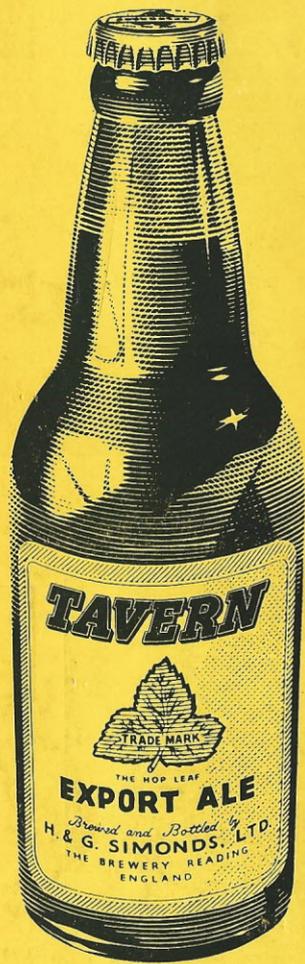


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THE HOP LEAF

Gazette

AUTUMN 1956 • VOL. XXX • NUMBER 4

THE HOUSE JOURNAL OF H. & G. SIMONDS LTD., READING (ISSUED QUARTERLY)



Hop



Leaf

G A Z E T T E

THE JOURNAL of H. & G. SIMONDS LIMITED

A U T U M N • 1 9 5 6

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FRONT COVER PICTURE

The "St. George and Dragon" Hotel by the River Thames, Wargrave.

Courtesy of the
Simonds family archives



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Editorial

In 1935 the Board decided to develop under central control the great latent potentialities of the many hotels and catering establishments owned by the Company. Accordingly, our late Chairman appointed Mr. H. C. Davis as founder and manager of the infant "Hotels and Catering Department," and Mr. Davis found himself installed in a small, bare office, with little to guide him other than his own burning zeal and his instructions "to offer to the public all possible comfort and amenity at the lowest possible price.

From those small beginnings the Department has grown and prospered greatly, thanks largely to its own unremitting effort. Three months after starting work Mr. Davis had seven Houses under his control; today he administers through his large and efficient staff no less than 45 Hotels and Taverns—as we now call them. Bedrooms for guests and staff total over 1,000, and during the past year more than 1½ million main meals have been served.

These are impressive figures, but every year they are growing. They provide mute testimony to the wisdom of the Board's decision twenty-one years ago, and they demonstrate clearly the success of the Department in carrying out its original briefing. This has only been achieved by steadily keeping abreast of the times and of the changing habits and keener requirements of our patrons, be they business folk, family parties, overseas tourists, holidaymakers, or what you will. To all are offered the new standards of luxury which have been the constant aim of the Department.

In the following pages we hope to introduce you to some of the people and some of the Houses, which together give the Department its delightful character. In meeting them ourselves we would only say that we have encountered a blend of friendliness and efficiency which must surely be unique.

Congratulations to Mr. H. C. Davis, and all his capable staff on "coming-of-age," and may good fortune in the future attend all concerned with "Simonds Hotels and Taverns."



The Hotels and Catering Department Comes Of Age

Twenty-one years ago our late Chairman, Mr. Eric Simonds, appointed Mr. Henry C. Davis as Hotels and Catering Manager, thus founding the Department which has become such an important part of our organisation. It is not many years since Brewery Boards considered that their responsibilities began and ended with the manufacture and sale of beer—wholesale. Now, however, it is widely recognised that Breweries can supplement the efforts

of their tenants, particularly by shouldering the large burden of capital investment required in catering for the needs of the modern discriminating traveller. Our Board was one of the first to appreciate this, and when they decided to establish the Hotels and Catering Department in 1935, they kept in view not only the possible economic success of their enterprise, but also the great prestige likely to accrue to the Company; surely our

This is the attractive house in Castle Street, Reading, where the headquarters of the Hotels and Catering Department is situated.



beers and wines could never appear to better advantage than when consumed in comfort at a first-class bar, or as accompaniment to an excellent meal, with the knowledge of a warm and restful bedroom awaiting the consumer ! This appreciation has been amply rewarded in the years that have passed since it was made.

Mr. Davis, a veteran of the First World War, and twice wounded, had been on the supervisory staff of the Slaters and Bodega organisation in London before joining H. and G. Simonds, Ltd., and had spent many years in the catering industry in the West End and elsewhere. He started from scratch with a new job and very little clear definition of its scope. It is difficult to appreciate that the vast organisation now under his control, with 45 large hotels and taverns in its orbit, has been developed so successfully in such a short time, especially bearing in mind the intervention of a six-year war, with its frustrating restrictions on expenditure of any kind in the industry.

Many factors have contributed to this development, but particularly :—

(1) The practical skill and experience of Mr. Davis himself when put keenly to the test ; these qualities have been allied to a rare energy and a flair for attracting loyal and efficient colleagues, who share his colossal enthusiasm, and (2) his stubborn (if sometimes unorthodox !) determination to get his own way which has, on so many occasions, won the support of the Board for his development projects.

Pre-war Programmes

The growth of the Department can best be traced by the members of establishments throughout the years. In 1935 the "Bush Hotel" at Wokingham, a highly unsuccessful tenancy, was taken over. At that time its takings were in the region of

£15 per week ; now it is a highly profitable hotel in the finest traditions of English inn-keeping, established in an undisputed position in the social and business life of the town. There followed in quick succession the "Crown Hotel," Cirencester, the "Queen's Hotel," Farnborough, the "Grosvenor House," Caversham, the "King's Arms Hotel," Stokenchurch, and the "Marquis of Lorne," Reading.



Mr. H. C. Davis with the telephone which never stops ringing. He is founder Fellow of the Hotels and Catering Institute ; a member of the Committee of the Reunion Des Gastronomes ; a member of the Council of the British Hotels and Restaurants Association ; a member of the Council of the British Travel and Holidays Association ; and he is nominated by the N.T.D.A. as a member of the Employers Side of the National Wages Board. He is a member of the Food and Cookery Association, Wine and Food Society, the Guild of Someliers, and during the war was, and still is, the Emergency Feeding Officer in the County of Berkshire. He is a Freeman of the City of London and a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Fletchers.



Every article of equipment is closely scrutinised. Here is Mr. Davis examining a decanter with Mr. Arthur Wicks, who is in charge of the stores.

Then in 1936, and until the outbreak of the war, the Company embarked on an extensive building programme of new licensed properties and a number were expressly designed as hotels and placed under Mr. Davis' jurisdiction. These included the "Falcon Hotel," Woodley, the "Waterside Hotel," Paignton, the "Anchor Hotel," Kennford, the "Evenlode House Hotel," Eynsham, and the reconstructed "Bath Arms Hotel" at Cheddar. Rumour has it that the last of these was originally designed on the back of an envelope over a glass of beer by Capt. A. S. Drewe, Mr. A. W. Bold and Mr. Davis. The reconstruction of this hotel presented an interesting problem in that the new hotel was built immediately at the rear of the old building which was kept in full operation during the building

period, subsequently demolished and its site used to provide the bold frontage and car park which we know today.

Thus by the outbreak of war Mr. Davis had a total of 14 establishments, and the Department was already proving a highly successful experiment. Its headquarters in Castle Street were well known in the hotel world and steps had been taken to place the accounting and control systems on a satisfactory footing, to establish a stores and purchasing organisation for the supply of anything from a pen nib to a double bed, and in addition there had been extensive development of an outside catering service.

The War and After

Then came the war and a period of intense frustration, limited supply of

essential replacement articles, Government control of most commodities vital to the running of hotels and restaurants, and an appalling shortage of skilled staff and managements. Through all these trials and tribulations Mr. Davis managed to survive, though he freely admits that it was an era when those things which ought to have been done were all too often neglected. He had considerable support at this time from Mr. Charles Chase, his outside catering supervisor, and Mr. W. W. Scott ("Scottie" to everyone), his head storeman.

After the war years the Department grew still further with the Company's brewery acquisitions in Basingstoke and South Wales, and in 1945 Mr. C. P. T. Wadlow, now the Group Manager of Arthur Cooper, was appointed as assistant to Mr. Davis, which added greatly to the efficiency of the Department, especially from an administrative and accounting point of view. It was also at about this time that Mr. Arthur Wicks, the popular Head Storeman of the Department at the present day, Mr. Eric Bailey, the Stores Clerk, Mr. Gilbert, the Wages and P.A.Y.E. Clerk, and Mr. Sidney Brunsdon, who is now the Chief Clerk of the Accounts Office, first put in an appearance.

