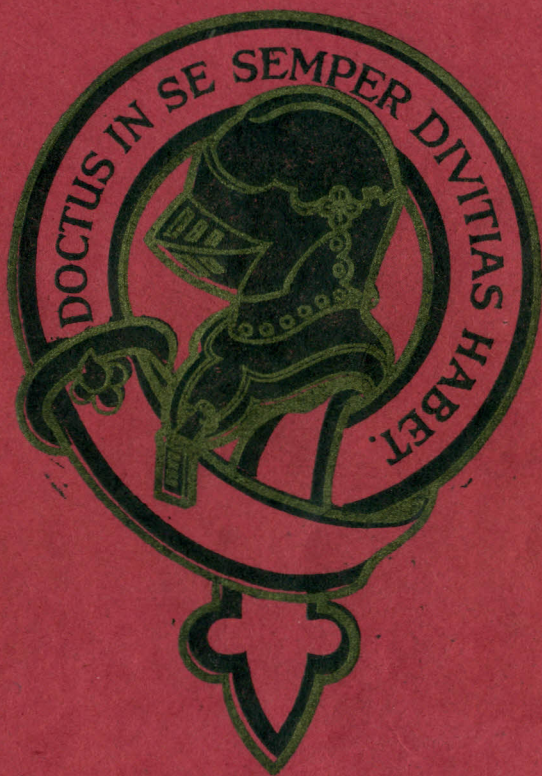


# THE VISOR

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BIRKENHEAD INSTITUTE  
SCHOOL MAGAZINE.

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SUMMER, 1947.

## School Calendar

Summer Term ends .....	July 24th.
Autumn Term begins .....	September 8th.
Half Term Holiday .....	October 30th, 31st, November 3rd.
Autumn Term ends .....	December 19th.

### Editorial

CONSIDERABLE speculation seems to have been aroused by the non-appearance of the *Visor* at the end of the Spring Term, and while we permit ourselves to feel flattered by this public concern, we take this opportunity of correcting the wilder among current rumours. In the first place, it had nothing to do with the fuel crisis. Though ministers felt that the country must get along somehow without its Spectator or New Statesman, no ban was ever placed on us, an obvious and delicate tribute to our national importance. No pages in the London Dailies were placed at our disposal, nor, up to date, has the B.B.C. invited one of our number (though it might, and frequently does, do infinitely worse) to appear in "Editorial Opinion." In the second place, our failure to publish was not caused by bankruptcy, by a lack of hard currency, or by a caveat from the Treasury. No, the explanation was the fairly obvious one that our regular readers must have appreciated, that we were still on the war-footing of two numbers a year, an output which is still double that of some of our esteemed contemporaries. This is not to say that we are satisfied with it. Our constant aim must be to restore the old 'terminal' character of the *Visor*, providing three numbers every year. As things turned out, last term provided little or no sports news for us to record. Its only motif could have been "O ye Ice and Snow," and as our readers had perhaps a little too much of both, it would have been, in Micawber's phrase, a work of supererogation, to rub them in. But we hope in future and less polar Spring Terms to publish as of yore. There is ample activity within the School to record, and more clubs are flourishing to-day than in living memory. Again the Old Boys' Association is showing great vitality. Regular publication would be justified to record their conspicuous triumphs alone. We intend too to make a place for the *Visor* in its concern for local history. For some time to come every number will contain an article from an authoritative pen on some aspect of the important (and all too often neglected) history of this district. These articles will be worthy of preservation, and indeed in the future may be eagerly sought after. We still look for more support in the shape of articles and subscriptions alike. We welcome criticism; for, as Ruskin said, honest journals always get plenty of it, but we feel compelled to rebuke, in closing, those who borrow some other fellow's copy, read it through and then toss it aside with a superior snort. The talents of these "fugitive and cloistered" gentry would be

better employed in showing where the Magazine could be improved. If not, they should in the words of an immortal (though incredible) epitaph "with a blush retire."

## *Salvete*

### SUMMER TERM.

Hallowell, B.; Parry, N. A.; Worrall, J. C.; Worrall, R. T. H.

## *Valete*

### CHRISTMAS TERM, 1946.

Advanced: Thomas, H. D.

Vla.: Murray, K. L.; Brady, W. G.

Vlb.: Quayle, A. W.

Remove S.: Allt, F.

Remove B.: Reed, B.; Little, J.

### SPRING TERM.

Vlb.: Rowlands, F. P.; Scregg, G. C.

Remove S.: Morris, A. R.

Remove B.: Corlett, R. G.

Remove A.: Hebden, T.

### SUMMER TERM.

Advanced: Bolam, T. P.; Lovatt, J. H.; Jordan, R. C.; Gray, J. D.; Mandy, J.

H. D. Thomas, who was called up in October of last year, was an outstanding three-quarter. He had been a member of a Liverpool District X.V. against Manchester District Public Schools.

J. H. Lovatt, who left the School at Easter, gained the unusual distinction of being directly admitted to Sandhurst as a Cadet Officer.

## *Staff Notes*

IT is with satisfaction after all the comings and goings of recent years that we have few changes among the Staff to record in this issue, and those recruitment not losses. We welcomed Mr. Amlôt's temporary appointment to the school on September 30th; and again on January 6th were very pleased to see Mr. Winter, an Old Boy, attached to the strength, a felicitous appointment, as Mr. Winter is a pillar of the Old Boys' Association. Both he and Mr. Amlôt have taken a keen interest in many of the School's activities. Finally, we can assure Mr. Bolton that we were very glad that he decided to return to his old position in the crossword first-team from "another place." In the prevailing state of the meat ration, a fatted calf was not forthcoming, but our pleasure at his restoration was none the less a real one.



*1st XI—1947*



P. Dobbing, G. M. Dickson, B. A. Weir, V. L. Smith, A. A. Smith, K. J. Horne, Mr. Thacker,  
H. R. Higgins, A. Plimley, K. Finch (Capt.) T. H. Gill, W. A. Johnston, I. S. Macdonald.

