# SANTA CLAUS CAME FROM PRISON

## And delighted all the children as deputy to Sir Winston's old butler

PLAYING SANTA CLAUS to thousands of children in a large department store may not be just another job for the men who take on these roles.—It may mean a great more. The true spirit of Christmas is certainly permeated the toy department at Chelsea's store this year for Saturday the 13th of December gave permission for a man who had spent 18 of his 38 years in prison to be the lunch-time relief for an hour for the regular Father Christmas, Mr. Frank Rose. They wanted to give him a chance.

John Bestford, who wanted to do "something good" and bring happiness to children in this his first free Christmas for 19 years, was voted by the toy department manager and the children as "a great success."

While he is playing Santa to the three children of friends at Bristol with whom he will be spending Christmas, John Bestford will be thinking of Christmas Day, 1939, when he and a friend hid in the snow outside Borstal. They were even glad to be recaptured!

And a spokesman at the Lewisham store had this to say: "He acted and looked the part and, indeed, photographed better than our own Father Christmas. We wish him well in the future and hope this start will lead to better things.

"The children appeared delighted with him and many parents commented on his ability to make the youngsters happy.

Few Father Christmases enjoy their work more than Mr. Rose with the regular Santa, who lives at Sidcup and for whom the seasonal work at Chiesmans was a great blessing because he was out of work at the time.

### "LOVES THEM ALL"

From his kindly manner to children one could well be lured them all, writes a "Borough News" reporter.

"I do, passionately," he confessed, and only regret I had no children of my own."

This is Mr. Rose's first year as Father Christmas, but he hopes to do it again as he has enjoyed every minute of his weeks at the Lewisham store.

### SIR WINSTON'S BUTLER

It is a far cry from his former work as butler.

While Sir Winston Churchill was Prime Minister, Mr. Rose was his butler for five years, travelling to Chartwell and Downing Street from Downing-street with his employer.

"I have tried to do my best this Christmas by making children and their parents happy," he said, and I have been most impressed at the many happy couples I have seen.

"I would like to thank local parents and children through the Borough News." "for coming to see me and making me happy too."

### 1,000 IN A DAY

A few weeks ago, Mr. Rose saw a record number of over 1,000 children in one day. In spite of being his usual self, he was rather than disappoint the hundreds of widely-spread wondering children who tell him what they would like.

"Some of them ask for the loveliest things," he commented. One child wanted her mother to be happy all through the year; another wanted a baby sister, and several have wanted Bibles.

## SHOP THEFTS BY 'VAGUE' HOUSEWIFE

Mrs. Gladys Martin, housewife (52), of Tressillian-road, Brockley, was conditionally discharged for 12 months at Bow-street on Friday for stealing a packet of suet, a packet of biscuits, butter and cheese, worth 4s. 7½d., the property of the Civil Service Stores, Strand. She pleaded guilty.

Det.-sergt. Ernest Gorf said the store detective saw the accused buy one or two articles and pick up the others and put them in her shopping bag. She made no attempt to pay and was stopped as she left the store. At first she denied the charge and was detained.

Det.-sergt. Gorf said Mrs. Martin told the police that she had a young daughter and, for the last two years, had been working as a relief shorthand typist. She had asked the police not to inform her family.

Miss Mary Hamilton told the Magistrate (Mr. C. Burt) that Mrs. Martin worked to provide everything for the children. Her husband paid for the mortgage on their house, and the hire purchase instalment on the furniture. She added that accused seemed very vague about everything.

## TELEPHONE KIOSK FRAUDS

Sentence of three months' imprisonment was passed at the Greenwich Court on Friday on Anthony Richard Falconer (26), haulage contractor's packing payment for a number of telephone calls.

He pleaded guilty and admitted that in addition to the small sums amounting to 18s. 6d. involved in the present charges, he had committed several similar offences when out in the country on his haulage business.

### METHOD DETAILS

An envelope was handed to Mr. Pereira giving information about the method employed by the accused, which it was not desired should be known publicly.

Mr. Pereira said he was not much concerned with how it was done.