Since the war there has been progressive improvement in the standard of furnishings and equipment. The stocktaking and audit work originally introduced by Mr. Davis has been formed into a separate department, and a training scheme for managements, recognised by the Ministry of Labour, has had varied success, over 50 per cent. of the present-day managements having been trained initially by the Company.

The Daily Post Bag

Present-day problems of the Department are great and varied. As in most households, running costs and general

overheads have increased beyond all recognition in the last five years, many goods which might be regarded as tools of trade (cutlery, vacuum cleaners, furnishings, etc.) still carry heavy purchase tax, and with full employment in heavy and light industries offering 4½ or 5-day weeks, experienced staff are in exceptionally short supply.

To give the reader some idea as to the wide range of subjects dealt with, the following is a random selection from one day's outgoing postbag:—

Correspondence dealing with operating problems in connection with the new top pressure draught beer system at the "Chevalier Tavern," Exeter.

Enquiries regarding stainless steel cutlery and tableware for the new restaurant, "Bear Hotel," Maidenhead.

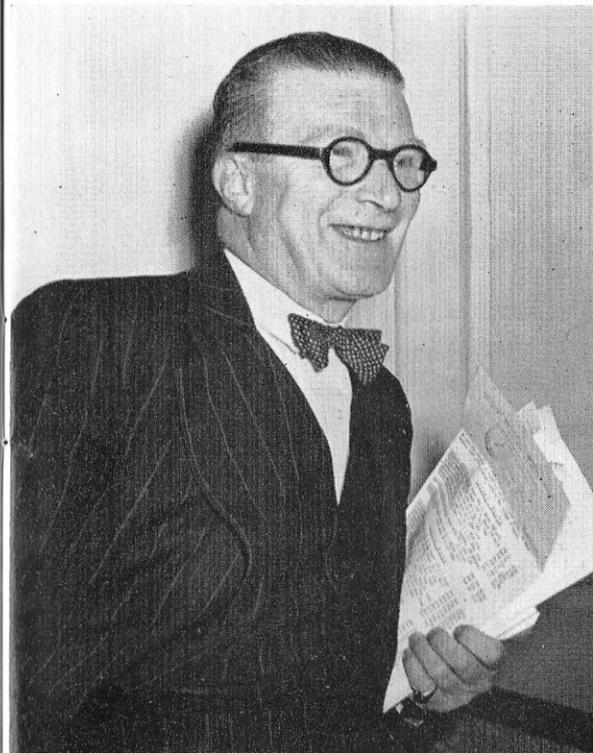
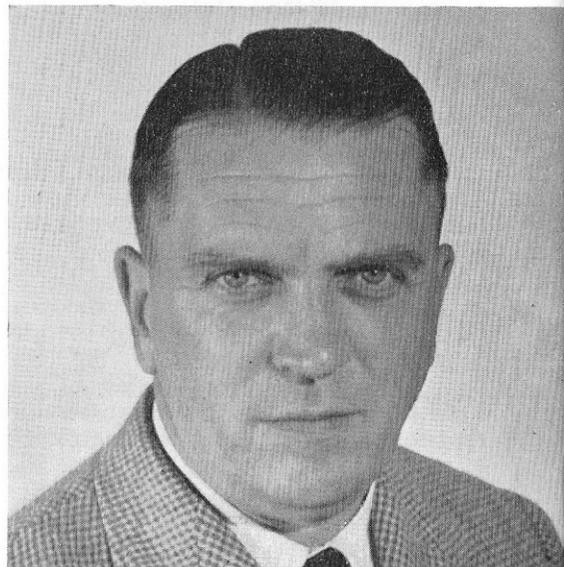
Report to the Board on trading figures.

Enquiry to a manageress regarding maternity benefits.

Movements of relief managements throughout the group.

Invitations to three firms to tender for coffee and tea supplies.

Mr. S. Brunsdon, Senior Clerk.



Mr. J. Chmurow, the Catering Supervisor.

Correspondence regarding the importation of Italian waiters into this country.

Enquiry to Textile Trades Testing House regarding specification of new quality in sheets.

Comments to Mr. R. Howie, the Furnishing and Decorative Consultant, regarding new colour schemes and proposed furnishings at the "Bear Hotel," Maidenhead.

Directives to managers regarding stock-taking results.

Enquiry regarding installation of a trout tank in one of our restaurants.

The Staff

To assist him in dealing with this fascinating variety of problems (the above being merely a selection of a few among hundreds) and to ensure adequate supervision of the 45 establishments under his control, Mr. Davis now has Mr. J. L. Hastings, appointed as Assistant Manager four years ago after extensive training in

this country and on the Continent, Mr. J. Chmurow recently appointed as Catering Supervisor after many successful years in management with the Company, and Mrs. M. Eagle, Deputy Assistant Manager.

In order to provide a direct link with the Board, an Executive Director has always assumed overall responsibility for the Department. From 1935 until his tragic death in 1947 this position was held by the late Mr. Louis Simonds, since when his place has been taken by his brother, Mr. Duncan Simonds.

Such is the team which now controls the destinies of this great Department and each of them, with the whole-hearted co-operation of all our Managers and their wives, is bent on achieving ever higher standards so that our group may become more than ever the pride of our friends and the envy of our competitors.



Mrs. M. Eagle, the Deputy Assistant Manager of the Department.

A view of the
General Office
showing Messrs.
C. Gwilliam,
I. Wallis,
J. Hunt,
J. Wooldridge,
F. Wells.



The girls who keep the
wheels moving.

(Left to right)—
Miss Elizabeth Wilson,
Miss G. Le Fort, and
Mrs. Theresa Heather.



(Left to right)—
Jean Bardrick,
Eileen Tilly,
Mary George, and
Barbara Atkinson.



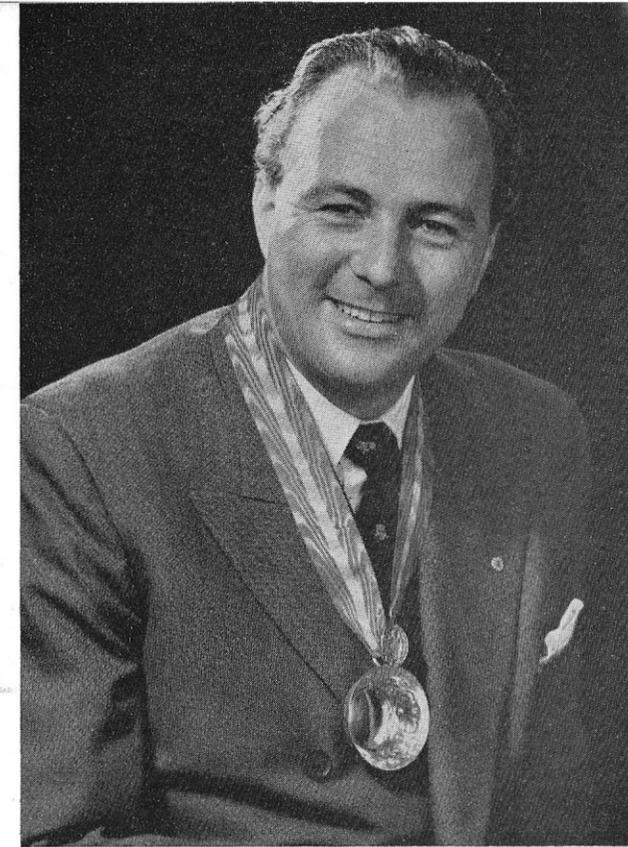
Mr. Hastings Honoured

Mr. John L. Hastings, D.S.C., M.H.C.I., the Assistant Manager of the Hotels and Catering Department, had the honour, on the 16th June, of being installed in France as a Chevalier du Tastevin. He writes :—

“ The brotherhood of the Chevalier du Tastevin is an ancient French Order much of the same type as our London Livery Companies, confined to those intimately connected with the production and sale of wine, particularly the wines of Burgundy. After being sponsored by two friends, both of whom are Commanders of the Order, it was necessary to write, for the inspection of the Grand Council, a short thesis on my personal attitude to wine, and it was quite obvious that an eloquent appraisal of the beautiful wines of the Burgundy area was necessary. This was in itself a formidable task, but my comments were obviously to the liking of the Council, as I was bidden to appear before them for indoctrination after their summer banquet on June 16th.

I arrived with my sponsors at 8 p.m. on that day at the Chateau du Clos de Vougeot near Dijon. Clos de Vougeot is renowned the world over as one of the finest Burgundies, and the Chateau itself is nearly 700 years old. It consists of the main building and two enormous stone-built barns which serve as cellars, so placed to form a triangular courtyard, cobbled throughout, and entered through a glorious archway below the main building.

