

# ST. DUNSTAN'S REVIEW

*Miss Stubbs*

For Men and Women Blinded on War Service

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[FREE TO ST. DUNSTAN'S MEN]

## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

SOME months ago, I raised in the House of Commons and by correspondence with Ministers, the question whether some help could be given to disabled men to secure motor cars. There were two aspects of this matter to which my friends and I drew attention. Firstly, the general case of all disabled men and particularly of those who had some difficulty in getting about. They were late in getting on waiting lists and cars were very expensive, especially when Purchase Tax was added. I moved in the House of Commons to give these men priority and take off the Purchase Tax, but the Government refused this on the ground that they could not single out a particular class, however deserving, for such treatment, and that the removal of Purchase Tax would present very great administrative difficulties. I must say that I was not very convinced with the answer and we may raise the matter again. About the same time, some of us in the House of Commons had raised the question whether the motor tricycle supplied free by the Ministry of Pensions to pensioners who had lost both legs was really the most suitable vehicle for them. Many of us have admired the way severely disabled men go about on these tricycles and they have the advantage that they are small enough to be economically housed and even to get through the gates and drive right up to the touch-line at a football match. On the other hand, they are exposed to the weather for there is no hood, and the disabled man has to go by himself, for the vehicle is a one-seater. Moreover, the cost to the Ministry of these vehicles, which are specially made in small numbers, is probably as great or greater than the cost of mass-produced 8-h.p. motor cars.

The effect of our raising the Purchase Tax issue was to produce, almost as a kind of by-product, a very valuable concession for the tricycle men, who were now to be allowed to choose an 8-h.p. four-wheeler instead, which would be taxed and insured by the Ministry, and, in addition, an allowance of £45 a year towards the garaging, running and upkeep expenses of the car would be provided.

A further concession was made at my request by Mr. Buchanan, then Pensions Minister, to allow very severely disabled men who could not drive a car themselves to have a free car which could be driven by a wife or friend. The total number of cars involved in the whole of this proposal is extremely limited, namely, about 1,500 spread over two years, and the majority of these will be absorbed by the tricycle men who change over to the four-wheeler. There are, however, just a few which are being allocated to disabled men who cannot drive themselves and amongst these a small number is available for St. Dunstaners. The Minister of Pensions, Mr. Marquand, has dealt with this matter most sympathetically and has asked our assistance in the extremely difficult task of recommending the individuals who are to be offered a free motor car. This is a very difficult job and whoever are chosen, it is obvious that many will think that the choice might have been otherwise. We shall be guided

in our recommendations by additional disabilities, the need of the car for business purposes, and the general situation of the St. Dunstaner. We have sent our list of recommendations of about seventy names from which the Minister will pick forty-five, and the cars will be offered at the rate of two or three a month, starting shortly. Now that the principle has been established, I expect Parliament and the Ministry of Pensions will want to see how it works and to what extent it might be expanded.

I should like to express our thanks to the Minister of Pensions and to the taxpayers for this generous experiment which will, without doubt, bring mobility and happiness to a small number of our most seriously disabled ex-service men and women.

### Retirements

Miss Martha Wood, After-Care Visitor for Scotland and Northern England, retires at the end of February. Miss Wood was a V.A.D. and a Matron at the Bungalow Annexe of St. Dunstan's in the First World War before she joined our Welfare Staff in February, 1929. Not many months ago I paid tribute in this column to the work of our After-Care Visitors as exemplified by Miss Wood, and her retirement reminds us not only of many reunions in the North which she has organised, but also of those far-off days in Regent's Park from 1917 onwards. All who remember Miss Wood in both these periods will join to thank her and wish her happiness.

Miss N. Gordon, S.R.N., has been appointed to take Miss Wood's place and has already started work.

Miss Ivy Coultate has also just retired after working for St. Dunstan's since 1915. For many years she was Appeals Organiser for the Metropolitan and Home Counties area, and no one, I suppose, spread more goodwill for St. Dunstan's than did Miss Coultate with her vigorous personality. Many voluntary organisers and others throughout the area will join with us in thanking Miss Coultate for her distinguished and successful services, as will many St. Dunstaners who lived in her area and took part in various activities which she organised.

IAN FRASER.

### Greetings from all over the World

At Christmas, Sir Ian Fraser, on behalf of St. Dunstaners everywhere, sent telegrams of greeting to our friends in kindred societies and organisations affiliated with us all over the world.

Among the replies that have been received are the following:

**From France:** "The blinded soldiers of France are very grateful for the kind wishes of St. Dunstaners and send theirs in return for a happy new year.—Isaac, President, Union Aveugles de Guerre."

**From India:** "Season's greetings.—St. Dunstan's, Dehra Dun, India."

**From Scotland:** "Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year to you and Lady Fraser and all at St. Dunstan's.—John Gavin."

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P. J. Sparkes, of Grimsby, has been presented with a clock and pipe by the British Legion.

Norman Perry, also of Grimsby, has been elected President of his Battery Old Comrades' Association.

### St. Dunstaner Grows His Own Tobacco

A. Hamlett, of Winsford, and his sons are just completing their first tobacco-growing experiment. Altogether they have produced nine pounds and our St. Dunstaner has tried out some of the leaf which, he says, smokes very satisfactorily if mixed half-and-half with shop tobacco. Next year he hopes to get seed from Virginia and plans to grow sufficient to keep the whole family in "smokes."

