

GETTING TOGETHER THE COURTS DAY BY DAY

WE lived, twenty at a time, in former U.S. army hospital wards dignified for us by the names of eminent Cantabrians. Within a few weeks, the 250 individuals who arrived at the College had become a community. The varied flavour of its component parts comes through Court comments that reached the Yearbook.

Brooke reported :

"Even the bribe of five shillings worth of savings stamps could not save our president, Varah, from the broad highway to destruction. After all the protestations of misogyny he fell and is now honorary vice president of Bedford. We wish Bill and Phil Goff the best of luck.

"Among other discoveries in the court we have found that bakelite door handles are not made to be roped together. Getting tired of members walking in at all hours we once attempted to lock them out but without much success. Talking of destruction our common room usually looks as if a tornado had passed by especially when nuts are plentiful at Huddleston's. Conway has a distracting habit of leaving his belongings anywhere, especially his pyjama jacket which he can rarely find when he needs it. His latest episode is a craving for young female skulls with which to adorn his bed space.

"We are a pretty motley crowd but we get on very well."

Bedford :

"We've had two weddings in our group
And now they look so cheerful
Annette and Doris kept it quiet
Of celebrations they were fearful."

Stop press : another wedding since reported.

Cotton :

"Looking around at the settled and complete domestic life in Cotton it seems a far cry from the sunny Saturday when we arrived, and gazed with dismay at the prospect of the college. Most of us expected to drive up to a mansion—instead of which we were delivered to a collection of army huts. However, our astonishment once over, we settled down incredibly quickly, beginning by putting Christian names on our wardrobes.

"Horace Cotton is our marmalade cat, a legacy from last year. We cherish him as our only resident male, but his early morning offerings of mice and baby rabbits are not always appreciated."

Cromwell :

"Kettle queues, cups of coffee and quiet first thing in the morning seem to be important features of our daily life. Cromwell contains a large proportion of restful people—an asset when there are twenty all trying to write theses.

"Frances Collin, our President, had done many kinds of social work before she came here, from prison visiting onwards. She minds her chickens carefully, communal jobs are smoothly run, and we are kept abreast of college news. She even brings us all a cup of tea at half past eight on Sunday mornings.

"More than once, in the cold grey dawn, while we have been scrambling to get ourselves onto those buses, Molly Eagle has electrified the nest, and reduced us all to helpless laughter with a five-hundred-word-a-minute recital of some epic, such as 'Horatius on the Bridge', delivered crescendo staccato as she flew on her way from one end of the court to the other.

"Everyone knows Doris 'Riding' Whitehead, for her activity in matters historical, and for her knowledge of dressmaking and sewing, and we hold her dry humour in affection.

"Pam Ford, once a nurse and then a land girl, became engaged to Howard Gilbert, of Sedgwick Court some time ago, and we wish them every happiness. Madge Freeman, our P.T. type, has roused many hitherto unwilling Cromwellians into positive frenzies of enthusiasm over netball, by her coaching, and her own evident enjoyment of it.

"Between us, we know Australia, the U.S.A., Sweden, Italy and Switzerland. Probably Rachel, our house-warden has contributed most to the comfort and happiness of Cromwell."

Clarkson :

"Margaret and I are at times most unpopular because we discuss with heat Important Questions of Politics, Economics, Religion and World Affairs. This does not conduce to Domestic Peace because our voices carry well. . . . The college as a whole offers little encouragement to those who think it part of their teacherly duty to respond to the Intelligent Woman's Guide. There isn't even a course on current Affairs and most people sound quite happy about it when they say they are too busy to read the newspapers. However the H. bomb (as mentioned by A. Eden in a broadcast) aroused a little, mild interest. . . ."

Fisher :

"It is traditional for Fisher to be the best Court in the College. We have maintained this tradition and lived intensely up to the Fisher family motto 'Where so 'ere we wish, there shall we fish'.

"The Court has been responsible for such activities as hoisting the End of Teaching Practice Signal, Amendments to the 1933 Syllabus (Mr. Thomas—for Action), Birthday Greetings to Celtic Tutors, and the defeat of such muscle-bound courts as Brooke and Newton at skittleball.

"Two members of the Court have been awarded the Freedom of Cotton, one subsequently obtaining a bar. The Court Snogger's Oscar, a hideous wolverine reminder of the clay, art and craft stage, has been held by most members and finally won outright by CENSORED.

"At various Social Functions in College, Fisher Court has been represented by detachments of the 'Arrington Yeomanry—Lady Bambridge's Own' and 'Hutchings Horse'.