It was urged on behalf of the accused that he had had difficulties in his business, that he was running with his brother, and he found he had a large telephone bill and he succumbed to temptation and used this fraudulent method of making calls from time to time.

### "SERIOUS FRAUD"

It was realised that he had suffered a previous good character.

In passing sentence Mr. Pereira said it was a serious fraud.

## POSSESSION OF FORGED £1 NOTES CHARGE

### Man and woman are released on bail

THE CASE in which a husband and wife are alleged to have been in possession of 33 forged £1 Bank of England notes at Catford was again before the Magistrate at the Greenwich Court on Monday.

The accused couple are John Farrell (37), of Christon-road, and Grace Farrell (32), housewife, both of Ilex-road, Addiscombe, the charge is of possessing the notes, knowing them to have been forged.

At the previous hearing it was said that they gave Mr. Farrell's mother-in-law, Mrs. Ada Langley, of Englemere-road, Orpington, a number of the £1 notes two of which were believed to be forgeries.

Questioned the woman produced a wallet from her handbag containing a number of notes, in which it was said there were apparently 18 forged £1 notes. She said they had been found in a street at Ladywell. In handing the wallet to the police to take them to the police station.

The couple now appeared before Mr. Pereira charged on remand.

Det.-Sgt. Homewood said the couple had been remanded in custody and he had been received a suggestion from the solicitors to the Bank of England, who were prosecuting, that the accused might be granted bail on one surety of £50 in each case.

Mr. Pereira agreed to this course and, no further evidence being called, a remand on these terms to January 5 was directed.

## A TOWN HALL CLERK ON THEFT CHARGE

Before Mr. Pereira at the Greenwich Court on Monday, William Alfred Mortimer, clerk, of Canadian-avenue, Catford, was charged with stealing a cheque, dated March 1, 1957, for £1 at Lewisham Town Hall a postal order, a Bank of England statement, and a bill dated October 31 at Lewisham Town Hall a cheque, a postal order, a Bank of England statement, and a bill dated March 1, 1957, and 11 cheques, all to the value of £6, the property of the Borough Council, by whom he was employed.

The police asked for a remand, the Magistrate being informed by Det.-Sgt. Homewood that evidence had to be taken, which were very complicated.

There would be no objection to bail being granted on it, was suggested that there should be one surety of £100.

In reprying to Mr. Pereira, who suggested that the matter did not appear to be very serious, Det.-Sgt. Homewood said there might be other charges of a serious nature.

The accused was remanded till January 5, and bail was allowed in one surety of £100.

## DEAF & DUMB MAN SENT FOR TRIAL

Appearing on remand at Marlborough-street Court, deaf and dumb man, Ernest George Pink (23), cabinet maker, of no fixed address, was at the Marlborough-street Court on Thursday last week, committed for trial at London Sessions on charges of breaking and entering a shop in Brewer-street, Soho, and stealing two typewriters worth together £45, belonging to Gaffitt Office Equipment Company; stealing at Allerford-road, Catford, motor car, worth £250, belonging to James Greenhill, shop manager of Playgreen-way, Bellingham, and alternatively with receiving the car knowing it to have been stolen, using the vehicle without a license and without insurance coverage and fraudulently using an Exeter license.

Through a sign language interpreter, Pink reserved his defence. The Magistrate (Mr. Clyde Wilson) refused to allow him bail.

## Brockley man died with three others in 47ft. fall from scaffolding

COMPLAINT ABOUT SAGGING in scaffolding at the new Northfleet power station before it collapsed on November 11, killing him and three other men in a 47-foot fall, were, it was said at a Gravesend inquest on Thursday last, to have been made by William Charles Victor Merritt, aged 46, a foreman fixer, of 13 St. Nicholas House, Deptford Green.

Also killed were: John Patrick Gibbons, aged 49, improver, of 94 Foxberry-road, Brockley; Arthur Whitcomb, aged 21, improver, of 342 Guinness Trust, Stamford Hill, and Frederick James Salter, aged 36, roof liner, of Glanville House, Weir-road, Balham.

A fifth man, William Webb, of 3 Ellis-avenue, New Addington, Surrey, is still at Gravesend Hospital recovering from his injuries.

