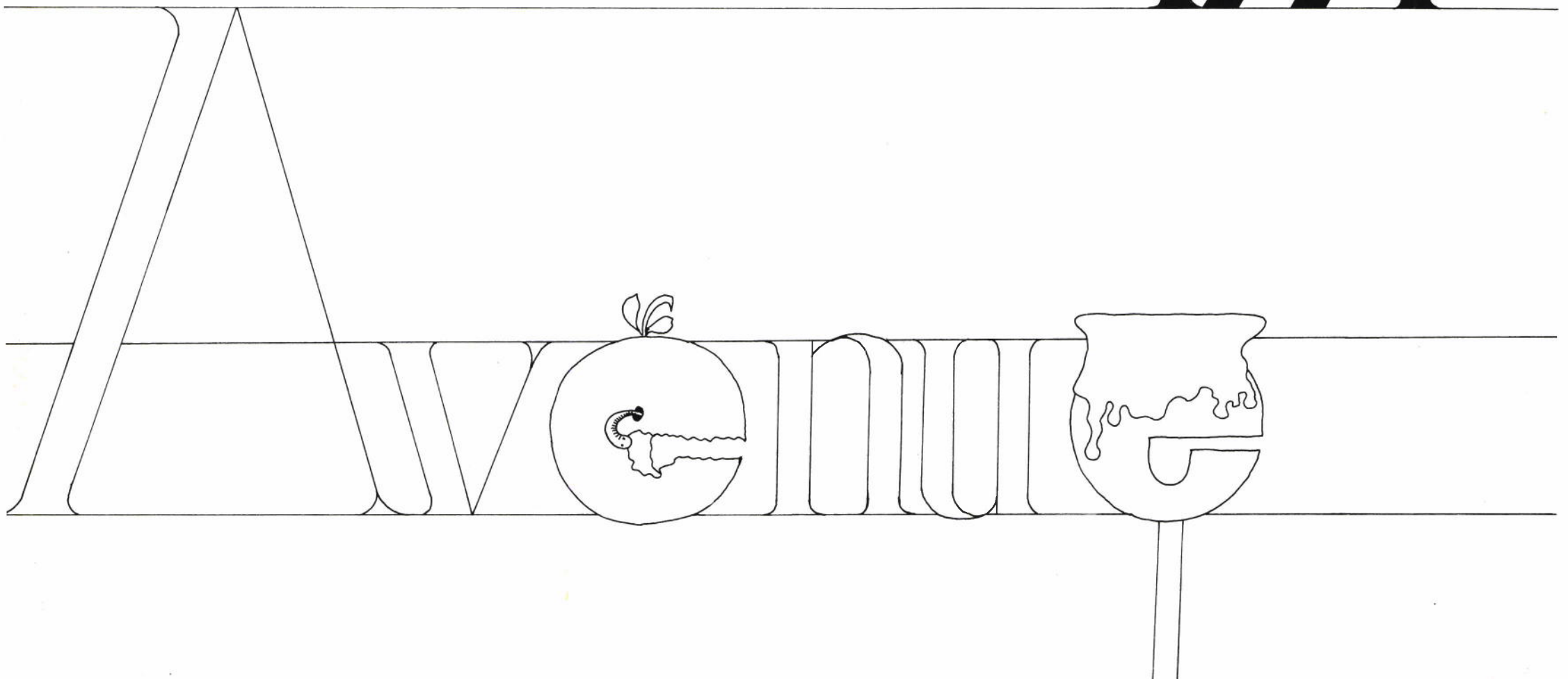
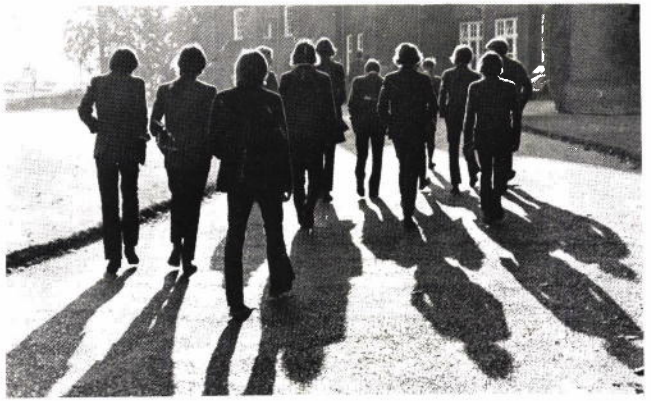
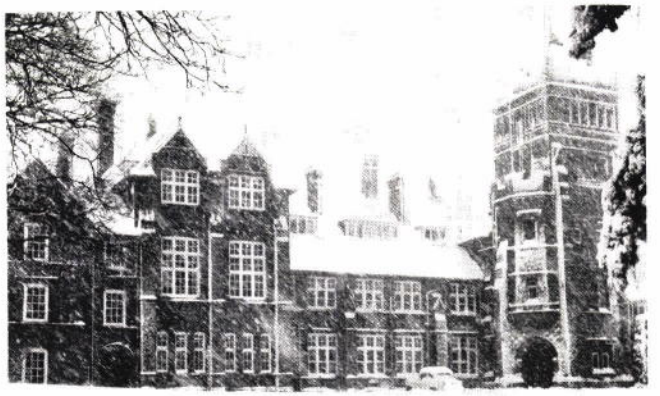
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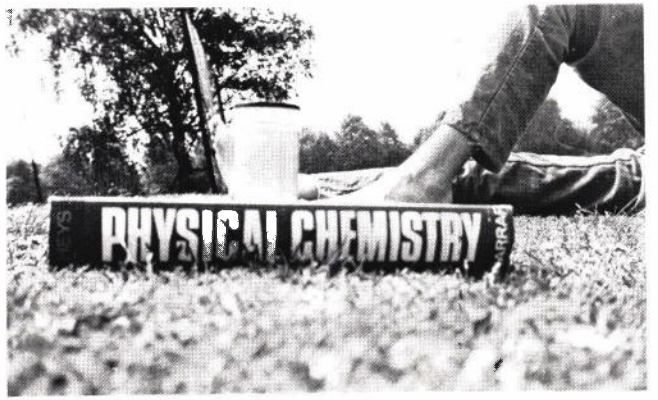














Orders for the next issue, or for copies of this, should be sent to The Business Manager, Friends School, Saffron Walden, Essex. Prices for this issue 20p to members of the school, 25p (post free) to others.
Details of advertising rates from the Business Manager.
Advertising copy for the next issue should reach him by 1st December 1971.

The Avenue is financed by a grant from the School Committee, sales and advertising revenue.

THE AVENUE Spring 1971 Vol. 46 No. 141

NOTE:-

The Postal Strike has made for production difficulty and delay.

In particular we have had to cut down on the proof reading stage.

Our apologies for errors.

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SPRING TERM

On Christmas night the Rose and Crown burnt down, and the sad news travelled as far as America! We returned to school to find we had been converted to North Sea Gas, hence the new free bunsen burners. We welcomed three student teachers to join the Maths, History and Biology Depts. In February we were the hosts to several local schools in an inter-school dance, and later that month 4th, 5th and 6th forms participated in a Vietnam teach-in organised by 6_2 and some staff. At the beginning of March a surprise fall of snow, nine inches in six hours, made possible the building of a super igloo on the tennis courts!

INTER ALIA

SUMMER TERM

We began the term by posing for the school photo, and our 15 months of hard practising culminated in performances of Bach's B Minor Mass at school, Thaxted and Friend's House Old Scholars' weekend passed with the usual festivities – sports, bonfire and entertainment, including Noel Coward's "Hands Across the Sea" produced and acted by the staff. Torrential rainstorms relieved exam tension. Afternoon classes dissolved and poured onto the field and the asphalts. After exams we said goodbye to many surprised early leavers from 6_2. Mock elections gave birth to the 6_2 Total Apathy Party and proved the school to be predominantly Liberal. The 7th July was recorded as one of the hottest days ever and we had fun and games on the field. Early next morning the La Coume party left, including Lylie Brown our Westtown exchange, and during Assembly a thunderstorm cut the electricity supply.

Arrivals:

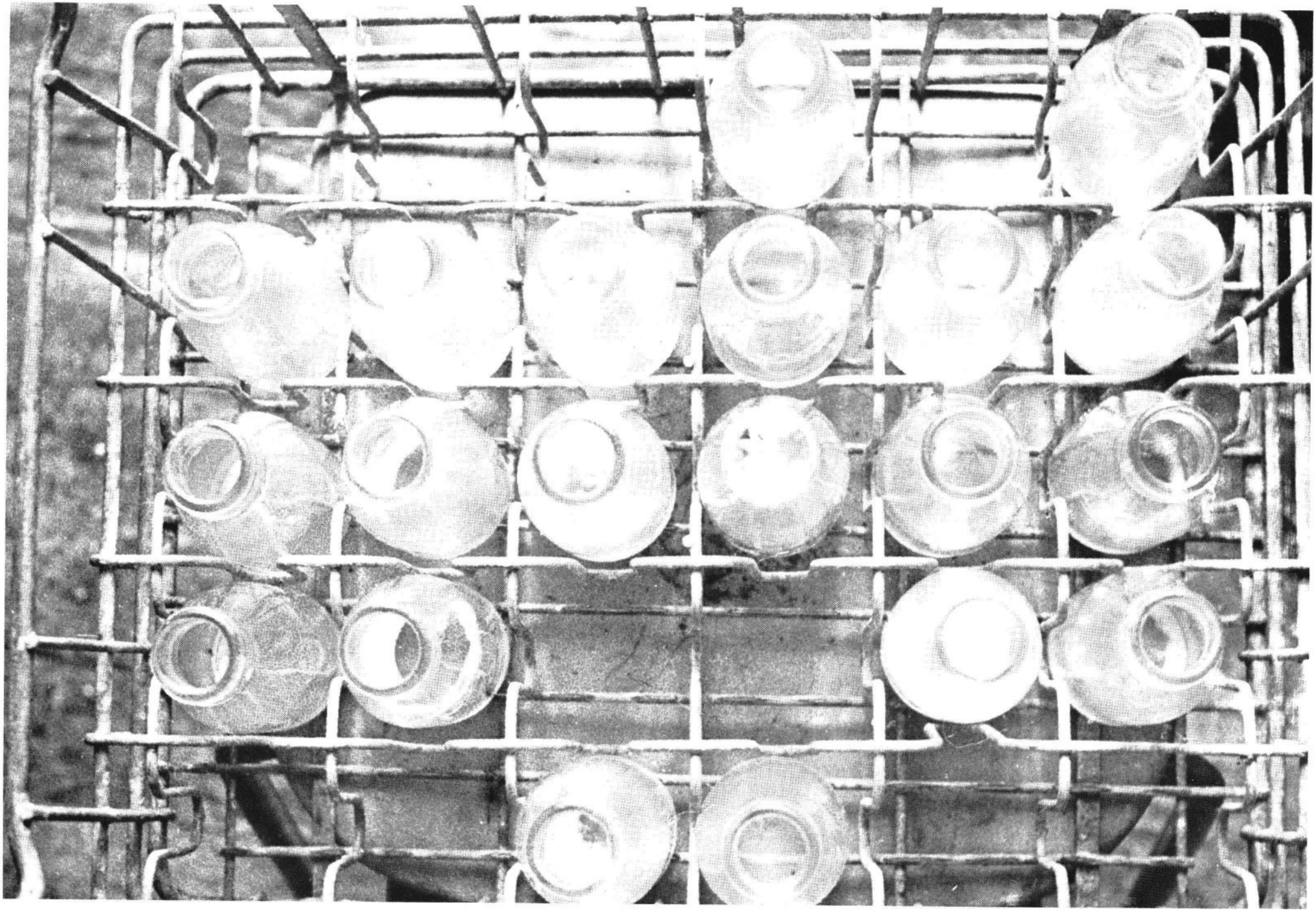
to Mr. and Mrs. Woods – a daughter, Sara Juliette, to Mr. and Mrs. High – a daughter, Catherine Elizabeth.

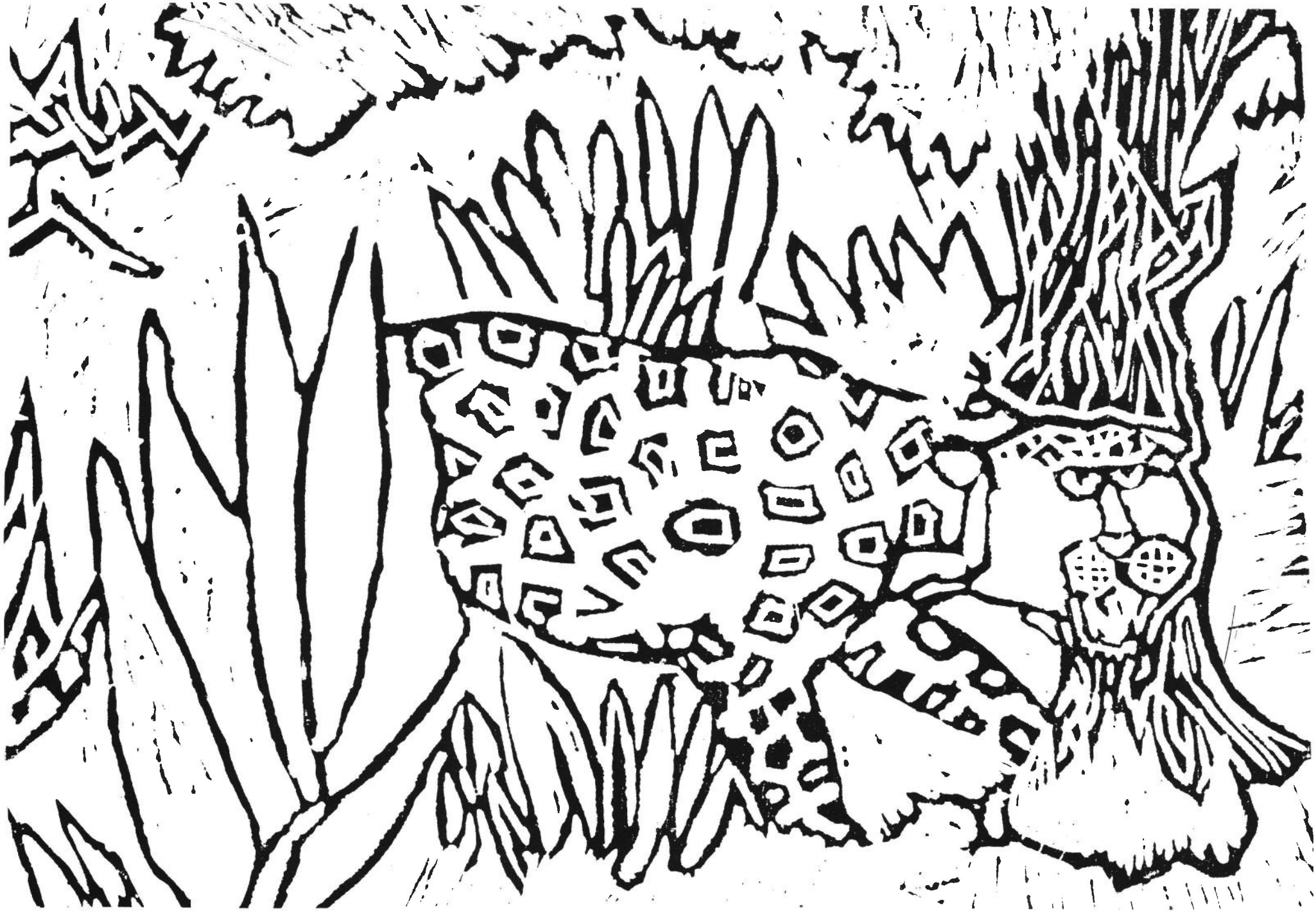
Departures:

Mrs. Howard, Heather Long, Therese Roxby-Bott, Elizabeth Cave, Mr. Smyth, Mr. Haslegrove, Mr. Hogwood, and Gerald Burton, who emigrated to Australia.

