

Pembroke Dock Grammar School

REPORT
for the year 1953-54

**MADE BY THE
HEADMASTER
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Headmaster's Report

MR. CHAIRMAN, SIR FREDERICK and LADY REES, MR. DIRECTOR, GOVERNORS, PARENTS, FRIENDS and MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL: This may be the last time that the School Prize-giving is held in this Hall. It is partly because of that that I have been willing again to pack in as many bodies as possible. If to this sardineship there is no return, should we not realise now both our relief and our regrets? It will be strange, I am sure, in those bloated halls over the hill to be reporting on what we did *down below* and remembering ever more faintly time proliferating proximity in which we lived - and sometimes moved. Free we shall be, but shall we, for good or ill, know each other so well?

For the very reason that today we are on view, perhaps for the last time, as a close corporation, I welcome especially our Guests of Honour, Sir Frederick and Lady Rees. Only last week at Milford Haven Grammar School Prizegiving I heard Mr. Wyn Jones, Secretary of the Welsh Joint Education Committee, refer to that School's early days—in 1900 thirty-seven pupils and two of them certificate winners—and go on to say that one of those two was John Frederick Rees, the boy whose brilliant academic career brought him to Professorships and ultimately to the Principalship of the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire, Cardiff. Now, a half-century later, we are delighted to welcome him and Lady Rees in their semi-retirement (not even *semi*-really, for Sir Frederick is away and about constantly on some commission, giving Ceylon a new constitution or rating roundly the secret vice of night-baking. Who knows what next?). If I envy Milford anything, apart from the fact of Sir Frederick Rees himself, it is the recent and beautifully produced volume on the fishing town which he has ushered through the University of Wales Press. It will be long, I fear, before we match this in Pembroke Dock. Nevertheless, Sir Frederick is here today to inspire us to emulation, and if there is one thing which heartens me personally, it is that admission of his in an unguarded moment that on his mother's side he too is a Mathias. Obviously there are no worlds beyond his reach! I do welcome Sir Frederick and Lady Rees very warmly on your behalf. They were here very generously not long since on the occasion of the Dock Leaves Sale, and it is delight to see them again before an even bigger crowd.

In turning now to my Report, the first note I sound must be one of sadness. On 1st July last died Alderman E. B. Davies, Governor of this School, in a sudden and unexpected relapse after an operation. It is impossible in a few words to do justice to any human being, let alone one who had worked so hard in the public service as 'E.B.' But I would say that his especial quality was *warmth* - a warmth perhaps going back to his beginnings as a farm lad in Welsh Clunderwen - a warmth that made him seem at the age of well over seventy vital and interested and enthusiastic far beyond the powers of many his juniors. After I had announced the sad news to the School, one of the senior boys came up to me and said: 'You know, sir, I hadn't heard until you told us. And ever since I've been picturing him sliding down the snow slopes from Grindelwald. First ahead of all of us, and enjoying himself like any boy. That was only four years ago.' 'Yes,' I said. 'I remember. I remember very well.' There was nothing more I felt like saying. He was a man one does not forget.

The Staff has had its losses too, but not to *the last enemy*. Here, in any case, there are always compensating gains. In September 1953 Miss C. E. Brown and Miss M. J. Jones joined us, the one to teach Geography, the other Botany and Chemistry. This is history as old as Herodotus now, or so it seems (though possibly one should not admit such things when there are ladies in the case). At the same time came M. Jean Bésida of Avallon, our new French Assistant (who to our misfortune has had no successor), and Miss Hylde Thomas, who became School Secretary.

