

**Blind Ex-Service Man's Commendable Effort.-** Mr. Paddy DOYLE, the blind ex-Service man, with Mrs. DOYLE, has achieved a highly commendable result by organising dances during the last four years. They have arranged 77 events, bringing in £2317 9s.2d. Their expenses amounted to £856 8s.11d. leaving a balance of £1461 0s 3d. for distribution. 1944 proved the peak year, when the profit was £560 11s., more than double that of the first year. In 1944 the charities benefited were Prisoners of War War Savings Fund £66 10s. 2d., St. Mary's Catholic School £20, St. Dunstan's £886 13s. 3d., Hospital Supply Depot £7 2s. 6d., Nursing Association £44 7s. 6d., I.W. Society for the Blind £39 7s. 3d., County Hospital £42 8s. 10d., ditto children's ward £5 5s., British Legion £47 3s., Red Cross Prisoners of War £21 0s. 9d., R.S.P.C.A. £38 17s. 9d., Shipwrecked Mariners Association £83 13s. 6d., St. John Ambulance £27 6s. 6d., Binstead Scouts £30 15s., and Ryde Youth Centre £100. Mr. D. G. TIMMS has audited the accounts and valued assistance at every function has been given by Mr. T. WILSON as M.C. and Mr. WARD as steward.

Paddy and Mrs. DOYLE thank their dancing friends for their generous and regular support which has so handsomely benefited the charities concerned. They deeply appreciate the unfailing help of Messrs. TIMMS, HART, and WILSON at every dance.

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**A 1914-18 WAR HERO**  
**Death of Paddy DOYLE**  
**At Ryde.**

Widespread regret has been felt at the death of Mr. **Alexander DOYLE**, aged 62, a blind ex-Serviceman, affectionately known in Ryde and other parts of the Island as Paddy. He had been ill since Christmas eve, and died at his home, Harlington, Great Preston-Road, Elmfield, on Saturday. A native of Leeds, he was the youngest member of the crew of the submarine E7, which in 1917 broke through the defence nets at the Dardanelles, and after creating havoc among enemy shipping in the Sea of Marmora, was forced to the surface. Paddy resolutely refused to give away information to the Turks, who destroyed his sight by spraying acid into his eyes. He was one of the youngest ex-Servicemen of the first World War at St. Dunstan's Hostel. For 10 years he visited various parts of the country making appeals on behalf of the hostel, and only a year ago carried the campaign to the Channel Islands.

As a youth, Paddy was a keen boxer, and it was on the recommendation of a Portsmouth promoter, the late Mr. John MORTIMER, that he came to Ryde in 1932 and was placed under the care of Captain W.S. RUSSELL (chairman) and Lieut. Col. C.L. ELLERY (vice-president) of the British Legion, of which he became a revered member. He managed a confectionary shop in the High Street, and in 1936 the Town Council granted him permission to place a kiosk on the Esplanade. The kiosk was given to him by many friends and well-wishers, and Paddy became a popular figure with thousands of holiday-makers. Until a few years ago he raised large sums of money for charity by organising dances in the town. His wife, formerly an opera singer, was a nurse at St. Dunstan's when they met, and was in charge of the Ryde Food Office. Her loyal care was a source of great inspiration to Paddy, who's optimistic spirit in the face of adversity was much admired. His cheerful greeting "Keep smiling" was never more welcome than during the dark days of the second world war. For many years he had a faithful guide dog, Sam, who became almost as well known as his master, and it grieved him when the animal died a few years ago. Paddy developed such an uncanny sense of direction that strangers found it hard to believe he was blind. He was never happier than when helping others.

**The Funeral**

The funeral took place at St. Mary's Church on Wednesday. In the absence of the Rector (Father J.

TROY) Father McDermot ROE was celebrant at the Requiem Mass.

