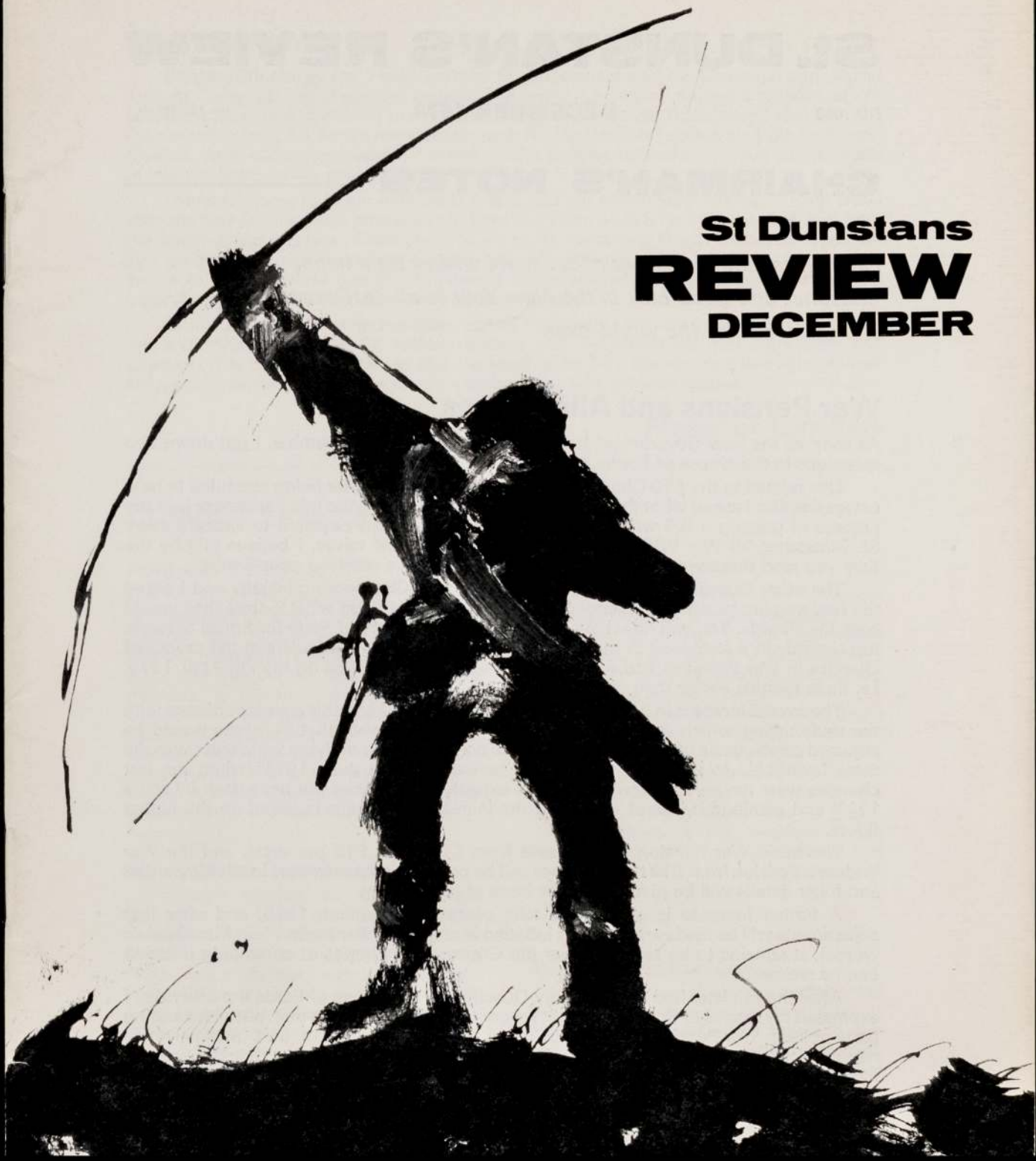


St Dunstons
REVIEW
DECEMBER



St. DUNSTAN'S REVIEW

NO. 658

DECEMBER 1974

5p MONTHLY

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Lady Fraser and I send our affectionate wishes for a happy Christmas and good luck in the New Year to all St. Dunstaners and their families the world over.

War Pensions and Allowances

As soon as the new Government had settled down early in November, I put down two questions in the House of Lords.

One related to the £10 Christmas Bonus which was this year being extended to new categories and I asked what these categories would be. As I write this Parliament is in the process of passing a Bill which will, I understand, give this payment to virtually every St. Dunstaner, all War Widows and some St. Dunstaners' wives. I believe that by the time you read these words many of you will already have received your Bonus.

The other Question related to War Pensions and Allowances generally and I asked the Government when they intended to review these and upon what factors they would base the awards. You will now have heard that the Secretary of State for Social Services has recently in a statement in the House of Commons given particulars of the proposed changes in War Pensions and Allowances which will take effect on the 7th April, 1975, i.e. three months earlier than originally planned.

The overall increase in benefits is in the region of 15½% and this is in accordance with the undertaking which the Minister gave me earlier this year that Pensions would be adjusted on the basis of average earnings or a rise in the cost of living whichever was the more favourable to the Pensioner. In the period between July, 1974 (when the last changes were made) and April, 1975, it is expected that prices will have risen by some 12½% and earnings by about 15½% and the increase in benefits is based on the higher figure.

The basic War Pension will increase from £16.40 to £19 per week and the War Widow's Pension from £13 to £15. There will be proportionate increases in all Allowances and fuller details will be given in a later issue of the *Review*.

A further increase is planned to take place in December, 1975, and after that adjustments will be made annually "as inflation is brought under control" (in Mrs. Castle's words). It remains to be seen whether the Government's hopes of controlling inflation can be realised.

After the Minister had replied to my Question in the House of Lords the other day I expressed my thanks to the Government for continuing the tradition that, notwithstanding party politics, War Pensioners would be given special consideration. St. Dunstaners may rely upon me to follow this up, but of course, we must all remember that the national finances are in a pretty bad way and it may be that things will be more difficult as the months pass.

COVER PICTURE: An archer lets loose the first of the arrows at Agincourt, October 25th, 1415., one of Esmond Knight's drawings for 'Agincourt', featured on centre pages.

Remembrance

On the 10th November, I led a party of St. Dunstaners past the Cenotaph and we did a smart "eyes left" to show our respect. We were the largest single contingent of old soldiers, sailors and airmen at this parade, being nearly 50 St. Dunstaners, making with their escorts about 80. As we marched through the Westminster streets after the Cenotaph Service, there were considerable crowds on the pavements and they gave us a number of hearty cheers as we passed them.

The party came to lunch with Lady Fraser and me at the Great Western Royal Hotel after the parade and it was interesting to note that there were 9 First War men and 39 from the Second War and later. Sitting next to me on one side was Ernest Carpenter, aged 82, and on the other side Fred Lea, blinded only a few months ago in Northern Ireland. It seems to me that these two St. Dunstaners illustrated between them the history of our organisation from its foundation to the present day.

At this time of year with the approach of Founder's Day, we think especially of the life and achievements of Sir Arthur Pearson and we remember him with pride and affection. On occasions such as the Remembrance Day Parade and throughout their everyday lives, St. Dunstaners to-day continue the fine work he began.

Fraser of Lonsdale

COMING EVENTS

Founder's Day

The Founder's Day Service will be held at St. George's Church Kemp Town, on Sunday, 8th December, at 3 p.m. The Rev. W. Popham Hosford, O.B.E., M.A., R.D., will conduct the Service. Mr. Nigel Pearson, a member of St. Dunstan's Council will read the Lesson and William Scott, a St. Dunstaner, from Rottingdean will give the Address.

Sir Neville Pearson's daughter, Mrs. Hardy will be attending the Memorial Service with her daughter Justine.

Hampstead Cemetery

On the morning of Monday, 9th December, a party of St. Dunstaners, accompanied by Mr. C. D. Wills, will leave Headquarters in Old Marylebone Road, and make their way to the Hampstead Cemetery to lay a wreath on Sir Arthur Pearson's grave.

The subscription towards the cost of the wreath is 7p and St. Dunstaners who would like to contribute are asked to send two 3½p stamps to Mr. Wills at 191 Old Marylebone Road, London NW1 5QN. Receipts will not be issued unless specially requested.

Ian Fraser House

The latest report from our Architects indicates that it is unlikely that Ian Fraser House will be vacated by the Contractors before the year end and consequently there is no hope of accommodating St. Dunstaners there for Christmas.

St. Dunstaners who had been given tentative bookings will be informed individually but it is intended to give single St. Dunstaners priority for Christmas bookings at Pearson House on the basis of first come first served.

Further news of the progress at Ian Fraser House will be published in the January *Review*.

Mrs. Margaret Stanway

Margaret Stanway tells us that she has been asked to serve on the Committee of the Macclesfield Blind Society and she has accepted. The area extends towards Manchester and nine small towns and villages come under this Society. As far as Margaret knows this is the first time a blind person has become a Committee member.



Remembrance Sunday at Rottingdean. 'Ginger' Scott, accompanied by Matron Blackford, lays St. Dunstan's wreath at the war memorial.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

by Robert and Joyce Pringle

Sunday, November 10th, dawned bright with a stiffish breeze which held the flags streaming out on the tall buildings along Whitehall. While in towns and villages all over Britain people were preparing to attend local ceremonies of remembrance at their own particular War Memorials, many St. Dunstaners gathered at headquarters for the march to the Cenotaph to represent our organisation.

At headquarters we were received by Mr. E. V. Stevens, St. Dunstan's Accountant, and we were plied with welcome cups of tea by Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Chow.

