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EDITORIAL NOTES

ON 26th January, the Minister of Agriculture announced in the House of Commons the Government's decision that the Women's Land Army is to go on for another two or three years. The services of its members will be needed in connection with the new agricultural expansion programme.

Conditions of service will remain substantially the same although, as the supply position gets easier, it is hoped that one or two welcome additions and alterations will be made to the uniform issue. There will however be certain changes in administration and these will be introduced on 1st June of this year.

The Land Army will still have its own offices both at Headquarters and in the counties but the organisation will rely very much less than in the past on voluntary help. On 1st June, the present Land Army County Committees will disappear and after then, regular visits to Land Girls on farms will no longer be paid by voluntary District Representatives. A standard contract of employment will be introduced to be signed by every employer and Land Girl. This will set out very clearly the Land Army's conditions of work and should make unnecessary the frequent check-up visits which District Representatives have paid in the past. Such visits as are needed will be undertaken by Land Army County Organisers but it will become the responsibility of each member of the Land Army to understand her own conditions of employment and apply to her County Office for assistance if difficulty arises or in the event of breach of contract. A Welfare Committee will be set up in each county to assist and advise the County Office on welfare arrangements for the Land Army and it is hoped that many former Representatives will still be willing to act in the villages as "friends of the Land Army" and to extend a friendly welcome to new Land Girls and give help and advice in any personal trouble.

During the war years the Land Army made heavy calls on the time, minds and bodies of over four thousand voluntary helpers. That could not continue indefinitely and the new "set up" is one better suited to peace-time conditions. The Land Girls who have benefited know how much the

organisation owes to the Chairman, Committee Members and Representatives in each county. It is sad for all who have worked in and valued the old administration that a change must be made, but the best thanks that the Land Army can give for the help it has received is to keep the standards and character to which the voluntary workers contributed so much. The Land Army can work to a new pattern but still maintain its old traditions.

EIGHT-YEAR ARMY

Once again the cockney equivalent of 'Hi'ya Landgirl' was heard in almost every part of London as our eight year volunteers made their way on 16th January to Caxton Hall for a very special party given in their honour by the National Farmers' Union. There is no doubt as to the warmth of the welcome which is extended to 'The girls in the green jerseys' on their rare but momentous invasions of our capital.

We converged on Caxton Street in a cheerful gabbling mass, and were soon ushered into a warmly lit hall, most beautifully decorated with every kind of blossom. The Cornish Growers had sent what appeared to be their entire stock of freesias, mimosa and carnations and enough gaily coloured anemones to fill little vases all round the room. 773 members of our organisation had completed eight years service and 429 of these were able to get to the party.

Committee members and local representatives received special mention in Mrs. Jenkins' welcoming speech as it was the first time they had been present at such a function.

Mrs. Jenkins spoke of our pride and gratification at being the guests of the farmers, who after all, have had the best opportunity of assessing our merits, and introduced the principal speaker, Mr. Turner, president of the National Farmers' Union.

In an informal and friendly speech Mr. Turner showed a flattering knowledge of the W.L.A.'s activities, both past and present and emphasised that whereas during the war it played a vital part in the fourth line of 'Defence,' it must now be regarded as part of the first line of 'Offence' in the battle for increased production. His speech was interspersed with many humorous allusions which were fully appreciated by the receptive audience. Then came the great moment when the Land Girls filed across the platform and had their magnificent armlets presented by Mr. Turner. He in his turn appeared delighted to receive a Land Army Map of Yorkshire, his native county from Nora Bryant (Herts.) followed by a vote of thanks to himself and the N.F.U. proposed by Sarah Curtice (Hereford) and seconded by Mrs. Sunderland-Taylor (East Suffolk). Both spoke with delightful ease and made many grateful and amusing references to their work with the farmers.

After this, for the first time in Land Army history our Chief and Senior Administrative Officers, Mrs. Jenkins and Miss Bower, were taken completely by surprise. The Hon. Mrs. Burrell (West Sussex) and Mrs. Simpson (Northants) presented a book and cheque to each as token of gratitude and affection from a host of their admirers in all sections of the W.L.A. The spontaneous applause which greeted their tributes showed how sincerely these were endorsed by all present. Despite their obvious surprise and emotion both Mrs. Jenkins and Miss Bower made a charming and characteristic reply.

During the lovely tea, distinguished by chocolate éclairs, many old friendships were renewed and new ones made. Even then the fun was not over, as happy gangs from different counties flocked to the theatres of their choice and so ended another of our never-to-be-forgotten Land Army parties.

D.L.T.

PASTURES NEW

Vacancies are available for Forewomen in North Wales, Sussex, Kent, Hertfordshire and Staffordshire. Applications for these posts should be made to your County Office who will contact Headquarters.

Brecon. Experienced Land Girl required for key position on farm. Able to drive tractor, plough, and do hand and machine milking. Wage £3 15s., billet on farm, living as family.

Somerset. Really experienced Land Girl required, able to take responsibility and work with another L. A. member. Pedigree T.T. Jersey herd. Modernised farm buildings. Electrically heated water. Electric light. Concrete yard. Milking bale for four cows. Cottage billet on estate. Salary according to experience.

Cumberland. Reliable and experienced volunteer required for machine milking and dairy work for T.T. herd of between 25-30 cows. Work will include small amount of general farm work. Farm is beautifully situated and is an exceptionally good one. Billet 1½ miles from farm but accessible by bicycle and very comfortable. Minimum wage to start.

