



In the Mind's Eye: The Blinded Veterans of St Dunstan's

David Castleton

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Discover the stories of the men and women who sacrificed their sight for their country. Since 1915 St Dunstan's (now Blind Veterans UK) has helped thousands of war-blinded men and women to rejoin society and live their lives to the full. This compelling book includes new research from the St Dunstan's archive and previously untold stories of the people, both blind and sighted, involved in the charity during the First and Second World Wars. St Dunstan's was founded by Sir Arthur Pearson, a blind press baron determined to prove that the blind could make a valuable contribution to society. Early St Dunstaners played football against Arsenal; learned to read braille, type, row and even shoot; and trained for new careers as masseurs, carpenters, switchboard operators and gardeners. As PR officer at St Dunstan's for 35 years, David Castleton worked with many of the men and women whose stories he tells in his book, and provides a unique insight into their achievements. Meet irrepressible Tommy Milligan, who lost his sight just months after enlisting on his eighteenth birthday, and Ian Fraser, blinded on the Somme, but later president of St Dunstan's. David Bell, who lost his hands and sight in a North African mine-field, yet found hope and a wife at St Dunstan's. War-blinded servicewomen also joined the charity during the Second World War, including 22-year-old Gwen Obern, blinded and maimed in a factory accident but later famed for her singing, and ATS sergeant Barbara Bell, who became a top physiotherapist.

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