

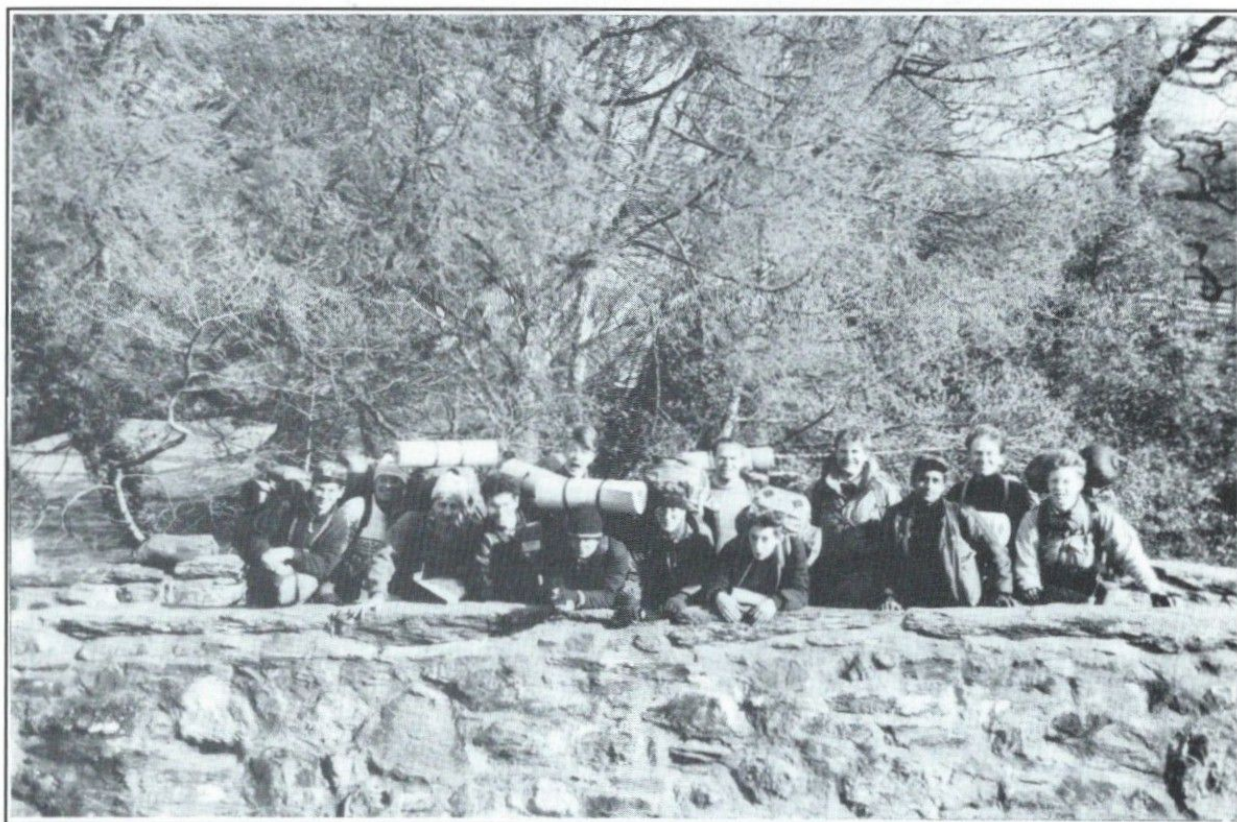
GROUP A
PASS

GROUP B
 - L-Cpl G. C. V. Bamford*
 " R. D. Bone*
 " M. A. Bratt*
 " C. P. Conroy*
 " J M Greenhowe*
 " D Guthrie*
 " P. S. Mulligan*
 " D. Stansfield*
 " D. I. Wilks*
 " M.P. Wilson*
 (*Promoted to Corporal - May 1990)

A. A. Babicki*
 G. E. M. Fisher*
 J. Flannigan*
 R. P. Moul*
 M. J. Sanderson~ (Cadre only)
 N. J. Williams* (Cadre only)

(* Promoted to Lance-Corporal
 - December 1989)

ADVENTURE TRAINING CAMP, CAPEL CURIG



Officers, NCO's and Cadets at the foot of the Watkin Path (Photo G.A. C. Fisher)

On the final day of the Lent Term two heavily-laden Land-Rovers and trailers set off for our annual Adventure Training Camp in Snowdonia. Capel Curig Training Camp provides good accommodation together with storage, drying and cooking facilities, and allows those units using it a considerable degree of independence and flexibility. This factor, together with the outstanding beauty of Snowdonia and its limitless potential for adventure training, explains why our Contingent returns to Wales year after year.

Unfortunately this year's Camp got off to an inauspicious start, one of our brand-new Land-Rovers giving up the ghost on the motorway outside Chester. Captain Fisher had already arrived in Wales, and so was able to leave his trailer (and cadets) there and drive up to the Dale Barracks in Chester, pick up Lts. Simkin and Jones, cadets and second trailer, and return to Capel Curig for a late meal! Happily things ran more smoothly after this hiccup, but we were faced with the problem of transporting cadets and equipment around the hills with only one vehicle. Mrs. Fisher came to our rescue at the weekend, just in time to help with the complicated logistics of a three day expedition.

A day's breathing space between our arrival and the start of the Expedition gave us time to prepare more fully and in less of a rush than usual, so that the recruit cadets in particular could have a morning in the hills and woods

near to the Camp to familiarise themselves thoroughly with map and compass. Micro-navigation was an interesting new feature of our preparation, and revealed cadets' strengths and weaknesses alike.

The Expedition itself followed our standard pattern: after a full evening and morning of preparation (including drawing and packing stores and rations, preparing kit, writing up route-cards and so on), the party moved by road to Tanygrisiau, near Blaenau, and then continued on foot up into Cwmorthin and our first bivouac area in the "garden" of an extremely isolated old house, once the home of the slate-mine manager.



Camping at Plas Cwmorthin (Photo: D. M. Fisher)

Capt. Fisher and Lt. Jones camped a few hundred yards away, allowing the cadets to get on with setting up camp and preparing their evening meal undisturbed. The following morning Lt. Simkin took over from Capt. Fisher, who was able to return to Camp and make contact with our newly arrived civilian driver! The party meanwhile crossed the Moelwyn Hills in two groups, one of which took in the delightful ridge and summit of Cnicht en route. After a rest at Bethania, near the start of the Watkin Path, the entire party set off up towards Snowdon, reaching the second night's bivvy site in good time, and luckily in fair weather.



Cdt. Ireland selects his spot for the night (Photo: D. M. Fisher)



Only one more day to go, and morale is high!
(l. to r.) Cpls. Wilks and Greenhowe, and L/Cpl. Fisher. (Photo: D. M. Fisher)

The third day incorporated the highlight of the Expedition, the ascent of Snowdon itself. This was achieved fairly comfortably, there being comparatively little serious snow, and various cadets continued to lead over different stages of the route. The Summit Café is always closed when we are in Wales before Easter, and so there is little to keep one on the top - apart from the magnificent panorama afforded by breaks in the low cloud, of course. Captain and Mrs. Fisher had come up from Pen y Pass to meet the cadets and walk back in with them. However, the party was moving too quickly, and by the time Capt. Fisher had toiled up over an icy Crib Goch, the cadets and their two officers had set off down the zig-zags for home.

The remaining two days of Camp were devoted to rock climbing in and around Capel Curig village. Mr. Saddington and two other instructors, Rob and Jason, gave this small group of cadets an excellent grounding in climbing, bouldering and abseiling techniques, as well as finding time to practise security on steep ground with them. The Contingent would like to record its sincere thanks to the climbing team for giving everyone such an instructive and enjoyable session.

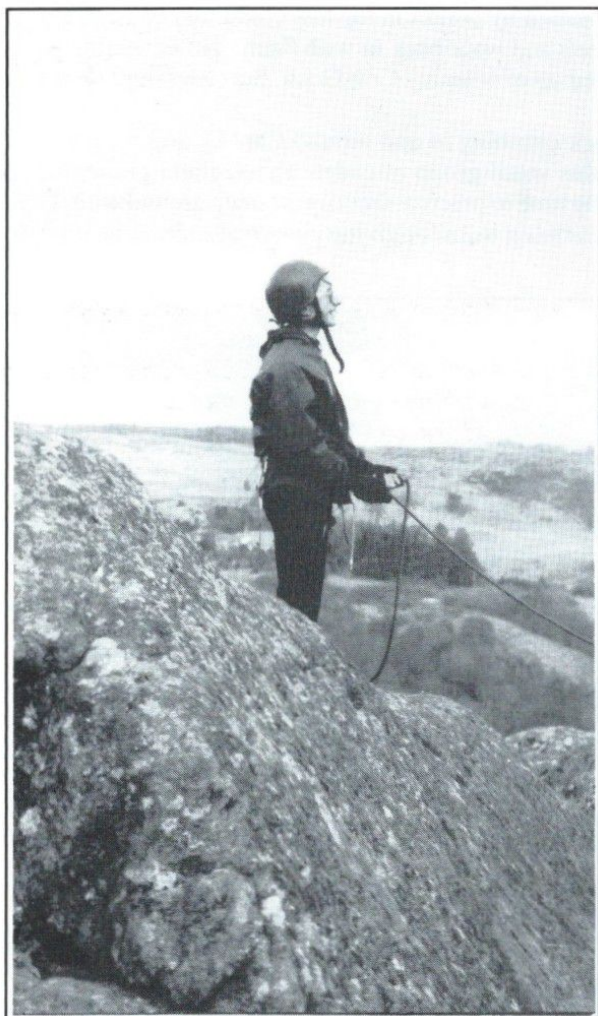


Climbing on Capel Pinnacles (Photo: D. M. Fisher)

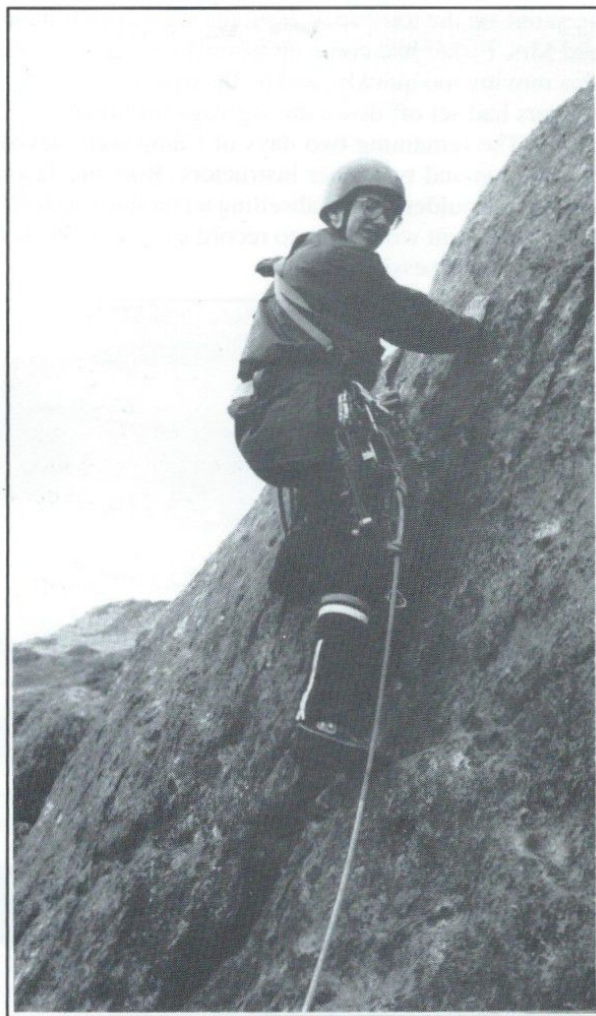


Cdt. Reichl learning to use protection on the rocks.

(Photos: D. M. Fisher)



Cdt. Bulger enjoying a day's bouldering



Cdt. Ireland took to rock-climbing straight away and revealed quite an aptitude

Three pairs, two of cadets and one of officers, took an afternoon off from the climbing to run a long and challenging orienteering course in the Gwydyr Forest near the Camp. It is enough to record the results:

1st - the Officers

2nd - Cpls. Greenhowe and Wilks

3rd - Sgt. Nathan and L/Cpl. Fisher

Visits from the Head Master, the O.C., and Messrs. Chudleigh, Kapadia and Mackereth, all former SNCO's with the Contingent, helped to make this Camp as satisfying as ever, and if one takes into account the uncertain weather conditions one normally has to contend with in the area, this must have been the most successful of our Adventure Training Camps, for conditions were nearly ideal throughout the week.

INSPECTION DAY - 4th MAY 1990

The Inspecting Officer this year was Group Captain Pink who made a spectacular entrance, arriving in a Gazelle helicopter on the School fields. The whole Contingent took to the field for the Inspection Parade, conducted this year by Colour-Sergeant Howells. The School Band played during the Inspection and March Past, and we are extremely grateful to them and to Mr. P. W. Goodwin. Group Captain Pink was very impressed with the smart turnout, bearing and marching of both sections.

After coffee the Group Captain watched highlights of the March and Shoot Competition between the Army and R.A.F., an adventure training lesson and a weapons cleaning lesson being taught by various senior cadets. The day ended with a spectacular exercise by the Army's Senior Platoon.

The exercise demonstrated all the military skills the cadets had learnt from their Army Proficiency Certificate and Cadre Courses. During the exercise, the cadets travelled in Land Rovers, fired light machine guns and had numerous pyrotechnics explode all around them. The patrolling, ambushes and section attacks were extremely well executed, and the visiting dignitaries seemed impressed with the boys' performance. The Cadet Training Team certainly was!

RESULTS OF THE MARCH AND SHOOT COMPETITION

Despite the R.A.F. Teams' lack of firing experience, this was a good competition which ran smoothly and was well contested by all participants.

The results tell a great deal: teams going out 3rd and 4th have the advantage of knowing the times they have to beat; but good, steady firing is the key factor, and it is here that most improvement can be made.

Thanks to N.C.O.'s, marshals, the reserve and the four Captains, and congratulations to Army Team B for their victory and Cdt. Dynes for his extremely good shooting. Members of the winning team were presented with small trophies by the Inspecting Officer during his address at the end of the morning.

Team/Capt.	Points	Position
R.A.F. 'A' (Cdt. Moore)	88	3
Army 'A' (Cdt. Dynes)	121	2
R.A.F. 'B' (Cdt. Burton)	59	4
Army 'B' (Cdt. Bury)	140	

Best Shot: Army Cdt. Dynes 32/40
R.A.F. Cdt. Moore 26/40

SUMMER CAMP 1990 - PENHALE

This year the Army Section went to Penhale Camp in Cornwall. The Camp is in a beautiful setting and with careful preparation, fantastic weather and a varied programme, it proved to be one of the best camps we have known.

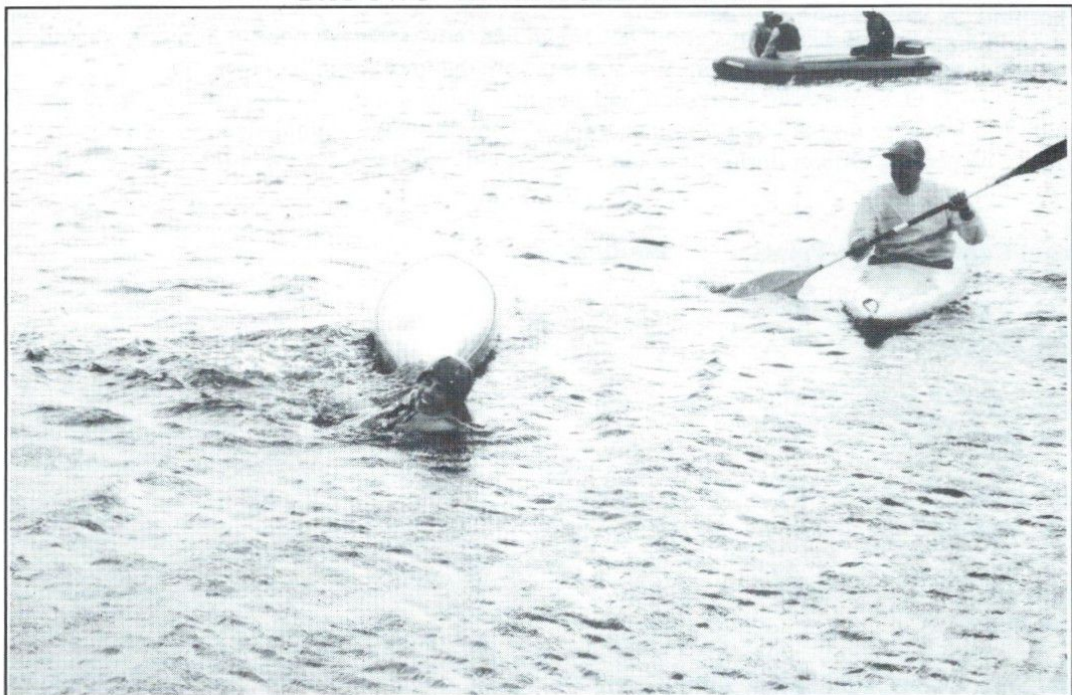
DAY ONE - MILITARY SKILLS



Cdt. Mason in determined mood (Photo: D. M. Fisher)

This day was a very useful introduction to the basic military skills of a soldier. In the morning we had a long but thoughtful presentation of section battle drills, after which we had to put it all into practice! Firing the old 303 weapon proved difficult, but after three separate section attacks on dummy targets, most of the cadets understood the broad principles. After this, the cadets then went onto the 30 metre Range to fire the Cadet Weapon and went down a small Close-Quarter Combat course, firing the S.L.R. After lunch the duties of a sentry were demonstrated by ten senior N.C.O.'s, much to the amusement of everyone else. The highlight of the day was the Nuclear, Biological and Chemical (N.B.C.) Warfare session. This included getting dressed in an N.B.C. suit and being locked in a gas chamber filled with tear-gas!