AUTUMN TERM

Mr. Benson was welcomed back from his sabbatical term in Canada, and Mrs. Collings, Don Miller, Jane Field, Felicity Pearson, Mrs. Hurden, Mrs. Salmon and Marie-Pierre Heatherington, joined the staff. Mandy Crowe, Neil Stuart, Jean Appleton and Colin Bell took up their positions as Head Girl and Boy and their deputies. The 5th form went to London to hear "The Meistersingers," and some of the 6th form went on a pilgrimage to the George Fox Country. An Industrial Careers Conference was held here for two days with Newport Grammar and County High schools. After General Meeting – which included a speech by David Bungey, Chief Education Officer of Essex – we all went home for nine days half term. The Sunday before the play, Brian Capel came back and gave us a very interesting Evening Meeting about his year in California. The play itself, Menander's "Rape of the Locks" produced by Tim Gay, was a big success. Just before end of term came the power cuts, plunging the school into darkness which was relieved by candles, torches and hurricane lamps, giving the school a prematurely Christmas atmosphere.





Lino Cut by Vivienne Hobbs.

THE JUNGLE

Through the gap in the fence, into the jungle.
Another world of weeds and ditches,
Little streams and muddy banks.
Purple flowered weeds that grow waist high.
I wind my way through paths like little canyons,
Till I reach the bushes.
There I find last summer's camp.
Old planks, dead twigs. A secret hideout.
To the dam where tadpoles thrive,
Fresh water weed and sparkling sand.
A plank for a bridge,
A slippery bank,
Big rocks, through the marsh.
Mind the brambles.
Ow! That's a nettle!
Buzzing flies and crawling insects.
Out into the fields beyond,
Like a desert in comparison.

David Newbold 4Y

THE WIND

The wind howls like wolves in the wood,
The wind sings like birds on the wing,
The wind whispers, dies and is gone, but will return.

Whistling, waxing through the white winter's way,
Whistling, winding through the Celtish hills.
Wailing whispers, never waiting, as though wanting
to wander but nowhere to go.

While I wander in the western waste, I want the wind's
warmth waxing.
Waiting, I hear whispers in the willow,
Waking I want the whispered news of the wind.

Richard Seed 1Y

THE GOAT

She stood still, motionless,
Her white hair gleaming silver on the hillside,
The sun played merrily on her cloven hooves, and
horns,
She seemed to sense that danger was near
But somehow not,
A flicker of gold, grey-black smoke flew high,
The flames of fire rose above the tall pines,
She turned away aware of nothing.

Susan Harris 1X

SNOW

It falls and lies,
Crisp and cold,
And covers the land,
With its edgeless, endless folds.

Elizabeth Green 1Y

MYSTERIES OF THE MIND

The scientists carry out their tests and stare through their telescopes and then state that 'there is believed to be no life on Mars'.

Our minds do not stretch far enough, we probably don't know a millionth of what there is to know about the universe. Does there have to be 'life' on Mars? Why not some other form of being; something that our brains cannot imagine; something far beyond our knowledge. Maybe there's no time, and may be there's an entirely different way of experiencing things from that on earth.

I often find I'm imagining Martians to be invisible, but why should they be even that? They may be shapes that find themselves in one place, have not moved to that place, but have just arrived there. Now I'm calling the martian objects by calling them 'shapes'. They could be a sense, or a wave of sound or a ray of light. But because I know about those ideas I feel being on Mars must be something more than that. It's something NOBODY in our whole world could ever describe, because as soon as it is said it is within our range of knowledge and that is nothing incredible or mysterious.

Gael Whittle 5X

A DREAM

A myriad of flashing thoughts
concepts, fancies
Tangled together with my imagination
Are woken by sleep
And come to life in my fantasy mind.

Celia Nickalls 6$_1$

SUNRISE

I look to the east, across the blank, indefinable landscape.

A bar of molten copper glows beneath the heavy curtain of cloud. Slowly, a faint colour and identity flow back across the earth, and the sky changes to rich ruby, flaming yellow river-gold at either end. Pale shadows of the fire below ripple across the thinning cloud-curtain. Rose- crested fairy mountains rise from the motionless swirling of a slate-blue sky; calm primrose lakes flecked with palest crimson. All the sky reflects an imaginary world of fire-colour.

But now the fiery majesty is fading; a shining band of sulphur yellow enveloping the horizon, melting to a liquid green where once the sky ran with river gold. A last remaining pillar of cyclamen rises, herald of the light to come. Then the searing brightness rises, majestically from the fiery depths, bathing the sky in magnesium brilliance, banishing the fire-colour from my vision, some other day returning.

Rowan Slee 4Y.

SUNRISE: TUESDAY 24th NOVEMBER 1970

Red sky in the morning,
Shepherds' warning.
Certainly not today!
Oranges, yellows,
Scarlets, pinks
All in the morning sky.
The wine glass water tower
Silhouetted against the sun
Everybody rushing to see it.
Another day has begun!
A Cinemascopic View
Stretches from left to right.
Everyone taking photos
Of this marvellous sight.
The day draws on,
The sun gets high
And the marvellous sunrise
Is starting to die.

Trevor Brown 2X

ESTUARY SUNSET

The tide had tu·ned
The waders' cry
Hung in the evening sky
Long lines of gulls winged home to roost
Near barges rotted hulls.

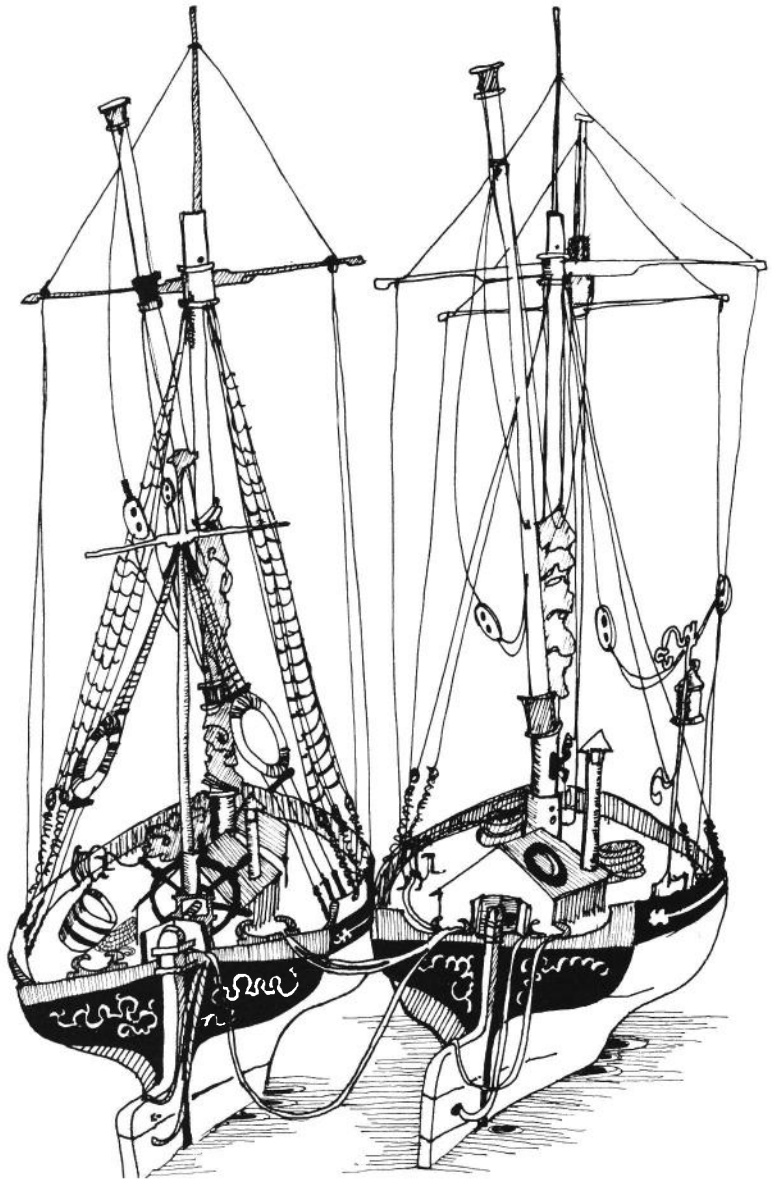
Ships and seaweed, stones and shells
Lay stranded on the mud
That glinted grey and brown and green
And oozed and spat at us.

The blushing sun dropped in the West
And like a drop of blood
Eked from a wound
Spread fire on a distant coast.

The clouds attained her fiery hue
And orange glowed with red
Like ashes that
With an aimless kick
Are scattered from a fire and fade.

And now the mist
From salt-marsh rose
In silent, shadowy form
Swirling, shifting, sliding
Softly engulfing all from view.

Thomas Holman 3Y



THE SOLDIERS' WIFE

They're mowing the meadow now,
Another mark of passing time.
Cutting the daisies one by one,
You always said that I was like a daisy.
There's little left of you now,
Not much to remind me of your smiles, your ways.

I cried this morning, when I woke,
In those cold sheets,
Without you there to comfort me.
When will this long war be over for you,
Allowing a passage home?
I used to count the days till you returned,
But now I've almost stopped,
As if all hope is given up.

I wish now we had a child,
Just one likeness of you.
If there was such a child,
I know sometimes I'd hate him,
For being your mirror, when you're not there,
But mostly I'd love him for being all that's left.
I'd tell him of his father,
A gentleman in all but name,
In every other way far,
Far above the common crowd.
I'd also tell our child that war is sad,
It serves no purpose but to break a thousand
happy hearts.

Rosemary Naish 62

WAR

Prescriptions for death are circulated
By insane officers.
Grenades, balls of death, screech then kill.
Each cry of agony is ignored,
Swallowed, by the thick silence.
White breath is thrown from fierce nostrils,
It mingles with the evaporating sweat
And the bleeding corpses steam.
Tangles of knotted barbed wire,
Gleaming with the wetness and blood
Lie, waiting, like gigantic cobwebs.
And the sickening vibration of bodies falling
Is as continual as a swinging pendulum.

Anon.

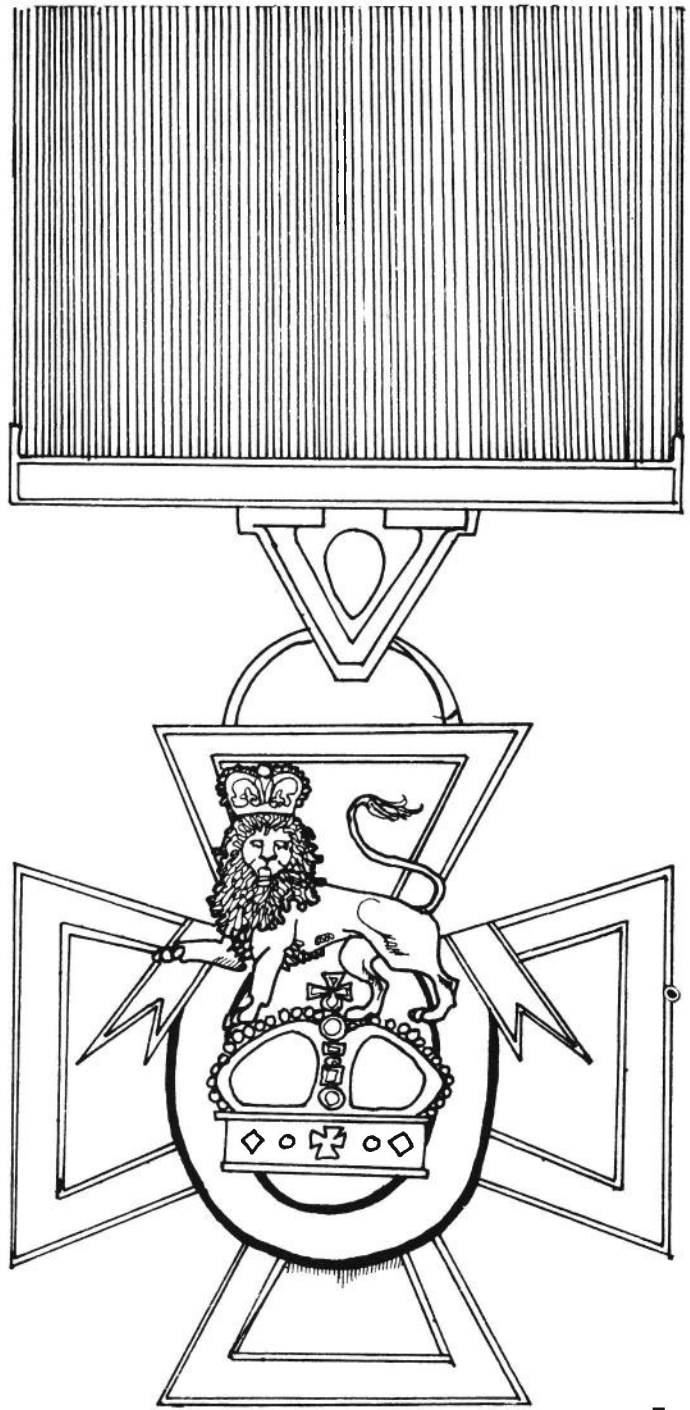
INDECISION

Two men . . .
Two soldiers . . .
One German, one English;
Pondering . . .

Face to face
On the top
Momentarily wondering . . .

Two soldiers . . .
One transfixed
The other dead.

Andrew Greaves 61



OUT AFTER DARK

Dark, blue-black soft
night-cold
Cloud whisps float streaming
Across the moon glinting sky.
Round hump evergreen bushes
Crouch. Silent waiting.
Thin, spike-edged semi-leaved trees
Avenue-line the field edge.

Soft-grass, wet-toed padding.
To sit,
To think.
Alone.
Breathe in sharp air. Fresh
Tingle-nosed cold atmosphere
seeps
Into my clothes-wrapped body.
Shiver
Withdraw
Huddle.

Then stride-walking to close-warm atmosphere
To fluorescent lights
Close-watch inquisitive minds Seek-out
Feeling chased back to work involved
rooms,
people.
I close my mind
I withdraw
Inside my eyes.

