

THE RENDCOMB MAGAZINE

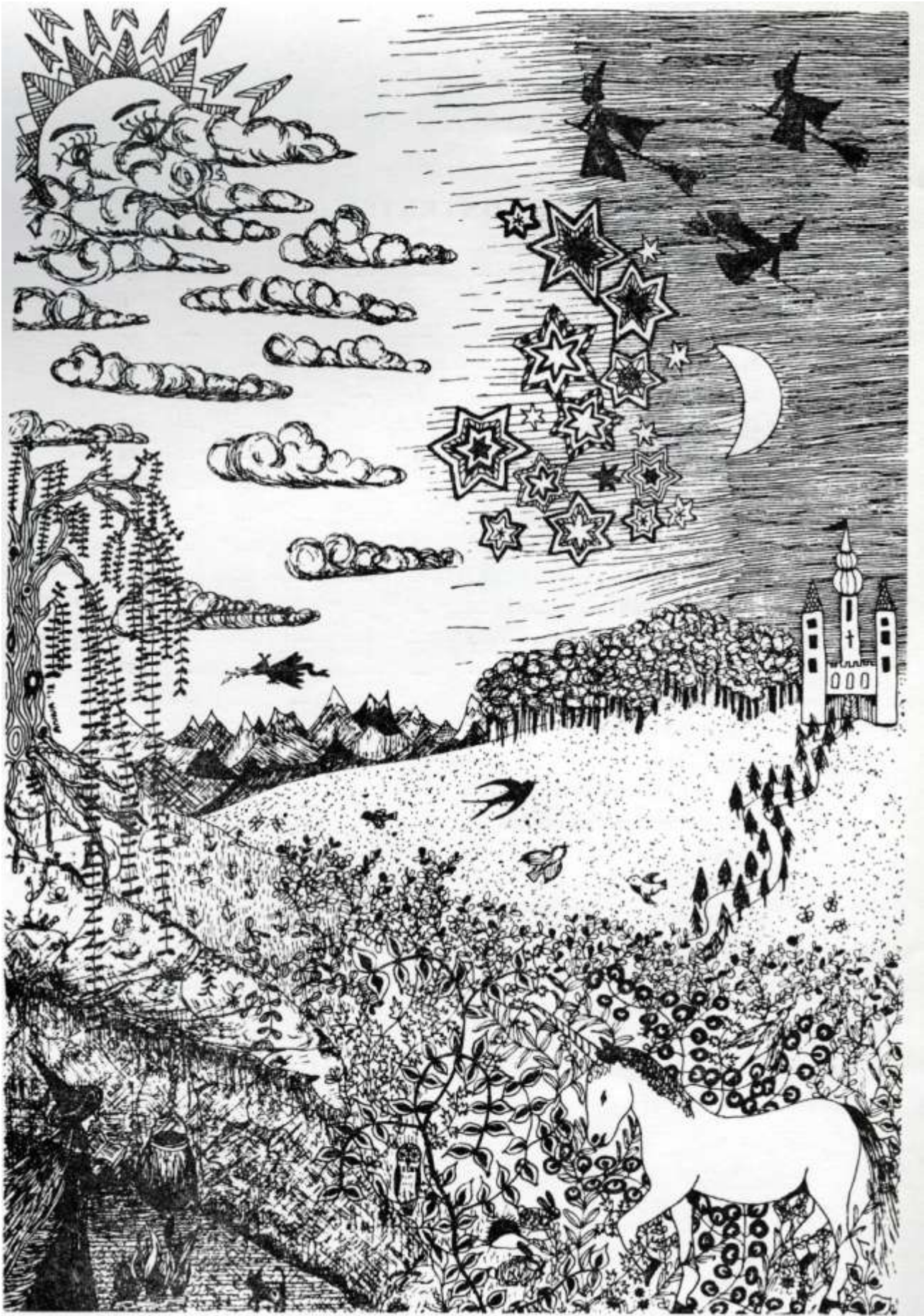


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EDITORIAL

WHAT has the casual Rendcombian newspaper reader encountered in recent months? In France a woman puts a pistol to her husband's head and pulls the trigger because he persistently preferred watching the world cup to discussing the family's summer holiday (if she was this impetuous who can blame him?), while a Devon woman systematically hacked up a colour t.v. set for similar reasons. Astonishing frenzy over the world cup off the field and gamesmanship and brutality on it, while more farcically we have had the young English girl excluded from her local junior football team and winning a court case via the sex discrimination act. Sport really has confirmed itself as the new opiate of the people. On the borders of Rhodesia (a country that, along with South Africa, appears to obsess the media) a number of Christian teachers and missionaries, dedicated to peace and the education of the African, are butchered in the name of 'freedom'. And, as ever, we have the backcloth of the more moronic and cynical aspects of advertising, pop music, and the gossip column.

In such an incredible, confused universe, with the media eager to deliver us such a farrago of information, there is a greater need than ever for a steady sense of proportion and values, a clear impression of right and wrong - there will be plenty of clamorous commentators these days ready to blur the lines with plausible (and usually self-interested) sophistry. Think of Joseph Conrad's Donkin, and of Singleton: 'He steered with care'. Think, too, of our founder Noel Wills, whose ideals 'steered' the school onto a course which we would like to think Rendcomb has never fundamentally lost sight of even in the furore of recent social and economic changes. Aptly, therefore, it was on Founder's Day that the guest speaker referred to people who have the vision, sensitivity, intelligence, and self-knowledge to recognise those rare golden moments in their lives - 'tides in the affairs of men' - crucial moments (again Conrad's stories come to mind) where our entire moral and physical quality, initiative, and will are dramatically tested to the point where, whatever path we choose, we can never be the same again. The more ridiculous or unbelievable the media's news the more we seem to be thrown back on the 'overwhelming question' of our own values and purpose.

All this may not be wholly divorced from consideration of the great Oxbridge successes achieved by the college this year, for these surely reflect the broader motivation, teaching standards, and working conditions at Rendcomb. Cynics might claim that the successes also reflect a highly selective entry system but this would be a gross distortion of the current pattern. An Oxbridge award is still, even in these days of fuzzy aims and standards, the most glittering prize for any sixth former and we can be proud of the four awards and the places achieved. A school community need not be ossified to have a healthy respect for long-tried traditional values. Further, we are well aware that entry into other universities, particularly in certain faculties, is often far from easy, that not all pupils are suited to university life, and that at Rendcomb we have always taken at least as much pleasure in the modest but merited attainments of the less gifted as in the scaling of Oxbridge pinnacles. One might add a fourth point, that we surely recognise that a Rendcomb leaver should be endowed with the elements of personal responsibility and courtesy as well as a batch of academic qualifications; if he has the latter but not the former then he or the school or both have failed in some way.

Finally, from the skein of term and year one might select a handful of memories and thoughts: the Red Arrows display in the Churn valley, a lavish spectacle for aesthetes and scientists alike; the huge metallic spider's web of the new sports hall glimpsed as we departed for the summer holidays; the apparently successful attempt by the college meeting, going back to the drawing board, to build itself a fresh rationale; the continued burgeoning of the richly rewarding community service work.

Apologies must be craved for the somewhat rambling nature of this editorial; but then the form of school life itself rarely seems neat and tidy. More digestible, let us hope, will be the ensuing contents of *The Rendcomb Magazine*, to which this particular editor cordially welcomes readers for the last time.

MISCELLANEA

SADLY we bade farewell this term to the following: the Rev. W. K. A. Hussey, the college chaplain and teacher of divinity, history, and English; Mr. B. J. Hembry, head of physical education and teacher of biology; and Miss Beeston, the matron. We hope to see them all again and wish them good fortune and happiness in the future.

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On April 30th Mr. Burden took his fifth form geography set on a field excursion to Lulworth Cove in Dorset.

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Christopher Dendy, O.R., who as many will remember won a cup in the Cheltenham competitive music festival for his piano-playing, returned on April 30th to give a recital ranging from Mozart and Liszt to Scott Joplin.

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May 3rd saw Mr. Price giving a fascinating and informative lecture about the church in situ. It is amazing how much there is to know about this building which most of us see every day.

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A collection was made for the work of the Red Cross on May 5th which raised over ten pounds.

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The school photograph was taken on the same day but unfortunately it was a very dull day and so the result was slightly less distinguished than in previous years.

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On May 11th the area careers officer came to interview various members of the fifth and sixth forms about their potential and prospects.

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The third form went on May 12th to the Everyman Theatre in Cheltenham to see the popular rock musical *Godspell*.

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Delegates from the school went as usual to the headmasters' conference community service conference in Worcestershire from the 12th to the 14th of May.

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Mr. Swaine took junior members of the school on a trip to Slimbridge to observe the birdlife on May 17th.

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A sixth form party went with Mr. Holt to Stratford to see the new production of *The Tempest* given by the Royal Shakespeare Company. Critical reaction was mixed.

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The concert given by the school orchestra and choral society was on May 21st and consisted of varied works by Gluck, Brahms and Vaughan-Williams.

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Rendcomb's alternative drama group presented its first production on May 24th. It was Ted Hughes' dramatic parable 'Tiger's Bones' with the serious message wrapped in music, spectacle and humour.

Mr. Holt took a small party, mainly of sixth formers, on 25th May, to see *The Yeomen of the Guard*, put on by the Cheltenham Operatic and Dramatic Society at the Everyman Theatre. After a shaky start this turned out to be a very good amateur production of Gilbert and Sullivan's most serious opera.

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Parents' meetings were held this term for the parents of form VIb on May 6th and form II on May 27th.

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Mrs. Holdaway took the VIa girls on an outing first to Berkeley Castle and then back to her own home on June 4th.

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A service of readings was organised by Mr. Hussey on the theme of 'Love; Its Meaning and Application' on June 11th.

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On the same day there was a third form house outing to Dodington House, Avon.

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Mrs. Walker, wife of the Bishop of Ely, returned to give her admonitory talk to VIa leavers on 'The Pitfalls of University Life'.

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Mr. Kelsey managed to persuade the Red Arrows, the RAF's crack aerial display team, which is stationed at nearby Kemble, to give Rendcomb a special display of their skills on June 23rd. It was impeccable, of course, and we had a better view than a crowd at an airshow as the valley enabled the pilots to swoop lower than they otherwise would have done.

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The annual Founder's Day took place on June 24th, with impressive exhibitions on display in the art room, the wood-work room, and the physics laboratory. Reports of the main speeches appear later in this issue.

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The Literary Society burst into life once this term on June 28th to present a selection of American poetry ranging from the master of the macabre, Edgar Allan Poe, to the prophet of the pop era, Allen Ginsberg.

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On June 29th, community service helpers at Rendcomb threw a party for nine handicapped children from Paternoster School in Cirencester. It was hard to tell whether the helpers or the children enjoyed it more. Thanks to Anna Hummel, the ever-resourceful Mistress of Ceremonies.

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The Debating Society met twice this term to participate in two very lively confrontations: one on the National Front which resulted in a resounding defeat for the supporters of this organization and the other an election debate. These took place on May 17th and July 5th. Full reports appear elsewhere.

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Preachers this term included the chaplain, the Dean of Gloucester, Mr. E. W. Fletcher, Mr. D. H. Carwardine, and the Rev. A. Knight.

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As a sequel to his display team's stunning performance Wing-Commander Whitehouse, director of the 'Red Arrows', came to talk about his team and the RAF generally on June 29th.

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Many members of the school went out for the day on 6th July, the majority going either to the Royal Show at Stoneleigh or to the Natural Science Museum and Madame Tussaud's in London.

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VIb members went on a trip to the beautiful church at Fairford, built by the man whose son built Rendcomb Church, on June 30th.

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The 'Rendcomb Singers' gave a recital of song and instrumental music from Byrd to Boulez on July 6th.

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Form VIa went to the city of Bath for the day on July 4th to soak up culture or to do some shopping, depending on their inclinations.

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A sixth form party went with the headmaster to Stratford to see the new production of *Measure for Measure* at the Shakespeare Theatre on July 4th.

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It has been said that if certain members of this years 'A'-level candidates fail their exams, they can always find employment as interior decorators, for among much useful work undertaken in the post-exam period, the sixth form common room was redecorated for the first time since Park House was built. Other efforts included painting the rugby posts for the coming seasons, and redecorating of a different kind, this time of the metal railings in the churchyard, which have been sadly neglected for decades.

Generally the brief lull between storms was put to very good use and much has been achieved.

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Line drawings, etc., for this issue were provided by Richard Perrett, Anna Hummel, Harriet Porter, and Nigel Pitt. Photographs were taken by Colin Hitchcock. Grateful thanks to all of them.

* * * *

The editors of *The Rendcomb Magazine* are Stephen Hawkins and Jonathan Porch.

COLLEGE OFFICERS

Senior Prefect: S. Hawkins

Prefects: K.-J. Crowhurst; R. W. A. Henniker-Gotley; I. S. Cummings; H. J. A. Wilson; J. Watson; B. Cross; J. D. Sinclair; A. J. McGill; N. R. Taylor; N. Carroll

Public Workman: A. Mackonochie

Church Ushers: I. S. Cummings; A. White; J. D. Sinclair; T. R. Evans; P. Haynes.

Librarians: I. S. Cummings; T. R. Evans; D. Taylor; J. R. Steed; N. D. Miles; G. M. A. Beattie

Bell Ringers: D. Taylor; K. P. Winnill

Magazine Editors: S. Hawkins; J. S. Portch

Cricket Captain: P. Haynes

Cricket Secretary: M. A. R. Webb

MEETING OFFICERS

Chairman: D. Taylor

Secretary: J. Porch

Meeting Banker: J. Porch

Boys' Banker: J. Steed

Council: S. Buist; S. Hawkins; J. McGill; C. Troughton; P. Haynes; J. Sinclair; R. Swaine

M.A.C.: I. Cummings; S. Buist; J. Sinclair; S. Brennan; W. H.-Gotley; J. Watson

P.L.O.: P. Haynes; S. Buist; C. Troughton; J. Porch; D. Taylor

Paperman: A. Simmins

Amplifier Technicians: J. Marson; D. Strong

Entertainments Committee: S. Brennan; A. Hummel; M. Raven; T. Burkham; T. Steed

Food Committee: H. Wilson; D. Beanland; S. Culverwell; R. Morgan; A. Pitt

Cycle Committee: S. Elliott; R. Hazell; R. Shacklock

Assistant Boys' Banker: T. Evans (IV)

Broom Warden: A. Jacques

Breakages Man: A. Martyn-Smith

MEETING NOTES

THE Meeting allowance has been adjusted following the decision to abrogate the financial responsibility for sports equipment to the college, and stood at nearly £300 for this term, the expenditure of which was largely automatic but nevertheless a surplus of £60 was granted.

An attempt to increase this surplus and suit magazines and newspapers to current tastes failed when after a census it was found there was sizable support for all of the material questioned. The General Meeting agreed to order two new periodicals for the library, these being the 'New Musical Express' and the 'Socialist Worker'. The latter aroused much controversy but it was felt that this would present a balanced range of political opinion and was therefore valuable. Unfortunately much of the surplus finance was spent on replacing unreported losses from the dining-hall. The General Meeting felt this was most regrettable and directed that the younger members of the school be made aware of this loss. The 'Alternative Drama' group now seems firmly established following an assurance of financial support from the Meeting; a resolution passed in view of the success of the group's first production.