Photo by Cull.

## *Athletic Sports 1947*

THE Annual Athletic Sports were originally arranged for the afternoon of Saturday, June 14th, when the Mayoress of Birkenhead had kindly promised to distribute the prizes. Unfortunately, heavy rain forced us to postpone the meeting, and the Sports were run off on Wednesday evening, June 18th. We were favoured with sunshine, and the event proved most successful. Mrs. Wynne-Hughes distributed the prizes, and we were very grateful to her for stepping into the breach at such short notice. We also take this opportunity of offering our warmest thanks to all parents whose practical and substantial support enabled us to reward successful competitors in a worthy manner.

### *PRIZE LIST.*

LONG JUMP (OPEN): 1, G. M. Dickson; 2, H. M. Turner; 3, D. J. Silcock.  
LONG JUMP (UNDER 14): 1, R. A. Dawson; 2, C. K. Classon; 3, K. H. Gornall.

HIGH JUMP (OPEN): 1, K. Horne; 2, H. M. Turner; 3, J. E. Morris.  
HIGH JUMP (UNDER 14): 1, R. A. Dawson; 2, K. H. Gornall; 3, C. Weir.  
CRICKET BALL (OPEN): 1, A. A. Smith; 2, J. H. Liggett; 3, G. A. Massey.  
CRICKET BALL (UNDER 14): 1, D. Turner; 2, C. K. Classon; 3, J. A. Gregory.  
100 YARDS (OPEN): 1, H. M. Turner; 2, F. M. Owers; 3, G. M. Dickson.  
100 YARDS (UNDER 13): 1, C. W. Weir; 2, I. H. Auld; 3, F. C. Elliott.  
100 YARDS (UNDER 14): 1, R. A. Dickson; 2, C. K. Classon; 3, J. Boardley.  
100 YARDS (UNDER 15): 1, W. Lloyd; 2, D. Henharen; 3, J. F. Rollins.  
220 YARDS HANDICAP (UNDER 13): 1, E. F. McAteer; 2, D. Stokes;  
3, R. Gaffikin.

220 YARDS HANDICAP (UNDER 15): 1, R. A. Dawson; 2, C. K. Classon;  
3, D. Turner.

220 YARDS HANDICAP (OVER 15): 1, C. D. Henry; 2, N. Osborne.  
220 YARDS (OPEN): 1, H. M. Turner; 2, F. M. Owers; 3, G. M. Dickson.  
440 YARDS HANDICAP: 1, A. A. Smith; 2, A. Bowden; 3, D. Henharen.

440 YARDS (OPEN): 1, G. M. Dickson; 2, H. M. Turner; 3, P. Dobbing.  
80 YARDS SACK RACE (UNDER 14): 1, J. Kitching; 2, F. Elliott; 3, G. M. Dodd.

80 YARDS SACK RACE (OVER 14): 1, A. Rixon; 2, C. Boardman; 3, J. Led-  
some.

880 YARDS (HANDICAP). 1, G. Jones; 2, K. Grantham; 3, R. E. P. Wright.  
3-LEGGED HANDICAP: 1, A. Rixon and I. McPherson; 2, R. J. Anderson  
and N. T. Mitchell; 3, A. Parkinson and H. Smith.

OPEN MILE: 1, H. A. Johnston; 2, A. Plimley; 3, J. K. Sedman.

OBSTACLE RACE (UNDER 14): 1, D. Turner; 2, J. Kitching; 3, J. Boardley.

OBSTACLE RACE (OVER 14): 1, R. Harris; 2, A. Rixon; 3, C. Boardman.

OPEN RELAY: (A), J. H. Stewart; (B), A. R. Nash; (C) R. A. Dawson;  
(D), K. H. Gornall.

A. W. T. Hudson (Rem. S); certificates to J. D. Gee (Rem. S.), A. Bradshaw (3S, and H. Smith (3S).

Birkenhead "Safety First" Poster Competition: First Prize, B. A. Weir; Fourth Prize: P. Dobbing. Honourable mention was gained by J. H. Stewart and D. D. J. Silcock.

P. Dobbing also gained first prize in the "Semaine Française" poster competition, thus completing an outstanding performance this year on which we congratulate him.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the "Semaine Française" held at Liverpool University in January, the School was well represented. Our representatives were not content with merely 'assisting,' but carried off some of the prizes too. P. Dobbing won a prize for his poster, and our ace-linguist, Mealor, was awarded a prize for a speech in French.

\* \* \* \* \*

We cannot close this number's "Varia" without a reference to the General Inspection of the School by H.M. Inspectors between June 3rd and June 6th. As this was their first visitation in strength since 1931 only the very oldest inhabitants were familiar with the correct technique for the occasion. However, the week passed without incident, and appeared to have upset the democracy so little that some forms were heard complaining that they had not had their fair share of inspection. The only relic of the affair is the array of letters and figures on form-room doors which were provided as clues for our visitors.

## *Shipbuilding at Cammell Laird's Yard*

(NEW CHESTER ROAD, TRANMERE)

### PART I.

A VISIT to this shipyard when work is in full swing is a memorable experience. The first impressions are of the ear-splitting din of rivetting and hammering, and of the sight of towering rusty hulks set amidst a forest of poles and cranes; the second that the technique of building presents an almost perfect example of the co-ordination of many different kinds of skill. Noise and strength are associated with intricate teamwork; the shipyard indeed represents a vast engineering enterprise, centred not on the usual assembly shop but on berths or slipways and with multiple, complex, and distant contacts. Thus while the pre-war building of one ship only, the *Mauretania*, afforded employment to some 5000 men in the yard itself, it also required the labour of an additional 150,000 people in other parts of the country.

#### (1) ORDERING AND DESIGNING THE SHIP.

Ships are bought by tender. The prospective owner, except in war-time America, does not purchase a standardised product as the buyer of a motor car may do. He states broadly what he wants, giving the "dead

weight" of the proposed ship (its weight with cargo, fuel, etc.), the type of cargo to be carried, the maximum draught of water permissible, the passengers (if any) to be accommodated. In stating his requirements he invites designs and estimates.

