
"OLD CONWAYS" AT DINNER.

A PLEASANT LIVERPOOL REUNION.

BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

Comradeship and the love of old friends is a very strongly marked characteristic of those who "go down to the sea in ships," and never is it so apparent as at the gathering of "Old Conways" when they foregather from all parts of the kingdom for the purpose of partaking of their annual dinner together. It was a very notable and enthusiastic crowd of "Old Boys" that met at the Exchange Station Hotel, Liverpool, on the evening of Tuesday, May 24th: men who hold the highest positions in the mercantile marine of which England is so justly proud, and "landlubbers" whose profession smacks of the sea were all there. "Old Conways" every one of them, proud of their profession, and doubly proud of the old ship which sheltered them so many years ago, and where they were taught those cardinal principles of patriotism, discipline, and fearlessness which make the British sailor the admiration of the whole world.

These "Old Boys," hospitable as ever, brought with them congenial spirits of other walks of life, and the visitors, who were honoured guests at the festive board were representative of the trade and commerce of the great seaport

of Liverpool. In the chair, the place of honour on such an occasion, was Captain F. Y. Powles, the oldest "Old Boy" but one, and who was on the original "Conway" more than half a century ago. Facing him, in

the vice-chair, was Commander H. W. Broadbent, R.N.R., the present genial "old man" of the "Conway," and an "old boy" to boot, and amongst those whose Alma Mater is the "Conway" were C. V. Daly, C. D. Van

Someren, A. M. Collins, J. W. Gracey, B. C. Daish, E. C. Roden, W. P. Thompson, W. Burrill, W. F. Seattle, C. D. Pickering, C. A. Lecoustre, Chas. d' H. Bell, G. H. Barclay, S. C. Magrath, J. O. Hope, J. Shekleton,

T. A. Addis-Black, J. C. V. Morgan, G. F. Ernest Dutton, H. Rogers, B. H. Davies, G. H. Dodd, J. D. Keatinge, A. C. Meredith, E. G. Meredith, H. McNeile-Dibb, the latter of whom most efficiently discharged the by no means light duties of hon. secretary of the Dinner Committee, which comprised Captain Powles, Commander Broadbent, G. H. Dodd, Dr. Burland, W. B. Wilson, J. D. Keatinge, C. L. A. Lecoustre, C. K. Browne, W. Seattle, C. Dodds, and W. Burrill, the last named acting efficiently as hon. treasurer. The visitors included Canon Lambert, Captain A. H. F. Young (an "old boy" of the "Worcester"), Commander J. McNab, Commander F. M. C. Sergeant, R.N.R., Captains M. H. Foster, Batchelor, Hugh Williams, Fost, D. Lyon, P. W. Atkin, J. Trenery, Lieut. Mace, Messrs. G. D. Killey, C. P. Grylls, S. B. Cotterell, Percy Corkhill, S. Burgess, J. W. Loader Cooper, and W. Backhouse.

An excellent repast was served by the management of the hotel, the tables being most tastefully decorated with lovely flowers and trailing smilax, whilst to add to the enjoyment of the diners Mrs. Mary Ross's ladies' orchestra discoursed delightful music, which was thoroughly appreciated, the talented instrumentalists coming in for a hearty round of applause later in the evening.

After dinner a short toast list was negotiated, "The King" being loyally and enthusiastically honoured on the call of the chairman. It is a notable fact that this was the first occasion on which the health of the Sailor King had been drunk in public in Liverpool, and that this honour should have fallen to sailors was particularly appropriate.

To Canon Edgar Lambert fell the pleasing duty of proposing "The Conway," who said he shared with them the delight of meeting together again on such a festive occasion. "We are meeting," said the Canon, "on a great day—Empire Day—and I feel sure that our Sailor King, whom some of us remember distributing the prizes on the 'Conway,' would fully approve of our meeting together at this dinner. Sailors have a good custom of not lying down to a sorrow, and I think the whole nation would be well advised, and indeed the whole empire, if it followed the sailors' custom. We grieve for the loss of our late good King, but we bow to the decision of the Almighty, and we believe, and I think we can see even already, how the blessing of the Peacemaker rests upon him in death