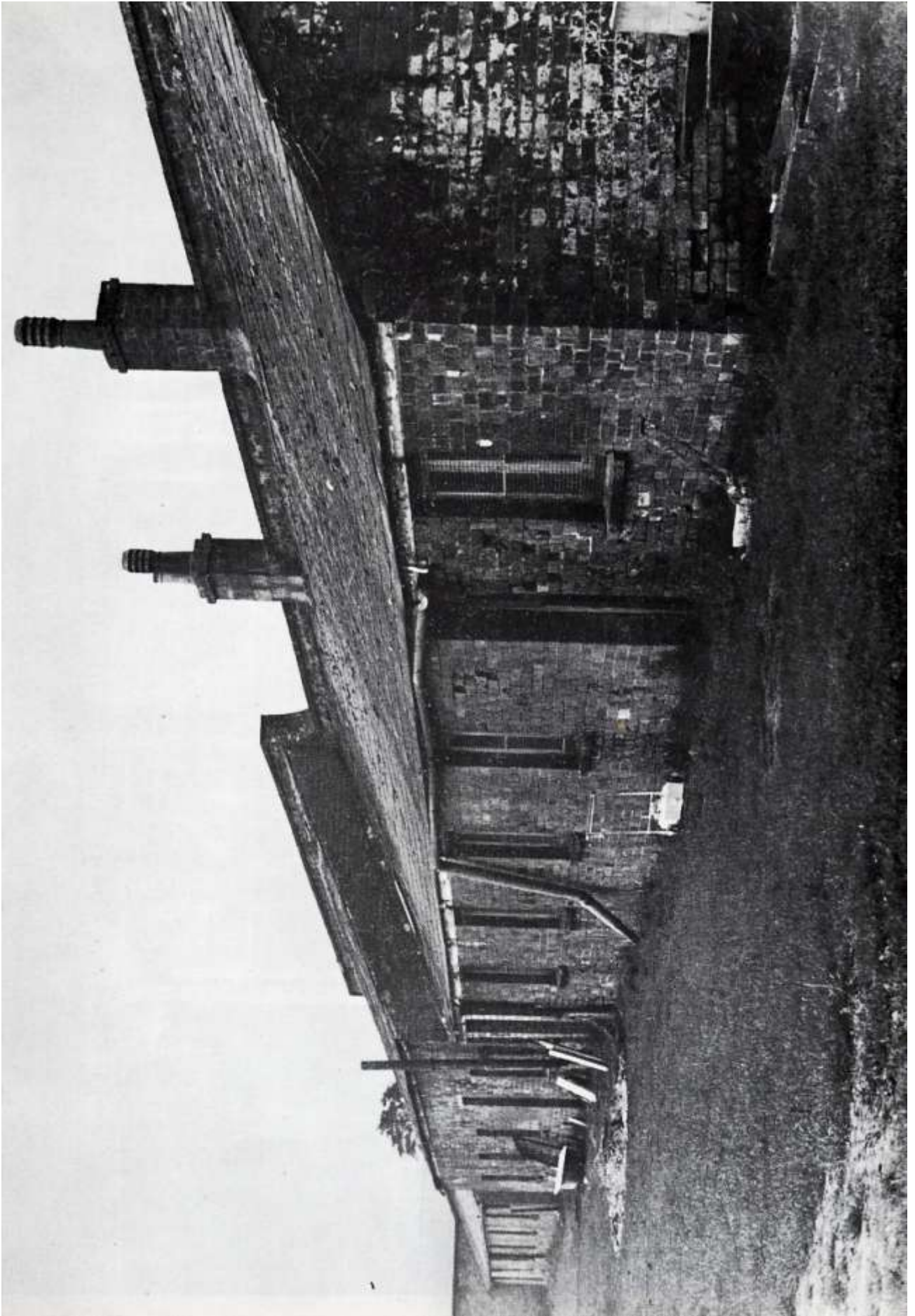
The General Meeting continued the tradition of arranging for and authorising collections for teachers who are leaving, although collectively was unable to decide upon a choice of appropriate present.

An investigation concerning the renting of a soft drinks machine found that this was unfortunately outside the limitations of expenditure and economically unsound due to the small size of the school and the fact that it would not be in use during the school holidays.

Valuable committee work has continued and all those concerned should receive due praise. This term has notably seen the increased activity of the revised junior advocates although perhaps not in the role originally envisaged.

A revival of interest in the General Meeting, especially from the lower school, may be detected this term. This positive attitude is certainly promising and offers hope for the future of the General Meeting in an enlarged school, and I think is reflected in the minutes of the General Meeting which trace the development of tangible proposals from what were previously vague and undirected feelings of discontent; for instance, the demand made in the form of a petition from forms I and II that they receive representation in the General Meeting. I should like to thank all those who have contributed to discussion over the term especially those in the lower forms who have summoned the courage to speak.

D.T.



FOUNDER'S DAY 1978

Headmaster's Speech

Mr. Chairman, My Lords, ladies and gentlemen, may I first welcome on your behalf our main speaker today, Vice Admiral Sir Louis le Bailly.

It is a pleasure to welcome such a senior member of the senior service, and it's a nice coincidence that one of our school prefects has just passed his admiralty selection board for a naval commission, and next week is visiting the Marine Engineering College of which Sir Louis was in charge.

Personally, I am particularly glad, because it was in the navy that I did my utterly undistinguished end of war service. I suppose one of the earliest things I learned was the well tried maxim: 'If it moves, salute it; if it doesn't move, polish it'; but something more useful than this, it is to nearly three years sleeping in a hammock that I attribute my ability now to sleep anywhere; at any time: and at critical moments in my teaching career, when some awful crisis has happened, I still comfort myself with the lower deck remark: 'If you can't take a joke, you shouldn't have joined'.

During my time in the navy I never came across anyone so exalted as an admiral but - if I may tell a story against myself - I did have to fetch the captain of my destroyer from a ceremonial visit to an American admiral in Shanghai. I should tell you that the River Yangtze Kiang flows at about five knots and the cutter of which I was coxswain managed about eight, so we hadn't much in hand. The captain was piped over the side of this large cruiser by the top brass and started the long walk down the gangway steps to the little platform at water level where I was to pick him up. Unfortunately, I fluffed the approach, my bowman made a wild grab with his boathook at the rope, missed, and the current swept us gently away just as the skipper reached the platform. He was left standing there in fuming isolation while I made the wide circuit to come alongside again. He didn't actually say, "Write out five hundred times: I must come alongside successfully" but I was given the equivalent of a Rendcomb hour's work - practising approaches.

We meet today in memory of our founder, Noel Wills, and I speak with confidence when I say that I know what item of Rendcomb news from the past year would have pleased him most. You may remember that there was great anxiety last year when the Department of Education asked for details of all places taken up by local authorities in independent schools. Would our long connection with the county be brought to an end? We were delighted when the minister decided that for the next three years at least our places were safe from government direction. Naturally, Shire Hall will want to keep the arrangement under review, but at least we have this tacit admission that there is still a need for boarding education which the state cannot fill. We are more than happy to fill it, because it is one of the main purposes for which Rendcomb was founded, and over the years many of our most successful pupils have come to us from Gloucestershire in this way. In talking of boarding need, one normally thinks of one parent families, parents abroad and so on, but there is no doubt at all that a good boarding school provides a great many things that everybody needs.

I was discussing examination questions with a VIth form the other day, and this was one of them: 'Show how Shakespeare explores the limitations and potentialities of human nature'. I suppose we are all engaged in this exploration all our lives, but isn't it one of the greatest values of school, and especially boarding school, that we learn to realise our limitations and our potentialities.

Limitations first, because unless we are to become insufferably conceited and arrogant we need to recognise that everybody is better at something than we are. But at least with the Rendcomb system it is not drummed into you by excessive competition that X is always bottom of the form while Y is winning all the cups.

Then we need to learn the difficult lessons of tolerance and self-control. I remember a comment made to me last November by a master in charge of a rugby team when the aggression of our opponents had gone well beyond what is acceptable even in a tough contact sport. He spoke of the team's fairness and restraint under considerable provocation, and to me that was worth far more than a victory on points. In a world of increasing violence this is something worth preserving - but in case you may think that we scored only moral victories last year and that this is simply a cover up, do consult the records - like the record this term of our second eleven, under fifteen, under fourteen and under thirteen cricket teams, all unbeaten so far.

And thirdly we need to learn the limitations which an ordered society imposes by reasonable discipline for the good of all. It was the great Dr. Johnson who said 'There is less flogging now in our great schools, but then less is learned there; so what the boys gain at one end they lose at the other'. Perhaps you have read in the papers of the continuing debate about corporal punishment. It is now many years, I'm glad to say, since a cane was raised at Rendcomb, and I believe that the boys have gained at both ends.

Enough of limitations, because when we turn to potentialities, the range is enormous. You may have noticed from your Founder's Day programme that the A-level results were impressive and they enabled the majority of boys and girls to go on to the universities of their choice. We maintained our usual high average of between seven and eight O-levels per head, while to crown it all out of eight candidates to Oxford and Cambridge we gained four open exhibitions and two places. You would have to look a very long way to better that record for our size, and I do congratulate the boys and girls concerned as well as those who taught them. One further point is that this is no intellectual hothouse cramming weedy scholars who have shot their bolt when they leave here. Our honour boards and your programme this afternoon show that there is a steady record of university prizes, first class degrees and research distinctions which emphasise that Rendcomb is a launching pad for further successes and the fulfilment of potential in later life.

Now turning from the intellectual to the practical, I hope you have spent some time in the exhibitions because I think you will agree that they are remarkable. Imagine yourself faced by a large block of stone, your aim to release the

shape of a cat from inside it, your only weapons a hammer and chisel, knowing that one false slip would ruin two months work. This is an achievement requiring not only imagination and skill, but patience and determination, not to mention some expert guidance on the way. Sculpture, pottery, carving, painting, glass engraving, photography - an exceptional range and variety of media.

About woodwork, I speak from personal experience as our drawing room has recently been graced by a milking stool without which no well ordered Rendcomb household is complete. Whether we shall ever come in for such a fine thing as the oak bureau I noticed remains to be seen; but the same high quality of craftsmanship is evident throughout the range.

As for physics and electronics, it really is quite beyond me. I gather from the newspapers that before long most of the work we do will be taken over by microprocessed silicon chips. Fortunately, however intelligent these midgets may be, they haven't yet learned to programme themselves, and I shall be surprised if some of our best Rendcomb software doesn't find scope for their talents in this developing field. If at the age of fifteen you are organising complex lighting circuits for a school play and designing subtle burglar alarms for your headmaster there must be an opening for you in British industry or business. And talking of business, a headline from the local press this year read 'Rendcomb Tycoons Progress'. This was a reference to the Business Game, organised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants and International Computers Ltd., and schools all over the country choose a board of directors from their sixth form to make decisions simulating those in a real business. Out of 390 we reached the last 27 and missed reaching the last 9 by the narrowest margin. But one further thought before I move on, and a vital one: boys and girls from Rendcomb have another quality besides business acumen still not common enough in our society; they are free from the limitations of snobbery and class prejudice of every kind. If the same could be said of all our youth the future of industrial relations in this country would look a good deal brighter than it does at present.

Now from the practical activities I have mentioned, tangible objects remain, and some of them will become the antiques of the future. From the year's music and drama only memories remain, but what splendid memories of Fidelio, The Song of Destiny, Sons of Light: the very names have a noble ring to them, and they received exciting and vital performances.

Both senior and junior plays this year were rich in entertainment value, profound in meaning. It's quite a challenge to produce a full scale musical like 'O What a Lovely War', and much of the Rendcomb Mystery Cycle performed by the younger boys was written by themselves. War and Peace on earth and in heaven - that's a bold enough theme for one year's drama.

And here I want to make a general point about a boarding school of our size. I counted up the performers in both plays - 60 players trod the boards: backstage a slightly larger number constructed, lit, applied the grease paint, ushered the guests; it comes to over half the school involved in different ways - and so it is in many other activities. A great part of a good education goes on outside the classroom, and it draws out from people more than they dreamed they were capable of. You have only to look through the school magazine to see that talents are not buried in the ground here, but used and increased.

That mention of the parable of the talents reminds me of a very large hole in the ground in the Estate Garden. The foundations of the sports hall show just how big this new building is going to be and it will be ready in January, just at the time when the snow is lying deep on the hockey pitches. Badminton, netball, basketball, tennis, cricket - as far as I can see rugby is the only game which you cannot play on it.

As I expect you know, the science laboratories have been extended and completely modernised, and from where I speak I can see the solar panels which are at this moment funnelling the sun into the swimming pool. You have to watch people swimming to realise just what pleasure a few thousand gallons of water at seventy degrees can provide. When we enter the element from which we originally came there is an access of power and freedom which converts everyone into a dolphin ... no wonder they always have that playful grin. The Garden of Eden must have been a water garden.

Ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of us all, I do thank you most sincerely - and all those not present - who have given so generously to the appeal which now stands at over £110,000. As much of the money is in the form of seven year covenants, a most handsome loan from the Dulverton Trust has enabled us to go ahead with the work immediately. There remains the final stage of our development programme, the conversion of the conservatory into what will be the most attractive and unusual assembly hall and theatre in the country, retaining its period charm, but provided with all the up to date equipment and furnishing required.

The appeal will be closed on Founder's Day in 1979 so we have exactly one year to find the remaining £40,000. Parents have most kindly felt able to give, on average, covenants of between £20 and £30 so may I encourage those who are still considering what they can manage to help us towards our goal. After all, a covenant of only £5 a year gives us £50 in the end - a substantial sum, and five or ten pounds is reasonably painless. Giving money is like having a tooth out - there may be a slight twinge at the time, but you do feel better afterwards. We have in mind also a Christmas holiday dance for parents and friends which I do hope that all those living within reasonable distance will support by coming and bringing a party with them, as I am sure it would be a very enjoyable occasion.

Now, do you remember only ten years ago when the cobblestones were flying in the streets of Paris and the vice-chancellors' studies were being rifled by Marxist students, one of the war-cries: "A university should not be a seat of learning, but a powerhouse of change"?

Aren't both these phrases apt for a good school? I have given some strong evidence for Rendcomb as a seat of learn-

ing, but it is also - in a different sense from the Revolutionists' meaning - a powerhouse for change.

A good school is a powerhouse providing the physical and moral and intellectual energy that an industrial country needs more surely than it needs coal or oil. And the change which it brings about will, in time, change our society - making it less hidebound, more hard-working, more humane - but the immediate change is to individuals, enabling them to find the best in themselves.

I have spoken of ten years ago; what will be the picture ten years from now? All we can say for certain is that the future will be different from what we expect and the speed of change will increase.

In an age of uncertainty what course should we adopt? Surely the answer is to remain as flexible and as farsighted as we can, but hold firmly to the things that remains unchanged. What are these things? Of course there are the abilities we need to learn our living and contribute to the society in which we are lucky enough to live - but isn't there something more than training for jobs, important though that is?

There is a fine saying of G. K. Chesterton which may have an old-fashioned sound, but it does so for the essentials : 'England is Faith, and Green fields, and Honour and the Sea'.

Here in the heart of England, surrounded by green fields, we are only an hour from the sea.

Honour I take to be that personal integrity which is the most valuable possession we can acquire as we grow up. Now as to faith, I must tread carefully. In a secular age what school can say outright 'We are a Christian school', but nobody who has not been taught about the religious faith of his own country, and has not had the opportunity of worshipping in that faith during his formative years can be considered fully educated, and I am convinced that one of the quiet but permanent strengths of the boarding schools of this country is that they are communities which consciously uphold a Christian way of life and they have at their centre a Christian church.

Surrounded by the trappings of a consumer society in a world of poverty, the idealism of young people looks for something beyond materialism. They may not find what they are seeking here, and now, but at least they have been made aware of possibilities.

This leads me on to say goodbye to our chaplain, Mr. Hussey, who has been with us for four years and who now goes to be chaplain of Berkhamstead School. I would like to thank him for his tireless and selfless work both in the school and in the village. He and Mrs. Hussey will be much missed and we send our warmest wishes with them.

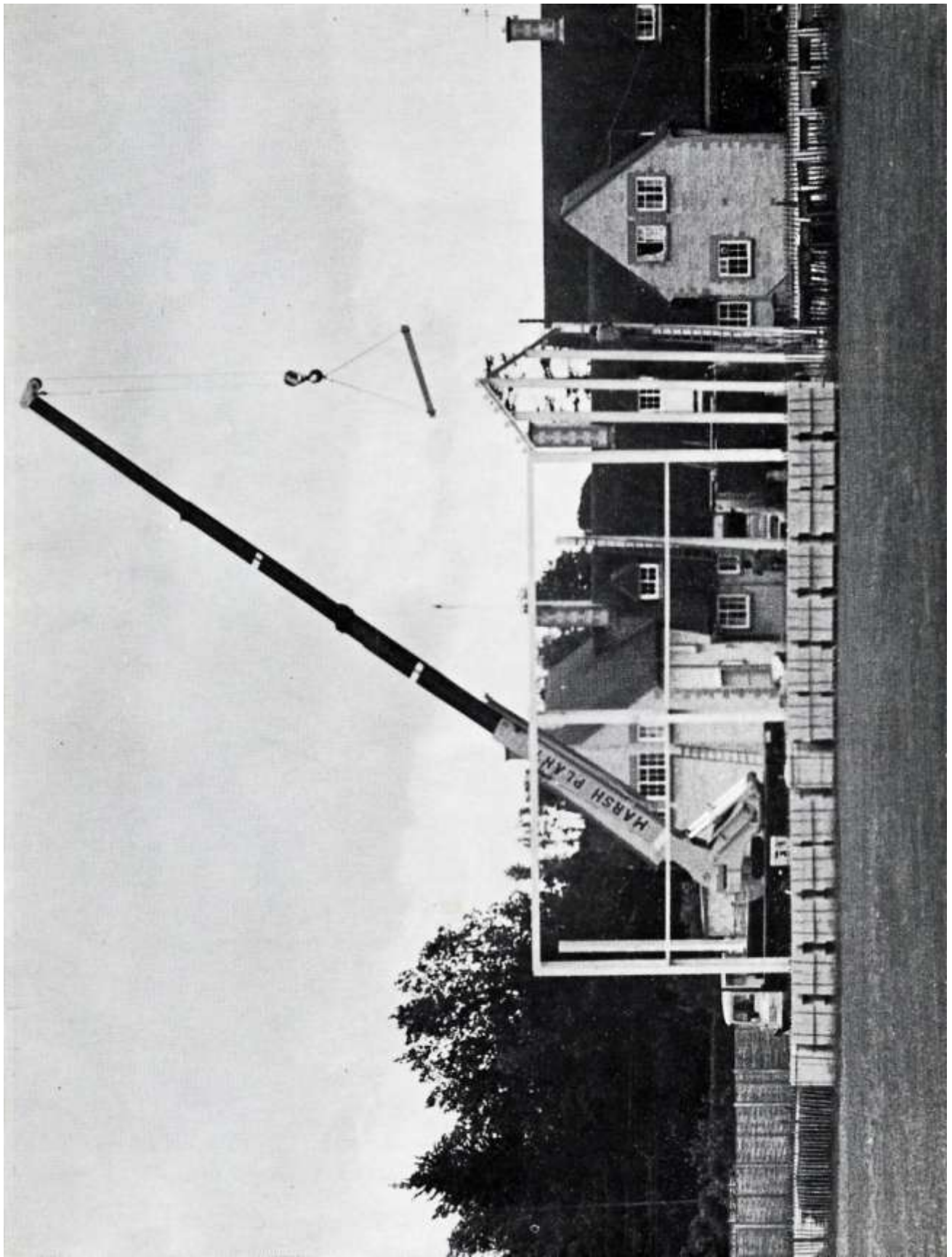
Mr. Hembry is also leaving this term, having secured a job as head of department in a large comprehensive school. It is one of life's ironies that he was appointed to run our new sports hall which was to be ready four years ago. Galloping inflation postponed our plans, and now the hall will be completed almost as soon as he has gone. However, he has made a great contribution to Rendcomb sport and in many other ways and we wish him every success in his new school.

