



THE NEWSPAPER OF THE OWEN OWEN GROUP

Scene

No. 8 . AUTUMN 1972



Third Robinson's store see inside

FINANCIAL DIRECTOR HAS GIGANTIC TASK

Business is about people—the people who work in it and the people it serves. But business needs money to keep it trading and profit at the end of the year to keep it growing and independent. The man in charge of the money at Owen Owen is Mr. William Shuttleworth, a chartered accountant and the group's financial director.

He is responsible for the efficiency of the store and central offices, for the collecting in and paying out of cash and for the pension fund investments. In a business with a sales turnover of around £25 million per year, with thousands of suppliers, hundreds of thousands of account customers and with tens of millions of transactions, it all adds up to a gigantic task!

Money is inextricably wound up with merchandising—in sales budgets, in stock heights, in gross profit earning, in expense control. And the computer is being brought more into merchandising—in analysing deliveries, unit stock control systems and so on, with the basic information being gathered in many cases from the cash registers at the point of sale.

Then there is the preparation of the company's annual accounts and tough taxation problems. Not only does UK tax law tend to

change each year in the Finance Act, but because of the Robinson's operation in Canada, Mr. Shuttleworth also has to be conversant with Canadian tax law!

As financial director, he is deeply involved in all the company's plans for modernisation and for expansion, keeping the money required and the money available in line. He played a major part in the negotiations which led to the link-up with Hudson's Bay in Canada earlier this year—negotiations which lasted more than four months and which kept him in Canada for over six weeks.

Mr. Shuttleworth joined the company in 1955 as group chief accountant and was appointed a director of Owen Owen in 1958.

A native of Barrow-in-Furness, his professional career was spent with Peat, Marwick, Mitchell & Co. and Cooper Brothers & Co.,

interrupted by the war when he served as a pilot in the Royal Air Force. He qualified with honours in 1949 and three years later joined Tube Investments, where he stayed for four years before joining Owen Owen.

Mr. Shuttleworth served for several years on the committee of the Liverpool Society of Chartered Accountants and in 1970 was elected the Society's 101st President. He is also a member of several committees of the R.D.A. and is presently chairman of its statistical committee.

Mr. Shuttleworth and his wife, Brenda, live at Childwall in Liverpool, but they also have a house overlooking Lake Windermere, where they spend occasional weekends. Their two sons have forsaken accountancy for the law, Timothy being a barrister in London and Paul having just completed his law degree at Liverpool University.



● Mr. & Mrs. Shuttleworth

BUOYANT HALF YEAR

In the first six months trading this year the group made a profit before tax of £184,000, compared with a loss of £208,000 in the first six months of 1971. Robinson's and Plumb's, who both achieved satisfactory results in 1971, made a further improvement, but the big swing came from the UK stores which achieved an overall sales increase of 16 per cent over the depressed levels of last year.

See page two

TRUST FUND HELPS 150 PEOPLE

Business Scene

In this issue of "Scene" we have set aside a separate section for business news incorporating comments on trading and the development of the group. It is hoped to continue and perhaps expand this feature in future issues.



Mr. J. A. H. Norman

GROUP RESULTS

Commenting on the group results for the first six months, the Chairman, Mr. John Norman, told *Scene*: "We have made a very good recovery in the period, compared with the losses incurred in the first half of 1971 and this turn-round reflects great credit on all members of the Company.

"Robinson's in Canada and Plumb's have played their part, but it is particularly gratifying to see the big improvement from Owen Owen (Stores) Limited, which represents the performance of all stores in this country.

"It is, of course, only on the full year's result that our real progress can be measured and I am sure all stores will respond to this challenge as we enter the crucial pre-Christmas trading period of the second half year."

In 1900, Mr. Owen Owen gave 2,000 ordinary shares of the company to establish a Trust Fund, the income on the shares to be used to provide financial help to the "present and future employees and ex-employees of Owen Owen Limited or the widows or children of such persons". Under his will, Mr. Owen gave a further 1,000 shares to the Trust on his death in 1910.

With the successful development of the company since that time the Fund's holding of Owen Owen Limited shares has grown to 533,880 ordinary shares together with nearly £100,000 at present day prices in shares of other companies.



● Mr. Owen Owen

The Fund is at present administered by three Trustees—all of them grandsons of the founder—Mr. E. O. Cemlyn-Jones, Mr. D. H. O. Owen and Mr. J. A. H. Norman.

The income of the Fund is mainly dependent on the amount of dividend paid on the ordinary shares of Owen Owen Limited. Currently, grants from the Fund are running at the rate of up to £13,000 a year, being made to over 150 people, mainly to retired employees to supplement their other income where necessary.

Before the Fund can make a grant it is necessary to learn something of the financial circumstances of the person to whom the grant is to be made. This is necessary because the Fund is, in law, a charitable fund and is subject to the authority of the Charity Commissioners. The Fund's monies can legally be used only to help those who are "going short" of things reasonably needed in everyday life—but for elderly people this phrase can nowadays be interpreted fairly liberally.

Applications for grants should normally be made through the store Personnel Managers who send details to Miss Costain (herself now retired but for many years a Staff Controller in Liverpool) who makes a recommendation to the Trustees. The details of financial circumstances have to be asked for, but they are treated in complete confidence.

The sort of circumstances in which grants can be made are for people with low incomes or people faced with some unexpected high bills due to illness or infirmity or some unforeseen troubles. The Fund is limited in what it can do to help—both by the amount of its income, by the requirements of the law on charities and by the need not to conflict with available social security benefits (because any regular grant of more than £1 per week can lead to a reduction in supplementary pension).

Owen Owen (Stores) Ltd.

Mr. T. O. McGrath, managing director of Owen Owen (Stores) Ltd. says —

The first half-year maintained the trading recovery begun in the second half of last year. It has been based on the twin foundations of improving the merchandise ranges and more effective selling, and we shall continue building on these lines in the months ahead.

A start has been made on the introduction of a more formal system of management—the new management style. It involves a formal agreeing of objectives to be achieved, determining what help is needed to reach these objectives, including any necessary training, a regular review of progress made towards achieving the objectives and quick and effective corrective action to recover any shortfall in achievement.

