

WVS/WRVS Bulletin/Magazine

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W.V.S. Bulletin

[By courtesy of the Central Office of Information

W.V.S. member serving a dinner on her meals-on-wheels round
(see page 4)

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MAY, 1958

NO. 221

W.V.S. Bulletin



FOR STAY-AT-HOMES TOO!

A VERY long time ago—to be precise, in November, 1956—we asked for contributions to a series of Travellers' Tales, because we were sure that W.V.S. working abroad would certainly have good fireside stories to tell the perhaps less adventurous members who had never left these shores. But, in spite of subsequent prodding, the response was very meagre.

We are still as convinced as ever that those tales *could* be told: witness the brief references to Oscar, the dancing crab on Christmas Island, and Whiskers, swivel-eyed fish in Malaya, who make their debut on later pages in this issue! But now we are throwing the net wider and asking all W.V.S. members and ex-members, wherever they are, to let us have their stories. Rumours have reached us—sometimes even second- or third-hand accounts—of extraordinary things W.V.S. members have done in the course of their work—for instance, travelling on skis, running a dog show, sailing down the Clyde and visiting John Brown's shipyards, washing out milk churns for evacuee trains, and so on and so forth.

There is a special reason for our wanting to collect these tales: next year W.V.S. comes of age and it would be pleasant by that time to know just what

amusing, dramatic or fantastic demands had been made on members or in what curious situations they have found themselves.

Even though a well-known writer, Miss Virginia Graham, has promised to read through the stories sent in and select the prize-winner, there is no need for anyone to wait for inspiration or labour for literary style or "fine" writing—indeed an attempt to be anything but natural is likely to ruin the effect of the story. Just imagine you are sitting with a circle of friends round a fireside reminiscing, and then take a letter-pad and write down your thoughts, or, if you need the incentive of an audience, why not make a party of it, and each in turn tell your tale, with one of your friends acting as scribe and setting down the stories as they are told?

What an opportunity this could be to get together a lively record of the W.V.S., which, after all, is essentially the sum total of individual service given when and where it is required—and these stories will no doubt show how wide and often strange are the needs for friendly, personal help.

The Editor

All A' Wheel

CAR SERVICE

HOSPITAL Car Service drivers from the Chedale and Wilmslow Division of Cheshire do many other jobs in an entirely voluntary capacity. In summer they take the occupants of a local old people's home for drives, followed by tea. They also take members of the local W.V.S. Blind Club on outings, for parties and on shopping expeditions. On some occasions when they have taken the Blind Club to the pantomime matinee, the drivers have asked their husbands, who worked mostly in Manchester and had in any case to pass the theatre on their way home, to leave their offices early and pick up the blind people. Apparently the husbands rather enjoyed this and it saved the wives having to turn out in the rush-hour traffic. The husbands have expressed disappointment now that a coach is hired for these outings, though, of course, they realise that it is a better arrangement from the general point of view.

THE Warwickshire Hospital Car Service has now completed ten years' service. A joint venture all over the country by S.J.A.B., B.R.C.S. and W.V.S., the Warwickshire service is administered by W.V.S. under the County Transport Officer.

The service in this county began in 1948 with a band of six drivers, and it has expanded continuously until now, when 45 drivers are regularly helping to carry patients to hospital for treatment. As part of the County Ambulance Service, H.C.S. receives all requests for transport from that source, and its aim is, by using voluntary drivers with their own cars, to relieve pressure on the ambulance vehicles when their load is heavy.

Patients carried are all unfit to use public transport, and all are going to hospital for treatment or admission. Many of them are old people and, especially in the villages, friendships have sprung up between lonely persons and drivers who continue to visit and take a kindly interest in their one-time passengers. Then there are spastic children and those crippled by

polio, and these are special favourites, for the drivers have the satisfaction of seeing their continued progress under treatment.

From time to time we lose drivers by retirement or removal from the county, so we are always looking for new members. In the ten years we have travelled a total of 837,359 miles.

E. M.

WILLESDEN MEALS-ON-WHEELS

THE meals-on-wheels service started in Willesden six years ago this month. W.V.S. cook the meals in the kitchen at their centre, which was equipped by the local authority. Each of the seventy recipients is served with a meal twice weekly and pays 1s. 3d. per meal (it used to be 1s.). The van leaves the Centre each day at 11 a.m. with food to suit each individual taste. The cover picture gives an idea of the kind of meal served. The members say they all enjoy doing this work, as it is so gratifying to see the look on the faces of the recipients when they arrive. Not only are they thankful for the meal; it gives them a chance to have a little gossip and (believe it or not) they have a form of "grape vine" of their own. One of them is making a table cloth for a friend a few streets away, and we always tell the friend how much more of the table cloth has been worked between the visits.