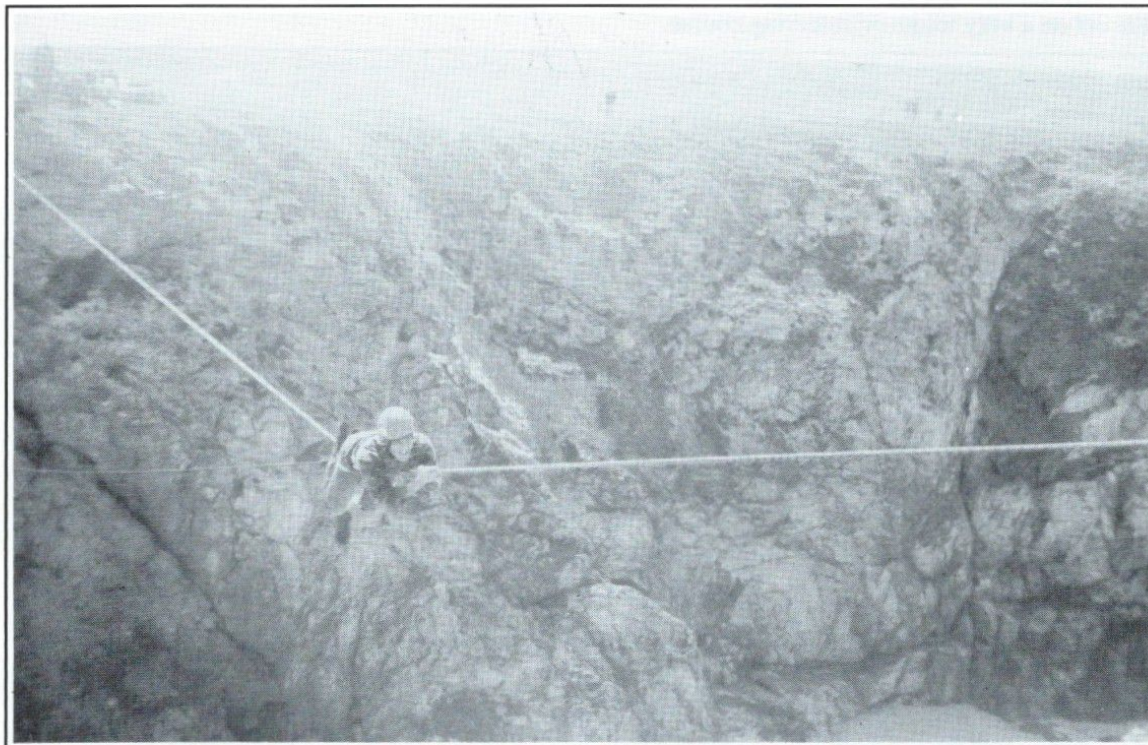
DAY TWO - ADVENTURE TRAINING



Cdt. Eckersley practises his capsizing drills as an instructor stands by. (Photo: D.M. Fisher)

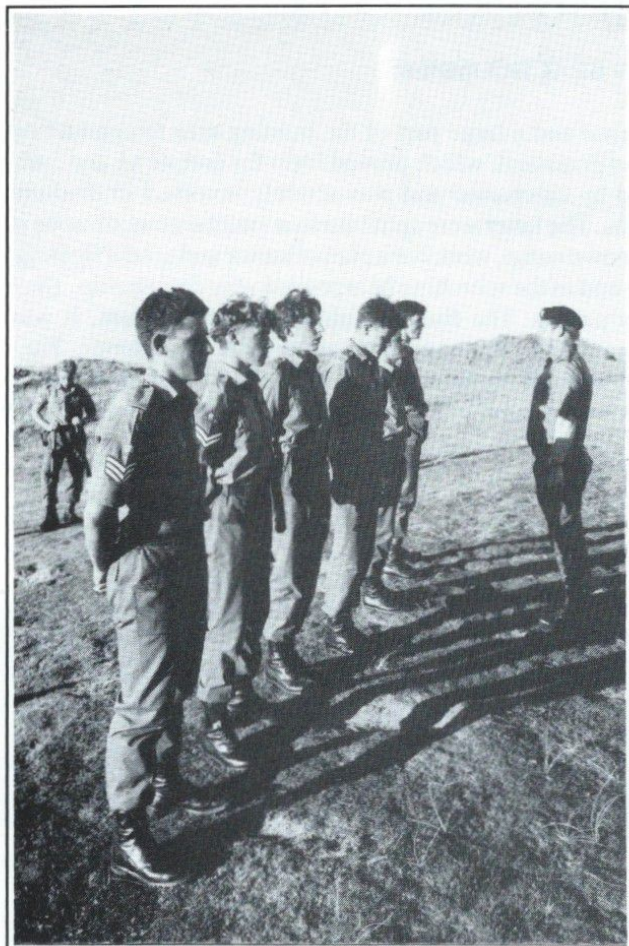
The morning session involved various canoeing exercises on a local reservoir. For many cadets this was their second experience in a canoe and so the training team was able to take them for a longer paddle than at previous camps.

The afternoon session was a mixture of climbing and abseiling down the cliffs on to the beach. However, the most exciting activity was the Tyrolean Traverse, which involved climbing along a rope from one cliff face to another.



Colour Sergeant Noble on the Tyrolean Traverse (Photo: Lt. M. P. Jones)

DAY THREE - SIGNALS TRAINING



This proved to be a very stimulating and varied package. In the morning the cadets were instructed in a variety of radios and took part in a number of competitions against another contingent, which we won. In the afternoon, the cadets were split up into small groups, given a radio between them, and then had to find twelve reference points around the large training area. The best group, led by Cadet Dynes, found all the reference points and no other contingent to date has been able to beat this. In the evening, in the scorching heat, we took part in a March and Shoot Competition and came a very creditable eighth.

Lt. Simkin takes a declaration from the March and Shoot Team.

(Photo: D. M. Fisher)

DAY FOUR - SPORTS DAY

In the morning, the cadets went over the Camp's small but challenging assault course. In the boiling heat and after four run-throughs, it was time to select a team for the camp competition. The cadets did a fantastic run and came second overall amongst twenty-two contingents. After a short session on the beach to repair battered limbs, the cadets then went off on a very tough orienteering course.



The Assault Course Team and their two P.T.I.'s

DAYS FIVE AND SIX - TWENTY-FOUR HOURS EXERCISE

"OPERATION BEACHCOMBER"

The contingent was given a completely free hand and a large part of the training area to conduct our own exercise. The area included undulating sand-dunes and grassland, which proved ideal for patrolling and ambushes.

An enemy commando group had been landed by submarine and was actively involved in disrupting the communications and supply routes of the friendly forces. The latter were split into four small reconnaissance patrols. They had to find the enemy's camp, report back to their own camp, work out a plan of attack and send a fighting patrol to destroy the enemy. This took the best part of the day and in the scorching heat proved very demanding. The enemy were also very successful in ambushing the friendly patrols. The final assault took place at night. It was quite spectacular to see the flashes of the guns and the thunder-flashes exploding around the sand-dunes. The whole exercise though was successful largely due to the extensive and proficient use of the radios, a new experience for us.

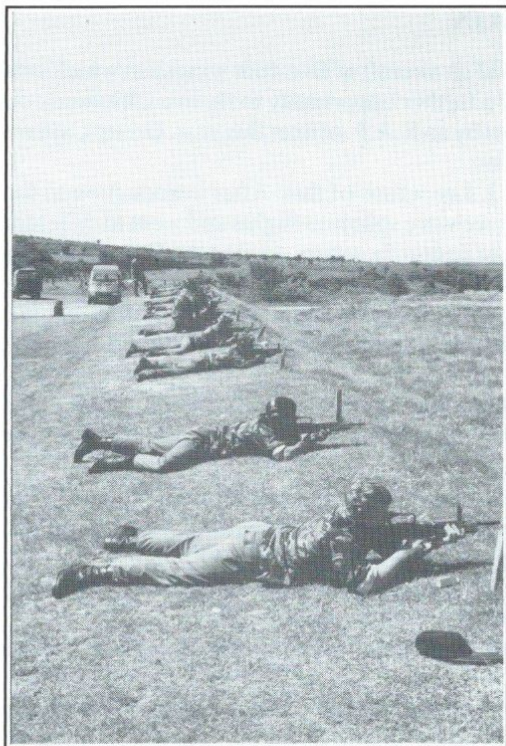


Lt. Jones keeping his head down, and Corporal Bratt not!



Major Chudleigh receiving a retirement present from the cadets just before dark on the 24hrs. exercise.

(Photos: D. M. Fisher)

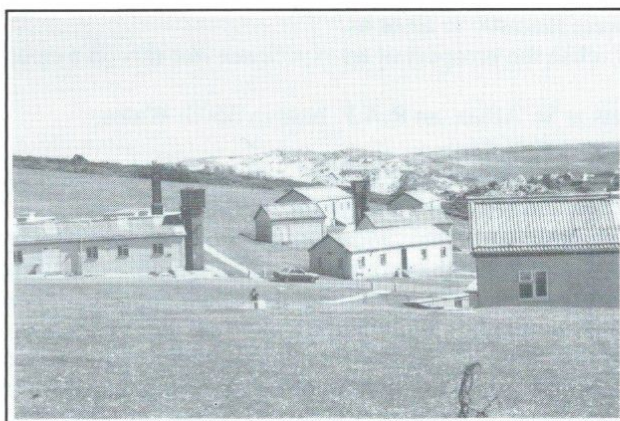


The final part of the day was spent at the gallery range at Millpool. Firing the Cadet Weapon again, over a range of 100 metres, was a valuable experience for all. The Cadets zeroed their weapons and then tried to get the smallest possible group of shots on a target. Later they all took part in a Banzai-charge fun-shoot. This involved running 200 metres from a trench, diving forward, rolling and shouting "Banzai!" at least three times before they reached the shooting point. They then had to fire twenty rounds at two targets, and all this in only forty-five seconds. The last session involved firing in different positions at a variety of targets.

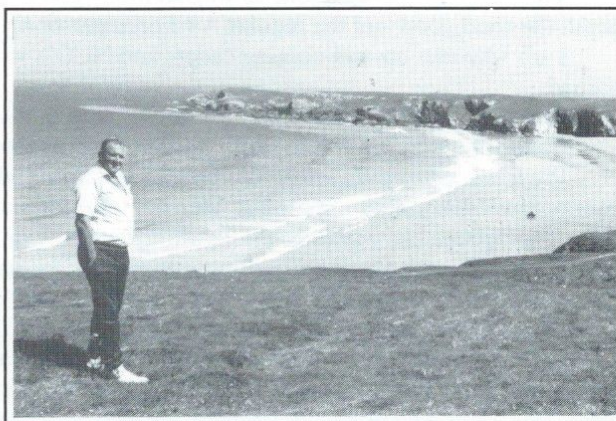
The 100m. firing point at Millpool Range

(Photos: D. M. Fisher)

The Camp was excellent. To be able to fire so many weapons in such a short period of time was unusual; to be able to use the radios was superb and to be involved in so many activities was a real experience. We were especially pleased to be visited by the Second Master whose Scouting experience proved useful during the 24-hour Exercise!



Penhale Training Camp.



Epilogue: Major Chudleigh, evidently well satisfied with his final CCF Camp.

PROMOTIONS - JULY 1990

From Colour Sergeant to C.S.M. - R. D. Hulse, G. R. Noble

From Corporal to Sergeant - M. A. Bratt, J. M. Greenhowe and D. I. Wilks

From Lance-Corporal to Corporal - G. E. M. Fisher

From Cadet to Lance-Corporal - E. Buckley, S. Copsey, M. Dynes, T. Howard, W. Mason, C. Reichl, N. Retter and M. Weeden

NEXT YEAR

In September we hope to welcome some of our new Lower Sixth girls into the Corps, in preparation for the following summer when the first group of Third Form girls enter the Corps and come away on Camp with us. We all look forward to this with great anticipation!

Capt. D. M. Fisher
Lt. M. P. Jones

C.C.F. R.A.F. SECTION

The R.A.F. Section has had another active year. The project to build an aircraft of five-foot wingspan which will fly and illustrate manoeuvres in the air is progressing well; cadets had a further opportunity to fly in a Chipmunk on the Field Day at R.A.F. Woodvale; and annual inspection was carried out by an R.A.F. officer this year, Group Captain Pink, who was impressed by the enthusiasm and turn-out of the section.

Summer Camp in 1989 was spent at R.A.F. Coltishall. Sergeant J. Lee writes of this: After introduction to the officers and facilities, we settled into our six-berth tents. Next morning we were split into flights and went to different sections of the station, to see what they did. We helped to service Jaguar fighter-bombers, visited the Control Tower and enjoyed a water-fight with the Fire Section.

During the week we went shooting with the new cadet GP rifle. Several cadets gained marksman badges. We also flew in the Chipmunks stationed there, with aerobatics for the courageous and basic manoeuvres for the faint-hearted.

Other activities included a night-exercise, for which we wore camouflage, and the construction of rafts to cross a river. The full programme, the glorious weather and the friendliness of everyone made it the best camp I have ever been on.

A small party of NCO's was fortunate to have the chance to visit R.A.F. Laarbruch in West Germany during Easter 1990. Corporal A. McGowan writes of this: It was the section's first overseas camp and the best by far. Corporals Lee, McGowan, Jones and Goodwin received the only four places available.

We were welcomed after our twelve-hour journey, by the Station Commander, who introduced us to one of the R.A.F.'S most important front-line bases, home to four squadrons of Tornado GR1 aircraft.

On the Thursday and Friday we made a tour of the base, the high point being a visit to the Fire Section, who always take the opportunity to get a few cadets soaking wet.

At the weekend we visited towns in the locality and also managed to see the cemeteries and museums of the battle for the bridge too far, at Arnhem in Holland.

Back at Laarbruch, we were told that we were taking part in a full NATO exercise, due to start at 6.00 a.m. the next day!

On the Monday morning we were involved in an attack on our coach, complete with fire, smoke, unexploded shells, blood and gore. All great fun!

The next day was a sad one as we had to say goodbye to friends made during the week. The facilities had been great, the food good and the regular Air Force personnel were fantastic to all of us.

I am sure that up-and-coming cadets and NCO's will relish the prospect of an experience like this on a camp abroad.

Easter camp 1990 was spent by a larger party of cadets at St. Athan, an R.A.F. base in South Wales.

Cadets M. Bentley and J. Duffy have contributed an account of this:

We travelled by train on the Wednesday to Cardiff where we were picked up by an R.A.F. coach and, along with contingents from Christ's Hospital, Merchant Taylor's and St. Bees schools, headed off for the base.

After introductory talks on the Thursday from the station commander and camp commandant, we spent the next couple of days going round the various squadrons of the station, the main task of which was repairing and overhauling Tornados, Phantoms and Harriers. We saw the station's own display of vintage aircraft, which included a fine example of a Mosquito, we each got a half-hour flight in Chipmunk and we visited the Fire and Police Dog sections.

On the Saturday we visited a Welsh Folk Museum and then were given some free time to explore Cardiff. On the Sunday there was a map-reading exercise which took us on a ten-mile walk, making various observations as we went. To give us a bit of encouragement, we were told that the sooner we got back the more we would see of the F.A. Cup Final between Manchester United and Crystal Palace.

The Monday and Tuesday we spent finding out about those sections we expressed an interest in. The most enjoyable was the training of the Police Dogs.

Cadet McMahon had his first experience of flying at St. Athan:

It was my first time flying. I was slightly afraid. My anxious thoughts were interrupted by the attendants who helped me into the Chipmunk, WB 654.

I looked around the cockpit at the array of dials and switches. My mind went blank.

We couldn't take off at once. We had to wait while a Tornado roared off with full after-burner.

Then we began to move. Finally the plane lifted and we gained height until the airfield was a mere model below. The pilot asked if I wanted to perform aerobatics or go for normal flight. I chose aerobatics and so we had to gain a lot more height (just in case of problems in the air).

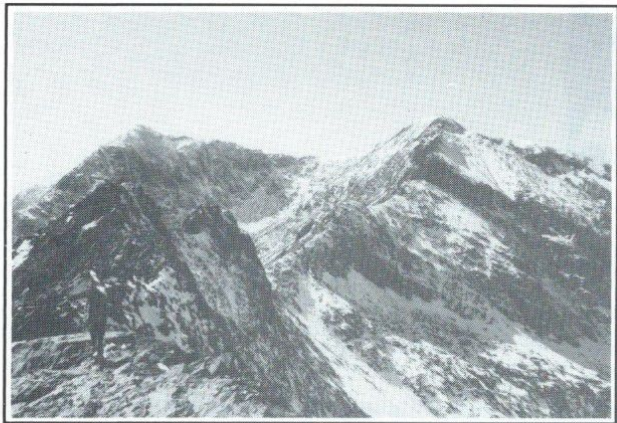
We began with a barrel roll. All I could see through the canopy was the sky, then the land, then the sky again.

Then I heard the pilot tell me we were going to try a stall-turn. We needed to pull up so that we were vertical. He calmly talked me through the manoeuvre. As we were vertical, he slowed the rpm's down to low and turned 180 degrees on the vertical so we were dropping to the ground. On the turn I had felt about 4g and on the dashboard I saw my face being sucked back. It looked like the ripples made when a stone is thrown into a pond.

