

# ST. DUNSTAN'S REVIEW

For Men and Women Blinded on War Service

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## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

**M**ANY of the first generation of St. Dunstaners were concerned with home occupations and some are still carrying on their crafts of mat-making, basketry, joinery, netting and boot-repairing, in spite of advancing years.

When the Second War came we realised that with more mechanisation in industry, home handicrafts would eventually be uneconomic and we turned our attention to other forms of employment. Already a number of first war St. Dunstaners, anxious to help in the war effort, were doing jobs in munition factories and doing them extremely well. But we wanted to find our men jobs not just for the duration of the war but for life and so we began investigating the possibilities of serious industrial training. Workshops were set up in the grounds at Church Stretton, skilled men were engaged as instructors, the goodwill of employers was enlisted, and soon there was a steady flow of new war St. Dunstaners—and first war men, too—into factories in all parts of the United Kingdom. Industrial training, in fact, had taken the place of handicraft training for the newly blinded, although the old familiar crafts were still to be taught as hobbies.

All this I was reminded of when I read a report recently from Mr. G. P. Owens, our Industrial Superintendent, and himself a St. Dunstaner. There were many points in it which I think will interest others also.

The types and class of jobs found in factories for our men have steadily improved over the years for we have convinced the employers and Trades Unions that the St. Dunstaner is capable, and furthermore on merit alone is worthy of, a variety of jobs, as opposed to one single repetitive operation.

The basic industrial training at Ovingdean continues at a high standard. Our aim is to turn out a workman equally at home in machine operating, the intricacies of light assembly work, and also in inspecting and viewing, and the majority of trainees attain this high all-round standard of proficiency.

As in all St. Dunstan's work, the personal touch and service of our four industrial representatives is vital; every possible difficulty has to be foreseen and ironed out in advance, and through the services of our own Research Department, we evolve and supply any necessary aid or gadget.

In spite of national industrial difficulties and the ever-increasing competition for every job, we are able to report, broadly speaking, full employment so far as St. Dunstaners in industry are concerned. Even to-day a number of First War men are still employed in industry and four of them have twenty years' service to their credit.



Telephony has always been a very popular settlement amongst St. Dunstaners and one at which they have excelled. Inevitably the number of First War telephone operators is now running down but their service record is quite outstanding. During the last twelve months, for example, two operators retired after 42 and 41 years' service respectively. Younger men are continuing to be placed in good jobs.

Our shopkeepers continue to do well. The efficient running of these businesses (usually confectionery and cigarettes) demands a high standard of physical and mental fitness. Here again St. Dunstan's representative is available to give the St. Dunstaner his services, particularly at stocktaking time, and to give him also the best practical advice on new trends in the trade.

Finally, here are some jobs covered by the Industrial Department, not coming into the categories above but all receiving every help and support—shorthand typist, piano tuner, office manager supervisor, Government Technical Research Officer, lecturer, home teacher, assistant canteen manager, hospital porter, storeman, sexton, and as variations in the shop-keeping field, there are St. Dunstaners who run launderettes, wholesale fish businesses, a travel agency, a country coach business, a country public house, a greengrocery business, a cooked meats business and a licensed Turf Accountant's office. The possibilities seem legion. The Industrial Department has indeed come a long way.

#### Walter Mellor

Mr. Walter Mellor died in Brighton on May 5th, aged 84. He was one of the early orderlies to join St. Dunstan's in the First World War and many will remember him at our Sussex Place Annexe. Later he became my personal orderly, which he remained for many years until he retired.

During the Second War he was Chief Orderly at the Officers' House in Church Stretton where he was also a kind of unofficial tutor to these young men. I know all who remember Mellor would not mind my saying that he was a kind of "Jeeves" or "Admirable Crichton," who quietly exercised a tremendous influence for good, abating ruffled tempers, composing differences and sometimes telling the young how to behave, which he did with such subtlety and grace that you hardly knew he was doing it.

He was a fine man whom we all admired and of whom we were fond. He typified the very best type of St. Dunstan's orderly, of whom we have been fortunate to have so many in our long history.

FRASER.

#### The Rev. Michael Norman

##### An Important New Appointment

The Rev. Michael Norman, South African St. Dunstaner and rector of St. Martin's Church, Bergvliet, since 1954, has been appointed rector of St. Stephen's Church, Pinelands, Cape Town, one of the most famous and old-established parishes in South Africa.

