

ST. DUNSTAN'S REVIEW

For Men and Women Blinded on War Service

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GROWING OLDER

(Contributed)

While I am ready to agree we are never too old to learn, I think a man about to celebrate his fortieth birthday has passed the toddling stage and an organisation nearing forty years' activity has begun to feel its feet, especially when that organisation happens to be St. Dunstan's. Its reputation is world-wide, and not because it belongs, as it were, to the British Empire, for men of all nationalities and races have passed through St. Dunstan's and amongst them, hundreds of doubly handicapped who presented gigantic problems.

Special typewriters and braille machines have been invented, special gadgets made for others, special tools and special workshop equipment for the man with special problems.

Everything was not foreseen; we had to learn often from experience, and the lesson was often expensive.

I am reminded of when I had just settled down and both my wife and I had a lot to learn. I was working in my shed at the end of the garden after dark when she came in; I, unable to hear and my work preventing me from feeling her enter, I did not stop work. She went groping round until she was slashed across the face with a piece of cane; about the same time a friend called and in his case he tripped over my plank and fell with his face in the staking. Thus St. Dunstan's realised the need for a light in a deaf-blind man's workshop.

Since the last war we have included many more modern methods and improvements; nevertheless there are times when a well-meaning person comes along with an idea that was put forward years ago, thoroughly investigated and then scrapped as not worth while. One of these was the method of lip-reading by touch and it was scrapped in view of the active life we deaf men of St. Dunstan's lived, and still live. When I find a girl like Gwennie talking to me, who has only part of a forefinger and thumb on her left hand, I see no excuse for people with two complete hands. Indeed, Sgt. Alan Nichols learnt the manual and spoke to me for years with his artificial hands, with slight alterations; unfortunately we didn't meet much during the war so the old Sarge got out of practice. Other handless men adopt the well-known block letter method which was used by escorts in walking races except that the latter wrote on our backs as we strode along. The late W. Birch had his own system. We were together for the first time and he badly wanted to ask a question and at first I was puzzled at his tapping of my hand. Then I realised he was tapping Braille dots. So fast did he go at his particular method that he was streets ahead of an expert at the manual who was confined to longhand.

My young friend, Wally Thomas, has met and chatted with Mr. Hatton who was referred to a month or so ago, and was no more interested in the touch-lip reading than I was after meeting and chatting with Helen Keller twice, first in London years ago, then at Ovingdean in November, 1946.

GEO. FALLOWFIELD.

War Pensions Debated

Speaking at the Conservative Conference at Blackpool on October 7th, Sir Ian Fraser in a debate on war pensions said the claims of all classes of pensioners were equal but those of the war pensioners were especially so. It had been suggested there was some conflict between the claims of war pensioners and old age pensioners. That was not so—certainly not in the minds of the British Legion.

Britain had done much to alleviate the burden of her most severely disabled men but there were hundreds of thousands of partially disabled men who still received, by way of war pension and allowances, money which bought less now than had been customary for years. When currency was de-valued through war or policy, it was up to the nation to make good to those men by bringing up to an appropriate value the compensation which they received. "It is a matter of honour," he said, "to look after the men who were hurt in our service as we promised and implied we would do when they went to war."

(Applause).

In his reply, Mr. Peake, Minister of Pensions and National Insurance, said that when the Government announced its new pensions plans, it would be able to claim that it had made good the whole of the loss suffered by pensioners between 1946 and 1951. He told Sir Ian, "for the seriously disabled war pensioner, I hope we shall be able to do something further still."

Aston Villa F.C.

The Aston Villa Football Club, who take a keen interest in St. Dunstaners, are arranging to lay on a commentary on the game at Villa Park every Saturday when the team plays at home.

This will take place at a small room on the ground and the commentaries will be given by the owners.

We should like those interested in football to make an effort to come along and support this very generous gesture.

Please send your name to D. Cashmore, 50 Umberslade Road, Selly Oak, who will keep you informed.

E. M. KING, *Welfare Visitor*.

Placement

R. Armstrong, of Leytonstone, as a capstan-lathe operator with Messrs E. N. Bray, Whipcross Works, Walthamstow.

Deaf-Blind Watch Fund

This Fund—as my St. Dunstaner friends will know—was started early in 1945 by our old friend, Mr. Ottaway, and since that date the substantial sum of £716 has been subscribed almost entirely by St. Dunstaners.

The object of the Fund is to supply Braille watches to the civilian deaf-blind, and I hear from the National Deaf-Blind Helpers' League that they still have on their lists about one hundred deaf-blind persons who have no watch.

In the early days of the Fund, Braille watches were difficult to obtain and costly, but now they are cheaper as purchase-tax is no longer payable and there is no difficulty with supplies. The present cost of a braille watch is £4 13s. 0d.

A few St. Dunstaners have maintained their interest in the Fund during the past year or so, and the Bridge Club have very kindly sent a braille watch to the National Deaf-Blind Helpers' League every year. I feel sure there may be many St. Dunstaners who might care to send me a small donation for this little Fund, which gives such pleasure to our deaf-blind friends.

W. ASKEW, *Hon. Treasurer*.

Great-Grandfathers

With the birth of Dennis Rose, our St. Dunstaner, G. Rose, of Pontefract, becomes a great-grandfather, and his mother a great-great-grandmother, five generations being represented. He now has seventeen grandchildren.

