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HEADQUARTERS MOVES

AT the end of April, the Headquarters of the Women's Land Army moved back to London which it had left four days before war began. Henceforward it will function at Nos. 4 and 6, Chesham Street, London, S.W.1, and next door, at No. 2, there will be, very shortly, The Land Army Club given by the British War Relief Society of America.

There have always been considerations in favour of having Headquarters in London; hitherto these have been outweighed by other factors but now it has been decided to go back and the move has taken place, fortunately without involving any change in the leading staff or in the organisation.

Anything which helps the efficiency of any department of our national war organisation is more, not less, important at the present time. Any tendency to think that it doesn't very much matter now what any of us does because the war is going to be won anyhow, will certainly postpone success and may lead to disaster. To win this war, we have all got to keep on keeping on, however sick of our respective jobs we may feel and however justifiable a little relaxation may seem.

Apart from the fact that the date of the end of the war is utterly uncertain, it seems unlikely that the need for the Land Army will end when the war in Europe does. The "cease fire" will not make anyone less hungry or put food into anyone's mouth. Thousands upon thousands of our fellows in Europe are starving to-day and directly the fighting ends they must be fed. The Land Army has done a grand job in helping to feed our own desperately fighting people, with what happier hope may it not look forward to helping to feed those whom a tragic fate has starved for five years or more?

M. A. P.

OUR MILK SUPPLIES IN WARTIME

By J. L. Davies, Assistant General Manager to the Milk Marketing Board.

Members of the Women's Land Army who live in the country districts, and particularly those who live and work on or near the dairy farms, will not be much worried by any shortage of milk. We who are less fortunate and who live in towns are restricted to our allowances of two pints a week—and we grumble and wonder why the cows cannot give a little more. We look forward to the summer months when we hope that milk will be in greater supply. Now in wartime we clamour for more milk and we forget that before the war the dairy farmers offered us much more than we were prepared to consume. The farmers advertised, we had various types of "Drink more milk" campaigns, but we preferred to spend our money on something else. It has taken a war to shake us and make us realise that a good supply of milk is vital to the maintenance of the health of our townspeople.

But this is only a superficial analysis of the situation. The truth is that, taken together, the people of this country are drinking much more milk in wartime than they ever did before. The increase in consumption now compared with 1939 is about 30 per cent. and I shudder to think what the increase would be if we all had as much milk as we wanted at present. The distribution of milk in wartime is very closely controlled and on the advice of those who know most about proper feeding, very large allowances of milk are made to the priority classes, the mothers, the children at home, the children in school, the invalids, etc. These priority classes get milk cheap and heavily subsidised by the State. They consume a great deal more than in pre-war days—some families hardly used to consume any and now they take their milk in quarts daily. The Ministry of Food rightly say that the milk supply must go in full measure to those who need it most. If one happens to be an adult with no priority whatever a miserable two pints is one's due in the winter months. I have no doubt in my own mind that the fact that the milk is distributed generously to the priority classes has had a tremendous effect in maintaining the health of our people in wartime and if so—well, the adults can carry on grumbling.

It is, obviously, useless to plan a scheme of distribution unless the supplies are available every day to meet the

need. So far as the milk supply is concerned we are dependent entirely on our dairy farms in this country—none is imported. The task of the dairy farmers for the past four years, aided by the Ministry of Agriculture, the Women's Land Army and the War Committees, has been to maintain supplies of milk in spite of all the wartime difficulties and in spite of the call for increases in other farm products. Milk has been, and still is, priority No. 1 on the agricultural list.

In the early days of 1940 and 1941 there was a fall in the supply, which in some areas assumed serious proportions. The bags of cake were no longer available in abundance and many of the dairy farmers had yet to learn to produce milk largely from the crops grown on their own land. The call for ploughing-up was insistent and this increased the work on every holding, and the cows were in some cases much neglected. But gradually the position has been adjusted and the Milk Production Campaign throughout the country is bringing good results. The test of production is the output in the winter months—almost anybody can get cows to give milk in the summer. Our targets, given to each county are now confined to winter output, the Victory Churn Contest and all the County Competitions are similarly confined to winter production.

The fact which is most gratifying is that in this war output of winter milk is increasing. We have this winter had the highest figures of winter milk ever recorded in this country—and this in the fifth winter of war. The increase is more in some districts than others and some farms do better than others. Some farmers are planning to increase output in winter while others are still content to run the cows on grass in summer and market what they will give. But on the whole output has been maintained and is increasing.

I feel that this is a very fine performance on the part of all engaged in dairy farming—the Minister has called them the "Heroes of the Agricultural Front" and I readily endorse his tribute. The greatest difficulty has been that of labour for milking and for looking after the cows seven days of the week. Nobody would claim that this is an exciting job but to those who are engaged in it I would like to say that their efforts are

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bringing good results in what is, after all, one of the most important branches of the war effort. It is because of this extreme labour difficulty on milk farms that the help of the Women's Land Army in this sphere has been so important. The girls on the dairy farms have done well and many are the tributes paid to them by the farmers.

The war is still on; we want still more milk, we want it in the winter months. The success of dairy farms must now be judged largely by their output in winter. The campaign for milk in winter will not stop with the war it will go on and we have a long way to go before we satisfy the increasing demands for the most important product of our farms in this country and which is properly given Priority No. 1 in our farm programme. Labour more than any other factor is the key to the problem, and we shall depend largely on the willing assistance of still more milkers in the W.L.A. for the increased efforts needed in the years to come.

OUR "ARTIFICIAL" CALVES

It must be more than twelve months now since one of our neighbours first decided to try artificial insemination on his cows. The thing was a nine days' wonder in the village, and every conversation sooner or later gravitated that way. I went down to the "Plough" one evening for some cigarettes, and as I stood in the warm kitchen waiting for my change, I could hear the talk in the tap-room over the hatch.

"It's agin nature, that's what I say." The voice was Billy Tabor's "So's using forks," said George. "They bin doing it in Russia a long time, I'm told." "Them Roossians, they may be good fighters, but who said they was good farmers?" Billy was determined to crab the thing if possible, but Billy's views were suspect I felt. Billy is stockman at the only farm in the village where they keep a bull, and Billy can claim a rake-off for every service!

Gradually the excitement died down, particularly as the inseminated cows seemed to come to no harm, but as the time for the arrival of the offspring drew near, interest revived. Reg's cowman was in great demand but he maintained a stoney silence, implying that the doubters would have to wait and see.

And then the great event came off and the news spread like wildfire. Reg's roan cow had come down, and presented him with a lovely little heifer calf. I was over at his house a week later, calling for

the library key, and he was talking about it. All the village had, apparently, been down to have a look at the prodigy. "It's really been very amusing," he said. "You know what some of them are. Take old Ted, for instance. You know what he is. He went across the yard to the calf place, and I'll take my oath he expected to see it with only three legs, or two heads! Stone, of course, was speechless as usual. He just glared at the animal, and then gave vent to one of his impressive 'Ah's!' " "You know," I said, "I haven't seen it yet." "Haven't you?" he exclaimed. "Come along now, then. You've five minutes before the library." It was a lovely little calf, right enough, and even I am now enough of a cow-hand to recognise its good points.

Then Reg's Freisian heifer produced her contribution: heifer twins. And the old red shorthorn gave him a fine little bull. By this time the idea had caught on in the village. The man opposite had had three cows done, and my own Boss had decided to try it for his new cow. She is due towards the end of this month and is already bagging up nicely.

