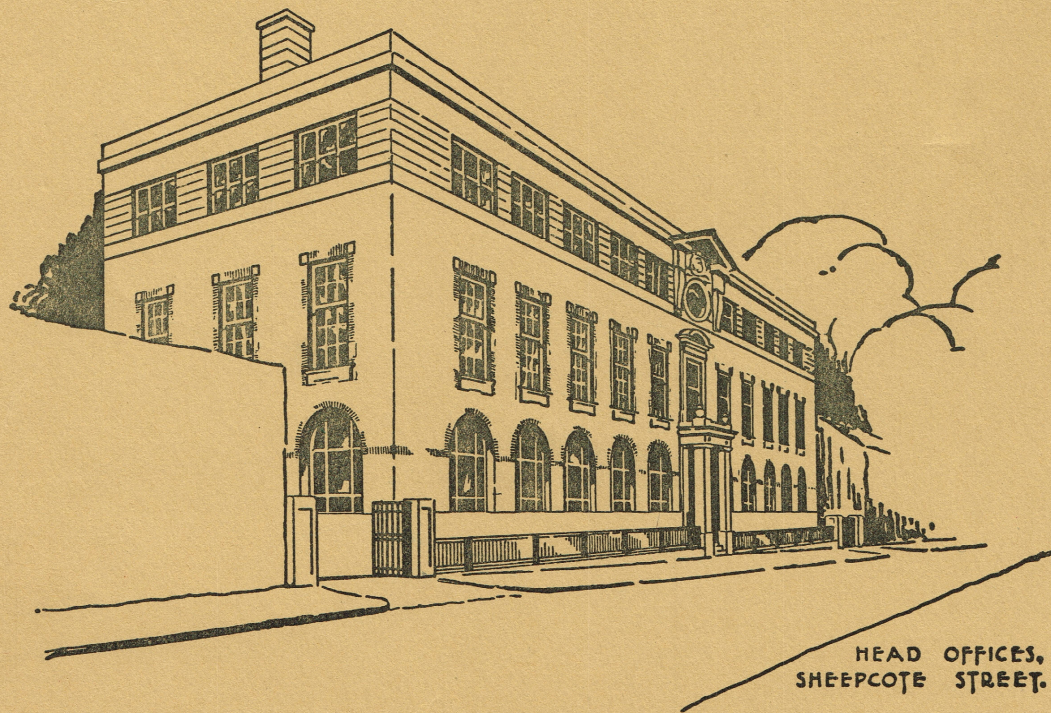


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THE SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE  
WATERWORKS COMPANY

# NEWS REVIEW



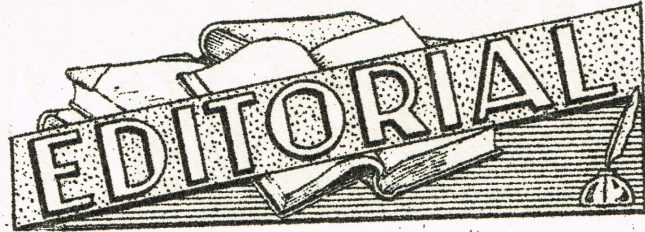
HEAD OFFICES,  
SHEEPCOTE STREET.

APRIL 1961

Vol. II

No. I





### THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

It is with the very greatest pleasure that I have to report that Nigel Brook (Architectural Department) who is a member of the 74th St. Germain's, Edgbaston, Scout Group, has qualified for the Gold Standard of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and I am sure everyone would wish to join me in congratulating Nigel on this wonderful achievement.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award has three series of standards of achievement - known as the First, Second and Third series. These are also known as the Bronze Standard, Silver Standard and Gold Standard respectively.

Each of the series is divided into four sections, each covering a different field of activity. To qualify in any of the series the required standard must be reached in all four sections. These sections are :-

- A. Rescue and Public Service Training
- B. The Expedition
- C. Pursuits and Projects
- D. Fitness

To have been successful in such varied fields must have meant a great deal of hard work and it is particularly pleasing to know that, in these days of trouble, one of our boys has been prepared to seize the opportunity of making the best use of his leisure by taking part in activities which are both enjoyable and character building.