H. H. Burnett, of Enfield, also has our congratulations upon becoming a great-grandfather for the first time.

Grandfathers

W. Thomas, of Wakefield (a daughter for Barbara); F. Beresford, of Stoke-on-Trent; T. H. Brewer, of West House (five grandchildren now); R. Edwards, of Denbigh; L. Jackson, of Heswall; J. H. Dalton, of Middlesbrough; J. Boyd, of Brighton (a second grand-daughter); E. Watts, of Birkenhead; W. Thomas, of Shipley; J. D. Rose, of North Berwick; and J. Thompson, of Parkstone (a second grandson).

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Maureen Lees was awarded a Certificate of Merit for a pram cover and towel submitted to the Ministry of Pensions Preliminary Competition prior to the Olympia exhibition.

London Club

Bridge Notes

The opening event after the August recess was the annual visit to Harrogate. Eight members of the Club made the journey, and we do appreciate most sincerely the assistance given to us by Mr. R. Willis, who was in charge of the party.

The week's programme was divided between match and social bridge, our team winning three out of the four matches played.

The St. Dunstan's trophy (teams of four), open to all clubs in Harrogate and District, was won by the Starbeck W. M. Club, the Oakdale Golf Club finishing a very close second.

On the Friday evening we held our At Home night at the Dirlton Hotel; the prizes for the bridge drive were made by St. Dunstaners.

A vote of thanks was extended to Mr. F. L. Nokes and Mr. W. Burgess for the work they do to make this a most enjoyable week. In reply, Mr. Nokes expressed the desire that next year at least twelve members would visit Harrogate. Please bear this in mind.

On September 18th the North v. South match took place, which resulted in a win for the North by 2,200.

Only one team, comprising Messrs. Gover, Nuyens, Winter, Thompson and Bulman, is entered for the London Business Houses League. They won their first match, against the Civil Service, by 21 match points, on Friday, September 24th, and their second, against Hicomind, on October 1st, by five match points. W. BISHOP.

Walking Section

The Walking season for 1954-55 commenced on Saturday, September 25th, with the annual two-mile race at Highgate.

Ten St. Dunstaners were there to take part, including a newcomer, Ron Harmsworth, a trainee at Ovingdean, and we were very pleased to welcome him. Ron was the first man off in the open handicap and maintained a good pace throughout the two miles. Charles Stafford was second off and walked very well to win. Alf Bradley, showing great improvement, was second, and Archie Brown (still going strong) was ninth to start and finished third. Charles Williamson was a very close fourth, Bill Miller, the scratch man, laying a lazy fifth.

Prizes were presented to 1st, 2nd and 3rd, handicap, and first, second, third actual times, with Archie taking one of each.

W. M.

St. Dunstan's Two Mile Invitation Walk

Promoted by Highgate Harriers
Parliament Hill Sports Track
Saturday, September 25th, 1954

Order of Finish		Actual Time	Time Allow.
1.	C. Stafford ...	17:31	2:25
2.	A. Bradley ...	17:36	1:55
3.	A. Brown ...	17:39	:20
4.	C. Williamson ...	17:41	:25
5.	W. Miller ...	17:45	Scratch
6.	L. Dennis ...	17:58	2:05
7.	T. Gaygan ...	18:02	:40
8.	S. Tutton ...	18:35	1:30
9.	P. Cryan ...	18:50	:30
10.	R. Harmsworth ...	20:27	3:30

Winner of Handicap	C. Stafford.
Second	A. Bradley.
Third	A. Brown.

Fastest Times:

1st	W. Miller.
2nd	A. Brown.
3rd	C. Williamson.

Handicapper, Mr. W. J. Harris.

Presentation to Mr. Doughty

On Tuesday evening, October 12th, at the London Club, the presentation was made to Mr. A. W. Doughty of his retirement gift to which St. Dunstaners from all over the country had subscribed.

Mr. Askew, who presided, said he had been asked to act as Hon. Treasurer of the Fund and he would call on Mr. Sammy Webster, Chairman of the London Club, to make the presentation. In a neat little speech, Sammy paid tribute to Mr. Doughty's thirty-six years of service, then handed to him a handsome wrist watch.

Replying, Mr. Doughty said that this was the first time he had been to the London Club, "but," he said, "when I say thank you, I am not thanking only those here tonight but St. Dunstaners all over the country who have so kindly contributed to this gift. The watch will every day remind me—if I need any reminding—of the long and happy time I have spent in the service of St. Dunstan's and St. Dunstaners."

Letters to the Editor

DEAR EDITOR,

The following is a reply to P. J. Harris's article re marriage bureau in the September issue of the "REVIEW"

*Oh, Peter, Oh, Peter, you sure had a go
When you advertised your marriage bureau,
But you must admit you made an omission
When you failed to divulge your rate of commission,
So why should they go to your marriage bureau
And fall in with their conjuring tricks,
And pay them something like twenty-five quid
When they can do it themselves for nix.*

ALF. J. WILTSHIRE.

Norbury, S.W.16.

DEAR EDITOR,

Amongst the group of war pensioners known as the totally disabled, there are many included because of the special character of their injury. The totally blind come into this category and help to form the outer border of this group. It is agreed that no one can be more than 100% disabled, and therefore it seems to me wrong that these borderline cases should be used as the standard for 100% basic pensions.

