

castellum

THE MAGAZINE OF THE DURHAM CASTLEMEN'S SOCIETY

No. 35 1982

THE MASTER'S LETTER

Term has just finished which means that I am really rather late in settling down to write this letter. The usual end-of-term events have been and gone and Castle is now a very quiet place except when there is a function in the Great Hall. The Advent Carol Service took a rather different form this year and was most successful. Jonathan Leonard has taken over from Jonathan Newell as Organ Scholar and is building on the good work put in over the past two years.* The present Choir is very good and their contribution to the Carol Service most enjoyable and rewarding. The Informal Ball held a week or so earlier in term was entitled 'Australian Midsummer Ball' and had a very down under flavour. A lot of effort was put in by all concerned and the decorations were very good.

Last year when I wrote this letter the 150th Anniversary events were very much on the horizon; now they are over. In fact as far as I am concerned they ended with a very good party in the Don's Set on Hall Stairs somewhere around 2 or 3 in the morning following the Anniversary Ball which was held in Castle. I should not have to add that the party was organised by some well-known Old Castlemen. The formal events which took place over the preceding week were blessed with good weather and the arrangements worked very smoothly. The general feeling in the University was one of enjoyment coupled with a sense of satisfaction that everything went quite so well, and relief that it would be another fifty years before anything of the same happened again. The highlight of the proceedings was undoubtedly the installation of the Chancellor in the Cathedral. Dame Margot certainly endeared herself to all that she met in Durham on that occasion and we look forward to having her with us again next year. The occasion was marked by the presentation of Honorary Degrees to people chosen by the new Chancellor and in this context we were delighted to entertain The Archbishop of Canterbury, The Earl of Drogheda, David Attenborough, Dr. Mary Catterall, Dr. Malcolm Arnold and Dame Kiri Te Kanawa. Honorary Degrees (in absentia) were also awarded to Sir John Betjeman and Dame Ninette de Valois. Generally speaking the main events and all the preliminary events – Open Days, Fun Runs, open-air performances of a

* Incidentally we still have available some of the records made last year. Please contact the Bursar if you would like one.

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MR. R. F. APPLETON, B.Sc.

Communications for the Secretary/Treasurer which are not private should be sent to him c/o the
College Office, University College, Durham Castle, where formal matters receive attention.

Mediaeval Mystery Play, etc. helped to bring the attention of the University to the City and County. The University also featured on television – Independent and B.B.C. The B.B.C. programme was presented by Harold Evans and I will not easily forget being interviewed by him on such matters as admissions policy on the steps to the Castle door right in the middle of the June Ball. It is always possible to criticise such programmes but I am sure that both have done the University a considerable amount of good and we were all pleased to have Harold Evans and his wife with us on that occasion.

One of the most pleasing aspects of the celebrations has been the way in which the City has responded to the University. Relations have probably never been better. To mark the anniversary the City have conferred on the University the perpetual right to process the Civil Sword of the City at the annual Congregation for the conferment of Honorary Degrees and have inaugurated an Annual University Lecture to be given before a public audience in the Town Hall on a matter material to mankind by a member of the University or other person nominated by the University. The first lecture was given this year by the Vice-Chancellor at a special ceremony in the Town Hall. For their part the University have presented the Mayor of Durham with a new set of robes. On a more day-to-day basis the City have appointed a Tourist and Conference Officer and he has established strong links with the Colleges realising that we attract a large number of conferences and other guests to Durham during the summer.

As part of the celebrations the University also launched a major Appeal to Industry, old students and all associated with the University. You should all have received the general brochure giving details of the projects and letter from me asking for your support for the Leonard Slater Fellowship. This will be a research appointment within the College and, along with other Fellowships to be endowed by Industry and other Colleges, will greatly strengthen the University. This is to be particularly welcomed at this time when, despite the financial stringencies introduced by the Government, the University is attracting more sponsored research than ever before. I know some of you do not look back to the academic side of University with the same enthusiasm as you had for rowing or rugby or whatever. But the academic role is fundamental to the life of the University and everything that can be done to enhance the academic reputation of Durham will ensure that we can continue to give a top-rate all-round education to those who come to

study here. One of the major items in the Appeal is the development of a Material Science Centre and funding for the post of Director has been donated, and negotiations for a building to house the Unit are at an advanced stage. This project is attracting a lot of interest from Industry. But Science is not the only area to benefit. The Farmington Trust have established a Professorial Fellowship in Theology and Tyne-Tees Television have given a grant to support the Performing Arts.

Our own Appeal Project, the West Courtyard Common Room, went out to tender early in the summer and fortunately the minimum price quoted did not exceed the maximum figure laid down by Governing Body. Building commenced in October and is going well so that the room should be ready by the end of next term – certainly I hope before the next Reunion. The final cost of the project will be around £55,000 and this leads me to make one or two comments which may be unpalatable but must I feel be said. By and large the response of the membership of the Society to both Appeals has been disappointing in that only one member in five contributed. Those who have contributed have done so generously and I and Governing Body are very grateful to them. Had the other 80% contributed as well what a different picture. Of course I appreciate that some of you, for one reason or another, are unable to help but I guess that for many it has just been put off. I am enclosing forms for both Appeals and hope that you will get out your pens now and return them promptly! In this context the plans for the Flower Festival are going ahead well and we hope that as many of you as possible will come and see it and bring your friends along too. Mrs. Slater has put in a lot of hard work and I am sure it will be very worthwhile. The funds are to be divided between the Courtyard project and the Northumbria Historic Churches Trust.

We were very sorry to say goodbye last summer to the Chaplain, the Reverend Philip Thomas, his wife and family. Philip Thomas had been Chaplain since October 1978 and Solway Fellow since January 1979. He and his family have returned to New Zealand where he has a parish near Wellington. He just completed his Ph.D. in time and was able to take part in the July Congregation. He will be missed and remembered by S.C.R. and J.C.R. alike. His successor, the Reverend Peter Hiscock, took up his duties at the beginning of term. He and his very pleasant wife have moved into the flat in Cosin's Hall and are already taking an active part in College life. Before

coming to Durham the Reverend Hiscock was with the Team Ministry at Jarrow and prior to that spent some time in India and a period as Dean of Residents (Chaplain) at Trinity College, Dublin.