Our only loss at the end of the academic year 1953-4 was that of Mr. Raymond Garlick, who was whisked away by ultramontane translation to Blaenau Ffestiniog. Our only loss, but how grave! Mr. Garlick's five years here had been marked not only by fine teaching, as July's English results clearly showed, but by the creation of a literary tradition in the VIth Form - a tradition born of his own example both as editor and poet. It is not mere indiscretion, I am sure, if I reveal that one of his pupils trying a University Scholarship at Cardiff fairly recently obtained in English 8% more than any candidate offering that or any other subject. Nor is a second and very up-to-date piece of news irrelevant. Peter Preece, who left School only in July but whose poetry has been seen in a number of magazines as well as heard once or twice over the air, has in his first term at Cardiff been made Editor of *Cap and Gown*, the College magazine, - to my mind a remarkable achievement. And since William Smith, another Old Boy, has for some years edited at Bangor the three-college magazine *Sigma*, we can say that half of the literary holds of student opinion are already in our hands! None of his ex-students would deny their debt to Mr. Garlick, who had them all writing, openly or secretly, and in so doing automatically adopting a distinctive attitude to the study of their English texts. A few words here and there are no way to sum up five years' teaching, producing plays, writing, editing and inspiring. I can only say that in Mr. Garlick we lost a first-class member of Staff, whose work will not be forgotten here, least of all by those old enough and intelligent enough to appreciate the standards he set.

Perhaps I have made it seem as though we shall never be the same again. Such was not my intention. I could not wish less than justice either to the other members of the English department or to Mr. Garlick's successor. Mr. Clive Gammon, 'who joined us this term from Stand Grammar School, Whitefield, Manchester, has excellent experience and is a creative writer himself. The School's English is still in good hands, and past glories cast no shadow over the future. We welcome with him Miss M. J. Cleevely, who is with us for a year as an additional teacher, mainly of Arts subjects. I must mention too our happy expectation of the arrival next term of Miss C. M. Lewis from Westcliff School, Weston-super-Mare. One-time Head Prefect of this School, she will be the first Old Pupil on the Staff, at least during my time. Her timetable this term was taken over in the first instance for a month by Mr. William Smith of University College, Bangor - a very generous gesture on his part - and latterly by Mr. Peter Howells of Haverfordwest. To both our very grateful thanks. The only other item worthy of mention under the heading *Staff* is the photograph which Miss Lewis Davies insisted on our having taken last term. At the proof stage it was a case of which faces we preferred with eyes closed, but on the whole we think we looked rather well, as least as well as any set of pedagogues *can* look!

At the beginning of the School year 1953-4 Graham Tregidon and Valmai Folland were Head Prefects, and numbers had dropped, misleadingly as it now seems, to 468 on roll. The necessity for an extra form of 23 in the Upper IVth year-group who sat

jowl by jowl in the Cloister's 16 desks (when they were not actually on top of them) made conditions *seem* much worse, if only because one came in at the front door and was hit by them immediately. When 110 were admitted as a result of the Entrance Examination last March (necessitating four first-year forms) we knew that whatever writing was on the wall it was not in the least funny. Our peak concentration this term is 495 - a figure which gives a saturation quotient suggesting both smog and corns. Homeless forms have overflowed to St. Andrew's Schoolroom, which the chapel authorities kindly redecorated to receive them. Very recently the virtual obliteration by storm, not to mention tempest, on the night of November 30, of an arty annexe in the School Field has rendered shiftless and happy two more classes, and we now seek sanctuary in St. John's. Conditions recently are the worst I have known here. They are indeed the worst I have experienced anywhere. The pitiful shifts to which we are reduced in order to be able to teach our most senior pupils are not only a source of continual irritation but are necessarily affecting our academic standards. Individuals of determination, of course, will triumph over these and any other difficulties, but a reasonable expectation of adequate space to write, a degree of quiet, and some security of tenure are a *sine qua non* for the maintenance of a good standard among the weaker-willed majority. I do not offer this solely as an excuse for what was, this year, an unsatisfactory result at Advanced Level. We have not, since I have been here, had a group of VIth Formers electric with ability, but for the first time, in 1954, there *were* some candidates of better powers than their results suggested. For this they must make their own excuses. Of the 20 pupils entered (3 of whom were not offering three subjects) only four passed in three subjects, and another five in two. Though our private guess of failure shadowed several entrants beforehand, I still feel that the overall result was not satisfactory. Eric Morgan's State Scholarship came as a welcome salve - a reward for what had been in his case a year of outstanding development.