Nigel will receive the Gold Standard cloth badge locally but the Gold Award Certificate and Lapel Badges will be presented to him by The Duke of Edinburgh at Buckingham Palace in December next.

Congratulations!

NORAH DAYES  
EDITOR



# STAFF ASSOCIATION EVENTS

## STAFF ANNUAL DINNER & DANCE

The Thirtyfirst Annual Dinner of the Staff Association was held in the Pavilion Suite, The County Ground, Edgbaston, on Monday, 13th March, our President, Sir Charles Burman, again presiding, and we were delighted that some of our Vice-Presidents and their Wives had been able to accept the invitation to join us.

Sir Charles and Lady Burman, accompanied by Mr. & Mrs. Lamont, received the guests, and Miss M. Jones of the Secretary's Department presented a bouquet of spring flowers to Lady Burman.

Friendly greetings were exchanged between District and Head Office staffs and it was obvious from the start that a happy evening was to be spent.

Soon Dinner was announced and when everyone was seated the Ladies fixed their posies - and here I must mention how much this little gesture on the part of the Committee is always appreciated- and after the President had said Grace everyone settled down to enjoy a superb meal. No praise can be too high in this respect, as the service was excellent and from the Cocktail Afrique to the Coffee, the Chef had excelled himself.

In proposing the Toast to the Staff Association, Sir Charles Burman said how delighted he was to see so many present. "We are on entirely new ground this year - the County Ground, in fact", he said, "and in a day or so not very far distant this room will no doubt be more packed than it is tonight. Nevertheless, we have a record attendance and I am delighted to see so many here. We have all enjoyed the Dinner and hope the rest of the evening will be as enjoyable.

The President said how glad he was that we had made new rules to enable the superannuated members to continue their membership of the Association and we were happy to welcome some of them that evening. He said he knew they liked to keep in touch with their colleagues in their days of leisure whilst we were sweating away.



Sir Charles spoke of various events which were taking place in our area and mentioned the merger being arranged with certain other water undertakings, thus bringing them under the umbrella of our own Company. This was carrying out the Minister's plan and we were quite happy as long as we didn't get submerged - "We are pretty lively" he said, "and that is not likely to happen".

Another thing - and that was the Engineer's worry - was the fact that everybody was washing too much these days! Bathrooms are going in and the water consumption is going up and up. It is very worrying to know where our sources of supply are to come from in the future.

He then spoke of Mr. Taylor's brilliant participation in the River Severn Scheme which is beginning to get moving, and which involves great feats of imagination.

Sir Charles then welcomed our new Chairman, Mr. Lamont. He thought we had chosen well and was sure we should work him very hard indeed.

He also paid tribute to Mr. Douglas Robertson who had resigned the Chairmanship as he would shortly be leaving the Company to enter the hard world of contracting. "We wish him well and are very sorry he is leaving and should like to thank him for all the service and attention he has given to the Staff Association over very many years".

"But this is a Dance" concluded our President, "your Committee have very wisely slashed the Toast List and I therefore ask you to rise and drink to The Staff Association, together with your Chairman, Mr. Lamont".

In responding to the Toast of the Staff Association, Mr. Lamont said how pleased we were to have Sir Charles and Lady Burman with us that evening and he also extended a hearty welcome to the Vice-Presidents and all our visitors. The absent Vice-Presidents had sent their apologies and whilst we were sorry they could not share in our festivities that night, we looked forward to seeing them on another occasion.

"When I joined the Company's staff a little while ago" said the Chairman, "I came to Birmingham - not by way of Beachy Head and the rolling English Road - but on the M.1., and I haven't been allowed to slow down since. Certainly I did not, at that time, expect to address you as your Chairman so soon".

He said how much he appreciated the compliment and considered himself fortunate to have been appointed at this time for, not only had he the privilege of thanking the President for proposing the Toast to the Staff Association, but also on that very special occasion, the honour of offering to him our sincere congratulations on the Knighthood conferred upon him in the New Year's Honours List.



On behalf of the Staff Association, he expressed his thanks to the President and the other members of the Board for the very great interest they have always taken in the welfare of the Staff and said that the presentation of gold watches to long service members had been very much appreciated.

