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find me  
in your  
local club  
or pub"**

*says "Hoppy"*



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# Hop Leaf

THE HOP LEAF

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G A Z E T T E

THE JOURNAL of H. & G. SIMONDS LIMITED

SPRING · 1956

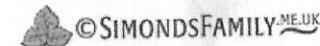
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### FRONT COVER PICTURE

*A table laid for four for a summer's cold lunch. This exhibit with food won the Challenge Trophy awarded by the British Hotels and Restaurants in the Salon Culinaire International at the Hotels and Catering Exhibition, Olympia, 1956.*

Courtesy of the  
Simonds family archives



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## Editorial

### THE CHANGING LAWS

Beer is still the best value for money in this country. It is a healthy beverage hygienically made and containing only the purest and most nourishing of ingredients.

It is a relatively cheap purchase these days because the price of a pint includes several social amenities—a warm fire on a cold evening, a comfortable seat, a place in the oldest of Debating Societies—that of the “local,” a share in the local gossip, a game of darts, cribbage, bar billiards or skittles and above all the opportunity of meeting one’s peers on neutral ground.

The Freedom of the Bar, like the Freedom of the Press, is one of our greatest and most vital traditions but one that has been hampered a great deal in recent years. The Freedom of the Bar is only ours nowadays for a few well defined hours per day but a recent decision affecting Civil Aerodromes and even more recent public discussions seem to point to a possibility of greater freedom being returned to us.

Anybody who has seen a frozen and horrified Frenchman being refused a well needed nip of brandy on a cold miserable Sunday afternoon at London Airport will be delighted to know that he may now have a more heartening welcoming drink than a glass of hot milk or cold mineral.

The Irish and the Scots have a more humane attitude towards Sunday travellers. In these countries one may legally consume a little alcoholic liquor after struggling past the first 3 miles from home. Conservative as the English are in this respect, it is our warm hearted Welsh cousins who are most hard hearted of all! Even if one were to climb to the top of Snowdon on one’s knees on a Sunday there would not be one drop of beer or spirits forthcoming as a reviver—and one would certainly need one after such a foolish feat.

Times change and with the times our drinking habits change. The evil drinking den is a thing of the past, the comfortable dignified and well managed Inns of today are typical of the advances made in every sphere of human activity. The Inns of the future—and we may obtain a glimpse of what the future Inns will be like from some of our recently built houses—will fit well into the improved standards of the Community’s social life.

And as times change the laws change—tolerance walks hand in hand with progress.

### G.B.E. FOR GENERAL SIR MILES DEMPSEY

Our Chairman, General Sir Miles Dempsey, K.C.B., D.S.O., M.C., was made a Knight Grand Cross of the British Empire (Military Division) in the New Year’s Honours.

## Stocktaking Department

Almost exactly three years ago, in April, 1953, our own Stocktaking Department was formed and by a coincidence, in that same eventful year for stocktakers, their professional association, the Association of Licensed Trade Stocktakers, came into being. It is an interesting fact that the Manager of the Department, Mr. N. J. Clements, and his entire staff of Stocktaker-Auditors, with the exception of Mr. Organ, the trainee, who does not yet qualify for membership, are all members of the Association. Mr. Clements is also a Council Member and the Association’s South-East Area Secretary.

The Headquarters of the Association are established at Burton-on-Trent, geographically and otherwise an appropriate centre for a body connected so closely with the brewery business.

A year later Mr. E. Duncan Simonds, who had made yet another link between us and the Association by becoming its President, defined very adequately the essential qualities of a member of this profession in his Presidential Address for the Association’s First Annual General Meeting.

“The qualities required in a good stocktaker,” said Mr. Duncan Simonds, “are at least as exacting as those required in most other professions, and the work is only for those who are strong-minded and self-disciplined.

“Every stocktaker must, above all things, be possessed of absolute integrity, for it is on the assumption of this integrity that the whole delicate structure of control is built up. And do not forget that this

*Manager of the Stocktaking Department, Mr. Norman J. Clements, with the “backroom girls,” the three charming young ladies whose job it is to grapple with the never-ending stream of facts and figures which flow in from the ten Stocktaker Auditors.*

*Mr. Clements discusses a query with Comptometer Operator Miss Audrey Partridge (left). Miss Joan Hopkins (right), also a Comptometer Operator, is busy at her machine; whilst in the background Miss Rhoda Dixon is concentrating on yet more figures.*





*Applying the hydrometer test to a gin sample, Mr. James R. Edwards has before him on the counter a book of tables and a thermometer. Changes of temperature necessitate small adjustments, which are calculated from the tables in carrying out this test.*

integrity is a two-way affair ; not only does the employer rely on it to ensure the proper control of his business, but Managers and Staff of Licensed Houses rely on it equally, in order to protect their own position from false claims and charges. Many a man's whole career may rest on the absolute integrity of the gentleman who comes to take the stock.

“ The second important qualification is accuracy, and in this connection I would say no more than that accuracy, like justice, must not only be done, but be seen to be done. Nothing creates more confidence than to observe that the stocktaker sets about his job with obviously meticulous care and accuracy.

“ Many other qualities are required for your profession and not least of them a heightened power of observation and perception. I will, however, mention only one more quality, and one which tends to be overlooked—I refer to

humanity. With all this emphasis on honesty and accuracy and objectivity there is a risk that a stocktaker may come to regard himself as a machine, and, worse still, may regard the Managers and Staffs of Hotels as machines too. This is definitely not so ; we are all of us, whatever our jobs, first and foremost human beings, subject to the weakness and weariness which from time to time afflict the human mind and body. Never forget this and always make allowances for the difficulties of whatever situation may prevail when you enter a house to take its stock.

“ In my own business I have endeavoured to set an example by creating an entirely separate Stocktaking Department, in the charge of one who is himself a stocktaker and a Member of your Committee. I believe that this has heightened the respect in which the duties of the Department are held by other Departments who require their services. I trust that as time

goes on, and your reputation grows, other businesses may adopt the same procedure. It all helps to improve the status and repute of your profession.

“ I would only conclude by saying that the duties of a stocktaker must always be performed without fear or favour, bias or sentiment. You should remain dignified, aloof, and ever watchful for the depredations to which our Trade is so unfortunately subject.”

Of course there were stocktakers in our service before the advent of a department formed to undertake this work exclusively, but previously they were on the staff of the department at whose Establishments they carried out their work—the Arthur Cooper off licences and the hotels controlled by our Hotels Department.

Additionally, outside firms of stocktakers were employed in some of the more remote areas of our territory, including Devon and South Wales.

