

ST. DUNSTAN'S REVIEW

For Men and Women Blinded on War Service

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CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

EDWIN ("Bob") Read is a St. Dunstaner who is nearly 57; he lives at Brighton. The Commandant tells me that although Bob is totally blind, he walks practically all over Brighton by himself. Bob says that bicycles on the pavement or leaning up against the wall are the obstacles he hates most. But in spite of the bicycles and other hazards, he can go from his digs to the local, to the Post Office, to St. Dunstan's at West House, or to see his friends by himself without any trouble.

Bob hears and feels his way about and the direct noises made by vehicles and pedestrians, together with the echoes from the walls of the buildings and the change of sound when he reaches the end of the street, tell him where he is.

All this is familiar enough to St. Dunstaners who walk alone, and even I, who lead a rather sedentary life, recognise that what Bob says is authentic.

I suppose the two really serious handicaps imposed by blindness are the difficulty of reading and the difficulty of getting about alone. You can substitute reading with the eyes by reading Braille with the fingers, and the Talking Book with the ears, but without a sighted person's help we must go without the daily newspapers and the magazines although, of course, the wireless fills in many gaps. Perhaps we can never walk freely wherever we like, but those who persist can traverse many familiar routes and it makes an enormous difference to one's sense of independence to be able to get out alone and go to a few places within easy striking distance of one's home or lodging.

Some think a sixth sense guides us; I do not think this is true unless we call the sense of obstacle a sixth sense, but this is really a combination of feeling and touch through the feet and the walking stick and of hearing and pressure, and all these are familiar senses, though no doubt we have developed their use more than others.

As I get older and busier, I find the temptation to sit down and wait for somebody to show me the way is very great, but I try to resist it, for once you lose mobility you lose one of the most precious contributions to independence.

At the one extreme are some remarkable St. Dunstaners of whom I call to mind Tommy Milligan, who walks all over London by himself, and Walter Thornton, who even in his earliest months of blindness walked all over Church Stretton—and many others. The other extreme is the fellow who dare not move from his chair. If we cannot emulate the most proficient, let us at least determine not to be immobilised and chair-ridden.

IAN FRASER.

Welfare Staff Changes

Miss E. Graham Doel retires from St. Dunstan's service this month after having spent ten years as our Welfare Visitor for Lancashire. On Saturday, September 1st, at the Liverpool Club, in the presence of some fifty St. Dunstaners, Mrs. Violet Formstone presented her with a portable radio set as a token of their gratitude for her devoted service. Miss Doel has elected to spend the balance of the Presentation Fund towards a greenhouse for her new home, which is to be a cottage in the Lake District.

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Miss Auriel M. Smith, who has been responsible for visiting St. Dunstaners in Lincolnshire and the South and East Ridings of Yorkshire since 1942, retired at the end of August, and St. Dunstaners in her area have expressed to her their deep appreciation of her services in the form of a cheque with which she will purchase something of daily use to her in the cottage she is preparing for her retirement, also in the Lake District.

Both Miss Doel and Miss Smith have established themselves very firmly in the hearts of our St. Dunstaners, and we sincerely appreciate the contribution which they have made towards the success of our Welfare Visiting during their years of service. We wish them many happy years in their retirement.

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Miss Doel has been succeeded by Miss P. W. Everett, whom she has already introduced to many St. Dunstaners in the area. Miss Everett comes to us from the Kent County Constabulary, which she joined in 1946, and in which she had considerable experience in welfare work.

Miss Ann Newall has been appointed to take over the Wales and Border Counties area. Miss Newall undertook experience of welfare work during her service with the Red Cross, both at home and abroad, and also at the East Grinstead Plastic Surgery Hospital, where she knew several St. Dunstaners and developed a keen interest in our work.

Holiday Accommodation

St. Dunstaners and their wives welcomed as paying guests. Three minutes' walk from 'bus stop. Ten minutes to Ovingdean. —For terms apply Mrs. Copley, 7 Ridge-wood Avenue, Saltdean, near Brighton, Sussex.

From All Quarters

Johnny Swann, of Cosby, who is one of our handless St. Dunstaners, received a prize of a handsome lamp recently when his Domino team, Balby, won the championship again for the second year running.

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E. Denny's grandson has been appointed Lecturer in English at Cape Town University.

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W. Bell, of Newcastle, won fourth prize with his leeks, beating some twenty other competitors—all experts.

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On August 22nd—Mrs. West's birthday—our St. Dunstaner E. A. West, of Lyderstone, King's Lynn, and Mrs. West were thrilled to speak to their son, Donovan, from Wellington, in New Zealand. It was five years since they had heard his voice.

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When the Duke of Edinburgh visited Devizes as Colonel-in-Chief of the Wiltshire Regiment, he did not forget retired members. He visited the regimental cottages, and among the veterans he spoke to in their homes was Harry Hill.

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G. Eustace, of Kingston, is Chairman of the local Blind Club, and recently its members went on a tour of London Airport. Mr. and Mrs. Eustace thoroughly recommend the idea to any other readers who may be interested.

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Walter Thornton, who plays an active part as one of the two joint secretaries of the Bourneville Youth Club, went to France with some of the boys recently. He decided "just for fun" to enter for the French National Life Saving Award. He passed, and as a result of his example, twelve of his boys decided that they would try, too.

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C. Roach, of Darlington, had a wonderful show of roses again this year and took more prizes at the local Shows.

