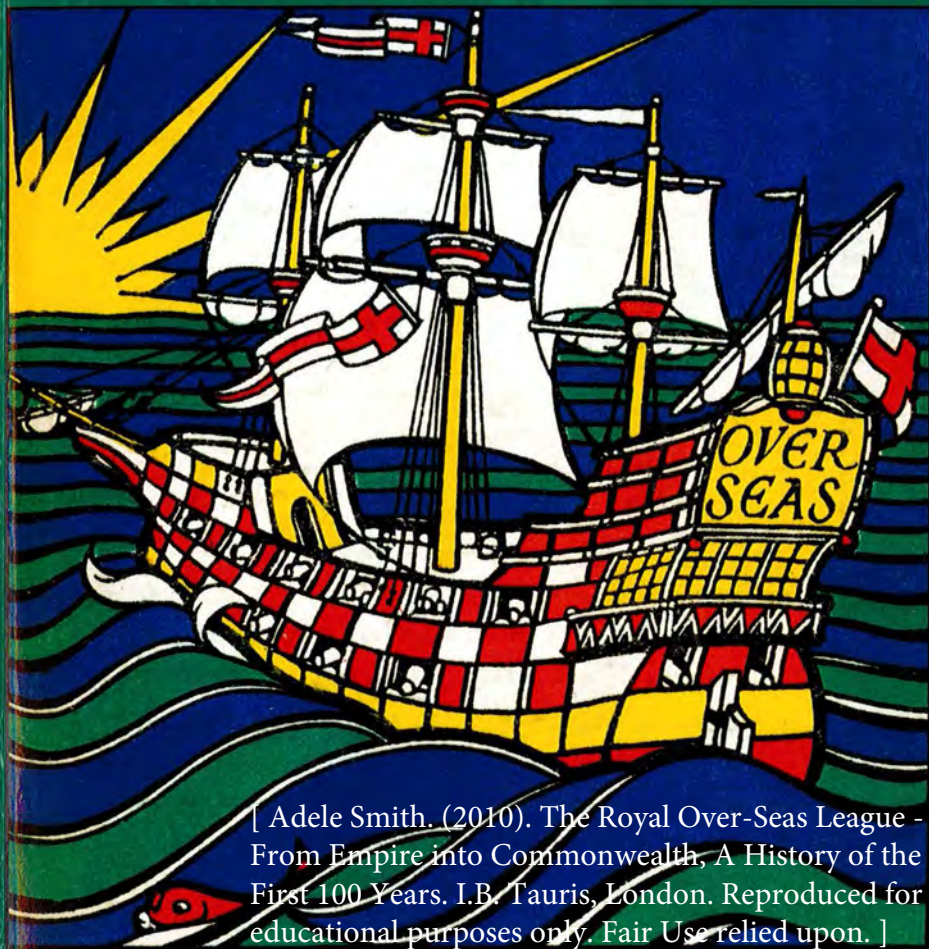


THE ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE



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From Empire into Commonwealth,
A History of the First 100 Years

I.B. TAURIS

ADELE SMITH



In 1910, when Evelyn Wrench founded the Royal Over-Seas League, King George V was on the throne, the British Empire seemed invincible and for most people international travel was a new and exciting opportunity. One hundred years later, the world and Britain's place in it has been transformed almost beyond recognition. Yet the League has weathered all these changes and now enters its second century with a renewed sense of energy and purpose. How has the ROSL developed since 1910 and responded to the fundamental shift from Empire into Commonwealth? What are the enduring aims and values, shared by all members of the League, which inform its activities? And how will it continue to evolve and find its place over the next hundred years?

This engaging and concise history of the first hundred years of the Royal Over-Seas League is lavishly illustrated with images from all aspects of the League's life and full of lively anecdotes about the many distinguished figures who have played a part in its creation. From Cecil Rhodes and John Ruskin, sources of inspiration to Evelyn Wrench, to Lord Northcliffe, Lord Baden-Powell and Earl Mountbatten, amongst many others who have been active in the League's development, the story also includes the many artists, musicians and writers who owe much to Royal Over-Seas League sponsorship of their early careers. A delightful commemoration of the rich history of the Royal Over-Seas League, it will inform and entertain anyone who is curious to find out more about this distinctive and important organisation.

Adele Smith has had a varied career in public relations and fund-raising. She was the Public Relations Director of the Royal Over-Seas League and Editor of its quarterly journal *Overseas* for four years and has maintained a strong association with the League ever since. She was born in Northumberland and educated at the Universities of Leeds and Oxford.

ISBN 978-1-84885-011-8



I.B. TAURIS

LONDON · NEW YORK

www.ibtauris.com

Image: The drawing of a ship by the artist Macdonald Gill (1884-1947) which was commissioned by Evelyn Wrench on behalf of the League and used on the jacket of *Overseas* magazine for many years.

About the author

Adele Smith has had a varied career in public relations and fund-raising. She was the Public Relations Director of the Royal Over-Seas League for four years and has maintained a strong association with the League ever since. She was born in Northumberland and educated at the Universities of Leeds and Oxford.



celebrating 100 years

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Published in 2010 by I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd
6 Salem Road, London W2 4BU
175 Fifth Avenue, New York NY 10010
www.ibtauris.com

Distributed in the United States and Canada Exclusively
by Palgrave Macmillan
175 Fifth Avenue, New York NY 10010

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ISBN: 978 1 84885 010 1 (HB)
978 1 84885 011 8 (PB)

A full CIP record for this book is available from the British Library
A full CIP record is available from the Library of Congress

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: available

Typeset in Garamond by Sara Millington, Editorial and Design Services
Printed and bound in Great Britain by CPI Antony Rowe



*We sailed wherever ship could sail,
We founded many a mighty state,
Pray God our greatness may not fail
Through craven fears of being great*

Alfred Lord Tennyson

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Acknowledgements

A history of this kind must necessarily be a collaborative effort. I am most grateful to all the past and present members and staff of the Royal Over-Seas League and fellow organisations who have given their time and help so generously. I am particularly indebted to Robert Newell, who has guided and overseen the whole enterprise, and to Stanley Martin, Roderick Lakin and Margaret Adrian-Vallance for their essential contributions, and to Fatima Vaníček, Samantha Whitaker and Polly Hynd for their constant help.

Two people have lent their personal archives, which have been invaluable. I am a grateful to the late Geoffrey Allen for his research papers and drawings about the Park Place buildings, and to Robin Noakes for lending the diaries and letters left to his family by his father, Philip Noakes.

I thank Viscount Norwich for permission to quote from Lady Diana Cooper's memoirs *The Rainbow Comes and Goes* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1958) and Anne de Courcy for her recollections of her great uncle, Evelyn Wrench. Finally, I acknowledge the great help I have received from my editor, Liz Friend-Smith of I.B.Tauris, who made the entire process an enjoyable learning-curve.

Adele Smith

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This portrait of HM The Queen, by ROSL prizewinner Christian Furr, was commissioned by ROSL in 1995 and hangs in the lobby of Over-Seas House, London.



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

The Royal Over-Seas League was founded by Sir Evelyn Wrench in 1910, the year that my grandfather, King George V, came to the throne. Within six years, he had granted his patronage to the young society and I am delighted to have followed him and my father, King George VI, in being Patron of the League.

On its fiftieth anniversary in 1960, I was happy to approve the title 'Royal' and I have appreciated meeting its members, from the United Kingdom and the overseas Commonwealth, on many occasions during my reign.

On its centenary in 2010, I wish the Royal Over-Seas League and all its members every success for the future.

Elizabeth R



INTRODUCTION

to the History of the Royal Over-Seas League

In the foreword to this book, HM The Queen refers to the patronage accorded by successive monarchs to the Royal Over-Seas League almost from its inception. Under that regal umbrella, much has been achieved over the last century.

The League has never realised the rather extravagant dream of its founder, Sir Evelyn Wrench, to be an imperial society of a million members. The imagination of the young 23-year-old when he sketched out his ideas in 1906 on the trans-Canadian train *The Imperial* (*The Canadian* when my wife and I did the same journey exactly 100 years later) proved to be beyond his capacity. Yet, as Robert Browning wrote, 'Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?'¹

The 'heaven' that the League has achieved in reality has brought meaningful activities and companionship to many, many thousands of members over the century, as well as decisive encouragement to thousands of young musicians and artists. It has always been, as Wrench consistently urged, 'not a club, although membership includes the privileges and amenities of a club'.

I am still mildly irritated when friends sometimes enquire, 'How is the *club* doing?'

Many such friends and others refer wistfully to the days when their parents or grandparents used the clubhouse whilst on their leave from such places as India, Malaya or Africa. The passing of Empire means that the League is no longer a home in London for members of the Indian and Colonial Civil Services, although a number of members of the modern Diplomatic Service still use it when in this country. That change from a dependent Empire to an independent Commonwealth is reflected in the composition of the Central Council of the League. Its members used to include many retired Indian and colonial governors; now a number of them are retired high commissioners and ambassadors.

The League has always justified the 'Over-Seas' in its title. The old dominion and colonial shields at Over-Seas House bear witness to that. In its early days, the League spread itself throughout the world, with branches or Corresponding Secretaries in many countries, both within the Empire and outside it. Gradually, it concentrated its activities on the countries of the emerging Commonwealth and today, apart from Britain, it has branches throughout Australia, New Zealand and much of Canada. Half of its 20,000 members live outside the Britain. The competitors in its music and art competitions come from all over the Commonwealth and its charitable work is concentrated on Namibia, formerly South West Africa. It stands, four-square, as a leading loyal society of the Commonwealth.

I shall not rehearse the manifold activities over the past century that are described so carefully by Adele Smith in this knowledgeable history. Many of you will be as surprised as the Director General and I were by much of what she has uncovered and recounted – and we thought we knew a lot about the League.

I feel privileged to have been Chairman of the League since 2005, especially in the period leading to the celebration of the centenary in 2010. I have been able to help in the many preparations for that celebration, the highlight of which will be a reception at St James's Palace, graced with the presence of our Patron, HM The Queen.

No introduction by the Chairman would be complete without referring to the truly remarkable job done by Robert Newell in his 31 years of service to the League: 13 as General Manager and 18 as Director General. He has moulded the League, led its staff in raising the already high standards of service and maintained a remarkable rapport with members throughout the world. As is evident from this history, the League has been well served over the century by a number of officials, not least by a succession of chief executives. I naturally did not know the early ones but I have come to know Robert Newell very well since I joined the Central Council in 1982. The League is greatly in his debt.

The subtitle of this history is *From Empire to Commonwealth, A History of the First 100 Years* and I am sure that all who read it, whether members of the League or not, will understand the important role played by our society in that vital transition. Not many empires have been dissolved in such a relatively harmonious manner and multi-racial bodies like the League have contributed significantly to that process.

What of the future of the League? There is a tendency to think that every organisation must somehow be made 'fit for the twenty-first century' by marked change. We have grown up to think of history as being divided, somewhat artificially, into centuries. I do not believe in change purely for its own sake – 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it'. So, while the League should continue to look for new ways of its extending its work in pursuit of its basic aims – 'supporting the Commonwealth through its own social, music, arts and welfare activities' – it may well find that 'more of the same' will be a perfectly adequate objective. In any case, whatever they decide, our successors will have a very firm base on which to build during the second century of the League.

Stanley Martin, CVO
Chairman



Evelyn Wrench and the Founding of the Royal Over-Seas League

The Royal Over-Seas League was founded as the Over-Seas Club in 1910, at a time when the British Empire was the focus of unprecedented interest by politicians, churchmen, theorists and idealists of all kinds. The idea of Empire with its potential for the creation of an advanced multicultural society, benefiting its people both materially and spiritually, had become a dominant force in British life. Empire builders, statesmen and soldiers, such as Joseph Chamberlain, Cecil Rhodes, Dr Livingstone and General Gordon, were popular heroes.

Throughout the last two decades of the nineteenth century this interest had been building, spurred on by elements in the popular press, led by Alfred Harmsworth (Lord Northcliffe), and extending to novels and poetry, such as that of Alfred Lord Tennyson, Alfred Austin and William Henley, with particular emphasis on the excitement and adventure that the Empire seemed to offer. Periodicals for children such as *Boy's Own Paper* were full of these possibilities.¹ The new Boy Scouts organisation and sport generally prepared a boy for an adventurous life with an imperial purpose. The Boer War with its attendant atrocities caused a more sceptical

mood to develop in the early 1900s, but by 1907 the imperialists were back in full force, with serious suggestions as to how the Empire could grow.

Books on Empire topics, such as *Colonial Nationalism* by Richard Jebb, and Normal Angell's *The Great Illusion*, examining the future of the imperial idea, were best-sellers.² This interest had led to the formation of many societies fostering Empire connections, such as the Royal Colonial Institute, the Victoria League, the Navy League and the Boy Scouts. In the Empire itself, the new countries were developing their independence and looking for ways in which they could assert their individuality without challenging their ties to the Mother Country. The first Imperial Conference was held in 1909. The question of Empire federation versus autonomy was a central theme in the years before the Great War, and politicians talked of the 'Greater Britain', seeing the Empire as integral in purpose.

At the same time, the nineteenth century had been remarkable for the growth of religious fervour and the intensity of theological dispute. Non-conformist church groups flourished, as did their missionary societies. The Oxford Movement, led by John Henry Newman, later Cardinal Newman, challenged the Church of England. Questions of doctrine existed alongside more practical expressions of Christianity, with a focus on the need to do good and to be of service to humanity at large. Earlier in the century Lord Shaftesbury had established the importance of philanthropy, and there was an increasing interest in the welfare, education and working conditions of the poor, illustrated by social studies exemplified by the work of Henry Mayhew.³ This interest led to pressure for legislation to provide universal elementary education, the abolition of child labour in mines and factories and better working conditions for women and children in particular. The belief that mankind could be made better by a combination of religion, practical help and service to others was held increasingly by educated people at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Against this background, John Evelyn Wrench, the founder of the Over-Seas Club, later the Royal Over-Seas League, was completely a man of his time. He was born in Ireland in 1882 into an Anglo-Irish family with aristocratic connections. His boyhood at Eton was marked by illness and injury but, despite this, he emerged as a remarkably lively, mercurial personality. Leaving Eton at 17 years old, undecided whether to become a missionary or a diplomat, he travelled extensively abroad, particularly in Germany where he studied the language. With his talent for seizing opportunities, he returned to England and set up his own postcard business, modelled on the ones he had seen in Germany. The great success of this teenage venture was short-lived due to too rapid over-expansion, but his entrepreneurial skills had been noticed by Lord Northcliffe, the newspaper proprietor whose assistant and protégé he became. He worked for Amalgamated Press for eight years, editing the Over-Seas *Daily Mail* amongst other papers.

The empire-builder Cecil Rhodes had been an idol of Wrench's since boyhood, together with the whole idea of Empire brotherhood. The critical moment of Wrench's life came in 1906, when, on a visit to Ottawa, he was staying with the Governor General, Lord Grey, a Rhodes Trustee. During his visit they discussed the future of the British Empire continually, and particularly the idea of forming a great non-partisan society to promote unity throughout the Empire. Lord Grey showed Wrench a document in which Cecil Rhodes set out his ideas for just such a society to extend the influence of the Empire. During the rest of his time in Canada, Wrench formulated the idea on which the Over-Seas Club (later the ROSL) would be based. He was 23 years old at the time.

Wrench later wrote:

I left Ottawa on August 15 1906 by the train *Imperial Limited* for Winnipeg – a two day journey – and my first afternoon in the train was spent in putting down in black and white the aims and objectives of an Imperial Society such as I longed to found.

This morning Lord Grey gave me the most interesting document to look at which it has ever been my good fortune to read. It was the statement which Cecil Rhodes wrote in the year 1875, when but 22 years old, on the South African veldt ... 'It often strikes a man to enquire what is the chief good in life. To one the thought comes that it is a happy marriage, to another great wealth, and as each seizes on his idea, for that he more or less works for the rest of his existence. To myself, thinking over the same question the wish came to me to render myself useful to my country.'

Surely at no time in the history of the British Empire has an equal opportunity presented itself to the practical imperialist ...

In the first place, why cannot we twentieth-century British citizens put into practice the germs of the idea as it appeared to Cecil Rhodes on the South African veldt 31 years ago? There are at the present time too many organisations and leagues – take, for instance, the Royal Colonial Institute, the Victoria League, the Daughters of the Empire, the Empire League, the Empire Day Movement, the Navy League, the British-Made Goods League, and so on *ad infinitum*. What is wanted is one great Central Organisation ...

The Germans, with that wonderful power of plodding, have built up a Navy League of 978,000 members, and, be it remembered, to a league which is only a copy of our own.

If we set ourselves to get a membership of 1,000,000, I believe we could do it, provided, of course, we received Royal approval, and the various societies sank their petty interests. An organisation such as I suggest – whose object would be to further the British Empire, British institutions and British liberty in every manner, would, I believe, become a tremendous power to be reckoned with ...

A poor and unknown man has built the Salvation Army to its present position in some 30 years with influence, the power of the press behind him and money – we can obtain even greater results.⁴

On his return to London, Wrench worked to promote these ideas with the support (financial and otherwise) of his employer, Lord



Cecil Rhodes.

Northcliffe. At first the combination of their talents – Wrench's vision and idealism and Northcliffe's pragmatic business sense – worked harmoniously. The older man had been a father figure to Evelyn Wrench and promoted him to an important place in his newspaper empire. It was natural for Wrench to outline his vision to his chief but their interpretations of the uses to which this could be put were widely different. It was inconceivable to Northcliffe that the career path he offered could be put aside for some purely idealistic concern. When he gave support to launch the venture in

the shape of the use of an office in Carmelite House, his HQ, and the publication of articles in the *Daily Mail* he was also intent on increasing circulation in the readership. Later, Evelyn Wrench reflected:

In starting the Over-Seas Club while I was editor of the *Overseas Daily Mail* I was sowing seeds of future trouble. I was thinking solely of the welfare of the Empire. I never for a moment thought that the new movement might have a dual purpose, that of serving the Empire but also of getting circulation for the *Overseas Daily Mail*. I was quite willing for Northcliffe and the *Daily Mail* to get indirect prestige as backers of the new scheme. But the Over-Seas Club was something sacred to me.⁵



Alfred Harmsworth, Lord Northcliffe.

The 'sacred' nature of Wrench's vision for the Club is demonstrated in 'The Creed of an Imperialist', which he often quoted in his publications. Part of it reads:

I believe in our glorious Empire of Free Peoples,
In the sacredness of our mission,
In the unselfishness of our aims.
I believe in our great past
And in a greater future,
In the emptiness of riches
And the dignity of labour.

This strongly romantic side to Wrench's nature fortunately was counterbalanced by his practical working experience. Eight years spent in the hard graft of the newspaper world, involving marketing, financial affairs and networking, had helped to give him the skills needed for the successful establishment of the new enterprise.

The Launch of the Over-Seas Club

By 1910, Wrench felt that the moment had come officially to launch the new organisation. The first public meeting of the Over-Seas Club was held at the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, London EC on Tuesday, 27 June 1911, the week following the coronation of King George V. Over 300 members were present from all parts of the world. Great enthusiasm was shown and the future structure of the movement was discussed. Evelyn Wrench was in the Chair and among those present were Lord Northcliffe, Sir Harry Brittain, the Premier of Alberta and representatives of 62 Empire groups and interests. Initially, Wrench had planned to make membership free and just charge a shilling for the badge. It soon became apparent that this was widely believed to be a circulation gambit by Lord Northcliffe's newspapers and Wrench was forced to consider both a membership fee and his whole association with the newspapers and their proprietor.

By 1912, Wrench felt he could no longer combine his journalism with his mission and resigned from the *Daily Mail*. However, the association with Northcliffe continued for many years on a personal level, with Northcliffe designated as Founder and President of the Over-Seas Club – inviting misunderstandings both public and private as to his real role in the Club's foundation.

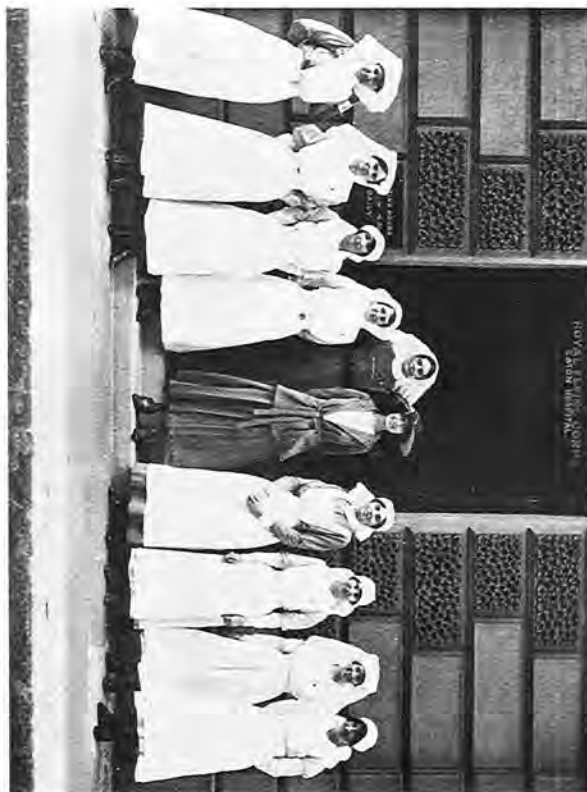
The same year, accompanied by his sister Winifride, Wrench undertook a 17-month, 64,000-mile tour of the Empire, which he called his 'Empire Crusade'. During this tour, entirely self-financed, he visited over 100 Club centres in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Union of South Africa and Rhodesia. The creation of so many branches and Honorary Corresponding Secretaries in the two years since the launch of the organisation was a remarkable achievement, and proved the popularity of the whole idea of 'Empire Brotherhood'. Public meetings were held in nearly all the important cities in the self-governing dominions. Numerous branches of the Club were formed and contacts made to secure the connections essential for its future. Evelyn Wrench himself dated the real beginning of the club from this tour.

On his return to London, Wrench found that misunderstandings still existed over the Over-Seas Club's association with the Northcliffe press, and he recognised the need to put the whole project on a proper footing. The administration to do this was accordingly established. Richard Jebb, the author of *Colonial Nationalism*⁶ and a respected authority on Empire affairs, became the first Chairman of the Over-Seas Club, and a Central Council was appointed to which Evelyn Wrench, as Secretary, was responsible. The Council was composed of many distinguished people with Empire connections, and some important vice presidents were created. Enough money was quickly raised from generous donors to rent the first premises of four rooms at General Buildings, the Aldwych, opened by the Lord Mayor on Empire Day, 1914. An annual membership fee of 2s. 6d. was agreed. All this was achieved prior to the outbreak of war in August 1914.



Evelyn Wrench in his office at Over-Seas House.

Evelyn Wrench took an active part in the war, becoming a Major in the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) and working incidentally for two further newspaper proprietors in turn, in their wartime posts at the Air Board (Lord Rothermere) and the Ministry of Information (Lord Beaverbrook). Simultaneously, Wrench's work with the Over-Seas Club intensified. The Club magazine, edited by Wrench himself, was created in December 1915 and immediately became a critical arm of consolidation for members throughout the world. The tremendous fund-raising campaigns he organised among members during this period – including raising more than £1 million for comforts for the troops, providing 350 aircraft and supporting hospitals for Flying Corps Officers at the cost of £30,000 a year – proved just how strong the Empire ties had become. The Club was further strengthened by amalgamation with the Patriotic League of Britons Over-Seas in 1918, thus becoming the Over-Seas League. For his work in raising funds for the war effort, Wrench received the CMG in 1917.⁷



Nurses at the RFC Hospital supported
by the Over-Seas Club, 1915.



RFC pilots recuperating at the hospital.

The
OVERSEAS CLUB
PATRON:
HIS MAJESTY THE KING.

1915

Christmas Day Gifts

FROM THE SCHOOL CHILDREN OF THE EMPIRE

This is to Certify

that *William Gould*

**HAS HELPED TO BRING HAPPINESS ON
CHRISTMAS DAY TO OUR BRAVE SAILORS
AND SOLDIERS, WHO ARE FIGHTING FOR
HONOUR, FREEDOM & JUSTICE.**

The underlying motive of the Overseas Club is to promote the unity of British subjects the world over. Its chief objects are:

- (1) To help one another.
- (2) To render individual service to our Empire.
- (3) To draw together in the land of comradeship British people the world over.
- (4) To maintain our Empire's supremacy upon the seas and in the air.

**SEAL OF THE
OVERSEAS CLUB**
General Buildings,
Aldwych, London, W.C.

CANADA

AUSTRALIA

S. AFRICA

NEW ZEALAND

NEW FOUNDLAND

INDIA

Certificate awarded to children in Christmas 1915 who supported the Over-Seas Club fund-raising for the troops.

