

WVS/WRVS Bulletin/Magazine

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Registered charity no. 1015988 & SC038924, Registered in England 2520413



The



Bulletin

Packed Meals for Thatchers

PRICE THREEPENCE
No. 118 OCTOBER, 1949

A plan for supplementing rations of farm workers is under trial by the Ministry of Food with the aid of W.V.S., Ipswich. Meat and cheese sandwiches and cakes are collected from a depot in the town and taken by W.V.S. to the fields. Workers pay on delivery and give orders for the next round. These farm workers seem well pleased with their cellophane-wrapped test meals. (Note the traditional thatching triangle).

Letters

As Others See Us.

From a Scottish father :—

I write to tell you that everything was perfect for my daughter Sheila, when she went to London. It looked like a railway strike on Sunday so she left on Saturday night. I tried to persuade her to stay but she replied : "You treat me like a child." This is big talk for a fifteen year old.

I always thought, as do many others, that the W.V.S. were a bunch of old hens poking their noses into other people's business. I know different now, for without your aid Sheila would never have had her chance in the exam. I am not much good with flowery phrases, so I can only say thanks, and if I can do you a good turn sometime, I certainly will do so.

What a Lovely View.

From N. McCormick Goodhart, Alexandria, Virginia.

What an amazing surprise greeted me in the post this morning in the shape of the *W.V.S. Bulletin* for July, 1949, containing in solid print my superb poem on the subject of the view from Queen Anne's Chambers after my window had been cleaned in 1909 ! I feel highly honoured that any effort of mine should ever appear in a document that will evidently last down through the ages, and I only hope that the ribald doggerel which it really is, will tickle the fancies of the members of the W.V.S.

We are suffering here under appalling heat and for the past week the noonday temperature has never been less than 95°, which makes me wish to be back in dear ole Lunnnon.

Cordial Relations.

From Major General Lakhinder Singh, M.B.E., to W.V.S. Bengal H.Q.

My wife and I wish to thank you for the most courteous way your Organisation has always treated us. Even though we are going away from Calcutta you will remain in our minds and we will always cherish the memory of your stay here, which has been so pleasant on account of the most cordial mutual relations.

While thanking you once again for the consideration shown us at all times, we fervently hope that the bonds of friendship that have been developed between us will continue for ever. We wish you the very best of luck.

Memory Lingers on.

From (Mrs.) E. Evelyn Eastlake, Chicago, U.S.A.

Ever since I left England for Canada, you have very kindly sent me the *Bulletin*, which I look forward to so much and just love.

You cannot imagine how deeply grateful I am and as I am leaving Canada for the States, I thought when giving you my new address as above, I would like to take the opportunity of sending my deep and sincere thanks. I still love the W.V.S. and miss my work for them and my many friends.

Any Others ?

From W.V.S. National Savings Dept.

East Ham have one hundred per cent. W.V.S. membership for the National Savings Committee. Is this a record ?

Ant Palace.

From a County Organiser.

How many readers of *The Bulletin* have heard of an Ant Palace ? When a man asked W.V.S. recently if anyone in Bedford possessed one nobody in the office knew what he was talking about—except the newest member of the staff.

She remembered being taken some 40 years ago to a house where she was shown an Ant Palace. This consisted of a table on which was a considerable amount of earth, and in this lived a family of ants. The whole thing was enclosed in glass so that the activities of the ants could be observed.

Magazines for the Forces.

From W.V.S. Administrator, South-East Asia and Far East, to Thaxted :—

Thank you for the grand lot of periodicals. We cannot have too many ; they really are a great help to the troops in helping them to pass some of their leisure hours—distances are very great, and cinemas and other entertainments expensive. Any papers from home are welcome.

Some of the women's papers are sent to the Families Welfare Centres and the Gurkha families—the latter love to look at the pictures especially any of the Royal Family. They have all the latest ones of Prince Charles pinned up on the walls of their Welfare Hut. The W.V.S. members working with these Gurkha families are doing a wonderful job. They help them with the very different conditions in Malaya compared to Nepal. Every week they have a Welfare Clinic and weigh the babies.

From W.V.S., c/o 1st Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, Iserlohn, B.A.O.R., to Thaxted :—

Thank you so very much for all the books and periodicals you have so kindly sent for the Fusiliers. They really do enjoy them and we have to keep these very much under our eye or they disappear to be read in bed.

