

SOUTHGATE COUNTY GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

ANNUAL SPEECH DAYS DECEMBER 4th & 5th 1952.

HEADMASTER'S REPORT.

THURSDAY, 4th DECEMBER JUNIOR

Mr.Chairman, Mr.Cansdale, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Once more it gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to our Junior Speech Day. Among our guests I would extend a special welcome to our Chairman, Alderman F.E.Cooper, and to all members of the Education Committee and the Education Office staff here on the platform with me.

I am also especially pleased that we have been able to secure as our Guest Speaker Mr.G.S.Cansdale, Superintendent of the London Zoo. To those of you with television he needs no introduction. Perhaps some of you were hoping he would appear tonight with the same companions that he brings before the television camera. I am sorry that this would have been rather difficult to arrange, and I trust you will consider those of us on the platform a more than adequate substitute. I knew Mr.Cansdale over 20 years ago when he was an undergraduate up at Oxford. I then understood he was entering the Colonial Forestry Service, and indeed he spent 14 years in Africa in that Service before he took up his present appointment in 1948. So he has seen something of the world and I know you will be looking forward to hearing what he has to say to us as much as I am.

FRIDAY, 5th DECEMBER SENIOR

Mr.Mayor, My Lady Mayoress, Mr.Chairman, Mr.Hallward, Ladies and Gentlemen,

May I begin by again welcoming all the guests to our Senior Speech Day, particularly the Mayor and Mayoress, Our Chairman, Alderman G.Peverett, Mr.Healey, the Education Officer and his staff, and all members of the Education Committee here on the platform with me. Finally I would extend a very special welcome to our Guest Speaker, Mr.B.L.Hallward, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nottingham. Many of you will

remember that he had accepted our invitation to come last year, but on Doctors' orders he had to cancel all outside engagements. I am, therefore, more than delighted that his Doctors have apparently relaxed this restriction so that he is able to be with us tonight. Before he became Vice-Chancellor of Nottingham he was Headmaster of one of our Great Public Schools, Clifton College, a post which he assumed after holding various University appointments at Cambridge. He is well qualified, therefore, by experience to speak both to Parents and to those still at school and I ask you to join with me in welcoming him in this, his first visit to us.

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And now for my report. At the end of the year, i.e. last July, we said goodbye to 4 members of staff, to Miss Earle, Mr. Lewis, and Mr. Turner, who left to take up other appointments, and to Mr. Scott who retired after 33 years in the School. I would like to pay tribute to the loyal and devoted service of Mr. Scott both as a teacher of Classics, and as a most willing worker behind the scenes in such matters as School Stationery, and the production of the School Magazine. I am sure you will all join with me in wishing him in his retirement the health and happiness he so richly deserves. At the beginning of this term we welcomed 4 new members of staff, Miss Brewer in the English Department, Miss Campbell, Biology, Mr. Sharwood Smith, Classics, and Mr. Walker, Chemistry. We all hope they will be very happy with us.

We suffered one further great loss last May with the retirement of Mrs. Long, the School Secretary. Like Mr. Scott she had completed 33 years service and I cannot speak too highly of her work. She set a fine example to every member of the School from the Headmaster down to the youngest pupil, an example of unremitting devotion to duty. By her cheerfulness and kindness she endeared herself to us all, and by her thoroughness

and dependability she gained our respect. She too has thoroughly deserved the happy retirement that we all most heartily wish her. Her place has been taken by Mrs. Atherton who has quickly settled in to the work and is already becoming an integral part of the School.

I will now turn to our academic results. I am pleased to offer congratulations to our eight Scholarship winners whose names you will find on your programmes, particularly to D.A. Thomas who secured an open award at Queen Mary College, London. In General Certificate of Education we had, compared with last year, a slightly lower percentage of passes at Advanced Level. (75% as opposed to 79% in 1951), but at Ordinary Level there was a definite improvement (66% as opposed to 58% in 1951). We have every reason, I think, to be pleased with this result. The percentage at Advanced Level - 75% is still good, and the increased number of passes at Ordinary Level is a very welcome pointer.

