

# ST. DUNSTAN'S REVIEW

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For Men and Women Blinded on War Service

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[FREE TO ST. DUNSTAN'S MEN]

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## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

### WAR PENSIONS

ON December 1st, the Government's proposals for improvements in War Pensions and Allowances were announced. The main features that interest St. Dunstaners are the rise of 12s. 6d. in the basic rate, bringing it up to 67s. 6d. a week; the rise of 10s. in the Unemployability Supplement with a consequential rise for a married person who is unemployable of 3s. 6d. for his wife; and a rise varying from 2s. 6d. to 10s. in the Attendance Allowance. These improvements, taken in conjunction with others that were made in 1951, mean that a substantial rise has taken place in the Pensions and Allowances of St. Dunstaners as a whole, and especially of those who are, through old age or for other reasons, unemployable. I could have wished that the improvement had taken the form of a much larger rise in the basic rate alone, because this would have given more benefit to those St. Dunstaners who are employed, and also proportionately increased benefits to the partial pensioners.

These proposals, together with a welcome improvement for war widows and some minor changes, will cost fifteen million pounds a year, the largest single increment we have had in our history. I feel sure I was speaking for St. Dunstaners as a whole when I thanked the Minister of Pensions and National Insurance for his announcement, and Members of all parties in the House of Commons for their support.

I should like also to express the thanks of St. Dunstaners to the British Legion, its officers and officials with whom we have worked in the closest harmony, and to Mr. Askew, Mr. Banks and Mr. Rice, who have given us much help.

### CHRISTMAS

On Christmas Day I shall have crossed the Equator and will be three or four days out at sea from Cape Town, for I am going to South Africa during the Parliamentary Recess to attend to my family business, returning by air for the opening of the House in January. Our ship will have left the Tropics behind and we shall be in that part of the South Atlantic where, in spite of it being mid-summer, you begin to feel the breeze blowing up from the South Pole, and an albatross which is about five to six feet from wing tip to wing tip hovers so low over the ship that the glint of its eye can be seen. On Christmas night, Lady Fraser and I will raise our glasses in a Toast to our absent friends, who will most particularly include St. Dunstaners and their families all the world over.

IAN FRASER.

### In Memory of Sir Arthur

The annual Memorial Service to Sir Arthur Pearson, Bart., the Founder of St. Dunstan's, was this year held on December 12th. It was attended by men staying at Ovingdean and West House and a number of St. Dunstaners living locally. The Service was conducted in the Chapel at Ovingdean by the Reverend Andrew Nugee (St. Dunstaner) and the Reverend W. Taylor (Padre to the Ovingdean and West House Homes) and the Lesson was read by Sir Neville Pearson, Bt. It was concluded with the singing of the hymn, "Abide with me," written by the Reverend H. Lyte, great-grandfather of Sir Arthur Pearson.

#### December 9th

On the morning of December 9th, the anniversary of Sir Arthur's death, Sir Ian and Lady Fraser, together with St. Dunstaners Messrs. A. Carrick, N. Downs and S. Jones, with Mr. T. Watson, went to Sir Arthur's grave at Hampstead Cemetery to lay a wreath. "May he rest in peace, and may the work of St. Dunstan's prosper," said Sir Ian.

#### American News Letter

Mrs. V. M. Russell, of New York, who is a friend of Sir Neville Pearson's, has offered to prepare and braille from time to time a "News-Letter" for the interest of blinded soldiers in Great Britain.

The first Letter will arrive in the course of the next week or so and, in the meantime, we should like to have a list of St. Dunstaners in this country who would like to receive it. It will then be sent off to the first man on the list who, after he has read it, will forward it to the second man, and so on.

#### Golden Wedding

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. E. D. Martin, of Wolverhampton, who celebrated their Golden Wedding on December 7th.

#### Ruby Weddings

We have just heard that Mr. and Mrs. J. Mitchell, of Edinburgh, celebrated their Ruby Wedding a year ago, and Mr. and Mrs. A. Chaffin, of Leighton Buzzard, celebrated theirs during the summer of this year. Mr. and Mrs. A. Lane, of Cardiff, had their anniversary on December 12th.

#### Silver Wedding

Mr. and Mrs. T. Batt, of Oakhill, near Bath, December 23rd.

### Calling All Campers

#### A Camp Reunion Dance

A Camp Reunion Dance will be held on Friday, February 4th, from 7.30 to 11 p.m., at the Trevelyan Hall, Great Peter Street, off Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W.1.

As well as all campers, any St. Dunstaner and escort will be welcome.

Tickets: 3s. single; 5s. double, to be obtained beforehand. No tickets sold at the door.

Just a word about arrangements. The Dance is being organised by the St. Dunstan's Camp Committee. Padre Royle, M.C., of St. Matthew's, Westminster, was Padre to the first two St. Dunstan's Camps and he is letting us have his Church Hall.

Harry Ranger's Four-piece Band will play. This band plays for Hunt Balls in Surrey and for a lot of private dances.

The local Red Cross will do refreshments at cost price. There will also be a bar.

The Hall is very central—about four minutes' walk from Westminster Abbey (the West Door, where the queue formed to see the Abbey after the Coronation). Here we shall arrange for Red Cross guides to direct you to the Hall. There may be cars to drive you.

Tickets will not be sold at the door but can be obtained by writing to Miss P. Kingswell, 17 Airlie Gardens, Campden Hill, W.8, enclosing postal order, or from Miss Ibbetson or Mr. Willis, at St. Dunstan's Club, 191 Marylebone Road. Please get your tickets before January 20th as we must know numbers.

#### "World Christian Digest"

We referred recently to this new Braille magazine, and gave the subscription as 5s.