almost as much as in life, and more than if he had continued beyond his proper term in life. So we have nothing to reproach ourselves for in meeting together at this dinner to-night." Proceeding, the Canon said he could have wished that they had called upon some far more distinguished and eloquent individual to propose so important a toast as that of "The Conway." More justice would have been done to the toast and the words of some better-known man would have rung out into quarters which would not be reached by his small pipe, but he did not think that any public man could have spoken more sincerely from the heart to that toast than he could. "The 'Conway' is a going concern," said the Canon. "An old town councillor on the north-east coast, where I was working for some years amongst sailors, made this remark: 'We are *in statu quo*, we are moving on' (laughter). Well, the 'Conway' is not *in statu quo*, but she is moving on. I think I cannot do better here than state my own personal grounds for believing in the 'Conway.' I believe in it first of all because of the sympathetic and spirited policy of the committee who manage it. In all the connection that I have had with the 'Conway,' coaching the crew from time to time and going on board for various purposes when I have been asked, I have always noticed that the 'Conway' committee are most sympathetic with all the good schemes of the captain and with everything that makes for the well-being of the ship. I would just like to adduce one or two illustrations with which most here are familiar, to remind you of that. It has been an immense satisfaction to us old rowing men who have had anything to do with the 'Conway' to see how warmly the committee have always approved of the race with the 'Worcester.' I am sure that Captain Young shares our feelings of poignant regret that that race has been abandoned, for a time only we hope, and we feel that he is working with us to influence public opinion towards the restoration of that sportsmanlike and highly beneficial contest. I always noticed that the committee took the keenest interest in the race and encouraged it in every possible way. Then again there came that crucial question about the Osborne Class, and there they showed that they were up to date and that they believed in the future of the 'Conway,' and were proud of the connection they were establishing with the Royal Navy,

or rather which they were strengthening, because there was a connection before. I am quite sure results have proved, and we all feel more than ever to-day, that that connection with the Royal Navy will be a benefit to this institution and to the Mercantile Marine, and will not be a loss to the Royal Navy itself (hear, hear). Then again, in other ways, the committee have shown their sympathy with all that makes for the good of the ship and a keen appreciation of all that is useful. The 'Conway' some years ago was rather badly off as regards athletics other than rowing, and I often regretted that on leave-out day the boys came and loafed about Liverpool and did not seem to have anything particular to do. Now they have a splendid field on which the committee have spent thousands, and there they have ample opportunity for playing cricket, football, hockey and other games, and so the Committee are able to carry out what is the intention of our energetic executive, to discourage idleness by every means possible, and to afford the boys every possible opportunity for developing their physical powers and other qualities which they will need in the manly profession to which they are called (hear, hear). I believe in the 'Conway' also because the executive, the captain and officers, the teaching staff and the chaplain, all set themselves out to encourage everything that is good among the boys, and they are watchful to do so. There is good discipline on board and the boys are trained in resourcefulness. The 'old boys' are remembered, too, as we saw last week, when our Bishop was called on to unveil that beautiful memorial to those who have laid down their lives, as the Bishop said, as much in the service of our country as any who have fallen on the field of battle (hear, hear). I had the privilege of knowing the old chaplain of the 'Conway' pretty intimately, and with our good friend Mr. Killey, I had a little hand in helping to secure his services for the 'Conway' in the first instance, and partly for the Mersey Mission, and I was always so thankful to hear from him how happy he was on board. I think the harmony that exists among people engaged in a difficult work, the unity of spirit that prevails in the working together for one aim, is a very striking feature of this educational and mercantile institution and makes very largely for its success. The ship is united in its working, it works for one end, it works hard and efficiently and compels our admira-