Mr. Norman was blinded in Normandy in 1944. He came to St. Dunstan's and in 1950 was ordained at Canterbury Cathedral. He returned to South Africa two years later.

#### The Derby Sweepstake

The draw for the Derby Sweepstake, which has now closed, will be held at the London Club on the evening of Thursday, May 31st. All those drawing a horse will be notified.

#### Imperial Service Medallist

G. Douglas Warden, of Southall, was on April 5th presented with the Imperial Service Medal by the Regional Controller of the Ministry of Labour. The presentation, which was in recognition of forty-one years with the Ministry, was held at the Acton office. Friends of our St. Dunstaner from all over the country, as well as those working or retired in the London area, were present at what in his own words, was "one of the most splendid gatherings of the kind I have ever experienced—it was unforgettable."

#### The "Busmen's" Summer Outing

The Summer Outing so kindly organised by the employees of the Brighton, Hove and District and Southdown Bus Companies, will take place this year on Wednesday, July 18th.

#### London Club Notes

##### Bridge.

The following is a short survey of the activities of the Bridge Club, London Section, over the past six months. Full entertainment has been the keynote and during that period we have played nine matches, losing six and winning three. When I tell you we lost by 70 and 260 points respectively, you will realise that competition was very keen. With regard to Bridge Drives, we have had two, both with a full attendance—approximately 32 players, making an enjoyable afternoon.

Last year's Sir Arthur Pearson Pairs Competition was won by Messrs. E. Carpenter and M. Delaney. This year's competition is well under way and I hope the final will take place sometime in July. This is a great improvement on previous years.

I would like to mention that a full programme is still in hand for the next six months.

Our team taking part in the London Business Houses Competition—Messrs. C. Bulman, H. Gover, P. Nuyens (Captain), C. F. Thompson and F. Winter—who were promoted to a higher division in each of the last two years, this year finished third in the Second Division. They won seven out of their ten matches as compared with six by the winner and five by the runners-up but results are worked out by Victory Points and not by match points, hence their third placing.

##### Reminders:

*Harrogate Week*—September 15-22.

*Ovingdean Congress*—November 24th.

Entries for both events to Mr. Willis please. G.P.B.

##### STOP PRESS

Our Meeting with the Masters will be at 191 Marylebone Road, on the afternoon of Saturday, July 7th.

#### Ewell 5¼ Mile Walk

In spite of the race coinciding with the Cup Final, nine members of St. Dunstan's turned out on May 5th, including three newcomers to walking, who all put up a very good show, and we look forward to meeting them again at our next walk at Ewell on June 16th. This walk will be for the St. Dunstan's 7 mile Championship and will incorporate the usual handicap ace.

#### Ewell 5½ Mile Walk

	Result		Actual Time
	Time	H'cap	
J. Caswell	46.44	14.00	60.44
L. Dennis	48.32	3.00	51.32
R. Young	48.36	9.20	57.56
R. Newton	48.42	12.10	60.52
C. Stafford	49.31	5.00	54.31
R. Mendham	49.51	Scr.	49.51
J. Wright	50.21	15.20	65.41
C. Redford	56.20	16.00	72.20
E. Proffitt	58.54	11.00	69.54

Now don't forget to make a note of the date—June 16th—Even though you may not have walked before, why not "have a go" and at the same time enjoy the company of old friends.

For further details contact Mrs. Spurway, The Vicarage, Holmwood, Dorking, Surrey.  
J. L. DENNIS.

#### St. Dunstaners' Success in Braille Reading Competition

St. Dunstan's trainees, Jim Blake and Paul Francia attended the National Library for the Blind Reading Competition on May 19th, to compete in the Special Class for blind persons who have lost their sight since 1939.

In competition with several candidates, Jim Blake won Second Prize and Paul Francia the Third Prize.

Our congratulations to them. We are very proud of their achievement.

Their money prizes were presented to them by Lord Normanby.

#### Family News

Ian Earnshaw, Atherton, Manchester, was recently instrumental in saving the life of a man who was in danger of drowning. He and some friends rescued the man from a pond near the de Havilland Works. For his great courage and resourcefulness in dealing with the situation, Ian has received congratulatory letters from the District Commission and the County Commissioner of the Boy Scouts Association.