St. Dunstaners, in fact, can receive it free of charge, and they should notify Mr. Jones, of Men's Supplies, if they wish to do so.

Those who have already sent a subscription for the magazine should notify Mr. Jones, who will have the money refunded.

#### Brighton and District Club

Will all those desirous of taking part in the tournaments for the Sir Arthur Pearson competition please let me have their names not later than January 3rd, 1955. Those wishing to play bowls will be welcome at the King Alfred, Hove Front, any Tuesday morning between 10.30 and 12.30.

FRANK A. RHODES.

### London Club Notes

On behalf of the London Club, may I wish all readers the old-time wish: A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. God bless you all. S. WEBSTER.

#### Indoor Section

Results of the Sir Arthur Pearson Indoor Competitions:—

*Cribbage*.—Winner: R. Edwards; Runner-up: J. Fleming.

*Dominoes*.—Winner: J. Mudge; Runner-up: S. Lambert.

*Darts (T.B.)*.—Winner: W. Lacey; Runner-up: S. Lambert.

*Darts (S.S.)*.—Winner: W. Bishop; Runner-up: C. Walker.

*Aggregate Whist*.—Winner: G. Brown, 500 points. C. J. WALKER.

#### Outdoor Section:—

On Saturday, November 20th, in Regent's Park, St. Dunstan's walkers again suffered defeat by the Metropolitan Police, though this time by a much reduced margin, in their six-mile walk.

Ten St. Dunstaners battled it out in a series of small bouts, both sides seeming evenly matched. The Police gained the initiative in several cases, and the result was another victory to them, 101 points to our 109.

In the St. Dunstan's sealed handicap, first prize went to Archie Brown; Pat Cryan was second and Les Dennis was third, Billy Miller being fastest loser. They were presented with their prizes in the Club by Miss Ibbetson. W. MILLER.

#### Bridge Section

On Saturday, November 6th, our team won their match against the Blue Circle, and on November 13th we lost the return match against Mr. J. Callow's team.

On the week-end of November 20th—21st, we held our 7th Annual Bridge Congress, at Ovingdean; 46 members took part in this event. After a keenly contested competition, the winners of the Sir Arthur Pearson's Trophy Pairs Competition were F. Winter and C. Thompson, with a score of 127 points, the runners-up being J. Clare and Miss Simon, with 122 points. The winners of the Sir Arthur Pearson's Trophy Competition (teams of four) were Messrs. Brown, Fleming, Jackson and Cook. The second place was won by Messrs. Gover, Nuyens, Kirkbright and Armstrong, 3rd place being won by Messrs. Bulman, Caudle, Rhodes and Carpenter.

The winners of the Bridge Drive held on Saturday morning were: 1st, Kelk and Simmons; 2nd, Needham and Nicholas; 3rd, Clare and Miss Simon; 4th, Wiltshire and Douglas.

The Sunday morning Bridge Drive was won by Brown and Fleming; 2nd, Rhodes and Carpenter; 3rd, Wylie and Barlow; 4th, Miller and Crabtree.

After the presentation of the prizes by the Matron, D. Downs passed a vote of thanks to the Matron, Commandant, Mrs. McDonald and all the staff at Ovingdean, who made the Congress a very happy and enjoyable event. W. Bishop, in seconding the vote of thanks, also expressed the appreciation of all the players to Mr. A. Field and Mr. C. Stokes, who carried out the duties of tournament directors most efficiently, and also to the markers who did their task of scoring in the usual efficient manner.

The last friendly match of the year was against the Midland Bank, which we won by 4,010.

London Business Houses League.—Our team in this League won their second game against the G.P.O. on Friday, November 12th, by 12 match points. In their match against the Unicorn, on November 18th, they suffered their first defeat, losing by 9 match points. On November 26th, against the Iraq team, they won by the large margin of 47 match points. W. BISHOP,

Captain-Secretary.

#### St. Dunstan's Six Mile Sealed Handicap and Match with Metropolitan Police, Nov. 20th, 1954

Order of Finish	Name	Club	Time	All. Scr.	H'cp.	Pos. Time in H'cp.
1.	W. Miller	St.D.	53-33			5
2.	P.C. Burton	M.P.	54-07			
3.	P.C. Dillon	"	54-22			
4.	A. Brown	St.D.	54-25	1-45	52-40	1
5.	P. Cryan	"	54-46	2-05	52-41	2
6.	P.C. Liddle	M.P.	55-07			
7.	C. Williamson	St.D.	55-33	2-10	53-23	4
8.	P.C. Youldon	M.P.	57-16			
9.	P.C. Butt	"	57-30			
10.	T. Gaygan	St.D.	58-16	3-30	54-46	8
11.	L. Dennis	"	58-20	5-10	53-10	3
12.	P.C. Norman	M.P.	59-11			
13.	P.C. Place	"	59-20			
14.	P.C. Stevenson	"	59-23			
15.	P.C. Parson	"	59-37			
16.	C. Stafford	St.D.	59-39	5-45	53-54	6
17.	A. Bradley	"	60-23	5-40	54-43	7
18.	S. Turton	"	60-50	4-45	56-05	9
19.	P.C. Burns	M.P.	61-38			
20.	D. Fleisig	St.D.	62-20	4-45	57-35	10

Winner of Handicap: A. Brown; 2nd, P. Cryan; 3rd, L. Dennis. Fastest Loser, W. Miller.  
Result of Match: 1st, Metropolitan Police, 101 points. 2nd, St. Dunstan's, 109 points.  
Timekeeper and Handicapper: Mr. W. J. Harris.

