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BIRTHDAY MESSAGE FROM THE HONORARY DIRECTOR

EVER since April, 1940, members of the W.L.A. have had their own magazine. Through the LAND GIRL we have got to know each other, and the member in Cornwall or Devon has heard of the work being done by volunteers in Scotland or Wales or Northumberland. The milker has learnt of the trials and tribulations of the tomato grower, the thresher has been able to appreciate the skill of the rat catcher; we have realised that the care needed in hoeing is no less than that necessary to the successful rearing of calves or shepherding of sheep.

The views of Volunteers, their enthusiasms, their needs, their talents and their ideas have been collected through "our book" and made known to all of us.

Our spirits, which may sometimes have flagged, have been raised by the accounts of work done by others and over and over again we have been put right by the articles on the front page signed "M. A. P.," which are written by our editor. Have we thought the war was won? we have been reminded that our efforts must go on. Have we grumbled that life is hard? our share in the struggle has been put before us in its proper perspective. Have we been taking a gloomy view? we have been made to see that there is a funny side to most things, even to our own efforts. I say "we" because I believe that all of us—volunteers, local Representatives and people concerned with the administration of the organisation, have received encouragement from our magazine.

So I think that on this, the fourth birthday of the LAND GIRL, you will agree that it is right that I should take the space which is generally filled by M. A. P. in order to thank her for the magazine for which she is responsible and to express our gratitude to all those who have contributed to it and also to the many who have made it known and distributed it in the counties. We hope that our pleasure and profit are a sufficient reward for the generous help they give.

G. Denman.

THE COUNTRY THAT IS NOT FARMING

Written for the LAND GIRL

By the Editor of "The Countryman"

All work and no play, etc. But life in the country is not confined to work and play, that is if, when you say work you mean your daily work.

It is divisible into different kinds of work, and play, and I am sure that one can often get more satisfaction out of different kinds of work than out of some kinds of play. Nothing is so certain as that if you have no relief from your ordinary work but play, life will not go as well as it might do. The secret is to have different kinds of work. Of course, some of that work may be regarded as recreation.

To be any good at music or at acting, for instance, one undoubtedly has to work, and work hard.

By the way, there are few districts now in which there are not people with whom one can work to advantage at both music and acting; in whatever part of the country I have lived I have been surprised at the amount of real dramatic talent there is. You see it manifesting itself in the most unexpected quarters, and certainly the notion that we are essentially an unmusical people is absurd. All we want is the opportunity and the incitement.

Plays and concerts, of course, are not easy to manage in War-time, with transport the difficulty it is, but it is wonderful what can be done. It is wonderful even what can be done with an all-women cast. One of the most enjoyable performances, in an amateurish way, of 'The Importance of Being Ernest' I have attended was done entirely by girls. They adopted a convention of netting their hair and one soon forgot that all the players were women. The performance was particularly convincing to me because the Carmen and one of the principle male characters were members of my staff whom I was seeing every day.

But what I had in mind when I began this article was to suggest that there are two departments of life in the country which might interest you, apart from working at different arts. One is wild life, and the other is the way the countryside is governed. An interest in wild life cannot be simulated; one either has the interest or one has not. It is, however, an interest that can be developed, and happily there are at hand the means of developing it. First, inexpensive and well-written books; second, talks over the wireless, which are not all at impossible

hours. A list of books, some of which you may be able to borrow or buy is printed at the end of this article.

With regard to borrowing, you realise, of course, that every county council has a circulating library, the headquarters of which are at the county offices. Boxes of books are sent into the villages and changed as often as practicable in War-time. These books are in the hands of branch librarians, and a postcard to the Librarian, County Library, County offices, at your county town will bring you the address of the nearest one. Please do realise that when these books are not frequently changed it is usually the fault of the local people, and if the books are not just what are wanted it is also the fault of the local people, for there are plenty of books in all departments of literature available. I know what I am talking about because I have been for many years the chairman of the library committee of my own County Council.

The other thing that would help to make life in the country more interesting for you is to take some interest in the way in which the county is governed, or, shall we say, in local administration generally. To begin with there are, of course, the different types of schools. The educational system, as you know, is at present in the melting pot, and is, therefore, particularly interesting. You will often find schoolmistresses and schoolmasters, not only the staff at the elementary schools, but at the secondary schools, people of character and attainments.

As to local administration, it begins, of course, with the parish council in every parish with a population of over 200. Below 200 they have only a parish meeting, which is held every Spring under Act of Parliament. The parish meeting cannot do much beyond blowing off steam, but the parish council has some powers. You are free to attend the meetings, the annual meeting of the parish meeting and the meeting at which the parish council is elected.

Some parish councils take themselves seriously and do a good deal. You must remember, of course, that women are as eligible for membership as men.

A number of parishes form a rural district council area. During the War no elections are being made to either rural district councils or county councils, but

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the rural district councils hold their fortnightly or monthly meetings, and the county councils their quarterly meetings as usual. The rural district council meets at the little market town, and although it is unusual for strangers to attend they have a right to be present. For the rural district council women are again eligible. On my own council there are seven or eight women, and it is in the power of a rural district council to add women to its housing committee who have not been elected, but are likely to be useful. Housing, of course, is a very big question. Already some new type cottages are being built and very soon their number will be greatly added to. Without decent houses, well lighted, providing sufficient accommodation, and having water and electricity, there is little hope of parents of farm-worker families being able to convince their offspring that as good a life can be lived in the country as in the town.

The rural district councils impose the rates and have to do with housing, water supplies and health, and through a committee, they run what used to be called workhouses but are now known as poor law institutions.

The county councils are miniature parliaments and consist of councillors, some of whom are chosen as aldermen. Women

are eligible to be councillors and aldermen. The main work is done by committees. There are any number of committees, and these committees have sub-committees. They look after education, roads, public health, agriculture, public assistance, mental hospitals, and local taxation. There is always a public gallery and usually a few people in it. At the councils many people learn a good deal which comes in handy if they stand for Parliament. Every year the machinery of local government is being perfected, and during the next year or two considerable improvements will be made.

I have gone on long enough to show you that the countryside is full of interests beyond the daily work on the farm. Of course, I have not spoken of the hundred and one societies which exist. Even in peace time it is very difficult to find really idle people in the country: as someone said, most people seem to be either going to or coming from a committee.

I. W. Robertson Scott.

* The Observer's Book of British Wild Flowers," by W. J. Stokoe; Ditto "Birds," by S. Vere Benson; Ditto "Wild Animals," by W. J. Stokoe; Ditto "Trees and Shrubs, etc.," by W. J. Stokoe, are published by Warne, and can be obtained through any bookseller. Their pre-war price was 2s. 6d., but this has been advanced to something like 4s. A book which is more expensive but has the advantage that it covers all the ground in one volume is "Wild Life Through the Year," by Richard Morse (Black, 7s. 6d.).



Off duty at Ayr club in Scotland.

ON DRYING GRASS

At Hollingbury Grass Drying Plant Brighton seven land girls are employed together with several men. Each girl's work is equally important, and each can, and often does, take over another's job from time to time. Most of us started work here before the Drying Plant was completely built, and so we have had an added interest in watching its improvements and making a success of it.

Although it is near the town, the plant stands in the middle of a woodland and seems as much in the country as the smallest farm. At first there was no road to it, and many were the punctures in trailer tyres. Now the road is made, and water is laid on to a comfortable mess room, a great boon especially as I know what it is like to have to eat my dinner in a draughty barn.

The Plant is worked in two shifts, 6. a.m.—2. p.m. and 2. p.m.—10. p.m., a man and two girls being on each shift. The rest of the staff work a single shift, 7.30. a.m.—5. p.m., doing the outside work, that is, collecting materials such as grass, cavings, clover etc., to be dried. These are collected by lorries with girls as lorry drivers' mates. In summer time the grass is dried. Girls using various types of mowers cut the grass on golf courses, playing fields etc. We have several types of mowers, so that if one breaks down another can be used whilst repairs are being done.

One type is a Rotocytne and is worked by a power take off from the tractor. Two others are driven by motors, and another is based on the same idea as an ordinary lawn-mower. They are all drawn by tractors. Each mower is connected to a trailer into which the grass is automatically thrown when it is cut. The full trailers are easily detached and replaced by empty ones.

