

WRIGHT AHEAD

THE HEAD-WRIGHTSON NEWS LETTER

Vol. 3

OCTOBER 1952

No. 3



MR. RICHARD MILES AND SIR JOHN WRIGHTSON, BART., WATCH SIR WILLIAM WORSLEY PIN ON MR. C. H. SOPPET'S B.E.M. BEHIND MR. SOPPET IS CYRIL PARKIN WHO RECEIVED A PRIZE AS THE LEADING APPRENTICE FOR 1951/52.

CHAIRMAN & MANAGING DIRECTOR'S LETTER

I suppose that we cannot help life becoming more complicated. Our command over nature has developed tremendously these last few generations.

I am not so ancient myself, but I remember the time when there were no motor cars. Since then we have seen flying, radio and radar, and television. Lately we are able to split atoms, and calculate the release of energy. In our own laboratories we use gamma rays from material

made at one of our atomic research centres; so do the hospitals; and both with benefit.

Six hundred years ago a labourer received a penny a day, and a chicken cost a penny. To-day a chicken still costs a day's wage, and I doubt whether there are so many chickens about, compared with the population.

Somehow or other, it seems that we have not been able to co-ordinate our scientific advance with a happier life. I am convinced myself that there are in all of us, essential good nature, and a fund of common sense, that could make the world happier, if they could find continuous practical expression.

We all shared the gratification when the Head of the State, H.M. the Queen, recognised the really good work

our friend Soppet has done. The illustration on the preceding page shows the presentation ceremony.

Though we cannot all be experts in political economy, most of us are reasonable people, and we have plain common sense. We know more or less what we want, and have a good idea as to what is possible. Those of you who take the trouble to read these letters have, no doubt, gathered that there is a general theme running through them, that is to say, a suggestion that we should all think things out ourselves as carefully as we can, and let our actions be based on our conclusions. The more foresight we can use, the better.

Richard Miles



MR. & MRS. E. PUTTICK



MRS. & MRS. K. W. BARWICK



MR. & MRS. J. LUMB



MR. & MRS. MORRIS



MR. & MRS. M. MCGARVEY



MR. & MRS. R. C. ALLAN



MR. & MRS. W. IRWIN



MR. & MRS. F. FASCIA



MR. & MRS. J. APPLETON
MARRIAGES.

Teesdale Bridge Yard.

Mr. A. Vernon to Miss Rita James, Forgings Division.
Mr. J. McClusky.

Teesdale Steel Foundry.

Mr. F. Fascia to Miss Sheila Milburn.
Mr. J. Appleton, (Pattern Shop) to Miss J. Wright.
Mr. S. Morris, (Pattern Shop) to Miss M. Horner.

Stockton Steel Foundry.

Mr. Robert Johnston to Miss Maureen Arkle.

Forgings Division.

Mr. F. R. Court, (Smiths' Shop, Teesdale) to Miss Margery Holliday.
Mr. W. Irwin, (D.O. Seaton) to Miss E. Cruikshank.

Stockton Forge.

Mr. James Lumb, (Machine Shop) to Miss Betty Wright.
Mr. C. Jinks, (Commercial Office) to Miss Sheila Donnelly.
Mr. M. McGarvey, (Machine Shop) to Miss J. Yates.
Mr. John L. Marston, (Machine Shop) to Miss Lily Ward.
Mr. John L. Colley, (Machine Shop) to Miss Nancy Glass.
Mr. Len Jackson, (Electricians) to Miss Norma French.
Mr. R. Allan, (Bridge Yard) to Miss Isabel Allen.

H.W. Machine Co.

Miss Audrey P. Gething, (D.O.) to Mr. B. Ripley.
Mr. Eric Puttick, (formerly of Erectors) to Miss Betty Bulmer, (Labour Dept.).
Mr. J. Hornsey, (Erecting Shop) to Miss K. Jenkinson.
Mr. Derek Brownlee to Miss Yvonne Leitch, (Cost Dept.).

Cashier's Dept., Teesdale.

Mr. J. Huitson to Miss D. Street.

DEATHS.

Condolences to:—

Bridge Yard.

The wife and family of R. Meynell. Mr. Meynell had been employed with the firm for thirty five years.
The relatives of Mr. S. Lamb.

