

ST. DUNSTAN'S REVIEW

For Men and Women Blinded on War Service

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CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

NEARLY eight hours in the saddle in one day, broken only by a quarter of an hour for morning tea and half an hour for a sandwich lunch, is a good deal for two people like my wife and myself who belong to the 1914-1918 war vintage and spend most of our lives indoors. Nevertheless we survived without undue stiffness or fatigue.

We had ridden from Marakabei, one of Fraser Limited's trading stations in South Africa, over the mountains to a camp that had been established near the source of the Maletsunyane River, some 8,000 feet above sea level. The camp consisted of a number of tents, primus stoves, cooking pots and, believe it or not, a canvas bath and every other convenience, which had been brought over the mountains by eight mules and thirteen Basuto ponies, and had been erected by Mr. du Preez, one of our store managers, and his native boys.

Chief Lechesa Mofogoi greeted us and rode the last two hours with us. That evening we exchanged suitable tokens of our regard for each other with speeches and salutes. The Chief's welcoming gift to me was a sheep which was slaughtered on the spot; its liver and kidneys, screwed up in a tin, were put in the river to keep to cook for our breakfast, a process which was hardly necessary because that night there were twelve degrees of frost. The rest of the sheep was cooked before an open fire in the veldt and eaten by our twenty native boys for supper and breakfast. We estimated that it provided between three and four pounds of meat each. All were pleased, and nobody seemed to have indigestion.

Next day a three hours' ride, accompanied by the Chief and his horsemen, brought us to Semokong, another mountain station 7,400 feet above the sea. Surrounded by a wall made of local ironstone is an enclave containing the Manager's house, a splendid double-fronted shop, a reserve store, a wool store, a mill for grinding grain, stables and outhouses, and a rest-house for customers. The store (with its modern glass counter in the centre) is laden with every conceivable kind of merchandise, the most colourful being blankets of every quality and hue. All the fabric of the store, including the Manager's bath, a wind-motor to charge his wireless and provide a little electric light, and the heavy metal mill, came up the mountainside on donkey, pony or bullock packs. Wool, mohair, wheat and peas are bought from the native farmers, and merchandise is sold. Only a handful of Europeans live here—the Manager and his wife, and, a few miles away, the doctor and his wife and a mission station. No other European is within ten or miles twenty in any direction.

Adjoining the station is an airstrip originally built by our company but now taken over by the Government, so that the isolation of earlier times has given way to a certain amount of traffic, including a weekly postal plane or an occasional Government visitor or inspector.

We needed many ponies for the trek and, apart from those belonging to the firm, had

to borrow from friendly chiefs, headmen and natives. The Basuto people are generous, hospitable and warm-hearted and have a strong sense of courtesy and respect for visitors, especially to old friends like ourselves, for members of my family have been trading in Basutoland for the past eighty years. I was told that to hire a horse for "a 'son' of Frasers" would, in the view of the village, be lacking in courtesy.

My co-director and friend, Jack Nolan, who organised the trip, rode ahead of me. My pony followed like a schoolgirl in a crocodile, up and down and zig-zag, sure-footed, certain, faithful. During our long ride we crossed mountains and rivers where there were no Government paths or tracks. We slithered down muddy banks, traversed rocky patches where it would seem that only a good goat could go; but no pony fell. Our personal luggage included Elastoplast to mend a punctured buttock, a pistol to shoot a horse if he broke his leg, a hypodermic needle to shoot me if I broke mine, and some anti-venom for snake bites; none was used. Our food—bully beef, sausages, eggs and bacon, soup and bread; our drink—coffee and the inevitable gin and, a special favour to me, a bottle of French Vermouth to go with it. Nothing had been forgotten.

It always rains at Easter in Basutoland, they warned us, but it didn't.

On our way we fished for yellow fish and caught none, and for rainbow trout and I caught two—a 2 lb. and a 3½ lb. They fought like the best English trout, which is the highest compliment I can pay them, and fishermen may like to know that they were killed on a light trout rod with 7 lbs. nylon cast and an invicta fly. I also had two takes on a Peter Ross.

From time to time, Jack Nolan or Bill Roche, my other co-director and companion, would exchange greetings in fluent Basuto with natives as we passed them in their villages, or with horsemen going about their business.

On Easter Monday we flew from the mountain in a single engine plane belonging to a most enterprising local operator. As we passed 11,000 feet above the famous Maluti Mountain we wondered which crag or pinnacle would be best to land on if the engine failed, but it didn't.

As far as I know, the Basuto nation are the only mounted African people, and the population of ponies bred, trained and ridden in Basutoland must number scores of thousands. The Government, the missionaries, and the traders have done much for this country, bringing it in a hundred years from primitive barbarism to a well-ordered, peaceful, and, on the whole, law-abiding condition. Britons, including as always, many Scots, may be proud of their civilising influence.

IAN FRASER.

Chess Week-end

The Chess Week-end at Ovingdean this year is being held from Friday, September 13th, to Monday, September 16th (nights inclusive) and I will be writing to all those St. Dunstaners on my Chess List nearer the time, in the usual way. If there are any other men interested and who would like to take part in this function, I shall be pleased to hear from them.