The structure of the pensions scheme was compounded many years ago by actuaries whose sole purpose was to save the Treasury as much money as possible, and they used the devilishly ingenious scheme of making the borderline cases the 100% and the real 100% disabled had their pensions made up by graded allowances. This was done simply to keep down payments to the vast majority of pensioners who are only partially disabled. Now Padre Nugee appears to believe that if you change the word allowances into 100% plus something or other, you change the character of the pension scheme. It is true that he also suggests consolidation, and I agree with him on that point, but only to establish the real 100% level.

Padre Nugee also states that you will not get rid of anomalies just by increasing the basic rate. That is true, but one must face reality and this form of increase does benefit proportionately all pensioners. Finally, may I point out that any Parliament who had a mind to take away allowances that had been granted would not find it very difficult to reduce consolidated pensions if ever they were of a mind to do so.

Yours sincerely,

EDGAR R. ETRIDGE.

Addiscombe.

DEAR EDITOR,

I was very interested in Mr. Nugee's letter in the September issue, particularly with regard to the suggestion that appropriate cases should be assessed at 100% "plus."

Whilst endorsing this, I would also like to suggest that the pensions generally should be increased with advancing years—although one fully sympathises with the need for an increase in the basic pensions, I personally feel that there is just as great a need for an increase in the percentage as the pensioner gets older, because with advancing years his disability is apt to react on his earning capacity to a serious extent.

I think it would be wrong, even if the country could afford it, to increase the basic pension too much, for particularly with the young pensioner, that might take away his incentive to earn a living in spite of his disability, which to my mind is all important, and in fact I would go so far as to say that the object of every pensioner should be to try and earn sufficient to leave him independent of his pension, thus furthering his rehabilitation and independence.

Briefly, I would suggest that pensions might be based somewhat on the following broad principles:

1. A 100% "plus" basis should apply to appropriate multiple injury cases—those of us who have been lucky enough to lose, say, only two limbs are indeed in a fortunate position compared with those who have lost sight as well as a limb or limbs, and some of us indeed feel very uncomfortable about the favourable position in which we are placed from a pension aspect as compared with our less fortunate friends.
2. The Constant Attendance and Comfort Allowance are not really pensions but represent the partial reimbursement of the expense to which certain cases of disability are put because of their handicap, or, alternatively, the deprivation of the earning capacity of the family in cases where one member of it devotes his or her time to looking after the pensioner.

They should not therefore be taken into account in assessing the pension as such.

3. I submit that all appropriate cases should have their percentage of disability reviewed and increased with advancing years.

If, say, a man with the loss of a limb is assessed at 50% whilst he is young, that might well be an adequate percentage for some years, but later in life it would generally be found that he is unable to compete so successfully with his more able-bodied friends and thus what might have been a fair assessment at 50% some years ago, should be increased to help him over the later years of his life.

It may well be wise to be "cruel to be kind" to those who are young, and to give them a pension which provides bread and a thin coating of margarine, leaving them to earn their butter and jam for the good of their soul, but surely their efforts should be rewarded in later years when their disability may well press on them so much more heavily.

Finally, I fully agree with Mr. Nugee that pensions should not be reduced by reference to earning capacity.

Yours faithfully,

M. SPENCER-ELL.

Henley-on-Thames.

DEAR EDITOR,

I wonder how many St. Dunstaners have had the experience I have had in trying to get someone to take me for a walk once or twice a week. I like walking and while I was training at Ovingdean I applied for a guide dog but was told I was too old, although why should a man of sixty or over, who is active, not be allowed a dog? The amazing part of it is that if you had a guide dog previously to reaching the age limit, you may get one, but if you, like myself, lose your little sight you did have late in life, with regard to getting a guide dog you are just unlucky. However, to get down to details of my own experience.

I finished my training at Ovingdean about six years ago and my welfare visitor Miss E. Pease, wrote to the local Red Cross Society and their representative came to see me and enquired when I would require to go out. I told her that as I was my own boss, I would make my time suit the time of the person willing to take me. Nothing could be clearer than that. She told me she would bring the matter before the British Legion Benevolent meeting. This she did, but with no result.

Then a friend of mine knew a Rotarian friend and the friend wrote to the secretary

of the local Club with the result that I was taken to the local Rotarian's lunch, introduced to the secretary, told them what I wanted—and heard no more.

Then someone got in touch with Toc H. I had a visit from the jobmaster who also asked me when I would want to go out. I told him, too, that I would make my time suit the time of whoever was good enough to take me out. I have now lost all faith in human nature as that was the last I heard of that.

Various St. Dunstaners have said, "Never trouble anyone," but I personally will not walk about in a town alone. I do not think the risk is worth while so I simply stay in. My wife cannot walk a lot as she suffers from arthritis.

Mr. Wally Thomas's letter shows the danger of a blind man travelling alone. Although I travel alone, I do not like doing it, and now that the railways are nationalised all registered blind persons should be allowed two tickets for the price of one so that he or she can always have an escort.

Yours sincerely,

Great Yarmouth.

E. B. OXBOROUGH.

DEAR EDITOR,

Pardon me while I give a call. Hallo, St. Dunstan's. Wakey! wakey! This is "Simple Dimples" calling from Brighton. I have laid an egg, I cried, not an 'orse. It may be due to the proximity of Ovingdean that has produced West House, for I have heard of the great efforts that are made at Ovingdean to help the fellows find new outlets for their pent-up energies.

