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JSJOURNAL

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Bigger market share

A DRAMATIC INCREASE in Sainsbury's share of the basic groceries market, as published by Audits Great Britain (AGB) this month, indicates the effectiveness of the Discount '78 operation.

ness of the Discount '78 operation.

The figures show JS's market share rose by more than a fifth, from 8.6 per cent in December to 10.5 per cent in the four weeks up to February 4. This coincided with the Discount '78 campaign which started on January 10.

While the JS market share rose many other stores have registered marginal declines, according to AGB. The Co-op market share of groceries has dropped from 18.9 to 17.9 per cent.

National newspapers have been quick to applaud JS following the publication of the figures. However marketing director Peter Davis points out that the survey covers only four weeks and measures only basic grocery items. Although this is an intensely competitive part of the trade, it does not measure the whole trade.

Commenting on the AGB results he added: 'This confirms the evidence of our own figures and demonstrates that Discount' 78 has put us in a stronger position than ever before in the market.'

Baaa-gain prices

NEW ZEALAND LAMB was given a special promotion in JS stores this month. For two weeks starting March 6, NZ lamb prices were down by as much as 11p per pound.

Although supplies of lamb from 'down under' were late reaching Britain this year, JS still managed to keep to schedule with its annual lamb promotion. Said fresh meat trading manager Ron Topp: 'Sainsbury's New Zealand lamb is a good product and a great buy.'

SavaCentre means happy motoring

MOTORING FORTNIGHT had the customers rolling up at SavaCentre, Washington for bargain prices in petrol and car care products when the campaign started on February 27.

Other garages were left at a standstill when SavaCentre reduced its petrol to the runaway price of 69p. Said petrol station supervisor Sydney Cooper: 'The average

price of petrol in the area was around 74p but when we reduced ours everyone else had to do the same, though no garage was quite as cheap as us.'

'You could say we struck a new level for cheaper motoring. Customers came in their droves, and most had SavaCentre goods in the back of their cars so it's had a great effect on trade.'

JS brews first cheaper cuppa

BRANDED TEA PRICES were immediately reduced by JS on March 6, following the announcement by the blen-

ders the week before that their prices were coming down.

The quick action by Sainsbury's brought some favourable press coverage and many stores reported a noticeable increase in trade around the tea counter. Brands now cost an average of 2p per quarter pound less.

JS own-label tea was reduced on January 9, eight weeks before the rest of the trade.

Bretton trolley-back

THE FIRST SUPERMARKET in the UK to introduce a trolley deposit scheme is Sainsbury's Bretton superstore. The high cost of collection and maintenance, estimated to be running at around £12,000 each year, and the danger to customers from vandalised trolleys all put pressure on the store to find a solution to this perennial problem.

The scheme was launched on March 7, and four full-time staff have been employed to operate it. Any customer who intends to take a trolley out of the store is asked at the checkout to pay a deposit of £1. In return they receive a special token which must be shown as they leave the store. On returning the trolley to the store the token may be exchanged for the original deposit.

The extra staff were taken on to check tokens at the exits and to man the 'trolley return kiosk'.

The scheme attracted a lot of media coverage, with reports appearing in the



Manager Bob Simpson with one of the new trolley deposit tokens.

national press and regional TV. Initial customer response was good, and deputy manager Brian Lucas was 'very satisfied' with the first day's operation. Charlie MacKenzie, checking tokens on the door said: 'On the whole people are reacting very well. We've only had the odd one or two who've got aeriated.'



The £1 deposit is refunded in exchange for a token and trolley by Nina Ormond working in the refund kiosk.

Building difficulties delayed the opening of JS's new Uxbridge store for over a year—now it's open and according to customers it was...

Well worth waiting for

AN EXTRA YEAR was not too long for the people of Uxbridge to wait for their new JS store. Even freezing fog didn't deter more than 200 people from queuing halfway round the store on opening

morning, February 21.

The store was due to open over a year ago but difficulties with the building contractors, and later the lift engineers' strike, meant eager customers had to wait. But the delays only served to whet their appetite. By mid-morning the shop was seething with customers and because queues at the tills were growing faster than cashiers could take the money, staff from the area office above the store were brought down to provide reinforcements at the checkouts.

Manager Charles Hart, who has been with JS for 17 years, expects trade to continue booming. 'Discount '78 and the JS reputation has attracted a tremendous amount of business to all JS stores. I think we'll do particularly well here since Uxbridge is a busy town with a high residential population and a reasonable amount of money around.

But even though the first day's takings were well above target Charles does not intend to rest on his laurels. 'There's some heavy competition in Uxbridge but I enjoy a good fight and I'm fortunate in having a great team to back me up.'

The store's 1850 square metres (19,900 square feet) contain all the usual JS departments and include health and beauty, hardware, wines and spirits, a micro range of textiles, and an integrated freezer centre. The multi-storey car park at the back, although not owned by Sainsbury's, is joined to the store by lifts, and provides inexpensive parking for hundreds of cars.

First in the queue was Mrs Wendy Munn, a young Uxbridge housewife. 'I dreamed Tony Curtis was going to open the doors today' she said 'but I'm not really disappointed. I'm just pleased to see such a good shop open after all this time.'

Right behind her was Mary Noble who



Patient customers queue at the checkouts but reinforcements soon arrived.



Manager Charles Hart helps an early customer with her purchases.

made a bee-line for the biscuit counter. 'I lived in Hampstead for 53 years and always shopped at Sainsbury's. I love your custard creams but since we moved to Uxbridge I haven't been able to get hold of any. No other custard creams will do, they've got to be Sainsbury's.'

As the customers crowded in AGM

Ken Wood looked on with satisfaction. With his office right over the new store he will be in an excellent position to keep a close eye on its development, and he has every reason to feel that will be in the right direction. 'I just don't think we can go wrong here in Uxbridge' he said. 'JS is bound to be a success.'



Crowning glory . . .

THE SEARCH for Miss JS 1978 ended on February 25, when 18-year-old Julie Curtin, a student worker at Walsall branch, was voted the winner of this year's competition finals. Lesley Gosden, a secretary at Blackfriars, was second, and Julie Harber, a student worker at Central Croyden branch, was voted third.

For the past five years the Miss JS Finals have been the centre-piece of the SSA's annual dinner and dance, held at the West Centre Hotel, London. This year over 800 members of staff, their families and friends sat down to an excellent four-course meal and later danced until one in the morning. The music was provided by a suitably top-volume group and a top-notch band.

However, the main attraction of the evening was undoubtedly the Miss JS Finals. The panel of judges consisted of Miss UK 1977 Madeleine Stringer, Miss New Zealand 1977 Michele Hyde, Surrey and England cricketer John Edrich and Stuart Hall, TV producer of many top shows, including Opportunity Knocks. In the chair was director Joe Barnes.

'I knew Julie would win' said manager of Walsall branch Peter Purslow. 'She's a wonderful girl. She's got real personality and it's not put on, it's all the time.' Julie's boyfriend wasn't so confident. 'He thought I would come second' said Julie, who confessed to being 'shocked and stunned' when she heard herself named 'Miss JS 1978'

Holiday in Sardinia

A number of Julie's supporters almost didn't make it. On the way from Walsall to London their car burst a tyre on the motorway. They arrived just in time to see Julie receiving the congratulations of director David Sainsbury, who made the presentations to the winners and the runners-up.

All nine finalists were given an elegant wristwatch as a memento of the evening. The top three also received a cheque—£100, £50 and £25 respectively. Julie has no immediate plans for her £100. 'I'm not going to spend it. I'm going to invest it—not in JS shares though, the last time I looked they were down!'

At midnight it was raffle time and the chance to take home a music centre, a dinner wagon, a Teasmade, or a Honey Monster. The star prize, a £500 holiday for two in Sardinia, went to Oxted branch, who will hold another draw to decide the lucky winner.

A singsong rounded off the evening, ending with a rousing 'You'll never walk alone'. The verdict of everyone present—the SSA's smash hit of the year.

Cricketer John Edrich (left) and TV producer Stuart Hall join the ladies. On the far right Miss UK 1977 Madeleine Stringer.



Top: A management perk for Julie's boss, manager Peter Purslow. Above: David Sainsbury says it with flowers to Lesley Gosden. Also in the picture SSA organisers Gillian Stockwell and Len Starling.

Wine, winners, celebrities and



FIRE!

THE SENTINEL PROGRAMME, the branch audio-visual training system, is to get a new addition this month. 'In case of fire' is a new programme of tapes and slides which will be used in branches to inform staff of fire procedures.

Frank Tarling, the company fire officer, is pleased to see the company's fire instruction standardised throughout the branches and added: 'I've always pressed for this programme and it will be a great aid to managers by relieving them of the responsibility for verbal instructions.'

Metric fruit and veg

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE wholesaling will be going metric in 1980. The government has been asked to prepare legislation to phase out imperial weights, with the objective that after June 30, 1980, all wholesale transactions in the fruit and vegetable trade should be in metric measures. Retail sales, and produce prepacked for retail sale will not be affected by this proposal.

The changeover date for retail sales is 1981, when produce, currently sold in dual marked packs, will have to be sold entirely in metric measures. Plans are already in hand within JS to cope with what promises to be a large operation.



DUTCH FOOD was given a special promotion in Sainsbury stores last month. The campaign began on February 20 and featured dairy and meat products from Holland.

The idea was first tried out last year and was such a success with the customers it was repeated.

Radio commercials, which used the music from the popular TV series Van der Valk were paid for by the Dutch Dairy Bureau, and the windmill symbol of the Dutch Cooked Meats Board, who also backed the promotion, was used at the point of sale.

Walking aids disco dancing!

CAMBERLEY BRANCH'S long standing relationship with the Hillside Hostel, a home for the mentally handicapped, was given a boost last month with the proceeds from a charity walk.

The walk from Guildford to Camberley by 26 of the staff raised over £150 for the hostel, and enabled them to donate disco equipment which it is hoped will lighten the lives of the residents.

A RISING MARKET in home-made bread products has prompted the JS grocery buyers to introduce three own-label lines. Strong white bread flour at 30p, brown bread mix, and white bread mix both 28p, went into all stores on March 6.

Home bread-making has become increasingly popular over the last few years and as Brian Horley, senior manager of grocery buying II, says: 'Every time there's a bread strike a few more housewives join the ranks of those who regularly bake their own.'