The naval architects who plan the ship bear all these facts in mind. They aim at giving the hull its desired stability and also those smooth curves which reduce resistance to the water, and produce good behaviour in rough weather. Normally a wax model of the vessel is tested in a large tank at the National Physical Laboratory, Teddington, and the force needed to tow it determined with great accuracy. The resistance of the full sized ship and the necessary horse power for its required speed can by this means be estimated, and desirable modifications in design suggested.

The design and specifications of the details of construction and equipment are finally approved and the price fixed. The drawing office staff then prepare hundreds of working drawings from which the steel and other materials are ordered, and workmen of various types given the information required for their respective jobs. Important at this stage are the mould loft men who make a series of full size transverse sections at every frame (or rib) of the ship, indicating on each the positions of all decks and beam lines. They also prepare working templates which are supplied to other departments in the yard, so that the necessary plates and bars may be marked and cut to the requisite sizes.

It is to be emphasised that the "lines" or smooth curves of the ship must be designed separately in each case, and that the full scale geometrical work and templates produced in the mould loft materially affect the speed and accuracy with which the ship is later constructed.

A great number of detailed drawings required for the machinery and boilers are now got ready in the drawing office. Materials are ordered, patterns of castings made, and the manufacture of these items progressed through the engine and boiler shops.

## (2) SHIP CONSTRUCTION.

### (a) THE ASSEMBLY OF RAW MATERIALS.

Coal, steel and timber (all heavy materials) can easily be assembled on the Woodside-Tranmere river front. The shipyards are flanked by an arterial road (the New Chester Road) and a main line railway along which steel plates and bars can be sent from steel mills in Sheffield; it is also often convenient to deliver steel material by coasting steamer into the yard. Coal can come by rail from the North Wales coalfield.

Merseyside is a great importer of timber and there are important storage yards in Bootle and near the Great Float.

### (b) SPACE, WATER FRONTAGE AND TERRAIN.

Shipbuilding requires a great deal of space and water frontage for storage purposes, shops, building berths and fitting out basins. These are

available on the Cammell Laird's site, where ships of all sizes up to the largest can be built on land which slopes gently to the river, especially in the Tranmere or southern half of the shipyard, and where there is also room if need be for considerable expansion towards Rock Ferry.

North of the fitting out basin are six slipways capable of taking vessels up to 375 feet in length; in the South Yard are six whose capacity ranges from 700 to 1000 feet. For repair work there are seven graving docks, two of them of 708 and 861 feet respectively. In all, the works cover 108 acres.

#### (c) THE PHYSICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE BERTHS.

A perfectly secure physical foundation is essential in the case of each building berth.

In the older part of the yard, in front of the Priory, the underlying rock, which formerly appeared from the river as a line of low cliffs, is of hard Bunter sandstone. Here Laird's moved in 1857, quarrying dry docks out of the stone, and building in them ships which were afterwards launched by flooding.

The observer who at low water stands at the extreme south east corner of the yard is made vividly aware of the striking contrast between the grey river silt of the original shore and the solidity of the berths which abut it to the north.

This newer part of the yard, an intake from the wide flat Tranmere beach, was added in 1903, and built up into "made land," slightly raised above high tide level, to construct steel ships in an age which had proved the value of concrete. Here a strong piling of concrete and steel has been driven through the unconsolidated material of the beach, and made to rest on hard rock some 70 feet below: it is on this piling that firm slipways have been built of concrete and steel, capable of supporting hulls as large as any afloat. The *Mauretania* (771½ feet overall length, 89½ feet breadth and 73½ feet to promenade deck), one of the finest, steadiest, and largest vessels of all time, was built in 1938 on one part of these.

#### (d) THE ACTUAL CONSTRUCTION.

Hull construction necessitates not only a firm foothold on a water front, but also a correct sequence of technical process, and sufficient room to facilitate (by cantilever crane, jib, derrick or gantry), the rapid and orderly handling of great masses of steel frame, beam and plate. The various shops, carefully designed and fully equipped, are listed to facilitate the sequence, the essential stages of which are given below.

(A) KEEL BLOCKS. A series of keel blocks made of timber or a combination of cast iron and timber is first erected on the slipway to suit the dimensions and weight of the ship. These are carefully lined off and trimmed to a perfectly straight line and set to that height and slope best suited to the ultimate launching. The average slope or "declivity" is 1 in 24.



(B) THE KEEL. Keel plates (numbered like all other plates with paint or chalk) are laid on the keel blocks and temporarily bolted to form a keel, a perfectly flat plate running the whole length of the ship.

(C) THE CENTRE GIRDER (or vertical keel), a vertical line of plate, is then fitted into position, perpendicular to the keel.

(D) FLOOR PLATES, cut to correct size and with all holes punched in them, are erected transversely to the keel plate.

(E) BILGE BLOCKS are often used on each side to form a line of support to the outer ends of the floors. The same purpose is effected by a series of bilge shores.

(F) THE TANK MARGIN PLATE is attached to the ends of the floors.

(G) THE TANK TOP PLATING is fitted to the top of the floor plates.

(H) THE SIDE FRAMES are erected. These have been previously bent to correct shape, punched with the necessary holes and fitted with brackets.

(I) BULKHEADS are fitted. These are steel partitions which run across the ship and divide it into water tight compartments.

(J) DECK BEAMS are erected on the side frames and extended horizontally from side to side.

(K) THE SHELLPLATING AND DECKPLATING are erected, riveted, caulked, scraped and painted.

(L) THE DECK HOUSES are completed and the ship is ready for launching.

This technique is in process of change. Welding, for example, is increasing in importance, and it is here worth recording that Cammell-Laird's built in 1919-20 what was probably the first all-electric welded ship, the little coaster "Fullagar." Prefabrication may also become a more common practice. A complete fore or aft end, or a bulkhead, or a large section of deck plating with beams, etc., can now be constructed in the shops and lifted into position. Two conditions however are necessary; very powerful cranes near the actual berth, and plenty of space in which these may operate. (To be continued).