Nearly ten years ago—April, 1945—before the bells of victory pealed throughout the land, I became a casualty that has proven a life sentence. The vexatious question of a lifetime is sorting itself—*cui bono?* meaning "to what purpose?" I accepted the challenge and said to myself I would find the answer to this question, the meaning of life, cost what it may.

I metaphorically threw all my interests into the dustbin and concentrated for nearly ten years. The way has been long, dark and painful, but at last I am coming out into the clear, living for the first time in my life with the icy cold hand of frustration lifted and, I think, cast off for good, for I have come to realise that the answer to this question is a truth that was there all the time, but I was unable to see it. It is

that God has the perfect answer to his critics, namely, the last word—"For man may destroy but God restores"—for I believe in the resurrection of the body and life ever after, amen.

To any St. Dunstaners who have been plagued by the same question, I recommend a little book as the first step in the right direction; the name of the book is "A Map of Life," by F. J. Sheed. The book is available in braille and it would give anyone who chooses to read it furiously to think.

Yours sincerely,

West House, Brighton. B. J. BUTLER.

DEAR EDITOR,

Recently it was necessary that I should enter hospital and like most people, I began to wonder what it would be like and what sort of companions I should have. However, my fears were soon allayed. To my delight I found myself in a small but airy ward containing only six beds and these were occupied by men of my own decade and all of them ex-servicemen—1914-18 vintage. The smallness of the ward made conversation easy and we all had something in common. One was my co-entrant, Mr. Seymour-Lindsay, and if any readers are interested in visiting old churches, abbeys, etc., they may have had pointed out to them his art. Mr. Seymour-Lindsay has designed the ironwork for altar rails, tombs and chapels in most of the bigger and older churches in the country.

The other occupants of the ward were very interested in the work of St. Dunstan's and after my operation one of my fellow patients came over to chat, but let him tell his own story. He is Major G. King, M.C., and he writes to me as follows:

"As promised, here is a letter which I have divided into two parts; one referring to my brief meetings with Major Bridges in Malaya and the other with details of my own experience.

I first met Major Bridges at a dinner party at one of the big hotels in Kuala Lumpur where we were fellow guests of the Chief Social Welfare Officer of the Federation of Malaya. Watching him during the evening it was indeed hard to realise his handicap. During the months that followed I heard much of his work in connection with the Welfare of the Blind in Malaya, but I did not meet him again till the beginning of 1952 when I went down to Kuala Lumpur to attend a big

conference of all the Probation Officers in Malaya.

One of the items of the Conference was an address by Major Bridges. He spoke for about half an hour, easily and smoothly, giving us a mass of statistics and figures, all from memory. It was a masterpiece from start to finish. . . . we were all left with the vivid impression of being addressed by a man who knew his job from A to Z. In a country where blindness is taken so much for granted, as it is in all Asian countries, his task must have been made so much more difficult than if it had been in this country, but one heard nothing but praise on all sides for the way in which he was getting things done.

"As for myself, my life has been roughly divided into two parts, about eighteen years of professional acting and broadcasting, and about fourteen years commissioned military service in both world wars. In addition to quite a number of broadcasts for the B.B.C. and Radio Luxembourg, I was employed by Radio Malaya throughout the whole of 1948, taking part in all their plays and having for some months my own programme of poetry reading, of which I still have some recordings."

I am sure that we all wish Major Ronald Bridges the success he deserves in his work in Malaya.

Yours sincerely,

H. CRABTREE.

Balaklava, October 25th, 1854

George Fallowfield reminds us that it is one hundred years since the famous Charge of the Light Brigade and therefore one hundred years since the first woman went on to the battlefield to dress the wounds of the fallen.

At this time then, we pay tribute to the memory of Florence Nightingale, and to those members of the nursing services to whom St. Dunstaners particularly owe so much.

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In "Braille Sports Report," Dixie Dean's story has been appearing and in it he tells of the motor-cycling accident which almost put him out of football. He did go back, "thanks," he says, "to the training staff and to old Harry Cook." Harry was of course, masseur to Everton F.C. in those days.

An Angle on Conscription of the Future

Through the centuries nations have wasted the flower of their youth on the sport of bloody warfare, which has seemed through history to be the most important occupation of mankind. The introduction of conscription in this twentieth century, to forcibly man the armed services with precious, adolescent man-power, endorses that historical trend and fatuously persists in a wastage, we, of all nations, cannot afford.

Conditions are rapidly changing, and every mother's son and daughter born on this island will be called upon to contribute in the future at least 50 to 100 years directly or indirectly productive work, to keep a population with an average age close to 70 from starvation and disintegration.

It appears that 30 or 40 years from now expectation of life will be in the region of 125 years so that it is going to be fair to assume that conscription should then or before then apply to whippersnappers of 60 instead of the present 18. (Recruits going literally bald-headed for sergeant-majors—that'll be the day!).

Fantastic as the picture is at first sight, there are three very distinct advantages that spring to mind immediately and quite probably there are many more. The youth will be putting in 40 or more years of good work before being offered up for cannon fodder; some of the gentlemen who make any declaration of war will have the deterrent of knowing themselves due for conscription; in any case, the makers of the weapons will have to be far more numerous and important than the fighting men in any war prior to the next Ice Age.

Some may say that at 60 a conscript would be no good, but what a man can do when he is compelled is exactly what makes truth stranger than fiction.