tion. It deepens our confidence, and it is always the greatest pleasure to me when parents come anxiously inquiring, as they sometimes do, to be able to speak in the highest terms of the ship and all its work, and to recommend it to anyone I may have the opportunity of so doing. I believe in the 'Conway' also because of its efficient, earnest and devoted staff, and I look forward with hopefulness to the spiritual work, about which I feel a very special interest, of the new chaplain. He seems to have an admirable record, and seems to be likely to do just what the Committee and Executive wish him to do in developing that manly Christianity among the boys which, after all, is the thing most worth acquiring and developing in those impressionable years of their life (hear, hear). I also believe in the 'Conway' because I have opportunities of seeing the type of men which it turns out. They constantly, by their brave and chivalrous deeds, and by their efficiency, compel the admiration not only of a favoured few who may know them personally, but of a much wider circle. In that admirable school magazine, THE CADET, we sometimes see what sort of life the 'old boys' have to lead, and some of their letters display very considerable literary merit." After a eulogistic reference to the exceedingly graphic description of the loss of the "Matterhorn," written by an old "Conway" boy, Portch, and published in the April issue of THE CADET, the Canon concluded an eloquent address by expressing the hope that steps would be taken to make the annual gatherings of "old boys" even more popular. "I do wish," concluded the Canon, "all prosperity from the bottom of my heart to the 'Conway.' I wish long life and health to the present Executive, the present Committee of Management, and I wish the same to all the boys who have the privilege of being in the ship at the present time. May her old timbers long hang together. I am one of those, whether old fashioned or not, who have a certain sentiment for a ship as a ship, and I should keenly regret to see that interestingly beautiful old sea mark removed from our noble river, and I further believe that 'tween decks of that ship there is a fellowship and other things which are not possible to the same extent in an institution which has its headquarters ashore. I hope it will be a very long day before the 'Conway' is removed from our river, and whether it is removed or not I feel certain

in my own mind that it is an institution which will bring lasting benefit to the Mercantile Marine and to our great maritime nation increasingly in the years to come" (loud cheers).

Old boys and visitors vied with each other in doing honour to the toast, and gave a cordial reception to Commander Broadbent when he rose to respond. He said he supposed it was considered part of his job to respond for the "Conway" on that occasion, and he need not say how indebted he felt to Canon Lambert for his very kind references to the Executive and the "old boys," both of which included himself. He cordially endorsed every word the Canon had said about the Committee, whom he had served now for close upon a dozen years, and he did not think he could improve upon the Committee, however much he might try to do so. The Commander went on to remark that as "Old Conways" they were an unorganised lot and they were dependent for their dinner there that night on a scratch committee. He commended to their thoughts and meditation the "Worcester," who did things better than that. They had with them that evening the president of the Old "Worcester" Boys' Association, who were responsible for the Old "Worcester" dinner, and he could not help thinking that the "Worcesters" did things much better in regard to the old boys' dinner than the "Conways" did. The scratch committee had done their best, he was sure, but he certainly thought they should not be dependent on them in the future. They certainly ought to have a "Conway" Old Boys' Association—(hear, hear)—and he thought with the assistance of THE CADET they could at least compile a list of Old "Conways" with their addresses and the places where they could be found. They had experienced great difficulty in notifying old boys of the dinner, and if there were some means, other than THE CADET, by which they could be made acquainted with the date and place of the annual dinner there would be an even larger attendance than there was that evening. They had a gathering on board the other day, when the Bishop unveiled the tablet which had been erected at the cost of a number of old boys to the memory of their less fortunate fellows who had lost their lives at sea, and it was only the previous day that an old boy had told him he had no knowledge of the proposed memorial, otherwise he

would gladly have subscribed to it. Continuing, the Commander said, "I think the old 'Conway' boys owe something to the 'Conway.' It is not a mere coincidence that most of the marine superintendents of leading Liverpool and other shipping companies are old 'Conways'; it is not a mere coincidence that we are so strongly represented on the Board of Trade, and I venture to say it is not a mere coincidence that the present Commander of the 'Conway' is an old boy, because if he had not been on the 'Conway' he would not be where he is now. I feel sure we ought to organise, and if we did so we should be a powerful organisation and an influence for good not only to ourselves, but to the younger members who are coming on and to whom we certainly owe something. I think this dinner should be carried further and placed on a permanent basis, so that we could look forward at a certain time of the year to meeting together here and talking about the old happy days on the 'Conway.' In conclusion, I will say I don't think you have any need to be ashamed of the 'Conway' of the present day (hear, hear). We are endeavouring to keep up the best traditions of the ship and of the boys, and I am glad to think we have dropped certain traditions that were not desirable. We are not perfect, by any means, but we are very much alive on the 'Conway' at the present moment. I feel that it is a great honour to myself to be Commander of the 'Conway,' and I assure you I feel it is a great responsibility also. I thank you again, Canon Lambert, for the very kindly way in which you have spoken of the 'Conway' and the old boys. You have been a very staunch friend of the 'Conway' in more ways than one. You have spoken of the staff, and I do not think anyone at the head of a ship has been more fortunate in his staff than I have been. I am glad to think that with one or two exceptions the members of the executive staff are younger than myself, so that they can without fear to their own feelings call me 'the old man.' I believe in youth, and the 'Conway' is not an old man's job, neither are any of the junior appointments in her retiring berths. I thank you for the way the toast has been received, and I hope we shall meet here year after year to honour the same toast" (cheers).