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P. R. Duffee, of Greenford, has passed the Home Teachers' examination with honours in three subjects, including braille.

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Placements

F. H. Greenaway, on inspection work with the Automatic Light Controlling Company, Ltd., Bournemouth; R. Newton, as a capstan lathe operator, with Measurements, Ltd., of Delph, near Oldham.

London Club Notes

Bridge

The St. Dunstan's Bridge Congress will take place at Ovingdean during the week-end beginning Friday, November 16th. Will all bridge players who are interested and wish to enter for the Sir Arthur Pearson Cup competitions—namely, for Pairs and Teams of Four—send in their names to Mr. Bob Willis at the London Club on or before November 1st, at the same time giving the name of the partner they have arranged to play with. This will enable the Committee to make the draw and ensure the smooth running of the competitions at Brighton.

JOCK BROWN.

Belgium and France Re-visited

I was one of the party Sergeant Nichols took to Belgium and France, and what a trail of triumph it was, to be sure. We were given a tremendous welcome wherever we went and everybody asking us to go again. We were given a civic reception at Courtrai and met with a great welcome at Mons, where two wreaths were laid. Other wreaths were laid at Casteau and on the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior at Brussels. We visited the Menin Gate and made a flying visit to Ostend before making for Paris, where we visited S.H.A.P.E. Later that day our Mons men marched down the Champs Elysées for the Kindling of the Flame at the Arc de Triomphe. We visited the British Embassy and met General Lambert, but what a big surprise for me when I found members here able to do the manual alphabet and sit down for a chat with me! We visited the Palais de Fontainebleau and by the time we had made all our calls had covered practically all Paris. Our last evening was spent at the British Legion in Paris.

The whole trip was wonderfully planned, with splendid accommodation. We remained seated in the coach and were driven on to the boat, took our seats, and were driven off with no trouble at the Customs, and enjoyed a perfect crossing both going and returning.

G. FALLOWFIELD.

"23 Paces to Baker Street"

This is a film which is right up the St. Dunstan's street in more senses than one. The hero is a blind playwright-detective and even has a flat in Portland Place! The film was very well received by the critics when it had its London première recently.

St. Dunstan's Physiotherapists at New York Conference

The Second International Physical Therapy Conference was held in New York from the 18th to 23rd June, 1956, and was attended by physiotherapists Mr. J. D. Calder, of Coventry, and Mr. H. J. Davis, of Stratford-on-Avon, and Mr. R. Priestley, Physiotherapy Superintendent, representing St. Dunstan's. The visit was arranged at the invitation of the American Foundation for the Blind, which has liaison with the Blind Veterans' Association, the Foundation acting as hosts to St. Dunstan's representatives.

This Conference, attended by physiotherapists from 36 countries, gave an opportunity to present the activities of St. Dunstan's in the field of physiotherapy and to demonstrate how successfully this work is being carried out by war-blinded men and women. The occasion also provided an opportunity whereby assistance could be given to the American Foundation for the Blind to re-open training in the profession of physical therapy for blind people, which had been suspended in 1949. St. Dunstan's representatives contributed much in discussion and demonstration at the various meetings to break down resistance to the training of blind people in this field, resulting in the promise of the fullest co-operation by those who, in the past, had not done so.

Plans are now being made by the American Foundation for the Blind to initiate a pilot scheme of training for physical therapy for blind people in America, with the ultimate aim of a long term training scheme being developed in the various States.

R. PRIESTLEY,

Physiotherapy Superintendent

150 Years Old

Congratulations to our friends and printers, the *Brighton and Hove Herald*, which on September 6th celebrated its 150th anniversary. The *Herald*—one of the oldest newspapers in the country, and Brighton's first newspaper—has at its head our St. Dunstaner, W. T. Curtis-Willson, M.B.E., J.P. Many St. Dunstaners will have heard Mr. Curtis-Willson when he took part in a fifteen minute broadcast entitled "Local Paper," in honour of the occasion.

Her Majesty the Queen sent a message of congratulation upon the paper's 150 years of continuous publication.

Letters to the Editor

DEAR EDITOR,

I should like to support the views in previous letters criticising the use in the REVIEW of the term "Young St. Dunstaners." To refer to the children of St. Dunstaners in this way is surely rather a silly misnomer.

Among the men and women who belong to St. Dunstan's there are the old, middle-aged and the young. But the last should not be confused with the children.

Previous correspondents have made practical alternative suggestions as to the manner in which the children of St. Dunstaners should be referred to, and I would endorse one or other of these proposals.

Yours sincerely,

J. E. ROSTON, *Iver.*

[Other readers have written to the same effect. From now on, therefore, items concerning St. Dunstaners' children will appear under the heading "Family News," as suggested by Mr. Floyd, of Teignmouth.—ED.]

DEAR EDITOR,

Many Roman Catholic St. Dunstaners will recall the kindness of the nuns and Parish Priest at Rottingdean in always holding their Chapel at our disposal.

For the past ten years two and sometimes three pews in the front of the Chapel have been kept in reserve for trainees and holiday makers at Ovingdean.

A new church is nearing completion—it is hoped that it may be opened on the 8th December—and funds are now being sought for its furnishings. Many who have attended the Chapel will no doubt wish to subscribe to the fund, and I am wondering if you would be good enough to receive donations, which would in due course be handed to the Parish Priest at Rottingdean.