## Letters to the Editor

DEAR EDITOR,

May I be permitted space in the REVIEW to enlighten George (Chase me, Sister) Ellis as to why the men of the 1914 war appear to him to be in their second childhood? We have not forgotten that it was George who thought us mentally deficient because we called the V.A.D.s "Sister," though he was determined to remind us; but it is for precisely the same reason that we still like to hear somebody vamping on the piano in order that we can sing about "The long, long trail a-winding," as well as let the world know that we packed up our troubles in those old kit-bags. While we were retreating from Mons, or while we were staying put in the same line of trenches for four years; or when we pushed Jerry back and made him desire an Armistice, we had no nice Forces Sweethearts to croon to us over the wireless. We had no special Forces programmes to cheer those cheerless evenings, up to our waists in snow or water, and, incidentally, we had no nice A.T.S. girls or W.R.A.F. girls to share our miserable lot. Down in the dug-out where Jerry could not hear, or on the march, we sang as long as somebody started up, and the real "heroes" were the blokes who had the guts to carry that old violin or banjo or concertina, as well as the donkeyload of spare ammo. on top of kit.

So, when some hundreds of us were assembled at Regent's Park to learn trades we could only follow at home, we sang again, and while many are too self-conscious to indulge in single harmony at home, they are always ready when they can get together to let rip with the songs that broke Jerry's heart. I know, for a blind German sergeant-major P.O.W. in Manchester told me that we won the war because we would not take it seriously, and if the Jerries could have sung as we did instead of taking war as a sort of religious rite, there would never have been an armistice. I am sixty-six and I sing in my workshop, and I sing as I go along, and I don't give two hoots what people think. All I know is that folks say "Good morning, Jack, you sound happy," and it makes them happier too. Why do men of the Second World War regard us as unique and as having a complex because we do not pose? We had none of the amenities enjoyed by the Forces of World War Two. Nobody regarded us as heroes, but just as the modern version of

Kipling's "absent-minded beggars," who had become literal mud-larks. If George had seen the men coming home from the trenches smothered in blood and mud and lice, but the leave train full of singing Tommies, he would not be so damned sarcastic, and instead of cursing the parents of that anonymous pianist, he would have thanked God that he was of the Second War and that the men of the First had shown the way that made rehabilitation possible.

Castle Cary. Yours sincerely,

A. J. RADFORD.

DEAR EDITOR,

My forecast is that the "Mons and Marne Merchants" will be roused to counter-attack by the letter from George (Chase-me-Sister) Ellis, in the November issue of the REVIEW, and these "Merchants" will be joined by the men of the Somme, Ypres, Vimy, Beaumont-Hamel, Arras, Armentieres, and the rest against a "clenched-fist" attack which he attempts to disguise by "velvet-gloved" phrases.

As one who does not "offend" in this manner, I find difficulty in deciding the type of mentality of anyone who opposes the display of high spirits in this way, and, of course, there is a quiet lounge for anyone who wishes to escape these demonstrations.

Surely this provocative letter would never have appeared if the author had exercised his "enquiring mind" in the right and obvious direction. Has he, for instance, ever thought that the songs he refers to are reminiscent of the camp fire days, of route marches when feet were more nimble than they are to-day, of weeks and months spent in the stench of trenches and dug-outs half full of mud and water, of excursions "over the top," when the only armour was a tunic and a steel helmet; of the few days spent in the "rest billet," still within range of shell fire, and, above all, in the hours of battle when these very songs were still on the lips of many, only to be hushed by the fatal bullet, or the piece of shrapnel, or the full blast of a shell.

What memories they conjure up of courage, comradeship, tolerance, sacrifice, unselfishness, and all that is good in the hearts of "old pals."

I offer no excuse for this retaliation on my part, for I consider this letter to be impertinent and designed to create feelings in the minds of anyone who is not content to be an "average man." I also ignore all his efforts to camouflage the bitterness

which he displayed by "silently cursing the parents of the pianist" who encouraged the singing on that one occasion, when a quiet corner might not have been easy to locate in order to pursue the silent inquisitive trends which he so innocently disclosed to us in an earlier article on "Eavesdropping."

The answer to his question is so simple as to make the question appear ridiculous. Let me draw a simile. Is any footballer, cricketer, or any other team player any use as such without his team? Does a chorister normally satisfy himself fully as a singer outside the choir? In the same way, a St. Dunstaner "joins the team" when he meets numbers of his colleagues, and if he is inclined to singing or merriment, he can and will join in with them, but I would not say "at the slightest provocation."

The average St. Dunstaner should, and I believe does, retain his happy mood in his daily life at home, where he is usually well known because of his cheerfulness. Evidence that this is true is also found in the various St. Dunstan's Clubs, in the British Legion, and elsewhere.

Wherever there is communal living or gathering, there is a place for singing.

This tendency to sing and be merry, and to put on the bright side whilst at Ovingdean, is not a manifestation of second childhood as we are asked to believe. On the contrary, it is an outpouring of friendship which can only help to strengthen the good fellowship which so many of us are proud to share.

If the term "Peter Pan complex" describes these rather grand tendencies, then we would not wish to change it, since to grow older and yet to remain young is a quality to be envied.

Yours sincerely,

Ashton-in-Makerfield. JIM SHAW.

DEAR EDITOR,

In reply to Mr. George Ellis's letter, may I put forward some observations on what has been called "the Peter Pan complex" in the 1914-1918 boys? I have been a St. Dunstaner for more than thirty-eight years, so am able to cast my mind back to the days before the First World War, when the causes originated.

In school we were taught to look upon all naval and military leaders and others who took part in historic battles as heroes. So we developed a strong National patriotism (a sense of emotion not encouraged to-day).

