



THE NEWSPAPER OF THE OWEN OWEN GROUP

Scene

No. 5 OCTOBER, 1971



Above: Smiling stockroom staff at Ilford House, Liverpool.

Half Year Results— A Lot Of Ground To Make Up!

TRADING in the first six months resulted in a loss before tax of £208,000, compared with a loss of £7,000 in 1970. A failure to achieve budget sales in the U.K. stores was the main reason for the increased deficit, with much of the shortfall happening in the early months of the year when retail trade was generally slack.

In the Board's interim report to shareholders the Chairman, Mr. John Norman, referred to some of the underlying causes for the disappointing half year result and the

corrective action that had been taken to hasten recovery before the year end:

- **Liverpool warehousing:** some £40,000 of the loss was accounted for by the costs incurred in alterations to the London Road building and the move of stock from Bootle Centre. The benefits of this move should begin to come through in lower costs and greater efficiency in the second half-year.

- **Erdington:** as expected, the store made a loss on its first six months trading, but sales are moving ahead and prospects are considered to be good.
- **Fashions:** it was an exceptionally difficult season with no clear fashion trend. Over-buying in the first place and then failure of the midi to catch on resulted in poor sales and very heavy reductions to clear stocks.
- **Canada:** the Hamilton store was hit by a 10 week bus strike, which only ended in mid-July. Burlington has continued to do well and plans are going ahead for a new store in Hamilton East to open next Autumn.
- **Plumb Contracts:** had an excellent six months and prospects for the second half are good.

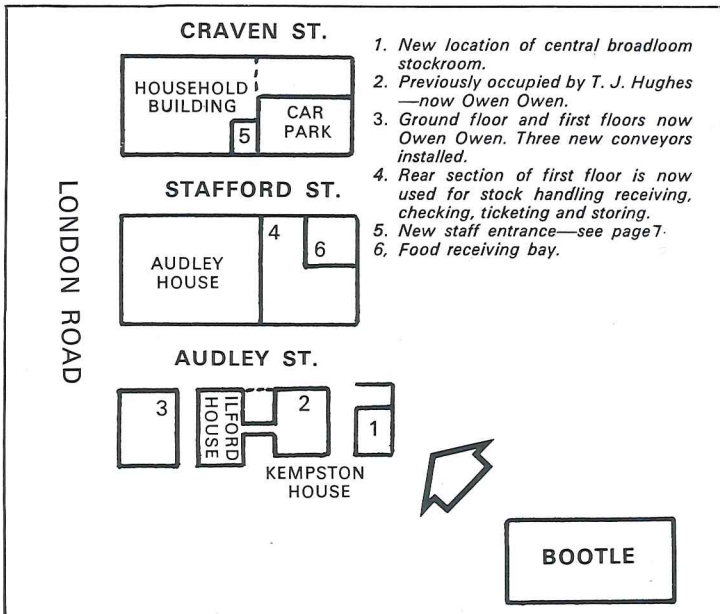
STOCK MOVES ARE A COMPLETE SUCCESS THANKS TO TEAMWORK

STOCKROOM and transport facilities are being centralised in some important moves involving the T. J. Hughes store in London Road, and Owen Owen at Clayton Square Liverpool. The aim is to make more economical use of the multitude of buildings in and around London Road.

Briefly, the selling area of T. J. Hughes has been reduced and the space vacated made into stockrooms. It is hoped that the massive warehousing accommodation at Bootle Centre, which previously serviced the Liverpool stores, will be sold.

New Conveyors

Altogether about 50,000 square feet of space has been affected at Kempston House, Ilford House and Audley House (the main store)—the buildings that make up the T. J. Hughes operation. T. J. Hughes stockholding areas have in many cases now been sited next to the appropriate selling departments. The ground floor



of Ilford House has been gutted and three conveyors put in to enable stock to be moved quickly to storage areas.

The moves were carried out astonishingly quickly. It took just one week to transfer the fashion, fashion accessory, menswear, stationery and a variety of other

departments from Bootle to Liverpool. When the move was completed, the 12 stockroom girls celebrated with glasses of sherry.

The invoice office was moved from the top floor of Bootle Centre to the top floor of Kempston House (adjacent to T.J.'s invoice office) in one day. The move of

various other departments—drapery, furnishing fabrics, hardware—from Bootle to Ilford House was started and finished during the week commencing August 16.

Co-operation

Mr. Basil Disley, general manager of Bootle Centre, said that the operation was completely successful thanks to the whole-hearted co-operation of everybody who was involved. Among those whose efforts contributed to its success were Mr. Ernie Cowley and Mr. Harry Grice on the transport side, Mr. Don Mitchell on the stockroom side, Mr. Frank Viggers in the invoice office and, in particular, Miss Edna Justin and her team of stock-keepers. And thanks are due to Mrs. S. G. Adams and Miss Maude Oliver, on the personnel side, Mr. Phil Shackell, store operations manager and the indispensable Mr. Arthur Pye and Mr. Mike Finnigan, each of whom made valuable contributions.

As a result of the operation, T. J. Hughes is now drawing a rent from Owen Owen for the space Owen Owen is using—a rent which is half that previously paid at Bootle.

Good Start to the new half-year

Sales have been good since the middle of July, both in the U.K. and in Canada. While this is a comparatively low volume period, the trend is encouraging. The full year's results will depend, as ever, on the results of the pre-Christmas trading—the months of October, November and December are of prime importance.

Good sales and good results in these months can make up the ground that has been lost in the first half.

Erdington barge-in

About 30 staff from Erdington took to the water in August, when they went on a barge trip from Earlswood Motor Yacht Club on the Stratford-on-Avon canal to Lapworth and back.

The happy sailors included management and friends, and despite some rain, the outing was a huge success.



Left to right at London Road: Mrs. M. Gill/Woodward (40 years service), Mrs. C. Tonner (17 years) still working part time, Miss I. M. Lewis/Lennard (38 years), Miss E. A. Lewis/Linford (21 years) still working part time, Miss L. Swift (32 years), Mrs. O. M. Pratt (16 years), Miss A. Barry/Brough (35 years), Miss E. Corrigan (27 years), Mr. A. Rannard (20 years), Mr. Edwards/Edwin (33 years), Miss Booth (18 years), Miss E. C. Glapham (20 years), Miss F. Hodson (21 years), Mrs. Lee/Ledwood (23 years), Miss N. Stevenson (18 years), Miss G. McCabe (18 years).



Clayton Square, left to right, back row first: Miss E. Ayles, Miss C. Constantine, Miss H. L. Goldie, Miss C. Johnson, Miss M. Bogle, Miss M. Young, Mrs. A. Borrows, Mr. R. G. Jones, Mr. J. Gore, Mr. R. J. Roberts, Mr. W. E. Draper, Mr. J. A. O'Hara, Mrs. E. Murray, Mrs. E. Wilson, Miss M. Hargadon, Mrs. A. Connell, Mrs. L. G. Cooke, Mrs. B. Wales, Mrs. S. Pinnington, Miss M. Newall, Miss O. Walmsley, Miss M. L. Hilton, Miss E. A. Wilkinson, Mr. A. Gray, Mrs. J. Royle, Mrs. F. Clarke, Mrs. A. Huggett.



