

END OF A SILLY STORY

Lord Reith Writes to "The Listener"



Treasury Chambers,
Whitehall, S.W.I.
19th March, 1945.

Dear Editor,

Sir Harry Batterbee sent me a copy of your issue No. 296, February 23, 1945, in which I read with interest some notes about myself.

I am now going to do what I have been inclined to do a hundred times before — scotch the story about the Sunday School certificate in my office. For the first time I will give you the small fire which has produced so much smoke.

There was a framed certificate in my office. It was for regular attendance at classes. But it was not my attendance, nor was it Sunday School classes. It was a certificate of merit given to my father, Dr. George Reith, when a student in Aberdeen University, nearly a hundred years ago, by Dr. Clerk Maxwell, for regular attendance at his lectures. Knowing that Clerk Maxwell was one of the pioneers of wireless, you will understand why I had this certificate in my office at Broadcasting House. When I left the BBC I gave it to Sir Noel Ashbridge, the Chief Engineer, as a memento of our pioneering days.

If the circulation of *The Listener* is as it should be, that ought to finish this particular silly story.

With best wishes to you,

(Signed) J. C. W. REITH.

Advice on Health (No. 231)

A SCHOOL LUNCH SCHEME

(Written for "The Listener" by DR. MURIEL BELL, Nutritionist to the Department of Health)

AN interesting programme for providing a hot lunch for all the children who travel to school by bus is in operation at Oxford, North Canterbury, where the Home and School League (Parents, Teachers' Association) has organised 43 voluntary helpers for carrying out the scheme. Only in one case is payment made—£2 per week to a man who does the lifting of the heavy boilers, carts water, and does the fire.

Each day four women act as cooks, taking turn in a regular rotation, going from 9 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. They have a turn once a fortnight; they go on the same day each time, and therefore know what they have to cook. Some women milk eight cows before they go; some travel in with the children in the school bus, some cycle six miles and for those who use their cars a petrol licence has been obtained. The scheme is in operation only during the winter because once the lambs arrive women as well as men on the farms can spare not an hour away.

The buying is left in the hands of one person. The school garden provides some of the vegetables. Circulars are sent out asking what vegetables and eggs the parents can send in; these are collected as they are needed and when that source is exhausted further stores are bought. The pupils, some of whom in the winter time leave and return home in the dark, are charged 4d per head if there are three or more in the family, 6d each if there are only one or two in the family.

The average number participating is 70. The collection of money, issue of lunch tickets, etc., is in the hands of the Headmaster and staff. One teacher is on playground duty and another teacher supervises in the Hot Lunch building daily. The waste is down to what will go on an enamel plate.

Community Efforts

The meal is prepared and served in an A. & P. Association Refreshment Room near the school. The coal range was put in by the Home Guard. The lighting, water, and cooking facilities are inconvenient. All the pots and pans are borrowed; it is easy to imagine that few of them would be large enough to save space on the stove. The difficulty about water was solved by borrowing three 60-foot hoses, coupling them up, and filling the tank at the A. & P. building from a school tap.

This particular community has a tradition for making concerted efforts; for instance, they have recently grown community potatoes, making funds for charitable purposes. One man lends the land, all who can sow and dig and sort.

The district is very keen, because, instead of the children taking home their cut sandwiches for the Iowls, they eat their hot meal and then go home ravenous!

The lunch is run with a view to social education as well as to feeding their bodies. The children say grace together. They are taught to have good table manners.

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No. 11

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Fig. 1



Fig. 2



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