Yours sincerely,

T. GAIGER, *Devizes, Wilts.*

[Yes. I will be happy to do this, and St. Dunstaners should send their donations to the Editor, ST. DUNSTAN'S REVIEW, 1 South Audley Street, London, W.1.—ED.]

DEAR EDITOR,

If you would allow me space I would like to thank the members of St. Dunstan's who came to the old inter-war camps at Little Gaddesden, for their delightful and generous gift of a door mat. The presentation at Lee-on-Solent took me so much by surprise

that I feel I did not thank them adequately. I shall indeed feel proud whenever I cross my doorstep to remember my friends of the old pre-war camps. I feel sure that no one could find a more splendid and courageous and gay lot of friends of 30 years' standing.

Also just one word as to my old Austin 7. It has worked well for 22 years and still can carry myself and three St. Dunstaners, probably weighing a total of over 55 stone—three St. Dunstaners at 15 stone each and myself the rest. It never broke down once at the Lee Camp after 90 miles in and around the camp.

Once again, many, many thanks for the mat.

Yours sincerely,

BRIDGET E. TALBOT.

Liverpool Club Notes

Saturday, September 1st, was a very notable occasion at the Club for a large company of St. Dunstaners gathered to take part in a very pleasing ceremony, namely, a presentation to Miss Doel from the St. Dunstaners she had visited for so many years.

Speeches were made by the Chairman, Vice-Chairman (Mr. Owen) and Mr. Collier, a member of the Manchester Club, all of whom assured Miss Doel of the esteem and gratitude we all feel for her and the work she has done for us in the past ten years, and the regret we feel at losing her services.

The presentation was then made of a portable wireless set, with a silver plate attached to it, on which were inscribed the following words: "Presented to Miss E. Graham Doel, by her St. Dunstaner friends, as a token of their gratitude for the ten years devoted to their welfare, and with their good wishes for her happiness in retirement, 1st September, 1956."

Our St. Dunstaner, Mrs. Violet Formstone, with a charming little speech, handed the set to Miss Doel.

Miss Doel then replied and said how much she had been touched by the nice things that had been said about her, and assured us she would carry with her very happy memories of the time spent among the St. Dunstaners she had tried to serve.

Refreshments were then served and afterwards a dominoe tournament with suitable prizes was held to conclude a very enjoyable afternoon.

JOSEPH BLAKELY,

Chairman.

War Pensions

Sir Ian's Plea in the House

In the House of Commons on July 31st, on the Motion for the Adjournment, Sir Ian Fraser, Morecambe and Lonsdale, said that he wanted to put on record some of the views of the British Legion and of ex-servicemen generally with regard to war pensions, so that they might receive proper consideration during the Parliamentary recess. The British Legion Conference had decided to adhere to its long-standing policy in asking that the basic rate of war pensioners should be raised from the present figure of 67s. 6d. to 90s., he said.

That would be an all-round rough justice and there was a great deal to be said for that proposal. It took no account of means or employability, did the same for all proportionately to the extent of their disability, and was in line with a long tradition of war pensions policy. It encouraged work and did not, as did some other methods of compensating people for disability, encourage idleness.

Sir Ian said that the conference had also asked for an increase in the special allowances and he added an individual plea of his own, that men suffering from two or three disabilities should be specially cared for. The Conference showed plainly that it felt its case had not been properly listened to or dealt with by any Government since the end of the war. "That is not surprising," said Sir Ian, "because pensioners are in a lower place on what I may call the cost of living ladder than they should be. Salaries, wages and income generally have risen by a large amount, but the war pension has not risen by a similar amount, at least for the overwhelming majority of war pensioners." The request for 90s. was not outrageous or unreasonable. It was something less than the assessment put upon disabilities by courts of law when dealing with negligence, and although the circumstances were different, the disabilities are the same. War pensioners were dying each year at something like 16,000 or 20,000, and before they were all gone, proper recompense should be given to them.

The Legion would try to rally ex-service societies generally to join in a united front to bring such proper and reasonable powers of persuasion to bear upon Members of Parliament and upon public opinion as will create the proper climate in which this

claim may be met, if not in 1957 then at least in 1958.

In his reply, Mr. R. Wood, Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Pensions, said: "The case for the 90s. rate on the basis of the rise in the cost of living has been put very fairly by Sir Ian, who is always zealous, eloquent and persuasive when he speaks as the champion of ex-servicemen and their dependents. No one can possibly deny that since the last war successive governments have completely transformed the situation for the most needy of all and the increase of 12s. 6d. last year was the biggest single increase that has been made in the history of war pensions. I feel that no Government can possibly be complacent about what my hon. Friend has said and in face of the British Legion's claim for 90s. That claim deserves and has received and will continue to receive the Government's constant consideration."

Referring to supplementary allowances, Mr. Wood said that the man with several disabilities was already receiving quite a respectable sum of money, but he would undertake, and the Minister would undertake, to study very carefully the suggestions Sir Ian had made, because they were both immensely sympathetic to the possibility of improving still further the position of the most needy pensioners of all. Concluding, Mr. Wood said: "I repeat that I am immensely glad to have had this discussion. I hope sincerely that what I have been able to say, and, far more, the way in which the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance try to administer the duties laid upon us, will leave my hon. Friend in no doubt as to our sympathy and desire to do all we can, both for the war pensioners and their dependants."