We were pleased to see Mrs. Avis Spurway. Also that two of our people from North of the Border were present to swell our numbers in the persons of David Bell and Ralph Pacitti. Charlie Hancock, Robert Young and Ernie Carpenter were just three of the first world War men who delighted us all with their obvious fitness and eagerness to observe this day.

Eventually the coaches were filled and we moved off to Wellington Barracks

where we formed up and marched off.

One aspect of the crowd which is drawn to attend the Cenotaph service which is pleasantly surprising, is the number of young people in their teens and early twenties.

When Big Ben rang out and the cannon signalled the start of the two minutes silence, over the thousands of people present fell a total silence in which it was possible to give one's thoughts entirely to the suffering and sacrifice of the servicemen of two world wars as completely as if one were standing at the Cenotaph entirely alone.

At the Great Western Royal Hotel we were received by Lord and Lady Fraser, whose presence, at any gathering, always delights St. Dunstaners.

The room here was larger than the St. Dunstan's club rooms and it became possible to find and speak to particular St. Dunstaners. We were very pleased to be able to meet two new men, Taffy Hughes and Fred Lea, who had come up from Brighton escorted by Jock Car-

nochan. Another very recent entry attending his first St. Dunstan's function was Mr. Arnold escorted by his wife. As is customary, many St. Dunstaners made a point of having a word with the three new men and we hoped they were made to feel at ease. Among the escorts who came to help us were Jock Scott and Bomber Brown of H. M.S. Daedalus fame.

The luncheon was the usual excellent meal which we have learnt to expect from this Hotel. After the Loyal Toast and the singing of God Save the Queen, Lord Fraser rose to address us.

Lord Fraser's Speech

He began by thanking the members of St. Dunstan's staff who helped with this occasion. Particularly Mr. Stevens, Mr. Norman Smith, Mr. Jock Carnochan and Mr. Charles Lawrence.

On this occasion he would like us to cast our minds back to the origins of today's ceremony which is the celebration of the end of the 1st World War held on 11th November because that was the day the Armistice was signed.

In 1924 or thereabouts, Lord Fraser recalled, he had entered Parliament at the age of 25 and had concerned himself with the plight of ex-servicemen, among whom in those days, there was much suffering and neglect. He and his fellow parliamentarians had constantly brought the case of the ex-serviceman before one Government after another, regardless of what party. He felt we would all acknowledge that at the present time the disabled ex-serviceman received a certain amount of privilege and recognition.

He wanted us to bear in mind particularly that Members of Parliament are not sent to the House of Lords because they are finished. Whatever we might hear or read to the contrary, the House of Lords provides a senate of some 200 very active members. Lord Fraser considered himself an active parliamentarian and he said that the Government still had to listen to his opinion.

Those of us who had had the time to read the November and current issues of the *Review* would have read within its pages something concerning pensions.

Lord Fraser then turned to another subject, the horrid disease from which this country, in common with many others is suffering, namely, inflation. This simply

means that, as a nation, we are spending more than we are earning.

"You may be wondering what the position of St. Dunstan's is in this condition," he continued. "We have collected from the public for many years to keep our promises to look after the welfare of the blinded ex-serviceman." Lord Fraser wanted us to know some things which might set our minds at rest. "There exist men who are called actuaries; now these men are very clever and as a result of their studies of statistics they can tell pretty accurately how long a group of people may be expected to live. They can't by looking at one particular person tell him when he is going to die, but they can make forecasts for a large number of people. It used to be said by the actuaries that the last St. Dunstaner would die in approximately the year 2007. However, that was before the terrible business in Northern Ireland. We deeply regret it has been the fate of some men to be blinded as a result of their service in Northern Ireland."

A man from this group was seated beside him as he spoke. He is Fred Lea, a man blinded at the age of 31 while serving with the Military Police in Northern Ireland.

These recent entrants vitally altered the previous figures for the projected future life of St. Dunstan's as these men could expect 40 or more years of life.

We Carry On

Lord Fraser wanted us to know that, taking all these factors into account, St. Dunstan's can still carry out all its promises to the blinded ex-serviceman. This was provided we took good care of our affairs, which we do. Mr. Wills, Mr. Stevens, and Lord Fraser, himself, regard it as their chief duty to guard St. Dunstan's resources. Unless a crisis of the magnitude which developed in pre-war Germany happens, St. Dunstan's will be all right.

Reverting to the march past at the Cenotaph, he said that the Queen, Ministers of the Government, and the public look for and appreciate the presence of the St. Dunstan's column in the march, as witnessed by the loud applause from the crowds.

Lord Fraser said he knew that Lady Fraser would like to join him in wishing us all the very best of good fortune.

Mr. Stevens introduced Tom Hart who moved the vote of thanks on behalf of St. Dunstaners.

Mr. Hart

Mr. Hart said it was not difficult to say thank you to St. Dunstan's. He felt that his fellow St. Dunstaners had come to-day for three reasons. One, to honour fallen comrades from two World Wars; two, to support St. Dunstan's and Lord Fraser, which the public appreciated, as Lord Fraser had said earlier; and three, to convince everybody that this country is still worth living in. He also believed he spoke for everybody present in expressing the wish that politicians would forget inter-party differences and get down to tackling our various problems. His sentiment was loudly applauded.

He concluded by thanking St. Dunstan's for this week-end and the hospitality which had made this occasion possible.

Lord Fraser rose again to say that we would all like to express our thanks to the hotel for the way the staff had looked after us.

Mr. Bill Harris then thanked St. Dunstan's on behalf of the escorts who regularly come to help. He said that he believed he was the only 1st World War man among the escorts. He said he wanted to thank St. Dunstan's for the luncheon but above all for the privilege of being able to take part in the day's ceremony among St. Dunstaners.

PRESENTATION ON RETIREMENT

At a party given by the Morgan Carbonite factory recently, *Sidney Tarry* O.B.E., who has been a member of the Battersea and District Local Employment Committee for 40 years, was presented by the Mayor of Wandsworth, Councillor Jimmy Hill, with an inscribed hip flask, in appreciation of his work over the years.

PAYMENT OF WAR PENSIONS

Mr. Slade's note in the last issue of the *Review* could be ambiguous. St. Dunstaners may take advantage of the switch from weekly to monthly payment at any time and may hand their book in after they have encashed their *next* voucher in the book.

Welcome to St. Dunstan's



On behalf of St. Dunstan's we welcome St. Dunstaners recently admitted to membership. The Review hopes they will settle down happily as members of our family.

Frank Baxter of Bedford, came to St. Dunstan's in October 1974. He fought in France in the First World War with the 8th North Staffordshire Regiment. He is a widower and now lives with his younger daughter.

John Gwynne of Kingsthorpe, Hereford, joined St. Dunstan's in October 1974. He served with the Royal Engineers in France during the First World War, and is married.

William Hopkins of Plympton, Plymouth, Devon, joined St. Dunstan's on 9th October, 1974. He served with the Royal Air Force Police Division in the 2nd World War. He is married with a grown-up daughter and he now works as a groundsman.

Peter Jones of Sheffield, came to St. Dunstan's in October 1974. He worked in Government Research during the Second World War and is a keen radio ham and in addition broadcasts on the local radio in Sheffield. He is married with one child.

Sydney Nichols of Rochford, Essex, came to St. Dunstan's in September, 1974. He served in the 1st World War, first in the 14th London Scottish Regiment and later on in the Royal Army Medical Corps. He is married and he has for many years been employed in the printing trade but he and his wife are now enjoying their retirement.

James Owen of Ton-y-Pandy, Glamorgan, came to St. Dunstan's in October 1974. He served with the Royal Engineers in the First World War, and is married.

Wilfred Parish of Norwich, joined St. Dunstan's in October 1974. He served with the Royal Air Force in the Second World War and was a prisoner-of-war in the Far East. He is married with two children.

Lincoln Robinson of Chatham, Kent, joined St. Dunstan's in October, 1974. He served in the 1st World War in the Royal Army Service Corps as a driver and following his discharge in 1925 continued with his occupation until his sight failed. In more recent years both Mr. and Mrs. Robinson have suffered with ill-health. They have two sons—both married.

Henry James Sherborne of Paulton, Bristol, joined St. Dunstan's in September, 1974. He served in the Royal Horse Artillery and was later transferred to the Royal Field Artillery in the First World War. After his discharge from the services in 1918 he worked as a butler and then for many years drove a horse for the Co-operative Society and in later years worked for an Insurance Company until his retirement. He is now 92 years of age and is quite active and enjoys steady walking. He is a widower now and lives with relations.

Thomas James Slater, of Bethnal Green, London, E.2, joined St. Dunstan's in September, 1974. He served in the Royal Artillery in the 2nd World War and since his discharge in 1945 he worked for a time in Spitalfields Market and as a City Messenger. He is married and has a grown-up son and daughter.

William Tickle of Liverpool, joined St. Dunstan's in October 1974. He was a member of the Home Guard during the Second World War and is married.

Laban David Williams of Bristol, came to St. Dunstan's in November, 1974. He served in the Royal Field Artillery in the 1st World War. After his discharge from the army in 1916 he worked in the Welsh pits and later on worked in the building trade, and was with one firm for 30 years. He is married and has a daughter who is married.

First Multi-disabled International Sports— Stoke Mandeville

The International Sports held at Stoke Mandeville from 14th to 21st September—the first international meeting to include amputees and blind people—was run by the International Sports Organisation for the Disabled.

The games were opened by the Prime Minister, the Right Hon. Harold Wilson, and then followed a week of sports. Between competitions there were lots of training sessions to keep the team busy.

The events included in the games for the blind were, field sports including running, high jump, track events, bowling and swimming.

The Great Britain blind team won 6 gold medals to other countries 3. In fact, the Great Britain blind section did much better than the other two classes.

It was an interesting week and great fun. At the conclusion of the games Challenge Cups were presented by Air Chief Marshal Sir Dennis Smallwood.