East Suffolk. Land Girl required for lonely, isolated farm house to live as family with owners, four sisters. Keen and capable girl would, in time, have charge of herd of ten to fifteen pedigree Redpolls. Minimum wage to start.

The following job is one for which Land Army members can apply who qualify for a willing release by virtue of length of service.

West Riding. Sampler-tester required in Rotherham area for Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. To work partly out-door sampling from producer-retailers and partly in-door on laboratory work, under National Milk Testing Service. Candidates should apply to W.L.A. Headquarters, 6, Chesham Street, S.W.1.

THE JOYS AND OTHERWISE OF RELIEF MILKING

Relief milking is an excellent job for a girl who wants to learn several different ways of doing nearly every job on a dairy farm. It is amazing how the methods of dairy farmers vary although they all have as their goal high milk yields produced at as low a cost as possible. Of course each farm considers its own way the best but it is with great dismay that a relief milker does a job as ordered by the farmer or herdsman when she knows her own or another farm's method would save time and energy and give the same result.

Before becoming a relief milker I had five busy but happy years on a general farm where I was cowman and how very grateful I am to that farmer for the way he expected me to do any job that came along instead of getting help.

On my round I do, at present, only hand milking. What a variety of udder cloths, stools, and pails, not to mention milking manners! I prefer the farms which record daily as I have a chance to compare my results with theirs. I find on farms where each milker keeps to his own set of cows or where there is a single-handed milker, there is more likely to be a slight decrease in the yield on 'my' day until I have visited for several days.

I get most pleasure from working where they are under-staffed or single-handed, I am then made so very welcome as it gives the regular milker a chance to take time off. My regular round enables them to make arrangements ahead for their free days which come one day later, each week, as mine do. When I go to a farm on Saturday I always stay on over Sunday so that we all get one week-end in seven. As a rule the milking routine does not take the whole eight hours I work each day, so I fill up the time by doing any jobs that are on hand. These, of course, vary with the seasons but I think that shifting dung takes priority over all other jobs. I find that the men I work with and for, always expect me to know exactly how to do a farm job, however unusual it is, so I try to make it look as if I had spent most of my Land Army career on the particular job on hand although I have not the slightest knowledge of the correct way of doing it and luckily I often win through. How very simple some work looks till you try to do it.

The Relief Milking Scheme is organised by the Women's Land Army and run by the War Agricultural Committee. The latter are responsible for paying me and collecting the money from the farmers according to my time sheet. The pay is better than the average. Relief milking is a specialised job and the working hours are shorter than most. My average week is 45 hours though additional time is spent travelling as the farms are not all close to ones billet. On the whole, I think the main requirements for a relief milker are a placid nature, a sense of humour, a poker face, a thorough knowledge of farming, a sense of responsibility for other peoples' property and above all keenness to make a success of the job.

W. Sussex.

K. Alexander, 22790.

POTTED TRIALS

The strange case of Samuel Gumboot accused of enticement and arraigned before his Honour Judge Mackintosh of Oilskin Hall in the County of Westertar, sitting without Jury.

CHARACTERS

Defendant. Samuel Gumboot—a sturdy creature with cleated soles and wide legs, attired soberly in dull grey with black tie.

Judge Mackintosh of ancient lineage and well versed in the intricacies of the law.

Prosecuting Counsel for Crown Sir Charles de Corderoy, K.C.

Defending Counsel, Sir Aloysius Felt, K.C.

Witnesses, etc.

It is the day of the trial and the Judge has just taken his seat.
Clerk of the Court. You, Samuel Gumboot are

come to this court to be tried on a charge of enticement—to wit that you on many and several occasions, did so deport yourself that sundry members of the Stocking Branch of the Uniform Clan did feloniously allow themselves to succumb to your charms on dry and sunny days; and that this conduct is severely prejudicial to the feet of members of the Women's Land Army. Also, that you have gone far towards ruining the ancient and honourable House of Boote.

How say you, Prisoner at the Bar. Guilty or Not Guilty?

Samuel Gumboot (in a thick gummy voice) Not Guilty m'lud.

Judge. Then let us hear the case for prosecution.

Sir Charles de Corderoy (a tall young keen faced barrister, faultlessly dressed).

It is indeed a sorry tale that I unfold. We shall prove that without doubt Samuel Gumboot is indeed a vile gum not fit to associate with revered and trusted members of the Uniform Clan.

Briefly, our case is this, Samuel Gumboot has admitted that his sole use is for wear in wet weather or on damp water-logged jobs; he also admits that he is prepared to do his best on these occasions to repel advances by water and liquid mud. But, it would appear m'lud that there is a sorry and sinister side to his character. On fine days, in spring and summer, Samuel Gumboot has been seen to caper in a way calculated to arouse interest in the Stocking family, who by reason of their finish are highly nervous of water and sensitive to the allure of rubber. This cavorting, has undoubtedly made the stockings agitate the feet and calves of their wearers towards Samuel Gumboot, and on sundry fine and glorious mornings he has been able to go for an illicit airing on the feet of the members of the W.L.A.; and thereby giving rise to excessive wear and tear and consequent unnecessary expense to the Crown.

Furthermore, Samuel Gumboot is of a stuffy nature by reason of his resistance to water and as such has a deleterious effect on the feet of the Stocking Family, and they, not unnaturally, defend themselves by passing on anything they can to the feet of their owners.