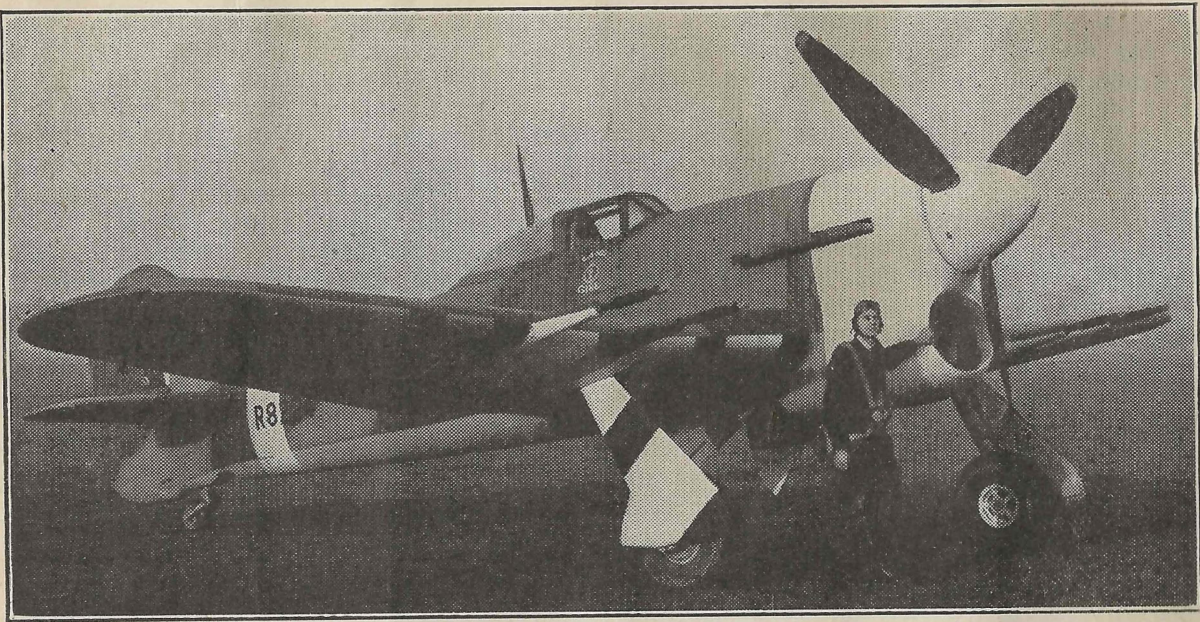
From what I have heard, the period of gestation seems without incident, and delivery entirely normal, though Reg tells me he is inclined to think the calf may come a week to ten days early, without (obviously) any ill effects that he can see. I shall be interested to see how our lady runs, and should like to know whether anyone else can furnish information on this point.

There are obvious advantages about artificial insemination. The outstanding one, of course, is the improvement in stock which will be effected, though I am inclined to discount Reg's grandiose schemes for grading up his very mixed herd! For one thing, it will take time, to put it mildly. But by and large, a cow may as well have a good quality calf as a poor quality one, and even under the bull licensing scheme, there is plenty of room for improvement. The big advantage from the worker's point of view is the abolition of that nerve-wracking business of driving the cow to the bull when necessary, with its nightmare of open gates and sketchy hedges, and endless tearing about over ploughed land, and other obstacles. As Johnnie said, "I'd willingly pay the difference in the fee meself, to be quit of that ruddy awful game!" In fact, the only person who disapproves of the thing, lock, stock and barrel, is Billy Tabor, and his views, as I have already shown, are suspect!

Cambs.

E. M. Barraud, 9600.

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At last we are able to publish a photograph of the Typhoon presented to the R.A.F. by the Land Army in 1942. The name "Land Girl" and W.L.A. badge can be seen on the side of the aeroplane.

POST-WAR PLANS COMPETITION

Judging this competition was very like trying to choose between an apple and an orange and a banana. Nearly two hundred entries covered a vast field and tho' the large majority, like K. Rawkins, (W. Sussex "were dearly set on any sort of land work" the choice ranged from garden architect to herb-grower, and from owning a dairy farm to instructing in tractor driving. Off the land, travel was popular and there were candidates for teaching, journalism, political work, acting, interior decorating, and dress-designing, among other occupations. There was also a great difference of approach—a Surrey volunteer dreamily forecasts "a small cottage, a dog, a cat, and a canary" while another from Notts states baldly "I am basing my post-war plans on the fact that I shall either be single or that my husband will be away from home most of the time." More than one volunteer thought a father or husband would come in handy for the heavy work.

Many entrants shewed intelligent appreciation of the farm-worker's place in the community and of the comparative values of modern housing and what M. Pyrah (Cumberland) called "that old world charm which hides so much drudgery."

Most of those who want to have dairy farms or small holdings have not given quite enough care to the calculation of costs and risks. All their calves will

be heifers, all their chickens will hatch out and no blackfly or wire worm will ruin *their* crops. The cautious ones like R. Clayton Barker (Somerset) and M. Mitchell (Hants) intend to build up a herd slowly while still in a job. J. Ryder's (Cheshire) idea of a nursery garden, combined with a jobbing gardener's service was good and N. Coppin (Kent) sent a thoroughly well-worked out plan for a pig farm. J. Whitfield (Yorks) has the excellent idea of becoming a farm or estate secretary and M. Oram (Cumberland) sent a more general essay which was both thoughtful and original. As announced last month, these six shared between them the 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes, receiving a guinea each. There were several other entries which ran them close and altogether a high standard was maintained throughout the Competition which was a very interesting one indeed to judge.

COMMENDED.—G. Yates (Berks), M. Earle (Bucks.), E. Barraud (Camb.), N. Jesty (Cornwall), M. Spiers (Devon), V. St. Leger (Glam.), A. White (Hants.), S. Curtice (Hereford.), S. Pitts (Kent), M. Vann (Leics.), B. Brown, N. Pratt (Notts), P. Darling (Salop), H. Edgley (Somerset), B. Lee (Surrey), M. Mills (Staffs.), M. Jolly (E. Sussex), L. Player (Warwick.), D. Pembridge (Worcs.), R. Robson (Yorks.).

There were more entries from Cumberland and Westmorland than from any other county.

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DIARY OF A RED ARMLET—3

Monday.—Pulling sugar beet all day, a rather back-aching business but with the compensation of working near the road and being able to watch comings and goings! Almond blossom all out now in the Rectory garden and my own out at the tip of the little tree. How many nuts for Christmas and will they have anything in them this year?

Tuesday.—Cows would not come in at tea time, but stood huddled by the bridge over the stream. Swore at them but had to fetch them, and then saw the reason for their refusal: poor old Pet bogged in the bottom of the ditch. Rushed for help. The Boss decreed it was a tractor job, and went for Stan and the Fordson. Milked while he was getting the tackle ready, then went to help. The poor old mare was paralysed with cramp and could give us no help, so we had to lug her out bodily, a job needing very nice decision how much strain we could put on her neck. Finally got her out with the main pull on a rope round her body (Boss and I, being the only ones with Wellingtons, had to scramble into the ditch and pass the rope through the gooey mud under her body) and only a little tension on her neck. She was in a filthy mess, plastered in mud all over, and lay like a stranded whale, but suddenly came to life, got up and shook herself. Nearly two hours late for tea. Amazing how news of such an accident spreads. Before we had her out, half the village was there, all full of advice, and a few of the older men really helpful.

Wednesday.—Beet again. Pet seems none the worse which is amazing as she is all of twenty-five. Library night and new books: look a good lot. Have pounced on Hogben's "Mathematics for the Million" for myself; it will keep me quiet for weeks. Why don't they teach maths like this at school? Achilles and the Tortoise kept us arguing over supper.

Thursday.—Our first "artificial" calf arrived, a fine little bull. Just about the right time, which does not bear out Reg's theory that they tend to run a week or ten days short. Vet says he has had no comments to this effect either. Red Cross meeting; lecture on gas. Practical and suited to rural facilities. We were left with the engaging picture of cleaning old Cecil down with a stirrup pump to decontaminate him!

Friday.—Cut across the orchard back home at dinner time. Primroses all out and birds in almost full song. Pigeons again in the ivy on my damson tree.

Saw a bird hovering at the face of the cut oat stack yesterday. Thought it was a hawk but it was a pigeon. Never seen one do that before, about a yard from the ground.

Saturday.—In the barn all the morning, mixing cows' grub for the weekend. The calf is a fine chap now. Spent the afternoon in the garden, trying to confine my efforts to the vegetable plot, but constantly straying to investigate things of interest in the flower beds or orchard. The arum lilies (Cuckoopint) are well up now, and I've found the robin's nest in the end hedge.

Sunday.—Wet all day so turned out the toolshed, and not before it needed it. Where does everything come from? But one is loth to throw away; things **do** come in handy, especially in these days. 9600.

I AM A RAT-CATCHER.

The author of the following article recently won a silver cup given by the Chairman of Dorset W.L.A. for the best rat-catcher in the county.

Rat-catching! Yes, that is my job, and it is a very grand job too. Before the War I was working in a factory in Yorkshire. In fact, eighteen months ago I was sewing buttons on coats. When I volunteered for the W.L.A. I was sent to Sherbourne, Dorset and trained by a trapper who taught me all he could and had patience with me, but he was firm.

After my training I worked with my trainer; we have 28 farms to keep clear of these pests. We have caught several thousand rats by trapping and many by poisoning. We feed the rats twice before we give them the poison. On the first and third day we lay bait in good worked holes, or in other places used by the rats, taking great care to protect it from other animals. On the fifth day we lay the poison and clear up any remains the following day. We have never had any complaints of killing anything else except rats. There are several kinds of poison and we never use the same kind twice in succession on the same farm, as rats are cunning animals and soon get wise. When making a gas attack, we gas hedges and places out in the open. We have a pump filled with cymag gas which we pump into the holes, stopping them as the gas comes out. Occasionally rats bolt and chasing them is great fun.

The best of luck to other Land Girls in this work and to those about to join the W.L.A. I say have a try at Rat-catching, you will find it very interesting. Dorset. A. Hunt, 81849.