★ ★ ★

Barry Cole, Bristol, has won a silver plaque for winning all his bouts and being the most stylish boxer at his school.

#### Talking Book Correction

The Catalogue Number of "Murder was my Neighbour," by Guy Cobden should be No. 961 and not 461 as given in last month's "REVIEW."



## Eminent St. Dunstan's Surgeon Dies

Mr. W. G. Howarth

Mr. Walter Goldie Howarth, F.R.C.S., died at his home at Wisborough Green, Sussex, on April 29th, at the age of 83.

In *The Times* on May 4th, Lord Fraser wrote:

"During the First World War—before land mines and other very high explosives were familiar—many young men were blinded by transverse bullet wounds which destroyed the eyes and caused severe disorganisation of the frontal sinuses. I was one of these and was one of Walter Howarth's guinea-pigs—a fortunate one—for it was he who, as a military surgeon associated with St. Dunstan's, invented, or perhaps one should say, perfected the operation for dealing with this new condition.

Walter Howarth treated some hundreds of First World War St. Dunstaners and restored their health and gave them comfort. But we like to remember him, not so much as an able and devoted surgeon but as a friend who encouraged and helped us when we were his patients. He was a shy man, but very kind, and many of us will remember him with affection and admiration".

There was no funeral or memorial service, by Mr. Howarth's desire.

## Captain N. Liakhoff

Captain Nicolas Liakhoff, M.B.E., formerly director of training for the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, died at his Reading home on April 30th, his 65th birthday.

An officer in the Russian Imperial Army before the Bolshevik Revolution, he came to Britain in 1933 from Switzerland where he had worked as a guide dog trainer for five years. For the next 25 years he was to be Director of Training with the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, being responsible in that time for the training of more than 1,000 dogs. Many St. Dunstaners will recall with affection his help and kindness to them during their stay at the training centre.

In the "In Touch" programme on May 20th, Ken Revis interviewed Capt. Liakhoff's secretary, paying St. Dunstan's tribute.

## Grandfathers

B. Priest, of Tipton, Staffs.; J. Wheeler, of Cricklewood; Tom Floyd, of Teignmouth, another grandson; and a second grandson for F. Griffie, of St. Ives, Cornwall.

## Cape Town Reunion

It had been quite some time since we had a full-scale reunion in Cape Town and so we looked forward with eager anticipation to the get-together which was held at the de Waal Hotel on the evening of Monday, March 12th. We were not disappointed as this proved to be one of the most pleasant St. Dunstan's parties we have had in Cape Town for a long time.

This reunion was held in order that we might meet the guests of honour, Lord and Lady Fraser, who were in Cape Town prior to their sailing for England after a stay in South Africa lasting several weeks. We all assembled for drinks in the Carnival Room of the Hotel at 6.30 p.m. and this gathering was somewhat unique as it was the first time that our non-European St. Dunstaners and their wives were present at a function of this kind. After sufficient time had elapsed for the troops to have imbibed sufficient to win all those battles over again, we all sat down to dinner at tables which were formed in the shape of a letter E. Again this was the first time that at a full-scale reunion of this kind we had sat down to a formal dinner.

Our Chairman, Colonel Sholto Grant and Mrs. Grant, together with our guests of honour and other members of the Board of St. Dunstan's, S.A., and Mrs. McGivern, our Secretary, sat at the table forming the long side of the E, our coloured St. Dunstaners sat at the table forming the middle arm, and other St. Dunstaners occupied the tables forming the outer arms of the E.

Colonel Grant welcomed Lord and Lady Fraser to our midst and told them how pleased we were to see them and to have this opportunity of chatting with them again. Colonel Grant mentioned some St. Dunstaners by name whom we had not seen at a reunion for many years such as Jimmy Crawford, from Hermanus, and Larry Watkinson. He said how glad he was to see Captain Carr Anderson with us, who had recently celebrated his 80th birthday.

The main subject of Colonel Grant's speech, after welcoming us all, was to impart to us the good news that at a recent meeting of the Board, it had been decided to make substantial increases in some of the benefits and there was much more than a snigger went up when he told us that the

maternity benefits in respect of St. Dunstan's wives would be increased.