The enquiry, which lasted six hours, was conducted by the Deputy Borough Coroner, Mr. R. H. Bruce, sitting with a jury.

### "BREAKING POINT"

Major Dudley Keith Edwards, chief safety officer of Sealoft, Texas, and had been called, said he understood a centre wire supporting the scaffolding had been removed and replaced by two angle irons. He thought that the normal breaking point should have been two to three tons.

The safe working load would, he estimated, have been about seven tons, and half-a-ton of weight. With the weight of the scaffolding itself, the men working on it, and working materials, the load could have been 14½.

Major Edwards said that that would still have been well below the normal breaking point, and one would not expect a wire to break until that point had been reached.

### "INSUFFICIENT"

Answering questions, Major Edwards said he would deplore anyone working beyond the normally safe working load. If his advice had been sought before the accident he would have said that the scaffolding was insufficient for the work for which it was being used.

Charles Ongley, training fixer, Chatham, who had dealt with Gibbons when the scaffolding collapsed, said that on November 11 he was working on scaffolding above the turbine room at the Power Station. The scaffolding was of the suspended type.

During the day he walked several times across the scaffold and had felt no noticeable movement. He noticed that the scaffolding tended to sag at the centre, and said the men were worried because they could hardly reach the roof above.

The scaffolding had only been erected a few days and had not been changed. The witness said he had complained about it because the men in their opinion had not been allowed to give him a hand with the lining boards.

He went to a sack to get some oiling, turned round, and saw the scaffolding boards on the move.

In addition to the five men on the scaffolding, there was a pile of sacks and lining boards and two cartons of boards.

### WIRES ALTERED

Answering questions, witness said the wire bonds had been altered three or four weeks before the accident. Fitters and riggers were working on the scaffolding at the time.

He agreed that the wire bond that had broken had been a vertical one and not one of the diagonal ones that had been altered.

Brian Stanley Treleaven, training fixer, of Norfolk-rd., said the morning was cloudy at one point where the diagonal bonds had been altered.

At about 4.30 p.m. he walked across the scaffolding to get something and heard a noise. He re-crossed it, shortly afterwards he felt a jolt, and heard a "terrific crack" and saw scaffolding boards falling.

### EXPERT'S EVIDENCE

Reginald John Harbourd, metallurgist, said he had not carried out a full test on the wire that had broken, because that would have resulted in its partial destruction.

He had found that the fibre core was dry and lacking in lubrication. The external part of the wire was free from corrosion. In his opinion the broken would not have revealed any defect. He thought the kinking in the rope had been caused by pressure.

Derek Tom Digby, foreman scaffolder, of Wallace-road, Grays, said that he had been in charge of the construction of the scaffolding.

He had received one complaint about the sagging from Merritt and had inspected the scaffolding. He told Merritt that in his opinion the scaffolding was quite safe, but that in view of his complaint he would carry out an alteration that evening. He did this after normal site working hours.

He did not receive any other complaints about sagging.

### WEEKLY INSPECTIONS

Witness said he had carried out weekly inspections of the scaffolding. He last examined it three days before the accident.

On one occasion he had had to ask for some of 32 rolls of glass wool on the scaffolding to be removed because of the weight.

He had told the foreman not to have more than four men working in one bay at a time.

He had not noticed any excessive overweight on the scaffolding except on the one occasion.

Thomas Finnigan, of Romford, said he had also helped to construct the scaffolding. He had inspected it on the Monday prior to the accident and found nothing wrong.

### A WARNING

Some weeks before the accident, he noticed excessive weight on the scaffolding and had advised that the work should be done at once. Witness said he had warned the men of the danger of overweight.

At about 4.10 p.m. on the day of the accident he had seen four or five full cartons of boards

going on to the scaffolding. When he spoke to Merritt about this he was told that it was not intended that the cartons should remain on the scaffolding.

Dr. J. L. Dales, pathologist, St. Bart's Hospital, Rochester, said death in each case was due to multiple injuries.

The Deputy Borough Coroner told the jury that they had only to be satisfied that the four men had died on the result of the fall and they were not concerned whether there was fault on any one.

Verdict: Death by Misadventure.