EARTHWORMS

I do not pretend to be an Authority on Earthworms, but I have always been interested in them, rather, perhaps, from the viewpoint of the small child who, at a family gathering, was heard to say, whilst gazing at a somewhat unprepossessing relative—"Mummy, what's Aunt Hannah for?"

...
Recently I was shaken out of this apathetic attitude by hearing the staggering statement made, that "the collective efforts of the worm population in an acre of land in one year probably results in ten tons of soil being brought to the surface and ultimately spread over it." This astounding activity is brought about in the process of food-getting, during which the worm makes its burrow. Into the burrow are drawn leaves and other vegetation, both fresh and half-decayed, a good proportion of which are eaten, the residue being used to plug the opening as a protection against extremes of temperature and the ravages of birds. The making of a burrow, which is, in other words, a tunnel leading to a small terminal chamber, is an easy matter in soft loose earth, the worm forcing its way head foremost, and the body following concertina-wise, but not so easy when the ground is hard. The alternate means of progress, when tackling a difficult country, is by eating its way through, swallowing the soil as it goes, and ejecting it on the earth's surface in the form of castings, which, when dry, crumble into fine dust. It is on account of these casts that, seen through the eyes of those devoted to ball-games needing smooth turf, worms have frequently been alluded to as "pests." Those who, by the use of worm-killers, rid themselves of this so-called "pest", soon rue the day, when the earth is no longer aerated by these natural cultivators.

The body of an earthworm consists of from 100 to 200 segments, and is furnished with 4 rows of minute bristles, 2 above and 2 below, which aid locomotion and can be distinctly heard if the worm is made to crawl over a piece of rough paper. There are no eyes or ears, but a very small mouth is found in the first segment. Nearer the head than the tail end, is a hump which looks like an old scar. This is where the reproductive organs (a worm is self-productive, although cross-fertilization also occurs) are situated, and the bulge varies in size according to the age of the worm and the season of the year.

Digestion is aided by the presence of a crop and a gizzard.

Earthworms do not appear to have any sense of hearing, although they respond readily to vibration. It is recorded that sound experiments were carried out by a great scientist, in order to establish this information. Every means of invoking response was tried, from playing the piano with the loud pedal down, to shouts from the human voice and blasts blown on the bassoon! The approach of a mole however, will send them quickly to the surface, and it is said that certain birds will deliberately tap the surface of the earth, in order to bring their prey to within their reach.

Experiments with tasty and pungent morsels of food such as onion or raw meat, point towards a sense of smell or taste, or perhaps of both. With regard to food, they are omnivorous, and their diet consists of vast quantities of earth and most kinds of vegetation; they are not adverse to animal matter, including their own kind, which places them amongst the cannibals.

Charles Darwin spoke the truth when he said "The plough is one of the most ancient and valuable of man's inventions; but long before he existed the land was in fact regularly ploughed, and still continues to be thus ploughed by earthworms. It may be doubted whether there are many other animals which have played so important a part in the history of the world as have these lowly organised creatures."

C. Beck.

CANTEENS—GOOD NEWS

Mobile canteens will in future serve members of the W.L.A. in uniform wherever this can be done without deviation from their normal routes. This does not effect the arrangement by which volunteers may already obtain refreshments from certain canteens operated for the Forces by voluntary organisations in towns and villages.

Dorset reports that many woolshops and haberdashers are now selling a buff yarn, coupon free, that is easily knitted into socklets for wearing in gumboots. A 4-oz. ball makes two pairs, and the time spent in knitting is saved over and over again by not having so many holes to darn. Sometimes oiled wool can be obtained coupon free. Socklets made of this are thicker, but excellent for very cold or wet weather.

THE LAND GIRL



At the meeting of the Worcestershire Land Girl's Council on 26th. Feb. Mrs. Lea, O.B.E. (County Chairman) is presiding with Lady Denman on her left and Mrs. Coombs (County Sec.) on her right.

"—APART FROM TIMBER MEASURING"

Up 'til March, 1942, I had never heard of Hexhamshire and from that date I lived there for 18 months, timber measuring for the Ministry of Supply.

I believe that this small valley is one of the most attractive spots in Northumberland and I found the people very kind, friendly and of strong character.

A tiny valley bounded by moors. The last outpost a lodge called Riddlehamhope. From Riddlehamhope there runs a stoney road to Blanchland, in Durham. By Lightside and the Cobbler's Venture runs, on the other road, a track over the moors to Allendale.

Surely there is no place in England quite so unique, cut off and self-sufficient, after leaving the Burn End. The folk stand alone. "We are from the 'Shire'," they say. No-one can say more, no-one remarks upon the phrase.

The names upon the tombstones in Whitley Chapel churchyard are the names of families still flourishing today: Charlton, Roddam, Oliver, Simpson, Bell and Kennedy.

The valley is well-wooded. There is an amount of coniferous timber on Duke's Field Fell. The woods about Finechamber's Mill are always lovely. The trees are varied in height and dip and curve like moss, for one sees the tops of the trees from the road. The little larch wood at Newbiggin is most attractive in spring, the brilliant foliage

contrasting with the pink cones. There are a few cypress trees at Low Mill where the cart road turns off into the wood. The saw mill is silent and lonely in the evenings; the wood, newly cut, smells good.

Further trees look green and cool. Upon the right the road which, over the Devil's Water and away over two fields, runs parallel, but upon a high bank; the Holywell pool is bridged, and across the green a cool undergrowth path runs to another flat green spot. The woods beyond Red Lead Mill are dense and extensive; the Raw Green sides are thin but lively, ant hills heave and ants work on, lacing the paths on endless business. In a felled patch remain a few slender birch amid stretches of foxglove. Primroses abound in spring over this place.

Jingle's Haugh looks splendid in autumn. I saw snowdrops there in spring in an old garden, when the darkness crept over the fells and the Devil's Water lazily flowed on under the two white bridges. Above Jingle's Haugh on the Raw Green side of the wood there is a hazel wood where bats fly in the dusk; there are cherry trees and mountain ash bordering the narrow lane to Viewly, and as I cycled silently along the road near the Heron's Burn early one morning last spring I saw a young deer asleep, plumb in the centre of a cornfield.

M. Haining, 60298.

WANTED.—Full-sized violin case. good condition. Davis, 10, Beechfield Road, Welwyn Garden City, Herts.

FOR SALE.—Jodhpur boots, size four, 40/-. Hall, Staplins, Coombe Hill, nr. Gloucester.

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The following is the closing part of a sermon preached by the Rev. A. Anderson to members of the Scottish W.L.A. at the Congregational Church, Nairn.

Emile Zola tells us in *La Debacle* how on the morning of the Battle of Sedan a company of soldiers pushing its way forward was ordered to lie down in a field of cabbages. Guns were booming, bullets were flying, shells were bursting, and houses were burning. The soldiers grew restive and impatient to be in action. How long were they to lie among these cabbages? Then the eye of one of them saw what staggered him with astonishment, for down in a lonely valley, sheltered by rugged slopes, a farm worker was calmly going on with his work, guiding a plough drawn by a big white horse. Why should he stop his work? Men would still have to be fed and corn would still continue to grow even if a few thousand men were fighting a battle. Then Zola tells us further on in the story how when the evening came and the great battle had been fought, the same soldier was busy washing the wounds of his comrade. To his astonishment he saw the same farm worker in the same valley, still going on with his labours, calmly turning up the sod, guiding his plough drawn by a big white horse. The feeding of mankind must not cease, the land must be cultivated, even if the battle raged and the war continued.

Isn't that how it must be with you of the W.L.A.? Your work belongs to the great essentials without which we are doomed to perish. "No man, having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God" or for any kingdom worth having. Therefore, plough on, work on, put your heart and mind and strength into your labours. You are God's fellow-labourers, God's partners in the saving of your country.

Our warmest congratulations to the Misses Kemp and Wise (Oxfordshire) who were Commended for their courage in trying, with other farm workers, to rescue the crew of a burning aeroplane: to the Misses Sales and Newton (E. Sussex) for their rescue of their employer from an infuriated bull; to Miss Hales (Berks) who did fine work when incendiaries fell at her farm; to Miss Carr (Derbyshire) who won the Ministry of Agriculture's Certificate of Merit for her allotment and to Miss Pat Boyce (Essex) who has been promoted Manageress of Silverpines Poultry Farm.

DAY'S WORK

Brrr!! 6 o'clock. Time to get up. Oh dear, another day of toil and sweat! Somehow we manage to get to the yard by 6.45, and to the stable if its horse-hoeing, or to the barn for a hoe or prong if it's cabbage hoeing or couching. Away we go, with grand ideas of doing acres and acres by the end of the day. But it's only an idea, after the first hour we are not so thrilled with the job, and by the end of the day we are sick of the sight of hoe, prong and horse!