Individual

It takes account of the individual, setting out what each is able to do and what resources are needed to achieve the personal objectives, and by identifying what each is responsible for it ensures that all are working together to achieve the company's overall objectives.

The method has already been introduced at General Manager/Buying Controller/Central Buyer level and will be implemented progressively throughout the company."

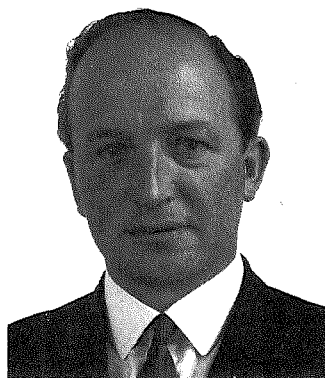
From the Trading Director:

Sales in the U.K. stores in the first half year showed very good increase on 1971. Our rate of increases was in fact slightly higher than the national average, reflecting of course our own poor sales performance in the previous year. All stores exceeded their sales budgets.

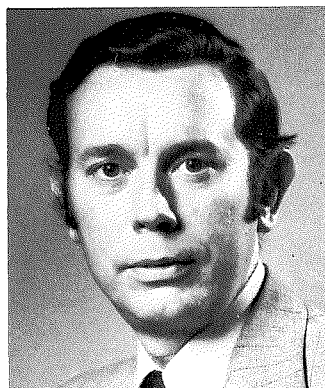
The two Liverpool stores made an excellent recovery and the increases at London Road were particularly encouraging when it is remembered that the sales area has been greatly reduced. Southampton, Finchley and Birkenhead all maintained very good progress and Wolverhampton has fully recovered its trading momentum after the temporary setback in the middle of last year.

Building

Chester and Erdington were both adversely affected by building works, but a very high increase at Bootle Strand reflected in part the addition of extra selling space. The stores with the smallest increases in own sales were Coventry, Preston and Doncaster.



Trading Director
Mr. H. W. Plumb



Mr. T. O. McGrath



Buying Director Mr. V. W. Baylis

From the Buying Director:

All buying controls exceeded their budget sales. Mr. Hoesli's Fashions came through with a terrific increase on last year of nearly 36 per cent, with particularly good increases in rainwear (Miss Nevitte), dresses (Miss Wallace) and separates (Mr. Howie).

The Household sections controlled by Mr. Simpkin maintained their steady progress, led by electrical appliances, audio and radio (Mr. Royds) household linens (Mr. Roskell) and bedding (Mr. McDonald).

In the Accessories group the highest increases were achieved

in handkerchiefs, umbrellas, scarves and jewellery (Miss Pluck).

Men's and Boys'

In the Men's and Boys' group, Mr. Aston, Mr. Briggs and Mr. Macfarlane all achieved increases of 40 per cent or more.

At London Road, the resident buyers in Mr. Reid's control achieved an increase of nearly 35 per cent, with particularly good results from shoes (Mr. Evans), dresses and rare set (Miss Brown) and separates and rainwear (Miss Miller).

THIRD ROBINSON'S STORE



Picture shows (from left) Mr. D. S. McGiverin, managing director of the Hudson's Bay retail stores, Mr. F. W. Dakin, Robinson's president and Mr. J. A. H. Norman, chairman of Owen Owen, at the time of the announcement of the link up between Robinsons and Hudson's Bay earlier this year.

A new Robinson's department store is attracting shoppers at Hamilton, Ontario, where dramatic developments have taken place in the last three months. The new store opened its doors on August 10, after extensive behind-the-scenes activity and a spectacular record-breaking sale.

Completely refurbished and enlarged at a cost of over \$2 million it was formerly the Hudson's Bay store which was transferred to Robinson's control on August 1, as part of a deal between Owen Owen (Canada) Ltd. and the Hudson's Bay Company.

Many items from the Bay store were sold at big discounts to clear old stocks before the opening. "It was the biggest sale we had ever had", said store manager Mr. John Hansen. "Shirts went for \$5-99, although original prices might have been \$8, \$10 or even \$12".

Alterations

Extensive alterations were carried out before and during the 10 days the store was closed prior to re-opening as Robinson's. The shopping area was increased by 15,000 square feet by building new perimeter walls in old stockroom sections; new lighting, floor coverings and fittings were installed. The restaurant was completely gutted and enlarged from 3,000 to 4,500 square feet and refurbished in modern decor — and a stand-up snack bar was added on the main floor.

Biggest

Special shops and boutiques were introduced, including the Launching Pad, for girls aged 16-22; In Gear, for fashion conscious young men; and Sheep and Suede, selling leather, suede and sheepskin fashions for women.

It is certainly the biggest of the Robinson stores. With 139,000 square feet, it outranks the established Hamilton James Street store (114,000 square feet) and the Burlington store (103,000 square feet), as well as the Eastgate Square store now being built in Hamilton (100,000 square feet).

Footnote: In the first two weeks of trading, sales at the new Robinson's shot up by 73 per cent above the same period last year.

Winning Bowls Team

Winners of the Hamilton Bowling League (from left): front, Wayne Rolph, Noreen McDonald (captain) and Bertha Soldaat; back, Ken Taylor and Logan Hamilton.

STORE'S NORWEGIAN GM

Mr. John I. Hansen, general manager of the new store, emigrated to Canada from Norway in 1935 and attended school in Vancouver. After graduating from the University of British Columbia, he joined the Hudson's Bay Company's Vancouver store in 1955, becoming department manager three years later.

He was appointed store manager's

assistant at Edmonton in 1965 and progressed to become divisional merchandise manager for home furnishings in 1968. He was transferred to Hamilton as store manager in 1971 and joined Robinson's as GM of the Centre Store this year.

Married with three children, Mr. Hansen enjoys skiing and stamp collecting.



General manager Mr. J. I. Hansen

NEWS FROM CANADA

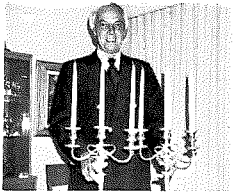
Now We Are 3!

"Now We Are Three" was Robinson's slogan for the opening of the new store. And, as if to mark the occasion, Mrs. Dot Pond, in charge of the Elizabeth Arden department in down-town Hamilton, became the grandmother to triplets—three healthy boys. "That must surely be a good omen!" said personnel manager Miss D. Bechler.