I call Roderick Boote as my witness.

Roderick Boote (young of noble mien, with beautifully greased hair and showing no signs of wear, is duly sworn.)

Sir C. Tell me my man, is it not true that you have been issued for two years eight days and have never been worn?

R. B. (in a dignified voice). Quite true Sir.

Sir C. Is it also a fact that your owner has been heard to say you torture her?

R. B. Alas yes,—but I have never been given a chance. (Proudly) Our family need knowing but once we have won our way in, we are never discarded. (Passionately, throwing his lace aside) I am sick of drawing unemployment pay, why can't we be allowed to do our duty by the feet we long to cherish?

Judge (sternly) No digressions, Sir Charles, have you further need of this witness?

Sir C. No My Lord.

Sir Aloysius signifies that he has no questions to put, and Roderick steps down.

Sir C. This concludes my case m'lud. I ask with all confidence that you will, in your wisdom pass the heaviest sentence in your power on the prisoner.

Judge (writes busily, then looks up, adjusts glasses) I call upon the Counsel for the Defence.

Sir Aloysius Felt, K.C. (a ruddy faced heavily built man with a pair of sparkling brown eyes, twitches gown, clears his throat). My Lord, with the greatest deference, the very greatest deference, I submit that my learned friend has failed to prove his case and that you should stop the trial immediately.

Judge (dryly) Proceed Sir Aloysius with your story.

Sir A. Very well, m'lud. My client has not a stain upon his soles or uppers, a true scion of the distinguished Rubber Family, he has a stern

sense of duty and a vivid imagination. His sole desire is to protect the feet of his wearers. I would submit m'lud that Samuel Gumboot is a far-seeing genius and is not easily led astray by a flashy shining morn. Samuel always suspects the WORST and knows that rain will often fall and so his protective instincts are always to the fore. As to capers, I ask you my Lord, to look at the prisoner and see if you genuinely think he is capable of precocious capers. Not he—not S. Gumboot a sprig of springless gummy stock. My learned friend must have been thinking of Samuel's cousins—the Ru-Berballs—a family noted for their bounce and go. I call Miss Greysox.

Miss Greysox (a blowsy-looking middle-aged female with gold rimmed glasses and a pair of peering blue eyes) is duly sworn in.

Sir A. Miss Greysox, in your own words tell the court what you know of Samuel Gumboot.

Miss G. (in reedy voice) I have known Samuel Gumboot since he came from the works. For a period he lay on the shelf. One day he was issued to a W.L.A. member with instructions that he was for use on wet days only or wet jobs. He has always tried to carry out his instructions faithfully.

Sir C. (jumping to his feet) Miss Greysox, tell me. Is it not true that you are connected with Samuel's "Inner Lining" branch of the family and are dependent on their good will?

Miss G. (faintly) Y-yes yer Honour.

Sir C. (sternly) I put it to you, that you know nothing of Samuel's behaviour during the summer months, as you are a hibernator and cannot possibly be aware of what is going on.

Miss G. (tearfully) Yes, yer honour—how did you know.

Sir C. (with a self-satisfied smirk) I have no more questions to put to this witness.

Sir A. (hurriedly) My Lord. I object to the tone of my colleagues remarks.

Judge (primly) Objection not sustained—proceed with your story.

Sir A. (rearranging his wig) As you will my Lord. I submit that Samuel has been the victim of malicious persecution by members of another family who, jealous of their ancient rights, seek to cast aspersions on a younger and more progressive line in the protection of the feet. (Flaps gown, seats himself with air of virtuous self-satisfaction.)

Judge (gathering up papers) Judgement will be pronounced to-morrow.

NEXT DAY

Judge (seated in court, looks round.) "The learned arguments I have heard, have been weighed and tested by me and I have given judgement to the Crown and decree that Samuel Gumboot do be forbidden to wander abroad on W.L.A. feet during the summer months under pain of exile from our Land."

K.D.

A DAY IN A CANNING FACTORY

While work has been short, 22 of us have volunteered to work at the canning factory in Boston, seven miles away. Arriving there at eight o'clock (having sung some of the latest songs, maybe a few old ones too, on the way) and having left our lunch bags, etc., in the cloakroom, we set to work. Having been greeted by the overlooker, we collect knives which are very different from the usual farm implements, and make our way to the benches where large boxes of carrots and turnips are lying, already cleaned. Stools are provided. Our job is to cut off the ends and any discoloured parts. Large carrots are then placed in wooden boxes, then emptied into tanks, and the smaller ones are graded into three sizes and put in tins. Turnips are diced, and then placed on a conveyor where they go for their final stages. The interior of the shed is very noisy, due to the machinery and hand driven trolleys.

At 10.15 we go to the canteen for a cup of tea at the charge of 1d. (also a cigarette, if any). The break lasts for 15 minutes, then back to work to the rhythm of "Music While You

Work" followed by a variety of records played on the radiogram until 12.30, when we have an hour's break for lunch. We are usually finished eating about one o'clock, the remainder of the time is spent in the nearby park, where, feeling like schoolgirls again, we play on the swings and roundabouts without a care in the world. Occasionally we go shopping in the town, which is only 10 minutes walk from the factory.