Some of you will remember Dr. Maurice Tucker who was an undergraduate here from October 1965 to June 1968; we are very pleased to welcome him back in Durham to take up his appointment as Lecturer in Geology. Professor Malcolm Brown is to be the first President of the Society of Fellows which has been formed in Durham as one of the results of the University Anniversary Appeal. Stephen Dearden who graduated in 1981 and was a leading light in the Castle Theatre Company, has been appointed Administrative Officer for the Arts. Rob Beckley who was Senior Man in 1980-81 had a very good year as President of D.S.U. and certainly improved relations between D.S.U. and the Colleges. Outside Castle I might mention that Dr. Kent retired as Master of Van Mildert College at the end of the Easter Term. He is to be succeeded by Mr. Arnold Bradshaw who has been Vice-Master and Senior Tutor. At this point I might mention my own sorrow at the passing of Jack Spedding. He was much better known to many of you than to me but I remember with considerable pleasure when he and his wife were able to join us for the Congregation Garden Party in 1981. Regrettably I did not meet him before his illness. The only possible occasion would have been my first Reunion and the weather, as no doubt many of you recall, intervened.

I have already mentioned the new Common Room earlier. We have no other major projects in hand at present but are taking steps to have the tapestries in the Bishop's Suite cleaned and also to restore the paintwork on the Organ pipes in the Tunstal Chapel. These of course come from the Father Smith Organ in the Cathedral and are, I understand, one of the very few sets of decorated pipes remaining from that period. They may be back in time for next year's Reunion. For a couple of years we have been able to but aside some of the receipts from visitors to the Castle and I hope that we will be able to use this fund for repairs to the fabric and furnishings of the Castle as they are needed.

I have specifically not mentioned the effects of the Government cuts in University finances, both through the U.G.C. and student grants. Certainly we are in for a difficult time but it is too early to state clearly what the final effects will be. Whatever the outcome we will endeavour to maintain the

quite unique position that this University has achieved. Best wishes to each one of you.

E. C. Salthouse

In the summer of 1982 the College was informed of the death of the following members of the Society:—

Dr. Frederick Hutchinson 1952-55 Died March 1981

Mr. Kenneth Newman Rayson 1953-57 Died September 1981

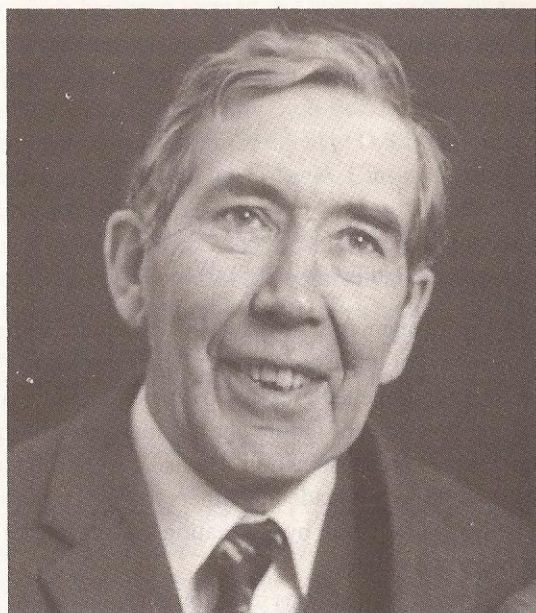
JACK SPEDDING

An appreciation by W. J. Dey

Members of the Castlemen's Society who gratefully remember Jack Spedding's long period of office as Secretary-Treasurer from 1955 to 1980 will recall that he was compelled to resign by ill-health. For many years he had withstood the pressures of family and business commitments which tended to edge him towards resignation. He had a stubborn streak in him and although he could be persuaded by others that he ought to resign, he could not bring himself to impair by resignation the interests of the Society which he had helped to create.

None of his freshman companions in October 1931 thought that the tall and taciturn Northumbrian from Morpeth Grammar School would prove such a stalwart servant of the College, devoted to raising its prestige and to supporting the University in its advance in public esteem. He seemed to us rather withdrawn, reserved and lugubrious. Nothing could have been more deceptive than these first impressions. He found his niche in rowing and certainly worked hard to revive Castle rowing. His enthusiasm could not be quenched by disappointment; he had gained the support of Lt. Col. A. A. Macfarlane-Grieve, of W. A. Prowse and of A.P. Rossiter so that by 1934 a few minor (but welcome) victories on the Wear came to the Boat Club. In that year he rowed bow in the University Second Crew, and in 1935 gained a full Palatinate against Edinburgh University. 'Sped' played forward in the

College Rugby XV; he was ever willing to lend a hand and helped at least once in the Soccer and Hockey teams. In 1934 he graduated and stayed for one more year – ostensibly to train as a teacher at his own expense, actually to enjoy rowing and a full life in the Castle. Then he showed his sense of humour, which in alliance with the drollery of Sam Lees made life in the JCR quite exciting and unpredictable.



He had some skill at dominoes, which proved profitable in Rag visits to pubs in Spennymoor and Bishop Auckland. He was a congenial companion on a visit in July 1935 to Penchise Peel near Hawick where Lt. Col. and Mrs. Macfarlane-Grieve used to entertain students. There and afterwards at his home in Rothbury, Sped extended the education of the writer in trout-fishing and rabbit shooting.

In that year he began to teach in Nottingham – a post which was merely an interlude, as his father's illness demanded his return to Ashington to run the family business, a wholesale newsagency. He would have preferred to join

the expanding RAF but never regretted his local connections which linked him with the famous footballing sons of Ashington ; the Charltons and the Milburns.

