Semi-verbatim report of the Headmster's speech:

I suppose no higher tribute could be paid to the Minister of Education than that he had made himself at home in the schools. All of us are well aware that he has done so.
If I put first the question of human relationships,- boys at home and school, it is because they hold first place.
When the shadow school came back from evacuation and joined up with the school returning from evacuation after the war the 200 boys rapidly increased in numbers to about 500. This necessarily involved the problem of human relationships, the problem of the unbalanced school. There was a weight of numbers at the bottom. There was the problem of the diution of standards. A school is not a machine. The raw material in a machine is not assimilated. But the human material must be absorbed into a living fraternity. There is the problem of instilling a sense of community, a growing sense of responsibility and self-direc ion and self discipline.
The degree to which the problems have been solved is in part due to the school's distinctive organisation,- the Tutor system. This system, worked out years ago was noted as it spread to other schools by the Board of Education in 1937 and by the Spens report in 1938, in which its adoption in all secondary schools was recommended. The school is divided into permanent families. The tutor set room becomes the permanent habitation in the school. As much of the corporate life of the school as possible is conducted in Tutor sets. We even sort special permission from the Ministry of Education to call the roll in tutor sets. The boy seeks knowledge in various parts of the building. Knowledge is not brought round on a conveyor belt. The Tutor Group is the whole school in microcosm, with boys of ages ranging from 11-18, promoting right relationships between younger and older boys, and getting rid of the anti-social relationship which exists in the older schools.
The system also promotes right relationships between teachers and parents. The Parents association is a corollary of the system. The set remains small, and is a satisfactory internal social organisation with which to meet the proposed big schools of the London Plan. It is objected that the Headmaster cannot know each individual boy. The L.C.C. says that at least the boy knows the Headmaster. We have a different answer; we say that there may be members of the staff nicer to know that the Headmaster. As Shakespear said in Cleopatra: Age could not wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety.
As the school grows, we have been able to afford greater variety. We had hoped to give greater access to workshops and to the variety of media of craftsmanship. It was hoped that when the building branch was made an administrative branch of Wandsworth school, we could have arranged this in advance of the general plan. Unfortunatel , the Merton Road school is under sentence of banishment from the vicinity.

We have however been able to revive the teaching of biology throughout the school as we had before the war, and also to reinstitute one of our most successful sides, the Sixth Economics, dealing with political and economic studies. Some of our most brilliant boys have in the past come from this side, as for example, a President of Campbridge University Union.

It falls to the Headmaster to explain away examination results, but this is not difficult in our case: the school is like and inverted funnel, the senior forms form the narrow neck. During the last few years the number of boys entered for examinations has risen steadily.

In 1945 we sent in 17 for the School Certificate
46 27
47 29
1948 35

and next year we hope to send in 60. The candidates have been of very mixed education and history.

It is pertinent to ask if an examination should test the ability of the boys, or of the staff to get them through examinations. We can be too complacent about sending boys into the world with a certificate which exaggerates his real ability.

I glance forward with approbation to the recommendations of the Report on the new school examination. It allows a broader basis of wider studies up the school with unfettered choice of three or four special studies. There will be greater scope for aesthetic and practical ability.
I am not against the age limit. It seemes to me preposterous that a boy should be considered to have "done" his History or Geography by the age of 15.

One of the characteristics which distinguish the English Grammer schools is the Out-of-school activities. This is a misnomer. The school subjects gain by being carried into the sphere of self-direction. The grammar schools perhaps fail in not carrying into the classroom the method of the the out-of school activity. With this in view a party of boys last summer paid a visit to a steel works at Corby, and studied the various problems involved in the growth of a new town. There were various aims. Not only was it intended to interest boys in Steel as a career, but to bring them into relationship with an industry on which the national life depends.
A fellow yorkshireman, Mr Squeers had a practical approach to education: win-win,d-e-r- der:winder, now go and clean them
It is the function of the school to open winders. The Parents Assocation brings the school into contact with life. At a recent meeting a discussion brought parents, teachers and industrialists together, who answered questions about youth and industry. Thanks are due to the Wandworth Rotary Club for supplying speakers.
We are having a series this year of speakers in the witness box, to study the class between school and life, in the shape of the Cinema , the B?B?C? and so on.

