



Vol. I.

SEPTEMBER 1947

No. 4.

EDITORIAL NOTES

SEPTEMBER is always a critical month in the farming year and Land Army members will remember the tragic autumn days of 1946 when farmers and farm workers, gazing at uncut fields and sodden sheaves, watched helplessly while the winter's food supply slowly but surely dwindled before their eyes. This year, though harvest prospects are brighter, the national outlook is dark indeed. The situation is as critical as ever it was in war-time, not excepting the days when the submarine campaign was at its height and the threat of invasion hung over us.

Though helping hands are held out to us by the countries of the Empire and America, we cannot and must not fail to realise that ultimately our recovery or failure to survive depends upon our own efforts and the speed and efficiency with which we do our work.

For members of the Women's Land Army the way lies clear. They need have no doubts as to whether their job is or is not of fundamental importance to the nation. They need not wonder whether they can be classed as Spivs or Drones. Every member who puts into her job all her energy and all her intelligence can go to bed each night confident that she has done her bit and done it well. If everyone does this it may be that we shall find ourselves free to eat as we like, go where we like and do what we like sooner than even the optimists among us at present dare to hope.

NEW WAGE RATES OF LAND ARMY MEMBERS

In our August number we mentioned a proposal to increase the minimum wage rates for men and women agricultural workers. The proposal has been accepted and confirmed by the Central Committee of the Agricultural Wages Board and the new rates took effect from Sunday, 31st August. The new minimum wages for women workers in agriculture, including members of the Women's Land Army, are, for a forty-eight hour week, 68s. for women of 21 and over, 63s. for those between 18 and 21 and 53s. for those between 17 and 18. In Cambridgeshire, Ely and the three Ridings of Yorkshire where the county week is forty-four hours, the minimum wage rates are 62s., 58s. and 49s. respectively.

As we foreshadowed in August, a national maximum board and lodging deduction has been fixed for workers provided with board and lodging by their employers. These rates for all counties are 27s., 25s. and 20s. for the three age groups mentioned above. Overtime

rates are also increased and are for all counties on weekdays 1s. 9d., 1s. 8d. and 1s. 5d. and on Sundays 2s. 2d., 2s. and 1s. 8d. The wage rates and board and lodging deductions for inexperienced workers during the first two months of their first employment remain unchanged at present. If any W.L.A. member is in doubt about what she should be receiving as a result of these increases, she should consult her county office or local representative.

Land Army members will appreciate these increases and we know we can count on them to give good value for the money they receive.

BENEVOLENT FUND

So many past and present members of the Land Army have helped to raise money for the Benevolent Fund that it may be of interest to them to know about the Fund's income and expenditure in relation to its work.

Since the Fund was started in 1942, members and friends of the Land Army have raised approximately £160,000. This achievement has been realised in a variety of ways such as, entertainments, flag days and by private subscriptions. The nation's interest in the wellbeing of the Land Army has been shown by grants received from H.M. Treasury totalling £160,000. In earlier days, when every effort was being made to raise a really adequate fund, money flowed in faster than it could be used and the Committee of the Benevolent Fund decided to invest some of this money so that it might earn interest. These investments have already brought in another £10,000.

By the very nature of its work the calls on the Fund are many and the expenditure high. How many people realise that the Fund is at present spending approximately £1,000 per week by giving grants and loans to members and ex-members who need assistance? Already over £125,000 has been paid out in this way, and the applications continue to come in. During the war, two Rest Break Houses were generously maintained by a gift of money from the U.S.A. When this money was exhausted the Benevolent Fund accepted the financial responsibility for the upkeep of these two houses. One of them will be closing shortly, but the other will remain open to meet the needs of serving members of the Land Army. The Fund also pays the fees for all girls who go to Ashton Wold for convalescence. In addition it maintains the W.L.A. London Club, and gives a free training in Homecraft, plus a pocket money allowance, to those members of the Land Army who wish to fit themselves for domestic responsibilities when their work in the Land Army is completed. All this has so far used up over £150,000 and so long as there is a Land Army the Committee of Management of the Fund hopes to be able to meet the calls which are made upon it. The Committee wishes to thank all those members and friends of the Land Army who have recently worked to raise additional funds, and regrets that the space available in LAND ARMY NEWS rarely permits the acknowledgment of individual efforts.

LANDGIRL'S LIBRARY

The Postal Bookshop section of Landsman's Library is now in operation. This section has many functions—new and secondhand copies of books listed in the Library catalogues, small booklets, advisory leaflets, etc., are stocked for sale; book tokens are exchanged, farming magazines are supplied and so on.

There are special terms for land girls who join the Library—instead of making a £1 prepayment they need send only 9s. Members of the Library are offered two special services. One is a "Books on Approval" scheme for the purchase of new books, and the other a "Joint Subscription" scheme applying to magazines that are expensive and/or hard to obtain. For full particulars apply to the Manager, LANDSMAN'S LIBRARY, Applegarth Studios, Augustine Road, London, W.14.