We have a very happy little Club and most attractive rooms, and very nice comfy armchairs. There is a table tennis room in the attic ; two billiard rooms and a small card room for whist drives and of course a dart board, so the young soldiers are well provided for. The gramophone is the most favourite toy and the boys love spending an evening playing their favourite records.

Canning Test.

From Miss Ann Clapham of the Medical Department, Brunei, Borneo, to W.V.S., Gloucester :—

I have been wanting to write for a long while, but you know how easy it is to procrastinate ! We were staying in Cheltenham last summer, and the W.V.S. tinned lots of fruit for us to bring back to Borneo.

This is to say that all the fruit you did for us has been perfect. Some of the tins got battered on the way out but it hasn't affected the contents. So if you need a recommendation, this is it ! I don't feel fruit could have a more severe test than travelling 7,000 miles and then several months of storing in tropical temperatures. Certainly there seems to have been nothing wrong with your methods. I expect your mouth will water at the thought of us eating fresh pineapples and bananas and oranges, while we feel the same about you eating new potatoes and green peas ! Such is human nature !

Thanks again to the helpers of last summer.

Sunshine Canning

At the height of the canning season 250 cans of fruit were turned out daily at this W.V.S. canning centre in Kent. Plums, apples, pears, tomatoes and blackberries were canned for hospitals and homes. Farmers gave surplus fruit and nearby residents waited and enjoyed a cup of tea while their own fruit was canned—this took a little more than an hour.

(Photograph by courtesy
of the Daily Mirror)

W.V.S. at Edinburgh Festival

FOR the third consecutive year Edinburgh W.V.S. staffed the Information Bureau at the Edinburgh International Festival Club. Past experience had made members undertaking duties expert at the job. They found that the fame of W.V.S. had spread amongst overseas visitors, the same enquirer returning again and again to seek help.

The work had, as usual, its lighter side with a variety of enquiries ranging from a request for a Rest Room for an old lady to a desperate appeal for a dentist.

A 10-year-old boy who had set his heart on being shown Hadrian's Wall had, however, to be disappointed. (NOTE : For the benefit of those who, like us, are weak in history, the Emperor Hadrian is reputed to have built the wall about 119 A.D. for the defence of the Roman province of Britain. Sections of the wall, which ran between the Solway Firth and the mouth of the Tyne, may still be seen some miles from Edinburgh.)

A London woman asked W.V.S. to give her the name of the caretaker of the Tolbooth, as she wanted to write to thank her for all the courtesy she had been shown. (Tolbooth is the historical Edinburgh prison in which many famous people have been executed.)

W.V.S. were able to arrange games of golf for a Canadian woman (from Quebec) and for a Persian. In the case of the Persian W.V.S. also supplied the golf clubs. Three Italian sailors were personally escorted to Usher Hall to get their tickets for an orchestral concert. A desperate man telephoned to ask how to use a canning machine. Another man, who had been provided with a postage stamp, said he had not yet found anything that W.V.S. could not do.

It is interesting to note that the first enquiry received after the Club opened was from two W.V.S. members from Bristol. After them many members from all over the United Kingdom were welcomed.

In addition to being on duty at the Festival, Edinburgh Centre members staffed two exhibitions sponsored by the Scottish National Trust. Her Majesty the Queen visited one of these exhibitions and the W.V.S. member on duty was much envied.

In Glasgow members undertook a big task in staffing the Information Bureau at the Scottish Industries Exhibition, which was open for 17 days. This was an entirely new type of work for Glasgow.

Women in Green

EMPLOYER, worried because her German domestic proposed setting out for home without adequate preparation, was assured thus :—

"Madam will not so bother. I reach Victoria : I see one of those ladies all in green—you know of them ? She sees to my permit and my everything and all right, I am there !"

(We picture Victoria Station dotted with "ladies in green.")

AN old lady, half blind, peered at the W.V.S. member for a long time ; then touched the green uniform and said : "Come in. I can see now that you are dressed for business, so you are all right."

Our Trolley Shop

WE met at the W.V.S. Office and staggered to the bus under our burden of two square biscuit tins holding cakes and sweets for about sixty people, also baskets with special orders and various oddments collected during the week. And so to St. Mary's Hospital . . .

Passing the doorkeeper, who beamed on seeing our green uniforms, we were soon arranging our trolley and checking prices, etc. Matron kindly allows us the use of a cupboard for imperishables which is a great help, and our ten baking tins, gay with blue paper linings were full to overflowing when we set off down the corridor.