C. D. WILLS.

The Derby Sweepstake

The Derby Sweepstake is now closed. The draw will take place at the London Club on Thursday evening, May 30th, and all those drawing a horse will be notified the following day.

Presentation to Miss Cecil Wood

On Thursday evening, May 2nd, a goodly number of London men gathered in the London Club rooms at 191 Marylebone Road, when a presentation was made to Miss Cecil Wood, until recently Welfare Visitor for the Greater London area. Mr. Lloyds introduced Mr. Sammy Webster, who, on behalf of the men of her Area, presented Miss Wood with a travelling clock and notecase as a token of their affection and regard. An antique chest had also been chosen by Miss Wood.

In her reply, Miss Wood expressed her sadness that her association with us had been prematurely ended, but she said she would take with her many happy memories of her days of visiting.

(A letter from Miss Wood is on page 3.)

London Club Notes

Special Notice

To all readers of this REVIEW—(and if you have any St. Dunstan's friends who do not read the magazine, will you please pass the following information on to them). Do you know the London Club carries on its activities at 191 Marylebone Road? The Club is open every night of the week except Wednesdays and Sundays. The main events of the week are as follows: On Tuesday a Whist Drive is held for men and escorts; on Thursday a Domino Drive is held, and very soon Housey-Housey will be added to provide extra entertainment on that night; on Saturday afternoon, Bridge tournaments, matches and Bridge Drives are held, and in the evening, a Whist Drive, again for men and escorts, finishes the day.

I hope that a large number of London men will spot this notice and give the Club a trial. All will be made welcome, so do try and come along. By the way, if you have any suggestions to make that you think might improve the entertainment, we have a suggestion box in the Front Hall, and new ideas will be warmly welcomed and will certainly be tried out. Now then, fellows, make up your minds and roll up. We will be pleased to see you. If you want to know anything about the Club and how to get there, telephone PAD 5021 and ask for Mr. Wills, who will be only too pleased to assist you.

Bridge

The following information might be of interest to St. Dunstan's bridge players. The first quarter of this year has been a very busy one for the St. Dunstan's Bridge Club. During the last three months we have played six matches on Saturday afternoons against London teams and up to the moment, the result stands at four wins to us and two losses.

The Sir Arthur Pearson pairs competition is going on wonderfully well and we have great hopes that it will be finished by the end of this month. It is hoped to start a Knock-out Competition sometime in June and all our bridge players are interested. This information has been put in this REVIEW with the sincere hope that it may encourage new members who are interested in this game and who have not given a Club a chance. So give it a trial lads, and we feel sure you will not regret it.

One more reminder that if you have not sent in your name for the Harrogate Week (September 7th—14th) will you please do so as soon as possible. G.P.B.

St. Dunstan's Fifteen-Mile Walk Regent's Park, Saturday, 13th April, 1957

Order of Finish	Name	Time	H'cap	Pos. in H'cap
1.	W. Miller	2-27-1	Scratch	2-27-1 5
2.	A. Brown	2-27-39	3-20	2-24-19 2
3.	G. Hewitt	2-34-55	8-00	2-26-55 4
4.	T. Gaygan	2-36-18	14-00	2-22-18 1
5.	P. Cryan	2-44-00	13-00	2-31-00 6
6.	S. Tutton	2-46-25	14-00	2-32-25 7
7.	C. Stafford	2-50-31	25-00	2-25-31 3

Time Standard Medals (2 hrs. 35 mins.):—
W. Miller, A. Brown, G. Hewitt.

To St. Dunstaners of the London Area

I am using the REVIEW to send a message of thanks to the many St. Dunstaners who contributed towards my retirement present but were not able to be at the Club yesterday evening.

I cannot tell you in a few words how much I value the affection which you have shown me through this most generous gift and also in your letters. The travelling clock (which has been inscribed) and the notecase and the antique chest will be constant reminders of you—if I should need one. I have enjoyed my twelve years with you and have many memories of experiences shared—some of them amusing ones! I am very sad at being obliged to leave you five years before my time, and I shall miss you all.

Owing to my walking powers having been reduced, it was not possible for me to keep right up-to-date with the visiting last year, but I am hoping to meet most of you once more at the London Reunion party in September. In the meanwhile, I send you my good wishes.

Yours affectionately and gratefully,
May 3rd, 1957. CECIL WOOD.

★ ★ ★
From John Mudge, now of the sun-bronzed face and soil-hardened hands, come greetings from Saltdean, and an entertaining description of his labours to make his new garden beautiful. When he wrote he was struggling with the handicap of no rain. "Like all farmers," he says, "I have my moans, but I am getting along pretty well."

Nice to hear from you, John.

Pensions Plea Rejected

Mr. John Boyd Carpenter, Minister of Pensions, has refused the request for increased war disability pensions put to him by the British Legion and seventeen other ex-service organisations.

In his letter to Sir Ian Fraser, President of the British Legion, the Minister says that improvements for the more seriously war disabled, costing £1,750,000 in the first full year, came into effect as recently as last February. These indicated clearly that the Government had not forgotten its promise to keep war pensions under review, "but it is little more than two years since we made the biggest increase in the main rates of war pensions ever made in the history of this country."