At Southampton — seated left to right: Mrs. Dorothy Vickery (8 years), Miss Marjorie Watridge (42 years), Miss Violet George (20 years), Mrs. Lena Vincent (14 years); back to camera: Mrs. Violet Hitchcock (11 years); facing camera: Miss Lilian McDonald (9 years), Mrs. Elizabeth Fisher (15 years), Mrs. Elizabeth Pearce (16 years), Mr. R. F. Smith and his wife

Owen Owen never likes to say "goodbye" to its employees—to the men and women who have served the company faithfully and contributed to its reputation for good service and civility. It prefers to say "au revoir". To welcome back from time to time its elderly shipmates in part-time jobs or at the regular pensioners' tea parties which have united former long-serving staff after their departure from active employment. The tea parties are an occasion to swap memories and exchange the latest home news, and an opportunity to keep in touch with developments at Owen Owen itself.

Owen Owen general manager Mr. Henry Cotton started the monthly parties at Clayton Square when he was personnel manager there nearly 10 years ago and ever since between 30 and 40 pensioners have gathered in the management restaurant for a get-together. Sandwiches, scones, cakes and tea are served by personnel manager Miss C. McDermid and members of the Over 25 Club, who act as waiters and waitresses and pass on store news. Tea parties at other stores are also well attended. They are held on the third Tuesday in every month.

LIKE A BREATH OF FRESH AIR, HE SAYS

JOINING Owen Owen was like a breath of fresh air for Mr. Edward Chapman, dutyman and security officer at Finchley. "I had no idea that store life was so varied and interesting," he says.

"I wish I had had the chance to train as a store manager. The interest and opportunities for young men in this store are tremendous.

Carpentry

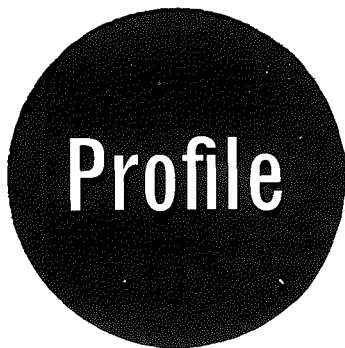
Mr. Chapman, aged 64, was born in Portsmouth, the eldest of six children. He was 15 when he started work as an apprentice journeyman, carpenter and joiner—the trade which he followed for 39 years. Although he was born within the smell of the sea, the only sailing he has done was during five years as a Royal Marine during the last war. After the war, he went back to carpentry—and local government. He stood as a candidate for Middlesex County Council twice without success in the early 1950s. However, in 1959 he was elected for three years to the Friern Barnet Council. In 1960 he took up a new occupation—framing pictures—but within a year he had moved into security with the Standard Telephone



Mr. E. Chapman

Company. Four years later, immediately after a spell as security officer with a big insurance company, Mr. Chapman joined Owen Owen at Finchley.

His duties at the store are varied and include chauffeuring and debt collecting. He has some



amusing memories about his encounters with store debtors.

Spurs Fan

Mr. Chapman and his wife, Ruby, have been married for 45 years and have a son and two grandchildren living in Hull. Mr. Chapman is a Spurs supporter in his spare time and a keen gardener, with an allotment where he grows fruit and vegetables. He used to be a competent ballroom dancer, and won several contests in North London.

A rather special garden party . . .

The garden party that Mrs. Jessie Kitson attended in July was no ordinary affair—it was at Buckingham Palace, where the guests brushed shoulders with the Queen.

Mrs. Kitson's husband, who is secretary of a branch of the British Legion, earned the invitation on the occasion of the Legion's 50th anniversary, when the Queen bestowed the title "Royal" on the organisation.

Story Book

Mrs. Kitson, who works on the men's shoe department at London Road, said, "It was like something out of a story book. I walked through the main gates of Buckingham Palace under an archway into a huge quadrangle where there were guards on duty in bearskins. I passed right into the Palace, up the red carpeted stairs, through the great hall on to a plateau of white stone, from which the gardens were visible ablaze with colour".

25 YEAR AWARDS

May

Mrs. I. A. Huddleston: Coventry

July

Miss E. J. Shippides: Clayton Square

Miss E. Swift: Clayton Square

September

Miss A. Manning/Manton: Clayton Square

Well Done

Congratulations to Mr. Edmund King, house manager at Southampton, who has been elected president of the local Totton and Eling Lions Club, of which he is a founder member. Mr. King, of Rushington Avenue, Totton, has worked at Southampton for 21 years. He is married with two children and three grandchildren.



"Are You Being Converted to North Sea Gas?"

Customers at Finchley were curious about the pipes being installed on all floors. Some thought the store was being converted to North Sea gas. But it was a sprinkler system that was being fitted during a hectic two months at "Tally Ho Corner".

It was first thought that installation would take 14 weeks of night work, but by good planning the exercise was completed in seven weeks, which saved about £1,500.