### *Parody on Verse 1 of Immortality Ode*

THERE was a time when treacle pud and cream,  
Jam tarts and every cake in sight,  
To me did seem

So scrumptious for a feast at night,  
That I did gorge until the sun's first beam.  
I feel not now as I did feel before;—

My face a greenish hue.  
I feel so blue,

The things which I have eaten now torment me more.

J.M.

## To Go Abroad

A LITTLE more than a year ago I planned to go to Holland. I had arranged with my Dutch friend that he should spend a week at my home, and that I should spend two weeks (good business policy!) at his. However, my friend happened to get typhoid, and everything dissolved.

About three months later a French friend sent me her photograph, resulting in my decision to go to Paris in the summer of 1947. I acquainted her of my intentions, and asked her to recommend the cheapest hotel in Paris. In her reply she discussed every subject except that of hotels; so I began to believe all the nasty things croaking teachers had told me concerning my French. I then executed what I believed to be a brilliant idea: I borrowed a guide to Paris from the Public Library. The cheapest hotel listed was stated to charge twelve francs for one room and three meals per day. Sixpence a day! That was indeed a blissful thought, until chance led my eyes to read the rate of exchange at the time of publication (1926). Nevertheless, I enquired of the hotel as to its present charges, which I found to be agreeable to my financial status.

Two weeks before my sixteenth birthday I wrote to the passport office to ask if I might apply for a passport. The answer was neither in the affirmative nor in the negative, but in the shape of a passport application form which rather resembled an outsize School Report (Sorry!). Now, when I am required to indulge in the merry pastime of form-filling, a curious eagerness passes over me. And on this occasion I must have wrecked all records in degree of such eagerness.

I first inscribed my name on the form. Then I read the regulations on the back, and began to complete the form itself. No, I had not divorced my husband—nor even separated from him. Yes, I was born British; so was my father. No, I was not naturalised British; nor was my father. I was to visit France, Belgium, Holland, and Switzerland. Why? I wrote: "For the purpose of pleasure and of visiting friends." Of course, I was delighted to oblige with my signature. I did not know a Justice of the Peace, nor a Magistrate, nor a Chief Constable, nor yet a Lawyer or Barrister. The insinuations! That no doctor knows me well is my mother's pride—and my embarrassment. Unfortunately I did not know a bank manager. My only choice was to search my memory for a Minister of Religion, of my acquaintance, who knew me. After pondering at considerable length I remembered one such gentleman, and proceeded to write to him ever so nicely, requesting that he should certify me and my photograph. Then I suddenly remembered that the form was still incomplete. I laid a solemn curse upon it and continued. My name was required once more. My sex was—have no fear, it still is—male. I was a student by profession. Whether married, marriage dissolved, or single?

In a burst of irony I wrote "marriage dissolved," when my sister, who had been looking over my shoulder in a disturbingly critical manner, took it upon herself to observe that "I was not even married yet." A fierce argument ensued, at the end of which, in the name of fraternal love, I conformed to submit to my sister's godly sermons on "truth." Owing to the repeated assertions of certain related ladies that I was "growing more every day," I omitted, until further notice, my height. On the eve of my sixteenth birthday the reverend gentleman previously mentioned certified that the photograph bore a true likeness to me and that he had known me for sixteen years, with the result that a heavy frown appeared upon my lily-white forehead.

About two months later, after drinking large quantities of ginger beer, I sustained enough courage to ask my father to give me written permission to have a passport, in accordance with one of the regulations. He did so, and after digging fifteen shillings from my savings stamp mine, and converting the sum into a postal order, I sent this slip of paper, together with my application form, permission, and two duplicate photographs to the Passport Office.

My father then completely bewildered and delighted me by suggesting that I should visit Switzerland as well as France, in view of the possible requirements of the Minister of Defence, which would delay my original plans to see one country each year.

When I informed my Swiss friend of this development he at once supplied me with a guide to Swiss hotels. I must assure the reader that I was born on the southern side of the Cheviots when I confess that I selected the least expensive hotel in Zurich.

I condescended to toil voluntarily at mathematics in an effort to estimate my daily expenses in each city. After a discussion which made me feel like a foreign secretary, my father agreed to allow me twice the amount of my mother's donation. My mother, in her turn, could not afford half as much as my father could. However, after a figure was named, and I had added to it the total of my savings, and had deducted the cost of the fare, I proceeded to calculate graphically how long I could stay in the respective cities.

I have not yet either visas, or train tickets; nor have I booked hotel accommodation. But I shall see to that on the eve of my departure.

G.M.

### *Mistaken Identity*

AS I was strolling through the countryside  
Admiring Nature's wonders all around,  
I all at once a little worm espied  
Emerging from a hole there in the ground.

His shiny body swayed from side to side,  
And seeing his reflection in the dew,  
He gazed and gazed again with foolish pride,  
Until to almost twice his size he grew.

When suddenly out from a nearby hole  
Up popped another little worm so fair  
That words of mine her charm cannot extol,  
That she the first worm's heart soon did ensnare.

"Please marry me according to our laws,"  
He said. But she replied, "Don't make me laugh;  
I cannot be your blushing bride because  
I am your other half!"

V.A.M.