We like haymaking because there are always plenty of people about, and life is interesting and above all time goes fast. The horse rake may jar your "inners" out, but its fun having command of a horse. Being on the rick is hard, heavy, hot work, but there is always a break while waiting for another load. We do *not* like baling—much too dusty.

We enjoy our work very much, but what we enjoy most, is hearing "Lunch time!" "Dinner time!" "Tea time!" and the sweetest sounding words of all—"KNOCK OFF TIME."

Then—home, hot tea, hot bath and best of all, BED!

Hants.

P. Wyvill, 11868.

Please note that Young Farmers' Club booklets are 1s. each; post free, *not* 9d.



E. Eaton (Beds) winner of a ploughing competition at Eaton Socon.

THE BIRDS OF MY DISTRICT

1st Prize Entry

I live in Dorchester, a small country town in the centre of an agricultural district, and my work of Milk Recording takes me over an area covering a ten-mile radius, which gives me a wonderful opportunity of noticing bird life.

Beginning with our garden residents and special friends, I must put first our thrushes, two pairs who have been with us for several years, and who are now so tame that they bring their children close up to our garden chairs to be fed. Blackbirds build year after year in the honeysuckle against the house, robins and hedgesparrows in the creepers, and wrens in the buddleia.

From round about come sparrows, chaffinches, mistle thrushes, starlings and jackdaws—the latter already putting on grey bonnets as the courting season approaches, and the mistle thrushes have been singing since January 1st.

On rough days we get black-headed and herring gulls, driven inland from the coast about ten miles away.

Seasonal birds in our garden are goldfinches, "charms" of them, who nest in the next-door apple trees, and depart when they have eaten the last of the Michaelmas daisy seeds; flycatchers, who love the long summer evenings, greenfinches who come mainly for water, and who seem the thirstiest of all our garden birds; willow warblers and garden warblers with their soft, grey-green colouring, and of course swallow, swifts and house martins, who come back year after year to their old haunts.

Twice only I have seen a goldcrest in our garden, and once a nightjar, the latter a strange speckled bird which lay, rather than perched, along our fence top, and then flew about the garden clapping its wings together above its back in a peculiar manner.

Down by the river are kingfishers who flash up and down stream in their glory of iridescent plumage; also grey, yellow and pied wagtails, the latter sometimes visiting our garden, and in the willows and rushes are the sedge and reed warblers, with their cleverly slung and woven nests. Moorhens and a few coot make their nests in the backwaters, and rear several broods each summer, and teach their young to build nests before parting with them in the autumn.

Hérons nest in the high trees on the river bank, and in the early morning are to be seen wading after their breakfast, or else slowly flying over the river, fol-

lowing each twist and turn and watching for fish.

Out in the open country in September one notices great flocks of lapwings collecting, and these remain together all the winter, joined in October by fieldfares and plovers, and later by common gulls, clearing the land of grubs. Starlings, too, collect in tremendous flocks, and seem to keep to a daily timetable, so regular are they in their habits and flights.

Skylarks sing joyous songs nearly all the year, and meadow pipits, wheatears and stonechats are to be seen in the summer months around gorse-grown warrens. Yellowhammers spend hours on the telegraph wires as though they enjoyed watching road traffic.

In the more wooded country are all kinds of tits, though many of these also frequent our garden. Tree creepers and nuthatches are often seen, jays, spotted and green woodpeckers with their sudden laughing notes in the spring, and very rarely a wryneck. On one occasion I saw a female redstart, and on another a nightingale singing only a few yards away, and on a frosty morning I saw a flock of siskins on the high branches of a pine. Once I saw blackcaps, attracted by their fine, ringing song, and bullfinches are also seen in passage.

A pair of tawny owls build every year in a yew, and I have had many chances of watching them, and going to work early in the morning I see many little owls, and also barn owls flying low over the fields in search of mice.

Kestrels abound, and so do cuckoos, and magpies appear more numerous than before the war. Snipe are seen at times about the withy beds, and wild duck fly at sunrise, but though I often see their formations I do not know their species.

Only once have I heard a curlew in South Dorset, and probably it was a bird of passage. Wild geese and swans fly over at times with a "whink-whink" of wings, and I must end with rooks and crows, which are ubiquitous, and seem an integral part of Dorchester and its environs.

Dorset.

B. M. Puzey, 1453.

Hillcroft College has two new Correspondence Courses, "The Development of the English House and Home" and "Drawing with Pencil and Watercolour I. and II.". For particulars of these and other courses write to Hillcroft College, Shenington, nr. Banbury, Oxon, enclosing a stamped and addressed envelope.

THE LAND GIRL

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editor,

Having read an account of life on a Scottish island, we are writing to tell you of our life at the other end of the country on the Scilly Isles.

We are 40 miles from the mainland, and the steamer comes three times a week; there is also a plane service twice daily in good weather. Out of the two hundred or so rocks and islands, only five—St. Mary's, St. Martin's, St. Agnes', Tresco and Bryher—are inhabited. They are connected by an inter-island mail launch service, and each has its own church, chapel and school—the total population is about 1,500. Most of the Land Girls here work on Tresco; there are six or so on St. Mary's.

The farms are very small—ours, of nearly 30 acres, is one of the largest. In peace time the main activity of the islanders was flower-growing, and although the acreage has been greatly reduced there are still large fields of daffodils and narcissus of many different kinds. It is a wonderful sight to see them all in bloom. To-day the chief crop is new potatoes, many tons of which are exported. Tomatoes, spring



Diana Nott, 3455 of the Scilly Isles.

cabbages, onions and other market garden crops are also produced; each farm has a few cows, many guernseys. Nearly every house has a greenhouse in which grapes are grown.

The scenery is wild and the views are lovely—on a clear day the mainland can be seen; at the western extremity of the islands is the Bishop Lighthouse. In winter we have strong gales, but on the whole the climate is mild and there is little frost. Tropical plants grow in the Abbey gardens on Tresco, and everything comes much earlier than on the mainland. In summer the sun is very strong, and the bathing is good although the sea is always cold. On the uninhabited islands there are large colonies of seabirds and seals can often be seen.

Grace Potter, W.L.A., 83604.
Cornwall. Diana Nott, W.L.A., 3455.

Dear Editor,

Now that rubber boots are so precious a few hints on "make-do and mend" may perhaps prove useful. When the uppers crack or perish a patch from a cycle puncture outfit is the perfect remedy—stick it on just as you would when mending a puncture. Boots which have been mended have an awkward habit of losing the soles or heels, which come unstuck. If the boots are thoroughly dried and the surfaces to be stuck cleaned well with glasspaper, rubber solution from the puncture outfit, or rubber cement (if you can get it) is just the thing for repairs. Finally, if the boots are kept clean, and stuffed with newspaper at nights so that they may dry out, they will last twice as long. And, of course, only wear them when it is absolutely necessary.

W. Kent. B. M. Richardson, 100071.

Dear Editor,

I wonder how many Land Girls know how good saddle soap is for shoes and boots, now that shoe polish is almost impossible to obtain? It is inexpensive and simple to apply and apart from leaving the leather soft it also preserves it. A quick rub over afterwards with a clean duster brings up a lovely polish.

Cumberland. L. E. Fenn, 57703.

Dear Editor,

Many thanks to the A.T.S. L/Cpl. for her words of appreciation of the W.L.A. It brings great pleasure to us to know that our "sister services," while doing their own important job of work, find time to appreciate ours.

Norfolk. W.L.A., 46258.

THE LAND GIRL

Dear Editor,

As a District Representative may I say how pleased I was to receive a letter from a Land Girl who had left the district saying how happy and interested she was in her new job. Also saying "thank-you" for my interest while she was in my area—a little thing, perhaps, but it cheered me up tremendously.

We District Representatives have to use a lot of tact and listen to enlarged versions from both sides! Many years ago I read—"There are three sides to every story—yours, mine **and** the Right." This has helped me to see straight more than once.

Brecon.

(Mrs.) G. Morgan.

Dear Editor,

Part of a letter from an entrant in a Proficiency test to her County Chairman.

I started out feeling as nervous as the day, two years ago, I donned the W.L.A. uniform for the first time. The officials present did much to dispel my misgivings by being so helpful. Once started on the Practical I felt quite at home and after the lovely tea provided by Mrs. Littler I felt ready for the Oral and thoroughly enjoyed the questions. The lectures have been very helpful, both in the test and in my work here.

I like having a responsible job and my employer is one of the best. The thought uppermost in my mind was that I must not let him down after all the training he gave me when I was *quite* green. Incidentally, when he asked me how many marks I had got and I said "90 or over" he said "Why didn't you get 100 per cent.?" Ah, why? Warwickshire.

E. Cleaver, 68997.

Miss R. Moynihan, 36466, 46, Beresford Road, Oxton, Birkenhead, asks if there are any French girls in the Land Army who would like to correspond in their own language?