Lord Fraser began his speech with a few words in Afrikaans. He said: "All human beings are dependent one upon another, but each of us likes to be as independent as possible . . . Five thousand men, and a few women, who fought for freedom in the two Wars, have been to St. Dunstan's in the last forty-five years to learn to be blind. They include South Africans—Afrikaans and English-speaking—coloureds and Africans. In the Republic were successful business men, wholesalers and retailers, physiotherapists, a Minister of Religion, telephone operators and farmers. A South African St. Dunstaner was a well-known Advocate and Member of the Legislative Assembly in Cape Town, and Mr. Jimmy Ellis was one of the best known propagandists in the Republic working for the National Council for the Blind.

Lord Fraser congratulated Colonel Sholto Grant, Chairman, and his Committee and staff and concluded: "St. Dunstan's (South Africa) has made very generous contributions to the parent organisation in London, for which we are deeply grateful. South African St. Dunstaners themselves have conquered blindness to a remarkable degree and taken their place as normal citizens. We in the Old Country are very proud of you."

Lord Fraser disclosed that only a few months ago a Transvaal man had his eye blown out by the explosion of an air compressor. Unfortunately this was his second eye because the first had been shot out in the War. With commendable speed the hospital authorities and St. Dunstan's (South Africa) sent him to St. Dunstan's in England. "I was able to telephone his relations in Johannesburg a few days ago and tell them that this young man was doing well and was rapidly learning how to become a successful blind man," said Lord Fraser.

J. ELLIS.

## Brighton Club Notes

*Note.*—The June meeting will be held on Thursday, June 21st. At the invitation of the Club, Mrs. Dacre has graciously consented to be our first President. All St. Dunstaners who reside in Brighton and District are welcome with an escort.

F.A.R.

*Chairman.*

## From All Quarters

R. Wood, of Colindale, has passed the Civil Service Proficiency Typing Examination, 1st Class.

Ken Revis has been elected an Associate Member of the Institute of Civil Engineers.

On the completion of his thirty years' service with I.C.I., L. Faulkner, of Northwich, chose that Mrs. Faulkner should receive the presentation of a lady's watch.

Between February 17th and the end of April, Colonel M. Ansell caught 33 salmon, the biggest being 18 lbs. In the eight days ending February 26th, he killed twenty-five, eight of them being on the last day.

L. Wood, of Yeadon, near Leeds, has been made President of the Old Comrades Association of his Regiment, the 2/6th Duke of Wellington's. Their annual reunion was held on May 5th at Skipton, when he placed the wreath on the Cenotaph there.

H. Bridgman, of Allenton, has been presented with a plaque by the Mayor of Derby for helping to win a cup for Allenton British Legion Domino Team.

Michael Barstow, of Hampstead, has been awarded the Royal Life Saving Society's distinction award. In the past three years Mr. Barstow has received the Society's bronze medallion, bronze cross and the award of merit.

Maureen Lees is exhibiting the work of St. Dunstaners at the Cheshire Agricultural Show, Hooton Park, on June 6th and 7th (Stand No. 230).

Mrs. C. F. Hornsby, wife of our Canadian St. Dunstaner Charles F. Hornsby, of Victoria, British Columbia, whose death is reported, will be remembered by early St. Dunstaners as Miss Grace Halford. Miss Halford taught music, the piano and singing until early in 1923, when she went to Canada to marry Charles. All will send him sympathy in his loss. He wisely says that he will endeavour to keep busy with all the activities of the Sir Arthur Pearson Association and the civilian blind.



### Letters to the Editor

DEAR EDITOR,

Our Chairman reminded us last month that we can read braille under the bedclothes when it is cold and I gather that correspondence on the pleasure of reading in bed recently appeared in "*The Times*," initiated by a letter from the late Lord Birkett, in which that ingenious suggestion was offered.

Personally I regard this as a much over-rated sport.

It may be enduring if one has a wide bed to oneself, but a companion certainly adds complications. The bedclothes, too, make it awkward to turn over pages, the book is too high or too low and does not move easily, and in any case, I drop off to sleep almost at once and a fat braille book is not a very desirable bed companion.

No. Give me a comfortable chair by the fire and then, providing I can keep my fingers warm enough to decipher those exasperating pimples, I am content.