At 1.30 we continue in the same manner. Between 1.30 and 3.30 we usually have a little request programme of songs. Each girl chooses her favourite song in which we all join, and at 3.30 we have the second programme of "Music While You Work." At 4.15 we have a break of 15 minutes, when we have another cup of tea, and, if there is anything left in our lunch bags, it is finished up then. Then, at 4.30 we are given a factory time sheet, which must be completed by each employee and checked by the overlooker. We are still listening to the strains of music at 4.55 when we strike up with our own signature tune, "Only Five Minutes More."

The fun begins at five, when there is a mad rush to the cloakroom to collect our belongings and then out to the lorry waiting to take us back to the hostel. Full of high spirits still, we sing all the way back. On arriving at our destination, we are greeted by the warden and cook with, "Come on girls, your dinner is ready." This is a good ending to a useful and happy day.

Lincs.

Lily Dickinson, 64631.

BENEVOLENT FUND NOTES

Convalescing after an illness very often means long, dull days with practically nothing to amuse you. The Benevolent Fund has, among its many cases, two ex-Land Girls who have been ill for about two years. The Fund has been helping them with their expenses and their health has improved considerably, but they are still unable to go to work. So, these enterprising girls have been making the most delightful soft toys and plastic bags in their own homes, and at Christmas time earned quite a lot of money. They hope to develop a regular business and work this up as their health improves. In order to give them a start, the Benevolent Fund Committee has now helped each girl to buy a sewing machine and hopes it will not be long before their trade is flourishing.

The pictorial maps of Hampshire and Devonshire are now published, copies of which can be purchased through your county office. Part of the proceeds on the sale of these attractive maps is devoted to the Benevolent Fund.

On 18th January, 1948, the enrolled strength of the Land Army was 25,643.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editor,

Here is my report of a very exciting day. Last Wednesday I was one of three girls representing the W.L.A. at Alexandra Palace in the television programme.

On arrival we were shepherded up many flights of stairs, along several passages, and into a dressing room. Having taken off hats and coats and tidied up, our guide asked us to go to the canteen and have lunch. The "we" I have referred to being Joan Harrington, of Berkshire, Pat Hill of Surrey, and myself, Margaret Rumbold of Kent.

After a very good lunch at a very low price, we once more climbed the stairs and we were shown into "our" studio. Not knowing quite what to expect, we were very intrigued with the masses of wires of all sizes which were strewn over the floor and the tremendous lamps that were slung overhead just where we had to stand. making us feel very hot and sticky.

Half-an-hour before the actual programme we were handed a script that had been worked out for us. We had each described our par-

ticular job on the land beforehand to Mary Ball, who seemed to be doing the spade work for the show. We just had time to get a rough idea of what was required before one of the many technicians called out that all was well when on went the lights, there was a call for silence, and on went the W.L.A.

Leaning against a bench, one hand in pocket, we were asked questions by Leslie Mitchell, such questions as, "How many cows do you milk?", "How much ground do you work?", "How far have you to go to work?", "Do you like it?", "Would you give it up?" and "Do you still want more girls?", all of which we answered as if we were talking to somebody from a town who has an interest in the country.

As we were questioned individually the camera was wheeled up fairly close to the one speaking, getting a close-up as it were. There was at no time any sign of stage fright, so many knobs were being twiddled and so many arms being waved that we forgot that we were being seen over the air. It was only when we were finished and went to the back of the studio and saw the next "act" on a television screen, that we realised that only a few minutes before it had been we three saying our party piece. So after being paid the handsome fee of £2 2s., we went home full of the comparatively new entertainment, television and delighted at having been chosen to represent the W.L.A. in "Picture Page."

Kent.

Margaret Rumbold, 4319.

Dear Editor,

First and foremost I want to express my warmest thanks to the North Wales Area for their kindness in arranging hospitality for us in London. I think I am speaking for all of us when I say how much we enjoyed ourselves at the W.L.A. Club and certainly we were the envy of all the others who had to fend for themselves.

On Friday morning we "North Walsians" and a girl from Cornwall went to St. James's Palace to see the Royal Wedding Presents which were wonderful.

We went back to the W.L.A. Club for a delicious lunch and then departed for Caxton Hall and the Long Service party. Everything was just right. The speeches were like those advertisements for collars, "Not too little, not too much but just right," neither bitty nor scrappy nor dragging nor wearisome, and the votes of thanks, too, were of the best. The Hall was most beautifully decorated, with flowers given by the Cornish growers, mimosa, daffodils, marigolds, carnations and I can't think what else.

The room where we went for tea was packed, it reminded you of a rugby match to start with but it soon sorted itself out as people collected eatables and started chatting in groups. The tea was magnificent, the sort one remembers at parties before the war, every kind of sandwich, sausage rolls in apparently limitless quantities, chocolate eclairs in profusion, cream buns and the kind of decorated cakes which my father used to call "Doctor's friends" and coffee and lemonade.

I thoroughly enjoyed Noel Coward's "Present Laughter" and sat next to a most charming woman (from the Headquarters Staff), who not only kindly insisted on showing me the way to the bus stop afterwards but even waited till I had climbed aboard the right bus. That was one of the things I noticed most of all, how everybody went out of their way to help us. The taxi-drivers were amiability itself, when we were hesitating at cross roads a passer by paused and offered to help us with directions.

At the W.L.A. Club, although they were over filled and short staffed nothing was too much trouble for them. On Sunday, knowing this, I made a start on the washing up with a volunteer from Gloucester who brought her plates to the hatch and said "I'll come round and help."