The mystique of making bread has previously discouraged housewives from having a go but JS is trying to make the operation as simple as possible.

Canadian wheat provides the strongest white flour, and the stronger the flour the

more reliable the results when baking a loaf. The JS bag of flour has a foolproof

Well bread flour



recipe printed on the back which has been tried and tested not only by the laboratories but also by amateur breadmakers around head office.

Brian is also hoping to provide a recipe leaflet at the point of sale explaining how to make doughnuts, fruit loaf, pizza and milk loaf, all using the strong flour. The own-label bread mixes are the ideal compromise for busy housewives who don't have time to start from scratch but who appreciate a good home-baked loaf. Both mixes are 20 oz and will make a two pound loaf.

As the rising need for home-baked bread continues JS buyers are confident that their new lines will capture a good slice of the new market. And that should but a little iam on the IS bread and butter.

slice of the new market. And that should put a little jam on the JS bread and butter.

The best years of your life

PREPARATION COURSES for retirement have been introduced for JS staff who are in their last year with the company. The first experimental two-day course took place on February 27 and March 6 and was reported by all who attended to be a great success.

The aim of the course is to give staff

who are about to retire as much information as possible in order to make the most of their new way of life.

On the agenda were discussions of pensions, social services, finances, investment, part-time jobs, and the JS veterans'

Speakers came from outside the com-pany as well as within, and included a director of the Midland Bank Trust Company who had some valuable suggestions for getting the full benefit from pension and savings.

Staff who attended the first course came from as far afield as Hastings and Rugby and are all due to retire in the last quarter of this year.

Bill Lewis, senior warehouseman at Eastbourne branch brought his wife



A lively talk by Maureen Wheatley of the JS pensions office gives her audience plenty to think about.

Anne along and both found the talks very useful.

'It's so much better than just reading the booklets' he said. 'They are putting it into plain language for us.'
The relaxed atmosphere was an impor-

tant part of the course for Bill Corbett, a branch engineer from head office. He

said: 'Getting everyone together who will be retiring at the same time is a marvellous idea because we're pooling our questions and finding out all the answers, as well as meeting people we've probably spoken to dozens and dozens of times on the telephone. It's been a very enjoyable

Forest Hill helps non-readers read the signs

BEING HELPFUL is something JS stores are famous for, but South London's Forest Hill branch has a new addition to their helpfulness range. By playing host to a group of mentally handicapped people, staff are helping them to learn to read, and become more independent.

because it's clearly laid out, the shelves Michael (right) reads are always in the same place, and the staff are very understanding.'
Chris has developed a special shopping his list, watched by Chris Lloyd. list with words and symbols which his pupils fill in and consult in the store as a reminder of their needs. The regular

The group is led by Chris Lloyd, a lecturer in basic education for mentally handicapped adults. 'Many of my pupils find shopping difficult. Supermarkets are often confusing and many mentally han-

dicapped people are unable to write themselves a shopping list' he explains. 'I'm trying to help them to fend for themselves more, and we like Sainsbury's

shopping expeditions are giving them confidence in using the list and in coping with the pressures of the checkouts. Pupil Michael Eggleton has already found a favourite cashier at the branch, Eileen Scott. He says: 'I always look for her when I come shopping because she's very friendly and I don't get in a muddle.

Says Eileen: 'I like to help people and anyone can get flustered if there's a queue waiting. You've just got to be patient."



Behind the cake counter, and Chris has a word of advice for Joyce Dunn.



'WE'VE NEVER HAD IT SO BAD' said Basingstoke depot's transport manager David Hibbard on the morning after the West Country's heaviest snowfalls for 30 years. Gale force winds whipped the snow into huge drifts, burying abandoned cars and blocking roads all over the region.

Despite the difficult driving conditions—described by the police as 'an Arctic hell'— the JS lorries pulled off a minor miracle by reaching all but one of the stores in the affected areas. Snow began to fall on Saturday 18 February and didn't cease until Monday, but only Taunton branch failed to get a delivery sometime on that day. Driver Brian Saunders got to within 200 yds of the store before getting stuck, and then struggled through the heavy snow in

Westgate Street (above) to warn branch staff.

Taunton's grocery manager Clayton Edwards had walked four and a half miles through drifts approaching 14 feet to be one of only six members of staff able to get to work. At one time the town was completely isolated from the rest of the country, but manager John Langrish was able to report a full day's trading on the Tuesday, despite mountains of snow making access to the rear of the store all but impossible. (Inset shows the extent of drifts not far from the branch in Taunton's town centre.)

Bridgewater branch was also suffering from blocked warehouse doors, and in the Bournemouth area traffic was very congested, with vehicles taking hours to move a few yards. On the Winchester bypass, freezing rain created an ice rink and forced the police to close the road.

Most of the JS lorries were able to penetrate into the West Country via the M4/M5 motorways, their more usual routes along the A303 being virtually impossible. At Exeter, manager David Ware reported that things were 'going well', despite the fact that staff from outlying areas were cut off for up to five days.

Later in the week, rain and warmer winds brought fears of flooding, and helicopters were dropping food to isolated villages and farms. Taunton branch played a helping hand, preparing food parcels for the rescue services and standing by ready to help in case of floods. The thaw, however, was a gentle one.

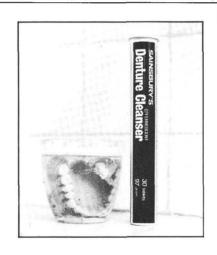
Own-label joins the top set

DENTURE WEARING JS customers will have a smile on their faces when they hear the latest news from the health and beauty department—and own-label denture cleanser.

The effervescent tablets went into JS stores on March 13 and retail at only 27p, a good deal cheaper than most branded cleansers on the market.

There's a ring of confidence in the health and beauty department which is hardly surprising since this is one of the first own-label cleansers to be produced by a grocery multiple.

'We're giving our customers something to grin about, while getting our teeth into some healthy competition' said a spokesman.



John's work is always on show

DISPLAYING OUR WARES is a vital part of successful retailing and that makes John Barber's job as a display specialist particularly rewarding. John has been helping to make JS shelves attractive to the customers for 18 months.

He works from Uxbridge area office (formerly Ealing) though he's hardly ever to be found at a desk. '99 per cent of my time is spent touring the branches helping with display alterations or dressing a new branch' he says.

Only about three new branches open each year in any area but because they are an important as well as an exciting part of a display specialist's duties the *Journal* decided to shadow John at the behind-the-scenes preparations for the recent

Just the job

For the next in our series of JS job profiles we take a trip to Uxbridge to watch a new store preparing to greet the public.

Uxbridge opening.

'If you want to be a display specialist you've got to be prepared to work long hours for weeks on end—weekends as well. It can play havoc with your social life' explains John. The long hours are usually necessary when a new store prepares to open and the display team is working round the clock to dress the shelves.

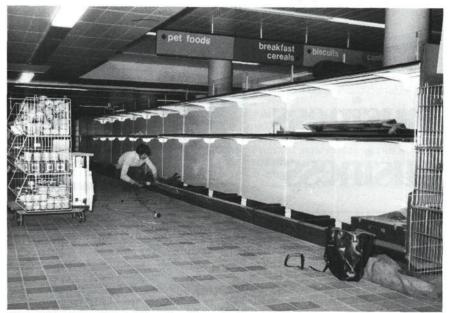
'You've also got to be able to get on with people no matter what the circumstances. For instance, you're sometimes not the most popular person at a branch when you turn up on a Saturday afternoon to re-arrange a display, so you've got to understand their point of view, and also get them to understand yours.'

John started his career with JS as a graduate trainee at High Wycombe and a year later went on to become an assistant manager at Chesham. 'The thing I most liked about my job was the display work so it was a logical step to go on to become a specialist' says John.

After 18 months with the display team Uxbridge is John's third opening. 'It's a "group one" branch so it will stock the full quota of JS groceries and traditional non-foods' John explains. New branches are discussed by the display team as the building work progresses so that basic information is known before the handover date.

'The area display manager is in charge of the team so he really starts the ball rolling as the handover date gets nearer. He meets the future management team and explains what is expected of them. He actually controls the setting up of the store for three weeks up to the opening day' says John.

As a display specialist John's first real involvement starts on the handover day when the team sets up their moveable office inside the new store. They have the relevant display and issue sheets, and they are able to start work on setting up catalogues for re-ordering to be used once



Above: Handover day. A fitter at work on the tinned fruit shelves.



Above: John sets out the display.

Right: So far, so good . . .





Above: Words of advice from area display manager, Barry Truman.

the store is trading.

On the second day the lorries arrive bringing boxes of each non-perishable product to be stocked. John and the other specialists use these advance orders to mark out each product's position on the shelves. As well as using their imag-ination to allocate the space they also have to bear in mind the relationship of space to sales. It would obviously be poor utilization of space to give a specialised brand of ginger marmalade as much room as a popular brand of strawberry jam, for example.

At Uxbridge John was responsible for placing the pre-opening orders to fill the store and provide sufficient reserve stock. 'If you look after the ordering it becomes a challenge to order just the right amount' says John. 'Too little and you'll have holes on the shelves on opening day; too much and you'll be overstocked

As the store takes shape there are always some changes to the display. A

new store is the perfect place to try out new ideas or put new display equipment through its paces. The specialists have to be flexible in their approach, even when they may have changed a display more than once. Without a search for perfection and a willingness to experiment the look of JS stores would inevitably stagnate.

Discount '78 has added a new dimension to John's job. 'We're creating a much greater impact with our dressing by making bold displays of discount lines, stacking products in vertical blocks, and using colour for effect far more than we used to.

The great thing about a new store opening is the tremendous job satisfac-tion it gives you' says John. 'You start off with four bare walls and empty gondolas and over three weeks you build it up until it's an attractive, colourful display of goods, encouraging the customers to buy. And then when they do it makes all the hard work worthwhile.



Top marks

THE HORSHAM AWARD for top marks in the Royal Institute of Public Health and Hygiene diploma exams has gone to Barry Odon, meat manager at Burton branch. Last year he attended the advanced diploma course at a local night school and passed his exams with the highest marks in the country-winning himself £10.

