

# KINGHAM HILL MAGAZINE

No. 16

SEPTEMBER, 1920.

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## CHRONICLE OF EVENTS.

The Swimming Bath was re-opened on June 13th. This year the attendance has been limited and the enjoyment curtailed owing to the wet and cold season. Up to the present only 13 boys have "passed"—but we hope before the season comes to an end this number will be increased.

On August 19th the Swimming Sports for the boys took place, and though the rain somewhat interfered with the enjoyment of the proceedings, the spirit of the boys was not damped, and some excellent racing and diving was witnessed. The results of the competition were:—

Championship (two lengths): A. Osborne, 1; H. Jenkins, 2; A. Rodwell, 3.

One Length (boys passed this year): J. Major, 1; W. Lane, 2; V. Balfour, 3.

Diving (three tries): A. Vecchi, 25; R. Sadler, 17; H. Jenkins, 17.

In the extra try Sadler beat Jenkins, thus securing second prize.

Clothes Race: A. Osborne, 1; L. Osborne, 2.

We deeply regret to record the death, in Canada, of A. Dray. We tender our sympathy to his brothers in their bereavement.

On June 22nd H. Mascot left for Canada in the "Tunisian." Our best wishes go with him for his happiness and success in the new country.

June 23rd being the anniversary of the birthday of the Prince of Wales, a short outline of his life and work was given in the School.

Sunday School was re-opened on June 27th after being closed during the war.

H. Holland (Sheffield) and his wife, after being absent from England for so many years, paid the Hill a visit during July. They have now returned safely to their home across the ocean.

On July 29th Douglas Board, Warrant Officer, R.M.L.I., gave the boys a very useful and pleasant afternoon in the Gymnasium. The games which he introduced to their notice were so arranged that every boy had a chance of success, and brought out that right spirit—that in all circumstances to "play up, play the game, and play for the side." Mr. Young, in moving a vote of thanks to D. Board for his kindness, said how much we were indebted to him, and hoped the boys would remember and practice the games they had been taught that afternoon. Mr. Birch also spoke, commending the boys for the manner in which they had entered into the various contests.

On June 30th a large number of Hillites were present at the Kingham Parish Church to witness the marriage of G. Pike and Miss Wiggall. Our best wishes are with them for their happiness and success.

We were delighted to welcome quite a large number of visitors during the August holiday. Unfortunately this was somewhat marred by the rain, nevertheless everybody seemed to thoroughly enjoy their visit to the old home. Especially were we pleased to see Mr. Shrimpton amongst us again.

Monday, August 2nd, being wet, the Boys' Sports were postponed. This was rather disappointing to the boys, but D. Board volunteered to conduct some games with the boys in the Gymnasium. Here the boys contested in several events both for prizes and the honour of their house, S. Messenger (Durham) winning the special prize given for boxing competition, VI. and V. Form. Sheffield House won the "House" competition by half point. Among the prominent competitors were G. Hancox, Captain of Sheffield; Cyril Orris and Jack Johnson. Both boys and spectators thoroughly enjoyed themselves in what we might describe a second Sports Day.

On Tuesday, August 3rd, the boys had their Sports, and some excellent racing took place—visitors and boys fully entering into the various competitions. The Obstacle Race caused a great deal of amusement, especially at the end when the successful ones, after eating the cakes, found some difficulty in declaring their names.

The following is a summary of the results:—

100 Yards Open: Osborne, A., 1; Orris, C., 2; Osborne, L., 3.

80 Yards (under nine): Dickens, S., 1; Anderson, G., 2; Medcalf, A., 3.

Egg and Spoon Race: Durham House.

100 Yards (Old Boys): F. Dack, 1; R. Osborne, 2; R. Fryer, 3.

200 Yards Open: Osborne, L., 1; Messenger, S., 2; Osborne, A., 3.

Wheelbarrow Race: Durham House.

Tug of War (House): Sheffield House.

Tug of War (Visitors v. Hill): The Visitors.

Hurdle Race (Boys): Messenger, S., 1; Osborne, A., 2; Back, C., 3.

300 Yards (14-17): Dack, V., 1; Fassam, E., 2; Fryer, R., 3.

Throwing Cricket Ball: Messenger, S., 55 yards, 1; Osborne, L., 50 yards, 2; Page, 47 yards, 3.

Quarter-Mile (Old Boys): Dack, F., 1; Silver, H., 2; Osborne, R., 3.

Sack Race: Sheffield House.

Cycle Race (Slow): Farmborough, J., 1; Floyd, P., 2; McSweeney, 3.

Half-Mile (over 13): Orris, C., 1; Osborne, A., 2; Messenger, 3.

Hurdle Race (Old Boys): Barlow, T., 1; Osborne, R., 2; McSweeney, W., 3.