When I tell you that I have appointed four able young men to the staff in September you might well believe that they would be needed simply to replace the work of these two men. However, it is not exactly like that - a larger staff will improve our ratio of masters to boys and enable us to extend our range of opportunities.

As chaplain I have appointed a young man who has had both teaching experience and responsibility for 10,000 parishioners in a Welsh town.

As physical education master and assistant biologist a Loughborough-trained man with the experience to coach the first fifteen and run the sports hall.

In addition to these a well qualified musician to help Mr. Willson, and finally a graduate of Durham University to launch our A-level geography course from the firm foundations laid by Mr. Burden. You may be interested to know that the Ph.D. which he is just completing at Durham is based on his experience of 14 months living in the African bush with a native tribe hunting buffalo and elephant with 10 ft. spears and poisoned arrows - the subject promises well! As I am speaking of able and well qualified men, I must just mention a woman of the same calibre - Miss Beeston, helping us out as matron for two terms, one of them stricken by 'flu, with impressive efficiency and concern; and finally, a warm thank you to the staff - men and women - for their sustained and most successful efforts during the year. When in ordinary conversation with people one says that one is a schoolmaster the unguarded reply is sometimes 'How lovely to have all those holidays'. But if you actually add up the hours worked, the time spent in preparation and assessment, the Saturdays fully employed while others are enjoying their 5-day week, the duties expected or done voluntarily on a Sunday, then you get a different picture altogether. It's this full-hearted commitment that makes Rendcomb the school it is.



SUMMARY OF THE GUEST SPEAKER'S SPEECH

THIS year we welcomed vice-Admiral Sir Louis le Bailly, who is the chairman of the civil service commission board, as our guest speaker at Founder's Day.

He opened his speech by claiming that his retirement is full of such speech-making and that clubs and societies welcomed reminiscences, while the 'tribal ritual' of founder's day speeches continues.

He then recalled a speech which he had heard whilst training at Dartmouth entitled 'The Golden Moment': in this speech it was suggested that the victories of Nelson at Trafalgar and Jellicoe were the result of self-discipline and self-training, and not just 'flashes in the pan'. Through the training of common 'copper moments' and rarer 'silver moments' such men were able to recognise and seize their 'golden moments'.

Sir Louis suggested that throughout life you are presented with opportunities to choose between right and wrong and that, as you grow older, it becomes increasingly harder to choose between the route offered by your conscience and that offered by cunning; and that moral courage enables you to bear your responsibilities. He gave the example of Harry Truman, who found himself thrust into the presidency of the United States and took his responsibility, coining the well-known phrase: 'The Buck Stops Here'.

He recalled an incident which occurred on January 10th, 1941, when the British battle fleet were searching the Atlantic for German destroyers. A young seaman had seen a puff of smoke on the horizon and called down to the engine room for 'full ahead'. Sir Louis himself was the engineer and began to speed up the engines only to receive the command 'half ahead' a few minutes later, called down by the captain who could see no smoke. Just as the engines were slowing down the command for 'full ahead' was called for by the Admiral. However, no ships were seen and the seaman was reprimanded. At the end of the war, it was discovered that the German battleships which had caused so much damage to Allied shipping were there on that day, and learning of the British fleet's presence through radar, had made smoke as they strained their engines to escape. If only this seaman had had the moral courage to dare all and seize his golden moment.

Sir Louis then went on to discuss how science and man's rapidly increasing knowledge had led to a materialistic outlook on life and the decline of faith, attributed to its lack of logic. He recalled the phrase 'Faith is reason standing on tiptoe', saying that this captured the need to look over incredulity and regain a lost hope.

He referred to a book he had read which claimed that 'our vision has become distorted through knowledge'. In this book reality was seen as a great mountain in a vast desert of infinite length around the base of which were the countries of the world. Some people climb this mountain and see the glory; some bicker about what they see; others gaze into the desert and see no beauty, no glory, only mirages in which man's power is greater than the power of God. In conclusion, Sir Louis said that we must train ourselves to listen to our conscience, although this may not be easy, and that good leadership can only be attained through example. It is possible to buy time, to buy presence, to buy muscular power; but enthusiasm, initiative, love and respect must be earned. He ended saying that we should aim for the power of endurance, the power to risk all, self-forgetfulness in order to accomplish tasks at all costs, patience, resilience in defeat coupled with gallant optimism, and we must dare to hope. If we achieved these goals then failure would not seem the end.

I.P.

PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

IT is encouraging to have seen the large increase in use of the darkroom which has taken place. The number of members, however, has remained at its all-time minimum of seven for two terms. I hope that more people will join during the new school year as this is really all that the society needs at present. As planned, a new and high quality enlarging lens was purchased early in the term with the aid of welcome assistance from the Meeting. It has certainly contributed a great deal to a large increase in the technical quality of prints produced - a good variety of which were in the Founder's Day exhibition staged in the art room.

C.A.H.

LITERARY SOCIETY

THE Literary Society met again on the 28th June, to start what will hopefully be a smaller, more intimate poetry discussion group by looking at the work of some American poets. Some of form VIb's English specialists were joined by a few 'outsiders' to look at Poe, Eliot, Frost, Williams and others. There was a lively discussion of pieces by Morse and Ginsberg.

Next year, we shall try to present a chance for budding poets to read and discuss their own work.

T.D.D.

FOLK CLUB

THE Club met only once this term, when, despite noble efforts by Andrew 'Wedlock' Carter and the unflagging Pete Haynes, the shades of exams were obviously discouraging the contributors. The next meeting was then cancelled due to a lack of performers.

The informal atmosphere of these Sunday evenings, which have generally been attended by over three-quarters of the sixth form, has produced some memorable offerings over the year, and revealed some little-suspected talents! It is to be hoped that next year's sixth form will continue them, revitalised with their own particular interests.

T.D.D.

BELL-RINGING

ANOTHER successful term's ringing in which we have managed to raise a band competent enough to ring unsupervised on Sunday mornings, and that in recent weeks has managed to master the method known as 'Plain Hunting'. We had the pleasure of ringing with the Dean of Gloucester one Sunday, who was also shown the newly rehung bells. I should like once again to thank Miss Bliss and Edgar for their invaluable help and also to thank Mr. Hussey for his respect towards and co-operation with the bell-ringers during his time here and also for his enthusiastic support in raising funds for the re-hanging without which this would not been possible.

D.T.

THE CHESS CLUB

THE tournament for the chess trophy was completed: it was won by David Denby.

G.J.S.

BRIDGE CLUB

CONTRARY to usual custom, there were a number of bridge evenings during the summer term. A drive was held on July 3rd, the prizes for which were kindly given by the matron, who has been a keen supporter of the club.

W.J.D.W.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

OUR regular weekly activities in the form of visiting, etc., have been extremely limited this term due to exams and the summer change in the school timetable. Nevertheless, it has been very encouraging to see some members of the fourth form starting, which counters the large number of girls presently involved. Outside our weekly activities we have been highly active, however, and achieved valuable results.

Once again, four senior and experienced C.S. volunteers attended a national conference at Winmill House in Worcestershire, a most enjoyable and revealing weekend. We were surprised to find out that we were the only school operating a totally voluntary system but we also found that we are hopelessly hampered by transport in comparison with other schools.

We sent a large number of volunteers to help the Querns geriatric hospital with their annual fete which provided a welcome break for some members of 6b after their exams as well as providing valuable community service.

A most enjoyable afternoon was spent giving a party for ten children from Paternoster School. Many senior students reverted to their childhood and seemed to become genuinely excited over such games as 'pass the parcel' and 'musical bumps'! Anna and Ondine deserve due praise for their highly imaginative part in organising this and making it a very successful event which we hope to repeat in the near future.

The Ampney Crucis Over 60's Club requested to be shown the school and as a consequence a guided tour with emphasis on the history of the building (a Victorian mansion) has been arranged which is to be followed by tea and musical and dramatic entertainment. We were staggered to learn that 50 people intend to come and, although at the time of

writing this has not been staged, it promises to be a success as well as establishing a new style of entertainment. The community services group initiated a silver paper collection in the school which has extended to the village and hopefully in the future will be supported by parents although plans for this are not currently pending. The silver paper is given to 'Dogs for the Blind'.

We are indebted to members of staff without whose co-operation the recent growth of community services would not have been possible, especially in respect of bringing people into the school, a development which appears to be national as shown at the conference. Finally, I am sure we would all like to thank Mr. Dyke for his continued enthusiastic support and guidance.

D.T.

DEBATING SOCIETY

A debate was held on 17th May, the motion being "This House Opposes the Ideals of the National Front". It was proposed by Chris Burkham and Fred Wilcox, who claimed fascism meant repression and loss of democratic freedom and pointed out the narrow-minded and inhuman side of the National Front. Fred Wilcox posed the interesting question, "Do whites feel so inferior alongside their black companions and countrymen that they are forced into joining the National Front and supporting their racist views?"

The opposition, Andrew Carter (sporting a 'toothbrush' moustache) and Peter Uglow, claimed the principles of the N.F. were not aimed at racialism but at the rejuvenation of British industry. Quoting from the party manifesto he claimed repatriation would only take place for those who were unable to 'offer tangible advantages in return for staying'.

The motion was then thrown open to the floor. Probably the most valuable point was made by Duncan Taylor who quoted the race relations board, whose statistics and research showed that blacks do not come here to sponge off the state.

Duncan Clarke pointed out the philosophical similarities between the N.F. and nihilism and explained the Freudian influences in the nihilist policies.

Chris Burkham summarised by quoting the popular Anti-Nazi League slogan 'Nazis are no fun', while Andrew Carter summarized for the opposition by saying that we reap for ourselves the benefits of society. However, this last passionate outburst was unable to sway the audience, who carried the motion by 23 votes to 1, with 4 abstentions.

* * * *

With the opposition party clamouring for an early election it seemed fitting to have an election as a debate at Rendcomb. Although held in the chaotic last week of term and in the assembly hall the speakers, many asked only a few days before, delivered speeches of a high standard.

Six parties were represented: the United Independent Britain Party, the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party, the Labour Party, the Communist Party, and the Anarchists.

Penny Hooley, speaking for the Conservatives, was greeted with tumultuous applause and cheering and had little to do in persuading an already right wing audience. Nevertheless, she put the case for capitalism very well, though the latest source of controversy, racialism, was ominously absent from her speech.

Labour spoke next after the chairman had calmed the slightly unruly audience. Richard Tudor, their speaker, used a mass of statistics to prove that we were better off with a Labour government, stressing that Labour does not take advantage of any minorities.

Mr./Miss Dominic Ind represented the Liberal Party in a light-hearted manner as Liberal in all things, being serious just long enough to attack the lack of proportional representation, and take credit for the maintenance of the old petrol price at the last budget. He summed up by saying that the Liberals kept the extreme right and left at bay.

Carol Franklin, speaking for the Communists, said that the Communists were the most advanced members of society. Quoting from Marx and other sources she put the case for a one-party state to the predominantly right wing audience very well.

Simon Howell spoke for the United Independent Britain Party. Using patriotic music and visual stimuli to support him he delivered a hysteria-inducing oration, attacking the E.E.C. and outside pressures that attempted to force Britain to surrender some of her sovereignty. He finished by stressing the two key words of the party: unity and independence. The anarchists, in the rather anomalous situation of being represented as a legitimate party, were spoken for by George Ashe. His speech, for those who listened, stressed the constructive aspect of true anarchy and its advantage of appealing to a fundamental communal spirit. He suggested that anarchy was the next logical step of civilisation.

The debate was then thrown open to the floor. Andrew Carter proposed himself for the National Front, claiming they would ban colour TV.

Julian Bull stood up to outline the policies of the Smokey Bears (legalization of cannabis), and Duncan Taylor explained to those who did not already know what the Rock Against Racism movement is. It was decided that the last

two movements would not be voted upon.

Many other valid points were made, notably by Jon Porch, Steven Whittard, Shaun Brennan, Sarah Culverwell, and Roy Edwards.

There was no summing up and voting was on a show of hands (no secret ballot) with one vote per capita (regardless of age, of course!).

Results:

Conservatives	14	Labour	6
U.I.B.	14	Liberals	3
Anarchists	11	N.F.	3
Communists	9		

Approximately half the audience abstained.

K.N.

CHORAL AND ORCHESTRAL CONCERT - 21st MAY

Overture 'Alceste'	...	...	<i>Gluck</i>
Song of Destiny	...	...	<i>Brahms</i>
The Sons of Light	...	...	<i>Vaughan Williams</i>

ONE felt the 1978 Rendcomb College May concert to be outstanding because of two aspects.

Before the first number was half way through, we were aware of the clean, crisp musicianship of the orchestra - augmented under the leadership of Brian Webber by the addition of thirteen guests, bringing the players up to forty-nine. A descriptive and sharp beat from the conductor obviously stimulated the players, whose rehearsal time had been fully employed.

So much was noticeable early in the programme; but the other aspect came as the concert was ending. This was the sensitive selection of works through which there was built up a sense of a common theme revealing those eternal truths of which man becomes aware when faced by natural forces. The might of this was most impressive.

If the 'Alceste' Overture closed in tragic vein, Gluck had shown us how he obtained effect merely with dripping arpeggios of simple chords echoing richly from one orchestral voice to another.

He displayed too how to build layer upon layer of orchestral textures to obtain atmosphere, the warmth of the brass contrasting with the acidity of the strings, while the woodwind daintily pointed the emphasis of his motifs. In this attractive piece the orchestra was very much relaxed, well rehearsed, and 'at home'.

Brahms' 'Song of Destiny' is not frequently performed, which may be because, like the composer's themes, the meaning of the work is rather involved, and thus beyond the scope of the experience of young singers; and although their numbers almost equalled the instrumentalists they were at times overwhelmed. But when the orchestral adagio, with its throbbing triplets, drew to its end, the altos crept in with excellent sweetness. This choir not only maintained good contrast of expression but obtained commendable top A flats. The trombones grandly heralded "But Man May Not Linger" which the choir took up with zest, enjoying both the forte and the triple beat with confidence, sinking back to 'repose' to leave the last word to the throbbing orchestra.

After the coffee interval came the great work of the evening - I write with hindsight. If, like the Brahms work, it is little played, it is also less known. Redolent with phrases, idioms, and intervals typical of Cotswold-born Vaughan Williams, and echoing snatches of 'Hodie' and icy from the south pole, it was played in three sections.

In spite of the ethereal music and the mysticism of the poems, the choir, always on the watch for their entry, took up the declamatory quality of the first movement with its horses and charioteers. The fugue of 'Rise Moon' went well and the triplets from the orchestra controlled the mood as it died away. Both in pitch and rhythms the zodiac section was more impressive to listen to than facile for the performers.

Indeed I have to confess that this was where, as a music critic, I dropped out! To be honest yet unashamed, I was so engrossed, overcome, by the message and might of the work that the task of scribing a few notes became in comparison a piffling chore - after all, here in the room was "V.W." himself demanding our attention! Even the ensuing full applause seemed irrelevant.

One wanted to sit back and absorb the impressions left behind. The composer, born on the edge of the Cotswolds, this grand old man, always young in invention and spirit, would have beamed his approval that this work should have been presented by these youthful musicians and singers.

If this was a work that will sustain and indeed demand an early second hearing, then this was a performance which leaves behind a deep-set impression of its vitality and value.

E.S.

* * * *

Christopher Dendy (O.R.) gave a piano recital on Sunday, 30th April, consisting of music by Mozart, Schubert, and Liszt.

CHURCH MUSIC

30th April	...	Thou Visitest The Earth	...	...	<i>Greene</i>
14th May	...	If Ye Love Me	...	...	<i>Tallis</i>
4th June	...	Te Deum in B flat	...	...	<i>Stanford</i>
		Hymn To The Trinity	...	...	<i>Tchaikovsky</i>
18th June	...	O For A Closer Walk With God	...	...	<i>Stanford</i>
24th June	...	Let Us Now Praise Famous Men	...	...	<i>Vaughan Williams</i>
2nd July	...	O How Amiable	...	...	<i>Vaughan Williams</i>

J.W.

