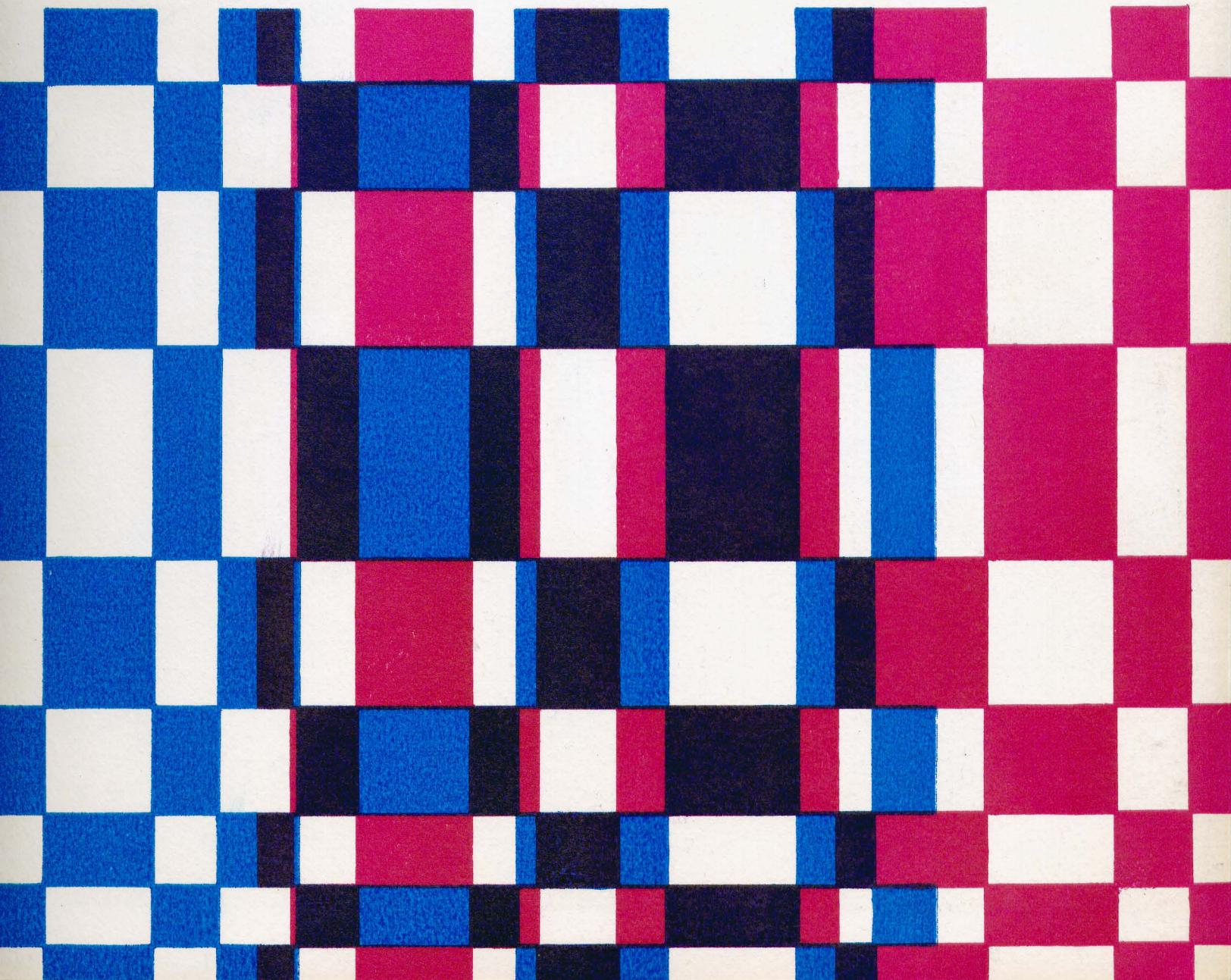


1968

Facet

Sydenham
School
Magazine





1968

FACET



2000

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Editorial

Why have a school magazine? For whom is the magazine intended and what sort of magazine should a comprehensive school aim at producing? These are the kinds of questions that my editorial team and I had to consider when asked to produce a school magazine. It was easier to see what we did not want - that is, the typical school 'mag' which is a catalogue of recent history, mostly sports' results, interspersed with a few poems and essays, and illustrations selected at random from the Art department. We felt a school magazine is valuable if it reflects things that are happening in the school and the classroom, but should also, be concerned with topics of general interest and importance. It should give an opportunity for girls, staff and parents to see the creative work of the girls and also how they can tackle a practical problem in a piece of reporting or design work.

It is our belief that the magazine is primarily for the girls and as such it should concern itself with the ideas, opinions and problems of the girls. So while the magazine can foster a school spirit we also want it to reflect the attitudes of the 60's, what girls think about school and the values of society rather than a stirring "call to duty". We would hate to think the magazine should be a chore or duty to read.

As we are a comprehensive school, we think it important to involve as many girls as possible and to include the work of girls of varying ability and age groups. We have been more interested in content and creativity

than in correct prose. This is not to say we undervalue competence but we feel that competence without content would not be the right priority.

Inexperienced as we are in this sort of venture we have learnt as we went along. We found that it is no good waiting for contributions to fall into our lap after making a few announcements in Assembly. In fact, we did not really get down to the job successfully until last Christmas. We also found that studying a subject in depth, like the questionnaire, is both more difficult and more hard work than we had supposed. This we take to be a valuable lesson. Also of great value was the way in which some things were mutually stimulating between departments, for example, the idea for the War article came from an English lesson, the Art department then had girls working on drawings which were used to stimulate girls to write about them. Girls from the Commerce department were very helpful both in the article on this department and in typing all the material for the printers.

We are aware of occasional inaccuracies in punctuation, spelling and grammar but to see and correct every mistake in proof reading is difficult, and once typeset, can only be corrected by delays of several weeks and further expense. Readers of the 'Guardian' will know this does not mean we are illiterate.

We have tried to tackle the magazine in as fresh a way as we are able and hope that you all will find things to interest and stimulate you.

Hello and Goodbye



Dear Girls of Sydenham School,
Saying good-bye is a very sad business, as I found to my cost when I left Abbey Wood, but I had the consolation and excitement of knowing that I was coming to Sydenham and this has given me great joy.

The friendliness, courtesy and obvious hard work of so many of you have impressed me and I am delighted with the way in which you have so quickly made me feel at home. All this is a great tribute to Miss Love, who has done so much for Sydenham, and has helped you to gain the reputation of being one of the leading comprehensive schools of London. As the days have passed, I have become acquainted with the traditions and customs of the school and I feel that we have a wonderful foundation upon which to build. Our task now is to develop the interesting schemes which have already begun in school, to continue to expand our well established Sixth Form, and above all, to press for more adequate and suitable accommodation for our senior girls. Good luck to us all working together in this new and exciting venture!

Yours sincerely,
Head Mistress.

18th June, 1968.

Yvonne B. Zackerwiche

The School has faced two serious losses this year. In July Miss Dumphreys left us on her appointment as Headmistress of Carshalton Girls' School. Her gentle and good tempered persuasiveness, her enthusiastic support of principles, and her business-like methods, are sadly missed in the present administration, though we still benefit, and shall continue to do so, from her important contribution to the development of the school.

The loss of Miss Love in April, when she left us to accompany her husband to Yorkshire (and to take up a post with Yorkshire Television herself) came as a great blow to all of us who have had the pleasure and interest of taking part in the reconstruction of the school over the last five years. Miss Love's genius created a system of delegated responsibility which made it an exciting and invaluable experience to work under her. The reorganisation of the school on a house and tutor group basis has contributed enormously to the welfare of the girls. The careful provision of courses designed to benefit girls of differing abilities and aims has given the senior school a sense of purpose reflected in the ever-growing numbers who elect to stay for a fifth, sixth, seventh or even eighth year. Above and behind all else, her unwavering pursuit of fundamental educational principles has guided the many changes of this period, and steered us through all the pitfalls of a time of evolution. Perhaps her greatest achievement lies in the acceptance by old and young alike that what has been done was right and inevitable.

We are fortunate to welcome as Miss Love's successor another great headmistress from a comprehensive school run, we believe, not so very differently from our own. The next few years are likely to prove crucial for schools like ours with large numbers of senior girls, and Mrs. Zackerwiche's experienced leadership will be of the very greatest value to us.

Cornered Males

Interviewed by Elisabeth Jones

Mr. Shiach Before we begin I would just like to say how wonderful, intelligent and attractive I am!

Lil What led you to become a teacher?

Mr. S. I always had a vague idea it was a pleasant job, you didn't have to sell your soul to business or industry, and anyway there are perks such as fourteen weeks holiday a year. It was nothing as high flown as a social conscience, that sounds so pompous and priggish, but I thought I could do some good. You have to make up your mind that you're never going to be rich; with my qualifications I could do many things which would be a lot more lucrative than teaching. I thought it to be an interesting job with lots of freedom.

Lil What do you think qualifies someone to be a good teacher?

Mr. S. There are so many ways of being a good teacher. I think someone who stimulates people to have original thoughts so they are able to think for themselves about their subject, or life generally, is a good teacher.

Lil Does a knowledge of psychology influence your approach to teaching?

Mr. S. Not really, but I try to get a positive reaction from my pupils. I would rather they dislike me than be apathetic.

Lil Does working in a girls' school influence the way in which you react to girls of school age out of school?

"Latter I'll kill you" Mr. Shiach shouted into Lil's microphone.

Lil Do your acquaintances react in any particular way when you tell them you work in a girls' school?

Mr. S. Yes, they tend to say "What the hell are you doing in a girl's school?" to which I reply "Why not?" Before I taught in a girls' school I thought I would find the female atmosphere overpowering and I was right. Probably the most difficult class I ever had was at a previous girls' school where the discipline was bad and you had to fight all the time to create a working atmosphere. With boys you can use the man to man approach, "Look son, if you don't belt up I'll knock your head off."

Lil Surely this could have been done in a girl's school?

Mr. S. No! Because I could not carry out the threat in a girls' school. Most girls see older males as figures of authority anyway.

Lil Are you aware of the difference in relationship between female staff and girls and male staff and girls?

Mr. S. You don't go around thinking you're a man in a girls' school all the time, after a few weeks you get used to it. Girls giggle a bit more than they would normally, they

are aware of you as a male creature whether you like it or not.

Lil Do you think you are accepted in the female community?

Mr. S. I should think I am accepted in the school as the man they love to hate. I don't mind that, I worked hard for that reputation for a long time.

Lil Does it heighten your misogynistic tendencies?

Mr. S. Yes, at times of course. I'm sure if you worked with a lot of men you would find them tiresome sometimes. When I come up against female triviality, the attention to trivial detail that some females go in for I tend to fulminate against women in general. I realise that this is irrational but we are all irrational at times. When you voice your opinions you can be accused of bullying and there is always the pressure of a woman bursting into tears. Not that that would stop me expressing my opinions.

Lil Do you find it easier to do drama with girls?

Mr. S. No, I much prefer working with a mixed cast. That is one of the reasons why I am going to Holland Park.

Lil It is rumoured that you are an inveterate cinemagoer. Is this all infantile obsession?

Mr. S. I don't think so, well you could say it was in the sense that it started in my early childhood when I spent a lot of my time at the cinema. I still do, but it is not infantile because the cinema to me is a serious art form just like literature or the theatre. For me the modern cinema is more vital and alive than the modern theatre.

Lil As a well known collector of pictures (sniggers from Mr. S.). What are your views on the visual arts?

Mr. S. I'm purely ignorant but wouldn't classify what I like. I have a terribly naive approach I know but my favourite painters are Van Gogh, Degas and the Die Brucke school. I like David Cowley, I have to say that because I bought one of his lousy sketches. I like colour used vividly. I think to some extent painting should make some kind of comment on life. Van Gogh does that even when painting a vase of daffodils.

Lil Do you think that music can all be judged at the same level?

Mr. S. No! When I'm drunk I might enjoy the Rolling Stones but still don't put it on the same level as Beethoven, but when I'm sober I realise that the Rolling Stones are rubbish, or at least purely ephemeral. You can have a good pop song and a bad one, but even a good pop song has limitations by its very nature and, because of these limitations, I like some of the things the Beatles do, but

Benjamin Britten is far more relevant to me.

Lil Do you think your political opinions have any influence on the way you teach?

Mr. S. I cannot say. I think everybody's individual attitudes influence the way they teach, what one teaches is coloured by one's personality. I can teach and have enthusiasm for right-wing authors. My favourites, Eliot, Lawrence, Henry James, Faulkner, are all right-wing authors.

Lil Do your political opinions also colour your attitude to the arts?

Mr. S. Oh yes! Well I mean - yes. You cannot judge a work of art without judging to some extent what it says. However I try to suspend my disbelief when Faulkner displays a paternalistic attitude to the Negroes in the deep South. I disagree with him entirely but still think he is a great writer.

Lil Do you think the Scottish Nationalists will really do anything for the Scots or is it an emotional step backwards to tribalism?

Mr. S. It is all an emotional step backwards but there is not much harm in that. Tribalism is a loaded word. Is the Kenyan wish for National identity a bad thing? I don't think so.

Lil Is Nationalism a force for good?

Mr. S. Can be, often is. There's nothing wrong in a country finding its own identity, we shouldn't all be the same. The English have a national identity and they cling to out-dated traditions in a way that no other European country has.

Lil Are there any other reasons for your leaving?

Mr. S. I want to teach in a mixed school. I've had enough of teaching just girls, not that I've been unhappy but in the four years I've been here I've done everything I really can do.

Elizabeth What did you do before you became a teacher?

Mr. Perrett I've been working for about sixteen years and about every two years I've had a change of direction. I started in the City as a general office clerk, in one of these very old wrought iron buildings. One of those places where we had great high office desks with huge bottles of ink that you pour into little ink wells, and reminds you of Scrooge and Bob Cratchet. I used to wear a dark suit, nothing else was allowed. I was working for a firm of timber agents. I had a slight creative bent even in those days and I used to take home sheets of hard board from which I cut out squares and made static robots. I was all set to go to the advertising department of the firm but the R.A.F., or rather National Service, wanted me. At the tender age of eighteen I was whisked off to Blackheath in three feet of snow to be graded, tested and marked with a little lion. There I was as pure as the driven snow on my way to Cardington not realizing what National Service involved. I don't think I was particularly good at being in the Air Force. I had a very inquisitive personality and was always getting into trouble, but I was never charged, I evaded going behind bars because I considered that as losing. I always used to break rules, often not meaning to. I remember once a little chap in braces knocked my kit off the table in our billet and I sort of picked him up and shook him and called him a lot of names and he turned out to be one of these important corporals that rule your life and I was a bit purged after that. From Cardington we went to West Kirby for nine weeks which was rather like hell especially for some one like me who isn't very receptive to being told what to do. I spent every night of the nine weeks in the cook house. I went to the cinema once at New Brighton and met this beautiful young lady who worked in a biscuit factory, she appeared like an angel in disguise. There was I, six foot tall, thin as a bean pole with my shaven head clutching the four and sixpence I had to spend in my right hand and my other hand in hers. I enjoyed feeding her hotdogs and Pepsi. We went down to the sand dunes to watch the sea coming in and I thought that was "very lovely". This happened during my last weekend of square bashing and I never saw her again.

Lil Was the Air Force any use to you?

Mr. P. If I'd gone abroad the National Service would have been more use to me. The business of having to do something you don't want to is good for you; it wasn't

much further from National Service to war time, when you are put on a ship and you are fighting for your life. It shocked me to find how little control we had over our lives. I used to think in some ways it was a good thing to be disciplined and sometimes a bad thing. I don't like to be disciplined from outside. I like to discipline myself. The travel part of the services is the best thing in National Service but when I went to see if I could go abroad the only two places were Cyprus where they were chucking bombs at each other and Christmas Island, which was not very Christmassy at the time, as they were letting off atom bombs. I thought there was no place like home. By the time I was ready to leave the Air Force I had come to some sort of compromise and was doing quite well. When I left the Air Force I thought every thing was going to be milk and honey. I went back to my timber-merchants firm where the director said they would find me a hole some where. I said I did not like holes very much and found a job in an insurance brokers' office. At first I was a complete city gent until I decided to have my own little rebellion and I was the only one out of 400 males to wear a light sports suit and big floppy bow-ties and they thought I was mad. They only put up with me because I used to write articles and poems for the office magazine. The work was boring and you could go on doing the same job but get paid a little more each year. I could not take it any more. I had been running a Jazz Club with a friend since I left the R.A.F. That was fun, starting it from scratch and doing, the advertising. We used to cook hot-dogs for about fifty every Friday night. It was rather like a combination of a transport café and an approved school. The people who came to the club were not very refined, we used to get some violence to add a bit of spice to life. I needed an easy job in the city so I could sleep after the weekend.

Lil When did you first think of going to Art School?

Mr. P. I had been doing art work for some time. I did large humorous posters for the club of people playing weird instruments like Emmett constructions. A friend of mine who could not draw got into Art School so I thought "Well if he can, so can I". Next thing I was chomping my work around and that was that. It was different in those days, a lot of odd characters did go to Art School, actually some were very good people, very talented. I think that Art School was in some ways more fun, I am not sure if it should be, but now many Art Schools are more like Art factories. I stayed at Art School for four years. When I left Art School I thought I would teach. I went for an inter-

view and got a job, but there was some County Hall mix-up and I got very irate about the procedure and did not bother looking for another teaching job. For the next three or four years I did an incredibly varied amount of jobs. I have worked in my time as a laundry man, a park labourer, a Wimpy Cook, a tree-pruner, a temporary postman, a poll clerk and a crumpet-packer. I worked nights packing crumpets. It was like an avant-garde play, the people who worked there were completely mad, every one, half were criminals, the rest were like film freaks. Every half an hour we changed our job, there was fast-packing, slow packing and then rest. Every change round we had a cup of tea. I stayed there about ten weeks. I earned a lot of money but nearly went mad and was quite glad when the crumpet season finished. Crumpet packing is a closed season.

I then worked in the parks to commune with nature while I sorted my problems out. That suited me as I was painting a lot then; I finished early and went home and did a lot of work. Then I went to Appledore in N. Devon and I lived amongst the natives, working on the docks. All good proving grounds to become an art-teacher? People might think after doing these jobs I could never hold down an art job. I think it was a question of adaptability. Many people cannot adapt themselves to do other sorts of jobs and I believe this is bad.

I think it would be better if there were a period between college and teaching. I am sure it is good for people who are going to deal with people, to know a little about people. What is valuable about my experience in working outside is that I have had relationships with a wide cross section of people. You have to learn to get on with these people and meet them on their own ground. When I was a tree-pruner I was first and foremost a tree-pruner not a frustrated art-teacher. I was there to do the job I was doing and tried to do it as well as I could. When I worked in Devon the work nearly killed me but I was not satisfied until I could do as much as everyone else. When I could do that I could then talk about things like art. The moment I proved I could do the job they would listen to me on my ground. I think this could apply to teaching, before you can get a subject over, you have got to have grounds on which you can communicate with the people you are talking to.

