

# ST. DUNSTAN'S REVIEW

For Men and Women Blinded on War Service

No. 345—VOLUME XXXI [NEW SERIES]

DECEMBER, 1947

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[FREE TO ST. DUNSTAN'S MEN]

## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

OWING to the tapering down of the total number of St. Dunstaners in training, two houses in Brighton have closed down this year, namely, North Gate House at Rottingdean and Arundel Lodge. The Officers' Training House at Avenue Road, London, closes at the end of this year. There are still 125 men and women in training at Ovingdean and the main building is full, but it looks as if from now on those leaving will exceed the intake of new trainees. Probably Ovingdean will continue to be fairly full for the rest of 1948, and it is unlikely that it will come into use, even partially, as a holiday home, unless this should occur at the end of the year.

We must welcome the decline in numbers, for it means that we are just approaching the end of the main stream of war-blinded, although the experience of the first war showed that for many years there is likely to be a steady flow of late cases from delayed blindness.

The result of the turn of the tide is that many valuable members of the staff have been or will be leaving at the end of the year. I cannot mention all by name, but to everyone goes the best thanks of St. Dunstaners and St. Dunstan's. But I should like particularly to refer to Miss Davison and Miss Arning, who are leaving Ovingdean at the end of the year. Miss Davison joined us before the second war, and was responsible in the early days of Ovingdean for the Good Companions Scheme, which brought us so many valuable helpers from Brighton and the surrounding country. When war came, Miss Davison occupied some very important positions, including Matron of Longmynd and latterly as Senior Sister and Principal Assistant to Matron at Ovingdean. Miss Arning has had service with St. Dunstan's from 1940, and has held many important positions, including that of Dining Room Sister, both at Longmynd and Ovingdean.

I express on behalf of very many St. Dunstaners our sincere thanks to these ladies for their valuable service.

I should also like to refer to Miss Bridget Beckwith who, after service at Church Stretton, went to Italy as a St. Dunstan's V.A.D., and latterly has been Matron of the Officers' House; and to Mr. Walter Mellor, who was an orderly in various houses in the first war, and then became my trusted butler and valet for many years. When the second war came, he stood by me while we continued to live in London, until my house was bombed, and no one set a better example of a stoic disregard of the enemy's intentions than he. Just about the time my house became uninhabitable, the Officers' House at Church Stretton was becoming active, and he went there as steward, and contributed as much as any individual to the smooth running of this house, and its successor in London, as well as to the re-education and adjustment of almost all the blinded officers of the second war. I am glad to pay special tribute to Mr. Mellor for, in doing so, I am also placing on record our indebtedness to many orderlies who have given most valuable service to St. Dunstan's, and without whose help our organisation could not have been carried on.

### Three St. Dunstan's Clergy

By a strange coincidence, three St. Dunstaners are in the religious news this month. Canon Speight, who contributed a very interesting article in a recent issue on his twenty-eight years' experience in India, first as a layman and then as an ordained missionary, has been appointed to the living of Stockton-on-Tees, and will be inducted there by the Bishop of Worcester, Dr. W. W. Cash, on December 12th. It is interesting to recall here that the Viceroy awarded Canon Speight the Kaiser-i-Hind Medal (silver) in January, 1942, for his services at Palamcottah.

The Rev. Dennis Pettit, who was ordained in June, 1943, and has been curate at St. Luke's, Duston, near Northampton, has been offered and has accepted the living of Spratton, Northampton, and will be inducted on December 6th.

And I now learn from the Rev. G. L. Treglown, M.B.E., who was blinded and lost a hand during the recent war, that he has accepted an invitation to act as Minister to the Crosskeys Circuit of the Methodist Church, Monmouthshire, in 1948.

Three notable steps in the lives of three of our number who have made the Church their vocation.

St. Dunstaners will, I know, join me in offering congratulations and good wishes.

The first St. Dunstaner in Holy Orders was the Rev. Harold Gibb, who was blinded serving in the first war as Chaplain to the 4th Dragoon Guards, and continued his vocation as Vicar of Sherborne, Warwickshire, until 1935, when ill-health caused his retirement. He died in 1941. Then followed the Rev. Andrew Nugee, who read for Holy Orders just after the first war, and, after being a curate and priest in various parishes, came to St. Dunstan's as Padre during the years at Church Stretton, and at the end of hostilities became Vicar of Crowthorne, Berks.

Another was the Rev. C. M. Rogerson, one-time Vicar of All Saints, Pendleton-in-Walley, near Clitheroe, and now in Australia.

To complete the list, there is a student at present at Queen's College, Cambridge, namely, Michael Norman, who was blinded in France in 1944.

### Military Medallists

During the recent war, the Government decided to make payments to winners of Military Medals. The payment was £20 down in normal cases, but where a Disability or Long Service Pension was in issue then 6d. a day was added to the pension, instead of the lump sum payment of £20. These payments were made in respect of Military Medals won in the second world war, and the concession was not extended to Military Medallists of the first world war.

Many of us in the House of Commons raised this point with Ministers of the last and the present Government, but we have been told that the administrative difficulties of finding all the men of the first world war is too great.