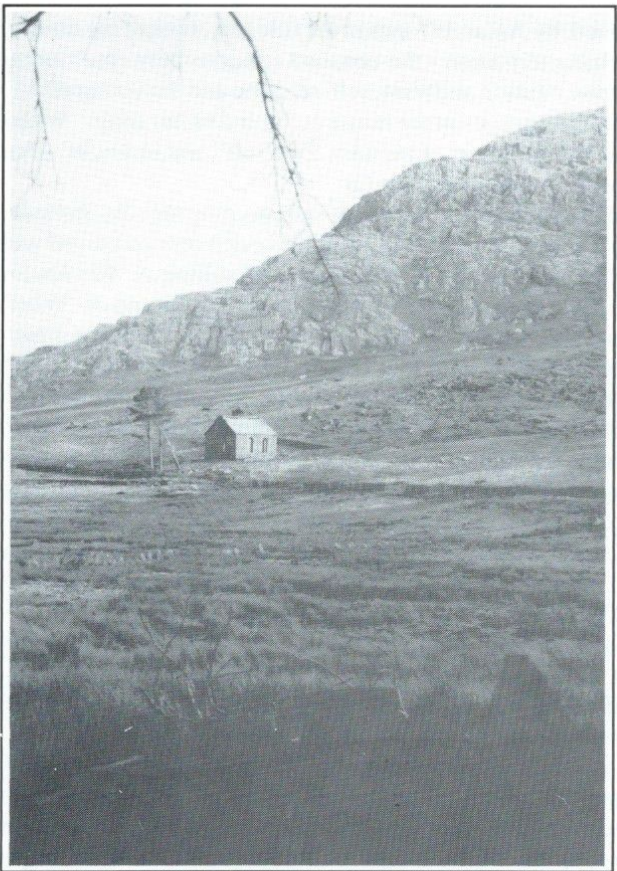
When we pulled out of this, we went straight into a loop-the-loop. This time I closed my eyes. When I peeped, I saw the artificial horizon swivelling round on the dial. We landed after what I thought was about ten minutes. In fact it was about half-an-hour.

The Section would like to congratulate Dr. Keable on her well deserved promotion to Flight Lieutenant.

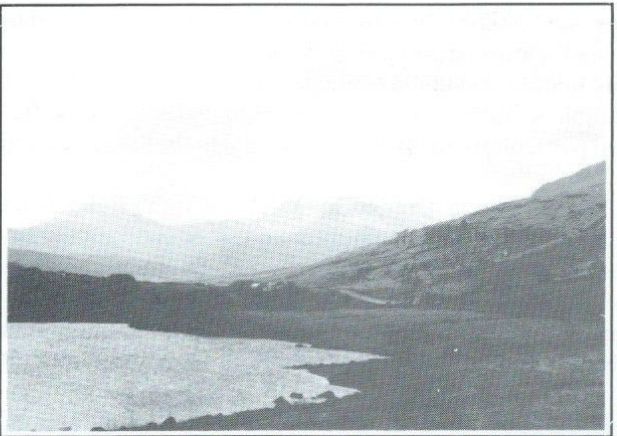
Plt. Off. M. H. Gracey.



The pinnacles of Crib Goch, with Snowdon summit behind and Carnedd Ugain to the right.



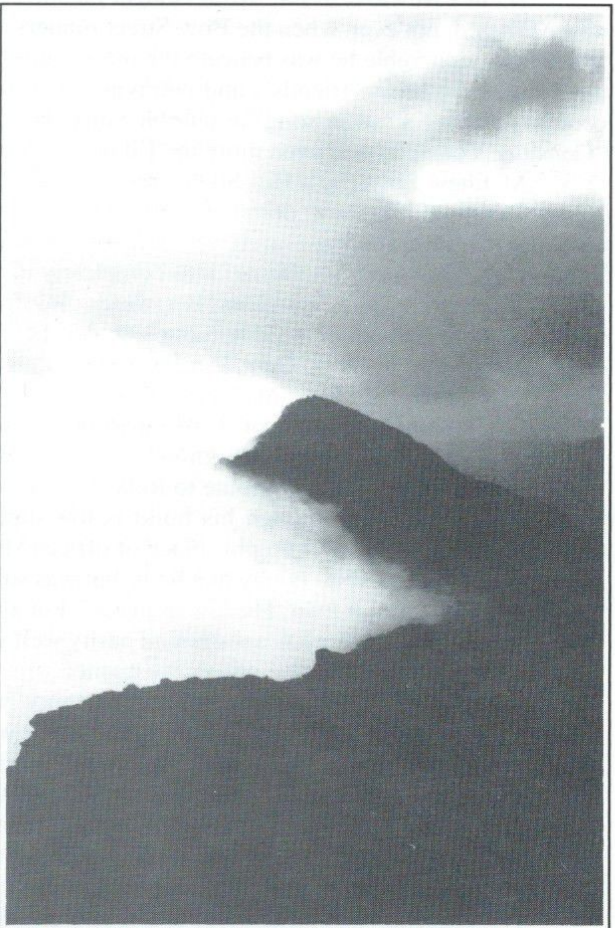
Deserted miners' chapel, Llyn Cwmorthin.



A distant view of the Snowdon Range from the Llynau Mymbyr.



Early morning in a lane near Bethania, Nant Gwynmant.



Late afternoon cloud on the Summit of Chricht

DRAMA



"OLIVER"

"And we'll praise the day
Somebody gave us
O-li-ver!"

Mr. Bumble and Mrs. Corney speak for all of us who saw the School's major dramatic production, Lionel Bart's "Oliver", last December. The "somebody" who gave us this delightful spectacle was Mrs. Parsons, Miss De Vince and Mr. Harrison (répétiteur), and their production was a triumph for all concerned in this famous adaptation of Dickens' "Oliver Twist".

Great versatility was demanded, and brilliantly achieved, by Amanda Jones in the title role, both in the number of skills required (acting, singing and dancing) and in the characterisation - the constant tensions between courage and timidity, confidence and bewilderment, humour and pathos, caution and trust, self-reliance and the young child's need, unmet until the end, for love and security. Amanda left few dry eyes in the house at the end of her song, "Where is love?", but we were soon smiling at Oliver's jauntiness with Dodger in "Consider Yourself" and in Fagin's den. Amanda is already showing tremendous assurance as an actress, and should go far.

Richard Avery as Fagin is equally to be congratulated. He avoided the danger of stereotyping the role, stressing Fagin's serious-minded, thoughtful self-absorption with dark, brooding eyes, and his incisive delivery conveyed well the old miser's shrewdness. But Richard caught too the pathos underlying this character. The soliloquy "Reviewing the situation" was particularly moving. In the musical score his appearance was accompanied by the tune of "Where is love?", a reminder that even the middle-aged need love too, and his slow exit through the hall, his black hat grimly silhouetted against the audience, as the lights faded, made us realise that, unlike Oliver, he was not going to find it. Even in "Pick a pocket or two" he seemed to be salving his conscience by justifying his life-style to his charges. Yet he still relished the humour of the part, behaving almost like Frank Spencer when the urchins picked his pocket.

Hadley Newlove as the Artful Dodger blended cherubic innocence and Cockney cheek. His infectious verve never faltered, not even when the Bow Street runners dragged him off protesting at the end. But he too allowed us to see how vulnerable he was beneath the mask, admitting with near-wistfulness to Oliver "Come to think of it - I ain't got no hintimate friends", and betraying great tenderness in his puppy-love for Nancy. Although this was certainly Hadley's "swan-song" as a treble voice, he could not have chosen a more effective one, both in the perky "Consider Yourself" and even more in "I'd do anything" for Nancy.

Matthew Sowerby's Bill Sikes presented this larger-than-life tyrant and bully with the greatest economy. Never shouting, Matthew dominated by sheer force of personality and sense of burly physical presence, a contemptible slob who must surely get his comeuppance before the end, as indeed he did, the only unmitigated villain in the work. His song "My Name" was completely in character - loud-mouthed and brutish.

The two "ladies", Nancy and Bet, were colourfully and full-bloodedly depicted by Rebecca Slate and Nicola Cross. Brazen coarseness, good humour and a deeper sensitivity beneath their enforced lifestyles were all brought out with panache. In their "Oom-Pah-Pah" song, delivered with Brechtian harshness, they savoured the "doubles entendres", and in "It's a fine life" they savagely played up the bitter irony of their lot. Rebecca and Nicola managed well the contrasting tenderness of "I'd do anything", and even more Rebecca's "As long as he needs me", though what she saw in Bill Sikes we shall never know! Despite its necessarily abrupt staging, Nancy's murder made the audience reach for its Kleenex, a great tribute to Rebecca's interpretation of the role.

Nicholas Taylor, though his build is too slight for the "chubby hubby" beadle Mr. Bumble, generated ponderous pomposity, wielding his mace of office (Mr. Fisher's most striking prop) to great effect! He came over as the pretentious parvenu booby that he is, but was suitably nonplussed in the comic scenes with Mrs. Corney and indignant in his famous line "The law is an ass". For all Bumble's faults, we felt sorry for him under his new wife's thumb. Nick's tenor voice has a restrained purity well suited particularly to "Boy for sale" and to the sanctimonious grace before the "meal" in the opening sequence.

For me, the most outstanding performance was that of Olivia Dunbar as Widow Corney. Harsh and domineering when dealing with or talking about her workhouse inmates, she assumed a coy innocence in her first scene alone with Bumble which deceived the beadle but not the more discerning audience, whom Olivia was almost inviting to share the joke. She clearly enjoyed Corney's vamping and later scolding of Bumble: she has a Pollyanna-like radiance of personality which illuminates her every word and gesture, and like Nicola Cross (Bet) she knows how to use her eyes to underline whatever she wants to convey. In her duet with Nick "I shall scream" she fairly bubbled with ill-suppressed mirth.

Act 1, Scene 4 is a masterpiece of dramatic effect, with a gradual quickening of tension and pace from Oliver's first morning at the undertaker's up to his escape therefrom, via fights, screams, shouts, chases, hysterics, kicks, water

thrown about and two members of the cast ending inside a coffin. It came off with split-second timing, thanks largely to the professional interpretation of the four episodic but fully-rounded members of the funeral household - Neil Haggerty as Mr. Sowerberry, Louise Borg as Mrs. Sowerberry, Stephanie Tabner as Charlotte and Andrew Goodwin as Noah Claypole. Neil met the challenge of showing the hypocrisy behind his doleful persona, and, together with Louise and Nick, drew on his experience as a chorister in the trio "That's your funeral". Louise as Mrs. Sowerberry had magnetic and authoritative stage presence. Shrill, bossy and fussy, she reacted with understandable realism to being doused with cold water by Charlotte. Her agile leap into the coffin was unforgettable, and her comment on seeing Amanda (two inches taller than she) "Yes, he is rather small" was greeted with laughter at all five performance. Stephanie as Charlotte only had nine lines, but this still gave her enough scope to emerge well as the already shrewish sluttish Sowerberry offspring, quelling her short-lived compassion for Oliver (Let the boy alone!) at the first signs of bullying from Noah. Andrew Goodwin's taunting of Oliver, loud and frightening, was larger than life, almost a burgeoning Bill Sikes - his voice really froze the blood!

Matthew Booth as Mr. Brownlow (Oliver's grandfather) and Dominic West as Dr. Grimwig assumed middle-aged dignity mingled with genuine humanity, though Matthew could have put up a more spirited struggle to retrieve the contents of his pocket! These potentially unrewarding parts were well fleshed-out, as was Matthew Maunder's Charley Bates, Dodger's spirited side-kick whose role in the original is drastically, and in my opinion regrettably, pruned by Bart.

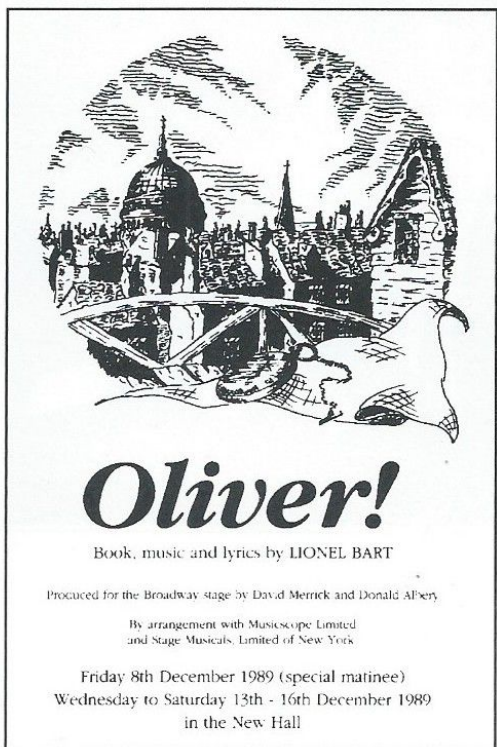
Nicola Ravenscroft played Mrs. Bedwin, the Brownlow's housekeeper. Though she was less overtly "motherly" towards Oliver than is usual, she appeared concerned, and sang her "Where is love?" with great feeling and purity of tone. Rachel Roden as Old Sally, the old crone who fits the last piece about Oliver's origins into the jigsaw, delivered her climactic news with appropriately melodramatic posture.

This production was impressive for the versatility of the cast. Not only did several of the main characters double as tavern revellers, market vendors, passers-by on London Bridge, and so forth, but the Chorus itself was equally energetic and convincing, whether as workhouse inmates, Fagin's gang, or habitués of the Three Cripples. Particularly delightful was the quintet of street criers (Karen Law, Laura Owen, Alison Soper, Philippa Whittle and Louise Borg) with their "Who will buy?", a moment of hypnotic still beauty amidst the hurly-burly of the main action, though we sensed the fragility of even these ladies' livelihood - they too must make money or starve.

The chorus sang its heart out in all the well-known numbers, professionally keeping up the energy until every last urchin or towns person had disappeared from the set or auditorium. The synchronised choreography too in the chorus songs was a tribute to the training and to the dedication of the participants. It was good to see so wide an age-range too; as well as the street criers mentioned above (all second or first years), there was a fourth year (Richard Berd), four third years (Chris Dixon, Jonathan Ghazi, Ketan Misra and James Seddon), a further second year (Nicola Miller), and four first years (Mark Abadi, Alice Caine, Abby Hyams and Andrew Kelly).

A musical, by definition, relies largely on music for its success. The music here was sparkling and utterly professional, thanks to Mr. Harrison (répétiteur), to Mark Brandreth (Assistant Chorus Master) and to the splendid, largely home-grown ten-piece orchestra, very ably gathered, rehearsed and conducted by Mr. Bamforth. The players were Mr. Hofton (flute and piccolo), Mr. M. P. Jones (percussion), Cemil Egeli (violin), Simon Ogier (cello), Michael Hope (clarinet) and Victor Cooke (trombone), augmented by four members of the Gorton Philharmonic Society, leader Ros Wood. The surprise was that there were so few players in the orchestra, so full and rich was the sound.

"Oliver" has nine scene changes. These were smoothly and silently executed by Mr. Hofton's excellent stage staff, under the able direction of Mike Wilson and Paul Hope. Mr. Hofton had the twin responsibilities of supervising his eight stalwarts and of playing in the orchestra, a noteworthy tour de force. The sets themselves, designed by Mr. Dunn, imaginatively combined simplicity and realism. Especially eye-catching were the silhouetted London skyline and the extended apron projecting into the audience like a narrow street, with the orchestra pit to one side behind it. Dr. Barker and his lighting cohorts Nick Butson and Nick West with their wide-ranging effects to set the



Richard Avery's bold programme cover for the School Musical.

mood; Mr. Fisher and Daniel Guthrie with their rich mixture of up and down market properties; Mr. Callaghan with his ticket sales and front-of-house work; Richard Avery with his lovely programme design; Nicola Cross and Sally Dickin with their sterling help with the make-up; and Mr. Grant with his organisation of the matinee for Primary Schools, all played their part in making this production one of the most memorable and successful that I have seen here in fifteen years. I hope the School's actors and actresses meant it when they told us at the end of Act 1 -

"Pip, pip, cheerio,
We'll be back soon!"