Obstacle Race: Orris, C. H., 1; Orris, Cyril, 2; Sadler, R., 3.

Obstacle Race (Old Boys): Silver, H., 1; Hall H., 2; McSweeney, W., 3.

Consolation Race: Balfour, 1; Milne, 2; Rodwell, 3.

The first match in the House Competition took place on July 31st between Durham House and Bradford House. Durham batted first and put up a score of 41. Bradford, in reply, could only score 12. Durham then went in, and, after 6 wickets had fallen for 51, took a very bold but sporting course and declared. In their second venture Bradford only made 29; Durham thus winning by 51 runs.

The match between the Residents of Norwich and Severn v. The Rest caused considerable interest, the (chief) scores being—Rest, 97 (Goddard 67 not out; Meacher, 10).

Norwich and Severn (Groves, 29; Floyd, 16; Osborne, 12).

The Final of the House Competition was rather one-sided, Durham scoring 75 in their first innings and 44 in their second; while Sheffield could only make 13 in their first innings and only 3 in their second. This surely must be a record for the Hill, and shall we say, for the world?

The annual concert took place in the School, which had been decorated for the occasion by the boys and their teachers (past and present). This proved a very enjoyable evening. Our thanks are due to Messrs. Cave, Devine, Goddard, A. Jarvis and C. Viner and the boys for their excellent songs; also to Mr. H. Sutton and Mr. C. Sutton for their selections on the piano and violin.

Cricket—by Hon. Secretary, S. G. Meacher.

The season has drawn to a close. No doubt many critics will say that with the talent at our disposal we should have done better, so, without making excuses for failures or lauding what successes we have gained, I will be content by saying that once again, under the leadership of F. G. Goddard, the team has "played the game."

Summary—Played 13, Won 10, Lost 3.

In the Chipping Norton and District League two matches were lost, each against Churchill. The other loss was against Shipton Court. In the next issue of the Magazine I hope to include the batting and bowling averages and also a summary of the doings of the Second Eleven.

We were pleased to have Mr. Fisher with us on Sunday, August 29th, when he spoke to us on a subject dear to us—our Lord's visit to the Temple as a boy, and showed how we could take Him as our pattern.

T. W. SCARFE.

**OUR LONDON LETTER.**

Latimer House,

September, 1920.

This is not really a letter this time, but only a short note, for, to use a well-known phrase—"except for minor operations there is little to report."

The minor operations have, however, been interesting, and include a visit from Mr. Claude Birch, a few cricket matches, and a General Sports Meeting.

Many of us were privileged, during August, to visit our "dear old Kingham Hill," where, amid pleasant surroundings and kind friends, we spent a happy time. And what a contrast to London. Here, we see nothing but bricks and mortar, and breathe little else than smoke and a thousand other impurities. But on Kingham Hill one can gaze across the open country for many miles, and, drinking in the deep beauties of Nature, fill one's lungs with sweet, pure air.

We feel decidedly "bucked" by the victory of the Visitors in the Tug-of-War, and we hope we may be allowed to share some of the glory of the "Rest" in their splendid win on the cricket field.

As the evenings begin to draw in we are reminded that summer will soon be past, and plans must be made for the winter season. Preparations for the football season are already in full swing—our Hon. Sec. is W. Spratley—and, under the Captaincy of Tommy Munton, we are looking forward to some excellent sport in the Finchley League.

On the Social side we hope to repeat the indoor competitions and games of last winter and to arrange one or two social evenings and concerts.

BLUE AND GOLD.

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**THE EVACUATION OF MURMANSK—continued.**

At the time of our arrival in Murmansk it was daylight quite twenty out of the twenty-four hours. This gave us ample opportunity to study the country through which we travelled.

I spent hours at a carriage window in the hopes of seeing something really interesting, but was rewarded only with the sight of forests, swamps, lakes and small rivers. And of the hundreds of miles we travelled the scenery was nearly the same. Here and there we passed a pretty stream complete with miniature waterfall and rushing waters. The ground on either side of the line was swampy and impassable for troops, the only firm ground being that on which the line was built, and a great deal of this had been drained

and banked up. When we did hit upon a considerable amount of firm ground one would find a small town or village consisting of a number of wooden houses built from the forest wood.

All the bridges and other structures along the line were also built of timber from the forest.

At every small wayside station, and dotted every few miles along the line, were huge piles of wood cut direct from the forests for fuel. It was simply wonderful that the trains could be run at all on such material, but, although we seldom travelled faster than twelve miles per hour on the level, the engines seemed to do their work quite well and draw enormous loads.

After about two and a half hours' run we stopped for water and fuel—this invariably took about half an hour—and a hot meal was issued. Our cooks were very good to the engine crew, which consisted of one Russian driver and three Mongolian firemen. Each time we stopped—if meal time—they would receive their portions with the troops. The crew soon adapted itself to this arrangement, for as soon as it became within a few minutes of any meal time the train would stop, and by the second day we were stopping about every two hours. At times I am certain the driver stopped because he had run short of smoking material and wished to cadge a cigarette or some tobacco.

