

WVS/WRVS Bulletin/Magazine

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Registered office:

ROYAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE, Beck Court, Cardiff Gate Business Park, Cardiff, CF23 8RP.

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

W.V.S. Bulletin

By permission of the Editor of the South Wales Daily Argus

A New Town Creche: W.V.S. lend a hand at Croesyceiliog Community Centre at Cwmbran.

PRICE FOURPENCE · JANUARY, 1957 · NO. 205



W.V.S. BULLETIN

(Incorporating The News Letter)

Number 205
January, 1957
Annual Subscription 3s. 6d.

(Official Journal of Women's Voluntary Service for Civil Defence)

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FOR THE YOUNG



THE New Year—a new beginning. For very many people literally a new beginning, facing life with roots upturned, surrounded by strange ways and people, longing for the accustomed home and friendship. This New Year wish must surely be that now, in 1957, we may draw near in understanding with all around us—our own and those who have hitherto been “other” folk. The opportunities will come, each in its own, so often unforeseen, way, and we must and will be ready to meet them.

But this January *Bulletin* is chiefly concerned with another kind of beginning. We have set to one side for the moment the adult world and its problems, to devote more space than usual to the children whose future depends upon what we, the older generation, do not only to build a better world but to bring present added happiness and health to the young things in our midst. And what rewarding work this is can be gleaned from the “Diary of an Experiment” on page 5.

Obviously, it was the children, and not W.V.S., who did the really important part of the work at Peasmarsh, but the

satisfaction will be mutual in the coming months when “the flowers that bloom in the spring” will have very much “to do with the case” in making the young gardeners realise that creating beauty is far more fun than destroying it. Then there is the pleasure of making time seem shorter for children in hospital by taking their minds out adventuring with the heroes of storybooks (page 7). But back we come, to touch on man's inhumanity to man, vaguely apprehended though not comprehended in the anxious eyes of the Hungarian children in the strange English home, pressing close to their parents, while W.V.S. displays the much needed covers to bring physical warmth—and tries, perhaps not in vain, to communicate some of the intangible warmth she feels.

So, into 1957 with a special thought for the children. May the whole of its twelve months ring with laughter from many happy young hearts, and its memory linger long after it, too, gives place to yet another New Year.

The Editor

Honours Awarded to W.V.S.

NEW Year Honours were awarded to the following W.V.S. Members, to whom we offer our congratulations:

Commander of the Order of the British Empire

Margaret MacDiarmaid, Lady MacCOLL, Chairman for Scotland.

Officer of the Order of the British Empire

Winifred Mary, Lady HAMILTON, Regional Administrator, North-West Region.

Member of the Order of the British Empire

Lily Etta, Mrs. GRAHAM, County Borough Organiser, Sheffield.

Edith Mary, Mrs. HART, Personnel Officer, Services Welfare Department, W.V.S. Headquarters.

Anne Mowat, Mrs. McKAY, District Administrator, Western District of Scotland.

Doris Avery, Mrs. RADFORD, Head of Housing Department, W.V.S. Headquarters.

Ivy Alice, Mrs. ROWE, Regional Clothing Officer, North Midland Region.

British Empire Medal

Louie, Mrs. HAYTON, Lately Deputy County Borough Organiser, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Grace, Mrs. HUNTER, Member, Aberdeen.

Miss Jane WILLAN, County Borough Secretary, Barrow-in-Furness.

Miss Betty WOFFENDEN, Personal Assistant to the Regional Administrator, London Region.



Diary of an Experiment



Destination: The Malthouse, Wick, South Wales.

Time: 10.30 a.m. Saturday, September 1st, 1956.

Place: The Hall of Memory, Birmingham.

A COACH, green and silver, a driver wondering just what sort of a job has been assigned to him. Luggage in the boot and on the rack, suitcases new, borrowed, old and battered, carrier bags, paper parcels. Children in the coach, parents on the pavement. A final wave; the door shuts. They're off. The scene is set for members of the Midland Regional Staff to take 48 Birmingham children to the sea for one week. Poor scraps, white faced scraps, overawed by grown-ups and uniform—overawed, but for how long?

So much planning and organisation has gone into the preparation for the week about to start, and so much planning and organising will go by the board before the week is over. But, first, the priority job: to give each a Kwell.

"Please, Miss, I can't swallow tablets, Miss". "Please, Miss, I feel sick." "Please, Miss, when shall we get there, Miss?" "Please, Miss, are you staying with us, Miss?"