GARDENING

THE indoor bulbs, planted in December, again made an impressive display in early March. The daffodils in the school grounds were particularly good this year, having benefited from the wet weather last autumn.

Dry weather in May enabled us to make good progress with routine work on flower beds and borders, and planting out was completed before half-term. Miserden Nurseries supplied us with excellent petunias, lobelia, alyssum, asters and salvias. We also increased our stock of geraniums by buying a further 30 plants. This should enable us to produce more geraniums from cuttings, if repairs are carried out on the greenhouse.

Although the climbing roses on the terrace and at the Old Rectory continue to do well, the bush roses will have to be replaced in the autumn, and we may replan the lower terrace.

I should like to thank those who have helped on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for their interest and hard work.

Tuesday: F. Peplow, T. Horton, M. Dibble, R. Shacklock, T. Evans.

Wednesday: S. Hawkins, D. Marshall, M. Raven, S. Howell, A. Jennings, R. Jacques, I. McCulloch.

W.J.D.W.

THE RED ARROWS DISPLAY AND TALK

“THE 1978 Royal Air Force Acrobatic Team, the Red Arrows!”, burst the voice of warrant officer George Thome, over our hastily improvised public address system. As he spoke, the nine scarlet Gnats swept in over the Wilderness, and into a Big Nine loop in front of the audience. They then enthralled us all for fifteen minutes, performing such manoeuvres as Viggen, Super Concorde, Apollo, Feathered Arrow, Wineglass, Vixen, the Twizzle, Carousel Break, Leader’s Benefit, Jubilee Break, Diamond 9, and then the finale - the Parasol Break, popularly known as the “Bomb-burst”. These main formations were punctuated by the synchro pair, making head-on passes at closing speeds of 800 m.p.h. These took place along the valley, and some were actually below us, giving a better than grandstand view. A fortunate break in the weather enabled the full routine to be performed, with loops up to 4,500 feet. As they finished, though, the skies darkened and unleashed a downpour.

On the following Thursday, the team manager, Squadron Leader Mike Whitehouse, gave us an illustrated talk on the Red Arrows, and answered questions. We were amazed to learn that the aircraft fly only 12 feet apart from each other. The aircraft themselves are Hawker Siddeley (Folland) Gnat T. Mk. I’s, with a wingspan of only 24 feet, and powered by a 4520 lb. thrust Orpheus turbojet. These 17 year-old aircraft are due for replacement in the 1980 season by the new H.S. Hawk trainer.

Thanks must go to Mr. Kelsey and to the team for putting on such a marvellous display, despite the disappointment of the 18th May due to fog. It was well worth waiting for.

D.M.

OSNABRUCKER SPRACHKURS 1978

AFTER a journey by train, then boat, then again by train, a group of thirty of us from all backgrounds and parts of the British Isles arrived on one snowy Easter morning in Osnabruck. I remember that I was full of apprehension and dreaded the thought of disembarking from the train. This feeling soon vanished when I met my German guest family with whom I was going to stay and I discovered how friendly, helpful and understanding everyone was.

As we were on a language course we had to attend lessons every day from 8.40-11.15 a.m., which consisted of geography, current affairs, literature and syntax. The teaching was excellent and was of immense value in helping both our oral and writing exam. There were very few days during our three-week stay when something or other was not arranged for us in the afternoon or evening. Excursions included visits to a car plant, the Osnabruck letter-sorting office (one of the most modern in Europe), the town theatre, Hamburg, and the historical monuments in Osnabruck. Hamburg was probably the most memorable event where we visited the Norddeutsche Rundfunk, the harbour, the famous Rathaus, the planetarium, and our coach even dashed quickly through the Reeperbahn.

All the participants on the course enjoyed their stay and got on very well with their German families. The guest families invariably had sons and daughters of own age and on one occasion we even arranged a football match - England against Germany - which was enjoyed by all. When the time came to leave many did not want to return and all felt that they had benefited immensely.

J.R.S.

SPORT

1st XI CRICKET

IN many ways 1978 was a season of unfulfilled promise; even the weather failed to live up to expectations, and our 'cricket week' in early July reduced the wickets to muddy trenches more like scenes from the Somme. But the team also played well within its capabilities, failing to gain victories by narrow margins. In complete contrast with last year we could field a side that boasted eight bowlers and batted well down the list; even so this often did not prove enough to win matches.

The majority of the runs scored were shared amongst the first five batsmen and, although Middlemist or Haynes occasionally played flamboyant innings, Page was undoubtedly the most consistent of the batsmen, proving to be the mainstay of almost every innings. One of the successes of the season was to find a reasonable pair of opening batsmen in Miles and Webb who got the team off to a fine start in several matches despite their inability to hit the ball hard.

Of the many bowlers Haynes proved the most successful, but the loss of Middlemist through a shoulder injury, leaving the team without an accurate pace bowler, meant that the use of spin became necessary, and both Page and Evans bowled well at times, the former being very unlucky not to have taken a lot of wickets. Flambard, Tudor, Ind, and Curtis-Hayward were all good on their day but they lacked the consistency required of them and often bowled poorly.

The fielding went into a marked decline in the second half of the season; the number of catches dropped must have outnumbered the wickets taken. However, credit should be awarded to Middlemist and both Philip and Treve Evans for their enthusiasm and alertness in the field.

As a whole the team was a joy to captain and but that we might have won more matches I feel that the season was a suitable zenith to my own Rendcomb cricket career. Next year's side will be the most competent seen since the days of the unbeaten record with many young players coming up and those staying-on blossoming to full maturity (in a cricketing sense!).

Off the field it was a pleasure to see that things went smoothly; I should like to thank Mrs. Emily Fry for her tireless efforts in producing teas and in her absence the help of Sarah Morris, Kerry Crowhurst, Harriet Porter, Penny Jones, and Sarah Culverwell who gave up their time to organize meals at the pavilion. And so finally to the most worthy of praise: David Essenhigh. This season he has made sure everything was done on and off the field as well as performing his accepted role of groundsman, and the excellence of the pitches at Rendcomb is something no-one can dispute: if we weren't always proud of our performance we were always proud of our pitch! And on a purely personal note I did not feel that I could let so many years of cricket at Rendcomb pass by without recording my deep gratitude to him.

Match Reports

v. KING'S SCHOOL, GLOUCESTER (Home)

A disastrous start to the season. There was a complete collapse of the batting to what was no more than mediocre bowling; there was no consolation in taking two of their wickets before they scored the runs.

Rendcomb 28

King's Gloucester 31 for 2

v. CRYPT (Home)

A much better performance in a game played in warm sunshine. A useful opening stand saw off the quick bowlers but soon became bogged down. An aggressive 30 from Haynes, including a fine six, pushed the total along to 93 for 6. The visitors held out for the draw but Middlemist put them on the rack with a burst of excellent fast bowling. Rendcomb 93 for 6 declared (Haynes 30, Webb 19)
Crypt 70 for 7 (Middlemist 3-19)

v. BREDON (Away)

A very good all-round batting performance put Rendcomb in a strong position at tea, allowing us to make an early declaration. Alarming the opposition shot to 76 for 2, but then collapsed to 91 all out, thus giving us our first victory of the season.
Rendcomb 125 for 8 declared (R. Tudor 20)
Bredon 91 (Middlemist 3-15, Haynes 3-16)

v. WESTWOOD'S (Away)

A very close match but one we threw away through our own complacency. After pinning them down at 1 for 2, inaccurate bowling allowed them easy runs on a small pitch. On top of this, a series of dropped catches further helped them to 89. Even so this score should have been well within our grasp but Middlemist remained our only hope and when he was out, just 11 runs short of victory, defeat was inevitable.
Westwood's 89 (Middlemist 3-13, Haynes 3-21, Flambard 3-24)
Rendcomb 79 (Middlemist 36)

v. KINGHAM HILL (Home)

We batted far too long to ever hope for a result. After the first three wickets fell to some dubious 1.b.w. decisions Page adopted the role of anchor man, batting right through the innings. What flair there was came mainly from Middlemist and Flambard. Our spin bowlers had the visitors in trouble at 15 for 3 but the display of fielding and bowling which followed was atrocious.
Rendcomb 101-7 declared (Page 43 n.o., Middlemist 23)
Kingham Hill 86-3 (Haynes 2-17)

v. KING EDWARD'S, Bath (Away)

This must rate as one of the closest 1st XI matches ever. After a poor start we recovered to 52 for 5 but then the last five wickets fell for as many runs. We opened the bowling with two spinners who bowled until the end of the match. They reached our total of 57 with 7 wickets down, but then lost two quick wickets and a tie seemed possible. However, they scored the elusive run they needed, carrying them to a narrow victory.
Rendcomb 57 (Page 22)
King Edward's 58-9 (Haynes 7-35, Page 2-18)

v. COKETHORPE (Home)

A good, but slow, all-round batting performance allowed us to declare with the reasonable total of 98. Right from the start the opposition were in trouble and never looked like getting the runs, but capturing two wickets in the last two overs was beyond the Rendcomb bowlers and we were forced to a draw.
Rendcomb 98 for 5 declared (Page 20, Haynes 20)
Cokethorpe 76 for 8 (Haynes 5-29, Moore 2-7)

v. STAFF COMMON ROOM XI

One of the highlights of the cricketing season was washed out by the temperamental July weather. The most memorable point was perhaps the wholesome and decorative tea laid on by Sarah Morris and Danielle Shrimpton.
Rendcomb 74 for 4 (Page 38, Haynes 20)
Match abandoned

v. BRIGHTON, HOVE AND SUSSEX VIth FORM COLLEGE (Home)

Having been forewarned of the strength of this team, we fielded Mr. Essenhigh and Mr. Burden to reinforce our side. The match must rank among the best of the season if not for some years. The visitors batted and had a fine opening stand of 123, but several stoppages due to rain forced them to make a generous declaration at 157 for 3. Rendcomb attacked the target and just when it seemed that everything might collapse, Middlemist and Haynes put up a brave stand full of fine shots (and two massive sixes). Playing 20 overs in the last hour the situation soon became like limited overs. A tremendously exciting finish saw the required 9 runs from the last over being just too much for the home side. A fine match both for cricket and off-the-field companionship.
Brighton & Hove 157 for 3 declared
Rendcomb 155 for 9 (Haynes 48, Essenhigh 36 n.o., Middlemist 24)

v. MARLING (Home)

An all day match was a new experience for the side and the lunch provided really made it all worthwhile. However, this match proved to be one of the biggest defeats of the season. After we had reached 94 for 4 the second half of the betting order could only score another 35 runs. Even so one did not really expect them to score the runs with such ease; once again we were hindered by poor fielding.

Rendcomb 129 (Middlemist 41, Webb 34, Page 22)

Marling 130 for 1

v. CHELTENHAM G.S. (Home)

The visitors batted too long, and really insulted both our sense and ability by supposing that we might try to go for the runs in the short time that they allowed us, or that they could bowl us out so easily. The match crept to an inevitable draw with us losing silly wickets by playing too defensively.

Cheltenham G.S. 154 for 3 declared (Haynes 2-37)

Rendcomb 78 for 6 (Tudor 22 n.o.)

v. OLD RENDCOMBIANS (Home)

The old boys, put into bat, attacked our bowlers with real zest and only Tudor could in any way stem the flow of runs. Their target, however, was not beyond our grasp and with Page as anchor man we very nearly made it. Time proved our enemy eventually.

Old Boys 121-7 declared (Tudor 4-20)

Rendcomb 107-5 (Page 55 n.o.)

P.H.

2nd XI

AT the start of the season there was some debate about whether forming a 2nd XI was a good idea. I hope that our performances and results in the three matches we played are proof that it was a good idea, and that there should be no cause for anyone to regret the birth of a new school sports team. The team certainly enjoyed their cricket, and I would like to congratulate everyone on the high standard of bowling, batting, and fielding maintained throughout the season. Lively, entertaining, skilful, and even surprising at times - all these epithets applied at times to the team.

I think that the team through its efforts has shown that a 2nd XI can exist at Rendcomb, and I hope that in future seasons 2nd XI fixtures become a permanent part of the school's sporting calendar.

I would like to thank Mr. Essenhigh very much for all his help this season and in past seasons. On behalf of the team I would also like to thank Mr. Dennis and Mr. Price for taking time off to umpire our matches.

2nd XI Match Reports

v. BRIZE NORTON (Home)

After a rather poor start with only R. Swaine making any impression on the score, though slowly, the rate suddenly increased when A. Mackonochie went in. As he had not played cricket for two years and was still theoretically a 'non-cricketer', we were very surprised when he took the bowling to pieces with some rather strange-looking strokes which were nevertheless extremely successful. His final score of 37 gave us an adequate total to declare on. The bowling and fielding were both consistently good and we dismissed their batsmen for 63, thus winning by 32 runs. In fact, the fielding was so good that the number of run-outs equalled the number of wickets taken by the most successful bowler!

Rendcomb 95 for 6 declared (Mackonochie 37, Swaine 20 n.o., Moore 13)

Brize Norton 63 (Moore 3 for 18, Peplow 2 for 14)

v. WESTWOOD'S G.S. (Away)

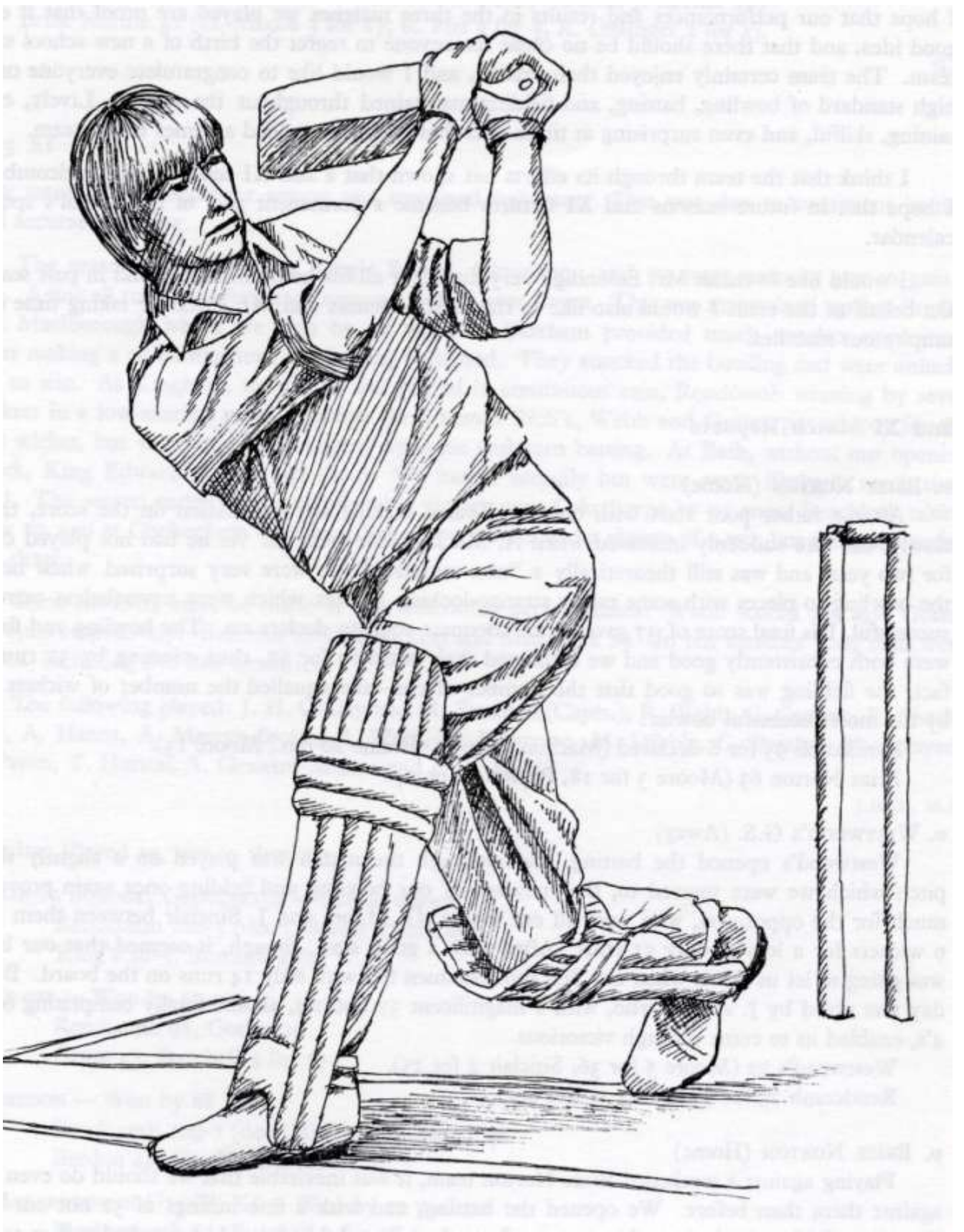
Westwood's opened the batting, and although the match was played on a slightly sloping pitch which we were unused to, the standard of our bowling and fielding once again proved too much for the opposition, who were all out for 72, G. Moore and J. Sinclair between them taking 9 wickets for a loss of only 51 runs. After such a good start, though, it seemed that our batting was going to let us down when our first four batsmen fell with only 54 runs on the board. But our day was saved by J. Archer who, with a magnificent 37 not out, almost totally comprising 6's and 4's, enabled us to come through victorious.