G. A. P.

Miss M. Davies

Confusion has arisen with regard to the address of our Northern Area Welfare Visitor, Miss M. Davies. All correspondence for Miss Davies should be addressed to her at 12 Ruskin Street, Briton Ferry, Neath, Glam.

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"What you do speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say."—EMERSON.

Ruby Weddings

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Evans, of Erdington, Birmingham, who celebrated their 40th anniversary on September 28th, and congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. J. Blakeley, of Liverpool, who celebrated their Ruby Wedding on October 24th.

Silver Wedding

Congratulations, too, to Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Gale, of Grays, whose Silver Wedding was on September 30th.

Correction

Jack Mahoney's regiment was given wrongly in the list of Old Contemptibles last month as "Ulster Rifles." Our St. Dunstaner served in the 1/9th London Regiment, Queen Victoria Rifles, and we apologise. Our records are being amended.

Brighton and District Club

The above Club meets in the Winter Gardens, St. Dunstan's, Ovingdean, on the second Thursday of each month at 7 p.m., when the usual games of dominoes, darts, cribbage and whist are played.

During the winter months those interested in bowls can enjoy this game between the hours of 10.30 and 12.30 every Tuesday morning at the "King Alfred," on the Hove front.

All those interested please come along. An average of twelve St. Dunstaners have, during the greater part of the summer, met every Tuesday morning at St. Ann's Well Gardens, Hove, to play bowls on the outdoor rinks, and have enjoyed the coaching and delightful friendship of Messrs. Finlay, Trotman, Yeomanson and their many bowling associates.

The Bowls Section had a most enjoyable outing to Seaford, when we were entertained by the Crouch Green Bowling Club, assisted by the Seaford Detachment of the Red Cross, who provided an excellent tea, and the Seaford Rotary Club, who kept the smokers constantly supplied with cigarettes. We also had a very happy outing to the Derby, and on August 26th a coach-load, plus overflow, had an outing to Goudhurst, Kent. This was a most enjoyable day, especially as it was a real summer day.

FRANK A. RHODES.

Forty Years

At the end of July, 1914, my wife and I and our little girl, Evelyn, aged four, were spending a holiday in Scarborough. I had a business in Leeds and the reason for the holiday was that we were expecting another happy event in October.

On the 2nd August, we went to the Pier Theatre and I well remember that the top of the bill was "Elroy, the Armless Wonder." The act proved to be the only one that interested me in what was a very large programme. Elroy had been born without arms; was slightly over 6ft., a wonderful showman, and amazingly athletic. He painted, he played the piano and a cornet; drew a cork from a bottle; used a rifle, scoring 5 bulls in 5 shots; he helped himself to a cigarette from a box on a table, using a match from a box like any other individual. All this with his feet, on which he wore something resembling mittens. When he wanted to carry a chair from one place to another (because, of course, he did everything sitting), he simply lifted the chair at the back, as one might with a hand, and hopped to where he wanted to place the chair. He did everything so naturally and made it all look so easy.

The following morning my wife and I were sitting in the lounge of the hotel when Elroy walked in and sat at an adjacent table. I watched his every move and have never forgotten how naturally he sat at the table. When the waiter appeared we heard him order a tankard of beer. As the waiter was returning with the order, Elroy slipped off his right shoe and from a small pocket in that shoe he withdrew a coin and it was on the table as the tankard was being placed before him. The waiter gave change and Elroy, leaving a couple of coppers which the waiter took as his tip, returned the change to the purse in the sole of his shoe. He took that tankard from a sitting position as normally as a chap with arms. I did not try to get into conversation with him.

The following day notices appeared on the lifeboat house, municipal buildings, post office, etc., recalling all reservists and as I happened to be in this category, I sent my wife and daughter home to Leeds and went to Newcastle to rejoin my regiment.

On the 19th September, 1914, I was wounded, and was fortunate enough to

be on sick leave on the 13th October when the happy event before-mentioned occurred. My business, of course, was closed but so many things were happening in France that there was not any time to worry about the mere loss of a business.

On the 4th September, 1916, after the explosion in which I lost my sight and both hands, I overheard the doctors discussing me and one said the lowest estimate he could put on the number of wounds was five hundred. I spent the next day thinking of Elroy, the Armless Wonder, and I don't ever remember thinking that I would not be able to do anything—on the contrary I made up my mind from the beginning that I was going to do things now; how, I didn't know, but of course then I was hardly in a position to start. A letter from Sir Arthur Pearson, *BT.*, telling me he was waiting for me at St. Dunstan's as soon as I was able to travel, confirmed my determination to live, and like it.

On my first meeting with Sir Arthur, in St. Mark's Hospital, I knew I would go places. He left me saying, "You are going to do things. You are going to surprise everybody, but the one you are going to surprise most is yourself." That confirmed everything I had thought and gave me a line to work on. I accepted those words as a challenge, without saying anything to anybody, and resolved to surprise everybody.

12th August, 1917 two ribs out (no relation to Adam.)

June, 1918, my last operation.

Am now in my 37th year as a St. Dunstan's propagandist and have addressed meetings all over Britain, the United States and Canada, and have discussed St. Dunstan's in Egypt and many parts of the Continent of Europe. I am fitter than I could ever have dreamt of being and on looking back over the last forty years, I do not hesitate to say that my crossroads were represented by the meeting with Sir Arthur Pearson, whose example and guidance proved the inspiration that put me on the right road.