THE CUCKOO.

The poets warble in your praise,
Extolling you with winsome lays.
By many who have eulogised
Your notes have been immortalised.
But I can never understand
Why they should deem your voice so grand.

Cuckoo-cuckoo-your song's sole words,
You most monotonous of birds!

E. Sussex.

A. Hewlett, 36110.

LAND GIRL, Balcombe Place, Haywards Heath, Sussex, 3s. per year, 1s. 6d. per half year.

"Hitler's Whistle,"

A. G. Street.

(Eyre & Spottiswoode 10s. 6d.)

"The Craft of Comedy." (Correspondence between Athene Seyler and Stephen Haggard. Muller 5s.)

"Hitler's Whistle," though its title hardly suggests it, tells in the form of a diary, the adventures of a farmer for three years from September 1939 to September 1942, and there cannot be many points of interest to land-workers on which it does not touch. But the main theme is the transition from dairy-farming to arable with all its difficulties, advantages, disadvantages and humours. Mr. Street is so enthusiastic in his calling that the reader shares his interest and suspense in watching what will come of a newly ploughed-up hillside or marshy meadow. According to him, practically all farmers at bottom hate the cow, their "gaoler", and keep it only when they must in order to make ends meet.

The author does not disguise that he regards land-workers as the salt of the earth and intends, so far as it lies in his power, that no one shall forget it now or when war-time emergencies are over. He obviously agrees with the countryman who said that, if he and his mates were sent down the mines and the miners set to till the land, everybody would soon be "b—— hot and b—— hungry."

Other people's letters are not often interesting, but everyone who has ever felt the fascination of plays and acting will rejoice in the opportunity to overlook the correspondence in "The Craft of Comedy." Stephen Haggard, on behalf of a young friend who has begun as an amateur actor and wants to become a professional, asks a mistress of the art of comedy for any advice she can give and is answered with the charming generosity of the most generous of professions. These are not merely rules for an actor to follow, but also a careful description of every expression, attitude, gesture and intonation needed in short scenes quoted in full from "The Wedding Morning" and "Love for Love." Sometimes, even alternative methods are given. The actor is told how to get his laughs, and shown that it is sometimes better not to get them.

After a sufficiency of baleful warnings, Miss Seyler admits that the actor's is a great life for those who do not demand cheap and easy success and have enough confidence to balance the sensitiveness they must also possess. "He must now expect," she says in launching the young man on his professional career, "to give to acting all the devotion, duty and sacrifice that a husband ought to give to his wife."

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SCOTTISH NOTES

AYRSHIRE (North).—A very successful and enjoyable dance organised by J. Mortimer, C. Grossett and R. McCall was held in Troon on 24th March. The W. and B. Fund benefited by the splendid sum of £45, and the girls were fully rewarded for much hard work.

AYRSHIRE (South).—An interesting question was brought up at a meeting of the Ayr and District Y.F.C. at the end of March—"Will the W.L.A. be a permanent feature of post-war farming", but it led to less discussion than might have been expected. The general feeling of the local Brains Trust was that the W.L.A. would not continue after the war!

DUNBARTON & RENFREW.—Paisley L.G.'s Club.—Miss Elspet Findlay, of the M.O.I., gave a most interesting and educative address to the above club on "A Scotswoman Looks at the U.S.A." A presentation was made to Mrs. Andrew Johnston (née Isabel Neilson) on her recent marriage. Club members have knitted over 40 garments for the Red Cross P. of W. and War Comforts. As a result of the latest dance in Paisley the sum of £14 has been handed to the P. of W. Fund. Another dance is to be held in the Art Gallery in Paisley on 21st April—proceeds to go to "Salute the Soldier" week.

EAST LOTHIAN.—Miss M. Hunter, North Berwick organised a dance which brought in £36. Miss J. Bertram raised £17 in a similar way, and a party given in Quarry Court Hostel, where the moving spirit was Miss C. Gillies, provided a further sum of £7 16s. Miss L. Mann collected £1 16s. 6d. by means of a raffle.

LANARKSHIRE (South).—Out of the world and in to Crawfordjohn, but the 5 L.G.s in this remote village raised £12 7s. 6d. at a dance held last month. They have sent £6 to the Benevolent Fund, and the remainder to the Red Cross.

SELKIRKSHIRE.—A very enjoyable evening was spent at a Whist Drive in aid of the P. of W. Red Cross Fund and the W. and B. Fund.

STIRLINGSHIRE & CLACKMANNAN.—There were six of the 31 competing teams in the finals for the debating contest open to Y.F.C.'s in the West of Scotland. Miss S. Alexander and Miss B. Flint, from Bearsden, now employed at Carbeth Home Farm, Killearn, were in the winning team. The question debated was "Should land be nationalised?" A prize for the best proposer outside the winning team was won by Miss A. Moncrieff. The girls of the Y.F.C.s are doing a fine service to the countryside as well as helping themselves when they put up such a good show in their debating contests. About 20 W.L.A. members from Alloa district took part in the "Salute the Soldier" Week Parade in Alloa on Saturday, 1st April. For Fairhill and Woodside Hostels, and for some of the girls on farms near Stirling, Miss Bolton organised a dance at Stirling, on April 5th. Not only was this an outstanding success, the hall being filled to capacity, but the grand total of £90 was raised for the W. and B. Fund. This is a record contribution to the Fund from this area from a single function to date. Lois Duncan, of Fairhill Hostel, one of the four girls who have been trained as rat and mole catchers, broadcast an account of her training experiences in the B.B.C. Home Service after the Scottish News on 3rd April.

SUTHERLAND.—L.G.s in Sutherland met at Ben Bhraggie Hotel, Golspie, to receive their G.S. Badges from Mrs. Sudlow. After the presentation Mr. Sudlow, Chairman of the A.E.C. congratulated them on their smart appearance and the great work they are doing. A most enjoyable tea was followed by community singing.

WEST LOTHIAN.—Our congratulations go to M. Allingham, 1818, and A. Reid, 1618, who were presented with 4-year armlets at the sale in aid of the Scottish Red Cross Agriculture Fund at Linlithgow on 8th April. Two-year armlets and diamonds were presented to other W.L.A. mem-

bers. The day was fine, the girls looked fit and well, and the tea was good. A request from the L.G.s for the "hat to be passed round" at tea-time brought £2 16s. for the Red Cross Funds. W. Lothian had every reason to be proud of the L.G.s.

WIGTOWNSHIRE.—March 25th was a "royal" day for Stranrear and especially for Cochrane Kellock, Roddie Cochrane and Monica Morris, who represented the W.L.A. at an informal opening of the new "Ritz" Services Canteen. H.R.H. the Princess Royal was present and had a few words with each of the girls.

W. & B. FUND.—Among many welcome and substantial donations which have to be acknowledged with gratitude is one for £88 6s. 2d. from The Crown Players (The Edinburgh Post Office Dramatic Society) who very generously gave a three nights' performance in Edinburgh in aid of the Fund. The play, "Badger's Green," an amusing comedy by the author of "Journey's End," was excellently produced by Mr. Campbell Robson (D.O.A.S. staff) and the actors, without exception, played their parts with splendid effect. L.G.s were much in evidence as ushers and programme sellers. A potential recruit has collected 200 "Ship" bawbees for the W. and B. Fund. Was this her "Open Sesame" to her ambition!

BENEVOLENT FUND NEWS

On April 30th the fund totalled £71,836 15s. 9d. The monthly total was £6,408 2s. 6d. Kent has the highest total of £6,581 17s. 4d. and Bucks the highest monthly total of £3,105.

The amin news this month is in the Bulletin, but the Editor has allowed us a short paragraph to mention some of the other noteworthy contributions. Dances are the main feature, with the exception of the further £189 received from the Norfolk War Charities. Northants grand total of over £300 (actually collected in March) includes £135 from Lady Spencer's tea dance and £124 from Mrs. Abbott's dance. Somerset's total of £200 includes £120 from two dances at Chilcompton; the Middlewich and District's Club dance contributed £80 to Cheshire's total of £194; and £80 raised by a dance, whist drive and prize drawing came from the Land Army Club in the Monmouth area.

RALLY AT NORTHAMPTON

The high-light of our news has been our Rally on April 1st at the Town Hall, Northampton, when H.R.H. The Duchess of Gloucester graciously consented to be present and to present Good Service and Proficiency badges.

All the local Representatives, Wardens, Forewomen, Proficiency Test Judges and Farmers who had generously given the use of their farms for these tests, representatives of the N.F.U., various departments of the W.A.E.C. and kindred organisations, a representative of the American Red Cross and the Army Welfare Officer were invited as well as more than 150 friends and relatives of the girls themselves who packed the galleries.