No sooner does one open an umbrella than the sun comes out. The Ordinary Level results were our best since the 50% pass level was adopted. 81 candidates were presented: 74 of them obtained Certificates: and in terms of subjects attempted a percentage of success of 53.5 was achieved. This may not look wonderful except to the confidential eye of members of Staff. I know very well, and feel justified in telling you, that in view of the ability available, this result indicated hard work and good teaching - indeed in some subjects extraordinarily good teaching. The boys of Form V.R. turned in a very solid result, and a number of Form V.O. surpassed what we thought possible. Need I say that it would not be difficult to make results at this level sound better still by rigorously excluding from entry weak candidates, of whom there are a great many? But I feel this to be a very severe discouragement to pupils of limited powers who have shown perseverance and loyalty - a discouragement which, if truth be told, would affect up to half the total Fifth Form entry. I prefer, therefore, to cut down the number of subjects that weak candidates may offer rather than refuse them entry altogether. After all, a Certificate with one subject on it is at least proof of having stayed the course, and, perhaps, of having more courage and determination than many early leavers who waste their Grammar School places. For all you know, the pupil whose Certificate carries one or two subjects only *may* have put in as fine an effort as the one who can show eight or nine. On the other hand, he may not. But the great thing is to try. You must take my word for it, therefore, that this Ordinary Level result, ability and opportunity and determination all considered, was a good one. I shall be well satisfied with as good next time. 104 pupils left School during the academic year, of whom 53 were here until July. Eight of these proceeded to a University or its equivalent: Eric Morgan to Nottingham to study Chemistry, Valmai

Folland to Aberystwyth for English, Ann David and Peter Preece to Cardiff for English and Betty Morgan to the same College for History, David John and Richard Rees to St. David's, Lampeter, with a view to the Church, and Nigel Albury to E.M.I. Institutes, London, for a four year course leading to a degree and entry into the radio industry. Three girls entered Teachers' Training Colleges - Pauline Francis, Shenstone, Kidderminster, Joan Goddard, Hereford, and Kathleen Lockett (whose fine voice we shall miss) Trent Park, Barnet. Graham Tregidon and Devan Preece have similar intentions, when they emerge on the other side of National Service. Four girls took up Nursing, five boys and girls the Civil Service, four Banking (the largest number for many years), one Accountancy and two Local Government. These pupils were not the only ones who were equipped professionally, but they represent all of whom we have certain news. It is, I think, satisfactory that their destinations are so varied.

One of my pleasures for the past few years has been to receive repeated and weighty assurance from University teachers that the Old Pupils of this School, even when not academically distinguished, are in most cases ready for responsibility and developed socially and personally to a degree above the average. I have mentioned Peter Preece and William Smith. May I note too in passing that Gillian Davies, who took her degree in History at Aberystwyth last June, was elected this year Vice-President of the Students' Union there? Those who scan their *Western Mail* at all keenly will not need to be told, either, that David John, for so long a pillar of School productions here, has in his first term appeared in the St. David's, Lampeter, production of *The Wind and the Rain* - a play surely worthy of a good run in 1954! No doubt students of real academic distinction are few enough from any School. If so, it is the more encouraging to be able to record that John Maynard, who took a first class honours degree in Chemistry at University College, London, last year, was awarded the Rosa Morison Memorial Medal for the best student in College graduating in Science in 1953. Old Pupils considerably more venerable than he have been dodging the columnists too. Twice within three months I opened my *Sunday Observer* to see at the head of the centre-page *Table Talk* a countenance which expressly proclaimed in paragraph below its Pembroke Dock origins. Once it was Sir Alfred Road, Chief Inspector of Taxes, and once Mr. W. F. Grimes, to whom the Temple of Mithras has surely brought a public repute that all his expert picking and shoveling had previously failed to lay bare. Mr. C. W. Wells, Deputy Director of Veterinary Services, Malaya, was awarded the O.B.E. this year, and (just to show what a variety we produce) a much older Old Boy, Mr. Archie Gwilliam, unobtrusively took home to Cardiff the Welsh Bowls Singles title. Among local items it is, I think, permissible to mention the appointment of Mr. H. J. Dickman to be Clerk to the Haverfordwest Rural District Council, and the really magnificent and exhaustive year's work (highly praised by Professor David Williams) which Mrs. Wisbey (née Violet Watkins) put into her Angle scrap-book to win the County W.I. prize. Old Pupil activities have continued as usual, and the Dinner - missing in 1953 - took satisfactory corporeal shape again at Whitsun, with Mr. W. Tidswell, Headmaster of Milford Haven Grammar School, as Guest of Honour. A production of Garrick and Coleman's little-seen play *The Clandestine Marriage* was put on by the ad hoc union of three dramatic companies, but since the cast included one present pupil, six members of Staff and five Old Pupils, the performance was legitimately an extension of School and Old Pupil activities. Two of the three companies, amalgamating into an Old Pupil compound bigger and more phosphorescent than ever, later put on *The White Sheep of the Family*.