Four years ago a special service for Lammaside was broadcast from Warnham Parish Church, Sussex. Subsequently the Young Farmers' Clubs in Sussex asked for services for Plough Sunday and for Rogation-tide; and the Women's Land Army asked for a Harvest Thanksgiving Service. A booklet written by the Rev. D. L. Couper, Rector of Crawley, Sussex, and entitled "Country Services" has recently been published to meet the needs of those who work on the land. It costs 9d. and can be obtained only from Farmer and Stockbreeder Ltd., Dorset House, Stamford Street, London, S.E.1.

"Housing the Country Worker" by Michael F. Tilley, A.R.I.B.A. (Faber and Faber, 12s. 6d.), is the title of an interesting new book on a very important subject.

CONGRATULATIONS

To E. James, 168021, Somerset, who rescued pedigree bulls when the farm buildings caught fire.

And to D. White, 61189, Cambs., who has won the three guinea prize awarded to the W.L.A. employee on the farm gaining the highest number of marks in the County of Cambridge Clean Milk Competition, 1947.

And to M. Major, 117699, who has done extremely well during her year at Bicton, Devon, and has won first prize for efficiency.

And to J. Crockford, 143549, Hants., who has obtained a certificate from the College of Estate Management for dairy work. Miss Crockford is chairman of the Andover District Y.F.C. and helped to start the Abbots Ann branch. She is chairman of the public speaking team of her Y.F.C. which this year was second in the County Shield competition.

And to Eva Knott, 179477, Hants., a new recruit, who after less than a month in the W.L.A. was given the privilege of leading prize cattle in the ring at the Lyndhurst Show.

Have you told your representative what form of recreation or education you would like provided in the winter?

THE WOOD AND THE TREES

By H. L. Edlin, B.Sc., of H.M. Forestry Commission.

During the war years the work of the Women's Land Army Timber Corps gained a great deal of publicity and much well-merited praise. Now so much of our standing timber has been felled that the Home Timber Production Department of the Board of Trade is speedily reducing the scope of its operations, and has brought the Women's Timber Corps organisation to an end. Tree felling and sawmilling are again almost entirely in the hands of private firms, who have many skilled workmen available and seldom employ women workers in the woods. For many years to come women's main share in British forestry will be in the rebuilding of our timber stocks by replanting and extending the woodlands.

Even whilst the war-time fellings were in full swing, the Forestry Commission, which is the Government department charged with the creation and conservation of the country's stocks of growing timber, was actively making preparations for a great post-war extension of tree planting. Foreseeing the need for many millions of young trees to fill the thousands of acres cleared by tree felling, it expanded the area of its nurseries and recruited labour to tend the young seedlings and transplants. Some four years must elapse between the sowing of the seed and the lifting of a young tree large enough to stand planting out in the forest, and so the forester must always plan his work for several years ahead. Although much of the heavier work in the nurseries is now done by machinery, the tiny trees, which range from less than one inch to a few feet in height, have still to be weeded and transplanted by hand. Women have always shown an aptitude for this work, and a large proportion of those employed in the Forestry Commission's nurseries today are Land Army members.

In 1943 the Forestry Commission published its proposals for post-war planting, which have since received the general approval of His Majesty's Government. Briefly the plan is to establish, during the next fifty years, a total of five million acres of productive forests. These will occupy one-tenth of our land area and produce one-third of our timber needs, leaving two-thirds to be imported. Although we already have three million acres of woodlands, so much of this area has been mismanaged in the past that before the war we imported more than nine-tenths of the timber we used; even the pit props essential for our coal supplies came from abroad. The Commission proposes to restore two million acres of these woods to full productivity; they are spread over all the counties of Great Britain, so that every part of the country will play its part in re-establishing our forest industry, and share in the prosperity that that will bring. After deducting one million acres of former woodland that cannot be made productive because it is required for other essential purposes, or lies in small scattered blocks, this leaves three million acres of new forests to be created on land of little or no agricultural value.

The Commission has already afforested nearly half a million acres of such rough land, with considerable success. Much of it lies in the Highlands and Southern Uplands of Scotland, the moors and fells of Cumberland and Northumberland, and the mountains of Wales, though there are also heathy wastes in East Anglia and the South of England. Inevitably some sheep have had to leave the hills to make way for the spreading ranks of trees, but good farm land has not been afforested, and far more men are needed to tend the woodlands than to herd the sheep. Indeed, at many forests it will soon be necessary to build new villages to house the people that the trees have brought back to the empty valleys. Most of the trees planted on this new land are conifers—pine, spruce, larch or various kinds of fir, because they are the only trees to form a satisfactory first crop on exposed sites

with poor soil and because we use far more of their *softwood* than the *hardwood* that the broadleaved trees produce. But oak, ash, and sycamore are being planted on the better woodland soils, with beech on the chalk downs.

Work for Land Army members under the Forestry Commission is nearly all of a labouring character though it is often skilled and can be highly interesting. Pay, hours, and general conditions are governed by the Agricultural Wages Orders for each county. There are very few supervisory posts available, as most of these are held by men who have completed a course of training lasting three years or more, and have obtained permanent posts as Foresters or Forest Officers, which are not open to women applicants. The ordinary worker has to carry out jobs that vary with the seasons and the weather, and at many forests she will enjoy a constant change of scene and occupation.