What a welcome we had on entering the wards. Old people who had not seen a shop for years, just delighted in the luxury of choice, even if it was only "which bun to have." As it was our fifth visit, every old lady already sported a gay hair slide or hair ribbon, often had a brightly coloured comb in her locker, and quite a few were waiting with money clutched in an eager old hand.

QUIET BACKWATER

What a fund of pathos and humour one meets in this quiet backwater of life. And how particular these old people were with their shopping—strong brown mints, liquorice all-sorts, cakes, bath salts and handkerchiefs seemed to be the first favourites.

They liked to peer at the trolley wheeled to the bedside or sometimes the baking tins put on to the counterpane even if no money was spent; one old dame said: "Bring it here, luv, and let me have a look at it. I've no money and am not going to buy, but let me see." One made me find a tin in her locker for her money (and I tried not to see the denture among the pennies) while another insisted on my "sitting her up a bit."

Suggesting a toothbrush to a hesitant shopper, I was met with "Eh, bless you luv, but I ain't got no teeth." And during the week I have often thought of the reckless old lady who insisted on buying three cheese cakes and asked for a fourth. But (perhaps fortunately for her) we had none left.

MANY A SWEET TOOTH

So round to each bed, and then along to the men's wards, where again a welcome awaited us although much less money was spent. Many showed a sweet tooth by choosing fancy cakes and chewing gum, while notepaper and matches (we have not yet a tobacco licence) were also popular. One old man who was "sitting up" said his money was in his locker at the far end of the ward and insisted on my colleague helping him there. As they slowly progressed along arm in arm, several envious voices declared he could manage quite well alone. I wonder if he could?

Our last call was to the small maternity ward which always seems such a complete contrast to the others. Happy young mothers, so proud of their babies, liked ribbon, bath salts and scent: but we enjoyed even more the privilege of peeping at those tiny morsels of humanity, and deciding that one should be Prime Minister, another definitely a boxer, while a young lady suggested by the strength of her lungs that she would make a name on the concert platform.

At the door of each ward we paused for a final wave and cheery greeting, and then took our trolley back down the corridor, a little tired perhaps but ringing in our ears were the quavering voices calling: "See you again next week" and "Come again soon."

Truly Rural

OUR food journeys seem to comprise a mixture of every odd job under the sun. Apart from taking orange juice, cod liver oil, dried milk and vitamin tablets, to mothers who have difficulty in fetching them from the Food Office, we act as a travelling "Advice Bureau and Clinic."

At present the most common enquiry is how to deal with lassitude following mumps, and often we are asked to diagnose symptoms of measles, whooping cough and safety pins sticking in various portions of baby's anatomy. Sick visiting also comes into this category, e.g., taking supplies to bed-ridden patients of local doctors. The country people are heartily grateful, for those who need such things often live in very isolated spots.

Many of our customers live miles from the nearest neighbour and sometimes they are difficult to locate. Once we were directed to go "off the main road, through the white gate by the mook 'cap and down over the hill." This white gate had been removed twenty years ago and the 'cap had apparently sunk into oblivion at the same time. But we found the cottages—tiny places set under the brow of a hill, three miles from a 'bus and over one of the worst roads we had yet encountered. Another time we searched for a house near a wireless station. No one knew the people (who had only been three years in the place) and we went on for miles before locating a cluster of cottages around a farm.

Most of our requests come through the "Bush Telegraph," but often we have to depend on sharp eyes for "flags of distress" on washing lines. Sometimes it is difficult to gauge the demand for a particular round, for the families move so frequently. One day you may be ten tins short, because of an influx of families with new babies all needing milk. Another day you may almost overload the car and come back with quite a few tins.

The population of the countryside is ever changing, so you find newcomers with strange dialects—Germans whose families have come to join them and need phrase books and dictionaries to help them; a local woman who married a Dutchman, lived three years in Holland, but came home in order to be able to bring up her children in her own way; Poles who dare not return to their own country. There are also local people with their own dialect. Indeed, you need to be an expert in sign-language and mimicry.

GLAMOUR IN DEMAND

There is a great demand for magazines, mostly of the glamorous type, as many of the wives are very young, and find it trying to live all day with just the baby, and maybe a turnip field and a haystack for company.

Shopping is frequently done in the town for those with the most home ties; foreign money is changed at the bank; a refund was obtained on a Dutch railway ticket! Details of new oil-burning and primus stoves and calor gas apparatus were ascertained, and details given of various schools, examinations and careers.