## TWO ARE JAILED AFTER 'SILENT' ALARM GIVES WARNING TO THE POLICE

AN AUTOMATIC 'SILENT' ALARM led to two men each receiving 21 months' imprisonment at the London Sessions last week for an shorting warehouse raid. They were John Patrick Bristow (34), stonemason, of no fixed address, and George Samuel Collins (37), motor fitter, of Paragon-place, Blackheath.

Both pleaded guilty to break and entering the warehouse of Cave Austin & Co. Ltd., 34-40 Eastdown-park, Lewisham, with intent to steal.

Prosecuting counsel said that on the night of December 2 the warehouse was empty. At 8.15 p.m. an automatic burglar alarm indicated that unauthorised persons were in the premises. Police officers were sent to the premises and overheard them and they saw a ladder leaning at an angle against the wall a first floor window, which was open.

The police climbed the ladder and then found the two accused inside. Nothing had been stolen as the men had been interrupted by the police.

### JUMP FROM WINDOW

When told they would be arrested, Bristow said, "Just my luck. I'll do time." He said he would come to. He was then thrown handed.

When formally charged, Bristow said, "It was worth a try. He then tried to escape by jumping out of the window, but was detained by other officers who were waiting outside.

Det.-con. Roy Brookes said that Collins had four previous convictions, the last of which was in September 1953, when he received 21 months' imprisonment for receiving a stolen car and driving while disqualified.

A married man with three children, he served in the army from 1946 to 1948 and was transferred to the R.A.F., where he became a fitter. He was in charge of transport, being demobilised in 1948 with an exemplary character.

### WORKED AT LEE

When he came out of prison in 1954 he was employed by a firm in Lee High-road as a motor fitter, earning £12 a week.

He left in June 1957 to go to a Bishop firm as a forward motor fitter. At the time of his arrest he was earning £18 a week with them.

Bristow, said the officer, had two findings of guilt and four convictions and he served in the navy with a very good character. In 1952 he was convicted with Collins for receiving and housebreaking implements and sentenced to two years' corrective training.

Since leaving prison in December 1953 he had been earning £12 a week as a stone mason with his brother's business in Eastbourne.

### A FOGGY NIGHT

The officer added that on the night of December 2 it was very foggy and the police took some time to get to the premises. There was a chance that a third man was involved, who got away.

Mr. A. W. Cockburn, Q.C., the Chairman, said that he would make no difference in their sentences. "You have started doing this sort of thing again for no real reason or excuse," he added.

## BREAKING - IN CHARGE ACQUITTAL

Confessing that he had broken into shops in Streatham and Forest Hill, Leonard George Wheeler (44), engineer, of Rommard-road, East Dulwich, was at the London Sessions sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment. It was stated that he had 16 previous convictions.

He pleaded guilty to breaking and entering the shop of C. and F. Liquors, of Sunderland-road, Forest Hill and stealing two televisions and breaking and entering the shop of the Broadmead Provision Co. Ltd., Streatham High-road, and stealing a tape recorder.

In the dock with him was Frank Albert Rawson (40), musician, of Alwyne-road, Canonbury Hill. He pleaded not guilty to the Forest Hill shopbreaking and stealing and receiving the property and he also denied a further charge of receiving the tape recorder stolen from Streatham.

After the close of the case against Mr. H. C. Hamilton, Deputy Chairman, directed the jury to acquit Rawson and he was formally found not guilty and discharged.

## YOUTH SAID TO HAVE FALLEN TO PIECES

Said by Mr. Eric Dashwood, Court Detention Officer at the London Sessions, to have fallen to pieces this year, Alan Henry Hollis (18), labourer, of Grantham, of Capstone-road, Downham, was placed on probation for two years.

Last session he pleaded guilty to stealing 9d. and a wristwatch worth £20 belonging to Sidney Fowler, the caretaker of Perry-hill, Catford, stealing 5½d. and a wristwatch worth £10 belonging to Keith Stephen Christie, of The Underwood, Catford; stealing 15s. belonging to Reginald Kenneth Lawson, of Sydenham-road, Sydenham; stealing 18s. 6d. belonging to Laurence Ivison, of Belgrade-road, Stoke Newington, and entering the pavilion of a society ground in Dunmore-road, Sydenham, with intent to steal.