I have wandered afield after the School's former members. I must not forget that some present members of our community, or members present in 1953-4, have been knocking at the headlines too. Early in October 1953 we learned that Karl Lees was one of the few Grammar School boys, under the late dispensation, to earn entry to the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth. A month or two later Eric Morgan was chosen as a member of the British Schools' Exploring Society's 1954 Expedition to Quebec and regions north. A Queen's Scout, he was not only the first Pembrokeshire boy to be so chosen, but the only boy from Wales to be included in this particular expedition. David Thomas won first prize in the *Western Mail* St. David's Day Essay Competition, English Section Class B, and received his reward from Sir Ifan ab Owen Edwards, in the presence of the School and Governors, one day late in March. Graham Tregidon, selected as captain of the Welsh Secondary Schools XV against Yorkshire, and sorely disappointed because the match was cancelled, earned his honour again when he captained Wales versus England at Leicester on April 3. He not only played brilliantly himself but led his team to victory. I am pretty sure that this honour has never come the way of a Pembrokeshire schoolboy before. You may like to know that last week he was at outside-half for the Technical Training Command XV which won the R.A.F. Command Final at Uxbridge, and that yesterday he was picked to play for the R.A.F. side against Bath. Obviously he has not rested on his laurels. Summer too brought us one distinction. Christopher Macken, after holding match-point against the ultimate winner in the semi-final of the Welsh Under-Sixteen Tennis Championship, made good his lessons by going on to Bristol and winning the West of England Championship easily. Paternal coaching and a course at Lilleshall at Easter had not been without their effect.

After all this it is perhaps no surprise that the School has been in *Punch* - two pages of us with drawings, not to mention 8,400 *educational subjects* (which in this case means pupils, on the analogy of Gwyn Thomas's *voters*) and a machine which 'makes a democratic award of marks, ensuring that all children make equal progress'. We are content to be funny, even if quite unrecognisable, if it helps *The London Charivari* to stagger on. A recent S.C.M. Press publication entitled *The School as a Christian Community* carried a chapter on this School which earned favourable comment. And to cap all, Mr. Stephen Griffith had an article in the *Journal of Education* on *Backsliding in Secondary Schools*. Our congratulations to him are mingled suitably with sorrow that he should have found sufficient material for his thesis here in our midst! No one can say that we have lacked publicity. In fact, it is now second nature *not* to duck when we see the reporters coming! So much has been tried already that it is difficult to point to innovations. Indeed, some things we have had to forego - a foreign tour, for instance, for which too few people were rich enough in 1954. There was, it is true, a Music Group or Choir last autumn which trolled away happily at *The Admiral's Broom* and other stirring pieces. But that was when we had a Rugby XV who could sing. Now the dust in No. 11 lies undisturbed after School. Mr. Sackett of Water Street took over the woodwind class in November 1953, and the Mock G.C.E. examinations were held in April and May of this year, thus bringing the *I told you sos* frighteningly near the real crisis. These alterations aside, little has changed, not even the gentlemen doing their ten years hard in writing class.