Worcester is reached and we stop to spend pennies—never has so much and so many got through for one penny. On

to Gloucester, where a friendly Brown Owl and two Guide patrol leaders meet us with bottles of orangeade and cups of tea. 48 little travellers are seated in a horseshoe and lunch is brought out, pathetic little bundles of "pieces." Back on the coach, W.V.S. fingers crossed: no one has been sick yet. Tewkesbury, the river: "Please, Miss, is this the sea, Miss?" A great deal of the awe is going out of their faces and their voices. Someone starts singing. Did we say singing? Robin Hood, Davy Crockett. Oh, I do like to be beside the seaside. For he's a jolly good driver. So the miles are eaten up. No one is sick. The Malthouse is reached. A swirl of children and luggage all still clearly labelled, and it seems a miracle that 28 girls and 20 boys each find a bed in a dormitory with their names firmly tied to the rail. The experiment of Regional Staff taking 48 Birmingham children to the sea is well and truly under way.

Memories? Any amount! The first view of the sea—excitement and a little fear: "Please, Miss, isn't the sea big, Miss?" Southerndown—rocks, shingle,

sand and sea; no one in sight but W.V.S. and 48 small children. "Please Miss, where's the toilet?" "Mee-iss, oh Mee-iss, is this a star-fish, Mee-is?" The ebb-tide has left small pools, and gradually clothes are discarded, bathing-suits and trunks, some owned, some borrowed, are put on and everyone gets gloriously wet, including W.V.S. who haven't yet had time to get into swim-suits.

The ebb tide is no longer an ebb tide and the incoming tide gathers momentum with every wave. The two watchers on the rocks gather

bundle upon bundle of small clothes to take to safety on a higher rock. Children are gathered in, a frantic half-hour ensues as 48 pants, vests, trousers, shirts and 96 shoes are sorted over; no one warned us to take the Clothing Officer with us!

A wet day, and we pack off in car and van to Porthcawl. Shopping for presents for home. 48 children invade the chain stores—brooches and scent for mummy; haircream (which afterwards gets broken and has to be replaced by an understanding adult) for daddy, uncle and big brother. Sun-goggles, which little Arthur has been waiting all week to buy. The purchase is made; the goggles donned—never again to be relinquished. A wet afternoon at the Cinema—a hurried staff meeting and a current space film is chosen. W.V.S. sit through it bewildered, while 48 eager interpreters explain the finer details of space travel. The One in Five specialist and the Civil Defence Organiser are seen to go into a huddle of heat, flash, blast and gamma radiation, surprised to find such things do still exist so real in the world of young children by the sea.

To the beach next day, to find the tide well in: "Please, Miss, someone's covered the sand up, Miss." Bath-time: at first a tussle to get small bodies naked, but soon a routine of strip, wash, and dusting powder—no strip, no dusting powder. Small bodies and white faces take on colour, awe goes completely and each W.V.S., when not "Mee-iss", is at some time or other called "Mom".

The Regional Staff? They've loved it, every minute. The Regional Administrator, at first demoted to "Miss", now knows that when her staff wish to show that little extra respect she will always be "Mee-iss".

The Civil Defence Organiser, whose voice is her stock in trade, is a little shattered to lose it completely as a result of talking, shouting, and community singing.

The One in Five specialist, brought suddenly face to face with her Glamorganshire opposite number, wonders whether perhaps Talks A and B could be pushed in as a bedtime story? It was but a passing phase and she was

soon back to normal. The Children's Holiday specialist, politely told by a six-year-old, "Please, Miss, you're not eating your porridge prop'ly—you told us last night to eat it sideways," wonders, does one try to explain that that was soup? The Forces Club Organiser feels herself in dire danger of returning to her Club and telling her customers to "hurry and change your pants and wash behind your ears."

All these memories and many more will be cherished by the members of the Regional Staff who were taken to the seaside by 48 Birmingham Children.

W.V.S. Brings Home the Bacon

SOME weeks ago we received a letter at Northern Region Office from the Bacon Information Council inviting our members to Bacon Cookery Demonstrations which were to be held in the restaurant of a large Newcastle store.

We sent out a notice to the Counties and County Boroughs, and a number of our members attended the demonstrations. During the week there was a competition for a Bacon Pie, open to one member of each branch of each organisation in the district. At least two County Boroughs submitted entries, and we were delighted to learn that Mrs. Eltringham of South Shields County Borough won the competition. Both she and the County Borough Organiser were interviewed on Independent Television, and asked to say a few words about W.V.S.

Several members of Regional Staff attended the final demonstration of the week when they met two representatives of the Council, who invited them to try some specially packed rashers of bacon. We cooked them at the office and ate them for lunch. We all decided that they were delicious.

As a result of the competition, many Darby and Joan Clubs received egg and bacon pies.—Joan Parker, Regional Food Specialist.