Great-Grandfathers

G. Worgan, of Woolaston, near Lydney; S. McLeod, Cricklade.

Grandfathers

T. Brougham, of Speke, Liverpool (at forty-six), E. Williams, of Shipley; J. B. Campbell, of Houghton-le-Spring; W. Millward, of Woburn Green; W. Watson, How Mill, near Carlisle; H. Bray, of Wythenshaw.

And new grandchildren for E. Watts, of Birkenhead; C. H. Stock, of Southampton; A. Briggs, of Thorpe, near Norwich; C. Durkin, of Tunbridge Wells; S. McLeod, of Cricklade.

A Passage from India in 1897

As the Suez Canal is very much in the news at the moment, I thought it might interest readers to hear about a voyage I made through the Canal as a small boy of seven. Although so long ago, the events of the voyage, including the passage through the Canal, remain very vivid in my memory. I have passed through the Canal many times in the last 60 years, but that first voyage I will never forget.

We sailed from Bombay on the good ship *Tokio*—she was a cargo boat, but carried a few passengers. There was no electric light on board and no refrigeration or cold storage of any kind, so the meat and poultry for the voyage, which lasted six weeks, had to be carried alive—sheep, chickens and a bullock were quartered on the well deck. On account of a lack of fresh vegetables, the crew were issued each morning with a ration of lime juice to protect them against scurvy.

Being the only small boy on board, I was allowed the run of the ship, and one afternoon I was standing in the foc'sle with the sailor on watch. A ship appeared on the horizon. As she came nearer I said to my friend "That's one of our ships." "No, it isn't," he replied, but I persisted. He got angry and told me to "buzz off," so I did. I ran up to the Bridge and called to the Captain in my piping voice "Captain Jones, Captain Jones, one of our ships is coming." The skipper called down to the "watch" "Is that one of our ships?" The "watch" said "No, sir." But it was, and there was a great hullabaloo as the Union Jack had to be fetched out of the locker, and a seaman had to hurry to the poop to be ready to hoist and "dip" the flag in courtesy as the two vessels passed each other. I have always had a great love for ships, and I knew the "lines" of the large companies' ships as a small boy to-day knows the "lines" of different makes of cars.

A few days after the above incident we arrived at Suez and entered the Canal. It was a very different Canal through which the great ships pass to-day. There were no great concrete banks as there are to-day, only sufficient width for a ship of not over 8,000 tons to navigate. The banks were of sand and it was quite easy to throw a biscuit to the little Arab boys who would run along the banks calling for "bak-sheesh."

At night huge searchlights are fitted to

the bows and it is a wonderful sight to see these lights many miles away. The passage through the Canal in those early days took about 36 hours, as vessels could only move very slowly to avoid the backwash shifting the sand on the banks.

Further, as there was only room for one ship to go through at a time, others going in the opposite direction had to tie up at specially appointed places. For a small boy there was plenty to interest him—small villages, donkeys, camels, etc., etc. A small boy's dream! Finally we arrived at Port Said—that "sink of iniquity" is very much the same as it was in those days, but quite respectable now. The little boats still come out to the ships, selling their wares—Turkish delight, nougat, handbags, etc. Then there was that character, the "Gully Gully" man, who performed marvellous tricks on the deck with day-old chicks.

We sailed from Port Said to the strains of "Funiculi Funicula," played from a small boat by a party of Italian men and women instrumentalists.

I remember very little more of the rest of the voyage, except that it was rough in the Bay of Biscay, and the end of the voyage when we berthed at Tidal Basin, London.

D. F. C. McALPIN.

Forty-four Years Married

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Johnson, of Eccleston, St. Helen's, on July 6th.

Ruby Weddings

Mr. and Mrs. D. J. McLoughlin, of Dublin, August 1st; Mr. and Mrs. A. Keegan, of Cork, August 26th; Mr. and Mrs. A. Briggs, of Thorpe, near Norwich, September 2nd.

We have only just heard that Mr. and Mrs. J. Lomas, of Walthamstow, celebrated their ruby wedding in June of last year.

Silver Weddings

Mr. and Mrs. T. Millward, of Brighton, on August 15th; Mr. and Mrs. F. Watkinson, late of Beverley, and now of South Africa, August 29th; Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Edmonds, of Grantham, August 15th.

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We congratulate all these St. Dunstaners and their wives on their anniversaries.

From the Chairman's Post-bag

Writing from Ovingdean, George Mortimer, in a letter to Sir Ian, says:—

"Your words in the July REVIEW have raised a number of very interesting points worthy of great discussion.

I know that blindness would be unbearable if it were not for the fact that we are able to forget that we are blind. We who have lost our sight have been given the power to form complete and satisfactory mental pictures before us. These mental pictures may not conform in every detail with the true visual picture which we would see if we were sighted, but such pictures grow and grow and become really real.

I dream fairly often and in my dreams I see real solid people, both those who I met before I was blinded and also those that I have "mentally seen" since I was blinded.

Before closing may I tell you about something which gave me a shock a few weeks ago. I happened to come into a room just after 2 o'clock one Sunday afternoon and heard your voice very clearly and very distinctly, so much so that I greeted you. As it proved, a little loudspeaker was switched on and you were giving a talk on the "Home Grown" programme. All this is a credit to the wireless installation at Ovingdean, also to the very fine reception produced by V.H.F. This method of broadcasting is able to maintain the true character of the voice, so much so that it becomes, shall we say, too realistic?"