When asked to describe the organisation he had created, Evelyn Wrench liked to quote Lord Baden Powell's description: 'The Over-Seas League is for grown-ups, and Boy Scouts for the growing-ups'; or, more simply, 'Scouts are for boys, the Over-Seas League is for grown-ups'. At the end of the war, Evelyn Wrench envisaged that the huge numerical success of the Scouting movement world-wide would be repeated in the Over-Seas League.

In 1918 Evelyn Wrench also founded the English Speaking Union, a new organisation to promote friendship between the Empire and the USA, believing that close cooperation between the two great English-speaking powers would be important in the post-war period.

By 1922, Evelyn Wrench had joined the Board of the periodical the *Spectator* and he bought a controlling interest in the paper, serving as Editor from 1925–32. He later sold his interest to Ian Gilmour MP, but he remained Chairman of the Board for the rest of his life. Travel writer Peter Fleming was working for the *Spectator* at the time and recorded his impression of Evelyn Wrench as being 'benignly handsome, outwardly naive, with a high-pitched voice and a rather fluttery manner ... behind his gentle façade ... lay a streak of canny toughness'.⁸

Wrench always believed in the Empire as a free and equal association of peoples, non-racist and democratic. An early proponent of self-government for all colonies, he claimed that his first Empire tour in 1912 had made him see all future UK–Empire questions through Empire eyes. He also learnt from his work during the first war, recruiting in the large impoverished cities of Great Britain, how bad conditions were for the majority of people, and his desire to give them a better chance in the Empire later led to more controversial projects in the post-war period. His energy and idealism had given the League its character and success: 'What others have dreamed, you have done.'⁹ His practical organisational skills drove it forward.

First Welfare Project of the Over-Seas Club:

Sir Frederick Truby King and the Babies of the Empire

A crusade for the health of women and children for the honour of the Empire, under the auspices of the Over-Seas Club.

Launched in 1917, and described by Evelyn Wrench as 'the first important piece of social work with which we identified ourselves', this crusade had its origins in the first world tour undertaken by Evelyn Wrench and his sister Winifride in 1912. They arrived in New Zealand with introductions to leading New Zealand politicians and influential people, including the Premier W.F. Massey and Dr Truby King, a famous medical pioneer, whose work with children was of particular interest to Winifride Wrench since she intended to make a career in infant welfare on her return to England.

Truby King had originally been in charge of a large government hospital for mental diseases in Ortagao, which had the benefit of an adjoining 1,000-acre farm. He began to study the animals and apply his theories of rearing young animals in as natural an environment as possible with proper ventilation and natural food. The marked improvement in their health, weight and resistance to disease gave him the idea of launching a parallel project to introduce a more natural environment for human infants, together with a sensible education for their mothers in child-rearing. Supported by Lady Plunket, the wife of the Governor General, in 1907 Truby King founded the Plunket Society for the Promotion of the Health of Women and Children, where the first Plunket nurse was trained and appointed to teach mothers healthier methods of child-rearing. There was an immediate and positive response to this initiative. At that time the infant mortality rate in New Zealand was 2,000 per 25,000 babies. As a result of Dr King's work, within five years this had been halved. His fame spread rapidly.

On her return from the world tour Winifride Wrench resumed her work with child welfare and with Lady Plunket, now resident in England, formed the ambition of inviting Truby King to England to launch a similar crusade to the one which had been so successful in

New Zealand. Despite the war, late in 1917 this project was realised, sponsored by the Over-Seas Club. The New Zealand Government agreed to lend the services of Dr King to the Club for a six-month period to launch 'The Babies of the Empire Training Centre' in Trebour Road, London. Financial support came from the members of the Club worldwide. Public opinion at this stage of a war notable for terrible loss of life was ready to support an effort to save and improve the lives of a new generation. Medical opinion, too, had been carefully cultivated to support the plan by eminent doctors such as Lord Dawson of Penn. A committee was formed to oversee the new movement, with medical direction passing to St Thomas' Hospital. In 1925 Cromwell House in Highgate was bought to house the newly named 'Mothercare and Training Centre', and Winifride Wrench's interest in the project continued.

The purposes of the project were to prepare women mentally and physically for childbirth; and to encourage breast feeding and natural health and hygiene; to acquire and disseminate information on all matters relating to the health of women and children via demonstrations, lectures, books and articles and particularly through the training of qualified nurses to undertake these tasks. Dr King defined his approach to the whole welfare project as 'common sense, scientifically applied'.

The Overseas Aircraft Flotilla

In the autumn of 1914 Evelyn Wrench considered the part that the Over-Seas Club could play in supporting the war effort. He decided to organise an 'Overseas Aircraft Flotilla' by asking members in each part of the Empire to subscribe for an aeroplane to be presented to the RFC, and named after the district which provided it. Although he recalled that he had never seen an aircraft of any sort during his 64,000-mile tour of the Empire, he recognised their future importance in the war, and the way in which, for a comparatively small sum, Over-Seas Club members in each district could make a personal contribution to the war effort. He wrote to the Army Council in January 1915 asking for permission to start the project, which was immediately granted.



Queen Alexandra with RFC pilots of the Over-Seas aeroplanes.



An aeroplane donated by Over-Seas Club members during the First World War.

The two aeroplanes used by the RFC at this time were the 100 HP Gnome, Vickers Gun Bi-plane, complete with gun, costing £2,250, and the 70 HP Renault BE ZC, costing £1,500. Within four months, six aircraft had been presented, prompting letters of appreciation from the King and Lord Kitchener. Acting on the publicity this provided, Evelyn Wrench had 100,000 leaflets printed for distribution throughout the Empire. The enormous response that followed (£100,000 in the first year) continued throughout the war, with some areas contributing through the fund and others directly. The Patriotic League of Britons Overseas, later to be amalgamated with the Over-Seas Club, had meanwhile sponsored 50 seaplanes and aeroplanes independently.

Altogether, as a result of the propaganda initiated by Evelyn Wrench, some 350 aeroplanes had been presented by 1918, 172 directly at a cost of £278,250, named for their district (Victoria, Nova Scotia, Hong Kong) or more creatively (The Springbok, A Devil Bird from Ceylon). If the original machines were destroyed the RFC arranged for others to be named after them, continuing the link. Queen Alexandra was the very active patron of the fund, visiting the Flying Corps pilots in training with the Over-Seas Club planes.



Development of the League

The Over-Seas League had emerged from the Great War with its imperial connections greatly strengthened. The immense fund-raising efforts organised so admirably by Evelyn Wrench and Lady des Voeux, his cousin and Director of Correspondence, had drawn attention to the League from many important quarters, and internally the support of the overseas and home branches had shown that the ideals of the original club could be practically fulfilled in a way unimaginable before 1914.

Nevertheless, the post-war period was a difficult time financially, and it is much to the credit of the Patriotic League of Britons Overseas and the Over-Seas Club that, by 1922, the character of the combined organisations had emerged successfully. With the granting of the Royal Charter in that year, the objectives of the Over-Seas League were established. Principal amongst these were:

- to draw together in the bond of comradeship British citizens throughout the world;
- to render individual service to the British Commonwealth of Nations;

- to maintain the power of the British Commonwealth of Nations and to hold to its best traditions; and
- to help one another.

An organisation with such ideals was bound to be democratic in practice. Despite the insistence in all early magazines that the League was 'not a club' but a worldwide League of Friendship, once premises were established in St James's the unusual character of the membership must have been striking in the heart of London's club land. From the beginning no distinction was made on grounds of race, creed or gender among the membership. At that time a club in St James's that welcomed women on an equal footing was unique and did much to determine the future independent character of the League.



The Prince of Wales with Lady des Voeux and Sir Ernest Birch at the opening of the new premises 1922.

The President and Central Council appointed Lady des Voeux, Director of Correspondence, to be Controller, effectively in charge of all administration at Over-Seas House, an honorary post that she held for over 20 years. Evelyn Wrench himself combined the roles of Executive Director with the editorship of the journal. As usual he was constantly making new contacts and alliances for the League. A formidable list of Vice Presidents was established, including the Duke of Devonshire, the Rt Hon. David Lloyd George, the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston, the Rt Hon. Winston Churchill, Lord Leverhulme, Viscount Milner and Lord Baden Powell. A new Travelling Secretary and the greatly enlarged magazine both helped to maintain the momentum of the war years. Membership stood at 27,000 at this time. There were many branches and 800 Honorary Corresponding Secretaries around the world. The immediate target for membership was 50,000.

Expansion of the Club Premises

To match these ambitions the Club had to expand physically. The first premises of four rooms in the Aldwych were quickly outgrown. By 1916, at the height of the First World War, it was decided that, as a fitting tribute to the contribution made by the Empire to the war effort, a building fund should be launched. A new building would serve as a permanent War Memorial. Although the main fund-raising efforts were devoted to comforts for the troops, hospitals and aircraft, the idea was established and the War Memorial Fund began. In 1919, talks about a possible amalgamation with another Empire Society, the Royal Commonwealth, and the purchase of a building adjoining their premises in Northumberland Avenue, failed. The search for suitable premises became urgent.

In 1921, appropriately enough on Empire Day, Evelyn Wrench visited Vernon House in Park Place, St James's, SW1, for the first

time. Put on the market by Lady Hillingdon for £45,000, the house was bought by the League with money from the building fund. A tablet by the doorway of the new Over-Seas House confirmed this as the League's War Memorial. Over the next few years the lease of number 3 and the freeholds of 4 and 5 Park Place were added to provide offices and a Club House with a bar and bedrooms for male members. By 1934, when space was again becoming a problem, Rutland House next door was bought from the Dowager Duchess of Rutland, with the necessary £73,000 purchase price again being raised by an appeal to the membership. The addition of the Westminster Wing in 1937 completed the nucleus of buildings referred to by Evelyn Wrench as his 'Empire Centre'. The increased space in the newly acquired buildings provided not only better facilities, bedrooms and dining rooms but also conference rooms and an Empire newspaper room.

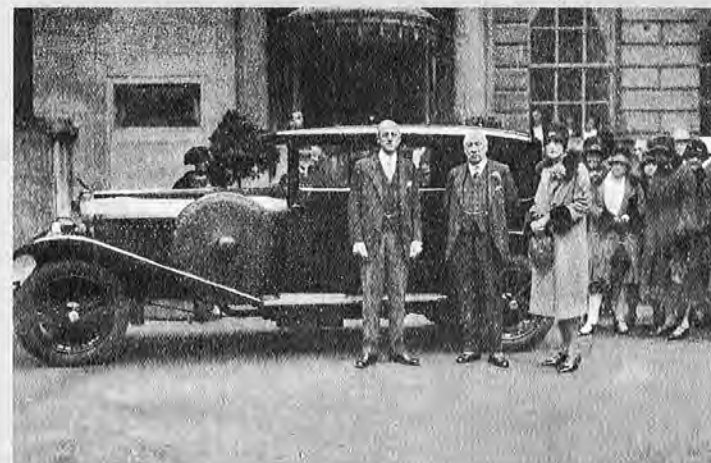
Evelyn Wrench's paternalistic presence decided the League's development. During the 1920s and 1930s he divided his time mainly between the Over-Seas League and the English Speaking Union, both of which prospered. His diaries reveal the extraordinary amount of work, travel, speeches and connections he undertook. He had great charm and skill in organisation. Some of his ideas failed to prosper, for instance, an attempt to found an Irish Unity League during the First World War, and later an All People's Association to promote Anglo-German understanding in the 1930s. However, he always remained open to new ideas and concepts and was adept at finding ways to implement them.

From the first the League was to be an organisation with a double purpose – welcoming travellers to the UK, making them feel at home and solving their problems, but also sending advice, information and, in some cases, people out to the Empire. The administration in the 1920s and 1930s was organised to reflect all these needs.

Evelyn Wrench's Bentley

In 1927 one of the oldest League members, Stuart Elliott, wrote to the Chairman of the Central Council, Sir Ernest Birch, suggesting that a presentation should be made to Evelyn Wrench to recognise all his great work on behalf of the Empire. The Chairman accordingly contacted all members of the League through the magazine, with the help of Lady des Voeux, in July 1927. He wrote, 'With so large a membership as ours I hope that it will be easy to present Mr Wrench with a motor car. Donations need not be large...'

An article in *Overseas* earlier in the year by Evelyn Wrench himself asking the question 'What is my new car to be?' may have suggested the appropriate nature of the gift. The Chairman was quite right to be optimistic: 1,600 members subscribed and a 4.5 litre Bentley was bought and presented, resplendent in black and red.



Evelyn Wrench with the Bentley presented to him by members in 1927.



Banquet at the Royal Albert Hall to celebrate the League's 21st birthday, 2 July 1931.

A Banquet at the Royal Albert Hall to Celebrate the Over-Seas League's 21st Birthday

On 2 July 1931 a banquet was held for League members at the Royal Albert Hall to mark the 21 years since the foundation of the Over-Seas League. Most of the lower tiers and boxes were filled and approximately 1,000 members out of a total of 45,000 attended. As a special distinction, HRH Edward, Prince of Wales, Vice-Patron, attended and proposed the health of the League. Philip Snowden, Secretary of State for the Dominions proposed the Loyal Toast.

Music on appropriate Dominion themes was performed by the band of the Royal Horse Guards (the Blues) with an organ solo of 'Homage to the Father', and pipe music was provided by the Gaelic Society Pipers for the London Scottish Reel Team.

When Evelyn Wrench wrote a treatise in 1935 describing the 'Empire Centre' and its purposes, an information/over-seas service bureau, travel bureau, trade intelligence, Empire fellowship, British National Union, migration bureau and reception centre providing help with accommodation were all flourishing. The needs of two of Evelyn Wrench's many initiatives with other societies were mentioned specifically: the alliance with the Red Cross, dating from 1914, a detachment described as 'one of the best in London', and, more controversially to modern thinking, the Empire migration and 'Back to the Land Scheme'. The migration initiatives had begun after the war to help discharged servicemen wanting to start a new life in Canada. They developed in idealistic fashion in this period to help poor children to have a new life in the Empire under the auspices of the New Zealand Government, the YMCA and the Fairbridge Society, or in Great Britain with the Back to the Land Scheme, which helped teenagers to find jobs on British farms.

The OVER-SEAS LEAGUE

{Incorporated by Royal Charter}

PATRON: HIS MAJESTY THE KING



THE OVER-SEAS LEAGUE is a non-party society formed to promote the unity of British subjects in all parts of the World.

ITS FOUR CHIEF OBJECTS ARE:

1. To draw together in the bond of comradeship British subjects the world over.
2. To render individual service to the Empire.
3. To maintain the power of the Empire and to hold to its best traditions.
4. To help one another.

MEMBERS' CREED

Believing the British Empire to stand for justice, freedom, order and good government, we pledge ourselves, as citizens of the British Commonwealth of Nations, to maintain the heritage handed down to us by our fathers.

THIS IS TO WITNESS THAT

_____ was duly enrolled as a member of the Over-Seas League in _____ on _____ 19____

World Headquarters
Vernon House
London S.W. 1

Secretary

New design for the membership certificate in 1934.

Many League branches raised funds enthusiastically to support children in these projects, believing that in a period of depression at home a much better future could be found for them in the Empire. However good the intentions, and fortunate as the outcome was for many, the system relied on the absolute integrity of the people involved in its administration, and it seems completely unacceptable to us today that the fate of children's lives should have been decided in this way. The alliance with one or other organisation involved continued until the 1950s when League sponsorship and practical help for families wishing to emigrate to Australia took its place.

Connections with other projects proved much happier. The ROSL had a long association with the excellent Ranfurly Library Service, allowing for the dispatch of much needed books to the overseas Commonwealth. Similarly, after the Second World War all members of Voluntary Service Overseas were entitled to honorary membership of the League for one year.

Over-Seas House was widely used by members for entertainment, meetings and to establish societies, many of which survive today. The Discussion Circle, London Group, and music and educational initiatives such as debating competitions, all reflected the interests of the League. A tradition began of giving temporary membership to visiting groups from overseas such as cadets and students, and private hospitality was always offered by home members. Chairmen's lunches, Lady des Voeux's receptions and visits to events of the season, including House of Commons teas, were popular. Voluntary hostesses were on duty daily to provide practical information and help to visiting members.

Evelyn Wrench, knighted in 1932, married his widowed cousin, Lady des Voeux in 1937, cementing a partnership that had already given him great support in his enterprises, particularly at the ROSL. He had admired her and depended on her judgement since childhood. Indeed, he remained close to all his family, particularly to his mother and his powerful sister Winifride. She had accompanied him on his tours abroad and played a part in developing membership of the League, particularly in Scotland.



The wedding of Sir Evelyn Wrench and Lady des Voeux in 1937.

In 1940 Sir Evelyn and Lady Wrench embarked on a tour of North America, Singapore and India, becoming stranded in India as the events of the war caught up with them. Sir Evelyn quickly familiarised himself with the situation and was appointed by the Viceroy to the post of American Relations Officer with the government of India. He subsequently wrote a book about this period of his life called *Immortal Years*.¹ Necessarily his association with the League became more remote, with the day-to-day control passing to others. Wrench received many honours including the KCMG² on the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the ROSL. He devoted his later life to writing biographies, notably one of Lord Milner, as well as his memoirs. He died in 1966.

The Second World War saw the League become a centre for hospitality for servicemen of all ranks and nationalities. As in 1914, funds were raised on a large scale to provide comforts, tobacco and gifts for the troops, but now there was a large building to offer constant hospitality, all organised by the powerful Allies Welcome Committee (1940–50) under the chairmanship of Sir Jocelyn Lucas.

The Allies Welcome Committee 1940–50

The first Canadian troops coming to Britain to fight in the war arrived on 11 December 1939. The various Empire societies began immediately to organise hospitality for them and for the large number of Empire servicemen who followed. It was soon realised that no similar provision had been made for the great influx of allied forces from occupied nations – French, Dutch, Belgian, Norwegian, Polish and Czech – who, together with their exiled governments, found refuge in the UK.

At the Over-Seas League, Sir Jocelyn Lucas, MC, was already Head of Hospitality. This remarkable man, MP for Portsmouth South from 1939 to 1966, combined his activities with the Club with parliamentary duties and arduous part-time work as an auxiliary fireman. Since the rules of the Over-Seas Club originally precluded raising money for anything but Commonwealth causes, he realised the need to form an independent Allies Welcome Committee to extend hospitality to all troops regardless of race, nationality, rank or gender. As Chairman, backed by an influential committee, he raised money to support hospitality not only from members but also from wealthy individuals and large businesses. The Committee started its work in 1940, soon after Dunkirk. The first dinner was given in August of that year for the Free French Officers and members of the French government who had escaped to London. This was followed by a weekly luncheon for each ally and Dominion in turn, and for the American Eagle Squadron.

Despite wartime shortages, bombings and the diminished staff at Over-Seas House, and with meals sometimes cooked over oil stoves when air raids cut off gas supplies, from the first these lunches were a great success, enabling guests to meet their British opposite numbers. Photographs of these events were forbidden in case of enemy reprisals on relatives who remained in occupied Europe.

With the lunches established, the Committee began a series of receptions to bring the Allied Forces themselves together. They were held on the first Tuesday of every month throughout the war, regardless of air raids, V1s or V2s. Quite quickly the numbers

attending rose to several hundred, beyond the capacity of Over-Seas House, and the receptions had to be transferred to the Dorchester Hotel.

Two of these occasions were particularly memorable. The first was held by chance on D-Day when the guest of honour was Mr Winant, the American ambassador. The French generals Le Clerc and Koenig were also present. The second time was during the week of the Victory Parade when representatives from every detachment taking part were invited.

The Committee entertained nearly every war leader present in London at that time, with General de Gaulle being one of the first. Royal guests included HMs the Kings of Greece and Yugoslavia, the Crown Prince of Norway, Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, the Princess Royal, the Duchess of Kent and the Duke of Gloucester. Guests also included heads of the British forces such as Lord Fraser and Sir John Cunningham from the Navy, Field Marshals Lord Alexander, Sir William Slim, Lord Wilson and Viscount Wavell from the Army, and Lords Trenchard, Tedder and Portal from the Air Force.



Admiral of the Fleet Sir John Cunningham and Admiral Earl Mountbatten of Burma, with Indian guests.



HRH the Princess Royal with, left to right: Lt JWK Champ, of Geelong, Victoria, Australia, Lt JG Rawson, of Victoria, Australia, and Lt G Bolding, of Morewell, Victoria, Australia.



Viscount Wavell with a Soviet soldier.

Much hospitality was less formal. Parties of all kinds were popular, from fork lunches and tea parties and broadcasts to dances held several times a week, which drew large crowds. Sir Jocelyn Lucas estimated that on average 3,000 servicemen and women passed through Over-Seas House each week. A dedicated group of volunteers ran all the activities. Out in the rest of the UK the League's branches were also very active, particularly in Liverpool, Ulster, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Cardiff, where large groups of servicemen were made welcome both at the club's premises and in private homes. Private hospitality indeed was extensive, especially at Christmas time, and this tremendous effort by League members was paralleled by fund-raising activities to provide comfort for the troops abroad and help at home for sufferers of the effects of war.

In 1950, with the war safely over, the Committee was wound up. Sir Jocelyn, who had also been Chairman of the returned Prisoner of War Advice Committee, wrote: 'The term Allies infers war. We wish to remember old friends but to forget past differences and we feel therefore, that the time has come to cease our activities.'³ The officers of the Committee in May 1950 were: President – Rt Hon. Anthony Eden MP; Vice Presidents Marie Marchioness of Willingdon and the Countess Mountbatten of Burma; and Founder and Chairman Sir Jocelyn Lucas.

All this despite wartime shortages and severe bomb damage to Vernon House in April 1941, when a direct hit burnt out rooms on the upper floors, destroying bedrooms, offices and most of the archives. In the difficult period after the war, the overseas members sent parcels of clothing and food to help distressed Londoners.

With Evelyn Wrench working in India during this period, the Assistant Secretary, Eric Rice, assumed responsibility as Secretary. His long service with the League (he had only had one other job) was typical of the careers of many of the staff who gave years of loyal service. Eric Rice finally retired in 1946. He was succeeded by Air Vice-Marshal Malcolm Henderson, as Director General.



The Director General Philip Crawshaw (front centre, with Denis Cramer on his right) with delegates to the Twentieth-Century Group World Conference in the 1950s.

Philip Crawshaw, another long-serving and well-loved member of staff, became Secretary General in 1956 and, from 1959 to 1979, Director General. This was a difficult period for the League, but nevertheless Over-Seas House continued to host many groups of visitors and events. Particularly prominent at this time was the Twentieth-Century Group for young members, founded by Florence Norden in 1936, suspended during the war and returning successfully after 1946 with up to 3,000 members at one time, under the patronage of Princess Alexandra and the Hon. Angus Ogilvy. The group organised wide-ranging activities both at home and abroad, and an annual conference of members worldwide was held at Over-Seas House between 1951 and 1962. This was also a period of much activity in the fields of the arts and education, with many



Earl Mountbatten shows the League's new Royal Charter with the help of Bluemantle Pursuivant of the College of Arms.

student visitors. Regular broadcasts by the BBC of programmes from St Andrew's Hall included the People and Politics series. The League's Golden Jubilee in 1960 was celebrated with a visit by The Queen and the granting of the official title 'Royal', together with a coat of arms. In 1962 membership reached 50,933, of which 9,000 were life members. Following the death of Sir Evelyn Wrench in 1966, a memorial fund to sponsor music and art was launched in his memory.

The period of high inflation that followed found the Loyal Societies of the Commonwealth – the Royal Commonwealth Society,

the Victoria League, the Royal Over-Seas League and the English Speaking Union – in financial difficulties. Currency regulations in some Commonwealth countries made payment for membership difficult, and indeed membership generally declined. Not for the first time, the idea of a merger between organisations with so many shared interests appeared attractive. A committee under Sir Anthony Burney, the chairman of Debenhams, was set up in 1980 to examine the possibilities. The initial proposal was to try to combine the first three societies on one site (the English Speaking Union having made progress independently). One idea, that all premises should be sold and the money used to establish a large Commonwealth Centre in London, proved to be impossibly expensive. An alternative idea, that the three societies should combine on either the RCS site in Northumberland Avenue or on the ROSL site in Park Place, turned out to be equally difficult. No one site could provide the requisite bedroom and office accommodation and there were further difficulties relating to individual status and debts. After protracted negotiations no satisfactory solution could be found. In the event all the Loyal Societies resolved their difficulties and continued to operate independently.