You will have heard that the Minister of Education has slightly relaxed the age limit regulations. A Head is now allowed to offer a candidate under 16 years old in special cases, if, for example, he judges it to be in that candidate's interest from an educational point of view. This is a most welcome relaxation, and will solve the problem of timetabling for the "too youngs". But I want to make it clear that only in the most exceptional circumstances shall we allow a boy or girl to take the General Certificate of Education at the end of the 4th year. In my opinion it is a mistake to allow the average pupil to enter form VI too young. VI form work, as it should be, is so different from work in the lower and middle school. On entering form VI the boy or girl should be changing from a pupil into a student, and if you promote too early you get an immaturity of outlook and attitude which robs the VI form of what should be its essential characteristics. We shall, therefore, so plan the curriculum that General Certificate of Education is not taken until the end of the 5th

year, and we hope that all those who do well enough will aspire to enter form VI and aim at the heights.

I have one further thing to say in connection with the Sixth Form. In my last report you may remember that I deplored the lack of proper library facilities in the School. I am happy to tell you that there is every prospect of this being remedied. I hope to report next Speech Day that a library has been established and is in full working order.

I come next to the Girls' Games. This is a happier record than last year when, you may remember, I told you that the School field had been out of action. The Hockey team have not yet fully recovered from what was virtually a year's enforced inactivity, but we can record a modicum of success. The First XI won 4 games, drew 1 and lost 8, while the Second XI won 5 and lost 5.

We ran 4 Netball teams which played a total of 40 matches. Of these 19 were won and 21 lost. The under 13 team did best winning 6 and losing 3.

The Tennis teams did very well. The First Six was unbeaten throughout the season winning all their 9 matches, while the Second Six won 7, and lost 1 by a narrow margin. We also regained the Rose Bowl for which we compete annually with Minchenden, the first time we have held it since 1948.

Our three Rounders teams (under 15, under 14 and under 13) played a total of 12 matches of which 3 were won and 9 lost. These were all junior teams. We do not run a senior team as there are no senior teams in other schools nearby for us to play.

In Athletics the girls won the Senior Challenge Shield in the Inter School Sports held in Broomfield Park between Southgate and Potters Bar schools. With the help of some promising juniors they also won the Darlington Cup for the best performances in High Jump and Long Jump. This entitled the winners to represent their School and District at the White

City in the Middlesex school sports.

Lastly the Girls' Swimming. In the Southgate and Potters Bar Schools Gala the Junior team, which was not at full strength, won for the first time the Brunswick Shield. This Shield is awarded to the School gaining the most points in the different events.

In the North Middlesex Grammar Schools Gala the Girls' Junior Relay Team came 2nd out of 12 Schools competing, and thereby qualified to swim in the All Middlesex Schools Gala at Marshall Street Baths. There they came up against strong opposition but managed to secure 5th place out of 16 Schools.

We held our own School Gala towards the end of the Summer Term, and Blue House won the Girls' Cup.

I will conclude my report of the Girls Games by congratulating the winners of the various Inter House Matches and Competitions, namely:- Red House who won the Hockey; Green House who won the senior and intermediate Netball and Red House who won the Junior; Green House who won the Tennis; White House who won the second form Rounders, and Red House the first form, and finally, Green House who won the Girls' Championship at the Athletic Sports.

Now for the Boys' Games. In the School Swimming Gala Green House won the Cup for the boys. In outside events the Boys did not have so successful a year as usual. Boys Teams competed in the Southgate Schools Gala, but no trophies were won. We also entered Teams for the North Middlesex Grammar Schools Gala, but only one boy, Ovenden, qualified to compete in the Finals at Marshall Street, where he came 4th in the Senior Diving.

I would take this opportunity to remind Parents that we have the use of the Arnos Bath after School on Wednesdays and Fridays, and we would be very glad to see more boys and girls turning up regularly for practice. I hope Parents will encourage their children to do this.

As regards Football we had a good season. I would particularly congratulate the 1st XI who won 15 Matches, drew 1 and lost 2. The other 4 teams also did well, and there seems to be no doubt that the School has promising young players who will maintain the high standard that has been set.