### A Gift from Switzerland

F. Dear, of Caernarvon, with another disabled ex-serviceman, was chosen by the W.V.S. to be the first recipient in the Caernarvon district of a suite of furniture, the gift of the Government and People of Switzerland. The presentation was made by the Mayor at the Guild Hall. It consisted of a table and four stools, a wardrobe (or cupboard), two single beds with mattresses and pillows, and a very good selection of kitchen utensils. The furniture is of unpolished wood.

### A Good Offer

We now have in stock a number of the old Talking Book machines which have been converted for playing ordinary gramophone records. These are all-electric (A.C. current only) and may be purchased at a cost of £5. These machines are in a perfectly good electrical condition, although the cases, of course, are not new, and for those who want a really good gramophone on which to enjoy ordinary records, this is an excellent opportunity.

Applicants should write to Men's Supplies as early as possible to avoid disappointment.

Owing to the difficult supply position, Men's Supplies Department would be very grateful if St. Dunstaners would return any wooden packing cases in which they have received goods.

### Piano Tuning Success

Alan Hold has just completed two years' study with the London Polytechnic in piano tuning with outstanding success. He was top of his class in the last six consecutive examinations and in the finals for membership of the Institution of Instruments Technology he took first place, gaining 100 marks in all subjects taken.

As a token of his success, a silver presentation has been made to him by the school.

### A Deaf-Blind Party

Mr. Aneurin Bevan addressed an audience of one hundred and forty men and women on 11th December, his words being spelled out on scores of hands. Two St. Dunstaners were there—"Ginger" Scott and Percy Ashton—and it was Scottie to whom Hannen Swaffer was referring when he wrote in the "Daily Herald" the next day of "a voluntary helper, a near-blind masseur, whose hobby is his worse-stricken pal." The National Deaf-Blind Helpers League want more members who will spend a few hours a week in giving friendship and encouragement to those in this country, more than 3,000 in number, who can sense neither sight nor sound.

The finger language is rapidly becoming known as "paw-jaw" or "pawj" for short. This was Scottie's idea.

### Placement

S. Waddingham, with Messrs. Ericsson's Telephones Ltd., Beeston, Notts. on plastic moulding work.

### National Insurance

One of the points raised by Sir Ian Fraser when challenging the Provisional Regulations relating to Overlapping Benefits was a restriction whereby certain disabled Service Pensioners and persons in receipt of Workmen's Compensation were prohibited from drawing full personal Unemployment or Sickness Benefit until they had requalified by thirteen weeks of employment.

Sir Ian asked the Minister of National Insurance to justify the restriction, and although the Minister then gave certain reasons why it should be included, the National Insurance Advisory Committee have now recommended that personal Unemployment or Sickness Benefit should be paid in full in addition to a War or Service Disability Pension and in addition to Workmen's Compensation. The restriction has, therefore, been omitted from the Permanent Regulations which have just been issued.

### Greetings from the Navy

The Commanding Officer, officers and members of the staff of H.M. Naval Victualling Depot, Fareham, sent their Christmas greetings to St. Dunstaners in a novel form. Their Christmas card bore sixty-four autographs, representing practically every member of the Depot.

### And from Sgt. Nichols

Sgt. Nichols' Christmas card was an original one, too. It was a photograph of himself, in shorts, cigarette in hand, with his dog and his chickens. He wrote: "I can say honestly now my handicap ceases to exist . . . the secret is in this picture."

### Thirty Years Ago

From the "St. Dunstan's Review," January, 1919:

"It is with justifiable pride that we record that no blinded soldier has had to wait for admission to St. Dunstan's, for we have always been a little ahead of the times, and have made provision for all eventualities.

"The next six months will be the busiest period in the history of St. Dunstan's, for the number of men in training is now well over the 600 mark, and there are many men still in hospital for whom accommodation will be provided."

### St. Dunstan's Club Notes

The following members of the National Institute for the Blind who are or have been members of St. Dunstan's staff, have been accepted by the Club Committee as Honorary Members. I am sure that all concerned will join in welcoming them to the Club and its activities. The only differentiation is that they will not be able to have the power of voting or accepting office. The members are: Miss H. L. Leverett, Miss D. Westcott, Miss E. G. Wood, Mr. R. W. Bridger and Mr. W. Burman.

In a previous issue of the REVIEW the address of the Gymnasium which we are hiring was wrongly given and should read as 240 and not 24a Great Portland Street. All are cordially invited to attend.

The Committee extend heartiest New Year wishes to its members and they express the hope that this year will be a very successful and enjoyable one for all.  
G. P. O.

### Annual General Meeting

The first Annual General Meeting of the Club was held on 7th January, 1949, at Headquarters, under the chairmanship of Mr. P. Owens; Mr. Askew was in attendance.

The members of the Committee for the ensuing year are Messrs. Ashton, Burns, Bradley, Fleming, Gaygan, Rhodes and Wiltshire. The first Committee Meeting was held on 14th January, when the new Chairman was elected.

The Club is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and all are welcome to the Institute of Magicians, Whist Drives, Dominoes, Bridge and other activities. The Committee would like the wholehearted support of all St. Dunstaners.