The nucleus of staff for the new Department were the transferees :—from our Hotels Department—Mr. Clements himself, Mr. Ambler, Mr. Rowland, Mr. Ashton and Mr. Pooley, and from Arthur Coopers Mr. Field.

Between them they had 82 establishments and managed houses, hotels and Arthur Cooper shops to attend to.

Since that time the number of establishments has grown and now numbers 135—the Arthur Cooper shops alone have increased from 20 to 36 and almost week by week further additions are made to the list.

To keep pace with the work the staff has also increased. Mr. Edwards, Mr. Farley, Mr. Couch previously at the

Tamar Brewery, Mr. Middlemiss previously at the Octagon Brewery and Mr. Organ from the Cashier's Department, have swelled the ranks of the Stocktaker-Auditors.

The outside staff are at the moment exactly divided with five of them operating directly from the Department's headquarters in Castle Street, Reading, and the other five based in centres from which they can conveniently cover the more distant areas of our territory, two at Plymouth and one each at Bristol, Cardiff and in South Devon at Paignton.

At intervals of never more than a month every one of the 135 establishments under their supervision receives a routine visit and in addition holidays, change of

*More tools of the stocktaking profession, a dipstick and a ready-reckoner, are on the shelf in front of Mr. Donald L. Ambler, Deputy to Mr. Clements, as he uses his gauge to measure the quantity of spirit remaining in the bottle on the shelf, whilst gripping his “board” and pen in his left hand.*





*Auditing, particularly in the Hotel Establishments forms, as might be expected from their official designation, a substantial part of the duties of the Stocktaker-Auditor.*

*Mr. Leslie G. Field and Mrs. R. J. Bunn, Manageress, of "The Ship Hotel," Reading, look through the accounts.*

management and occasional emergencies, such as sickness where the services of a relief manager are required mean yet more visits, sometimes requiring to be arranged at very short notice.

To Mr. Clements as Manager of the Department falls the task of dovetailing the movements of his staff and occasionally, when an emergency arises, of reshuffling his carefully made plans.

*The latest recruit to the ranks of the Stocktaker-Auditors, Trainee Mr. Kenneth S. Organ (right) records the quantity in the cask which is being dipped by Mr. Raymond G. Rowland.*



*Mr. S. R. Couch.*



*Mr. D. S. Middlemiss.*



*Mr. E. T. Farley.*

A typical day for a stocktaker, at Reading or away, may start with a journey of thirty miles or more, involving leaving home at 7.30 a.m. or earlier. At a hotel a substantial part of his work will involve the auditing of the books and checking food stocks as well as liquor stocks in several bars and in the cellars.

Ledgers, cash books, bank paying-in books, invoice and excise books and staff national insurance cards all are given careful attention. In the stocktaking the quantities in stock of spirits, wines, beers, bottled and in casks, mineral waters and soft drinks are recorded on the rough sheets from which they are later transferred to the stock books, of which there is a set for each house.

By contrast little auditing is involved if the premises are those of a managed public house where the book-keeping requirements are kept to a minimum. With the smaller of such houses it is sometimes possible, where two of them are conveniently close together, for both to be visited on the same day.

After stocktaking has taken place the stockbooks are sent to Reading where, with the aid of their remarkable accounting machines, the comptometer operators quickly calculate the final figures which are the object of the operation.

*Five members of the Department's Staff who work in the outlying areas of our territory:—*

*Messrs. Stewart R. Couch and David S. Middlemiss from Plymouth who cover an area extending to Penzance, Mr. Eric T. Farley from Paignton, Mr. James Ashton, from Bristol and Mr. George Pooley in South Wales.*



*Mr. J. Ashton.*



*Mr. G. Pooley.*

A final check on the accuracy, it is rarely otherwise, of the figures and statistics which have been so assiduously collected and compiled is made by Mr. Clements, who has another claim to fame in that he acts in an advisory capacity regarding the Catering Wages Act, before passing them on to the departmental managements concerned.

Such a brief description of a day in the working life of a Stocktaker-Auditor is necessarily incomplete. No mention is made at all of the many occasions when

they readily lend a very welcome hand to a weary and worried management who has greeted his arrival with a plaintive plea concerning a mysterious discrepancy in the accounts. Invariably the mystery is soon solved which no doubt accounts for the fact that a welcome cup of tea and a friendly greeting always await "the man with the bag of tricks," a reference to the brown leather bag which he carries and which is almost the badge of office of the Stocktaker-Auditor.



Mr. Fred Emney, the comedian, supervising the measuring of the huge pile of pennies at the "Ferry Arms," Shoreham. It amounted to £60, which was handed over to the National Spastics Society. Among those who attended the ceremony were Col. H. G. Henman and Col. E. T. Todd, of the National Spastics Society, Councillor J. W. Bayley, J.P., Chairman of the Shoreham Town Council, and Mr. G. E. Ashdown, representing our firm. Our licensee, Mrs. H. L. M. Laker, has lived at the "Ferry Arms" for fifty years.



## Retirement of Captain A. S. Drewe

### Several Presentations

Captain A. S. Drewe, M.C., J.P., Chief Surveyor, and one of the best-known and most highly respected members of the firm's staff, retired on 31st December last. Following his retirement came a series of presentations, including one from the Directors of some exquisite china ornaments; a silver ash-tray from the Area Surveyors on which all their signatures were engraved; a "Parker 51" pen and pencil from the Clerks of Works and Office Staff, and, finally, a 196 years' old bow china candlestick with cockerel and encrusted flowers scroll base from the employees of the whole of the combine.

### The Captain's Career

Before World War I, Captain Drewe studied and qualified and became a Lecturer at what is now Reading University, but then was the University College of Oxford University.

Captain A. S. Drewe, M.C., J.P., receiving the antique china candlestick from Mr. J. D. Richardson, the Secretary of the Company.



He joined the Army Reserve in 1913 as 2nd Lieutenant and was posted to the 3rd Battalion The Leicestershire Regiment on the outbreak of war in August, 1914. He saw service in Gallipoli, Egypt and France throughout World War I and his record is one of which he is rightly proud, having gained the Military Cross in France.

He joined the South Berks. Brewery Company in 1920. A year later the Company with its 150 houses was taken over by H. & G. Simonds, Ltd., with approximately 300 houses.

At the South Berks. Brewery he looked after transport, bottling and properties, and on joining H. & G. Simonds, Ltd. was appointed to look after the South Berks. Brewery properties. He was placed in the Estates Department under Mr. Lindars.

Shortly afterwards he took over control of Simonds' properties, and the management of the Building Department, covering the South Berks. Brewery and H. & G. Simonds Ltd. at Reading, and the Tamar Brewery at Devonport.