Celia Nickalls 61



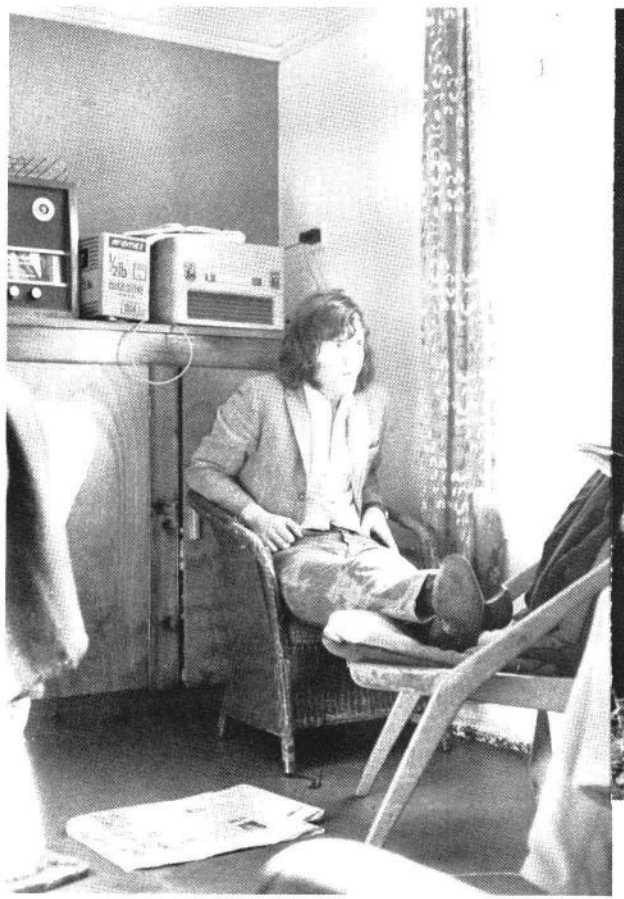
TIME IS RELATIVE

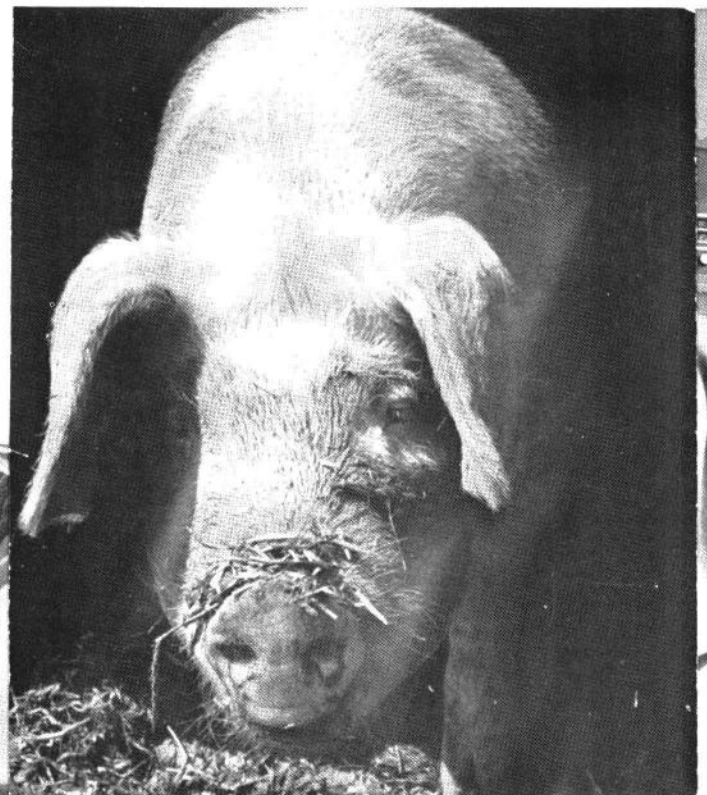
the day breathed heavily and all the
clocks were saying quarter-to-ten.
quarter-to- quarter-to-
ten, ten,
the opening bars of Beethoven's Destiny
Symphony skid across my mind.
I am moulded into a great brass weight
and the Devil Grocer has placed me on
the Eternal Scales with allthedaysofmylife
in the other pan.
with a fiendish grin he shortchanges me.

the day held its breath
for a few
short
seconds
and then exhaled
a-sigh-and-twelve-hours before it turned
over and went back to sleep.

Lucinda Coleman 61

CAPTION PAGE







A SILLY PAGE



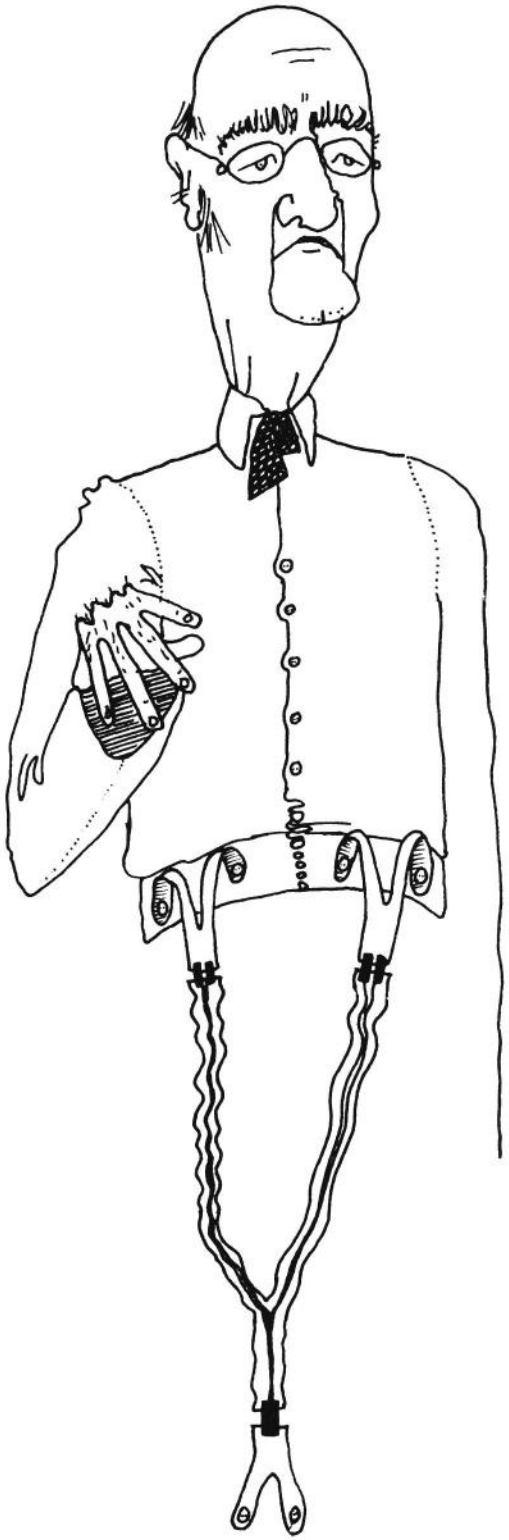
GRAVITY

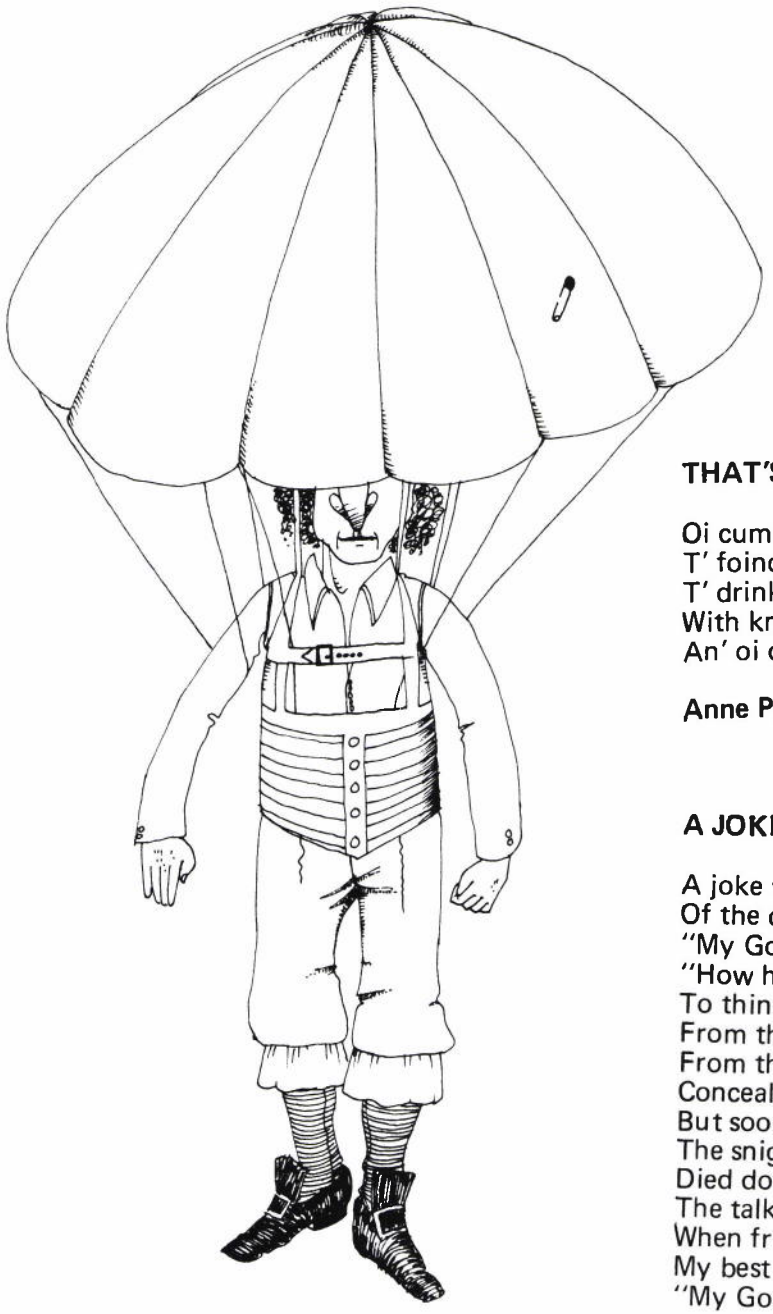
How come,
  When I drop a piece of bread and jam
It always falls
  Jam side down?

If Gravity
Hadn't been invented
  Think how easy gym would be.
But then,
Think where we would be.

Once a dog
  Walking down the road
Saw an apple
Falling on his head.
He said,
  "I wonder what it is,
That pulls it to the ground?
  I wonder if, anyone,
Has thought of it before?"

Anne Miller 4Y





ANOTHER SILLY PAGE

THAT'S THE SPIRIT!

Oi cum t' this school f' th' culture,
T' foind owt wot loif is abowt,
T' drink fr'm th' cup
With knowledge filled up,
An' oi did . . . an' they're chuckin' me owt.

Anne Powell 62

A JOKE

A joke was the cause
Of the comments that day.
"My God, how crude!"
"How horribly rude;
To think a son of mine should say . . ."
From the crude, the sniggers;
From the ladylike, titters,
Concealed in a lacy 'kerchief.
But soon the squeaks and the snortles,
The sniggers, bellows and chortles,
Died down.
The talk turned to other things.
When from the corner a great arf,
My best friend's laugh,
"My God, what a joke, what a killer!"

Wendy Orford 4Y

BOREDOM

One hundred seconds until the end of ninety nine, ninety eight, this, ninety seven, ninety six, ninety five, long, ninety four, ninety three, ninety two, ninety one, tedious, ninety, eighty nine, eighty eight, eighty seven, dragging, eighty six, eighty five, eighty four, eighty three, slow, eighty two, eighty one, eighty, seventy nine, seventy eight, droning, seventy seven, seventy six, seventy five, seventy four, seventy three, monotonous, seventy two, seventy one, seventy, repetitive, sixty nine, sixty eight, sixty seven, irksome, sixty six, sixty five, sixty four, sixty three, soporific, sixty two, sixty one, sixty, fifty nine, stale, fifty eight, fifty seven, fifty six, fifty five, fifty four, fifty three, flat, fifty two, fifty one, leaden, fifty, forty nine, forty eight, forty seven, excruciatingly, forty six, forty five, forty four, forty three, forty two, dull, forty one, forty, thirty nine, ponderous, thirty eight, thirty seven, thirty six, pedestrian, thirty five, thirty four, plodding, thirty three, thirty two, thirty one, thirty, twenty nine, banal, twenty eight, twenty seven, stuffy, twenty six, twenty five, dreary, twenty four, twenty three, twenty two, heavy, twenty one, twenty, dead uninteresting, nineteen, eighteen, seventeen, only sixteen days till I'm fifteen, fourteen, thirteen, uninspiring, twelve, eleven, ten, nine, nearly over, eight, seven, cough, shuffle, six, five, four, three, two, one, lesson!

Shân Poynder 5Y

THE RAPE OF THE LOCKS

Producer TIMOTHY GAY







Pataecus,	Edmund East
Philinus	Angus Willson
Sosias	Martin Underwood
Moschio	James Douglas
Glycera	Catherine Pleydell
Polemo	Timothy Bloomfield
Cook	Peter Appleton
Doris	Barbara Crossley
The Goddess Ignorance	Helen East
Porter	Guy Busher
Myrrhine	Valerie Dix
Davus	Giles Norton
Habronis	Ruth Wood
Three Soldiers	Paul Harris, Christine Gayfer & Daniel Monck
Mime Dancer Philinus' Daughter	Jane Cole
Prompters and helpers	Sarah Edwards & Nichola Weate
Costumes designed and made by: Helped by:	Alison Turnbull, Ruth Brown, Claire Holmes, Imogen Moody. Rosemary Catterall, Claire Copeland-Watts, Katherine Davies, Hermione Holmes, Gillian Seaman.
Set built by:	Timothy Gay
Set and scenery painted by:	Imogen Rowlands, Dorothy Backhouse, Jacqueline Whittle, James Douglas.
Lighting and sound by:	Peter Cutler, Robin Bloomfield, Antony Jewell, Moray Dewhurst, David Heydecker
Make up:	Jane Field, Iorwerth John, Anne Garrod
Business Manager:	Anthony Ratcliffe
Armour by:	Arts Theatre, Cambridge
Stage hand:	Jonathan Schofield
Properties:	Heather Dunlop, Amanda Wright
Help also given in various ways by:	Felicity Pearson, Christopher Prince, Peter Jones, Peter Appleton and others.











A parent's view...

Any complaint I have is directed at the choice of play; this choice seemed a little obtuse considering the wealth of available material. The production was fine; lively and with plenty of pace. The set was visually excellent and dramatically effective and the producer made skilful and meaningful use of music.

The acting was generally sound, with excellent delivery and easy familiarity with the lines. My recollection of school-plays in my school-days is that, without being any less full of vitality, they were much more slap-dash and under rehearsed. The voice production was poorer and more variable, and there were always weak performances as well as good.

There was a good clownish performance from Martin Underwood as Sosias and effective support from Giles Norton as Davus. The performances of Edmund East and Catherine Pleydell were a little lacking in life and sparkle. James Douglas gave a dashing and funny performance as Moschio, although he came uncomfortably close to overplaying his hand on a few occasions. In fact one had the feeling several times that the actors were not quite sure on what level of comedy they were supposed to be performing.

The play was undoubtedly funny and enjoyable. The cast made the most of the visual and verbal comedy, and the odd bits of curiously modern social comment. But in the last resort they were struggling, albeit with success, with a not very rewarding play. Historically interesting, yes, but not having very much to say to us today.

The producer's view...

After all three audiences had enormously enjoyed the School Play, the Avenue staff asked the producer, Tim Gay, how he had discovered and chosen "The Rape of the Locks" by Menander. He replied as follows . . . . . .

"I chose **The Rape of the Locks** because I thought that in spite of some shortcomings as a play and a translation it contained a largish number of parts which were suitable for children, boys and girls to act; parts they could understand, perform creatively and enjoy. Secondly the scenery and costumes were relatively straight forward and left me free to concentrate upon the acting side. (Here I should add that Alison Turnbull made a wonderful set of costumes and left me with no worries in this respect). Thirdly I felt that there was plenty of scope in the play for the use of music, dance and mime, in fact opportunities for it to be an original and creative production. Fourthly I thought that it was a very interesting piece of theatre considering that it was written over 2000 years ago.

I'd read the play at College, but not seen it performed and when I re-read it last Summer I saw broadly in my mind how the whole thing could be done. I felt that if I set my sights fairly low I could cope. I had to make some compromises along the way and had moments of awful doubt, but I felt in the end that the cast and the team built up during rehearsals fully achieved what I'd set out to do. Probably it could be done better, certainly it could be done differently, but not by me and the group who put on this production, everybody gave their best. It is hard to judge ones own work, but I felt tremendously rewarded by the whole enterprise and I know all concerned enjoyed themselves and felt a great sense of achievement".

I

OLD GET

LONELY

POOR

WHEN

AT

I

UNFEELINGLY

FEEL

ME!

AND

THAT

COLD

PEOPLE

STARING

ARE

AND

JUST

ROUND

STANDING

Concrete Poems

BY GILES NORTON
V TH YEAR

JUMP

RUN

LIKE

HAPPY

I

WHEN AM I TO AND



NO SPORTS REPORTS?

This year, instead of the customary factual (and rather dull?) Sports Reports, we asked for "human interest" articles about Games. After all, we get a full report on each term's sport in Final Assembly.

The result was disappointing, however. So, instead, we have chosen a few of the more humorous (and moderately truthful) accounts, and incorporated them in the main part of the magazine.

The Editors.



CHAPMAN FOOTBALL

This 'report' is etched by Guy Busher, Paul (Bobby) Brewster and Nick Dakin.

Prologue: Known officially as 'football two' this group contains the dregs, cripples, misfits etc., of the FSSW football world. All comers are welcomed with open arms provided they will bend to the power of the Ref. (or not bend to the power of the Ref., which ever the case may be).