At the conclusion of the meeting a vote of appreciation was accorded to Messrs. Askew, P. Owens and Willis, and Miss Ibbetson.

The St. Dunstan's Institute of Magicians section entertained their tutors to a surprise tea-party on 20th December. It was remarkable how magic could produce so much from so little. A very enjoyable Club party was held on 21st December, when the star guests were Messrs. James Moody and Harry Hemsley, assisted by local talent.

A special vote of thanks was accorded to Lady Stern whose generosity contributed so largely to the success of the party.

Two successful dances have been held at the Great Cumberland Hall, where everyone had a jolly good time.

On 14th December, a bumper Whist Drive was held, when special prizes were presented through the kindness of Mrs. Sassoon.

We are now embarking on another year of club activities, and look forward to having the support of as many St. Dunstaners as possible. All suggestions welcomed.

Watch this column for our future events.

### Other News

Blodwyn Simon has just been made joint president, with Lady Spriggs, of the Ruthin Branch of the British Legion, Women's Section.

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Gwen Obern has been addressing members of the Aberdare Women's Rotary Club and an interview with her appeared in the Rotary publication, THE INNER WHEEL.

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A. Rowe, of Burslem, has another granddaughter, and W. Sullivan, of Cork, tells us that he has four great-grandchildren—all doing well. His father was in the Duke of Wellington's 33rd Regiment of Foot and served in the Crimea and the Indian Mutiny.

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Just before Christmas, a small party was held for St. Dunstaners in the Cork Area and D. Driscoll remarked that it was being held at the time of the christening of Prince Charles. He proposed that the meeting should express its very sincere good wishes for the health and future happiness of the Princess Elizabeth and her baby son. The proposal was received with unanimous and hearty approval.

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A St. Dunstan's watch has been found. If any St. Dunstaner has lost a watch will he please write to J. E. Cooper, St. Dunstan's, 191 Marylebone Road, N.W.1, giving details of date and place of loss.

### Silver Weddings

Congratulations upon their anniversaries to Mr. and Mrs. F. Parker, Marston, December 24th; Mr. and Mrs. G. Fallowfield, Southwick, December 28th.

### Letters to the Editor

DEAR EDITOR,

I feel that I must support the view of Sir Ian in last month's REVIEW regarding the amalgamating or fusing of the different organisations dealing with disabled service men and the dependants of them.

By all means let us run with them through liaison, and let members of one organisation help members of others, but let the different specialists continue to specialise in the organisation which has been built up and perfected by them.

As a St. Dunstaner, I realise that the work put in, and the knowledge derived, makes the organisers of St. Dunstan's real specialists in the work of helping war-blinded men. They have, through years of good work, discovered ways and means of assisting the men to rehabilitate themselves, eased them round awkward corners, and shown them how to dodge corners.

By all means let us belong to the Legion and our Regimental Associations, but let us keep St. Dunstan's as our godparent.

Can I say this. Let us stay St. Dunstaners, but always be ready to help others along, for as St. Dunstaners we are individuals, and not just number something which would be automatic if a large alliance was formed.

Yes! St. Dunstan's for me, and let our torch show the others the way.

N.17. Yours sincerely, JOHN A. MUDGE.

### The National Newsletter

DEAR EDITOR,

Could the National Institute be persuaded to allow some better paper for the braille edition of the NATIONAL NEWS-LETTER? I feel pretty sure that you will agree with me that this publication is at least of equal importance to most of the braille magazines and ought to be embossed on equally good paper. Instead, the material at present is so thin and soft that reading is extremely difficult and sometimes quite impossible in patches. I am not referring to any deterioration which may have taken place in transit. In my experience such damage is extremely rare and the postal workers ought, at every opportunity, to be most warmly thanked for the care taken with our literature. Yours sincerely,

Dumfries. CHARLES MCINTOSH.

(We shall be very glad to receive the comments of other readers of the NEWS-LETTER upon this point).

### A Tribute

DEAR EDITOR,

In the course of having to drive my husband round the country, we have had to attend many shows on behalf of St. Dunstan's. On Christmas Eve I was an invited guest at West House and witnessed one of the most impressive scenes I have ever seen, and I should like to pay homage to all who produced it. The scene opened on the Church of St. Dunstan in the East (incidentally one of the playgrounds of my girlhood), showing the stained glass window of the Madonna and Child. This was a work of art. Grouped around were the choristers; the singing of the carols was excellent, the lighting was particularly beautiful, and coupled with the organ and the bells, the scene touched most of us very, very deeply.

The scene and the story, if one may call it so, was compered by Matron, and here, may I say just a little thing from one woman to another. The curtains parted to show our Matron not in her austere dark blue suit but a radiant figure in a lovely gown of pale grey, outlined with silver sequins, and a heart shaped neck—she was a vision of delight and loveliness. Her description of the scene was, like everything else that night, excellent. I think I can only finish by saying that we have a worthy successor in Matron Ouseley to all our other dear departed Matrons.

Thank you Matron, for a lovely Christmas Eve.

Yours sincerely,  
(Mrs.) MILLANE RICHARDSON.

### To Poultry Farmers

DEAR EDITOR,

I recently put forward a suggestion that poultry farmers should have a meeting, my idea being that we should renew old friendships and pool knowledge gained over the past years. This proposal was considered by the Welfare Committee and found to be impracticable.