In 1925 he became Manager of the Surveyors' Department.

Then the firm took over Mackesons, of Hythe, and the work of the Department spread from Kent to Devon, and the Home Counties, with branches at Ludgershall, Oxford, Slough, Woking, Brighton and Portsmouth.

Captain Drewe's first big undertaking for the Brewery was to remove the Branch Stores at the Railway Arches,

Waterloo, and make ready and alter for bottling Messrs. Woodwards Plough Brewery, which we had acquired. This was in preparation for the 1925 Wembley Exhibition. It entailed alterations and considerable extensions to the loading stage and Bottling Hall. The whole of the drainage to the Brewery had to be laid, including asphalt floors. Fire bricks had to be made with fire doors to comply with L.C.C. regulations, and also the re-wiring of the whole of the Brewery, and the forming of a Transformer Station in one of the cellars.

#### Further Acquisitions

This was followed by extensions to stores for bottling at Slough, Ludgershall, Woking, Brighton and Portsmouth, and the removal of the stores from Queen Street to Osney Lane, High Street, Oxford, also the building of a big extension to the Reading Bottling Stores, which necessitated the filling-in of the Old Mill tail from the South Berks Brewery, and the large sunken garden, with many watercourses.

There then followed, almost immediately, the acquisition of further land adjoining the Tamar Brewery at Devonport, and the building of the large Bottling Stores in that district. The alterations and improvements to these stores necessitated the installation of new machinery, which came under the Surveyors' Department.

Then came additions to our Public Houses—the Hythe Brewery being sold in 1929, and the purchase of Ashbys, of Staines, which included the Wheelers of Wycombe Brewery.

Other undertakings acquired with more houses included Messrs. Hunts Cyder Factory at Crabbs Park, Paignton, Messrs. Stiles, of Bridgend, Messrs. Rogers, of Bristol, Messrs. Marsh, of Blandford, a

small Brewery and Houses in Dorset; Messrs. Hunts Brewery, of Brixham, The Cirencester Brewery, The North Wilts Brewery at Swindon, Messrs. Mays, of Basingstoke, Blundells Brewery, Kingsbridge, Devon; Phillips, of Newport, and Pools, of Penzance—the latest acquisition being the Octagon Brewery at Plymouth.

Every new acquisition added, of course, to the responsibilities of Captain Drewe's Department. His Department was also responsible for building and re-building some 50-60 new houses between 1922 and 1939.

#### A.R.P. and ACK-ACK

He was also responsible for the first removal of a licence from the interior of a town, namely, "The Bell," Church Street, by St. Giles, to "The Bell," Oxford Road, in the Norcot Estate; and also, in collaboration with Mr. McIntyre, the Manager of the Tamar Branch, for the purchase of the "Camel's Head" in the Plymouth area. Owing to the increased trade that we were enjoying in the late twenties and early thirties, two big major operations were performed—the raising of the roofs of the Bottling Stores at Reading and Tamar, in one operation—the roof being half up to its new position at Tamar Brewery when it was hit by a South-westerly gale.

Before and during the War, he acted as Controller, and devised a scheme for Air Raid Precautions and fire-watching throughout the Brewery, and also devised and carried out, under Civil Defence, the erection of strong posts in and around the town of Reading, and was Chairman of the Spotters' Club in Reading, and Second-in-command of the ACK-ACK Rocket Battery. In 1946 he was made a J.P.



WINDSOR CASTLE

19th December, 1955.

Dear Sir,

On behalf of the Committee of the Royal Household Social Club, Windsor Castle, and myself, I would like to extend to Mr. & Mrs. Boon of the Tessian Continental Restaurant and yourself, our sincere thanks and appreciation for the splendid buffet provided on the occasion of the Staff Christmas Ball, held in the Waterloo Chamber, Windsor Castle, on Friday, 16th December, 1955.

The quality of the food was excellent and the service splendid, and remarked upon in glowing terms on all sides, I would also like to add that Her Majesty commented on the excellence of the Buffet. Would you also convey a word of thanks to the members of the Staff.  
Thanking you.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

*W. J. Saleman*

Hon. Secretary, Royal Household Social Club, Windsor Castle.

F. W. Freeman, Esq.,  
Home Trade Manager,  
H. & G. Simonds, Ltd.,  
The Brewery,  
READING.

## A Royal Comment

The above letter was received by Mr. Freeman after the Staff Christmas Ball at Windsor Castle.

\* \* \*

The Ball which was organised by the Royal Household Social Club took place in the Waterloo Chamber, Windsor Castle, on Friday, 16th December. The Queen, The Duke of Edinburgh, the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret were present, together with over 400 guests.

The Catering was carried out by Mr. J. Boon, Proprietor of the Tessian Continental Restaurant, High Wycombe, who is also tenant of our "Roundabout"

there, with the co-operation of Mr. F. W. Freeman (Home Trade Manager) and of our Catering Department.

Mr. and Mrs. Boon, together with Mr. and Mrs. Freeman, were presented to Her Majesty. The evening was a complete success, the Cabaret which was presented by Peter Brough included the following Artistes, Alma Cogan, Jimmy Edwards, Frank Muir, Ronnie Hilton, Rob Murray and Ken Platt, and was thoroughly enjoyed by everybody; dancing went on to 2 a.m. to Tommy Kinsman and his band.

The Royal Party left at 1 a.m. after dancing with members of the Royal Household Staff and Artistes.



The winning entry under the gaze of the Judges. Left to right : Major Sidwell, late Catering Manager of the House of Commons, Sir Bracewell Smith, Chairman of the Exhibition, another Judge and Lord Woolton.

## Hotel and Catering Exhibition Successes

Success crowned the efforts of three of our Establishments who entered exhibits in the Salon Culinaire International at the Hotels and Catering Exhibition, Olympia, 1956.

The "Pack Horse Hotel," Staines, won the British Hotels and Restaurants Association Challenge Trophy ; the

"Grapes Tavern," Windsor, won the Silver Medal in the same Class, and Mr. W. J. Poulter, Chef at "The Grosvenor House," Caversham, was highly commended for his exhibit of a decorated salmon trout.

The exhibits were as near perfection as could be achieved by any establishment,

even including the most famous hotels in London. A great deal of time and the utmost care had to be given to the preparation and presentation of the exhibits. There was also the problem of transferring the equipment and carefully prepared dishes to London in good time for judging and most of the success can be attributed to the excellent teamwork inspired by Mr Hastings, the assistance given by the Stores staff, the enthusiasm of the Managements and the loyal co-operation of the Chefs.