Lil Does it show that some teachers have a narrow range of experience?

Mr. P. Yes I think it does, I feel that certain members of

the profession I've met are not going to understand certain variations in human behaviour. I think I have a good idea of how people who work with their hands think. They have a lot more to them than people often realise. Many of the workers I've met have been great individuals. They have found a job they like and they are happy doing it in spite of the repetition.

Lil Since teaching art is not a repetitive job do you find it more satisfying?

Mr. P. Yes I do, art is a subject in which you can cover a vast amount of ground and it can be approached in so many different ways. When you teach you can explore these various avenues of thought. It is a good way of exploring areas which, as an artist, one cannot possibly do; a person who is going to paint, unless his work is going to change all the time, falls in to a certain way of working and carries on like that, but when you teach you can broaden your own as well as the kids' outlook towards the subject.

Lil What do you think is the value of teaching art to school girls?

Mr. P. I worked at a lot of jobs where art has had no value at all to the people working there. I think to the kids what they are putting into it is what is of real value. It's the creative process, irrespective of whether they find it easy to be creative or not. I think nowadays people kick the chance to be creative. Because of things like T.V., books, films, and other leisure activities the creative instinct in people has become less, and if we can stimulate the ability in a person to create something I think this is very good. I read somewhere, 'that after survival comes creativity' and I like this idea.

Lil Did you have any misgivings about teaching in a girl's school?

Mr. P. Only in the way that I had not had much contact with girls between the ages of twelve and eighteen. I was very doubtful about how I would get on with someone of say, fifteen, which is a rather difficult age for girls and I wasn't sure how I would deal with them and that frightened me a bit. The idea of thirty fifteen year olds giving out at me worried me quite a bit. I think that teaching girls is a very good test for one because this idea of a man's life in a girls' school being all "wine and roses" isn't true, you are judged on your ability to handle the situation and that's that. It is up to you as a teacher and if you don't get over to them you have had it.

Lil Do you consider yourself a nonconformist?

Mr. P. To a certain extent yes. I don't like to accept things just like that. I like to chew things over. I have in my time been a terrible rebel, even a sort of angry young man, especially after I left the Air Force. I'm not a nonconformist to the extent that when I've got a job I will not conform to what the job demands. I would only rebel if the people above me acted irresponsibly. I've had a lot of jobs but never been sacked, I've always done my job well. I like individual nonconformism, in this form nonconformism can be of use to society, but if a person says he is not going to conform and then fifty thousand people do exactly the same thing it is of no use at all. I like to do my rebelling on my own.

Africa



Gambia was our first view of West Africa and consequently made the deepest impression. It is a very poor country, this is illustrated by the fact that until recently there were only two doctors and two secondary schools between 300,000 people. Owing to the lack of ante-natal facilities and an ignorance of hygiene there is a high death rate among babies and young children. In spite of such setbacks the people were extremely friendly. Their nature was reflected in their music and dancing in McCarthy Square and by their eagerness to sell us souvenirs which was to be noticeable in all of the countries. The one strange unexpected factor was the abundance of shops selling American goods. It was awkward explaining that we had not come several thousand miles to buy one very nice pair of genuine American shoe-laces. We had here our first glimpse of an African beach, great rollers could be seen in the distance and the water gently lapping on golden, untrodden sand. Palm trees fringed the beach which was occupied by the old straw hut. This paradise was far removed from the poverty we had passed on the way.

Ghana presented an entirely different picture. Railways and a large harbour at Takoradi enabled this country to exploit their resources and in time this has improved their whole standard of living. Yet the road of progress has not been an easy one for Ghana. Political upsets have quietened the lively nature of the people who appear less free and easy than the Gambians although far more gay than the majority of English people. Our longer stay of two days meant that we saw far more places including the Volta Dam, Akasombo Village and the main towns of Accra, Tema and Takoradi. We saw a Durbar, which is a colourful gathering of the sub-chiefs and followers who come to greet the Paramount Chief and Queen Mother who play an important part in tribal rulings. Wherever we went building projects were underway and on the straight modern roads we passed the packed "mammy wagons" bearing such warnings as 'Prepare to Meet Your God' and 'Death is round the corner'. European influences had obviously been at work since every town possessed its Paradise Saloon and advertisements for Tuskar Cigarettes.

Poverty still exists whilst Nkrumah's massive home Peduasi Lodge lies empty and wasted. We visited the fifteenth century Portuguese castle at Elmina which is a reminder that the countries of West Africa are not as new as is often thought. The town of Elmina itself was horrible and probably the dirtiest we saw, yet outside was some of the most beautiful countryside and beaches that we had seen.

Anchored off Freetown we could see the mountains behind the city that give Sierra Leone its name (Lion Mountains). Our welcome was more docile than our previous ones but the beautiful flower-covered gangway made up for this. Iron ore and diamonds are the backbone of the economy here. We were to see a diamond exhibition at the hotel where the Sierra Leone Dance Troupe performed for us. Our day in Freetown was packed solid. We dived into the first market we saw and emerged with baskets of all descriptions, spears, horns, bags, drums, carvings, in other words, the lot. Our last visit was to Fourah University, the highest point over Freetown and the climb was too much for one bus which broke down.

Our final port of call was Dakar the capital of Senegal. We were taken on a guided tour which included the market, the first undercover one we had seen. Senegalese women put on their best to go to market. They wear a headscarf and dress, which most likely comes from Japan, and their coiffure is shaped into two horns, one over each ear. Our guide managed to get us into a mosque so we were able to go up the seven storeys of the tower to get a wonderful panoramic view. The modern buildings conveyed how Europeanised the town was. This part of Africa has been in contact with France for 250 years. We saw the government buildings, geological museum and a museum containing exhibits of their culture and of course the market where we bargained until we were satisfied. The afternoon was spent on an Island in the bay called Gorée. On it is an open prison which was once the slave house, but we were not in an exploring mood and so we just lazed on the beach after a short stroll round.

On this note our brief but fascinating voyage to West Africa ended.

WAR WAR WAR WAR WAR

Out there, don't know why,
Killing,
Afraid to die.

Out there, there's no day,
no night.
To stay alive soldier,
You have to fight!

You're young, you're just a kid,
Not old enough to vote,
But old enough to kill.
Christine Madden. 5S4.

WAR

WAR WAR

WAR





Illustration by Jaqueline Webber, 5th year

The people shiver as the planes
go by,
Somewhere, somebody is going to
die.
Tell the heroes of the war what they have done.
Tell the brain power of the war what they have done.
Tell the children of the war what they have done.
But hadn't someone better tell the dead what they
have done.

Elizabeth Jones. Seventh year.

"Till Death"

by Sandra Adams. 7A.

'ere, d'you see that pitcher in the paper? That one of that feller all shot up, rite in the middel. I reckon that bloody 'orrible puttin' fings like that in the Sunday paper. I mean yuh don't wan'na read fings like that wiv yer dinner do yuh? I reckon someone oughta complain abaht it, bloody well puttin' 'orrible pitchers in the papers. Yuh could see it all where it 'ad ripp'd 'is arm open, an' 'is leg! Makes yuh fill bleedin' sick dun it. Ah mean, it ain't our bleedin' war is it, ain't got nuffin' to do wiv us 'as it. Eres nuffin ah can do abaht it if a load o' bleedin' coons wanna start fighting' each uvver. Ah reckon they oughta get on wif it, ain't aur look aht.

Illustration by Renate Kluge, 5th year





Illustration by Sandra Loughtey 5th Year

Sorrow!
From death
Death from War
War from conflict between knowing men
Ripped reeking piles of men
The debris from this game they play
A woman's hand, a child's tortured body
A man lying next to the dead child's toy.
And all we know is two kids on a bus

Hit by napalm and sent here for sympathy
For sympathy
Not apathy
Which is all we seem to give
Except of course the pretence to care
And that we give to save our faces
They're born, They die,
We live.
by Suzy Way. Seventh year.



In front of the live hero the dead one
 Begins the long rot
 From the twisted fall of his bullet death
 Into the blueness of no sun
 For his eyes or mind
 Only into his broken flesh
 And his drying blood in the ground.
 by Judy Kelly. Seventh year.

Ceaseless, futile, raging
 Like a decaying tooth, war
 Continues. The battle is for
 What?
 Freedom, wealth, nothing at all
 Deaths double, injuries even more
 Soldiers sing their merry tune
 Until it happens!
 What?
 A prisoner of war they become
 Or lie, decaying in a swampy hide-out
 Ridden with bullets, unable
 To tell their tale to anyone
 Or perhaps they wouldn't want to!
 by Rona Pratt. 6L.

Illustration by Christine Reeves, 6th year
 Illustration by Pamela Belleguelle, 5th year



Everyone knows this is a war. Well what's she doing, standing there with that half terrified, half reproachful look? Tell me that. Don't these locals know when to clear out - I mean, they had fair warning didn't they. What's she moaning about? WHAT! Her home? What does she expect us to do - drop mortars everywhere except HER little shack. Insanitary looking things too - should be glad of the chance to rebuild. Whad'y'mean she's lived there all her life? This is a WAR, man, not army training manoeuvres with red tape everywhere, and local residents fussing over allotments - get that into her! There are principles here, man, and her bloody shack's not one of them, its her we're trying to liberate is'nt it. Of course they hated the old regime, if she thinks I'm going to hold up the offensive because of her bits and pieces . . . get back to your post, man . . . and get her OUT OF HERE!

C. A. Reeves. Sixth year.

The tumult ceases all is done
And now The question - who has won?

The mind of an ordinary man,
Brainwashed to kill.

A man standing by himself
What will happen to him I wonder.
His eyes bound, his mouth gagged.
So he stands there without a sound
Waiting perhaps for the firing squad.
He stands with agony in his face.
What has he done to deserve this.

Denise Hibble. 5S4.

Blinded by a white rag,
Dumb by another one,
Why? and for what?
He has been fighting
Caught by the enemy
He is standing not knowing
Where he is,
What will they do to him,
What is it all for.

Terisa Williams. 5S4.

Illustration by Rosemary Sullivan, 3rd year
Illustration by Judith Floyd, 6th year





Bang dead
 Bullet dead
 Shot dead
 Dying dead
 Napalm dead
 Man dead
 Child dead
 Doesn't anyone know what it means
 DEAD.
Elizabeth Jones. Seventh year.

The Battle Ground
by Oya Asiz. 4S3.

I hear those naked drums beating in my head,
 Cold and black as they untruthfully cry,
 They beat out to give the news of death,
 They sigh, and they lie, as they die,
 A sparkle of light is what I see across the field;
 A light that blissfully shines so high,
 But looking at my eyes that mournfully yield
 It cries, as it lies when it dies.
 My hand reaches out to pick the pieces off the ground.
 I forget everything and just let the world go by,
 The smell of death runs joyously around,
 And it flies, and it cries, then it dies.
 I see myself as the brave soldier once again,
 The memory goes round and tears fill my eyes.
 Slowly but surely I feel a hurting pain,
 And it dies, and it dies, and it dies.
 The bodies laying on the ground stare up at me.
 A bright star fades away shyly in the sky,
 Everything shouts as if to say "set me free!"
 And I cry, and I cry, and I cry.
 The battle ground, the dead, the war unwon,
 Witnessed by the fading stars above,
 One crying, shameful heart of a man,
 Full of pain, full of hurt, full of love.
 One field, one star, one soldier late for war.
 One army of enemy triumphantly march afar,
 One gun, one man who failed to hear their call.
 And I cry, and I cry and I cry.

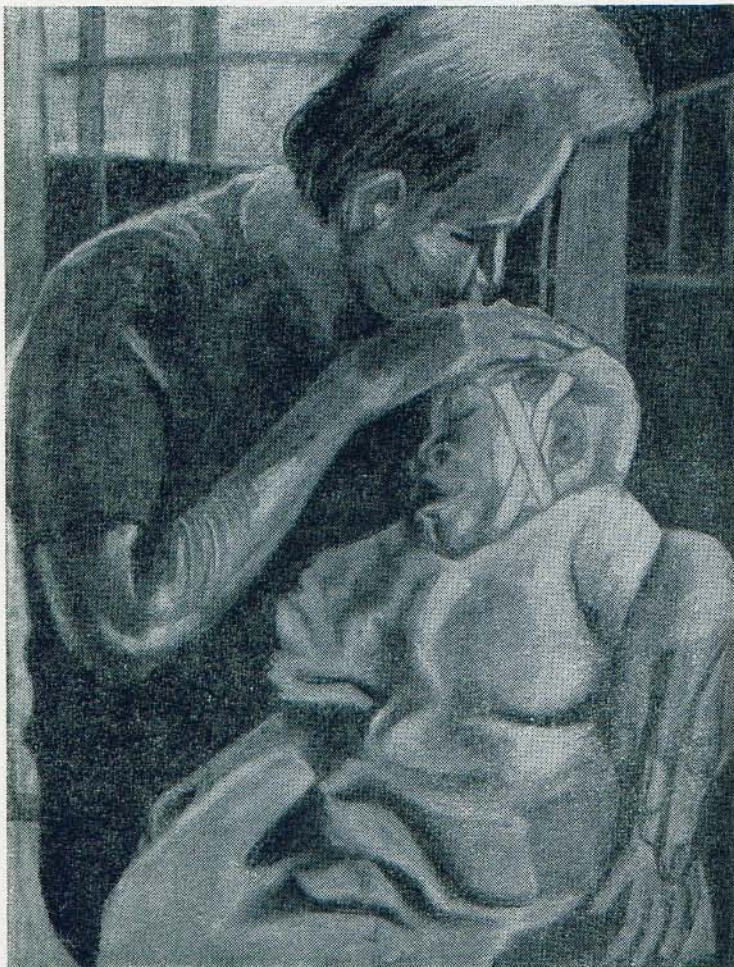


Illustration by Sylvia Lamb, 6th year
 Illustration by Lucy Painter, 5th year

Little Man

Susan Lipton.



Once upon a time, in a big white house, lived a little man, with a lot of power. He had power over everyone, and by one press of a button he could order people to carry out his slightest wish. There were a lot of these buttons, arranged on a big machine, and all except one were coloured white. The exception was red and had a dial around it, and was different because when pressed, it didn't summon his butler, his wife or even his selected Party delegates. In fact, Little Man, didn't really know what would happen if he pressed that button; he only knew, that when the electrician had installed the machine he had said that the red button wasn't to be pressed unless his little world became too much for him to take.

Often, as Little Man, sat wondering what to do about the ever-increasing number of complaints that he always had to read while eating his breakfast, and more important the indigestion they invariably give him, he contemplated pressing the button just to see what would happen, you understand.

One day, instead of getting an ordinary letter of complaint in the post he received one from the other country, saying that they were fed up with Little Man's cheating and lying, and that they were coming to sort him out, just as soon as they had got enough men together. "Right!" thought Little Man "I'll direct the arrow on the dial towards their country and then perhaps that will put a stop to their nonsense."

No sooner had these thoughts been thought, than they were front page news in every newspaper in the country. And no sooner had they been printed than arose storms of protest from everyone. Shouts of "Don't do it", could be heard all over the country, as it seemed that everyone but Little Man knew what the red button was for.

But as is usually the case, all that the protests did was to annoy Little Man, who was determined that as he was Little Man with a lot of power, he would not be told what to do; and anyway he was dying to see what all the fuss was about, and what would really happen if he pressed the button.

So up he got from his throne-like chair, moved over to the machine, stretched out his little hand, and pushed the button.

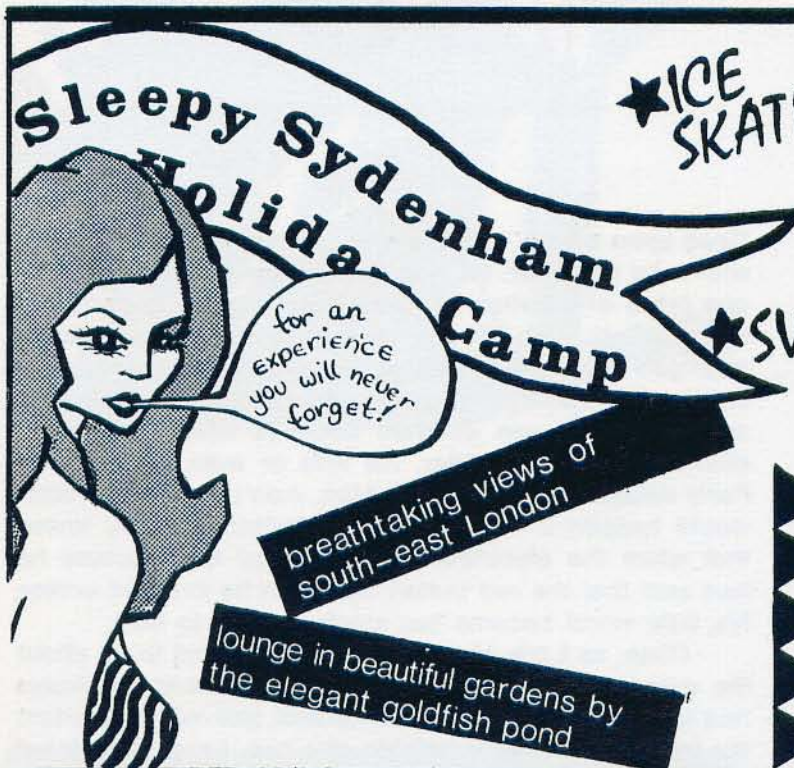
What a shame! Little Man never did know what happened, nor anyone else for that matter, for that was the absolute end of everything.

Sydenham Sell-out

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says Angela Higginbottom
WALTZ CHAMPION &
CAPTAIN of AYLWARD
HOUSE FORMATION TEAM





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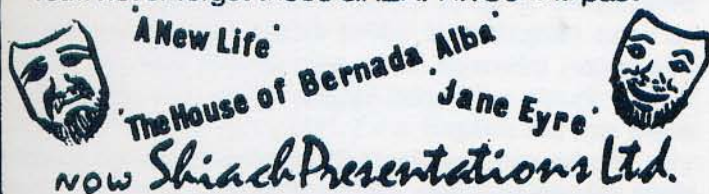
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Minis in the Mountains

Extracts from Swiss Journeys.



Illustrated by Jane Grey

I have never taken a test which lasted so long before. It lasted three hours, but this was mainly because there were twenty-four people taking the test and each one had to do seven different items.

We were all very nervous at first, but we started with the easiest things, which gave us time to get over our nervousness before tackling the more difficult things. We were given a number to wear, like the numbers worn by skiers in the Olympics. This made us look, even if we did not feel, like experienced skiers. I am glad to say that we all passed, in spite of all the fears we had. We were each given badges and cards which proved that we had taken and passed the first skiing test. Now the eight girls from this school who took the test are very proud to display their skiing badge amongst their collections of prefect, representative and other assorted badges.