At the last hearing it was stated that the 1921 Boundon A.F.C. ground in Bowes Bowley-road, Catford, held a parade and during it property was stolen from the caretaker. Later it was found that the pavilion had been broken into and a pane of glass in the door leading to the changing room had been broken, but nothing had been stolen.

When seen later in a café in Southend-on-Sea, Catford, Baker admitted the offence, stating and said he had got rid of the watches, which were subsequently recovered.

Mr. Dashwood said Baker had one finding of guilt for breaking, entering and larceny and lived with his parents in Somerset. He left Somerset after coming to London because of the difficulty of finding employment. Last year he had fallen to pieces and had lost the work he managed to find.

Baker agreed to return home and he was under the supervision of a probation officer at Yeovil.

## A LEE MAN FOR TRIAL ON DRINK-DRIVING CHARGE

JAMES Patrick Mullarkey (39), manager, of Leyland-road, Lee, was charged at the Greenwich Court on Monday with driving a motor car in Trafalgar-road, Greenwich, on December 8, when under the influence of drink so that he was not able to exercise proper control.

It was alleged that the car was swerving in the road and nearly caused a collision.

When he was asked by a policeman if he felt ill the defendant said, "I am drunk."

P.C. Denny said the defendant's eyes were glazed and he smelt strongly of drink and was only able to get out of the car with difficulty.

Witness formed the opinion that the defendant was drunk and unfit to be in charge of a car.

Dr. C. F. Pattison, Divisional Surgeon, said that on December 8 at 3.30 a.m. he saw the defendant at the police station and asked him if he would agree to be examined by him later and asked for another doctor.

The defendant was seated in a chair, his face was flushed, his eyes were bloodshot and his breath smelt of alcohol and it was difficult to understand his speech.

Witness came to the conclusion that the defendant was unfit to be in charge of a motor vehicle.

The defendant, through his solicitor, elected to go for trial and said he would be committing him for trial to the London Sessions.

Through his solicitor he pleaded not guilty and reserved his defence and called no evidence at this stage.

Bail, previously granted, was continued.

### Sudden death

Early on Sunday the police were called to 105, Dalmain-road, Forest Hill, where Mrs. Ellen Rankcom, aged 84, had died suddenly in bed while her daughter was washing her.

## THERE WAS NO HITCH IN THE PLANS OF THE "HEADLINE" BRIDES

EVERYTHING went according to plan for the headline bride on Saturday, and vivacious brown-haired 22-year-old Sylvia Martin of 41 Duncombe-hill, Forest Hill, is now Mrs. Bill Schwitzhausmer, while 16-years-old Joan Eggott of West Norwood, pretty and dark-haired, starts life as the wife of Derek Wallen, aged 21, a lorry driver, of Manor-avenue, Brockley.

Derek held up an overcoat to prevent photographers taking pictures of his bride after their register office wedding at Brixton.

"No pictures," he shouted as he and Joan dashed to a taxi.

Derek met Joan, whose home is at Hansen-road, West Norwood, at St. Jehovah's Witness chapel when she was 15. They became engaged when she was 14 Joan was 16 only three days before the wedding.

### TWO-DAY HONEYMOON

Before the reception at a West Norwood restaurant, Joan said: "We are having a short honeymoon—just two days, but we'll have a more official one some time next year, with relatives in North Wales.

Joan is the youngest British-born married woman.

Sylvia's marriage to Australian-born Bill took place at St. Saviour's Church near her home.

There was also a "mock" ceremony at the church under Stodfights so that a film could be made and sent to Australia in time for the birthday of Bill's mother early in the New Year.

### DRASTIC ACTION

Sylvia, hit the headlines when she confessed: "I was the arch-tyrant in the British Embassy at Washington and I put paid to air-conditioning system out of action several times so that Bill, who was the electrician, would have to notice me."

Bill did, and followed Sylvia to Forest Hill when she decided to marry from her mother's home.