G. J. Turner.

"Oliver"



Young Oliver himself (Amanda Jones) and Dodger (Hadley Newlove)
(Photo: J. H. Thomson)



Fagin (Richard Avery)



Bill Sikes (Matthew Sowerby) and Nancy (Rebecca Slate)
(Photo: J. H. Thomson)



Mrs. Corney (Olivia Dunbar) and Mr. Bumble (Nick Taylor)



Bet (Nicola Cross) shows her garters "But not for free and gratis!"
(Photo: J. H. Thomson)



Mr. Brownlow (Matthew Booth)



Mrs. Sowerberry (Louise Borg) and Mr. Sowerberry (Neil Haggerty)



Noah Claypole (Andrew Goodwin) and Charlotte (Stephanie Tabner)



Dr. Grimwig (Dominic West)



Mrs. Bedwin (Nicola Ravenscroft)



Old Sally (Rachel Roden)



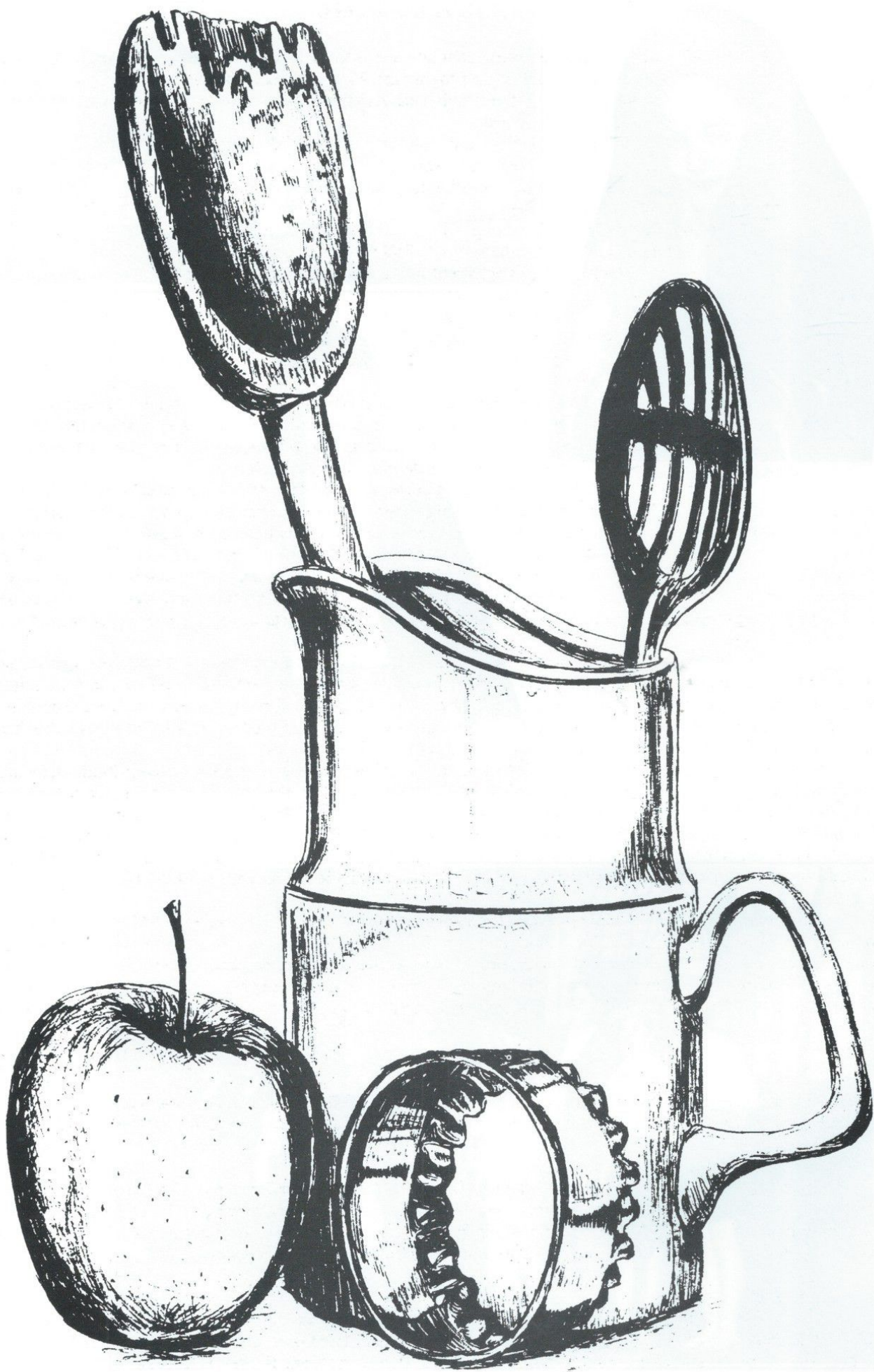
Workhouse



Charley Bates (Matthew Maunders) with Dodger



Song time!



Michael Clark 5X

THE SILVER SWORD

Let's begin at the end, as it were, with warm congratulations to the Silver Sword's production team, that list of staff and pupils which appeared on the back of the programme. Most of these also gave freely of their time to the other dramatic event of the Michaelmas term, *Oliver*: their hard work throughout a long term played a very significant part in the undoubted success of both productions.

The Silver Sword was an inspired choice as a junior play. It requires a very large cast of over thirty, thus giving scope for the more experienced to take on a major role while at the same time introducing newcomers to the stage fairly gently. The plot is one which is instantly appealing to young people: an epic journey by a group of children seeking to restore their world of happiness and security which has been shattered by war and terror. For the youngsters of Nazi-occupied Poland a stable family life belongs to the past and, hopefully, to the future; chocolate is a thing unknown, and a simple letter opener becomes the symbol of all their hopes, as the Silver Sword.

Such a powerful dramatic theme requires of its central characters that they act with conviction and sensitivity: this proved not to be beyond the capabilities of this young cast. Richard Pimblott gave a creditable performance as Joseph Balicki, the Polish schoolmaster who finds it impossible to compromise with the Nazi occupiers. His role, especially in the opening scenes, is an important one, and although Richard found it difficult to sustain so taxing a part throughout the play, there were some splendid moments here, not least when he decided in the first scene to teach the Polish rather than the German Bible.

Matthew Butterworth gave a skilful performance as Jan, the boy all alone who develops a mystical belief in the sword as the "best of my treasures", the talisman which will see the children through all their difficulties. He was perhaps at his best at the end of the play when he offered the sword back to the Balickis on condition that he can join their family. This was a sensitive performance which was deservedly well received.

Two first rate performances came from Michelle Cowan as Bronia and Alex Rodgers as Edek. Bronia is too young fully to appreciate the hardships of war and the dangers to which the children are exposed. In the cellar scenes Michelle portrayed this innocence to perfection: she showed real distress when there was no wall space left for her drawings, blank incomprehension when offered chocolate by a Soviet soldier ("What's chocolate?"), and touching devotion to, and confidence in, her brother and sister. Alex displayed a whole range of emotions with conviction: violently loyal in defence of his mother, commanding in leading the escape party, tragic and tearful as he revealed that his mother had been sent to Germany "to slave on the land". I look forward to seeing these two appearing in future School productions.

The highlight of this productions was without doubt Alison Soper as Ruth, the substitute mother and teacher of the children in the cellar. Her fierce support of her brother and the care she lavished on Bronia were totally convincing, and she dealt with Ivan (Marc Kaye) with great skill. Alison was fortunate to have some of the best lines in the play, and as Communist power collapsed in eastern Europe at the end of 1989 it was wonderfully ironic to hear her tell Jan that the Russian soldiers had "come to set us free and look after us".

With a cast of over thirty, it is impossible to do more than mention some other important contributions. Leanne Basso and Louise Borg kept the action going with their narration of events (a necessary, but in some ways a thankless, task, for I am sure that they were both itching to be part of the main action); Marc Kaye was a very sympathetic Ivan, the children's first contact with the Russian forces; and Gareth Roberts was an excellent G.I. Joe, right down to his accent. There was in fact a wide range of accents convincingly used in the play, American, German (from Daniel Riste and Faresh Maisuria), English rustic from Matthew Belwood, or the wonderfully Cockney Germans played by Jonathan Howarth and Chris Dixon.

This review would be incomplete without recording the work done by Dr. Barker and Mr. Hofton as Stage Managers; Mr Fisher for the props; Mr. Turner and Miss De Vince for make-up; Mr Blight for refreshments; Mrs Maguire for ticket sales; and Mr. Greenall for the programme. Above all, of course, our congratulations to Mr. Turner for taking on an ambitious play, for entertaining large audiences on both nights, but most of all for fostering the talents of boys and girls who we hope will want to take part in School plays in the future.

Peter Callaghan

Cast list

Alison Soper: Ruth. Alex Rodgers: Edek. Michelle Cowan: Bronia. Matthew Butterworth: Jan. Richard Pimblott: Joseph. Louise Borg and Leanne Basso: Narrators. Marc Kaye: Ivan. Gareth Roberts: Joe.

The following took two or more parts:

Caron Abramson: Kathrynne Arran: Matthew Belwood: Aaron Callander: Jenny Colclough: Chris Dixon: Jenny Ellis: Jonathan Ghazi: Justine Goldman: James Greenough: Jonathan Howarth: Rebecca Kingston: Karen Law: Faresh Maisuria: Nicola Miller: Claire Reichl: Daniel Riste: Melissa Seger: Jonathan Shneck: Richard Smith: James Vickers: Sally Ward: Simon Whittingham: Philippa Whittle: Matthew Woolley.

Backstage

Nicola Cross: Sally Dickin: Paul Hope: Chris Whiterod: Jon Symms: Andrew Pilling: Chris Nix: Andrew Pardoe: Paul Fellows: Sam Spencer: Mike Wilson: Peter Gallagher: Marc Ogier: Daniel Guthrie: Marek Wysteppek: Stephen Hoo: Paolo Rinaldi: Musa Ajoob: Sara Atkins: Shakila Chaudry: Nadia Hanley: Hadley Newlove: Chris Bell: Nick Butson: Nick West.

THE SILVER SWORD



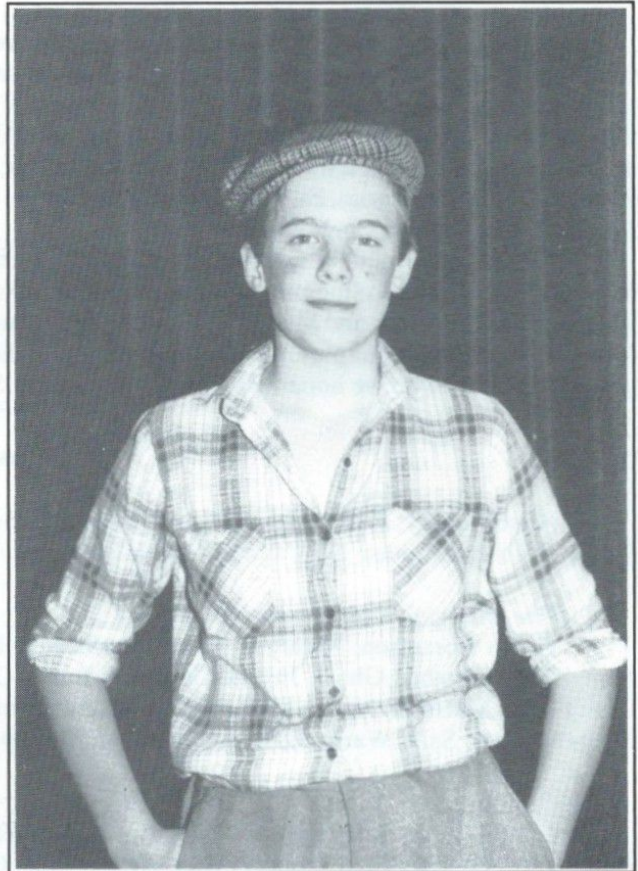
RUTH (Alison Soper)



BRONIA (Michelle Cowan)



JAN (Matthew Butterworth)



EDEK (Alex Rodgers)

OCTOBER 1989



NARRATOR (Leanne Basso)



NARRATOR (Louise Borg)



THE CAST

(Photos: J. H. Thomson)

HOUSE PLAY FESTIVAL 1990

Once again we were very fortunate that Mr. and Mrs. Lowe accepted the invitation to adjudicate the House Plays this year on March 29th and 30th. Their report follows below:

GASKELL HOUSE

The 1990 season of House Plays got off to a very promising start with Gaskell's production of "Out for the Count", by Martin Downing - a melodrama set in a lunatic asylum, with characters as varied as an Irish Cook, a German professor and a sinister Count. Effective use was made of the whole stage to give a realistic indoor set which allowed for free movement throughout the play, but before this was revealed the mood had been established by some effective atmospheric music and a dense black-out. The opening exchanges between Jonathan Farquhar (played by Mark Levy) and his fiancée, the daughter of the house, Mina Sewer (Holly Smart) revealed that all was not well between them (with kisses rationed to one a month!) but it would have been more helpful to the audience if they could have taken this opening dialogue more slowly. The entrance of cousin Lucy (Rachel Roden) was also a little too rushed, but once she settled down she made an effective contrast to Mina, while forwarding the plot with the news of the impending visit of a Count. The arrival of Bridget the Cook (forcefully played by Cemil Elegi) in hot pursuit of the insectivorous inmate Rennet (David Horner) immediately brought the play to life; Bridget was a figure straight out of pantomime, equipped with strong Irish accent, a menacing rolling pin and an uncontrollable head-scarf while Rennet was an effectively creepy creature with his eager anticipation of the arrival of The Master.

The domestic background expanded with the entrance of Dr. Arthur Sewer (played by Mario Constantinou with a quiet dignity) and his wife Constance (Jennie Roden); their conversation was spiced with some deliberately corny jokes, and if these fell a little flat the fault was due to a lowering of voice at critical moments - if you're hoping for a laugh from the audience you must give them a fair chance of hearing the punch line!

The arrival of Professor Hertz Van Hyer (played by Roberto Lavorini) brought more pace to the action - he looked appropriately dignified, made good use of gesture, and managed his Germanic accent with some style as he warned the Sewers of the impending visit by a vampire-in-Count's-clothing. After a very stylishly dressed family gathering for pre-prandial drinks, the melodrama took off with the arrival of Count Nolyard himself, appropriately heralded by a total black-out and a rushing wind. The Count was well played by Jarrod Bull, who exuded a sinister charm, heightened by effective make-up, which immediately caused differing reactions from the other members of the household - hostility from Jonathan, adoration from Rennet and infatuation from Lucy and Mina. Once again, the appearance of Bridget and her altercation with the Count over his apparent distaste for her cooking added both pace and humour to the situation which now developed more rapidly as jealousy between the girls heightened, the Professor returned with more specific warning of the danger and the Count received the admiration of both girls and Rennet. The team-work of the cast throughout was excellent, apart from a tendency to rush key speeches; the Count himself held the stage well and maintained an impressive presence especially in the proposal scene with Mina and in his long speech on the perils of being a vampire. The confrontation between the Count and the Professor was well handled and the play worked up to a satisfying climax of fisticuffs, black-outs, wolf howls, chases, more corny jokes - with Bridget appropriately having the last word, with the offer of "a quick bite!"

Altogether the production was very successful - comic melodrama needs confidence, timing and a good sense of contrast, and all these qualities had been brought out by the producer Jarrod Bull and his cast.

WHITWORTH HOUSE

Whitworth's production of "The Alternative Fawlty Towers" was a brave effort by a young cast, but even the introduction of the word "alternative" could not banish all memories of the original and inevitably comparisons came to mind, however unfairly! Sybil's opening phone-chat was not entirely audible, but once she got into her stride and her laugh (not unlike the noise of a badly-tuned chain-saw), Kathryn McKinnon revealed a good stage presence and an intimidating edge to her voice. Daniel Marsh had the unenviable task of taking on the John Cleese role, and he certainly made an excellent stab at conveying some of the contorted body-language which is so much a part of the Basil Fawlty make-up, but one missed the "double-takes", the blank stares of sheer incomprehension, the slow dawn of a vague understanding that are also part of the character. Undoubtedly television, with its use of close-up, has a clear advantage in conveying some of these nuances, and the "live" actor must be prepared to adopt a larger-than-life approach to get them across, even at the risk of "hamming" up the part. That said, Marsh managed his opening scene with the pompously pedantic guest, Mr. Hutchison very well, he had a clear physical advantage in that the positioning of the Reception Desk meant that Mr. Hutchinson, (played by Peter Cohen) had his back to the audience for much of the time, so that some of his words were lost including part of the discussion on "Ps" and "Bs" which involved another guest, Mr. Walt (Stewart Shimberg). These two came into their own once the action moved from the apron stage into the dining room on the main stage where they were joined by fellow guests with somewhat unrewarding walk-on sit-down parts - the Major (Perry Warren), Miss Tibbs (Chris Heys) and Miss Gatsby (Alok Jha). The two lady guests, elegantly dressed and hatted, sat apparently totally oblivious to the mounting mayhem going on around them - surely some reaction might have been appropriate from time to time?

David Kemp had clearly made a close study of the Spanish waiter, Manuel, and cleverly captured his rabbit-like scuttle, his look of total incomprehension, and his incomprehensible language. This was a very promising performance, while Sally Dickin's portrayal of the waitress, Polly, brought some clarity and sanity to a scene of growing disorder as Basil shuttled between the tables where Mr. Hutchinson had difficulty in ordering, and getting, the right meal, and Mr. Walt had problems with his wine and his cigarette! Tables were switched, guests were unceremoniously dumped, bottles opened (with effectively prolonged struggles), forks were jabbed in tender spots - indeed, the underlying violence which is another part of the Fawlty way of life was well brought out in the production, down to the final custard-pie routine. Throughout all this, Daniel Marsh received good support from the rest of the cast as his moods changed from sweet reasonableness via fawning anxiety to open brutality towards the supposed Hotel Inspector - until the genuine triumvirate (Neil Armitage, Andrew Roche and Duncan Streeter) made their (very) brief appearance at the end. It was a very brave effort, with some excellent moments which the audience fully appreciated.

DALTON HOUSE

"The Day They Shot John Lennon" by John Mehwe

After a usefully informative introduction the play opened with the cast lined up before a bare but effective set - two wooden benches and a graffiti-covered wall. Quickly the formal line broke up into separate groups, each of which quickly established an identity, covering a wide spectrum of American society. These were the man and woman in their 30's, part of the 1960's generation with memories of Woodstock and flower power; there were three high-school kids experiencing the pangs of grief and young love; two Vietnam war 'vets' bitter with a grudge against society; and an ill-assorted couple - a black, street-wise youngster and a confused 70 year old man. What had brought this oddly assorted group together was grief at the murder of John Lennon, the sense of an end of an era, a morbid curiosity, and, in the case of the 'vets', an opportunity for easy pickings.

The cast very quickly established themselves in their different roles. Costume helped to suggest class and background, but each established a rapport with the audience by clear enunciation, good eye-contact and effective body movement, while within each separate grouping the contrasting personalities were rapidly established. Maneet Kapoor as Larry, armed with a massive ghettoblaster, moved and spoke with a lively cockiness that contrasted sharply with Andrew Goodwin's very well observed 70 year old Morris, a lonely old man delighted to be part of a crowd. The interplay between these two was a real pleasure to watch, accompanied as it was by such differences in movement. Gail Hepburn as Fran and Jeff Greenfield as Brian took longer to establish themselves as the products of the 1960's - Fran, the apparently tough feminist, Brian the quieter, more passive partner - but as the play progressed their characters emerged more clearly, with Fran finally revealing her true strength in her denunciation of the would-be pick-pockets. Of the two Vietnam war 'vets', Iain Brassell as Silvio gave a very strong performance, suggesting both his bitterness and his eagerness to get his own back on society; by comparison James Goodall's Gately was quieter and more passive, and obviously far less bitter - but his very quietness and stillness were impressive. The same "positively negative" quality was noticeable in Richard Swerdlow's portrayal of Mike, the sensitive 16 year old lad who had joined Sally (Stephanie Tabner) and her ex-boyfriend Kevin (David Greer) in their bewilderment of grief and their attempts to relate Lennon's death to their own lives. The three were well contrasted, with Sally's passionate and eloquent outbursts contrasting with Kevin's more down reactions, while Mike suffered quietly, devastated by the thought that "Yesterday - Everything was perfect".