Here is a case where a voluntary agency can do something which the Government finds too difficult, and I am glad to report that St. Dunstan's has decided to make the payment of 6d. a day as from December 1st of this year (1947) to all surviving St. Dunstaners who won a Military Medal in the first world war, or, should there be such a case, between the two wars. If ever the Government takes this payment over, of course St. Dunstan's payment will stop. I am afraid no payment can be made for the years that have passed, but I hope Military Medallists will look upon this as a pleasant surprise, starting just before Christmas, and that all other St. Dunstaners will wish them luck, and will feel that this action is typical of St. Dunstan's thoughtful attitude in relatively small, as well as, I hope, in great matters.

### A Happy Christmas

My wife and I wish a Happy Christmas and good luck in the New Year to St. Dunstaners and their friends throughout the world.

IAN FRASER.

### St. Dunstaners' Gift to Princess Elizabeth

Princess Elizabeth has accepted a wedding present from St. Dunstan's trainees at the Training Centre, Ovingdean.

It is a table electric standard lamp, made by a trainee in the plastic department, and is of polished plastic material with the initial "E" boldly forming the central support. The letter is mounted on a solid plastic base, and the shade and the flex are also plastic.

The gift is displayed with the other wedding presents at St. James's Palace.

Sir Ian Fraser has received the following letter from Her Royal Highness:

BUCKINGHAM PALACE.

15th November, 1947.

DEAR SIR IAN,

I am really pleased with the Standard Lamp which has been made by a blinded ex-serviceman at St. Dunstan's, and given me by the men and women of St. Dunstan's. The lamp itself, with its stem so cleverly made in the form of an "E" is something which I greatly admire, and shall be glad to have in my house; but I am, if possible, even more pleased by the loyalty, affection, and goodwill which I know that this kind present represents.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) ELIZABETH.

This letter was photographed and a photostat copy sent to each St. Dunstan's establishment, so that the Princess's thanks reached all St. Dunstaners who were under St. Dunstan's roof on the morning of the wedding.

### Sir Arthur Pearson Memorial Service

A Memorial Service to the late Sir Arthur Pearson, Founder of St. Dunstan's, was held at St. Dunstan's Chapel, Ovingdean on the morning of Sunday, December 7th. Sir Neville Pearson, Bt., read the Lesson.

On December 9th, the anniversary of Sir Arthur's death, Lady (Arthur) Pearson, accompanied by Sir Ian Fraser, visited the grave of Sir Arthur at Hampstead Cemetery, where Lady (Arthur) Pearson placed her personal wreath and Sir Ian laid a wreath bearing the inscription "In affectionate remembrance from St. Dunstaners throughout the world, 1914-1918, 1939-1945."

### A Rifle Range at Ovingdean

On November 27th, Sir Ian Fraser opened a rifle range at St. Dunstan's, Ovingdean, by firing the first two shots.

The rifle range is a result of experiments carried out by Mr. P. B. Nye, St. Dunstan's chief research engineer, at the suggestion of the Commandant, Air Commodore G. Bentley Dacre.

The rifle used is of standard pattern, firing normal .22 ammunition, designated for all miniature rifle ranges. "Sighting" the bull is carried out electronically, and the rifleman judges his aim by the note heard, either over a loudspeaker or by telephone. When the rifle is accurately sighted, no sound is heard.

The range has been inspected by the Brighton police authorities, and a certificate of safety has been issued. It now awaits the official permission of the War Office.

Sir Ian Fraser was accompanied at the opening by Lieut.-Col. Sir Lionel Fletcher, chairman of the National Small Bore Rifle Association, and vice-chairman of the N.R.A., who, blindfold, registered the first bull.

### Placements

G. Beard, Walton-on-Thames, as a tobacconist shop-keeper; John Cowan, Leicester, as a tobacconist shop-keeper; B. Inman, Elstree, with Messrs. Dufay-Chromes, Ltd., on spool-winding; W. Miller, as telephone operator with the City of Leeds Electricity Department.

### Thirty Years Ago

From the "St. Dunstan's Review," December, 1947:

"If any of you are asked what you would like for a Christmas present, suggest a clock with a good sensible tick. You will find, as I do, that a clock is a great help in enabling one to locate one's position in a room, and to move about it with ease and accuracy. In the winter time, the crackle of the fire is often a useful guide, but the fire does not always crackle, neither is it there all the year round. The ticking clock is a good and safe guide, and by following its unostentatious signalling, you will often find yourself moving about a room in a way which occasions surprise to people who do not tumble to the help given by the little friend on the mantelpiece."

—SIR ARTHUR PEARSON,  
in "Notes by the Chief."

### Letters to the Editor

To the Editor, "St. Dunstan's Review"

DEAR SIR,—There is a rumour abroad in the pubs and quiet lounges that the Appeals Department is no more; in fact, that it never was. Why otherwise, goes the argument, was the President so hush-hush about it in this month's REVIEW? It is suggested that a small tooth-comb was used to find out what was what in St. Dunstan's, and the result showed no evidence of such a department, that Miss Marshall, in fact, is only the fairy godmother of an old tale, and is, in any case, too good to be true. I should greatly appreciate your opinion on this matter. Though perhaps the truth is that the Spirit of St. Dunstan's is above such mundane things as bawbees and, like the real ladies of old, believed to exist without such crude nourishment.

Yours sincerely,

ROBERT YOUNG.

Dorking, Surrey.

### The President's Reply

10th December, 1947.

To the Editor, "St. Dunstan's Review"

DEAR SIR,—There are various reasons why I did not mention the Appeals, or for that matter the Publicity Department of St. Dunstan's in my message of thanks and appreciation.

At the time of writing I had in mind particularly our men and women themselves and those who are more directly concerned with their welfare.