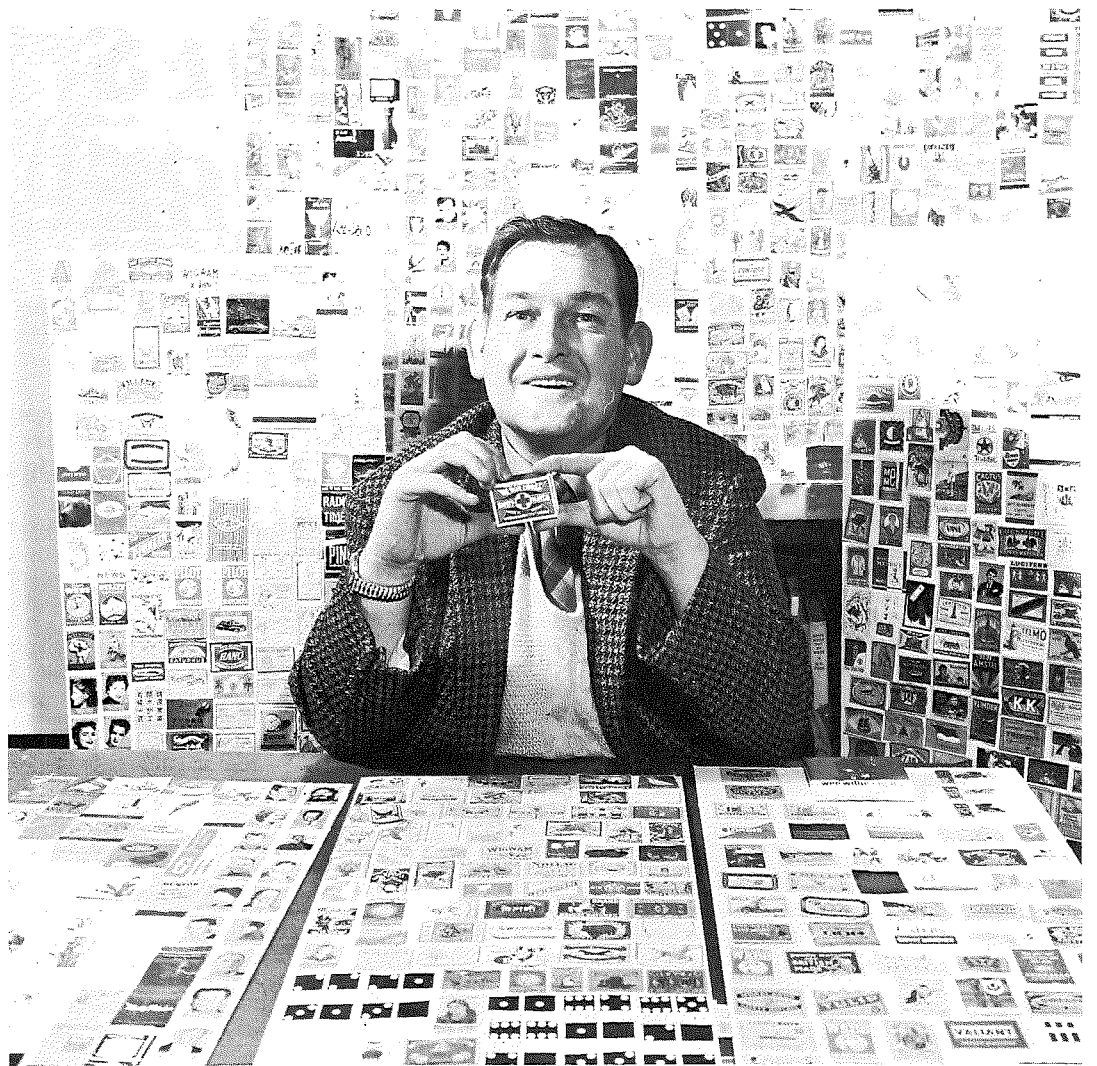
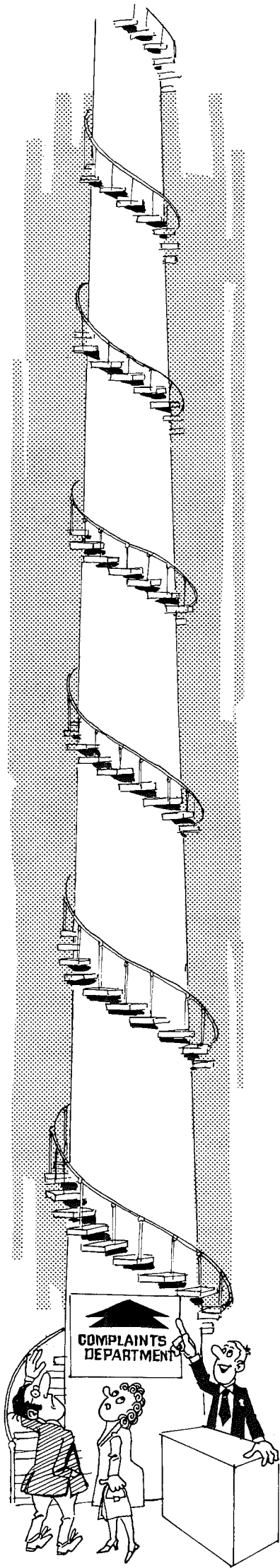
The ground floor has been carpeted to match the newly-finished ground floor at Coventry and bears no resemblance to the former

red carpet and yards and yards of binding tape. This work took only three evenings, thanks to the co-operation of all the staff and a hard-working team who laboured one Sunday moving fixtures and fittings.

Office sections have been resited and the staff restaurant has been modernised. Tiles from part of the ground floor were used to carpet the dining area and give a luxury look.

The store is now catching its breath and waiting for the next phase—department improvements and more ground floor moves.

LAUGHTER



Top That!

Surrounded by hundreds of matchbox tops is Mr. L. T. Mack (40), of the Southampton ticket office, who, it goes without saying, is an ardent collector. He started his collection three years ago and now has over 2,000 labels from all over the world. Which we think is a pretty striking achievement by any standards.

Annual Outing

Blackpool was the venue of T. J. Hughes' annual staff outing in July when 197 men and women from London Road, together with staff from Bootle Strand, Bootle Centre, Birkenhead and Blackpool, and 40 pensioners and friends invaded the resort. After a meal at the Casino Restaurant, on the Pleasure Beach, the party made the most of the good weather. Some brave people went for a dip and reported "the water's fine!"

Southampton team helps raise £1000

Thirteen members of the Southampton store were among people from other local stores who helped raise £1,000 for the Cottage Homes this summer.

The 13 took part in a 20-mile charity walk from the town centre sponsored at up to three pence a mile by their friends. The Mayor of Southampton cut the tape for the start and the walk got under way through the streets and countryside. Among the finishers were Mr. George Mordey, a pensioner, and carpet fitter Mr. Rogers. The gallant 13 raised £97.



She sold poppies at 96!



Cutting the Owen Owen 103rd birthday cake at Southampton is Mrs. Edith Amey who at 100 is nearly as old as the company founded at Liverpool in April, 1868. A party was held at the local Moorgreen welfare home which 60 people attended. Mrs. Amey, who has lived at Southampton all her life, used to be a shop-keeper. Her son said she had never been ill and at the age of 96 was selling poppies in the street for the British Legion! She has three children living, 13 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren.

In the picture, behind Mrs. Amey, is staff trainer Mrs. Doris Willmer, and cash office manager Miss Peggy Etheridge.

Cathy is a personality girl

The happiest looking girl in this picture taken at Butlin's holiday camp at Skegness is Miss Cathy Casson who works in the stockrooms at Ilford House. Broad-smiling Cathy (right) aged 31, was awarded third place in the camp's personality competition. She has worked for the company since August, 1967, when she was a clerk in the invoice office.

Kidney fund is started

A fund has been started at Coventry with a target of £2,000 to buy a kidney machine for a local hospital. It is hoped to raise the money by raffles, collections, dances and other social events.

A savings account is to be opened, and a target indicator board set up in the staff restaurant to show the progress of the fund in the months ahead. Former general manager, Mr. Ken Hemsworth, gave the green light to the fund, which was asked for by a large number of staff.

FROM THE ASHES OF WAR—A STORE TO BE PROUD OF

THERE have been three Owen Owen stores in Coventry—the first was opened in September, 1937, and destroyed by German bombs on the night of November 14, 1940. The next month business restarted in temporary premises and continued until the present building was opened in October, 1954.

