



THE ELIZABETHAN

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E D I T O R I A L

The Internet threatens to become one of Great Bore Debates. So far, I see very much more in its favour than against. It is a blessed relief to receive essays which are immediately legible, after years spent ruining my eyesight on the depraved cursive of most adolescents. The new Computer Room is bright, light and busy: the boys and girls look enthusiastic whenever I go in there, and this bucks me up.

People get very Luddite about the Internet, and its most militant opponents even millenarian - the Internet marks the death of books, an enemy of scholarship, preparing the way for a new barbarian age etc etc. I certainly agree that a terrific amount of drivel gets into the ether which wouldn't end up any further than the reject file of a respectable publisher. This is a worry if a pupil attaches any credulity to it, but it isn't in my experience a very big problem. Moreover, let me speak the truth which dare not say its name and say that many academic books are appalling - some so turgid as to be unreadable. Four or five hundred poorly written pages need to be expertly leafed in order to come up with two or three unexceptionable ideas. If that's scholarship, why should it be defended?

The Internet undoubtedly takes away some of the more autistic elements of scholarship. I see nothing more inherently virtuous in scanning shelves/contents pages/ indexes of books in chasing up a subject than in getting an Internet Browser to do it more efficiently and better. A mantra becomes easily attached to the rituals of scholarship, but that doesn't mean they are necessarily good.

The real worry isn't the process (ie high-tech as opposed to books), but the maintenance of scholarly standards themselves. Every age group nowadays reads books more reluctantly and less patiently than ever before, but reading intensity began to die with television, and is nothing whatever to do with the Internet. I am genuinely shocked by the vocabulary of some pupils, which seems to be startlingly malnourished. Their affinity to the nuances of text is often less finely honed than it would be if reading were an unselfconscious, daily event in their lives.



Reading, once it becomes a habit - and a pleasurable one - can be extended, by degrees, into more difficult and oblique areas. This is the raw material of much scholarship. It doesn't seem to me to signify one bit whether the reading happens on a VDU screen or between the folios of a book. The mindset is what matters: immersion in works of genuine scholarship teases one into a series of critical responses, but it takes time and stamina.

There are assets to this process which will make it more efficient - the Internet is the most important of these for centuries, so many argue. But no prodigious talent was ever exploited without much repetitive labour and harsh self-examination, and no amount of hi-tech can ever change that. The pursuit of academic excellence is a rigorous and moral business, but also a journey of self-discovery.

The First XI Cup Tie against Bolton last October drew almost unprecedented crowds to the touchline at Vincent Square. Instead of the usual ten to twenty, there must have been two hundred or so. Some of these were pupils instructed to go and watch, but there was nothing lacking in spontaneity in either the support of the crowd, or the commitment of the team. When Bolton scored the first goal, late into the match, both team and crowd rallied behind the First XI goalkeeper; minutes later, Westminster had scored an equaliser. The team was euphoric, and the crowd scarcely less so.

We have often been disdainful of the this kind of 'team spirit'. Perhaps it would be more truthful to say we have often not been able to evoke it, even to the extent of drawing supporters to the touchline. This indifference is not restricted to sport: anybody involved in the Arts at Westminster will know the frustration of giving weeks or months of your life to preparation for a performance, only to discover a paltry sized audience. In the case of plays, there is a habit of 'coming on the last night' which is a mixed blessing, especially if it means a nervous cast spending the first two performances talking largely to empty spaces, while the last night resembles the Black Hole of Calcutta. People go to plays when their friends are in the cast, and the play is either familiar or, on reputable authority, known to be funny. House football matches, for these understandable but parochial reasons, attract a crowd commitment and presence much larger than many School matches. In the case of classical music, even friends turn granite hearted. In a recent straw poll in my Sixth Form, four people were involved in the Choral Concert in Abbey in March, but none of the rest of the set attended.

How do you cajole people to extend their sphere of interest? To turn up to a football match? Go to the School Opera? Visit the Carleton Gallery to see this year's entries for the Takashi Funaki Prize? To do so because, however much or however little you understand of what's going on, the architects of what is before you are your contemporaries, and their skill and commitment should command your respect?

Experience tells me that if you market something adeptly enough, you eventually get an audience. The worry is that it's too often the same audience. Running the John Locke Society parallels what is going on elsewhere: about 25% of the Upper School are diehard attenders, another 50% come if it the speaker is sufficiently famous (note - a merely 'distinguished' speaker commands no such ready audience) and the final 25% hardly show up at all. The same 25% doesn't go to plays or concerts.

There's no clear answer to this but I do maintain we enjoy and understand everything in our lives more, the more we attend to what's going on around us. Any solutions for how to draw in the untouchable last quarter gratefully received.



e d i t o r i a l

A major effort is underway to track down recent pupils at Universities all over the country. The idea is to canvass their opinions about quality of courses, tutoring, lifestyle. None too soon, many would say. Most of the old certainties surrounding graduate employment have disappeared, but University remains the invariable destination of virtually all Westminsters. Their motives for going are often practical, but negative: (i) a decent degree from a well regarded University is virtually essential for most, even if the way into the world of work is more oblique than it once was; (ii) everyone else is.

I think another critical shift concerning Universities is that it no longer spells freedom to school-leavers in the way it did twenty years ago. I hope I was an affectionate son and brother, but there were few sweeter moments than the one when I knew I was saying goodbye to my family for eight weeks at the start of University term. A generation back, living at home meant keeping rooms tidy(ish), curtailing social life around family meals - and only one TV in the house. Put like that, you can see how thousands of eighteen year olds shivered in delight at the prospect of nestling down in a cell in some breeze-block Hall of Residence. A cell, maybe, but your very own cell - and adequately removed from patriarchal authority.

Nowadays, there is a kind of pupil who approaches University entrance in severely materialist terms. The choice, whatever the UCAS form may say, has mentally narrowed down to Oxbridge or London at an early stage. On the strict understanding that a College has status, its Quadrangle rustic charm, and the trains to Paddington leave on the hour, they might consider an application. Should the University authorities lack imagination (inexplicable, but so common, alas!) and fail to come up with an offer, no provincial University need fear an approach from this metropolitan sophisticate. Mummy is making over (and, good God, even doing up) the basement flat in Lansdowne Road especially. Halls of residence are for the provincial anoraks.



True, there's a measure of burlesque here - but only a little. The more prodigal and libertine the home, sophistication takes the place of wisdom, and the less likely University will be what it ought to: a time for rich and plentiful experience, beyond anything School can offer. Clearly there are courses and colleges at London University which are pre-eminent. But it is surely desirable for virtually all OWW to live away from home when doing their first degree. In their first weeks of University, they should try steer as clear of other Westminsters as they can. Strange people (even seeming anoraks) and unpromising situations can metamorphosise within days (or weeks) into something new and splendid. To make that happy discovery, we have to throw away the lifebelt of familiar faces.

Most of our pupils recognize this danger and deal with it perfectly well. Indeed, many are doing a good deal about it well before they leave School. Some know London far more fully and adventurously than their teachers and parents - with friends and interests quite distinct from the sober rhythms of the School term. But it is a truism that Westminster pupils are, in some ways, critically unprepared for University. The honeyed diet of School and home can lead the unprepared into premature disillusionment. Their best prophylactic, by far, is to be studying a course and at an institution commensurate with their best abilities. But once they're there, they should get on with it. No more gilded passage - youthful independence and resilience should kick in now.

e d i t o r i a l

O B I T U A R I E S

G E R R Y A S H T O N

2 JULY 1946 - 4 MAY 1999

Gerry Ashton was one of those rare men who achieved distinction in his career in the three levels of the educational system: at university, and at secondary and primary schools. It was clear that he could have pursued that career successfully at any one of these three levels. His cruelly premature death in May came during his tenure as headmaster of one of the most successful Preparatory Schools in London.

Gerry was born in Wigan in 1946 and educated at the Salesian College in Bolton. Coming from a traditional Roman Catholic background, he found enough nonconformism in his French teacher (and part time UFO expert) to satisfy his impish sense of humour and at the same time to inspire his love of languages. From School he joined the Seminary at Upholland in preparation for the Roman Catholic priesthood. When he decided not to pursue orders he went up to Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge, to read Modern Languages. He began to learn Spanish and developed a great devotion to its language and literature. It was at Cambridge that he developed the clarity, structure and succinctness which became the hallmark of all his writing. In Spanish he covered more ground in three years than many achieved in more than twice the time; and he did so with relish. He took a First and was awarded the Gibson Spanish Scholarship. His time at Cambridge was one of great freedom: released from the struggles that he had had to resolve as a seminarian, he sought to be a liberal in all things and enjoyed the challenge which that posed. On the way to visit his supervisor to discuss proposed research, Gerry bought a copy of Boethius's *De Consolatione* for his own interest and it was to become the topic for a PhD.

It was during his time at Cambridge that he met his wife Rosemary. Subsequently he took up a permanent post at Strathclyde University. At this time there was a lack of mobility in higher education and this restricted pursuit of a purely academic career. As a result, and because by this stage Rosemary had moved to University College, London (where she now holds a Chair), in 1975 Gerry applied for a teaching post at Westminster School. He found himself surrounded by bright and committed pupils in a fledgling department. When he became Head of Spanish, he built unobtrusively on the department's developing success. Boys and girls found his understated intellectualism and his deceptive casualness attractive, and the brightest of them took from him an academic rigour which gave their work new purpose and quality. The less (or at least, less obviously) able trusted his teaching and enjoyed his lessons.

His knack of bringing the best out of pupils, to engage and to be listened to, made him a certain candidate to be a Housemaster. His interest in his pupils and the time which he gave them were prodigious. From being Housemaster of Liddell's he was invited to become Registrar of the School, a critical post which involved a good deal of contact with the Preparatory School world. When Westminster Under School headmastership became vacant in 1991, Gerry was appointed by the Governing Body of Westminster School and moved to Vincent Square as Master.

In some respects Gerry seemed an unlikely Prep School head – a mild sceptic, curious, inclined to humour rather than passion, and wary of enthusiasm. His strengths lay in personal relationships, never expecting or demanding too much, always philosophical and kind when confronted with doubt or failure. His family was the welcoming centre of his life: he and Rosemary were generous in their hospitality. Even during his illness he was to invite the staff to his home in Dulwich after a school inspection. Gerry encouraged and aided Rosemary in her distinguished career: family holidays were spent, on occasions, at Yale; Gerry was always the first to review each completed chapter of any new biography.

The warmth of his family life spilled over into school where he acknowledged adolescent angst with sympathy but equally relished biking sorties and the wizardry of Harry Potter. The happiness of the boys around him was his primary aim. He actually liked his charges, and behind those thick glasses were two highly intelligent and mischievous eyes that always enjoyed engaging the boys: it was impossible to pass him without looking at him and speaking a few words. Temperamentally unable to punish, he inspired widespread affection: an authority figure who was more likely to wink than to preach, to distribute toffees than clichés - perhaps his sternest word was 'Stop'. Each pupil felt that he was given individual attention: despite the privileged home circumstances of many of the pupils, Gerry perceived that there was no guarantee that each had been listened to sympathetically and understood, and he sought at all times to bridge that possible gap. His Mastership became a wonderfully enriching experience. His family, friends and colleagues are bereft and a generation of Under School boys feels that they have lost a friend.

CHARLES KEELEY

COMMON ROOM
1950 - 1980

FUNERAL ORATION

The reason I am speaking to you today about Charles Keeley is not simply that I was one of his many pupils in the History VII at Westminster School, or that we went on to become life long friends but that, in my case his influence was life long and directly determined the course of my own career; and that in the end I came to accept all his views on liberalism in education and maybe most on Catholicism.

In case you don't know who I am, and if you don't you do not need to know, I started and ran for many years a little experimental school in Richmond in Surrey, that was committed to academic standards, an easy timetable, very few games, a good social mix from the state sector and no corporal punishment. This was between 1975 and 1991. But the story goes a lot further back to 1958, when as a junior boy I met Charles in the cloisters and being in considerable difficulties in things like Latin and Maths, wrote extra-curricular essays for him and found myself within a year, not in the geography remove, but in the History VII where I spent about half my time at Westminster School. The important thing about this, for me, was not that I learned the dates of the Kings of England - actually I was always very hazy about them - but that it taught me how to think, how to write and talk and, in the long run, how to teach.

The Times obituarist was in no way exaggerating when he said that, through the medium of his history, Charles Keeley was one of the great educators in the English public school system in the 20th century. I could not imagine him ever being concerned with things like teaching diplomas, any more really than with typewriters and computers, or even at the end of the day with results - though his results were, in his heyday in the fifties, the best results in the country.

His own early academic career was outstanding. Born in Maidstone in 1919, he won a scholarship to Maidstone Grammar School and then at seventeen to New College, where (after war service) he got a First in History in 1946, becoming a research student at Christ Church in the same year - though for some reason not a full Fellow of an Oxford College. He once described this time as the 'tragedy of his life'. But as so often happens in life, tragedy turned into triumph after he went to Westminster in 1950 where his boys won scholarship after scholarship to every major and minor Oxbridge College, and a good proportion of them proceeded to become academics in provincial and commonwealth universities, editors of national newspapers and the like.

And yet at the core of this there was always the query that the system was not quite fair: that people had to pay too much money to go to schools like Westminster and that Oxbridge was too élitist and took too many pupils from the

public schools. As the obituarist implied, when he resigned from the headship of department to run a boarding house, he joined the hearties by the soccer pitch, but still seemed to be running with the hares whilst hunting with the hounds.

When I went down to lunch with him at Harrietsham after he retired in 1981, we would discuss the state of my own little school, and then the name of some old Westminster would creep in, and the indication that if he had been to Westminster and Christ Church, perhaps he would have been a Fellow after all.

I think that it was this concern for a less divided society than we have, which apart from academic standards, was his most lasting and endearing quality for me. He had, after all, been in training for the Catholic priesthood after he came down in 1948 and before he went to Westminster, and his liberalism and his Catholicism, seemed to me at the end to be his most outstanding characteristics.

We all die and in our Christian faith, this is a release from this 'mortal coil, the gateway to a much better and less transient world'. I think Charles would have been certain of this: I am sure that Charles would have agreed with Milton when he wrote:

'The shepherd took up his cloak of blue
Tomorrow to fresh fields and pastures new'.

CAREY PALMER (OW, 1956-1961)



o b i t u a r i e s

LESLIE SPAULL

COMMON ROOM

1946-1974

Leslie Spaul came to Westminster as art master in 1946, still very much in the aftermath of the war and life unbelievably difficult. Facilities for teaching art were virtually non-existent; the School's buildings had been badly damaged in the war; there was no money for anything except reducing the School's overdraft; and the Governing Body was, or appeared to be, largely philistine and gave little priority to art – which in fact had not for several years been taught at all. But Leslie was quite undeterred and set about establishing his department on a firm footing. His talent as a painter, shown not only in his pictures which could be seen in the Royal Academy's Summer Exhibitions, but also in his painting of scenery for School plays, was quickly grasped and appreciated by discerning colleagues and pupils – the latter valuing perhaps above all his lectures on the History of Art, the former being no less impressed by the speed with which he solved The Times crossword! His skill as a teacher was demonstrated by the annual exhibition of his pupils' work.

Anyone who got to know Leslie at all well could not fail to be impressed by the breadth of his knowledge and abilities. He designed furniture, was a successful photographer, a skilled repairer of clocks, a fine book-binder, and no mean shot with a .22 rifle. He was the School's archivist as well as editor of a new volume of the Record of Old Westminster.

Leslie Spaul was not an orthodox art teacher, and was teaching at a time when the subject was still not taken seriously at many schools. He was remarkably tolerant and open-minded, quite happy to let his pupils write essays on such obscure subjects as 'Hispano-Flemish painting of the 15th Century'. He made no attempt to direct their artistic tastes, but stimulated an interest in many aspects of the



subject without any rigid chronological approach. His restless encyclopaedic mind was always going off in unexpected directions – topics ranging from the Ancient Egyptian period to duelling pistols! He was a pioneer and a great original. In the 1960's few Westminsterers were fascinated by art, but for those who showed talent or interest, he provided a refuge. They could paint or browse through the art room library; they learned here to understand pictures, to create their own images.

Some art periods were devoted to drawing and painting, others gave greater insights into his talents as a great teacher. In a darkened room – a challenge to anyone's disciplinary powers – he lectured in a drily humorous way, never giving judgements on what was projected on the screen, never hinting at his own preferences for any school of painting or sculpture. If other teachers taught how to think, it was Leslie Spaul who taught one how to look. In the opinion of one pupil who later became a television producer, his lectures on art were far superior to the programmes on Civilisation fronted by Lord Clark.

He was essentially a hospitable person, conspicuous for his talent for friendship. And in everything he did he was sustained by his wife José's help and support. He is survived by her and their two daughters.

DENIS MOYLAN

LESLIE SPAULL, 1947

o b i t u a r i e s

C O M M O N R O O M

In autumn we welcomed our new Head Master, Tristram Jones-Parry, who had already held an impressive range of positions here between 1973 and 1994, and came to us after a highly successful headmastership at Emanuel.

New colleagues included Mr Jaideep Barot and Dr Andy Reid (Physics), Mrs Fiona Smart (Classics), Dr Gabrielle Ward-Smith (History), Mr John Witney (Modern Languages), and the Revd Huw Mordecai. Claudia Harrison's and Amanda Jørgenson's maternity leave were covered by Nick Bell (Geography) and Sarah Strachan (Art).

There have also been more junior additions: sons to Guy and Henrietta Hopkins, Tony and Ela Morris, and Rachel and Andy Mylne; daughters to Amanda and Alex Jørgenson, David and Vicki Riches, Martin and Helena Robinson, and Claudia Harrison and Pat; and twins to Fiona Freckleton and her husband Nigel.

J I M C O G A N

Jim arrived at Westminster in September 1964. The Headmaster of Rugby had written: 'I know of a good chap. He filled in here for a year and then went off to the West Indies on some business venture. He was a definite success here. Not a bad cricketer either. Name of Jim Cogan'. Jim was appointed by John Carleton, without interview, on the basis of this reference. He did not disappoint.

He arrived as the Young Turk of the English department. He has remained that. For more years than I care to remember

Jim was the intellectual centre of a vibrant Common Room. Teachers and pupils sprang to life in his company. Tired colleagues would suddenly find the mental vigour and energy to join in the discussions that Jim forced on us all. He cajoled, bullied and teased us into exploring together the most wide-ranging issues. He refused to be satisfied with half-truth, sloppy thought or intellectual dishonesty. His own mind was constantly deployed, not only in his incomparable teaching - everyone wanted to be in his set - but also with us, his colleagues. His humour is irresistible - the sheer fun of being in his company attracted the oldest and the youngest teachers and it is certainly not only the pupils that are educated by him. He is still at it every morning at breakfast.

Soon after Jim arrived at Westminster he was appointed to be Librarian. He immediately showed his love of books by painting a white line along the spines of all the books in the library, whatever their rarity or value. Perhaps this is not surprising in a man who admitted in later life that he did not like reading books and preferred magazines. He was quickly promoted!

In September 1971 Jim was appointed Master of The Queen's Scholars and Under Master at the age of 34. This would be young now, then it was revolutionary. So started an exceptional 16 years in Westminster's life. Jenny made No 3 Little Dean's Yard the centre of that life. There were always colleagues, pupils or family dropping in for meals and the talk and the laughter went on into the night. It was their home to which new teachers gravitated and to both Jim and Jenny that pupils from all over the School would turn to for advice. Jim's no-nonsense approach in his dealings with pupils,



NOT ALL ENJOYED EXPEDITIONS

together with a compassion and humour worked extremely well. College was a good place in which to grow up. Jim's habit of dropping in on them at one o'clock in the morning kept the seniors on their toes.

Not content with being Under Master, a Housemaster and teaching a full timetable, Jim still had energy left over. With John Field, he decided that Westminster pupils needed some idea of what mountains looked like. So the idea of Expeditions was born. In those days they did not include the soft variety. They were all out in the rain - and enjoy it. Amongst the unconverted there was the idea that Jim was disorganised. Much glee erupted when another young colleague rang from Euston Station to say he had missed the train because Jim had got out of the taxi and left him with the food. Jim, of course, had not told him where they were going. Yet the Expeditions always worked and the doubters were proved wrong. Jim was

never a great man for using a map. On what he thought was his tenth ascent of Scafell, this time with a zealous colleague who read a map, Jim discovered that he had never in fact climbed Scafell Pike.

As well as all this, Jim organised the annual ski-trip - colleagues vied to be invited. His energy was still not used up.

When the master i/c cricket left, Jim took over. He was the First XI coach for many successful years. Never before or since have there been so many colleagues down at Vincent Square on sunny Saturday afternoons. It became a convivial place to be. Jim was always, though, excited by further possibilities. He would never rest on his laurels. So was born the Star XI from India. We had the honour of watching a 13 year old Tendulkar play at Vincent Square and Mike Brearley tempted back to play against them. As earlier noted, Jim himself was no mean batsman.

When Jim stepped down from College and later from being Under Master, rightly or wrongly he felt betrayed. Most of the wounds we hope have healed now. Since then Jim has embarked on a whole new 'career'. What started as him encouraging College boys to do something useful in their year off became SPW (Schools' Partnership Worldwide). This has grown enormously, so that eventually Jim has had to go part-time at Westminster. SPW is now a nationwide organisation delivering pupils to many parts of the world. It has expanded into links between schools and now universities and even city councils. It is a shining example of what one person can do if they have a vision for what they think is right. Jim has that vision. SPW is certainly no longer a one man band. As well as experts in the field, Jim seems to have recruited a large number of recently retired Headmasters to work for him - surprising, given Jim's views on Headmasters!

What will be my personal memories of Jim? An outstanding teacher of English. He also had a particular love of and gift for teaching General English. Pupils' descriptions of Jim lying on a desk whilst expounding on Shakespeare. Certainly Jim is the teacher I would most like to have been taught by. Playing Fives with him for so many years. His tendency to assault pupils physically, colleagues and even Head Masters. Having fun whether in the pub, on expeditions or in Jim's own restaurant. I forgot to mention that! The good thing is that Jenny will still be here and therefore so will Jim.

Jim has had a profound effect for good on dozens of teachers and hundreds of boys and girls over the last 35 years. He has been the cohesive presence that all closed communities need. Jim, with Jenny, has been the heartbeat of Westminster.

TRISTRAM JONES-PARRY



J O H N B A I R D

At Jim Cogan's farewell party John, who first came to Westminster in the same year as Jim, in 1964, accompanied Lucy Barker when she sang an aria from *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Summertime* and *Misty*. She represented the many musicians who started their careers here and her choice of songs reflects something of the range of music which has flourished at Westminster in the past decade and a half, opera, musical theatre and cabaret. Jim, in introducing her, said that her presence was itself a tribute to John's contribution to developing the very high standard of music at Westminster. What he did not know was that John had been coaching and rehearsing Lucy for several weeks in preparation for her return to professional singing after university. John maintains a prodigious range of contacts with past pupils in the musical and artistic worlds and numbers among his former pupils Ian Bostridge, George Benjamin, Julian Anderson, Justin Harmer and Leigh Melrose.

As a student at the Royal College of Music John studied conducting under Sir Adrian Boult, so it was appropriate that when he eventually became Director of Music he found himself involved in instituting the Annual Concert at Westminster in memory of his former teacher. He had also studied composition under Herbert Howells and William Lloyd-Webber, and a distinctive feature of his time as Director of Music has been the encouragement of composing as well as high standards of solo and orchestral performance.

John started his career at Westminster as a peripatetic in 1964, teaching A and O level Music and piano. At that stage he was also teaching harmony and counterpoint at the Royal College of Music. It was not until 1977 that he became a full time member of a Department of two as assistant to David Byrt, and was appointed by John Rae to succeed Charles Brett as Director in 1983.

His brief as he saw it was to bring music to life at Westminster by making it accessible to every member of the School, with the aim of developing an informed interest in good music, classical, jazz, rock or pop which could last a lifetime. He was convinced that the Music

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department must be a 'service industry', concerned with not only putting on concerts but supporting drama and Abbey Services with appropriate music.

This led to a large number of innovations, many of which are now an accepted and integral part of musical life at Westminster; the introduction of practical class music in the Fifth Form before the GCSE course which Westminster was one of the first schools to embrace; the tradition of every House putting on an annual concert (on the rare occasions when a House did not have quite enough talent, in combination with another); the development of the Abbey Choir, and the performance of major choral works (Bach's *St Matthew Passion*, Brahms' *German Requiem*, Haydn's *Creation*) in the Lent Term. The Parents' Choir evolved from these concerts and now attracts a loyal following among current and recent parents; the Contemporary Music Society's annual concert features works composed by pupils; the Election Term concert enables star performers to play a concerto movement with the orchestral rehearsals concentrated in the first weekend of term to give proper time for revision for public exams; several times a year there are now charity concerts in Yard given by jazz and rock groups.

Under John music making was encouraged outside the School in homes, primary schools and hospitals. Carol singing at underground stations raised funds for charity. Jazz venues in the West End have featured Westminster bands in recent years.

As a teacher of composition John has many former pupils whose work he follows closely, Richard Blackburn, Julian Anderson, George Benjamin and more recently Edmund Jolliffe (Liddell's 1989). His own works range from a children's opera *Treble Chance* (1971) based on Chaucer's *Pardoner's Tale*, to a London *Te Deum*, various works for organ and oboe, settings of Christmas Carols and his recent *Carnival* and *Gloria*.

Another of John's passions is Wagner and he has introduced generations of Westminsters to the *Ring Cycle* and *Parsifal* through recordings and notes of the principle motifs followed up by visits to performances at the ENO and Covent Garden. In the middle 1970's before he became Director of Music he was Artistic Director of the Wagner Society and, assisted by Friedlind Wagner and Dame Eva Turner, conducted the first semi-professional performances of the later operas.

In 1997 John stepped down as Director of Music, handing over to Guy Hopkins. He was made Director Emeritus and Composer in Residence by David Summerscale and continued to teach A level music and composition. The latest version of his *Gloria* was performed last Play Term in St John's Smith Square conducted by Guy Protheroe as part of the School Concert. He is taking early retirement to concentrate on his composing, encouraged by a successful visit to the United States in February 1999.

Looking back over his 14 years as Director of Music it would be no exaggeration to say that in spite of limited facilities music at Westminster enjoys an enormously enhanced reputation, both within the School and in the outside world. As David Summerscale often said, what other school could put on full scale operas of such a standard as recent productions of *The Magic Flute*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, Gluck's *Orfeo*, Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*? And Westminster is doubly fortunate that John's successor, Guy Hopkins, has himself musically directed opera and is as committed as the Head of Drama to opera within the School. The teaching of singing developed by John is an essential ingredient too, and the operatic tradition owes much to Shauna Beasley and now Gavin Carr.

No Director of Music has an easy passage at Westminster or perhaps at any school. There is a permanent tension which can break into conflict between academic pressures and the need to get the required grades and the demands of music making, an activity which brings pleasure and delight to audiences (and one hopes performers) but in the final analysis, except for those committed to a musical career, is a leisure pursuit. John, as a professional for whom music is everything, always found it difficult to accept that any talented musician should restrict his or her talent to the concert platform without sharing it for the good of the community. On occasion this could lead to conflict and John might appear sometimes to have missed the appropriate moment to make a compromise. Probably all Directors of Music find themselves in this position if they want to maintain high standards and persuade those with talent, particularly Music Scholars, to achieve the highest possible standards. The many professional musicians whose musical training started at Westminster under John acknowledge their debt to him and many generations of amateurs of music, in the strict sense, for whom music is a vital part of their lives, have much to thank him for. We wish him every success in the next phase of his career, supported as ever by Penny who will continue to teach at Westminster.

TIM FRANCIS

ROBERT COURT

Robert Court came to Westminster from Clare College Cambridge (where he was a Scholar) to teach Physics in 1974. At that time he was one of three members of the Common Room who had been educated at St Paul's. They were later to be joined by Peter Hughes when he was appointed to set up the Robert Hooke Science Centre, and by James Gazet.

Robert soon made his mark as a teacher, a cricket coach, and House Tutor in Wren's. In 1986 he succeeded Rory Stuart as Housemaster of Wren's, presiding over a happy and successful House and its unique tradition of celebrating Sir Christopher Wren's birthday with an entertainment of music, poetry and humour.

C O M M O N R O O M

Characteristic of Robert's style was his efficiency over paperwork (the desk in his study was always clear) and a brisk and concise manner at meetings. With his organised mind he was ideally suited to take over from David Custance as Director of Studies and steered the protracted negotiations between departments over the Lower School Curriculum to a successful conclusion, balancing competing claims for valuable teaching time with the technical possibilities of the timetable.

His skills as negotiator and ability to present an argument clearly were again summoned to the aid of the Common Room in his chairmanship of a Special Committee set up to examine the vexed issue of self-service catering and the proposals for rebuilding Grant's Hall.

Robert was devoted to cricket both in the School as a coach, as the organiser of the Pink Elephants, and the owner of the complete Wisden with an encyclopaedic knowledge of the game. As a Member of the MCC he went to many Test Matches and ingeniously managed to make his sabbatical term coincide with an Ashes Series in Australia, and later followed England on their tour of Zimbabwe. He is also a very good bridge player, and during many a lunch hour played for the Common Room against the School.

He leaves us to become Headmaster of Birkdale School in Sheffield, an evangelical foundation very much in tune with his own beliefs and faith. On several occasions he set these out in talks in Abbey, one of which, on his visit to Israel, made a particular impression on all present.

At his farewell speech at the Summer Party he revealed a well kept secret. He had taken the Challenge in 1965 and been elected Third Scholar into College. In those days the St. Paul's exam was a week later and he also won a Foundation Scholarship there which he accepted. As it turned out, he spent many more years in his career at Westminster than at St Paul's, from which it might be concluded that he thought highly of this establishment. He then went on to express his appreciation of present and past friends in the Common Room, and paid moving tributes to the memory of David Hepburne Scott as an inspirational and hugely entertaining colleague in the Physics Department and to Stewart Murray with whom he worked for many years running football and cricket teams.

We wish him and Andrea every success and happiness in Sheffield. We have no doubt Robert will take a keen interest in Yorkshire cricket and enjoy their new home half an hour's drive from their official residence in the Peak District.

TIM FRANCIS

D A V I D C O O K

When David Cook first entered Dean's Yard in 1978 to take up his post as a history teacher (or rather 'medieval history' teacher, as he would insist), little did School, with the probable exception of John Rae, suspect that this gritty, gruff un-public school figure of a man would become a Westminster phenomenon for the next two decades.

It soon became clear that, for David, sport and learning were synonymous. If Albert Camus had said that soccer had taught him everything he knew about morality, then Cookie certainly taught his history as if it had everything to do with game strategy. For generations of Westminster historians the name 'Leicester' must still be resonant with medieval power struggles, gory deeds and fears of relegation. For these same historians, the clinical accuracy of a strike, the defensive retreat and a judicious sense of distribution had, thanks to DRC, as much to do with the well-honed essay as the well-fought match.

It was not long before Cookie succeeded the now sadly departed Stewart Murray as Head of Soccer. The only things they had in common were their love of the game, a weakness for the very finest malt whisky and an enduring friendship. As for management style, they were light years apart. Out went Stuart's sagely philosophical approach, and in came fire, fury, blast and bluster. It did not, in fact, make for more victories (double-figure defeats, it has to be said, were not unknown in that pre-Kemball era), but there was much spectacle and plenty of excitement. The boys intuitively knew that the more their coach bawled at them, the higher he rated their potential. And this was as true at St Andrew's Boys Club as it was at Paradise (aka Up Fields). Indoor Soccer LSA was a misnomer if LSA was taken to mean 'Lower School' Activities. 'Lively Soccer Action' would be far nearer the mark. True, the juniors would arrive thrice-weekly at 4:20 on the dot; Upper Shells would begin to muster around 5.00, Sixth and Remove at 5.30, and, if they were lucky, the stray old boys, anxious to shed their City garb, would get a final 'knock' with Cookie, Mozie and the lads before the 6.15 halt. Very much a Whole School Activity!

Appropriate, too, that Hakluyt's, the first of David Summerscale's new Houses, so wisely entrusted to DRC, received its 'virtual' christening in mid-March and mid-Channel with a bottle of duty-free Moët as the trusty Brittany Ferries vessel steamed Cookie and the lads towards yet another of those legendary continental football tours which the young Westminsters, Ray Gilson the groundsman, and Howard Fox bursar and Soccer Club Treasurer, so enjoyed.

With the responsibilities of founding and running a new House, it would have been reasonable for Cookie to bow out of School sport. Reason was never a guid-

c o m m o n r o o m

ing principle with DRC and the opposite proved the case. Within minutes of accepting responsibility for cricket he was busy planning a West Indian tour, and subsequently DMS asked him to take on full responsibility for sport at Westminster to which he agreed with characteristic enthusiasm, even though he was spending more and more of his free time on academic work in Malaysia with his wife Debbie, herself an ex-Westminster economist.

Amazingly, this unrelenting commitment to the competitive edge of Westminster life, be it sporting or academic (few colleagues were as proud as David when historians beat English students in the Oxbridge Entrance stakes) was tempered, better, complemented by a very gentle and understanding awareness of the stresses that confront Westminster pupils every day of their school lives. He was always ready to lend a compassionate ear, but ultimately he regarded fun as the best therapy, and that did not go unappreciated among the first generations of Hakluytians. He was immensely and infectiously proud of his 'baby', and relieved to know that the House would be entrusted to Jeremy Kemball once he had accepted the post of Principal of Qatar Academy, where he now prospers alongside his wife and two young daughters. One of his first decisions in the job was to introduce LSAs to the Gulf. 'A gentle giant', 'a neurotic stickler for correct spelling, 'the best striker Westminster Common Room has ever had', 'a man whose principles were almost as strong as his language'; many things have been said of David. Not all - but most - are true.

MAURICE LYNN



Y M C A - H I S K A R A O K E F A V O U R I T E

RICHARD STOKES

C O M M O N R O O M

H E L E N P I K E

When Dave Cook departed for Qatar at the end of 1997 we were lucky enough to gain the services of Helen Pike as a temporary replacement. With Cookie Helen shared an enthusiasm for cricket and the Norman Conquest so she was an ideal replacement. There, however, the similarities ended. Helen brought glamour (remember the gown? that fur coat? those purple gloves?), enthusiasm and flair to the History Department, as well as scholarly habits and a total commitment to the task: within weeks she was intrepidly planning trips to Normandy and a girls' cricket Station. Helen showed herself to be a popular, hard-working and very successful teacher who quickly gained many friends in the Common Room. We wish her every success at her present post, the City of London School for Boys.

GILES BROWN

B R I A N S M I T H

'Mr Smith! Mr Smith!! Mr Smith!!!' Those were the cries that welcomed Brian, as he crossed Yard to attend an interview for his present job in Swaziland, three months after leaving Westminster. The spontaneous cries were uttered by members of the School, who came running up to their former teacher, as though he'd been away for three years.

His popularity at Westminster was never courted; he was, very simply, liked. He taught French here for two years, not always in the target language - jargon he abhorred - but with inimitable elegance, gentleness, bonhomie, wit, enthusiasm and a peerless French accent. His concern for the welfare of his students was typical of a man who not only ran Community Service at Westminster, but organised the Drama course during PHAB at the beginning of the summer holidays. Secure in his own beliefs, he never pushed them or sought acolytes, and there was something refreshingly irreverent about his goodness.

Briano, as he was dubbed almost immediately by some members of the Common Room, was the sort of the individualistic teacher who makes Westminster special. Despite his popularity with students and colleagues, he loathed to be lionised; and when I wrote to him with a request for dates and information about his achievements at Westminster, he declined to respond, sending me a naughty postcard instead.

Homme au sourire tendre...