All explorers and colonists were heroes. On Empire Day the pupils were drawn up in orderly ranks on the playground, and as the Union Jack was run up we sang, "Lift High the Flag of England." Other patriotic songs followed, after which we were dismissed for the day.

At parties, members were called upon to provide entertainment by singing or playing a musical instrument—choruses were very popular. Ridicule might be directed against these memories. Much of the entertainment was so very amateurish but thoroughly enjoyable. I do not think a piano is any more outraged through being played by one's left elbow than at having to produce hot rhythm under the dexterous fingers of a skilled pianist. The vocalists sang in English—if they had a dialect they were not ashamed of it; they did not render a poor imitation of the American accent. The poorest singer's efforts were better than those of the best crooner. "Lusty voices" were mentioned—no doubt due to the fact that microphones and amplifiers are comparatively recent inventions.

Smoking while at work was forbidden. This was perhaps as well with low wages and cigarettes at 3d. for ten. Without cigarettes to impede them, errand boys and telegraph messengers whistled as they trundled around on their fixed wheel bikes. Gangs of workmen sang on their job.

The 1914 war was declared. National patriotism was easily stimulated by martial music, men volunteered in their thousands to serve in one of the fighting services. It was a great adventure. Even as raw recruits they were heroes, they were happy, they sang. Fresh on a route march they sang, stimulated by waving people, especially the girls. Returning from the march they sang to revitalise limbs which threatened to fold up. In those days of "spit and polish" returning from parade they would graphically describe drill sergeants and other n.c.o.s. Wielding a button stick or boot brushes in preparation for the next parade, they broke into whistling or singing—they just couldn't help it.

Except that it would make me a few years older, I regret I cannot claim the honour of being a "Mons or Marne Merchant." My next observations were made at St. Dunstan's. St. Dunstan's, that gigantic and daring experiment in training thousands of men under unfamiliar conditions in jobs and pastimes so different from those they

had known. Teaching them to read and write by, to them, new methods. The late Sir Arthur Pearson, our Founder, to whose memory no thanks or praise is too great, put his faith in us as founder members. He impressed upon us that we were ordinary human beings without sight. We worked at our studies and perhaps to convince ourselves as well as other people there was nothing in this "blindness racket," we sang more lustily and more often, and our practical jokes became more wild. With our Chief's example, with help and patient encouragement from everyone connected with St. Dunstan's, we made the grade. Gradually, without being aware of it, our boyish light-heartedness was no longer partly an act, but the spontaneous result of something achieved. It is obvious then that the 1914-18 boys will have the "Peter Pan" complex until they fade away—"Old soldiers never die." I hope the Old Contemptibles and the other professional soldiers will not think me presumptuous in linking the duration volunteers with them.

In reply to Mr. Ellis's final question, I must admit I have never met any of the Second World War St. Dunstaners—I purposely refrained from calling them "boys." I know of no reason why they should be called "a miserable lot," they will never have the "Peter Pan complex"; no doubt they show their light-heartedness in different ways. Yours sincerely,  
Redcliffe, Bristol. W. CHAS. TAPLIN.

DEAR EDITOR,

Well, "Chase me, Sister, up a gum tree," what a weird idea. Our elder colleagues being criticised for high spirits and vocal community?

Of course, there is some allowance to be made for surprise and bewilderment at the 1914 men's ability to sing.

Is it because of the modern trend of musical effort, the weird dronings and sobbings of the popular groaners of the microphone? It is with great joy that I hear the men gathering around the old piano and with thunderings and bangings of keys, the voices raised in song. There is also the old idea, "Give me a man who can sing in the morning," when the mere thought of the joy of living means music and fun.

Then, again, is the inability of the younger generation to appreciate this joy due to the day's worries and strain, or (subtle thought),

are the younger men unable to see through the dark clouds to the silver lining, or unable to keep the home fires burning through lack of natural fuel?

For over thirty years there has been a long, long trail a-winding, and the old boys are keeping on to the end of the road.

I personally prefer the idea of "Let the people sing" to "Go on, baby, cry."

I cannot agree that the pianist plays with his elbow, but I do know one of the 1914 men who can and does play a melody with his nose. Funny, his name is George, too.

In the course of my mundane existence, I visit many clubs and organisations to help pass away a short while for some of the less fortunate folk than myself, and find, on considering the matter, the older folk always join in with far more joy and enthusiasm than the younger ones, so I guess it is just because they have learned the lesson of life, and so maybe, as George says, the young 'uns will perhaps grow into the same happy frame of mind. Then once more I am compelled to suggest that the songs of to-day do not lend themselves to such united efforts as the songs of yore. So, with a song in my heart, I go on my way, just the awkward in-between.

Sincerely yours,

Tottenham. JOHN A. MUDGE.

DEAR EDITOR,

I have just read my November REVIEW and cannot wait to send you a note in reply to Charles Kelk. It will be short, but I would like him to know that I salute him, and in the same breath hand a bouquet to his wife. I am indeed happy to know that Charles has found the safe harbour of St. Dunstan's, and that there can now be no question of further cross-roads, coupled with doubt as to which is the one to take. Congratulations, Charles! and may you and yours have many years ahead in which to enjoy the well-deserved victory you have achieved over your handicap. At the first opportunity, I will slip in for a cup of tea, and we will have a laugh together on the way we both surmounted our difficulties, quite unaware of each other's existence in this little world of ours. Totally incapacitated? My foot!

Make my happiness complete, Charles, and say you are an Old Contemptible and can join our annual meet at Ovingdean. Good health and good luck!

Yours sincerely,

Portslade. ALAN NICHOLS.

## Christmas Competition

Here is a Competition for Christmas.

Below are a number of letter-groups. Can you sort them out and team them up to make the names of some clubs in the three Divisions of the Football League?