The description of the cutting of baby's first tooth, or mother's first sleepless night is much more intriguing when recited to the accompaniment of planes overhead, or the snorts and wheezes emitted by a nearby tractor! Backs to the land!

How necessary it is to keep a working contact with these young couples who are wondering if it is all really worthwhile.



(Photo. by courtesy of
Associated Newspapers)

Centre of attrac-
tion at Southport
Flower Show.
W.V.S. Garden
Gift exhibit and
some admirers,

(Photo. by courtesy of the Kent Messenger)

Dover W.V.S. in action. An amusing description of their work at Swingate
camp appeared in the September Bulletin, under the heading "Just Washing Up".

W.V.S. with the Brigade of Gurkhas

GENEROUS tribute to the work of W.V.S. in Malaya is paid in *The Kukri*, the Journal of the Brigade of Gurkhas. Here are some extracts:—

"The Editor is certain that everyone, from the Major-General downwards, would wish to express here his thanks to and admiration for the ladies of the W.V.S. who have unsparingly given their time and energy to the wives and children of the men."

The section under the heading "2nd King Edward VII's Own Gurkha's Rifles" includes the following:—

"Including K.G.Os. the 1st Battalion now has 95 families in Singapore and 70 children. Despite tented accommodation they are very happy and contented. They have discarded dress more suited to 5,000 feet for something cooler and have taken their children out of woollen jerseys and stockings and they keep them clean. All this is almost entirely due to the untiring efforts of our W.V.S. helper, who devotes the greater part of her day, and sometimes the night as well, to looking after the families. It is amazing what a difference the hard work and devotion of one person has made to the whole outlook of these women, for whom, in many cases, this is the first time they have left Nepal."

"There have already been about 20 births since

the arrival of the Battalion in Malaya. Recently the P.R.I., poor bachelor that he is, was asked to report how many G.O.Rs' children there would be in the lines by July 1st. He took the present figure, subtracted the number that might be proceeding with their parents on leave before that date, guessed wildly and added the number that might come back from Nepal with the leave party in May. The answer was 70. Proudly he took his report to the W.V.S. helper, only to be informed that he was hopelessly out. He had forgotten 30 small ones, unborn but signalled, in his estimate."

And again, headed "7th Gurkha Rifles":—

"The 2nd Battalion cannot allow this opportunity to go by without mentioning the W.V.S. worker. She, with her devotion to the wives and children and untiring efforts for their comfort, is entirely responsible for the present happiness of the families. It is no easy task, the conditions of the Family tented camp being what they are. It is a real pleasure to see her escorting our wives on shopping expeditions in the crowded main thoroughfares of Kuala Lumpur."

WOMEN IN GREEN

by Charles Graves

Published by Heinemann

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with a foreword by the Dowager
Marchioness of Reading, G.B.E.

12 illustrations - 280 pages

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HELP FOR BRAILLE TYPISTS.

How W.V.S. members at Urmston are helping sightless people by reading to typists at the National Library for the Blind, Deansgate, Manchester, was told recently in the *Western Telegraph*.

"They go to the library one half-day each week to dictate chapters from recent literature to operators of machines which emboss the paper with Braille characters," the correspondent wrote. "Most of the operators are blind or partially blind, and each works in a small office with the reader."

"It is possible to alter small mistakes in the Braille script but if as much as a whole word is wrong the entire page must be scrapped. This means that the reader must be accurate and careful about punctuation and exact wording."

FOR TIRED CHILDREN

A creche organised by W.V.S. at the Royal Welsh Show, Swansea, was much appreciated. A member (whose visit coincided with that of "Monty") describes it:—

"Everything was so well organised. Small low camp beds were used that the toddlers could get on to themselves, and they had nursery tables and chairs, a beautiful rocking horse, swings, toys and books. Most of the 289 children who used the nursery stayed from two to three hours. About 30 lost children (brought in by police officers) were also entertained."

"On the Saturday it was necessary to erect barriers across the opening of the marquee to keep out the sight-seers, as W.V.S. just could not cope with them. These sight-seers were especially interested in the nursery and one person was heard to say: 'Isn't it wonderful? Just like fairyland.' One little boy said 'Thank you for a lovely party.'"

"Swansea W.V.S. members were very tired by the end of the Show, but happy to know that their efforts had been appreciated."

Food News

ONCE again the Good Housewife is faced with a major problem—the shortage of milk. After having enjoyed the summer months of plenty it will take considerable re-adjustment to get down to new menus. Here are a few recipes to start you thinking :—

Breakfast :

Tomato Eggs.