As most of our season's work is completed by the end of August, I am wondering if those interested in this idea would care to arrange their holidays at Brighton for the last week in August and the first week in September. Doubtless we could arrange some such gathering during that period.

I would advise those interested to make early application for accommodation.

Yours sincerely, A. IVOR GWYN.

### Three Hates

DEAR EDITOR,

T. Floyd has hit the nail on the head when he speaks of the disadvantages at dominoes, also at the suggestion that it would take no longer for us to feel after each man played, because when we play fives and threes we do it that way; we usually have a partner on these occasions who insists upon the method. Our V.A.D.s and orderlies usually let us choose our own way. It is visitors and other men's wives who want to act dictatorially.

I HATE to be attended at table by a person who cannot talk to me and puts pickles, sauce and mustard on my food.

I HATE to share a room with one who doesn't like the window open wide all night or wants to smoke in bed.

I HATE the vibration caused by others beating time to music by tapping the floor with their feet or a stick, or fist on the arm of a chair when I'm trying to read.

Yours sincerely,

Southwick. GEORGE FALLOWFIELD.

### Christmas at Northgate

As we awoke on Christmas morning the sun was streaming through the windows. Although this was unusual for Christmas, it was very appropriate for our plans for the day. At 7.30 a.m. we were all excitedly opening our stockings which we were surprised to find full at the end of our beds. Matron came in at eight o'clock and told us to wash and dress quickly and go down to breakfast. Then we all went to church. After the service we all ran home with an appetite for dinner. We had turkey, stuffing, roast potatoes and sprouts. After this we waded through the Christmas pudding which was full of sixpences.

Then to regain our appetites for tea, we went for a long walk over the Downs and on the seashore. When we arrived back at 3.30, tea was awaiting us. The tea was absolutely delicious. There were mince pies, jellies, cakes, etc., not forgetting a huge Christmas cake which was greatly relished.

After tea we all went into the hall and sat in a semi-circle around the brilliantly decorated Christmas tree which was laden with presents. Suddenly there was a loud knock at the door and Father Christmas entered. He then proceeded to hand out

presents to everyone. There was even one for himself. Following this we went into the nursery where we had games and country dancing. After this all the children acted a charade. The word was Northgate. For the first syllable we all came in with coats and scarves on and we were shivering with cold. This was meant to be the north wind. The second syllable was "gate"; we had a kissing gate and we all kissed one another. For the whole word we each did something which was common in Northgate, one rang the Dinner Bell, another shouted "Matron," and so on.

As the evening drew to a close we all thanked the staff for giving us such a lovely Christmas. Then, feeling very tired and happy, we went to bed.

MARY LOVERIDGE.

### An Emigrant

Those who met him at Ovingdean in 1946 will be interested to learn that J. F. N. Alton, of Moreton, Cheshire, has sailed for Australia with his family. After treatment John's sight improved so that he was outside the St. Dunstan's category, but he had been trained for assembly and he left us to take up a job as an aircraft assembly fitter at Hooton. Now, after much discussion with the authorities, he has been accepted as an emigrant and he sailed for Australia on January 11th. The "Daily Mail" had a story and photograph of him the next day. When he lands he will take up a job with a Government aircraft firm in Melbourne.

The good wishes of all his St. Dunstan's friends will go with him.

### National Laying Test

Report for the second period of four weeks, Nov. 8th to Dec. 5th, 1948.

Posn.	Name	Test Score
1	Bagwell, Philip ... ..	159
2	Gregory, T. D. ... ..	134
3	Webb, William ... ..	129
4	Woodcock, W. J. ... ..	107
5	Jarvis, Albert ... ..	102
6	MacIntosh, Charles ... ..	101
7	Chaffin, Albert ... ..	100
8	Clarke, T. ... ..	92
9	Young, W. E. ... ..	68
10	Holmes, Percy ... ..	58
11	Smith, W. Alan ... ..	47
12	Carpenter, E. H. ... ..	37

Average per bird to date—16.20.

### West House Notes

December festivities were heralded in by a visit from the Denham Film Studios Social and Sport Club Concert Party. We were delighted to welcome amongst the guests the Mayor of Brighton, Councillor Friend-James, and Miss Milne, Matron of the Royal Sussex Hospital, who has always been so good to our boys. The Concert Party gave us a first-class performance, including a Talent Competition which was very popular, and the lucky St. Dunstaners were:

Tiny Fleming, first prize;  
Tiny Northcott, second prize;  
Rope Trick Warren, third prize;  
John Mudge, fourth prize.

The Christmas programme from December 20th onwards went with a non-stop riot of entertainment, including dances with special competitions, visits to local pantomimes, Laurence Fawcett and his Twenty Questions, and our old friend, Jack Sullivan, leading the community singing.

We only wish that West House had elastic walls so that we could have accommodated more of our old friends whom we missed.

The Domino Tournament and Whist Drive were more popular than ever, and we were very thrilled to see so many St. Dunstaners and their wives. The prize-winners for the Domino Tournament were:

#### Residents—

Dai Thomas, first prize;  
F. Hemsworth, second prize;  
Jack Orrell, third prize.