He spoke of the numerous activities which had taken place during the year. The Annual Cricket Match with Bristol - in perfect weather - was won comfortably by S.S.W. and everyone was looking forward to the return match.

The Annual Outing and Visit to Works was a great success, thanks to some very good weather. He also reminded us of the high-light of the day, namely the spectacle of a number of senior members of the staff playing trains on the miniature railway at Trentham Gardens.

A number of successful dances were held in the Canteen and the Tramps Dance and the Christmas Dance were outstanding.

The Chairman then welcomed the Superannuated Members who, due to the revision in the Rules, were now able to participate in the affairs of the Staff Association.

He expressed the thanks of the members to all those who, by their hard work, had done so much for the Association during the year and was sure that the success which had been achieved was due entirely to their efforts.

Mr. Lamont said he would like to associate himself with the remarks made by the President about Mr. Douglas Robertson, saying that he had been a very popular and active Chairman and wished him the best of luck in his new venture.

He then spoke of Mr. Whitworth, the new Vice-Chairman, who had been a tower of strength on the Committee for many years and congratulated him on his election.

In his inimitable manner, the Chairman told us of a serious matter which had been brought to his notice. A new product - "Dehydrated Water". He warned us that a Dehydrated Water Week was imminent, when every effort would be used to advertise the new product to the detriment of our own. He gave us a few examples of the advertising which was likely to take place and said he had no doubt that the Chairman of the Company would consider this threat at the next Board Meeting!

He spoke of the glorious early Spring we had enjoyed and thought we could not have failed to notice the preparations that nature was making for the coming season. There was a sense of urgency everywhere and the songs of the birds seemed to herald a wonderful summer. "Let the Association therefore be guided by this example" he concluded,



"and let us make this year a memorable one in the history of the Staff Association, for it is in this way that we can best thank the President and members of the Board for their kindness and generosity to us in the past."

The speeches over, the delightful dining room was soon transformed into an equally delightful ballroom and dancers were soon entering into the gaiety which one always associates with this annual function. In spite of a feeling of stiffness following the winter inactivity, everyone joined in the fun, and to the music of Allan Ayres and his Band, the Rock-and-Roll and Latin-American dances were enjoyed by both dancers and spectators. The traditional Foxtrot, Waltz and Old Time Dances were included, together with spot dances, when the lucky ones received prizes. Here we must pay tribute to the members of the staff who had chosen the prizes, which looked most intriguing in their gay wrappers. One lucky guest, who was celebrating a birthday, was the recipient of an unexpected birthday present.

Dancing continued until 12.30 a.m. when everyone joined in Auld Lang Syne, and so our Thirtyfirst Annual Dinner and Dance was over. A wonderful evening, with a friendly atmosphere and an occasion to meet our friends once again.

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#### SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

A Special General Meeting of the Members of the Staff Association Club was held in the Canteen, Sheepcote Street, on Friday, 24th February 1961. There were 24 members present.

The Chairman explained that as a result of certain points which had been raised at the last Annual General Meeting, the Executive Committee had appointed a Rules Sub-Committee to look into, and where necessary, recommend a revision of rules to bring them up to date.

Mr. Robertson pointed out that the new Rules would enable Superannuated Members of the Company to retain their membership of the Association on payment of one amount of 30/- and this would entitle them to participate in all social events organised by the Association. He also went through the Rules and indicated what minor revisions had been suggested and it was unanimously resolved that the Rules as presented should be brought into operation as from the date of the Meeting.

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting followed the Special General Meeting on the 24th February, the same number of members being present.

The following Officers and Executive Committee were appointed.

Chairman Mr. J.Lamont Vice-Chairman Mr. J.W.Whitworth

Honorary Secretary Honorary Treasurer

Mr. C.H.F.Gilbert Mr. R.G.Clarke

Executive Committee

Secretary's Department Miss M.Jones, Messrs. R.Billingham, K.Hand and R.Swingler.

Engineer's Department

Head Office Staff Mrs.D.Moore, Messrs. C.E.Packwood, D.F.Rowan and R.J.Wright.