- 8 medium sized Tomatoes. 2 Eggs.
- 3 dessertsp. Melted Margarine.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teacup Breadcrumbs. Salt and Pepper.

Gently cook the tomatoes and allow to cool. Mix the eggs well beaten with tomatoes, melted margarine, breadcrumbs and season well. Drop in spoonfuls on greased girdle or frying pan and brown on both sides.

Lunch :

Baked Pig's Cheek.

- 1 freshly pickled Pig's Cheek.
- Brown Breadcrumbs.
- Wash the cheek well. Cover with warm water, bring to the boil and simmer gently for $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Strip off the skin. Cover thickly with breadcrumbs and bake for half-an-hour. Let get very cold and serve.

Dinner :

Salmon Box.

- 1 tin Salmon or fresh salmon if available.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Rice. 3 cups Water. $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. Salt.
- 1 pint Sauce. 2 teasp. Vinegar. 2 teasp. Mustard.

Sauce.

Melt 2 oz. margarine and mix in 4 tablespoons flour. Cook for 3 minutes. Pour 1 pint of water in gradually and bring to boil, stirring all the time. Boil gently for 2 to 3 minutes. Season.

Cook the rice in the usual way by dropping rice into boiling water (salted) and cook for 15 minutes without letting it go off the boil. To separate the rice, drain through sieve and shake for a moment over heat. Cool.

Lightly grease cake tin or bread tin with layer of cooked rice, both sides and bottom. Flake the salmon after removing skin and bones. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of Sauce. Season well and fill into centre of tin. Cover top with remainder of rice and put greaseproof paper over. Steam for 1 hour. Turn out and serve with the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ pint sauce sharpened up by adding after blending 2 teasp. mustard and 2 teasp. vinegar.

For the Coffee Party :

Cheese Crackers.

Arrange small plain biscuits on a baking tin. Brush over with melted margarine and sprinkle finely with grated cheese. Bake until cheese is melted.

Ginger Nuts.

- 6 oz. Flour. $1\frac{1}{2}$ tablesp. Syrup.
- 4 oz. Sugar. 2 oz. Margarine.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teasp. Bicarbonate of Soda.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teasp. Cream of Tartar.
- 1 teasp. Ginger. $\frac{1}{2}$ Egg.

Spinach and Beet

(Further extracts from the Diary of a Centre Organiser.)

MONDAY. Our office cleaner, Mrs. Buckett, drew me aside this morning to tell me a tale about her little girl. "Took her to church yesterday for the first time," she confided, "and her father being in the choir, we went in through the vestry with him. 'Hallo, Susie,' one of her friends greeted her, 'how did you get here?' And what did my Susie reply? Why, 'We came in by the tradesmen's entrance,' she said!"

TUESDAY. How careful one has to be when wearing uniform: one's slightest word is taken literally. Among ourselves in the office we have dubbed as "vegetarians" the members who come to peel vegetables for Meals on Wheels. ("How many vegetarians are wanted on Thursday?" "We shall want an extra vegetarian on Tuesday when there's Lancashire hot-pot"—and so on.) Apparently similar remarks were overheard on a 'bus or somewhere equally public, as we were telephoned this morning by someone who wanted to join "The W.V.S. Yes: The Women's Vegetarian Society—such a splendid idea!"

WEDNESDAY. Mrs. Flappe is one of those members who always has a tale of woe ending with "Oh, dear, why do such things always happen to me?" To-day's "tragedy" was that her ball of wool rolled off her lap and down the step of the "bus" into the road during a country journey—and she did not immediately notice what had happened. By the time the 'bus was halted, the ball was some hundreds of yards away, and between her and it was a herd of cows!

THURSDAY. Mrs. Darling, who has become a W.V.S. Godmother, frankly admits that she may find the task beyond her. "He's only three," she told us, referring to her "godson," "and wanting to find out how much he knew I put a penny on the table and asked him if he knew what it was. Do you know what he said?" We shook our heads and urged her to tell us. "He came right up to it and then said 'It's tails!'"