The cut grass is taken by lorry to the Drying Plant. At the Plant the grass is loaded on to a table and fed on a miniature elevator which takes it into a huge revolving drum where it is dried by heat drawn through it from a furnace. When it is thoroughly dry the grass is drawn by an electric fan into a mill where it is ground into a fine powder, and then to the sacks attached to the machine. The grass meal thus made looks like fine green flour. The sacks are weighed and labelled, some being 28lb, some 37½ lb, and some 56lb., but none heavier, so they are easily moved.

During the winter when no mowing is done, Glume meal is made by the same process as the grass meal, from cavings. This gives us an opportunity of coming in contact with the girls who work on farms, especially threshing gangs.

When the meal is sold it is often sent long distances by rail. Then it means "all hands on deck" to get the sacks moved to the railway trucks ready for transport, and sometimes 20 to 30 tons are despatched at a time. Both grass and Glume meal by the way are used to feed cattle.

The Grass Dryer will have completed its first year at the end of April, so once again we are harrowing and fertilising ground to make sure we have a good crop of grass in the summer. Time for us passes so happily and quickly, and men and girls all work together without disagreement.

E. Sussex.

E. Parker, 75479.

WINTER COMPETITION

Entries in the *Arts and Crafts* sections reached such a high standard that it has been decided to arrange a small exhibition in London when the new Land Army club and hostel is opened. Competitors whose entries are chosen for final judgment at this exhibition will be informed and the date will be announced in the May LAND GIRL.

In the *Literary* section, two competitors were in a class by themselves. Both come from Warwickshire; it is tempting to add one more theory to the innumerable explanations of Shakespeare's genius, by suggesting that it was really all due to the air of the county—or can he have affected it so profoundly that it has never been the same place since? Anyhow, the three poems and two articles by **P. White (46666)** and the sketch by **A. Coats (2026)** are awarded one guinea each. "Country Memories" and "The Epitaph" by P. White are printed in this issue. "That There Apple" by A. Coats is too long to print but it is hoped to quote at least one lyric from it in a subsequent issue.

A prize of 10s. 6d. goes to **M. Spencer (50717)** Yorks W.R. for her vividly written and charmingly illustrated Diary. She has a sense of humour and handwriting which is a Judge's joy. Diaries from **D. Abbott (104076)**, Warwicks; **L. Newell (38355)**, Dorset; **N. Jesty (71662)**, Cornwall (this was a continuation of last year's good effort) were all interesting and each of them illustrated the determination and undaunted good humour with which members of the L.A. tackle their jobs

however varied and however difficult, and the spirit and interest they show in out-of-work activities.

Other entries highly commended are "Nocturne" by Anne Dupuy (16683), Scotland, poems by S. Steffen (39996), Worcs, R. Clayton-Barker (22658), Somerset and A. P. White (117517), Hants, and amusing parodies and verses by F. Wildish (90824), Cornwall, D. Sims (80597), Yorks and E. P. Stedman (83782) Northants.

There were a great many poems and verse entries, besides essays, a Nativity Play, a sketch about John Clare (the Northamptonshire peasant-poet) and some short stories, two of which concerned the lost and re-found loves of airmen and another the sad tale of Lucy, the Land Girl, "who wore [at work] large imitation ear-rings, rather too much make-up" and ended up as a murdered corpse in the mangold grave.

For *After the War* Essays.

R. Clayton Barker (Somerset), N. Copin (Kent), M. Mitchell (Hants), M. Oram (Westmorland), J. Ryder (Cheshire), and J. Whitfield (Yorks, W.R.) share the three prizes offered equally.

A report on this competition will appear next month.

BIRD COMPETITION

Many of the entries were so excellent that judging was most difficult, and extra prizes have been awarded. A few competitors lost marks through over-stepping the word limit. Some mentioned as many as fifty birds, thus leaving little space for personal observation, while others concentrated too much on only a few birds, not giving a general impression. The first prize-winner gives a good account of the many birds in her district, while the second excels in personal observation, as did the third. The fourth struck a happy medium, while a special prize goes to another competitor whose account of rearing a young rook is too good to be overlooked.

Now I suggest that you all keep a bird note-book throughout the year, ready for a new competition next winter, in which personal observation will take pride of place.

Prizes.—1, B. Puzey Dorset; 2, G. Lyster, Wilts; 3, B. Jones, Surrey; 4, D. Thornton, Somerset; 5, V. St Leger, Glamorgan.

Very Highly Commended.—D. Abbott, B. Ash (Warwicks), L. Clark (Rutland), M. Gilham (Berks), S. Goldup (Kent), B. Lazell (E. Sussex), B. Mackerness (Dorset), P. Phillips (W. Sussex), O. Schofield (Yorks, N.R.), J. Spurgin (Hants). 14 others were commended.

DIARY OF A RED ARMLET—11.

Monday.—Milked and mixed up the afternoon cows' grub, then down to the brook. They have now cleared more than half of it and I was put on to carting away the hawthorn stumps and then going on with hedge slashing and burning the results. Lovely bright morning and the work and fires kept me from being preoccupied by the bitter cold. I do like all this part down by the brook. Arum lilies are now poking up under the hedges.

Tuesday.—Down to the brook again, this time burning only small stuff. Seem to be a few rabbits about still, tracks and spoor in the hedge bottoms, and an old snare, probably one of Pinner's

Wednesday.—Milking and cow's grub, but then helping Frank mend the very decrepit distributor. I had thought it was going for scrap! Three hours' chipping away with a chisel and hammer made little difference to the appearance but at least the major parts now work and Frank is full of optimism. Spent the afternoon helping him drill holes in a steel plate for the bottom. How I should hate being neat and clean in an office now!

Thursday.—Finished the distributor job and Johnnie took it off up the quarry, with 30 cwt. of basic slag and his oldest overalls. He came back as I was milking, filthy from head to foot, and sneaked my washing water to get some of the worst of it off. Persuaded me to take a ticket for his Prisoner of War Concert; his brother is now Chief Interpreter at Stalag VIII B and is again working in the Sugar Beet Factory. Red Cross meeting at Rectory Farm at seven o'clock. Mrs. C. again, this time refreshing our memories about bed-making. Calling for volunteers to help her, the young idea stepped forward. Glad young Joan made a good showing. A male team did the next sheet-changing demonstration with young Colin nipping about and being as neat-handed as any pro! If only he'd show the same agility when called at 6.30 a.m.

Friday.—Milking and cows' grub and then straw carting all by myself, to the horse yard, much to Maggie's disgust as I tied her up in the stable to avoid the inevitable steeplechase all round the farm. She's a nice little mare and her foal should be coming along some time this month. Funny that she and her grandmother, old Pet, are great friends, whereas she has no use for Bunty, her mother. New library books arrived this afternoon;

spent an exciting half-hour putting them out on the shelves and taking an armful home for personal investigation over the week-end. Eleanor Farjeon's "Golden Coney" caused me a late supper as I couldn't put it down. Cobbett's "Rural Rides" promises some good solid reading; index shows quite a lot about our part of the country, as well as parts of Hants, Wilts and other places I know well.

Saturday.—Odd jobs morning for the week-end. Sprouts nearly finished now. The next job will be slashing the stalks before ploughing them in. To the shop after dinner for stamps, boracic ointment for Bill's many wounds—he is an unlucky cat, yet won't run away, bless him. Mated *Whilhelmina* and *Lop-eared*; only four young bunnies coming along for the pot now.

Sunday.—Sawed off the stump of the damson tree over the ditch; now the willow can have it all to himself, and very charming he looks. Watercress beginning to show signs of growth now. Orchard full of primroses and violets, and chaffinches singing all out.

W.L.A. 9600.

"I was rather amazed at the high standard of efficiency of most of the girls who entered for the tests, they nearly all had a sound working knowledge of the proper care and maintenance of both the tractors and agricultural implements in their care. In addition to taking a great pride in their outfits, they were keen on their work, which it was a great pleasure to judge." *Mr. Durbin, County Machinery Instructor at Hampshire Tractor Driving Proficiency Tests.*

The high spot of the Essex drive for the Benevolent Fund will be the Brains Trust on April 21st. This will take place in the Shire Hall, Chelmsford and will be broadcast to Canada. Donald McCullough will be Question Master and the following will take part: the Rt Hon. R. A. Butler M.P., (President of the Board of Education), J. H. Knowles (President, N.F.U.) T. H. Hodgson (Secretary, Transport and General Workers' Union) and L. Easterbrook.