There will be three prizes of one guinea for the senders of the first correct solutions opened after the closing date, which is January 10th.

Address your entries to "Christmas Competition," St. Dunstan's Review, 1 South Audley Street, London, W.1.

Happy hunting and a very happy Christmas and prosperous New Year to St. Dunstaners everywhere.

WEN	ME
NOWT	NOT
WIN	LE
TOR	SEAS
HO	HER
NET	REVE
HAM	OUT
NODS	MAH
WAN	TOT
SCAT	BURN

## Manchester Club Notes

On October 19th, several of our members attended the Annual Party given by Mrs. Jackson, of Levenshulme, in memory of her son who was killed whilst serving with the R.A.F. At this party we were joined by members of BLESMA and a number of blind of the N.I.B. Our sincere thanks are accorded to Mrs. Jackson for her kind invitation and for an enjoyable party.

The Club headquarters at Red Cross House, Pendleton, are now freshly decorated, and all the rooms give an air of cleanliness and tidiness. In this atmosphere our annual competitions are well in hand and should be completed early in the New Year, when we propose to follow last year's successful procedure by having a Whist Drive along with the ladies and escorts to finish off the competitions.

Once again we also record our grateful thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Hindle, of the Railway Hotel, Pleasington, and to the members of their Darts team for their kind invitation, which we honoured on November 26th.

Our party arrived in the late afternoon and the glowing fires and two tables

liberally stacked with wholesome food provided a real Lancashire welcome to counter the rain and cold wind experienced on the journey. When tea was finished, we seemed to have made only a small impression on the variety of freshly prepared foods, yet everyone had had a sufficiency as we adjourned for a brief respite whilst darts and dominoes were arranged. On completion of the games we achieved the rather gratifying results—Darts, five games to four against us; Dominoes, five games all.

Near the end of the evening, Sam Russell was called upon to present Mrs. Hindle with a shopping basket which Sam had made. Mrs. Hindle accepted it in a few well chosen words of thanks. The Club Chairman then expressed sincere thanks to our hosts, to all the ladies who had helped in providing the excellent food, to the captain and members of his Darts team; and to Bob Britton for his part in making this outing such a grand occasion—an outing which will be remembered for a long time.

May we take this opportunity to remind St. Dunstaners who live in the Manchester area, or within reasonable distance of Pendleton, that they are welcome to join us at the Club as members, and to take part in all the activities. We normally meet on the second and fourth Fridays in each month at 6.30 p.m., so come along and keep the bonds of fellowship securely sealed.

"MANCUNIAN."

## Placement

Donald Stott, of Oxhey, as a capstan operator with the De Havilland Engine Company, Leavesden, Herts.

## National Laying Test, 1954-55

Report for the First Period of four weeks,  
October 12th—November 8th

	Score	Value
1. G. Cooke	...	55
2. W. Webb	...	51
3. P. Holmes	...	36
4. J. A. Dix	...	28
5. W. A. Smith	...	24
6. P. Bagwell	...	13

Average number of eggs per bird, 6.31.

D. W. F.

### Anchor Away

People seem to make a lot of fuss about "Four-minute miles" and doing the hundred yards sprint in less than ten seconds, but, after all, these athletic feats are done by youngsters who are in the pink of condition. Let me relate of a time about four years ago when seven or eight St. Dunstaners, ages ranging from thirty to fifty-odd, did a dash that must have been dazzling to the onlooker. Just picture for a moment a huge scaffold affair standing on the Downs near the Big House at Ovingdean. A very long rope runs from a massive concrete weight standing underneath the scaffold and through a pulley arrangement overhead. The idea was that this weight, which I can only assume was of concrete, weighed tons and tons, and had to be pulled as far from the ground as possible. The ten or twelve husky men who did this regularly were to form the tug-o'-war team representing Ovingdean at the annual sports. On the day we broke through the sound barrier I was one of the volunteers who might not have been so enthusiastic had he been able to see the weight which stood there like the Rock of Gibraltar.

Under the guidance of our coach, we grabbed the rope in approved fashion and each one of us put our twelve stone or more into the struggle. It took us hours to raise that weight, but raise it we did. I don't quite know what happened next. Three or four of the idiots at the front suddenly decided to have a smoke or something. The remainder, about eight of us, found ourselves streaking roughly in the direction of Brighton. I am quite sure we touched forty miles an hour, but of course, unlike Bannister and that crowd, we had no watches set for us.

GEORGE ELLIS.

### Mrs. Wiggins

Hundreds of St. Dunstaners all over the country will hear with deep regret of the death of Mrs. Wiggins. For some twenty years, Mrs. Wiggins, at 87 Albany Street, looked after St. Dunstaners who had to stay short periods in London when our Headquarters and Administrative Offices were in Regent's Park. In 1945 she reluctantly retired owing to ill-health, but there will be many who will affectionately remember her and recall those pre-war days at "No. 87."

### Talking Book Library November Narratives

Two modern thrillers, one political and one war-time, and an old romance, add lustre to what has been a beastly month. Three titles and their significance appended: "The River Line," by Charles Morgan, reader Robin Holmes, is set in this country and portrays an American ex-airman visiting a British friend, fellow escapees from the Germans. The story that emerges from between them concerning the organised escape system through Belgium and France is packed with drama and suspense. *Cat. No. 901.*

"The Dying Ukrainian," by Patrick Howarth, reader Robert Dougal, reveals a far-reaching Communist network in this fair land of ours, which has to be traced and broken up by a most inoffensive professor who happens to speak Russian. This yarn has the dreamlike quality of the anarchy stories of the first decade of this century, plus that most important feature of any novel, an entertainment value above average. *Cat. No. 903.*

"Jade of Destiny," by Jeffrey Farnol, reader Arthur Bush, concerns the adventures and romance of a Captain Dinwiddie, notable soldier of fortune and a pure Don Quixote. The intrigue and excitement of the times of Elizabeth I preside refreshingly over this cloak-and-dagger romance. I confess I love this author's work dearly, but even so this is a pleasant and restful period piece. *Cat. No. 904.*

Three good ones—you choose!