We value our Parents Association for its great help to the School. A recent instance is the help they are giving us in the reconstruction of our school library.
There is also cooperation between the Old Wandsworthians Lodge and the Parents Association. This year, a £looc of the £ 2ooo required has been raised for the War Memorial Appeal.
We value our relationship withthe B.B.C. through Mr Fenn, and with Unesco. Recently we were able to do a job, in company with other schools, sorting thousands of C.I.O. pictures for use in Europe as Educational material.

We look forward to kaing our contribution to Unesco, in its study of International Study in Schools.

I must pay tribute to the uncovenanted service given in out-of-school activities by the staff. It is such service as this which raises the school off the flat. There are influences which would get to work with a plane, to level all education.
Compressing his speech somewhat he continued:

"I must pay tribute to the part played by the Governing body of the school.
In the 22 years I have been a headmaster I have never given the Governing body so much trouble as last year.
Colonel Matthews entered the profession of governor without ~~any~~ any previous experience, but he has already lost his amateur status. Tere are no restrictive practices in the Governing Profession, and he has put in a great deal of extra work.

The Chairman in introducing the visitors said he had much pleasure in introducing
Her Worship the Mayor of Wandworth, Mrs Goodrich. She needs no introduction from me; she is energetic and ubiquitous, both at educational meeting and at a recruiting meeting at the town hall.
Mr and Mrs Hugh Linstead, M.P for the district has attended many meetings in the district and is Chairman of the Party Education Committee.
The right Honorable George Tomlinson, Minister of Education. He is well known by his reputation if not by sight. We are pleased he could leave his duties to spend an hour or two with us in our company. We are sorry that Mrs Tomlinson was not able to come, but I understand she is recovering inhealth.
Mrs Ryan, L.C.C. member for Putney, a keen worker for Education.
Mrs Blizzard, a governor of the school for many years, a vice-chairman and chairman of the board of governors. We hope she is now restored to health. Also to the permanent staff of officials: Mr Bollock, H.M.I., Mr Turner, from County Hall, Mr Pullen, Dor Chaplin, Divisional inspector. I appreciate ther advice on points of administrative procedure. Mr Howell, vicar of Wandsworth, the Town Clerk, Borough Treasurer and representatives of local colleges and schools.

Semi-verbatim report of Mr Tomlinson's Speech:

It is certainly a pleasure and a privilege to have the opportunity of presenting the prizes at your school. There was one snag, as the chairman has indicated, that there are times when we have to work at the House of Commons. Not work with a capital W, mind you, but our attendance is only marked if we are present at 10 o'clock.

But there is another reason why I must not waste too much time; I don't know whether you have the same programme as I have, but on mine it says "Coffee at 9.15."

I do not want to talk about Policy this evening. There will not be one word of controversy. I do not even want to comment on the Headmaster's dissertation; only want to say how it delighted me to see the way the Senior Prefect presented his report. I was interested to note that he mentioned a lively chess Club, which says much for his enthusiasm. It is something to be proud of. I once won a game of chess but I could never describe the game as lively.

I also liked the way the Chairman introduced me, saying that you all knew me by repute, even if you had not seen me. Now you have seen me, I will not comment except to say I rely on my reputation.

I want to talk to the boys; I do not mind if the elder folk listen, but it is not intended for them. I want to talk about the importance of little things.

Everyone nowadays is keen on doing big things, on being a star, and being in the centre of things. There is a danger of the importance of little things being forgotten.

I want to tell you a story about myself; Ten years ago I entered the House of Commons as a young man in a hurry. I wanted to do be doing things quick. I thought it would be well to sweep away many of the formalities.

One of these was the Speakers procession. Every morning during the war, and every afternoon now, at the same time, the Speakers procession enters in full robes, with the mace bearer and secretary, and the man who says the prayers. They are never late.