Tipton Depot Mr. C.B.Brennan

Walsall Depot & Wood Green Mr. R.R.Pearsall

Burton, Cannock & Sutton Depots Mr. W.J.Flatt

Lichfield Area & Outside Staff on Construction Work Mr. G.W.Anderson

Honorary Auditors Messrs. E.Burgess and K.Hand.

Tobacco Club Secretary Honorary Librarian

Mr. R.F.Chamberlain Mrs. M.Bowser

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### COAL MINING SUBSIDENCE

Few of us seldom pause to think as we sit before a glowing fire, of the effort, risk and forethought entailed in obtaining and distributing this fuel for our comfort.

This is by no means the end of the story; in fact it is only the beginning, as far as the Company are concerned, in maintaining continuity of the water supply, owing to subsidence of the ground following extraction of the underground coal seams.

It will be appreciated that, following ground subsidence, water mains - particularly trunk mains - tend to follow any ground settlement, with sometimes disastrous results, such as badly leaking joints, broken sockets and split pipes, necessitating immediate attention, and strangely enough these incidents usually occur in the early hours of the morning.

When a message is received that a certain pumping station has suffered a serious drop in pressure, or the pressure possibly dropped to zero, it is obvious that a serious fracture of a trunk main has occurred and the organisation for emergency repair is brought into action, as any delay in restoring the supply could result in distribution difficulties. Should the trouble arise in the early hours, the first task is visible, shut off the affected section of main, at the same time rouse the required personnel from their slumbers. Here must be recorded with appreciation the agility with which they respond when occasion demands.

Prior to 1957, when the Coal Mining Subsidence Act came into force, the Company had to bear the cost of repairs to their mains damaged by subsidence but, under the Act, are now reimbursed when damage is directly attributable to subsidence due to mining.

The approximate depth of subsidence which may be expected is usually forecast with some degree of accuracy by the Company's Mining Consultants in conjunction with Officials of the National Coal Board and is dependent upon the thickness of the seam of coal to be extracted and the degree of stowage or backfilling which will be carried out in the working.



An idea of the magnitude of subsidence which could occur in certain circumstances may be gained from the fact that if extraction of coal as envisaged is eventually carried out, a possible subsidence of 15 feet could occur, and this in close proximity to one of the Company's trunk mains which is causing some concern at the present time.

One might envisage the use of rubber pipes which would adapt themselves to the undulations caused by subsidence, but suitably sized rubber pipes could not withstand the pressures obtaining in the Company's mains. However, it is not beyond the realms of possibility that science and technology may yet produce a P.V.C. or plastic flexible pipe of suitable strength which would then enable the water engineer to enjoy uninterrupted slumber.

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PRESENTATION OF LONG SERVICE AWARDS

Twentyfive Years' Service

Thursday, 30th March, 1961

W. Bickley,	Plant Attendant,	Walsall
C. B. Hewines,	Lead Pipe Jointer,	Walsall
F. L. Brown,	Compressor Driver,	Walsall
J. Jeavons	Mains Jointer,	Tipton

Thursday, 27th April, 1961

C. E. J. Robinson	Mains Inspector,	Burton
J. D. L. Hough	Engine Tenter,	Chilcote

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ANNUAL CRICKET MATCH

S.S.W. v BRISTOL WATERWORKS COMPANY

SUNDAY, 2nd JULY

at

KENRICK & JEFFERSON'S GROUND  
WEST BROMWICH



MR. D.H.ROBERTSON, A.M.I.C.E., A.M.I.W.E.  
DISTRIBUTION ENGINEER

On Friday, 28th April, we said au revoir to Mr. D.H. Robertson, when a number of his friends gathered in the canteen to witness a presentation by Mr. Lamont, Chairman of the Association.

The gift took the form of a cocktail cabinet which was subscribed for by employees of the Company both at Head Office and on the Districts.

Mr. Lamont spoke of the growth of the Company during Mr. Robertson's 19 years' service, when the amount of water distributed had increased from 31 m.g.d. to 47 m.g.d. He said that if Douglas were asked to select one job during this period of service that gave him the most satisfaction it would perhaps be the installation of the supply for the Jamboree in 1957.

He had been a very active and popular member of the Staff Association and was the immediate Past Chairman, an office he occupied with distinction.