In the case of the ROSL a turning point in the League's affairs was reached in the early 1980s when the Central Council, under the direction of Lord Grey of Naunton and Sir David Scott and with a new Director General, Captain John Rumble RN (rtd), and a new and enterprising General Manager, Robert Newell, transformed the League's fortunes by selling property in Park Place. The sum raised cancelled the League's debts and enabled a complete renovation of the premises to take place.

In a period when clubs in London were amalgamating or closing, the ROSL was able to compete with hotels and professional premises whilst maintaining the strong Commonwealth connections so essential to its character. A greater emphasis on conference use and the creation of corporate membership made the ROSL popular with people who had not considered club membership



Over-Seas House and the old Park Place buildings before their demolition in the 1980s.

before. The membership records themselves were overhauled and computerised, which gave a more accurate picture of the subscription base. The active exchange with reciprocal clubs throughout the world continued and after 1998 the Central Council voted to extend membership to non-Commonwealth citizens.

The traditional societies continue to meet at Over-Seas House and the Discussion Group, formally the Discussion Circle, meets regularly. The group has maintained a very high profile over the years with meetings open to all members and their guests and a programme of excellent speakers. The London Group with its own membership combines monthly meetings with visits to places of interest throughout the year. In addition there is a full events programme organised by the Public Relations Department with limited



Inter-Club reception for younger members at the Royal Over-Seas League.



The Public Relations Department organise a full programme for the season: Dr Chris Nonis (far left), ROSL representative Sri Lanka and Chairman, Mackwood Tea Company, and his management team with Mr Stanley Martin, the Chairman, on the House of Commons Terrace at the ROSL members' tea in 2006.

tickets for events such as Wimbledon and Trooping the Colour. A long tradition of teas at the House of Commons has been kindly hosted by Members of Parliament, and recently at the House of Lords, by the President of the ROSL, Lord Luce. There is a welcome renewal and regeneration of the Younger Members Group as the Inter-Club Group combining with younger members from other clubs to offer balls, drinks parties and visits, much like the Twentieth-Century Group in its heyday. ROSL ARTS continues to attract particular interest both in the UK and overseas.

In addition to the ROSL's own societies, some groups have used the Club for regular meetings for many years, making it in fact their home. A good example of this is the Cricket Society, founded independently in 1945 as the Cricket Statistical Society, which first used the old League premises in 3 Park Place to house their cricket library in what was the Men's Reading Room, and to hold meetings there. When these premises were demolished the library and their meetings transferred to Over-Seas House, with handsome bookcases being built to house the library on the second and third floors of the Westminster Wing. Some Cricket Society members are members of the League and all regard Over-Seas House as their base.

The League has the satisfaction of knowing that professional standards have been achieved and maintained at the Club over many decades without the loss of the personal element so distinctive to the ROSL – a difficult balance critical to its success.



The Royal Connection

One of Evelyn Wrench's most significant early achievements was securing the patronage of the King for the newly established Over-Seas Club. Within six years of its foundation, in 1916, King George V had agreed to become patron and he continued in this role until his death in 1936. This was more than a nominal interest; records show an active exchange of letters with the Palace, particularly between 1916 and 1918 when the King's private secretary wrote frequently to congratulate the Club on its wartime fund-raising efforts to provide aeroplanes and comforts for the troops. Indeed, the King started the Over-Seas Club's fifth war fund ("They've Remembered Us") with a personal gift of £25.

Royal patronage, once established, has continued under every subsequent monarch: Edward VIII (1936), George VI (1936–52) and Queen Elizabeth II (1952 to the present day). In addition there was an early tradition of other members of the royal family becoming vice-patrons and, later, presidents of the ROSL. Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught, Queen Victoria's youngest son, was a vice-patron from 1916 to 1942 and Edward, Prince of Wales, was also a vice-patron from 1922 until his accession in 1936. All four of

George V's surviving sons were involved with the League in the 1920s and 1930s; Albert, Duke of York, was a very active president from 1922 and George, Duke of Kent, followed his brother in this role. Henry, Duke of Gloucester, was a vice-patron from 1942 to 1974. It is unimaginable today, in an era of intense royal engagements, that so many members of the royal family should be involved simultaneously with one organisation.

The granting of a Royal Charter to the League in 1922 was of course an important step in establishing the connection. In the early years, royal visits to Over-Seas House were invariably made to mark advances in the League's life, usually the opening of further premises on the site in Park Place.

These ceremonial occasions, though important, were perhaps not as significant as the visit of King George and Queen Mary in 1922 to mark their appreciation of the active role the League had played in raising more than £1 million (approximately £50 million in today's terms) towards the war effort between 1914 and 1918. A similar visit after the Second World War by King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, accompanied by Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret, took place on 28 May 1946. Hundreds of Commonwealth servicemen and women gathered in St Andrew's Hall to welcome the royal party who paid tribute to the part played by the whole Empire in the war effort. Early in the war, in 1940, Queen Elizabeth had made a visit to meet many of the servicemen who had been evacuated from Dunkirk. Other members of the royal family were frequent visitors during the Second World War joining Allied Forces invited to receptions at the club.

The League did not become officially 'Royal' until 1960 when, to mark the 50th anniversary, The Queen graciously conferred the designation and made a visit, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh. It was appropriate that Sir Evelyn Wrench lived to see the title given to the organisation to which he had devoted so much of his life. The Queen also came to Over-Seas House on the League's 60th anniversary in 1970 and again in 1980 and 1990.



King George V and Queen Mary visit Over-Seas House in 1922.



The then Duchess of York, later Queen Elizabeth, at the Over-Seas League garden party in Regent's Park in 1923.



King George VI (as Duke of York) signing the League Silver Jubilee Book.



King George VI and Queen Elizabeth talk to servicewomen during their visit to the League in 1946.

Other members of the royal family have played a significant part in the life of the League. Princess Alexandra, cousin of The Queen, has been a vice-patron of the ROSL for more than 25 years. Initially connected with the 20th Century (Young Members) Group, her very active interest in the Music Competition has continued over the years, both in attendance at the final concert and in encouraging young musicians, on occasion giving the prizes, and also enabling concerts to take place at St James's Palace under her patronage.

Earl Mountbatten of Burma, the last royal member to be president (1942–79), was much involved in League events both at home and abroad, particularly during and immediately after the war when Countess Mountbatten joined him in hosting occasions for Commonwealth and Allied troops. Lord Mountbatten became Grand President in 1959. His daughter, now Countess Mountbatten, a vice-president, has continued this interest, opening the most recent extensions to the west wing in 1987 and 2004.



HM The Queen at Over-Seas House to mark the 80th anniversary of the League in 1990.



The Director General, Robert Newell, with the Earl of Wessex at a celebration to mark The Queen's Golden Jubilee in Kenya in 2002 at the Nairobi Club.

Visits to Over-Seas House are, of course, the most obvious sign of the royal connection. However, from the 1920s onwards many League events have taken place throughout the Commonwealth which have had the distinction of a royal presence. In 1923 alone the Duke and Duchess of York attended a League garden party in the Botanic Gardens, Regent's Park, and later in the year the Prince of Wales attended a Dominion banquet at the Ritz Hotel organised by the ROSL. Recent years have seen many visits by The Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh and their family to Commonwealth countries where League members were invited to be present at welcoming receptions. The League receives recognition for the connection in other ways – through regular invitations to Royal Garden Parties for members, and the privilege of attending Promenade Concerts in The Queen's box, for example.

Perhaps, more importantly, to mark the connection in a modern and relevant way, the ROSL is now accredited as an official Civil Society Organisation of the Commonwealth. This means that since 1991 a League representative has frequently been present at Commonwealth meetings where the heads of government assemble after an opening ceremony by The Queen. Sir Evelyn Wrench would have recognised this involvement with the widest possible aspects of the Commonwealth as a great achievement and proof that the ROSL is constant in its ideals and practical in their application.



Communications

Overseas Magazine

It was not surprising that Evelyn Wrench, trained as a newspaper man, was determined to establish a journal for the new society as soon as possible. Despite the difficulties and paper shortages of wartime Britain he launched *Overseas*, a monthly magazine for members, edited by himself, in December 1915. Early contributors included George Bernard Shaw, A.A. Milne and Harry Lauder. King George V, the Prince of Wales and the Prime Ministers H.H. Asquith and Lloyd George were among the many distinguished and busy people who sent personal messages to the magazine, acknowledging the great contribution made by members of the Over-Seas Club to the war effort.

Evelyn Wrench's view of what the magazine could achieve was ambitious from the beginning: 'My vision of *Overseas* was a journal dedicated to the highest ideals, which would ultimately earn for itself a unique place in the literature of the Empire.'¹ He later claimed it was 'The Foundation on which our edifice rests'.²

The first edition of *Overseas* comprised 32 pages including eight pages of advertising, taken only from British firms. There was a

strict embargo on advertisements for alcohol. With a cover by the popular artist Macdonald Gill, its identity was established quickly. The cost of the first four years of production (£1,000 a year) was paid for by Alec Cochrane, an American and early Wrench supporter. The magazine was intended to be a 'non-political', positive arm of Empire, to offset German propaganda. The Empire War Aims were set out and social questions discussed ranged from housing, slums and public ownership of the drink trade to garden cities and the decimal system. A special 'Khaki' supplement was provided for the troops monthly and an armistice special issue reflected how London welcomed the peace.

In 1922 there was a great increase in the length of the journal. Regular features now included Evelyn Wrench's monthly newsletter, which was extensive and rambling, covering topics of the moment, political situations at home and overseas, details of his travels and general philosophy. There were reviews of new books and London theatre productions, 'Sport at home and overseas' (including football results!), a motoring column and a series 'Why I went overseas and what happened to me', as well as articles on every imaginable Empire topic. Large numbers of photographs enlivened the text.

Overseas was used as the main tool in the League's many fund-raising efforts, starting from the earliest editions. Articles exhorting members to greater efforts and the publication of lists of contributors' names and gifts encouraged fund-raising in wartime and beyond. The detailed accounts printed for the campaign to buy Rutland House took up pages of the journal, for example, but were remarkably effective.

As early as 1917 a special column for female readers was established, with the Editor noting, 'we have now such a large number of women members that we feel they will appreciate a monthly letter'. This was 'From a woman's standpoint', written anonymously under the nom de plume 'Wayfarer'. The variety of information and comment was extensive, with one of the first articles in 1917 featuring 'The most interesting post held by a woman in England!'.

This was Lloyd George's (the Prime Minister's) Secretary, 'Fair and attractive, 26-year-old Frances Stevenson', who went on to play a more influential role in his life, eventually becoming the second Lady Lloyd George.

New jobs for women were featured frequently – including women preachers, police officers and munitions workers during the Second World War – as was, of course, the whole issue of girls' education. The journal made a consistent attempt, begun in 1917 and continuing until at least 1945, to relate women to the modern world.

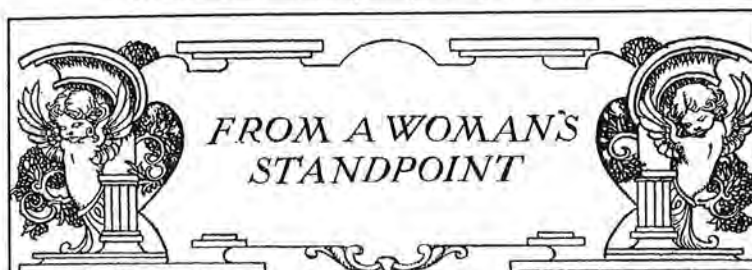
Health and exercise featured, too, with articles such as 'Exercises for women who do their own housework' and 'The future of the figure from the health and beauty point of view' reflecting the increasing awareness of health issues in the 1930s. The League's connection with the Mothercare and Training Centre, established by Dr Trudy King and Winifride Wrench (see Chapter I), continued with a Mothercraft Column with advice for mothers from Miss Liddiard, the director.

Advertising grew rapidly, with an emphasis on charities: Dr Barnardo's, the National Children's Adoption Association and Ladies in Reduced Circumstances, plus practical suggestions for overseas visitors concerning car hire, hotels and other services. From the 1930s onwards health charities were more prominent, with cancer and tuberculosis charities advertising regularly, whilst simultaneously cigarettes such as Craven A., Balkan Sobranie and Rothmans were advertised monthly. There were also many personal advertisements. After 1945, reduced space severely limited the advertising copy, and there was a shift in emphasis towards travel overseas, reflecting a move from the UK to wider horizons rather than the other way round. Charities and private services continued to feature.

The more pronounced political character of the earlier magazines is exemplified in the regular Cartoons of the Month, reprinted from other publications, sometimes foreign. Other domestic cartoons also featured.

Continued on page 60...

'From a woman's standpoint', Jan. 1926 (an extract).



NEW YEAR THOUGHTS

Another Christmas has come and gone and December, the greatest selling and giving month of the year, has passed on its way, and January and a new year lies stretched out before us.

We are tempted to let speculation run riot in our minds. What secrets does 1926 hold within its breast? What joys, what sorrows for you and me, for our country and for the world? At any rate, there is a greater spirit of goodwill abroad than there has been since the outbreak of the World War, and we can only hope and pray that, as the weeks and months pass, the spirit of the Locarno Pact will enter more deeply into the lives of us all, and that, indeed, would mean a happy New Year to the majority of dwellers in the Western World ... As each year passes, we are slowly, painfully slowly, becoming a healthier race. For another, we are slowly, again painfully slowly, becoming a more humane people.

We treat our prisoners far better than we did, even twenty-five years ago. Before long the same progress will be found in our treatment of the inmates of our lunatic asylums.

And women, who in the last resort are the supreme civilisers of the world, they too will be surer of themselves sure of their task of asserting Life as triumphant always and everywhere over form and mechanism ... it is for women to be awake in all these matters, and to lead man as she never has done, through love to those higher

heights that lie far off on the horizon, of which we catch but a glimpse to-day.

SHOPPING INTELLIGENTLY

Allow your thoughts to ponder for one minute on what the world would be like without women, even it some means could be found of propagating the race without them. Most of the trade of the world would come to a standstill ... Women keep the world going in more ways than one, and if they are the supreme civilisers they are also the greatest shoppers and buyers of the world.

To a large extent it rests with us which industries we choose to encourage and which we choose to ignore. Hitherto we have been curiously unintelligent in our shopping. Too often we have bought as cheaply as we could, without asking ourselves any of the questions that as citizens we are bound to ask. We have taken little or no trouble to inform ourselves where such or such an article is made, or under what conditions it was made; and if it happens to be very cheap we are pleased with our 'wonderful bargain', quite forgetting that it is pretty sure to be produced under sweated conditions and probably in a foreign country. In defence of this attitude of mind, we must remember that even the saving of one penny a day is a matter of importance in thousands of British homes. There are other who would certainly consider it desirable to save a shilling a day, if possible. On the one hand we do want to buy British goods, at a fair price; on the other, we must try and buy as cheaply as we can.


We come to a third category of people - not in the majority at present - who are seriously concerned at the state of British trade and who are anxious, even at a sacrifice to themselves, to buy in the home market. This is not always as easy as it sounds. I tried to buy some Canadian tinned salmon recently, 'at any rate', I said, 'it must be Empire salmon'. The grocer's boy said he was very sorry but they only stocked tinned salmon from Newfoundland!

I pointed out that if he had been to Wembley he would have known that Newfoundland was part of the Empire, and fondly hope that he will be better informed on the next occasion. Again, I asked my housekeeper one morning to get me some Empire tinned fruit. I said as she left, 'Remember, I don't want American tinned goods.' She returned in triumph with California peaches; again I pointed out that California did not acknowledge the Union Jack, and next time I shall have Australian fruit on the table.

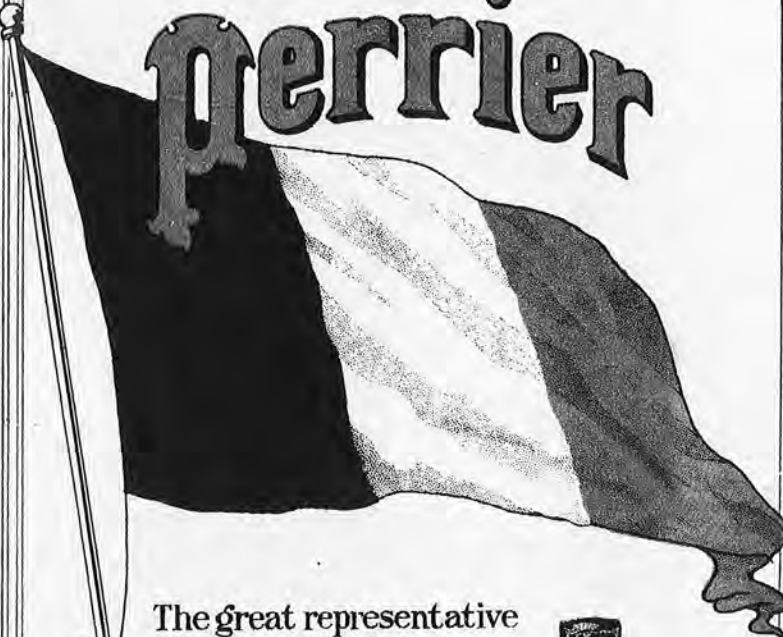
WHERE WE FAIL

If every Member of the Over-Seas League and their friends would buy Empire food, English chocolate, matches, tooth paste, tobacco, stockings and hundreds of other things, we should very soon help to bring back prosperity to our country and to our Empire. What a fine New Year's resolution that would be for us all! But there is another point not to be overlooked. If we are to wake up our manufacturers, we must continue to buy foreign goods when they are *better made and more beautiful* than our own.

The lessons of the Paris Exhibition of Decorative Arts have been almost entirely lost by us as a people. One of the organisers of the British Section predicts that because 'the tremendous wave has been swept across Europe, from Poland to Denmark, and from Sweden to the shores of the Mediterranean, has passed these islands by', the wave that is of modern feeling in decorative art in two years' time 90 per cent of the shops of the world will be filled with goods of foreign manufacture, and not with British. We shall have been left far behind in the race. It is well that we should buy British goods; but it is not well that we should lower our standard and buy the productions of our own country if they are vulgar in design and poor in feeling, when we might buy something of foreign manufacture that is beautiful, both in design and workmanship.


Supplied by Appointment  to the Royal Palaces.

perrier



The great representative
of France against
Apollinaris and
other German Waters.

The battle cry
of the Allies
A fight to a finish
in War and Trade.



P.C.B.-31

Address of Springs:-
Cie de la Source Perrier,
Les Bouillens, Vergèze (Gard) France.
London Offices:- 45-47, Wigmore Street, W.

Perrier advertisement from Overseas, Aug. 1917, back page.



Prices ruling in Great Britain

Tunic Shirts - 16/6
Tennis Shirts - 18/-
Pyjamas - 29/6

Always see name "Viyella" on woven tab sewn in garment.

FROM FIRST-CLASS SHIRTMAKERS AND OUTFITTERS.

"Viyella" Tennis Socks—made from the same yarn as the famous flannel—are equally satisfying. From 2/6 per pair.

If any difficulty in obtaining, please write for address of suitable retailer to

Wm. Hollins & Co. Ltd.
(suppliers to Trade only),
741 Viyella House,
Old Change, Cheapside,
London, E.C. 4.



ALL over the world "Viyella" shirts are covering the shoulders that are bearing the burden of Empire.

The Briton abroad—to whom chills and colds, arising from changes of temperature, are often a very dangerous business—

welcomes the unique protective qualities of "Viyella" fine twill flannel.

He appreciates, too, the easy fit and sturdy strength of these soft, fine-textured Shirts from Home.

For all the freedom they give for his more active life—"Viyella" Shirts are thoroughly in accord with that British tradition of trim, well-groomed appearance under all circumstances and at all times.

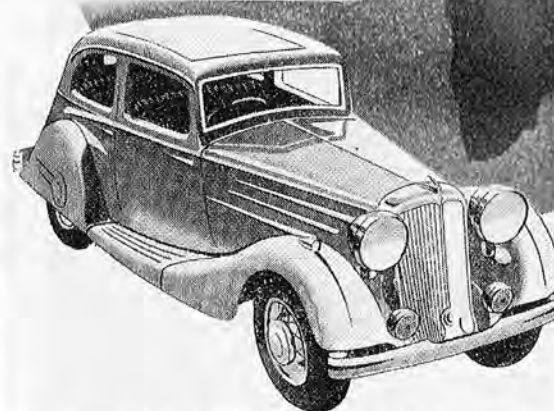
Even primitive native washing methods cannot spoil their rich, "fresh-from-the-shirtmaker's" appearance.

"Viyella" (Regd.)
unshrinkable
fine twill flannel **Shirts**

BRITISH AND GUARANTEED.

Viyella Shirts advertisement from *Overseas*, Aug. 1928, p.1.

**EVEN IF
YOU'RE
THE OTHER
SIDE OF
THE
WORLD**



**YOU CAN
BE SURE
OF A FINE
LEAVE
CAR**

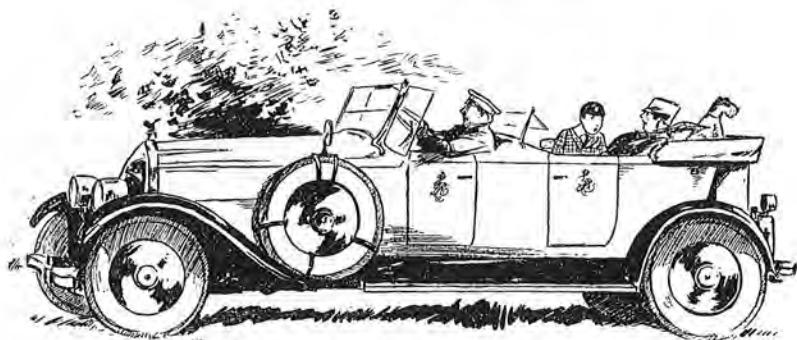
The world's a small place, but England is a big island—when you're home only for a few fleeting months. Then, a really reliable car from Henlys, England's greatest leave-car experts, will double the pleasure of your leave and halve the expense of getting about. Henlys offer you the finest selection of cars, New and Used, and the greatest facilities. Write them now for booklet and full particulars of the advantages offered, including combined hire-purchase and re-purchase terms. Or, when you arrive in London call at one of Henlys' showrooms.

HENLYS

England's Leading Motor Agents, Devonshire House, Piccadilly, London, England.
Phone: Grosvenor 2271. And at Manchester, Bristol, Bournemouth.

Henlys advertisement from *Overseas*, Jan. 1935, p.ix.

The Month's Cartoons



FROM THE AMERICAN POINT OF VIEW.

"Is everybody in this country 100 per cent. American, mother?"
 "Why, of course not, child. Somebody has to do the work."

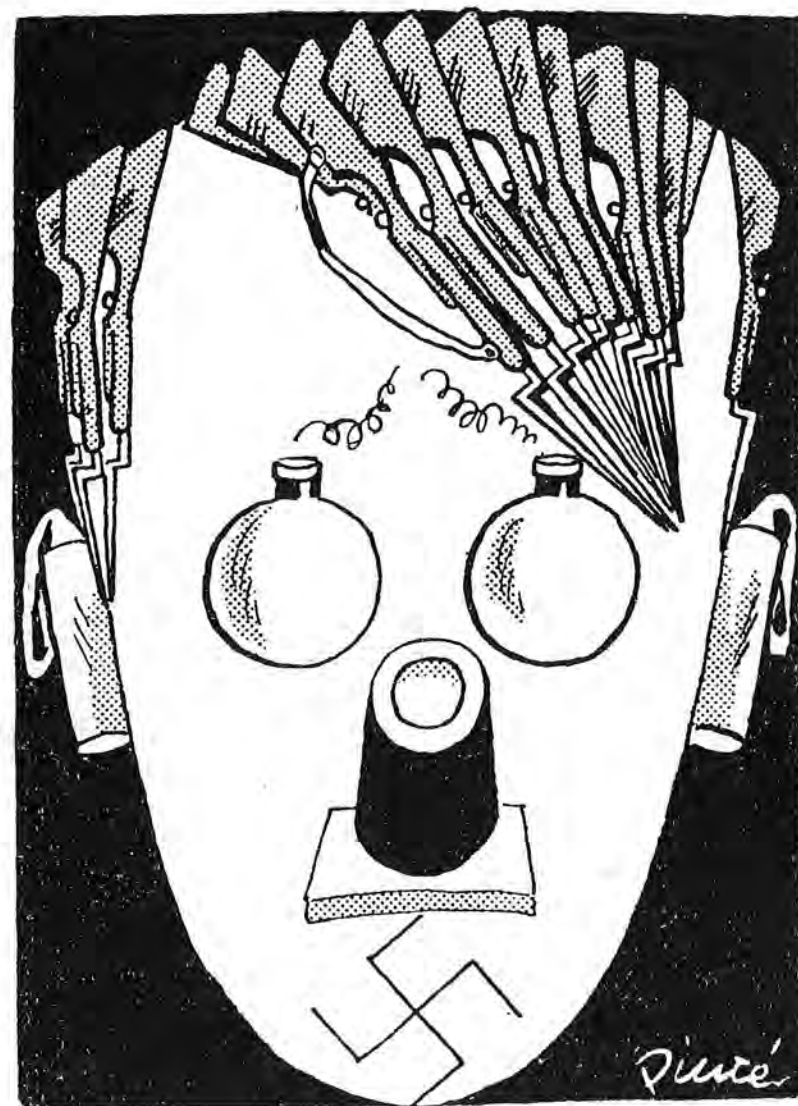
From *New York Life*.



