A HISTORY OF SWANLEY HORTICULTURAL COLLEGE

by

ELSA MORROW

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FOREWORD

It would not have been possible to assemble all the historical details about Swanley without a great deal of help. Miss F. C. Schimmer, ('Schim') has been the greatest encouragement, and the assistance and hospitality of Mrs. M. Lucas, the Librarian at Wye College and her staff have made the search for facts easy and interesting.

My thanks are due to those who kindly wrote to me about their own days at Swanley. And we must all be grateful that so many records have been preserved, in spite of all the difficult removals of the 1940's. Without the Minute books of the Governing Body meetings and the College Magazines little of this narrative could have been written at all.

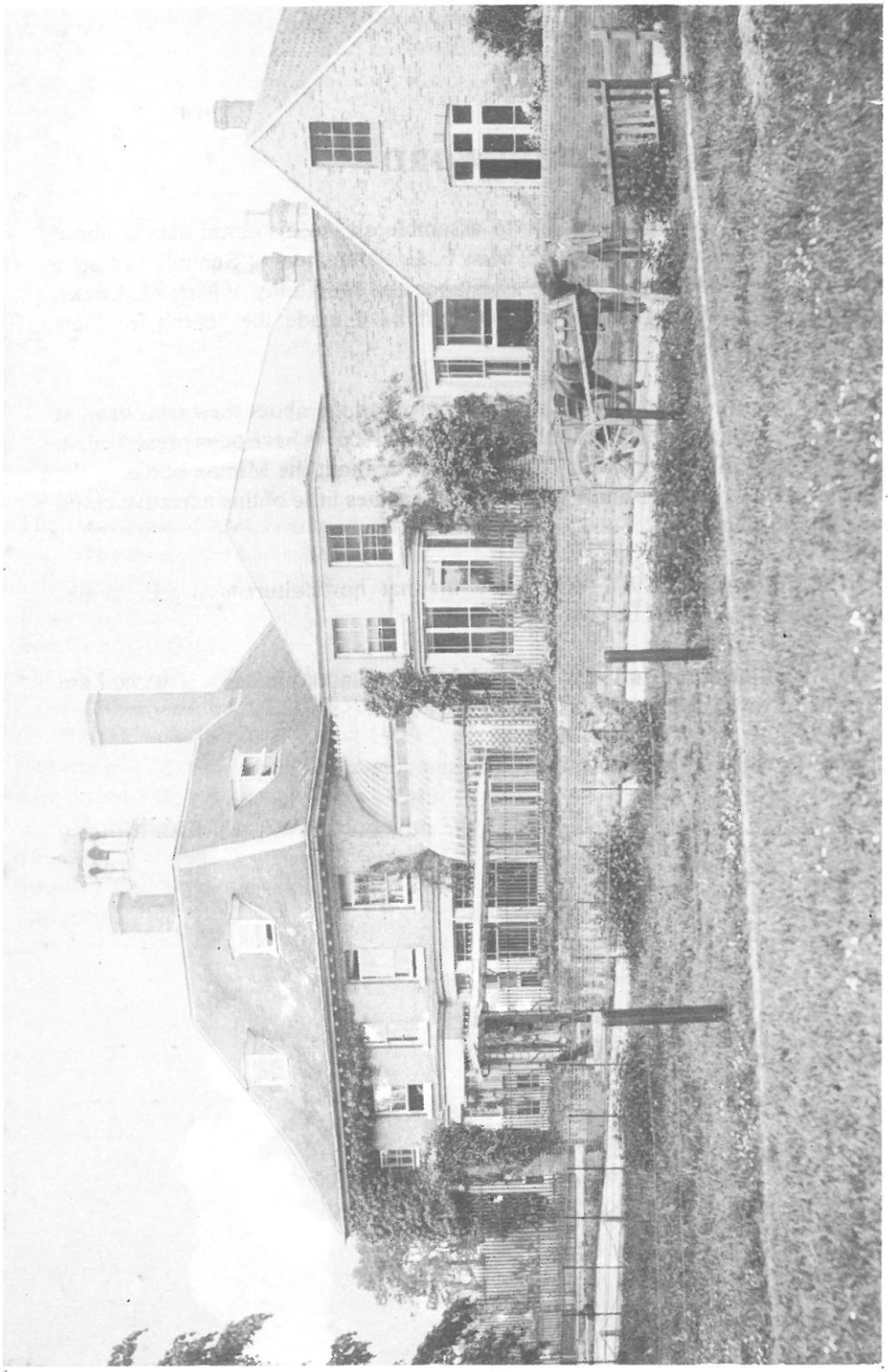
Dr. Barratt wrote in 1930 "It seems to me that horticulturists in general are great talkers and doers, but poor writers".

And M. Milner wrote in 1936 "This job is so stupendous in its variety that I am always like a swimmer out of his depth."

I know what both of them meant !

Elsa Morrow

1984



The Horticultural College
Hextable House in 1890

THE FOUNDING OF SWANLEY

by A. H. Bond
The Horticultural College and Produce Company

Swanley Horticultural College was founded in a house which had a long history. It is certain that a farmhouse, which was later enlarged to become a small mansion, was in existence well before 1664, when it was recorded as the largest house in Swanley.

Hextable House, as it was then, derived its name from the locality known as Highstaple; it was sold to Charles Egerton, a well-connected London merchant in 1733, and although he is not recorded as living there, it is probable that the house was improved and altered at this period. In 1876 the Egerton descendants sold the estate in lots, so Hextable village came into being. The House and 43 acres were bought by Sir Edward Reed who had been in the Corps of Naval Constructors, and had an interest in the building of S.S. Bessemer, a cross-channel ferry which had its main saloon hung in gimbals, so that it remained horizontal as the ship rolled. When this ingenious experiment failed, the Saloon was removed from the hull and rebuilt beside Hextable House as a billiard room, to serve ultimately as an assembly hall for generations of students.

In April 1889, Arthur Harper Bond bought Hextable House and its 43 acres for £5,500. From boyhood he had enjoyed horticulture and was especially interested in tree fruits. When he was in his early thirties he announced his intention of applying scientific principles to fruit growing, whilst at the same time interesting and training students. Bond was the founder of "The Horticultural College and Produce Company" and as a private venture started what was probably the first Horticultural College in the world.

By June, he had thirteen students, who paid fees of £80 per annum, but he needed more to cover the expenses of running the College, and to pay a dividendto the shareholders of his Company. He worked tirelessly to keep his College alive, and the inaugural meeting of the "Horticultural College and Produce Company" was attended by the Lord Mayor of London, Sir James Whitehead. It was his Lady Mayoress who laid the foundation stone of the range of Market houses.

Some pages from the Prospectus of 1890 are given below. These reveal the most careful planning and thorough-going professionalism of pioneers who were clearly determined that Swanley College should be second to none.

It was imperative that Bond had more students and more money, so he entertained members of Kent County Council, who were favourably impressed by what they saw, and granted an award for twenty scholarships of £60 per annum for young men of the county; and in January 1892 the first of these came to College.

However, it was decided that public funds could not be granted to an institution run for private profit, and so in 1891 a new arrangement had to be made. The Horticultural College was licensed by the Board of Trade as a non-profit-making company, and the Articles of Association drawn up at that time remained the same, with only slight modification, until the College closed in 1945.

A.H. Bond seems to have had some disagreements with his students (one suspects they objected to practical gardening) and he was very advanced in thinking that they and the employed gardeners might appreciate profit sharing; in 1890 his fellow directors agreed that no definite step could be taken until a profit had been earned !

It was at this time that the Board agreed to receive applications from suitable ladies as students.

Bond's great academic asset was undoubtedly Professor F. R. Cheshire, who was the first Resident Principal. He must have been exceptional for we hear of his genius, patience, and ability in imparting knowledge. He was a Fellow of all the learned Societies, a born gardener, an expert agriculturist, a clever mechanic and draughtsman... and a brilliant illustrative lecturer. He agreed to a reduction in his fees in August 1889, and his lectures were so good that a Directors' meeting agreed that the public should be allowed to attend. He is recorded in the prospectus of the time as a former lecturer on "Apiculture" and "Insects and flowering plants" at South Kensington, then the College of Arts and Science. He lectured at Swanley on Botany, Plant Physiology and Apiculture, although by 1892, he was only visiting College once a week; but his lectures were said to be "the high lights of instruction".

At the International Horticultural Exhibition at Earls' Court in 1892 the Educational Section was arranged in connection with the Horticultural College. Professor Cheshire lectured eight times and his namesake H. Cheshire, six. The latter was soil analyst at Swanley but we do not know if they were related, Mrs. T. Chamberlain, then the Honorary Secretary of the newly-formed Womens' Branch, gave six talks, ranging from "London Gardens , their capabilities and limitations" to "Looking after Room Plants" (more than Aspidistras, one imagines.)

In September 1894 it was reported in the Governing Body minutes that Professor Cheshire had died. In an article in the Horticultural Record (the College

THE

HORTICULTURAL COLLEGE & PRODUCE COMPANY,

(LIMITED,)

SWANLEY, KENT,

ASSOCIATED WITH

Science and Art Department.



The Horticultural College & Produce Company

LIMITED,

SWANLEY, KENT.

Directors.

CHAIRMAN:—ISAAC CHARLES JOHNSON, J.P.

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THOS. WOOD, Crockenhill.
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ARTHUR HARPER BOND, Swanley, (*Managing Director*).

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THOS. WOOD, Crockenhill, Kent.

Secretary.

C. W. HERBERT GREAVES, F.R.H.S.

Auditor.

WALTER WINDER FEAST, F.C.A.
(*Chartered Accountant.*)

Solicitor.

E. J. BOND.

Bankers.

LONDON AND COUNTY BANK.

London Offices.

23, LEADENHALL STREET, E.C.

Professors and Lecturers.

General Science applied to Horticulture and Floriculture, Physiology, Apiculture, &c.	FRANK R. CHESHIRE, F.L.S., F.R.M.S. (Formerly Lecturer on Apiculture, and relation of Insects to Flowering Plants, at South Kensington; Author of "Bees and Bee-keeping, Scientific and Practical," &c., &c.)
Botany, Zoology, General Biology, Physics, &c. ...	J. PENTLAND SMITH, M.A., B.Sc.
Chemistry	HERBERT TREWBY, F.C.S. (Senior Demonstrator at the Birkbeck Institution, &c.)
Geology, Entomology, Land Surveying, &c.	CECIL H. HOOPER, M.R.A.C., A.S.I., F.R.H.S., &c. (Silver Medallist, R.A.S., Ireland.)
Law relating to Land Tenure, Compensation, &c.	ERNEST J. BOND, *Solicitor.*

Practical Instructors.

Horticulture	HERBERT EAST.
	W. SPENCER.
Carpentry	HENRY MUNDY.
Engineering, Smithing, &c.	GEORGE BLACKSTONE.

Analyst.

HORACE F. CHESHIRE, F.C.S.

Resident Director.

A. H. BOND.

Resident Secretary.

C. W. HERBERT GREAVES.

The College and its Surroundings.

THE COLLEGE is situated about 15 miles (by road) from London, near to Swanley Junction on the London Chatham and Dover Railway. Its Grounds, including Orchards, Glass Houses, &c., are 43½ acres in extent, the subsoil, chiefly of chalk and gravel, being very healthy, and highly favourable to fruit culture.

The main building contains accommodation for about fifty Students, and includes a handsome Lecture Theatre, Class Rooms, Dining Hall, Laboratory, Library, Dormitories, &c., with Dairy, Apiary, and Poultry Runs, Farm Buildings, Stables, Workshops, Glass Houses and Horticultural Accessories adjoining.

Objects of the Institution.

The College has been founded for the promotion of scientific Horticulture, the development of which is advocated by leading statesmen and economists, and which opens up a wide field for very remunerative employment of capital and labour. For those intending to enter this field, perhaps the most promising one of our time, such a technical training as is afforded by the College is admitted to be an indispensable necessity.

Here every facility is given to young men to acquire a thorough and practical knowledge of the *latest* and most scientific, and in consequence the most profitable, systems of Horticulture, fitting them either to become prosperous Cultivators, or to enter upon the duties of Land-holders, Horticultural Farmers, Market Gardeners, Resident Estate Agents, Stewards, Surveyors, Bailiffs, Colonists, &c.

SYLLABUS.

HORTICULTURE.

Orchard Trees ... Selection, Planting and general management of the Apple, Pear, Cherry, Plum, Damson, Nut, &c., as Standard, Bush, Pyramid, Espalier, Cordon, &c.

Bush Fruits ... Gooseberries, Currants, Raspberries, Strawberries, the varieties best suited to market, &c.—Their combination in orchards or plantations.

Fruit Borders ... The making and management of Vine and Peach Borders.

Fruit Culture under Glass ... Grapes, early and late, Peaches, Nectarines, Apricots, Cherries, Pears, Apples, Strawberries, Figs, &c.

Pruning, Grafting The principles involved in Root and Branch Pruning, Pinching and Stopping, Budding and Grafting—The influence of stock on scion, &c.

Harvesting and Marketing ... The Gathering, Packing, and Marketing of Fruits—Storing, Tinning and Preserving either in Water, or by Sugar, by Crystallization or Evaporation—The manufacture of Fruit Juices.

Mushrooms ... Their cultivation in beds or in houses.

Tomatoes ... ... Their cultivation in houses or in the open.

Vegetables, Salads, Flowers, &c. ... ... The production of Early Vegetables and Salads, to compete with foreign produce. Market Gardening in all its branches, Plants and Cut Flowers.

Hybridization, & Propagation Natural and Artificial Fertilization of Blossoms and principles involved in selection—The Propagation of Plants by Seeds, Suckers, Cuttings, Layers, &c.

Soils ... ... Preparation of, by Digging, Ploughing, Trenching, Bastard-Trenching, Draining, Paring, Burning, Manuring, &c.

Manures ... ... The composition and modes of application of Natural and Artificial Manures.

STOCK KEEPING.

Dairy ... ... Cream separating by hand and machinery, Butter-making, &c.

Poultry ... ... Fowls and Ducks. Breeds, Foods, Incubation, Rearing, and General Management.

Apiculture ... Bees: their structure and habits, relation to flowers, and influence on fruit production—Honey and wax—Flowers producing variations in honey—Variety of bees—Profitable management of stocks—Swarm making and queen raising—Packing and marketing of honey and bees, &c.

APPLIED SCIENCE.

Zoology and General Biology Elementary anatomy and physiology of domestic animals, poultry, and insects. The laws of variation and principles involved in artificial selection.

SYLLABUS—*Continued.*

Natural History in relation to Plant Life ... General classification, life history, habits, food and influence on horticulture of earth—worms, insects, molluscs, reptiles, birds, &c., prevention of or defence against those injurious,—the encouragement of those beneficial.

Botany ... ... Structure and method of feeding and growth of plants.—Use of parts of plants—Conditions necessary for healthy growth—Chlorophyll action.—Pollination—Embryology—Relation of seed to fruit—Seed distribution—Selection and vitality of seed—Causes of variation and laws of selection—Origin of cultivated plants—Edible fungi, moulds, blights, mildews, and other parasitic growths—Classification—Vegetation as governed by climate, altitude, aspect and soil—Explanation of effects of pruning—The laws governing grafting, &c.—Microscopic work.

Forest trees and shrubs—habits, cultivation, management, sowing, planting, pruning, felling, barking, measuring, seasoning, sale and uses of Trees for different climates, situations, soils—Ditto for shelter, and ornament. Insects, birds, mammals, which are destructive to trees.

Chemistry ... Inorganic, and elementary organic (Theoretical and Practical.)

Horticultural Chemistry ... Composition of air, waters and usual substances of animal and vegetable origin, also of living plants, seeds and fruits (both in their different parts and stages of growth)—Manures (special requirements of different plants), the best time and manner to apply them—Effects of general and special manures on plants—The relation of the composition of the soil to the plant grown—Utilisation of sewage—Irrigation.

Simple tests, Composition and analysis of soils, manures, &c. Experiments with manures on plants, in laboratory and field.

Geology ... ... Commonly occurring minerals. Character, composition, distribution, and fossils of the more important rocks. The soils formed through disintegration of rocks by heat, frost, air, rain, rivers, sea, plants, and animals. Fertility, water supply, and drainage governed by underlying rock. Building, road, and manurial materials.

Meteorology ... The causes of varied climate, temperature, winds, rain, hail, snow, dew, lightning and thunder. Instruments for recording temperature, moisture, air-pressure, wind and sun-light. The principles of weather forecasts. Physical properties of soils and the action of large and small plant life as affecting the absorption and retention of heat and moisture.

Heat ... ... Its nature as a mode of motion—Conduction, convection, radiation, absorption—Expansions of solids, liquids, and gases—The Laws of Diathermancy in relation to the growth of plants under glass—Principles of heat as applied to water circulation and other forms of warming apparatus, &c.

Light ... ... Reflection and refraction—Colour—Undulatory Theory, Action of Light on Plant Life, Etoilation, &c.

Dynamics ... Work done by force, how measured. Centre of gravity. Laws of Motion—Falling bodies—Mechanical powers.—Strength of materials used in Horticultural buildings and implements.

SYLLABUS—*Continued.*

Hydrostatics and Hydro-Dynamics — Transmission of pressure—Laws of level—Capillarity and diffusion of liquids and gasses—Specific gravity, Hydrometers, Lactometers—Springs and wells—Boyle's law. Construction of barometers, suction and forcing pumps, hydraulic press—The Siphon—Fire engines—Various forms of apparatus for watering plants.

Steam Engine ... Properties of vapours. Relation of heat and mechanical work. History of steam engine. Modern forms of engines and boilers. Agricultural engines—Machinery of all kinds as applied to Horticulture.

Measuring and Surveying ... Measurement of land, calculations of excavations, gravel, brick, earth, &c.; Plan-drawing—Measurement of heaps, cisterns, stacks, &c., by tape and staff.

Levelling ... Use of chain, cross-staff and theodolite—Levelling, Contouring for drains and roads, Placing survey and level on paper, Pegging out of road or drain, &c.

Drawing ... ... Drawing (free-hand) of plants, and implements—Drawing of plans for laying out of garden or estate—Working drawings of buildings required for horticultural purposes, green-houses, frames, packing houses, fruit stores, cottages, &c.

Building Construction ... Foundations—Drainage above and below ground—Walling—Paving—Roofing in wood and iron—Glazing—Furnaces—Boilers—hot-water circulation—Ventilation, fresh air inlets, disposition of outlets—Sun-blinds—Snow-guards—Precautions against frost—Experimental construction, patented systems, Foreign and Colonial practice.