PETER HOLMES

Peter Holmes' departure means farewell to a giant of Yard. He arrived in 1987 but such is the sense of architectural permanence that surrounds him, he seems in direct line of descent from the foundress herself – an impression reinforced by his devoted custodianship of the Camden Room, and his organisation of the annual Foundation Day gatherings. From here, Peter's repertoire of voices is often heard to boom out.

Peter's professional experience as actor brought charisma and determination to many aspects of his teaching, as well as a dimmer sense that he knows more of 'the wind and the rain' beyond our privileged walls. Texts have been made to run and perform for his pupils, and his varied experience – in the Liverpool rep, on TV, in very different schools from ours – have brought an extraordinary fund of professionalism to his classroom and to the Westminster stage. Particularly memorable was his 1989 production of *Henry IV Part One*, his rôle as the ghost of Hamlet's father in John Field's *Hamlet* in College Hall, and Peter's own *Hamlet* up School two years ago.



HE HAS BEEN SAVING FOR A RETIREMENT TREAT

Peter has worked with two Heads of Departments at Westminster – Gavin Griffiths and myself. Both have come to depend on his total reliability as a teacher, and his sense of duty and professionalism. He has made an outstandingly scholarly contribution to the School. Regularly, meticulously hand crafted grid plans have appeared, marshalling the speaking parts of another Shakespeare reading into fascinating order. A Chaucerian scholar, Peter spent time in the Bodleian Library in holidays, to him a natural and necessary activity, glossing commentaries on his beloved Franklin's Tale or Shakespeare's history plays. This examination of his texts

has been something in which many of his pupils joined, with the appropriate spirit of inquiry. My own papers have been enriched by Peter's scrupulous studies of Webster and Chaucer; even when undergoing a lengthy hip operation, Peter used the opportunity to work on his Shakespeare research. He has taken particular care for the Fifth Form, establishing the 'nuts and bolts' of English, while fostering at the same time a deep commitment to literary texts. He cherishes his pupils' scripts, illuminating them with his characteristically crystalline handwriting.

Many pupils and parents will continue to value that most unlikely of stations he created – punting and skiffing. Peter continues to haunt the waterways of the Thames, with the tough competitiveness of a serious coach and sportsman. Thanks to him, two generations of punters and skiffers have passed through Peter's tutelage, and many continue to prosecute their art on the Cam and the Isis.

He has also sacrificed many hours to restoring and cataloguing Westminster's babel-like archive, and to research-

ing the original monastic architecture of Ashburnham House; he has been a devoted tutor up Grant's, and perhaps some of his most unrecognised work has gone on with Amnesty International, turning the Camden Room into a hive of well-organised protest.

He will be much missed, and there are many snapshots of him – though not literally. Some might show him clutching his own tea-mug; scanning the broadsheet newspapers beneath a reading lamp; cycling into Yard with knee-length socks pulled up over his

trousers; gently wassailing the company at Jim Cogan's restaurant; his waistcoats and watch-chains. Above all, Peter should be remembered for the principles he brought to Westminster: he believes that dedication to his teaching and pupils comes first, and that there are no literary limits to a student's capabilities. I hope that between his games of bridge and cribbage, as well as from his more distant bournes along the Thames, he will take up the permanent visiting rights to this School he so richly deserves. We wish him well.

RICHARD PYATT

C O M M O N R O O M

STEVE ADAMS

A graduate of Selwyn College, Cambridge, Steve Adams worked for the BBC in London and carried out MSc research in Canada before settling into his true vocation at Manchester Grammar School where he taught for a number of years. When he came to Westminster as Head of Physics in 1992 and took over a department noted for the length of service of its staff – sixteen years, on average – Steve must have dreaded the prospect of trying to reform such a well-established team. He wisely avoided revolution in favour of an evolutionary policy that built on the changes initiated by his predecessor in the late 1980s. Steve set about fine-tuning the department's teaching to achieve the very high level of success in public examinations seen in recent years. In stimulating the ambitions of physics students he always looked beyond the confines of his own subject, seeking to benefit the whole teaching of science at Westminster. His most remarkable achievements were the foundation of Hooke magazine as an opportunity for pupils to write about science, and the establishment of Science Society lectures by visiting speakers. Encouragement of pupils to attend lectures outside School and to visit CERN in large numbers each year has also featured in Steve's campaign to raise the profile of Westminster science both within and outside the School. Steve's ability to nourish the brightest pupils with his teaching has been recognised by his selection to accompany the British team to this year's International Physics Olympiad. However, the less able student has not been neglected; as a dedicated teacher Steve really does care for all his pupils and has devoted many hours giving individual help to those pupils who find A-level physics far from easy.

Steve's interest in physics and in teaching goes far beyond the confines of any syllabus. His love of modern physics and his talent for explaining difficult concepts has been evident both in the RHSC laboratories and in the string of publications which has emerged from his pen over the past seven years. These days few A-level students could fail to acknowledge a text by S F Adams in their Research and Analysis bibliography and there always seems to be a new project taking shape on his word processor. As assistant editor of *Physics Education*, Steve keeps his finger on the pulse of new developments in the subject while contributing many ideas of his own. And in this perhaps lies his greatest contribution to physics teaching at Westminster; Steve has turned the department's attention outward and has established for it many links with the wider world. During his time at Westminster the Heads of Physics at both Eton and Marlborough were appointed from his department.

Good teaching ranges far beyond the academic, and Steve has carried out all aspects of his work with conspicuous commitment and success. Many pupils up Rigaud's have been grateful for his care as a Tutor. An enthusiastic sportsman, both as a coach of pupils and a member of Common Room teams, Steve recently took great delight

in captaining the only departmental team ever to compete in the Bringsty Relay. Undaunted by a lack of victory in that event, he was soon challenging pupils to take on his department in a five-a-side football tournament. At School Steve has chosen to devote most of his physical energy to tennis. Station, but he also enjoys long-distance walking and, together with John Vincent, has led a succession of Lower School Expeditions in exploration of the rugged coastline of the British Isles.

The demands of teaching at Westminster and a heavy writing commitment have made Steve value all the more the time he spends with his family. As he leaves Westminster to take up the challenging post of Head of Science at Shrewsbury, Steve will be glad to move with his wife Roxanne and their sons from the noisy centre of London to a more peaceful and rural environment. However, although Steve is moving far from the capital city, I have no doubt that he will make as major a contribution to British science teaching from his new base in Shropshire as he has from Westminster.

Pupils and colleagues alike are very grateful for all Steve has done here and for the steadfast friendship and support he has offered so many of us. We wish him and his family every success and happiness in his new appointment and in their new home.

MARK TOCKNELL

NICK MALONEY

Nick came to Westminster straight from Cambridge – the only economist in his year to take up teaching. And a natural teacher he proved to be, with an immediate rapport with the pupils and a willingness to devote considerable amounts of extra time to those struggling with the subject. By the end of his energetic two years here his sets had achieved record A-level results and the departmental stock of hand-outs and revision material had grown considerably.

At one point he was nearly killed by a car which, with characteristic enthusiasm, he was overtaking on his bicycle (the environment had suddenly become a major focus of our A-level teaching). Fortunately, having flown several yards down a steep hill, and over the car that had suddenly turned right without indicating, he was saved by his protective head gear and had to spend only a few days in hospital.

He took to the Water as soon as he arrived, working his way up to coaching more and more senior crews. There were some impressive J16 results and by the end he was widely felt to be indispensable. The same impressive commitment was seen in PHAB, which he enjoyed so much that he will be coming back against this Summer. Rumour has it that, as he pursues his post-graduate studies, he is also about to make a come-back at Putney.

RUSSELL DUDLEY-SMITH

C O M M O N R O O M

SHARON NEWMAN

Frozen chickens through jet engines, Chippendales beneath departmental benches and a firm understanding of the tensile properties of supportive underwear: these are the legacies of Sharon Newman.

Sharon arrived at Westminster in 1990 to teach physics, fresh from Cranleigh. With industrial experience from working as an engineer at Rolls Royce, she always approached her teaching from a practical point of view, using demonstrations, experiments and numerous variations on the theme of the aforementioned frozen chicken to explain energy, electricity and planetary motion. Keen to explain as well as indoctrinate, she was immensely popular with both the scholarly Fifth Former and the hardened Upper Shell; even those rare foolish souls for whom physics was not a *raison d'être* were entertained, if not by her sense of humour, then by her feminist manifesto for the male of the species.

Her interest in supportive underwear, on the other hand, developed from her passion for horse riding. She discovered this at Westminster and led numerous expeditions across the wuthering moors of Port Talbot. If she was not riding, she was shooting, leading the School team to victory in the Small Bore Category.

She tutored successfully in both College and Dryden's, ran the Sixth Form entry with efficiency and sensitivity, and throughout remained as unpretentious but acute as her sense of humour; after all, who else in her first term could identify which of the seven dwarfs Michael Davies was impersonating...

JAMES GAZET

JAMES GAZET

James Gazet's career at Westminster had an unusual start: we had not advertised for a Mathematics teacher, and he had no intention of becoming one. Fortunately for us, he had no gainful employment of any other sort in mind either and we were still in that idyllic period when lack of a vacancy was no barrier to making an appointment. Now, after nine years, James has finally decided that, as he had always suspected, gainful employment is much overrated and a year touring the world decidedly more appealing.

James has cultivated an image of robustness amongst his pupils and his colleagues, and if one took this at face value one would imagine that he finds the whole business of instructing small boys (if not big girls) utterly exasperating. This would be wrong, however, as not only did James thoroughly enjoy teaching his classes, even those that many of us would see as less rewarding, but he has also been prepared to spend innumerable hours after School, often until late in the evenings, helping his, and indeed other less dedicated teachers', pupils with their

work: from STEP classes with future Cambridge mathematicians to offering daily extra classes in the Election term to those just about to take examinations and concerned that their sins of omission committed over many years were about to find them out. But pupils were not the only ones to be offered James' advice and help: many Housemasters, too, benefited from considerable amounts of his time, as he patiently explained to them where they were going wrong.

I expect that every school Common Room has a chosen public house: usually, probably, since teachers are neither energetic nor choosy, it will be the nearest: certainly, this is the case at Westminster, where the Westminster Arms has for many years now been that public house. The advantage of settling on one establishment in this way is that, at the end of a heavy day, one can always hope to find a colleague there with whom to have a quick drink before heading home: James Gazet has for many years now been that colleague. His convivial presence in Storey's Bar has turned it from a seedy, dingy hole into a hole whose seediness and dinginess are compensated for by the uproarious company he has attracted there and the unbridled conversation he has encouraged. I fear that, for a sizeable subset of the Common Room, James's departure will leave a hole, albeit seedy and dingy, which will be difficult to fill.

MICHAEL DAVIES

RICHARD BRYANT

Richard Bryant is an all-rounder and, as a teacher, he was the sort of person that schools like Westminster have traditionally relied upon to ensure the continued vitality of both its academic and other fields of life.

Richard may have been fresh out of Cambridge when he started his Westminster career in 1994, but the extent of his involvement in the School in his first term was both that of a veteran and also to become typical of his dedication to schoolmastering in its broadest sense; he was giving extra classes late into the evening to help the classicists of the time gain their places at Oxbridge and running a football team: he accompanied a School Expedition single-handed (in the days when such things did occur), took a half Fifth Form to Alston, and gave up all his first Exeat to teach and give seminars on a Classics trip abroad. He undertook all these things and did them all both well and professionally within weeks of the start of his career.

He was a mainstay of the Classics Department - a friend that a succession of Heads of Department have been able to rely upon for help and support. He was a House Tutor in College and a teacher who managed to be very popular with his pupils without ever slackening his strong sense of principles; his ability in the classroom, on the football field and as an athlete pounding the streets of London both generated and confirmed the respect that lay at the heart of the affection in which his pupils held him.

C O M M O N R O O M

For three years, Richard oversaw the operation of The Challenge exam and was the pivotal figure in the CE interviewing. For over half the School, therefore, he was the first contact they have had with an ordinary member of the Common Room: his efficiency, compassion and clear integrity made him a worthy and impressive point of first contact for the boys.

He was also a figure that the Common Room will miss - his conversation, those enigmatic frowns, the slightly distant sense of humour. He has been taking time out to decide what precisely he wants to move on to do. We should wish him very well as he considers his future; whatever he finally decides, there is no doubt at Westminster about his fine qualities as a schoolmaster.

ANDREW MYLNE



D A V I D S U M M E R S C A L E

I think it is fair to say that I saw a different side of Mr. Summerscale from most. As a Westminster pupil for only two years (and a female one at that), I did not spend the Fifth Form peering up at him from the front pews in Abbey or see him flanked by monstrous Monitors at Latin Prayers. I had peculiar preconceptions (my elder siblings had 'experienced' the previous HM). In my year as Captain of the School, I saw him more and in different situations than most. He was charming to parents and pupils with an intense, quiet authority; leading with guidance, not persuasion; by example and not command.

Mr. Summerscale's manner of speaking was, for pupils, probably one of his most distinctive attributes. The deep, fruity tone, with carefully chosen words and calculated silences, would resonate around any room; the habitual 'as it were's would pepper every conversation. He really listened too, with a trademark wry (or interested or amused or something) smile and more remarkably, made us listen to each other in an unshakeably diplomatic manner. I don't think that most pupils saw his understated sense of humour and fascinating observations. I recall him (as he watched boys scurry across Yard to Latin Prayers) pondering the fact that he'd been on an aeroplane that morning watching elephants lollop across Indian plains. I remember some Monitors' lunches where one of us might utter something bordering on the sycophantic and the rest of us would roll our eyes but the HM would sit, unerringly tactful but with a glint in his eye and his trademark smile.

He was not one accustomed to bounding up to pupils in yard and slapping on the back, it has to be said. Yet many of my friends would be surprised by how involved he was with each and every pupil. His suite of rooms above the Common Room seemed like a closely guarded headquarters, managed by the indomitable Anne Carman, fiercely proud of the HM and his family. When it came to School report writing times, he would be ensconced in his study (or perhaps some other hidden location) where he would assiduously read each and every report - his interest was truly genuine. I remember one meeting where Maundy money recipients were being decided upon and a couple of names cropped up that were unfamiliar to some, if not most in the room. Yet David Summerscale knew them all.

He had a real passion for dramatic and musical productions in School and directed plays in the same erudite way as he did the School - always nurturing, never dictating (apart from when I allowed an Americanism to creep into *In Parenthesis*...) with the cast glancing over to establish whether they had hit the mark. Similarly, his sporting involvement - from legendary centre action and goal scoring in School vs. Common Room hockey to solid support from the river towpath as far as Nottingham or as close as Putney; hair haystacked and proud.

He was generous and had great concern that others should experience and enjoy events and he trusted us perhaps more than he should have done: kindly allowing two of us to take his and Pauline's place at the State Opening of Parliament, allowing the Monitors to meet with Ofsted inspectors 'unbriefed' and uncensored, and seeming quite happy about the lethal combination of wayward Westminsters, free flowing wine and 'important people' at Election Dinners. David Summerscale was parental without the annoying bits and authoritative without being imperious.

BLAISE METREWELI
CAPTAIN OF THE SCHOOL, 1994-1995

C O M M O N R O O M

RICHARD BALLARD

By the time Richard left Westminster in 1998, he had become an institution, held in profound admiration and affection. After a varied career as Chaplain in several schools and a West Country parish, he retained enough energy and enthusiasm to enjoy Westminster, without ever being remotely overawed.

He gave much to the spiritual side of the school. His sermons twice a week were a fine advertisement for the intelligent and latitudinarian tradition of the Church of England, with a strong flavour of mysticism. He knew it would be a significant challenge to spark much recognition from an audience of so many religious traditions – and often of none – but he succeeded fulsomely. Eschewing the temptations of instructing by analogy, or wooing people through secular examples, he went (usually) direct to the Scriptures, and expounded. It was bright stuff, but never lofty. Richard's sermons were peppered by cryptic allusions and homely asides – he wasn't unduly worried if these were not picked up. As he would say at such moments, grinning cheerfully, 'But let it pass'. He followed faithfully the liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer. His congregations at Holy Communion were not large, but committed – and they were grateful for his example and leadership.

My strongest memories of Richard, however, are those of a fortunate colleague, with whom I shared A Level sets happily for seven years. He read prodigiously on 18th and 19th century Europe, and as a dedicated francophile, worked his sets hard on the French Revolution. Frequently nonplussed by his extempore (and histrionic) approach in the first weeks of A Level, his pupils rapidly came both to trust him, and relish his lessons. His style here, as in everything else, was inclusive: he deplored nagging, above everything else, and protected pupils from it, whenever he could. If the same treatment was applied to him, he usually laughed up his sleeve. That became infectious.

David Summerscale knew Richard from Haileybury, and saw that he had the versatility and imagination to succeed as Chaplain in a substantially different environment. Though Vanessa's ill-health was a nagging preoccupation for much of his time at Westminster, I think there were good times here: his daughter Henrietta's marriage to Guy Hopkins was prominent among them, as was later the birth of a first grandson, Alexander. Settled now in Sussex, Richard is busy in the garden, and Vanessa is holding her own. Her husband is rumoured to be a natural as 'a retired gentleman cleric'. We hope so, and carry with us the fondest memories.

DAVID HARGREAVES

I have been at this august seat of learning for a mere two terms; friends ask a question, which is somewhat difficult. 'Tell us', they say, 'what is the School like? What sort of a place is it?' As I begin to describe all those fascinating little customs that set Westminster apart from other academic institutions – ceremonies such as Latin Prayers; the Greaze – a worried look starts to creep over their faces. It is easy to see that they are debating whether I have finally slipped over from eccentricity into sheer madness.

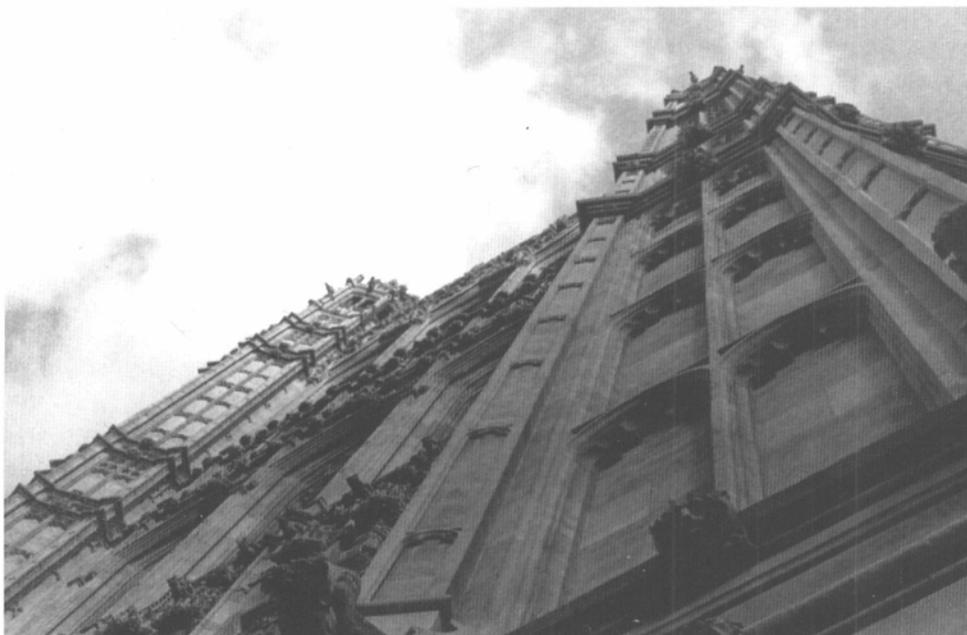
So what is Westminster like from the Chaplain's perspective? To state the obvious, the School is physically dominated by the Abbey, and I still find going to services there throughout the week an exciting privilege. But the school's Benedictine foundation is now centuries away, and that particular tradition does not loom large in school life, sadly. Issues of faith, doubt, and how one should live, are still explored from many different angles in Abbey. I am deeply grateful to those who have been willing to speak there, and for the rounded nature this gives to the discussion.

Abbey itself is not the place for debate, although issues raised there can be taken further in the rest of the day. But it is the place for large services, some of them magnificent. The most impressive I have seen so far was the Confirmation Service, when the Bishop of London,

Richard Chartres, came to take the service.

Those are the big events. Yet, week in and week out, there is a cycle of smaller services which are just as important. Twice a week we meet in St. Faith's Chapel, and enjoy its simple beauty. The numbers there are not large, but that does not matter. What is important is that we have stopped for a while, and made space to listen to what God is saying to us. That listening is, to my mind, the most important task anyone can undertake, and lies at the heart of St. Benedict's famous Rule.

HUW MORDECAI



C O M M O N R O O M

F E A T U R E S

Emu and friends

A new currency in Europe was enforced on 1st January of this year. Too often the European Monetary Union debate is conducted in terms of headlines and slogans from entrenched and unalterable positions, without regard for the facts, and leaving the public to disentangle the various elements of the argument. Too often also, one finds that remarks upon the British debate on European issues are heavily scrutinised to establish whether the speaker or writer is pro or anti European, to the point whereby the issue is sometimes missed. For these reasons, there now follows a concise yet inclusive, subjective yet non-biased, analysis/ audit/ inquisition.

Stage Three of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) in Europe has now begun. This stage incorporates the creation of a single European Currency for participating EU member states, and a uniform monetary policy operated by a new European Central Bank (ECB). These measures are seen as necessary to finalise the arrangements for a European Single Market, and to strengthen economic ties within Europe.

A single currency in Europe is not a new idea. The determination and eagerness that at present is being seen for it is, however. The political will to go ahead has grown in recent years, supported by the economic recovery and the consequent improvement in the fiscal positions of many continental countries. It is also driven by the fear of several founder members (particularly France and Germany) that if the project is delayed, the whole business of European integration could be dealt a fatal blow.

Stage Three proceeded as planned on 1st January 1999, due to the considerable Franco-German political commitment to EMU. Until recently there existed the possibility, allowed for in the Maastricht Treaty, of a short delay. It was also possible that the whole process could have fallen apart, although this was generally believed to be the least likely outcome.

In accordance with the original timetable, formal decisions on participation were made last spring. The heads of state, using qualified majority voting, decided by comparing each applicant to the Maastricht convergence criteria (entry conditions in the categories of inflation, long-term interest rates, debt and deficit, and exchange rates).

Eleven of the fifteen members of the European Community are participating: the original six founders of the then European Economic Community plus Austria, Finland, Ireland, Portugal, and Spain. Greece did not meet the criteria, and so will not be participating in the

foreseeable future. The position of Sweden was less certain; it may have met the criteria, but chose not to participate for now for political reasons. Denmark gave notice that it would not participate in the single currency at this stage.

Two years ago, not many people expected the UK to be a founding member of the euro group. Whatever was to happen at the then-forthcoming elections, it appeared highly unlikely that the UK Government (with or without a referendum) would be in a position to participate in the first wave. This proved to be the case, leaving us in exactly the same position as Denmark.

There have been three notable previous attempts at economically unifying the countries of Europe. The first was in 55BC, as part of the Roman Emperor Julius Caesar's attempts to expand his Empire. Although temporarily successful, it inevitably failed. The second, in the nineteenth century was a similar attempt on behalf of the French by Napoleon Bonaparte. This also ended in disaster. The third and final attempt was in the 1940's, but the German despot didn't even get to paddle his little toe this side of the English Channel. Failure was on the cards... until now with Stage Three of EMU, which is gallantly challenging the records of History to bravely go where no European economic merger plan has gone before. That is to say, towards success.

On a more serious note, in the 1940's Winston Churchill talked a lot about European union. However, he was referring to a continental Europe, excluding the British Isles. At the Treaties of Messina and Rome (in 1953 and 1956 respectively) the European Economic Community was formed, initialising the co-operation within Europe of the iron and steel industries. However, in Britain the cabinet got cold feet, or couldn't summon the courage to take the membership act through Parliament, and with strong suspicions of its failure, the UK did not join. By the 1960's (probably at the sight of the German steel industry doubling in just ten years), Macmillan tried to join. Unfortunately, General de Gaulle said 'Je suis desolé, mais non.'

In 1973, Ted Heath managed to opt Britain into the EEC, followed (slightly strangely) by a referendum on the issue two years later. In the 1980's, Margaret Thatcher pushed the Single European Act through Parliament, allowing Britain into the Single European Market (SEM), as much as it appears she may now regret it. This enabled free movement of goods, services and people between the member states.

Finally, John Major signed the Treaty of Maastricht in 1991 (at which time the SEM changed its name to the European Union [EU]) allowing the 'opt-in', - often mistakenly called opt-out - clause to the proposed European Monetary Union.



In a speech at Chatham House on 17 July, 1997, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, refused to rule out UK first wave participation, but emphasised the 'formidable obstacles' to be overcome. He then called for 'an informed national debate about the pros and cons of EMU membership' and stated categorically that 'whether Britain is in or out, EMU will have profound implications for British business and the British Economy' (thus demonstrating his phenomenal insight and intelligence).

After a summer of French and German uncertainties, by September 1997, the way forward to EMU looked to have clarified. However, despite Mr Brown's stimulation of the start of an objective debate within the UK, there was no clarity as to when the Blair Government might be prepared to put a decision on entry to a referendum. UNTIL...

On 27 October, Mr Brown presented the British Government's policy of the single currency to the House of Commons; in principle, British membership of a successful single currency would be beneficial both to Britain and to Europe. The key factor was, and still is, whether the economic benefits of joining for jobs and industry are clear and unambiguous. If they are, the Government declared no constitutional bar to British membership of EMU.

To make this assessment, the Chancellor set out five economic tests which have to be met before Britain enters. These are presented in the form of the following questions:

- 1) Are business cycles and economic structures compatible so that we and others could live comfortably with euro interest rates on a permanent basis?
- 2) If problems emerge, is there sufficient flexibility to deal with them?
- 3) Would joining EMU create better conditions for firms

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making long-term decisions to invest in Britain?

4) What impact would entry into EMU have on the competitive position of the UK's financial services industry, particularly the City's wholesale markets?

5) In summary, will joining EMU promote higher growth, stability and a lasting increase in jobs?

These are very fine-sounding questions, but they have the added benefit (as Mr Brown and more importantly, Mr Cambell, are undoubtedly aware) of being phrased in such a way that they demand answers that are judgemental, not absolute.

If the powers that be are making no assertions, then what does one know?

FACT: Possibly the most obvious fact, which many people fail to regard, is that no-one knows; no-one knows what the outcome of EMU will be, no-one knows to what extent, or in what direction members of EMU will undergo fiscal (tax), welfare and/or labour reforms. No matter how many economists or politicians with no matter how much experience and qualifications agonise over the debate, the situation will always be comparable to weather forecasters predicting the weather, whereby one knows that there will be weather of some sort, but it is impossible to predict exactly what it will be, say, in a week's time. As we progress towards this time, the outcome will become clearer, but we'll only know for certain when we go outside on that day and it's raining or the sun is shining.

FACT: Regardless of the UK's membership, EMU went ahead.

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FACT: The UK was not in the first wave of EMU.

FACT: Should we choose to participate, the UK will qualify (meet the criteria) for EMU.

FACT: In accordance with a) Government stated policy, and b) the British electoral cycle, the abolition of the pound, and the British membership of EMU will not be approved before 2001/2002.

Having pointed out the vulnerable unpredictability of the situation, it is only fair to respect the fact that British governments have successfully used their influence to ensure that common policies in Europe should be based on the NATO alliance, subsidiarity, respect for the diversity of individual states, and a proper rôle for national parliaments. For now, the Boy Scout motto 'be prepared' makes good political sense; the country must prepare itself now for the possibility of entry, because events might make it suddenly attractive for us, in the national interest, to move rapidly in that direction.

There were three tasks in mind at the original plans for a European single currency. The first was to create an institutional framework for European, and particularly Franco-German, reconciliation after the horrors of the World Wars. The second was to provide an economic framework of cooperation that could prevent a repetition of the economic crises of the 1930's - crises, which did so much to bring about the rise of Hitler and Nazism. The final task was to act as a bulwark against the spread of Communism; the EEC was an economic counterpart to NATO.

These driving forces had a lot to do with the political objective of shaping the continent according to an agenda formed nearly fifty years ago, in the 1930's and 1940's, and are neglectful to the challenges facing us as we move into the 21st century. The three major new issues are:

1) That the countries of the EU should be finding a way to reintegrate the states of Central and Eastern Europe into the family of Western democracies. This can only be achieved by building institutions which fall short of the federal goal: only the most extreme Euro-federalists could believe that there could possibly be a federation from Britain to Belarus.

2) That there is a need to improve Europe's long-term economic performance relative to the rest. Britain may be doing better than most in Europe, but the whole continent has been slipping behind the world's fastest-growing economies.

3) The likely instability in the countries of the former Soviet Union, (particularly Russia, which must be continued to be handled in a trans-Atlantic context) must be managed.

However, the EU's top priority, many people believe, should be enlargement. It is in both Britain and Europe's interests that wider should come between deeper; all of the

EU's members have extensive geo-political stakes in consolidating the stability of Eastern Europe, but there is an obvious, unsustainable tension between widening and deepening.

Supporters argue that EMU confers large direct economic benefits by reducing uncertainty and business costs, increasing transparency, and by delivering a better anti-inflationary strategy for the UK. The direct consequences will be the removal of exchange rate uncertainty, higher competition between businesses, a reduction in some cross-border business, and make price differences clearer (ensuring that obliges to the lowest market price). All of these mean cheaper goods and services for the public. Their opponents reply that the economic benefits are small at best, and because of the risks of the whole project, could incur economic costs at worst: including second-rate anti-inflationary performance.

Many people see the obvious reduction (abolition) of conversion services (transaction costs) as the number one reason for the public to welcome EMU; as it stands, if one were to go to France on one of the 'return for just a pound' offers that are so much the rage, and was to take with them £100, change it into French francs, decide to buy nothing, return to England and change their francs back into pounds, they would end up with around £60. That is a 40% reduction on a return ticket!

As concerns actual transactional costs (for example the movement of dollars from California to New York) Karl Otto Pöhl claims that 'The repeated references to alleged huge savings in transaction costs for the countries of a single currency are not in the least convincing'; he believes that transaction gains could be obtained by the improvement of efficiency of banks, which would be generated by a combination of better technology and greater competition. Therefore the completion of an internal banking market is at least as important in reaping savings in transactional costs as the creation of a single currency.

Europhiles also claim that EMU confers further economic benefits indirectly by hastening the completion of the single EU market. In response to this, anti-Europeans claim that EMU carries the risk of jeopardising the whole European system, referring to the early 1990's when the ERM appeared to collapse soon after its inception, with huge one-off adjustment costs.

The question of EMU's contribution to the completion of the single market is impossible to gauge, as it includes too many variables. However if one looks at the Far East or at economic activity along the US/Canadian frontier, it is clear that very high levels of economic integration (and hence a lot of the economic benefits) are achievable without a single currency. Having said that, even if the Single Currency is not required for the achievement of these gains, it will probably act as a catalyst in hastening their delivery.

It is also claimed that EMU will strengthen the EU and

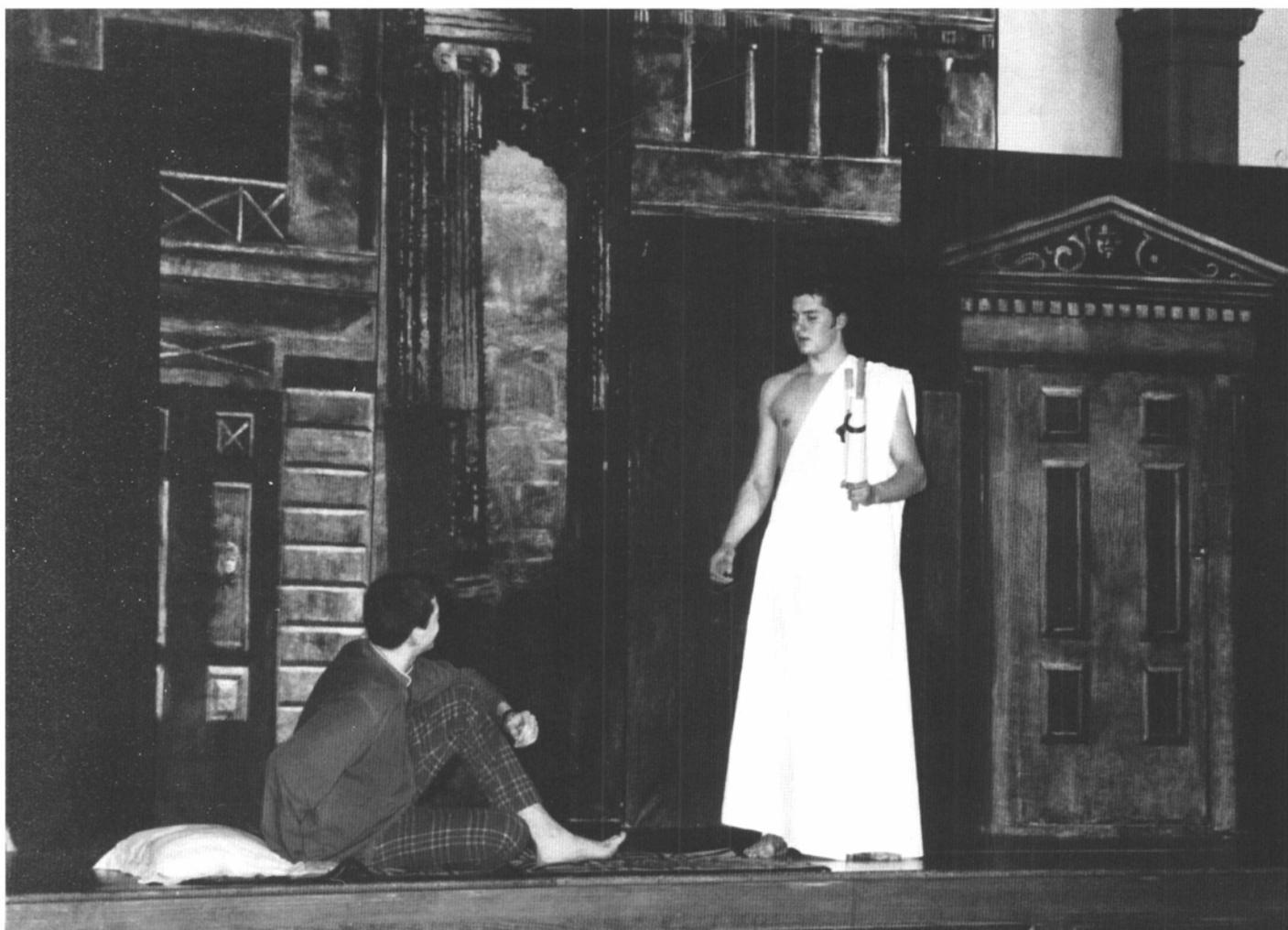
enable the European continent to fight its corner in a world increasingly dominated by a highly integrated US market on the one hand, and the low-wage Asian tigers on the other. In answer to this, eurosceptics pull out the trump card, sovereignty; the UK economy is not naturally suited to full economic integration with continental Europe, remaining subject to a largely independent Anglo-Saxon/US business cycle (Britain - despite a lot of recent integration with Europe - still trades more with the rest of the world than any of the continental countries), and should retain the power to vary our exchange rate to cope with our unique reaction to variations in this cycle or other economic shocks, and the unemployment that will be associated with them. Too back up these claims, they refer to the five years since the British suspension of ERM (the Exchange Rate Mechanism) as a harbinger of better performance and excelled economic activity.

They also point out that Europe is increasingly becoming an economic backwater in a global context, and that by distracting attention from more important reforms to improve economic performance EMU would be adding to this problem, not solving it. They claim that it would make far more political sense for Britain to engage more fully in the global economy than to deepen its ties with a West European customs union.

As regards sovereignty, the direct political control of Britain's was lost with the granting of the independence of the Bank of England. It could, however, be argued that there is indeed still sovereignty to be lost, as the Treasury still sets the inflation target and retains the power to override the bank.