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C. J. R. Fawcett, of Bournemouth, writes:

"My dreams are not at all regular nor are they frequent; many of them are not worth recalling and many a time I am aware of having dreamt but am unable to bring it to mind. Those I do recapture, however, have at least one feature in common—the visual sense has been stimulated every time. I believe it is possible for any of our senses to be involved, and it is probably for that reason that all one's emotions could conceivably come into action.

In my experience I seldom remember sounds such as conversation or music, although they do occasionally linger and can be recaptured. The point I am trying to make is that pictures are more readily and firmly established in the memory than any conversation or other sound. I dreamt a month ago of being introduced to two or

the Australian cricketers—Lindwall and Johnson; the former was a man of short stature with a face that was full of character but rather forlorn; and Johnson a much taller man who, to my great surprise, was wearing an overcoat that was much too long for him, leaving me with the impression of an undertaker rather than a cricketer. I have seen no new faces since 1918, and I don't suppose the faces I saw in my dreams are anything like the real thing; one could follow up this line of thought and wonder how those particular faces came into my mind at all; were they concocted specially for the occasion, or were they faces I had seen in *Comic Cuts* or the *News of the World* before 1918? I can't say.

Another dream I had only last night was of a beetle running across the floor of my room with the speed and almost the silence of a mouse. I joined in the search for it after it had disappeared behind some furniture, but the furniture had about as little relation to the truth as the size of the beetle, but the point is that I could see all those details in my dream, including the colours of the creature, carpet and furniture.

Have you ever wondered what the dreams are like of a person who was born blind? I never cease to wonder about it, and likewise never cease to be thankful that my nineteen years of being able to see has greatly enriched the rest of my life—even my unconscious hours."

Spinners' Cottages

The Weavers' Guild, of which I am a founder member, is seeking to record the whereabouts of old time spinners' and weavers' cottages, especially those with a frame for spinning purposes. Many St. Dunstaners and their friends in their travels may have come across or heard of such places, and I would gladly welcome authentic data. I came across many such places in Somerset, Norfolk, Suffolk, etc., during the war but memory eludes the precise details.

MAUREEN LEES.

The Coach House,
52 Hamilton Square, Birkenhead.

Exhibition

The date of Maureen's exhibition of work done by the physically handicapped was wrongly given in the last REVIEW as July. It actually opens on October 22nd, and will go on until Friday, the 26th. It is at 94 Argyll Street, Birkenhead.

Lee-on-Solent, 1956

The Annual Camp at the Royal Naval Air Station, Lee-on-Solent, was again an outstanding success, and we all hasten to express our gratitude to the Commander and the Ship's Company for providing us with yet another memorable week in our lives. Despite depressions from Suez and the Atlantic, the general opinion is that it was the "best ever."

Though space is restricted, special mention must be made of the Field Gun Crew who, fresh from their victory at Earl's Court, were once again our close friends and helpers. They certainly are a fine bunch of chaps.

The gay round went off to a good start with a dance at the Eagle Canteen, where we fell easy victims to the delightful Highland dancing of a cute little Wren. We were guests of the British Legion Club in Gosport, where it was shown once more that St. Dunstan's was in the forefront of entertainment by the talent produced from within the campers. There were tea parties at the Wren Officers' Messes and wonderful trips over the Solent to Cowes, on the Isle of Wight. It was on one of these trips that our tame policeman-piper was taken for a blind man again. With cheeks puffed out and eyes half closed in ecstasy, he led us along the gangway to the boat for the return journey. A couple of dogs started to bark and howl, but resolutely Jock went on until he saw the Pier Master bearing down on him with wild gesticulations and hoarse shouts. It seemed to our haggis basher that here was a definitely unappreciative audience about to show his feelings physically. He put out an arm to defend himself. "No, no," the agitated official took his arm to lead him. "Mind that rope, you'll fall over it."

An enjoyable drive to H.M.S. Dryad, General Eisenhower's H.Q., was a sort of mystery tour. We still wonder where the teetotallers' bus went to, for it returned home an hour after the "pubby" one. Happy memories of two excellent dances held at the R.A.F. Station, Titchfield, will remain with us for another year.

The annual walking race was held as usual. Amid scenes of great enthusiasm that wonderful youngster of seventy-three was victorious for the second time in two years. Alec Craigie took first place this year again. He certainly keeps the colours of the old boys flying from the top of the mast.

On Friday morning, August 24th, two buses left for Ovingdean and London, and the only consoling thought was that we were one week nearer next year's camp.

To the R.N.A.S., Lee-on-Solent, we reiterate our sincere and grateful thanks for another wonderful week, and we hope that the Padre's hat will produce our names so that we may see you all next year.

STEWART SPENCE.

"In Arduis, Flora"

By the time this appears in print, should it do so, I shall have removed from the place of which I speak to plough a new furrow in virgin soil in a fold of the Sussex Downs. There is an old saying that one cannot have pleasure without pain, and even now the truth of this is impelled upon me.

My life has been spent in its majority within five and a half miles of London Bridge; my earlier days from birth until my late teens in business premises with but stone walks and brick walls, with one small yard about seven feet by six. Here in my boyhood I helped to rear ferns, geraniums and fuschia, with occasional cactii and bulbs. It was amazing that in this small area, surrounded by walls over ten feet high, there grew and flourished greenery and blossom to brighten one's view.

Pre-1939 I had a garden of my own, devoted to many types of flowers, and a plot of land; half of the space allocated, I am afraid, to many head of chicken. But the hours spent therein were hours of pleasure.

