

THE HAMMER

BRYNTAIL EXCERPTS

1915 -1972

gallant band. The march up was accomplished in about one hour, Mr. H. Guerra gallantly leading the rear.

As soon as we arrived, several energetic souls forgetting their fatigue started mountaineering, the others were content to explore the unknown corners of the cottage.

Bryntail is an ideal place for a holiday. Hills tower up on all sides, and circling round the valleys below or dashing over rocks or hiding in the deep foliage on its banks, flows the river, the name of which a few elastic tongues, especially that of "Brains" can pronounce correctly, it is the Clywedoc. Not far from its banks stand the remains of what once was a flourishing lead mine, and with the exception of Bryntail farm, no human habitation can be seen within a couple of miles.

Several brave parents attempted to reach the eagle's nest we had chosen and many failed in the attempt. Some motorcyclists landed in gorse bushes at the sharp corners and some motorists, imitating the lobster had to climb backwards, thereby no doubt giving the impression they were going down hill; others collided with inoffensive farmers on the road, to say nothing of one of the best known characters of the C.S.S. who not only raced the Cambrian Railway on the level but also the farmer's cart up the hill.

Great interest was taken in the architectural design of the ruins of the old mine. Our artists improved on the archways with the help of well-intentioned but misguided parents.

Of the twelve boys who formed the first contingent no fewer than seven managed to get round their parents with such skill that they obtained permission to remain another fortnight. Mr. Guerra sat up (with a cup of hot cocoa) until the midnight lamp burnt low, making a brave and praiseworthy effort to find out where to put them all. The problem became acute later on when it was known that four "tramps" were also to find lodgings at the cottage. One slept on two tables and another attempted to sleep in an armchair; both were unsuccessful and passed the night chasing a mouse in the chimney.

Many were the pleasures of the mountains, but to these pleasures was added the attraction of the farm, Mr. E. Evans and family being most obliging and kind, and we take this opportunity of thanking them for all they did for us. The farm, thanks to them, was a delightful spot. One boy learnt how to ride a horse, though he still has to learn how to stop it, and another maintains he can now milk a cow. They all made friends with the dog "Bob," and with three snorting monsters which lived by the gates and which specially attracted Mr. C.

On the last Saturday the prize distribution took place. Mrs. Esslemont kindly consenting to give them out. The proceedings were opened by R. Powis, the school football captain, who presented her with a fine bouquet of wild flowers which the

BRYNTAIL

We started on our holidays at Snow Hill station at 1-15 p.m. The journey as far as Shrewsbury was comfortably accomplished, as we had reserved compartments, but after that we had to brave the terrors of the Cambrian Railway. The least said the better and eventually we landed at Llanidloes half an hour late.

A cart was waiting to take our luggage up to Bryntail and in about half-an-hour we got everything loaded up satisfactorily. Then we started on our grand march up the mountains. It was up hill practically the whole way, the gradients becoming steeper the farther we went. When about half way, it started to rain, and that, combined with the last hill, nearly finished off the

SCHOOL NOTES.

Dates to be remembered : Prize Distribution on Wednesday, 26th, at 7-30 p.m. ; end of term on Friday, July 28th ; next term, Tuesday, September 12th to Wednesday, December 20th.

A very interesting marriage announcement :—" On the 20th May, at St. Michael's, Handsworth, Norman Loveridge (Sergeant R.A.M.C.) to Dorothy G. B. Cashmore."

On June 6th, Mr. Foster gave a most enjoyable lecture on the Shackleton Expedition, first reviewing the work of Vasco da Gama, Captain Cook, Captain Scott, and other explorers, then giving us a detailed account of this last expedition of Sir Ernest Shackleton to the South Polar regions. It will be remembered that the School took a practical interest in Captain Scott's last expedition by making a contribution sufficient to buy a dog. This lecture has greatly helped to increase the School's interest in a work which, but for the war, would have engrossed everyone's attention.

From a Bryntailer :—"On Wednesday, April 19th, twenty boys under Mr. Guerra's supervision entrained via Llanidloes for Bryntail, their home for the next fortnight. The three-mile walk to Bryntail was soon accomplished, the cupboards were ' bagged ' as also were the beds, by the first arrivals ; the three older boys having these. The weather, except two days, was very fine, and excursions were made to Rhayader, Plinlimmon, Pennant Rocks, and to the waterfall of Craig-y-llo. We were favoured with visits from a number of parents who all enjoyed camp-life, although it be rough and ready. The Camp Sports were held, and Mrs. Robottom kindly distributed the prizes which Mr. Powis had brought from Birmingham. How pleasant it was to go just wherever we pleased—no fences or sign-boards with the usual warning phrase, not to trespass. We all enjoyed ourselves, even those who, being late for meals, had to wash up. We did hear of two poor fellows who went without a meal altogether. Everybody returned looking better for his holiday and is eager to go again."

A very interesting match was played between an XI. of convalescent soldiers from Highbury and the C.S.S. Our XI. had the benefit of the services of Mr. Lovel, Mr. Davison, Mr. C. A. F. Hastilow, and Mr. Postins, captain of the Night School Cricket Team. Highbury batted first on a wet wicket and made 57. C.S.S. played out time making 100 for the loss of three wickets. We hope to play more of these matches before the term ends.

We do not vouch for the accuracy of the following description of a mathematical lesson :

" The master walks in, looks round, passes his hand through his hair, then 'Good morning, boys,' says he—pause of 10 seconds

boy contracted stomach-ache, having captured the larger part of the Llanidloes' tuck shops. Matric. results arriving, it was found necessary to christen the Sixth Formers the "Guild of Undergraduates." Knicks beginning to look the worse for wear. Great attraction the next day in Innes' and Holloway's accidental diving exhibition in full dress. Holloway ascending the hill in a towel, gave us the impression of a prehistoric Briton or else an advertisement for Pears' soap. On the 3rd several campers visited Pennant Rocks. Tunstall gave us a good example of the force of gravity as applied to human beings, trying to hang by his budding moustache over a twenty-foot precipice. On Friday (the 4th August) eight of us went to Moat Lane to see Govier off for Borth. Personally, we saw him just as the train started; however, being philosophic, we consoled ourselves with the thought that it was quite enough. Growing casualty list, including tooth-ache and sunburn cases. Indeed, many boys were wondering if they would have any epidermis left on their return. On Sunday Mr. Powis arrived on the famous "James," also Fred Sadler. A visit was paid to the Welsh Church. On Monday, the first Camp Sports were held, R. Matthews gaining most successes. The Guild still survive their suppers, although half a pound of vigorous cheese eloped with a loaf of bread in a mysterious manner. On Wednesday (August 9th) the water sports were held; these included polo and diving, the latter being won by Langley, with Hall as runner-up. The day after, a visit was made to Plynlimon. On Friday (the 11th) the first fortnight boys disappeared, being replaced by the second fortnight boys, with whom came Mr. Millard and Mr. Walker. On Saturday we had the first rain, the weather previously having been very hot and fine.

Sunday, the 13th, was wet practically all day; a few boys, thinking they would get no wetter than they were, took advantage of a fine interval to bathe. A very fine interval indeed! So fine it could hardly be measured. The following day, a baseball match was arranged between the Old Campers and the New Campers, the former gaining an easy victory. On Tuesday a paper chase was organised, in spite of some protestations from the opposition benches. It was remarked that an enthusiastic devourer of the "Nelson Lee" Library (full particulars on application) followed the trail in the approved style, sniffing hard. By the way in which Matthews (Form II.) succeeded in sticking to a large deposit of Welsh mud, one would have thought we had had some rain; of course a most ridiculous supposition. Very ungentlemanly laughter from hares on hounds' arrival, one and half hours after them. Wednesday was calm on most fronts. On one sector, however, Bradford (Va.) tried to hang by one finger on to the barbed wire entanglements of the front gate, with consequent disastrous results. Another visit was paid by the boys and Mr. Guerra to Craig-y-llo Waterfall. Great credit is due to J. Nicolle

BRYNTAIL SUMMER CAMP, 1916.

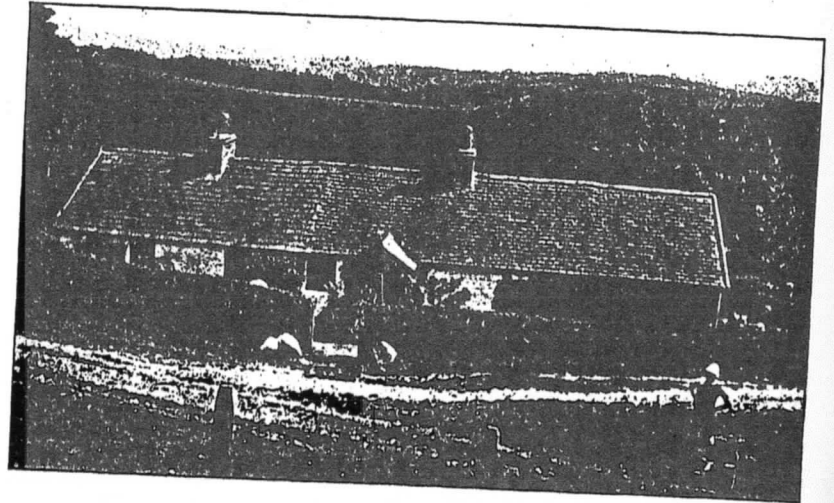
We all arrived safely on July 23th, and got the cottage in order. On the Saturday Howson and Smith arrived unexpectedly, and had to return to Llanidloes; then Southon, Ball and Boston arrived at 11 p.m., having cycled from Birmingham. Owing to lack of accommodation they had to sleep in an old miner's cottage. On the 30th an excursion was made to Craig-y-llo Waterfall. At night the air was alive with muttered strafings against unknown persons who had effectually sewn up the pyjamas of certain boys. On Monday an unofficial report was circulated that the Sixth Formers (Ball and Co.) had pineapple and salmon for tea. We sincerely hope they had a good night. A certain Form II.

for his brave attempt to fall the 70ft. On the return, Mr. Guerra and a few intrepid followers forded the river, without wetting their boots and stockings. Great protestations from Mr. Guerra that he had not taken them off, though of course no one dared suggest that he had. On Thursday, meat having run short, the writer and a gallant ally assisted 12lb. of meat in its walk from Llanidloes to Bryntail. No bathing, the "raison" being that the current was too strong. On Friday, the 18th, Mr. Taylor effected a safe arrival. It is rumoured that the Cambrian train by which he arrived was only three minutes late. No special editions of the local paper were observed, however. On the 19th Govier re-arrived from Borth. The second fortnight sports were also held on this date. On Sunday (20th) several doughty warriors, following the example of the Spanish toreadors engaged in a little interview with a Welsh bull of prepossessing appearance and good manners. Records were made both in cross-country running and in tree-climbing. Winners, Mr. Millard and Mr. Taylor for the running, Messrs. Grew, Govier and Walker for the tree-climbing. Finally, after a quiet conversation, lasting about a quarter of an hour, the interviewers made a highly dignified and strategical retreat, without casualties. However, Aspinall narrowly escaped a serious wound for laughing in a particularly hard-hearted manner at two prefects washing up. (Hurried retreat of Asp.). The duty boy for the day severely "strafed" for being too economical with the butter. However, as the bard says, "Man needs butter little here below."

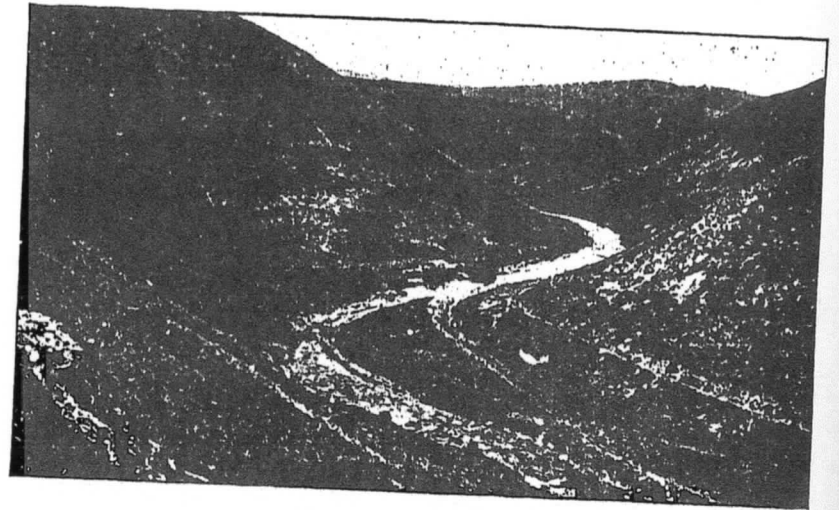
On Monday a visit was paid to the Van Mines, but no one succeeded in falling down the shaft. One boy showed a suicidal desire to have his head crushed by the beam engine, but fortunately for those who would have had to pick up the bits, he was saved. On Wednesday, the 23rd, a visit was paid to Broncho Bill's Wild West Show, Three Huge Shows in One, etc., etc. (total time taken, one and half hours). Everybody trudged down to Llanidloes in the wet fully prepared to witness bloodshed and murder in the hair-raising sword duels, also feats bordering on the impossible. By the way, did Roman Gladiators wear trousers and leggings, or have their hair down their backs? The only feat bordering on anything, let alone the impossible, were those of the tight rope dancer. On the Thursday the prize distribution took place, Mrs. Evans, of the farm, presiding. On Friday the camp broke up, after a very pleasant holiday, and with hopes for a further visit.

J. GREW.

[Two views of Bryntail Camp (from photographs taken by S. Rymond) are added to this number. The first gives a view of the cottage, and the second shows the grand scenery of the immediate neighbourhood. On the right of the lower picture, near the river bank, may be seen the patch worn bare by the Undergraduates' Camp].



BRYNTAIL.



CLYWEDOG RIVER.

SCHOOL NEWS.

The Prize-Giving will take place on Thursday, July 26th, at 7-30 p.m. We break up the next morning. Season Tickets for next Term should be ordered from September 11th to December 19th.

We regret to announce that Miss Henderson is leaving us at the end of the term; we trust that the West Country will appreciate, as we have done, her high standards of work and duty, and that the maids of Clifton may emulate the boys of Suffolk Street in their response. We are heartily sorry to lose her.

Birmingham University successes:—S. G. Ball has passed the Final B.Sc. in Mathematics and Physics; and C. A. Lakin, in spite of his being engaged in war work since before Easter, has passed the Final B.Sc. in Physics.

Mr. Ellerker is again offering a prize for fielding to be awarded on the vote of the team. In 1915 the prize was awarded to R. Powis, and in 1916 to A. B. Holmes.

A Watch Competition provided us with a little excitement and enabled us to send £3 to the Y.M.C.A. Hut Fund. The winner, F. M. Barr, now positively revels in punctuality.

The exact amount raised by the Whist Drive on February 17th and the Headmaster's Lecture on March 3rd was £26 10s. 4d., and a cheque for that amount was sent last term to the Lady Mayoress' Depot Fund.

Of ginger beer it may be said that its precise composition now depends on Lord Rhondda and is a problem for the laboratory, but the brand prepared for the Sports must be sweetish, must cling to the palate, must froth, and must distend—one bottle is good, three are desirable, more is unattainable felicity. Our Sports' brew triumphed over every difficulty.

If, as comic opera tells us, the hall mark of gentility is a following of sisters, cousins, and aunts, our entrance examination candidates are the very pink of courteous circumspection, the Ex.-VI. of years to be.

An innovation this term is a series of water polo matches, Form VI. v. the Rest. It was Mr. Guerra's intention to have a polo match at the Sports, but the short time allowed for the use of the baths made this impossible.

The Easter Bryntailers had a unique experience: snow to the hocks, more snow, well-pressed sledding snow, if anything, added to the enjoyment. The Summer Camp immediately succeeds School Assembly; on July 27th, promptly at noon, twenty-eight boys plus luggage will swarm down the front steps. The same evening, the walk up, the pure mountain air, and long vistas of joys to come may cause a sad inroad upon the countless bags of luscious nutriment thoughtfully despatched ahead by Mr. Guerra.

It has been known for some time that our attempts to improve the turf on the cricket pitch were welcomed by the rabbits in the

BRYNTAIL CAMP.

Now-a-days a journey on an ordinary railway is both uncertain and dangerous, and the Cambrian is anything but ordinary. However, the charms of Bryntail being irresistible, even in the face of such hardships, Mr. Guerra plus thirty boys embarked in high feather on the 1-5 express from Snow Hill on July 28th. Even the attempts of the railway company to stifle us by shunting our carriage into a tunnel, and leaving it there for half-an-hour, proved inadequate to quell our spirits. The journey was further enlivened by the rain, torrents of it, till we were nearly home. Our only excitement during the first fortnight was getting up at midnight and hammering in tent-pegs, which the wind immediately pulled up. During the second fortnight we were favoured with five really fine days, and a walk to Pennant Rocks was arranged. A sudden shower coming on just as we were scrambling up a cliff added to the excitement, and greatly to the astonishment of a cow, who shared our quarters; we dried our jerseys in a shed belonging to a neighbouring farm. One night some fellows arrived in their tent to find everything an inch deep in water, so they spent half-an-hour in carrying bedding into the cottage. Jam supplies ran short after the third week, so Mrs. Millard volunteered to preserve bilberries. Twenty-eight pounds were speedily gathered, and the jam was thoroughly appreciated. A paper chase, with Mr. Millard and Mr. Walker as hares, ended in a victory for the hares, while Macadie won sixpence for being the first hound to reach home. As our time drew to a close, "feeds" became nightly occurrences. The members of one tent decided to hold theirs while the rest of the camp were at supper. Unfortunately the secret leaked out; there was a raid, pineapple got on the ground, the ground got on the pineapple, while both got into the cream, and a mixture of powdered biscuit and smashed gooseberry got on everything and everybody.

On adding up the number of points which each camper had gained it was found that Esslemont and Aspinall had tied for the Bryntail Medal, but a baseball match, won by Aspinall's side, gave him the necessary point. Throughout the month the camp maintained its record for punctuality and early rising, especially the members of Form V. tent and the cooks, who never once were late for breakfast, though they sometimes discarded "summer time."

In spite of rain we had a glorious time; nothing ever mars our enjoyment at Bryntail, and with each visit the place seems to get more and more delightful.

Recently the Bryntailers gave an exhibition game of Baseball; an "exhibition," the strain of which, the ball itself could not withstand. However, the players carried on with a rubber ball, while Grew continued to referee with a solemnity which would have graced an owl. The losers were assisted by Mr. Guerra, who, escaping before the end, was discovered in the pavilion drowning his shame in cocoa.

of wild rose bushes; also a most successful cycle run to Earlswood with a full tale of punctures and lots of chaff and laughter. It is rumoured that when the Threes are Fours the "Junior" lure may draw them still.

A party of boys already initiated into Baseball at Bryntail, and desirous of seeing the real thing, went to the Aston Villa ground on June 8th. Their expectations rose greatly when a U.S.A. player stopped a long catch with his head; the business-like way in which a reserve took his place was impressive, while the comments of some fifty American soldiers seated behind the "home plate" were more impressive still. One was told to "vamoose to ballyhack," another to "fetch his granny," and another to get a drain-pipe to it." Apparently "buckets" not "mitts" were required, and the only decent man in the "Canuck" team was the catcher who was "jake-aloo." But we are "ornery" linguists, so "nuff sed."

None regrets more than we the absence of Old Boy Letters from this number. Other deficiencies we can make up, but not this. Cheery, humorous, uncomplaining, these letters, giving us an insight into the hum-drum duties of the soldier, have set the cords of memory vibrating, and, more than anything else, have helped us to realise what the school is doing in the war. Can we not have more?

The Maroon Demonstration provided the School with a little excitement; the prospect of something going off is always alluring; moreover, there were persistent rumours, unfortunately unfounded, that the occasion would be graced by an elocutionary effusion of patriotic sentiment; but none knew exactly what was going to happen. Directly the maroons were fired orders were given to assemble in Room 127. First came 5A and 5B, swinging along manfully, half protesting against being in the van, while gracefully acknowledging the compliment implied; then 3A, beautifully led, mincing in time with crisp, decisive steps, were immediately followed by 3B and 3C; far above there sounded the patter of little feet in unabashed haste, while their leader hovered uncertainly between van and rear wondering which was the post demanded of propriety; Form VI. strolled imperturbable, disapproving of any uncalled-for exertion, condescendingly and leisurely they wended their lordly way; lastly came the Fours, noisily, as is their wont. In four minutes the whole school was safely stowed away; we have often seen boys and macaroons stowed away in 162 in half that time.

We are grateful for the ungrudging payment of the increased price of the magazine; one reader who borrowed a copy went so far as to pronounce it worth sixpence, another, however, thought the inclusion of the Four Oaks railway-service might make it worth a penny. Criticism generously dealt out has clearly indicated a plain path to our unperplexed vision: in future, the Easter

BRYNTAIL.

We have been privileged to look over the Easter diary; it is a piquant document, full of life and youthful excitement, a testimony of pure joy and exuberant health, occasionally giving little peeps into the innermost life of the camp, but more often relapsing into silence after saying just enough to whet the keenest curiosity.

The fun started at Snow Hill, where Mr. Guerra had a "fierce argument with the ticket-collector about half-fares." We are not told who won, but, knowing H.G.'s thoroughness, we can picture his stage setting: Esslemont cutting a tooth, Cash lisping in falsetto for a Steedman powder, Bushill soothing a teddy-bear with chocolate cigarettes, and the others standing around singing "We are Seven." By the way, H. G. seems fairly to have run amok: besides this fierce argument, we learn that he "tried his strength on six yokels"; we cannot find out anything about these yokels, so we conclude they were mangled beyond identification; he also conspired with Asp—the very name gives us Nilotic shivers—to assassinate M. Le Grand; once, after cider, H. G. attacked the cottage with the brutal idea of spring-cleaning it, and damaged himself with a hammer; again, unaided, and armed only with a sou'-wester, he went out and defeated in single combat the turkey-cock, enemy to boys and devourer of rice-puddings; moreover, he won the Booby Prize.

Others, besides Mr. Guerra, were strangely affected by Welsh scenery. Once Slater was carried home in a stretcher, completely overcome; another time Esslemont forgot to go to bed. In his search for a quiet corner suitable for the study of Nesfield, he had retired into the pantry and was found, late at night, devouring grammar with his head propped up against a half-empty jam-pot. But the most remarkable testimony to the efficacy of Welsh civilisation is found in the following entry:—
 "On Saturday three notable Sixth Form wits went to Craig-y-lloe." Three wits, Sixth Form wits, all at once! Note the suddenness of the change. The very boys who are wont to gaze stolidly and unrelentlessly with dull, leaden, expressionless gaze out of those windows turned, in three days, into wits! Wonderful! What a tribute to Plynlimmon!

We have always had a partiality for cooks, we admire them and all their works, and we rejoice to find that the Bryntail cooks kept unsullied the high reputation won by the world's greatest benefactors. They were thoughtful from the first; owing to a high wind there was little sleep the first night, so they were late the next morning; the day after, with infinite tact, they were too early; on meatless days they comforted the camp with chocolate and rice pudding; they shared their rations with the turkey-cock; after seeing the deplorable effect of cider on Mr. Guerra, in utter devotion to their beloved chief, they "put away" the source of evil, cut their fingers and broke two plates; so tremendous were their efforts that they used up the coal too soon and had to collect wood; and their meek and unaffected grace at church prompted the vergar to ask their assistance in taking round the collection-plates. We are proud of them!

One Thursday several boys went to Llanidloes by trap, but missed it for the return journey. Fortune, however, amply repaid them, they met a "nice girl, aged two, who had never been kissed." Tut-tut! Where was the fierce arguer, the vanquisher of six yokels and one turkey-cock, the co-conspirator with Asp, where was he? Or was Walker, winner of the prize for being the most obliging boy, on the spot? And did he oblige? We sincerely hope he was and did.

The Camp ended up in a blaze of glory with a splendid Prize-Giving, splendid Prizes, and splendid Speeches, notably that of Esslemont, winner of the Bryntail Medal, awarded for the highest marks for Beauty, Leap-frog, Intellect, Potato-peeling, and Virtue.

SCHOOL NEWS.

The Athletic Sports will be held on Saturday, June 28th. We break up on Friday, July 25th. Next term's seasons should be ordered from Tuesday, September 9th, to Friday, December 19th, inclusive.

Our House Captains are :—A. POWELL (Black) ; F. R. SANTALL (Blue) ; H. B. VICARY (Green) ; and H. S. ROBINS (Red).

At present we have twelve Prefects :—J. H. Bushill, F. R. Lea, N. C. Marples, E. W. Moore, F. H. Nicholls, A. Powell, H. S. Robins, E. R. C. Smith, R. B. Tunstall (Senior), H. B. Vicary, J. M. Walshe, and A. S. Witts.

The small Union Jack which jauntily flutters near the ceiling in 267 was put up on Armistice Day. How it got there puzzles us ; how it can be got from there puzzles 6B.

The Junior Debating Society has had a good session. Among its most successful features may be recorded a paper on The Channel Tunnel, by Walker (4B), a Mock Trial of Kaiser Wilhelm, and War-talks by Lieuts. Quinney, Hopkins, and Loveridge. A Yarn-Spinning Contest and a Musical Recital had something of the charm of novelty. But why, oh why, have we not a piano ?

On April 14th the Sixths, with inimitable decorum, endured "Everyman" at the Repertory as a sermon which cost a shilling ; on May 12th, as an antidote to fifteenth century morality, they enjoyed in "Much Ado" Dogberry's malapropisms and the delightful "Sigh no more," though they voted Claudio a scurvy hero, and preferred to his fickle affection the obvious villainy of Don John. The Fours had a rare old time at "She Stoops to Conquer." Tony they consider a real hero, and are prepared to let the management know just how the part should be played.

Our school has an architectural admirer. Its beauty has evoked enthusiasm in a French schoolboy, who ordinarily can see little to charm in English interiors. He was pleased with the inside mural decorations ; but tears were very near his eyes when, in 5B, he spied those channels grooved in the desks for

streams of ink, widely separated in the highlands and converging near the edge into one vast and cunningly constructed reservoir. Another strand in the Entente Cordiale !

The Prizes were distributed by Miss Burrows, a constant good friend to the School. A beautiful gilt basket, tastefully wreathed by Mrs. Hatfield with crimson roses grown in the gardens of the boys' fathers, expressed the thanks of the School more warmly than could the usual costly bouquet.

Bryntail still draws crowded and enthusiastic houses. Last summer the camp lasted four weeks ; there were no mishaps, contre-temps, or accidents ; indeed, of this camp it may be said : "Il n'y a pas d'histoire à raconter des camps heureux." For the first week of the Easter camp glorious, weather prevailed, and the older boys were able to go under canvas ; but one morning, at 6-30 summer time, the tents gave way, the cooks established a record for early rising, and soon after winter returned, making Alpine sports possible. Unfortunately, one young camper hurt his knee while playing baseball ; otherwise the Easter holiday, in spite of varied weather, was most enjoyable ; moreover, the presence of Cash and Govier, those stainless cooks of a former camp, gave an air of distinction to a blameless holiday.

The above is the official record, but we are not so easily misled. Our exposure in the Magazine of last July has obviously frightened H.G., and though he may have told us the truth, he has certainly not told the whole truth. Searching inquiry has established the fact that Bushill and Robins, supposed to sleep at the farm opposite, were once locked out and forced to sleep above innocent cows in a hayloft. Moreover, the turkey-cock has disappeared. "Le brave coq est mort." His last gobble is gobbled, and his last strut strutted. It is of no use to tell us "il n'y a pas d'histoire à raconter des coqs heureux," because we know that H.G. went down at Christmas and came back smacking his lips, not with emotion, but, we fear, with gustatory recollection. Crocodile was the tear that dropped on the parson's nose ! And the last gobble of all—we blush to relate it—was not the turkey-cock's, but H.G.'s.

About forty boys spent three weeks of the summer vacation "on the land" in Scotland. Despite the fact that they camped near a plantation of seven or eight hundred acres of raspberries, they did only four days' work. The National Service committee, having a somewhat guilty conscience, paid the expense of a trip to Loch Earn, one of the beauty spots of Scotland. Previous to this—in fact, during the last week of the summer term—six boys went to Tamworth. Although they missed the delights of "Bonnie Scotland," and of hearing undiluted Scotch accent, they certainly chose a better time.

The plays chosen for last Christmas were "Le Cid" and "King Henry IV." Part II. Rehearsals were continued until the

BRYNTAIL.

During the early part of the term there had been strange rumours that there would be no camp; wise heads were wondering what H.G. would do with himself. What could be the counter-attraction? What greenhouse, what tomato, what strange malady of the chicken-coop could accomplish this? Speculation was rife, but the boys nevertheless had their camp. This year we have prodigies to chronicle. First two prefects got up at 4 a.m. to catch a train. Gentle reader, you have read aright, it was 4 a.m. They got up, travelled, arrived, but their eyes, if not their appetites, belied any awakening. Again there came to light a ferocious wild-beast-hunter who, searching for tigers, snared a rabbit, and tracking a polar bear, encountered a pole cat. As it was dead, its capture became feasible. Our snake-charmer who specialized on the tail-end was not wholly successful, since the cobra, known in Wales as a blind-worm—strange people are the Welsh to persist in miscalling animals—slipped through the operator's fingers into a gorse bush. For the first few days we had our Headmaster with us, needless to say he was most welcome; he left on Tuesday at 6 a.m., and tents A and B should have seen him off. However, by some unforeseen hitch, tents A and B were still asleep when the breakfast bell rang at 8-30. The question they still try to solve is whether Welsh time is the same as English time. Dr. Roberts paid a flying visit, also too short; and then came two tramps from Bristol, all dust and thirst; then another, yclept "Tuppence"; and yet another visitor, Mr. Walker, to whom the camp, since its start, owes the Bryntail medal; a debt recognized by speech and souvenir on his departure. With him came a horde of tenderfoots, tired and footworn. It is such a climb from Llanidloes, the City, to Bryntail, the CAMP. And so days passed; swimming, running, and baseball, watching 1st XV. heroes indulging in scientific tip-cat—without move, levels, or nose-drops—made the time pass all too quickly. Duty boys did their work with zeal. It is true that a key was found in the porridge that dish-cloths had a knack of disappearing, and that scarcity of plates was felt; these are but details. Everyone knows it is easier to break a plate than to wash it: for proof come to Bryntail. Rumour also has it that there is a cupboard in H.G.'s room worth breaking open. It is full of tuck. Tuck plentiful and up to the present, unowned.

All camp activities proved successful, and competition between boys was keen. Four paper-chases were run, all campers joining in and all finishing, except one. In spite of Indian-like methods, in which it appears Bryntail boys are adepts, the track was lost. The four dispatch runs were exciting, but bilberries proved too strong a temptation for the small fry. The weather, fine beyond expectation, proved favourable for camping. Some boys were as black as the blackest negro Africa can boast, and days of brilliant sunshine followed one another until the last week, when a hurricane swept down the valley and blew a tent over. The following night, when rain found its way into the same tent, H.G. took drastic measures and removed

the forlorn sixth-formers, plus the School Captain's bed, into better quarters. The only tangible result of the efforts of the wind was the appearance of the seniors for breakfast; yes, indeed, whatever! In time, look you now too! It was one of our best camps. On an average fourteen pounds of bread per week per head were eaten (what says the Food Controller?). Fielding at baseball smartened up, and twenty-two catches in one evening will take some bearing. With the exception of a cut sustained as a result of the attraction of the bread-cutter, the surgery was singularly neglected. The youngest camper, joined for the month, was twenty-four months old and weighed two stones. The water supply for the first time ran so low, that special duty had to be taken to carry some from the river for washing purposes, the little supply available from the spring being kept for cooking. Amongst the campers were the School Football Captain; seven 1st XV., seven 2nd XV., and six 3rd XV. players; two boys who were amongst the first Bryntail campers five years ago; six boys from form VI, ten from form V., twelve from form IV., ten from form III., [and one Master from Alexandra Road, Edgbaston—Ed.]

Birmingham Central
Secondary School Magazine.

"FORWARD."

Editor - - MR. L. C. EVANS.

VOL. VIII.—No. 5.

MAY, 1920.

SIXPENCE.

Pro Patria.

To the sixty names already published one more must be added :
 G. F. R. BRIDGE, killed in action April 15th, 1918.

SCHOOL NEWS.

We break up on Friday, July 23rd, and re-start on Tuesday, September 7th. The School Sports will be held on Saturday, June 26th.

We congratulate H. Whitworth on his success in the January London Matric. Exam.

Prizes for General Knowledge were awarded at Christmas to Eaton 6A and Hughes 3B.

To many readers the name "Bryntail" is linked with their pleasantest memories of school life which will stand out undimmed and unforgettable when other incidents will have faded into oblivion; old Campers, especially, will be grieved to hear that, after Easter, Bryntail will no longer be available for school camps.

The C.S.S. is always pleased to see old friends, especially, perhaps, when they happen to be ladies; those who knew Miss Henderson were delighted to greet her en route in the New Year from Aberdeen for the West. She can still identify the surviving Sixth under their disguise of adolescence! Mrs. Hatfield blew in at mid-term, floated up to Form II. to compare this year's spring crop with previous seasons', and openly wished herself back on overtime, explaining Nap to Matric. candidates. It's some success to make scientists sense history!

Preparations for cricket are well advanced. Some rolling has been done, stock has been overhauled and, where necessary, repaired or replaced, and a completed fixture list has been put in the hands of the printers. We resume this year our games with Halesowen G.S., and for the first time matches have been arranged with Yardley S.S. Santall's leaving creates a gap in the XI, we shall have difficulty in filling. His keenness and brilliance in School cricket lead us to expect big things of him in the next few years, and we shall watch his career with interest.

for posterity. If some outstanding event had to be inscribed on the School's record, we should mention the weather. The weather makes or mars camp life, and that summer it was most unkind. Easter, 1921, was again not favoured, and even this summer when an exceptional fine spell created elsewhere a record of sunshine and warmth, the boys at Bryntail caught all the worst the year produced. After the weather, health holds second place in importance. During the four weeks of the camp in 1920, ill-luck was again with the boys. Mr. Guerra, who assumes the responsibility of the outings, and believe me, reader, it is no small matter, suffered much from ill-health. Moreover, one of the boys contracted quinsy, and we must in this connection give hearty thanks to Mrs. Millard who was with us, for the excellent care she gave the invalid. However, the two following camps were absolutely free from illness, and health reigned supreme.

Camp routine was pleasantly broken in 1920 by the visit of several parents, who are always welcome in our little "nid d' aigle." Most welcome indeed was the visit at Easter of our Headmaster and Mr. Benton, who remained with us for far too short a period. Mr. Benton created quite an enthusiasm by discovering a tumulus, which the boys dug out in the expectation of finding remains of a period now disappeared in the fog of time. The energy they displayed in digging would drive the leaders of the trade union of navvies to despair.

Old Boys still flock to Bryntail. Once having been, they always want to come again. In 1920 the Old Boys joined hands with the School; in 1921 they camped independently close by. Their only mishap was the loss of a bucket that floated down the river which had risen so high and so quickly as to flood their tent.

Activities never flagged. Last summer the boys bathed in the river daily, had four paper-chases of about five to six miles, four dispatch runs, two sports days (in which all events were keenly contested by every boy without exception), two gymkhanas, well enjoyed, tugs-of-war, four hill-climbing competitions, some swimming sports, one junior sports meeting, two mock trials, and four concerts, in which the camp Jazz band gave a good account of itself. After tea baseball was the order of the day, and on four occasions the boys went for long walks in the neighbourhood (about 8 to 9 miles). It is needless to add that none suffered from insomnia.

Duty in 1920 was not altogether satisfactorily performed, but at the two following camps it proved to be without a flaw. Each boy did his best, and that is all that is asked of a Bryntail boy.

We cannot close these comments without a word of praise for the spirit displayed this summer. Indeed the Camp Motto, "un pour tous et tous pour un" for them is not an empty phrase. It is a motto they took to heart and obeyed to the letter. So long as that is the case, we need have no fear that Bryntail will not live yet a while for the enjoyment and pleasure of the boys, and of their commanding officer whose orders are carried out so cheerfully and well.

BRYNTAIL.

It is not possible to allow the Magazine to go to print without a word about Bryntail. Every Easter and every Summer boys from the C.S.S. leave for the School camp in Wales, high up in the Plynlimmon Range. The event attracts no attention, produces no stir; it is part of the School routine! The Summer camp of 1920 has little to record

AIR, LIGHT AND SPACE.

The easiest, simplest, most delightful way of studying Geography, indeed the only method that should be admissible, is to see the world for oneself; then, then only perhaps, do the plans, maps, descriptions of experts become intelligible, then only can the information they exude in class- and lecture-room be absorbed; while, incidentally, fresh experts may thereby be created to bore with their knowledge the yet untravelled young. The day, we fear, is yet far distant when enlightened Education Committees, no longer impecunious, will at not infrequent intervals despatch envoys to the far places of the earth to see, enjoy, return and report; but till that happy day arrives (we shall watch its advent from our "bed of heaped Elysian flowers"), let us continue—afoot, awheel, atrain, or in hospitable car—to scour that portion of the universe accessible to us. The one necessity of travel is not money, but time; though into a week-end one can cram a deal of pleasure, and some folk would tackle the Indies in a Whitsuntide recess.

Several habitues of the School have recently by week-end discovered Wales, which, as the bulk of boys already know, is a Principality, which in the North produced for them a Second, and in the South a Head, which, as one of its dozen counties, includes Montgomeryshire, which enfolds Bryntail. Ah, Bryntail (remember to pronounce as newsboys cry their My-i-i-il), what visions the word calls up of huge jam-jars and smoking camp-fires, of cold, clear water and romantic caverns, of cheeky squirrels and elusive otters, of yarns and climbs and races galore! If there be yet one Boy, Old or Extant, who knows not Bryntail, and who asketh "What?" and "Where?" we answer: "Bryntail is a hospitable home in Edgbaston, where one plays billiards, and fingers longingly antique bayonets, scimitars and swords; Bryntail is a windy hill-top that looks towards Plynlimmon; it is a flourishing farm whose cows are red and white Herefords, not little black Welsh; it is a long, low cottage, the nucleus of the School Camp, set deep in a hollow of the mountain-side."

And how does one get there? One cycles, if holidays are long and luggage light, its 120 miles of distance; one meanders there by train, if loads are weighty; one is whisked there by car, if the Fates and Mr. Guerra are kind.

Hast thou, Fair Reader, seen Mr. Guerra's car present or past, replete with boys and dogs and gramophones? Hast ever seen him drive, him to whom Jehu, the son of Nimshi, was a racing snail? But mind, he slackens speed to let a black-aviced lambkin cross the road, and he never exceeds the speed limit long when he spies a policeman in the offing. And what game he puts up—a long-tailed cock-pheasant, a vagrant fox, bunnies and blackbirds galore. And some won't up! Certain matronly hens, sublime in buxom British worth, decline to hurry the pace, and the Citroën must needs slacken speed lest Dignity's staid plume be ruffled by her breeze.

Once there—O the joy of waking at Bryntail on a May morning, when the bloom is on the pear! Breakfast cooked in the open, French omelette done to a turn, pommes de terre sautées, chunks of bread and butter overlaid with store marmalade, and washed down with mugfuls of China tea. Then the scrambles up and down stony banks, the peeps into birds' nests, the discoveries among the whinberries and down by the stream. Hard to say which is most exciting, to dig out a baby rabbit with the help of one stick, one dog and half a dozen excited humans, or to locate Cavern 161—first discovered by a 4a boy, and capable of holding most of two Juniors, dovetailed head and heel! Then the charm of running water, the distant blue of mountain glens, the gleam of golden celandine, the elusive charm of violets, white and blue.

Then the Farm at Bryntail is so jolly neighbourly; in its great bedroom the sound sleep born of unlimited fresh air defies the gambols of rats and mice behind the wainscot, and round its wide fireplace it is very pleasant to gossip overnight with the Welsh lads come safely back from Salonika and Jerusalem. How odd these far-away names sound in this mountain home!

Of the two roads to Bryntail it is hard to say which is the more pleasant, the one through quaint Leominster (where one stops to note that the Ducking Stool was the reward not only of scolding Wives, but of cheating Brewers and Bakers) and busy Rhayader, or the other through the gate of old-world Ludlow and by half-timbered Ombersley. One may mention that since Bryntail was actually bought for a permanent School Camp, the Birmingham Water Works Authority at Rhayader, in view of the increased traffic of the district, have thought it expedient to take down the ancient "Butter Cross" that blocked the main village street lest it should share the fate of Llanidloes Town Hall, charged sideways recently by a Bryntail motor convoy. (Damage to car, slight to negligible.)

Of late, the Chief of Camp, in the goodness of his heart, has made some extra runs down Bryntail way, but we are glad to report that the patient in Llanidloes War Memorial Hospital, whose visitors he has carried, is now well on the road to recovery, since he has taken to blowing bubbles and laughing aloud over the epistles despatched to him in bulky envelope by his co-mates in smoky Brum.

Au revoir, Bryntail! We long to see you again! The lilac is all abloom, and the hedgerows are white with May, and all the trees have tumbled into flower and leaf, incontinent, at once. The scent of the bean-field, the lark's nest in the heather—and the engines are letting off steam alongside the C.S.S., and through the dull glass panes one can hardly tell whether the sun shines or no. Ay de mi, ay de mi!

E.H.C.

THE EASTER CAMP.

This Easter Camp was the fourteenth held at Bryntail. In giving this short account of the deeds and misdeeds of the bold adventurers who penetrated to the summit on which stands our little eagle's nest, we will not enlarge on the sorrow felt at the misfortunes of one camper who, the day of his arrival, was taken seriously ill. Barring this, the only clouds were those in the sky, and these were many, the weather being an extraordinary mixture of snow, sun, rain, hail, and wind: indeed, we had no weather, but merely a complete set of samples. The rain seemed particularly keen on exercising its influence in the morning, greatly to the distress of F. Barr, our eminent cook, who knows how to combine mysterious elements into a delectable whole, but likes to do so in solitude. Thus it happened that, making the most of sunshine and accepting rain with a cheerful mind, the days at Bryntail followed their unswerving course, and too soon, much too soon, the hour came when it was necessary to say good-bye to the Welsh mountains. Looking back upon the fourteen days, it must be admitted that nothing but pleasant recollections are present in our minds. The activities were numerous, dull moments few, and these were soon dispersed by the efforts of the excellent household band, whose selections were admirably rendered, especially the "Birthday

Serenade," their best effort. Out of doors games were keenly played, even "tip-cat"; Mutt and Jeff were here in their element, and great were their victories. Each week Sports were held, and these proved most successful; four Old Boys—Boston, Esslemont, Laughton, and Barr—joined in, but their efforts, though duly appreciated, met with little success. We had the pleasure of having Mr. Benton as judge and our Headmaster as starter. It is always a great joy for the boys to have our Headmaster at Bryntail, and the sole objection to his visits is that they are too short. We know what a busy man he is, and for once we shall excuse him *mais qu'il ne recommence pas*—carried nem. con.

We also welcomed the presence of Mrs. Brosecomb at our last meeting and prize distribution. She gave out the prizes in a way which at once captivated every boy. The C.O. expressed his satisfaction at the behaviour of the boys and at their readiness to fall in with any suggestion. Once again the boys proved true to the Camp motto: "One for all and all for one." We feel that when this is the case we can but repeat the famous words of Macmahon: "*C'est vous le négre, parfait, continuez.*"

The outstanding event of the fortnight was the farewell dinner organised by the Senior Boys for their own benefit. This was a gorgeous affair indeed. Eggs, bacon, milk and tea galore! The table was loaded, and to complete the festivity, the C.O., in the dark of night, produced a cake that also disappeared in mysterious fashion.

This account would be incomplete should no mention be made of the addition of a steel tent to the sleeping accommodation. In connection with this, our most hearty thanks must be given to Mr. Fox, who so kindly came to Bryntail to erect it, and who incidentally mended all our seats; put up a shelter for the Cook, and proved such a useful acquisition to the Camp that hopes are entertained that he may come again. Rumour says he may.

And now one word to the boys. We speak of events, of visitors, of building: what about the boys? Undoubtedly they form the most important part of the whole concern. Duty well performed, discipline, sportsmanship above suspicion, constitute elements assuring a successful Camp. May it ever be so.

H.G.

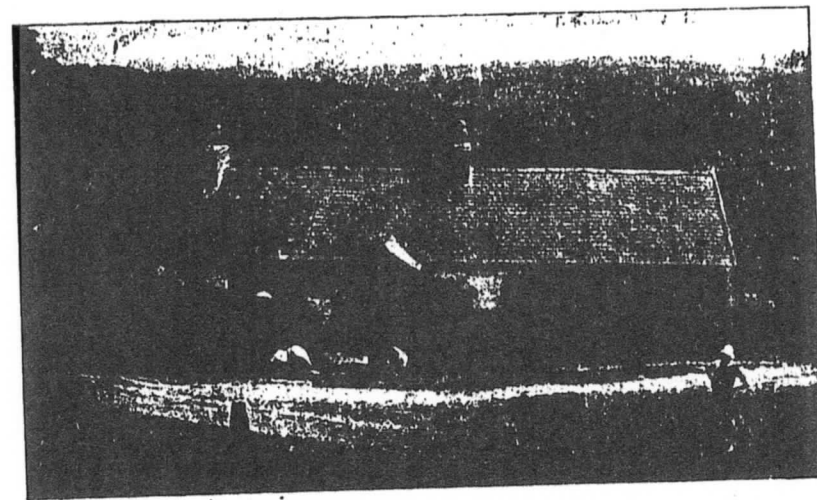
Months ago there were persistent rumours that C.S.S. boys were to become landed proprietors. Everyone of importance now knows that, through the kindness of Mr. R. G. Powis who lent the necessary cash, Bryntail belongs to the School. The debt on the cottage was £80 plus legal expenses amounting to £5 16s. Already two whist drives have helped considerably to reduce this debt. The first, at which there were 244 players, yielded a profit of £20, and the second with 228 players gave us £19. We have, therefore, thanks to the generosity of parents and the splendid help by the Ladies' Committee, who made such a success of the catering, reduced the debt to £46 16s. At both drives Bryntail boys were to the fore; after their experience in waiting on forty hungry campers, the task of supplying refreshment to two hundred or more civilized Birmingham citizens was mere child's play. Elsewhere a picture of Bryntail will give parents an idea of the holiday home they have helped to buy and, we hope, will prove an incentive to further acts of generosity so that the purchase may be speedily completed.

A party of eleven, ten mere hommes, and Nell Guerra, spent New Year week working at Bryntail, [That's the place to teach that work is the best of play!] and thanks to their efforts the walls are now distempered in artistic tones, and everywhere is swept and garnished for Easter. The weather was mild, and the moon was full; the Jazz Band gave several spirited performances. [You should see H. G. conduct! Appleby Matthews isn't in it!] There was a new cook [Fr: cuisinière], who burnt the soup only once—it was thick soup! Ye gods! Even the Farm dogs sniffed. H. G. looked like Don Q in his crimson sweater, with his hair on end; the rest resembled budding pirates till transformation came on leaving day, when shoes were polished and collars clean. Nell's costume sustained no damage. Rumour has it that the smaller half of the party got side-tracked on the return journey. However they looked jolly enough when an inspector looked in on them, in a carriage all to themselves, crunching toffee and playing bridge for love. Swank!

BRYNTAIL.

Bryntail Camp was carried on last August with as much enthusiasm as in previous years; the boys were keenly interested in Camp Sports and Camp Competitions, as was shown by the hard tussle for the Camp Medal. Mr. Guerra was pleased with the keenness shown in the Swimming Sports, one of the greatest camp events. There were also two walks, each about ten to twelve miles long, and four hill-climbs, one in each week. The weather was bad for the whole month, but in spite of this, routine was carried out as usual.

The Camp was honoured by the presence of a few Old Boys, though these proved quite sufficient; on the other hand they did a great work in acting two Charades, which were quite humorous. The Old Boys who turned up were Boston, Robins, Harris, Slater, Govier, and a jolly new camper Cornick, or the camp comedian. The camp was also honoured by the presence of Mr. Broscomb and Mr. Benson who made a Stage which, to our surprise, has not yet broken down under the weight of performers. A little while before August those famous building contractors, Broscomb and Guerra Ltd., came to Bryntail, and by knocking down the wall between the C.O. room and the Square room, formed the large Dining Room and Concert Hall. The campers were not without tuck, for H. G. opened a



BRYNTAIL COTTAGE.

tuckshop which was put in charge of H. Walker. All went well until the second fortnight when a poor little darling turned up and grew so homesick that, when he had been there only three days, he was sent back home incurable. Friend Cooke came to camp and proved to be a good camper, for he kept to the camp motto, "One for all and all for one," so well that he was voted the Popularity Prize.