Yours sincerely,

S. A. CHAMBERS,

*Birmingham.*

DEAR EDITOR,

I think the programme which Lord Fraser mentioned in the April issue of the "REVIEW" must only be on the radio in the Southern Region. There is certainly no programme on the Third Wavelength at 7 a.m. in the North (and I am up before that time each morning) and on checking through the "Radio Times," Northern Edition, I find there is nothing on the Third or Network Three until the evening.

Yours sincerely,

MARGARET STANWAY,

*Morecambe.*

(It is true that this programme may not be able to be picked up by all listeners in this country. It is intended for reception abroad and goes out on 464 metres on the Medium Wavelength. Listeners in this country may also be able to pick it up on the following Short Wavelengths: 19.76; 19.85; 25.12; 25.47; 31.17; 41.49 and 49.59.—Ed.)

DEAR EDITOR,

Modern blindness—totally blind man as racing driver and glider pilot!

How about a book on "old fashioned"

blindness—the tandem "dash" from Church Stretton to Craven Arms with Lady "B" at the controls . . . or was it the St. Dunstanian in front? I forget, but why worry about such a minor detail.

Yours sincerely,

PETER SPENCER,

*Weston-Super-Mare.*

DEAR EDITOR,

Potatoes are in the national news so why not have some in ours?

I understand the Ministry has refused to lift the ban on the import of potatoes from certain countries owing to the risk of importing disease. What a farce when he allows the merchants to sell us seed potatoes that are already tainted with a Dry Rot disease!

We usually buy 28 lbs. of Scotch seed and put them into the boxes for sprouting but always have to cast out some which have got the disease, and by planting time we have to throw out a few more. Also, we find some of them are so big that if we wanted to cook them we should have to cut them in half. I understand regulations are in force to ensure that they are free from disease and also regarding their size.

Would the Government allow grocers to sell us bacon, butter or cheese if it was tainted with disease? I don't think they would, then why allow us to be palmed off with such rubbish of seed.

I have been gardening for more than sixty years but unfortunately I cannot go on the land now but I still know what a good seed spud is like.

I should like to hear the views of other St. Dunstanians on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

H. COBLEY, (Uncle Tom),

*South Molton, Devon.*

### Stop Press

On May 23rd, in the House of Lords, Lord Fraser asked the Government to consider an improvement in war pensions to keep abreast of the rising cost and standard of living. "This is the first shot in a new campaign," he said.

Lord Denham, speaking for the Ministry of Pensions, said while he could not commit the Ministry, they had this matter under consideration.

Full report next month.

### Good Writing Points

(We are often asked for tips on writing and we thought the following article was just the thing for would-be journalists. But, we hasten to add, please don't let lack of style put anyone off writing to the "REVIEW." Contributions are always welcome and will be carefully considered.—Ed.)

\* \* \*

Why do we write? How do we write? What is the Golden Rule for all writing? It was defined many years ago by John Buchan (the late Lord Tweedsmuir) when he wrote: "It is to put into words your full and exact meaning as simply as possible. But I would add this warning: before you can apply this Rule you must have a meaning to convey. He who has nothing to say may be gifted by Providence with the tongues of men and angels, and yet will produce indifferent matter."

In a more homely way, similar advice was given by an old editor to a young reporter, or so it was related by a former "John O'London" (the late Wilfred Whitten). The young man had ability but everything he wrote was confused and opaque. At last the old editor told him what to do.

"Take this paragraph back," he said, "and imagine that you have sitting in front of you the stupidest man in the kingdom. Then tell him in the simplest and clearest way you can what to put in the paragraph. When you think you have made him understand, write down what you said to him."

The youth went sadly away but an hour later returned with his new version. The editor read it. It was a clear and forcible piece of writing.

"Capital," said the editor, "how did you manage to do it?"

"Well, sir," he replied, "I did what you told me. I sat down and fancied that you were sitting opposite me."

The point of both these quotations is that a writer must have something to say, and he must be able to say it. If what we have written does not communicate what we have thought, our effort is wasted.

The Golden Rule is to have something to say, and to say it as simply and exactly as possible. Words are our medium of expression and to express ourselves exactly,

clearly and correctly we must know how to use them, and perhaps how not to use them.

Dr. Syntax, in the *World's Press News*.

