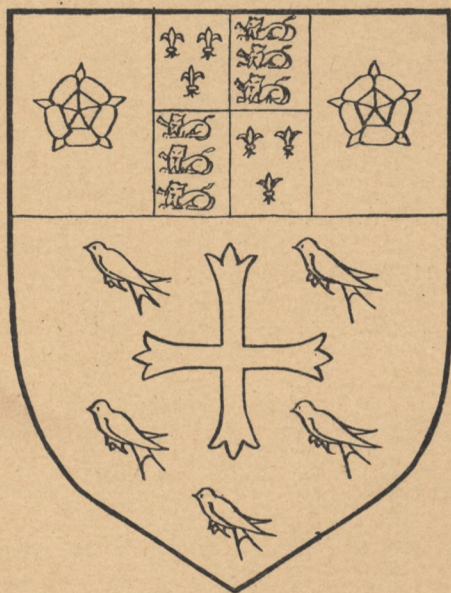


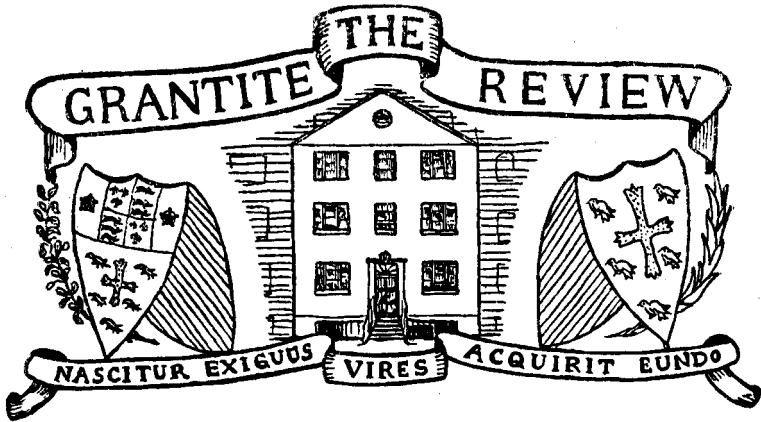
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# THE GRANTITE REVIEW



LENT TERM,  
1942.





#### EDITORIAL.

"It seems funny," someone said to me last week, "to think that we've been at Fernie nearly twice as long as we were at Lancing."

"Funnier still," someone else butted in, "we've been out of London longer than we were in."

Very few of us realise how true this is. When first we moved from London, we used to think of everything from the old point of view, and tended to regard our evacuation as a new sort of holiday. But, as time passed on, and the War became even more of a reality, we very soon detached ourselves and smothered down into our new surroundings. We went to see all the new sights of the district, and made many new friends. Such were Lancing and Exeter.

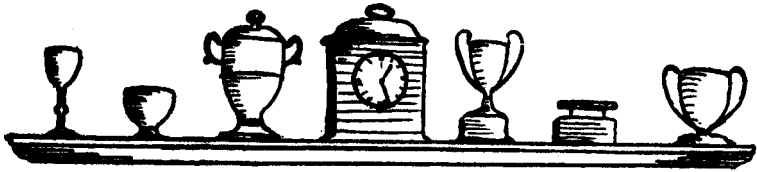
But here, in Hereford, though we have made many new and greatly valued friends, we do not have so much time for enjoying our latest county, nor for visiting places of local interest. Cycling has become so much of an essential daily duty that it has lost much of its glamour. Let's go by bus, or not go at all, is the usual attitude.

Boys have to fill their own spare time with far more ingenuity than before, when, if at a loss for a better occupation, an aerodrome, the sea, pleasing shops or a cinema were round the corner—all ready, waiting.

Thus they turn to material at hand, ornithology, entomology, botany, writing, photography, reading, and, in one or two cases, amateur psychology. We can see new geni and individualities appearing, and it is in their occupations that we see their true characters.

Thus, circumstances have given us a life with a far more even routine than it was before; and I think it is this, the fact that curious new jobs have become so much of an everyday common practice, that really accounts for my friend's remark, that, in Hereford, Time has gone without us realizing it.

As for myself, instead of reckoning in seasons (rather than terms) as do most, I only notice that another term has gone, when I have to sit down to write another Editorial.



### HOUSE NOTES.

There left us last term :—P. N. Ray.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Inner are :—F. G. Overbury, J. R. Russ, D. O'R. Dickey, J. R. B. Hodges.

\* \* \* \* \*

In Chiswicks are :—F. W. E. Fursdon, J. D. B. Andrews, W. R. van Straubenzee, A. H. Williams, E. F. R. Whitehead, D. I. Gregg, D. M. Eady, D. W. Shenton, D. J. E. Shaw and A. J. Croft.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Head of Hall is I. D. Kingsley, and Hall Monitors are B. R. Corcos and I. D. Grant.