MR. TRIBE CELEBRATES QUARTER CENTURY

General manager of Robinson's credit operation and a member of the executive group, Mr. E. A. Tribe has just celebrated the completion of 25 years with the company.



He is seen here with a set of silver candlesticks which were presented to him.

Mr. Tribe joined Robinson's in June, 1947, and became credit manager in 1954. He is married with three children and one grandson.

Widow unveils plaque in memory of George Baker

A six-foot stone memorial stands in Little League Park, Ancaster, near Hamilton in memory of Robinson buyer Mr. George A. Baker, who died suddenly last year. The monument, and a bronze plaque given by his fellow employees, was unveiled recently by his widow.

Mr. Baker was a founder of Little League baseball and a former league president.

Owen Owen Pension Fund

A STAKE IN 70 COMPANIES

"Equities lost some of their firmness on concern over militant dockers Leading oils were marked a little lower, but mining markets generally maintained a firm tone P. & O. deferred and Bovis continued to attract most of the limelight on the bid situation Overnight money commanded 6½% in the morning but rates had eased at the close"

These are the phrases that appear day after day in the financial columns of the daily papers and most of us turn quickly on to the other pages, more interested in the latest disasters, the fashion pages, sport or just the crossword. Yet many of us—all those who are members or will be members of the company's pension fund—are affected.

That is why each year a special bulletin is published on the notice boards giving details of the pension fund. The most recent notice showed that in April this year the pension fund added up to £3,978,080.

The reaction of at least one member of staff was to say: "They've got nearly £4,000,000 lying there. Why can't they pay better pensions to those staff who have already retired and whose wages were much lower than wages are today?"

Who are "They"?

The pension fund is run by trustees who are advised by an actuary and a firm of investment managers. The actuary calculates, at least once every five years, the liabilities of the fund—how much it is going to have to pay in pensions to all its past and present members, taking account of average rates of life expectancy, the course (and curse) of inflation and the expected yield on investments. This is to make sure the fund is solvent and that it will be able to pay our pensions when we retire. The investment managers are in constant touch with stock market movements and regularly review the prospects of all the companies in which the fund is invested so as to protect those investments and

so as to take every reasonable opportunity of increasing their value.

Where is the £4 million?

The money isn't lying in a bank, nor is there a large safe somewhere in head office holding four million pound notes. Almost the entire pension fund is invested in ordinary shares of many of the world's leading companies—not only UK companies but also companies in America, in Canada, in Australia and in Europe. The valuation of £4,000,000 represents the market value on the stock exchanges of the world of the pension fund's holdings of other companies' securities.

One of the fund's major benefits to members is that pension entitlement is based on the average final five years' earnings—and as a consequence one of the fund's major problems is inflation. It has been calculated that if someone starts work today at £800 p.a. and receives no increases except cost of living increases, then by the time they retire in 45 years' time, if inflation continues at its present rate, they will be receiving over £20,000 per year. And that is what their pension would have to be based on.

One way of meeting this problem is for the major part of the fund to be invested in equities (i.e. in ordinary shares) both at home and abroad.

At the last valuation of the pension fund's holdings in April 1972, the fund's investments had cost £2,229,204 and their market value was £3,978,080, an increase in value of £1,748,876. This is where the money will come from to pay the pensions based on our final earnings, and over the years

to provide improvements in the pension fund benefits generally.

Some of the 70 or more companies whose shares are held by the pension fund at the moment are:

- Banks**—Midland, Barclays.
- Insurance**—Prudential, Sun Life, Eagle Star, General Accident.
- General**—Dowty, Imperial Chemicals, Glaxo, Beechams, Bovis, United Builders Merchants, Rank, Telephone Rentals.
- Oils**—British Petroleum, Shell Transport.
- American**—IBM, American Express, Louisiana Land and Exploration, Pinkertons.
- European**—Philips, Ciba-Geigy.

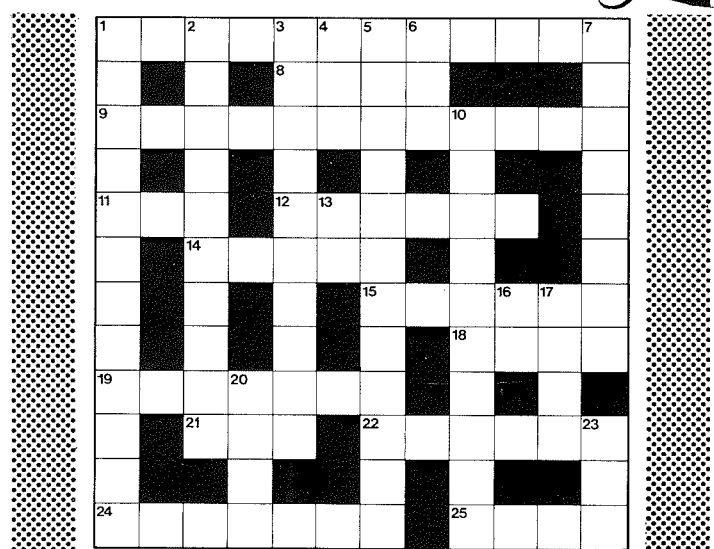
The Owen Owen pension fund is not, of course, unique—most pension funds are now invested in other companies' shares. So are the funds of some trade unions, so are the unit trusts to which many contribute and so are many of the premiums which we all pay to insurance companies. Increasingly the ownership of Britain's companies is held indirectly by the people of Britain through the medium of these institutions—we are all shareholders now!

Why not increased pensions?

The answer to this question has already been given. The securities held by the pension fund represent the money that has to be used for the payment of present pensions and for the payment of future pensions when those who are working members of the pension fund eventually retire. The fund is built up of the money to pay each individual member's pension when he or she retires. Those pension entitlements are built up in accordance with length of service and with earnings. Pensions must be calculated according to the rules; otherwise if someone gets more than their true pension entitlement it could mean that someone else would have to get less. The only way in which pension benefits can be improved over and above those provided for in the rules of the scheme is if the pension fund's investment policy is more successful and achieves greater growth than the assumptions on which the fund is based, or more is paid in the form of contributions. The actuary is at present working on his five yearly assessment of the fund's assets and liabilities. A further notice will be published in due course following his report.