### "Trumpeter, What are you sounding now?"

In the days of yesteryear at Ovingdean, the song at one's heart was "Springtime in the Rockies." This time, on a re-visit after a lapse of years, it had to be paraphrased as, "Rocktime in the Springies." Long tramps over the Downs were taboo. Rottingdean and its allies were comfortably within the ambit of my pedal extremities. But did I enjoy my holiday? Oh boy!!!

Uncle St. Dunstan's has done a good job of work in the building itself. The re-positioning of the chairs in the Braille Library permits one to read in comfort, as also does the new layout of the type-writing room. The highlight of the changes is the double quadrangle which surrounds the Lounge. The flagged section permits it to be used at all times. To stroll on the lawn, with its surround of flowers and shrubs is a real pleasure. The high wall, built to fend off the high wind, and to throw a shade on a hot day makes this quadrangle a charming place. It has very many admirers but yet it retains its almost cloistered charm. A book, a smoke, the pleasant chat, and summer noises take some beating. The walk across the golf course, past the old mill, to the old trysting place—the back gate—can still be done.

What of the "Old Indispensables?" They are still ready to "rise and shine." "Com." is still no ward-room ornament. Matron Ramshaw as always, ready with a welcome—and Miss Carlton, Miss Taylor, Mrs. "Mac," Miss de Faye, Miss Feaver, Mrs. Lange, Mrs. Bevington—are all there still to greet us. And what about the "Cookhouse?" Yes, almost as you were. The staff of the Dispensary has changed—the poultice wallopers have moved on—but there is always Dr. O'Hara to help us.

To all my old comrades, north, south, east or west, who have given Ovingdean a miss over years, I'd say: "Before you go west, old pal, go south. Recapture once again in reminiscence, that spirit which was once yours, when you jogged along the highway, with accoutrements jingling, behind the "rub-a-dub-dub, rub-a-dub-dub."

W. E. BROOKES.



### I Remember

When old folk say "I remember," you can bet your bottom dollar they are going to relate the happy, exciting and adventurous things they did in their youth. But there is another side to the coin. What do I remember? I remember going to school on a Monday morning clutching my penny or tuppence in my hand, together with my little red book to have it entered that I had paid my school money. Some children spent their school money and played truant for the rest of the day and they got away with it for their parents could not read or write so the book was never examined. Many children ran about without shoes or stockings on their feet and it was the days of big families. I remember one mother saying to another, advising her on her sick baby, "I ought to know . . . I have had nine children and I have reared five." The weaker went to the wall in the "good old days."

We lived in a house in a yard containing twelve houses and there was one water-tap halfway down the yard to supply the twelve houses. I had to fill a maiden-pot in our house to last my mother until dinner-time when I had to fill it up again. All the other kids in the yard were on the same errand at the same time. Have you ever realised how long it takes to fill a bucket at a tap when it is raining?

I left school when I was 12. For spending money each week my brothers, sisters and I each received a half-penny. For five days out of six we gazed into the shop windows looking for the biggest haporth on which to spend it.

I remember gangs of navvies making the old Norfolk, Suffolk and Lincolnshire Railway which was afterwards merged with the Great Central Railway. I watched them cut the cuttings and lay the tracks and gaze at the old Puffing Billy bringing up the stores on the track already laid.

I remember in 1897 Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. We children were each presented with a mug with a picture of Victoria as she was when she came to the Throne in 1837 on one side and on the other as she looked in 1897. Those Diamond Jubilee celebrations were really one of the highlights of the Good Old Days because we kids were given a free tea so that was something to remember!

BEN HAMILTON, *Thetford, Norfolk.*

### I tort I taw . . . ?

I have told this story on many occasions, but just in case you don't believe it, I would point out that over fifty years ago I was one of those wee lads attending the first Royal Review of Boy Scouts in Windsor Great Park.

Now for my thrilling story. You of the higher income group, elevate your aural appendages, and you of the lower group, pin back your lugholes.

