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YEAR
BOOK
1958

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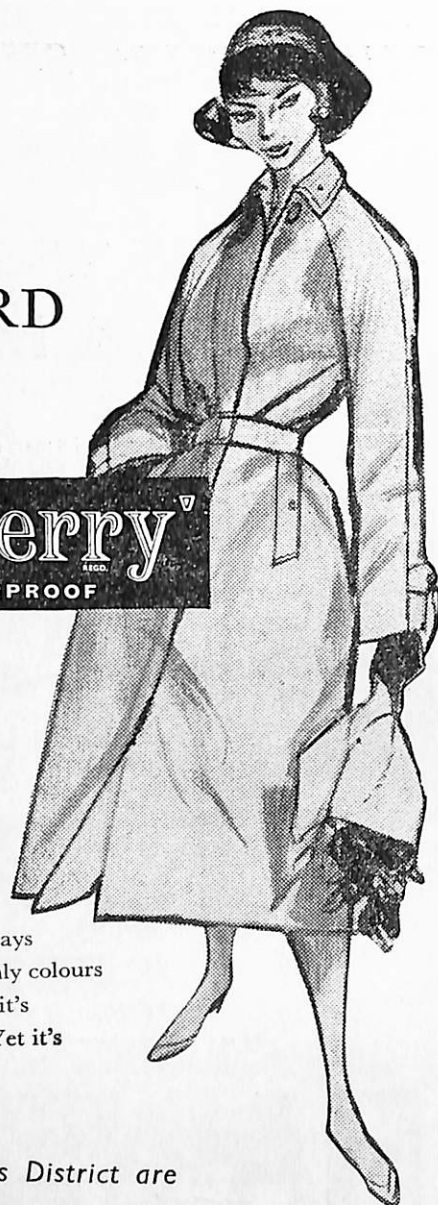
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PREFACE

IT is hoped that this YEAR BOOK of the Gravesend Division Conservative Association, which is intended as a guide to our members and helpers in the Conservative cause in this constituency, will be of value in our efforts to build our organisation to a state of efficiency which will enable us to consolidate the Conservative Party locally.

Suggestions for improvements in the lay-out and contents of this book will be welcomed.

R. L. NICHOLSON,

Honorary Editor.

September, 1958.

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Mr. PETER KIRK, M.A., M.P.

Your Member Says

This year, our Year Book is coming out in the middle of the National Membership Campaign, and indeed will, I hope, form an important part of the Campaign in the Gravesend Constituency. For that reason, I hope it will have as wide a circulation as possible, and my wife and I send our good wishes to all those who may come across it.

The Campaign is itself in the form of a preliminary to a General Election Campaign which must come during the next eighteen months. This General Election will be one of the most vital ever held in this country, and as success for the Conservative Party in the country depends on success in seats like Gravesend, it is clearly of vital importance that all Conservatives in the Division should be ready for the battle and should play their part when it comes. It is for this end that the Campaign has been devised.

Why is the next Election so important? The danger of a Socialist victory, of course, cannot be too strongly stressed, but there is also the vital importance, which too often gets overlooked, of a positive Conservative policy. In seven years of government, the Conservative Party has done an immense amount for this country, but the process of recovery from six disastrous years of war, followed by six years—almost as disastrous, at any rate in the economic field—of Socialism, is taking longer than we had hoped. Although our economic position is better now than many people could have hoped twelve months ago, we are still by no means in a comfortable position, and the recollection of what happened the last time we had a Socialist Government should be enough to tell us what would happen again if they come to power before our recovery is complete. We simply cannot afford to have another Socialist Government.

The International scene has darkened during the Summer, too, and although at the time of writing this, things look a little brighter this is only because of the wise measures taken by Mr. Macmillan and his colleagues, measures many of which were hotly opposed by the Socialists.

Our job, then, is to work to hold the Gravesend Division for the Conservative Party in the next Election, and so help to give the country another five years of good Government. I wish you all the very best of luck in our joint enterprise.

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Divisional Chairman's Message

It gives me great pleasure to tell you the good news that your organisation has steadily improved since our last issue in June, 1957. The results of the Local Government Elections throughout the Constituency in May bear ample witness to this.

We must now face the possibility of a General Election at any time from the Autumn onwards. Naturally any organisation needs tuning up for the big event and with this in mind we are running a Membership Campaign from the 16th September to 16th December, 1958. We have clear evidence that there are numerous electors who are prepared, indeed are anxious, to join our ranks but who are, in many instances, unaware of how this can be done. It is clear, therefore that we must have only two objectives for our Campaign:

1. To turn as many as possible of our present members into active helpers who can assist us in the many facets of our organisation ; and
2. To contact every elector on the DOORSTEP so that they may have the opportunity of pledging their support for our cause and joining our Association.

