

SAILOR IN THE HOUSE

By the C N Parliamentary Correspondent

MR. JAMES CALLAGHAN became Labour M.P. for South Cardiff in 1945. He was 33, ambitious, a polished platform speaker, and his prospects seemed bright.

But a few months later the Labour Government negotiated the huge American loan which, in Mr. Callaghan's view, unduly tied Britain to the apron strings of a powerful ally. With 24 other Labour M.P.s, he opposed it and resigned his unpaid post of Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Under-Secretary at the old Dominions Office.

Less than two years later Mr. Callaghan had become Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Transport. After the 1950 election he was promoted to the Admiralty as Parliamentary and Financial Secretary. Today, with his party in opposition, he sits in the Shadow Cabinet as prospective Colonial Secretary and is also a member of the national executive.

James Callaghan was born on March 27, 1912. His father ran away to sea as a boy, joined the Navy at 15 and became a chief petty officer, but forfeited his rank in order to join the former Royal yacht, Victoria and Albert.

Young James inherited his love of the sea, but his father had other ideas, and on leaving school he became a junior in an income tax office. From this "haven" he



James Callaghan, M.P.

escaped when the war broke out. A six-footer, he was 27—and he was in the Navy.

By the time the war in Europe ended he was a lieutenant aboard the battleship Queen Elizabeth, which on VE day was bombarding the Andaman Islands.

Like many men of his generation who became M.P.s, he had thought much about the political shape of the post-war world. Lieutenant Callaghan sought permission to fly home from the Pacific, and, after a bustling campaign at Cardiff, found himself at Westminster with hundreds of other Labour men and women all dedicated to reform.

CLEAR AIMS

The ex-naval M.P. was quite clear about what he stood for. Full employment; security for the weak and the aged; decent housing; equal opportunity for all; individual freedom; a classless society. Above all, he determined that the old British "colonial" system must go.

He soon won a reputation as a "mixer" in Commons debates. No opponent was too tough or mighty for him to tackle—even Mr. Churchill. One day Mr.

Churchill, then Leader of the Opposition, chided Mr. Callaghan for interrupting him from the Government front bench though Callaghan was only "a subordinate Minister." Whereupon a Labour back-bencher was heard to call Mr. Churchill "an old fool."

A delightful "row" followed. Mr. Churchill justified his own remark by saying he had never heard the word "subordinate" described as an unparliamentary expression. Meanwhile, the Labour M.P. had apologised for his remark about Mr. Churchill, who, to everybody's great glee, observed: "The 'old fool' has accepted the apology!"

DISAPPEARING ERRAND BOY

He was proud of the social transformation wrought in Britain after the war. The errand boy, he once pointed out, is "a disappearing species." It was an aspect of the social revolution brought about not only by full employment, but by the growing prosperity of small traders, many of whom could afford to use vans instead of boys.

Mr. Callaghan spent a lot of time when he was at the Transport Ministry driving with lorry-men and sailing with ships' crews to find out about their working conditions.

Thanks to the pioneer work of Mr. Callaghan and the advisory committee on oil pollution, ships may no longer discharge oil waste close to Britain's coasts, and our beaches are now much clearer of the sludge which used to spoil many people's holidays and kill millions of seabirds.

FAMILIAR ON TV

Mr. Callaghan has also emerged recently as a champion of policemen.

To many he will be familiar as one of the early stars of BBC Television's *In the News*.

Not long ago his elder daughter, Margaret, was one of the teenagers chosen from a thousand who wanted to appear in the Network Three programme *What's Your Pleasure?*

As Mr. Callaghan himself said some years ago: "Young people with ability, courage, and gumption have openings on a bigger scale than I can ever recall." One can only add that in 13 years he seems to have come a long way himself!

The Meteor Spotters

Every clear night five Kent schoolboys leave their homes with deck-chairs and blankets under their arms and meet behind the cemetery in Bexleyheath. There they spent part of the night gazing up into the heavens.

They make up the only meteor-spotting station in England. They work for the National Research Council of Canada and it is their way of contributing to the International Geophysical Year.

Under their leader, 16-year-old Keith Herbert, they scan the skies for meteors and record them.

The information the Research Council wants is facts about the amount of light produced by the meteors the earth encounters, which will give a clue to their sizes. The observations of the Kent meteor-spotters will be tied up with the facts recorded by radar at five stations in Canada. These work round the clock throughout the year.

CODE NAME

Keith, who is a pupil of Dartford Grammar School, wanted to help when the Geophysical Year began and he offered his services as a meteor observer.

They were accepted and his plotting station, with code name "Holkam," the name of his house, was set up on some waste land behind Bexleyheath Cemetery.