When the war began, he naturally chose the RAF, and flying became his passion and survival his hope. After various accidents he eventually became a veteran pilot of Mosquitoes in 109 Squadron (Pathfinder) of Bomber Command, where he reached the rank of Squadron Leader. He was awarded the D.F.C. and after 96 operational flights he was decorated with the DSO for his courageous leadership, sense of duty and calm efficiency. The uncertain freshman had developed into the unflappable and competent officer. His widow, Hazel, is the daughter of a Yorkshire clergyman (ex-Hatfield!) She has shared 'Sped's' love for Durham and the Castle and supported him unselfishly in caring for his parents and their own four sons. In the last three years she has nursed him devotedly and protected him from some of the effects of a painful and debilitating sickness.

Jack Spedding was one of the first to join the Society in 1946, and almost became a permanent fixture as Secretary-Treasurer because he could carry responsibility with quiet and unostentatious reliability. In committee his occasional observations might have sounded caustic and sardonic; all would acknowledge their blunt sincerity and common sense.

His death at the age of seventy has removed a bulwark of the Society and some of us have lost a life-long friend. When he was buried at Mitford Church in July 1982. Col. and Mrs. Slater, Canon T. H. Corden, D. M. Roberts, J. Bryce, and W. J. Dey were present to pay the respects of the Society and the College to a true Castleman.

EDITORIAL

NO NEWS IS NOT GOOD NEWS

It is the sad lot of editors, as it is of hon. secretaries of voluntary organisations, to write in exhortatory terms.

In now nearly thirty issues of *Castellum* I have managed largely to avoid this tedious convention – largely by writing as few editorials as possible. The occasional heart-felt appeal for some-one to put their literary capabilities to the test in a special article, together with an occasional word of encouragement to send in news items about old Castlemen, have occurred. But not much else. And this has been possible because year after year, in respect of the heart of the magazine, the news items, we were well supplied. That, together with the firm efforts of successive Masters and Jean Oliver within college to keep the regular reports going, has made my job an easy one throughout.

In the last two years however we have struck a dearth. The news items have suddenly almost entirely dried up. The only outside macro-circumstance to which I can relate this is the world recession. Such a cause and effect on humble *Castellum* seems unlikely. But I suppose it is possible that if opportunities and careers stumble rather than grow, or even more so if the real knock of redundancy comes, that old Castlemen then do not have the same cheery sort of news to convey. Even *Castellum* and Old Castlemen cannot be immune from blighting circumstances, and career steps and location moves following on promotions or new and better jobs were often the triggers for news items in the past.

I hope however we can shake ourselves free of those conventions and trade news at other levels. Any conversation or contact with Old Castlemen shows there is no less curiosity about contemporaries and their fates, good or ill, and however undifferentiated things must sometimes seem in more public terms as we traverse the waste-lands of early and middle middle-age, it would be fascinating to know what some of those old friends now are thinking, either in retrospect about Castle, or about now seen from those old stand-points. That can be either a news item or a longer piece – either will be very welcome so that *Castellum* can do its job of contributing just a little to the unity of life.

Having said all that, there is a cause for satisfaction in two excellent contributions in this issue from students in residence. They both involve journeys in the Sahara, and I have to apologise for the somewhat unbalanced desert flavour that results, but next year perhaps some-one will have been to an equatorial jungle.

D. Holbrook

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D. Holbrook

ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE DESERT

by Matt Dickinson

There are certain people who are regarded by the general public as being completely mad. Shark trainers are one example. . . Spaniards who run frantically down the streets of Pamplona with one and a half ton bull scampering playfully at their heels are another. . . .and Archaeologists who choose the hottest months of the year to work in the very centre of the Sahara desert are most certainly in the same category.

Whilst the Archaeologist whose interest lies within the more temperate regions of the world sits miserably in the site hut as thousands of gallons of rainwater turns his beautifully excavated site into something resembling the less attractive regions of the everglades the Saharan Archaeologist is suffering from sunstroke and conserving every single drop of murky water from his rancid goatskin container. When the pet dog of an interested bystander starts enthusiastically burying his bone precisely in the middle of post-hole 573. . .the most promising post-hole of the site which has been earmarked for special excavation, spare a thought for the Saharan Archaeologist who has to share his sleeping bag with the deadly five striped scorpion and his site with the even more deadly horned viper. And, come the end of the working day, when the normal Archaeologist retires swiftly to the local hostelry for his relaxation with a few pints of the local real ale, think (albeit briefly) of the Saharan Archaeologist who is at that very moment picking the combined droppings of almost every known herbivorous desert dwelling beast from his plate of rice.

In short, let there be in future, two simple categories of Archaeologist. . .The SENSIBLE Archaeologist and the SAHARAN Archaeologist.

Why be a Saharan Archaeologist?

To the Pre-historian, the Archaeologist or the Anthropologist the Sahara is not strictly a desert. It is a historical and cultural Oasis. Lying within its boundaries are such a rich and immensely varied collection of phenomena that those few who do immerse themselves, and their careers, in the Sahara

find themselves hopelessly addicted to a subject in which the surface has not even been disturbed, let alone scratched. herein lie the attractions of the desert. . .and it's pitfalls.

In the very centre of the desert, some eight hundred miles from the nearest recognisable town is the Tassili plateau . . . a region of strangely eroded sandstone canyons and gullies whose walls are painted and engraved with some of the most spectacular rock art in the world. There are literally hundreds of thousands of these paintings and engravings in the Tassili (and in other regions of the Sahara as well) which have been described as "the greatest open air museum in the world!" (Henri Lhote in 'The Search for the Tassili Frescoes') To get to the Tassili plateau is an expedition in itself. Having reached Djanet, the beautiful Oasis which lies on the edge of the plateau all mechanical transport becomes redundant and donkeys or camels take over for the long hard trek onto the plateau itself. After several hours of toil and confusion the donkeys are finally loaded up with enough water to last several days and the rucksacks, sleeping bags and food for the guides and expedition members balance precariously on the donkeys' backs. At first the going is easy across a rocky gravel plain but then comes the hardest part of the trek during which the expedition climbs more than three thousand feet up the plateau face. The track is very rough, and sometimes to be almost vertical. The donkeys plod on reluctantly, their heels cut by the sharp rocks and their behinds battered almost continuously by the guides who are Touareg of the 'Kel Ajjer' confederation. . .the traditional inhabitants of the Tassili region.