Visually the production depended on a constantly changing pattern of groupings, with black-outs providing breaks between one set of characters and another; this was done very slickly by the lighting crew while the cast played its part by making full use of the acting areas, and remaining perfectly still when not in action. This was disciplined acting of the very highest order clearly the result of thoughtful production and long and careful rehearsal. Towards the end of the play the various groups merge into one until Gately breaks his long-held restraint with his plea that "whether we like it or not we should do something" - and quietly the groups disperse with new or strengthened relationships into an unknown but not entirely hopeless future. This was a moving end to a very powerful and successful production.

FRASER HOUSE

The second night of the competition began with Fraser's production of Act I of "Billy Liar" by Willis Hall and Keith Waterhouse. The mood was set with good atmospheric music, and after a pleasantly welcoming introduction the curtain opened to reveal a well-furnished set, with Florence Boothroyd (played by Richard Mattison) burbling away to herself on the settee placed on the apron stage. This opening speech was clearly delivered, and she managed a convincing arthritic hobble as she crossed the stage. With the entrance of Billy's mother, Alice Fisher, (played by Louise Borg) and his father Geoffrey (Omar Islam), the "ordinariness" of the domestic background was firmly established - although while Geoffrey had been suitably aged, Alice retained an enviably youthful appearance!

But costume and movements were convincing and the dialogue (with Grandma providing her own commentary) was taken at a good pace, and was always audible. With the entrance of Billy (played by Paul Tweed) the pace quickened still further with his heavily sarcastic "interpretations" of his grandmother's comments. Here, perhaps, his father could have become much more positive - monotonously meaningless as his "bloodies" might be, they deserved a little more emphasis as his anger increased. It was not long before Billy, goaded by parental disapproval, began to weave the first of his fantasies - his escape to London to become a script-writer - a dream that he elaborates on when left alone with his grandmother.

At this point the effective use of lighting gave greater emphasis to his imaginary world peopled with an art-student in an Espresso bar and a father with amputated legs! Tweed's voice, movements and facial expressions were excellently varied in these moments of visionary escape - as they were during his conversation with his friend Arthur Crabtree, well played by Daniel Guthrie, who called to warn him of trouble, not so much "at t'mill" as at the office where the absence of Billy and the stamp money had been noticed. This was a lively and entertaining scene which brought out even more details about Billy's vivid imagination and his various romantic entanglements. His problem with the unposted Christmas calendars was revealed (on a somewhat reduced scale!), but once again he shied away from possible consequences as he contemplated the glittering career that lay ahead of him in London. Guthrie's support for Tweed was vigorous and well-sustained, and contributed greatly to the pace of the production. The arrival of Barbara, played by Anna Heaton, posed fresh problems for Billy as assorted chickens looked likely to come home to roost - an unguarded mention of a non-existent sister led to a partial confession of "exaggerations", but he also had to find an opportunity to slip a passion-pill into her drink and satisfy her more passive desire with a lyrical description of their dream cottage! In many ways Barbara is a difficult role to play - so unexciting that she deserves and gets a "booster-dose" of passion pills, and is much happier peeling an orange and spurning Billy's tentative advances - but perhaps a little more comic business could have helped. When she retires to repair her "sticky paws" Billy has to take an awkward phone call from his irate employer, but the act ends with the defiant claim that "some of us belong in the stars" as Billy is once again lost in his world of fantasy. This made a good end to a production (by Omar Islam) that had pace, variety, audibility, and above all, a good grasp of character.

HEYWOOD HOUSE

Even before Heywood's production of "The Deterrent" by Charles Mander started, expectations were raised by the appearance of the highly imaginative and appropriate programme. These hopes were immediately confirmed as the play began with Muriel Flinch (Matthew Booth) hoovering the carpet, with her mind and an eye clearly on other things - her tenseness and her nervous glances towards the closed, angled door immediately created the right atmosphere, and this was heightened by the business with the meat-on-the-broomstick. From the beginning, Booth refrained from "camping up" the part - neatly dressed and coiffed, he moved easily and naturally, and above all made every gesture count. When Joseph Flinch (Richard Avery) entered, the physical contrast was well brought out as he made his headlong dash for the chair in front of the television set; his facial expressions as it slowly dawned on him that the set was not working were a joy to watch. From then on the relationships and personalities of the two were clearly brought out at a spanking pace as the distressed Muriel tried to get through to her telly-besotted husband that they had a (growing) problem on their hands! The dialogue of cross-purposes was very well handled, Joseph's almost manic despair and frustration contrasted well with Muriel's growing anxiety, while the "business" which led up to Joseph's realisation of what really lay behind the door was handled skilfully to the accompaniment of ever-increasing off-stage noise. When Joseph typically blamed Muriel for being "casual", Muriel's self-control broke, and in a well sustained tirade she finally revealed the fate of "the Lad". As an example of "black comedy" at its best, Muriel's reluctance to have the dog put down was very well suggested, while Joseph as usual sheltered behind his wife's name when he rang for the vet, as he had done earlier when he rang the T.V. repair shop. Muriel's accusation that there was more evil in "the box" than in their "defenceless animal" roused Joseph to a paroxysm of eye-rolling horror as he protectively shielded the T.V. from possible harm. The appearance of Harry the repair man (forcefully played by Iain Drayton, with a nice line in asides to the audience) was unfortunately brief, as he was mistaken for the vet and shown through the fatal door, with yet another outburst of off-stage noise.

The appearance of the real vet, played by Andrew Babicki, was sensational in every sense - tweed-suited, deer-stalker-hatted and glitteringly ear-ringed (a master stroke of detail!), he held the stage as an archetypal "butch" lady of-uncertain-age as she proceeded to bully Muriel, have a furious row with Joseph on the folly of television, and engage in "crossed-lines" dialogue on the death of "the little fellow", before proceeding to her professional duties. Her absence off stage lasted only a few seconds; "noises-off" went into overdrive, and her re-appearance in a somewhat dishevelled state was beautifully timed. It says much for the team-work of the three principals that through all this Booth and Avery held their own, never slipping out of character for a moment. The vet's admiration for the beast reached a level of ecstasy which in another context might well be called earth-moving, yet Babicki never allowed his performance to go over the top. His departure was immediately followed by the arrival of the Second Tele Man (Peter Gallagher, who maintained the high standard of the whole production) whose skilful use of a mallet restored the set to life. To a growing pandemonium off-stage and to the ominous bulging of the front room door which Muriel tried in vain to block, Joseph sat entranced before the set as the play came to a very effective, dramatically-lit end.

The final touch in a highly competent and imaginative production was a curtain-call which included one (very

minute) dog and two (very hoarse) "barkers", Jonathan Kay and Martin Barnes.

Mention must also be made of a very well-designed set which gave the audience an uninterrupted view of the fatal door, while keeping the "all important" television set constantly before our eyes.

BYROM HOUSE

The competition ended with Byrom's production of Willy Russell's "Our Day Out", co-directed by Jennifer Hassard and Olivia Baker, and produced by Matthew Grey. It was a bold choice, for the cast includes a number of unruly children, while the action is episodic, covering locations as varied as school, 'bus, zoo, castle and sea-side. It says much for the production that not only was the "story-line" held in spite of the inevitable breaks in continuity, but also that the characters were allowed to develop. Mrs. Kay (played by Rebecca Slate) is the idealistic teacher taking the Progress Class on a day out to Conway Castle, an expedition viewed with some misgivings not only by her Headmaster (played with quiet dignity and understanding by William Seddon) but also by Mr. Briggs (Matthew Grey) whose views on discipline and child-management are poles apart from those of his colleague. As the class assembles for the 'bus journey one can understand his fears - the pupils are noisy and excited, and even the driver (dourly played by Rick Hulse) expects the worst until won over by Mrs. Kay's skilful playing on his emotions. Already one pupil in particular, Carl (Matthew Sowerby) has revealed himself as an unenthusiastic member of the party, not even sure of the intended destination. So with the scene set, and the characters nicely established, the 'bus sets off.

The 'bus journey was handled well on the full stage; the "indiscipline" of the class had, in fact, a great deal of discipline behind it as it never got out of hand, although it inevitably distracted the audience's attention away from the principal characters. The sympathetic relationship between Carl and Mrs. Kay was developed as Carl spoke of the miseries of his Pilot Street background, while Mr. Briggs tried in vain to impose a stricter discipline at the back of the 'bus while showing something of his own enthusiasm for local history - and dismally failing to impart it to the class. Even in his exchanges with Andrews (played with appropriate cockiness by Ian Cope) on the evils of smoking, Briggs shows an inability to comprehend the background from which the children come. As Colin (Alex Rodgers) an assistant teacher, tries to explain to Briggs, "Mrs. Kay likes kids", a philosophy that Briggs finds incomprehensible. But Mrs. Kay refuses to be dominated by Briggs - she arranges the stops for the toilet and the zoo (although the latter was not entirely successful!) and while Briggs fails yet again to impress the children with his enthusiasm for the architecture of the castle, Mrs. Kay listens to the boys' reaction to its beauty - "If all this belonged to us we'd look after it. Defend it. D'y'know what I mean, Miss?"

It is Briggs' tactless interruption of this conversation that sparks off the row that has been brewing since the trip started - it was unfortunate that Mrs. Kay's anger erupted at this point into shrillness and a tendency to gabble, as she had previously held her own with quiet dignity. With the disappearance of Carl, the dramatic tension rises - his misery at the thought of returning to the horrors of Pilot Street lead him to the cliff-top and the threat of suicide. When he is eventually discovered by Briggs, the struggle for supremacy between them was very well handled - the stubborn refusal of the boy to be brow-beaten eventually forcing from the teacher an unaccustomed but heart-felt "Please". Matthew Grey managed to suggest that this was indeed a turning point for Mr. Briggs, with his almost scrooge-like conversion to jollity and his proposal that they visit the fair. It was left to Carl, as he returned to the harsh world of reality, to ask "Why can't it always be like that?"

Taking into account the difficult staging involved and the number of supernumerary characters required, this was a commendable effort, held together by Grey's performance.

The judges would like to thank the School for allowing them to share in another House Play Competition. We were impressed with the care that had been taken in all the productions, not only as far as the acting was concerned, but also in details such as costume, jewellery and make-up. As always, the back-stage crews did a splendid job in creating manageable sets, while the lighting crew worked over-time on their split-second timing of black-outs and special effects. Care had obviously been taken over the preparation of programmes (with Heywood's deserving a special mention!) and the established tradition of introducing each play added to the pleasantly relaxed atmosphere in the New Hall - whatever mayhem may have been going on back-stage! Music, too, played its part, not only the "live" variety between productions, but also the skilful choice of suitably atmospheric music to introduce individual plays.

After two very enjoyable evenings and a week-end of, at times, heated discussion, we placed the Houses in the following order:-

- (1) Heywood
- (2) Dalton
- (3=) Fraser & Gaskell
- (5=) Whitworth & Byrom

The winner of the individual acting award was Andrew Babicki for his performance of the Vet in Heywood's "The Deterrent".

Our warmest congratulations to all who were involved on or off stage.

Jean and Chris Lowe.

MUSIC

MUSIC NEWS 1989 - 1990

Associated Board News

The year has been a thin one for entries for the Music Examinations of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. The following were successful during the year:

Grade 1	Neville Clemetson (clarinet)
Grade 2	Geoffrey Barraclough, Rebecca Kingston (clarinet) Andrew Chance, James Seddon (piano)
Grade 3	Kathryne Arran (tenor horn) Jonathan Bratt (trombone) Nicholas Ghazi (trumpet) Debra Mosley (clarinet)
Grade 4	Michael Brook (tenor horn)
Grade 6	Cemil Egeli (theory)

In addition to the 'official' list of entries above, quite a number of pupils have private tuition outside School and have also passed these examinations.

It is hoped that the '90-'91 year will be more productive in bringing forward more candidates for examination. It may even be possible again to have enough to bring an examiner to the School.

Music Day News

In November a new venture took place. A Musical Instrument retailer was invited to the School to display instruments and to talk about them to the First Year pupils. One or two of our visiting teachers were also able to attend during the afternoon. On the day in question we waited patiently but our supplier did not turn up. He was caught in an enormous traffic jam and couldn't even phone in a message! In spite of this rather major setback, Mr. Tillier (clarinet teacher), Mr. Martin (piano teacher) and Mr. Goodwin (brass teacher) worked hard explaining and demonstrating the various instruments that we were able to show from School stock. Quite a number of pupils have since obtained instruments and have started lessons. The idea will be repeated, for the new intake, in November 1990.

Competition News

The House Music Competition which took place in March was won by Fraser House. The standard of performance continues to rise in spite of a general lethargy about the event as a whole. The adjudicators, Mr. C. H. Martin and Mr. C. Jagger were reasonably satisfied with the overall standard and with certain individual items in particular.

The Junior Music Competition was won by IB. Mrs. Shaw, who adjudicated on this occasion, awarded special performance prizes to Andrew Chance 2A (piano), Elisabeth Keable 2B (clarinet), Mark Kelly 2D (violin), Debra Mosley 1B (clarinet) and Richard Strudwick 1C (tuba).

D. A. Bamforth

CHRISTMAS CONCERT AND CAROLS IN ST. ANN'S CHURCH

This year's Christmas Concert, held in the Upper Hall on December 18th, was as full of variety as of seasonal cheer. The Choir sang in well-balanced harmony six carols ranging from Joubert's energetic "Torches" to John Rutter's delicate setting of the "Sans Day Carol" - my personal favourite was the lusty, life-affirming "Gloucestershire Wassail" arranged by Vaughan Williams. The Band gave us four sparkling numbers, ranging from Mozart's "Sleigh Ride" to popular favourites from "The Sound of Music"; then it split forces into Seniors and Juniors for further items - a rich Italian baroque "Ricercar" and, in sharp contrast, the "Mango Walk to Linstead Market" by the Senior Group (M. Russell, J. Samuels, V. Cooke and Mr. Goodwin), and three pieces by the Juniors including the ever-popular "Trumpet Voluntary" and Tombey's "Eye Level", reminding older members of the audience of the T.V. series "Van der Falk" in the seventies.

It was a pleasure to hear so many fine soloists too. Michael Clark played a Haydn Fantasia with real sensitivity, avoiding that mechanical soullessness into which renditions of eighteenth century music can so easily fall. This is even more true of Bach's unaccompanied cello suites - Simon Ogier's interpretation of his Prelude in G showed not only great mastery of technique but also a deep spiritual intensity. Cemil Egeli brought a placid serenity to his playing of the slow movement from Bach's A minor single violin concerto. By contrast, Victor Cooke's virtuoso "Firefly"

trombone solo can only be described as dazzling, and Michael Hope played two beautiful clarinet solos - some dark, reflective Brahms and Lutoslawski's "Dance Prelude".

The String Group, conducted by Mr. C. Jagger, played three delightful pieces in sharply differentiated styles (a Bourrée by Telemann, Lichner's "Contemplation" and a Prelude by Rathgeber), which were a great joy to listen to.

The Music was punctuated by four appropriate secular readings. Iain Drayton read Louis Macneice's "Prayer before Birth" with heartfelt thoughtfulness, and Richard Avery's Christmas letter from the trenches in 1914 made us realise the deepest values behind the festive season - he spoke almost with awe of that incredible truce in no-man's-land. Two of our vivacious junior girls reduced us to laughter by their effervescent wit, Amanda Jones with Ogden Nash's cautionary tale about "The Boy who laughed at Santa Claus", and Olivia Dunbar as the flustered nagging mother of a naughty infant in Pam Ayres' "Don't Start".

It was a pity that illness prevented the choir's four-part consort (Hadley Newlove, Neil Haggerty, Nick Taylor and Mark Brandreth) from delivering its four prepared carols at this Concert. Fortunately, however, the Small Group did sing at our annual lunch-time service at St. Ann's Church in the centre of Manchester, where many of the Choir's items described above were also performed. Two old favourites, "Deck the Hall" and "Away in a Manger" were given fresh life by their interesting harmonies, and two unfamiliar carols by Marks, "A Caroling We Go" in sprightly 6/8 time, and "Joyous Christmas", were buoyant and refreshing. We had two readings at St. Ann's, Iain Drayton's Macneice again, plus Alison Soper reading George Herbert's lovely mystical "Love bade me welcome".

It is sometimes said that we do not give enough attention to the Christmas spirit at William Hulme's. This is certainly not true where the School's Music is concerned!

G. J. Turner

MARCH CONCERT 1990

The band, conducted by Mr Goodwin, opened the concert with three well-known pieces, "Gaudeamus igitur", "Say, Say, Say" and an arrangement of "Land of Hope and Glory". Even though the audience enjoyed the performance, it was merely a prelude for what was to come.

The concert saw many début solo performances; Peter Kidd (viola), Geoffrey Barraclough (clarinet), Andrew Chance (piano), Kathryne Arran (tenor horn), Debra Moseley (clarinet), Jonathan Lazarus (piano), Marcus Carrulli (trumpet) and Neil Haggerty (piano), all played convincingly, reflecting the musical potential of the School. There were also fine solo performances from "Old Timers" - Andrew Babicki (flute), Cemil Egeli (violin) and Michael Hope (saxophone).