In and Out of Doors



*(Right) A story to pass
the time in the children's
ward at Chester City hospital.*

By courtesy of the
Chester Observer

*(Below) Young gardeners
planting bulbs on road verges
at Peasmarsh in Sussex.*

By courtesy of the Sussex
Express and County Herald

Scottish Page

IT is very difficult to make our page of any interest, other than Hungarian Relief Work, but we begin it by telling of the safe arrival of two train loads over the week-end at two camps, one Middleton Camp, Gorebridge, the other Broomlee Camp at West Linton.

W.V.S. set up the clothing issue stores in both camps 24 hours before the expected arrival of the refugees and were then at the station and in the camps to help settle them in for the night. W.V.S. are now on duty issuing clothing and giving every possible assistance.

Now to turn to our day-to-day work. It is interesting to see that the Medical Officer of Health of Edinburgh City is organising coffee parties at regular intervals, for the members distributing Welfare Foods in the many clinics in the City. The idea is to keep the workers together and to show them some appreciation of their regular and unspectacular service. More and more Centres are being opened in the new housing schemes. Edinburgh Centre had the pleasure of a visit from the President of the Nursing Society covering part of Yugoslavia. She was particularly interested in the meals-on-wheels and went on the rounds.

Our liaison between Dundee City and the lightship continues and we have been presented with three strong hand-made rope mats made by the men. W.V.S. keep the men supplied with playing cards and magazines. This is our first contact with the men manning lightships and lighthouses around the coast, but we are hoping that other Centres will follow suit in due course.

We congratulate our new County Clothing Officer for Moray and Nairn for the way she and her team handled the emergency clothing work resulting from the floods in the County. It was a real challenge to new personnel and they all acquitted themselves admirably.

One of the most impressive schemes operating in our North-East District is the system of work parties based on the

District Clothing Store and embracing all Centres and village groups. Darby and Joan clubs are also helping and the result is a good stock of children's clothing into the store.

His First Soup for 27 Years

This is the headline in a local paper. The story—an old man of 88 years tasted his first soup the other day, through the meals-on-wheels service in Aberdeen. He had "done" for himself and lived mainly on cups of tea and oatcakes. It was indeed a great day for him.

One of our National Savings Shop Groups in Dumfries decided not to withdraw their savings for holidays; they said it gave them a nice "rich" feeling to know the money was put aside in case of emergency.

Our W.V.S. in Clydebank have been asked to assist in a new venture. The Medical Officer of Health, parents and others interested felt that the time had come when something should be done for mentally handicapped children, who are uneducable and who live in a sort of no-man's land, socially and educationally. The primary aim is to get these children a change of environment. A Centre has been set up on two days a week from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The children are brought there by their parents and left in charge of willing helpers. They are taught to use their hands by crayoning, making wax flowers and woolly balls, etc. They have improved enormously, one boy weaving a scarf, another making a rug. This work requires infinite patience, but is so rewarding when improvement is noticeable. We wish all the workers every possible success in their well worthwhile job.

We have been given a big job from one of the Glasgow Hospitals. Matron has asked W.V.S. to make 1,500 tray-cloths and 1,500 glass covers for the patients. She has chosen delightful material to make these and the work is being spread out all over Scotland. It is a case of all hands to the wheel. The interesting part of the "operation", is that through decentralisation, we are giving work to our more remote Centres and linking them with the Large Burghs. We hope to develop this policy in other directions, as occasion arises.

Civil Defence Training

The contamination meter which is used for detecting radio-active dust being demonstrated by Miss P. Green to a group of nuns from the Sainte Marie Convent, Luton, who are taking a course in Civil Defence.

By courtesy of the Luton News

Overseas Students in London

THE number of overseas students now in the United Kingdom tops the 30,000 mark. Half of this number is in the London area and the problem of their welfare, welcome and hospitality is comprehensively covered by a well-written, well-informed booklet issued by the Central Committee of the Conference of Voluntary Societies on the Welfare of Overseas Students in London, of which W.V.S. is a member.

How best the students can help themselves and how the public can help the students is described under such head-

ings as why they come, what they study, finances, the importance of welfare etc. It would seem that nothing has been left undone to further the worthwhile aims on which may depend the future good relations between the countries the students come from and our own.

Valuable appendices give statistics of students and their distribution in universities and colleges up to July 1st, 1956, lists of commonwealth and foreign government officials dealing with educational queries in the United Kingdom, and also the organisations represented on the Conference.

Services Welfare Overseas

Beloved Enemy

By VIVIAN NEELE

W.V.S. Administrator South East Asia
and Far East

BLUE sky, blue sea, golden sand, gently waving palm trees leaning out at extravagant angles over the shore: here is everyone's picture of a desert island paradise. And what a paradise it is for our troops stationed here in Malaya, for this is a picture of Sandycroft Leave Centre, Penang.