Stockton Forge.

The family of Mr. J. Sowerby. Mr. Sowerby had served the firm for over fifty years.

Steel Foundry.

The widow and family of Mr. Norman Bond, Asst. Commercial Manager, Steel Castings. Mr. Bond's death was a great shock to all of us.

The relatives of Mr. George Russell, who was formerly employed for many years in our Pattern Shop.

Stockton Steel Foundry.

The families of:—

Mr. A. W. Burdett and Mr. A. Christon.

BIRTHS.

Bridge Yard.

Mr. and Mrs. Levitt—a son.
Mr. and Mrs. T. Dover—a daughter.
Mr. and Mrs. J. Muldowney—a daughter.
Mr. and Mrs. R. Husband—a son.
Mr. and Mrs. J. Sills—a daughter.

Stockton Forge.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Murphey (Machine Shop)—a son.
Mr. and Mrs. H. Thompson (Template Shop)—a daughter.
Mr. and Mrs. F. Todd (Bridge Yard)—a daughter.
Mr. and Mrs. A. Swales (Welding Shop)—a daughter.
Mr. and Mrs. T. Porteous (Bridge Yard)—a son. This event has occasioned the following verse:—

Said Gregory Tye to Porteous T.,
I'll give five "bob" if you name him after me.
Said Porteous T. by way of reply,
I admire you "Greg" as a real tough guy,
So I've asked the wife an she says she will
Give him "Gregory" if ever he's ill.

H.W. Machine Co.

Mr. and Mrs. B. Wilding (Spiv.)—a son.
Mr. and Mrs. G. Sanderson (Burners)—a daughter.

Teesdale Steel Foundry.

Mr. and Mrs. Tommy Dixon—a daughter.

SILVER WEDDING ANNIVERSARY.

Forgings Division, Teesdale.

Mr. and Mrs. C. Grounds have now put in twenty five years. They celebrated their anniversary with the birth of a grandchild.

GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY.

Congratulations Mr. and Mrs. T. Hall, Pattern Shop who have just celebrated their golden wedding anniversary.

ENGAGEMENTS.

Seaton Works.

Mr. Duncan Ludbrook to Miss Sheila Jennings.

Stockton Forge.

Mr. R. A. Shaw to Miss Dorothy Pattison.

Bridge Yard.

Mr. N. Davies to Miss M. Glenn.

H.W. Machine Co.

Miss Mable Gill, Stores Dept. to Mr. Alan Hutchinson.
Mr. Colin Lowery to Miss Doris Blows (Wages Dept.).
Mr. Lew B. Bailey, D.O. to Miss Betty Stafford.
Mr. Bob Russell, D.O. to Miss M.S. Robson.

CONGRATULATIONS.

Mr. J. W. Lythe, Cashier's Dept., on passing the Intermediate (Section 'A') Examination of the Corporation of certified secretaries.

Mr. W. Winter, (Cashier's Dept.) and Mr. John Allen, (Steel Castings) on passing the Intermediate (Section 'B') Examination of the same body.

Mr. Ron Gowland, (Forge D.O.) on obtaining his A.M.I. Mech. E.

DIVISIONAL NEWS

ENGINEERING DIVISION



BACK ROW:— MESSRS. WHITTLE, SMITH, RICHIE, BARCLAY, JACKSON, WILD.
FRONT ROW :— MESSRS. REDFERN, PARSONS (TREASURER), FLETCHER
(CHAIRMAN), SHEPHERD (SEC.), SMAILES, TRANTER.

Machine Shop.

The photograph of the first Welfare Committee has aroused much comment around the shops. It was amazing to find so many still among us who could remember the people on it.

This photograph belongs to Mr. Harry Parsons and he tells me it was taken in 1919. The occasion was a presentation to Mr. Fletcher, works manager.

Mr. Shepherd, father of our Personnel Manager, was Secretary of the Committee. It is believed that Harry Parsons, Toolroom foreman, is the only one still with the firm.

The sporting writer may accuse referees of giving too much protection to goalkeepers. If you agree with this, don't let Harry Armstrong hear you. Last season playing for Billingham, he suffered a double fracture of the jaw. This season in his second game for Whitby, he cracked his shin bone. He hopes to be back with us in a few weeks.