Another argument for EMU is that we are witnessing a re-run of 1957 and the start of the EEC: failing to ever join EMU would be an historic opportunity missed and would leave the UK 'on the sidelines' of European decision making, and outside a system which (if it works) we are bound to want to join sooner or later. The very short answer given to this argument is that if we want to join sooner or later, we can, but let's not rush it for now, if that is the case.

Both the arguments for the benefits and for the costs of EMU have been exaggerated. Some of the more major flaws in the above arguments have been highlighted, but what many people really can't get over is why such a ridiculous amount of ink has been spilled and voices have been raised when (with the exception of inflation arguments) neither the economic benefits, nor costs are particularly large. The answer, of course, is politics. And so it is that one progresses to the political debate about EMU...



THE GREEKS ARE KEEN TO JOIN THE EURO
f e a t u r e s



A WARM WELCOME FOR HELMUT KOHL

Dr Helmut Kohl, the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, received the Honorary Freedom of the City of London on 18 January last year. As a thirteen-year-old boy he had to drag his dead brother out of the Berlin rubble following a British bombing raid. Consequently (he claims) uniting Europe is not surprisingly a driving passion and a preoccupying goal to him. In his speech of acceptance, he put forward one sentence that summed up the major political reason for European integration that is shared not only by him but also of much of Western continental Europe. He said that 'The euro will ... strengthen Europe economically. It will also make for a more integrated European Union as a system promoting peace and freedom'. (Incidentally, another good point that he made was to reassure that 'Europe will continue to be defined by its cultural diversity, its regional characteristics and its different traditions. In the future Europe, too, we shall still remain Britons, Italians, Frenchmen and Germans. Only those things will be regulated at a European level which cannot be regulated at local, regional or national level.') This epitomises the view of the most trenchant supporters of EMU, arguing that it forms an essential part of the package that has helped to avoid war in Western Europe since 1945, and that it is a further force which can bind us together so indissolubly that war

would become an impossibility ever again. He even went as far as to say, a few years ago, that actually 'without EMU, there would be war again in Europe'.

These opinions are, to say the least, open to massive objections: single currencies do not prevent wars. The successful dinar did not prevent civil war in Yugoslavia. The gold standard did not prevent World War One, and the embryonic 'dollar zone' did not prevent the American Civil War. (Of course, separate currencies do not ensure the elimination of the risk of war, as shown by the complete demilitarisation of the US/Canadian frontier for nearly two centuries.) The success of a currency used by countries of differing sizes is also not unprecedented, for example Luxembourg sharing the Belgian Francs. There is also the example of Hong Kong whose currency has been successfully tied to the US dollar, so far without the risk of breaking the link. However, several elections ago the Irish Government let the pundt float. Previously it had been tied at parity to the pound (this was unprecedented, and an economic success, despite complaints of a lack of identity). Letting the euro float is certainly not on anyone's plans for any stage or back-up plan for EMU; it is not envisaged and would be an unexpected innovation to put it mildly.

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Euro-sceptics also lay hold on Great Britain's geographical isolation, and our lack of invasion since 1066. All four of my grandparents fought in World War Two and fortunately there were no fatalities, although my paternal grandfather was hospitalised for several months and still needs regular attention for two gun shot wounds he suffered 'protecting King and Country'. Loyalty to the deaths and bravery of those soldiers who fought in the wars to protect our identity as an independent island, free from German (or any other) attempts to unify Europe, is thought by some as enough alone to refuse British membership of a single European Currency.

Those worried about our loss of national identity, should contemplate this: Britain would not cease to be a sovereign state if we entered into a monetary union. We would not suffer the loss of either supreme national or political sovereignty. (And for those who care, the British note issue will almost certainly have the Queen's head on it.)

An EMU that started and then failed would not only bring temporary economic disruption but also long-term political disillusionment with the spawning ideas; it could mark the impossibility of the completion of the Treaty of Rome's agenda, and jeopardise the whole EU project.

Some have argued that though in theory withdrawing from an EMU would be feasible, in practice it would be impossible; being unique and unprecedented, it could well prove to be impossible disentangle oneself from it. However being unique and unprecedented are the exact reasons why we don't know how the process of disentanglement would fare, but fare it would, were that the decision.

The two issues of withdrawal would be simply the individual monetary base, and the identification of that country's reserves within the ECB. However, there is no exit clause to enforce this redistribution, so for the time being at least it is ideologically impossible.

Presuming that the UK will at some point join EMU, the advanced question in the debate is when. The fact of the matter is that the British economic cycle is synchronised with that of the USA, not with continental Europe; whereas we came out of the recession more than five years ago, and have an unemployment rate of around 5%, continental Europe have only just come out, and have unemployment rates ranging between 12% (Germany and France) to 22% (Spain). It is not plausible for our economies to integrate whilst we are at different stages of this cycle.

Therefore, in reality, there are only two foreseeable times for us to join; the chances are that in twelve months our economies will converge. They will then diverge. This is not a feasible time for merging, as the present Government (with the support of the opposition parties) has pledged this to be a no-join period. Taking into

account the four year business cycle, it is thought that there will be another convergence of our economies around in 2003. Supposing that the next General Election is expected in summer or autumn 2001, it looks likely that the period following this will be the time when the (new) Cabinet may decide to join EMU. It would then be upto Parliament to approve the principal movement, and then the specific legislation. Finally, it would be put to the nation, in the form of a referendum.

And finally:

There are four options. If the EMU is a failure, whether we join or not, Britain's economic and trading ties with continental Europe are such that the outcome would be disastrous. However, one should consider the prospect that Britain joining could strengthen EMU, thus delaying or reducing such a failure. If the EMU is a success, as early reports show that it is, Britain can only really profit by joining. Considering this, the only logical option in my mind is to join.

ADDIE BOTTOMLEY

The future is history

As the nation proceeds into the unknowns of the Millennium, we have - largely - grown increasingly introspective. Questions about identity, the nature of the way our society exists, the changes and need for change therein, are being raised throughout the media and national conscience as a whole. Westminster School is no exception. Change in the School is especially noticeable in 1999.

The School has changed physically rapidly over the last year; it has at last procured a new theatre, sprawled out into Milne's, turned Grant's traditional Dining Room system into a canteen one. Its function within the locality is being refashioned: under the impetus of the Head Master, there is a real drive to shift from the introspective, intelligent loner of old into the locality, consciously shaping it as a community institution. In this he has been strongly supported by those Common Room members already involved in such schemes. The School already boasts several such projects: the longstanding, ever-expanding PHAB; primary school assistance on Station days; pupils working at the St. Botolph's Soup Kitchen; the participation with other community schools in the Inner City Schools Project. Even the Upper Shell have found time to leave their benches in Yard and play Animal Snap with the children at Millbank Primary School.

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There are also less prominent, but no less integral changes to Station: a new and improved Boat Club; the burgeoning numbers in football; recognition of the need to establish a Basketball Station. Such alterations reflect the changing demands and needs of our society. They also reflect our slowly changing constituency from a school predominantly populated by boarders to one in which two-thirds are day-pupils.

John Troy, the Housemaster of Milne's, opined that the thinking which led to the setting up of a new Day House was strictly practical - improve the staff:pupil and bump up pastoral care. When Houses grow too big, unruly and extrovert pupils inevitably secure the attention - the safe, conformist pupil gets marginalised. Mr Troy waxed eloquent on the desirability of Milne's, which he sees it as lending gravity to that area of Dean's Yard previously inhabited in lonely (less-than-) splendour by Ashburnham. Now many pupils opt to stay in these Houses rather than move to Yard - traditionally the physical heartbeat of social hubbub. Mr Troy attributes a good deal of this to the long care and deliberation which went into Milne's layout and amenities. As an economist, he also interprets, in economist's terms, this successful integration. That is, if a second worker (Milne's) becomes involved in a scheme (the House structure of the School in Dean's Yard), the first (Ashburnham) will become more motivated to be more productive and successful.

Jim Cogan, former Under Master, drew on his experience of the School spanning four decades to put the recent changes in the Pastoral Care system into a wider historical context. The present system he sees as a logical evolution: the vestiges of an authoritarian system in the 1950's, reinforced by violence and by the Prefect were replaced by the dismissive attitude and lack of care by Teachers during the social overturn of the 1960s/1970s. The present system has been shaped by both Conservative and Labour policies during their respective periods in Government. Under the Conservatives, the Children's Act was passed, in which guidelines were set out to enable a humane pastoral balance between discipline and fairness to be struck. Teenagers were given sober, well modulated advice on how to behave without it seeming oppressive. The whole thing was an exercise in subtle control by those in authority. This change in Government and parental thinking over the last decade has been enhanced by the present Minister for Education, David Blunkett.

Mr Cogan is somewhat sceptical about Westminster's ability to become significantly integrated into the community, though he applauds all efforts taken in this direction. I must - to an extent - agree. Westminster is composed of, and largely thrives from, its independent, liberal minded, private pupils. It is hard to see how such an insular institution could benefit the community or, even, the community benefit the School.

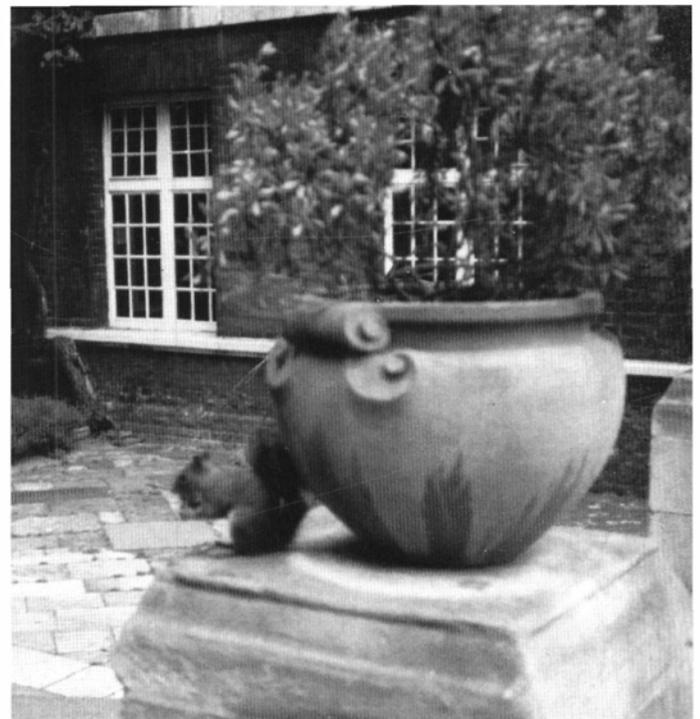
Do we feel the need to change in such an outward - looking way in order to join the fashionable trend against exclusiveness? Or is the creation/consolidation of external community ties objectively objectively desirable? Or even essential for its survival?

Rumours of future possible acquisitions are circulating: will we become the new owners of Westminster City Library in Great Peter Street? If such relatively remote buildings became part of the School, would Yard lose its centrality and the School its historic identity? The Robert Hooke Science Centre has been in our possession for over twelve years without challenging the supremacy of the School's traditional heart, and is generally treated by the majority of pupils as a fine facility, but one which involves an irritating walk.

Schools are conservative: even lesser changes have the ability to create controversy. Mr Cogan raises an eyebrow at the new canteen system in Grant's Boarding House. While acknowledging its utility value, he fears it may compromise the quality of life for the boarders in Grant's to have their territory occupied daily by so many visitors - an unnecessary triumph of Modernisation over Traditionalism, New over Old. As such he perceives it as a painful symptom of a School heading irrevocably towards becoming a Day School with a 'Hostel Boarding System'.

New boy or old lag, young teacher or crusty old codger, the School is changing. Ignore it at your peril; it will not pass us by.

DANIEL FRANKLIN



N A T U R A L H I S T O R Y

f e a t u r e s



was involved in considering what 'useless' means; whether, from the definition achieved, it can be seen whether philosophy is in fact 'useless', and a possible refutation of the statement, 'Philosophy is useless'. This suggests that philosophy is important; in considering the truth of a claim; and - thus - has some use at least.

Thus, philosophy is about questioning convictions, statements and moralities,

N O P A I N N O G A I N

Truth hurts

Philosophy is the use of reason and logic in the pursuit of knowledge and understanding of reality and existence. It is thus perhaps more similar to the sciences than to any other branch of human wisdom, being engaged, as science, with creating logical models which fit what we observe of the world. Philosophy doesn't claim to 'know' for sure anything about the world, but through ongoing discussion and criticism of previous discussion, it may possibly create theories closer and closer to 'the truth', if such a thing exists. A further branch of philosophy is epistemology, the study of understanding. This questions the nature and limits of human understanding - whether there are some aspects of reality which cannot be empirically investigated, the nature of which is perhaps left up to faith.

A widespread view of philosophy is that it is boring, pedantic and ultimately useless. Concerning the third claim, the term 'useless' usually implies in everyday speech that no money to speak of can be made from the pursuit in question, and that no lives can be saved. Here, the question of why it is desirable to save lives must be asked. If all human intelligence and resources were involved solely in saving lives, the people whose lives had been saved might well not see the point of living, when the only activity partaken of was saving more lives. Saving lives, and the morality which endorses this, assumes that living is in some way fulfilling, interesting or enjoyable - put bluntly, preferable to being dead. Perhaps the study of existence, of all that exists, and of understanding and perception is something which is fulfilling or interesting, or enjoyable. What is a more potent argument for the relevance or importance of philosophy is that the logical reasoning and deduction of philosophy

often tracing them back to first principles, and even questioning these. The utilitarian who believes in a moral system, aiming for the greatest happiness for the greatest number, must at some point consider what happiness is, whether it is the same for every individual, and whether a supposedly false happiness, as portrayed in the clones in Aldous Huxley's 'Brave New World', is preferable or not to the anguish and despair of the Savage in the same book. Such views are likely to be unique to each individual, and this is not a problem in itself. A morality, when dissected into first principles, is almost always seen to be founded on a few very significant assumptions or beliefs, with huge implications. For example, a belief in a god of some description, a belief in evil outside the human mind, perhaps manifest in some nefarious demon or devil, or others of this kind. It is very difficult to prove that any of these assumptions are the case to another person in the same way that if $12 - x = 4$, then $x = 8$ (though mathematics too is based on a core of fundamental assumptions such as that x cannot be equal to two values at the same time). One argument, endorsed by (among others) Soren Kierkegaard, is that these assumptions or beliefs need not be 'false' merely because they cannot be proven true; that these - fundamental beliefs are true on the particular, individual level, but cannot be justified on the universal, ethical level. This Kierkegaard describes as the 'theological suspension of the ethical' - a leap of faith. (It is still the policy of the Roman Catholic Church, however, that the existence of God can be logically proven.)

Another very important idea which must involve philosophical reasoning is the concept of good and evil. The general perception of this is that, faced with a decision, there is always a right way to act and a

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wrong way to act. (I shall assume that 'good' and 'right' and 'bad' and 'wrong' are - equivalents here; although, particularly in theology, this is not always the case.) For example, someone who commits an unprovoked murder is generally thought to be 'bad', and his action 'wrong'. There are a variety of ways of justifying this. It could be argued that the murderer's actions were detrimental to the prosperity of his/her community: a society where murder is common and not condemned might lead to a breakdown in trust, the foundation of civilisation. It could be argued that the murderer is infringing on the autonomy of his victim. It could be argued that the murder leads to fewer happy people in the world. All of these arguments are open to criticism and need further justification, which will not be offered here; the questions of what autonomy is; why it is desirable; and the same for happiness, must be considered. However, it might also be argued that murder is inherently bad or 'evil'. Many people have considered that there is an ethical code. Imprinted on the human mind or given by a deity of some kind; an ethical code which does not require justification; which should not be questioned.

Ostensibly, many of these ideas and others are of enormous importance in setting up, for example, a judicial and legal system, in making personal judgements, or sustaining personal beliefs. Thus, it would seem that logical reasoning on the nature of reality does have its uses. It could also be related to the concepts of saving lives or making money. Questions of when a life ceases to be 'worthwhile' or how the world's wealth 'should' be distributed present themselves. But I would argue that usefulness is certainly not restricted to the categories suggested at the beginning, and so have not dwelt on them. However, I hope I have gone some way in showing that individual moralities are different not because one or the other is faulted in some way, but because it is inevitable that the bases to moralities are impossible to prove logically to be true, not least because this would lead to an infinite regress of definition after definition.

The implications of this are, in my view, the paramount importance of a liberal society based at least on tolerance. Tolerance, however, is a very negative post-imperialist concept, implying an absolute certainty that one's individual assumptions are correct, and thus that different ones are wrong, and yet pretending that they are not for politeness's sake. My argument taken further, leads, I think, to the acceptance that one's primary assumptions may in fact be false, and this leads to something much greater than tolerance. It also leads to the importance of criticism of past philosophies, moralities and religious texts, particularly the third, of which many have often been viewed. as sacrosanct. This idea has been endorsed in recent times by Karl Popper, but was really begun in the Socratic dialogues related to us by Plato. The fallibility of all reasoning must be accepted, due to the different primary assumptions made by each individual. Again, a parallel with the scientific method can be drawn, where Einstein's General Theory of Relativity should not

be seen as 'correct' where Newtonian physics were 'wrong'. Rather, Einstein's theory is a model which fits observation more precisely than Newtonian physics but which demands ongoing critical examination. However, then, with science, and with philosophy, questions must be asked about the reliability of observation, about whether what is observed with human senses or measured with scientific instruments can in any way be termed 'reality'. And so the quest for truth (and the truth about truth) continues...

GEORGE HULL

Black is the new PC



T O L E R A N C E I S E S S E N T I A L

The endurance of the temporary does not apply to most aspects of political correctness. Minority ideas of what ought to be desirable or required can only go in two ways: beyond fashion into common unremarkable behaviour or out in the dustbin of history. Is political correctness a necessary step to general acceptance of a new idea?

It was politically right to challenge apartheid in southern Africa, especially after a troublesome missionary (Garfield Todd) or priest (Father Trevor Huddleston) had given controversial recognition to a young teacher like Robert Mugabe or a teenager Desmond Tutu. More time had to pass before

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American military hero Colin Powell was applauded in London for telling British Chiefs of Staff that they could actually put substance behind a decade of declared but ineffective commitment to anti-racism in recruitment. Right and correct may be synonyms but they may not be identical style comments.

From Westminster we can observe the troops lining Whitehall at the annual Remembrance Service. They are young and overwhelmingly white even if the selection pool is one fifth black or asian. Compare the National Health Service and the police: The NHS recruits on specific qualifications and visibly succeeds in employing and retaining people, women and men, with mixed ethnic minority backgrounds. The police services do not require specific vocational exam success and face many employment tribunal claims of discrimination by women and minorities for the canteen culture that has rejected the respect and fairness that should be the common experience of all.

It is not PC to declare that the colour of my skin should be as important as the colour of my hair or eyes. It is PC to try to keep up with the fashions in describing a black person from, say, Grenada, when it is necessary to note colour, successively as an immigrant, a West Indian and as an Afro-Caribbean.

The description should be less important than the treatment. But how often actually is it? The best PC behaviour is not for show: it is for example. Drink driving once killed 1,800 people a year in this country. Traditional remedial approaches including stronger law, greater policing and mandatory sentences made less difference than the cultural adaptations ten years ago. This was when BBC Radio One, then unbelievably the only popular national music station, treated rhythm and booze as news and current affairs rather than a boring public service message. Young drivers drinking beer in pubs and clubs started to set an example to their parents who had been drink driving for decades. Two thirds of young people's drink driving evaporated with no change of law, sentencing or enforcement.

That was not PC. The style or news pages did not notice. In truth young people doing better is uninteresting. PC is seeing head teachers claiming that the money spent on colour pages advertising tobacco and spirits is wasted on their pupils: what is not PC is then watching the pupils following a short lived fashion of say three inch platform soles and heels as they collect prize books.

The politically correct wear, say or do something recognised as new, interesting and reportable. The curiosity is why those concerned for the general state of well being forget to use the technique for

worthwhile causes. Take drugs, or rather, don't take drugs. Media coverage is either about some of the famous at the Priory or about the snorting, smoking or injecting habits of others. There is next to nothing about the political incorrectness of tolerating in others a habit which, like tobacco consumption, has little to recommend it.

Reducing avoidable disadvantage, distress and handicap is worthwhile. Without becoming too boring and serious, could the style gurus who determine future waves of PC ideas please try to include things that matter?

**ADDIE BOTTOMLEY
DESPINA TSATSAS**

Surf's up

Computers are gaining an ever-greater prominence in today's society; and it is nearly inevitable that today's pupils will have to use them to an ever greater extent, both at work and at home. It is essential therefore that pupils are allowed, and indeed encouraged, to use computers.

The government has therefore decided to place a large emphasis on the teaching of Information Technology (IT) in schools, aiming to have a computer in every classroom in the near future. Before the last General Election, it also announced a deal whereby all state schools would be connected to the internet for free. Indeed, the last budget included a provision for the training in IT of a further 370,000 teachers, and to provide low-cost loans for all teachers to buy laptops, after a successful pilot scheme.

Westminster decided that it must follow this lead, and it has in recent years done just that. At the beginning of the 1996-97 School year, new computers were purchased, and a room was set aside for their use. An intranet (internal network) has been developed to allow pupils and teachers access to e-mail, the homepages of the various departments of the School, and other databases, such as the library's, from any computer in the School that is on the network. Indeed, over the last two and a half years, the School has spent nearly half a million pounds on computer-related capital expenses. However, it has to be asked whether this large sum of money has been usefully and fruitfully spent; or if it is being poured down the bottomless pit of a 'White Elephant', designed merely to impress prospective parents but, in practice, useless.

Computers are by no means the be-all and end-all of School life at the moment, and will never be so. While their best use is for handling large amounts of data such as spreadsheets for mathematical models, they also have a use in communication via e-mail, and in word-process-

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ing long projects. On the other hand there are shortcomings. For instance, despite the hype, the Internet is not very useful as a research tool for basic queries related to schoolwork. Although the information is bound to be contained somewhere, it is a vast resource and also poorly structured; hence, reliable information is often very difficult to find. This makes the Internet ideal for finding out about obscure subjects such as the reproduction of a Hydra, and for up to the minute information on the latest test match. However, it is very slow and cumbersome if all one is interested in is the Battle of the Somme or the physical properties of the Noble Gases. For the latter examples, a book is much more useful. It is therefore critical that a well-stocked library is maintained, and indeed enhanced. For this reason, it is to be welcomed that the School will be employing a full-time librarian starting this September, and that the budget for books is not being reduced in any way.

The actual usage of computers in the School seems to be very varied. A few departments use the intranet a lot to deliver lessons and homework, and indeed Russell Dudley-Smith has developed a separate and impressive intranet for the Economics Department. But outside formal lessons, the vast majority of computer usage seems to be for surfing the Internet or playing games (70% of people were engaged in these pursuits when surveyed over three different occasions).

All staff and pupils have been given their own e-mail accounts, and it seems that this is a widely used facility, with 'around 80% of staff using it on a regular or semi-regular basis', according to the Computing Department. The percentage of pupils is likely to be higher, given that younger people tend to be more receptive to and adept at using new technology than the older generation. The department see a future in which homework is delivered via e-mail, but it seems likely that this will take a few years yet, until e-mail is almost universally used throughout the School.

Further use of computers will doubtless be made in the area of administration within the School, as databases can easily be constructed and manipulated, allowing teachers in charge of various activities (such as stations), to know exactly who is supposed to be there on that day. In addition, pupils in the Fifth Form and Lower Shell are now required to make their LSA (Lower School Activities) choices using the intranet, and there are plans for Housemasters to use it for morning registration.

This high level of computer penetration into the inner workings of the School puts Westminster at the forefront of the IT revolution. Microsoft Education UK is indeed so impressed with this that it plans to make the School a case study for inclu-

sion on their web-site in the near future. There are of course the cynics who say that the only reason that the School has been selected is because we are one of the few large organisations in the country that uses almost entirely Microsoft software.

Usage of computers by pupils throughout the School is in general quite high. As a result, nearly 90% of the School has accessed the School network at some point during the past academic year. This statistic can be misleading because, as has been explained earlier, it is obligatory for pupils in the first two years to use computers for administrative purposes, as well as to have semi-regular lessons in the computer room. All pupils in the Sixth Form and Remove who study maths (about 75%) also have to use spreadsheets for coursework. What is more unclear is the number of pupils and staff who use computers regularly, as statistics on this were unavailable at the time of writing.

Despite the enforced nature of a lot of the usage, it seems likely that a large majority of the School have logged on to the network at some point of their own accord, although it seems that there is a 'hard-core' of regular users. This can be seen by the fact that over 15% of pupils have logged on to the network from home – a considerable number given that Internet 'penetration' in British homes is far from universal. Westminster also seem to be quite computer-literate, with almost two thirds of those surveyed knowing what the letters 'R.A.M.' stand for, and over half knowing its function inside a computer. Worryingly however, the percentage of correct responses amongst girls was considerably lower than amongst boys, pointing to a 'gender-divide' in computer literacy. At the higher end of the spectrum, Westminster has a number of very good programmers - one of last year's Remove won a gold medal at the International Informatics Olympiad.

Possible problems and pitfalls abound, however, with the possibility that modern computers will be seen as so essential both for work and in attracting new pupils that other areas of the School will suffer. One would have to be wary in case the budgets for such essential parts of the School as the library, and the new theatre that has recently been bought, are slashed in favour of buying more computers whose main use is likely to be to 'surf' the Internet for fun.

There are also concerns that have to be expressed over data-protection issues. The School holds a lot of highly confidential information on its computer databases, which will doubtless increase in quantity to include such things as GCSE and A-level results. 'It would be easy,' according to one knowledgeable source, who wishes to remain anonymous, 'for someone with malicious intentions and not too great a hacking ability, to severely compromise many areas of the School's computer systems.' Indeed recently a pupil at the

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School did manage to hack in to the School website during the holidays! Although no damage was done, it shows that there could be serious problems if the person concerned had actually wished to cause harm.

There is also the problem of the fragmentation of the School, with the Robert Hooke Science Centre still not connected to the School network despite the fact that the physics and technology departments are both heavy users of computers. Hopefully, this will finally be accomplished this summer using a dedicated fibreoptic cable running between the Science Centre and the main part of the School. Other departments are not heavy users of computers, as perhaps the teachers concerned are not aware of the potential that they have. This could lead to a group of departments who use computers frequently bidding for money to put computers in their classrooms. Others, who know less about the possible benefits, might though be satisfied with little development of the network in the direction that would be useful to them, and to stick to the status quo.

In the future, the School is looking to expand the usage of its intranet, by putting a network-connection in all boarders' rooms. There is also likely to be a far larger emphasis on classes spending lessons in the computer-room, and on computer-based homework assignments. However, it is unlikely that this growth will be anything like as rapid as some might envisage, as it is dependent to a large degree on the majority of boarders having a computer in School, compared with the 5-10% who have one at the moment.

To conclude then, we would give the School high marks for trying to develop their 'Academic and Administrative Intranet' into something that has the capability to become a useful tool. However, we would query whether the vast sum of money spent on computer related expenditure can truly be justified, given that so much of their use is on items which the School really should not be funding, such as playing games and 'surfing' the internet for no real purpose.

SOPHIA DEAN
GERALD WELDON
HENRY NEWMAN
GERARD ROTHSCHILD

The School website can be found at:
<http://www.westminster.org.uk>

Back issues of the Elizabethan Magazine and Newsletter are available online on the School website.

There is also a directory of Old Wesminsters at:
<http://www.westminster.org.uk/intranet/elizabethan/view.asp>

Dewey eyed

Hugh Eveleigh has been Librarian at Dulwich College since 1991. He will take over as Westminster School's full time Librarian in Play Term 1999.

Today's popular press has taken on the mantle of end-of century/new-millennium comment with something close to obsession. The intellectually more rigorous 'informed' press (the weeklies and monthlies and to a lesser extent the broadsheet dailies) have similarly taken the opportunity to reflect on the past and the future. Libraries, the 'new information age' and the future of education are all examples of this debate and all must figure in the thinking behind the development of the School's library - in how it is arranged, equipped and managed and how we envisage it being used by students and staff today and tomorrow

What is the current thinking in respect to libraries both in and out of Schools? Do we see the future as electronic and home based, are we suspicious that some of the technological bandwagon is just that or are we even more reactionary and worry that the library may be losing sight of its traditional rôle of conservation and retention? Or are we more uneasy about other less tangible concerns, for instance the fear that some libraries have embraced the new to such an extent that opportunities for the serendipitous may have been lost? Yes, we live in the 'information age' but what is information without some degree of knowledge and how is knowledge acquired without some degree of effort and how is effort to be encouraged without us offering encouragement and support? So much of what we see and read and otherwise concern ourselves with these days is commercialised and instant and gratuitous. Life is one not-too-intellectually-taxing ball and in some respects libraries, particularly those in the public sector, have further pushed the utilitarian to the detriment of the ideal.

And so in a little more detail to our library and its development.

It was John Field who consolidated the School resources into a library some fifteen years ago - without question the right action. Since then the library has been the responsibility of certain members of the teaching staff. Although not librarians per se they all managed to retain the status quo and to introduce changes where thought necessary. But to teach a full timetable and to develop and efficiently manage a library is not possible. It took the appointment of the Head Master at the beginning of this academic year to see this and to budget for change.

For the next few years fundamental physical changes will take place in the library. But before physical change will come the thinking and the fine tuning of the library's underlying philosophy. The direction it takes and the

ideals it aspires toward will be under the guidance of the Head Master and myself but any suggestion from any member of the student or staff body (or parent) will be welcome to help achieve this

It will be a thinking person's library and will not concede to the instant gratification alluded to above. It will take on all the technology deemed useful to the acquisition of information and knowledge but will not lose sight of printed sources, and possibly most important of all, the desire of a student to want to read a linear text for enjoyment be it factual or imaginative in nature. For that reason we shall retain the book and promote its use in any manner of ways. Much of the stock is outdated and of limited or no use. We shall dispose of this and concentrate efforts on the material which will remain and the newly acquired. We shall also introduce a security system. This is essential if we are to know that the material on which we have spent time and money is secure. Most library theft is not theft as such - forgetfulness or the 'I'll just borrow it tonight and return it tomorrow' scenario are common. But tomorrow rarely comes and the material is lost.

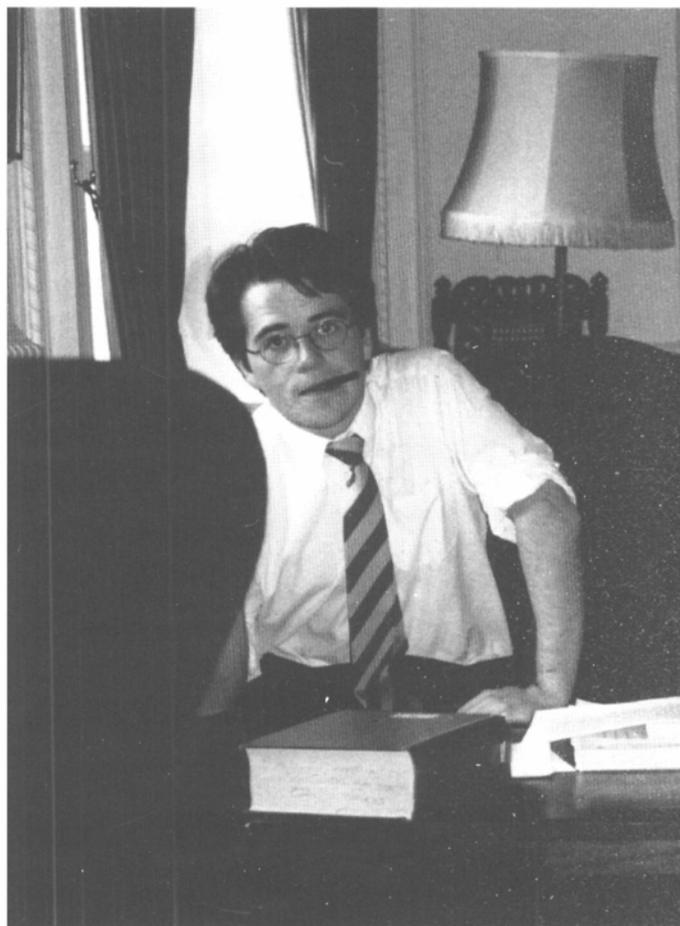
To outline other possible changes at this stage is of little benefit as the particulars may well change in time but suffice to say that the aim is to develop the library so that it becomes outstanding - something only achievable with the help and interest of the whole School community. I hope that those of you who have bothered to read this far will make themselves known to me and to pass on thoughts you may have. In any case I am looking forward to integrating the library more fully into the life of the School community and to the challenges this will undoubtedly present.

HUGH EVELEIGH

The next generation

John Field (Staff 1964-1995) is the author of *The King's Nurseries*, the most recent official history of Westminster School, first published in 1987. The book has now been reprinted, with an additional section: the period when David Summerscale was Head Master between 1986 and 1998. The additional text is here reproduced, especially for the benefit of those who have the first edition of the book.

The 1980s into the 1990s was a period in which the broad educational scene was in turmoil with innovation. The law and its attendant bureaucracy marched into schools everywhere, inspecting, monitoring, regulating, calibrating. Mr Gradgrind was back, in force. The Children Act, the National Curriculum, OFSTED, League Tables, the Health and Safety Executive



ARE YOU LOOKING AT MY BOOK?

between them effected a revolution that changed attitudes and language, made schools self-aware, inadvertently fostered window-dressing as a tool for survival, and, with the laudable aim of making teachers accountable, opened up a new national sport of bullying them.

Parents began to feel empowered. 'We pay the fees, so we should have the best seats', declared one parent at a carol service in the Abbey, indicating the stalls from which the choir was to sing. The size of the school fees disposes many successful parents to assume that there is a tacit contract for the School to deliver the results that status and ambition dictate. The National Curriculum has given many schools a sense of purpose, but the principal losers are probably gifted pupils and gifted teachers, of which A Level has always had a generous share, who now have to hack their way through a disproportionate quantity of banal undergrowth, particularly at the GCSE stage. The ideal of a broad-based liberal education is ever harder to sustain. In most bureaucrats there is a totalitarian lurking, and even independent schools have much less freedom and more paperwork than they knew a decade ago. Pity poor heads everywhere who have to churn out volumes of codes of practice and guidelines to cover every dimension of a school's real or imagined activities, and who need a solicitor at their right hand more often than a glass of whisky.

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But 800-odd years of history have given Westminster both momentum and insouciance when tempests rage. Though teachers elsewhere were tearing their hair out, there was no unusual litter in Little Dean's Yard, where it was very much business as usual. The School simply got on with what it is traditionally good at: academic excellence and artistic ferment. League tables were leapt at a canter, and year after year the School held its place in the forefront of the premiership. Many pupils represented their country in Mathematics, Science and IT Olympiads where gold and silver medals were won. The range and quality of plays, concerts, operas and art work mounted in the precincts was a clear vote by committed pupils for diversity and against the reductiveness of a potentially treadmill process of education. How such events emerge from the apparent casualness of daily life remains both a glory and a mystery of the place. So too its capacity to rise to the big occasion. The Tizard, Brock and Harrod lectures, and the Adrian Boult concerts - public events commemorating distinguished Old Westminsters - have become stabilising points in the year's rhythm, enriching the lives of members of the School and visitors alike. And the old pleasures are as potent as ever: weekend cricket at Vincent Square and the Mediterranean mood of Yard on a summer evening are high on the list of even the most sated Epicurean.