History: In Autumn 1967, J. Chapman zealous fired with enthusiasm (etc . . . . etc) and ignorant of his fate volunteered for the NOTORIOUS 'football two'.

A Match: 1st move: Players trail out miserably cold and feeling depressed. 2nd move: Stand in despondant groups trying to keep warm. 3rd move: John Chapman, blows his favourite whistle and says "Right" and attempts to fire these miserable specimens of humanity with enthusiasm. 4th move: J.C. says, "Let's get started, it's quite cold". 5th move: The game starts (you hope).

Rules: Virtually none. No sidelines. Oaths, tripping up, bangings and even a little judicious mudthrowing are all allowed, (J. Chapman gives a resigned sigh!) People often shout, "Half time!" and J.C. says, "It's not". Then, after a quick glance at his watch, he shouts, "Half time!"

Present day J.C. Football: We have few fixtures (why?) except for a few tussles with the U15 in which U15 sustain heavy casualties and JC XI virtually none.

Future: Unfortunately J. Chapman is no longer with us to impart his knowledge. His place though has been filled amply by Fred Sessa. His voice encourages the team to kick and hack at the goal. This team has carried on flourishing under Denby Allen and Fred Sessa, and contains such illustrious names as Bobby Brewster, Basher Busher and Big Beck.

Guy Busher 4Y





VOLLEYBALL

Our style has been labelled everything from a Tahaitan Love Dance to a flight of bumble bees. Each Tuesday 61 girls descend on the boys' playroom for a lesson. Miss Hurden took one of them and fled leaving us to fight it out alone. When Anne serves — we may as well call it a tea-break. When Louise serves there's no one left either side of the net to receive the ball and when Nicola serves her own side are usually decapitated. The last 10 minutes of the lesson usually degenerates into a free-for-all with Julia abstaining on the litter bin.

On Thursdays when 62 come, we become a bit more serious and play in the gym, but the rules change — if the ball hits the roof take the point again. Two points if it goes through the rope and so long as it's in the air it's in play, no matter where it is in the room. Achievements this term are none apart from a ball which Louise burst on a broken pipe.

Pow Ell 62

RUGBY

It's cold, wet, and depressingly gloomy; all the other games for the day have been cancelled but one remains. It's the game played by the lesser well endowed co-ordinates of this world. Suffering there with us, at every drop of the ball, is our all American coach Fred. The game starts and all hell is let loose with thirty people rummaging, rucking, scrumming, running, fighting all over the area of mud. Fighting for dear life to get the ball to their end of the pitch. Time after time their steaming mass of bodies collide. It is, however, unusual for a player to stay down long. This is the game that sets the soul on fire and flushes the mind with fear which has to be suppressed. At its finest the game is one of following, bold movement with fast breaks and hard rummaging. At its worst it is vicious, scrappy and unenjoyable. Usually it is a supreme test of physical strength and mental endurance.

Tim Aubin 62

NETBALL

To start playing netball you need a ball, and you usually start by learning by doing the different passes, push pass, bounce pass, shoulder pass and underarm pass.

My usual position is Goal Attack abbreviated as G.A., this means that I have the opportunity to shoot. This season I have been in all our games, we lost one and won the other. Netball is a very energetic pastime. We have to learn to intersect in mid-air. The main object is to get the ball in either of the two semicircles and shoot goals. We have to wear pleated shorts and artex shirts. To distinguish different teams coloured bibs are provided, red and blue. We hope all the girls will have enjoyed playing this game during the course of Life.

Vicky Chapman and Louise Smith.



GUITAR MUSIC COMPOSED BY JANET STENBRIDGE

THIRTEEN

She saw the boys as she entered the room. She was suddenly conscious of her plumpness – like a child, and cushioned round the face.

She wondered what they thought of her.

Her hair was lanky – it needed washing and she felt uncomfortable and dirty. She wanted to hunch herself up on the wooden seats and hide her plumpness. The boys continued playing tabletennis. They were at least twenty. Perhaps more. Forget them, she told herself fiercely. She was thirteen. A childish-looking thirteen, and she wanted a boyfriend desperately.

Her cousin came and squatted beside her. He was eight and she despised him, loudly and obviously. Underneath she had a niggling sort of envy for his thick hair and even brown skin.

After a while one boy, florid-faced and sweating, left the game and went to get his jersey. He stopped by them.

"Go Youth-Hostelling often?" he asked.

"Yes," her cousin answered. He had a smudge on his nose. He looks like a baby she thought.

"Like it?" the boy asked.

Again her cousin answered. The boy still hung around talking. She was flattered but she stayed silent. Partly shy. Partly because she thought that he would think her babyish to show how flattered she was – she was only thirteen. She'd never had a boyfriend before. Then the other boys called to him and he went back to the tabletennis table. Her cousin began to chatter. She wished she had washed her hair yesterday.

Her cousin wanted a game of ludo, of snap. He kept pestering her.

'He's always talking and following me,' she thought.

Then suddenly, stupidly, she felt that the boy would hear her cousin's row and would think that she was trying to attract his attention.

"Chess?" she suggested quickly.

"O.K."

They got out the chessboard. He slowly, precisely, stood up the chessmen, then moved a pawn. She did too. It was a slow game. Before long though the boy threw down his racket and sauntered towards them. He sat down, offered to help them. She was flattered and began to relax. So did her cousin. Before long he was bragging and shrieking after the boy's jokes, shouting mimicks of the boy's heavy Leeds accent.

The boy was obviously irritated, and she felt triumphant – he really liked her and her cousin just annoyed him.

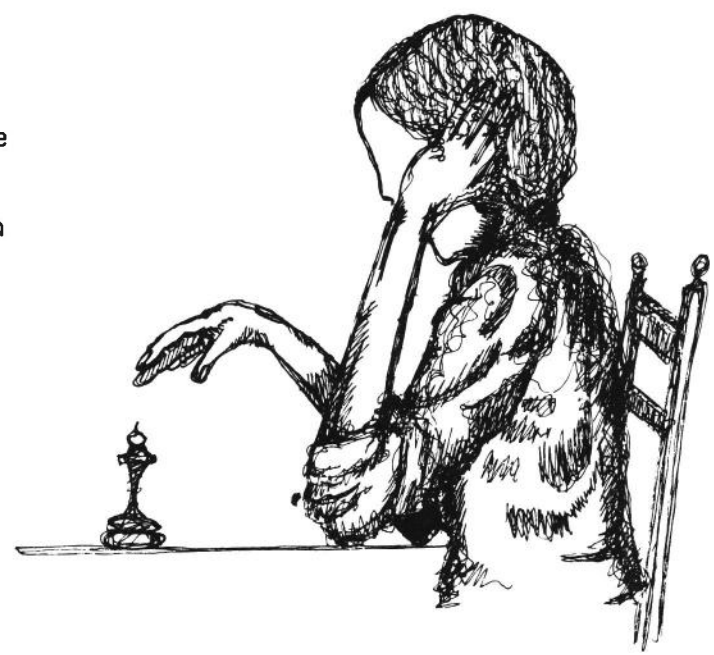
'She's a queer girl,' the boy thought.

They played cards and chess most of the evening. The girl laughed and chattered. When the warden came in at ten to tell them to go to bed she was openly worshipping him.

'He really likes me,' she thought. 'Really likes me.'

Going to bed that night the boy thought: 'She was queer. Funny. Jean says I like playing arond with kids. Funny. I'll have me own kids soon.'

Rachel Morris 3X



EARLY MEMORY

One of my early memories was the time I decided to run away! I had just had an argument with my brother, (one of many), had slapped him and on being told off I had stormed out of the room slamming the door as hard as I could, which was, in my younger days, a favourite pastime.

I threw open my bedroom door, stomping in, grabbed my suitcase from under my bed and began packing it. I had just finished when the aroma of my favourite tea came whafting down the hall and entered my room, dancing through the key-hole. And so, I decided to stay for tea, to fortify myself for my long journey.

During tea, however, I made up my quarrel with my brother and on going to bed found my suitcase neatly unpacked.

To this very day my mother teases me about the contents of my suitcase, but why I can't tell you. What else does a four-year-old need when running away besides a doll, a teddy bear, and a bar of soap?

Wendy Orford 3Y

A CHILD IN A FURY

My head is bursting.
My eyes are hot like coals.
My mind drives me on
There's no stopping.
My head is spinning
My nose is blocked
I can't breath, yet I do.

I want to destroy
To fight back.
To get rid of my oppression.
I want to hurt something
To make something else . . .
Mad, bad tempered and . . .
Wanting to hurt people,
It's a nice feeling to get
Over.

Julian Carr Linford



PASTIMES

MUSIC

The round of Christmas music with which the musical year has just ended included the twenty-first visit of the Small Choir to Newport Church, an anniversary which our hosts were kind enough to mark by a special cake. These extra-mural events are a particular pleasure which this year the Junior Choir have been able to share. They sang at St. Mark's, at Stansted, and most notably upon the occasion of the 300th anniversary of Hertford Meeting House.

At Parents Week-end in February the First Orchestra gave a concert which included Haydn's Symphony No. 31, the "Hornsignal". Caroline Darke played pieces by Debussey, Christopher Woodhouse the Franck Violin Sonata, and Roger Leyland gave an outstanding performance of Chopin's Scherzo in B flat minor. In November the newly constituted orchestra gave the annual concert in aid of Friends Service Council. Ben Heydecker, was among the soloists, as were Helen Burgess, Celia Pitstow, Janet Stembridge, Susan Penning and Fiona Whitney. The Second Orchestra has performed at Extended Assembly and at the Chelmsford Music Festival.

The improved instrumental standards mentioned in the last issue have been maintained. Last year the boys in the Upper Sixth held five Grade VIII's, behind each of which lay many years of hard work. Roger Leyland, who held two of them with Distinction, is now at the Royal Academy of Music, where we wish him every success. These boys have now left, but there is plenty of talent coming up the school, as is shown by the Lunch Hour Concerts and by the large number of instrumental groups who competed at Chelmsford.

A year which included Bach's Mass in B Minor was bound to be noteworthy. Through the kindness of Father Jack Putterill we were able to give one of the three performances in Thaxted Church, where the magnificent setting and fine acoustics made it an unforgettable occasion for all who took part. Only the other day one who had been in the audience said to me, "Do you remember how the sun came out at the beginning of the 'Gloria' and flooded the whole church with light? It was magical — almost as if the Almighty were lending a hand". Perhaps he was!

Richard Sturge

GUIDES

It's our Diamond Jubilee year, and we have been celebrating in many different ways.

In May we had a big bonfire and camp fire songs with all the other Guides in the district. This was followed in September by the Diamond Jubilee Service, held in a Brentwood cinema. You can guess how many Guides there were! We had to organise the seating, usher people to their seats and clear up.

In the Summer Term we organised a camp fire with other Guides. An air show arrived unexpectedly and raised the level of the entertainment.

June brought the weekend camp, followed quickly by the week's camping, when some of us went to Devon. Miss Shaw drove there in her car, which was full to the brim with camping equipment, while we all travelled in comfort on the train to Totnes.

The weather was hot and sunny, and there was a river just below, and a noisy steam-engined train, near Buckfastleigh. We went swimming in an open air pool and the water was freezing cold.

While trekking in the woods one day we lifted up a log and underneath, curled up, lay an adder. I was so scared I took one look and fled back to camp.

We returned home quite sunburnt. A Guide who had taken charge of the train tickets put them in the waste paper basket on the platform with a Mars bar wrapper. Luckily we found them, or we might still be stranded in Devon!

Christine Hill 3Y
Catherine Greaves 3X

MATHS CLUB

A rumour has gone round the 4th form that a Maths Club has been started! The first meeting was held in the Physics Lab. soon after half term. Its aim – to determine one mouse power. Three 4th form boys, Don Miller and Donald Benson were there as well as the subjects, two mice. One mouse power was finally decided upon as 0.039604316 joules per second, approximately.

Actually Richard Wright and Don Miller were trying hard to organise a weekly Maths Club, and we wish them the best of luck.

Robin Wright 4Y

RAMBLING CLUB

The sun was blazing down on us. We had sun scorched backs, tired feet and our tongues were hanging out for drinks.

We started our walk near a farm at Burnham-on-Crouch; we walked along a roadway for a little way but we soon saw the sea when we reached the sea-wall. We walked along the sea-wall, regarding the sea, waiting to take the plunge. We stopped and everyone except Mr. Cutler and Miss Rowlands made a dash for the sea. Squeals from the girls showed that the water was cold and muddy, and the boys were a long way out before I had even put my foot in!

We soon returned, hungry, and for once looking forward to school packed-lunches.

Somebody's tomato was squashed and I sat on my egg, while other adventurous people tried to feed a crab in a rockpool. We carried on walking in our costumes. We could see our goal, St. Peters Chapel, about five miles before we arrived there.

We stopped for rests every so often to let the people who were bringing up the rear (e.g. me) catch up. We eventually arrived at the chapel and we had to walk about 300 yards to the bus; it seemed an age. We staggered on, our backs scorched and sunburnt, practically asleep on our feet.

It had been a very enjoyable day. Many thanks to Mr. Cutler, Miss Rowlands and Mrs. Cave (this was her last ramble before leaving) for organising our rambles.

Catherine Greaves 3X

CHEMI CLUB

The purpose of chemi club is to give scholars a chance to carry out interesting chemical reactions which they may have read or heard about and which are off the school syllabus for some reason or another. A certain amount of censorship has to take place because the younger elements in chemi club frequently prefer the somewhat hazardous reactions!

It was also hoped that chemi club would provide a pleasant informal atmosphere in which interesting discussions might take place; that it might offer another avenue for fruitful scholar-staff relationships.

In some of these aims, at least, it has been successful. In fact it has been so successful that its popularity threatens to defeat the ends for which it exists. The numbers attending the meetings are sometimes so great that some form of restriction may become imperative. Yet to restrict would be against the aims and atmosphere of the club. Already a division has taken place into Junior and Senior sections; further division may be needed, but of course this would result in a drop in the frequency with which a given member may attend.

On the whole, though, the meetings are very pleasant occasions. A few new things may be learned, old things re-learned and, one might say, there is some "spin-off" both to and from the school syllabus. One's main regret is that more girls don't come along.

Francis Whittington.

SCOUTS

Dolgellau, a small Welsh town to the north-east of Cader Idris, was graced in the middle of July 1970 by the company of the 4th Saffron Walden Scout Troup. On a hot, humid day they arrived, tired and hungry, and proceeded to wander aimlessly round the Welsh countryside. Finally they found, more by accident than intent, the pre-ordained site where they pitched camp.

The camp passed quickly. The weather, though not wet, was uninspiring. However, it became excellent for a sortie up Aran Fawddy (2970') and Aran Benllyn, while the summit of Cader Idris was reached in swirling mist. The Precipice Walk (described as 'one of the finest in Wales') though over-frequented by tourists was found to be Bilberry clad, and was therefore much appreciated. The general camping standard was high, and the camp was greatly enjoyed by all.

Friday evening meetings have provided varied challenges. One notable event was the depositing of the patrols, separately, in a 4 mile radius of Saffron Walden, after a blindfold car journey. The patrols were left to find their own way back and some took more time than expected.

Another noteworthy occasion was when Neil Stuart took a group of scouts on a weekend hike. Although the cold weather detracted slightly from their enjoyment they were greatly aided by the helpfulness of a farmer on whose land they camped.

Eddie East 5X

STAMP CLUB

A usual Stamp Club meeting consists of members swapping stamps among themselves; poring over the Stamp Club tin which is kept filled by gifts from friends, old scholars and parents; mounting and identifying stamps for their own collections. Sometimes a different type of activity is arranged, such as competitions or devoting the time to just the stamps of one particular country.

Besides these activities we have had one or two highlights this year. The first was a visit by Sheila Robinson who had designed stamps for the Post Office. She told us of the way she produces her designs and the processes they are subjected to before being accepted by the Post Office. Sheila Robinson brought with her many examples of her work for us to see, including the latest work for the Rural Architecture series, and answered our questions.