Mr. Lamont said he was sure Mr. Robertson would be remembered by all the Superintendents for a number of reasons, not least of which being his appreciation that when new trunk mains require recharging, so do the Superintendents!

He concluded by wishing Mr. Robertson good luck in the future and success in his new appointment, together with the very best wishes of all his friends in the Staff Association.

In acknowledging the gift Mr. Robertson thanked everyone for their good wishes and said that in many ways he was sorry to be leaving the Company and his very good friends.

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To mark the occasion of Mr. D.H. Robertson resigning from the Company, his dining room colleagues forgathered in the Engineer-in-Chief's office for the purpose of presenting a personal mark of their esteem. This took the form of a Parker 51 pen and pencil set and the ceremony was performed in a very happy and informal manner by the Engineer-in-Chief. In making the presentation, Mr. R.H. Taylor, on behalf of those associated with the gift, wished Douglas Robertson every success in his choice of a new career.

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### COOKLEY PUMPING STATION

One of the 3 boreholes at Cookley has now been completed and test pumped, with extremely satisfactory results regarding both quantity and quality of water.

Work is proceeding on the site roads and suction tank and the Building Contractors should start on the pump house and cottages in the very near future.

Concentrated effort is being made with the mainlaying, with a view to getting one half of the 21" main between Kinver and Lawnswood into commission before the summer months. This would enable an additional quantity to be taken from Kinver.

### WEST BROMWICH BOOSTER

Work has now been completed on the laying of the twin 27" diameter mains, and they have been satisfactorily tested. The booster pumphouse building has been completed but the pumps have not yet been installed.

### OUTWOODS RESERVOIR

Since the Staff Association Visit to Works last October, work has been steadily progressing. Almost two thirds of the concrete floor has been completed and the Contractors have started to concrete the walls, which they hope to finish by the autumn. The completion of the reservoir is scheduled for 1962.

### TRENT VALLEY PUMPING STATION

At Trent Valley Pumping Station a diesel engine alternator set has been installed as a standby unit and is the largest unit of this kind to be installed by the Company so far.

The set occupies the old engine house and the two steam boilers will be used for fuel storage.

It will be some little time before the engine is in beneficial service.

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### INCORPORATION OF TUTBURY UNDERTAKING

On the 1st April, 1961, a further addition to the Company's area was made in the Parish of Tutbury adjoining and north-west of Burton-upon-Trent. The area taken over is approximately one square mile, with a population of about 3000. It is mainly residential and agricultural in character and comprises about 800 properties with a daily consumption of approximately 90,000 gallons.

The supply is afforded through a 6" diameter main from the Outwoods Booster-Hanbury system at a reduced pressure at Beamhill. The Tutbury district has been split into a high level zone fed direct from the reduced Hanbury Tower pressure, and a low level zone fed from the Tutbury Reservoir. The Tutbury Reservoir is of brick construction with a capacity of 75,000 gallons and a top water level of 312 feet A.O.D.

There is also a pumping station situated in Cornmill Lane with two Tangye 3-throw electric ram pumps, capacity 5000 g.p.hr. delivering to the Reservoir by a 5" diameter main from a shallow well. The Pumping Station is being retained for the time being as an emergency supply until various distribution improvements in and around Burton-upon-Trent are complete.

It is interesting to note that the original works of the Parish were constructed in 1904-5 and were designed to meet the needs of a population of 2000, and the Reservoir was estimated to hold 2½ days supply at 30 gallons per head per day. All water drawn from the well has to be metered and is subject to a Royalty of 1d. per 1000 gallons and payable to the owner of the land. A further point of interest is that the water from the well is very hard, about 650 parts per million.

The Parish of Tutbury is famous historically for the ruins of its Castle, built originally in Saxon times, destroyed and rebuilt twice by the Earls of Derby. The present ruins are those of the stately castle built by John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, which following his death was seized by Richard the Second, and the Estate has since remained Crown property.

Tutbury is also famous for a very fine Norman Church founded about 20 years after the Conquest by Henry de Ferrers. Needless to say there are some stocks in the churchyard! There is also a fine old 'Inn' with a timbered front which seems to have known little change in 500 years.

The supply of water to Tutbury will be the responsibility of Mr. J.Flatt, District Superintendent at Burton-upon-Trent.