With one lurch the télécabine was off. The sensation of rising so slowly was almost unbearable, but the magnificent view was worth all of the uncomfortable feelings. As the small, round car moved upwards the whole of the village could be seen. On the slopes below, green, brown pine trees broke the monotonous whiteness of the snow. Up on the peak, a small, grey stone building could be seen, the télécabine lurched in, and I climbed out of the swinging bubble.

On the Cross Channel boat we met some Italian students, who were returning to their home country. Veronica began the conversation by betting one student that if he went to the bow, his precious souvenir, an English Top Hat, would blow overboard. He was full of confidence that this would not happen. On reaching the furthest point towards the bow, we waited anxiously for the great moment. I decided to relieve the tension by offering round a bag of 'humbugs'. Several moments later it happened, an extra heavy gust of wind followed by a shower of cold salty water sent us all into shrieks of triumph or dismay, whilst the previous owner of the magnificent topper, begged the boat to be stopped and the lifeboats to be manned. Both requests were denied. The deprived owner would not be consoled by us, instead he continued to wail that life would mean nothing without his English topper.

The village of Champéry is situated high up in the mountains in a valley. It is rather small but it has everything you could think of. The shops are well equipped and the shop assistants try their best to understand you, they help you with great enthusiasm to choose the right things to buy. I used to love walking in Champéry just to look at the shops and what they contained. The shop assistants never minded you having a look around their shop, even if you had no thought in your head to buy anything.

The boys and girls of Champéry do not go to school on a Thursday, they go on Saturday instead. That is because Saturday is considered a dangerous day for children to be running around the street as it is so busy, and indeed they are right. As there are not many pavements, you have to walk in the road, which is only big enough to take one line traffic.

To get to the top of the mountain called Planachaux for our skiing lesson, we had to go up in a télécabine. The télécabine, a thing like a bubble car without wheels and seating for two, was carried along on a thick cable. The first time I stepped into one, I thought I'd never get out at the other end, my head being filled with breaking cables and avalanches. As we set off in the télécabine, it jogged a little but as we got higher it became steady. As I reached the top of the mountain. I had forgotten all about breaking cables and avalanches, and I was thoroughly delighted with the mountain ride.

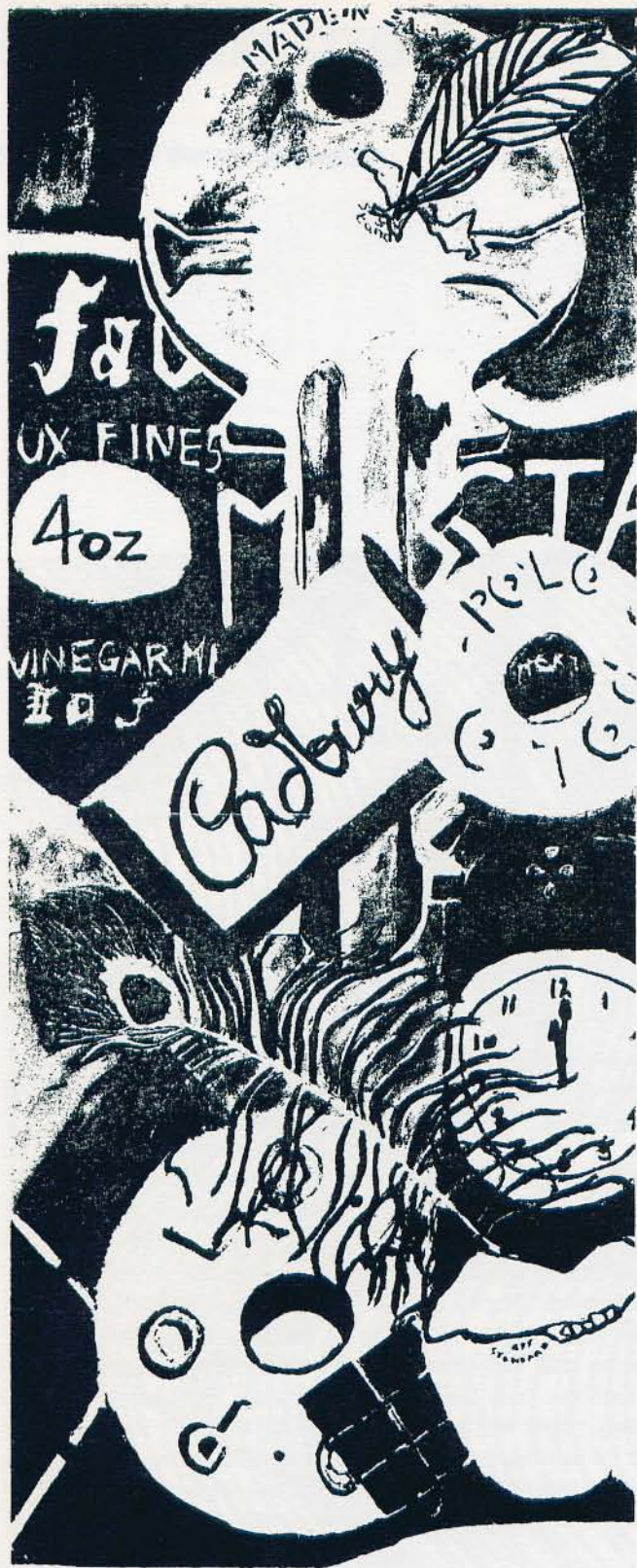
The mist travels along, cutting off the village from the top of the mountains. Sometimes it reaches high and when you look around you from the top of the mountain, there is nothing. Just how I imagine it to be like when the end of the world comes.

The most memorable incident of my holiday in Switzerland was the day I lost my ski. After having spent two days looking for it, I had to admit to Eric, the proprietor's son, that it was lost. I had, however, found another lost ski, but it was old and in bad condition, no substitute for a practically new one. I drew a diagram to show where I had lost it, but since then we have had no news that it has been found. Meanwhile, my friend and I have been cleaning cars to raise the money for the new ski.

The most unusual and different thing in Switzerland is the shops. They are much better than English ones as anything you buy is wrapped up in beautiful paper and not just in an old, brown paper bag. This struck me as quite a novelty and I am sure if the English did this there would be more pleased customers. The owners are very patient, helpful and understanding and they display their goods in beautiful ways.

We were given queer looks when we wore mini skirts.





My heaven and My Hell

The smells of french mustard, of wax and of chips,
 The feelings of power and of love would all mix!
 The tastes of plain chocolate, of cheese and of mint
 The textures of satin, of soap and of lint.
 The sounds of thunder, of sighs and of sea
 These things all make my heaven for me!
 The smells of moth balls, of rust and of clay,
 The feelings of hatred, that go with dismay,
 The tastes of blood, of egg and last licks,
 The textures of birds, of glass and plastics.
 The sounds of clocks, of snores and of a key
 These things all make my hell for me!

by Janet Maloney. Third year.

Noises

The clattering of the wheels
 And the rumbling and clanking in the far distance
 Changed.
 To the pounding, raging, booming sound.
 And the wheels went clickety-clack.
 And the grating of the points.
 The screech of well-timed brakes
 The shunting of the joints,
 Meant the train had stopped.
 The banging of the doors
 Came before the hiss and the whistle.
 And slowly, the fast express train moved away.
 by S. Ramjeet. Fourth year.

First Time Waves

Crashing waves, dashing waves, big cold smashing waves,
 Sighing waves, crying waves, heaven high flying waves,
 Like nothing we'd ever seen
 Like no-where we'd ever been.
 They carried us, deep down green or upwards heaven
 blue or to a gurgling, whirling, black unknown.
 We rode with each crash, with each splash, and down
 again to earth, just as the waves meet the shore.
 And again, and again, and again, we rise, we fly,
 we rise and fall, over and over.
 And this is only the first time
 And this is only the last time
 Our breath can be taken our imagination shaken
 by these waves.

Mr. Sunder
Christine Taplin.

A little pink man in a damp dark room
Banging on the Bean Can with a rusty old spoon
People downstairs begin to wonder
If everything's alright with Mr. Sunder.

Every morning, dead on eight,
He does his daily jump over the garden gate
People in the street stop and stare
But little Mr. Sunder doesn't care
All he does is laugh and jump some more
Then he starts a banging on a downstairs door!

"Who's that there?" the little lady cries
"It's your lover, my dearest" Mr. Sunder sighs
"Oh my dear, what can I do!"
She quickly phones the mental home and
they'll be round at two.

Poor Mr. Sunder feeling rather sad, begins to chew
His slippers, the only ones he had,
Sitting on the stairs as quiet as a mouse
As though he knew it was his last day in
the house.

Hearing the van coming up the drive
Poor Mr. Sunder decides to take his life.

People downstairs said they didn't hear a sound
When the policeman told them that they'd
found him on the ground.
"Jumped from his window" they all say
So now little Mr. Sunder has really gone away.

The New Acquaintance
Anna Fisher. Third year.

Ring - ring the bell,
I answer the door,
A man, so cold,
Dark glasses, pale raincoat.
So cold. "Come in", I say.
He enters, no smile.
"Board and lodging" he says.
So cold. "Come up" I say.
I show him the room.
He enters "how much?"
So cold. I tell him the sum.
He hands me the money,
No smile, so cold.

Stonehenge
M. Gibson. Third year.

They worked and they slaved they heaved and they
strained those ancients of long ago.
They dragged those great rocks for mile after mile.
By use of their strength and their guile.
They brought them there, and left them there, in the
middle of the plain.
A desolate place, a lonely place, a place we call
Stonehenge.

There was an old lady called Wee,
Who had an addiction to tea,
She said, "LSD!"
That's nothing on tea,
So don't you start laughing at me!"
Anna Fisher. Third year.



A survey by Lindsay Robbins, Rita Westcock, June Marshall and Lorraine Birmingham.

It is often said we live in a permissive society and that there has been a degeneration in moral standards, particularly amongst adolescents. We decided to hold a survey in order to see if there is any truth in these statements and decided to investigate the beliefs of the 15-18 year old girls of this school from whom we took a sample of one in five.

The Church in the past has been the traditional arbiter of morals so one of the questions we asked was concerned with

Church Attendance

Percentage of girls attending church

Weekly	18.5%
Monthly	6%
Occasionally	28.5%
Never	47%

The reasons given for going or not going to church were complex and vary considerably. Belief in God was the most frequent reason given by those who go to church regularly and lack of belief the most frequent reason for not going, as would be expected. However not all those who go do so because they want to. 14% who go weekly are made to by their family. Family pressure has sometimes resulted in girls finding that they enjoy going and choose to go of their own accord. More than half of those who go monthly go because they belong to the Guides or Girls' Life Brigade, who require attendance at Church once a month. One of these said "I have to go because I belong to the Girls' Life Brigade but church is so boring". In spite of these qualifications the 24.5% who are regular churchgoers is a higher proportion than the national average.

Given the fact that 21% state that they do not believe in God, representing 44.5% of those who never go, this leaves a large proportion who do not go for other reasons. A considerable number of girls (13%) find the institution of the church unsatisfactory in many ways. Here are a selection of typical reasons given for not going to church. "Church is always dreary and cold", "It is boring, and they never do anything for people of my age". "The services are so morbid", "I find the services dull and very hypercritical", "I lost interest as nothing seemed to be real and factual or relevant to everyday life". Many girls obviously think that the Church is irrelevant, boring and out of touch.

The 54.5% who neither attend Church regularly nor express complete disbelief in God seems to indicate the extent of the apathy that exists towards religion today.

However, not all those who do not go are merely apathetic, some have positive opinions. "I do not attend because I believe God is just someone who has been built up in people's minds but doesn't exist. I suppose you could say he's a symbol of reassurance." For the majority of girls then, the Church does not play a significant part in helping to guide their ideas. Does school fare any better?

Guidance from School

We asked the girls if anything learnt at school in any subject had helped them to understand or make their mind up on various social and moral problems. Only 35.5% said they had been helped. The largest number of these mentioned Social Studies or Sociology (11.5%) and 9% mentioned R.I. It would seem that there is an imbalance between the amount of discussion on moral issues between the academic and non-academic girls in the fourth and fifth years. One fourth year academic girl made this point, "I don't think any of the above questions have ever been mentioned. That's why I think it would be a good idea to have at least one Social Study lesson a week".

It is obvious then that the school is not doing enough to help its pupils come to reasoned and balanced decisions on vitally important things. Where help was given it was invariably either through discussion or through the explanation of facts. We feel that it is quite likely that some of the girls who said they had not been helped on any of the issues which we deal with later in the questionnaire had some of the topics dealt with in subjects like History and English but had not related them to everyday life. This could be the consequence of putting everything we do into separate compartments or 'subjects' which rarely seem to have any relation to each other. The fact that many of the girls 'feel' they have not been helped indicates that schools are failing to educate in the fullest definition of the word.

The most obvious expression of religion in schools is Assembly

What do the girls think of this institution established by law?

No Assembly:	35.5%
Religious Assembly:	32.5%
Non-Religious Assembly:	32%

Although two thirds are in favour of some form of assembly it is equally obvious that a similar proportion are not in favour of assembly in its present form. Many of the girls find the religious ceremony unsatisfactory, even a number who believe in God and go to church. One such girl

believes assemblies should be non-religious "because the religious part seems insincere and forced on those who do not wish to participate and therefore spoil it for others, but I think assemblies are necessary to bring the school together." Typical of many remarks about assemblies are "Insincere", "Most people take no part at all", "People should not be forced to worship if they do not believe it's right", "A religious assembly forces people to hear rubbish from people who sometimes don't know what they are talking about", and, "there's no form of life in it, no interest". Some girls think that the Friday assemblies are more interesting and that more assemblies should be like them. Others felt that sometimes they should be religious and sometimes secular. Reasons given to continue religious assemblies mostly make the point that "Many people have no other connection with God or religion". We conclude that while there is considerable support for some kind of assembly, at the moment they are not meaningful to the majority.

What Kind of Marriage Ceremony?

There are three times in life when people who are normally apathetic to the church turn to it as an institution and these are the fundamental moments of birth, death and marriage.

Although only 24.5% go to church regularly, 78% would like to be married in church although only 13% mention religious reasons. Tradition was the most popular explanation, 31% of the girls gave this as the reason for wanting to be married in church. 14% thought a church wedding would make the occasion more memorable. The rational conclusion that a mockery is made of the whole ceremony by undertaking vows to someone you doubt exists, seems either not to occur or to be discounted. However it is rational in the sense that many react to the pressure of family or tradition. The wedding day is still obviously the 'big day' in most girls' lives, a day when the most insignificant seeming person is the centre of attention, and this means all the frills, the bridesmaids, the flowers and a church wedding. 13% say they would not feel properly married in a Registry Office wedding which seems to indicate that it is felt that such ceremonies are somehow sordid.

Clubs

We thought it would be interesting to see how girls respond to organized activities outside school and asked if any were members of clubs or organisations.

44% belong to clubs.

Girls who go to church regularly are far more likely

to belong to clubs than the others. 73% compared to 33.5% of non-churchgoers. However as the great majority of these girls go to clubs associated with the church, like the Guides, it is not clear whether they go to church because they are required to by their organization or because churchgoers are the more likely type of person to belong to these type of activities.

7% of the girls belong to Dance or Pop clubs (all of whom are non-churchgoers). It is perhaps surprising that in this era when teenage girls are supposed to think of nothing but 'pop' or boys that this percentage is considerably lower than the 27% who belong to clubs which have association with the church. We were also surprised to find that only 3.5% belong to sports clubs. Is it significant, we wondered, without suggesting everybody practises what they preach, that 11% of the girls thought that sex before marriage is always right compared to the 3.5% who indulge in sports.

Social Service

13% of the girls are involved in social work such as Task Force, helping spastics and looking after old people or young children. Churchgoers are far more likely to be engaged in this sort of activity, 24% compared to 9.5% of non-churchgoers. However the great majority of these girls are members of Task Force which is organized through school. This could suggest that while the church can provide the inspiration it does not provide the facilities within its own framework to do social work.

It might seem strange that we have not asked how many girls believe in God, but we felt that many girls would be forced to make a decision one way or the other which was not meaningful because of the variety of conceptions about who or what God is. Instead we decided to ask three questions about attitudes towards life and religion.

Does What Jesus Christ Said and Did Matter Today?

In answer to this question 54% said YES and 46% said NO. Many of the answers to this question seem rather surprising. Nearly half of the non-churchgoers recognised that Christ's teaching is relevant today, whereas nearly one quarter of the churchgoers do not think this is the case. One girl, who goes to church monthly and has been confirmed said, "It all happened in the past and not many people think about it anyway". In contrast one girl who does not go to church because it is boring said "Yes, because he died for us to make us good and truthful people". Not all the girls' answers were illogical, for example one girl said "What Christ taught had and still

has relevance today because his ideas were the basic philosophy of life. For His time he was, in fact, ahead of His contemporaries, preaching brotherly love to warring people whose justice was 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth'. This idea of brotherly love does not change with time and still holds good. Where I disagree with Christ's teaching is His belief in a God and that He was God's son". Several girls made similar points. 'The development of our society has been based on religious belief, mainly Christian'. 'He taught anti-violence and consideration for others'. Of course many churchgoers made their ideas clear, 'Because His teachings are relevant to life today and following His ideas is the only way that men will ever live in peace together'. Typical of many comments was, 'Nobody nowadays wants to know what a man who lived over 1,000 year ago said and did as times have changed. 8.5% of the girls thought along these lines.

In spite of the fact that a number of girls had obviously thought clearly about this question, the answers in general showed a great deal of muddled thinking. It would appear that the Church and school have failed to give any constructive teaching which young people can accept or reject.

'What Do You Think Happens When You Die?' was our next question. The largest group of answers fell into the 'Don't Know' category which we thought quite reasonable for this question. 28% said that nothing happens, we just rot, probably revealing the considerable extent of the decline in the influence of the Church on Society's thinking on this matter.

As many as 10.5% believe in reincarnation and we wondered whether the Beatles had influenced these girls with their interest in transcendental meditation and eastern religion. 19.5% believe in some undefined afterlife, this group was composed of similar proportions of churchgoers and non-churchgoers. We found the same feature with the 7.5% of those who believe in Heaven and Hell.

It seems that the Church's teaching appears somewhat muddled and incomprehensible to many young people, as the church-goers were just as confused about an afterlife as the non-churchgoers, 10.5% of them say nothing happens at death, 10.5% believe in reincarnation and 32% said they did not know.

What Do You Think Is Your Reason For Living? A large proportion of the girls said, 'to enjoy life'. The girls' own words explain the complex meaning of this phrase more clearly. 'To enjoy life to its full capacity and to find out

about things'. 'I was born and I enjoy being part of society'. 'I have been given the power to live and I treasure it'. One girl's answer probably expresses what many girls think: 'I never thought I had a reason for living except that I happen to be here, but I suppose it must be for the things that I enjoy in Life. I must have a reason otherwise I'd want to die and I don't. I look forward to marrying and having children'.

