

MR. MALCOLM G. SHARPE

On Saturday, April 17th, the Association was represented at the funeral of Mr. Malcolm G. Sharpe, and a wreath from the residents of Selsdon was placed "In grateful memory of a true friend and benefactor."

To old members his name was familiar. The landscape around reminded us of his contribution to the common wealth of Croydon, Sanderstead and Selsdon. It was proper that on his passing Selsdon should acknowledge a debt that can never be repaid, and it is desirable that the new residents who have come to enjoy the views from the Croham Hurst, the Littleheath Woods and the peace of the Bird Sanctuary should know something of a truly remarkable man.

Mr. Sharpe came to Croydon in 1895. He was on the Preservation Committee of Croham Hurst, which was purchased for the public in 1901. Purley Beeches was acquired through his activities in 1907. South Hawke, Woldingham, and the extension of Kenley Common were secured by committees on which he served. Selsdon Wood nature reserve began with a gift of five acres of Court Wood by Surrey Garden Village Trust, and the purchase of 110 acres in 1924 by a committee under Mr. Sharpe's chairmanship. The lovely field "David's Crook" and further areas were added, and an area of 200 acres finally handed over to the National Trust.

The purchase of Littleheath Woods, first proposed by Mr. Sharpe in 1928, was brought to success in 1931 through his sustained effort. Hesitant local councils had to be persuaded, the hard of heart and infirm of purpose overcome. It may not be widely known that the original Selsdon lay-out showed Queenhill Road extended through Gee Wood.

During these years of saving and giving Mr. Sharpe compiled a record of the public rights of way in the area between Croydon and Godstone, about 170 square miles. He was honorary treasurer for Kent and Surrey to the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation

Society, member of the National Society for the Protection of Birds, the Coulsdon and Purley Citizens' Advice Bureau, and a member of the executive of the National Trust for the Preservation of Places of Historic Interest and Natural Beauty. His election later to the Council of the National Trust was an honour that he valued.

Here indeed was a great man, so modest that few were aware of his accomplishments. No public speaker, his rare interventions in debate were always received with respectful attention. The decision finally reached was usually the course he had urged. A tireless secretary and most punctual correspondent, he had the uncommon quality of forgetting and effacing himself in the cause. It is good to have seen one who in his middle seventies would undertake the 'bus journey to Purley on a winter evening on public business. Quiet, wise and good, his eyes were lifted to the hills. The strength which he drew has enriched us all in the heritage he has bequeathed.

A.J.H.

"SAVE EUROPE NOW"

As a direct result of an appeal in the February issue of the "Gazette" for discarded clothing and footwear for the distressed people of Europe, twelve sacks of clothing have been dispatched to the "Friends' Relief Service," Euston Road, London, by Mr. and Mrs. Sharpe, of 69, Farley Road, Selsdon, who express their sincere appreciation, and have kindly consented to continue to receive articles of clothing, which should be clean, but need not be repaired. Between July, 1945, and May, 1947, the Friends' Service have sent over two million garments in 13,907 bales, weighing 780 tons, to eight European countries.

Advertisements for inclusion in the July issue of the "Selsdon Gazette" should be received by the Advertisement Manager not later than June 10th. Please mention the "Gazette" when writing to advertisers.