Nursery work starts with the gathering of seeds in autumn from the forest floor, or cones from felled pines or larches. In spring the seed is carefully sown in prepared beds and all through the summer the seedlings must be weeded—a tedious job at times, but essential. During the winter months the seedlings are transplanted to another nursery bed, and the older trees are lifted from the ground, counted, graded, and carefully packed for transport to the forest. All this work, and the many other nursery jobs, are carefully organised, and at every large nursery provision is made for working under shelter during rough weather.

Though the trim and orderly nursery beds appeal most to some, others prefer the woods where there may be brush-wood to clear and burn, in readiness for planting out the young trees during winter and spring. In the summer the new tree crop is weeded or cleaned, with reaping hooks or billhooks, to free it from competing plant growth. At a later stage some or all of the young trees will have their side branches removed with a saw in order to give cleaner timber and to lessen fire risks. Then there may be small trees to cut out in thinning operations, and these will probably have to be sawn up by hand or by power driven saws, into lengths suitable for stakes or pit props. In some wooded districts such traditional crafts as hurdle-making and hoop making are still carried on, and it is interesting to find that in Thomas Hardy's day the oak bark used in Dorset for tanning leather was harvested by women workers, who also cut the hazel that spars still used by farmers for thatching their ricks.

"Fire watching" is a task that Land Army members still have to perform, for at every forest a constant watch is maintained in dry weather, often from a tall tower or other good viewpoint. Now and again one may have the excitement of an actual fire, when all hands have to rush to the outbreak and beat the blaze with birch brooms to check its spread.

Some senior ex-members of the Women's Timber Corps, who during the war served as acquisition officers, pole selectors, forewomen and chief measurers, have recently been recruited as surveyors for the Forestry Commission's Census Branch. They have undertaken the task of completing within the next two years a detailed record of every wood in Britain of over five acres in extent, giving particulars of the type of crop, age, proportion of different species of trees, area and condition. The information derived from this census, after it has been sorted and analysed, will reveal the extent of the devastation caused in British woodlands by six years of war-time felling and will form a basis for plans of restoration and for various research projects.

Those who work in the woods have the satisfaction of creating something that will endure for scores of years, for even after the tall trees have risen to their prime and been laid low to make way for others, the timber they yield will continue to make men's homes sturdy and weatherproof, or enhance their beauty if it is used for fine craftwork or furniture. And to raise a forest successfully it

is necessary to understand all the natural lore of the countryside, the secrets of the seasons and the weather, the history of the deep rocks and the surface soil, and the intricate life stories of the plants that thrive beneath the forest giants or compete with their seedlings for the sunlight. Birds, four-footed beasts, and insects all attract the attention of the forester, for certain of them may destroy or save his crop, and the naturalist knows no richer field for his studies. So the forest offers, besides the freedom and freshness that go with every kind of outdoor work, the reward of creating lasting wealth and beauty.

PASTURES NEW

Vacancies

Dorset. Capable worker required to take charge of dairy on 850 acre farm near Sherborne. (Machine milking.) 250 pedigree cattle, including 120 T.T. Ayrshire cows. Farm supplies milk to two schools. Salary £3 10s. p.w. rising to £4 10s.

Monmouth. Member required to live with family near Monmouth. Share comfortable flat in house with herds-woman (aged 28) and assist with Gascoigne machine milking and dairy work. Small herd of Red Polls. Salary to start £2 2s. 6d. p.w. resident, to be increased as herd grows.

East Sussex. Two experienced members wanted to take charge of Jersey and Shorthorn herds (35-40, including 18-20 in milk) on 500 acre farm. Hand milking and dairy work with other seasonal work. Salary £4 p.w. to start. Accommodation free unfurnished cottage on estate.

Worcestershire. Two members required for pedigree Guernsey herd (40 including 16 in milk) on home farm of large estate near Tewkesbury. Salary according to experience. Accommodation in private house on estate.

Flintshire. Forewoman with experience in horticulture required to take charge of 30 W.L.A. market gardeners near Chester. Must be capable of taking responsibility. Salary 5s. p.w. above minimum. Hostel accommodation.

Shropshire. Member required on 12½ acre market garden at Worfield, Bridgnorth, for intensive Cloche and Dutch Light cultivation, vegetables and commercial flower growing. Hostel accommodation.

Dorset. Poultrywoman required for 200 R.I.R. near Sherborne. Member between 20 and 30 preferred with experience of incubator work. Salary £2 10s. p.w. resident with family in modernised cottage.

The following are two interesting jobs for which Land Army members can apply who qualify for a willing release by virtue of length of service:—

East Sussex. Private gardener required for flowers and vegetables, near Alfriston. Also small orchard. Salary £3 10s. p.w. Billet accommodation.

North Wales. Vacancy for gardener at Harlech to live with lady in modern private house, plan and cultivate garden. Driver preferred as lady is partially crippled but has car. Salary by arrangement.

Posts Wanted

Lancashire member, just completed Vocational Training Course with satisfactory report, wants post in general farmwork, specialising in cattle and horse breeding—preferably in southern county. Willing to do a little milking but does not wish to concentrate on dairy side.

Herefordshire member, with good report from Training Institute, wants at end of September a machine milking and dairy post or work with horses, preferably in Kent.