After supper I bade them farewell, being urged to "Come again" and started for home on the night train. We arrived safely at Bangor

at 5.30 a.m. and in a final flourish of glory I got a car to bring me back to Penmynydd to a wash and a change and a day's work.

N. Wales.

Lois Bacon, 22059.

Photographs of the Eight-Year Party may be obtained from Fox Photos, Ltd., 6, Tudor Street, London, E.C.4, and from Sport and General Press Agency, 4, Racquet Court, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.

COUNTY NEWS

BEDS.—We offer our congratulations to L. Croft, 2365, J. Garratt, 5698, and I. Skevington, 27787, who attended the party in London given to those who had earned eight-year armlets. Miss B. Fuller, County Organiser, and Mrs. Robinson, member of the Committee were also included in the number.

During the festive season parties and dances were held in all the hostels, the rooms being gaily decorated and showing much ingenuity in the matter of colour schemes and effects.

Visits of a more serious nature were paid to factories in the neighbourhood, Vauxhall Motors, Crayke, and Messrs. Melts, have each taken parties of volunteers round their works and these visits have been very much enjoyed. A party of 250 volunteers had a most enjoyable evening at the County Theatre for the pantomime "Cinderella." Certain topical allusions to the Land Army showed that the actors were fully aware of the identity of their audience. Congratulations to Bolnhurst Hostel for their kindly thought in entertaining 40 children from the local Dr. Barnardo's Home. The volunteers and Wardens of this hostel provided tea and a present for each child. We are still importing volunteers, and give a hearty welcome to those who have recently joined us from Huntingdon, Lancashire, Yorkshire, London and Middlesex, and Lincolnshire.

BERKS.—The award of the M.B.E. in the New Year Honours to Miss Bayne Jardine has given great pleasure to everyone in Berkshire. All who know her recognise her sympathy and interest in everything connected with the W.L.A., her great sense of fairness, and the encouragement she has always given to temporarily discouraged Land Girls. Her own experience on the land during the 1914-18 war has undoubtedly helped her to understand the problems of land girls faced for the first time with the difficulties of farm work. Eleven girls from Berkshire, together with Lady Mount, our Chairman, Miss Matthews and Mrs. Parker, our indefatigable Uniform Officer, attended the eight year party at the Caxton Hall, and Miss Joan Hanning, 11409, was one of the three girls to be televised in the Topical Magazine Programme on 14th January. Miss Hanning who has worked on dairy farms in Berkshire since January, 1940, and who hopes some time to have a farm of her own, says that what impressed her most about the television broadcast was the very great friendliness of everyone at Alexander Palace, which helped her to get over her nervousness. We were all sorry to hear of Lady Mount's unpleasant car accident before Christmas, and are glad that she is now feeling better. Christmas seems far behind now, and we look forward to a busy spring with a great deal of work. However, it is not too late to record that all the Hostels celebrated Xmas with dances, Christmas dinners and parties, which were much enjoyed. We are very pleased to welcome Miss Salmons as Warden of Blewbury Hostel.

BUCKS.—On 13th December a very successful party was held at the County Farm, Aylesbury, at which long-service awards were given to girls who had done six and four years' service. The presentations were made by Mr. J. K. Knowles, General Secretary of The National Farmers' Union, who in a most interesting address spoke of the valuable work the W.L.A. members were doing at this time of acute national crisis. Three girls who had given eight years' service were also presented with hand-written certificates, but were to receive their special armlets at a party arranged by the N.F.U. in London on 16th January, 1948. The gifts of a book, written by hand, recording W.L.A. activities in this County, and of a leather hand-bag, were made to Miss A. M. J. Oxley, who had given untiring service as a County Organiser since 1939 until her recent resignation. These tokens of appreciation were handed to Miss Oxley by two W.L.A. members. At the close of the ceremony a Handicraft Exhibition, open to W.L.A. members and hostel and office staff, was on view in an adjoining room and made a very attractive show. Nearly one hundred entries had been received under the classes of needlework, embroidery, knitting, crochet, leatherwork, toys and miscellaneous items. The judges, two experts connected with the women's institute, expressed their admiration at the high standard of work exhibited, and many of the visitors also said how creditable it was for busy Land Girls to find time and materials to produce such lovely articles. There have been a number of successful Christmas parties in the hostels, at which both staff and W.L.A. members have given splendid co-operation. About 20 girls from Manor Road Hostel, Newport, Pagnell, went carol singing just before Christmas, and collected the sum of £1 4s. This was donated to the County Blind Society and a local Children's Home.

CUM. AND WES.—There has been the usual round of Christmas gaiety at each of our nine hostels and at the Land Army Club in Penrith, where a special tea and cinema party was held for privately employed volunteers. A Bring and Buy Sale in aid of the County Welfare Fund made approximately £50 and more than paid for the radiant heat lamp which we have bought for use in our hostels and for our immersion heater. It is now possible for volunteers to have hot baths at the Penrith Club on Saturday afternoons and Tuesday evenings. Congratulations to the twenty-three girls who passed their Proficiency Test in Field Work last month, but particularly to the ten who gained distinction. It was a great pleasure to see Violet Nelson, home on leave from Newton Hall, where, with Olive Newton and Mary Cowin, she is taking an agricultural course. Successful dances have been held by Cliburn and Bolton Hall in aid of Great Ormond Street Hospital and

Whitehaven Pit Disaster Fund respectively. Lazonby and Milnthorpe have made donations to the County Welfare and Benevolent Funds. We welcome two new wardens, Mrs. Holroyd (Brampton) and Mrs. Miller (Scaley) and hope they will be happy in Cumberland.