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### "COMBINED-OP"

The 24" dia. trunk main from Sandfields Pumping Station to Walsall Reservoir runs alongside the railway line from Lichfield to Wednesbury. At around 7 a.m. on the 19th February 1961 Walsall Control was notified from Sandfields Pumping Station that normal pumping pressure had been lost. The railway authority was immediately informed that the railway line might have been undermined and Turncocks sent off to isolate the damaged section of the main. It was found that a section of pipe had come away at the railway bridge near Hammerwich Station and that escaping water had made an enormous crater in the railway embankment. Subsequently it was discovered that a passenger train had passed over the damaged railway line as its support was being scoured away.

Alternative arrangements were made to replace the water pumped to Walsall and Dudley from Sandfields and further arrangements were put in hand for the repair of the main.

Repair work was carried out in conjunction with backfilling by railway employees of the crater in the 20' high embankment. Views of the damage were shown on television that evening. On account of the probability of subsidence the main was repaired using flexible joints and slung from a 45' girder which just spanned the crater. Although advised accordingly, the importance of good consolidation of the backfill for a water main was not appreciated by the railway staff. The unfortunate consequences of this were the cause of what might be called the biggest "combined operation" in the history of the Company.

As expected, settlement took place and very soon a round the clock watch on the movement of the main was kept by engineers from Head Office. After a few days it became apparent that another fracture might occur, and the main, which had been restored to service, was drained down again.

By arrangement with the railway authority it was decided to relay about 60 yards of the main in steel pipes at the site of the trouble but the work had to be completed within a period of 30 hours starting at 11 p.m., Saturday, 4th February, 1961. During this period traffic would operate on one line for about 12 hours; otherwise, both lines would be blocked.



The operation bristled with engineering and logistical difficulties. The only access to the site was along a farm track from a road  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile away; the main was laid in the embankment 20' above the track. An additional road crane was hired for lifting materials on to the embankment and a railway crane was engaged to handle pipes and specials and concrete skips. A special train was obtained to transport stores and materials from Hammerwich Station. Other plant not normally held by the Company was hired and special arrangements made for preparing the farm track and the provision of ready-mixed concrete as and when required.

At 11.10 p.m. on the Saturday night gangs from Tipton and Cannock ascended the embankment and began excavation. In indifferent weather they worked through the night into Sunday morning when a mainlaying gang from Walsall took over from them. Also on Sunday morning a shuttering and concreting gang arrived from Burton and commenced work. Mainlaying proceeded more slowly than expected on account of the very deliberate movements of the railway steam crane even though it was attended by a multitude of operators. In the evening a gang from Sutton joined the Walsall gang to assist in backfilling as mainlaying and concreting proceeded. By good fortune the weather held mainly fair and the job was completed by 6 a.m. Monday, when normal railway traffic was resumed.

Altogether about 135 staff and men were employed on this operation. It was necessary to utilize about 500 tons of shale to keep open the farm track. Thrust blocks called for bringing to the site and pouring of some 33 yds. of concrete.

This most unusual and difficult mainlaying job was organized and supervised by the Distribution Department. Co-operation that was requested from other engineering departments was swiftly and efficiently afforded; we should not forget the messing facilities provided and personally served by members of the Staff. The detailed planning and preparation would have been of little avail had it not been backed up by the combined efforts of men from Tipton, Cannock, Walsall, Burton, Sutton Coldfield and Wood Green.

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# Personalia

## NEW EMPLOYEES

Miss C. Hawkins	Postal Department
Miss A.R. Jones	Order Department
Miss P.F. German	Civil Engineering Department
Miss P.F. Jones	Typists Department
Miss P. Bate	Tipton
Miss P.S. McNaughton	Powers Samas Department
Mrs. N.M. Morris	Do.
Mr. J.K. Stanton	Wood Green
Miss M.P. Cabey	Comptometer Operator
Mr. R.D. Sheldon	Mechanical Department
Mr. R. Barnes	Revenue Department
Mr. J.V.D. Banham	Civil Engineering Department
Mr. K.M. Bird	Distribution Department

## RESIGNATIONS

Mr. D.H. Robertson	Distribution Engineer
Miss D. Penn	Filing Department
Miss A. Harris	Order Department
Miss E. Moore	Typists Department
Mrs. A. Sposato	Powers Samas Department
Mr. C. Jenner	Cannock
Mr. J. Bliss	Accountancy Department
Mr. J. Hill	Revenue Department
Miss P.K. Parkes	Distribution Department

## RETIREMENTS

Mr. G. Bowers, Foreman, Moors Gorse Pumping Station, retired 31st March aged 61 years, after 40 years' service.