In the Inter House Football Matches Blue House won the Senior and White House the Junior. This year we revived the six-a-side competition and after many close games White House emerged the winners.

The School has also been accorded Football honours beyond the borders of Southgate. Four boys played for the Middlesex Schools County XI, one for the Middlesex Youth XI against the Team selected from the Schools coaching week at Oxford, and One for the London Schools XI against Glasgow. We also note with pleasure that an old boy of the School, Peter Baker, has made his debut for Tottenham Hotspur and has played numerous games for their Reserves and A Team.

The Annual Inter House Cross Country Race was held last November. Individual winners in each age group set up new records for the course, and Red House is to be congratulated on winning Senior, Intermediate and Junior events. Our warmest congratulations go to the School Cross Country Team. In the Middlesex Grammar Schools Cross Country Championships we came first out of a field of 23 competing Schools, thereby winning the Ivanhoe Shield. It gave us great pleasure to welcome our friends from Minchenden into the second place in this event.

We also had a good Cricket season and again fielded five separate elevens. The 1st XI won 5 Matches, drew 3 and lost 2. In the Inter House Matches, White House were the winners of both Senior and Junior Competitions. Five members of the 1st XI played in trials for the County XI and also took part in the Match between the Mayor's XI and the Southgate Cricket Club.

Finally the Athletics. Now that the work on our games field has been completed we were able to hold the Athletic sports at home once more. When one takes into consideration that the ground is far from level I think we must congratulate the boys on breaking 5 School records and particularly Bale who won the middle long jump with a distance of 20' 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ " which not only beat the middle and senior records but is a best-ever all comers performance. The Sports were also noteworthy in that White House and Green House tied for the Boys' Championship, and for the first time the Pole Vault was introduced.

Boys teams, and individual boys of the School also won honours at outside meetings. In the North Middlesex Grammar School Championships we came 1st in the Senior events, 3rd in the middle and 1st in the Junior .

At the White City Finals we came 2nd in the Senior events out of 44 Schools that entered. Collier broke the previous  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile record for the Senior events, and Bale broke the middle long Jump record with a better Jump than that which won the Senior event.

In the Borough of Southgate Championships we secured the first four places in the 100 yards and in the Southgate and Petters Bar Schools Athletic meeting we again did well, particularly in the Senior events, and retained the trophies previously held. From this meeting the Teams were selected for the Middlesex Schools Athletic Meeting at the White City and a number of our boys and girls were chosen. At the White City Collier won the Senior Quarter Mile and B. Cook the intermediate High Jump. These two boys were included in the Middlesex Team in the All England Schools inter County Championships held at Bradford where Collier did the quarter mile in 50.9. seconds and Cook came 3rd in the High Jump. Both these boys went on to compete in their respective A A A Championships. Cook won the Middlesex A A Youths' High

Jump with 5' 8", while Collier won the 440 yards and ended the season by being runner up in the National Championships at Motspur Park where he did the quarter mile in 50.7 seconds.

I will now refer briefly to the other activities that have taken place during the year.

We entered four Verse Speaking Choirs and Seven Drama Groups for the Enfield Festival. Between them they won 6 First Places, 2 Thirds and a Fourth. In the under thirteen Soloist Class our four entries gained First, Third, Fourth and Fifth Places.

The School Orchestra and the Recorder Club have met regularly each week throughout the year, and continued to play at Morning Assembly. Might I mention that we need far more recruits for the School Orchestra and remind Parents that we are prepared to loan the necessary instruments if Parents will arrange for their children to have lessons on them.

The Senior Choir has sung three times a week at Morning Assembly throughout the year, providing special items at the end-of-term dismissal services.

At the Annual Inter House Musical Competition this year we were pleased to welcome an old boy of the School as our Adjudicator, Mr. George Mitchell whose Choirs are well known for their performances at the B.B.C. and elsewhere. He awarded the Cup to Red House giving special praise to the Red House Choir. He has also presented £20 to the School for the purchase of a Cup to encourage Choir Singing.