Cambridgeshire member, with satisfactory report from Training Institute, is seeking market garden post, preferably in Dorset. Has good experience in all branches of farmwork and market gardening.

GIRLS WITH GREEN FINGERS

This article comes from a member who has taken a one year's training course in horticulture at Swanley, Kent under the Government Vocational Training Scheme.

When I joined the W.L.A. in 1942 nothing was further from my mind than that one day I should be making horticulture my career. Indeed, as a Londoner, gardening to me meant little beyond formal flower beds and the pleasure of eating a good English apple. I was lured into the Land Army mainly by the townsman's conception of the glamour of farming—what a sadly false conception that was!

I was allocated to a garden with three other recruits. The garden, which was partly walled-in, consisted of about sixteen acres with half an acre of glass. I think it was the pleasure I received from seeing the change from almost a wilderness to a neat orderly garden which grew splendid crops that first made me realise that there was something in this gardening business after all. That, combined with the fact that we had an excellent head gardener who took a great pride in his own work and inspired us to adopt the same attitude. From him I learned most of the fundamentals of practical gardening—digging, potting, pricking out and the intricacies of preparing a seed-bed.

My next job was at a small nursery of about forty acres with an acre of glass. By then I realised my good fortune in being employed as a gardener—not only had I developed a real love of growing things and discovered the attribute of having 'green fingers' but I had also met several farming colleagues and heard the hard facts of life on a farm at five o'clock on a cold wet wintry morning. I found that big-scale commercial gardening was not really very different from what I had been doing before and that equal care and patience is required to raise ten thousand healthy tomato plants as is required to raise a hundred. We grew most vegetables and I received my first insight into the production of flowers and shrubs.

Early in 1946 I was informed that the Royal Horticultural Society required six girls to assist with the vegetable seed trials at Wisley for six months. I could hardly believe my good fortune when I learned that I had been accepted. We started in March, 1946 and it proved to be a most interesting and valuable period. The six of us did most of the work on the trials ground including the preparation, sowing the seeds and keeping the beds in good order. There were over a hundred varieties of onions and peas and all the other vegetables were well represented.

Some time before going to Wisley I had decided gardening as a career was far preferable to office life so I applied to Headquarters for the Vocational Training Course at Swanley which began last September. The Kent Horticultural Institute was running three courses, two for commercial students and the one which I took in private gardening. There were lectures in horticulture, botany, biology, soils and general science as applied to crop production and the practical work covered almost every branch of gardening. Most of us took the course because we felt that to do a practical job really well one must have at least an elementary knowledge of why certain things are done. Why, for instance, one incorporates manure in a sandy soil to retain moisture and in a clay soil to assist drainage. Why one in a clay soil to assist drainage. Why one in grafts fruit trees in March and buds them in July. While some of us have taken the public R.H.S. Examinations that is not our chief aim—we do not hope to become professional botanists or scientists but skilled working gardeners with, we trust, a theoretical knowledge a little above the average.

P. C. Dawson, 110664.

Surrey.

On 18th August, 1947, the enrolled strength of the Land Army was 26,762.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE

In these days of currency restrictions it is encouraging to hear of an official but free plan which offers young people working in agriculture or horticulture in this country—including members of the Land Army—an opportunity of spending up to a year on a farm or holding in Europe.

The scheme is one for an exchange of individual workers and will obviously be difficult to work out in detail. The countries at present taking part are Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland. It is hoped that this list will be considerably extended. To prevent the scheme being used as a means of getting a cheap holiday abroad, it is restricted to those who genuinely intend to make a permanent career in agriculture or horticulture and who will thus benefit not only themselves but the industry as a whole by the experience they gain of present-day methods of European husbandry. The conditions of work abroad will vary from country to country. In some cases the full agricultural wage of the country will be paid while in others it may be a question of keep and pocket money only. Everyone will be expected to pay his or her return fare but only in exceptional circumstances is it likely that the cost of the fare will not be earned back. The time spent abroad can range from a minimum of eight weeks to a maximum of twelve months. The National Farmers' Union has undertaken to act as one of the sponsoring authorities and any Land Army member who is interested and who intends to remain in agriculture or horticulture permanently should write for further particulars to the Education Department, National Farmers' Union, 45, Bedford Square, London, W.C.1. We feel sure that many of our members will be attracted by the possibility of seeing other countries and of learning something of the way their agriculturalists live and work. The scheme is still in its infancy and the waiting list may be a long one. Nevertheless, we strongly advise all Land Army members who are settled in the industry and would like to take this opportunity of broadening their experience to register their names at the National Farmers' Union Headquarters without delay and so secure their places in the queue.

HEALTH TALKS

If you have not heard or joined in the discussions following the three talks given by speakers from the Central Council for Health Education entitled "Your Health and Happiness", "Choosing a Husband" and "The Health and Happiness of your Child", then ask your County Secretary where and when they can be heard in your area.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editor,

A party of fifty Young Farmers recently spent a fortnight in France as guests of the Confédération Générale de l'Agriculture and I had the good fortune to have my name drawn as the girl representative for West Sussex.