The time is 6.30 p.m. on a dark and gloomy night in November, 1911. I am standing by my doubling machine in the local silk mills. I switch off my machine, grab a clothes brush, brush my woollen stockings and unravel the strands of fibre that have wound themselves around the four buttons of my knickerbockers (four buttons on each leg—posh!). I put my face in the steam-box, wipe it on a rough towel. The bell goes and so do I. Over the roadway, dodging the clanging trams and the horse traffic, then turn and head for a bright light shining about three hundred yards away. A faint voice comes louder and louder through the murky night. "Three, six, nine and a shilling, this way. First house shortly commencing." I rush by, up the stone steps and into a room at the rear of the pay-box. I don a uniform jacket and peaked cap and pick up a tray with oranges, programmes and chocolates on it. I make my way to my partner at the other side of the hall. "Have you got 'em?" asks I. "Yes," says he. "And the 'wait-a-minutes'?" says I. "Yes," says he. "Good, I'll meet you in the spool room." Here an explanation is necessary. About this time the first nail had been driven into the coffin of the old music hall. Eight turns had been reduced to three and the rest of the programme was made up of the bioscope. In the programme that night was a circus turn, The Lady, the Lion, the Horse and the Dog. After the News had been shown, it was customary for one of us boys to get the spool, take it up to the spool room and rewind it ready for the second house. The "got 'ems" were two and a half Woodbines (rationed) from the little corner shop. The "wait-a-minutes" were red top matches called standstickers, not to be confused with fuses. They were three-hapence a dozen. To light them we struck them sharply across the seat of our trousers. I see Alec making his way

up the stairs to the operating box for the rewinding of the reel; I see the operator's hand slowly going round and round (it was hand motivation in those days); I make my way down the auditorium, back stage. Everything is ready for the first turn. Curtain raisers are at their windlass in the flies, the stage manager is ready to give the signal. I sidle past them switching off the two lights, one over the door and the other in the room. I hear Alec coming and go to open the spool room door. It's locked. I grope around and find the key on the nail. Funny! Someone has forgotten. The door has never been locked before, I unlock it, push it open and Alec slips inside. He puts down his chocolate tray and fixes the spool on the bench. It's my turn to have first puff at the woodbine tonight. I light up by the half open door, cupping my hands so that the glow does not give the game away. Alec says something but I have a few more puffs before I ask him what he said. "Don't muck about," he said. "I'm not mucking about," says I. "I've been by the door all the time." Silence. I puff some more. "Don't act daft. You'll make me snap this film," he said. "I haven't moved," says I. "Then switch on the light," says he quickly. I take two paces back and switch on the lights. As the lights flash on, there's another flash. It's Alec. He flies by me shouting, "Shut the door quick." I do so and only then do I see a notice saying, "Please keep door closed." Nothing else. Just that. Alec is at the end of the corridor, pale as a ghost. "What was it?" I asked. "A lion," says he. "Don't talk daft," I said. "I tell you it was, and I've left my chocolate box in there too." Just then the dressing room door opened and a lady came out in riding kit. "What's wrong?" she asked. We told her. She laughed uproariously and said, "That's my Leo. He won't hurt you. His travelling cage was slightly damaged in transit and he is only in there while it's being repaired." "I've got my box and the spool only half done in there," says Alec. "You come back with me," she said, "We'll put things right."

We went back, she unlocked the door and beckoned us in. There was no reason for me to go in. Alec peeped round the door and seeing the lady stroking the lion, plucked up courage and entered and in a few minutes came out with his chocolate

box and spool both intact. Suddenly he asked, "What about my half?" "Oh," said I, "In the excitement I must have smoked the whole fag or thrown it away in my fright. Never mind, you can have the half left in the packet".

E. H. NORTH,  
*Taunton.*

I said I would never tell this story again, but about seven weeks ago a new gas meter was fixed and the fitter who called was Alec. "Nice to see you again, old boy. Remember the old Empire days?" "Oh yes," he says. "Remember the old lion in the spool room?" "Oo ar," says he, but not very convincingly. He spoke about everything else but I could not get him back on the subject. Did it really happen, or have I been relating a dream all these years? Or could it be that it is a re-occurring nightmare with Alec and he wishes to forget it? What do you think? GEN.

★ ★ ★

Tom Gordon, the author of the following verses, is a Canadian St. Dunstaner who was wounded at Ypres in May, 1916. He lives at Lake Megantic, Province of Quebec and the verses, with others, were first published in the *Quebec Evening Telegraph*.