Here can be seen every day, all the year round, dozens of young men, rarely clad in more than bathing trunks, so brown as to be almost indistinguishable from the Malay boatmen, relaxing and enjoying the main feature of this place, the sea. The creaming line of surf constantly breaks round the perfect curve of the bay, and endless entertainment is provided in swimming, diving and paddling the Malay boats, which spend most of their time overturning the laughing occupants into the water. Darkness falls early in Malaya all the year round, but night only increases the joy of swimming. At times the sea sparkles under a full moon and at others it is so black that only the feel of the water caressing your ankles like cool black silk tells you that you have stepped into it.

Yet our dearest friend is also our most implacable enemy. The sea is jealous of our paradise and seeks ceaselessly to destroy it. It resents our diving platform, the successor to a number of diving rafts, which it has ripped from their heavy moorings and hurled, a few battered spars, on to the beach, a token of its resentment. Even the strong steel diving platform, sunk in solid concrete, has twice been uprooted and thrown aside, twisted like a discarded toy. It claws hungrily at the buildings until they too are swept away, only to be replaced by others, built more strongly but never strongly enough to withstand the constant onslaughts.

Four W.V.S. characters live in this setting. Three members work from dawn

to dusk and indeed much later too, to make every minute of the men's leave memorable and happy. The fourth, inanimate but beloved, is the Green Line bus. Delightful in its complete incongruity in the Malayan scene, it picks its way between bullock carts, and stray goats as it takes the men on the various trips, at the same time firmly announcing its destination to be Guildford.

W.V.S. live in the most delightful rickety Malayan bungalow, raised on stilts in Malayan style, the rooms opening off a long deep verandah, open on all sides and hung with lopsided chicks ready to be lowered in case of heavy rain—pure Somerset Maugham!

And here, from another part of Malaya—the furthest corner to the north, near the Siamese border, comes Miss M. Baird's account of her work with Gurkha families:

My Gurkha Families

By M. BAIRD

I AM very happy here, but so busy that time seems really to fly. Large numbers of my Gurkha families have left the depot recently to re-form and I was sorry to see them go. The new families are arriving every day, some straight from the hills in Nepal. They look very dazed, poor things, and when they have all arrived I will be calling a meeting to tell them what they can do and have at the Welfare Centre. The children have already realised that they are on to a good thing, and at the moment about twenty of them are careering about outside my office, shouting with yells of anger, excitement and joy. I have been

Sandycroft Leave Centre, Penang.

able to give them a toy jeep and tricycle to play with. Now and again I have to go out and break up a few fights and sit with them a little while to see that fair play prevails.

Some of the mothers are very intrigued by the sewing machine and I shall soon begin giving demonstrations on its use. The more "jungle" ones I am sure regard it as a device of the devil.

The terrific rains of the last months have put a stop to outside activities. The magazines are still very popular—in fact as soon as they arrive the children are all round me begging for "Photo mem sahib" and I am trying to formulate a plan to get them first to the patients and the ones with the best embroidery pictures to the sewing enthusiasts.

One of our hospital Diahs has gone back to Nepal. We had a tea party before she left, Naafi providing traditional Gurkha sweetmeats and vast quantities of sticky things made from coconut and sugar, coloured bright pinks and greens. Also we had bottles of bright orange drink. I had decorated the Welfare Centre with great bunches of balloons in every colour and had plenty of flowers about to make a gay spectacle. Gurkhas love these bright colours so it was a great success.

I work a great deal with the Doctor, as the health of the families is naturally of great importance. Sometimes the women and children seem to be lacking in essential vitamins, so we have to teach them to take them. Baby-weighing takes place once a week and it is very important as a means of discovering which babies have lost weight or seem in any way neglected or in need of medical attention. On Saturday mornings we give inoculations, which means we have to call up those who need them. We have lists for vaccination, typhoid and tetanus, anti-diphtheria, and, in the case of families going to Nepal, India or Hong-kong, cholera.

The Gurkha wives knit beautifully, and wool is the most important item in the shop at the welfare centre. I go to Penang once a month to purchase stocks and any other things the wives require.

The Gurkhas are very fond of their

children, both boys and girls, but of course every Gurkha longs for a son. One day at the hospital I was chatting to a Gurkha soldier, who was waiting for his first child to be born. I knew him quite well and said I hoped his child would be strong and healthy like himself. He replied: "I hope for a son—and as you are here I am sure I shall have a son. So I departed to the centre feeling vaguely responsible. Luckily the son was born and the father came and thanked me.