After two days' sight-seeing in Paris we divided into smaller groups and travelled to different districts. The main object of our visit was to see French methods of farming and for this purpose another girl and I were sent to Estrées-St-Denis (L'Oise). Despite language difficulties, we soon felt at home with our kind hosts who worked untiringly to make our holiday perfect. Through their generosity we visited private farms of varying sizes, including those specialising in pigs, poultry, dairy (Hollandaise breed), sheep, etc. "Our farm" as we soon came to know it, extended over 800 acres, a large portion of it being under potato crops. Tractors were scarce and those in use were well worn and old. Farmers expressed surprise at our countless questions, but our surprise equalled theirs when we learned that the majority of our French counterparts do not

take an active part in farm life. Great was our amusement to hear of their grave concern as to what we should do once the poultry had been inspected. It did not take us long to dispel the idea that the care of poultry was the limit of female activity on the English farm and as a result an extremely successful programme was planned.

The hospitality of our hosts is something we shall always remember. Apart from our agricultural visits, we had the good fortune to be able to make a quick trip into Belgium. Then again while we were in L'Oise there was the Grand Fête in honour of the "Young English" when festivities did not cease till six the following morning.

The day of departure came all too soon. It was with great reluctance that we bade farewell to the people who had so unhesitatingly extended the hand of friendship, thus turning our educational tour into the finest holiday we had ever had.

W. Sussex.

Betty Green, 106986.

Dear Editor,

I have now received my six year green and gold arm-band from Headquarters and have returned my old one. I shall be very proud to wear my new one.

May I add that looking at it takes me back over six very happy years spent in the W.L.A.—years which have been packed full of new experiences, making new friends and, of course, lots of good fun mingled with each day's work.

Cum. & Wes.

F. Barclay, 38228.

THANKS TO THE W.L.A.

In a letter to the Dorset County Secretary, Mr. J. B. Thorburn of Bridport writes, "I would like to place on record my appreciation of the help I have received from the W.L.A. I have had a land girl here and no other labour at all. In proportion to my small acreage I have turned out quite a quantity of produce especially milk, and I could not have done it without the help of the W.L.A."

A SIGN OF THE TIMES

When a group of new dairymaids in the course of a lecture was told the average price of a cow, one girl asked if this included purchase tax!

COUNTY NEWS

LONDON AND MIDDXX.—Volunteers in the County will be interested to know of the use that has been made of their Land Army experience by two rat catchers in the County. Joan Brunt and Doreen Sutton have been rat catching for the War Agricultural Executive Committee for four and three years respectively. They have now become so proficient in this work that they have obtained good appointments as rat catchers to the Ruislip Council. Both these girls hope to be married in the not too far distant future, and we send them our congratulations.

The Harvest is well under way in this County, and many girls are working overtime, particularly now that the Prisoners of War are being repatriated.

MONMOUTH.—After six years as one of our most successful hutment hostels Cross Ash Hostel ceased to accommodate land girls at the end of July; all who have been connected with the hostel will have their regrets. Land girls are frequently admired for their smart appearance and it is interesting to note that Laura Phillips, Ynys Hafod Hostel, was chosen as Carnival Queen for Usk, and Vera Jones of the same hostel, one of the court ladies. Mount Ballan Hostel girls collected £18 for the Mumbles Life-Boat Fund, whilst Witla Court and Llanvapley Court Hostels subscribed £10 and £3 respectively to the "Farmers Flood Distress Fund." Many Land Girls have signed on for a further twelve months. Social activities have been abandoned during the busy season in favour of reaping a splendid harvest. Congratulations to O. Grigson, M. Horn, D. Ople and A. Randall who obtained The National Certificate in Poultry Husbandry after their twelve months course at Usk Agricultural Institute. We wish them success for the future.

NORFOLK.—The Flood Relief Fund inaugurated by the Norfolk W.L.A. has now been closed and a cheque for £1,055 14s. has been sent to the Lord Mayor of London. This amount was raised in many ways and we should like to thank all who helped by means of dances, whist drives and collections in cinemas. Miss Grummett, the Warden of the Shooting Box, and the girls there, obtained the grand total of £200 and we should like especially to congratulate them on their efforts. It is with much regret that we announce so soon after all the activities there that the Shooting Box has had to be closed owing to trouble with the drainage. After the August holiday the girls were moved to vacancies in our other hostels. This meant the breaking up of many happy associations and friendships but the girls co-operated wonderfully and we were most grateful. Every effort was

made to post friends together and we only wish it had been possible to transfer the hostel as a whole. Several volunteers from Norfolk have enjoyed holidays at the Rest-break Houses, and have been enthusiastic about their welcome and the kindness shown them. One member is at Ashton Wold recovering from an illness. We hope to hold a further proficiency test in machine milking this month.

NORTH'D.—The W.L.A. tent at the County Show in Newcastle on 21st, 22nd and 23rd August, was thronged with visitors, and many ex-members came to talk over old times. The pictorial maps of the counties were much admired and the public showed great interest in the display of farm and garden produce which had been raised with the help of W.L.A. members. Those members who were on duty in the evenings had a busy time helping with the auctions of the produce which Mr. Dent and Mr. Dalkin so kindly and successfully held outside the tent. £47 was raised for the Benevolent Fund from the sales. Heartly congratulations to J. P. Pitt, 34177, who finished her course of training at Moulton with a splendid report.