Simon Ogier captured the audience with his recital of Fauré's "Elegy" Op.24; it is a difficult piece and was played with merit. Marc Ogier played Schubert's "Impromptu in C Minor" Op.90 No. 1 which is part of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music Grade VIII syllabus. Both Nicholas Taylor and Mark Brandreth sang solo pieces, marking the end of their School Music. Nicholas sang "Total Eclipse" by Handel and "O Mistress Mine" by Quilter. Mark sang "Silent Noon" by Vaughan Williams and "On My Own" from "Les Misérables" by Schoenberg.

There were three small groups featured in the concert. The Beginner Brass group played "First Sounds", "Haselmere" and an arrangement of "The Saints" by Johnson. The Brass group played Johnson's arrangement of the "Savoy Suite" and a Gilbert and Sullivan "Pot Pourri". Relatively new to the W.H.G.S. concert scene was the string group directed by Mr. C. Jagger; they played two eighteenth century country dances as well as "Song of the Reaper" by Schumann and two dances by Beethoven.

The singing group (Mark Brandreth, Nicholas Taylor and Mr. Hofton) made a comical contribution with their rendition of "Kiss me, honey baby" by Carter which brought smiles to the faces of the audience.

The Happenings possibly marked a new era in W.H.G.S. Music. Happening Number One was called "Storm at Sea" by Paul Sturman. This was performed by 2D and consisted of sound effects depicting the title. Similarly 1B performed Happening Number Two called "Journey Through The Galaxy", again by Paul Sturman. Happening Number Three was much more down to earth and was "The Moonrakers" by Malcolm Williamson. This was a song about smugglers, sung by people who usually sing in the choir. However, it called for audience participation and while the singers were singing, the audience needed to make sound effects such as the wind and horses' hoofs. The audience was amused and clearly enjoyed being part of the concert.

The hard work of the Music Department and Messrs. Bamforth and Goodwin must be gratefully acknowledged in making such an entertaining evening possible.

Cemil Egeli (L6A6)

HOUSE MUSIC COMPETITION

This year Fraser deservedly came first; they were lucky enough to have a lot of musical ability within their House as well as good organisation. They had eleven well-delivered items (two more than the minimum of nine needed). Dalton came a close second; again the house was well prepared for the competition. Third place went to Byrom, who had an entertaining programme ranging from classical to rock music, followed by Gaskell. Gaskell had a well-organised and well-presented show, but unluckily only managed to come fourth. Fifth and sixth places went to Heywood and Whitworth respectively. Heywood originally had a solid nine-item programme; however, this was altered at the last minute and led to a weak entry from the house. Likewise, Whitworth was suffering from a dire lack of organisation which resulted in many people not bothering to take part in the competition.

The final results were as follows:- out of 200 points:

Fraser	150 points
Dalton	146 points
Byrom	141 points
Gaskell	133 points
Heywood	120 points
Whitworth	95 points

The key to House Music success is organisation. If every house made the effort to put together a good show the competition would be all the more enjoyable.

Cemil Egeli (L6A6)

JUNIOR SCHOOL MUSIC FESTIVAL

4th JULY, 1990

The Music Competition started with a "bang" by 2A. Leanne Basso announced the acts in a clear voice. The first act was a simple folk tune on the recorder and the rest of the acts included Rebecca Kingston on the clarinet, and Matthew Whiteley and Andrew Chance on the piano. 2A were very well organised, there were a few hiccups in some of the acts but their presentation and organisation deserves to be praised. Next was 1A; I didn't feel it was presented well as I could hardly hear the announcer's voice. The acts for this included Caroline Ip on the recorder, a duet on the trumpet and piano which went a bit wrong, a clarinet solo and a violin solo. The tunes were unfamiliar and there were quite a few mistakes, but it was organised well, it just needed more rehearsing. 2C were next and their entry was certainly original. It started off with a medley of Nursery Rhymes followed by "the 2C band's" version of 'Hear the Drummer Get Wicked'. Effort was put in at the last minute to make up for a shaky start. After this came 2C girls' version of 'Opposites Attract'. This was also a last minute act but everyone tried; unfortunately the voices weren't very loud and everyone seemed a bit lethargic. 2C were very disorganised but they did try - even if it was two minutes before they started!

After this entry 1C was a breath of fresh air with their very well organised act. Ellen Nicholson contributed a lot to the competition: two solos, violin and clarinet, and one duet with Joshua Robinson on the clarinet. Richard Strudwick played a fast-moving tune on the tuba, which must have been quite exhausting as he went bright red. Louise Illingworth played "Whistling" on the piano which was done quite well. 1C were very good but I think their announcer could have spoken up a bit as I couldn't hear what was going on. 2B were the favourites for the competition, as they won as 1B last year. Caron Abramson presented the acts very clearly and enthusiastically. It started with 2B's version of "A Storm at Sea", very well done by Philippa Whittle, Elisabeth Keable, James White and Amanda Jones. 2B had a lot of items, a lot were done by Elisabeth Keable who appeared in a duet on the recorder accompanied by Amanda Jones, a solo on the piano, a solo on the clarinet and again on the recorder accompanied by Geoffrey Barraclough and Amanda Jones. Other acts included Dalia Daud on the flute and Philippa Whittle on the piano. 2B's entry was excellent and also very well presented by Caron.

After a short break, it was 1B's turn. The 1B 'extravaganza' (as it was called) started off with a slow and sad duet on the piano and the trombone. It was the death march and I didn't think it was a cheerful way to start but it was well played. 1B, like 2B, had a lot of items. There were a few of the tunes that I didn't know and they weren't very recognisable but familiar songs like Greensleeves (Clarinet), Walking in the air (piano) and Yesterday (trumpet) were played and were brilliantly performed. Well done!

The two remaining classes were 1D and 2D. Would they come up with something utterly brilliant to beat the quality of 2B and 1B? 2D started just with Karen Law on the clarinet; it was very well done with no mistakes but I didn't really like the tune as it was a bit too varied. 2D seemed to be slightly disorganised but they produced some good stuff. There were three solos altogether - keyboard, violin and piano and there followed a safari song which was a bit mixed up but effort was put in. Elvis Presley's "Teddy Bear" was arranged into an even more brilliant song by Tariq Djeddour, Morgan Parry and Steven Neary. To finish off 2D's entry was a fantastic finale in which the whole class gathered to sing 'I'd like to teach the world to sing'. Last but not least came 1D. 1D must have lost a lot of marks by their presenting, as the presenter was whispering and Mr. Goodwin had to keep telling the acts. To start with, there were three songs performed on the piano, none of which I caught the name of! They were all done well but I only recognised the first tune. After this came a solo on the clarinet which had a few mistakes in it. The National Anthem duet was played well. The entry came to a close with three people, one on drums, one on trumpet and one on keyboard who unfortunately couldn't get it to work! This brought the 'varied' competition to an end. It was short and sweet with hardly any mistakes and presented very well. But every class put in a good entry. Congratulations to 1B who actually won the prize.

Rebecca Baron (2C)

THE SCHOOL BAND

The School Band has once again been busy throughout the year, preparing and performing items for the Christmas and March concerts, as well as providing the music for the C.C.F. Inspection.

Unfortunately this year has seen the loss of a large number of senior members, several of whom were extremely talented and experienced, which has had an obvious effect on the overall standards of the band.

One result of this loss is that the band now has the highest number of Junior School players that I can remember in the fifteen years that I have been associated with it.

Whilst this means that the long term looks bright, there are several problems in the short term. Obviously it takes a considerable amount of time to train young players and for them to gain the experience and stamina required for what is a very physically demanding activity.

The choice of music is important; too hard and young players are frightened away, too easy and the older players become frustrated and leave!

One other major problem this year has been that of balance. We have been particularly strong in the brass section, at one time fielding nine trumpets, three trombones, two horns, a euphonium and tuba, but against one flute, one saxophone, and four clarinets this is a patently uneven contest!

Despite these problems, I have continued to enjoy working with the band, and - who knows - next year I might have six new clarinet players, or four saxes, or three flautists, or two oboes, or ?

P. Goodwin

GORTON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

The "Gorton Phil" was founded in 1854 and today it is the oldest orchestra in Manchester - older than the famous Hallé! The Society enables amateur players of a reasonable standard to play in a full orchestra. The ages of the players range from sixteen (myself, the youngest) to over sixty.

The orchestra rehearses every Sunday from 10.30 to 12.30 at Spurley Hey School in Gorton. The conductors work upon a professional basis, although some ex-players do help out now and again. These include Stephen Threlfall and Tom Bangbala who now play with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra.

Last year the Gorton Phil gave a concert at William Hulme's Grammar School. The programme included works by Bizet, a Rhapsody for solo clarinet and orchestra by Debussy and Le Cid Ballet Suite by Jules Massenet. Our conductor was David Hoult who has given concerts throughout Britain, Europe, Australia and the Far East. He also has a broadcasting career, presenting BBC's "Music for Pleasure".

There will be a concert at the school held on October 19th this year, and the traditional Christmas concert on December 8th at Stockport Town Hall.

Simon D Ogier (5X)

THE GALA CONCERT

The B.B.C.'s use of Grand Opera as an introduction to the exploits of "our lads in Italy" was a pale imitation of William Hulme's Gala Concert, held in the New Hall on the evening of April 3rd as a fund raiser for the Rugger team's tour to the United States. The Concert was given by four singers: Barbara Segal (soprano), Yvonne Howard (mezzosoprano), Jeffrey Talbot (tenor) and Christopher Blades (baritone), while the accompanist was Robin Humphreys. The fact that one of the singers is a parent of one of the boys on the squad, while the pianist is an Old Hulmeian, gave the occasion a "family connection" which in no way detracted from a thoroughly professional entertainment which delighted the audience.

The programme was very wide-ranging, from arias and duets of the classical repertoire ("Carmen", "La Traviata", Don Giovanni" for example) to songs from "South Pacific" and "The Sound of Music", with a dash of Gilbert and Sullivan for good measure. It would be impertinent for the coarsest of bath-tub warblers to comment on the musical expertise which all four singers showed. What was evident to all was the close rapport they established with each other in their various duets and their ability to communicate a range of emotions to the audience by the skilful use of gesture, facial expression and intonation. Throughout the evening Robin Humphreys provided a tactful and appropriate accompaniment - he seemed to relish his return to the scene of past triumphs on piano and organ!

The interval glass of wine added a nice "touch of the Glyndebournes" to the concert, but in all honesty the pleasures of the evening needed no "beaded bubbles" to enhance them. The applause of the audience was spontaneous and prolonged - perhaps it may tempt the artistes to pay us a return visit! We are indeed grateful to them and to the firm of Alan C. Edwards, Chartered Accountants who sponsored this very enjoyable event.

C. J. Lowe

“RUMILLAJTA”



RUMILLAJTA from Bolivia

“ I burst out laughing as soon as they entered . “

“They looked like a bunch of aborigines. They were dead good but weird. “

These were just some of the responses that greeted “Rumillajta”, a Bolivian band who generously took a break from their world-wide tour to come and entertain the W.H.G.S. Lower Sixth Form for an afternoon.

Their traditional Andean dress and looks at first mesmerized the audience but the initial unease was soon replaced by appreciation of the quality of their music.

There were five members of the group and each one individually explained his instrument’s background before proceeding to play it. Some instruments seemed familiar, for example, the “charango” (a guitarlike instrument, traditionally made from the shell of an armadillo) and the “quena” (an end-blown bamboo flute) but some were unusual, for example the “chaj chas” (a percussion instrument consisting of numerous llama and sheep hooves twisted together) and the “Zamponas” (pan-pipes of various sizes, some of which measure over five feet long) . At last they gave a short concert performance involving the audience who were at first slightly perplexed by their broken English, until Mr. Bull stepped in with his knowledge of Spanish.

The pupils received the performance with rapturous applause, although their unique culture came as a shock to one boy who was totally overwhelmed .

Thanks must go to Mr. Bull for obtaining the band at such short notice, and although their scarce knowledge of English did cause a problem, their musical talent overcame this barrier; as Mr . Shaw said, “Music is a universal language”.

A . Redstone (L6L)

R . Lavorini (L6L)

CHARITIES WEEK, MARCH 1st - 9th 1990

A personal involvement by one of the members of the Sixth Form with the leukaemia disease influenced the Prefect body to direct this year's charity endeavours once again towards Christie's Hospital. Dr. Scarfe of the Leukaemia Research Unit came to talk to the prefects and outlined some of the details of the work which he and his colleagues were engaged in. It was suggested that the money raised should be funnelled into three different channels: some would go towards research, some to updating the ward's computer system and some towards purchasing expensive portable medication pumps. The address to the pupils then followed to describe the problems of the disease, and to explain what we as a school could do to help mitigate the inevitable suffering which such an illness causes. This done, Charities' Week began.

The events and activities which took place were as usual both varied and ingenious. The staff dared to take on the might and ability of the prefects in three different sporting extravaganzas - hockey, darts and football. Aided by luck and aggressive tactics in the hockey and simply outclassing their opponents in the darts, owing to the likes of the vastly more experienced Messrs. Jones and Dunn, the staff pulled off surprise victories. However, despite the underhand attempts of the staff to augment their chances of winning in the football by introducing a near professional goalkeeper to replace Mr. Sharp, justice was done as the prefects administered a sound thrashing of 3-2.

Once again there was ample opportunity to eat copious amounts of food with an easy conscience, as the tuck shop and hot dog stalls flourished. At the same time avenging pupils and teachers alike could enjoy the privilege of drenching their chosen prefect by sponge or bucket for a small fee. This year also saw an unprecedented increase in the number of musical ventures. Ben Smith undertook two sponsored guitar plays; the Authentic Innovation, a group of talented Sixth Formers, performed a jazz concert; and three members of staff, Messrs. Bennett, Thomson and Harrison, kitted out in hideous wigs and scandalous seventies attire and professing to be the Jimi Higginbottom Experience, revealed wild alter egos as they assaulted the ears of an unsuspecting audience.

Other activities included an auction of assorted lost valuables and film posters kindly donated by Mr. Greenall, a display indoor Lacrosse match between a selected bunch of the School's 1st X and Withington Girls and a 'sponsored sport' conducted by the Sixth Form.

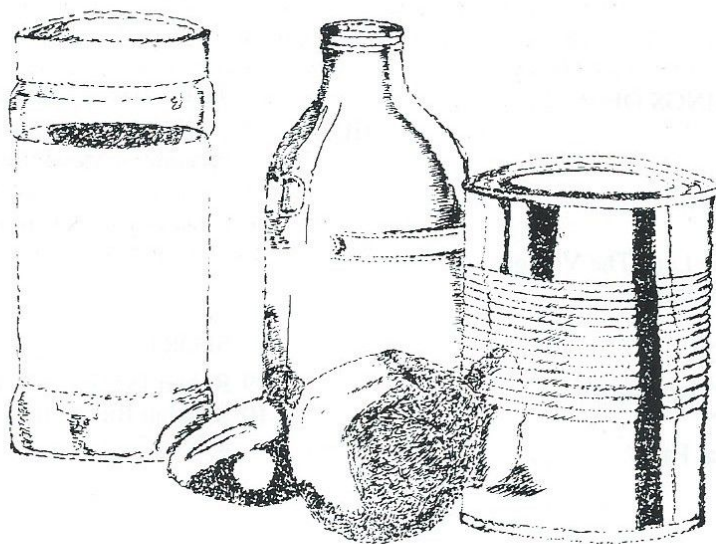
The most important event of the week was of course the sponsored walk. Although a blustery day, fortunately there was no accompanying rain, and almost the entire School turned out to march around Chorlton Water Park and back. The walk was covered by the local press which took particular interest in a small number of Junior School girls who decided to hobble round the course in three-legged fashion.

Our special thanks go again to the Junior School, who succeeded in contributing most, in terms both of money and of ideas. The market of stalls in the Old Hall provided Charities' Week with its traditional jovial atmosphere, and some outstanding individual endeavours sought to encourage the whole School. William Faulkner deserves particular attention. Not content with last year's ten hour sit in a shopping trolley, he decided to repeat the process in a large container of cold porridge, and singlehandedly raised £300. This greatly boosted 2B's total and meant that they retained the Junior Charities Shield.

Collecting the money in is always a long and difficult process. Slowly and surely, however, it trickled in, and was duly counted and banked under the watchful eyes of Iain Drayton and Jeremy Griffiths. The collections which had taken place on Founder's Day and throughout Charities' Week, along with the sales of various items of stationery, increased the grand total to a sum of £9500 which was presented to the hospital in Senior Assembly.

My thanks go to Ashley Reece and Andrew Haffner for producing an excellent and at times amusing Charities Magazine, and indeed to all the prefects for their invaluable help and efforts. A big "thank-you" must also go to Mr. Loveland and Mr. Veevers for their assistance with publicity, and particularly for their involvement with the success of the walk. But most of all may I express my gratitude to all the pupils and their families for their superb enthusiasm in raising money for this most worthy cause.

Andrew Edwards (U6C)



Daniel Wilks 5X

NEW-STYLE ASSEMBLY READINGS

In the Midsummer Term this year, the Head Master decided to diversify the readings in Assembly. Instead of just Bible readings, excerpts from secular works were read, based each week around a different theme. These ranged from the horrors of the First World War and the Aberfan disaster to Chris Bonnington and Sir Matt Busby of Manchester United. We hope that students appreciate the more varied fare, and we are continuing along the same lines next term.