"NELSON."

### Young St. Dunstaners

At an exhibition of drawings and paintings arranged by the Art Group of Yeovil, Thomas Higgins (near Crewkerne) was awarded a third-class certificate.

★ ★ ★

Alan Brougham (Speke, Liverpool), has been awarded a certificate for Art, English and Woodwork, which was presented by the Lady Mayoress of Liverpool.

### Marriage

We have only just heard of the marriage of Thompson Mitchell (Edinburgh), to Miss Nan Gilbray, on December 9th of last year.

On July 31st, William MacKay (Castletown) to Miss Nancy Lee.

### Liverpool Club Christmas Party

Despite the Christmas shopping crowds we held our Christmas Party on Saturday, December 11th. From all parts of Merseyside flocked St. Dunstaners, their wives and escorts, friends and relations to make merry on this festive occasion. A coachload of our friends from Pleasington, Blackburn, included Mr. and Mrs. Bob Brittan, Mr. Hindle of Railway Hotel fame, and many notable personnel of the district. We were very sorry that some of our St. Dunstaner colleagues could not be with us, due to illness. However, they were in our thoughts and we wish them all a speedy recovery. Approximately eighty jolly revellers sat down to fill their "innards" with the delicacies of a splendid meal. Somewhat replenished and revived by the cup of tea, willing hands cleared the tables away for the action of Mr. J. Reason and his Concert friends. This brilliant and all-round entertainer never misses our Christmas Party and his supporting friends are all of exceptional talent.

Our President, Capt. Holloway, paid splendid tribute to Mr. Reason and his friends, and this was ably supported by our Secretary, T. Milner. The presentation of gifts to the children was made by our President's wife, Mrs. Holloway, with a smiling and cheery word for all. After some games for the children, in which the silence was not golden, the floor was cleared for the dancing session. We have all heard of modern style, old time, and ballet but, believe it or not, all these were left in the shade by our St. Dunstaners and their escorts. Spot waltzes were frequent and the lucky recipients were delighted they happened to be on the right spot. During a lull in the dancing, a surprise contest was staged for some of our Pleasington friends. It was amusing to hear and see their efforts as "Babies on the Bottle"; we hope all dislocated necks are now restored to normal. Reluctantly, though necessarily, all good things must end. Mr. Hindle, of the Railway Hotel, Pleasington, thanked our Club for inviting them to such a magnificent party, at the same time inviting our Club to Pleasington early in the New Year.

The Club Chairman, Mr. J. C. Owen, made a very suitable response, and with the joining of hands and singing of "Auld Lang Syne," the 1954 Liverpool Club Christmas Party came to a close.

### Foul!

Before you eat on Christmas Day,  
List to these words I have to say,  
Related to me by a turkey,  
Who'd seen deed done most foul and murky.  
"Once," said he, "my life was sweet  
With bags of corn and oats and wheat,  
Bran and hay, with barleymeal,  
Ten young wives with sex appeal,  
But alas, they are no more,  
They're dead and gone, my heart is sore.  
The farmer's wife came round at dawn  
Her feet sped fast across the lawn,  
With gleaming knife above her head  
She drove them into far-off shed.  
Come with me, I'll show you why  
I'm sick at heart and fit to cry."

I followed him to barnyard door,  
I stood in feathers ankle deep,  
Oh, stony heart, could I but weep,  
Feet and heads surround the floor.  
I sympathised, then stroked his nob,  
I felt a sob within his gob,  
"Look," said he, "There on that table,  
My favourite girl friends, Pat and Mabel.  
Those cruel folk, the ghoulish louts,  
Have turned their poor old insides out.  
They have no heads at all, poor things,  
Their necks are drawn up 'neath their wings,  
Their legs I gazed on with such pride  
Without their feet, tied side by side.  
Indeed it is a bitter pill  
To see them there so cold and still."

I'd seen enough, I came outside,  
The saddened turkey by my side,  
Said I to him, "How were you able  
To recognise your Pat and Mabel?"  
" 'Twas by the bruise on poor Pat's wing,  
You saw it by that knot of string.  
One day I got her by the scruff  
In playful mood a bit too rough,  
And Mabel there I recognise  
By stalwart rump and girt big thighs."

"Now," said I, "let's have a word  
With you, my cocky little bird,  
Come, turkey, come now, tell me why,  
Like them, you did not have to die."  
"Oh yes," said he, "I'll tell you, mate,  
Quite simple, I was under weight,  
I saw the axe begin to drop  
Upon my unprotected crop,  
Then, 'ere the gleaming blade could fall,  
I heard the farmer's daughter call.  
'Don't kill it now, it's too absurd  
To kill that poor old skinny bird.'  
She knelt beside me on the ground,  
Felt my body all around,  
'Room for fattening here,' said she,  
'We'll make our money yet on he,  
Four bob a pound in shops they pay,  
We'll have thee done another day,  
So free him, let him scratch around  
Until he reaches thirty pound.'"

So that's my tale, the turkey said,  
For three more months I'll keep my head,  
Then shall I be, like all my mates,  
A browned-off carcase on your plates.  
"Thou sha't not kill," you're telling me,  
Just a roody mockery."

"GEN."