At the top of the climb is a chance for a rest from the heat of midday but after an hour or so the expedition continues across the roof of the plateau following barely visible tracks through the confusion of eroded cliffs and canyons which were home for a complete civilisation of desert dwellers during the neolithic period. At dusk, the expedition comes to a halt; the donkeys are hobbled with a piece of rope and set free to graze on the few scrub and tough camel grass that still remain in the area and the human contingent of the trip boil water for mint tea, eat a little bread and hard goat cheese and then huddle up in sleeping bags for the night. The Touareg guides build a small fire with wood they have brought from Djanet and lie talking late into the night, wrapped in coarse hair camel blankets against the cold night air of the desert.

The Greatest Open Air Museum in the World

Unlike the better known prehistoric rock-art of Europe, the frescoes of the Sahara are painted on the walls of shelters. There are no deep caves but rather shallow undercut shelters, eroded by blown sand, wind and even water. Thus although they are not easily recognisable as human dwellings, by building a wall of loose rocks along the open edge of the shelter, the eroded cliff face becomes an adequate home or a stock pen enclosure for cattle. There must be several thousand of these shelters in the Tassili and almost every single one bears evidence of occupation. Finely carved stone tools and arrow heads are scattered throughout the whole region (which covers several thousand square kilometres) as are the remains of fibres and stock-pen enclosures. . . . but the finest relic of all those left by the prehistoric inhabitants of the Sahara are the rock paintings themselves. There are many museums in which it is possible to see displays of how life may have been in the past. There are many books which also attempt to give us a *visual* image of the past but these do not compare with the opportunity given us by such sites as the Tassili where it is possible to see exactly how life was led in the past. Each painting of the Tassili represents life in the Sahara as it was from about 8,000 years BC to 500 years BC. Some paintings show herds of more than fifty cattle in superb detail; others show groups of hunters with bows and arrows as they hunt wild goat and gazelle and others show women beautifully adorned in ceremonial dress dancing in formation. The range of subjects depicted by the paintings is greater than those in any other part of the world and the skill employed in their formation is so great as to astound many artists. Yet it is not only from an aesthetic point of view that we can appreciate the frescoes. They also document a critical part of the history of the Sahara Desert itself. The earliest paintings (approx 8,000BC to 5,000BC) portray an astonishing range of African fauna including hippopotamus, elephant, lion, ostrich and crocodile which are now of course restricted to the sub-saharan parts of Africa. This evidence, when coupled with the work of botanists, geographers and geologists, has shown that the Sahara has only recently been a true desert. Since the end of the last ice age, about ten thousand years BC, the Sahara has been able to support large human occupation due to a series of pluvial or moist periods. Only in the last five thousand years or so has the aridity of the desert increased to the extent that it became impossible for all except nomadic pastoralists to live there.

Yet for all their isolated position, the Tassili frescoes are not safe. They are well preserved NOW. . . indeed many of them are in perfect condition but as a specially formed committee of experts found when they investigated the potential deterioration of the frescoes in 1978, there are many forces which could destroy this exceptional open air museum.

Conservation Problems

The rock paintings of the Sahara have survived thousands of years due mostly to the dryness of the desert air and the fact that they lie mostly under the protected overhang of the eroded shelters, away from the wind and blown sand so characteristic of the desert. As is so often the case, the biggest danger they face is from the people who come to study them, or the tourists who come just out of curiosity. Many paintings have been partially destroyed by those who have swabbed down the surface with a damp cloth to reveal the frescoes more clearly, others lie in particularly exposed sites or have been eroded by the sporadic rain storms which happen once or twice a year in the 'wet' season. Others have been ruined by the chemical processes of oxidation or other reactions caused when the pigment of the paint (made mostly from powdered sandstone or vegetable dye) interacts with the constituent elements of the rockface and the physical forces of the climate.

The situation has not caused so much immediate concern that the area will become closed to visitors like some of the better known European sites but nevertheless, a strict conservation programme has been launched by the Algerian authorities to try and stop the gradual deterioration of the paintings and several long term projects have been devised to study the *exact* rate of deterioration over periods of several decades.

With careful attention and conservation the neolithic rock paintings of the Tassili will be in the same condition several thousand years hence. . . a record of the prehistoric Sahara.

The Modern Day Sahara

The Sahara is not only rich in prehistoric material. The culture and structure of the modern day Saharan inhabitants is of immense interest to the Archaeologist and Anthropologist for captured in the way of life of the nomadic and semi-nomadic peoples of the Sahara is a living example of the way societies change. The forces operating on the peoples of the Sahara are

very divergent. On the one hand their existence relies strongly on the subsistence occupations of pastoralism. . . the need for grazing ground all year round forces them to be nomadic. . . the seasonal variations of the desert climate dictate the route they must take to find water and pasture. . . the economy of the desert means they must congregate at least once a year to sell goats and sheep in return for essential supplies of salt, millet, sugar, grain, dried vegetables and dates. But at the same time the nomads of the Sahara find themselves subjected to the politics and ideology of the newly independent nation state. Countries like Algeria, Mali and Niger find themselves in an ambiguous position regarding the nomad whose interests they are bound to represent but whose way of life is considered primitive, backward and even embarrassing to the politically ambitious nation states of the Sahara.

Therefore, there remains an uneasy juxtaposition of values in the Sahara. On the one hand is the physical necessity of life as a nomadic pastoralist, mixing ancient tradition and cultural values with a small amount of modern technology (most nomads in the Sahara come to the main towns to have their cattle vaccinated) and on the other hand are the efforts of the nation state to modernise and consolidate the resources and peoples who traditionally own the land.

Politics and socio-economics have not traditionally been the concern of the Archaeologist but in the Sahara of today there are many opportunities for an expansion of traditional Archaeology. Reflected in the material culture of the Saharan peoples are the forces of social change.