There is no doubt in my mind that the Conservative Government under our very great Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Macmillan, has provided the leadership and the policy which have brought us a long way on the road out of our economic difficulties and placed us again in the forefront of the nations of the world. This has been one of the greatest forces in the cause of peace.

We should indeed be foolish, therefore, if through lack of organisation and the enthusiasm of each one of us, you and me, if we were to fail at the next General Election and bring upon ourselves the disaster of another Socialist administration. Mr. R. A. Butler, speaking to us a short while ago, stressed that the complexion of the next Government must, as always, depend upon the results in the marginal seats such as Gravesend. We shall only achieve that success with your help. Please give us your active support and co-operation.

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*First
Impressions*

by the

Agent and Secretary

R. L. NICHOLSON

Before my appointment as Secretary and Agent to the Gravesend Division I had heard quite a lot about the Constituency, and had made several visits whilst working in the Industrial Department of Central Office. I had met your Member, Peter Kirk, and knew your Agent, Mr. Chittenden, very well.

I did not however fully appreciate the enthusiasm and team spirit that exists among the helpers in the Association. This spirit was very evident during the County Council Elections in April and the Local Council Elections in May.

I have no doubt whatsoever that if only this spirit can be fostered and spread among more of our supporters, we shall return Peter Kirk as your Conservative Member of Parliament with an even greater majority at the next General Election. This would not only be a great triumph for our Association, but would also be a National achievement as it is only by winning seats like ours that this country can be saved from the Socialist doctrines of restrictions and control at home and a policy of subservience and subordination abroad.

It is up to every one of us to make sure that every elector is aware of their responsibility and that when the time comes they use their vote knowing the consequence of a return of a Socialist Government.

I would like to thank all those who have done so much to make my early days in the Constituency so much easier by their support and assistance. Please do not hesitate to give me a ring, drop me a line or call in, whether it be to check upon your vote or to find out when the next social function is being held. Whatever your query I am anxious to help.

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In the Constituency we rely in no less a way on our ladies to carry the burden of our organisation. On all occasions, both political and social, they come forward and are the mainstay of every function.

Without doubt the ladies will play a vital role in the forthcoming General Election and it is for this reason we must double our efforts to persuade the women of the Constituency to use their influence, as they have done throughout history, and ensure that there is no return to rationing, nationalisation, municipalisation or any other control which must be the dread of the housewife.

If you are not already taking an active part in the Women's Section of our Association please contact the Secretary of your local Branch; the address can be found in the directory elsewhere in this book, or a phone call to Gravesend 871 will soon provide you with any information you require.

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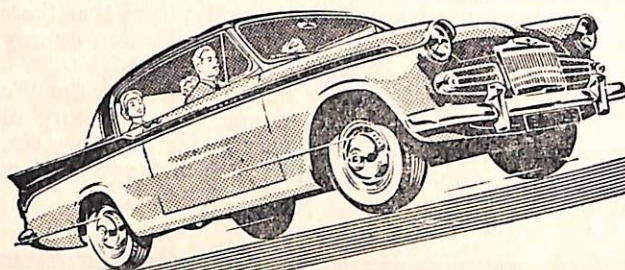
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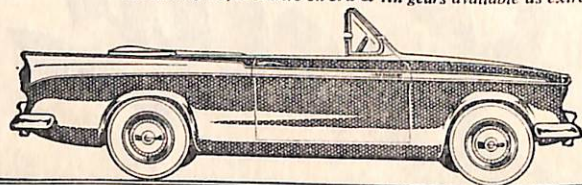


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A Message from the Divisional Young Conservative Chairman



I welcome the opportunity of sending a message to the Young Conservatives in the Gravesend Division. They are the Ladies and Gentlemen between the ages of fifteen and thirty who hold Conservative principles.

My desire is to see them all members of one of our three branches. The "Borough" branch, which meets on Thursdays at Association Headquarters, has been extended so that we now have regular meetings on Tuesday, at our HIGHAM & STROOD RURAL branch (which meets just inside the Strood boundary) and on Wednesdays at MEOPHAM. It is hoped to extend our activities to NORTHFLEET this winter. These branches organise both indoor and outdoor activities to suit all tastes and are by no means politically dull evenings! Any young person between the ages mentioned is welcomed on enquiring for details. Each branch programme should appeal to you whether your interests are tennis or cricket; barbecues or dances; theatres or films; even perhaps the production of make-up or beer!

On the serious side, as young people we are interested in how our Government is spending our money and managing our affairs. Whilst we are not too young to remember how their predecessors failed in this respect it is still useful and interesting to maintain the chance of expressing our views on current events as they arise. Conversely we are always able to obtain a personal but authoritative viewpoint at our meetings when required.

What ever aspect of these activities may attract you, please do not hesitate to contact the Agent or myself directly—we shall be only too pleased to answer any queries or to put you in touch with our nearest member in your neighbourhood. There's bound to be one.