## Our Contemporaries

IN acknowledging with thanks receipt of the Magazines of local schools, ("Quarry," Quarry Bank; "The Red Rose," King George School, Southport; and "The Holt School Magazine"), we beg to draw the attention of our own readers to some of their outstanding features. All these magazines still carry advertisements. This is a vexed question, of course. While they provide welcome revenue, the tendency to-day is to keep them under strict control. At the moment, as you see, our own *Visor* is innocent of them. Interesting additions noted in these magazines are a Contents page enabling the reader to look up articles and school news quickly, and also an editorial 'corner' advising contributors of the last date for receipt of their copy and the date of publication. The former should be helpful to editorial committees though some contributors no doubt will continue to follow the evil practice of famous scribes and start writing only when the urgent printer's devil is at their very elbow. As for a precise announcement of the actual date of publication, we feel this to be a counsel of perfection suitable for a Utopian magazine in a far-off elysium. Far more practical, however, is the abundance of poems and articles *by members of the school* which distinguish these three magazines. We counted six such contributions in one and ten in another, and these were long and serious efforts over which care had been taken. When all is said and done, such material is the real stuff of any magazine, and its true well-being can be estimated only by the amount and quality of writing which members of a school are capable of producing. Six good articles in print should mean at least a dozen for the editor to scrutinize, to accept or reject. "The Quarry" has attractive drawings or designs at the head of all columns dealing with school clubs and societies. We have one good one at the head of "Varia," but the idea might well be extended, and here is an opportunity for our artists of whom the Institute continues to produce a notable band. House notes are particularly full and interesting in "the Red

Rose." *Ours* used to be, but the interruption caused by the war has devitalised them considerably. Every effort should be made to produce really worth-while House notes. We note "Philatelic" and "Music" Societies in the "Holt School Magazine" which should make an appeal to experts and enthusiasts in these fields. University Letters are notoriously difficult to gather in, but the editors of these magazine have succeeded in presenting a good batch of letters from old boys engaged in academic work. Such contributions keep the school in touch with the stalwarts of the recent past and show the present generation to what *their* sometimes heavy labours may lead. Finally we are struck by the almost universal decline of the once familiar "Letters to the Editor." At one time, no journal would have been thought complete without some of these. Though the more abusive never got out of the editorial den and the more pungent were softened in tone by wary sub-editors who had visions of the dock in the King's Bench Division, they were often valuably critical, always stimulating. We hope that some of our surviving radicals will consider the revival of this instrument. No doubt magazines from other schools often come into the hands of readers of the *Visor*. We hope that our estimate of the flourishing magazines at Quarry Bank, King George's, Southport, and the Holt will also encourage them to look at all such creations with an intelligent and sympathetic understanding. Whether they feel that their own *Visor* is here superior or there less satisfactory than the 'foreign' article, they are by so doing building up a consciousness of what a school magazine ought to be, and, though they or their representatives may never make a perfect one, they will have gone a long way towards making a really good one.

M.T.C.

### 6th Form Literary and Debating Society

**M**EETINGS this season have been fairly well attended, the average attendance being twenty members. A record house for a debate was achieved when the United Nations Organisation was discussed on February 28th, Mr. Bailey and Mr. Williams being the principal speakers. Seventy-two members attended this debate. In all, nine meetings have been held this session, four in the Christmas and five in the Spring Term. Four debates were held, three papers delivered, and General Knowledge or literary competitions arranged for the other meetings. Plans are already well in hand for a busy session next September.

J.H.S.

### Chess Club

*President:* THE HEADMASTER. *Chairman:* MR. J. G. ALLAN.

*Captain:* M. T. CADDICK. *Secretary:* J. B. GOODWIN.

**M**EETINGS during the Autumn and Spring terms have been well attended, and the number of members has risen to over 50. In September we were pleased to welcome Mr. Thynne to the Club. We have



had regular meetings every Wednesday and Friday, in addition to the matches played on Thursdays.

Our equipment has been improved by the acquisition of six plastic sets, and by a good wooden set generously given by Mr. Williams. Under construction at the present time in the workshop under Mr. Edge's supervision is a large demonstration board, for which the pieces have been designed by P. Dobbing.

In the Autumn term A Fayle won the Knock-Out Competition. In the Spring term J. Finch beat A. Smith to become School Champion and holder for the year of the Shield presented to the School by the British Chess Federation.

In the Wright Challenge Shield matches the Club did well to finish 6th of the nine Schools taking part, when it is remembered that it was competing with clubs which have played throughout the war years. Of the matches played five were lost and three won. The team was picked from: M. T. Caddick; K. J. Horne; J. E. Morris; J. B. Goodwin; A. A. Smith; R. F. Macdonald; E. James; A. Fayle; G. A. Wilson; J. Finch.

## Scientific Society

THE Society has made good progress since the last number of the *Visor* appeared. On December 17th. a party of twenty under Mr. Richards went on a visit to the Manganese Bronze and Brass Works in Dock Road. This was a most interesting experience, since we had the valuable guidance of the firm's general manager, Mr. F. J. Tector. A splendid tea concluded the afternoon. Three members of the Staff have given lectures to the Society, Mr. Edge on "Insects," Mr. White on "Meteorology," and Mr. Williams on "Bus and Tram Indicators." We have also enjoyed some very interesting and informative talks from our senior members, perhaps the most outstanding being given by Morris on "Hereditry" and by Owers on "Blood." These titles show that the Society's interests cover a very wide range and appeal to many. During the year, well over a hundred boys have attended our meetings. The large attendance from the Junior and Middle Forms is a particularly hopeful sign, and we are proud of our season's record, seventy-six at one lecture. No doubt the publicity given by the posters devised by Mr. Richards has encouraged good attendance. On May 5th. we inaugurated the Scientific Society Library, and, although this is small at present, we hope it will expand and fill a real need. Before the term ends we hope to arrange another works' visit and to obtain the loan of a scientific film.

J.D.W.

## Dramatic Society

SINCE its successful presentation of "Laburnum Grove" last December, the Dramatic Society has been very busy out of the lime-light. Its activities have included several play readings, make-up classes, general

knowledge bees, and numerous visits to the Liverpool theatres. In addition the members presented four one-act plays to the School on an afternoon at the end of the Easter Term. Judging from their reception the School evidently appreciated the efforts of all those taking part.

The first play, given by Gore and Davies of the Advanced, was entitled "The 'Ole in the Road," and was produced by Mr. Malcolm. Although known to the majority of the School, this one-act play was thoroughly enjoyed and started the afternoon very well.