FRIDAY. It is our boast that there is a niche in W.V.S. for all women with a wish to help their fellow creatures. Mrs. Gushleigh, however, is a little hard to place as her ideas of what to do contrast somewhat sharply with what the people involved need to have done for them. She argues incessantly so it is not much use approaching her directly in an attempt to direct her energies into more useful channels. Tried to tackle her obliquely to-day by brightly recounting the story of the three Scouts who reported to their Scoutmaster that their good deed for the day had been to help an old lady to cross a busy street. "Excellent, excellent," the Scoutmaster had beamed, "but, tell me, why did it take three of you to help her across?" "Because," one of the Scouts had explained, "she didn't want to go." (Will the moral of this tale have any effect on Mrs. Gushleigh? Time alone will tell!)

Melt in saucepan sugar, margarine and syrup. Mix dry ingredients, add beaten egg and then melted margarine, etc. Combine well and form into small balls. Bake on a greased tin well apart for 10 minutes. Take out and cool a little and then put back into oven and cook until brown and nicely cracked. Cool on wire tray.

TO MEMBERS OF THE W.V.S.

Dear Madam,

We have booked this page in order to draw attention to a development which is probably unique. A private hotel has been opened at St. Leonards-on-Sea to cater primarily for those who support the principle of voluntary service.

It is felt that our guests will thus have much in common to increase the enjoyment of their stay. This has been the case during the successful summer season just concluded. A message - probably too generous - from the General Secretary of a large Voluntary Society whose conference was held here recently reads:-

‘All agreed that nothing could have exceeded the hospitality of Normanhurst last weekend. The work put into the furnishing and equipping as well as the catering for so full a house-warming party was splendid in every respect and detail.....’

AUTUMN AND WINTER HOLIDAYS, rest and recuperation. St. Leonards was chosen by the founder because of its medical commendation as a winter resort; comparatively mild and with a high sunshine record for this Country. The Hotel, (facing South on the sea-front and sheltered from North and East) is probably in the best of all positions. Every bedroom has central heating, hot and cold running water and spring interior mattresses. Most of the double bedrooms have twin bedsteads.

NORMAL VALUE and full service is given. Vacancies now at £5; £5 10s.; £6 10s. inclusive of gratuities to staff; early morning tea in bedroom; breakfast; luncheon; tea; dinner; coffee; baths. Daily and weekend terms on request. St. Leonards is about 2 hours from London by electric trains.

We hope that many members of W.V.S will visit us and meet other members here. Husbands and children will be very welcome also!

Special facilities given for Conferences and group visits. Will you kindly write NOW for any further information you desire, or retain the address for future reference.

Yours truly,

Peggy Milne
Manageress

K. M. Chew
Principal's Deputy

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Competitions Ideas Wanted for Posters

No. 12



FROM TIME to time W.V.S. Art Department is called upon, often at short notice, to produce and put into execution ideas for posters, booklets, window displays and the like. In some Centres the demand has developed unsuspected talent. For example, at one Borough office a member (a retired school teacher whose subject was Latin) was engaged in welfare work for old folk and children when she responded to an emergency call for a poster. This she did so well that she became a poster specialist. Her interest in her new work led her to take art lessons at a technical school, and now her work is well up to professional standards.

Through this month's competition (No. 12) we hope to discover further latent talent. Ideas are wanted for

a poster drawing attention to the need for *Magazines for the Services*. The sketches may be as small or as large as you wish—the idea is the thing. And don't worry if your linework is shaky: one of our art specialists will correct such minor faults.

The accompanying reproductions, both the work of a member, are typical of what is called for, and also have a message for non-subscribers to our Bulletin.

Entries will close on October 31st for the Poster Ideas Competition (No. 12). They should be addressed to the Editor, W.V.S. Bulletin, 41, Tothill Street, S.W.1. The usual prize of a book token (10 6d.) or a copy of "Women In Green" will be awarded.

(Entry form on page 11.)

Result of No. 10—Uses for Old Cotton Reels

ALL THE suggestions for the use of old cotton reels were good, but most of them were by no means original.

The prize goes to *Borderer*, of Carlisle, for the following:—

A charming coffee table can be contrived from a plywood top (from an arts and crafts shop) and numerous cotton reels supplied by dressmaking friends. The reels should be of uniform size—not necessarily the same shape, as several shapes mix well. When glued together and reinforced by a peg running the full length of each column, they make strong and decorative legs for the table, and when stained or varnished lose all trace of their humble origin.

The judge's comment was: "The coffee table idea is a good one and original (to me anyway). It is practical and simple to carry out."