### Fish and Ships

Chef Dennis Morgan, of "The Pack-horse," who had his initial training at the Westminster Hotel School and Mr. and Mrs. Nias, the Manager and Manageress, were mainly responsible for the entry which won the Challenge Trophy. The exhibit was a completely laid out table for four covers for a cold lunch in the summer.



Mr Poulter entered a decorated salmon trout set between a Viking ship and an Elizabethan galleon in carved truffle—each of these took over three hours to prepare. Over sixty entries were received in this class from all over the Continent and Mr Poulter deserves every congratulation for his success.

We were the only Brewery Company putting up exhibits in connection with its own managed Hotels and Restaurants.

The winning table as it was laid—the model lamb in the centre is made out of butter.



## New Bottling Plant at Newport

General Sir Miles C. Dempsey pressed a button and set in motion machinery in the new bottling plant of our brewery in Dock Street, Newport.

The plant has a capacity for 45,000 bottles a day.

The beer is received into eight tanks, each with a capacity of 15,264 pints and is carbonised, passed through a filter into a beer tank, from which it is fed to the bottling tank.

With General Dempsey were General Sir Charles Allfrey, local director, Mr. E.

Duncan Simonds and Mr. R. B. St. John Quarry, joint managing directors, Mr. R. M. Downes, director and head brewer, Mr. A. Norman Phillips, Mr. F. E. R. Phipps, head brewer, Newport, Mr. R. E. Southall, chief architect, and Mr. W. J. Watkins, chief engineer, Reading.

With the Deputy Mayor were Alderman R. S. Tyack, Alderman A. F. Dolman, Councillor H. H. Jones, the Town Clerk, Mr. J. G. Iles, the Deputy Town Clerk, Mr. J. R. Long, Borough Engineer, Mr. Johnson Blackett, Chief Constable, Mr. F. H. Smeed, Lieutenant-Colonel R. C. L. Thomas and Mr. Tom Parry.

*General Dempsey points out a factor of the new plant to Councillor Percy Jones, Deputy Mayor of Newport, and other guests after the opening ceremony.*



## Arthur Cooper Managers



*When a group of Arthur Cooper Managers visited Reading for a Conference recently they took part in tasting some of the Company's wines.*

*A Conference of Arthur Cooper Managers also took place at Bristol where these pictures were taken.*



## *Our people and places* THE HIGH WYCOMBE AREA

High Wycombe, called after the River Wye which runs through it, is an ancient town now the centre of two industries—paper manufacture and chair-making. The latter grew there because of the area's prolific and excellent beech forests.

*The haunted staircase of the "George and Dragon," West Wycombe, holds no terrors for Mrs. Pamela Ives, wife of the licensee.*

Since 1930 our Firm has taken a great interest in the town. We originally owned 55 houses there, but by careful planning with the full support of the local Licensing Bench, the number has been reduced to 43. In all, the Company has spent £335,000 on buildings in the town and the effect on local industries and on employment has been considerable.

Three miles towards Oxford is the village of West Wycombe, rightly acclaimed as one of the most picturesque survivals of an older and more gracious England. It stands today as it stood 200 years ago—Elizabethan buildings side by side with shuttered Queen Anne houses and Georgian Inns. The unique oval sign, of the "George and Dragon," of solid lead depicting the slaying of the Dragon by England's Patron Saint, dominates the historic street as it has done since 1726.

### ***Footsteps in the Night.***

This magnificent old coaching Inn has become a house well worth visiting under the capable hands of Mr. and Mrs. K. Ives, who have prepared excellent hotel accommodation and a first class snack bar there. Mr. Ives, previously an Engineer, is rightly proud of the great solid oak beams—one of them must be the longest in England, over 30 feet and 12 inches square—which weave through the house.

Another noteworthy feature of this old Inn is the fact that it boasts two ghosts. One a well authenticated spectre alleged to have been murdered there in the "good old days," and the other a "white lady" whose earthbound spirit appears from time to time in the grounds of the Inn.

The interior haunting takes the form of footsteps which come down the stairs night after night. Some years ago a party of men decided to investigate this—they waited in the nearby bar until the footsteps reached the bottom of the stairs. Then they threw the door open and rushed out to see—nothing! They carried out the same procedure on the following night and again heard the footsteps but saw nothing—they left firmly convinced of the authenticity of the ghostly footsteps. It is, however, a most harmless haunting and since Mr. Ives has installed carpets on the staircase the footsteps, if they still exist, are completely muffled!

### ***The Hell-Fire Club.***

A few yards along the street is another

*The "George and Dragon," showing its unique sign. Mr. Ives is carrying in logs for the bar fires.*





Mr. J. Barry tends the fire in his sixteenth century fireplace under Mrs. Barry's supervision.

ancient and attractive hostelry, "The Swan," where Mr. and Mrs. J. Barry are Host and Hostess. Mrs. Barry has lived in the house for 45 years and in her own words "has loved every minute of it." Her earliest and happiest memories are connected with the cleaning and polishing of glasses, a task which she still loves. Another happy chore for Mrs. Barry is the preparation of her daily luncheons which have a wide and well deserved reputation for succulence and generous portions. Her lunch trade is a very regular one ; in fact, one couple lunches with her every day of the year—on Good Fridays and Christmas Day, when Mrs. Barry does not normally cater for lunches, she invites the couple to have lunch with the family !

The famous Dashwood Estate which attracts huge numbers of visitors during

Mr. and Mrs. D. Pennock, of the "Friend at Hand."



the year, helps trade at the "Swan" considerably. There is the great Golden Ball, the Hell Fire caves where a group of eighteenth century rakes used to hold orgies and rituals of an indescribable nature—they were known as the Hell Fire Club—and the great Mausoleum are some of the interesting places nearby.

The showpiece of the "Swan" is the beautiful, well-preserved and—in cold



The right-of-way staircase.

weather—well-supplied huge fireplace in the lounge. Mr. Barry, who was a Regimental Sergeant Major in the recent war—he was the first to join up from the village—is Chairman of the High Wycombe and District Licensed Victuallers Association.