Next came a play given by members of the Third and Fourth forms, "A Cure for a Cold," produced by Mr. Allan. The scene was set in the palace of the King of Ruritania, and the costumes certainly added to the amusement of the audience. The chief characters were portrayed by Hutchinson 4 A (every inch a king), Finney 4 A (a butler), and Cashen 4 A (a very efficient chamberlain). Perhaps the best of the group was Boden 3 A, whose vivid imagination made him a perfect jester.

The third play, "In the Library," presented by the Fifth and Remove Forms, was produced by Mr. Townsend. In spite of the fact that this was a drama, and, therefore, difficult to put over to a schoolboy audience, those who took part deserve the highest credit for carrying it off so successfully. Those taking part included Gee, R.S., Hudson, R.S., Greenfield, R.S., G. Jones, R.A., and Wilde, 5 S.

Last, but certainly not least in the School's estimation, came "Refund," which was produced by Mr. Malcolm. The Advanced entered into the spirit of the play and produced much laughter with their characterisations of schoolmaster. Those taking part included Caddick, Gray, Liggett (plus moustaches), Jones, W. E., and Johnston. Perhaps the true comedian of the afternoon was Powell who played with great enthusiasm. The main support of the play, however, was Owers, an Irishman in alternate sentences. I should like to take this opportunity of thanking Owers for being such a very efficient secretary during the past year. He was one of the original "Torch Bearers" who saw the Dramatic Society under way again after the war, and his place will be very hard to fill. L.T.M.

## LABURNUM GROVE.

THE School Dramatic Society gave two performances of this comedy by J. B. Priestley at the Y.M.C.A. Theatre, Whetstone Lane, on the nights of Friday and Saturday, December 20th and 21st. The cast consisted of Walter Baker, Alan Powell, Fred Owers, L. T. Malcolm, Allan Johnston, James Gray, Michael Caddick, E.C. Townsend, and Alan Smith.

The play—an ambitious one for youthful actors to tackle—was produced by Mr. Malcolm, and he and all other members, both those on the stage and those behind the scenes, are to be congratulated on putting it

over the footlights in a most convincing manner.

Mr. Malcolm and Mr. Townsend, in addition to their duties as Stage Director and Stage Manager, played the principal parts—the former as George Radfern, an ex-wholesale paper merchant who has turned forger, the latter as Inspector Stack of Scotland Yard, who is investigating his activities. Both parts were admirably portrayed, the scene towards the end of the play, when the inspector attempts, unsuccessfully, to clinch his case in an interview with Radfern, being particularly effective.

Michael Caddick, as Mrs. Radfern, was perhaps the most convincingly feminine of the three “ladies,” but Alan Powell deserves high praise in the part of Mrs. Lucy Baxley. He played with great gusto, never missing an opportunity of raising a laugh, and creating not a few on his own account.

Lucy's husband, Radfern's ne'er-do-well brother-in-law Bernard Baxley, was excellently characterised by Fred Owers, whose pose was confident throughout. Walter Baker, as Elsie Radfern, gave a competent performance, though marred at times by uneasiness, particularly in his movements. Allan Johnston (as her boy friend Harold Russ), James Gray (Joe Fletten, a confederate of Radfern's) and Alan Smith (Sergeant Morris), ably supported the principal actors.

A.R.G.

### ***Rugby 1946-47***

**T**HE account of this season is mainly the account of football in the Autumn term, for the prolonged frost made all but a very few games impossible during the Spring term. Until Christmas the season was quite successful for both 1st and 2nd XV's. This success is most praiseworthy, as both teams were subject to constant changes and were thus not able to get to know each other well. In the 1st XV, for example, Podmore, an outstanding wing threequarter, left school early in the term; Liggett, Lovatt and Dickson were injured. However, all played well. Kearney, at full-back, was always safe and is a most promising player: the three-quarters generally worked well together. Thomas was the inspiration of the back division, and together with Lovatt was responsible for most of the scoring movements. Owers, a determined strong runner, with a good hand-off, proved the best scoring wing, and set up something of a record by scoring 29 times in 14 games. Johnston, the captain, played in almost every back position, being a useful all-rounder. Rixon and Dickson combined well at half-back. The former played with energy and determination in spite of his small size. Dickson, when he was able to play, was always most reliable and full of football. The standard of play, amongst the forwards was not always good. On a winning side, they were admirable in attack and in feeding the backs, but, possibly through lack of practice, they did not always produce their best when up against really good opposition. However, the victory against King George V.,

Southport, is due entirely to their efforts. Liggett and Morris were excellent in the line out: Young played outstanding football in the loose and Smith A. A. proved perhaps the most promising all-round forward of the year. Silcock generally hooked well.

After the great frost the team had to be changed, as many of the original team had left, and the earlier standard of play was not reached. However, some success was obtained in the Seven a side games.

The 2nd XV. have the best record of all School 2nd XV's. The backs always played well. Turner and Bennett were the best of these, although Mandy and D. O. Jones did almost as well at half-back. The forwards although small always played well together, and to this is due most of the success of the team. Gill's goal-kicking helped to win many matches.

The 3rd XV. did not play together regularly enough to become a real team. Much the same can be said of the Bantams. There are promising players in this team, but bad weather and lack of play have not given them the opportunity to improve much. It is hoped that in the 1947-8 season there will be more regular games for the Bantams and other beginners.