NOTTS.—Miss Duff, Supply County Secretary, was replaced by Miss Hirst from Holland, Lincs. in April, and since then, Miss Duff has married and is now Mrs. Hirst. We wish her the best of luck and every happiness for the future.

Tuxford Hostel enjoyed a fifth anniversary party in March with five cakes, one being cut by our Chairman, the Lady Sibell Argles, and the others by long service girls. We are delighted by the award of the M.B.E. to Miss M. Cheston, Forewoman at Bunny Hostel. A Party was held at the Hostel by way of celebration, entertainment being provided by an ex-Bunny Land Girl, (Miss Shelagh Bailey with her Partners). Dances and Whist Drives have been run by Hostels and the County Office to raise funds for the Agricultural Distress Fund, W.L.A. Benevolent Fund, and the Marie Curie Hospital for Cancer.

We are sorry to be losing Miss Derbyshire, Assistant County Secretary since July 1946, but all wish her every success at Durham University where she will take a year's Course in Youth Work. We are pleased to welcome Miss Cowell as Warden at Collingham, and Mrs. Myers as Assistant Warden, also Miss Arliss as our new Warden at Clipstone. Mrs. Kinton, late Assistant Warden at Bunny has now become Warden at Farnham Hostel.

OXON.—A new hostel is being opened at Broadwell, Nr. Burford, and Mrs. Boyd the Warden is already installed. Broadwell is an old R.A.F. Station, and the Hostel is what was once the sick quarters, and should be very pleasant and comfortable when it is ready. The girls will be moving in as soon as all the alterations are finished, and we all hope they will be happy there.

There was a Carnival at Eynsham in July and the girls from Cokethorpe Hostel took part in the procession through the village. One of the local farmers lent them two tractors and in the first were girls dressed to represent different nations who were our allies during the War, in the other tractor which was loaded with bales of hay were the girls dressed in their Land Army uniforms and carrying pitchforks. They all looked very attractive.

During June we held our Milking Proficiency Tests, and though we only had five entrants, four of them passed. They were Muriel Hazel, Jean Brocklebank, Mary Smith and Barbara Wood, and we congratulate them all on their success.

PEMB.—We are all very proud that the Land Army in this county has been honoured by the award of the B.E.M. to Mrs. Tessa Graham. Mrs. Graham has worked on the same farm for the last seven years and is one of a family which has given excellent service to the Land Army in this county. Her daughter, her sister and two nieces have all been in the W.L.A. Pembrokehire W.L.A. was well represented at the Royal Welsh Show at Carmarthen, and our Committee was responsible for organising the Publicity Centre on the first day. It was pleasing to see so many Land Girls showing exhibits in the stock-yard. Four of our long service girls, Miss Jean Horsley, Mrs. Tessa Graham, B.E.M., Mrs. G. M. V. Thomas, and Miss Mary Abraham received their long service armlets from H.R.H. Princess Elizabeth. Great efforts were made by two hostels to raise funds for Lady Denman's Appeal and we were very pleased to forward £45 from Pembrokehire. This sum included several private donations.

We are very sorry to lose Miss E. M. Lewis who has been our Assistant Secretary. Miss Lewis joined the Land Army in September 1939 and after working on the land for over six years she became an Organiser in the South Wales Area.

SOM.—During the past two months we have gladly welcomed new recruits from other counties. Many of them are rapidly gaining a reputation among Somerset farmers as "splendid workers." Congratulations to Rosemary Powell, 154970, who has obtained entry to the Midland Agricultural College for two years, to E. M. Elliott, 79717, who has obtained entry to Newton Hall, Cambridge, to J. Dodwell, 165988, and R. Powell, 154970, who have obtained certificates in the Agricultural Correspondence Course. We extend all good wishes for success to V. Copp, ex-W.L.A. 97411, who has taken over the gardens at Montacute House as a market garden and nursery. We are very glad to learn that D. de Grauw, 29337, has obtained an interesting post in South Africa and that M. Hodges, 62565, will be taking up fruit farming in Canada as soon as she can get her passage. We wish both these members every success.

The Benevolent Fund has been helped by B. Penny, 66599, who made and sold toys and by B. Parfitt, 138371, who saved odd pennies until they became a really substantial sum. We hope shortly to start another relief milking unit at Ilminster. Proficiency tests will be held in September and October.

STAFFS.—We are happy to report that with the almost continuous sunshine of recent days, the harvest is in full swing and, with a few exceptions, all Land Army workers are fully and happily employed. We were delighted that our County Secretary was chosen as a representative to attend one of the Royal Garden Parties held at Buckingham Palace in July; she very much enjoyed the visit and we felt that we had a share in the honour. We congratulate E. Hayhurst 5,622, and her sister J. Hayhurst,

6,621, who complete eight years in the W.L.A. this month; also J. Graham, 90062 and D. MacLoughlin, 105201, who have recently obtained a special proficiency badge for their work in excavating. The Warden and girls of Lea Hall Hostel recently organised a highly successful dance which they all enjoyed, and which produced the sum of £20 for their piano fund. Lynn Hostel girls have had fire prevention drill lectures, and are having a sewing evening every Thursday to avoid the use of pins in their daily dress.

We have regretfully parted with five members of our office staff. We are having an office reunion party in September.