Thus, a nomadic group of Touareg in the central Sahara may present a confusing picture to the Archaeologist. They grind grain and millet on a stone block in the same manner as their neolithic counterparts yet search for their strayed cattle at night with a modern electric torch. Many spend half the year in the desert tending to their flocks and then go to the Oasis in search of work as mechanics or even telegraph operators for the other half of the year. Others will happily spend hours carving a traditional spoon from a single piece of wood and then jump in a landrover to visit friend or relatives a few kilometres into the desert. Sometimes, the nomads of the Sahara will even carry a small petrol pump to pump water from a remote well.

The implications for the Archaeologist are clear. Imagine digging a site several centuries in the future to be confronted with a primitive stone tool.

and a short-wave radio in the same stratified layer!

The problems of such an event happening would be many but they can be avoided by the careful study of material culture while it still exists. . . . while it is still in operation.

Expansion

The Sahara desert is expanding in every direction. Yearly it engulfs thousands of square kilometres of valuable grazing land in the Sahel region and in the northern parts of Africa. Yet whilst the Sahara expands our knowledge remains at a standstill.

The peoples who inhabit the Sahara of today will not leave us a record so clear and so inspiring as their neolithic counterparts but we can at least in part understand their culture whilst it still exists. . . . before it is destroyed by the dual forces of desertification and social change.

(Matt Dickinson is a Castleman currently in residence at the College).

15 MILES ON A FERRET

by Barney Lynch

6.30 a.m. Mass is normally a case of drooping eyelids and cold bums. Not so when you're 10,000 feet up and slap-bang in the middle of the Sahara Desert. For me, a catholic, it was pure joy and warmth to hear two French hermits saying mass in the Hoggar Mountains. Their little stone chapel hangs to the edge of a 200m cliff and surveys the surrounding volcanic peaks like a boy-prince amongst his army of silent sentinels. It was here, in 1911, that the French mystic Frere Charles de Foucauld came and founded his mountain hermitage and the order of the 'Little Brothers of Christ'. he studied the Touareg way of life and compiled the first dictionary of the Touareg language Tamashek, which is, even today, a standard reference book to all researchers into the life of this gentle desert tribe.

Thus charged with the spirit, did young Matthew Dickinson and I

commence our trek back to the oasis of Tamannrasset, which was approximately 100kms away. The foreknowledge that there were only two gueltas (waterholes) on the entire route would have been too much for all but the most hardened of desert travellers or else the mentally unstable. Our team divided equally into these categories, myself belonging to the former!

The first day was hard on our out-of-condition legs but the formidable scenery: black desert – varnished peaks and cascades of volcanic debris supplied the required adrenalin for our flagging limbs. The midday sun forced us to shelter under the flysheet for three hours around the zenith.

As we lay, listless in our man-made shade, a young goat herdsman came skipping merrily over the nearby ridge, oblivious to the searing heat, leading his flock of emaciated animals in search of new pasture! (To my eye there had been nothing vaguely green for the last 24kms.) Thus we wiled the midday hours away listening to tales of the Kel Ahaggar the elegant tribe of the Touareg who inhabit this, the most terrifying beauty-spot in the Sahara. We gleaned an insight into the simple life of the desert, where the main ambition is to survive the onslaught of the climate and fulfilment is reaching the end of the 16km trek for water and seeing the green and pleasant land coming into sight.

Our insight complete we set our sights on the next ridge and plodded off in search of the guelta of Afilale where we planned to stop for the night. Banter flowed casually between the two comrades, Matty and I, yet was separated by long arid silences when the desert would sift quietly through the thoughts in our minds, slowly drying them until they were as desiccated as rocks that crumbled beneath our feet.

However it is, only in contrast, thanks to the sandy surroundings that Afilale stands out so green and tranquil, drawing all the wildlife of the desert to it. Similarly in our dehydrated minds did the real sources of life stand courageously out against encroaching desert of materialistic trivia! Therefore, as we sighted the guelta, we began to understand why civilised gentlemen, such as Charles de Foucauld, retreat to the harshness of the desert to find their Raison d'Être.

Night falls quickly in the desert — crash! As quickly as the blue azure is gone, the velvet black night comes with diamond stars richly strewn across its inky blackness. A poet would have surely stayed until dawn eulogising on the beauty and silence of night as was truly befitting, but my sandy bed

seemed far more attractive. For a few minutes we lay quietly conscious of nothing before the greater void of sleep covered us completely.

The next morning the sun rose, in a soft and soothing haze of light with an insincere smiling warmth that we knew would soon turn to the sadistic heat of the midday sun. After filling our goat skin water carrier we set off to walk the 45kms to the next water hole. The land in between is a large, black plateau, dominated by the huge volcanic plug called Akar Akar, seemingly blocking our route. All morning we struggled towards this mocking mountain but by midday we were still miles away and were forced to take our siesta with Akar Akar still to be rounded.

It was then that we decided to take a short-cut by the foot of Akar Akar rather than take the meandering path to the east. The folly of this decision took four hours to fully unfold and is a good example of how harshly the desert punished an error. Our problem was that the surface of the Sahara was far from being the conventional sands, but rather it was made up of jagged hard granite-like rocks about 6" to 8" round which covered this plateau. For us it was comparable to a fly walking over coarse sand paper, and shod only with training shoes our feet were pushed and poked, twisted and rubbed, until when we finally found the track again our feet were completely cushioned against the ground by water — the water in the blisters that covered our pauvres pieds. With the assurance of the true road ahead of us and the delirium of leaving the longest of all short cuts behind, we collapsed, pathetic, and removed our foot gear to relieve our little pinkies from their imprisonment — Bliss. Next thing — black tea. Black because the water was by now full of dust and the addition of tea-leaves did not alter the colour of this pungent mix but helped to make it more palatable. This gritty paste was nevertheless like honey dew to the back of our parched throats. Gradually we began to relax and we were able to laugh at our new found scenic route around Akar Akar. Eventually, by and by, when the sun had set and the moon had risen, we could look at our swollen feet and smiling still, look forward with excitement to the next days trek!

So, sleep came again, conquering the pulse in our feet and gently repairing the fatigue of the day. The silence of the desert lapped against the shores of our dreams and graceful peace sailed into the awaiting port of our minds.