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Meopham Branch :

Chairman : D. DAWSON, 34 Sun Lane, Gravesend.

Hon. Secretary : Miss. R. JAMES, Melliker Farm, Meopham.

AUCTIONEERS AND ESTATE AGENTS

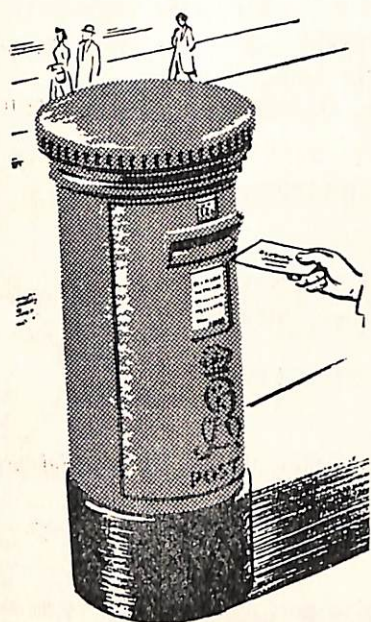
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POSTAL VOTERS

VITAL POSTAL VOTES

Conservative workers quickly saw the great possibilities created by the postal vote. At the 1950 General Election there were nineteen constituencies won by Conservatives where the majorities were less than the postal votes case.

The Socialists then became aware of the importance of the postal vote, but we still kept ahead and in the 1951 General Election it seems probable that in at least 10 constituencies we won by our lead over the Socialists in postal votes.

WE MUST WORK HARD TO KEEP THE INITIATIVE

The increasing importance of the postal vote is shown by these figures: in 1950 there were 507,717 postal ballot papers issued; in 1951 there were 831,877.

DO NOT WAIT until the Election begins. The final date on which the local Registration Officer will accept claims is only a few days after the campaign begins and this leaves very little time for tracing and following up all Conservative removals.

Therefore, START NOW compiling lists. Get your Claims in and be sure of them!

THESE ARE THE ELECTORS WHO CAN CLAIM TO VOTE BY POST

Category.	Claim Form.	Page No.
Invalids	R.P.F. 7	3
Away on the Job	R.P.F. 7 (R.P.F. 10A if out of the country).....	4
Blind	R.P.F. 7	5
Removals	R.P.F. 8	5
Service Voters		6
Service Voters' Proxies	R.P.F. 11	6
Service Reservists	R.P.F. 9 (R.P.F. 10A if out of the country).....	7
Election Officials	R.P.F. 9	8
Cut off by sea	R.P.F. 7A	8

N.B. "Removals" can vote by post only for Parliamentary Elections.

The other categories, unless otherwise stated, can vote by post at both Parliamentary and some local Government Elections, i.e.,

County Council, Borough or Urban District Council.

No one is allowed a postal vote for Rural District or Parish Council elections.

You will not have a Vote next time !

Unless you are certain that your name is included on the electoral registration form which is sent to householders and certain occupiers of property during October. Anyone who is actually resident or occupying property in Gravesend on the 10th October is entitled to be on the register for Gravesend next year.

YOU WILL STILL NOT BE CERTAIN OF YOUR VOTE

unless you examine the elector's lists which are published on the 28th November. If your name is not included you may make a claim but it must be not later than the 16th December. The electors lists may be seen at the Town Hall, Post Office or the Association Offices.

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT INTERVIEWS.

Peter Kirk makes a point of being available for personal interviews for *all* Constituents at least once a month.

These interviews are held at the S.A.A.F.A. Office, at the Gravesend Town Hall and are advertised the previous week in the "Gravesend and Dartford Reporter."

Any Constituent who wishes to see the Member has only to ring Gravesend 871 or write to 15 The Grove, and an appointment will be made.

If you hear of anyone who has any difficulty in which Mr. Kirk can help will you please bring this service to their notice.

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BOOK THESE DATES ! NOW !

HALF-DAY CONFERENCE:

Saturday, November 8th, 1958—Tivoli House.

Speakers include : RICHARD THOMPSON, M.P.
(*Parl. Secretary to Minister of Health*).

R. HORNBY, M.P.
(*Member for Tonbridge*).

PETER KIRK, M.P.
(*Member for Gravesend*).

WOMEN'S WEEK:

November 24th to 28th.

Including : WOMEN'S LUNCHEON, Wednesday, 26th
November, at Central Hotel—

Speaker : MRS. PAT McLAUGHLIN, M.P.

GRAND RALLY, Friday, 28th November, at Tivoli House

Speaker : MRS. HENRY BROOKE
(*Vice-Chairman of Conservative Party*).

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR:

6th December, 1958, at Gravesend Town Hall.

SPRING BALL:

20th March, 1959, at Gravesend Town Hall.

GRAND RALLY—FETE AND BARBECUE:

Saturday, 20th June, 1959, at Woodlands Park, Gravesend.

FOR _____

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