The money-raising and publicity sides of St. Dunstan's fall into a somewhat different category. The work of these Departments is a great and necessary adjunct to St. Dunstan's, but it is not that heart and spirit of our enterprise to which I was particularly referring. Theirs is rather the relationship of the printing press to the great newspaper, or the tools and jigs to the Rolls Royce which they create. This does not mean that we are any the less grateful to Mr. Stanford or to Miss Marshall, or indeed to all who work in our Appeals or Publicity Department, as well as to Mr. Robert Young and to all St. Dunstaners who contribute in varying degrees to the successful operation of our staff.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) NEVILLE PEARSON.

To the Editor, "St. Dunstan's Review"

DEAR SIR,—Some St. Dunstan's men are humorous without knowing it, or do they? For instance, Walter Thornton, of Birmingham, in "Hints on finding one's glass." I think Walter must be a new man, as he does not realise that 98 per cent. of St. Dunstan's men are gifted at finding glasses, especially if they are full! and they always attack them from the top.

I belong to a group of men known as telephonists—we have been called other things!—and I believe we have handled as many glasses as the Bank of England has got pound notes. What is more, people have marvelled at us passing them from one to the other without spilling a drop. This is a gift which cannot be taught at St. Dunstan's.

My hint to St. Dunstan's men is that they should all carry a white stick. They will find this is a great help, and what is more, it is a greater help to the public. I know the Chairman is against white sticks, but he is in the fortunate position of having a car—which reminds me, Sir Ian, if you ever have an old car going "buckshee" I should be pleased to accept it!

Yours sincerely,

Ilford.

JOCK MACFARLANE.

### Enjoying Films

To the Editor, "St. Dunstan's Review"

DEAR SIR,—Following a visit to the cinema with my brother, I have been thinking over the matter of a St. Dunstaner obtaining the most enjoyment from his visit to the films.

My brother and I, on this occasion, tried out the idea of pin-pointing a few of the main features of the film beforehand, a sort of brief synopsis. I found this added greatly to my enjoyment of the film, and it was not necessary for my escort to explain any episode during the film.

The suggestion is that the film people should supply St. Dunstan's with a synopsis—only of the new films, of course—and from this we might be able to issue a very brief outline of the story, pin-pointing the less obvious situations.

It would be interesting to know if other St. Dunstaners agree with me that help of this kind is needed, in order to obtain full enjoyment from the film.

Yours sincerely,

Harrogate.

BILL MOON.

### London Reunion Dance

There were over two hundred St. Dunstaners from the London area, with their escorts, at the Seymour Hall on Wednesday, December 3rd, for the London Reunion Dance.

Sir Neville Pearson received a hearty welcome when Sir Ian Fraser introduced him as the new President of St. Dunstan's. "The great thing about St. Dunstan's," he said, "is its stability and the cheerfulness of St. Dunstaners; as long as I can remember it has been the same." (Cheers).

The President proposed a hearty vote of thanks to all the staff of St. Dunstan's for their service during the year. This was carried with applause.

### The London Club

Sir Ian Fraser said that when the new Headquarters at 191 Marylebone Road were ready next year, the London Club would be an important feature. He hoped that it would revive the friendly spirit of the old lounge at Headquarters, so that men who came to see us on business, or who were passing through London would be made to feel at home. There would, in addition, of course, be evening events and associated with the Club would be residential quarters, to take the place of the present house at No. 8 Park Crescent, so that those passing through London could stay for a night.

Continuing, Sir Ian said it was just a year since they made him and Lady Fraser the presentation which they valued so greatly. He thought he ought to report that, although they had looked in many shops, and enquired in different parts of the country, they had not found exactly the old silver they wanted. This gift was so important to them that they wanted it to be just right, and felt sure their friends would understand if they took a little time to find it. (Hear, hear).

"You will be glad to know, however," Sir Ian added, "that the stick Mr. Churchill gave me in your behalf as a token is still in my hand daily, and that the rest of the money is still in Mr. Askew's hands, as trustee; we haven't 'blown it!'" (Laughter).

Colonel Eric Ball and his daughter, Mrs. Scott, Sir Neville and Lady Pearson, and Sir Ian Fraser put up a shocking performance as a quintet in the Palais Glide.

To the Editor, "St. Dunstan's Review"

DEAR SIR,—I have had the advantage of reading Squadron Leader W. Moon's letter. I do not think I have been to more than three or four films since I was blinded some thirty years ago, and I am therefore extremely unskilled, though I am a very regular theatre-goer. The film is primarily a visual medium and I would expect that a blind man would miss very much. Perhaps there is much to miss in many films. I can only quote one recent experience. When in the United States lately, my host took me to see an English film, "Great Expectations," because he was so pleased it was being shown in his village. This is, of course, a straightforward tale, and I had read the book as a boy thirty-five years ago, but I did not remember much about it. Although there were considerable periods during which pictures were being shown but there was no speech, I found I could follow almost every detail of the drama, and in some cases I spotted what was coming before it came. This is, I suppose, due to much playgoing and a certain dramatic imagination. I wonder if this is the experience of those St. Dunstaners who go regularly to the films?

IAN FRASER.

### Braille Magazines

To the Editor, "St. Dunstan's Review"

DEAR SIR,—When I became able to read braille, the "Hampstead" used to state on its front page that its stories were taken from the publications of George Newnes.