The camp was marred by the illness of Nell and Dunn, the former became stiff and could not stand, probably due to overgorging. Nell became so ill that Mr. Guerra was obliged to take her to the Vet, but she soon got well after a few days starvation. Dunn caught a severe cold; it appears that he fell into the river, and instead of running straight back to camp, he undressed and waited until his clothes were dry; however he recovered and was well enough to go home quite soon.

The last note of interest is the journey of five adventurers who risked their lives by going to Aberystwith in the Citroën. They did the twenty-nine miles in seventy-five minutes, some speed; but H.G. says that a Citroën will do anything, even beat a Morgan.

There will, of course, be a camp at August, and Mr. Guerra hopes to see many new campers at Bryntail, and I may tell you, it is really a wonderful place.

B.G.M.



SOME OF THE BRYNTAIL BOYS. SECOND FORTNIGHT, SUMMER, 1924.

CAMP.

For boys especially there is no happier, healthier holiday than camping . . . but camping depends on three things:— First. The weather. Our last four camps were very unfortunate, and the work of the C.O. and the Cook was increased tenfold. Last summer we had four paper chases, of about eight miles, in the rain; every boy except one turned out, and all enjoyed the fun. We also had four dispatch runs in the midst of showers, and they also proved enjoyable. We had two Sports Meetings, in which all the events were well contested, specially the tug of war, and two days were set apart for Junior Sports. The weather allowed one Swimming Sports Meeting, but the second suffered from the rain and cold.

Second. The boys, who must show themselves docile and adaptable. To learn not to be selfish is a great lesson; where can it be better learnt than in camp?

The third essential is the officers, who must be perpetually on the alert, see to everything, know everything, control everything, and give sometimes disagreeable orders in a pleasing manner.

There is also the question of money. In spite of the heavy demand the various improvements at Bryntail have made on our resources—two new steel tents, reflooring of miner's cottage, covering of way to camp oven and water supply, laying of drains—the balance sheet this year shows a welcome improvement. So far we have lived on our debts; in a near future all this will be cleared up.

We had the pleasure of entertaining during the 1923 Summer Camp three boys from our city's adopted town of Albert, and from these boys we still receive occasional letters recalling amusing incidents. Last summer unfortunately neither space nor money allowed the repetition of the experiment.

We have been fortunate in our cooks; they have all done admirably; such names as Govier, Innes, Robins, Boston, Robotham, need no comment. Last summer this responsible post was held by a school boy, Mills, and at no time were we better served,

The Camp Concerts were excellent! We had a gymnastic display, living pictures, an articulated doll, a mirror mystery, marionettes, and a nigger minstrel troupe, and songs specially composed for Bryntail were numerous and amusing. We must thank Mr. Broscomb for his help in our entertainments; his song "The Nigger Sunday School," has become part of the Camp collection. Underwood as a young lady, Brooks as the parson, Mr. Boston as the bold bad pirate (with a stove-pipe in lieu of a telescope) took the camp by storm.

We also gave a Grand Banquet to the Old Boys and visitors. Five courses, with speeches and songs, finished with a dance in which the C.O. led the final farandole to the martial strains of "Quand Madelon." Form Four boys acted as waiters, in costume, towel tied round the waist.

One of our bonfires had to be abandoned through rain, but the other was splendid, and the flames rose to the height of the cottage chimney, while the hissing was deadened by the syncopated singing of the Old Boys.

Mrs. Broscomb kindly distributed the 67 prizes on the last day; the medal was well won by G. Hughes; the runner-up was Talboys.

OLD BOYS' CAMP, 1924.

The affair started on July 28, when half a dozen of us set out from Snow Hill, presumably to look after the schoolboy campers, but really to have a jolly good time. Railway journeys have a knack of putting people into high spirits and giving them that Kruschen feeling necessary to the successful holiday-maker. By the time we reached Llanidloes we were ready for any devilment, but our good sense prevailed! We managed to crawl up to Bryntail and renew old acquaintance, and then we turned to our "digs" in the miner's hut next door to the school cottage.

A conspicuous old camper who always slept in bed socks would have us all "go to sleep together;" his appeal for unity met with a storm of missiles, most of which were heavy boots. There was, too, a super-fastidious person, who would have a table of some sort, and who would object to burnt porridge or even to a few cinders in his rice. Our membership included also two notorious Alexandrines—brothers, worse luck!—an insurance agent, pianist, a hard working moulder, a harder working chartered (nearly) accountant, the hardest worker of all (the writer), and a would-be actor. During August week, we had a real live cricketer, who is also a full back, a non-smoker, and a strict abstainer.

None bathed until the third week of camp, thanks to the rainy season setting in, with short sharp spells of cold relieved by down-pours and further outlook gloomy to stormy. Of course wood duties had to be performed, and the brother Alexandrines, setting aside for once their little differences of opinion, rigged up intricately intelligent contrivances with straps for that easy carrying of logs which constituted most of our material exercise and diversion and after which complete rest, before and after dinner, was always much appreciated—except by the cooks.

The first exciting action in which we took part was H.G.'s concert, to which we were invited free of charge. The next was when, as hares for the paper chase, we led the boys a rare dance—and ourselves too—only to find them cut the trail by about a mile and a half and suddenly appear a few yards behind us! The funniest incident of the run was that a certain "Chappie" could not stop running down the Van mountain and crashed, legs foremost, through a thick set hedge.

Our piratical troupe outshone anything in "Treasure Island" or "Peter Pan;" our libretto, with lyrics, highly original, left the juniors dumbfounded. Dewdrop, the pirate wench, was highly acceptable, though her borrowed skirt was rather short; the rest of the troupe made love to her quite attractively, and when she quivered and

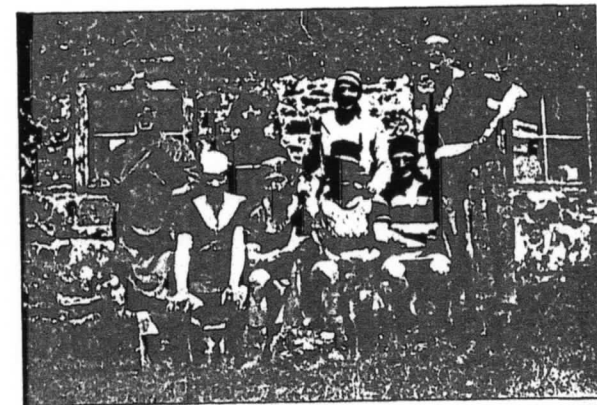
tremored in the "Prithee, pretty maiden" duet, the whole house quivered and wept with her.

We gave a really A1 dinner in the Hut; it was a four-course dinner, and H.G.'s appetite certainly improved when he saw the fruit salad. Impromptu speeches were made in flowing terms, and Mr. Broscob related funny (?) stories. The gathering dispersed to the accompaniment of weird and wonderful noises from a crowd of boys, dressed in anything from a pyjama upwards, who were growing excited over a suppositious bonfire, and the evening finished with songs and dances round a huge conflagration.

We visited the Birmingham Waterworks in the Elan Valley, thirteen miles away, where we drank tea and sherry (the brothers had birthdays!) at the Hotel, sang with mine host's daughter, descended beneath the Caban Gôch dam and generally had a good time. Then we raced back to Rhayader and shopped in Llanidloes, and, when the moon arose in silvery majesty, even the staidest old camper felt the prick of Cupid's little sharp arrows. However, abnormality soon returned, and we treated Sabrina (Severn) and her neighbours to a selection from our extensive repertoire of song. Finally we crawled the four miles up to camp and flopped into bed, dead to the world.

Succeeding days saw another paper chase, much longer than the first, a supper and concert, given in our honour by H.G. à la Savoie, the revival of the obsolete art of bathing, and much more which has been forgiven and forgotten. "Goodbye, Bryntail; roll on 1925!

Wood.
L.



OLD BOYS' CONCERT PARTY, SUMMER, 1924.

CAMPERS IN TOWN.

Some of the best events in camp life are those which take place after it is too dark for outdoor sports, and perhaps the most enjoyable of these is the Camp Concert or Sing Song when those who are able are called upon to amuse the others by their efforts, vocal, instrumental, etc.

It was thought by the 'powers that be' that those unfortunates who have not been able to take part in the camps, together with their parents and friends, might be interested to know how the time at camp is spent, and to this end a Bryntail Sing Song was arranged in the School Hall, on Saturday, January 24th.

The Head in his opening remarks pointed out that as only one person could sing, and he was not mentioning that person's name so that no one would be jealous, the audience must please be merciful and not throw things at the performers, each of whom would be doing his best.

The "Sing Song" was declared open by the private camp crier known as the Silent Reader—Barlow, Broscumb and an overcoat. This item was successful in that at least one of H.G.'s pipes is now useless.

The next item was the Camp Song—"There is a Happy Camp," by the Form 4 artists, after which Merrick and Fletcher told us, in musical form, exactly what one eats at each meal.

A recitation called "Morrow," by Rooke, was much appreciated by the audience. Keey, supported by a Form 4 Chorus gave the

song—"L'Alouette," and the Head and H.G. endeavoured to persuade the audience to join in the chorus, with more or less success owing to a certain amount of shyness, a quality which was confined to the older members.

During the evening, Mr. Broscumb, a camp visitor, gave two songs.

Form 4's section of the evening's entertainment concluded with an athletic display—"Pyramids."

A Nigger Minstrel concert, of which the instrumental part was of the Jazz order, next took place. Two of the leading instruments were the Watering Can and H.G.'s banjo. Perhaps the most successful items in this section were, Piccadilly (the Band), The Garden Subbub (sung by Partridge), and Me Namara's Band (sung by Hughes).

During the interval which followed, the audience were stimulated by coffee, served by the camp waiters, and after this Mr. L. M. Jones gave an interesting talk on Camp Life, illustrated by Lantern Slides. It is interesting to note that, in spite of rumours to the contrary, one slide showed that washing does take place in Camp routine.

The next musical item was a song called "Hey Diddle, Diddle," which tells of the exciting adventures of "Mary," "Mrs. Perkins," and others. Ellerslie's song—"Rhubard and Custard" made an impression. "The Capital Ship" was sung by Anckorn, supported by others from Form 5, who also sang a song which is now looked upon as belonging to the camp—"My Old Master."

This brought to an end the first Sing Song, which was certainly enjoyed by present boys, old campers and, we hope, the audience.

The proceedings closed, in the same manner as at Bryntail, by all singing God Save the King.

R. B.

The latter simply adopted an old track of years gone by and got home before the hares!!! The Relay Races also were successful and well contested; so were the Baseball matches. The most interesting event of the Sports was the Tug-of-War which was rendered difficult by the wet and slippery grass.

The Concerts were most enjoyable; a pathetic little ditty about H.G.'s beard went to the tune of "It aint gonna rain no more"; a good song about "our marsh" had elaborate staging, including live animals. (This does not refer to the actual troupe of entertainers). All did well.

A certain amount of excitement animated the smaller boys when, through a stoppage in the pipe, the water supply gave out. They had brought soap; but how to use it!!!

Accidents. O! yes of course! One boy came into rough contact with the rocks and damaged his leg. Another sprained his foot. The latter is used to it. He does it every time! Quite a habit!

The two outstanding events of the Camp were undoubtedly the final banquet and the bonfire. The Cook surpassed himself, but rumour has it that he is now convalescent and ready to recommence. Excitement reigned when it was found that Nell, innocent Nell, taking advantage of the concentrated attention given to the eloquent speech of the C.O., was silently but effectively devouring Form 2's custards.

The bonfire would not burn. It simply WOULD NOT BURN. It was raining, and our Senior Stoker had built it.

Duty was well performed. Even the wood duty. Ay, Ay! Sir! even the wood duty, as proved by the acrobatic performance of the milk duty boy, vaulting high stacks of wood piled in the most unexpected place. One of the Camp problems is how did the Cook manage to burn the lot!

For the second time in Bryntail Camp history two boys tied for the medal—Clarke and Burr. Well done!

And the last day came all too soon, and every one returned to Birmingham all the better for the change.

H. G.

THE TWENTIETH BRYNTAIL CAMP, EASTER, 1925.

It has been said that happy countries have no history. The same can be said of last Easter Bryntail Camp.

It was raining when the boys tramped up to the Cottage. It rained practically all the time, and by sheer luck the boys managed to get to Llanidloes on the return journey between two showers. Rain, however, is of little account. It is easy to get accustomed to all things, it is only a matter of forgetting that it might be otherwise.

We had two excellent Dispatch Runs and two good Paper Chases. The second was of a special nature. Through lack of paper the hares laid but a scanty track. That did not puzzle the hounds.

BRYNTAIL.

The first fortnight boys, conducted by Mr. L. A. Walker, arrived at Bryntail, tired but happy, in the afternoon of July 28th and were immediately served with tea. A few days after, F. Barr came up, followed by an outbreak of influenza in the camp; H. G. brought a doctor from town, and, having caught cold himself, went about with a blanket wrapped tightly round him, à la mode indienne.

The Sports and Concerts were a success on the whole, but the weather was wet; to quote a Form II boy "Stormy, further outlook unsettled" Towards the end of the fortnight there was a banquet (?) followed by a bonfire, and next day the fortnightly boys departed, accompanied by Barr, who, having smoked hundreds of Army Club, had littered the Camp with empty cigarette boxes.

The second fortnight, with the helpful supervision of Colonel and Captain Walker, passed peacefully (except when H.G. was awakened too early in the morning or afternoon); but the water supply ran short, and the boys had to wash in the farm horse trough or the river, that is, when they did wash. (Who was the boy who carried pails of water to the farm for Mary?)

The Sports, ably (?) conducted by Barlow, were a great success; several new records, the chief being the two-mile relay in 29 minutes 0 seconds by Mills, were set up. The usual Paper chases were run, but why did the whippers-in carry gorse bushes?

Poulton celebrated his sixteenth (or his sixth) birthday; the inmates of the cook's room, plus an outsider, invited H.G. to a magnificent tea, subscribed for by them, but alas! a certain 1st XV fellow couldn't pitch in the baseball game afterwards, and his side, who were firm favourites, lost.

Several concerts were given, notably the mock wireless demonstration, of the Walkers and Tent Four, but the greatest event of the fortnight was the Banquet; the most hard worked person in the Camp was the cook, who provided the following menu :- Soup, sausage and mash, sardines, peas (cannon balls), bread and cheese, and custard and prune(s?), washed down at various intervals with tea. The Banquet was followed by the Prize Distribution, when the Camp Medal was given to Fletcher, but the bonfire, not for the first time, was washed by rain.

The next day Camp broke up with mixtures of joy and sadness, but "If Summer comes, can Easter be far behind?"

F.J.M.

BRYNTAIL CAMP, EASTER, 1926.

The School Camp was again, as in previous years, a great success. The chief thing which ensures a successful camp is good weather, and probably never before has the camp enjoyed such delightful weather at Easter-time.

Then again there was no grumbling, every boy performed his duties willingly and well, and even the C.O. could find nothing wrong, and he is, as everyone knows, very critical. Special praise, if such may be given, is deserved by the camp cook Mills, whose culinary achievements were truly remarkable, reaching the summit of their greatness in the camp banquet held just before the return home. Mills also served the meals to time, or even a little before time; this latter fact, although appreciated by the camp in general, caused considerable discomfort to some members of the Sixth, not to mention a few Old Boys, in the mornings.

Two paper-chases and despatch-runs were run as usual, everyone in camp taking part. The second paper-chase was, however, unfinished, owing to the length and difficulty of the course. For the first time was held a "course au clocher," in which the camp was completely hoodwinked by Mr. Walker and Mr. Broscombe. Two sports meetings, as well junior sports, were held; all the events were keenly contested. Most events were won by Burr and Hughes. Thanks to the weather, swimming in the morning and baseball in the evening formed part of the daily routine.

Three visitors, Mr. Broscombe, Mr. Humphreys, and Mr. Walker, honoured the camp by their presence; a number of old boys turned up at the beginning of the first week, but of course "Camps are not what they used to be in the old days. Why . . . etc."

Several camp concerts were held during the fortnight, the first, by the old boys, was a great success, although H. G. arranged the programme, while the audience patiently awaited the performers. Of

the performances in the other concerts, that of Grocock occupies a position the others could not rise or fall to,—his singing as well as his voice is unique.

Two days before the end of these eventful weeks was held the camp banquet, at which the guest of honour was Mr. Humphreys. After the dinner, served by Mr. Guerra, Dunn and Walker, (many and varied were the remarks passed about the amount left for the waiters), various items of song (?) were rendered by the more accomplished members of the camp.

The next day the prizes were distributed by Mr. Humphreys; the medal was awarded to G. Hughes, and the popularity prize to Broscombe (Sen). After supper the camp bonfire was lit by Mr. Guerra with a gallon of petrol. Then on the Saturday camp broke up, as did the weather in seeming sympathy. D.N.W.

THE SUMMER CAMP, 1926.

The first fortnight boys left Snow Hill on Friday, July 23rd and arrived at Bryntail in time for a welcome tea. Camp activities began with a Paper Chase on the Monday, and everybody slept well that night. The second Paper Chase was held a week later, and, after losing the trail several times, the whole camp, including the hares, turned up late for tea, much to Mr. Guerra's annoyance.

The Two Mile Relay Races were held, (Jones covering the ground on one occasion in less than twelve minutes), and in the usual athletic and swimming sports, competitions and despatch runs Mills and Fletcher covered themselves with glory.

Bathing was enjoyed nearly every morning. The water was very cold, though H. G's thermometer, a unique instrument, proved it was always above freezing point. Baseball was played by part of the camp every evening, and those unfortunates who were not playing, indulged in a peculiar game invented by H. G. and called Tip and Run.

Towards the end of the fortnight a magnificent bonfire was fired by means of all the available petrol. In a burst of economy and thinking of the coal strike, H. G. decided to boil his kettle on the embers, and save the methylated sprits in his stove. The seniors were allowed to roast potatoes in the ashes.

At the Camp dinner on the day following the bonfire, Broscomb Senior was voted the Popularity Prize. The dinner itself was excellent and our cook surpassed himself.

The second fortnighters ate a week's bread in the first three days, and certain activities were cancelled, no paper-chase at all being held. Mr. Humphreys and the seniors conducted a walk to Craig y Llo, the falls being particularly high owing to the rain, and six senior campers walked to Pennant Rocks.

At the end of the third week we lost the well-known Mills, our much prized cook. The brothers Walker took over this difficult task, and their dinners will long be remembered. At the second Camp Dinner and Prize Distribution Mr. Guerra was presented with a cut glass and silver biscuit barrel in honour of his twenty-fifth visit to Bryntail. The prizes were distributed by Mrs. Walker and Mrs. Broscomb. Bennett won the Camp Medal, Marklew was voted the most popular boy in Form 4, and Newey was awarded the Junior Medal.

As usual there were numerous Old Boys at Bryntail, it would not be camp without them. We had a number of visitors during the month, including, as usual, Messrs. Broscomb, Walker, and Humphreys, Mr. René Guerra and several parents.

The weather was, as is usual at Bryntail, rainy with a few fair periods. The second week was glorious, but during the second fortnight bathing was often impossible as the river rose two feet. The concerts during the month were as good as ever, Form IV's was especially enjoyable. At the mock trial Mr. Broscomb was a very good judge, and we will not enlarge upon the terrible punishment of the prisoner. The camp attended Divine Service at the chapel on Crowlwn once during each fortnight.

R. J. B.

x/6 JUL 27

That there are one or two Weary Willies in the Upper School whom nothing short of a charging bull or a charge of cordite could rouse from their lethargic boredom. So young and yet so slothful! Perchance all their energy is spent on growing pains?

That eclipsing is great fun, especially when Dad pays your fare and Mother cuts the sandwiches and fills the Thermos. We mayn't be here for the next Sun Shadow Show; we may be up among Bailey's beads. How nice and warm we'll be, smoking Coronas on the Moon!

That there will be many changes in the class rooms and canteen next September. One bold spirit prophesies that books will be housed in a library and that a penny scone will cost less than three halfpence. What a hope!

That the Head is some cricketer.

That "Current Events" as a part of History is a brainy idea and can include anything from Archæological Excavations and aerial wonders to the sliding of a front garden down a fissure in the London chalk.

That a ditty called "Sing a Song of Sixpence" is not popular in the Fives.

That some of the hymns sung at Morning Prayer are top hole. The musical critic of the Upper Fifth has some yarn about the second century of the Christian era and the Procession of the Ass. Perhaps Mr. Hopkins (or another) would oblige with a lecture on "Origins of Early Christian Music."

That Mr. Evans shows such a pretty wit whiles in Assembly that one wide smile leads on to silence.

That some of the Prefects are mighty good looking, and that a Fourth Form boy's young sister noted the fact aloud.

That though there was no Easter camp this year at Bryntail a Rhode was found there; the way was long, the path was steep, and the water bubbled in the radiator before the Cucumbers were reached.

That one of the Staff reached school so early one June morning that he lost both himself and his hat. It is not true, however, that he nicked the night watchman's early cup of coffee.

That at the injunction, "Hands out of your pockets, boys!" one of the masters nearly obeyed himself.

BRYNTAIL.

Arriving at Llanidloes at 4 o'clock, we began camp training with a four mile walk, all uphill in a boiling hot sun. Mr. Humphreys presented the camp with twelve silver medals for various activities; Dr. Cobb came up, and Mr. Ward, one of the school curators. It was a wonder some of the boys survived the 'Camp Feast,' when one considers what they put out of sight.

We went on a lorry to Llandinam; had altogether four paper chases, of about six to eight miles each; four relay races of five miles across country (the best time 12 minutes); two 'gate hunts,' two dispatch runs, two junior sports, two camp competitions, two senior sports and two swimming sports.

Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds came to the Farewell Dinner; Mr. Reynolds gave us a little entertainment, Mrs. Reynolds distributed the prizes. The Camp Cup, for the best at Sports, Baseball and Duty, was won for the third time by R. G. Hughes.

On the last night we had a tremendous bonfire and a procession, and the seniors roasted potatoes on the ashes. On Saturday (the last day) we set out in pouring rain for Llanidloes. D. T. L.

lost himself in the hills of Wild Wales, but we do not know what refreshments he had en route. Some reached Bryntail far in advance of the School Advance Party, much to the delight of the members of this party, who found everything ship-shape and in perfect order and therefore had nothing to do. Two more Old Boys were seen, after the Camp had broken up, hastening on push-bikes towards Middleton. Whether they reached Bryntail or not, we cannot say. What they did if ever they got there and found everything locked up, we can but guess, but what they said we pretty well know!

The chief activities of the Old Boys were: first, a terrible rush on the Camp tuck shop (Ask friend C—— what he thinks of the camp "Fruit Dainties,")! second, a visit in force to Llanidloes Picture House. We are told that when they had all got seated, it was found necessary to close the doors—"House Full." We cannot record the hour of their return to Camp. They returned so quietly that even the mastiff of the O.C. failed to hear them. Did they get back at all that night? We wonder!

We also hear on good authority that Old Boys peeled potatoes, mended wireless sets, drank milk and even played cards at the farm.

And these Old Boys were right to come and were therefore heartily welcomed. It is the best way to enjoy an outing and the O.C. assures me that he is always pleased to see Old Boys coming back to the old spot where so many pleasant hours were spent.

May there be many such happy parties at Bryntail. H.G.

WITH THE OLD BOYS AT BRYNTAIL CAMP, EASTER, 1928.

[This article deals with the activities of a party of about 20 Old Boys who attended the School Camp at Bryntail and had a really first class, enjoyable time.—Ed.]

A fine gathering of Old Boys took place at Bryntail this Easter. The Old Boys outnumbered the School Boys by six!! They all rolled up—some by train, some on motor-bikes, some on push-bikes. One Old Boy who is following special treatment for reducing his embonpoint suggests walking it? And on they came, at all times; one turned up in the early hours of the morning. It appears that he

replacement, and certain improvements in the cooking arrangements were contemplated, but the havoc wrought by the weather was beyond our wildest nightmares.

A brief statement of the Camp's finances must here be made. The Cottage, steel tents and fittings represent a capital outlay of £150.

It has been the policy to keep the fees of the campers as low as possible. No provision for a sinking fund has therefore been made; the money for repair work, extensions, etc. has been met by means of loans, repaid by instalments from the proceeds of subsequent camps. There is thus no money in hand, indeed an amount of £10 is still owing to the Old Centrals' Football Club. It must be clearly understood that since the Camp concerns at the most 15% of the boys in the School, the general games fund can hardly be used for camp purposes (except by way of loans).

It must also be remembered that the cottage property is leasehold and that when the lease falls in in 23 years time it will have to be handed back to the owner in its original condition. Such restoration will prove expensive, and in justice to our successors it is imperative that some provision be made for this. If we are to provide for a sinking fund for the above purposes, it will be necessary to increase the charges made to campers.

Such then are the facts upon which a decision will have to be made. It must be clearly understood that the ultimate responsibility for a Camp bearing the School name and under School auspices must fall on the Head Master, and that from this no-one, however willing, can relieve him.

May it be added that he is appreciative of the delights of the Camp and its surroundings, of the immense benefit life under such conditions can be to boys and of the happy memories it holds for Old Campers.

W. H. R.

BRYNTAIL. FEBRUARY, 1929.

The premature and much regretted retirement of Mr Guerra raises the question of what is to be done about the School Camp at Bryntail, and it is important that boys, parents and old boys should understand the true situation.

Those who know and appreciate the time and labour Mr. Guerra devoted to camp matters will realise that no single man can succeed to his work—for masters who have normal home ties to spend almost the whole of the Easter and Summer Holidays at Bryntail is an utter impossibility and an unreasonable tax on their time. Responsibility for the camp will therefore henceforth have to be borne on more than one pair of shoulders, and several masters have intimated their willingness to take a turn of duty. Mr. Humphreys has agreed to undertake the organisation of the administrative side, and offers of assistance have been received from parents and old boys.

The main difficulty is the Camp itself. A certain amount of annual repair of the cottage and the tents is expected, but the gales of last Autumn caused unprecedented damage. Two of the steel tents are completely wrecked, a third is so badly damaged as to make its reconditioning at least a very difficult matter; the corrugated-iron roofing over the cook-house has been blown down and part of the verandah roof swept away. We already knew that the beams supporting the roof of the miner's cottage were rotting and required

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BRYNTAIL.

In response to the request of many parents the Camp at Bryntail is being continued.

In order to put the Steel huts, the Cottage and various camp buildings in proper repair we have already incurred expenses amounting to £35. We hope parents, old boys, and others interested in the activities of the School will send donations to help us to defray this expenditure.

BRYNTAIL, 1929.

After a lapse of about a year the Camp was reorganised this Summer.

At Whitsuntide a party went to Bryntail to estimate the extent of the damage done by the gales, and it was decided that out of the remains of the four tin huts, together with some new materials, three huts might be erected. Hence the Summer Camp was intended to be a "Working Camp." Actually, the greater part of the work under the supervision of our technical advisers, Mr. Crump and Mr. Broscob, was finished in the first four days, and after that the Camp ran on its usual lines, sundry despatch runs and paper-chases, etc., being arranged.

The second paper-chase was a particularly bright affair; it poured hard and it blew hard, so that after some (thirty?) three miles the hounds gave up; the hares, who included a member of the Staff, got home about two hours later. It appeared that at frequent intervals they had thought they could hear the hounds and hence they made the most gruelling trail they could, until, eventually, they lost themselves.

The weather was quite good for Bryntail; that is to say "mainly unsettled and showery with a few fair periods." The fair periods were brilliant, and even sun-bathing was indulged in.

As for the home life of Camp we were exceedingly well fed and generally looked after by our excellent quartermaster, Mr. Humphreys.

The position of C.O. was ably filled by Mr. Loveridge, who even tested our bath water (River Clwedig) before allowing us to get "c-c-c-eversowarrm." ourselves.

Mills acted as cook for the fortnight, surpassing even his usual high standard—The porridge was burned only twice. He was helped by Mr. E. Ward, who filled the post of General Handyman.

Mr. Logan came up to give Camp a trial for two or three days. He stayed a fortnight. What more can be said to emphasise the pleasure of the holiday?

D.G.B.

The next evening saw an innovation in the camp, Rugby-touch succeeded Base-ball, mainly on account of the temperature or rather lack of it. Those who have played "ordinary" Rugby-touch have no idea what the game can be made into. It can become as exciting as Rugby itself, especially if the players disagree over the rules.

A long walk to the "Bottomless lake," inured us to the "hardships" of camp life.

A paper-chase, held a day or two after, was by no means a complete success, unless to collect mud from unbeaten tracks, and dump it at the camp.

Now Mr. Loveridge took the opportunity to paint the tents, and some unfortunate ones had to scrape the rust off them, on their free days.

At the end of the vacation, we had a bathe, that is those of us who could stand a temperature of a little, if any, above zero. Mr. Loveridge enjoyed it; he said so himself when he came out of the water, three seconds after he had entered it.

A Steeple-chase, about the last thing we did, was perhaps the most successful of all, though wading the river three or four times damped the ardour of some.

The breaking-up concert was successful but not so much as the feast that preceded it.

Then almost before we could realise it, ten days had gone and the time had come to return to home and beauty.

From another source:—Messrs. Humphreys and Broscob were Quarter Master and Renovator respectively. The latest innovations are sausages and palliasses. Smith and Mills took over the cooking. Together they used, according to the wood squad, more fuel than ever before. The Quartermaster and Renovator bricked in the tap, built a set of steps and improved the outside fireplace. Out of old tent tin they made a contraption for either bathing in, or keeping wood in.

From a third:—Near to the Camp, at Van, Mr. Guerra was found taking a holiday. Cheerful as ever, with as usual a number of small boys about him, he was lodged in a cottage through whose roof protrudes the remains of a fallen tree.

THE TRIO.

C. S. S. CAMP, EASTER, 1930.

After an uneventful train journey, about fifteen of us arrived at Llanidloes, dumped our kit-bags, and faced, cheerfully or otherwise, the prospect of a three-mile walk uphill.

The long train ride had cramped our legs, and the first mile of walking eased them, but after that, well, I'll leave that to your imagination.

As soon as our kit-bags arrived, we reduced our wear to the least possible and went to see the "sights." Old campers renewed their acquaintance with the beloved land-marks, new campers paused and wondered at the glories revealed.

That night gave an indication of the cold weather that was to come, and I am afraid most of us wore more than the usual night-gear.

christened in Yorkshire, schooled at Birmingham University and housed for four years at Chancellor's Hall, (where they play fives), and Mr. C. Roberts whose English is more intelligible, in the Gymnasium and out, than was Mr. Logan's. Quite a number of the staff, some of them Army men, are fluent in French and German, but Mr. Roberts is unique in that he speaks Danish as the result of three years spent in Jutland and on the Island of Fyn at the Silkeborg and the Niels Bukhs Physical Training Colleges.

Two masters, two boys and a make-weight had a delightfully strenuous November week-end at Bryntail where they went to "tuck up the camp for the winter." Lunch off the road side, shopping in Llanidloes, a rush up hill in Mr. Humphrey's powerful six cylinder Austin, sausages for supper, a moonlight walk down to the tumbling Clywedog and over the swaying Miners' Bridge, Welsh ham for breakfast, and a ripping run home—how's that for twenty-seven hours! Camp is picturesque and comfortable nowadays, the beds, which rolled up look like fat umbrellas, make good lying, and the steel tents are gay with stripes of black, white and flame.

Congratulations to Mr. Guerra on his recovery after operations. We wish him a long tenancy of his £5 house at Van. It is stone built and solitary, even a Citroën cannot get to the door, and rumour says it is well furnished for the simple life with a sack, a deckchair, and a table-cover convertible when required into a blanket.

A Fourth Form boy walked into the Library the other day with half a dozen "sixpenny" books as a modest gift to the School. The gift was heartily welcomed and put into circulation forthwith; volumes today are so badly bound, they are indeed only cased, that their life is short, and any readable book lasts till it falls to pieces. Perhaps others will look over their shelves and emulate Thompson.

School is proud this season of its Rigger "fathers," the Old Centrals. The *Mail's* Saturday night's issue and the *Post's* Monday morning's are eagerly scanned for new victories.

November's Whist Drive was most successful. There were sixty-six tables and quite a floating regiment of supers; in all, some three hundred people were present, and a goodly number of boys, and even men, played "lady." Jackson of 5A won First Prize, Madame was equally successful, and Miss Marsh, one of our two charming satellites, gained half a tea-set and had to motor home to Shropshire at the week-end to display the spoil. Excellent and plentiful refreshments, as usual, halved the programme. At the C.S.S. the food is half the fun, while at other shows one pays, often through the nose, for coffee, cakes and sandwiches.

SUMMER CAMP, 1930.

Ours was a reserved coach all the way to Llanidloes this year, and the boys rode up to camp in comparative comfort upon a motor lorry. At Bryntail a great crowd was gathered—all sports, all noisy, and all thoroughly prepared to extract the maximum enjoyment from their sojourn in the wilds. The smallest boy in camp was the biggest noise there (with perhaps one notable exception); one could not help knowing Harrison.

Each day's programme was arranged upon the actual day so that the weather might be consulted before hand and its fell intentions balked.

On the first Sunday certain boys who walked to Craig-y-Lloe encountered a Welsh farmer's wife and her pig: she did all the talking and won, hands down.

As usual there was plenty to do; despatch runs, gate hunts, prisoners' release, a paper chase, and, lastly, bathing every morning, all of which were endured, if not enjoyed.

Our first concert was a mixed effort, boys, Old Boys, Masters and visitors all made as much noise as possible. This was obviously their aim, and well they succeeded. The second concert included THE BAND, i.e. one watering-can, one banjo, and lord knows what else; the banjo played just one note though the player seriously studied the music and moved his digits accordingly, and the watering-can grunted sympathetically. At the last concert, the Old Boys, attired in varied garb recorded every camp happening. This concert was great and deserves a space to itself.

Mr. Humphreys was quietly indispensable, Mr. Loveridge worked hard upon the tents, Messrs. Crump and Broscob, though a nuisance to ping-pongers, transformed the miner's cottage, Mr. Guerra paid us a visit and ladled out the soup, Mr. Ward was as cheery as ever and the Head was a true camper.

It was a great camp and everyone was sorry when breaking-up day arrived. There have been good times in the past but none better than this.

T. A. GROGOK.

BRYNTAIL, SUMMER 1930.

At Camp this Summer there were more Old Boys present than there have been of recent years; and in accordance with Mr. Loveridge's invitation voiced at the O. B's. dinner they were all made very welcome. Camp nowadays is not what it used to be. Eggs, for example, are no longer thrown in the air at breakfast time by the C.O. and caught on an enamel plate at the third attempt; and in order not to set the youngsters a bad example we had to break the habits of a lifetime and wash before breakfast. In spite of these minor changes Camp is still a very pleasant place to spend a holiday.

The Camp buildings have been enormously improved; the Miners' Cottage now being topped with a really waterproof roof and the cottage itself being cleaned and painted throughout.

The Old Boys as of old played the School at Baseball and as usual beat them, the game lasting the full nine innings for each side. In order to solace the School to some extent for their defeat, we volunteered to provide the breaking-up concert. We appeared on the stage in weird disguises and chanted all the old camp songs (including two of L. M.'s parodies) together with a few original ones manufactured by our own private parodist, in which we slated everybody in general, and of course, Mr. Loveridge in particular.

We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and fondly hope and trust (and also believe) that the audience did likewise. Incidentally it was very pleasant to see that the people from the neighbouring farms still turn up at the concert.

It was very good to see Mr. Reynolds at camp. He joined in everything that was going on and proved himself a first-class camper. It is distinctly to be hoped that he will make regular visits to Bryntail.

In conclusion we would like to thank the School for still allowing the Old Boys to come to Bryntail, and to say, at least in as far as the six habitués who were there this last Summer, that we intend trespassing on your good nature again. Incidentally there is no finer place than Camp for renewing old acquaintance as well as making new. However, adios Bryntail, until 1931.

R.J.S.B.

BRYNTAIL.

Due no doubt to the fact that Easter was rather early this year only eleven or twelve stalwarts visited Bryntail. Lack of numbers, however, was more than counterbalanced by enthusiasm.

To a newcomer to the Camp, our arrival in a steady drizzle of rain was hardly exhilarating, but I was informed by old-stagers that I should soon get used to it, in fact the said old-stagers persisted in recalling for my benefit, holidays spent at Bryntail with perhaps one fine day per month. The "fickle jade" favoured us, however, and we had only two wet days out of ten. Further, let it be known, on one or two occasions sun-bathing was the order of the day.

The Camp went on in the usual manner, paper-chases etc. being organised and on four occasions we braved the waters of the River Clywdog.

Mr. Humphreys 'quartermastered' us exceedingly well and saw to it that we were all well fed, while Mr. Loveridge made an admirable C.O., in fact to my mind the two chief joys of Camp were to see Mr. Loveridge with paint-pot and brush busily engaged in painting the window-panes—sorry—I mean the window-frames, and to hear him tootle "Come to the Cook-house door, Boys" on one note.

James, assisted by Squire, set up, I am told, again by the old-stagers, a new standard in Bryntail cooking.

Another newcomer to the Camp was Mr. C. Roberts who proved a very jolly and useful camper, despite the fact that he suffered with his throat for the first few days and went about in mortal dread since Mr. Loveridge entertained bloodthirsty notions of removing his tonsils with a penknife.

A welcome visitor to Camp was Mrs. Cantrell, who, though staying at the farm, "messed" with us.

A peculiar feature of the Camp was the number of Old Boys present over the Easter week-end, indeed at one time they actually outnumbered us.

R. PITTAWAY.

OLD BOYS' SECTION.

EDITOR: A. CHURCHMAN, "Tideswell," 23, Kingsley Road, King's Norton, who will welcome contributions for future issues.

OLD BOY'S ASSOCIATION.

In spite of the discomfort necessarily attached to eating in an armour plated shirt,—Convention's misguided conception of suitable evening wear,—the Old Boys' Dinner appeared to be thoroughly enjoyed by everyone present. The chair was taken by Dr. Anderson, who proposed the toast of our Association with effortless eloquence and with a flow of language to which it was a delight to listen. Mr. Reynolds, responding to the toast of the School,—proposed by S. H. Smith, the retiring Head Prefect,—spoke of what we must regretfully consider to be the School's uncertain future. Mr. Scorer's breezy remarks, Richardson's rather incoherent reply, and Hastilow's graceful appreciation of our guests were all heartily enjoyed, while Burt and his friend, with their duets, added to the evening all that was required for its complete success.

Mention should be made of the Easter Camp, which for part of the time, was almost completely predominated by Old Boys. Why any sane person should voluntarily forego the comforts of modern civilization for Bryntail's Spartan existence,—a Bryntail rendered even more barbaric by a contrivance known as an Ablution Bench, (one of Mr. Loveridge's infernal machinations, I believe) planted in the wide open spaces, and exposed to the four winds of heaven,—can be understood only by seasoned campers. Whether it is that fragrant smell of burning wood and burnt prunes, or those inimitable paper-chases, or that particularly persistent, drenching rain which makes this Bryntail so dear to them, it is difficult to determine, but for those who have once learned to love its barren slopes and icy river, it possesses an inexhaustible enchantment. Before passing to other things, a tribute should be paid to the hospitality of the quietly efficient C.O., and the equally efficient, but not nearly so quiet Second-in-command, both of whom gave a warm welcome to the numerous O.B's. who drifted in during the holiday.

June 27th was noteworthy for two reasons:— 1. It was a fine day. 2. It was the date of the Old Boy's Cricket Match. Being lamentably ignorant of all things cricket, but a bare outline of the game can be given. The O.B's., by dint of shamelessly scrounging runs on any pretext whatsoever, managed to scrape together 42 in the

SUMMER CAMP, 1934.

The Dry Bryntail theory was abolished after gaining a considerable number of adherents. It even retained them for a year or two and indeed made a gallant fight for it, but at this Camp was completely discredited and once again replaced by the "Wet" or "rain" theory. The records state that we had three completely wet days, two completely wet ones and nine when the Heavens, if not opened, were at any rate distinctly ajar.

New Campers included Mr. Bradley, hereinafter referred to as B. and Mr. Chapman, a Technical College lecturer with gifts in the arts of engineering and song-writing. They were both unanimously agreed to be good campers; both very definitely added to the enjoyment of life at Bryntail, enriching it with songs ancient and modern, cheerfulness and good humour, concrete suggestions, concrete steps and a bottle of Worcester sauce. We hope to see them both at Bryntail again.

This camp also saw some important additions and improvements to our equipment. The tent roofs were all repainted; we acquired a new boiler; Mr. Chapman stuck lumps of concrete on and round the kitchen fireplace - the focus of all camp-life; N.L., assisted by Freddie Broncomb, stayed on and painted the cottage inside, after we had all cleared off to our respectable homes. Finally the front steps, laid and concreted by L.B. and Mr. Chapman, were declared open on the 5th August. On the 6th, after a thunderstorm, they became a cascade and shot half the water neatly off "Bryn" under the front door.

The old gutter has been redug.

Health was not so good as usual; Parkins went to see Dr. Davies; the cook's room fed one night on mushrooms, sardines and fried potatoes; Brockway suffered from some obscure Celtic disease; Fry slid down Crowlwm on a wet afternoon.

A final melancholy fact: the pool "Llyn Ror (?) " or "Whitpool," reputed to be bottomless, is actually about 18 feet deep. A party being sounded for concealed rocks or snags the pool was in use among Bentons and Old Boys as a diving-pool.

DAILY LOG, SUMMER, 1934.

W. 26th July. Fine, warm, wind moderate from West. Buggott, Holland, J. James, Dolphin, E.C., P.J.H., J.M. arrived as advance party. Opened and cleaned tents, etc. Aired and filled gasbags. Bathed.

Th. 26. Rain, fine and warm after 3 p.m. Washed all crocks; prepared Miners' cottage; bathed. Mr. Chapman, L.B., N.L. and 25 boys arrived. Faulkner arrived by bicycle at 9 p.m. P.J.H. returned home in afternoon.

F. 27. Showery; fine in afternoon. Bathing. Camp Walk. New boiler arrived from Falkirk. Rugger Touch. E.C. went back.

S. 28. Rain in morning; some sun later. Bathing (optional). Whitehouse, Brooks, Freeman arrived by bicycle at breakfast time. Despatch run. Rugby Touch.

Sun. 29. Rain all day. Indoor Tournaments.

M. 30. Fine; some sun. Bathing; some old boys in "New Pool." Free afternoon; small party walked via Bwlch y Gle to "The Hill." After tea, the new campers received compliments from the old on their unusual rapidity in picking up the rules and methods of Baseball. Leading-Aircraftman Richmond arrived. Isherwood had four bowls of soup.

T. 31. Heavy showers after 11-30 a.m. Pennant Walk. Sing-song after tea; L.B. introduces Barnsley National Anthem.

W. 1st August. Rain all day after 1 p.m. Bathing optional. "Straight" run. Another sing-song after tea, led by old boys. L.B., Faulkner and J.M. walked to Plynlimon.

Th. 2. Rain all day. No bathing. "Straight" run. Free evening. Messrs. Crump and Crump arrived. Visit from Mr. H. Guerra.

F. 3. Fine; warm afternoon. E.C. and cousin departed. L.B. got up early, oyez, and also departed avec Legg. Richmond left. Bathing optional, river being high. Free afternoon, optional bathing at 4 p.m. Painting tent roofs and concreting front steps completed. Baseball. Tracey, S. J. Roberts, Mather, Field arrived.

S. 4. Fine. Bathing. Walked to Craig y Llo.

Sun. 5. Showery. Bathing optional. Treasure Hunt. To Deildre chapel; heard Mr. Davies, a local preacher from Llangurig. Mr. and Mrs. Turner, Mr. and Miss Gillam visited camp; also Mr. and Mrs. Holland.

M. 6. Showery; thunderstorm in evening. Bathed. Prisoners' Release, Baseball (Old Boys v School).

T. 7. Dull, but warm; some rain at 5 p.m. Banquet and Concert. Ladies from the farm (Mr. Chapman's wife and mother),

Mr. and Mrs. Varnom, friends from Crowlwm, Cwm and Bryntail.
(Programme given below).

W. 8. Fine and warm ; shower about 8 p.m. Bathing. Free
afternoon with optional bathing. Baseball.

Th. 9. Showery. Return, the main party with Mr. Chapman.

PROGRAMME OF CAMP CONCERT.

The Diver, Jean Ba'tiste, The Last Round Up, Assorted Songs
(Rowland, 2A), Five Sketches ; the following song, written and sung
by Mr. Chapman (air : " John Peel ")

1. D'ye ken Bryntail with its boys so gay ?
D'yd ken the O.C. and big May ?
D'ye ken the cooks who get no pay
And the duty in the morning ?

Chorus : For the O.C's. face peers in at the door,
And we know that day we shall sleep no more :
" Lazy swabs ! Get up from the floor,
For there's duty to be done in the morning."

2. The Veg. Squad to its work does fly ;
At the start they're very spry ;
At the hundredth pound they're ready to die
Or jump in the river in the morning.
3. The big man May is very wise
For a person of his size ;
When on walks " Nice now ! " he cries,
But he can't get up in the morning.
4. Clever men in the Long Room dwell,
Of four of them I will not tell ;
The fifth finds it difficult to quell
Their remarks as he gets up in the morning.
5. The cook's efficient, there's no doubt,
Although wet wood makes fires go out ;
His plans sometimes go up the spout,
And the porridge turns to water in the morning.
6. But we must admit that in spite of this
The life up here is full of bliss ;
We hope that next time we shan't miss
Tea in bed, hot fish and taters in the morning.

Easter Camp, 1935.

This Camp was in several ways different from previous ones. Instead of raining most days, it rained every day; it was in fact a wet Camp, and there was an unusually large number of Old Centrals present—the conjunction “and”, grammarians say, is the most over-worked word in the English language (innuendo).

Another change was the welcome variation of the menu. Jam pudding on the Easter Monday and plum duff on the previous Saturday replaced the usual rice and fruit. Then a more permanent change was the complete renovation of the Colole roof which had been found lying about the garden. The galvanised sheets of which it is made had been torn away from the bolts, clearly by a storm of some violence, since the Colole is at the sheltered end of the cottage.

Though Easter was late the Clywedog was reported to be still fairly paralysing. The O.C. continued to lower the moral tone of the Camp by indulging in the rite known inaccurately as “bathing”, and it is ascertained that on Good Friday two Old Centrals—one Field and one Bundy—also participated in this ceremony which leads only too often to idle and vainglorious boasting. Happily they later recanted and when the O.C. persisted in what the present writer must call his blue-blooded obstinacy—to adapt Macaulay—

“Curse on him” quoth good Bundy;
“Will not the villan drown?”

Finally, using Bryntail as their base, the Old Centrals carried out a brief but most successful tour which will no doubt be found reported in the O.R.A. section of the magazine.

DAILY LOG, EASTER 1935.

Mon., 15th Apl. Mostly fine, but rain at night. P.J.H., J.M., J. James, Legg, Varnom (advance party) cleared out cottage, washed crocks, etc.

Tu. 16. Fine intervals morning and evening, rain all afternoon. Dried and filled palliasses. L.B., N.L., and 17 boys arrived. Brooks and Freeman arrived by bicycle at 10-30 p.m. (never again), P.J.H., and J. James returned.

Wed. 17. Rain all morning and afternoon, very high W wind. N.L. bathed. Indoor tournament and Rugby touch. Faulkner arr. 2 days late—said he had been touring in Mid-Welsh Border country. Late arrivals: Brockway (Civil service exam.) and Isherwood (Mid-land Schoolboys' Rugger trial).

Thurs. 18. Morning and afternoon fair, rain after 4 p.m. Warmer. No bathing. Camp walk via Bwlch y Gle, “Old Aberystwyth Road” and Derelict Farm. Free evening. 12 Old Boys arr. late.

Fri. 19. Some showers, warmer. N.L., Field, Bundy, Brockway bathed. Old Centrals walked to Llani., played the town (and Dr. Graham Davies) won 11—3. Free afternoon; some boys going down to match. Rugby touch in evening. Baggotts I and II arrived.

Sat. 20. Rain in morning, showery afternoon. Optional bathing. Straight run in afternoon. O.C's. played Newtown, lost 3—9.

Sun. 21. Mainly fair. Optional bathing. Free afternoon. Rugby touch at night.

Mon. 22. Mainly fine. Wet in evening. O.C's. again played the Town, the Doctor and the Newtown Flier, and with encouragement from H.G. on the touchline won 9—3. Despatch run in afternoon. Old Boys' concert. J.M. injured and returned.

Tu. 23. Fine, some thunder-showers after mid day. Optional bathing. Camp supper and concert—adequate fodder in spite of absence of J. James. Visits from G.B.B. and F. J. Mills.

spent an interesting afternoon on the cottage roof in the blazing sun, poking owls' nests, a decomposed owl and various brickends down the chimney of the Long Room, and then fixing wire netting over the chimney pots.