There were possibly more "educational experiences" (as distinct from lessons) than in previous years. Among these I do not list the appearances of regular entertainers like S/L. Gregory (making his last visit), Mr. Lockyer and Mrs. Williamson of the Youth Employment Service, or of a first-timer like Miss J. E. Rees of the R.S.P.C.A. But there were two visits to the cinema, once for *The Conquest of Everest* and once for

The Film of the Royal Tour. Ballet made its first professional appearance in Pembroke Dock in September 1953 and was duly pronounced 'cissy' by all the boys who did *not* go. But the Ballets Minerva, athletic and undeterred, returned again in January and have recently paid a third visit. The Arts Council sponsored performances of *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Duenna*, which were never less than well staged and costumed. Not only was the autumn of 1953 the first occasion on which I was able to persuade the Arts Council to risk the perils of our stage in preference to those of the Garrison Theatre. It was also the first-fruit of a new and generous policy on the part of both the Education Authority and the Borough Council in contributing substantially towards the cost of School matinees. This development cannot be too loudly welcomed. Among visiting speakers were the Reverend Llywelyn Jones of Liverpool, General Secretary of the Foreign Mission of the Presbyterian Church of Wales, Miss Gwyneth Evans, Headmistress of a large School in Madagascar, Mr. Idris Thomas of Singapore, who brought along some wonderful cases of butterflies and moths, and our old friend Mr. Coleman, who prepared us mentally for the sun's eclipse. There were music recitals by Elizabeth Bowen and Phyllis Ash-Child of the Welsh National Opera Company, and by Margaret Haig and Gertrude Trede, who demonstrated costume and musical instruments down the centuries. An exhibition of the paintings of Kyffin Williams was staged in September and October 1953, the Pembroke Arts Club gave the School the benefit of their display of photographs and coloured slides, and ours was, I believe, the first bid against the County Librarian's generous offer of a loan collection of maps and prints of Pembrokeshire. All these brought their special blessings to some, at least, of our number.

I pass over the School buildings almost without comment. It is enough that most of them remained standing. Three of the upstairs classrooms were panelled to receive drawing-pins. Had this happened in the huts it would no doubt have been of considerable assistance in supporting their structure. We have, however, received certain benefits of a solid and material nature. A new Bell-Howell film projector came our way in September 1953 (though we are still waiting for the screen). An extra pair of curtains, also provided by the Education Authority, have in some sort clothed the nakedness of our centre stage. Outside too a new Atco mower which really cuts grass has sent into retirement the poor coughing thing which previously and very occasionally took a turn up and down. We ourselves by our own unaided efforts (Education Authority please note!) purchased one of Kyffin Williams's paintings, which now hangs in Room 1. In an excess of financial optimism, we also purchased a new Hockey Cup, intended for the House Junior XIs. This will be awarded for the first time today. Mention of new awards brings me to the munificence of private individuals and in particular to that of the Reverend John L. Pay of Maiden Wells, who has presented the School for three years with a prize for Biblical Studies. I would take this opportunity of thanking Mr. Pay not merely for his gift but for his perennial interest in the School and its spiritual welfare. Mr. and Mrs. Tregidon made a most generous donation of £5 to the School Sports Fund, and gifts to the Library came from Mrs. Bleddyn Howell, Mrs. H. G. Humberston and Mrs. C. Humphreys, Helga Daihoff and Jutta Rauchfleisch, David Thomas, Miss Sylvia Canton and Mrs. Anna Jones. This last name may remind many, sadly, of the end of an era. Mrs. Trevor Jones, who for so long after her husband's death lived on alone in Clovelly, Bush Street, was some months ago persuaded to join her son in Horsham. Before she went she insisted on presenting to the School Library her husband's learned periodicals, and it is some comfort to us to have in them a tangible reminder not merely of a great Headmaster but of the thirty-five years which really made the School what it is. When Mrs. Anna Jones left town there must have been many who felt a link with the past