Diary Notes for 1975

B.S.A.D. A.G.M.: Saturday 14th June. Delegates from St. Dunstan's are welcome. Cheltenham B.S.A.D. Sports: Saturday 12th July.

Multi-Disabled Games: 12th -14th September.

Note for 1976

Would St. Dunstan's sportsmen please note and get into training for the Disabled Olympics which will follow the Ordinary Olympics in Toronto, Canada, in 1976. These will include the Blind, Amputees and Paraplegics.

AVIS SPURWAY

FISHING 1975

Would all St. Dunstaners who wish to take part in St. Dunstan's organised fishing trips for 1975 please apply to me for entry forms at Pearson House. Entries will close on 14th December, 1974.

J. CARNOCHAN,
Sports Organiser.

KEMP TOWN NOTES

The last Brighton Race Meeting for this season started the month and a few went to try their luck yet again; it must add to the enjoyment to hear the horses galloping and snorting by, even if they're in the wrong order!

We had a revival of "THE LITTLE HUT", the well known comedy, at the Theatre Royal, followed by the ever popular Agatha Christie's "MURDER AT THE VICARAGE" with Barbara Mullen. It must be difficult to imagine her as anything but Janet, Dr. Cameron and Dr. Finlay's housekeeper. Two new thrillers followed, "THE GENTLE HOOK" and "THE PAY OFF" with Nigel Patrick and Dulcie Gray, this prior to opening in London.

The Drives still prove popular, although one Friday was nearly a wash-out, it is not often it rains without a break as it did this day. The list of tea places to visit gets short now as some close for the Winter.

The range of musical entertainment on record was wide as we had stereo evenings from Michael Hayes, Tom Eales and V.A.D. staff. Not only music—Michael brought some humour with Max Miller who, I understand, was known to many St. Dunstaners.

Comedy play readings seem the most popular so "A MONTH OF SUNDAYS" by Gerald Savory was an agreeable choice and we had a good cast including guests Mr. R. Boorman and Mr. M. Grimshaw, a talented couple who are always keen to help if their acting commitments allow, also V.A.D.s and Mr. J. Bingham, liftman, another willing and versatile recruit.

How it started I know not, but most Sunday afternoons bring an impromptu Concert after tea in the Winter Garden with Mrs. Wright, V.A.D., accompanying solo singers. Bill Jack joins in on his saxophone, or any one of his numerous musical instruments and, of course, we have a spot of singing the old favourites that everyone knows.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From George Fallowfield, Worthing, Sussex.

May I be permitted to congratulate Alan Wortley, his wife and friends upon their achievement? I like the enthusiasm and perseverance of Mrs. Wortley. After all what would this world be like to-day had it not been for women inspiring, encouraging and even bullying men to go and do great things?

A merry Christmas to all and all you wish yourselves in the coming year.

From John Woodhead, Blackpool.

The time must be getting near for Northgate House to close and as I left there last week-end to return to my own home, I would like to say a very special thank you indeed to the wonderful staff who have looked after me, not only on this occasion, but at other times I have spent there because of my disability and illness.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD

Marian, daughter of Eric Bradshaw of Northampton, has won the Duke of Edinburgh Award at the age of twenty. She has worked for this through the Girls' Brigade which she joined when she was six. Marian is a Sub Officer and the Drum Major of the Northampton District Girls' Brigade Band.

During the last five years she has learnt many varied subjects, such as life saving, driving, dressmaking, child care, floral arranging and taken part in expeditions to achieve the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards.

On 31st October Marian went to Buckingham Palace with her mother and father to receive her award from the Duke of Edinburgh.

Wasted effort

Heard in a Manchester hotel bar: "I learned how to crawl when I was only a few months old, but it hasn't done me any good with my bank manager."

Reading Time

by Phillip Wood

Cat. No. 499

The Eye of the Wind

by Peter Scott

Read by Roy Williamson

Reading Time 26½ hours

The exhaustive (and sometimes exhausting) autobiography of a restless and adventurous perfectionist—painter, naturalist, skater, glider-pilot, globe-trotter.

It has to be said that he got off to a good start. Son of the famous explorer, his mother was a successful sculptor (she studied under Rodin), his godfather was J. M. Barrie and one of his christening presents was Honorary Life Fellowship of the Royal Zoological Society.

In fact he never did things by halves. As a boy he lost his appendix to a Very Distinguished Surgeon (a Noble Lord to boot). Later he scrambled about the roofs of Cambridge in the company of embryo Everest explorers, turned down an offer from a famous teacher to make him World Skating Champion in two years, played poker with Richard Strauss—and was once kissed by Elizabeth Bergner!

He also shot with King George VI asked H.M. The Queen to scrounge some Trumpeter swans during her State Visit to Canada, won an Olympic Bronze Medal for sailing and 'enjoyed' a spectacularly-dangerous War. Predictably most of the fourteen tracks are concerned with the almost obsessive adoration of ducks and geese. He named his daughter after a species of Pin-tailed duck—and you just can't get more dedicated than that!

A very interesting (if over-long and often over-detailed) book written by a most remarkable man.

Cat. No. 528

Queen Elizabeth I

by J. E. Neale

Read by Eric Gillett

Reading Time 16¾ hours

On reading this book I was struck by the enormous amount of documentary material which has survived from Elizabethan

times, in the form of letters (some quite trivial), memos, diary entries, verbatim reports of speeches, Court tittle-tattle, etc.

The author has drawn exhaustively on these sources and the result is a vivid painstakingly-researched *authentic* biography of the great Queen.

The complex and highly individual character of Elizabeth is beautifully drawn and the fine (but never tedious) detail of the book gives the reader the curious impression of being an invisible observer during this most colourful and turbulent period of our history.

One of the best historical biographies I have ever read.

Cat. No. 125

Winter's Crimes

Edited by George Hardinge

Read by John Curle

Reading Time, 7½ hours

These ten crime stories are not reprints from other sources but especially written for this book.

Each tale is a little masterpiece, brilliantly executed by an acknowledged expert in the field.

The result is a thoroughly satisfying book. I was very sorry when it was finished.

Cat. No. 525

An Expensive Place To Die

by Len Deighton

Read by David Broomfield

Reading Time 7½ hours

Classic spy-thriller set in Paris. The plot is a touch involved — it lost me several times. But this doesn't seem to matter with this type of novel, or detract from the enjoyment.

It contains all the right ingredients, of course — secret files, the truth-drug, a sinister Chinese, black limousines and, naturally, a few well-chosen corpses.

Extremely well-written and satisfyingly horrific.



St. Dunstan's bowlers at the King Alfred Centre

photo—Brighton Gazette.

Bowls win over sighted players

St. Dunstan's, Brighton, Bowls Club wound up their 1974 outdoor season with a three ends victory over Hove, Kingsway B.C.—playing *indoors* at the King Alfred Centre, Hove.

Club Captain, *Ted Frearson* reports a very successful season playing matches in Hampshire, Kent, Surrey and Sussex. "We played about 16 matches", he said, "and kept up a good average in results. Our players have a very good reputation and we have some extra fixtures for next season."

Through the winter

That end-of-season indoor match is not so Irish after all. The St. Dunstan's players will be bowling indoors every Tuesday morning through the winter. "It keeps us in practice," explained Ted. "We would welcome any new members keen to join the Bowling Club."

After the match our players and fellow members of the Social Club were entertained to dinner by the Hove, Kingsway Club. *Mrs. Elizabeth Dacre*, President of the St. Dunstan's Brighton Club spoke, as did *Ted Frearson*, in reply to speeches

by the Hove Chairman, *Mr. E. Sutton*, and their Captain, *Bill Hammel*. Another guest was *Miss Frances Ramshaw*, Vice-President, St. Dunstan's Club.

The St. Dunstan's team was: *Ted Frearson*, (Capt.), *Tim Kirk*, *John Walker*, *Eddie Quinn*, *Stan Pike*, *Bill Megson*, *Tom Mugan* and *Harry Preedy*. Reserves: *Alf Smith*, *Bob Fearnley* and *Rufus Jones*.

WANTED

Kevin, son of *David Purches*, is collecting old regimental badges. Any St. Dunstaner who has any regimental badges he does not want, might like to get in touch with Kevin at 109, Tollgate Road, Colney Heath, St. Alban's, Herts.

GOLD WATCH

Alan Key of Dartford, Kent, was presented with a Gold Watch in November last, for 25 years' service with Messrs. J. and E. Hall of Dartford, Kent. Alan is a capstan operator.

CLUB NEWS

MIDLAND

Our meeting held on Sunday, 13th October, was rather a quiet one, probably because it followed immediately on our outing to Stratford, nevertheless the members had time to have a good chat together and this can be very enjoyable.

The tea for this particular meeting was arranged for us by Mrs. Androlia and we all thanked her for the enjoyable meal.

The November meeting was held on the first Sunday of the month so that members wishing to attend services on Remembrance Sunday were free to do so.

It was quite a good meeting and mostly taken up with a darts competition, many good darts were thrown and some good scores made. Mrs. Marjorie Hordyniec kept a watchful eye on the direction of each thrower so that not too many darts went astray.

At tea we discussed future programmes, such as another evening outing towards the end of November, our Christmas meeting and a brief mention was made about the Christmas dinner.

My wife, Joan, went round to each of our members wives asking them to bring some goody or other along to the Christmas meeting so that our party could be as good as ever.

Our Christmas dinner will be held on **Saturday, 21st December** at our usual venue, the Austin branch of the Royal British Legion and I am now beginning to get all the plans finalised.

Our old friend Eddie Hordyniec is in hospital once again and he was missed very much at the meeting. We send our best wishes to him and hope to see him at Club meetings before very long.

The tea for this meeting was arranged for us by Mrs. Cashmore and we all thanked her for the lovely meal.