#### Local St. Dunstaners—

Ethel Whiteman, first prize;  
F. Frank, second prize;  
W. Sebbage, third prize.

The markers at the winning tables were Mrs. Lamy and Mrs. Edwards.

The prize-winners for the Whist Drive were:

#### Ladies—

Miss Whiteman, Mrs. Fleetwood and Lady E. Daniells.

#### Men—

Jock Waddell, Bob Horsley, F. Parker, H. Clevitt, Billy Burnett and W. Bedford.

This year we went all nautical—even our printed programme said: "Christmas Fun and Festivities aboard H.M.S. Ousel"—and we were lucky in procuring all manner of appropriate gear such as a ship's wheel, compasses, pairs of oars, fishing nets

containing shoals of silver-foil fish, lobster pots and ship's lanterns, etc. We have to thank Wing Commander Curtis-Willson of the Yacht Club, Mr. Shipley of the Naval Cadets, and Mr. Savage of Ovingdean, for their grand help. Among the various ensigns was a Red Duster, presented to St. Dunstan's by Tommy Tuxford.

The staff and helpers really made the conservatory look ship-shape, the stage being made into the ship's bridge, complete with bell and wheel.

Mrs. Hufflet did us proud in the galley, and all the tourists thought they were travelling first-class!

One of the high-lights in our programme was a special concert on Christmas Eve arranged by George Killingbeck and compered by Matron, nobly assisted by Bob Osborne, Joe Walch, Tiny Northcott and George Taylor in solos and selections from "Chu Chin Chow." Killy surpassed himself in his "Recumbent Posture"!!! Mr. Francis Gyra, the clever artist from America, directed the second half of the programme. His lovely stained-glass window of the Madonna and Child, representing a corner of the church of St. Dunstan's in the East, was a beautiful background for the choir in their blue cassocks and white pleated surplices. A tableau of six angels followed, kneeling and standing in reverence carrying their golden Madonna lilies and wearing golden halos designed and executed by Mr. and Mrs. Jack Taylor.

On Christmas morning, Commandant and Sue, dressed as a cheery bo'sun and his mate, blew in to distribute the Christmas presents from a lifeboat on wheels. We were delighted to have with us for our Christmas Dinner some of the wives and friends, and it was good to see so many of our boys from the Sick Ward. Those who were not well enough to join us were specially catered for and entertained, and were given presents by the Yacht Club and the Butchers' Association. Orderly Howe assisted by Mr. Savage from Ovingdean, surpassed themselves in the decoration of the Dining Room. The tables, in the form of a horseshoe, were decorated with scarlet, blue and silver striped foil, interspersed with low bowls of anemones, moss and rosemary. At intervals, festive galleons ablaze with colour were laden with crackers of every hue, and during the toasts, which were drunk in port given to us by the

Grocers' Association, greetings telegrams from all over the world were read by the Commandant and Matron.

To round off the day, we finished up with a dance and Christmas party, which included games and competitions.

The following day the Communion and Evensong Services in our little Chapel were very well attended. The Crib looked beautiful, framed in daffodils and Christmas roses, the Star of Bethlehem lighting up the Crib.

In the evening, Ousel's Odd Broadcasters presented various sketches by Joan Brampton, produced by Elsie Brodie and compered by Arthur Mason.

### Our Settler Writes Home

At the beginning of the year, W. B. Riley left England to settle in South Africa as "mine host" of the Round House, Cape Town. Here is his first breezy letter home:—

This place is reputed to be one of the best places in the world, at any rate people come from all over to drink in the scenery and our tea at the same time. It comprises the original Round House and an annexe of ten rooms which we let off to boarders. It is backed by mountains, and stands about 800ft. up, and slopes gently down to the sea about a mile and a half away. The intervening land is planted with all kinds of semi-tropical trees, and just outside our back door we have oranges, peaches, apricots, figs and goodness knows what. Nasturtiums and geraniums grow just like weeds, and the latter climb up trees and flower so that they look like as though the tree had been sprinkled with them, and daily we pick large bunches of them to decorate the cafe. This same cafe is unique as we in Britain know them. You see, there is nowhere much to go in this place as Cape Town itself is only a small place. So all the society ladies come out here to air their new dresses and also their latest cars. And our lawns are a miniature Ascot and we graciously supply them with a cup of tea and a small scone for eighteen pence. I am writing this out in the garden under a tree, with nothing on but a pair of flannels and a thin shirt. The perspiration is running off me as the glass is about 40. My wife has just come to say that she has finished writing out the lunch menu. We do about thirty extra ones each day. To-day's

consists of Tomato Soup, Cold Salmon and Cucumber, Roast Duckling or Cold Ham or Chicken, with four different veg., Fresh Fruit Salad with Fresh Cream, then Coffee and Biscuits and three different kinds of cheese. We then have a notice inviting customers to help themselves to the fruit table which we fill with pineapples, peaches, green figs and grapes. This, you will agree, is not bad for four and a tanner.