The mourners were Mrs. DOYLE (widow), Mr. and Mrs. N, MAAS (brother-in-law and sister-in-law), Members of the Ryde Town Council present were the Mayor (Mmr. W.A. CHRISTY, J.P., C.C.), Aldermen Lt.-Col. C.L. ELLERY, O.B.E., T.D., and Captain W.S. RUSSELL, and Messrs. A.E. AYMES, E.H. CASTLE, and B. JOLLIFFE, Colonel B. DRAPER, M.B.E., and Lt. Col. L.W. LEWER, D.S.O., Council officials attending were Mr. E.S. SHEPPARD (town clerk), Mr. J. AITCHISON (treasurer), Mr. W. ROWBOTHAM (surveyor) and Mr. R. LUGG (housing manager) and Mrs. LUGG. The British Legion was represented by the president (Commander W.O. Rees MILLINGTON C.C., T.C.) and Messrs. J.E. PRICE and W.B. STONE and the Women's Section by Mrs. Rees MILLINGTON (chairman) and Mesdames H. GLADDIS, F.M. FEW, I. GOSDEN, I. WILLIS, D. LODDER, T. WRIGHT, and P. STAY (standard-bearer).

Others present included Mr. V.A. VARDY (I.W. Society for the Blind), Mrs. SPENCE BROWNING (ex-V.A.D. at St. Dunstan's), Miss E.H. MOSS (Ryde District Nursing Association), Mr. and Mrs. R.H. CLARKE (J.P. CLARKE and Sons), Mr. ROBINSON (National Provincial Bank), Mr. R.J. COTTER (Southern Vectis Omnibus Company) and Mesdames B. LAVERS and F. MATTHEWS (Ryde Food Office). The many friends attending included Mr. S.A. PORTER of Newport, who was in the same prisoner-of-war camp in Turkey.

There were 33 floral tributes, including tokens from Lt. Col. Sir Ian FRASER, C.B.E., M.P., on behalf of blinded officers and men of St. Dunstan's; the British Legion; the British Legion Women's Section; the Ryde town clerk and staff; Ryde branch of N.A.L.G.O.; past and present members of Ryde Food Office; the Municipal Workers' Social Club, staff of J.P. CLERK (Ryde) Ltd, manager and staff of W. COLLIS and Co.; S. PHILLIPS and the chair staff Ryde Front; and "The Taxi Boys."

Messrs. WHEELER Bros. Made the arrangements.

### **An Appreciation**

The Mayor of Ryde (Mr. W.A. CHRISTY J.P., C.C.) writes :

Paddy DOYLE is dead and a very gallant gentleman he was has passed to the "other side." Although his health had not been good for several years, the end came suddenly, and it is hard to realise that we shall no longer see that familiar trim figure moving so confidently about the town and hear the cheery greeting "My your'e looking bonny !"

Blinded deliberately by the Turks after the capture in the 1914-18 war, Paddy never became bitter, and even when obviously unwell his invariable reply was "There are plenty of folk worse off than me." But those who took pride Paddy of an unerring insight into human values. He was a sure judge of character, and what is especially rare these days, he never failed to deal with every situation faithfully and fearlessly as it occurred. How much accumulated mistrust and bitterness and how many crises might we not save if the same could be said of each one of us to-day ?

Passing through St. Dunstan's in the early days of his blindness, he mastered the training so thoroughly that for some time he travelled up and down the country speaking on behalf of the society, but the continued challenge of unfamiliar surroundings became a strain, and in the late twenties he and Mrs. DOYLE settled in Ryde. His kiosk by the Canoe Lake in the summer has become a familiar sight to thousands of residents and visitors alike, though shortage of supplies made it impossible in recent years for him to open on more than one or two days a week. Immediately after the last war, as a mark of affection and respect, his many friends presented him with a new kiosk to replace the one previously in use, and the Borough Council allowed him the free use of his Sandy Slip site.

During the last war he raised many hundreds of pounds for charities, and did much to help young Service men by organising weekly dances at the Town Hall. His genius for handling situations never showed more clearly than at his dances at the Town Hall. Bling though he was, he was always in complete control, and no-one, officer or ranker, who attempted to ignore the simple regulations he laid down was ever likely to forget the experience or to repeat it. It was one of his proudest moments to be asked by St. Dunstan's to visit a group of war blinded civilians who were finding rehabilitation especially difficult, and we may be surer that in some measure he passed to them his own rare courage and hope.

Whenever life has seemed difficult or one has been tempted to feel discouraged, just to think of Paddy has been at once a reproach and an inspiration. To his countless friends life will never be quite the same again without his cheery voice and smile, but the memory of his life and example will make better men and women of all who were privileged to know him.

(Also in the I.W. Times Thursday January 3<sup>rd</sup> 1952 no further information).

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