The next category of answers claimed there was no reason for living. Some made the point that they are not old enough to have found any particular reason for being alive. 'It's hard to say, I haven't found a reason yet, but I'm only 16'. Others were more fatalistic. 'There's no special reason why I was born' and 'I have no reason for living. If I had the courage I'd drop out now'.

In this question 31.5% of churchgoers say their reason for living is to fulfil God's will, or as one girl said 'to live in the hope of everlasting perfect life in God's new system of things'. The remaining girls think the reason lies in achievement and ambition. It would seem then that a fairly considerable number of the girls feel there is more to aim for in life than marriage and children.

The other part of our questionnaire endeavoured to find out what the girls feel about some of the important moral issues that confront us today. The letters A B C D E referred to the following when answering the questionnaire.

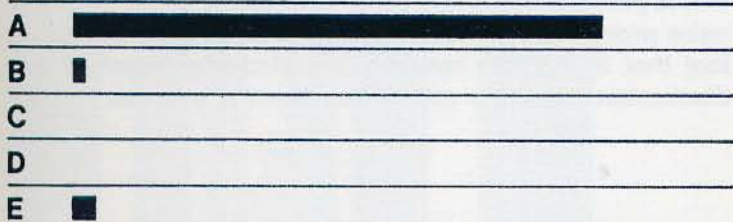
- A - It is always wrong.
- B - It is usually wrong but sometimes excusable.
- C - It is usually excusable but sometimes wrong.
- D - It is always right.
- E - I do not know.

We now list the eleven issues, beginning with the problems the girls feel most strongly about.

Percentage of girls answering A	
Nuclear Weapons	86.5%
War	77%
Stealing	68%
Colour Bar	57%
Capital Punishment	37%
Suicide	29.5%
Lying	28%
Drunkenness	24%
Gambling	18.5%
Sex before Marriage	17%
Smoking	9%

The things the girls are most against can easily be seen to be wrong and harmful, whereas problems like

To show the difference distribution of answers according to the nature of the question we will use three graphs.



This graph shows the broader range of answers to the "personal" type questions compared with the answers about Nuclear Weapons.

Smoking

We can see from this that 44% of churchgoers think that sex before marriage is always wrong compared to only 9.5% of the non-churchgoers. The churchgoers thought more strongly about it than gambling, drunkenness,

smoking, lying, capital punishment and suicide except for the 13% of them who stated that sex before marriage is usually excusable.

The majority of people who answered B C D E to this question showed by their remarks that it is not a question of right or wrong but of circumstances and individuals - "so long as the individuals have sufficient common sense to realize the obvious consequences, and precautions are taken". Another question that revealed a considerable difference of opinion between the churchgoers and non-churchgoers was that of Suicide.

Suicide

	Total	Churchgoers	Non-Churchgoers
A	29.5%	42%	25%
B	41%	40%	41.5%
C	7%	5%	7.5%
D	4.5%	0%	6%
E	18%	13%	20%

On the chart we see that 42% of churchgoers think that suicide is always wrong compared with 25% of non-churchgoers. This most probably reflects the Church's teaching of life being sacred and the gift of God. However, this still leaves 58% of churchgoers who are not prepared to say that suicide is always wrong. This question together with the question on Capital Punishment, Sexual Intercourse Before Marriage and the Colour Bar all had fairly high proportions of "Don't Knows".

Percentage of "Don't Knows" in the following questions.

Suicide 18%

Colour Bar 12%

Sex Before Marriage 19%

Capital Punishment 25%

As these subjects are mostly controversial, implying strong feelings either for or against, it would seem logical that a considerable proportion of people have not made up their minds between the various points of view.

One rather surprising result, we feel, was the answers to the question on "Lying" because it was one of the few questions where the non-churchgoers were more inclined to be critical than the churchgoers. Only 18.5% of churchgoers compared with 31.5% non-churchgoers felt that lying is always wrong. Perhaps the churchgoers are more likely to be charitable in certain circumstances in spite of the fact that the 10th commandment says 'thou shalt not bear false witness'.

Some of the answers given indicate that girls generally are not so concerned specifically about TRUTH but with the practical and personal implications of any question,

particularly the dislike of hurting anyone. Typical comments are, "sometimes it's necessary to be kind", "Everyone tells little lies and sometimes for the best".

The Colour Bar question is the next topic to be analysed. The results are very interesting in comparison with the National Polls that have been held recently.

Colour Bar

	Total	Churchgoers	Non-Churchgoers
A	57%	70%	53%
B	21.5%	16%	23%
C	6%	5.5%	6%
D	3.5%	0%	5.5%
E	12%	8.5%	12.5%

That 57% of all the girls feel that the colour bar is always wrong compared to 3.5% who think it is always right reveals that the girls of this school, and possibly the younger generation as a whole are more tolerant of the problem than their elders. A number of girls, especially those studying Religious Knowledge and Social Studies, said that they had been helped at school to understand the various attitudes and difficulties of the problem.

To conclude, we hope you have found the results of our questionnaire interesting and perhaps provoking. We most certainly found it both stimulating and surprising, for we think it is educationally important to have individual thoughts rather than taking the Younger Generation and generalising. Not everybody will agree with the conclusions we have drawn, but we have tried to avoid biased opinions by discussing the statistical evidence at committee meetings comprised of senior girls, members of the Religious Instruction, Sociology and English departments plus the Editorial board. The results of our questionnaire provoked lively discussion at these meetings and we feel that if you, the readers, are similarly provoked into discussion then this article has been a success.

sydenham
school
presents

march 20, 21, 22
7.30 pm
admission 2/-

Pride & Prejudice

School Drama

by Donald Shiach

Would it be true to say most people, outside those actively involved or related to the performers, approach school drama productions with a good deal of apprehension? We all have ghastly memories of boring evenings spent in uncomfortable, ill-ventilated halls trying to keep our eyes open so that we could see the incompetent production of some so-called 'classic' of the British theatre. The faults of productions like these are manifold; inaudibility of actors, long gaps between scenes while the unrehearsed stage staff scuffle to change ill-designed scenery, curtains opening and closing at the wrong time, lighting cues getting mixed up - these are but a few of the things that can, and often do, ruin a school production.

At Sydenham, we have tried to avoid these major faults. On the whole we succeeded. The plays produced in the last few years have been very well attended and generally well-received. We have had little trouble in filling the school hall on numerous occasions. School plays need an audience, so one very important factor in the choice of production must be potential 'box-office' appeal. The biggest success of past years was undoubtedly Mr. McNaught's musical "A New Life". "Jane Eyre", though far from being a good play, proved popular and attracted large audiences because the name of the novel was familiar, (only too familiar in some cases), to many parents and pupils. Similarly, "Pride and Prejudice" of last year is a novel that is known to many pupils. It is useful, then, to show them a stage adaptation, although, like "Jane Eyre", it was far from being a good play.

One major problem peculiar to girls' schools is the lack of good plays that are female-dominated. I am not absolutely hostile to girls donning male guise on stage but obviously it is to be avoided if at all possible. "The house of Bernarda Alba" by Federico Lorca, the Spanish dramatist, provided us with an all-female play of sufficient quality. It is a very "adult" play, hence the restricted audience. It demanded a range of emotional acting that is not often required in school productions. I would not pretend that the production was anywhere near perfect, because it is a very difficult play for school-girls. But it presented a challenge to both the performers and the audience. It was **not** just another innocuous school play mangling the "classics".

The object of a school play is to involve as many pupils as possible in a united creative effort. It also provides the school with an important school "occasion" when pupils, parents and staff can come together to enjoy the work of some of the members of the school community. "To enjoy", perhaps, ought to be stressed. I look forward to returning to Sydenham school to see future drama productions.

The
House Of
Bernada
Alba

6-7 July
7.30 pm
2/6

Profile on Commerce

by Vivian Amner

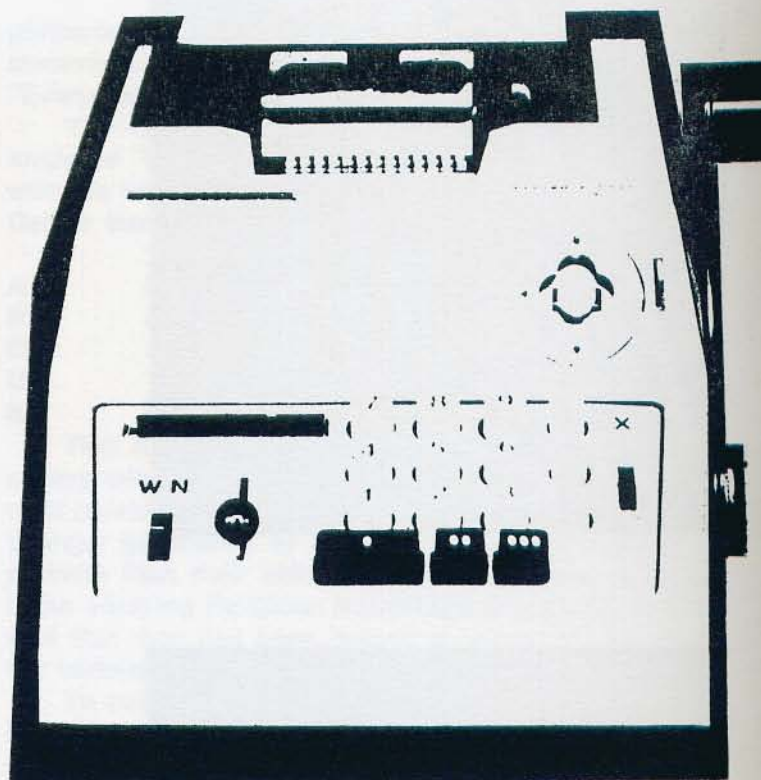


Too often both staff and pupils are not aware of what is going on in the rest of the school, outside their own departments or courses. We felt it would be a good idea to examine departments in the school to see what they are doing and how successful they think they are in achieving their aims. In the magazine this year we decided we would like to look at the Commerce Department.

These are the questions we decided we ought to ask.

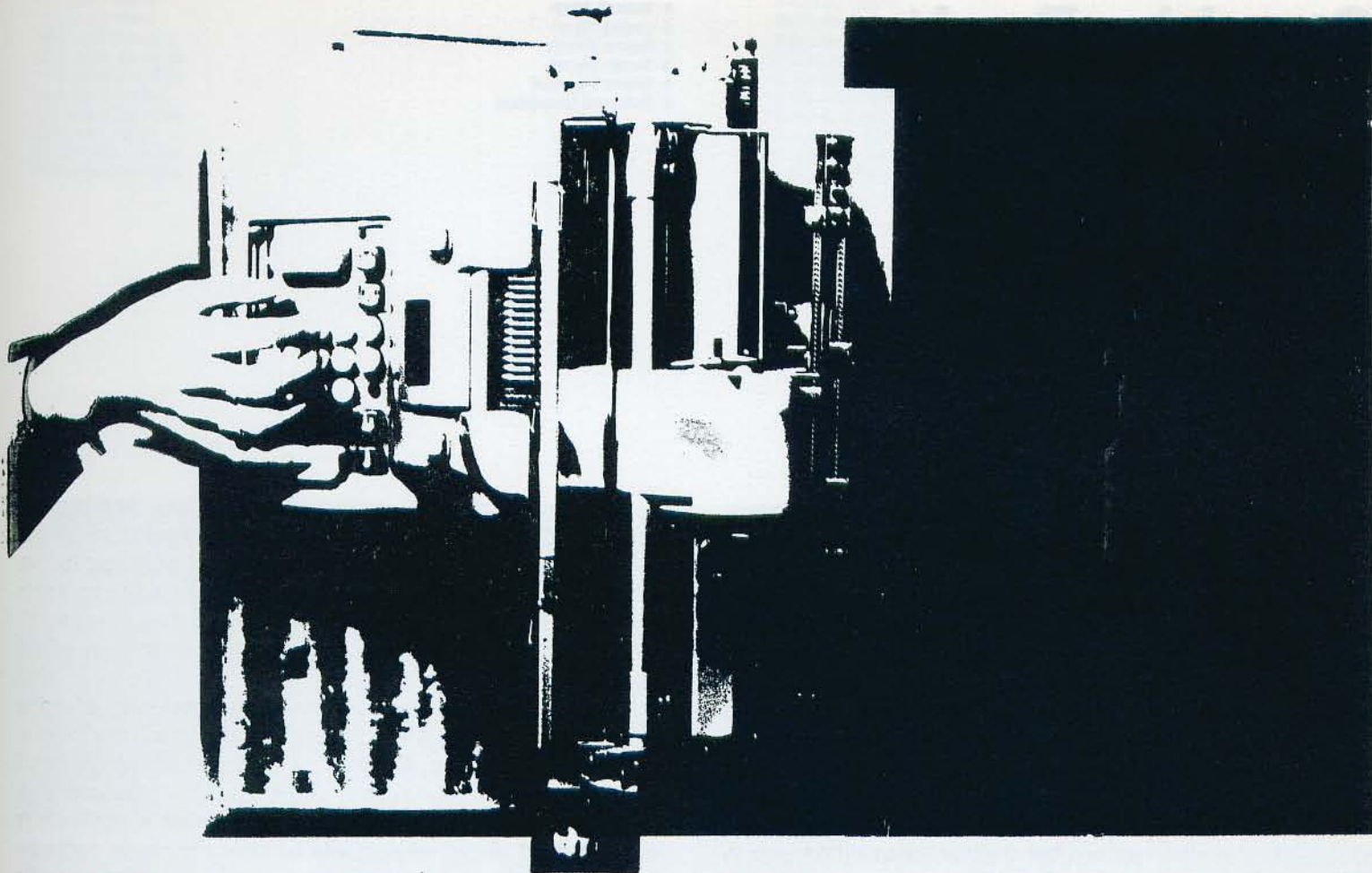
1. What sort of courses are available and what do these courses aim to do?
2. How does the Commercial Department ensure that its courses relate to every day business?
3. What kind of facilities do the Commercial Department have?
4. What do the girls involved think of the course?

Mr. Leech, as head of the Commerce Department, has to take into consideration, when framing the courses, trends in education. There has been a great increase of girls staying on voluntarily at school longer than the official leaving age, and this has led to a change in character of the 6th forms of our schools. Until recently, 6th form studies concentrated almost entirely on A level G.C.E. work. This particular development is having an influence on employment trends. It is now more difficult for a girl who leaves school at 15 to obtain a good office job, employers preferring older leavers who tend to be better qualified. In view of this it has been found necessary to widen the whole of the commercial course beyond just Shorthand and Typing, into the study of the whole field of office work and general education. At Sydenham, girls are encouraged to take a general course to the end of the



fifth year before embarking on a Commercial course, although a commercial course is open to the 4th years. The fourth year course includes Commerce, Office Practice, and a short course in typing. There are four courses open to 6th form girls, enabling those of different abilities and aptitudes to find a course most suitable to them. The senior secretarial course, which lasts for two years, enables girls to reach a very high standard in commercial subjects and also study a subject to A level. Here girls are taught, not just to be typists, but are given a sound basis in general education, as well as a study of commercial practice and its widest application. This may sound admirable in theory, but on the other hand would be of little value if it were not related to the needs of the outside world. The commerce department seems to have dealt with this problem in several interesting and effective ways.

Every year a number of girls take part in an office work experience course, which means they go to work in local offices for a week, in order to familiarise themselves with the methods, machines and atmosphere of a typical office. This seems to be a critical factor in giving girls confidence



when applying for jobs, and finding out if this type of employment is going to suit them. Another way in which the commerce department keeps in contact with outside office life, is by inviting people from government and business concerns to talk to, and advise, the girls. In April, there was an Institute of Office Management visit where representatives of many firms discussed with the Commerce Department Staff the methods and approaches to teaching commercial subjects. Mr. Leech has also taken the trouble to conduct a survey to find out what ex pupils of the Commerce Department have been doing since they left school. He asks what type of jobs they do, what type of machines they use, and what sort of positions they hold. Mr. Leech does this in order to obtain guidance in planning future courses.

The girls in this school are fortunate in that the facilities available are good and well planned. Apart from the three typing rooms, a large classroom has been converted into a Practice Office. This office is designed on a flexible plan basis so that equipment can be re-arranged to simulate various office conditions. It is well equipped with up to date machinery for duplicating, dictating and add listing, also filing cabinets, telephones and a switchboard.

On the whole girls think that the course is well thought out and the facilities provided very good. Criticisms are almost entirely concerned with details of the different subjects; for instance, one girl said:- "Economic lessons are of interest as we learn about every day matters that not only concern the individual but the country as a whole. However, the lessons would be even more interesting if it were possible for us to take a more active part. If debates were held and our own

opinions put forward this would make an interesting lesson and we would learn what other people think and feel about different circumstances."

Most of the girls agreed that taking part in a general education course up to the 6th year was a good idea. Certain girls felt that Business English lessons were unnecessary, particularly those who had taken a general education course, which meant they had done English for five years and had covered all the work earlier in the school. However, girls who had taken commercial training earlier in the school had found it invaluable, especially for composing and writing letters and writing out manuscripts.

Office Practice was another subject which aroused some criticism as some girls thought it was unnecessary to learn so much about machinery at school. With the varying types of office machinery in use today it would be highly unlikely that a girl would be able to enter an office and be put on a machine without having to receive some initial training and therefore the time taken up at school could be put to more profitable use.

It was agreed that one of the most useful ventures undertaken was the visit to firms and organisations such as the G.P.O., B.B.C., and large commercial firms where they are able to see for themselves the great possibilities open to them.

Our conclusion is that the girls of this school are fortunate to have such a well planned and well equipped Commercial Department which caters for girls of varying abilities and aptitudes. It is particularly interesting that the courses are so carefully related to the world outside school and is ready to adapt itself to changing demands and situations.

Graphic Design

1 Valerie Kent
2 Lesley Flynn
3 Susan Marsh
4 Susan Marsh
5 Shella Dymond
6 Suzanne Norredam

Two years ago Graphic Design was introduced as a specialized subject in the Art Department under Biman Mullick, a practising designer.

What is Graphic Design? The term "Graphic Art" is used to describe any work which is intended to be duplicated by means of printing. Design is more difficult to define. In so far as any man-made object is not entirely the result of accident, that object may be said to have been designed. The designer's task is to concern himself with the functional and the imaginative. An 'E' type Jaguar and a Rolls-Royce are both very consciously designed. One's preference is a matter of taste and fashion. There are no engineering reasons for their marked difference in appearance. This is not to say there are no reasons, there are, and their designers are well aware of them. They are the same as those which cause some television sets to appear to be seventeenth century cabinets and others as products of the twentieth century.