On a form applying for release from her factory, a Durham worker gave as her reason "Have been a bad time-keeper as I am unable to get up in the mornings so will join the Women's Land Army."

This quarter's cover design is by E. Zierer, 30971, (Oxfordshire).

"MARY, MARY"

"Please meet at Roundhay Park Potting Shed at 10.0. a.m., on Monday next, to take the Land Army Proficiency Test in Outdoor Gardening and Glass-house Work."

The notice made us smile—my partner had spent her pre-Land Army days as general factotum in a Gown Shop, and I had been employed as secretary in an Engineering Works, so this was certainly our first invitation to a Potting Shed.

Saturday and Sunday were spent as anxiously as in our schooldays, looking forward to a hockey match and attempting to charm the weather to be kind, but when we met on the station platform on Monday morning the countryside presented a perfect spectacle of Alpine scenery, lovely to look at but definitely not "what the gardener ordered." Roundhay Park looked just as white, although the sun obliged by coming out in full force on the 11 entrants at the Potting Shed door.

Our examiner led us to a marked-out piece of ground and eleven spades were soon slicing into the snow covered soil, taking out the first 2ft. trench. By the time we completed double digging our separate 10ft. by 20ft. plots the snow had practically melted, and we were told to prepare the ground for seed bed, half to be sown with peas. All the time we worked, our examiner walked round asking questions and generally finding out if we knew the why and wherefore of the particular job we were doing.

We had a good look round the other girls' work before going up to the potting shed, where mounds of soil, leaf mould an empty box and lettuce seedlings were paced out on the bench, and before pricking off, the made-up boxes were carefully inspected. When this job was completed, we were given six tomato plants to pot up. These were carefully up-turned to see if they had been done correctly.

Lunch made a welcome interval, after which came the oral test. We were called in turn into one of the hottest green-houses imaginable, and asked questions relating to the practical work and our daily work. It is one thing to mix a compost for tomatoes and another to give full details as to how and why.

As we ran down to the tram, still boiling from the greenhouse, we wondered whether we had passed; this morning we heard we had been successful, and we shall perhaps be admitted someday into the "realms where true gardeners go and grow."

Yorks, W.R.

C. Wilson, 27542.

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Sheila Sim as Alison Smith, W.L.A.

A Canterbury Tale is the title of a forthcoming film which will be of special interest to members of the Land Army because the heroine is a member of the W.L.A. The part is taken by Sheila Sim who herself did land work in Worcestershire early in the war.

The story is original and interesting and will appeal particularly to the many volunteers who, through their war time calling, have discovered the beauty and interest of our country. The scene is mostly laid in a village of Kent and the star is Eric Portman who gave such a brilliant performance as the U boat Commander in **49th Parallel**. The date of release is not yet fixed but keep your eyes open so that you don't miss **A Canterbury Tale** when it appears.

FARMING AT HOME

My sister and I joined the Land Army in October, 1939, and worked on a farm in Gloucestershire. I in the dairy and Stella as stockman, but we helped one another with our T.T. herd of 50 cows, reared all the calves and most of the pigs, with very gratifying results.

But in March last we went back to Kent, where we are now learning a lot about fruit and market gardening. It is all as nice as it could be, but we missed the animals so much that we determined

to get some of our own. Stella bought three acres of land and we started with five hens, which laid 30 eggs a week through the Spring, and produced two hatchings of ducks and one of chicks. We also have three goats, supplying some of our neighbours with milk, 12 pigs, four rabbits and a donkey and cart—to say nothing of five cats. The donkey is the pet of the village and if we had listened to all the good advice received concerning her, she would have been killed with kindness long ago.

Stella is also the founder, organiser and secretary of the local pig club which in six months has grown to 20 members. They are all very thrilled with their pigs but will not be persuaded to keep them until they are a good ten score or so and really worth something. Still, we live in hopes of sending a really good batch of baconers to the factory in due course.

In our spare time, after putting in the regulation 50 hours plus overtime during the harvest, we have cropped our garden of half an acre; I have a greenhouse full of tomatoes, and have made about 50 lb. of jam and some pickles. Unfortunately our flower garden has suffered badly, but we are hoping for better luck next time!

E. Kent.

N. Coppin, 25120.

COUNTRY MEMORIES

When I was fourteen we began spending summers in a ramshackle hut on a canal bank in Warwickshire. After three years I knew that bit of country minutely, wasps' nests and all. It had been my first experience of "sleeping out"; I had seen moorhens, kingfishers, partridges, dragonflies; been "wooding," mushrooming, blackberrying—very annoying when the juiciest berries fell into the canal as one was reaching for them—and plodded through the wet, early morning lanes for the milk. I had become a connoisseur of dew and mist, which lay long on the flat Warwickshire meadows.

At the student stage I was sent to Malvern Wells after an illness, and thereafter went to Malvern for odd weeks throughout the year. How little, I found, did the hilltops alter with the seasons! I learnt to walk up and down hills; I explored the rough land towards Ledbury, finding there a herd of deer, and mistletoe growing on old thorn-trees; I saw the wild cherry-blossom on the way to St. Anne's Well, and autumnal bracken on the hill-slopes. What a vantage-point from which to observe weather—especially thunderstorms—was the Worcester-shire Beacon!

At nineteen I went flax-pulling in Somerset. I know of no more beautiful crop than flax among which to spend long days. In the midday rest I lay and looked up at the trunks of pines, at dawn I bathed naked in a mill-pool, and some nights I walked or was driven through the moon-drenched country. The next year I picked plums near Pershore, choosing to work on the high ladder so that I might have the happiness of poking my head out above a whole waving orchard.

I began to spend time at Kinver as I had previously spent it at Malvern. It was still the misty, pretty country to which I was accustomed, but with more of the element of surprise: the escarpment (Kinver Edge), the caves and rock-houses, the steep, sometimes rocky lanes. There was the stretch of heather on the plateau, the circular clearing in a wood—I thought it a natural theatre—the canal with one high, wooded bank. I loved it very faithfully until my first post took me within reach of the Lake District. There, week-end after week-end, I tramped: first through the rich countryside of Lorton Vale, where week by week I saw different wild flowers, and then into Lakeland proper. It was my first experience of clear, mountain air. I ex-

plored the infinite variety of the Lakes, from the stark majesty of Westwater to the reedy softness of Rydal; and came to love especially Ullswater and Crummock Water. The only lakes which I failed to appreciate were the more southerly ones—Windermere and Conistone—I suspect because I had had my fill in the Midlands of merely pretty country.

I swam in the clear brown water of the Lakes; I slept out one night near Scale Force, on another in Crummock Woods; I tramped over Honister Hause, watching the landscape open out as I followed the road of rough, loose stones; I rejoiced in the splash of colour made by wild rhododendrons at the edge of Ullswater; and always when up on the fells I sought for the glimpse of sea which somehow unified the whole.

EPITAPH

She was a helpmeet and a mother; loved Her garden, music, art;

Was tolerant; faced life with steadfast courage:

She leaves no counterpart.

Warwicks. P. White, 46666.

"Guerilla" by Lord Dunsany. (Heinemann 8s. 6d.)

When poets write novels the result often has a peculiar charm. Lord Dunsany's "Guerilla" is no exception, even though common sense tells one that guerilla warfare must be a particularly ugly business. There is indeed no shortage of violent death in the story, and yet its atmosphere is somehow cool and soothing like the mountain air in which Hlinka and his little band hold out against the Nazi forces in the city below. Beyond the crude details of their bloody work, they are thinking constantly of "The Land" and its liberty, directly present with them in the beauty and freshness of their mountain home and its bracing hardships. "The Land" might be any of Hitler's less sophisticated victims and it is only in the last pages that there is a clue to its identity. But, for all its remote and fairy-tale quality, the delicate and sensitive treatment of human relationships makes "Guerilla" anything but unreal. It is also a good story, with a Buchan-like conclusion, after the Irish airman's radio message to Cairo, "Look for fifty men fishing for carp. If you're waking, call them. Mother dear."

M. Jaeger.

LAND GIRL—Balcombe Place, Haywards Heath, Sussex: 3s. a year, post-free.