The Operatic Society performed The Yeomen of the Guard to the usual packed houses. Their performance was, I think, of the usual high standard, and I would like to thank Mr. Everard, a former Headmaster of the School, who wrote the criticism which will be appearing in the School Magazine. This year we are producing "Princess Ida" an Opera which our Society has never before attempted, and I am sure that I can again count on the support that Parents have always given us.

The Discussion Society has met at fortnightly intervals in the Xmas and Easter Terms with fair attendances, and some of our members also attended The bi-Terminal meetings of the Inter Schools Discussion Society.

While on the subject I would mention that a party of Senior pupils visited the House of Commons in June, and last Xmas Holidays a group attended the Christmas Holiday Conference arranged by the Council for Education in World Citizenship.

Other Clubs and Societies that have continued to meet are The Christian Union, The Art Club, The Serious Music Club, The Chess Club and The Table Tennis Club. These last two have played matches with other Schools. The Chess Club with a Senior and Junior Team played 20 matches of which they won 9, drew 3 and lost 8. The Table Tennis Club only played two, both of which they won.

I am glad to report more holidays abroad. During the Easter Holidays 22 girls visited Avignon and during the Whitsuntide week, 20 boys went to Belgium. Both these parties had enjoyable and interesting holidays.

After the Summer Examinations we resumed the customary day outings and visits were made by the 1st Forms to Whipsnade, the 2nds to Blenheim, the 3rds and 4ths to Portsmouth Harbour, and the 5ths and 6ths to Cambridge. We also revived the intensive courses for those that had taken G.C.E, giving each boy and girl one practical and one academic subject. In the course of these a number of boys had their first introduction to Domestic Science and a number of girls to Woodwork.

I am glad to tell you that there has been a revival of interest in National Savings. At the beginning of the year we had an average of 60 pupils contributing a total of about £8. a week. By the end of the year these figures had increased to 95 pupils and £12. The School has also participated in the U N E S C O Scheme for helping Schools in various parts of the world, and has so far collected over £30 for a School for

Crippled Children in Bombay.

Might I now say a word about leaving School. This year 14 have left from the Sixth Form to go to a University, an increase of 4 over last year. We still get, however, occasional requests from Parents who want their children to leave too early. May I emphasise that it is only in very rare cases that it is to the child's interest to leave before sitting for the General Certificate of Education Examination at Ordinary Level. For those that have the ability, it is far better for them to stay in Form VI and take it at Advanced Level as well. The best jobs with the best prospects go to those with the best qualifications. In this connection I would like to thank Mr. Clark, the Southgate Youth Employment Officer, for all the help he has given us by interviewing and advising School leavers, and in many cases securing jobs for them. He has also obtained Speakers for the Parents' Careers Evenings which we have held, and which, I hope, will become a regular feature. I would stress the importance of boys and girls thinking about their Careers as early as possible, finding out all about them, so that they can have a definite target to aim at. Far too many still begin to look for any sort of job late in July.

Talking of School leavers reminds me of the Old Scholars Association. This year an Old Boys' Dinner and a Christmas Dance were held, both functions being very successful. The various sections of the Association, Football, Cricket, Hockey, Tennis and Dramatic have also had an active and prosperous year. I would again urge all School leavers to join the Association to the benefit of The School, The Association and themselves.

Now some words of thanks. I have already mentioned Mr. George Mitchell's gift of £20 to buy a Cup to encourage Choir singing. I would like on behalf of the School to

thank him, and assure him we will make the best possible use of it. We also acknowledge with gratitude the gift of some books from Mr & Mrs. Plaskett in memory of their Son Brian, who was killed just over a year ago. We would also thank the Parents of David White, who died shortly after leaving the School in 1950, for the gift of a violin and a flute in his memory.

These are thanks given for tangible things. May I conclude this report by expressing thanks for the intangibles; by this I mean the hard work and loyal service of all those on the Staff. I would also thank once more the Education Committee and those at the Education Office for the interest they have shown, and the help they have given. I know I can count on the maintenance of this interest and this help, and I can assure them that we in the School will continue to work for its steady progress along the road that leads to success.