DOUGLAS CASHMORE,
Secretary

LONDON

The Football Pontoon Sweepstake, which ended on 26th October, was shared equally by Mrs. Lynch, Mrs. Meleson and W. Allen. Their teams were Manchester United, Norwich and Birmingham respectively. The 'Booby' prize went to F. Dickerson, whose team was Luton, with an incredibly low score of one goal after a run of five weeks.

Domino winners during the month of October were as follows:

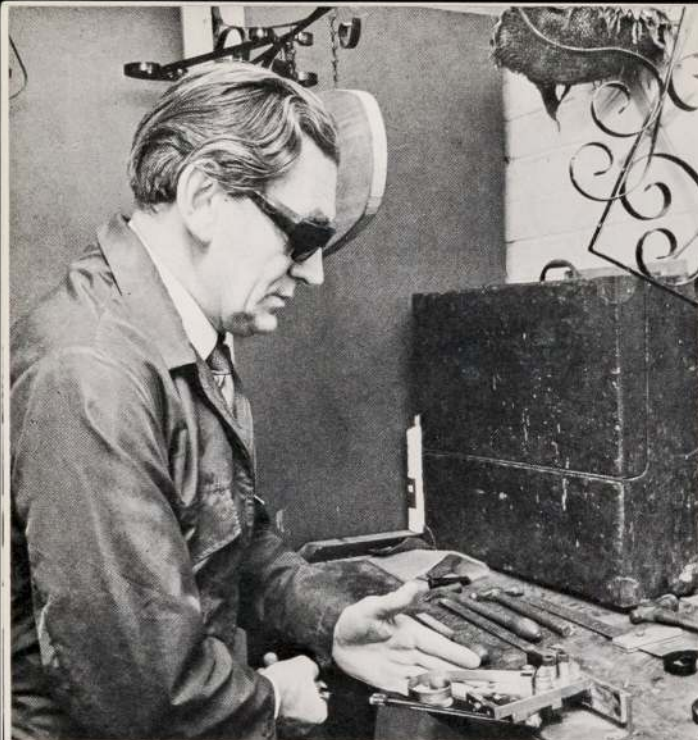
3rd October	1 W. Miller
	2 J. J. Majchrowicz
10th October	1 C. Hancock
	2 R. Armstrong
17th October	1 W. Miller
	2 J. Majchrowicz
24th October	1 W. Miller
	2 W. Phillips
	R. Pringle
31st October	1 G. Stanley
	2 J. Majchrowicz

The Sir Arthur Pearson Domino Fives and Threes Competition has now got under way. Roy Armstrong and Bill Phillips have succeeded in reaching the second round after very close and exciting games against Jim Padley and Bob Pringle, respectively. In each case it was two games to one.

We were very happy to see Mr. and Mrs. George Stanley back at the Club again after a number of weeks absence. It is good to know that Mrs. Stanley continues to improve in health after her unfortunate fall some time ago. We hope she will soon be fully recovered.

Another of our popular visitors, Mrs. Spurway, accompanied by the Rev. Spurway, came to see us on Saturday afternoon, 9th November, and again on the following Sunday morning, which was Armistice Sunday. The 'boys' and their wives say 'please come again'.

W. MILLER.



Duncan in his workshop using one of his special tools for wrought iron work.

New St. Dunstaner keeps Busy

Duncan with a fledgling albino budgerigar.



Among the more unusual crafts on display at the Corn Exchange, Maidstone, in the Kent Association for the Blind Exhibition of Handicrafts on 6th November was wrought iron work by Duncan Sutherland, of Dorrit Way, Rochester.

Duncan is a relatively new St. Dunstaner who came to us in 1972. He lost the sight of one eye during service in the Second World War with the Royal Corps of Signals. The sight of the other failed just over three years ago. At Ian Fraser House he was introduced to wrought iron work. "They had the tools there set out in the workshops and I took an interest in it," said Duncan.

So much so that he became one of the first St. Dunstaners to be set up in his own workshop with the specialised tools for working in wrought iron. His exhibit at the show was a house sign in mahogany suspended from a wrought iron wall-bracket. Duncan is specialising in this particular item although he also makes other things, including shelf brackets and flower pot holders. He is at present making seven balustrades for a staircase.

One piece of equipment St. Dunstan's did not provide is the capstan on which Duncan has mounted the metal former which shapes the iron strip into scrolls. This is Duncan's own invention made from the base of a dentist's chair. "When the metal former was fixed on the bench I found I had to swing the metal round the scroll. This was getting in the way of everything so I thought why not fix it on a capstan and turn the scroll?" The base had to be heavy so Duncan thought of a dentist's chair which had been given to him. With the chair removed he has a rotating base which can be raised or lowered to any working height.

"It is a nice hobby for an unsighted person who likes to work with his hands," says Duncan, a former engineering factory worker. "The attraction is the idea of turning out something with a certain amount of beauty in it".

Wrought iron is not Duncan's only hobby. He is a newly-qualified radio amateur—his call sign G4 DJI—having passed his examination in May. "So I am comparatively new—not new as an operator, I had about five years in the Service on the key so the question of morse in the exam was no difficulty."

Around his new 'shack' are Braille maps of the world on which he can check the whereabouts of any worked contact he makes. He has already worked Portugal, Sicily, Sweden, the Ukraine and Yugoslavia.

Also in his shack is another dentist's chair which makes a very comfortable operator's seat. Duncan extolled its usefulness. "It's got tilt, it revolves; you can adjust the seat back; you can raise and lower it and the head-rest is adjustable as well. In fact I suppose its the first dentist's chair where the person has gone to sleep voluntarily. You can really be comfortable in it!"

A hobby that has survived from his sighted days is Duncan's aviary in which there are some 18 species. "I breed a number of tropical finches, the Java Sparrows, the Australian Zebra Finches, they breed quite freely, cut-throat finches breed. With budgies I specialise in lutinos and albinos." Even without sight Duncan enjoys listening to his birds. "Every species of bird has its own sounds. I can't manage the cleaning of the breeding cages because I'd miss a lot. Regarding feeding and watering of the birds and mixing different types of seed that are required for the tropicals, I can manage nicely."

Another danger Duncan has found being blind in the indoor flight is that of treading unknowingly on a young bird fallen from a nest. The older birds know him and although they do not fly away they move out of his way. "When I go in I sweep my hand across the floor to see there is no youngster down there."

Another of Duncan's innovations are basket-work nesting boxes. "That's my own design," he said, "It's in the shape of a coconut, with just a hole at one end about a half inch diameter. These baskets are specially made for finches to nest in. They build their own nest in there quite happily, and they lay and raise the youngsters in there."

The cost of seed has increased 400% in 18 months and Duncan has had to reduce the numbers of his budgerigars. Instead of ten breeding pairs he only has four or five. "Up to now I've been able to carry on but we'll have to see in future," he concludes, "I would still keep the finches because they don't require much in the way of feeding. I like to have things alive around me, things which need care."



A bevy of finches greet Duncan when he visits the aviary.

Consulting a Braille map in his radio shack.



AGINCOURT

by ESMOND KNIGHT

Esmond Knight in stage costume as the archer from Agincourt



Our St. Dunstaner, Esmond Knight, who featured in the Ways of Life series last June, has been acting in a solo performance in which he plays the part of an archer who served with Henry V's army at Agincourt. This brilliant evocation, written by Esmond Knight himself, abridged for the medium of the printed page, is reproduced, together with illustrations painted by the author.

Well, how did it all start? Why, I suppose it must have been Christmas 1414 when we first heard, down in town in Alvediston in Wiltshire, about the young King Henry, the one time mad-cap Hal, how he'd been sending saucy messages over to France, laying claim to territories there which he said were his by right of inheritance. Now he'd been writing to the Prince Dauphin, see, no good writing to his Dad, he's stark nuts anyway, and he was claiming sovereignty over Maine, Aquitaine, Anjou, Normandy, along with the hand of young Catherine of Valois in marriage, with a dowry of two million marks. Well, the Dauphin being a boy and shallow, he thinks he's dealing with a baby so he sends a message back to our King: "Since you are a youngster, I am sending you little balls to play with and soft cushions to lie on until one day perhaps you will become a man." And he actually sends our King a box of tennis balls, tennis being a popular game amongst the wealthy in those days.

Well, that's what our King's waiting for and he sends back a message: "If God so wills and my life lasts, I shall within a few months play such a game of ball in the Frenchmen's streets that they will lose their jest and gain but grief for their game.

Well, just about the middle of April, 1415, the Governor, Sir John Turville, who lives down the Castle at the bottom, well it wasn't really a Castle, it was a ramshackle bloody affair really with a bit of the River Ebbles running along one side which he called a moat. Wouldn't have

kept a pussycat out. Anyway, he called us lads down, all the fellows working on his land to meet in the yard inside the gate. He climbs on to a cart and addresses us. "I call you here today to tell you that My Lord, the King, is enlisting an Army to sail for France later this year to lay claim to territories there which are his by right of inheritance. Now I propose that a contingent from Alvediston shall consist of myself and Bailiff, ten men at arms, eight archers and six boys to take care of the baggage and arrows in case of any fighting. Men at arms will be paid at the rate of 12 pence a day, archers 6 pence,"—that's me—"The rest of you must remain at home to take care of the women and the children and our farmlands."

I was in charge of the archers and I took the lads down every day for practice, down to the butts, they weren't really butts, it was a bit of fallow marshland down at the bottom, no damn good for anything else. Now our method of practice was to see how quickly and how accurately we could get off, say, ten, twelve dozen arrows. Now we reckon that a good archer can get off 15, 16 arrows in a minute. Now say you've got 5,000 archers that's 75,000 arrows coming in in a minute. And that's a terrible thing to stand up against. Now I remember my old great Grand-dad. Now he was a boy at Crécy and he told my old man when he was a very young boy that when those first arrows went into Crécy into the French it darkened the sky, like a flock of starlings coming in to roost in the evening.