The N.I.B. has published a collection of the world's best short stories, and might, when the paper position allows, publish more of them. Yours sincerely,

North Auckland, JAMES CHISHOLM.  
New Zealand.

### True Story Department

I was going home one dinner-time from my shop when a woman approached me and asked if I would like to buy a bunch of buttercups. I did buy them and as I was standing on the edge of the pavement by the level crossing, waiting to go across the road; I suddenly felt that my arm and shoulder were touching someone. I at once apologised and turned round. The "someone" was a big railway horse, and my bunch of buttercups was gone.

Bath.

A. STERNO.

Lady Pearson said: "The trouble is that these three determined men won't work as a team." Sir Ian said he was the only one in step.

Music was provided by the band of the Royal Horse Guards (The Blues).

### War Decorations and Medals

Sir Ian Fraser has raised the question of war decorations and medals in the House of Commons, first with the Prime Minister and then on an Adjournment Debate.

He pointed out that, after the first war, three million medals had already been distributed after two years. We were now told that none would be distributed until the end of 1948, that is, three and a half years after the end of the war. Why this delay?

Other questions Sir Ian asked were:

Are individual names going to be written on the side?

How will medals be distributed?

Older men, Sir Ian said, often forbore to wear their medals at Legion gatherings out of consideration for the younger men, who had none. It was a bad thing to discourage men from wearing their medals. A little colour and symbolism would cheer us up in this dreary world.

The Under Secretary of State for Air (Mr. G. de Freitas) replying, said that the delay in issue of initial decorations and medals is in most cases because medals have been returned "address unknown."

With regard to General Service Stars and Medals, our production task to-day was very different from the period after the last war. Instead of a few hundred thousand Campaign Stars, for instance, we need eight millions. Twelve million War Medals would be finished in two years—about half a million a month, starting very early next year. The name would not be stamped on the back of the medal.

There will be one distribution only—one to each person, and distribution cannot begin until each distributing authority has several thousands, at least of the medals, and large supplies of the packing boxes.

### Silver Weddings

Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Hill, Tideswell, December 26th; Mr. and Mrs. R. Archer, Sandringham, Australia, February 3rd. Congratulations!

### From the Chairman's Postbag

On October 23rd, Sir Ian Fraser wrote to Mr. Alfred Robens, M.P., Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Ministry of Fuel and Power, as follows:—

DEAR ROBENS,

I understand that your Ministry has made a special concession for a basic petrol ration for 100 per cent. disabled people for domestic use. Could you please let me know whether this is so, and, if so, how application should be made for it.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) IAN FRASER.

Mr. Robens has replied as follows:—

DEAR SIR IAN,

Thank you for your letter of the 23rd October, about petrol allowances for 100 per cent. disabled persons.

As you know, all invalid and disabled persons have had special consideration throughout the entire period of petrol rationing for compassionate allowances, quite apart from supplementary allowances for professional and business purposes, or the basic ration during the periods in which this has been in operation. During the years 1942 to 1945, when there was no basic ration, compassionate allowances were also granted for all the miscellaneous purposes normally covered by the use of basic rations.

In regard to totally disabled persons wholly dependent on cars for getting about, our Regional Officers have wide discretionary powers to grant allowances as a means whereby they can maintain health and a reasonable amount of normal social life.

Applications should be made on Form R. (M.S.) 1, which is obtainable from all post offices doing motor taxation business, and should be sent to the appropriate Regional Petroleum Office, accompanied by a medical certificate as proof of total disablement.

I can assure you that all deserving cases will be given sympathetic treatment.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) ALFRED ROBENS.

W. Lowings, of Chandlers Ford, presented a tray, made by himself, to Her Royal Highness Princess Elizabeth, on the occasion of her marriage, and on November 18th he attended a Party at St. James's Palace to view the wedding presents. He has sent us a most interesting account of his visit there.

### Ovingdean Notes

The end of term Concert on November 26th and 27th has given us that Christmas feeling earlier this year, and made it difficult to settle down to work again.

There is no need to say how delighted we were to welcome our Guest Artists: Beryl Sleigh, Gwen Obern, Tiny Hill Brown, and Ron Smith. The "Brytonics" gave us a grand variety of entertainment; we were charmed by songs and melodies, and laughed until our sides ached at the sketches.

The Cash or Forfeits Quiz, with Mr. Cheesman as Question Master, was a very popular item, and gave the audience an opportunity to show its own talents! Trainees of the "14-18 Club" brought back memories of the "good old days." We were delighted when our Chairman and Commandant donned tin hats and great-coats and joined in with the choruses.

Our thanks to the producers, Mr. Morton and Mr. Cheesman, and the artists, for a first-class entertainment.

And now back to the beginning of the month, when we welcomed Mr. and Mrs. Learmont on their first visit. Mr. Learmont was Hon. Secretary and Treasurer of St. Dunstan's Committee in Buenos Aires.

The Service of Remembrance was held in Ovingdean Chapel on November 9th, and was conducted by Canon Speight. Four St. Dunstaners, representing the Navy, Army, R.A.F., and Women's Services, supported Mr. Anderson in the laying of the poppy wreath at the Altar, Mr. Anderson deputising for the Commandant, who was at the Cenotaph Ceremony in London.

A Dancing Competition, judged by Miss Babs Slough, took place at Sherry's Dance Hall on the 6th. Harry Foster won first prize of a silver cup, Charles Stafford and Eileen Gould were second and third respectively, both receiving silver cups; Eileen also received a bouquet.