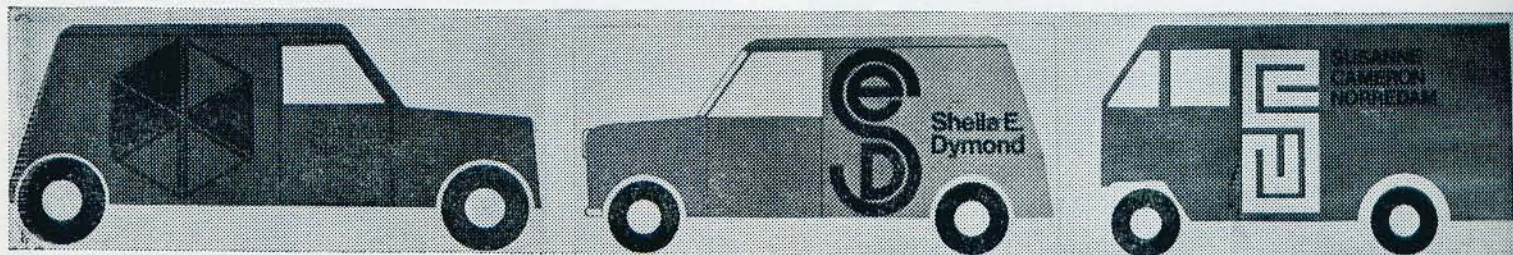
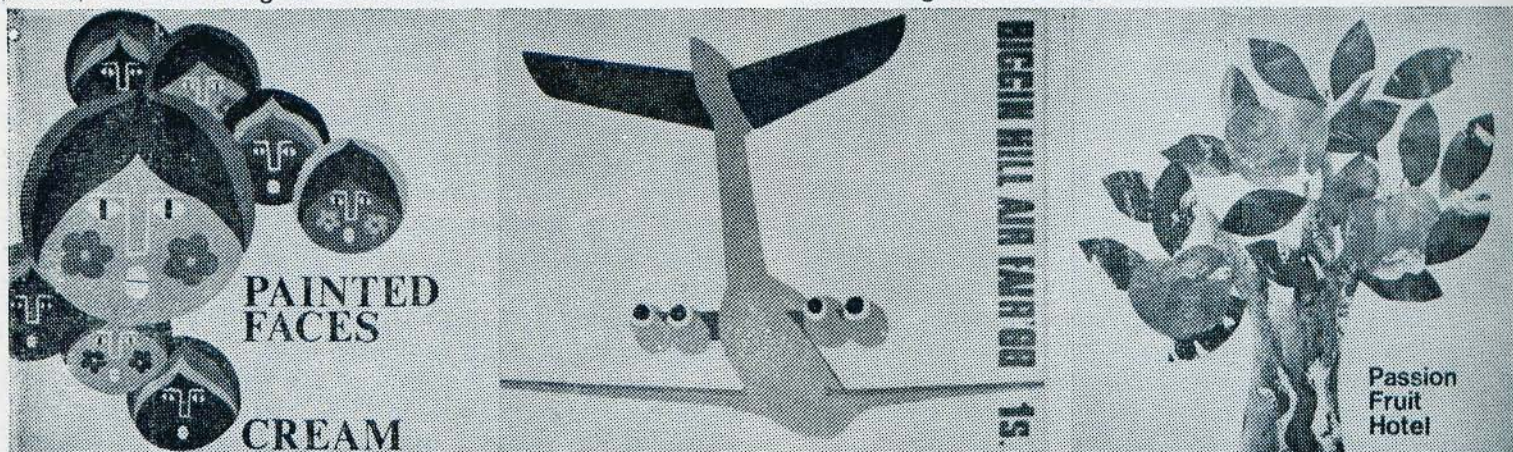
These reasons affect the graphic designer as much as the car and industrial designer. If a car does not function as intended, the fault is with the design. If a poster does not communicate the right message to the right public, then the designer has failed.

Examples of bad design surround us; application forms which leave five inches for the applicant to insert one word and one inch for their name and address; forms which when folded once are just one quarter of an inch too large for the envelope provided for them; muddled, confused and trite posters, notices and advertising of all types.

On this and the opposite page are examples of work by girls, from the fourth to seventh years, who have followed an elementary course of graphic design. We have tried to teach them some simple skills, an ability to make a logical analysis of the problems posed and a realization that the best visual effects are usually simple in conception. This demands more thought and imagination than is generally realized.

Last year girls taking Graphic Design as part of their G.C.E. and C.S.E. Art examinations were outstandingly successful. For those who are interested in art as a career and do not wish to teach, Graphic Design is a practical alternative.

In another part of the magazine girls in the Art Department have amused themselves by parodying the worst of advertising art. We hope the difference is apparent.

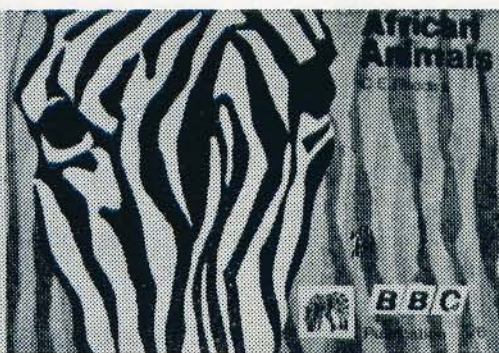


17 Lesley Butler
18 Wendy Perry
19 Sheija Dymond
20 Brenda Knowles
21 Christine Arthur
22 Julia Palanka
23 Teresa Zaremba
24 Lesley King
25 Christine Arthur
26 Teresa Zaremba

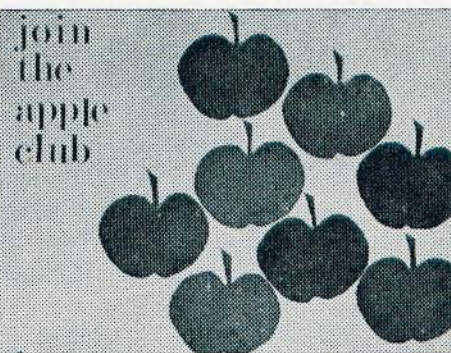
7 Lesley Baker
8 Elizabeth Queen
9 Susan Marsh
10 Sheija Dymond
11 June Marshajj
12 Christine Wodarz
13 Dawn Russell
14 Lesly Butler
15 Valerie Kent
16 Valerie Kent



7



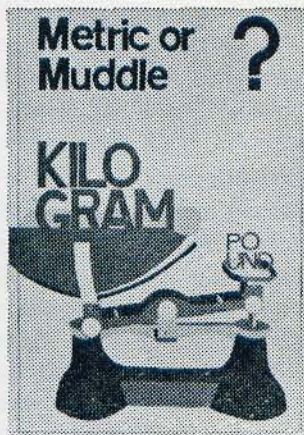
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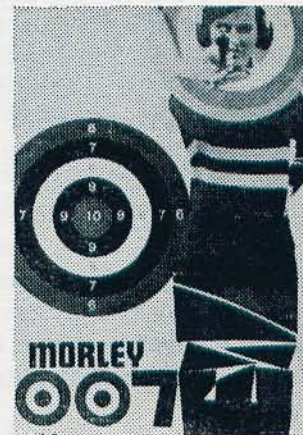
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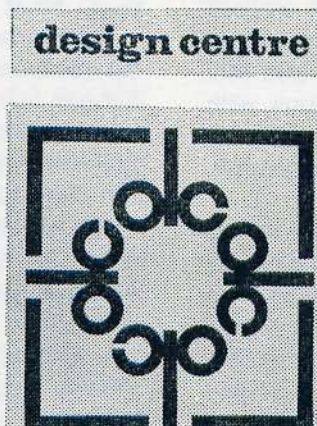
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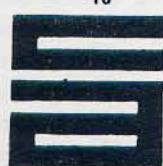
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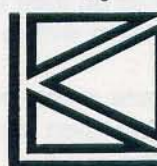
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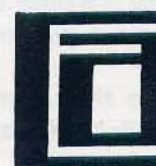
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26

From Far Away Places

That was the time of the sun, when the banana plantation was greener than it had ever been before, the coconut trees looked like they had never borne so many coconuts, the children never seemed to get tired of playing.

I sat on the front steps of the balcony. My grandmother came with a jug of iced lemon drink, and gave me a glass. I sat gazing at nothing, sipping the cool drink. The young children played hide and seek among the banana plants, and cashew nut trees. I finished the drink, got up and went inside the cool room, which was our living room. At night we sat in that room and talked, joked, and there we all said our prayers before we went to bed.

It was now mid-day and the sun was blazing down on the earth. The grass was going brown. I came out of the room with a large sun hat. The hat matched my yellow short sleeved blouse and black trousers. I took my camera off a chair in the balcony and walked out into the hot sun. As I walked out some of the little boys and girls came up to me and all I could hear was "Take my picture". In the end they won. While they played, I took two pictures of them. Then I walked towards the little ravine just by the house. I took off my "flip-flaps" and dipped my foot in the water. It was lovely and cool, but it would be warm later. I sat on the bank and played with my reflection in the cool, clear water.

"Lunch is ready". My grandmother's voice brought me back to reality. I picked up my shoes and walked towards the kitchen which was separated from the house. The most lovely breeze was coming up, but the sun still managed to pierce through it. Lunch was delicious with lobster salad (my grandfather had caught the lobster himself), fresh fruit with cream, and to finish iced lemon drink. shone like gold all around.

At 4 o'clock, Tony, Barry, and Mary came, so we decided to walk to the river and bathe. I collected my bathing things, said good-bye to my grandmother, and we left.

The streets were hot. With or without shoes, our feet got burnt on the roads. We got tired walking on the grassy sides, but even the grass was too hot. In the end Mary and I decided we would make the boys carry us on their backs. At first they refused, but we got round them with a bit of hard pushing.

When we got to the river, there were many people, most of them our High School mates. We then changed and joined the others.

We ran up and down the river banks jumping from

stone to stone to get on the other bank first. The stones were slimy with green stuff. The river was full with huge stones and that is where clothes are put to dry when the busy mother came to wash the weekly wash.

It was now half past five so we decided to make our way back home. On our way back we picked mangoes off the trees, which were very refreshing now.

The sun was setting now. In ten minutes it would be gone.

"I wish it would rain."

Septima Remice. Fifth year.

Contrasts

R. Kluge. Fifth year.

The difference between a Brazilian school system and an English school system is very great.

I, personally, like the English school system better. Here we can choose our subjects. In Brazil we must do Mathematics, Portuguese, History, Geography, Singing, Needlework, French, English and Physical Education. In England, if a girl is weak, for example, in History she does not need to do it. That is a great advantage because a pupil must like her work to do it properly.

We used to have two gymnastic lessons a week which do not include games. Sometimes we play volley-ball after school, and at the end of each year we have a great tournament. First we play between forms and the winner plays with the winner of another school.

The Brazilian teachers are the same as in England. They are interested in individual work and care about each girl. We have our lessons in the same class rooms and the teachers come to us instead of us going to them in different rooms like we do here. It was very difficult for me to find the class rooms the first weeks, and I was always late but now I am used to it.

Now, we come to a not very nice point - exams. In Brazil we do not have public exams and do not need 'O' or 'A' levels to get a good job. Every two weeks we have a test and at the end of each month an examination. The marks are added and divided to give the average percent and the lowest is nil. When at the end of the year we have a mark lower than four in three reports or more, in any subject we do not pass the year and must do it again.

In our Portuguese lessons we have much more grammar and less literature than here. Literature is studied as a separate subject only in what here is called "college" for senior girls over sixteen. After finishing the fourth year we can choose between the Classical course for four years and the Normal course for three years. The course you take depends on what you want to do later.

The girls, here in England, were very nice to me when I started to study in this school. This is a great help and I am very grateful for it. My South-American friends did the same to me and I miss them very much but I found new friends here, who replace the ones I lost.

One thing which surprised me was that here they have so many prefects and house captains and so on. We had only seven or eight prefects for 1,000 girls and we had them only for cultural purposes. Here we have prefects to look after the lifts, prefects to look after the stairs and a lot more for keeping order and good behaviour. We did not need that, because each girl could look after herself and obey the school rules without anyone chasing after her. Actually, I think the girls here in Sydenham School could do the same.

My First Impressions of England

Septima Remice. Fifth year.

My first impression of England was horrible, I did not like it at all.

When the boat had landed in Southampton I did not know what to think of England. The station was full, I had never seen so many people in my whole life. Everybody was moving, I stood at the station with my brothers and sisters waiting for my mother and father. The station with so many people, seem to make my country very small. Infact, my country is small.

St. Lucia is one of the last countries, on the map of the West Indies and small. I lived in a town called Mon Repos there. The capital is Castries. I enjoyed living in Mon Repos because it was country life. My family lived on a farm. We all enjoyed going to the garden and bring down the crop.

It was in the middle of May when we came to England, and I was cold. My brothers, sisters and I did not have cardigans.

We took a train from Southampton to Waterloo. I had never seen a train before in my life. I stood there wondering, what it was my father told me later it was a train.

England's way of life was different from my country. So I did not like England at first, but later I found I liked it.

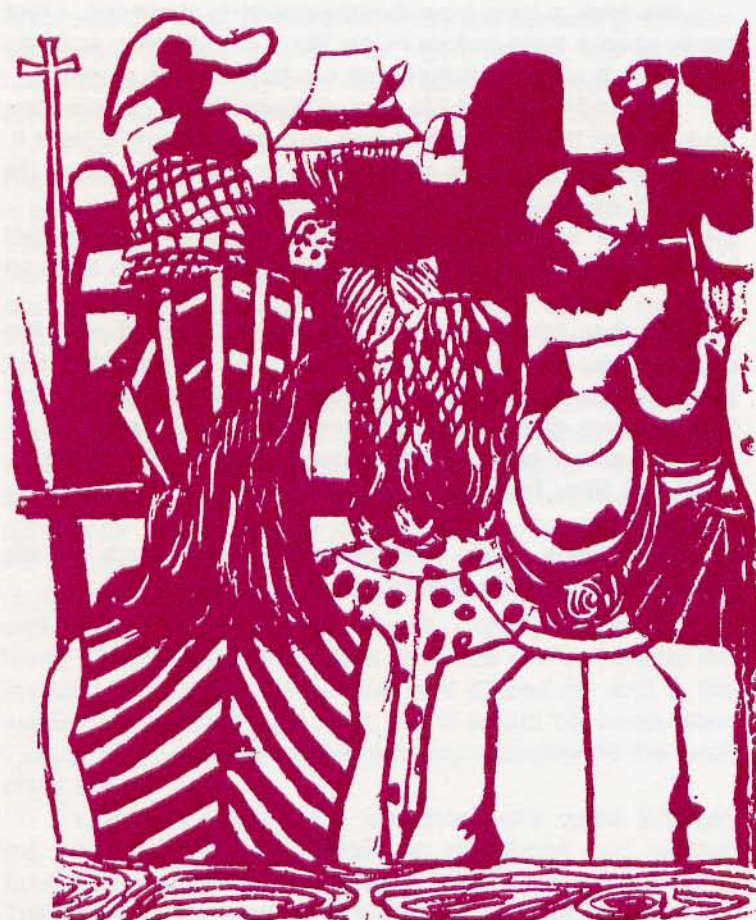
From Waterloo we hired a van to our destination. On our way we passed through London.

It was in the night, lights were on and it looked lovely. I looked at all the signs and different things enjoyed them.

Another thing I did not like about England was the crowd. I was not used to living where it was crowded. But I got used to it. I missed my country food, very much. Our houses were differently made and not closely built.

But now I have grown accustomed to all the things I did not like. But I still hate the winter. I do not know why but I do.

Sometimes I sit and remember the ways of my country life and miss it very much.



Hats in Church

S. Brown. Third year.

On whitewashed pew, upon whitewashed pew,
 Sit finely-cultured ladies,
 And on each head sits neat and prim,
 A flowered hat, a black one - maybe.
 The stone-faced vicar, oh that stone-faced vicar,
 Frowns upon young ladies,
 Who came to church with naked heads,
 Or a "mod" hat - maybe.
 But beware that man, beware, beware that man
 Who comes, like the ladies,
 With hat firmly on his head,
 He'll be out red - faced - maybe.

Lonely Blues

E. Addison. Third year.

I sit on the beach,
 And watch the red-coloured sun sinking slowly on the
 horizon,
 The silver moon silently plays hide-and-seek among
 the clouds,
 While the stars spread their light far and wide on this
 earth,
 It is quiet and peaceful here among the rocks.
 And the sound of the waves is music to my ears,
 The taste of the seaspray on my face refreshes me,
 I am alone, in this quiet world,
 Where is he the one I love?
 The boy that left me for another?
 I run along the beach,
 Trying to remember the past,
 But it is too late.
 I must weep alone,
 Letting my sorrows drain out of me.

Lighthouse by the Sea

H. Gibson. Second year.

High above the breaking waves,
 Stands a lighthouse tall
 Its beam at night flashes out to sea
 A warning to us all.
 The beach below looks calm and still
 But a story it can tell
 All you do is listen at the doorway of a shell.

Sporting Activities



The Tennis season is with us again. Enthusiastic girls by the dozen wanting to play during the dinner hour on our too few courts. There are some very promising players throughout the School, perhaps some of them will go on to emulate Hilary Merrick who is hoping to make competitive tennis her career. Unfortunately for the team she left at Christmas to enable her to give more time to Tennis. We wish her all success and hope that she will achieve her ambition of playing at Wimbledon. Hilary, with S. Morgan as her partner won the Under 18 Kent Girls Doubles Championship last September. She also won our own Singles Trophy which was presented to the School last year by Mrs. Millar, a former member of the Physical Education Department.

Two girls, Shelley Smith and Angela Harris took advantage of the coaching scheme sponsored by the Girl's Schools Lawn Tennis Association and attended a course at Streatham for three days at the end of last term. They both spoke enthusiastically of the help they received.

Our teams always enter the Aberdare Cup Competition and the Kent Under 15 Team Competition. Although we rarely get past the first round, these occasions afford valuable experience to the teams both from a playing point of view and socially. This year was no exception and the Saturday visits to Cobham Hall and Maryville Convent were much enjoyed.

The 1st VI had good results last season and the present team are keeping up the good standard under the able leadership of Marian Webber, this year's Captain.



Judo has become increasingly popular among both men and women in this country since it was introduced from Japan by a man called G. Koizumi, in the early part of this century. The aim of Judo is to teach a Judoka (person practising Judo) how to fight, and possibly beat an opponent, using skill rather than brute force. Judokas are taught a number of techniques, which include:- throws from a standing position, ground holds, strangles, choakes and arm locks. These techniques are very interesting to learn and not at all dangerous to practice.

Judo is no longer considered merely a way of learning self-defence, but is enjoyed as a sport by an ever growing number of people all over the world.

5th, 6th and 7th Year girls are offered the opportunity to visit the National Recreation Centre at the Crystal Palace for coaching in various activities. It is becoming more and more difficult to book these facilities as now the times available have to be shared with the College of Education.