Bathing was as popular as ever and was made even more delightful towards the end of Camp by the use of Jimmy Dunn's "Lido," which, by the "mercy of the gods" was not damaged on any of the many gorse bushes which line the path to the river.

As usual, one blazing summer day, the whole of the present-boy section of the Camp plus a few Old Boys turned out for the 14-mile walk to Pennant Rocks, which brought its usual number of blistered feet.

The Camp Banquet, a source of pleasure to everyone, except the Cooks, was as usual a grand success, and that goes for the Camp Concert as well.

The idea, circulating rather freely around the Camp and overheard by no less a person than the O.C. that the Cooks, Black, Legg and Varnom, got up at 6 a.m. was rudely dispelled by our friend the O.C. at breakfast, which on that particular morning was late.

We greatly missed Mr. Bradley and his charming "bamboo-pipe" music which was very much in evidence at the Easter Camp, and hope he will be present next Easter.

The rest of the time was occupied very enjoyably in playing base-ball, rugger touch, dispatch runs, walks, concerts and free afternoons.

Mr. May, that great "he-man," accompanied by Varnom, attempted to return from Llanidloes by way of the river Severn. They did not accomplish this feat however, owing, so we heard, to the lack of water in the river.

The Camp on the whole was a very enjoyable one, and we were glad to see such a number of Old Boys present.

N.B.—It is impossible to publish the Camp Log for the Summer Camp, for it cannot be found. VARNOM'S BLACK-LEGG.

Summer Camp, 1935.

Another record for Camp weather was established last Summer at Bryntail, when it rained but once, and then in the night. Messrs. Humphreys, Faulkner, James, Black and Legg, forming the Advance Party, arrived on 24th July, and prepared for the main party who arrived next day. At about 6 p.m. Messrs. Humphreys and James left to return to Birmingham and were not seen until the night before Camp broke up.

AGAIN THERE WERE NO PAPERCHASES.

Mr. Loveridge with his usual dexterity acted as O.C. and made himself generally useful by re-painting the tent roofs. Mr. Chapman (found to be a Technical College lecturer, being gifted in the art of engineering) constructed with the aid of his right hand man Jimmy Dunn, a new stile and a new gate and replaced the rapidly deteriorating barbed wire round the cottage garden. Jimmy Dunn and the Cook

Easter Camp, 1936.

During the Easter holidays 17 boys spent an enjoyable time up at the School Camp; they were joined during this period by a number of Old Boys who added to the fun. The weather was not at its best, consisting of snow, hail, rain and bright periods [as our friends, the announcers of the B.B.C., put it.]

There were, however, no paper-chases or straight runs, the time being spent in rugger-touch, walks, concerts, a despatch run and a visit to Newtown (gratis!) to watch a rugger match between the Old Centrals and Newtown R.F.C.

The cooks became daring once more (hurrah!) and in addition to the camp Banquet, attempted two "specials" in the way of puddings, all of which were voted to be a success.

Further excitement was provided by Mr. and Mrs. Chapman who arrived in a "Morris," so called, and Jimmy Dunn the camp's handy-man on motor-bike.

There is, however, one grouse; we *should* like to see more seniors up at camp! If only a few go up, it is not half so enjoyable for them, and also more awkward for those in responsible positions. Seniors who have been up at Camp might do everyone a good turn by helping to prevent the spreading of untruthful rumours, concerning 20 mile walks, paper-chases, etc.

It is impossible to close without thanking the masters; notably N.L. and the Head who give up their holidays to look after those boys whose parents wish to get rid of them for a week or so, and also Mr. Humphreys, who is less conspicuous, but nevertheless works just as hard.

GLEG.

Daily Log at Easter Camp, 1936.

TUESDAY, 7TH APRIL. Messrs. Humphreys, Jimmy James, Faulkner, Parkins and Legg opened up Camp after having had to borrow a set of keys from the farm the others having been lost. Tea. Aired palliasses and filled some with straw.

WEDNESDAY, 8TH APRIL. Washed crocks, cleaned cottage out, etc. Legg and James bathed although in general they seemed normal

individuals (we wonder?) Messrs. Bradley, Loveridge and H. Butler arrived with 17 boys to the usual delightful sausage tea and to sleep for a short time. Mr. Humphreys and James returned.

THURSDAY, 9TH APRIL. Some new campers got up at about 6 a.m. with the result that veg. duty was almost finished before breakfast. Seven tough guys bathed!! Four being new campers which explains it! A new camp walk in the afternoon, followed after tea by Rugger touch. Mr. and Mrs. Chapman arrived in a "ninety-eight honk-honk" better known to the privileged few as a "Morris Motor Saloon"; J. Dunn also arrived.

FRIDAY, 10TH APRIL. The number of bathers was reduced to five. A despatch run filled the afternoon, the evening being free. Numerous Old Boys arrived.

SATURDAY, 11TH APRIL. One super-tough-he-man bathed—the one and only N.L. In the afternoon the boys turned mountaineers and under the leadership of Reynolds and Butler climbed Vann Hill.

SUNDAY, 12TH APRIL. The river for once was untroubled by bathing beaux. The afternoon and evening were free. In the late evening an impromptu concert was held, which was, however, successful.

MONDAY, 13TH APRIL. The camp lost Mr. Bradley who went to town in the "Morris" making it necessary for Mr. Francis to ring up the station master to tell him to hold the train up. In the afternoon the Camp, owing to the generosity of the Old Boys, spent an enjoyable afternoon watching a rugger match between the Old Centrals and the Newtown R.F.C. at Newtown, when the Old Centrals lost after a tough struggle by 8-13 pts. To-day there were 46 in Camp.

TUESDAY, 14TH APRIL. A fairly successful treacle pudding was manufactured (I think that is the most suitable word) by the cooks. A free afternoon. Rugger touch in the evening.

WEDNESDAY, 15TH APRIL. The Camp Banquet took place to-day; but no concert owing to the indisposition of Mr. Faulkner.

THURSDAY, 16TH APRIL. Parkins had an argument with the bread-cutter. The Camp Concert was successfully compered by J. Dunn. Mr. Humphreys returned to help with the clearing up.

FRIDAY, 17TH APRIL. 6 a.m. Reveillé!!! The rear guard arrived in Birmingham just before the Train party.

Bryntail, Summer 1936.

After the usual introduction of new campers to the sights and scenes surrounding Bryntail the camp really started on Saturday when the campers went a "straight run" led by Brooks (or should we say "led astray"?). At any rate, despite the strenuous plea of the leader that he knew where he was all the time, the party really did arrive back rather late.

Sunday was perhaps the most momentous day of the camp and will ever demand head lines in the annals of camp history. The hardy campers had the promise that on this day they would be feasted on ham and pudding. Ham and pudding at Bryntail! What a glorious prospect! And then the amazing, monstrous and awful discovery that that which was to have been could not be. THE HAM WAS LOST. . .

How the air went blue!

How uncomfortable the cook would have been under his collar if he had had one on!

What theories, fantastic and far-fetched, were put forward to explain the mystery! But all to no avail!

Many campers will remember that black day. A day which will have no date nor be mentioned on calendars, but will ever be known as "the day on which the ham was lost."

After a despatch-run on Monday and a gentle paper-chase on Tuesday afternoon we attempted to play base-ball on Tuesday evening. That is, we stood outside the kitchen door and looked at the mist and clouds, attempting the impossible: to forecast the weather for an hour. This latter unreliable individual played one of his typical Bryntail tricks; tempted us down to the base-ball field and then sent us back by "watering the place beneath" as soon as the fielders were on their bases.

On Wednesday we had better fortune, which threatened to be misfortune as a ball went flying river-wards, but turned out the best of fortune as, on the slope, we found two balls, one of which had been there for a year.

The walk to Pennant was again successful, though while we were away Engineer Dunn superintended the work of a special squad in making a stone platform for the ablution bench. As if there is not enough water already in the river and descending from the clouds without providing a supply on tap and, moreover, washing bowls, for the torture of certain conscientious, half-naked washers.

Justice was done however. The Engineer lost his hammer the very next day. Naturally the culprit was another old boy. He took the instrument to nail crude verses on gate-posts and then left it lying about.

Boys found the clues all right and the treasure these led to but it puzzled all and sundry to find the hammer.

Some campers thought that real paper chases were a thing of the past but such people were sorely disappointed. We had a proper one with wet gullies and river crossings to the hares' content.

The camp ended happily with a banquet and concert and a closely contested base-ball match between the School and Old Boys; the O.B.'s. gaining a narrow victory of 12 to 10. E.A.F.

Summer Camp, 1937.

The day after the arrival at the Camp was a wet one, but in spite of the rain six stalwarts bathed (some said the "stal" should be left out), while the rest went for a short walk. Some old boys—Messrs. Faulkner, Dunn and Brooks—had a brainwave, which was to start a "Camp Magazine," so every morning we received a printed sheet containing the chief events of the day before. People who did not like other members of the community sent in contributions of their own.

The weather was not really nice till Tuesday when the sun shone quite brightly, but many backs were turned red by Wednesday's sun and on this day bathing was compulsory for the first time. On Thursday the walk to Pennant Rocks was made successfully, the only ill effects being some blistered heels. The best day of all was Saturday, January 30th, the hottest since 1933.

On the following Tuesday night there was the "Grand Banquet and Concert," which went off very well, not ending till 10.30. Nearly every day Rugby Touch and Baseball were played, so it may safely be said that this year's camp was a success.

5L WEAVER.

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Bryntail, Easter, 1938.

Bryntail now works miracles twice nightly. We cook the stew, the porridge and the pud, by putting them into a box full of hay, and as we now possess two of these boxes, the miraculous feat is performed twice as often as before.

We mention food first, for at Bryntail one takes a keen and permanent interest in food. It is discussed. Sometimes it is criticised. At frequent intervals it is eaten. And always it is a subject for meditation and silent thought, as indeed it must be at all camps, for the life in the keen open air will soon whip up an immense, gargantuan, all-deavouring—in fact, hearty—appetite, even in your puny, ice-cream and fish-and-chip-nibbling delicate stomached darling.

Food first, even at Bryntail, where the country is so grand and wild in its beauty. We record with pleasure that Mr. Simm and his friends, Michael and George, were so captured by the unspoilt beauty of mid-Wales, so charmed by our lovely Clywedog valley and impressed by great Plinlimon that, though they had come for a couple of days, they stayed a week. Other visitors whose presence was felt in camp for some days were the Old Boys. They also left their mark on Llanidloes, whacking them most decisively, twice in three days, by really good and attractive football.

Unfortunately, only a handful of our own boys were present to enjoy the fine Easter weather. This is a pity, for several reasons. It means that the economical running of the camp is impossible—in fact, as Mr. Loveridge justly pointed out last time, it is hardly worth while running Bryntail at all for fewer than 15 boys. It means that for those boys who go, such games as "Despatch Run" or "Race to the Pole" are not easily managed—for these and many other excellent wide games, numbers are essential. It means finally that you are missing a chance—the chance of getting to know, and love, one of the finest of unspoiled countries in Britain, and *that*, to anyone who lives in Birmingham and haunts Suffolk Street daily, is certainly a chance not to be missed.

Summer Camp, 1938

The Summer Camp 1938, which began on Thursday, 21st July, was distinguished from the preceding camps in four ways. Firstly the Camp visited the Llanidloes Hospital Carnival for the first time in camp history. Secondly, a cricket team formed from campers visited Llanidloes in order to play a team from the Llanidloes Boys' Club. Thirdly, there was no Penant walk, and last, but not least, there was Bamping's birthday. On the morning of the first complete day bathing was compulsory; in the afternoon there was a walk round Bryn and Van, and in the evening new campers were introduced to the mysteries of "Bryntail Base-Ball." The O.C. admirably spent part of his time painting tent roofs and humming the "Lambeth Walk." The weather was alternately good and bad, and during the bad weather games and competitions in the Miner's Cottage replaced the usual baseball and Rugby touch. The camp was lucky on the first Sunday in being graced with the presence of the Chapman family, who kindly supplied the camp with home-made cakes. On Tuesday, 26th July, four stalwarts i.e., Messrs. May, Perrot, Faulkner and Isherwood journeyed to Plynlimon, where they obtained a marvellous view of the surrounding country and of the distant sea. On the afternoon of the second Sunday, twenty-one campers made their annual visit to the chapel at Deildre. The Camp Concert and Supper was held on the evening of Tuesday, August 3rd and, as usual, was a success. The Camp ended on Thursday, August 4th, and I think everyone agreed that it was a well-spent and enjoyable holiday.

S.D. (6R.)

School Notes

There is always an air of conclusiveness about the summer term, a sense of something attempted, something done. It is at once a time of retrospect and of prospect. Those who are leaving realise rather regretfully that their schooldays are over, and wonder what the outside world has in store for them; those who are staying on are looking forward to next year, some of them hoping for a place in the First XV; while those taking exams. this year have all their thoughts on the results, which we all hope will be favourable.

Turning to the Summer Sports, we see that Green has followed its tradition of winning the School Sports. Blue House was a close runner-up, partly as a result of the great help it received from Tye, who thoroughly deserved his Gold Medal. Red House was unfortunate to lose Dean though injury, for it had hoped for so much from him.

At the Joint Sports we did not do as well as usual — Dean was still injured, Tye was disqualified for no fault of his, and some of our runners failed to turn up. These facts explain our weak results.

After a trial at the School Fields and a fiasco at Sutton Park, the Steeplechase was run satisfactorily a second time and, to most people's surprise, won easily by Black, with four runners in the first six. The first man home was Hussell, of Red House.

So far this season the School First XI, captained by Leeke, have played seven matches and won four of them. The three lost are those usually considered the toughest of the season.

The Easter Camp this year was as successful as ever; it seems to be a hardy annual incapable of anything but success! A Fifth Form also ran a Whitsun Camp, for the success of which Archer was chiefly responsible.

The School Play, "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme," was by way of a histrionic success for C. P. Hall, who delighted the audience throughout the play except when he sang. But highlights were provided by other capable actors — the seductive ogling of Bishop, the inspired gymnastics of Thorneycroft, the stony silence of Stephens, and that laugh of Hooley's.

Jubilee 1897-1947.

An old trick of the amateur debater is to kick off with a definition, which he then uses as a preacher uses his text. "Aha" we thought, as we approached our subject, "it's a gift—*jubilee* is clearly a relation of *jubilee* and *jubilate*, and no doubt descends from their Latin ancestor *jubilum*, meaning "a shout of joy and triumph." But we were wrong.

The word comes, by a roundabout route, from a Hebrew word meaning "a ram's horn," so that our brilliant guess was wrong in fact, although we modestly claim it, even now, to be right in spirit. A *jubilee* has come to mean a celebration, a jollification, or (to put it in plain English) a Bit of a Do. It is a sort of public boast that a reign, or a marriage, or even a school, has lasted fifty years—and in "atomic" times this will become very rapidly an outstanding feat. It is a public thanksgiving for a comparatively long life. Finally it is an excuse for eating and drinking.

What about our own Jubilee? Well, we hope to have our celebration next summer, on the 17th, 18th, and 19th July. The "eating and drinking" part of it will probably be later, nearer to the date of the opening of the school in 1897, and will no doubt take the form of a Dinner, attended by Old Boys and Friends of the school.

The part which concerns the school most is the first part, due to take place in July. This will be held in the Central Technical College in Suffolk Street, the school's first home. It is hoped to hold an exhibition, as full as possible, illustrating the history of the school, its past achievements and its future aspirations. It will be made up of charts and photos, diagrams and pictures, and of actual objects of interest such as Honours Boards, Athletic shields, and—if the Victoria and Albert Museum will release it for a few days—the world-famous Left-handed Porridge Spoon from the School Camp at Bryn-tail.

To enliven the exhibition for visitors a series of short Puppet-plays is planned, for which preparations have already begun. Connected with this is the mystifying discovery by several mothers, in recent weeks of their best pastry bowls smeared with a dirty grey and rather offensive mass of newspaper pulp; this pulp is the very earliest stage of an amusing and lifelike puppet's head, or that is what we all hope.

Another part of the Jubilee will be a special magazine planned to contain the best articles from previous "mags," specially written articles by "old Old Boys" and others, and interesting illustrations.

That then is the very rough outline of the Jubilee plans; to carry them out the school must do its part, as it certainly will, with keenness and enthusiasm—and as it has already begun to do with the Puppetry Club.

J.M.

Editorial.

Here we present another edition of "The Hammer," smaller perhaps in quantity, but still, we hope, maintaining its usual quality. Our exhortations in the last issue regarding polish of style have had a good effect, particularly on the lower forms, whose contributions indeed, far exceed those of the upper school in number and often in relative quality. The apathy of the seniors in regard to magazine contributions has been disappointing and from personal observation we feel that the excuse can hardly be pressure of examination work. The most important school event since we last went to press, was the Prize-Distribution, at which Mrs. L. J. Cadbury presided, and Mr. H. C. Cooksey presented the prizes. This, the peak of the school's scholastic life, is reported in full further on.

School life has gone on placidly and the only really outstanding event was the re-opening of the school holiday camp at Bryntail. A much appreciated innovation has been the commencement of gramophone concerts in the dinner hour. The bad winter brought the school's outdoor activities to an abrupt finish; scrimmage ball, however, has been energetically taken up by the Juniors, and we hope soon to form a basket-ball team. The Easter term was well rounded off by a combined staff and boys' concert at which all present, both audience and performers, enjoyed themselves. The only Society which has held regular meetings has been the Literary, Dramatic and Debating Society which arranged a play-reading and several discussions. Some of these latter were to have been debates but owing to the paucity of members they took the form of discussions. The poor support from members of the upper school does not, we hope, reflect their mental ability or their attitude to the subjects discussed, most of which were controversial enough to allow of a wide range of debate. The Chess Society, too, struggling valiantly to maintain itself, suffers from poor attendance, which we hope will soon be remedied.

Bryntail, 1947.

Between April 1st and 10th, the first school party since 1939 stayed at the camp. Its main purpose was to be a working party to prepare the camp for the August holidays.

The camp is situated 3 1/2 "Welsh" miles up the Van Road from Llanidloes on the side of the Bryntail mountain about 25 yards from the Evans' farmhouse. The country round about varies from barren hills to steep wooded river valleys and everywhere you see swampy ground caused by the rainy Welsh climate. The weather varied from snow, hail and rainstorms to unclouded windless days, but the latter unfortunately did not show themselves until the last two days of the camp.

The life of the camp consisted largely of the camp duties, walks and various games.

The duties consisted of cooking, "spud-bashing," wood-gathering and various other odd jobs and household repairs ably directed by Mr. Probert. With regard to the cooking, many amazing discoveries have been made; in the first place, for example, that it is useful to cook beetroot in water, secondly, the remarkable fact that soot flavouring in the porridge is quite enjoyable; and finally, the wonderful varieties of pudding you can get from only dates, macaroni, and figs. Of all the meals I think the most remarkable was breakfast for which we had an egg every day; quite a contrast to home life!

The camp, which was organised and conducted by Mr. Faulkner, proved on the whole a great success, and I myself am looking forward to the next camp in August.
V.A.T.VIC.



"... Many amazing discoveries have been made ..."

Bryntail, 1919-1939.

Holiday camps were run at one time at Holt Fleet on the Severn; then in 1919 M. Guerra first took a party of boys to Bryntail. Bryntail is an old mine-manager's cottage in the heart of the hills of Mid-Wales, 3½ miles from Llanidloes, where are the nearest shops. West and North are scores of miles of hills and moorland, cut up by rushing mountain torrents.

Four circular corrugated-iron huts were used for sleeping, but the wind has removed all of these.

M. Guerra ran the camp from 1919 to 1928, then Mr. Loveridge carried on till 1939. The 30 years' lease is up in 1952, so for five years more at least we shall have camps there.

The weather there is unpredictable—sometimes a fortnight without a shower, more often a fortnight with hardly a day's sunshine altogether; sometimes at Easter sun-bathing one day and snow the next. One always knows that there may be a little sunshine one of the days.

Food was the second most important subject of conversation. For breakfast we had porridge and eggs, usually boiled as hard as stones. Once we had nicotine flavouring in the porridge; Mills, the cook, had lost his pipe; at any rate, this masked the usual burnt taste. At dinner-time we had a standard menu, "Bryntail stew"—1¼lbs. of potatoes each, corned beef, and rice, rice, and more rice. There was a choice for tea—bread and butter and jam, or jam on bread and butter. Soup for supper one day, soup for supper the next, and so on alternately. Each week we had the baker up with four cwt. of bread—1¼lbs. each per day.

Bathing parades were held each morning, rain, hail or shine. All bathed, unless the rain was too heavy or turned to snow, or the river was running too high. In the late afternoon, after a period of scorching days, it was delightful to splash on the smooth rocks surrounded by water and lashing spray. Despatch runs, Paper Chases, Base Ball, Rugby Touch and other activities helped to run off the stiffness of the previous day.

Camp concerts were usually arranged by the leading lights among the boys; one year we had a most successful band complete with tin whistle, tambourine, cymbals, watering-can saxophone, triangle and numerous percussion instruments of the tin-can and enamel-bowl variety.

Old Boys visited the camp in fairly large numbers and slept (from about 1 a.m. to 7.59 a.m.) in the stone building known variously as the "tool-shed" or "Registered Office of the Cambrian Mining Company." Some old boys were useful as expert pitchers and catchers at baseball, which, by the way, we played in a field at the brink of the steep hill which goes down to the river. The first rule of camp baseball is: "When the ball shoots over the wall and down to the river, all boys within range shall thereupon leap over the said wall and go after

it." (This means a break of five minutes—waiting for them to climb up again).

Another feature of the Old Centrals' visits has been the rigger matches against Llanidloes and Newtown.

Standing jokes are a feature of camp life; the stew that contains who knows what; the dried peas as hard as bullets; the 11 a.m. remark of Mr. Loveridge: "Time for Bathing Parade. I'll go and blow up;" the pre-war cry of "Tuck Shop's open," immediately following a tremendous meal; and the old camper who waits by the gate for the new camper with the remark: "Have you pulled the chain?" to send the new camper back to discover, of course, that it is just a shed and seat over a deep hole in the ground.

A note is added to bring home the usefulness of the Tuck Shop in normal times:—

July, 1939, for forty campers:—3 tins of Mintoes; 3 tins of Glacier Mints; 1 tin of toffees; 69 dozen twopenny bars of chocolate, etc.; 15/- worth of toffee-bars; 7 dozen oranges. E.A.F.

BRYNTAIL.

A camp is being held from 24th July to 7th August and I should be pleased to hear from Old Boys who would like to come up. Please write straight away.

E. A. FAULKNER
(For Magazine Committee).

Nearly Twenty Years With The "C.S.S."

Yes, the circular is on my table! It has been there for some time. It reminds me that the C.S.S. is now fifty years old . . . It was 36 years ago that I first entered the doors of the School. The building in which it was housed gave me a shock. I remember the dark and smoky 5b room, under the street level. I remember 3c room placed immediately above the sawmill of the woodwork "lab" and immediately under the drilling machines of the brass shop. I remember the railway engines shunting, blowing and letting off steam without cease right under the windows. I remember the endless stairs that our Headmaster, Mr. L. M. Jones, would take at one stride and that reduced Mr. L. C. Evans to a state of complete collapse . . . still I hoped for the best. I was young and young folks live in hopes. That is as it should be. Old folks live in memories. That is also as it should be.

The most pleasant memories are connected with the School camps. In 1913, Mr. Seckler invited me to help him with his camps which were then held at Holt Fleet. We camped in an orchard near the river and lived under canvas. Some 60 to 70 boys attended these camps. We were at Holt Fleet when the first world war broke out. Mr. Seckler, owing to his nationality, came in for much observation from the police. A charge was made against him of communicating with the enemy. The informer declared that this was done by means of a kite. It turned out that the guilty party was a school boy — Newey — who really was quite an expert at kite flying. I wonder how many Holt Fleet campers remember the "Ten little nigger boys" who tried so hard to entertain at these camps.

During the war, camping at Holt Fleet was no longer possible. A friend, Doctor Roberts (now medical officer on board the P. & O. passenger liners) suggested letting a small cottage he owned on the top of a mountain on the east side of the Plynlimon range in Wales. The suggestion seemed good. I immediately took train and taking three boys with me (one of these was F. Esslemont) explored the possibilities. I decided on the spot that Bryntail was to be the future camping ground of the C.S.S.

Our first camp was in 1915. 30 boys attended and the venture proved a great success. Since that date I have held more than 30 camps on that ideal site.

"L. M." (Please let me call him L. M. . . . He has always been L.M. for me!) also found the spot ideal for the purpose and was instrumental in providing two steel tents. A few years after, we entered into negotiation with Doctor Roberts with the view of purchasing the cottage. The funds were raised by whist drives and concerts and in due time the cottage was ours on a 30 years lease.

Memories of various events which took place at Bryntail rush to my mind in an overwhelming flow! — I remember Williams, in the early days of the war, trying to reach the camp on his motorbike. A dreadfully noisy affair! We could hear his bike far away wandering round Staylittle and the Van for hours. To this day some of the old folk on the farms will tell you that a "Zepperlin" visited the district. I remember the heated argument two fathers and three boys had with an oversized Welsh bull (known from that day as "OXO"). For running, the prize went to Mr. Walker and for tree climbing the boys (one of these was Slater) proved unbeatable. They were all late for tea and therefore went without! I remember a vicious turkey that would try to get at the boys' legs when they went to the farm to fetch milk. We lost two gallons of this much needed milk owing to the hasty retreat of one of these boys. I remember "Cock" Robbins finding a dead polecat which he started skinning. The smell was such that the boys chased him away to the powder magazine, where he finished his self imposed task. I cannot remember what happened to the skin! I remember Ellerker riding with great pride one of the giant

horses of the farm. He might have done so for ever, because he did not know how to get O. Dick, of the farm, came to his rescue, and saved him from that dreadful fate! I remember the habit the boys got into of falling at odd times in the river. The example was set by Innes and Holloway. They remained in blankets for the rest of the day! I remember a small boy falling over a basket containing 100 eggs. We salvaged about a dozen. A trip to the river was indicated! I remember one of the cooks putting a lump of soap in the rice pudding. He maintained it was sugar and to prove his contention offered to eat it lot . . . but soon gave up the attempt.

Names are crowding in my mind. Esslemont, H. Walker, Broscob, Collins, Slater, Powis, Barr, Nicoll, Mills, Robbins, Richardson, Squire, Smith, Santall, Birbeck, Cornic Dare, Holtom, Holloway, Innes, Hawley, Underwood, Grocock, L. Walker and his brother Webb, J. Dunn and many others who year after year spent many happy days at Bryntail.

The success of camp depends much on the cooks. We had a long list of really efficient cooks. Govier, Innes, Robbins, Boston, Robotham and especially Mills who officiated several years in succession.

In 1920 we converted two rooms into one and thus made what was called the dining room. In 1924 we added two more steel tents, refloored the miner's cottage and built a covered way from the camp kitchen to the water supply.

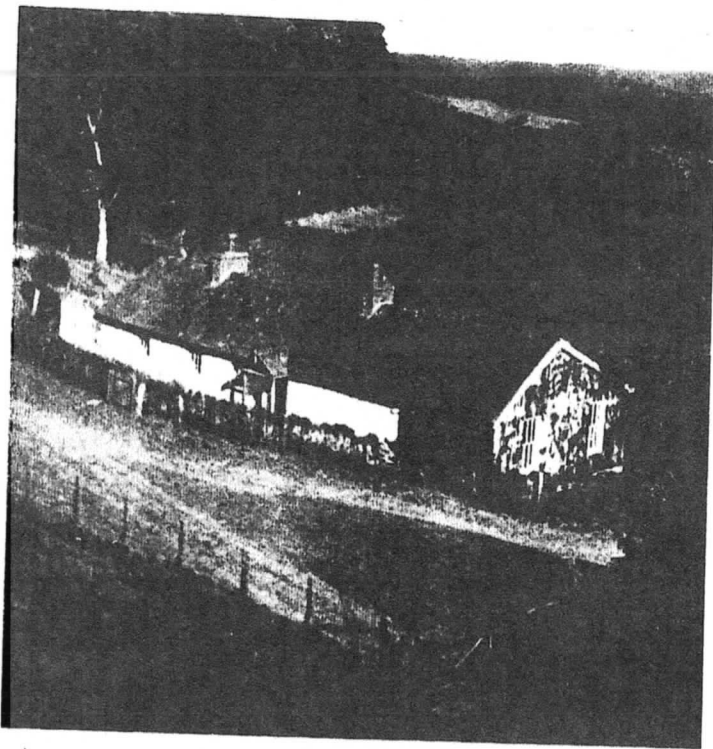
The principal events of these camps were the bonfire, the banquet and the cat concerts. The old druidic ceremonies of "Al Tor" followed the bonfire and the bonfire roasted potatoes in the hot cinders. On one occasion the goat, figured by a small boy proved difficult and barged into the chief priest and nearly bowled him into the fire. The suppers were grand affairs! Juniors acted as waiters, with aprons and caps all complete. They were followed by speeches and songs and were generally attended by visitors. The waiters fed after — and they lost nothing by waiting . . . except once when "Nell" (O.C.'s dog made the most of the opportunity and devoured all the waiters' custard! I find the following programme amongst papers carefully treasured:—

MENU

SOUP :	<i>Potage à la Bryntail</i>
ENTREE :	<i>Salmon on Toast Green Peas</i>
ROAST :	<i>Brawn à la Mills Pommes en robe de chambre</i>
SWEETS :	<i>Vanilla Custard Fruit Salad</i>

The concerts were very elaborate affairs! We had a band (a household band), solo choros and duets. The Old Boys, (there always were Old Boys at Camp), helped to make up the programmes. The most successful contribution I can remember was given by Underwood (a young shy damsel) Brooks (a parson) and Boston (a bold and bad pirate). Some of the songs soon became hardy annuals. "The bog" by Mills, "The egg" by H. Walker. "The fish ball" and several brought to camp by Mr. Broscob.

Old Boys used to camp under canvas by the river near "the diving rock." I remember once a fierce storm compelled the Old Boys to make shift in the "Miner's Cottage." I shall never forget Boston's look when he found all his precious provisions floating down the river as well as the only bucket they possessed! The next day the boys were busy fishing clothes, caps, sacks and food out of the swift running water.



School Camp, Bryntail.

Bryntail 1919-1946

When we heard that I had passed for the Central Secondary School, my parents, already fond of holidays in Wales, decided to stay in Llanidloes that summer and go and have a look at the camp the school was running in the hills. We stayed at the Trewythen Arms, and one day went up the Staylittie road. I realise now that we got only as far as the Cucumbers, but the black shadow of the farm and the line of Crows still stand clearly in mind. The next camp I was on the strength. We walked up in those days with the farm cart taking the kitbags up the road. That first journey of mine was a wet one, and to make matters worse, there was no ex-Army and Navy Stores kitbag labelled for me when we got there. Arthur Ford, then a bosom pal, and I walked back to the station to look for the missing bag, but drew a blank. When we eventually got back to camp, the bag turned up in the O.C.'s room, but tea had been and gone. I have rarely been hungrier or wetter. Supper seemed about three weeks off, and I know we both caught beautiful colds. All the best bed-places had been bagged and sacks had to be filled with straw in the barn, and this was all the worse because we were so new to it all. That camp we slept in the Long Room with five other small boys. The exalted slept in the Cooks' Room and the supposedly sensible slept in the three tents out in the garden and on the bank. There were no steel tents in those days, and the dining room was halved by a partition halfway down. Cooking was done almost exclusively on the big fire outside, and hot water was confined to cooking. The grub was good and plentiful, if unvaried, and it was at that first camp that I grew to like the stew and porridge in particular. I have never lost the taste, and I have never seen a whole sheep cut up and eaten in the open air by forty people since. It wasn't cooked properly, but it was exciting and it all went down. Breakfast was porridge followed by eggs or kippers and then bread and butter and marmalade (I can still hear

H.G.'s joke about the chicken and the vociferous answer) washed down by tea from the urn. In those days the tea showed a distressing tendency to taste of soap from time to time. I always suspected one particular Duty Squad that would persist in washing the urn with soapy water, but forgot to swill it. If memory serves, they were all mulcted of the day points on one occasion for a particularly strong brew of soap faintly disguised by a flavour of tea. But it went down all the same. So did the bread. I recall one later camp when a table of ten boys got through 142 slices of bread and butter and jam. Pat Collins and Piggy Smith and one or two others could remember, too, perhaps. Dinner was the invariable stew.

I don't know if all the duty squads did the same when their turn came round for Vegetable Duty, but our quota was 120 spuds, 60 carrots, 40 parsnips, and about 20 each of onion and swedes, depending on size and supply. I don't suppose there is a boy who was there who will ever forget doing veges. in cold water in the open at Easter camp. The veges. were all cooked in the big iron pot, and about 20 minutes before time the corned beef was cut up and put in the boiling water. It was good stew. Pudding was, at Easter, boiled rice and dried fruit, but the Summer camp had bilberries or whinberries or sometimes raspberries. The first two came mostly from Van Hill in basins, gathered by the Fruit Squad. Unless I misremember, similar objects to bilberries crept into the pud. at times, but were unidentifiable by the time it was cooked. Tea was bread and butter and jam, unlimited, with occasional bursts of fruit cake from parents or Old Boys or some similar source, who received our thanks and plaudits in absentia. It was at a Bryntail tea table that the evergreen joke was born about camp being as bad as home the day there was no cake. Supper was soup from the stew remains, or shredded wheat and warm milk and sugar. And so to bed after reading in the dining room by the warm oil lamps.

In those days we were organised along competitive lines. Marks were awarded for all duties, for bed-making (some clod always kicked your bed just after you had made it and just before the O.C. came along to mark you up), for games, for bathing. The biggest total at the end of camp won the Camp Medal, and there was also a popularity prize decided by popular vote of all the Campers. If I remember right, Fatty Cooke made a habit of the Popularity prize, but never got the other one. Looking back now I see several snags in the system, but they never obtruded as a boy, and I think I tried as hard as everyone else for the medal. I do know that I resented the dragooning of my spare time. I would often have preferred to skim stones at the bathing pool rather than make the defenders look silly in a Despatch Run. Still, we all grew and thrived on the system, even if parents were apt to look askance at the outer layers of dirt on clothes and skins. In the early camps there was no camp tuck shop, and we had to make the trip down to the Post Office at Van. I went there last year, and was served by the same woman as in 1920, although she tells me she gave up the general store side of her business about 1943, and now the shop is just another Post Office.

In my second camp I was promoted to one of the tents on the bank. I was under the Reading Rock, and that year we had a wet camp. The second night the pole came through the top four times, and we then made tracks for the cottage, spending the rest of the night in the passage by the Long Room, though there was no partition there then. I believe it was that camp when L. M. Jones spent some time with us, and the Beak turned very human to some of us lesser fry. I remember his almost lightning parody of "Gin and Body" for one of the Concerts. In those days Concerts were a full dress affair. H.G. usually coached reluctant musicians on weird instruments like combs and paper, milk jugs, coffee pots and so on. I can recall Washington Post March played on that gramophone to this day. The farm people were all invited, and usually some neighbours also. A riotous evening was had by all, especially the evening we organised some draw-curtains that didn't. The Old Boys played a very large part in those early camps and there contributions were usually the pick of the evening. Does anyone else remember Ranny Holtom's Black Country stories? And Corkneck's songs, and Greg Boston's reluctance to do anything?

After that camp the tents were abandoned to the fate they deserved, and the next camp we put up the steel tents. I have a suspicion that this would have served the Crazy Gang well for material, but they got put up with no worse trouble than rocking floors and D.L. getting cut by a roof section that slipped. I remember well trying the supposedly "bullet proof" glazing material with a pointed stick, and being very disappointed to find that it wasn't even stick proof. From time to time some painting was done, but the next big job I remember was taking the partition out of the dining room and making one big room of it. A great improvement followed by the partition cutting off the Long Room from the passage. It was about 1923 when a small camp spent Christmas there to do some extensive painting. There was Mrs. Cantrell, H.G., and about six boys. It snowed, and I can see the top side of the cottage still with snow right up to the bank. It was at that camp that I had the embarrassment of hitting Madame Cantrell in the face with a plate of stew I was passing to someone. The colour scheme was light and dark grey (French grey, of course). Not Mrs. Cantrell, but the walls. It was unfortunate that we got the colours mixed up when it came to doing above and below the waist-line. We met halfway with a neat counter-change that H.G. hadn't bargained on. Still, there was plenty of paint then, although I don't think it came from Dockers in those days.

I think it was about that time that I realised just how much these camps got into the blood. For some reason I decided to go home with the first fortnight boys (the whole camp lasted a month, and you could go the whole time or first or second fortnight). Anyhow, I got up at crack of dawn the morning after I got home, and caught the 6-30 a.m. from Snow Hill, and rolled back up the hill again. I was sore when H.G. said, "Ah, I thought you would come back to us." But he was right. There is some indefinable something about that place that draws a regular back. And the early camps slipped away with Despatch Runs, Paper Chases, walks to Craig-y-Llo and Pennant and Llyn Ebr, Baseball up the hill in the top field (how grateful I was to Elliott, then a very Old Boy, who was kind about a dropped catch one evening) and later on in the field above the Copse over the river, when every stray ball had to be found and brought up that confounded slope on cold evenings when the only shelter was below the wall waiting to bat. And the walk over to Deildre to Chapel, and the struggle to keep a straight face in the midst of strong Welsh Faith. And sliding down Crawlwm afterwards, and the long sunny days out on the hills, so that the city smelt when we got home, and campers could be spotted by their open neck shirts long after the others had resigned themselves to collars and ties.

Then I went again as an Old Boy, and this time to a Camp under new Management, for H. G. had retired to Llanidloes, and N. L. took his place in charge. I don't know what I thought to find, but was relieved to find the more it changes, the more it is the same. The hills stood where they did, the same wind blew cool at evening up the river, and the same bent trees stood along the ridge above Cwm. I think it was the second day I was there that N. L. asked me how it compared with the old days, and I think the only real difference was the less probability of finding Milky Mills' pipe in the stew or porridge because Mills wasn't there. In later camps I did notice some changes, but it seemed that Bryntail stood where it always did. I think the only serious criticism that would be worth making would come from a boy at both camps, not a boy who had grown into an Old Boy, because camp is such a different place for the two types of camper. But it doesn't matter, anyhow. Bryntail will always be Bryntail whoever runs the camp. I was lucky enough to become one of the elect. Of course, I refer to the Camp Engineers, and number such names as Chappie, Pa Broscob (the Hammer Wizard), Probert, the Beak (one Mr. Bradley) and such. I suppose there were always the varied repairs to be done, but as a youngster I didn't notice them. Grates, fences, paths, roofs, chimneys, painting (now definitely from Dockers) more painting gave a good day's work for medium-strong Engineers. Does the noble fraternity remember the excellent service of tea? It's worth becoming an Old Boy if only to have N. L. bring a cup of tea to bed first thing in the morning.

Then there was the summer when we saw no rain for three solid weeks and precious little dew, either, and Jack Brooks went about parboiled, and J . . . M . . . shed about four

acres of skin in the sun. And the year of the one and only Camp Magazine, which probably gave its compilers and producers much more fun than any of its readers ever had. A Old Boy Rugger matches with Llanidloes, Newton, and Rhayader, usually followed by h jinks in the town at night. Does Robbo remember that classic run back to camp at F Scouts trot, when his legs faded out on Quarry Hill, and the night we got back from the F phant at 2-30 a.m. to find a fat rabbit in the wire. And how we cleaned it with a ra blade and a chopper, and fried it in about four pounds of butter? And got up the follow morning and fetched wood, and played Llanidloes in the afternoon? I think nowhere co such energy be put out and maintained as up in that crystal air with those hills to stir blood. It is hopeless to call all the names back, but there are several who went in 1939 a have gone to their last camp in the war. Nab Bennitt, Shwash, Tracey, to name only th I suspect their spirit lurks round those hills somewhere. Go and read the pencilled and names down in the salon in the copse to see the people who found Bryntail satisfying a made it what it was. They start at an early date and they go on and on. And don't for the out-of-the-lime-lighters like Humph. who did much for Bryntail but rarely stayed the

In 1945 and 1946 my own family were lucky enough to get a holiday at Bryntail, than to N. L.'s generosity, and they are added to the growing list of devotees. This East Arnie Faulkner took ten boys up there to get things going for fresh camps. Good work these ration-bound days, and a sign of returning sanity in this post war world. So t camp goes on. I have often wondered why Bryntail pulls so hard at the memory, a talking to Jimmy May one evening I think he put his finger on the spot. He said th holidays there were the most completely satisfying form of enjoyment. For a travell man, that is a big statement, but I believe he has the answer. I can vouch for that fro my camping days, for I have never spent such holidays, wherever I have been.

I have tried to analyse this satisfying feeling about camp. I have found more impressi scenery in North Wales, more sun at the seaside, finer woods in Warwick, hills as beautif even in the Lickeyes, and unparalleled scenery in Devon and Cornwall, and in the Pennine But still the old familiar outline of Crawlwm with the sun beyond in the evening, and th rush of the river at the end of the bathing pool, and the wildly inhospitable top of the h and the scamper of wild life in the little square spinney up Bryntail, and the clump of ax on wood duty are exclusively Bryntail. Or is it the Campers? And last year we found a exploded bomb-case at the back of Crawlwm.

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as walks to Craig-y-Lloe Falls and up Van Mountain. Some of us braved the cold water and bathed in the river. On Saturday, 27th, some of us went to town to see a local football match, and afterwards to the pictures. On Easter Monday, the camp's six boogey boys went to a dance and had a very enjoyable time. The walk back to camp was not so pleasant, but in spite of the blinding rain we all reached camp about 12.15 a.m., wet, but not much the worse for wear.

The whole camp was full of thrills and spills, some of which are not printable. Among the principal pastimes were, climbing crags on Bryntail, sliding down Crowlwm (which turned out to be rather uncomfortable in the end) and the court of high treason (further information on this point can be obtained from V. R. Watson, J.P.).

When Mr. Reader returned home after the first week, Mr. Aldridge took his place. With the latter came Mr. Walker (Old Boy) and his dog "Jane," who became popular when shoes and valuable articles began to disappear.

The last items at camp were the concerts, in which everyone took part. "Old Favourites" were introduced once again by Messrs. Faulkner and Aldridge, while Mr. Walker "amused" everyone with the songs he picked up in the Navy.

Time passed very quickly, as it always does on such occasions, and just as we were enjoying our stay at Bryntail, the dreaded morning of the 6th April dawned upon us. The new campers prepared breakfast while the old campers packed, and afterwards the old campers cleared up. Packing finished, we set out in moderate rain for the town. We took turns at guarding the kit and after lunch caught the train for the homeward journey, which was disappointingly uneventful.

A photograph of the Easter Camp appears at the back of the magazine.

J. K. D. and J. K., VL.

Bryntail, Easter, 1948.

The morning of the 25th March brought many happy faces to Snow Hill Station. Everyone was on time and we all managed to squeeze into the 8.20 a.m. train to Shrewsbury. At Shrewsbury reserved coaches awaited us. We were well installed in our compartment enjoying a little game of cards, when Watson, in an attempt to close the window, with his mighty strength pushed his hand right through the glass. This inflicted a severe flesh wound and we had the great pleasure of holding the train up for almost half-an-hour while Watson's hand was dressed by a very obliging station-master.

After this little incident we continued on our journey, caught the connection at Moat Lane, and eventually arrived at Llanidloes. We were met by Mr. Faulkner and a decrepit old lorry. Our kit was thrown on to the lorry and after a hurried glance round the town we set off for camp.

Our arrival at camp, after a gruelling 3½-mile walk, was well-timed, for the lorry arrived at the same time. We installed ourselves in our respective sleeping quarters and then explored the camp and its surrounding country.

The weather was good for the first two days, and then the rains came. Several wet days followed and indoor activities prevailed. A Relay Race and a Despatch Run were organised, as well



BRYNTAIL, EASTER 1948.

Photograph by E. A. Faulkner.

Bryntail Summer Camp.

As the first rays of sunlight on the last day of the Summer Term began to fall softly upon the magnificent C.G.S. premises in Bordesley Green, sixteen sublimely happy young Centrals were eagerly boarding the 8.20 a.m. train to Shrewsbury in Snow Hill Station. Bryntail was our ultimate goal, and after a couple of changes we arrived in Llandidloes at midday. After a 3½ mile walk in sweltering heat we arrived at the Cottage and began settling in. First came a week of brilliant sunshine, during which temperatures were continually in the nineties, and then one of more unsettled weather with two days of rain.

An excellent tea having been done justice to, we were introduced to the game of baseball, which all seemed to enjoy, although few understood it at first. This mode of amusement was pursued in a field which a certain black cow seemed to consider its own private domain. This animal, unfortunately, showed a strong inclination to join in the game, and many members of the camp became remarkably adept at scrambling swiftly through or over prickly hedges, much to the delight of those who were not at that particular moment the objects of the cow's attention.

Another favourite pastime was bathing in the river, especially on the first week, when we went in two and three times a day. However our innocent recreation was often marred by the intervention of that most bloodthirsty, savage and grotesque monster, commonly known as the horsefly. This creature seemed to show a marked affection for any bare expanse of human flesh, especially if it were wet.

Among the activities of the first week was a cricket match with the County School. Here, all Centrals will be pleased to hear

the School acquitted itself well, failing by only a few runs to pull off a win. The day was a scorcher and the whole team, especially Watson, V., and Rolfe, played well under trying conditions. Jabbitt, J., Strike, and Griffiths (Old Boys) ably assisted the team.

A usual feature of the camp was to some extent missing, for, on account of the terrific heat, walks were restricted. Nevertheless two were accomplished in our second week. The first was conducted by Mr. May, and consisted of an evening stroll, (about 3½ hours) round Crowlwm, and the second, more in the nature of a half day affair was to the picturesque little village of Llawr-y-Glyn. On the first Sunday we ambled gently up hill and down dale to the little chapel at Deildre, where we all listened to an interesting sermon by the Rev. M. Anthony.

It was amazing the number of hitherto unknown runners the camp produced during the relay race and two cross-country runs. Of course such stalwarts as Watson, V., and Strike (Old Boy) were well to the forefront, but Murray and Abbey put up a very good show. These runs were the delight (or otherwise) of wet evenings and the sight of scantily clad youths ploughing through farmyard mud and over sodden fields in slight rain and mountain mist became quite familiar. Of course the ping-pong table, where Billingham managed to hold his own against all comers, chess, and bagatelle were more popular forms of amusement in such weather, especially among the less bold spirits. However, once the race had begun all competed keenly, and on the whole very well. (Ambitious athletes should note that runs were between one and two miles, and one Bryntail mile equals three Birmingham miles, as Rolfe, (5L) will, we are sure, be pleased to inform those interested.

With the discovery of a rugger ball and the presence of Watson V., we could not hope to escape for long the consequences. A seven-a-side match was played between the Old Boys, including Watson, and a School side. The game was keen and hard-fought throughout, providing enjoyment for spectator and player alike. (Old Boys managed to snatch a victory by 24 points to 3).

Towards the end of Camp, what has probably been its most regular feature through the years, the Camp Concert came round. Everyone except Horton, who claimed to be suffering from a touch of laryngitis, took part, the items ranging from one of Schubert's songs, sung by Watson, V., to comedy acts by Jordan, and Griffiths (Old Boy) assisted by Watson. Mr. May and Mr. Faulkner both contributed amusing and very much appreciated turns.

Thus after a fortnight of good weather, good fun and keen sportsmanship, the Camp made its way back to Birmingham, all I think convinced that a holiday at Bryntail (in spite of straw beds and large doses of Bryntail Stew) can be almost all one could desire.
J.G.P. and D.H., VI.

Bryntail, Easter 1949.

On 12th April the main party of boys with Mr. Reader left Snow Hill, on the 8.22. Mr. Faulkner and the two cooks having gone on in advance. After changing at Shrewsbury and Moat Lane, we finally arrived at Llanidloes. We all split up into various groups, and after a very unpleasant 3½ mile walk arrived at the camp. There was much chatter and little sleep in our camp that night, except for Chellingworth perhaps, who had cycled from Birmingham in blinding rain.

The weather improved gradually and on Thursday three young stalwarts bathed in the river. In the afternoon the whole camp walked to Craig-y-Lloe waterfall. The main party, under the sheltering wing of Mr. Reader returned the same way, while Mr. Faulkner and 5 boys carried on to the Wye Valley to look over a cottage which Mr. Faulkner had in mind for a future camp. This little party arrived home rather late, returning by road via Llangurig and Llanidloes, about 19 miles in all.