We have seven coloured waitresses, and I have some real fun with them. Last Saturday they had a wedding. The first job was to find a chap with a soldering iron to mend their jewellery. Then they got toggled up in all the colours of the rainbow—Dolly blues, Irish greens, the brightest of pinks—a lot of rouge and lipstick and just a dab of soot on their noses to top the shine. What smashers! I had another interview with an old boy who was collecting for his church. He was dressed in a loin cloth and a long beard and a gold bracelet just under his knee to keep him from catching cold. He explained to me that as there were forty days and a similar number of nights taken up by the Flood, the Master and Madame of the house were expected to contribute a shilling for each one of them. I explained to him that it was not me who caused the Flood, and anyway, I doubted if there was so much money in the world. So I gave him a threepenny piece. My generosity overwhelmed him; he fell on his face, and after banging his forehead on the floor for a bit, he kissed my feet, and went on his way murmuring blessings on my house. Anyway it sounded like that. Last week we had forty bags of coal sent. The boys emptied them and put the bags in a heap, then they counted the empties. This was easier said than done. For every bag they held up a finger. As there were two of them all went well until they had counted twenty. Then the trouble started. Finally they took off their boots and all was well, but I am looking forward to next time, when I intend to order forty-five.

Since we arrived here, my wife has had some fun with chocolates, nylons and new dresses, but the novelty is wearing off. I still cannot get over the price of booze at eight bob a bottle, and tobacco at one and six a quarter pound. Please remember me to anyone who may ask about us.

All the very best wishes for Xmas,

WILLIAM RILEY.

### Talking Book Library December Draft

Happy New Year, 1949, to all readers or would-be readers. Now to clear up 1948. The last month of the year provided five new books for general circulation. "Columbus," historical fairy tale, heads the list, then "Tomboy in Lace" and "Private Enterprise" bring us up to the last ten years. "An Eye for a Tooth" makes a good adventure yarn, and, finally, "The Westering Sun."

"Columbus," written by Rafael Sabatini, read by Lionel Marson, is well read and well written and gives virility, bombast and strength to a character on his way to world acclamation. The story is convincing enough and enjoyable with settings in Venice and then Spain. (N.B.—Students of history, please do not read this as a text-book).

"Tomboy in Lace," written by Bertha Ruck, read by Lionel Marson, is a good story, well read and well recorded, covering a period, 1942-1947, in the lives of a corporal artist and a land-girl. It is a romantic novel with a good title and several little twists to mark the craftsmanship of the author. Good reading for a post-war story and little is heard of food and shortages.

"Private Enterprise," written by Angela Thirkell, read by Georgie Henschel, is well recorded but gives the reader little chance. This is simply 1945-1947 from an unsympathetic political angle and Mrs. Thirkell was probably hungry when she wrote it. My impression was that the book was written for our grandchildren and their children, and was designed for the 21st century as social history. "Ladies only" is my opinion.

"An Eye for a Tooth," written by Dornford Yates, read by Duncan Carse, is well read and recorded as far as I read, but I was unable to finish it. The setting of the adventure is Central Europe and Mr. Yates uses his well-known team to make exciting reading for us.

"The Westering Sun," written by George Blake, read by Stephen Jack, is a long book, well read and recorded, covering sixty years of a Scottish family through a period of luxurious degeneration, with only one daughter revealing any qualities of stability or responsibility. It is not a good book or a bad book—it is just another book.

NELSON.

### "Night Attack"

This episode of the Great War occurred during the early winter of 1917.

A column of the R.A.S.C. were parked in a village about ten miles to the west of Albert. Two of the drivers (who were great chums), had built themselves a bivouac, complete with bunks and a fireplace. This was constructed of timber and tarpaulin sheets, built close up to the face wall in a chalk pit.

Over the head of each bed a small shelf was fitted angle-wise across a corner, on which to place odds and ends and spare rations. On the day in question, each man had been issued, among other things, with a 2lb. container of raspberry jam: These had been duly opened and the lids lightly replaced after using. Came night and all was quiet and peaceful. Suddenly, without warning, pandemonium broke loose. The guard turned out; the C.S.M. came running out of his tent, buttoning his overcoat over his pyjama suit, and with his gas mask, steel helmet and Wellingtons.

When he and the sergeant of the guard reached the point of the uproar they saw a man in a little short shirt, dancing about with his face and top part of his body covered in what they thought was blood; a ghastly and gory sight he looked by the light of a candle.

When they came to dress his wounds, the "blood" was very gritty; it might be shrapnel, but no sound of firing had been heard during the night! Investigation was made, and it was discovered that a rat in search of food on the shelf had overturned the raspberry jam, which had been placed too near the edge of the shelf and had fallen with precision on the face of the sleeper beneath. How do I know all this? Well, I happened to be one of the sleeping men. But don't mention raspberries to the other man.

E. A. MARSDEN.

*(The Editor would welcome true amusing stories of service days or since. They should not exceed 250 words and should be shorter, if possible.)*

### Grandfathers

S. H. Edwards, Hackney; P. Milliss, Sevenoaks.

### Ovingdean Notes

Since the end of the Christmas term is always so crammed with parties, the Concert and Pantomime took place at the beginning of December and a short report of the Choir's excellent performance and Miss Carlton's delightful burlesque of "Cinderella" appeared in last month's REVIEW. "Cinderella," a V.A.D., and the Prince of Ovingdean, were played by Miss Genower and Miss Cooper; Miss Carlton herself as the Fairy Sugar Plum was a big hit—she made all her entrances and exits to the accompaniment of a penny whistle—and was ably assisted by her page, Miss Barton. Whilst Cinders was preparing for the Ball—a Monday night dance—Ted Bullen, Ron Smith and Alby Ryan delighted the audience with a comical sketch of three trainees returning from the "White Horse"; then Alby entertained with a tap dance.