\* \* \* \* \*

Congratulations to :—

F. W. E. Fursdon on his Thirds, S. P. L. Kennedy on his Colts, G. D. Glennie on his Juniors—for Football.

\* \* \* \* \*

We lost to College in the first round of Juniors.

\* \* \* \* \*

In Lit. Soc. this term we have so far read "The Rivals," by Sheridan and an abbreviated sequence of scenes from the "Merchant of Venice."

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The Gramophone Society continues to hold a well-attended meeting every Sunday night.

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The House now runs a Red Cross Penny-a-Week Fund.

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An impromptu Raffle and Auction in aid of the School Mission Furniture Fund realised just on £2.

\* \* \* \* \*

Proceeds of sale of waste paper to date is £2 3s. This went to the Red Cross.

\* \* \* \* \*

At a very successful Play Supper last term the guests were :—The Head Master, Mr. A. Garrard, Mr. J. Heard, Mr. L. A. Wilson and Mr. J. A. Holloway.

\* \* \* \* \*

The second day of this term we had a welcome visit from Sgt. Pilot A. W. G. Le Hardy.

### FERNIE BANK.

From Underground and taxi to train, and tractor. Such was the experience of those of us who braved the driving snow and ice to come back at the beginning of term.

After arriving late at night (instead of afternoon), the only practicable way of being conveyed to Fernie was on a truck drawn by a powerful tractor. It was not until six days later that we were able to assemble as a school, so, as last snow season, impromptu teaching by boys again proved very helpful.

This term we are so far enjoying a bus on every Buckenhill day (three a week), and this saves our cycle tyres (and us!) a considerable amount of wearing.

We still have our hens, who have contrived to lay an egg or two just lately, and we hope to bring up 30 baby chicks to come on next autumn.

Three pigs have taken the place of last term's pair, and these were very generously given to us by the Old Grantite Club. We take this opportunity of thanking them most warmly for such a useful present.

There are three new small arrivals at Fernie this year. The first is Dumbo, Alison's black puppy, with a white shirt front and his namesake's world-famous large ears. He looks like a cross between a Cocker Spaniel and a Smooth Fox Terrier, and has already acquired, like all school dogs, the knack of keeping clear of thirty-five odd pair of feet—some of them (unfortunately for him!) in heavy H.G. boots.

The second (the latest addition to the Housemaster's collection) is an Austin Seven.

Last is the acquisition by us of one of the pair of cottages adjoining Fernie. This aroused enormous excitement, and suggested uses for it included a Quiet Room, new dormitory, carpentry shop, bike repair depot, depository for the piano, private zoo and such like, but soon we were told it was to be a place for John to continue to live in, with a room for visitors and a place for storing vegetables and rearing baby chicks.

### THIS BICYCLING.

After a year in Herefordshire we can safely say that, if we have learnt nothing else, we have learnt to bicycle. Perhaps we have learnt too well, because bicycles have become so much part of our lives that our imaginations indulge their fancies when our eyes should be on the road. We are rash bicyclists when we concentrate, but when we dream we are maniacs.

As I bicycle along the familiar route to Bromyard, I ponder over such problems as occur to my mind. Occasionally I find inspiration in the soothing undulations of the road and the monotonous passing of the bridges. This practice of day-dreaming (I prefer to dignify it with the name of meditation) could well be discouraged on the grounds of public safety, but everyone must admit that the amount of time every week I set aside for it is truly commendable.

We may speculate that, if the poet Coleridge had had a bicycle, he might have dispensed with opium. Instead of composing his poems under opium's destroying influence, he could have fixed a writing pad to his handle bars. In addition to preserving his health, Coleridge would thus have furnished critics and biographers with the added task of discerning the lines he wrote as he rode uphill.

Besides bicycling in daylight, we also bicycle at night. Brakes which are adequate in daylight become dangerous, and it is only the fact that everyone is travelling in the same direction which preserves us from frequent accidents. Such is the terror we inspire in the minds of local inhabitants that, after nine o'clock at night, no one will venture on the road between Fernie and Huntlands.

This term, with buses three times a week, we have more energy for occupations outside bicycles, and it is noticeable that our tempers have improved. Before, our strength and patience were expended struggling against the frequent hills and the wind which, like charity, never faileth.

### THE BUBBLE.

I have a passion in my heart  
Which strikes me like a rubber dart,  
I cannot quite define it.  
I feel I want to sit and write  
On paper (quarto), blue or white,  
A sonnet, or an "Ode to Night,"  
And then proceed to sign it.