Barry sat the exam, which covers all aspects of public health from vitamin deficiencies to food poisoning, early last summer. He passed with honours, but was a little taken aback six months later to find he'd got the top position nation-wide. 'It's a very interesting subject' says Barry. 'I did a preliminary course a few years ago which got me interested in the subject, and when I found out about the advanced course I had no hesitation in going in for it. Mind you, I wouldn't have got anywhere without the help and encouragement of my manager and Coventry area office-they were terrific.'

Clean and fresh . . .

STAFF AT CHATHAM have reason to be proud of themselves. Following a visit to their store, Peter Hygate, secretary of the Medway Towns, St John Ambulance Training Centre, wrote to manager Colin Etheridge saying how impressed he was by the ' . . . strict attention to all details of cleanliness and hygiene' and the '... rigid control of stocks so all goods reach cus-tomers in the best possible condition'.

Mr Hygate was a manager at David Greig's before the war so his words were high praise indeed. He wrote: '... it was high standards like these that in my day distinguished JS and DG from other multiples.

The invitation to look around the store was made to Mr Hygate during a first aid course being held at the branch.

Holidays in store

EASTER HOLIDAY arrangements have been announced by the company. Stores, with the exception of Victoria, will be open on both Good Friday and Tuesday, March 28.

Shop staff who work on Good Friday will receive extra payment and will also be able to arrange with the manager to take a day off in lieu.

There will be no late night trading on Friday although normal trading times will be kept on Thursday, March 23.

Good Friday and Easter Monday are the official bank holidays in the depots and head offices, although to cope with the store deliveries depots and head office will be making overtime arrangements.

IN BUSINESS there are two kinds of risk. There are speculative risks, where the gamble is between making a profit or a loss. And there are risks, such as fire or theft, where the only prospect is of a loss.

'We are concerned with the latter' says Martin Gant, head of JS's insurance department. 'Insurance is a way of eliminating or reducing the losses to JS resulting from the "loss only

type of risk.

Martin and his team of three insurance officers arrange all the company's insurance cover. They also take care of insurance claims made by or against JS, including those

involving staff, customers or company property.

'Large organisations like JS do not insure everything' says Martin. 'It is generally cheaper to absorb small losses than insure against them. One of the jobs of the insurance department is to identify potential risks at JS and estimate if the company could stand the loss or not.

On the whole we only insure where it is compulsory, for example motor insurance, or where the potential losses are too great' says Martin, 'although the risks that might con-

stitute a serious loss are changing all the time,

Until recently the only stock insured against theft was wine and spirits. When certain prices rose very rapidly many commodities became more attractive to the would-be thief and it was necessary for us to expand the insurance cover.

JS's growing range of non-foods has also added a new dimension to the potential risks Martin and his staff must be aware of.

'Our biggest problem' says Martin 'is keeping abreast of all the changes within the company. Other people are not always aware of the insurance implications of new developments.

Like most in-house insurance departments we need to maintain good communications with other areas within the company but we still have to rely on the grapevine, and even the JS Journal, for information that has slipped through the net! One way or another we always manage to get to know what's happening in the branches, depots and head offices so we can assess what difference it could make to JS's insurance.

The recent installation of the big new computer system at Blackfriars was duly noted by the insurance department. 'We had to take a completely fresh look at what would happen if, for instance, the system went up in flames and analyse the losses that might result."

Every year at the end of March all the company's insurance policies are reviewed and renewed. Amendments and additions are incorporated and new risks taken into account.

Negotiations with insurance companies can be tough and insurance doesn't come cheap. At the moment JS is paying out about £1 million a year in premiums.

The risk business

Improving the odds is the job of JS's insurance department. Here we take a closer look at the risks and the people who get the strength of the insurance companies around us.

JS'S ASSETS are insured for more than £300 million. Les Howcroft is the 'assets' insurance officer. The £300 million covers all the company's property, stock and capital equipment' says Les. 'Knowing the value of every individual item is part of my job.

Branches where JS owns the building are insured individually under one policy. Leasehold shops are usually insured by the landlord concerned. 'But it is up to me to see the insurance is acceptable to JS, particularly the premium we are charged' adds Les.

The depots are insured separately. 'The fire at Basingstoke depot in June 1973 is the biggest disaster the company has ever experienced' says Les. 'The insurance claim was for nearly £1/2 million.'

A more recent, but smaller disaster, was the fire at Bitterne branch in January. 'The cost of the damage was in the region of £100,000' says Les.

Shortly before the Bitterne fire Les was called upon to inspect serious fire damage at Green Walk depot in South London. Although JS does not own the building the company houses much of its paper and packaging stores there and occasionally uses it for returns.

As at Bitterne' says Les 'most of the damage was caused not by the fire itself but by the smoke.' At Green Walk a heavy layer of black soot covered the

whole area. The fire was contained in a small packaging storage bay. 'But everything on that floor was a complete write-off as far as we were concerned.

Les's work takes him out and about more than his two fellow insurance officers. 'I often have to be on the spot to inspect damage. Where stock is concerned it is important to establish who owned it at the time and to agree arrangements for disposal of damaged

goods or cleaning as quickly as possible.'

Les has been with JS for three years and has recently completed the first part of examinations to qualify as an Associate of the Chartered Insurance Institute. 'I used to work for an insurance brokers office and a property company. Since joining JS I have been able to specialise. The work is never dull because JS's property portfolio is so varied.



Les (right) inspects the damage at Green Walk depot, with him is the company's depot fire prevention advisor John Gore. Fire is Les's biggest risk.



MARINE INSURANCE is the domain of Jim Benge. 'My job is to see goods imported by JS are properly insured, to look after the shipping documents and to process JS claims against shippers, overseas suppliers and insurance companies.'

The growing own-label range and the ever widening scope of the goods JS sells is reflected in the number of different items Jim now finds himself handling. 'At one time it was only canned goods. Now the list includes wines and spirits, some produce, frozen fruit juices and a number of non-foods, from all over the world.'

Mostly the insurance is taken out by the agent or supplier concerned. However in an increasing number of instances it is now cheaper for JS to arrange the insurance cover. 'This way we also have a greater control of things and can check all is well.'

Apart from keeping an eye on changes within JS Jim has to keep an alert business eye on what is going on in the rest of the world. 'Dock strikes, goslows, natural disasters, shortages, all can have a bearing on insurance and claims.'

Settling claims connected with damaged goods is an important part of his work. 'Sometimes I go and meet the surveyer who is handling the claim on behalf of the insurance company. We can haggle and argue for hours before a satisfactory conclusion is reached.

'The surveyor is only interested in keeping his company's costs as low as possible and so he will try and persuade me that the damage is "not too bad" for JS to accept. My answer is JS standards are higher than that.'

Containerisation has helped to reduce the amount of damage done to goods in transit. It has also reduced the number of security risks this type of business is open

Jim, who joined JS in 1965, first became involved in marine insurance seven years ago when he moved to the grocery division to deal with insurance claims. He transferred to the insurance department three years ago.

'Like most jobs connected with insurance you can't go home at the end of the week with an empty "in" tray. Some claims take years to settle. But eventually they are—it's my job to see JS doesn't lose out.'

SYLVIA EDWARDS must have heard the words 'it wasn't my fault' many, many times since she became responsible for accident claims involving JS vehicles, staff or customers.

There are nearly 1000 motor accidents a year at JS. About half will result in an insurance claim being made by one or other of the parties involved. They range from a complete write-off, to a gentle (but unfortunate) bump in a crowded car park. It is Sylvia's job to sift through the mass of documents in order to establish where the blame lies and who is liable.

'You have to be very diplomatic and tactful as hardly anybody ever admits liability' ears Sylvia

liability' says Sylvia.

If motor accidents, which cost the company about £100,000 a year, are her biggest headache, accident claims involving members of staff are her smallest. 'Although employers' liability insurance is compulsory to protect the rights of staff, we don't receive many claims. This is probably a reflection of JS's good safety record.'

In between come claims by customers. 'My major problem here' says Sylvia 'is whether the customer has a genuine claim, particularly where the complaint is about faulty goods.' Sylvia works closely with the customer relations department. With their help she establishes the truth of the matter and gets things sorted out to everyone's satisfaction.

Hundreds of small claims are received from customers but the vast majority are settled at branch level or through the customer relations department. Says Sylvia: 'The number of claims that get passed to our insurers is very small, about 50 a year.'

Sylvia joined JS 18 years ago to work in the sales office. When it closed nine years ago she transferred to the insurance department.

'I didn't know JS had an insurance department until I came to work in it' she says. 'I started as a sort of general assistant. As the office grew so I began to specialise in accident claims.'

Her work involves mountains of paperwork, writing lots of letters, making endless telephone calls and skillfully liaising between all the parties concerned.

On the other side of the motoring accident coin Sylvia is also responsible for rewarding safe driving. She looks after the annual RoSPA safety awards presented to JS lorry drivers who have not had a blameworthy accident during the year. As well as the RoSPA award drivers who qualify get a cash bonus from the company.



THE MAN IN CHARGE of the company's insurance department is assistant company secretary Martin Gant. Martin, who is 35, joined JS in 1972, shortly after the decision was taken to centralise all the company's insurance dealings at Blackfriars.

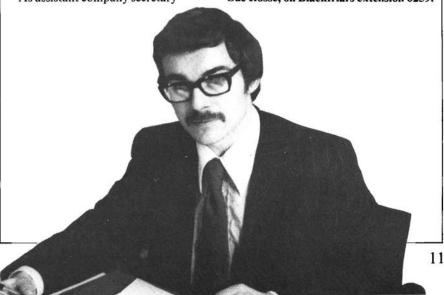
He is a Fellow of the Chartered Insurance Institute. There isn't much he doesn't know about the insurance business. Before joining JS he worked for an insurance company, an insurance broker and was deputy manager of the insurance office of a large, well-known group of companies.

As assistant company secretary

Martin not only acts as insurance manager he is also involved in the many other areas within the secretary's office, including: the share option scheme; the annual general meeting; and mortgages for JS employees who have to move house because of their job. He is currently studying to become a chartered secretary.

Martin reminds us that JS staff (and JS veterans) get preferential terms if they use Paladin Motor Policies at Lloyds, or the Royal Insurance Group for all other types of insurance.

For details contact Martin's secretary Sue Rosse, on Blackfriars extension 6259.