You might say to yourself as I said: We could cut all this out. When you have been there a bit, however, you begin torealise that this is the only place in the country where things do start to time. Mind you, all the members of parliament are not there, but at least the procession is always punctual. It emphasises the value of that little thing called punctuality. During the war there had to be a change of time, but in all the difference circumstances, with aeroplanes about and bombs falling they would not cut it out. The fact that the Speaker could always be relied upon to turn up did more for the morale of members perhaps than anything else.

Then there is another little thing: When a member of Parliament enters the House, he bows to the Speaker. Now I am not much good at bowing, and very soon my bow became a nod. I thought it was friendlier. By the way, I must congratulate the boys who came up for the prizes on the way they bowed. When I have told this

When we were boys at school there were too many in the class to read all together. So we had cards printed with reading pieces on. One of the stories was about a boy in Holland, walking along the dykes and heard a trickling sound, and saw water coming through. He put his fist into the hole, and remained there until they found him, practically asleep. But his action saved the countryside. It shows the importance of dealing with little things.

You may wonder how I remember this story so well. The fact is, I was the monitor and I used to give out the cards. I had the same card every week. That was the advantage of being a monitor.

I was interested to hear that one of your boys reached the final of the boxing championship, and that he was a lightweight. In the Olympic Games recently it was noticeable that each race was won by the individual who got off the mark on the pistol (mind you, they sometimes went before the pistol shot, but they were allowed to beat the pistol tice before they were disqualified.
In a boxing contest, one man was al little bit too heavy for the lightweight. So they shaved him, and still he was too heavy. So they sweated him, and finally when he was the right weight, they found that it was the wrong man. So I would say, make sure of the facts. Make sure you have the right man, and the right objective. Every little thing will help.
The little things you do outside the school are the things which people see. The Headmaster has said that you are rebuilding not only the name but the tradition of the school. What you do will make or marr the school name, and what you do will depend on your paying attention to the little things.

After the votes of thanks, the Minister said that perhaps they thought he had forgotten something. But he had left the best till last. A year or two ago, when he spoke at Speech Days, he had to ask most humbly whether they thought an extra holiday could be granted, and the Headmaster and Governors would go into a huddle, and hum and ha. But now, I no longer have to ask the Minister.
We have a word in Lancashire: when the manager of the Mill used to come round, people would say "He's boss.
Since I did not see anyone looking at his prize while I was talking I am going to grant you an extra day in addition to the days about which there is so much argument. I daresay the staff will be even more pleased than the boys.

Vote of thanks:
Mrs E.K.Goodrich J.P.?L.C.C. the Mayor of Wandsworth moving the vote of thanks to the Minister, said that
"we could all have felt honoured if he had come with a speech already prepared and typed out and had read it to him. We should have understood that he has thousands of schools to consider. Instead he has given us a speech which was fresh and vivacious, with many thoughtful and wise things to consider. I find it ver difficult to make people laugh at the numerous public functions I have to attend, but Mr Tomlinson has given us a dozen good laughs and every one has a meaning behind it.
He has given us the reason why the boys bowed when they received their prizes. They were bowing to someone who mattered.
Mr Tomlinson said in his speech that it was most important to be punctual, and I must be punctual. I was told that I was allowed three minutes. I believe I have already had my three minutes, but the time is not long enough to thank you for all you have done.

Mr Hugh Linstead M.P. seconding the vote of thanks said
It is a great pleasure for me to sit beside my political enemy, and I think I may be allowed to say, my personal friend, and to thank him for encouraging Wandsworth School.
I went to him on a social occasion when he was more friendly than usual, and thried to get him down to one of our Wandsworth Schools. I was quite prepared for him to refuse, but to my surprise he said: "I like to get down among the children as much as I can."
I am sure he cannot avoid passing on his influence to those with whom he comes in contact.
I once talked to the Speaker in the House of Commons. It was 4.0 o'clock in the afternoon during the war. Just as I did so, a noise started up like a pneumatic drill. He said to the man beside him: Verney, can't you stop that? Ralph Verney answered: No, it is the Anit-air-craft gun on the terrace.