## ALL FOR A SHILLING.

The twins were enjoying themselves that winter morning, although an icy wind was coming across the sea and unloosing its fury on them as they walked along the top of the cliff. They had already walked several miles, but they were cold; so they agreed to run a few hundred yards and get warm.

They had run a dozen yards or so when David shouted to Aubrey, his brother, "I bet you a shilling I get home first!" His words were snatched away by the wind and carried off inland; but his brother had heard, and the pace was quickened. They had covered half a mile before either gained, but then it appeared that David had betted wisely, for he was gaining steadily on his brother.

When he had a lead of some ten yards he turned round to see how his brother was faring. He laughed when he saw Aubrey panting, and increased his own pace. A moment later David turned round again to see how far ahead he was (he was running dangerously near to the edge of the cliff) and shouted out above the wind, "Do I get ——?" But he never finished the question, for with a fearful cry, he found he had run into space. A moment later his body was dashed to pieces on the rocks below, a wave contemptuously rolled his mangled corpse into the sea, and all was quiet again except for the rushing of the wind and the noise of the sea.

It was a month later when Aubrey went to see his brother's grave. He was no longer a twin now, and as he stood gazing down his eyes filled with tears. Out of his pocket, he took a shilling. "Yes," he said, "You win—the bet," and he dropped the shilling on the grave.

### "THE WAVES FOR EVER ARE BREAKING."

It seems strange that, out of a house of thirty odd, only about half have ever known Westminster at Westminster. For them such words as "Fields," "Occupat" and "Grove Park" seem to be of another world, separated from the present by war. Their only knowledge of it is of glimpses in verbal reminiscences or in the flashback articles in the *Grantite*.

For them "Half-boarders" have never existed, and "Abbey" has been replaced by "Chapel," "St. David's" and just "Church." On the other hand, who of us, three years ago, ever thought of "jobs," cycling or even Herefordshire as anything but connected with holidays?

My purpose in this article is to jog the memory of those who have forgotten, or who have never known, some of the incidents of the last four years.

Do you remember the first evacuation? Those tense meetings Up School and the red labels we addressed to "Rossall School, Fleetwood, Lancs.," and which we sadly tied to our white kitbags.

Next come memories of the last minute change to "Lancing College, Shoreham-by-Sea" and of the thrilling drive down there in Samuelson's Coaches (with a large bar of chocolate), and of the first glimpse, from the Steyning road, of the gaunt green-windowed chapel.

The rapid distribution of boys—the makeshift teaching in lettered class rooms with polished floors? Then, so sudden, the return from exile, after a long week "at the seaside." That was Munich.

It seemed queer hearing the first Air Raid Sirens practising during that second history period in Mr. Peeble's form-room and watching the underground trenches being dug in Vincent Square: of course the sight of the balloon that actually flew from the middle of the once-perfect surface of the 1st XI Cricket pitch was infuriating. I'd almost forgotten those A.R.P. practices, when we all filed down to the kitchen of No. 2, Little Dean's Yard.

Then war came.

We knew what Lancing was like from the previous season, but what clothes would we wear? For the first time, we gave up tails for every-day use and only wore them on Sundays. Funny idea having a holiday every Saint's Day, wasn't it? And those walks to Cisbury and Chanctonbury Rings—and the bike rides to Arundel, Ditchling, even just to the Airport, or

lying and basking on the shingle, eating a "choc bar."

Next minute we were on the special for Exeter, eating enormous quantities of lettuces; and then unloading brake vans and crowding on to the lorries plying between St. David's Station and Mardon Hall:

Can you ever forget guarding the railway on a moonlight night, digging up those potatoes, and playing with the green hand-truck! The spacious day-rooms, smart "two-bedders," glorious baths, super-breakfasts, Gandy Street, and the Canteen where during break one could buy those chocolate-iced buns for 1d.?

Exeter? With five cinemas to choose from, the County Ground, the School Ground, Port Royal and Double Locks? Of course, in those days Water was Water, and the Regatta on the Canal was full of excitement.

J.T.C. Parades were rather like the present H.G. Proficiency tests, consisting of learning the ways to and positions of important places so that we could all act as guides in an emergency.

Then came Bromyard, and my memories fade, as do the spots on a fawn, for Hereford is not past, but present; and, for the present, you have only to turn up the last few numbers of the *Grantite* to set your own screen moving.

"Thus," as the travelogue compère would put it, "with hearts full of sadness, we leave this land of memory, thanking it for all it has shown us; its spirit will be with us, will guide us on our way, and will carry us through the many trials and barriers that we must pass, until it takes this present in its jaws and makes it all—just a memory."

#### PRICE RETURNS.

It was a surprise to me to find how many people were interested in my humble doings and so I thought I would tell you the story that I consider my most unpleasant experience.