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The Editor regrets that the appearance of some of the following poems and verses has been considerably delayed. Limitations of space unfortunately prevent the publication of more than a small proportion of contributions received.

Now that the daffodils
Swell green buds with promise of spring
And the blackthorn's rimed with blossom:
The gold crocus burns in the bare orchard; the lark
Sings and sings wordless in ecstasy
Delight too rare for a maker of rhymes.
While over the land where you lately ploughed
They are drilling corn, trailing your harrows
The blue smoke rises over the land.
And white smoke
From the trains, and from Ketton chimney, melts
Away to curdy cloud in the transparent sky.

I can see, here in the cool morning,
Sun on my face, wind in my hair,
Across the valley the light spread softly
Veiling the bare lands, and the sky,
Veiling the planes, and the fantastic village
Like a dream on the other hill.
Above that hill Orion stood last night
Proud and straight, and I thought of you
Standing as confident, your eyes lifted
With mine, staring up at the crowded sky.
That now, intent on earth, have forgotten
The shared ecstasy the lark carols,
And we were dumb to tell.

Rutland.

M. Cook, 75820.

As I gaze around at rolling fields on either side
A feeling swells within me of overwhelming pride.
To think that golden, waving corn was seed I helped
to sow—
To think that tidy stack was built with hay I helped
to mow—
It was my hoe that helped those cabbages to thrive—
Those wheel marks were indented by the tractor
that I drive
And everywhere I go I see the mark of my own
hand:
There's such a satisfaction got from working on
the land.

W. Sussex.

"Dot,"

A LOYAL HERD

Molly was a Land Girl who joined the A.T.S.
Thinking she would like the change from breeks to
battle dress.
But Molly was a Land Girl who very sadly erred
By thinking she could thus dismiss her erstwhile
dairy herd.

When Moll set forth for Middlesbrough, they fol-
lowed two by two.
And, led by Jane and Jennifer, they followed her
to Crewe.
The N.C.O. said "Blimey, there's been some mis-
take, I fear.
We may look rather funny, but this ain't no farm-
yard, dear."

Poor Molly tried to send them home, 'twas more
than she could do.
For miles around they filled the air with loud, dis-
cordant moo.
So Molly's still a Land Girl, milking cows from
morn to night.
And to those of us who know her, after all its
nobbut right.

Yorks, E.R.

E. Woodward, 1953.

It is pleasant to hear that in one coun-
ty, a Land Army Club has been much ap-
preciated by nurses from the United
States.

I love to clamber down,
And sit upon the wooden bridge
That spans the age-old stream,
Flowing so clear and cold,
And there to swing bare legs
And dabble toes in crystal depths.
On the banks primroses cluster
And violets soon will peep
Midst trailing ivy.
The spreading roots of trees are mossy
And form small caves where rabbits burrow.
Tufty grass and teal grow.
Ferns spread green leaves to water's edge
And the moorheens call.
The air is sweet and fresh.
For peace reigns here,
In this quiet English scene.
Unchanging through all time.

E. Sussex.

H. T. Beard, 5935.

ONE DIAMOND

Gentle breezes
Lambs at play,
Blossom time and
New mown hay—
Droning bees and
Drowsy heat
Azure skies
Nodding wheat.
Chilly dawns,
Blood-red leaves
Sunset glories—
Blackberries;
Silent snow and
Frozen ponds
Roaring fires—
Friendships' bonds.
Thus is found in
One short year
A Land Girl's real
Arcadia.

K. H. Lye, 55498.

Middlesex.

TWOPENCE IN THE BOX

Everything that we do wrong
If we talk after the gong
It's twopence in the box

Gaiters, boots must be in place.
Not thrown all over in disgrace—
It's twopence in the box.

Sandwiches to pack for the crew.
No smoking in the dormitories too—
It's twopence in the box.

When the lovers stop out late,
Then the Warden locks the gate—
It's twopence in the box.

This is how we lose our money.
You may laugh but it's not funny—
It's twopence in the box.

We may shout, we may curse,
But never mind, things could be worse
Than twopence in the box.

Worcs.

"Back Room Girls."

Wharfedale L.A. Club (Yorks) raised
£27 for the Salute the Soldier Fund by
a dance in March. No dance in this village
had ever raised so much money. Well
done. Wharfedale Land Girls.



L. Roberts, 68196, (Flintshire) and her dog, killed 73 rats in 1 hour, 40 minutes.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editor,

We were interested to read Mr. Macfarlane's letter. Many of us feel very strongly that this question has not been sufficiently stressed to draw the attention of all members of the W.L.A. A very smart uniform is ridiculed and scorned because some Volunteers have not the sense of decency to wear it properly. Here are typical examples of W.L.A. members frequently seen in this area (1) Mauve corduroy slacks—Pink satin blouse with collar turned over the Land Army overcoat. Fur boots. (2) Land Army breeches and stockings—Fancy blouse—civilian coat. Land Army hat stuck on the back of the head and tied on with a bootlace or ribbon (coloured). (3) Armlets literally hacked to pieces. Surely it is time *something* definite was done. No self respecting girl who has the honour to wear a uniform, Service or Civil defence, abuses the privilege of being a member of a Force of which she should be proud. Why then the Women's Land Army? Worcs. W.L.A. 54155.

Dear Editor,

The letter from an "outsider" in this month's LAND GIRL prompts us to write about a matter that has embarrassed us for a long time. We are not quite certain whether it is worse to see uni-

form mixed with civilian clothes or pink and white hair-ribbons worn with uniform. And as for hats turned up all round, worn on the back of the head and tied on with a bootlace—well, really!! May we point out that the photograph of 4 year volunteers in the same issue shows how uniform should be worn. We are sure that most L.G's. feel the same as we do, when they hear "outsiders" criticise the use we make of our uniform, and if all the others realised the fact they would not misuse it as they do. E. Kent. Spick and Span.

Dear Editor,

The following hints on the care of stockings may be helpful. When new, they should be washed and darned closely up and down the backs of heels with matching wool, leaving loops each end for shrinkage. On the inside of stockings, the tiniest piece of fabric should be taken up with each stitch, so that most of the wool is on the inside face. As stocking heels wear away from the INSIDE, it will be found that the darning wool will wear away leaving the fabric of the stocking unworn, when darning can be repeated. A pleasant job by the fireside in the evening when work is done. Wool from an old pair, unravelled, dampened and wound on cardboard to take out kinks, is excellent for darning. Berks. O. Wakeford, 40838.

THE LAND GIRL

The following is part of a letter from one of the first volunteers to go to the Torquay Rest-Break House, to her County Secretary.

It is really lovely here, we are right on top of a hill. The house is grand and has a lot of trees around and from the windows we can see for miles. It is lovely to be able to sit and write letters and look out of the window and see such a stretch of sea. It is quite a thrill to be the first ones here.

We have a lovely drawing room and dining room and we also have a games room. The beds are white enamel, and each one has a pretty patchwork quilt—also we have each got a rug made of knitted squares sewn together. They were sent from America.

The Americans from a nearby camp are going to invite us to a Dance, and also to their cinema which they have at their club.

It is so lovely here that you will have me asking if I can come again next year, and I know the other girls will be wanting to as well.

Sd: C. Bland, 38974

Dear Volunteers,

The National Savings Committee is now commencing the greatest of all British financial campaigns with a national target of £680,000,000. "Salute the Soldier" Week will soon be in full swing in your districts. Here is a grand opportunity for you, who have seen the ever growing strength of the British Army and who have fed the millions so successfully, to help still further by investing all your spare monies in War Savings. Back up the boys by taking an active part in the "Salute the Soldier" Campaign.

R. A. Ward, Chairman,
Agricultural War Savings Committee.

TRUTH ABOUT AGRICULTURE

Many members of the W.L.A. want to know the truth about what is called the "agricultural problem." They should read

THE LAND AND LIFE By MONTAGU FORDHAM

the textbook of the Rural Reconstruction Association. It will tell them what they want to know.

Price 4/- Published by Routledge

Obtainable from any library. It has been highly praised by the press. If you want any information write to Montagu Fordham, The Council Secretary of the Rural Reconstruction Association, at his private address, The Severals, Seagr Green, Beaconsfield, Bucks.

