

# Tribute to Arthur St. George Tucker

Arthur St. George Tucker, M.B.E., founder and retired superintendent of the Nonsuch Training School, passed away at the English-Speaking Union, Cedar Avenue, on Thursday, December 21, 1961.

He was born on March 15, 1896, at Sackville, Nova Scotia, the third child and second son of the Reverend (later Canon) Arthur Tudor Tucker and Elizabeth Christiana (Mathers) Tucker. When he was eight months old the family removed to Bermuda and settled on St. David's Island where his father was curate to the then rector, the Rev. Frederick Lightbourn. He was educated at the little school conducted by Miss Lizzie and Miss Janie Frith and later attended St. George's Grammar School.

At the age of 15 he became an apprentice on a ship plying between London and the West Indies. Upon the outbreak of World War I he attempted to join the London-Scottish Regiment but was turned down. Nothing daunted, he jumped ship in Demerara and, after hiding for three weeks in the jungle, worked his way to England and joined the Royal Navy as a gunner. He served first upon H.M.S. Victory and later upon H.M.S. Lurcher where he was seriously wounded in the Battle of Jutland. He was later transferred to the Canadian Navy and invalided out in 1918. He then rejoined the merchant marine and continued to sail until, owing to rheumatic fever, he was forced to abandon the sea in 1927.

In the same year he was married to Elsie Green of London, with whom he had been corresponding ever since the war, and three months later the couple removed to Nonsuch Island where they were in charge of the quarantine station under the Health Department. Later two boys who were deemed too young to be sent to prison were placed in their care, and Mr. Tucker conceived the idea of a training school for young delinquents run along such lines as would turn out good citizens. It took a long time but on January 1, 1934, the famous and unique Nonsuch Training School was officially opened. The school, — which was in truth a ship

ashore — was operated completely on naval lines, the boys standing watches, wearing uniforms and being instructed in navigation, seamanship and in various trades and skills which have stood many of them in good stead in later life.

In time the school became a spiritual powerhouse which generated currents which are felt in the island to this day. Over and over one hears: "Where would I be today if it hadn't been for Mr. and Mrs. Tucker?"

In 1942 Mr. Alexander Paterson, His Majesty's Commissioner of Prisons for England and Wales wrote in the visitors' book, "Nonsuch must be one of the most remarkable schools in the Empire. It has courage and resource associated with the real spirit of the pioneer. I trust it may receive the wholehearted support of the courts and the community."

Shortly after the end of World War II the school removed to Paget Island in St. George's Harbour. The work flourished but in June, 1958, ill health forced Mr. Tucker to retire from his beloved school. For a short time he worked for the Committee for the Blind — a work which he enjoyed very much but he was soon too ill to continue. Always a devout man, he bore his last year with patience and courage.

The funeral took place at the Cathedral on Saturday morning at 9 a.m. where a requiem was said by His Lordship, the Bishop of Bermuda. Canon Manning, Canon Residency, received the body at the door where he recited the usual sentences and after the requiem the Bishop and canon preceded the body to the hearse. While the people were being seated the organist played the Ave Maria, and at the close of the service the hymn "The King of Love My Shepherd Is" was sung. The bearers were:— The chairman of the Royal Naval Association, Mr. Herbert E. Siggins; Mr. Thomas Hall also of the Royal Naval Association; Mr. Leon Smith; Mr. Arthur Butterfield; Mr. Geoffrey Stiles and Mr. Albert Perinchief.

The funeral service at St. George's, at St. Peter's Church at 10.30 was taken by the rector, the Rev. Keith Harman and the Rev. G. E. Evison, priest-in-charge at St. David's. The hymns were "Praise My Soul The King of Heaven" and "Eternal Father." The bearers were Mr. Lloyd Clifford, Mr. Haskins Davis, Mr. Arthur Leighton, Pilot George Green, Col. Brownlow Tucker and Mr. R. A. Aldrich Sr. Interment was in the family lot in the Church of England cemetery, North Shore, St. George's.

Mr. Tucker is survived by his wife Elsie Green Tucker, one son — Arthur Tudor Tucker of Hamilton, Bermuda a daughter, Isoble Ann (Tucker) Swan and son-in-law John Swan of Westchester, Pa., one sister Mrs. P. W. G. Shelley of Paget, and two brothers, Edmund Richard Harvey Tucker M.B.E. of Toronto, Canada, and Leonard Nigel (Dickie) Tucker, M.B.E., of Paget.

(Contributed).