Trainees in the Basket Shop took to heart the request Councillor Nicholls made one Tuesday evening at the Dome for children's toys, to be distributed at Christmas time. Each man made a dainty little basket to rejoice the heart of any child, and each basket carried the name and a message of goodwill from the donor. On Tuesday, December 7th, Ted Penny handed the baskets to Councillor Nicholls in the Dome, receiving the appreciation of all who were present.

The Ovingdean Darts Team is still most enthusiastic and this term, out of fifteen matches (nine away and six home) has won ten.

**Shooting.**—Sixty-one men entered for a knock-out competition at the beginning of the month, and after some very brilliant shooting, the competition was concluded by the following results:

*Winner*—Ted Penny.

*Runner-up*—Dickie Richardson.

Stan Oliver and Joe Ormond were knocked out in the semi-finals. A running commentary, which was relayed into the Lounge, was given by Commandant, and Air Commodore Dacre presented the prizes.

The Christmas Dinner and Dance on December 13th brought a happy term to a successful close and we were delighted to have with us at this time Sir Ian and Lady Fraser and Air Commodore and Mrs. Dacre. The dinner was one of the real old-fashioned kind about which one only dreams to-day, and not a thing was lacking to make it a

memorable occasion, and our thanks go to Mrs. Comer and her staff. After speeches and toasts, everyone gathered in the Lounge, then dancing and games were the order of the evening. The fun waxed fast until the clock struck eleven, and the party finished with "Auld Lang Syne."

We should like to send our very best wishes to all who have left Ovingdean this term.

### The Tap And All That

Some of us remember what fun we had when we were very small, when we escaped the eyes of Authority and turned on the tap to sail our paper boats in the sink and, incidentally, get ourselves thoroughly soaked. Later, as school children, we put on a superior air and talked of H<sub>2</sub>O in front of our little sister; but it wasn't such fun when we were in the classroom and forgot the formula. During the war there were moments when water assumed a new value in our eyes. We thought of it with more respect—a commodity which had become infinitely precious once we were denied unlimited supplies. War over, and the burst pipes repaired, we once more carelessly turn on the tap and water gushes out, fresh and sparkling. We need it to bath the baby, or wash the clothes, or to dilute the thirty under proof—or even to drink neat for those who prefer it that way.

But—and a very big but—do we ever stop to think of the journey the water has made before it reaches the tap—a long, long journey through varied countryside to the large towns and cities, where the majority of us live?

May I take you on a tour—in imagination—and travel the same path as the water does day by day.

When the clouds break, the water that the sun had drawn up from the earth falls back on us again and, sinking into the soil, forms springs and wells, and from these it is brought by canals, trunk mains, and ducts to the thirsty populations of our crowded towns. As the river or main pursues its winding course, more and more water is pumped up from deep wells on the route, and so the volume of water increases as it approaches its destination.

At certain periods some of the water is deflected into large storage reservoirs, which keep the supply mains at full pressure in case of drought, or when the primary

source is under supply—or rather under demand!

During the progress of the water towards the towns and cities, samples are frequently taken and forwarded in sealed, sterilized bottles to the laboratories, where they undergo stringent bacterial tests in order to prevent the possibility of contaminated water reaching the public.

Once the water has reached the outskirts of the large town or city, it is subjected to real factory treatment, for, before it is allowed to enter the supply mains, it is pumped, guided and forced through a series of filter beds, and it also has to submit to chemical treatment of various kinds. Then, having survived all this, it disappears from view into the larger trunk mains. But that is not the end of the care that is exercised to ensure that the water coming out of your tap is as it should be. Inspectors are kept busy seeing that the water fittings in your house are of the proper type, and that you do not misuse the water, or work appliances which might contaminate the water, and let it seep back into the mains.

In large cities the water supply system might be compared to the arterial blood streams of the human body. Taking the pumping stations as the heart and the larger trunk mains as the main arteries, the water circulates to the lesser arteries, and so on, eventually passing into the lead pipes which correspond to the capillaries of the human body. And, as the blood helps to dispose of impurities in the body, so does the water help the life and health of the city by providing fire hydrants, street flushing hydrants, etc.

The complicated work of supplying water to meet the needs of the population of such a city as London is rarely appreciated. And there are many people who do not understand why the water has to be brought from so far away. True, the rain pours down just as hard on the cities as on the countryside. But the rain falling on built-up areas is almost entirely lost as far as our water supply is concerned. Most of it, instead of sinking into the ground, falls on roofs or pavings or hard roads and, collecting dust and dirt on its way, it passes into the drains and sewers. The little that reaches the soil is for the greater part absorbed by the existing vegetation. Only a small percentage escapes to find its way according to the strata, and perhaps in the end reach

one of the water supplier wells, to add its quota to the vast volume of water required to supply the city.

And just how vast that volume is can be calculated when one realises that, in our large towns and cities, the water consumption per person per day is reckoned at 28 gallons. This does not, of course, mean that every inhabitant lets 28 gallons of water flow out of his tap daily. Besides that used by him personally, the 28 gallons includes his share of the water used in the service of the public, in street flushing, for example, or for washing out the fish shops!