#### MATCH RESULTS.

	1st	2nd	3rd	Bnt.	1st	2nd	3rd	Bnt.	1st	2nd	3rd	Bnt.
Hawarden . H.	A.	—	—	Won	Lost	—	—	26-6	6-11			
B'head Sch. H.	A.	A.	H.	Lost	Lost	Lost	Lost	11-23	0-21	15-40	0-20	
Rock Ferry. A.	H.	—	—	Won	Won	—	—	3-0	9-3			
Wirral G.S. H.	A.	—	H.	Won	Won	—	Lost	35-8	16-16	—	0-5	
Oldershaw . H.	A.	—	—	Won	Won	—	—	30-5	22-5	—	—	
Wrexham . H.	A.	—	H.	Won	Won	—	Won	32-0	16-3	—	9-6	
St. Mary's . A.	H.	A.	H.	Lost	Won	Lost	Lost	13-15	9-6	3-33	0-40	
Ruthin .... A.	—	—	—	Lost	—	—	—	3-16	—	—	—	
B'head Sch. A.	H.	H.	A.	Lost	Lost	Lost	Lost	5-14	6-15	6-32	0-9	
Wrexham . A.	H.	—	—	Won	Won	—	—	17-6	34-6	—	—	
Park High S H.	A.	—	H.	Won	Won	—	Lost	24-0	9-0	—	0-24	
Kg. Geo. V. A.	H.	—	H.	Won	Won	—	Won	16-12	9-6	—	9-0	
S. Edwards H.	A.	—	—	Won	Won	—	—	28-0	9-3	—	—	
Park High S A.	H.	—	—	Won	Won	—	—	32-8	24-3	—	—	
Ruthin .... A.	—	—	—	Lost	—	—	—	0-31	—	—	—	
W'lasey G.S.H.	A.	A.	—	Lost	Lost	Lost	—	8-21	11-12	0-27	—	

#### HOUSE MATCH RESULTS.

Westminster beat .....	Stitt 26-6; beat Atkin 24-6; beat Tate 27-6.
Stitt beat .....	Tate 18-0; beat Atkin 27-0.
Atkin beat .....	Tate 18-6.

#### BOYS WHO PLAYED IN PUBLIC SCHOOL TRIALS.

Liggett and A. A. Smith played at Birkenhead Park on 26th December. Thomas, Owers, Morris and Silcock played at Waterloo on 27th December. Dixon, Goodwin and Wright played at Port Sunlight on 27th December.

## Scout Notes

AS I sit here writing these notes I have before me records of some of the most enterprising activities the troop has put over for many years.

So far this year, since the return of Don Coughtrie and Frank Tomlinson, and the elevation of John Goodwin to T.L., the troop has participated in every possible event in the local Scout world, and has, on the

whole, participated very successfully; not up to the pre-war level, it must be admitted, but on the other hand the enthusiasm and all-round keenness shown must far exceed any pre-war efforts.

In the Scout Boxing Competition held recently at Birkenhead School, two of our lads proved champions in their classes. Of these Morris won on a K.O. in the second round, and Black also won in the second round when the referee stopped the fight. On this score, our thanks must go to Mr. Clare for allowing us to train with some of the School gym.equipment.

In the recent cross country race held at Solly Recreation Ground, I am pleased to say that the troop won the championship with a lower aggregate than any other troop. Congratulations must go to the winner, Fayle, not of our troop, incidentally, and the runner-up, Morris. The rest of the troop team backed Morris up splendidly and took prominent positions to give the troop the low aggregate that enabled them to win the championship.

In the near future the troop is holding a parents' evening, and at the moment, all the patrols are preparing items for the show.

Camps are being arranged for both Whit and Summer, and it is hoped that every member who can do so will attend.

R.E.P.W.

## Boxing

THE Finals of the 1st Annual Novices' Boxing Championships of Birkenhead were held at Byrne Avenue Baths on the 9th April. The events were open to all Schools and Youth Clubs in Birkenhead, and the School did exceptionally well to become the first holders of the Birkenhead News Cup.

The Championships are divided into three groups according to age—Schoolboys (12—14 years), Youths Class A (14—15½ years), and Youths Class B (15½—17 years), and there was a fine response when entries were invited, especially in the first two classes. The Juniors did very well considering the limited training they had had, and though there was no lack of spirit and the will to win, their opponents' greater skill proved the deciding factor. In the Youths Class B event our entrants had played a hard game of Rugger on the day of the preliminary bouts and had to scratch.

The School's successes were scored in the Youths Class A event. H. K. Evans (5s) was unchallenged at 6 stone, and gained a point without having to box. At 7 st. 7 lb. R. M. Lloyd (5s), Price (5s) and Crowe (Rem. S) reached the semi-finals, Lloyd eventually gaining a point for the School and a medal for himself as Runner-up in the Final. W. H. Lloyd (5 B) won a closely contested bout in the Final of his weight to become Novice Champion at 9 st. 7 lb.

We have now gained a name for ourselves in Boxing, and with the aid of more extensive training hope, not only to retain it, but to score further successes in future Championships.

C.C.



## Laburnum Grove



A.A. Smith, Mr. Townsend, A. Powell, F. Owers, M.T. Caddick, J.W. Baker, Mr. Malcolm, H.A. Johnston, J.D. Gray, Mr. Allan.  
Photo by Cull.

## *Table Tennis Club*

THE Club met regularly during the Easter term, when activities included a knock-out competition. The finalists in the latter were Jordan (Advanced), and Jackson, W. E. (6 S.). The final was played at the end of the term, when Jordan proved the winner. At the same meeting a match was played against the Staff, the School proving the better team. The Staff, however, are hoping to reverse this result in the coming season.

P.D.

## *News of Old Boys*

K. Bannerman who took the degree of LL.B. with Honours at Liverpool University in 1944 has been appointed to an administrative post with the National Coal Board.

G. Maitland Brown has been appointed Station Superintendent for East African Airways at Kampala, Uganda. After service with the R.A.F. in the war, he joined the British Overseas Airways, serving as a Traffic Officer at several of the Corporation's stations in Africa, until his present appointment was made in April.

T. H. H. Green (who left in 1931) has gained the Degree of M.B., Ch.B. at Liverpool University.

W. E. Clare has appeared in the Trial Side for the Northern Counties Basic Team against Great Britain at Water Polo.

A. Neale has recently been appointed to the Consular Staff at the Hague.

Geraint Williams captained the Welsh Universities Cross Country Team which beat London University in their annual fixture. He himself came in second.