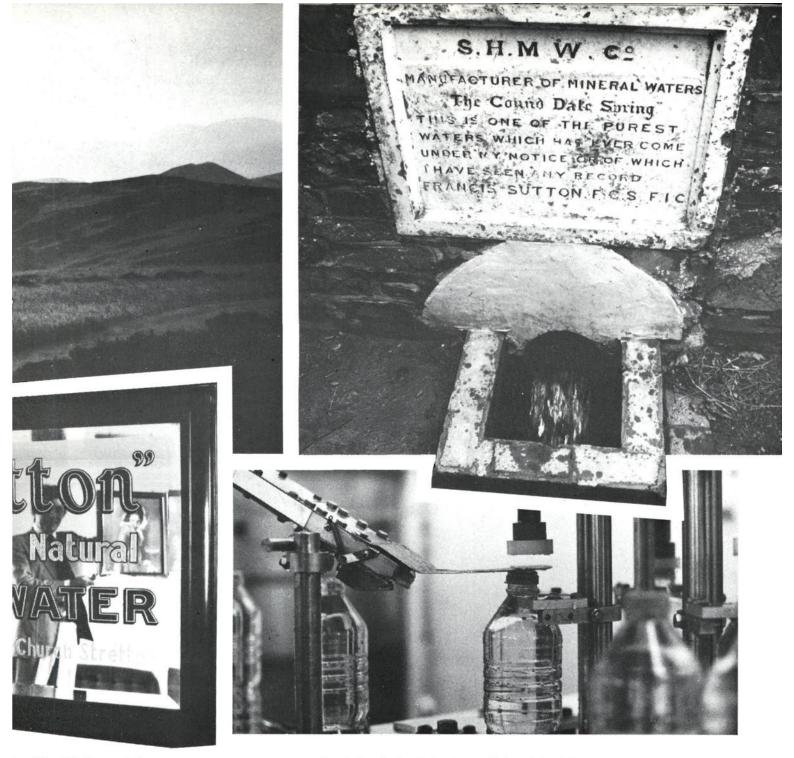
WHAT DID THE ROMANS COVET, Caractacus camp on and the Empire drink from? The answer lies to the South West of Shrewsbury in Shropshire-and is a mountain called the Long Mynd. Nestling under the 1,700 foot Mynd is the little town of Church Stretton, the source of JS's new Natural Spring Water.

The Cwm Dale spring is on the out-skirts of the town, at the foot of a little valley that cuts back steeply into the broad, flat mountain top. The bottling plant is over 150 years old, but its ancient exterior belies the efficient and modern equipment inside. 'Stretton Water' has quite a long history. In the days of the Empire it was put into five gallon carboys and shipped to all the far flung corners of the world where our diplomats could not trust the local water. It is even rumoured that in the 1920's there was an enormous 'Stretton Water' sign in New York harbour. Advertisements used to carry the Royal 'By Appointment' logo. A painting of the Queen Mother was even featured in one series of advertisements-probably the first and last time that a member of the

Royal family has featured in an ad. The war brought closure, and until recently the bottling plant was being used as a furniture warehouse. A couple of years ago, a local businessman in the soft drinks trade decided that spring water was definitely a coming thing and took over the Cwm Dale spring and put it back into production. Barrington Robinson, who runs Wells (Drinks) Ltd with his son Robert, was somewhat surprised that on the day he decided to go into the bottled water market he was contacted by Charlie Pratt of grocery buying III who wanted to know if anyone could supply JS with a British bottled water.

The market for bottled spring water has been rapidly growing in the UK, but has a very long way to go before con-sumption is on anything like the french scale. In 1973 we consumed around 1.4 million litres, but last year almost 8 million litres—a phenomenal growth rate, yet in real terms still only as much as the French drink in a day. Our supplier is Top left; the story begins here on the rolling top of th right; excess water from the bottling plant flows at Sutton, Fellow of the Chemical Society and the Insti old building, and centre; a pre-war advertising mirro the capping machine seals in that crystal clear water.

The spring



Long Mynd. Rainwater falls on the bleak moorland. Top the beneath a plaque testifying to its purity. One Francis e of Chemists was obviously impressed. Bottom left; the n which can be seen Barrington Robinson. Bottom right;

that waters mpire

convinced that the bottled water market is soon going to climb to continental levels, and he intends to have a sizeable slice of the cake—and JS with him.

Stretton water has an enviable reputation for purity. It has very few trace elements and a perfect acid/alkali balance—or pH 7 as it is known in the trade. The water owes its characteristics to the geological structure of the Long Mynd. The slopes of the hill are made of impervious volcanic rocks, whilst the centre consists of water-bearing sandstones and shale. Rain falling on the 80 square mile top of the Mynd is filtered through these porous rocks and finally appears on the 'spring line' as pure 'Stretton Water'. From rainfall to bottling is thought to take somewhere between four and seven years.

The bottling plant is served by just one spring. The water wells up from the ground straight into a late-Victorian tiled tank which holds 40,000 gallons, and is then piped down to the bottling plant. The water passes through a special ultra-

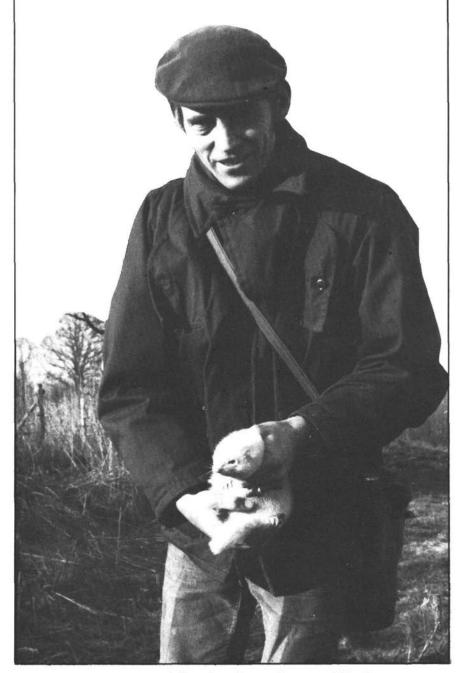
violet light and filters which make sure that no germs can get through, and then goes straight to the bottling machine. The first time that it sees the light of day is when it emerges from the pipe and drops into the bottle.

The bottles are then automatically packaged and dispatched, up to 6,000 per hour passing through the system.

The 1½ litre PVC bottle is made twenty miles away at Tenbury Wells. The plastic is mixed and blended to the precise requirements and then extruded as a thin tube. Air is blown into this tube at high pressure and forms the bottle in a special mould. Plans are afoot to build a bottle making plant at Cwm Dale, since EEC regulations are probably going to make this compulsory in the next couple of years.

The suppliers are currently exporting most of the spring's output to the Middle East and West Africa, and in Kuwait or Bahrein a bottle can cost as much as £1. JS customers get a much better deal at only 22p a bottle.

A countryman's pursuit



A FROSTY MORNING, a local meadow, and his ferrets, are the ingredients of a good day's sport for warehouseman Nick Weight. Every winter weekend Nick and his furry friends can be seen in the countryside around Bishop's Stortford helping to control the local rabbit population.

Nick is used to the cold. He works in the perishables coldstore at Buntingford depot, and has been with JS for 22 years. Although he was born on the outskirts of London he loves the country and enjoys being a part of it. 'When I was a boy my grandmother used to tell me about the country life. I married a country girl and moved out of town. Since then my father-in-law has taught me all the country ways.

Three albino ferrets live in hutches at the back of Nick's house, two gills and a buck. 'Ferrets originated in China' says Nick 'and were brought over here by the Romans. The albinos, which have white fur and pink eyes, are the true breed though you can also get dark-furred ferrets which have been cross-bred with the polecat.'

Gills die for love!

At one time Nick had 15 ferrets living in his back garden after a particularly good breeding year. 'You have to allow a maiden ferret to breed within the first two years or she will die' he says. 'They're also very susceptible to infection so you must keep their hutches clean.'

On a hunting day the first job is to feed the ferrets. 'They live on bread, milk and offal' says Nick. 'We don't have to starve them to get them to do their job. Just the opposite. The idea is to make the rabbit bolt when he hears the ferret coming down the hole. Usually the ferret never touches the rabbit.'

Before Nick arrives at a meadow he has always asked the permission of the farmer in advance. 'Farmers get to know you and as long as they know you take care to shut gates, fill in holes and you're not a poacher, they're pleased to see you. Everyone knows how much damage rabbits do so we're providing a service. If the rabbit population was allowed to increase the price of bread would go up because so many fields of young wheat would be ruined' Nick explains.

The ferrets are carried to the chosen field in a wooden box. Nick surveys the land looking for small sets and fresh earth and places a net over every rabbit hole he can find. 'Sometimes you do miss one and the rabbit disappears over the horizon in a cloud of dust. They always seem to choose the hole you missed when they bolt' he says wryly.

Quick and painless

Hoping that he's spotted every hole Nick puts a ferret down and waits. If there are rabbits in the bury they will quickly bolt from a hole, get tangled in a net and meet a quick death with a blow to the back of the neck from Nick. 'I know people will think it's cruel, but if rabbits have got to die then I think it's better that they die quickly and painlessly than be gassed to death, or suffer myxomatosis' says Nick.

A morning's ferreting could result in 20 rabbits, or none at all. Nick sometimes sells them to local market tradesmen, or sometimes gives them away to friends. Ironically, he is never allowed to eat rabbit himself since his wife refuses to cook them.

By March the ferreting season is coming to an end and Nick's ferrets can look forward to a summer when they will become 'overfed, fat, and lazy'. But that's something Nick could never become. 'I get a thrill from being out in the country, no matter what the weather, and I could never be the sort of person who sits in front of a warm fire, in a comfortable chair, and gets his excitement from the television. It's just not me.'



With net in hand Nick scours the ground for every hole. 'If I miss a hole the chances are the rabbit will disappear over the horizon in a cloud of dust' he says.



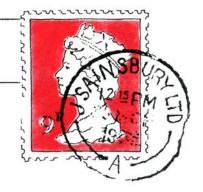
Having eaten a good meal before the journey the albino ferrets are taken from their box. 'The true breed originated in China' says Nick 'and were brought over here by the Romans, though you can also get a dark-furred variety.'



Down the hole. Although the ferret has sharp claws and a nasty bite it rarely touches the rabbit—just the sound of its approach is enough to make the rabbit bolt.

Your letters

Letters are welcome and should be addressed to the editor.



Any more contenders?