Well, that was the long bow, it was a terrific weapon, about as thick as a birch tree in the middle where you hold it with your left hand, tapering off either end, made of yew and the method was you get your arrow, knotch her . . . , bring the flèches up to your right cheek and hold it, look down the shaft, then push out, push up with your left arm, stretch the muscles back in the back, open the chest, hold it, hold it, hold it, aim, . . . and off they go. By God, they went hard. Now we were shooting a target, say 250, 300, 400 yards distance and the men, they get very accurate. The bodkin sharp pointed arrows, could pierce armour and the big broad headed arrows—terrible, they cut into the flesh and if a poor warhorse got one of those in his chest, by God, he was unmanageable, absolutely useless. Anyway, that was the long bow.

Goodbye . . .

Well, the time was getting on and on July 17, 17th it was, just as the Governor said, we all met together in the yard again, the young boys sitting up in the baggage cart, shouting and cheering and we was there having a last cup of wine. "Goodbye Jack, goodbye Joe, see you at Christmas".

At Southampton we were halted, every man's name was taken, we went through in single file, every man's name taken and written down on a great roll. Then through the Bargate and out into the square on the other side, coo, you never seen such a sight, hundreds and hundreds of men, all shouting and laughing. Men sitting round cooking pots, carrying great bales of straw, men carrying suits of armour and the smell of woodsmoke and the horses, lances stacked, banners flapping and flying and the King's Marshals riding about among us all, trying to tell the newcomers where to go.

I said to Ned, "Come on let's get out of this and go and look at the ships," and we pushed through all the throng down some narrow passages and out on to a little quay and there was the Armada, looking like a forest of young larches, hundreds of masts, their sails furled and the pennants flapping in the wind and a choppy sea, going smack, smack, smacking against those great blunt bows, pulling at their anchor chains and then we noticed on the quay there were two other men standing, one an enormous bearded man

with a great sword hanging at his side and the other a smaller man standing three or four paces in front of him, smaller, but very well knit, very well made.

He was wearing a velvet jerkin with a little gold chain round his waist, and he was standing with arms folded looking down at the water, he wasn't looking at the ships, he was looking at the water and suddenly I nudged Ned, I said, "Cor, its him, its the King." "How do you know?" he says, "Oh, I dunno." You do know sometimes, don't you? And then as if he felt us behind him, he slowly turned round and I shall never forget that long pale face, those steady grey eyes under hooded lids, looking very steady, unblinking and he was smiling. No he wasn't, he wasn't smiling. He'd got a scar from his right ear right down to the corner of his mouth, pulling his mouth up. It was an arrow wound he had had at the Battle of Shrewsbury when he was a lad of 15, it made him look as if he was smiling. Well, we dragged off our caps, sank to our knees, of course. He told us to get up, asked us who we were, asked us what our names were, who we served under. Well, we told him and he said, "Well, we'll meet again", he said. "Be of good cheer," gave us God's Blessing, a little wave of his right hand, he turned and he was off.

We Feel Rich!

Well, we went back to our lines feeling as rich as if somebody had given us a bag of gold each. Later on that night young Ned said, "I wonder what the King was thinking about." A couple of days later we had the answer to that because it became known in the Army about this plot which had been uncovered, a plot against the King to set up the Earl of March, or somebody, while he was away and three of the main conspirators were there actually in the King's party. The Earl of Cambridge, Lord Scrope and Lord Grey. Well, these men were arrested, of course, summarily tried, taken out, hanged, drawn and quartered without any ceremony at all.

My Lord Grey was a close friend of the King, he was let off lightly, he was just beheaded in public. Now that's a terrible thing to see. Here's a man standing, standing in his shirt, looking round, smiling sadly and an enormous crowd of men all gathered round, in dead silence, and then



The night before the battle, "The poor condemned English, by their watchful fires, sit patiently"

the man is kneeling and s..soomph and his head's rolling in the filthy cobbles and he's dead.

Well, Ned was very silent after that. I said to him, "Take it easy son, you haven't seen nothing yet." Well, that seemed to clear the air, 'cos the next day we got the order to embark and all that army, 6,000 archers, 4,000 men at arms and lances, the knights and all their horses and baggage, the grooms and the valets, the carpenters, the farriers, the blacksmiths and waggoners, all crowding up those ramps, all laughing and jesting, off for a damn good holiday abroad.

Harfleur came into sight, looking very dark and sinister, standing in low, marshy ground under a lowering sky. Well, we finally disembarked at a little port quite

near, called Quai de Caux. We were given three or four days to find our land legs and in that time the King was riding about among us on a little grey mare which he rode all through the campaign, telling us to take it easy, take our ease for soon we should have very good tidings. I suppose he meant by that he thought that Harfleur was going to open its gates to us and show us a bit of hospitality.

However, when we drew near to the town and crossed the little narrow causeway over the marsh, word came back that the Governor had no intention of opening his gates and he was going to keep them very firmly locked against us, whereupon the King sends back a message to say he's going to stay there until he opens them so order was given to lay siege to the town

and planks and pontoons and bridges were laid out over the marshes and dykes until the whole town was completely surrounded and the postern gate cut off.

It so happened at that time it was blistering hot weather and the stink from those marshes was appalling. You know how a salt marsh stinks when the tide's out. Well, this was a damn sight worse 'cos it was filled with all the sewage and muck out of that town for 200 years and very soon the men began to fall sick. Well, nothing happened for about three or four days, then they brought up these great stone throwing machines, the ballistas really from Roman times and they would fire a rock about as big as a cauldron, they pull 'un back and they would go creak pvooooooooooooom-pow! and crash against the wall and back into the moat the stone would fall, about as much good as spitting a cherry pip at a church door. Then they tried the great big cannons and they were no damn good, great clumsy things, did more damage to the gunners than the enemy and even the attempts to blow a breach in the walls with mines were just about as unsuccessful.

Harfleur Surrenders

Anyway, cut a nasty story short, the Governor of Harfleur sees there are no re-inforcements coming along, he's not going to get relieved, as he thought, that's why he was holding out, see. So, on word being given by us that there would be no reprisals, no damage done, the gates are opened and a garrison goes in of a thousand men, men at arms and archers.

Now it was at this time that the King's staff, Duke of Gloucester, Duke of York, one or two advisers told him about the sad condition of the English army, they were in a bad way, hundreds of men had been sent back to England, too sick to march or to fight. Hundreds had deserted over the marshes, never to be seen again, a lot of men had died and the army was in a very bad state. Why not go back to England now. Come back next Spring, it was October now, Winter's coming on, come back next year with a bigger army, make a job of it.

I can just see the King, sitting there in his tent, with the flap open, gazing out over the salt marshes towards the sea,

listening, those steady eyes unblinking and then saying quite quietly, "I am possessed of a very great desire to see my territories and those places which belong to me by inheritance, nor shall I allow those inflated by pride to enjoy what belongs to us by right. My resolution, therefore, is to go on and if the enemy should attempt to hinder us on our way, we will come off with victory, triumph and very great fame."

The Road to Calais

On the 7th October we march away to the North on the old road to Calais which runs more or less parallel to the sea.

Now at Blanche-Tache great things were expected, because it was here, you see, that Edward III had crossed the Somme on his way to Crécy and his great victory there and it was here also that we were promised re-inforcements from Calais, but when we got there the next morning we could see for a start we'd never get across the river, it was far too deep, much too swift and instead of any re-inforcements waiting on the other side there was a huge body of French cavalry with lances, flanked by crossbow men, just waiting, stock still, to see what we'd do.

The army was halted, conference held, the King was advised to turn back; if the French were there, they'd be there guarding the Somme all the way up, but no, he decides to go on, so we march upstream and the French march upstream on the other side. There we are marching, gazing at each other across the water. To make matters worse it had started to rain and it rained from then on right through the campaign. Now spirits began to flag very quickly. They were very hostile at Amiens, couldn't get any food and on to Boves where the men broke open some big barns where there were great casks of wine and practically the whole army got drunk. Well, it didn't do any 'arm, we sank our sorrows for a little while.

Then the next day, on to Nesle and at that place a posse of French came dashing out of a wood on the right and seized one of the many French flags we were holding, and rode away back with it, laughing, over the stubble, whereupon a young squire named John Bromley yanks his horse out of the ranks and goes galloping after him,

seizes the leader, drags him off backwards and they were wrestling on the ground like a couple of boys, fighting in the stubble and then he stands there holding the banner aloft in his hand, to loud cheers from some of our archers, who ran out to bring him in, and the Frenchman too. Well blimey, he got knighted for that later on and the Frenchman, Lancelot Pierre, his name was, he was given a cup of wine for having put up a good fight.

He was taken to the King who gives him a few more glasses of wine and after a little more encouragement, he tells the King that there is a ford not much further up river at a place called Voyennes where we can get across and which was unguarded. Well, that seemed a bit too good to be true. However, scouts were sent off at the gallop and they came back a couple of hours later to say it was true.

Voyennes

So a forced march was made that night and on the morning of 19th October we got to Voyennes and there was this great wide river, gurgling over rocks and stones but nobody around. So, a party of about 800 archers were sent in to occupy a bit of high land on the other side to cover the crossing, 'cos we intended to go over there, you see. In we went to that water, coo it was cold, up to your knees, to your waist and then suddenly out of your depth, kicking, kicking like mad, holding our bows above our heads to try and keep them dry. Four of the chaps got taken away down stream and were drowned. But the rest of us scrambled out the other side up on to the high land, stood there panting, looking round, nothing to be seen only the fields of France, fading into the distance so we made back to say it seemed to be all clear and then the operation of getting the Army over the Somme began.