Meanwhile, it can be said that pension entitlements were increased in December, 1970 for all pensioners who had retired before January 1, 1967, the cost of this being met by a special contribution from the company.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

1. Start by going in, the whole is very enjoyable (12)
8. Could be described as right, deck or under, but is usually of assistance (4)
9. Insert Pan (Anagram) (12)
11. Initially over 65 (3)
12. Brazilian carnivorous animal about the size of a cat (6)
14. John Wayne is rumoured to have been the hero of this battle (5)
15. With the north out, a gift becomes laid down in advance (6)
18. Open ditch which sounds a bit of a burden (4)
19. There are two ways of spelling this type of table, this way looks hairy (7)
21. Broken arm used for battering (3)
22. When I leave the actor, the character asks for more (6)
24. The part of a flower that contains the nectar (7)

25. The going had a metallic booming sound when I left (?)

DOWN

1. Taxi, tool and pine combine in employing successfully for a selfish purpose (12)
2. Law breaker? on somebody else's land (10)
3. If you've this around the joint, you'll be in pain (10)
4. Go to the dance and you're browned off (3)
5. The science of man or mankind in the widest sense
6. Girls name
7. Teen gear could produce power (anagram) (8)
10. On the move (10)
13. Initially before noon (2)
16. Often precedes what? (2)
17. If you're on it, you'd be nervy (4)
20. Seasoning for a sailor (4)
23. A band round this could make a bandit (3)

What do you know?

More questions to test your general knowledge. Give yourself five points for every correct answer and reckon your score out of 100. There are no prizes, but you can take a bow if you score over 60.

1. Who wrote "The Four Just Men"?
2. What is the capital of Holland?
3. Where does caviar come from?
4. What are cricket bats made of?
5. What is monophobia?
6. What is the 40th wedding anniversary called?
7. Who wrote Madam Butterfly?
8. What is the capital city of Uganda?
9. What does QC stand for?
10. When did the Massacre of Glencoe take place?
11. Who wrote a History of the World while imprisoned in the Tower for 12 years and was finally beheaded in 1618?
12. Who is called the "father of the British Civil Service"?
13. When were the railways nationalised in Britain?
14. When was the Black Hole of Calcutta?
15. Where is Catania?
16. What is the first sign of the zodiac?
17. What is a scruple?
18. What is ague?
19. How many pawns are there in chess?
20. What is loam?

—ANSWERS—

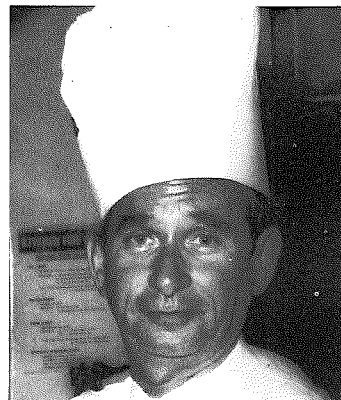
1. Edgar Wallace.
2. The Hague.
3. The sturgeon.
4. Willow.
5. A fear of being alone.
6. Ruby.
7. Puccini.
8. Kampala.
9. Queen's Counsel.
10. February 13, 1692.
11. Sir Walter Raleigh.
12. Samuel Pepys.
13. 1948.
14. 1756.
15. Sicily.
16. Aries.
17. A measure of weight equal to 1.296 grams.
18. An old fashioned name for malaria, or other fevers.
19. 16.
20. Soil composed of clay and sand.

Telex Orders

Customers at Coventry can select and order furniture direct from Denmark, now that a new Scandinavian Room—the first in the group—has opened.

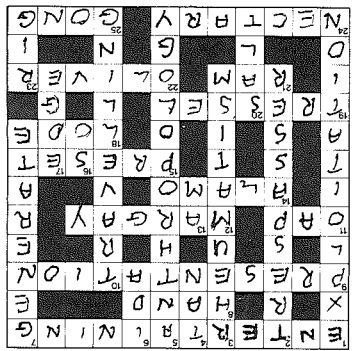
The showroom is a permanent exhibition of Danish furniture and customers who decide to buy have their orders transmitted by telex to Denmark, from the Scandinavian Room's office in Bond Street.

HARD WORK



People in America work much harder than people in England, says Coventry's head Chef, Mr. Walker Seymour, who spent three and a half weeks in America and Canada during the summer.

"It's a quite different type of world, where people work harder, live harder and are always on the go," said Mr. Seymour, who visited such places as Vancouver, San Francisco and the Canadian Rockies.



Roman City

Chester was founded by the Romans in about AD 60 as a fortress and fell into 500 years of decay when the legions left in the middle of the 4th century, until 907 when Alfred the Great's daughter rebuilt the town and raised a castle near the river.

From then until the Norman conquest, Chester found its former glory—it was the last of the important Saxon towns to fall to the invaders and was destroyed again in 1070, later to be ruled during a turbulent period by the Norman earls up to 1237.

In 1506 Henry VII granted the city a Great Charter which made it a county and to this day it is still officially "The City and County of the City of Chester".

Eastgate Street is the main shopping street, where the famous Jubilee clock tower bestrides the road. Chester is famous for its good shops and its romantic Rows—covered walks with balconies at first floor level. A new shopping precinct blends well with the delightful old architecture.



Maureen often finds she has to stand in for her boss, as well as type his letters and take his phone calls. "I have to deal with enquiries when Mr. Ross is on his travels between stores", she says,

The Chester stores have an excellent training record, with eight passes and three distinctions in the proficiency certificate last year and one first-year and three second-year passes this year in the National Retail Distribution Certificate.

CHESTER'S

One of the trainees, 18-year-old Geoff Brown, worked at the stores part-time for two years before joining Owen Owen full time in July, with eight 'O' levels and two 'A' levels. Geoff has just started studying for his Certificate of Distributive Management Principles and would like to be a general manager, personnel manager, or buyer.

So watch out Chester personnel manager Miss Jane Vearonelly (the name is Italian), who has worked for the company since 1970.

Jane has a bedsit in Chester and enjoys dancing, folk singing and swimming in her spare time. Her parents live in Noctorum, Birkenhead.