### From All Quarters

"Pollie" Botha is playing a leading part in many sporting activities in South Africa as well as carrying on a successful private practice as a physiotherapist. He is President and Chairman of Germiston Sports Club, President of the General Purposes Committee, and Vice-President of the Baseball Club.

The ST. DUNSTAN'S REVIEW (South Africa), which gives us this news, also tells us that the Prayer Desk which the Rev. Michael Norman uses at St. Martin's Church was the gift of fellow St. Dunstaners when the Church was recently dedicated. A small silver plaque bears the inscription, "Presented by blinded comrades of St. Dunstan's."

Ron Smith, of Seaford, is now local representative for the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, and has been giving many lectures both locally and at Newhaven. After Christmas he has a programme of lectures for schools. As a result, there is great local enthusiasm and interest in the movement.

We hear from Mrs. Hazeldene that the Alsatian, "Don of Lorrimore," owned by our late St. Dunstaner, H. Rawlinson, was "Best Alsatian on Show" at a Dog Show run by the Western Province Kennel Club. This was in spite of the fact that he has lost an eye through being pierced by a cactus.

The *Sevenoaks Chronicle* tells us that W. J. (Bill) Ritchie has just completed twenty-one years as Keeper of the Lamp of the Sevenoaks Branch of Toc H. He has been a member of the Branch since 1928. His record as a blood donor is twenty-eight transfusions since 1936. He also holds the British Red Cross Society ten-year medal.

Sympathy and congratulations go to Maureen Lees this month. Sympathy because she has been ill for a long time now and still must not take up active work again yet; the congratulations are upon a letter of hers which, although she did not intend it as a contribution, was broadcast, and was paid for! Incidentally, as a result of information given to him by Maureen of a discovery she made at Thetford Abbey in her A.T.S. days, the Curator of the City of Norwich Castle Museum has told her that her information is being recorded on

certain Ordnance Survey Maps so that it will be permanently available.

J. Goldthorpe, of Doncaster, was in the winning team in the Straight Dominoes Handicap run by the Blind School at Doncaster, and F. Hemsworth was the winner of the fives and threes event, so that St. Dunstan's was well represented.

H. Perkins, of Edgware, was mentioned in the *Mill Hill and District Times* as having the highest number of points for a well-kept allotment; he also won third prize for his show of vegetables.

George Shallcross, of Mouldsworth, is busy building a wall, laying crazy paving, and making a rockery and sunken beds. First he made a model, pasted on wood.

We were reminded, speaking recently of the many honours which have come to St. Dunstan's men, that William Bithell is a Freeman of the ancient City of Chester.

Two or three years ago, George Fallowfield received from Sir Winston Churchill two cigar boxes, to be used for the delicate cabins, etc., in the model boats which George so skilfully and beautifully makes. With some wood remaining, he patiently carved two collar studs, correct in size and shape, and sent them to Sir Winston for his 80th birthday. He has now received a reply from the Prime Minister congratulating and thanking him.

### Grandfathers

T. Wood, Congleton (the seventh grandchild); H. A. T. Pearce, Leighton Buzzard (the second); R. Popple, of Llandebie; P. Sheridan, of Wishaw; H. C. Adams, of Rosehill, Oxford (second grandchild), A. Coleman, of Northampton (a second grandchild), W. Shurrock, of Chilton, Aylesbury (the twentieth); K. H. Palmer, of Leicester (a fourth grand-daughter). The little lady arrived with some publicity, for it was one of the cases recently reported in the Press where the father had been told that it was a boy.

### The Way

For golden tongue, for magic sword,  
For power men's minds to sway  
And conquer worlds I ask not, Lord,  
But just for grace each day  
To live my life THY WAY. ALEC B. HILL.

### Ovingdean Notes

It has been very apparent in the last few weeks just how fortunate St. Dunstan's has been in having so many good friends in this district. Recently we have had no less than three examples of wonderful hospitality extended to St. Dunstaners resident in the area, including those staying at Ovingdean or living at West House.

The first of these gatherings took place at the Grand Hotel, Brighton, on November 18th, when a dinner and dance was organised under the provision of the terms of the will of the late Mrs. M. Pittman. This was the sixth annual occasion on which a dinner and entertainment has been arranged and it has been noticeable that numbers attending have grown slightly each year, as the word got around!

On November 19th the employees of the Brighton, Hove and District and Southdown Bus Companies held their annual dinner for St. Dunstaners, at the "Black Lion," Patcham. Here the men were entertained to dinner and were later joined by wives and escorts for the dancing which followed. A great deal of hard work and much thought is obviously needed to make these occasions the success they undoubtedly are, and we are always most grateful to those Committee members who undertake the preliminary work.

The third event was on Wednesday, December 1st, when over 200 local St. Dunstaners (including some from Ovingdean and West House), together with wives and friends, had a most enjoyable evening, thanks to the generosity of the Brighton, Hove and District Grocers' Association. Their annual Christmas Party was held at the Grand Hotel, Brighton, and after a wonderful turkey dinner (plus all the usual trimmings) there was dancing to Percy Warden's Orchestra and Mary Orme and Stuart John entertained with songs. This was an occasion when Sir Ian had hoped to be present, but, by an unfortunate coincidence, the party was held on the same day as the House of Commons debate on the question of the provision of higher pensions and, of course, he felt in view of the campaign he had been supporting for many years for higher War Pensions, he should be in the Commons. Happily, Sir Neville Pearson was able to be present, and he expressed the warm thanks of all St. Dunstaners to the Grocers' Association for their interest in the organisation, and the

wonderful evening they had organised.

The main event to be held at Ovingdean since our last Notes were printed, has been the Bridge Week-end from 19th to 21st November, when no less than forty-seven St. Dunstaners took part.