If you have not seen Ellismere Hall you cannot possibly imagine its size. It is one of those houses that take your breath away when you go inside the front door, and it stands in a commanding position at the top of an imposing hill. To look at it, you would think that its owner must be at least a millionaire, so vast is the mansion. But this is certainly not so, for, inside, the house is empty to a point of poverty and is only just habitable. The front door does not open any more, or at least it falls down if you do open it, and the roof lets streams of water cascade into the empty pillared hall. The marble staircase has become a waterfall, the tall rooms homes for busy spiders and the extensive gardens a wilderness. At a first glance you would think that no human being could possibly live in such a place, but there is one redeeming feature—the house is on the telephone!

The reader cannot possibly imagine what joy it was for me to discover that fact when I arrived at the house at dusk last October. Knowing my profession, you must have guessed that I was investigating crime. As a matter of fact, in this case it was murder—we don't usually get anything so exciting as that—and I arrived at the house in the middle of a traditional thunderstorm, with the lightning flashing in and out of the mock-Grecian pillars, and making a gruesome beginning to a horrible crime.

The old lady who lived alone in the house had been discovered dead that morning, and no one knew when she had been killed. The gardener, who discovered her, had the presence of mind to telephone the Police and so I was able to be on the spot fairly soon.

My first action was to view the body—not a pleasant business! She had been shot cleanly through the head and was lying just as she had been found. She was in her big bed-sitting room, furnished in a stiff Victorian style, and had evidently been writing at a desk when killed.

I did not start to investigate that night but went to the next room where a bed was prepared for me.

Investigating a murder always makes me a bit sleepless, but it does not usually affect me as much as it did that night. I could not get rested, however I turned and however I lay. My mind simply would not lie still.

It must have been about 3 o'clock in the morning when I first heard it. Remember that it was raining and that the water was pouring into the hall: nothing could make itself heard against the din. Then suddenly it stopped! No slackening off or gradual diminishing, but absolute silence.

For the first time I realised the utter loneliness of my position. Somehow the constant dripping had been a comfort to me, and now in this awful stillness it was brought home to me how helpless I was.

Only next door all that remained of a saintly, if eccentric, old lady was lying as her murderer had last seen her. Why should anyone want to murder her? Her name was held high by the villagers below, and she looked after her properties with care and with tenderness towards her tenants. Certainly no one in the district disliked her, there was no money in the house for loot, there was . . . but here I heard a sound again. Now a sound in that stillness really means something: it was a kind of creak or groan, as of some windlass or rusty handle. It was followed immediately by the rush and swirl of running rain-water as before.

In that din, nothing much could be heard, so I got up quickly and walked outside. I glanced around the empty gallery and noticed that my seal was still on the door of the murder room. My torch travelled round further, past a few broken bits of Chinese furniture, and then shone on an old woman! This will be as much of a surprise to the reader as it was to me and we must have stared at each other for a full minute before I said anything.

I noticed her evil expression, her overhanging brows and green eyes. You laugh? Well, I don't ask you to believe me, but I repeat, her green eyes.

Then she started to walk towards me, slowly but with grim intent, for in her hand she held a small ivory pistol and it was pointed at me. I waited till I could feel her breath warming my cheeks and then I struck, struck with all the force of terror inspired by the un-natural. She fell back to the parapet, an agonized look on her face and then slowly, oh! so dreadfully slowly, overbalanced and fell to the hall far below. There was a splash, some spray, and all was still.

It took me all my courage to continue investigating that case, but I am glad I did so, for it turned out more interesting than I thought.

The old woman who was murdered was merely a plant, a hoax to make everyone think the owner of the house was dead. She was just some harmless missionary, hired there by the holy pretensions of her hostess. Now I came to this devilish woman who had murdered another, for her own ends. She turned out in the end to be the follower of some obscure foreign religion, whose doctrine consisted of the worship of the dead.

For many years she had dug up coffins in the local and surrounding graveyards and worshipped them, finally boiling them away. She always did this last in a vast cauldron fed by rain water in the hall . . . but I don't want to go into details.

It was the purest accident that the first body was found, and the gardener mistook the one for the other. I think that about explains everything, so good-bye for now. . . . No! There's one thing more. Why did the rain stop so suddenly? Well, she had to put a tarpaulin over the roof to keep out the rain when she wanted to light her cauldron.

What did she want to do that for? I don't like to think of it, but as a matter of fact, that cauldron was intended for me.