From: Guess Who? ex-manager, Buntingford depot

Re your article 'Distribution-new men at the top' in the February JS Journal you state that John Galloway at 34 is 'the youngest JS depot manager on record'.

Let us not forget the band of pioneers who moved out into the wilds of Hertfordshire in the late summer of 1960 to begin despatches of non-perishable goods to a limited number of branches immediately after the August bank holi-

In charge of this intrepid outfit, at Buntingford, was one K D Curtis, and while it started as a very small operation compared with the present depot, none the less he had been appointed 'JS depot manager' . . . age 30.

Perhaps some of the 'on record' has become yellowed and illegibly aged!

From: F W Edwards, JS veteran

I would like to point out that the mention of John Galloway as being the youngest JS depot manager on record is not quite correct.

When Union Street, Blackfriars, was the company's one and only depot, responsible for the distribution of meat, bacon, butter, etc, I was in charge from 1934, at the age of 30, until 1957.

Part-timers want in

From: Mrs P Hughes, Basingstoke branch I am writing regarding the article on pensions in the January issue.

I brought up the question of part-time employees being able to join the JS pension scheme at the area meeting about pensions last year, and was later informed that it was impractical for part-timers to be included. But in the Journal I read that part-time management grades have been

I and many of my part-time colleagues feel this is blatant discrimination as many of us have given quite a few years of loyal service and we hope to continue to do so for many more to come.

So if some are allowed to have the cake, surely the rest of us could at least have some crumbs.

Peter Fryer, pensions manager, replies: Experience has shown that most part-

timers prefer to keep deductions from their pay as low as possible and not contribute towards social benefits they have no intention of claiming back. This is the main

reason why the company decided not to include part-time non-management grade staff in the JS pension scheme.

Another consideration was the fact that many part-timers by working fewer hours do not earn enough to benefit under the JS scheme. Anyone whose earnings are below a certain level is therefore probably better off, in pension terms, being contracted in to the government scheme and not paying

contributions to the JS pension scheme.

Also there are about 15,550 nonmanagement grade part-timers at JS and it is amongst this group of employees that staff turnover tends to be highest. Although the company recognises that there are many part-timers with excellent long service records, it is nevertheless true that as a group, part-timers do tend to come and go more frequently.

The high numbers involved at JS made it impracticable to contract this sector of staff out of the government scheme.

During the pensions consultation exercise during the early part of last year the majority of part-timers expressed the view that they did not want to join the JS scheme. Management grade part-timers however, of whom there are about 220, said they wished to be allowed to join the scheme and this was accepted by the company and the Occupational Pensions Board.

Wetproof bags?

From: Neil Jordan, student, Petts Wood freezer centre

Whilst working on checkouts recently I was endeavouring to pack a customer's goods in the brown paper bags supplied, when picking one up to hand to the customer, the bag split. The bag had become soggy because of the ice around the packages melting. Also, the bags are often not big enough for the goods sold in the store.

Therefore, would it not be a good idea for freezer centres to have polythene bags at the checkout as used in other foodstores?

With the ever-rising cost of paper surely this change-over would prove no more expensive than the method used at

From: Christopher Baker, deputy manager, branch productivity services

Mr Jordan has a point. Although studies have shown that the incidence of bags splitting is only around 2 per cent of total usage, in terms of service to the customer this is still not a satisfactory situ-

Trials of plastic 'drip proof' bags for wet

products such as meat, poultry and frozen foods, are being carried out at four branches presently to test their effectiveness, acceptability and usage rate.

Great minds...

From: D Day, Basingstoke depot

I note from your February issue that the ultimate in lunacy has arrived at SavaCentre. Not content with despatching men to the darkest corners of the world to collect trolleys, we're now going to the expense of designing a special lorry

for them to go in!

JS prides itself on leading the field, when are we going to take a lead over trolleys and charge a deposit for their removal? I cannot see that it would absorb more manpower than the present system nor would it particularly upset customers. I'm sure most customers would be delighted to see their towns rid of unsightly abandoned trolleys. Any pensioner liable to have trouble finding a deposit is unlikely to have a car to return to, so what possible reason against can remain?

Perhaps it's time local authorities started impounding trolleys and charging supermarkets with causing litter? Hit supermarkets in the cash register and they might start worrying about the danger and unsightliness trolleys cause.

Bretton branch is ahead of you Mr Day. On March 7 the branch began charging a deposit on trolleys taken outside the store as an experiment. See page two_Editor

Unjust the job

From: Mrs O Garcia, BPO Blackpole branch, Worcester

The canteen staff at Ipswich branch would indeed seem to have 'just the job'. (See February issue.) While not questioning that they are doing an excellent job I do question that their working conditions are not typical of all JS canteens. Blackpole for instance operates with fewer staff and less storage space than they appear to have at Ipswich.

We, at Blackpole are very proud of our canteen both for the quality of the staff and the food and have been con-gratulated by many visitors to the branch. This story however did cause a flutter in an otherwise happy dovecote.

It is a fact of life that canteen facilities will vary from location to location, in a com-

cont. next page ▷

pany as large and widely scattered as JS. The age and size of the kitchen, the local labour market, the personalities of the staff, are only a few of the things that contribute towards these variations.

I am very sorry the story caused a flutter in the Blackpole dovecot. We just reported that we found at one JS store—a happy, hardworking team of ladies, four of them part-time, who were good at their job—Editor

No news is bad news?

From: G Follows, fresh pork trading, Blackfriars

Considering that over 20 per cent of the January *Journal* was devoted to Discount '78, the reaction in February, both editorially and from staff, is conspicuously absent.

Could it be that the pressure of work created by Discount '78 precludes putting

pen to paper, or could it be disinterest.

Surprising that nobody sees it as a perfect example of a self-financing productivity deal.

Discount '78 is a long-term operation and its progress can only be judged in those terms. At this stage it would not be prudent to publish statistical evidence of the operation's success. All we could have reported therefore was that Discount '78 so far is a great success, a fact most people had worked out for themselves anyway.

In a state of shock

Electricity is both friend and foe. It generates light, heat and power to make our lives easier. It can also kill or maim if we are not aware of the hidden as well as the obvious dangers.

There are two types of electricity, man-made and static. With the help of Stan Ramage, JS's safety advisor, we take a look at some of the shocking el'ects of the static variety.

A IAIR-RAISING example of static electricity is con bing your hair and watching it stand-on-end and 'stick' to the comb. When you take your clothes off at night, one chances are you have generated enough static during the day to produce a fine audio-visual display of crackles and sparks. You may even feel the tingle of a mild electric shock.

Walking on a man-made fibre carpet wearing shoes with synthetic soles (which act as electrical insulators), in a relatively dry atmosphere (for the technically minded that's about 52 per cent relative humidity) is likely to result in your becoming electrically charged. Sometimes the charge can be as high as 20,000 volts!

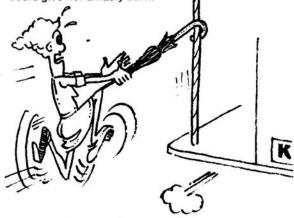
If the next thing you touch is charged to the opposite polarity, a metal desk or the lift button for instance, you will experience an unpleasant—but not fatal—electric shock. One simple way of overcoming the problem of static in buildings is to let in more air from the outside. In most cases this will raise the humidity enough to disperse the static.

To our knowledge no-one has ever been killed by static, apart from lightning. However its presence can spark off a series of chain reactions that could end in disaster.

Many fires are started by static in the air. Precautions include earthing all surfaces that can be earthed, or coating them with a conductive material like metallic paint.



Even though static itself is not a killer it can be the cause of a serious accident. The slight shock a tea-lady gets as she opens an office door after walking on a nylon carpet will not do her any great harm but if it makes her drop the tray, the hot tea could give her a nasty burn.



Running for one of the older buses, the shock you get as you grab the 'statically charged' plastic handrail won't kill you—but if it is enough to make you let go and fall back, the bus coming up behind you could!

Peter strengthens his family ties

TEN PIN BOWLING started Coventry meat tradesman Peter Wale on his hobby. He designs ties.

Last year Peter, who competes regularly in Coventry's 'Pioneer League', decided that his sporting attire lacked a certain distinction and so designed a tie for himself. Very soon all his team were wearing them and requests were rolling in for other designs.

In the last six months he's produced a 'Concorde' tie for British Airways aircrew, ties for the various divisions of Rolls Royce, even a Coventry City supporters' tie (sent to Jimmy Hill). So far none of his designs have been officially adopted, so he thought he'd try his hand at designing a new JS tie.

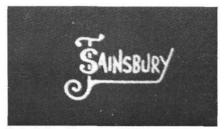
A few weeks ago a bulky envelope arrived in the Journal office. Inside was

Peter's tie, (pictured) and we passed it on to Jim Perry, manager, personnel (retail), for his comments. He pointed out that most JS ties are symbolic: 'Company logos on ties, brooches etc, have in the past tended to lean towards monograms and symbols. I am thinking particularly of the JS 25 club crest, the present JS blue tie with its three bars and the JS centenary tie with its four candles representing the four generations. Nevertheless I think it is very well done. But I believe that half the fun in looking at people's ties and symbols and emblems is trying to decipher what they represent.'

So it's back to the drawing board as far as a JS tie is concerned, but Peter still has plenty of orders to keep him busy. As he says: 'Lots of people like wearing individual ties and I enjoy making them.'



Peter with ties he has designed.



Peter's idea for a new JS tie logo.

Golden moment at the Palace

BUCKINGHAM PALACE was the venue for tradesman William Dimond and course tutor Howard Bentley when they attended the presentation ceremony for the Duke of Edinburgh awards on February 22.

William was there to receive the gold award and Howard, a Queen's Scout, was selected to act as an usher.

Howard, 22, has been with JS for seven years, and in the training department for two years. It was his first time in attendance at the Palace and as he said: 'I'm thrilled by the honour.'

William, 19, who works at Ipswich branch, has been working for the gold since he was 16. He already holds the bronze and silver awards but he found the final test even more demanding.

The Duke of Edinburgh's scheme requires the candidate to complete a year's project, a year's service to the community, and a 50 mile expedition in wild

country in order to qualify for the highest award.