The handsome Cup, suitably inscribed, in memory of Sir Arthur Pearson, which has been presented by Sgt. Alan Nichols, is now in position in the Lounge at Ovingdean. The Cup is to become the property of the last surviving "Old Contemptible" St. Dunstaner. We expect keen competition—as Sgt. Nichols is determined to make the presentation!! In response to enquiries, we regret to state that "monkey glands" are not dealt with under the National Health Service!!!

Christmas is rushing towards us now. The trainees go home on December 15th, and soon afterwards Ovingdean will be filled with the holidaymakers. The End of Term party and Christmas dinner for trainees was held on December 13th, with everyone in the best of spirits. We were delighted that Sir Neville and Lady Pearson who, as Commandant remarked at the dinner, must have been spending a great deal of time on British Railways on our behalf lately, were again ready to face the journey from London to join the party.

Commandant, Matron and all the Staff at Ovingdean and at West House wish to send all good wishes to St. Dunstaners all over the country. A very happy Christmas and New Year to everyone of you.

### Barbara Cole

We feel sure that many ex-trainees from Church Stretton and the early days after the return to Ovingdean, will remember Barbara Cole (who later became Mrs. Alf Shepherd). Those of our readers who do recall her, will be deeply distressed to learn of her sudden illness towards the end of the summer, which resulted in her death last month, and they will wish to join with us in offering their sincere sympathy to her husband and family.

Barbara Cole came to St. Dunstan's first in December, 1944, and remained on the Staff until January, 1952. After leaving Ovingdean in 1947 she rejoined the Staff, this time to serve at Park Crescent, in January, 1952. She was married in September of the same year. Her sympathetic and friendly nature made her one of the most popular members of the staff.

## “ In Memory ”

### Private John Coleman, *Suffolk Regiment*

It is with deep regret that we record the death of J. Coleman, a permanent resident at West House. He was seventy-two.

He came to us in December, 1946, and trained in wool rugs, continuing with this work until he was admitted to West House in December, 1950. He left temporarily to stay with his sister at Bury St. Edmunds for a holiday and he died there on August 27th.

Our deep sympathy goes out to his sister and step-daughter.

### Private Edwin John Summers, *Labour Corps*

We record with deep regret the death of E. J. Summers, of Eastleigh, at the age of sixty-six.

Discharged from the Army in September, 1917, he came to St. Dunstan's in January of the following year, when he trained as a mat-maker. He continued with this work until the time of his death.

He had been in failing health, however, for some time, and he went to Ovingdean where he died on November 29th.

He leaves a widow and grown-up family, to whom our deep sympathy is offered.

### Private Joseph Benjamin Hart, *Royal Derbyshire Regiment*

It is with deep regret that we record the death of J. B. Hart, of Cardiff, at the age of sixty-three.

Enlisting in early 1916, he lost his sight as the result of an accident while serving in France. He came to St. Dunstan's in 1921 and trained in netting and mat-making.

During the last few years his health had given cause for anxiety and in October he entered hospital, where his condition rapidly deteriorated and he died on the 29th.

Our deep sympathy is extended to his daughter, Mrs. Willis, and to his family.

### Private Thomas Eden, *Royal Marine Light Infantry*

We record with deep regret the death of Thomas Eden, of Richmond, Sheffield. He was fifty-five.

Coming to St. Dunstan's in 1925, he trained as a boot repairer and mat-maker. For the last few years his health had been poor and he had been going downhill for a considerable time.

Mr. and Mrs. E. Bradford, of Sheffield, attended the funeral.

Our deep sympathy is offered to his widow and family.

### Private James Frederick Davey, *Royal Army Medical Corps*

It is with deep regret that we record the death of J. F. Davey, of Swanage.

He saw service in the First World War and was discharged in October, 1917, but it was not until 1947 that he came to St. Dunstan's, when his age and the state of his health prevented any training. His health had been failing for some time, and he passed away on November 22nd.

He leaves a widow and grown-up daughter to whom our very sincere sympathy is extended.

## Births

KIRKBY.—On November 2nd, to the wife of

J. Kirkby, of Leamington Spa, a daughter.

MINTER.—On November 28th, to the wife

of J. R. Minter, of Southall, a daughter—  
Ann Heather.

WHYTE.—On November 30th, to the wife

of F. Whyte, of Gainsborough (late of  
Motherwell, Scotland, a son—Liam  
Andrew.

WINDLEY.—On November 17th, to the wife

of H. Windley, of Hull, a daughter—  
Pauline Ann.

## Deaths

Our deep sympathy goes out this month  
to the following:

DAVIES.—To J. Davies, of Meols, Cheshire,  
in the loss of a much loved sister.

GOODLEY.—To H. Goodley, and Mrs.  
Goodley, of Pulham Market, near Diss,  
whose daughter-in-law died on November

14th, leaving three small children, the  
youngest being only three days old.

NEAL.—To W. H. Neal, of Bampton, whose  
brother, with whom he lived and who  
also had lost his sight, died on November  
26th.

NEWMAN.—To G. Newman, of Cheriton,  
Folkestone, whose wife died in hospital  
on December 4th, after a long illness.

PAGE.—To R. Page, of Hove, who has lost  
his mother.

SALTERS.—To J. Salters, of Liverpool, who  
lost his mother on September 24th.

SIMMONS.—To J. Simmons (and Mrs.  
Simmons), of Ramsgate, whose mother-  
in-law, who lived with them, has died.

SMITH.—To D. W. Smith, of Tolladine,  
Worcestershire, whose mother has  
recently died.

WRIGLEY.—To W. Wrigley, of Droylesden,  
Manchester, whose father has died very  
suddenly. He had only recently retired.