Bridge Yard.

Congratulations to Mr. G. Semple on winning the Miles Trophy for Tennis. (Men's singles). This is the first time the Bridge Yard has provided the winner for this event.

The Wilfrid Wrightson Trophy for Bowls was again won by this Department. The Bridge Yard offers congratulations to their colleagues who took part in this event.

What member of the Bridge Yard, during a visit to Ireland, was misled by a pair of ears. Was it Tony?

STEEL FOUNDRIES DIVISION

Teesdale.

The department wishes a speedy recovery to Messrs. Baker, Jackson and Collier.

The tragic death of Mr. Norman R. Bond, Asst. Commercial Manager of the Department, came as a great shock. After the serious operation he had undergone earlier in the year, it was felt that he was well on the way to recovery.

Mr. Bond had spent the whole of his working life with Head Wrightsons. During the war he acted as Assistant Secretary of the Stockton Construction Co., and was a very active member of the Home Guard in which he held a commission.

The Department's heartfelt sympathy goes to his widow and children.

Mr. Harry Lamb (Steel Foundry Shop Foreman) Mr. Jack Southern, Steel Foundry Yard have now returned to work. Their colleagues are glad to have them back on the job.

The Foundry were again the winners of the Interdepartmental Football Cup. They pay tribute to their opponents the Bridge Yard who were gallant losers. This is the fourth time the cup has gone to the Steel Foundry. Sir John Wrightson, Bart., made the presentation of the Cup. The victory was celebrated by a dinner in our new Canteen. Among those present were Mr. Frank Shepherd (Personnel Manager), Mr. D. W. Atkinson, Mr. W. Hutchinson, (Works Engineer), and Mr. F. Harris. The Department puts on record the congratulations of those present to the Canteen Staff for the excellent meal served. A concert by the Searchlight Concert Party followed the dinner. The Organisers, Mr. Allison and Mr. Theakston, win laurels for the excellent arrangements made.

Stockton.**A Grand Old Man Retires**

John McGiffin retires at the grand age of 81 years.

John joined the Stockton Steel Foundry when the Works were taken over by Head Wrightson & Co., Ltd., in 1927 and has been actively employed there since that date. Previously he had been employed by the former owners of the foundry. His early working life was spent chiefly at the old Moor Works of the South Durham Steel & Iron Co., Ltd., and as these works were demolished many years ago, it gives one a good idea of the many years of hard work he has done. Mr. McGiffin is still very active and we all wish him a long and happy retirement.

To mark his retirement, he was presented by Mr. Mercer (General Manager, Steel Foundries) with a wallet and notes in the presence of all the workmen of Stockton Steel Foundry.

Retirement of General Works Manager

At the same gathering, it was the desire of the workmen to show their appreciation of Mr. Mercer's managership and leadership during his long association with Stockton Steel Foundry. Mr. A. M. Hall, one of the employees, presented Mr. Mercer with a case of pipes. Wishes for a long and happy retirement for Mr. Mercer were warmly expressed. Mr. Mercer replied suitably.

H.W. STAMPINGS DIVISION

Rhymes from Smiths' Shop, Teesdale

Some time ago, a year in fact,
A pair of siamese twins
Commenced to work at our place
(A penance for their sins?)
They shared their jobs and wages, too
As you will understand,
And when they punched the clock each morn,
They used each other's hand.
All went well till last July
When serenity was shattered,
One of them quite lost his head
And the other's nose was battered.
Can you guess what caused this rift?
What has caused this bother?
Well, when they drew their holiday pay
One got more than t'other.

Some time ago there was quite a hectic meeting in relation to the extra issue of tea and sugar. The merits of hot, heavy and shift workers were fully discussed and pungently commented upon by the hot water, heavy handed and makeshift workers. The latter's opinion, however, left the former cold, lighthearted and fully clothed respectively.

One section's attitude reminded us of one of Shakespeare's characters (he got torpedoed by K. C. Portia in the battle of Venice), who quoted the following:—

My pound of flesh and a quarter plus
I will have no matter,
And I don't care a tinker's curse
If your tea tastes like watter.
To this we should like to add,
We declare, with fervent passion
That tea will soon be off the ration
And if the next is the last issue
Think of the pounds we'll save in tissue.

