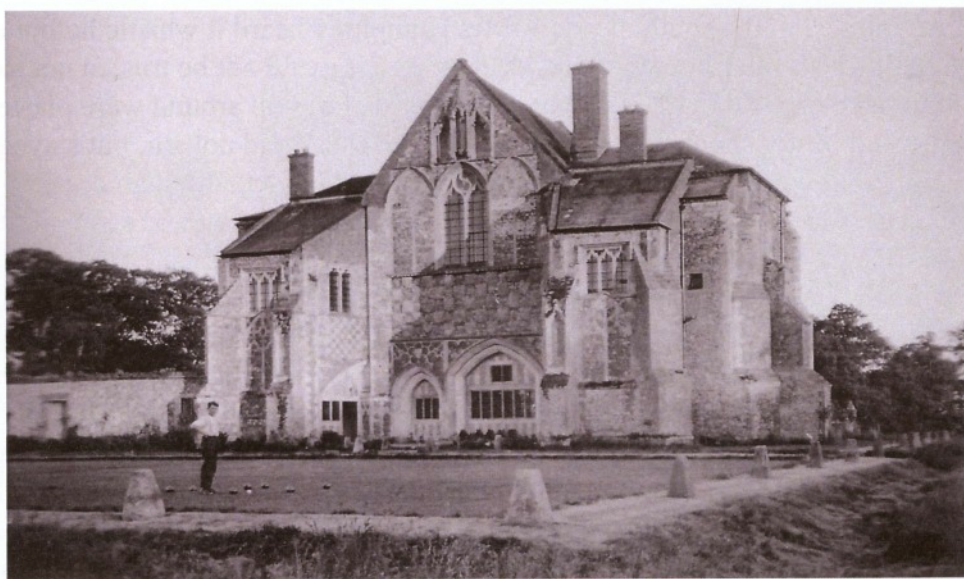


## DR MONTAGUE RENDALL - A PILGRIM FINDS REST

When he retired after 37 years as headmaster of Winchester College Dr Montague Rendall came to Butley in 1925 to live at the Priory, describing the old Gatehouse as 'a perfect place for the pilgrim to rest and reflect before the pilgrimage is over.' The peace was shattered only once, when a departing German bomber loosed its remaining bombs over Butley and one fell immediately behind the Gatehouse.

At Harrow and Cambridge he played football and his large frame and ungainly manner were suited to goalkeeping. Typical to his approach to games, which precluded any which required the training necessary to develop skill, is his account of a match between Cambridge University and Old Etonians. 'The game was memorable for a terrific encounter between the Etonian Macaulay and myself: he was a famous quarter-miler and got clean away, moving straight for the goal at heroic speed. I ran out to meet him, and we clashed with a jar and impact I can still feel after sixty years. We both fell in a heap, but the goal was saved.' Today he would have been sent off!

From 1927 to 1932 he served on the first Board of Governors of the newly formed British Broadcasting Corporation. However he was not in sympathy with popularisation. At Butley, he would not allow a wireless to be visible in his principle room, and it was concealed in a wall of the Gatehouse so thick that during the Second World War it served as an air-raid shelter. The sound emerged through a discreet aperture inscribed, in Greek, 'The Mouth of the Air'.



Dr Rendall playing bowls in a favourite hat. He diverted the road and created a bowling green in front of the Gatehouse.  
(Photos: Butley Research Group archive)

The Priory Gatehouse, which he purchased, had served as a vicarage and had been made cosier by the insertion of false ceilings and other interior alterations that hid the mediaeval workmanship. All these were removed by workmen who occupied the building for a whole year before Dr Rendall moved in and began the laying out of gardens, the building of terraces and archways and excavating the site of the priory. It was during this time that the monastic chronicle covering the years 1510 to 1535 was discovered, although it was not published until a short while after Rendall's death.

Will Humphrey and his wife lived adjacent to the Gatehouse in the Pavilion, built around 1790. Together they looked after this most impractical of men. Will was both gardener and chauffeur, the latter an essential job because Dr Rendall was an erratic driver. He nearly ran down a policeman directing traffic at Cross Corner, Woodbridge, at a time when vehicles used the Thoroughfare in both directions. Completely unabashed, Dr Rendall upbraided him with the words, 'You know, my man, you are standing in a very dangerous place!'