"It is not realistic to suppose that a further basic rate increase could be made for war pensioners and their dependents in complete isolation from other social service claims. I am afraid, therefore," Mr. Boyd Carpenter concluded, "that we cannot meet the deputation's request for an immediate substantial increase in the basic war pensions rates. It is naturally with regret that we have felt bound to come to this decision."

The Minister's letter deals only with the deputation's plea for an increase in the basic rate, from its present level of 67s. 6d. to 90s. a week. He has promised to reply separately to other points raised by the deputation.

Speaking at the British Legion Women's Conference on May 16th, Sir Ian Fraser said "We have been told that at Chequers last week-end, Ministers were planning the biggest pensions reforms ever, to come into effect before the next general election. Such a complicated scheme, affecting so many millions of people, must take time to prepare; it could not become law until the middle of 1958. Even then there must be a further administrative delay before it became effective. A major reform of war pensions rates could not wait until the Government had put through all the necessary processes for these changes. An adjustment of war pensions to what the Legion calls the '90s. level' is long overdue. We ask the Government to increase them this year, thus giving practical effect to the assurance the Minister made in his letter to me that it is the Government's firm intention to maintain the principle of preference for war pensioners."

International Handicrafts, Homecrafts and Hobbies Exhibition

The International Handicrafts, Homecrafts and Hobbies Exhibition, now in its fifth year, will be held at Earls Court, London, from September 19th to 28th. This Exhibition is recognised as the largest and most successful of its kind in the world, covering as it does all aspects of handicrafts, homecrafts and hobbies. A British Handicraft Competition is also being run in conjunction with the main Exhibition, and this will include special sections for blind and disabled people. Prizes to the value of £280, in addition to silver and bronze plaques, bronze medals and certificates of merit, will be awarded in the British Handicraft Competition.

It is felt that the Competition will particularly appeal to some of our experienced hobby craftsmen and St. Dunstan's is prepared to assist with the cost of placing exhibits. Application forms for entry can be obtained from Mr. Wills, at Headquarters.

The Reunions

The month so far has brought meetings at Blackpool, Chester and Manchester.

At Blackpool, on May 8th, Mr. T. F. Lister, C.B.E., member of St. Dunstan's Council, presided over what is always one of the biggest gatherings of the year.

Not quite so large, but no less enjoyable, was Chester on May 10th. Mr. D. G. Hopewell, so well known in the North as a member of our Council, welcomed the guests at this meeting, which was the first organised by Miss Newall, Visitor for Wales and Border Counties. During the afternoon, our St. Dunstaner, Tom Woods, with his band, provided music, and some amateur entertainers whom he had also brought along were greatly appreciated.

At Manchester, on May 11th, Mr. Hopewell, again presided. A company from the Hulme Hippodrome entertained during the afternoon and everyone agreed that it was a most successful meeting.

Mr. Wills was, of course, present at all these Reunions, and Miss M. A. Midgley, who has taken Miss Wilson's place, had her first introduction to them and was able to meet many of her Northern men.

Letters to the Editor

DEAR EDITOR,

When choosing books for the blind, I should certainly do so on the comprehensive and lucid lines suggested by our Chairman last month.

We St. Dunstaners are fortunate in that we have seen and can therefore appreciate descriptive matter, and I wonder to what extent, if not completely, this is meaningless to those who have not had sight. Personally, I feel strongly that excessively descriptive and verbose literature should be avoided, and in the case of the Talking Book, a voice that does not become monotonous is essential.

I favour the condensing of long books, old and new, where this is really worth while, but to make it so is obviously a very difficult task.

Having regard to the cost of production, it is clear that only the best of all types of literature should be selected, and that we must adjust ourselves as cheerfully as possible to circumstances beyond our control.

Yours sincerely,

ARTHUR T. BROOKS, *Bournemouth.*

DEAR EDITOR,

I think that it is highly desirable that books recorded should seldom exceed two volumes; that all books with a dialect should be avoided; also, that peculiarity which sometimes crops up of the character who, when playing the part of a foreigner, will persist in talking broken English even when he is supposed to be speaking in his native tongue.

With reference to the condensation of some novels, I am sure that many will not suffer much in the telling if some of the redundant verbiage were excised. I think that many of the older novels are great offenders in this respect. Since the turn of the century, our language has become more streamlined, terseness being the order of the day, so, since we live in this century, we must not pretend to be purists.

I also think that cast reading does much to make the characters in a story come to life. However good a reader may be, and there are several, the telling of a story if extended, tends to become monotonous. With cast readings, surely the sound effects can save many grooves in a record, although I am not sure that this would add to the cost.

A good example is that of the B.B.C.'s story-telling, especially in the Children's Hour, where so much care is given to detail that one can see the story live—without a "tele."

Sincerely yours,

ERNEST E. J. S. BURTON
Cliftonville, Margate.

DEAR EDITOR,

I fully agree with our Chairman that something should be done to enable Braille readers to obtain a larger variety of books. I know there are some Braille readers who are opposed to any book that is being put into Braille being abridged, but if they read a lot, I feel sure there have been times when they must have said to themselves, "Well, a lot of this could have been cut out." I have just read one of the Panda novels in four volumes. This work could have been condensed and I should have enjoyed the reading more if I could have done some skip-work, but being blind I was at a disadvantage. I feel sure there are many authors who, when writing, have to consider making the book into, say, three hundred pages, so that it can be sold at full novel price, and also perhaps please the publisher. Such works should be condensed. I know many who will say, "Who is to do this?" Well, if it is done in the printing world with *World Digest*, *The Reader's Digest* for example, why not in Braille?