Sylvia and Bill kept their honeymoon destination a secret, but Sylvia said that they would keep a promise to her mother to be at 41, Duncombe hill on Christmas Eve.

## Your 150 million bottles of Christmas milk

This Christmas the nation's milkmen will be placing no less than 150 million bottles of milk on the country's doorstep. This staggering figure comes to life a little more when it is realised that these bottles standing upright would cover all the football pitches of the Football League's 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Divisions! And there would be a good many million bottles left over, too.

Because of this tremendous outgoing of bottles, Christmas time is always a difficult one for the dairymen. This Christmas will be more difficult than usual as the holiday runs into a weekend.

The public can help the milkmen by putting out their empty bottles well rinsed, every day.

If the dairies ran out of bottles they would find it extremely difficult to maintain their daily deliveries in the extra quantities required at Christmas.

So, in the interests of everyone the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food asks the public to "rinse out and put out those bottles."

Make sure of your Christmas milk.

Nearly 50 children from the Haven Home, Crystal Palace-parade, Sydenham, Hyde-basin and The Sunshine Homes, Lee, saw "Jack and the Beanstalk" on Monday as guests of Catford and Lewisham Round Table and the New Theatre, Bromley.

## FESTIVE HAPPINESS MAY BRING SORROW, TOO, SAYS THE KENT FIRE CHIEF

CHRISTMAS IS A TIME OF HAPPINESS, but the decorations and excitement can be the forerunners of danger and sorrow, states the Kent Fire Brigade in a warning about the risk of fire during the next few days.

Over Christmas, deaths from burning throughout the country will be five times higher than at any other period of the year. Paper chains, cotton wool, Christmas trees and children's clothes will provide the fuel. Candles, matches, Christmas lights and unguarded fires will provide the flames.

Last Christmas a child was burned to death when she tried to light the coloured bulbs on the Christmas tree. Another child died when an oil-stove was knocked over and set the house on fire.

The Brigade suggest that there are many precautions you can take to protect your family from fire this Christmas.

Make plenty of ashtrays available for everybody's cigarette ends; matches should be kept out of sight and reach of children; hang decorations well away from electric light fittings or candles; portable heaters should be placed well out of the path of children.

Above all, fire must be guarded.

In moments of excitement children are liable to fall into unprotected fires and heaters or to brush against flights. Dresses and flimsy party dresses need no encouragement to burn.

When it is cold, old people will build up the coal fire or turn up the gas and they are then liable to doze off dangerously near the fire.

Fireguards must be strong enough to withstand all the bustle of Christmas and firmly fixed to hold in the fire which, when knocked over, could become a terror if it caught on.

There has already been a considerable response to the Government sponsored "Guard that Fire" campaign. If you have not yet guarded yourself with fireguards, Christmas is a particularly vital time to do so.

## HER DEATH NOT INFLUENCED BY OPERATIONS

### Expectation of life was poor

A Sydenham woman's expectation of life was "poor" and her death in Lewisham Hospital on November 23 after two operations had not been influenced "in any way" by those operations.

The Coroner (Mr. R. I. Milne) recorded a verdict of "Natural Causes" at the resumed Lewisham inquest on Miss Daisy Parsons, aged 63, of 21, Laurelgrove, on Thursday last week.

He felt that Mrs. Parson's final illness considerably shortened—started considerably earlier than first examination by a Lewisham Hospital consultant.

Asked by counsel for Mrs. Parson's relatives if her final illness could have been diagnosed without an operation, the pathologist, Dr. F. E. Camps, said it would not have been possible.

Inflammation of the liver, due to an unknown virus or germ, was extremely difficult to diagnose and was a condition that could continue for a year or longer.

"Nothing could have been done for this anyway," commented Dr. Camps, "and if she had not had the operations the disease would also in the end be fatal. Of course, of course that her life might have been shortened by a day or two.

Mr. Alfred Cavendish, consultant surgeon at Lewisham Hospital, said in evidence that Mrs. Parsons first saw Mrs. Parsons in October 1957. Her symptoms suggested an ulcer or growth. A diet improved her condition, which, however, deteriorated again into violent attacks of pain.

In March 1958 he suspected gall stones and she was put on the waiting list on April 3 for an operation.