During the next few days many old boys arrived, Mr. May also arriving on Saturday. The school played the old boys at baseball and after being 14—7 in arrears the school made a magnificent return to form and finally won 30—16. On Monday evening the majority of boys went to town, either to the dance or the cinema. A very enjoyable time was had by all. Everyone had returned by midnight or thereabouts except K. Hall, who was obviously not well acquainted with the Bryntail district. During the next few days a Despatch Run and a Whist Drive were organised. We finally made a trip to Pennant waterfalls. Mr. May and eleven boys returned by the river route, while Mr. Faulkner returned by road with numerous cripples.

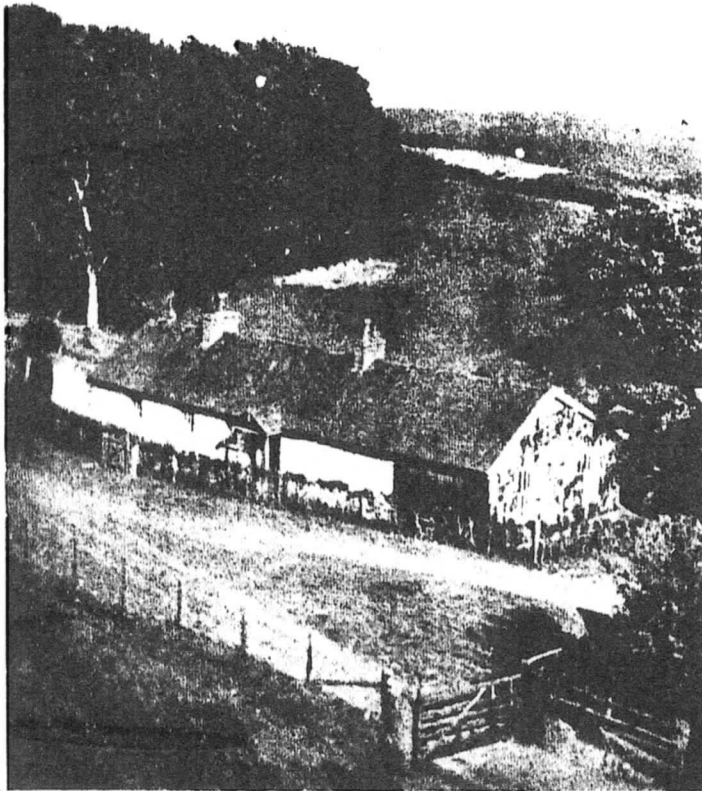
The day for our return arrived, a typical Bryntail day—wet and windy. Mr. May and thirteen boys caught the 1.54 at Llanidloes and arrived back at Snow Hill about 6 p.m., Chellingworth arriving by bicycle at 5.30 p.m. Mr. Faulkner returned after clearing up with the two cooks on the following day.

J.K., VI.



The Joys of Camping.

K. Tomkins, VI.



SCHOOL CAMP, BRYNTAIL.

Bryntail.

There have been over fifty School Camps at Bryntail since the first party was taken there in 1917 by Mr. Guerra. Perhaps between five hundred and a thousand boys have been to a Bryntail Camp. How much pleasure and enjoyment there has been none can tell; Bryntail is so different!

We leave the smoke and grime, the rush and bustle of Birmingham for the clear mountain air where the pace of life depends on the steady pace of nature. Restriction is replaced by freedom; "no standing on top," "move along there inside;" "empty 'bus behind" and two hundred boys crowded into each small playground give way to "bathing parade at 11 o'clock, you won't need costumes," a paper chase in the afternoon when the hares can go wherever they like and upset no one (except the hounds), or a walk to Rhayader, or Plynlimmon, Ffrwd Fawr or Craig y Lloe and perhaps meet no one for the first ten miles.

These things make Bryntail what it is!

"Veg. squad" and a great dixie to fill with potatoes; "camp squad" and a mountain of bread to butter; "lights out" with a howling gale and rain lashing on the drumming tent roof; gasping for breath on plunging into the icy water of Clywedog; sun-bathing when it is almost too hot to move or the umpire's cry of "strike three" and your team mates' yell of "run for it, run!"

These are some of the things that make Bryntail worth while.

But how can we carry on?

Three of the four corrugated iron tents have been blown to pieces which so reduces the sleeping accommodation that it really does not pay. To make this loss good we need a hut; and to build a hut we need about one hundred and twenty pounds.

A gift was received two years ago in memory of an old camper, who was at school from 1927 to 1931. This will form the nucleus of a fund which is being raised to replace the huts which were lost.

Who knows but that the "C. A. Tracey Hut" may house many young campers in the years to come? E.A.F.

Summer Camp 1949.

Statistics first, just to get them out of the way.

Numbers present: 18 boys, 2 masters, 10 old boys, 3 friends, 2 birds of passage (Fig. 24B).

Weather: 8 days WITHOUT rain, 7 days WITH.

End-to-End: If all the eggs (one per person per day) were laid end to end on the side of Crowsm, they would roll down into the river.

This camp was unusual in one respect: we did no walking. True, there were one or two rambles round the farms, and an afternoon stroll to the "Derelict Farm," Pen y Banc, and Eblid, perhaps 7 miles in all. Then there were numerous trips to Llanidloes, but you can walk on tarmac without leaving Birmingham.

There were no "real" walks—those long days on the tops that previous campers have known, with hobnailed boots crashing over the moors, heather-wading and bog-trotting; running down steep places and toiling up the other side; filling the aching void from a mountain stream because the sandwiches went long before, and at last thankfully recognising, in the late evening light, some landmark of home.

The strange thing is that if the Unwilling Pedestrians of Summer 1949 had only once known the pains and blisters, the toils and triumphs of a real Bryntail walk, they would have been converted. So, campers of Easter 1950, be warned! Give Mr. Faulkner no rest until you have been to Plynlimmon over the tops, so winning the freedom of the hills.

The weather did perhaps give the Weary Walkers some excuse, for the eight fine days were too hot for anything strenuous, and tempted everyone down to the river. Clywedog was scarcely ankle-deep, but the stones thrown in by thirty generations of campers have made a rough dam and our pool was still full of water, so warm that even the most delicate were reluctant to leave it. Getting dry was a matter of lounging in the sun for five minutes before putting on shorts and pumps and strolling up to camp. The second week saw the old routine return: dive in, come up speechless, make a dozen mighty thrashing strokes, and scramble out on numbed feet. Breathe. Dry hastily in a biting wind and sudden shower, dress, and then utter the time-honoured words: "It's fine when you c-come out."

Bryntail has always seemed to encourage a delightful eccentricity in dress. This was well maintained and is illustrated elsewhere by a selection from our Fashion Artist's sketch-book. He explains Figure 1 thus: "We are all familiar with the Hikers who roll their stockings down and trousers up, but it was Abbey of 58 who carried the idea to its logical conclusion; he rolled up his rugger-shirt as well." No. 24 shows Hodgson's idea of suitable headgear for a wet day; it has also occurred to the U.S. Navy. 10 and 17 are our artist's impressions of two masters dressed for camp rather than for school. A few campers, like No. 11, continue to wear their school-caps, perhaps to emphasize their innocent, child-like expressions and so ensure kindly treatment if captured by the Wild Welsh. Fig. 213 shews another treasure from the Army and Navy Stores, usually decorated with a Plume, and worn with a ferocious tilt by the meekest junior. The last, Fig. 24B, shows the kind of rucksack now in favour. The two figures visible in the background are Graham and Shirley on their walk to Bryntail from Birmingham. The sketch suggests that this walk was entirely mechanized but the camp's Medical Staff can testify that this was not so (private joke).

There was no room to illustrate fashions in bathing-suits, but enough has been said to support the claims of Bryntail to encourage freedom and individuality in dress if in nothing else.

To end this report, here are some of the most memorable events of the camp. First, of course, comes the cricket match. Bryntail managed for the first time to beat the County School. With the help of an impressive 29 by their sports master, Mr. Tudor. Llanidloes scored 72, Banks taking six wickets. We lost two wickets cheaply, then Tracey (44) and Banks (26) played with great freedom and confidence. Our final score was 102, and Mr. Tudor was so impressed that he took Tracey and Banks to play for the town team in two matches.

Abbey, Chambers, and others learnt something about snaring rabbits, and the camp officers a great deal about skinning and cleaning these charming little creatures. We had seven in the stew one day.

We had a paper-chase—the first since 1939. After a seven mile run the hares, three Old Boys, arrived back only a minute before the first two hounds, Abbey and Hodgson. Everyone else was home within ten minutes, perhaps because all the other Old Boys were on duty as whippers-in.

Murray ran the "Two-Mile" relay course in 9½ minutes, by the camp alarm clock. This time has been equalled several times in the past, but never beaten; what about it, you cross-country runners?

There is much more of interest to past and future campers in the eighteen pages of the log-book—the Concert, the Despatch-Runs, Baseball, Seven-a-Sides—but this extract must suffice. If you want to know more, come and see for yourselves.

Finally, a further statistic which has just come to light: if all the boys who wanted to come to this camp, but could not be accommodated, were laid side by side, they would comfortably fill the new hut that we so urgently need. If those readers who have a spare half-crown (or more) in their pockets missed the delicate hint in another article, perhaps they will notice this more shameless appeal!

PROFESSOR ZEUGMA.

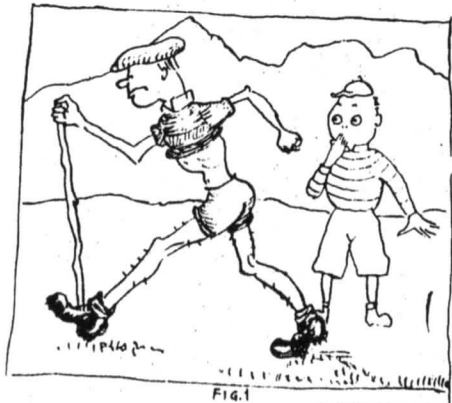


Fig. 1



Fig. 24



Fig. 10



Fig. 11



Fig. 17



Fig. 213

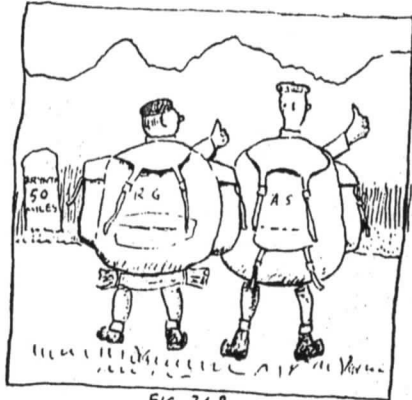
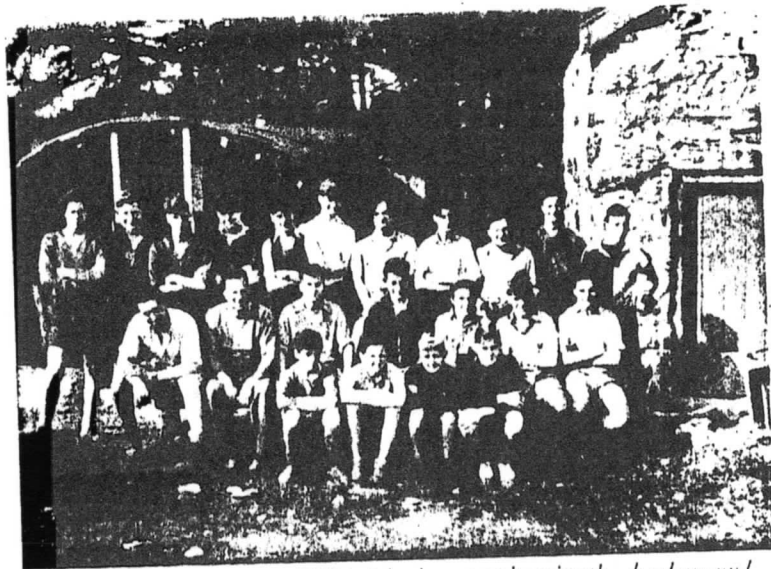
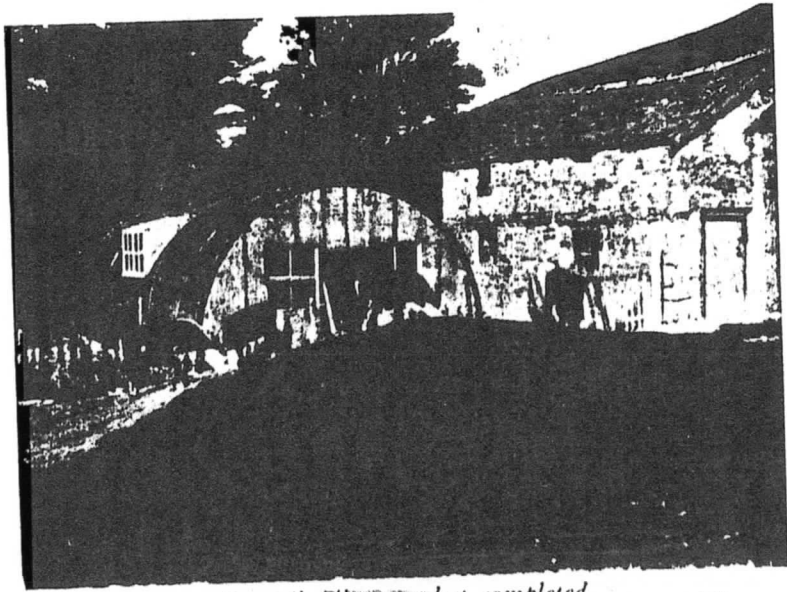


Fig. 24 B

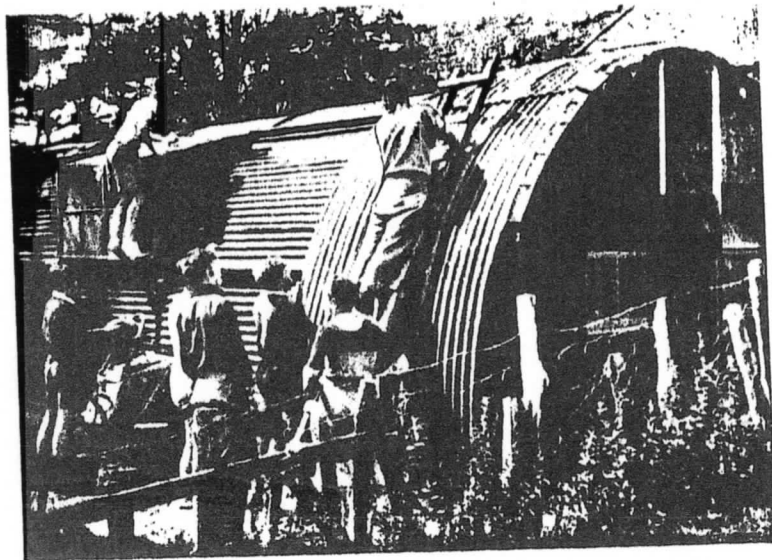
FASHION NOTES FROM BRYNTAIL.



Bryntail: Summer party, with the new hut in the background.



Bryntail: The new hut, completed.



Bryntail: Building the new hut.

BRYNTAIL ***Easter at Bryntail, 1950.***

A working party consisting of 13 boys and 5 masters spent their Easter holidays at Bryntail in order to erect a Nissen hut. The party with Messrs. May, Faulkner and Merriman had quite a good journey down and were met by the Royal Air Force, namely Messrs. Phillips and Reader, who had arrived the day before.

The camp was very pleased to welcome a party comprising Sir Rodney and Lady Pasley and their son, and Miss Sheldon.

The general health of the camp was very good, except for Mr. Reader and Spencer, G., who fell victims to Jordan's cooking but who recovered rapidly in Mr. Phillips's experienced hands.

At the end of the first week Messrs. Phillips, Reader and Merriman returned to Birmingham, as did Woods, Jones, W.D. and Horton, but their places were taken by Old Boys, nine of whom were at Bryntail during the fortnight.

Owing to the wind which reached gale force at times it was impossible to erect any superstructure but the foundations and the floor were successfully laid.

It was hoped that the hut would be finished during the Summer Camp thus, in the future, enabling about 20 more boys to enjoy life at Bryntail.

As always, time passed much too quickly and April 14th arrived before it was expected.

After 4½ hours travelling we reached Snow Hill station feeling pleased that the journey was over, but sorry that the target had not been hit.

B.J.E. 6U Science.

Summer at Bryntail.

I.

After a prompt meeting the party obtained their seats in the train. We left Snow Hill at 8.30 and arrived at Shrewsbury at 10.0. After a half hour wait we left and arrived at Llanidloes at 1.15. We sighted camp at about 2.0 and we had arrived to be met by Spencer and McDermott who had cycled.

The camp was divided into two usual squads, hut and camp. Work commenced soon after our arrival.

With the help of Messrs. May, Faulkner, Reader and Phillips two sections were put up in the first two days. Work steadily progressed and just before we came away the hut was near completion.

A walk to Van (a mountain 1,835 feet high) and Van village was made. The camp went to the local chapel as usual.

All too soon the holiday came to an end and on the day of returning we left camp at 11.30 and arrived in Snow Hill at 6 o'clock after a very nice and enjoyable holiday.

B. C. HALL, 5F.

II.

I think that all the old campers will agree with me, that this camp was the best for many years. Work of course came first and the high spirits second. The job of this camp was to complete the erection of the Nissen hut that had not been finished last Easter. It will now be possible for about another twenty boys to visit the camps of the future.

There was a fair amount of sleep the first night after Mr. May had kept all twelve of us in his sight (but not out of tobacco fumes)

from Snow Hill to Llanidloes, Messrs. Faulkner, Phillips and Reader having arrived on the previous day (July 26th) to prepare for us.

Work on the Nissen hut was begun immediately. Once work was under way we had the misfortune to lose the services of Messrs. Phillips and Reader. The decrease in "up-put" was very soon compensated by the eleven old boys who were at the camp from one time to another. With lots of scraping, hammering and painting, the hut was eventually finished on the last day but one of the fortnight.

The duties of the camp squads were even more tedious this year. "Spud-bashing" and wood-gathering had to be done as well as the usual tidying up.

All runs and games of one sort and another were missing this Summer. We did however take advantage of all the "off duty" time we could. This time was occupied mainly by ambling around the countryside.

Two walks were organised. The first was a Sunday afternoon stroll to the top of Van. This was very ably conducted by Eastwood and very ably misconducted by the rest of the party. The second walk was organised by Messrs. May and Faulkner. The route taken was Crowlwm Farm, Pen-y-banc and Deildre Chapel. It was this chapel that we visited the following Sunday.

Our annual cricket match with Llanidloes Grammar School could not take place this year owing to building operations. Llanidloes Cricket Club did however borrow Tracy (O.B.) Harris and Smith (School) for their match with Llanfyllin. Despite the fact that Harris and Smith did not receive a chance to show their paces, Llanidloes won by three wickets.

Bathing parades this Summer were very popular. The primary use of them was for us to have a good wash down, but some good all-round sports were experienced. These mainly consisted in trying to "repel all boarders" from "Mac's" dinghy.

After a fortnight of reasonable weather, the dreaded last day arrived. With the hurry and bustle of packing over, we set off from camp along the track back home. One last look at the Old Town Hall, before starting our very comfortable journey, made one wish that next Easter was nearer than it is.

J. D. PAYNE, 6L.

Bryntail 1950 : Hut-Year.

EASTER: "Thoughts, while concrete-bashing."

A-a-a-a-h! Creak-crick-crick! Ah! that's better. Hinges of back still working, and we can still stand up, after mixing another load . . . Slop it into the barrow, wheel it down to the Site, tip it,

spread and level it quickly before it begins to set . . . Yes, as usual; here it comes again—hail this time for a change.

Why does it always start to rain or hail or snow as soon as the concrete is mixed? The labouring men, the actual bashers of the concrete, can retire to shelter, but not so the layers and levellers. These men, aristocrats of the profession, cannot leave their tasks until all is smooth and covered over.

* * * * *

Behind us is an old stone building. It contains a heap of lime, half a ton of cement, drums of paint and some of the iron and wood that will one day be a Nissen hut. We have no name for this old cottage, but for some years before the war there was a piece of board nailed to the door and bearing the impressive words:

CAMBRIAN MINING COMPANY—REGISTERED OFFICES.

At that time it served as a canteen and welfare centre for the employees of the Cambrian Mining Co., who numbered four, or three when work was not so heavy. It was also an equipment-store and office, and for these purposes contained:—

- (a) a few picks and shovels;
- (b) some boxes of gelignite sticks;
- (c) a notebook, with a short pencil attached to it by a piece of string.

* * * * *

The weather; Easter at Bryntail has produced some queer and horrible samples of Plynlimon weather, but nobody remembers anything like this before. There's the wind, blasting and roaring round the corner at ninety miles an hour; there's rain, sometimes mixed with hail, sometimes with snow; there's snow alone, snow that looks so cosy on a Christmas card, but so bleak a thousand feet up and so untidy when mixed with inches of grey mud. But all the time this wind, howling down from the west. At its worst it prevents conversation in anything less than a shout, it whisks rough concrete off the trowel in a spray, it drives the new lambs slowly across the fields into the hedges, and pins them there.

* * * * *

Thursday, 13th April, the last day; a suitable time to look back over the fortnight's work, to compare the Vision with the Fact. The Vision—or as it now seems, the absurd dream—was something like this: about 3 days for levelling the site and laying concrete foundation walls; then a day or so to sort out and prepare the various parts of the hut while the concrete hardened; then a week or more for the work of erecting it.

The fact is that we have a level piece of ground, on which are some fifteen hundred bricks, covered with two inches of concrete and surrounded by the foundation walls. Inside the Miners' Cottage is a pile of material: 150 corrugated sheets, all straightened out, cleaned, and tarred, and the wooden ends of the hut, now cleaned and repaired.

So we are defeated, but not disgraced; beaten by the weather, for the "Bryntail Constructional Co." inexperienced though they were, realized that conditions were not quite suitable for building a hut when two strong men found it a dangerous and strenuous job to carry a single sheet of corrugated iron, and when ten-foot curved sheets were whipped up from the ground, and went sailing through the air.

* * * * *

The last barrow-load of concrete is laid down, to complete the floor, into a pool of rain and melting hailstones. So, with about two hours of daylight to spare, the first stage of our battle against the weather comes to an end.

Summer: "I dunno what we done," quoth he,
"But 'twere a famous victory."

Looking back on the victory, the first thing to remember is the weather. Any really old Bryntailer—say, one whose memories go back to the nineteen-twenties—will tell you that if you have had seven days wet and seven days dry, you have been lucky. Such would count as a Good Camp.

Our record was: 10 dry, 2 drizzly, 2 wet. Bank Holiday was a perfect day, with sun all day, a few white clouds and a gentle breeze, but the next day was 24-carat Bryntail weather, with heavy rainclouds driving from the West in unending processions, and the rain like rather grubby lace curtains drifting down incessantly.

The evenings and nights were often very wet, as we ascertained from Bromage and Flavell, for these two (like many other Old Boys) had undertaken a serious study of Welsh life and social customs, which necessitated their return from Llanidloes in the early hours of the morning.

* * * * *

Our Nissen hut consists of a skeleton, a double skin of corrugated iron, and two ends. Semicircular iron "ribs" are held in position by five long wooden joists or "purlins" which run from one end of the hut to the other, and are bolted firmly to the ribs. The inner skin is fitted—about 75 sheets of corrugated iron fastened together by clips. Then the two ends are blocked up by sectional wooden walls, which have the useful effect of forcing the hut into something like the desired shape. Finally the outer skin of large

curved sheets is nailed on the purlins, leaving a three-inch space between the two skins.

This rather long-winded description should help to make clear the following summary of progress:

- Day 1: erected first three ribs and inner sheeting.
 Day 2: first three ribs and inner sheeting collapsed.
 Day 4: skeleton, inner skin and one end in place.
 Day 5: above still standing; other end fitted.
 Day 8: all outer sheets in place.
 Day 10: side-windows in place; outside painted green.
 Day 13: inside finished with 3 coats cream paint.
 Day 14: floor painted, and the whole thing anchored with wires to the ground, the trees, and a couple of tram-lines set in concrete.

* * * * *

Our few visitors included three really old campers: I. Birbeck and F. J. Mills who remember being at Bryntail with Henri Guerra about 1925, and Roy Brocombe who was also there about that time, and attended his last camp, as an Old Boy, about 1932.

The "Bryntail Boys" too were frequent visitors, and keen but silent critics. Most evenings one or other of them would be round, inspecting the day's progress and testing it in the way that farm stock and farm buildings are usually tested, which is (a) by prodding with walking-sticks, and (b) by grasping in powerful hands and shaking vigorously, to see whether anything will fall down. After Day 2, nothing did. And now for miles around there is wonder and genuine admiration for the job we have done.

* * * * *

In the last number of "The Hammer" there was a very strong hint, at the end of the Camp report, that your money was needed to support the Bryntail Building Fund. Since that time the money has been contributed, the hut has been bought, transported from Cumberland, and erected—a very substantial way of saying "thank you" to all subscribers, be they boys of the school, parents, Old Boys, or the many good friends of the Central Grammar School. They will all agree that the last word in this present camp report should be a word of appreciation for those who did the work. A total of 43, at the two camps: 22 boys, 16 Old Boys, 5 masters—nameless toilers all except for the one whose untiring enthusiasm, patience, foresight and sheer hard work saw the project through from beginning to end—Arnie Faulkner!

Prof. ZEUGMA.

WHERE THE MONEY CAME FROM (and where it went to)

RECEIPTS			EXPENDITURE		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
Mrs. Tracy	25	0 0	Huts, Nissen, one	56	0 0
School	48	0 3	Paint:		
Old Boys and Friends	70	13 0	2½ galls White	4	0 0
Anonymous	25	0 0	5 galls Cream	11	7 0
			10 galls Black	2	15 0
			5 galls Green	6	5 0
			3½ galls Glust (for floor)	9	12 9
			5 galls Thinners	2	0 0
			Other Materials:		
			Stove and transport	4	16 4
			4 rolls Roofing Felt	2	9 0
			5 galls Felt Adhesive	1	15 0
			28 lbs. Bitumastic Putty		16 0
			4 lbs. Putty		6 0
			1 gall Creosote		4 0
			30 cwt. Cement	7	16 3
			12 tons Gravel and Cartage	6	2 6
			½ cwt. Galvanised Wire	1	8 0
			Nuts, bolts, screws, nails etc.	3	16 0
			Sacks for Beds	4	10 0
			String		2 6
			Tools:		
			Paint Brushes	1	12 0
			Wheel Barrow	4	5 0
			Spade and Shovels	1	14 6
			Pick		13 3
			Scratch Brushes		12 0
			Buckets		14 0
			Hammer		5 0
			Hack Saw and Blades		14 5
			Trowels		8 2
			Punch		9
			Fares and Accommodation:		
			Whitehaven (to fetch the hut)	1	17 3
			Working Party (Part of Fares)	3	16 2
			Secretarial Expenses:		
			Advert. in Farmers' Weekly		18 2
			Duplicating Paper	1	8 2
			Envelopes		3 3
			Stamps	1	5 1
			Telegrams		2 9
			Receipt Book		1 10
			Balance in Hand for "Finishing Off"	19	0 2
<hr/>			<hr/>		
	£168	13 3		£168	13 3

E.A.F.

xv/b JUN 51

It was during the period 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Sunday, when going to Chapel, that we found that not even capes and macs could keep the rain from penetrating every layer of clothing we had on. Even worse, though, was the hour sitting in damp clothes during the service.

On the Wednesday afternoon we all followed the river down as far as town. Most of us went to the 'Cinema' to see "Ma and Pa Kettle." In the newsreel the "Blues" and "Wolves" were given full support in the cup semi-final. This support was eclipsed later in the evening when the film "Jane" was shown.

The following two days were uneventful apart from a "Wide game" on Thursday afternoon.

The person who made the biggest blunder on 1st April was the one who suggested that we should go a walk to Lake Glaslyn. Five slightly smaller fools agreed to go with him. Two parties were organised, one for Pennant Falls and the other for Glaslyn. Both parties started in fine weather but before long the rain began to fall. Pennant was reached and dinner was had at the falls.

During that afternoon Eastwood, Hughes, Randell, McDermott Croft and myself went on to Glaslyn. When we reached the lake, a paddle (in boots) provided a welcome change of water around our feet. Although the lake itself was clear, the whole scenery looked drab and uninteresting as the rain beat down incessantly. Tea was had near the lake before we started on our ten-mile journey back to camp.

On the following evening a camp concert was organised. Some very weird and wonderful sounds were experienced. They ranged from Eastwood's "Goofy" grunt to Buckley's almost feminine squeak. The programme included such things as songs, jokes, stories and sketches.

Wednesday, the day of our return saw everyone busy doing odd jobs about the camp. Then, just after 11 a.m. we out of the Nissen hut, reluctantly left our stove and beds, while eight second formers from the tent were "mad keen" to get home and get a good night's sleep.

Although the camp was not a working one, concrete 'bashing,' fence and path making was done. Hard work, mainly by old boys and masters, will continue for a number of years, so as to make the camps of the future a success.

J. D. PAYNE, 6L.

Bryntail (I.)

THURSDAY, 22nd MARCH—WEDNESDAY, 4th APRIL.

In the care of Messrs. May and Cunningham, 27 boys left Birmingham on 22nd March for a fortnight at camp. After the usual changes at Shrewsbury and Moat Lane we arrived at Llanidloes. When camp was reached we found Mr. Faulkner, Eastwood and McDermott waiting for us. They had arrived the day before to clear up.

On the Friday, the weather was really bad. In the afternoon a team race over the 1½ mile cross country course was organised. Three teams of nine boys, stoutly dressed, fought their way against the elements around the course in times varying between 11 and 15 minutes.

During the Saturday morning, Marston, after having attempted to lop his knee off, was given a free ride on a stretcher from the wood back to camp. A walk to Crawlwm, Cwm, Pen-y-banc and Deildre Chapel was made during the afternoon.

Bryntail and the Flying Saucers (II.)

It should be made clear from the start that no-one has seen flying saucers at Bryntail—for the very good reason that we have no saucers there. Let there be no doubt about this fact: Bryntail is a Camp and, as our peppery old C.O. says, "Dash it all, Sir, these young fellahs must learn to rough it, what? Do some of 'em good." So, no saucers.

True, since the early days, a few concessions to comfort have been made: there is a solid and windproof Nissen, with a stove in the middle, and spring beds with a locker by the side of each. Many boys wash daily and some who are "nesh," and at the same time cunning enough to elude the vigilance of the cook, even wash in warm water. For the weekly shave we use hot water and not, as so often in the tough pioneering days, cold tea. We put an oil stove in the dining room on cold evenings; we cook with Calor gas; we have a doormat but—definitely no saucers.

Those who associate the word "camp" with a bell-tent pitched in the lush summer grass of an English field, and aluminium frying-pans over a wood fire of low calorific value—however useful it might be for sending smoke-signals—may express contempt for the luxury at Bryntail. They are wrong. And the weather this Easter would have shewn the most obstinate critic just how wrong he was; the first two days would have sent him back to his home, and his tent over the top of Pen Clun.

There is no need to say much more about the weather, really; the spring of 1951 will be remembered for generations. Up there we had $2\frac{1}{2}$ fine days and $11\frac{1}{2}$ more or less wet ones. It blew hard most of the time, and it rained, hailed, and snowed. One morning, on the way down to the river for "Bathing Parade" they had a vigorous snowfight—after which Ken Bromage and W. J. R. stripped and entered the water, voluntarily. One thing which will certainly stay in the memory of most campers is the mud; it was everywhere, especially round the cottage, varying in depth from a mere couple of inches to a foot or more.

Yet it was possible to carry through a good deal of outdoor activity, mainly walking, and in this we had plenty of small-scale luck with the weather. The usual thing, after a morning of showers or pouring rain, was to start out for the walk, heavily disguised in sacks, gas-capes, sou'westers, etc., and find that after the first few minutes the rain eased off and then stopped. Sometimes the sun shone, more often not, but at least we returned to camp with dry shirts. In this way we visited the summit of Van; the Van Mines; the Cwm and Pen-y-Banc; the top of Dinas; and some nearer parts. In addition there were a run around the Two-Mile Relay, a game of Prisoners' Release (in the very wide bounds we use at camp), and a "run-walk-run" along the river to Bwlch-y-Gle and back.

This luck did not hold all the time, and on two occasions we got a real soaking. The first was on Easter Sunday when we went to Deildre Chapel for evening service. It rained all the time and though everyone was pretty well equipped for such weather, even the newest and most voluminous oilskins are not proof against horizontal rain. So we arrived, all more or less wet from the waist down, and sat in the cold bare little chapel for nearly an hour and a half. In spite of the discomfort, behaviour was exemplary. It was not until clammy macks had been put on, and the homeward rush began, that the tongues started to wag again. Rain was still driving pitilessly, but the wind was on our backs now; even so, a few, hurrying down the slippery steep of Crawlwm, became even wetter after they had skidded several times and sat down in the mud. The notable thing about all this is that not one of the thirty-six pilgrims had the least suspicion of a cold afterwards, or indeed at any time during the camp.

The other wet occasion was the Big Walk, a week later. Eleven walked to Pennant Falls and Dylife, then back by the river path (15 miles) while six others led by Payne pushed on to Glaslyn (20 miles), on a day of frequent rain-and snow-storms. It was far too cold to linger and, except for one halt in the shelter of a ruined house to eat sandwiches, we kept on the move all the time. So, having some clear weather on the return half, we were able to walk ourselves nearly dry.

Altogether, in spite of the foul weather, this was a quite successful camp. The smaller boys, including nine second-form lads, did remarkably well and promise to become useful campers later on. May they discover that the sun often shines in Mid-Wales!

Finally, a word of appreciation for four of the many who contributed to the success: Payne, who was an active camp-leader; Eastwood, our conscientious and efficient cook; and two who must blush behind the obscurity of initials: T. R. and G. W. P., who worked all the dry hours and some wet ones, and put yards of concrete path down, and yards of pig-proof fencing up, asking for their reward only fourteen mugs of tea a day—without saucers.

PROF. ZEUGMA.



Bryntáil—Easter 1951.

very tempting. So instead of sighing, "If only we could have a dip," we merely strolled along until we came to a deeper place, and—got in. Those who had brought towels dried with them, those who had not used other methods.

Outdoor activities also included a Gate Hunt—the first since about 1930—a great and formidable paper-chase, and a cricket match against Llanidloes County School, in which, after two innings each, Bryntail lost by four wickets. Cricket at camp is impossible, but there were some mighty games of baseball; Campers soon learnt and took to the game with enthusiasm and success.

Of our visitors three call for special notice: Mrs. Tracey, Dr. Roberts and Harry Webb.

Mrs. Tracy came to see the place where Charles Tracey had spent so many happy days, and we were proud to be able to show her the new Nissen—officially known as the Tracey Memorial Hut—which had been made possible by her generous gift in memory of her son.

Dr. Roberts, our landlord, spent a busy morning looking over his property with a shrewd Welsh eye, and expressed his great satisfaction at the way we had looked after the cottage and buildings. He was pleased, too, with the general organisation of the camp.

Harry Webb spent a week-end with us. One of the oldest campers we have ever entertained, he first came to Bryntail as a boy in 1917, two years after Mr. Guerra held his first camp. He vividly recalled the rough conditions of those pioneer days when even our antique tap did not exist and the water came out of the hillside as a spring.

Better Than Ever

Summer Camp at Bryntail was an outstanding one. The weather was good; spirits were excellent; some traditional activities were revived and others improved upon; most memorable of all, washing in camp was Officially Prohibited.

Before we went to camp there had been a long dry spell. As a result, the tap would run dry after a few cans of water had been drawn off. So it was reserved mainly for cooking. Only cooks and food-handlers were allowed a few pails for washing; other boys managed to conceal their disappointment. However, the kit in Bathing Parade was towels and soap, and in the end many were actually cleaner than in normal camps.

The Pennant walk was memorable. On a blazing hot day we spent over nine hours doing fifteen miles. Naturally there were spasms of hard walking by those whose gear-boxes give them only "Full Speed" and "Stop," but the emphasis was much more on "messing about" than walking. "Messing about" meant chiefly scrambling up and down hillsides, and bathing. Bathing was quite informal—the most delightful sort. As we walked along a green track by the river, under the blazing afternoon sun, hot and dry, the water looked



"LLANIDLOES FLYER."

The cooking staff becomes, with the confidence born of experience, bold to the point of audacity, and the cook's (or Eastwood's) stew-like soups—or soup-like stews—brought fresh adventures to every supper-time. When at our first supper he was asked what was in the stew he was able to reply, with magnificent simplicity: "Everything" He may perhaps have looked on the Tuck Shop, revived from pre-war days, as a slight reflection on his ability to feed the hungry, but there is no doubt that he welcomed as heartily as the rest of us another innovation—the oven. Acquired and presented by "Jimmy" James, one of our ex-cooks (a resilient and hard-bitten race, if they survive), it consists of a large square tin with asbestos lining, and stands on two bricks, above a Calor Gas ring. Not much to look at, but it is most efficient, and enabled the cook to produce, for the first time in campers' memory—roast meat! To say more is to gild refined gold.

Finally a word about those last-but-not-leasts, those silent, unseen, devoted workers behind the scenes, without whom the roofs would collapse, the buildings perish for lack of paint, the fireplaces fall in, and the consumption of tea fall to below the danger-point, causing spontaneous combustion. We refer to the masters and the old boys, of course. Besides the work implied in the preceding sentence, they made gates, repaired doorways, laid concrete paths, and did much necessary work on the cottage itself with putty, plaster and cement.



CONCRETE MIXING.

In fact, Harper of Form 2 may have stumbled on a sinister conspiracy when he suggested that any Old Boy who in his Bryntail application form was unable to prove his ability as a carpenter, plumber, civil engineer, or property maintenance expert, was certain of rejection. We hope it is untrue, for the peculiar mixture, the happy community of boys, Old Boys, and masters makes Bryntail what it is. Let the figures speak: in 1951, campers have included, 10 Old Boys,

10 masters, and 58 boys—over one eighth of the present school population.

PROFESSOR ZEUGMA.

P.S.—Wanted, for Easter 1952, any Old Boys or others who are skilled in the art of making Coracles.

Alien Thoughts from Home

(The writer disclaims all responsibility for Welsh spelling; mispronunciations have his approval. The Editor hopes everyone is familiar with "Kubla Khan"!)

In Bryn-y-tail did E.A.F.
 A stately Nissen Hut decree
 Where Clywedog's sacred river ran
 Past Crowlem and the Lakes of Van
 To Severn and the sea.
 So fifty yards of rocky ground
 With concrete walls were girdled round
 And Old Boys broke their hearts and picks
 Lifting rocks and laying bricks
 And shovelling the concrete-mix
 To make foundations sound.
 There concrete paths were truly laid
 And wicket gates and fences made
 And purlins fixed and arches raised
 And chimneys set and windows glazed
 And all without was painted bright
 And all within made water-tight.
 —It was a miracle of rare device
 A Sunny Dome . . . a Cave of Ice!
 And O that deep romantic chasm which slanted
 Down the Long Path, below the bracken cover!
 A Bathing Place, delightful and enchanted
 That daily 'neath the summer sun was haunted
 By Centrals, when the working squads were over!
 —A master with a wooden flute
 Late in the kitchen once I saw.
 He pursed his lips and resolute
 Puffed out his cheeks and set his jaw
 And undeterred by hour and place
 He entertained—bob Sais!
 The Cook's Room kitchen squad awoke
 Enraptured as the music spoke
 The Songs of Llanidloes:
 The Ash Grove and Ar Hyd-y-nos
 The Harlech Men and Saspan Vach
 Cwm Rhondda and Taffy the Welsh
 The White Rock and the Gle-y-Bwlch
 [As he was playing in the dark
 The order may be wrong!]

Could I revive within me
His symphony and song
To such deep delight 'twould win me
That with rucksack stout and strong
And hobnailed boots and ancient hat
I would leave Llanidloes flat
—Five miles meandering with a mazy motion—
I would seek that Hut again
And Centrals all should follow then
And when the Cooks had brewed their potion
[Of herb and fruit and meat and spice
With incantations duly said]
And carried in the savoury pot
And plied the ladles, steaming hot
And all had sent their bowls up thrice—
None who saw would wonder then
Or marvel more at Bryntail men
Who mountains move and uproot trees
And Nissens build with skill and ease
Or millstones pick up in a trice
And heave them to the river's bed—
For they on Bryntail Soup have fed
And drunk the Tea of Paradise!



BRYNTAIL SECTION

An Elegy on a Country Residence

"Llanidloes!" came the croaking shout,
 The school contingent tumbled out,
 As through the station we did tramp.
 To make our way up to the camp,
 The wise ones hurried on ahead,
 To get the comfortablest bed;
 But not so smart, I lagged behind.
 The long rough country lanes did wind.
 Had this pilgrimage no end?
 "Left wheel ahead, another bend!"

Up to the "cucumbers" we drew:
 "I'm dizzy, Dai, I'm telling you."
 "The camp," a shout that made me smile,
 It died, "three quarters of a mile
 To go." I rallied and began to trot;
 But by this time I'd had my lot.
 The camp now loomed into my view,
 A welcome sight, I'm telling you.
 I slumped down to the Nissen floor.
 —I'd got the bed beside the door!

I'd come in last: the others laughed
 To think that I'd be in the draught.
 My bed and I were knocked about
 Whenever anyone went out.
 It scraped the floor with frightful din,
 Whenever anyone came in.
 "Fetch that" "Take this" "This should be sent"
 And next the door, 'twas I who went.

That night I tried to close my ears,
 And sleep in spite of yells and jeers;
 And every night I was kept awake
 By Nissen night-jar and camp cornerake.
 Next day I drew no peaceful breath,
 The camp-squad worked me near to death;
 And dinner time was misery,
 I thought the cook would poison me.
 But still I dared not make complaint,
 The mine-shaft threat was my restraint.

The second morning made me shiver,
 I learned that we were for the river.
 We scrambled down the slopes of Bryn
 To the river and tumbled in.

We're lucky no one has to quote,
 Of swimming in that icy moat,
 "They went down to the river side
 And there committed suicide."
 I took a breath, and with a leap,
 Flung myself into the deep.

I sank immediately, alas!
 And thought my end had come to pass,
 "Help! Help!" was all my strangled shout,
 And two tough fellows dragged me out.
 Next a walk all strides and jumps,
 It nearly wore my legs to stumps.
 Then mountain races—these quite good,
 Until I tumbled in the mud;
 And as I found I'd sprained my wrist,
 The baseball match was one I missed.

We went to town before departing
 To see the School's Old Boys imparting
 A beating to Llanidloes Town;
 Our rigger team deserves a crown.
 The last day came alas, alack,
 We were leaving, going back
 To Birmingham, back to the city,
 I really thought it quite a pity.

The Easter camp's had me perplexed,
 But summer is for me the next;
 We shall have a different cook
 And warmer water in the brook;
 There'll be less mud and work to do,
 And I have learned a thing or two,
 I'll choose a bed upon the floor
 Rather than that next to the door!

T. N. WILLIAMSON, 5S.

Bryntail Easter 1952

"Bryntail," grumbled Professor Zeugma, when he was reminded last term that "The Hammer" can hardly go to print without him, "is always the same; or at least, what one can say about it is." Nevertheless, we do not suspect that he journeyed north instead of west this Easter to avoid writing his own especial pages. It is true that life at Bryntail follows a pattern, but to those who go it is always fresh; so, too, the words of the professor.

And indeed, it was a different Bryntail that we found this Easter. I left last summer when the kitchen was in a state of upheaval, the grate and fireplace out, plaster, soot and broken bricks everywhere, and one member of the staff, perhaps inspired though late in his life by the writings of the Rev. Charles Kingsley, was stuck

half way up the chimney, not even his boots visible. I entered the cottage at Easter to find as clean and pleasant a kitchen as could be wished; congratulations to our amateur bricklayers, plasterers and painters—the Bryntail Old Boys and Staff!

Camp was opened this year as usual by Mr. Faulkner, who, with Eastwood and McDermott, put in a good day's work getting all things ready for the main party, which arrived after a pleasant but uneventful journey, on 4th April. The party was of a further 27 boys, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Jones and Mr. Reader. Mr. Rees and Mr. Heslop joined the camp later on. Llanidloes was still asleep, but to Centrals it is a beauty sleep, and Billy Vaughan had roused himself and his truck to meet the train, so that all boys were soon settled in at Bryntail. Not so the staff, for our O.C. had arranged for the truck to return to Llanidloes and bring them the shovels, that a load of gravel from the river bed for concrete mixing could come to camp with them—a good introduction to the mysteries of Bryntail for Mr. Jones!

Life at camp did follow its pattern, but what a fine healthy pattern it is, and by how much each year is fresh colour and detail added. Each camp sees more work done and improvements made for easier running and greater comfort. Particularly is this noticeable now we have the Nissen—the Tracey Memorial Hut—and iron beds for most of the boys. The camp gives to all who come healthy exercise, keen appetite and good food in plenty (with cooks of Eastwood's ability we might say "excellent food"); it gives a complete change in interest and scene, and in the spirit it fosters, a better understanding between masters and boys, and in its long association with the district a sense of pride in "belonging"—not just to the elect of Bryntail, but to C.G.S. Many lessons can be learned outside the form room. These, as our Editorial points out, are days of change and experiment, and local education authorities and the Ministry encourage innovation and variety in the pattern of school life. Can we look forward to a time when a period at Bryntail may be part of the term's timetable? It offers possibilities for work in subjects that do, or might, find a place in our curriculum. In school, indeed, we learn much from Welshmen—we might learn still more in Wales!

The weather was reasonably good, but there were showery days, and April showers in the hills are heavy. They did not prevent any of the customary activities: walks, races, baseball, the various and peculiar Bryntail games which have developed over the years—or working parties! An unusual job for the last-mentioned was the filling in of a "hole." This had appeared in the cottage garden behind the rockery, a hole about a foot square on the surface, but below it opened up, big, deep, dark and mysterious. It may have been old lead mine workings from the days before maps and records, or, as the more romantic asserted, part of the legendary secret passage from the Miner's Cottage to the Farm; (I have heard it extended to Llanidloes, one day it will reach back to Birmingham); we do not know; it was filled up, not explored.

Of walks and expeditions mention should be made of the climbing of Van Mountain, and on 8th April an excursion to Craig-y-Llo by the younger boys, while the stalwarts of the stout hearts and strong legs, made the longer journey to the top of Plinlimmon. Two anecdotes of that day are worth recording. On the return from Plinlimmon the party was greeted by an old inhabitant (aged 85) of the Plinlimmon slopes. He told of Bryntail as it was many years ago, in those harder days when he had walked some five miles each way over mountain tracks daily to work there, asked who was there now, and was told that C.G.S. had been for about 36 years. "Ah yes," said he to Mr. Faulkner, "I remember. You're a citizen now." Mr. Jones, bringing home the other party from Craig-y-Llo, stopped to ask for water and directions from a farmer, speaking to him in Welsh, in which language the farmer replied; all this to the amazement of one second-former who expressed his wonder that the old farmer should speak French!

The great event of the camp this year, apart from the arrival of Old Boys to stay (there were seven over Easter) was on Easter Monday. This was no less an event than the revival of the pre-war annual football match between Old Centrals and Llanidloes. On this occasion most members of the team arranged to come by coach to Bryntail, with wife, if they had one, friends and supporters, play the match, visit the camp for lunch and tea, and return to Birmingham in the one day. The project was excellent, and the day keenly awaited in camp and in town.

But there were difficulties, and the weather was the worst. It rained for the arrival of the team, heavily throughout the match, and on and on until almost time for departure. But even so, with hard work by the cooks (that day under the inspiring command of old boy "Jimmy" James) and smart organisation by the O.C. a good lunch was served to time to all the visitors and the residents, even though kitchen and O.C.'s room were full of folk "drying out."