E. SUFFOLK.—During last month we took over West Suffolk's Uniform Store. All the Office Staff had a very hectic time counting and helping to pack away boots, shoes, breeches, raincoats, etc., etc. Everything has now been fitted into our store, and the Uniform Staff hope to be able to give both West Suffolk and our own girls "every satisfaction." Many girls have had their holiday in anticipation of the harvest work which is now getting into full swing, and this year, more than ever before, it is important that it should be a good one. Quite a number of the private farm girls were given the day off by their farmers to attend the Suffolk Show. This was a big event, with very large entries in most classes. All who were lucky enough to attend found it most interesting and educational. Holton Hall, a new Hostel, was opened in June; this is near Halesworth. At the moment there are only a few girls there, as the Ministry of Works are still working on it doing many repair jobs; when it is finally completed this should be a very nice Hostel and we hope a happy one. We expect to open another Hostel in the north of the county in the early autumn but arrangements for this are still in the very early stages and no date for opening can be fixed yet.

W. SUFFOLK.—At a most successful Gymkhana and Fete held on 9th August, at Leavenheath in aid of the Benevolent Fund £130 was collected and Miss Lamson and Mrs. Dovey, who were chief organisers, should be congratulated. Another machine milking Proficiency Test was held at Thorpe Morieux for Relief Milkers; all passed, three with distinction. We have just started our sixth Relief Milking unit, and the success of the scheme is in a very large part due to the efficiency of our milkers. The Suffolk Agricultural Association have again given us £10 and asked that this prize be awarded to an outstanding milker. It was decided that Sheila Purkiss, Milking Instructress at Shimpling, and Myrtle Northover, who works for Colonel Gordon at Layham, should share the prize. We welcome Mrs. Shann on our Committee. She will take over the Bury district, and hopes soon to meet the girls in this area.

SURREY.—You will be glad to hear that Miss Talbot, our County Chairman, is now restored to health after her recent illness and is once more able to participate in active work in the County. General interest was aroused by the model farm displayed at the recent Rally of the Surrey Women's Institutes at Clandon Park. This skilfully constructed model, made by Miss Weir, one of our Local representatives, illustrates the typical English farm. Many members of the W.L.A. who have happy memories of our Hostels, Devoke Lodge and Park Farm, Ashted, will hear with regret that they have now closed down. The weather this summer has done its best to atone for a winter of exceptional severity, and thatching and harvesting are now in full swing. We are glad to be able to announce the appointment of several new Local Representatives. A meeting was held in the County Office with Mr. Donald McCullough and Mr. Clegg to collect information for the Surrey Pictorial County map in the series now being published by "The Countryman." We congratulate B. M. Horsburgh 9739 on obtaining a 2nd Class pass certificate at The John Innes Horticultural Institute. Proficiency Tests are now under consideration and it is hoped to arrange these in October. The usual annual gathering for volunteers who have completed five years service is being arranged in October and will take place at Hampton Court.

E. SUSSEX.—It was with great regret that we heard of the death of Mrs. Dunlop, Local Representative for Eastbourne, and also of Stella Borner, who was killed by lightning while sheltering under a tree.

Successful proficiency tests were held recently in milking and general farm work. In both tests all candidates passed and we congratulate D. Treneman, J. Cole, J. Morpew and M. Inglis on obtaining distinction in dairy work and A. Rollings distinction in general farm work. The first hostel in the County to be run by the W.L.A. opened in Brighton on 25th August, when we welcomed 100 girls from Durham, Yorkshire, Derbyshire, London & Middlesex and Kent. They are employed on market gardening and seed cultivation. We hope they will be happy in the hostel and at their work. The W.A.E.C. Hostel at High Hurst, Newick, closed on 1st September, and we are glad that the girls and their Warden, Mrs. Newman, have come to Brighton. V. Rolfe, N. West and A. Pavitt go to the East Sussex School of Agriculture, Plumpton for a One Year Course on 6th October. We wish them success. This is the third year that we have had trainings at Plumpton and already 12 East Sussex Volunteers have taken the Course. A. Hocking has taken the Relief Milker's Training in East Suffolk and passed her proficiency test in milking with distinction. She is now working a Unit near Lewes. We hope that another volunteer will go to East Suffolk shortly.

W. SUSSEX.—Everyone has been very busy during the last two months, first with haymaking, now with the corn harvest, and there has been little time for anything else. The outstanding event was the Sussex County Agricultural Show in perfect weather, drawing huge crowds. The Land Army attended in force. The W.S.A.E.C. and many private employers gave the girls in their employment time off and every facility to visit the Show. Our W.L.A. tent made an excellent centre for meeting old friends and the chance of a quiet cup of tea and a chair in the members' side of the tent, was much appreciated. In the other section, the map of Sussex showing the work of the land in gaily coloured symbols—designed and carried out by one of our County Organizers, Mrs. Bailey—caused much interest to the public and to the many farmer friends who visited us, who were also interested in the photograph display and in Midhurst W.L.A. members'

model farm. Forest House Hostel gave a wonderful party—which was in the nature of deferred house warming party as their move took place in mid-winter. Everyone was glad it had been. Dancing on the lawn on a lovely hot evening in a perfect setting; refreshments; and then an excellent entertainment by the girls and some very talented guests from a neighbouring camp. A trip to the sea organised by Battine House Hostel for the children of their remote village in conjunction with the village club, was very popular.