Horticultural Building—Site of Buildings ... Structural Laws, regulating strength, and rigidity of girders—Strength, how calculated. Considerations before making selection—Proximity to roads, gardeners' cottages—Aspect—Trees—Water-supply—Drainage, &c.

Materials ... ... Considerations governing the selection, durability, effect of climate, cost of carriage, facilities for repair by local labour, protection from the weather, value of paint, &c.

Book-keeping ... Farm, garden and poultry accounts—Forms of bills, orders, receipts, valuations, &c., &c.

Law relating to Horticulture ... Compensation—Taxation—Dilapidation—Systems of tenure—Allotments.

The Method of Instruction

comprises Lectures, Classes, Laboratory Practice and Out-door work under qualified instructors. All Students are required, as far as health and other circumstances permit, to take part in the practical and experimental work of the College in the grounds, glass-houses and workshops, that by the acquirement of technical skill and handicraft they may be the better prepared to appreciate and subsequently utilize the Scientific Education in which they are engaged. The Students are also expected to attend the various courses of Lectures by Professors in the Theatre attached to the College, and to write Examination papers on the subject matter of the Lectures, also to give as required time for laboratory practice, no Student being permitted to take part in the Sessional Examinations unless thus duly qualified. It is generally arranged that the lectures and the practical work run concurrently, one illustrating the other. Class lists recording the results of the daily work, and all examinations are published at the end of each Half-year, a Sessional report as to progress and conduct being sent to the parents or guardians of each Student.

Sessions, Vacations, &c.

The Sessions are divided into four Quarters, as follows:

First Quarter	...	Jan. 20th	to	March 31st.
Second ,,	...	April 1st	,,	June 14th.
Third ,,	...	July 14th	,,	Sept. 30th.
Fourth ,,	...	Oct. 1st	,,	Dec. 20th.

It will be observed that by the above arrangement of quarters, Students will obtain holidays at Midsummer and Christmas, when Horticultural operations are least pressing; but leave of absence for a few days will also be granted at the end of March and September to Students whose parents or guardians may make a special request in writing.

Students may enter at any time of the year, proportionate fees being charged for the remaining part of a Session. Arrangements can be made for intending Students and friends to stay at the College on weekly terms.

Parents and friends are always welcomed at the College, and are invited to attend such lectures as may be delivered during their visits.

Fees.

Inclusive Fees	£80 per annum.
Students under sixteen	£60 ,,

payable quarterly in advance.

A Quarter's Notice or a Quarter's Fees on leaving.

Fees include all charges except laundress, books, or separate rooms.

N.B.—Students of not less than a year's standing will have an opportunity of participating, in proportion to their work, in any profits which may accrue from the Horticultural operations on the College Estate.

Junior Students.

Arrangements can be made for receiving Junior Students; facilities being given for pursuing any particular scholastic studies that may be desired.

Domestic Arrangements.

These are regulated with due regard to the health and comfort of Students. The building is heated by hot water pipes in addition to open fireplaces. The diet is liberal in kind and unlimited in quantity. Dormitories are furnished on the cubical system and with separate lavatories. Private rooms by arrangement. The bath-room is fitted with hot and cold water. The sanitation is upon the most approved principle. Sectarianism is rigidly avoided, but an earnest effort is made to maintain the moral and religious atmosphere of a Christian home.

Each Student should be provided with a hand magnifier, pruning knife, bee-veil and a bibbed apron for laboratory practice, four towels, strong boots and slippers. A student's microscope is desirable, but it is suggested that the Principal be consulted as to the best method of purchase. The work shops are provided with tools in variety that are College property, but Students are still strongly recommended to supply themselves with at least two saws, a smoothing plane, and two or three chisels.

Rules and Regulations.

Students absenting themselves from prayers, classes, lectures, experimental work, examinations or meals, without permission, or in any way persistently infringing the rules of the College, render themselves liable to rustication or expulsion.

Recreations

Consist of Cricket, Football, Lawn Tennis, Athletics, Music, Debating, Chess, Reading, &c.

Prizes, &c.

Medals and Class Prizes are awarded each session to successful Students.

The Certificate of the College is given to those qualified to act as Horticulturists.

Special Course for Practical Horticulturists.

Arrangements are made for giving short courses of instruction to enable those already engaged in Horticultural pursuits to obtain a certificate of proficiency from the College.

Associates.

Anyone wishing to obtain advice by correspondence concerning any matter relating to Horticulture, may become an Associate of the College, an annual subscription of One Guinea entitling such to receive replies to six enquiries by post or otherwise.

Analysis of Soils, &c.

SAMPLES OF SOIL, &c., ANALYZED.

Experts attend to advise and report upon Horticultural matters in any part of the United Kingdom by arrangement.

Future of Students.

The Managing Director will be glad to confer with parents or guardians, and with the Students themselves, as to their future "avocation and location," with a view to assisting them, on leaving the College, to take up land or obtain suitable appointments —special facilities being offered to intending Colonists.

All Communications should be addressed to

THE SECRETARY,

THE HORTICULTURAL COLLEGE & PRODUCE COMPANY, LIMITED,

SWANLEY, KENT.

Telegraphic Address:
"HORTICULTURAL COLLEGE, SWANLEY."

"There are many hundreds of acres of land in this country which would give a substantial profit, if judiciously planted with fruit trees and fruit bushes, and properly managed in all details."—*Charles Whitehead, F.L.S., F.G.S., Agricultural Adviser to the Privy Council.*

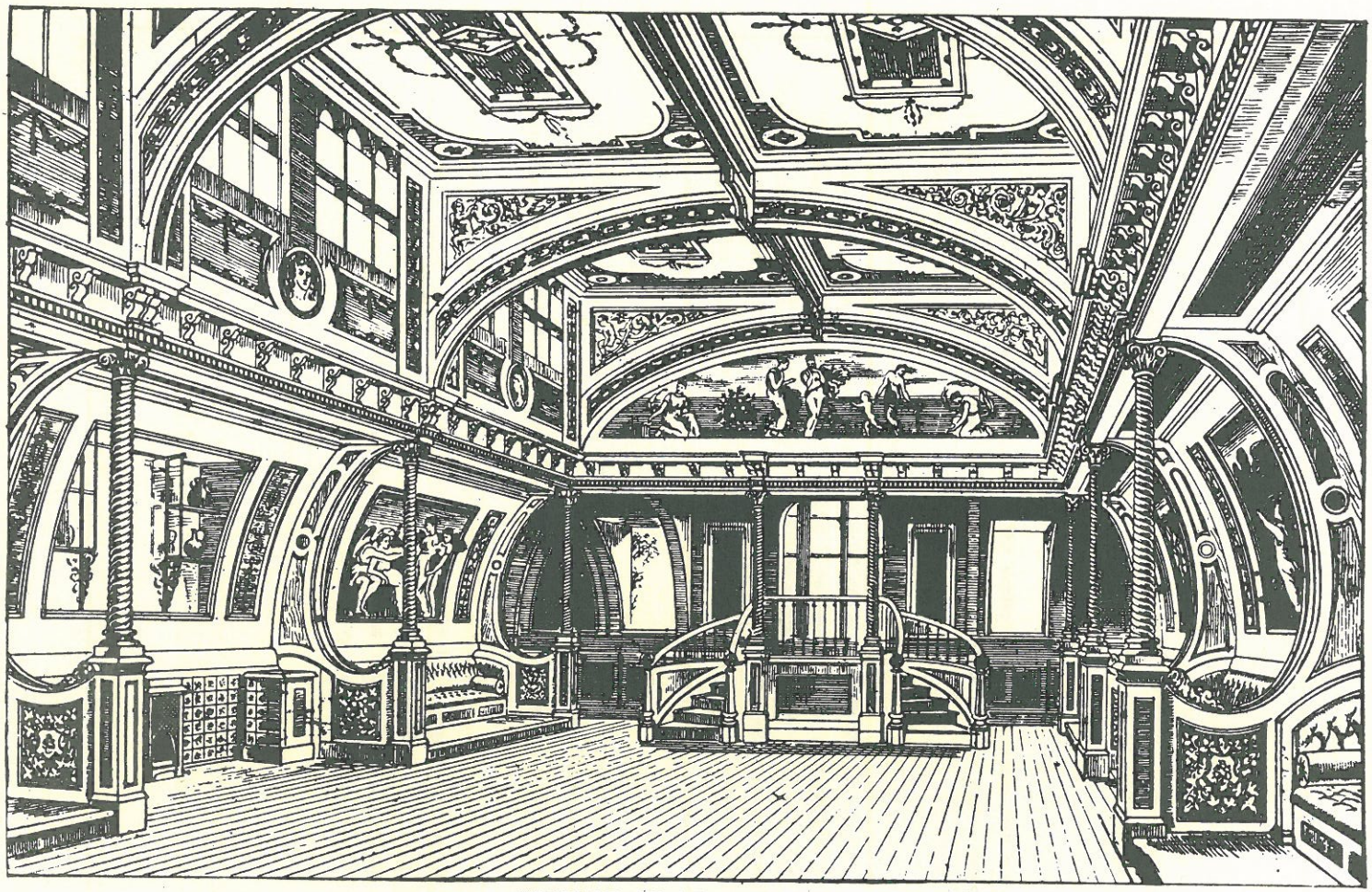
" . . . . The highest, and I think the noblest occupation that a man can follow, namely, that of improving and cultivating the land." — *The Right Hon. Lord Wantage, V.C., K.C.B.*

" This question of fruit growing is, to my mind, one of the most vital importance to the prosperity of this country. . . . There is no reason, so far as I am able to learn, why we should not be able to grow fruit to a profit, and grow it much more largely than we do at the present time . . . and why we should not make our land three times, five times as profitable as it is at the present time." — *Alderman Sir James Whitehead, late Lord Mayor of London.*

" An increase of knowledge as to how to do the best for the land, and how to get the most out of it, is very much needed, both for the farmer and the labourer. We perish for lack of knowledge, but as a class we do not see it."—*Contemporary Review.*

" Why should not the woman, who means to trade with her capital, buy or rent a garden or fruit farm, just as others set up as milliners, house decorators, or florists, or start newspapers, or practise medicine. In these and many other occupations successfully pursued by women, a course of study more or less expensive is necessary." —*Woman's World.*

" Parents who desire their sons to embark in fruit growing should see that they are properly trained before placing them on the land."—*Nineteenth Century.*



INTERIOR OF LECTURE HALL.



The Horticultural College, Swanley, Kent
April 1890

Seated: **C. H. Hooper, A. H. Bond, J. P. Smith, H. Greaves.**

Magazine) in 1895 on several experiments carried out at Swanley, F. J. Baker wrote "Much of the information given we owe to the patient and thorough investigations of the late Professor Cheshire, and we much regret that so much of his work, being unpublished, is largely unknown, except to the one or two with whom he worked." These experiments dealt with fertiliser application on various crops.

Sir John McDougall, whose nephew was one of the first students, became a Governor of the College: he was a prominent member of the London County Council, and it was he who first introduced Miss Emma Cons, and her friend Miss Everest, to Swanley. It was great good fortune that Swanley attracted Miss Cons' attention, and that she found time and energy to work so hard for the development of the College. She was on the Governing Body, Treasurer for a time, and always on the Committee of the Womens' Branch. She was forever encouraging prominent and wealthy people to give to, or to serve College in some way, — frequently both.

It is reported that she and Miss Everest worked at Swanley beside the men students to prove that women were physically strong enough to undertake such gardening operations as were included in the training given there. In 1890 Miss Cons was invited to join the Governing Body; she invested £50 in College, and Miss Everest £250.

Miss Cons was clearly an active and vociferous director and in many ways a remarkable woman. Against much opposition, she started a workshop in Clerkenwell to enable women to work as engravers of watches, a job previously done only by men in England. She had leased the Victoria Theatre in Waterloo Road in 1880, the "Old Vic", where she organized theatrical entertainments of a wholesome kind which every member of a family could attend. From this grew a demand for more stimulating mental recreation, so the Samuel Morley Memorial College was formed; it was really a flourishing polytechnic. She was also responsible for improved housing for many a project in which she worked closely with Octavia Hill, and she lived for many years among the newly-housed, poorer folk in Surrey Lodge in the Industrial Buildings in Lambeth Road.

The confidence of Swanley's many well-wishers seems to have been unbounded throughout its years. They selected potential benefactors from their wealthy and frequently titled friends, and persuaded them of the advantages of a scientific and horticultural training for women as well as for men. They started at the top, too; the Royal family was represented by the Empress Frederick of Prussia, Queen Victoria's eldest daughter, and mother of the Kaiser, who became Patron of the Women's Branch soon after its foundation. She headed the long list of Council members, many of whom were pioneering girls' schools, as well as higher education. Prize Days must have been great social scenes, eminent politicians and



Mrs. Watson and the first five Women Students
1891

agriculturists were frequently invited; on occasions they were unable to come, and a lesser, but perhaps wealthier mortal gave the prizes instead. Many philanthropic men and women worked hard, one after another, all down the years to get the name of the College well known among rich and influential people.

The Womens' Branch started on June 13th, 1891 with five students. It was socially unacceptable at that time that there should be much contact between young men and young women so it was fortunate that Mrs. Watson came forward to provide a house of her own, adjacent to College where the women students could live. This was "South Bank". While fees for tuition were paid to College she provided the accommodation, and the chaperoning !

Mrs. Watson, who was known as the Lady Superintendent (she died in 1930 at the age of 90) took endless time and trouble over the Womens' Branch. She was a great gardener and herself taught her first students decorative work in her own garden. The practical work done at College at that time was all commercial horticulture. She attended every lecture with the women (where they sat together behind the men) even if she stayed for only ten minutes. As the number of women students increased she bought the house adjoining "South Bank". In 1899 it was decided not to take any more men students, so that in 1901 it really became Swanley Horticultural College — for Women.

In these early days the names of two people who were to maintain their faith in Swanley throughout its lifetime, and who made it the splendid place it became, first appeared in the Register of new entrants; as we knew them many years later, Dr. Barratt and Professor Tabor.

Richard John Tabor was sixteen years old when he came to College in 1892, and he must have stayed for two years. In 1895 he was living at Dover, presumably with a job; we know he paid a visit to College as an old student; and in April 1896 he read a paper at Chiswick (to students and staff of the Royal Horticultural Society's Garden, one supposes,) on Swanley Horticultural College.

In October 1898 he was already a Fellow of the Linnaean Society, and he was appointed Resident Tutor at the College lecturing in Botany, Chemistry and Geology. In 1900 he was editing the Horticultural College Magazine; it was probably his enthusiasm which revived this entertaining journal, which lapsed for thirty months after only six numbers had been published. He continued as Editor until 1910.

Among many other things he was responsible for the design and planting of the Botany Garden at Swanley, arranged from Hooker's Flora. There were about five hundred plants in 1900, all labelled. He was himself one of the plant collectors, and

he started and maintained the College herbarium. He served on Sports committees and conducted botanical expeditions to many local Kentish beauty spots. In 1902 he became housemaster for the few remaining men students at 'Northbank', but for only a few terms as the last young men completed their courses.

In 1909 he obtained B.Sc. Botany. Hons. at Imperial College and together with other staff, became an Honorary member of Swanley Old Students' Guild. He finally left Swanley in 1910 (he was probably a visiting lecturer later) to become a Botany demonstrator at Imperial College. He was succeeded by Miss Katie Barratt, who had Miss M. G. Holmes as her demonstrator.

R. J. Tabor joined the Governing Body in 1929. He became chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee in 1939, and was at the very last meeting of the Governors of Swanley in 1945.

Katie Barratt was eighteen when she became a Swanley student in 1902. After completing her Diploma course she stayed on as Botany demonstrator for two years. She won a national scholarship at the Royal College of Science at South Kensington (the fourth former student to do so — two were men). After obtaining her B.Sc,. Botany Hons. she returned to Swanley to take R. J. Tabor's place in 1910. Her influence on the College was to prove momentous.

For any reader learning the story for the first time, it must be recorded that Richard Tabor married Kate Barratt in 1950, and they had eight years together.

LIFE AT COLLEGE — 1889 — 1899

This decade was a time of great confidence, and growing interest in education. The staff and students at the Horticultural College must have been conscious that they were initiators of a novel training. The five women who became students in 1891 must have been objects of surprise; they were the founder members of the Womens' Branch.

The Staffing on the academic side, and at the top, seems to have been difficult. Both Professor Cheshire, and then A. H. Bond were initially resident in College and in both cases the health of their wives seems to have been the cause of their having to resign. The former became a visiting lecturer, and the second continued to act as Secretary both to the College and to the Governing Body.

In 1892 Whately Eliot became Resident Principal; during his single year we know only that Professor Cheshire seemed to triumph in the academic world, being

asked to lecture to the Royal Horticultural Society, and to visit schools of horticulture in Europe; and that there were disciplinary troubles with some students. It was in January of this year that the first Kent County Council Scholarships were being taken up; many of the students were only sixteen or seventeen; and the Registers tell of a variety of occupations of their fathers, ranging through labourer, "dredger", "squatter", coachman, curiosity dealer, publican and booking clerk, a contrast with others, especially the girls, most of whom came from professional families, or were the children of "landed proprietors".

In 1893 Colvile Brown was appointed; at this time finances must have been very bad for Miss Cons and Miss Everest offered to support College financially provided they had the entire management for two months, but the following week it was reported that the County Council refused to approve that scheme! Miss Cons, clearly not rebuffed, then lent £500 to help with the financial short-fall. The following month she became treasurer of the College. Later in the year Miss Everest offered to buy some College land to build a house for the women; this was not accepted.

Colvile Brown was apparently dismissed and left at the end of 1894. He was succeeded by F. Graham Powell. For four years there seems to have been success and growth, although the hunt for funds to keep going was never forgotten by the Board of Governors. Because of their interest and generosity Miss Cons and Miss Everest were articulate and prominent members of the Governing Body; very good for fund raising, but obviously not so easy for Mr. Powell. Early in 1895 he reported that he had 33 men and 23 women students.

Thanks to the beautifully produced Horticultural Record (the students' magazine of the time) we have a good idea of student life and their more important activities. There was great excitement in 1895 as a visit by the Empress Frederick of Prussia, Patron of the Women's Branch, was expected, and in March, two students made a bouquet for her. It was taken to London and presented to her there as she did not make her anticipated visit; in fact, College had to wait until 1917 for its first Royal visit.

The magazine during the next few years (it faded away after 6 issues , to reappear in 1900) tells of experimental work on the lands; of a visit (by the football team) to the South Eastern Agricultural College at Wye in 1895; butter making, much of "old" student news and very good examination results. Two of the women so impressed their examiner, Mr. T. W. Sanders in their Diploma practical tests "that he presented each of them with a copy of his "Encyclopedia of Gardening".