She says, "I love my job, although it can be a bit hectic at

NO wonder people come to shop in Chester. On a sunny day the city makes you welcome in many ways. There are good shops, delightful walks, interesting old buildings at every turn and the pleasures of the river, reminiscent of Windsor. And, of course, there's Owen Owen—or rather two Owen Owens.

There's the main Eastgate Street store and another in Bridge Street, both of which are popular shopping places. And between them they can sell you everything from a roll of Axminster to a jar of quails' eggs!

The stores employ about 230 people altogether and boast a combined sales area of nearly 34,000 square feet, more or less equally divided, on three floors in each building. Both stores were acquired from Richard Jones and Co. in 1960—coincidentally exactly 100 years after the family company was founded.

Having two stores more than 300 yards apart to run poses unusual problems for the general manager, Mr. J. A. Rossbotham, who says he has lost more than a stone in weight in the last six months, by having to make so many trips across town. "But it's

director, before becoming Chester GM two years ago.

He says, "Chester people have more than an average amount of money to spend and most of our sales are in the middle to top merchandise range. One of our best departments is carpets. We have an excellent carpet-fitting service and our own workrooms, and the carpet department is one of the most progressive departments in the group, under Mr. Tom Evans, who has been in carpets at Chester for 12 years.

"Our Rare Set department has also built up a good reputation, despite the stiff competition in town, and the fashion floor has picked up a lot this year, making the biggest sales percentage increase in Chester for the half year from February to July".

Having two stores means you also have to have two of other

many walls are made of reeds and plaster. When they were re-roofing some out-buildings, they discovered that some of the main floor beams were really old ships' masts, dating from the time when Chester was a port (up to the 15th century). They also found that Roman bricks had been used on one of the walls. The beams and bricks are still there.

Eastgate Street has been the scene of recent modifications. An attractive new shop front, which conforms with the traditional architecture of Chester, has been fitted, with entrance doors in the centre, instead of at the sides, and the whole ground floor has been given a facelift, featuring new carpets, fittings and decorations, based on improvements made at Wolverhampton. The cost of the modernisation was £45,000.

Despatch supervisor Mr. George Versey (61) has seen all the changes. He has worked in the stores for 44 years, since the age of 18, when he joined Richard Jones and Co. as a porter pushing a handcart or riding a bicycle through the streets on deliveries.

Chester-born Mr. Versey is the first in the Bridge Street store every day. He arrives at 6.30 a.m., to unlock all the doors and check security, before he gets down to his proper job of sorting through delivery dockets and supervising

the preparation, loading and unloading of merchandise.

Deliveries are made up to 30 miles from Chester and his department make about 600 trips a month with furniture and about 500 trips taking groceries.

The groceries come from the remarkable William Jones speciality food shop, which has been part of the Bridge Street store since 1961.

The shop sells such things as real chow mein, bamboo shoots, quails' eggs, truffles, exotic fruit and imported chocolates, and has customers all over the world, including a large number of titled people, like the Marquess of Cholmondeley and Viscount Leverhulme.

First hand in the order room Miss Peggy Pugh is as remarkable as the shop. She has worked there for 32 years and most of them have been spent as a van driver!

She started as a cashier in 1940 and was put on the vans because of the shortage of men drivers during the war. But she continued to drive a van until 1965 and



Display supervisor Linda Harding and display manager Mr. Frank Davies.

times. I like the variety it offers and take an interest in the merchandise side of the business. It would probably not be half as interesting not working in a store".

Linda Harding has a lot of "friends" who look alike, but they are the strong, silent type. For Linda is display supervisor and her "friends" are the dummies she dresses for the store and window displays. Linda (27) works with display manager Mr. Frank Davies (25) and is responsible for planning and carrying out displays, organising fashion shows and training juniors. There are eight main windows in the two stores and four smaller windows at William Jones to take care of—which can sometimes be amusing.

It is not unusual to see Linda pushing a trolley, or carrying undressed dummies from Bridge Street to Eastgate Street and vice-versa, with a policeman stopping the traffic for her.

Linda, who has worked at Finchley and Clayton Square and did two years art study before joining the company, is married to a marketing man and enjoys making pictures from fabric. She is the oldest person in the display team and also—at 5-ft. 11-ins.—the tallest, which means she gets the tall jobs like changing light bulbs and hanging pictures!



Personnel Manager Miss Jane Vearonelly (right) with new members of the staff.

a marvellous way to keep fit", he says, "and I do at least get plenty of fresh air!"

Married with three children, Heswall-born Mr. Rossbotham (called colloquially "Mr. Ross" by his colleagues) knows Chester well. He went to school there and, after spending the war years in the RAF, joined the organisation in 1949, as a trainee at T. J. Hughes. Most of his career has been spent as a shoe buyer, but he was also Blackpool GM, Owen Owen merchandise controller, T. J. Hughes buying director and merchandise

things, like two cash offices, two canteens, two merchandise managers, two staff entrances and two Tannoy systems. So that Chester has a larger proportion of non-selling staff than most stores.

Executive and non-selling management have recently moved into new offices at Bridge Street to create a closer link and improve stockroom facilities at Eastgate Street.

Because of the age of the building, Bridge Street tends to be a rabbit warren of rooms inside. Wood beams are everywhere and



General Manager Mr. J. A. Rossbotham



Miss Peggy Pugh

reckons to have logged more than 500,000 miles without an accident.

Someone else who enjoys driving is Girl Friday Maureen Antrobus—the general manager's secretary.

Maureen (25) has been on car rallies with her cousin, Dave, and drives a new 1000cc Mini Clubman. She has worked at Chester for six years and used to be the credit office supervisor—experience which she finds useful in her job.

New and Old Meet at Liverpool—



—double intake from schools

In August 97 school leavers were recruited throughout the UK stores—double last year's intake in response to the Government's decision to raise the school leaving age in 1973.

The recruitment of school leavers reflects the company's policy of "growing our own" junior and senior management, and it is hoped that this year's intake will provide a large pro-

portion of this year's proficiency test entrants.

We are sure that all newcomers will be made as welcome as the group above, pictured with Miss G. Cain at Clayton Square. They are (from left) Miss Cain, Miss Clare Foy, Miss Christine O'Neill, Miss Carol Williams, Miss June Dickinson, Miss Hilary Baxter and Miss Gillian Ball.