G J Turner

ASSEMBLY READINGS - MIDSUMMER TERM 1990

THE INEQUALITY OF WEALTH

- APRIL 24 Sartre "Les Mains Sales"
25 Tolstoy "Resurrection"
27 Tennessee Williams "Night of the Iguana"

THE DEVIL AND HELL

- MAY 30 R H Lloyd "Graduation Day in Hell"
2 C S Lewis "Screwtape Letters"
4 Job 1, 1-12

CIVIL RIGHTS

- 9 Lincoln, Gettysburg Address
11 Martin Luther King "I have a Dream"

THE HORRORS OF WAR

- 14 Kurt Vonnegut "Slaughterhouse Five"
18 Wilfred Owen "Dulce et decorum est"

YOUTH AND AGE

- 21 Shakespeare "The Seven Ages of Man"
23 Goethe "Time the Coachman"
25 Ecclesiastes 12, 1-7

RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

- JUNE 5 Robert Bolt "A Man For All Seasons"
6 Voltaire "Candide"
15 The Salem Witch Hunt. Miller "The Crucible"

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHILDREN

- 18 Brecht "The Children's Crusade"
20 Dostoyevsky "The Brother Karamazov"
22 Aberfan. Laurie Lee "The Village that lost its Children"

PROPAGANDA

- 25 Solzhenitsyn "The First Circle"
27 Orwell "1984"
29 Orwell "Animal Farm"



Rebecca Slate tells us about the physically handicapped former American golfer Robert Tyre Jones learning to "play the ball from where it lies".

(Photo: G. J. Turner)

THE CHALLENGE OF NATURE

- JULY 2 Chris Bonnington. Rowland Purton "Climbing Mountains"
4 Captain Scott's Last Diary
6 Chay Blyth "The Impossible Voyage"

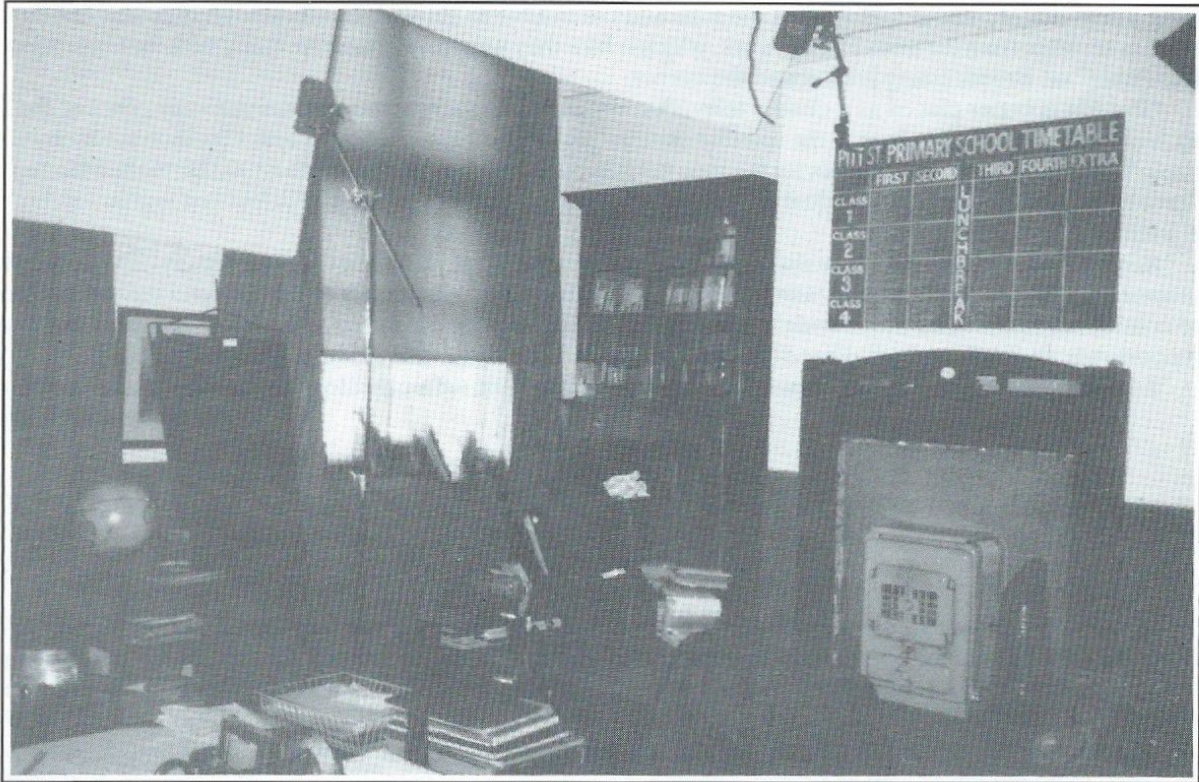
SPORT

- 9 Robert Tyre Jones. Alistair Cooke "America"
10 Sir Matt Busby. Rowland Purton "Building a Team"

"GBH"

During the week July 9-13 (which overlapped the end of term), the Old Hall, Room 7 and later Room 36 were invaded by Channel 4 for the filming of Alan Bleasdale's television play "GBH", featuring Julie Walters and Michael Palin, to be televised some time in the first half of 1991. Our own students were not involved, but it gave us all an insight into how television films are made, from the plethora of ladders, lights on stands, etc., outside Room 7 to the need for total silence in the filming area, by the side of which our "No talking after the second bell" rule pales into insignificance! We all look forward to seeing our own surroundings on TV next year.

G J Turner



A new look for Room 7! (Photo: G. J. Turner)



Two keen autograph hunters (Melissa and Georgia) persuade Julie Walters to write something for them during the filming of "GBH" (Photo: G. J. Turner)

"IN CONFERENCE" AT GRANADA TELEVISION

In January, Matthew Phillips and I were invited to Granada's main studios in the centre of Manchester, after I had written to them asking for details of some aspects of their output. To our surprise, when we arrived, we were greeted by the head of presentation, the head of promotions and the head of graphic design. Basically, these people are responsible for Granada's on-screen identity. We had our questions at the ready and they were all answered in some detail. The head of presentation, Mr. David Black, was very interested in our opinions on Granada's range of programmes and explained how most of the people watching the channel don't even know which region they're in, and how most people refer to it as ITV, which is the company's name, or worse yet, Channel 3! He also said how pleasing it was that we had actually taken the time and the trouble to gather our information together, and to treat Granada as separate from the main ITV network, which is how they want to be seen, especially with the Government's "White Paper" on Broadcasting just around the corner.

Granada is better placed as a quality television contractor to survive the nineties than any other of the ITV companies, with its having a share in the satellite company BSB. Granada pioneered better food on the motorways. Its tenpin bowls have set new standards for the industry. Granada have made sale worth \$100,000 to the Middle East, and have made a \$200,000 two-way deal with Spain. So their claim that they make 'Television worth watching' is truly justified.

Recent events have made us realise that Granada are more than just a television company. They do believe in customer relations, as a few weeks later, Matthew and I were invited back once more, to spend the entire evening in the control room, the heart of Granada's operations. We felt very privileged to be there, and I would like to take this opportunity formally to thank David Black for those two occasions and for his continued support.

To say that we enjoyed ourselves would be an under-statement; we are thrilled to have had such an experience.

Jonathan Lazarus (4L)

MY YEAR AT W.H.G.S.

One year has passed since I arrived in Manchester to do a second year as a foreign language assistante. Time has flown past and as I am writing I am getting ready to go back to France to resume my studies. Most of my luggage is already packed. Though I am looking forward to seeing Alsace, my relatives and my friends, I am sad to leave Manchester.

I spent such a good year at William Hulme's Grammar School. I enjoyed my work with the Sixth Formers very much. I tried to do my job as well as I could, keeping the subjects of conversations varied, helping to prepare them for their examinations. We got on well together, as most of them are eager to improve their spoken French. For me this work was very interesting and rewarding. I hope they enjoyed it as much as I did and benefited from it. They will have a new assistante next year and I am sure they will make the most of it. I wish them all the best for their French 'A' Level next year.

Compared to the Sixth Form College I was at last year, I much preferred William Hulme's Grammar School. It was the first time ever I came to an independent school and I discovered something completely different from what I was used to. I am myself from a rather poor background and I always attended French state schools. Though there is a certain formality in a grammar school - uniforms, assembly which is undeniably part of the school system in Britain, there is nothing "stiff" about the life within the premises. The pupils work in a good atmosphere, they get on well with their teachers, their efforts and their work are praised. They also have plenty of opportunities to get involved in many activities within or outside the School. The parents are also closely involved in the school life and the teachers keep in very close touch with them. I would have loved to have the opportunity to attend such a school when I was younger. I may have done better or may have put my expectations much higher had I had such a schooling. From my own experience, I can tell how lucky the pupils of William Hulme's are to be in such a good school, though some of them may not be aware of it.

When I look back on this year, I also notice that there is a very friendly and informal atmosphere within the School which I didn't witness in the schools I was at in France. Teachers and pupils take part in many activities, they value the time to speak together. I got on very well with quite a few members of staff and I thank them very much for making my year so enjoyable. People in the North are much more friendly than in the Midlands where I worked last year. They smile more readily, they are more generous and outgoing. I enjoyed this year in Manchester very much. Though at the beginning I was a bit afraid of living in a big town, I discovered that it can be a very good experience. There is so much to do and to see. Manchester has got a very rich cultural life (museums, cinemas, theatres) and I made the most of it. Now that I am leaving I realise how lucky I have been to end up in the Language Department at William Hulme's where I could work in such a good atmosphere. There are quite a lot of things I will miss about the School and about my work.

But I cannot say I will miss English food a lot! Though there are some good things, I have never taken to British chips or milk in tea. I must concede that I may be biased but I much prefer French food with our wider range of cheese and wine.

Isabelle Rué,
French Assistante.

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTIONS

CEMETERY

I have walked here alone,
And seen no living thing
Under rainfilled darkening skies,
When the sun shone
and I picked a daisy for a buttonhole,
I stop and smile
And a field of stone laughs awhile.

Smelling damp earth,
As first rains drown dry summer's
dusty memories,
Forgotten souls are sighing
to the rhythm of my step -
then stopping to cry ...
the field of stone looks on in silence.

Dead flowers in a tacky vase
Spell out our sad lives' ironies
Would you still walk here with me,
Then leave to court a lifetime's dying?
For as you cry to laugh
and fill your heart with still stones safety,
I turn and leave.

Richard Kay (U6A4)

FEAR

I lie in the darkness.
An owl hoots through the night,
I feel my heart thumping, and
I long for daylight.

As I walk through the forest,
I hear a twig crack,
Who can be following?
Something on my track!

I dare not turn round,
My heart's in my throat.
What on earth can it be?
Only a goat!

Jonathan Sills (2C)

GROWLING GRUMBLING GRUMBEL

G rumbel's gory
R oar frightened the friendly.
"O h!" he roared again.
"W here is my dinner?"
L o and behold: the Grumbel had run out of food.
I nside Grumbel's cave, the wise old owl had
all the animals about him.
"N ow then, I have a plan to trap that
G ory Grumbel in his cave."

G ory Grumbel had
R umbles in his tummy. Meanwhile
U nder the owl's tree there was a
M adding hubbub of activity as the owl gave out
orders.
"B eavers, go and chop down some trees. Elephants,
L ug them with your trunks
I nto the clearing above Grumbel's cave.
N ow all the snakes are to
G rip the logs with their tails."

"G reat!" cried the owl from his vantage point in the air.
"R elease the logs!" At the noise, Grumbel walked straight
out
U nderneath the mound of timber and earth, burying that
M ad
B loodthirsty
E normous
L umbering Grumbel forever!

Thomas James (1C)

THE SHARK

The Shark
Swims round in the water,
Scales gleaming in the half distorted sun,
Mouth open
Showing rows of sharp pointed teeth,
Grinning
Now it swims faster round and round,
Back arched,
And then comes in for the kill

Daniel Taylor (1A)

THE 1990s

2015a

Marie stepped outside, which was a singularly bad idea considering that the U.V. count, according to her wristwatch, was nearly 9.8 and she couldn't find her sombrero - an old central American custom recently adopted universally because of their excellent protection against the sun, or more importantly the ultra-violet light from the sun from which most of the Northern Hemisphere was no longer protected by that extremely useful gas, Ozone. Bureaucratic stalling by governments and producers of C.F.Cs the world over had led to an international ban on the harmful gases coming far too late, the result of which was a stab in the back in the form of a colossal increase in the number of skin cancer cases.

Marie walked on down the street and, gazing into the haze in the distance, the thought struck her. Of course! She was going into the city so she would need her air filter. This was a pair of small, strangely shaped sponges which fitted into her nose and had recently been made compulsory in most cities because of the lead-filled fumes from cars. She laughingly remembered the "lead-free petrol" of the early 1990s which had failed to catch on. Gosh! Twenty-five years ago. She was barely six years old then.

Having collected the filter, she set out again for the road station where she got into an electric taxi, told it where to take her and inserted her credit card into the slot on the dashboard. They whirled along through the suburbs, past the zoo, last refuge for much marine life, marsh life and tropical forest life. The North Sea had a pH of 3 and the Black Sea was full of dioxins. There were very few elephant seals in existence. As for the Mediterranean, the ancient chemical factories, apart from becoming fully automated, which caused unemployment, had changed very little since the 1970's and continued to spew (innumerable) poisons into the once blue waters resulting in the extinction of three kinds of fish, the monk seal, and several kinds of shrimp, to name but a few. Indeed the phrase, "Dead as a", which had once been, "Dead as a dodo", had gone through several phases including, "Dead as a white rhino", "Dead as a bald eagle", "Dead as a humpback whale" and "Dead as a fish in Norway", before arriving at "Dead as a monk seal", which was the current trendy one.

Marie arrived at the house of her ten-year-old nephew, whom she had been asked to babysit for the evening. The young lad had just started high school - the Government had lowered the school starting age in the hope that it might produce more skilled hands to work in industry in competition with West Germany, as the UK trade deficit was in excess of £100bn - and he was eager to show his aunt his first lot of homework.

"This is Geography", he stated, "Look, here's a map of the UK as it was twenty years ago."

"You'd never have believed it, would you?", said Marie. "It's so different."

The greenhouse effect had affected the shape of most countries, especially the Netherlands, by means of the billions of tons of melt water from the poles, which had also lulled governments into a false sense of security by diluting maritime pollution, and causing them to think that their minimal pollution controls were working, so they took no further action to clean up the seas.

"And this is History. Look, this is a real live newspaper cutting. Ten years old, it is."

The caption read:

"US CUTS SPACE PROGRAMME IN FAVOUR OF ARMS RACE"

Marie recalled that there had been no solution to the freedom-hungry Russian republics, and the "Cold War" had restarted around the year 2005. She started to think what it would be like without nuclear weapons, and then stopped.

The radio crackled into life - it was on a time switch and Marie did not know how to turn it off, so the afternoon play burred in the background for a while. It was suddenly interrupted by an urgent newsreader's voice. Newsreaders often have urgent voices, but Marie detected a note of panic in it, which caused her to pay closer attention.

"Take cover! Take cover! A nuclear missile attack has been launched on this country. You have four minutes!"

2015b

Marie stepped outside her luxury all-granite flat and breathed in the fresh air. The fish were jumping in the estuary, beside which the huge white factory gleamed and hummed. They had finally found a way of taking down the chimney, a last reminder of the pollutant horrors of the last century. A thin wisp of steam escaped from a vent somewhere from time to time, but there was no more of the thick black smoke about which she had read in a magazine article on the twentieth century.

Walking on down the riverbank, her gaze drifted to the horizon which consisted of a vast new forest, part of the reforestation programme which was Britain's half of the deal in the 1995 Forestry Treaty. This basically stopped the South Americans and Africans cutting down any more rain forest and made Britain stop draining marshes and reforest 40% of its farmland.

Seeing the fish in the estuary made her think of the Pollution and Rivers Act which had put severe restrictions on what industry could discharge into lakes, rivers or seas. The UN had pressured many other countries into following Britain's lead in this field. Europe's economic giants had assisted those countries recently estranged from Russia in building clean, up-to-date industries instead of cheap, dirty factories. As a result, the Black, Baltic and North Seas had been saved and the Mediterranean returned to its former paradise.

All this was part of the "Palmer Plan", an American idea which also incorporated methods of ensuring that the millions of dollars of aid already flowing into Africa found its way to the people who really needed it, instead of going towards weapons for civil wars, many of which ceased as a result. Marie thought to herself that the Western World must have made some sacrifices, but looking around she decided that it had simply become more efficient.

So, what will it be, 2015a or 2015b? These are two pictures of the extremes which the world could reach. Logic tells us that it will be somewhere in between. However, I fear that it may turn out to be closer to 2015a than any of us realise, unless the world acts as one *now*, in the 1990s. This is the deciding decade.

Paul Edwards (4X)

* * * *

DO YOU ADMIRE ODYSSEUS?

It seems a daunting task to arrive at a fair judgement on a mythical character who "existed" so many centuries ago. Since the days when Odysseus went off to war in his black ships many events have changed our planet beyond recognition: the Greek and Roman empires have peaked and fallen; Christianity has swept across the civilized world, banishing the gods with which Odysseus directly conversed to folklore and superstition; there have been two World Wars; it is now possible to fly to countries which Homer never dreamed of. If Odysseus were returning home from Troy today, he would probably cross the "wine-dark" sea in a car ferry, or he might even take an aeroplane - the journey would be just as long and arduous, but it would be the industrial action of air traffic controllers, and not amorous nymphs, one-eyed monsters or sorceresses with a penchant for turning men into swine, which would cause the delays. A twentieth century Odyssey would lack glamour and mystery. I recently had the misfortune to see a rather down-market American cartoon version of Odysseus' wanderings which transported our hero into a hi-tech futuristic world. He could be seen jetting from planet to planet in a flying saucer, warding off mechanical monsters with laser guns. The makers of the cartoon obviously knew a good story when they saw one, and yet had no qualms about sucking all the magic out of it. They had, in the process of creating their dreary (but no doubt lucrative) "Space Odyssey", reduced Homer's characters to barely animated cardboard cut-outs - literally! Their hero, with his long blond hair, his bulging biceps and his booming American accent, seemed more akin to He-Man than Odysseus.