In September some boys were fortunate enough to go to "Philympia", the International Stamp Exhibition in London. There was much to see, and what the boys did not actually see themselves they were able to read about in the masses of leaflets and pamphlets they brought back.

Elizabeth High

SWITZERLAND 1970

Six one Geographers set off for Lacarno full of enthusiasm for the journey ahead. Fortunately, by some administrative error, we were given compartments with bunks which enabled some members to sleep as we trundled across Europe.

Our base in Locarno was a hotel situated in the main square, co- inhabited by a party from an English Convent School. The contrast between the two groups had to be seen to be believed!

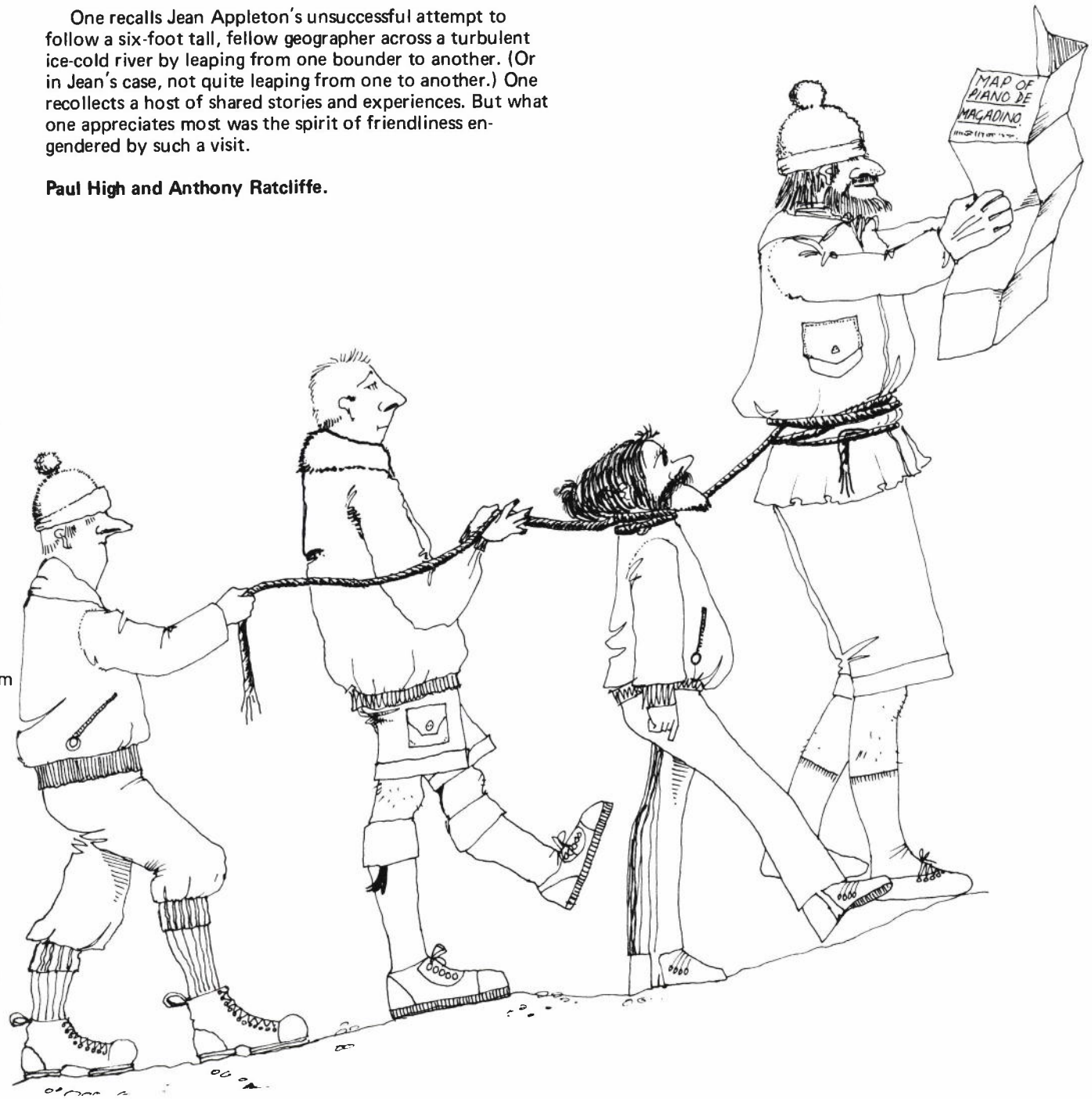
The field work consisted of land use studies on the Piano de Magadino, settlement studies in the Valle Maggia, valley transects in the Centovalli, a visit to an H.E.P. station, a trip to Lugano to study tourism, river studies and the mapping of glacial terraces.

However, in retrospect, it is the amusing and pleasurable aspects of such a trip that linger in the memory, rather than the academic.

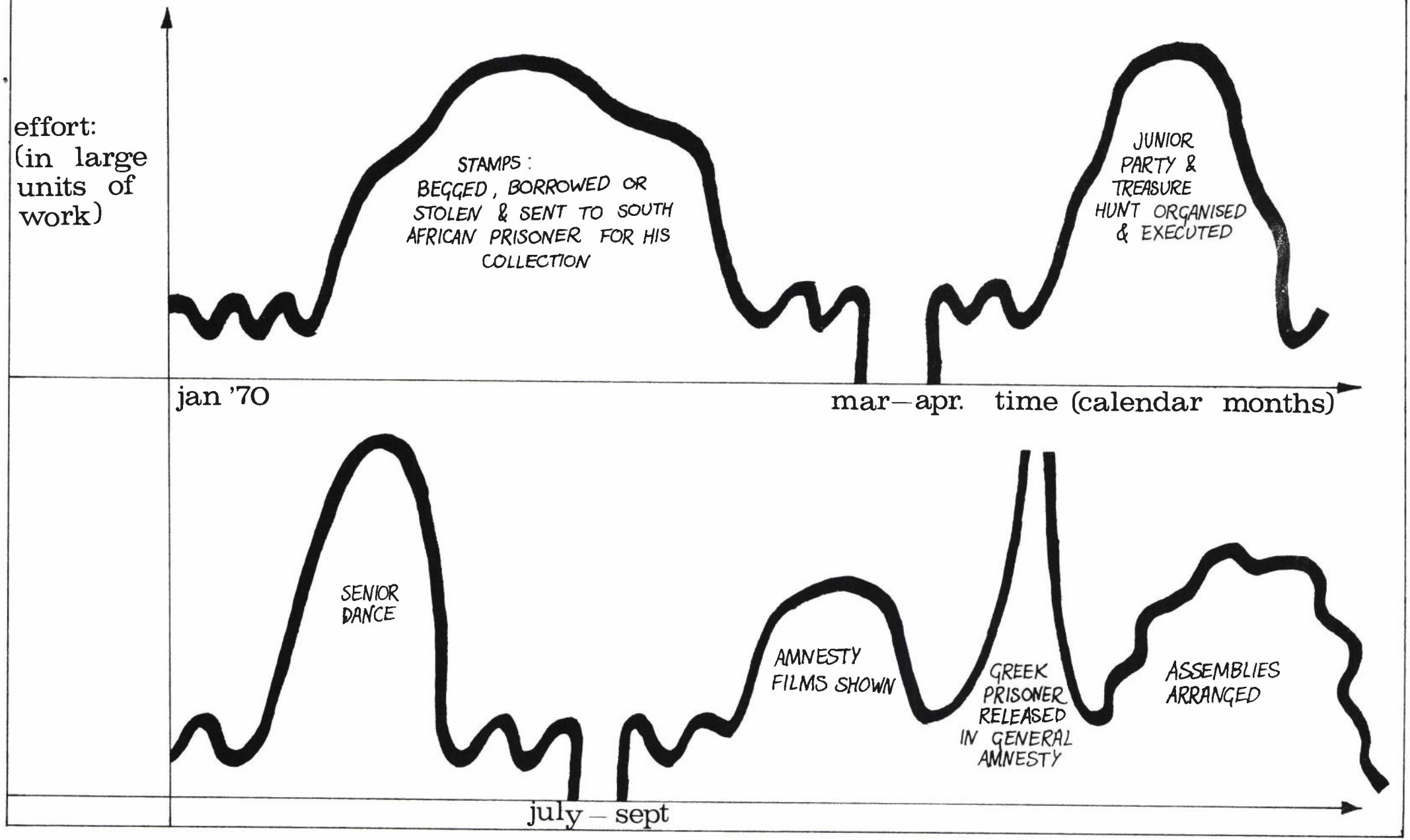
One thinks of Richard Myatt 'back-sliding' head first down a snow slope into a tree – without any noticeable effect. One remembers Neil Stuart and others being reprimanded, in Italian, for driving their 'pedalos' (water cycles) without due care and attention on Lake Lugano.

One recalls Jean Appleton's unsuccessful attempt to follow a six-foot tall, fellow geographer across a turbulent ice-cold river by leaping from one bounder to another. (Or in Jean's case, not quite leaping from one to another.) One recollects a host of shared stories and experiences. But what one appreciates most was the spirit of friendliness engendered by such a visit.

Paul High and Anthony Ratcliffe.



AMNESTY REPORT



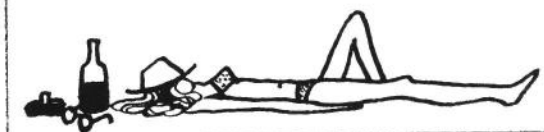
What
~~The Work~~ We Did At

LA COÛME

Much of our time was spent doing this,



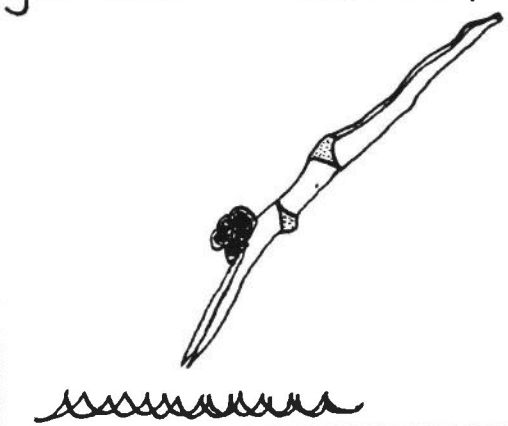
or this.



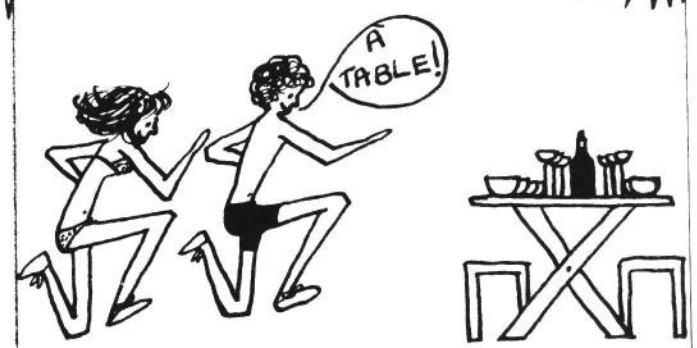
Occasionally, we did this,



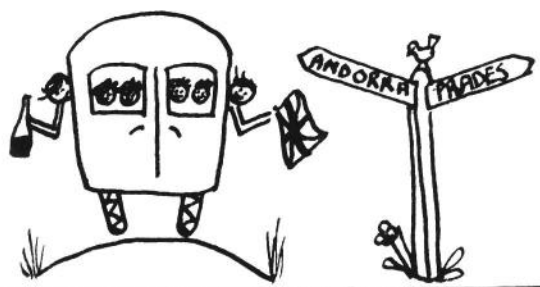
after which we did this,



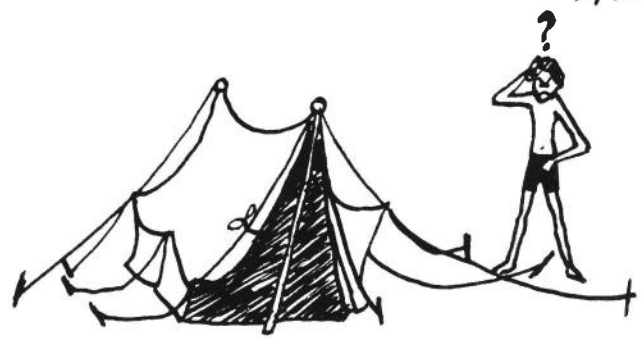
before this.



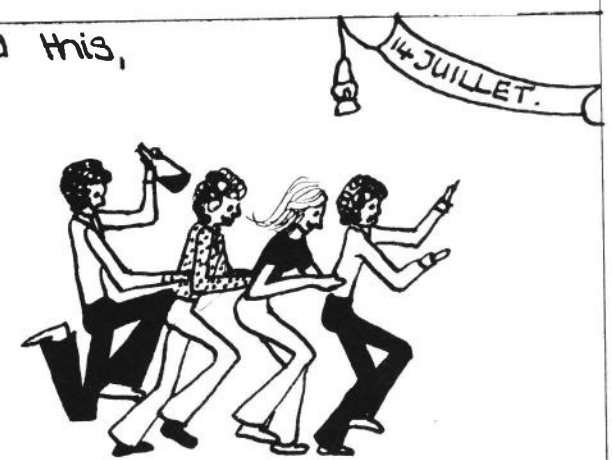
We did lots of this,



and some of this,



and this,



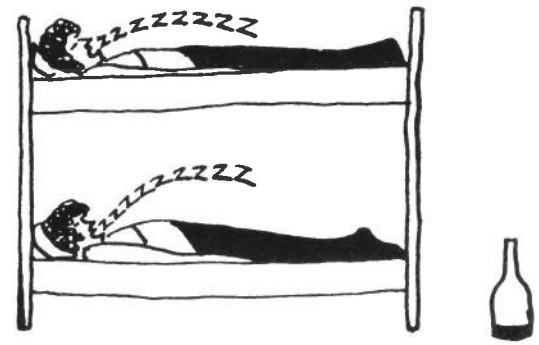
and this!



In the evening we sat around the fire and did this



until about 3 in the morning.



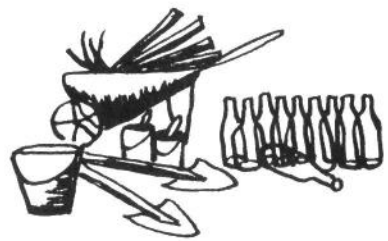
We left, exhausted,



but happy,



our work accomplished,

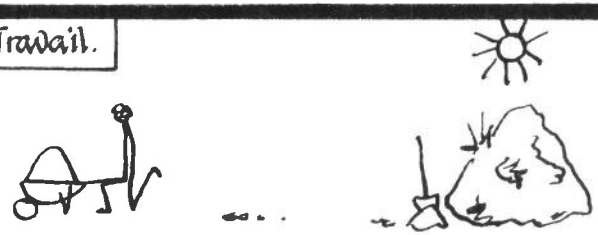


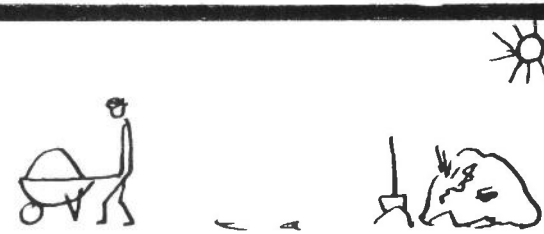
very much thankful to those who made it possible.



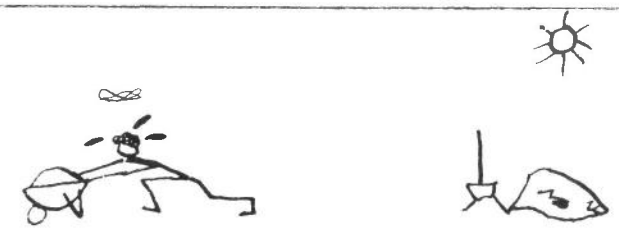
Anne '88

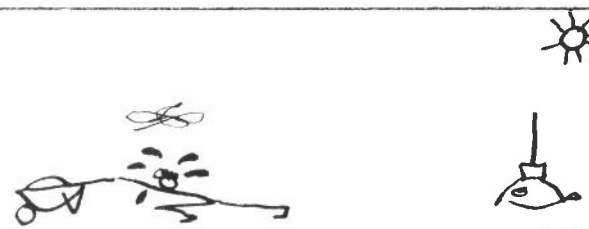
Au Travail.