John Rae was succeeded as Head Master in 1986 by David Summerscale. It was his calm and unflappable personality which enabled this period of relative stability to flourish. The eye-catching event of his tenure occurred early on: the opening of the Robert Hooke Science Centre by The Queen in the course of a two hour visit to the School in May 1987. The gamble of acquiring a prime piece of real estate in desirable Smith Square at 1984 prices was inspirational, and the opportunity given to the sciences to become equally inspirational was lavish. In the following year the School, defying the reductive trends which have menaced secondary education in recent years, bought a country base at Leadgate, near Alston in the North Pennines, and for many years now a series of field trips for new boys and reading parties for specialists have sought to affirm the precious prin-

ciple of practical collective education, out of the classroom, out of the city, and with a human face. Three new Houses were created - Hakluyt's, Purcell's and Milne's. This was the better to care for the School's increased numbers and, in the case of Purcell's, to enhance the girls' boarding. There was a controversy over Hakluyt - 'who's he, and how do you spell it?' - and over Purcell - 'was he ever a Westminster?' - but not over Milne. The generosity of A.A. Milne's legacy to Westminster, multiplied by shrewd marketing of the Pooh performing rights and a bountiful 25 year extension of the equalisation of European copyright law, supplied the School with a safety net during this period. The School came through its OFSTED inspection (in January 1995) and its Social Services visits with flying colours. Not surprisingly, it was the quality of the teaching which was widely praised.

Most of the School buildings were given facelifts with



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the help of English Heritage, triumphantly in the case of Burlington's honey-hued Bath stone on the east front of College, bringing dazzling new light to College Garden; less so with the garish 1890s brickwork of Rigaud's, in Little Dean's Yard, which prompted general nostalgia for the old grime. The Boat House at Putney was rebuilt, providing prime conditions for both oarsmen and oarswomen. Indoor heritage was also cherished: the huge canvas backdrops to the old style Latin Play, designed by Charles Cockerell RA in 1961, were rescued from fifty years of nomadic deterioration, restored through the generosity of the Pilgrim Trust, and hung at the south end of School. Bookbinding also returned to Westminster, welcome for its appropriateness in a school with so bookish a pedigree, and for the devoted adherents it won among both pupils and staff.

The cause of school food, generally regarded as lost no matter what efforts are made on its behalf, may have been advanced by the conversion of Grant's Dining Room, the only 1950s space with an 1850s ambience, into something resembling a snack bar on a cross-channel ferry.

Moving from the domestic to wider horizons, David Summerscale, renewing a lifelong love of India, set up an exchange with The Doon School in the Himalayan foothills. No doubt thinking of staging posts, he also peopled eligible schools in the Gulf with headmasters from the Westminster nursery. Continuity of staff was maintained and there was no decline of that cumulative memory which is one of any institution's main arteries. The

Latin Play remains in that memory and we await its revival. In the meantime, Westminster continues its tradition of producing high quality classical scholars.

From 1598 to 1845, only Old Westminsters were appointed Head Master. From 1845 to 1998 there have only been two. In 1957, eyebrows were raised when John Carleton became the boss after a lifetime spent in the place. But from 1998 there is Tristram Jones-Parry, not only an OW, but one who knows the School, for better and for worse, inside out. Maybe it will take such a man to make changes that would be bitterly resented if undertaken by an outsider. Westminster has preserved its stability and worked well during a period of rapid educational change. Are any changes of direction needed? What might the agenda for a new era have on it? The pattern of the week pre-supposes a boarding norm, but the proportion of committed weekly boarders seems to be anchored at about a third. Maybe it is time for Westminster to seek active engagement with the local community, to exert the social and academic responsibilities that many, including government, believe to justify privilege, as well as fitting pupils for a more inclusive society. Gilded metropolitan youth are only too readily sucked into an exclusive vortex of a culture which has little or no sense of history. As a counterbalance for a generation which seems to need, and even quite enjoy, rituals, the place needs confidently to continue to assert the history and distinctions of a great School, but perhaps also find ways of educating parents in its traditions and expectations before it can even begin to educate their offspring.

JOHN FIELD



THE ANCIENT RITUAL OF LOITERING IN YARD

f e a t u r e s

T H E A T R E



HOMO CUIUS CORPUS VELUT IN CUNEUM TENUATUR (ALASTAIR SOOKE)

Adelphoe Up School March

New Labour. new Latin play: after a gap of 19 years, Jonathan Katz and Charles Low have revived one of Westminster's most distinctive traditions, with this excellent production up School of Terence's *Adelphoe* (as we have now learnt to spell it). *Adelphi* (as we used to spell it) was one of the traditional cycle of four plays put on in College Dormitory until the Second World War. It was performed in the presence of King George VI in 1937, and it was chosen for the School's Quatercentenary production in 1960; it was also the last play of the great Zinn era, in 1980. But it is not only these local associations that make it a particularly appropriate play to have chosen: this is Terence at his best, and *Adelphoe* is one of the masterpieces of the European comic tradition. It is subtle and humane, lively and funny; and its theme is one of perennial interest and importance, the question of the relationship between parents and their adolescent children and of the moral outcome of different approaches to it.

In some respects, this was a return to the pre-war tradition: it was a College play, performed indoors, in modern costume, with a painted set. (Under Theo Zinn's direction, from 1954 to 1980, the play was performed in Yard, in modern dress, by Classicists from all the Houses.) There was even some organised applause of the one-liners in the opening scene (which added to the fun of the occasion without having the air of a familiar ritual), and a dual-language prologue by Jonathan Katz in which Daniel Pimlott realised the ambition of every true Westminster, in that he met Terence in person and even understood his Latin!

But the essential qualities of the Zinn productions were maintained: there was a proper emphasis on the delivery of the Latin, and the play was performed as drama, not as the recital of a venerable text. It is invidious to single out particular performances, but Thomas Wood as Demea deserves special mention for the way in which he increasingly came to dominate the action; Demea's triumph at the end of the play has long been seen as a problem, but in this production it seemed absolutely right. Of the other actors, for beau-

ty of delivery I particularly admired Alastair Sooke as Micio, and Amelia Walker as Sostrata, and for vigour of both speech and performance David Reicher's entrance monologue as the outraged Geta could hardly have been bettered. Sinan Savaskan composed and directed some very effective music, mainly as interludes but occasionally accompanying the text.

There was a brief synopsis in English on the back page of the programme, supplemented by epigrammatic summaries of the action to come in English verse, recited by a succession of non-acting scholars at the beginning of each scene. These were an excellent idea, and it was as much as anything the recital of these summaries that conveyed the enthusiasm of College for the project. For this was indeed the impression given by the whole production - not surprisingly, since *Adelphoe* is such a wonderful play. The Latin Play offers a very special educational experience. Congratulations and thanks to the directors for reviving it; we all hope they will be able to ensure that the Play is preserved in the new millennium.

PETER BROWN (QS 1958-1962)
FELLOW AND TUTOR IN CLASSICS,
TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD

My career as a Latin scholar was brief: I took up the language aged eleven, enjoyed the pursuits of Caecilius et al for a year, excelled in the end of year exam and then promptly gave it up in favour of German.

Thus, I approached the College Play with some trepidation. I had loved their run of Aristophanes' comedy - but they were in (rather witty) translation. Chums in the Classics department assured me that I would be able to follow the action: the play was in bite-sized chunks each preceded by a synopsis. My mind, remembering College's performance at House Singing, imagined dragged-up Fifth Formers holding placards like dolly-birds in some naff TV game show...

The opening lines threw me. Had I been given the power of understanding foreign tongues? No - this was English. But then, even Oliver McGregor's Terence *ex machina* was vaguely intelligible to my ears (aided by Daniel Pimlott's half translations). Perhaps this would be easy.

Then the hard work began as character after character disgorged streams of immaculate Latin (but then, it could have been complete nonsense as far as I was aware). The promised synopses - Abbey

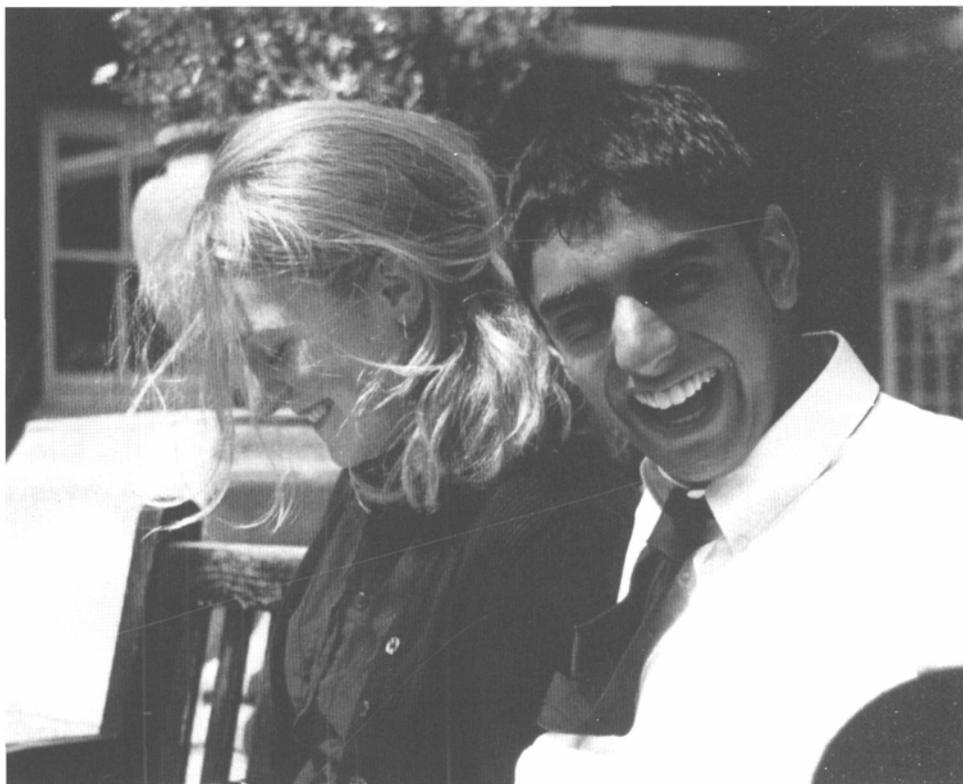
dress, thankfully - materialised: sadly, fast or quiet delivery too often made these slightly unintelligible in School's unforgiving acoustic; but they were greeted rapturously by the rest of the Chorus, leaving me with the feeling that I had missed a punchline.

As for the performance of the main protagonists, Alastair Sooke and Thomas Wood gave impressive performances as the two fathers Micio and Demea. Both are consummate performers: their mien and expressions conveyed emotions and meaning which surmounted linguistic barriers. Ned Harrison and Alex Mackenzie were equally engaging as the pair of sons, Aeschinus and Ctesipho. As an irascible wide-boy slave dealer, Jonathan Goldsmith was demonstrative and delivered his part with passion. The girls, too, gave whole-hearted performances led by Amelia Walker as a (rather young looking) widow, Sostrata.

As ever with College productions, one is impressed not just by the quality of the star performers, but by the consistent excellence seen in supporting rôles. Here we were treated to Martin Malinowski's cunning slave, Syrus (who was particularly convincing in his drunk scene); Thomas Baranga's elder statesman, Hegio; and David Reicher's 'angry young man / slave' Geta.

A final word of praise must go to those who contribute to each College Play: to Dale Inglis for the well designed sets, to Anne Tucker for imaginative and fitting costumes, to Sinan Savaskan for his haunting incidental music and, of course, to Jonathan Katz for bringing the whole House together to frame such a triumphant evening.

DAMIAN RIDDLE



t h e a t r e

The Marriage of Figaro Up School September

When Richard Strauss and Hugo von Hofmannsthal rewrote *Figaro* as *Der Rosenkavalier*, Strauss produced music that collided Old Vienna with Bayreuth, and Hofmannsthal created a libretto that ditched the boring characters and spotlighted the Mozartian pathos. So Cherubino and the Countess take centre-stage whilst Figaro himself gets the boot.

Apart from the incomprehensibility of the plot, the real problem with most *Figaro* productions is the eponymous hero. Too easily *Figaro* – despite his social ‘inferiority’ – can come across as smug, unfunny, and slightly cruel. This was not the case with Philip Needham’s production which managed to balance the humour with an appropriate dollop of sadness. All was bright on the forestage, where the Countess roused her beehive at her shocking pink dressing table, but the jet black void of the main-stage loomed behind her. The japes at court could not warm the moral vacuum in which the funsters frolicked.

Musically, the orchestra responded zestfully to the energetic requirements of Guy Hopkins’ conducting. The woodwind was clear and accurate, cutting through the dancing strings. The comic pace was maintained throughout.

Nick Clark must be awarded an accolade for his human and touching Figaro. His singing voice was delicate but this accentuated the nervy charisma of his portrayal. He could also be heard: throughout his diction was impeccable, so that one relished the recitatives, rather than relishing their absence. He was complemented by Anne-Marie Cunnold’s genuinely charming (and sexy) Susanna. Once again Philip Needham and Guy Hopkins managed to express Figaro’s love for his bride-to-be, avoiding the usual pitfalls of coyness and cutyness.

Sapna Jethwa’s Cherubino was hilarious. All wide-eyed innocence one minute, and suppressed lust the next. Max Grender-Jones’s Count was suitably chilly: although, at the end of the opera, he asks for forgiveness, it was hard to believe that this particular Count would remain particularly faithful. A cad to the core. Meera Kumar’s Countess was going to have to put up with a lot. As ever, the Countess almost stole the show. Meera sang both the Countess’s arias with a sufficient restraint, courting tears but embracing a more ennobling stoicism.

In all, this was an astonishing production. How on earth, after the exigencies of a School day, boys, girls, teachers and musicians are able to focus their minds and talents to give Mozart such vivid dramatic life, is beyond me. Once again it is all praise for both drama and music departments.

GAVIN GRIFFITHS



OLIVIA TEBBUTT, NICK CLARK, DAPHNE HARVEY

t h e a t r e

Under Milk Wood Drama Studio September

Originally designed for radio, the read-through of this play was, not surprisingly, a great success. An unfamiliar image of an incestuous, sleepy Welsh village was vividly created from Thomas's script and brought forth memorable and thoroughly believable Welsh accents. Narrated throughout (by Thomas Wood and Felicity Blunt), the audience gained a true insight into the diverse characters, jumping to and from significant and not so significant occasions in an attempt to depict village folk and gossip. The occasional soap-addict might have compared it to a mid-nineteenth century Ramsey Street or Albert Square, leaving one with an overwhelming longing to see the next stage in the saga.

Accents aside, the play posed several potential difficulties: the text is stark and moderately disconnected, and moreover it took place early in the School year and was 'only' a read-through. But the likes of Billings, Stevens, Burton-Hill (many of whom no doubt are now seriously considering a gap year shearing sheep on the Pembrokeshire coastline) put forward a comic and engaging performance, shot through with home truths and deep meaning. It also provided a forum to introduce two new Sixth Form thespians, Despina Tsatsas and Anna Theophilus.

A most impressive and memorable occasion, and a great start to the theatrical new year.

ADDIE BOTTOMLEY
HENRY NEWMAN

An Evening with Gary Lineker Up School November

An Evening with Gary Lineker ignited the audience's collective memory of that fateful day of 4 July 1990, when England lost to West Germany in the semi-final of the World Cup. In the play, unhappily married Monica (Fleur Kilburn-Toppin) and Bill (Maram Alkhadi) are on holiday in Majorca with Bill's friend, the sexy Dan Hudson (Jasper Lillingston). Monica fantasises about a relationship with the God of football, Gary Lineker, to escape the horrible reality: her clothes stink of pickled onions due to a prank by Bill's colleague Ian; she is married to a 'sad w****er' and is having an affair with Dan, a man who tells her, 'Stoke City FC is the most important thing in my life'. In the company of the infuriating Ian (Sebastian Billings) and a mad German tourist rep Birgitta (Neda Eslamian), they watch the match and the drama unfolds both on and off the pitch.

This was a superb production, which received a standing ovation from a packed house. Jasper and Maram were amazingly convincing in their unfamiliar rôles of emotionally inarticulate football fanatics, while Seb was hilarious as the ghastly, plumbing-obsessed Ian: 'the boys done good.'

It was, however, a 'game of two halves' and Neda and Fleur 'gave 110%'. Many in the audience identified with Fleur's exasperation with men. She was the only intelligent character in the play, and beautifully covered a whole range of emotions, from resignation and frustration to final elation, while Neda's energy and vivacity shone through her portrayal of a rather different Birgitta.

A very funny script, compelling individual performances, and inspired direction from David Hargreaves and Sebastian Billings, combined to deliver a very slick production indeed.

The audience's verdict? 'A right result for Hakluyt's'.

RACHEL OAKESHOTT

Absent Friends Drama Studio November

Ayckbourn's play centres upon suburban discomfort, marital dissatisfaction and social deterioration. This was humorously and sensitively handled by an assured cast and production team in this year's Liddell's House Play. The performance was weighted with delightful characterisation and punctuated with a keen sense of delivery - comic or otherwise

Particularly impressive was the players' ability to interact as an ensemble whilst retaining very distinctive and entertaining individual character traits. This awareness helped instil real vibrancy and suited the small enclosed environment in which the play is based. This atmosphere was maintained throughout, allowing the audience to become really involved in the lives of the participants, in the suburban environment in which they dwell and suffocate.

Ultimately the play is about relationships between individuals who are having to cope with each other more than anything else. The performance very effectively portrayed this fact, the audience having to swallow the bittersweet pill of these lives. Frequently hilarious yet tinged with a bitter, regretful mood, the performance allowed Ayckbourn's fire-loaded dialogue to be spoken at a comfortable and natural pace - neither allowing it to lapse into mundane chat nor constricting it with its own telling observations.

The play's underlying tension was brought to the fore by Doug Shaw's wonderfully platitudinous Colin, whose irritating nasal whine lent itself as much to Harry Enfield as it did your average misunderstood, misunderstanding

t h e a t r e

simpleton. He was brilliantly complemented by Statten Roeg's nervously excited wheeler-dealer John (who pulled off the evening's most impressive, yet least lauded, feat of eating half a tray of sandwiches during the performance) and Nick Brough's confident and understated Paul. Their three female counterparts were similarly engaging. Jenny Steven's authoritative Diana was convincingly betrayed as the play's truly sensitive and delicate anchor, offset by Abi Conway - her acerbic disdain burning the others as only ice can - as Evelyn. Both of whom were sharply focused by Catherine Taylor's turn as Marge, a woman perpetually dominated by an absent husband whose illnesses and moaning provided a stark, intelligent dramatic contrast to Evelyn's infidelity with Paul, at the expense of her husband John and Paul's wife - Diana.

Produced with the dry wit one has come to associate with Richard Pyatt ('Pyatt Productions presents...') and proficiently directed, *Absent Friends* was the entertaining, often painfully realistic, production that the text itself promises. To my mind, when considered on its own, it's a text that doesn't deliver. This made the production's success all the more laudable.

DANIEL FRANKLIN

Next Time I'll Sing To You Up School January



BUT IS IT MY COLOUR?

t h e a t r e

David Summerscale staged a discreet return to Westminster when he directed this demanding play early in the New Year. The action of the play centres around one lost individual who has spent decades of his life in utter isolation, in a shed at the bottom of his family's garden. Morbid, some might say, but it was this play that Mr Summerscale chose to take on tour to India, with his highly able cast of Alastair Sooke, Will Stevens, Tara Hacking, Tom Wood and Seb Billings.

At its showing up School, the multi-layered introspection of the action raised interest and respect among the audience - a rather scant audience at that, but the cast were too tentative to be fully effective, as though the morbidity of the theme had embarrassed them. From every account, Mr Summerscale's patient direction had resolved these doubts in time for the tour, which proved both happy and triumphantly successful. Such a very English play in a very un-English environment proved to be an intriguing cultural experiment.

Magic Box Drama Studio January

If this production moved sometimes on imperfectly oiled wheels, that is only to be expected of a premier performance of a new play. The plot is centred on the great emergence of our hero, the thirty year recluse, Frank Taylor, a disciple of the cathode ray who, since birth, has never abandoned his television. However, various better influences - his long lost cousin James, and a former soap actress - are coaxing him into the open. But, after letting his health go unmonitored for thirty years, Frank suffers a heart attack and is admitted into hospital, sans television. It is here, when deprived of distraction, that Frank first begins to develop.

Given that we were seated in the Drama studio, the simple set and conversational dialogue were well suited to the play's purpose. With one or two exceptions diction could be kept to a level just above that of normal speech, without any problems of reception. The set had little boast, and props were few and functional. If I have one quibble to make, the lighting, like the background Bond themes, lacked taut control. At the end of each scene the lights were dimmed in the hope that it would mask the black suited attendants shuffling things from bedroom to hospital.

Praise for the actors is well deserved. Lionel Laurent, who was Frank, captured, through his nonchalant tone, his abstention from the world. Kate Fowler and Tom Browne as Mr and Mrs Conway were the fount of most of the humour of this play, while Catherine Robinson skilfully presented a rôle which dealt with the confusion of identity.

ALEXANDER CHEVASCO

Drama Festival Up School December

Bouncers

You don't expect the professionally cool Upper Shell to understand Yorkshire discos, Humberside perms and northern Friday nights, but the unfaltering commitment of Tom Dawson, Tom Farthing, Russell Cliffe and Dimitri Weber to this demanding marathon of physical theatre brought Donna Summer, Brut aftershave, and corkscrew topknots to captivating, hilarious, horrifying life.

The astute dialogue of John Godber's classic requires the four actors to cut – almost cinematically – from barber's to salon to pub to club, the whole overshadowed by the brooding chorus of bouncers. The pace of the progression was faultless, as this propless production needed only expertly chosen faces, postures and poses to create a spectrum of characters. A grunt, a stamp or a giggle catapulted the audience from The Dog and Duck to The Hen and Chicken, depositing us, breathless but fascinated, in the middle of someone else's Friday night misery.

The casual ease of these four performances hid the intense concentration demanded. Four lads prepare their stinking caracasses for a hot night of action, perfectly synchronising the scratching, sniffing, sprinkling and splashing that pass for a personal hygiene routine: had one shaved when he should have spat all comic momentum would have dissipated. But there was no such slip, there were no moments when the focus wobbled.



YOU'RE NOT ON THE LIST
YOU'RE NOT COMING IN

t h e a t r e

A play about clubs has clear appeal, but the four avoided stapling their contemporary experiences onto an Eighties' text. The design of both sound and light was more Studio 54 than the Ministry, even if the former was occasionally too loud and the latter sometimes too dim. This was a popular hit of the drama festival - plays with extracts from Swedish porn movies often are - but Dimitri Weber's lascivious barber, Russell Cliffe's dead-end Rosie, Tom Farthing's wannabe punk anarchist and Tom Dawson's perpetual gurning are worthy recipients of the highest praise.

ALICE EVE
ROBERT WILNE

Duck Variations

Mamet was a popular choice for the Drama Festival this year, and this play showed us why. It is a series of conversations between two old men: Emil (Jamie Coggans) and George (Fabian Joseph). Each conversation is centred around the ducks swimming in the pond in front of them, but it soon becomes clear that the two old men are discussing their own lives and problems. Jamie and Fabian, if a little muffled at times, conveyed the message matter-of-factly, with style, humour and sentimentality, and it endeared their characters to the audience. The production, like the characters, was in no way flamboyant. This kept a sense of realism amongst the audience, and I, for one, will never forget George's advice:

'The duck's life is not all hearts and flowers.'

WILLIAM DUNBAR

PVT Wars

PVT Wars fulfilled many of the criteria required of a Drama Festival production. It was an entertaining script of good length with few scene changes or props, and - most importantly - genuinely comic acting.

Set in an American hospital, three in-patients are recovering from the Vietnam war. The play documents the arrival of a new patient, Natwick played by Sam Wise, into a ward already holding the large, sexually-frustrated Italian, Silvio (Charles Howard). The third patient, Gaitley, becomes caught in-between two battling egos.

Many of the Drama Festival plays this year included American accents but this cast certainly deserves commendation for their efforts, in particular Bart Shaw, whose slow, nasal and deliberately soporific voice added an identity to his character that his acting might have lacked, due to his being immobile for most of the play. Visually there was little movement on stage, save the entrances and exits of the actors (and Silvio's occasional nurse-flashing) which although showed the dull monotony of their conditions, became a little tiring for the audience to watch. Consequently, the inserts of Natwick's letters home were much needed breaks, the only criticism here being Sam Wise's occasional lack of voice projection.

Having watched most of the Drama Festival, I personally found this production one of the most enjoyable, and found the actors dealt admirably with a potentially controversial script and handled the comedy in a subtle manner. Credit must be given to Sam Wise for his poised direction and casting which showed an understanding of the play and its successful presentation. Long after the loud brava-do had subsided, the echo of these ignored soldiers' suffering could still be heard, lonely in the night.

DESPINA TSATSAS

The Tin Can People

Edward Bond's *The Tin Can People* deals with what, on the surface, seems to be an issue from the sixties: the horror of the nuclear holocaust; but the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the recent tests carried out by India and Pakistan underline its frightening relevance today.

Oliver Marre's production emphasised the bleakness of the play; using an open, unadorned stage enhanced by cold, stark lighting. The players understood the demands of the text and handled it effectively, leaning on the harshness by maintaining the distance between characters. A measured pace and a controlled bland tone clearly brought home the horror of the holocaust. The arrival of the 1st Man, played by Ned Harrison, (Bond's play uses no names to emphasise the collapse of social structures and the loss of individual identity) and the burgeoning warmth between him and the 1st Woman, Anna Theophilus, was made clear by warmer vocal tones and proximity, which spread through the group, giving a vision of hope in a post-nuclear age, soon dashed as fear of the unknown, represented by the 1st Man, reasserted itself.

The highlight of the play, dramatically, came in the middle. It consisted of a cold bake-bean fuelled rampage by the 2nd and 3rd Woman (Kate Fowler and Rachel Oakeshott), destroying much of what was on stage – including the 2nd Man.

For some, Bond may be considered dated and too heavily political, but as one of the foremost living British playwrights it was good to see part two of his uncompromising trilogy, *The War Plays*, tackled with understanding and sensitivity. Including a memorable performance by Matthew McFadden, the audience was treated to an evening which provoked reflection, as well as entertainment.

PHILIP NEEDHAM

Final Placement

In *Final Placement*, Despina Tsatsas played a social worker whose client, played by Neda Eslamian, has had her young child taken from her and given up for adoption, on the grounds of unfit parenting and child-abuse. The play depicts specific meetings between the two characters and the scenes are broken up by the social worker's dictations, gradually presenting the audience with more information.

Perhaps the most important element of the play is the characters' emotions - the Mother needing a friend, the social worker trying not to get any more emotionally involved than she already is. The two actresses both put across what seemed appropriate feelings for their characters as well as accurately describing the class difference through their tones and physical actions (Neda Eslamian's sitting down, missing the chair and falling on the floor seemed to be very realistic and an ambitious piece of acting).

This play was consistent, if a little heavy-going, and left me and much of the audience in a state of some unease, especially as there was absolutely no element of comedy in it. The portrayal of the characters left one unsure whose side one was really on. Any play which has any sort of long term effect upon its audience deserves credit. More to the point, any play which can bring the audience back down to earth and keep it there straight after the ruckus of *Bouncers* deserves even more.

MICHAEL GOODING



ONLY A FEW SURVIVED THE BOMB

t h e a t r e

Clerks

It is always difficult to convert a play successfully into a film. Even harder is producing a film script on the play. Yet the director and cast of *Clerks* managed this admirably.

The story centres around two store clerks who work at adjacent shops. Dante, played with conviction by Simon Wroe, is unlucky in love. He finds company in a fellow shop assistant – an amusing Daniel Franklin – and the two discuss the finer points of the female sex. Their body language was accomplished, and both projected their convincing American accents well.

Director Alice Eve managed to ensure that her actors made the most of their parts. This furthered the success of the play, making it a real 'crowd-pleaser'. Her staging revealed thought and hard work throughout, showing the inside and outside of the shop simultaneously, and using spotlighting to move between the two. If there was a weakness to this technique, it was the largely empty area in the centre of the stage, but the vibrant performances drew attention away from this.

Dante's ex-girlfriend, Catalin, was played by Lucy Chadwick. She managed to portray the easy-going attitude of her character in a confident performance. Here the only fault was the occasional lack of voice projection. During the play, Catalin falls prey to a pornography-obsessed vagrant: a humorous Jonny Hayes.

A young hoodlum uses the store as a sales market for his own goods. This character was hilariously played by Alex Karageorgis, whose confident – if unsubtle – performance suited the part perfectly. There were also amusing and charismatic performances from Chris Page (Silent Bob) and Maram Alkhadi, both Alex's sidekicks.

NICK ELSTOB

Squirrels

Whilst *Squirrels* was amusing, its portrayal of the tortuous process of writing was also subtle – a combination which is often missing from Drama Festival plays.

Nick Elstob, who both directed and took the leading rôle in the play, acted his part confidently, which suited the character of Art and gave the impression of driving the play forward, encouraging both Jonny Goldsmith's character and his performance. Having said that, Jonny Goldsmith himself gave a very accomplished portrayal of Elstob's new assistant. If he spoke too quietly at times (which must have been especially tempting when having to speak with an American accent throughout the play), his body language portrayed his character's subservience and growing annoyance well. And he need not have worried about the accent: all the American tones were without fault throughout the play.

Emily Mears played her enjoyable cameo as the multi-talented cleaning woman successfully. Her loud voice and fast, bouncy movements suited the part well. However, I'm not so sure about her costume, which was a little out of character...

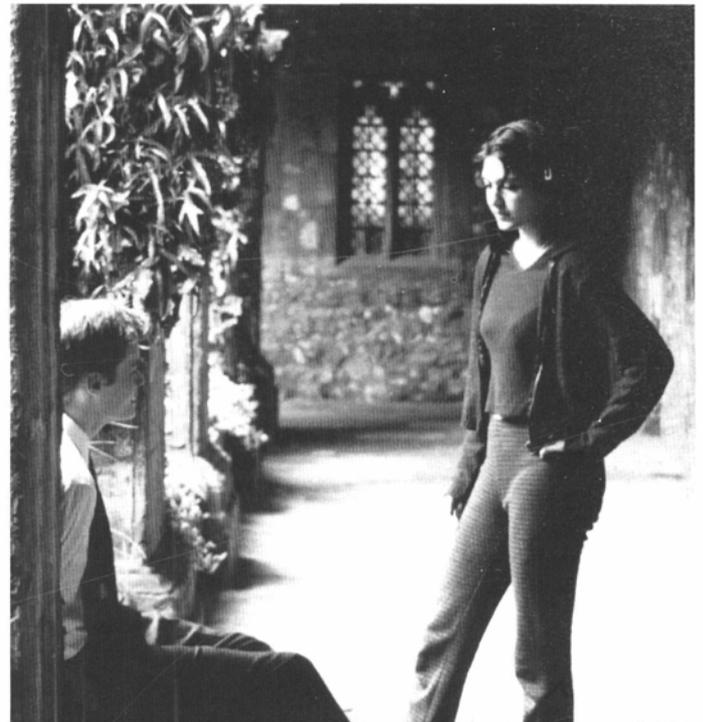
Overall, the performances in this production were strong. Rick Reilly, the assistant director, ought also to be mentioned, as whilst Nick Elstob was acting, he must have helped considerably with the blocking of the play which was notably smooth.

OLIVER MARRE

A View From The Bridge Drama Studio February

The action of the play may take place in and around the home of Eddie and Beatrice Carbone (played by Michael Gooding and Addie Bottomley respectively) – second generation immigrants in the Brooklyn area of New York – but Miller's play broadly aims to echo some sort of classical tragedy taking place in Calabria perhaps, or on the cliff at Syracuse.

Without doubt, the poverty and claustrophobia of the setting was well-suited to the intimate Drama Studio and was conveyed in the balance of symbolic staging techniques, although the greater themes of tragedy and doomed destiny were harder to communicate. Jonny Hayes as the lawyer Alfieri, as well as the quasi-Greek chorus, opened



WOULD YOU DO IT ON A DEMI-LUNE?

t h e a t r e

Black Comedy Drama Studio May

proceedings with the slick confidence and worldly cynicism that befitted his rôle. That which he lacked in projection was well made up for in his rich Italian-American accented delivery and assured control over the scene – through a measured combination of relaxed posture and sparse, deft body movement.

Indeed, one of the most noticeable aspects of the performance was its reliance upon, and usage of, characters' body language and accents. Michael Gooding constantly looked over his shoulder and nervously sucked his gums, a physical encapsulation of his wariness in harbouring the two 'submarines' – illegal immigrants Marco (Sam Wise) and Rodolpho (Jack McGee). However, it may be too often called upon as a device, hence devaluing it when it was most necessary to understanding the emotional turmoil his character was undergoing at key stages in the play's dramatic crescendo.

Eddie's interaction with his niece Catherine (Alice Eve) is one of the foci of the play – bringing the malicious sexual tension purveyed by the self-denying Eddie towards her to the surface, for all the audience to perceive in its ugliness. In doing so, they both instilled poignant emotional dynamism to the performance. Alice Eve's fidgeting fingers and uneasy smiles also ably and appropriately represented a woman trying to burst out of the mental confines of a child. Yet even in the romantic moments with Jack McGee's Rodolpho, when she is surely a self-knowing adult, she persisted with these nervous gestures.

This fledgeling courtship prompts the other staple action of the performance – the inevitable confrontation between Eddie, inflamed with jealousy at Rodolpho's successful wooing of his Catherine, and Marco. The latter is determined to protect his younger brother, unversed in the ways of physical violence, but also to salvage his own reputation. The climactic scene at the end of the first act, in which Marco defiantly lifted a chair with one arm, was a finely staged symbol of Marco's superior strength, and the point at which the audience realise that, in this contest, it is Marco who will emerge as winner. A lesser production might have failed to emphasise so adroitly this essential element to the play's theme of destiny.

It is doubtful that the play can truly be a tragedy in the classical sense, as Eddie seems to lack a sense of his own. Addie Bottomley's resignation and passivity in grief, as her husband descended into betrayal and defeat, was astute and effective. Her splendid gesturing – head in hands – never faltered, unlike her accent, which moved from Italian to Irish to Yugoslav and back.

This was a praiseworthy production, with just a hint of the histrionic. But tangible emotion was exacted from the text, and the audience shared in it. To achieve this in the confines of the Drama Studio, to evoke Miller's dimensions of classical tragedy – all the claustrophobia and collapse of integrity – is testimony to success.

DANIEL FRANKLIN

Most productions that are put on at Westminster can certainly be described as good, but it is rare for one to come along and be described as excellent. One did, and it was Paul Rees's superbly realised production of Peter Schaffer's play, *Black Comedy*. The set was a perfect interpretation of what you would expect a contemporary artist's flat to look like, right down to the smallest, most insignificant ornaments. The lighting was obviously complex, and its brilliant timing and flawlessness was thus more impressive. There were occasional moments of very intricate, and possibly dangerous, choreography which were so remarkable because much of the play was performed in minimal light.

All of these details, however small, displayed Mr. Rees's dedication to putting on something spectacular. Finally, the actors' thoughtful representations of a set of incredibly complex, varied and utterly ludicrous characters were thoughtful, relevant (to the play) and most importantly hilarious. And of course, none of the intended humour was lost from their speaking of the script, and even the smallest jokes were easily identifiable.

There were striking performances from Kate Fowler, as the loyal but disillusioned fiancée and daughter of a rich Colonel. Her performance was somewhat over-the-top, but this was indeed a vital part of the play's comic element. Mica Penniman was also very convincing in the main rôle, as the unstrung and utterly disorganised artist desperately trying and failing to stop things going wrong, despite losing his accent occasionally. His part was essential in holding together the farcical element of the play, and the audience were certainly not let down. Overall there were very few problems with the acting, even though there were those who were inexperienced and clearly had had problems with grasping the essence of their characters and the way to perform them. The most brilliant performance of all was that of Edward Ryland, as the insanely camp friend from Yorkshire. His accent was perfectly northern throughout, and despite the extravagance of his character, Ed made it nearly believable. Kenneth Williams could not have done better. The only slight problem was that occasionally, because he realised he was so good, and was aware that he was receiving unanimous applause every few minutes, he overplayed the campness simply to gain laughs, something that became evident to the audience. He risked type-casting for a few cheap laughs.