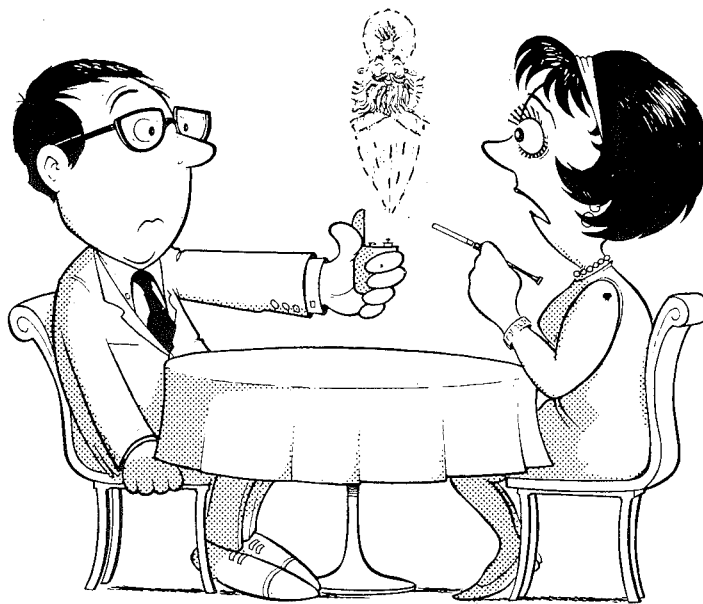
Chairman Presents 25-year Awards



The Chairman presents a watch to Mrs. M. Tarbuck. From left: Miss A. Rimmer, Mr. T. Lawrence, Miss I. Miller, Mr. A. Broderick, Mrs. Tarbuck, Mr. Norman and Buying Controller Mr. A. Simpkin.

More than 200 long service clocks and watches have been presented since 1968. Since the last issue of *Scene* the following have received timepieces:

Mr. A. Broderick (Group Auditor), Stafford House; Mr. A. Simpkin (Buying Controller), Stafford House; Mr. J. H. Barkway (Personnel Director), Stafford House; Mr. T. Lawrence/Laurie (Goods Lift Attendant), Clayton Square; Miss M. Gallagher (Cook—Clayton Room), Clayton Square; Mr. N. W. Hall/Haynes (Salesman—Bedding Dept.), Clayton Square; Mr. L. H. Evans (Supervisor—Promotion Studio), London Road; Mrs. M. Tarbuck (Porteress), London Road; Miss A. Rimmer (Porteress), London Road; Miss I. Miller (Resident Buyer), London Road; Miss B. Cottam (Stock Clerk), Audley House Complex.



I know the Owen Owen jewellery buyer is good—but this is ridiculous

Ship to Store!

Clayton Square received an order from the middle of the Irish Sea one Saturday recently. It came from a passenger on the B+I car ferry Leinster on its way from Dublin to Liverpool and was relayed by Anglesey Radio.

Overloaded

The passenger—a university lecturer—said his car was overloaded with luggage and books, and could the store provide him with a case? The only problem was that he was docking at 6.30 p.m. and wanted the case there and then.

As the customer did not have an account, kitchen furniture salesman Mr. Henry Whitney took the case out to meet the ship and collect the money. The customer packed his new case with books—and then asked Mr. Whitney if he had another one. But by this time the store was closed!



Joan cuts the tape

First hand Joan Churcher cuts the tape to open Southampton's new staff restaurant. The new look restaurant which was opened on 26 June is matched by refreshing lemon and white uniforms for the catering staff. The section holds about 60 people and there is an adjacent roof garden where staff can sit in the summer.

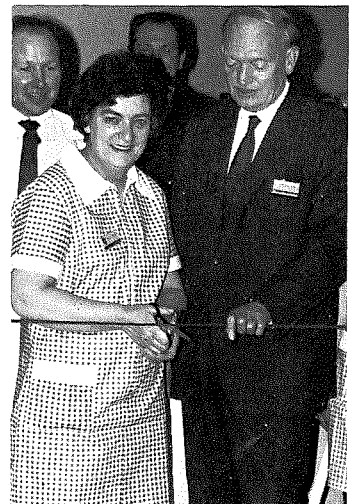


Best Increase

All smiles as southern regional director Mr. J. A. Mariner, presents a prize to Mr. Philip Bottrill, manager of the Coventry gift shop and china department, for the best percentage increase on target for the first day of the store's summer sale. This was also won by menswear manager Mr. J. Prince. In the background are other sales managers who won prizes: from left radio manager Mr. J. Quelch, electrical manager Mr. D. Walker, menswear first hand Mr. R. Gould and Jones Sewing Machine Centre manager Mrs. McGrory.

RIVER CRUISE

About 300 people from Clayton Square, Chester, Birkenhead and Bootle stores took part in a Saturday evening cruise on the River Mersey and enjoyed dancing and a buffet meal on the popular river steamer 'Royal Iris'. In fact, they enjoyed themselves so much that 10 intrepid sailors from Chester and the driver of their coach missed their stop and had to be ferried back across the river from Liverpool!



GUILD CELEBRATIONS BRING SURPRISE BOOM—DESPITE SETBACK

Preston Guild celebrations while having a quietening effect on the town's trade also brought an unexpected boom to the store.

Takings in the restaurant and snack bar shot up and extra chairs and tables had to be whisked over from the Liverpool store to cope with demand. There was also brisk business in take-away sandwiches and drinks for those who didn't want to miss any of the colourful parades.