THE PILOT WHO WOULDN'T BE DROPPED.
 (With acknowledgments to *Punch*.)
 From the *London Daily Express*.



MARS, THE EVER VORACIOUS.
 From *Il 420* (Florence).



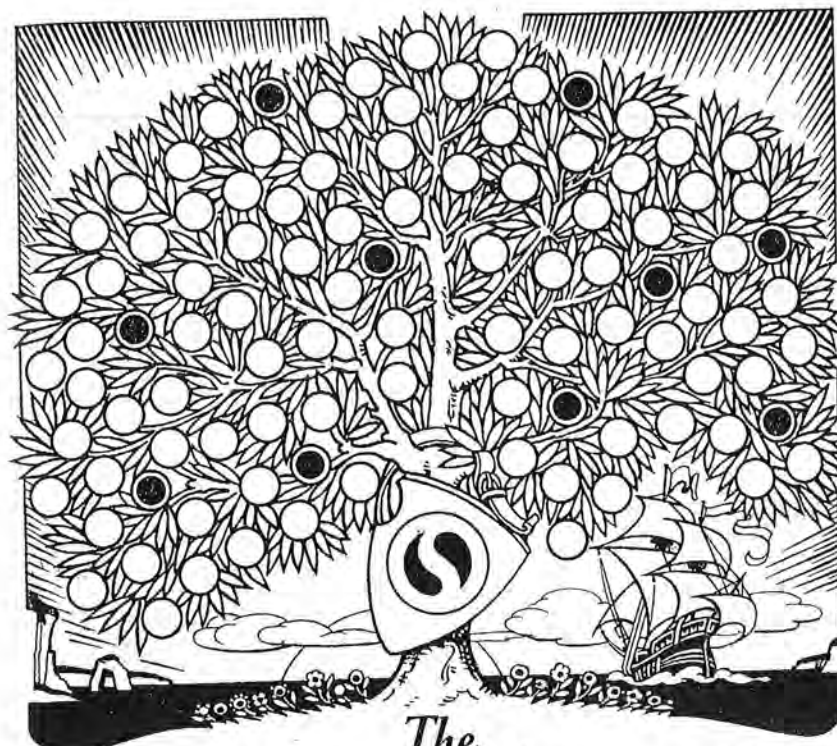
HITLER—IN THE FRENCH LOOKING-GLASS.

From *Maygarzag* (Budapest).

During the 1920s and 1930s the magazine combined details of League activities at home and abroad, advertisements, contact addresses and photographs with a similar interest in wider political and social issues, creating an excellent record of the period from a 'Middle England' point of view. There were well-known and sometimes controversial contributors, but Evelyn Wrench, as editor, kept the balance with professional skill. In this he was helped by the assistant editor, Eric Chaplin, who worked for the magazine for 17 years. There was a constant record of numbers of members in every edition, in the early years illustrated by the 'Over-Seas Club Tree'. Evelyn Wrench's passion for figures even extended at one point to recording the number of meals served in the Buttery each month. However dazzling the published figures, it is nevertheless sometimes difficult to be certain of their accuracy.

Early on, Wrench had aimed at a reading public of 450,000 from a circulation of 23,000-30,000 members. He always had in mind the part that *Overseas* could play, not only in providing entertainment and practical contact, but in spreading the word of the Empire brotherhood. A quotation from John Ruskin, 'imperialism synonymous with social service', was a favourite maxim of Evelyn Wrench. Ruskin's ideas were a source of inspiration to him.

Evelyn Wrench gave up the editorship of *Overseas* of necessity during the 1939-45 war. He was succeeded first by Eric Chaplin and then by two professional editors, Tom Iremonger, MP (retired in 1982) and Elwyn Hartley Edwards. The wartime magazine continued to appear monthly in reduced form and whilst recording the immense range of activity at Over-Seas House and the fund-raising initiatives (Field Forces Hampers, the Tobacco Fund and the like) it still looked at larger issues, for example in the regular feature 'The month in the Empire' and other articles of interest such as 'Boy miners in training at New Court Colliery in Coalville'. Visits of eminent people to the headquarters, such as the Viceroy of India, Lord Wavell, were also recorded.



The OVER-SEAS Membership TREE

The Membership Tree has added five more ripened fruits to its branches, thanks to the enrolment of 473 further new Members, whose names appear in this number.

Thus 1,046 new Members have been enrolled since the 25th Birthday campaign was first announced, one-tenth of the total of 10,000 which we hope to reach in celebration of the 25th birthday of the League, August 27th, 1935.

There are now 14 months left in which to enrol 9,000 new Members. About 650 new Members each month will be required. Can we do it?

Junior Members, who enrol for the sum of 5s. before the age of 18, are not, of course, included in our figures, though we are happy to announce that over 70 have joined during the past two months.

A coloured and mounted copy of the Tree, with 50 fruits on its branches each representing one Member, is being sent to all Branches and H.C.S.'s of the League; and a number of smaller trees, with 12 fruits, have been prepared to send to individual enthusiasts on our roll of membership. We shall be glad to send one to any Member who is willing to help with the 25th Birthday Drive.

PLEASE HELP US TO DARKEN AT LEAST SIX NEW FRUITS IN THE JULY NUMBER

Total required	10,000
Two months' enrolment	1,046
Balance required	8,954

The Over-Seas Club Tree demonstrated the growth of membership month by month, from *Overseas*, Jun. 1934, p.18.

After the war, the magazine still retained its Macdonald Gill cover. Serious articles such as 'Australia in the atomic age', 'Empire into Commonwealth' and 'The coal crisis' reflected the mood and concerns of the post-war world. With the retirement of Evelyn Wrench, the magazine became less personal, his monthly letter becoming first 'This month's events', subsequently the 'Chairman's message' and later the 'Director General's monthly message'. The magazine continued to attract distinguished contributors during this period.

By the 1950s the cost of sending the magazine to all members became a problem and members in this period were asked to request a copy. Further economies later in the decade saw the magazine appearing bi-monthly and, later, quarterly.

In 1951 Tom Iremonger introduced a variation for the cover. The trademark Macdonald Gill artwork disappeared to be replaced by tasteful photographs of Commonwealth scenes. Serious articles about the Commonwealth, and themed editorials on countries such as Scotland, Ulster, Pakistan and Australia, made the slimmer magazine more formal and professional.

Further cutbacks followed in the 1960s, with the introduction of a newspaper format, a loss of general articles and advertising and a decline in appearance. The Chairman's message was an important feature and the usual reports on Branch and League activities kept contact alive. Home members were asked to pay 5s. a year to receive the magazine, so difficult was the League's financial position at this time.

In the early 1980s, the magazine became the responsibility of successive PR directors with external editorial and design help. The format only changed more radically when Pat Treasure, PR Director from 1988, gradually initiated more Commonwealth coverage, largely through the contacts she had made when attending the Commonwealth conference at Harare as League representative in 1991. With a bigger budget for articles and pictures, plus a new design format, *Overseas* became much more professional.



The cover of *Overseas* in Nov. 1956.

Pat Treasure became the full-time editor from 1994, and was able to concentrate on obtaining articles from Commonwealth journalists and League members with specific interests such as the Arts, which made the journal more focused. At the same time, particular aspects of the ROSL and Commonwealth life were realised in more face-to-face interviews, including some with artists and musicians. Vicky Baker continued the modernising process, changing the format where appropriate and experimenting with improved photography and layout. Miranda Moore has developed this style, rationalising the content to make it more accessible and returning to a more serious examination of Commonwealth and other problems, typical of the pre-war magazine. The modern *Overseas* is a readable publication covering the traditional topics in a professional way with excellent photographs and relevant and appealing articles.

The Travelling Secretary

When Evelyn Wrench returned from his 17-month tour of the Commonwealth in 1913, he was convinced that this exhausting undertaking had in fact been the true beginning of the Over-Seas movement and that the 1910 foundation had been a prelude to the real business. He realised that regular personal contact between the headquarters and the branches and Honorary Corresponding Secretaries was necessary to avoid misunderstandings, encourage membership and to keep the enthusiasm for the Empire project alive. The magazine *Overseas* already in prospect would be important but there could be no substitute for personal contact.

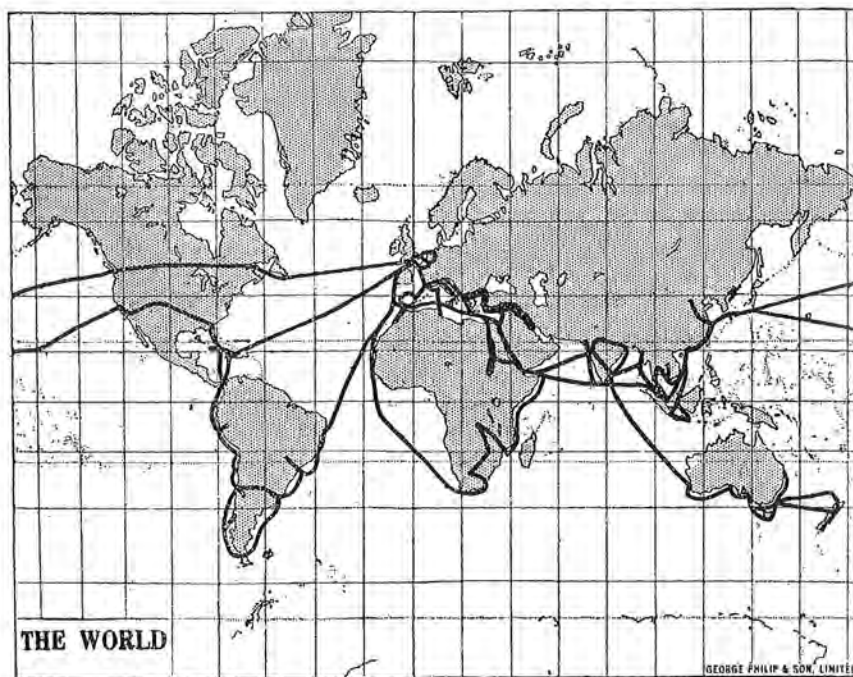
The First World War stopped the development of this idea temporarily, but by 1922, with the Over-Seas League well established, the need for a Travelling Secretary to revisit old branches and create new ones was of first importance. Eric Rice (who was associated with the Club from 1918 to 1946) was the first appointment. His links with the League developed during the 1920s and 1930s, not only as Travelling Secretary, almost perpetually on tour, but also

being in charge of the Men's Annexe in Park Place. In this capacity he organised receptions and welcomed visitors, eventually becoming Assistant Secretary to Evelyn Wrench and, on Wrench's retirement, Secretary (i.e. Director General) of the Over-Seas League. The extent of his tours is remarkable by today's standards and would not have been possible without the generous hospitality offered by overseas members.

The tours were not confined to the Commonwealth, however. In 1931 Rice's tour took in Venice, Athens, Istanbul, Singapore, Cyprus, Beirut, Damascus, Jerusalem, Haiti, Jaffa and Cairo. More typically, in 1926 a tour of the Commonwealth and other countries worldwide lasted eight months and added 1,000 new members to the League. In the 1930s, his duties at Over-Seas House being demanding, an additional travelling Secretary, Lisle Carr, was appointed, to be followed by Philip Crawshaw, later Director General of the ROSL. Eric Rice had a monthly column in *Overseas*, 'A diary of a travelling secretary', which reflected his experiences and, more importantly, the number of new members these voyages had produced. Eric Rice noted that in his first ten years in the job – in his own words 'A task demanding Funds of humour, pertinacity and tact' and 'A cast iron constitution' – he had travelled 260,000 miles. He was awarded an OBE for his work in 1935.

Evelyn Wrench also travelled frequently throughout the Commonwealth, and Council members volunteered for special assignments when visiting branches abroad. The connections between the home and overseas branches of the League were thus regularly maintained.

After the Second World War changes in the costs associated with travelling and the development of better and newer forms of communication made the role of Travelling Secretary much less important. Once Philip Crawshaw became Director General he undertook Commonwealth tours himself, accompanied by his wife, and a Travelling Secretary was no longer needed. A video of their six-and-a-half-month tour in 1961 provides an excellent record of



Eric Rice's map of his journeys on the League's behalf in 1934.

the range of such visits and the amount of hospitality received. This practice was to be followed subsequently by later Director Generals, Chairmen and sometimes Council members with particular interest in Commonwealth countries. Increasingly, tours were extended worldwide once more, with the present Director General having travelled more widely than his more recent predecessors, making many more contacts. In the early years, however, the Traveling Secretary was the vital link between the League's headquarters and its overseas members.

In 1939, the mother of Eric Rice became ill unexpectedly, and he was unable to go ahead with his planned tour of India, Malaysia, Singapore and China. A young substitute was hastily engaged and, with minimal instructions, sent out on the P&O liner *Strathallan* to take Rice's place. This was Philip Noakes, a 23-year-old Cambridge graduate. Thanks to his diaries and records we have a remarkable

insight into the whole project.³ A star at Cambridge, President of the Union, Noakes' only overseas experience at the time was a university debating tour of the USA, sponsored by the ROSL, during which he encountered much anti-war and anti-European feeling. In this sense, Philip Noakes was better prepared for this tough assignment than the average young man of his age. Nonetheless his letters show a lack of briefing that would have daunted a lesser man. (He had written earlier in desperation to Eric Rice, 'I feel about as knowledgeable as if I was being asked to convert Mars!')

Sped on his way by a telegram of support from Sir Evelyn and Lady Wrench, he spent his first days aboard organising a cocktail party under the Captain's auspices to introduce the Over-Seas League to passengers. He records the 'need to be ruthless' and wasted no time in recruiting 50 new members. He was also constantly meeting existing members during the voyage, including a relative of Evelyn Wrench. He wrote to his fiancée, at home, 'Yes she is a relation of the Wrenches and has the same sort of face! She is a rather remote cousin and her family live in Delhi and were all roped in by Eric Rice three years ago!' Less happily, he comments on a fellow passenger, 'a rather horrid old man turns out to be a Life Member – tho' he courteously explained that he thought the Royal Empire Society much better!' Vivid impressions of people bring the voyage to life – including several Lords on board and a Maharajah who turned out to be a Life Member (Noakes signed up the rest of his entourage during the trip) and the hard-drinking English military returning to post 'who talk as if they owned India' – and all combine to convey his gradual growth in confidence and ability to cope with the situation.

Once the ship docked in Bombay, a Gurkha who was Eric Rice's usual bearer on his Indian visits arrived to welcome Philip Noakes and accompany him on his tour, making all domestic arrangements. He formed the charming habit of putting up the photograph of Noakes' fiancée, Moragh Dickson, at every stop, to make him feel at home. A pattern for the tour emerged; success entirely depended on the individual Honorary Corresponding Secretaries in the

various regions. A good organiser would have first-class introductions at the highest level, enabling Philip Noakes to organise meetings and receptions at prestigious locations including Government House. The prestige of the Over-Seas League on the sub-continent is clearly demonstrated. The Delhi meetings were some of the most successful despite the strong National Party movement for Indian independence, which made the attraction of membership of an Empire organisation more dubious. This success was largely due to the indefatigable HCS in Delhi, Colonel Webb-Johnson, described by Noakes as

... fearfully energetic. He knows everyone in Delhi and if I haven't met them all, it won't be his fault ... My party was amazing – Cabinet Ministers, Congressmen, a Judge or two, Mrs Sorarji Nehru, poet and politician, Colonels, majors, shop keepers, saris, beards and English ladies.

Later he said that in contrast to some of his experiences, 'I have had here the sense that I am doing something real and worthwhile.' The Viceroy agreed to become a vice-president of the League and Noakes made contact with many members of the National Assembly, including Pandit Nehru's sisters:

The dinner with Nehru's sisters and party was most pleasant but as someone said quite truly to me, the intelligent Indian has given up trying to make the English take him seriously and so does not take him seriously either.

On the other hand, Noakes had success with the British Establishment, enrolling His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, India ('a dear old man'), as a Life Member. Throughout he reveals a mature perception of the political situation, privately noting that 'The British Government have made an awful mess of India.' Following his instincts, Philip Noakes altered the tone of his addresses, stressing the non-political character of the League and presenting it as 'the largest and most democratic of all societies of the British

Commonwealth'. His emphasis on 'good feeling and mutual respect' between the Commonwealth and Great Britain was very much in keeping with Evelyn Wrench's own views and greatly increased support for and the popularity of the League in India, his press coverage in Indian newspapers being particularly impressive.

Noakes made the most of his old college contacts, Queensmen both Indian and English crop up regularly in his accounts, he wrote newspaper articles about the political situation in Europe and the Far East, broadcast for 12 minutes on All India Radio, and recorded that he left India with 250 new members (membership being everything to Evelyn Wrench, Philip Noakes had been set a target of gaining 100 new members a month). Noakes was summoned to Bombay to meet the Wrenches, who were en route to Australia. Sir Evelyn became seriously ill and eventually was obliged to return home. Philip Noakes records his impression of Evelyn Wrench as: 'distinguished and courteous showing, despite his illness, a constant interest in ideas and plans'.

During this epic four months, Philip Noakes on his own initiative went on to Singapore, Malaya and the Far East, completing his League commission and only returning in July 1939 prior to the outbreak of war. He married his fiancée, Moragh Dickson, in January 1940 and went on to have a distinguished career both in the War and later in the Colonial Office, subsequently the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. After the war he maintained his connection with the ROSL as an influential and highly respected member of the Central Council.

Noakes' letters provide an insight into the difficulties the Travelling Secretary could experience, which called for independence, judgement and innovation on his part. The support and generosity of overseas members, and particularly the HCSs, was also significant, as was the esteem in which the League was held generally. The Travelling Secretary provided the vital link between the headquarters and the Commonwealth, demonstrating 'good feeling and mutual respect'.

Below and opposite: Headlines in Indian, Malayan and Singapore newspapers give widespread publicity to the League and Philip Noakes' visit.

THE MALAYA TRIBUNE, WEDNESDAY, MAY 24, 1939.

Overseas League Travelling Secretary In Singapore

Singapore, Wednesday.

BECAUSE of the importance of Singapore, making it an ideal centre for the work of the Overseas League, Mr. P. R. Noakes, the Travelling Secretary of the League, who arrived to-day by the "Karapara," is going to spend a month here.

Mr. Noakes who is twenty-three years old left Cambridge last year, where he took an Arts course. He was the President of the Cambridge Union and in that capacity toured the various American Universities.

The Overseas League, founded in 1910, is a Society of British people whose object is the promotion of goodwill and understanding among the various people of the Empire. It has a membership of 5,000.

Singapore has 350 members, while there is an equivalent number in the rest of Malaya. Mr. Noakes' aim in coming here is to meet members of the League, to make it better known to Singaporeans and to secure more members.

While in India, where he spent three months, Mr. Noakes personally enrolled no fewer than 300 new members for the League and despite the seemingly adverse political conditions there he received a great deal of help from the Indian National Congress.

As a demonstration of goodwill the League and despite the seemingly adverse political conditions there he received a great deal of help from the Indian National Congress.

Mr. Noakes will also visit various centres in the Malay States after which he will return to London.

Mr. J. Wilcott, the Singapore secretary of the Overseas League, welcomed Mr. Noakes on his arrival here.

The Overseas League is having a dinner at the Sea View Hotel to-night. Mr. Noakes will speak.

Friendly League Without Politics—50,000 Members

From Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, March 16.

Mr. Philip Noakes, Travelling Secretary of the Overseas League, who has been staying at 6, Akbar Road, with Mr. S. Webb Johnson, Honorary Corresponding Secretary in Delhi and Simla, has received the support of H. E. The Viceroy and Lady Linlithgow, who have accepted the position of Vice-Presidents of the League. Others who supported the League during Mr. Noakes' visit to Delhi or who have recently joined the League are H. E. The Commander-in-Chief, the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India, the Air Officer Commanding in India, Sir Mohammad Zafrullah Khan, the Hon'ble Sir Maneckji Dadabhai, Mr. Bhulabhai Desai.

One of the main objects of the League, which is a non-political organization of over 50,000 members, is to promote good feeling and respect between the peoples and communities, and it recognises no distinction of class or creed. The service given at home and overseas to its members, and the Overseas Journal, are already

LOCAL ENGAGEMENTS

NOTICES IN THIS COLUMN ARE INSERTED AT TWO RUPEES PER LINE

LINK IN WORLD ORGANISATION

Overseas League's Work

Members of the Overseas League in Bombay and Mr. Philip Noakes, of the League Green's Rest Tuesday evening meeting, Mr. Noakes had play in the consolidate in Bombay.

Mr. W. corresponded League in Noakes to had been original p tour Indi necessitat suddenly Noakes's fore, to

"WHAT HONOUR CAN THERE BE FOR... BANDITS?" Average Britons Think War On China Disgusting

INTERVIEW WITH OVERSEAS LEAGUE SECRETARY

Kuala Lumpur, Wednesday.

THE average Englishman, of whom I hope I am one, thinks Japan's continued war on China to be unjustified and, he hopes, unsuccessful. He is not worried about British prestige or even British trade. He just thinks it is disgusting and uncivilised to attack, bomb and slaughter the defenceless population of another country, whatever the motive. As for prestige I myself do not feel that as between ourselves and the Japanese, that we have lost face, honour or prestige, for what face, honour or prestige can there be for international bandits?"

Ing, stated why enthusiasm in the League had succeeded in uniting people in parts of the Empire from days when it had no special organization, headquarters or representation. The League, besides having many branches, had representatives voluntarily represented it in various centres. It had also a magazine and a journal which, he believed, formed a useful link between part of the world and another also acquainted members with League's plans.

Mr. Noakes felt that the of any country, but a sincere hatred of aggression.



Mr. P. Noakes.

There were many members in the city, and as Bombay was the Gateway of the East, he felt that the League had a very definite part to play in the city. He hoped to organise a way through which that could be done. The League, Mr. Noakes declared, should have a more important place in India today. The political

Alexandra Road, Gamdevi, when the delegates from Bombay will speak on their general impressions of the 13th Session of the All-India Women's Conference held at Delhi, Mrs. Heera-bai Gilder will preside.

OVERSEAS LEAGUE.—A meeting will be held at Green's Hotel on Tuesday at 6-30 p.m. when members of the League are asked to be present with their friends to meet Mr. Philip Noakes, Travelling Secretary in India, who is at present staying in Bombay with the object of obtaining support for the League. All members are asked to be present in making this occasion a success.

Overseas League

Asked about the objects and activities of the Overseas League and the object of his recent visit to Malaya, he said: "The Overseas League tries to remove misunderstandings and to promote good feeling between all classes and communities within the British Empire." Mr. Noakes added that the membership was open without distinction to all or creed, and that all headquarters and branches and local centres of the League are available for the use of members in many parts of the world as clubs and meeting places for intelligent discussion. The monthly "Overseas League" is read all over the world and tries to spread the League's principles of understanding and mutual service and respect. Continuing he said, "Asiatics help the League in promoting its aims in many ways, both directly and indirectly. Many Indian, Malay and Chinese members are very enthusiastic for the League and have helped as honorary correspondents and on honorary correspondence centres for the League, thus contributing actively for its progress. Each local branch can help by supporting him about the League."

"We have only a few branches as yet in Malaya but I hope that there will be more support forthcoming. Singapore, Malacca, Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh and Penang have local secretaries and there are over 1,000 members in the whole of Malaya." Mr. Noakes added that he had enrolled nearly 200 members in less than two months.

Mr. Noakes was warmly welcomed at Overseas House today where people in England today were beginning to realise the need for national service, so those interested in the League's work realised the need for Empire service, for service to the men and women who made up that Empire. The support now given to the League had enabled it to render service not only to its own members but to others outside. It had sponsored many forms of social service, and was at present carrying out a scheme to train boys on farms in England for emigration as farmers overseas.

The more support it had the more privileges it could offer to its members. He appealed to members to help the League. Every member,

LUNCHEON PARTY.

Saturday, 25th February 1939.