Black Comedy was, overall, a roaring success, and we all hope to see more of Mr. Rees in the director's chair and future performances from the entire cast, especially Kate Fowler and Edward Ryland.

OLIVER MARRE

t h e a t r e

The Odyssey Drama Studio May

The enthusiasm and enjoyment of the actors involved in this production struck the audience immediately. This was a colourful performance, brimming with multiple rôles, fast costume changes and occasional Greek and Latin chants (interspersed with giggles...) emerging from backstage. The pace of the play – ten meandering years condensed into an hour - was surprisingly fast: knowing the story in advance definitely helped. They performed with confidence, clarity and volume - only a few lines were lost due to enthusiastic audience participation.

Ben Irving was an apt choice as Odysseus and showed considerable talent in a demanding title rôle. He was well supported by all his crew members, in particular Jonathan Hazell (Costa) and Nick Boswell (Stratis). Along the way, Odysseus notably encountered Felix Hilton's well judged comic yokel, the Cyclops (Rick Reilly, whose confident stage presence promises much for the future) and the expertly measured performance of George Richards as both the alluring Circe and the gentle Penelope.

The play was an ambitious choice by director Fiona Smart, which showed dedication from the actors and noticeable artistic direction aided by John Larkey's intelligent technical designs. The image of the blue-lit Odysseus, desperate to hear the discordant beauty of David Powell's siren, gripping the mast as taunting sailors dissolved into maelstrom, still haunts. Few plays display the imagination with which Fiona Smart used mime, ritual and minimal paraphernalia to create both gods and monsters, and few casts have embraced the techniques of physical theatre with such total commitment.

DESPINA TSATSAS



A R E W E N E A R L Y T H E R E Y E T ?

t h e a t r e

Round and Round the Garden Drama Studio March

It all seemed so relaxing at 7.15 pm – birdsong, trellis and shrubbery do not threaten an audience, they do not suggest a cruel examination of hopeless people's hopeless lives. But it is Ayckbourn's gift to weave, using only the finest threads of laughter and farce and confusion, a noose of bleak despair in which all his characters soon find themselves swinging. Catherine Totty transplanted a startling proportion of her mother's Surrey garden into the drama studio, but little was rosy in this expertly poised production.

We laughed, initially. Thomas Munby's amiably gurning vet stammered and mumbled and failed to grasp the slender clues offered by Daphne Harvey's sensitive portrayal of the apparently relaxed Annie. She appeared so free, so unencumbered by the demands of neat beauty that ruled her sister, but this performance did not ignore that the messy hair and the broken nails were her only reward for looking after a bedridden mother. In fact, this was to be her first ever weekend away, but it was soon apparent that she wanted to go with the vet Tom rather than Norman, the brother-in-law who is later revealed to be her somewhat unwelcome co-respondent. But Tom is too obtuse to relate to an actual person, and it was the aching misunderstanding between these two that gave the play the still moments of suffering on which the comedy could be built.

The arrival of Annie's brother Reg and his wife Sarah is intended to free Annie of her duties, but their suburban fussing only disturbs the brooding, offstage mother. Edward Randall's Reg was a well-meaning buffoon, whose over-ironed slacks amidst the rambling ivy were a subtle image of his own fraternal incongruity. Amy Walker's Sarah glittered with her desperation to help, and hence to be valued, but her peach twin-set could not hide the perfume of Mogadon. The comic foreigner is an archetype, but these two were wrecked on the shores of their own family, and this confusion informed these two excellent performances.

Enter Casanova stage left. But Norman is quite normal, and only appears racy compared to the plastic emotions of his in-laws. Alasdair Donaldson created a dishevelled, unkempt

Norman whose adolescent lust seemed unlikely to manifest itself anywhere beyond his imagination. This was a sophisticated interpretation, whose boyish enthusiasm promised an arid affair that was so painfully welcome first to Annie then to Sarah. In the middle of the fertile garden they could only see the stunted men to whom Norman was the alternative. Even grey Ruth, coolly realised by Catherine Totty, could not ignore the apologetic puppy-dog charms of her unmasked husband Norman. The farce of her myopia had been faultlessly choreographed, but Catherine's blind stares showed a panic beyond that of merely geographical confusion.

This was an impressive production whose bitter aftertaste lingers, with an intelligent cast that followed well-timed comic burlesque with quiet expositions of bitter suffering. The sensitivity of the performances avoided mechanical clowning in some pastoral idyll, choosing instead to point their characters into the chilly, guilty wind that would always gnarl any new growth.

ROBERT WILNE

The Lover Up School October

In this short, crisp play Pinter compresses much of what Albee was exploring in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* In particular, he explores the sexual games and fantasies of a frustrated middle class couple, who rebel against the constraints of their banal humdrum existence by enacting their sexual fantasies. Much of the tension of the play derives from the ambiguities and doubts in the mind of the audience as to the nature of the relationship of the couple. Pinter makes the identity of the lover deliberately unclear. Is it Thomas Wood, Tara Hacking's rather run of the mill husband, or is it Statten Roeg, the rather ambiguous milkman, or is it somebody else entirely? Towards the end of the play it is of course revealed, and only then do we understand the true nature of the rather confusing relationship which we had up to now been witnessing.

This slick production exploited these ambiguities and doubts well. The play opened to the sound of Radio Four's *Today* programme, a choice which struck a chord with the picture of a rather tedious middle class Surrey household. Thomas Wood ably portrayed the languor of a dull middle-class businessman, in his dull suit, whose metamorphosis in the second half of the play into something totally different was thus rendered even more striking. Tara was excellent as the bored housewife, who spends most of her life fiddling with tedious aspects of housework, only to release her frustrations in her sexual fantasies. Statten Roeg's cameo milkman added both mystery and comic tension.

In a play where characters reinventing themselves as something entirely different was an important theme, small details of direction, such as Tara Hacking changing the style of her shoes as she changed her character, helped to give this production extra life. Perhaps most striking of all were Thomas Wood's bongo drums, on which he beat out his brutal, tribal beat. This primitive instrument was the perfect medium on which he could express this most primitive of urges. The transformation of the set from an urbane suburban living room into a sexual playground was strikingly effective.

The play was short and sharp and full of surprises, but above all it maintained its momentum throughout, firstly by creating doubts and questions in the audience's mind as to what in fact was going on between the two characters, and then by starkly revealing their bizarre inner world. Their transformation from the mundane to the outrageous was simultaneously incongruous and yet strangely credible, giving Robert Wilne's production its powerful, lingering effect.

TOM BARANGA



N O W A Y O U T

t h e a t r e

M U S I C

Beethoven's 5th Symphony St John's Smith Square November

'Thus fate knocks at the door' Beethoven is reported to have said about the first four notes of the opening movement - *Allegro con brio*. Guy Hopkins, conducting a talented but youthful School orchestra, may well have felt something similar. Familiarity with its frankly emotional appeal can lull audiences into believing this is an easy piece. It is not, least of all the first movement. The listener soon becomes aware that their rhythm dominates the whole passage, but it is only part of a large-scale first subject which does not end until the horn entry.

With such a medley of harmony and rhythm, the orchestra managed the pitfalls splendidly, so that its terseness, vivid orchestral colour and 'shock tactics' were all fully exploited.

Whereas the first movement shocks the audience in its impression of angry fate, the second movement sets out in calmness and serenity. The wonderful series of harmonies which occur between the statement of the two principal melodies was lyrically brought out, first by the violas and cellos, and the second by clarinets and bassoons. Formally, the movement is a series of variations on these themes, the elaborations, being mainly melodic; the final cadences of the coda were most sensitively exploited, adding a unique touch of grandeur and tenderness.

The third movement shows that, whatever else, Beethoven is unafraid to offer contrast. Mystery, clangour and even a sense of foolery came, one after the other, the last when the cellos and double basses managed, with great discipline and precision, mischievously to disturb the genial texture built up in this episode. But the eerie gloom returned, and the march became a whispered husk of how it began. In the gathering darkness, the timpanist coolly began to beat out a persistent rhythm over which floated out echoes of the first theme. Crescendo came without a hesitation, grinding discord, until at last the audience emerged from the introspective reverie into the great C major theme of the jubilant last movement. Here was



Y O U P U T Y O U R L E F T L E G I N

Westminster School's orchestra in full evening dress - a double bassoon and alto, tenor and bass trombones are added to the ensemble. Guy Hopkins commented that 'there are a lot of notes' but it was in fact a less terrifying movement to perform than the first. The themes were vigorous, and nothing could stem the exuberant sweep of this finale, with its glorious restatements of the chord of C major.

Having listened carefully both on the evening itself, and to the CD produced on the occasion, my enthusiasm both for the choice of piece and quality of rendition remains undented. For all their inexperience, there was an authority and integrity to the ensemble work which augurs that great days lie ahead. Even in the most testing moments of the first movement, there was never a sense of the beast drifting out of control. Brass and woodwind have justly been praised, and no doubt the orchestra's repertoire over the next two or three years will be exploiting fully some of the precocious talent we have been lucky enough to attract. But I should wish to add emphatic and equal praise for the strings, whose exactitude and musical knowingness lifted them well beyond the merely highly competent.

In the months and years leading up to this event, Beethoven's deafness had intensified; it is certain that, by the time he gave the first performance of the Fifth Symphony in Vienna in December 1808, it was total. The turbulence of his feelings, it is hardly fanciful to suggest, receives sublime expression in this piece. Intellectually and emotionally, this orchestra honoured fully his legacy.

DAVID HARGREAVES

Choral Concert Abbey March

On Thursday 18th March the Abbey provided an enchanting setting for the Lent term School concert. Once again the audience were amazed by the incredibly high standard of the performances of the orchestra, choirs and soloists; and in true Westminster style a highly ambitious programme was pulled off with remarkable skill.

The concert began with Schubert's '*Unfinished*' *Symphony in B minor*. Conducted by Guy Hopkins and led by Clemmie Burton-Hill, the orchestra masterfully created the apocalyptic and enchanted air that separates this piece from Schubert's other symphonic works. Written six years before he died, there are several theories as to why this movement remained incomplete. It cannot be true that Schubert intended that there should be only two movements because a substantial part of the third movement exists, and it is possible that the last two movements were lost. Music historians argue over this anomaly, but there is one romantic but rather tragic explanation. Whilst Schubert was writing the symphony he became desper-

ately ill. It is quite possible that having written two movements so great that they elevated him to the status of preceding composers such as Beethoven, Schubert simply could not bring himself to complete the work, for fear that he would not do so satisfactorily. To create a finale that released the vast tension built up in the first two movements would have been an enormous feat and, had Schubert achieved it, this might have become one of the greatest pieces of music ever written. The despair and alienation that Schubert must have felt whilst writing this work could be felt through the spirited and involved performance that the orchestra gave, and all members should be congratulated on a highly professional presentation.

The next item in the programme was Benjamin Arnold's performance of three short pieces for organ written by twentieth century French composers. *The Berceuse* by Louis Vierne from his op. 31, a series of 24 pieces in Free Style, is a 'cradle-rocking' piece which then contrasted with the timelessness of Messiaen's *Le Banquet Celeste* and then the vitality of Eugene Gigout's famous *Toccata*. Benjamin handled these contrasting pieces with astonishing ease, and masterfully brought out the different colours and varieties of tone.

The Henry VII Singers brought the first half of the evening to a close with *Trois Motets pour un Temps de Pénitence* by Francis Poulenc. As ever the standard of music produced by Gilly French's small choir was remarkable, and despite the complexity of the motets the singers rose to the challenge bringing out the contrasting moods. The unusual dynamic changes and varying time signatures typical of Poulenc's work gave the motets a feeling of freedom and unpredictability, which was enhanced by a very professional performance.

Durufle's *Requiem* brought together the School choir, the parents' choir, the orchestra and the organ in one of the more ambitious works undertaken by the music department in recent months, certainly from the point of view of organisation. Guy Hopkins should be congratulated for bringing together so many musicians in one piece, and so admirably keeping his composure throughout. Nine movements in the *Requiem* involve varying combinations of voices each using the plainsong of which Durufle was so fond. Solos from baritone Gavin Carr and mezzo soprano Louise Mott gave a truly professional stance to the performance, and the *Pie Jesu* for mezzo soprano and cello, the climactic movement of the piece, was a particular highlight. The evening was brought to a close amidst the tranquillity and timeless spirituality of the *Requiem* which concentrates on the peace and rest of Paradise rather than the violent images of grief conjured up by some of Durufle's predecessors.

Congratulations should go to all the musicians who played a part in the concert. Manifest hard work and ability brought abundant reward.

CATHERINE ROBINSON

Jazz Concert Up School November

The School's Annual Charity Jazz Concert took place on Monday 30th November up School, treating listeners to a dazzling array of talents and including a broad range of pieces that were 'jazzy' in the widest sense of the word. The evening kicked off with the 'Monday Night Band' (so called, it is believed, because of the day of the week on which they meet). They played the home-grown *Monday Night Jump*, by our own Mr McAllister, the smooth *Creole Love Call* and the immediately catchy *Tuxedo Junction*. Tom Nishiwaki then came on to dazzle with his piano skill, playing *Dolphin Square*. He was followed by the trio of Roderick McKinley (on piano), Alex Moylan (providing the riffs on double bass) and Ed Stevens, keeping everyone in rhythm on the drums, who played *My Funny Valentine* by Richard Rodgers.

We were then treated to Olivia Tebbutt's fantastic voice, accompanied by Ben Arnold on piano, as she sang a medley containing *Misty* by Burke and Garner, *Desafinado* by Hendricks and Carlos Jobim and *Let's Fall in Love* by Koehler and Arlen. From the exquisite evening wear to the breathtaking voice, the performance seemed worthy of a slot at any fashionable club. Olivia then teamed up with Katherine Kingsley and Georgina Burley in a very different kind of song - unaccompanied close harmony. This tremendously demanding form of song - with only one person per part, and no instruments to help direct the singer, they are really 'on their own' - is enchanting and fantastically absorbing when done well - and 'Inkognito', as the group call themselves, did just that. Riding through *Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man* by Hammerstein and Kern as if it were a breeze, they proceeded to don Santa hats and treat us to a non-programme item - a Christmas medley containing all the traditional tunes. Tom Wroe (alto sax), Ben Hartman (drums) and Christian Vaughan (piano) were next up, playing *There is No Greater Love* by Isham and Jones with tremendous panache.

Emily Edmonstone, a new face at the School this year, was accompanied by Roderick McKinley - in his second outing on the keys of the evening - as she sang *It Ain't Necessarily So*, a plaintive number by Ira and George Gershwin. We were then treated to a pair of piano pieces - first Ryan Victor playing *RSVP*, and then Ben Arnold playing *Tunisian Medley*, a very difficult piece indeed. Both were dispatched with style and flair.

Next up were the 'Parliament Square Quintet' (not named, so far as I know, after the place they meet). Dan Franklin played alto sax, Charlie Howard trombone, Ben Arnold piano, Alex Moylan bass and Ed Stevens (as ever, the master of rhythm) on drums. Their impressive range of virtuoso improvisations were included in pieces in a number of styles, from the traditional Senegalese *Let Your Voice Be Heard* to the blues - *Mo' Better Blues* to be precise.

The finale to the evening was provided with the uncompromisingly-named Big Band. Despite problems of illness that meant slight curtailment of the programme was necessary, the tremendous talent shone through and no one could fail to be impressed. Ben E. King, Leiber and Stoller's unforgettable *Stand By Me*, George and Ira Gershwin's *I Got Plenty of Nothing*, Woody Herman and Joe Bishop's *Woodchopper's Ball* and much more provided a fitting end to this impressive evening that stood as a testament to the tenacity, talent and effort of all the students involved, and the tremendous hard work of Mr McAllister in pulling it all together.

TOM BARNET-LAMB

Contemporary Music Concert Up School January 1999

The School's annual Contemporary Music concert took place up School on the 22nd January, comprising an eclectic medley of twentieth century works from early Stravinsky and middle-of-the-road Holst to sixties music theatre and home-grown compositions. The first work, and a most accessible introduction, was Catherine Robinson's *Overture for Orchestra*, an orchestration/composition exercise which combined Mahlerian hues and incisive string patterns in a manner far removed from Romantic pastiche, but which, as with the work of Jonathan Sells, reflected Dr Savaskan's influence on these impressionable young sixth formers in their use of the tam-tam. (It is rumoured that the BBC SO percussionists needed overtime when playing his Second Symphony last year).

Jonathan Sell's work, *Justice, They Say, Does Not Exist On Earth*, was perhaps the most ambitious that we have seen since Robin Haller's *Studies for Orchestra* two years ago, but showed the difficulties of such large-scale scoring, especially as it had been hurriedly adapted from its conception as a choral work, instead making use of the School organ. Perhaps these were exacerbated by the spread of the orchestra down most of the length of School.

The other home composition of the first half was Bernard Freudenthal's *Interlude for String Orchestra* a very lively GCSE composition, imaginatively mixing the elements of string orchestra with violin solo, and reflecting the composer's interest in Shostakovitch.

These works and three studies for orchestra by Stravinsky - *Danse, Eccentrique*, and *Cantique* - were conducted by Dr Savaskan, leading the orchestra with his customary clarity and precision. This early Stravinsky proved a great contrast to Holst's *Suite in E flat*, played by the Wind Band under the ever energetic Kenneth McAllister, where English folk song

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ANTHONY CARDONA, JONATHAN SELLS, CHARLES CORN

melodies mixed with English marching band tunes were exuberantly played by a band stretching from Saxophones to no less than five percussionists, led by Barnaby Taylor.

Much of the rest of the programme comprised shorter works, firstly a paraphrase for organ on the plainchant *O Emmanuel* by Naji Hakim, Messaien's successor at La Trieste, Paris, played by Ben Arnold. Three further home grown compositions were interspersed with a setting of Shakespeare, in the second half, before a finale of avant garde music theatre. Two of the compositions were for wind - Max Bolt's GCSE project *Trio for Clarinets*, an episodic work mixing strident harmonies with contrasting neutral themes, and Barnaby Taylor's *Expressionale*, a technically demanding work played enthusiastically by Frances Gardiner and Mark Tocknell. Ed Stevens' *Silent Journey*, with its intense, involving melodies and soft harmonies, was played to mesmeric effect by Dr Katz, who also accompanied Gavin Carr, the School's singing teacher, in *Where Should Othello Go*, a setting of Othello's last soliloquy by Alison Bauld (the mother of OW Alex Evans), where an eerie start of Ivesian dissonances built up to a truly angst-ridden climax.

The final work of the programme was Gyorgy Ligeti's 1960s work *Aventures*, for three 'eerie' voices and chamber group, and one whose phantasmagorical staging - all purple and green and red - must have made an indelible mark on the memories of the audience, for many reasons. The sight of Amy Russell in a Tutu and Pail Bailey, conductor and director, in tail coat and top hat, a backdrop of newspaper highlights ('Are you middle class?' and 'Banana jailed for sex with soccer team!' - if you've been wondering about the relevance of those posters - to name but two) added up to a unique experience. Timothy Vale's dizzy lighting effects created a surreal deranged world of darkness and mayhem punctured only by shafts of bile green and bruised purple. As Amy Russell, Daphne Harvey and Charles Ogilvie made every wordless noise in this tremendously technically difficult work, ranging from the bizarre, through the canine to the grotesque, the audience's reactions ranged from shock to taut suspense. Certainly this was a most memorable conclusion to a concert whose astounding range of styles and great perfectionism reflected the effort of all the musicians, and especially the hard work of Dr Savaskan.

Concerto Concert Up School April

Throughout this concert the audience were treated to magnificent solos from many concertos, all played with technical skill and artistic flair by some of the most outstanding musicians of the Remove. The concert was opened by the *Allegro* of Strauss's *Horn Concerto No 1 in E flat* (op 11). Will Stevens played the solo horn in this lyrical and refreshing piece, which possessed a relaxing yet invigorating air. Next was Mozart's *Adagio for Violin and Orchestra* (K261). Emily Mears's accomplished playing allowed the elegance of this tranquil and refined piece to shine through, and the classical simplicity of Mozart's writing did not degenerate into blandness.

Paul Bailey now played the solo in two movements of Bohuslav Martinu's *Oboe Concerto: the Poco Andante and Moderato*. Paul effortlessly overcame the technical difficulty of the solo part's many fast moving passages to give a magnificent performance. The Oriental melodies gave the music a mysterious charm, which the sailing cadenzas brought to life. Ernest Bloch's *Nigun from Baal Shem* (subtitled Three Pictures of a Chassidic Life) had a wonderful 'rustic' charm, reflecting the folk melodies on which it drew, and the accomplished playing of Michael Garnett ensured the end result was strikingly beautiful. The first half of the concert was brought to a close with a performance of Vivaldi's *Sopranino Recorder concerto in D 'Il Gardellino'* (op 10 no 3). Max Grender-Jones's decision to play a piece on this instrument treated the audience to the beautiful sound of it sailing above the contrapuntal orchestral playing. It allowed for an interesting interplay between the general polyphony of the baroque music, and the distinctive tunes of the solo part.

Following the interval, we moved to Germany to hear the *Erbarme Dich* from J S Bach's *St Matthew Passion*. Daphne Harvey sang the mezzo-soprano solo of this plaintively lyrical piece. Next, Clemmie Burton-Hill took the solo in the *Adagio* from Brahms's *Violin Concerto in D* (op 77). Brahms's majestic music was highly emotive, and skilfully manipulated the audience's mood and the tension of the atmosphere to draw them further into the music. The solo part itself was undoubtedly highly demanding, and Clemmie's performance was absolutely first rate.

Ben Arnold's partiality for French composers was further demonstrated when he played the second and third movements of Guilmont's *Organ*

Symphony no. 1. The second movement, though entitled *Pastorale*, nevertheless was fast moving and almost polyphonic in places, while the third, *Finale Allegro Assai* combined elements of both fugue and toccata in its vigorous buildup, with seemingly unstoppable motion and energy, to the highly dramatic conclusion.

Following this was the *Allegro* from Bach's *Klavier Concerto in D minor* (BWV 1052). The mastery of those amazingly intricate harmonies that is the hallmark of Bach was clear in this fantastic piece, and Tom Wood's performance as solo pianist was impeccable. Finally, the concert was rounded off with the *Allegro Affetuoso* of Schumann's *Piano Concerto in A minor* (op 54). Thomas Baranga, as solo pianist, gave a magnificent performance in this piece which combines moments of pathos with times of highly charged playing and atmosphere, as well as melodies which remain with the listener long after the music has stopped.

TOM BARNET-LAMB

Wind and Brass Concert Yard June

During the last week of the Election Term, July 1998, at the request of the retiring Head Master and Chaplain, we had a repeat performance of Berlioz's *Grande Symphonie Funèbre et Triomphale*. This work for wind and brass orchestra was performed some six years ago up School: hence the request.

Ken McAllister assembled an orchestra made up of pupils, visiting instrumental teachers and many professional friends and conducted the work. The performance was in Yard, as Berlioz had originally conceived the work for an open air public ceremony to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the 1830 revolution.



PURCELL'S GOES DISCO

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Amnesty

Over the last year the School's Amnesty society has continued to run weekly letter writing sessions on behalf of prisoners of conscience all over the globe. In addition, Mr. Holmes has set up a link with the Abbey's Amnesty project. His fine Amnesty candle now stands in the Camden room, displaying the case of the victim of conscience currently being publicised by the abbey. The Amnesty committee has been broadened to include Lower School members, and attendance has varied from pupils of all ages to the Head Master. Funds have been raised through collections after performances of Pinter's *The Lover*, and a Shag Day has been agreed by Mr. Arthur and the Head Master. Finally, the committee would like to thank Mr. Holmes for his hard work setting up the School's Amnesty society and helping run it over the years. A successor matching his enthusiasm will be hard to find.

WILLIAM ROBERTSON

History of Art

History of Art at Westminster continues to thrive, and the Society has, over the past year, certainly reflected this, offering an interesting and varied programme. Tom Parsons kicked off in September with the somewhat provocatively entitled 'Is Matisse a Failure?'. Probably not, we decided, but nevertheless enjoyed an exciting new perspective on a favourite artist.

Although we study a modern art history course, nobody can dispute the vital importance of 'The Classical Tradition in Art', which was the subject of Mr Draper's lecture in November. This was a fascinating exposition of the fundamental basis of art, and very relevant to all of us.

Gill Perry opened the Society for 1999 with an excellent talk about 'The Modern Body'. She is the co-author of our second year textbook, and by dealing with artists as varied as Manet, Matisse, and the German Expressionists, she covered many of the artists and images we study in what was an excellent talk.

We finished the year with an old favourite, Old Westminster John House. As ever, his talk on Monet's 'La Grenouillère' was as fresh and exciting as the painting itself, and by bringing in many diverse issues including the attitudes of 1869 society, completed what has been a fantastic year for History of Art Society. Many thanks to everyone who has attended, and of course to Mrs Cockburn, Dr Jacobi and Mr Clarke for organising it.

CLEMMIE BURTON-HILL

Chess

This year was a rather quiet one for the Westminster Chess Team, with only three tournaments and matches against other schools. The first tournament was the annual one held at a school in Guildford. Although Westminster was weakened by the loss of most of its first team who had been in last year's Remove, we put up a creditable performance in coming sixth out of nine schools participating. A lot of the schools there had people who compete regularly in tournaments and have national rankings, which is unfortunately a luxury that we do not have.

The next match was a 'friendly' one against Harrow School, which we drew with the score at three boards each, and we were unlucky not to have done better. The final match was the first round of the annual *Times* Competition, in which we were drawn against Colet Court (the junior branch of St. Paul's School). Due to the difference in age between our two teams, Westminster would have had to have won by a score of at least 5-1 to progress to the next round. However, Colet Court - like many prep schools - has a good team, and we were unable to get the scoreline that was required - a shame given that our record in this competition is quite good. However, the performance of the Fifth Formers that played was very encouraging, and next year ought to bring some better results.

GERALD WELDON

Debating

Regular debates continued within the School this year, with varying audience sizes but a popular move to debates including more speakers and prepared only a short time in advance. These short-preparation debates tended actually to increase the standard of what was said, by forcing people to 'think on their feet'.

Westminster also took part in three major debating competitions. Thomas Munby and Frederick van der Wyck reached the finals of the Cambridge Union Schools Debating competition and its chaotically organised Oxford rival. Punctuality was not something Westminster's debaters could boast about, but an extremely later arrival still proved early enough to beat the Oxford adjudicators to the debate venue. The Oxford finals, however, had an air of friendliness and warmth which Cambridge's tight schedule did not seem to allow for, but debate in the Chambers of both Universities was certainly an experience.

Expeditions

The prestigious ESU Observer Mace debating competition was, however, the arena of greatest success. Having had to persuade an all-female opposition that feminism was excellent in the first round, the next round provided some relief. The opposition, saying that gay celebrities should be 'outed', entirely contradicted each other by trying to present a left-wing and then a right-wing case in their two speeches. There was no confusion on the part of teams in the subsequent hotly-contested London area final. The St. Paul's team appeared to be on good form having just won the Oxford final, and they were not the only team containing England debaters. Westminster, however, succeeded in convincing the audience (and, more importantly, the judges) that 'This House would not fear China', Thomas Munby's speech being so convincing as to make one wonder whether he were not a secret Sinophile. That after writing speeches on a bench outside the railway station on the way to the debate was something of a lucky success! Praise is also due, though, to Mr. White who not only found the way to the obscure venue but also shared his extensive knowledge on Chinese affairs in this case, and on many other subjects in the other debates.

Having made short-preparation debates of all the initial rounds, it was decided to prepare thoroughly for the national final, arguing that World War II criminals should no longer be prosecuted. The case seemed a tough one to have to make, but long preparation led to a solid, if complicated, case. However, Gerald Rothschild, at extremely short notice, was forced to take the place of Thomas Munby. In the face of a considerable ordeal, arguing a complicated, inherently difficult case in front of a large audience and cameras, and having been coached only an hour before, Gerald performed superbly. The surprise of the whole thing, however, undermined the Westminster performance and the opposition ended as the evening's eventual winners. The motto is clearly that it is not worth preparing debates in advance.

FREDERICK VAN DER WYCK

Frederick van der Wyck and Thomas Munby took the School team back to the top of the pile in English Schools debating. Though formally fifth placed in the Cambridge Union Society final, the speaker points suggested that they were actually third. Thomas went even better in the Oxford Union finals, being scored as the second best speaker in the competition. It was a shame that he could not be at the ESU Observer Mace Final, where we surely stood a chance of winning the whole thing. The two were, nevertheless, worthy London (regional) champions.

This year saw the inaugural inter-House debating competition; the Grand Final on 25th June is awaited with sincere anticipation. The popularity of the event underlines the suspicion that Debating is, for all its arcane procedure and etiquette, still a worthwhile and entertaining skill to learn.

JONATHAN WHITE

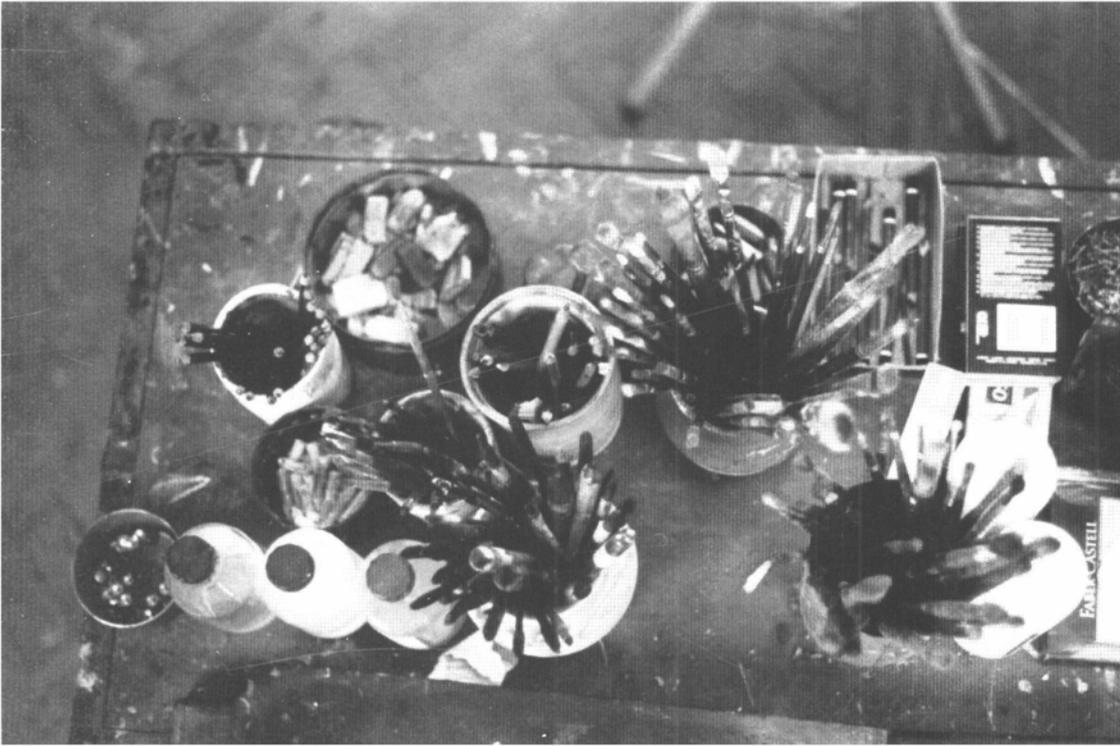
The sail was raised, the boat slowly picked up speed. The first Expedition Society trip of the year was under way. Led by Andrew Bateman and Claudia Harrison, the Sailing Expedition was, as always, a great success. Problems with the boat on the last day were overcome, and the excursion was over before it had really seemed to begin. It wasn't long, though, to the start of the longest 'day' in the School year, the Lyke Wake Walk. Lessons on Saturday morning, packing the minibus, driving up to Osmotherly in North Yorkshire, fish and chips as the clock chimes ten thirty, and then a forty-mile walk (plus detours) across the moors. James Hooper smiled to himself as he set off with the 'fastest group' and stayed with them as they got lost within the first mile. As always attitudes change from 'we're going to finish this in record time' to 'come on, we can do it,....' The Head Master and other staff were at checkpoints to encourage and hand over tea and food while trying to avoid the gentle hand of sleep. A record number of pupils completed the walk this year, a gruelling, feet-blistering, muscle-aching walk, a considerable undertaking and a personal success.

The Caving Expedition, based down in Somerset really started above ground, climbing a tree with a thin metal ladder. This was to prepare for the caves visited on an overcast Saturday afternoon in January and the wet, sporting Swildon's Hole on Sunday. As always this was a very popular expedition. In Election term the Parachuting Expedition will have taken place by the time this is published, led by a (currently) enthusiastic Jay Barot. I sure that there is nothing in the fact that jumping out of an aeroplane seems to be heavily favoured by the Sixth Form girls this year. After the School year has finished the Picos de Europa Summer Camp will be making its way by ferry to Spain where James Hooper, Mark Tocknell and eight members of the Upper Shell will be camping in the mountains, caving, scrambling and tackling the harsh, rugged limestone peaks.

The trips that have taken place have thus all been very successful, and thanks are due to Chris Peck (Busby's), the current chairman. Next year it would be nice to see more pupil involvement, however. Both the Snowdonia trip and Riding Expedition were cancelled due to lack of interest, after considerable organisation from Mark Tocknell and David Hemsley-Brown. Both of these events have been very popular in the past. The School has considerable equipment and if there is enthusiasm, members of the Common Room will be happy to help arrange trips. So do you fancy climbing? Walking/Camping anywhere in Britain or abroad? Cycling across Great Britain? Doing anything out of doors, out of the metropolis of London? If you do then weekend trips and Easter camps can be arranged. Just let someone know.

JAMES HOOPER

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C A V E P A I N T I N G

to home, of Ogof Dreanen in South Wales, where over sixty kilometres of varied passage has been found in the last few years. In contrast, it was interesting to see how the sport has evolved over the last century. The days of flat cloth caps, candles and home made ropes and ladders have now been replaced with helmets, wetsuits or modern materials, powerful lights. Photography has changed too and it was fascinating to see the quality of old photographs, replicas of which were shown.

The Brock Lecture

On Wednesday 2 December 1998 Westminster, past and present, guests and Governors and prep school pupils attended the Fifteenth Brock Lecture in the Great Hall of School. Our speaker, Chris Howes, quickly enthralled the audience with spectacular slides and an enthusiastic talk entitled 'Ventures underground, the last unexplored places on Earth.' Chris has spent years exploring the world of caves and chasms, both in Britain and abroad. As he soon pointed out, exploration in this field is still truly original. Indeed more people have been to the moon than to parts of potholes. It must be difficult to describe an environment that few of us have ever seen. Chris not only showed award-winning photographs of vast chambers, huge, strange formations, waterfalls, hidden streamways, stalactites, stalagmites, bats and bugs, but also conveyed an impression of what it must be like to be in these places and marvel at them.

To gain access to this underground world is clearly a sporting undertaking, but a true passion carries with it the questions 'Why?', 'Is there more to be discovered?', 'How can finds be properly recorded and preserved for future generations?'. Chris dealt with all of these, explaining how geology, biology, chemistry, photography, cartography, cave diving and other disciplines all play a part in the quest with which he is involved. Young and old alike were entertained and informed as he moved fluently from topic to topic. Slides were shown of expeditions abroad and, closer

Caving has received a very bad press over the years, largely out of ignorance of what it involves. Chris's excellent talk helped in a small way to rectify this and, though distinctly different from previous speakers (Doug Scott, Chris Bonnington) it was true to the purpose of the Brock Lecture, encouraging or rekindling a love and appreciation of mountains, outdoor activities and the greater outdoors. With caves now included in this list, horizons and possibilities have been expanded even further.