A. M. NICHOLS.

[Many St. Dunstaners may recall a similar experience and will endorse what Sergeant Nichols has said. Some may like to tell us how they, too, reached the crossroads of their lives. We would like to hear their stories.—ED.]

On My Way

After being fitted with my new plastic eyes in 1948, we were returning to Victoria. Fred, the orderly, was asked how our eyes looked. After telling us to look up, look down, look right, look left, he informed me that mine were all right but the right eye was not working in agreement with the left. This was quite understandable as I had had my right eye excised only one month previous to my fitting. Fred advised me to exercise the muscle of my right eye by moving it as much as possible. Then I went back to Ovingdean to finish my holiday. On the following Monday, in the company of Jacky Back, I returned to the West Country. Fred again met us at Victoria and took us across to Paddington where Jacky was to meet his wife. Fred said to me, "Well, Gen, old boy, you have not been exercising that right eye of yours; it's still stiff. Look up, look down, look right, look left. Keep on exercising while I go and look for Mrs. Back. Stay just where you are and don't move." Jacky and I stood there motionless, I rolling my eyes in the manner suggested. All of a sudden I received a terrific wallop from someone's suitcase and the voice of a perfect lady came out of the shadows to me. "Git aht of it," the voice said, "standing there cawping and rolling your eyes all over the place. Are you gone potty?" E. H. NORTH. *Taunton.*

I like the Ovingdean packed luncheon when travelling home but on one occasion recently I decided to have luncheon in the dining car to pass away time. I shuffled along to the Restaurant Car where the waiter persuaded me to have turbot instead of the meat course. I said I was afraid of the bones although I liked fish. Along came the soup, then the fish, and the waiter proceeded to take out the bones, having done so he remarked, "There's not much fish there for a man. I'll fetch another portion." So off he went whilst I sharpened my appetite with a Worthington. My fish portion augmented and cleaned of bones, I settled down to a "man's meal," complete with cheese and biscuits and coffee. Eventually the cashier came along but instead of presenting me with a bill for about 8s. 6d., he said, "It's your lucky day to-day, sir." "Why?" said I. "Well," came the reply, "the gentleman who sat with the lady on the

opposite table asked for your bill and paid it." I offered a gratuity but even that was refused.

Imagine how surprised and rather embarrassed I was for neither the lady nor the gentleman spoke to me and had left their seats before I realised what had happened. I could not even thank them. *Ashton-in-Makerfield.* J. SHAW.

On my way from Manchester No. 2 General Hospital in October, 1918, for transfer to St. Mark's, Chelsea, there was not a seat to be found on the train, which also had two special Pullmans for the "Maid of the Mountains" theatrical company. As we stood on the platform, while the stationmaster himself looked for a seat, a lady asked where we were going. My orderly explained that I was being transferred to St. Mark's for entry into St. Dunstan's. "Bring the poor lad in with us," I heard the lady say as the stationmaster said we would have to wait until another coach was attached. The lady was the famous José Collins, at whose table I sat and conversed and had the infinite pleasure of enjoying a first-class luncheon with a bottle of beer, at which my orderly turned a blind eye. On reaching London the orderly had two Bradburys handed to him which I was supposed to have "won," as one of the company playing cards at the opposite table said he had been playing for me. It is one journey I shall never forget.

A. J. RADFORD.

Castle Cary.
As I rode down from London town in coach as red as red could be,
A lady entered with small son, the small boy aside of me.
We sat in silence for a while till I did feel the small eyes stare,
I turned to him as though to stare although my eyes near sightless be.
And then the questions did begin, and when I answered 'nother came.
The mother then with stern rebuke forbade him so to question me,
But I assured her 'twas "All right" and then the questions came apace,
Some of them amused me while other were perplexing.
And so we talked small boy and I as I my brains were raking.
And as I neared my journey's end, with plaintive voice he said to me
"I wish you could go farther," and added words of thankfulness.
I added my deep thanks to him and wished it happened more often.
Shatterling, nr. Canterbury.

W. C. HILLS.

Ovingdean Notes

With the Autumn Training Term only two weeks old we were delighted to welcome Sir Ian and Lady Fraser at Ovingdean in early September. The Chairman met new trainees only recently arrived here and then he and Lady Fraser made a tour of the training departments.

The number of men here on holiday during this month appears to have been a little higher than usual this year. Perhaps everyone has been waiting throughout the appalling summer for a break in the weather, and, indeed those who came to Brighton for the second half of the month have fared fairly well for there have been some really lovely days. The coach drives to such places as Rustington, Arundel and Alfriston have been very popular and as the evenings were longer the indoor entertainments have been increased here. Sunday evening programmes have been well attended and during the month we had two play readings by the Staff and a concert at which Professor Michaeli made a welcome return to give a piano recital. St. Dunstaner Joe Doubler from Hove also took part, and his accompanist was Miss Chidley.

Towards the end of the month Mr. Cheeseman organised another of his regular dances for St. Dunstaners, at the "Arlington," which are always so popular.

Now, with the beginning of Autumn we shall be having several "special week-ends" and the first of these took place here during the last week-end of September when we welcomed those St. Dunstaners who came as contestants for the Chess Week-end, which is reported below. The Physiotherapy Conference and the 1954 Bridge Tournament Week-end are both to follow later in the year.