The Darts Team misses Norman Crane, who has been a regular and keen player; we wish him and all who have left this term the best of luck in their new ventures.

### Test Results

#### Avenue Road

Advanced Reading.—Frank Boldero.  
Typing.—Michael Ansell, J. Cook.

★ ★ ★

J. Lawlor, of Birmingham, is a great grandfather.

### Other News

St. Dunstan's magicians-in-training had a good write-up in the *Daily Graphic* on November 27th, when Victor Lewis wrote of the happenings at Headquarters on Friday evenings. He particularly mentioned W. T. Scott, of Streatham, "performing feats of magic which would do credit to a sighted man"; Terry Roden and John Mudge, who are learning ventriloquism, Jack Pearce handling puppets from a Punch and Judy Show, and the wise-cracking "Smudger" Smith memorising the intricacies of paper-folding.

★ ★ ★

Pamela Carlton, the little daughter of W. C. Carlton, of Wakefield, is 2 years 10 months. The other day, unobserved, she slipped away from home and the next heard of her was when she toddled into Pinderfields Hospital, where Cliff is a chartered physiotherapist. "I've come to get you, Daddy," she said. An anxious Mrs. Carlton had meanwhile reported her missing to the police. Mrs. Carlton, with Pamela, meets her husband every day.

★ ★ ★

Gerry Brereton, of Derby, has another broadcast with his band from the North of England Home Service on December 22nd.

★ ★ ★

Mr. Syd Manchee, of Brighton ("Syd Walker" to many St. Dunstaners, and one of the original "Good Companions"), has brought in no less than £1,002 16s. 4d. for St. Dunstan's through our Brighton Appeals Office. In 1944 he travelled some 2,750 miles, escorting our men to and from Melplash and Blackpool.

★ ★ ★

George Pollard, of Rothwell, Kettering, has been made a member of the Rothwell N.U.R., and Chairman of the Local Departmental Committee.

★ ★ ★

Jack McGill, of New Zealand, would like his friends to know his new address: Whangaparaoa, Via Silverdale, Auckland, New Zealand. He has recently re-married.

★ ★ ★

The National Library for the Blind have issued a volume of short stories by W. E. Brookes, of Southampton. They are a selection which he made from his stories, published in popular weekles, etc., over the past twenty-five years.

### West House Notes

Our first visitors during November were those for the special Bridge Week-end, reported in full elsewhere, and then from November 14th until 16th we had the Chess Week-end. Congratulations to all prize-winners!

On November 8th a party of four, Allcock, Burton, Tiny Northcott, and Shaylor, escorted by Commandant and Sister Carter, joined up with the party from Ovingdean and Croxley Green, in the Royal Box at the Remembrance Festival at the Royal Albert Hall. The following morning, Barney Martin, Shaylor and Burton, with Orderlies Innes and Bones, went to the Cenotaph Service as representatives from West House. The Service at West House itself was held in the Lounge, and conducted by Commandant. A wreath was laid on the War Memorial, Brighton, by Micky Burns.

We had our usual arrangements for dominoes and darts, and on November 18th a presentation of a wallet was made by Harry Russell to Mr. Jefferson, who has given so much help in running these evenings, and who is now leaving us.

We had, of course, our own special way of celebrating the Royal Wedding, and, in fact, made the celebrations last three days!

On December 7th a Memorial Service to the late Sir Arthur Pearson was conducted at West House by the Rev. H. J. Kingston; Jock Boyd gave an inspiring address.

### A Week-end of Bridge

On November 7th, thirty-seven St. Dunstaners gathered together at West House for a week-end of Bridge. It was evident they were bridge-ites by the din, everyone eagerly explaining to anyone who would listen to his personal triumphs since last they met. Trumpets are as dear to bridge players as long arms are to fishermen. However, what matters when such a grand crowd get together, and there is no mistake about the "grand crowd." The essence of the week-end was good fellowship, and keen bridge. Congratulations to the Commandant and staff for operating an excellent move.

On Friday evening it was "get together" and on Saturday morning "all hands on the Prom," and very nice, too, leaving a small working party to arrange details.

On Friday afternoon eight St. Dunstaners were entertained at Hove Bridge Club, the remainder competed in a Bridge Drive, held in the Conservatory. This was a social drive, all names going into the hat and a draw made for partners. A similar drive was held in the evening, and on this occasion Squadron Leader W. T. Curtis-Willson was able to join in.

On Sunday afternoon another eight were entertained by the Hove Bridge Club, and twelve ladies from that Club were our guests at West House. The Bridge Drive on this occasion was "Partners," everyone playing with the partner of their own choice. This, of course, gave the St. Dunstan's "Tigers" an opportunity to exhibit their combined skill. Alas, the "rabbits" were not fascinated; they just waded in and some tasted "Tiger" for the first time.

In the evening we swept up the fur and concluded with another Social Drive. The complete list of winners is as follows:—

Saturday afternoon: Powell, Gover, Webster, Wylie, Caldwell, Blodwyn.

Saturday evening: Van Niekerk, Jolly, Capel, Caldwell, Collins, Fisher, Roden, Wiltshire.

Sunday afternoon: Blodwyn, Miller, Taylor, Winter, Walch, Rhodes, Steel, Shakspeare, Burns, Delaney. Ladies (Special Prizes) Roden, Henry.

Sunday evening: Gover, Henry, Winter, Fisher, Kirkbright, Tuxford, Rhodes, Blodwyn.