#### The "Friend at Hand."

Nestling under West Wycombe station is the "Friend at Hand." This warm, compact house is unique in that it is the only licensed house in Great Britain

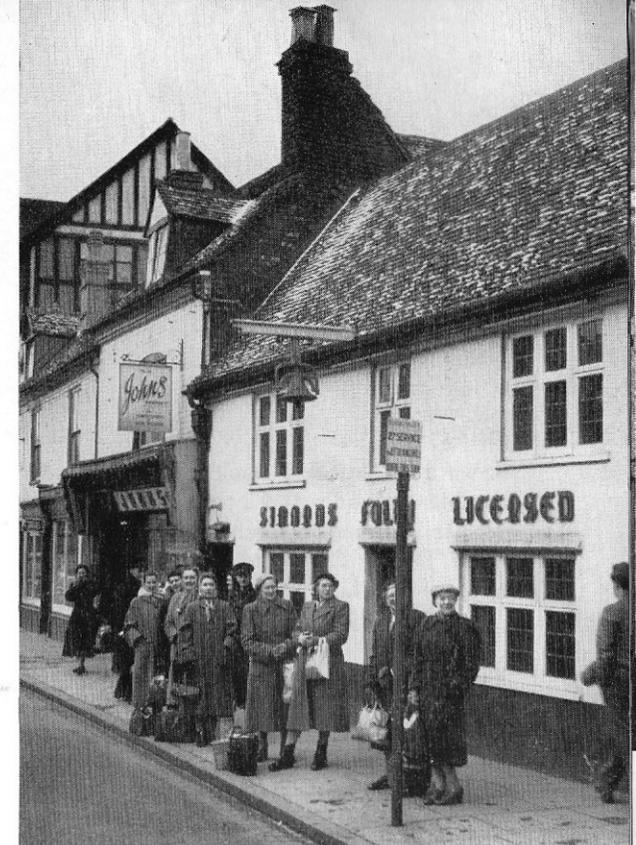
through which British Railways have a right of way. The entrance at road level leads to a staircase which comes out at the level of the station platform. Passengers to the station have the right to use this staircase during opening hours—at one time they could use it at all hours. It is a lead covered stairs and it is a moot point whether a person using it as a means of getting to the station is in fact on licensed premises. It has its advantages in that nobody can ever be sure that a person entering the "Friend at Hand" is going for a drink or going for a train !

Mr. and Mrs. D. Pennock, who have been there for close on two years, take every effort to make the pleasant name of the Inn truly descriptive also of its activities. A committee of four, which includes customers and Mr. Pennock, administer a special Trust Fund formed by the regulars of the House to assist unfortunate and needy people. The fund makes grants of about £5 to anybody in dire distress—the money is raised by various competitions run in the bars throughout the year.

"The Bell" is a small frontage house in one of the busiest streets of the town of High Wycombe itself. Its frontage is, however, deceptive. This four hundred years old Inn, its blackened beams contrasting strangely with the array of Zulu shields which decorate the walls, stretches back across the depth of several rooms and a cellar. There are two large bars each end of the house with the cellar on the same level in between them. In fact the Landlord, Mr. H. Wicks, said it was more like two separate inns.

#### The "Talking" Dog.

A finely executed head of Disraeli, one time Prime Minister of England, who subsequently took the title of Lord Beaconsfield, stares benignly down on the



"The Bell."

customers as they enter the "Beaconsfield Arms" on the outskirts of the town. He used to live in the neighbourhood and it is confidently claimed that he used it on a few occasions. It is a house well worthy of such a patron, welcoming and warming—it was a bitterly cold day when we visited it—and it has also acquired a wide and excellent reputation for the lusciousness of the Cornish pasties and

Mr. and Mrs. Cathery having a chat with Rex.



sausage rolls which are a speciality of the Landlord's wife, Mrs. S. Cathery. Mr. Cathery, who used to work with the Ministry of Food before he entered the licensing business, and Mrs. Cathery, have been there for nearly seven years. Another "personality" of the house is Rex, a collie. Rex, during opening hours, is a friendly dog who actually tries very hard to speak to the customers. A few pleasant words to him and he will sit down and "speak" back in a low pitched rumble which is the nearest he can yet get to human speech—during closing hours he is a different dog, who does not hesitate to show marked disapproval of

any unauthorised guests on the premises.

### **The Flint House.**

One of the most attractive of our houses anywhere is the "Flint Cottage" opposite High Wycombe station. Its outside walls are built of flint stones which were originally part of an ancient Abbey. Inside, its comfortable bars and recently altered lounge are well in keeping with its attractive exterior.

"The Iron Duke" does not owe its name to any famed battleship or historical character. Originally it was little more than an iron hut built on the corner of Duke Street, and thus it obtained its

*"The Flint Cottage" is one of our most attractive houses.*



*Sergeant R. Martin, of the American Air Force, chatting with the landlord of the "Flint Cottage," Mr. S. Page.*



*Mr. M. Middleton, the landlord, enjoys life at the "Iron Duke."*

name. That was many years ago. Today it is a fine modern house with large, well laid out bars. It draws its customers from the locality where the great majority of people are engaged in the typical High Wycombe industries—furniture making, light engineering or "in the mills." The landlord and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. M. Middleton, moved to the "Iron Duke" about four years ago from the "Crown" at Basildon.

The "Gordon Arms," in Gordon Road, is a finely built, impressive house dominating a busy cross roads. Erected just sixty years ago, it can be well described as a "family house" which serves as the social centre of a pleasant residential district. Its lawns and outdoor seats are well patronised in the warm summer evenings by family parties, and its cosy bars are well attended when the wintry "nip" comes into the air. Mr. C. Beck, the landlord, who was previously an engineer, has been in the house for seven years.

### **The Red River.**

The "King George V" Hotel is, according to a leaflet prepared by its Host and Hostess, Mr. Albert and Mrs. Lily Wood, exactly 3,628½ miles from New York; it is also 27 miles from Oxford and precisely the same distance from London. It is the first public house

one meets on the way into the town coming from London and its excellent car park and the attractive appearance of the Inn draw a steady and considerable coach and car trade. It is a house where every coach party is made welcome—the car park can accommodate twelve coaches at a time—and where sustenance from a quick snack to a full lunch is quickly available. The "George V" is definitely a "pint" house—in an era when one hears that we are, as a nation, more

*The "Gordon Arms."*





*The pleasant view of the "King George V" Hotel from across the colourful brook.*

inclined towards half-pints it is refreshing to see an array of over 100 pint tankards in a bar with but two "halves" looking almost shy and effeminate.

Another unique but rather sad feature of this Inn is its chameleon-like river which almost laps the buttresses. Once, it was a famous trout stream. Now the few fish that live in it must be very confused, poor fish indeed! When we were there the stream was red—like tomato sauce; on other days it is emerald green; it can also be royal blue, deep purple and even black. On Sundays it is usually its normal colour. All these pigment changes are due to the waste materials from the nearby paper mills.