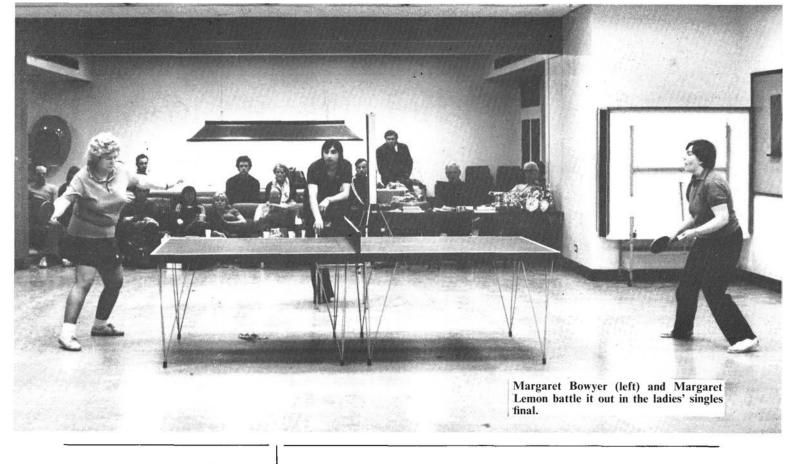
As a flight sergeant in the air training corps William trains young people in airmanship, map reading and first aid, and so provides a valuable service to the community.

His project was undertaken in the corps' pipe band where he plays the bagpipes and his expedition took him to the Peak District when the weather was so bad that there was snow on the ground.

Because of its stiff requirements few people go on to receive the top award but William hopes to join the organisation of gold award winners in order to encourage young people to follow in his footsteps.



Leaving the Palace, Howard Bentley (left) takes a look at William Dimond's award certificate.



Girls at work . . .

WALTON ON THAMES branch played host to two youngsters last month who were taking part in Surrey County Council's work experience scheme.

Two schoolgirls visited the store for a week to discover what a working life would be like in a supermarket. Manager John Hebberd supervised the girls making sure they gained useful experience in all parts of the store.

Both girls enjoyed their week and Karen Dicker, who is taking her CSE examinations this summer, said: 'I think I really would like to work in a shop when I leave school and Sainsbury's has been good fun so far.'

\dots and at play!

TEENAGE GIRLS went on the rampage in Reading last month with a spray can of bright blue paint. Altogether five stores were affected in the town—Sainsbury's, Woolworth's, Tesco's, Heelas, and C & A, and nearly £2000 worth of damage was done.

The JS store was fortunate. The girls only managed to spray a pack of oranges. Manager Charles Turner commented: 'My staff are very vigilant so perhaps they were scared off, or perhaps the can of paint ran out.'

As seen on TV

DISCOUNT '78 has been given an extra boost in the last three weeks by an intensive burst of TV advertising. A 30-second commercial, featuring Michael Barratt and shoppers' reactions to the campaign, was shown on Thames, ATV, Anglia and Southern.

Table tennis Marathon

NEARLY ELEVEN HOURS play was required to decide the champions of this year's SSA table tennis tournament. Held in the basement of Rennie House on Sunday, 19 February, 60 players took part.

The standard was high, and many games went to three sets. As a result the day was longer than expected—play starting at ten and only coming to a climax with the mens' singles final at 8-30 pm. Alan Bennett and Simon Fisher, both of the Office section, fought a worthy final with Simon running out winner in two sets.

The ladies' singles final was won by

Margaret Bowyer from Wolverhampton, and she became the first winner of the new Torr Shield-presented by Jean Torr, who had already lost to Margaret in the semi-final. Jean however took the honours in the ladies' doubles (with Margaret Lemon from Woking) and in the mixed doubles (with Simon Fisher). Fred Kalb from Southgate took the veterans' trophy, beating Ken Hayward from Haywards Heath by two sets to one. Graham Harrison and Vic Tyc, both of the office section, beat Alan and Simon in the mens' doubles final, to round off a great day for JS's star tabletennis players.



SSA secretary Alan Kettley gets ready to hand out the day's prizes.



People pages

Appointments

G Kenney, formerly deputy manager at Dudley branch, has been appointed manager of Halesowen.

B Thake, formerly temporary manager of Worcester Central, has been appointed manager of Oxford branch.

G Challis, formerly deputy manager at Blackpole branch has been appointed manager of Worcester Central.

P Ronan, formerly operations manager at Charlton depot, has been appointed operations manager at Buntingford depot.

K Smithard, formerly works engineer at Hoddesdon depot, has been appointed depot services manager at the same depot.

Due to an unfortunate error, some of the appointments notified in last month's *Journal* were incorrect. The following are the actual appointments:

P Marsden, a district manager in the Romford area, is to replace J Soper (same area) who is moving to Blackfriars.

J Spence, formerly a district manager in the Bromley area, will be replacing P Marsden in the Romford area.

A Rowland, formerly manager of Central Croydon branch, will succeed J Spence as a district manager in the Bromley area.

Long service

Harry Stringer, relief manager of the Green Walk contract depot, celebrated 40 years with JS on February 22.

Mr Stringer joined the company in 1938, working in the Blackfriars warehouse. During the war he saw active service with the bomb disposal teams and the Camel Corps—serving in places as far afield as Eritrea and the Congo (where he held a 'big game' licence). Back with JS in 1946 he took over as manager of the depot at Saffron Walden. He remained there until its closure in 1972, and then transferred to Green Walk.

Geoff Shade, manager of Ballards Lane branch, celebrated 25 years with the company on February 2.

Mr Shade joined JS in 1952 after completing his national service, and has worked mainly in branches around North London. His first post as manager was at Drury Lane.

George Hooker, meat manager at Sittingbourne branch, celebrated 25 years with JS on February 16.

Mr Hooker joined the company in 1953, working in North London. He became assistant head butcher at Folkestone in 1969, and four years later transferred to Ashford branch as assistant meat manager. He became meat manager at Folkestone in 1976.

Dennis Dew, meat manager at Bedminster branch, celebrated 25 years with the company on February 28.

Mr Dew joined JS in 1952 as a trainee butcher at 122 George Street, Croydon, and worked at 73 Croydon, 911 Croydon and Forest Hill manual branch before becoming second butcher at Beckenham in 1959. He moved to 869 Bristol in 1961 when it opened, and ten years later was promoted to meat manager at Bedminster.

Jim Leahy, warehouseman at Swiss Cottage branch, celebrated 25 years with JS on February 23.

Mr Leahy joined the company in 1953 after a period working on the railways. He started at 140 Finchley Road, and before his present post worked at 177 Finchley Road and 4 Harben Parade, Finchley Road.

Jim Berresford, returns supervisor at Basingstoke depot, celebrated 25 years with the company on February 16.

Mr Berresford joined JS in March 1953 in the bacon department at Union Street. He later worked as a poultry checker, but moved to Basingstoke depot in 1964 as a foreman in the perishables department.

Stanley Fox, a senior tradesman at Ilford Central branch, celebrated 25 years with the company on March 2.

Mr Fox joined the company in 1953 as a tradesman at Seven Kings branch. He spent five years there before moving to Barking. Eight years later he moved on to Dagenham, and he worked at Gants Hill and Barkingside before taking up his present post. He has also done relief work in other branches in the district.

Retirements

John Wozny, a store serviceman at Wood Green branch, retired on February 25 after 23 years with JS.

Mr Wozny joined the company in 1955 at Palmers Green, and worked in the Winchmore Hill and Wood Green manual shops before moving into the Wood Green supermarket when it opened in 1973.

Peggy Reeve, senior cashier at Bury St Edmonds retired on February 11 after 16 years with the company.

Mrs Reeve trained at Blackfriars before becoming a cashier at Bury St Edmonds. She later trained to become a meat saleswoman and spent eight and a half years in the meat department, before qualifying as a cashier instructor. She has also been a first aider for the last seven years.

Ernie Debarr, senior warehouseman at Kings Heath branch, retired from JS on February 4 after 12 years' service.

Mr Debarr started at Nottingham branch in 1966, and then transferred to the old Kings Heath shop when it first opened in September of that year. He moved to the current store when it opened in 1975.

Frances Ayres, a cashier at Bedford branch, retired on January 13 after 15 years with JS.

Mrs Ayres joined the store during the changeover from the old manual shop to the present supermarket, and has worked as a cashier ever since.

Doris Lambkin, a display assistant at Bexleyheath branch, retired from the company on February 24 after nearly 12 years' service.

Mrs Lambkin joined JS in 1966, working full-time as a display assistant. Working at first with biscuits and non-foods, she moved to the meat department in 1969 when a broken ankle prevented her from doing heavy work. She has worked in a part-time capacity for the last six years.

Bet Brand, a part-time display assistant at Churchill Square, Brighton, retired on February 18 after 11 years with the company.

Mrs Brand joined JS in 1967 at Churchill Square and has worked there ever since.

The following people have also retired. Their length of service is shown in brackets.

Mrs E Mills (8 years) Mrs A Carey (6 years) Mrs M Coyne (5 years)

Obituary

Norah Fitzpatrick, meat preparation assistant at Wimbledon branch, died on January 17. Miss Fitzpatrick had worked at Wimbledon throughout her twelve-year career with the company.

Tales of a traditionalist

A TALL, WELL-EDUCATED youth joined JS in February 1938, and 40 years later Edward Perou, warehouse manager at Purley branch, retired after a happy and successful career with the company.

The job advertisement of the time wanted young men who could be seen over the level of the counter, and as Edward says: 'I was certainly tall though I don't know about well-educated, but I was keen to work in food retailing because my parents owned a small food business.

Edward's further education soon began in the old Blackfriars shop where he was a salesman. 'I started to learn about tradesmanship but my career was soon interrupted by the war. When I came back I stayed at Blackfriars for another eight years before I moved to Watney Street, in the East End.

Then his real education began. 'When I left Blackfriars I thought I knew every-thing, but I still had so much to learn.' The old Watney Street branch, situated in the heart of the bustling street market had made selling a fine art. 'We would never waste or reduce anything if we could possibly help it, and we always bore in mind that the more attractive something



Edward Perou

looked, the better it would sell.'

The East End atmosphere may have been good for trading, but it had its problems. 'The store was regularly burgled until we introduced an alarm system, one of the first shops to do so.

The alarm was a long-playing record, wired up to every possible entrance. 'If anyone set it off it would relay the message to Scotland Yard' says Edward. 'We had quite a few false alarms. Once the tube train which ran under the shop made a door vibrate and set it off. After that we had to remember to position a biscuit tin against the door whenever the alarm was switched on.

Surrounded by coppers . . .