Westwood's 72 (Moore 5 for 36, Sinclair 4 for 15)

Rendcomb 75 for 7 (Archer 37 not out)

v. BRIZE NORTON (Home)

Playing against a weakened Brize Norton team, it was inevitable that we should do even better against them than before. We opened the batting, and with a fine innings of 52 not out by W. Henniker-Gotley, backed up by 30 runs from



Archer and Mackonochie, we declared at tea with a comfortable 117 for 7. Having lost their best batsmen, Brize Norton could not stand up to the accurate and consistent bowling of G. Moore and R. Pitt and were all out for 41, leaving us clear winners by 76 runs.

Rendcomb 117 for 7 declared (W. Henniker-Gotley 52 n.o., J. Archer 18)

Brize Norton 41 (G. Moore 3 for 17, R. Pitt 3 for 3, A. Grainger 2 for 1)

G.M.

UI5 XI

THE team had an excellent season and remained unbeaten. This was due to consistent batting and accurate bowling. The season opened against King's School, Gloucester, and we were unlucky not to gain a win. A fine all round-performance ensured victory over Crypt. This was maintained against Bredon and Marlborough where we won by 10 wickets. Bloxham provided much tougher opposition. After making a promising start our batting collapsed. They attacked the bowling and were unlucky not to win. At Kingham, the match was played in continuous rain, Rendcomb winning by seven wickets in a low-scoring game. Against Sir Thomas Rich's, Webb and Gotley put on 105 for the first wicket, but we were denied victory by some stubborn batting. At Bath, without our opening attack, King Edward's made 182 for 6. We batted soundly but were never likely to reach their total. The season ended with a comfortable victory over Cokethorpe by 95 runs, Shacklock taking 8 for 10, and at Cheltenham Grammar School both sides had a chance of a win but the game ended in a draw.

Some mention must be made of fine individual performances. Webb scored 280 and Gotley 262 runs respectively.

Burchell took 31 wickets and Shacklock 29. In ten matches 1069 runs were scored, including five half centuries.

The following played: J. H. Gotley and M. Burchell (capt.), R. Webb, C. Cannon, R. Shacklock, A. Harris, A. Martyn-Smith, R. Woof, N. Blencowe, M. Dibble, C. Brealy.

Also played: T. Paton, T. Horton, A. Graham-Munro and I. Stewart.

J.H.G., M.B.

Results:

v. KING'S SCHOOL, GLOUCESTER - Match drawn

Rendcomb 100-5 (dec.), Brealy 37 not out

King's 26-5, Burchell 4 for 5

v. CRYPT - Won by 57 runs

Rendcomb 98, Gotley 26

Crypt 45, Burchell 5 for 17

v. BREDON - Won by 88 runs

Rendcomb 129-7 (dec.), Gotley 54, Brealy 48

Bredon 41, Shacklock 4 for 11

v. MARLBOROUGH UI5 'B' XI - Won by 10 wickets.

Marlborough 64, Burchell 4 for 18

Rendcomb 65 for 0, Webb 32 n.o., Gotley 25 n.o.

v. BLOXHAM - Match drawn

Rendcomb 100-9 (dec.), Webb 31

Bloxham 94-7. Burchell 3 for 27

v. KINGHAM - Won by 7 wickets

Kingham 50, Burchell 5 for 15

Rendcomb 51 for 3.

v. SIR THOMAS Rich's - Match drawn

Rendcomb 120-2 (dec.), Gotley 70 n.o., Webb 33

Sir Thomas Rich's 62-6, Shacklock 3 for 14

v. KING EDWARD'S - Match drawn

King Edward's 182-7 (dec.)

Rendcomb 126-3, Woof 51 n.o., Webb 28 n.o.

v. COKETHORPE - Rendcomb won by 96 runs
Rendcomb 136-4 (dec.), Webb 57 n.o., Burchell 31
Cokethorpe 40, Shacklock 8 for 10

v. CHELTENHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL - Match drawn
Rendcomb 144-6 (dec.), Webb 50
Cheltenham 120-8, Shacklock 4 for 54

Played 10, won 5, drawn 5.

Under 14 XI

D. Rollo captained, with great enthusiasm, a talented eleven which did very well after a disappointing start to the season.

Rendcomb was easily knocked out in the first round of the Lord's Taverners Trophy by Cirencester, confirming that Rendcomb's batting was not suited to 25-over matches, so it was pleasing when Rendcomb did well against one of the area finalists, Cheltenham Grammar School.

Generally, Rendcomb bowled well and the keen fielding compensated for the lack of a good spin bowler. D. Rollo, S. Knapp, R. Dunwoody, and N. Townend nearly always contributed significantly to the batting total, with an occasional good innings by S. Hawkswell and D. Hammond.

Perhaps the most memorable match was the win at Marlborough with Rendcomb's last man batting and only two minutes remaining.

The team should do well as an under 15 XI next season if they can combine their abilities with a little more determination.

Results:

v. CIRENCESTER SCHOOL (Away) - Lost (25 overs)
Cirencester 59 (20.4 overs)
Rendcomb 42 (24.4 overs)

v. KING'S SCHOOL, GLOUCESTER (Away) - Drawn
Rendcomb 73 (Rollo 24).
King's 46 for 7 (Knapp 4 for 10)

v. MARLBOROUGH COLLEGE 2nd YEARLINGS (Away) - Won
Marlborough 73 (Rollo 3 for 12; Barrow 3 for 20)
Rendcomb 74 for 9 (Rollo 22; Townend 20)

v. BLOXHAM SCHOOL (Home) - Won.
Bloxham 81 for 9 dec. (Knapp 3 for 16; Rollo 4 for 21)
Rendcomb 83 for 3 (Rollo 46).

v. KINGHAM HILL SCHOOL (Home) - Won
Rendcomb 111 for 4 dec. (Dunwoody 27; Rollo 54)
Kingham Hill 57 (Rollo 3 for 18; Barrow 3 for 26)

v. KING EDWARD'S SCHOOL, BATH (Home) - Drawn
King Edward's 119 (Knapp 3 for 20; Rollo 4 for 35)
Rendcomb 83 for 6 (Townend 23; Knapp 15)

v. CHELTENHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL (Away) - Drawn
Cheltenham 84 (Rollo 3 for 7; Knapp 2 for 23)
Rendcomb 69 for 6 (Hawkswell 35).

The following played: D. Rollo (captain), R. Dunwoody, S. Knapp, N. Townend, S. Hawkswell, D. Hammond (wicket keeper), C. Schreiber, T. Steed, D. Lee, T. Barrow, J. Martyn-Smith, R. Evans, S. Oliver, G. Breal. I would like to thank T. Pratt for scoring.

C.J.W.

Under 13 Cricket

DURING the last three years fixtures and fortunes have greatly improved at this level: in this period, of the fourteen matches played, nine were won and five drawn. This year's team was almost certainly slightly stronger than its illustrious predecessors and not only won five of the seven games but achieved moral victories in the other matches, in both cases leaving the opposition hanging on by the proverbial fingernail while the runs dried up and the wickets tumbled. The 1979 side will have much to live up to!

It was a pleasure to work with such a keen, competent, and unified group, efficiently organised by the captain, Giles Brealy. The fielding was generally sharp and alert, Brealy, Archer, Powell, Woof, and Knapp being particularly impressive; some fine catches were held. Hazell and Deacon were very close rivals for the wicket-keeping job, Deacon ultimately gaining the vote, but both fortunately could field well close to the bat and it will help to have two such wicket-keepers working their way up the school's cricketing hierarchy. About two-thirds of the team could bowl respectably: Oliver was a promising opening bowler with a good, free action, though he needs more 'bite' and lost some of his rhythm and accuracy in the last part of the season; B. Knapp, Brealy, and Dewar, in their different styles, all showed great promise, if a tendency to excessive run-ups; Powell and Archer also bowled well at times, though neither was accurate enough as yet; Webb was an interesting leg-spinner, who with practice will surely perplex a few batsmen (and himself).

The batting was sound and our tail decidedly small - numbers 10 and 11 might justifiably claim it to be non-existent! Brealy was an especially good prospect, his rapid innings of 66 at Sir Thomas Rich's perhaps being the batting highlight of the season. He likes to attack in front of the wicket and hits the ball ferociously when in form; however, he tends to hit impetuously sometimes too early in his innings before he is really seeing the ball and will need to stiffen his defensive techniques if he is to accumulate the runs his class merits. B. Knapp also looked a useful player, though he plays a little across the line in defence and neglects too many offside scoring chances; he is strong on the leg side. Webb opened the innings well and has a feel for the game, but his running and calling, as with a number of the team, leave much to be desired. Powell and Archer were hard hitters who, if they came off, could soon transform a situation, while Hazell was a more stolid and correct player who showed his capabilities best in the final match. R. Smith, Woof, and Deacon also batted well at times, while Oliver could become a competent middle-order contributor if he would believe more seriously in his abilities.

All in all a most enjoyable and successful season: the weather may often have been dismal but the cricket played by this team was emphatically not.

Results:

31st May: Under 13½ 1st XI v. OAKLEY HALL 1st XI (A)
Rendcomb 129-9 (dec.) (Hazell 34, Brealy 32)
Oakley Hall 60 (Rollo 4-19, Dewar 3-8)
Won by 69 runs

31st May: Under 13½ 2nd XI v. OAKLEY HALL 2nd XI (A)
Oakley Hall 88
Rendcomb 89-2 (Webb 43 n.o., Powell 20 n.o.)
Won by 8 wickets.

3rd June v. KING'S SCHOOL GLOUCESTER (H)
King's Gloucester 47 (Oliver 5-9)
Rendcomb 48-5 (Archer 20 n.o.)
Won by 5 wickets.

10th June v. SIR THOMAS RICH'S (A)
Rendcomb 138-9 (dec.) (Brealy 66, Webb 22)
Sir Thomas Rich's 48
Won by 90 runs

17th June v. KING EDWARD'S SCHOOL BATH (H)
Rendcomb 126-8 (dec.) (Hazell 28, Powell 22)
King Edward's Bath 17-8 (Brealy 3-1)
Match drawn

5th July v. KINGSHILL SCHOOL (H)
Kingshill 43 (Brealy 3-4, Oliver 3-11)
Rendcomb 44-2 (Archer 25 n.o.)
Won by 8 wickets.

7th July v. CHELTENHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL (H)
Rendcomb 105 (Knapp 25, Powell 22)
Cheltenham G.S. 18-5 (Knapp 3-5)
Match drawn

Team: R. Smith, D. Webb, B. Knapp, G. Brealy (capt.), M. Archer, S. Powell, D. Woof, S. Hazell, S. Oliver,
R. Deacon, C. Dewar. Also played: R. Akers, E. Wilcox.

J.N.H.

TENNIS

1st IV and Colts IV

1st IV v. CHELTENHAM COLLEGE (A)
1-3 (W. Gotley*, B. Knapp, J. Gotley, N. Blencowe)

1st IV v. SIR THOMAS RICH'S SCHOOL (H)
3-1 (J. Sinclair*, B. Knapp, B. Hatchwell, D. Ind)

COLTS IV v. CHELTENHAM COLLEGE (A)
1-3 (N. Marlow*, B. Hatchwell, P. Uglow, R. Smith).

COLTS IV v. SIR THOMAS RICH'S SCHOOL (A)
3-1 (B. Knapp, S. Knapp, J. Gotley, N. Blencowe*)
*Captain.

THIS season brought out three or four new capable players into the team and there was a gradual improvement in the play throughout the term. On the whole the team tennis was of a high standard and only well-drilled Cheltenham teams managed to stop us from having a clean sweep.

There are good prospects in the lower half of the school to carry on the work that J. Sinclair, especially, and W. Gotley have provided throughout their time at Rendcomb. It is hoped that more fixtures may be arranged next season, possibly with sixes as well as fours, but obviously this will depend on the facilities.

N.M.B.

GIRLS' TENNIS

THIS summer term the girls' tennis team took part in many matches despite the weather and the majority of the results were very successful with few defeats. Many of the girls participated in both the 1st and 2nd teams and I would like to thank them for their effort and enthusiasm. I would also like to thank Mrs. Holdaway for all her help in arranging matches and her continual support.

I hope the teams are as successful and keen next year and wish everyone the best of luck in the future.

E.A.

The following girls played in the 1st team: Liz Adams (capt.), Kim Knight, Carol Franklin, Victoria Powell, Kitty Roberts, Helen Packwood, Julie Alesworth, Sarah Morris.

1st Team Results:

v. Cirencester	...	won	8-1	v. Dean Close	...	lost	3-6
v. Marlborough	...	lost	2-7	v. Wycliffe	...	won	8-1
v. St. Clotilde's	...	won	7-2	v. Dean Close	...	won	5-4
v. Westwood's	...	won	6-3	v. Westwood's	...	lost	5-4
v. Hatherop Castle	...	won	9-0	v. St. Clotilde's	...	won	5-4

The following girls played in the 2nd team: Ondine Glanville, Sarah Culverwell, Isabel Weeks, Bridget Cross, Kerry J. Crowhurst, Alison White.

2nd Team Results:

v. Marlborough ... lost 9-0
v. St. Clotilde's ... lost 6-3

The 1st girls VI have played exceptionally well against tough opposition. As the team consisted mainly of VIb, this promises well for next season. I am particularly grateful to Kim Knight, the games secretary, and to Elizabeth Adams, the tennis captain, for their efficiency and enthusiasm.

C.A.H.

SWIMMING

THE swimming pool was opened at half-term, work on the filters, heating system and surrounds having been completed. Extensive use of the pool was limited to a few warm, sunny days; despite the installation of the solar panel heating system for the water few were prepared to brave the cold winds and low air temperatures.

G.J.S.

JUDO 1977-78

This has been a very eventful and successful year for the judo group, with seven members being promoted into the senior gradings. Enthusiasm has been high, a point indicated by the good turn out on Tuesday evenings. I am also sure that we would all like to thank Alan Davis for his eternal drive and interest, Paul Godsell and Gordon Tartaglia for their useful advice and coaching, and finally Mr. Thorne for his coaching of the junior group and overall supervision. Last November eight boys competed in the junior judo championships at Dowty Rotol in Cheltenham. It was a long, hard day in which teams from Hereford, Fairford, Cheltenham, Gloucester and Winchcombe fought; it also seemed to be the preparatory ground for the Crystal Palace Championships. Among other notable people present was the current west of England champion.

The following positions were obtained:

Burkham T.	...	Silver medal
Wilcox A.	...	Semi-finals
Twinning M.	...	2nd round

Grainger, Hawkswell, Uglow, Dick, and Chivers also competed.

There were two senior gradings this year, the first in November and the second at the end of May.

The following results were obtained:

November. Venue: Cheltenham Y.M.C.A.

McGill J.	...	3rd kyu
Archer J.	...	8th kyu
Sayers D.	...	8th kyu

May. Venue: Dowty Rotol.

Sayers D.	...	7th kyu
Archer J.	...	7th kyu
Cannon M.	...	8th kyu
Middlemist M.	...	7th kyu
Grainger A.	...	7th kyu
Twinning M.	...	7th kyu
Tudor R.	...	8th kyu

A happy party of orange belts!

At the end of March a group went to the national inter-area team championships at Bath. It was an enjoyable day and we witnessed a very high grade of judo. In the semi-finals London beat the Combined Services, and the Southern Area beat Humberside and North Yorkshire. This led to an eventful final in which London won the first three contests, meaning that the South had to win the remaining four to retain the title, which they did. The Southern team was strong with four internationals and the current national open champion.

Finally, there was a junior grading at Rendcomb at the beginning of July. It was well attended and organised with teams from Winchcombe, Dowty and Cheltenham Y.M.C.A. The following promotions were recorded:

Uglov P. ...	10th Mon.	Everatt J. ...	8th Mon.
Waddell C. ...	13th Mon.	Freeman B. ...	9th Mon.
Martyn-Smith	9th Mon.	Haze11 S. ...	9th Mon.
White D. ...	8th Mon.	Wilcox E. ...	9th Mon.
Daniels T. ...	9th Mon.	Hawkswell S. ...	10th Mon.
Needham R. ...	6th Mon.	Mills A. ...	6th Mon.
Pratt T. ...	8th Mon.	Redman S. ...	6th Mon.

J.M.

OLD RENDCOMBIAN NOTES

A large number of old Rendcombians came to the school on July 8th when the annual cricket match was played. After the annual general meeting of the society in the evening, 64 O.R. 's and their guests attended the excellent buffet supper, once again provided by Mrs. Mezo and her staff.

The main news of the society was circulated in the newsletter sent out in May.