In this courtyard the company was called to dinner by trumpeters on French horns, and the Commanders and Chevaliers, wearing their tastevin insignia with red and gold ribbon, and the gay colours of the ladies' dresses made a gallant and impressive scene in the late evening sunshine.



Inside the gigantic cellar, lit by torch-light, were five long tables to hold over 100 persons at each, there being approximately 550 people present. When all were assembled, to the call of French horns the first course of the dinner was carried in on the shoulders of six chefs to tremendous applause. The serious business of eating, and drinking the beautiful local wines, had begun. Here we were at the heart of gastronomic France, gastric juices flowing freely, and an air of expectancy and good living all about. We were not disappointed. The meal was magnificent, especially when one bears in mind the large number of people to be served. Between courses papers in praise of food and wine were read by world renowned gastronomes, and songs were sung by a choir of Burgundy cellarmen in their traditional dress. Needless to say the wine flowed freely and, in all, seven

courses were served with six wines, and a choice with coffee of two local 'eaux de vie,' either a marc or a prunelle. The meal commenced at 8.30 and finished at approximately 1.30 a.m. when tables were cleared and preparation made for the Installation Ceremony.

To musical honours the Grand Council of the Order, in glorious red and gold robes with tricorne hats, entered in procession and occupied a raised dais at one end of the cellar with the 32 novitiates below, myself among them. After a long

discourse and a command to adhere to the principles of the Order each candidate was called forward by name. On arrival at the dais I drank from a large silver loving cup with the Grand Maitre and was dubbed a Chevalier by him. He used an ancient vine root for this dubbing ceremony and after placing the ribbon and insignia round my neck, embraced me on both cheeks in the French manner.

Thus ended a memorable day and an exciting, never-to-be-forgotten ceremony."

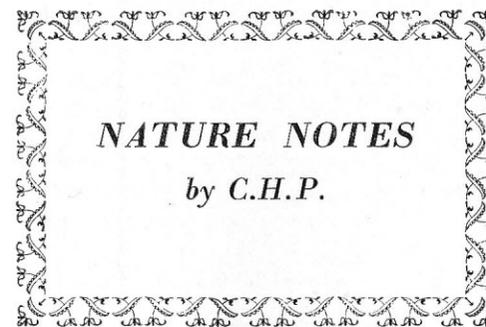


Before we leave the Hotels and Catering Department, Congratulations to Mr. H. C. Davis, who was married to Mrs. Lorna Greville on June 16th last.

Flowers for Mrs. Houlden

At a recent meeting of the Bristol Licensed Trade Central Board the Chairman announced that Mrs. S. A. Houlden, who is the tenant of our off-licence at "Belmont House," Brislington, Bristol, had been a member of the Board since the inception of the Bristol Women's Licensed Trade Association in 1921.

This represented 35 years of continuous service ; it was a remarkable record, one to be proud of, and he heartily congratulated her. He felt that this warranted suitable recognition and he proposed that she be made a Life Member of the Board, which was unanimously agreed with acclamation. The Chairman then presented Mrs. Houlden with a handsome bouquet of flowers.



On an August Afternoon

During August I often spend some delightful hours on the banks of the River Pang, out Bradfield way. Quite recently I noticed millions of gnats buzzing just above the water's surface, and a sudden little gust of wind would send wave upon wave of these tiny creatures away downstream for some yards and then they would buzz their way back again. I watched them for a long time, and so far as I could see there was not one collision. How they managed to avoid one another was a mystery to me. There was no one-way traffic here, and when motorists can thread their way safely through such crowds and with such wonderful precision we shall indeed have reached the motorists' millennium.

The Jaws of Death

And then a dragon-fly would come along, taking heavy toll of the smaller winged life. A voracious creature, you can distinctly hear the "snap" as his terrible jaws come in contact with some little victim. Presently he took a rest, no doubt to aid his digestion. I stalked him stealthily and experienced little difficulty in capturing him with my hand. I examined him carefully and was amazed at his gorgeous colouring and beautiful gauzy wings. But what an engine of destruction ! Taking great care not to

harm him I gave him his liberty and he was soon at his death-dealing work again, darting right and left, to and fro, and gathering all manner of forms of life into his rapacious jaws. There are always a large number of dragon-flies by the river-side. You can see them, large and small, and you cannot fail to be struck by the variety and beauty of their colours.

But don't run away with the idea that they can sting, because they have no apparatus with which to perform that effective little ceremony.

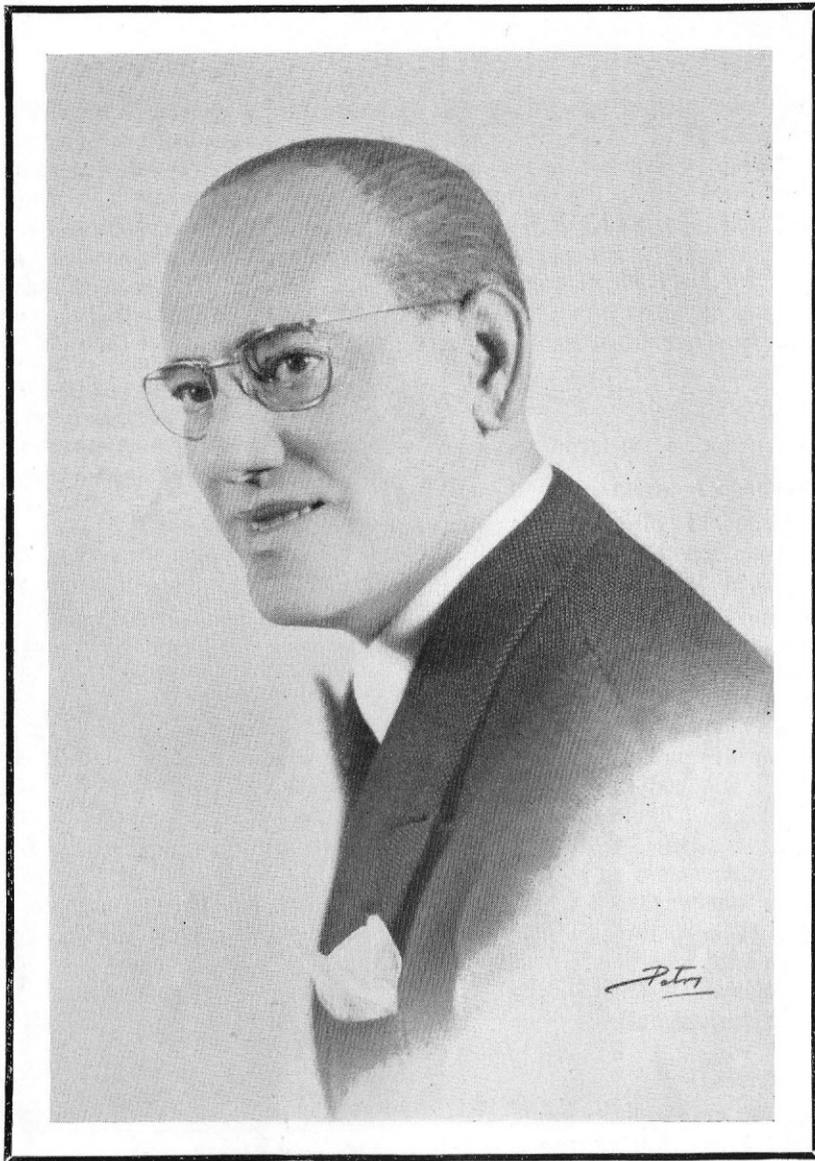
A rather Rare Bird

The grasshopper warbler was here again this year, and there is no mistaking his peculiar note, very similar to the "chirping" of a grasshopper, though louder and much longer. If you pull out your fishing line from your winch you have a noise, for it is hardly musical, every bit like that produced by our very shy little feathered friend, the grasshopper warbler. He will soon be taking his departure now, and if his "song" is not exactly melodious it is very welcome for all that. This bird's nest is not difficult to find ; it is a very dainty little structure and the speckled rosy-white eggs are dainty too. *Bon voyage*, little bird ! Come again next May and gladden us with your song. I will call it a song, for I am sure his wife, at any rate, thinks there is none more musical.

Life and Death

Away yonder are the cornfields in all their glory. And as evening sets in you can hear "*terwit, terwit*," the note of the partridge. They have a call-over each evening and I fear that before many days are over now many will be missing, never again to attend call-over and answer "*adsum*"—I am here.

It is a strange, strange world, with all its joy and sorrow, life and death.



Death of Mr. Lewis Farrugia

The recent death in London of Mr. Lewis V. Farrugia, O.B.E., B.E. & A., A. & C.E., Managing Director of Messrs. Simonds-Farsons-Cisk of Malta, has deprived that Island of one of its most illustrious sons. He was a skilled engineer, a first-class administrator, an indefatigable and brilliant business man, and a most honourable and charming gentleman.