So it's a store very conscious of its past. And there are Coventry reminders like the blitzed Coventry cathedral, by which stands the modern replacement with its famous Epstein St. Michael and the Devil.

The first Coventry store was completely destroyed during the blitz which added a black page to the history of the city, previously best known for nothing more stirring than the legend of the good Lady Godiva, who rode naked through

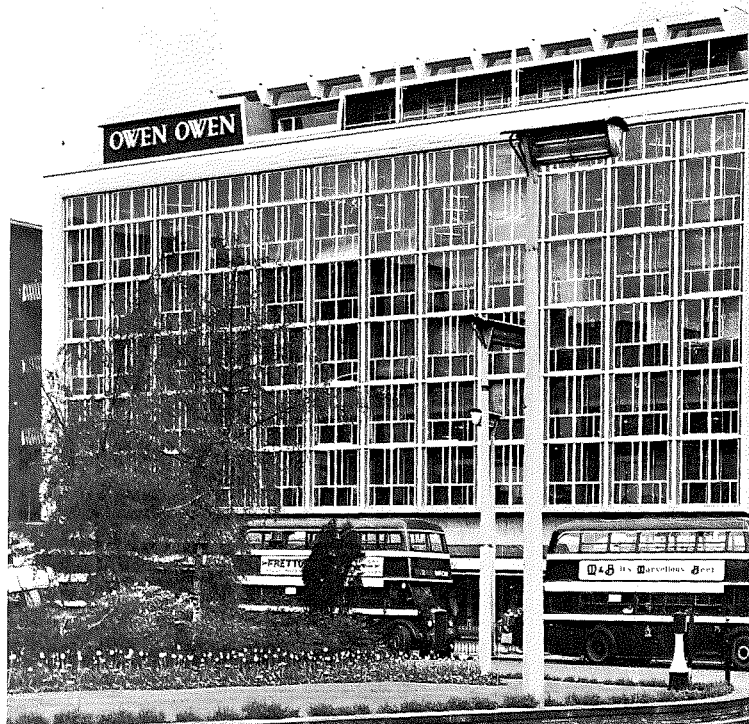
The present general manager, Mr. James Mariner has been in the position for only three months—but he has had his eye on the store—so to speak—for longer. For two years he was managing director of Hogarth Stores Ltd., Coventry, and he could see rivals Owen Owen from his office! Most of his previous retail experience was with Beatties of Wolverhampton.

Mr. Mariner is a director of Owen Owen (Stores) Limited

ware, DIY, radios and cigarettes lead the group.

The store is one of the three largest in the group and is the biggest outside Liverpool. It has its own subway to bring goods inside, which passes under other city-centre shops, and possesses a busy social life with theatre outings, netball, soccer and hockey teams, and regular discotheques. It also has its own sports ground two miles away, where the inter-store hockey tournament is held every year, and attracts more than its share of visiting celebrities.

The longest-serving full-timers at the store are Mr. Frank Kilby and Mr. Lloyd George. Mr. Kilby has travelled 30 miles a day to work from Birmingham every day for the past 34 years. He joined the store in April 1937—five months



The ground floor.

the streets as a protest against high taxes. Amazingly nobody in the store lost their lives. Stock worth £100,000 was rushed from Liverpool and a building was leased in which trading was to continue for 14 years. In 1954—a big year in Owen Owen history—a brand new store, built at a cost of almost £1m and designed by Coventry architect, Mr. Rolf Hellberg, was opened in a commanding position in the

with responsibility for the midlands and southern stores at Wolverhampton, Erdington, Finchley and Southampton.

He says the Coventry store has had to gear itself to a volatile population whose future is very much tied to the car industry—Coventry is the biggest car producer in the U.K. Recently major changes to the ground floor have taken place. New fixtures have been built and the whole floor has been carpeted. Seven new escalators have been installed—total cost well over £100,000.

"The changes are already beginning to pay off", said Mr. Mariner, "particularly in regard to stationery, luggage, men's clothing and gifts. In addition the fashion accessory departments are also starting to nose forward".

Mrs. Nellie Walker has worked at Coventry for over 25 years and is a waitress in the Midway Restaurant.



Mr. Mariner is proud of Coventry's position. This year sales of haberdashery, handkerchiefs, perfumery, gifts, hosiery, travel goods, stationery, dress fabrics, paper patterns, hard-

from Banbury railway station—they would not let the trains into the city. The next day I walked about 10 miles into Coventry with two colleagues. The store was just a shell. The walls were standing but it was smoking and there was nothing left." Mr. Kilby has to contact customers immediately after the tragedy. He is now first hand on carpets.



Nineteen-year-old Ann Grainger is a sales assistant in the jewellery department under Miss Liz Murton. She wears rings which are part of a trial promotion. They cost £5—£35.



Mr. Kilby.

before the opening—as a salesman on bedding and furniture. He sold bedding until 1940—"I was on my summer holidays. I saw the blitz

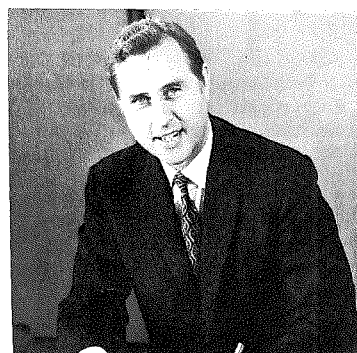
Mr. George joined the company in the same year. His family name, which has no connection with the English Prime Minister, attracted various comments; but there were stranger things—



Miss Sharman Hampson is assistant sales manager of the fashion floor. She joined the company as a junior trainee in 1969 and spent a year at the London buying office.

"The store also took on a William Shakespeare, a Florence Nightingale and a Rudyard Kipling at the same time", he recalled.

Mr. George was a salesman on carpets and linos before the war. In late 1940 he signed up for the Navy and was out of the city when the bombs fell. When hostilities ended he rejoined the store on the soft furnishings department and is still there. He has been married for 29 years.



General Manager Mr. Mariner.

city's main square, where it stands today, a stone's throw away from the new cathedral and opposite the 11th century parish church of St. Michaels.