When the railway was under construction (during the war) hundreds of Mongolians were imported to do the labouring. These individuals appeared to be doing quite well; they seemed to wax fat and prosper where the poor Russian peasant would go under.

What shops there were in Murmansk were owned by these gentry, and on Sunday they could be seen swaggering round in the latest cut European clothes. A good number had turned over to the Bolsheviks, and proved to be cold-blooded and cruel.

They were to be seen at intervals the whole way along the line—with their bland expression and beady eyes—repairing the bridges and permanent way, and ever ready to seize the opportunity of making a few roubles.

About every hundred miles or so, we would stop at one of the more important stations for exchange of engines. This would take anything up to five or six hours.

It was during these stoppages that the troops would emerge from the carriages with their towels and wash off some of the travel stains in the near-by lake or stream which is always evident at these stations.

The country through which the line ran was simply abounding in wonderful large fresh-water lakes, the largest being the famous Onega.

The lakes simply teem with fish, which form the peasant's principal food in normal times. The water is very sweet and clear, but we had strict orders not to drink it unless boiled, owing to the fear of dysentery.

These lakes are formed by the watercourses from enormous ranges of mountains and hills on either side—but some considerable number of miles away—of the railway. The valley, or plains, through which the line runs extends for nearly one thousand miles, with slight breaks only.

This, no doubt, is the reason for selecting this site for the railway, the ground lying flat nearly the whole way to Petrovodsk.

Being so used to punctuality on English railways, it took us some considerable time to get used to the existing conditions. At every whistle or ringing of bells, etc., our fellows would rush to the train, dressing themselves *en route*, laughing and shouting, invariably to find that the train would not move for half an hour or so. There was seldom anything definite laid down, and when we did move it was generally without the slightest warning. This used to cause considerable amusement. All heads would be popped out of windows and doors watching for the unfortunates who were obliged to sprint to get their places in the train.

The drivers invariably made a practice of moving about four hundred yards and then stopping for the stragglers.

Before leaving the "Czar" the Adjutant had given a lecture on the different paper money in use in North Russia. The only money we were allowed to use was the N. Russian rouble notes, date 1918 and 1919, and backed up by English gold. These notes were very easy to come by and could be changed for English money. Before we arrived British soldiers were allowed to change as many roubles as they wished at the Post Office, but the authorities found such enormous sums were being exchanged that they decided to put a stop to it, and an order was issued to the effect that five pounds worth of roubles at a time only were to be changed about once a month.

I have heard that men used to sell everything in their possession, except a few things to actually stand up in.

Bartering between the soldiers and natives was strictly forbidden, but the authorities did not mind our fellows exchanging bully beef for fish or flour for milk, etc., etc.

At every stop the natives—consisting chiefly of employees of the railway—would flock round the train clamouring for cigarettes, food, clothing, etc. A strict watch had to be kept in the carriages containing our baggage; the natives had a dodge of slipping round to the blind side of the train, climbing into the carriages and throwing boots or other handy articles on to some convenient spot near the line, to be gathered after the train had left. Should they be caught in the carriage they would pretend to be looking for someone.

Except for the trees and larger bushes there was very little vegetation. The principal wild flowers—and, as far as I could see, the only one along the wildest parts of the line—was a brownish-red flower, growing on a plant

with dry-looking leaves. A small blueberry bush also grew in the swamps in large profusion. These blueberries are very good to eat and make excellent pie and jam. The natives, and especially the children, eat so many of these that their lips and fingers become permanently stained with the juice. Our fellows, of course, took full advantage of these bushes at every stop.

All the wild life which had lived near the line must have been driven away long before our arrival. Except for a straggling bird or two and the inevitable rook and jackdaw, nothing was seen during our journey.

When the men got tired of watching the scenery they would play cards, tell stories, sing or sleep to pass the time away. It is really wonderful the amount of sleep that some of the fellows would get in in the twenty-four hours; some of them, I am sure, would sleep quite sixteen. This, I think, is rather a good thing in such a campaign; it gives a man a chance to build up between the arduous campaigning.

Our greatest difficulty was the sleeping arrangements. Some of the carriages had shelves built into their sides; perhaps I ought to say cattle-trucks, for that is what they really were. On these shelves the men would coil up with their blankets round them and wait for a few hundred yards' smooth run to get to sleep; once asleep everything was alright. I have not mentioned the fact that the bumping of half the trains in England put together could not compare with the lurching, groaning and bumping of a N.R. train. One would manage to secure sufficient space to stretch one's limbs, when an extra lurch would send one on top of the next-door neighbour.

DOUGLAS BOARD.