We offer our most sincere sympathy to his widow, Mrs. V. Farrugia, and her four children.

Amongst those present at a Requiem Mass at Brompton Oratory for Mr. Farrugia were Mrs. Farrugia, Mr. A. Miceli Farrugia and other relatives and, representing our Firm, General Sir Miles Dempsey, Mr. E. D. Simonds, Mr. E. M. Downes, Mr. K. P. Chapman and several other Company Executives.

A Distinguished Career

Mr. Farrugia was born in Malta in 1901. He obtained the degree of Civil Engineer and Architect at the Royal Malta University in 1926. In 1929 he was appointed to a Professorship at the University in the Course of Engineering and Architecture. In 1925 he accepted a Commission in the Royal Engineers, Malta Division, and was sent to England for training. He served at Biggin Hill Aerodrome and at Gosport, and the School of Military Engineering at Chatham.

In 1927, Mr. L. Farrugia began work on the plans for the first Brewery on the Island and the first consignment of beer left the Brewery in April, 1928. It was chiefly through his energy that the merger came about with H. & G. Simonds and the firm of Simonds-Farsons was formed. He became the Managing Director, and its success was wholly due to his wonderful ability and tireless energy. In 1947 the merger was extended and the Firm became Simonds-Farsons-Cisk.

On the outbreak of war, in 1939, Mr. Farrugia became Treasurer of the Malta Relief Fund and later Manager of the Milk Marketing Department. For his services to the Government he received the O.B.E.

In 1944, Mr. Farrugia conceived the project for the erection of the new and magnificent Brewery at Imriehel, Malta. It was completely his own idea : he found the site, drew up the plans, designed the

building and co-ordinated the work—it was officially opened by the Governor of Malta in June, 1950.

Mr. Farrugia married Miss Virginia Critien, daughter of Dr. The Hon. A. Critien, O.B.E., in 1946. Although Mr. Farrugia allowed himself little leisure he was a keen sportsman, an excellent marksman, played a good game of billiards and was a keen motorist.

Trade Union Tribute

The Torch, the weekly organ of the General Workers' Union, Malta, referred to the late Mr. Farrugia thus : " We can justly say that he was one of the fairest men amongst the Maltese industrialists. He gave fair conditions to his men and it is not the first time that we showed him up as an example of a good employer of labour. We did not always agree with all that he said, but after disagreements with him he never left the impression with us that he was a despot, but rather more as a Capitalist who knew how to look after the interests of industry and who appreciated the rights of the worker. He kept his Company up to date and made his workers happy. . . . His death not only came as a loss to his employees but also to all other employees in Malta. In a few words we may say that Malta lost the best industrialist that she ever had."

Mr. R. C. Pitts, previously Manager of the Bridgend Branch, was appointed Manager of the Swindon Branch, with effect from September 24th. Mr. R. Scott, who has been Assistant Manager at Bristol, replaces Mr. Pitts as Bridgend Branch Manager as from the same date.

Mr. S. B. Farmer replaces Mr. Scott as Assistant Branch Manager at Bristol.

New "York Tavern" opens at Bridgend

In the presence of a distinguished local gathering Mr. E. D. Simonds, the Joint Managing Director, formally opened the new "York Tavern" and Restaurant at Bridgend on June 13th last.

On the ground floor a roomy, bright and very attractive Regency bar has been constructed. Fitted carpet, elegant chandeliers, and comfortable and attractive tables and chairs have created a most impressive bar where customers may drink and take snacks in an atmosphere of luxury and comfort. Referring to this bar, Mr. D. J. Amos, Engineer and Surveyor to the Bridgend Urban District Council, said: "I have not seen a finer bar in South Wales."

A be-flowered and mirrored hall leads to the tastefully decorated vestibule and finely built staircase to the first floor. Here is another modern bar, the Foyer Bar, where diners may take a pre-lunch or pre-dinner cocktail before entering the Restaurant itself. About the staircase and Foyer Bar are several ingenious touches of modern art which, perhaps not consciously, create an air of elegance aimed at and successfully achieved by the designer and decorator.

The Restaurant is a delightfully surprising room—mirrors, bright furnishings, a huge, gay carpet sixty feet long by forty feet wide, and generous and unusual lighting fittings blend to create a most pleasing atmosphere. It is certain to become one of the most popular dining rooms in the West.

The "York Tavern" and Restaurant



The Regency Bar with its fine carpet and tasteful decor.

The other room on the first floor is the Banqueting Hall where private functions may be held. At one time this was an attic over a stable—today it is a large and attractive room where seventy people may be seated for a meal and over a hundred may dance.

Strategically placed near the Restaurant and Banqueting Hall is the kitchen. This rightly received particular attention and has been designed so that a speedy service of hot victuals and vegetables is immediately available for guests in the Restaurant or attending private functions in the Banqueting Hall. All the most modern

and efficient labour-saving devices have been included there.

Air conditioning has been installed in all the public rooms which ensures that the air is changed twelve times every hour. In his opening speech Mr. E. D. Simonds said: "We believe we are in the twentieth century when a man can bring his wife and family into decent surroundings to take good food and drink."

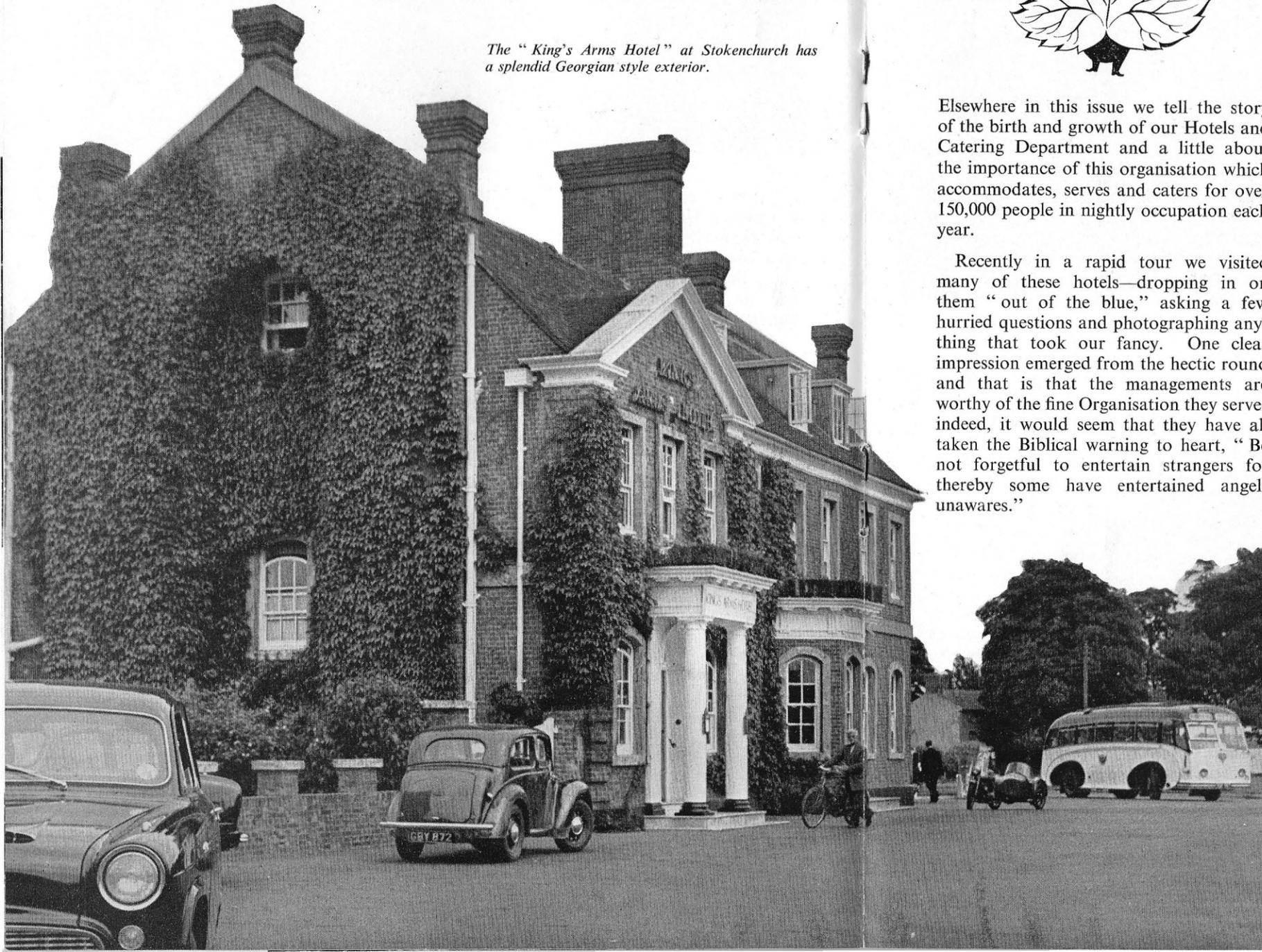
The Chairman of the Bridgend Council, Mr. Norton, expressed his pleasure at the opening of what he described as a "very fine establishment," and said it was extremely welcome in the town.