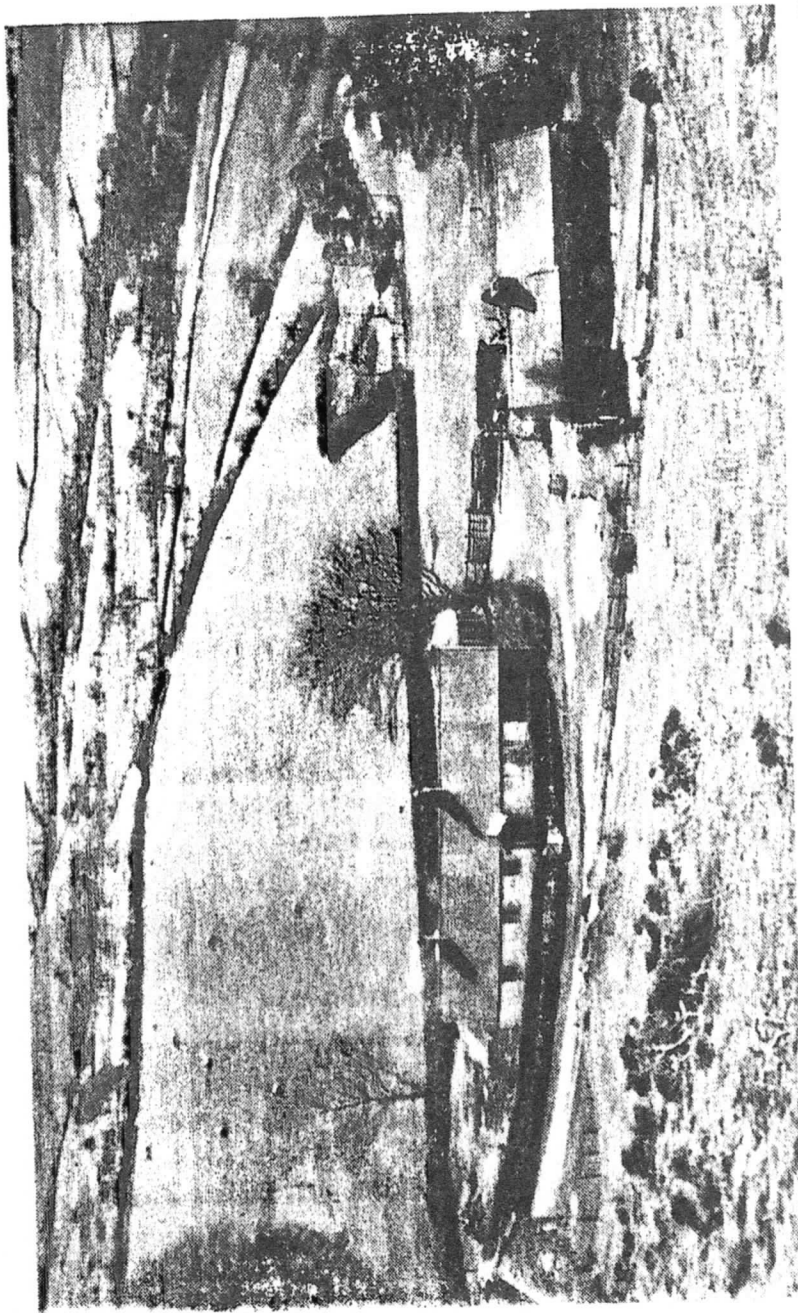
Alas for the coach! The road to Llanidloes is good, but Llanidloes to Bryntail is a mountain road. This the coach driver negotiated comfortably as far as Bryntail boundary, but he would not bring his vehicle through the "cucumbers" for the last half mile of the farm road. Nor could he turn there, but went on to find a suitable place for this manoeuvre. Later, word was brought to camp that the £3,000 "luxury" vehicle was stuck across the road at Bwlch-y-gle, and it was only after strenuous efforts by the stoutest of old boys, who dug away the banks on either side of the road and took down a yard or so of stone wall (and all this in torrential rain) that the coach was turned and headed back for Llanidloes.

But back at camp clothes were dried and, after a buffet tea at 4.30, the visitors left. And the sun smiled down on their departure.

Old Centrals won their game, 22 points to 8. An interesting comment afterwards came from Dr. Graham Davies of Llanidloes, who although by all the rules is far too old for the game now, was

still keen enough to play. He is an old international player, having been chosen for Wales several times. Our Mr. Carter, who as a boy knew him well, has many anecdotes of the footballer-doctor. He once sent Mr. Carter to bed on Friday with influenza and a very high temperature, at the same time assuring him he would be all right for Saturday, and must be up to play in the rugger match! The Doctor met Mr. Faulkner on the evening after the Llanidloes match, when the Centrals were giving assistance at the scene of a slight accident, and thanked him for his very considerate refereeing of the game. He said that he hoped we hadn't minded their playing 16 men, but one had come over from Rhayader especially for the game, and rather than disappoint him the Welsh had played him, hoping the Old Centrals wouldn't notice. And they hadn't, referee, nor players, nor spectators! It is this type of bold innovation and originality of method that will, without doubt, keep Wales at the top of the international table.

Several whist drives were held during the evenings in camp (with the re-opening of the tuck shop it is not so difficult to find prizes) and there were two evening sing-songs. (For the first came a request from the smallest member that modern songs might be sung, not the "hey nonny nonny stuff." It was his first camp.) At the second we had visitors from the farm, but on these evenings, as on so much else during the stay, we missed the services and company of Mr. May—as much as we miss in this issue the notes of Professor Zeugma.



D. Weedon

BRYNTAIL, EASTER 1952

BRYNTAIL

AN INCIDENT OF THE WELSH CAMP

Some people love to be in a crowd. To them St. Andrew's or the Speedway, or Blackpool's South Shore are just little bits of Heaven. Others take the opposite view: their chief desire is, every so often, to get away from people.

The latter ambition is much harder to achieve; as the population of this island increases, so do its lonely places become fewer, year by year. Houses sprawl; quarries eat into the mountain sides; hydro-electric schemes invade the secret valleys of our hill country, or score the flanks of Snowdon with lines of enormous drainpipes.

And this, for those who seek solitude, is where Bryntail comes in. It stands on the threshold of the Plynlimon area—a lonely part indeed, and one that becomes lonelier as time passes. When Victoria was Queen, these hills must have been full of people: leadminers crossing them as they went to or from their work; shepherds; the squires and sportsmen shooting over their moors. But the mines died long ago, the shooting lodges were left to decay, and now the shepherds and hill-farmers have gone too, pushed out by the Forestry Commission. "Come to Bryntail"—the word is plain to those who, at times, need to get away from People.

This desire is by no means selfish or unsocial. It springs rather from the urge to find out how much we can do for ourselves, without interference or well-meant offers of assistance; to test ourselves; to set ourselves a simple task and carry it through under our own steam. And that—without being too solemn and dramatic about a mild little adventure—that is the kind of task that faces anyone who will walk from Bryntail to the top of Plynlimon.

At the Summer Camp this year there were daily questions, from the lads, beginning quietly on the first day and developing into a persistent and relentless nagging: "What about a walk to Glaslyn?" Later it became "When do we go to Glaslyn?" and the more ambitious added the words "and Plynlimon"—a bold but not revolutionary idea, since this double expedition had been carried out many years before by at least one notable pedestrian among our Old Boys. After a week of such nagging, Authority at last yielded.

It was clear that the desire for a Real Walk was both spontaneous and genuine. More to the point, the lads had been both tested and trained by walks to Van summit, to the Glyn bridge ("Jones's Bridge"), Crowlwm and Coppice Llwyd, to town and back for the cricket match, and to Llawr y Glyn.

Accordingly, on Friday, 1st August, the O.C. said, "Let this thing be." At breakfast, when the question was put, there were some two-dozen who said they wished to take part. When the less capable walkers and the ambitious young had been firmly though regretfully weeded out, fifteen were left, and these set about preparing for as early a start as possible.

It was just eleven o'clock as the party left camp. Some dashed eagerly ahead at a good four to five miles an hour; the more experienced were content to warm up gradually. The period between breakfast and the start had been filled with activity which, if not feverish, was certainly continuous: washing up, the construction of monumental sandwiches, last-minute attention to boots, the collection and packing of gear such as capes, extra sweaters, maps, whistle, compass, and the usual small quantity of first-aid items which experience had proved useful, not least a small tin of vaseline.

The first walkers halted at Staylittie (4½ miles) at twelve o'clock and were replete with pop when the last arrivals came on the scene some ten minutes later with the tin of vaseline. The pace, on that hard and hilly road, had been a bit too hot for some, and the vaseline both soothed and lubricated several chafed heels and sizzling toes. Level going now for two miles; then a few minutes' halt to marvel at the Ffrwd Fawr (the "Great Waterfall") which campers know as Pennant Falls; then on through the ruins of Dylife and so, after three and a half miles of uphill road, to our first objective—Glaslyn.

Glaslyn (the "Blue Lake") lies at the respectable height of 1,600 feet, but half a dozen of the party were not satisfied with this climb. They felt compelled to arrive there by way of Foel Fadian, a hill 1,850 feet high and a mile or more further than the direct road. When all were met, operations were begun on the sandwiches. These were fully appreciated, particularly by the hardy few who had made Glaslyn their swimming pool, drying in a keen wind off Cardigan Bay, which from this point is clearly visible.

A shepherd on a pony was seen at the far end of the lake, but soon disappeared—the only living soul we had seen since leaving the seven or eight houses that still remain of the once prosperous lead-mining village of Dylife (Not "Die-life," but "Dull-ce-veh").

At half-past three the party divided: nine turned back to follow the river Clywedog down through its raven-haunted gorge to Staylittie and so back to camp; six went onward to Plynlimon. Following the cart-road for a mile we reached Bugeilyn, the end of the road and of civilization. This "Shepherd's Lake" is long and shallow—at one end an expanse of startlingly green and tender grass, in which stand the shepherd's cottage and a grim, square-

built shooting-lodge. Though there are still some faded curtains hanging in the little house, no shepherd has lived there for five or six years, while the shooting-lodge with its elaborate plumbing ("Baths they had in the rooms upstairs") has been long abandoned—perhaps since the days of the fabulous Squire Wynn who built it.

Between Bugcilyn and Blaen Hafren we covered $8\frac{1}{4}$ miles (a distance, to speak more correctly, of nearly five hours). We climbed on to the long hog's back of Plynlimon, over the lower summits, and at last to the Cardiganshire peak, the very top of the mountain and the principal object of the walk. In those five hours that we spent on Plynlimon we saw just three traces of human beings: a wire fence running along the shoulder of the mountain; the far scattered remains, now becoming hidden among the sparse heather and coarse grass, of what we could only suppose was an aircraft that crashed near the summit cairn; a few slabs of slate, standing like little gravestones here and there on the tops and bearing the inscription "W.W.W. 1869." These links with men who once lived or died on these hills seemed to emphasize more strongly, even poignantly, the surrounding desolation.

At the top (marked on maps with a little triangle and 2468) we crouched in the shelter of a large cairn and scraped the bottom of our rucksacks for the last precious crumbs, while the mist drove above our heads. Then we stood, leaning on the wind, to look at the view.

Through driving mist we caught glimpses of a vast landscape; southward, a welter of jumbled, hummocky mountains; westward, a deep and shadowy trough, then a black rim of hills beyond which the sea stretched for many a mile, a sheet of dazzling silver in the evening light, with cloud-shadows like horizontal pencil lines moving across it.

High time to be getting off the top, and as near camp as we could before nightfall. Racing downhill, we passed the source of the Wye and drank gratefully (like George Borrow a hundred years before).

At half-past eight we were at Blaen Hafren, once a farm but now a name ("Severn Spring"). Children played there forty years ago, round the little house that is tumbling down today. At last we reached Rhyd y Benwch, and the highroad. But there was still no sign of life, for this once prosperous farm has been abandoned since the war. A mile or more of tarmac lay between us and civilization—a wayside house, where we saw a bulldozer and some living people. We spoke to them, and they answered us.

We covered the last two miles in darkness, fitfully relieved by the feeble rays of a watery half-moon. As we trudged, weary and silent, over the familiar tracks we were content in the knowledge that, without the aid of any Transport Department, we had done what we set out to do. The twenty-seven rough miles had taken twelve hours, for it was just eleven o'clock as we came into the Cottage.

The O.C. and his mates welcomed us kindly, with bowls of steaming broth, apples and custard, and pints of coffee. And then, having got away from people for most of the day, we settled down to dreamless sleep. In our little camp there were fifty people that night.
PROFESSOR ZEUGMA.

Bryntail Easter 1953

The Easter Camp this year was from 2nd April to 14th April. Twenty-nine boys and Mr. Faulkner were there for the whole period, while seven Old Boys, Mr. Philips, Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Weston and Mr. Reader stayed for part of the time. An unexpected but welcome visitor was Mr. Rees, who stayed for a few days. Other visitors were parents of some of the boys, and Old Boy Mr. H. Liggins, who called with his family. The weather was at times showery, but there were some very pleasant days, sunny and warm enough to encourage the bathers into the pool.

Camp followed its usual pattern, active, healthy, interesting and useful. Games were keenly played; excursions undertaken (noteworthy were those to the top of Plinlimmon and back in nine hours by seven senior boys, and of the whole company to Rhayader by train, with a further 10-mile walk to the second dam to view the panorama of the lakes); repairs and additions made to the cottage; and tremendous meals eaten, thanks for the last being due to D. Abbey, who as cook was excellent.

Contributions

The Red Book of Bryntail

Constant readers of this magazine will by now have gathered that the School runs a Camp at Bryntail.

Nay, more! dozens of boys still in School, as well as hundreds of Old Boys, have actually been to Bryntail themselves. Some have been 15 or 20 times and know the hills, the people, and the Camp in almost every detail, and yet it is safe to say that to none of them do the words *Llyfr Coch Bryntail* convey anything! A very few may guess at the meaning of those same words, when Englished as *The Red Book of Bryntail*. And even when the veil is lifted and the book appears under its common name as the *Camp Log*, only a mere handful would know it as anything more than a name.

This is a great pity. To help put matters right, we now bring to our readers a description of the book, the more timely as Volume III. has now been started with a record of the latest Camp Easter 1953.

The Camp Log is, of course, still in manuscript—the publishers have not yet found out about it. It has been in existence since about 1936, and is always written in a thick book with red covers. There is no official Camp Secretary, Historiographer, or Scribe; any master who can read and write (and is willing to accept the task) is free to write his pages as seems best to him. Volume III., which we are now reviewing, contains contributions from Thomas the Rhymer and the O.C.

The Log in the early days was factual, brief, to the point: a mere catalogue of wind and weather and events. But various writers added more and more to it and Volume III. is typical of the style which was finally evolved—facts mingled with fancies; names of campers and accounts of their exploits, mixed with names of half-legendary local characters and the racy local gossip about them (*not*, at present, for publication, even though the characters appear in some measure disguised).

This volume opens with an account, day by day, of the Easter Camp. The entries vary from under half a page to five pages for a day, according to what happened on any particular day, and how the writer felt. It starts with entries, in the bold and fluent hand of Thomas the Rhymmer (T.R. on the time-table), from which we learn that Camp opened with 29 boys, one Old Boy and four masters. The weather of that first day is described exactly, yet without profanity, as is only right.

When the Log is published the reader will find that the weather, faithfully recorded every day, has at Easter and August over a long period of years been astonishingly good. In fact, the Englishman's idea of perpetual Rain in Them Thar Hills is a wild exaggeration.

Other facts that one may glean from this volume include records of walks undertaken, of property repairs successfully carried out, of games played, with their results. Fully recorded, with names and scores and times, are the baseball games, the two Despatch-Runs, the Two-mile Relay.

Then, besides recording facts for the sake of future interest, the Log is meant to be of practical use. Place-names are entered, and names of all the farmers round about, added as we learn first one, then another. There are details of walks—distances, measured in miles and in hours; hill routes to use and others to avoid. There is even technical information, unobtainable elsewhere such as the following on How to get 27 boys aboard the Rhayader train by 10.15: "If sandwiches are packed before breakfast, this can be at 7.45. Camp Squad prepares breakfast; Veg. Squad sandwiches; Wood Squad clear up after breakfast; Odd-Job Squad do camp duty in the evening."

This was the successful prelude to a memorable visit to our Elan and Claerwen Waterworks; it is easy to see how useful the information will be to planners of future trips.

But, as we hinted earlier, not all of this book is fact. The Camp Log is also the Red Book of Bryntail, full of humour and imagination, of fantasy and Cymric legend, at times of poetry!

Even that notable Druid-hunter, T.R., is ensnared by the gramarye or the music of the local names, and his pages ring with Aber Deunant and the Cwm, Glaslyn and Ystrad Hynod and Allt y Rabbit. On another page an unsuspected beauty of Bryntail is recorded: a night of stars—that clear night-sky framed in the blackness of the hills and filled with the brilliance of stars bigger and more numerous than we ever see in Birmingham. A little thing, some may think; yet it is one thing that will come flooding back in the memory of any old camper who may chance to turn the pages of that book.

Humour too, much of it too sly, too allusive, too personal to quote here. "Family jokes" are seldom appreciated outside, so if you wish to know the true history of Todd (the Post), or Holy

Joe, or what the farmer said to the camper who climbed his new fence, you must come to Bryntail and learn the background and when you are a very senior boy, ask to have "a read of the Camp Log." However, to round off our brief review, here is an entry which needs no special knowledge. It is from the five pages about Easter Tuesday, and is headed "Nature Note":

"G.W.P. and N.C., prospecting for grit for concrete, ambled over to the old mine-workings. A rabbit, busy on its new burrow, suddenly aware of them, bolted from under their feet, straight down the field. And in its blind career struck a lamb amidstships, bowling it clean over. All four surprised, but only two amused."

So this is our book: three in one. The Camp Log for meteorology, visitors, statistics; the Red Book of Bryntail for every kind of comment, observation and musing; Llyfr Coch Bryntail for the legend of Llyn yr Ordd, the Druid's Curse, and the recipe for Bryntail Stew! PROF. ZEUGMA.

The Bryntail Pilgrims

(Note: There should be no difficulty in the pronunciation of the words here, as anyone who is, or has been, in the Arts Sixth would tell you. "Ed" or "es" at the end of a word is usually pronounced as a syllable, and so is the letter "e" unless the next word begins with "h" or a vowel. That's all you need to know.)

PROLOGUE:

Whan that Aprille to an ende doth bringe
The Scole terme, highte Easter or Springe,
And murily fro out our halle wende
Al yonge knaves whos swink is at an ende;
Whan maisteres namore hem bidden hede
Whyles they in hir olde bokes rede;
Ne prefectes ne lenger in despyte
Hem honden paper lynes for t'endyte;
Ne Second Maistere hath entencioun
Hem lenger holde in detencioun;
They casten in hir mindes everichon
In straunge strondes shortly for to gon.
And fro our Scole the halydayes to spende
To Bryn y tail in Walles the moste wende,
Hir Nissene herbergage for to seke,
And herknen to the Walssehemmen how they speke.
Bifel that in that sesoun on a day,
At Snow Hill on the deys in my way,
Weren of knaves wel som seven-and-twenty
(And eek of kittebags and gere a-plenty)

Redy to wenden on this pilgrimage.
 And murthe and joye out-shoon in ech visage
 For Bryn y tail they shopen hem echon
 And I was of hir felaweship anon
 Me thinketh it not accordaunt to resoun
 To telle yow al the condicioun
 Of ech of hem; hir bewty or hir grace
 Hir singularitee of forme or face
 Ne eek in what array they weren in
 Of habergeoun or of hainselin
 Forgat sholde ben al swiche atte beste
 They weren murye knaves, leet it reste.
 But of hir officers I wil you telle
 That hem sholde garde and reulen welle
 What tyme the ferne londs they weren inne
 And at the Hostiler wil I firste biginne.

THE HOSTE.

A hoste ther was of stedfast demeanour,
 Of campers-oute he was the verray flour;
 Of viagings to Bryntail hadde he been
 Ful six-and-twenty, mo or lesse, I ween.
 Wel coude he marschal knaves and lede hem hence,
 For he was lerned of long experience,
 With urchins or with old boys grete or smal,
 And eek with Walsshemen coude he dele withal.
 As he were duk he marched hem up the hille,
 Than torned hem round, there nas no standing stille,
 To march adoun; or sayde he to this oon,
 "Go yow," or "come," like a centurioun.
 Of vitailles was he a kene achatour,
 And wyse in bynge mete or bread or flour
 Wel coude he juge of brisket or bacoun,
 (And gif ech knave his fair proporcioun)
 Or whether eyen fresshe were or stale;
 And whether that he payde or toke by taille,
 Ther coude no wight bring him in arerage.
 His rekenynge he wroot faire on his page,
 And atte the ende his chafferynge he chekt,
 His purchasing might never ben infect.
 No knavish trikkestere mote with him avail.
 At the campe singe-songe tolde he wel his tale;
 Lite it rekked hem he nadde but oon,
 It moot be hered, that was tradicioun;
 What time the lampe was light and soper doon,
 He yaf hem al his benedictioun.
 Out after with his lanterne wolde he crepe
 T'ensuren al were sauf and sound on slepe;
 Breke his campe reules no knave dorste,
 Algate he praktised hem himselve firste.

THE DOCTOUR.

With us ther was a doctour of phisik,
 The knaves to helen if that they were sik.
 A bettre praktisour has nowher noon,
 Al for his science and his high renoun.
 Wel was he grounded in chirurgerye
 And hadde of gere almost an armurye;
 His sheres and knives and saws and his scalpel
 As burnisht silver sperkled everydel,
 Harneised wel and sharp as point of spere,
 No razour was so kene as his daggere
 To cutte or probe a mormal, whelke or knobbe;
 An amputacioun was right his jobbe;
 Than wolde he dresse his takel semely,
 And grete his pacients ful solempnely;
 They neded nat comen a second daie,
 A first visyte was enow alwey.
 In lechecraft knew he everich remedye
 And eek the cause of everich maladye;
 Large was the boks he kept his oynements in,
 His boras, brymstoon and penicillin,
 His philtres and his phials of oyl of castre,
 His lytarge, narcotykes and stikinge plastre.
 Of everich herbe he knew the propretee,
 As opie, dokke leves and fumetere,
 And strange lore he hadde and termes queynte
 To conforten ech herte that was feynte.
 To othere woundes and to broken armes
 He hadde salves and he hadde charmes,
 Fermacies of herbes and splintes stoute
 To setten bak a nekke-boon put oute.
 Of everich herbe and plante and tree and flour
 He knew the vertu and he knew the power,
 But allerday the mooste he hadde in minde
 Were but tweye—of Virginie and Inde.

THE PROFESSOUR.

A professour was with hem for the nones,
 Full long he was of heyghte and big of bones;
 Given was he to meditacioun,
 And ful his head of erudicioun,
 Of subtil lerning and of wordes queynte,
 With divers tonges he was wel aqueynte,
 As walsshe t'exercise his tonge and jawe,
 And he had muchel latyn in his mawe.
 And atte table one moot here him saye,
 "Cette sauce H.P. de haute qualitee."
 Or "Passez-moy the pain and eek the sel."
 For fressshe he spake fetisly and wel,
 After his scole of Bordesley-atte-Grene

(" Cours Moyen " was to him a boke unsene!)
 He was a worthy wight in camp, pardee:
 Atwinne his bokes and lerning than leet he.
 Wel farced with meat his walet for the day,
 For nuncheon and by-etings on the way,
 Boted and hosed, he ladde the knaves on
 To Bwlch y gle and thennes Plinlimmon.
 Nimble he strood from montaigne into plaine
 Ne stinted he his pas for wind ne rain.

Whan bak to campe he had hem sauffly broght,
 At night he wolde maken hem disport,
 And at the campe singe-songe wolde he pleye
 On giterne or ribible, or assaye
 (His owne voys as a trompe thonderinge)
 As which of hem coude hoppe bet, or singe,
 Or blowe pypes, combes or clariounes
 That in hir Nissene maken murye sounes.
 And after, as whan men to kynges wryte,
 In heighe style the logge-boke wolde endyte,
 With coloured inks or peynts or other swich:
 Zeugma, he highte, or Jimm, I know nat which.

THE COOK.

By Destinee, ministre general
 That ruleth in the wide world overal
 As is depeynted in the sterres, ywis,
 A cook we hadde, for our wele and blis!
 A lusty knave he was, and yong and strong,
 Grete clatterynge maked he his pots among;
 Skilful to reulen tornespits was he
 By his experience and auctoritee.
 For deyntee cakes and servyse at the feste
 Bake metes or broiled, al yaf he with the beste.
 The knaves kepte him never wayting long
 What tyme he maked sounes his soper gong;
 That was a sighte ywis for yen sore,
 Whan inne his cauldron royailliche he bore.
 Echoon was redy in his place aright,
 The montaigne air so yaf hem appetyt
 They coude the harneys etc, lat be the hors;
 He neded never a del of poynaunt sauce;
 Lyk Jakke Sprat, ech lafte his platter clene;
 How bet mote cooks appreciated been?
 Sparkled and winked his ladels spikke and spanne,
 Bornished and scoured everich pot and panne,
 In al his gere no defaute mote be founde;
 His kitchen was as hit were haly grounde.
 Now God him helpe that sholde ther trespas!
 " Avaunt! " quoth he, and " Get thee gon apas! "
 A squad he hadde to kepe his knives bright,

Choppen his logs and make his fyr aright,
 His oynons pele and scrub his porigge bowls,
 His asshes swepe and beren inne his coles,
 Al for our bote, and that hit is hygiene,
 Especialliche he kept his owene hondes clene.
 Somtyme the officers did he to reste
 Hem to refresshe and drinken if hem leste.
 Fetis he was in art culinaryre,
 Of al that craft he coude the misterye,
 As how boylle water or how kerve bread,
 Or tinne cannes ope or butter sprede.
 Certein of cakes were we withoute doute,
 And benes on toste, but if his fyr were oute.
 He fested al, and dide so grete labour
 To esen us, that ech dide him honour,
 Al were hit officer or knave or gest.
 —But Evening Dishmetes he maked alder-best!

OLD BOY.

An olde boy ther was, a worthy man,
 At Bryn-y-tail as urchin he bigan;
 Of al the olde knaves that comen ther
 Bet coude he hewen wode or water bere.
 For he was stout and sturdy for the nones
 And thereto was he brode and hard of bones;
 His stature was nat grete, ne his limes long,
 But hard of braunes he was, and stif and strong
 To doon what any wight coude him devyse;
 He many yeer had been in this servyse.
 Ther nas no task he could nat for to doon;
 He was of aller wightes a paragon.
 At ones was he carpenter and cook,
 Anon the bones fro the mete he took;
 Wals coude he mende and he was therwith
 The bocher and the joyner and the smith;
 Betwene whiles he braste stanes and rocks;
 Anon he heeld aloft his magyk boks,
 And al the knaves stode in stif posture
 Whiles he made of hem hir pourtreiture.
 Sanguine his humour and his yen bright,
 Jolyf his lauf, he japed everich wight,
 Risen at cokke-crow he wolde not faile,
 But alderbeste he tolde a murye tale.
 He was so murye of condicioun
 That thurghout al the camp was his renoun,
 And at his japes laufed al the roum.
 Jimmye he hight in camp, and Jakke at hoom.

Bryntail, 1953

Does anyone read these notes? No doubt those who were present at the last camp will be interested. And perhaps other boys who have been to Bryntail, but missed Summer '53—poor fellows! And a good number of Old Boys too, Old Centrals who are also old campers.

Perhaps A. E. Baker will be among the Old Boys who glance at the "Bryntail Notes", just to see how the old place is going on. Very likely he will read the article, for he was one of the visitors we were glad to welcome on that brilliantly fine Sunday afternoon, the 2nd of August. Standing in the cottage garden, he remembered it in—yes, in 1921, and talked of "H.G." (Henri Guerra) and bell-tents in the garden, and camp programmes fixed and immutable whatever the weather, and of a boy named Baker who was there then, at his last camp. "See you in 32 years' time".

More recent campers, the post-1932 classes, will be interested to hear that Megan, servant at Bryntail Farm for 21 years, has left to go back and help on her parents' farm. Hundreds will remember seeing her as a guest at camp concerts, or when they were sent to fetch eggs or milk from the farm, or striding manfully, a sturdy figure in her heavy boots, as she went to feed her hens or carried the dinner-basket to the men at work in some distant hill-side field.

Perhaps not only the Old Boys, but also some Old Folk will read these pages—or, to put it more clearly and diplomatically, the parents of campers both actual and prospective. They should know that the health in general was good and that despite the clear air and one or two days of intense sunlight, only a couple of these Old Boys lost any skin through blistering. Washing, in cold water, and with the shirts, pullovers, and vests removed, was a daily occurrence, and every boy had a chance—in fact, several chances every day—of rediscovering that excellent way of getting from one place to another known as walking.

Two notable walks were those to Llyn Ebyr and to Plinlimon. The way to Llyn Ebyr, a reedy lake whose dark waters are lit up with yellow water-lilies, lies along the disused Van Railway, then lanes where wild raspberries grow thickly, and finally through tall, dense beech-woods. An afternoon stroll of ten or a dozen miles.

Plinlimon (which the new Ordnance map pedantically calls "Pumlumon") is another thing altogether. In the first place, although half the camp was eager to go on the walk, it was thought advisable to limit numbers to seven boys, all from the Fourth and Fifth Forms, and all stout walkers. Again, though the distance on the map is not much more than 25 miles, the going is rough in places, and the walk normally occupies at least ten hours including all stops for taking in food, bilberries and scenery. But this sprawling mountain has been described before in these notes, and we saw little change this time. So much for the parents, who learn that we care for their sons in sickness, walk them off their legs in health, and teach them hygiene, potato-peeling, and geography by the well-known Wackford Squeers method—"go and do it".

Finally, there are those who form the backbone of the School magazine reading public, the boys themselves! They read every page as a matter of course, and those who write for them need not even bother, normally, to please—but the wise will do so.

Therefore, old campers will find half-buried scraps of personal information, and "not-yet" campers will be able to correct the lurid stories brought back from Bryntail by their imaginative school-mates. So, if Burton has read this far, he will notice that in our annual cricket-match he scored 11 valuable runs against a Llanidloes County School XI, and thus converted a rout (26 for 8) into the respectable defeat (38 all out) of a very Junior Second XI.

Or Broadbent, who will certainly have read this far, will find that, ably assisted by Lynch, he was our Cook, and as the Red Book of Bryntail says, "a highly successful one; not perhaps experimental in the matter of stew, but having the great quality of being unable to sleep after six in the morning". Less sublime, but each achieving temporary fame in his own way, are Beards (he played tunes on his teeth), Lewis, who stayed in the river on the coldest day until ordered to leave, and Birch, who found every nest and identified every kind of bird living, dead, or mummified.

Perhaps, after all, the answer to the question, "Does anyone read these notes?" is, "Yes, a few". And at least half a dozen will already be wondering about next time, too.

PROF. ZEUGMA.

Bryntail — Easter, 1954

A year for records, 1954! One little-known record which will, nevertheless, be remembered as long as most of the famous ones—a matter of three or four years—concerns the weather at camp.

From the day the advance party arrived until the day they left, seventeen full-sized days, NOT ONE DROP OF RAIN fell on Bryntail. Even at Welshpool there was an hour's drizzle on the great day of the Rugby match, but at Bryntail—No! A sharp frost most nights, freezing the bowls to the ablution-bench, but of rain, never a drop.

Having established this fact, let us add that despite fairly heavy demands on it, the tap never dried up or even gave cause for anxiety, as it so often has done in dry summers.

This was a great camp for walking. Most of the boys had been able to fit themselves out with strong boots, some of them elaborately nailed with Hobs, Triple Hobs, or Studs, and at least one pair with a complete set of edge-nails or Clinkers, that must have added over a pound to the weight of each boot. Soles were thick, and the boots roomy enough to take at least one extra pair of socks. In a word, those who stood inside these boots meant business.

They had what they wanted: fourteen walks in fourteen days. The walks ranged from an hour's stroll by the old Powder Mag.

and then (as the Red Book of Bryntail romantically puts it) "along the Goat Track to the Petrified Forest and Bwlich-y-Gle"—from such gentle two-mile strolls up to day-long walks over twenty miles and more of hill-country. On April 15th, eleven walked across country to the Birmingham Waterworks, a walk described by one of the party on another page of this issue. Five days later, sixteen walked to Pennant Fall and Dylife, and eight went further still, to Glaslyn. All three of these walks are between twenty and thirty miles, but it should be understood that the time is spent, not merely in moving from point to point, but also in aimless, though healthy, activities such as reading the map, admiring the view, climbing up to nests, or bathing impromptu in chilly pools. So the question whether we have walked ten miles or twenty is not very important.

The furthest afield that we went was to Welshpool, but not on foot, except to Llanidloes station in the morning and back at night. Even this, however, plus wandering round Powys Castle and the streets of Welshpool (alias 'Pool or Trallwm) added up to about ten miles.

The event of the day was a Rugby match between an Old Centrals' team and Welshpool. Unfortunately, the home side was rather below its usual strength, so that although the 60 or 70 spectators saw an interesting game with plenty of action and some first-class passing movements, the elements of struggle and uncertainty were lacking. Old Centrals won by 28 points to 3.

After the match many of the Old Boys came on to camp and spent Easter Sunday and Monday with us, enlivening us with their presence and assisting us with their strength in various jobs of maintenance, including the sinking of a gatepost big enough to hold a level-crossing gate. At this time we reached our maximum number of 44 in camp.

The total number was 49, including nine masters who were in camp either the whole time, or the first week or the second week, or with the Rugby team. Nine masters! No wonder the boys were subdued after the first day or two! P. Zeugma wants to point out that this is a misleading statement; that there was no such appalling situation as a master/boy ratio of 1 to 4 (i.e., one master to four boys), for they came and (happily) went and the nine were never there at one time.

Still, nine of 'em! Wedi ei pacio yng Nghymru!

PROFESSOR ZEUGMA.

Bryntail — Summer, 1954

"LLYFR COCH BRYNTAIL" or "THE CAMP LOG"

There have been so many camps at Bryntail that it would appear at first sight that nothing new or unusual could possibly happen. Reading through this summer's account, however, shows that this is a complete fallacy. It would seem that there is always something fresh.

There were the normal events—walks, despatch runs, the two-mile relay, baseball, the whist drive, rugger-touch, and rugger of the special Bryntail variety. But even the walk up Van was varied this time with a spell of rock climbing up a 30ft. face, with the aid of a stout 80ft. rope. The paper chase was also exceptional in that the hares went to earth and were caught, and it was enlivened for many of the hounds by the antics of one of their number when crossing the river. Quoting from the "Llyfr Coch": "One unfortunate youth failed to understand or appreciate the spirit of the game; becoming more and more irritable as he was urged on along the trail, he reached the climax, a paroxysm of ineffectual fury, as he reached the middle of the river. There he stood, pouring bitter imprecations on the silly Quidam who had invented this unmentionable game and who was destined, he hoped, to burn everlastingly, and accompanying all this with frantic beating and splashing with his hands on the surface of the water."

It would seem impossible to find new walks, but this year a party broke new ground and visited Glynbrochan Pool, sometimes called Marsh's Pool, a short distance north of the Llanidloes-Llangurig Road; a pool described in some detail by Robert Gibbings in his book "Coming Down the Wye."

The Old Boys also varied the even tenor of events: from a part-time inhabitant of one of the "locals" they bought a £2 motor cycle. After having its name duly painted on the tank, "Benny" spent his time between camp and the river and between camp and "town," sometimes driven but more often pushed.

And so camps come and camps go, much as they have done since 1915, but there is always something new.

E.A.F.

Bryntail Fund

Last year Harold Liggins thought that it would be a good idea if there were a fund which could be kept in reserve to be available if at any time there should be any large expense in connection with the School Camp at Bryntail. He promised most generously to double any donations up to a sum of one hundred pounds.

Over £40 was collected in the School and £40 from Old Boys; Mr. Liggins himself sent a cheque for £100 so that there is now a Bank Account balance of £181/13/0.

All Bryntail boys, past and present, will, no doubt, be very pleased at this and will join in thanking Mr. Liggins and the very large number of others who have given donations.

Bryntail A Reply to the Critics

Of Bryntail, the cynic, usually an unfortunate who has never made the pilgrimage, will say, "Once you've been you have seen the lot", or, "I want a holiday, not concrete-bashing in a concentration camp", or, more approbriously still, "I have enough of Mr. — at School, I couldn't endure him at that dump". (I have heard these criticisms of Bryntail so I can vouch for such irreverences having been uttered!)

Let us disprove him lest his factious words dissuade both the ardent lovers of solitude and those of good companionship from visiting Bryntail.

His first argument is, of course, easily refuted. Each camp has individuality, not, let it be said, in its general pattern, for walks to Van, Dinas and Aber Deunant are traditional and are "done" at every camp. No, it is in more particular detail that each camp differs, and that of Easter 1955 was no exception.

Once more, builders, architects and carpenters were assembled before the critical eye of the O.C. and, armed with the appropriate tools, the semi-professional army went into action. As a result, the new outhouse, variously denominated "Marguerite", "Myfanwy", or any other euphuism of the speaker's fancy, was completed within the specified time of ten days, in spite of much earnest discussion, much puffing of pipes and, of course, much drinking of Management Tea (and coffee!)

"Ah!" the cynic says, "what is different about that? You build something every time you go to camp". But nevertheless, this was a building with a difference, for Mr. Price, "the organiser of victory", drew intricate diagrams of the—er—"thing" before it was assembled.

The second argument is more difficult to disprove. Everyone is expected to labour mightily for the good of the community.

"The immortal spirit grows
Like harmony in music; there is a dark
Inscrutable workmanship that reconciles
Discordant elements, makes them cling together
In one society."

Most campers, both boys and old boys seem to regard it as a labour of love, and if the critic is still not convinced, let me tell him of Bond, Hunt and Salisbury, who volunteered to stay behind from a walk in order to help the engineers lay concrete in a race against the dark and rain.

The building of an adjunct was not the only activity; the Nissen Hut was given a new coat of paint and it is now probably visible from Banc Ddu; and, of course, all the usual walks were undertaken, including a visit to Glyn Brochan or the "Marshes Path" and the ascent of "The Hill of Sion" to Deildre Chapel.

But let this stimulating excursion into the intricacies of Calvinistic Doctrines be mentioned only in passing lest it embarrass anyone. There are full and lurid details obtainable on special request from the O.C.'s Stationery Office.

If our critic is a lover of sport then he would not leave Bryntail disappointed. Admittedly, Mr. Faulkner replied "No paper", to the suggestion of a paper-chase, but who could complain? Both young and old took part in a relay race, in which rain started rather than stopped play, and threw themselves vigorously into games of "Rugby Touch", held in honour of the acquisition of a second Rugby ball which was painstakingly cared for by Bond. There was still more to follow; the ever-popular dispatch-run was held, in which everybody took part, from the smallest to the largest (that is, from Maddison to Monaghan).

Thus we come to the sceptic's last argument. "I can't tolerate Mr. — and Mr. —", did he say? Let him come to this "Palace of Culture", for are we not the finest musicians, scribes and men of mighty voices (temporarily eclipsed, alas! when Ingleston lost his voice) throughout Wales, the Eisteddfod included? and he will discover that such men have souls. He will learn, for instance, of Mr. Reader's overmastering passion for hot, sweet tea, and Mr. Price's equally violent dislike for the brew, and of Mr. May's ability as a recorder player.

"In his hand
The Thing became a trumpet; whence he blew
Soul-animating strains—alas, too few!"

Moreover, he will discover in Mr. Heslop "a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy", with his "flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table on a roar"; and can the National Health Service compare with the kindly hands of our own Doctor Phillips? Then there is Mr. Faulkner himself; the critic will soon discover why he is legendary to old and new campers.

"O Friend! our comforter and guide!
Strong in thyself, and powerful to give strength!"

Thus we have left the critic defenceless and in passing sentence on such a base heretic, we demand that he should make the pilgrimage and form his own opinion first-hand. His verdict will never be in doubt; "What is the date of the next camp? I want to be there to help lay the new path".

P.S.—"Myfanwy" will definitely stand in lasting memory of "The First Battalion, Bryntail Engineers", for it has already withstood the thrusts from the "Welch Regiment" from the Farm!
V. E. BROADBENT, 6U.

Bryntail—Summer 1955

The rare occurrence of good weather at Bryntail amazed the ancient sages of this little England beyond Wales for they were convinced that Bryntail was never visited by the sun. They proved to be wrong but fine weather brought its cares as well as its pleasures.

The lack of rain ensured cleanliness underfoot (except in the cook's room) and one was able to reach the Nissen hut without the use of waders. But the cooks' room remained aloof from cleanliness, for here disorder held sway. Anything that could not be found on the floor could be found "in the fridge," a luxury which existed, however, only in the fancies of the room's inmates.

The culinary sorcerers (dare one call them cooks?) found the summery warmth a great advantage; towels (made grimy by the hands of thoughtless dixie-cleaners) could be washed and rapidly dried, whilst there was a marked hesitancy on the part of the usual hearth worshippers to approach the blazing inferno which cooked our potatoes.

Bryntail is noted for its sartorial customs, but the "torrid clime" of this camp encouraged fanaticism in undress rather than dress. Blackened backs were seen everywhere and one athletic giant resembled a certain American pugilist—especially after the elegant coiffure by Watson of Bond Street, or is it Aston Cross?

Warm weather encouraged outdoor events, and activities in this kind were numerous and varied. Excessive heat prevented marathon walks to Plynlimon and Glaslyn, but in an atmosphere of pleasurable languor the Campers made pilgrimages to Van, Llwr-y-Glyn and, of course, the impregnable fortress of non-conformity at Deildre. Heat had penetrated the chapel walls and the sun had thawed out the harmonium from which the Mercian pilgrims (our lads) heard:

" Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:
At which the universal host up-sent
A shout that tore Hell's concave and beyond
Frightened the reign of Chaos and old Night."

They could almost be taken literally for the formidable combination of English and Cambrian voices would have sent Satan and his rout (or any unfortunate shepherd on the side of Dinas) fleeing in terror.

Besides tentative excursions into piety, the camp indulged in Rugby Touch (Bryntail is oblivious of season), baseball and, of course, a despatch run in which the runners themselves were almost dispatched by the glare of the sun. Perhaps the most notable event of this camp was a midnight walk. The stillness of the night seized even the least romantic soul and we journeyed "Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways" in silence for even the penetrating voice of Ariss was momentarily hushed.

During the day the languid air bred a laziness which could not be dispelled even in the depths of Clywedog's "ebon-shaded" pools. The only engineering that was undertaken was the construction of a much-needed path by the front door. No doubt the engineers were inspired by the threnodic chorus of recorders from the kitchen for

" Anon they ' worked '
In perfect phalanx to the ' doggerel ' mood
Of flutes and ' shrill ' recorders."

Recorders were not a sufficient inspiration, however, for there were frequent interruptions, apologetically called "tea-breaks" by the workers.

The manufacture of tea has now become a definite science at the Camp. Teapots are innumerable and comprise three bright instruments of aluminium, one with a woefully small top; a fuscous, medium-sized one (recently acquired); a ' five-cupper ' (a faded, battered blue with a grotesque brown lid many sizes too big) and a near relation of the last mentioned (usually reserved for the postman). In addition there are three milk jugs, an unfathomable sugar basin and even a tea-cosy. Bryntail is indeed a paradise for drinkers of tea.

From the kitchen in the solitude of afternoon,

" I spied a man, with aged step
Seem'd weary, worn with care;
His face was furrow'd o'er with years,
And hoary was his hair."

But this was no Leech-gatherer or Cumberland Beggar, it was Mr. May with his scythe harvesting in full glare of the sun a riotous crop of weeds. It is not surprising that Mr. May's demand for tea exceeded the output from the kitchen!



"WHILE GREASY JOE DOTH KEEL THE POT"

A. J. WRIGHT, 6L.

But let us go from the peaceful afternoon to the industrious hours of the morning when Bryntail resembles a beehive. Suddenly all work ceases and the least obtrusive member of the Camp Squad achieves his transient fame by a dramatic call of "The tap's run dry!" The Management is summoned and a hush descends over the Camp as the Governor-General verifies the sad news. The situation, caused by the summer drought, was indeed serious but the tap recovered some of its lost vigour and on the order of "use less water" the Camp survived the fortnight.

Apart from these domestic difficulties, the more drastic effects of summer were felt during walks. Wherever we went we were accompanied by a retinue of flies of varying degrees of social attainment, from the resplendent horse fly to the humble house fly. Wilkinson, however, stalked untroubled throughout the Camp for he was literally besmeared with an offensive lotion that repulsed both man and fly.

This last Summer can be accused of subversive activity for it lulled new campers into a false sense of security in regard to Bryntail weather. Let me warn them that at Easter Bryntail may be

" a frozen continent

Dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
Of whirlwind and dire hail."

And capes and sweaters must, of necessity, replace tee-shirts and straw hats from Grenada.

V. E. BROADBENT, 6U.

Bryntail — Easter 1956

" Five years have past; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a soft inland murmur—."

I have been a camper for five years and little has changed at Bryntail during that time. Fed by the mountain springs the river still rolls past the foot of Bryntail and Banc Ddu dominates the skyline. If nothing changes why does the camp merit a twelfth visit? It is variety rather than change that makes Bryntail so interesting. Easter 1956 certainly had variety and the camp was endowed with a character which distinguished it from all others.

Until this camp, meals had to be eaten with care if the hungry diner did not want enamel flakes with his vegetables. Now he can dig his fork in with abandon, for china plates have arrived. Tradition is not lost, however, for we still have the hazards of our enamel mugs. Bryntail stew has achieved great fame during the years. Usually it has been eaten in the evening when everybody has been too tired to care what he was eating, but at this year's camp we found that last winter's frosts caused the potatoes to boil into the water, and traditional "potage du soir" became "potage du midi". And although everyone was wide awake, palates approved the flavour and the fame is unimpaired.

Change came also to the "Long Room". For many years "the smoke and stir of this dim spot" had troubled all who dwelt in it. Now it was decreed that it should be painted, and dusty, forgotten relics were cast into the dining room in preparation for the assault. Inquisitive hands soon discovered the gramophone among the rubbish and the more conservative members of the community had to endure the instrument's

" ——— quivering peals
And long halloos and screams and echoes loud
Redoubled and redoubled."

However, the transformation in the Long Room amply compensated for the shrieks of the gramophone. After the painters' work was done the place seemed like a palace.

Eventually, everyone pleaded to be taken away from paint and "canned music" and so a walk to Rhayader was proposed. But for the weather, the walk varied little with tradition, for we had the same pack of "ham, jam, cheese and fish", the same landmarks and the same Sid Thomson to drive us from Rhayader to Llanidloes. But there was fun in a new battle-cry: "You're going too far over to the right!" This warning proved correct, and until someone asked a motor-cyclist the way we were marching

towards Aberystwyth with our wheeling to the right! But from then on the party hastened light-heartedly to Rhayader, no doubt spurred on by the thought of Mr. Thomson's taxi-cab for the return!

During the week, Centrals "raised impious war" with the gramophone, but Sunday inspired in them a subdued and chastened mood. In accordance with custom they dutifully followed their commander over Crowlem to the Chapel at Deildre. This pilgrimage usually takes place in the evening, but 1956 again had variety, for the service was held in the afternoon. And this was not all, for our service was conducted by no less a person than the Mayor of Llanidloes. This suggests that we are gaining more and more prestige and importance in this part of Wales. There is even a hope that we may reconcile the Cymrw to the acceptance of the Westminster Government, just as we ourselves accept its Lloyd George tradition and Celtic eloquence.

Chapel was not the only thing held at an unusual time. The relay race took place in the calm of a warm evening instead of on the traditional cold, wet afternoon. Although the race is rather gruelling, we found it nevertheless preferable to the gramophone. A new walk through the lands of the Forestry Commission, stirring games of Rugby Touch and bathing for the intrepid constituted the rest of this eleven days' camp, and now we must look forward to the summer. Alas! we shall still have to endure the gramophone, as Hollingshead, who first mastered its mysteries, has already put his name down!

V. E. BROADBENT, 6U.

Bryntail, Summer 1956

In this wilderness of gaunt, barren mountainsides, of mighty verdant forests, of tumbling streams and miry tracks; amongst these great humps, from which giants once hurled defiance at each other, and these deep incised valleys, which once resounded with fierce war-whoops mingled with the clash of steel and the ululations of dying legionaries as some ambuscaded Roman patrol met its end at the hands of the wild inhabitants; here, in this land steeped in legend and tradition, lies the Bali H'ai of Bryntail.

Campers during the last few years have enjoyed, by normal Bryntail standards, some remarkably good weather and, indeed, the Easter of a few years ago was distinguished by the complete absence of rain. This summer very nearly gave us the opposite record. For the first week an almost incessant rainfall deluged the countryside. High winds shrieked around the mountain tops and curtains of rain drifted down the valleys, forcing the sheep to huddle in downcast little groups in whatever cover the bare slopes afforded. There was a marked improvement in the second week, however, and occasionally a vestige of sunshine briefly illuminated the landscape.

Despite the weather the usual camp activities were little affected. Some bathed when the elements permitted, numerous games of rugby touch were played and two despatch runs were conducted through mist and rain. A paper chase, a rather rare diversion, was also enjoyed by those fortunates still standing on their feet (a mysterious illness forced several junior campers to resort to their beds for a few days). And, of course, there was Chapel. The engineering accomplishments of the camp included the construction of a new window frame for the "long room" and the reconstruction by several assiduous old boys of the stile immediately above camp.