Once again, finance became critical. This time, the Misses Martineau lent £3,000 "to enable College to continue". Constance Martineau was to become Honorary Secretary to the College in 1899; her sister Caroline was Principal of Morley College. It is a tribute to the wonderful enthusiasm of educationally-orientated philanthropists such as these wealthy women that the teaching of Horticulture continued at Swanley.

In 1898 Mr. Powell reported that he had 20 men and 35 women students. The Director of Kew Gardens reported satisfactorily on the work of the women (old students) who were employed there. The RHS Certificate examination results were again successful, Miss Winlo was first with the Silver Gilt medal, and there were 23 other first class passes.

On Prize-Giving Day in 1898 the Principal was the only man among 6 ladies on the platform. Perhaps that was significant, for on November 30th F. Graham Powell wrote to the Chairman resigning and saying "It has always seemed to me indispensible to the interest and dignity of the College that its Principal should have a free hand in its Government, and it has for some time been increasingly evident to me that the views of the ladies who hold a prominent position on the board are materially divergent from my own..."

Poor frustrated Mr. Powell, he had married while he was Principal, and one might have thought him a happy man, but was there something strange in that Miss Sieveking, the Hon. Treasurer, gave the College £150 "on condition Mr. Powell resigned immediately"!

The succeeding resident Principal was Captain Probert, who was appointed in 1899, and on January 20th he reported that he had 55 students, 35 of whom were women; and further applications to enter the Women's Branch were being sent to Mrs. Watson, the Lady Superintendent. But by April there was another Board Room rumpus for the Joint Hon. Secretaries resigned, giving the same reason as Mr. Powell. The most cheerful announcement of the time was that Dean Hole of Rochester was to be invited to open the new Rose Garden at a garden party for Delegates for the International Congress of Women being held in London.

In 1900, the Governing Body must have had yet another shock. Captain Probert, the Principal, was called to the Militia, and within a few months, sailed to the war in South Africa.

TEACHING AND EXAMINATIONS

The objects of the Horticultural College and Produce Company when it was formed in 1889 were "to promote scientific horticulture, the development of which is advocated by leading statesmen and economists, and which opens up a wide field for very remunerative employment for capital and labour...." "Here every facility is given to young men to acquire a thorough and practical knowledge of the latest and most scientific ....systems of horticulture".

The prospectus (see pp. 64-77) lists in detail a vast syllabus; and some seems very advanced, for no pre-entry requirements were mentioned.

There was also a separate curriculum for young boys, but we don't know if it was exercised. Boys and men were expected to do practical work, and to write a paper on each lecture. Examinations were taken at the end of each of the two sessions. There were nominally fifteen professors and lecturers, though some of them were undoubtedly part-time, visiting once a week, perhaps. By 1891 the Prospectus was for "The Horticultural College" associated with the Kent County Council and the Department of Science and Art; two of the Directors were now appointed by Kent County Council which had given funds for scholarships for Kent boys.

The Womens' Branch, opening in 1891, had by 1893 its own prospectus, and a Hall of Residence (South Bank) and offered a two-year course, leading to a Diploma. Scholarships from Kent, Essex and London were available for women. in addition to College scholarships. The Diploma syllabus was similar to the one listed on pages 68-70, and the results of the Science and Art examinations were also taken into consideration.

In 1894-95 one visiting lecturer was Professor R. Warington F.R.S., M.A. Sibthorpian Professor of Rural Economy in the University of Oxford; another was the Rev. George Henslow M.A., F.L.S., Professor of Botany at Cambridge.

After 1892 the students were taking the examinations of the Board of Education in Principles of Agriculture, Botany, Theoretical and practical Chemistry, and Geology. These were known as the "South Kensington exams" and were set and marked by the Department of Science and Art. (This was to become the College of Science and Art, then the College of Science and Technology, and eventually Imperial College of London University).

It is also recorded that the College Diploma required a First class pass in the Royal Horticultural Society's Certificate examinations as well; even students doing a short course needed a first class pass in the R.H.S. exam to obtain a Swanley certificate.

The R.H.S. exams grew side by side with the expansion of technical education. Around the year 1890 there were many centres for extension lectures on applied subjects, indeed, Sir Daniel Hall, the first Principal of S.E.A.C. at Wye, left his apparently prosperous schoolmastering to lecture on Agriculture in Surrey and S.E. England to men who were keen enough to study after their day's work was done. We can assume that gardeners were equally fortunate for they were beginning to make some headway in forming mutual improvement societies, and although Swanley was the first horticultural College it is probable that it was soon imitated.

As a result of the interest shown in the theoretical principles of horticulture, the Royal Horticultural Society agreed to set, and hold written examinations based on "Elementary principles of Horticulture, Horticultural Operation and Practice". There were two grades with separate papers, leading to the award of a Certificate. Accordingly, on 4th May, 1893, 204 candidates sat for this first certificate examination, in many centres from Co. Clare, Kent and Aberdeen to Cornwall. It became known as the R.H.S. General Examination, but there was no testing of practical horticultural competence. The candidate gaining the highest number of marks was awarded a Silver Gilt Medal, and there was a Scholarship to the R.H.S. Gardens at Chiswick awarded by the Worshipful Company of Gardeners to the men who won the Medal. We know this made women envious, as the Medal winner in 1895 was Miss Gulvain of Swanley. And she was not allowed the R.H.S. Scholarship !

This examination had some influence on the social life of Swanley. Traditionally, the first year students entertained all the others on the evening before the exam (for relaxation) and for many years the party or play was referred to in the Horticultural Magazine as "the R.H.S. Party"; it eventually became the First Years' Entertainment.

In 1904, Nature Study courses for intending teachers were started; with these were short courses for teachers from rural schools in the summer vacations. Natural History and its applications had been discovered, and the importance of teaching a new awareness to country children was suddenly realised. By contrast, in 1905, it is stated in the Minute book of the Governing Body meetings, that the first move was made towards acquiring affiliation with London University.

In 1912, we read of old students gaining a National Diploma in Horticulture "held under the auspices of the Womens' Agricultural and Horticultural Union". Here we must note that the R.H.S. National Diploma in Horticulture was inaugurated in 1913. In both cases the standard was extremely high, and some of the first N.D.H. awards were to men who had been at Swanley, and thereafter had done well over 10 years in practical jobs. In the Magazine of November 1914 we

read that four former Swanley students gained their N.D.H. — all men. R. J. Tabor was one of their examiners, and one of the successful candidates had already been examining Swanley students for two years. In 1917, two women, H. Thrupp and M. Heron, passed the Final, and three women passed the Preliminary exams.

Farming courses of 3-6 months duration could be taken in 1917, as well as short courses in gardening, dairying, poultry keeping, beekeeping and fruit preserving.

The Swanley Diploma, first instituted at the turn of the century, provided an all-round practical training in horticulture, and after some revision demanded a full course of nine terms, with a satisfactory diary of practical work, an individual enterprise, and a certificate in one related short course. It was recommended for students wishing to become practical gardeners. The last Swanley Diplomas were awarded to eleven students in 1948 at Wye.

Several trophies were awarded to the best Diploma students. The Silver Salver was held for one year by the Diploma student gaining the highest aggregate marks in her final examinations. The Shield, given by the third year students of 1924, was held for one year by the student judged to be the best all-round practical gardener. The Mary Bond Prize was awarded annually for the best piece of individual work, and the Monica Franklin prize for the best garden diary.

The curriculum was arranged in this way until the B.Sc. Horticulture was instituted by London University in 1916. Every effort was made for Swanley students to qualify to take the examinations leading to this Degree. By 1933 the regulations regarding B.Sc. (Hort.) for external students stated that as it was a Pass Degree only three years would be needed for the course. Thereafter, the curriculum followed similar lines, always expanding, varying slightly to meet topical needs, and advances in technology. Over the period 1916-44 about 15 Diplomas were awarded annually. From 1924 - 38 an average of five students graduated annually with London B.Sc. degrees, increasing to about eight each year from 1938 - 44.

In 1943-44, the Horticultural courses offered were for B.Sc. (Hort.) the external examination of London University; the College Diploma; the College Certificate in General Horticulture, Commercial Horticulture; or Smallholding. For students in the poultry world courses led to the National Diploma in Poultry keeping, or a College certificate; or Rural Studies, a certificate course designed mainly for teachers.

It may be noted that London University eventually instituted internal degrees in Horticulture at Wye in 1947, together with a Chair of Horticulture first occupied



The Saloon as a Dairy
A travelling County Council Class at work
***circa* 1899**

by Professor H. W. Miles D.Sc. This was 42 years after Swanley Governors made the first move to secure affiliation with the University.

Related subjects were immensely important all through Swanley's existence. Almost every student became a bee-keeper, and entered the British Beekeeping Association Crafsman examinations. The Bee Master was usually a very well-known apiarist, and often a nationally-important figure in agriculture. For many years it was W. Herrod Hempsall, and his articles on beekeeping in the Swanley magazine are worthy of a book of their own.

At a more mundane level the Jam "Shed" also played a big part in tuition; great enterprise was shown in trying to make sales; in 1927 the Junior Carlton Club in London placed a monthly order for bottled plums; and the College at Wye asked for a quotation for a regular delivery of marmalade in 7lb. jars.

Tuition on the farm, with its few cows and pigs was probably ideal for the small scale of the times. In later years a few cows were kept for tuition and to supply College residents with milk; that needed for cheese manufacture was usually bought in. Cheese and butter-making were part of the Dairying course from the first. We know a Kent County Council Dairy course was held at College for a week in 1896, and a photograph shows the extraordinary sight of churns in the Saloon, where "water was temporarily laid on". Unique and surprising !

Showing produce from every department was considered very important, both for the students' education, and to draw the attention of the public to the accomplishments of an educated horticulturist, especially if she were a women. The awards and prizes, sales, and orders, which the beautifully-staged exhibits won, and invited, at many shows, were a great tribute to the consistent high quality of the produce of all Departments.

THE COLONIAL BRANCH

By 1903 the College had only women students, and the Colonial Branch, which had its own curriculum, was formed.

This period of Swanley Horticultural College's history is full of fascination, which, bearing in mind the years it covered — 1902 - 1915, seemed to be one of the most courageous and enterprising ventures undertaken in women's education and training anywhere.

The purpose of the Colonial Branch was "to carry out the valuable indoor and outdoor training for girls going forth to our Colonies, who would be qualified to maintain beyond the seas the best traditions of English home life".

In 1902, as soon as the last of the men students had left; and the Women's Branch Committee had dissolved "as there was no further need", it was agreed by the Governing Body that a Colonial Branch would be formed "provided it does not entail any burden on College finances". Mrs. Hopkinson, who first appeared as a Governor on March 29th, 1901, was obviously the prime mover, and immensely enthusiastic. She became Chairman and Miss Godden was made Hon. Secretary.

The Colonial students were to be at North Bank where they would receive practical training in cookery, house and laundry work under Mrs. Mercier, whose own colonial experience gave her special qualifications for this instruction. Practical gardening was taught at North Bank; flower, fruit and vegetable culture at College. Dairying, poultry and bee keeping, jam making and fruit bottling were included, as well as sanitation, first aid and nursing. Students with South Africa in view were able to take lectures from a qualified instructor in native languages. Book-keeping, harnessing and driving and carpentry were also part of the curriculum.

The first student arrived in January 1903, and by 1907 65 students had passed through the branch.

We know quite a lot about some of these pioneer students, as Miss Kekewich painstakingly kept an indexed record of all who entered the Branch. Mary Hewetson was 35 when she arrived in 1903, and she stayed for a year. She came from Newton Stewart; and she wrote charmingly about her enterprising and sadly short, adventurous life. She described a day, perhaps not typical, giving a glimpse into life at the Colonial branch! At 4.30 a.m. they joined other students for raspberry picking in the plantation; the first fruit was for College jam-making, and the surplus went into leaf-decorated baskets for Covent Garden. Strawberry picking followed until 8 a.m. They went back to North Bank for breakfast, where one student had fed the hens, and another had cooked and cleaned. One student owned a goat, and could easily sell the milk; two were doing their dairy course. Others were gardening, picking fruit and vegetables; it must have been a very hot summer in 1903 as "they get as much done before breakfast, so as to avoid the heat later on". A carpentry lesson followed in College at 11 a.m. — the students were making their own tool boxes. After dinner, prepared, cooked and served by fellow students, they went back to the jam-making shed. They made jam and bottled fruit while others were in the Apiary. The only student who escaped without a sting... ".....had taken the precaution of wearing gloves and a bee veil". Supper was at 8 p.m. Only one was absent, she "is an expert whip, so had the frequent privilege of driving the College pony trap". Another came in from a lesson in soldering "brandishing a huge kettle in which she had repaired several holes". They concluded their day by strolling back to College to look at their individual garden plots; so it is not surprising that lights were out at Northbank at 10.30 p.m.

Mary went to S. Africa, as did a good many others, and after gardening in Natal she visited Rhodes Fruit Farm in Cape Colony to report on its suitability for womens' posts. She obtained land from the Government at Winterton in Natal, but sadly died in May 1907.

Almost the first account of Colonial life came from E. Watts in Nova Scotia in 1906 — she was superintending a farm, garden and apple orchards at a school, and she wrote happily undaunted by tent caterpillars all over her orchard and ornamental trees, and Colorado Beetle on her potatoes.

V. Munroe wrote from Kelowna B.C. in 1906 "the work is very hard.... the more one knows this country and people the more one realizes what an impossible place it is for any girl to start horticulture.... without a large capital. Although land is cheap, labour is very expensive and the climate is such that girls cannot do outdoor work themselves". But she married in 1909, so probably settled happily.

Miss Bond wrote in 1907 from Quebec, where she was laying out a garden. "It was amusing to see the number of visitors we had — to see the garden and the lady gardener, as I believe I am the first one in Canada."

Every effort was made to be as democratic as possible, as many girls who would be suitable colonists came from walks of life where it would be impossible to find fees. Some parents of those days might well have been deterred by the domestic work students were expected to do, and to learn.

In 1912 the Branch took Mrs. Kate Morris. She was only 20, and had been a waitress at a restaurant in Aldgate in the City. She left to join her husband in Western Australia.

Sylvia Ruxton was engaged to a Transport Officer in the Colonial Service, stationed in Northern Nigeria. She completed her course, and married him in 1907, but he died in Nigeria in 1908. She became an innovator of education for Nigerian women.

There were other sad stories as the 1914-18 war took its toll, but many more with happy endings.

Constance Davis was 19 when she entered in 1905; she sailed to Canada in 1907 and wrote happily from her first post in British Columbia. She then went to Mexico, and came back to England in 1911, acting as instructress at Northbank before marrying and going to live in India.

It seems that 250 students passed through Northbank to do Colonial Branch courses. One of the last was a Belgian refugee who only stayed a month.

Because of war-time conditions admissions dwindled, so in 1916 Northbank became a house for College Horticultural students again. But it was reported "that the careers of past students are most satisfactory".

Many of the students who had been at the Colonial Branch kept in touch with the S.O.S.G. Their courage and versatility in dealing with so many contingencies in so many different parts of the British Empire leave us filled with admiration.

THE WILKINSONS 1900 — 1916

After several Principals who held office for only a year or two, Matthew Eason Wilkinson became Acting Principal in 1900. We know that during his time the number of women increased and in November 1900 there were 84 students altogether. In 1902 College became the womens' residence, and by the end of that year all the men students had gone. Now began a period of peaceful, firm guidance. Incidentally, in 1908, long after he had left, Mr. Wilkinson married Miss Sieveking, at one time Secretary of College.

In 1901 Miss Cons resigned as Treasurer; and on 16th July the Countess of Aberdeen after presenting the Prizes in the Saloon on Speech Day, mentioned Miss Cons in her address. She said how well she had publicized the aims of Swanley among friends, and how she might be looked on as the mother of College. Lady Aberdeen also stressed that the College was the first institution of its kind, and had met with twelve years of ever-increasing success, and they were being imitated. She congratulated all students; she said outside people were looking to the women with great interest in what was considered an experiment — could women really make good gardeners? She understood that the lady students had worked efficiently and there was no shirking of the rough or dirty work which fell to their lot.

Speech Days must have been wonderfully organized. The band of H.M.S. Arethusa played in 1901 (was it then the training ship it became?) College produce, including honey and preserved fruit was on display; there were competitions in the conservatories for bouquets and buttonholes, crosses and wreaths, and table decorations, and fresh wild flowers. There was a new feature this year; an exhibition of old students' produce, and ten of them showed a variety of exhibits, ranging from a collection of Canadian insects, through all kinds of horticultural produce to a pair of Brahma Fowls! After all this, and surely tea, Speech Day ended with a pastoral concert held on the lawn.

There was much of interest going on at the College. Always keen to experiment, HCN gas was tried out in the tomato houses; despite advice from the Science staff

both plants and white fly perished at the first attempt. But the Chrysanthemum houses were obviously in good heart, for in November, 1899, over 200 visitors came to College especially to see the chrysanthemums.

The proprieties of those days were strict, and running a mixed college must have made difficulties. During a vacation two students became engaged to be married. They were both under 21, but despite the fact they only met in classes, and not at all for recreation, their parents were obliged to withdraw them.

Gas for lighting was installed in College House — it was still in use in 1943 in the little bedroom called the Cabin, and probably elsewhere!

In 1902 student numbers were down, and Miss Frances R. Wilkinson, sister of the acting Principal, was asked to become Principal of the "Women only" College. She had been on the Committee of the Women's Branch ever since its foundation. She was dedicated and generous and Swanley was amazingly fortunate in her wisdom and her gift for command. For her first year she took no salary asking that the £150 due to her be paid towards building a new glasshouse.

In December that year the men students, only ten in number, went to live at North Bank with Mr. Tabor as their house master. It was in 1902 that Miss K. Barratt entered as a student.

This was a time of great development. The Women's Branch Committee, which had been operating from 1891, now decided to dissolve as they felt they had succeeded in their aim. At the same time the Governing Body were discussing and approved the formation of the Colonial Branch (See page 90) at North Bank; providing that gardening was the main feature they were happy to approve the new syllabus. It appears too, that the Women's Agricultural and Horticultural Association, was active, and became the Women's Farm and Garden Association, founded in 1899.

Former students were writing at length in the Magazine about their experiences. Articles ranged from "The Flora around Oporto"; to work in Antigua, at Kew, and at the R.H.S. Gardens at Chiswick. We know that lectures were given to students on "Openings for Women in South Africa" and "Colonial Life in the Transvaal".

Herbert Cowley described his work in the new plant Department of James Veitch and Sons nursery at Feltham — another enterprise. He wrote proudly of the garden hybrids and varieties obtained by their efforts, as well as plants collected from abroad by Botanic Garden expeditions or individuals.

