



NEWSLETTER

No. 114

November 1970

Die Burschenherrlichkeit

You are right in suggesting that since these words in the title are so funny and long, they can only be German. The attempt to translate these words, which are the beginning of a famous students' song, is a hopeless venture. I will try, therefore, in this report to give you a slight impression of the old and still young "Burschenherrlichkeit", by describing the students' life at a German University and especially the life in a German "Burschenschaft". Sometimes you may get no impression at all, which may be caused partly by my clumsy English or partly by the impossibility of translating special words accurately.

One of the most famous ancient university towns in Germany, as e.g. Heidelberg, Tübingen, Marburg, Jena, Halle, etc., is Göttingen; famous not only because it is a historic town but also - and perhaps especially - because of the large numbers of scientific renown who studied at the "Alma Mater Gottingiensis". Göttingen, which is situated at the river Leine seventy miles south of Hannover, is first mentioned in history in the 10th century. In former times it once belonged to the Hanse, the political and commercial league of Germanic towns. In 1737 the Georg-August-Universität was founded. The University grew rapidly in the past centuries and today about 10,000 students are studying in the various faculties.

Walking through the narrow streets in the city one is impressed by the beauty of the ancient beamed houses and the many historical and venerable places.

Passing the house where Bismarck spent his time as a student, one comes to the rampart, which is now a dreamy promenade. In the breaks between the lectures the students have a rest on a shady bank to think about science and all the problems of the world. Since the foundation of the University the life of the town and its inhabitants was strongly influenced by the students. Göttingen without students is like London without Bobbies; one cannot imagine the one without the other. Nevertheless this comparison is not perfect, because one cannot claim that the students every time were intending to do what is right. The landladies of Göttingen could tell long stories about the students, (I would not dare to exclude myself), and their jokes from which they had to suffer.

Everybody who visited the "Höhere Schule" (High School) and passed at an age of about 19 years the "Abitur" (final High School examination) is entitled to go to a University. When he has made up his mind to climb the steep steps to the top of science he chooses a suitable University and becomes a student. The first thing he will do, after he has matriculated at the University, is to look for a proper students' "diggings" with a suitable landlady, according to the motto: the nicer her daughter, the better the landlady and the "diggings". The first weeks, or even months in his new period of life will be full of strange and confusing impressions. Sometimes he may get the impression - especially if he studies mathematics and physics - that he missed his lecture and unfortunately got into a lecture about ancient hieroglyphs or Chinese. But this will abate with time. In these first weeks he also will get many invitations of the different "Studentenverbindungen". (The translation may be students' societies or fraternities or something similar. The German "Brockhaus" or "Duden" which represents the respective "Oxford Dictionary" explains the word "Studentenverbindung" in the following way: traditional form of life in a students' community at Universities in the German speaking countries). He will participate in the various meetings such as for instance scientific or political discussion evenings, foundation-festivals, balls and last but not least "Kneipen", and many other events which will be mentioned and explained further down. ("Kneipe" is according to my dictionary a beer party, which is indeed a very bad translation, because a "Kneipe" has nothing at all to do with a party. The only part which is right is the word beer.)

In each university town in Germany there are many different kinds of "Studentenverbindungen" with different aims, history and social life. The first "Landsmannschaften" (Society of Compatriots) are dated back to the 17th century. From these the "Corps" developed, and after the 1813-1815 war the "Burschenschaften" arose, mainly with the political aim of uniting the German countries. Since I am a member of such a "Burschenschaft" I would like to

restrict my report to this special kind of "Studentenverbindung", otherwise I would have to write a book.

At each University there are again many different "Burschenschaften". All of them were united in 1874 in an organisation, which has been called since 1902 "Deutsche Burschenschaft". Each Burschenschaft has its own name as e.g. "Burschenschaft Hannovera, Burschenschaft Germania Jena, Burschenschaft Frankonia;" etc. and its typical colours. The members wear a special cap and a ribbon which both show the colours of this Burschenschaft. They are called by the French word "couleur".

If a student asks for membership in such a Burschenschaft he will become a provisional member for a special time of probation. After this time the members will decide about his admission at one of the weekly "Konvente", where all the internal and external affairs are discussed and if necessary decided on. Then he will be admitted to the Burschenschaft in a special ceremony and will become a member for life, unless he does offend badly against the constitution and the laws of the Burschenschaft. (Hereinafter to be referred to by the letter "B".) If he is expelled - which fortunately occurs very seldom - he cannot become a member of any other B., because all the other B. will be informed about his behaviour.