The Restaurant.



People and Places

The "King's Arms Hotel" at Stokenchurch has a splendid Georgian style exterior.



Elsewhere in this issue we tell the story of the birth and growth of our Hotels and Catering Department and a little about the importance of this organisation which accommodates, serves and caters for over 150,000 people in nightly occupation each year.

Recently in a rapid tour we visited many of these hotels—dropping in on them “out of the blue,” asking a few hurried questions and photographing anything that took our fancy. One clear impression emerged from the hectic round and that is that the managements are worthy of the fine Organisation they serve; indeed, it would seem that they have all taken the Biblical warning to heart, “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.”

Coaches were drawing up at our first port of call—the “King’s Arms Hotel,” Stokenchurch, when we arrived. Coaches are always drawing up there and we followed a party of travellers into the ultra modern “help yourself” bar where anything from a packet of biscuits to a packed lunch may be picked up and paid for at the end of the counter. During licensing hours the bar is open. The hotel is a magnificent Georgian building with first-rate parking facilities, and for those who wish for something more substantial than a snack there is a large and finely served restaurant under the supervision of the Manager and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Roberts. Both of them have studied the business at home and on the Continent, and are very popular in the locality.

The “help yourself service” may not be a traditional feature of hotel life, but in this case it serves an urgent and very important need. Over 2,000 people a day pass through the Cafeteria, and during the rush hours 600 people can be served there in less than an hour. When necessary it is available to the public from 8 o’clock in the morning until 1 a.m. the following morning, and when the various motor rallies are on it is open all night.

Oxford and Swindon

Leaving this 20th Century atmosphere we arrived at Oxford and entered the more leisurely and traditional surroundings of the “Eastgate Hotel.” Situated in that world-famous street, ‘The High,’ opposite the loveliest of Oxford’s Colleges, Magdalen, this hotel fits perfectly into the architectural setting of the town. Life at a University is a jig-saw of quiet study and boisterous intervals and the walls of this famous Inn have looked down on all the different pieces of that jig-saw. In a town where hospitality, good food, good service and pleasant surroundings are well

appreciated "The Eastgate" has won a high and lasting reputation for all of them. Under the capable supervision of Mr. and Mrs. V. H. Manning no good aspect of hotel life is forgotten and both the young and thirsty Undergraduates and their admiring and more sedate parents are made equally welcome.

The railways made Swindon a great centre, but before they came it was, as it still is, an important centre for agriculture. "The Goddard Arms"—a noble and handsome building—serves all masters. There country and commerce meet and mix over good drink and good meat. Its restaurant is beautiful and famous, its ballroom an important feature of the social life of the town and surrounding country, and its bars, with their excellent and



Above :
The "Eastgate"
Hotel, The High,
Oxford.



Left :
The creeper-clad
"Goddard Arms"
was an old Swindon
Hostelry when the
Railways came
there.

varied snacks, popular, bright and up-to-date. Here, indeed, is a hotel which blends all that is best in "olde hostelry" with the conveniences and improvements of our own century. A sound-diffusion service which incorporates a fire safety device connects every room to a central switchboard—the sleepy traveller can speak back without raising his head from the pillow, and the anxious mother can eat her dinner in peace because should the baby wake up its protestations or happy cooings are broadcast whenever necessary.

A King's Bed

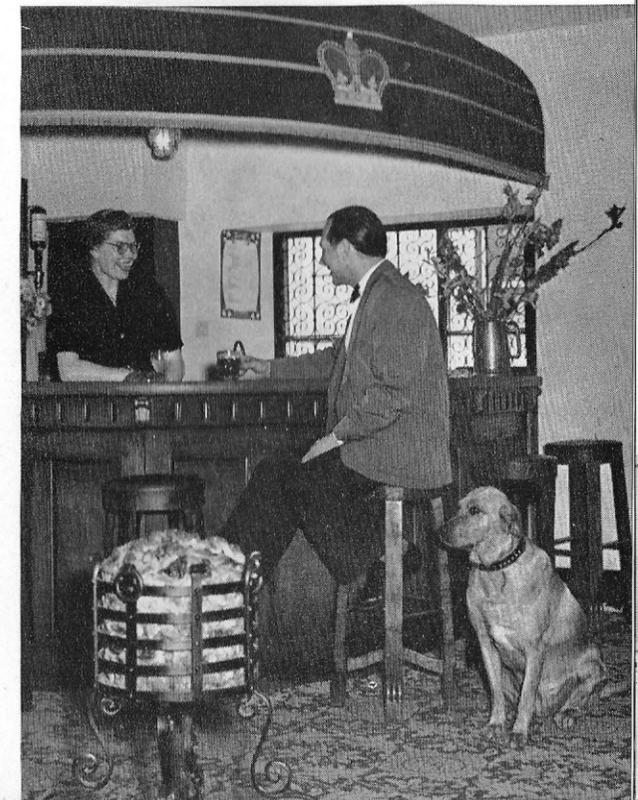
Leaving Swindon we took the route that King Charles II took many centuries before and we arrived at the same hotel as he did—"The Crown Hotel" in Cirencester. In his case, unfortunately, those cursed teetotallers, the Roundheads, were at his heels and he had hardly dropped off to sleep in the comfortable four-poster bed on the second floor when they were hammering at the door with the hilts of their swords. King Charles went through the window—sliding down a knotted sheet to Blackjack Street where a fast steed was awaiting.

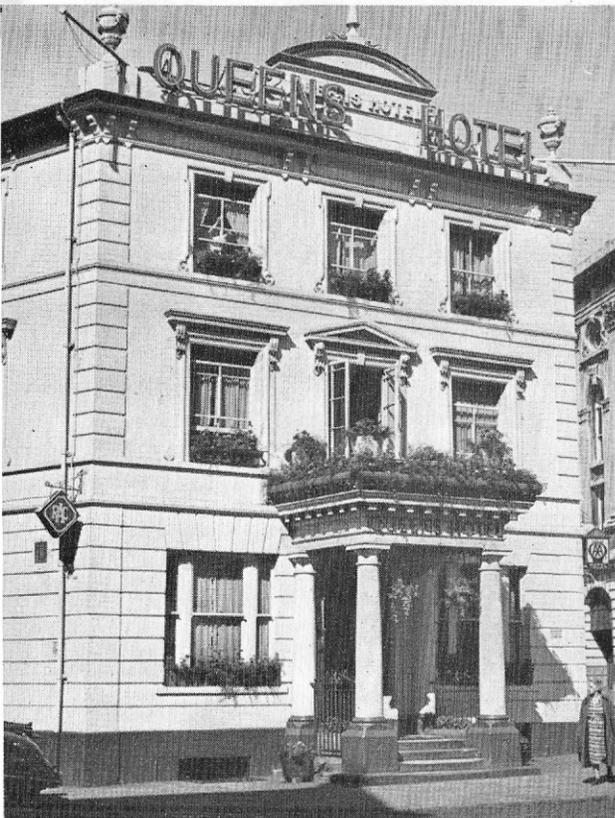
If this historical hotel was as comfortable in those days as it is today, Charles was unlucky to have to leave so quickly. It has one of the most attractive beamed restaurants in the West Country, where the best of local produce from the Cotswolds is available. Here also modern comfort has been unobtrusively added, and the visitor after an excellent meal in the restaurant may, on a cold winter's evening, eat roast chestnuts from the electric brazier in the Cotswold Bar before retiring to sleep in King Charles's bed now fitted with a mattress more comfortable than anything the unfortunate monarch ever knew.



A corner of the oak beamed Restaurant in
"The Crown" at Cirencester

. . . . and a view of the Cotswold Bar.





A Tyrolean Bar

"The Queens," Newport, has a well-earned and wide reputation for comfort and good food. It is one of our larger hotels with high and spacious rooms. The excellence of the catering at "The Queens" is without question, and watching the head waiter preparing a steak Diane beside the table is one of the most beautiful sights any hungry man could ever see. In order, as it were, to ensure that nobody who visits "The Queens" is in any fear of going hungry a silver grill has also been added to the unusual and pleasant Tyrolean Bar, the most popular rendezvous in the city. In Tyrolean surroundings one may order a luscious steak and watch it being cooked; there is also a good choice of bars in the hotel and, for the resident, a full suite of comfortable lounges and writing and resting rooms. Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Warren, the manager and the manageress, are both well-known and well liked in the city.