Squash, Badminton, Diving and Swimming have all been enjoyed by groups of girls and the coaching offered there is of a high standard and much appreciated.



The swimming activities of Sydenham take many girls to swimming pools scattered all over London; from our "local", well used pool at Forest Hill, they branch to slightly more extravagant pools, such as Crystal Palace and Ladywell. There are various practices to attend, early morning swimming starts at the unearthly hour of 8.30 a.m., and the house swimming clubs start at a more respectable hour of 12.30 p.m. The younger girls do swimming as part of their school curriculum, but when they reach the fourth year it becomes an optional sport.

Swimming does not cater for just the "speedy" ones, it has many branches. There are a large number of girls who find competition swimming far above them, but they are rewarded with the Personal Survival Scheme. This is done in three levels, bronze, silver and gold, each time becoming harder and needing more strength.

Competitive swimming is another aspect, and the girls connected with this side of swimming do very well as a team. In the 1968 Lewisham Schools, the Under 16 Team came first to take the trophy for the third year running. The Over 16 Team came first this year as well. Every girl competing swam well, and every swim, whether gaining a final position, or not, helped towards the end score of Sydenham's triumph. Matches are occasionally swum against other schools usually with good results.

The girls who have reached a good standard in swimming go on to enter for the London Schools Swimming Gala. There has been some success in the London Schools and last year our Borough Team won in a new record time.

In October the English Schools Championships were held, and last year two girls went to Leeds, where a new pool had been built, for the opening of this occasion, to represent London.

Life Saving is also part of the School curriculum. It teaches girls the art of water work and artificial resuscitation, which is enjoyable to learn as well as being very useful.

Swimming, like other sports, does not come without a lot of hard training. Although this may seem tedious the reward comes when you can look back at the medals you have won.

Lesley Butler.



This is the third year that parties of girls have gone to the South London School of Equitation to have lessons in Horse Riding. Unfortunately this year numbers have been cut down to 16 girls each term and only one group of 4th years have had the opportunity. Most of them have made very good use of the facilities offered and have become very keen. A few find it very difficult to rise early enough for an 8.40 a.m. start from school!

During the last two years a number of girls have gained the "D" Certificate of the Pony Club after only one term of Riding. Now that the school is covered it should make for even better progress.

Usually at the end of term a Gymkhana is held for all the schools visiting the stables. This is always very enjoyable - we have not as yet won the Trophy awarded to the school with most points but everyone seems to go home with one or more rosettes.



Hockey is the 'Cinderella' of our team games from the practice point of view. Great enthusiasm is conjured up by the House Tournaments at the end of the Spring Term. Everyone vows that next season they will go up to Orchard Playing Field, Anerley after school each Tuesday to practice. Then the evenings get cold and dark and other more pressing engagements come crowding in, with the result that only a handful of the more enthusiastic players appear. It is impossible to coach team tactics under these conditions. Perhaps next year with the advent of 'summer time' throughout the winter we shall have more success. There are a considerable number of potentially good players who just need more practice to become really skilful.



Archery is now quite a popular sport and is taught in many Schools and Sports Centres.

There are about 20,000 archers in Great Britain and Surrey has more clubs than most Countries.

This is a sport very suitable for the person who likes to shoot for scores and not for team work. Clubs do of course send their best archers in teams to Tournaments.

Club subscriptions vary but £3 per year is average, half price for young people under 18 years of age. Equipment would cost a beginner about £10.

About fifty 4th and 5th Year girls are at present receiving instructions from Mrs. Woodward, Archery Instructor, Orchard Sport Centre.



In the Autumn and Spring terms twelve of us were given the opportunity to go to Beckenham Place Park to play golf. This was one of the many optionals offered to the sixth, seventh and eighth years on Wednesday afternoons.

As a not very sporty person who gave up horse-riding through sheer terror, I enjoyed learning to drive, chip and putt. Other girls, who are good at games like Jill Hawes, Katherine Hobbs and Margaret Spooner found golf another interesting sport to add to their 'repertoire'.

We were shown many different types of club from the woods to the putters and when it rained we went indoors for a lesson on the rules and intricacies of the game.

One amusing lesson was spent in getting balls out of a sand bunker, but the most satisfying part of golf is to drive a ball from one end of the practice field to the other. Unfortunately we never graduated from the practice green to the course, but once golf gets into the blood it stays there!

Hazelle Eastman.



Many 4th and 5th year girls have become interested in this sport through learning at the Crystal Palace with Mrs. Rowe, a former full-time member of the Physical Education Department.

The gift of a Trampoline to the School from the proceeds of last year's Summer Fete is a welcome addition to the equipment in our gymnasium. The use of this for coaching purposes is restricted to those members of Staff who have the special coaching award necessary. This unfortunately limits the numbers of girls able to use it at present.



The season 1967-68 was a long and strenuous, but fairly successful one, for most of the school netball teams. An increased number of friendly fixtures was arranged and for the first time, the teams competed both in the South London and in the all London Leagues.

All the teams reached the later stages in the London competition, having won their sections; the seniors and Third Years being beaten only in the Final. The Seniors ended the season as South London Champions, by defeating Walworth 17-2. While the Second and Fourth Year teams were narrowly beaten in their final matches.

Colours were awarded for outstanding performances as follows:

Seniors:	M. Webber	R. Vallidum	E. Parsons	
Juniors:	Y. Marson	J. Bent	J. Bartholomew	
Match Results	Played	Won	Drew	Lost
Seniors	21	15		6
Fourth Years	17	11		6
Third Years	20	11	2	7
Second Years	22	18	2	2
First Years	10	9		1

Queer Folk

Judith Kelly. Seventh year.

Leblow walked on crusty hills and the grass snapped and broke under his feet. He felt the cracked, life-filled pieces squirm and dance and grow tall to the sun. Leblow walked out into the tunnel where the roof was the black brick sky and the floor was silver rails for a silver engine. Leblow was a man as he walked between the lines out under the burning spot in the sky. He wore black and carried a stick. Leblow's beard flew with the birds and the wind, and Leblow was a boy sitting on the wood floor porch of the station shed above the gravel ground. Beside Leblow in the quiet daytime of summer heat sat a sister, a girl shining in blue. She played with a scorpion, stinging, explosions in red and Leblow was gone.

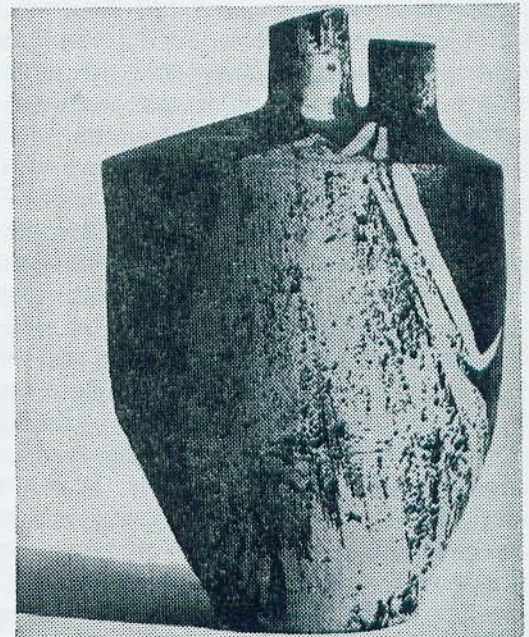
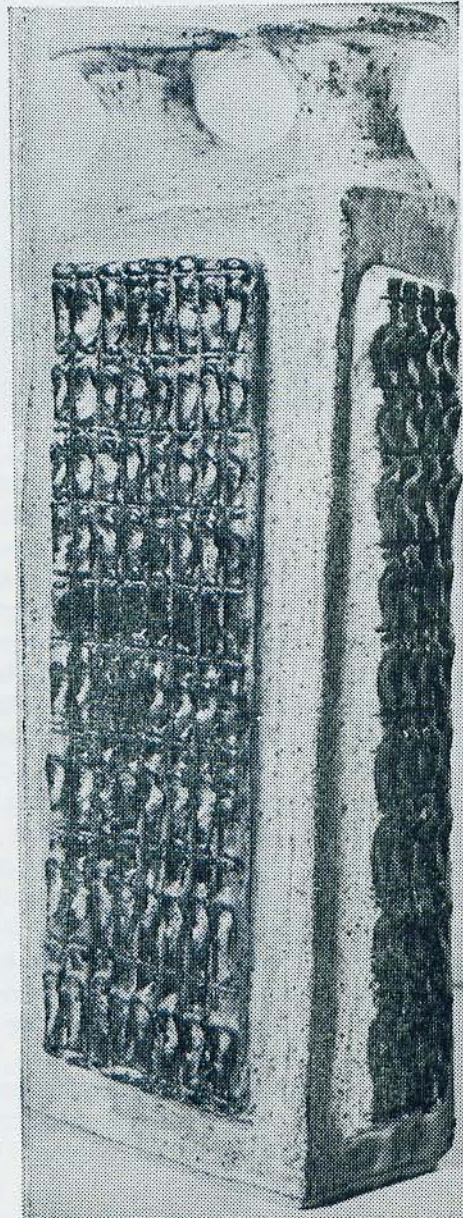
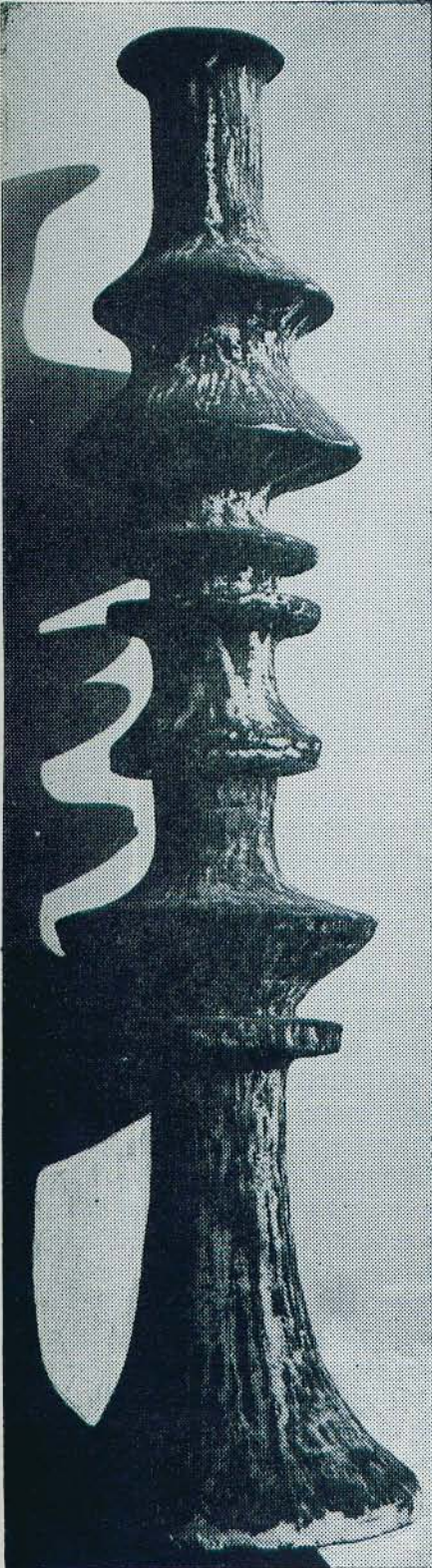
Debalino in blue was big, she clenched her hand and the waves down in the sea foamed white. She stamped her foot and the sky dropped blue into the ground. Debalino was fair today in the sun but dark in the moonlight of tomorrow. Debalino climbed a long slope and saw the campers in their triangle canvas tents on the hillside above a roadway busy with traffic. Debalino saw the campers moving frightenedly. Underground blood was getting hot and ready to force through the pipes upwards. The people were moving and Debalino walked away into the dusty desert merging slowly, becoming summer season and flying to the sun as autumn came brown to the flaming trees.



Ceramics



left: Angela Hall 6th.
right: G.Cleveland 5th.
mid.right: J.Burtonshaw 5th
bottom right: C.Charles 4th.
below: P.Edmonds 5th.



It's a commodity like cornflakes

Tom McGuinness interviewed by Christine Reeves and Elizabeth Jones.



"My career developed in a totally negative direction . . .," Tom McGuinness was sitting on the sofa of his Blackheath house. The room was comfortable and personal, the simple decor acting as a foil to the collection of interesting objects such as a sitar, an old wood carving, a wooden relief panel and the inevitable hi-fi and records which reflected the breadth of interest and taste for the unusual which seems to be characteristic of Tom and Ruth McGuinness. He continued in answer to our question about how his career developed:

"When I was sixteen I wanted to do science subjects at A level but when I was eighteen I changed my mind and wanted to study English Literature and History, but there was no opportunity to do this. The educational system works in such a way that at sixteen you are forced to take a decision that will dictate the whole course of your life."

For the next two years Tom worked in an insurance office. He found himself passing insurance exams and somewhat horrified, deliberately failed the next one and left. For a year he did not work and would have us believe he lived on his Pension Contributions. Finally he ran out of money (or Pension Contributions) and took a job as a furniture porter. This he considered to be a great step for-

ward. "People working in an insurance office are worried about things like pension funds, whereas furniture porters are only passing through, they are either on the way up or down". After six weeks as a furniture porter Tom joined the Manfred Mann group after having played with Paul Jones and Eric Clapton (now with the Cream).

RELIGION IS LIKE MARXISM OR ANY IDEALOGY: IT IS ONLY GOOD FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THE SECURITY OF A WELL THOUGHT OUT SYSTEM.

At school, Tom found there was no stimulation or artistic understanding, only academic work was considered important. It was a Catholic school run by Jesuits, who were, Tom said, not concerned with original thought. "You are not taught any criticism, you are taught to think along their lines." Although Tom continued going to church until he was twenty, he does not believe in God; in fact, he says he never really believed, but only later realised that what he was doing was something easy, a well ordered routine. "I didn't have an original thought - I don't know whether I have now". I didn't need the security of religion and decided it was not for me. I don't openly fight religion. I believe it can be harmful as in Spain

where it is very reactionary, but in South Africa it can be very good where it is in the forefront of the fight against Apartheid. Religion is like Marxism or any ideology, it is only good for people who need the security of a well thought out system. The only moral code you need to get through life is not to hurt anyone else."

We asked him if he thought that by pointing this out to people it would do any good. He replied that it might in a thousand years time, but that if one wanted to change things quickly the only way is by violent revolution. He preferred a more gradual process except, he added as an afterthought, in Cuba.

"YES, WE ARE A POP GROUP, NOTHING ELSE - JUST ANOTHER POP GROUP"

Tom has no pretensions about the music the Manfreds play. "We are a pop group, nothing else just another pop group. In terms of the general public you can count your success in hits. People don't come and see you if you haven't got a hit record, and they do if you have. You can come into the position where you don't need hit records if you're someone like John Mayall or the Cream, if you are exceptionally musical or surround yourself with exceptional musicians (subtle shnide). No we don't think we are big stars. We are dependant on each hit as it comes out to keep us as "stars".

I THINK I'D GO MAD IF I WAS JUST DOING IT FOR MONEY

When asked if he played in the group purely for the money he reacted rather strongly "No! No! No! Pop music isn't just money! I do it because I enjoy it, and make money out of it. It gives me a lot of time to do other things." He added he was only sometimes able to play the kind of music he really wanted to play. "We are a group of five people, who all have different influences and things we want to play. If you are a co-operative group as we are, the decisions are co-operative, all the music we play is a decision of five people. It is impossible for me to go on stage and play only what I like; it is impossible for me to record only what I like. That isn't to say I don't like all the other things we do. I do as a general rule but I can think of other sorts of music I would like to do more of."

MICHAEL LEAPS ABOUT THE STAGE AND LIES ON HIS BACK AND I JUST TRY TO LOOK COOL AND ALOOF - UNTIL HE KNOCKS ME OVER.

"There get to be periods when we're not playing well on stage and I feel 'What's the point of it all' if it was just

for money I wouldn't feel like that - I'd think 'God we weren't very good tonight HA! HA!' and I'd go home and look at my bank book. But I don't - I mean, we all come off stage if we've played badly and we feel very brought down. When we played at Exeter University we followed another top pop group who 'died', whereas we had an encore . . . there was a communication with the audience. We always assume if they're a university audience you can talk to them, and we go out and talk. I like playing in a university hall where everyone listens, and you can do a long instrumental: if it is good people will like it. I also like playing in a huge auditorium with ten thousand people screaming. I hate it where the front two rows are screaming and everyone else is trying to listen because you don't please anyone. I like carefully worked out audiences, either universities or screaming teenyboppers."

"We don't get many screamers, but, if we do, we just alter our programme. We cut out all long solo's and just play a string of hits. Michael leaps about the stage and lies on his back and I just try to look cool and aloof - until he knocks me over. We only work twice a week at the most and only choose the engagements we want to do. We deliberately set our money very high because we don't want to work much."

IT'S A COMMODITY LIKE CORNFLAKES OR SOUP

When asked if there was any pop he despised, he replied: "No, not a type. The obvious answer would be to say I despise people like Englebert Humperdinck and Tom Jones. I don't: if the record is good I like it, but I wouldn't buy it. I can't stand light music - like the Palm Court Orchestra, 7 p.m. Sunday night B.B.C. radio. I don't feel that way about pop music; pop music is just a sort of throwaway commodity to me. It's not made to last. For instance, I like rock and roll but I think it's dated. It has a nostalgic appeal to me. I think a revival of rock and roll will kill the rockers if they see the mods going around in leather jackets with studs. Rockers love being so different from the mods, it's a great shame if they disappear because they have managed to keep going - all these people like Breathless Stan and Righteous Rick Winkly who run fan clubs and have caravans called "The Rock House."

We had a fan club, but decided to give it up because it became a waste of time for us and for the members. You can read everything you want to know about the group in the papers plus a few things that aren't true! Who wants to read what we have for breakfast, which is

the average level fan clubs are run on. If fans like you they'll come and see you. Pop music is a business based on the charts. John Mayall probably has about 30,000 fans devoted to the blues. Whereas no one is devoted to what we do. It's a commodity like cornflakes or soup - you try to make the best product available within the limits of public taste. Basically every single you bring out has to be something that will sell, it doesn't have to be the lowest common denominator. For instance, the 'Quinn' is a good song, I don't mean our record, which we all like (and normally don't) but the final test is "Will it sell?" You have got to have hit records to keep functioning as an economic unit."

Tom's private life has not been affected except that he has more money to spend. He doesn't have many friends in the pop business. "I don't like to go to the Bag O'Nails and all that scene, in fact I've only been to . . . where have I been? . . . Oh yes I went to a free party for the Monkees at the Speakaway because it was free. I have no interest in these places. I'd rather have a few friends round for a drink. You can't get to know anyone in a nightclub, back of a ballroom or changing room of a theatre. I'm not interested in such superficial relationships.