Since 1945 I have had a garden. I have derived pleasure from it and bragged how little work I did in it. My wife has the green fingers.

I give some idea of it to maybe help or suggest ideas to some other St. Dunstaner, who likes a garden but does not like work.

It measures roughly 25ft. by 45ft., and is a walled plot. On the south wall I have four wall-trained fruiting trees, cherry, plum, peach and pear. These trees stand in a wide bed of soil in which grow golden rod, delphinium, lilies, phlox and stocks. I have also gooseberry bushes, apple trees, flowering shrubs; the walls of the house hold clematis, wisteria, honeysuckle and jasmine. Below them grow the sweet scented plants. Interspersed among all the others are the flowers I call the "common herd"—marigolds, larkspur, antirrhinum, asters. These, and roses, surround the lawn.

Reunions

As we go to press, only the London Reunion remains to complete the successful series of 1956 meetings.

The Glasgow Reunion on July 10th was one of the smallest gatherings, but nevertheless only three St. Dunstaners of those invited were unable to be present. Mr. D. G. Hopewell, Member of St. Dunstan's Council, presided and the Deputy Chief Constable of Glasgow came along after lunch and was a most popular guest, as the constant laughter during his speech showed.

Mr. Hopewell presided again at Newcastle on July 12th and this was also a very good meeting, as was Harrogate two days later, in spite of rain which did not stop all day.

Brighton, naturally, was the biggest of all these Reunions, more than one hundred St. Dunstaners attending. In Sir Ian's absence abroad, Mr. Hopewell again presided at this very happy gathering. Here, as at all of the Reunions, a message of good wishes was sent from Sir Ian and Lady Fraser.

National Laying Test, 1955-56 Report for the 11th Period of Four Weeks 17th July to 13th August, 1956

	<i>Score Value</i>
1. Philip Bagwell	1060
2. George Cooke	1027
3. W. Webb	1005
4. Percy Holmes	892
5. John Dix	774
6. W. A. Smith	734
Average No. of eggs per bird per month, 12.39.	
Average No. of eggs per bird to date, 163.53.	

Marriages

LLOYD.—On August 31st, R. R. Lloyd, of Bournemouth, to Miss Kathleen Crocker.
NESBITT—JOHNSON.—On July 28th, at All Saints' Parish Church, Maidenhead, Alexander Nesbitt, of St. Johnston, Co. Donegal, to Miss P. E. M. Johnson, of Brighton.

WARREN—DEMPSEY.—On September 1st, J. W. Warren, of Pendleton, Salford, to Margaret May Dempsey.

Personal

Our old friend Mr. Ottaway has left Enfield and now lives in Cleve, Somerset.

Well, it is more than ten years since we started this oasis, but it has not been a hard garden.

I have one piece of advice to all St. Dunstaners. A garden is not an unemptying pocket. You cannot take all the time. Every year give the soil a good meal of compost, manure or hop manure, and then during the season a little general fertiliser. It will work wonders.

One other tip. If you need a hose use the new plastic type. It does not kink, crack or split and is light and very pliable.

If you read these lines think of me now, trying to think out and fit in my new soil. I am taking a number of cuttings from my London oasis to remind me of this place.

JOHN MUDGE.

To St. Dunstaners and their Families in the Lancashire Area

May I take this opportunity of expressing my deep appreciation and thanks, particularly to those friends unable to be at the wonderful Presentation at the Liverpool Club on September 1st, for your most generous gifts of a greenhouse and wireless set on the occasion of my retirement.

I leave you with happy and affectionate memories and wish you all, as well as my successor, the best of luck. GRAHAM DOEL.

Quite Clear

Without comment, the magazine "Civil Service Opinion" prints this extract from the Pensioners' Guide to the Pension (Increase) Acts: "In addition it was laid down that if the total of pension and increase was less than it would have been if the pension had been smaller, it could be increased to the larger amount."

★ ★ ★

In a letter to Headquarters, Francis E. Hawes, of Swindon, writes:—

"During my stay in Amsterdam I chanced upon a Dutch official who works for the Dutch War-Blind. His name eludes me for the moment, but he spends a good deal of time in the Wardens' Bungalow at the camping terrain which forms part of the Olympic Stadium. He is himself a war pensioner, having served on detachment with the British Navy during the war. He is not blind. He showed me much kindness and I suggest that should other St. Dunstaners be camping or cycling in Holland and happen to stay in Amsterdam, they introduce themselves to him."

Brighton Club

The above Club meets on the *second* Thursday of each month at 7 p.m., in the Winter Gardens, Ovingdean. We have had many enjoyable bowls outings this season. On August 28th we entertained the Blind Bowls Club of Eastbourne, on the rinks at St. Ann's Wells Gardens, Hove. It was a very close game, Eastbourne winning by 34 shots to 31 shots.

FRANK A. RHODES.

Westbury Camp

The annual Camp for St. Dunstaners who once came under Miss Oliphant's care for after-care held their annual Camp at Westbury, Wiltshire, from the 10th to the 20th of July. A good time was had by all.

Camp Commandant Miss Oliphant carried out her duties in her usual efficient manner, whilst Church Strettonite Miss Arning again excelled herself as "minister of the interior." We are greatly indebted to those wonderful people who, year after year, give up their holidays to come and help us out. They are a grand lot of people. Mrs. Luce, a Warminster lady, deserves a special word of thanks for the very hard work she puts in as "minister of transport," as do all those ladies and gentlemen who put their cars and time at our disposal. If you could see our convoy of about thirty cars speeding their way to Sherborne Abbey, in Dorset, you would see what I mean.