Society Officers, 1978-79

<i>President:</i>	...	J. B. Fell
<i>Chairman:</i>	...	J. Gilchrist
<i>Secretary:</i>	...	F. R. Glennie
<i>Treasurer:</i>	...	G. F. Smith
<i>Vice-Chairman:</i>	...	M. Whittering
<i>Rugger Secretary:</i>	...	M. P. R. Rose
<i>Hockey Secretary:</i>	...	J. D. Whiteside
<i>Cricket Secretary:</i>	...	D. Pearce

W.J.D.W.

contributions

RAILWAY STATION

Patrick Lorenzen (Form V)

TICKET machines jam and cause endless queues and frustrated ticket officers. The members of the queue begin to jostle and jockey for positions as the time for their train to depart rapidly approaches. Women with new coats and leather bags struggle to their carriages. Businessmen with apparently no luggage march to their trains. Last minute farewells are said as the carriages trundle away pulled by an engine far in the distance.

Vacuum brakes hiss, buffers clank together and heavy bogies judder over the joints in the rails. On the stone, forming the track, there is a large oil stain where the jolt has knocked a drip of oil off from under the carriage. The smell of diesel wafts across the far end of the platform, where the diesel-electric engine sits purring and throbbing with power. The driver sits almost motionless at the single control lever.

Meanwhile, porters click across the platform carrying large, grey, E.R. sacks on their trolleys.

Before the train leaves, the station intercom can be heard distorting the time of departure, the 'revised' time of departure and then the reason why there is a delay. The station clock ticks on: there is still no departure and the atmosphere becomes gradually more tense as the meeting will start soon, the plane takes off in forty-five minutes or the wife will be going mad as the dinner is already cooked.

As the train is about to leave, carriage doors open like marching soldiers and as the train pulls out these gradually shut and one sees little scenes of newspapers, tea pots and last minute work in individual compartments pulled by. When it is out of sight the station seems to lose its life but it builds up to a climax when the next train is seen to be coming. It takes a long time to arrive and when it does it seems to want to go straight through.

The latecomer dashes onto the platform only to find that he is on the wrong side of the track for the leaving train; in a desperate bid to reach it he runs across the footbridge, but he is too late; the emptiness has already arrived.

THE GARDENER

Jon Porch

THE drawing-room of 112, Elsmere Road was rather dark despite the large French windows which opened onto a small balcony over the garden. These windows unfortunately faced north and so would not receive the sun until late afternoon, being for the greater part of the day in the shadow of the four-storey Regency house. The walls of the room were painted in a dark saxe blue and so did not help to make the room brighter. To the left of the window stood a black upright piano with the manufacturer's name, 'Steiner', painted in the usual gold lettering. The lid was closed. Above the piano hung a large Victorian print in a plain black lacquered frame. Several horned sheep were grazing on a few tufts of coarse grass that were not covered by the blanket of snow. They were on the right-hand side of a cart track which ran through the snow alongside a rough fence constructed from old tree branches. The snow was largely blue-grey in colour owing to the spidery shadows cast by the bare trees behind the sheep. The weak yellow winter sun was setting.

Mrs. Aquinas sat in a large, red, leather, wing-backed chair that dwarfed her small body. She was tidying her tapestry silks and placed the neatly wound cards in her sewing-basket, along with the wooden tapestry rings. As she was doing this, the doorbell chimed. Mrs. Aquinas rose slowly from her chair and moved towards the sitting-room door. However, before she reached it, a maid opened it and introduced her son, Andrew, who entered, dressed, as usual, in an Aran fisherman's jumper - though it had been no nearer a fisherman than Andrew himself - and light-blue brushed denim jeans.

"Hello, mother".

"Hello, Andrew".

A silence followed while each waited for the other to break it before Mrs. Aquinas said: "It's your turn to speak now".

"I don't really have anything to say. I only came round to say 'Hello'."

"And are you going now that you've said it?" laughed Mrs. Aquinas. "Come and sit down. Julia, some tea, please."

The maid left the room to make some tea, closing the door as she reversed out.

Andrew went and sat down in the red leather chair while his mother sat on the piano stool and looked out into the garden.

"I see you've been sewing another tapestry."

Mrs. Aquinas looked away from the garden. "Yes. It's the family crest. Do you like it?" "I'm not sure that I approve of the 'dormouse rampant'."

"That, as you know, is a lion", said Mrs. Aquinas indignantly.

"I was only joking", replied Andrew, trying to calm his mother down although she was not really indignant anyway.

At that moment, Julia, the maid, entered with the tea-service on a silver tray which she set down on a red leather-

topped coffee-table. Andrew stood up and walked towards the French windows while his mother got up to pour the tea.

"That will be all, thank you, Julia", said Mrs. Aquinas, dismissing the maid who was standing awkwardly next to the table.

"Where on earth did you get a six-foot garden gnome?" exclaimed Andrew, looking out through the French windows and blocking out much of the light that did get into the room. "What on earth do you mean?"

"With a beard as well!"

"Andrew! What are you talking about?"

"Were the wellingtons extra?"

"Oh! You mean Thomas. He's the new gardener."

"New! He makes the house look modern."

"He's very good really."

"Undoubtedly, but at what?"

"Just look at the roses : the blooms are magnificent."

"Let me guess, he's really an old Indian guru who possesses the amazing psychic ability to encourage roses to bloom simply by going into a deep meditation, which appears, to the uncultured observer, as if he's fallen asleep on the bench. Or does he scare greenfly away simply by sitting there?"

"He does his job quite well enough for me. How much sugar?" Mrs. Aquinas was slightly hurt by the insults to Thomas and the question was asked with a clinical coldness.

"About one, please", said Andrew, turning away from the dormant gardener and his sunlit garden: he did not notice his mother's change of tone. The room seemed even darker now and it took a while for his eyes to readjust in the dark room. His mother had seized possession of the red-leather chair again but had also pulled up a similar wing-backed chair, though this one was covered with a heavy brocade on which was a pattern of an eighteenth century couple on a bench in a garden. Andrew sat down in this chair and took the cup of tea offered to him by his mother. He held the saucer, with the cup balanced on it, in his left hand while using a teaspoon with his right hand to spoon the tea out of the cup and to pour it back into the cup. After he had repeated this enough times to satisfy himself that the tea was sufficiently cool to drink, he took a sip. He burnt his tongue and hastily replaced the cup on the saucer with a clatter that broke the prevailing silence and startled his mother and caused her to breathe rapidly, though she said nothing. Within a minute Andrew had, for want of something to do, started again to drink his tea. Rather than drink it, he took repeated sips, in between which he looked around the room, occasionally meeting eyes with his mother, upon which they both looked away: it's rude to stare. Soon Andrew had finished his tea and returned his cup and saucer to the tray. Mrs. Aquinas inquired as to whether or not he would like another cup, he did not and so she hurried, as best she could, to finish hers before standing up.

"I would like to go for a walk in the garden. Will you accompany me, Andrew?" The question was more of a demand.

"Of course", replied Andrew, moving towards and then opening the French windows onto the balcony over the garden: a few steps led off the balcony to the garden which was only four feet below. These steps continued down for another four feet to the basement, though they were rarely used; the majority of visitors to the basement descended through the stairs in the house.

There was a large green lawn stretching unblemished for about one hundred and fifty yards before it reached a red-brick wall with an arched doorway in it. On the left grew a trailing rose bush with pink blooms; on the right slept Thomas. To the left of the lawn immediately as Mrs. Aquinas and her son came down from the balcony stood a greenhouse. It was made out of wood, which was covered in blistering white paint, and, like most greenhouses, several glass panes. However, the lower two feet of the walls was made of the same red-brick that surrounded the garden, as it was a town house. The greenhouse was particularly green today owing to the flourishing tomato plants which grew like trifids all up their poles next to the glass. The tomatoes here were earlier and more profuse than in most greenhouses owing, firstly, to the central heating in the greenhouse and, secondly, to Thomas' affinity for the fleshy red fruit.

"The tomatoes are doing well this year!" exclaimed Mrs. Aquinas in the direction of Thomas, who awoke and leapt from the bench clutching his beige hat - formless in every way except that it had a brim - to his head as he did so.

"Yes, ma'am", he said, rolling the double 'a' into an 'r'.

"How did a yokel like Thomas manage to get here?" inquired Andrew.

"By bicycle", replied Mrs. Aquinas, indicating an old and exceedingly solid pushbike leaning against the side gate to the garden. She continued on her way slowly down the garden while Andrew strolled restlessly by her side, aggravated by the slow speed.

As they passed Thomas on their way to the smaller garden through the arch, he yawned. Andrew found he could not resist the temptation, having seen Thomas, to do so himself, though he turned away from his mother as he did so and pretended to study a pear tree which grew to the right of the bench where Thomas had been sleeping. The warm mid-morning sun had given the tree a golden tone as it shone down from the technicolour blue sky. Thomas stood blankly by the bench, still clutching his hat though he had lowered it and now stood tentatively like a footballer in a 'wall' in front of a free kick.

"Thomas, would you mow the front lawn, please?" Mrs. Aquinas left Thomas in no doubt: he would mow the front lawn. He trundled off in his gumboots towards the garages on the left of the house, where the lawnmower was kept. Meanwhile, Mrs. Aquinas led Andrew through to the lower garden, as it was called. The red-brick walls of this se-

cluded garden were lined with wall roses of various colours and shades. In the centre grew a young willow tree while an old bench had been placed, a long time ago, against the side wall on the right. This bench was made out of elm and had weathered to an almost black shade of brown though this was mostly hidden by a fine green lichen which grew on it. Mrs. Aquinas sat down here and invited Andrew to do the same: he sensed an urgency in her voice and so complied with her wishes. No sooner had he sat down than she turned to him: "Andrew, do you think I'll be an angel?"

"But, mother, how . . ."

"No but's, Andrew. Please answer my question. Will I be an angel?"

"I honestly can't say". Andrew felt awkward.

"Well, what is your opinion?"

"I doubt if you'll be one, mother", said Andrew, lowering his head as the words raced out of his mouth.

"Why the devil not?"

"You're not really good enough, mother, and the competition is strong."

"I was good when I was young. Everyone said so."

"That won't help you now."

"I'll help. Financially, I mean."

"You can't buy your way into this one."

"But can't you do something, Andrew? I was so looking forward to being an angel and there's not a lot to look forward to at my age."

"I know, mother. But the best men, or women, must have preference. They don't need many angels."

"But he's your friend, Andrew. Have a few words with him. Persuade him that I'm good enough."

Andrew stood up, exasperated, and paced towards the willow tree. When he reached it, he stared up, with his head thrown back, through the branches into the deep blue sky. Mrs. Aquinas watched him anxiously from the edge of the bench. Suddenly he spun round.

"All right, mother. The audition's at ten o'clock on Wednesday at the theatre. If you're good you'll get the part."

Mrs. Aquinas sprang from the bench just as the lawnmower, which had been choking for a while, spluttered into life and Thomas plodded behind it towards the front lawn.

MEMORIES

Jonathan Pedley (Form III)

KNOWLEDGE and memory are very different. Memories are faded pictures of the past - slotted into sockets in one's brain, and soon covered over with the dust of forgetfulness. When removing them one must be very careful: the brittle yellow pages of remembrance crumble easily.

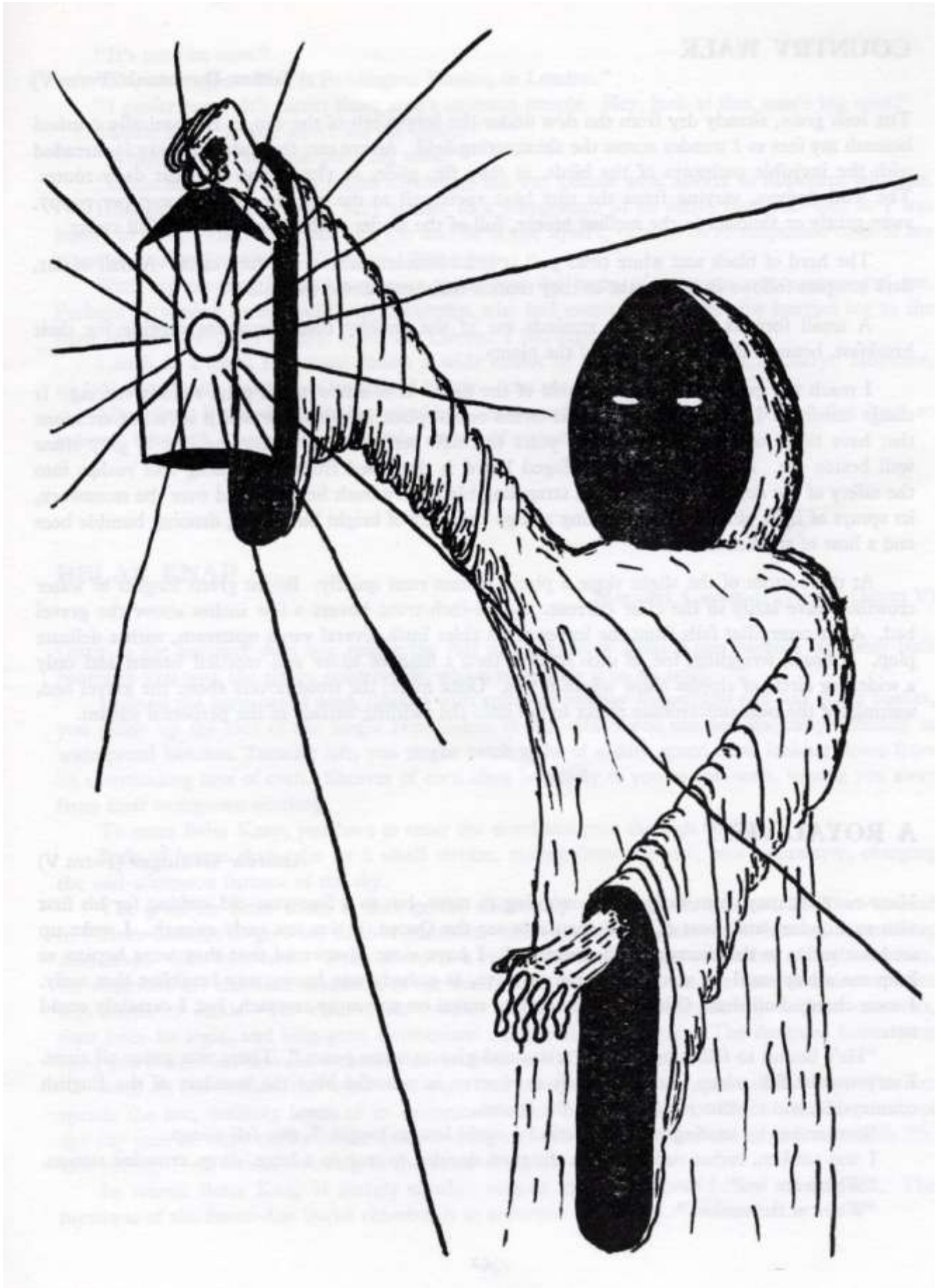
Knowledge is carved out of unbreakable material, and lies on the top, ready at any time to be wrenched out and surveyed.

To look at one's memory is exciting, but the layer of forgetfulness soon deepens, and much concentration is needed to lift it and reveal the snippets of information below.

I can only uncover small pieces of memory and vague pictures which have creased beyond recognition at the edges and are yellow and old: and yet these are the ones that give pleasure. By recounting these thoughts it is possible to learn things I previously thought it was impossible to know from earlier in my life: pear trees and blue skies; boredom and rides in a car; squeezing milkwort sap out of the stem; horrible tight black shoes and trivial arguments meaning so much; salty tears dribbling down my face.

These are memories. Some of these memories are strangely far away, almost unreal, and some stare you in the face and yet you cannot grasp them. Many of them are sad, and few are happy, but all of them can be exciting adventures. I enjoy going into an old room, disused for a long time, and taking out a book, crinkled and dusty. I open it at any page, and, however boring the book may be, it is exciting not knowing what may turn up.

Delving into the maze of passageways of the brain is dangerous, though, because the maze is large and unless one is properly equipped with caution, it is possible to get lost and confused, and lose snippets that you had found. Not going into the passageways may soon make them impassable, however, so work is necessary constantly to keep the pathways of memory clear. If this is achieved, it can give great pleasure discovering lost fragments of the past that you thought were gone forever.



COUNTRY WALK

James Duncumb (Form V)

THE lush grass, already dry from the dew under the bright orb of the sun, is rhythmically crushed beneath my feet as I wander across the shimmering field. Above me, the featureless sky is threaded with the invisible pathways of the birds, as they flit, glide, or slowly flap on their daily routes. The wild flowers, varying from the tiny blue speedwell to the upright, red, crepe-paper poppy, sway gently or shudder in the mellow breeze, full of the scents of the countryside in full swing.

The herd of black and white cows pull at grass beneath them with worn teeth. A trail of flat, dark cowpats follows in their wake as they munch their way across the field.

A small fortress of molehills reminds me of the chubby black creatures digging for their breakfast, beneath the fibrous roots of the plants.

I reach the gate on the opposite side of the field. It is a new metal gate, already rusting. It clangs noisily as I shut it behind me. It seems out of place in this scene which is full of creations that have taken so many thousands of years to reach perfection. I follow the line of grey stone wall beside me. A beautifully camouflaged lizard is disturbed from its sunning and rushes into the safety of the depths of the wall. A straggling blackberry bush lies sprawled over the stonework, its sprays of light pink flowers attracting a huge company of bright butterflies, droning bumble bees and a host of smaller insects.