Cowley was dealing with winter flowering Begonias, Hippeastrums, Gloxinias, Jacobinias, Kalanchoes, and many others. How exciting, to write as he did, in 1903, "We now have some exceedingly valuable plants... some of which are only waiting to be named by the Kew authorities..."

An interesting sequel occurred... in 1926. The Plant House Dept. of College set up a small Botanical exhibit at the spring R.H.S. Show. It consisted of *Primula Kewensis,* and its parents (*P. floribunda and P. verticillata).* The plants made a cool spot in a much overcrowded Hall, and were visited during the afternoon by Mr. Hales, the Kewite who detected the original *P. Kewensis* in a pan of *floribunda* seedlings; also by Mr. Coutts, then foreman at Kew who grew on the first batch, and by Mr. Cowley, previously of Swanley and Kew, who was in charge of the plants at Veitch's when the first pin eyed form appeared. Herbert Cowley became editor of "The Garden".

Winifred Brenchley won the Silver Gilt medal for coming first in the R.H.S. exams; Swanley had won the medal for four years in succession. A few years later she obtained her B.Sc. at University College, London, and went on to a long and distinguished career at Rothamsted. At this time K. Barratt was entering the Royal College of Science to read for a Botany degree.

Letters from other old students present a wonderful picture of gardening, gardeners and social life. There was much friendliness and consultation with employers, although there seems to have been a rapid turnover in posts. We cannot ascertain why that happened but can only surmise about the clashes of personality which must have occurred. To have men working under a woman in those days must have called for great tact. And probably these well trained and self-possessed young women were justifiably anxious to gain more varied experience.

In March 1905, Mr. Dunstan, the Principal of S.E.A.C. at Wye was elected to the Governing Body. It was one of the many useful contacts between the two Colleges; there were many reciprocal arrangements. Mr. Kersey was advising Swanley on farm matters, and he became Farm Manager in 1906, which he apparently combined with his book-keeping lectures. Prior to this, there had been contact with Mr. John Russell (later Sir John), and Mr. Salmon, the Wye mycologist, advised and worked on *Armillaria* in Swanley fruit trees. It was some years before Swanley was to offer the hospitality of flower garden and plantations to Wye horticultural students. Mr. F. V. Theobald lectured on entomology from 1898 until 1917. In September 1907, Mr. C. H. Hooper, who had been on the Swanley staff from 1889 until 1903 had become Librarian at Wye. Later, Mr. Wellington was to lecture on "Top Fruit Growing".

Financially the Governing Body must have felt relieved as a bequest of £1,000

was made by the Trustees of the Bawden Fund; it was allocated to the Colonial Branch, and used mainly for scholarships. A resolution was passed by the finance Committee that "the Governors desire to express their gratitude to Miss Sieveking for having been instrumental in obtaining so large a sum for the purposes of relieving the College of its burden of debt."

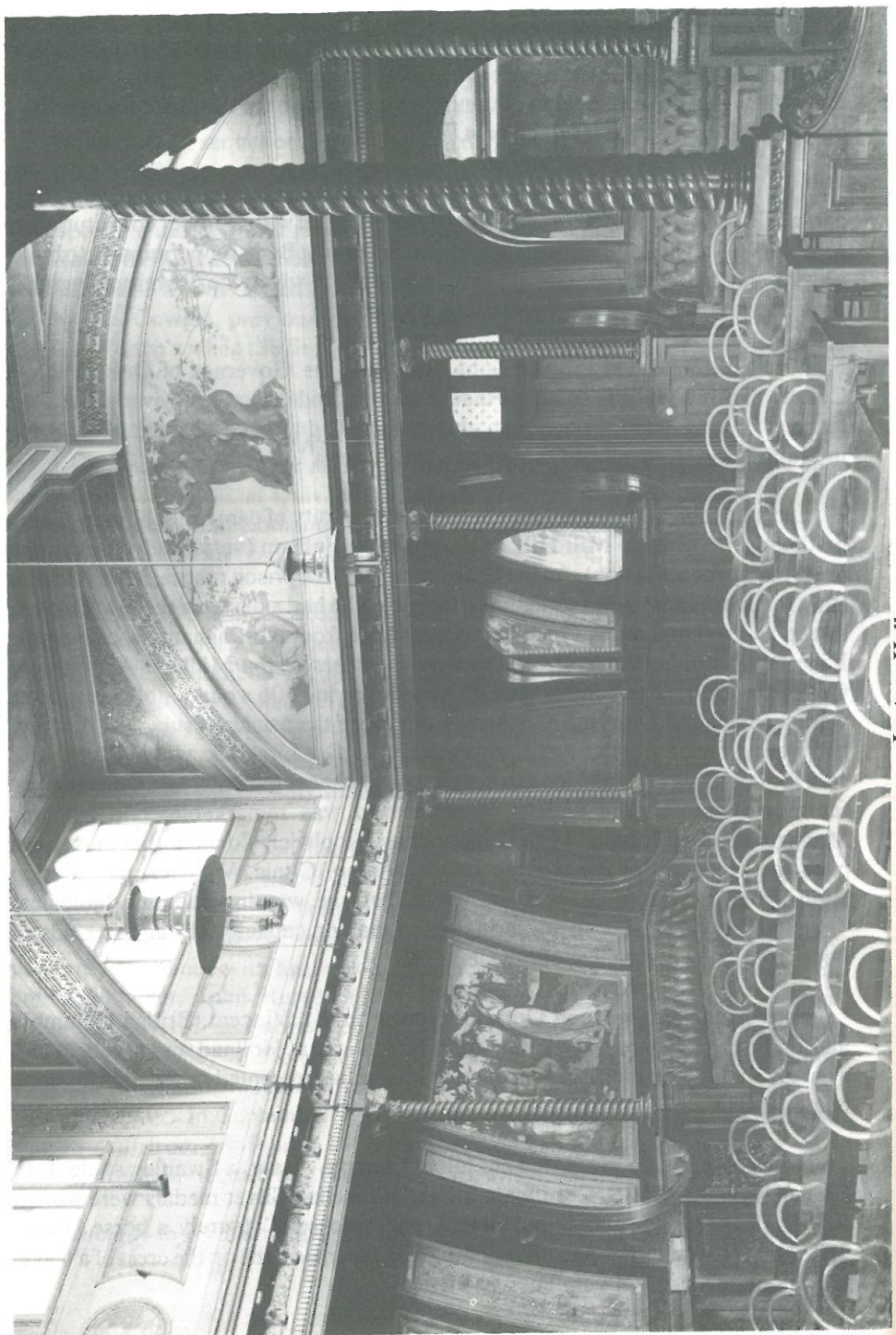
The vitality and perseverance of past students and those at College was wonderful. The Old Student's Guild was really established with a proper constitution in May, 1906. In 1907 the students asked the Governing Body for permission to build a swimming bath "like the one at Girton College" to which the Governors agreed, provided no call was made on College Funds.

Many distinguished visitors came, including the Governor of Orange River Colony and probably because of that, a former student, one of several, went to teach at Bloemfontein. In one term, the students had talks on "Pineapple growing in Natal", the 'History of Gardening', and "Japan".

Old students' letters revealed a wonderful diversity of careers; school teaching, gardening 6½ acres in Mill Hill; at a convent in Fulham (very shady this garden presumably for seclusion). As the Convent worked for prison rescue, Miss Allwork (that really was her name) sometimes had girls who had a past (for theft) to help her sweep and roll and mow. One old student wrote from Nottingham describing the Kingston Institute (those of us who were evacuees at the Midland Agricultural College in 1940-42 remember it well!) where even in 1906 a quarter of the students were women, and Dairying and Agriculture were the principal subjects. Another two were growing violets as well as vegetables in Co. Limerick; violet leaves were sold for poultices and infusions to hospitals and cancer patients, and were sent as far as Edinburgh. The variety of posts held was remarkable; one girl was Manageress of an Infants' Milk Depot run by Woolwich Council; that must have been the precursor of the modern Infant Welfare Clinic. W. Brenchley was at Rothamsted by this time, and she wrote that she was investigating biological "strength" in wheat i.e. the differing bread-making capacity of various kinds of flour from known varieties of wheats.

Former students were in Ontario, Glasnevin, St. Vincent, British Columbia and Ladysmith. There were letters from Nova Scotia, Holland and Quebec, and even an apology that lack of space in the Magazine prevented other contributions being printed.

Notes in the same Magazine are full of triumph. Again, a Swanley student, L. French, won the R.H.S. Certificate Silver Gilt medal; Silver medals were won at R.H.S. shows for vegetables and melons, and "Blossom" (surely a horse ?) won 2nd prize at Swanley Village Fete. The College seemed to be on the crest of a wave; full of confidence, and very successful.



Lecture Hall

We read that a Nature Study exhibition was staged at College for visiting teachers "as it is a new and fascinating school subject". Short Nature Study courses for teachers of rural subjects during the summer vacation, became immensely popular, applicants sometimes having to be turned away. The new interest in Nature Study in schools encouraged College to prepare students in Natural History; an additional one year course being included in the syllabus; it was designed to complement the two year gardening course, or to be attended by school mistresses. The syllabus included Botany, Zoology, Geology, Meteorology and Astronomy, and those who came for only one year did gardening as well.

In 1908 some of the students wished to walk in a Women's Suffrage demonstration in London, and to carry a banner. It was agreed by the Governors that they might walk as women gardeners, but it was undesirable that they should use the College name.

It was this year that the lease of North Bank was purchased for £450 with 70 years to run. The finances were such that a loan had to be obtained, probably with the help of Miss Hannah Cohen who with her brother Herbert joined the Governing Body. They were both outstandingly helpful and generous to College to the end of their days.

Miss Wilkinson visited Canada where she was able to see "many old Swanley students, all doing well" and she thought there were good openings for women gardeners there. But still more publicity was needed, and a woman journalist was writing articles on the Colonies and the Swanley Colonial course. One was headed 'Stepping Westward' and appeared in the Women's supplement of the Times in 1910.

In Miss Wilkinson's absence, the Acting Vice-Principal was Jessie Smith who had been one of the first five women students in 1891. After qualifying at Swanley she did Market garden work — and then for over ten years she was head gardener at Lady Henry Somerset's home for inebriates. She had maintained her links through the Old Students Guild, and was one of the many enthusiasts who came back to work. It appears that the charm and atmosphere of College was such that many could hardly keep away. Jessie Smith became out-door Superintendent for some years.

In 1909 the French Garden was being made, using vast quantities of manure to make the hot-bed; in subsequent years College had a contract with Lambeth Council for supplies. Part of the Walled-in Garden was set aside for training and growing apples, plums and pears; varieties of espalier pruning were being tried out, and bush and pyramid trees were grown, too. In a lecture on French gardening the students were told that 6-8 perfect crops could be expected from the same plot each year.

We read of one successful Garden designer Lorrie Dunnington, who, after two years at Swanley went on to learn some architecture, and had studied under Miss Wilkinson when she was Superintendent of the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association. In the Magazine there were still letters from many parts of the world; an old student in S. Africa complained that the principal pest is a little tortoise, which sounds as bad as a plague of slugs.

Lady Falmouth gave the Prizes in 1910, and there was such an array of notables on the platform that the proceedings were reported in the Daily Mail; which led to a Norfolk land-owner wondering if any former student would like to rent his four-acre garden.

It is interesting that the College was to be represented at the Bath and West Show held at Rochester; some students entered for the butter-making competition.

It was in 1910 that Swanley came under the aegis of the Board of Agriculture, rather than having connection with the Board of Education, It was the only College for women which was regarded of sufficient importance for inclusion in its new scheme. This was obviously regarded as very good news, and College was brimming over, with 63 full-course and 13 short-course students.

It was agreed by the Governing Body that application should be made to the R.H.S. to see whether the winner of the Silver Gilt medal in the Certificate Examination, if a woman, could receive a Scholarship. Up to now, the Scholarship was only awarded to a man, but either the rule remained unchanged, or a woman never again won the Medal with top marks.

When Mrs. Watson, who had been Lady Superintendent since 1891 retired, she sold South Bank, which had been her own house, to the college for £800.

In May of 1911 at least 806 students had passed through college, and plans were being made in the Swanley Old Students' Guild for the formation of an Old Students' Benevolent Fund although this wasn't established for many years. Letters, as usual were of great interest. Miss Petty (who last wrote when she was running the Dairy for babies at Woolwich) wrote from Lady Mayer's charities at Newport, Essex. There she was organizing and cooking penny dinners for 40 children; once a week she ran a clinic for mothers and babies and a girls' Club every evening from 5 - 9 p.m.; in between she visited the families in their cottages. If this is typical of an Edwardian social worker, one marvels at their dedication.

In the magazine there was a letter from a gardener in Quebec, a Nature Study teacher in Wisconsin, a visitor's description of the Swiss Exhibition of Agriculture

held at Lausanne and another from Winnipeg which described a successful honey enterprise, in a well-watered valley, not, of course on the prairie.

Miss Kekewich the vice-Principal, had written to Rudyard Kipling admiring his poem, "The Glory of the Garden" and he replied in a charming letter "I am....most pleased at the enthusiasm and cordial appreciation of the students and staff at your College... I have always known a great deal about the work at Swanley and have met and talked with students from there, all over the world and I feel sure that the College has done much and will do more to realize "the Glory of the Garden".

1912 saw many changes; Mr. Dunstan of Wye resigned as a Governor, Jessie Smith resigned as Garden Superintendent, and K. Barratt left her post to go to the Royal College of Science. But the links with Wye remained, Mr. House, the poultry expert being most helpful.

The Colonial Branch was really poised for expansion, it was doing so well. The Goldsmiths Company had sent a Donation of £50; and lessons in upholstery were added to the curriculum. An application from a "coloured" student from W. Africa had been received. The Governors agreed that she could come, provided her references were satisfactory and her parents could afford a separate bedroom for her. History doesn't relate that she ever arrived.

In 1914 it really seemed that student numbers were at the top; 85 for the start of the summer term. But the outbreak of war caused great uncertainty in the minds of staff and students alike, and numbers went down for a while — everyone subscribed towards the keep of five Belgian refugees who lived at South Bank; it was hoped that they might work in the gardens. The Board of Agriculture was sending town girls, three at a time, who went straight into employment on farms, having spent 3 weeks learning milking and farmwork.

Queen Mary had sent the Colonial Branch £10 at Christmas, and in 1915 she paid a surprise visit to College on April 30th. She visited the House, gardens, laboratories and dairy, and had tea at Northbank. The students were delighted with the day, and she handed the College £100 "to assist in the work of training women of the professional classes who are suffering through the effects of the war".

One long serving member of the staff, F. J. Baker, retired in 1915 after lecturing in horticulture and rural economy for 22 years. He and R. J. Tabor were the first Swanley students to pass on to more theoretical work at the Royal College of Science — it is recorded that there were 10 old Swanley students there at the time.

E. Maud Howard (1914-1916) recalls doing practical work all day, wearing a very practical "gym tunic" and that work stopped five minutes early to clean tools. There were lectures after high tea. The students had lots of energy, they love their hockey in winter, clearing the cow pats and rolling the pitch themselves; students in the shafts of the pony rollers! They were enterprising too, and in hot weather slept out on the roof by the belfry. E.M.H. returned to College as Demonstrator under Miss Joshua in 1924.

Experiments at College included trying out bacterized peat; and Professor Lefroy of Imperial College was investigating means of destroying flies "as a plague was expected in the wake of the armies". Incidentally the French garden and manure heaps were said to be a cause of danger to nearby cottages in Hextable; but we don't hear whether the sanitary authorities insisted on any action.

By 1915 women were working at Kew again, and were managing well. Some old students had diversified into nursing, but most were doing a variety of horticultural and applied jobs. A unique appointment was that of game-keeper, and there is a splendid description of this unusual occupation for a woman at any time, let alone seventy years ago !

1916 was the year that London University founded the Degree of B.Sc. in Horticulture. The Editorial of the magazine was pleased that Horticulture had at last been recognized as a science of sufficient importance to be granted a University degree. The Swanley Diploma was also approved as a qualifying examination for the N.D.H.

Miss F. R. Wilkinson successfully directed affairs for 14 years, resigning in 1916; never very robust, ill-health and the worry of the war years must have contributed to her decision to give up. She retired to live at Swanley Cottage at Snape in Suffolk; she gardened and kept goats. She remained a Governor, and an active honorary member of the S.O.S.G.

AFTERMATH OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR 1916 - 1921

In 1916 there were 94 students, many of whom were doing special "War Courses" varying from 5 weeks to 6 months, in all subjects, and the difficulties of running College with so much coming and going must have been enough to try the toughest Principal.

In June Miss Wilkinson resigned, to be succeeded by Miss Sanders. During her time there were many changes; it is reasonable to suppose she brought a trans-Atlantic directness from her previous post as Director of a school of Landscape

Design at Lowfield, Mass., U.S.A. One of her students M. Wylie-Hill, now Mrs. Knox Finlay, V.M.H., writes "she never took any part in our education by lecturing or practical demonstration.... but she had a good presence, and we respected her."

She had a new bathroom and washbasins installed in College, and she proposed to plant new shrubs and lay out a formal garden. Developments at College included a special course for teachers, and another for Garden Design. A new central heating system was installed in College. She had many other plans; the Minutes of the Governing Body meetings were full of her suggestions. The reasons why she resigned in 1919 are not clear. During her time student numbers were well up; unfortunately costs must have been rising as well.

When Miss Wilkinson left in 1916 she remained a Governor, but it may have been partly due to her advice that the value of the Old Students Guild was recognized, and one of their members was to become a member of the Board. K. Barratt was elected to represent the Old Students.

Towards the end of Miss Sander's principalship fund-raising became of great importance. A development sub-committee of the Governing Body was set up to report on the needs of the College. After 4 - 5 years of war and its shortages it was agreed whole heartedly that an increased salary scale for staff, new science laboratories, garden equipment and additional housing accommodation for staff and students were wanted. The Board of Agriculture agreed to help, promising to award up to £10,000 on a pound for a pound basis in addition to increasing the annual grant. They also recommended the Governors to make a public appeal for funds, hoping that many people who were interested in women's work and the training of women in horticulture would respond generously. Fortunately Lady Falmouth was successful in obtaining £500 from the Rhodes Fund, which was immediately put to good use in the College Development Fund.

Whatever may have happened, Miss Sanders took over when there were wartime difficulties; in her three years some changes were made in College life. Daily prayers were started, and a Students' Council formed "to discuss affairs and offer recommendations", and to be responsible for discipline. There was a new course in landscape gardening, in which M. Agar, already much experienced, lectured and taught.