Every B. is represented by five officials, who are called "Chargierte" because they are in charge of the B. New ones are elected every semester by secret democratic elections. They are in order of grade :

1. The "Sprecher" (speaker), who represents the B. on all external and internal official events. He is the leader of all "Konvente" or other meetings and of official festivals (and there are quite a lot).
2. The leader of the "Burschenschaftlicher Abend". He arranges and leads the weekly meeting at which different themes about politics, political science, history, economy, philosophy, natural science, arts, etc. are discussed. Every member has to give sometimes a lecture on a topic of general interest, which he may choose by himself. Very often outstanding personages of the University or of public life are invited to give a lecture on their field with a subsequent discussion.
3. The "Schriftwart". He may be called the secretary of the B., because he is in charge of the whole correspondence and he has to take down the protocol of all "Konvente".
4. The "Fechtwart". His daily task is to teach the young members fencing. Every member has to fight a "Partie" against a member of

another B. at least once during his first four semesters. "Partie" means approximately a contest with sharp weapons in the presence of two seconds and one umpire. Nowadays this fight has nothing to do with the original duel. These contests are arranged by the "Fechtwart" of the different B. At a special day, the "Mensurtag", about 20 or 30 "Partien" are fought. The different opinions about the "Partie" and its educational value are split, therefore, one can't say in general that every member has to fight at least one "Partie", as mentioned above. The trend nowadays is to abolish the "Partie" as an obligation, and to leave it to the personal decision of individuals.

5. The "Fuxmajor". This strange name arises from the fact that young members - young with respect to the time of their membership - are called "Füxe". They are therefore the lowest grade in the order of precedence in a B. The function of the "Fuxmajor" is to teach and educate the young "Füxe" in several subjects as e.g. all round education, general knowledge, general history and special history of the B., rules of etiquette as well as good manners. After four semesters they have to pass a final examination held by the "Chargierte" and other members. If a "Fux" fails, he can repeat the examination some months later; if he fails again, he has to leave the B.

Assuming, as is usual, that he passes the examination, he will become a "Bursche". Both "Füxe" and "Burschen" constitute the so called "Aktive" (active members), because they have to participate in all meetings and special events i.e. to take part actively and form the life in the B. Again after about four semesters they will become "Inaktive". At this time usually they have to start preparing for their different examinations at the University. Therefore they only have to come for special and so called "high official" events. This, of course, does not mean that they don't come as often as before. When they finally pass their examinations at the University and by this bad fortune have to finish their students' life which they spent in "Burschenherrlichkeit" (which could mean the splendour and excellence of life as Bursche - "the golden time") they become "Alte Herren". (I am aware that "old gentlemen" is a very bad translation, but who can tell me a better one? "Old boy" could mean something similar.)

You may have got the impression after all this tiring stuff about laws, rules, grades and education, that it is rather a "dry" affair to be a member of a B., but I can assure you it can be very wet, too. Every semester each B.

issues a special internal newspaper reporting all the news and special events of the preceding semester and giving a survey of the future. One part is the program of the semester, which gives the dates of all the coming events and meetings.

In every semester there is at least an "Antrittskneipe" and an "Abschlusskneipe", i.e. a Kneipe at the beginning and the end of a semester. The "Kneipe", which is a very common institution, is lead by the "Sprecher" accompanied by two other "Chargierte". They wear on this occasion their "robes", whereas the other members wear their black suit and "couleur", sitting at a long table with beer mugs and the book of songs in front of them. (One has to wear "couleur" anyway being in the house of the B., where all these meetings take place.) During the first part of the "Kneipe" which is called the official one, the various invited guests are welcomed, the "Sprecher" delivers a speech, various students' songs are sung and many toasts are drunk. All these procedures take place according to special rules, which are called by the French word "comment". The "comment" itself is partly in Latin as e.g. "Silentium, bibite, corona, ex," etc. The beer mugs are filled up as soon as they unfortunately become empty (in order to "oil the voice"). In the second half of the "Kneipe", the unofficial one, life becomes more gay. The "Füxe" produce the sketch, which they prepared for the evening. Various people show their experience on the piano in trying to press the right key at the right time accompanied by the tremendous choir of oiled voices. One will learn that a piano plays also much better, if it gets some beer, too. Others will be condemned by the leader of the "Kneipe" who changes now from time to time, to deliver a scientific speech about an acute problem of general interest, as e.g. "The love-life of the May-bugs under special regard of the effect of the infra-red part of the moonlight during high solar activity". This may be of interest for biologists, physicists, psychologists and specialist in "solar-lunareal physics". These dissertations are mostly followed by lively discussions in order to clarify the remaining obscurities.