Coming of Age Cake

I HAVE always thought it a great pity that servicemen who come of age when serving overseas seem to have memories of only a sore head and a nasty taste in the mouth, so I started a 21st Birthday evening. The airmen gave in their names (I checked up) and at the end of the month they had an enormous cake. PSI gave me a grant for the ingredients (including four dozen eggs), a Flight Sergeant (Catering) made a magnificent cake, weighing approximately 52 lbs. With marzipan and icing it was a marvellous sight. The names of the airmen were written in coloured icing. We had a free Tombola evening. A buffet was provided to which the airmen did full justice. The "birthday" Airmen were presented with a key and a mascot. Cameras were very much in evidence during the cutting of the cake ceremony. The lounge was packed and the airmen all voted it a most enjoyable evening.—
D. Fleming, R.A.F. Butterworth, Malaya.

Indomitable

AN old lady of 87 with a wooden leg joined the Kalsall and District Darby and Joan Club in November. When asked if she would like to borrow a book or take home a few magazines, her reply came promptly: "Oh no, thank you. I don't read much; my hobby is walking. I like to get out and about."

And so she does. I met her walking up a hill home with a fellow member soon after she joined. An example of courage and spirit.—G. L. Banwell, Centre Organiser, Tarvin, Cheshire.

W.V.S. Homes for Women

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THE Wanstead and Woodford W.V.S. Home for Women, the first of its kind in London, has progressed most happily since it was opened in the autumn. Eight elderly ladies are now living there in comfortable bed-sitting rooms with their own treasured belongings around them, their own latch-keys and front door bells. Far from disliking the sharing of kitchens on each floor, they often share meals there and help in washing up. Little coffee parties are held in each others' rooms of an evening when they enjoy the companionship and at the same time save light and fuel. Some of the tenants expressed a wish for "a bit of garden" and this seems likely to be fulfilled, as the Wanstead and Woodford Youth Centre have offered to take over and keep the garden in order. Many other offers of help and co-operation have been received from local sources, including the offer of a radio set. Mrs. Gerald Legge, J.P., a Councillor on Westminster City Council, paid a visit to the Home where she had tea and spent some time talking to the tenants, who were delighted to meet her. She expressed great appreciation of the house and the way in which it was run and hoped that many other Local Authorities would hasten to follow the example of Wanstead and Woodford and adopt the scheme.

W.V.S. Housing Association are also happy to report that a second house in London was officially opened in Sutton

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in September by the Mayor, who was welcomed by the Chairman of the Housing Committee and presented with the key by the Borough Surveyor. The W.V.S. Centre Organiser, members of her staff, and representatives of London Region and W.V.S. headquarters were present. Everyone was delighted with the house, a particularly pleasant one, which has been converted to house six elderly tenants in comfortable flats. Conversion here differs from that usually adopted by W.V.S. Housing Association, in that each flatlet has a separate kitchen unit instead of one kitchen shared by the tenants on each floor. Another feature is the sun-parlour, made out of the old conservatory, which should prove a happy retreat for the old ladies to meet and perhaps have a good chat.

From Clothes to Tea

DROYLSDEN W.V.S., working late into the evening to sort, bundle and pack the clothing that has been pouring into their headquarters (a single room in the basement of a Methodist Sunday School) received news of the train accident at the local station. Off they set to see what aid they could give. Fortunately no one was injured, but the railwaymen who were clearing the derailed engine and coaches from the lines appreciated the hot drinks, soup and sandwiches that were provided for them on that bitterly cold and misty November night.

Fitting In and Fitting Out

(Right) The Clothing Officer for Fareham brings a cot for the baby of one of the Hungarian refugee families for whom accommodation has been found in an English home.

By courtesy of the Evening News and Hampshire Telegraph, Portsmouth

(Below) W.V.S. providing Hungarians with clothes at an L.C.C. Welfare Home in London.

By courtesy of The Times

Help for the Disabled

The Piercy Report on the Disabled and the Voluntary Worker

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THE Piercy Committee was set up under the Chairmanship of Lord Piercy to consider the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons; it has now published its findings and brought together in one place an account of the services which a disabled person may readily expect under the Welfare State.

After enumerating various recommendations for the further assistance of the disabled, the Committee says: "It is, however, dangerous to assume that more effective services can be brought about solely, or even mainly, by increased expenditure, because some of the best work in the rehabilitation work has been done by relying upon the capacity to inspire the disabled to help themselves, and to the intelligent adaptation of available material."

A tribute is paid to the standard of service of those concerned in rehabilitation, both in the public service and voluntary organisations. "The provision by the Statutory Authorities of services to the disabled does not remove the need for voluntary service; there remains a vast field for personal service and meeting individual human needs."