Concerning this period M. Wylie-Hill wrote:

"During my first two years I had a Bedroom Study in College and one night during the summer of 1917 I witnessed from my upstairs window the first German Zeppelin to be shot down to the cheers of what seemed to be the whole population



The Conservatory
1919

of Kent. On one beautiful sunny day I witnessed an air battle in the sky above my head when I was working in the French Garden. It was an amazing and rather a beautiful sight until they moved off into the distance. On warm summer evenings we could hear the boom of the guns in France.

There were another two Boarding Houses, Northbank and Southbank, and some of the students lived in digs. There was also a Staff Cottage where I lived for part of my third year.

There were two Resident Tutors for Botany and Chemistry, otherwise there were outside visiting Lecturers. The Laboratories were not very good, but I suppose adequate, and the library was certainly disappointing.

Out of doors we worked in squads of six or eight, moving from one department to another. One elderly Scotsman, a good gardener, was in charge; a Foreman and his son ran the twelve market houses, and two men ran the outdoor fruit and vegetable areas. All the produce was grown for the market, and it was well done There were six areas marked off as Cottage Gardens, and the six most promising Second Year Students each had one of those in her charge, and a squad to work with her for half day a week, which was a good idea.

On the private garden side there were four trained women gardeners in charge, two of them were former Swanley Students and each had returned after gaining further practical knowledge elsewhere. The facilities were not good. There was a quite nice Conservatory with two side houses. One could have been used as a store house but fuel was being economised. There was a poor, small rose garden, a large lawn, very few good trees and a few interesting shrubs. No Rhododendrons or any Ericaceous plants, as we gardened mainly on chalk. No Rock Garden and really no Rock Plants let alone an Alpine House. There was a nice Walled-In Kitchen Garden, but again the planting was done mainly for market work, and there were few good Herbaceous Plants. This, of course, was understandable in war time, but we did learn how to prune and use our tools.

I left Swanley with some regret. I did enjoy the work and the very mixed company in which I found myself. They were of such varying types and ages, and a few of the older students were only on short courses, a temporary arrangement which had to do with the war, and perhaps provided a justifiable occupation.*

The next Principal was Miss Micklethwaite. She had been a student at Swanley in 1894-97, and went on to the Royal College of Science; she became a very capable research assistant to several professors of chemistry. After a war-time career in the Ministry of Munitions, and doing research with Boots the chemists at Nottingham she came to Swanley, which, just as everywhere else was handicapped by shortages and difficulties which were a direct consequence of the Great War.

As well as some apparent clashes of personality and resignations, College had some important visitors. Sir Daniel Hall, then Secretary of the Board of Agriculture presented Prizes; a conference was held for Head Mistresses of gardening schools, and they were addressed on the start of the Land Settlement Association Scheme. The Vice Chancellor of London University visited Swanley as College had been recognized for preparing students for the B.Sc. in Horticulture.

Despite Miss Micklethwaite's enthusiasm and knowledge, she resigned after only 18 months, and Miss Wilkinson came back temporarily. It was at this time that Professor Blackman of Imperial College joined the board, and Mr. Kersey, Bursar at Wye, lecturer and farm manager at Swanley, who had resigned the previous year, came back to lecture on book-keeping. Miss Lucas, the Secretary, was authorised to type the minutes of Governing Body meetings; (although this didn't often happen!)

At the end of January 1922 the Governors were able to approve the purchase of Hextable Farm House for £2,500, to be used as a staff House and for the College Library. Finances were, as always, a problem, and the Geddes Report, which recommended limiting the Board of Agriculture Grant, on which Swanley was dependent, was a real threat.

DR. BARRATT TAKES OVER
1922 - 1929

About this time the position of Principal became vacant. It was known that Kate Barratt was a potential candidate. She had been awarded the D.Sc. degree by London University in 1920 and during the 1914-18 war had organised women workers in flax factories. She was also the first representative of S.O.S.G. to serve on the Governing Body being elected in 1917.

However Dr. Barratt was anxious that University scales of pay should be granted to all members of staff who qualified. When this was agreed, she thankfully accepted the post, beginning her new job on 1st September, 1922. She wrote at the time "I shall regard it as a life work and shall spare no efforts to carry out the duties to the full extent of my powers." We know this is exactly what she did. She is described as being "upright in stature and in demeanour, hard-working and kindly. She had an extremely difficult task in running the College on a veritable shoe string... she carried it out most successfully". She saw to it that "Swanley students knew their horticulture and worked with precision and careful attention to detail".



Daffodils on the Lower Terrace 1920

She was made a C.B.E. in 1931; in 1939 the R.H.S. awarded her a Veitch Memorial Medal, and in 1949 she was made a Fellow of Wye College. At the time of her death in 1977 it was written "Hers was a splendid career which influenced and inspired many generations of students and made Swanley training a guarantee of excellence".

The Swanley Old Students Guild was pleased and proud that they were to have two representatives on the Governing Body They had contributed £50 towards the Development Fund, and were especially anxious that it should go towards the new library. At this time Old Students were writing to the Magazine about visits to Egypt and Palestine, and the start of the Guide and Brownie movement.

Ethel Morrice was a student during this period — she recalls sleeping on the lawn in the long hot summer of 1921; the excitement of the "char-a-banc" outings to gardens, and the visits to R.H.S. shows. She says they were a happy crowd. Mr. Hayes ran the French garden with its cloches — she writes "We were inclined to smile at his experiments of sowing seeds by moonlight" but we all know now what he was trying to do. Even just after the Great War there were a few foreign students — from Sweden, Holland, Switzerland and China.

Of student life at this time Marjorie Lunn (nee Picard) wrote:

"I came to Swanley in 1921 to take the Horticultural Diploma three-year course. We had to do a short course as well in either Bee-Keeping, Poultry or Dairying. I very much wanted to do Poultry keeping but unfortunately my Mother had been to see the then Principal — Miss Wilkinson — before I entered the College and she said the Diploma students usually did Bee-keeping. Imagine in these days an arrangement between Principal and parent, and the student having to conform, which I did with bad grace, having no interest in Bees. I was pleased when I failed the exam and was then allowed to do the Poultry course. I took to it like a duck to water! After gaining my Diploma I stayed on a fourth year as a Demonstrator in the Poultry Department. Subsequently after a year's practical experience on a poultry farm I took the National Diploma exam in Poultry Husbandry and finished up on the staff of an Educational Settlement in South Wales in 1931 which worked amongst the unemployed miners. My job was to train four of them at a time for two years to become Poultry farmers in the Rhondda Valley. They were all married men with families and after they were set up on their own I used to visit them to give help and advice; they all prospered and I became very friendly with their families. It was a very satisfying job as I had to start from scratch and start a farm first on the Settlement land, the men building the houses and making much of the equipment.

At the College in 1921 it was decided that the first years, being untrained, should do all the digging and heavy work while the second years did the "fancy"

work in the greenhouses, taking cuttings etc. Imagine our dismay when at the end of our first year, it was decided that it was not right to expect girls straight from school and unused to hard physical work, to start digging and barrowing. In future the roles were reversed so we got let in for two years hard labour! It rankled for quite a time.

There were fourth year demonstrators in every section, vegetable garden, plant houses and plantation. The latter was not a very popular place when winter pruning was the order of the day. Besides apples there were acres and acres of Nuts to be pruned. It was very cold up there and became rather boring after a whole day of it. Everybody enjoyed it when it was their turn — in gangs of eight at a time — to go into the jam shed for the preserving course. Miss Fisher, the staff member in charge in my day, was such fun and we had many a good laugh waiting for the jam to set!

The three houses, South Bank, North Bank and College, used to compete against each other at Games and Sports, Tennis and Hockey. Of course there were Drama groups and various societies to belong to. I must not omit the Guy Fawkes celebrations which were the highlight of the Autumn term: for some reason it had become customary to raid Staff House that evening! How childish it seems now but what fun it was at the time: we would let off fire-works all round the house and the staff would retaliate with hoses from the upper windows. On one occasion, somewhat carried away with excitement, Marjorie Mason and I decided to get on to the roof of the main College building and let off rockets which we duly did. Next day, Dr. Barratt, whom I think became Principal in my second year, gave out at morning assembly, that she had not thought it necessary to point out that the roof was out of bounds but in future would we please remember it!

Altogether I enjoyed my life at College enormously and shall always cherish very affectionate memories of it."

Dr. Barratt became Principal with 63 students, exactly 20 years after she had herself become a Swanley student. Things must have started off well; a loan of £500 which could well have been reclaimed when the donor died at the age of 49. was reported as a gift from the beneficiaries "in memory of Theodora W. Powell". She had been a student and had special interest in the now defunct Colonial Branch.

Nothing ever stood still at Swanley — how could it? But from now on, under the leadership and initiative of Dr. Barratt, despite difficulties of the financial slump and the anxiety of running such an under-capitalized establishment, the old spirit of confidence had returned.

Miss Joshua, former student, now Staff wrote to the Magazine to "reassure old

students that things were not as bad as they seemed". As well as personality clashes with two short-stay principals, and then Miss Wilkinson's firm caretaking, any enterprise might be forgiven if there were set backs. It is more surprising, that after four years of war, and its aftermath, so much was always in motion.

At the last Governing Body meeting of 1922 there was a good deal to report. The Ministry had sent someone to demonstrate apple packing. Mr. Montague Allwood gave an illustrated lecture on carnations. The rose garden was being replanted and the pergolas repaired; a poplar and beech screen was put in on the west boundary and the long herbaceous border was planted with perennials to serve as a teaching collection.

Among other visitors Mr. Lobjoit and Mr. Bunyard had been to advise on the farm buildings, and those at Hextable Farm House. A small portion of East plantation might be sold to a neighbouring nurseryman; the Governors hoped to get £150 per acre — it was good growing land. In fact three acres were sold for £500, the purchaser putting up the new fence.

Old students were writing to the Magazine about the newly forming Women's Institutes; one wrote from Valparaiso; and Muriel Whiting from Canton, China, where she was laying out the grounds, voluntarily, for a new Hospital. M. Agar had published a 'Book of Gardening for the sub-Tropics, with a Calendar for Cairo' and including a vocabulary of Arabic gardening terms. M. F. Rivett was lecturing in Botany at the University of Alberta. Another old student was gardening in a Jewish Colony near Mount Carmel in Palestine. Dr. Brenchley wrote to "fellow Swanleyites" a long and interesting description of her weed survey, asking for help in compiling lists of weeds in gardens. There are letters from a Yorkshire hardy plant nursery, and another from a woman gardener in Italy, unusual at this time.

At Swanley the newly-built jam shed was ready in time for making marmalade; and the library in Staff House had become extremely popular; the S.O.S.G. gift of £50 was devoted to buying books. The College Club, "Brighter Swanley", was flourishing and as a result of Cecil Sharp's visit there were two Folk Dancing classes every Friday evening.

Splendid gifts were received from Kew in March 1923, and plants and cuttings from Chelsea Physic Garden. Others gave plants, seeds, and settings of eggs. In the autumn of 1923 it was announced that Wallace of Tunbridge Wells were to build a Rock and Water garden at College, and a short course of instruction was to be run in conjunction with this.

In 1923 things seemed to be on a fairly even keel; the father of a prospective student was interested to see the Saloon again, as he had been an apprentice on S.S.

Bessemer in her short sailing career.

A new venture which ultimately brought a small income, was the production and saving of seeds of choice melons, cucumbers, antirrhinums and Conservatory plants for Carters' seeds. Miss Swift, the Botany lecturer, had spent three weeks at the Plant Breeding Institute at Cambridge to familiarize herself with their methods.

The Ministry of Agriculture was assisting with grants for much new building. By May of 1923 the Carnation house was built by the firm of Duncan Tucker; and Mr. Engelmann of Saffron Walden had given 200 carnation plants for stocking the new house.

But there was also some bad luck on the estate. Swine fever had caused the death of fourteen pigs; several stocks of bees were much weakened due to local arsenical spraying; about half the chickens had died from bacillary white diarrhoea.

The students had a flourishing Guide Cadet Corps with 33 cadets; and they were able to have a wireless set in the College Common room, for which they had subscribed. Times were indeed changing rapidly! The Governing Body agreed that two old horses should be sold and the Hextable Haulage Company, with its new-fangled lorries, be used for transport. And a new uniform was introduced which continued much as it was until 1943.

In 1923 Princess Mary visited College. She showed a keen interest and the students loved her.

At the S.O.S.G. conference that year Dr. Winifred Brenchley spoke on the development of Rothamsted Research Station, where she had worked on various problems, particularly weeds and trace elements, for 17 years. In 1923 experiments were being undertaken to convert straw to farm yard manure; though in those days it was not straw disposal that was the problem; rather an increasing shortage of manure, with the decrease in working horses.

Old students wrote from India and France. One was gardener at Hatchlands, Guildford (now a National Trust property). Landscape gardeners were particularly busy: B. Colvin working in Scotland and restoring the landscape at Stowe; M. Agar preparing plans for replanting part of Wimbledon Common, which had been occupied by Guards Regiments during the War; and M. Milner working in the Landscaping Department of Wallaces at Tunbridge Wells.

In 1924 student numbers were only slightly down, and together with the Staff, they organized a dance and fete to raise money for the Development Fund. This turned out to be immensely successful, raising at least £136. As a result it was

decided "to adapt and renovate some of the farm buildings as a store" and "to construct a Forcing shed". The balance of the money was divided between the four houses for Staff and students to spend on things they really needed !

There was much discussion at Governing Body meetings as to the best way to participate at the Wembly Exhibition, due to open later in the year. It was agreed that College accept the invitation of the British Poultry industry to supply floral decorations to their stand. This would be a good advertisement for Swanley. The Governors were also inviting 200 overseas members of the Women's section of the Wembley Exhibition to a Garden Party; there were 116 acceptances, but owing to bad weather, only 80 eventually attended.

Mr. W. G. Lobjoit, an influential grower and one of the Ministry of Agriculture representatives on the Governing Body went through Market Houses with Dr. Barratt and Mr. Dyson, the Commercial Superintendent, and expressed his satisfaction with the condition and choice of crops.

Wallaces built the Rock Garden at cost price and generously donated 200 alpine plants. In addition Bunyards of Maidstone (Mr. E. A. Bunyard was a Governor) had given 300 trees and plants, and there were other gifts from generous individuals.

In May 1924 there had been a well-attended open day for Head Mistresses; both Professor Blackman of Imperial College, and Mr. H. V. Taylor of the Ministry of Agriculture spoke on the "Openings in Horticulture for Women".

The following month the Principal reported that "The need for a large entry of students is very urgent". She went on to say the number of applications for past students to fill posts is very satisfactory.

It was reported that Mr. Wilson, Principal of Wye, welcomed the opportunity of sending two students to work at Swanley under Mr. Dyson, for it meant the men getting commercial horticultural experience they could not get at Wye. Mr. Wilson declined an invitation to become a Governor.

The College Shield, was given by the third year students; this was to be awarded annually to the student, who having completed six terms, was the best practical worker.

The first results of the B.Sc.(Hort.) examinations came that summer; M. Alden had obtained her degree, and two their Intermediate (Part I). One of these was A. M. Dickens. The N.D.H. (General and teaching) had been gained by G. E. Pollard. There were many other successes, K. Wood had gained a National Diploma in Poultry keeping; Swanley won a silver Gilt medal for fruit at the R.H.S.

autumn show; awards for produce and bottled fruit had been very encouraging, and a bronze medal was won at the Chrysanthemum show.

In 1924 the students and teaching staff gave a Christmas party for the outdoor and domestic staff, their wives and children. Fifty guests attended a Christmas tea, with games, a Father Christmas, and Sir Roger de Coverley! The Staff party became a traditional event, the last tea party being held in 1938. In 1939 it was arranged as an evening entertainment, some students nobly undertaking to look after the children at South Bank. Owing to the black-out, guests were invited for 6.30 p.m. and everyone seems to have enjoyed whist, supper with musical accompaniment, and a one-act play. Certainly the writer (then aged 17) thought it a lovely party, the first of many happy Swanley occasions.

In the May Issue of the Magazine in 1925 there was a description of the difficulties facing Swanley financially. In the past, capital funds had been provided from time to time by raising money on mortgage. In the early days many sums were contributed by friends interested in the development of the College and willing to lend money at a very low rate of interest. This state of affairs could not be a permanent one and as the original mortgagees died and the loans passed into other hands, interest charges increased. That was one reason for the increased cost of running the College. There were also increases in the cost of materials, salaries and labour. For 14 years College had been fortunate enough to have the devoted services of a Principal who had acted in an honorary capacity, whereas it had now to provide a salary. The running expenses had increased by at least 75% although the average increase in fees was only 30%.

To maintain efficiency it was necessary to reduce expenditure or increase income. To raise fees was impossible without excluding many students who would be likely to make a successful profession of Horticulture. The reduction of expenditure was to be achieved by raising a sum large enough to pay off all the borrowed capital and consequently save the annual disbursement of interest on this money. That was the task the Governors set themselves to accomplish and it was not a light one in those days of tight money and numerous demands.

The work of the Governors had been made easier by the favourable recognition which had been shown to the College by the Ministry of Agriculture. On its recommendations the Treasury promised a grant of £5,000 on a £ for £ basis for the redemption of mortgages. That was an inducement for people to help as they knew that every pound they gave would earn another.

Since Christmas 1924 nearly £2,000 had been collected and the Ministry had paid the College £1850. On March 25th the College actually owned some of its premises free of all debt; Staff house really belonged to Swanley.

Many well-wishers worked timelessly to try to obtain funds. A. Harper Bond, the founder, came down with Sir Alfred Yarrow, a philanthropic and successful shipbuilder. This was clearly an important visit, as A.H.B. gave a talk to the students, who lined up and cheered the party on their departure. The shipping magnate eventually gave £40 to the fund. Others were immensely generous. Miss Cohen, then Chairman of the Finance Committee, converted a loan of £500 to a gift. The R.H.S. "recognized its responsibilities to women gardeners and sent a donation of £105". Reginald Cory (a great benefactor to Cambridge Botanic Garden) had sent £500 as he "believed it to be good work, which will serve the cause of horticulture, in which he was deeply interested."

In the gardens, the Iris borders were started with a generous gift of 29 varieties from Mr. G. P. Baker; he was a knowledgable plantsman who was to make gifts repeatedly throughout the years.

Old students were writing about growing crops in Labrador, (with the Grenfell Association), California and New Zealand.