Mr. Kitchen	Captain Burns
Mrs. Betham	Captain Gooch
Mr. Bridgman	The Lady Joan Hope
Mrs. Holmberg	Mr. Noakes
THE VICEROY	The Lady Anne Hope
The Lady Lilian Wemyss	The Rt. Revd. The Bishop of Lahore
The Hon. G. Hamilton-Russell	Miss Betham
The Lady Doreen Hope	Captain Chandos-Pole
	Lieut. Southby, R.N.



*The Marquess & Marchioness of Lintithgow
request the pleasure of
Mr. P. Noakes'
Company at Luncheon
on Saturday the 25th February
at 1-10 o'clock.*

*An answer is requested to the
A.D.C. in charge of Invitations.*

Philip Noakes' invitation from the Viceroy with seating plan.



Philip Noakes rides in a rickshaw during his Far Eastern tour.

Portraits of Chairmen, Past and Present

When Robert Newell became Director General in 1991 he was able to put into practice his idea of commemorating all living (and future) Chairmen of the Royal Over-Seas League appropriately by commissioning their portraits to be painted by winners or scholars of the Art Competition. This has given the ROSL the advantage of some interesting portraits of distinguished people and at the same time has encouraged the young artists, none of whom had previously been known for their portraiture. Some have since made successful careers in the genre.

The first commission was the portrait of Lord Grey of Naunton, Chairman 1976–81, President 1981–93 and Grand President 1993–99, painted by Tai-Shan Schierenberg in 1990, who was the First Prize winner in the ROSL Art Competition. This portrait is now in the entrance hall of Over-Seas House. The same year the portraits of Mr Maneck Dalal and Sir Lawrence Byford were added, and that of Sir David Scott, who donated a portrait of himself, painted by a friend. Thus all three living Chairmen were celebrated simultaneously. The following portraits now hang in the corridor and on the front staircase at the League:

- Sir David Scott, 1981–6, by Rupert Shepherd
- Mr Maneck Dalal, 1986–9, by Christian Furr
- Sir Lawrence Byford, 1989–92, by Jane Walker
- Mr Peter McEntee, 1992–5, by Melissa Scott-Miller
- Sir Geoffrey Ellerton, 1995–2000, by Robert White
- Sir Colin Imray, 2000–5, by Andrew Tift
- Mr Stanley Martin, 2005, by Nick Archer

In addition a portrait of The Queen to mark her 40th anniversary of accession hangs in the hall. Her Majesty was given a choice of the artists already represented and chose Christian Furr. This portrait was painted in 1995 and was unveiled by Lord Grey the Grand President. The recent portraits of Lady Barbirolli, OBE, the long-time Chairman of Adjudication of the Music Competition (1981–2002),

is entitled *Evelyn in Her Garden* by Michael John Shaw, painted in 1995. The portrait of Lord Luce, President of the ROSL, painted by Bella Easton, completes this distinguished collection.



A recent portrait of Sir Colin Imray, Chairman 2000–5.



Rutland House next door in 1934, established the League in St James's. Although Rutland House with its cobbled yard and gatehouse was entered from Arlington Street, it was decided to keep the existing entrance to Over-Seas House and to join Vernon House and Rutland House internally for practical purposes. The addition in 1937 of the Westminster Wing, providing many bedrooms and two lecture halls, was made possible by the destruction of the ballroom of Rutland House and building over its courtyard – unthinkable today under listed building regulations.

Over-Seas House in London is thus essentially an amalgam of two historic houses of eighteenth-century origin plus a 1937 wing. The acquisition of these buildings and their development has provided the ROSL with a fascinating and distinguished building in a prime location in St James's with a garden overlooking Green Park.

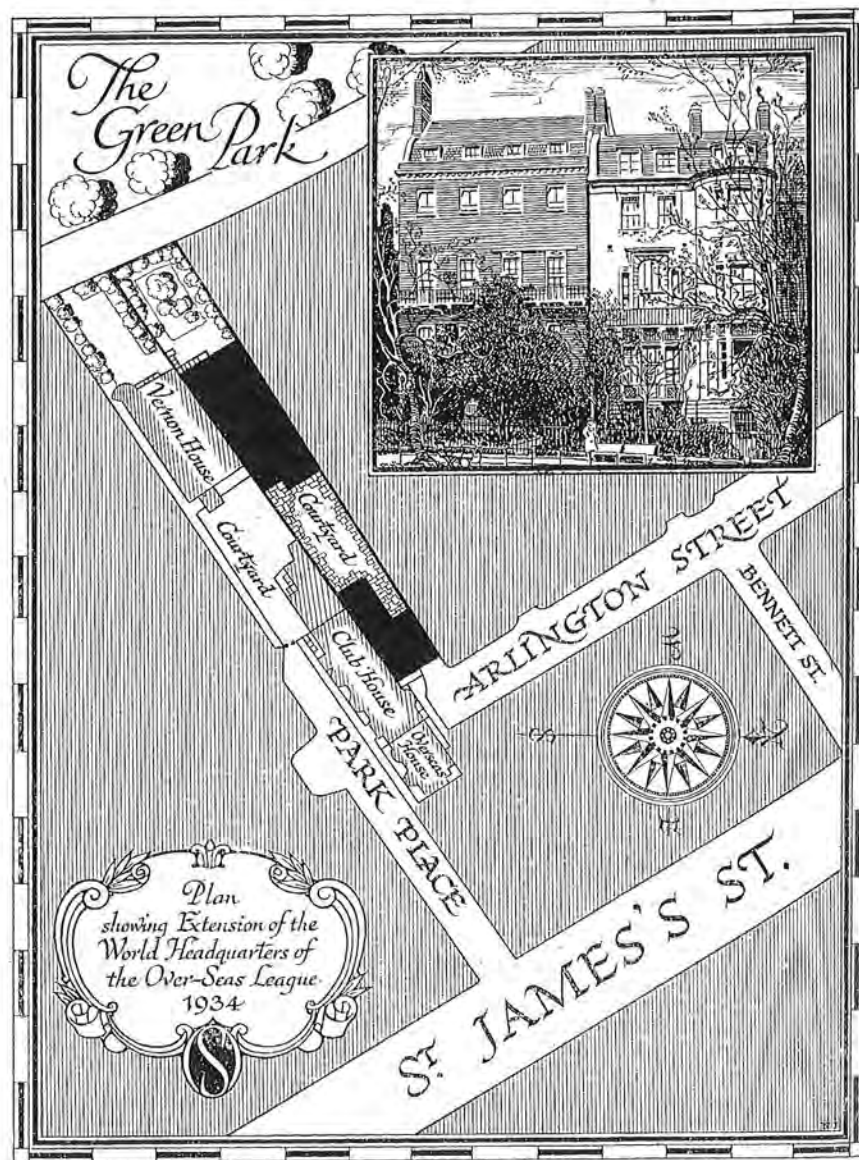
St James's itself is one of the most prestigious areas of London. Like much of the so-called 'West End' and the City of Westminster, it was not developed as a fashionable district until after the restoration of King Charles II in 1660, and particularly after the Great Fire of London in 1666. Until that time aristocratic families had lived in or close to the City of London, often along the Strand, in large houses whose gardens stretched down to the River Thames. The move westwards to the rural parts of the ancient city of Westminster was a natural result of the devastation and rebuilding after the fire. The area around the Court at St James's Palace provided undeveloped land ready to be laid out in elegant streets and closes where courtiers could make their homes. The King, always a generous friend, had already granted large tracts of land to his favourites, with the Earl of Arlington, Henry Jermyn and Barbara Castlemaine among others receiving land on both sides of St James's Street.

Park Place was laid out in 1683. Old maps show the intense building spree that took place during the remainder of the century and beyond. Whilst at first occupied exclusively by the nobility such as Lord Clifford and the Countess of Tankeville, after the end of the century a mixture of the houses of the aristocracy and premises

catering for their needs such as clubs, gambling dens and brothels existed side by side, as a list of early residents shows. One of the first such in Park Place was that of Mother Needham, a notorious brothel-keeper who kept a house of 'civility' on the site of the later Vernon House. Famously described by Hogarth as a 'handsome old Procuress' and mentioned by Pope in *The Dunciad*,³ she had a long tenure due to rich protectors and was only convicted of keeping a disorderly house in 1731. Her punishment – standing in the pillory 'over against Park Place' – was slightly mitigated when she was allowed to lie down on her face. However she was 'so severely pelted by the Mob, that her life was despaired of',⁴ She died later the same year.

The eighteenth century also saw the celebrated Betty, Queen of the Apple-Women, who kept a fruit shop on the corner of St James's Street and Park Place. She is frequently mentioned in Horace Walpole's letters as a convivial woman who went to Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens with parties to whom she supplied her hampers of fruit. More conventional residents were William Pitt and David Hume, and Charles James Fox, who lived in an apartment at 2 Park Place, convenient for Brook's Club next door where he could indulge his passion for gambling. Arlington Street, adjoining Park Place, quickly became popular with government ministers, including Sir Robert Walpole (1716–45).

What is considered Georgian architecture began to develop from 1714 when George I came to the throne. The district of St James's quickly demonstrated the new classical style in beautiful buildings whose main influence was that of Palladio (1508–80), the Italian architect. His buildings of light, space and proportion had been seen by many aristocrats on the Grand Tour. Books of his architectural drawings, made in the sixteenth century, were circulated in England two centuries later, showing how to relate everything in a house 'to the human Frame, creating simple splendour'.⁵ It was on these principles that James Gibbs created Rutland House for the Duchess of Norfolk between 1734 and 1740. It was the



Map of Park Place, St James's, from *Overseas*, May 1934.

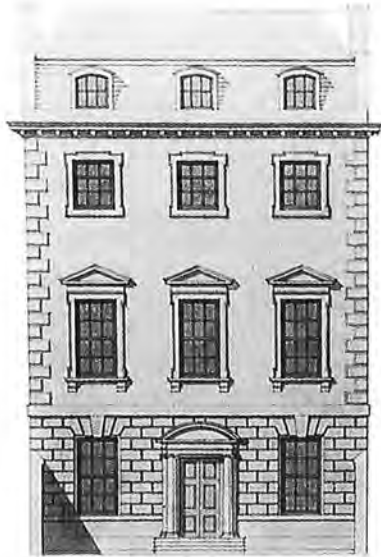
last London house he designed, a comparatively small building, of three floors overlooking Green Park. It was entered from Arlington Street via a Gatehouse (which can still be seen), an original feature

which became fashionable making 'the buildings more retired and quiet' (according to the eighteenth-century *Grub Street Journal*). It was later the home of Lord North.

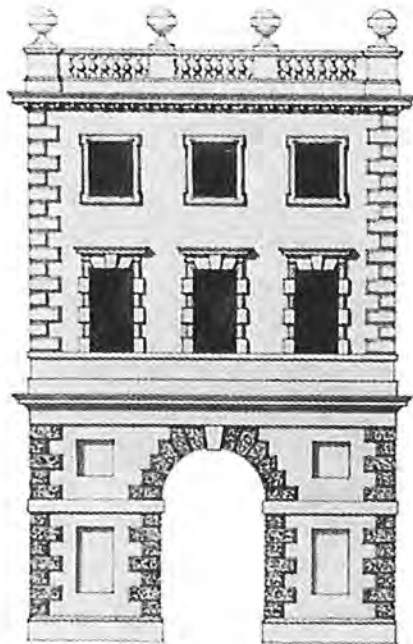
The house passed into the Rutland family after 1816. George IV's brother and heir Frederick, Duke of York, was a friend of the Duke and particularly the Duchess of Rutland. He spent much time in their home, now known as Rutland House. It was here that he died in his chair in what is now the cocktail lounge, pursued by his creditors to the last and with his new palace next to St James's Palace (now Lancaster House) still being built down the road.

The eighth Duke of Rutland brought his family to live in Rutland House, 16 Arlington Street, in 1898. The best description of the house at the time comes from the memoirs of Lady Diana Cooper (née Manners) the youngest daughter of the family: 'One of the most unspoilt eighteenth-century houses in London', it was 'a huge house boasting electric light and two bathrooms'.⁶ The front entrance was through the lodge on Arlington Street and across a cobbled court yard to the main door into a dark hall with the beautiful staircase beyond. Beneath the lodge were 'vast kitchens' and an underground passage by which tradesmen (and all meals) made the long journey to the basement of the main house. Here was the servants' hall and a large room (once the Ulster Room and now ROSL ARTS and PR departments) where the unplaced tomb of Haddon, Lady Diana's brother, sculpted by his mother, stood. Narrow back stairs, known as the Crinoline, went up three flights to the attics, which were reached by wooden stairs.

On the courtyard level was a 'Kent decorated dining room and a library' for the Duke, overlooking Green Park, with an outside staircase to a 'mangy garden'. The Duchess had a sitting room on the courtyard side. On the first floor was a 'vast ballroom' used as a studio, music and play room, facing the courtyard, and a 'gilded Drawing room', which together with the Duchess's bedroom and tiny bathroom (now a cupboard) faced the park. Above were more floors of bedrooms, nurseries and servants' rooms.



Designs for the exterior and interior of Rutland House
by James Gibbs.



An early design for the Gatehouse in Arlington Street.

The house was used as a private hospital during the 1914–18 war. Later, after the Duke's death in 1928, the Duchess moved to the lodge, the house having been 'denuded by a sale' and was in the market waiting for 'some modern Croesus'. The modern Croesus in the form of the Over-Seas League bought the house from the Duchess in 1934. The transformation that took place to meet the League's needs is described by Lady Diana as having '[the] exquisite proportions half obliterated and totally deformed by the Over-Seas League, which has suppressed the William Kent decorations, torn up and roofed over the eighteenth-century courtyard and built a lot of new rooms'.

Although the ballroom was destroyed and much of the interior altered by the ROSL for its purposes, some outstanding features of Gibbs's work still remain, in particular the main staircase from the Central Lounge. This beautiful stair with a balustrade created of wrought iron, then a new building material, connects the two principal floors. The secondary staircase called the Crinoline is a hooped spindle stair, so shaped to allow women in hooped dresses to descend easily from the bedroom floors. The back stair also accommodated the letter carrier operated by a handle, which still survives, which brought letters from the upper floors down to be collected for the post by a uniformed page.

The three first-floor rooms of Rutland House, now known as the Wrench, Rutland and Bennet Clark rooms, contain some fine original work by William Kent in dadoes, carved fireplaces, windows and shutters. The large marble fireplace in the Rutland Room was carved by John Rysbrack, the well-known sculptor who worked frequently with James Gibbs.

Vernon House too had its origin in the eighteenth century, named after Admiral Edward Vernon (1684–1757) whose family lived there. He was the Admiral nicknamed Old Grog, after the shabby Grogram coat he wore habitually, whose prescription of a daily ration of 8oz of 80 per cent water and 20 per cent rum per man was adopted by the Navy to contain and reduce the terrible

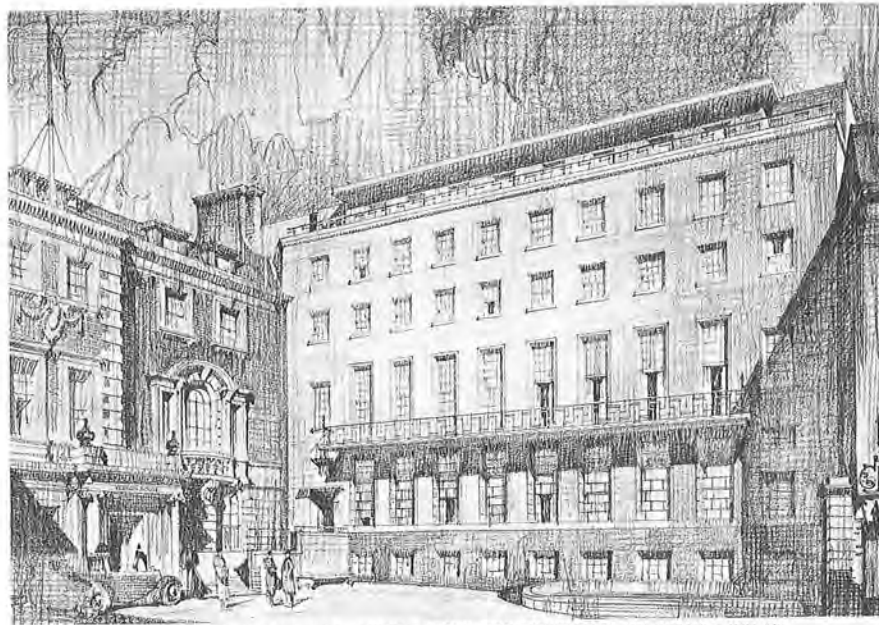
drunkenness prevalent at the time. The house was entirely rebuilt in 1835 and again, after a fire, in 1905, by Lord Hillingdon who gutted the interior, refurbishing it in the lavish Edwardian style then fashionable. The panelled interiors of the Hall, the Vernon Staircase, Mountbatten Room and Hillingdon Drawing Room all demonstrate the decoration and style of the period.

The two houses combined have given the League beautiful rooms whose use has changed with the demands of the times. The Buttery, for example, originally the restaurant, became the main office until the 1980s, dealing with members and all related activities. The addition of the Westminster Wing in 1937 provided the two large halls, originally intended as a lecture hall and an Empire newspaper room and library, together with the necessary bedrooms. In 1935 Evelyn Wrench referred to the collection of six buildings on the site as 'an Empire Centre'. Funds for the decoration of the main halls came from an appeal to the members, being given appropriate acknowledgement in the chosen name, for example the Hall of India and Pakistan supported by Indian members (including a number of ruling princes) and the former St Andrew's Hall supported by some Scottish members. St Andrew's Hall was renovated to concert standard in 2005 for music events and renamed Princess Alexandra Hall after a further appeal.

The bomb damage in the Second World War to Vernon House and the difficult time that followed led to the League leasing some accommodation locally. During the post-war period too the buildings in Park Place (number 3, freehold, numbers 4 and 5, on lease, and the Gatehouse, freehold) had deteriorated to a dangerous level, with a water-powered lift (with a porter inside) falling two floors, fortunately without serious injury. In 1980, when Peter de Savory established the St James's Club opposite the Park Place buildings and offered to buy both leases and freehold, the Central Council, under Lord Grey, realised that the proceeds of the sale would provide for the complete renovation of Over-Seas House, and simultaneously cancel all the League's outstanding debts.



The destruction of part of Rutland House to make way for the new Westminster Wing, 1935. The view from the Gate House in Arlington Street.



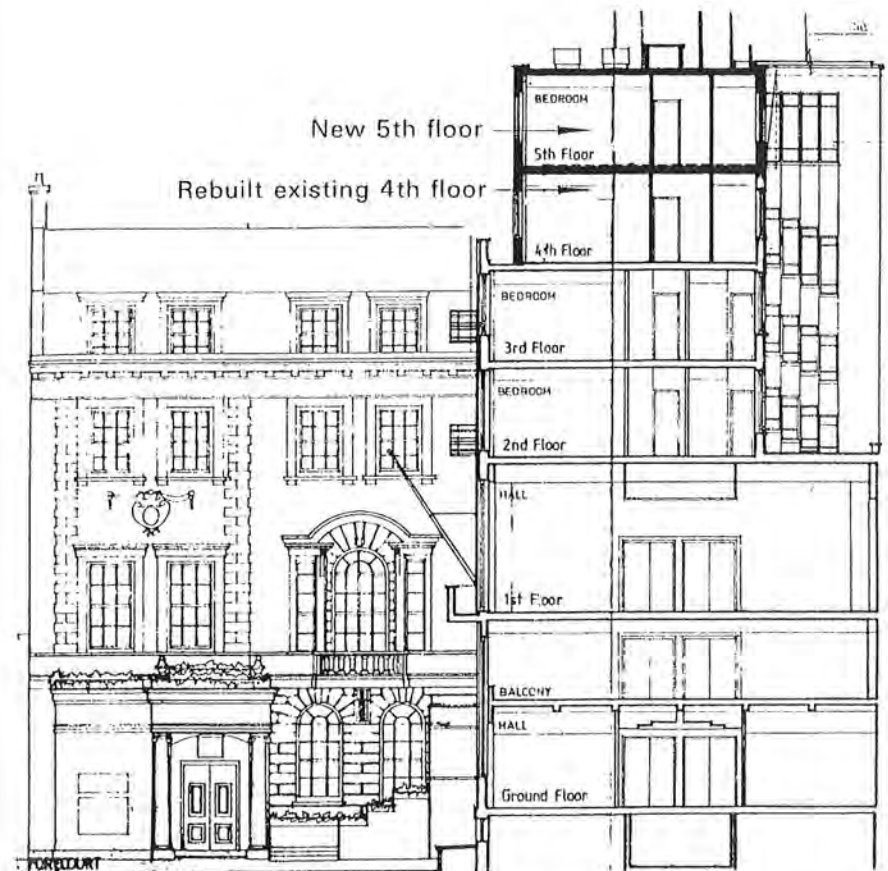
SKETCH OF NEW BUILDING, OVERLOOKING THE COURTYARD OF VERNON HOUSE
It is hoped to begin building in March

'Our wonderful new building': design for the 1937 wing.

The League was thus enabled to launch Project 1981 under the direction of a new general manager, Robert Newell, later director general. Not only was there to be a total renovation of the premises, but space had to be found to accommodate the facilities lost in the sale of Park Place – the Victoria bar, buttery, bedrooms, staff accommodation and the men's reading and TV room. This ambitious project, transforming the interior of the building and the kitchen and essential services, was entirely successful and with the addition of extra bathrooms in both the Park and Westminster Wing brought the club facilities up to an unprecedented standard.

The need for more bedroom accommodation was satisfied in 1987 by the addition of a fifth floor on the Westminster Wing, to be followed by a sixth floor in 2003.

In 2004 the Central Council took the radical decision, on the advice of the Director-General, to outsource all food and beverage



Plan showing the location of the improved bedrooms on the fourth floor.

catering at Over-Seas House to Convex Leisure Ltd, due to a decline in standards and surpluses. The result has been a significant reduction in overhead costs and an increase in revenue. Convex Leisure has become an associate employer and part of the League family.

The task of maintaining a historic house in central London with all the problems of piping, drainage and subsidence (due to new tube line construction) that this has entailed, whilst creating the most modern standards of comfort, has been accomplished under the guidance of the former house architect Geoffrey Allen, and the Director General.

Geoffrey Allen's records of the state and use of the buildings over the years are a fascinating account of the struggle between conservation and innovation, and above all the need to keep the premises open and working day-to-day whatever the circumstances. Allen also made a study of the historic origins of the buildings, which is invaluable.

Like much else about the ROSL, Over-Seas House unifies past and present in its architecture and facilities, in a harmonious combination.

Over-Seas House, 100 Princes Street, Edinburgh

There has been an Over-Seas Club in Edinburgh for almost as long as the one in St James's, London. The first premises were established in Charlotte Street in the New Town in 1927. Soon outgrown, the League bought 100 Princes Street, a former hotel, in 1929. In order to oversee the necessary renovations, and to initiate a drive to increase membership and promote the club generally, Winifride Wrench, Evelyn Wrench's sister, spent a year in Edinburgh. During that time membership increased to 1,500 local members and in 1930 the new club premises were opened by the Duke of York. It was the first mixed club in the city and boasted 20 bedrooms, a bar and restaurant and other club facilities. All the furnishings were produced and made in Scotland.