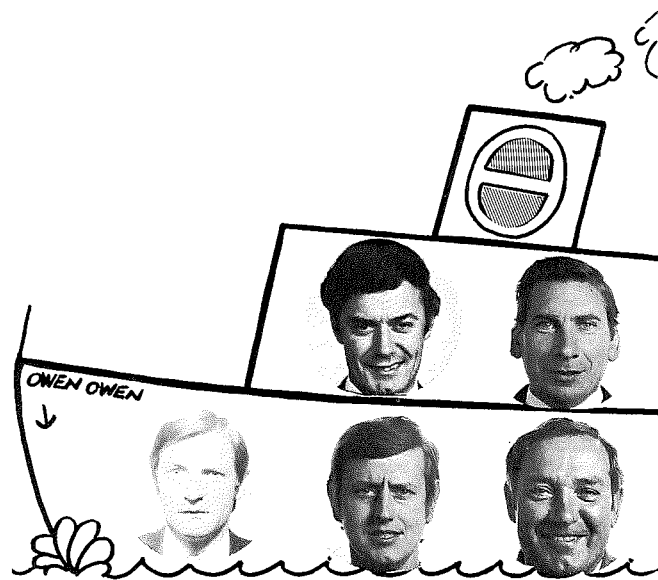
Because of Coventry's history and close proximity to Shakespeare's Stratford, the city attracts a lot of tourists, especially Americans, a large number of whom visit the Owen Owen store—the only large department store in the city centre. The people of Coventry have an affection for the store, like comrades who have come through the worst together. An old lady who had shopped there for over 30 years and had to move from the district was so upset she wrote to the general manager to say how much she would miss the place.

Full Steam Ahead For Our Co

We tried to gather our central buying team together for one picture but it was impossible to collect them in one place! So here they are in the same boat so to speak—all six of them. The team has been formed in the past two years and contains almost 100 years' company experience. All but one of the team have been general managers at Owen Owen or T. J. Hughes stores. They are:

● (Top left): Mr. Vincent Baylis, the senior buying controller responsible for the overall planning and controlling of buying, who joined the company in 1960 and was general manager at Clayton Square for 18 months;

● (Top right): Mr. Ken Hemsworth, buying controller for the accessories group, dress fabrics, toys and gifts, who joined the company in 1960 as general manager at Coventry and took up his new duties in July;





The picture above shows the Owen Owen store at Coventry today—the one below indicates the extent of the damage on the morning of November 15, 1940, after the bombs had fallen.



Central Buying Team

● (Left to right bottom row): Mr. Mike Wright, the buying controller for the men's and children's wear group, who came to Owen Owen in 1968 after working for Proctor and Gamble;

● Mr. John Hoesli, who joined the company from school and was general manager of the new Wolverhampton store from its opening in 1969 until last February. He is the buying controller for the major fashion departments;

● Mr. Arthur Simpkin, household sections buying controller, who joined Owen Owen in 1947 after a career as deck officer in the merchant navy throughout the war, who was previously general manager at Southampton; and

● Mr. Bob Reid, the buying controller for fashions in T. J. Hughes, who has been with the company since 1935 and has been general manager at four stores—Blackpool, Preston, Coventry and London Road. He also spent two years with Robinson's in Canada.



fashion scene

SENSATIONS, SHOCKS AND SURPRISES ARE OUT

—well almost!

THE Paris designers' Autumn shows have long since passed, but there was no doubt that the couture fashion scene advocated in common with our own garment industry, a return to stability, one might even say sanity, for Autumn.

A Spring season of dramatic and ever-rapid change saw us go through several decades of fashion, resulting in confusion and chaos through the trade. We move into an Autumn season where so far as the mass market is concerned, there is generally no looking-back to any particular period—rather a return to good-looking, flattering, often elegant clothes which Mrs. Average wants to wear. Clothes, in fact, which do not depend on sensational publicity for acceptance. Gimmicky fancy dress is out. Sensations, shocks and surprises may fill the headlines, but they rarely lead to record sales and profits.

Eccentricity

The young will, no doubt, continue to strive after eccentricity, but it is just possible that even they are beginning to suffer from a surfeit of novelty and would welcome a calming influence. Certainly at the time of writing, young fashions are in a state of suspense with little scope being offered to those who hope for quick returns by exploiting a topical "rave". Time will tell.

In outerwear there is a feeling for more fullness with "swagger" coats back in the picture. There are, however, still plenty of straight and semifitted coats about. Making a comeback, too, is the jacket or car coat, which can be wide-shouldered and belted in the forties manner or straight and double-breasted. But it will be Spring before we see the full impact of this revival. For the young, smock styling is important, often in bright colours, but generally the less extreme line of Autumn coats augurs well for sales to the more mature woman, rather than a repeat of the bumper sales on young style coats generated by the midi last year. On colour, the aubergine tones for the new season veer towards deep red and maroon rather than last year's brash purple. Earth tones such as browns, rust and camel will be good and black is still popular. Fur trims are still very much a part of the coat scene too. Lengths move around the knee but there is a place for both the mini and midi dependent on the style of each individual coat and the age of the wearer. Expect volume sales on Leather Coats and continued development on Rainwear in what could otherwise prove a difficult season.

We look forward to excellent sales on suits with indoor and outdoor trouser suits remaining strong. Blazer styling appears to have given a new stimulus to the demand for trouser suits which seemed at one time to be levelling out. Skirt suits will probably have to wait for Spring (and pleat development) for a resurgence in popularity. The key to the suit trade at the moment is, without doubt, to stick to the basics and do them well. Simple tailoring and tasteful styling result in an

inexpensive but impeccable end product, which makes the sky the limit.

Winning Dress

The dress for daywear has still to find its true role in the contemporary fashion picture. With lengths settling down or at least becoming identifiable to some extent with different age groups, there must be hope for a revival in day dress sales, though success will depend on how clever individual manufacturers are in both their choice of prints, which are of growing importance, and their use of fabrics, for it is certain that a winning dress will have to have something different about it.

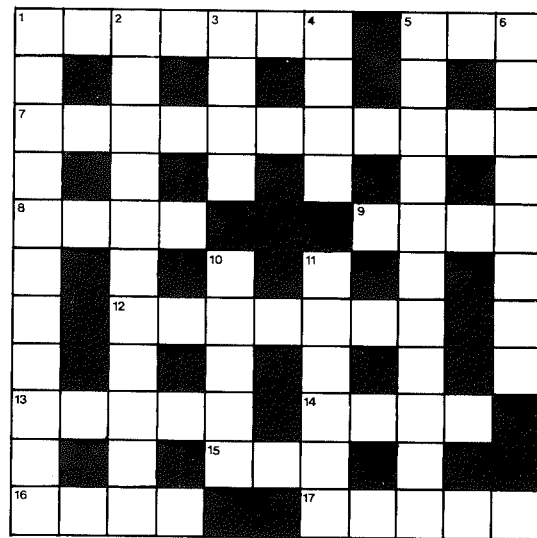
The excitement is provided by late day and evening dresses with, at this stage, just a faint hint of a return to favour by the cocktail dress—at one time a mainstay of the fashion business. Hostess dresses are increasingly in demand as entertainment in the home gains popularity, but it is the evening dresses, no longer at risk of being mistaken for nightgowns, which really cause the sensations with stunning combinations of fabrics such as velvet and lace, beautiful styling and tasteful colours.

Buoyant sales can almost certainly be expected on inexpensive dresses. On better dresses the picture is less certain. Manufacturers have suffered with retailers this past twelve months and have pulled out all the stops for Autumn. They have had to. Success then must now hinge to a large extent on how effectively stores put over their merchandise to the customer. It should prove to be an interesting season!