We did have real scares, too. One night I was summoned to the branch by the police and arrived to find it surrounded by coppers. It was like the siege of Sidney Street! The burglars had managed to get through five doors without setting off the alarm, but the sixth had been their downfall. That had triggered the alarm and they had run off empty-handed.

In 1962 Edward was promoted to spare manager at Watney Street and then moved to his first managership at Hoxton branch near Shoreditch. 'I think I was the type of manager who did too much for myself, but in those days we had terrible staff shortages in that area.'

It wasn't long before Edward was back at his favourite store Watney Street, this time as its manager. 'It was marvellous to go back to the store that had taught me so much, and many of the customers who knew me when I used to cut their meat

were really pleased for me.'
When Watney Street closed in 1970 it was a sad occasion in the market. 'Many of the traders thought we brought in custom, and didn't want to see us close. I transferred to Kingsland branch which also closed after two years, and from there to Purley. continued page 23

THERE AREN'T MANY identical together in their JS careers there are twins around. There are even fewer who work for JS, and still fewer who are both meat managers in South London branches and both celebrating 25 years with a lot. the company on the same day.

In fact there's only one pair we know of—Jack and Ted Bardrick, meat managers at Woolwich and Forest Hill respectively. They joined JS when they left the army, having seen an ad in 'Blighty' that offered them good training and pro-

reputed to be quite a few people in South London who firmly believe that there's only one Bardrick—he just moves around

A few years ago they appeared on a TV show with David Frost-talking about being twins and the funny coincidences that sometimes happen. They very often buy the same clothes—completely independently, but they don't think there is anything 'supernatural' about this. 'It's spects. Although they've never worked just coincidence' said Ted, pictured left

(or was it Jack?).

Jack is a keen cricketer and for many years opened the bowling for the JS 1st team, but Ted, in contrast, is a keen freshwater fisherman, and has competed in many competitions including this year's 'National' in Nottingham. They have recently taken up golf, and every Monday when they're not working they play 36 holes during the day and then spend a couple of hours in the evening being coached by their club professional. 'We play off all the handicaps' said Jack.



Green-fingered engineer stays on the rails

'I STARTED AS AN EGG BOY at 114 Lewisham in 1934. The old shop was a real 'market' store and we used to have to shout our wares louder than any of the stallholders. One cold and foggy day I thought I was going to freeze to death when the manager came out and took pity on me—or so I thought. All he said was "come in and put on another apron if you're cold"!

That was how Harry Kendall, who retired this month as manager of Ashford branch, began his career with JS 44 years ago. A country lad from a tiny village in Lincolnshire, he came to the big city specifically to join Sainsbury's and has never looked back.

From Lewisham he moved to Lee Green, and there he met his wife Connie. 'Two people "walking out" weren't allowed in the same shop in those days' says Harry 'and Connie had to move to Blackheath.'

Later he moved to West Wickham and 158 Catford, doing 'a little bit of everything,' and in 1939 was sent up to Northampton to help with the increased trade caused by evacuees from the cities. He stayed there until January 1940, when he was called up for war service. He joined

the Northamptonshire regiment and served in Northern Ireland, in the home defence forces, and in Holland, Belgium and Germany. In 1945 he was transferred to anti-terrorist duties in Palestine and spent nearly a year there.

Despite those troubled times, Harry has a fund of amusing stories about the Middle East—and some fond memories. 'The taste of an orange ripened on the tree and freshly picked is something I shall never forget' he says. 'And there was the occasion when some Arabs infiltrated our camp in the night and stole a tent. There was nothing particularly unusual in that, except for the fact that the two officers inside it didn't notice. They were a bit anmoyed to wake up and find the whole camp laughing at them.'

Operation 'Netta'

Harry returned to England and JS in 1946, and joined the staff of Catford Hill. Later on he moved to 44/46 Lewisham, and there he was promoted to assistant manager. When 132 Lewisham opened, the largest self-service store in Europe at the time, Harry moved over there until in 1956 he got his first manager's post back at Catford Hill.

About this time he began a model engineering project that lasted on and off for 17 years. This was 'Netta', an 0-8-0 LNER goods loco (3½ inch gauge). Built entirely from scratch and from the original blueprint, 'Netta' is a working model capable of pulling several children around the special tracks that can be found in many parks. She even uses coal as fuel! 'My wife helped me a lot' says Harry, 'she made me thousands of cups of tea and gave me invaluable moral support.'

His current project is a 'Quorn' grinder. This is a multi-purpose, very accurate tool grinder, which will enable him to maintain and even make all the complicated tools he needs for his hobby. 'It'll take me a fair while to finish it, but I should have time on my hands now' he says.

From Catford Hill he moved to Lee Green in 1957, and spent five years there as manager. One night there was a terrific thunderstorm, water was running down the road like a river. Connie and I went to look at the store and found it surrounded by water with almost 18 inches in the cellar. We were up all night trying to save some of the stock! continued >

Harry and Netta-the fruit of 17 years' intricate and exacting engineering.





Netta's controls—they all work!

From Lee Green he moved to 132 Lewisham as deputy manager, and he stayed there for two years before opening the new Bexleyheath supermarket as manager in 1964. He stayed there for four years before taking on the new Ashford supermarket in 1968. 'I've enjoyed Ashford a great deal' says Harry, 'but it's given me its fair share of problems—especially three years ago when three new supermarkets opened and we had some real competition.'

From his quiet bungalow in a little village between Ashford and Folkestone, Harry can put the bustle of his JS career into perspective—and at last find a little extra time for his three great loves—his wife, his model engineering, and his garden. Even on the freezing day when we visited him, his greenhouse was full of blooming beauties. The display, Harry assured us, is going to get better.

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At Purley branch Edward's traditional tradesmanship was not lost although he feels conditions have changed. 'One Easter we had a number of six pound veal and ham pies unsold on the Saturday. Instead of cutting them the JS way I cut them all lengthways down the middle and put them on the counter so that they looked attractive. The larger size was just what the housewives wanted so they went like a bomb, though if anyone had pointed out I hadn't cut them according to the book I

might have got the sack. But that's what I call tradesmanship.'

Edward will be able to put his trading skills to good use for his two sons. They are both setting up photographic businesses and Dad is going to help them in the office and organise the canvassing.

But before that he has a Caribbean cruise lined up for himself and his wife. It's a long way from tradesmanship and the East End but the hot West Indian sun is a great way to end a happy career.

Master of all trades . . .

'THINGS WERE GRIM in the early thirties, particularly in the building trade' recalls Bert Duffett. 'I was an apprentice bricklayer in 1933. As soon as I had served my time I found myself out of a job. When I got the chance to work at JS I jumped at it.'

Forty-five years later, on February 3, Bert retired from JS as a building charge-hand at Ealing area office (now Uxbridge). However, at the beginning of his career with the company he was one of a small team of skilled workmen based at Blackfriars.

'Not that we saw much of HQ' says Bert, 'most of the time we were out around the branches doing maintenance work, carrying out alterations and fittingout new shops. The job is much the same today, except the hours are probably shorter. Modern materials have taken a lot of backache out of the work as well.

'The marble finishes used in the old days took some shifting. The marble counter tops weighed upwards of five hundredweight and it was real hard work lifting them into position.'

To many people a bricklayer only lays bricks but as Bert explains: The apprenticeship includes all aspects of building and you are expected to be able to turn your hand to anything.

'One of the first jobs I did when I joined JS was at Running Horses Yard. I had to repair the holes in the floor made by the horses' hooves!'

In 1938 he was the foreman in charge of the building work that added a sixth and seventh floor to Stamford House. 'The job took about 12 months to complete' says Bert. 'We had a good view of the river. War was in the offing and I remember being able to see barrage balloons being tested not far from where we were working.'

When war came in 1939 Bert was kept busy patching up the damage done to JS property as a result of the heavy bombing. 'Some mornings it was so bad we didn't know where to start.'

Incidents that stand out in his memory include the landmine at Ealing, the bombing of Marylebone, the devastation of the factory at Blackfriars (now Rennie House), and the day they had to shore up Hoxton branch when the shop next door was hit.

Bert joined the army in 1942 and served in France and later the Middle East. In 1947 he came back to England on special 'B' release from the army, to help build council houses for the government. At the end of six months working to re-build bombed-out Britain, Bert returned to his job at JS. By this time he was married and looking forward to settling down.

About six years ago Bert transferred to the Ealing area office. He lives with his wife Emily in the village of Ottershaw in Surrey. They have two daughters. One of them was recently widowed and with her son she now lives with her parents in their comfortable bungalow.

Recently the Duffett's decided to almost double the size of their home. 'We had a very large garden and it was easy to

continued back page ⊳



Emily and Bert Duffett at home.

On the large side



SUPPLYING hotels and restaurants at one time was an important side to JS trading. The hotel and restaurant department of Stamford Street branch (closed in 1972) had four delivery vans. They were painted dark blue with the firm's name in gold copperplate lettering. The vans were in constant demand supplying hotel and office dining rooms around and about.

The catering and wholesale trade department ceased in 1959, when the score of JS self-service shops that had opened began to set the style of a new type of trading.

JS veteran Reginald Cox, who presented this price list (pictured below) to the JS archives, wrote: 'I can add that JS catering numbered some of the leading and most "select" restaurants and hotels amongst its accounts.

'In the pre "deep-freeze age" quality and reliability were pretty rare commodities and there were few sources of really good quality produce. Throughout all levels of the trade, Sainsbury's were the acknowledged tradesmen by whom standards were judged-so it was little wonder there was a thriving catering trade.'

Telephone Nos.: HOP 1421, 1422, 1423 J. SAINSBURY, LTD. Hotel & Restaurant Department, BLACKFRIARS. SPECIAL PRICE LIST for LARGE CONSUMERS BACON (FINEST DANISH SMOKED) PER LB. 5½d. 7 ½d. BACON 2nd Cut BACK (Boneless) $9^{\frac{3}{2}}d$ Prime 12 Per Cwt. 10d. Pale SIDES EGGS English New Laid (15½ lbs. approx) 12/6 1-116 Middles Smoked ENGLISH 14 116 Per lb. 12 BUTTER 1/4 IRISH 10 -112 DANISH 1-English New Laid (14 lbs. 106 7/6 EMPIRE 1 J.S. Unsalted Per Ib. 10d. BACON J.S. Slightly Salted Fresh Imported Fine Quality, Empire Unsalted Fine Quality, Empire Slightly Salted 10d. Danish Cut-through Rashers Good Quality, Empire Slightly Salted 1/2 Back with Thick Streaky Week ending 10th March, 1934 1/2 Back with 2nd Cut Streaky 1 Back with Flank Subject to being unsold and Market fluctuations Any information on the catering and wholesale trade department would be greatly welcomed by the archives. Please contact Honor Godfrey at Blackfriars, extension 6528.