audibly snap. Before I turn to the main chronology of the School year I ought to allow that the feats of nervous courage in Assembly were more numerous than before. Karl Lees was heard to speak on H. J. S. Smith, Eric Morgan on James Gregory, Norman Phillips on John Wallis, Megan Harries on William Pitt the Younger, Betty Morgan on Charles James Fox, David John on Woodrow Wilson, Jennifer Gordon on John Wilkes, Una Flint on George Washington (of cherry-tree fame), Peter Preece on Gerard Manley Hopkins, David Phillips on Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, and George Reynolds on Clark Maxwell. Armour of proof could do no better. These have sent over their first real salvoes in the cold war. They are not likely to face worse than their massed schoolfellows.

I have left until now any mention of our main creative activities, first among which must come the School Play, Norman Nicholson's *The Old Man of the Mountains*. For the first time since 1948 the cast was small and included no member of Staff. Once again the standard of verse-speaking and of production was commendably high, and if I noticed any falling-off from our Kanchenjunga of the past, it was chiefly in a failure or two of concentration and consequently of sincerity at vital points. Terence Panton, however, in his first real part, gave us an Elijah complete and terrible in his simplicity. A journey at speed through the Christmas parties (the senior one with floor-show by Messrs. Cooper and Shaw), through January's fallen-snow weather and a minor coal crisis, brings me again to the fringe of the Eisteddfod crowd, from which disadvantage point I can see again the conductors and adjudicators coping hoarsely with their nine-hour programme. Not that the actual proceedings were as long last year: adjudications of literary items were postponed. But the preliminaries took four and a half days: there were 109 entrants for the Junior Poetry-Speaking alone: and the House machines seemed more noisily in gear than ever. Once again there was no holding Glyndwr, who rattled up 1,019 points, 245 more than they won with in 1953 and twice as many as the bottom House earned. Many of the most outstanding individual performances came from other Houses - for instance, that of Picton's David Thomas in wresting the crown of Prepared Speech from VIth Form temples. I liked too the organisation and personal effort of Picton House Captain David John. But Glyndwr prefects as a team were irresistible. Prolific scorers themselves (Dorothy Thomas, for instance, notched 73 points herself and Peter Preece 53) they always had their followers within distance and well ahead of the rest. So, despite the shouting, there could be only one result - Glyndwr first again! The end-of-the-month addendum to all this excitement, the House Drama Competition, which was adjudicated by Miss K. Hearn of Tenby, produced two creditable one-acters from Glyndwr and Hywel and an outstanding one from Picton. Ann David's production, David John's incessant vociferation and the care and effort of the staging, all made *The Little Man* (complete with spotted baby) and Galsworthy's international railway-carriage well worth a return visit. Each year I am more impressed, not only with the failures which must result from throwing such responsibility upon the prefects, but with the quality of the success, indeed with the stature and leadership achieved by those who win through.

The summer term is always quiet, comparatively speaking, except for the rumbling of exams. The eclipse of the sun on 30 June, however, not only provided a longer dinner-hour but gave Messrs. Griffith and Lloyd the opportunity to borrow a telescope and get the groundlings to smoke a great many bits of glass. After this it was only a moment or two to the outbreak of educational visits. Earlier in the year parties had been to Llanelly to see the All-Blacks, to Milford to see *His House in Order* and *Hamlet*, and to Tasker's to hear *Orpheus and Eurydice*. In July, however,