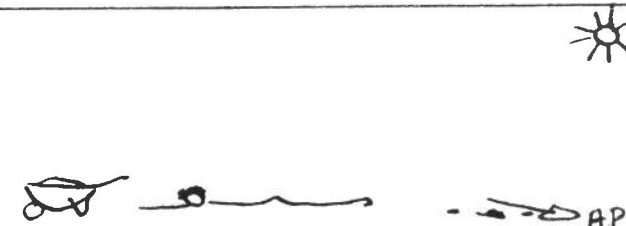












TEACHER, TEACHER

The story I am going to tell is simple. The time of year is almost winter and things have closed up. The weather is mostly cold. The water comes through my shoes. It is very cold.

I went to see my teacher who told me he had no more time and I would have to come back some other day. I left. Outside if was very cold. People walked in the street with dead, empty dead, hope in their faces and blankness in their eyes. People hurrying in the cold. Not looking in each other's eyes. Wrapped up against the cold and each other.

The story has just begun.

My teacher is very young. He has clean, gleaming white teeth. He has blonde wavy hair, blue eyes and a long pale sensitive face. There is a tentative gentleness about him. My teacher dresses neatly and cleanly, he dresses meticulously and conventionally. His shoes are always polished and his shirt is always clean.

I do not know my teacher very well.

When I left his room I went to the bus stop. (At this point I would like to say that I lit a cigarette. Unfortunately I didn't). As I stood at the bus stop the teacher walked past. I have already said it was a cold day. It was more; it was a dry cold day, a razor-edge cold day. The teacher was wearing only a jumper over his shirt (this struck me as being strange). He must have been going home because he was carrying a brief case.

(At about this point is where some of you will have begun to get bored. Yes I know it's pretty thin material, but if you just read on a bit you may find it brightens up a bit. I won't hold it against you if you do stop reading it, I really won't. Come to think of it I'll never know).

He was very tall and thin and delicate, (this is the bit, just hang on for a paragraph or so) and his curly blonde hair was blowing in the wind. As he walked past he smiled at me and nodded, a broad I've-got-nothing-to-hide smile that had nothing to do with his eyes. I was looking into his eyes as he smiled. They were very beautiful eyes. They frightened me. When I saw his eyes as he smiled, so full of despair, I realised that he knew.

They were filled with deep despair, not just apathy, but the actual living and writhing knowledge of life. They carried the burden of his soul. He knew what life is, it was real to him. He did not shove it aside, gently obscure the staring hate with the boring escape of routine; he lacked the bastions of love, hate and religion. He was mankind stripped bare. He had nothing and he knew that whatever he did or was he would have nothing for ever, from re-incarnation to re-incarnation, from year to year, from day to day, and from hour to hour he knew that he had no life. His was not the despair of a few moments, his whole life was despair for he carried the weight of not only his own emptiness but also that of all you who put it aside, that pretend it does not exist. He realised, although he was not an old man, the futility of being that was part of him; that is part of all of us and that only a few of us see.

That was the story. It was written by nicholas fell.

Most of us trudge unhappily through life, some of us don't make it.

Teacher, teacher on the wall
don't go away
please don't fall.

I'm sorry it wasn't a good story.

(I can still remember his smile. I can still remember him walking stiffly and straightly down the road. I can still remember the freezing cold. I can still remember the water in my shoes. I remember everything but still . . . still something is lost. Did I see his eyes right? Was it really that way?)

Somehow I feel the story either has no ending or it never had a beginning. Does that make sense?

TIPS FOR PASSING O LEVEL ENGLISH AND THEREBY SECURING A CAREER TO A LEVEL AND ACHIEVING FINANCIAL, EMOTIONAL, SOCIAL, INTELLECTUAL AND SPIRITUAL SUCCESS

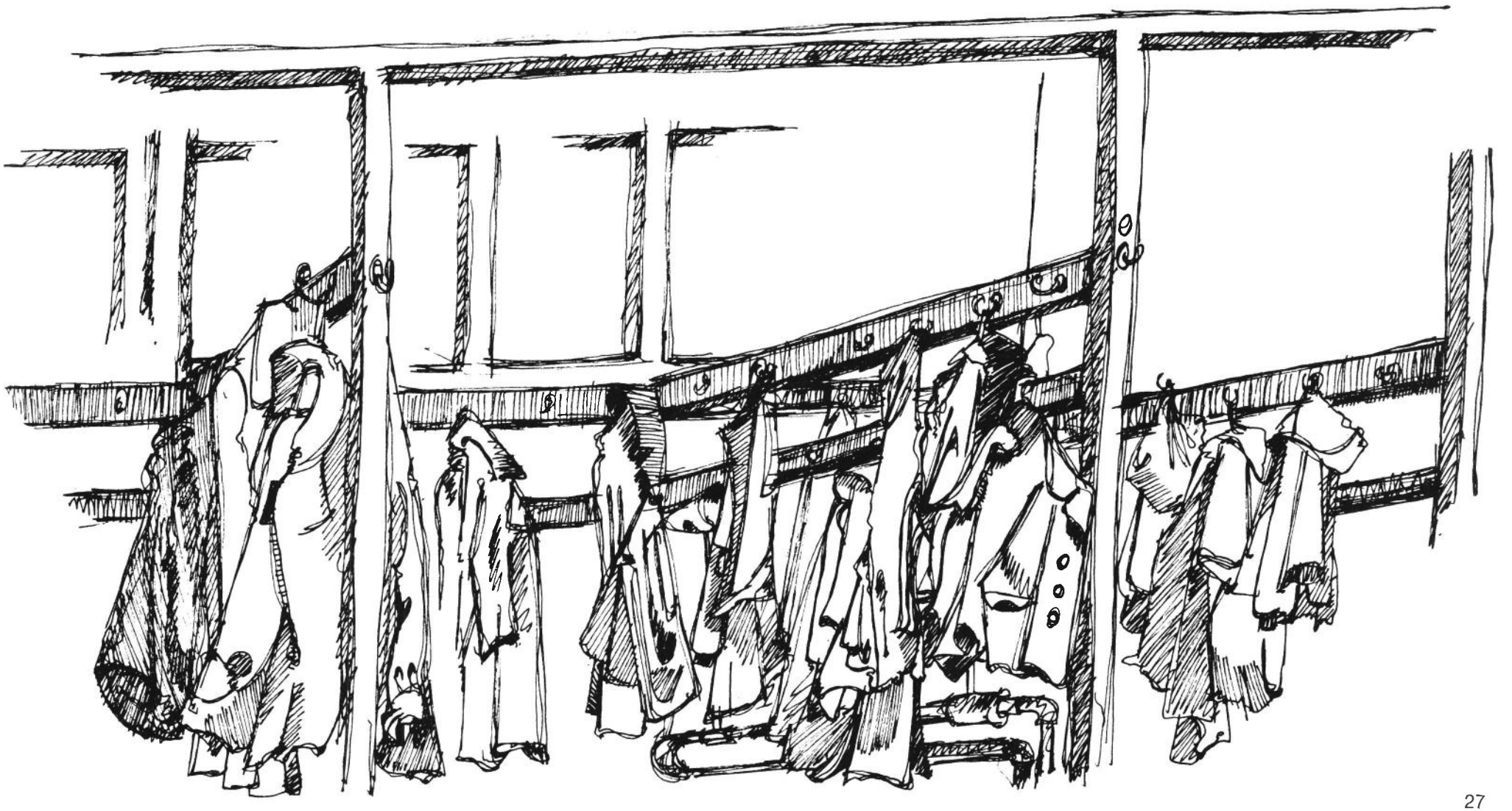
1. Across the slippery rocks the slimy snake slid.
2. Across the slimy rocks slid the slithering snake.
3. Tigers only nibble children's little toes.
4. Only tigers that have passed all the necessary exams are permitted to nibble any part of the child's anatomy other than the little toes.

The future ultra-effective young business man should be able to decipher the above information and be successful in his coming exams.

Good Luck, remember God is on your side; you can only fail; in which case, a fate worse than death awaits you.

Nick Fell 61

ON THE WALL



TO BELIEVE

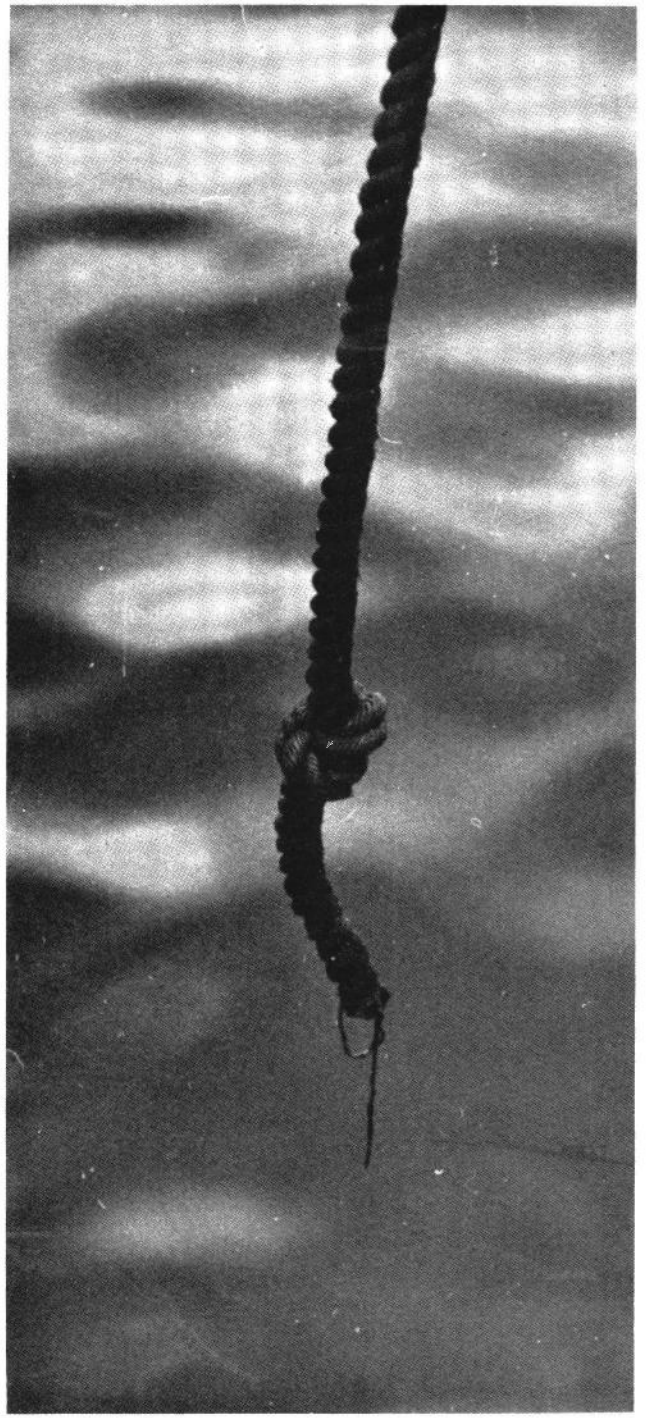
The downland grasses whispered you loved me,
The skylark twittered a wind-whipped tale
Of dove-cotes and windmills
And flint-speckled earth.
I heard,
I believed the downland whispers –
Believed that you loved me.

The pink-petaled paper vowed that you loved me,
Relatives chattered through pale champagne
Of blankets and napkins
And sweet-dimpled bridesmaids.
I heard,
I believed the fluttering petals –
Believed that you loved me.

The quick-blown kisses said that you loved me,
The fat babe gurgled through cradle bars
Of bottles and powder
And fresh-washed nappies.
I heard,
I believed the quick-blown kisses –
Believed that you loved me.

The stair cold-silent, the breeze-butted porch,
A young voice questioned through half-choked
tears
Of Mummies and Daddies
And harsh words spoken.
I heard,
And knew that you were gone for ever –
Believed that you loved me.

Anne Powell 62



THE OFF CHANCE

If the wind blew in the void

and caught my love

rehearsing,

I could hold it there forever

in the wastes between the frontiers.

But if it blew inside me

and grasped the interpretation

I could give it to you

briefly

within your understanding.

Tanya Fox 62



THOUGHTS ON THE PAKISTAN CYCLONE

I look at the beautiful sunrise,
And see one thousand, thousand,
Lost souls within it.

THOUGHTS ON ATOMIC WARFARE AND C.B.W.

When children are born
With six fingers and seven toes,
Then they will realise.

THOUGHTS ON THOUGHTS

One thinks millions of thoughts,
Talks very little
And does even less.

Alison Coleman 3Y

EVENING

Magnesium sphere flares
In a clear sky, merging blue to
Opaque nothingness. Black tree
Skeleton, blotched leaves and frail,
Quaking umbellifera: star-flowers.
  The sparrows squeak and chirr.
Chattering in roof huddles.
Grass shivers.
Rainbow scratches on dirty windows:
Cool breeze,
Paper crackle, murmers;
Pen taps on desk, chairs squeak
Bracelet jingles – Restless.
Faces – happy, empty, thoughtful:
Open mouths, finger-biting:
Still feet, fidgeting. Desk-lid
Squeaks, low talk, books thud.
A 'plane rumbles. No hope
of concentration.
  Stare at smeary,
Speckled board, hollow footsteps
Running past on dirty path,
Swoosh of car.
Work; Hopeless.
Sycamore flowers, pale green foam
Splattered on sunless sky.
Salmon flecks towards a
Once sunset; spinning ball
On dusty pavement, a
Symmetrical conifer points
Up above an old passing wall.
Repetitive thrush-song,
White cherry blossom.
Misty horizon. Gold and
Blue flowers drift into
Heavy-hearted distant thoughts:
Familiar engine purrs in
  Stir and drag to car,
Fifteen minutes sleepy travelling
Then out through sweet-smelling
Twilight, to warmth, a smiling
Photograph,
Home.

Rowan Slee 3Y

AN ALARMING INCIDENT

My Friend fired with the air rifle at the bottom of the sun-flowers. Fut, and a hole appeared in the bottom of the sunflower. It quavered steadied and stood firm. My Friend knelt by the stalk, meanwhile I cocked the gun and loaded it. Aiming at just below the head of the flower, I fired at the same moment as my friend, whom I had forgotten, stood up. Fut, my friend seemed to jolt and the sunflower was still. An ice cold wind bit my cheek, the birds seemed to sing no longer in the trees, no sound seemed to reach my ears, no feeling felt except the feeling of terror and that cold black wind, that I had not felt earlier. Time stood still. It took a long, long time for my friend to turn and say 'What's the matter, Dan?' A long, long time.