When sighted people read, they look at print; when blind people read they feel dots. When we read we all see a moving picture in our brains, but the difference is that the sighted can skip the non-essentials whereas we have to feel every word, fearing we will miss an essential. . . .

I am grateful to all those people in the sighted world who have provided capital for so much expensive Braille reading matter so that our incapacity is more easy to bear. If more books could be provided for the same outlay, I shall be pleased. I should like all who are interested in Braille to again read our Chairman's article in the April issue of the REVIEW and to let him know if you are for or against condensation of Braille reading.

Yours sincerely,

MALCOLM JORDAN, *Hove.*

DEAR EDITOR,

I have been receiving on average twelve volumes a month from the National Library for the Blind now for over thirty

years and have no complaints to make about the selection of books by that Library. As to condensing books—*certainly not*. Which sane writer is going to give permission for his books to be put into Braille or read for the Talking Book only to have it slashed to pieces and probably their best work cut out of it? Was "Whereas I was Blind," by Sir Ian Fraser condensed? Who would do the condensing and what would it involve in cost and time? If the blind had condensed books they would quickly become a laughing stock. People would say we hadn't the intelligence to read a book as it was written. Our books would become like a town of council houses, drab and unattractive... Reading a book should be a pleasure and who on earth wants to rush through a pleasure?

May I point out that there are about 4,000 deaf-blind people in Britain; most of them find reading their chief entertainment, the rest their only form of entertainment. The deaf-blind are cut off enough as it is without people who are able to turn to other forms of entertainment cutting down our reading to next to nothing.

Yours sincerely,

GEORGE FALLOWFIELD, *Southwick*.

DEAR EDITOR,

The analysis by Sir Ian Fraser of the position regarding Braille and talking-book publications is interesting and raises some important considerations. It is obvious that within the limitations imposed by production factors, very careful and judicious selection of reading matter for the blind is extremely important.

I think that the question of any abridgment of books—a matter which I believe has previously been raised in your columns—requires the closest examination. With certain types of books of perhaps passing value and interest, abridgment may perhaps be a practical consideration. Whether for the blind or anyone else, I think it would be highly undesirable in the case of say, a classic such as "Pride and Prejudice."

In the case of talking books, technical improvements, such as the project recently mentioned in the REVIEW by the Chairman for recording on tape, this development presumably would make it unnecessary for books to be abridged. Developments in the field of Braille publications, however, do not seem to open up the possibility of parallel improvements, so that the present

factors of weight and bulk are likely to remain much the same as hitherto.

Although every now and then one finds that a desired book is not available in Braille, one must admit that the range of titles is very wide and, for the most part, the limiting factor in one's reading is the ever present time factor. Even when reading at a respectable rate, one feels that one will never catch up with the main titles constantly being added to the list of Braille books. To a lesser degree, the same consideration applies to the increasing titles in the talking-book library, and, as I mention above, this is a field where one may hope for considerable technical advancements within the next few years. With these two facilities for reading, that is, through Braille and talking book publications, it is of course most important that there is close co-ordination in the selection of titles by the respective publishing organisations. I imagine that such co-operation must already exist, but there is the question as to whether certain types of books might be more satisfactorily dealt with in the talking book form whilst others could be left to Braille. In this connection one must, of course, not overlook the fact that many blind people have to rely solely on Braille, though it is to be hoped that as time goes on the facility of the talking book will become available to the greatest possible number of blind people.

Yours sincerely,

J. E. ROSTON, *Iver, Bucks.*

DEAR EDITOR,

Quite a number of St. Dunstaners living in or near Croydon are finding that, what with the cost of fares and the time it takes to travel, it is more and more difficult to come to the London Club. The other day, when we were travelling to the Windsor Reunion, some of us started talking about the possibility of having a local Club. When we talked to Mr. Wills about it later he said he thought it a very good idea and that if we could get about seventeen or twenty of the chaps together, Headquarters would give us support.

I have spoken to some of the chaps who live in Kingston or thereabouts, and it has been suggested that we make Sutton our point of meeting.

Please don't think for a moment that we wish to separate from the Club at H.Q. We still are all members of the great family of St. Dunstan's, but we think this is an

experiment which would be worth trying. Will all St. Dunstaners who are interested please write to me at the address below.

Yours sincerely,

74 Waddon Court Road, E. W. DUDLEY.
Croydon, Surrey.

DEAR EDITOR,

I read with interest Sir Ian's leader in the March REVIEW and his efforts, combined with all the other ex-servicemen's organisations, for an increase in the basic rate of war disablement pensions.

It is most disappointing that the war disability pensions were not mentioned in the Chancellor's Budget speech of April 9th. However, there was one concession, I noted, *i.e.* A married couple over 65 have their personal allowance raised from £240 to £400 per annum.

May I make this suggestion: That when further discussions are taking place regarding the war disabled pensioner, this concession might be granted also to all 100% disabled and unemployable pensioners at any age.

Has Sir Ian or any of your readers any criticism to make on this, please?

Yours sincerely,

CHARLES W. W. COOPER.
Worthing.