NO ONE'S EVER SCREAMED AFTER ME YET - I'M ALWAYS HOPING THEY WILL

We asked Tom if anyone ever screamed after him in the street. "No one's ever screamed after me yet," he said, "I'm always hoping they will." "What?" we said, "no one's ever knocked at the door?" "No! No!" he said. "Yes! Yes!," interjected Ruth loudly. "A gorgeous coloured chick arrived on the doorstep. 'Is T-o-h-m in?' 'I never heard about her!' said T-o-h-m. 'I never told you!' replied Ruth.

Tom continued with "This doesn't happen much, the scene's not like that anymore. We're not a young kids group. They go for the Small Faces and the Love Affair. We're thought of in a rather horrible way as entertainers, not pop idols. This thing about us being a musicianly group is a carefully fostered myth. You ought to hear us recording sometimes. 'Ha! Ha! said the Clown' took fifty six takes to get the basic rythm right."

"Me, personally, I think it's terrible," Tom replied to our question about musicians playing instead of the group at the recording sessions. "I can't understand how it could be done. I would be shattered if anyone suggested we should get another guitarist to do anything in my place. I can understand the pressure on a new group when a

manager might say, "Look uh . . . we've got a great song for you, uh, but, like we done it yesterday. All you gotta do is sing."

BLOKES IN TIN HELMETS WITH GREAT LONG NOSES PAINTED RED

We found when we talked to Tom about the Arts that his tastes ran to the bizarre, the freaky and the odd. He likes kinetic art, things that move, and he likes Dada and Surrealism because they make him laugh. The sheer size of some paintings impress him immensely. He confessed to rather liking a painting of blokes in tin helmets with great long noses painted red which was once near the cafeteria in the Tate but has since disappeared. Tom asked us if we knew where it had gone. We were very sorry, but, alas, we were unable to solve the mystery. Similarly he likes 'art' films and particularly those that are weird and strange. He admitted a liking for horror films, not that they frighten him, they just make him laugh.

We went on to ask Ruth if she would prefer Tom to have a more ordinary, reliable job as opposed to being in the pop business. She emphatically refuted this. "No, I've never been attracted to 9-5 workers, because in general they are as boring as their jobs and that frightens me. It's like looking at animals, not humans. When I left school I went into an office because it was the only thing I could do, and it frightened me even then to see people scurrying like ants across Waterloo Bridge.

Tom broke in to say, "Well the answer to that is somebody's got to do it; and the answer to that is the system should be arranged so no-one should have to do it."

Ruth continued, "When we were first together we had very little money, I never thought we'd have a house or a car, and though that makes life much more comfortable, I can really honestly say I'm not any happier inside. The thing about having money is that after you've been and spent it all, supposedly having a marvellous time you've still got to come back and be yourself. You've got your insides to cope with."

Mr. Perret, also with us, said "The nice thing about Tom and Ruth is that they live a completely free, normal life." Tom replied to this with "The thing about that is we can only do that because of contracts guaranteeing us money. We are only able to work so little because of various money guarantees."

Ruth concluded, "I think Tom is very lucky to be able to do what he wants and still be able to live, and his work is what he wants to do."



Murder Manslaughter

Lorraine McGimpsey. Seventh year.

who were desperately trying to lipread. The knife shown to the jury was about eighteen inches long, flat and rusty. Another smaller knife was produced. Some foreign girls behind chatted excitedly. Seemingly somebody involved in a fight had been stabbed with them. The fight as far as I could make out had been motivated by a series of petty incidents and jealousies on the part of several men and women. The story however was complicated and the evidence obscure. A man had killed another because his wife had been supporting him through her immoral earnings.

The summing-up lasted a tedious hour and a quarter. The jury looked exhausted and went out. There was hardly a pause between the next case and the last. A coloured man was called into the dock accused of being responsible for the death of his four year old daughter.

The judge in a harsher and louder tone than before summed up the evidence against the man which had been heard previously. The man had passed his illegitimate daughter into the hands of several foster-parents who had for various reasons neglected the child and had failed to realise that she was seriously ill and suffering from eye trouble. Eventually, because she was so hard to look after, her father had to take care of her himself. This happened at a time when his wife was in a maternity hospital. Photographs were shown to the bench of the child's body. There were, as the judge pointed out bruises on her chest, arms and head, and severe scalds on her legs. The judge told the bench that the accused's explanation was unconvincing. He had failed to take the child to a doctor and had beaten her when she complained of her injuries. When the child became unconscious, he still failed to get a doctor but went to his neighbours for a cup of tea.

The defence began. He produced evidence in favour of the accused's character, evidence to show that he had been a good father and was genuinely fond of his daughter. He produced evidence to show that the child was ill-tempered and unmanageable so much so that several foster-parents had been unable to control her. He pointed out that the father had to look after the child at an inopportune time, when his wife was in hospital, and that he had been kept awake each night by her tantrums. He had not called the doctor because he did not want to put him to any trouble. It was obvious that the father had been taxed beyond endurance by his daughter of whom reliable evidence showed he was sincerely fond. We began to be convinced of the poor man's desperate plight

Sitting in the public benches, it was almost impossible to see anything. The witness stand was almost immediately in front of us. By craning my neck and peering over the heads of several other spectators I managed to have a relatively good view of the proceedings.

The court assembled and the usher called for silence while the judge entered. The judge lived up to any preconceived ideas one may have of a judge. He scuttled in, a small withered head and bent shoulders moving behind the enormous oak tables, in front of enormous oak chairs. He sat in the biggest chair of all, in the middle, a small isolated head and shoulders. He jerked his head to the left and looked at the jury over his wire-framed spectacles, "Members of the jury, I want you to consider this case, which you have already heard on the following points, motivation, the evidence", . . . his voice, which had begun in a high-pitched screech trailed off. The jury visibly leant forward. Their ears strained. Somebody in the public benches coughed. The recorder looked up angrily.

"Consider the time element", . . . his voice swelled again - "you have heard witnesses swear that the stabbing took place at 10 p.m., which contradicts other statements. What was the motive . . ." his voice trailed off again. No one could hear him. He was squeaking quietly into his notes. When next he became faintly audible State Evidence was being produced to refresh the memory of the jury,

and to sympathise with him. Our sympathy however was soon cut short. The judge suddenly leant forward and interrupted the defence counsel's eloquence.

"The point in question is that the accused failed to summon a doctor even when it was obvious that his child was critically ill." The case for the defence collapsed. The man was accused of manslaughter and sentenced to prison for six years. Not a flicker of emotion registered on the accused's face as he was led from the dock.

Thoughts of the Trees

Toni Pearce

It's a cold day I'm cold
And the trees appear to be suffering too.
They don't look happy. With bare branches
Raised to the sky in mild protest,
They seem to be saying,
"Please let the sun shine. We are cold:
Soon our bare branches will be covered with snow".
The wind blows, and the trees are happier now;
They think, "The cold bitter days will drag by,
But they will go,
And we will dance in the wind and be joyful,
And thank God for the sun.
Children will sit beneath us;
Joyful picnics will be held
Birds will nest in our branches;
Boys will climb us,
Happiness will reign."
The wind drops and rain begins to fall.
The trees are still; now they seem to say,
"Rain will fall down on us.
Adults won't let their children shelter under us."
"You mustn't shelter under the trees in a storm
or you might get struck by lightning."
So we are left alone.
"No one loves us
No one will miss us."
The rain stops. All is silent.
All I hear is the steady drip of rain
Falling from their leaves.
They are crying.





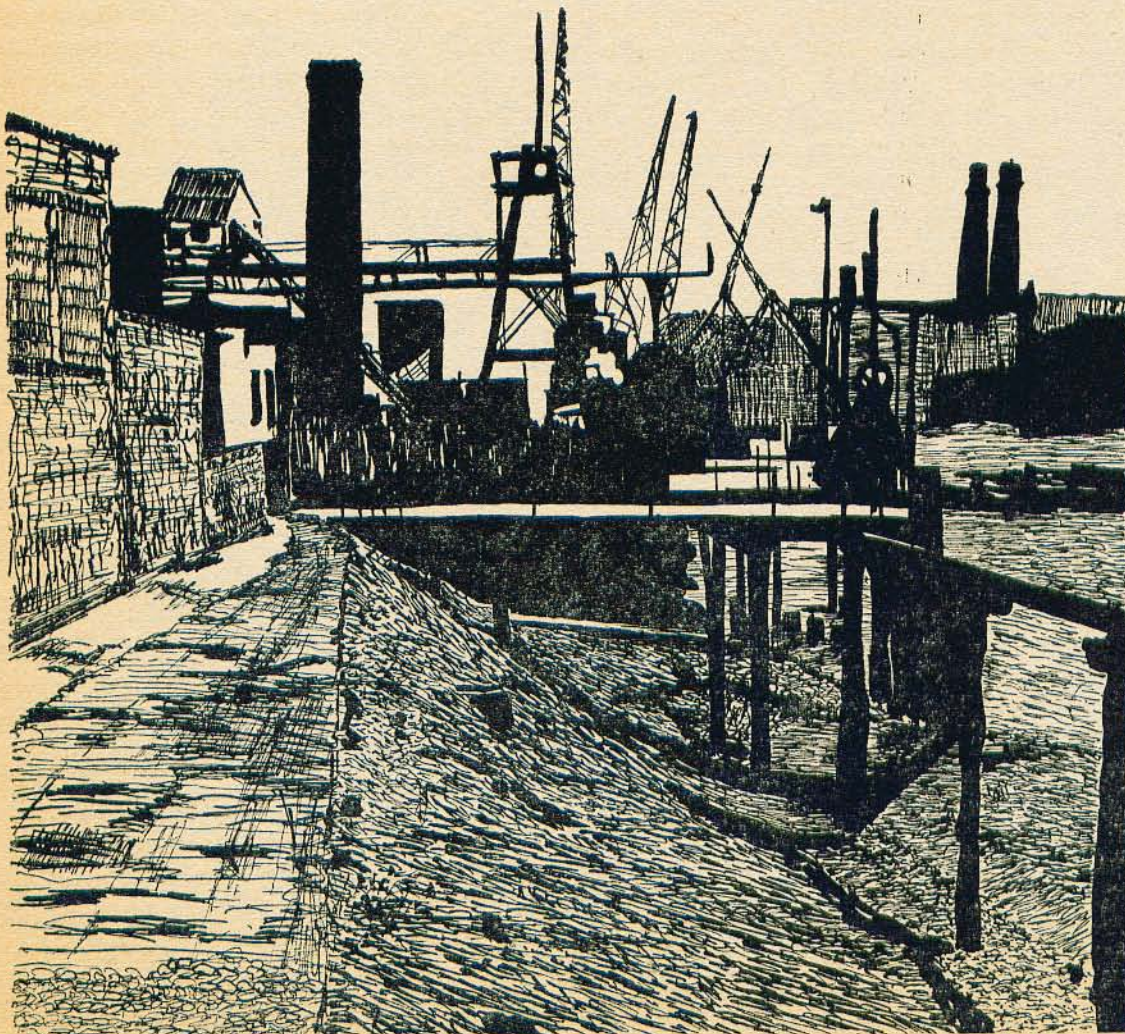
A Rat

A rat, I can see a rat,
Mother can you see it, a rat,
Look there he goes,
But he hardly shows.
Look there he is scurrying across my bedroom floor,
Quick shut the door.
Where's he gone?
It's so quiet,
Oh mother why is he so quiet?
Oh why did the electric have to fail,
To see the rat I fail,
Mother please go and get some poison,
Why it will be easy to kill it with poison.
Oh mother look, the poison,
It is killing him the poison,
Oh the electric is on again,
And now I can see everything again.
Oh look at the way he wriggles,
The way he wriggles and wriggles and wriggles,
He's dead at last he's dead
And to sleep I lay my head.

Riverside Greenwich

Dirty muddy water
That laps at an undefinable shore,
Strewn with the waste of a city's life line,
How many years can you recall?
You say nothing to me of what you know,
For I cannot understand your murmurs,
How many years can you recall?
Each drift wood floats,
With your will to its unknown death or destination,
It scrapes the surface of your thoughts,
But cannot relay to me the meaning of your murmurs,
How many years can you recall?

You collect the decay,
From ship and wharf,
And gather it to your mystic depth,
Where your life breathes its deepest there,
How many years can you recall?
You hold some message in your deep breast,
Which to me you cannot tell,
Perhaps of experience passed on,
Of years gone by,
Maybe you have life's answer,
Tell me, how many years can you recall?
Elisabeth Jones



Illustrations:
left Judy Kelly 7th
right Linda Burgess 453
far right Julie Conway 483

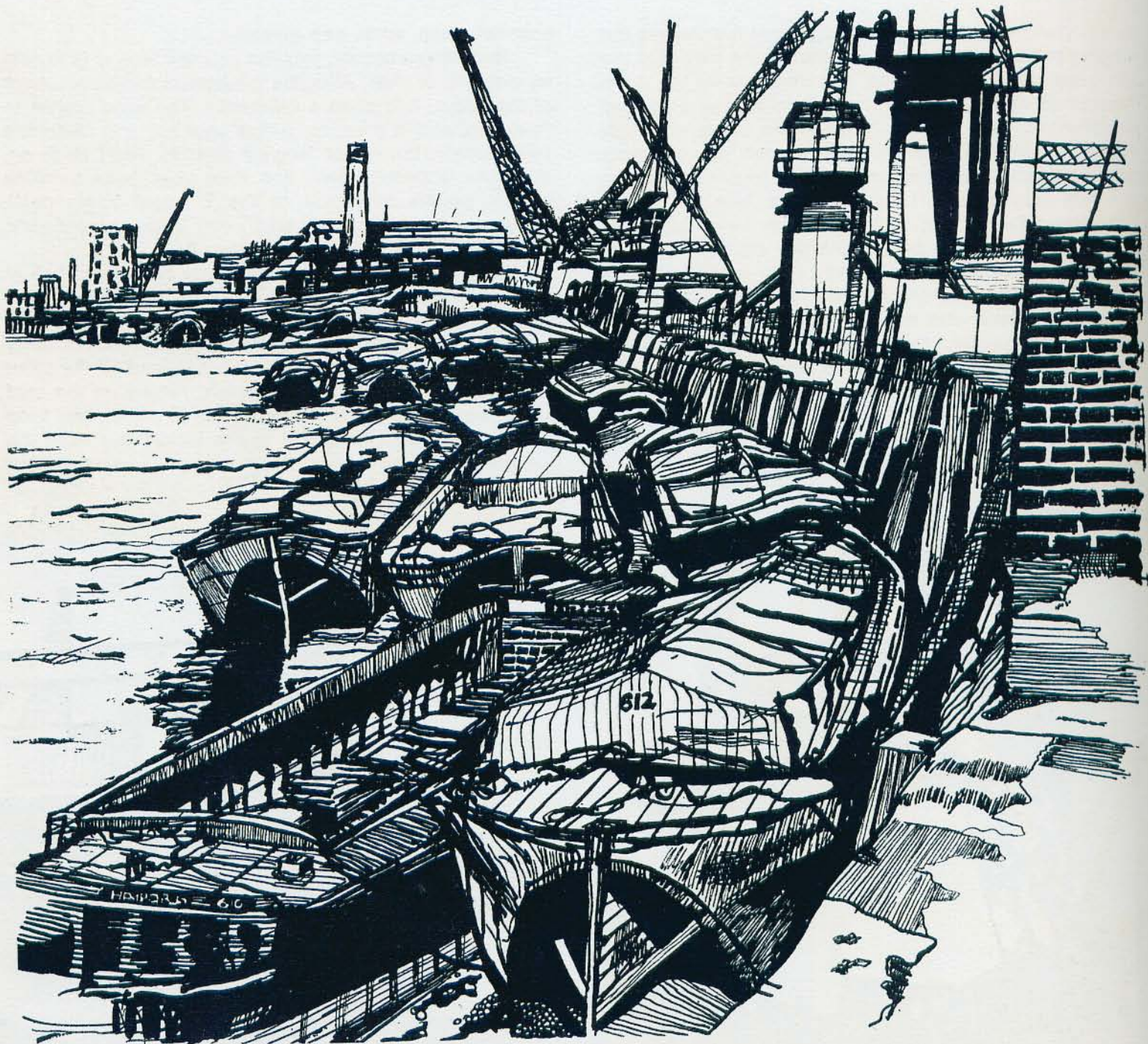
As you wander away from the straight and narrow into the winding and narrow, the noise of the human herd that the sun usually brings wandering in droves around the more commercial aspects of Greenwich fade in your ears, and you plunge deeper into the little winding alleys with their ornate cobblestones and decaying houses, you suddenly become aware of the real essence of Greenwich. Strolling onwards you become conscious of a hive of activity carrying on behind the corrugated iron walls that loom up on either side. You peep cautiously round a doorway to come face to face with a load of old junk. 'BEWARE OF THE CRANES' cautions a notice. The vivid imagination immediately leaps into action. Are there wild, untamed cranes lurking behind those high walls ready to pounce on unsuspecting victims out of the sky when they are not looking? In the middle of all this industry you find a tiny

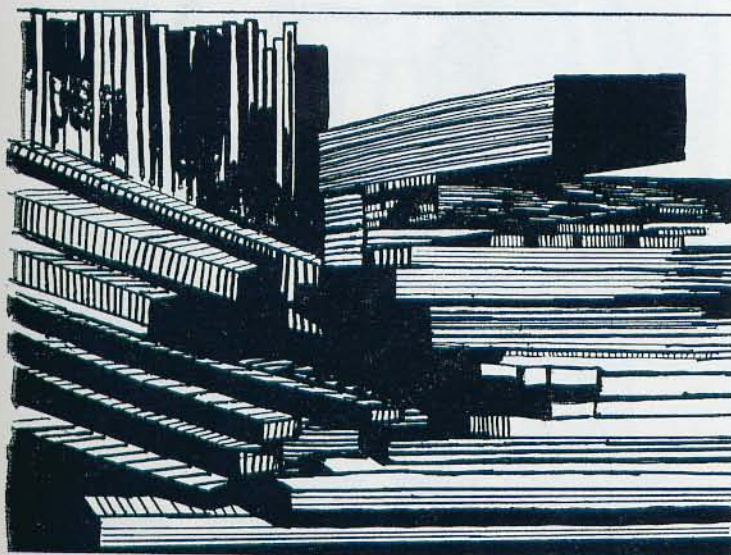
hospital clean, white and peaceful.

Rounding a corner, you find yourself face to face with an expanse of river. After the claustrophobic atmosphere of the alleys, it is quite a difference. The wind rushes to meet you, and in greeting, ruffles your hair into charming (you hope!), but rather tangled disarray. Aah! fresh air. You take a deep breath and then your nose wrinkles slightly as the full force of the Thames' fragrance(!) assails your nostrils. "Oh well", you think benevolently, "What did I expect? Chanel number 5?"