#### **The A40 Houses.**

Not far away in a quiet side street is "The Swan," tenanted by Mr. B. Waters, a Yorkshireman. A popular house with a popular landlord. The "Swan" caters especially for the local trade. Its splendid

Club room is the meeting place for the various local organisations and at weekends when the Club room becomes the music room it possesses all the good fellowship, melody and cheerfulness of the Continental beer cellar.

Another prepossessing house on the main road (the A.40) is the "Red Lion," the tenant of which is Mrs. V. Ellis, who has been there seventeen years. Incidentally, she has but recently returned from a visit to her daughter in Nairobi, where she had to carry a gun owing to the Mau Mau activities. A house of wide, roomy bars, it caters for local and passing trade, providing every possible amenity including wireless and T.V.

One of the personalities of the "Red Lion" is Mr. H. F. Hutton, who has known the house since 1906, when it was called the "Cock Inn." Mr. Hutton's visits to the house are heralded in a most unlikely way—his pet pigeon walks into the bar a few minutes before Mr. Hutton arrives. "Pijjy," as he is known, accompanies Mr. Hutton everywhere—flying

*Mr. B. Waters, of "The Swan," and a customer.*



backwards and forwards across the road in front of him. Once in the Inn, "Pijjy" is content to sit on Mr. Hutton's head or shoulder until the visit is finished.

The "Rifle Butts" nearby, also on the main road, owes its name to the fact that in the days of the County volunteer regiments the small arms used to be stored in its bars, and it was within easy distance of rifle ranges. Mr. B. Johnson, the licensee, who was born and bred in the town, is busy all the year round. Across the road from the Inn are the extensive playing grounds which attract crowds of athletes and spectators during every season of the year. An interesting photograph in the bar of this house is of Mrs. Johnson's grandfather in hunting pink, who was what was known as a Running Huntsman. He hunted with many well known personalities of the past, including the late King Edward VII.

Another main road house nearby is the "Nag's Head," which also has close connections with the volunteer levies of the past—the horses of the Buckinghamshire Hussars used to be quartered in its stables and the men used to eat there. At first glance the "Nag's Head" looks more like a dwelling house than an Inn, but its cosy and well patronised bars prove that nobody is deceived. An interesting and unusual feature of this house is its spacious and high ceilinged Club room—more of a hall, in fact—which stretches back from the Inn proper. It is easily the largest and most useful Club room in or near the town. Mr. C. Carter is the licensee.

#### **A Unique Bar.**

The "Coach and Horses," Easton Street, became an Inn in 1734. Since that date it has had but five tenants. The present landlord, Mr. L. Dent, was himself born and bred in the house. The



*Mrs. V. Ellis, of the "Red Lion," chatting with Mr. H. F. Hutton.*



*Mr. B. Johnson behind the bar of the "Rifle Butts."*

*"The Nag's Head."*





The bar of the "Coach and Horses," showing its remarkable counter. The landlord, Mr. L. Dent, is on the right, behind the bar.

tenants before that took over in 1846. Apart from its age and its constant bustle, the great feature of the Inn is its unique bar—now probably the only one of its kind left in the world. The top of the long bar is covered with ancient and excellently preserved pewter which was

Mr. A. Wallington, of the "Three Tuns," preparing some of his famous whisky punch.



installed in 1894. The high silver content of the pewter gives it a great intrinsic value but apart from this its attractiveness enhances the appearance of the bar enormously. This is a very busy house, famous also for the excellence and generosity of its lunches. The house is the headquarters of several local organisations.

Right in the centre of the busy town is the Fourteenth Century Inn, the "Three Tuns," where Mr. A. Wallington has been the landlord for the past nine years. This old coaching Inn preserves a great deal of its ancient charm, and an unusual but very effective heating system which also serves, as our picture shows, as a useful method of keeping the kettle warm for the whisky punch—a favourite cold weather local beverage. One of the Inn's most famous visitors in the past was Queen Anne—whose demise is so well known.

"The Antelope," where Mrs. C. Gibbs is the Licensee, is tucked away in Church

Mr. Gibbs in the tiny bar of the ancient "Antelope."

Square—the historic centre of High Wycombe. This very attractive house is also one which has changed little in the passing years—barely twenty-five years ago the customers used to move to the side of the bar to allow the horses which were stabled there to pass through to the stables. A most interesting link with military history is the fact that it was in this house that the famous Military College of Sandhurst is reputed to have been founded. General Le Marchant, the Founder, was billeted here in the first place with six others and from there he set up the first College at Marlow. Subsequently it was moved to Sandhurst where it still flourishes.



## CHANNEL ISLANDERS RETURN VISIT

Last June a party from "The Feathers Hotel," Basingstoke, chartered a plane and flew to Jersey where they were welcomed by "The Wimbledon Hotel," of Grouville, and spent eleven pleasant hours on the Island.

Last November a party of twenty organised by "The Wimbledon's" landlord, Mr. Dickie Goodchild, paid a return visit.

When "The Feathers" went to Jersey they lost the darts match between the two hotels but this time they avenged their defeat, drawing the pairs and winning the foursomes.

The Jersey party arrived at Eastleigh airport in the morning, made a tour of Southampton docks, and a coach tour of the New Forest before reaching Basingstoke for tea. Then came the all important darts match and social evening at "The Feathers." The party returned by the midnight boat from Southampton.



Mr. Fred Brett, landlord of "The Feathers," said that his guests had greatly enjoyed their trip.

### "THE MUSSEL INN"

An interesting link with the past is maintained by the recent change of name of "The New Inn," Down Thomas, near Plymouth, to "The Mussel Inn."

In the olden days there were great Mussel Fisheries near the Inn and huge quantities of these were cooked at the Inn. The residents of the house packed the shells under the floors as insulation for sound and warmth.

The shells were revealed during recent alterations, in some places there were as many as three floors, one on top of the other, with mussel shells packed between.

## Nature Notes

(BY C.H.P.)

### *Aerial Evolutions of the Pee-wit*

In the early morning you may often see hundreds of pee-wits suddenly rise from the meadow where they have been roosting and make off in decisive fashion for their feeding grounds. Perhaps they break up into large companies but, the remarkable thing about this morning flight is the fact that they have some very definite end in view. There is no hesitation at all about it. One company wings its way, perhaps to the right and the other to the left and off they go! Have they discussed the matter before setting out for their feeding grounds or have they a chosen captain whose lead they follow? I often wonder. That they know where they are going or at least their captain does, seems certain.

### *Amazing Aerial Evolutions*

And then at dusk, when they return to their sleeping quarters, extraordinary aerial scenes may be witnessed. There is the whirr of countless wings and the birds describe amazing aerial evolutions as they make their descent. In the failing light the eye can hardly follow their flight, so great is the pace. At times they seem as if they will dash themselves to pieces against the ground. But just as they are about to reach it, with an extremely graceful swerve, they will rise again a little way in the air, then silently alight and settle down for the night. They generally choose meadows which are often partly covered with water and one would

think that going to bed under such circumstances would give them cramp or rheumatism.