## BARBARA.

I woke to find my room pitch black, save for the grey-blue square of sky at the top of my window. Just to the right of the silhouetted chimney-stack, a very bright star peered through. How remote and infinite it seemed. Perhaps Barbara could see it too—all the evening my thoughts were filled with her—rich brown hair, deep hazel eyes, smooth nose and perfect mouth. I waltzed again with her round the Rougemont—or was it the circular floor



of the Clarence. I held her firm as we flew through time together.

Where was she now—in a train. Bumping over points, packed in a small carriage with only a dull blue light, perhaps with nothing to read. I could almost feel the shivers of cold racing through her body, and the piercing draught whistling round her feet. How had she got on at her nephew's christening; she had been thrilled at being a godmother. Her train from Brackenford had been due in at Paddington that evening, but she had forgotten to tell me when. I was feeling pretty tired, and a dreadful fear kept dodging me, that something had happened to her. My mind was swirling with fantastic ideas, but that star fascinated me and held my overwrought brain together. My petty troubles seemed so small beside it—and I, so insignificant. I dozed off again. At about three I heard a persistent buzzing in my dreams which woke me up with a shock, when I realised it was the phone. I reached out automatically and rested the receiver on my pillow. Suddenly I realized it was Barbara's voice, and my heart knocked with a new vigour. She had just arrived home in Ellgan Square, after a nine-hour journey. I soon told her to go to bed as her voice sounded desperately tired, and that I would meet her at the Picadilly for lunch. I clicked the phone back and sank back with a strange feeling of peace and generosity in my heart.

Suddenly my stomach muscles grew taut as I heard the sirens. I prayed for it to be an All Clear, but as the note wavered up and down, the aching fear spread over my whole body. God help poor Barbara, I whispered.

I knew no more until I woke up to find myself on the floor, my bed-clothes all against the wall, and the hell of a row going on outside. Little pieces of glass covered the floor like a frozen hailstorm, and, with the light of the glare outside, I could see the window frames empty. Jagged glass poked from the sashes. For a moment or two I lay where I was, trying to convince myself that it was not all an awful nightmare, but a grim reality.

Very quickly it dawned on me, as the shrapnel tinkled in the street, and the air was full of whistles, whines, coughs and splutters, that a raid was on. I jumped up, put on a pair of shoes and an overcoat, grabbed my torch, and raced downstairs. I thanked God that there were no other people in the house to look after. I longed to phone Barbara, but of course that was impossible, so I made myself a cup of tea on the methylated and felt steadied. My tin helmet on, I pushed open the back door and took a look outside, where I found an incendiary sparking outside the house next door. I snatched two sandbags, chucked them on it and rushed back again.

Gradually the noises died down, and soon the All Clear rang through the silent streets and I was left drifting, like a speedboat when the engine is cut.

When morning came, I set to work to clear up. A roll of spare linoleum spanned the shattered windows. I discovered where the bomb had fallen, in the garden on the other side of the street, and realised that I was very lucky to escape so well. My milkman had told me it had been a very light raid, so, not wishing to disturb Barbara, I set off down Harrington Gardens to get a book for Barbara's younger brother, David, at Harrod's Book Department. After strolling and pottering round for nearly an hour, I had bought three books for myself, and one for David.

I suddenly decided to go and take Barbara to the Picadilly myself, instead of letting her find her own way, as it was only twelve o'clock and I had finished my shopping. I descended the subway, rattled to Earl's Court by tube, bought some tobacco at the shop next to the station, and, filling my pipe, started walking briskly up Earl's Court Road.

I turned off down Pembroke Road in high spirits, looking at the superb photos in David's book and thinking of the futility and waste of the night's raid. Barbara—what had she thought of it; too much asleep to notice, I should imagine. Probably getting a cold lunch ready for David, on his return from school; her light form darting about the compact kitchen, producing a magic lunch from nowhere.

I turned down Ellgan Square, wondering at the scrap iron in the railings, and pulled up with a jerk. A ghastly hand gripped my heart and my blood seemed to clog . . . The bomb had cut the house clean out of the row,

and the rubble and patchy mess stared nakedly up at me. Slowly . . . very slowly . . . my numbed brain took it in . . . There was no more No. 7 . . . there was no more . . . Barbara. I stared blankly, too dazed to realise quite what it meant. A W.K. Policeman came up and stood beside me. I sensed him taking in my expression; we stood there for a while, until he turned and said in a kindly tone that the two bodies had been recovered. I saw him turn his head the other way.

"Thank you," I said, "very much."

My bedroom uninhabitable, I went to bed in the kitchen. I felt I could never go to sleep and just lay in a half-coma, looking up at my silver star, which seemed bigger now, and twinkled with a half smile.

The telephone extension suddenly yelled beside me, terribly worldly and mechanical; its shrillness cut me right through. "Telegrams; Come home immediately; Father dead . . ." It all seemed to have come at once, but in a way I was grateful, for it gave my mind something definite to hold to. Packing; writing a few notes; and very soon I was on the 5.30 a.m. from Paddington.