In unison with nature we rose with the sun, to meet, what we hoped would be the day to bring us back to Tamannrasset. First though, we had to find the

second guelta, as we only had two litres of grit solution left and at least 48kms of walking. Grimacing, we put on our shoes trying to ignore the swollen nature of our toes! Matt had the optional-extra water pads on the balls of his feet which apart from being excruciating were very pretty!

We hobbled off bravely fighting away thoughts of the days walking when suddenly Hawkeye Lynch spotted three white blobs on the horizon – unmistakably to the trained eye, the rare Desert Gazelle. Young Matt got rather excited as he'd never seen these on any of his previous trips. These beautiful creatures scrape a meagre existence from this grass-less region, relying heavily on the small seasonal rain and dried out river beds for sustenance.

They were the major excitement of the morning and soon we were left to follow the track, twisting away into the distance. The sun rose higher and higher and still there was no sign of the guelta. The plateau was now long behind us as we plodded across a huge basin surrounded by tooth-like peaks, mysteriously formless in the blinding midday sun.

Soon we only had half a litre left, yet on and on went the track, dipping and rising, turning as if to stop — then suddenly it dropped steeply; the descent tearing at our tender feet, doubled back on itself and disappear into a canyon. Hurriedly hobbling, we enter the shady canyon to see the wonderful wonderful sight of water, ripping and tugging at our shoes we plunged our feet, sizzling into the cool, smooth, soothing water of the guelta – Bliss.

From here to Tamannrasset there were no philosophical lessons learnt-all energy and all concentration was narrowed to walking, each step planned and plotted to reduce pain and maintain speed. The road seemed never ending, continually turning, wastefully, away from Tamannrasset. On and on, faster and faster we strode, pulled manically by the desire to find the end. Head down, shoulders drooped we rose to yet another false ridge. Toes stubbed, knees knocked we rounded another useless corner.

Suddenly there. We sat, too tired to take satisfaction in completing the trip, merely content with not walking, enjoying the soft-pain of released, shoe-free feet.

(Barney Lynch is also a student in residence).

JCR REPORT

The academic year 1981-82 witnessed the 150th birthday of Durham University in general, and of Castle in particular: and in cataloguing the numerous events of what was a hectic time for all concerned, I shall try to avoid the inevitable risk of boring my expectant reader. Their somewhat predictable nature was symptomatic perhaps of the essentially conservative nature of the institutions and participants involved.

Unquestionably the saddest moment of what was expected to be a year of unrelenting celebrations in Castle was the death of one of its greatest servants: Canon Gordon Berriman. This is not the place for an obituary, or an expression of too many wholly inadequate platitudes about this truly remarkable man. His memorial service in the Cathedral was initially intended to be a quiet affair: in reality, the building overflowed and the service was, to my mind, easily the most memorable of the many held there this year. Significantly it was, in a sense, a joyful occasion, a celebration of a life well spent: would that all Castlemen could contribute as much to their College (both in their time there and in later years) and to the community in which they live.

As far as JCR contributions made to the celebrations were concerned, perhaps the most notable was the release by the College Choir of their first L.P. "Choral and Organ Music from the Chapels of University College," still available from most leading record stores on the Abbey label. Not content with their debut on vinyl, Organ Scholar Jonny Newell and his partners in sin, The Jehosephats, also took to the airwaves of both the BBC World Service and Radio Three. The success of these ventures did the College great credit, and the Choir's praises are too frequently undersung (*ouch!*) The only regret was that this should be the last year in Castle of the Chaplain and Solway Fellow, Philip Thomas. Much loved and respected by his "flock", Philip was also well known and highly popular amongst more pagan Castlemen, and he never discriminated between the two: a fact which did him great credit, and it helped to make his stay with us one of, I would hope, mutual enjoyment. We will be lucky indeed to find a replacement of equal stature, and the JCR wishes him and his family well in the future.

The services and celebrations seemed endless. Dame Magot Fonteyn de

Arias was installed as the new Chancellor (Leonid Brezhnev's nomination having, regrettably been overlooked due to rumoured ill health)—although it seemed sad that the ceremony should have been scheduled for the last day of the Summer Term, when many students were either already at home or on their way. Princess Margaret popped into the Senate Suite for lunch one day, although this aroused greater interest amongst local folk than it did amongst Castlemen more intent on either exams or getting to their favourite spot on the sun parlour.

Certainly Castlemen found little difficulty in providing their own entertainment: the Informal Ball, the Freshers' Wine, the College Guest Night and the June Ball. All were the usual successful extravaganzas; certainly Social Chairman Dave Coward and Food Chairman Charlie "Slim" Hayward put in a great deal of hard work so too did the Catering Manager, Dave Watson, and his merry band – the standard of food improved noticeably during my three years through their efforts. The contribution made by the kitchen staff, the bedders, Ray and Mike the porters, Cicely, Auntie Mary Vine, the office team and everyone else is all too easily forgotten – perhaps they go unnoticed by the virtue of the fact that they run the College so smoothly.

Entertainment came, too, from the Castle Theatre Company and 3 major productions, the ever popular Christmas panto (*Robin Hood*), *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, and the Fellows' Garden performance of *Othello*. Participants displayed considerable professionalism, not least Perry Mills, who assumed Nick Bond's double role of CTC maestro and Preventions Officer with consummate ease and skill.

Continuing the literary theme, 1981-2 finally saw the emergence of a College Magazine – *Smallprint*. Editor David Simonson published two editions – no mean feat in view of the lack of material received whilst Harold Evans, still then Times editor, found time to write an article, the vast majority of Castlemen could not. Yet they all wanted a magazine, and were very ready to act as its critics. The third year were not exactly buried in books either, for academic results were poor.