“educational subjects” got away in large numbers to Somerset, Oxford, Stratford and Ferryside for five of four-day trips. Meanwhile Mr. Cooper had modestly trundled his artists from Orierton to Lamphey Court, and other humbler souls reached Skomer and the upper Cleddau. No one was declared missing, for long. The plum was out of the pudding this year, however. No foreign tour! To make up for this there was an especial spate of visitors. In the autumn term came Rotraut Kudicke and Wilhelm Leuchter from the Frankfurt region of Germany. In February Etienne Rivat of Pully-Lausanne was here for ten days, and the following month arrived our most unusual visitor to date - Professor Ivan Rudolf, a Secondary School Headmaster from Maribor, Yugoslavia, who “observed” us for the best part of three weeks. The summer term brought Helga Daihoff and Jutta Rauchfleisch from Osnabruck, together with Elfriede Mundi from Vienna. One of the happiest features of this summer, however, was the reappearance on holiday of two of our previous students, Axel Schroeder and Gertrud Adametz, who had enjoyed themselves so much that they had to come back. Our scheme, I think, could hardly wish for a better advertisement. End of term brought a cheerful innovation. Through the agency of Professor Rudolf, four Yugoslav boys came to Freshwater East to camp with half a dozen of our seniors under the leadership of Eric Morgan and Derek Blake, and although the timing and organisation in Maribor were bad, before the School closed we were able to hold a camp fire attended and enjoyed by well over a hundred people. In this our Austrian girls, Kathleen Lockett and Mr. Tom Bevan with his harp were well to the fore. I need hardly say that this camp meant a great deal of work, and to Mr. Islwyn Griffiths and Mr. Stephen Griffith must go our grateful thanks.

One further aspect of School life remains to be described - games. The Hockey XIs had a season exceptional even among many good ones. The 1st XI, unbeaten in 18 matches except by the Staff, scored 76 goals and conceded only 7. When the tally of the other three XIs is taken into account the score mounts to 137-13. Gwen Evans, who captained the first team until Christmas, and Jean Crutchley played for the County Schoolgirls XI and Jean was awarded her County colours. It should perhaps be mentioned that Miss Ebsworth and Miss Brown of the Staff both play for the Pembrokeshire Ladies XI. Of our four and sometimes five Rugby teams, the 1st XV and the Junior XV turned in their best season’s performance to date. The 1st XV, in winning 17 of its 24 matches, scored 368 points against 75, and some of its defeats were very narrow ones inflicted by teams such as those of The Lewis School, Pengam, and Carmarthen Grammar School, amongst the strongest in Wales. The Junior XV reached the astonishing total of 355 points *for* and only 15 *against*. Their line was crossed only twice in the season. Nine of these Juniors played regularly for the County Junior XV, and in addition to Tregidon, John Ebsworth, Peter Preece and Derek Blake represented the County at Senior level. For the Pembrokeshire Schools XV which toured Cornwall last Easter we provided half the team (indeed, two Schools provided fourteen of the fifteen) and the results were most encouraging. Cornish Schools were beaten 18-9 and Bristol Schools 12-11, but in the points scored against us there was only one try. Within another few days of this, Graham Tregidon was playing for Swansea against the Barbarians.

Athletics were completed before the exams this year. Our Sports Day on May 20 was bitterly cold. Both judges and competitors were glad to get through the events quickly, and apart from the fact that Eric Morgan and Margaret Phillips were Victor and Victrix Ludorum respectively, little of detail remains on my mind. I could wish that less of the County Sports Meeting at Milford remained too. We thought that we

had a rather better team than usual, but everything imaginable went wrong, and if Eric Morgan had not won the Pole Vault in pouring rain at the end, I should have thought a hoodoo had settled on us. As it was, we were cupless and third in both boys' and girls' events, and although positionally we could hardly, perhaps, have hoped for improvement, the fifty or sixty points we *dropped* would certainly have helped to give the two Schools our betters a run for their Cups.