Left: "The Queens," Newport.

Below: The Tyrolean Bar.



At Bristol we entered a different style of house—"The Alma Tavern." This is not a residential hotel—it is an extremely busy tavern and restaurant. Situated in Clifton it is always a-bustle satisfying the hunger and thirst of its many patrons. It has earned an excellent reputation for its snacks which disappear like the proverbial hot cakes. It is surprisingly situated in a quiet side road, but it is nevertheless the Mecca of the neighbourhood. It is extremely well managed by Mr. and Mrs. M. Butler.

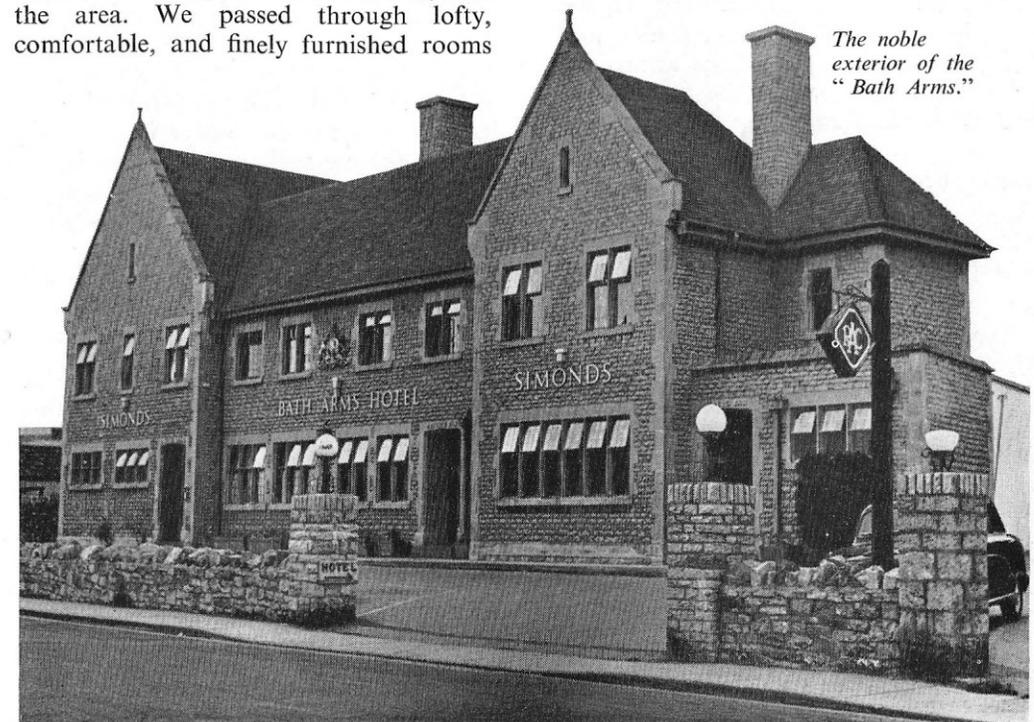
Cotswold Houses

Intrigued and entertained by such slogans as "If you wish your friend to please—send him off a Cheddar Cheese," we passed through the Cheddar Gorge and stopped at the royal looking "Bath Arms Hotel." It is a magnificent looking hotel built of the local and very attractive Cotswold stone in the accepted architectural style of the area. We passed through lofty, comfortable, and finely furnished rooms



The pleasant garden of "The Alma" is an excellent place for study.

to the rear where we admired a wonderful view of the Gorge and commented on the extensive and well tilled vegetable garden which supplies fresh vegetables straight into the kitchen. The hotel makes a special feature of its local meat and vegetables, which like the cheese comes



The noble exterior of the "Bath Arms."

from "just around the corner." It also has an excellent skittles alley—one of the best in the County—where the visitor may mix amiably with "locals" and even try his hand at skittles.

Mr. and Mrs. C. R. Turner, who manage it, are busy all the year round, for the hotel is right in the heart of the strawberry country, which as the seasons change becomes the bulb and anemone country. Mr. Turner, who has studied the trade in Africa as well as England and on the Continent, puts on a West African curry as a house speciality.

On the Exeter by-pass we found the attractive "Anchor Hotel" surrounded by magnificent rose gardens; these same gardens in springtime are one of the local sights—a scintillating mass of different hued tulips. This is not an ancient house, but it is an extremely comfortable one and a popular centre for the many attractions of the surrounding Devon countryside. Golf, boating, fishing and hunting are but a few of the attractions which bring patrons to the hotel. Mr. and Mrs. R. Lodge, the manager and manageress, have built themselves an excellent reputation.

"The Anchor" Inn is a handsome hotel in lovely surroundings.



Between games of bowls and beating "The Dons" Sir Francis Drake slept in this very bed in "The Royal Castle" Hotel. It is more comfortable nowadays.

Historical Hotels

There is sometimes an indefinable character about an hotel which guests appreciate but cannot explain, a kind of invisible hallmark of comfort, hospitality and tradition. Such a place is the "Royal Castle" on The Quay at the beautiful town of Dartmouth. It is ancient and famous. Its staircase is unique and its past is woven into great incidents of history like the sailing of *The Mayflower*. Some time during the first two weeks of every September a ghostly coach visits the Inn. The clatter of horses' hooves on cobbles can be heard and the opening and slamming of many doors. Nothing can be seen but this annual visit by a disembodied Coach and Four is authentic.

There are several other interesting features. The initials scratched on a mirror by Edward VII; the bed used by Sir Francis Drake, the great Elizabethan Admiral, and by King Charles II. There used to be a duelling room at the Inn, and recently discovered but not explored is a secret room. There is no doubt about the excellence of its background—today, under the management of Councillor Mrs. G. M. Powell, it has an enhanced reputation.



"The Waterside Hotel" has a Continental air.

"The Bolton Hotel" at Brixham is another ancient hostelry. It was a coffee house in the days of Napoleon Bonaparte, but it has been modernised and improved. It is busy in and out of season, and is famous for its meals and snacks prepared from such local produce as salmon from the River Dart and local crabs and lobsters. Mr. and Mrs. M. R. Fisher are the well-known manager and manageress.

The Paignton Hotels

"The Waterside" at Paignton is one of our more modern hotels. Situated near the popular beaches of the town it is a favourite rendezvous for the holiday visitors. It has a noble exterior and several lofty and well-lighted bars. In the holiday season the manager, Mr. K. J. Micah, and his wife number Cambridge Undergraduates amongst their staff. When we called we were served by an Old Etonian, now a law student, who was dispensing drinks with all the skill and verve of an old campaigner.

"The Coverdale," excellently managed by Mr. and Mrs. J. Helsdon, is another popular Paignton house. Its large and comfortable bars are well patronised all the year round, and the hotel portion is nearly always full. At Christmas a large

party arrives from the Midlands. They have spent Christmas there for the past six years and have booked again this year. This is another house proud of the local produce—here it was Bersand crab which, it is said, are the most luscious in the world.

"The Gerston Hotel," also in Paignton, has a long and interesting history. It was in the Bijou Theatre, then part of the building, that the Gilbert and Sullivan opera, "The Pirates of Penzance," had its premiere. This is also a house with an enviable reputation for the excellence of its food, due in great part to Chef Northcott, who has reigned over the culinary part of the Inn for six years. He is assisted in the vacation time by students

Mr. and Mrs. G. C. Bousfield, of "The Gerston."



from the Plymouth College of Technology.

Recently a new and delightful lounge bar was opened there. It is decorated in a



Above: The "Haunch of Venison" beside the old Poultry Cross.

Below: That fine old Coaching Inn—"The Bacon Arms."



sea-blue and sand theme, and its specially woven carpet to harmonise with the scheme of *decor*, and its delicate prints on the walls attract great numbers of visitors. Mr. and Mrs. G. C. Bousfield are the well liked manager and manageress.

Warminster and Salisbury

Guests at the "Bath Arms Hotel" in the Wiltshire town of Warminster find plenty to entertain themselves in the hotel and surrounding countryside. The hotel

is an extremely bright and comfortable one with modern bedrooms and a magnificent restaurant—we found the standard of food excellent everywhere, in a few cases superb. In the oak-panelled Sherry bar of the hotel is a unique collection of snippets from Club ties. The manager, Mr. L. Welch, started the collection three years ago, and now it numbers more than 400, and includes some very exclusive ones donated by passing customers. Men from the nearby infantry training centre have also given scores of Regimental and Divisional signs which decorate the public bar.