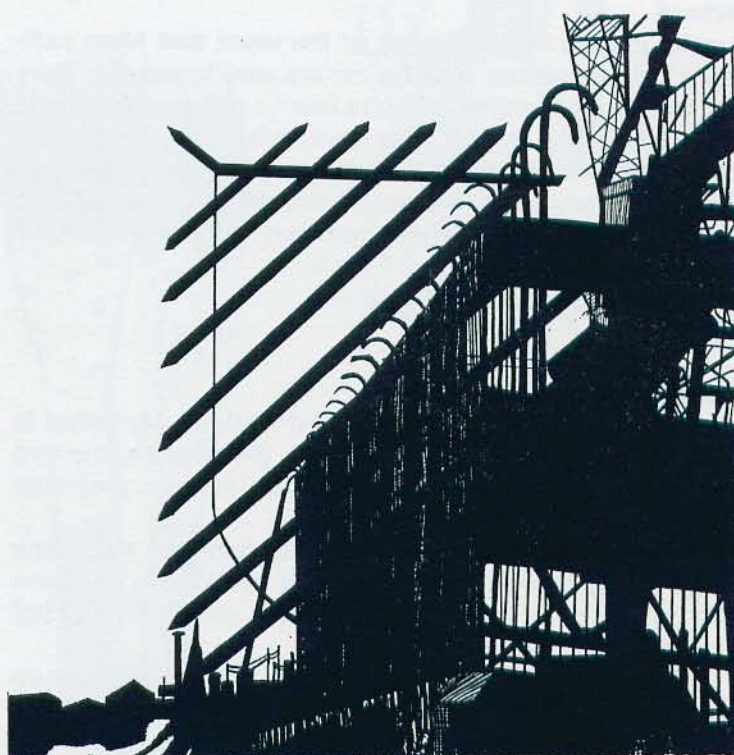
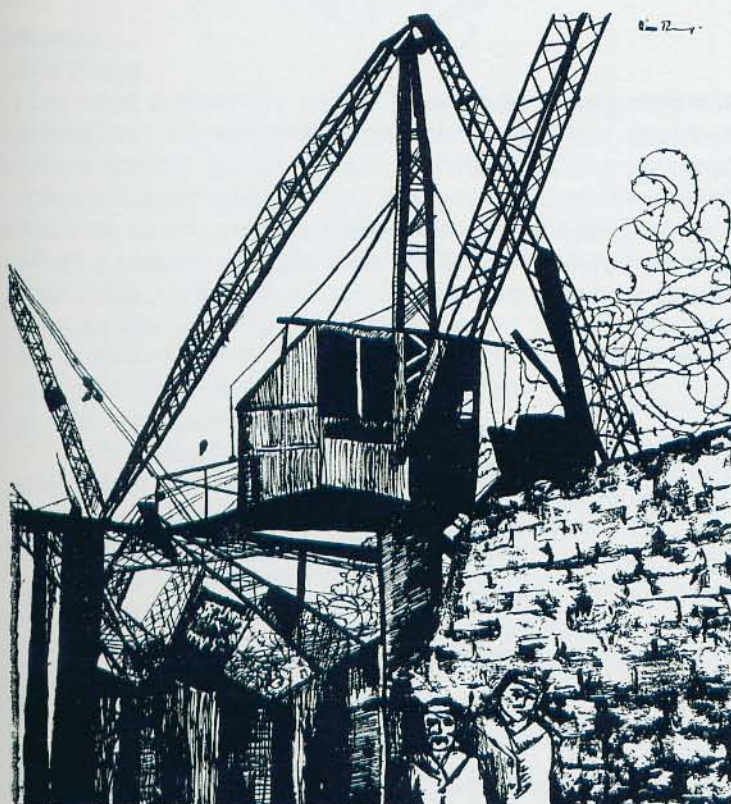
Before you, several rusty and dirty old barges bob at their moorings, occasionally clanging together in their swaying dance. After walking a bit further you suddenly leap down the bank, amidst the sodden driftwood, rusty springs and broken glass, old machinery and all the other fascinating things that one finds languishing on the mud at low tide, ready to trip you up, or cut you to blazes; even give you blood poisoning if you're lucky! But even the flotsam, the mud and slimy water oozing towards your feet







Illustrations
above: Marion Wadey 7th
below: Diane Murray 6th
right, Heather Dempsey 7th



takes on a different character as they glisten and sparkle in the sunlight. You gamble and frolic about like children among the burnt out jetties and slimy banks, threatening to push each other into the water and then pausing momentarily to stare in wonderment as a big cargo vessel chugs slowly past you. Strolling on you pass more industrial buildings and hearing the sound of a crane you glance uneasily skyward to see a huge pile of timber swaying precariously above your head.

Hurrying on you come across a wall, announcing in large white letters 'DOGS LOVE VIMS'. Do they? Oh, I didn't know. Coming onto another newer wharf you find yet another notice illustrated with a man and a dog. (My goodness, everyone seems to be trying to ply you with information), which cautions you to beware because there are guard dogs. I wonder if they love Vims?

Unfortunately your unromantic stomach begins to complain, so regretfully, you are forced to turn back towards the noise and commotion of tourist infested Greenwich.

Are you tired of the Cutty Sark? Tired of General Wolfe? Tired of hunting in Greenwich National Park for your male prey on a sunny Saturday or Sunday afternoon? Take my advice, try a walk by the river.

Gillian Symons

They must hate me I think

School

I wake up. It's the beginning of the week and Mum calls me. I have breakfast and I'm on my way to school. Mum shouts from the window "You're late". I arrive at 9 o'clock. My teacher tells me off. She says "why are you late?" I cannot think of anything and she gives me a lecture and I wonder why I come to school, I wonder if it's going to be a good day or bad. It was a bad day, I got told off every lesson. They must hate me, I think.

Shirley Crumpton. Third year.

Saturday Night

It's going on six and I'm bored and restless. My father is reading the paper, my mother is in the kitchen, my two younger brothers Micky and Joey are in their playroom playing with their toys.

My boyfriend Phil used to be boring, but right now he is sitting beside me; his hand is resting on my knee and he is looking at me, but I'm feeling unwanted and hot although it is cold outside.

The tele in front of me has little figures jumping up and down making funny little noises. They are babbling away but I can't make head or tail of what they're saying.

I'm in a dream world for the unwanted and forgotten ones. My mother has brought us all a cup of tea and I am sipping it, but I cannot taste it, I cannot tell if it is hot or cold for I feel numb from my head to the tips of my toes.

The television is being switched off, so I suppose the good things on tele are finished. The boys are on their way up to bed and I am staring at the clock but I see nothing but a blank wall.

My mother is saying something to me but I cannot make out the words. The light is being switched off so I suppose she's going to bed, and I must see my boyfriend to the door. He is taking my hands in his and he is kissing me but I hardly notice it.

And now I am walking up the stairs to dreamland. I am ready to face another day.

Lynda Aldridge



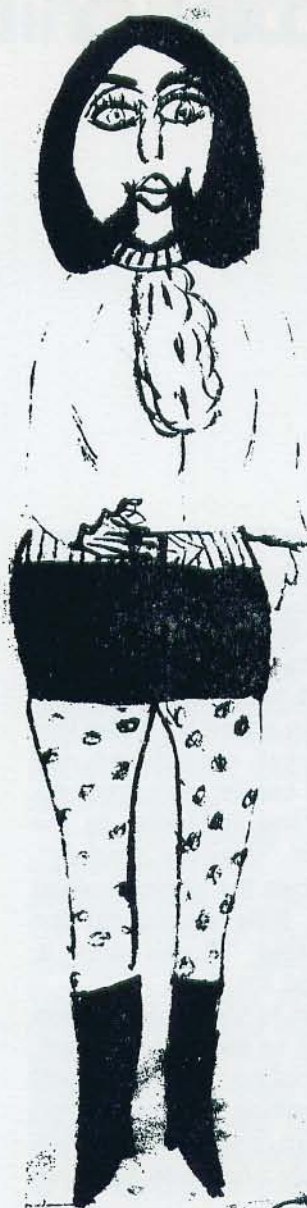
Someone young who died

Someone who lived near me got married,
To a man of 35 years old.
She was only twenty,
And she had a baby when she was 21,
And died giving birth to the second,
That is someone young,
Who died.

Carol Muir

I know a girl,
She is a horrible girl,
She thinks herself big,
But acts so little,
She wears short skirts.
How I hate this girl!
She looks so common,
When she goes out,
The make-up she wears,
It's like a cake
All over her face.
How I hate this girl!

Carol Muir. Third year.



Mumps

Rita Payne

Huh, what a Saturday night, usually I go out to different places, but where can you go? What can you do when you've got the mumps? You sit at home and watch television but even then you cannot see it properly. Your eyes water so much. You can't make out what's going on and all of a sudden a noise disturbs the air, people talking, their noise makes your head pound and you long to tell them to shut up. Your mind searches for peace and quiet but it cannot find it. Your head spins and you yell "Shut up", and all of a sudden you cool down and bury your head in a chair cushion.

Huh, Saturday night, I'm bored stiff. The play on television I can't understand, I can hear their voices, but I cannot distinguish the words, I feel so fed up that I long to go out. My throat is sore and I feel terrible. I think I'll go to bed, I have a splitting headache and a sore throat. But sleep does not come easy when you have a runny nose and you feel terrible. I lie there for fifteen minutes, it seems like eternity. Later I fall into a light sleep, only to be wakened in an hours time by my mum with my medicine. I feel terrible. I don't know whether it is that or the feeling of depression, but I burst out crying and am comforted by my mum, I fall into an uneasy sleep.

The Working Girl

Janice Cotton. 2Y1.

At eight o'clock, I'm still in bed
I should be up and dressed instead.
At half-past eight, I'm out of the door,
Forgetting my Math's books of course, once more.
My shoes, they aren't really bright
I meant to give them a polish last night
My homework's not in on time again
Though my teachers make it very plain
I must leave home earlier to catch my train.

School

Carol Muir. Third year.

School isn't bad I suppose,
It's the thought of it,
I don't like
To wake up and think,
"Another day of school!
Of nagging teachers,
And their looks,
Enough to kill you,"
But it really isn't bad,
I don't hate it,
I don't love it,
It's just alright.

Billy came to town

Janet Paterson. Third year.

Billy came to live in Sydenham. And within a week he had a gang ready to start the bank raids. The first time that week all I heard was "Billy's coming". Then I saw him. He came riding down Kirkdale, looking for the 'Woodman'.

He stopped and asked Danny the blacksmith, where the 'Woodman' was, Danny directed him. When he came to the 'Woodman', he told his gang to go on in, as he had

He rode down to the supermarket, dismounted and walked in. Then he picked up a wire basket, and proceeded in between the frozen foods. Then he came to the cereals and picked up a packet of "Breakey Crunch", then he walked out into the street. Then the sheriff walked out into the street and said "Billy, Billy you've got the supermarket's wire basket". Billy said "If you want it, come and get it". "I'm gonna get you for that".

There was shooting and Billy fell to the ground. Then the sheriff returned the wire basket to the supermarket. But the gang did not hear the shooting, and were still there. The sheriff walked into the saloon and said "You Billy's gang? If so, get out of town and quick, Billy's dead". So they collected Billy's body and rode back up Kirkdale road.



Georgie Porgie Pudding and Pie?

Christine Reeves

'Slowly, purposely taking his time, the Stranger mounted the black horse and slowly rode off into the sunset . . . '

The man sitting in the arm chair wore a glazed unseeing look and sat stiffly in the pleasing warmth of the suburban open-plan room, which owed its pleasant atmospherical conditions to the latest, most effective form of central heating.

His face twitched and his fingers jerked spasmodically at the pages of an open novel on his knees. He seemed to gradually relax and his eyes blinked rapidly as they focused on the room before him. Modern. Spacious. Blue and green and elegant. He looked at it coldly, impassively. How he loathed its suburban conformity, the obvious look of easy living it portrayed to any guest who might drop by (and, Lordy, Lordy, there were plenty of them!).

Yet, much as he hated to admit it, he would not be able to live any other kind of life. He worked on what he considered to be a 'routine 9 to 5 job'; though he was thought a 'good man' by the people at Consolidated Plastics. He could imagine what they thought!

'I mean to say, take George Porter - there's a man who's done well for himself! Well on the way to a directorship I shouldn't wonder. And - well, I mean to say, - you've only got to look at that wife of his to see the B's luck. Lovely woman - deserves the best two fine kiddies too'.

Oh yes, there was Claire alright - once Hammond, now Porter. No, he did not dislike his wife: how could he when the whole situation had no feelings? Poles apart, that's what they were, poles apart. True she played her role well - the wife of the successful businessman with her 'Oh, but I NEVER doubted in GEORGE' attitude, her perfect grooming, her perfect taste in colour and decor generally, her perfectly elegant supper parties, et cetera, et cetera and PERFECT ET CETERA! Perfect. Perfect. The word pounded hammerlike in his brain.

Oh, it hadn't all been perfect; he could remember yet the early struggles and failures when he had started in the plastics line as a designer: he could remember, too, the warmth of their early relationship when it had been he, Claire and eventually the first baby, against it all.

Things had started to go wrong when they had started to go right. Ridiculous sounding; but true, he thought. That lucky break into Consolidated Plastics had been the beginning of the rot. Since that time Claire had ceased to be the sympathetic wife he could return home to; but

had become the driving force which had relentlessly pushed him on. She had stopped seeing him as the rather unsuccessful businessman, but, rather as a man suddenly full of potential and possibilities. As she realised what could be her lot she had changed, and her desires had become purely material. Before long she found no comfort in anything but her material wealth - and George had been his wife - a cool, calm, serene exterior with an incredibly calculating interior.

Finally George had had to find an escape from the wealthy perfection of his perfectly ordered life, and had, strangely enough, resorted to cowboy novels (or perhaps not so strangely when the bowdy life portrayed in the average unruly western is taken into consideration). Gradually, to the orderly Claire's amazement, George became more and more immersed in the fantastic world of the Western hero and names such as Wyatt Earp, Hop-a-long Cassidy, Matt Dillon and Billy the Kid were often heard in the Porter household: and cowboy novels stood in rows on the bookshelves. Claire puzzled over, but tried to be tolerant of what she considered a childish delight.

After reading a novel, George gradually came to more than associate himself with the current hero - he often felt that he had actually participated in the adventures of the novel's hero.

It was slightly unnerving, but George continued to avidly follow the exploits of his wayward and tough-guy idols, till, one day, after a particularly hectic brawl, he (Billy the Kid) had been flung to the ground outside the saloon doors . . . and George awoke to find himself covered in dust . . . The realisation of what had happened made his mind revolve and darkness alternated with blinding colour and he trembled as though he had just received ocular proof of the supernatural. Gingerly he touched the pages of the book at last he had found a full release from his stifling '9 to 5 keep up the image life'.

Over the next few weeks Claire noted an even greater detachment in George than before. He went to sleep in the armchair in the middle of reading those ridiculous books, and woke twitching as though he had had a bad dream. She worried rather vaguely if he was quite alright - those novels always had seemed peculiarly important to George. Perhaps he was just . . . tired.

One Sunday in October, George fell asleep with that peculiar blank look on his face and a cowboy novel open on his knee. Claire walked over to the chair and . . .

Wyatt - George Potter - Earp stood facing the dark

stranger his gun-belt slung low on his hips (knowing full well that at the crucial moment he could think himself awake), and drawled to the stranger. 'Okay . . . enytahm yuh ready . . . draw'.

There was a pregnant silence, till suddenly . . . a stifling blackness came over George . . . it had never happened before . . . Someone . . . someone was closing the book, he couldn't get back! 'Claire! Claire!' he screamed silently, 'No, Claire, please!' . . .

Before Claire's eyes, even as she held the closed book in her hand, George suddenly convulsed violently and slumped forward. She uttered a single cry and fell on her knees beside the sprawled figure - was he alright? Was he ill? He was dead.

'Oh George,' she whispered. And the brittle shell broke, huge soft tears trickled silently down her face. Perfection deserted her as grief shook her entire body. Images of her unhappy marriage drifted through her mind: the sad memories of George's gradual estrangement from her; his refusal to accept that her desire for material things was purely for the children's sakes; his refusal to admit that she could love him as much as ever; her own hurt withdrawal from the remote stranger who methodically abused her every attempt to keep his home and children as befitted him. The thought too, of her sad striving for perfection - a factor she knew was totally lacking in the last years of the marriage, oh George . . .

Some time later, in early November - Guy Fawkes to be exact - Claire threw, one-by-one, all the cowboy novels George had so ardently collected, on the bonfire. They reminded her too much of the strangeness which had possessed George in those last few months. One by one they sank into the crackling flames, browning, shrivelling. Finally she held only the novel George had been reading when he had died so unexplicably . . . She dropped it into the flames near the edge of the fire and stood watching the flames suck and hiss hungrily round it. And while she watched, amid the roar and crackle and distant explosion, she noted how strangely the pages curled, and twisted . . . and moaned.

Swinging Sydenham

Marilyn Fridjohn.

SYDENHAM, a name to conjure up all the swinging sights of Top of the Pops, a name to bring gasps of envy from all unlucky enough to live in some insignificant suburb, far from the scintillating excitement of this 'in' city.

For in this environment, life is lived, being anywhere else is a mere existence. People flock from far around to pay homage to the Granada Cinema. Its reputation is spreading far so that the jet set is making a bee line for its lush velvet seats and gnashing their teeth on their reefers as they inhale its satisfying forces and stare wide-eyed at the vast Cinemascope screen, their fingers clicking to tunes they are mentally humming as transistor sets attached to their ears pound out the latest sound.

The next holy spot we visit on our once in lifetime pilgrimage is to the Alpine. This coffee bar (no let us not uplift it to the realms of a coffee-lounge, for this denotes a snobbery not seen here). This is the heart of the local social chatter and life. Be not deceived by the words 'social chatter' for here we will hear no pretentious prattle. This is the pulsating, life-giving oasis for the Sydenham crowd. Coffee is served, 1/6d. a cup, no we forget the twinge in our pockets which reflects that two pints of milk cost the price of this cup - and pay with thanks in our hearts, for here we know we will be re-educated. Just looking around we see lively faces talking - is the subject politics, sex or religion? How fascinating to know that tomorrow's adults of Sydenham are discussing the Rhodesian sanctions and foreign agreements.

You can spot the Sydenham Sect by their uncanny dress sense. The wonderful shopping schemes in the area enable everyone to dress uniquely and in good taste. I have even heard whispers that Quant received her inspiration from a day in Sydenham.

There is a small suburb about ten miles from Sydenham in the region of Charing Cross which is trying to rival our swinging city. Theatres, supermarkets, bistros, boutiques and discotheques are being erected in the hope of removing the Sydenham influence. Our society is being threatened, but we will remain staunch and the giant operations of our rivals (even financed by the Government) will not divert us from our cause. We are the jet set, the 'in' crowd, the swingers. Are you going to let us be swallowed by our jealous competitors?

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