

I did not consider it wise to add any witty postscripts in case my next postcard might be shorter still:-

I am not so well.

Thus, I stayed on the bottom rung of the ladder both then and for the next 49 years, in fact, until two months ago, just before the election in March.

As you may know, Lord Blake, the Provost of Queen's College, was a candidate and it was not unnatural that a letter should arrive from the college Bursar to let me know that voting would take place on March 14th & 16th. Unfortunately, an M.A. degree was the minimum qualification, but B.A.'s who had never gone that far need not be filled with remorse. They could be entered for a simple but moving ceremony on 7th March at which the Master's degree would be quietly pinned *in absentia* on the phantom breasts of those worthy of that distinction. To be worthy, you had to send in (*Wait for it!*) a cheque for £9.

What would you have done? Myself I went round to *The Feathers*, one of Woodstock's leading eateries, and studied the menu on the wall outside. What could I get for £9? The cuisine is *nouvelle anglo-américaine* which tends to confuse the customer into uncertainty whether he is eating the meat course or the fruit salad. There was nothing for £9. But for £12.50 I could have "Medallions of Monkfish served with a warm Raspberry Vinaigrette and garnished with slices of carrot and orange" (I warned you, didn't I?).

I came to one of those snap decisions which characterise the late developer. After a life-time devoted to the intellectual advancement of greenkeepers, it would be ungrateful to turn down the career-best available on March 7th and stupid to squander an extra £3.50 into the bargain... on RASPBERRIES! I went home and wrote to the Bursar. This long flirtation, just one year short of half a century, could now be brought to the altar and made official. Moreover I should not be one of those who peevishly returned the marriage certificate if my favourite fell at the last vote. This time it was for real.

We should now be coming to what I promised you, but I am sorry. I have not been watching the clock and the alarm has just gone to switch on the TV for the Open University course which is my next chosen hurdle.

The nuts and bolts of greenkeeping education will therefore have to wait until May. At least you realise now that it's not just any old hack that's feeding you the raw material. It's coming straight from the top.

So what's another month in the great school of life? And what, provided you get there in the end, are 49 years.

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**Part III next month takes you behind the scenes in the echoing halls of agronomy and exposes the secret methods as well as the passions and jealousies of the greenkeeping advisory world. RESERVE YOUR COPY NOW!**

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## OBITUARY

Older Northern Section members and others, who remember Jim Ellis, will be sorry to hear of the sudden death of his widow, Edith. She died unexpectedly, on Monday 23rd March on her way to hospital for tests.

Jim had been Head Greenkeeper and also involved in the construction of the St. Ives course at Bingley, before moving to Stand G.C. at Manchester.

From there he took on the two new courses at Saint Nom La Breteche, near Paris, while it was still under construction.

Edith settled down magnificently to life in France and gave him every support. He brought both courses to perfection, but was then sadly killed in a road crash in France on 10th August 1961 while on his way to England for the Annual B.G.G.A. Tournament at Bridlington.

Edith is survived by her son Martin, her daughter Kathleen and three grandchildren.

We extend our deepest sympathy to her family.

F.W.H.

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