The Committee concludes its report by saying that an improvement of knowledge amongst the general public of the range of services available for handicapped persons, of the impressive achievement of those services, and of the ideals and aims of rehabilitation, would be of great public benefit. "It would improve the climate of public and neighbourly opinion in which the disabled person could meet and be helped to overcome his disability and it would provide a stimulating background for voluntary service in the field."

The Report also recognises that voluntary effort, which expresses itself in various forms and with varying success, is still necessary in spite of the widening of the statutory concern for the disabled. Voluntary effort will best serve as sup-

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plementing existing services and pioneering new ventures."

Describing the Local Authorities Welfare Service for the disabled, the report says that only the fringe of the field has been touched by these responsibilities which are:—

- (a) to cater for the social need of the disabled in employment;
- (b) to meet social and occupational needs of other disabled persons.

In some places the W.V.S. already run clubs of their own for disabled people where contacts are made, and entertainments and games are enjoyed; handicrafts are also taught. In other places the W.V.S. help in clubs which are organised by the local authorities on similar lines. Work is also taken to the homebound who are visited regularly and advised and helped with their work. In some cases this is done in connection with a club for the disabled, and in others it is done as entirely separate work.

In all cases where W.V.S. help with work for the disabled, their aim should be, and is, to make them as self-reliant as possible, and with this purpose they are encouraged to run, ultimately, their own clubs, and to help the disabled in every way to complete rehabilitation into as normal a life as possible.

Early Practice

WITH reference to the letter in the November issue of the Bulletin, under the above heading, do tell the Food Department before it is too late that eggs boiled in sea-water are perfectly horrible! We tried it once as children, but never extended the experiment further.—**Monica Guillebaud (another Emergency Feeding Instructor).**

(We have told the Food Department, and they suggest that it would be interesting if members living by the sea would experiment—not necessarily with eggs—and let us know the results.—**EDITOR.**)

Brabazon Employment Society

MANY people can remember the time when the workhouse was the only home for hundreds of unfortunate people. Time dragged heavily for them as they had practically nothing to do all day but sit with folded hands or else walk round and round the dreary yard. To women who had in their time been busy housewives, often bringing up large families, this inactivity caused depression and apathy and a state of mind which, in time, might lead to a mental breakdown.

Lady Brabazon felt so strongly that something should be done to interest and occupy these women that she started the Brabazon Employment Society, which provided materials for the women in workhouses to use for sewing and knitting. She interested many people in this scheme and branches were formed in many parts of the country. Local people who realised the need for this work gave donations for purchasing materials and work parties were started actually in the various workhouses to which ladies in the neighbourhood would go one afternoon a week to interest and instruct the inmates in their work. This afternoon was the highlight of the week to these poor women. When enough suitable articles had been made a Sale of Work was held and from the proceeds further materials were bought from which to make more goods.

With changed social conditions the need for this work has ceased, but the Brabazon Employment Society still have a small income from investments and wish it to be used for the help of sick and disabled people. They have, therefore, during the last few years given an annual grant to W.V.S. to purchase material for handicrafts and so give occupation to sick people of all ages in their own homes or in hospitals both for the physically and mentally ill, in clubs for the disabled and also for use of both sick and able-bodied prisoners.

In addition grants have already been given for work in clubs for the disabled, in hospitals for the chronic sick and for work with home-bound disabled.

W.V.S. Headquarters are always ready to consider an application for a grant of £5 or £10 from any Centre to start off handwork for the sick or disabled. The only condition is that such money must be controlled by W.V.S.

A Word of Advice

WHEN it's blowing or raining,
And folks are complaining
Of twinges, lumbago or gout;
When the attic is leaking,
And old friends aren't speaking,
Then put on your coat and go out!
Don't sit in your kitchen fed up and alone,
Go out and find friends at a Darby and Joan.

For there you'll find others
With troubles and bothers,
With pains in their back or their knee;
Yours won't seem so bad then,
And you'll feel so glad then
A-sipping your hot cup of tea;
You'll find that you've really no reason to moan
As you chat with the folk at a Darby and Joan.

You'll find lots to smile at
And make life worth while at
The Club that is run just for you,
And you'll be surprised
When you've once realized
How life can treat other folks too!
And after an hour you'll find troubles have flown
And twinges are cured at the Darby and Joan.

Now when it is ended
And homeward you've wended
Your way to your own humble place,
With legs much less weary,
And heart much more cheery,
With a warm shining smile on your face,
Remember when sitting once more on your own.
The good folk who serve you at Darby and Joan.