Frank Rhodes moved a warm vote of thanks to the Commandant, Matron, Mrs. Carter, and all the staff who made the week-end possible.

What good does this week-end do? It gives a fillip to the bridge players, and also provides an opportunity so beloved by the male sex, to get together in an all-male party for a couple of days; after that, the novelty seems to wear thin and there is a scamper home to the various "roosts," and one can almost imagine an apologetic crow.

A mental stimulant is a high priority essential, and bridge provides that stimulant. St. Dunstaners who have patiently acquired this bridge lore are to be congratulated, and this week-end would appear to be one of the rewards.

A. E. FIELD.

### The Chess Contest

From November 14th to 17th, eleven men of St. Dunstan's met at West House for the purpose of indulging in a week-end of chess. This was the first time that such a thing had been done, and it proved to be a huge success. This week-end is to be a regular feature, and it is hoped that many more interested in the game will come forward to swell our numbers.

The main feature was the play for the Challenge Cup, presented by St. Dunstan's.

FIRST ROUND		Winner
Hill v. Porter		Hill
Vine v. Culshaw		Vine
Kirkbright v. Roden		Kirkbright
Byes: Hammett, Maskell, Tuxford, Scott, Parker.		
SECOND ROUND		
Tuxford v. Kirkbright		Kirkbright
Parker v. Hill		Hill
Hammett v. Vine		Vine
Maskell v. Scott		Maskell
SEMI-FINALS		
Kirkbright v. Hill		Kirkbright
Vine v. Maskell		Maskell
FINAL		Winner of Cup
Kirkbright v. Maskell		Maskell

This competition was played in the most sportsmanlike manner, and the final, I think all will agree, was quite outstanding. Both Kirkbright and the winner, Maskell, played wonderful chess. The Umpire said afterwards that he had no idea, until the last few moves, who would be the winner.

On Saturday afternoon, the Brighton Chess Club paid a visit to West House with a very strong team. The team included at least two County players. Their No. 1 also plays No. 1 for the County. Peter Maskell had to meet this giant of the game, and did exceptionally well to be one of the few winners on our side. This was a great achievement. Although we lost to Brighton, we can feel proud of the splendid show which two of our players put up against such strength. Full credit must also go to Hill for his victory over No. 4. Result: Brighton Club 9; St. Dunstan's 2.

Our last match was against the Schools League, and again we met with defeat, but not disgrace. Our opponents consisted of several County players, who proved themselves even stronger than the Brighton Chess Club. For instance, Maskell lost to their No. 1, a 17 year old Czech schoolboy. Kirkbright on No. 4 table was successful, and Hill on No. 3 gained  $\frac{1}{2}$  point.

Our visiting teams were very well looked after, and in the speeches which followed tribute was paid to the staff of West House.

T. TUXFORD.

### Greatheart and the World's Reply

It was not surprising to find that so few of the walking sticks had tidy ferrules. That had to be put right. I knew a shop at Brighton where sticks were re-ferruled reasonably and quickly. Off I marched with eight of them, of every breed, shape and fancy, bundled under an arm.

"Certainly," said the proprietor, "Come back in an hour and you shall have them."

I went into Lyons' to while away the time, hoping that Bill Girling's brothers would turn up to help me do it. None hove into view. An elderly man vacated a chair, and I seated myself in it; thus enthroned I awaited the advent of the waitress. Hooked across the back of the chair next to mine was a polished, mounted, banded walking stick. I fingered it and guessed that some absent-minded diner was the owner. Coffee, and cakes, I unhitched the stick, intending to leave it at the cash deck. I had travelled five paces when the old gentleman sidled up, touched my arm, and said, "It's funny you should occupy my chair when I left it to get a sugar basin from the table behind, and now you're going away with my walking stick. I've been watching you all the time." I was prodigal with apologies. People were milling into the shop, so it was impossible to explain matters. Deeply reddened, I passed out to the pavement. There was yet forty-five minutes to idle. This I wore down in a bradypodish amble. Promptly on time the walking-sticks were ready. With seven stowed snugly in the crook of my arm, and lightly swinging the eighth, I began the journey back to West House. While crossing Old Steine, I sat on a bench to tie a shoelace. "Hullo, again," said a voice close to my ear, rather sternly. It was the old gentleman who owned the walking stick. He tapped my welter of sticks and counted "two-four-eight . . .!!! You've had a very busy and a very successful hour, haven't you?" How profoundly happy I was to have time to explain! Too, I did enjoy his company as we trotted along to Kemp Town.

Southampton. W. E. BROOKES.

★ ★ ★

Bob Hope, the famous American radio and film star, gave his broadcast fee for Variety Bandbox on Sunday, November 23rd, to St. Dunstan's.

## Braille Reading

### Prizes for a Third Test

Two years ago, through the generosity of an anonymous donor, a scheme of prizes was announced, to be awarded to St. Dunstaners passing an Advanced Braille Reading Test. As a result of this scheme, some eighty St. Dunstaners of the first war entered and passed the test, and were awarded the special prize of £3. St. Dunstaners passing the test at the Training Centre receive their award automatically.

At the present time, therefore, we have two tests: (1) the Elementary Braille Reading Test, with a prize of £1; and (2) the Advanced Braille Reading Test, prize £3.