"Pee-wit," one calls. "Pee-wit," answers another. "Pee-wit, pee-wit, pee-wit" comes from different parts of the camping ground, and I always think, there is something weird about the call of the pee-wit at night—very different from the note in the day-time.

In the early morning and at eventide you may see and hear these very interesting sights and sounds in the meadows by the Thames at Reading.

### *Sparrows going to Bed*

I like to watch the birds going to roost at night. And what a noise some of them make! Take up your stand by an ivy-clad withy tree. As the light begins to fail, one sparrow and then another followed by dozens more, take up their positions on the branches of the tree, and having satisfied themselves that all is well, settle down in the ivy. Whether or not they tell bedtime stories I do not know. Just before they settle down, however, they create no end of din by their chatter. Who knows, it may not be just idle talk. Perhaps it is a kind of thanksgiving to the Giver of all good things for providing them with such an abundance of food and such a beautiful world to live in.

### *Significant Signs of Spring*

The winter is nearing its end. Now, all around, there are signs and sounds of

spring. And spring is not only in the air, it is in the hearts and minds of bird and beast. How significant it is, isn't it, that, whereas a few weeks ago you saw coveys of partridges and many other kinds of birds going about in companies, it is a question of "two's company" now. Many engagements have been announced and the marriages will take place very shortly. Those concerned will live in very charming little houses built by themselves and, let us hope, there will be families safely reared, and that the children will grow up to gladden the heart of man by their delightful ways and joyous songs.

### *Migrants Will Soon Arrive*

What a different world it would be without the birds! And soon we shall be able, once again, to welcome the little migrants from overseas. There will be the familiar note of the chiff-chaff, the delicately sweet song of the willow warbler and the cheery twittering of swallow and martin. They seem ever more and more welcome as the years go by; their music is sweeter and it goes down into the heart deeper—sweeter and deeper, yes even sweeter and deeper in its meaning.

Such is the song of a bird!

## HOTEL MANAGERS' VISIT PARIS

Four of our Hotel Managers, Mr. J. Chmurow, of "The Queen's Hotel," Farnborough, Mr. J. A. Gronland, of "The Ship Hotel," Reading, Mr. K. W. Nias, of "The Pack Horse Hotel," Staines, and Mr. B. J. Warren, of "The Queen's Hotel," Newport, visited Paris in November to attend the International Hotels and Catering Exhibition.

On show was the latest catering equipment including the newest labour saving devices, machinery, methods and materials.

The President of the French Republic was present at a ceremony in connection with the Exhibition at the Sorbonne University attended by all the Brotherhoods associated with gastronomy and wine.

## RIBBON TROUBLE

Human touches at yesterday's investiture at Buckingham Palace: THE QUEEN MOTHER was placing the ribbon of the G.B.E. across the shoulders of GENERAL SIR MILES DEMPSEY when it caught on a button. But he didn't have to struggle with it; the Queen Mother stepped forward, straightened it at the back for him . . .

from DAILY MAIL 8.2.56



Mr. and Mrs. P. Dale, of the "Staff Hotel," Camberley. Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Wills, "The White Hart," Bagshot. Mr. and Mrs. F. Chisholm, "The Three Mariners," Bagshot.

## Staines Tenants' Dinner and Dance



Mr. and Mrs. F. Scott, "The Catherine Wheel," Egham. Mr. and Mrs. W. Bacon, "The Sun," Bishopsgate. Mr. and Mrs. E. Fry, "The Victoria," Egham.

Our tenants in the Staines area held a Dinner and Dance at "The Pack Horse" Hotel, Staines, on February 16 last. It proved to be a most enjoyable function which everybody thoroughly enjoyed, and it was decided—on the spot—to make it the first of a series of Annual Dinner and Dances for tenants in that area.

Mr. K. A. Chapman was President for the evening, and Mr. E. Gosney was Chairman. Mr. Gosney organised the function with the assistance of Mr. E. Fry, "The Victoria," Egham, Mr. W. Jaques, "The Hen and Chickens," Bisley, Mr. E. Markham, "The Jolly Waggoners," Hounslow, and Mr. C. Winter, "The Three Horse Shoes," Feltham.

Mr. S. H. Spurling and Mr. M. St. J. Howe were amongst those who attended from Reading.

Mr. and Mrs. H. Bonner, "The Phoenix," Staines. Mr. and Mrs. E. N. Miller, "The Wheatsheaf and Pigeon," Staines. Mr. and Mrs. E. Summers, "The Feathers," Wraybury.



## Hop Leaves



To mark the occasion of Mr. Eddie Woolfe taking over "The Masons' Arms" at Crynant, Glamorgan, a local Rhymester composed an eleven verse poem. Here are a few of the verses :

" We're here to welcome Eddy,  
Mrs. Woolfe, the boys and Betty  
They've come to keep the Masons'  
Arms—

But they need not have any qualms.

" And now a word for the clients so  
true,  
Who'll struggle along with noses so  
blue ;

Hell-fire and tempest, earthquake  
and smog  
Won't keep the old regulars away  
from their grog.

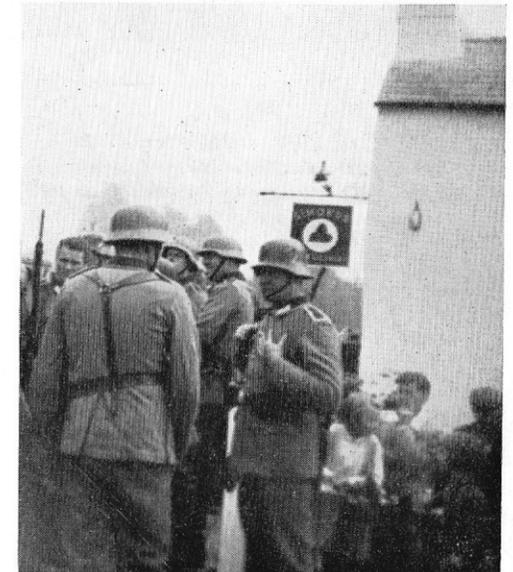
" So knock your drinks back and wish  
our hosts well,  
That is about all that I have to  
tell ;

I'm not much of a hand at making  
a rhyme,  
But we'll try again some other old  
time."