M. G. MALLETT

From the Centres

ASHFORD. Egerton and Kingsnorth are still supplying magazines for the Forces, and one boy who found the Organiser's name on a magazine he picked up in the NAAFI wrote to her. He lives at Deal and knows Ashford. He asked that the correspondence should be maintained, saying letters mean so much. This is the second time the Centre have heard direct from a service man as a result of their regular despatch of magazines.

BATTERSEA. Two charming visitors from Indonesia came to see the Marigold Darby and Joan Club. That day 250 sponge cakes arrived from the Farmers and Stockbreeders Association as a result of a competition held in the Midlands, and the two visitors looked on while cakes in tins were distributed among the club members.

BLAYDON. The Area Organiser spoke to a meeting about W.V.S. Services Welfare Overseas, with particular reference to her recent visit to Germany. Prior to the meeting, this subject had been given publicity in the local press, and in consequence the Manageress of the Blaydon Labour Exchange has had several enquiries regarding W.V.S. work overseas.

BOLDON. Two Americans on holiday visited an Emergency Feeding demonstration, and in a letter of thanks received afterwards declared it would be their "pleasure to tell our friends in America about the activities of your organisation and the very fine things you do".

BOLTON. Work at the four hospitals is being carried out as usual in the kiosk, on the tea trolley, and the four trolley shops. At Hulton Lane, we found that some of the old ladies had no handbags, and our Clothing Officer was able to provide them with some. The old ladies were delighted with these and very grateful to us also for the trolley shop service. One remarked "I am sure you must be very tired pushing that trolley all the way up from town."

BRISTOL. A small Irish boy whom we escort regularly to and from the Airport for school holidays arrived at Bristol Station with instructions to see him on his plane for Dublin at 4.30. As there was a two hour wait the W.V.S. escort suggested various ways they could pass the time, but Brian said he would rather stay on the station so that he could get some engine numbers! With true W.V.S. fortitude our member spent two hours at the very dirty, noisy station, watching the trains go by! When they eventually went to catch the Aer Lingus bus, they were informed that the flight had been cancelled and there was no plane until 5 p.m. the following day. The Air Line said they would inform Brian's parents and give them the W.V.S. escort's telephone number, and she agreed to take Brian home with her for the night. His father telephoned during the evening to say how grateful he was. The escort took Brian to Bristol station again the next day for more engine spotting. When she finally saw him off he thanked her very much and said he hoped to stay with her again some time as he had collected over sixty new engine numbers!

BOOTLE. W.V.S. have through the past months helped the Local Authority in many ways, and it was pleasing to see 60 uniformed women standing at the Cenotaph here on November 11th.

BROMLEY. By the end of last September we had completed our fourth year of cooking for the Meals-on-Wheels Service, and by a month later we had delivered the 55,000th meal cooked by our teams at our own kitchens. We have cooked 14,476 meals this year! It would be interesting to know how these figures compare with other Centres who do their cooking in their own kitchens.

We were asked recently if we knew of someone who could speak French to go to a household in Bickley where a French girl employed there could not speak a word of English. One of our members, who is French, went along and helped both employed and employee to sort out their problems. She also took the girl to the Catholic Church and has arranged for her to have English lessons.

CAMBERWELL. A diabetic who was

being escorted to see the Medical Officer, and who lives alone and finds it difficult to keep within his special diet, suggested that a club should be started for diabetics. The Centre is wondering whether this reflects a definite need and if W.V.S. in other districts have encountered this difficulty.

CARLISLE. The County Borough Organiser's room in the basement of the Centre has been transformed into a sorting and packing room for the clothing that has flowed in for Hungarian Refugees. The clothing staff and members of the sewing party have worked late every night, including Saturdays. A local firm supplied excellent packing cases, already lined with thick water-proofed paper, and even sent a supply of new nails and boards to complete the job.

CHISLEHURST and SIDCUP. During Civil Defence Week, the Welfare Section took part in an Emergency Feeding Exercise, when they cooked for 95 people. Every member of the Welfare Section who took part in the exercise was also a W.V.S. member, and five people from each of the local old people's clubs were invited to a luncheon at the Civil Defence headquarters. Several letters of appreciation from people present have been received, and the Centre Organiser has been informed by the Civil Defence Officer that he has been congratulated on every hand.

DARTFORD R.D. The Organiser reports a growing interest in One-in-Five following an address she gave to a meeting of representatives from various village organisations at Hartley. Vicars' wives are particularly helpful in getting meetings together.

ELSTREE R.D. When a Sale of Work was held in connection with Darby and Joan Clubs, it was opened by Miss Anna Neagle, C.B.E. The old people themselves helped to serve at the stalls. For several months previously they had worked very hard, making all sorts of things which they had brought along week by week. The amount collected on the day was £110 and the old people were accordingly delighted.