My God, what an operation. Into the flood went the horses and the carts and the men, struggling and floundering in the water, wheels came off the wagons which had to be fixed on again in mid flood. Men got carried away, pulled out again and shouting and yelling, "Come on, get on and get your backs into it, come on, move there, move, move," and after about three or four hours of this desperate floundering through the water, the Army was standing on the other side, panting and dripping

and looking around them, fearful, it must be a trap, but there's nobody there. Well, we were all countrymen, we knew damn well you can't move around in another man's land without eyes watching you, eyes watching from little coppice, from farmhouses and from woods. We couldn't see them but, by God, they could see us.

We were given that day to rest and try and dry out our clothes. In that time all the archers were ordered to cut their stave, a long stave about nine foot long, sharp at both ends, the idea being that when we got to battle you stick them in the ground towards the enemy, like a spikey palisade, so as to, to try and ward off their horses, I suppose, if they came. Anyway, we cut 'em out of a larch wood nearby and at this time the king went out to spy out the land and he was met by a party of Frenchmen who came cockily riding up to him. "Which road are you going to take?" they said. "Straight to Calais," answers the King, "and if you should impede us on our way, it will not be without your very great peril." Why did they want to know which road we was going to take? Well, next day, we marched on. It was very mysterious, very eerie. The whole of that huge wide country, very quiet, no noise, all deserted.

Sir Gilbert Baxter

Now, as we came up to a little village called Maison Celles, a young knight called Sir Gilbert Baxter comes galloping back from the advanced party, pulls up in a flurry of mud and turf in front of the King, points back excitedly, "The enemy M' Lord are encamped across the road, not a mile further on."

Well, messengers are sent galloping back to our stragglng ranks, "Close up, close up, close up, battle positions either side of the King behind the village. He'll be somewhere. At the double now, move, move, move, move, move." Well, that shook us out of our lethargy and as we got to our places, panting, shaking off our packs sticking in the stakes into the ground in front of us, we looked out at the scene in awe, so this was the battle ground they had chosen, this was to be the place of execution.

The road to Calais led straight down across a great wide field of winter wheat about a mile across, Wood of Trame-



The archers in action October 25th, 1415.

court on the right, Wood of Agincourt on the left and way down the road, less than a mile on was the might of France, proudly planted right across our road, in their tents and pavilions and flags and banners flying and the smoke of a thousand campfires going straight up into the rainy sky. And the din from their lines which come to us in gusts over the plain was like from a riotous horde, gathered before some tremendous tournament, filled with excitement and anticipation for the great sport and spectacle that was going to be theirs the next day.

But we needn't have bothered 'cos they certainly weren't bothering about us. No, they were preparing to sleep and to feast before the fun they were to have sometime later on, but not now. Oh, no, they weren't bothered about us now. They'd look after us when the time came. They hadn't even noticed we were there. The

rain continued and the night began to creep on. The trumpet sounded Stand Easy. There wouldn't be any fighting that day. Watches were set and the men off guard moved around listlessly, looking for firewood and food.

Soon it was pitch dark and the French campfires are glowing like orange torches and in front of them you could see the little black silhouettes of men nipping back and forth, back and forth, and in front of them the larger shapes of their warhorses being marched up and down, up and down, by the grooms. Now there's no stabling for a warhorse on a battlefield, so the only way to keep them in trim is to keep them moving, keep them in fettle and that went on all night long, up and down, up and down.

As the night wore on, the sound from their lines got more and more riotous, shouting and laughing, singing, drunken

singing like a bunch of screaming gypsies. The louder they got, the more and more quiet we became, sinking lower and lower into our own thoughts and meditations.

This time last year we were in our own warm beds in Alvediston, nothing to worry about, except the sheep up on top, whether there was enough straw in the barns for the cows and now we was wondering whether we should be alive this time to-morrow and if we were, how many arms and legs and ears chopped off. Feelings of resentment began to grow up inside of us. This isn't what we signed on for. What the hell were we doing here?

I looked up and there he was, moving around among us in a cloak wrapped round him, no covering on his head and the rain pouring down his face. Now he's just speaking very quietly to the men. "Be of good cheer children, sleep while you can, the victory will be ours, to-morrow. God is with us." Words to that effect. And he moved on.

Now it's a very funny thing but when a man says things are going to be all right when you know damn well they're hopeless, you begin to think, well, perhaps he knows more than what we do. I mean how can a man ever look you in the face again if he's told you that things are going to be all right when you've got a damn disaster on your hands?

The Cocks Crow

The first cocks began to crow. Maybe the cocks would be crowing in Alvediston too. And then suddenly, starting us out of our dreadful reverie, our own trumpets, reveille, get up, standto, standto. We was on our feet, jumping about, trying to shake some warmth and strength into our poor cramped limbs and trying to shake out that terrible fear that was sitting like a black toad in our stomachs. The last bit of wine, last bit of bread and you could see the men hugging their longbows to them as if they were their womenfolk, don't let me down to-day, my darling, serve me well to-day, my love. They were the only things that stood between them and death, the longbows.

And then about 9 o'clock the sun broke through and the rain stopped. Cor, it was amazing and then about that time a little solitary horseman broke loose from the

French lines and came trotting very jauntily down the road with 20,000 eyes on him and he draws up in front of the King to tell him to surrender now or face complete annihilation.

Whereupon the King replies, "Let they who serve prepare, for France is mine and I will have it and men will speak of me to the day of doom," and the herald twists his horse round on his hind legs and goes trotting back, smiling, with his arm swinging.

God Be With Us

The King gets on to his own little grey mare and he was riding among us, just waving, saying "God will be with us, God will give us the victory to-day," and he comes very close to us chaps and looks down at us and goes past and then stops, looks back again and he turns his horse and comes back and he bends down; there's young Ned standing, holding a great bundle of arrows in his arms. He says, "Can you climb a tree, Ned?" He remembered his name! "Yes, Sir," Ned says. "Then let me see how quickly you can climb that tree and tell me how many men there are beyond that wood on the left."

Well, Ned goes up that tree like a red squirrel. He looks round there for a bit and then comes slithering and sliding down and lands in front of the King. "Well," he says, "There must be a million men there Sire, but they're only Frenchmen," he says with a little smile. And the King bends down and pats him on the head. That's one of the few times I have ever seen him smile. Coo, well old Ned's going to remember that when he's sitting round the fire as an old man. Anyway, the King goes back to his tent, dismounts from the little mare, gives her a smack on the behind and back she goes into the baggage carts. He puts on a breastplate, arm pieces, no leg armour and a little helmet without the vizor.

Now at this time we saw a great fluttering and moving of flags in the centre squadrons of the French. Well, we could see what they were doing. They were handing all the flags and banners back to the rear. Now, you can't see much through a vizor when it's down over your eyes and with all that flapping in front of your face you couldn't see sweet Frances Atkinson.

Anyway, that's the moment that the King chooses, he marches forward, right out into the fields, turns to face us and lifting up his arms says, "In the name of God Almighty, in the name of Jesus and Mary, in the name of the Holy Trinity, advance bannere in the best time of the year and St. George be this day thyspeed", and the whole Army lets out a great Hooray echoing backwards and forwards, across that little valley and then we started the advance. Here we go, Sir Thomas motioning us forward. "Get forward archers, get forward," so that we were moving forward like a great sickle, the archers like two protecting wings on either side. We moved forward, eight hundred yards, seven hundred, six hundred here we go boys, this is it, this is it, we are going through it, five, four, three, hold it halt, hold it.

Now we could see 'em, now we could distinguish the noblemen by their tabards, we could see 'em and there were their crossbow men already standing there on either side of them on their flanks, their bows ready, ready to shoot and at that moment, the chaps in the middle, the French knights in the middle had lowered their lances, that was a sign that they were going to charge and at that very moment more cavalry came bursting in from either side, anxious to be among the first into the field too, scattering their own crossbow men in front of them.

Shoot, Shoot, Shoot . . .

Then the King raised his sword and dropped it and that was the signal we'd been waiting for. "Shoot, shoot, shoot, shoot, shooooooooot."

In the first minute 75,000 arrows like winged furies went screaming into the leading French. The effect was like a scythe, cutting into a field of standing corn, they just crumpled and fell to the ground in wild confusion barring the way of those coming on behind but then we could see that they weren't coming on, no they were floundering, they were floundering in the morass created by the exercising horses of the night before.

It was incredible, a pattern was beginning to emerge immediately before our eyes. Here they were in the middle, caught in their own trap, while either side the French cavalry coming in were being

compressed into that bottleneck between the two woods and they were being cut down in the field of their own choice. It was amazing. Only minutes before they'd been immaculate, sitting there, fresh and arrogant, glittering in the afternoon sun and now they were twisting and squirming in the mud like a nest of maggots in a decayed carcass. Yes, the starlings were going home to roost all right.

The Trumpet Sounds

And then the trumpet goes, close the ranks, get in closer, then the men at arms go in and start their deadly business of hand to hand fighting and still the arrows go reaching in and the archers behind, standing there in readiness in case we had an attack in the rear, we were ordered to shoot, right up and over the fighting men and the arrows were arcing right over and finding the French coming on from behind and finding those running away in terror. Their leaders and captains had been killed and smitten down by the arrows so now there was no order but complete confusion and we were fighting on.

How long did it go on? When you were thinking about it afterwards, you couldn't tell until in the end we were standing there sobbing for breath, exhausted, our arms hanging limply at the side, no more strength to lift the sword again. And then the trumpet sounds a retreat and we were staggering out through the dead and dying, staggering back to our own lines.