The 'Times' of February 14th contained the obituary of a remarkable woman, L. S. Gibbs. She was born in 1868 and was at Swanley for 2¼ years from January 1899. She then (aged 33) went on to the Royal College of Science to read Botany, and in 1910 was awarded the Huxley Medal and Prize. She was reported as having done "valuable work in Botanical exploration in various parts of the world" in fact in Fiji, British North Borneo, Dutch New Guinea, Queensland and Tasmania. A complete set of her collections is preserved in the Natural History Museum. Her name is commemorated in the Genus *Gibbsia,* a shrubby nettle collected by her in Dutch New Guinea.

1925 opened with some disasters, severe gales caused much structural damage; the domestic boiler at College burst on Christmas morning, and a Redpoll calf died.

Dr. Barratt was endlessly versatile and enterprising — she found time to judge Bottled Fruit and Jam at the Dairy Show; and to speak on Poultry Keeping at Chislehurst. She arranged for the annual Conference of the North West Kent fruit growers to be held at Swanley in June, papers were read from Cheshunt Research Station, by a representative of the Covent Garden sales firm, Geo. Monro, and by Mr. E. S. Salmon of Wye.

In late 1925 a more favourable financial position was achieved, and it was possible to implement the superannuation for the Academic staff recommended by the Ministry and postponed in 1922. It was affecting four members of staff, and was to cost College £76 per annum. Other much needed purchases were an Atco motor mower, microscopes for geological work, and a new domestic water-heater

for Staff House. One realizes how the finances were always on a knife edge; there were never any spare funds. However an entrance Scholarship of £40 per annum was introduced for candidates wishing to study for a Degree or Diploma.

Two tributes must be made here, sent by Peggy Jaques, (1924-26). She writes that Mr. Dyson, the Commercial Superintendent, was a marvellous instructor. He was almost tyrannical in his thoroughness. "I remember having to excavate the 3rd spit of a sweet pea trench with a pick axe in pure chalk. Once a week he came into the saloon and gave an hour's lecture; on these occasions, he appeared immaculate in his best clothes. Gardening-wise I owe him an immeasurable debt."

Of Mrs. Craig, a Housemistress, Jaques said it was rather like living with a time-bomb, but she was a perpetual joy; kind, human and with a great deal of humour. She had a bark like her own fox terrier, but a very gentle bite.

Another memory was of the Bell game, which was stopped, for evident reasons in 1924. After dark on one night in the autumn term the whole College turned out into the Avenue, and the Head Student rang a large dinner bell. The object of the game was to get the bell away from her by any means. As lads of the village also joined in on this occasion, it is not surprising it was stopped — Jaques writes, "I thoroughly enjoyed it but I remember wondering at the time if the staff, who did not participate, really had any idea of what it was like....!"

Old students accomplishments were of great interest.F.C. Schimmer having been awarded her B.Sc. (Hons) in Botany at Imperial College came back to help out by teaching Zoology while Miss Wilson was at Cheshunt on a sabbatical. F.C.S. later went to do research under Professor S. G. Paine at Imperial College into the nature of the decay in the walls of the Houses of Parliament. The old students were so versatile; V. Day wrote a charming account of agriculture in the Yorkshire Dales, C. Rivett and M. Alden were teaching at a secondary school; there were letters from China, Nova Scotia and U.S.A. and so much news of interesting jobs in the U.K.

In 1926 student numbers seemed to be good, the financial position was balanced, and plans were going ahead very slowly for building the Principal's cottage —which was to be done at her own expense.

Dr. Barratt had been asked to set the examination papers for the Horticultural Scholarship examination at Wye. At Swanley Miss Dickens was appointed superintendent of Plant Houses and Rock Garden; visiting lecturers included Mr. Rhodes from Wye for Poultry pathology; Mr. Bagenal from East Malling for Fruit growing, and Mr. Thomas from Oxford to lecture on rural economics.

In June there was a visit from the important Ministry of Agriculture Grants

Committee, which included Sir Daniel Hall and Mr. H. E. Dale, who was frequently at Swanley. They were received by some of the Governors and the Principal, and after seeing the gardens and greenhouses investigated the details of administration and curriculum of the College. Lord Bledisloe, their Chairman, subsequently wrote a very nice letter of thanks, expressing the hope that "If the opportunity occurred, to be able to hint to some potential benefactors the desirability of contributing something to the capital cost of the new Botanical Laboratory". By July, financial matters really seemed to be settled; the Finance Committee recommended an increase in salaries of £100 per annum, and annual expenditure of £600 for repairs and renewals, and these proposals were adopted!

The Royal Agricultural Show was at Reading, and College was awarded a Silver Medal. The King and Queen visited the stand, and Dr. Barratt was presented, Queen Mary recalling her visit to college eleven years previously.

Rothamsted wrote suggesting they sent lecturers to speak on their experiments, and four talks were arranged to which neighbouring growers were also invited. The Growers' organization had by then become a branch of the N.F.U. and Dr. Barratt was elected to represent them on the Kent Education Committee. Efforts were being made to have Swanley recognized as a training college for teachers, and approaches were being made to the Board of Education. The quest for improvement in educational status, and for money to add to facilities went on and on.

Towards the end of 1926 Dr. Barratt's house Meadow Bank was completed, and a group of four students won a competition for a design for her garden of lawns and Irises. There was more building in progress, the Head Gardeners Cottage at the top of Farm Lane had been started, with a loan of £700 from the Lands Improvement Fund. The next requirement was a new Botany Laboratory.

During the year, B. Colvin and E. Cowell had shown plans and photographs of their garden designs at Chelsea Show; Colvin was designing in Dorset, Essex, Dieppe and some small, paved gardens in London.

A. P. Wilson addressed the annual Old Students' Conference on the work of Cheshunt Experimental Station; and the following summer she was invited by Kent Education Committee to lecture at Folkestone summer school. Rothamsted applied for a Swanley student to grow glasshouse crops for experimental work; and the gardens at College were to be open one day in June in aid of Queen Alexandra's memorial fund.

The Principal had discussions in 1927 with the Registrar of London University in an effort to get recognition for training students for an internal degree of B.Sc. (Hort.). One condition would be the award of statutory salaries for the teaching staff, which were higher than those which were actually paid, but, as we know this did not occur until after the integration with Wye.

The Secretary of the R.H.S. visited Swanley, but regretted they were not then in a position to subscribe further to College funds; and the Empire Marketing Board also regretted that they could not approve a grant which would carry them into the field of agricultural and horticultural education as distinct from scientific research. Efforts were being made to fund more scholarships; there was an abundance of students for the Poultry Department; and students from the National School of Cookery were coming for a few months as part of their course.

The local fame of Swanley was spreading, and there were many requests from parties to visit the gardens. It was agreed that a nominal charge be made "as such visits usually entailed a good deal of trouble and time"— and money so raised went into the Appeal Fund.

On a far greater scale, Dr. Barratt gave comprehensive evidence of College's needs to the Kent Agricultural Education Committee, asking for more recognition and a grant of £500 a year. After a visit from a sub-committee a grant of £100 was received, in return for some demonstrations in bottling and jam making by College staff. Field trials for outside bodies were welcomed; the Ministry supplied strawberry plants for variety trials and demonstration; and Pyrethrum was grown for the Plant Pathology Labs. at Harpenden.

Mr. Kersey who had been coming from Wye to lecture in book-keeping since 1903 resigned, but he was expected occasionally to speak on farming. He was succeeded by Miss H. C. Jameson.

On November 26th 1928 there was a special meeting of the Governing Body; the College Farm was infected with Foot and Mouth Disease. Anyone reading the minutes of the meeting would feel the awful shock it must have caused. Even so at this sad meeting it was resolved that the replacement stock, when bought, would be fully attested free from tuberculosis; and there was a great deal of generosity and kindness shown.

Mr. Cutbush of Barnet nurseries came to talk on herbaceous borders, and was evidently so impressed with Swanley training he offered former students posts in both his garden design and propagating departments.

The staff were frequently busy judging at flower shows, taking two students each time so that they received instruction. Classes were started for local boys in the gardens, and there was talk of setting up a Young Farmers Club. Among staff changes in 1929, a bachelor came as plantations foreman. This meant one of the College cottages became vacant, and a mining family came from the north to live there. The magazine reports "Whitmore and his son are working on the estate, and his daughter is employed in the house so we hope that will be a welcome change from their previous unemployment."



Dr Kate Barratt in 1956

Professor Tabor became a Governor and Dr. Barratt found time to serve on several committees, but must have been looking forward to a visit to South Africa, where she could attend meetings of the British Association and make valuable contacts. She was accompanied by Miss Holmes and Mr. Brenchley, Miss Lucas acting as Principal in her absence. Speech Day of 1929 must have been strange without Dr. Barratt. In her report, Miss Lucas referred to "our proud possession, the new motor van". It was also pointed out that many desirable prospective students had to be turned away through lack of means, so speakers stressed the need for more scholarships.

It was in 1929 that the Mary Bond Prize was founded in memory of A. H. Bond's wife. The Collections, representing the results of a scheme of work laid down as part of the College Diploma was the basis. This required a study at first hand of a selected family of flowering plants both as to its importance as a garden plant, and or, a weed of cultivation. The first winner was M. Kemball.

The Women's Land Army Scholarship was also established; it was worth £25 per annum for two years. The money came from the sale of surplus land army uniforms, which apparently were much in demand from women who worked in market gardens or orchards.

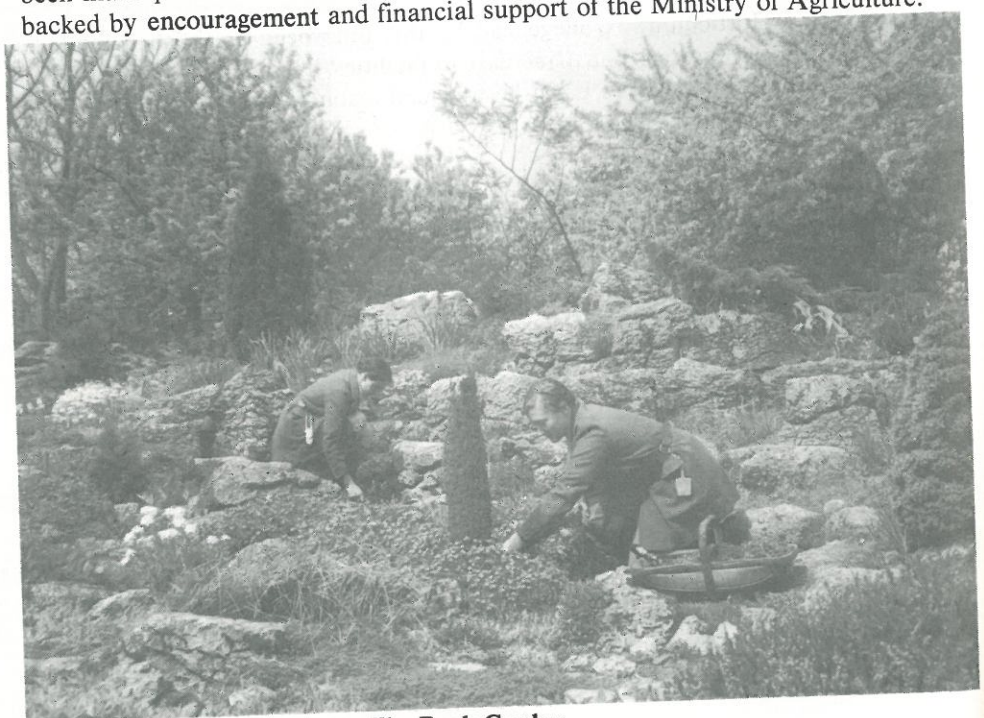
Swanley Horticultural College had by this time been established for forty years. It had to progress; it had to increase its facilities, it had to keep up the number of its students, and it had to have the financial resources to do all this.

A DECADE OF CONSOLIDATION AND DEVELOPMENT

1929 - 1939

In the past ten years there had been substantial improvements in buildings; Meadow Bank had been built in 1926, the head gardener's cottage in 1927; the Botany Laboratories in 1928, and the new Dairy in 1929. South Bank had been enlarged by the purchase of New Bank and by building a dining hall and kitchens between the two. These extensions allowed an increase of twenty in student numbers, and meant North Bank could be returned to its former use as a domestic centre.

The educational scope of the gardens had been extended to include an attractive and well-stocked rock and water garden, a fair collection of flowering shrubs, and iris garden, and the conservatory range had been repaired and reconstructed. Laboratory equipment had been increased and brought up-to-date. The garden departments had been equipped with a motor mower and a power sprayer, essential to a well-run modern estate. The poultry department had been extended to provide accommodation for approximately 1,000 head of adult stock. These additions had been made possible through the generous support of many friends handsomely backed by encouragement and financial support of the Ministry of Agriculture.



The Rock Garden
***c.* 1930**

The Library

It was in 1922 that Hextable Farm House was bought by College, to become a Staff House and Library. There had been many gifts including a splendid sum contributed by the S.O.S.G. and Miss Wilkinson had been especially generous. By 1930 the Library contained 1900 books, about 120 new ones arrived each year; in 1932 Miss Dickens was appointed Librarian. By this time an overflow of books was housed in the Saloon passage, and the Fiction library was removed to South Bank. In 1935 there were three books written by staff; from Dr. Steele, Mrs. Spry, and Mr. Shewell Cooper. In 1937 there were over 2,800 volumes, and letters were being received asking for advice on horticultural books from enquirers unknown to College.

Miss Hess wrote of the years 1934-39...."the five years I spent there changed my life...." "From being what was then a 'Lady gardener', I became an avid student of horticulture...which was achieved by the College Library and "Dickie" the College Librarian. By today's standard the Library was badly housed, but the monographs, encyclopaedias, works of reference and first class gardening manuals were beyond belief to my eyes.... Miss Dickens gave me carte blanche freedom of the library at any time. I don't believe she ever had a closing time and I believe the library was kept open....as long as it was required by anyone".

In May 1939, our Jubilee Year, the 3,000th book was registered, and the new thousand started with Frances Perry's (Everett) "Water Gardening". There were over 2,400 books in constant use (the balance were shelved elsewhere) and less than 0.5% were lost.The Library subscribed to over fifty periodicals and twelve year-books of learned societies and associations.

In June 1940, some of our books went with us to the Midland Agricultural College; and in 1941 we added about 80 new books, well below average but creditable for war-time conditions. The Library was very well used at Sutton Bonington, and during 1942 another 70 books were added.

Characteristically Miss Dickens made no mention of the two moves, but in the magazine, thanked the staff and children of Chislehurst County School who helped with the re-organization of the Library after our return to Swanley in 1942.

The Library suffered relatively little damage in the air-raid of 1944, the windows were covered with sisalcraft paper, so it was safe to read there. Despite all the broken glass only one book case was so badly damaged as to be unusable. And even in this dark year, 70 books were added.

In 1944 part of the Library moved again to Ripley Court, (our own book cases

were still away being repaired). Miss Dickens wrote that "this has been the leanest year...we have only been able to add fifty new books, many are very slender or are replacements."

Early in 1946 our books at last came to rest at Wye, and the magazine published a long report on new acquisitions for the Wye library by Miss Page and Miss Schimmer; many new editions of pre-war text books were being published. albeit still in war-time quality, so many of our much-travelled, well-used reference books must have appeared in newer condition for succeeding generations to use.

At the beginning of the decade a writer in the magazine asked how far the expenditure of sums totalling £15,000 had produced commensurate results. "Larger numbers of students do not by themselves justify the expenditure of public or private money; but it is worth while if those women, through their training can contribute in their turn to the well-being of the community at large by good service or adding something to the sum total of knowledge". The number of students had in fact increased and the majority were studying for three or four years.

The development of horticulture at that time was towards commercial work. Import duties had relieved a difficult situation and had enabled the price of horticultural produce to reach a level which permitted a reasonable return on invested capital and business enterprise. It was suggested that the majority of girls drawn to horticulture did not seem to have a liking, or capacity for commercial work. Women at last had the opportunity of demonstrating their capabilities as growers. and many tempting lines were open to them. The Ministry of Agriculture had helped greatly with the improvement of marketing facilities and had demonstrated the need for better production and presentation if the British grower was to compete with imported produce even with the help of tariffs.

There was little doubt that well-informed competent managers would be required. It was important that women should be conversant with, and experienced, in the management of motor appliances such as mowers, sprayers and the latest cultivators, and understand the working of oil fuel and steam boilers, of grading machines and cold storage plants. Moreover information relating to orchard fruit practice and glasshouse cropping was accumulating at a great pace through the activities of research stations and it was difficult for the hard-working practical gardeners to keep up-to-date. College was then trying to help past students to keep up-to-date with the latest information on various branches of horticulture.

Great steps were being made in Women's horticultural education. A joint conference of all interested teaching establishments was held to encourage co-

operation with the Women's Farm and Garden Association. It was felt there was a need for supplying and collecting "accurate up-to-date information in regard to facilities for training, requirements for examinations set by public bodies and the prospects of employment for trained and experienced women in Agriculture, Horticulture, Dairying and Poultry Husbandry". This was supported by the Principals of all Colleges and Farm Institutes where women were trained, not least Dr. Barratt and Miss Holmes of Swanley.

Governing Body meetings were usually well attended, 12 or more Governors assembling about eleven times a year. At the beginning of 1930 there were 82 students: of whom 9 were First year degree students and 27 Diploma course students. The meticulous Minute Books of Governors meetings indicate that they must have been very well informed as to many aspects of College life and much of its day-to-day running. Finances were always a problem and in May 1930 Miss Cohen reported "that they must defer payment of some bills until students fees and the Ministry grant were received, a position not unprecedented."

These 10 years had many highlights; but everything ran so smoothly that Dr. Barratt was able to tell the governors in 1932 "There is little to report. The students' health, conduct and work is quite satisfactory". In the gardens there were no major changes until June 1940 when the students were evacuated to Sutton Bonington, and food production became of first importance. Old students were writing from almost all over the globe, and were holding down posts in many important walks of horticultural and agricultural life. Small wonder that in 1931 Dr. Barratt was awarded the C.B.E. for her service to horticulture.

At College the students decided to support the "Time and Talents" Settlement at Bermondsey, both with annual cash payments, and, more importantly, personal contact between students and young girls and children. This became a starting point of reciprocal visits, which lasted until 1939.

Students came from several different countries, Holland, Sweden and Norway. and for a short while two came from the University of Riga, in Latvia.

Miss Joshua,one of the old students' representatives on the Governing Body. was arranging Flower exhibits for the W.F. and G.A. at R. H. S. shows. Exhibitors were able to send their produce, which gave them publicity, and "practically everything sold" and they won a Bronze Banksian medal as well. Vegetables did not sell so well at this type of show, so it was felt advisable "to stick to flowers".