If the 1953 Cricket season had given us hopes of as good a successor, those hopes were dashed. There was no John Davies this year, and Haverfordwest Grammar School skittled the holders of the Bowen-Summers Bowl in the first round. Evan Evans and Graham Tregidon both played for the Pembrokeshire/Carmarthenshire Joint XI, and Tregidon, who made a very neat 56 not out for the County against Breconshire, had a Final Welsh Trial as a wicket-keeper but did not succeed in finding a place in the Welsh team. Perhaps it is hardly worth mentioning that whatever the School XI's deficiencies, the Staff were all out for 29, as usual! Our Tennis VI was not strong and much the most reliable member of it was Helga Daihoff, who at the end of the season won the Girls' Singles Cup. Since a compatriot of hers won it in 1953, this has only got to happen once more for us to feel that we *ought* to send the Cup oversea - as, like the Lonsdale Belt, won outright! The Boys' Singles were won for the third time by Stephen Griffiths, and the Mixed Doubles by Noreen Jones and Gordon Rickard. Stephen Griffiths and Christopher Macken played a number of matches for the very successful County Senior VI and had a big hand in their victory over the Cardiff Athletic Club. Our most successful team of the summer was undoubtedly the Rounders IX, captained by Jean Crutchley, which scored 25 rounders against 6 and remained unbeaten. I should mention too that the School was host during the year to a Welsh Secondary Schools Final Rugby Trial, played on the London Road ground, and to a Pembrokeshire versus Carmarthenshire A.A.A. meeting at Bush Camp.

We are almost at finis. It remains only to record that National Savings totalled nearly £568 for the year, over £100 more than in 1952/3. The sum of £56 was distributed in cheques to charities from the Social Service Fund, in addition to a contribution of over £12 to the Dylan Thomas Fund, the largest School subscription I saw entered. The Barnardo's Helpers League again collected about £46. All these collections and funds mean work for somebody, and I hope you will feel, as I do, that in the warp and weft of School life there are not many strands missing which it might have been in our power to insert.

And so enough, as many, if not all, will say. Yet having got myself an undeserved reputation for being provocative, I may as well use this opportunity to have a dig at my neighbours on the educational belt, the Universities and the Primary Schools. What I have to say about the Universities is this (and I shall be brief): The Grammar Schools have been blamed in recent years for not providing university entrants who have had a wide and general education. I say boldly that that is the fault, in the main, of the Universities themselves. It is their representatives on examining bodies who insist on absurdly long syllabuses at Advanced Level - syllabuses, in fact, which make VIth Form teaching one mad rush to complete the course. How then can a liberal timetable of reading and discussion even be considered? I am not pleading for an extension of non-examinable subjects in the VIth Form, which is the familiar elixir shaken up for us in conferences. What I want is more time on examination subjects and a chance to *teach*. It would do some of the more dyed-in-the-wool university teachers immense good to be compelled to spend a couple of years in the Grammar

Schools to implement the syllabuses they set in terms of the time and material they would have to work with. A little such experience might persuade them that without lowering standards many of these syllabuses could be cut, and if that were done, they might find that their average university entrant had been taught rather than crammed.

My complaint against the Primary Schools is also about syllabuses, but paradoxically an opposite one. The ground that the child entrant has to cover for the Secondary Schools' Entrance Examination is limited - a certain sort of English and a given quantity of Arithmetic, no more. The longer I go on watching the progress of successful candidates, the more convinced I am that there are too many in the Grammar Schools who have been well taught, nay driven, through their bottleneck year and when they are faced by the wide range of subjects in the Secondary School, they are beaten from the word 'go'. Don't think I am blaming the teachers. Whatever the system, they have to get results, as I'm sure parents, of all people, expect. Nor am I saying that there shouldn't be an examination. What I mean is that I like less and less closed tests of one-word answers in English, Arithmetic at speeds that are undesirable, and a total absence of History, Geography, Nature Study, General Knowledge or any attempt to test the child's background in terms of what he or she has read. A much wider examination, for which it would be impossible to cram, would bring to the top less fallibly the children of an intelligence fit for a Grammar School, besides throwing far more weight on an ability to write at length in English. It would also give primary teachers an opportunity to teach some English grammar, without which no child can begin to comprehend a foreign language. We are no worse off here than elsewhere. There is no privately-aimed stone inside my washed-leather glove! It is simply that I do not like the criteria of ability on which we are all bound, it seems, to depend today. Fair play, I say, for the slower, more persistent, more reliable child of interested parents, who is more likely in the end to do something worthwhile with a Grammar School course than many of the one-word intelligentsia who skip in ahead of him! Is it stark reaction to say that character, even more than ability, is the determining factor in a successful School career? Very well, I am a reactionary, and unrepentant.