



Age 3.



Age 12.



Age 16



Age 19.



## INTRODUCTION.

John Russell Greaves, only son of Canon and Mrs R.S.Greaves ( née Spokes ) was born at All Souls' Vicarage, Clapton, on November 27th 1918. He spent most of his boyhood in Beckenham, where in St Barnabas' Vicarage he grew up under the shadow of the Church.

His preparatory school was Clare House, Beckenham, but at an early age he joined the Junior House of Ardingly College, and remained at Ardingly until 1937. His Headmaster wrote- "John was indeed one of the best products of Ardingly. . . His power of leadership was such that he was chosen as Head Prefect, and did his job well. In 1937 came his great triumph when he passed by open competition into one of the last places at Sandhurst. The severity of the life here brought out the metal in him, and when he joined the Indian Army, he found himself in his element."

He loved the open air, and the happiest holidays of his boyhood were spent in a sports shirt and cord shorts camping, hiking in Cornwall, or climbing the mountains of Wales and Cumbria. In 1938 he ended a camping holiday on Lundy Island by sending his kit home and taking a twelve days' trip as a deck hand on a trawler.

He delighted in the Vicarage garden, and was always ready to take a hand in improving it; the more difficult and strenuous the job, the better he liked it. Indoors, his favourite haunt was the "Carpentry Room" with its bench and tools, where many happy evenings were spent.





Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1939.

"Good-bye, Dad. I'll bet  
I'm a Colonel before you're  
a Bishop."



When he left School, he stood over six feet high, weighed twelve stone seven, and was "fighting fit". He boxed in the heavy-weight class at Sandhurst, and played a good game of Association Football; but although he keenly admired "toughness", he abhorred anything in the nature of bullying, and always showed the greatest tenderness to the little and helpless, or to the old and feeble. There, I think, was the secret of his popularity both at School and in his home parish. He was musical, with a good baritone voice, and a real appreciation of music and poetry, though rather shy about the ~~latter~~ latter with a schoolboy's self consciousness.

His religion was very real to him. Coming as he did from a Vicarage home, he learned to look upon the practise of religion as an essential part of everyday life, and in his adolescence learned to discriminate between religion and religiosity. There is little doubt that the faith he learned in childhood stood him in good stead in India and Burma.

He had a great sense of humour, and a keen appreciation of the tragic-comic side of so much that he saw in Parish life.

He died at the age of twenty-three, and the following copy of his correspondence from the Far East, and of the letters received in connexion with his death will describe the three last years of his life.

God rest his soul.

Bill Greaves .