I looked round at our chaps, simple countrymen that I had known as young lads, wouldn't hurt a rabbit, mad men, with staring eyes, mad as a gate, covered in blood, like crazy men out of a madhouse walking back in a dream, couldn't believe it, laughing hysterically. And then we was back in our own lines and the sound and the fury of the battle began to fade.

Then as the sun went down behind the woods, just behind us, that same herald who'd come up in the morning, so cockily, rode up to the King to say the day was his. "What is this castle that stands hard by?" he says to the herald. "Azincourt", the herald replies, "We call this the Field of Agincourt fought on the day of Crispin Crispianus. Let there be sung Non Nobis and Te Deum."

The French couldn't be numbered, they were banked up there in piles in that

bottleneck between those two woods. This was the ground they'd picked to beat us and to crush us into the ground and there they all were seven foot high, piles of dead and dying and they've never been numbered, 10,000, 11,000, nobody ever really knew. The English: Duke of York, Earl of Suffolk, Sir Richard Kettley, Davy Gamm and a few others. We gathered them up, put them into a barn and burnt them.

And then the night began to come on. Some wine had been got from the village and we sat round our fires, drinking it talking stupidly, wildly of what we had seen that day. Dressed in the finery we had stolen from the French, crested helmets of gold and silver, their tabards lying aslant our filthy clothes, tabards with golden suns and stars and rampant lions on, and now and again a man would fall crash into the cinders in dead exhaustion.

It's quiet now, only the pitiful sounds of poor souls dying there out in the darkness under the stars untended. And from the French lines, not a light, not a light to be seen. Then the cocks were crowing again for another dawn, a different dawn, then our own reveille sounds, standto, get ready to march out, as if the King was keen to get out of that place.

A way had been cleared through the French lines on our road to Calais and we marched out, scarcely daring to look at those terrible banks of dead on either side, broken lances, filthy tabards and banners besmirched with blood and filth. Fine faces, fearfully slashed, broken legs and arms, a golden helmet filled with blood. Dead horses, and the cream of French nobility, stripped naked by the scavengers, lying in a dreadful pattern of shattered vanity, a nightmare painting of the day of doom.

And we marched out, 'til the last remnant of the battle field was left behind and the fields looked fresh and clean again. On our road to Calais, filled with wonder, with gratitude for our deliverance, silenced by what we had seen and done, but filled with a sickening despair at the waste of it all.

Now the name of every man who volunteered was written down in a great book for all posterity to read. Dukes and Earls, Knights and Squires, Men at Arms and Lances who joined and sailed and marched and fought and won for Harry and the Leopards of England on the 25th October, 1415—not a single man is entered on that roll as archer. Well, that's how it goes, isn't it?

The French Knights charge.



BRIDGE NOTES

BRIGHTON

The ninth and final Individual Competition of the Brighton Section for the Gover Memorial Cup for 1974 came to its final conclusion on Saturday, 2nd November. The results are as follows:

A. Smith and R. Bickley	70
S. Webster and J. Whitcombe	69
W. Lethbridge and F. Griffie	69
R. Fullard and M. Clements	62
C. Walters and W. Burnett	56
W. Claydon and E. Bedford	52

Best five cumulative results:

R. Fullard	359
M. Clements	352
W. Lethbridge	350
S. Webster	348
F. Griffie	334
R. Bickley	329
A. Dodgson	327
A. Smith	323
W. Scott	321
C. Walters	316
J. Whitcombe	304
W. Burnett	292
F. Rhodes after 4 games	270
R. Goding after 4 games	261
W. Claydon after 4 games	206
E. Bedford after 4 games	203
F. Mathewman after 1 game	56

P. NUYENS,
Secretary

Bridge Drive

On Saturday, 26th October, a bridge drive was held at the Saltdean Community Centre. There were 17 St. Dunstaners present with wives, friends and helpers. Mr. R. Goodlad, acted as Master of Ceremonies and checked score cards.

Prizes were won as follows:

- 1st F. Griffie and Mrs. Gover
- 2nd W. Burnett and Mrs. Negus
- 3rd R. A. Fullard and Mrs. McPherson
- 4th J. Whitcombe and Miss Sturdie

During the afternoon, play was suspended for us to partake of a splendid tea.

At the conclusion of the drive, Alfred Dodgson, on our behalf expressed thanks

to all who were concerned in organising such an enjoyable afternoon. In particular, he mentioned Mrs. Nicholson, Mr. and Mrs. Dickerson who had throughout the year laid on for us such a nice tea whenever we played our individual St. Dunstan's competitions. He also associated these thanks with our many friends who had acted as scorers and deputised for absent St. Dunstaners during those same individual competitions.

R.A.F.

LONDON

The attraction of last month's Bridge Drive, which was held on 12th October, was indicated by the eighteen happy St. Dunstaners, who with their wives and friends, made up nine tables for this game. This number, although somewhat smaller than we had at first anticipated included some competitors who had travelled some distance to be with us on this occasion, Joe Carney from Bourne-mouth, Fred Dickerson from Bristol, Mike Tybinski from Ipswich and John Whitcombe from Eastbourne, just to mention a few.

First on the prize list was Paul Nuyens partnered by Miss Hessian. Miss Hessian is a comparatively new lady partner at the Club, and was delighted and highly appreciative of the prize she had won, a contemporary coffee table made by one of our St. Dunstan's boys. The second prize was taken by Roy Armstrong partnered by Phil Power, one of our loyal friends from the Firestone Bridge Club. Third on our list was Sammy Webster and Miss Molly Byrne. Molly needs no introduction whatsoever, for she has been associated and indeed a good friend of St. Dunstan's and the Bridge Club for many, many years. Winners of the fourth prize were John Whitcombe and John Painter, who incidentally is a son-in-law of our

HARROGATE

by Paul Nuyens

This year there took place the 35th annual visit to Harrogate of members of the St. Dunstan's Bridge Club. Being the only one who attended on 34 occasions, I feel that the origin of this annual trip should be put on record.

Some time during the 1937/38 season, bridge players representing the "Mount Pleasant" G.P.O., played a match against our bridge members. Mount Pleasant won. They were using a new system, the Stern (Austrian) taught to them by their Captain, Alf Field. Those who had the privilege of knowing Harry Gover, better known to all of us as "Charlie Gover", were not surprised that after the match he invited Mr. Field to come along and teach us this new system used by Paul Stern and his team who won the European Championship in 1936. Alf accepted, a Braille copy explaining a simplified version was issued and when the War with its black-outs came along, Alf was escorted by his St. Dunstan's friends to the nearest station via the "Chester Arms". After the invasion of the lowlands and France, the German Luftwaffe raiding first by daylight and later nightly, Alf's G.P.O. department was evacuated early in November 1940 to Harrogate. On arrival he immediately made himself a member of the Oakdale Golf Club and very soon he made friends in his new surroundings, amongst them the late Jack Habisch, the proprietor of the Salisbury Hotel. A hotel, thought Alf, means bedrooms and knowing that most of the hotels had been commandeered, he timidly mentioned to Jack—"Would it be possible to put up a

LONDON—Continued

St. Dunstaner, Harry King from Dunstable.

Mrs. Hilda Chow of our staff canteen kindly presented the prizes.

On behalf of the St. Dunstaners, Bob Evans thanked the guests for a pleasant afternoon's play and the voluntary helpers for the tea provided.

P. NUYENS,
Secretary

few of the lads for a week-end?" "Who are these lads?" asked Jack. "My friends from St. Dunstan's," replied Alf, "who could in this way have a break from the Blitz and an opportunity of a game of bridge in these peaceful surroundings," adding as an afterthought—"Just a stag party and I am sure the lads will pay their way". The effect was electrifying. Jack's reply, typical of him was, "Tell me what week-end and don't ever mention money—it's on t'house." Poor old Jack, now passed on, thereby laid the foundation stone of that Yorkshire hospitality, and doors opened everywhere.

December 1940

An invitation was sent by Alf to "Charlie" and thirteen bridge players set off to Harrogate for a week-end in December, 1940. It was only a week-end, playing bridge in the afternoon and evening, in the hotel lounge. We even had a bridge drive which enabled us to meet the people from Harrogate as well as Alf's new-made friends, amongst whom were Frank Nokes, Johnnie Morrison, Wally Burgiss and a very popular Yorkshire figure, George Nelson, the famous international billiard player.

This visit was such a success that we were invited again the following year for a long week-end which thereafter became a week. When in 1946 the G.P.O. Department and Alf returned to London, Frank Nokes took upon himself the responsibility of arranging our programmes for the future.

Beside the bridge venues, he always used to include one day for a visit to places of interest such as Fountains Abbey, York Cathedral, York Museum, Knaresborough Castle and Terry's Chocolate Factory, or a luncheon party in one of the Inns near Harrogate.

On these excursions Frank had the generous assistance of many friends such as Alf Hopkinson, Norman and Margaret Green, Miss Pauline Webster, now Mrs. Venekamp, Mrs. Angela Beaumont, now Mrs. Hunter Paterson, and latterly Mrs. Memby, who arranged bridge games at their homes. In those early days several

of our members used to go before breakfast to the Hydro to taste the various waters of which the Kissenden was certainly the most pleasant and palatable. After breakfast and the reading of the papers we used to go for walks such as through the Valley Gardens to Birk Crag on to the Harlow Car Hotel or the "Squinting Cat" and even to Knaresborough, keeping the afternoons and evenings for bridge.

As the years went on, the bridge drives and ordinary bridge games were gradually replaced by duplicate matches with members of the Oakdale, Pannal, Knaresborough and Harrogate Golf Clubs. The Starbeck Working Men's Club played a match with us. The landlord of the New Inn, who had lost his son in the War, invited us in the early days for a social evening. Then we had I.C.I. Crimble House Club, I.C.I. Social Club and the St. George's Club, to which in latter years the Bradford Bridge Club was added and this year the newly formed Ripon Bridge Club.