Visits were paid to Bath Theatre and Bath and Salisbury Races; to Hinton Charterhouse, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robertson-Glasgow (early St. Dunstaners will remember Mrs. Robertson-Glasgow as a V.A.D.); and we were royally entertained by the Women's Section, British Legion, Westbury, the W.V.S. at Wilton, the Infantry Training School, and by various private individuals.

There were two new innovations this year—tandem riding and skittles. We played three matches, winning one, losing one and drawing one. I would respectfully pass on this skittles lark to the powers that be at Ovingdean. It certainly caught on.

The Camp indeed was a great success, but was it necessary for a certain Lancashire bloke to show off with his feats of strength? After all, Dickie, lad, those poor soldiers might possibly need that stove. (There will be a poem to follow on this little affair.)

Camp at last came to an end with our final night for those who had helped in so

many ways. Two hundred or more joined in dancing, and to the singing of "Auld Lang Syne" one more glorious camp came to an end.

E. H. NORTH.

The Trout

*From Westbury Camp one summer's eve
Two blind campers took their leave.
Complete with fishing rod and creel
Intent to catch some perch or eel,
They said farewell, that they would try
To bring us home some fish to fry.
Some perch, or roach, or possibly
A salmon for some kedgeriee.*

*Returning late that summer night
To camp came Dickie in delight.
A fisherman I'm proved, said he,
Fra' Lancashire, not West Countree.
"Feel it, Gen, that massive snout."
"Cor strewth," says I, "a blooming trout."
"Indeed," says Dickie, filled with glee,
"We'll have it for to-morrow's tea.
So goodnight Bill, Clem, Bob and Fred
I think I'll toddle off to bed."*

*He turned to go, but quite forgot
That cursed square, that danger spot.
His toe caught in that concrete slab,
At that old stove he made a grab.
To tummy clutched the stove so black,
Fell Dickie, flat upon his back.
We all lay still upon our beds,
With pangs of fear and covering heads,*

*We said our prayers. Bad sinners all.
Oh, where, or when would chimney fall?
Where is death's sting, oh, bitter pill.
But ain't old Dickie lying still?
He's lying somewhere on his back,
Has anyone a Union Jack?
Get out your arms, we must rehearse
"Shun! Present! And arms reverse!"*

*And then it came, the chimney fell,
A grinding crash like fiends of hell,
We felt our hearts beat 'neath our shirts,
All is well. Nobody hurt.
The chimney fell across Dick's bed.
He rose to feet, then shook his head.
Said he "What's all the row about.
Where the hell's my ruddy trout?"*

*Said I "It slithered across the floor,
It's lying somewhere around the door,
Sticks came out to prod round beds,
No fish was found, alive or dead.
No fish was found, simply because—
A blooming trout?—there never was!*

"GEN."

Family News

Geoffrey Pearce (Hendon) has passed the Advanced Level General Certificate of Education and goes to King's College, London, in October.

Josephine Broomfield has again won the Singles and Doubles Tennis Trophies for Chertsey Convent School and holds the two Shields for another year.

Valerie Waters (Sevenoaks) has passed her General Certificate of Education in six out of seven subjects.

Julius Weeks (St. Leonards-on-Sea) has passed his entrance examination to Brookwood Grammar School, and also his Grade II music examination. He is not yet eleven.

Thirteen-year-old Jane Sutton (Madeley, Crewe) has passed the Junior Examination for the Trinity College of Music, gaining 80 marks out of a possible 100.

Mildred Horner (Holmfirth) has passed her "Commercial" examination, and Valerie Shread (King's Lynn) Part I of the Preliminary State examination.

Phyllis Redford (West Molesey), who is fourteen, won a 1st Class Diploma in the "Good Housekeeping" Institute Milk Cookery Competition (Schoolgirls). She also came second in a school competition held by McDougalls for a plain cake.

Eight year old Peter Webber (Tewkesbury) was awarded the Effort Prize for his form.

Dorothy Cole (Lower Tuffley, Gos.) has passed the fifth grade for piano and singing and was soloist in the school choir.

Little Patricia Lee (Wakefield) has passed Grade II of a Greek Dancing examination.

Ethel Dimond (East Grinstead) has passed her school swimming test.

The son (Geoffrey) and daughter-in-law of Mr. and Mrs. A. Rowe, of Burslem, have left this country for Australia.

Helen Embleton, Trimdon, has been successful in the General Certificate of Education examination. She is a good sports-woman, too, being in the school and house teams for all games.

Pauline Potts, Ilfracombe, has passed the Chamber of Commerce examination in English, French and Geography; she has also passed a Pianoforte Grade 3 examination.

Marriages

Donald Brookes, son of our St. Dunstaner, W. E. Brookes, was married to Miss L. M. Arnold, until recently Lounge Sister at West House, at Childwick Green,

on July 21st. The bridegroom, who served in the R.A.F. during the war, is now planning engineer with a well-known aircraft company at Southampton.

Beryl Catherine Hawkins (of Sidcup) married Mr. George P. Saunders on August 25th.

On July 26th, Elizabeth Homan (Cork). Barbara Weldrick (Hull) on July 21st, to Mr. Kenneth Wilkinson.