(Sir Ian comments: This was a tax concession and Mr. Cooper's suggestion would not benefit many "unemployable" pensioners, as their pension and allowances are tax free and they are unlikely to have any taxable income. It would only be of benefit to those totally disabled men who were married and had taxable earnings or other income, and the fact that all disability pensions and allowances are exempt free of tax is, in itself, a considerable concession.)

Another Saint Dunstan Legend

"Nearly every year there is a wintry spell of weather in May. Why?" asked a *Daily Herald* reader recently. Anthony Field replied:

"Because, according to legend, St. Dunstan set up as a brewer and bargained with the Devil for three days' frost ending on St. Dunstan's Day, May 19th, so that the apple crop of the rival cider-makers would be ruined."

(The Saint seems to have inspired a number of legends, but we query the reference to May 19th. St. Dunstan died on this day and "The Feast of St. Dunstan," according to our records, is on May 10th.—Ed.)

News from All Quarters

Douglas, Isle of Man, is to be the British Legion's Annual Conference town this year and a St. Dunstaner, Howard Simcock, will be responsible for most of the arrangements. Mr. Simcock, who was wounded in Italy and is now an Advocate of the Manx Bar, is the Legion's County Secretary, Isle of Man.

★ ★ ★

L. S. Scales, a telephonist at Messrs. Wall's Factory, Purley Way, won a knitting machine in a firm's magazine competition, in which he had to place in correct order women's knitted twin-sets. He is himself a very skilled knitter, and now has orders which will keep him busy for several months. The presentation was made by James Norbury, the T.V. knitting expert.

★ ★ ★

Robert R. G. Lloyd, of Bournemouth, with Mrs. Lloyd, has left on the *Queen Mary* to make an extensive tour of Canada and part of the United States, to study American and Canadian physiotherapy methods.

★ ★ ★

Lewis Page, of Portslade, knew that chocolates and cigarettes were vanishing from his shop shelves, and kept watch. He caught two boys in the act. The police prosecuted, and the *News Chronicle*, in a special story, paid tribute to our St. Dunstaner's astuteness.

★ ★ ★

Dagenham Old Contemptibles honoured one of their oldest colleagues last month when they presented J. Moeller with a silver cigarette case as a farewell present when he left Dagenham for Brighton.

★ ★ ★

Tom Daborn, of Bexleyheath, has had a letter from Mrs. Ritchie (Miss Verna Johnson) with lots of news of the girls who used to be at Church Stretton. Mrs. Ritchie says that at their last association meeting, it was suggested that they save hard and charter a plane to have a reunion in London. Everyone over there wished to be remembered to all who knew them, and hope that one day the reunion will take place.

Au Revoir

Mr. and Mrs. H. G. Graves, of Eastham, Cheshire, who are joining their daughters and grandchildren in California, say "au revoir" to all St. Dunstaner friends and St. Dunstan's staff.

Bomb Under the S.A.C.

I suppose I must be the only man living who ever took a live Japanese bomb into the H.Q. of the Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia, and then went off to tea while the Security Service broke down doors to find it.

I did put the cat among the pigeons that day. Many of them were really panic stricken; quite a large number were officers who had never in their lives seen a shot fired in anger—you know, the type who saw the war from behind their desks—and to have a real live enemy bomb in their midst was entirely without precedent. Particularly when that midst revolved round so exalted a Supremo as Lord Mountbatten. He was S.A.C.—Supreme Allied Commander—and the Holy Grail itself would have felt insignificant in his H.Q.

His staff had taken over six floors of Cathay Building, Singapore's only skyscraper, and I, who worked for the Military Government, had a couple of rooms for my office on the first floor.

Now, believe it or not, Singapore is a place where I suffered agonies of boredom in those days. Unless you had a car—I hadn't—or were gifted with an unquenchable thirst, there was very little to do when you weren't working.

That's why I went alone to the beach at Katong that Sunday afternoon. It was not too far away, and though it was crowded with Chinese, Indians and Malays, it was blessedly free from Europeans.

I watched the bathing for a time, then I wandered along to a deserted part of the beach and sat down where a small stream—or perhaps it was a drain—ran down to the sea across the sand. It was a very small stream and, after a while, just to pass the time, I began idly to move some of the stones about to make a little dam. One of the stones was imbedded deeper in the sand than I had thought. I tugged and tugged, but it only moved very slightly and would not come up to the surface. I grew irritated, and got up to heave it aside with both hands. I worked it backwards and forwards and gave a steady pull at the protruding end, which was quite small.

A long, torpedo-like object began to come to the surface. It was much heavier than a stone of that size should be. Then I saw the reason why; it was made of metal, but so encrusted with corals and tiny sea

shells that it had looked like any ordinary stone. One last heave and it lay at my feet.

It was a Japanese 25-pound bomb.

Now when I was stationed at Chatham during the second year of the war, I was a member of the bomb disposal squad in my barracks. And I have quite a nice little collection of unexploded German bombs at home, a collection of which I was rather proud. They have been emptied and are quite harmless, of course; that goes without saying. But naturally I hadn't got a Japanese bomb among them; so I examined this one closely.