Dear Editor,

I heartily agree with the L.A. member who is so keen on clogs. In winter I wear nothing else but real clog boots and my feet are always dry and warm. I think if more Land Girls wore them, instead of the everlasting Wellingtons, there would be fewer complaints—
Lancs. A. Nuttall, 101542.

J. Coop (74076) is another Lancashire Volunteer who wears nothing else but clogs and finds them entirely satisfactory.

(The stuff to give the Editor)

Dear Editor,

Enclosed please find a good apology for a poem which I would like to see in the LAND GIRL. If you do the same to this effort as you did to the last I swear I'll never write another line, what a loss to the general public!

Kent. Yours in fun.

N. B.

P.S. My last effort was hushed up.

When washing a tie, put tacking stitches all round sides; this will fasten lining to outside and so prevent tie from losing its shape. Don't take stitches out till ironed. N. Eastham (57702) Lancs.

In the U.S.A., Mr. H. J. States, of Wyoming, has 800 hives of bees working over farms near Saratoga. Last year the bees produced 80,000 pounds of honey for market and 3,000 pounds of beeswax. There is no substitute for beeswax—practically all types of ammunition are coated with it and it is used by pharmacists and in chemical warfare. Beeswax neither expands in jungle heat nor cracks in the cold of aeroplanes at high altitudes.

Regretful apologies are offered to the last eight counties in the Employment Returns List in the March LAND GIRL. Unfortunately the Benevolent Fund Totals and number of Employed volunteers became inextricably mixed. There was not a single county which failed to send in its return in time for publication.

FOR SALE.—Black summer coat, bust 34 inches, good condition. Lees, Pitney Hill, Pitney, Taunton, Somerset.

WANTED.—Ladies riding coat. Bust 38. Height 5ft. 7ins., Marsden, South Wales Sanatorium, Talgarth, Nr. Brecon.

WANTED.—Riding Breeches, any condition. 22ins. to 24ins. waist. Tresson, Edwins Hall Farm, Woodham Ferrers, Nr. Chelmsford.

THE LAND GIRL

SCOTTISH NOTES

ABERDEEN and ELLON.—At a dance in Oldmeldrum organised by Mrs. Manson in aid of the W. & B. Fund several prizes were given including one for the best looking L.G. It must have been a job for the Judge to pick out the latter from so many!

ALFORD and DEESIDE.—Mary Hanton and Murial Duncan have helped splendidly this month to raise the total of W. & B. subscriptions.

AYRSHIRE (North).—The Craigie Dramatic Troupe (leader Miss Turner) gave their grand finale performance of the season at Kilmarnock to a large and enthusiastic audience. During an interval Mrs. Kennedy introduced Principal Paterson of the West of Scotland College who presented badges and armlets. Another Club has been started at Darvel, in a room very kindly provided, by Mrs. Findlay of Carnell.

AYRSHIRE (South).—A very successful Whist Drive organised by the hostel wardens was held at the Ayr Club in aid of the W. & B. Fund and a collection was taken for the same purpose at an Ice Rink Hockey Match by Sadie McNeill, M. Topping, B. Gardner and Jessie Kemp. The Ayr Club entertains a party of 'lonely' soldiers every Sunday night.

ARGYLLSHIRE (North).—Not in vain did Mary Ewing, 4688, lead a yearling Highland Bull round the Show Ring at Oban on a bitterly cold day, for An Gille Cuimte of Fanans ('The Neat Man') was put at the top of his class, and awarded the reserve Championship. In the Sale which followed he fetched 210 guineas (the highest price paid for a Highland Bull for many years) while the Champion sold for 130 gns. All credit to Mary who handled her charge in such a quiet efficient way.

ARGYLLSHIRE (South).—A dance in aid of the W. & B. Fund was organised by Miss Noble at Cairndow.

DUMFRIESHIRE.—The Rotarians of Dumfries had a very special treat at one of their recent meetings when Mrs. Ralston accompanied by Miss Savage and a trio of L.G.s, talked about the growth and work of the L.A. in the county. Mrs. Conn, until lately warden of Stroghuan Hostel, received a parting gift from the girls, presented by Susan Brown.

EAST FIFE.—By courtesy of the local Home Guard, L.G.s at Waterside Hostel held a dance in Wormit Hall in aid of the W. & B. Fund. Lathones had a grand party at which a sketch with much local colour was presented by the Misses Brown, Marven, Greig, Stewart and Meek.

KINCARDINESHIRE.—The local W.L.A. and Home Guard foregathered at a very enjoyable party arranged for them by the Ardoo W.R.I. An excellent programme of music, dancing etc., was provided and a vote of thanks to Miss Hunter and the members of the W.R.I. was proposed by the Rev. G. Alexander.

KIRKCUDBRIGHT.—The Castle Douglas Club, always enterprising, entertained over sixty soldiers at a party in the Town Hall. Dances have been held at different centres.

LANARKSHIRE (North).—G.S. badges were presented by Mr. Chapman, M.P. Under Secretary of State for Scotland, and Mrs. Monteith at a rally in Marlborough House, Glasgow, over which Mrs. Luke presided. There was a fine turn-out of girls; the tea was lovely and the entertainment was excellent. Successful dances for the W. & B. Fund were organised by Mrs. Couper at Steppes and by Mrs. Robb at Cambuslang.

MIDLOTHIAN.—The Edinburgh Club enjoyed a talk, with demonstration, on hairdressing given by an expert. The speaker stressed the need for a neat hair style with uniform.

ROSS-SHIRE.—Mrs. Munro organised dances, a concert and raffle at Polnicol in aid of the County Welfare Fund and Mrs. Cameron ran a whist drive, a dance and a raffle at Cromarty for the same purpose. All were financially, as well as socially, successful.

STIRLINGSHIRE.—Lady Stirling of Giorat presented G.S. badges at a party arranged in Glasgow for the girls in Miss Mickel's area. A Discussion Group has been started at Woodside Hostel. Dances in aid of the W. and B. Fund in Balfour and in Tullibody (arranged by Woodside.) were very successful.

WEST FIFE.—L.G.s. at Fernwoodlea Hostel assisted by the warden ran a very enjoyable and profitable dance in Oakley for the W. & B. Fund.

WIGTOWN.—A rally attended by girls from every corner of the county was held at Newton Stewart under the chairmanship of Mrs. McNeill. The Earl of Stair, Lord Lieutenant, who was accompanied by the Countess of Stair, presented G.S. badges. Afterwards there was a concert sustained entirely by W.L.A. talent and very good it was. A dance in the evening rounded off a red-letter day for the W.L.A. in Galloway. Kirkcolm Hostel, one of the newest in the county, ran a dance in the village hall, the proceeds of which are to go to the W. & B. Fund and the Hostel Welfare Fund. This hostel is determined to be the best in the county—a challenge to the rest!

BENEVOLENT FUND

On March 31st the fund totalled £65,431 12s 2d. The monthly total was £8,218 10s. 5d. **Kent** has the highest total of £6,578 19s. 10d. and **Herts** the highest monthly total of £2,771 14s. 11d.

Herts has gone up with a bang following the splendid result of their drive and **Kent** is again in the news having presented to the Fund a further £1,000 from their special effort in addition to the famous £5,000. Altogether this has been a bumper month with £482 from **Hants** including £75 as a result of a variety of entertainments in Mrs. Newnham-Davis's area and £70 raised by Mrs. Marsh's Whist Drive. Another £367 from **Norfolk** War Charities Fund; £315 from the **W. Riding** **Yorks**; £258 from **E. Sussex** including £60 from Lord De La Warr; £227 from **Devon**; another £110 from **Dorset** making a total of £210 from their draw and dance; £165 from **W. Suffolk** including almost £77 from the splendid dance organised by Mr. Thomas (a Land Army employer); £163 from **Somerset**; £100 from a flag day in **Cards** and **Carmes**; £76 from **Wores** drama performances and collecting tins. Seven land girls in **Denbigh** raised £40 at a dance and two splendid hostel efforts each brought in £50 from **Stratford-on-Avon** and **Brecon**. The latter was the result of four performances of a musical show by volunteers.

STOP PRESS.—£1,000 has been received from **Devon's** recent Flag Day.