In 1930 the Ministry of Agriculture's adviser to the Glasshouse Industry Mr. W. Corbett had an office at Swanley. He had come from Cheshunt, and by 1939 had become a visiting lecturer in Market Gardening.

Fund-raising continued to be important, for despite Swanley's great successes, national finances were at a low ebb, and student numbers did not increase greatly. Staff and students had two fairs in July 1931 to coincide with Speech Day and made £241. Lady Falmouth organized a lecture by Mrs. Patrick Ness called "Cairo to the Cape" at the Hyde Park Hotel and made £330 for the development fund — practically single handed.

There were innovations in short courses at Swanley. A refresher course was held for old students on "Orchard Fruit Practice". Speakers included Mr. Basil Furneaux of Wye, and Mr. I. Turnbull of the Ministry on "Spraying machinery". The course was attended by 16 people, thirteen of whom were old students. In the same year a 10-day course in Marketing from W.I. stalls was attended by 17 people.

There were some momentous staff changes. Miss Schimmer, who had gained her M.Sc. in 1931, joined Dr. Farries as assistant in Plant Pathology, and shortly succeeded her; and W. E. Shewell-Cooper became Garden Superintendent, a post he retained until 1937.

Examination results were splendid; B. Beakbane and Mary Page were awarded their N.D.H., and there were two B.Sc.'s and 19 Diplomas. Dr. Barratt was able to report that the leaving students had nearly all obtained posts.

Dr. Barratt and Miss Cohen, always anxious to improve the status of College, visited the Principal of Bedford College for Women to discuss association with them in the hope of University recognition. That idea did not meet with the approval of the University. But the Governing Body agreed that the idea must be pursued.

There was now good co-operation between Wye and Swanley and Mr. Wilson and Dr. Barratt approached the Registrar jointly for stronger University support but this was unsuccessful too. Two Wye men had done an intensive course in Decorative horticulture before their B.Sc. Hort. finals, and were very appreciative. Dr. Barratt hoped to arrange a course in Rural Economics from Mr. Wyllie, and to obtain expert advice in the Farm and Poultry Departments.

In 1933 Lord Northbourne came to Swanley for the second time. He said that some years previously he had been on a tour of inspection with the Agricultural Education Committee; this time he came to present the prizes, and a few more years were to pass before he became so important in the guidance of College.

The Finance Committee had to report to the Governing Body that a serious cash deficit was expected; in October 1933 there were only 56 students. Sales of college produce were encouraging; van sales had gone up well since they were started in 1929, and College was also co-operating with the W.I. stall at Sevenoaks, both with advice and produce, and in 3 months, £75 had been raised. Poultry seemed to be most profitable on the retail scale but the routine market sales of produce sometimes showed a loss. The Treasurer, Miss Cohen, reminded the Governors at this stage that the Ministry of Agriculture were always impressed by the fact that a College of this size could show receipts of sales amounting to about £4,000 per annum. The flowers, fruit and vegetables grown for sale had to be really marketable; it was not possible to put all the loss down to education!

Four of the Market Houses were being steam-sterilized for the first time, and in the Dairy Department milk was bought in for cheese making, thus increasing the scope enormously; four cows were kept for instruction and supplying milk for the hostels.

In 1933 the staff was strengthened by the arrival of Miss Huntbach and Miss Page and in 1934 Miss Hess was appointed.

College had 3 exhibits at Chelsea in 1934, a pattern which was to be followed until 1939. There was a stand in Sundries Avenue, which was an information bureau for the public about Swanley's aims and objectives; Show Pelargoniums were staged in the great Marquee; and in the scientific tent there was an exhibit on the life history and control of *Thrips tabaci* with reference to its importance as a vector of spotted wilt virus.

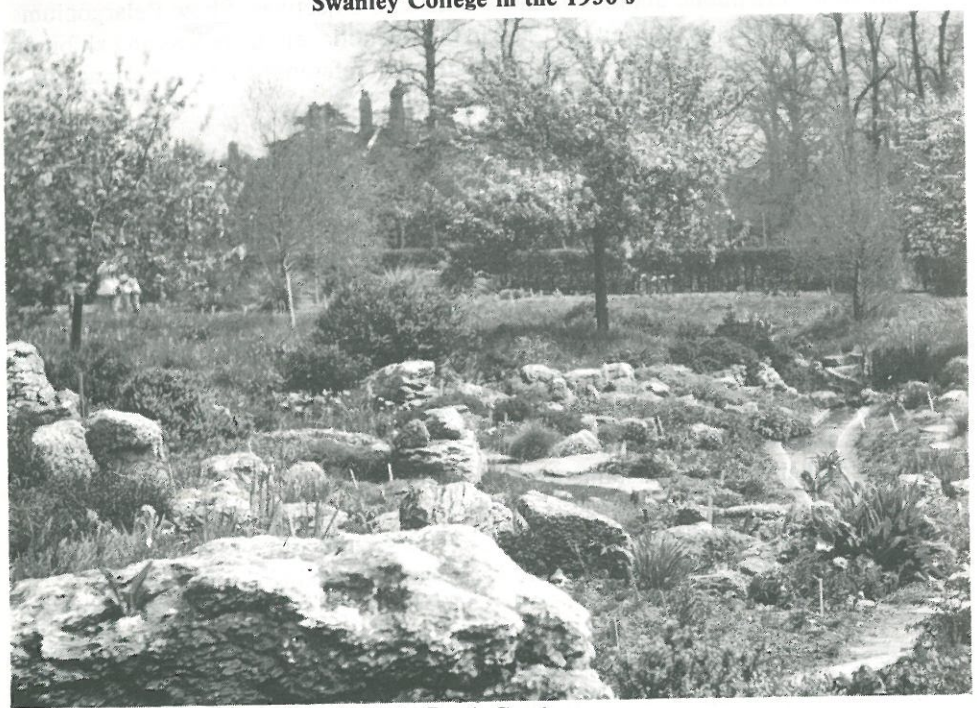
At the Royal Show, which was at Ipswich, Swanley's exhibits were displayed in an imposing tent. There were record attendances, and lots of interest shown in everything, from the large group of handsome cheeses to the hen battery containing six live hens busily laying eggs. There was also plenty of Jam-shed produce. Similar exhibits were put up at Ashford, Tunbridge Wells and Shrewsbury, and there was a Great Autumn Show at the Crystal Palace, which consisted mainly of apples and pears in market packs, and a small section on variety identification. A Hogg Memorial Medal was won for what must have been a wonderful exhibit. This successful activity was probably because Ursula Newman had joined the staff, her artistic expertise must have assisted in publicizing the activities of College, as well as giving her student assistants useful training.

Among the speakers at the College Club that year was the Dean of Canterbury (later known as the Red Dean), and he spoke on "China".

Dr. Barratt was obliged to take a long holiday in 1934, and was away for Prize Day. During her absence Miss Jameson acted for her, and was subsequently offered the position of Vice-Principal. But by May, 1935, Dr. Barratt visited U.S.A. on a lecture tour so Miss Jameson undoubtedly filled her place admirably.



Swanley College in the 1930's



The Rock Garden
***c.* 1930**

Dr. Barratt had toured Cumberland for the Federation of W.I's; Mr. Shewell Cooper was instructing 9 men school teachers in school gardening on alternate Saturday mornings, and six men from Wye were due for a two-week course in Decorative gardening in April.

In this typical year of success, head student M. Chambers wrote that it was thrilling to meet and live with members of so many nationalities; evening sing-songs had been revived, with the especial co-operation of German and Swiss students. They were affiliated to the National Union of Students, and the Ranger Cadet Company had organized a good deal of camping. There had been meetings in connections with the Student Christian Movement, visits had been paid to the "Time and Talents" Settlement at Bermondsey and *vice versa,* and Swanley members ran a stall at a sale at the Hyde Park Hotel. Some of the famous gardens of Kent were visited, and they had become Friends of Rochester Cathedral.

In 1935 Lady Northbourne became a member of the Governing Body, and more good news came when the Ministry grant was increased to £2,300 plus a further £1,000 for repairs and equipment; but there was a slight fall in the number of students which always caused financial difficulty.

It was toward the end of 1935 that the Old Students' Benevolent Fund was formed. The previous year's Old Students' Conference on "Horticulture for Women" was addressed by M. Agar, B. Beakbane, W. Brenchley, B. Colvin, L. Joshua and M. Mason, and many others, names of considerable importance and achievement.

An exciting experience for some of the students came when they participated in the Lord Mayor's Show. The new Lord Mayor of London in 1935 was Sir Percy Vincent, and being a farmer himself, his theme was "Rural Life and Industries in Britain". Thirty students took part; there were tableaux on a decorated lorry showing women as gardeners or farmers; and some walked alongside carrying banners or tools. The Lord Mayor presented the prizes at Speech Day in 1936.

It was in 1936 that electric light and power was put in to the Saloon, laboratories, farm, dairy and poultry departments — it was very late in coming to rural north Kent.

In 1937 plans were under way to mark the Coronation of King George VI. The formal mark was made by the planting of two *Piceas* by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, who came down to Sports Day; and the students participated in village festivities.

Lady Falmouth resigned as Chairman of Governors, but became Swanley's first President, and continued to attend Board meetings; she had been a Governor



THE STAFF 1934 - 1935

Newman; Alcock; Curling; Batten; Anderson; Schimmer; Earls; Huntbach; Oakes; Wingell; Sutherland; Hess; Shewell-Cooper; H. Smith; Page; Campbell; Given; FitzGerald; Dickens; Jameson; Dr. Barratt; Holmes; Craig; Stewart.

for 30 years, having been introduced to Swanley by Miss Cons. She was succeeded by Sir William Lobjoit, who was only to serve for 2 years. There was much coming and going of staff at about this time; Miss Page was appointed Garden Steward, B. Beakbane was coming from East Malling Research Station to lecture once weekly on Orchard Fruit Growing in place of Shewell Cooper. Miss Hampshire came to replace Miss Newman to prepare show exhibits and instruct in floral decoration; B. Colvin came to lecture on "Garden making and appreciation". The sad news of the year was the untimely death of Miss Jameson, who had been a member of staff, Vice Principal and Secretary, for 9 years. In the spring term alone, the staff gave 19 lectures and demonstrations outside College.

Of eight Wye students who were at Swanley to take part of their course on Decorative horticulture it was reported: "They work seriously and their conduct is satisfactory in every way".

1938 was a year of consolidation at College, darkened only by the events leading up to the European Crisis in October. Dr. Barratt sought advice from the Ministry of Agriculture, and did the only possible thing; College carried on. There were fewer foreign students, but even so there were 2 Czechs, 1 Dane, 2 Dutch, 1 Swiss, 1 Austrian, 3 German Jewesses and 1 Rumanian! The Governors were setting up a sub-Committee to make arrangements for 1939, Swanley's Jubilee Year. Lord Northbourne became Chairman of Governing Body and he and Lady Northbourne were at Speech Day.

1939, the 50th Anniversary of the foundation by Arthur Harper Bond,opened with optimism for the nation and a year of thankfulness and celebration for Swanley. The Jubilee celebrations could not have come at a more fortuitous time. Those who were lucky enough to participate must recall that summer with great thankfulness and affection. The Jubilee Luncheon was held at the Horticultural Hall, Greycoat Street on January 26th 1939 and among the 280 who attended were some very illustrious names from the world of horticulture and education, as well as seven men students from the early days. It was beautifully described as a happy and momentous gathering, bringing together the experience, interests and friendships of people of all ages bridging 50 years of loyalty to Swanley.

Speech Day at the end of July that year was combined with Old Students' week-end; the Prizes were presented by Lord Aberconway, President of the R.H.S. and it was estimated that there were over 400 people present, and many members of the Guild stayed on until Sunday. Particularly interesting was the show of old students' work for all the week-end visitors to see; it fell into many categories — Landscape and Design, Literature and Journalism, Research Work, Education, Flowers and Vegetables; Produce; Photographs of Gardens and Travels; Home-making, and Models illustrating the development of College.



The Iris Border
June 1936



New Dairy at Swanley College
1935

As a result of the Old Students' Jubilee Appeal they were able to present to College the Alpine House and a new hard tennis court; gifts from past and present students.

As well as these celebrations of affectionate thanksgiving so well supported, others were not forgotten; the students raised £73 on Sports Day and in other ways, for the College Refugee Fund, which was to be put towards training a refugee from Europe.

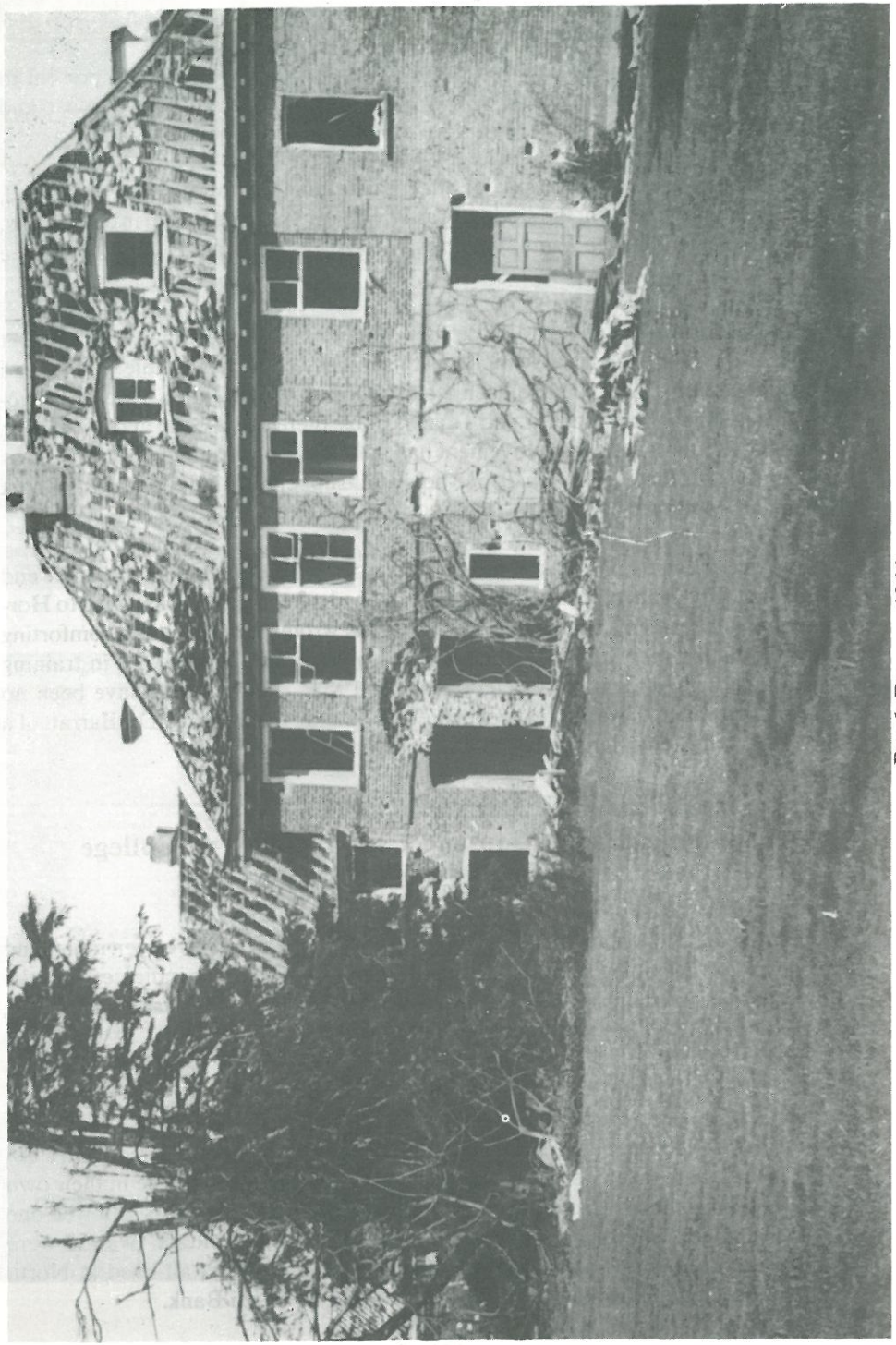
The College Club chose to go to the Centenary Royal Agricultural Show at Windsor for their expedition, which must itself have been memorable. The rest of the student clubs seem to have been well supported, Folk Dance, Choral; a successful season for both Hockey and Tennis Clubs; there was a Gym and Swimming Club; the Student Christian Movement had got off to a very active start; there was great interest in the Discussion Group held after supper on Sundays, and the Cadet Company continued to thrive!

No one knew it then but the "fitting milestone" (of the Jubilee) marking the end of the first fifty years of the College, really opened a fresh period of service to Horticulture; and women's education. As Dr. Barratt wrote "it remains as a comforting and stimulating recollection". She went on to hope that "many now in training might take part in Centenary celebrations in 1989". There could have been no more fitting end to these 50 years of achievement than the award to Dr. Barratt of a Silver Veitch Memorial Medal "for her service to Horticulture".

THE SECOND WORLD WAR
Bombing, Evacuation and Union with Wye College
1939-1945

During the early years of the second world war there must have been more land put down to vegetables at Swanley than hitherto, but memory indicates that the flower garden and plant houses were full of delights and enjoyment, and the packing shed filled daily with superb chrysanthemums.

Everyone was getting used to war-time black-out and North Bank was in use, with Miss Gibson living there and Miss Knight as housemistress. It isn't until one reads reports that one realized that recreational activities were much reduced. First Aid Classes were taken very seriously, and students spent more time in their own houses, making their own entertainment. Groups of Land Army girls followed one another in quick succession, and brought much interesting contact; over 50 were trained in less than six months. In 1940 the W.L.A. recruits all lived at North Bank, those students who had been there moving to South Bank.



Bomb Damage 1944

The winter meetings of the S.O.S.G. were cancelled for two years running, as it was considered unwise to hold social gatherings in London.

The winter vacation of 1939-40 was extended to seven weeks, and characterized by very cold weather, O° F being recorded on three nights at Swanley in late January; the spring term must have been short.

The summer term of 1940 opened on May 2nd, but by June 25th most of the staff and all the students were evacuees at the Midland Agricultural College at Sutton Bonington. After moving everything, in what must have been incredibly difficult circumstances, and getting a warm welcome at M.A.C., Swanley staff and students settled down to work.