Some would contend – a well-known Irish engineer amongst them – that the cure to many ills lies in going mixed. Certainly the venture of change has proved a success in St. Aidan's, and it could be said that there now exists an imbalance, which should be rectified in the bastion of male chauvenism. The

JCR has started to send out an "alternative" *College* prospectus to schools – time alone will reveal the effects of this. A 1980-1 JCR questionnaire revealed 80% of Castlemen opposed to the idea of going mixed and this was the view their Executive continued to represent to Governing Body. The matter, though, will not disappear. Perhaps it would be as well for all Castlemen to give it their considered opinion and not an instinctive reaction.

Positive change for the better as agreed by all sides came with the West Courtyard Appeal, aimed at providing badly needed extra facilities for the JCR. The Castlemen's Society and the JCR made further sizeable contributions, and Governing Body finally gave its go-ahead to the project on a revised budget of £55,000. On a lesser scale, improvements were made to Moatside in the form of an outside patio – hopefully Hotel Alcatraz's image will improve slightly as a result but the problem remains one of successive generations of Freshmen having to live in shoeboxes. Whatever would Freshwomen say?!

And what of JCR politics, always a subject dear to the heart of writers of this column? Internally, relations and cohesion were pretty good. The Senior Man proved to be nothing if not a larger than life figure, and the JCR should be grateful to him for the sacrifice he made in at times putting their interests ahead of his own. Despite his personal rabid anti DSU line communications with the inhabitants of that architectural masterpiece, Dunelm House, were positive and generally to our benefit. This was not entirely unconnected with the fact that the 1980-1 Senior Man, Rob Beckley, was DSU President: though, in fairness, it should be said that he did an excellent job for all students.

As regards the College, there was a new Bursar with whom to contend: Albert Cartmell, an old Castleman himself. He adapted quickly to his "new" environment, and his first year was a great success. The cuts in university spending announced by the Government during the course of the year will make his job more difficult in the future, as it will to all those lucky enough to be part of Durham University. JCR Treasurers will also feel the brunt: James Allison must be glad he served his year (and he did so with great diligence) when he did. The Mad Monk and his axe cast a long shadow over the celebrations, and it was fortunate that the Vice-Chancellor had the foresight to launch what will hopefully be a very profitable appeal. Durham escaped relatively lightly when compared to other educational establishments, but

the effects will inevitably be felt, not least by Castle. The rise in the Maintenance Fee was held to an acceptable level, but the fall in the real value of the student grant is going to lead to a situation of university being there for those who can afford it, rather than those who merit it.

The JCR did at least show some all too rare animation when it came to a questionnaire produced halfway through the year, a questionnaire that was largely the brainchild of 3rd Year Rep. John "the Chief" Trafford. By far the most contentious questions proved to be those on College Tutors, especially when it was revealed that certain tutors had scarcely ever seen even their third year tutees. Inevitably this raised once more the whole question of the tutorial system. It should be said that the JCR was in favour of it; and was grateful to those tutors who do do an excellent job. A hornets' nest was stirred up as the Exec. sent letters to those tutors felt to be failing in their jobs, and the nature of the relationship between the college and the student body exposed. I cannot help but feel that the JCR all too frequently fails to realise the strength of its own position and far too often merely passively accedes to the maintenance of the status quo. The present preoccupation is one of getting a job in an increasingly competitive market – what some fail to realise is that employers tend to look for signs of life outside the academic sphere.

Some might contend that students waste too much time playing sport, though this is not really true of the majority of Castlemen. Our most successful team this year was the only one with any real degree of representation at the University level: the Trophy winning soccer side. The "real" final was a replay win over Hatfield; the final itself was a fairly comfortable 2-0 defeat of St. Chad's. It would be invidious to highlight individual performances in what was, throughout the competition, essentially a team effort on the part of both the "Uni" Stars and the "College" players alike. The rugby and cricket sides had less successful seasons, though 'minor' sports – notably squash and badminton – produced excellent results. The Boat Club continued to appropriate the lion's share of JCR funds: giving a proportionate return in volume in the Undercroft if not on "pots" actually won. The College darts competition was great fun, many of the league players falling victim of the amateur giant-killers. Final night in the Undercroft was superb. Nick Peel made Sid Waddell look the true amateur he is, and he and his sidekick Urquhart ran a book on it: highly profitably, until eventual winner Mike Hughes landed a 180 maximum. Thankfully,

Peche ran the Bar better than he did his book, and generated some healthy profits for the JCR, a source of revenue which is likely to become of increasing importance as the level of income from governmental and university authorities decreases in real terms. Regrettably the Bar was populated by too few Castlemen and, proportionately, by too many concert-goers, Library escapees at 9.55 p.m. in the Summer Term and so on.

The JCR proved as usual highly adept at finding money for their own entertainment and at spending it. Less auspicious was our performance during D.U.C.K. (or Rag) week. Durham has a tradition of raising paltry sums for the charities concerned, although the recent introduction of a league competition amongst colleges has led to an improvement overall – but not in Castle. True, a bonfire night cum disco did raise £180 (perhaps simply a case of a good night out with the cause immaterial), but Castle once again finished in the league's relegation zone ("raise any less and they'll drop off the pools coupon – as one cynic put it). We managed a grand total of less than £600 – or less than £2 per individual for the week. Little wonder that Castlemen retain an image amongst fellow students – and students as a whole (not particularly Castlemen) amongst the community at large – of a lofty, uncaring arrogance towards others. perhaps we deserve to have those grants cut after all.

Charles Ross
JCR Secretary 1981-82

1982 REUNION

THE 36TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 24TH APRIL 1982.

In the Chair

The President, Dr. E. C. Salthouse, Master of University College.

Present at the meeting.

The President welcomed the fifty eight members present.

Apologies

D. Holbrook, P. J. Ibbotson, P. E. Lane, P. L. Kirby, J. Spedding, and A. C. Woodcock.

Minutes

The minutes of the 1981 A.G.M. were read, accepted and signed as a correct record.

Welcome

The President introduced Wing Commander A. E. Cartmell the new Bursar to members and welcomed him on behalf of the Society.

Matters arising

1. Canon C. Corden agreed to find out as to the welfare of Vic Hill.
2. The President suggested that members would find a visit to the Moatside Complex rewarding in terms of the Macfarlane-Grieve Memorial.