JAMES HOOPER

If you would like an Invitation to the 1999 Brock Lecture and are not currently on the mailing list, please send your name and address to Mr. James Hooper, 17 Dean's Yard, London, SW1P 3PB. The lecture is kindly supported by the School Society and all proceeds for tickets (a modest £5 per ticket) go towards Expedition Society costs.

Bridge

Bridge this year has been at an all time high. We have worked hard building up steady practised partnerships, and this seemed to pay off, as we became more and more confident playing together. The first team comprised two partnerships. Thomas Baranga, the captain, partnered Alida Nieduszynska, and Sam Treasure partnered Ahmed Lajam. We also have a lot of up and coming players from the lower years who participate in the Bridge LSA.

The first competition we had was the London Schools Bridge League. This is set up in a series of groups and the

winner of each group goes through to the final. The first match we played was against City of London A. This was our toughest match in our league, and we found out from them that they had already won their first two matches, one of them 20-0. It was a testing match, but we were able to beat them comfortably with a score of 12-8.

The second match we had was the day after that. We were playing against Eltham College B, the team that City of London had beaten 20-0, so we were feeling confident. We went into the first half trying to play it safe, but by the end of the first half we were losing quite badly. We went into the second half, playing aggressively to try and recapture lost points. Fortunately for us, with an inspired slam bid, which we made, which our opponents failed to pick up on in the other room, we regained our form, and managed to beat them 15-5. The third match we had to play was against Alleyn's. This we played with our usual style, and we beat them 17-3. The finals were held in the Young Chelsea Bridge Club. Unfortunately we were unable to play to our full potential in the match, and did not do as well as we should have done.

Apart from the regular fixture of the Common Room against the School, we had one other match. This was one we organised against Eton. This fixture was a lot of fun, and was partly a way for old Westminster staff to come back for a bit of friendly sport, but behind it all we had quite a competitive match. We managed to pull off two victories in this match, with the Westminster Common Room beating the Eton Common Room by 66 to 35. The School all but matched this performance with a powerful 47-32 victory.

Overall, Bridge has gone very well in Westminster this year, and I hope that we shall be repeating this sort of performance next year. The final, and in many ways the most important, thing that must be said is a big thank you to Peter Holmes. He has done a great deal in recent years in building up Bridge at Westminster. He did a very great job in putting together and training teams, and in putting aside time to play with us, and helping to set up matches. Bridge definitely would not have been the same without him on our side. Thank you, Mr. Holmes.

SAM TREASURE

Hooke

Hooke's seventh year, and mine too - time goes by pretty quickly at Westminster. Henry Newman broke a six year old tradition of Remove editors by taking over from Sapna Jethwa as he entered the Sixth Form in September, and has overseen two high quality issues (numbers 13 and 14) in a year which has produced more good articles than any other. At the time of writing, issue 14 is almost ready for printing and threatens to run to 40 pages! Henry has been ably assisted by Alex Dixon (who is also responsible for updating the Hooke archive at

<http://www.westminster.org.uk/hooke>) and Jo Lim. I am really grateful to them for their hard work, ideas and efficiency, all of which have meant that, once again, I have been able to watch from a distance as students at this remarkable School rise to ever new challenges. Henry will continue as editor for issue 15 (Play 1999) before handing it on. Dr Ken Zetie will take over from me when I leave in July.

An impressive range of articles from students and staff have stretched from 'Mr Riddle's Exceedingly Bad Chemistry Jokes', typical of which is 'What do you do with a dead chemist? - Barium ...'. to Mark Adcock and Sebastian Tallents explaining the operation of a quantum computer, or from a 'Lonely Hearts' page to Leo Lester's rant against *Homo sapiens sapiens*:

'One species has managed to leave the rat run of natural selection by reducing evolution's powers. It is the one species in the world that can halt the effects of natural selection by keeping those individuals that would otherwise die alive and by exterminating, or at least attempting to exterminate, its major predators and adversaries. In fact it was so good at making animal species extinct that there are now no species of animal that can be said to actively prey upon this species. It is, of course, *Homo sapiens sapiens*.'

This was another year in which Westminsters did remarkably well in scientific and mathematical Olympiads, and it was all reported in Hooke. So were the visits to CERN and the Particle Physics Masterclass at UCL. We even had a guest article on Materials Science by Professor Alcock (University of Toronto) and the brief appearance of a 'baby Hooke' - the 'Moment', created and edited by Anne-Marie Cunnold and Catherine Totty, reviewing useful physics-related articles in recent publications.

In the Play term Dr Reid organised a series of visits to the University of London Observatory at Mill Hill and all Sixth Form physicists had an interesting tour of their facilities, seeing the large optical refractors and reflectors and learning a little about spectroscopy. Unfortunately the proximity of the A1, a great deal of light pollution and overcast evenings meant we were unable to make any real observations (i.e. this was like real astronomy). Nonetheless the talk was well received, though perhaps not so enthusiastically consumed as the pizza that followed....

Visiting speakers included Dr Jessica James from the First National Bank of Chicago and Dr Carol Thompson from Shell explaining how PhDs in physics can lead to exciting high profile careers in all kinds of other areas - their lecture was called 'Life after Physics?'. With Drs Zetie, Reid and Needham also present in the audience it was clear that physicists can turn their minds to just about anything. A visit by Dr Francisco Diego, who has spent nearly 30 years chasing total eclipses around the world to photograph and study them, was a wonderful reminder of

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the total eclipse that will cross Cornwall in August (you will have to wait almost a century for the next one visible from Britain). It even led to a request for more information from John Baird so he can plan his summer holiday in Europe to coincide with the eclipse.

Once again we made use of outside lectures at the IOP and UCL and visits included Tim Spiller's 'Quantum Computation' and Dr Mason's lecture on the Leonid Meteors. However, my favourite trip this year was with remove set R1 to see 'Copenhagen', Michael Frayn's remarkable play in which Niels Bohr, his wife Margritte and Werner Heisenberg reflect on an enigmatic wartime meeting, the meaning of quantum theory and the responsibility of the scientist. If you get a chance you must see this play!

I will look forward to accessing Hooke via the web in future. Who knows, a similar magazine may soon appear at Shrewsbury.

STEVE ADAMS

John Locke

This past year has, I hope, maintained the John Locke Society's reputation for pluralism and entertainment, and Will Stevens has been a conscientious, un pompous, engaging Chairman. In that tense, crowded opening slot of the year, **Libby Purvis** argued entertainingly and forcefully that women had a perfect right to try having a career and a child, but shouldn't be surprised at the heavy toll it often took. Stout, sensible and good humoured, she seemed a shock contrast to next week's bodice-ripper authoress and ex-MP **Edwina Currie**. More articulate and thoughtful than one might have guessed, she was also light relief and fun. **John Bagguley**, from the Medical Foundation for the Victims of Torture, was a poised and likeable speaker on a very, very difficult subject.

In absolute contrast (in terms of subject matter), **Griff Rhys Jones** mused engagingly on his own route into comedy, and the vicissitudes of life. **Rob Hull** from the Department for Education and Employment used the latest technology to show us that we weren't being dumbed down. The technology proved unequal to his purpose, but his talk was incisive and interesting. He was followed by **Mary-Ann Sieghart**, Assistant Editor of *The Times*, chum of Blair and epicentre of the bright and the beautiful. Talking to a large audience, she argued passionately in favour of the legalisation of cannabis (and against tobacco), with a glibness and assurance that provoked some of her adolescent listeners into sharp refutation. She was followed by **Jonathon Green**, lexicographer and polyglot, who expounded to a mesmerised audience on the glories of slang, and some of the more serious social inferences to be drawn from it. His

sparkling range of literary allusion, his unfeigned love of the subject, proved - in addition - to make this something of a master class in correcting the impression that learning, however much fun, is dilettantism.

Culture, in elegant and informal garb, came next in the person of **Sir Simon Rattle**, who arrived to see us a matter of days after his much lamented departure from CBSO. An audience of about eighty or ninety seemed disappointing given the distinction of the man. In interview, he expounded on his life and music with a self-effacing spontaneity that won many admirers and quite a few hearts. Much, much less appealing was **John Redwood**, MP, whose initial meeting with me was an object study into why aloof bad manners sometimes costs you the leadership of a Party. That said, his polemic on Europe was one of the most finely crafted and magnificently delivered I have ever heard. Redwood's intellect is magnificent, though I suspect he relies too readily on the tactic of offensive dismissiveness to any viewpoint not his own - a presentational skill, rather than an intellectual one. He is certainly someone I should again welcome (through gritted teeth) to the Society. By sheer chance, next week's speaker was **Teresa Gorman MP**, another fabled right winger, a whole lot more likeable, and correspondingly less coherent. Her instinctive libertarianism exposed some of the confusions of labels (ie pro-capital punishment, but anti-homophobe) and gave some of the audience pause for thought. The last speaker of the term was **John Bowers**, a profoundly reflective ex-con who spent 14 years of his life in gaol, and has worked hard for the last six or seven years to stay out of trouble. He offers no answers, eschews bitterness, and elicited much admiration for his quiet courage.

Courage was what I needed in the first meeting of the Lent Term, interviewing - at his insistence - the redoubtable **Jeremy Paxman**. In the event, it couldn't have been easier, or much nicer. He ranged, with great charm and modesty, over the whole field of politics, and - very enjoyably - briefly on *University Challenge*. I was left with the sense, consistent with his Newsnight demeanour, that his only real enemies were people who claim the moral highground, and then resent being tested upon it. The following week saw **Jim Cogan** at his eloquent and impassioned best, talking about SPW, his pioneering Third World Development Agency which draws large numbers of school leavers each year to constructive and seminal activity all over the globe. The theme of Africa was maintained by the appearance the following week of someone whom I had been tracking down (by letter and fax, rather than in person) for four years - the BBC's Africa Correspondent, **George Alagaiah**. Experience suggests those you look to for most often disappoint, but Mr Alagaiah exceeded every possible expectation. Charismatic and quite brilliant at his job, he brought both war-reportage and the seismic tragedy of much of Africa right to the heart of his audience. It was a moving and humbling experience, and a talk which was matched in its solemnity only by that of Martin Bell last year.

s o c i e t i e s

The following week saw **Melanie Phillips**, ex-Observer, now Sunday Times, ruminating on her own intellectual journey from the heart of the Left to as disconsolate no-man's land. Her thesis, that many on the Left have relapsed into uncritical and fashionable series of 'beliefs', and that her attempts to test these against empirical experience have been hotly resented by erstwhile friends, is troublingly impressive. She offered an alternative theory to the Left/Right divide, which she believes is now largely meaningless - society divides, she claims, into those who recognise the force (and thus the constraints) of 'attachments', and those who don't. She was followed by an icon of the New Right, historian **Andrew Roberts**, who spoke delightfully on the various interpretations given by scholars to Sir Winston Churchill, a sufficiently totemic figure to interest a lay audience.

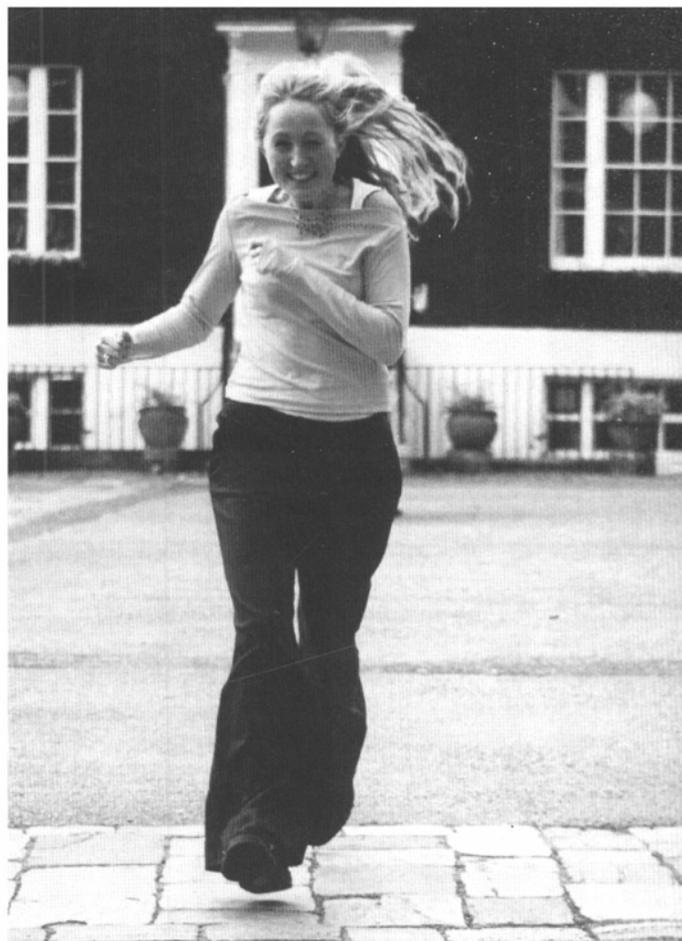
The Very Reverend **Colin Slee**, Provost of Southwark Cathedral, spoke on the highly topical Stephen Lawrence case, days only after the Enquiry's findings had been published. He contrasted the frequent ineptitude of the investigating officers with the thirst for justice of the friends and family of the victims, and wondered where it would all lead. A friend of the family of Derek Bentley, he reflected that these searches for 'the truth' take a terrible rate of attrition on personal relationships in the families of those left behind. The following week's speaker, **Lord Imbert**, ex-Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, attempted to put the Lawrence Affair in some kind of longer term perspective, but never sought to evade the grievous mistakes made in this instance. His solemnity was delightfully in contrast to the effervescent brilliance of **Dr Jonathan Miller**, the final visitor of the Lent Term. We were treated to a virtuoso series of polemics on children, adults, life, death, music, drama and science - everyone spellbound by his intensity and brilliance, and still with time left over for questions.

Back to basics in the Election Term, **Maeve Sherlock**, Director for the Council of One Parent Families, spoke sensibly and avoided any temptation to take her pampered audience on a guilt trip. Many, indeed, belong to one parent families, and the questions showed real feeling and insight, though few recognised from experience the economic devastation that often accompanies the landscape. She was followed by **Humphrey Burton**, music broadcasting guru, who spoke entertainingly of a career which has done much to bring great music to the public at large, and bore manfully the disappointment of his superb video clips being massacred by the ancient VCR in the Lecture Room. Another stoic was **Nicholas Evans**, author of *The Horse Whisperer*. His wry and self-effacing reminiscence on his impecunious path to becoming a best selling author, was widely admired. There was pain here, too, and great sensibility, and every plug for his latest novel, *The Loop*, is richly deserved.

The next visitor, **Norman Stone**, ex-Professor of Modern History and well known *Sunday Times* polemicist, seemed to many people a disappointment, albeit a genial one. His

panegyric on the 1980's amounted to little more than a series of banalities, and his historical analogies raised a few departmental hackles. In stark contrast, **Dr Antonio Armellini**, Italian Ambassador in Algiers offered a trenchant and lucid historical and economic context to the problems of Algeria, greatly appreciated by the audience. His formal exegesis contrasted sharply with the style of the next week's speaker. Baddest of all bad boys, **Howard Marks** scored (a dangerous word in the circumstances) a triumphant success with an audience, probably partisan, but still with an nose for tosh. Mr Marks is a consummate showman, who believes himself to be a moral figure: he doesn't grass on people, and doesn't dabble in drugs harder than marijuana. Unregenerate, articulate, theatrical, he was a great panacea at a slightly tense point in a busy term. The last speaker of the year, **Professor Lewis Wolpert**, might have seemed an anticlimax. Maths exams exacted their bloody attrition on the potential audience, but fifty or so were able to listen, and talk, to this fascinating and brilliant man about his rapid and terrifying descent into acute depression, and about the book he has recently published on the subject - *Malignant Sadness*. Depression, like cancer, he believes to be a product of heredity and environment, and no respecter of status. The subject matter was sobering, but his style unpompous, accessible - and somehow it was a voice of hope.

DAVID HARGREAVES



WAIT FOR ME

s o c i e t i e s

WSMUN

One hundred and sixty Sixth Form students from nineteen schools in the South-East of England convened at Westminster School over the weekend of 20 and 21 March 1999 to participate in the fourth Model United Nations which we have hosted. They represented twenty-five nations and debated numerous resolutions with boundless enthusiasm. The weekend's newspaper headlines - which ranged from the exodus of refugees from Kosovo to the 'banana war' trade dispute with America - presented some additional contentious issues for debate.

The conference was opened by Mrs. Virginia Bottomley, MP. Her speech reflected on the fifty-year history of the United Nations and expressed her hopes for its future. As a former member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, she highlighted the variety of problems which are faced in international politics, stressing that many of these, including inequality between the sexes in many countries and rights of access to education, remain unresolved.

The delegates soon realised how difficult it is to effect diplomatic compromises on any issue which involves either warfare or expenditure. A resolution proposed by the Russian Federation on the thorny question of the Kosovan conflict condemned any foreign military involvement. This drew reluctant support from the United States of America but it was rejected by the General Assembly. Another resolution demonstrated Italian optimism by attempting to promote the cancellation of Third World debt and also financial assistance for impoverished farmers. Both proposals were turned down after heated interrogation.

An emergency radio broadcast interrupted a session of the Security Council to announce that Hamas terrorists had contaminated the New York water supply in the vicinity of the United Nations' Headquarters. The red colouring used proved to be erythrocin, a harmless dye, but their aim was to show the degree of havoc which could have been created had they so wished. A resolution was drafted swiftly and in true diplomatic style by the Council, which immediately issued a condemnation and called for an investigation and a conference on terrorism. International terrorists cannot be discouraged so easily, for, shortly afterwards, an announcement from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office was broadcast by the Westminster School News Service which stated that our distinguished opening speaker had been kidnapped in Central London by six men of Mediterranean appearance. Thanks to SAS commandos, the tyres of the getaway car had been punctured and the Member of Parliament rescued. The United Nations' member states confirmed that they would increase security, especially for strategic services, in their major cities, voting in favour of the Security Council's resolution by eighteen votes to three.

After heated proposal, debate and amendment, many important resolutions were passed. A selection includes: 'that the age of military service should never be below 18 years', 'that the education divide between the sexes in Third World countries should be reduced' and, 'that a solution be found and applied to control the Greenhouse Effect and reduce carbon dioxide emissions'.

Sadly, our conference could do nothing to affect the working of the real United Nations, but all who took part enjoyed an exciting and productive weekend. Both socially and educationally, it was highly rewarding for the participants as well as the organisers. As the Secretary-General, my thanks go to all who contributed, and especially to Dr Nicholas Kalivas for his supervision and guidance.

GERARD ROTHSCHILD

Henry VII

The Henry VII Singers have been on top form this year, with a particularly strong soprano section, and have, unusually, performed in a number of concerts.

The first of these was part of the 'Evening of Christmas Music' in support of the Fairbridge Trust, held up School in early December, where we sang Sweelink, Howells, Leighton and were joined by strings and organ for a resounding performance of Monteverdi's *Beatus Vir*. The School carol concert followed a few days later. In the Lent term we faced our greatest challenge to date when we performed three of Poulenc's *Motets pour un Temps de Pénitence* in the School concert, held in the Abbey in mid March. The pieces are particularly challenging because of the intensely chromatic harmonies, but they were performed with much conviction and everybody enjoyed the challenge of learning them. In the Election Term we held two of our own events - the regular May Day madrigal singing and also a concert of English choral music, where we performed some Tudor anthems, some madrigals and ended with Handel's magnificent *My Heart is Inditing*, with extremely accomplished orchestral accompaniment.

It is always sad to see regular singers leave, and we warmly wish every success to our Remove members. Max Grender-Jones and Georg Ell have sung with the Singers since their Lower School days, and we shall also miss the strong solo voices of Anne-Marie Cunnold, Olivia Tebbutt and Daphne Harvey. Sopranos Amelia Walker and Henrietta Wydell have sung with us for two years and displayed exemplary commitment; Georgina Burley and Catherine Totty joined the altos this year and have helped transform the sound of that section. We will miss them all.

GILLY FRENCH

s o c i e t i e s

E L S E W H E R E

PHAB

PHAB was an experience that affected me really deeply. I feel that I grew a lot as a person during that short, short week. Spending time with those poor, tragic wretches I came to see beyond their drooling exteriors and to view them as real people. I was amazed by the nobility, generosity of spirit and spirituality that comes from true suffering. The experience made me realise just how lucky I am to be able-bodied and now I am never miserable or unpleasant, for, having spent time with those less fortunate than myself, I live each moment to the fullest.

Oh sod it, I can't do it. I confess. The most entertaining moment for me was when Neil, brain-damaged from being hit by a car as a child, tried to hit me over his



shoulder with a cricket bat and instead smacked himself in the face with it. No, I don't usually go around laughing at the disabled; the point I'm making is that by the end of PHAB I could laugh with a man I had met five days before about his disability. What was amazing about PHAB was not the warm fuzzy feeling I got from helping others but how much FUN it was. There was a wonderful absence of pity, condescension and pomposity and a wonderful focus on being nice to each other and having fun.

The week was hectic, rising at seven every morning and never getting to bed before midnight with an exhausting schedule in between. Although sometimes people appeared to be doing very little, everyone was constant-

ly working to keep the momentum and mood of the whole thing going. It can be pretty exhausting, being almost revoltingly cheerful for an entire week, but it rarely took a lot of effort. Like everything else on PHAB you find yourself rapidly drawn into it without even realising.

There was more variety amongst the PH's than I had expected: they ranged in age from 16 to around 45. They came from all over Britain and even from Canada in one case. There were several taking part for the first time, while Dorcas Munday had been on every single PHAB at Westminster. There was a tremendous range in the nature of disabilities and the level of care required. Neil required no help at all, while Stuart and Adam suffered from severe cerebral palsy and had almost no control over their movements. Everyone responded well to the responsibility of caring for people who depended on them and there were no major problems (If you don't count the time I dropped Dave Tate on his head while helping him use the toilet. Or the time I challenged Neil to a race across Yard, causing him to dive headfirst down the stairs at the arch of School. Oh how we laughed).

The week was filled with memorable moments but there were a few obvious highlights. The dinner followed by disco at the Vitello d'Oro was as much fun as any party I've ever been to as the relentless good humour of the whole week culminated in a fantastic evening. The big show on Sunday, when the products of the week's work in the art, music, drama and video workshops were displayed, brought a satisfying sense of a job well done. I remember a feeling of great pride at the chaotic thumpings, twangings and tinklings of our somewhat avant-garde musical interpretations of Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*. I unfortunately missed the whole of the final morning as I was taking Brian to the airport, but I am reliably informed that it was a deeply moving occasion, with much wailing, beating of breasts and tearful goodbyes all round.

Thank you very much to all those who took part for making it such a wonderful experience and especially to Tim Francis and David Hargreaves for masterminding the whole operation.

Rigaud's House run

In February of this year, it suddenly dawned on me that it was about time I organised another sponsored run for another deserving charity. I was unable to make up my mind to what charity the money would go to, but in the end I chose the International Red Cross; it was unknown to me at that time that this money would be very well spent by the Red Cross in Kosovo.

I set about organising dates with teachers who would be interested. Mr. Hood: 'I'm sorry - can't make it - important Fives match!' Mr Adams: 'Me? Running six miles? Are you pulling my leg?' Mr Hargreaves: 'I'd love to. Let's set a date!' Finally, a teacher who was interested in my cause. I also asked Mrs. Lambert to whom I had mentioned this idea to on a School expedition walking up Snowdon, I think. Goodness knows what made me think of that.

Eventually, I had a team forming who had been suckered into running six miles. These people were Benji Guy, Felix Hilton, Mr. Hargreaves, Mrs. Lambert, Ed Stevens (Grant's) and myself.

The day approached and everyone was in good spirits. Perhaps they thought it was going to be too easy. We met at 2.30pm in yard and the group was raring to go, Mrs. Lambert most of all!

In the dying embers of the 2 March, the Rigaud's Charity Runners started the six-mile run around three of the Royal Parks; St James's, Green and Hyde, for the International Red Cross. Ed Stevens and Mr. Hargreaves sped off into the distance while Benji, Joe, Felix and I stayed with Mrs. Lambert. When we got to the halfway mark at Kensington Palace we had a short break, and I took the lead to take us past the recently refurbished Albert Memorial, by the Barracks and finally onto Hyde Park Corner. When we had completed this leg of the journey, we ran in a large group back towards the Sanctuary. That is, everyone except Felix who was still struggling around the course. So when the rest of the group were relaxing with the snacks provided by Mr. Hargreaves, Felix came staggering into Rigaud's, totally breathless. Well, at least everyone finished.

The sponsorship came in thick and fast, money coming in from each year of the School. At least £890 was raised in total which was a stunning achievement for everyone who took part. Special thanks have to go to Mr. Hargreaves and Mrs. Lambert for their support and to all the runners who took part.

RICHARD BURN

St Botolph's

When I first heard of the St Botolph's Project, I eagerly signed up, feeling that this was a far better way to help the homeless than nonchalantly chucking a couple of coins at them in the street before resuming my comfortable daily routine and immediately forgetting about them. I imagined it to be a squalid room submerged in a rancorous film of acrid smells, full of down-and-outs all jostling for position on the floor while brave volunteers endured these conditions, all in the name of charity. Some pupils imagined that they would be some kind of romanticised anti-poverty crusaders for the evening.

The best thing about St Botolph's is how little effort is required. It is easy to understand why a team of hard-working volunteers have been working there for years, because St Botolph's is great fun, especially for part timers like myself as the duties are few and far between and most of the time is spent chaffing to the clients. The first time I went I felt quite apprehensive, but, as soon as I went inside, my unease was assuaged by the welcoming, comfortable, cafeteria-like building and the sounds of Jazz FM playing in the main room. Cafeteria-like is a particularly apt description of St Botolph's as the atmosphere is very relaxed and friendly, the clients sitting around tables drinking, eating, playing cards, watching TV or just talking. On arriving at 5:45 there is a quick briefing and then the next couple of hours are spent tending to a particular duty, but mainly conversing. Duties include manning the desk, policing the front door, tending to the showers or sandwich duty. Soon, any stereotypical idea of what the place and the clients may have been like is discarded; I had been expecting to go hungry as I imagined what the food would be like, but the hot food is tasty (better than school food!) and the sandwiches (provided by Marks and Spencer's and other retailers) are always delicious, with a wide selection on offer.

Personally, I feel that what the clients benefit most from, even more than the free food and services, is being treated as equals, something they rarely experience as the general public ignore them, treating them as part of the landscape of London: a nuisance they could do without. An unpatronising manner yields great rewards; so many have great stories to tell, years filled with experiences to draw on and interesting opinions on any topic of debate or current affairs. I found people with whom I had much in common - something else that I didn't expect: for example, the 70-year-old who has travelled all over Europe but spent the first 20 years of his life in Spain, close to where my family come from and an area which I often frequent. A friend of mine met a like-minded classicist with whom he discussed the poetry of Virgil, and we are always entertained by Kevin who has the wit of a stand-up comedian.

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On the other hand, I hope not to glamorise the place, there are often problems with alcohol or drugs and sometimes there are incidents involving violence. On one visit one of the clients, drunk and vulnerable, burst through the door needing desperate medical attention after he had been attacked by a gang of thugs. However, these events are rarities and problems are bound to arise when the clients are abusing alcohol. The majority of the time is both relaxing and rewarding. When I return I no longer have a stereotypical vision in my mind, nor do I feel perturbed by the remote chance that something unexpected might take place. I now regard Thursday evenings at St Botolph's as a social occasion where I can catch up with my acquaintances while giving a little help to the homeless that extends beyond the cold tokenism of tossing a couple of coins at their feet in an attempt to rid my conscience of guilt.

At around 7:30 the clients have to leave and the cleaning process begins. Once the centre has been cleaned and the debriefing is over we are free to leave. Outside in the fresh air I feel exhilarated. For once I have done something useful, and not a product of selfish motives. So ends another evening at the shelter: I thank Mr White who organises Westminster trips to the centre and say goodbye to the other volunteers; as I go off for a drink with my friends I make a mental note to persuade other friends to give St Botolph's a try. Once again, it has been a brilliant experience and I am looking forward to next Thursday.

JAMES BROOMFIELD

Millbank School

At the beginning of the Lent term twelve eager volunteers from the Upper Shell were offered the chance to help out at the local primary school - one could play board games, football, run the chess club, or play in the recorder group. At first the task didn't seem appealing - I'm not sure why I signed up. I think it was because I felt the need to do more at School than just register, learn, then leave. It might not be fun, but it would be a break from the norm.

The reality was more entertaining than I had ever imagined. I was selected (lucky me) to play board games with a group of five to eight year olds; I thought back to when I was six, and the games which ended when I had eaten a counter or thrown a tantrum. After a five minute walk to this neighbouring school whose existence I had never imagined, we squeezed into their miniature chairs - were we ever that small? - to play such family favourites as Ludo, Jenga and Boggle. After the first meeting the group, initially about twenty, grew in size: the children remembered our names, and called out to us as we arrived the following week. My first week was spent playing junior Scrabble with Sonya. At the beginning of the session her alphabet was a bit shaky, but by the end she was handling three vowels and four consonants with all the skill of a



OKAY, THREE CARD BRAG, ACES HIGH

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future Carol Vorderman. English was not the first language of all the children: Hugh Graham had the unenviable task of explaining to a timid refugee how to play a card game that required him to memorise the names of four or five everyday objects. Unfortunately, neither Drillan's English nor Hugh's Bosnian could quite manage 'plug', 'mushroom' or 'postman'.

It's true some of the children were a handful. One week I was playing Snap with a five year old girl, who was too shy to even shout 'Snap' until I gave her an approving nod. But from the table behind me I could hear the screams of the infamous Warren: 'I MAKE YOU BLEED, I MAKE YOU BLEED!' Another week it was Akhim, a gruff eight year old boy, who was repeatedly cheating and shouting at little Sonya, who was sitting next to him. After I lost, he called me nothing but 'Loser' till the end of the session.

The project does have a serious side, though. These children are in classes of over thirty, and to have one-on-one contact with a 'big person' was a rare treat for many. Some of them were taught by us to take turns, to roll a dice, to play fairly. Simple things, maybe, but they are essential. When we look back on our life in the Upper Shell, one of our fondest memories will be of these trips to Millbank Primary.

HARRY ADAMSON
JONATHAN RANDALL

ICYPP

The Inner City Young People's Project was founded in 1988, and organises exchanges between state and independent schools.

When I first signed up for the state school exchange, I did not really think about what it would entail. It was just another of those things you put your name down for at the beginning of term, wanting to get involved in everything, as well as having a careful eye on the UCAS form. So when Mr. Wilne told Josh and me that we were actually having to have to go to one, we were a little nervous, to say the least.

I think that part of our initial fears was based on typical Westminster ignorance. When we were told our friends where we were going, we got used to hearing phrases like 'Hope you know some self-defence', 'Send our love to Kevin and Sharon', and best of all, 'Don't forget your shell-suit'.

So it was somewhat apprehensively that we arrived at the Lillian Baylis School, near Vauxhall, where we were to sleep for the next few days. It was a little less prepossessing, to put it mildly. The school sign was covered with graffiti, and Josh's suggestion that a small hole in the sign

was made by a bullet didn't really help matters. At this point I would have gladly walked straight back across the river to Westminster. Indeed, we could even see St Stephen's Tower from where we were standing.

Fortunately, before we had time to take to our heels, a huge motorbike drove up to us, and a man, clad in leathers, introduced himself as Pat, one of the scheme's organisers. Once we realised that he wasn't about to mug us, we were thankfully led into the centre itself and introduced to the people on the course.

There were a total of sixteen students on the course, eight from maintained schools, and eight from independent schools including us. Revealingly, it was easy to tell what kind of schools everyone went to, as all independent school pupils were white, and all state schools students came from ethnic minorities. Despite this superficial divide, after a few 'bonding' games some of the initial barriers were broken, and our fears about being beaten up seemed ridiculous. Although reading such a statement may seem appallingly clichéd, it was actually true.

Nevertheless, the following day our prejudices were really put to the test when we had to go to the actual state schools. Talking to a few pupils had been all right, but the thought of actually visiting a school, packed with drug-dealing, trigger-happy mobs was somewhat daunting to us. However, we were pleasantly surprised.

I visited Mulberry School near Whitechapel, while Josh visited The New Vic, a Sixth Form College. What surprised me the most was how few differences there were. Needless to say, no one attacked us and everyone was really friendly to us. Although our host state school friends did admit that they were worried about how their friends would react, these concerns proved to be unnecessary. As far as the graffiti issue went, I think it would be fair to say that there is more at Westminster, than at the state school I visited.

One thing that was striking was the fact that I saw only one white pupil in the whole of my stay there, most pupils being Asian. At first I found this unnerving as I had never been in a situation like that before, but this soon ceased to be an issue, and even a bonus as I was immersed in what seemed to be an entirely different culture. My hosts showed me around the surrounding area and it almost seemed an entirely different country: there were Asian shops, restaurants, and markets, even a Halal Kentucky Fried Chicken. I really enjoyed seeing this whole new side of London, one that I never even imagined existed.

In the afternoon I went to a Maths lesson with one of my hosts, and here I could really observe the different teaching styles between independent and state schools. The standard of teaching was a great deal better than I had expected, and although the teachers were not as strict as the ones at Westminster, there were no control problems.

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Indeed, I think the pupils warmed to the relaxed style of teaching. However, I would say that the main reason why independent schools do achieve better league table results is due to this discipline, as in the state school I visited I think it would be hard to find the motivation to hand in work on time, as the teachers did not make such a fuss over late homework as they do in Westminster.

Both Josh and I thoroughly enjoyed our experiences in state schools, and it invalidated many of our preconceptions of state schools and the people who go to them. Without exception, we all got on really well, and although the atmosphere was tense at first, by the end of the course we lost many of our prejudices. I think many of the divisions that are present between people from different schools are largely the result of ignorance on the subject, and courses like this one really served to break down these prejudices. For example, we had assumed that the state school pupils would be from desperately deprived backgrounds, so had left our mobiles at home, but as it turned out, it was all the state school pupils who seemed almost glued to their mobiles, while independent school pupils had left theirs behind. I think these kinds of assumptions only broaden the gap between different kinds of schools.

KATIE POWELL

Never again

NOVEMBER 11TH 1998

The minute hand slowly crept to the hour mark. Most of those present were aware of the two minute silence that we had been invited – not told – to observe. No teachers were in the room. One person signalled the time of eleven o'clock. Those playing stopped, all chatter diminished. Everyone stood quietly in silence, out of respect for all those who died in war. A few more entered the room, and understanding the situation, adopted the same stance of respect. Those who did not spare any of their time to the memories of the dead were ignored as they lightly mocked all those who performed the ritual.

After the two minutes, the person in charge of the timing gave the signal and slowly the room returned to life. A small conversation began to stir and the game resumed.