There had been no horticultural training at Sutton Bonington at that time although there was a flower garden at "the Elms" and formal beds adjacent to the Main Building and Residential Hostels. Swanley set out to make a garden of all this, and to establish and plant a 2½ acre market garden, and a 10 acre orchard, planned at East Malling Research Station by Beryl Beakbane, and with the planting supervised by Mr. Garner. Most of the decorative and private garden teaching was done at Kingston Hall, Lord Belper's stately home, the first and only time that some of us were able to glimpse such gracious living. The head gardener, Mr. Rowe, was a successor, of a sort, to the earlier Mr. Dyson. He was always immaculately turned out and had started his career in the gardens at Sandringham. He was a superb teacher. 40 years later, the writer remembers more about the growing of peaches, melons, grapes and top fruits for showing at Shrewsbury and Southport, than of many more modern practices.

The M.A.C. had excellent Poultry, Agricultural and Dairy Departments, and the mixture of studies, (and sexes) must have been stimulating, although many young people at that time longed to be nearer the action in war-time Britain.

At Swanley a skeleton staff was keeping things going, and there was little damage, although there was much enemy activity. College and Buildings had been requisitioned for the Civil Defence Mobile Reserve. Dr. Barratt must have been perpetually on the move, as the College office and accounts remained at Swanley with Miss Topper in charge, and Governing Body meetings were held in London or at Swanley. It was a special sadness that Miss Holmes died in November 1941.

War-time life for students at Sutton Bonington was full of interest; some of us lived in rooms on the top floor of Kingston Hall for two terms; and a hard winter at the start of 1942 meant lovely late afternoon skating on the lake. An unforgettable visitor was Constance Spry, who came for a few days to instruct in floral decoration and florist's work.

About this time a great step forward had been made for there were twenty women working at Kew of whom a number were trained at Swanley.

The usual College activities were carred out with great enthusiasm, the staff even finding time to produce plays, and there was an N.D.H. refresher course for several very appreciative old students. Despite the total national commitment to winning the war the future was not forgotten. The Luxmoore Committee, which was to make recommendations for the future of agricultural and horticultural education, had visited the Midland Agricultural College, and it was expected that Dr. Barratt would soon be asked to give evidence to the Nairn Committee, on the training of teachers.

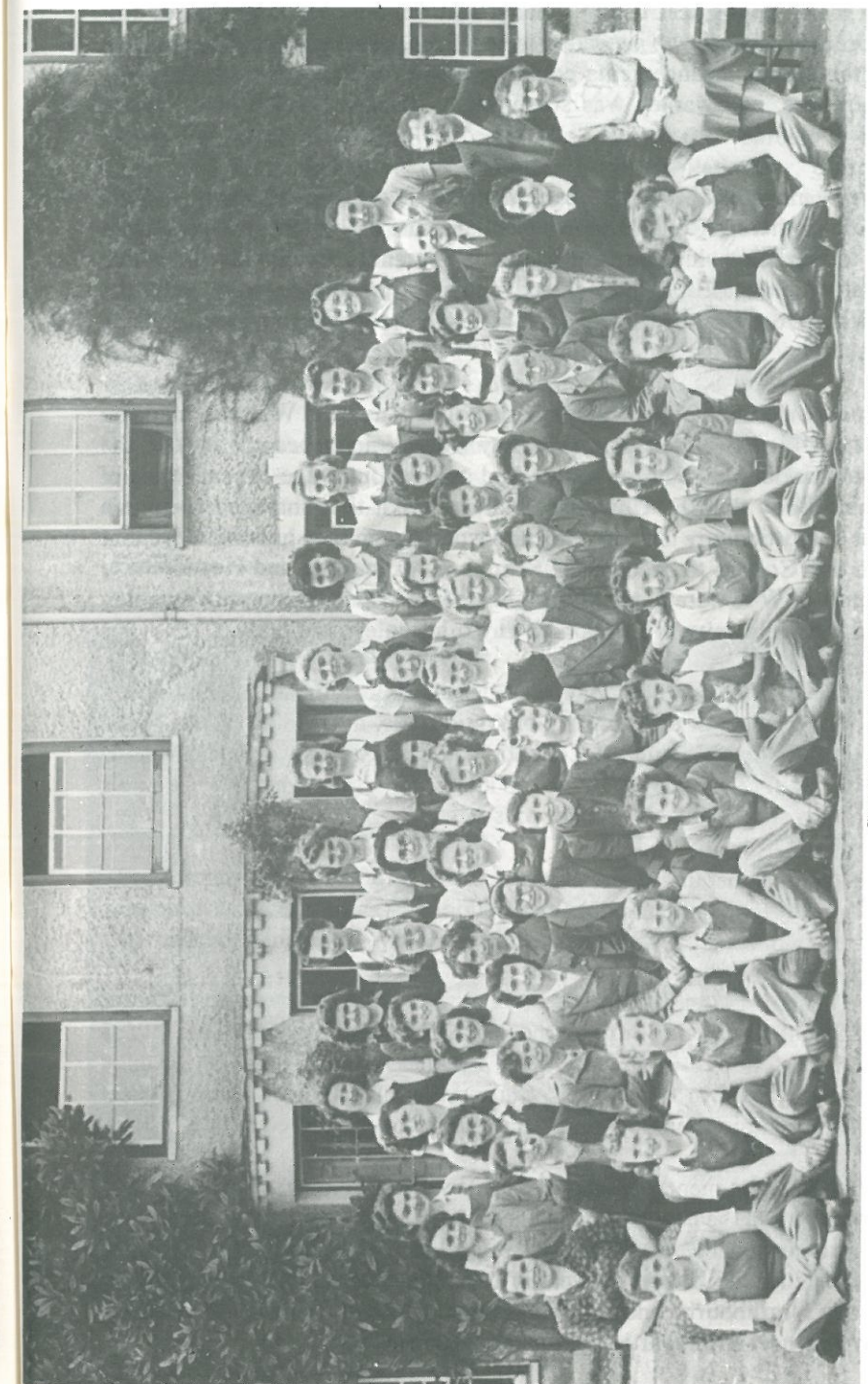
But in the administration of the two Colleges there were divergences, Sutton Bonington found they had less acccommodation to spare than expected, which would have limited the number of Swanley students, and there were differences of opinion as to the best length of the Swanley Diploma course. As a result the September session of 1942 started at Swanley again.

The May, 1942 edition of the Horticultural College Magazine was compelled to appear in battle dress; from that time onwards the paper ration allowed only two issues a year, of twelve pages only — which was unfortunate for this amateur historian.

As a student at the time one was not fully aware of the dedicated work of the staff in returning us to our proper home. Somehow, we were fed, worked and enjoyed ourselves immensely; studied and eventually passed our exams. The Magazine recalls that all the usual College activities continued, the Young Farmers Club and the Red Cross Detachment being particularly active.

Speech Day in 1943 was a specially memorable occasion and if there was wartime austerity the writer didn't realize it. Plans were in hand for replanting a collection of flowers and decorative plants to serve as a nucleus for our own, (and others), needs for post war planting; the examination results had been good and many former students were employed in good horticultural posts. Good quantities of apples and tomatoes, in particular, were available for marketing and packing experience: and the grounds were gradually returning to normal.

On the night of 1st-2nd March 1944 four bombs were dropped across the grounds. Dr. Smith recalls "The greatest damage was to the main College building... the large yew tree had taken much of the blast of the nearest bomb, but shutters and windows of the common room where most of the students were sheltering were blown in, and it was here that the casualties, one fatal, occurred." Helen Armstrong the Head Student was killed and in memory of her daughter, Mrs. Armstrong later presented the pews for the new Wye College chapel.



SWANLEY COLLEGE AT RIPLEY 1944

2nd Row: Staff who came to Wye.
Martin, Knight Schimmer, Reynolds, **Smith,** Topper, Barratt, **Page.**

Despite the appalling destruction, Gladys Martin, the cook, managed to produce a hot breakfast for all who needed it, by using the dairy facilities. The students were sent home until arrangements could be made for them to complete their courses elsewhere, as Swanley was so seriously damaged, much of it beyond repair.

Dr. Barratt moved swiftly to make temporary arrangements; some students went to Studley, others to Royal Holloway College, and the diploma and certificate candidates to the Hampshire Farm institute at Sparsholt. Eventually the whole College re-assembled at Ripley, to take advantage of the facilities offered by the R.H.S. at Wisley, and despite the tragedies of 1944, the spirit of staff and students was excellent.

The first consideration of the amalgamation of Swanley and Wye was made on 16th August 1944. It was felt then that they would jointly become part of the University of London. Lord Northbourne had pointed out at the June meeting of the Governing Body that the University indicated that they intended to have a Department of Horticulture for both men and women, and they had told Wye that they wished that College to become the School of Agriculture and Horticulture. The Governors of Wye were ready and willing to join in discussions with Swanley College and the University of London or any other interested body....

Had Swanley remained a private institution its position might have been influenced by the policy of the Ministry of Agriculture, and the proposals of the Luxmoore Report (on Agricultural Education). Since Swanley would not have been large enough for the colleges envisaged in that report it might have become a farm institute (in status as well as size, presumably).

It was agreed at this meeting between representatives of the Governing Bodies of Wye and Swanley that amalgamation as a School of Agriculture and Horticulture of the University of London would be the best step with, if possible, the identity of Swanley preserved in some way.

The first Swanley students (3rd and 2nd year Degree Courses) came up to Wye in October 1945, followed in January 1946 by the Diploma students. Swanley Diplomas were awarded in 1946 and 1947, and the Silver Salver for the highest aggregate of examination marks was also awarded for the last time in 1947.

The College is permanently commemorated by the building of Swanley Hall at Withersdane, a part of the new Wye College. In 1951 the new building was opened by H.R.H. Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone in the presence of the Earl of Athlone (Chancellor of London University), Dr. Kate Barratt, Sir John Russell, Lord and Lady Northbourne and many other distinguished friends of the College including Wye's new Principal Mr. Dunstan Skilbeck.

A wrought-iron gate in the Withersdane Garden was also presented by old students of the College.

A few members of the Swanley staff continued their careers at Wye; these included Frieda Schimmer as Lecturer in Plant Pathology, Mary Page as Lecturer in Decorative Horticulture, Margaret Smith as Lecturer in Chemistry and Eleanor Knight as Domestic Bursar.

So that, in some ways, is really the conclusion of the story. It is difficult to envisage what would have happened had things been different. Would we have been celebrating a centenary in 1989? It seems unlikely, for all the recommendations at long last, were for University status for Horticulture.

So many students have been outstandingly successful in such a wide variety of related careers that it will be many years before the traditions of Swanley finally fade away.



The Avenue

SOME SPECIAL PEOPLE

It is impossible to do justice to the many people who assisted Swanley by means of their benevolence, powers of persuasion and great ability to guide and lead College towards the peak it reached in the year of its Jubilee in 1939.

One of the most generous and devoted was Kathleen, Viscountess Falmouth. She became a member of the Governing Body in 1906 and Chairman of the Governors in 1919. She resigned from this position, where she had served graciously and effectively, in 1937 when she was made President of the College, remaining a Governor. She showed skill and enthusiasm in fund-raising almost beyond belief. She brought many influential and wealthy friends to College, and she herself financed countless projects, and gave many gifts in cash, which must have meant she was determined to keep the College, and everything in it, a going concern.

Miss Hannah Cohen became a member of the Governing Body in 1909. She was a gifted woman with a strong financial flair, and when the Governors appointed a Finance and General Purposes Committee in 1921 she was elected Chairman. She carried on for eighteen years, giving most generously of her expertise (and sometimes cash) until war-time conditions, making travelling difficult, compelled her to resign in 1939. She remained a Governor, and was present at the last meeting of the Governing Body in 1945; she died in 1946.

Lord Northbourne became Chairman of Governors in 1938; his wife was already on the Governing Body, and he succeeded Sir William Lobjoit. He had the interests of Swanley much at heart, confirming and assisting in the difficult decisions which had to be made during the years of the second world war. He was at Swanley for the Emergency meeting of Governors on March 4th 1944, just 48 hours after the bombing of College. Having been a Governor of the South Eastern Agricultural College at Wye for many years, he was able to give much good counsel when the amalgamation of the two Colleges took place in 1945.

Just as it is only possible to mention a few of the outstanding personalities who gave so much time and ability to Swanley, so must the many members of staff who contributed so greatly, be limited to two whose names will be recalled by almost all who were at Swanley at whatever time.

Miss Hilda C. Jameson was on the staff for nine years; her early education had been in music and book-keeping and accountancy. She came to College as the accountant, and to lecture in Book-keeping in 1929. She was a great friend of Swanley having its wide interests and aims much at heart. She became Secretary, and later on, Vice Principal of College. She joined whole-heartedly in the lighter side of life, without losing any of the respect of the students. She had a great gift as an actress and producer of plays, and she was greatly missed after her sad and untimely death for she was keenly interested in so many student activities.

Miss Marion G. Holmes was another pillar. Born on December 30th 1889 she entered College in 1907. She was both student and demonstrator between 1908-1912. Miss Barratt described her as "always accurate, thorough, and up to time". She went on to Imperial College, and graduated with a B.Sc. in Botany in 1915. After a period in Newcastle and at University College Cardiff she returned to Swanley in 1924 as Botany lecturer. She worked tirelessly for the Swanley Old Students Guild, compiling and filing and served it in several offices. In 1926 she was the anonymous donor of £1000 to the fund for a new Botany Laboratory which was completed in 1928, and she was one of the staff who worked so hard to evacuate Swanley to Sutton Bonington in 1940. She died in 1941.

It was a great misfortune that two influential members of staff died relatively young and suddenly. But of course the list of important people is endless. For the students of every generation it was those with whom they had daily contact who mattered most.

The academic and theoretical teaching was always marvellous, and great patience shown in preparing us for external and College examinations. We all owe a great deal to the thorough grounding in the practice of horticulture which was given by the men on the orchard and market garden staff, who were appointed because of their own practical skills, and had the ability to impart their knowledge to generations of young women.

SWANLEY OLD STUDENTS GUILD

The first mention of a Guild of old students was made in May 1903; there does ɔt appear to have been a committee, but for an annual subscription of 3/3d a mem-ɜr received a copy of the Magazine, twice yearly and by post. The distribution ɾrangements seem to have been made by the Editor, who was the enthusiastic R. Tabor. Meetings of old students were arranged on the day of the R.H.S. Temple ıow. These seem to have been just tea parties and were certainly important to old udents in 1903.

The Temple Show was the fore-runner of Chelsea and was held by the R.H.S. the gardens of the Inner Temple from 1888 until 1912, when the Royal ıternational Horticultural Exhibition was held in the Royal Hospital grounds. he students met in the earliest days at 116 Fleet Street for tea and chatter, the ıain purpose being to keep in touch with one another.

In 1906 the Horticultural College Magazine published a little paragraph: "It is lt by so many that the students of different years know little or nothing of each ɜher so it is proposed to hold a meeting at the social gathering on the second day of ıe Temple Flower Show to discuss the desirability of forming a Guild or Club of ast students". Probably Miss Wilkinson had a hand in this. At the meeting, ɜveral old students pointed out "that such a Guild had been in existence for years" ıd it was decided that the time had come to put it on a formal basis.

The Guild so formed was to have members and Hon. members; it was to be orked by a Secretary/Treasurer and a committee of two; and there would be no ıembership subcription to start with "then there can be no lapses". They met at ast twice a year, in London and they were welcomed at Swanley on Sports Day. ı 1911 they organized a Conference on "Nature Study and the Teacher" and the ıllowing year agreed that one meeting, in December, should take the form of Conference.

By 1913 it was decided to elect a Secretary who had time to be permanent ıther than to be annually elected, and to arrange for her to have an assistant ɜsident at College to deal with correspondence.

The Winter Conferences were always well reported, and were held at 6 Onslow ɾardens, S.W.3., at the house of Mrs. Moon, whose sister, Miss Kekewich, had ɜen an active secretary and vice principal of Swanley. In 1919 the Guild members ɛpressed themselves so appreciative of Mrs. Moon's hospitality they decided to ıke a permanent interest in the Islington Infant Welfare Centre to which she ɜvoted much time and money. After each conference they were able to give her a ım of money to help towards the annual Christmas party which was attended by ɔout 300 mothers and 450 babies.

In 1919 the Governing Body invited the Guild to elect one of their members to serve as a Governor, Miss K. Barratt was elected, and the following year a second representative was called for, and C. Cracknell was elected. In November 1922 the Guild had 400 members.

The link between members was always the Magazine. It was published from July 1900 until November 1947 (which was number 100) with six previous students' magazines ("Our Magazine", or 'The Horticultural College Record') from 1895-1898. It was a continual fund of interest, information and fascinating tales, it combined news of the activities of the College with those of former students in every aspect. The largest issue was probably that of May 1936 with 48 pages. Most important was the register of old students and continual up-dating of changes of address. The College administrative staff were always ready to help old students to find and fill posts, and a great deal of work was entailed in correspondence — from December to February in 1935 ninety letters were despatched on behalf of seventeen old students!

The old students were always generous towards any appeal from College. They were contributors to every Development Fund, they raised money towards re-stocking the College Farm after the Foot and Mouth disease outbreak of 1929, and many generous donations were received in 1944. In 1935 they started their own Benevolent Fund. It was intended for Guild members who were in need of special help in cases of temporary illness, initial cost of working uniforms, implements, tools, businesses, and perhaps education. Subsequently ill-health and old age were to have priority. Apart from special donations, there was to be an allocation from Guild Funds whenever possible.

Before the war the Guild had a Sports club, a tennis match was always played against students at the summer weekend, and College was challenged to hockey matches in 1930, '31 and '32.

The S.O.S.G. started a circulating library in October 1933 which enabled Guild members to keep in touch with recent research by sharing expensive Journals paid for by an annual subscription. It must have been hard work for a devoted secretary, as membership declined. But it was still in existence in 1947 and probably continued for many more years.

The Guild was united with The Agricola Club of Wye College in 1946.

POSTSCRIPT

After the amalgamation with Wye was completed, the Swanley property was sold to Kent County Council for £33,800. It became the Kent Horticultural Institute, so new generations of students were taught the same skills on the land and in the remaining buildings. About 60 students living in Southbank and Northbank, took a one year course in commercial horticulture. The acreage of cash crops was extended; the private gardens were greatly reduced and North Field and the French Garden Site became a fruit propagation nursery (which was what the Founder envisaged in 1889!). As the glasshouses were rebuilt they were used for the production of house plants. The Avenue, remained, although there were fewer lime trees.

In 1967 the Kent Horticultural Institute left Swanley for its permanent home at Hadlow. Seven acres around the site of the house was retained for a Day-Release and vocational course-centre for students taking City and Guild examinations.

A visitor now will find the N.W. Kent Teachers' Centre established in the single-storey Buildings and the gardens have become a Nature Trail; some of the trees and shrubs remain. Meadow Bank and Staff House (Hextable Farm House) are still homes. Buildings of all kinds have come much nearer; but it remains a quiet spot in a well-populated area.