Knitwear leads the field in the separates scene. Longer lines, layered looks, shape variation through stitch constructions and co-ordination all the way emphasize the growing importance of fashion styling for all knitwear houses in a trade that has for too long depended on the Classic.

Blouses after a phenomenally successful run are likely to take a back seat to knitwear, although there will be a great demand for printed tunic tops in warm handle fabrics such as brushed tricot. Slacks are now established as a firm favourite in the casual era of the 70's, and indeed are and will remain an invaluable part of any woman's wardrobe. Styling will continue to develop with a greater accent on flares, and watch out for Oxford bags which look good in heavier weight woven fabrics.

SCENE CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 Medical perhaps but straight to the point?
- 5 Initially, payment on receipt of goods! Looks fishy?
- 7 Would super value lines from Oporto and Milan be described as this?
- 8 Look back to hold the thread.
- 9 The Brigadier's all at sea in it from the start.
- 12 The this of new season's merchandise is usually eagerly awaited.
- 13 May get bitten when business is slow.
- 14 Require.
- 15 Initially a heavy levy, since eased.
- 16 Observed your News Sheet minus 100.

- 17 A grass or hemp fibre sometimes used to make cord or mats.

DOWN

- 1 All around us on the sales floor.
- 2 Our most helpful competitor.
- 3 Customer in a black one, won't help to make ours a good one.
- 4 We might sell the cloth variety, though the butcher would be the usual stockist.
- 5 Toll corners help keep us within our limits.
- 6 Ask our man at the conference to do it for us?
- 10 Insist on getting your name in the paper.
- 11 There's always the same girl at the beginning of them. A household word.

See answers on back page.

NEWS FROM CANADA

A NEW DIRECTOR



Mr. Arbuckle

Mr. W. A. Arbuckle has been appointed a Director of the Owen Owen parent board. He has been closely associated with the company in Canada since 1954, where he is the non-executive Chairman of The G. W. Robinson Company Limited.

Mr. Arbuckle was born in Scotland, but has lived in Canada for many years. His home is in Montreal and he is a director of a number of prominent Canadian companies, including the Bank of Montreal, Canadian Pacific Railway and The Standard Life Assurance Company.

When he has some spare time, he likes to golf, fish and ski.

An early retirement

After 20 years as supervisor of the collection section of the credit department, Mrs. Helen Williams has taken an early retirement.

Mrs. Williams was responsible for training and co-ordinating the work of the collection clerks, and looked after court cases and bad debts. She handled her job in a most businesslike way, but was also a considerate person, so that many "bad debts" turned into regular and grateful customers.

A new delivery scheme

For the first time since 1899, all Robinson's deliveries will be handled through a central delivery service, following the inauguration of a united scheme with other local stores.

This means that the familiar Robinson's van will no longer be seen in the streets.

But a quicker, more efficient service will be achieved and the new system will help keep down soaring costs and free badly-needed space.

It was part of the agreement with the new company that all Robinson's long-serving drivers would be transferred without any loss of seniority and, in fact, all the drivers were guaranteed jobs.

There was a special send-off for Mr. Johnny Later, who had been with Robinson's for 20 years, and Mr. Frank Boucher—17 years.

Bowling battle

The battle for the inter-store bowling trophy between the Hamilton and Burlington stores was fought in May, when Burlington won for the second successive year.

The bowling season ended with a bowling banquet and dance at the Fischer Hotel, Hamilton, which made local history. It was the last event at the hotel, which was later demolished to make way for new down-town city development.

In the picture, the winning team receives the trophy from Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Tribe. Mr. Tribe is the credit manager.



The winning bowls team receives its prize.

They cycled to work in strike

Staff at Hamilton thought up some ingenious ways of getting to work during a recent three-week bus strike.

Some hitch-hiked and others brought bicycles, but not one of the full-time staff missed work.

Regrettably, the store's customers were not inclined to make the same effort and the strike left its mark on the trading picture of the store and others.

HOCKEY CHAMPIONS



Southampton won the 12th annual inter-store hockey tournament at the Owen Owen sports ground at Lythalls Lane, Coventry, where 15 teams competed for the Norman Cup.

The Southampton XI fought their way to victory in an exciting tussle with Doncaster, who had beaten Finchley 2-0 in the semi-final. It was a goal-less final, but Southampton won by forcing five corners to Doncaster's one.

The Hampshire store won by an even closer margin in their semi-final clash with Coventry. Unlucky Coventry lost by just three corners to two.

Other results, First round: Coventry beat Erdington, Plumbs beat Wolverhampton, Doncaster beat Bootle Strand, Birkenhead beat Bootle Centre, Chester beat Preston, Southampton beat Stafford House, London Road beat Clayton Square, Finchley had a bye.

Second round: Finchley beat Chester, Doncaster beat London Road, Coventry beat Plumbs, Southampton beat Birkenhead.

Tea was provided at the Leofric by courtesy of the Board of Directors and the whole day was marshalled by the working committee of the Coventry store.

Fashion lesson

"Forget just about every idea you ever had about fashion and start your fall season with a clear head, an open mind and a great new enthusiasm towards the new", fashion co-ordinator Mrs. Carol Weir told 130 sales staff from both stores at a two-hour "fashion clinic" in August.

The event was held at the Burlington Mall Auditorium, after a wine and cheese party. The showings were informal and each employee was given an A to Z guide to the new autumn fashions.

The "clinic" was so successful that it may become a regular event for Robinson's sales staff.

Holiday Trip

Four members of the Robinson's staff flew to the Old Country for three weeks' holiday recently. For three of them it was a return home.

The quartet were: Mrs. Glenice Blackborow, Mrs. Ruth Butler, Mrs. Joan Yeardey and Mrs. Laura Hayes.



From left: Mrs. Blackborow, Mrs. Butler, Mrs. Yeardey and Mrs. Hayes.

Mrs. Blackborow visited her family at Hereford and was given VIP treatment at our Coventry store. Mrs. Butler and Mrs. Hayes travelled together, Mrs. Hayes conducting her companion on a sight-seeing tour of London, followed by an eight-day holiday on the continent, where they visited Holland, Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, France and Belgium.

Mrs. Yeardey enjoyed a family re-union at Louth in Lincolnshire and spent her time visiting friends and relatives.

Tea Party for Mrs Kelly

The visit from Canada of Mrs. Dorothy Kelly, sales manager with Robinsons from 1954 until her recent retirement, obviously called for a celebration. For Mrs. Kelly's life-long career with Owen Owen started in Clayton Square in 1929.

Preston store. In 1954, just as she and her husband planned to emigrate to Canada, Robinsons became part of the group—so straight to Robinsons she went.