These kinds of "Kneipen" are also celebrated on other occasions as e.g. examinations or doctor degrees passed by a member, and of course as a part of the yearly foundation festival which lasts several days. To participate in the latter festival will be the aim of every member, especially if he is living in Germany, but even if he is, e.g. the German Ambassador in Australia or a member of the staff of Wernher von Braun in Huntsville, he will try to arrange his yearly visit to Germany at this time. Another opportunity to meet nearly all members and especially the "Consesemester", i.e. those who spent their students'

time together, is the annual "Weihnachtskneipe" (Christmas-Kneipe).

Another very favourite event - mainly for the younger members - is the annual "Faschingsfest", i.e. a usually three days lasting carnival festival during the German carnival time in February. Everybody tries to change his appearance and wears self-made or bought clothes and other utensils in order not to be recognized. The whole interior of the B. house is decorated completely according to the theme of the respective carnival festival. One really can get the impression to be, e.g. at the "slave market in Tangier", where dark spectacled sheiks are waiting to bid for navel-bare beauties for few drachmen, or in the "hell and the heaven" or "on the bottom of the sea" etc. etc. This festival and other dance evenings and balls are the only events at which members are allowed to invite their girl-friends to the house. All the other meetings, as well as the membership in a B. are only for men.

Continuing in the program of the semester, every Ascension Day there is the "Fuxentaufe in Witzenhausen". At this date the new "Füxe" are "baptized" in the well of the market-place of Witzenhausen, a small romantic village near Göttingen. This ceremony is a tremendous joke not only for the members of the B. but also for the citizens of Witzenhausen. The "Sprecher" delivers on this occasion a rather funny speech from the very top of the well to the citizens who crowd the market-place.

In summer there are usually some "Exbummel" (sprees) in the hilly surroundings of Göttingen. The final destination after a long and "dry" walk through the woods and forests is either a renowned students' pub or a place under the sky where one can enjoy a barbecue and a nice barrel of beer, which, of course, will have been brought there before by car.

In winter there are cosy evenings with a "fire-tongs-bowl" (punch), or a sleigh-ride by horses in the white Harz-mountains, or music evenings or very popular evenings playing ninepins in one of the pubs in Göttingen. There are lots of other events and reporting on them would fill at least some other "newsletters".

But I hope you will have got some impression about the "Burschenherrlichkeit" and the life in the German University town of Göttingen. Perhaps you may even be able to visualize life in a B., where one is educated to learn how to live in a community with its own democratic rules and where one can spend one's time as a student not only in widening horizons and educating one's own personality, but also enjoying this beautiful time of life and making friends for the rest of it.

I would like to finish my report about the Burschenschaft, which is inseparably connected for me with Göttingen, with a popular saying in Latin from a renowned Göttingen student of the past century; this summarizes all I have said rather shortly in one sentence : "In Gottinga est vita, extra Gottingam non est vita."

Rüdiger Rüter

The 3-Eyed Men's Yearly Outing

On Saturday the 5th of September, more knowledge was going to be printed on films and brains : the R.S.R.S. Camera Club had spotted, on a map, a small area of remarkable density of science, history and art : Greenwich.

From Westminster Pier to Greenwich Pier, whilst a group of cameramen was silently gliding with a slow uniform motion on the Thames, a motorised complement, with a fast jerky motion, was cutting its way in the warring stream of Londonian vehicles.

At 11 o'clock, Click! The photonic junction of the two groups was achieved, from the top of the Pier, by means of a camera overseeing waving hands stretching out of the Thames. Then, straight away, the 3-eyed men exchanged their floating boat for a dry boat : the Cutty Sark. Its historical richness is surprising. If you divide 2 shillings by the number of interesting items you have seen, you realize that it costs you nothing per item.

The old sailing boat held us one hour in her flanks. It is hard to believe. To put you in the picture (and without taking any picture!), it was the minimum time necessary to investigate her internal museum.

One hundred yards further on, the famous Gipsy Moth - was she relatively too short or too young? - did not retain our thoughts and cameras more than a few minutes and we directed ourselves towards a complete change.

The large sunny green space, the shadow of the trees, the hilly narrow lanes of Greenwich Park invited us to rest while the clock invited us to rush to the top of the hill that is the kingdom of time accuracy and cradle of the World's longitudes : Greenwich Observatory.