N. WALES.—We were proud that Barbara Eggleton and Jane Owen represented Anglesey in the Y.F.C. competitions at the Royal Welsh Show at Carmarthen and that these two volunteers and also M. L. Leybourn were members of the Penmynydd Club, which obtained the highest aggregate of marks in the Anglesey Rally. The Merionethshire Y.F.C. Rally was held for the third year at Eryl Arran Hostel and once again there were many compliments about this Hostel and the Land Girls. Elizabeth Hughes was a member of the National Eisteddfod at Colwyn Bay, and J. M. Humphreys was in the Llanberis Ladies' Choir which was awarded 3rd prize. We congratulate Ruthin Hostel, who sent £4 to the Benevolent Fund and Llanerchymedd, who sent £1 6s. to the same Fund with £5 to our Local Welfare Fund, and we also thank Llanerchymedd British Legion for their gift towards our Welfare Fund. We extend a warm welcome to Mrs. Sprunt, Mrs. Kerfoot Evans and Mrs. Taylor, all of whom have recently joined our Hostel Staff. We are all very grateful to have good weather for our harvest and we would compliment our members for the splendid work they have done and especially for undertaking so much overtime.

WILTS.—We have had the misfortune to lose Miss Burbury, our new County Secretary, who has had to resign for health reasons. We hope she will make a complete and speedy recovery. We are very pleased to offer our congratulations to her successor, Mrs. Cotter, already well known as our Assistant Secretary.

Perfect haymaking and harvesting weather has kept all volunteers exceptionally busy. In spite of this they have found time and energy for social activities. Darley House girls enjoyed an outing at Southsea, won 2nd prize for the most original entry in the local Carnival, and have organised raffles with enthusiasm. Other hostel girls have had swimming parties and are planning Sunday outings.

YORKS. N. & E. R.—During August the Dutch students on holiday in Middlesbrough were entertained by the Stokesley Hostel girls. Before dinner the National Anthems of both countries were sung and afterwards all joined together in singing Dutch and English Folk Songs, the land girls making an effort to learn the Dutch song "Pete Heine." Afterwards the students were shown round the Hostel and grounds. The main topics of conversation were farming and food. The visit was a great success. Howden Hostel recently organised a dance and raised £20-£10 each for the Benevolent County Welfare Funds. The organisers are to be congratulated for a very good effort and a most enjoyable evening. At the end of July, Dishforth Hostel was closed and the majority of the volunteers have been transferred to other hostels or gone into private employment. We are very sorry to say goodbye to Mr. and Mrs. Shaw who have worked very hard whilst at Dishforth. On 7th August the North Riding W.A.E.C. arranged a series of proficiency tests in market gardening, field work and general farm work. The ten girls who took part are to be congratulated on having passed—especially M. Gunner, P. Fawcett and M. Turner who all gained distinctions in General Farm Work. At a concert at Market Weighton Hostel during May £14 was raised for Lady Denman's Appeal. Thanks are due to the Warden, Mrs. Sumner, and her Assistant, Miss Berriman, who helped to organise it.

ROYAL WELSH SHOW

The Royal Welsh Show held at Carmarthen on 6th, 7th and 8th August was a memorable occasion for many land girls in Wales. H.R.H. the Princess Elizabeth as President of the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society for 1947 attended the Show on the first day. During her tour of the Show-ground she visited the Land Army Publicity Centre. Miss Lloyd-Price, Chairman of South Wales Area, and Mrs. Sackville Owen, Chairman of Pembrokehire, were presented to Her Royal Highness who then spoke to several land girls. Later in the day twelve land girls received their long service armlets from Princess Elizabeth in the Main Ring.

BANK HOLIDAY AT OAKHAM

There were two classes for W.L.A. members in the Rutland Agricultural Society's Show. Miss Jelley, who sent us the following account, won 1st prize in the Tractor and 2nd prize in the Horse Handling Competitions.

The Land Army members who were entering for the Tractor and Horse Handling Competitions were all keyed up, each feeling sure that something would happen that would take off precious marks. We had to drive the tractor, with a four foot trailer behind, round a given course between posts, reverse it up a gangway and leave it. All went well except that the onlookers did not allow us sufficient room to see the posts we were supposed to miss. This meant that we lost a few seconds in trying to avoid running anyone down and speed was one of the winning factors.

When it came to tackling the horse it was not as easy a job as it looked. We had to harness the horse to a four-wheeled cart correctly, then drive it round the course, back into a gangway, come straight out and take the horse out again. Our horse behaved beautifully until a competitor in a trade class pranced round with jingling bells. Fortunately when the sound of the bells subsided our horse quietened down and I was able to carry on but in my anxiety to gain time I made an un pardonable error in unharnessing (I did not even know I had done so).

These competitions are all good fun and though of course we like to win, it's quite a thrill seeing what one can do and what silly mistakes one can make in the excitement of the moment. Thanks are due to the Show Committee for allowing us a place on the programme. Leics. and Rut. D. M. Jelley, 104294.