The Chairman has recently gone into the question of the possibility of a third Braille Reading Test, with a view to stimulating still further the interest in braille reading, and it has been decided to institute a third test, to be known as the Senior Braille Reading Test. The following suggestions have been put forward:

1. Three pages of interpoint to be read in 21 minutes.
2. Not more than six mistakes to be allowed in the test—a mistake afterwards corrected not to be counted.
3. No notice to be taken of a slight inaccuracy that does not interfere with the sense or continuity.
4. The passage to be taken from a Panda edition—an incident from a story or non-fiction book.
5. The passage selected to have continuity and not contain any difficulty unlikely to occur in general reading.

For this Senior Braille Reading Test the prize will be £5, with a consolation prize of £2 for a very near miss.

It is further suggested that any St. Dunstaner who has not passed the Advanced Braille Reading Test should be allowed to re-enter for the Elementary Braille Reading Test, even if he has passed it before, providing he has not done so in the last ten years. A prize of £1 to be awarded to successful candidates.

When a St. Dunstaner re-sits the Elementary Reading Test, and passes, it is hoped he will carry on with his reading and sit for the Advanced Braille Reading Test.

Arrangements will be made for these tests to be undertaken at Ovingdean or in London, the prizes, other than those given

for the Elementary Braille Reading Test, to be paid from the Arthur Pearson Memorial Fund, and known as the Arthur Pearson Prize.

St. Dunstaners wishing (a) to enter for the Senior Braille Reading Test, or (b) to re-enter for the Elementary Braille Reading Test, should send in their names to Mr. Mackay, Welfare Superintendent.

## Blackpool Notes

November and early December are days of remembrance, and we, with the rest of Britain, observed November 9th. A party of six took part in the Parade to the Cenotaph, where W. Thomas, of Wakefield, placed the wreath of poppies. T. Vaughan, J. Power, and J. Salt, with two escorts, formed the rest of the party. In the evening a number attended Holy Trinity Church, from where the service was broadcast. We had much difficulty in repressing a desire to call out "Hello, St. Dunstaners, here's us!"

On December 9th we held our Service of Remembrance for our Founder. Old boys will remember, new ones ever feel grateful, for the wonderful example Sir Arthur set for us.

How quickly we pass from grave to gay. Christmas will be upon us very soon after these words come into print. May we, at the Blackpool Home, send our warmest greetings for Happy Christmas days to all the very large family of St. Dunstan's and St. Dunstaners everywhere. It will be a wonderful time indeed at Blackpool.

The Ministry of Pensions staff is arranging a party for us—those in the home and local lads—on December 22nd. It will be held at one of the leading catering establishments; transport will be arranged, so we shall have the added fun of the coach drive, during which no doubt every man will aver his love of "Nelleeee Deeeecene."

Happy Christmas indeed—we all hope yours will be as happy. B.V.D.

## Young St. Dunstaners

### Marriages

Ethel Hill, Tideswell, on November 19th, to Michael G. James.

Florence Holmes, Witton Park, on October 25th.

Joy Evelyn Leeman, Louth, on November 10th, to Robert J. Darmon.

## Hints for Escorts

My pal and I were sitting in the Lounge the other day when a Sister came up and asked us whether we would like a walk. We started out and she asked us at what pace we would like to go. I think it is always advisable to ask this question, as it makes it easier for all concerned. Cheerful conversation does add to the enjoyment of the walk, but so often escorts tend to be silent. A good way to begin the conversation is to discover the interests of the man.

We made our way towards Black Rock, at the east end of Brighton, and our escort described the scene about us, the beauty of the sunset, rising of the moon, and calmness of the sea, etc. Eventually we found ourselves on the cliff top, and it was a pleasure to be told about the old mill silhouetted against the evening sky, and the people passing by.

At a theatre, it adds greatly to our evening's enjoyment if we can have a description of the setting, even to the details of the heroine's clothes. This, of course, should be given before the play gets under way as, with too frequent remarks, we are apt to lose the thread of the story.

BILL GRIMWOOD (West House).

## Sunset Over the Downs

*The gathering shadows of a summer night*

*Creating phantoms in the fading light;*

*The red and gold as the sun sinks low*

*Tinting the Downs with a crimson glow.*

*A picture painted by a Master Hand*

*With all the world at His command.*

*Across the sky creep streaks of grey*

*Heralding the end of another day.*

*Lights starts twinkling in nearby towns*

*The sun sinks lower behind the Downs.*

*The crimson darkness deepens still*

*As the great Artist works His Will.*

*The sun sinks down below the West,*

*All Nature's creatures go to rest;*

*The stars come out to twinkle and to peep*

*On a world below that is fast asleep.*

*Dotted here and there like specks of gold*

*As His picture the Artist does unfold.*

*The moon comes up to dispel the night,*

*Shedding o'er the Downs her silver light,*

*Making new shadows, large and small,*

*As its light spreads over all.*

*And still the world and nature sleep*

*As the Master Hand makes His picture complete.*

Edinburgh.

T. C. MCKAY.

## To Manchester St. Dunstaners

Sam Russell, of Gorton, Manchester, like all St. Dunstaners, has received the greatest consideration from all members of railway staffs, and he has passed on to us a suggestion which, thanks to the kindness of Mr. Rose, Station Master at London Road, Manchester, station, will be helpful to men of Manchester travelling to London.