DERBY.—Congratulations to Miss N. Tankard, 58877, and Miss H. J. Hayles 58874 on qualifying for their six-year armlets. Our thanks are due to the Wardens and staff of our hostels who arranged parties for our Land Girls at Christmas. A whistle drive was held at Trusley Manor Hostel on the 16th December and the proceeds of £5 were forwarded to the Children's Hospital, Great Ormond Street, London. A dance was also held at this hostel on the 31st December and the profits of £5 18s. were used for a children's party given at the hostel on 10th January. A party and dance were held at Stanton Hostel on the 22nd December. Parties were also held at Eaves Hall and Aston Hostel and the girls invited their friends. Four committee members, two representatives and two Land Girls qualified to attend the eight-year armlet party in London. The girls were very proud to receive their eight-year armlets from Mr. Turner, President of the N.F.U. All who attended the party from Derbyshire were very charmed with the floral stage decorations which had been supplied by the Cornish Growers. A Ministry of Information film was shown at Eaves Hall Hostel on the 9th January and was much enjoyed. Many girls from the hostels in the Derby area attended a D.A.E.C. staff dance on the 16th January.

DEVON.—A three day training course was arranged by the D.A.E.C. for supervisors at the end of November and was much appreciated by those who attended. The necessity for the initial training and supervision of recruits was emphasised, and other matters of general interest were discussed. It is hoped to hold a series of these courses. Over five hundred W.L.A. members descended on Exeter on 6th December for a most enjoyable rally. Mr. John Maude, the M.P. for Exeter, opened the proceedings and there was an exhibition of handicrafts followed by a drama competition. The standard of exhibits was high, and the drama items revealed much talent. A gathering of Land Girls is a stimulating sight, and everyone seemed happy and in good voice! Most of the hostels had Christmas dinners and parties before the girls left for their holiday. These are always cheerful occasions, and Wardens and domestic staff are to be congratulated on their efforts. Our County Chairman, five District Representatives and seven W.L.A. members had invitations to the eight-year party in London on 16th January, and those who were able to attend enjoyed themselves immensely. We congratulate them on their long years of service. J. Hebditch, 162463, and E. Parker, 186769, are working full time at a calf clearing station near Exeter. We are proud to think that two W.L.A. members should be chosen for this important job, and we wish them every success.

DORSET.—The festive season has not been lacking in Land Army parties, which have already taken place at most of our hostels. The standard of Christmas decorations has been extremely high this year, and we congratulate those responsible for this. Our hostel at Piddletrenthide which was abandoned by the W.L.A. at the end of 1943 is about to be re-opened, and we welcome the girls from London and Middlesex, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Hampshire and Leicestershire, who are to work in that district. Another hostel will be opening shortly in the Wareham area, when a further thirty girls will be coming to Dorset from other parts of the country. We rely on the "Old Stagers" to do all they can to help the newcomers to settle down to work which is bound to seem rather strange at first. Girls from one or two of our hostels have been doing excellent work on land drainage, and we congratulate them on the way they have tackled this job, which is quite new to most of them. We are proud to have such a high percentage of long service volunteers in this county, and in addition to the 14 W.L.A. members, our Chairman, three committee members, and county Secretary have completed eight years' service. Unfortunately four of the 14 Land Girls were unable to attend the party in the Caxton Hall, London, to receive their armlets from the President of the National Farmers' Union.

ESSEX.—The last two months have been uneventful except for the spate of Christmas and the New Year parties, which were all very much enjoyed. Our most isolated hostel, Layer Breton, which closed on 23rd January, has had a fairly full weekly programme of events throughout the winter including dressmaking and German classes and a discussion group. The twenty girls from there have now moved to Fordham where they will form the nucleus of a new hostel housing sixty volunteers.

We congratulate the following girls who qualified to attend the eight-year party given by the N.F.U.—Mrs. E. Booby, Miss P. Patmore, Miss M. Titterton, Miss A. MacLeod, Miss J. Lynes, Miss E. Beswick, Mrs. T. Burton, Miss S. Chadwick, Miss C. Barber, Miss B. Billham and Mrs. F. Rideout. Most of them were able to go and enjoyed themselves very much. Four committee members and one district representative were also invited.

FLINTS.—There have been several dances in the county all of which were a great success. A dance in Mold, organised by the girls from Mold Hostel, on the 11th December, 1947, resulted in £30 11s. 3d. for the County Welfare Fund and £17 for the Benevolent Fund. Members from other hostels came to the party and enjoyed themselves enormously. St. Asaph, one of the smaller hostels, also gave a dance on the 21st November from which the County Welfare Fund benefited by £13 and the Benevolent Fund by £10 10s. Queensbridge have had two social functions—one in November and a dance in January which contributed £7 to the Benevolent Fund and £7 to St. Dunstan's. The guests at this dance were the officers and men from No 4 Trading Centre at Ellesmere. Bad weather has brought a certain amount of unemployment and the Ministry of Information has provided film shows in the hostels and Mr. Humphreys, Chief Advisory Officer, has also shown a series of agricultural films. Many girls have been mending and renovating sacks. All the hostels were

beautifully decorated for Christmas with holly and other decorations and Christmas trees and everyone had a Christmas party. We have welcomed quite a number of new recruits into the county and we hope that they will settle down in their new life in agriculture. Two hostels have asked for drama classes which it is hoped may be arranged.