At the bottom of the slight slope a placid stream runs quietly. Bright green lengths of water crowfoot wave lazily in the clear current. A five-inch trout hovers a few inches above the gravel bed. A fat caterpillar falls from the leaves of an alder bush several yards upstream, with a delicate plop. It floats, wriggling, for an inch or two, then a flash of silver and mottled brown and only a widening circle of ripples show where it was. Once more, the trout hovers above the gravel bed, waiting for the next unfortunate insect to fall onto the swirling surface of the perpetual stream.

A ROYAL VISIT

Andrew Grainger (Form V)

HALF-PAST-SIX may seem early in the morning to most, but to a four-year-old waiting for his first visit to London, and, best of all, a chance to see the Queen, it was not early enough. I woke up an hour early, to the dismay of all concerned. I have since discovered that they were hoping to keep me asleep until we were just about to leave, as nobody was having any breakfast that early. I soon changed all that. Others may be able to travel on an empty stomach, but I certainly could not.

"He's bound to fall asleep on the train, and give us some peace." There was peace all right. Everyone else fell asleep, and I was left to observe in peaceful bliss the wonders of the English countryside, and to contemplate seeing the Queen.

Surrounded by snoring statues, I found I could last no longer. I, too, fell asleep.

I was awoken, rather rudely, when the train decided to stop in a large, dirty, crowded station. "Where are we?" I bawled.

"We're at the station."

"It's not like ours."

"No, it's bigger. This is Paddington Station, in London."

"I prefer ours. It's nicer: there aren't so many people. Hey, look at that man's big nose!" "Come along, or you won't see the Queen."

"Where is she? Has she got a big nose?"

"Come along!" I always found it strange, the way people were always so impatient with me.

Horseguards Parade seems very similar to a playground to an active four-year-old, so I was hardly to blame when I ran out into the middle of the square, only to be accompanied back to my place by two men in blue uniforms and funny hats.

With my parents, I could not see a thing past the backs of everyone who surrounded me. Perhaps persuaded by my yells, the policemen who had escorted me back now hurried me to the front of the crowd, just in time to see the Queen. I had seen the Queen!

Lunch in a small restaurant means a wide choice of meals, from bacon to curry. However, all I decided to eat was brown bread and butter - four plates of it.

After that, I cannot remember anything. Apparently, I fell asleep, but I find that hard to believe. After all, I had only been awake since half-past-six.

BELAS KNAP

Michael Curtis-Hayward (Form V)

ONLY in the summer does one realise the full significance of Belas Knap because its silent bulk contrasts well with the sleepy countryside, which surrounds it on all sides.

Leaving the hard-baked road, flanked with spires of rosebay willowherb and soft green bushes, you climb up the side of the larger Humblebee Wood, which you can see gradually thinning to widespread beeches. Turning left, you might catch sight of a dark green mass looking down from its surrounding nest of corn. Sheaves of corn cling languidly to you as you walk, waving you away from their overgrown nestling.

To enter Belas Knap, you have to enter the wood and pass through a stile.

Beds of lemon thyme lie by a small stream, resting from the sun, now oppressive, charging the mid-afternoon furnace of the sky.

The grass on Belas Knap is dark green, obstinately clashing with the pastel colours around it. Nature declines to give her final brushstroke, which transforms plainness to beauty, to anything man-made. But who cares? Belas Knap is a refuge from the sickly sweetness of high summer. Its ventricles are the dark chambers of the dead; time, already slow in the haze outside, vanishes into obscurity inside. The clammy air swathes corpses of stones, seconds slip back to centuries, time loses its logic, and long-gone civilisations whisper their existence. The darkness burns your eyes, you retreat out into the summer; let the dead look after themselves.

Back on the surface, the wind is stronger and cleaner, drying the sweat of the day. The sun spends the last, draining hours of its existence masked behind a cloud. The neglected sounds of the day gain an extra clarity in the quiet evening air. The black bulk of the mound stirs with life. Life springs forth from death only in the black of night.

In winter Belas Knap is merely another mound in the dark, oppressed countryside. The mystique of the stone age burial chamber is as attractive as the day.

SEASIDE RESORT

Ben Hatchwell (Form V)

GREY clouds merge with a leaden grey sea, colourless waves beat inexorably on the quartz-ribbed stone. A few seagulls gracefully master the full fury of the water-bearing winds, hurling their shrill cries at no-one, only the empty bathing huts and stalls. The amusement arcade is full of damp steaming bodies; unable to sit on the beaches they throw themselves into contortions in the 'Hall of Mirrors' and shout ecstatically as their luck turns and a copper torrent issues from the machine. And small, wet ten-year-olds gaze alternately at the sticky candy-floss and lightly-clad girls sitting at tables in the bar.

The guest houses stretching inland look bleaker and more uncomfortable than ever, the stunted palm trees in the garden standing dejectedly, suffering the unnatural barrage of cold wind and rain; pink petunias are laid flat among the groundsel and couch grass. Inside, guests sit reading two-year-old 'National Geographics' or watching the Sunday film, asleep.

As the rain lightens momentarily people appear at the windows hopefully looking up at the rapidly moving sky, praying that the weather will clear and the children stop moaning and hitting each other with their new, unused buckets and spades.

Outside in the streets and along the broad sea front nothing moves except the inevitable seagulls, wheeling, gliding, calling, ignorant of their beauty.

As clouds gradually heave themselves beyond the horizon people come out to catch the full benefit of the cold sun; sitting in chairs on the wet sand they watch their children get plastered in brown grains.

Waves roll in continuously with white crests lit by the sun, causing havoc among the small castles built by uncaring children. A subdued murmur settles over the loose crowd of people gathered under the coloured lights and hanging baskets along the broad pavement.

Seagulls appear in hordes, their plumage illuminated to a bright white by the weak sun, their graceful antics showing their perfection of flight.

ESCAPE

Stephen Hawkins

WAS there a wall on this side of the hospital too, Devlin wondered, letting go of Miss Bennett's hand. A vague idea began to form in his mind. He was surprised at first about the lucidity of his thought; there were no church bells being rung by the invisible ringers that the doctors seemed unable to remove from his head; there was not even the monotonous buzzing of the bee that, although irritating before the other noises had come, Devlin now looked on as an ally in his struggle against them. If the bee was there, the other noises were not. When the bells or the pneumatic drill decided

to come back, the bee would put up a struggle on his behalf, or so it seemed, but it always lost. After all, what could a bee do against a peal of bells or a pneumatic drill?

But no, not one of them was there. They had all gone. Devlin's heart gave a jump. Did this mean that he was cured? Had all the drugs and the therapy sessions and the interviews with distinguished specialists finally rid him of his tormentors? The nurses had said nothing about it that morning if he was, but that was not surprising. They never spoke to him; he could hear them further down the corridor laughing and gossiping with the other patients, but when they reached his room, they would just put their heads round the door, beadily checking for knives or drugs before turning out his light with a cursory "Night, Devlin".

The idea which had taken up only a small corner of his mind to start with, now began to swell exhilaratingly and alarmingly. Part of Devlin called to him "Danger, they'll catch you, bring you back, punish you, put you in the room with the electric chair", but another, more insistent part of him called "Freedom, far away from here, you'll be able to see your mother again and live with her as she always promised you could". Devlin had no hesitation in making up his mind. The old black-and-white photograph he kept on the cupboard at the side of his bed of a smiling, pretty, blonde woman, her still clearly remembered visits when he had been much younger, and the presents she had sent, that he still cherished, all helped to convince him. But, most of all, there were the cold voices of the nurses telling him his mother would never be coming to visit him again; he would never see her again.

Beverley, who was Miss Bennett's other charge this afternoon, suddenly pointed at and rushed towards a violet she had spotted. Miss Bennett ran after her, worried the child might stumble into the brook which ran a few feet away. Beverley gurgled with pleasure as she reached the flower, and then, with savage concentration, wrenched the flower from the bed and proceeded to crumple it in her tiny, sticky hand. She wailed uncontrollably when she discovered what she had done and Miss Bennett was obliged to comfort the child, muttering maternally about there being many more violets in the wood, but they were very fragile, so Beverley must not touch them.

Devlin made the most of his chance. It was years since he had felt so well in control of his faculties; his body was doing exactly what he wanted it to; his head was so clear that, as he crept away through the undergrowth, he could map out exactly what he was going to do. He would go to the nearest house and ask if they would let him use their telephone. Then he would ring the number his mother had given him so long ago, that he had never forgotten and she would come and collect him and he would live with her and they would both be happy and he would never see the hospital again. Then he would be able to laugh at the nurses, they would look stupid, saying that he would never see his mother again, when there he was living with her.

It was early April and the weather was still undecided whether it was winter or spring. It had rained in the morning, Devlin knew that as he had spent hours watching it through the window of his room. The sun had emerged weakly after lunch, so Miss Bennett had decided to take him and Beverley for a walk, but almost as soon as they had reached the end of the garden the sky had clouded over again and as he moved stealthily away from his wardress he could feel drops of rain landing on his head and shoulders. Looking behind him after every other step he noted with grim satisfaction that Miss Bennett was still totally engrossed in Beverley, trying to make her touch a daffodil without pulling it out by the roots. Now he was out of her sight, he moved faster, eventually breaking into a full pelt. He stumbled over the roots of trees protruding just above the ground. His excitement grew and grew; he was so delighted at the prospect of seeing his mother again that he burst into tears. He had no idea which direction he was running in, except that it was away from the grey, oblong box of the hospital.

Devlin was eighteen. He had been in institutions most of his life and as well as being educationally subnormal he apparently suffered from about half a dozen syndromes named after famous Austrian psychiatrists. A lot of his time was spent in a state of total intellectual and emotional confusion, either whimpering or laughing demoniacally. The nurses tried to do their best for him but everyone at Marshfield Hospital from the director downwards agreed that he was a difficult case. What made it worse was that sometimes as on this present occasion he was perfectly sane and capable of an extended sequence of logical actions but the nurses found themselves unable to appreciate this as they always had to be on the lookout for the inevitable relapse.

Now, he could see the wall. He was pleased that it was not a formidable twelve feet high like the one at the front of the hospital but a mere three. Devlin vaulted over it and out into the open farmland beyond. He felt that he could run for ever in the light of the forthcoming reunion, he could feel his mother beside him, laughing and crying with him, happy to be with him again.

A high-pitched voice yelled his name. Terrified, he stopped in his tracks and looked round. Miss Bennett, however, had not come to this side of the wood, obviously thinking that he would not try to leave the grounds. She probably thought he was still wandering somewhere in the grounds or had gone back to the hospital. He laughed inwardly at how stupid she was, how stupid they all were. He was going to make them look utter fools; they would be sorry they had not liked him. They would see.

He crossed several more walls and found himself on the crest of a hill. He tore down the ridge and noticed for the first time the grey huddled mass of the village below dominated by the spire of its church. Telephone, he must get to a telephone. The nearest home was a large manor house with six expensive cars on the driveway. There were briars clinging to the walls and a thin twist of smoke oozing from one of the three chimney-stacks. Devlin thought it was the best house he had ever seen in his life. He scaled a fence into the well-organised garden, breaking neatly placed pea-sticks in his eagerness to reach the door. He was breathing heavily with exertion and expectation as he reached it. He opened it and rushed into the wide hall, with its fully occupied rows of coat-pegs, stag's head and rapidly falling barometer.

Heated voices were coming from one of the rooms leading off from the hall. "I think a petition would be ineffectual. We'll hand it in at the Ministry and they'll just file it away and take no notice. We must organise more direct action. Something that will get the press and television interested."

"We could picket it. People always seem to be getting on the news for doing that."

"That sounds a bit extreme to me, but publicity is certainly one of the things we need. I think we ought to list the incidents starting with the attack on Mr. Carlisle when the place first opened and send the list to the gazette."

At this point Devlin rushed in. The first thing he saw was the back of a woman with blonde hair. It was his mother! He threw his arms round her and buried his face in her beautiful hair, mumbling incoherent endearments, oblivious at first to the woman's screams and struggles and the yells of horror from the other people round the oak table. Then he felt the arms pulling him away from the woman; he saw her face for the first time; it was not his mother. This woman was older, uglier, her perfume was different. She had made up her face heavily to disguise the hideous wrinkles and her lips were bright red, harsh, tight. Devlin's lucidity dissolved in a shuddering instant, he screamed and whimpered, no longer sure of who he was, where he was or what he was doing there. When the shock had passed, the indignation began to pour out thick and fast around him.

"Mrs. Willoughby, are you all right?"

"This just goes to prove my point!"

"Absolutely, that place has to go."

"We can't stand for this sort of thing."

"Actually here in the village!"

"Ring up the police."

"I'm going to see my M.P. about this."

Devlin had no idea that his intrusion into that elegant room had won an important tactical advantage for the 'Close Marshfield Hospital Campaign' in their protracted war with the minister of health, but then he probably would not have cared anyway, as in that instant he had lost his sanity for ever.

PAINTING THE HOUSE

Michael Curtis-Hayward (Form V)

I had decided to paint the outside of the house. Why? Well, the house was definitely dirty and it seemed a statement of superiority over a practical brother. The family was impressed: not being people to let opportunities slip through their fingers, they brought me some paint and left me with the job.

Slightly taken aback by this abandonment, I nevertheless erected my ladder in the street, scorning the superstitious pedestrians, who hovered unhappily below.

The first day was cold: the only relief from the interminable scrubbing of the walls was to let fall some water on the unsuperstitious, no-nonsense people, who bravely walked under my perch.

The next day was slightly better, for applying the sealing undercoat offered comic relief. The house next door almost winced as my slow brushstrokes progressed, the house seeming visibly to mould under my touch. The afternoon was bright, with the clarity of spring, but our house, covered with the wicked, viscous, yellow liquid, resembled a gangrenous toe-nail. Ignorant passersby worried over my colour scheme and superior smiles were etched on many people's faces. Leaving the world to worry, I left the house for another day.

I was definitely bored on the third day: the job was never-ending and I had only just started applying the white paint. The liquid seemed reluctant to stay on the wall, sliding down in protest. My painting was a mechanical action and I paused only to cough: a graveyard cough which the paint had given me. The wall still glared yellow at me through its mask of white and I realised with a numbing clarity that I would have to paint another coat.

It was hot. The mist had fallen away from the eyes of the sun and it watched intently, even remorselessly, as my slow, laboured brush strokes progressed.

I was angry and tired: passers-by were mere four-letter words in my intense little hell, the wall was unending, and its new set of clothes didn't fit very well.

However, I continued, now savaging the wall, now stroking it until the first coat had been finished.

I didn't think I could bear another day of this lonely purgatory and so I spent the next day as far away as possible from the house. I finished the next coat later in another monotonous haze and then left all the brushes in a heap in the sink and walked away from the scene of the crime.

However, the house looked much better for my attentions but home-decorating has no charms. I felt no sense of achievement: I'd left a little bit at the top, which I couldn't reach on my ladder, and this blotch sneered at me from its high perch. Short of burning the house down I couldn't think of anything to do, and so I didn't.



THE COTSWOLDS

David Denby (Form III)

A young lad rises lethargically from his reverie and gazes wistfully at the deep yellow sun. A blood-stained sky gradually covers what was formerly an open roof as the blueness filters away to infinity.

Dusk marches inexorably nearer and the living air eventually becomes saturated in an alien monotony. So down a muddy slope and over a rotting fence he goes, and then onto a pair of symbolically hard ruts.

A furtive glance upwards reveals the looming grey ceiling and the pace quickens.

Past yellow buildings which have long since sunk, feebly protesting, into the tranquil emerald serenity of urban Gloucestershire. Then through an obscure village with its customary, solitary shop, on which a greeny black, iron bell sits, its typical eighteenth century over-elaborate fashioning and misused dullness fighting for the attention.

So through a line of trees, which has braved many a foggy gale, with none too few injuries to show for it. After that it's through the newly-ploughed field, with its rich, brown, earthy smell which insists on hanging on in your nose long after passing the field.

Along a rough track that epitomises the dusty summer's evening, accompanied by an orchestra of many hues, crickets, cockerels, geese and hens, but still on. Past a stone wall, now distinctly damp, and between 'Miller's Arch': a pair of fungus-ridden old oaks standing guard over the traveller.

By-pass 'Potter's Shed' - the haunted derelict panelless old edifice with its dank inside. Kicking slowly through the meadow. Home's in sight.

Nobody seems to notice the rain.

"Ma! Noice smell, ma! Whort's f'supp'r?"

A DRAINED RESERVOIR

Ben Hatchwell (Form V)

THE water gradually receded down the shallow, sloping sides of the reservoir; as if the plug had been pulled from a giant bath. The ancient, decaying dam at one end of the reservoir admitted defeat in a battle with thousands of tons of water. Grey murky water spewed from the rusting sluice gates along the old dehydrated river bed, now once more alive with flowing water.

The sinking water level slowly revealed a new world formed beneath the water of the reservoir from a familiar landscape. The old contours were revealed where prior to the dam people had walked in the bright sun of summer and children had tobogganed after snow in winter. The slopes now were covered with a grey mud several inches thick, barren and void of the atmosphere surrounding the green hills encircling the valley.