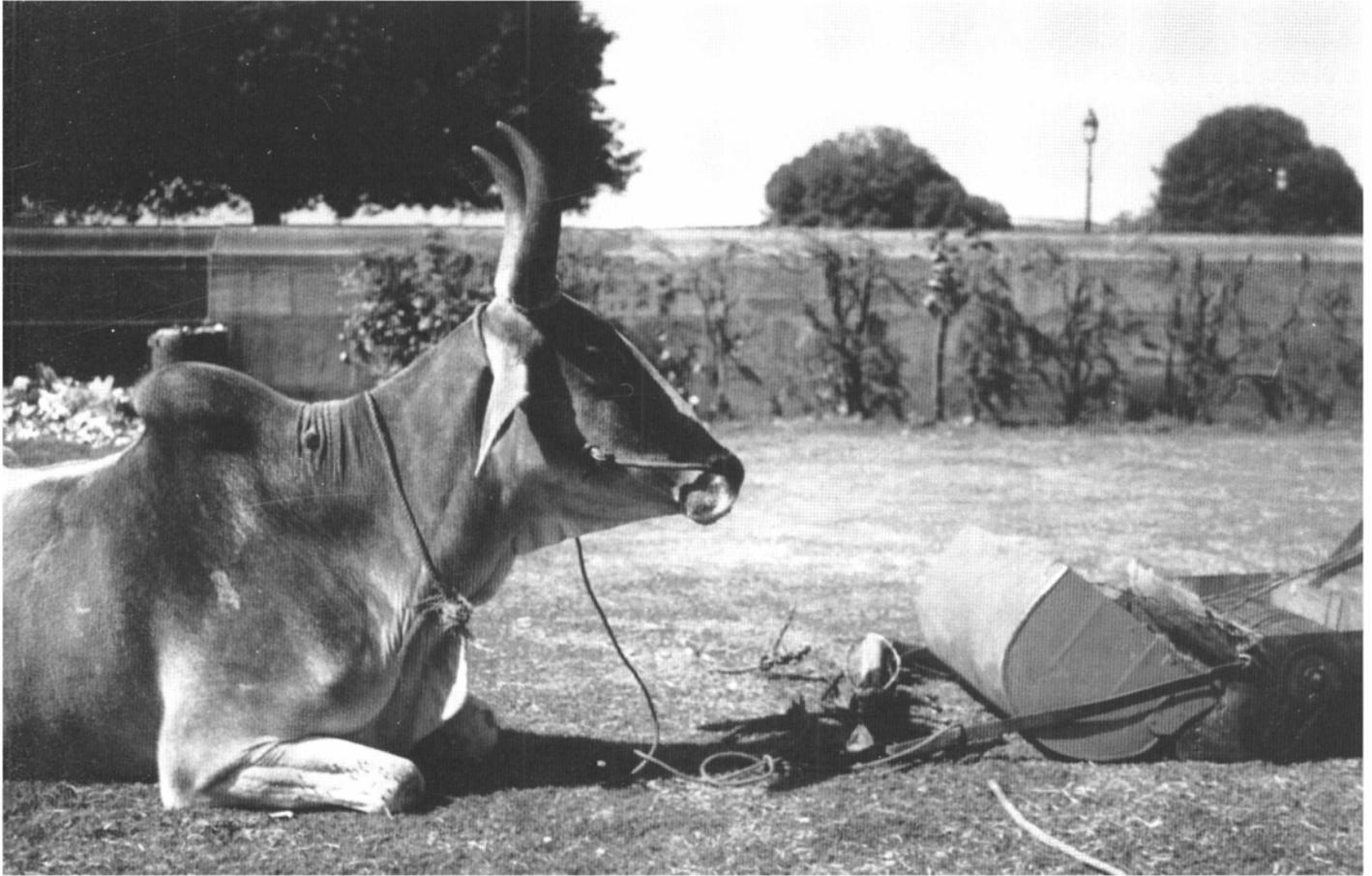
ELIAS MITROPOULOS



VERGISSMEINNICHT

e l s e w h e r e

T R A V E L



SPARE PARTS FOR LAWNMOWERS ARE READILY AVAILABLE

India

I had laughed at the 'Top Travel' holiday catalogue. The upmarket Indian hoteliers didn't try to in make India a home away from home. They set out to show that India was infinitely more glamorous than anything at home. In an explosion of invention they invited tourists to 'experience a slice of the real India.'

An air-conditioned coach would transport me from my five star hotel to a huge complex on the outskirts of Agra. Here I would be met at the gates by two men mounted on camels and dressed in the regimental uniform of the Camel Corps of India. On entering I would be greeted in the traditional manner by Indian women, in colourful costumes, who splashed visitors with rose water and pressed caste marks onto their foreheads.

Beyond the women stood elephants, with howdahs swaying on their intricately decorated backs. Behind the elephants were snake charmers, jugglers, puppeteers and at every turn I would encounter folk dancers from all over India, doing boisterous dances to the music of travelling musicians. And if I was to get bored by the splendour of the real India a hospitable host would console me with a choice of the finest cuisines and stimulants of three continents. With this in mind I signed up to visit India.

There was no matching the strength of that irrational desire to find a means of keeping my head upon my shoulders and retaining my frontal appendage in its accustomed place, when on a journey to a 'developing country'. A travel book provided the necessary information, a small suitcase was sufficient for my medical requirements; barring 1,700 different species of parasitic worm from your bloodstream and Wagler's pit viper from just about anywhere; of removing small, black, wild-boar ticks from your crotch with minimum discomfort (you do it with sellotape); of declining to wear a globulating necklace of leeches all day long; of sidestepping amoebic and bacillary dysentery, yellow and blackwater and dengue fever, malaria, cholera, typhoid, rabies, hepatitis, tuberculosis and the crocodile (thumbs in its eyes, if you have time, they say).

The Palace Royal is situated on an island in the middle of the River Chambal near Bundhi, a large town three hundred miles South of Delhi; I am told that Rudyard Kipling wrote the majority of his masterpiece *Kim* in Bundhi. It is pleasant. I'm happy. I'm alone. I am sitting on a balcony with my feet up, perfectly relaxed. My left arm grills in the sun; my right, in the shade, is still cold from the night. I am crossed by a sharp diagonal shadow, happily divided. In front of me stands the impressive Fort of Bundhi, once the home of mighty Maharajahs, now derelict, polluted and ruined by tourism. On a low table by my elbow

are two slices of toast, butter, marmalade and a pot of Earl Grey tea brought to me by a slavish servant who pestered for a tip. Some small children are shouting from the river; I walk to the edge of the balcony and peer over.

The children are nowhere to be seen. Downriver, a salt-water barrage has been built. The barrage regulates the inflow of salt water from the backwaters that open into the Arabian Sea. Presumably they now have two harvests a year instead of one. More rice for the price of a river. Despite the fact that it was June, and the monsoon had arrived, the river was no more than a swollen drain. A thin ribbon of thick water that lapped wearily at the mud banks on either side, sequined with occasional silver dead fish. It was choked with a succulent weed, whose furred brown roots waved like thin tentacles under water. It was just a slow, sludging green ribbon that transported garbage to the sea. Bright plastic bags blew across the weedy surface and cans added colour.

The stone steps that once led bathers and fisherman to the sea now lead from nowhere to nowhere.

On this side of the river, the steep mud banks change abruptly into low mud walls of shanty towns. Children hang their bottoms over the edge and defecate directly onto the squelchy, sucking mud of the exposed river bed. Upstream, clean brightly dressed women wash clothes and pots in factory effluents. People bathe. Severed torsos soap themselves like insects on a rocking ribbon lawn. Today it is hot and the smell of faeces lifts off the river and hovers over Palace Royal like a hat.

The Palace Royal can not be approached from the land. The ancient bridge had finally crumbled three years ago. I could see some hotel guests arriving in an expensive speedboat, opening up a v of foam on the water, leaving behind a rainbow film. The hotel had built a tall wall to screen off the slum; there was little they could do about the smell.

But they had a swimming pool for swimming in - we needn't go anywhere near the river. And fresh tandoori pomfret and crepe suzette on the room service menu. The trees were still green and the sky blue, and Top Travel depended on these facts, because they knew that smelliness, like other people's poverty, was simply a matter of getting used to. A question of air-conditioning and rigour - nothing more.

At lunch times, semi-suntanned tourists in bathing suits sip tender coconut water from the shell and eat lavish continental meals; few have the mouth or stomach for real Indian food, and old political radicals who now work as bearers in colourful ethnic clothes, stoop slightly behind their trays. After the meal we are treated to shortened kathakali performances. Six hour classics are slashed down to twenty minute sketches, performed whilst children frolic in the water and courting couples rub suntan oil on each other, all this while Poothana suckled Krishna at her poisoned breast.

At around three o' clock I decided to take the boat to shore and visit the town of Bundhi to buy some sandalwood Hindu God replicas for family back home. From the small quay, surrounded by unsteady wooden fishing boats, I hailed one of the Indian taxis; a classic Morris Oxford, painted bright yellow, drove me the fifteen miles or so to Bundhi.

As we approached the outskirts of Bundhi, the red and white hand of the railway level crossing gate went down. I was sure this had happened because I had been hoping it wouldn't.

Initially, when the level crossing had just closed, the air was full of the impatient sound of idling engines. But when the old man that manned the crossing came out of his booth, on his backwards bending legs and signalled with his limp, flapping walk to the tea stalls, we realised we were in for a long wait, drivers switched off their engines and milled around stretching their legs.

The prominence of people conjured beggars with bandages, men with trays selling pieces of fresh coconut, papada vadas on banana leaves. And cold drinks. Coca Cola, Fanta, Sprite. A leper with soiled bandages squashed his nose up against the Oxford's windows and begged.

'That looks like Mercurochrome to me,' my driver, Raju, said of the inordinately bright blood.

'Congratulations,' I thought. 'Spoken like a true bourgeois.'

On my side of the road was the tea stack that sold tea and stale glucose biscuits in dim glass cases with flies. There was lemon soda in thick bottles with blue marble stoppers to keep the fizz in. And a red-ice box that said rather sadly Things go better with Coca-Cola. I could see a man I was informed was called Hurdharan, the level crossing lunatic, he was perched cross-legged and perfectly balanced on the milestone. His beard dangled down pointing towards the writing which said BUNDI 2 MILES. Hurdharan was naked except for a piece of cloth around his crotch and a cap which he was unable to remove as he had lost both his lower arms in the war with Pakistan, I am told. Untouchables line the street picking up plastic bags in the land fill site, or collecting the cow dung from the streets, forming large pancakes that they leave on hut roofs to dry out and be used as fuel. Finally the train passed.

Once I arrived in Bundhi I was keen to explore into the Indian culture and wished to find out the truth behind the many miracles of the legendary mystic Gurus, whom so many Westerners follow, in search of mystic enlightenment. Long-bearded old men, dressed in bright orange saffron robes and most of the time apparently high on some drug. I stumbled into an ashram packed with foreigners and pushed my way to the front.

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As my eyes became accustomed to the gloom, I was able to see the guru more clearly. But he wasn't looking at us. He had his hands folded serenely over his belly and was rolling his eyeballs. We bowed our heads. After half an hour of bowed head I got restless and sneaked a glance to see how the faithful were getting on. To my surprise the faithful were emulating the guru, following his eyeballs with their own. Apparently twice a week these sophisticated urbanites during their holidays would shed the brushed suits for badly tied saris and come here and roll their eyeballs at each other for an hour, in deadly earnest. True believers were convinced that if they rolled their eyes long enough they would, like the guru, acquire healing powers.

The meditation of the devotees came to an abrupt halt when the elderly ladies rose to their feet and initiated their procession. This involved sliding through the pews, walking in single file to the teacher, touching his feet and receiving his blessing, which the teacher delivered with his hands while his eyeballs continued to judder aimlessly in an otherwise motionless face. Having been blessed, we filed past ladies who were dispensing the guru's darshan from a box of Swiss chocolates. We each got a chocolate, and filed back to our seats.

It was now administration time. Notices were produced and functionaries read them out. How much money had been collected last week. The arrangements in Florida for the guru's Thanksgiving Season Retreat. Who was to stay behind for a private audience with the guru. A recipe from one of the devotees for vegetarian spicy cutlets. The sort of minor details that preoccupy any religious community.

Then came the moment for the guru to give his benediction and some thoughts to sustain us over the coming week. There was a demure rustle of expectation in the audience. This was the only time the guru spoke and it was essential not to miss a word. The Teacher's written speech, which would the next day be cyclostyled and available for purchase, was held up for him by the senior-most Eastern European elderly. The guru's bloodshot eyeballs began their descent. The pupils constricted. The teacher tried to zero in on the paper. It would have been an optical miracle if he'd been able to read after rolling his eyes for an hour. But he didn't pull it off. The guru's power is often limited to controlling the body of others, not his own. The session felt remarkably similar, apart from the rolling eyes bit, to a church service on a Sunday with the collection of money at the end and the efficiency of the announcements, as well as loudspeakers so that everyone can hear.

A brief walk up the hill brought me to the market and centre of commerce of Bundhi. There was an overwhelming stench coming from the market and it was clear that in India, Indians and their animals are keen

on defecation. I had read in a journal that 'anyone who, first thing in the morning, cannot face the sight of fifty men ridding themselves of the previous day's indulgences over an open gutter is not strong enough to live in an Indian city.' Unfortunately, the Indians concern with 'purification' as they call it, does not extend from the body to the street. They prefer to leave their wastes on the pavements, blithely ignoring the government signs at every public spot that might tempt the passer-by to a quick evacuation, sternly instructing the careless Indian to 'COMMIT NO PUBLIC NUISANCE' or 'KEEP BUNDHI CLEAN - SPONSORED BY BT'. So the odds are that on any given short journey, the inexperienced traveller will have the opportunity of judging for himself if he is strong enough to look on fifty defecators without blanching.

The familiar commercial signs of European and American products were all over the place in the market. American mass-marketing had penetrated so fast to the Indian interior that its experts were invited by the government to popularise contraceptives with the same panache. There were also a great deal of fruit and vegetable stalls and local artisans. To cross the grove meant picking my way past the people and their possessions on the ground, and past stone and wood carvers making sandalwood replicas of Hindu Gods, and past Indian snake charmers to whom only a crowd meant business. Not in a mood for starting the lengthy process of getting the prices down on various souvenir items, I chose to rest in a cafe on a roof flop. I stared across the town, and admired the beautiful havelis, masterpieces of architecture dotted around the place; ancient national symbols threatened by tourism and from the polluting effects of modern industry, imported from the Western world. Whilst sitting at the cafe enjoying a ham omelette, I found my self staring at a coconut vendor with his cane stool set in front of him on which was supported a large basket of deep green coconuts. The vendor waved the broad curved knife he used for slicing off the tops of the coconuts. Over him towered a tall man vehemently brandishing what appeared to be a diary.

'You westerners are paranoid. They think everyone is trying to rip you off,' announced a fellow British traveller who had clearly been living in India for quite some time; he had come up for a refreshment too and was also engrossed by the argument below. 'They come here from London, or Paris or Toronto or wherever with little black notebooks. It tells them how much a rickshaw costs, what you should pay for a room, for a coconut. Look at that guy over there, hassling.' He pointed the man out. 'Do you know what else he has in that notebook' continued the stranger, 'He's got a figure that tells you what soap should cost, for heaven's sake. Now tell me. What good is that going to do in India?'

NICK RICHMOND

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Mexico

We did not really know what to expect. What we did know was that this trip would not follow the lines of a ten-day sojourn to Valladolid, with language classes in the mornings and 'trips of cultural interest' in the afternoons. And that was quite exciting. We had heard that the trip would feature temples, but however many posters and photographs Mr. Bartlett showed us, we were not prepared for the immensity of those that greeted us on our second day in Mexico, at Teotihuacán. We were completely exhausted, of course, following the transatlantic flight and first-night celebrations, and some of the group were decidedly unenthusiastic about traipsing through a heat of forty degrees to see something that we had already seen on video. On arriving, however, their opinions changed. The Pyramid of the Sun (which I can say on good authority, is the third largest pyramid in the world) reaches up into the sky, so that the tourists seemed to disappear into the clouds as they reached the top. It was not just the size, but the fact that as we stood there, we were surrounded by temples built by an almost unknown civilisation, during the first century AD, and there was (whether this sounds clichéd or not) something magical about it.

It may sound as if once you have climbed Teotihuacán, you have climbed them all, but that is not the case. We visited pyramids on hills, pyramids in rain forests, and even a pyramid (which has not yet been fully excavat-

ed) under a protective roof built some time in the last decade. We became veritable specialists in interpreting Mayan murals (the world of snakes, felines and mixtures of the two), and all developed suntans to a greater or lesser extent.

The first two weeks of the trip passed in a flurry of minibus journeys, long walks through tropical forests (our guide on one occasion was all of five years old), swimming pools, poolside bars, late, large Mexican meals, and on one (glorious) occasion, an all-inclusive package stay including unlimited alcohol – until they realised that we were under eighteen. We spent time on the beach, admiring the tropical fish whom we had to share the sea with, and their homes of coral.

During the third week we settled down. Five hours a day, one to one Spanish tuition was the highlight for some. Others preferred experiencing Guatemalan family life (incredibly hospitable households with non-flushing toilets). Others liked the hippy-owned cine-bars and the Chinese restaurants. Everyone enjoyed the trip.

Many thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Bartlett, who put an extraordinary amount of time into planning and preparing the trip; and to our guide, Dr. Elizabeth Baquedano, who not only taught us everything we know about Meso-America, but kept us interested in it too.

OLIVER MARRE



THE ULTIMATE IN MODULAR FURNITURE

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Russia

Our diplomatic reception on arrival in Moscow consisted of a somewhat rickety bus containing cold frankfurters and cans of apple juice to make up for the meal that British Airways had failed to provide. Still, as with so much in Russia, liking and affection grew in a short time, and just as I soon fell in love with the dingy corridors and glaring key-ladies of the Hotel Rossiya, so the impromptu meal went down quite well.

Our first morning in Moscow was spent on a city tour conducted by our lovely guide, Tamara, who, despite remembering the days of Stalin, gave us a very level-headed and interesting insight into Moscow as she knew it. On that day and those following, the many memorable sights included the old British Embassy facing Stalin's former room in the Kremlin Palace, from which he would glance out and see the British flag raised every morning. The Kremlin itself and Red Square were every bit as spectacular as travel-writers describe and twice as beautiful as the photographs imply.

Everyone was astounded by the abundance of beautiful gold-domed cathedrals in the Kremlin and by their interiors that left not a stone unpainted. Another of the most interesting sights among the many we saw was the Kremlin Armoury, including the remarkably kitsch Fabergé Imperial Easter eggs and other priceless tsarist treasures.

During our city tour Tamara took us to her friends' business place that just happened to be selling over-priced souvenirs. This turned out to be Russia's universal constant: everywhere there are traders waiting to sell you matryoshka dolls of Boris Yeltsin or expensive rabbit hats - which I must confess to buying. So, laden with memorabilia that will make sure we never forget Moscow, we boarded the overnight sleeper for St. Petersburg .

SEBASTIAN SAVAGE

So we arrived after a beautiful train ride that took us out of the city centre and through the Russian countryside. Passing through it we saw sublimely beautiful, rustic villages at the same time as decrepit, crumbling Soviet heavy industries. In a way it was a metaphor for what we were about to see in St Petersburg; palaces, cathedrals and monuments of legendary beauty. Cosmopolitan streets like Nevsky Prospekt, indistinguishable from King's Road or the Prado, full of the new class of *hiznismyeny*. All this in the same city as dingy hovels and despairing people, reduced to begging off rich tourists like gypsies. Contrast could also be seen in our guide, Tatiana, who while giving us the old Intourist style 'I'll take you round the city in a coach, talk to you incessantly in English that I learnt from a Siberian peasant with a phrasebook and a wheezing problem, and occasionally let you out of the coach (but only for five minutes mind) to take pictures'

was one of the most violently bigoted monarchists ever to appear on the face of the earth. One of the memories I will always treasure about our guide was when we visited the tsarist prison, which she objected to on the grounds that it wasn't harsh enough on the Bolshevik scum that passed through the doors. 'I wouldn't say it was a holiday camp, but compared to the evil communists' prisons, well, it was.' Her ramblings were always accompanied though by the quiet murmuring of Dr Aplin, who according to him was trying to educate us with the 'truth' about how terrible the days under the tsar were. It's interesting to note though, that ten years ago the western intellectuals would be going on about the evils of the Soviet gulag. Maybe western intellectuals just like to be different, who knows?

Of course, both Dr Aplin and Tatiana provided valuable historical information on the city, and the sights would have been just that without them to tell us the meaning and history behind them. The lavish Winter Palace and Hermitage, the unassuming but important battleship *Aurora* and the spectacular cathedral of St Isaac's were brought alive by them and made the trip to St Petersburg a memorable one. Thanks should also go to Dr Morris, who although making one too many jokes about Greece and Arsenal, was very kind to take care of us in the way he did. Finally, if we didn't have an eccentric guide, local Finnish delicacies and two teachers to generate a fund of stories, we would have nothing to tell the people back home. So, here's to a great trip, and I doubt there is one person that went on the Russian trip that hasn't come back starry-eyed about Russia.

FERDINAND KOENIG

Paris

Anything that could go wrong, did. With only four days to spend in Paris we managed to schedule our visit to the Musée Picasso on the day it was shut, to Rodin's house on the only day when it was closed and our visit to the Musée d'Orsay on the day when the staff there decided that, just to be difficult, they would strike! In addition, Eurostar made a mistake with our tickets (delaying us for two hours) and members of the group returned late after a night out, meaning that they were locked out of the youth hostel! You would expect tempers to be frayed and tensions to be running high. But, in fact, an enjoyable time was had by all.

Reorganisation of the schedule meant that we saw everything we had planned to and got an extra visit to the Marmatton museum of Impressionist paintings. Paris metro was regularly used, French restaurants provided us with delicious food (and plenty of wine), seedy French bars were explored on free evenings and there was even time for getting to know one another round dinner after a hard day at the Louvre! But, as we were constantly reminded, we were there for a reason...meaning early

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morning lectures (ie. 9am) and plenty of notes to make. You won't be too surprised to learn that we still managed to find time to sample Parisian café culture - as long as 'a balance' was maintained and 'our work didn't suffer'... too much!

But we are grateful to the teachers who gave up their holidays for a very successful and much appreciated trip, however. I'm only impressed they sacrificed more time this Easter to give us a revision course!

NISHA MAKAN



C H E Z A T E L I E R G A R N E T T

Osmotherley

'Once you have eliminated the impossible! whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth'. The inescapable conclusion is that people take on the Lyke Wake Walk because they actually want to. Why they want to, of course, is another question entirely. Perhaps it just fills them with delight to think of pushing their bodies further into exhaustion. It could be the thought of College Hall food at 3am is too much of a temptation to resist. Or perhaps, just perhaps, madness enters the equation.

It is nevertheless the case that everyone agrees to take part. It doesn't seem nearly so bad when you're sitting up School being told what a character building and enjoyable experience it will be. In fact, the sheer rashness of one's commitment does not become obvious until one is hurtling northwards, in a School minibus, slightly too late to pull out. It is only then that you realise that you will not sleep again until you have crossed the breadth of the North Yorkshire moors. On arrival at Osmotherley, in a kind of dream state, prepa-

rations were made. The enormity of the venture ahead was deliberately ignored, replaced by the discussion of extremely important questions such as exactly how much vinegar is necessary to make Osmotherley Fish and Chips taste.

Procrastination only got us so far, however, and soon we sallied forth into the unknown (our map reading being what it was). At this point, recollections become hazy. Soon, the carefully crafted groups had converged upon the inanely smiling Mr Hooper, who refused to give the smallest hint of our location. We managed without, and having progressed over Wheeldate Ridge, under a beautifully clear (if bitterly cold) night sky, constantly kidding ourselves that the next peak was the last, we finally reached the minibuses. A quick cup of tea later, and the long trek continued.

The next portion of the walk was in some ways the hardest. The incredible simplicity of the route (a gravel-covered disused railway), and the lulling rhythm of the walk (and not to mention the time of day) was remarkably soporific. Conversation slowed to a standstill (as did the group, more than once. It's amazing how comfortable heather can be). However, we pressed on, and soon the happy prospect of breakfast was upon us. Having eaten, the walk continued, spiced up by a short spell of 'the countries' game'. (Don't ask). The ensuing featureless bog was made easier to cross by its frozen nature. The fact that it was slowly melting lent an urgency to our walk, and soon we navigated our way to a road. This was slightly odd, because it should have been sighted 2 km earlier. This prompted a navigational crisis, only resolved by the discovery that the missing kilometres were to be found on the opposite side of the map.

Our progress was, from then on, steady if not rapid. Cutting across the heather, we made our way to the next checkpoint, where delicious College Hall lunches were avoided at all costs. The final section, one of the longest, was then set upon with relish. A few hills later, and a strange modern art sculpture had appeared on the horizon, which was later realised to be a high security military installation. This was, however, useful hints for navigation (especially tricky at this stage), and the uneventful but lengthy trek continued, punctuated only by a ridiculously steep ravine. Now on the home straight, we struggled on. By now impervious to all things cold-related, we waded straight through knee deep puddles, and coming up to the last hundred metres, we broke into an enthusiastic, if irregular, run. Moments later, cold hands were placed on the gate of the radio mast, the finish. We had arrived.

Transported by the now familiar minibus, we soon reached the farmhouse where we would be spending the night. We were cold, but the showers colder - something less than that to which battle-weary, returning soldiers felt entitled. But the prospect of sitting in a chair was heaven. Conversation was made difficult by our periodically falling asleep. Having supped on sausage, pasta and canned tomato, we headed for the bunks, where sleep was almost instantaneous.

TOM BARNET-LAMB

t r a v e l

S T A T I O N



Fencing

It has been a busy and successful year for Westminster's fencers. We are delighted to report wins in all our matches against other schools, continuing our unbeaten record of the past six years. The team has also been to many 'open' individuals' events, where we gained valuable experience.

Highlights of the year's inter-school fixtures included our victories against Harrow (20-7), Wellington College (24-12) and the London Nautical School (34-2). The team also overcame a strong Highgate team 20-16.

Full match reports are available on the fencing website located within the main School site at <http://keynes.westminster.org.uk/fencing/index.html>

In team events, the Station has also been successful, with both the Under 14 A team and the Under 18 A team taking the silver medals at the National Youth Team Championships held at the King's School, Canterbury in February. We also retained the Pearson Cup from the Public Schools' Fencing Championships at Crystal Palace,

together with the Christie Trophy for the best school at junior foil. Notable individual placings were Matthias Williams (Dryden's) second in the Mount Hayes foil event; Edward Rugman (Grant's) eighth (who was also selected to represent the Country at the Eden Cup international) and Oliver Marre (Busby's) tenth, both in the senior category.

Much of the credit for this success must go to our coaches Tomek Waliki, Pierre Harper and Steve Davey, as well as to the master in charge who is now taking an active rôle in coaching. We are grateful to Mr Russell Dudley-Smith for his motivation and sacrificed weekends, which have been at the heart of the Station's success - and who achieved the best result of any of Westminster's fencers this year: third place in the Invicta Open.

The new regime of squad training which began in September has already had a notable effect on fitness and morale. We are lucky to have an outstanding group of Fifth Formers this year, a number of whom have international potential.

EDWARD RUGMAN (CAPTAIN)
OLIVER MARRE (VICE-CAPTAIN)

Water

This has been an extremely mixed year for the Boat Club. 'Frustrating' seems to be the most apt description of the year, for the Top Squad and particularly the First Eight - with a huge amount of potential yet generally under-achieving on the day. However, the potential of the younger years - J14s and J15s- has been realised, in a number of important successes which demonstrate a consistency which the upper years lacked and bodes well for the future. The Girls' Squad has grown considerably with the new intake of Sixth Formers, a few of whom had rowed previously, allowing a refreshingly wide scope for competition and success therein.

The outset of the year and the Head season, which runs through the Play and Lent terms, saw the arrival of new coaches and an atmosphere of forward-looking positive thought. The First Eight had reached the giddy heights of the Semi-Finals at Henley the previous July, had featured in *The Times* after defeating Radley in the Quarters, and Olly MacGregor (Head of Water) won a Gold medal with Effy Hamawi (now at University) in a Pair at the Coupe (the Junior Rower's European Cup). Olly was appointed Head of Water and has had success with the Great Britain Squad at points in the last year. Daniel Kapp was made Secretary of Water and Miranda Schnitger Head of Girls' Water. Peter Sheppard, Head Coach of Molsey Boat Club, joined the coaching staff, as did Polly Gough, giving the girls a long-term instructor.

On paper, the First Eight should have been one of the strongest ever. However, despite promising Water sessions, and notwithstanding raising fitness levels and stiffening Land Training regimes to new levels of intensity, results were bitterly disappointing during the Head Season. There was an ongoing inconsistency and inability to produce results which prompted many questions, in search of that missing mental edge which would have taken the crew into the top flight. As it was, the solution to the problems couldn't be found in a number of line-up changes and the situation was not improved by three Top Squad members leaving at key junctures in the season. These problems meant the Eight never really settled into a crew that came together as a unit, demonstrated by a poor result of 27th in the School's Head, demanding a re-think over Easter at the annual Training Camp at Gent.

During the week at Gent, prospective First Eight candidates were seat raced after more disappointment in both the Open and Junior Eights categories at the International Regatta held in the middle of the camp, for which we were underprepared following two weeks' break and a number of people falling ill whilst in Belgium. Seat racing took place in Fours and the

results were somewhat discredited by some unexpected racing results back at Putney. There was some success at Docklands in the Poplar Regatta on 25 April with two Top Squad fours coming second and fourth, demonstrating that this was the arena best suited to them, a sense compounded by good performances in Fours at Southampton Head on the last weekend of the Lent Term. Therefore, seeing that the Top Squad had preformed so much better in the smaller boats (negligibly less competitive as a racing category than First Eights), combined with the fact that these results couldn't be translated into the Eight, Top Squad has resolved to race National Schools Regatta (29/ 30 May) in 1st, 2nd and J16 Fours.

The J15s have spent the year mostly in an Eight and have brought the Boat Club most success. Good results were obtained at Hampton Head, Henley Head and the Schools' Head. For National Schools they have divided their numbers between a strong Eight and a seemingly indestructible Four. The J15 Four is truly the sum of its outstanding parts, having won at Putney Town Regatta, Avon County Schools Regatta and shown themselves to be competitive at both J16 and Junior levels; they also raced extremely well at Poplar in the J16 category. As things stand, they are our best hopes for a medal at National Schools - a result of commitment and consistency throughout the year.

The Girls' Squad had a larger number of members upon which to draw on this year and success was forthcoming, again in fours, with very credible results of second and fourth in the School's Head. Once again, it is hoped that the Girls will follow up this term's third place and first place (in a Four and Double respectively) at Avon County Schools, with placings in the two Fours which they will row at National Schools.

Henley Royal Regatta will be a challenging prospect at the end of the Election Term. It is not even certain whether an Eight will be raced there yet. Trials take place during Exeat in Henley itself and we will see whether the Top Squad can find that ever-elusive Race Form, perhaps with some J15 input increasing boat speed and boosting confidence.

In the ever increasingly competitive environment of Schools' Rowing, resilience and the will to win are extremely important attributes. Westminster's watermen are severely disadvantaged by pressures on their time, and consistency of form is difficult to achieve despite hard work. The younger years seem to have these qualities in spades. However, the School cannot afford to let the older Boat Club members grow disaffected; it is imperative not to sacrifice the talent of the present Top Squad for the sake of safeguarding the potential success of the future Top Squad rowers.

DANIEL FRANKLIN

s t a t i o n

Cricket

1 S T X I

Our first half term of fixtures has come to an end with a magnificent win over Alleyn's. Having been 91 for 7 and 114 for 9, we fought back to 145 with Ed Rose, Chris Page, Henry Freeman and Jon Sells all making valuable contributions. A tight run-chase ensued with Alleyn's being left 16 to win off the last two overs with three wickets in hand. Ed Rose was brought on and his first ball was a leg-side wide. The next saw the batsman caught slashing to Alex Cowper-Smith at backward point. Ed's next two deliveries were both out-swinging yorkers that crashed into the stumps to complete the hat-trick and win the match.

For most of the games up until then we had struggled to amass sufficient runs to be competitive. Sujay Chandran's 76 against the Lords and Commons was very much the exception. Chandran is an aggressive batsman who times the ball well: however he is inclined to loft the ball and this frequently leads to his dismissal. Pierre Bell has played several gritty innings and Cowper-Smith is developing into a fine all-rounder.

Our bowling is good with a seam attack of Biswas, Page, Rose, Freeman, Cowper-Smith and Yell, we have the potential to bowl good sides out. Ragu Nandakumara and Imran Coomaraswamy have both bowled steady spells of spin. The pick of the bowling was Biswas's 4 for 22 against the Lords and Commons that helped reduce the opposition to 85 for 7. Unfortunately we dropped some difficult chances and they made their target of 154.

Our fielding has improved steadily from game to game and the enthusiasm and determination showed during the Alleyn's match was most encouraging. Most of this year's team will be here next season (and several the year after), so the foundations are laid for a strong side. The newly re-laid pitch is a great success and is already providing more life for bowlers, whilst remaining a good batting track. The groundsman, Ian

Monk, and his assistant David Wicks, are to be congratulated on the outcome of their hard work.

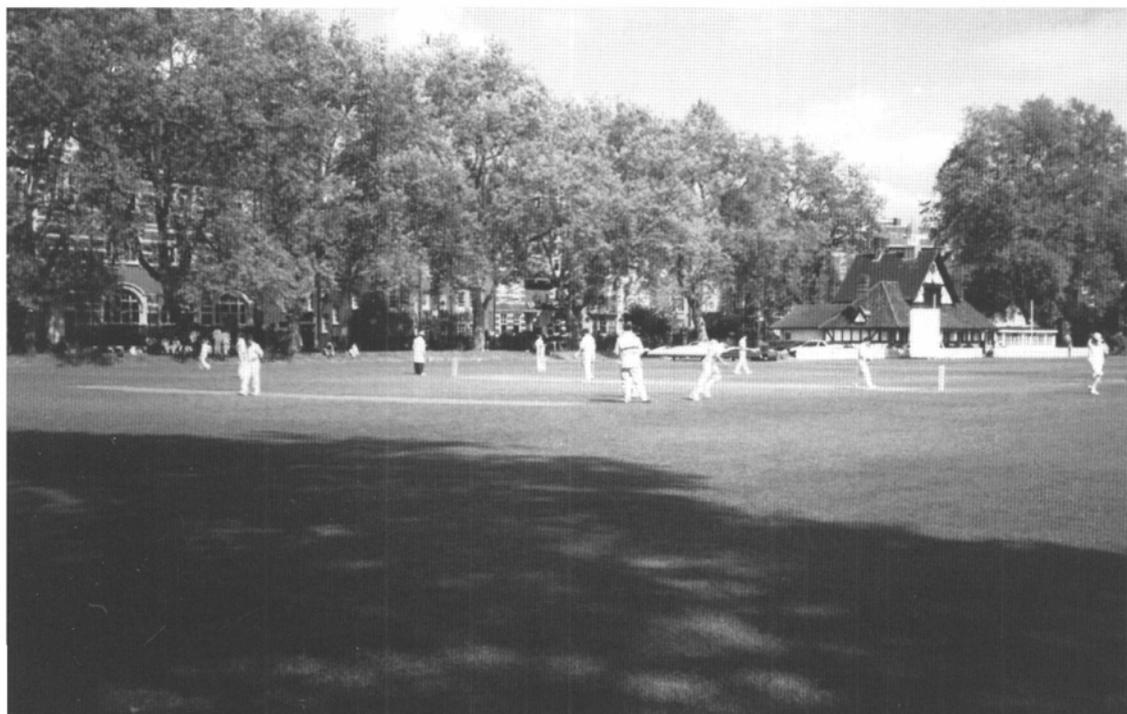
Bell has led the team well, setting intelligent fields and encouraging positive attitudes. This coming Easter we plan to take a tour to Barbados, and there is healthy competition for places.

MARK FELTHAM

U 1 5

The U15 cricket team, captained by Ed Saunt, have started the season in good form, with a number of impressive individual performances, especially by the bowling attack. The first match of the season, away at Highgate, finished in a tense draw after they declared, leaving us 200 to win in 32 overs. Our batsmen declined the run chase but a middle order collapse was stemmed and we finished on 124 for 7. Our next match was away at UCS, where we bowled them out for 80 runs, Will Wolton taking 5 for 18 off 5 overs. We overhauled that in 16 overs thanks to a swift 49 not out by Chris Knaggs. At Aldenham we again had a run chase, needing 156 to win after the spinners, Japhet and Saunt, had bowled them out. Unfortunately the tail end let us down as we collapsed from 138 for 6 to 141 all out, losing by 14 runs. At Alleyn's the spinners again worked wonders with a turning pitch, and skittled the opposition for 71. We made that in just 16 overs, with Ell making 36 not out. Also worthy of mention this season are Hughes, who has bowled a very tidy line and length with great spirit, and Pike who has kept wicket well, with a number of swift stumpings, as well as opening the batting.