### Honour the Blind

*Let us honour the blind of our land,  
With words of praise, not pity,  
By the clasp of a friendly hand,  
They will bless us and understand.*

*Sir Arthur Pearson, of St. Dunstan's fame,  
Taught blinded soldiers to play the game,  
His courage and cheer set a torch aflame,  
The blind forever shall hallow his name.*

*When fate seems to treat us unkindly,  
And we whimper, whine or complain,  
Let us to our neighbours be kindly,  
Neighbours with or without a White Cane.*

*Canada's a kind-hearted nation,  
She helps wherever the need,  
That is the greatest religion,  
Kindness the noblest creed.*

*Then honour the blind of our nation,  
Whether high or low of station,  
May they touch their cane on their native sod,  
And place their hand in the Hand of God.*

TOM GORDON.



## “In Memory”

### Private John Sidney Bond, *Wiltshire Regiment*

With deep regret we have to record the death of John S. Bond, one of our permanent residents at Pearson House. He was 80.

He enlisted in 1915 and was discharged from the Army that same year but he did not come to St. Dunstan's until January, 1952, when his age ruled out any training. In 1954 he became a permanent resident of our Brighton Homes although he often left us for short spells to live out. His health had not been good in recent months; suddenly he became seriously ill and he died on April 23rd.

Our deep sympathy is extended to the members of his family and to his many special friends in the Brighton area.

### Private Daniel Healey, *Royal Welch Fusiliers*

With deep regret we record the death of D. Healey, of Cork. He was 76.

He served in the First World War but did not come to St. Dunstan's until 1948, when his age ruled out any training. He died in hospital on May 3rd.

He leaves a widow to whom we send our deep sympathy.

### Private Ronald Jeffries, *Royal Scots Regiment*

It is with deep regret that we have to record the death at the early age of 37 of Ronald Jeffries, of Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent. He died very suddenly at Ovingdean while on holiday there.

He served in the Second World War from 1943 until 1944 but only came to St. Dunstan's in 1959. He and his wife had a tobacco and confectionery business.

Our deep sympathy goes out to Mrs. Jeffries, who is left with three young children.

### Private Herbert Read, *Suffolk Regiment*

We have to record with deep regret the sudden death at his home on May 12th, of Herbert Read, of Mistley, near Manningtree, Essex. He was 72.

He served in the Suffolk Regiment from 1915 to 1919 but did not come to St. Dunstan's until 1961. He had suffered throughout his life as a result of a mustard gas attack during the war and because of his health and age he was not able to undertake training when he came to us.

He leaves a widow and grown-up family to whom we send our very sincere sympathy.

### Ambulance Driver George Harry Piper, *Casualty Service, Civil Defence*

We have to record with very deep regret the death of G. H. Piper, of Watford. He was 58.

“Peter Piper” as everyone knew him, served as an ambulance driver from 1940 until 1941 and came to St. Dunstan's the following year. He trained as a telephonist and he became a most efficient operator, carrying on at his board until his death, which occurred very suddenly on Good Friday, April 20th. One of his keenest interests was Toc H, and he will be greatly missed there.

Our deep sympathy goes to Mrs. Piper and her family.

### Albert Edward Austin, *Australian Forces*

We have heard with deep regret from his daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Axon, of the death of our Australian St. Dunstaner, A. E. Austin, of Perth.

Our deep sympathy goes out to Mrs. Axon and to the other members of his family.

## Found

A gentleman's grey-blue felt hat was found after the Windsor Reunion on March 31st. The hat is now in Miss Rogers' room at Headquarters awaiting collection.

## Ruby Weddings

Mr. and Mrs. A. James, of Margate, January 7th last. (We have only just heard of this); and Mr. and Mrs. J. Macfarlane, of Ilford, May 20th. Many congratulations.

## Birth

WOODHALL.—On April 16th, to the wife of W. J. Woodhall, of Birmingham,—a daughter.

## Marriage

GRIFFITHS—WATSON.—On May 19th, J. H. Griffiths, recently of Ovingdean, to Mrs. Watson, of South Woodingdean, widow of our late St. Dunstaner, W. Watson.

## Deaths

We send our deepest sympathy to the following:—

BRITTON.—To R. Britton, of Blackburn, on the recent death of his brother.

HORNSBY.—To C. F. Hornsby, of Victoria, Canada, whose wife died on April 7th, at the age of 82.

JENSEN.—To E. R. Jensen, of Wembley, whose mother has died in hospital following a coronary thrombosis.