On October 17 she came off the waiting list and was taken into hospital.

In reply to a question from the Coroner, Mr. Cavendish felt that was a very fair duration of waiting time for an operation for a case of that type.

In the first operation on October 20 he removed a few small stones in Mrs. Parson's gall bladder. Later her jaundiced appearances puzzled him and finally he felt a second operation was justifiable in case something had been missed.

He found nothing could be relieved and when he saw the condition of the liver he realised there was nothing he could do.

"In a seriously sick patient a second operation might advance death a little, but her expectation of life was poor," he told counsel.

### Ejected from pub

Richard Canavan (41), cloak room attendant, of Courthill-road, Lewisham, was fined 20s. at the Greenwich Court on Monday for disorderly behaviour on December 20 at High-street, Lewisham.

The police said he was ejected from a public house and then tried to return to see the licensee. He refused to go away when told to do so.

## AN AGED WOMAN DIED BECAUSE OF 'A NASTY DANGEROUS THING'

AT A LEWISHAM INQUEST on Thursday last week the Coroner (Mr. R. I. Milne) described slot gas meters as "nasty, dangerous things" in a house which is shared.

A verdict of "Accidental death" was recorded at the inquest on Mrs. Elizabeth Keys, aged 86, of 101 Brockdale-road, Catford, who died of carbon monoxide poisoning while suffering from cerebral thrombosis, having inadvertently turned on a gas jet.

It was revealed during the evidence that her son, Mr. George Keys, of the same address put money into a gas meter when he returned home on the early hours of December 12. He put a kettle on when he woke up, but there was no gas. Later he found his mother dead in her room.

### "HAD A STROKE"

He told the Coroner that he found the tap on a gas light bracket turned on. As far as he knew she had not used it for years as they had tried to stop her doing it.

Dr. F E Camps, pathologist, said Mrs. Keys had a stroke just prior to her death. During the onset of the stroke she might have acted strangely.

Before the Coroner commented on slot gas meters in a shared house he said that although Mr. Keys had unwittingly allowed more gas through the machine by putting in the slot, it was possible his mother was already dead at that time.

## "HIGH" FINANCE

An elderly man who came before Mr. Pereira at the Greenwich Court on Saturday on a charge of being drunk was asked why he had not paid a previous fine.

"I have been waiting for a rebate from the Income Tax," he said amid laughter.

## MONEY THEY LEFT

Mrs. Sophia Harber (or Glen) of 144, Algernon-road, Lewisham, who died on September 5 last, wife of Harry C. Harber, retd. representative, left £5,486.4.8. gross, £5,088. 8.5. net value. (Duty paid £129).

Miss Catharine Reed Newby of Goring-by-Sea, Worthing, Sussex, Principal of St. Christopher's College, Blackheath, who died on July 24 last, left £1,358.10.6. gross, £11,078.16.4. net value. (Duty paid £667).

Mr. Frederick Arthur Algar, of 161, Stanstead-road, Forest Hill, who with his brother, the late Percy George Algar, carried on the Forest Hill firm of drapers, merchants, and who died on October 5 last, left £11,553. 10.0. gross, £11,471.17.6. net value. (Duty paid £6590).

## Long service remembered

Some time during the next few days 442 retired pensioners of Bond Tea, Ltd., will have the warm and rewarding proof that, although they are no longer active, they are still a part of the firm.

One of the famous little red vans, driven by a former colleague, will call at each pensioner's home in Miss F. Stevens, of 11, Kilgour-road, Forest Hill, who retired in 1943 after long years of valued service with the Bulston-street, London, factory.

## Christmas milk supplies depend on the return of empty bottles

please put out your empty milk bottles overnight


RELEASED BOXING DAY FRIDAY DEC 26TH

"CRACKERJACK WESTERN OF LAUGHTER AND THRILLS"—Daily Mirror

"EXCRUCIATINGLY FUNNY"—The Knight

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Buses 36, 47, 54, 63, 180, 185 Stop outside 75, 94 124, 160, 160 yards away




A Happy Christmas to all members—from the ROYAL ARSENAL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY Ltd.


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