Mr. G. D. Killey made a capital speech in introducing the toast of "The Old Boys." He said, "I feel appalled by the magnitude

of the task of proposing the toast of the old boys of the 'Conway.' The old boys of the 'Conway,' upon whom the sun never sets, may their successes go on and may their renown be known from Pole to Pole!" (cheers). Proceeding, the speaker said he was glad he had been invited to propose the toast, because though not an "old boy" himself he was frequently called "Captain Killey" by the cadets of the "Conway," and besides he had sailor blood in his veins. His father, grandfather and great grandfather were all sailors,

'Conways,' and it is a most extraordinary thing that to have been on the 'Conway' is a passport in all the ports of the world. When we look at Captain Powles, our chairman to-night, whose sea days are over, but with whom we who have something to do with the management of the 'Conway,' are brought in contact, we feel extremely proud of him (cheers). I would like to say this, that it is more than the desire, it is the intention of the Committee of the 'Conway' that old 'Conways' shall never be ashamed of their ship of to-day (hear,

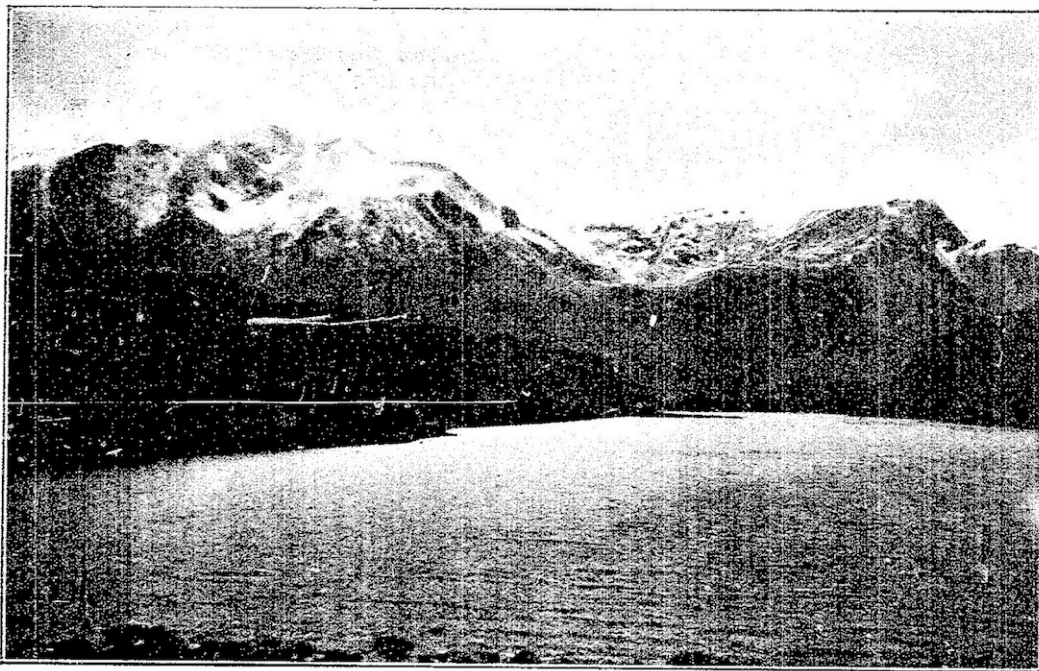


Photo. by M. F. W. B. **OGWEN LAKE (NORTH WALES) on April 25th, 1910.**

and his only brother was a sailor also, so they could fully understand how thoroughly he appreciated the honour that had been placed upon him that evening. "It is impossible," said Mr. Killey, "for us who live in this great seaport to underestimate the value of the 'Conway' and the training that the 'Conway' has given in the past. Let us for a moment, without mentioning any names, look at our large steamship companies, the executive heads of the marine departments of which are in the hands of old 'Conways.' Wherever we go we find old