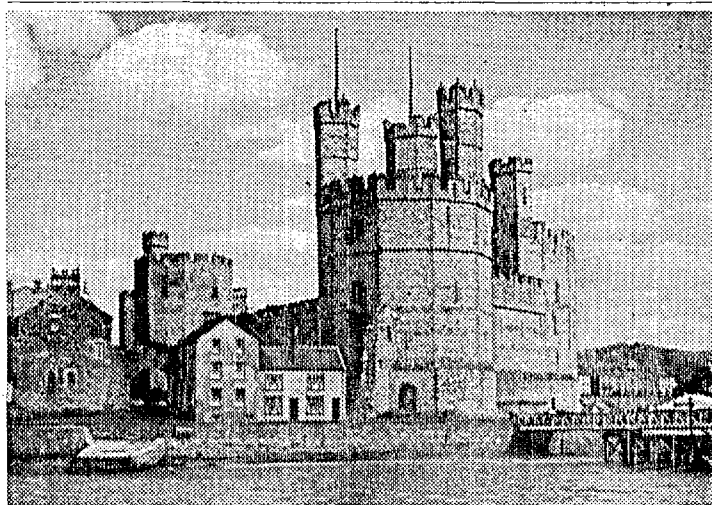
On one night alone Keith's team recorded 126 meteors, and during the school holidays they completed 115 watching periods and spotted 357 meteors.

Keith's ambition is to become an astronomer. He has been interested in the night sky since the age of seven, has made his own six-inch telescope and is now at work on an eight-inch instrument.

LONDON JUNIOR ORCHESTRA

Auditions for the London Junior Orchestra, founded in 1927 by Ernest Read, are being held on Monday and Tuesday evenings, September 15 and 16. Rehearsals start on September 19 in the Duke's Hall at the Royal Academy of Music.

Further particulars may be obtained from the Secretary, 151 King Henry's Road, London, N.W.3.



OUR HOMELAND

Caernarvon Castle, one of the most imposing medieval fortresses in Wales

News from Everywhere

Sixteen-year-old Michael Duffield of Huddersfield, who failed in his "eleven-plus" exam, has passed the G.C.E. in seven subjects.

The famous Long Market at Canterbury, destroyed by bombs, is to be rebuilt as a shopping centre from which traffic will be excluded.

Ride for the camel



Joan Moore of Camden Town, London, was seen the other day carrying a young camel. Though only 12, she was able to make light work of it because the camel was a stuffed one—the work of a local taxidermist.

Britain exported aircraft, engines, and equipment to the value of nearly £92,000,000 in the first seven months of this year.

In the first six months of this year a total of 498,500 overseas visitors came to Britain, an increase of eight per cent over the same period in 1957.

THEY SAY . . .

HUMAN society is suffering acute indigestion from an overdose of science. *Lord Boyd Orr*

IT is easy to kill a virus. The problem is how to preserve the patient at the same time.

Dr. Alick Isaacs, of the National Institute for Medical Research

WE stock stewed octopus, grilled frogs' legs, roasted caterpillars, chocolate-covered ants, fried grasshoppers, and boiled octopus.

Notice in a store at Kingston-on-Thames

New Zealand's oldest motorist, Mr. Walter Reid, aged 98, has driven more than 250,000 miles, and has never had an accident.

A Chesterfield park has a floral carpet showing three sputniks circling the world. It contains over 10,000 plants.

The Band of the Grenadier Guards and the pipes and drums of the 1st and 2nd Battalions Scots Guards are making a three-month tour of Canada and the United States.

STAR-GAZER

An electronic apparatus called Cat Eye, developed by the U.S. Air Force, can take photographs of stars in daylight. It has an optical amplifier, making it over a thousand times more sensitive than an ordinary TV camera.

A fox has been seen taking balls from the fairway of the St. Leonards Golf Club, Hastings.

An Elizabethan silver coin dated 1566 was found by six-year-old Reynold Dootson of Beccles, Suffolk, while playing in his garden.

Anti-polio vaccination is soon to be extended to people up to the age of 25, and the Ministry of Health hopes eventually to make it available to everyone in the country, irrespective of age. Up to the end of June, 5,600,000 children had been vaccinated, and 900,000 adults.

Six-year-old Andrew Cameron Jeffrey is believed to be the youngest climber ever to reach the summit of Ben Nevis, 4406 feet. He made the ascent with the Eastbourne Scout troop, of which his father is Scoutmaster.

Canada now has a population of more than 17 million.

Out and About

FOLLOWING two newly-born tortoiseshell butterflies over the common, I came near a fine hedgerow bordering a rutted lane. In it were several elderberry trees, and several starlings which were busily plucking at the purple berries took alarm and flew off. They made for some big trees, where others joined them every minute. It was the time when they gathered in ever-growing parties before roosting for the night. Their loud twitterings sounded as if they were all trying to recount the day's adventures simultaneously.

It reminded me of D. G. Rossetti's poem, "Sunset Wings," in which he described how clouds of starlings, "sing clamorous like mill-waters" in every copse by turn, so that:

*Each tree heart-deep the wrangling rout receives;
Save for the whirr within,
You could not tell the starlings from the leaves;
Then one great puff of wings, and the swarm heaves
Away with all its din.*

They were just like that, as I watched while the sun set in a misty splendour. How quiet the evening seemed when they had all moved on. *C. D. D.*