"The Haunch of Venison" by the Poultry Cross in the ancient city of Salisbury is an acknowledged gem of Ancient English Inn architecture containing some original Armada oak. It is quite unspoilt from the traditional point of view, but it has in recent years enhanced its virtues through the excellent reputation it has won for its food, particularly its steaks and grills. It is now under the capable management of Mr. and Mrs. Ian Bennett, who have both the right type of personality for such an outstanding house. Incidentally, Mr. Bennett has a most intriguing way of signalling the arrival of "closing-time." He is an accomplished musician and can make a 7-ft. length of ordinary gas pipe sound like a trumpet. When closing time arrives he produces his length of gas-piping and blows the "Last Post"—it never fails.

Dick Turpin and Charles Dickens

"The Bacon Arms Hotel" at Newbury is one of the old coaching inns of England, and it is still a favourite place for weary wayfarers to call for rest and refreshment. Its dining-room and bedrooms have been brought up to the best modern standards and its cuisine attracts a large lunch and dinner-time trade. Mr. and Mrs. Mc. L. Marshall, the manager and manageress, are justly proud of the

specialities of the house—roast duck and poussin. During the race meetings at nearby Ascot they are hard put to meet the demands of the racegoers.

The romantic past of this magnificent Inn have been enshrined in its "Highwayman Bar," where scenes from the life of Dick Turpin, and horse pistols and spurs of the period decorate the walls.

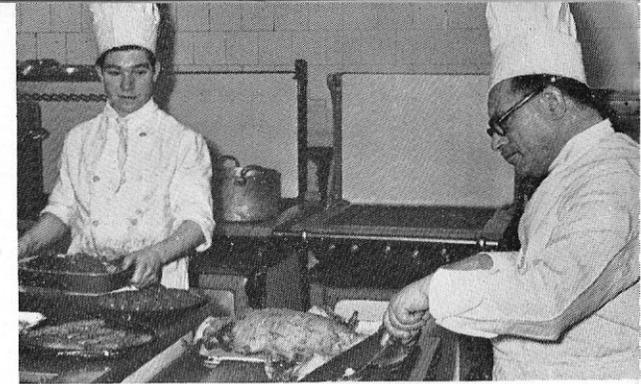
"The St. George and Dragon Hotel" at Wargrave is one of the most famous of Thames-side hotels. Charles Dickens and Alfred Tennyson knew it, and Jerome K. Jerome mentioned it in his book, "Three Men in a Boat."

It is situated between a quiet village street and a placid green-banked stretch of the Thames, with its own river frontage and landing stage, excellently furnished bars and modern and delightful restaurant. It charms both the casual caller and the hotel resident and is very well patronised all the year round.

It is at present in the capable hands of Lieut.-Colonel D. J. Hewett, R.A.O.C. (Retd.) and Mrs. Hewett. Lieut.-Colonel Hewett was previously in charge of catering for the Greyhound Racing Association. He also had a supervisory interest in catering for the House of Lords and for the Privy Council, and since the end of the war helped to re-open most of the larger racecourses.

Reading and Staines

In view of the fact that Reading is our Headquarters Town one would expect our "Ship Hotel" there to be a worthy one and, indeed, it is. From every point of view—accommodation, comfort, food and bars—"The Ship" is worthy. It has a popular Spanish Bar decorated in the style of Old Spain, an oak panelled and carpeted public bar, and on August 13th last, its reconstructed restaurant was opened by Mr. E. Duncan Simonds, our



Chef Tramontana in his Domain.



Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Bunn, of "The Ship."

Joint Managing Director. The new restaurant is a credit to a fine house. Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Bunn are the popular and efficient manager and manageress.

"The Ship" also has a chef whose fame is known throughout the Home Counties—Chef Tramontana—whose culinary skill and artistry is well appreciated in Reading. He has on several occasions prepared food for Royal functions.

One of our loveliest hotels is undoubtedly "The Pack Horse" beside the Thames at Staines, which is immensely

The recently opened Restaurant of "The Ship."





A view across the Sun Lounge and Terrace of the "St. George and Dragon." Mr. D. J. Hewett is admiring it.

popular in summer and winter. It has splendid parking facilities, balconies overlooking the river and a magnificent restaurant where guests may eat by candlelight in lovely surroundings. Here also is a famous chef—D. A. Morgan—who carried off prizes at the recent Salon Culinaire International Competitions at the Hotels and Catering Exhibition at Olympia. A few items from his menu are: Blue Trout and Melted Butter; Escargots Bourguigonne, Bortsch Koop, Crepe Suzette and Lobster Normande. The manager and manageress are Mr. and Mrs. K. W. Nias, an extremely popular couple.

The Dickens Bar

In the centre of Staines stands the ancient "Angel Hotel" where Charles Dickens wrote one of his famous novels, and where his stay is commemorated by the Dickens Bar, an oak panelled and very popular spot in the town. The present management believe in sound comfort and good English fare in their restaurant, a policy which has built up a sound connection for their house.

"The Devereux"

One of our most pleasant and interesting taverns is "The Devereux" in the heart of historical London. It is situated in an alley off Essex Street, Strand, and is a favourite meeting place for writers from

Fleet Street and lawyers from the nearby Law Courts. "The Daily Cause List" of the Supreme Court of Judicature is exhibited daily for the convenience of members of the legal profession. Even amongst such notable gourmets "The Devereux" has an ancient and excellent name for its luncheons and snacks.

It began centuries ago as a chop house, then it became a coffee house and was frequented by such literary giants as Dr. Johnson, Boswell and Oliver Goldsmith: today it is an outstanding example of a modern comfortable tavern.

A glimpse of "The Devereux" through a City of London gateway.



Sport

London

The presentation of trophies for the Southern Clubs' Darts League took place at the Tooting Conservative Club on June 15th, when the President of the League, Mr. S. J. Sulston, presided.

In the absence of Mr. E. D. Simonds through a slight indisposition, the London Manager, Mr. S. M. Penlerick, presented the prizes. The new Simonds Challenge Cup for the Premier Division Team Championship was won by Tooting Conservative Club, who also won the Second Division Championship; in both these Divisions the runners-up were Tooting Constitutional Club.

Other Clubs who won trophies were: Tooting Bowling Club, Manor Club and Institute, 54th Old Comrades' Association, Colliers Wood Constitutional, Streatham Conservative, Walshe House Club and the Southfields British Legion. In all, Mr. Penlerick presented 11 cups, 9 tankards and 43 plaques.

The Tooting Conservative Club put the seal on an eminently successful season when their "A" and "B" teams beat selected teams from the Premier and Second Divisions after the presentations.

Devonport

Over a thousand people attended the "Hop Leaf" Darts Finals and End of the Season Ball at the Exmouth Ballroom, Devonport. "The Standard Inn" won the Simonds Challenge Cup, defeating "The Minerva Inn" in the final. The Individual Championship was won by Mr. D. Willis, of the "Laira Hotel"; Mr. A. Bale, the "Lord Beresford," was runner-up. Other winners were: Shield, Section "A," "Standard Knights"; Runners-up, "Sir Francis Drake." Section "B," "Camel's Head"; Runners-up, "Eagle Tavern." Section "C," "Minerva Inn"; Runners-up, "Lord Clarendon." Individual House Trophy, Archie Sherrell Cup, "Laira Hotel."

Mr. D. J. Simonds presenting the prizes at Exmouth Ballroom.



Swindon

Mr. E. D. Simonds presented the prizes at the Finals of the Swindon and District Darts League at the "Goddard Arms Hotel" on June 7th. The results were :

Team Championship : Winners of the "A" League, "The Bell and Shoulder of Mutton," Swindon. Winners of "B" League, "The Nine Elms," Shaw.

Singles Championship: Winner, J. Dixon, "White Lion," Cricklade ; Runner-up, W. Tyrrell, "The Bell and Shoulder of Mutton," Swindon.

Pairs Championship : Winners, J. Dixon and W. Butler, The "White Lion," Cricklade ; Runners-up, G. Andrews and R. Bridgman, "The Rolleston Arms," Swindon.

Landlords' Championship : Stolto Cup : Winner, A. C. Johnson, "George Hotel," Swindon ; Runner-up, J. S. Spencer, "The Red Lion," Wootton Bassett.



The nineteenth annual cricket match between our house, "The Lamb" and "The Wolf" took place before a great crowd on August Bank Holiday at Norwood Green. This year the match ended in a tie—99 each. Therefore, as "The Lamb," Southall, were the holders of the trophy it will remain with them for another year.