Skeletons of trees stood gaunt and solitary, husks of a previous life, symbols of the reservoir's past. Hidden for years beneath the water, now deprived of the water's support, they crumbled and fell like giants, their rotten trunks unable to hold up their own, waterlogged branches.

The scene resembled a battlefield, everything bare except for the decaying bodies of fish and the skeletons of old beds, bicycles and trees. No life except for a green slime enveloping everything. A few isolated pools of water in the valley bottom still supported several sickly, oxygen-deprived fish with a heron stalking haughtily round the edges, bloated with dead fish but still absent-mindedly spearing at flapping bodies in the muddy water.

At one edge, where a road passed the reservoir, a large pile of old, unwanted rubbish had accumulated under the water, the litter of a modern civilization - prams, cans, parts of cars and old wheels; now it was revealed, an eyesore, red-brown with rust, the complex skeleton of a confused and complex world.

Soon, the brown mud was speckled with green as nature started to reclaim what was rightly hers, brambles grew among the metal frames, seedlings grew to replace their fallen ancestors. The reservoir was only a brief interval in the time-scale of the landscape.

THE CASTLE

Oliver Medill (Form II)

WHEN I arrived in Wales, my grandmother was at the station, waving her little black handbag everywhere.

"It's so good to see you!" she said, embracing me. Then I went lumbering along the platform, with both hands on my suitcase handle, and her, bustling around and making way for me, and soon I found myself breathless and utterly exhausted, but in her car.

The next day I asked her for a packed lunch, and leave to go on a walk for the day. She consented, as she had to make rock buns. I walked on and on, through fields and over hills, until I came to a winding, dusty track, which led, as I found out, to the ramparts of a very old and crumbled but recognizable castle. I scrambled over some piles of rock, suffering a few minor scratches, and found myself inside what must have been the courtyard. I decided to have my

lunch then. I was half-way through my can of ginger-pop, when an ancient old man, with a few wisps of hair flicking in his face, walked up to me. And what a sight! The thin, brown skin on his hands showed lumped, blue veins, and terribly thin little bones. The face was wind-burned, and withered, and sour, like a crab-apple, with two dark-ringed eyes, of which I could see only two holes. He walked with a great gnarled and knotty staff, with a nasty-looking knob on the end, and, as far as I could see, all he wore were rags.

He broke the silence. "You like the place?"

"Yes", I said, overpowering the urge to run. "It's . . . beautiful." Then all of a sudden I grew fascinated in the old man. He seemed to realise this, and a thin, watery smile creased his face.

"This castle was built in 960", he said. "A man called Dubbosy lived here, with his wife and two children, when a terrible tragedy occurred. The wife was washing in the river, when a strange current pulled her under, and she was swept downstream and died." On the word 'died', his eyes rounded, his eyebrows rose, and he smiled. Then he went on. "That night Dubbosy was horribly murdered along with his two children, and ever since that night, no one has gone near here."

"But why was he murdered?" I asked.

"That is the mystery", he said. "Some say it was spirits, living in cracks among the stones. Even now, people never come here, except me."

"I . . . I must be going", I said, and so saying, I picked myself up, and walked out over the piles of rock. I then turned to look at the castle, which had blotted the sun from my view; the silhouette made me shudder. So I turned round and fairly ran for my life, not stopping till I had got back.

"Have you enjoyed yourself, dear?" my grandmother said, placing a pile of rock buns in front of me.

"Oh . . . yes : yes, you could say that", I said. "I visited a castle." That was all I said, because I didn't want her to make a fuss; but I will never forget that strange encounter at the castle.

SUMMER TERM

Richard Needham (Form III)

I lay in bed one night and recaptured the day that had just passed.

I was staring out of the window while I was busy cleaning my teeth. What I saw was definitely not the start to a summer's day. The road beneath, full of puddles, told me that it had rained heavily during the night, and the dull sky told me that it would be the same as the day before, miserable and unexciting.

I walked to lessons, clothed in an anorak and loose scarf thrown carelessly round my neck. As the rain began to fall, I found myself running to a nearby shelter.

By the afternoon the weather had cleared up although those ominous clouds still loomed hauntingly above. I tramped up to the playing fields and stood there, looking down at my feet, up in the sky or at the pavilion, but very rarely at the game in progress. Once, in two hours, I found myself chasing a red ball. I picked it up and tried to throw it into the wicket-keeper. Unfortunately it was a terrible throw and I was given a thorough telling-off by our capable captain. After waiting half an hour impatiently to bat, I went in, confident and determined, and returned, two balls later, angry and fed-up.

Having changed for my game of tennis after prep I waited for my partner to arrive. Ten minutes later he did so and the game commenced. I won the first game and prepared to serve for the second. As I threw the ball in the air a droplet of water landed on the tip of my nose. Then another hit me, and another. I looked despairingly over the net at my partner and as the rain increased we decided to call it a day.

One game did go right. I had a quick game of table football before bed and won three goals to two.

No, it hadn't been a very successful day, and I had a nasty feeling that the one ahead was going to be the same.



BREAKING THROUGH

Carol Franklin

Pushing back brambles, branches, boughs,
Stumbling past roots, rocks and rough growth,
Untrodden ground, wary, frightened.
Shimmer of light, slight, bright, fleeting,
Then darkness overwhelms, a fall
Betrays false security and
I am again alone and lost.
The way is slow and retrograde,
But better all the while, although
The way is slow.

For a while, I am not alone,
Someone sees into my trauma
And shows me an easier route,
For a while, and then he is gone.
Breaking through is a slow process,
But, the first barrier overcome,
The evanescent swirling mist
Disperses, the path is clearer
And soon, though through a morning haze,
I look around.

And see a panorama of
Hills and trees and people watching,
But they are not watching me now.
I turn as one with them to see
Far away through a morning haze -
A lonely figure I still know
Breaking through; I smile, turn away
And walk assuredly to where I want to go - and then
Stumble again.

GOD

David Strong

"Have you found him yet? -"
"No, not yet."
"He could be upstairs -"
"Yes, perhaps."
"Well, I can't be bothered to look -
Let's go to church without him."

HESITATION

Jon Porch

"Our doubts are traitors
And make us lose the good we oft might win
By fearing to attempt." (*Measure for Measure*)

I turn from the play
And the game spins my way
But for the heartbeat.
The vaults falter as lightning
Strikes twice.
The secrets are hidden;

Silent as a dissident,
Behind bars.
I hold the key to fit the lock
But fear has snatched my strength.
Why does it die
When I could fly
With a leap and a bound to the top
Of the bank?

There on the wall, alone,
Sits the apple of my Eden.
Am I tall enough to reach?
To tremble on tip-toes and
Pluck.
The ripest fruit falls first,
Plummeting down to drop on
Newton.
Gravity draws my hopes
Down deep into the depths of
Earth's core.
The apple has gone:
I'll take the wall, instead.

ON NOT SEEING THE RED ARROWS

David Webb (Form I)

In my mind I saw them coming,
Twisting, turning, rolling, rushing,
Smoke streaming from them,
Like bright-coloured tails.

A red vee moving across the sky,
Another moving in time,
Two planes climb, twisting and turning, diving and spinning,
Then they ascend, serene yet austere.

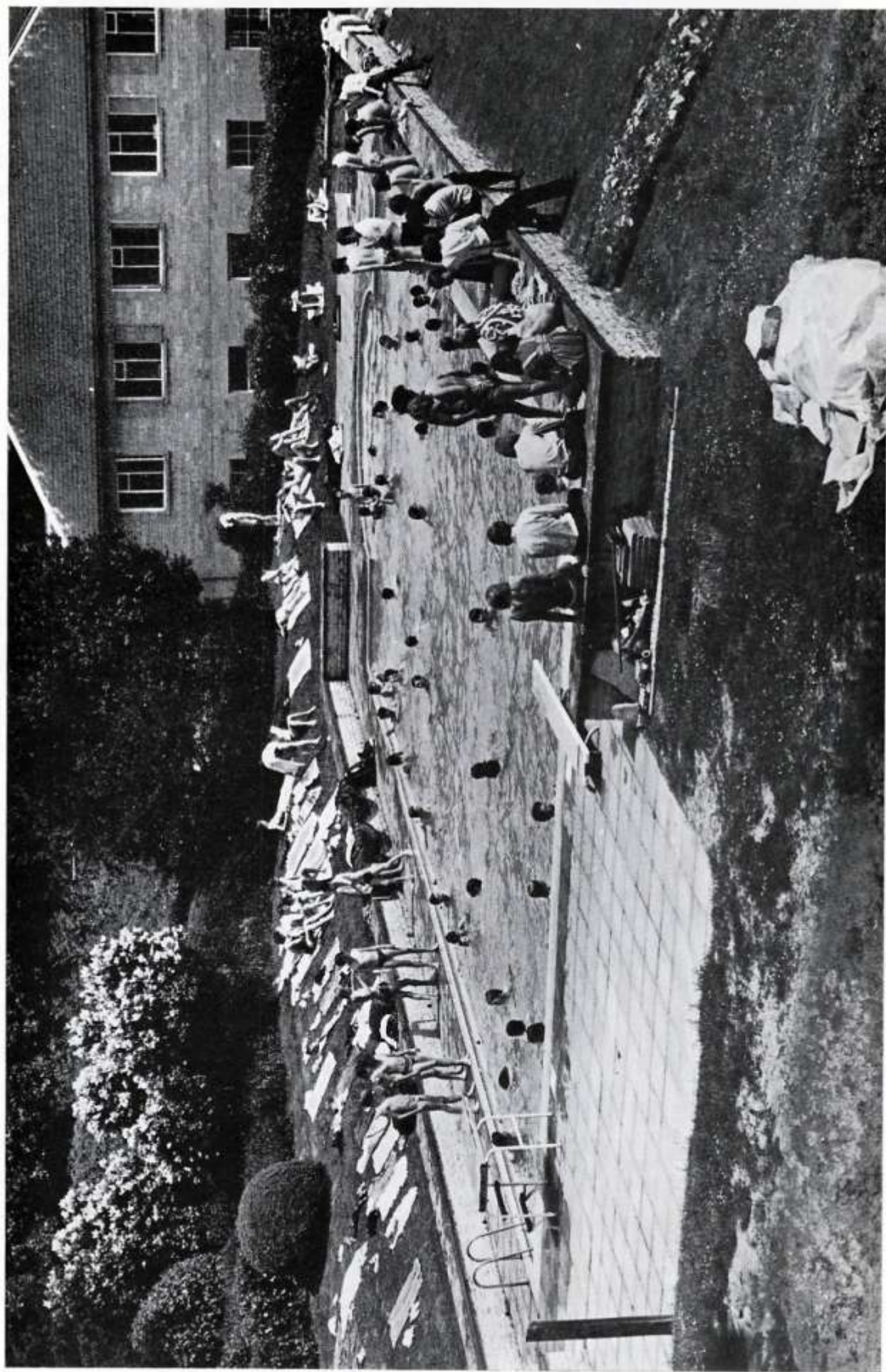
Two more are coming,
They move dangerously close,
Then move away again
Quite unperturbed.

In my mind I saw them going,
Twisting, turning, rolling, rushing,
Smoke streaming from them,
Like bright-coloured tails.

But there was no coming,
There was no going,
Nor nothing in between.
Just empty sky, coloured by nothing.

Onto the terrace everyone rushed,
First formers pushing and shoving for places,
Sixth formers standing, important and calm,
Though really they wanted to see.

Everyone's quiet, waiting, waiting,
They're late, they're late,
Where could they be?
Perhaps they're not coming, oh, why are they late?



COLD COFFEE STOOD

Graeme Connelly

cold coffee stood. fearless though he
drank, and as he did so changed to hemlock

poisoned, the cherry awaited its victim, sparkling
politely in its crystal - candidly she sucked the long
wood.

darkly, the deed reported, cortege arranged,
they sent the golded R.S.V.P.s, carefully blacked.

grey, they saw, gold-grey shown twice down scraped
stairs.
worms eat ye hearty this night.

THINKING ALOUD

Christopher Brealy (Form IV)

“Write a poem,” he said;
The claustral room demands the imperative
Oppressive order that reels off the closed windows
To hit the uncertain mind
And turn to fiery ink,
Words precipitated from the intellect
Bled from emotion and imagination,
Swelling up into bursts of flowing, frothing, frolicking
freedom of delirious desires.
Oh! The power of personification,
Mystery of metaphor, beauty of imagery;
The expressiveness of verse,
Allusive, taught-to-the-children, quoted-bywise-men,
stanzas,
The implicit song of language.

GODSPELL

David Denby (Form III)

The house lighting dissolves into the atmosphere,
A faint phosphorescence awakens the stage,
Soft human overtones float gently outwards,
An apprehensive audience settles down.
Out bursts a sudden pillar of light,
And concentration takes its footing.
The satirical prologue is soon gone
As explosive metallic powerchords set the pace,
Cuprous blue and burnt orange combust,
An iridescent stage is alive.
An addicted audience submit,
Acrid vermilion greets the Christ,
Gentle ballads and sombre laments,
The sordid superman, mighty and kind,
The hard-learning, singing disciples.
And tension like a purple slick enlarges.
Scene upon scene increasingly faster,
Topical joviality, anti-climax.
The translucent, multi-faceted prism

Turns another face to reveal, with acid harshness,
Its piercing swan-song: the inevitable passion.
Streaks of gawdy red and violent blacks,
Songs hauntingly fill the theatre.
The neon blue goes out
And the fawn is dormant once more.
The stunned crowd rises from their drug-dream,
Fervent applause deafening the hall.
The stage dances with electric smiles.
Encore!

THOUGHTS ON THE BUTTERFLY SYNDROME

Deborah Harrison

Pity the poor mortal with butterfly syndromes:
Who longs to take on ephemeral wings and flight
And, itching feet, escape to distant latitudes;
Whose lambent eye-glow stems from heart's desire
Shines out from inmost part of wearied palindromes;
Who aches to stretch and soar with rose-fresh might
Beyond man's greatest walls of oriental magnitude
Until, exhausted, senses go no higher.
Relaxes gently, slips through lapsing stars and rainbow
Draws comfort from such gloried shades
So darts elsewhere through arching cloud-gaps
In search of loving long-lost friends
That vanished in an avalanche of snow.
For words mean more to you once the ink begins to fade
And glinting butterflies, perhaps,
Having curving minds of looping bends.

SHADOWS OF A BICYCLE

Alan Jennings (Form IV)

Bent, crooked, gnarled or straight
As trees torn with savage weather,
The bike is warped, lengthened and stretched
By the midday sun.

Boring black and white
Though strangely interesting
To those who want to know
And to those who want to bother.

Although distorted and moved
It's still a bike, still recognisable
Even through the shimmering heat,
Pressed out on the ground.

SOLOMON

Duncan Taylor

Nothing more, no nothing less
Could become this guilt.
In the eye of Solomon
I saw you wrinkle, crinkle and crack with age

As a cup glazed with lines and confusion.
 Just: in the eye of the king
 Whose marble stone stands sudden against the dark.
 As in diamonds there glitters an inner light
 So does a reasoning cross this orb
 As into two the babe is cast
 And motherhood surging the barriers
 Release the tide and wash this wisdom clean
 And bending figure stooping low -
 Praise Solomon.

FRUSTRATION

Andrew Carter

Hope dies,
 Like a tail-swung cat,
 In a basement flat,
 In Piccadilly High Street on a bleak Sunday morning,
 In June or July.

Tears mount,
 Like oil slick-blocked weirs
 Congealed septic fears
 Drowning the wet oceans into a tepid cracked teacup
 On a tableau with flowers.

Mind clogs,
 With arid lost dreams.
 Everything seems
 Lost; until reality reimposes its merciless grip,
 And monotony rules again, O.K.

SEAL'S SKULL

John Marson

The seal's skull gleamed
 With muted lustre,
 A silky white abstract
 Fusion of smooth bone.
 Life, skin and sinew
 Having long since fled
 This temple to decay
 Where a scurrying spider
 Spins its gossamer curtains,
 And has a macabre second entrance;
 A dark, huge and gaping
 Occipital foramen,
 Yawning in reply to
 The mouth's toothless grin.
 Seated like a weird pebble
 Carved by wind and sea,
 Which it once carved through itself
 With graceful curves,
 And shivering silver dives.
 No more;
 Now, pitted and broken,
 It lies forgotten.

ALLEY CAT

Richard Perrett (Form II)

King of every dark street,
 Master of every back alley,
 Teeth like ivory sabres,
 Pupils glowing in pale moonlight
 Armed with a gimlet.

Walks on the roof-tops by night
 Keeping watch on all his domain;
 Eyes that pierce the darkness, like an owl's,
 Slyness like the best of foxes,
 Leaps as swift as a swallow on the wing.

Using each claw as a sharp-pointed dirk,
 He battles with all-comers
 That dare cross his path.
 With darkness and silence
 His only companions to fight by his side.

FREEDOM . . .

Julian Wilson (Form IV)

Unlocked from the earth,
 No chains or rope,
 Floating,
 No thought,
 Nothing, words
 In the air of cool breath.

.. AND SLAVERY

Locked down slowly,
 The weight of mud,
 Drowning,
 All fear,
 Careful words
 Mingle with the sweat air.