(hear). Everything that thought and money can provide is to be found on board the 'Conway.' There used to be a tradition on the 'Conway' that the Committee made a very fine thing out of the ship—(laughter)—and that they ran the ship and pocketed the profit (laughter). It is hardly necessary for me to tell you that in these days there is profit in nothing. We don't run anything for profit, but any profit there is on the 'Conway' is spent on the 'Conway.' Our playing fields, of which we are extremely proud, are evidence of some small profit or

loss on the 'Conway,' and so in the future we shall consider that we have a sacred duty to old 'Conways' to maintain the prestige of the ship, so that they can look at the ship of to-day with the same pride as they looked upon the ship of their day (hear, hear). I would like to point out to the old boys that the 'Conway' of to-day is in a great measure dependent upon them. It is in a great measure dependent upon their good will, and we are looking to them for a good word when the opportunity occurs. It is marvellous how elastic the sides of that good old ship are. We have at present two hundred and eight on board, but I believe Captain Broadbent's ingenuity is such that if two hundred and eighty offered he would be able to accommodate them. At any rate that would be rather a tight fit, and I am glad to hear that there is nothing but satisfaction expressed on all sides by the parents and guardians of those who are on the 'Conway.' It is the object and aim of the Committee to keep the ship going as a ship that it is desirable for the youth who is going to follow the sea to be trained in. I hope the outcome of this dinner will be the formation of an Old Boys' Association, and if we begin to dream we may see in the future an old boys' club established in Liverpool—(hear, hear)—where old boys can come and meet their old friends and where they can hear of the men they were associated with years ago. There are no limitations to the outcome of such a dinner as this, and I hope as years go on we may see an increasingly large number of old boys who will travel, as gentlemen present to-night have done, from one end of England to the other to attend this annual gathering (hear, hear). May the old boys continue to flourish and may they be spared for many a long year to meet round this festive board."

The toast, which was coupled with the name of the genial chairman, was accorded musical honours by the visitors, and after the last vociferous strains of "For they are jolly good fellows" had died away the chairman made a humorous and characteristic reply. He didn't know whether to thank Mr. Killely for the kind and eloquent way he had spoken of the old boys, because although some of them deserved all that had been said of them, it was evident that he himself did not, if Commander Broadbent was to be believed (laughter). "I beg to call to his notice," said the Captain amidst renewed laughter,

"that I am supported on the right by the gentleman who is responsible for keeping me straight." I was on the "Conway" some time ago and was much interested to meet a man who has done what nobody else has done, I mean Sir Ernest Shackleton. I had the honour of shaking him by the hand and I told him it was the greatest pride of my life to shake hands with a man who had done what nobody else had done, and I told him that I was shipmates with Webb, who swam the Channel. Webb was a fearfully lazy fellow—he was nearly as lazy as I was myself (laughter). When it was 'clean up mess things' he used to bribe me with half his duff to clean up for him (laughter). Webb was the same age, height and weight as myself, and we used to have a few 'set tos' now and again after I had eaten the duff (laughter). Duff is not a good thing to fight on and you can imagine the result (laughter). But Webb was a great hero and I am proud to think I was messmates with him." Yarn after yarn recalling amusing adventures of other days fell from the Captain, who told a particularly thrilling story of one "William" and others who went ashore at Port Louis, smashed up a hostelry, killed a Chinaman, injured a policeman and then stole a boat to proceed to their ship, afterwards refusing to apologise, but settling the matter, including the dead Chinaman, for £10. In conclusion, the Captain said old boys would always have a very warm place in their hearts for the "Conway," to the training on which they owed so much. As a grand finale the Captain went to the piano, and accompanying himself, sang his famous old "chanty," "Rio Grande," the company joining heartily in the rousing chorus.