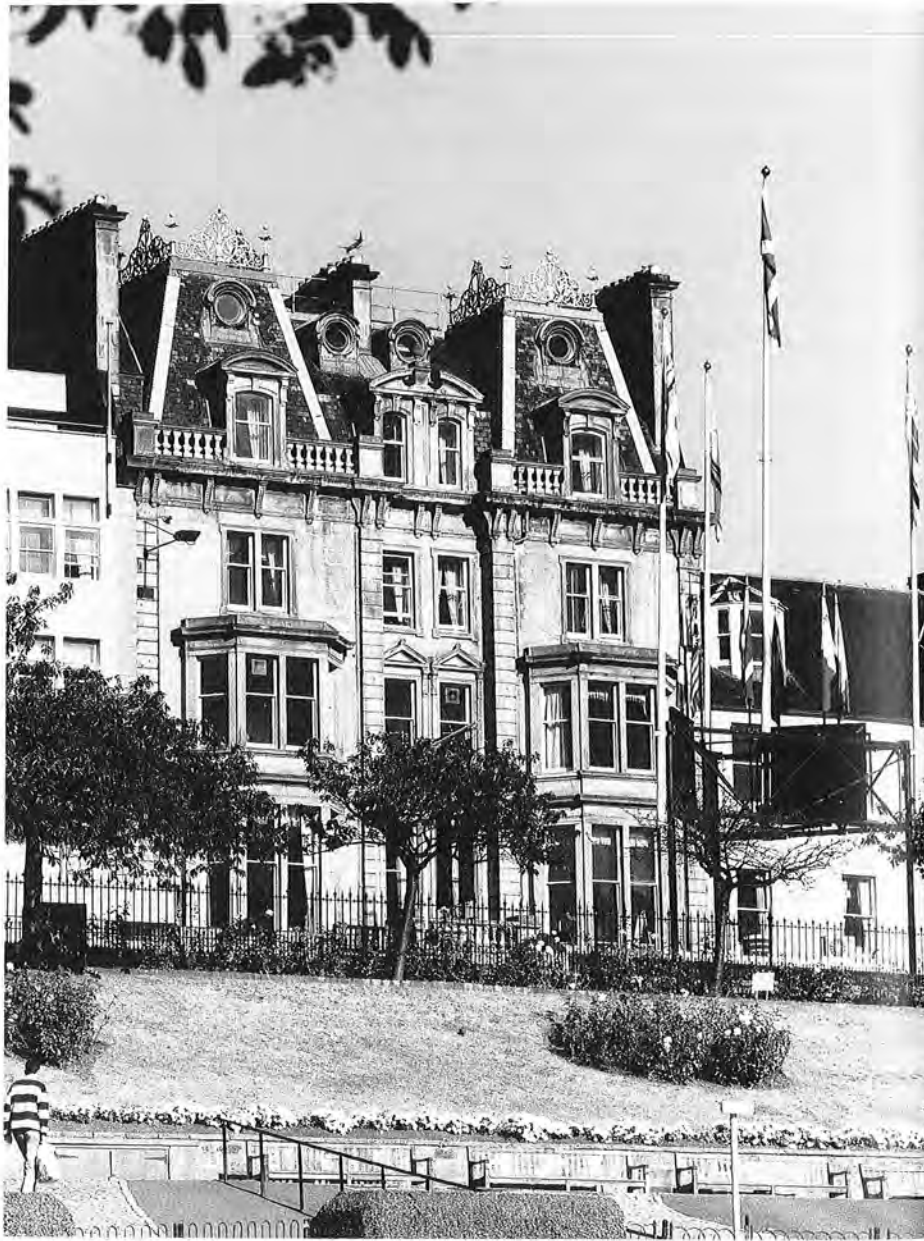
The building, formerly the Windsor Hotel, a temperance establishment, had been designed in 1879 by Robert Patterson, part of the rash of Victorian building along Princes Street. Although not particularly distinguished architecturally, 100 Princes Street occupies a wonderful site, directly opposite Princes Street Gardens and the Castle above.

This site was also of interest historically, with an earlier building being occupied by Lady Clerk of Penicuik, a Jacobite hostess and supporter, whose wearing of the White Cockade proclaimed her loyalty to Prince Charles Edward. The house had been visited by many members of the Scottish Enlightenment in the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century.

From 1930 onwards the Club became a popular centre for Commonwealth visitors, with the prime ministers of Canada, Australia and New Zealand all staying there in that year. Perhaps because of the Scottish origins of so many Commonwealth members, the League in Scotland developed rapidly. In 1933 there were 21 centres (branches) and Glasgow as well as Edinburgh had premises. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s membership increased, reaching 6,206 in 1941. The Scottish clubs and branches were very active during the Second World War, providing a great deal of hospitality to overseas troops.

The Club has always been popular with visitors and Scottish members, becoming particularly important after the closure of the Glasgow premises in 1966. Rebuilding plans for the Edinburgh Club began in 1972 as a result of an initiative by Boots the Chemist, which bought part of the old building, demolishing it and occupying the ground floor of the new building while leasing the upper floors back to the League to provide for a new much larger restaurant, bar and enhanced bedroom accommodation. The new wing was opened by the Duke of Gloucester in 1975.

Since 1993 new arts and social programmes for members, plus constant renovation and upgrading of facilities, have brought in new groups and members. 'Fringe' drama groups had used the



Over-Seas House, Edinburgh, from Princes Street.



Princess Alexandra visiting the Edinburgh Club in 1985.

rooms frequently during the Edinburgh Festival, but a decision by James Wilkie, Development Officer, Scotland, and Alan Chalmers, the Edinburgh Clubhouse Manager, and the ROSL Director of Arts Roderick Lakin, to move from drama to music has resulted in a programme of excellent concerts in the club during the Festival, to augment the regular 'Music with a View' concerts and arts lunches that attract many notable speakers. At the millennium Sir Kenneth Scott, James Wilkie and Alan Chalmers established a Commonwealth Week in the City, raising the League's profile. In the inaugural year of the Scottish Parliament a musical evening was held there with performances by young ROSL musicians, which has since become an annual feature. Membership in Scotland is around 1,000, with 650 Edinburgh and district members. There continues to be strong support for all activities from the Glasgow branch.

The Princess Alexandra Hall Project

On 25 January 2006 Princess Alexandra opened the newly refurbished concert hall at Over-Seas House, named in her honour as Vice Patron of the League since 1979.

This hall, part of the Westminster Wing, built in 1937 to complete Evelyn Wrench's 'Empire Centre' at Over-Seas House, had originally been designated the St Andrew's Hall, with funding coming partly from Scottish members of the League, designed together with the Hall of India on the floor above, for lectures, meetings, concerts and conferences. The St Andrew's Lecture Hall was the scene of the Opening Ceremony of the Empire Centre performed on 14 April 1937 by the Duke of Gloucester. To mark the occasion, the first all-Empire radio/telephone ceremony took place linking the audience in London with the Viceroy of India and the Governor-Generals of Canada from Ottawa, of Australia, from Melbourne, and of South Africa, from Pretoria. The link to the Governor-General of New Zealand failed. Sir Evelyn in his speech drew a parallel with the material benefits of the new telephone links and the idealistic good service and citizenship links provided by the ROSL to all members of the Empire.

After this splendid start, St Andrew's Hall continued to be used widely for all kinds of functions. In 1947 the League's Music Circle began a recital series there, under the banner of the Festival of Commonwealth Youth, which was the origin of the present Music Competition.

As the annual Music Festival (renamed the Competition in 1985) grew in importance, the final concert moved from Over-Seas House, first to the Wigmore Hall and then to The Queen Elizabeth Hall. However, all Music Competition auditions and many prize-winners recitals continued to be held at St Andrew's Hall. The hall was not designed originally as a concert auditorium, its limited stage being unable to accommodate a chamber music group and being suitable only for solo or duo performances. Additionally,

the refurbishment of the room in the 1950s and 1960s with carpets and curtains deadened the acoustics considerably. The addition of a balcony and upper corridor spoilt the symmetry of the original design.

In 1999 the ROSL ARTS Sponsorship Committee was formed to raise money for a project to transform the hall, for which the prime function would be the performance of chamber music. A brief was drawn up and a number of architects were asked to submit plans. The brief specified the creation of a suitable stage, lighting and flexible seating as well as the technical facilities to allow for a variety of other uses such as conferences and receptions.

Avery Associate Architects, which had won significant awards for its work in transforming facilities at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA), was chosen. They produced a design, addressing all aspects of the brief as well as re-creating the elegant style of the original 1930s building. The balcony was removed, together with all extraneous furnishings. The main construction work began in July 2005 and was completed by the end of September when the hall was back in use. The rest of the work, the installation of the curved stage end wall and stage lighting and the upgrading of the foyer, was carried out between October 2005 and January 2006.

An appeal to meet the costs of the refurbishment was launched in 2002 to mark the 50th anniversary of the ROSL Music Competition. The target of £300,000 was met within three years, mainly from members of the League, a success parallel with the creation of the original hall and a tribute to members' recognition of the important part that music and the arts in general have played in the League's history and the greater role they will play in the future.



The Chairman, Mr Stanley Martin, welcomes Princess Alexandra at the concert, in January 2006, to mark the reopening of the concert hall at Over-Seas House, London, and its renaming as Princess Alexandra Hall in her honour.



ROSL ARTS

Of all the many enterprises undertaken by the League from the 1920s onwards, the most enduring has been the promotion and fostering of the arts in the support given to young Commonwealth musicians, artists and writers. Initially music was the principal focus, but later a visual arts and literature programme was developed with great success, fulfilling the League's commitment to promote and unite in friendship young artists and musicians from the overseas Commonwealth and the UK.

Concerts had been held frequently in the early years but it was in 1947 that the very active Music Circle, founded by Jessica, Lady Forbes, established a recital series at Over-Seas House under the banner of the Festival of Commonwealth Youth. This provided a showcase for outstanding young musicians from the UK and the overseas Commonwealth. The recitals took place in the Hall of India and Pakistan and St Andrew's Hall and many were broadcast live on the BBC World Service during the 1950s. The Festival became competitive in 1952, in response to the large number of young musicians eager to perform, with a first prize of £10. Joan Kemp Potter,



Left to right: Lady Pamela Mountbatten, Richard Bonyng and Harriet Cohen at the 1951 Festival of Commonwealth Youth.



Jacqueline du Pré, winner of the First Prize in 1961 with Sir Lennox Berkeley.

as the new music organiser, devised the selection process. As the Festival became established the next organiser, Patricia Stammers, successfully approached the Gulbenkian Foundation for support. Its grant of £100 for three years ensured the future of the competition.

Audrey Strange, a retired concert singer, became Director of Music in 1962, and under her professional expertise and dedicated leadership over the next 20 years the Festival grew in strength and stature. She was appointed MBE in 1983. In 1972 the final of the Music Festival moved to the Wigmore Hall, courtesy of the Arts Council, and in 1975, through the generosity of Harry Miller, moved to The Queen Elizabeth Hall where it has been held ever since (except for 2006). Myriam Ponsford, Audrey Strange's assistant, succeeded her in 1982.

Since 1984 the Festival has been directed by Roderick Lakin, subsequently the League's first Director of Arts, who has concentrated on expanding ROSL support of prize-winning



Joan Davies, left, Audrey Strange and Barry Douglas after he won the First Prize in 1979.



Roderick Lakin, Director of Arts, receiving a Herald Angel award at the 2007 Edinburgh Festival for the ROSL ARTS Fringe concert series, 'Music at 100 Princes Street'.

musicians outside the Festival itself and on developing an international scholarship programme. He was appointed MBE in 2004 and received an honorary degree from the Royal Academy of Music in 2007.

Over the past 50 years the scope and prestige of the Festival, renamed in 1985 the ROSL Annual Music Competition, has grown immeasurably. By 2010, awards for solo performers, accompanists and chamber ensembles totalled in excess of £55,000. ROSL ARTS also supports prizewinners by sponsoring concert appearances at major venues and festivals throughout the Commonwealth, and by providing promotional materials such as publicity photographs and CDs. A sum of £40,000 per annum is also given for scholarships to enable Commonwealth musicians to make study visits to the UK.

The League's Vice Patron Princess Alexandra has been a loyal and active supporter of the competition since the 1960s. From the first, it has enjoyed the support of eminent musicians as adjudicators. These have included Dame Myra Hess, Sir Malcolm Sargent, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Sir Arnold Bax, Carl Dolmetsch and Leon Goossens. From 1960 to 1979, the chairman of adjudicators was the concert pianist and teacher Joan Davies, who was succeeded by Dame Eva Turner. From 1985 to 2002 the Chairman was Lady Barbirolli. Ian Partridge, Michael Gough Matthews and Gavin Henderson have succeeded her in this position.

Past ROSL prizewinners comprise an impressive group of musicians of the highest calibre who have established prominent careers in most areas of the music profession. Gold medallists include pianists Geoffrey Parsons (1953), John Lill (1963), Melvyn Tan (1976), Barry Douglas (1979), Piers Lane (1982) and Paul Lewis (1992); singers Jean Rigby (1981), Susan Chilcott (1986), Janice Watson (1987), Jonathan Lemalu (2000) and Lucy Crowe (2002); and cellists Jacqueline du Pré (1961) and Liwei Qin (1997). (See Appendix 13, pp.159–67 for a list of major prize and scholarship winners.)



Sir David Scott watches while Princess Alexandra, ROSL Vice-Patron, signs the visitors book on a visit to Over-Seas House, London, to celebrate the ROSL 75th anniversary.



The gold medal awarded for First Prize in the ROSL Annual Music Competition.



Singaporean harpsichordist and pianist Melvyn Tan in 1976, the year he won the ROSL Music Competition Gold Medal.



Lucy Crowe, soprano, at the 2002 competition.

In 1984 the ROSL Annual Exhibition was started by the artist Carol Wyatt (ROSL Director of Arts 1984–6): her brief, to match the Music Competition in quality and scope, providing a showcase for young Commonwealth artists. This was the League's first attempt at an exhibition of professional standard, building on earlier art exhibitions and competitions of a different type both at home and overseas. The new exhibition included up to 50 artists per year, and brought together work by young British artists such as Tracey Emin, Peter Howson and Tai-Shan Schierenberg, with their overseas Commonwealth contemporaries. Due to this annual exhibition, many overseas artists have been able to show their work in the UK for the first time.



Artist Jane Walker working on her portrait of Sir Lawrence Byford at ROSL, London.

In 2000, the ROSL Annual Exhibition was restructured as a group show for five Commonwealth artists, one each from Africa, the Americas, Asia, Australasia/South Pacific and Europe. Each artist, selected in collaboration with national arts councils, major gallery directors and prominent visual arts institutions, is awarded a travel scholarship and a month-long studio residency in the UK or a Commonwealth country other than their country of origin.

Throughout the year ROSL ARTS organises solo exhibitions at Over-Seas House in both London and Edinburgh. ROSL ARTS also commissions work from young artists in ceramics and glass (used as prizes in the Music Competition), graphic designers and portrait artists. (A selective list of artists supported by ROSL ARTS is given in Appendix 14, pp.174–84.)

The third dimension to the arts programme is that of literature. A popular series of literary lectures and book events was established in 1982, originally in collaboration with the National Book League, with the energetic support of its then director Martyn Goff. Now organised entirely by ROSL ARTS, book events take place throughout the year at Over-Seas House, London, involving a wide range of writers, novelists, biographers, historians, poets and travel writers,



A ceramic trophy by Stephen Dixon created for the 1987 Music Competition.

including such authors as Margaret Atwood, Beryl Bainbridge, Penelope Fitzgerald, Doris Lessing and Ben Okri. The League was also a co-founder in 1987 with the Commonwealth Foundation and Book Trust of the Commonwealth Writers' Prize. Since 2000 the League has supported the Caine Prize for African Literature, providing accommodation for shortlisted authors.

Roderick Lakin as Director of Arts is responsible for an ever-increasing programme of international events in the three spheres of music, arts and literature. To support this ambitious programme, the 'Friends of ROSL ARTS' was created in 1999 to encourage new support, develop audiences and foster the active involvement of arts donors with the League's work. The 'Friends' programme, providing special events and privileges, including cultural trips, garden parties and priority bookings, is a positive point of this initiative.

With the impetus of an active sponsorship committee, under the chairmanship of Graham Lockwood, funds raised between 2002 and 2005 from donations, legacies, sponsorship and subscriptions to the 'Friends' contributed to the total refurbishment of what is now Princess Alexandra Hall.

The opening of the newly restored hall by the Princess in January 2006 was a landmark for ROSL ARTS. For over 50 years musicians had struggled during the early auditions of the ROSL Annual Music Competition with an unsuitable environment and unsympathetic acoustics in what was essentially a lecture hall. The Princess returned to the Hall in January 2009 as guest of honour at a dedication concert for a new Steinway concert grand piano, the funds for which were raised in just one year entirely from members' donations, legacies and 'Friends' subscriptions.

Now the acoustics, layout and amenities of the Hall are, in the words of the Director of Arts, 'worthy of the musicians it is our privilege to support'. The ROSL ARTS initiative unites young people worldwide in a shared endeavour in keeping with the idealistic ambition of the founder. It is a most progressive aspect of the life of the League.



The League Today

Every organisation that survives to its centenary with vitality owes something to its founder. In the case of the Royal Overseas League this is particularly true, since Evelyn Wrench dominated more than 30 years of its early life. In the 70 subsequent years it has been the responsibility of others to carry forward his ideas and adapt them to contemporary life in a relevant way.

Evelyn Wrench's great-niece, the author Anne de Courcy, has summed up her impression of him as 'that rare thing, a practical idealist'.¹ This unusual combination laid the foundation for the success of ROSL.

As the ROSL celebrates its centenary year, with the English Speaking Union not far behind, it is instructive to see how the idealistic concepts on which Evelyn Wrench's two creations were founded have shaped their development.

The ROSL, as we have seen, was to be an 'Empire Brotherhood' with a strong emphasis on educational projects, social welfare and support for music and the arts. The ESU in the early years aimed to bring together the two great English speaking peoples of

the world, 'the British Empire and North America in democratic unity'² with a similar emphasis on education and support for young people.

Education has indeed remained a cornerstone of both organisations, with a steady development of educational exchanges, scholarships and sponsorship within the ESU achieving its modern purpose 'to promote international understanding through the widening use of the English language throughout the world'.³ A similar emphasis within the League on sponsorship, particularly for young Commonwealth musicians, artists and writers, has fulfilled Evelyn Wrench's educational ideals for the ROSL. The League's goal of 'Empire Brotherhood' has been a constant feature working through the branches, the projects, and the triumphant survival of the League's two club houses as centres of hospitality and meeting places as complete today and infinitely more comfortable than the 'Empire Centre' of 1937.

None of this could have been achieved without the capacity to adapt to change over the years and the ability to find modern interpretations of the original ideals. This, in turn, has been dependent on the judgement and practical skills of the chairmen, councils, directors, staff and volunteers.

Like many organisations, in the first half of the twentieth century the ROSL exemplified a tradition of voluntary service which, while not unique, is more marked in Great Britain and the overseas Commonwealth than in many other countries. Evelyn Wrench himself and Lady des Voeux (later Lady Wrench) served the League in an honorary capacity. While there were always paid staff, the amount of voluntary work undertaken by thousands of members before and during the Second World War was an essential part of the League's success. The post-war world was very different, however. With time and the retirement of Evelyn Wrench, the slow change from voluntary to professional had begun. This coincided in the 1940s and 1950s with very difficult conditions worldwide, making the League's progress problematic.

Fortunately, Evelyn Wrench himself had established in 1912 the practical framework needed to underpin an organisation in the modern world. The chairman and Central Council to which the Secretary, later the Director-General, reported remained in place with additional committees where appropriate. The Central Council has always been composed of men and women with Commonwealth connections either by birth, or through service or business interests. Recent councils have reflected an increasingly wide range of backgrounds and experience. With the retirement of Evelyn Wrench, and the later ending of the tradition of Royal presidents, the role of the Chairman became more important, with the Director-General being a key position needing the necessary vision and skills to steer the League in new directions.

If adaptability to changing conditions has been an essential factor in the League's success, an equally important aspect has been the retention of core values. This has been a matter of fine judgement for recent councils, and particularly for the Director-General as the interpreter of these values in practical terms.

Initially, Evelyn Wrench aimed at a worldwide membership of a million or at least 50,000 and the latter target was last narrowly achieved in the 1960s. Today it is recognised that numbers alone are not the benchmark. It is the quality and diversity of the League's objectives that makes membership attractive. The extension of membership to corporate organisations and, latterly, to non-Commonwealth members, has given the ROSL a broad appeal. The excellent standards of facilities for conferences, receptions and occasions of all kinds mean that an enormous number of people have experience of the League today.

To some extent this has always been the case, but whereas before such experiences might have included coming up from boarding school to have tea with a travelling aunt, it is now far more likely to involve assisting at a concert, conference or competition with people of one's own age and interests. In many respects the membership resembles a modern 'friends' organisation, happily

exemplified at Over-Seas House by the contemporary 'Friends of ROSL ARTS'.

The archives of the League and its branches are few – in part due to wartime damage but also perhaps because people have been too busy carrying out the League's practical purposes rather than documenting them. However, the excellent bound editions of *Over-seas* magazine record 94 years of ceaseless activity and the changing prospects and current preoccupations of the League's members.

The ROSL has good reason to celebrate its centenary. The ideals of the founder, his years of dedication, the ability of those who succeeded him, and the enthusiasm and commitment of the membership have created a contemporary organisation with many interesting objectives. There may well be surprising new initiatives to come.



Recent Welfare Projects: Sri Lanka, Western Australia and Namibia

In the early 1990's the League, as part of its remit to 'give service to the Commonwealth and humanity at large' began to develop small welfare initiatives in partnership with overseas organisations requiring support in kind. The first was the Sri Lanka/ROSL project to support eye care camps for tea plantation workers who lived in the 'lines', in single rooms often shared with poultry.

This came about through a chance meeting between Ashruff Aziz, Chairman of Sri Lanka's Aziz Foundation, which undertook tea plantation welfare work, and Margaret Adrian-Vallance, ROSL's new Director of PR, who had previously worked on development projects in several of the 44 member countries of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award International Association, including Sri Lanka.

Mr Aziz asked if ROSL would put out an appeal for prescription glasses that could be graded by the Colombo Eye Bank, and a team of nurses would then conduct eye tests and match spectacles to requirements. The Aziz Foundation would fund all transport costs including the travel of the PR Director to Sri Lanka to help raise awareness of these health care needs. The appeal that followed collected over 3,000 pairs of spectacles and these were boxed up and free-freighted out to the Colombo Eye Bank by Air Lanka. James Soh, Singapore Youth Award Chairman, then launched 'Operation Vision' and 1,200 more glasses were sent to eye camps in Badulla and Nawalapitiya. Not all were perfect matches but the Eye Bank and villagers considered their improved sight of great benefit.

The second wave of welfare projects also saw a happy liaison with the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, this time in Perth, Western Australia. Here, Award Coordinator Anna Dean, concerned about the difficulties facing isolated youngsters, sought ROSL help for a Youth in Business initiative including a leaflet and a small amount of funding for a wheelchair production centre employing young people. ROSL and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award were further linked when Mrs Dean became ROSL Branch Secretary in 1997.

Both these projects encouraged the start of an important new initiative in 1995. Supported by ROSL's Central Council, Margaret Adrian-Vallance, together with the HCS for Namibia, Dick Chamberlain, members of the Namibian government (Speaker Mose Tjitendero, Minister of Local Government Libertine Amathila and Deputy Minister of Basic Education Clara Bohitile), Air Namibia, the University of Namibia's Vice Chancellor Peter Katjavivi and three primary schools joined in a project to help San (Bushmen) and farm children to gain an education.

At this time Namibia (population only 2 million) faced many challenges. At independence from South Africa in 1990, the country chose English as the national language so most children had to learn this. Large areas were not on the national grid. Some former 'white-only' secondary schools had difficulty adjusting to post-apartheid Namibia. On the big commercial farms with drives of up to 13 miles long farm workers' children had little means of finding a school place, let alone funding one.

Initially an appeal in *Overseas* for books and other items to be free-freighted out by Air Namibia had a great response: a Canberra group ingeniously got an oil tanker to deliver theirs into Walvis Bay; members like Enid Bates involved local schools; branches bought biros and crayons; Dorling Kindersley and writers donated books; inventor Trevor Baylis gave clockwork radios; Banqueting Manager Tony Hanmer raided his stores for candles; and Mairi Radcliffe found T-shirts and sweaters.

This then encouraged more substantial support, with ROSL member Paul Shipman becoming the first financial donor. Clara Bohitile and the Ministry of Education requested that money raised was used to support annual school bursaries covering fees, clothes, books, shoes, hostel accommodation and other necessities.

In 1996 ROSL funded the first nine bursaries for Bushmen and 'farm children' at three primary schools near the Kalahari – Hippo, Mokalleng and Gquina. All had the essential hostel accommodation needed for children from remote areas. As more funds were raised, ROSL was able to extend bursaries to secondary level and then to tertiary level – at Windhoek College of Education and the



Clara Bohitile MP (Namibia), formerly Deputy Minister of Basic Education and Culture.

University of Namibia (UNAM). By 2000 there were ROSL supported schools and individuals in the north, east and west of the country.

By 2007 a pleasing aspect was that several were back in their homelands teaching. One was Cwisa Cwi, the first Bushman to qualify as a teacher, who sometimes joined Margaret as adviser on her annual monitoring visits with Dick Chamberlain, UNAM's

Language Director, or Walter Nel, Chief Inspector of Education. Cwisa enjoyed inspiring others and gaining public speaking experience: 'Not all Bushmen want to be just hunter gatherers,' he said. 'There are many ways of combining modern life with tradition. I will always be grateful to ROSL for helping me this way.'⁴

Cwisa is now Principal of the five bush schools in the Nyae Nyae conservancy where his sister Katrina, also a former ROSL bursary recipient, is a Radio Tsumkwe broadcaster. Three of the first nine in the project, Elias Araeb, Ellie Velskoen and Jon Noad-eb, are also teachers, as are later bursary recipients Kaijandere Kaizondjou and Melissa Uses from Himba communities in the north.