SURPRISE TRIPS

RECENTLY one of the Committee on duty at the W.V.S. Residential Club at St. Leonards-on-Sea answered the bell to a man in chauffeur's uniform. He told her that he ran a car hire service, and when his business took him to a place where there was a W.V.S. old people's residential club, while he was waiting for his return journey, he always called and offered to take four of the residents for a drive. It appears that his mother was a resident at Southwood and this was his personal way of saying thank you for kindness shown to her. Four of the Grosvenor House (St. Leonards-on-Sea) residents had a most enjoyable drive to Winchelsea on this occasion.

❖ Nature and Other Notes ❖

Extracts from reports sent in by W.V.S. members serving overseas

The "Beastie" Club

THE Natural History Club (usually known as the "Beastie" Club), of which I am an honorary member, acquired a pangolin—a most extraordinary creature rather like an ant-eater—but after a few days it was allowed to escape, as the club members did not feel able to provide the correct diet for it.

Various snakes have laid eggs, and it is hoped that they will hatch out. An elephant's trunk snake has its own pool, and Sammy the Python and Cordelia the Cobra also dwell in solitary state.

Whiskers, the little fish with swivel eyes, eats the most exotic blooms from my hand, but Louis the Gibbon can't abide women, so I don't bother with him. Two moosangs are friendly, but the tree squirrel is very timid.

One day the club members found a very small piglet which had to be bottle-fed. On one occasion when I went to clean the bottle, I discovered an eight-foot long python reposing in the sink. Piglet's bottle remained dirty.

An Excursion

We left early one Sunday morning for a round-the-island trip. A coach took us to the ferry, and another coach awaited us in Penang and took us to the Snake Temple. The airmen in the party seemed somewhat disappointed—they apparently see bigger and better snakes every day! Our next call was to the fresh-water pool, where we had lunch and a swim. Then followed a drive to the Temple of Pagodas in Ayer Itam; this was most interesting and our colour photographers went into action. We climbed innumerable steps—well worth while—to get to the top. Later we had a very pleasant drive to the Botanical Gardens, where we stayed for an hour or so. The party were enthusiastic in their thanks for a very enjoyable day when we returned to camp.

D. M. Fleming

Butterworth R.A.F. Station, Malaya

More Beasties

A great neurosis about our fauna seems to have swept over England, and even Tothill Street has succumbed! I must admit that the crabs are unprepossessing and the rats not house-trained, but with a little ingenuity and a tin of poison one can avoid having to hob-nob with them.

When troops first landed on the Island they had literally to sweep the crabs aside. The creatures were run over and crushed by the thousand, but now that Main Camp has been established, they have retired to the scrubby vegetation under the palm trees, though there are still some about. Sensible chaps put a bit of boarding round their tents and under their beds, as this particular species of crab is non-climbing. The inevitable clown keeps one on a string as a pet, and one crab, called Oscar, will dance if you jiggle the string hard enough. Humourists find them irresistible for popping into the beds of the unsuspecting, and one crab, with R.S.M.'s *Runner* painted on its back, appeared on the R.S.M.'s desk last week. At least one lives at the back of our office; we sometimes see it jinking round corners looking petrified with fright—as well it might, considering the amount of DDT we spray around. In short, land crabs here take the place of slugs and snails and grass-snakes at home, all of which terrify me, and all of which are either the pets or victims of small boys at some time or another. According to temperament, they croon over them, stick pins into them, or put them into their sisters' beds.

The rats are not really rats at all. They are large sand-mice called "taboa" (not "jerboa," as appeared in one paper). They are vegetarian and non-disease-carrying. They are incredibly bold, greedy and noisy, and not at all fussy about where they leave their droppings. We have waged chemical warfare against them, and at one stage felt we would have to move

and let *them* have the bungalow. They live inside the hollow wall and thunder about with their boots on at night, squealing like pigs. But they keep themselves to themselves now, and don't sit with us in the evenings or climb on to our beds. Freda regards them with the same disgust as I reserve for land-crabs, so we both have every incentive to take steps against them, and we also wage united war on ants.

So you see there's nothing very ghastly to worry anybody here—no scorpions, no snakes, no malarial mosquitoes.

Elizabeth Hutcheson
Christmas Island

Improvements

An improvement to our lounge has been

made with the addition of an assortment of fish for the fish tank. A cover is being made for the top of the tank and a base on which to raise it to eye level. With the addition of strip lighting, this should greatly improve the lounge decor.

A number of posters drawn in humorous vein by one of the servicemen have also been very much appreciated.

A light refreshment bar is to be installed by NAAFI at the rear of the W.V.S. lounge, which is at present housing the Education classes. This will serve to increase the attendance in both centres and will act as a dual purpose, in fact, advantageous to all three parties.