It had been dropped on the soft sand of the beach and had not exploded. That was when the Japs took Singapore. So for five years it had been knocked about and corroded by the water, and now the detonator was protruding at least three-quarters of an inch out of the nose and rusted immovably in that position. Nothing could shift it, the action of the water had welded it to the metal of the bomb case.

I looked at it with longing. Here was a magnificent souvenir for my collection. There was no way of emptying it now, but that didn't matter, it was as safe as houses. The job could be done later when I had the necessary tools.

With my copy of the *Straits Times* I made it into as neat a parcel as circumstances permitted. It would never do to let the other passengers in the bus see me holding a bomb on my knees! You never know how Asiatics will react.

The bus—an open lorry, really, filled with noisy Chinese—took me as far as Cathay Building, but as I would have to wait until the evening before a government car would be running up to Thompson Road, where I lived, I decided to leave the parcel in my office. By now I was eager to get rid of it: twenty-five pounds is no light weight in Singapore's muggy heat.

I was hot and sticky, so I went along to the lavatory for a wash.

While I was drying my face a young officer whom I knew slightly came in. He was a captain, very earnest, very conscientious, and completely devoid of a sense of humour. I didn't pay much attention to him, so when he asked what was in my parcel, and if I was going to give him a drink from it (he thought it was bottles), I just answered abstractedly that it wasn't booze, but a bomb.

Then I took it along to my office without giving him a further thought.

As I laid the parcel on my desk the strap of my wristwatch snapped. Leather soon rots in that climate, and the watch was rather a good one, so I slipped it into the top drawer of the desk, rather than risk accidents by carrying it in my pocket.

The time was much later than I thought, and a certain Chinese girl I was becoming fond of was expecting me for tea. I slammed the door of my office, turned the key in the lock, and hurried down the stairs. Half-way down I thought I heard a voice calling my name, but I didn't want to be made later still, so I ignored it and only hurried the faster.

The usual two sentries were on duty at the entrance of the building. One of them called my attention to the fact that someone was calling me.

I didn't even hesitate. I just said briefly that I had no time to stop to talk; then I turned the corner and hurried down the unlighted steps leading to the front of the building.

I wasn't present at what happened next, but I heard all about it very fully the next day.

The bright boy captain, who had always thought I was peculiar—I didn't go round with him or his crowd, but consorted with Asiatics, who were obviously not respected—was worried. I was a man who might be capable of anything. Perhaps it *was* a bomb I had left in my office. Perhaps I intended to blow up Mountbatten's H.Q.? He grabbed a telephone and poured out his suspicions to the Security Police.

Alarms and excursions followed post-haste.

Three jeeps full of armed soldiers were sent off to search the nearby streets for me. The sentries told them the way I had gone, and the haste I had been in.

Bomb experts were summoned by telephone.

Orders to evacuate the first and second floors were given. As it was Sunday, most of the rooms were empty, apart from the broadcasting people on the first floor.

Somebody yelled to clear the car park, and the shouts of people seeking their cars added to the confusion. One man thought there might not be time to find his car and began to run. That started it . . .

Meanwhile a squad had been assembled. It proceeded at the double to the suspect

office. The door was locked. They were told to break it down. They did so. The officers—there were four of them—entered the room. There on the desk before them was the mysterious parcel wrapped in newspaper.

Someone said "Listen," and every man held his breath. A faint, very faint ticking noise could be heard.

What would have happened next goodness only knows, but a *real* Army officer arrived. He walked straight over to the desk, pulled the paper wrapping off the bomb, and began to laugh.

Then he pulled open the partly closed drawer and picked up my merrily ticking watch . . .

The colonel who called me in to give me a "blast" the next morning wasn't laughing though. This was a very serious offence; I had made myself liable to all sorts of penalties. He did not know what would happen to me, but—

Then I asked if the local newspapers had got hold of the story yet . . . Eventually, after a lot of persuading and a few glasses of his gin, I promised to keep my mouth shut.

But I never got my bomb back.

JOHN HOGAN.

Correspondent Wanted

A war-blinded Frenchman of the First World War, Mon. G. Fessard, is anxious to correspond with a St. Dunstaner. He is sixty-four and was blinded at Verdun in April, 1915, but retains light perception in one eye. He says that besides English, he practises several other languages and could exchange magazines in these languages.

The Editor will be glad to give his address to any St. Dunstaner who would like to write to M. Fessard.

Another Radio "Ham"

From the *ST. DUNSTAN'S REVIEW* (South Africa) we read that S. J. Schemper, of Cape Town, is an enthusiastic radio "ham." Since he received his amateur radio licence in 1952 he has spoken to 127 other "hams" in all parts of the world. (He has 117 cards to confirm the contact.) His call sign is ZSI Ontario, Denmark.

St. Dunstaner Again Second in Stock Exchange Brighton Walk

As we go to press, Bill Miller has come second again in the Stock Exchange Athletic Club's London to Brighton Walk.

R. E. Green won the race in 8 hours 54 minutes 36 seconds—his fourth consecutive win over the 52 miles course. Bill Miller was second home, only seventeen minutes after him. Third was another Stock Exchange man with 9 hours 21 minutes 1 second.

This is what the *Financial Times* said:

"Held in conjunction with this event is the St. Dunstan's (London) annual race, which was again won by 'Dusty' Miller (Royal Engineers), the record holder, in 9 hours, 11 minutes, 11 seconds, only seventeen minutes behind Green.