For time and optical purposes, an incredible amount of genius was applied during centuries to an incredible quantity of any shape of copper bits and blocks. I do not remember having seen a bit of plastic, even (obviously) in

the antique sets of furniture or in the 18th century astronomer's suits

The main fun was to ride a universally famous white line, the right foot in the West World and, to be politically right, the left one in the East World.

Downhill, the treasures of the Marine Museum were waiting for us. Half past two! So many panels and walls to see! And so little time! I was fancying to be a spider (with so many eyes!) But, unfortunately, for spiders the museum was only open at night!

Our party was a small one - therefore there was a very little chance to lose one of our members, except myself. Since the morning, I did not miss any of the chances. During random explorations, it is amazing the number of times you meet the same people - I faced the same faces several times at each of the 3 exhibitions and even, sometimes, the ones of the Camera Club! Paul Dickinson and Henry Rishbeth were taking advantage of such events to point out any French feature they could trace and that I might miss.

I think the best summing up of my feelings was gathered in the answering note which I left in the Teleprinter Room :

As "le Musee de l'Homme,
The "Marine Museum,
Did look to me.
As long on foot
As world on sea,
By sailing route.

According to my legs,
I will have by all means,
To look for the first aids
Or gird the World on dreams.

I have to stop, therefore,
And to cast the anchor,
Until the alarm clock
Choir, matching the cock,
Will synchronise
Bedrise - Sunrise

Pierre Neirinck

STAFF NEWS

Congratulations to :

Chris Boulton and Veronica Lovell on their engagement.

Welcome to :

P. C. Barber	S.O.
C. J. Gibbins	S.O.
P. R. Button	A.E.O.
D. King	A.E.O.
Miss J. Richardson	S.A.
R. T. Clough	C.O.
A. E. Dilly	Labourer
W. R. Guthrie	Labourer

Resignations

R. A. Marsh	A.E.O.
G. T. Bryant	Stores Supervisory Grade III
Mrs. A. Williams	Canteen Assistant P/T
E. E. Freeman	Skilled Labourer

Other Changes

C. R. Carter	Promoted from E.O. to S.E.O. on taking over command in Singapore
I. M. Greenan	S.E.O. Arrived U.K. from Singapore
J. E. Allnutt	S.S.O. Changed from Div. 6 to Div. 3
Miss L. Taylor	Sandwich Course Student. Changed from Div. 3 to Div. 2.
Mrs. E. M. Kershaw	Changed from Part-time Cleaner to Part-time Canteen Assistant

STATION NEWS

The Director and Mr. Lane will be attending the meeting of the international working group of C.C.I.R. Study Group 5 to be held at Nice from 30 November to 4 December. This working group, under Dr. Saxton's chairmanship, is part of advance preparations for the World Administrative Radio Conference which is to take place in Geneva in June 1971. Its purpose is to provide the most up-to-date advice on propagation data, over ground and through the troposphere, relevant to planning space communications systems, and it precedes a Joint Study Groups meeting at Geneva in February 1971 where the technical basis of the WARC will be prepared.

Mr. Dalziel, Dr. G. Thomas and Mr. P. Smith attended an ESRO data exchange meeting in Oslo on October 20th and 21st.

Mr. Dalziel attended a U.K.4 meeting in Washington on October 29th and 30th.

News of Former Staff

Staff will be pleased to learn that Professor E. D. R. Shearman of Birmingham University has been appointed a member of the S.R.C. Astronomy Space and Radio Board. Professor Shearman was a member of staff here for some fourteen years.

SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB

Wine Circle

The cheese and wine lunch will take place at 1 p.m. on December 21st, in the Cricket Pavilion. Members will be charged 1/-, non-members 2/6d, to cover the cost of the cheese. All wine served will be home brewed and any donations of wine will be very gratefully received. Tickets are on sale from committee members.

Bridge Club

Our second match this season, played at N.P.L. on 12 November, was lost by 65 IMP's to 40, a defeat which only became apparent in the last three hands played. These hands produced some of the highest scores of the evening and all three were adverse.

The next Club Evening will be held on Thursday 3rd December at 6 p.m., when all are welcome to come and play. The next match will be the following Thursday and revive the fixtures against I.C.I., the initial match being at R.S.R.S.

Robert Pratt

Christmas Decorations

Decorations are being made in the Cricket Pavilion every lunch-time. Help with this would be much appreciated.

Christmas Carroll?

Christmas comes but once a year
The bar is stacking up with beer
And Madam Chairman's frown grows deep
Probably through lack of sleep!

Her workers are; committee members all
Preparing for our annual ball.
A party is more like, me thinks
With lots of fun and cheaper drinks!

