



## EXONIANA DO YOU REMEMBER?

Exonians have always been explorers at heart, whether dissecting ideas in the classroom or taking Harkness on the road and overseas. Can you identify any of the people or places in the photos and share some of your own globe-trotting memories from your Exeter days? Mail your responses to Exoniana, c/o *The Exeter Bulletin*, Phillips Exeter Academy, Communications Office, 20 Main Street, Exeter, NH 03833. Entries may be edited for length and clarity.

### ANSWERS TO THE LAST ISSUE:

The spirit of *non sibi* was easily recognized by several Exonians who identified the students shoveling snow in the railway yards of Lawrence, MA, and those who scavenged for cardboard—all part of the relief efforts of World War II. One Exonian even noted that John Knowles '45 took artistic license and used the shoveling, of which he had firsthand experience, as a memorable rail yard scene in his novel, *A Separate Peace*.

### AND THE WINNER IS:

**MAURICE "MICKEY" D. O'CONNELL '46; P'72** of Toledo, OH, who received a PEA-engraved leather notepad.

"I believe the picture [of the boys on the truck] was taken in the fall of 1944. Starting on the left is George Gorham '45 and Philo Lange '46; P'75. On top of the truck is Mickey O'Connell '46; P'72, and, in the rear, I'm not sure but I think it is Peck Jennings '45. The driver was Mr. Kesler '47 (Hon.); P'58, P'60, P'67. Coming around to the front is Tom Dignan '45, Dave Abbot '45 and Dan Walker '45. On the far right is Mel Dickenson '45; P'80. The picture was taken on a Sunday afternoon when the Christian Fraternity was picking up waste cardboard and paper from

the various dorms to contribute toward the war effort.

"I am confident about the identification of the individuals except for who I suspect is Peck Jennings. Mr. Kesler, as you may know, was then an instructor in German and English, coach of the varsity lacrosse team and later dean and vice principal of the Academy. He was a magnificent man.

"Dan Walker, Mel Dickenson and I were lieutenants in the Marine Corps in the Korean War. Philo Lange, now deceased, a graduate of West Point, was captain of the 1945 Exeter football team and co-captain with me of the 1946 Exeter lacrosse team. Mel Dickenson was captain of the 1945 varsity lacrosse team."

### A CALL TO SHOVELERS

Based on the pictures alone, I should judge that they all have to do with service to our country or to our community.

I *do* remember the first one. I think it was the winter of 1941-42, and there had been a serious snowstorm that shut down the rail yards of the nearby Boston and Maine Railroad.

A call went out to Exeter students to help in clearing those yards. I was among those who volunteered and worked the first day in the Portsmouth yards and the next day in the Haverhill (I



*Exeter's World War II relief efforts were well-remembered by Exonians.*

## AROUND THE TABLE



think) train yards. The railroad provided our transportation.

They even paid us for our work—50 cents an hour, as I recall—a munificent sum in those days. I don't think I worked a third day.

Amusing [aside]: My mother and the mother of a friend were coming up to visit via train and were somewhat scornful when they saw us leaning on our shovels as they passed through the yard. It did not occur to them that standing by the side of the tracks when a train passed was, quite simply, a safety measure.

*Russell Hunter Ph.D. '43  
Beverly Hills, CA*

### SORE BACKS

The photo from the 1943 *PEAN* in the winter *Bulletin* is not only an interesting piece of Exoniana but it also illuminates a bit of American literary history.

When a blizzard shut down the Boston and Maine Railroad in the winter of 1943, a call went out for student snow-shovelers to dig out the rail yards of Lawrence, Haverhill and Portsmouth. The usual peacetime laborers weren't available, of course. They were fighting in North Africa and in the Solomon Islands, or were working in New England's war industries.

The Academy brass substituted shoveling for compulsory athletics for several days, and we students cheered when we learned we'd be paid for our contribution to the PEA war effort. And so this student brigade entrained for Lawrence. (My memory says that the executive-looking student facing the camera in the rear of the picture is Richard "Chief" Miller '43, a well-known footballer of the era.) With sore backs and full wallets, members of the Academy's swimming teams—including a talented breaststroker, John Knowles '45—were welcomed back to the gym's pool by a decidedly grumpy coach, Dan Fowler. His doctrine decreed that "hard" muscles derived from shoveling, or any other kind of weight-training, ruined a swimmer. His sentence: weeks of extra duty in the pool. Each day we had to "pull, kick and swim" dozens more laps than our soft-muscled teammates.

Jack Knowles had the last laugh. His shoveling experience became the memorable rail yard scene in his highly successful novel, *A Separate Peace*, published in 1959. His sense of artistic license added a fiction-



al troop train chuffing through the icy pathway prepared by prep-py laborers on its way to the real war. To my mind, this sequence was the high point of the film based on a memorable book.

*Jake Underhill '44; P'69  
Cocoa, FL*

### DIGGING UP MEMORIES

The latest *Bulletin* arrived and I hasten to send some partial answers. The top-left picture is of Exeter students shoveling snow in the crippled railway yards of Lawrence, MA. We were enlisted to dig out the yards because of the war's effect on manpower. A special train brought us down and back—we were paid, but I do not recall how much. The top-right picture is of Robert Kesler and his group of scavengers during a World War II-inspired scrap drive.

Reading from the hood of the truck: George Gorham, Philo Lange, Mickey O'Connell and Kesler behind the wheel. I don't know the person on the back side, but then on the rear it's Dave Abbot, Danny Walker and Mel Dickenson. Bracing up the back front is a true gentleman, Tom Dignan. They aren't all with us now, but thanks for the memories.

*Joseph "Joe" F. Palmer '45  
South Harwich, MA*

*Editor's note: Congratulations to Joe Palmer for winning the second prize.*

### PEOPLE REMEMBERED

Shoveling snow after a big storm: Teacher Bill Clark '45 ("The Bull"), football coach.

Doing a cleanup for The Christian Society: George Gorham, Philo Lange, Dave Abbot, Dan Walker, Mel Dickenson, Tommy Dignan and Mr. Kesler.

*Charles C. Harwood '45  
Portola Valley, CA*

## TWO CONTEST WINNERS EVERY TIME!

**There will be two prizes awarded for the correct answer to the Exoniana contest. One prize will be for the first correct answer received via delivery by the U.S. Postal Service. The rest of the correct answers will be placed into a drawing and one winner will be chosen at random.**