## *Birkenhead Institute Old Boys A.F.C.*

ANOTHER football season has ended, and it is now possible to consider the results achieved by the Old Boys Soccer Section. As the Committee fully realised, many difficulties had to be overcome in this the first season of the re-formed Club. It is very satisfactory, therefore, to record that both elevens completed their full fixture lists, and, despite the fact that only a small number of games was won, many enjoyable and interesting encounters took place.

Thanks are due to the older members of the Club who constituted the backbone of the 1st eleven, whilst it was pleasing to note the promise shown by several newcomers to Old Boys' football. Towards the end of the season, however, injuries to players and removals from the district made team selection very difficult.

The use of the ground in Holm Lane has again been obtained for next season, when it is hoped to field two teams as before. All Old Boys

interested in the Soccer code should communicate with the Secretary of the Section. To those leaving School this Summer we would say:—Remember—if you are a Soccer ‘fan,’ we can provide you with regular games in one of the leading local amateur leagues—it is up to you.

## Old Instonians R.F.C.

**I**N 1939 the Old Instonians were looking forward to their fourth full season, and had arranged to have four XV's in the field, but on September 1st the Club dissolved overnight. The majority (including the Committee) were Territorials and all went their various ways. However, after a break of nearly seven years, a few of us met in July of last year, at the instigation of Mr. A. O. Jones, and decided to reform the Club, but none of us then anticipated the successful season which followed. I think perhaps we had not taken into account the number of splendid rugby players turned out by the School during the war years, and it was mainly the excellent form of some of the younger members who had only recently left school that helped us to finish up with the following playing record:—

	P.	W.	D.	L.	F.	A.
1st XV. ....	23	...	17	...	6	...
2nd XV. ....	18	...	10	...	7	...
					324	...
					206	...
						131
						135

It was indeed a great day for the Institute when the School's victory over Rock Ferry High School in the Schoolboy seven-a-side competition at Birkenhead Park was followed by the Old Instonians defeating the Old Parkonians in a most exciting final. Few who saw it will forget the excitement as Garry converted Podmore's try to win the game with the last kick of the match.

We have an excellent fixture list for three XV's next season, and we shall be delighted to welcome any new members who have just left school. To all those who are staying on next term we wish a most successful season.

C.K.C.

## Old Boys' Dramatic Society

**T**HE Society has now re-formed after being in abeyance during the war years. Its first production will be the comedy-thriller “I killed the Count,” by Alec Coppel, which will be presented on October 23rd, 24th, and 25th, at the Y.M.C.A. Theatre, Whetstone Lane.

It is hoped that, by enjoying the support of all old boys and present members of the School, the Society will once again be able to earn the reputation it had in pre-war years.

Any Old Boy who is interested in Dramatics, either in an acting or a stage capacity, is asked to get in touch with Mr. Malcolm, c/o. Birkenhead Institute.

J.C.

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*Rising costs and the shortage of paper have made it necessary to withhold some contributions, including University Letters, and to curtail others—Ed.*

*Old Instonians R.F.C.*

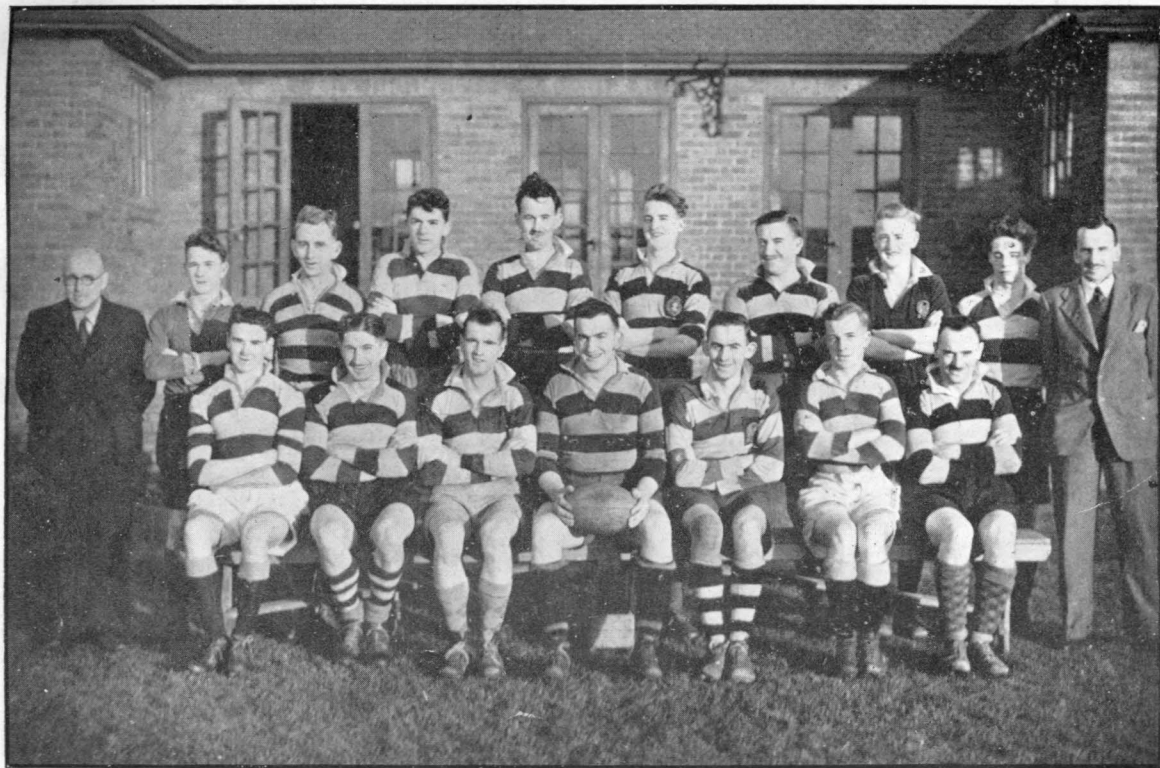


Photo by Cull.