Another of the project's highlights has been the progress of the isolated but dedicated Huigub Primary School near Tsumeb. For many years ROSL was the only major donor, funding items from floors to chair repair. In spite of poverty, floods, droughts, food shortages and meningitis, Huigub came fifth out of 137 schools for examination results in 2008. ROSL also donates to the isolated and stoical Katora Primary School in the Namib Desert, as well as supporting individual bursaries there.

The third school ROSL has supported over the years is the remarkable Hippo Primary near Gobabis, which also undertakes pastoral care of its former ROSL youngsters as they progress to secondary or tertiary level. Elrico Slinger, a former pupil, is one of three ROSL bursary recipients to be voted head boy or girl of their secondary school.

Students have remarked often on the importance to them of ROSL interest in their progress and consider this to have been as vital as the financial arm. Clara Bohitile's view of the project is that 'ROSL went that extra mile which is why these kids have succeeded. They fall out of the system because nobody cares. This project keeps them in.'⁵

This welfare project is exactly the sort of scheme, true to the League's idea of providing practical service to the people of the Commonwealth which, established through the dedication of a few people and the sponsorship of many League members, has made a real difference in people's lives.



ROSL bursary recipient Belinda Awases carries one of the renovated chairs back into the classroom at Huigub Primary.



Elias Araeb, ROSL bursary awardee at Hippo Primary, Wennie du Plessis Secondary and Windhoek College of Education with his class at Rakutuka Primary in the Omaheke.



The Royal Over-Seas League and the Future

by the Director General

When I joined the League in October 1979 it lost, in that year, over £100,000 (well over a million pounds today) and the talk at Central Council meetings was about selling the London and Edinburgh premises. The plan was to buy an alternative club house but in the provinces. Well, here we are in 2010, still in the buildings purchased by our founder. Over-Seas House looks better than ever, having been expanded to provide members with accommodation and facilities of five-star standard. Restoration of the historic architecture has been accomplished alongside the installation of the latest technology. And the dire financial situation of the late 1970s, when the very future of the League was in peril, has been replaced by healthy finances in the second millennium.

At the time that the League appeared to be in trouble, so too did the Commonwealth. Its break-up seemed a definite possibility and was predicted by many pundits. The main cause for this pessimism was the row over Britain's refusal to impose sanctions on South Africa during the worst abuses of the apartheid era. But, like the League, the Commonwealth has weathered the storms and is more

vibrant and meaningful today than ever under the leadership of its visionary secretary general, Kamalesh Sharma. The Royal Over-Seas League remains loyal to the Commonwealth's aims and ideals and is better placed than ever to help achieve them. Today, the future of the two organisations is assured, with membership of both continuing to expand.

So, what of the future of the League as it enters its second century and I come to the end of my time as its director general and my 30 years with the League? When I assumed the position as chief executive in 1991 I said that I would strive to lead the League into the twenty-first century on a sound financial footing whilst at the same time ensuring that its Royal Charter's aims were achieved and expanded. My principle objectives were to ensure a future with positive cash-flow, an excess of income over expenditure, increased events and activities for members, more overseas branches, an enlarged and more active cultural programme, and further development of the premises in London and Edinburgh. I am proud to say that these goals have been now achieved, with considerable support from my highly competent, enthusiastic and skilled colleagues. They, with my successor, will build on these foundations and work to further expand membership benefits and facilities, and to support the ever important ideals of Commonwealth.

The challenging issues facing the governments of the world and its peoples – rising energy and food costs; depletion of natural resources; population growth; climate change; and economic pressures, to mention just a few – will have a significant impact on the future of the League and they must be confronted with vision and courage. New markets for membership will need to be explored and means to increase revenue must be developed. Further funding of the League's charitable endeavours in the fields of culture and humanitarian projects must be found through donations and legacies. More will need to be done at the club houses to minimise our impact on the environment by reducing waste, recycling, improving energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions. The League itself

will participate in the debate about how to tackle issues that threaten the stability of world communities through, amongst other things, debate in the quarterly journal *Overseas* and at Discussion Group meetings. We will need to play a more proactive role in world affairs, as was the case in the ROSL's early days under the leadership of Evelyn Wrench.

The League must continue to be relevant to the needs of its members in the changing and challenging years ahead and must seek new ways to attract younger members, who may be less emotionally attached to the Commonwealth but have more interest in international affairs. By expanding its cultural endeavours the League will be well positioned to explore Commonwealth issues and ideals with a younger audience and by so doing will help the younger generation, especially in those Commonwealth countries presently ruled by authoritarian and corrupt governments, to influence change and develop good governance in their homelands. The role the League has always played in fostering friendship and understanding amongst people of different races, religions and communities will be more important than ever in the years to come as differences in ethnicity, religion and ideology continue to cause discord amongst international communities.

Nevertheless, as well as such important ideals, which lie at the very heart of everything the League does, the pragmatic benefits that encourage people to join the League must never be neglected. The demand for quality bedroom accommodation has grown substantially over the past two decades and will continue to do so; therefore a means to provide more bedrooms must be identified. Over the next few years the League will need to look into acquiring additional buildings, with access to sports facilities, health spas and exercise centres, which will offer stylish and contemporary facilities suitable to take the League through this century and beyond.

As I step aside and hand the reins of leadership to my successor I look back upon the past 30 years with enormous pleasure. I have

The Royal Over-Seas League

made close friendships with many members throughout the world and with many colleagues. I have travelled extensively, both on behalf of the League as well as privately. I have witnessed the formation of new overseas branches; the strengthening finances of the organisation as a whole; improved club house facilities; the expansion of the arts programmes; and above all the ability of the League to adapt to ever-changing political and economic circumstances. I am confident that the sound foundations that are now established will ensure a prosperous and meaningful future for the Royal Over-Seas League as it embarks on its second hundred years.

Robert Newell

Director-General, 1991—



APPENDICES



1. The Royal Over-Seas League Timeline

- 1882 Birth of founder, Sir Evelyn Wrench
- 1887 **First Colonial Conference of Empire Premiers held in London**
- 1898 **Empire Day introduced in Canadian schools by Clementina Trenholme on the last school day before 24 May, Queen Victoria's birthday**
- 1901 **Death of Queen Victoria**
- 1904 **Empire Day on 24 May instituted in the UK**
- 1906 Evelyn Wrench's first vision of his 'Empire Brotherhood' during visit to Canada
- 1910 Over-Seas Club founded on 27 August by Evelyn Wrench
- 1911 First public meeting of the 300 members of the Club at the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, London EC, on 27 June, the week after the coronation of George V
- 1912–13 Evelyn Wrench and his sister Winifrede made a 64,000-mile tour of the Empire promoting the Club
- 1913 Over-Seas Club reorganised with Richard Jebb as the first Chairman and a committee to which Evelyn Wrench reports. Viscount Northcliffe elected President
- 1914 First premises rented in Aldwych, London
- Outbreak of the First World War in August**
- 1915 Fund-raising for aircraft, comforts for the troops and hospital support began in the Over-Seas Club worldwide and continued throughout the War
- £978,326 raised by 1920
- Overseas* magazine created
- 1916 King George V became first royal patron
- 1917 Sir Frederick Truby King's 'Babies of the Empire' project began in UK sponsored by the Over-Seas Club
- Evelyn Wrench made CMG for War Services

- 1918 **First World War ended in November**
- Amalgamation with The Patriotic League of Britons Overseas, becoming Over-Seas League
- 1922 Vernon House, London SW1, bought as the League's war memorial to Empire troops, and its headquarters, opened by the Duke of York
- League incorporated by Royal Charter. King George V and Queen Mary visited headquarters
- Membership 32,506
- 1923 61-year lease of 3 Park Place acquired
- 1924 4 & 5 Park Place, London SW1, bought
- 1925 Edward, Prince of Wales opened Park Place premises
- 1927 First Edinburgh premises opened in North Charlotte Street
- 1930 Scottish headquarters at 100 Princes Street opened by the Duke of York
- 1,500 local members
- 1931 21st Birthday Banquet at the Royal Albert Hall
- 1932 Evelyn Wrench made Knight Bachelor
- 1933 Purchase of Rutland House, 16 Arlington Street, next door to Vernon House from Violet, Duchess of Rutland
- Membership 44,555
- 1937 Empire Centre comprising existing buildings plus new Westminster Wing completed with funds raised entirely by members. Opened by the Duke of Gloucester
- First all-radio telephone link from all parts of the Empire took place at a public function in St Andrew's Hall
- Evelyn Wrench marries Lady des Voeux
- 1939 **Outbreak of the Second World War in September**
- 1940 Allies Welcome Committee founded and organised by Sir Jocelyn Lucas to give hospitality and support to all allied troops. Continued with great success until 1950
- 1940–1 Sir Evelyn and Lady Wrench touring abroad became stranded in India for the duration of the War. Eric Rice took over Evelyn Wrench's duties and subsequently his position as Secretary of the League for the duration of the war

- 1944 **First Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference held in London**
- 1945 **Allied Victory in Europe and Japan**
Membership 58,261
- 1946 Air Vice-Marshal Malcolm Henderson became first Director General
King George VI, Queen Elizabeth, Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret visited Over-Seas House, London
- 1947 The Music Circle established a recital series under the banner 'Festival of Commonwealth Youth'
India and Pakistan gained independence within the Commonwealth
- 1952 The Festival of Commonwealth Youth became competitive. Early winners included Australian pianist Geoffrey Parsons (1953), British cellist Jacqueline du Pré (1961) and British pianist John Lill (1963)
- 1956 Philip Crawshaw became Secretary General and subsequently Director General
- 1958 **Empire Day renamed Commonwealth Day, held on the second Monday in March and marked by a multi-faith service in Westminster Abbey**
- 1959 Earl Mountbatten of Burma President of the League since 1942 becomes its first Grand President
- 1960 The League has 'Royal' title conferred by HM The Queen on its 50th anniversary
Armorial bearings granted
Sir Evelyn Wrench appointed KCMG
- 1962 50,000+ members
- 1966 Death of Sir Evelyn Wrench. Arts Scholarship Fund established in his memory
- 1967 Membership declines to 38,315
- 1971 **First biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) held in Singapore. Hosted since by different Commonwealth countries in rotation**
- 1972 Final concert of Festival of Commonwealth Youth moved to London's Wigmore Hall and subsequently to The Queen Elizabeth Hall in 1975

- 1975 New wing of Over-Seas House, Edinburgh, opened by the Duke of Gloucester
- 1979 Captain John Rumble RN (rt'd) became Director General. Robert Newell appointed General Manager
- 1980 Burney Committee discusses amalgamation of the Loyal Societies of the Commonwealth – no agreement reached
Sale of Park Place properties realises £815,000
- 1981 Project 81 launched to upgrade Over-Seas House, London
- 1982 Inauguration of Book Event series at Over-Seas House, London, initially in collaboration with the National Book League (now Book Trust)
- 1984 ROSL Annual Exhibition for young Commonwealth artists (age limit 35) inaugurated
- 1985 Festival of Commonwealth Youth renamed ROSL Annual Music Competition
League's 75th anniversary
- 1987 Fifth floor of bedrooms added to Westminster Wing, Over-Seas House, London, opened by Countess Mountbatten of Burma
Commonwealth Writers Prize founded by ROSL, Commonwealth Foundation and the Book Trust
- 1991 Robert Newell, former General Manager, is appointed Director General
- 1992 Concert of Music and Musicians of the Commonwealth held at Lancaster House, London, for HM The Queen to mark the 40th anniversary of her accession
- 1993 ROSL secured official recognition as a Commonwealth non-governmental organisation (NGO) and was represented for the first time at CHOGM in Cyprus
- 1995 Namibia Welfare and Educational initiative created
- 1998 ROSL affiliated membership extended to non-Commonwealth citizens
- 1999 Friends of ROSL ARTS established
- 2000 ROSL ARTS Commonwealth Visual Arts Travel Scholarships (up to five per annum) inaugurated. ROSL Annual Scholars exhibition replaces ROSL Annual Exhibition
Membership 21,039

- 2003 Sixth floor of bedrooms added to Westminster Wing opened by Countess Mounbatten of Burma
- 2006 Extensive refurbishment of St Andrew's Hall, Over-Seas House, as a concert room. Re-opened by HRH Princess Alexandra and renamed Princess Alexandra Hall in her honour
- 2009 History of ROSL written by Adele Smith published by I.B.Tauris
- 2010 ROSL celebrated its centenary. An appeal was launched to endow awards in excess of £50,000 annually in the ROSL Annual Music Competition.
- The Queen and Princess Alexandra agree to attend a reception for members at St James's Palace
- Service of Thanksgiving at St James's Church, Piccadilly. Many other celebratory events held at ROSL branches throughout the world

2. Patrons

- 1916–36 HM King George V
- 1936 HM King Edward VIII
- 1937–52 HM King George VI
- 1952– HM Queen Elizabeth II

3. Vice Patrons

- 1916–42 HRH The Duke of Connaught, KG, KT, KP, GCB, GCSI, GCMG, GCIE, GCVO, GBE
- 1920–36 HRH The Prince of Wales, KG, KT, KP, GCSI, GCMG, GCIE, GCVO, GBE, ISO, MC (later King Edward VIII and Duke of Windsor)
- 1942–74 HRH The Duke of Gloucester, KG, KT, KP, GCB, GCMG, GCVO
- 1946–52 HRH The Princess Elizabeth, Duchess of Edinburgh, Lady of the Garter, CI (later Queen Elizabeth II)
- 1979– HRH Princess Alexandra, KG, GCVO

4. Presidents

- 1916–22 Viscount Northcliffe
- 1922–36 HRH The Duke of York, KG, KT, KP, GCMG, GCVO (later King George VI)
- 1937–42 HRH The Duke of Kent, KG, KT, GCMG, GCVO
- 1942–59 Admiral of the Fleet, The Rt Hon. Earl Mountbatten of Burma, KG, GCB, OM, GCSI, GCIE, GCVO, DSO (Grand President 1959–79)
- 1962–81 Sir Angus Gillan, KBE, CMG
- 1981–93 Lord Grey of Naunton, GCMG, GCVO, OBE (Grand President 1993–9)
- 1998–2002 Sir David Scott, GCMG
- 2002– The Rt Hon. Lord Luce, KG, GCVO, DL

5. Chairmen

1913–14	Mr Richard Jebb
1916–18	Mr Willian Bulkeley-Evans, CBE
1922–9	Sir Ernest Birch, KCMG
1929–33	Mr Alec Rea
1933–6	The Rt Hon. Sir John Tilley, GCMG, GCVO, CB
1936–41	The Rt Hon. Viscount Goschen, GCSI, GCIE, CB
1941	The Most Hon. the Marquess of Willingdon, PC, GCSI, GCMG, GCIE, GBE
1941–6	Marie, Marchioness of Willingdon, CI, GBE
1946–9	Sir Shenton Thomas, GCMG, OBE
1949–52	Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Longmore, GCB, DSO
1952–5	Sir Henry Craik, GCIE, KCSI
1955–62	Sir Angus Gillan, KBE, CMG
1962–8	Sir James Robertson, KT, GCMG, GCVO, KBE
1968–71	Admiral Sir David Luce, GCB, DSO, OBE
1971–6	Marshal of the RAF Lord Elworthy, KG, GCB, CBE, DSO, LVO, DFC, AFC
1976–81	Lord Grey of Naunton, GCMG, GCVO, OBE
1981–6	Sir David Scott, GCMG
1986–9	Mr Maneck Dalal, OBE
1989–92	Sir Lawrence Byford, CBE, QPM, DL
1992–5	Mr Peter McEntee, CMG, OBE
1995–2000	Sir Geoffrey Ellerton, CMG, MBE
2000–5	Sir Colin Imray, KBE, CMG
2005–9	Mr Stanley Martin, CVO
2009–	Sir Anthony Figgis, KCVO, CMG

6. Secretaries,
Secretary-Generals and
Director-Generals

1912–42	Sir Evelyn Wrench, KCMG Secretary
1942–6	Mr Eric Rice, OBE Secretary
1946–56	Air Vice Marshal Malcolm Henderson, CB, CIE, CBE, DSO Director-General
1956–9	Mr Philip Crawshaw, CBE Secretary-General later
1959–79	Director-General
1979–91	Captain John Rumble, RN (Rtd) Director General
1991–	Mr Robert Newell, LVO Director-General

7. Vice-Presidents *as at January 2010*

Their Excellencies the Commonwealth Secretary-General and the
High Commissioners for Commonwealth countries in London

The Viscount Boyd of Merton

Dame Mary Bridges, DBE

Sir Lawrence Byford, CBE, QPM, DL

Mrs Yvonne Calver

The Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster

The Rt Hon. the Baroness Chalker of Wallasey

Mr Colin Clark

Mr Maneck Dalal, OBE

The Dean of Westminster

Mr Martyn Goff, CBE

The Lady Gore-Booth

The Lord Imbert, CVO, QPM

Sir Colin Imray, KBE, CMG

Mr Graham Lockwood

The Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales

Mr Stanley Martin, CVO

Mr Robert Matheson, CM, QC

The Countess Mountbatten of Burma, CBE, CD, JP, DL

Sir David Scott, GCMG

Sir Kenneth Scott, KCVO, CMG

Sir Donald Tebbit, GCMG

The Rt Hon. the Lord Woolf

8. Central Council *as at January 2010*

Miss Farah Amin

Mrs Marilyn Archbold* (Deputy Chairman)

Mr Graham Archer, CMG

Mrs Shirley Barr*

Mr Ralph Bauer

Mr Clive Carpenter

Sir Roger Carrick, KCMG, LVO

Mr Christie Cherian*

Nik Raof Daud

Mr Paul Dimond, CMG

Mr John Edwards, CMG*

Mrs Patricia Farrant

Sir Anthony Figgis, KCVO CMG* (Chairman)

Mr Simon Gimson

Ms Diana Gray

Mr Robert Gregor, MBE

Sir James Hodge, KCVO CMG

Mr David Jamieson

Mrs Beryl Keen

Mrs Anne de Lasta

The Rt Hon. Lord Luce, KG GCVO, DL (President)

Miss Sheila MacTaggart, LVO

Dr Edmund Marshall

Mr David Newman

Mr Ian Partridge, CBE

Mrs Doreen Regan*

Mrs Judith Steiner*

Mr Geoffrey Thompson, OBE

Mrs Pamela Voice

Mr Simon Ward, FCA* (Hon. Treasurer)

* Executive Committee

9. Senior Staff as at January 2010

Mr Robert Newell LVO	Director-General
Mrs Fatima Vaniček	Asst to the Director-General/ Membership Secretary
Mr Roderick Lakin, MBE	Director of ARTS
Miss Margaret Adrian-Vallance	Director of Public Relations and Development
Mr Rachid Mellah	Rooms Division Manager
Mr Shakil Tayub	Director of Finance and Administration
Mr Paul Streat	Maintenance Manager
Mr Michael McCall	Head Hall Porter and Health and Safety Officer
Mrs Deisy Garcia	Head Housekeeper
Mr Abdul Amrani	Purchasing Officer
Mr Alan Chalmers	House Manager, ROSL Edinburgh
Mr James Wilkie	Scottish Development Officer, ROSL Edinburgh
Mr David Anderson	Chef de Cuisine, ROSL Edinburgh
Ms Lena Rose	Head Receptionist, ROSL Edinburgh
Mr David Laurance	Catering Director, Convex Leisure
Mr Tony Hanmer	Conference and Banqueting Manager, Convex Leisure
Mr Losine Khezour	Chef des Cuisine, Convex Leisure

10. ROSL Branches as at January 2010

UK

BRANCH

Bath
Bournemouth
Cheltenham
Edinburgh
Exeter
Glasgow
West Cornwall
West Sussex

CHAIRMEN

Mrs June Jessop
Mr Christopher Bladen
Mr John Miller, MBE
Mr Robert Gregor, MBE
Mr Ewan MacLeod
Mr William Agnew
Mrs Margaret Knighton
Mrs Marilyn Archbold

Overseas

AUSTRALLIAN BRANCH

New South Wales
Queensland
South Australia
Tasmania
Victoria
Western Australia

Mrs Lily Murray (Secretary)
Mrs Sharon Morgan (Chairman)
Mrs Marjorie Scriven (President)
Mr Robert Dick (Chairman)
Mr Jason Ronald, OAM (President
and ROSL Chairman Australia)
Mr Jeffery Turner, MBE (Chairman)

CANADIAN CHAPTERS

Alberta
British Columbia
Nova Scotia
Ontario

PRESIDENTS

Mrs Cynthia Cordery
Mrs Pamela Ducommun
Mrs Barbara Hughes QC
Ms Ishrani Jaikaran

EGYPT BRANCH

Prof Abdallah Schleifer

HONG KONG BRANCH

Mr Paul Surtees (President)

NEW ZEALAND

Headquarters

Mrs Lyn Milne (ROSL Director
New Zealand)

PRESIDENTS

Auckland

Mrs Val Sullivan

Christchurch

Mrs Judith Leckie

Manawatu

Mrs Helen Thompson (Patron)

Oamaru

Mr Dennis Norman

South Canterbury

Mr Len Home, QSM

Southland

Mrs Eunice Sutton

SAUDI ARABIA BRANCH

Mr John Freel OBE (Chairman)

SWITZERLAND BRANCH

Mrs Jo Brown MBE (Chairman)

THAILAND BRANCH

Mr James Napier (Chairman)

11. Honorary Corresponding Secretaries *as at January 2010*

There are HCSs in the following countries, states, counties and towns.

UK

England

Essex, Manchester, Norfolk, Oxford

Scotland

Aberdeen, Blairgowrie, Inverness, Moffat, Perth

Ireland

Belfast, County Down

Wales

Haverford West

Overseas

Arabian Gulf

Doha, Qatar

Australia

Adelaide, Kincumber, New South Wales, Perth,
Queensland, Tasmania, Victoria, Viewmont

Bahrain

Adliya, Manama

Belgium

Ways-la-Hutte

Bermuda

Paget, Warwick

Botswana

Gaborone

Brazil

Rio de Janeiro

Canada

Alberta, British Columbia, Newfoundland, Nova
Scotia, Ontario

China

Beijing

Colombia

Bogotá

Cyprus

Nicosia

Egypt

Cairo

France

Loire Valley

Germany

Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Köln/Düsseldorf,
Malente-Benz

Ghana	Sekondi
Gibraltar	
Hong Kong	
Iceland	Reykjavik
India	Kolkata, Chennai, Mumbai, New Delhi, Pune
Italy	Florence, Milan
Kenya	Malindi, Nairobi
Malta	Sliema, Valletta
Mauritius	Quatre Bournes
Nigeria	Kaduna
New Zealand	Hamilton, Auckland
Portugal	Lisbon
Saudi Arabia	Riyadh
South Africa	Cape Town, Knysna, Pietermaritzburg
Spain	Malaga
Sweden	Gothenburg
Switzerland	
Tanzania	Dar es Salaam
Thailand	Bangkok
USA	Atlanta, Connecticut, Florida, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Seattle

12. Reciprocal Clubs *as at January 2010*

Australia

Brisbane Polo Club, Brisbane, Queensland
 Karrakatta Club Inc., Perth
 New South Wales Masonic Club, Sydney, New South Wales
 North Queensland Club, Townsville, Queensland
 RACV City Club, Melbourne, Victoria
 RACV Cobram Resort, Cobram, Victoria
 RACV Healesville Resort, Healesville, Victoria
 RACV Inverloch Resort, Victoria
 Royal Automobile Club of Australia, Sydney, New South Wales
 Tattersall's Club, Brisbane, Queensland
 University House, Canberra

Brunei

Royal Brunei Yacht Club, Brunei Darussalam

Canada

Edmonton Petroleum Club and Golf and Country Club, Edmonton, Alberta
 Glencoe Club, Calgary, Alberta
 Halifax Club, Halifax, Nova Scotia
 Mount Stephen Club, Montreal, Quebec
 Ranchmen's Club, Calgary, Alberta
 Royal Canadian Military Institute, Toronto, Ontario
 Royal Glenora Club, Edmonton, Alberta
 Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron, Halifax, Nova Scotia
 Royal Victoria Yacht Club, Victoria, British Columbia
 Terminal City Club, Vancouver, British Columbia
 University Club of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario

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Canary Islands

British Club, Las Palmas

Channel Islands

Victoria Club, St Helier, Jersey

England

City University Club, London

Gibraltar

Royal Gibraltar Yacht Club, Gibraltar

Hong Kong

Hong Kong Cricket Club, Hong Kong

India

Bangalore Club, Bengaluru

Bengal Club Ltd, Kolkata

Bombay Gymkhana Club Ltd, Mumbai

Delhi Gymkhana Club, New Delhi

High Range Club, Kerala

India Habitat Centre, New Delhi

India International Centre, New Delhi

Jaisal Club, Rajasthan

Kodaikanal Golf Club, Tamil Nadu

Madras Gymkhana Club, Tamil Nadu

Mysore Sports Club, Mysore

Ootacamund Club, Tamil Nadu

Poona Club, Pune

Royal Bombay Yacht Club, Mumbai

Royal Calcutta Golf Club, Kolkata

Royal Calcutta Turf Club, Kolkata

Secunderabad Club, Secunderabad

Tollygunge Club Ltd, Kolkata

Willingdon Sports Club, Mumbai

Ireland

United Arts Club of Ireland, Dublin

Kenya

Mombasa Club, Mombasa

Muthaiga Club, Nairobi

Nairobi Club, Nairobi

Luxembourg

Cercle Munster, Luxembourg

Malaysia

Royal Selangor Club, Kuala Lumpur

Royal Sungei Ujong Club, Seremban

New Zealand

Auckland Club, Auckland

Canterbury Club, Christchurch

Christchurch Club, Christchurch

Dunedin Club, Dunedin

Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron, Auckland

Nigeria

Ikoyi Club 1938, Lagos

Pakistan

Punjab Club, Lahore

Sind Club, Karachi

Philippines

Manila Club, Makati City

Portugal

Oporto Cricket and Lawn Tennis Club, Porto

Royal British Club, Estoril

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Scotland

Royal Northern and University Club, Aberdeen
Western Club, Glasgow

Singapore

Singapore Cricket Club, Singapore
Tanglin Club, Singapore

South Africa

Country Club, Johannesburg (Auckland Park)
Country Club, Johannesburg (Woodmead Golf Course)
Durban Country Club, Durban
Kelvin Grove Club, Newlands

Spain

British Society, Malaga

Sri Lanka

Hill Club, Nuwara Eliya

USA

Arlington Club, Portland, Oregon
Ashford Club, Atlanta, Georgia
Cornell Club, New York
Kansas City Club, Kansas City, Missouri
Poinsett Club, Greenville, South Carolina
Standard Club, Chicago, Illinois
Union League Club of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois
Union League Club of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
University Club San Francisco, San Francisco, California

Appendices

13. Annual Music Competition Prizewinners 1952–2009

Prior to 1952, the competition was known as 'The Festival of Commonwealth Youth' and was non-competitive. From 1965 until 1979, two equal first prizes were awarded to the best competitor from overseas and the best competitor from the United Kingdom.