Dan Monck 4Y



THE EEL

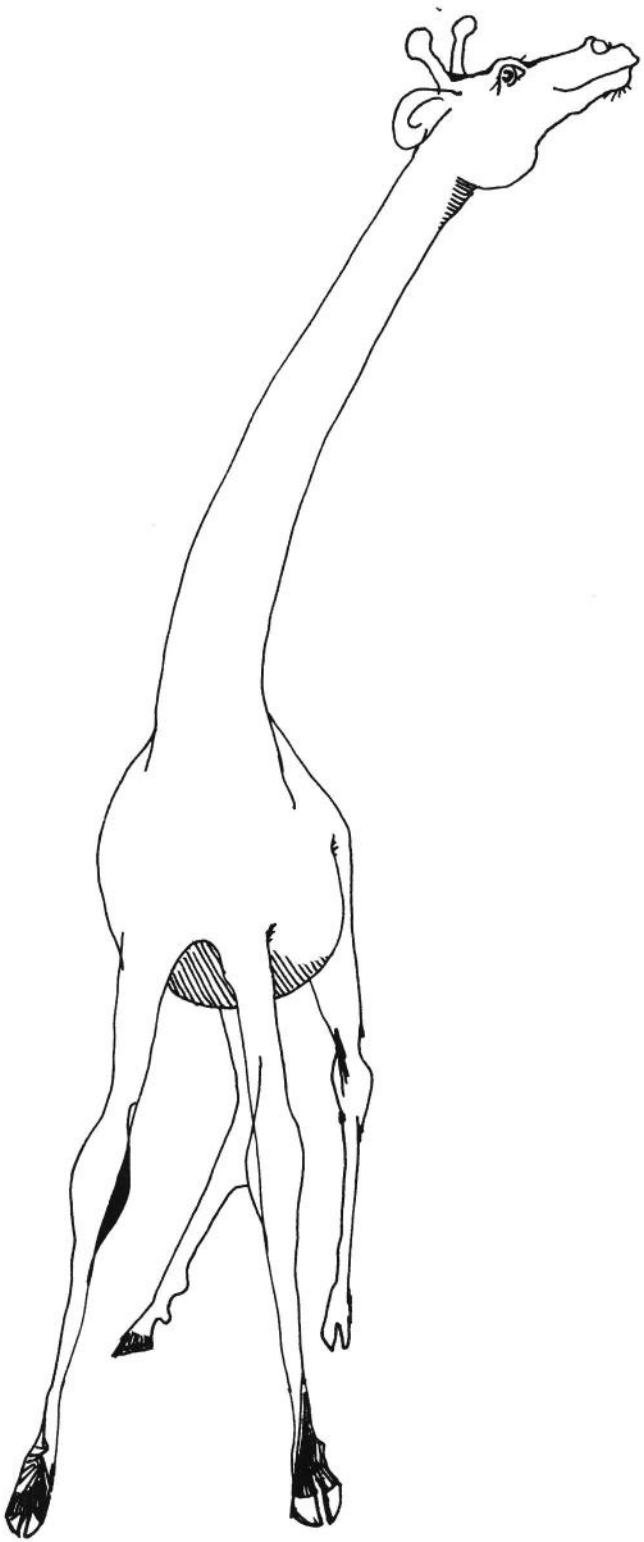
One dark and windy night
I was sitting on the stone bridge,
The owl hoots in the wood nearby.
My dream is suddenly awoken
By a jerk.
A jerk from the fishing line.
A wriggle.
A wriggle from an eel.
I quickly pull up the line.
A bleeding eel appears.
Ugh!
Is there a penknife in my pocket?
But no, an idea.
An idea comes to my mind.
I picked up a stone.
Shall I kill it?
Or shall I leave it to die in pain?
I shall kill it.
I held the jagged stone
And threw it.
The slimy eel stopped moving.
There was a pool of blood.
The green spiteful eyes
That once were seeing
But now sightless.
The red mouth
That was once eating,
But now dropping with blood.
The grey slimy body
Was once moving
But now silently motionless.

Jo Holmes 1X

THE TRAMP

The rain drips down on my shaggy torn hat,
And all pools of water that –
Give me a feeling so unpleasant and cold,
It's horrid to think you're now getting old.
My bones are all weary, frozen and stiff,
And I ain't got the guts to jump off a cliff,
I haven't got the courage even to hide,
Let alone commit suicide.

Owen Cox 1X



YOURS SINCERELY

In one minute, the typist-pool of ten identical, nail-polished young ladies had typed one thousand words. The manager had received three 'phone calls. And the Company had served five hundred customers.

In the same minute, the ex-manager, the manager of last year's failures and successes, had levered his body out from the depths of an armchair – this took sixty seconds. He never did stand up to his full height; he fell straight forward onto his face; not even his hands fell forward to cushion his fall. His life fell away, as the typist's paper fluttered into the OUT tray.

When his lifeless body was discovered, the manager was informed. He received the news, just like any other 'phone call. The typists accepted the news without a pause from their typing. We will be glad to receive . . . we are sorry in having to inform you . . . 10% from the following . . . yours sincerely/ gratefully/Faithfully. The ex-manager had also seen it all. He hadn't seen it since – your services will no longer be required – retirement – yours sincerely, Company Manager.

Angus Willson 5Y

THE GIRAFFE

The Giraffe,
With its long, spindly neck
Looks up at the sun and laughs.
He once looked down at the trees
and ate.

Mark Stephens 1Y



SPECULATION

On the rocks I crouch.
Picking pebbles from the foam,
With my toes getting cold,
I wonder who I'll love
And where will be my home.

On the dark cliff I stand.
Thinking to the sky,
With my back to the land,
Of what I will do
In the time of my life.

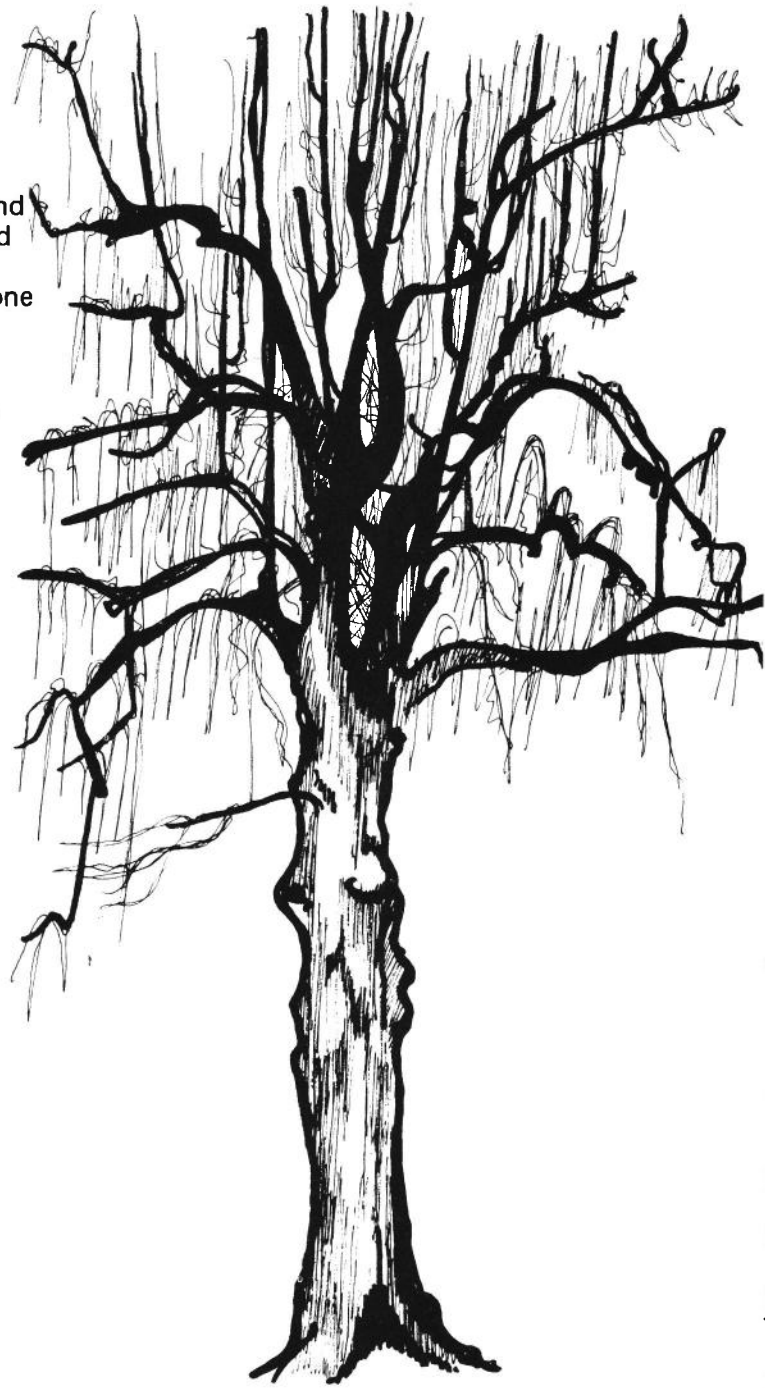
Celia Nickalls 6₁

THE FALLING TREE

The axe hit the trunk with a resounding thump which sounded like the noise of a Chinese block. Again and again the axe hit the tree, cutting into the soft resinous wood which smelt fascinatingly fresh. The top of the tree was swaying as I looked up, and the dead branches were falling down around me like shrapnel in a minefield. The tree shuddered like a concrete vibrator every time the axe struck. Now it was leaning slightly and the wood was up one side and creaking like a loose floorboard. Then I heard a rustling, then a creaking, the tree lurched like a car in the wrong gear and came crashing to the ground, snapping the branches off a smaller tree nearby.

It lay there, some of its branches shaking and the others bent and crumpled under the weight of the massive trunk. One fairly large bush was still propping it up but slowly this bent and small bits splintered off until, with a loud cracking and a sudden thump, the trunk hit the ground and it crumpled like a stoat under an elephant's foot.

Charles Coulson 3Y



TREE

A tree
Stands
Solitary
Under a hill.
A windbreak?
The wind has broken all the others.
This tree is left
Alone
To brace itself against
The pressure.
The others failed,
Look,
They lie
Broken and battered
Flattened against the ground.
They gave up.

Ceri Jones 5Y

LEAVES AND PAPER

I was walking along the Avenue,
Between the pages.
The glowing white leaf before my eyes,
Was supported, along with many others,
With two staples.

Angus Willson 5Y

RAIN

My bare feet slap against the wet pavement;
Cold pink toes peer from beneath my long dress,
Five at a time

The beautiful black shiny road
Washed by rain, stretches ahead;
Cars whistle by,
Raising sheets of spray;
Windscreen wipers hard at work.

Umbrellas of all colours hide people's faces,
Hide their faces from the rain, I suppose;
Why keep off the rain?
Let it come.

Let the rain bathe you,
Let it bathe everything
Leaving all clean and smelling fresh.

I lift my face to the rain,
Feel the small droplets end their fall,
Upon my closed eyelids.

My hair dripping, shiny and dark,
Tomorrow when dry will be rainsoft.

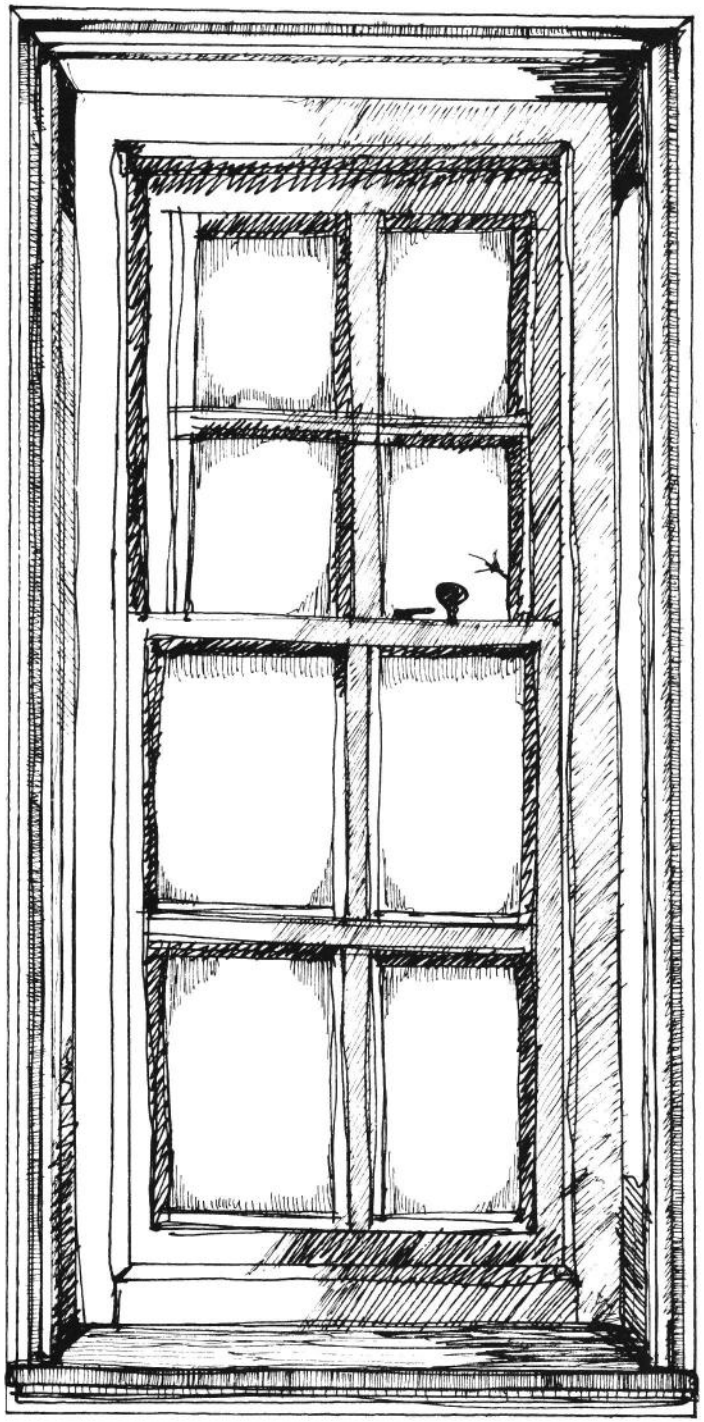
Kate Northam 5X

LONELINESS

Like droplets from a tap
Each one separate, isolated
Dripping, into silence, dripping . . .
Like being old.
Like dying.
Like having your belt too tight
And no room to breathe . . .
Like having no friends . . .
In a class of your own.

A dark bare closed-in cell
Choking with bitter, remorseful feelings
A door slammed, a key turned,
Footsteps echoing far away
Leaving you alone,
To face — loneliness.

Mari Strong 2X



THE MARCH OF THE PYLONS

The pylons march along the sky line
Striding sedately through the country
Going on for ever to the end of time.
Bare skeletons stand stark against the sunset
Unseen, unnoticed.
They have been there too long to remember.
Always still, always ugly, always.

Caroline Casson 3Y

AN APPLE CORE

The pip is gone,
Now there is only its shell,
The tough green skin,
Has shrivelled up,
Slowly, turning a rusty brown.

Once it was gleaming in the sun,
Shining, delicious,
But now,
It is nothing.
Since sharp, cruel teeth have
Killed it.

Susan Isserlis 1Y

AN EMPTY CITY

Tall blocks of flats
Look down on me
Like tall people
Gaily coloured shops
Smile and say hello
Like happy children
Sophisticated statues
Turn their noses up at me
Like old ladies
But although I see no real people
I'm not alone
The buildings are my friends

Claire Holmes 3X

MEXICAN JOURNEY

The modern eight lane freeway (motorway) came to an abrupt end at the border and our car rumbled over in this iniquitious town, Tijuanna. I was a little apprehensive, as although it is relatively easy to get out of the U.S.A; the Mexican authorities are very particular about the length of hair on individuals who are entering their country. My curly locks hadn't seen the likes of a pair of scissors for 10 months, so I hurriedly compressed by candy floss top and sank into the rear seat of the car. The immigration officer summoned me to sit up, followed by a sharp, "Turn your Head", I gingerly turned my well insulated skull and nearly swallowed my tonsils when he allowed us to drive on.

Driving through the customs gate was like entering a new world, a fairytale, or more appropriate: a horror story and entrance into hell. San Diego is a city of skyscrapers, lush green landscaped gardens and parks with a myriad of flowers, cars, buses, theatres and at night, a sea of neon: all that goes with a city of extrem e affluence Tijuanna is a shanty town; too many people living in too few square yards. A town soiled and corrupted by affluence, but not prospering from affluence. Houses are cramped together, tied, hooked, nailed and proped up; cardboard being the main building material with a smattering of chicken wire, bedsteads and assorted pieces of iron and wood. The pavements were dusty, sticky and stained and little children, some in bare feet, others with remnants of shoes, kicking balls, cars and boxes over the dusty terrain.

The whole town had an air of corruption. Beggars and prostitutes roamed the streets and bars, and as we passed these proliferent places, young girls attempted to pull us inside and enticed us to partake of the entertainment. The good-looking young girls were the privileged few who could find jobs of any kind; and they supported their families by working as prostitutes or strippers.