Lady Spencer, our County Chairman was in the chair and supporting her on the platform were Miss Williams—our Regional Organiser—members of the County and Welfare Committees, the Lord Lieutenant the Marquis of Exeter, K.G., and the Marchioness of Exeter, the respective chairmen of the Northamptonshire and Soke of Peterborough W.A.E.C.s, the County W.L.A. officials, the Regional Organiser of the Y.W.C.A., the Mayor and Mayoress of Northampton and many other representative people.

Her Royal Highness was received by Lady Spencer, the Lord Lieutenant the Marquis of Exeter, the Mayor of Northampton and the County Secretary and passed into the hall through a guard of honour of 80 Land Girls from neighbouring hostels, who did us infinite credit by their smartness and excellent bearing.

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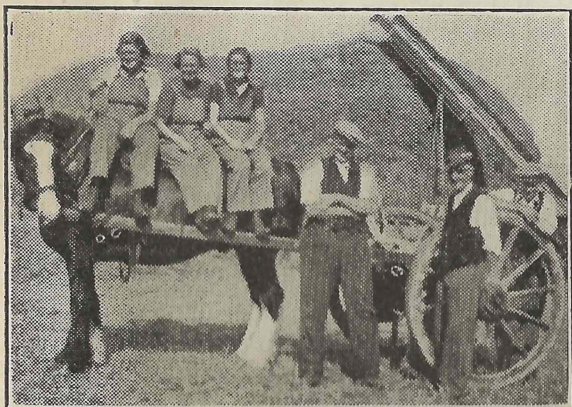
After the singing of the National Anthem and a brief speech full of encouragement and inspiration by the Chairman, the Duchess presented 56 Proficiency Badges, 25 4½-years Good Service Badges and 15 4-years Badges. As there were 400 badges to present and the strain of standing so long would have been too great, Lord Exeter most kindly completed the presentation.

Clarice Clipston presented her Royal Highness with a beautiful bouquet of pink tulips and almond blossom. Joyce Chambers presented a little woolly dog for Prince William on behalf of the W.L.A. Freda Hudson, W.L.A., one of the W.A.E.C. forewomen expressed thanks to the Duchess in a charmingly composed and delivered little speech. Mr. H. Overman (County Chairman, W.A.E.C.) spoke a few words of praise and encouragement to the Land Army and thanked the Lord Lieutenant for so kindly presenting the badges and a very happy and memorable afternoon ended with three rousing cheers for Her Royal Highness, "Our Duchess" as the Northamptonshire Land Army are proud to call her.

It was a very notable day. The Duchess looked completely charming in a lovely shade of violet. Thanks to Mr. Cowper Barrons, Managing Editor of the Chronicle and Echo and Allied Newspapers, the hall was beautifully decorated with plants and palms and the flags of the Allied Nations, and no-one who saw the Women's Land Army that day, rank on rank in perfectly worn uniform, full of health and vigour and the very spirit of the country, could fail to feel a thrill of pride.

COUNTY NEWS

LONDON and MIDDIX.—We are holding our Proficiency tests this last week in April, and wish the best of luck to all entrants. Miss V. Burley and Miss P. Glass write of their work in the heart of London: "When we arrived two years ago, the canteen which we were to supply with vegetables was unfinished. Two acres of land awaited our labours. Our first task was to clear the ground of old water tanks, broken bottles and china and we received moral support from labourers working on the canteen, although the factory staff eyed us suspiciously. Before long a greenhouse was erected and the land fenced. We grew and grow, most vegetables that a factory canteen requires. We can hardly complain of dullness out here. The railway runs along the back of our plot and when trains go by packed with troops, we are usually hailed. We don't even notice the peculiar odour of some of the engines when the rubber refinery across the way is working hard. Sometimes we get an awfully sickly smell from the chocolate manufacturers, like very sweet hot butter. These odours mixed with the oil from our own factory and the smell of lunch cooking in the canteen make us wonder just what real fresh air is like. There are a few weeks in winter when it is



D. Chaplin and fellow-workers in Wiltshire.

still dark at 8 o'clock, and then we sit in the greenhouse by candle-light, waiting for black-out to end so that we can start working.

MON.—We have this month to welcome our first County Organiser, Mrs. Mary Nethercot, herself a former Land Girl, who gave the broadcast talk "An Artist in the W.L.A." in May last year. We feel that her wide experience will be most helpful and we wish her every success in her new position. Proficiency Tests are to be held at Usk during the week beginning May 15th. We are hoping for excellent results. The first meeting of the Cross Ash Y.F.C. took place at the W.L.A. Hostel with Mrs. M. Hill (District Representative) as President and K. Denner (69175) as one of the Secretaries. The New Zealand speaker of the international Wool Secretariat visited several hostels recently, Mrs. Wakefield spent her youth on a New Zealand farm, and her talks proved to be most entertaining. Four girls from this county are going to take advantage of the Rest-break scheme this month. One of our long-service girls asked if she might postpone her well-deserved rest after recent sick leave because "My cows will be forgetting me." The Benevolent Fund was richer last month by £80—proceeds from a whist drive and dance given by Monmouth L.G.s. We congratulate them warmly.

NORFOLK.—Successful Proficiency Tests have been held in the Tractor Driving, General Farm Work, Field Work and Poultry Work; those in Milking and Market Gardening are yet to be held. Out of 18 entries there were 7 distinctions, two in Tractor Work, two in General, one in Field Work and two in Poultry. The judges remarked that they had difficulty in faulting the General Farm Work candidates, and were very pleased with the adaptability and common sense shown by the Poultry workers. Our Exhibition of L. A. life and work remained open for three weeks instead of two. The public appreciated the photographs of the Land Girls at work on the Sandringham Estate, and the exhibit which displayed a hostel dormitory. Lingwood hostel is taking part in their local "Salute the Soldier" week by giving two sketches in the village hall. Diss Club has re-opened with an interesting programme, including a cross-talk between a Corporal in the American Army (an agriculturalist in civil life) and a well-known Norfolk farmer. A similar evening was held at Woodton Hostel, and proved extremely interesting, both to the speakers and the listeners.

NORTHANTS.—The county has been very busy with Proficiency Tests. These are being conducted by the Northamptonshire Institute of Agriculture. The standard of proficiency is very high and the interest these tests have aroused among the girls is very great. So far 107 have been tested and 56 are known to have passed, though the results are not complete. Six members have so far gained distinction. These tests are an immensely valuable contribution to the work of the W.L.A. and there are still a gratifyingly large number of entrants to be examined and new candidates are constantly coming forward.

NORTH'D.—For the Drama Competition held on April 1st at The People's Theatre in Newcastle, seven Hostels entered teams and all seats were sold. The winning team again came from Norham Hostel which continues to hold Lady Grey's silver cup for another year. Thropton Hostel was 2nd. Mrs. Marshall, the Adjudicator, considered that the standard of acting had improved since the first competition was held last year. In spite of very heavy expenses we were still able to send in £13 to the Benevolent Fund. Other contributions received for the Fund include £134 from Cornhill Hostel and £100 from Wooler. at Cambo Timber Corps Volunteers made £23. and a dance at Seaton Delaval (R. H. Parsons, N. V. Thompson and E. Hall) made £20. As a result of the efforts throughout Northumberland this winter, a total of £1,000 has been raised

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for the Benevolent Fund and a cheque for this amount has been sent to Headquarters. The Spring Series of Proficiency Tests will take place in May. We are very glad to know that Lady Denman has kindly agreed to attend the County Rally in Newcastle on July 8th. Individual invitations will be issued in due course.

NORTH WALES.—Thanks all who have helped to achieve our target of £1,000 to the Benevolent Fund; it has meant a great deal of hard work since in areas with but a scattered population large sums of money are not easily raised and depend upon numerous small events and continuous effort on the part of every L.G. Committee Member and Representative. May we say, quite modestly, that, as a small area, we are rather proud of our achievement; if we were not, we would be guilty of ingratitude to the generous support given to us. We thank the School of Agriculture, University College of N. Wales, County Council and W.A.E.C. staffs, and employers for their generous co-operation and assistance with Proficiency Tests and congratulate our L.G.'s on their high standard. Recent outstanding events include, a marvellous House Warming Party at Eryl Arran, very successful "G. S. and Proficiency Celebrations" an Menai Bridge and Llanbedrog, a Welsh Drama at Llanerchymedd as well as the Welsh Broadcast from the hostel itself, the much enjoyed dance at Llangefni and Tydweiliog's successful concert. We specially congratulate Menai Bridge Dramatic Society on the sustained effort which brought them within an ace of winning the competition again this year. We extend a very warm welcome to Mrs. Odbert our new Warden at Llanerchymedd.