An expression coined by one of our Seaton Carew fraternity, and oft times used since, is "You don't have to be mad to be a drop stamper — but it helps!"

Seaton Works.

An instance to prove that we have some competition from the "madding crowd" outside our gates was reported some few weeks ago the official log from the night shift foreman.

In the early hours of the morning, he had a visitor, who drove up to our gates in his car, with the urgent request that the foreman should stop the hammers as it was impossible for him to get to sleep — although he lived about two miles away. The foreman, who bears the family name of one of America's famous feminine personalities of the screen, politely agreed with him that it was a poor show, but he wasn't able to stop the noise, although he found it rather difficult to sleep himself.

Writing of "our gates" in the last paragraph, brings us to Seaton's latest acquisition — a noble pair of wrought iron gates in the traditional scroll design fit indeed to grace the entrance drive to any baronial hall.

They are not yet quite complete as we are awaiting the arrival of two plaques which will form the centre piece of each gate — it is whispered that they will be profile representations of two of the senior officials of the Forgings Division.

No grave consideration has yet been given to the inclusion of wrought iron gates among our list of products, but it does associate itself somewhat with the greenhouses of another division. Perhaps we will have enquiries from affluent employees who desire replicas to enhance their front gardens.

Seriously, however, we consider they are a grand job of work, and congratulate the members of Forgings and Iron Foundry Divisions who have made them for us.

As this is being written, Mr. & Mrs. Chilton are nearing the other side of the Atlantic in the French liner "Liberté" bound for New York in the first instance, but principally to foster further business relationships from Montreal to Vancouver, among our Canadian friends.

Our good wishes go with them for a successful trip, both in business and in health, and may they bring back with them in October a host of treasured memories of happy days spent among our nearest neighbours to the west.

STOCKTON FORGE

Congratulations from the Division go to Mr. J. Meechan who has left the "Forge" to take over the post Mr. Summers' held in the Apprentice School. Mr. Summers, too, started work at the "Forge".

On looking back over the years, it would seem that the "Forge" is the training ground for many of the subsidiary companies.

The Machine Shop at Teesdale is now managed by Mr. John Franklin and Mr. Cryer is one of the foremen.

The Personnel Manager started in the "Forge" Pattern Shop. H. W. Machine Co., too, has its share of ex Forgites"—Mr. Fred Hall and Mr. Skidmore.

Mr. A. Gallogly left us for Egglecliffe Foundry.

The present Forge Works Staff (with two exceptions who have been with the firm for over twenty five years) all commenced their working days at the Forge.

The Division thinks this is a good record for a poor relation.

Tulip Time

Stuart Bruce liked his old Dutch
He thought the Template Shop a hutch,
So before the holidays were due,
The tools were dropped, and off went Stu.
Wooden clogs his feet did hurt
But they were heaven compared to "Bert,"
Through lack of funds—Home again,
To face Bill Sowerby's might and main.
Back to the warren he came one day
But, alas, they wouldn't let him stay.
For two whole weeks he was suspended
Then back to the benches, his holiday ended.
As you can see, the moral is clear,
Keep away from women and keep off the beer,
Stuart's not worried—you may think him barmy—
But this time next month, HE'LL BE IN THE ARMY.

H.W. MACHINE CO.

This Division hopes for the speedy recovery of:—

Mr. Jack Robinson, Machine Shop.
Mr. Harry Bycroft, Machine Shop.
Mr. J. Dunkerley.
Mr. Fred Husband, Millwrights.
Mr. George Beckwith, D.O.
Mr. E. Glenc, Cranes.
Mr. Tom Dawson, Tool Room.

The Division offers congratulations to the Forge Bridge Yard on beating them in the final by three runs in the last over. The Cup for Cricket nearly came to M'bro.

The Bowling Team managed to reach the semi-final of the Interdepartmental Competition.

Peter Johnson, D.O., managed to reach the final of the Men's Singles for the Miles Trophy.

These results show that H.W. Machine Co., is fast becoming a force in the Athletic World.