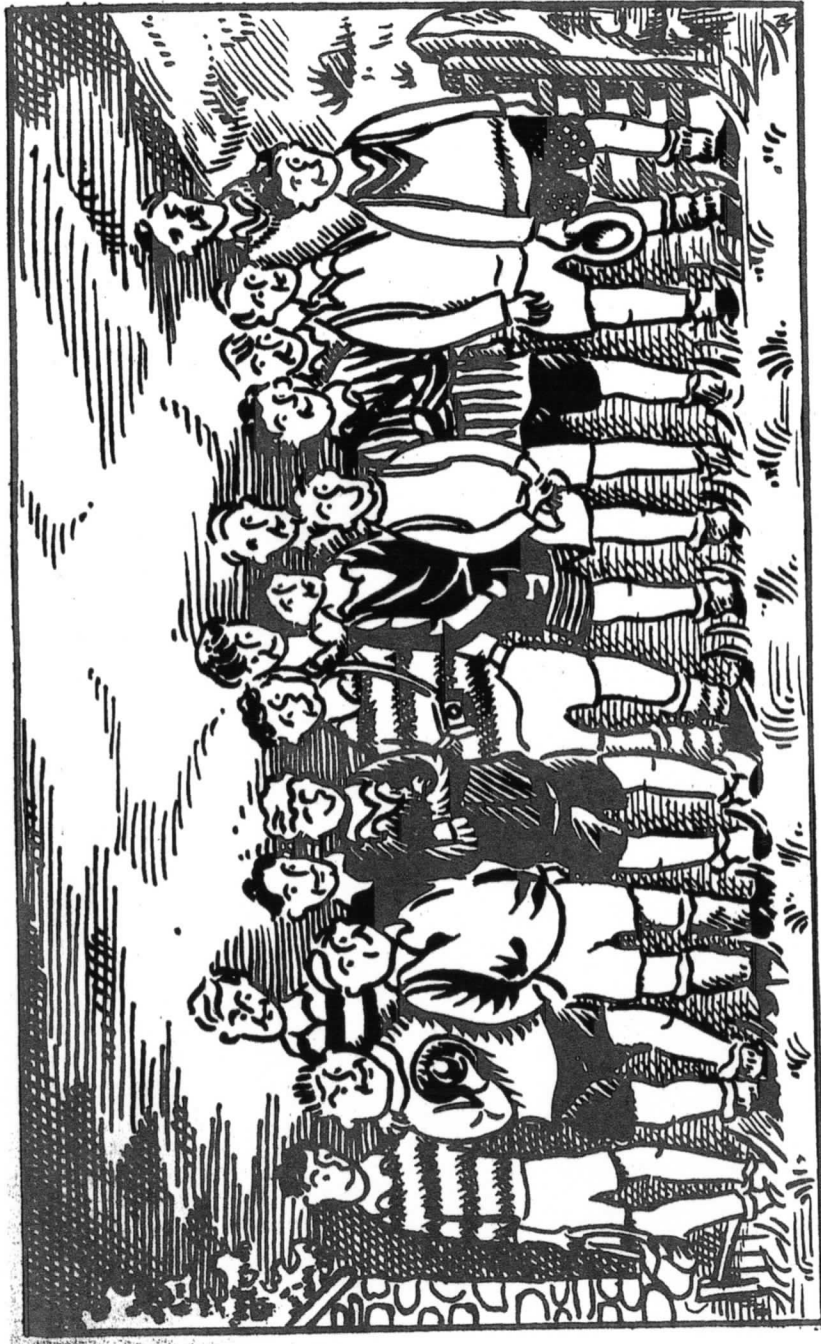
The camp was characterised by the number of walks undertaken, ranging from an evening stroll along the ridge of Crawlwm to appreciate the magnificent sunset, to a Plinlimmon marathon. Intermediate amblings, notably to Craig-y-Llo, to observe the waterfall in full spate, Llyn Ebyr, to squelch through a succession of treacherous morasses, and Van, were also engaged upon.

A. J. Wright, 6.U.

The Plinlimmon Walk

To the west of Bryntail in the depths of wild Wales lies mighty Plinlimmon, a desolate mound relieved only by jumbled outcrops of rock and intersected by numerous rivulets, cascading down the long, deeply-cut valleys to mingle with the torrents of the Severn, the Wye and the Rheidol.

Periodically, excursions to scale the lofty peak are conducted over the twelve miles odd. So it was, on a particularly inauspicious day, that an intrepid band of Centralites set out in pursuance of this aim, leaving the more sybaritic members of the camp to consider the elements and cackle over our impending fate. The journey to the summit was fairly uneventful except for one minor incident. The proposed route passed through an arm of the great Hafren forest; which extends over the lower slopes of Plinlimmon. After a reconnaissance, a fairly well-defined path was found which seemed to offer a means of passage. However, "the best-laid schemes



A. J. WRIGHT. 6.U

THE PLINLIMMON PARTY

o' mice an' men gang aft a-gley" and half-way through the wood the path mysteriously disappeared. The party pressed on through densely packed fir trees and eventually emerged from Stygian gloom, bodies a mass of contusions and abrasions, to find the struggle had been conducted within a few yards of, and parallel with, a great anti-fire swathe, at least twenty yards wide, which had somehow not been noticed.

The vista from the chaos of rocks which is the summit of Plinlimmon is reputed to extend over ten counties, from Snowdonia in the north, to Brecon Beacons in the south. Obviously it was an "off" day, for all that could be discerned were a few lifeless, craggy ranges, half veiled by nebulous mist, extending to the horizon, which was marked by an almost imperceptible white streak which might or might not have been the sea.

The journey back was decidedly more eventful. Almost at once the rain which had threatened began to fall as a thin, intermittent drizzle which, by the time we had reached the source of the Severn, had greatly increased in volume. With hail beating around our ears and lightning playing around the mountain tops, we made a concerted dash for the deserted ruin at Blaen Hafren, several hundred yards down-river. The party was in the act of crossing the bridge under construction at Blaen Hafren, when the whole place exploded in a violent flash, sparks flew around and a gigantic roll of thunder reverberated around the mountain tops. Streaks of lightning sizzled around and everyone cowered in abject terror. One old boy had his beard singed and another individual vows he was thrust aside by a streak which whistled past him. All tottered into the ruin and subsided onto the various implements employed on the bridge building.

After half an hour, despairing of the weather, the party set off back through wind and rain and eventually stumbled into camp, thoroughly dampened in body and spirit.

A. J. Wright, 6.U.

Bryntail — Easter 1957

One of the features of this camp was the unusual number of walks which were engaged in. Besides numerous evening strolls over time-honoured routes that are followed at every camp, there were also the longer "tea" walks. One of these was to Lawr-y-glyn, a small village away over the back of Waen-y-Cader in the Trannon valley and which surprisingly enough does not possess a functioning place of worship—there is a church but the inhabitants of Lawr-y-glyn have to go to Llanidloes for their services, and it now stands deserted, a haunt of owls and other "beasties", ready and waiting for a Welsh counterpart of Tam o' Shanter. The other was a walk of exploration to a bleak tract of land never before trod by campers. Even the map is rather hazy on the area, a long strip of moor on the other side of Dinas, called Dduallt, and although one of the two farms reputed to exist there still functions, all that remains of the other is a long-abandoned shell.

However, the really memorable walks, memorable for completely different reasons, were the two long tramps to Glaslyn and to Plynlimon. The walk to Glaslyn was noteworthy because it cannot truly be said that we saw our destination. We may well have tramped the full length of this supposedly blue lake but all that could be made out, assuming one was interested enough to look, was a few murky-grey patches of water through an almost solid sheet of driving rain. But as the over-riding ambition of most of the party was to reach the shelter of a distant shepherd's hut, few actually glimpsed what we "went out for to see". Plynlimon was remarkable because, instead of the deluges that campers have come to accept as a regular part of this walk, the tramp was conducted in broiling sunshine, and when the summit had finally been reached, instead of being forced to cower under dripping rocks to eat a plum jam-sardine flavoured soggy mess, the party was forced to shelter under sun-blasted rocks to eat the brittle, dehydrated remains of erstwhile plum jam and sardine sandwiches. The walk back was by a rather roundabout route to enable us to see a model farm, situated a dusty three-mile trudge along the Aberystwyth road. However, all that could be seen was a cluster of corrugated iron sheds, and after this the party pressed on over a long succession of paths which apparently led nowhere, but eventually the sun-seared little group tottered into the haven of camp.

The other camp activities followed the usual pattern; a two-mile relay, a despatch-run and numerous games of rugby-touch were engaged in. Further evidence of Old Central's engineering ability was furnished by the production of yet another masterpiece of concrete path-laying, a fitting counterpart to the other half of a promenade which now extends the full length of the cottage front.

The pilgrimage to Chapel was made on Easter Sunday. Two boys were persuaded to read the lessons and acquitted themselves well. We were introduced to the mysteries of geology by Mr. May who traversed the surrounding countryside in search of specimens. But he gavelled the rock unrewarded, for the trilobites proved evasive and all he caught was a hammer-blow on the thumb.

The journey back was considerably enlivened by the little incident that occurred at Moat Lane Junction. Mr. May and a group of Old Boys forgot to get off the train at Moat Lane and, much to the chagrin of the campers (Mr. May had all the tickets), were whirled away up the line. But all came right in the end and Mr. May and company were taken on board at Newtown.

A. J. WRIGHT, 6U.



" Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog . . . "

BRYNTAIL COOKS

A. J. WRIGHT, 6U.

18/1 DEC 57

BRYNTAIL—SUMMER, 1957

To old campers Bryntail conjures up visions of driving rain and high winds, but occasionally the sun does appear from behind the clouds and then the weather can become very hot. This summer brought both sun and rain; we had one rather long sunny spell but this was followed by pouring rain which must have made up for all the rain we had missed in the sunny days that had gone before.

Camp activities included the usual games: Baseball, Rugby Touch, a despatch run and a two-mile relay in which (according to a battered alarm-clock) the existing camp record was broken by both Birch and Wright. The walks varied from the customary strolls to Van and Crowlwm and the usual excursion to Deildre Chapel, to longer "tea-walks" to Craig-y-Llo, a waterfall in the middle of a dense wood and which is reached by descending a steep slope, and Llyn Ebyr, a reputedly bottomless lake about which a strange legend exists.

The second Monday of camp was the day chosen for the more daring of us to make the excursion to Glaslyn, while the younger campers went to Pennant Falls. The Glaslyn party set off under a leaden sky which must have brought back memories of the Glaslyn journey last Easter. Staylittle was soon reached and from there we carried on to Pennant Falls where we stopped for a short time while some of us took pictures and had a closer look at the high waterfall and the very steep-sided gorge. After this brief respite we carried on to Glaslyn, a fairly large lake, which was soon reached and where the less fortunate of us attended to any wounds we might have received. By now it seemed that the rain would hold off and that we should return to camp in a reasonable condition. But alas! no sooner had we started back than a torrential downpour, accompanied by thunder and lightning, started; and, after passing Pennant, which by now was swollen to three times its normal size, we were all forced to accept lifts from passers-by, on account of the heavy rain and the fact that we should not arrive back at camp before dark.

Camp passed by very quickly and soon it was time to return once more to unwelcome civilisation. Many of the boys who go to camp for the first time, go full of doubts as to whether they will like it or not but always seem to return to this place where the cares and worries of the outside world are forgotten. G. E. ARCHER. 6U.

Bryntail — Easter, 1958

"There's joy in the mountains". How true this saying is when applied in Bryntail! This Easter did nothing to disprove the saying. The weather was not too unkind, there was slightly less rain than usual, but as if to make up for this we had very cold mornings and evenings and, on one or two days, fairly high winds. But we just accepted these with a shrug of the shoulders, thankful that we were spared those sudden showers against which even a cape seems no protection.

The usual games were played and the usual walks were made, although there were fewer walks than usual; perhaps because it seemed to get dark early during this camp. However, this did not prevent us from carrying out the traditional excursions to Crawlwin, Van, and Deildre Chapel. Rugby Touch was indulged in frequently, although often we had the novel experience of playing long after the sun had set. We also had a whist drive, one very close game of prisoner's release (I wonder if Wade of 6L will ever feel like playing this again!) and the customary despatch run.

Bryntail is not strictly reserved for boys who are still at school and each camp these mountains are besieged by hordes of Old Boys (they don't look so old!) Camp would be at a loss without them, for each year they always voluntarily carry out some piece of improvement. This year we saw the erection of a new shelter over the outside boiler and washing-up bench. It is said that it is the Old Boys who make any Grammar School what it is, and it is the Old Boys (and Masters) of our school who have made Bryntail what it is today. Our Old Boys would be sadly missed at Camp.

One novel and unusual feature of Camp this Easter was the inauguration of "The Bryntail Furniture Removal Company". One Saturday, everybody trooped off to assist in the removal of the possessions of one distinguished Old Boy and his family from one part of the Welsh Highlands to another; a task in which all at camp eagerly and whole-heartedly participated.

Signs of the march of civilization are now only too evident in this seclusion. The postman has recently acquired a red van in

which to bring his letters. Another sign is the planting of over nine thousand trees by the Forestry Commission. Now they are hardly visible, but soon the slopes of the hills will be covered by forests; forests which will tend to shut in Bryntail.

"Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance."

No, this does not apply to the trees planted by the Forestry Commission, but to the multitude of new-born lambs which are one of the many things which make Easter here so different from Summer. Everywhere one goes one is greeted by hordes of clean, white lambs which stand out in marked contrast to the rather dirty grey of their mothers. These lambs are very tame and will often come running up and let us stroke them and even pick them up.

With all these things the days quickly flew by. It is surprising how quickly time does pass at Bryntail, and no sooner was this camp over than most boys were eagerly discussing their chances of being able to return in the Summer.

G. E. ARCHER, 6U.

Plynlimmon — Easter, 1958

Plynlimmon sooner or later becomes the objective of every camper above the Fifth Form. It is a fairly high mountain, the highest part being 2,468 feet above sea level. I said "the highest part" because this mountain is not just a mountain in the accepted sense of the word, it is more or less a vast, hilly moorland spread over many square miles. Perhaps the most important thing about it, and one that matters to those interested in Wales is that it has on its slopes the sources of two of the well-known rivers of Wales, the Wye and the Severn.

So much for a description of the mountain itself, now for the walk to it. One damp, dull Wednesday morning five of us set out for what was to have been a walk to both Plynlimmon and Glaslyn, though Glaslyn was never reached.

The Severn Valley was reached after about one hour's walking. From there we followed a narrow road which eventually turned into a cart-track. After following this track for a few miles we rounded one bend in the road and there before us, deceptively close, lay our goal. But what was that on its slopes? It was snow! Yes, snow; a fairly large patch was visible and we could well understand the existence of it on those cold and windy slopes when we reached the summit.

Soon we turned off this road, past one or two Forestry Reserve buildings and followed what seemed to be a combined fire-break and cart-track through a large forest of young pines. Then followed a long tramp across open moorland; the only signs of life being a few sheep, and an old cottage, half-ruined; which by the time we had left it was more than half-ruined. Soon we reached the base of Plynlimmon, at 12.40 to be exact. And this was where the climb really began, for we were not to reach the summit until

2.35; every step taken in those two hours being uphill. We stopped once or twice to check our positions, for nobody would want to get lost in this vast wilderness. We knew we were following the right track when we reached an old lead mine, shown on the map under the romantic name of Nant Jago. A close examination led us to wonder how the Welshmen had transported materials for this mine over this vast tract of swampy heath; and we also reflected on an unusual feature of life in these hills, namely, that instead of the population growing larger with the march of time it had steadily diminished, for everywhere we could see ruins of old farm buildings and mines.

The higher slopes of Plynlimmon were reached and this was where the hardest part of the climb began. At one time we had staggered to the top of what we thought must be the final slope when, to our dismay, we discovered another huge one about half a mile away. But we did not intend to be thwarted at the last stage and so determinedly we carried on to the summit. Soon this was reached.

“ And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold.”

Coleridge might well have had this place in mind when he wrote these lines for they are a perfect description of the conditions which greeted our arrival at the summit.

On the top in the “open shelter” of a cairn we ate our dinner of dry jam-sandwiches and cold hard-boiled egg, and it was there that, with the weather as it was, we thought it would be folly to attempt to find Glaslyn. So instead we decided to walk our way down towards the Aberystwyth road which we knew was to the west. Soon we had found the path leading down to this road and we reached the road at Eisteddfa Gurig. This is where the irony of the walk became apparent, for no sooner had we reached the road than the sun broke out from behind the clouds and we realized that we should have had a very pleasant walk to Glaslyn.

We had tea in a small roadside café and soon we were back on the road towards Bryntail, which was reached just before nightfall. This walk does not leave unpleasant memories with any of us. The rain kept off remarkably well, and the only time when it became serious was on the climb to the summit; otherwise the walk was a rather pleasant expedition from which, for a change, everybody returned in a dry condition.

G. E. ARCHER, 6U.

Bryntail—Summer, 1958

There were many things about this camp which marked it out from others. First of all was the one that will be most easily remembered—the weather. From first to last not one day passed without rain falling; often the rain was really heavy and this, coupled with a high wind, made conditions rather unpleasant. However, at camp one learns to ignore almost completely such weather and accepts it as what it to be expected. There was a really heavy rainfall the day we went to Chapel and many of us were soaked to the skin when we got there, and then after the service we had to brave another storm

on the way back. Many of the walks were made in pouring rain and capes became an automatic choice of dress for every walk. Many of the days were overcast and the sun did not break through very often; consequently the river was very cold and most days boys had to be encouraged to go into the water, an unfamiliar thing in summer.

This summer also saw the re-introduction of the camp concert and the "Run-Walk-Run." The concert was enjoyed by all and consisted of camp songs, acts by many of the boys in camp and our visitors from Crawlwm Farm and stories and jokes from the more gifted of our brethren. The "Run-Walk-Run" was participated in by everybody, although perhaps not quite so eagerly as the Concert, and was won by Horton. One lesson we learnt from this is that even experienced Old Campers can often take the wrong turning (perhaps the Old Camper in question would prefer to remain anonymous). There were also the usual Despatch Run and Two-Mile Relay and it would be fair to mention that both were carried out on fine sunny afternoons.

Another innovation was the walk on August Monday from Machynlleth, a small town situated on the River Dovey. We were to go to Machynlleth by train from Llanidloes and then walk back to camp via Glaslyn. All was well until the track we were following petered out, but after consulting a farmer we soon found our way to the side of Foel Fadian, a steep sided hill that is clearly visible from Glaslyn. So far we had had no rain, but it was there that a very heavy rainstorm suddenly hit us and we were soaked to the skin before we had time to put our capes on. Soon we reached the road and took shelter in a Dutch barn where we finished of our sandwiches. After that we set out in twos, in the hope that in that way we could more easily get a lift in a passing car, since the state of the weather and our distance from camp would have made the remainder of the walk very unpleasant.

There was also one "Free" afternoon and it was on this afternoon that three campers got to Plynlimmon and back wearing only pumps and having practically nothing to eat except some bilberries, which can be found in their thousands on the lower slopes of this mountain. The original plan was to follow the road till we came in sight of Plynlimmon, but a passing car stopped by us and we readily agreed to show the occupants the way to the source of the Severn. After following this river so far, we decided to carry on to the summit of Plynlimmon. All this was well worth while for from the peak we had a marvellous view of all the surrounding countryside and the whole of Cardigan Bay. After spending a short time at the peak we made our way down to the main Aberystwyth road at Eisteddfa Curig. There we had very little difficulty in getting a lift from a passing car and were soon back in camp, proudly boasting of our exploit.

Apart from these irregularities, camp followed the usual pattern. There were the customary walks: Crawlwm, Van, The Broken Dam, etc. Campers showed the same aversion to soap and water, to getting up in the morning and to going in the river; the porridge was quite often burnt and on one occasion the spoon was even burnt, by, of all people, a squad leader. One new acquisition must be mentioned: the Welsh Flag which now proudly adorns the wall over the kitchen fireplace and which the Machynlleth party brought back with them.

Finally, mention must be made of all the masters who attended camp and put in so much work. We must not forget Messrs. Reader and Phillips and Old Boy K. Bromage, who drank almost as many cups of tea as hours of work they put in, in repairing the edge of the roof of the cottage and the porch of the dining hall; and last of all Messrs. Faulkner and May, who efficiently and capably run camp and whose presence at camp is accepted just as much as the presence of the Clywedog, of Crawlwm and of Van.

G. ARCHER, 6U.

Bryntail : Easter, 1959

We had been told a great deal about Bryntail by experienced campers and their descriptions made us curious. While our interest was still lively, Mr. Faulkner gave a show of coloured slides in the Lecture Theatre. These were colour photos of Bryntail. We wanted to go; and it was not very long before, full of excitement, we were off early one morning with heavy kitbags to Snow Hill Station. Luckily at Llanidloes there was a lorry to carry kitbags to camp. We had a three-and-a-half mile walk, and then, after passing through a muddy farmyard, saw the camp at last.

It consists of an ancient cottage, one or two other buildings, a round hut and a Nissen hut. This was the place I had longed for with such eager anticipation and now I was just a little surprised and perhaps disappointed for a brief time, for to me it seemed somewhat crude to say the least. For it is not a super modern holiday camp equipped with all the latest comforts and entertainments, and those folk who love luxuries and soft romantic music had better stop reading this immediately lest their minds be upset.

This camp is guaranteed to toughen your muscles and sharpen your wits. At first you may be disheartened and think you cannot stand the pace, walk so far, eat so much, or laugh so much, and then after a day or two, you find yourself hoisting great logs up the mountainside like a Hercules, walking and running for miles with ever-growing strength, breathing deeper than you've ever breathed before, and eating like a hungry cart-horse. You will learn many new and interesting things, listen to all kinds of unmentionable tales and songs that will make you roar with laughter till your belly aches, and you will continue to sing them and chuckle about them under your breath, ages after you have returned home.

Then this will be the only life for you and any other existence will seem dull and stuffy, so that you will be sorry to return to civilisation and will resolve that nothing will stop you from repeating this holiday next time.

What does it matter that you sleep on a rickety iron bed, liable

to let you down some night; that dozens of varieties of snores lull you to sleep and waken you in terror? You do not care if the Nissen hut looks like an eternal washday when, each night by the dim light of the oil lamp, excited groups of boys huddle close to the log stove, where strange and weird tales are exchanged by imaginative story-tellers with unusual acting ability and horrible voices to give the required spooky atmosphere. You will never suffer from loneliness when you are always surrounded by the bumping bodies of dozens of boys whose voices work overtime and whose arms and legs are everywhere.

How you will hate cleaning the dixies, but how you will mop up the porridge! And when the inevitable chores are done and you take those long walks, you will see the finest scenery imaginable. For as far as the eye can see are soft rolling hills, delightful valleys, silver streams and rivers, thick, mysterious woods and still, calm lakes, inky black and mirror-smooth, holding dark images and reflections of the trees above. This is Merlin's country, and of any mountain lake it would be easy to believe that this was the "great water" of King Arthur's legend, and that

"In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderiul
Holding the sword—"

Though the river bathings are icy they give a thrill of delicious freedom, and your blood will sing and you return to camp as hungry as a wolf, though you still have to help prepare the food before it can be eaten, and you are utterly weary and long to flop on your bed and be waited on; yet it will all be worth while.

Our masters give us just the amount of organisation and discipline required to make everything run without the atmosphere of school and we know that however much we may hack ourselves about they will patch us up again somehow and are always ready with exciting outdoor activities which, as they are properly arranged, are so much more fun. So we went on till the last day, when the dixies were cleaned and put away, the camp site tidied, and kits were packed to await the lorry for the first stage home. We were sorry to leave; we hope to come back next year.

A. G. HIAM, 3L.
P. G. SCRIVEN, 3L.

BRYNTAIL, SUMMER, 1959

The casual onlooker at Snow Hill Station at 8.20 a.m. on Friday, 24th July, may not have observed anything remarkable in twenty-four boys and two masters meeting there; to most members of the party—the two in particular—it was a staggering phenomenon that everyone was there on time! So we were consigned to the mercies of British Railways, and Bryntail, July, 1959 was under way; off to a most auspicious start.

In strict truth the summer camp had begun the previous night when some of the more aristocratic members of the party had travelled towards the Celtic Twilight in limousine luxury, while some of the more enterprising and optimistic spirits braved the rigours of the Westward Trail on various forms of motor-bikes, thereby proving that it is better to travel hopefully than to arrive!

The train journey was uneventful except for the customary mix-up at Shrewsbury (to be repeated with a vengeance on the return journey!) during which two members did a very difficult job of loading and unloading luggage vans—no-one is really sure why! On arrival at Llanidloes something of a spirit of rivalry emerged, when some very junior campers, no doubt ignorant of past prodigious performances, rashly suggested that the three-and-a-half miles uphill trudge in the blazing sun would prove too much for Mr. Thomas and Mr. Massey.

The camp itself was remarkable for several reasons: the weather was fine, there was a record number of staff there (nine) and a prodigious amount of work was achieved (the exact connection between the two latter points has been hotly debated but a connection there must be).

First things first; the excellent weather meant that all the usual activities were undertaken and probably enjoyed more than usual. Swimming, baseball, relays, despatch runs, and walks all took place. There were many games of "Rugby Touch," so many in fact that someone suggested holding future camps on the school field; further reflection, however, prompts the thought that the Bryntail brand of Rugby Touch could hardly be played elsewhere than on the "top field" with its sporting terrain and natural hazards.

Walks took place almost every day, either in the afternoon or evening, though the Seniors had two full-day expeditions and the Juniors one. Various places were visited and some sights will be well remembered, such as that of a tall figure sprinting across the skyline of Crowlwm, arms wildly waving, pursued by hordes of flying ants and French imprecations!

Equally memorable were the attempts of our "birdman" (Liggins) to fly down the precipitous slopes of Dinas and Van. Many of us, too, will retain a lurking suspicion that some of the rougher routes and faster pace-making which we sweatingly endured were designed more to test our endurance and tempers than to get us by the best route from A to B. At all events the many new members were able to get a very extensive view of the countryside and to realize that five miles on the map can represent considerably more on the ground.

A further word should be added on the work achieved by the Old Boys and Staff—and the campers themselves. Such was the activity that there was almost a labour-camp atmosphere and it was hardly safe to stand around doing nothing. Rumour indeed has it that one unsuspecting youngster who did stand still for a second was savagely attacked with a blowlamp, smoothed-down with glasspaper, undercoated and painted before the mistake was realised. However, practically everything paintable was painted and various gadgets of decadent civilisation were installed; namely, a sink and a draining board; a drainage system and an elaborate brick structure, the exact purpose of which gave rise to much speculation, but which eventually proved to be a boiler. Finally, routine matters of maintenance such as hedge-cutting, disposing of wasps' nests and roof repairing were carried out.

An account of the expedition of a party of thirteen (senior boys, old boys and staff) over Plymlimon, to Devil's Bridge and on to Aberystwyth must be included—if only to clear up several misunderstandings and ugly rumours. It is not true, for example, that a pirate edition of this saga has been published in Paris, under the title of "Passport to Plynlimon." The party, fully briefed and prepared by frenzied discussion, heated debate and learned map-consulting on the previous night, rose early, breakfasted, packed and posed for official photographs; then took the trail into the fresh morning air.

The first hour or so was uneventful, everyone striding along, enjoying the cool, clean air, contemplating the beauties of nature and thinking of the hazards to come. The Haunted House at Aberdeunant was safely passed and then our reveries were suddenly shattered by the frenzied whinnying of a horse! From the top of the hill a wild beast came charging down and stood ahead of us in the path, snorting, pawing the ground and effectively blocking the way. Eventually it was persuaded to withdraw and the party trudged on.

As we approached the foot of Plynlimon and entered the thick forest lands we met a native, an employee of the Forestry Commission with whom we exchanged friendly greetings. In the course of our conversation he elicited the fact that we came from Birmingham and

proceeded to ask us whether we knew Metchley Lane—most of us, it seemed, did! Whereupon he told us some story of having a sister who lived there; quite one of the local characters, he said, and indeed we must know her as she had only one leg! This story struck us as being rather fantastic and we still wonder if he was pulling our leg.

So the toil up the slopes commenced, with its nominal leaders emulating the Duke of Plaza-Toro. However, the summit was eventually gained by the party and half an hour later the "leaders" arrived. Reunited we admired the extensive view of several counties—blanketed in Welsh mountain mist. We did not linger, lest the sense of achievement turned sour, but, relying now upon map, compass and a skilled navigator (so he said), set off through the mist, over "terra incognita" towards Devil's Bridge, and finally emerged on a steep hillside below the mist and above the road, about a mile short of our object. We descended the hazardous slope slowly, and then a remarkable transformation came over us and the mile to Dyffryn Castell was achieved in record time.

Here we were suitably refreshed and continued to Devil's Bridge and the little railway down the beautiful Rheidol Valley to Aberystwyth. There, in the space of under an hour, the hardy members bathed while the "return of the native" (Mr. Thomas) was celebrated.

"BOB SAIS"

SCHOOL NOTES

BRYNTAIL, 1959. We acknowledge with thanks letters from two readers confirming the existence of the Metchley Lane lady mentioned in the account of Bryntail Camp in our December issue.

PRIZE GIVING

In activities such as clubs and societies, comparison between 1943 and 1959 showed a striking change. Beyond a harvest camp and a revived debating society there was nothing in 1943. In 1959 with a gymnasium for its practices, the school basket-ball team had won the championship of the newly-formed schools' league. There were Badminton and Swimming Clubs. Boys were prominent in Birmingham and Warwickshire Table Tennis, cross-country matches were held and the Boat Club built its own canoes and sailed them on the River Blyth. Four Chess teams represented the school; there were vigorous Junior and Senior Debating Societies; the Scientific Society was lively; there was a schools' branch of the S.C.M.; we had held a Carol Service in our own hall for the first time and had sent a strong contingent to the Grammar Schools' Music Festival, while our own Spring Concert had been highly successful. The Christmas play production "Murder in the Cathedral" matched any pre-war ones; the School Library was fully organised, and further afield, 31 boys had been to the Easter Camp at Bryntail and 27 to the Summer Camp. 30 boys had been taken to Paris at Easter and there had been a trip to Austria for winter sports.

Sir Rodney said he did not mention these contrasts in any spirit of complacency for there were many possibilities and much yet to do if school life was to become all it could be. During the long bleak years the school had kept in good heart, there had been occasional exhibitions of work and the Jubilee celebration of 1947 to support morale and whenever calls had been made on their energy and public spirit the boys had responded. The interest of the Old Centrals and the success of their Rugby Club had been an inspiration. In Bryntail they were fortunate in having a means of strengthening the links with the old boys. Those links were of the greatest value and he was glad the school had been able through the generosity of parents and boys to contribute £100 to the fund for the upkeep of the Memorial Sports Ground, and to co-operate in the Summer Fair. He paid tribute to the Staff as a strong sustaining force, particularly to those who had stayed for long periods at the school and given their best years to it, and to all his colleagues, past and present, he expressed his gratitude for their friendly support.

BRYNTAIL

It has been claimed that the climate of the British Isles is one not to explain but to marvel at, and that the weather is the most unpredictable in the world. Our first week-end was one that surprised old campers and gave the new a strange impression of Welsh weather. Sunday afternoon found us all battling our way against a gale-force wind, driving rain and occasional hail to get back to camp, after going up Van Hill. As one boy put it when we got back, "It was a pity it rained, there are quite a few good views on that walk!" After which the boy in question beat a hasty retreat through the Nissen Hut door, followed by several wet socks. The weather brightened as days passed by and as a contrast the Easter week-end was very warm, and gave the less shy a chance to do some sunbathing.

The assortment of hats, sweaters, shirts, shorts, socks and boots that the happy strollers wear as they make their way from

farm to farm, is always a source of interest to the local inhabitants. The turn-out, with its vivid colours and unique styles, is one to rival any Paris fashion show. These marchers "blazed" the trail to all the usual destinations of afternoon and evening walks. During the week we visited Aberdeunant, performed the ceremonial paddling in Van Pool, completed the building of a cairn on the top of Pen-y-gaer and made the pilgrimage to Deildre Chapel one bright Sunday morning. As well as the numerous short walks, there were two longer walks when we took our tea with us. The first was to Llawr-y-Glyn, nature's own setting for a fairy tale. There is an enchanting little village set in a small valley, which I can only describe as a landscape painter's paradise. The second of the longer walks was to Craig-y-Llo, a gully running into the Severn Valley, with three impressive waterfalls. The steep, densely wooded slopes on either side give the falls a subdued, unnatural light that has the effect of mystery and adventure.

Interspersed with the walks, we had a variety of enjoyable games and pastimes as well as our usual Dispatch Run, Table Tennis, Whist Drives, Beetle Drives and Rugby Touch. One wet afternoon there was a Two-Mile Relay. The course was treacherous in parts, although the falls and excuses of a few were made up for by some very good times by Second Formers. It was warm enough one afternoon for us to have a game of Prisoners' Release, and on another fine day, three hares set out to lay a trail over difficult country for the hounds of the Paper Chase to follow.

Apart from the orthodox walks of the majority, there were two "weird" walks by a few of the Old Boys, who were with us for a few days. I say "weird" because the object of these extraordinary strolls was to discover as many theories of the history of the district they were in as possible, and to return with numerous fantastic finds. From the stories they brought back with them, it seems that all they managed to do was to amuse any inhabitants and passing road-users who must have thought the walkers more weird than their walk.

The longest walk of our twelve days stay was the conquest of Plynlimmon, achieved by five Seniors and one Master. The walk started under a cloudless sky at about nine-thirty, and by the time that Glyn Hafren had been reached we were "stripping off" with the heat. As we walked up Glyn Hafren, the sunshine was not overpowering, but enjoyably warm. On reaching the foot of the formidable mountain, we decided to walk along the base a little way so as to make a more direct ascent to the peak. After what always seems to be an endless climb after Bryn-y-tail, we reached the top, much to our triumphant pleasure. A little cloud had gathered by this time, but not enough to spoil the happy memories of a beautiful day. From the top peak we made our way down to the Montgomery peak, where we decided to have a well-earned rest. A short rest was what we wanted, but it was an hour's sleep that we had. After this we descended one peak further to Plynlimmon Cwm Biga and then, as we thought, into the valley

of the Afon Biga. We knew that the Afon Biga led to the Clywedog, a little way upstream from Eblyd, so that when we saw that the valley we were in led to the Forestry Commission's houses near Staylitle, we realised that our navigators had led us one valley to the left of where we should have been. Eventually we returned to our intended course round Dinas, up to Bwylch-y-gle and on to make a triumphant entry into camp.

Easter Monday found tired Bryntailers getting up a little earlier than usual, in order to go and see Rao Bryntail play Llanidloes at football in the town's stadium. By breakfast time the three squads had done the bulk of the work, and down to town they went straight after breakfast. A formidable line-up faced the Llanidloes side at the kick-off, but the Bryntail team's trainer had carefully explained to his side that the ball was to be kicked, and only to be picked up when it went out of play. A fine struggle was put up by our representatives, even though they went down by three goals to none.

The last day seemed to arrive too quickly, as it always has done in my past camps. The boring, dirty job of dixie cleaning was completed, the Nissen, tent and cottage were thoroughly cleaned and generally the place was restored to what we had found when we arrived. Finally, we had to leave these pleasant surroundings for the smoke and bustle of the city. I hope that the boys who will be joining me this summer will have as pleasant a time as we had at Easter.

R. PORTER, 5M.

BRYNTAIL : JULY, 1960

"Right, lads! Your kit-bags will be taken up by lorry, as usual—but take your waterproofs out first." This was Mr. Faulkner's greeting when the train party arrived at Llanidloes, and his advice was to hold good for the duration of the camp. The first four days passed quietly enough in the Welsh rain, but the fifth was more eventful. Six cyclists left early for Aberystwyth; the Headmaster and Mrs. Ockelton visited the camp; and in the evening a "thistling party" was organised on the Rugby touch field. This was followed by an exhibition of Soccer by a team composed of Staff and Second Form, which defeated a team representing the rest of the campers by five goals to two.

During Prisoners' Release next day, one runner decided to take a rest and found himself a comfortable bracken bed on the side of Bryntail. Such restful pastimes were naturally followed by active ones and next afternoon we had a paper-chase. The hares, A. J. Wright, C. A. Whittock and R. Porter—all old hands—set off in the rain laying several successful false trails and returning well ahead of the first hounds, Hinshelwood and Owens. The Dinas walk, later on, was uneventful and was followed by one of the few games of Rugby touch played at this camp. Saturday showed a slight improvement in the weather, so a tea-walk to Craig y Llo was undertaken. The more daring of us ate our sandwiches by the fly-infested waterfall, although the plague of flies was nothing to the hazard of wasps we had to face when on our return journey we were led past their disturbed nest. On Sunday evening we made our customary pilgrimage to Deildre Chapel.

On Monday, the older boys with Mr. Massey, set off on a new camp walk to explore the country south-east of Llanidloes. The rest undertook the walk to Llyn Ebyr in the afternoon. After a picnic at the foot of a Norman Motte and Bailey we climbed to the top and had a short history lesson before beginning the journey home, which for most of the party was by a route round the back of Van Mountain.

One day during the second week one party went to Rhayader while the cyclists ventured farther afield. At Rhayader the party divided, Mr. Massey taking the Old Boys and the older boys on a long walk, visiting two dams, whilst Mr. Carter and Mr. Hutton took the juniors on a shorter walk. This latter proved very exciting, and we were taken through bogs and pathless woods until to our astonishment we found ourselves in the middle of an assault course, which we later found belonged to the Police Cadet Camp through which we were walking! We reached the Caban Coch Dam at what we decided was lunch-time, and after a cold, damp lunch by the dam we returned by the track we had failed to find in the morning, stopping for tea under a convenient oak.

A Camp Concert was held on the last night but one. Acts varied from a serious and original recitation by Liggins to sketches by Butts and others, songs by the Cyclists, a topical Welsh ballad and last, but not least, Miss Constant Wedlock's rendering of "Rule Britannia"

—a fitting end to this wet but enjoyable stay in the Montgomeryshire hills.

B. H.

BRYNTAIL TRAINING CAMP, SUMMER, 1960

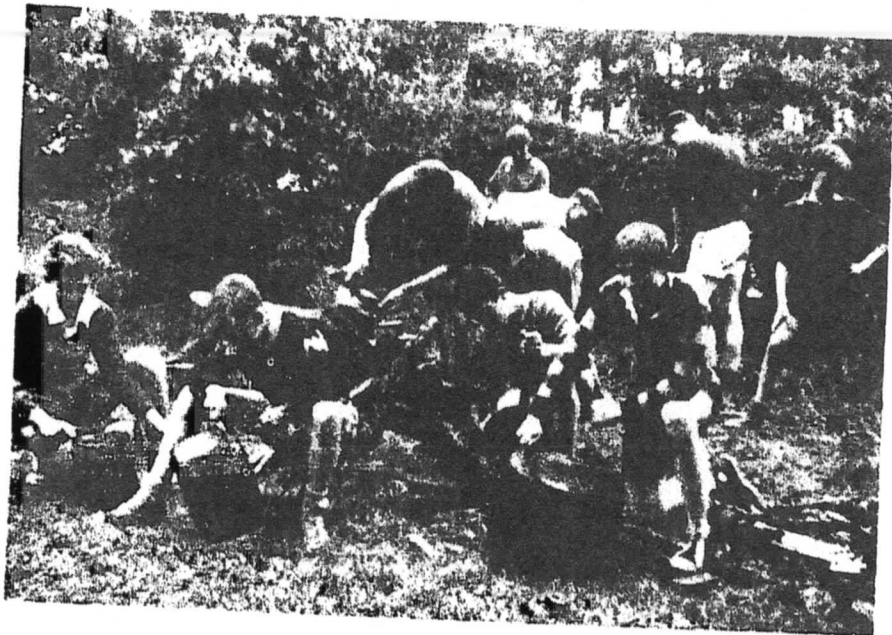
During the 1959-60 Rugby season, many members of the 1st XV were criticised for their lack of fitness and prowess in basic principles of the game (for example, passing). The reply to this criticism was that there was not enough time for practice by weak sections of the team before the start of the season. It was suggested by Mr. Parry that if enough members of the team were interested, a party could be taken to the School Camp at Bryntail, an ideal place for training, at the end of the summer holidays. The idea was well received by a number of boys and during the summer holidays arrangements were made. Three "coaches" were invited to come with us on this venture; Don Abbey, of Moseley R.F.C. and Vic Watson (both Old Boys) and Brian Wightman, of Moseley and England. These three were joined by three masters: Mr. Faulkner, Mr. Weightman and Mr. Parry.

At 10 a.m. on Sunday, 28th August, we met at the "Fox and Goose," Washwood Heath; also meeting there a friend who was to remain with us for the rest of the week—the rain! We were transported to Bryntail by Old Boys and parents of some of the boys, who had kindly offered the use of their cars in order to keep down the cost of the trip. We arrived at Bryntail just in time for lunch, which had been prepared for us by "Fed" Broadbent, our worthy cook. A lot of food was left after the first meal, as the change from home cooking was too much to stomach, but after a few days' training the boys who had left their food were waiting for second helpings! The next few days were devoted to various forms of vigorous physical training and despite the rain, Rugby training in this new environment proved highly enjoyable. Members of the team were divided into squads to perform the menial yet necessary tasks of "spud bashing," dixie cleaning and gathering firewood; and after a few days we considered ourselves reasonably organised.

During the week we were joined by a reporter and a photographer from the "Birmingham Mail" and articles and photographs of our various activities were published in both the "Mail" and "Sports Argus." Many Centrals were pleasantly surprised to open their newspapers and see a muscular Green, closely followed by a Spartan Harris trudging up what appeared to be the side of a mountain, carrying great tree trunks on their shoulders.

The rest of the week was occupied by numerous runs, walks and games and intensive training in passing, dribbling and tackling. All too soon it was time to return. So it was that a party of exhausted, but fit Centrals came back to Birmingham on the following Sunday. All agreed that the week had been well spent, and the results of this season's matches will show just how successful the camp was. We are indebted to the masters and Old Boys for their efforts to make this unusual experiment most enjoyable.

D. K. HILL.



BRYNTAIL, SUMMER, 1960



BRYNTAIL TRAINING CAMP
(Photograph reproduced by permission of " Birmingham Post & Mail.")

18/8 JUL 61

HOLIDAY EXCURSIONS

Bryntail

The signpost says that there are three and a half miles to Bryntail but old campers will assure you that the wooden, pointed finger has no idea whatsoever. He has never tried walking a step or he would realise three and a half leagues is nearer the mark! At last when camp is reached you feel you will get a well-earned rest, but never could you be more mistaken. Instead you have to attack a pile of rags-cum-sacks-cum-canvas material which on closer inspection proves to be empty, shapeless receptacles, which the experienced campers inform you are called palliasses. These are then filled with straw and become your mattresses for many a good night's sleep at Bryntail.

Sleep! A figment of the imagination! How can you, a mere English chap, hope to sleep when the wind is wailing like a pack of Irish Banshees, the cold is as bitter as the icy blasts from the Scottish Mountains, and you are being bewitched by the weird Welsh ghost stories told just before around the low-burning stove? And no sooner are you soundly asleep than you are called for your duty turn under the masterly and watchful eye of Ted Broadbent, the camp cook. Here you learn something of the art of feeding the hungry multitude and of the amazing number of dixies and cooking utensils that need cleaning for the next meal, because when Ted Broadbent says spotlessly clean he means just that.

After the squads have finished, it is bathing parade and every boy tramps down to the river; here there is the usual fun and games and some of the more hardy may venture into the river. Each afternoon there is either a walk or a game, often depending on the weather.

This Easter the senior walk proved to be an attempted tour of the Elan Valley dams. After trudging many miles over mountainous country, we found that we had missed the dams by a mere four hundred yards. So much for our compass expert! The following day there was another walk, to the "bottomless lake", although those who were still recovering from the senior walk went with the younger campers on a walk up Van Mountain.

As a precaution against putting on weight, we climbed mountains, waded streams, tramped through bogs and ambled through a few rugby touch sessions. Then as soon as signs of a little returning vitality were observed, a two-mile relay was organised, followed by a despatch run. A serious game of rugby was added to the touch variety and the Campers versus the Mighty Men of Llanidloes proved to be an entertaining game.

"Lift up thine eyes unto the hills," said the Psalmist. We did more than that; we went to Deildre Chapel and lifted up our voices. A well-packed chapel it was, with our going swelling the normal congregation two-fold. It is good to sing in the Welsh mountains

and dales; no wonder, with such air filling their lungs, the people of the Principality burst into song on any occasion.

The weather is consistently tough, especially at Easter, when gales, snow and rain are all encountered; yet every camper speaks joyously of his next happily anticipated visit to Bryntail.

There'll be a welcome in the Hillside,
There'll be a welcome in the Vale,
There'll be many hours of laughter
When you're camping at Bryntail.

R. CUTLER, 6L.

BRYNTAIL, SUMMER, 1961

The journey to Bryntail was uneventful as far as Llanidloes and soon the more enthusiastic of us were striding up the three-mile road to camp, only to be told that we had to wait at Ael-y-Bryn to pose for a film which was being made of the camp.

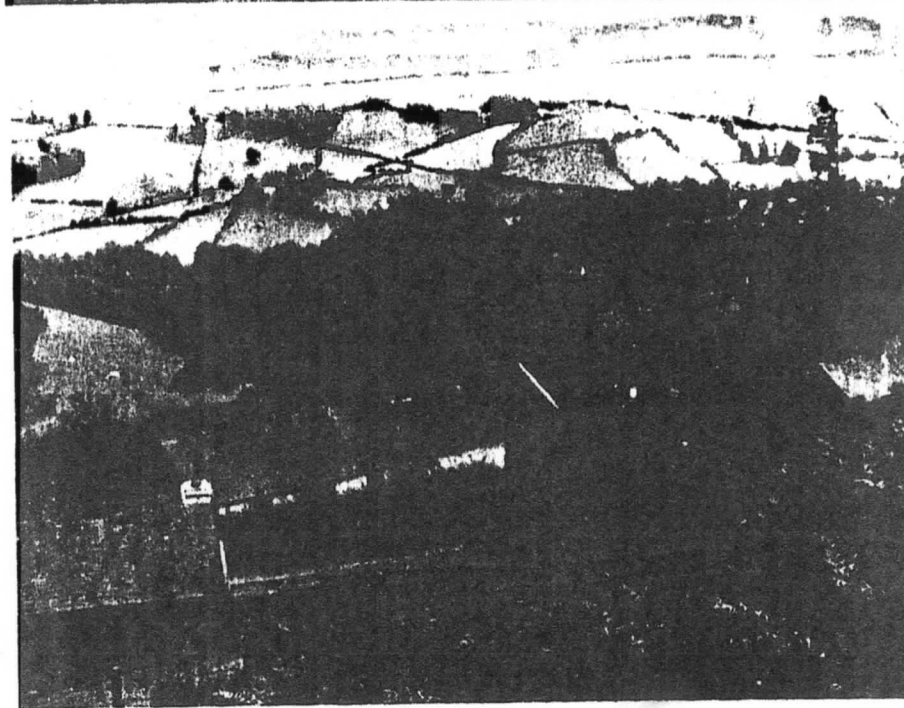
On arrival at the newly-whitewashed "cukes", a sorry sight greeted us. Leaning against the wall was a large yellow and black board saying "Site Investigation, Wimpey". This was the first sight of "Mr. Wimpey" whose yellow huts disfigured the valley sides. The general silence of the countryside was periodically shattered by the harsh sounds of drilling machines, and by contractors' cars slowly grinding their way up and down the Long Path.

The contractors are exploring the valley for the Birmingham and South Staffordshire Waterworks Companies who are planning to dam the waters of the Clywedog. The engineers seem a little unhappy about the rock formation of the Bryn-y-tail side of the valley and because of this the project may not materialise.

However, camp activities were carried out as usual, including exhausting expeditions, fearless plunges into the icy waters of the bathing pool and frantic games of rugby touch. The traditional treks were made to Van, Crowlwn, Dinas, the broken dam at Tyr Llyn and other places. The weather for these activities was quite good (for camp) although on one night the wind succeeded in blowing a Wimpey shelter and some apparatus into the river.

A party of strong zealots set out on the pilgrimage to "Pum-lummon" led by "Curly" Wright. After we had been driven off the peak by a howling gale, our leader persuaded us to visit the source of the Severn which, to our disappointment, turned out to be merely an oozing peat bog. Ten hours after our enthusiastic start, nine disillusioned and wearied campers filed in and fell on to their beds. All was quiet until supper when they were lifted off their beds and led into the dining room.

The "top field" had been completely ploughed up so we were



compelled to play rugby touch on the old baseball field near the top of the Short Path. A game of six-a-side rugby was played between a school team and the Old Boys for the "Piedmont Trophy" (a piece of slate which looks suspiciously like one from the Miners' Cottage roof) engraved by T. Hiam. The Old Boys' team won by five tries to one after a hard-played match. The runners-up were presented with a consolation shield painted by A. J. Wright.