NOTTS.—K. Wenn and her employer, Mrs. and Miss Martin organised a very successful and enjoyable Whist Drive and Dance raising £9 for the Benevolent Fund. Refreshments and prizes were given by generous neighbours. The effort was supported by people from many villages round and by the Hawksworth W.L.A. Hostel, and everything went with a swing. Coddington Moor Hostel was visited recently by an American Correspondent who took many photographs of the girls at work and play. These are to be incorporated in "The Story of Newark" to be published in the American Magazine "Look" for President Roosevelt's campaign for the conscription of women for War work. A very enjoyable E.N.S.A. cinema show was given at Calverton Hostel on March 21st. These shows are fortnightly and any girls working on private farms will be cordially welcomed by the Warden, Mrs. Sergeant. All the hostels have collecting boxes for the Benevolent Fund and Daneshill Hostel has so far outdone the others by collecting £9 3s. 0½d. that is 2s. 8½d. per head, all subscribed by the girls themselves each pay day. Clipstone have collected 1s. 0½d. and Retford 8½d. per head. We hope the other hostels will soon catch Daneshill up.

PEMBS.—Proficiency Tests in Tractor Driving, General Farm Work, Field Work and Hand and Machine Milking have been held during the last two months, and the Gardening and Glasshouse Work Test will take place soon. Although the number of entries has not been large, the standard reached has been good. We congratulate those who gained distinction. M. Roberts (Tractor Driving), Mrs. Graham (General Farm Work), M. Dawson (Field Work) and Mrs. Thomas and G. Taylor (Hand milking). Miss A. E. Williams, who entered for the Tractor Drivers Test, had recently done very well in a County Ploughing Contest in which she was the only woman who entered. We hope for many entries when the next batch of Tests is arranged. We are very grateful to all the kind people who helped. A Leaders Course has been held and another is starting shortly at the Glen Hostel for the Supervisors and Charge hands of the hostel girls. The programme includes lectures from members of the W.A.E.C. Advisory Staff and others, practical work in various branches of Agricultural Work,

and a day at the Flax Factory. During the winter, our smallest hostel at Cwmyregiws, which houses about ten girls, has raised the excellent total of £31 1s. 9d. by Whist Drives for War Charities. £6 12s. 9d. has been sent to the W.L.A. Benevolent Fund and £3 to the Welfare Fund. Penty Park Hostel has raised £1 1s. 3d. for the Welfare Fund, by the simple method of small fines for girls who leave their uniform about! We intend organising another Flag Day this summer, when we hope to raise another good sum for the Benevolent Fund.

SALOP.—Proficiency Tests have recently been held in Dairy and Milking and General Farm Work and the judges expressed surprise at the very high standard of the candidates' work. We are sorry that Milking is not included as an optional point in the General Farm Work Test since so many of our volunteers who spend the bulk of their time on general farm work also milk daily. Indeed, two of the candidates who gained Distinction in the General Farm Work Test are expert regular milkers. Many thanks are due to Mrs. Alsop and to Mr. Bebb who not only placed their farms and stock at our disposal, but provided competitors and judges with really marvellous teas. Volunteers are taking part in various processions organised on behalf of "Salute the Soldier" weeks and several hostels are arranging dances and whist drives for the same appeal. We are hoping to open our twelfth hostel within the next few weeks. Instead of a Rally this year, there will be small local functions for the presentation of G. S. Badges. 31 volunteers have now qualified for their 4-Year Armlets.

SOMERSET.—The first presentation of Proficiency Badges took place at a Rally in Yeovil on April 22nd, when a good number of members from the south-east of the county came to the Grass Royal School. Badges, special armlets and half-diamonds were presented by the Hon. Lady Langman, and Col. Denis Boles, M.P., gave an encouraging address. After refreshments there was a delightful entertainment from the Blackouts Concert Party, in which two W.L.A. members figured conspicuously. If possible, the rest of the Proficiency Badges will also be publicly presented. We congratulate the 117 members, out of 158, who have so far passed, 14 in Tractor Driving, 23 in General Farmwork, 3 in Poultry, 18 in Market Gardening, 8 in Fruit-work, and 51 in Milking. We are most grateful to the Somerset Farm Institute and to the W.A.E.C. at Steamboat Farm for providing the facilities and the judges for all these tests. The W.L.A. Hostel at Priddy was re-opened in April as a tractor training school for the W.A.E.C. One of the first Somerset W.L.A. tractor drivers, Miss M. Hawksley, is acting as instructress, and there are to be 10 volunteers regularly taking a three weeks' course. We are glad to have passed the £1,000 mark in the Benevolent Fund and hope this will act as a spur to greater effort. Chilcompton members deserve special mention for their recent contribution of £120 from two dances.

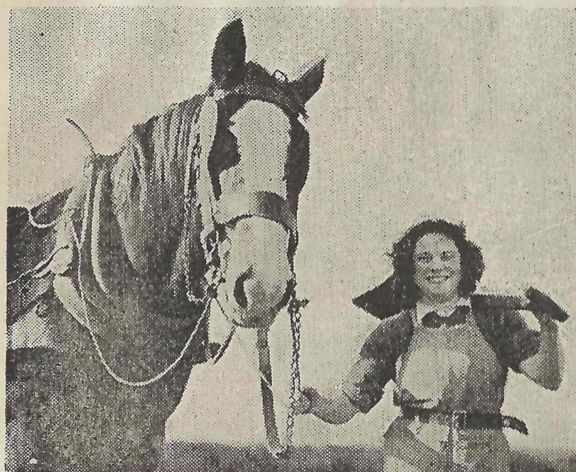
STAFFS.—Parties from Christmas have extended into March and a delightful evenings entertainment was given to a large number of L.G.s by Miss R. M. Harrison, our County Chairman. Mrs. Hatton and the representatives in her area also kindly gave a party to another section of girls. As the players of the Concert Party who arrived to give an entertainment were 1st class London people, this went down very well and the rafters of the hall rang time and time again with laughter. Clubs and groups are still busy as bees making entertainment for themselves and incidentally gathering in money for our Benevolent Fund. The Loggerheads Hostel, Market Drayton, held a most successful Whist Drive and at the Rangemoor Club, Burton-on-Trent, a grand time was had at their dance. It is always very wonderful to see the magnificent display of refreshments at all these functions and a good deal of praise should go to the organisers. Several

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clubs are still very keen on the Make Do and Mend Classes and one, even after a heavy days work, enjoys "Keep Fit and Folk Dancing."

E. SUFFOLK.—We very much regret that the Variety Concert by members of the W.L.A. in aid of the Benevolent Fund, which was being arranged to take place in Ipswich on May 13th, has had to be cancelled. Owing to the unusually advanced state of the crops, many prospective "performers" will be too busily engaged in overtime work, sugar beet hoeing. We are proposing to get up entertainments of the same kind on a smaller scale during the summer in different parts of the county. Among other items, there will be two duologues: "This Land Army Business," by J. Bacon and O. Renwick (Falkenham) was written by the former's fiancé while on service overseas, and "The Land Army at Work," written and acted in broad Suffolk by D. Last and L. Godbold (Henley). The only three L.G.s who were brave enough to go in for a Proficiency Test in tractor work passed, two with distinction, and of the ten candidates in the gardening and glasshouse test, seven passed, one with distinction. The tests in field work are being arranged for the 24th and 31st May. There is a very large number of entries. We now have five volunteers in the employment of the E.S.W.A.E.C. who are acting as relief milkers. These girls are skilled in both hand and machine milking and have already helped many farmers who have found themselves in serious difficulties owing to temporary shortage of labour through illness and other causes. The girls find their experiences on different farms most interesting, and we hope shortly to train several more for this responsible and most valuable type of work.

W. SUFFOLK.—Since Jan. 1st., Committee Members, District Representatives, Farmers and L.G.s. have worked hard for the Benevolent Fund. Whist Drives, dances, etc., have been organised all over the County and we have been able to contribute £351 1s. 4d., to the Benevolent Fund, and £111 2s. 7d., to our own Welfare Fund. We now have 71 volunteers who have gained their proficiency badges. Tractor tests have been in full swing of late and we hope to complete our first round of entries in all branches of farming by mid May. The W.A.E.C. have arranged to give a 2s. 6d. weekly bonus to their employees passing a proficiency test, provided these volunteers have a good record as regards work, time keeping and general keenness. Each case will be reviewed from time to time by the Executive Officer. We would like to offer our congratulations to A. Enderby, 103544 who has just been appointed Assistant Labour Officer to the W.A.E.C. The hostels are very busy with an Agricultural Brains Trust. Contests have been close and lively and the W.A.E.C. are arranging to hold the final of the Inter-Hostel Quiz at Bury.