But call it what you will or won't
This is what you must, and don't
Forget to buy from any of these,
Tickets in ones or twos (or threes?).

Seriously though you must come and see,
And not miss all the revelry
The Christmas Dance is eight and six
Not including the stuff that makes you hicks (ooh)
And not much like the P.S. sent
From P.C. who seems on no fun is bent.

A committee member

P.S. Come to the Christmas Dance and see
U.K.4 and George Mark III
If you work upon the Station
Come and join in our celebration.

Tickets on sale from

Kathy Shand
Yvonne Dias
Liz Zbikowska
Ros Ford
Doreen Baldwin
Lena Thomas
Jock Gourlay
John Murphy
Pete Smith

"Bonfire 70"

The conspirators had been at work for weeks, collecting material for what seemed some devilish plot. Trees had been crashing down in the park and many noises had been heard behind bushes during the lunch-hours. Then they appeared, from the woods, bearing their trophies which were piled high in the field, outside the Vehicle Store, and we realised that November 5th must be approaching. That typically English tradition of celebrating the failure of Guy Fawkes and his cronies in blowing-up the Government. The cynics might say that it's a pity they failed, but the wiser amongst us would counter that had they succeeded we would have nothing to call that brown fruity liquid - "le sauce de haute qualité qui est un melange des fruits orietaux, etc. ...".

The Bonfire was ready then, and so were a goodly supply of fireworks - despite the fact that Niagra Falls had got somewhat confused having been taken unceremoniously out of its box and dumped in a jumbled heap on the floor! The children, with the bigger ones, their parents, had arrived (also the less privileged ones without parents who were invited, from Homes nearby, by the Sports and Social Club).

I passed two Guys in a barrow :

Guy 1. "I feel like getting lit-up tonight".

Guy 2. "Not me old-boy, I'm going out with an old flame".

The torches were lit and the Bonfire roared into life, making a spectacular display. Then the fireworks, with the whizzing rocket on a string making the biggest impression - apart from the one that was aimed just above the heads of the crowd. Someone trying a little conspiracy of his own?

It was all over too soon, but we had the hot-dogs and coffee to prepare too in the Vehicle Store and the usual renewal of old acquaintances who one probably only sees each year on this occasion. The bar was also open in the Old Building where a Social get-together between Guys and Dolls went on until closing-time. In all a very pleasant evening and greatly enjoyed by the majority of the children (5-50!) whom I spoke to afterwards. Our thanks to the faithful few whose efforts made it possible.

One hears a lot these days about the possibility of banning fireworks for general sale, and perhaps this would not be a bad thing when one considers the numbers of accidents involving children. However, if they are banned one hopes that community efforts like ours will still be given licence so that we can enjoy the R.S.R.S. Bonfire for many years to come.

John Cathrew

LETTER TO THE OUTSTATIONS

Dear Colleagues

The animal kingdom is, as you recollect, never far removed from us here. Its representatives are, for the most part, bovine, with the occasional rabbit or sheep calling on behalf of minority interests.

The previous few weeks have seen a difference, the silver swan, which living had no note, has seen fit to drop out from the Lohengrin image and, like many another, hit the road in response to hard times at home. The cupboard is bare - or rather the moat dry - a-begging it must go.

The decision made, the plan has been executed with professional skill. The bird, accompanied by a suitably beguiling and fluffy offspring, parades round the building accepting charity from all. It fills in the slack time by following Nebuchadnezzar's example; it eats grass, the very epitome of fallen majesty.

Wise enough not to degrade the noble image too much, all talking is delegated to the cygnet which cheeps continuously in the true begging cant. The mendicant pair succeed well enough, one supposes they would, for they doubtless apply the aristocratic precept that it doesn't really matter what you do so long as it has style and doesn't scare the horses.

Such high born indifference to the common opinion has its uses - it fills the gossip columns and gives employment to the artisan - such as

Yours sincerely

The Editor

November 1970

List of Reprints

- H. Rishbeth The Polar F Region
Reprinted from Polar Ionosphere and Magnetospheric
Processes, pages 175-192
- D. L. Croom and Solar activity at $\lambda = 15.8$ mm (19 GHz) during the
R. J. Powell period 27 October - 4 November 1968 and its relation
to proton events
Solar Physics 1970, 14, 221-225
- P. G. Davies and Statistics of tropospheric attenuation at 19 GHz from
J. A. Lane observations of solar noise
Electronics Letters 1970, 6, 522
- P. A. Bradley The focusing of radio waves reflected from the ionosphere
at low angles of elevation
Electronic Letters 1970, 6, 457