The Chess Week-end—Ovingdean

There was a strange stillness in the Winter Garden during the last week-end in September, only a faint rattling sound could be heard, and an occasional low muttering! Twelve heads were bowed over the tables—what was happening here as the wind hurled itself against the windows? Was it a gathering for thought and contemplation, or was it a meeting of a Secret Society?? No—nothing so deep or so mysterious! It was just the Annual Chess Week-end and, strange as it may seem, these people were enjoying themselves

The conspirators were Messrs. B. Evans,

F. Parker, W. Kirkbright, F. Taylor, W. Hammett, W. Hodder, G. Fallowfield, R. Armstrong, R. Freer, J. Scott, W. Muggeridge and J. Campbell.

It was good to meet old friends again and to meet new ones. The games were well fought out, and were played in a sporting spirit. The decisions of the adjudicators were accepted without question, although their task was not always easy.

The Cup was won by Frank Parker after a stern struggle with Bob Evans in the Final; while the Consolation prize went to Bill Hodder, who had a long and vigorous game with Ron Freer in the final of that section. In the semi-final of the Cup, Parker had a "bye" but Evans had a 3½ hour game with Hammett which had to be adjudicated. Bob Evans had just enough superiority to obtain the verdict. Better luck next time, Hammett.

As usual the Brighton Schoolboys turned up and many friendly games were played with them. These Sussex boys are really "hot stuff" and gave our chaps plenty to think about.

It was unfortunate that some of the games had to be decided by the toss of a coin, owing to lack of time for the competitions. The unlucky ones here were Messrs. Hodder, Kirkbright and Campbell.

The prizes were presented by Sir Clarence Sadd who is Chairman of the Sussex Chess Association. Commandant and Matron were also present. Sir Clarence made a short but very interesting speech in which he mentioned some of the personalities in the Chess World through the ages. He referred to Cicero, King Canute, Charlemagne and various other notabilities and said that many Popes were devotees of this ancient game.

After the presentation of the prizes, Sir Clarence was introduced to all the players, and had a friendly word with each one. We were very pleased to have him with us, and hope that he will come again.

I cannot conclude this account without mentioning the kindness and patience of Miss Carlton. I can assure her that we all appreciate her all-out efforts to make this week-end a happy and enjoyable occasion, and she can rest assured that her efforts were crowned with success. A vote of thanks to her was proposed by Bob Evans and carried with acclamation. We all wish you a happy holiday, Miss Carlton.

C. KELK.

Young St. Dunstaners

We have heard with deep regret that the husband of A. W. Back's youngest daughter (Shaldon, near Teignmouth), met with a fatal accident at work and was electrocuted.

Marriages

On September 11th, Herbert Jarman (Southbourne, Bournemouth) to Miss Cicely Partridge.

On September 25th, Audrey Sayers (Northampton) to Anthony John Robbins.

On October 16th, Vincent Healey (Bradford) to Miss Brenda Bramley.

On October 16th, Geoffrey Webster (Forest Hill), to Miss Maureen Collin.

They Sail to the Loneliest Island

The following was taken from the *Bournemouth Times* of September 24th, 1954:

"A young Bournemouth doctor, his wife and two children sailed yesterday for two years on the loneliest inhabited island in the world.

Dr. Kenneth Fawcett, 31 year old son of Mr. C. J. R. Fawcett, the physiotherapist who lost his sight in the 1914—1918 war, has obtained a Colonial Office appointment as medical officer on Tristan Da Cunha.

A volcanic island in the South Atlantic, Tristan da Cunha is named after the Portuguese admiral who discovered it. With its peak of rock rising 7,000 ft. above the sea, and eight miles across, it lies 2,600 miles from the mainland—the Cape of Good Hope—and 1,500 miles from St. Helena.

Mrs. Fawcett was as eager to go as her husband. There will be no education problem with the children. They will be back in this country when they reach school age.

Their voyage will take about a month. Dr. Fawcett is the second M.O.H. for Tristan Da Cunha. Before his appointment he was in general practice as an assistant in Cambridgeshire."

Miss Gertrude Witherby

Early St. Dunstaners will bear with deep regret of the death of Miss Gertrude Witherby who for many years, both during and after the First World War, was head of the Netting Room. Miss Witherby was a good friend of all blinded soldiers but particularly will be remembered with affection by those who took netting and wool-rugs. She died at her home in London on July 3rd.

Births

CHAPPELL.—To the wife of A. T. Chappell, of Epping, on September 26th, a son—Crispin David.

EDWARDS.—To Dorothy Edwards, of Yeovil, on October 6th, a son—David William.

FILBY.—On October 8th, to the wife of W. E. Filby, of Streatham, a son—Paul.

HOWELL.—On September 29th, to the wife of A. Howell, of Colindale, a son—Terence.

WALTON.—On September 17th, to the wife of J. B. Walton, of Slade Green, a daughter—Jacqueline Marie.

WATERS.—On September 4th, to the wife of A. Waters, of Needham, Norfolk, a daughter—Suzanne.

Marriage

INGREY—LEWIS.—On September 18th, B. Ingrey, of Beddington, to Mrs. Lewis.

Deaths

Our deep sympathy goes out this month to the following:—

BARNES.—To W. Barnes, of Bradford, whose wife died on October 1st, after great suffering.