Dr. Burland, in felicitous terms, proposed the health of "Our Guests," and at the outset humorously resented the epithet of "scratch," which had been bestowed upon by the committee by Commander Broadbent, especially as the Commander had a hand in the selection of the committee and was a member himself. At the same time he thought a great deal more might be done to attract old "Conways," such as had been done with such unqualified success by the "Worcester," and he warmly advocated the formation of an Old Boys' Association in connection with the "Conway," so that they could get and keep in touch with each other. He was very glad to hear Canon Lambert's remarks as to the justification for holding the dinner that

evening. "We are met here," added the doctor in tones of deep solemnity, "in the shadow of a terrible national calamity, which comes to the heart of each one of us as a distinct and personal sorrow, but we have to remember that our great Sovereign laid to rest is succeeded by a sailor, and I think His Majesty King George the Fifth would say to us on such an occasion 'Carry on.'" The speaker concluded a brief and appropriate speech by extending a cordial welcome to the guests, expressing the hope that their number would be considerably augmented in the future, and making special reference to the welcome presence of a distinguished old "Worcester" in the person of Captain Young, of the Board of Trade.

A hearty reception was accorded the toast, and Mr. P. W. Atkin, who was the first to respond, referred to the interesting fact that the chairman was on the "Conway" in the year 1859, when he (the speaker) was an infant in arms. Having acknowledged the kindly compliment paid the guests, the speaker referred to the steps which had been taken to bring about the resumption of the "Conway"-"Worcester" race, and which were of a private character.

Captain Young, who also responded, was cordially greeted, and as an old "Worcester" said he heartily echoed the wish that the boat race would be resumed, as he believed it would, though he thought it would be a matter of time. It was particularly gratifying to him as an old "Worcester," to be present at that gathering of old "Conways," and he hoped their hospitality that evening would be as cordially reciprocated. Captain Young said the interchange of such courtesies could only lead to a feeling of good fellowship between the sister ships "Conway" and "Worcester" (hear, hear). After affording some valuable information as to the working of the "Worcester" Old Boys' Association, the gallant captain again thanked them for their more than kind reception of himself and wished the old "Conways" all success, long life and prosperity.

The concluding toast was that of "The Chairman," introduced in happy terms by Commander F. M. C. Sergeant, and the rousing reception accorded it spoke volumes for the esteem and respect in which Captain Powles is held by old "Conways."

With "chanty" and "yarn," Captain McNab "obliging," the remainder of a very

happy evening was spent, old friendships were renewed, new ones were formed, and when at last "Auld lang syne" signified the parting hour the one thought uppermost in the minds of all present was "Happy to meet, sorry to part, happy to meet again."

OLD BOYS PRESENT.

H. W. Broadbent.....	1880-1
C. V. Daly.....	1870-2
C. D. Van Someren.....	1904-7
A. M. Collins.....	1882-4
J. W. Gracey.....	1899-1901
B. O. Daish.....	1867-9
E. C. Roden.....	1890-2
M. G. Douglas.....	1893-5
W. P. Thompson.....	1869
C. Burland.....	1874-5
W. Burrill.....	1883-6
W. F. Seattle.....	1879-81
C. D. Pickering.....	1883-6
T. Y. Powles.....	1859-61
C. D. A. Lecoustre.....	1883-5
C. de H. Bell.....	1875-7
G. H. Barclay.....	1875-7
S. C. Magrath.....	1881-3
J. O. Hope.....	1872-4
J. Shekleton.....	1872-4
T. C. Addis-Black.....	1903-5
J. C. V. Morgan.....	1902-7
T. E. Jameson.....	1865-6
S. E. Dutton.....	1882-4
H. Rogers.....	1905-7
B. H. Davis.....	1899-1901
G. H. Dodd.....	1880-2
J. D. Keatinge.....	1887-90
A. C. Meredith.....	1904-7
E. S. Meredith.....	1904-6
H. McNeile-Dibb, hon. sec....	1883-4