Mr. Paul Bullen in his bar at Beaulieu-road Hotel, in the New Forest, which won the annual cup awarded by The People's Refreshment House Association Ltd. for the best bar display by a small Hotel. Our South Coast Manager, Mr. F. C. Cowlin, is on the right, and facing the camera is Mr. A. E. Andrews, Representative in charge of our Southampton Sub-Depot.

The Newport Judo Club, which has its Headquarters at "The Hereford Arms," Newport, has become one of the leading clubs in Wales. Proficiency in the art is distinguished by the colour of the belts worn. Amongst members of the Newport Club are three who have won Brown Belts, the highest grade, three with Blue Belts, the next highest, and four with Green Belts, the third highest distinction.

This group of "German Soldiers" outside "The Shovel," Cowley were taking part in the filming of "Reach for the Sky" by J. Arthur Rank Productions Ltd.





Hounds moving off from outside "The Bird Cage Inn" Thame for the Boxing Day meet of the South Oxfordshire Hunt. This picture appeared in "The Times."

The Dribblers' team from "The George," Basingstoke who defeated the Frothblowers Rangers from "The Lamb," Basingstoke by 7 goals to 5 in their Boxing Day match in aid of the Spastic Children. Captain of the Dribblers was Tony McPhee, tenant of "The George," who was centre forward for Reading Football Club for 14 years. He is on the right of the back row.



Referring to some of our Coronation Ale brewed to celebrate the Coronation of the late George V, in 1911, a writer in *The Tatler* commented: "The contents had certainly retained a great deal of its alcoholic strength, but let no one imagine that laying down beer for this length of time is a good thing." He was proffered the ale by a Highgate Industrialist at Christmas.



Mr. C. V. Churchward presenting the Plymouth and District Social Clubs Euchre League Cup to Mr. R. Waterfield, Captain of the winning side—the Sutton Social Club, our very good friends. The group includes most of the Committee men.

A Sub-Depot at 57a, Harrison Road, Swaythling, Southampton, was opened in November. The Depot is under the Management of Mr. F. C. Cowlin, Portsmouth Branch, with Mr. A. E. Andrews as Representative-in-Charge.

A happy group at the neat bar at Princess Mary's R.A.F. Hospital, Halton, Bucks. Sgt. "Lucky" Locke, W.R.A.F. is behind the bar, left W/O Scott and right Mr. Charles Allison.

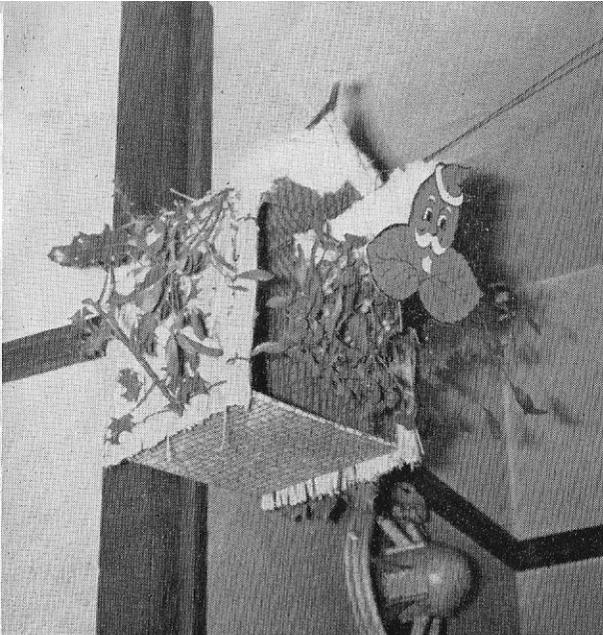
(Picture by courtesy of J. Watkin, Halton.)



Mr. Frank Stevens has just retired from our Staines branch after 42 years' service. When he joined the Firm in 1899 his father and six brothers were also employed in the brewery which at that time was owned by Messrs. Ashby.

"Swindon is doing well at present for it is producing visible exports from locomotives to Miss Diana Dors," said Mr. E. Duncan Simonds proposing the toast, "The Town and Trade of Swindon" at the Annual Ball of Swindon's Licensed Victuallers Association.

A little fat pig, hurrying away through the streets of Bristol from a party of men intent upon turning it into bacon, was an unexpected visitor to our Bottling Department there. The pig was recaptured and led away before it had an opportunity to "quelch" its thirst.



*Mistletoe was instantly available for any customers of the Highwayman's Bar at "The Bacon Arms," Newbury, over Christmas. The ingenious device pictured above made it possible to send Father "Hoppy" Christmas on his overhead cable to any part of the Bar with his Seasonal sprig.*

Mr. J. Vickery, who was until recently a member of the staff of the Estates Department in the capacity of Public House Inspector, has now re-joined the Department as Assistant Manager/Chief Public House Inspector.

Decorating the bar of "The Shades," Gun Street, Reading, is an attractive inlaid wooden plaque giving a brief history of the house which dates back to about 1600. The plaque includes a representation in coloured wood mosaic of a "shades" bar. The word was used to denote an underground beer or wine vault with a drinking bar attached.

*Mrs. Norma Bromelow fits well into the Spanish decor of the recently redecorated Spanish Bar at the "Ship Hotel," Reading, which she looks after. The genuine Spanish Dolls in the background were sent by our Associated Company, Saccone & Speed Ltd. of Gibraltar.*



## Obituary

*We deeply regret to record the deaths of the following :*

**Mr. C. W. Pitch**, who died on Christmas Eve last. He had been our tenant at "The White Hart," Fairford, since March, 1952. The funeral service, which took place at Fairford, was attended by Mr. J. Vickery, representing the Company.

We extend our sympathy to Mrs. Pitch and family.

**Mr. G. Wall**, who died in Sandford Hospital, Newbury, on Saturday, 14th January, at the age of 66.

Mr. Wall was a well-known steeplechase jockey of the 'twenties.

**Mr. E. A. Tigwell**, who died on 28th November last. He was in our employ for 40 years, most of this time being in the capacity of Chargehand.

**Mr. R. P. Blake**, who died on 9th December last, aged 60 years. He was in our employ for 29 years and worked in the Union Room and as a Watchman at Reading.

**Mr. T. E. Stevens** who died on 14th January last. He was Chief Clerk in our Delivery Office when he retired from our employ in 1952 having completed 49 years service.

**Mr. H. Shepherd** who died on 13th January last. He was Chief Cashier in our employ when he retired in 1946 after 50 years service.

**Mr. V. McGuffie Stevenson** our tenant at the "Gaiety," Christmas Steps, Bristol.

**Mrs. K. Tranter**, ex-licensee of "The Red Cross Knight," High Wycombe.

Courtesy of the  
Simonds family archives



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