Valedictory Verses to

Mr. Robert Brand and Ann 205

There is a chariot on four wheels
Whose owner thinks she's canny—
Her beauty to the eye appeals
She's known to all as "Annie."
Though her chassis's trim and neat
(One can't compare with Venus)
For where the paintwork's incomplete
She's mostly eruginous.
Affection reigns betwixt these two,
Which needs must be platonic,
And, steadfastly, the one man crew
Ignores remarks ironic.
As yet she's bound for no museum
At passing years she mocks,
So someday, maybe, we may see 'em
In the Brighton race for crocks.
For Bob has just that coaxing touch,
With loving words he'll melt her,
But then, when he lets in the clutch
All prudent folk take shelter!
At first she'll sulk and then she'll cough,
Capricious as a kipper,
Till sundry bangs proclaim—"She's off,"
All same—like windy chipper.
A jerk or two—she's through the gate
While Bob remains within her
As comfy as on "Coach of State"
She takes him home to dinner.

Yes! Little Annie stands "All square"
 'Mongst cars which may be stronger,
 What Annie's got, the others share,
 But Annie's had it longer!

And yet she's never known to "flop"
 (We'll take the view that's sporty
 To bet that Robert wouldn't swop
 For Tommy's new "A.40.")

Right in our midst for quite a time
 These two have been implanted
 Till now I write to tell in Rhyme
 We've taken them for granted.

Dame Fortune beckons and again
 We see Time's moving finger
 Which brings this parting in its train
 With us they may not linger.

Away they go, his fame to seek
 Where Cheshire cats are grinning,
 Already Annie is unique,
 Lets hope they both keep "winning"

Bob's tenure here comes to a halt,
 He'll work with "boffins" four-eyed,
 What heretofore he's known as "salt"
 Will now be "sodium chloride."

So may this move with Luck be bound,
 Our high regard? He's won it,
 No more need Bob go tearing round,
 To try to find "who done it."

Success! Attend him on his way,
 Our erstwhile estimator,
 So say his friends—I trust he may
 Include—"Delineator."

Two newcomers joined the female ranks of the D.O. recently and having suffered the usual appraisal by the male members of the staff, are settling down happily now. June Turner is working in the Photographic Dept., where we expect she will learn much from Anne and Nancy, and Yvonne Young, who has earned local fame as a cyclist, now adds extra glamour to the Tracing section.

We welcomed back Bob Russell recently who has been with the army in Germany, and we are pleased to hear that George Fenna, also serving in Germany, is spending a holiday in London with his charming wife "Poppy."

Our best wishes for a speedy recovery go to George Beckwith who is sadly missing his gardening.

Acknowledge without Malice

Two men, two desks, two telephones
 A bustle and a hum in the air,
 Don't panic, don't get excited
 The Assistant Chief Draughtsmen are there

They have just been appointed,
 That's right, they're both brand spanking new
 And if you think their task is dead easy,
 Have a go, see just what you can do.

This verse has been vetted and censored,
 I work for them, so you will see,
 That if I don't watch what I'm writing
 I'll have them both down on to me.

McKEE IRON AND STEEL DIVISION

The days grow shorter, the temperature is that bit cooler, the children return to school, the first leaves are turning brown — once again the summer holidays are over. It seems only yesterday that our thoughts were full of the pleasant anticipation which precedes the annual holiday and now those thoughts are memories, memories of blue skies, golden sands, country lanes, moors, big cities or even the garden at home.

It is almost essential that one has a holiday for although many people like their work and take pleasure in doing it, most jobs have a great deal of routine in them and this over a long period leads to monotony. Of

course, there are the usual seasonal holidays — Easter, Whitsuntide, Christmas and New Year, but these being short do not offer the same opportunity as the summer holiday to leave behind the everyday routine.

It would seem, therefore, that at this time of the year after having rested and being refreshed during the holiday everyone will return to work with renewed energy, prepared to do their best to ensure maximum production thereby helping the National effort towards economic recovery. We are sure that the members of the McKee Division staff and all other members of the H.W. organisation will do so.

We have to welcome to the McKee Division staff Mr. Andrew Young who comes from Colvilles and is now Assistant Chief Engineer of the Division; we are not yet sure whether it would be easier to teach the staff, Scots or Mr. Young, English. He seems to be mastering a little of the English language and is now able to make his requirements known in the local hostelrys.