Twenty-eight gallons of water per day from springs and wells, so many miles away, pumped out of the earth, guided on its long, winding journey to the town, tested, treated and delivered at the house—and what does it cost us? A house of average size, with a family of, say, three, four, or more, pays a rate of ninepence to a shilling a week. If the family is four in a house paying ninepence a week, that comes to less than a shilling for a thousand gallons!

No black market there!  
Tottenham, N.17. JOHN A. MUDGE.

### Bridge Club Notes

On December 18th, 1948, the Bridge Section of the Club held their Christmas Bridge Party, when twenty-four members of the Club, each with a guest, had a most enjoyable afternoon. There were quite a number of prizes. As to who won the prizes, who cares? The rooms were very suitably decorated, thanks to Mrs. Spurway producing the foliage, and Miss Ibbetson and Mr. Willis, with their co-helpers, doing the artistic arranging of the holly, etc. We were especially delighted to welcome Miss Carter, who presented the prizes, and also Miss Hensley.

NOTE.—All St. Dunstaners interested in bridge (players) please attend the Annual Meeting of the Bridge Section on Saturday, 5th February, at 2.30 p.m.

FRANK A. RHODES.

### Young St. Dunstaners

Brenda McIntosh, Dumfries, is now a Queen's Guide—this is the highest award in the movement.

### Marriages

Douglas Wylie, Bromley, on November 27th, to Miss Eileen Renny.

Marian Davies, Sandbach, on November 20th, to Mr. John Etherton.

## “ In Memory ”

### Private Albert Mann, 12th South Wales Borderers

With deep regret we record the death of A. Mann, of Essendine, near Stamford, who served in the 12th South Wales Borderers from July, 1915, until December, 1916.

When he came to St. Dunstan's he was not a young man, but he took up basket-making and right up to the time of his death was interested in this hobby. For a number of years, however, it had been obvious that his health was failing. He was able to visit Brighton last year and thoroughly enjoyed his holiday, but a few months later he was removed to a nursing home where he died on November 22nd.

A wreath from Sir Ian Fraser and his St. Dunstan's comrades was sent for the funeral. Our very sincere sympathy goes out to his widow.

### Corporal Amos Robinson, 1st Royal Fusiliers

It is with deep regret that we record the death on January 1st, of A. Robinson, of Tottenham, N.17. He was wounded at Loos Wood in September, 1916, and he came to St. Dunstan's two months later, where he trained as a shopkeeper.

He had been ill for some time and was admitted to our Brighton Home but he died shortly afterwards. Many St. Dunstaners and members of the Brighton staff attended the funeral, and among the many flowers was a wreath from the Chairman.

Our deep sympathy is extended to his widow.

### Private William Edward Cairns, King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry

With deep regret we record the death of W. E. Cairns, of Liversedge.

Although his sight was very severely damaged and he also lost a leg as a result of his service in the 1914-1918 war, he did not come to us until last December. It was then arranged for him to enter West House as a permanent resident, but he had a seizure and he passed away on December 29th in Staincliffe General Hospital.

As the funeral had taken place before we were notified of his death, a wreath from Sir Ian and his St. Dunstan's comrades was placed on his grave.

He was a widower and our sympathy is extended to his relatives.

Mrs. A. Robinson would like to thank Matron, nurses, orderlies and other St. Dunstaners and their wives who were so kind to her during her husband's illness and when he passed away. She deeply appreciates that, in the midst of their Christmas festivities, they had time to think of her in her trouble.

### Births

CAMERON.—On January 2nd, to the wife of R. G. Cameron, of Forest Gate, a son—Robert Murray.

GOODHEAD.—On December 24th, to the wife of R. Goodhead, of Sheffield, a daughter.

JENNINGS.—On December 21st, to the wife of D. Jennings, of Market Harborough, a daughter.

JONES.—On December 24th, to the wife of R. Jones, of Cardiff, a daughter—Carol Elizabeth.

RICHARDS.—On January 3rd, to the wife of E. Richards, of Dudley, Worcs., a son.

### Death

GADD.—Our deep sympathy goes out to A. W. Gadd, of Chessington, whose wife passed away on December 31st.

### Marriage

BLACKMORE—HARRIS.—On December 27th, P. Blackmore, of Cardiff, to Miss Evelyn Harris.

### Tommy Handley

St. Dunstaners everywhere heard with regret of the death of Tommy Handley.

At the funeral, on January 13th, a wreath of poppies was sent bearing the inscription: "Tommy Handley—From the blinded men and women of St. Dunstan's at the Training Centre, the Holiday and Convalescent Homes, and in their homes all over the United Kingdom, in sincere admiration and appreciation of many hours of great enjoyment."

### Old Christmas Cards

W. Burtenshaw, of Wimborne, reminds us that the Andrew Davison Christmas Card Industry, Morpeth, Northumberland, would welcome old Christmas cards and calendars. This industry was begun by Andrew Davison, an ex-serviceman who was bedridden for 27 years until his death in 1945, but his work has been carried on. The cards are renovated, and the entire profit goes to help disabled ex-servicemen who are too badly injured to work to augment their pensions.