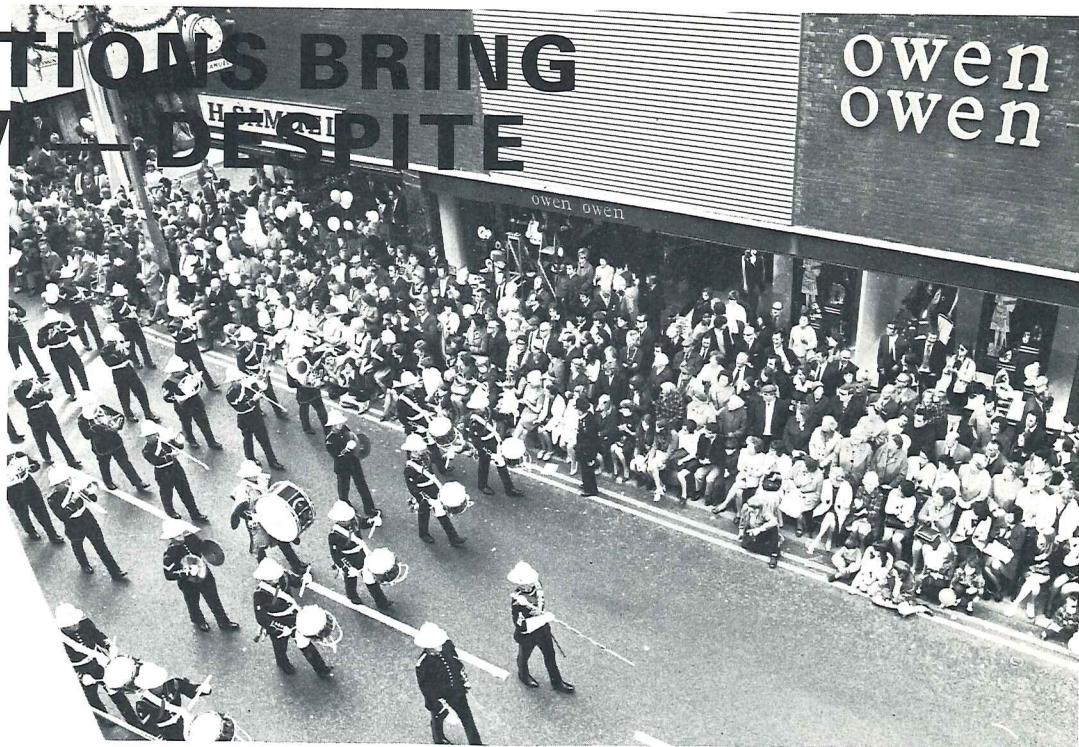
Said general manager Mr. James Herbert, "There's no doubt that the celebrations had a marked effect on general trading but takings in the restaurant and snack

bar went up by £750 of which £290 was gross profit".

Souvenirs

To meet the demand of the thousands of visitors who flocked to the town for the Guild Celebrations—held every 20 years to celebrate the town's past—the Preston store opened a souvenir shop selling all types of merchandise ranging from badges with the store crest at 17½p to a collector's item in crystal glass goblets showing details of old Preston and costing £12.50.

The store was decorated with Guild motifs and banners together with special window displays and a fashion show and cosmetic demonstrations were organised in conjunction with a leading local motor agent.



"If he comes in again don't serve him!"

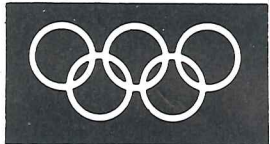
Son Brings Home Two "Olympic" Medals

Liverpool transport driver for 42 years Mr. Ernie Gibson is a proud father. For his twin son Robert (18) brought back two medals from the Olympics.



You will not have seen him on the television, however, because these were the schoolboys mini Olympics in Rome.

A student at De La Salle Grammar School, Liverpool, Robert captained the British team who beat Holland for a bronze medal in the international volleyball competition in July. He also coached



the team, when the official coach was taken ill.

Robert received the bronze medal on behalf of his team-mates and won a personal gold medal for his own outstanding contribution, which is being presented to him by team director Mr. J. Jenkinson in the picture.

Robert who also keeps goal for the Lancashire and Merseyside youth soccer sides, is hoping to become a physical education instructor at Loughborough College, Leicester, when he leaves school next year.

"I never expected him to bring a medal back", said his father, "and I was absolutely delighted when he came home with two!"



FAITHFUL CAR

George and Kim Ellis's car has been everywhere with them since they bought it in 1959 and proudly displays transfers from Canada, America and Puerto Rico. But the Volkswagen "Beetle", which has done over 100,000 miles, is too old and has to go—together with all those mementos.

George and Kim met when they were both working at Birkenhead in 1959 and were married four years later. They emigrated in 1965 and spent two years in Canada, where they were employed by the Volkswagen "Beetle", which has done over 100,000 miles, is too old and has to go—together with all those mementos.

ADVENTURE MUM!

If you asked Mrs. Doreen Green what she did in her spare time you would get a surprise. For there can be few mums in the organisation who have such exciting weekends.

Sparkle

Supermum Mrs. Green belongs to the Family Adventure Association, which was formed four years ago by the Lancashire Education Committee to add a little sparkle to family weekends. She helped to organise the first event—a camping trip—but today a complete

programme is worked out by club officers, from which Mrs. Green and her family pick the things they want to do.

Mrs. Green's husband, Bill, a site agent for a firm of building contractors, has been deep sea fishing off Rhyl and the whole family have been out and about in tents and caravans—including

"I've enjoyed every minute of it", said sales manager Mr. George Milnow, who retired on October 5, after spending 34 years with the company at Liverpool, Doncaster, Southampton, Erdington and Bootle.

Mr. Milnow of Scarisbrick Road, Norris Green, Liverpool, joined the staff at London Road in May, 1938—the year the liner *Queen Elizabeth* was launched—and became first hand on the drapery

A bachelor and keen Everton football club supporter, Mr. Milnow celebrated his retirement with a two-week holiday in Spain—but he hopes to be back part-time.

Favourite

His favourite story concerns the now famous Doncaster bull. When a bull from the nearby cattle market stormed into the store, scattering customers and screaming staff, George grabbed it by the horns, turned it about and belted it on the backside all the way out into the street. And told the girls, "If he comes in again, don't serve him!"



department in 1950, after six years in the army. He went to Doncaster as a sales manager in 1960 and stayed there for nine years, returning to Liverpool as menswear section manager at Clayton Square.

Then followed spells at Southampton and Erdington, before he came back to Merseyside to spend his last eight working weeks at Bootle.