About half-way through camp we were visited by a reporter and photographer from "The Birmingham Mail". Several photographs were taken of "typical" scenes at camp. We think that all campers should be congratulated for their unselfishness in posing for photographs when they could have been enjoying a two-mile relay. Such was their eagerness to be included in these pictures that, when the photographer visited the bathing pool, almost every boy voluntarily plunged into the cold water. Some time later an article on Central Grammar School's Camp occupied more than half a page of "The Birmingham Mail".

On the last day a party set out with Mr. May to Llyn Ebyr (the Bottomless Lake) via a hill fort called Pen-y-Castell. The party quickly made for the highest land in the neighbourhood and were soon lost in a fir plantation. After ten minutes of uncomfortable walking through brambles the "fort" was reached. After visiting the lake the party made for camp, eager to rehearse for the concert which was to be held in the evening.

The concert included a sketch from the tent, a mannequin parade by Monsieur Tague and the "Ancient Gentlemen", a number of good old camp songs and concluded with "God Save the Queen" and "Hen Wlad Fyn Nhadan".

This camp was not unusual; there were the usual duties and the usual games and excursions and yet everything was changed by the threat of the dam, which, if it comes, will transform the district. Everyone hopes that its wild beauty will not be spoilt by "Progress".

G. WRIGHT, R. C. LILWALL, 6L.

18/10 JUL 62

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

PRIZE-GIVING

Prize-giving was held on the afternoon of Wednesday, 21 February, 1962, in the large hall of Garretts Green Technical College. There was a very pleasing attendance of parents and old boys; and guests included Dr. Peter Gray, Reader in Physical Chemistry at Leeds University, who distributed the prizes; the Chief Education Officer, Sir Lionel Russell; our own former headmaster, Sir Rodney Pasley, Bt.; Lady Pasley; two former Chairmen of the Education Committee, Alderman Mrs. E. V. Smith and Alderman J. Wood; Mrs. Goddard, of the Education Committee; Mrs. Hastilow; and the Chairman of our proceedings, C. A. F. Hastilow, Esq., C.B.E.

The Chairman's introduction was most entertaining. Mr. Hastilow is himself an Old Boy of Central, and gave some interesting reminiscences of the school as it was in his time, 1906-1912, when the name "Central" had geographical rather than traditional significance, and our four houses had a geographical basis, the North, South, East and West divisions of the City. He mentioned too the existence then of a fifth section, the "Country" house, composed of boys who lived more than ten miles away from school—a house in those days as big as any other. This was a particularly interesting point in view of a recent development in policy, mentioned by the Headmaster, and commented on in the press.

The Headmaster welcomed the Chairman as a distinguished representative of the oldest generation of Centrals, and then gave an account of the activities of the school in 1960-61. Academic successes, he said, were relatively easy to assess and compare, but many other things were not, particularly that one which in the end marked the success or failure of a school society, the type of young man who went out from it. The Upper Sixth Form had been larger with almost twice as many passes at A level and more boys going on to some form of further education in university or college. O level results in 1961 had been markedly better than in 1960, with about a hundred more passes, although there had been some irrational and disappointing results. Activities outside academic work had included two ambitious productions, "Hamlet" in December and Handel's "Messiah" jointly with Erdington Grammar School. Parties of boys had visited France, Spain and Austria during the year, the school had been represented at an Anglo-German camp in the Rhine Valley, and the School Captain, J. W. Rose had been chosen to visit Canada, under the auspices of the W. H. Rhodes Trust. There had been the usual Easter and Summer camps at Bryntail, where for forty-two years Central Boys, Old Boys and Masters have joined in what are now generally known as "Outward Bound" activities. The summer camp was clouded by the threat of the proposed dam to flood the Clywedog Valley and the possible loss of one of the few remaining untouched areas in the country.

BRYNTAIL

As we left the train at Llanidloes Station the new campers followed the older boys to a waiting van which, the old hands said, carried our kit-bags up to camp. When informed by the old campers that a walk of only three miles lay between us and tea no-one was unduly worried, but we had not reckoned on the Welsh hills, which were to be a familiar background to life for the next ten days.

On arrival at camp we were provided with limp, tattered sacks which must have done many years' service at Bryntail; these were filled with straw and were to be our beds for the duration of camp. We had tea provided by the camp cooks and this was followed by a walk to Crawlwm and over the top of Pen y Gaer to Bwlch y Gle. After supper we all settled down to sleep; or tried to, with the wind whistling and branches creaking and with some passing round stories of the ghosts which supposedly haunt the nearby mine workings.

At 7.30 the next morning, and afterwards for all the days at camp, a cheery voice awakened the camp squad and they were followed by the others half an hour later. After breakfast we went down to the river for bathing parade, which was accompanied by the usual fun and games, and the more hardy of us went in.

In the afternoons, various games and walks were arranged. One day the seniors went on a twenty-mile walk to Llyn Ebyr, Dolwen, Rhydd Hywel and Llangurig, and the cyclists on a tour of the Elan Valley dams. Games included despatch runs, prisoners' release, a fell race and a two-mile relay; all of which served to keep down our weight.

After the annual game of rugby touch between the Seniors and the Old Boys, the Old Boys received the Piedmont Trophy, but in fairness to the Seniors it must be explained that in this match the Trophy is presented to the losers!

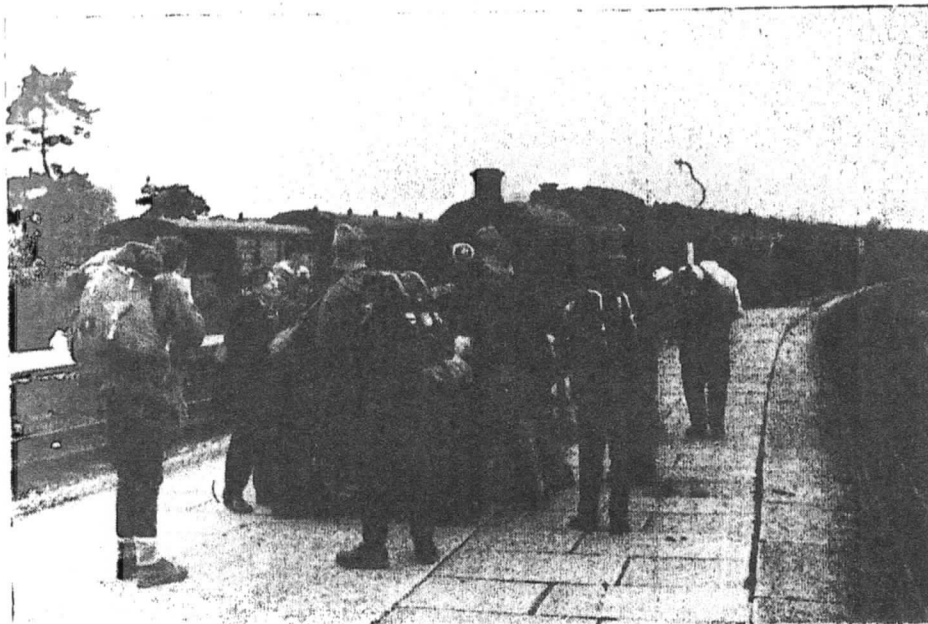
On the second Sunday we visited Deildre Chapel and this was a fitting conclusion to a most enjoyable visit to Wales.

D. E. SMITH, 2X.

FIRST-FORM GEOGRAPHICAL EXCURSION TO BRYNTAIL

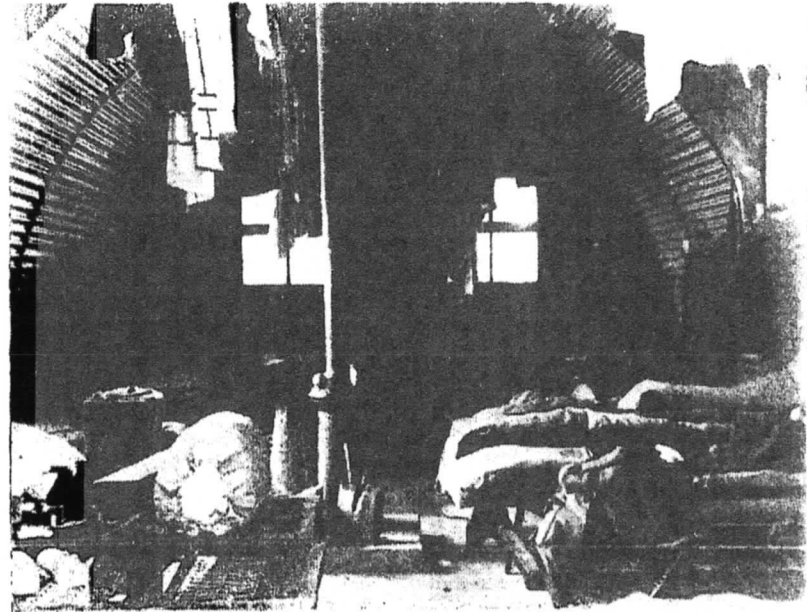
On Friday, 12 October, the First Formers went on a geographical tour of the country around Bryntail. We went by coach to Llanidloes where we looked round a typical Welsh town, and saw the old market hall which is now a museum, the new market hall, a much bigger building, and an old woollen mill now used for a boys' club. We were interested to see a third storey in some old houses where once the people had stored and graded and worked on the wool.

Van Hill, its lower slopes covered in bracken and with narrow sheep-paths through the bracken, was the next point of interest. Van is 1,580 feet above sea-level, and as we started the climb we found several good pieces of quartz. This hill was the highest we climbed. At the top there is a triangulation station, which is used for mapping the surrounding countryside, and from it we had splendid views. After the steep descent through the bracken we reached the U-shaped valley at the bottom, which had been cut long ago by a glacier. This is a mountainous district which was once one big plateau but the plateau was cut and worn by glaciers and rivers into a dissected plateau. The mountains that are still standing consist of hard rock that does not wear away quickly.



The Bryntail Train Party at Moat Lane Station, Summer, 1962.

The line from Moat Lane through Llanidloes to Brecon is to be closed at the end of this year.



Interior of the Nissen Hut, Bryntail.

The hut was erected in 1950 and is called the "Tracey Memorial Hut" because the fund used for its building was started by a donation given in memory of Charles Tracey, an old "Bryntailer," who lost his life in the war.

The climb up Waun-y-Gadair was by road. This hill is covered with grass and on it sheep and cattle are reared. At the bottom we crossed the River Clywedog, near the hairpin bend, and followed the river along. We saw on the other side of the water that two paths had once been cut. In these had been laid wooden troughs to bring more water power to the Bryntail lead mine. Here in the river there is a rock with an archway through it: an archway cut by the swirling water. We crossed the Miners' Bridge, a wooden footbridge which has been standing for over a hundred years, and which the lead miners used to cross daily to and from work, about a hundred and twenty years ago. The buildings of the lead mine are ruined now, but we saw the pit in which went the millwheel for driving the few pieces of machinery, and the places where the lead ore was crushed. In amongst the rocks we looked for pieces of galena. We found pieces of quartz with streaks of galena running through them.

We saw the pool where the Bryntail campers swim, and some rare flowers which grow on the banks of the Clywedog. We made our way to the school camp at Bryntail for tea and then set off back to Llanidloes, with a look back to Van and the old hill-forts.

J. E. ALLEN, 1M.
A. M. KING, 1S.

18/12 JUL 63

HOLIDAY EXCURSIONS: BRYNTAIL

Because of the recent closure to passenger traffic of the branch line from Moat Lane to Llanidloes, this year's Easter campers had the distinction of being the first campers' coach party, and enjoyed the luxury of coach travel as far as Llanidloes. The final stage of the journey was made on foot in drizzling rain. Camp began on the 9th of April; on the 10th the annual rugby match for the Bryntail Trophy, between the Old Boys and the School took place. The School, aided by frantic cheering and an often-unsighted referee, P. J. Smith, beat the Old Boys by five points to three. At the presentation of the trophy the players saw fit to present the referee with a pair of outsize cardboard spectacles and a hand-written book of laws which he was urged to read aloud for all to hear. The weather was still poor on Saturday for the fell race, which took place in showers of rain and hail. But discomfort was soon forgotten in anticipation of the camp concert to be held that evening. The main feature, with an all-star cast, was "Watch with Gaffer," the Old Boys' satirical rendering of a T.V. programme for children.

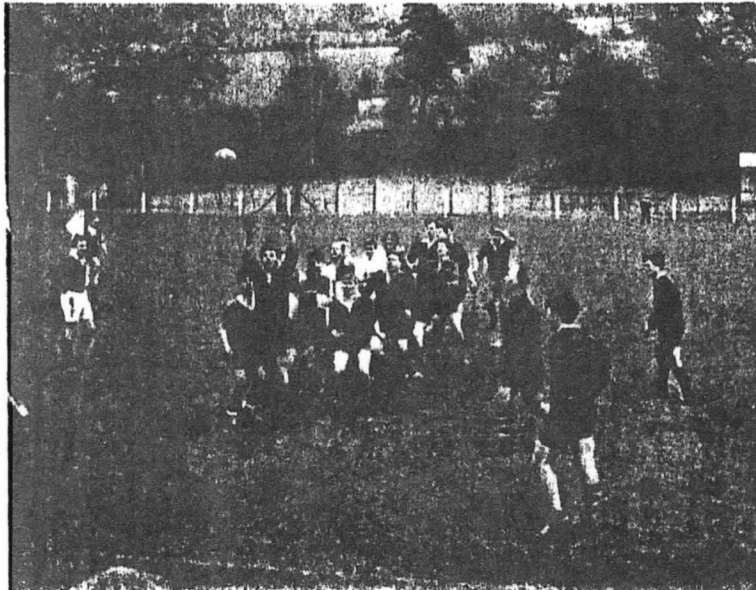
Storms with heavy rain, hail and wind pounded down on camp all that night, and next morning we found many broken-off branches and a very much swollen river. That day Alderman Jack Wood, a keen walker and country-lover, and a member of the City Council, visited the camp and was shown places of interest in the

vicinity, including the site of the proposed Clywedog reservoir, which will in many ways mar the beauty of the surrounding country. Alderman Wood left camp for Machynlleth, and returned the next day, walking the twenty miles back to camp. His impressions of Bryntail and the district formed the basis of two articles which he wrote for *The Birmingham Post*, in which he expressed his own appreciation of the valley and the hope that nothing in the future development of the region would be allowed to detract from its beauty.

On 15th April, the Rugby match between Llanidloes and the Camp team took place at the Llanidloes Football Club's ground. The day was fine, cloudy but dry. The field looked a lush green, but proved to be very wet, and the handling of the ball became difficult. Several opportunities of scoring were missed by the campers, chiefly because of too-early passing in the three-quarters, but nevertheless they won by six points to nil, the two tries being scored by old boys J. F. Smith and R. Harwood. The match made very enjoyable entertainment for the spectators.

On Wednesday, although it rained for most of the way, a party of seniors made the long walk to Machynlleth, returning by train to Caersws and thence to camp by car relays. By the end of the week the weather had begun to improve. On the last day the sun shone, there was hardly any wind and no rain. It was a change that came too late, but which nevertheless made the return journey more pleasant.

R. A. EVANS, R. J. HEATH, 6L.



The Llanidloes Match, 1963

tea, the quality and appreciation depending to some degree on the state of him who imbibes. After a long day's walk at Camp or a paper-chase the thirst is great, and the quality of the tea is naturally considered to be superlative.

There are various ways of making and serving tea; the romantic ceremony as practised by the geisha girls of Japan; Russian tea in a glass, laced with lemon; the method of a late master of ours who brewed in a 500 ml. beaker on a Friday afternoon while the Vith Form did their practical chemistry, and kept it gently simmering over a small bunsen flame so that he could calm his jaded nerves with an occasional sup. At home the pot holds a pint or so; at Camp each of the three pots holds a gallon. The water is boiled over the fire in a three gallon kettle; a kettle with a tap and in some places called an urn, a drudge or a fountain. Small boys enjoy their half pint out of their enamel mug; the capacity of the Old Boys or Ancient Gentlemen is much greater and when there is digging or wood-carrying, painting or stile-building the demand is almost insatiable, though Ted, the cook, does his best. This summer the boys who travelled by coach and walked up to camp from Llanidloes felt that they deserved their first "cuppa," or should it be "mugga," but naturally their thirst was exceeded by that of Pinkney who had cycled from Birmingham. The camp included many of the usual activities, which Ted perhaps would claim are only designed to produce an even greater appreciation of the cup that cheers.

Thirst-producing walks were undertaken. Over Bryntail to Bwlch y Gle and back over the Hair Brush and Pen y Gaer. To the top of Van and Bwlch y Fan, on to Llawr y Glyn and back via Cwm Cidyn. To Eblid via Waun y Gadair and back via Ystrad Hynod; to Llyn Ebyr via Cwm Stordy and Bwlch y Llyn and back through Bron Haulwen, Cefn Dol-gwrden and Bwlch y Gle. Then the senior walk to Brithdir, Rhyd y Benwch and over Pumlummon to Dyffryn Castell and Devil's Bridge. Apart from the walking, the pronunciation of these strange and beautiful names makes one's throat and mouth parched and dry.

On Saturday the camp went to town to see the Carnival organised by the Llanidloes Borough Band. It rained until 2.30 but the Clerk of the Weather then relented and the sun shone brilliantly. The "Bed Race" was followed by the Carnival Procession which led us to the football field. The town's populace and the Bryntail Boys took great interest in the programme on the field: "El Granadas," the Royal Command Performers dressed as cowboys, and especially the fashion show which included Joan, Betty and Bronwen, who paraded in all descriptions of day and night attire. The first three places in the Senior and Junior Cross Country Races were taken by Pinkney, Curly Wright and Ian Wood and by Weightman, Davis and Rose. The hot afternoon and the walk back up to camp certainly inspired a great thirst.

The "Two Mile Relay" was won by Weightman's team and some very good times were recorded, especially by some of the younger runners. Thirsty work this!

BRYNTAIL

Term ended on Friday, July 12th and since then there have been over 250 people at Bryntail who have supped and enjoyed about 200 gallons of tea. This is a fairish quantity and if poured out into ordinary cups would fill five or six thousand. There are various kinds of tea: Indian, Ceylon and China tea; good tea and very good

In the two Despatch Runs, Pinkney's Team beat Lilwall's by —1 to —4; this esoteric method of scoring, arrived at after years of experimentation, is understood by the runners after a few years at camp.

Other energetic thirsty pursuits included baseball, the fell race, prisoners' release, rugby touch, swimming and fishing.

Thirty of us went to Deildre Chapel to join with the score of local supporters in listening to a good straightforward sermon by the Reverend F. W. Thomas, of Machynlleth, and to sing our hymns to the accompaniment of the harmonium which had previously had a couple of hours' repair work done on it by J.M.

One evening there was the incident of the cow. We helped John and Soley to extricate her from the narrow, roofless passage in the old engine house where she had been stuck since morning, unable to turn and unwilling to walk backwards. A cart rope tied round her neck, passed between her legs, and heaved on by half a dozen fellows was enough to persuade her to back out. But it took time—three quarters of a ton of obstinate cow is not easily moved.

A justifiable excuse for a brew!

The camp concert, which this year was of a high standard, is an event organised for the enjoyment of all perhaps, but could one also say that it is an inspired attempt to increase thirsts beyond all previous expectations?

There were about forty people at this July Camp.

The Rugger Training Camp was held during the last week of the holiday, twenty one boys with six staff and Old Boys, with Mr. Massey in charge of the cooking and tea-making operations. The programme included training talks, practice of the finer points on the field, circuit training, swimming, walks, cross-country running and a paper-chase. The second half of the week was ideal, but on the first couple of days the training schedule was sadly upset by the state of the weather, so much so in fact that a Whist Drive was held on one wet evening, proving that Coombs was the leading Gent and that the leading Lady was Dixon.

The Midland Area of the Ramblers' Association decided to arrange a walk down the Clywedog Valley, of which they had read so much in the papers, and they asked us if we could provide guides for a Sunday in late September, not only to point out landmarks, but also to explain the history of the dam proposals. When they arrived at the Eblid cattle grid, they were met by the official guides and half a dozen of the Ancient Gentlemen in rugger kit who had decided to make a weekend of it. From Eblid the party followed the left bank as far as the Ystrad Ynod sleeper bridge, the right bank to Coppice Llwyd, then over Pen y Gaer to the Miners' Bridge and up to camp. The services of the guides and the four gallons of tea were greatly appreciated and thanks were expressed by Vivian Bird, the President of the Association, not only verbally, but also in an article in the magazine later for a local Sunday paper.

On Friday, October 11th, there were nearly a hundred people at Bryntail drinking tea. It was the day of the First Form Geography Excursion. The party travelled by coach to Bwlch y Fan and then walked over Van Mountain and down the valley to camp. With observant eyes, many details were noted of the physical features of the area and of the human and economic geography of this sheep-farming area. Seven gallons not only necessitated the fountain on the fire but a dixie on the gas rings and a certain amount of topping up in addition.

For half term at the end of October, half a dozen Sixth Formers, with a couple of guides, had planned a Cader Idris walk. Travelling one morning by road, they went on in the afternoon to Eisteddfa Gurig and walked up Pumlumon, only to peer through the mist at the immediate surrounding rocks. On the top of Cader the next day, the party again had to accept the leader's assurance that on a fine, clear day the views are truly magnificent. This mist-enshrouded walk was followed by the evening return over the mountain road, past Glaslyn and Staylittle to camp, in even thicker swirling cloud, necessitating the washing away of the effects in the mouth and throat by even longer and more copious draughts of the hot, reviving beverage.
E.A.F.

First Form Geographical Excursion

Bryntail is in the mountainous country of Central Wales. *Bryntail* is the name of a farm, a mountain and our School camp, which consists of a cottage and a Nissen hut.

We left School by coach for a day at Bryntail, on Friday, 11th October. After a short stay at Llanidloes we crossed the bridge where the River Severn and the River Clywedog join and set off up the steep hill towards Bryntail. But the coach could not take us all the way and we alighted and walked down the road until we reached a stile, the start of a long uphill walk. We first climbed a hill called Van, an ideal place to get bogged down, or stung and tickled by the gorse and bracken. But when we had struggled to the top of Van, we found that it was well worth the climb, for the view was wonderful. The clouds in the distance blotted out part of the skyline and the sun made wonderful shadows on the Van Pool away below. We ate our sandwiches on the top of the Van in a very strong wind. When our appetites were satisfied, we set off down the other side of Van. We found the descent as difficult almost as the climb, for the going was very rough. Our way was through gorse and bracken, over a barbed wire fence, through a hole in the wall, until we reached a farm where we stopped for a few minutes' rest.

We then went off the beaten track again, onto a mountain slope. We walked through a lot of mud to reach the next landmark, the Miners' Bridge. This did not feel very safe, for it bounced like a trampoline and swung from side to side with every step. About fifteen minutes later, after climbing Bryntail, we arrived at the School

camp, where we had the remainder of our sandwiches and a refreshing cup of tea. Then we walked back down to Llanidloes and boarded the coach for home.

K. TONGUE, IS, J. CURLEY, IP.

The Long Walk

It had been decided to attempt a walk from Bryntail to Devil's Bridge, and then travel by the narrow gauge railway to Aberystwyth. This meant that we should have to be in Devil's Bridge by four o'clock. Our route would take us by the way of the Forestry Commission tracks in the Severn Valley onto Plynlimmon. For this purpose, at the late hour of nine o'clock (by Bryntail standards), a small group of Bryntail "Hardies" gathered outside the Nissen hut. The weather was mixed, but we were confident that it would not rain.

We made good time and by one o'clock we had reached the summit cairn of Plynlimmon, after a seemingly unrewarding trek over the false summits of the Montgomery Peak of the Plynlimmon range. Here we had our lunch—a couple of the famous Bryntail jam sandwiches (it is a constant wonder to me how the jam manages to diffuse itself through the bread) and other miscellaneous articles of food which we had brought with us.

After lunch we set off again, following the ridge of Plynlimmon in the hope of finding the track which runs down the Duffryn Castell on the Aberystwyth road. Far down to our right we could see the Rheidol Reservoir which had been recently dammed. We found the track and soon we were beating a fair pace to the main road at Duffryn Castell. We rested here and after refreshments set off again along the road to Devil's Bridge. The pace was now beginning to tell on some of our more mature members, so they decided to remain at Duffryn Castell for the one 'bus which left Aberystwyth for Llanidloes at six o'clock that night. With only three quarters of an hour to go before the narrow gauge train left Devil's Bridge, we were still about three miles from the Bridge. After a scaring walk we reached the railway station just before the train was due to leave. We were met at the station by a group of the Old Boys. Soon we were peacefully chugging down the beautiful Rheidol Valley to Aberystwyth. After a short stay in Aberystwyth, during which we had a dip in the sea, we caught the 'bus to Llanidloes and then walked the "short" distance back to camp. It was not till later that we found that the other members of our party had missed the 'bus and had to hitch-hike back to the camp!

A. LESTER, 6U.

Training Camp

With a large nucleus of last year's First Fifteen remaining at School and many good, young players in reserve, it was felt that with the addition of some stiff training the First Fifteen could have a very good season. With the help of Mr. Parry, an Old Boy of almost limitless energy, a Training Camp was arranged at Bryntail for the last week of the holidays. The journey to Bryntail, on the 25th

August, was made in private cars, which were driven by staff, Old Boys and parents, to all of whom we are extremely grateful. When we arrived at Bryntail it had begun to rain and a gale was blowing. This weather lasted for two days, during which much of the stamina and fitness work was done. A paper-chase, a cross-country run, and a "run-walk" were undertaken with enthusiasm—and the minimum of clothing! On the third day the weather brightened and the serious work with a rugby ball began. Games were played with vigour, many hard knocks being given as all sought to impress. Vast amounts of food were consumed and huge logs were carried. Our activities were intended to improve rugby prowess, and were arranged by Mr. Mawdsley, Mr. J. H. Davies, and "Curly" Wright. We returned home on Friday very tired, but not before leaving camp in the good order in which we found it. D. J. HARRIS, 6U.

HOLIDAY EXCURSIONS

BRYNTAIL EASTER CAMP

Although I have been to several camps and have read the magazine reports of all of them, when I sat down to write an account of this Easter camp, I did not find it an easy task. So many little incidents could be included which would be significant to those who were there, but to the majority of readers they would mean nothing. So, therefore, I will try to avoid too many veiled references to people and places and mention only the main events, in the hope they will suffice to remind people who were there of the more trivial occurrences.

I suppose that a general picture of this camp could be given by just one word: "Cold". We naturally expect it to be chilly at Easter and most people go suitably prepared, but even the most experienced campers were caught out this time and as a result many must have had either a cough or a cold during the ten days. Surprisingly enough, however, the coughing, spluttering and wheezing which went on for most of the night was largely forgotten during the day and all the usual activities were undertaken enthusiastically. It seems that the Nissen chimney suffered most, for repeated heating to near melting point and regular renditions of "Glad All Over" soon reduced it to "Bits and Pieces".

All boys seemed to be in good voice this camp, in spite of their colds. Indeed, they had to be, if only to join in "Happy Birthday to You", for it seemed that a record number of boys celebrated their birthdays at camp. The vocal chords were again exercised at the camp concert. Not only was there community singing but also several sketches were performed by groups from the tent and the Nissen. The Old Boys enacted what can only be described as "A Tale of the Sea", with suitable sound effects, and Mr. May sang a particularly heart-rending Victorian ballad about a flower-seller. Any rumours that he was born within the sound of Bow Bells were hotly denied.

Chapel provided its usual opportunity for song and it was grasped enthusiastically, if not altogether tunefully. On our way to Chapel, to our amazement, we encountered a group of canoeists, or rather a group of walkers carrying canoes with them. Anyone familiar with the Clywedog will sympathise with them for they will realise that stretches of clear water suitable for canoeing are few and far between. Still, they seemed to be enjoying themselves.

Another chance to make noise was afforded by the Rugby match. Because of a very sudden change of plan the traditional game between Bryntail Camp and Llanidloes was not held as expected on Easter Monday, but on the preceding Friday. This meant that the reinforcements of Old Boys and school players who had planned to come on the Monday could not, and thus only eight players were to be found in camp. Fortunately, Llanidloes had imported several players, so a scene resembling a slave market was acted in the middle of the pitch in order that teams could be sorted out. However, an entertaining game sprang from these improbable beginnings and several fine tries by Ridge were loudly appreciated by a large crowd.

The people who came to camp on Easter Monday expecting to see a rigger match were not left entirely without entertainment, for the Old Boys provided amusement by sweeping the kitchen chimney. After several suggestions it was decided to remove the soot by pulling a gorse bush up and down the chimney, and not Broadbent. The complications which ensued could occupy a separate article, so let it suffice to say that through the efforts of the Old Boys the danger of black rice was considerably lessened.

Regretfully, however, Easter 1964 will be mainly remembered as the start of the dam construction. The preacher at Deildre might well have taken as his text "Change and decay in all around I see," for change was certainly apparent in the Clywedog Valley. However, the initial shock of seeing only one "kuke" to greet you on your arrival, finding a road-roller at the top of the short path and a mechanical shovel half-way down the long path, soon wore off and was replaced by an attitude of resignation. In any case, it will take more than bulldozers and Irishmen to spoil the attraction of Bryntail and any inconvenience caused by the building operations will be quickly overcome.

R. W. FRYER, 6U.

Pool. New access and other roads scarred Crowlwm and the skyline beyond Deildre, whilst workers' quarters covered the old baseball field. A new bathing pool was found—by kind permission of Mr. Rees—at Ystradhynod, and a cold shower and bath were installed in the Farm Yard following a suggestion by Butts, to compete in some ways with the plumbing activities associated with the dam. Another notable feature of this camp was the fruit pies baked by Ted with fruit from the farm—now owned by the Joint Authority Board—given to us by that genial gentleman, Johnny Plunkett, the site foreman.

Nevertheless, the usual Service at Deildre Chapel, Camp Concert, Despatch Run, Baseball, Fell Race and Two Mile Relay (on a slightly amended course) all took place. It was the walks which were different. With the disappearance of the Miners' Bridge short walks on the Right Bank were out and we had to look farther afield. The Seniors used cars to get them to Cader Idris and became the first Bryntailers to scale this peak. They also used their cycles to tour the Elan Valley and to reach Devil's Bridge for a trip by train to Aberystwyth. Other walks took Fifth Formers up the Clywedog Gorge to Glaslyn, some non-cycling seniors on a tour of the Trannon Valley and the Juniors to Pennant and to Llyn Ebyr and Trefeglwys for another first—a bathe at Brynllwyn.

However, the Gold Medallist was undoubtedly the Junior Jaunt to Pumlumon Fawr. Making use of a 'bus service, introduced following some of Dr. Beeching's closures in the locality, we, that is Mr. Weightman, nine juniors and myself, were transported from Llanidloes to Eisteddfa Gurig. The seniors had left us at Ty'n-y-cwm to explore the area to the south but we gather they spent much of the time bathing and eating.

The idea of juniors climbing Plynlimmon had never before been seriously contemplated. However, here we were and if we wanted to get back to Camp we should have to walk—but it was only eight miles, or so we were led to believe! Ninety minutes later we arrived at the summit (2,468 feet) having covered two miles and ascended 1,350 feet. It was decidedly warm and heat haze obscured some of the better views although much of interest had been seen and commented on during the ascent. After relaxing for an hour and posing for the expedition photographer, the historic descent began. With a 2½ in. O.S. Map (1900 Edition), a compass and some experienced geographers in the party, our future held no fears.

At a leisurely pace we crossed the County Boundary and made for the Nant Iago lead mine. The peace and solitude of this open moorland was soon shattered by jets roaring overhead and perhaps it was this which caused our guides to err. We soon realised we were going in the wrong direction and what we had taken—from the distance—to be the mine was in fact a barn not marked on our map. The only thing now was to carry on downstream in the hope that eventually we should be able to locate our position on the map. Dame Fortune was with us and about a mile further on we were able to

BRYNTAIL

Did you realise that there was a direct connection between Dr. Beeching and one of the major activities of this summer's Camp? No? Then read on!

This Camp-with-a-difference, and one of the driest on record, really began with the midnight exodus from Birmingham of bicycles and tandems, to be followed at various intervals and at more reasonable hours by a scooter, a car and the coach. Never before had so many boys made their own way to camp—but this was not unexpected since a half of this year's campers was from the Upper Sixth—and never before had the coach been able to get as close to camp as the Biddfald. (Access roads have their uses!)

Once there we were met with a much changed picture and a hive of industry connected with the dam building. Gone for ever were our bathing pool, the natural arch, Hammer Falls, Hammer

ascertain from two passing locals that we were at Cefn Brwyn in the Wye Valley. "Impossible!" was their reaction to our: "We are walking to Bryntail tonight," but within a few hours they had been proved wrong.

The most difficult part of our route was facing us: a 600 feet, steep climb out of the Wye Valley. Once this had been achieved the peaks of the Clywedog Dome were clearly visible on the horizon and it was merely a matter of selecting the easiest, albeit undulating and meandering, route through Forestry Commission land to reach them. This we did with but one further error of navigation and by 7.30, four and a half hours after leaving the summit, we arrived at Geufron and were back in familiar territory. After a short stop for tea we set off on the last part of our journey to a bath, a meal and a sleeping bag! Suffice it to say that, despite minor ailments, nobody complained and all returned to Camp in the true Bryntailer spirit to outlive the day's nineteen mile ramble and to tell its tale with advantages!

Prophets at last summer's Camp Concert had foretold:

"And picturesque bulldozers soon will appear.
The lane will be widened, fenced in with barbed wire,
And trespassing notices add to the mess."

This was greeted with rapturous applause—as are all Camp Concert items—but the sight of these and many other similarly depressing scenes this summer brought home to one and all that although the spirit of Bryntail cannot be erased thus easily, unfortunately the Clywedog Valley near Bryntail can never again be quite the same peaceful, secluded beauty-spot known to Centrals for fifty years.

B.H.

FIRST FORM EXCURSION TO BRYNTAIL

Bryntail is in the mountainous region in the centre of Wales. We went there on Friday, 9th October, on a geographical expedition to confirm what we had been learning in Local Geography. Llanidloes is a little town we passed through on the way. When we arrived in Llanidloes we walked round the town observing the buildings and making notes. The Boys' Club there was once a mill for weaving wool. The wheel, which is still there, was driven by the fast flowing river. The weavers got their wool from the sheep which grazed on the nearby hills. In Wales the weather is often very damp and rough, so on the sides of the houses there are slates on top of the bricks to stop the damp getting in. Most houses are three or four storeys high; the top storey was used as a room in which to spin the wool. The old Market Hall was built in 1280 and still stands solidly in the centre of the town, but a new one has been built, where there is a regular Saturday market, because the old one is now too small. On one side of the town there is the church, the walls of which are very thick. The tower built with it is fourteenth century, and was for defence, guarding the people from enemies on that side. On the opposite side to the Church is "The Mount Inn" which is built on the site of a Norman castle which guarded the other side of the town. In Llanid-

loes there are about 2,500 people, but we saw scarcely half-a-dozen. We had now circled the town so we went back to the coaches and set off for Bryntail, the actual country we were to study. We were divided into parties to climb Van, and on the way up we saw some signs of deposition and an old lead mine which had been partly filled in. From the top of Van we had a magnificent view for miles around. After lunch at the summit we went down to the Clywedog, and at the bottom of the river we could see pot-holes and smooth rocks. A hill with a line of feathery trees along the top looked like the head of a Mohican. In the valley where there was more shelter the land was arable. We saw examples of U and V shaped valleys and signs of where the ice had carried away parts of the mountain. These were on the way to the School Camp, where we had a cup of hot tea and refreshments. The most welcome place after that long walk through rain and wind was home; the coaches were already waiting, it was getting dark, and that is where we went next.

D. EATON, IP; S. LOWE, IP.

and his coach, which conveyed thirty of us from Bwlch-y-Bar to Steddfa Gurig. An hour's steady climb brought us to the Cardigan summit where we refreshed ourselves, trying to find shelter behind the cairn from the pitiless North-East wind, as we fumbled at our sandwiches with numb, blue fingers. A brisk walk to the Montgomery summit restored the circulation, and enabled us to admire the subtle contours and colours of this unjustly despised mountain before we descended to the variety and splendour of the Hore and Severn Valleys, and so back to Camp.

Other activities included the Dispatch Runs; the "Two Mile" Relay, where Pulley did 11.07 on a slower variant of the traditional course: the eighth Fell-Race, in which Ayre returned the best time (19.15); Rugby Touch; a "shopping" walk to Llanidloes, which half the boys had never visited before; the ascent of Van and Dinas, followed by the only genuine, wet bathing parade of the Camp—thirteen went in at the substitute bathing pool near Ystrad Hynod bridge. This catalogue could easily be extended, if space permitted; one other activity, however, demands a mention. It is eating and drinking, a tradition of which the origin seems to go back to the first Camp in 1915. This continued unchanged, despite the absence of our literate and musical cook, V. E. Broadbent, who was not enjoying quite the robust health that this exacting task demands. Another old camper, P. J. Smith, took over and did an excellent job—one almost said "rendered yeoman service", but who ever heard of a yeoman that could cook?

Perhaps it would be fitting to end this brief account by recording two of the curious *dicta* that this, like every other Camp, produced. One, heard during the picnic on Plynlimon summit: "I never realised before that Cardigan Bay is visible from Siberia". The other, heard after a far-ranging Dispatch Run: "We didn't see anyone at all, except a blodwen on a bicycle".

PROFESSOR ZEUGMA.

BRYNTAIL, EASTER, 1965

This camp, which ran from the 12th to the 22nd of April, was notable for the high proportion of new campers: 14 of the 29 boys were "first-timers". In addition, there were in residence at various times five Old Centrals and five masters, our maximum being 36.

The weather was moderately good—about what one expects at Easter in mid-Wales. More precisely, we had four days mainly wet, four mainly fine and sunny, three showery; for eight days a strong, sometimes fierce, wind blew and this gave us six days that could fairly be described as "cold", with snow and hail on two of them.

Changes continue: roads (up "Quarry Hill", over to Bwlch-y-Gle, up Waen-y-Gader) are widened and, from one point of view, "improved"; the regrettable scenic highway over Crowlwm Hill has been pushed beyond Deildre Chapel; the valley is even further scraped clean of its grass and soil, and the Hammer Pool is overwhelmed with the concrete foundations for the dam. To many old campers (the 1915-1964 batch) it is a minor change that will come as a major shock—the "Cukes" are no more. These quaint but imposing gateposts, unique and symbolical of who-knows-what, have been demolished, together with the friendly shelter of the stone wall. The spot is now known to campers as "the far cattle-grid" or, more authentically, "Bwlch-y-Bar".

However, life at Camp goes on. We adapt ourselves, learning new paths, new ways. On Easter Tuesday, for instance, the rather punishing Plynlimon walk was brought within range of young and old (or, at any rate, middle-aged) by the assistance of Trevor Jones

THE ANNUAL DINNER

Bryntail Jubilee, 1915-1965

More than three-quarters of those attending the dinner in March have been associated with the School Camp at Bryntail as boys, as Old Boys or as members of the Staff.

Some left School before camps were started but have become fond of Bryntail since, some camped at Holt Fleet and then at the earliest of M. Guerra's camps, some have been at Bryntail over a long period of years and some have only had the opportunity during recent years. For all, however, the evening brought back a host of memories, mostly recounted in one's neighbour's ear and some to the company at large.

The President introduced the guests, most of whom have had connections with the camp for a number of years, and Mr. Loveridge, in his reply, remembered H. G. and Mr. Humphreys and the pre-war days when the boys paid 15/- a week.

Last year's Head Prefect, D. J. Harris, proposed "The School" and the response was by Mr. May who gave some account of the successes achieved by the School during the past year. J. M. mentioned the Holt Fleet camps, the first in 1908, and others run jointly by the Seckler twins and the Guerra twins; the first Bryntail camp in 1915 with thirteen boys; and the staff who were there through the following years, H. G., P. J. H., L. M. J., Mr. Crump, Mr. Broscumb, George Bernard Benton and others. Then from the past with the fixed routine and programme of M. Guerra's camps and on into the future with numerous changes and the possibility of more varied activities.

"Jimmy" James proposed the toast of "The Association"; he spoke of the invaluable help that Old Boys give at Bryntail and had numerous stories to recount covering a period of nearly forty years.

The President in replying for the Association spoke of the various activities of the Association, Rugger, Cricket, Dances and the Dinner, but raised the question of the possibility of other activities, such as a revival of the Dramatic Society which was so strong in former years.

THOSE PRESENT AT THE DINNER

The President in the Chair:
Mr. N. Borg (1925-1928)

Our Guests:

- N. Loveridge, In charge of Bryntail, 1928-1946
- J. May, At Bryntail since 1930
- J. James, Camp Cook before the war
- V. E. Broadbent, Camp Cook since 1950
- E. A. Faulkner, At Bryntail since 1927
- F. N. Dixon Old Centrals' Association Secretary and President-Elect for 1965-66
- Ivor Davies, Groundsman, Metchley Lane
- H. Marriott, School Head Prefect

1890-1900

1898-1901 F. C. Whitehouse

1900-1910

1908-12 F. Coney

1910-1920

- 1913-19 W. T. Robotham
- 14-19 R. L. Birbeck
- 15-21 J. E. Richardson
- 15-22 H. R. Walker
- 15-22 L. A. Walker
- 16-21 H. H. Squire
- 17-20 J. C. Harris
- 17-21 A. D. Bradley
- 17-21 S. W. Bradley
- 17-24 C. F. Cheshire
- 18-23 W. G. Innes
- 18-25 R. G. Millard
- 18-25 Eric Smith
- 19-24 H. D. Wakeman

1920-1930

- 1921-25 W. J. Talboys
- 24-29 J. T. E. Griffiths
- 24-30 H. J. Liggins
- 25-29 L. E. Clark
- 25-30 G. F. Kay
- 26-32 J. M. Brooks
- 27-31 S. A. H. Bundy
- 27-33 E. F. Gardner
- 28-32 S. T. Liggins
- 28-33 G. E. Robinson

1930-1940

- 1931-36 J. H. Hull
- 34-39 G. W. Jackson
- 34-39 F. G. Seadon
- 35-40 T. K. Harborne
- 35-40 J. W. Jarman
- 39-45 R. W. A. Wright

1940-1950

- 1940-45 P. D. W. Pugh
- 40-45 L. G. Williams
- 41-46 G. S. Griffiths
- 44-52 J. D. Payne
- 45-50 R. Jelf
- 46-54 A. C. McArthur
- 47-53 J. A. Scott
- 47- T. Reader
- 48-53 K. A. Crook
- 48-56 P. J. Smith
- 48- C. Thomas
- 49-54 B. C. Sumner
- 50-55 B. A. Taylor

1950-1960

- 1954-62 R. Porter
- 56-64 R. J. Pinkney
- 57-64 R. Butts
- 57-64 J. B. Curtis
- 57-64 R. W. Fryer
- 57-64 D. J. Harris
- 57-64 A. J. King
- 58-64 J. Liggins
- 58-64 K. A. Ridge
- 60- D. W. Ockelton

With apologies for omissions and errors

BRYNTAIL, 1915-1965

Fifty years young! A jubilee seems to call for special notice, for a brief look back into the past.

The Old Centrals' Association has already held its Bryntail Jubilee Dinner, attended by many former campers, and among these were one of two of the pioneers: boys who were at that first camp in the Summer of 1915. Memories were revived, speeches made, tribute paid to the founders and to those who carried on the work, and it is fitting to give a more permanent form to what was said then.

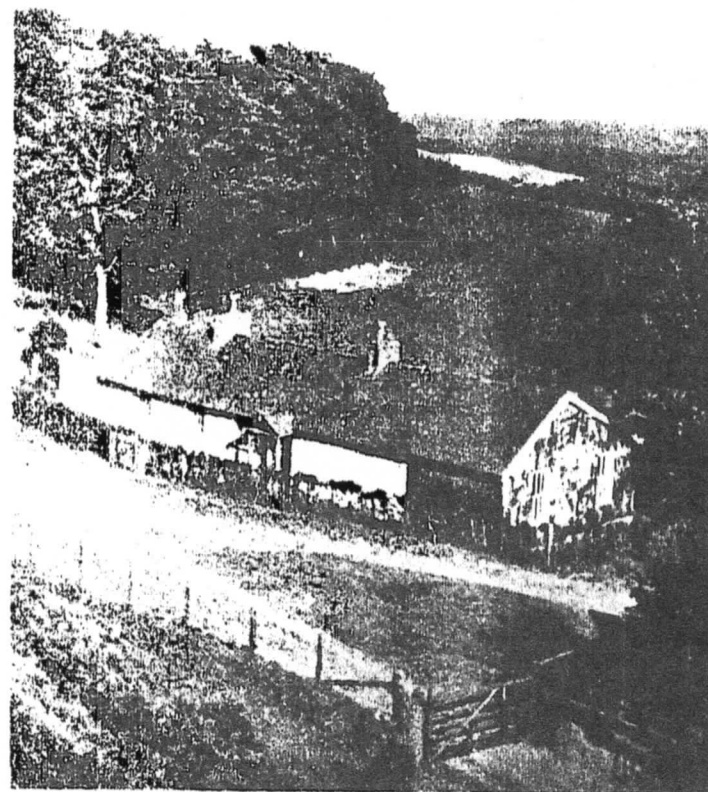
The story really begins on the 25th July, 1908, when two masters and 32 boys of the Central Secondary School pitched their tents in an orchard at Holt Fleet. This was the first of seven annual camps inspired and organised by Ewald Friderich Seckler. Seckler was appointed to the School in 1901, and served it with devotion and energy until, in September 1915, he was rewarded by being interned as an enemy alien.

That first camp must have been Spartan; Seckler and most of the boys walked from the Selly Oak tram terminus to Holt Fleet, and there were appeals for the loan of tents and for gifts of provisions. However, the camp prospered. In 1911 it was attended by more than 60 boys; in 1912 they travelled by train to Stourport, then on to Holt Fleet by river-steamer; at the last camp, just before the outbreak of the First World War, one item of equipment that was taken there was—a Harmonium!

An enthusiastic helper at Holt Fleet in 1910 was Henri Guerra, a Parisian who, the previous April, had joined the School to teach French. In no time he was inspecting tents (and awarding points), organising sports and knock-out contests (more points), and enlivening the Camp Concerts with his "Talented Company of Juvenile Jumpabouts". Such activities—which were destined to have a long life—may seem to us rather trifling, but there was no doubt of his interest in the more permanent and genuine values of the outdoor life, and he was the obvious successor to Seckler. The problem of finding a site to succeed Holt Fleet was solved just as readily.

How it happened is described in Guerra's own account of Bryntail in our *Jubilee Magazine* of 1947: "A friend, Dr. Roberts, suggested letting a small cottage he owned on the top of a mountain on the east side of the Plinlimmon range . . . I immediately took train and, taking three boys with me, explored the possibilities. I decided on the spot that Bryntail was to be the future camping-ground of the C.S.S."

So it came about that the first Bryntail camp was held in the summer of 1915. Like all Guerra's Summer Camps, it lasted a



Bryntail: The Cottage

month. Twelve boys attended the first fortnight and, of these, seven stayed on and joined the campers of the second fortnight.

Accommodation was a problem. At first, everyone seems to have been squashed into the cottage, but by 1917 tents were being pitched in the garden and elsewhere—and often being blown down or flooded, so that when, in 1922, some ex-Army steel tents came on the market at £20 each, one was bought, and erected in the cottage garden. Three more were added in the next two or three years, and the accommodation problem was solved—until 1928, when the autumn gales wrecked two tents and badly damaged another, and the best that a working party could do was to make two good tents out of three wrecks.

Camp activities were governed by a programme that was decided (by "H.G.") and printed beforehand, and carried out whatever the weather might be. An account of the Summer Camp of 1921 gives a good idea of what could be crammed into two fortnights. There was daily bathing, four paper-chases, four Dispatch-Runs, two Sports Days, two Gymkhanas, tugs-of-war, four hill-climbing competitions, swimming sports, one junior sports-meeting, two mock trials, and "four concerts, in which the camp Jazz Band gave a good account of itself." In addition, there were four long walks, and every evening, after tea, Baseball was "the order of the day".

Old campers who may read these lines must forgive the many omissions, but there is no space to tell of the "Bryntail Medal", the Grand Banquets, the elaborate concerts to which guests were invited from surrounding farms (and, in those pre-radio days, came eagerly), the legendary characters and their feats; all this, incidentally, was provided on a very small basic charge—in 1919, it was 12/6 to 14/6 a week.

The disastrous gales of 1928, already mentioned, coincided with the absence of H.G. on sick leave, leading to his retirement in the December. This might well have been the end of the story for Bryntail; there was no-one to run the camp, only one of the steel tents was in good condition, the beams supporting the Miners' Cottage roof were rotten and on the point of collapse, and there were no funds—in fact, the camp owed £10 to the Old Centrals' R.F.C. Once again, however, crisis brought reaction: faced by the danger of losing Bryntail, masters and boys, parents and Old Boys worked hand in hand to good purpose. The money was found, and the men came forward.