CARNEY.—To Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Carney, of Dunstable, in the loss of their second son, Allan, in a road accident. He was 16.

DONNELLY.—To T. J. Donnelly, of Edmington, whose mother has died suddenly in Ireland.

ELSEY.—To H. Elsey, of Beccles, whose wife died on October 3rd, after a long illness.

FARNAN.—To H. Farnan, of Sale, whose younger brother has been killed in a road accident.

HEMSWORTH.—To F. Hemsworth, of Doncaster, whose sister has died in hospital following an emergency operation.

MILLER.—To H. S. Miller, of Skegness, who lost his wife on October 13th.

MUDGE.—To J. Mudge, of Tottenham, whose father died on September 15th, in his 84th year.

STOTT.—To D. Stott, one of our trainees, whose sister died shortly after he was recalled home.

WALDRON.—To E. Waldron, of Whixall, Whitchurch, whose wife died on September 26th. She had had a serious operation from which it was hoped she had made a good recovery.

WEBBER.—To L. A. Webber, of Tewkesbury, whose mother died on September 22nd following a serious operation.

"In Memory"

Private Rufus Shaw, M.M., 1st Royal Dragoon Guards

It is with deep regret that we record the death of Rufus Shaw, of Rossendale, in his sixty-second year. He enlisted in 1914 and was wounded at Ypres in May, 1915, being awarded the Military Medal. He came to St. Dunstan's that year and trained in mat-making and netting. Owing to very poor health, however, he was never able to do much work and during the last few years his condition had deteriorated. He entered hospital in June of this year, but was quickly discharged. His death, therefore, on September 22nd, was a great shock to all.

Our sincere sympathy is offered to his widow and family.

Private Arthur William Cooke, Royal Artillery

With deep regret we record the death of A. W. Cooke, of Inwood, near Rugby. He was fifty-six. He enlisted in 1913 and was discharged in 1918, having been wounded the previous year, but it was not until 1950 that he came to St. Dunstan's. He trained as a wool-rug maker, but his health, never good, remained poor and in the autumn of 1952 he went to West House.

His death took place suddenly on September 12th, whilst he was on holiday at Bristol.

The funeral took place at Brighton Cemetery and a number of St. Dunstan's comrades, members of the staff, and escorts, were present.

To his wife and family our deep sympathy is extended.

Private Charles Ernest Porter, 2/4th King's Own Liverpool Regt.

We record with deep regret the death of C. E. Porter, of Deepdale, Preston, in his sixty-ninth year. He came to St. Dunstan's immediately upon his discharge in 1918, following two years' service, and he trained in boot-repairing and netting, but for the last two years his health had not been good. Nevertheless, his death on September 20th was very sudden, coming after only two days' serious illness.

The funeral took place at Leyland, his old home town, near Preston.

He leaves a widow and our deep sympathy goes to her and to his relatives.

Private Alphonse Kenyon Knibbs, Royal Berkshire Regiment

It is with deep regret that we record the death of A. K. Knibbs, of St. Thomas, Exeter. He was seventy-one.

He suffered mustard gas injuries in France in 1917 and, his sight gradually failing, he came to us in May, 1948. His state of health prevented him undertaking any training and this had slowly deteriorated, even in the time since his admission to St. Dunstan's. He died on October 3rd after a short illness.

He was taken in to St. Thomas' Church for a short service, followed by cremation at Plymouth; his ashes were scattered in the Garden of Remembrance, as he wished.

Our deep sympathy is extended to his widow and grown-up family.

Sergeant Thomas Edward Kenefick, 1/6th Yorkshire Regiment

With deep regret we record the death of T. E. Kenefick, of Brighton. He was nearly seventy.

Discharged from the Army in March, 1919, he was admitted to St. Dunstan's in November, 1936, and trained as a wool-rug maker. For some years, however, his health had been failing. He went this year to Yorkshire for a holiday, but he became worse; he was admitted to hospital and he died there on October 11th, three days later. He was buried on October 14th. Requiem Mass was celebrated at St. Mary's Church, Bradford.

Our very sincere sympathy goes out to Mrs. Kenefick.

Marion Smith, 35th Central Alberta Horse Regiment, Canadian Forces

We have learned with deep regret of the death of Marion Smith, of Quebec, which occurred suddenly on July 24th, after a heart attack.

He enlisted in 1914, in the Canadian Forces, and came to St. Dunstan's in September, 1918. He had previously been engaged in farming and ranching, but he trained as a masseur and secured his Medical Electricity examination before he left for Canada in 1920, having married Miss Elliot while over here. He returned for a visit four years later. For many years he had been employed at the Military Hospital, Montreal. We had heard little from him for a long time until he wrote contributing to the Percy Way Memorial Fund, and his wife tells us that he was taken ill shortly afterwards.

Our deep sympathy is extended to Mrs. Smith and her son.

Private Henry Rolt, Royal Fusiliers

We record with deep regret the death of H. Rolt, a permanent resident of West House. He was seventy-nine.

He served in the 1914-1918 war and came to St. Dunstan's in November, 1939. He trained as a wool-rug maker. After the death of his wife in 1951 he was admitted to West House, but his health had been failing for some time.

Personal

Mrs. Cooke and family would like to express their deepest thanks for all the kindness shown to them by St. Dunstan's

and the staff at West House, and to say how sincerely grateful they are for their care of Arthur, and for making the last few years of his life so happy.