Picture shows the two Captains, A. L. Wigand ("Wolf") and K. Styles ("Lamb") with the huge cricket bat trophy.

"THE LOT!"

The British Legion Club, Twyford, which meets at our house, "The Station Hotel," Twyford, have swept the board this season. They won the Berkshire British Legion Club Trophy and the All England British Legion Club Championship. The victorious team above are (Left to right)—
W. Hatch,
P. Kimber,
G. Spicer and
A. Horne.



Hop Leaves



An impressive view of our fleet of E.R.F. lorries in the Brewery yard at Reading.

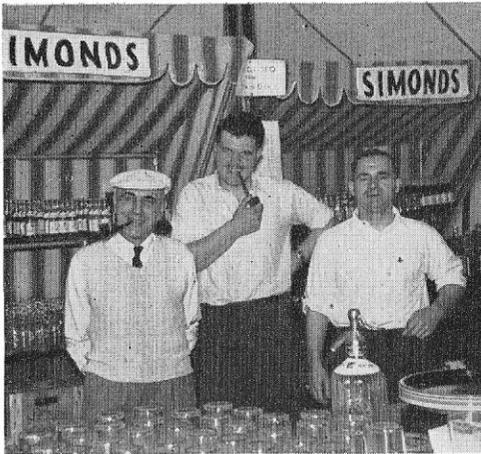
Mr. Boon, licensee of "The Roundabout," High Wycombe, was in charge of the catering for various functions in connection with the recent Tercentenary of the Grenadier Guards. Amongst the parties which Mr. Boon dealt with was Lord Freiburg's party in Windsor Castle, and a luncheon for 1,100 Guards Officers.

When Mr. George William Halfpenny took over "The Chequers," Sunningdale, on June 6th last he became the fourth generation of his family to do so. It has been in the family since his great-grandfather went there 80 years ago.

This pleasant picture was taken on the occasion of the University of Bristol Regatta. The beer had to go by boat because vehicles could not get through to the marquee.



Only Hop Leaf products are available from this R.A.F. Association Bar at 178A, High Street, Berkhamsted, where all members of the Association are welcome. The bar is the work of the members themselves, including (left to right) Mr. Benny Brewer, Mr. Bob Andrews, Mr. Gordon Grimsdale.



Waiting for the rush at Messrs. Broomwade's Sports Day are (left to right) Alderman G. H. Cooper, Mr. G. Pilkington (Bar Chairman) and Mr. "Jock" Williams.



Down with a resounding crash went the 7ft. 7½in. pile of pennies at "The Rokeley Arms," Newbury, when Miss Hy Hazell pulled the string. The landlord, Mr. J. Coleman, handed over £65 to the National Spastics Society.



An impressive picture of a blaze which broke out in an adjoining building and threatened our "Bush Hotel" and Arthur Cooper shop at Wokingham. Fortunately the fire was brought under control before our premises were damaged.

In November, 1889, the following advertisement appeared in *The Western Morning News*:

"Lockyer Hotel and Restaurant, Coffin & Holmes, Proprietors. Bed and Breakfasts, English and American Bars. Restaurant, Dinner and Luncheon from 11 a.m. to 10.30 p.m. from the Card. Ladies' Room, Afternoon teas from 4 to 6 p.m. THE SPECIALITY DINNER, Soup, Fish, Entrees, Joint, Sweet, Cheese, Bread and Butter, Small Claret—2/6d. Table d'hôte, in Coffee Room, 6.30 to 8 p.m. (Sundays included)—3/6d."



Press reporters and others admired an attractive exhibition of photographs, plans and blue prints of our hotels and restaurants at "The Ship Hotel," Reading. The exhibition was prepared by Mr. R. Howie. The exhibition included plans of the re-born "Bear Hotel" at Maidenhead, which is to be opened later this year.

Mr. F. C. Smith, who used to work in the Estates Department at Reading as a public house inspector has now become the tenant of "The Pheasant," Winnersh. On his departure his colleagues presented him with an electric fire. Mr. Smith had an adventurous war career; he left our Accounts Department in 1939 to join the R.A.O.C., went to France, and returned

via Dunkirk. Then he went to the Middle East, was captured at Tobruk, but escaped and made his way to Switzerland. After leaving the Services he rejoined the Firm as a Representative in the Free Trade Department, and joined the Estates Department in 1953.

Mr. F. H. V. Keighley, Joint Managing Director, opened a new Hall for the High Wycombe Trades and Labour Club on June 23rd last. The members themselves constructed the stage and bar in the Club and installed the internal fittings.

Mr. Keighley expressed the hope that the Club and H. & G. Simonds would have many years of happy association. A bouquet was presented to Mrs. Keighley.

In recognition of his work in connection with the building of the new Club our representative, Mr. R. F. Pratt, was made an honorary member and Mrs. Pratt also received a bouquet.

The Oldest Inn?

There has always been controversy about which is the oldest Inn in Great Britain, but so far few of them claim antiquity before about 1100. Now, however, it has come to our notice that the "Church House Inn" at Rattery, near Totnes, in South Devon, can trace its origin back to the year 1028.

Apart from its antiquity the "Church House Inn" has much to offer. Standing on a hill beside an ancient church it overlooks the delightful village of Rattery which is situated within easy reach of all the famous South Devon beauty spots. Visitors to this famous old Inn are assured of a kindly welcome from the owners—Eric and Joan Wilkinson.

The Public House Inspector

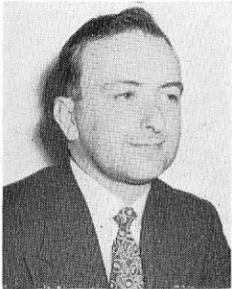
There are many links in the chain which stretches from the Head Brewer to the customer in the corner of the Inn drinking a half-pint of beer. The most important link of all is undoubtedly the Public House Inspector. He has the interests of the brewery at heart but—no whit less—he has the interests of the licensee at heart also. He is an expert in every aspect of the licensing business and because of study and experience is rarely stumped by any problem which may arise. We are all well served by our team of Public House Inspectors who deserve every credit for the efficient and courteous manner in which they carry out their responsible duties.

We look upon our Public House Inspectors as a liaison between every branch of the Brewery and every aspect of the public house. Their duties are to help, not hinder; to advise, not condemn; and in general to ensure the sale of our products in the best manner possible, and we acknowledge through this article the ready co-operation we enjoy from our licensees.

The Public House Inspector normally visits each house in his area on a twenty-eight day cycle, and on that visit all



W. PLANT,
Reading Area.



B. ATKINS,
Bracknell/Aldershot Area.



J. LUSH,
High Wycombe Area.



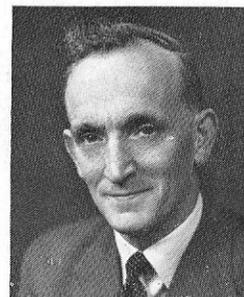
J. W. VICKERY
The Chief Public House
Inspector.



A. H. MORGAN,
Staines Area.



P. T. AULSEBROOK,
Newport Area.



C. L. CARVILL,
Bridgend Area.

J. HAWKINS,
Newbury/Basingstoke Area.



L. S. INNES,
Plymouth Area.



F. C. CROOK,
Plymouth Area.



A. HOWMAN,
Assistant Manager,
Swindon Area.



R. E. WRIGHT,
Assistant Manager,
Plymouth Area.



L. C. WHITE,
Assistant Manager,
Penzance Area.

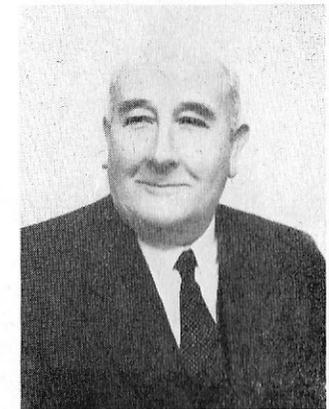


S. B. FARMER,
Assistant Manager,
Bristol Area.

matters applicable to the management of the property are discussed with the licensee. Notes are made of the condition of all cask and bottled beers, temperature of cellar, condition of the property and repairs that may be required. In addition, accounts for supplies are submitted and settled at the time of the Inspector's call.

Sales Representatives, a correction

We owe an apology to Mr. R. Paice, Ludgershall Branch Manager, for a mix-up in the photographs of Sales Representatives in our last Edition. Here is the correct picture and title :—



Mr. R. Paice,
Ludgershall Branch Manager.

Obituary

We deeply regret to record the death of the following:—

Mr. F. Oliver, Cooper, who served for 47 years with our firm.

Courtesy of the
Simonds family archives

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