Local Hospitality

From the beginning hospitality was extended to us by the local Bridge Clubs. First by Mrs. Whitsed's, to be followed by Johnnie Morrison's Stray Club, and after Johnnie's sudden death by Major and Mrs. Campbell's. On Major Campbell's retirement, the present Harrogate Bridge Club was formed carrying on the tradition of its predecessors.

In 1964 Frank Nokes, for personal reasons, was obliged to give up his wonderful work, and it almost looked as though our visits would end. A quick telephone call in July to Charlie Gover succeeded in six of our members being willing to go to Harrogate in August and he was fortunate in finding Norman and Margaret Green agreeable to carry on the arrangements for us at the Harrogate end. This remained so until 1971 after which the present Harrogate Bridge Club Secretary, Mrs. Shirley Wrigley, took over.

After Jack Habisch gave up his hotel, we stayed two years at the Clarendon then two years at the Hydro (now the Old Swan) and since 1951 at the Dirlton Hotel. It is essential to mention that during these 35 years we were privileged to have the assistance of so many kind

STUDENT LIBRARIAN

Ben Varley of Marks Tey, near Colchester, Essex, is very proud to announce the success of his eldest grandson, Robert, who has just obtained a B.Sc. Honours Degree in Biology and Social Science at the London University and has now taken a post as Student Librarian at the College Library. Robert is 21 years of age.

15th OUT OF 1,000 STUDENTS

Michael, son of *Basil Backhurst*, St. Brelade, Jersey, Channel Islands, has passed his second year Law Exam. at the Middle Temple. He was 15th out of a thousand students and naturally Mr. and Mrs. Backhurst are very proud of their son's success. Michael is married.

HARROGATE—continued

helpers from London, such as Wally Waller, Jack Callow, Aubrey Ozanne, Bob Willis, Wally Long, Norman Smith and Joe Kennedy. We could certainly not have done without them.

Kiplin Hall

Those St. Dunstaners who went to Little Gaddesden Camp will remember Miss Talbot, who also had a home in Yorkshire, Kiplin Hall. When she knew that some of her St. Dunstan's friends were included in our bridge party, she used to invite them for tea to her place. In latter years she asked as many as would like to come from our party to visit her during our stay. Besides the history of Kiplin Hall and her family these visits ended by her showing us the various items of her antique collection and by sitting down in Nelson's Chair drinking a tot of rum while the old gramophone played "Over the Ocean Waves". Such interesting visits and the rolling fresh air from the Pennines gave us a good start for our forthcoming evening bridge.

I have tried to give a brief synopsis of our annual visits to Harrogate since 1940 and trust that this may be interesting not only to our bridge members but also to readers of the *Review*.

FAMILY NEWS

Silver Weddings

Warm congratulations to *Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Dominic Laverty* of Downpatrick, Co. Down, Northern Ireland, who are pleased to announce they celebrated their Silver Wedding Anniversary on 12th November, 1974.

Many congratulations to *Mr. and Mrs. James Minter* of Ruislip, Middlesex, who celebrated their Silver Wedding Anniversary on 29th October, 1974.

Grandfathers

Congratulations to:

Harry Foster of Farnham, Surrey, is delighted to announce the safe arrival of his fourth grandchild, born to his son and daughter-in-law, Barry and Linda on 25th September, 1974.

Stanley J. Fowler of Beeston, Notts., is pleased to announce the birth of another grand-daughter, Dawn Elizabeth, born to his daughter, Valerie on 17th September, 1974.

Edward Quinn of Peacehaven, Sussex, is delighted to announce the safe arrival of a grand-daughter, Susan Elizabeth, born on 9th October, 1974.

Percy Stubbs of Norwich is delighted to announce the birth of his fourth grandchild, Claire Victoria, born on 1st August, 1974.

Long Life and Happiness to:-

Susan, daughter of *Cecil Wilson* of Brough, East Yorkshire, who married Roland Payne at Harrow Registry Office on 2nd November, 1974. The young couple are making their home in Watford, Herts.

Deaths

We offer our sincere sympathy to:-

Mrs. Mary Davies, wife of *Vic Davies* of Branton, North Devon, whose father, Mr. William Brayley, died recently at the age of 96.

Mrs. Dickerson, wife of *Fred Dickerson* of Bristol, who mourns the death of her brother.

David Hodgson of Hartlepool, Cleveland, who mourns the death of his mother who passed away on 10th August, 1974.

George Shepherd of Reading, Berks., on the death of his mother who died on 9th November, 1974, at the age of 87. Mrs. Shepherd lived in London and had enjoyed good health until the last six months of her life.

Mrs. Smith, wife of *Gilbert Smith*, of Guildford, Surrey, mourns the death of her mother in August at the age of 92.

Emrys Tucker of Dulwich, London, S.E.21, who mourns the death of his mother on 15th May, 1974.

In Memory

It is with great regret we have to record the deaths of the following St. Dunstaners and we offer our deepest sympathy to their widows, families and friends.

Edmund Kirman. Hong Kong Defence Corps.

Edmund Kirman who used to live in Gillingham, Kent, and was for the last few years residing at Pearson House, Brighton, died on 29th October, 1974. He was 88 years of age.

He enlisted in the Hong Kong Defence Corps

in 1941 and was a prisoner-of-war from December 1941 until September 1945. He was discharged in 1946.

He came to St. Dunstan's in 1970 shortly after the death of his wife, and stayed at Ovingdean for the Winter months. Eventually he went to live at Pearson House. He enjoyed good health and he was able to visit his son and family in the North of England fairly frequently. In 1973 he flew to Canada to spend a holiday with his other son who lives in Ontario. It was fortunate that Mr. Kirman's son, Mr. Roy Kirman from Canada, had been able to make a return visit to England and see his father this year when his health had shown cause for some concern.

He leaves his two sons and their families.

John Elvey Lewin. Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

John Elvey Lewin of Portsmouth, Hants., died on 28th October, 1974 at the age of 55 years.

He enlisted in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps in June 1939 and served with them until his discharge in May 1946.

For the next few years he worked as a chef but it was impossible for him to return to this occupation and on joining St. Dunstan's in 1964 he studied Braille and typewriting with the intention of joining a friend in the building business. Unfortunately his health did not permit him to take up any form of business settlement. Mr. Lewin then transferred his activities to homecraft work and eventually settled in lodgings in Portsmouth.

Although Mr. Lewin changed his lodgings from time to time, he preferred to remain in Portsmouth where he made many friends including Mr. and Mrs. Flory, and Mr. and Mrs. R. Brown, with whom he was lodging at the time of his death.

Mr. Lewin was single and had no known close relatives.

Reginald Walden James. 8th Canadian Forces.

Reginald Walden James of Worthing, Sussex, died at his home on 1st November, 1974. He was 81 years of age.

He enlisted in the 8th Canadian Forces in March 1915 and served with them until July, 1917. He came to St. Dunstan's in 1952.

He had already retired when he joined St. Dunstan's and at that time he was living in Dorset with his first wife. He trained in type-writing and Braille and amongst his hobbies he showed an interest in playing the saxophone. Unfortunately his first wife died in 1964 and he moved to Worthing. He married again in 1968.

He continued to enjoy his retirement and was in reasonably good health until last year.

He leaves a widow, Mrs. Edith Patricia James and her daughter, Miss Marilyn Reevesley.

Frank Pusey. Royal Field Artillery.

Frank Pusey of High Wycombe, Bucks, died on 18th October, 1974 at the age of 77 years.

He enlisted in the Royal Field Artillery in 1916

and served with them until 1919 but did not come to St. Dunstan's until 1966 when he had already retired. He was particularly interested in wood turning, gardening and his greenhouse. He enjoyed a game of Bridge and often went to Ovingdean to join Bridge week-ends and he was also a member of the London Bridge Club.

Following the death of his wife in 1968, Mr. Pusey continued to live at home and managed most of his own affairs. His daughter and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. McHardy and his two sons, Norman and Leonard, lived near and visited him daily. He was admitted to hospital on 6th October and died very suddenly twelve days later.

He leaves a daughter and her husband, and his two sons.

Walter James Woodcock. 3rd Essex Regiment

Walter James Woodcock, late of Saffron Walden, Essex, and recently residing at Northgate House, Rottingdean, died there on 6th November, 1974. He was 82 years of age.

He enlisted in the 3rd Essex Regiment in 1915 and was wounded in France in September, 1916. He came to St. Dunstan's in 1917 and trained in poultry farming and mat making. He continued with both these occupations for some years but later concentrated solely upon his poultry farming and was very successful with this. Mrs. Woodcock was a great help to him in running the poultry farm but sadly she passed away in 1934. However, with the help of his youngest daughter he was able to continue with the business for many more years. In 1956, due to failing health, he disposed of all his stock but he retained his interest in his garden and greenhouse.

After an illness in 1972 Walter came to our Brighton home for nursing care. Unfortunately his health never improved sufficiently for him to return to his own home.

He leaves his three daughters, all married.

Brian Worrall-Smith. Royal Field Artillery

Brian Worrall-Smith, of Hythe, Kent, died in a nursing home on the 9th November, 1974, at the age of 77 years.

He was commissioned and served in the First War and then lived for many years in the Far East, working as a physiotherapist there and also later in England. His sight ultimately deteriorated gradually as a result of mustard gas and he came to St. Dunstan's in 1953. He had had poor health for many years and he gave up work in 1957. When his wife also became seriously ill, they both entered the Seabrook Nursing Home, where Mrs. Worrall-Smith died last January. Recently, he had a fall and was admitted to hospital, but returned to the nursing home, where he received every care from the Matron, Mrs. Hamilton, and her husband and staff.

He leaves cousins, Mr. and Mrs. Patrick, who visited him constantly, and other relatives.