"Les. Dennis (Royal Engineers) who will be competing in the Bath to London race—100 miles—in July, was second in 9 hours 52 minutes 40 seconds, and 61 year old Archie Brown (5th Cheshire Regiment), a centurion walker, was third in 10 hours 1 minute 3 seconds.

"Had this little band of war-blinded men, escorted by very notable walkers, have been eligible for the team race, they would have literally 'walked it.'"

Sailplane Flights from Long Mynd

From "The Times," April 19th:—

"Two sailplane flights into Kent and one to Essex were made from here (Long Mynd, Church Stretton), to-day, at the Midland Gliding Club's Easter rally. Mr. Philip Wills, the British gliding champion, flew 204 miles to a point between Folkestone and Dover, and Commander Nicholas Goodhart, world gliding champion in the two-seat class, reached his declared goal at Lympe, 195 miles away."

Election Result

In the municipal elections, Colin Beaumont-Edmonds, M.C., was re-elected at Sutton Coldfield. In a 38 per cent. poll, he received 1,013 votes. His opponent received 573.

* * *

Councillor Charles W. W. Cooper, of Worthing, has been elected Chairman of the Conservative Local Government Committee.

Brighton Club

The St. Dunstan's Brighton Club meets at 7 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month, and all St. Dunstaners in the Brighton area are cordially invited.

We had a most enjoyable outing to Rustington, where we were entertained to a most excellent tea by the Inter-Services Club, and this was followed by a first-class cabaret. There were two nearly full coaches.

* * *

It is with very sincere regret that I have to report the death of our most beloved Club member, Mr. Freddie Fleetwood. He was the founder and "father" of the Club, and, in conjunction with his wife, who most ably assisted him, there was born that happy and harmonious community now known as the "St. Dunstan's Brighton Club." The cremation service took place on the 13th May, and was beautifully conducted by our own Padre, the Rev. Taylor. A lovely wreath was sent from his friends of the Club, who attended the service to pay tribute to one of nature's gentlemen.

FRANK A. RHODES,
Secretary.

Work for the Blind in Malaya

We have received two most interesting publications from the Malayan Association for the Blind, of which our St. Dunstaner, Major D. R. Bridges, is Hon. Secretary. Major Bridges is Blind Welfare Officer for the Federation of Malaya. Magnificent work is being done by the Association and a blind girl has recently been placed as a telephone operator—the first blind girl in Malaya ever to be trained and placed in this profession. Major Bridges says that she is only one of several young Malaysians for whom the future holds great hope.

Mrs. Arnold

Miss B. Vaughan-Davies writes:—

"The news of the passing of Mrs. Arnold sends my thoughts to my very early St. Dunstan's days. Mrs. Arnold was my first Matron and I always thank her for training me in the ways V.A.D.s should go. She was strict, but kind, making me want to crawl into hiding if I disappointed her and jump for joy if she gave me a word of praise. Even yet I can hear her merry laugh!"

Family News

Dorothy Cole, Lower Tuffley, Gloucester, was a soloist when Ribston Hall Choral Society gave a performance of "The Messiah" in Christ Church, Gloucester, recently. The local paper said: "Apart from the eminently fine solo performance of A. Steventon (bass), the most pleasing of the individual singers was diminutive Dorothy Cole (soprano), 17-years-old Ribston Hall sixth-former. Her voice rang sweet and fresh and true . . ."

Elaine Little, Carge, who is only eight, has been chosen to take part in the Highland Dancing Display at Carlisle Festival. She only began her dancing lessons at the beginning of the winter.

Little Jane Rowe, Minehead, has received a wonderful prize of toys for being declared "The Peach of the Beach" last summer.

Vanessa Etherington, Chertsey, has now won the bronze, silver and gold medals for Old Tyme Dancing.

Marriages of Sons and Daughters

Shirley Williams (Sheffield) to Brian M. Armstrong, on May 11th.

Peter Millen, Birchington, to Joy Barbara Vass, on March 30th.

David Loveridge, Harrow, to Cherry Minns, S.R.N., on March 2nd.

Great Grandfather

W. Raine, of Maldon.

Grandfathers

E. Astbury, of Saltdean; A. Morgan, of York (Eileen has had another son); T. Ashe, of Lancing (the third grandchild); F. J. Robbins, of Almondsbury, near Bristol; J. Halsall, of Southport.

Ruby Weddings

Many congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. J. Martin, of Goldsithney, Cornwall, and to Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Hill, of Devizes, who celebrated their Ruby Wedding (forty years) on the same day, April 21st.

Silver Wedding

Mr. and Mrs. A. Spencer, of Gillingham, April 23rd. Congratulations.

* * *

We have heard with regret that Mrs. Lovett, of Enfield, widow of our St. Dunstaner, died on January 21st, and that Mrs. E. J. Summers, of Eastleigh, passed away on April 13th.

After Fifty-five Years

From the London "Evening News" May 8th:

"A brother and sister met in London to-day for the first time since 1902.

Miss Florence Worlidge was only 17 when she last saw her brother Samuel, who lives at Dollis Hill.