1952	Robert Cooper	violin	Australia
1953	Geoffrey Parsons	piano	Australia
1954	Oswald Russell	piano	Jamaica
1955	Rohan de Saram	cello	Ceylon
1957	Winifred Durie	viola	Australia
1958	Audrey Cooper	piano	Jamaica
1959	Patsy Toh	piano	Hong Kong
1960	John Georgiadis	violin	UK
	Yonty Soloman	piano	South Africa
1961	Jacqueline du Pré	cello	UK
	Marjorie Biggar	contralto	Canada
1962	Ruth Little	contralto	UK
	Roy Malan	violin	South Africa
1963	John Lill	piano	UK
	Ross Pople	cello	New Zealand
1964	Sharon Mckinley	cello	Canada
	Gwennyth Annear	soprano	Australia

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From 1965 until 1979, two equal first prizes were awarded to the best competitor from overseas and the best competitor from the United Kingdom.

1965	Georgetta Psaros	soprano	Australia
	Leslie Child	violin	UK
1966	Enloc Wu	piano	Hong Kong
	Hannah Francis	harp	UK
1967	David Bollard	piano	New Zealand
	Oriel Sutherland	contralto	UK
1968	Dennis Lee	piano	Malaysia
	Frank Wibaut	piano	UK
1969	Patrick Payne	contralto	New Zealand
	Penny Scott	piano	UK
1970	Geoffrey Tozer	piano	Australia
	Andrew Haigh	piano	UK
1971	Andrea Kalanj	piano	Canada
	Jan Latham Koenig	piano	UK
1972	Tessa Uys	piano	South Africa
	Marius May	cello	UK
1973	Richard Creager	tenor	New Zealand
	Anthony Smith	baritone	UK
1974	Francis Reneau	piano	Belize
	Colin Carr	cello	UK
1975	Keith Lewis	tenor	New Zealand
	Jonathan Dunsby	piano	UK
	Stewart Harling	baritone	UK
1976	Melvyn Tan	harpsichord	Singapore
	Lorraine McAslan	violin	UK
1977	Ralph de Souza	violin	India
	Aydin Onac	piano	UK
1978	Mark Walton	clarinet	New Zealand
	Suzie Meszaros	viola	UK
1979	Surendran Reddy	piano	South Africa
	Barry Douglas	piano	UK
	Jonathan Rees	violin	UK

Appendices

From 1980 onwards, the first prize has been awarded to the best musicians from any country chosen from the winners of the four main solo categories (* indicates First Prize winners).

1980	Ian Graukroger	piano	Zimbabwe
	John Harle	saxophone	UK
	Peter Manning*	violin	UK
	William Shimmell	baritone	UK
1981	Wissam Boustany	flute	UK
	Jagdish Mistry	violin	India
	Jean Rigby*	mezzo-soprano	UK
	Simon Shewring	piano	UK
1982	Geoffrey Dolton	baritone	UK
	Helen Duffy	flute	UK
	Piers Lane*	piano	Australia
	Carla Maria Rodrigues	viola	UK
1983	Douglas Boyd	oboe	UK
	Susan Bullock	soprano	UK
	Christopher Marwood	cello	UK
	Jonathan Plowright*	piano	UK
1984	Lorna Anderson	soprano	UK
	Nicholas Cox*	clarinet	UK
	Gina McCormack	violin	South Africa
	Adrian Sims	piano	UK
1985	Philip Lloyd-Evans	baritone	UK
	Ieuan Jones*	harp	UK
	Anthony Marwood	violin	UK
	Jean Owen*	bassoon	UK
	Victor Sangiorgio	piano	Australia
1986	Aline Brewer	harp	UK
	Susan Chilcott*	soprano	UK
	Colin Stone	piano	UK
1987	Manuel Bagorro	piano	Zimbabwe
	Philip Levy	violin	UK
	Lucy Wakeford	harp	UK
	Janice Watson*	soprano	UK
	Michael Whight	clarinet	UK
	Read Gainsford	piano	New Zealand

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1988	David Mattinson*	bass baritone	UK
	Gerard McChrystal	saxophone	UK
	Aaron Stelow	violin	UK
	Cheryl Barker	soprano	Australia
1989	Jane Evans	cor anglais	UK
	Nicola Hall*	guitar	UK
	Alvin Moisey	piano	UK
1990	William Dazeley	baritone	UK
	Rachel Gough*	bassoon	UK
	Nicholas Unwin	piano	UK
	Abigail Young	violin	UK
1991	James Brawn	piano	UK
	Janice Graham	violin	UK
	Alistair Mackie	trumpet	UK
	Adele Paxton*	soprano	UK
1992	Liam Abramson	cello	UK
	Paul Lewis	piano	UK
	Robert Plane*	clarinet	UK
	Simone Sauphanor	soprano	Trinidad & Tobago
	Neil Varley	freebass accordion	UK
1993	Sara Fulgoni	mezzo-soprano	UK
	Andrew Haveron	violin	UK
	Eryl Lloyd Williams	piano	UK
	David Preston*	freebass accordion	UK
1994	Daniel Bates*	oboe	UK
	Catryn Wyn Davies	mezzo-soprano	UK
	Priya Mitchell	violin	UK
	Roger Owens	piano	UK
1995	Annelies Chapman	soprano	New Zealand
	Sarah Markham	saxophone	UK
	Laura Samuel	violin	UK
	Ashley Wass*	piano	UK
1996	Jeanette Ager*	mezzo-soprano	UK
	Nicholas Cartledge*	flute	UK
	Viv McLean	piano	UK
	Alice Neary	cello	UK
1997	David Farmer	freebass accordion	UK
	Nicola Howard	soprano	UK
	Stuart King	clarinet	UK
	Liwei Qin*	cello	Australia

Appendices

1998	Daniel Bell	violin	UK
	Gillian Keith	soprano	UK
	Fraser Tannock	trumpet	UK
	Alexander Taylor*	piano	UK
1999	Thomas Carroll	cello	UK
	Owen Dennis	oboe	UK
	Timothy Mirfin*	bass	UK
	David Quigley	piano	UK
2000	Sarah Field	saxophone	UK
	Jonathan Lemalu*	bass-baritone	New Zealand
	Benjamin Nabarro	violin	UK
	Tom Poster	piano	UK
2001	Juliette Bausor*	flute	UK
	Richard Burkhard	baritone	UK
	Danny Driver	piano	UK
	Marie Macleod	cello	UK
2002	Lucy Crowe*	soprano	UK
	Gemma Rosefield	cello	UK
	Simon Tedeschi	piano	Australia
	Eleanor Turner	harp	UK
	Sara Temple	clarinet	UK
2003	Martin Cousin*	piano	UK
	Katherine Wood	cello	UK
	Helen Vollam	trombone	UK
	Wendy-Dawn Thompson	mezzo-soprano	New Zealand
2004	Louisa Breen	piano	Australia
	Amy Dickson*	saxophone	Australia
	Anna Leese	soprano	New Zealand
	Ruth Palmer	violin	UK
2005	Nicola Eimer	piano	UK
	Timothy Orpen*	clarinet	UK
	Tamsin Waley-Cohen	violin	UK
	Elizabeth Watts	soprano	UK
2006	Mateusz Borowiak	piano	UK
	Jacques Imbrailo	baritone	South Africa
	John Myerscough*	cello	UK
	Leslie Neish	tuba	UK
2007	Daniel de Borah	piano	UK
	Jill Kemp	recorder	UK
	Pei-Sian Ng*	cello	Australia
	George von Bergen	tenor	UK

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2008	Simon Ierace	keyboard
	Laura Lucas*	flute
	Victoria Simonsen	cello
	Adrian Ward	tenor
2009	Sarah Beatty	clarinet
	Yelian He	cello
	Madeleine Pierard	soprano
	Ben Schoeman*	piano

Accompanists Prize

Since 1981 the Accompanists Prize has been of equal value and status as the awards for solo performers.

1981	John Henry	UK
1982	Pamela Liddard	UK
1983	Linda Ang	Singapore
1984	Vanessa Latache	UK
	Malcolm Martineau	UK
1985	Steven Naylor	UK
1986	Scott Mitchell	UK
1987	Rachel Franklin	UK
1988	Clare Toomer	UK
1989	Rebecca Holt	UK
1990	Elizabeth Upchurch	UK
1991	Alan Darling	UK
1992	Sophia Rahmann	UK
1993	Helen Leek	UK
1994	Julian Milford	UK
1995	Alison Proctor	UK
1996	Gretel Dowdeswell	UK
1997	Clemens Leske	Australia

1998	Stephen de Pledge	New Zealand
1999	Simon Lepper	UK
2000	Philip Moore	UK
2001	not awarded	UK
2002	Catherine Milledge	UK
2003	Huw Watkins	UK
2004	Not awarded	UK
2005	Gary Matthewman	UK
2006	Alasdair Beatson	UK
2007	Daniel Swain	UK
2008	Joseph Middleton	UK
2009	Simon Lane	UK

Ensemble Prize

Since 1980, the Ensemble Prize has been of equal status as the Gold Medal and first prize for solo performance. Since 2006 two ensemble prizes have been awarded: one for strings/keyboard and the other for wind/percussion/mixed.

1980	Trio Canello	1989	Apollo Saxophone Quartet
1981	Mladi Ensemble	1990	Techinsky Quartet
1982	Guildhall String Ensemble	1991	Kreutzer Quartet
1983	Marwood String Trio	1992	Bone Idols
1984	Auriol Quartet	1993	not awarded
1985	John & Katherine Lenehan Piano Duo	1994	Nemo Brass Quartet
	Lisney Piano Trio	1995	Leopold String Trio
		1996	Micallef/Inanga Piano Duo
1986	Mistry Quartet	1997	BackBeat
1987	No Strings Attached	1998	Newbold Piano Quartet
1988	Barbican Piano Trio		

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1999	Moore/Crawford Phillips Piano Duo	2005	Sacconi Quartet
		2006	Ensemble na Mara Lancier Brass
2000	Tavec Quartet		
2001	Bones Apart	2007	Cappa Quartet Zephyrus
2002	Eimer Piano Trio		
2003	Bronte Quartet	2008	Brodowski Quartet Camarilla Ensemble
2004	Linus Wind Quintet Brass10	2009	Solstice Quartet St James' Quintet

In addition to the main awards listed above, the ROSL has given support and encouragement to hundreds of other gifted musicians from all over the Commonwealth through many other prizes and scholarships awarded under the umbrella of the ROSL Annual Music Competition and ROSL ARTS. A small selection of these winners is given below:

1981	Jagdish Mistry	violin	India
1986	Ian Munro	piano	Australia
	Charles Uzor	oboe	Nigeria
1987	Param Vir	composer	India
1989	Charles Uzor	oboe	Nigeria
1990	Ning Kam	violin	Singapore
1991	Ian Bostridge	tenor	UK
1992	Nathan Berg	baritone	Canada
	Carmine Lauri	violin	Malta
1993	Philip Dukes	viola	UK
	Clio Gould	violin	UK
1995	Stephen de Pledge	piano	New Zealand
	Gretchen Dunsmore	clarinet	New Zealand
	Christopher Maltman	baritone	UK
	Ashan Pillai	viola	Sri Lanka
1996	Christopher Duigan	piano	South Africa
	Glen Inanga	piano	Nigeria

Appendices

1997	Karina Gauvin	soprano	Canada
	Clemens Leske	piano	Australia
	Nicholas Vines	composer	Australia
1998	Grant Doyle	baritone	Australia
	Sally Anne Russell	mezzo-soprano	Australia
1999	Catrin Finch	harp	UK
2000	Catherine Carby	mezzo-soprano	Australia
	Natalia Lomicko	violin	New Zealand
2001	Andrew Aarons	piano	Canada
	Ellen Deverall	clarinet	New Zealand
	Jared Holt	baritone	New Zealand
	Joyce Moholoagae	soprano	South Africa
	Gillian Ramm	soprano	Australia
	Bobby Chen	piano	Malaysia
2002	William Berger	baritone	South Africa
2003	Elizabeth Cooney	violin	Ireland
	Mei Yi Foo	piano	Malaysia
	Bobby Chen	piano	Malaysia
2005	James Baillieu	piano	South Africa
	Kishani Jayasinghe	soprano	Sri Lanka
2006	Brian O'Kane	cello	Ireland
	Nicholas Vines	composer	Australia
	Antipodes String Quartet	piano	New Zealand
	Michael Ierace	violin	Australia
	Victoria Mavromoustaki	violin	Cyprus
2007	Katie Stillman	piano	Canada
	Trio Scintillatum		New Zealand
	Jayson Gillham	piano	Australia
2008	Sarah Jane Brandon	soprano	South Africa

14. ROSL Annual Exhibition Prizewinners 1984-98 and Scholarship Winners 1999-2009

The ROSL Annual Exhibition, established in 1984, has provided a showcase for young artists from the UK, Commonwealth and former Commonwealth countries including Australia, The Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Canada, Cyprus, Ghana, Grenada, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Jamaica, Kenya, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda and the UK (* indicates First Prize winners).

1984

Christopher Cook	UK	Trevor Landell	UK
Julie Held*	UK	Shanti Panchal	India
Miles Hunter	Canada	Elizabeth Willis	UK
Maggie James	UK		

1985

Michael Croft	UK	William Macilraith	UK
Valerie Dunant	UK	Neil Macpherson*	UK
Amanda Faulkner	UK	Gerard Morris	UK
Yvonne Forward	UK	Emma McClure	UK
Wendy Hodge	Canada		

1986

Iona Campbell-Gray	UK	Julie Held	UK
Philip Davies*	UK	Emma McClure	UK
Jason Gibilaro	UK	John Skinner	UK

1987

Sonia Boyce*	UK	Judy Inglis	UK
Nicholas Fredman	UK	Stephen Rose	UK
Alexander Guy	UK	Colin Smith*	UK
Roderick Henriques	UK	Patricia Wright	UK

1988

Patricia Gardner	UK	Sally Moore	UK
Stephen Goddard	UK	Jake Tilson*	UK
Leslie Hakim-Dowek*	UK		

1989

Stacy Billups	UK	Julian Hyam	UK
Martin Churchill	UK	Robin Mason*	UK
Rory Donaldson	UK	Tara Sabharwal	India
Paul Furneaux	UK		

1990

Martin Churchill	UK	Susan Ryland	UK
Christopher Cook	UK	Rebecca Salter	UK
Lynn Dennison	UK	Tai-Shan Schierenberg*	UK
Nicholas Romeril	UK		

1991

Susan Adams	UK	Mark Burrell	UK
Lesley Banks	UK	Moyra Derby	UK
Tracy Beckerley	UK	Anne Desmet	UK
Simon Brewster	UK	Christopher Nurse*	UK

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1992

Murshida Arzu Alpana	Bangladesh	Gayle Nelson	UK
Andrew Bick	UK	Melissa Scott-Miller	UK
Shirley Chubb	UK	Judith Weil	UK
Lee Wing Keung	Hong Kong	Kim Williams*	UK
Atta Kwami	Ghana		

1993

Ben Cook	UK	Joseph Mathew	India
Elysia Dywan	Canada	Michael John Shaw	UK
Joe Fan*	UK	Jane Walker	UK
Nigel Jensen	UK	Charles Williams	UK
Mark Masters	Canada	Lisa Wright	UK

1994

Lucy Bentley	UK	Patrick Mazola	Kenya
Ma Choi	Hong Kong	Arabella Ross	UK
Jonathan Cole	UK	Paul Ryan	UK
Shelly Goldsmith	UK	Stephanie Sampson	UK
Mohd Azhar		Balakrishnan	
Abd Manan*	Malaysia	Sreegopan	India

1995

Pindaro Cabrera	Canada	Sophie Herxheimer	UK
Martin Constable	UK	Caroline List*	UK
Michael Cubey	New Zealand	Sally Meyer	UK
		Stuart Robertson	UK
Joan Dymianiwi	Canada	Charles Williams	UK

1996

Marika Borlase	Australia	Joanne Hodgen	UK
Alan Brooks*	UK	Bharti Kher	UK
Jenny Dolezel	New Zealand	Sista Pratesi	UK
		Aimie Reeves	UK
Sarah Durcan	Ireland	Amrit Singh	UK

Appendices

1997

Guy Buckles	UK	Nigel Mullins*	South Africa
Helen Flockhart	UK	Pradeep Sukumaran	India
Christopher		Renny Tait	UK
Gilvan-Cartwright	UK	Robert White	UK
Vincent Graves-Aggrey	Ghana	Charles Williams	UK

1998

Isobel Brigham	UK	Grace O'Connor	Ireland
Andrew Cranston*	UK	Joe Painter	UK
John Dargan	UK	Philip Parham	UK
Derek McGuire	UK	MTPV Satyanarayana	India
Todd Narbey	New Zealand		

Visual Arts Travel Scholarships:

Since 1999 ROSL ARTS has offered five Visual Arts Travel Scholarships annually. These scholarships enable selected artists to make a study visit to or undertake a residency in a Commonwealth country other than their country of origin. In the year following their scholarship study visit or residency the scholars are brought together for a group exhibition in London.

1999	Pindaro Cabrera	Canada
	Todd Narbey	Canada
	Ming Wong	Singapore
2000	Matthew Burrows	UK
	Fiona Couldridge	South Africa
	Mzukezi Dyaloyi	South Africa
	Nahid Niazi	Bangladesh
	Savandhary Vongpoothorn	Australia
2001	Joseph Cartoon	Kenya
	Bella Easton	UK
	Belinda Harrow	Canada/New Zealand
	John Lai	Malaysia
	Heather Straka	New Zealand

The Royal Over-Seas League

2002	Sudath Abeysekera	Sri Lanka
	Kwadwo Ani	Ghana
	Deborah Bowness	UK
	Christine Morrow	Australia
	Ebony Patterson	Jamaica
2003	Matt Couper	New Zealand
	Jason Hicks	New Zealand
	Kwok Cheun Lee	Hong Kong
	J. Henry Mujunga	Uganda
	Ruth Uglov	UK
2004	Jemima Burrill	UK
	Sohan Ariel Hayes	Australia
	Ally Nyomwa	Tanzania
	Shanti Persaud	Jamaica
	Ratheesh Thankamma	India
2005	Daisy Jackson	New Zealand
	Ali Kazim	Pakistan
	Ryan Mosley	UK
	Justin Partyka	UK
	Nicholas Twist	New Zealand
2006	Aimee Lax	UK
	Joseph Matthew	India
	Paul Ryan	UK
	Allyson Reynolds	Australia
	Francois Simard	Canada
2007	Jacob Carter	UK
	Joanna Langford	New Zealand
	Christina Papakyriakou	Cyprus
	Lauren Porter	UK
	Jeremy Sharma	Singapore
2008	Melanie Fitzmaurice	Australia
	Liliane Nabulime	Uganda
	Kazi Sahid	Bangladesh
	Michele Fletcher	Canada
		Nigeria
2009	Anikpe Ebene	Malaysia
	Chan Kok Hooi	Trinidad and Tobago
	Keegan Simon	Australia
	Todd Stratton	

Notes

Introduction

- 1 Robert Browning, 'Andrea del Sarto', 1855.

I – Evelyn Wrench and the Founding of the Royal Over-Seas League

- 1 The *Boy's Own Paper* was a collection of stories and articles aimed at young and teenage boys. It was published by various publishers including the Religious Tract Society, Lutterworth Press, Purnell and Sons and BPC Publishing between the years 1879 and 1967. For more information see the Wikipedia entry at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boy%27s_Own.
- 2 Richard Jebb, *Colonial Nationalism* (London: Edward Arnold, 1905); Norman Angell, *The Great Illusion* (New York and London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1913), developed from his 1909 pamphlet *Europe's Optical Illusion*.
- 3 In the 1840s Henry Mayhew observed, documented and described the state of working people in London for a series of articles in the *Morning Chronicle* newspaper. These were later compiled into *London Labour and the London Poor*, with three volumes published in 1851 and a further book in the series was published in 1861. More recent editions were published by Dover Publications in 1968 (Vols 1–3) and 1983 (Vol. 4).
- 4 In John Evelyn Wrench, *Uphill* (London: Ivor Nicholson and Watson, 1934), pp.158–62.
- 5 Ibid., p.242.
- 6 See n.2.
- 7 The award Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George.
- 8 From a letter of sympathy after the death of Sir Evelyn Wrench to the then Director General, Philip Crawshaw.

- 9 Quotation in the Courtyard of Dartmouth House, the English-Speaking Union Headquarters.

II – Development of the League

- 1 John Evelyn Wrench, *Immortal Years* (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1945).
- 2 The award of Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George.
- 3 Sir Jocelyn Lucas, from pamphlet 'The Allies Welcome Committee 1940–1950', ROSL archives, London.

IV – Communications

- 1 From 'The Story of the Over-Seas League', an in-house article written '28 years after its inception' by Sir Evelyn Wrench.
- 2 From 'Over-Seas League in the Year of the Coronation of His Majesty King George VI' (in-house publication, 1937).
- 3 Many thanks to the family of Philip Noakes who hold these records and have given permission for use of the quotations from his diaries and private letters in this book.

V – The Branches, Honorary Corresponding Secretaries and Reciprocal Clubs

- 1 Over Seas League Annual Report, 1926.

VI – Over-Seas House, London and Edinburgh, Architecture and History

- 1 From an article by Sir Evelyn Wrench in 1937 to mark the completion of the Westminster Wing.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 *The Dunciad* by Alexander Pope was first published anonymously in 1728.
- 4 *The Daily Advertiser*, April 1731.
- 5 From 'Over-Seas House, London, Past and Present', (London: ROSL), p.5, an in-house booklet giving a history of the ROSL and Over-Seas House.

- 6 For all direct quotations and terms ascribed to Lady Diana Cooper in this section see Chapter 1 of Diana Cooper, *The Rainbow Comes and Goes* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1958).

VIII – The League Today

- 1 Letter to the author, 28 July 2008.
- 2 Sir Evelyn Wrench, quoted in Michael Wynne-Parker, *Bridge Over Troubled Water* (Cambridge: Granta Editions, 1996), p.103.
- 3 From ESU promotional brochure.
- 4 In conversation with PR Director Margaret Adnan-Vallence in Namibia, as reported to the author.
- 5 In conversation with PR Director Margaret Adnan-Vallence in Namibia, cited in ROSL Annual Report 2007.



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