Mrs. Kelly was anxious to see her colleagues of the 30's and



She was then Miss Dorothy Buckley, a sales assistant in the fashion departments. In 1939 she was promoted to the position of sales manager of fashions in the

40's, from Clayton Square and Preston. So Miss Arthurson decided to have a tea party for some 20 of them. This was held in the new Rowen Grill on the 5th floor of Clayton Square, and was greatly enjoyed.

The photograph shows Mr. and Mrs. Kelly with the chairman, Mr. John Norman.

IT HAPPENED AT T.J.'s

Mother was busy buying a bed and did not notice when her six-year-old daughter slipped away. When she did, a frantic search discovered her in an unusual place—perched atop a pedestal in the adjacent bathroom suites department wearing not much more than a contented smile, while an ever-widening pool appeared on the floor.

Fashion preview

Staff donned new outfits and stepped out bravely on to the catwalk in front of their colleagues when Coventry staged a 20-minute fashion show, complete with commentary and soft music, last month.

The show was a preview of autumn fashions and took place during the weekly staff training period.



VIP VIEW AS QUEEN OPENS NEW TUNNEL

OCCUPYING a VIP place when the Queen visited Liverpool recently to open the second Mersey Tunnel was Mrs. Anna Derbyshire, secretary to trading director, Mr. H. W. Plumb.

Mrs. Derbyshire was invited to the opening with her husband, Mr. Derwent Derbyshire, who is a senior civil engineer working for contractors Nuttall, Atkinson and Company. Although they were not actually in line to be presented to the Queen, they had a close-up view of the ceremony from the VIP stand, on the right of the picture.

Mrs. Derbyshire came to England from Canada five years ago on a working holiday, met her husband vacationing in Spain and has now settled here.

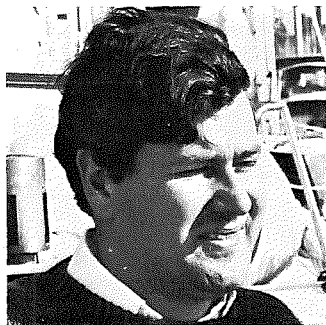
Later that day the Queen attended a variety performance at the Empire Theatre, which was televised the following Sunday. Forty people from Stafford House, Clayton Square, London Road and Bootle Centre saw the show in the presence of Her Majesty and were entertained by such Liverpool stars as Ken Dodd, Frankie Vaughan and Jimmy Tarbuck.

The new bus service using the tunnel will make shopping in Liverpool easier for shoppers from across the river and should boost trade at the Liverpool stores.

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What Do You Know?

More questions to test your general knowledge. Give yourself four points for every correct answer and reckon your score out of 100. There are no prizes, but you can take a bow if you get more than half right. The answers are on the back page.



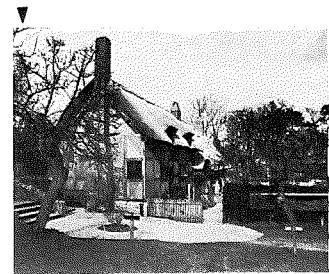
1. When was the Battle of Waterloo?
2. Who wrote Pilgrim's Progress?
3. What do the initials UNESCO stand for?



4. What is the Great Barrier Reef?

5. Who is this?
6. What is the capital city of Finland?
7. What is the highest mountain in the British Isles?
8. Who was Apollo the son of in classical mythology?
9. What was this event?
10. What is a cabriolet?
11. When did the Titanic go down?
12. What is a Henry?
13. How many centimetres are there in one inch?
14. Do men have more brains than women?

15. How many American presidents have been assassinated?
16. Which camel has only one hump—a Dromedary or Bactrian?
17. How many pores are there in the skin?
18. Where is this?



19. What is the Mistral?
20. How many crochets are there in a minim?
21. What is a light year?
22. What is the Appian Way?
23. Where does Mohair come from?
24. What is a Bishop's hat?
25. What do the Roman numerals LXXVI stand for?

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COLOURED DISCS REPLACE TIME CLOCK IN NEW STAFF AREA AT LONDON ROAD

Staff at T. J. Hughes in London Road, Liverpool, have a bright new prospect facing them when they arrive for work each morning.

The staff entrance has been moved to the opposite side of Stafford Street and extensively modernised. Wood panelling decorates the staircase and an attractive reception area has been built from what used to be a dark, basement stockroom.

And when the staff arrive for work they no longer have to clock in in the traditional way. An experimental system of coloured discs has replaced the old time clock. "It is quicker and quieter and you can see at a glance who is in," said Miss Maude Oliver, personnel manager.

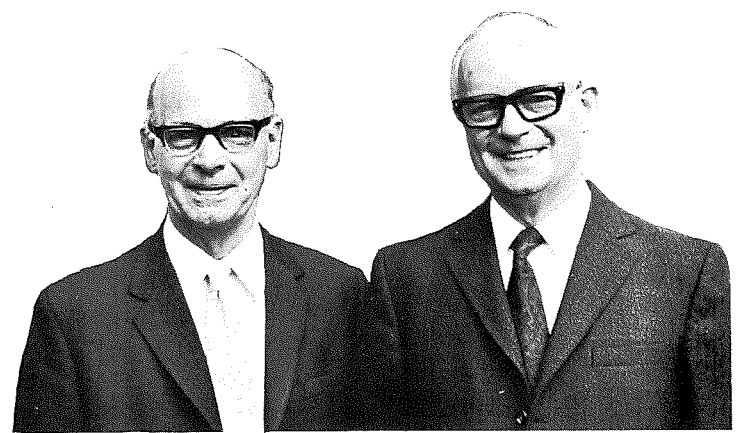
Colours indicate the staff situation every day. Each member of the staff turns over a disc on arrival. The discs show red before



the staff come in. On the reverse side, blue means full-time, green means part-time full day and yellow means part-day. White discs indicate holidays.

There was one problem, how-

ever. Some of the store's ardent soccer supporters were offended by having to turn their red discs over to blue! Red is the colour of Liverpool Football Club and blue of Everton!



They remember store being built

THE Owen Owen store in Clayton Square, Liverpool, made its reputation thanks to people like Leonard and Leslie Brooks, who retired recently after more than 80 years' service between them.

The brothers saw the store built and, as boys, walked past the spot when it was occupied by railway warehouses, back in the 1920's. Born in the Dingle area of Liverpool, they joined Owen Owen within 18 months of each other. There were four boys and two girls in the family, and their father and uncles were seafarers. Leslie was 23 when he started work as a salesman in the soft furnishing department at Clayton Square in January, 1930. His brother joined the following April. He had wanted to go to sea, but the prospect was not bright at that time. They found themselves working on different floors as salesmen under the same buyer—Mr. John Davies.