We also welcome Mrs. Ramsay and several draughtsmen who have recently joined us. We hope they will be happy in the Division.



TWO WELL-KNOWN MEMBERS OF H. W. EMPLOYEES' COUNCIL WITH TWO OF OUR STAFF NURSES.

Holiday Snapshot Competition

1. First Prize 3 guineas
 Second Prize 2 guineas
 Third Prize 1 guinea
2. Competitors may submit three snapshots of any size on any subject taken bona fide by themselves.
3. These snapshots together with a title, should be in the hands of Mrs. Lonsdale of the Personnel Department by Thursday, 30th October, 1952.
4. The opinion of the Magazine Committee, which has power to co-opt judges, will be final.
5. Name and Board No. or Department should be on the back of each snapshot submitted for the competition.
6. All photographs will be returned to competition entrants after the competition is over.



H.W. PERSONALITIES

MR. OSWALD BELL—

TECHNICAL MANAGER, GENERAL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT.

Mr. Oswald Bell must be one of the most familiar figures in our organisation. He began as an apprentice in the Drawing Office in January, 1907 and the whole of his working life has been spent there apart from his War Service in the Royal Engineers from September, 1914 to January, 1919.

Mr. Bell, who was admitted an A.M.I.C.E. shortly after the 1914-1918 war, recalls that proposal forms necessary for him to sit this examination were signed by Sir Thomas Wrightson so that he has served under three generations of the family.

He became Assistant Chief Draughtsman under Mr. Walker in 1943 and in the re-organisation at the end of the last War, was appointed Technical Manager of the General Engineering Department and was later given charge of the Drawing Office under Mr. R. H. Sturges, the General Manager.

A keen sportsman, Mr. Bell's greatest interest has been in cricket and he was for a number of years a playing member of Thornaby Cricket Club and in later years has derived much enjoyment as a spectator, particularly at Scarborough Cricket Festival.

Mr. Bell puts on record his gratitude to Sir John, through whose kindness, he has been able to see Test Matches at Lords. He says these have been the high lights of a life-time of cricket.

During his latter years, Mr. Bell has become a keen bowler and was, for four years, a playing member of the Yorkshire County Bowling Association. In 1948 he was a member of the team which won the County Championships at Paddington.

We wish Mr. Bell many years of health and continued service with our organisation.

MR. J. E. MERCER—

General Works Manager and Director, Head Wrightson Steel Foundries Ltd.

Mr. Mercer retired from the services of the Company at the end of last month but remains a Director of Head Wrightson Steel Foundries Ltd. In this way his valuable experience will still be available.

Mr. Mercer was previously employed by Messrs. Vickers Ltd., at the River Don Works, Sheffield where he started in their foundry in 1897. Despite long working hours he continued to improve his technical knowledge by attending evening classes for ten years, which led to his promotion from chargehand to foreman and thence to Shop Manager.

In 1922, Mr. Mercer joined Head Wrightson's as Steel Foundry Manager when the output of finished castings was 7/8 tons per week. In 1927 the firm purchased a steel foundry in Light Pipe Hall Road, Stockton-on-Tees and this, too, under Mr. Mercer's guidance proved a very satisfactory venture. His record throughout shows that through hard work and study of modern methods, he has been able to keep abreast of changing practices and improve the quality of steel castings. He was appointed a Director of Head Wrightson Steel Foundries Ltd. in May, 1946. The output of the Steel Foundries at Teesdale and Stockton is now over 200 tons of finished castings per week.

Many technical institutions have benefited from Mr. Mercer's wide experience. He was a member of the Steel Castings Research Committee of the Iron and Steel Institute, and also of various sub-committees dealing with Foundry Practice, Sand and Refractories. Mr. Mercer joined the Institute of British Foundrymen in 1926 and was President of Middlesbrough Branch in 1933/34. He also represented the Branch on the National Technical Committee, the Finance Committee and the General Committee of this Institute. He was, too, a member of the Technical Committee of the Steel Castings Association.

We wish Mr. Mercer, who now lives at "The Villa Farm," Bulkington, Nuneaton, a long and happy retirement and look forward to seeing him in the works on his visits to the Factory.



MR. J. E. MERCER