**JAMES KERSHEN
KEN ZETIE**



s t a t i o n

U 1 4

The U14s have played some excellent cricket this summer without, as yet, perhaps achieving the success that their efforts deserve. They have endeavoured at all times to play positive cricket and to take the game to the opposition. This has been expressed in some top class fielding, and engendered a terrific team spirit. Much credit for this is due to the captain, William Stevenson, but most importantly the players have encouraged each other's efforts and shared wholeheartedly in each other's achievements. Runs and wickets (and catches) have been spread around, with Will Stevenson, Richard Clark, Tristan Summerscale, Tom Morrison-Bell, and Oliver Butler all making big scores and William Yell, Oliver Butler, George Woodrow, and George Gilmore among the wickets. In the field, perhaps the efforts of Adam Hall and Rod Mamudi come to mind in the first instance - but the side excel here in general (and compare favourably even with some past senior sides!), owing a considerable debt to our gritty and inspiring (and occasionally long-suffering!) wicket-keeper, Sam Morrow.

The strengths and attitude of this group augur very well for future years. Our sincerest thanks to Simon Massey for his outstanding coaching (of the mind as well as the body).

GILES BROWN

Football

1 S T X I

Sept

KES Witley (h)	Draw	2-2
Eton (h)	Lost	1-6
Ardingly (h)	Lost	1-6
Wellingborough (a)	(ISFA Cup 1st round)	Won 2-1

Oct

Forest (a)	Drew	1-1
Kimbolton (h)	Won	7-1
Lancing (h)	Won	1-0
Bolton School (h)	(ISFA Cup 2nd Round)	Drew 1 - 1 aet Lost 4-5 on penalties.

Nov

Highgate (a)	Lost	2-3
Brentwood (a)	Drew	1-1
Charterhouse (h)	Lost	1-5
Victoria College(h)	Drew	3-3

Dec

Aldenham (h)	Drew	3-3
Bradfield (h)	Lost	0-2
Wellingborough	Quarter-Finals of plate	
Chigwell (a)	Lost	1-7

Jan 1999

Corinthian Casuals (h)	Lost	0-1
UCS (a)	Drew	1-1

Feb

Dulwich (h)	Lost	1-6
St.Paul's (a)	Lost	0-3
Oratory(a)	Won	4-1

Mar

Harrow (h)	Lost	0-3
Higham's Park (h)	Won	3-2
King's Canterbury (h)	Won	3-2

Played 23 Won 6 Drew 7 Lost 10

Players who represented the 1st XI:

E Frangos (Captain), D Alamouti, L ap Gwilym, J Choo, A Cowper-Smith, A Jones, W Walton, M Hildebrand, T Hildebrand, J Jones, R Kirk, C Makhoul, J Mouracadeh, F Phillips, F Pongratz, E Roy, F Ruiz, B Shaw, D Stranger-Jones, T.Vanhegan

House Matches: Sixes won by Grants
11-a-side won by Hakluyt's

This was a season full of highs and lows: a season where the team seriously underperformed on a number of occasions and, on others, surpassed all expectation; a mercurial season, following in the best Westminster traditions. Perhaps our main weakness was in defence, not because of a lack of players with ability or lack of individual commitment but because of a reluctance to play as a unit. This was largely due to immaturity in some sectors and lack of clear direction from key players. When it worked, it worked well, but mental frailties and an inability to see the bigger picture sometimes cost us dear. In addition, the lack of a naturally athletic keeper with respect to those players who donned the distinctive clothing resulted in blunders that sometimes turned games. However, there were players who developed greatly during the season and benefited enormously from the extra gym training. Their impact was directly felt by the team and I am glad to say that next season's side may be the main beneficiaries. The time that 1st XI players give up to represent the School must be respected, but I trust it is a rewarding experience for them too. I want to thank Elias Frangos in particular for his work as captain and the committed approach he showed in all games, occasionally resulting in outstanding performances. Next year's captain will be Darius Alamouti who thoroughly deserves the honour, and I am confident that he will do it with distinction.

The season began with a short trip to Guernsey which proved a useful and enjoyable exercise. After a fairly rusty performance against Elizabeth College who had been playing league football all summer, we organised ourselves well to beat two club youth sides convincingly. There was a good mixture of youth and experience in the

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tour party and a good time was had by all. The first fixture against ISFA opposition was disappointing in terms of the result. We played some good football against KES Witley and were 2-1 up and in control. Poor defensive technique allowed one of their strikers in and they equalised with the last kick of the game. The Eton and Ardingly games followed in quick succession with the same result. Both were strong sides, certainly the best Eton side for a number of years. They were strong, direct and all looked about 21. We played very well in the first halves of both games and were even at half time. However, two short periods of mad defending and poor communication in both games cost us four goals apiece. We then entered our most productive phase of the season. We won our first round cup tie against Wellingborough with Aidan Jones scoring one of the great goals of the season. A left foot drive from outside the box from a half clearance took us into a one goal lead. They equalised late on into the game before Federico Ruiz snatched the winner in the dying seconds of normal time. An emphatic win over Kimbolton, with Alex Cowper-Smith scoring four, an indifferent result against Forest where we were much the better side but couldn't score from endless opportunities, and a pleasing win over Lancing, brought on Bolton. This was a match to savour and was perfectly captivated in the lengthy *Times* report of the match. We were playing well, but were drawn against the previous year's winners and one of the top sides in the North. The players gave everything and matched Bolton in all departments. It was true that the heavier burden of pressure fell on us for large periods of the game, but we created good opportunities and had a good chance to win the game when Llewlyn ap Gwilym made a powerful run in front of the chasing defender and past the keeper, only to see the ball bobble past the post. We conceded a soft goal near the end to go one down. But the team never panicked, and in the dying seconds a speculative free kick from Elias Frangos, with no greater intention than to launch the ball into the box, deceived the keeper who saw the ball sail over his head and into the goal. The bay-ing hordes went wild and the game went into extratime. The pace never slackened and the game was unresolved after 20 minutes of extratime. Penalties! Even here the game hung in the balance. With two saves from either side and two spot kicks ordered to be retaken by the referee, it came down to the last penalty for us. We had to score but saw the kick drift agonisingly past the post. We had gone out on the narrowest of margins, but what great theatre. We had shown that in all departments we could compete with the best.

After Exeat the side suffered a little from the post-Bolton high, and no better was this displayed than at Highgate where we should have come out easy winners. We found ourselves 3-0 down in 25 minutes through three quite incomprehensible goal-keeping errors. We rallied in the second half but only managed to recover two goals. This game was a huge disappointment and some momentum was lost here, although a superb performance away at Brentwood did cheer us all up. Always one of the most

proficient and well-organised sides on the circuit, they severely tested us in the opening minutes and conceded a goal. However, we struck back very soon with a superbly crafted individual goal from Theo Hildebrand. We played some attractive football on a heavy pitch and defended well, with Aidan Jones and Elias Frangos outstanding. A few further draws and two heavy defeats against a good Charterhouse side and a young emerging Chigwell side, and a 0-2 defeat at the hands of an excellent Bradfield side, brought the term to a close. In the representative fixtures, both Darius Alamouti and Alex Cowper-Smith were selected for the ISFA U19 south B team, and Edward Roy represented the ISFA south U16 team against the north at Repton.

The Lent term became a time for rebuilding and a few U16 players were slowly introduced. By the end of term the side was beginning to take shape again and some superb football was played. On the strength of this and with a talented U14 year we have decided to undertake a large scale football tour of Canada. A tour brochure is being prepared, and I hope next season will kick off with real vigour on our return. Despite the disappointments of this season there have been some wonderful memories and some excellent football. As a School we can comfortably field nine teams across the age groups and the number now playing in the Station is unprecedented. I would like to thank the football Station staff who give up much of their time on Saturdays to manage teams: Ian Monk, David Hargreaves, Mark Feltham, Andy Reid, Nick Hinze, Jay Barot, Martin Robinson, Jim Kershen, Gabrielle Ward-Smith, Richard Stokes and the coaches, Valence Similien and Roland Butcher for their valuable input. We rely heavily on all of them for their goodwill and enjoyment of the game, especially Ian Monk without whose help football Station would be much the worse off.

JEREMY KEMBALL

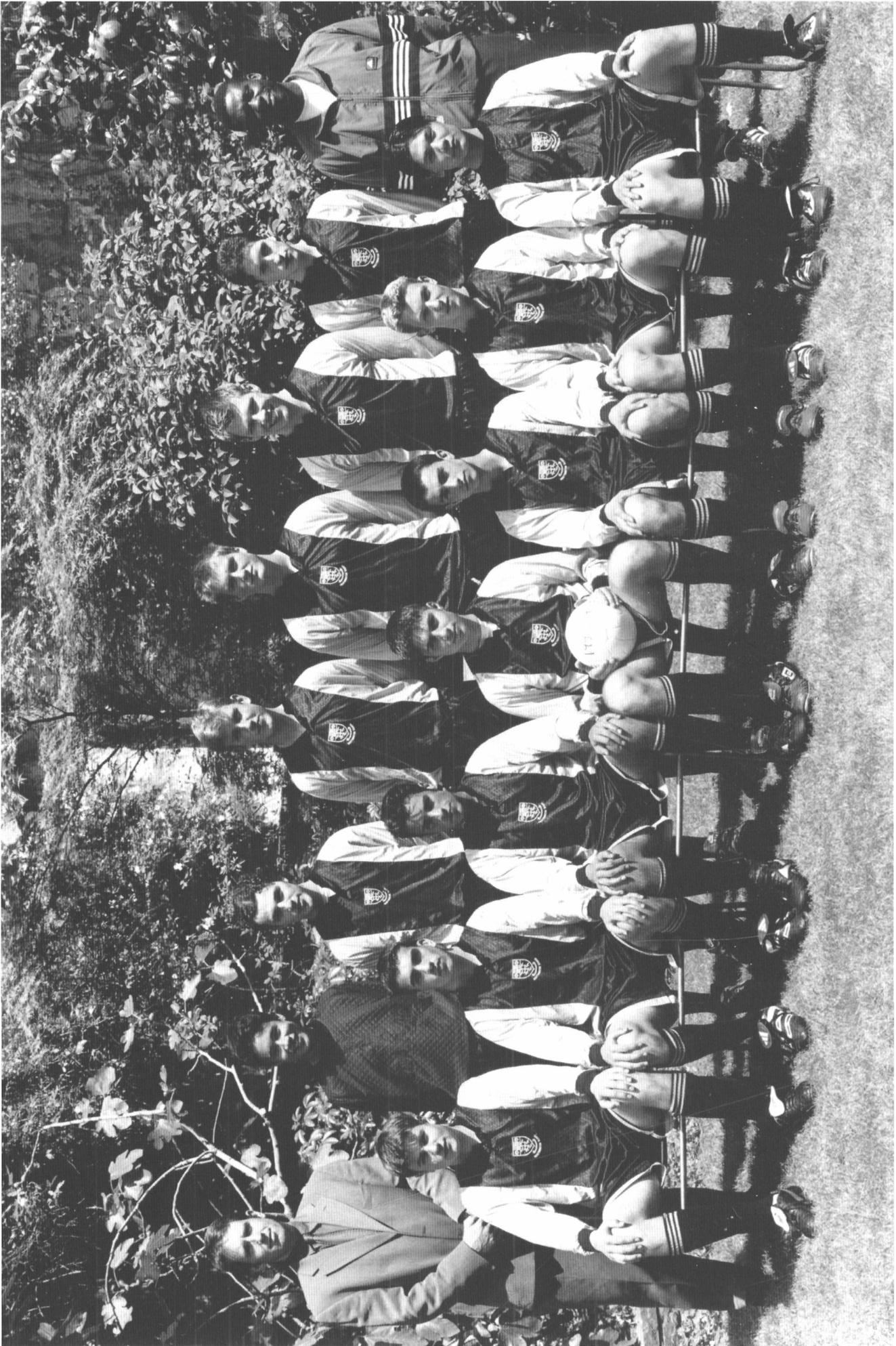
2 N D X I

Our season got off to a winning start on a far flung pitch at Eton where our endurance was tested not only by the long hike to the pitch, but also by the incredible addition of nine minutes' injury time. Still, all was worth it for a 2-1 scoreline.

This performance set the tone for the season. With a large squad of players showing great endeavour, enthusiasm mixed with a good degree of skill. We were well organised thanks to the marshalling of Ollie Bennet-Coles, fired up by the incredible energy of Carlo Makhoul, who later went on to play 1st XI Football, and we were ultimately kept afloat by the goals of our captain Federico Ruiz.

All in all, the season was one of many highs and few lows. Due to the camaraderie of both Sixth Form and

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**THE FIRST ELEVEN: KEMBALL, STRANGER-JONES, PONGRATZ, J. JONES, VANHEGAN, AP GWILYM, KIRK, SIMILIE
ROY, ALAMOUTI, A. JONES, FRANGOS, GARNETT, COWPER-SMITH, CHOO**

s t a t i o n

Remove players, it was a pleasure to be able to coach, advise, and eventually see many original 2nd XI footballers win a chance to play for the 1st XI.

A mention should also be given to the three regular members of the 2nd XI who managed to score against the Common Room to inflict their first defeat in many a year. It was a tough and competitive but also well mannered match, with Max Hildebrand being rather grateful to have had a crossbar on a couple of occasions.

Lastly, I would like to say that amongst some very commendable performances, George Chichester stood out as the 2nd XI player of the season. Well done, and thank you all.

IAN MONK

3 R D X I

The team included: Akle, Maidwell, Stevens, Taplin, Barkhordar, Kanetsuka, Roberts, Bell, Ebied, Dhoul, Nikbin, Richmond, Ranki, Obradovic, Wise.

Match 1 : vs KES Witley (a) Won 1-3

A majority of the team's players had played for the under 16Bs the season before and so were able to get together as a team from early on in the match. In fact, the team's strong performance was possibly highlighted by a weak Witley performance (with the exception of their keeper). Our own keeper, Akle, had very few saves to make in the first half because of consistent tackling by Stevens and Barkhordar. Berrigan-Taplin also had a good game, especially in dealing with their left-winger, who couldn't time his tackles properly and was eventually sent off

Roberts was the first to score, getting on the end of a passing move. Our second goal was arguably our best: the ball fell to Wise, who flicked it over his shoulder to Ranki, who then calmly slotted the ball home. Our third goal came from Wise - he ran across the face of the goal and poked the ball into the lower corner. Our performance became lacklustre in the second half as we failed to convert chances and in fact conceded a rebound goal. Despite this, we never looked like losing.

Match 2 : vs UCS (h) Lost 3-4

This game was at a much faster pace than any others and in turn was much more exciting to watch. The UCS players were bigger than us, and so had an immediate advantage. This advantage took effect early and they took the lead: their number 10 ran on to a through-ball to round Akle and hit the ball in before Maidwell could reach it. Westminster equalised when Bell dribbled their defence and put Ranki through to score. Bell was then fouled in their box and Ranki stepped up to take the penalty. The keeper in fact saved it although Ranki was

in the perfect position to correct matters. UCS drew level through a replica of their first goal and then were in front again by half time, when their number 9 walked through a dormant defence and curled the ball around Akle, who was rooted to the spot.

As the second half got under way Maidwell was injured, and so came off and was replaced by Obradovic who, with only five minutes to go finished off a passing move started in the defence to rifle the ball across the keeper, and into the bottom corner. Westminster's joy was short-lived though, because right at the death UCS won a free kick which looped into the area. Akle ran out to retrieve it but was pushed away from the ball which fell freely onto the unmarked number 10's head. Although we lost the game, this match was arguably our best performance of the season, largely due to a magnificent performance by Bell.

JONATHAN MAIDWELL

U 1 6

Played 18	Won 1	Drawn 2	Lost 15
For 9	Against 70		

In our early games we competed well, but defensive frailties were exposed. In spite of three losses conceding seventeen goals without scoring, the feeling in the team was positive. There were strengths to build on. David Stranger-Jones was already making a difference in goal and James Jones looked like a potential match-winning striker. The work-rate of the team was good as it was to remain all season.

We needed to strengthen the centre of defence and Jamie Coggans's aerial power and Alex Malmatinas's pace were to provide the support for Edar Mullan. Both Jamie and Alex adapted quickly to their new rôles. The full backs, Ferdinand Koenig and Ed Kenny, became wing backs. The new defence had implications elsewhere. We could now only afford one striker Fabian Joseph with Jones playing down the spine of the pitch supported by a mid-field drawn from Dimitri Weber, Ed Reilley, Simon Ruda, Ricky Gadani and Tristan Lillingston.

A narrow defeat by Ardingly was followed by a draw against Forest and a win against Kimbolton. In these three games we scored four goals and conceded four goals. A memorable finger-tip save from Stranger-Jones in the last minute of the draw at Forest and good goals from Jones and Joseph were the defining moments, even though in the Kimbolton game we ended with only nine on the pitch.

Subsequent bans resulted in a weakened side losing heavily to Lancing in our next match, but after that we performed strongly until the end of the term. Highlights were the draw at Brentwood and the defeat by Bradfield. We were on the back-foot for most of these

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games. The wing backs seldom found the time to get forward and we did not create enough scoring opportunities. The matches were invariably close, competitive and enjoyable to watch.

In the second term we were sorry to see two of our best players depart to the First Eleven. Weber was by now developing into a sharp finisher and Tom Farthing and Phillip Sanguinetti filled gaps. There were supreme moments, superb individual goals from Weber and Joseph, sublime passes from Ruda, but our lack of depth as a squad was exposed.

Whilst we often toiled in vain we were, industrious, well-disciplined and enjoyed our football. Although it is always pleasant to win there is a rich pleasure to the performances of the underdog.

MARK FELTHAM

U 1 5

As Europe's top clubs have demonstrated in recent seasons, achieving success at the highest levels in the modern game requires a large squad of talented players. We were certainly blessed with such a squad this season at U15 level!

Convincing early victories over Royal Russell and KES Witley saw the season get underway in style. Maram Alkadhi (the self-proclaimed 'Denilson of the Desert') showcased mesmerising skill and a sweet left foot; Daniel Freyhan gave glimpses of the predatory instinct that would assist him in becoming the most effective striker of the campaign. However, a run of defeats against strong opposition from Ardingly, Lancing, Forest and Highgate deflated the team - we often would dominate games for long periods, but still lose by the odd goal. Defensive frailties (especially in the air), and the inability to convert good goal scoring opportunities were our main problems.

A stunning win away at Brentwood (an epic clash involving no less than five penalties) lifted the spirits of the team, but ultimately did not prove to be the turning point we had hoped for. An injury to Alastair Gow-Smith, our temperamental talisman, precipitated a major reshuffle; the return of Benji Guy to the side was most welcome, and Sam Stannard, after a spell in the B team, reinvented himself as an inspirational left back. However, despite displaying greater aerial strength and playing some truly excellent passing football at times, we never quite fulfilled our potential. We drew or narrowly lost games we should really have won; defeats away at Oratory and in a mudbath at Harrow spring particularly to mind (although Henry Bacon's long range strike from the centre circle made the former trip worthwhile!).

Overall the statistics for the season are disappointing, and do not perhaps reflect the quality of much of our football. However, lack of concentration and commitment at crucial moments can lose matches, and if this lesson is learned, an excellent season at U16 level could be in store.

The ever evolving B team also had a mixed season, but did pull off a handful of splendid results, including a thrilling 5-5 draw at Ardingly (after extra time!). Several players, such as Krishen Chandaria, Meeran Attar and David Lloyd made the transition to A team football fairly comfortably, an indication of the depth in the squad. Ed Macdonald deserves a special mention for winning the U15 'golden boot', being the top goal scorer in the squad as a whole.

The introduction of extra team training on two evenings a week helped to raise fitness levels over the course of the season, and the benefit was noticed in both the A and B teams. I hope that if our players have learnt one thing this year, then it is that football is a physical game - fitness and a competitive spirit are just as important as skill. My thanks go to Jaideep Barot and Roland Butcher for their valuable assistance throughout the season and to Michael Dalton, Max Makhoul and Pierre Georget for their reliable and supportive captaincy.

NICK HINZE

Full team and player statistics are available on NJH's homepage on the School website.

U 1 4

U14 FOOTBALL REPORT 1998-1999

Royal Russell	(A)	W	12-0
Eton	(H)	W	8-2
K.E.S. Witley	(A)	W	5-0
Ardingly	(A)	W	6-1
Forest	(A)	W	8-5
Kimbolton	(H)	W	20-0
Lancing	(A)	W	3-0
Highgate	(A)	D	1-1
Brentwood	(A)	W	4-0
Charterhouse	(A)	W	2-1
Aldenham	(H)	W	5-0
Bradfield	(A)	W	6-5
Chigwell	(A)	L	2-3
Highgate U15	(H)	W	7-1
U.C.S.	(A)	L	1-2
City of London	(H)	W	7-2
The Oratory	(A)	W	10-0
Harrow	(H)	L	2-3
Latymer Upper	(H)	W	2-1
The Dragon School	(A)	W	7-0

Also played:

Highams Park U15	(H)	W	4-3.
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Overall Record:	Played: 21	Won: 17
	Drawn: 1	Lost: 3

Goals For:	122
Goals Against:	30

s t a t i o n



M I D - S E A S O N T R A I N I N G

It is very rare, if not unheard of, for junior age group football teams at Westminster to enjoy the kind of success that has come the way of the U14 XI this season. It is generally quite hard to predict how good a side will be at the start of the academic year; however, this year it became evident very early on that this team was going to be something special.

The season began with a trip to Royal Russell School whom we would normally expect to defeat. Nevertheless, a 12-0 victory somewhat surpassed early expectations, with Chris Abell, in particular, distinguishing himself by netting five goals on his first outing. This was very pleasing, but surely Eton would present a completely different challenge since they had the luxury of over four times our number of boys to choose from in this age group. Nothing of the sort! In a spellbinding display, Prince Harry's classmates were spectacularly swept aside 8-2 at 'Fortress Vincent Square'.

A comfortable away victory over K.E.S. Witley followed before another convincing 6-1 victory over Ardingly School, who boast an excellent football reputation. This match was notable for the debut of David Taylor, who had previously been missing through injury. He marked his arrival with a personal haul of five goals in the game, and he was to go on to total a remarkable 43 goals for the season.

The next match was away (again) to Forest, and it was the sort of game which would take years off any manager's life, as well as prompting them to tear their hair out (however little they may have). In a see-sawing thirteen goal

extravaganza, Westminster won 8-5 against a very physical side, despite doing their utmost to keep the opposition in the game with some howling defensive errors. After a bit of a roasting from the manager, the team went on to produce a very skilful and ruthlessly efficient record performance at home to Kimbolton. Against what was admittedly weak opposition, the U14s showed their full array of talents to win by twenty goals to nil, with Tom Smith picking up six in truly 'Lineker-esque' predatory fashion. The final match before Exeat took the team on the long, hard, and generally fruitless trip to Lancing. Despite the two hour journey the side quickly moved into a 3-0 lead, before 'coach-lag' appeared to set in. Nevertheless, victory was achieved, bringing to an end an exhilarating first half of term.

The 1-1 draw at Highgate could be attributed to 'post-Exeat rustiness', but, in truth, it was a game that should have been comfortably won. The fact that it was not was due to several missed chances, good opposition defending and a silly defensive error to gift them their equaliser.

With the 100% record gone it was interesting to see whether the team would bounce back or whether the 'bubble had burst'. As it was, the side reacted brilliantly to deservedly shatter the 100% record of a highly-rated Brentwood U14 team by 4-0 on their home soil. This was undoubtedly one of the side's most complete all-round displays of the season, with excellent performances from everyone involved, (much to the frustration of the opposition Master, who had fancied his team's chances, to say the least, prior to the start).

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And so to Essex, and a very talented, if somewhat arrogant, Chigwell team. In a game that was truly of two halves, a draw would probably have been a fair result in a match played between two very good school sides. As it was, Chigwell managed to score a last-ditch winner in a five goal thriller which Westminster had led by two-nil at half-time. And so, the term ended on a slightly sad note with the loss of the undefeated record.

A T H L E T I C S P O R T S

Rejuvenated by this effort, the team travelled to Charterhouse to take on another highly-rated U14 XI. In a very hard-fought, high-quality encounter, Westminster narrowly managed to come out on top by two goals to one, due mainly to some excellent defending and important saves from Ned Naylor in goal. The team were rewarded for their efforts with a home game (at last!) against Aldenham, who were comfortably dispatched 5-0, although, it was somewhat ironic to hear the opposition complaining (unjustly, in my opinion) of a Westminster team being over-physical.

With two games to go most U14 records had already been broken, but, could they go through the entire Play term unbeaten? Deprived of several key players the team travelled to Bradfield with hopes still high, only to find themselves 5-1 down ten minutes into the second half. The unbeaten record had surely vanished in a haze of over-confidence, disastrous defending and deadly opposition finishing. It was at this point, with 25 minutes left to play, that something very strange and, alas, all too rare in Westminster sporting tradition happened. The team decided that they simply refused to be beaten, and through sheer force of will they upped their game several notches and started to fight back. 5-1 became 5-2, offering some consolation; then 5-2 became 5-3, and Bradfield started to get a little rattled. Suddenly, 5-3 was 5-4, and the Westminster momentum seemed unstoppable as the opposition lay in a state of utter panic. With only two minutes to play, parity was achieved at 5-5. Time to shut up shop and gratefully take the draw back to London - thought the Manager. No way, we're not finished yet! - thought the team. Deep into injury-time, victory was achieved by 6-5, leaving the Westminster supporters and Manager exhilarated, speechless, and desperately in need of a lie-down!

Nevertheless, it was still an unsurpassed record-breaking term playing against most of the top football sides on the Independent Schools circuit.

The Lent term began with a hastily-arranged return match with Highgate. However, the opposition pulled a bit of a surprise by fielding an U15 side. Nevertheless, with the help of a couple of U15s, Westminster were able to exact revenge for their previous term's draw by emphatically winning 7-1 at Vincent Square. This was followed by a disappointing 2-1 loss to a physically strong and well-organised UCS team. On an awfully uneven surface Westminster were unable to get their passing game going until they were losing 2-0, courtesy of a couple of defensive lapses. Revenge was swiftly exacted upon teams from City of London and the Oratory, who were both convincingly defeated, 7-2 and 10-0 respectively, by means of some excellent, flowing attacking football which had the crowds and Manager purring with delight.

These victories were followed by another cracking game of football against an undefeated Harrow U14 side. In a thrilling see-saw contest Westminster narrowly lost out by 3-2, when many felt that they deserved a draw at least. Nevertheless, Westminster U14s had nothing to be ashamed of, as they had given their all against very talented opposition in what was probably the best match of the season. The Harrow game was followed by more tough opposition in the shape of Latymer Upper School, who have a fixture list consisting of many of the top London State school football teams. In a hard-fought encounter, Westminster again just came out on top 2-1, although they were particularly indebted to goalkeeper Naylor who pulled off some crucial saves. This match was followed by another mixed U14/U15 outing against an

U15 side from Highams Park School, who have strong links with Arsenal FC. In an entertaining affair, Westminster just hung on to win 4-3, although the victory would have been a much more comfortable one but for some panicky defending in the last 20 minutes.

The season was finished off with a pleasant trip to Oxford to play the Dragon Preparatory School, whose Master-in-charge (Danny Gill, Common Room 1985-1994) had been keen to give his team some stronger opposition. However, if truth be told, they were a little over-ambitious and our U14s strolled to a very comfortable 7-0 victory which was played in very good spirit, although it was somewhat one-sided.

This brought to an end a momentous season for Westminster U14 football, the like of which had not previously been experienced, and the like of which is unlikely to occur again for a while. I would like to congratulate the entire U14 squad for the hard work, application and enthusiasm in both training and matches. Their efforts have been justly rewarded with outstanding results and the promise of an exciting tour to Canada in the Fall.

To run through the squad, Ned Naylor was the goalkeeper who showed himself to be brave, as well as an excellent shot-stopper, who gained in confidence and ability throughout the course of the season. Richard Clark was a virtual ever-present at Right Back, where he exhibited a sound defensive tactical awareness added to good distribution and composure on the ball. Sherif Salem filled the berth at Left Back, (a new position for him), and developed remarkably well showing athleticism, tenacity and no little skill. In the middle of the defence, Robert Sawbridge had an outstanding season, and he was often the rock upon which opposition attacks foundered. A strong athlete who developed greater and greater positional awareness throughout the year, Robert was undoubtedly a candidate for player of the season. The position next to Robert was often filled by a von Burian, either Zoltan or Arpad, who were often interchangeable. Both put in some excellent performances as good athletes with strong competitive instincts and no little ability. Towards the end of the season, William Yell forced his way into

the side at Centre Back and showed a lot of promise for the future as another strong athlete with good ball skills and a healthy appetite for tackling. Similarly, Tarquin Clarke also gained a place in the side as a result of several outstanding performances for the B team, whom he captained with distinction throughout most of the year.

In midfield, William Stevenson, playing on the left side (a rôle to which he was previously unaccustomed), had an excellent season, exhibiting a great deal of skill, ever-increasing tenacity and unending enthusiasm. Cyrus Alamouti showed himself to be a central midfielder often capable of 'running the game' when he so desired. He is perhaps the most complete player in the side with superb all-round skills and tactical awareness, and I hope for great things from him in the future. Paired with him in central midfield was the captain of the side, David Weinstein-Linder. David was a credit to himself and the School for his on-field performances and his inspirational leadership. As a footballer he has a boundless appetite for hard work, exhibited by his endless desire to run, head, pass, shoot and tackle for the entire game. David, who was constantly willing to lead from the front and never shirked any challenge, also contributed over 20 goals during the season. On the right side, James Lewis started and ended the season very strongly scoring a few important goals along the way. He is another good athlete who can play some excellent football both in attack and defence.

Up front, the team had an extremely strong strike force made up of three strikers who contributed over 80 goals between them during the season. Tom Smith showed himself to be a predatory striker, (scoring over 20 goals), with excellent ball skills and great tenacity, as well as a genuine appetite for hard work in training. Chris Abell



APPARENTLY, NOT EVERYONE PLAYS FOOTBALL
s t a t i o n

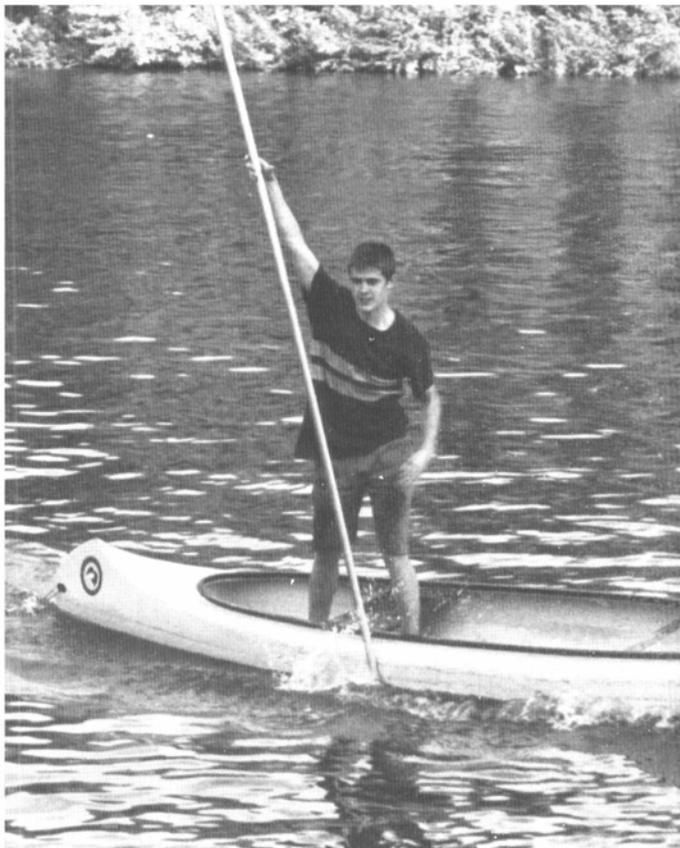
also exhibited a real eye for goal in the penalty area, applying the finishing touch to many moves, as well as creating a number of opportunities for others through his own endeavours. Lastly, there was the considerable presence of David Taylor, standing over six feet tall, and possessing excellent ball skills and a venomous right foot shot. David scored an extraordinary 43 goals during the season (many of them spectacular), a figure made all the more remarkable for the fact that he missed about five games through injury. He is undoubtedly a striker of extreme promise, so much so that he made one appearance as a substitute for the 1st XI with distinction.

I would also like to express my thanks to my colleagues Martin Robinson, Gabrielle Ward-Smith and Richard Stokes for their efforts and support throughout what can be a very long and arduous season. In addition, it is very pleasing to be able to thank so many of the Westminster players' parents, family and friends for their undying support and loyalty. It really does make a huge difference to the players and gives them all a big lift to see so many friendly faces on the touchline.

Finally, I would commend the side on their achievements this season, but I would also advise them to keep working hard to improve their football. All the squad have areas of their play which can be improved upon, and, if they choose to rest on their laurels then the gap between them and the opposition will diminish. I am sure that the team will keep working and I look forward to monitoring their progress as they move up the School.

JAMES KERSHEN

Punting



A SPORT FOR GENTLEMEN

The 1998 season was, in terms of events won at regattas, the most successful since the Station came into being a decade ago - twenty two victories all told, including three championship medals (Tom Gentleman with the Junior Championship, and Joanthan Gee with the

Under 16 Handicap and the Classified and Drawn Doubles). Tom Gentleman also won the major trophy for canoe poling, the Dardier Cup, at Sunbury Regatta. Support from parents was continuous throughout the summer, and most welcome, with frequent invitations to join the picnics that sprang up along the banks. They contributed greatly to the spirit of our own regattas, the Captain's and the Secretary's, where for the first time a Parent and Son event took place - very popular, keenly contested, and, of course, great fun.



GRANT'S VICTORIOUS

PETER HOLMES

s t a t i o n

N E X T

The most significant news to recount is that the Millennium Campaign, which started in 1995, has been successfully concluded. The target of £2.8 million was reached in November of last year, and the School is extremely grateful to all those parents, Old Westminsters and friends who so generously contributed not only money, but also their time and effort.

The Campaign raised significant sums for the Scholarships and Bursaries Fund, the renovation of the Boathouse, the new railings at Vincent Square, music bursaries, Sixth Form bursaries and many other smaller projects.

Alas, fundraising activity will not cease with the end of the Millennium Campaign. Westminster currently has very few bursaries to offer and the abolition of the Assisted Places Scheme has brought the problem into even sharper relief. We are absolutely determined to offer opportunities to the very brightest boys (and girls in the Sixth Form) regardless of their financial circumstances. Only by doing this can the School continue its traditions of the highest possible intellectual standards, and be able to offer the broad social base that is so important in a good all round education. The sums involved are horrendously high - it costs £1.5M to endow just one 11+ Bursary.

The other great priority for the School is improving and expanding the existing facilities. Perhaps the most pressing needs are for a music centre, a sports hall and improvements in the teaching of I.T. We would also like to have more room for teaching, study, and cultural activities in general - young people need space: places where they can 'let off steam', indulge hobbies and express themselves. As a first step (at the time of writing), the School has been negotiating the purchase of a nearby building which it is hoped will become a state-of-the-art theatre. The cost of the building and fitting it out will be in excess of £2M.

Elsewhere, the Parents' Committee continues to do a great deal of excellent work for the School. Not only have events like the Antiques Roadshow raised some significant sums, but more informal gatherings, such as the new Fifth Form Parents' Barbecue, have made parents feel part of the community. Many thanks to Elaine Potter, the outgoing Chair, her successor, Diana Fortescue, and to all those Committee members who have worked so hard and enthusiastically on the School's behalf.

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W A T C H T H I S S P A C E



L S A S K I I N G W A S T H E S U R P R I S E H I T O F T H E Y E A R