The chocolate and yellow train with its gorgeous green engine raced smoothly westwards. I sat in the corner, gazing out with listless eyes at the panorama of sun-lit amber foliage and peaceful farms.

We passed a smiling farmhouse, with its white-washed face splashed with ivy, and in front deep red cows munched lazily. In the next field a man was turning up a new furrow of purple earth.

"Seems so peaceful, doesn't it?" said the sergeant at my elbow.

The massive green engine raced westwards. . . .

#### BELLONA'S BRIDEGROOM.

Imagine the sensation of headlong speed  
As, from the hazy height of jostling clouds,  
You dive at the Lilliputian earth.  
Beneath you on the road are marching men,  
Toy soldiers whose unconsidered destiny  
Is ruled by savage whims of crafty minds  
Empowered to despatch them—the missiles,  
Fired by the catapult of impregnate ideals,  
Against a seething hive of steel and stone . . . .  
The aerial silence of the swoop is shattered  
And latent death springs down converging lines.  
The serried ranks are churned, men lie torn  
Like Autumn soil when furrowed by the plough . . . .  
The moment is gone, exhilaration past.  
When the deed is over, Truth will seize your mind  
And you will see how men were killed . . . .  
While their kindred weep, some Aryan field  
Is strewn with phosphates from cremated bones.

#### THERE'S A LONG, LONG TRAIL.

A familiar voice awoke me from my coma. "Isn't it about time you set off for Huntlands?" I started out of my chair, and suddenly saw it was after 10. I had been dozing in Hall, and my prep. lay unfinished in front of me.

"Yes, sir!" I answered, collecting my books together.

I ran downstairs and guessed my way round to the yard in the dark. Pushing open the door of the Change, I felt round for my scarf and mac. I slipped these on, extricated my bike from the garage, and pedalled down the drive.

The night was pitch and the wind ruffled my hair.

Once out of the gate, the wind hustled me along the road which showed up like a strand of ribbon on a black curtain. I rode harder. Soon I was

hurting down the Elmore Hill, with wind numbing my ears till they hurt like —— (anything).

At the bottom I crossed the bridge where the little stream flows down the valley, and prepared for the hill in front.

The wood on my right seemed full of unseen dangers and I could not restrain a few discomforting fears, which increased as my speed decreased for I fancied something tapping behind me. I tried to persuade myself not to imagine things, but this methodic tap, which followed me so closely and even slowed down when I did, was far too real. The hill was reducing my speed now, so I got off and resolved to face my invisible opponent, if he existed.

The tap was very faint now and my own heart-beats were terribly loud in comparison. Cursing my faintheartedness, I began to step out. Sure enough, the noise quickened too.

I jumped on my bike again and pedalled furiously. The patter broke into a run and chased me all the rest of the way. I arrived sweating, in spite of the intense cold.

As I turned my rear lamp off, I suddenly stiffened and gazed hazily at the strap of my luggage carrier, which hung loosely in the spokes of the back wheel.

My heart started beating normally again. . . .”

“ EUTERPE'S ART . . .”

Euterpe's art must be my means of joy,  
For worldly wealth is not my final aim.  
Nor Rubaiyatian sensuousness my God.  
What chance have I, of mediocre brain,  
What chance have I to reach this goal of bliss ?  
Is life an Everest climb, a fruitless quest,  
'Where brave men die, the summit unattained,  
While cowards groan and mumble down below ?  
Will life for me be one of hopeless toil ?

But, there's a chance the struggle will be short :  
A further eighteen months its full extent.  
When I have tasted but the joy of life,  
'Ere bitter disappointment grips my mind,  
As sacks with coal, I may be filled with lead.

But if a quick escape is not my lot  
And Pute's icy hand is on my brow,  
And I, who fought in faith to save this land,  
Must choose the London streets to live in now :  
With numbed hands and body rent with cold,  
My violin mourning thus my heart's despair.  
Still in this wretchedness one thought remains,  
One hope to sooth and cheer my grief-torn brain,  
How I, unseen and scorned by passers'by,  
Had helped preserve for them this liberty . . .  
Alas! This solitary hope can't last,  
For even as I stand, I see how men,  
With senseless souls, rapacious minds,  
Embark upon this slaughter once again.  
And boys too young to see the Gates of Hell,  
Lie burnt by yet more ghastly tools of war.

I fought for peace. I broke my life. In vain.

## GAMBLING.

The philosopher and the insurance company are agreed that all life is a gamble. Day by day we pit ourselves against fire, robbery, railway accidents, influenza, bridges collapsing, and spraining our ankles. We battle unceasingly with famine, homicidal maniacs, and a decline in oil stock. We are fatalists, all of us. We had better stay at home and do nothing.

