

Some Lewes Thoughts

100 years . . . it didn't take long even in 1933 to realise there was a magic word . . . old hands worked with extra skill, newcomers (10 years' service or less) were allowed to participate and gained their instruction from those who had been through similar "flaps" before . . . very newcomers saw eyes get keener and a sharpening of the pace, and thought "Aero" must be the ultimate to be gained as a result of learning to be a printer at the Lewes Press . . . after it was condescended you were "coming along".

. . . In those days it meant for me to read the "copy" for checking the galley proofs of the setting of the "Abstracts" . . . 30 ems wide, 10 point Old Style . . . to old Charlie Furner who, between copious pinches of snuff, vowed and declared Capt. Pritchard's writing was quite decipherable . . . anyway, the words he wrote seemed very important . . . old Johnny Dawes on the Linotype set away all day on the job . . . you didn't ask if his galleys were ready for proofing to read when he was setting "Aero" . . . "Aero" was senior staff stuff . . . not to be discussed with "copy" boys . . .

. . . of course, "Aero" was *the* job some years before this . . . in days when Winnie Blaber . . . she's now in charge of the folding department . . . used to come back to work Saturday afternoons to sew the "Aero" Journals . . . by hand . . . at 3d per hour . . . the Centenary issue is going to be near 14 tons of paper through the department . . . folding, collating . . . machine sewing . . . boxing . . .

During the 1939-45 War we were at one time reduced to one Linotype operator . . . Teddy Troke . . . he trained under Johnny Dawe's wing . . . still, "Aero" got out by some means or other . . . I went on to the Linotypes to help and sometimes we had Trade Typesetters to help . . . only on the "straight" setting, though . . . we set the maths . . . one "advance" paper for reading at a meeting of the Society was typeset in London . . . not much time, and the type was sent to Lewes on the train . . . arrived at the "Press" in sacks, completely "pied" . . . so Teddy and I had to set the paper after all . . . got it out on time, too . . . Teddy will tell you "Aero" ask impossibilities in maths typesetting today . . . but he sets it just the same . . .

. . . Miss Chitty could write some devastating maths . . . might take more than a fortnight to assemble the equations . . . authors often generously send a letter to say the paper was well set . . . Mr. Masefield's paper was quite an epic . . . about 40 fold-in Tables in this one . . . Mrs. Bradbrooke had arrived at "Aero" as a successor to Capt. Pritchard by this time . . . "Aero" had found another miracle worker we had to match . . .

. . . the Centenary issue was late starting . . . November had already arrived . . . but Mr. Haigh made sure we had enough paper and . . . R. Wickham, R. Parsons (Comps), H. Hindon (Machines) soon caught the magic of "Aero" once again . . . A. Barnden is going to bind the issue on his new machine . . . he must have helped bind over 2 million Journals for the Society . . . many by hand . . .

Capt. Pritchard came along, at the invitation of our Managing Director, Mr. R. W. Mountain, to one of our Company celebrations in London . . . and said we always made sure we delivered his Garden Party programmes safely . . . to the airfield very often . . . because we sent in addition to the first van carrying the goods another van following behind . . . in case of breakdown . . . the Centenary issue first copies will be delivered by G. Smith, by road . . . to the Science Museum on Wednesday 12th January 1966 . . . we will send F. Parsons, our van driver, with him . . . in case of breakdown.

I expect a copy of the issue will get on to the lower

shelf in our "Front" office . . . we've got copies of the JOURNAL going back over 40 years there . . . impresses the visitors and newcomers (10 years' service or less) and we've got some likely lads coming along . . . at present they're busy helping on the "Aero" for January 1966 . . .

. . . mustn't be too long about it . . . we've still got to get February JOURNAL set up . . .—REGINALD PELLING.

Editor's Note

The Editor wishes to thank all those who have contributed so generously to this Centenary issue of the JOURNAL—some at such short notice—to apologise to those whose contributions have been so drastically "cut" (without consultation or approval) so that they could be squeezed in and, above all, regrets sincerely that so much has had to be held over. Three hundred and two pages of text seems a fantastic number for one issue but it was not enough and a halt had to be called—one had to harden one's heart and be ruthless—and it was not easy. Illustrations have been sacrificed for the written words that might not perhaps be repeated. There is some overlapping, but usually from a different angle. There are bound to be errors and discrepancies just as there are many omissions. Unfortunately many who were asked to contribute had to decline for reasons of health or lack of time.

The names of all those whose contributions have had to be held over are listed below; it is planned to publish them during the year, probably in a special section in each issue, together with other contributions which it is hoped will be received as memories are revived. Arrangements have been made so that at the end of this Centenary year all such contributions can be bound with this special issue and a few complete copies kept in the Society's Library.

To say just "thank you" to everyone who has contributed and helped with this special issue is hopelessly inadequate, yet never were these words said more sincerely—to everyone, but especially to Captain Pritchard whose original idea it was that this issue should cover not just the Society's one hundred years but British aeronautics generally and especially the people—so many of them members of the Society—who have made these hundred years; to my Editorial colleagues (Mrs. Joan Bruce—JB2, Miss Joyce Davis, Miss J. A. Wolf—"Jay") who have put in such endless hours of work; to Dr. Ballantyne who has left us so free—as always—to "get on with the job"—with the comforting knowledge that he was ready to help in any way possible; to the Librarian and his colleagues for their infinite patience in checking facts, supplying information, photographs, coping with any and every SOS, no matter how unreasonable. And above all to the Lewes Press who have printed the JOURNAL for over 50 years (and nearly everything else for the Society), whose service and ability to "work miracles" in print has been a source of wonder to the Editor for the past 20 years, but who have done the seemingly impossible with this Centenary Journal; all hours of the day and night they have worked, willingly, enthusiastically—it is *their* JOURNAL as much as ours. Seeing them more often this past week and listening to them reminisce we asked for a contribution from them and it is given opposite. Now they really are doing what at this stage seems impossible—delivering 6 copies of the January 1966 JOURNAL on the 12th January. What a team!

11th January 1966

J.B.

Contributions held over but to be published:—

W. K. Alford, E. A. Allcut, F. A. Best, A. E. Bingham, J. Blake, F. Boreham, A. Buchanan Barbour, L. J. Cardew Wood, H. D. Carey, B. C. Carter, A. T. Eadon, D. Eyre, F. M. Green, P. T. Griffiths, J. Johnston, T. Jones, J. E. G. Labey, C. H. Latimer-Needham, G. E. Petty, R. W. Potts, J. W. Ratcliffe, C. G. Sandison, D. Scarlett, T. L. Smith, J. Sowrey, C. W. Tinson, Sir Frederick Tymms.