COUNTY NEWS

BEDS.—The standard of proficiency in Tractor Driving, Milking, Dairy, and Poultry work tests has been high among the Volunteers, causing an alarming rise in demand among local farmers for W.L.A. labour. The candidates' conversation at one test was so technical that the judges gasped, and three of the Volunteers were asked to take part in an Agricultural Brains Trust the next day. Sharnbrook House, our beautiful new Hostel, which comes under the Historic Monuments of Britain opened on March 12th. and Mrs. Graham, our Chairman is giving a tea-party there shortly. Our Hostel at Hulcot Moors, which had already been in the news when it opened its doors to a stranded parachutist, was in the front line once more when everyone had to spend a night in the cellar when a loaded 'plane crashed within 100 yards of the House. It was daylight before the magnificent Bomb Disposal Squad came to rescue them.

We welcome Miss P. Ronn as our new Assistant Secretary. She replaces Miss D. Martin who is now Organiser in the North of the County. We wish them both success in their new posts.

THE LAND GIRL

BERKS.—All volunteers will be sorry to learn that Mrs. May will be relinquishing her post as County Secretary at the end of May. She has held this position in the Berkshire W.L.A. since its inception and has been unsparing in her work on behalf of its members.

Three fortnightly Courses for Forewomen and Charge Hands were held at Hewens Wood Hostel, Bradfield. 49 volunteers attended, out of which a large proportion passed the test and qualified, and have now started on these duties. A very interesting Warden's Conference was held at the County Office. All Wardens attended and many problems were discussed. Further Proficiency tests in Milking and Dairywork held in March resulted in all entrants passing, which was very gratifying, as a high standard was set by the Judges. Great interest was taken in the Outdoor Garden and Glasshouse work test, and a certain number of the entrants were successful.

Club activities are now coming to an end for the summer. Both the serious and the social side have been well catered for and the Benevolent Fund has benefited on several occasions from dances and whist drives.

BRECON & RADNOR.—Congratulations to 21 girls employed by the W.A.E.C. who have successfully completed the Tractor Maintenance Course at Slough. J. Mollard, M. Midgeley and D. Godfrey, of Yorkshire, all gained 92 per cent., which is the highest figure so far gained on this Course. During the last quarter of 1943 nearly £200 was collected for National Savings by the five hostels in Brecon & Radnor. Each hostel has its own Red Cross Penny-a-Week Fund which is well supported. Two excellent entertainments have been provided recently by the Maesllwch and Brecon Hostels. Maesllwch raised £24 for the Benevolent Fund by two performances that were greatly appreciated by visitors and L.G.s, and £50 for the same Fund was raised by Brecon Hostel as a result of four performances to some 1,700 persons. An immense amount of talent was shown by both hostels, and reflected the highest credit on both producers and girls for their hard work and excellent results.

BUCKS.—Concentrated efforts were made by Members of the Benevolent Fund Week with Dances, dramatic performances, whist drives, and Fun Fairs. One enterprising Land Girl, hairdresser before enrolment, raised £2 by practising her art on fellow-members, and another collected a considerable sum by cleaning shoes and boots for her co-workers! The Week culminated in a Flag Day in various districts. In High Wycombe a procession of W.L.A. Members, accompanied by tractors drawing various implements, and headed by both hostels, and reflected the highest credit on the Town Hall, where Major-General Sir Alfred Knox, M.P., for South Bucks, accompanied by the

Mayor of High Wycombe, took the salute. The total result of the Week cannot yet be announced, as several events could not take place until later in the month.

The first Proficiency Tests were held on March 18th, at the County Farm, Aylesbury, 12 girls entering for General Farm, and 4 for Field Work. The judges, Messrs. F. W. Hartop, J. W. Shirley, and W. A. Stewart, expressed great satisfaction with the high standard achieved by the girls, all of whom passed the test, 9 gaining distinction. Thanks are due to the officials of the B.W.A.E.C. for their co-operation, and especially to Miss C. Bodington, who conducted a correspondence course to help the girls in preparing for the tests.

CHESHIRE.—Congratulations to the 138 girls who passed their Proficiency Tests, 21 with Distinction. We are most grateful to the farmers and market gardeners who acted as host on each occasion, and to the visiting judges who were so helpful. At Mickle Trafford, the L.A. variety entertainment was most popular; we do not know what Widecombe L.G.s would have thought of the rendering of "Widecombe Fair," but it was most popular with the audience. The sketches were very well produced and acted. The Nantwich Club dance and Upton dance, in aid of the Benevolent Fund were both very successful. Dances have also been arranged by Macclesfield and Middlewich Clubs.

We were all very sorry to learn of the death this month of two of our volunteers, Miss D. Newport and Miss B. Gifford. Both these volunteers had excellent records, and will be a great loss to the Land Army.

CORNWALL.—We are holding a Benevolent Fund "Drive" in April and May, and every member has been asked to contribute something—either in money or effort—to raise our deplorably small total to something worth while. £1,000 has been mentioned as a target, and it is hoped that by the time these notes are in print all arrangements will be well in hand. There will be a prize for the most ingenious money-raising scheme devised, so here is a chance for volunteers with bright ideas. Donations to the Fund received recently include £25 from the Cornwall Branch of the N.F.U.; £10 from a whist drive by the W.L.A. Club at Bude, arranged by Mrs. Holtby; £9 8s. from a Fancy Dress dance held at Caerhays, probably the smallest parish in Cornwall; £26 from a dance at Lostwithiel, arranged by Miss Stephens; and £7, and £2 10s. from dances at Mullion and Newlyn East. At a very interesting Agricultural Bee held at Liskeard recently the Y.F.C. beat the W.L.A. by 47 points to 40 after a close competition. A miniature cup was given by Mrs. Babbage, District Representative, to the winning team, and it is hoped the W.L.A. will recover it at the return "match." Major Phillips and Mr. Thistlethwaite of the Ministry's expert staff in Pest-destruction conducted Proficiency Tests for the "Ratters" in February. Of 27 candidates, 23 passed and 11 won distinction.

CUM. & WES.—The second Forewomen's Training Course is in progress at Newton Rigg Agricultural Training School. The syllabus is comprehensive and includes lectures by L.A. Officials and concludes with a Brains Trust when general questions regarding a forewoman's job are both asked and answered by the Trainees. Next month the Westmorland Forewomen are to have a training course at the same place. A Representative from each of the four Westmorland Hostels had the opportunity of attending a week's Training Course for members of the Westmorland Y.F. Clubs. For this privilege we are indebted to the Westmorland Education Committee. There have been many successful efforts for the Benevolent Fund. 7 volunteers at Staveley in Westmorland raised the splendid sum of £21 14s. by a whist drive and dance and Millgrove Hostel's concert (repeated at Whitehaven) brought in £29 10s. for various causes. Four Clubs are



Mrs. Houston (County Secretary), W.A.E.C. Officers and Brecon volunteers who went to Slough.

formed. This is an achievement, as unless one knows these two counties, it is difficult to visualise the distances between the farms. The Keswick Club held its first meeting on March 11th, and enjoyed amongst other things a talk on Local History between the years 40,000 B.C. & 1944. Activities in the Hostels include Play readings, Brains Trusts, with the Army, Cooking Demonstrations, Leather work and Slipper making apart from the usual round of socials, dances and film shows, while a C.E.M.A. Tour is being arranged.

DENBIGH.—It has been quite a good month for the Benevolent Fund. The seven girls working at Llannerch Park take first place with their splendid contribution of £54 15s. 4d., the proceeds of a dance held at Trefnant on March 3rd. Miss Caldwell, an employee of the W.A.E.C. Machinery Department collected £1 9s. from the Machinery Yard and the W.A.E.C. Offices. Lectures for Proficiency Tests are being held twice weekly at the Ruthin, Abergele and Rhosnesney Hostels and 33 will be given in all. We are most grateful to the W.A.E.C., their Technical Officers, Miss Davies, of Llysfas, and Mr. E. G. E. Griffiths for giving us so much time and help. The Bersham Hostel is now being used as far as possible to accommodate all new-comers who are training at Wynnstay Home Farm, which has now become a training farm for employees of the W.A.E.C. under the instruction of Miss Satchwell, who has been a member of the L.A. for four years. We wish her success in her difficult and responsible job.

DERBYSHIRE.—Congratulations to Mrs. Daley 23877 and to Mrs. J. May 23864 on the award of 4 year armlets. Proficiency tests held up to the end of February have resulted in 23 candidates being successful, seven of these gaining a pass with distinction.