In France she worked with Nurse Edith Cavell. She made her home in France and lost contact with her family during World War I. Mr. and Miss Worlidge were reunited by a coincidence. "My wife happened to hear about her when she went shopping in Wembley," said Mr. Worlidge. "The shopkeeper had the same name and mentioned the relative in France. It was Florence."

Mr. Worlidge will never see his sister. He was blinded at Gallipoli."

Births

BURNHAM.—On May 5th, to the wife of A. J. Burnham, of Headington, Oxon., a son—Barry Paul.

CARTWRIGHT.—On April 19th, to the wife of A. Cartwright, of Cardiff, a daughter—Wendy Margaret. (Mrs. Cartwright will be remembered as Miss Davies, Welfare Visitor for the Welsh Area.)

HARMER.—On April 6th, to the wife of A. J. Harmer, of Hastings, a son—Kevin John.

TEMPLE.—On April 15th, to the wife of B. Temple, of Petts Wood, a son—John.

Marriages

KAVANAGH—DILLANE.—On April 13th, James Kavanagh, of Liverpool, to Miss Bridget Dillane.

KENNARD—PRICE.—On April 6th, V. Kennard, of London, N.W.1, to Miss Phyllis Price, of Guernsey.

Deaths

Our deep sympathy goes out to the following:

DAVIES.—To J. Davies, of St. Osyth, who lost his brother in February.

JUBB.—To B. Jubb, at present of Gravesend, whose father died on May 1st.

MCDERMOTT.—To J. McDermott, of Davyhulme, Manchester, whose mother died on April 20th. She was seventy-seven.

"In Memory"

Private William Cavanagh, 22nd Durham Light Infantry

It is with deep regret that we record the death of W. Cavanagh, of Patcham, Brighton. He was 74. He came to St. Dunstan's in September, 1917, and trained as a boot-repairer and netter. He followed both occupations until 1936, when he gave up boot-repairing. In 1951 he gave up netting, and after a long period of ill-health he was admitted to West House, where he died on April 18th. His St. Dunstan's friends, Mr. Jackson, Mrs. Dickinson and Mrs. Dixon, attended the funeral. Our deep sympathy is extended to Mrs. Cavanagh.

Private Frederick Charles Fleetwood, 1st Worcestershire Regiment

We record with deep regret the death of F. C. Fleetwood, of Brighton, at the age of 68. Wounded at the Dardanelles, he came to St. Dunstan's in August, 1915. He was a mat-maker for a few years, then purchased a business for himself. He gave this up in 1928, later taking up netting and basketwork again, and he continued with the latter craft until 1954, when he lost his wife. Since Mrs. Fleetwood's death in March, 1954, he had been with his sister, but he had been ill for some time and he died in Ovingdean on May 7th. He was a founder-member of the Brighton Club, and a tribute to him by Mr. Frank Rhodes, the secretary, appears on another page.

Sapper Kenneth Jones, Royal Engineers

With deep regret we record the death of Kenneth Jones, of Maerdy, South Wales. He came to St. Dunstan's as recently as April, and was only 22 years old. He was taken ill while serving in Malaya in August, 1956, and had been seriously ill since then. He leaves a widow and two baby daughters, to whom we send our deepest sympathy.

Private Charles Edward Thomas, 6th Leicestershire Regiment

It is with deep regret that we record the death of C. E. Thomas, of Neasden. He was 57. He trained in telephony at St. Dunstan's in 1918 and continued with his work until his admission to hospital on April 25th, where he died the following day. His death was a great shock to his friends. "Charlie" Thomas was for some years a member of the "St. Dunstan's Singers." His pleasant tenor voice was well-known among St. Dunstaners and, indeed, in many parts of the country, where he sang often in support of efforts for the Appeals Department. Our deep sympathy goes out to Mrs. Thomas and her daughter.

Gunner Alfred Henry Robinson, Royal Garrison Artillery

We record with deep regret the death of A. H. Robinson, of Rayleigh, Essex, at the age of sixty-three. He was discharged from the Army in February, 1919, but did not come to St. Dunstan's until 1938, when he trained as a basket-maker. He continued this work up to the time of his death, although his health had been poor for some time. Nevertheless, his death on April 29th was unexpected. He leaves a widow and eleven year old son, to whom our deep sympathy is sent.

Private William Victor Sargent, 10th Royal Fusiliers

With deep regret we have to record the death of W. V. Sargent, of Bedford, which occurred on May 8th, within a month of his 60th birthday. He came to St. Dunstan's in June, 1917, after being wounded in France, and he trained as a joiner, and he continued with this work right up to his last illness. His speciality was picture frames and he utilised the front of his house as a shop window to display his goods. His work had been admired in Bedford for thirty-seven years. Our deep sympathy goes out to Mrs. Sargent, whom he met at St. Dunstan's, where she was working as a V.A.D.

E. J. Deacon, Eastern Command Camp

We have heard with deep regret of the death of E. J. Deacon, of New South Wales, Australia, at the age of 70. He served on the staff of Eastern Command Camp from July, 1941, until April, 1950, but in 1948 an accident on duty led to the eventual loss of his sight. He died in Concord Military Hospital in February last. Our deep sympathy is sent to Mrs. Deacon.

Personal

Mss. Cavanagh wishes to thank Dr. O'Hara, and Matron, Sisters and Orderlies at West House for their kindness during her husband's illness.