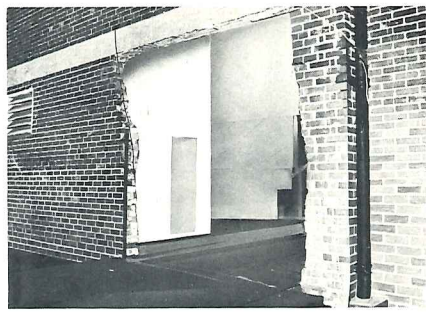
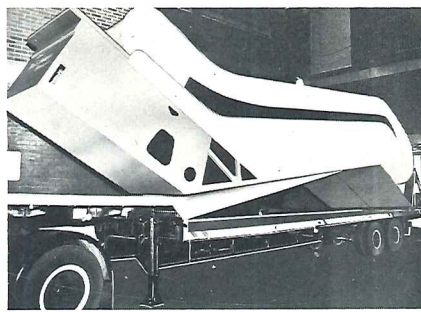
MORE ZING PLEASE

If your store, or office is not mentioned very much in this issue of *Scene*, here's what to do:

1. Identify your local *Scene* correspondent.
2. Corner him or her and say you want news from YOUR store in the next issue.
3. Do something about it yourself, by telling about anything special that is going on in your department and details about unusual hobbies or personal achievements.

Remember that *Scene* is YOUR magazine and needs YOUR news to make it go with a zing.

How they brought the escalators in



● Anne Aston with G. M. Barry Boycott on the new escalators

She's our own inimitable Jeeves

Whoever it was that gave Miss Doris Jones the house-name "Jeeves" when she came to work at T. J. Hughes nearly 45 years ago could not have picked a more appropriate handle. For, like the P. G. Wodehouse character, she responds to situations in a quietly efficient way, and has earned herself a reputation as one of the company's stalwarts.

Miss Jones—known to everybody as Jeeves—has been invoice office manager at Liverpool.

The invoice office on the top floor of Kempston House deals with all the merchandise expense invoices that are brought over from nearby Stafford House by supervisor Miss Judy Holtom. The invoices have to be date-stamped, double-checked and copied down before being cleared for payment.

Cashier

A native of Liverpool, Miss Jeeves who lives in Hunts Cross, has seen the company grow from two stores in the city to its present size. She joined T. J. Hughes in 1928—as a cashier at London Road, after leaving school at Sefton Park.

She spent some time as a checker in the receiving room until 1942 when she was "called up" to help the war effort. She went to work in a munitions factory at Kirkby. After the war she moved into the invoice office as a clerk, climbing the ladder to become office supervisor under receiving room manager Mr. Arthur Bentley, who died in 1966.

After two years in the check office, she was promoted invoice office manager in 1964.

Miss Jeeves arrives at Kempston House punctually at 8.40 in the morning and her timekeeping record would do credit to Big Ben!

A passive Liverpool soccer supporter and avid reader and theatre-goer, Miss Jeeves does not like to be the centre of attention and modestly shrugs off any suggestion that she is indispensable. "I prefer to work behind the scenes and out of the limelight", she said. But the company would not be quite the same without her.

She has even been asked to put back her pending retirement to stay and help with problems of VAT.



● Miss Doris Jones

Second time on television

Kitchen furniture salesman Edward Disley (18) from Clayton Square was picked to represent the store's newcomers on a BBC TV programme in June.

The 20-minute schools programme was broadcast on BBC 1 a week later on two consecutive days. Eddie, of Kirkdale, Liverpool, was invited to appear in the show by the producer, Miss Barbara Parker, who visited the store earlier in February to make a schools programme which has just been shown on BBC 1.

It was his second appearance before the television cameras—this time at the TV centre in London.

Where's my hat?

A customer in the millinery department at Erdington took off her hat to try on a new one and left it on the counter. But when she returned it had disappeared. It was on the head of another customer who was preparing to pay for it! Luckily both customers saw the funny side.

Selling Prizes

Regional director Mr. J. A. Mariner gave money away when he visited Erdington recently—to winners in the store's salesmanship competition.

Miss Molly Southall won the prize for the sales manager with the best performance from her group of departments and Mr. Fred Barratt from the electrical department was named as best salesman.

Best saleswoman

Miss Susan Johnson from corsetry took a bow and a cheque for achieving the title of best saleswoman, and the best part-time sales assistant award went to Mrs. Mary Bourne, who works on children's wear.

Consolation

Consolation prizes were won by: Mrs. Kathleen Hodson (P/T fashion accessories), Miss Jackie Gibbons (F/T glass and china), Mrs. Mary Spalding (F/T fashion accessories), Miss Helen Rice (F/T dress fabrics) and Mrs. Mary Barton (F/T major fashions).

GOLDEN SHOT GIRL OPENS £80,000 IMPROVEMENTS

Anne Aston, hostess from the popular television game "The Golden Shot" pushed the button that started Erdington's new £20,000 escalators moving on September 22, at a spectacular opening ceremony at Owen Owen's latest store.

The first 10 customers to use the escalators were each presented with a £1 shopping voucher and there were special offers to mark the event.

The escalators—installed over a five month period—carry customers from ground to first and first to second floors, in place of two old-fashioned staircases and two lifts. Said general manager Mr. Barry Boycott (28), of Sutton Coldfield, "There must have been many people who never bothered to go upstairs. It's going to be a tremendous improvement".

In addition to the escalators, other changes have taken place to make shopping more enjoyable. A dozen solid walls have been removed to give a clear view over wide floors and a number of department improvements have been made.

The two 35-ft. long escalators have glass sides and concealed

lighting, and move at 100-ft. a minute, powered by electric motors. They were brought by trailer and manhandled into the store at night by six men.

An outside brick wall had to be knocked down to get them in and the eight-ton escalators were lifted into position by shackles bolted into the steel roof beams.

Installing the escalators plus a set of new staircases alongside to bring shoppers down took place behind screens, so that it was "business as usual" while the work went on.

The main contractors, Bovis Fee Construction Limited, also installed new steelwork and fire shutters. All three sales floors were completely redecorated. Total cost—nearly £80,000.

Despite the building strike and rising costs, work was finished dead on target after 23 weeks!

"We must put our own house in order first . . ."

Most managerial posts should be open to women, believes Mrs. Patricia Telkman, senior merchandise manager at Coventry.

In an interview with the *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, published in August, Mrs. Telkman says she is an ardent feminist. But she warns: "The burdens being placed on management of either sex in these days of high pressure and mounting costs are very considerable indeed . . . Many marriages have suffered as a result of divided loyalties.

"So before we women start cheering and waving the banner, we have a real job of work to do in putting our own houses in order."