Little Traffic

Clayton Square was the only Owen Owen in the country then. It closed at one o'clock on Wednesday and staff worked a five-and-a-half-day week, finishing at 8 p.m. on Saturdays. "Clayton Square was a proper square in those days," said Leonard, "and there was little traffic about. It was a different type of trade then and the shoppers were more inclined to spend a day at the store and take their meals in the restaurant where there was a four-piece orchestra. The merchandise was more specialised and trade was more leisurely—you offered a customer a chair and had a conversation with her. They asked for you by name and new customers came on recommendation."

Personnel Manager

Leslie became soft furnishing buyer in 1938 and sales manager in 1945, after service in the RAF. In 1947 he became workrooms manager at Whitechapel. He was personnel manager at Bootle Centre when he retired.

Since the war, Leonard has been manager of four departments at Owen Owen and T. J. Hughes. In 1964 he became credit sanction manager at T.J.'s and in 1968 complaints manager. "You find you have a lot of time on your hands when you retire," he said, "but there's plenty of work to do around the house."

She Paints for Pleasure

FORMER staff controller Miss Margherita Costain is making a considerable name for herself in art circles since retiring six years ago. She has had three exhibitions of her work at a West Kirby art shop and was recently elected a fellow of the Deeside Art Group.

Miss Costain, who lives in Newton, Wirral, worked on the personnel side in Liverpool for many years. She was secretary to Miss N. L. Arthurson and assistant staff controller at Clayton Square, and subsequently staff controller at London Road and Bootle Centre.

Most of her paintings are done with a palette knife, and her pictures are usually pleasing landscapes. Miss Costain says she paints to relax and give pleasure to other people. She has been painting for



about 15 years. Since retiring in 1965 she has kept in touch with many Owen Owen pensioners and helps administer the trust fund set up in 1900 by Mr. Owen Owen for the benefit of needy employees and pensioners.

Some Excitement at Southampton

THERE was a sinister happening at Southampton recently, which resulted in an injured man being taken in custody to hospital.

It all started when assistant general manager Mr. Ron Skinner was summoned from his bed at 01.30 in the morning in response to the store's burglar alarm. Large numbers of police arrived and swarmed over the roof, but no intruder was found.

However, when the store opened a few hours later, Miss Valerie Holder, manageress of the invoice office and receiving room spotted a lamp bulb missing from its socket and painter Roy Dawson saw it outside on the roof. Following a trail of keys and other objects, he discovered a man injured on top of the upper roof where he had been all night.

The man had to be lowered on a stretcher from the roof by firemen. He subsequently made an appearance in court at Lancaster.

Flatterers!

Satisfied customers have written expressing their thanks to:

Mrs. Aspden, carpets Preston, and to the carpet-laying contractors.

Miss Potthecary, men's wear, Southampton, for her courteous service—"Nothing was too much trouble".

Miss Hoare, china, Southampton, for the concern she showed to a customer who wished to exchange one of two tea sets which were engagement presents. The customer was given a refund.

Mrs. Williams/Welton, handyman and gardening clerk, Clayton Square, whose service was "delightful".

RETIREMENTS

Bootle Centre
Mr. L. H. Butler/Leslie Brooks 41 years

T. J. Hughes
Mr. L. Butler/Leonard Berkeley 40 years

Mr. George Douglas 36 years
Miss Amy Hackney 39 years
Mr. Joseph Lannon 32 years
Mr. Donald C. Murray 32 years
Mr. George L. Wheelan 35 years
Miss Marguerite I. Dove 36 years
Mr. William Killops 34 years
Mrs. Ann Cooley 32 years
Mrs. Doris Boswell 32 years
Mrs. A. M. Howland 31½ years

Head Office
Miss L. M. Coventry 32 years

Coventry
Mr. Leon November 36 years
Mr. Samuel Holehouse 39 years

Clayton Square
Mr. George H. Cowell 37 years
Miss Doris Wells/Wensley 41 years

WHAT ABOUT US?

If you don't think there's enough news about YOUR store in *Scene*, it's time you did something about it. *Scene* is YOUR magazine and YOUR news is what it's all about. We need your contributions to make it go.

So if you have a story about your work, or the way you spend your spare time—tell us PLEASE. You can write to us direct if you like (care of the Secretary's office at Liverpool), or give your news to your personnel manager, who will pass it on to us.

Our next issue comes out in December, which means we want your contributions NOW.

'Father' to 15 Girls!

Southampton furniture and bedding salesman Sidney Dowding played father to 15 girls this summer. His wife, Vera, still takes an active interest in the Girls Brigade company she has run for many years, despite a serious illness five years ago.

So once again this summer the couple set out for camp at Boscombe, where, in order to relieve his wife of some of the more arduous work—Sidney, who joined Owen Owen in 1952, did most of the cooking, darning and washing-up.

They like the new

Scene

The "new look" *Scene* was welcomed by London Road staff with great enthusiasm. Miss E. Rigby, assistant personnel manager, writes: "More interest was taken in articles other than those associated with our own store. The staff felt they wanted to read the issue completely whereas before many only glanced through. A copy of *Scene* was issued to each of the pensioners at our May tea party and we are also sending a copy to those who did not attend."

Staff at Coventry also liked the new *Scene*. More than 150 were asked to fill in a questionnaire about their reaction by personnel manager, Mrs. A. M. Avian. Among the results: 138 said "Yes" we do like the new magazine—115 wanted more pictures—136 wanted a letters page—and (we're glad to say) 143 said they liked the idea of a group magazine! Other suggestions are being considered for future issues.



Twins at T.J's

Twins Ann and Lucy Barnes aged 20 (Ann is on the right in the picture) have been with T. J. Hughes at London Road for five years and are working hard in Top Gear and hardware. They joined on the same day—July 25, 1966—when they caused some consternation for the personnel manager. Can they be told apart? "Ann is supposed to be fatter in the face," said Lucy, "but otherwise we dress alike and like the same things."

Were You Right?

Here are the answers to the general knowledge quiz on page

- June 18, 1815.
- John Bunyan 1628-1688.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.
- A coral reef extending for 1,200 miles along the east coast of Australia.
- Yachtsman Chay Blyth who sailed single-handed the "wrong way" round the world.
- Helsinki.
- Ben Nevis 4,406 feet.
- Jupiter and Latona.
- Festival of Britain 1951.
- A one-horse vehicle.
- April 14, 1912 off Cape Race with the loss of 1,517 lives.
- An electrical unit of Inductance.
- 2.54 centimetres.
- It seems so. The average weight of a man's brain is 3 lb 8 ozs, that of a woman is 2 lb 11 ozs.
- Four—Lincoln, Garfield, McKinley and Kennedy.
- The Dromedary or Arabian camel.
- 2½ million, or 3,000 to a square inch.
- Anne Hathaway's cottage, Stratford-on-Avon.
- A cold North wind of the French Mediterranean coast.
- Two.
- The distance light travels in one year, at which speed the sun's light takes eight minutes to reach us.
- The oldest and finest Roman road—from Rome to Capua.
- The Angora goat.
- A mitre.
- 76.

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