My point is this: we can only judge a character by the standards and ideas of his own time and not ours. As I have said, a twentieth century Odysseus would approach his trials and tribulations with different ideas in his head and different technology at his fingertips. By transporting a character out of his own time and into another the very character we are considering is completely changed. It is we who must make the adjustment. We must transport ourselves to Homeric Greece and try to imagine what life must have been like in a relatively primitive society which did not have television or radio, a superstitious world where the poetry of the bards must have been a welcome distraction. We cannot condemn Odysseus' slaughter of the suitors as an unchristian act because Odysseus preceded Christ, but we might still be justified in thinking his action inhumane. Homer is very swift to defend his hero: right from the beginning of the Odyssey it is stressed that those who sailed home with the Ithacan brought their own deaths upon themselves by their reckless folly, and the massacre of Penelope's admirers is portrayed as wholly justifiable - it was Odysseus' right to avenge the wrongs done to his wife and household.

Here is another problem: we can only see Odysseus as Homer and, to some extent, his translators portray him, as they want us to see him. Odysseus is always "blameless", "noble", "godlike", "much-enduring" or "resourceful". It is significant that the test which distinguishes Odysseus (and Telemachus) from the arrogant suitors, the contest of the bow, requires both physical strength and skill. Odysseus embodies everything which the Greeks considered "heroic". In fact, he fulfils the criteria so neatly that he is just too good to be true. Here we are at the crux of the matter: he is a mythical character dealing with unreal situations, so it is difficult to compare him with any real person at any point in history.

I think the best way to answer the question "Do you admire Odysseus?" is simply to take each event in the Odyssey in turn and to see how the hero bears up, perhaps to consider how he might have done better. Above all, one should bear in mind at all times that the whole adventure was created as an entertainment and should not be taken too seriously. And so with the aid of the Muse, or rather the microchip, let us begin at the beginning.

Odysseus' patron goddess, Athena, champions his cause throughout the Odyssey, and in Book I she asks her father why the sacker of Troy has apparently been forgotten. Zeus replies that he has incurred the wrath of Poseidon,

god of the sea, whose son, Polyphemus the cyclops, he has blinded. But now Poseidon has gone away, and so Odysseus may resume his journey home. Athena visits Telemachus in disguise and urges him to go in search of news of his father and to stir up support in Ithaca for its king. At this time Calypso, an amorous nymph, is keeping Odysseus on her island as her lover.

Already we have learned several telling facts about Odysseus. Firstly, he is such a great man that the gods themselves, and Athena in particular, take an interest in his affairs. Odysseus' relationship with Athena is not a sexual one. What they share is the quality known as *metis* or cunning. Odysseus is a resourceful man; he is not above telling the odd white lie to get himself out of a predicament; he knows how to orchestrate a plan and execute it at exactly the right moment; he is a persuasive and beguiling speaker. These are all laudable qualities in any person, but in Odysseus' case they are all so well polished that grey-eyed Athena, the intellectual goddess, the daughter of mighty Zeus himself, has thought him worthy of her support. She had come into the world by springing from her father's head fully armed and was always interested in military affairs. (Many of the gods were active "behind the scenes" at Troy.) And so Odysseus the warrior and Athena the goddess have much in common.

Another, slightly more obvious, fact about Odysseus has also come to light: although he has a son on the threshold of manhood and has endured many hardships, he is still physically attractive even to minor deities. Calypso, and also Circe the sorceress, have thought him a worthy lover. To be fair, Odysseus was unable to resist their charms because both had magical powers, and so we cannot charge him with being unfaithful to his patient wife, Penelope. Homer is at pains to point out that Odysseus did not actually enjoy the fun and frolics on Calypso's island - he was much too homesick for Ithaca! Calypso offers him immortality if he will stay with her, but he prefers to get on with his journey. Odysseus also acts chivalrously in another embarrassing situation: having been washed up naked on the shores of the land of the Phaeacians, he encounters the king's daughter, Nausicaa. At first she fears he will rape her, but, realising this, Odysseus is quick to allay her fears. She later becomes besotted with him and drops several heavy hints that they should marry. He, however, tactfully evades the issue. And so I think that Odysseus is admirable, at any rate, for his moral conduct.

The incident with the cyclops which has already been mentioned, but which is described more fully in Book IX, is also significant. It is Odysseus' inquisitive nature which compels him to pay a visit on Polyphemus: his men are against the excursion into the lawless land of the cyclopes. Here is a flaw in Odysseus' character: he is rather singleminded and not really in tune with his crew's opinion; he cannot really see when it is best to leave well alone. However, the way in which he extricates himself, and what companions he has left, from such a horrific situation shows real ingenuity and flair - it is Odysseus at his best. We all know how he did it: he gets the cyclops drunk on wine from his ship, and while the brute sleeps, the men bore the single eye with a hardened stake. The despairing monster demands to know who has done this to him, and Odysseus replies that his name is "Noman". The foolish Polyphemus cries out for help, saying that Noman is attacking him: the other cyclopes, puzzled, return to their caves. The men escape, hiding under Polyphemus' sheep, but the story does not end there: as he sails away, Odysseus cannot resist telling his victim who he is. This allows Polyphemus to lay an effective curse upon him, and he prays to his father, Poseidon, for vengeance. This, of course, is essential to the plot of the *Odyssey* - it neatly explains why the journey back to Ithaca takes so long. But what makes Odysseus reveal his identity? Too much confidence in his own abilities? Boastfulness? Stupidity? Bravado? Some believe that this step was necessary if Odysseus was to avenge the death of his companions effectively: Polyphemus had to know that it was not a "nobody" who had blinded him. Odysseus is willing to take calculated risks. Whichever way you like to interpret this incident, it clearly holds the key to Odysseus' character, but there are still many other factors to consider.

This is not the first time Odysseus has lost a few men. He had originally set out from Troy with twelve ships. Six men from each were killed by the Cicones when they stayed in their city longer than Odysseus thought prudent, after sacking it. When they reached the land of the Lotus-eaters, tasted their fruit and forgot all thoughts of home, it was down to Odysseus to drag them back on board - or so he tells Alcinous. After the encounter with Polyphemus, when, of course, Odysseus' cunning saved the day, they came to the land of Aeolia. Aeolus gives Odysseus a bag containing all the winds unfavourable to his voyage. His curious companions open the bag while he is asleep, and they are driven back to the god of the winds, who refuses to help them any further. They then come to the land of the Laestrygonians, a race of ogres who destroy all but one of the ships along with their crews, and later reach Circe's island. Throughout the *Odyssey* Odysseus' companions seem nothing but a burden to him. He must protect, guide and keep a watchful eye on them at all times. The dilemmas from which he saves them serve only to highlight his supremacy over other mortals. Odysseus is then free from his charges, however reluctantly, for a year during which time he has a fling with Circe the witch, who turns them into pigs. It was thanks to Odysseus' smooth-talking that she did not eliminate them altogether. The hero then negotiates their release and, after his sojourn into the Underworld, their next obstacle is the Sirens. Being inquisitive, which is not always a bad thing, and keen for new experiences, Odysseus feels he must hear the beautiful but deadly song of the Sirens. (He listens, bound tightly to the mast, his companions having plugged their own ears with wax.) He is also eager to get a glimpse of the fearsome Scylla as he navigates the treacherous straits of Messina, and, forsaking the advice of Circe to stay unarmed, he stands on the foredeck, waving his spear. The monster is thus provoked and snatches another six men - his "ablest hands".

Has Odysseus been selfish here? If he had thought more about his friends than the seeking of new experiences, this tragedy, which he claimed to have affected him deeply, would not have occurred. This is another episode which illustrates his single-mindedness and curiosity.

But Odysseus still has some crew left! Those who remain are despatched by a thunderbolt from Zeus after the Sun complained that they had stolen some of his oxen. Here is another example of the "recklessness" of the crew. They had been warned explicitly not to touch the cattle and had sworn to obey Odysseus' instructions. The only way

in which we can decide whether Odysseus is truly great is by comparing him with those around him. Why is Odysseus, who must surely take the blame for the deaths which could have been avoided if he had not been so cocksure, allowed to survive and receive all the glory whereas those who simply sought a square meal are blasted off the face of the Earth? There does not seem to be much justice here, but Homer has been preparing us for this from the outset. He cannot have the good name of his hero besmirched:

He suffered many hardship on the high seas (what about the crew?) in his struggle to preserve his life and bring his comrades home. (None of them actually made it, did they?) But he failed to save those comrades, in spite of all his efforts (such as they were). It was their own sin that brought them to their doom, for in their folly they devoured oxen of Hyperion the Sun, and the god saw to it that they should never return.

When the Phaeacians have landed Odysseus back in Ithaca, he does not storm into his palace in a rage, brandishing his sword. He takes a more tactful line, disguising himself as a beggar, with Athena's assistance, and secretly revealing his identity to Telemachus. This is typical of the man of metis: he patiently endures the ridiculing by the suitors, sounding out those in the town and gauging the extent of the suitors' crimes, as he waits for the precise moment to wreak his revenge. It is interesting to note at this point the affection which Odysseus has inspired in his servants and subjects in years gone by. Eurycleia, his old nurse, lets out a cry of surprise and delight when she recognises the scar on his foot, yet she has too much respect for her master to go and spread the news of his return - he has thought it unwise, and that is good enough for her. Eumaeus and the oxherd have tears in their eyes when they take Odysseus' bow from Penelope - it holds such fond memories for them. Then there is the touching scene in which Argus, Odysseus' dog, worn out through old age and neglect, expires as soon as he catches his first glimpse of his master in twenty years. He must be a clever canine to see through the disguise: Penelope obviously sees something she recognises in the itinerant beggar but does not identify him as her husband - he must pass several tests before she believes his story. Even Antinous, one of the leaders of the suitors, concedes that he has tremendous respect for the absent King, remarking that there is no man amongst all those in the palace such as Odysseus was. He had only seen the great man once, when still a child, but the experience had had a lasting effect on him.

The Contest of the Bow is also significant. Although it was Athena who suggested it to the unwitting Penelope, who ordered it, Odysseus was a definite hand in the affair and plays it beautifully. (He is a brilliant actor, very convincing as a beggar and spinner of tall stores. The tales which he tells of Odysseus are not meant to be believed - they are just the sort of thing which wayfarers would tell to ensure a hospitable welcome at Penelope's home. No-one suspects that he is Odysseus until the arrow has passed through all twelve axe-heads.) The suitors cannot string the bow: they are either simply not strong enough or do not have the know-how. Telemachus would have succeeded if Odysseus had not held him back with a disapproving look, so the king does have a rival in greatness, if not a dangerous one. The contest is necessary for several reasons: it gets all the suitors in the same place, it shows up their inferiority to Odysseus, and it proves to everyone that the wanderer has returned. The battle then ensues, and Odysseus gets his revenge. Penelope is only convinced that this man is indeed her husband when she has tested his knowledge of the intricate construction of their marriage-bed. All right, so she's "prudent" and it has been a long time since she last saw him, but surely, if he were such a good husband, she would have remembered him? Fortunately, Athena smooths things over with the outraged relatives of the slaughtered suitors, and we reach the inevitable "happy ending".

And so we have discovered that there is a lot more to Odysseus than just blood, phlegm, choler and melancholy. He is an extremely brave man (his journey into the Underworld, although it was necessary if he was to escape the clutches of Calypso, is perhaps his most courageous feat); he is a cunning and ingenious schemer, an attractive man, one who commands respect and admiration. Yet he is also boastful, a little too curious for his own good and perhaps slightly selfish. In the final analysis he is admirable but by no means perfect. But could we reasonably expect him to be perfect? I don't think so: even the almighty Zeus had his flaws!

FINIS

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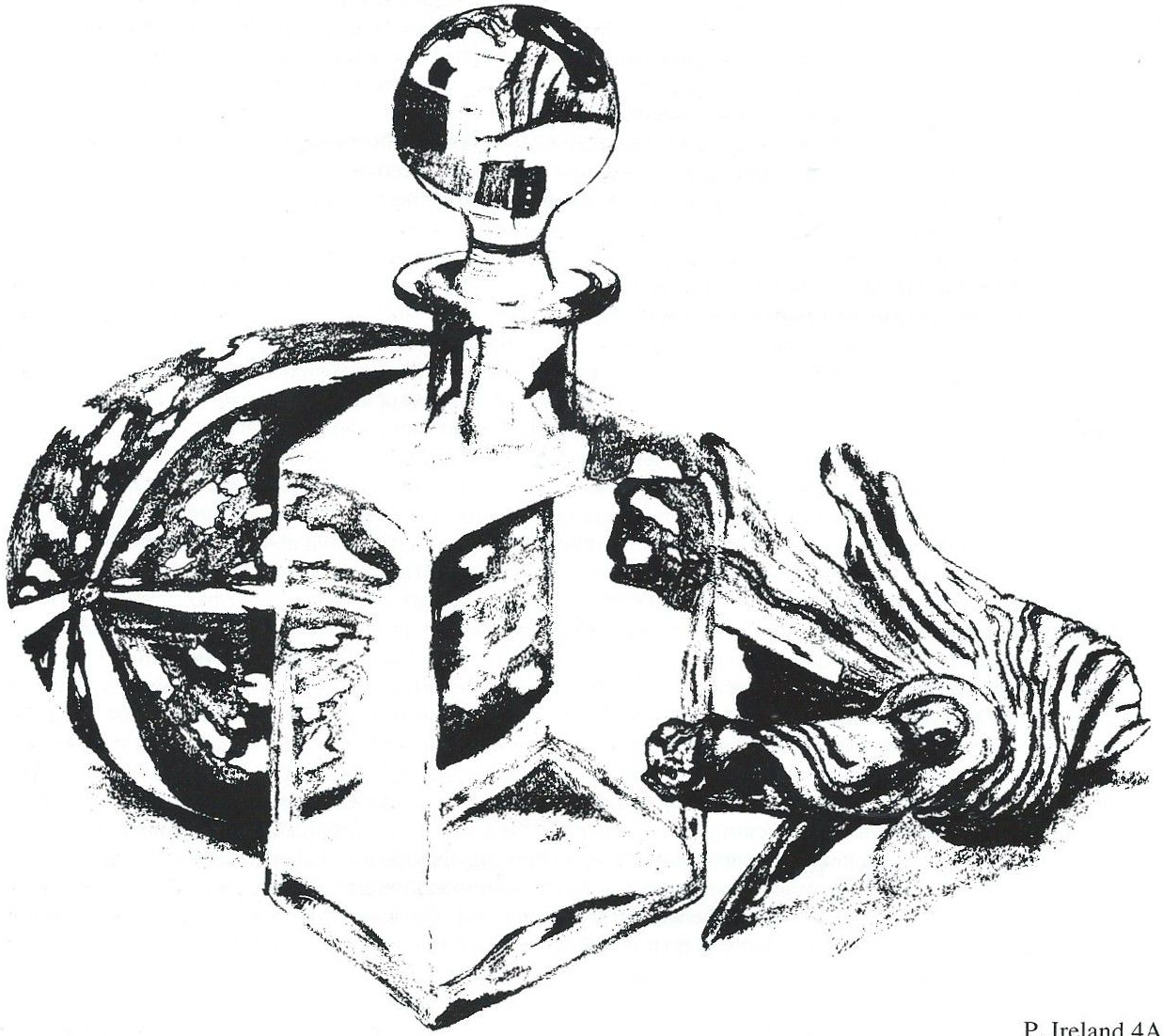
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M. R. Clark (5X)



P. Ireland 4A

“GRANDAD, HELP ME”

“Jimmy Andrews, get down here now, you little scallywag!” “I’m coming,” he whispered. He knew what to expect. He slowly stumbled down the stairs. “Who do you think you are trying to sneak in the house at this time of day? You finished School an hour ago! I said four o’clock, not 4.15. Just suppose I wanted to go somewhere.” Mrs. Andrews screamed, “You toe rag, you good-for-nothing little brat!” Jimmy backed off repeating to himself in his mind, “Run! Go on, run, now, now!” But his efforts were in vain, because at that moment, to Jimmy’s surprise and dismay, he found himself being grabbed by the scruff of the neck and hauled up the stairs. Mrs. Andrews dragged him along the corridor and gave him a great shove which was hard enough to push him right into her bedroom. Jimmy picked himself up off the floor and ran to hide behind the chair. She ran after him, pulled him up, and flung him on the bed. Then she picked up a cane stick and set about him with it. “Aagh!” screamed Jimmy, “please stop, I’m sorry.” Mrs. Andrews paid him no heed. She just beat him harder. After three minutes Jimmy had suffered so much he could just about manage a whisper.

The door slammed and in walked Jimmy’s real parent, his father. “I’m home, love,” he called. In desperation Mrs. Andrews dragged him up and kicked him to his bedroom where she pushed him in and then locked the door.

Jimmy lay on the floor, motionless. His limbs felt numb. He was scared; all sorts of wild thoughts zoomed through his head. He managed to lift his head up. He looked at everything - they all had a second image, everything seemed blurred. He lay his head down and fell asleep.

At 7 p.m. they returned to the house. “We’re back” shouted Mr. Andrews, “Nancy and Jimmy, we are back.” Mr. Andrews hung his coat up on the stand and with a very suspicious look on his face climbed the stairs and went to see if Jimmy and Nancy were in his bedroom watching T.V. To his surprise, he found Jimmy’s bedroom door locked. He took out his bunch of keys and unlocked the door. He looked inside - there was no-one there. Confused, he went downstairs and told Mrs. Andrews. At this she began to panic but she tried not to show it by making up silly excuses.