Annual accounts

1. That the accounts be accepted – Agreed.
2. That the Bursar investigate possible improved investment areas for monies now with the Northern Rock Building Society – Agreed.

Appeal

Mr. J. Hollier – Appeal Director

1. He very much appreciated the help given to him.

2. The result so far was disappointing with only £16,000 pledged (at growth).
3. That 40 people pledging £40 per annum would largely solve the problem.
4. The College Governing Body had already agreed to go ahead.

The President

1. The total bill was estimated at £54,900 of which some £40,000 was directly concerned with the appeal.
2. The undergraduate contribution had been encouraging.
 - (a) £1,000 from J.C.R.
 - (b) £2 a head for two terms on Battels.
3. Mrs. Slater would be organising a Flower Festival (at the College) in some fourteen months time and some of the proceeds would be directed to the Appeal.
4. It was possible that work on the Project could start either in the Summer holidays or early next term.

University Appeal

The President

1. This was to be a major appeal with a floating target.
2. There would be some 20 separate projects.
3. The main project was a scheme to set up Visiting Research Fellowships.
4. Castle could itself benefit from the University appeal, in a number of ways.

Recommendations from Committee

1. That Castellum continue with photographs and a wider variety of articles though in a more modest form than the 1982 Special Issue – Agreed
2. That the receptions for students continue – Agreed.
3. G. Berriman Memorial: That the President consult with the student body and then move matters further in consultation with the Committee – Agreed.
4. That the Address List be re-issued in 1983 – Agreed.

Election of Officers

1. Secretary/Treasurer : Mr. R. F. Appleton – re-elected.
2. Editor of Castellum – Mr. D. Holbrook – Re-elected.
3. Governing Body Rep. : Proposed and seconded : Messrs. R. F. Appleton and R. Heady.

Elected Mr. R. F. Appleton.

2 Members of Committee (Mr. J. G. Bridges and Mr. P. C. Thickett retiring).

Elected Mr. M. Pallister

Mr. R. Heady.

Any other Business

1. In reply to Mr. R. Easthope the President informed members that the College would have its own small computer in the future and this would assist the compilation of a variety of lists including addresses. The 1983 address list would be done by the University.
2. Mr. J. Hollier (Appeal Director) complained as to the limited choice of wine this year and was surprised to see bottles of 1978 vintage available at this stage. The President stated that the College was aware of this and it was due to economies that the situation had been allowed to develop. Matters were now in hand to return the stock to a more acceptable position.
3. Members expressed their congratulations to the President on his appointment as Dean of the Science Faculty.
4. Mr. R. Easthope proposed that a special effort should be made next year to attract members who came up in the years 1923, 33, 43, 53, 63, 73, Agreed
5. In response to a question it was pointed out the Senate Shield was now hanging in the Old Buttery.

The Reunion Dinner was attended by 104 members.

The toast of the College was proposed by Mr. M. Waters and the Master replied.

DURHAM CASTLEMEN'S SOCIETY

Income and Expenditure Account for the period ended 31st March 1982

Expenditure		Income	
1980/81	£	1980/81	£
988.50	Reunion Expenses	998.00	Reunion, 1981
	Printing:		Subscriptions and contributions
417.00	Castellum, 1981		towards Castellum
26.93	Stationery		do. in arrears
102.48	Postages		Less received in advance
	Miscellaneous Expenses	607.10	Interest on Investments
33.72	Receptions for Students		
78.98	Balance being excess of income over expenditure for the period	42.51	
		£1980.51	£1980.51
		£1647.61	£1647.61
			1071.77
			1052.27
			19.50
			41.24
			1029.27

Balance Sheet as on 31st March 1982

Liabilities		Assets	
	£		£
Contributions towards Castellum received in advance	229.62	Investments:	
Capital Account as on 1st March 1981	270.32	Northern Rock Building Society	
ADD Excess of income over expenditure for the period	931.29	Preference Shares as on 1st March, 1982	491.94
	1201.61	ADD interest	41.24
		Cash at Bank	533.18
			898.05
			<u>1431.23</u>

N.B. The liability for the printing and distribution of 1981 Castellum will amount to £750 approximately.

I have examined the books of account of Durham Castlemen's Society and confirm that the foregoing statements are prepared in accordance therewith.

22nd April, 1982

Old Shire Hall, Durham.

A. Falconer A.A.A.I.

COLLEGE OFFICERS, 1982-83

MASTER

E. C. Salthouse, B.Sc., Ph.D., C.Eng., M.I.E.E.

VICE MASTER AND SENIOR TUTOR

S. G. Ramsay, B.Sc.

BURSAR

Wing Commander A. E. Cartmell, B.A., M.A.

CHAPLAIN AND SOLWAY FELLOW

Rev. P. G. H. Hiscock, M.A. D.

LOWE LIBRARIAN

J. S. Ashworth, B.A., M.A.(Econ)

TUTORS

F. Ashton, B.Sc., Ph.D.

J. S. Ashworth, B.A., M.A.(Econ)

J. M. Black, B.A.

G. M. Brooke, B.Sc., Ph.D.

J. R. Bumby, B.Sc., Ph.D.

D. Bythell, M.A., D.Phil.

P. D. B. Collins, B.Sc., Ph.D., M.Inst.P

D. E. L. Crane, B.Litt, M.A.

O. T. P. K. Dickinson, M.A., D.Phil.

G. D. Dragas, B.D., Th.M.

D. Flower, B.Sc., Ph.D.

R. F. Frame, M.A., Ph.D.

P. Harbord, M.A. P.L.A.

K. F. Hilliard, M.A.

C. Jones, M.A., B. Litt.

E. J. Lowe, M.A., B.Phil., D.Phil.

W. T. W. Morgan, M.Sc.(Econ), Ph.D.

D. Parker, B.Sc., D.Phil.

F. W. Pritchard, LL.B., A.L.A.

E. G. P. Rowe, M.Sc., Ph.D.

R. B. Thomas, B.A., M.A.(Econ.), Ph.D.

K. Werner, Ph.D.