GLOS.—The following seven volunteers attended the party on 16th January, and were presented with the new eight-year armlet by Mr. James Turner the President of the National Farmers' Union:—Miss Roma Callen, 27485, Miss H. Chapman, 16506, Miss E. Hatherall, 28281, Miss E. Hirst, 13671, Miss G. Pugh, 8497, Miss E. Simpson, 7293, Miss I. Thompson, 22101. Mrs. Morrison, our Chairman was also present with Mrs. Huntley Sinclair, Mrs. F. Lister, Mrs. Hughes, Miss Phyllis Ratcliffe and other committee members and area representatives. The party was greatly enjoyed by everyone, and was followed by various theatre parties, suppers, etc.

The following have applied to enter the Gloucester Dairy Students Machine Milking Contest, and we hope others will do so:—Miss W. Rickman, 152032, Miss I. Winter, 53910, Miss L. Bradley, 46928, Miss E. Worrall, 151452. Miss Colnett, the Chairman of the Association (also W.L.A. committee member) has suggested that if the W.L.A. entries warrant it, there could be a special W.L.A. class at the contest. Dumbleton Hostel are holding their winter party on 24th January, and Mickleton on the 28th. The dance in aid of the Benevolent and County Welfare Funds, which the office staff were going to arrange in Cheltenham, is now going to be at the Guildhall in Gloucester on 20th February. Full details will be published in the County News Letter, and we all hope it will be a great success. A few of our volunteers from various hostels have responded to the call of their district officers to volunteer to help in a Fruit Canning Factory during the slack period of agricultural work, these volunteers preferring to do a good days work than to sit idle. The hostel wardens' pantomime party on 8th January was great fun—all the wardens were able to come, and Mrs. Morrison and members of the office staff had tea with them all afterwards, when Mrs. Morrison thanked the wardens for the work they are doing, and have done for the W.L.A.

HANTS.—We are very proud of having 14 volunteers, seven county committee members and 21 representatives who were eligible to receive their eight-year armlets from Mr. Turner. Unfortunately only nine volunteers were able to attend the party, and these were entertained to lunch by Miss White at the Army and Navy Stores, before going on to a wonderful party at Caxton Hall. Activities in aid of the Benevolent Fund drive are still going on—Redenham Hostel has sent a cheque for £116 raised by a draw and Christmas play, and Miss E. Redding organised a dance in Stickbridge entirely by herself which brought in £22. Both efforts deserve many congratulations. Many successful Christmas parties were held in the hostels and the help of the Wardens and hostel staff towards the success of these is very greatly appreciated. It was with great pleasure we welcomed Miss Keith to the Wardens Conference held in Winchester, on 5th December. Miss Keith gave an extremely helpful and interesting talk, and Mr. Williamson, Chief Executive Officer of the W.A.E.C., spoke on the problems of organising labour as faced by the W.A.E.C. Altogether it was a most interesting conference and we are very grateful to Miss Keith for coming to talk to use and advise on our problems.

HEREFORD.—We are all very sorry to say "Goodbye" to our County Secretary, Mrs. Walker, who is leaving at the beginning of February. Mrs. Walker has been County Secretary in Herefordshire for over 18 months, and before she came here she worked in the W.L.A. County Offices of Worcestershire and Gloucestershire. As Mrs. Walker's home is in Hereford we hope she will still remain in touch with the Land Army. We are delighted by the appointment of Mrs. Bages as County Secretary. Mrs. Bages is well known by all connected with the W.L.A., having been County Organiser for the past year and a half. We are also losing two of our Wardens. Miss Bach from Brockington Hostel and Miss Septon from Three Crosses Hostel. Both Wardens have been working with the W.L.A. for some years, and will be very much missed. Great efforts have been made to get full employment for all the volunteers in the County during this rather slack period. Many have been doing the usual field work but for the rest we have been able to arrange for several to go out working in gardens, many have been sack mending and others have been preparing fruit and vegetables for canning. The Christmas party was most successful, and we were very pleased indeed that Mrs. Jenkins was able to be there, in spite of the very nasty weather. A Group Leaders' Conference was held on 11th December and Miss Parry, the Regional Organiser gave a most helpful talk.

HERTS.—December and January have been very social months in the hostel world. Christmas parties and Christmas decorations have cheered all volunteers, but the H.A.S.C.'s decision that an extra week's holiday without pay could be taken in addition to the ordinary Christmas holiday, was the most welcome Christmas present for the north country girls. In these particularly difficult months, employment has been our main problem and we welcomed the decision of Stanstead Abbots girls to help at Allen & Hanbury's factory. The clearance gang at Nym Park have also earned very good reports on their work, and before long we hope to have more girls usefully employed on work not strictly agricultural. Hertfordshire was well represented at the eight-year party and we were particularly glad that Nora Bryant was chosen to hand the W.L.A.'s gift to the President of the N.F.U. Miss Hickling (County Organiser) leaves us on 6th February to take up similar work in Gloucestershire. We shall all be sorry to lose her but realise that the attraction of living in her own home must prove greater than her affection for Hertfordshire W.L.A. volunteers and hostels. Her place will be taken by Miss Griffin. The Christmas bazaar raised £145 for the County Welfare Fund and we were most grateful

to volunteers, wardens, and employers who helped us in this great effort.