Normally, our Social Visitor gets in touch with the Station Master, but if this has not been possible, owing to the unexpectedness of the visit, the St. Dunstaner should go to the Enquiry Office at London Road (the same side as the booking office) two days or the day before he intends to travel and ask for Mr. Ash. He should then tell Mr. Ash the date and time he and his escort will be travelling, and Mr. Ash will see that seats have been reserved for them. On the day they travel they should make themselves known to the ticket collector at the barrier, who will find their seats for them.

## Mr. S. W. Fobbs

St. Dunstaners will hear with the deepest regret that Mr. S. W. Fobbs died in hospital on December 10th. Mr. Fobbs retired from St. Dunstan's service nine months ago after twenty-eight years with us, for many years as Chief Accountant.

The funeral took place at Banstead Parish Church, St. Dunstan's being represented by Mr. W. G. Askew, Mr. P. Lale, and Miss M. Sailing. There were wreaths of poppies from St. Dunstan's and the British Legion, which was also represented at the funeral.

## Tailpiece

George Reed, of Hertford, was filmed by Pathe Pictorial while training with his guide dog, at Leamington, and the film is to be shown at all A.B.C. cinemas some time in January. Telling us of this, George adds a story which will appeal to all guide dog owners.

"I was travelling home in the train during the rush-hour," he said, "the train was crowded and several men and women were standing, but on seeing my dog and myself a gentleman got up and offered his seat to my dog, which was accepted with gratitude, as it prevented his paws from being trodden on. It only goes to show that the age of chivalry is not past." George assures us that this story is authentic.

## " In Memory "

### Corporal Kenneth Roy Clark, *Australian Infantry*

We have heard with deep regret from Mr. Archer of the Blinded Soldiers' Association, Australia, of the death on July 28th of a new war St. Dunstaner, K. R. Clark, of Malvern, Victoria.

He leaves a young widow, to whom we offer our sincere sympathy.

### Private James Carwardine, *Australian Imperial Forces*

We have heard also with deep regret from Mr. Archer of the death of a St. Dunstaner of the 1914-1918 war, J. Carwardine, of Victoria, Australia. He was admitted to St. Dunstan's benefits in 1933. He had suffered poor health for some years and he passed away on September 5th, leaving a widow to whom our sincere sympathy is extended.

### Sapper Walter William Bowerman, *Royal Engineers*

It is with deep regret that we record the death of a St. Dunstaner of the recent war, W. W. Bowerman, of Kensal Green, who came to us in August, 1943.

He was wounded by the explosion of a mine while serving at the Battle of the Mareth Line. He lost his sight and received injuries to his left hand, while injuries to his ears also caused deafness, but he was very persevering and in spite of these handicaps, mastered his craft, joinery.

Our deep sympathy goes out to his wife and child.

He was buried in the plot in Brighton Cemetery set aside for St. Dunstan's men; many St. Dunstan's comrades were present.

### Harry Brown, *Queen's Own Camerons*

With deep regret we record the death of H. Brown, of Peterborough.

Although he received injuries from mustard gas in the 1914-1918 war, he did not come to us until quite recently and his training had not begun when his death from pneumonia occurred.

A wreath from Sir Ian Fraser and his comrades was sent for the funeral.

Our deep sympathy goes out to his wife and family.

### William Chambers, *1st East Lancashire Regt. and Royal Engineers*

It is with deep regret that we record the death of W. Chambers, of Northenden, Manchester, on November 13th.

His sight failed while he was serving in the Dardanelles, and he came to us in December, 1916. He trained as a picture-frame maker, and he continued with this work for a number of years. Towards the end of 1939, however, his health began to fail and although he continued with his work for a while he eventually had to give it up. He passed away in hospital, where he had been admitted only a few hours before.

A wreath was sent for the funeral from Sir Ian Fraser, and his coffin was covered with the Union Jack. Mr. and Mrs. Joyce were among those present.

Our deep sympathy is extended to his wife and children.

## Births

**BRERETON.** On November 15th, to the wife of G. Brereton, of Derby, a daughter—Lorraine Susan.

**COWAN.** On December 12th, to the wife of J. C. Cowan, of Leicester, a daughter—Linda.

**DABORN.** On November 23rd, to the wife of J. T. Daborn, of Bexleyheath, a daughter—June Angela.

**EARNSHAW.** On November 19th, to the wife of H. Earnshaw, of Bolton, a son—Ian Michael.

**FREER.** On October 23rd, to the wife of R. Freer, of Gravesend, a son—David Arthur.

**GREEN.** On December 5th, to the wife of F. L. Green, of Fareham, a daughter—Rosemary.

**HANCOCK.** On November 20th, to the wife of J. Hancock, of Chelmsford, a son—Philip John.

**HOLLAMBY.** On November 8th, to the wife of L. Hollamby, of Oldham, a daughter—Kathleen.

**INNESS.** On October 21st, to the wife of J. Inness, of Barnstaple, a son—Raymond Malcolm.

**MILLER.** On July 23rd, to the wife of E. Miller, of Wimbledon (trainee), a daughter—Susan Edwina.

**NORTHWOOD.** On October 25th, to the wife of L. Northwood, of Plympton, a daughter—Lesley Denise.

**SUTTON.** On November 17th, to the wife of P. Sutton, of Manchester, a son—Kevin Daniel.

**VARLEY.** On November 21st, to the wife of E. Varley, of Erdington, Birmingham, a son—Raymond Francis.

## Death

**GREEN.** Our deep sympathy is extended to F. L. Green, of Fareham, whose mother passed away on November 20th at the age of eighty-seven.