Cabbage and Beet also submitted an idea new to the judge, and probably to others, but it seemed hardly to come within the "terms of reference" for the

competition. *Cabbage and Beet* and her friends collect a special brand of reels. When they have a sackful they send them by rail to the manufacturer, and get a cheque in return. (NOTE: It would be unwise to follow this lead without consulting the manufacturer.) During the war the money was used to buy wool for the Forces: now it benefits an institution for the deaf.

Others suggestions which were commended by the judge were from *Lavender*, H.Q. (Cut off ends of reels and use centres as door stops, screws being counter-sunk; use ends for wheels for miniature toys—wheelbarrows, perambulators, trolleys, carts). *F.S.*, *Gissing* (Save backache by heightening kitchen table by fixing three reels to each leg. Use reels of exact size as legs, and varnish).

Other suggestions were for candlesticks, aids to counting in nursery schools, wheels for boxes for various purposes, and "barrels" for miniature Christmas trees.

East Anglia Entertains

IT WAS EARLY in May that 100 children from Austria (50 boys and 50 girls) arrived at a Camp at Kessingland, near Lowestoft. They had been selected as those most needing a long holiday in this Country and many looked thin and frail. As it was chilly by the sea, they were glad of the woollies and other warm garments which W.V.S. took to the Camp. Many had little English and all were shy at meeting so many strangers. After a fortnight of Camp life, where the children mixed freely with the youth of Kessingland, they were dispersed in groups to various parts of East Anglia and the North of England where they enjoyed the hospitality of English homes and made friends with English boys and girls.

In the Lowestoft district the Scouts, the Girl Guides and the Youth Clubs made special overtures of friendship. The kindly hostesses made the children feel really at home; the many sunny days by the sea made them brown as berries and even rationed English fare made them gain rapidly in weight.

But holidays, however long, come to an end, and in the early morning of a sunny August day, the children assembled with their luggage to catch their 'bus for Harwich en route for their homes in Austria. And what

luggage it was! Great bulging sacks, square packages, hold-alls of all varieties with here and there a toy projecting. So many bulky packages that it was dubious if there would be room in the 'bus for the children themselves. The little girls were smart in new clean frocks and the boys wore English suits. All were well shod including the biggest boy who had acquired Army boots and a "warm winter coat for Mother" in his sack.

There were many sad farewells for the children were tearful and loath to go and some of the grown-ups had lumps in their throats. "See you again soon" was heard on all sides.

As the 'bus finally moved off with waving hands all along its length, one motherly woman remarked to her neighbour: "Our house will feel so quiet without those three big boys. They made a lot of work but we shall miss them—there's a lot of talk about United Nations and some folk like to hold forth at meetings but I reckon we've done more United Nations' work here these last ten weeks than some of these platform speakers."

And do you know, I think she was right.

News Flashes

ACTON.—In five days W.V.S. filled 1,092 cans with fruit for Acton Hospital.

BURTON-ON-TRENT C.B.—Police asked for W.V.S. help for a family affected in a gas explosion. Clothing was provided.

CHESTERFIELD.—Many odd queries. A Polish woman from the Russian Zone of Germany asked W.V.S. to trace her husband whom she last saw before the 1914-1918 war and who sent his last letter from Philadelphia in 1919!

CHISLEHURST AND SIDCUP.—A young student appealed to W.V.S. to find him a dentist to extract two aching teeth. He had been unable to get an appointment under 3 months. W.V.S. made arrangements for the teeth to be extracted the same evening.

DONCASTER C.B.—When the Meals on Wheels van broke down recently *The Yorkshire Evening News* loaned a van and driver. On another occasion the proprietor of a local ice cream business used his luggage brake and drove the car himself so that the old people were supplied as usual with their hot meal.

DERBY C.B.—There are 154 National Savings Groups in Derby and all most active.

DARLINGTON C.B.—German Club.—The Chief Education Officer has offered to arrange English classes for a minimum of eight girls, to be held in W.V.S. office if necessary. These girls appear to be very keen to learn and one girl is simply thrilled to be allowed to keep her typewriting in practice. She is a trained shorthand typist and has taken advantage of this domestic scheme in order to perfect her English.

GRIMSBY C.B.—The Hospital Management Committee appreciates the work of the W.V.S. trolley shop so much that it has asked if one can be organised for a second hospital.

GRAVESEND B.—A request for hats came from the hospital. The "Old Folk" were going to Margate and had nothing to protect their heads from the sun. Could we help? We have a cupboard where W.V.S. store everything and anything unnamed, and which we call "The Lost Paradise." We managed to unearth twelve very ancient and tired-looking specimens, but strange to say, fashionable now. Bought bunches of artificial flowers from a local sale to trim them, also two more felt hats at 1/- each, making a total of fourteen. They were cleaned, brushed and reshaped and sent to the hospital that very same afternoon, also three for the men.