ESHER. Members, old and new, have worked long hours receiving, sorting, and

packing clothes for Hungarian refugees. Local schools, churches and other organisations have brought us their collections. The Ministry of National Insurance, whose premises adjoin ours, have kindly given us the use of their rest-room for storing clothes. The sub-centre was similarly inundated and here the original owners, the new owners, and the estate agent negotiating the sale of a disused garage, came to the rescue and agreed to our using these premises temporarily. Large tables were lent by local firms, and we opened on a day when the *Esher News* carried an article on our project. We were surprised at the number of packages received. The endless loads included those brought by four local schools and the Girl Guides. One touching instant was the arrival of an old rather tattered looking man, who entered somewhat diffidently and laid 3s. on the table with a very shaky hand, saying he had no clothes to offer.

GREAT YARMOUTH. The N.S.P.C.C. asked us to visit a mother who was in very poor circumstances. We did so and found that her chief worry was that her three children had not been christened. To her great delight, three of our members accompanied her to Church and acted as Godmothers.

GRIMSBY. The Y.M.C.A. is taking ten young Hungarian refugees in the near future, and the Centre were able to put them in touch with a Hungarian-speaking resident.

KINGSBURY. A visit to the House of Commons was arranged and so enjoyed by the American ladies at Kingsbury Manor that a further two visits have been organised, one each for the ladies and for the officers.

LAMBETH. One of our members serves on the Kennington and Camberwell South National Assistance Board Committee. It was found that a man was unable to get a job as he could neither read nor write. He was also starving himself in order to feed his adopted child. We arranged for him to go to the Public Library and have the advertisements read to him twice a week, and offered to write any letters for him. He now has a job. We also arranged

school meals in the holidays.

NORTH WESTMORLAND R.D.

Several times during the summer the Centre Organiser was able to advise and help foreign visitors to the district. On one occasion she strengthened the *Entente Cordiale* by finding accommodation at a reasonable price for a rather bewildered Frenchwoman, who had arrived at Penarth Station straight from the Continent.

ORPINGTON.

The members of W.V.S. Grafeld Club were very interested to hear a talk given by Miss Gibson who was visiting London Centres. She showed them her coloured slides taken in Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore, at the same time explaining the work of Services Welfare Overseas.

RICHMOND (SURREY).

Two of our members attended an Open Night at the St. John Ambulance Hut in the Old Deer Park. They enjoyed the evening very much and we have since contacted the District Superintendent with a view to some of our members taking a complete course in Home Nursing.

SOUTHGATE.

The Centre Organiser is gratified with the results of the Publicity Week held to try to enlighten the public about the varied aspects of W.V.S. work in the district. An encouraging number of new members have been enrolled, and eight took their membership training at County Hall in November. The wife of the M.P. for Southgate has taken great interest in the work, and especially in the meals-on-wheels service in which she participates weekly.

STAINES.

An amusing piece of Anglo-American relations was reported. Two American children came into the Centre to enquire where the Medical Officer of Health could be found. They were told, but the Centre Organiser thought it discreet to ask the reason for their query and was told: "Well you see, I'm what you call an American Girl Scout and I want to get another badge and I've got to find out how you treat sick people here". Thinking that the Medical Officer of Health might not welcome the visit so early in the morning, the Centre Organiser offered to give them the in-

formation they needed. Armed with a large sheet of paper, the questioning began. "What would you do if everybody in Staines got smallpox?" "What do you do for old people, orphans, etc., etc?" Finally the little boy said challengingly, "Yes, ma'am, but what would you do with a little American baby that had no mother and father?" The answer was accepted and with many thanks the children departed on their way to the Police Station to interrogate the Police on their methods of coping with crime!

STOKE NEWINGTON.

A Dutch- and German-speaking member of the W.V.S. in Stoke Newington was asked to attend a meeting of the European Women's Federation at Caxton Hall. During the meeting she conversed with the foreign visitors in their own languages and thus helped to create an easy and friendly atmosphere.

WEMBLEY.

One of our members has visited an American couple with three young children. She has let them have the use of her garage, contacted a Nursery School, found a daily help and sitter-in, and in general is making life much happier than it might otherwise have been. Her efforts have been greatly appreciated.

WOOLWICH.

The Abbey Wood Darby and Joan Club held a handicraft Exhibition which was opened by the Mayor and Mayoress of Woolwich. One member, aged 82, exhibited violins which he himself had made. He was very proud of one he had made from a cigar box given to him by Sir Winston Churchill. His violins have been sold all over the world and fetched as much as £50 each.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Rates. 10s. for a minimum of three lines, 2s. 6d. per line thereafter for W.V.S. members. Special rates only for W.V.S. members who are *Bulletin Subscribers*. Commercial Rates on application.

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