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The stream at the bottom of Bert's garden.

build on a couple of extensions that give us all the extra room we need' says Bert.

I thought about doing the building work myself, but in the end I decided to leave it for someone else to worry about. Mind you, I don't think I was very popular with the workmen who did the job for me-I was a bit of a stickler for seeing things were done right.

Bert is pleased to have his family living around him now he is retired. He is also looking forward to 'doing a bit of gardening' and 'tinkering' with his car.

Since his retirement he has become a keen ornithologist and can instantly name all the many different birds that visit his garden. (There is still plenty of garden left even after all the building work, plus a stream running along the bottom of it.)

I deliberately saved up all the odd jobs around the house until I retired and had more time. But before I get round to them I intend to take it easy for a while.

Don't forget—last copy date for next issue is

John's work is always on show

DISPLAYING OUR WARES is a vital part of successful retailing and that makes John Barber's job as a display specialist particularly rewarding. John has been helping to make JS shelves attractive to the customers for 18 months.

He works from Uxbridge area office (formerly Ealing) though he's hardly ever to be found at a desk. '99 per cent of my time is spent touring the branches helping with display alterations or dressing a new branch' he says.

each year in any area but because they are an important as well as an exciting part of a display specialist's duties the Journal decided to shadow John at the behindthe-scenes preparations for the recent

Just the job

For the next in our series of JS job profiles we take a trip to Uxbridge to watch a new store Only about three new branches open preparing to greet the public.

Uxbridge opening.

'If you want to be a display specialist you've got to be prepared to work long hours for weeks on end-weekends as well. It can play havoc with your social

usually necessary when a new store pre-pares to open and the display team is working round the clock to dress the 'You've also got to be able to get on with people no matter what the circumstances. For instance, you're sometimes

life' explains John. The long hours are

not the most popular person at a branch when you turn up on a Saturday afternoon to re-arrange a display, so you've got to understand their point of view, and also get them to understand yours.' John started his career with JS as a

'The area display manager is in charge day' says John.

when the team sets up their moveable office inside the new store. They have the relevant display and issue sheets, and they are able to start work on setting up

graduate trainee at High Wycombe and a year later went on to become an assistant manager at Chesham. 'The thing I most liked about my job was the display work so it was a logical step to go on to become a specialist' says John.

After 18 months with the display team Uxbridge is John's third opening. 'It's a 'group one" branch so it will stock the full quota of JS groceries and traditional non-foods' John explains. New branches are discussed by the display team as the building work progresses so that basic information is known before the hand-

of the team so he really starts the ball rolling as the handover date gets nearer. He meets the future management team and explains what is expected of them. He actually controls the setting up of the store for three weeks up to the opening

As a display specialist John's first real involvement starts on the handover day catalogues for re-ordering to be used once



Above: Words of advice from area display manager, Barry Truman.

the store is trading.

On the second day the lorries arrive bringing boxes of each non-perishable product to be stocked. John and the other specialists use these advance orders to mark out each product's position on the shelves. As well as using their imagination to allocate the space they also have to bear in mind the relationship of space to sales. It would obviously be poor utilization of space to give a specialised brand of ginger marmalade as much room as a popular brand of strawberry

jam, for example.

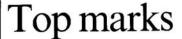
At Uxbridge John was responsible for placing the pre-opening orders to fill the store and provide sufficient reserve stock. 'If you look after the ordering it becomes a challenge to order just the right amount' says John. 'Too little and you'll have holes on the shelves on opening day; too much and you'll be overstocked.

As the store takes shape there are always some changes to the display. A

new store is the perfect place to try out new ideas or put new display equipment through its paces. The specialists have to be flexible in their approach, even when they may have changed a display more than once. Without a search for perfection and a willingness to experiment the look of JS stores would inevitably stagnate.

Discount '78 has added a new dimension to John's job. 'We're creating a much greater impact with our dressing by making bold displays of discount lines, stacking products in vertical blocks, and using colour for effect far more than we used to.

'The great thing about a new store opening is the tremendous job satisfac-tion it gives you' says John. 'You start off with four bare walls and empty gondolas and over three weeks you build it up until it's an attractive, colourful display of goods, encouraging the customers to buy. And then when they do it makes all the hard work worthwhile.'



THE HORSHAM AWARD for top marks in the Royal Institute of Public Health and Hygiene diploma exams has gone to Barry Odon, meat manager at Burton branch. Last year he attended the advanced diploma course at a local night school and passed his exams with the highest marks in the country-winning himself £10.

Barry sat the exam, which covers all aspects of public health from vitamin deficiencies to food poisoning, early last summer. He passed with honours, but was a little taken aback six months later to find he'd got the top position nation-wide. 'It's a very interesting subject' says Barry. 'I did a preliminary course a few years ago which got me interested in the subject, and when I found out about the advanced course I had no hesitation in going in for it. Mind you, I wouldn't have got anywhere without the help and encouragement of my manager and Coventry area office—they were terrific.'

Clean and fresh . . .

STAFF AT CHATHAM have reason to be proud of themselves. Following a visit to their store, Peter Hygate, secretary of the Medway Towns, St John Ambulance Training Centre, wrote to manager Colin Etheridge saying how impressed he was by the '... strict attention to all details of cleanliness and hygiene' and the '... rigid control of stocks so all goods reach customers in the best possible condition'.

Mr Hygate was a manager at David Greig's before the war so his words were high praise indeed. He wrote: '... it was high standards like these that in my day distinguished JS and DG from other multiples.'

The invitation to look around the store was made to Mr Hygate during a first aid course being held at the branch.

Holidays in store

EASTER HOLIDAY arrangements have been announced by the company. Stores, with the exception of Victoria, will be open on both Good Friday and Tuesday, March 28.

Shop staff who work on Good Friday will receive extra payment and will also be able to arrange with the manager to take a day off in lieu.

There will be no late night trading on Friday although normal trading times will be kept on Thursday, March 23.

Good Friday and Easter Monday are the official bank holidays in the depots and head offices, although to cope with the store deliveries depots and head office will be making overtime arrangements.



Above: Handover day. A fitter at work on the tinned fruit shelves.



Above: John sets out the display.

Right: So far, so good . . .





WHAT DID THE ROMANS COVET, Caractacus camp on and the Empire drink from? The answer lies to the South West of Shrewsbury in Shropshire—and is a mountain called the Long Mynd. Nestling under the 1,700 foot Mynd is the little town of Church Stretton, the source of JS's new Natural Spring Water.

The Cwm Dale spring is on the outskirts of the town, at the foot of a little valley that cuts back steeply into the broad, flat mountain top. The bottling plant is over 150 years old, but its ancient exterior belies the efficient and modern equipment inside. 'Stretton Water' has quite a long history. In the days of the Empire it was put into five gallon carboys and shipped to all the far flung corners of the world where our diplomats could not trust the local water. It is even rumoured that in the 1920's there was an enormous 'Stretton Water' sign in New York harbour. Advertisements used to carry the Royal 'By Appointment' logo. A painting of the Queen Mother was even featured in one series of advertisements—probably

the first and last time that a member of the Royal family has featured in an ad.

The war brought closure, and until recently the bottling plant was being used as a furniture warehouse. A couple of years ago, a local businessman in the soft drinks trade decided that spring water was definitely a coming thing and took over the Cwm Dale spring and put it back into production. Barrington Robinson, who runs Wells (Drinks) Ltd with his son Robert, was somewhat surprised that on the day he decided to go into the bottled water market he was contacted by Charlie Pratt of grocery buying III who wanted to know if anyone could supply JS with a British bottled water.

The market for bottled spring water has been rapidly growing in the UK, but has a very long way to go before consumption is on anything like the french scale. In 1973 we consumed around 1.4 million litres, but last year almost 8 million litres—a phenomenal growth rate, yet in real terms still only as much as the French drink in a day. Our supplier is

Top left; the story begins here on the rolling top of the Long Mynd. Rainwater falls on the bleak moorland. Top right; excess water from the bottling plant flows away beneath a plaque testifying to its purity. One Francis Sutton, Fellow of the Chemical Society and the Institute of Chemists was obviously impressed. Bottom left; the old building, and centre; a pre-war advertising mirror in which can be seen Barrington Robinson. Bottom right; the capping machine seals in that crystal clear water.

The spring that waters an Empire

convinced that the bottled water market is soon going to climb to continental levels, and he intends to have a sizeable slice of the cake—and JS with him.

Stretton water has an enviable reputation for purity. It has very few trace elements and a perfect acid/alkali balance—or pH 7 as it is known in the trade. The water owes its characteristics to the geological structure of the Long Mynd. The slopes of the hill are made of impervious volcanic rocks, whilst the centre consists of water-bearing sandstones and shale. Rain falling on the 80 square mile top of the Mynd is filtered through these porous rocks and finally appears on the 'spring line' as pure 'Stretton Water'. From rainfall to bottling is thought to take somewhere between four and seven years.

The bottling plant is served by just one spring. The water wells up from the ground straight into a late-Victorian tiled tank which holds 40,000 gallons, and is then piped down to the bottling plant. The water passes through a special ultra-

violet light and filters which make sure that no germs can get through, and then goes straight to the bottling machine. The first time that it sees the light of day is when it emerges from the pipe and drops into the bottle.

The bottles are then automatically packaged and dispatched, up to 6,000 per hour passing through the system.

The 1½ litre PVC bottle is made twenty miles away at Tenbury Wells. The plastic is mixed and blended to the precise requirements and then extruded as a thin tube. Air is blown into this tube at high pressure and forms the bottle in a special mould. Plans are afoot to build a bottle making plant at Cwm Dale, since EEC regulations are probably going to make this compulsory in the next couple of years.

The suppliers are currently exporting most of the spring's output to the Middle East and West Africa, and in Kuwait or Bahrein a bottle can cost as much as £1. JS customers get a much better deal at only 22p a bottle.