I remember once vowing to myself that I would cease gambling for ever. It was on a wet Sunday afternoon, and there was nothing else to do. I sat down in an arm-chair and resigned myself to doing nothing. It worked very well for the first two hours. I slept soundly. Then, I am ashamed to say, I resumed the gamble. I rose, with a colossal head-ache, and ate my tea.

But despite all this, the fact that gambling is man's inescapable fate, he asks for more. He frequently indulges in it; if not for the sake of pleasure, at least as a recreation.

In our heart of hearts the word gambling has a certain glamour about it. On hearing it, thoughts come immediately to our mind of the bank at Monte Carlo, financial crooks, dens in Soho, and all the bushy manhood—and womanhood—of the Middle West in the 'eighties. We think of high stakes, false gaiety, velvet dinner jackets, and absinthe: of the bloated financier with his cigar (where there is gambling there are always cigars), giving orders to the subordinate to swindle the poor little man with the young daughter with tuberculosis in both lungs! and of Mae West and the Marx Brothers, and sharp-shooters, tavern brawls, and gin.

Beyond that it is difficult to define. For the football pool fan and the fellow with two bob each way on a horse in the Derby (never back the favourite) it provides amusement. Hence it is a good thing. I prefer bridge.

### 100 WORDS.

It is the habit, I am told,  
Quite often, when a man grows old,  
To stand before a glowing fire  
And warm the back of his attire;  
To kiss small children on the head,  
Tell 'em tis time they went to bed;  
Relate, " My dears, when I was small  
All ships wore sails, with rigging tall;  
Most cars were crocks, all warships wood."  
(He'd tell them more, if they were good).  
Then all the best young men wrote sonnets  
To sweethearts dressed in pale pink bonnets.

'Tis the custom, I am told,  
—Seems as if I'm getting old.

### I'VE BEEN SMITTEN\*.

It was a bitterly cold day, and I was at the hairdresser's—not the superb London type, but at one of the rival Bromyard firms.

The barber was keeping up an incessant conversation in my ear, but I merely grunted to keep him talking whilst really I was thinking how cold his shop was.

After a time he, too, seemed to tire, and, glancing at him out of the corner of my eye (just as he was about to snip off the locks hanging over my forehead) I noticed a malicious look in his eyes. To my dismay he grabbed the curls and began tugging them. Then he pulled them backwards and forwards, round in a circle, and finally began to hit my face with his hand.

Terrified—I suddenly became aware of three or four others standing round me, like medical students surveying an operation.

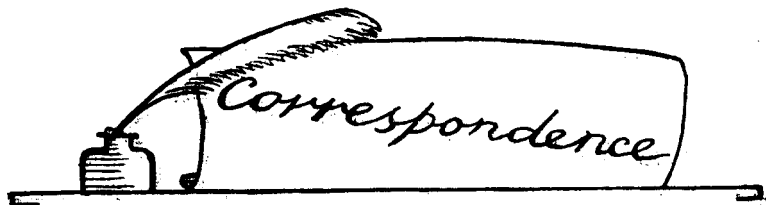
" Look here, you blighters," I yelled indignantly, " I just won't stand for this!" but they all shook with laughter.

Feeling quite subdued enough for one day, I tried to get up. They all started cheering at my effort, but I soon sank back—exhausted.

Then the barber nodded to one of the spectators, who picked up the spray and soaked my face. This really was too much, and, bringing up my boot, I kicked hard at the nearest student.

I awoke to find the Head of House bending over me with a sponge in his hand, and the other members of my dormitory round my blanketless bed. My only consolation was that one of them was rubbing a bruise on his head.

[\*“ Smitten ” is one of the Bromyard Hairdressers.—Ed.]



To the Editor of the "Grantite."