HUNTS, CAMBS, AND ELY.—Visits to the pantomimes are again popular. Sixty Land Army girls with members of the office staff saw "Toad of Toad Hall" at Cambridge on 14th January, an excellent show which was much enjoyed. A hundred and forty will see "Babes in the Wood" at Peterborough on 4th February. We congratulate those girls who qualified for the eight-year armlet between September and January and who were eligible for the party. Most of the hostels had their usual Christmas parties. March, Ely and Portland House, Whittlesey were open over the holiday. Father Christmas appeared at Portland House and gave out presents to everybody. At Ely the Latvian and Ukrainian domestics cooked their native dishes for the festival. Miss Betty Freeman, an ex-member of the Land Army, who was unfortunately taken ill in Switzerland last year while on holiday and who is still there receiving treatment, writes us of the winter scene at Davos. The Pension is more than 5,000 ft. above sea level and when she looks out of her window she sees the children going to school on skis or toboggans. She hopes to be fit enough to return to Cambridge in May.

I. of W.—January was a rather sad month for some of our hostel girls, as work was short and rain more or less continuous. This temporary "stand down" has, however, proved conclusively the joy of having even a dull job and all are eagerly looking forward to full and speedy employment. On 5th and 12th January, very interesting lectures were given by Mrs. Godfrey Phillips from the Central Council for Health Education. They were well attended by the girls and Lady Rowbotham, Chairman, Mrs. Parkinson, County Secretary, Mrs. Gardner, County Organiser and Miss Oldham, Committee member and D.R., all went over on both occasions. We hope to see Mrs. Phillips again next winter by which time another hostel will, we hope, be ready to welcome her. A social and dance was held at St. John's Parish Hall, Sandown on 22nd January. The party was organised by Mrs. Allen and Miss Lewis, Warden and Assistant Warden of Sandown Hostel, and was most successful, everyone seemed to be bubbling over with happiness. The proceeds were divided between the District Nursing Association and our own Benevolent Fund. The hostel has had, over a period of years, a great deal of valuable help from the Nursing Association and everyone was glad to show their appreciation in this practical way. Prizes were presented by Lady Rowbotham. Congratulations to Miss Beryl Gabbert who has been selected to go to Switzerland under the exchange scheme organised by the N.F.U.

KENT.—The news from our hostels includes several Christmas parties. A very happy party was held at Swadlands on 18th December, and another at Offord Hostel on 17th December. At the latter, in addition to an excellent supper, £5 12s. was raised for the County Welfare Fund by means of a raffle. Congratulations to all the girls and staff at Gransden for their grand effort in aid of the County Welfare Fund. At their Christmas party on 9th January, they collected £20 7s. 6d. by means of a most successful raffle. They are now working hard to augment this amount by having a whistle drive on 10th February. Malling House gave a delightful combined Christmas and Wedding party, at which two brides from the hostel received wedding gifts from the other members. There was dancing and a Bran Tub, from which everyone drew a gift. A very successful evening. We congratulate Miss D. E. Scott, 54376, who took third prize in Class 4 at the Thanet Ploughing Match at Monckton Court on 6th November, also third prize for maintenance of a tractor used for a year. She was the only woman entrant competing against eight men. Congratulations also to the 13 Kent Land Girls who received invitations to the party given by the National Farmers' Union in London on 16th January to be presented with their eight-year armlets by the President, Mr. James Turner. Their names are:—S. Furneaux, I. W. Groves, A. J. Scott, D. R. Thompson, M. M. Rumbold, F. P. Johnson, A. G. Price, E. W. Henniker, P. Montgomery, N. M. Warrick, E. M. French, C. K. S. Lewis, and P. T. Quirke. We are proud of their record of long service. In December the K.A.E.C. gave a delightful film show at Malling House on farming in Canada, followed by a lecture on the care and maintenance of bicycles, which the girls found most interesting and helpful.

LANCS.—We are very proud that K. A. Abraham, 1896, D. Dixon, 17981, B. M. Oxley, 29340, E. A. Parkinson, 13538, P. Prescott, 16574, H. G. Rowley, 15403, N. Taylor, 22952, our Chairman, Lady Worsley Taylor and several members of the county committee have completed eight years' and were eligible for invitations to the Long Service party on 16th January. The girls at Halsall hostel gave a Christmas party to the children of their employers on Sunday, 21st December. The hostel was beautifully decorated and after the party, the Christmas Tree was sent to the Ormskirk General Hospital. The men from the invited at Christmas to Birkdale Hostel and the party was a great success. Nine of our volunteers who unfortunately had to spend Christmas in hospital, were sent a gift of 10s. each from our County Welfare Fund. We would like to welcome Miss Parry as our Regional Organiser and also Miss Clarke, our new County Organiser.

SOMERSET.—Hostel Christmas or New Year Parties have been very jolly events. We wished the walls of Asham House could expand to give more room to the guests who did justice to the marvellous refreshments, and enjoyed the Christmas Tree, games and dancing on 11th December. Entries for Proficiency Tests were somewhat disappointing. We congratulate those members who passed, and wish those who failed better luck next time. We are proud that fourteen of our members have completed eight years' service and hope they will enjoy their trip to London to receive the smart new armlet. The Xmas draw has again been a great success and we hope to send a substantial cheque to the Benevolent Fund, thanks to those members and friends who sold so many tickets.