On August 17th, Myra Williams (Cardiff) to Mr. Peter Moverley.

The news has only just reached us that Brenda Rosemary Hazel (of Merton Park) married Mr. David Williams-Wynn, of Johannesburg, on February 25th.

Christine McLoughlin, Dublin, on July 18th.

Births

BEATTIE.—To the wife of J. Beattie, of Mobberley, Cheshire, on August 2nd, a son—Malcolm Samuel.

EDWARDS.—To the wife of J. L. Edwards, of Coventry, on July 26th, a son—Richard.

JONES.—To the wife of S. Jones, of Hatch End, Middlesex, on August 10th, a son—Andrew Philip.

MANNERS.—To the wife of M. Manners, of Bridgend, Glamorgan, on August 15th, twin sons.

MCCARTNEY.—To the wife of H. McCartney, of Belfast, on August 26th, a son.

TUTTON.—To the wife of S. Tutton, of West Hounslow, on August 31st, a daughter—Stephanie.

Deaths

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

BURCHELL.—To W. Burchell, of Midhurst, whose sister has died in hospital.

CHISHOLM.—To G. Chisholm, of Fenham, Newcastle-on-Tyne, in the loss of a much-loved aunt.

COLLINGS.—To F. Collings, of Blackpool, whose wife died in hospital on September 8th.

DAKIN.—To H. A. Dakin, of Blackpool, whose father died on August 3rd.

IBBOTSON.—To H. Ibbotson, of Withernsea, whose brother has recently died.

NEWTON.—To Roy Newton, of Oldham, whose father died on August 17th, after a short illness.

SMITH.—To C. Smith, of Bury St. Edmunds, who has lost a brother very recently.

WILLIAMS.—To J. Williams, of Swansea, whose eldest brother has died in hospital.

"In Memory"

Private James Kevill, *Lancashire Fusiliers*

We record with deep regret the death of James Kevill. He passed away at West House on September 7th. A regular soldier (enlisting in February, 1901) he lost his sight in the First World War and spent a few days with us in 1919, but it was not until six years later that he came to us finally. He did not undertake any serious training, and for many years had been a very sick man, permanently living at one or other of our Homes.

He was a widower, and our deep sympathy is extended to his relatives, particularly Mrs. Bundy, his sister.

Private George Gardener Hill, *Royal Army Ordnance Corps*

It is with regret that we record the death of G. G. Hill, who had been a permanent resident at West House since 1952. He was nearly 81.

He came to St. Dunstan's in 1950, but owing to his age and the state of his health he did not train. He was a widower and our deep sympathy is offered to his three grown-up children.

Sapper Ernest Woodward, *Royal Engineers*

We record with deep regret the death of Ernest Woodward, of Dunstable, who died in hospital on July 26th. He was 73.

Enlisting in January, 1917, he came to St. Dunstan's in September, 1917, and trained as a mat-maker. Later he became a mat instructor in our workshops and was affectionately known as "Woodie." In 1920 he continued mats at home until 1933, when ill-health forced him to give up. He had been an invalid for many years.

Our deep sympathy goes out to Mrs. Woodward.

Gunner Herbert Beed, *Royal Garrison Artillery*

With deep regret we record the death of H. Beed, of Southampton. He was 71.

He came to St. Dunstan's in 1919, but his age, and the state of his health, which grew rapidly worse, prevented him taking any training. He died in hospital on August 7th.

Our deep sympathy is offered to his family.

1st Class Blacksmith Harry John Clapson, *Royal Navy*

It is with deep regret that we record the death of H. J. Clapson, of Portsmouth. He was nearly 73.

Enlisting in 1902, he was invalided from the Royal Navy and came to St. Dunstan's in June, 1939. He did not train and was for a time a resident at West House.

He was a widower and our sympathy is offered to Mrs. Button, an old friend, who had cared for him since he returned to Portsmouth.

Private Samuel Green, *Labour Corps*

We record with deep regret the death of S. Green, of Chichester.

Although he was discharged from the Service in March, 1919, he did not come to St. Dunstan's until 1936, when he trained as a telephonist. He carried on this work until 1944 and then retired to do netting and rugs in a small way.

He leaves a widow and daughter to whom our deep sympathy is offered.

Gunner Harold S. Thomson, *Royal Garrison Artillery*

It is with deep regret that we record the death of H. S. Thomson, of Bruche, Warrington.

Enlisting in November, 1914, he was wounded in 1916. He came to St. Dunstan's and trained as a joiner and was a first class craftsman. When the Second War came he instructed the newly blinded men in joinery. When he returned to Warrington he went into factory work and he continued successfully at this until quite recently. He had a sudden illness and he died a few weeks later in hospital.

Our deep sympathy goes out to his wife and son.

Sergt. Wilfred Morton and C. H. McQuillan, *Australian Forces*

We have heard with regret of the deaths of two Australian St. Dunstaners. Wilfred Morton, of Lawley, Western Australia, served with the 12th Field Ambulance, Australian Imperial Forces, as a sergeant. Although we have kept contact with him, he had never come to St. Dunstan's. He leaves a widow, to whom our deep sympathy is extended.

C. H. McQuillan, of Cook's Hill, New South Wales, also did not come to St. Dunstan's. Our deep sympathy is extended to his relatives.

The late Mr. W. Rickaby

We much regret that it was omitted from our records that our late St. Dunstaner,

W. Rickaby, of Battersea, was a Military Medallist.