DEVON.—The Benevolent Fund must take pride of place. Miss Medley-Costin has won her bet with our Chairman, Lady St. Aubyn, that £1,000 would be raised between November 1943 and February 1944 and the target has been exceeded by at least £500. The net result of Flag Day is not yet in, but over £1,100 has been banked. Exeter's effort does not take place until July 21st. Dis-

trict Representatives deserve our grateful thanks. Particular mention must be made of Mrs. Dodds, Committee member for Torquay area, who raised nearly £300 in three weeks. Volunteers have raised over £500 by dances, socials, raffles, etc.

The very successful dance organised by the County Office brought in £164. 36 out of 44 entrants have passed Milking and Dairy tests, and 37 out of 47 have passed Pest Destruction tests held all over the County. Our very real thanks are due to all those farmers and their wives who entertained us to tea so lavishly on these afternoons. A very successful Supervisors' Week-end Course was held at Totnes, attended by 18 from Devon and 4 representatives from Cornwall, together with their Chairman and County Secretary, whom we were delighted to welcome for part of the Course. Twenty-five American farmers have recently toured Devon. They saw the Training Farm at Whimple and were entertained to tea. As a wind-up to their week's tour, a dinner and dance were arranged for them by volunteers at Cleve House, Exeter.

ESSEX.—Since our last Essex news, Mrs. Melville (who had been Assistant Secretary for two years) has left to join her husband. She is missed by staff and volunteers and we wish her the best of luck. Many volunteers have been successful in our first series of Proficiency Tests, several gaining distinction. More will be held in April and we hope Lady Denman will present the badges when she attends our Rally on May 6th.

Enormous preparations are taking place for our Benevolent Fund Drive, the Brains Trust being the outstanding feature. Essex County Services Cricket Club takes a keen interest in the Fund and have arranged 7 matches and 7 Dances. They are also helping start a Essex W.L.A. Cricket team and we have been challenged by the ladies N.F.S. team. S. McGovern, M. Statt and E. Funnell are the first three Essex W.A.C. Leaders who have been selected as travelling forewomen. We wish them every success in their splendid National service. In the issue of Mar. 10th, of the "Farmers' Weekly" we were very proud to see photographs of our Inter-District Hedging and Ditching Competitions which took place on 27th Feb. Four districts competed and were most favourably commented upon by the Judges.

Supervisors' Conference. On Feb. 25th Miss Olive Tritton (County Chairman) entertained 32 Wardens and Assistant Wardens in the County Hotel, Chelmsford when Miss Violet Tritton, for many years a worker in the East End Settlement, gave a most stirring address on "THE PART OF YOUTH IN PLANNING POST WAR RECONSTRUCTION." A very interesting discussion followed with an excellent tea provided very kindly by our County Chairman. An innovation was the forming of a Supervisors' Association.

FLINT.—A very enjoyable Leap Year Dance was held at the Assembly Rooms Prestatyn on Feb. 29th. It was regretted that more members were not able to attend and enjoy such a pleasant evening. Have members of the Rhyl & Prestatyn Areas any good suggestions to offer re future dances and entertainments?, if so, Mrs. Caswell, "Dingley" Prestatyn would like to hear from them.

HANTS.—Proficiency Tests in Tractor Driving and milking and general farm work have been held all over the county. Congratulations to all who passed and especially to the two volunteers who obtained 100 per cent., Mrs. Williams for tractor driving, and Miss Long for general farm work. The last two months has seen a big drive for the Benevolent Fund. The twenty four areas into which the county is divided were each set a target of £20 and a total of about £480 was expected. Up to date over £700 has been received and we still have to hear from six areas. Many congratulations to all those volunteers who have worked so hard. The Health and Beauty Lectures held in the Hostels this month have been so much appreciated that a further series is to be arranged for the Clubs.



A. Laycock, 29131 (Denbigh) recently awarded the B.E.M.

HERTS.—The Benevolent Fund week has been more successful than we dared hope. Committee Members, Local Representatives, Wardens and volunteers all made a terrific effort with the result that when on March 19th, Mr. Hedley Morgan received cheques at St. Albans Town Hall on behalf of the Fund, we were able to announce a total of over £2,800, with more contributions still to come. The Hostels alone raised over £1,000. The picture presented by Mrs. Rome for the hostel raising the greatest amount of money per girl in the hostel went to Lower Woodside, whose total was £135 which averaged £5 per girl. We were delighted to welcome Miss Moncrieff, Secretary of the Benevolent Fund, and were most grateful to her for giving up her well earned Sunday rest to be with us. We in the office are more than grateful to the willing workers in the villages, hostels and towns, who made our work so light. The methods used for raising the money are a saga in themselves and reflect enormous credit on the organisers.

Proficiency Tests.—Of 25 volunteers entering for Milking and Dairy, 22 passed, two with distinction, 13 out of 15 passed Garden and Glasshouse and all 7 who entered for General Farm, 6 with distinction.

HUNTS, CAMBS. & ELY.—54 volunteers have passed, 7 with distinction, Proficiency Tests in Cambs. and Hunts. Congratulations to everybody. There is a bumper entry of 58 for tests in the Isle of Ely. Our thanks are due to the W.A.E.C.'s in Hunts and Cambs. for their willing co-operation. In the case of the former, the Committee put Mill Farm, Gt. Gidding at our disposal so that all tests might be completed on the same day. Another very successful week's course in Field Work, Milking and Dairy was recently held in Buckden Towers by the Hunts. W.A.E.C. for girls in their employ. Demonstration lectures, films and visits to farms in the County were part of the programme and the girls learned such interesting work as repairing tarpaulins and maintenance of their bicycles! A new Club has been started at Snailwell, near Newmarket, and girls from W. Suffolk have been invited to join. Other clubs, at Fen Drayton, Wisbech and Bourn, are going well and the Wisbech club, especially, has met a great need. Alwalton (Hunts) has just formed a Y.F.C. and L.G.'s are on the Members' and Advisory Committees. Huntingdon Y.F.C. has proved very successful. Doddington and March Hostels had very successful Dinners, to which officials of the L.A. and the W.A.E.C. were invited, and between them raised £15 5s. for the Benevolent Fund. Other contributions come from Thorney Hutment Dance and from Miss Smithson and Miss Garrett who ran a Whist Drive in their village and raised £8 10s. 0d.

THE ISLE OF WIGHT continues to be a mid-get county. No dictator in the world could alter our frontiers, they are already dictated by the sea. Therefore we cannot expand very much, but for the size of the county our numbers are quite good. We are now trying to prove our worth by holding the National tests, the first of which, in dairy-work, takes place this month. Work is in full swing and we are very busy. In leisure time we have done what we can for the Welfare Fund with whist drives, concert parties, etc. Early in the year we had a successful dance in the Ryde Town Hall, and cleared £37 for the Fund. This dance and several smaller ones were entirely managed by W.L.A. members. Lately we had a very amusing and instructive evening with the Agricultural Brains Trust, Mr. Donald McCullough of the B.B.C. being the question-master. He told us it was the first time he had seen the faces of his audience, but he refrained from telling us what he thought of Island faces. He is a very polite man! Please note, if any member from another county is able in the future to spend her holiday here, we hope she will get into touch with us. We do like occasionally to get news from England.

E. KENT.—Proficiency Tests are in full swing. The Fruit Test was held at Borden on March 8th, and the General Farm Work Test on March 17th, at Brabourne. Many congratulations to L. White and R. Bernas who have obtained the badge for fruit, and J. Chantler, J. Cooper, L. Morris, P. Thornton, and P. Walker who were all successful in the General Farm Work Test. The Milking, Tractor and Poultry Tests will have been held by the time this issue appears—good luck to the candidates! We owe a very great debt of gratitude to Mr. Hart, Principal of the Kent Farm Institute, for organising the tests for us so efficiently, and to the judges for their painstaking work. Miss Thomas, W.L.A. 7, has again become a pioneer in E Kent by being the first W.L.A. volunteer to join the Home Guard. She and Miss Meier parade every Monday at Battalion H.Q. to work in the Intelligence Room, and find it very interesting. A very effective W.L.A. Stall was arranged by Mrs. Walker at the request of the Whistable War Horticultural Committee at their show in March. Among other talks given during the two days D. Godfrey (milk), L. Heath (Excavator driver) and J. Harris (fruit farming) each gave a resumé of their experiences on the land.