Dear Sir,

Any regular reader of the Oxford Letter, if such a stooge exists, will picture O.W.W. up here as peculiar creatures who call each other Mr. So-and-So, who never use a one syllable word where three would fit—eccentrics living in a rarified atmosphere of quaint madness. Don't be taken in. We are much the same crowd that entered 2, Little Dean's Yard, our first term, shining with carbolic soap, pink, frightened, and surrounded by vast Eton collars. Rationing has dealt with the soap: the collars are long since crumpled little balls of paper at the bottom of Mr. Claridge's ink pots. But fundamentally, believe me, we are no madder than we were them. For instance that grand old fighting alliance in the realm of mathematics between Dick Borradaile and Peter Ray is picking up wonderfully. Many will remember these two, whispering furiously every evening in prep. over their latest mathematical problem, quite oblivious of the fact that no one near them could do any work, until the exasperated monitor intervened and told them to postpone the conference until later. This dual Brains Trust can now work at any hour of the day or night, and there often floats across to my room sounds of the ensuing scuffle when the two budding Einsteins disagree. However, neither allow themselves to work too hard as you might expect. Peter Ray holds the record for brief military careers up here. He rolled up ten minutes late for his first parade, had a slight argument with the R.S.M. on the subject, and next day announced that he had retired from the S.T.C. However, he is due back on the Active Service list as a Radio Locator, in which position no doubt he will flash "Music while You Work" round to the assembled air forces of the world. Dick Borradaile's amorous adventures are far too complicated to trust to print. Anyway, I myself saw him going off to skate at Blenheim, 10 miles away, in a snow storm . . . and I can't help feeling he wouldn't do that just for the love of skating. He also plays a fierce brand of football from which he incurs such terrible injuries that he cannot parade with the S.T.C.—so, you see, History repeats itself.

Within the orbit of this letter come Tony Self and Dick Cawston. When last heard of, the former had passed a vital exam. and came distinctly closer to being a veterinary surgeon. Dick Cawston is on a signaller's course up here; in fact he is the invisible army. All that has come to my ears is that he lives in "a box at the top of nowhere" and is very busy.

Oxford becomes increasingly militarized: it is a great concession that any undergraduate is allowed to study here at all. By next October the University may have shrunk to containing scientists only. A sign of the times occurred the other day when the sergeant-major came up to a long-haired

figure clad in a uniform that bulged in the wrong places—"Who the 'ell d'you think you are—Sir 'enry Wood?" he bellowed. The victim unfortunately was

Your  
OXFORD CORRESPONDENT.

*To the Editor of the Grantite Review.*

Dear Sir,

All the Old Grantites returned, with one addition; to our amazement we discovered one of the "old stagers," whom none of the O.W.W. had come across last term—namely, Mr. Yealland. He has been most elusive; it had been understood that he was to go down last June and resume his medical studies at a London hospital, but it appears that he was too fond of Cambridge. He is much the same as ever, and has apparently not yet lost his interest in ju-jitsu. We see more of Mr. Archer on the River nowadays, though he is never to be seen anywhere else. He is secretary of Trinity Hall Boat Club and still takes the keen interest in new Watermen that he always showed at Westminster. Mr. Sandelson, on the other hand, is no longer cox of the Trinity Second Boat, for he has been forced to give up rowing for good owing to ill health. His fellow O.G.s see little of him nowadays for he moves in higher circles—indeed, he is to be seen more often than not (on the rare occasions that he appears in public), among the crowned and aristocratic heads of South-Eastern Europe. His political views appear to be very versatile as he had so far joined the Varsity Clubs of four different political parties. We understand that, when he joins up in June, his is likely to be granted a commission and gazetted to a post on the Army Staff. We see quite a lot of Mr. Wilson, although he is working very hard. Every day he comes tearing down King's Parade in a blue coat and fiery red sweater, on the bike that we got so used to at Fernie, and gives a loud "Watcher!" in true Indian war-whoop style. Much to his chagrin, he has had to take up Home Guard seriously and has joined the Mobile Battalion. Besides the usual 3½ hours Sunday parade, he has to put in 2 hours in the evening every week, with an occasional whole-day field-day on Sundays. Mr. Macmillan is in fine spirits, but not yet conformed to the ideas of working. Whenever we go into his rooms, he is invariably in, listening to gramophone records and reading the *Amateur Photographer*. The first thing that strikes you on going into the room is the extravagance of having two radiograms, but then it suddenly dawns on you that the huge object on the left of the door is not a radiogram but the packing-case that the other one arrived in!

We have so far not been sued for our last Letter, so we have hopes that next term we may still be your

CAMBRIDGE CORRESPONDENT.

*To the Editor of the "Grantite."*

Dear Sir,

On behalf of those who look after the pigs, and of the rest of the House, I would like to thank the Old Grantite Club for their generous present of our three pigs this term; also to invite any Old Grantites to come and taste them next term.

Yours, etc.,

J. R. B. HODGES.

#### NOTES.

Correspondence should be addressed to The Editor, Fernie Bank, Whitbourne, Worcester, and written clearly.

The Hon. Secretary of the Old Grantite Club and of the *Grantite Review* is A. Garrard, and all enquiries should be sent to him at the Duchy of Lancaster Estate Office, Dunsop Bridge, near Clitheroe, Lancashire.

Back numbers may be obtained from the Editor, price 1s.

The Editor is *not* responsible for any opinions expressed by contributors. The Editor would welcome contributions from any old Grantites.