Mr. W. Jennings, Stationary Engine Driver, Springsmire, retired 31st March, aged 66 years, after 23 years' service.

Mr. J. H. Clarke, Blacksmith's Striker, Wood Green, retired 20th January, aged 65 years, after 40 years' service.

Mr. F. J. Gray, Trenchman, Cannock Depot, retired 31st March, aged 67 years, after 10 years' service.



### RETIREMENTS (contin)

Mr. C.W.Mayo, Trench Inspector, Walsall Depot, retired 15th May aged 63 years, due to ill health, after 39½ years' service.

### DEATHS

Mr. T.Wood, Formerly Secretary's Department, died 21st January aged 73 years. Mr. Wood retired in 1947.

Mr. H.Spears, Formerly Accountant, died on 16th January, aged 85 years. Mr. Spears retired in 1936.

Mr.J.Craddock, Formerly Assistant Waterman, Walsall Depot, who retired due to ill health in February 1960, died on the 17th April, aged 57 years.

Mr. W.J.Lewis, Chief Waste Inspector, Tipton Depot, died on the 15th March, aged 52 years, after 26 years' service.

Mr. A.V.Motteram, Waste Inspector, Walsall Depot, died on the 19th April, aged 57 years, after 25 years' service.

Mr. A.King, Formerly Assistant Turncock, Tipton, died on the 23rd March, aged 80 years. Mr. King retired in November 1946.

Mr. A.A.Dale, Formerly Labourer, Walsall Depot, died on the 6th May, aged 71 years. Mr. Dale retired in March 1957.

### MARRIAGE

Congratulations to Miss M.Fielding on the occasion of her marriage to Mr. F.I.Swindale on the 1st February.

### ENGAGEMENTS

Congratulations to Miss C.Williams and Mr. M.Faulds on their engagement, also to Patricia, daughter of Mr. L.Riches, Engine Tenter, Shenstone, to Mr. Wm.Kinnear of Scotland.

### BIRTHS

Congratulations to Mr.& Mrs. E.Evans (nee Eunice King) on the birth of a Son (Carl Edward) on the 4th May.

Also to Mr.& Mrs. B.Hawkley on the birth of a Daughter (Ann Louise) on the 8th May.

### NEW APPOINTMENTS

C.T.Langdon, B.Sc., A.M.I.E.E. Electrical/Mechanical Engineer  
H.G.Sims, A.M.I.E.E. Deputy Electrical/Mechanical Engineer  
W.A.Markham, B.Sc., A.M.I.C.E., A.M.I.W.E. Distribution Engineer  
C.D.Barnes, A.M.I.C.E. Deputy Distribution Engineer

### TRANSFER

Mr.R.Marshall, formerly Waterman, Cannock Depot, has been transferred to Chief Waste Inspector, Cannock.



# Obituary

## MR. HOWARD SPEARS

It is with regret that we report the death of Mr. Howard Spears on the 16th January 1961, at the age of 85 years.

Mr. Spears joined the Company's service on the 19th March 1894 as a Clerk in the Secretary's Department, rising to the position of Accountant to the Company, which position he held until his retirement at the end of 1936.

He will be particularly remembered for his work in connection with the Staff Association, the Superannuation Fund, and the Widows and Orphans Fund, of which he was the first Secretary.

On his retirement he resided in Minehead and during the 1939-1945 war worked untiringly as Chief Air Raid Precautions Officer and placed his own house at the disposal of the Civil Defence Corps as a Warden's Post. Shortly after this he unfortunately lost his sight but in spite of this handicap he remained cheerful and mentally alert.

Many of the staff have visited him at Minehead in his retirement and will regret the loss of their former colleague.