It was this thin arbitrary dividing line, between Mexico and the U.S.A., that made me think deeply about humanity. What kind of world is this, that allows lines to be drawn on the earth's surface, separating such iniquitous disparities in human rights, priviledges and conditions?

The dividing line is a wire fence, twelve feet high, topped with rolls of barbed wire; regular stretches interspersed with towers reminiscent of the surrounds of a wartime prison camp. Children pressed their faces against the wire, peering through to the promised land, hoping that one day they will break out of their cage.

We drove down one of the newly constructed Mexican freeways paying a $ (8/4d) toll at 25 mile intervals. We reached Ensenada, quieter than Tijuanna; still the beggars but not the corruption and degeneration so much in evidence. We spent part of our first evening in a local bar where for 20 cents, a group of male musicions would play a tune interspersed with some delightful singing. They were lovable characters; shabbily dressed, middle to old aged, their faces wrinkled and tanned with a thin line of a moustache over lips that were eager to speak to we strangers. I was greatly impressed by the ability of these minstrels. Several street traders ventured into the bar offering Tacoburgers, flowers and candy for the price of a few cents. I found myself, in my pity and sorrow, wanting to buy something from each of these victims of poverty. In the space of 20 minutes, I'd bought a fragrant flower, a taco topped with chilli pepper sauce, and a packet of Wrigley's chewing gum. For the latter item, the pedlar asked for 10 cents. On giving him 15 cents, he exhibited the most remarkable demonstration of gratitude by repeating for about a minute, "Gracias Senor."

That night was soothed away beneath the stars on a beach at San Miguel. We lit a fire and rolled our our sleeping bags on the soft sand before drifting to sleep to the rhythm of the whispering Pacific surf.

In the morning we returned to the border via Tijuanna and I managed to play a little soccer with some small boys on their dusty hard pitch. We halted at the frontier where an officer promptly asked if we were all Americans. I produced my British passport which caused us to be directed to an interrogation area. The boot of our car was locked and an officer produced a long chain of keys, none of which would do the trick. There was no way in which we could go without the officer looking inside that boot, and eventually we were required to dismantle the rear seat to gain entrance.

I asked if there was a toilet nearby and was directed to go to the Greyhound station which happened to lie on the American side of the state line. As I proceeded across, I was confronted by a drunk and at the same time I recall voices behind me, "Where do you think you're going?" This was repeated several times as I walked, and I looked over my shoulder to ascertain if the cries were directed at me and also to determine their source. At that instant, two excited police officers sprinted towards me. I froze; they grabbed my arms, lifted me off the ground, took my coat and proceeded to search me. I explained my motives, making it quite clear that my pursuits were due to nature and that I wasn't attempting to gain illegal entrance to the U.S.A.

After about two hours, the customs officials had satisfied themselves that we did not possess any contraband, apart from one declared bottle of Vodka which was poured down a drain before our eyes. We then proceeded back to civilisation, to the affluence, the land of green backs, plastic grass, synthetic food and neon: San Diego, U.S.A.

Brian Capell, November 1970.

A VISIT TO THIRD FORM CHEMISTRY

It is a chemistry lesson. To the right of you (you are standing safely by the door) are the benches, crowded out with busy young scientists, each conducting thrilling experiments which bear no relation to the set class work in any way, apart from the fact the same equipment is being used, though it is employed on courageous, out-of-this-world experiments.

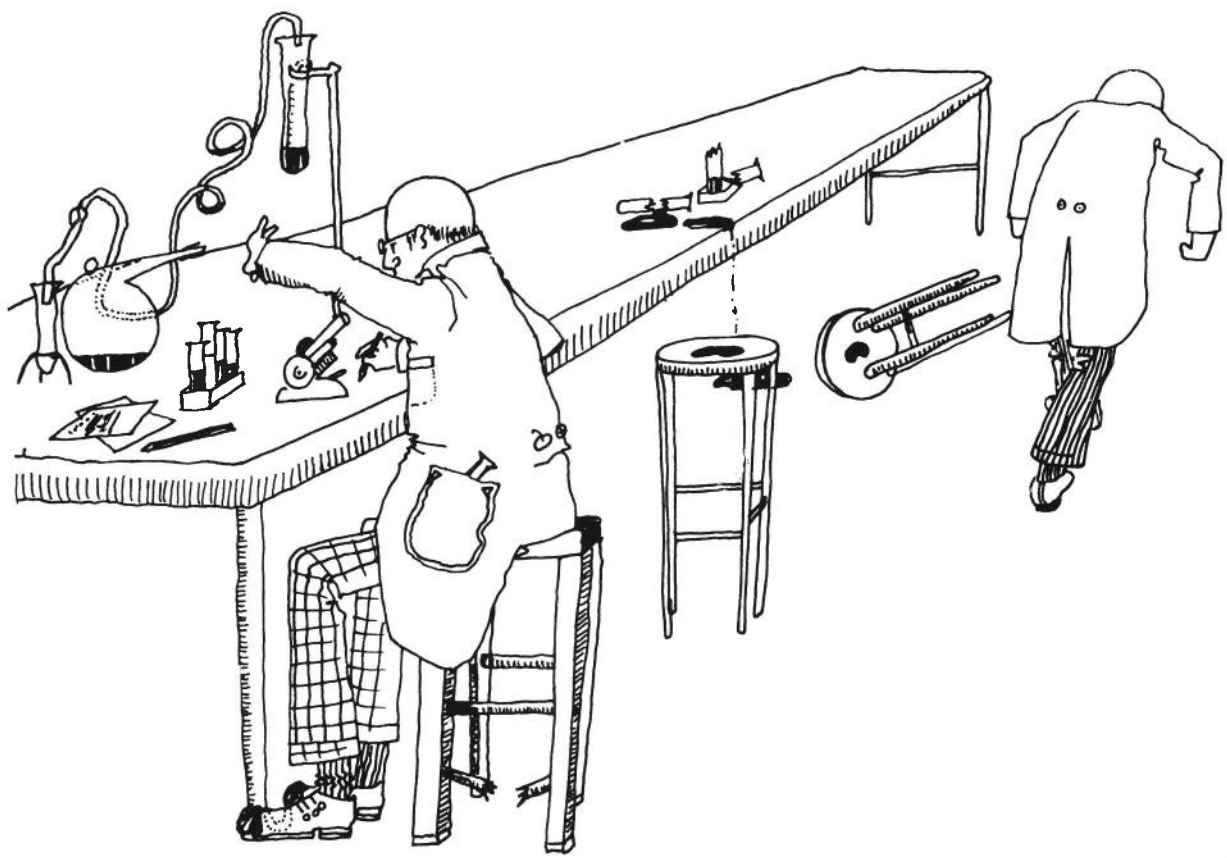
James, one of our keen crew of pyromaniacs, is engaged upon the fascinating task of discovering whether (using a wooden spill and no bunsen burner) it is possible to ignite the entire gas system of Saffron Walden. This project is NOT sponsored by an overworked teacher. In fact she has no idea of its existence, which is, perhaps, fortunate for James. To his right, completely unaware of the peril he is exposed to, is Chris, occupied on discovering whether or not copper sulphate solution, mixed thickly with blotting paper and a pinch of salt, when heated over a bunsen burner would produce a blue variation of school porridge. "Smack!" a large wad of sodden blotting paper hits James square on the head. He snorts in disgust, remarks on, "Stupid idiots who fool around in Chemi without a pang of guilt conscience!" He retaliates, marking the beginning of a bitter outbreak of chemical warfare.

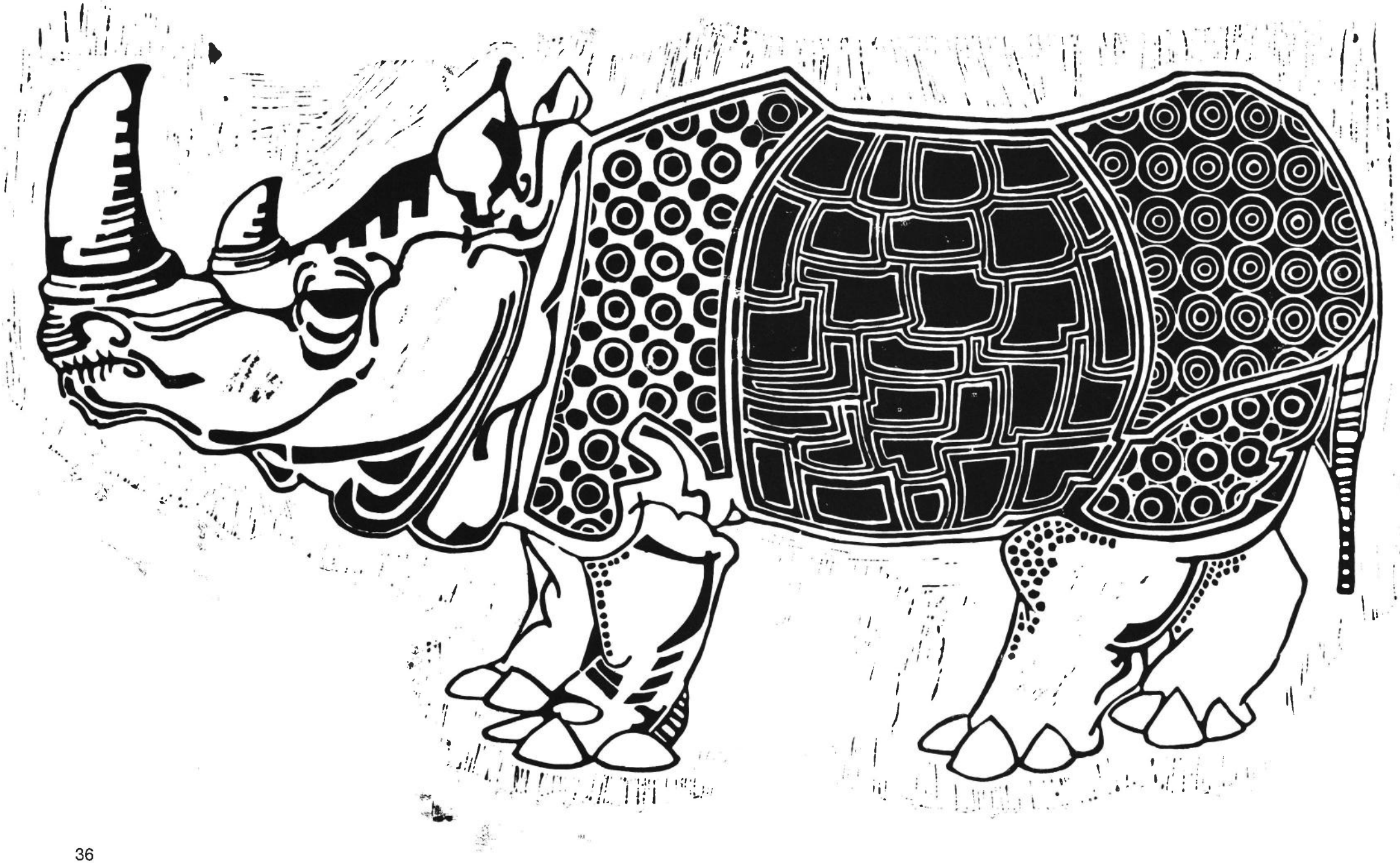
In a corner by the window, surrounded by dirty test tubes, bunsen burners and clamps, all stuck together in a tottering, unsafe, red-hot construction, slouches Rich. He is weary from a hard afternoon's reading, and he pores over "Dingle and Simpson — A basic Chemistry". Or is it "Planet of the Double Sun"? We shall never know, for he whisks it away as an outbreak of fierce bubbling in his contraption demands his attention.

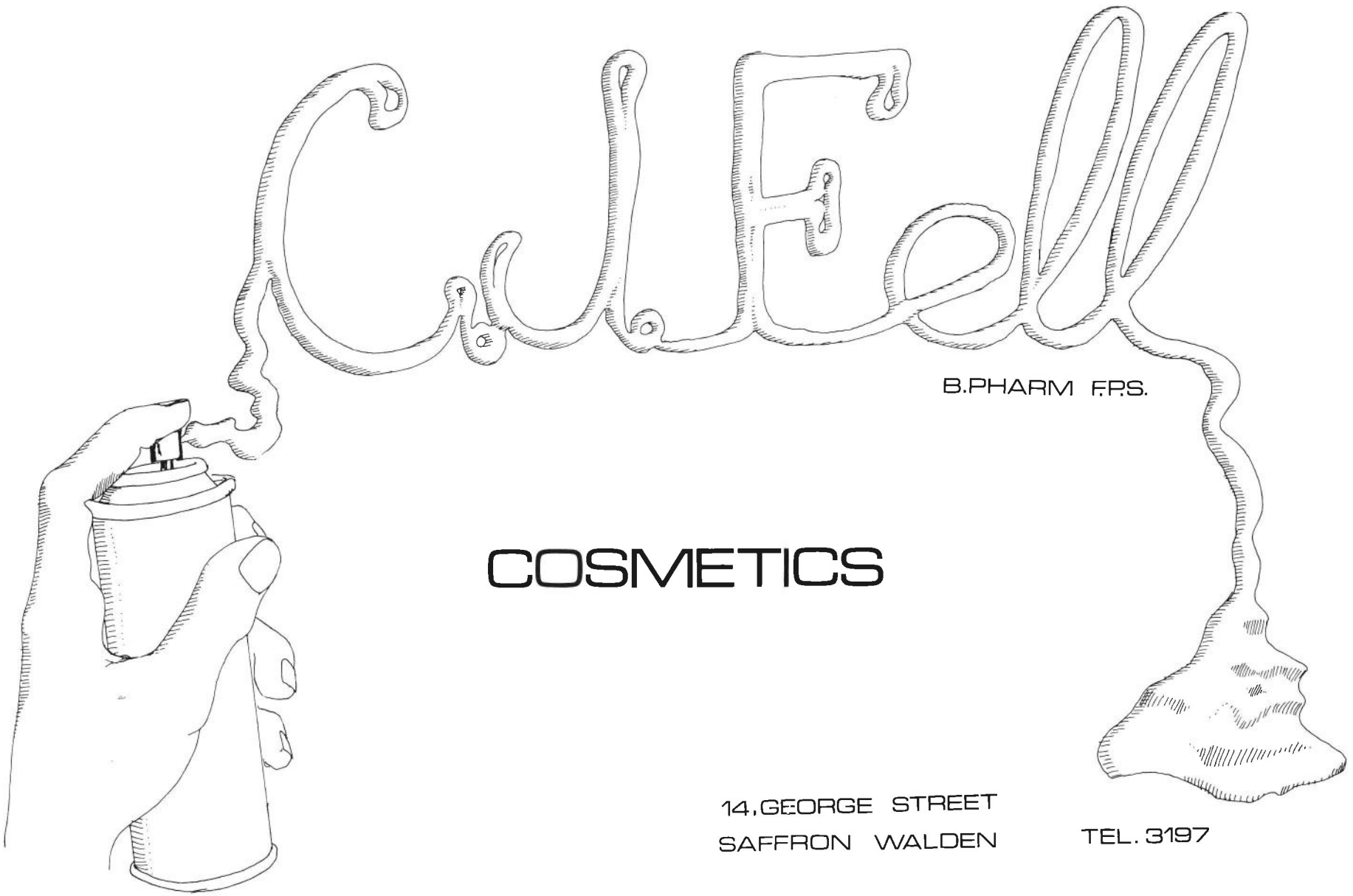
So, cautiously, we move on, past rows of busy young scientists and hooligans, dressed in pale brown overalls, blotched and spattered in all manner of chemicals, all the colours of the rainbow and more besides, colours which would horrify Mother Nature and baffle Persil. Each person enthralled by the properties of boiling chemicals with wierd names. Names, which one wonders, should perhaps be pronounced in Mongolian?

Looking up from our task of avoiding scalding ourselves, we catch sight of the door. Within seconds we are outside. Our minds are made up. Never meddle with third form chemistry!

Andrew Smart 3X






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