*Yorkshire Land Girl with friend.
By courtesy of Middlesborough Evening Gazette.*

SURREY.—Mrs. Godfrey Phillips is just completing a very successful two weeks' tour of the county and has given an extremely interesting Health Talk to 5 clubs and 3 hostels. The tour has coincided with our first allocation of cosmetics which are now being distributed through the hostels and clubs and are proving very popular. Our congratulations are due to Miss Rosa Wood who has recently celebrated her 50th birthday. A party was held at the hostel in honour of her 3 years' service in this war and also her service in the last war as a member of the W.L.A. A very successful dance was arranged by the County Organiser at Lingfield on Easter Eve which produced £30 15s. for the Benevolent Fund. The Reigate Area under our Committee Member, Lady Bartholomew, is already preparing for a grand Benevolent Fund Fête on August Bank Holiday, to be held in Lady Bartholomew's garden which adjoins Colley Hill. This is a famous beauty spot and always attracts large crowds which it is hoped will be skilfully deflected into Lady Bartholomew's garden. The Reigate Club, with whom the County Chairman and Secretary spent a happy evening recently, is co-operating in this great effort and is already producing hand-made gifts for the stallgifts for the stalls.

W. SUSSEX.—We congratulate D. Runacles and G. Philpott who gained distinction in the hand-milking Proficiency Tests, and particularly V. Evans of Petworth, who gained 97 per cent. in the machine-milking Test. There were no distinctions but 100 per cent passes in the horticultural Test. The international mind has been cultivated: C.E.M.A. at the end of February sent a delightful tour which included dances by the famous Polish dancer Pola Nerinska, songs by Miss Miette Muthesius and piano solos by Miss Rachel Cavehlo. Arundel had a most interesting and vivid talk by Mr. Li from the M. of I., while Crawley heard about Poland from Madame Skalinska, a well-known Polish scientist, and Madge-lands Hostel enjoyed a talk by Mrs. Flieschman, a Czechoslovakian refugee. Good works flourish, too; Worthing heads the list with £75 raised by a dance for the County Welfare Fund; Steyning has raised over £50 for the Benevolent Fund and Henfield, from a really delightful dance on Easter Monday, sent over £34 to be divided equally between the Benevolent Fund and the Welfare Fund, while the tiny village of Harting has raised £37 for the same causes. We congratulate Mary Renwick, of Chilgrove, Chichester, who won a competition for Y.F.C. members organised by the Guild of Agriculture Journal for the best essay on "The Rural England I hope to see after the War."

WARWICKS.—Proficiency Tests are being held in all parts of the county and we are most grateful to Mr. Gibson, Ministry of Agriculture Dairy Inspector and Miss Fairlie Kaye of Studley College for spending busy week-ends as Judges for the milking tests. Of our 81 volunteers who have taken their tests in milking and dairy work, 71 have passed and 11 have obtained "distinction." We send our heartiest congratulations to each. The high standard is largely due to the helpful courses of lectures given beforehand by Miss Ironside, County Dairy Instructress, and members of her staff. General farm tests are now being arranged and horticultural lectures are in full swing in preparation for the tests next autumn. Recent club activities have included a special Church Service in Stratford-on-Avon when members of the W.L.A. read the lesson, sang special hymns and took the collection; dances in Sutton Coldfield, Solihull, Rugby, Coventry, Brinklow and Temple Grafton; a party for W.L.A. Landladies in Stratford, and the series of performances of the L.G.s' Revue given by the Alcester and Windmill clubs.

We were very sorry last month to say "good-bye" to Miss Rogers, our Assistant Secretary, who has gone to Berkshire as future County Secretary. Miss Rogers is greatly missed by all

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after her four years' work for Warwickshire and all good wishes go to her in her new post.

WORCS.—The third meeting of the Land Girl's Council was held on Feb. 26th, at the Shirehall, Worcester. Lady Denman and the Hon. Mrs. Burrell honoured the Council with their presence. Our Chairman, Mrs. T. C. H. Lea, presided, and 63 L. G.s were present, representing their hostels and districts in the county. The Council talked over matters relating to their employment, and a lively discussion followed on post-war plans for peace-time work for L. G.s. The Council now meets regularly, approximately every 2 months, and the delegates report to their clubs, hostels and groups in between meetings. Worcestershire was the first county to have a council and is interested to watch its development.

Proficiency Tests have been held in Tractor Driving, General Farm Work and Dairy Work. E. A. Bolton gained a distinction in General Farm Work; D. Bean and E. Smith in Milking and Dairy Work. In the latter test, all entrants were successful, which was a splendid effort.

YORKS, E.R.—It is with great regret that the hostels at Bubwith, Aughton and Hessle have had to be closed in order to fill up existing vacancies in the hutment extensions of other hostels. We would like to thank the Wardens for all their help in the past and are sorry to lose them; we wish them well in their new jobs. An interesting film show was held at Bubwith in March by the M. of I. An enjoyable party was given by the Wardens at Keyingham on the occasion of their joint birthdays. Two successful dances have been held in aid of the Benevolent Fund, £26 came from Jean Iddon and Audrey Mackrill from a dance at Beverley in January, and £11 3s. 6d. from Driffield Hostel, raised in April. The East Riding Welfare Fund benefited by a splendid effort of £31 17s. organised by Mrs. Hicks, County Organiser, which consisted of a raffle and donations from threshing proprietors in recognition of work done by the W.L.A. Three more volunteers have earned their 4-year armlets. It is hoped when our next County News appears we shall be able to include results of Proficiency Tests to be held soon.

WOMEN'S TIMBER CORPS

In April the W.T.C. was celebrating its second birthday, but for many of us not our second birthday as forestry workers because we can look back to the days when we started, when the W.L.A. was our mother and the local representatives our aunts. It was good to feel that affinity with the Land Army, for as we have since been told many times "forestry is the handmaiden of agriculture," and one of my happy early memories is of a little party given for us by a very kind Land Army representative so that we might have an opportunity of meeting the local land girls.

And then we were told that we were to be organised as the W.T.C.; now the children were to be given the key of the door and live their own lives. Like children, we were proud of our independence: we got together, and to see a green beret was to see a sister, and green berets stood a little aside from brown hats, perhaps.

Now that we have had two years of independence maybe it is time to look back and see whether our time has been well spent; has our life such a solid foundation that we can usefully share our experiences with others? I think it has. They say that to be Jack of all trades is to be master of none and, just as you have girls who are learning all they can about farming and agriculture—I've met them and know them—so we have girls who are learning all they can about forestry and woodcraft, but still we can spare a little time to learn something about each other. We have proved that in wider spheres the way to happiness and fullness of life is the way of co-operation, so I hope that during our third year as the W.T.C., even though we cannot often meet, we may get to know each other better through your magazine.

Doris Walford, 35230.

County Returns

County	Ben. F. Total			Em- ploved
	£	s.	d.	
Kent	6581	17	4	3985
Essex	671	15	7	3548
W. Riding ..	768	1	6	2706
Surrey	1501	3	5	2197
Hampshire ..	1304	12	6	2075
Leics. & Rutland	1366	19	1	2073
Hertfordshire	3588	4	7	2049
E. Sussex ..	1226	14	5	1965
Worcester ..	1208	8	5	1863
Northants. ..	1919	10	4	1819
Bucks.	4097	8	10	1818
Somerset	1257	13	8	1731
Norfolk	2011	10	8	1650
Warwick	2194	10	3	1647
Devon	2459	0	3	1637
W. Sussex ..	1865	16	1	1601
Cheshire	1401	4	7	1530
Lancs.	790	12	3	1445
Wilts.	534	0	8	1440
Northumberland	1237	4	3	1354
Notts.	352	18	9	1350
Cornwall	277	18	11	1309
N. Riding ..	400	0	10½	1290
Glos.	1607	6	0	1211
Berks.	1123	14	0	1189
Hunts, Cambs. & Ely	742	4	9	1171
Oxon.	664	9	0	1120
E. Suffolk ..	1256	14	5	1092
E. Riding ..	133	16	3	1004
Salop	738	8	11	996
Beds.	603	18	2	992
Durham	291	0	7	984
Cumb. & West. ..	405	7	10	922
Kesteven	569	7	6	883
Dorset	836	1	10	847
Staffordshire ..	369	4	2	737
Gloucestershire	599	4	10	699
Lincolnshire ..	573	0	1	690
Herefordshire ..	914	8	11	619
W. Midlands ..	1253	12	10	615
Devon	345	7	11	606
Monmouthshire ..	572	19	1	599
London & Midx. ..	649	6	8	592
Flinch	370	15	4	567
Derby	699	0	10	559
Holland	655	11	11	552
N. Wales	1122	0	9	539
Pembroke	639	15	8	415
Carms. & Cards. ..	532	9	11	361
I.O.W.	105	15	6	348
Brecon & Radnor. ..	272	0	4	298
Timber Corps ..	1151	14	7	3635
Montgomery ..	280	19	10	Not rec'd.

On April 29th there were 69,010 volunteers in employment.

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