GUILDFORD B.—Received a purse from Littlehampton with the request that this Centre should find the owner. There were some Clothing Exchange points in the purse, so the owner was found!

GREAT YARMOUTH C.B.—This Centre has a list of old men with socks needing re-footing. W.V.S. knitter deals with the socks in her spare time.

HOVE B.—479 Meals-on-Wheels served this month. We received a nice message from the son of an elderly lady to whom we delivered meals and who has now gone to hospital. He said he would never forget the kindness of W.V.S. ladies who had delivered the meals. For the records of the East Sussex Association for Care of Cripples two W.V.S. members are making a house-to-house check of cripples.

KINGSBRIDGE R.D.—The Deputy Divisional Food Officer writes:—"The Food Executive Officer has advised me of the very valuable assistance which W.V.S. have rendered with the distribution of ration books this year, and would like you to know on behalf of the Ministry how much this is appreciated."

KIDSGROVE.—W.V.S. members bake cakes for the four Darby and Joan Clubs in this area.

LEEK U.D.—Gifts of nightdresses and a dressing gown, sent into the Office in response to the Clothing Appeal, seemed providential as they were passed immediately on to a needy "Joan" who had to be rushed into hospital to undergo an operation.

LEXDEN AND WINSTREE R.D.—A copy of the Centre Narrative Report is now handed to the Clerk to the Council at the end of each month.

MANCHESTER C.B.—A small Manchester boy has won a prize at a local Show with his pumpkin grown from one of the American seeds supplied through W.V.S.

MAIDENHEAD B.—W.V.S. staffed the Information Tent at the County Agricultural Show and afterwards provided a splendid canteen for the workmen who dismantled the stands. The men appreciated this service enormously and their only complaint was that W.V.S. had not provided a canteen for them when they erected the stands!

MALDEN AND COOMBE.—Handicrafts for home patients filling a want. One patient wrote saying her doctor had advised her to take up a hobby, and it was "largely due to the kindness and patience of W.V.S." that she now feels so much better.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.—The following appeared in the *Newark Advertiser*:—"The Rev. L. M. Charles-Edwardes, Vicar of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, writes:—"We now have a Darby and Joan Club at St. Martin's. It is going very well and we hope in due course to reach the high standard of the Newark Club." It is interesting that the fame of the Newark Club should have spread to the heart of London.

NUNEATON.—Happy to announce that this Centre is active again, having started a Trolley Service two days a week at the two local hospitals and also a Tea Service for the Outpatients' department.

NEYLAND U.D.—At a Carnival held in Neyland (Pemb.) recently a lorry was arranged to represent the Neyland Darby and Joan Club. Children were dressed to represent the Darbies and Joans and the W.V.S. helpers. A table was set for tea and at another Darbies were playing dominoes. This lorry gained 3rd prize.

PORT SAID.—Troops in transit have made full use of the Britannia Club. On three occasions the Club was opened at 7.30 a.m. for the benefit of men given shore leave. One day it was almost crowded out by a seething mass of troops in jungle green. When naval vessels were here on a four days visit large numbers of the ship's personnel were in the Club, taking part in the various tournaments and attending the dances, which they appeared to enjoy tremendously. We were delighted to receive four parcels of magazines from Ardler, Burnley, Dunkeld and Headquarters (Technical magazines). Last, but certainly not least, six parcels from Eastbourne W.V.S., who also very kindly sent a grand parcel of sheet music and song books, which were greatly appreciated by our band.

PORTSLADE.—A member offered to make 200 cakes for a Garden Party given in aid of the local Animal Clinic. This was in answer to an appeal by Brighton Centre.

PADDINGTON.—A Darby has recorded in his Will his thanks for many happy hours spent in a W.V.S. Darby and Joan Club, and a bequest of £25, and the residue of his estate.

PUDSEY.—Food distribution busy. About 300 parcels have been delivered, 200 to people of 70 years and more. The Local Authority provided the transport.

POCKLINGTON R.D.—A Darby aged 58 cycles 1½ miles weekly from outlying village of Allerthorpe to attend the recently opened Darby and Joan Club.

COMPETITION ENTRY FORM No. 12

Name.....

Pseudonym.....

Address.....

Centre.....

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