W. KENT.—Lady Violet Astor, the newly appointed Chairman of the Kent W.L.A. presided for the first time at the meeting of the County Committee on Feb. 29th receiving a hearty welcome.

Under the auspices of the Kent N.F.U. a Mass Meeting was held at Tonbridge on March 15th. The meeting was addressed by the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Hudson. It was good to see row after row of members of the W.L.A. listening with the utmost interest to the Minister's speech of three-quarters of an hour. The L.A. was also well represented on the platform. Lady Violet Astor, our Chairman, supported the vote of thanks to the Minister and Mrs. Heron Maxwell and the Hon. Mrs. Saeville Tufton were also present. The final result of the Kent N.F.U. contribution to the Benevolent and County Welfare Funds amounted to the magnificent sum of £2,500. Rainham Club ran a most successful evening in March for about 200 people. One of our girls has been fortunate enough to enjoy a fortnight at the Torquay Rest-Break House, where she has had a very happy time. We have several more girls on the waiting list. A would-be recruit writes to our Office as follows:—"I would very much like to join the Land Army, as I feel I must do something to impede the War effort!"

LEICS & RUT.—On March 5th, Leicester celebrated International Women's Day, which was started in America and has since been celebrated all over the world. There was a procession through the town, in which the L.A. was represented, the County Chairman, Lady Martin, was on the platform and a L.G. read a message to the women of China. Two new hostels for between 20 and 30 girls have been opened this month—Drayton House, near Market Harborough, and The Woodlands, Melton Mowbray. The first proficiency test was held in Rutland on March 21st, when eight volunteers entered for the tractor section. A high standard of efficiency was shown. L.G.'s, have been offered accommodation at the Victoria Hostel, 101, Granby Street, Leicester, price 3s. per night for bed and breakfast. A competition, which included ploughing, hedging and ditching, has been held in the Lutterworth area. Two of our girls went in for ploughing, and did quite well and two went in for ditching. They both did excellent work and won special prizes: one of them gained third prize along with a man. Mrs. West W.L.A. was the only woman entrant for hedge cutting. She won a special prize for merit, and one for L.G. entry. In their summing-up, the judges praised the high standard of the work of the L.A.

HOLLAND, Lincs.—Congratulations to P. Taylor, E. Harrison, K. Johnson, C. Mottram, E. Revell, for passing their Proficiency Test in Tractor

Driving with such high marks. The Test was held at Mr. Harold Bowser's farm at Swineshead on Feb. 8th, and all present enjoyed the day and thank Mrs. Bowser, our W.L.A. Representative for Swineshead, for entertaining judges, entrants and spectators to lunch and tea. Mrs. Boardman at Wyberton Rectory produced a Revue called "Bits and Pieces" at Boston at the end of January and W.L.A. members raised £15 for the Benevolent Fund. Mrs. F. Richardson (Representative for W.L.A. in Spalding billets) held the first of her monthly "At Homes" on February 8th. There was a good attendance. The Beetle Drive organised by Mrs. O. Turner, W.L.A. representative for Pinchbeck, on March 1st, was a great success, raising £16 for the Benevolent Fund. The dance held at Holbeach Drove Hostel raised £5 for the Benevolent Fund. We thank H.M. Inspectors of Taxes of Boston and Spalding for giving up so much of their valuable time to go to each of our hostels to explain the "Pay-as-you-earn" scheme of Income Tax to our members and to help them to fill up their returns.

KESTEVEN.—The Tea Talks held in our Hostels during January and February were much appreciated and well attended. The discussions which followed proved how eager Volunteers are, not only to increase their knowledge regarding their own particular work, but farming in general. W.A.E.C. officers who attended and gave talks were inundated with questions, and the County Secretary, who was present at each meeting, found a favourable opportunity to answer questions on W.L.A. procedure. Proficiency Tests in Poultry Keeping and Tractor Driving have been held. Our congratulations to the successful candidates, and in particular to the 8 tractor drivers who gained distinction. The Cookery Classes arranged at our North Kyme Hostel, with the Warden as demonstrator, have been enthusiastically supported. The Volunteers at Billingborough spent an enjoyable evening debating with three officers from the local unit of the Pioneer Corps, "Is a woman's place in the Home?"

Mrs. Podger, of the Central Council for Health Education, has made a very much appreciated tour of all our Hostels. Some very successful efforts have resulted in magnificent donations to the Benevolent Fund, Wellingore, leading with £47 and Stubton record with £20—Please help us to reach our self set target.

LINDSEY-LINCS.—Three more volunteers have earned their scarlet armlets for 4-year service; one of them has been in the same employment since her enrolment. This brings the county total to 12. "The Scattered Club" at Belsby has had three meetings, a debate on "Town versus Country" (which resulted in a draw), a demonstration on toy-making, and a lecture on "Russia by Mrs. Wintringham, County Chairman. Mrs. Wintringham also lectured on Russia to the club at Walesby, and this club, too, had a demonstration of toy-making. Owston Ferry Hostel has had a course of lectures on First Aid and is now having Cookery Classes. Brigg Hostel had Make and Mend Classes. Cumberworth Hostel has had a demonstration of soft toy-making, and West Butterwick of soft slipper-making. All the hostels have had a talk on health and beauty from the Council of Health Education and films are now doing a tour of the county. Most of the hostels had Christmas parties. Mr. Parker's hostel at Stonebridge Farm, North Coates gave one for all the farm children. The volunteers at Croxton went carol singing and, helped by the men of the farm in their Home Guard uniform, raised £7 10s. for the Benevolent Fund. A dance at Willingham, in November, raised £16 3s. for the Fund. M. Allen, 65542, is taking the Humberstone G.T.C. in First Aid and club swinging. The first Proficiency Tests in milking and in general farm work are to be held towards the end of March.

A Leaders Course for volunteers employed by the W.A.E.C. has been held at INGLEBY hostel—There was a short refresher course for the old Leaders.

County Returns

County	Ben.	F.	Total	Em- ployed
	£	s.	d.	
Kent ..	6578	19	10	3968
Essex ..	642	4	0	3588
Yorks, W.R.	713	7	8½	2336
Surrey ..	1449	13	5	2294
Herts. ..	3504	18	8	2060
Leics. 1786 }	1345	13	1	2052
Rut. 266 }	1768	10	6	2047
Hants. ..	1156	14	11	1993
E. Sussex ..	1208	8	5	1848
Worcs. ..	992	8	10	1820
Bucks. ..	1580	6	8	1769
Northants. ..	1057	3	10	1722
Somerset ..	2163	9	0	1692
Warwicks. ..	2364	17	11	1645
Devon ..	1821	14	1	1637
Norfolk ..	1822	14	5	1548
W. Sussex ..	1206	14	3	1491
Cheshire ..	715	14	7	1460
Lancs. ..	521	12	11	1424
Wilts. ..	237	4	3	1367
North'd ..	270	13	11	1290
Cornwall ..	364	15	0½	1277
Yorks, N.R.	350	3	9	1265
Notts. ..	1574	10	0	1211
Glos. ..	1021	1	0	1190
Berks. ..	665	9	11	1168
Hunts. 305 }	1216	7	7	1095
Camb. 534 }	661	14	0	1066
Ely 329 }	133	0	3	1028
E. Suffolk ..	738	8	11	982
Oxon. ..	603	18	2	967
Salop. ..	271	0	7	946
Beds. ..	397	7	10	896
Durham ..	547	14	1	882
Cumbs. & West.	813	12	10	846
Kesteven ..	349	10	8	748
Dorset ..	599	4	10	711
Staffs. ..	557	15	6	684
Glam. ..	915	8	11	629
Lindsey ..	1212	15	7	625
Hereford ..	370	15	4	593
W. Suffolk ..	345	7	11	592
Flint. ..	646	16	0	591
Denbighs. ..	572	19	1	586
Lon. & Middx.	1070	19	9	548
Mon. ..	626	1	9	543
N. Wales ..	668	1	2	541
Holland ..	628	9	3	401
Derby ..	509	3	5	354
Pembroke ..	95	15	6	339
Carms. & Cards.	243	19	4	298
I.O.W. ..	280	19	10	200
Brec. & Rad. ..	1151	14	7	3709
Mont. ..				
Timber Corps				

On March 31st there were 68,578 volunteers in employment.

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