The men were P. J. Humphreys, who was appointed in 1905, retired in 1946, and (as readers of *The Hammer* will recall) died in 1963, and Norman Loveridge, appointed in 1910, retired in 1948, and, happily, still with us. Both had been associated with the Holt Fleet camps, and both had interrupted their long service to the School by four or five years in the Army during the 1914-18 War, which no doubt explains a few vaguely military touches about their camps.

The way in which they shared their command is well expressed in a 1929 magazine article by Dennis Broscob: "We were exceedingly well fed and generally looked after by our excellent quartermaster, Mr. Humphreys, while the position of C.O. was ably filled by Mr. Loveridge, who even tested our bath-water (River Clwedig) before allowing us to get 'c-c-c-eversowarm' ourselves."

Under new management, Bryntail evolved. The great change, from the boys' point of view, was the abandonment of the fixed programme; as Tom Grocock reports in 1930: "Each day's programme was arranged on the actual day, so that the weather might be consulted beforehand, and its fell intentions baulked". Other innovations, mentioned in a report on the Easter Camp of 1930, were palliasses, sausages, and Rugby Touch: such is Progress!

The crisis of 1928 had emphasised the vital necessity of maintenance in "a spot two thousand feet above the sea-level, where Bryntail

"Like an eagle's nest, hangs on the crest
Of bare Plinlimmøn Range".

This description, from a School Magazine report of 1916, may not be quite accurate, but it gives a fair idea of the situation. There is little doubt that, had it been left to itself, Bryntail Cottage would now be a heap of stones and broken slates, for that it what has happened to many farms and other buildings in that area.

Much necessary work in alteration and construction had indeed been done already by H.G. and a small band of helpers, but 1929 marks the beginning of a great expansion. The decaying roof and battered tents were soon dealt with, but these were only the first items on an endless agenda. At this time, the camp fee was fifteen shillings per week, which clearly left little margin to pay for materials and labour. The answer to the question "How was it done?" is three-fold: "Whist-drives, begging, volunteers." From this time on, N.L. not only spent all his spare time in applying paint to the tents, the cottage and his faded Birmingham University blazer, but also welcomed hordes of Old Boys, fathers, masters, and friends of the School to Bryntail; once there, they could hardly be persuaded to stop working. And so it has been, ever since.

In those days, wood was plentiful—the Gelli wood was still standing—so that nearly all the cooking was done over fires of wood, which was sometimes dry, but often wet. As a result of this, the quality and timing of the meals was variable. More often than not, the breakfast porridge was burnt (or at any rate swarthy) but eatable. Breakfast consisted, as it does today, of that porridge, hard-boiled egg, bread-and-something. Dinner seldom varied: "Bryntail stew" and boiled rice, sometimes enlivened with dates or dried fruit, were served in colossal helpings. Tea one remembers as satisfyingly thick slices of bread and butter, spread with jam, red or yellow. Supper

was a generous bowl or two of "Bryntail soup", steaming hot and reputed to be full of mystery, but it was comforting to come back to on a cold Easter evening, after Rugby touch on that bleak "Baseball Field" (now, alas, occupied by huts to hold 500 workmen).

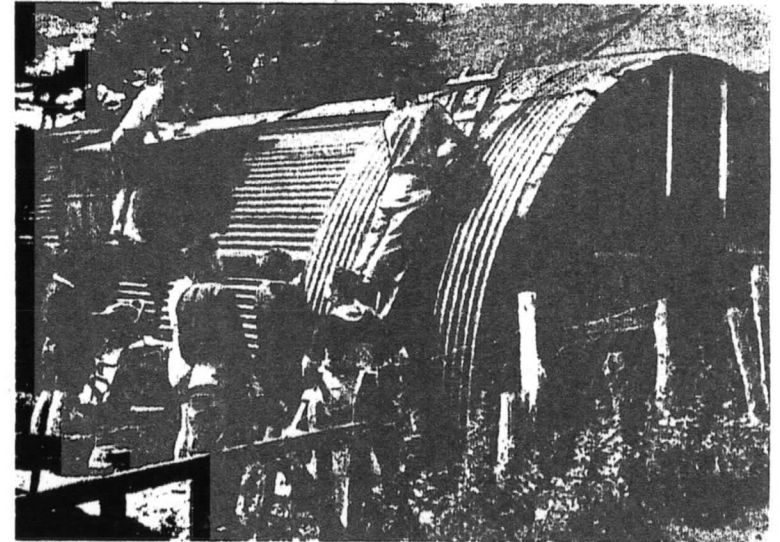
As in Guerra's time, Old Boys continued to come to camp in substantial numbers. They and the senior boys formed a Rugby XV which played matches annually (more or less; it depended on the opposition) against an "ad hoc" Llanidloes side, and sometimes against Newtown or Welshpool. A treasured relic of those great days is still to be seen in the Dining Room; a photograph of the 1938 Bryntail XV, which comprised virtually the entire Old Centrals First XV of that season. They fed in the cottage, slept in "the Dry" or Tool-house (a spacious but draughty bedroom), worked at Wood Duty, played and made social and sociable contacts in Llanidloes; at least one of them married a girl from "Llani" and there were several near misses.

Other camp activities continued much as before: true, the "points" system, the medals and the Prize Distribution were all swept away, as were the Sports and Gymkhanas. But the great "wide games" (Dispatch Runs, and Hare and Hounds, and Prisoners' Release) all went on, and so did the swimming, the Baseball, the "Two-mile" Relay, the service at Deildre Chapel, the Camp Concert, the walks, which became longer and more frequent.

This crowded centre of busy, cheerful life was suddenly and dramatically stilled in 1939. Summer camp that year was the last of the "Loveridge regime" as it must be called, for, though Humphreys was still an invaluable quartermaster, he spent less and less time at Bryntail, apart from opening and shutting down each camp. For seven long years, war and evacuation kept it empty.

In 1947, Bryntail faced its third major crisis. The School was hidden away at Cherrywood Road, small in numbers, ill-equipped, and struggling for its very existence. Up at Bryntail, though the cottage itself seemed to be in fair shape, only one of the steel tents was serviceable, another being badly damaged and the third just a heap of battered corrugated-sheets. To make the general picture even more unpromising, war-time rationing was still in force, restricting the purchase of almost every form of food, fuel, and clothing. Even bread, a major item in camp meals, could be bought—in modest quantities—only by giving up "Bread Units". It was this factor that finally decided N.L. not to open Bryntail again, but to hand over to a new "Gaffer".

Arnold Faulkner was the obvious successor. A man with Bryntail in his blood, he had been a regular camper since 1927; first as a boy, then as an Old Central and later a schoolmaster, he had helped to run many camp activities, and knew the place, in every aspect and in every detail, better than anyone else. But no-one, least of all



Building the Nissen: The Tracey Memorial Hut, 1950



Bryntail: any day, any camp.

E.A.F., needs or wishes to hear of his many qualifications for the high and onerous position of Gaffer.

Rejoining his old School in 1946 as Physics Master, he opened Bryntail again, with 14 boys, at Easter the following year. The boys slept in the Long Room and the one good tent and, two by two, took it in turns to cook, an experiment that was never repeated . . . Today we can look back on nineteen years of Phase Three: 38 camps (ten days at Easter, a fortnight each Summer) plus very many more—working camps, training camps, Old Boys' week-ends, First-form Field Days, and the rest.

It would take two pages of *The Hammer* even to mention the work and play of that long period, and Ed. would frown. But room must be made to tell of the Tracey Memorial Hut: Charles Tracey was killed in the Second World War, and Mrs. Tracey made a gift to Bryntail, the nucleus of a fund, in memory of a son who had loved the place so well. We built the Hut in 1950. About the same time we strengthened the front wall of the cottage, which was beginning to sag and crumble, by pouring some six tons of liquid concrete into it. "Calor" gas helps with the cooking, and there is now a sink with running water inside the kitchen.

Camp activities continue to expand as well. To the basic ones of baseball, Rugby touch, swimming, and the "wide games" to which the site is so well fitted, we have added the Fell Race (over Bryn-y-Tail, Pen-y-Clun and Penwar) and our walks have become ever more varied, far-ranging and exploratory. We possess one high-class lightweight tent, and hope to acquire more, and have begun to send out little parties of senior boys to fend for themselves in the hills for two or three days. Cyclists ride to camp from Birmingham and are able, when duties allow, to probe Mid-Wales on long, all-day rides. And, happily, Old Boys still come in encouraging numbers, to paint and build and keep the wood-bin full, to play Rugby, to show their wives and families the scenes of past exploits, to enliven the local population between the hours of six and ten p.m.

So much for the past, although only a tenth of the tale has been told. What of the future—the next fifty years? As everyone knows, a shadow is at this moment growing, threatening to blot out fifty years of devoted effort and dim the bright comradeship . . . the shadow of the Clywedog Dam. Already the Bathing Pool, focal point of the camp, is obliterated; the valley is ravaged and full of noise and casual destruction; wide roads penetrate crudely into the secret places, carrying an endless stream of lorries. In a word, Bryntail as it was, the Bryntail that cast its spell on so many hundreds of boys and men, has gone for ever. Some have said they will never go there any more, and one can understand them.

Yet flexibility, too, is a virtue, if not an heroic one; there are other things to do with spilt milk than cry over it. So the conclusion

may well be to give thanks for the past, not lament it; to think of new Bryntail as a totally different place from old Bryntail, not as an inferior place (a hard one to swallow, that!); to let new activities evolve. Two such activities have in fact already begun to take shape. We have made a successful start on one: the development of lightweight camping forays into the more remote hills, at present held up only by lack of extra equipment. The other, slightly more ambitious, and much more costly, is Sailing. The camp, in the person of E.A.F., recently became one of the Founder-Members of the infant "Clywedog Sailing Club", and plans are afoot for the acquisition of a sailing dinghy.

Our final thought, then, will be: "The next fifty years", and our final word a remark by Chunky. Chunky was a mysterious but popular character at the time when we were building the Nissen hut. The only part of him that he ever showed was a bare arm holding a curious sort of hammer, and the only remark he was ever known to make is particularly apt in the present circumstances. It was the one word: "FORWARD".

J.M.

19/6 Jul 66

HEYSTAD: EASTER CAMP

For those of us who went to bed at midnight on the night of 31st March, the prospect of fresh air, hard work and play and little sleep for the next ten days held no terrors. For those who forsook their heavy sleep to await the General Election results it was a pleasure to hear that Evelyn Hoosen, O.C., was once again to be "our" M.P.

The first day at camp followed its usual course and our preliminary perambulation revealed that the Mallik and Reed Construction Team had been busy during the winter. The main dam was beginning to rise, the retaining dam at Bwlch y-Gile was at least half complete and the road on the right hand bank was now open through to Staylittle. A new departure on the second day was to choose the local terrain and discuss tactics. This, it was felt, "would prove more profitable than the customary trudge, en masse, with occasional remarks to an inattentive crowd". In due time the Dispatch Run was held and the other Camp Activities followed their time-honoured prescribed courses, except for the Fell Race, which required two afternoons. On Easter Day, we were entertained in Chapel by a twenty seven minute discourse on Elijah, and entertained ourselves, in the absence of professional musicians, with hearty renderings of the hymns. Walks, naturally, had their place, and although there were no absolutely new ventures, there were several variations on old and well loved themes.

Construction and demolition tasks were undertaken within the confines of camp. The two most important were the laying of some thirty feet of drainage pipes some considerable distance below the surface and the construction of a soak-pit at the outlet end; and the installation of pig-wire fencing alongside the garden hedges, to rival that erected by Mr. Tom Jarman around many of the surrounding fields. Perhaps the biting winds and freezing rains inspired the labourers, as the finished products were a credit to them.

B.H.

19/7 DEZ 66

BRYNTAIL, SUMMER, 1966

This summer, School Camp was opened with the assistance of two Sixth Formers and two Old Boys. They had ably performed the tasks essential before camp could be opened, before the arrival of the main party of boys by coach the next day. Camp activities included the usual games - rugby touch, baseball, two-mile relay and a new addition to the camp "curriculum". This was the leaf hunt, in which some excelled, by identifying more than twenty trees from the leaves they brought back to camp. Walks were organised to many of the places whose names are familiar to old campers: Penllyn, Fawr, Flyn Ebyr and the valley of the Afon Hafren. On the sixth day of camp a party of seniors was transported to Cadair Idris and spent the day conquering this mighty summit. A recent innovation was that "despatch-run" teams should tour the course before the actual event and so, on the second day of camp, both teams, led by their captains, went out to explore. In the evening games of rugby touch were organised. This excess of physical exertion induced such a deep sleep that the following early morning activities at the same place behind camp passed unnoticed. Three of the "dam" workers had been exploring and one had fallen about forty feet down the shaft.

Swimming excursions were once more part of the daily timetable. A new swimming pool had been discovered close to the "Iweedle Dum" mine level in the Gelli Wood, and although rather difficult of access the pool proved serviceable and worthy of development. The despatch run was won by Moulson's team, although Moulson and Ball, the two captains, did not take part. They spent a long day haymaking for farmer Davies. Once more the school did battle at rugby touch with the Old Boys for the "Piedmont Trophy". The Old Boys won the Trophy but the school had its revenge by beating them at soccer (with a rugby ball, of course!). On the last day of camp there was continuous rain, but this did not matter over much as the day was devoted not to excursions but to preparation for the evening concert. Four campers, however, set out after breakfast to walk twenty miles over the mountains to Machynlleth. The concert was a great success and rounded off a camp which had been thoroughly enjoyed by all.

D. E. SMITH and R. S. PULLEY, 6U.

FORM ONE BRYNTAIL VISIT, OCTOBER, 1966

We arrived at Llanidloes to find that the monthly fair was occupying the Gro, so we had to park by the railway station. Although there is no longer a passenger service on this line, the station seemed to be in good repair. When we left the coaches at Bwlch-y-fan it was raining heavily and this made the ascent of Fan Mountain very difficult as we kept slipping on the wet grass. However, the rain had stopped by the time we reached the summit and we were able to eat our sandwiches and enjoy the view in pale sunshine. Nevertheless, the rain had not left us, and as soon as we began the descent it returned with a vengeance and we were soon drenched again. By the time we reached the bog at Bwlch-y-gle the rain had stopped and the rest of the walk was accomplished in fine weather. The earthen retaining dam at Bwlch-y-gle was almost complete, and from the top of it we were able to get our first close view of the Clywedog Valley. Although we thought it was very beautiful we were told that the valley used to contain hedges, fences, stands of trees and some isolated farm buildings, but they had been moved prior to the flooding of the valley by the waters of the Clywedog Reservoir.

At Eblid we saw the remains of the farm, which had been evacuated by the occupants, as this farm would also be under water. The floor of the Clywedog Valley was extremely wet following the heavy rainfall of the previous weeks, and later we saw a tractor pulling a lorry out of the mud. The lorry was there to carry away the felled trees which, had they been left there, would have fouled the dam. At this point in the walk we all felt rather envious, as there were many bonfires burning the wood from the hedges and fences. We wished we could have carried some of the wood home for our own Guy Fawkes celebrations. On the last leg of the walk round the side of Bryntail Hill we could see the old water courses, which again had water in them as a result of the recent heavy rains, and also the nearly completed main dam. It was almost dark and the men were working with the aid of floodlights.

We soon reached camp and, after a cup of tea, walked in the dark to rejoin the coaches at Bwlch-y-bar for the journey back to Birmingham.

A. MEDDINGS, 1P.

SCHOOL NOTES

At the end of the term the Headmaster, Mr. D. W. Ockelton, will be leaving Central.

* * *

Mr. J. Liddell left at the end of the Autumn Term, and the following members of staff will be leaving in July: Mr. H. Jones, Mr. G. Karavis, Mr. D. Harris, Mr. D. Howard, Mr. R. Gunter, Mr. C. McFadyean and Mr. S. Rao. Mr. J. Faurie, French Assistant, will be returning to France.

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In January Mrs. McKechnie joined the staff to teach Modern Languages.

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A further 16 "A" level passes and 54 "O" level passes were obtained by boys in the January examinations, bringing the total for the year to 120 "A" levels and 464 "O" levels.

* * *

R. Pulley, 6U, has been awarded an Alfred Herbert University Bursary. This is the first time this industrial scholarship has been awarded.

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Mr. D. Howard was awarded a M.Sc. degree of London University on 1st July.

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A sale of toys and books given by boys at the end of the Autumn Term realised £25 13s. 6d. for Dr. Barnardo's Homes.

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A Jumble Sale was held on Friday, 3rd March as a joint effort of the School and the Old Boys; the Old Centrals hoping to raise money towards the cost of draining the Third XV pitch, the School towards the cost of a boat for use on the Clywedog Reservoir (as some recompense for the lost amenities of Bryntail). A total of £55 was raised from the Sale.

BRYNTAIL

CAPEL DEILDRE IS NO MORE

A party went to Bryntail at Easter and was blest with some spells of sunshine, although in general the weather was very cold and dull. Many of the usual activities were arranged and, as the custom is, the Camp went to chapel—to the chapel at Old Hall, not to Deildre chapel—for Capel Deildre is no more.

For fifty years and more this journey to chapel has been made, down the short path, over the Miners' Bridge, up the long sloping path on the face of Pen-y-Gaer and down the rough grassy track to the chapel in the wilds. The boys sat on the grassy bank waiting for the local people to arrive and occupy their seats first: the people from Bryntail, Crowlwm, the Cwm, Cefn Penarth and the Ty'n Frons, from Deildre Fach, Deildre Fawr, Ty Coch, Coppice Llwyd, Ystrad Ynod, Pen-y-Banc, the Foel, Eblid and Bwlch-y-Gle. When the chapel was built, by the sturdy hill farmers ninety years ago, the congregation was eighty or ninety. Now the families are smaller, some of the farms are closed and some demolished to make way for

the Clywedog Reservoir. The congregation dwindled to a handful and reluctantly the decision was reached to close the chapel, and Capel Deildre is now no more.

Many are the stories that can be told of the visits to chapel, of the boys enthralled by the Welsh fervour of the preacher, of the hearty and tuneful singing and the manful attempts of the seniors to reach the top notes, which often seemed out of reach; especially when Mrs. Owen, Coppice Llwyd, used to pitch the note, apparently half an octave higher than we should have chosen. There was a little harmonium. Sometimes there was an organist, sometimes there was none. Sometimes it worked, sometimes it did not. This was not really surprising, as it stood cold and damp through the long winter months; sometimes snowed in for weeks on end. Occasionally the amateur repairer of organs from camp would spend a few hours with screwdriver and pliers coaxing it back into life. The foot pedals were stiff, the bellows leaked somewhat and one note tended to stick open a little; but it could give a tune, which was a great help and greatly appreciated by one and all.

Normally the services were in Welsh so that arrangements had to be made in advance for the preacher to take the service in English; sometimes it was difficult to find a preacher available who could preach in English, to some a completely foreign tongue. On one occasion, on a Friday evening, the message came through on the bush telegraph that in spite of all the efforts of Mr. Vaughan, Pen-y-Banc, it had not been possible to find an English preacher. Disappointment loomed near. What was to be done? Could a preacher be found at such short notice? And would he be acceptable to the deacons of the chapel? Off to see the Evanses at Bryntail to see if they could make a suggestion. "What about Ben Watkins, Councillor Watkins, in Llanidloes?" Down to Bwlch-y-Gle, over the Iron Bridge and up through Ystrad Ynod yard to Pen-y-Banc to ask Mr. Vaughan. "Well yes, and indeed, a good man he is; but you had better have a word with Watkins, Deildre Fawr." Up from Pen-y-Banc over the rough rocky road, strewn with pebbles, to see Watkins, Deildre Fawr. "He preaches well, a Wesleyan he is, not a Calvinistic Methodist but a good man for all that." Along the Red Road, down the hairpin bends into the Severn valley and on into Llanidloes. "Vaughan, Pen-y-Banc, and Watkins, Deildre Fawr, wonder if perhaps you could preach on Sunday?" Councillor Ben Watkins would be only too pleased and "could you please let them know at Pen-y-Banc and Deildre Fawr?" "Well certainly, no trouble at all."

Along the valley of the Hafren, up the hairpin bends, along the Red Road in the gathering dusk to let them know at Deildre Fawr, where the watch dogs growled and barked their disapproval at being disturbed. Up the rough rocky road, strewn with pebbles, and down to Pen-y-Banc, where the message was delivered after the door had been stealthily unbolted and unbarred. Down through the steep yard of Ystrad Ynod, dogs barking disapproval and eyes peering

through the curtains asking, "Who travels this way in the dark?" Over the Iron Bridge and up through Bwlch-y-Gle back to Bryntail. Thirty miles, but a successful journey; on the next day, it being Llanidloes market day, the word got round, "Ben Watkins is preaching an English sermon at Capel Deildre". And all the local people were there.

But now Capel Deildre is no more.

The chapel at Old Hall is perhaps half a mile further, a much bigger chapel and more pretentious, and cold. But the strange feeling of this new venture was dispelled by the great warmth of the welcome we received, by the inspired preaching of the English sermon and by the hearty singing of the old favourite hymns.

"And, indeed, the boys sang well and listened with great attention. Pleased we are to have them with us."

E.A.F.

BRYNTAIL, SUMMER, 1967

The Dam, as always now, affects the activities of the Camp, but many of the "hardy annuals" remain. All that is left of Eblid Farm is being slowly engulfed by the rising waters, and several excursions culminated at Eblid with a swim in the drowned fields. Peace is slowly returning to the valleys. No longer is dinner interrupted by blasting at Crawlwm, and the once continuous clankings, groanings and protestings of the rock-crushing plant have been replaced by long quiet periods of inactivity, punctuated only by occasional short bursts of ferocious energy. The army of "Paddies" has been decimated, and only about fifty remain in their smart, prefabricated huts. The earth dam at Bwlch-y-Gle is practically finished, and lacks only a general clearing up and a wall at the top. The main Dam itself is almost complete and dominates the view with its massive, white, monolithic visage.

The hackneyed topic of the weather must always "rear its ugly head" as far as camp and the fickle Welsh Hills are concerned. The start of camp was marked by a period of blazing sun and raging thirsts. The pristine green of the countryside soon became dull and dusty. This period of long walks and dispatch runs was all too soon replaced by dull, changeable weather, interrupted by occasional bursts of sunshine, but the sun was now usually hidden all day by a veil of rain, mist or cloud.

As far as the campers themselves were concerned, we had, for the first time, a large body of First Formers, and a considerable number of other new campers. The second week was marked by the return of that figure, immortal in camp folk lore, of "Ted" (Broad-bent), who took over his old job as cook from "P.J." (Smith), who, despite ribald criticism, had performed sterling service (connoisseurs of camp cooking have declared his "rice flambé" the most accomplished to date). Mr. C. W. McFadyean, prior to his tour of Canada, lent an air of class to our rugby-touch, and was aided later by Mr. S. A. Doble.

Bathing parades at the 'Tweedles' Pool continued, but the water level was low, and the river itself very brown and dirty and extremely cold. There was a choice between taking a drastic plunge, or slowly acclimatizing oneself, toe by toe. Towards the end of camp, swimming at Eblid was preferred, as the water there was cleaner and much warmer.

Rugby-touch was played in Cae Llyn, with variety added by sociable and co-operative-minded cattle. The Piedmont Games were played, but despite the services of our two distinguished visitors, the Nissen teams could not prevail against the combined strength of the Old Boys and the Referee.

The Dispatch Runs were complicated by the large numbers of new campers. The element of luck did not seem to play such a large part, but the close result shows how evenly matched the sides were. The Two-Mile Relay had the closest result that could be remembered, the winning team gaining victory by only two yards from the others.

A novel variation of the Two-Mile Relay was performed, and the Two-Mile Handicap Relay was run over the two-mile course, but the times did not compare with those of the actual Relay. A wet morning was spent in converting a pile of newspaper into "tiny-tiny" pieces for a paper-chase. In the afternoon, the hounds in full voice slithered and scampered after the fleet-footed hares—to no avail.

The activities of Mr. Jarman (who now farms part of the Bryntail land) and his tractor in the Gelli Wood led to a renewal of the old pastime of log-lifting, from river level up to Camp. Another source of timber was a tip near the old "Mountain Gate". Two interesting mornings were spent unearthing the wooden shuttering for concrete, old tyres, cans, iron rods and pieces of lorry in a quest that brought down cascades of rubble.

The large number of Juniors meant separate walks, the Seniors going on the longer, harder walks, the Juniors on shorter. A Senior walk, led by David May, took us to Marsh's Pool. The first stage, to the pool itself, was quite straightforward, but on the return, over a cross-country route via Craig-y-Llo, things became more interesting. After a running fight with the "man-cating" bracken, through the same stream at least four times, and all the way round a field to leave it again two yards from where it was entered, our guide managed to find the right path (after many attempts on wrong ones, and on some which, in our opinion, existed only in his imagination). Another Senior walk was to Trefeglwys, the Trannon Valley, and Llawr-y-Glyn. A stop was made in Trefeglwys to procure frozen raspberries and cream with which to tantalize the other campers at supper. The final Senior long walk was the most interesting. The route was to Eblid, along the Clywedog Valley to Staylittie, and through the Gorge to Glaslyn. From Glaslyn, map and compass took us to Bygeilyn, and finally to the source of the Severn (or, more correctly, to a notice in the middle of a peat bog proclaiming "Y Blaen Hafren"). The Severn was then followed down through the Hafren Forest. The party left its valley by the Brithdir Gate, and from there walked easily back to Camp. Variety was added by the consternation of Mick Chambers on seeing the car, which was to give him a lift back to camp from Glaslyn, disappearing over the far horizon. After reaching the source of the river, the party followed the embryo Severn in the wake of a pair of size thirteen boots. Suddenly, on rounding a bend, we were confronted by the sight of their owner up to mid-thigh in bright-green bog. The walk was uneventful after that, but that sight will remain imprinted on our minds!

It must be said that this was a most enjoyable Camp. We found that many of the old activities are still possible, and these remain; and new variations on the old were tried out and will become established. And with the sight of yachts on the reservoir, there is promise for future camps.

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authority, on the previous evening. Often we would set off at a moderate pace in the cool of the morning to take a short walk or to collect wood from the Clywedog's banks, or even to bathe, for indeed the weather was exceptionally fine for Easter, and bathing wasn't confined to those who are less sensitive to the icy waters of a mountain stream. The Clywedog Dam, that great topic of scornful conversation at supper-time, is now nearing completion, and one can only hope that the surrounding countryside will retain its character when the throngs of tourists come to gape at the mass of concrete that blocks the clear water of the Clywedog.

On occasion we would forsake our evening meal and carry sandwiches along, so carefully and arduously prepared by that benevolent gentleman of Bryntail, Mr. Faulkner. Such an occasion was the walk to Craig-y-Llo, where we beheld the stream tumbling down over numerous river-terraces. Mr. May was our guide on this occasion: a man who, despite his years, could walk many of us supposedly agile youngsters off our feet!

This year, under the guidance of David May and Mr. M. Jones we undertook an expedition to Pennant, where we camped for two days. This, I am led to believe, was an unusual diversion from the normal Bryntail activities, and proved to be an exciting and exhilarating experience for all who took part. Pennant was only our base camp. Leaving all the equipment in the safe care of the farmer at Pennant Isaf we set off to walk to Plynlimmon, an all-round distance of about twenty-six miles. However, those amongst us who were less inclined to walking decided to rely upon the then unknown map-reading ability of Mr. Jones, and go to Nant-y-Moch to sneer at yet another of those concrete constructions that are dotted amongst the Welsh hills. Mr. Jones did an admirable job and we were back at Pennant, rather ironically, for eight o'clock in the evening, having walked about the same distance as those spirited fellows who had toiled up Plynlimmon.

Indeed, the activities at Bryntail never cease. There was always soccer and rugby in the evening, when someone in authority could be persuaded to referee: not a very enviable task when fourteen young men are battling tooth and nail for that most treasured possession the "Piedmont Trophy", which incidentally—and with our commiserations to the Old Boys—this year went to the School. To go to Bryntail is an opportunity that no-one in the school should miss, and the whole business of it is a tribute to those who help to maintain the buildings and who organise and participate in the school camp. No doubt they enjoy the work, but it is good to remember that it is done for the benefit of every boy in the school.

BRYNTAIL **Easter, 1968**

It was my first visit to Bryntail and I must admit that the thought of spending ten days in the Welsh mountains did not really appeal to me, but nevertheless, I went along. How wrong I was!

I found that there is a unique atmosphere at Bryntail, an atmosphere of tingling excitement, for we never knew what the next day would bring until it was planned, with the help of those in

M. A. JONES, 6L.

R. W. LOWE, 6L.

EXCURSIONS

BRYNTAIL, SUMMER 1968

Certain camps are memorable for certain things: the weather; the food (the camp of the "Jam-Buttie" eating contest, for instance); the walks; but in fact most camps are a conglomeration of various ingredients mixed up into one remaining impression which has to be given the title of "This year's Bryntail Camp". The principal ingredients of this summer's camp, as far as school campers were concerned, were the walks, the absence of rain (which eliminated those two malevolent mainstays of Bryntail wet days, the Two-mile Relay and the Fell Race), and being chauffeur-driven from door to door by parents. For the Old Boys, Seniors and Mr. Doble there were hay-making and tractor-driving, swimming in the river by the new "Miners' Bridge", and generally keeping active. The exceptionally fine weather of this camp coincided with hay-making, and several evenings and afternoons were spent heaving the bales into small stacks to dry, then loading the hay onto the tractor-trailers and taking it to the barn. Several people tried their hand at tractor-driving, with various degrees of success. Efforts were rewarded by "Mars" wafers and a farmhouse supper.

We indulged in the usual camp activities—potato peeling, grass cutting and carrying, swimming in the river (remarkable for the length of time Moulson stayed in and Anslow didn't), table-tennis (and a tournament), porridge-stirring, and finally the most important activity—tea-drinking. Various odd-jobs were performed: manhole cover making, window-repairing and wood-cutting. Mr. Phillips spent a very energetic time using gallons of white paint on the cottage, himself, and everything within his reach, and in consuming gallons of tea. The despatch runs were performed with great zeal, with the main menace coming from Mr. Doble, but the most effective catching was by Ian Wood. The second despatch run was held two days after the first, in order to give the other team a chance to catch Mr. Doble. They were unsuccessful in this and in the overall result. This final result remained in the balance until all the results were judged. At the adjudication, Mr. Wood and Mr. Fryer were counsel for the defence, while D. May represented himself. Despite determined efforts, the runners were pronounced "in" and N. Evans' team won. Games of baseball were played regularly, which meant that, in general, there was a decided improvement in the standard of play before the end of the camp. The usual games of Rugby Touch were played. In the "Piedmont Trophy" and the "Bryntail Trophy" competitions, the Old Boys, despite their grandiose claims, found the Nissen teams provided stiff opposition. However, the tactics and skill of the Old Boys paid dividends.

The main events of the camp for the seniors, who made good use of the fine weather, were the two marathon walks. The first was to Rhayader; the route was Glynbrochan, Llangurig, the Wye Valley, the Elan Dams to Rhayader, and back by bus to Llanidloes. Amusement on this walk was provided by the "disappearing shoes"

trick of R. W. Ball. At the end of the walk his footwear had almost completely disintegrated. Hallworth, in a moment of misguided inspiration, indulging an unsuspected ecclesiastical side of his character, decided to supplement his bedside reading with an ancient family Bible which he found and insisted on bringing back to the Promised Land (Birmingham, via Bryntail). The various comments of the carriers of the communal rucksack seemed in general to be on the surprising increase in weight because of his find, weight which seemed to grow with the distance travelled. The second marathon walk was to Devil's Bridge, from camp via Plynlimmon. Thence we went by the Rheidol Valley Light Railway to Aberystwyth. This walk is also memorable (as any walk with D. May usually is) for its record ascent of Plynlimmon—both peaks. However, the record has not yet been verified because the question of altitude has not been decided. Devil's Bridge was reached in good time (except by D. May, who, ignoring informed advice, attempted to blaze a new trail, which, as usual, finally led him back to the route of the main party and nearly caused him to miss the train). At Aberystwyth the party bathed—members changing beneath anoraks, towels, long sweaters, and other hastily improvised bathing robes. Return from Aberystwyth was by bus. After these two excursions, a normal senior walk to Pennant, the Clywedog Gorge and Glaslyn seemed child's play in comparison. Most of the usual camp walks were performed with variations. The walk to Llawr-y-Glyn was extended by the seniors, with an expedition to the Trannon Falls—eventually found successfully.

This really concludes the Bryntail report, as far as the writers are concerned. Much more that could have been said has been omitted; some has been forgotten; much that happened to others, their memories and contributions to the whole, cannot be put on record because this would require a separate report from each one. Readers wanting a more detailed account should consult the Camp Log; all that has been given here is a personal recollection of the various elements that went into the mixture of "Bryntail Summer Camp, 1968".

N. J. EVANS, 6U.
J. E. ALLEN, 6U.

BRYNTAIL, 1969

Now that The Hammer is to appear only once a year, the Bryntail scribes will have to include two camps in one article, a feat now attempted for the first time, and the problem of what to omit becomes more acute than ever. Therefore, no more preamble; we turn at once to the—

Easter Camp. This housed and fed, at various times, 36 souls, comprising 24 boys (including eleven from Form 1); seven Old Boys and guests; five masters. The greatest number of hard-boiled eggs served at any one breakfast was thirty-two. After a day and a half of fierce winds and driving rain, we were blessed with that crisp, clear weather that shows Mid-Wales at its best. The nights were frosty; the days sunny, with cloudless blue skies and crystal air through which, from Van Top, even the Brecon Beacons could be seen, far away to the south. These conditions made their greatest impact on the Tenters (or "Proper Campers") during their two-day expedition, whether they were freezing in their little tents at Llanuwchllyn (we teach you how to pronounce such names), or striding over the snow-capped Arennigs and Arans. It was a strenuous trip and confined to Senior boys—Evans, Allen, Anslow, Parkes and Brember—though they kindly allowed Messrs. Doble and D. May to accompany them. However, the younger end were not to be denied: two days later, the nineteen Juniors walked over the hill to Llawr y Glyn and on to Nainfa, where a splendid site had been discovered, and twelve Tenters pitched camp. Then, after their more prudent companions had left them to return to the fleshpots of Bryntail, they set about discovering, with the assistance of Mr. Jones, Hudson (of the C.W.M. Club) and Steve, the delights and mysteries of lightweight tenting.

These were not the only innovations: a new Long-Walk was invented, taking in Llanidloes, the Dulas Valley and Marsh's Pool; it is for strong walkers only, with its eight miles of road and fifteen miles on tracks and hills and disused railways. Several new activities were introduced by M.J., such as the game of scavenging, where success depends on mobility, speed, knowledge of country, observation and low cunning. At other times, elementary Orienteering helped to give point to some of the walks. Gastronomes, however, may feel that M.J.'s great contribution was the introduction of Cawl, using an old Cardigan recipe which he is believed to have made up as he went on. Mothers of large families among our readers may like to know that Cawl is an inexpensive but powerful and nutritious stew, particularly acceptable to hearty trenchermen with open minds; it consists of leeks, potatoes, neck of mutton and twelve secret ingredients, including leeks. Finally, in the count of things new, comes the Minibus. Without this obliging vehicle, many of our activities would hardly have been possible; "borrowed" and tirelessly driven by Mr. Jones, it would come and go at literally all hours of the day or night, with any cargo from campers to kippers, and constantly on

the move between Bryntail and Birmingham, or Llanidloes, or the Bwlch y Groes, or wherever.

Summer Camp. Smaller than at Easter, the party comprised eleven boys, ten Old Boys and guests, and six masters—amongst whom we were all happy to see E.A.F. back in harness as Gaffer. The total was 27, and the highest number of hard-boiled eggs 20. The weather again was kind: we had only four showers (one of them lasting all day), and the rest of the time was fine, sunny and warm, or even hot—indeed, much better than in the Midlands, so we heard. It was on one of the hottest of these days that an unheard-of event took place: a visit to Nant y Moch, "scenic routes" and all, and a day at the seaside, the whole journey being performed in horseless carriages. A most successful and enjoyable experiment, without any doubt; but perhaps one or two were happy, at the end of it, to step from their time-machine back into the world of 1915, with soft lamplight and an open wood fire—a world happily free from transistor radios and the box. An equally memorable break with tradition, despite the remarks already made about hard-boiled eggs, was the provision of fried eggs and bacon at half a dozen breakfast times; a considerable feat, seeing that there were seventeen hungry mouths and only one frying pan. This time, too, a Long-Walk was pioneered; a nineteen-mile jaunt that may in time come to be known as the "Wig Walk". Its object was to find old coach roads and milestones which are alleged in the recent *Shell Guide to Wales* to exist on the remote Trannon Moorlands. The walkers did find vague traces of what might once have been roads, but no sign of a milestone. But they saw superb vistas, and discovered lonely hill farms like Trannon and Wig, and swam in a mountain llyn.

Old and New. Thus, even after 54 years there are new things going on at our old cottage. At the same time, these two camps saw the honouring of tradition; old-established walks, such as Craig y Llo; meeting our friends at Chapel (Old Hall now, not Deildre); Despatch Runs and the "Two Mile", Rugby Touch and Baseball. As the years go by we are able to combine the new with the best of the old. Bryntail is constantly changing, yet always basically the same, and this will no doubt continue even when we "get off the ground" and on to the water; when we acquire our first dinghy and turn our membership of the Clywedog Sailing Club into a reality. But that is a subject for a future Hammer—maybe the issue of 1970—and a future scribe.

Prof. ZEUGMA

BACK TO CIVILISATION

Friday the thirteenth is always an easy date to remember, and that particular evening in June is one which I remember well. Some of the boys' parents had agreed to spend a week-end at Bryntail to carry out some renovations to the school cottage, and I had arranged to meet Don and Arthur after work on the Friday. With Don as pilot, we set off shortly after six o'clock on our hundred-mile journey into mid-Wales. The evening was fine and the journey pleasant and relaxing. None of us had much idea what the cottage was like apart from some brief descriptions from the three parents who had been there the week-end before, but we were all looking forward to what we knew would be a complete change.

It was almost nine o'clock when we arrived, the last part of the route from Newtown having been readily identified from a special map prepared and kindly supplied to us by Mr. Faulkner, the teacher in charge of the cottage. It was he who welcomed us almost before we had time to get out of the car. The first task was to unload our personal luggage and the various items of food which had been purchased for the week-end in accordance with Mr. Faulkner's recommendations. In the meantime, large mugs of tea were being prepared for us—the first of many we were to have during our stay. For half an hour or so we sat and chatted about the cottage and even in that short time we learned much about its past history and about people who had been associated with it. The nearest town to Bryntail is Llanidloes, about five minutes journey by car, and it was there that the three of us enjoyed a jug of beer and some fish and chips before returning to the cottage for an early night to bed.

There were just three beds in the sleeping room to which we retired, and we were very grateful for the air beds which we had brought with us to smooth out the bumps in the palliasses. No-one had any trouble getting to sleep, and soon after seven o'clock on the next morning we all awoke refreshed. Arthur was the first to be on the move, and he was soon busily engaged preparing man-sized breakfasts of egg, bacon, fried bread and tomato. More massive mugs of tea too! Our number had since been increased by the late arrival, the night before, of P. J. Smith, an Old Central, who had maintained a keen interest in the cottage.

The inner man having been well satisfied, we all set to with putty, blowlamps, scrapers and paint brushes, restoring the paint work on all the windows and doors at the front and back of the cottage. I think we had all been surprised at the size of the place with its three bedrooms, kitchen, dining-room and outhouse, quite apart from the large Nissen hut to accommodate about thirty beds, another building containing a games room and a storage area, plus a "bell" hut containing more beds, and it made us realise the urgent need for many more volunteers to carry out repairs and maintenance.

The day's work was only interrupted by the lunch break when we enjoyed an ample meal prepared and cooked by Mr. Faulkner. There was a brief spell of rain, but this did not interfere too much with our programme, as we were able to divert our attention to the doors, where we were afforded some protection from the weather. None of us wanted to stop, and we carried on until late in the evening, sustained by gallons of tea. After clearing up we went into the kitchen to be greeted by the genial countenance of Mr. Faulkner, who had prepared more food for the hungry. Oh, and that delightful down-to-earth country cottage smell of burning paraffin from the oil lamp attached to the wall, and the cheerful warmth of the coal fire in the grate.

Sunday's activities were more or less a repetition of those of the day before, except that we finished earlier to allow us time for the return journey to Birmingham.

There was gratifying satisfaction in having made some small contribution to the needs of the cottage, and we left behind recollections of a delightful week-end. There was much amusement, and I recollect with a chuckle the occasion when Smithy, during his outdoor ablutions, dropped his toothbrush in the hedge and couldn't find it, when Don's clothes fell off the hook and on to his face while he was in bed, and when a certain character knocked over a tin of blue paint on the grass. But also, it was a peaceful time in beautiful Welsh surroundings, with nothing to worry about except who had "borrowed" your paint brush. No television, no radio, no telephone, no papers—and even the clock wasn't working!

Back to civilisation? Yes, indeed.

H.B.O.

BRYNTAIL OPEN WEEKEND

In late June of this year an open week-end was held at Bryntail. The object of this was to show the parents of boys still at school the camp and something of the surrounding area. At the Head's request the Old Boys' Association provided several experienced "Bryntourist guides" to shepherd the sightseers on their tour. Tea to revive them on their return was brewed by wives of Old Boys and Masters. In all, about 50 parents arrived and were conducted around, probably leaving with mixed impressions of both Bryntail and O.C.'s! All those who took part in this new departure, however, agreed it was a very enjoyable and successful week-end.

Ordinary camps in 1970 will be from 27th March to 5th April (at Easter) and in the summer from 19th July to 2nd August. Please let Arnold Faulkner know beforehand if you would like to go.

R.W.F.

SOCIETY REPORTS



BRYNTAIL 1970

At last the Clywedog reservoir gives some benefit to the boys camping at Bryntail. Sailing has become a part of Camp and it seems that it will long remain so, because there were no mishaps, apart from one slight accident in the winds of Dinas. A raucous chorus of "For those in peril on the sea", greeted the three sailors involved when they got back to Camp.

A mere soaking is nothing to deter the spirit of Bryntail and visits to the sailing club were eagerly awaited when earlier fears changed into confidence engendered by experience under the capable tuition of Williams, Moulson, Mr. Weightman and an instructor from the sailing club, many campers were introduced to nautical affairs with a bang—or was it a splash? It was a sight for sore eyes to see the ever nimble Mr. May, looking like Jack Tar, on his first ever voyage under sail. Mr. May undertook yet another adventure and his dauntless spirit emerged triumphant. Although he is sadly no longer a member of the school staff, it is sincerely hoped that he will continue to grace, for many years to come, the corrugated iron that is Bryntail.

Sailing, however, was not the only activity that was carried on at this camp. More traditional events were still undertaken and gave relish to even the oldest of hands. The Old Boys, for example, ran the Dispatch Run (a game of speed and guile) and most of them got back, even "Tick-Tock", who explored the yet un-

charted reaches of Llandloes Golf Club and his side, led by Ward 6U, were victors, although all but one of their successful runners were within 10 minutes of being late. Four of Anslow's team were late, so the 2-hour time limit was of paramount importance this camp. As well as the Dispatch Run, other traditional events were carried out in addition to pioneer efforts from the Seniors. Customary pilgrimages were made to Old Hall, Crowlwn, Van, Brithdir and the Glyn. There was also the Two-Mile Relay in which Lake, a first year, finished in 11.00 minutes and Roden finished in 9.52 although this time has not yet been ratified by the Camp recorder.

The Concert had its highlights in Bernie Mclenaghan's much-appreciated, non-musical rendering of "Lola", accompanied by Peak and Knowles on imaginary guitar and drum, and the poems of "Curly" Wright from New Zealand, read by Mr. May. Even from New Zealand "Curly" Wright still demands a place in the annals of Bryntail folklore.

Not only good poetry but also good music came to Bryntail. Under the direction of the ex-patriot, Geoff Thomas, the 4-part arrangement of "Cwm Rhondda" sung at Old Hall served only to enhance our already excellent reputation. Rumours that Geoff has been signed by "Apple" have been hotly denied.

The lowland country beyond Llyn Gbr was explored as far as Llandinan while less intrepid souls were indulged by the Bryntail School of Motoring with football and candy floss on Borth Sands. The more Wordsworthian souls in our party preferred a gentle stroll to Cefn Carnedd, a Stone Age hill fort, although an ancient

cottage at its foot seemed to be of more interest.

The "Piedmont Trophee" at last returns to the Nissen. In a neck and neck tussle, Messrs. Wood, Tustin and Company were defeated 9-8 in the best match that the writer has seen in Cae Llyn. The only grumble was that after the game the players were forced to trek down to the Round Pool to wash because the water shortage was at its height. By sacrificing hot water and washing catastrophe was avoided. Nobody really seemed to mind anyway.

"Water, water everywhere but not a drop to drink".

W. Anslow.

BRYNTAIL DIARY

Since the last report from Bryntail there have been four camps and two working parties, 1971 seeing the start of a new system of camps. With Easter being too cold for sailing, the mid-year camp was changed to occupy the Whitsuntide holiday, leaving Easter free for a working party and the usual summer camp continuing as before. As there is a lot to report on, here is a summary of the more memorable events of the past two years at Bryntail.

The Easter working party of 1971 saw a "noble army of Martyrs" battle with mid-Wales 'monsoons' in order to re-paint the inside of the nissen hut and re-coat the outside of it with bitumastic. Hunter (the hedge) meanwhile proved his worth as an amateur pruner of garden shrubbery.

Whitsuntide that year included the usual attractions, with added enjoyment (or amusement) from sailing on the reservoir. Because some of our brethren fell foul of Llyn Clywedog, a 'Capsize Trophy', to be presented to such unfortunates, was donated by J. D. Payne (O.C.). One particular highlight was the Cader Idris walk, ably led by Mr. Tustin, who managed to control the 3rd and 4th Formers who were under the impression that there was a fruit machine at the summit.

In the summer of '71 a greater use was made of the minibus and we were able to extend our itinerary to include days at Barmouth, Plynlimmon and the Elan Valley. A walk which is now very popular amongst campers with determination and good boots is the one to Glaslyn and Foel Fadian, from which there is a spectacular view of the counties around it, and even the coast of Cardigan Bay on a clear day.

Unfortunately, there is always the need for manual work to keep the cottage in a pleasant state because of its age and the bad winter weather it receives. Last year it was the turn of the kitchen chimney-breast to have its overhaul, and our thanks go to those willing Old Boys and Staff who undertake these jobs whilst we enjoy ourselves.

1972 saw the end of E.A.F.'s role as 'The Gaffer', as he was affectionately known, who retired early in the year from camp duties. As a result we all came under the governance of the newly-formed Bryntail Committee.

Easter heralded another working party which amongst other things became infamous for Mr. B. D. Roberts' carried hotpot. For the rest of the week everyone's breath was distinctly 'fiery'. Much of our time was spent paint-

ing the staff room, the passage, and the dining room in glorious technicolour and shades of 'salmon wistaria, sage and aubretia' (courtesy of Permoglaze Ltd.). Thanks must also be extended to Mr. J. May who, in his true Jack-of-all-trades fashion, scaled the west face of the Miner's Cottage to renovate the tiling thereupon.

A very good turnout arrived at the cottage this Whitsuntide, some of us adding the much-talked-of-but-never-used Spaghetti Junction to the list of routes to camp. Under the able leadership of Mr. P. N. Jones some local caves were looked into and recorded and it is hoped that caving may become a part of the Bryntail scene.

This summer, the committee rejoiced as numbers for camp swelled. With the length of camp reduced to ten days we crammed it with as much activity as possible, the increase in numbers allowing a wider choice of pastimes, including cycling for our resident cyclist and a minority sport known as 'chatting up' Girl Guides (no names). For the first week the reins were held by Mr. Price with a hefty tug from Mr. Peck who organised lightweight camping excursions for those who wanted them. These included trips to Llangwig Glynbrochan, Cader Idris and Tallylyn. Our thanks must go, finally, to those stalwarts of the kitchen who satisfy our ravenous appetites. Thanks go particularly to Ted Broadbent (of the Wooden Spoon Club) who introduced specialities like chicken, fruit crumble, treacle pudding and so on, last summer. Burp! Thank you.

In conclusion, you probably think that this has been one big plug for Bryntail. Well, you're dead right! This report only summarises the sort of things that go on at camp, missing out joys such as football, softball and tuck shop! If you really want to see what it's like, come along next Whitsun and we'll be only too glad to see you.

Finally, a word of thanks to the committee for their efficient organisation of the camp and in particular to Mr. Smith.

J. W. RODEN.