E. Brown
Johore Bahru

Handicrafts

Anglo-Egyptian repatriates in Summerfield Hostel, Kidderminster, with rugs that they have made to their own designs, in a W.V.S. rug-making class. The workmanship is very good. Miss Watts-Moses, the W.V.S. member in the photograph, is the welfare worker in the hostel, and one of her duties is to help with the handicraft work. The hostel is run by the Anglo-Egyptian Board.

[By courtesy of the Midland Despatch and Mercury]
The Chairman with the Mayoress of Birmingham and the Mayoresses of West Midland towns at a One-in-Five meeting held in Birmingham on March 5th.

The Chairman in America

LADY READING flew to the U.S.A. on May 1st to speak at the Annual Conference of the Association of Junior Leagues of America, which is being held this month. The Conference, attended by 500 delegates from 190 branches of the Association, is honouring six leaders in the field of community service and has invited them to speak at the conference and attend a reception and dinner at which the Ambassadors of Argentina, Canada and Great Britain will be among the distinguished guests.

The five other women who are being honoured are Eleanor Roosevelt, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the American Association of the U.S.; Margaret A. Hickey, Editor of the *Ladies' Home Journal* Public Affairs Department; Mary Pillsbury Lord, U.S. representative to the United Nations; Oveta Culp Hobby, former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, U.S.A.; and Marta Maldonado De Garcia, co-founder of Por La Patrie, Argentina's civic welfare organisation.

(Continued on page 19)

Continental Wives Club: 10th Anniversary

TOWARDS the end of 1947 the Army Welfare Officer at Grimsby suggested to W.V.S. that something should be done to help the foreign wives who were coming to England with their service or ex-service husbands. He had found that the wives felt very lost in the rationing queues and general post-war difficulties that even English housewives found trying.

W.V.S. suggested a Club, with monthly meetings, where the girls could meet English women and ask them numerous questions, and also talk in their own languages with one another for a few hours. It took about three months to collect names and interview some of the girls who would help to make a success of such a Club. In February 1948 the first meeting was held. About fifty girls turned up and Babel was in being again. Nationals seemed to find each other by instinct, and there were groups speaking Polish, French, German, Italian, Danish, Dutch, Greek and Czech. There was never more than one Spaniard. Mercifully the room was large. The Army Welfare Officer was at that time head of the local gas undertaking, and he allowed us the use of the demonstration room free of charge.

Gradually the W.V.S. monthly rota sorted out the different nationalities, and with tact and cheerfulness managed to make them mix instead of clinging to their own compatriots. Anyone, W.V.S. or otherwise, who could speak a foreign language was roped in to help those who knew very little English, and after about a year we began to cast round for entertainment in our meetings. As the girls' knowledge of English varied greatly, we had to think of things that would create visual interest. We had exhibitions of stamps, demonstrations of Easter recipes, coffee making, knitting, hair-dressing and rug-making, as well as fashion parades and square dancing.

Each July one of the W.V.S. held the meeting in her garden, and that was one of the highlights of the Club's year. Everyone dressed herself and her children in their very best, and the garden was gay with a gathering of as pretty women as could ever be found anywhere at one time. As the years went by the members became more and more a part of the English scene, and they asked that, instead of being called Foreign Wives, they might be known as Continental Wives. Their families grew up and the children, too, came to the meetings.

By 1953 attendance began to drop off, and as the Gas Board was being nationalised we could no longer have the room free. W.V.S. suggested that the Club should close down. Finances had always been one of our major difficulties. Most of the money had been provided by about twenty members, and this group of twenty had become firm friends. It was decided that W.V.S. should keep a small Club in existence and that the remaining members should meet in each others' homes. By that time many of the Italians had taken their husbands back to their own warmer clime, and the Dutch and Scandinavians (with the exception of one Icelandic girl) had all drifted away. The meetings now became purely social, and a high standard of housewifery among the women became apparent.

So, through various phases, we came to our tenth anniversary. This was celebrated at a local hotel. The Swiss chef entered into the occasion by making a special gâteau, and, coming down to receive congratulations, talked French nineteen to the dozen. The countries represented at this dinner were France, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany (East and West), Greece, Iceland, Austria and Algeria. The women from Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Nether-

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★ The Modern Cinderella ★

WHO are the Cinderellas of the Welfare State? For my money (speaking as a mother of three myself), the young housewives with babies. They cannot engage in any regular activity outside the home; they cannot treat themselves to a shopping jaunt in town, an afternoon cinema or a perm at a good hairdresser's. They are always short of money and short on interesting conversation (it is dreary talking to a two-year-old all day long, with the odd break for a word with the milkman).

Near our Centre premises there is a village, not long since quite rural, which now has several factories, hundreds of new houses, a few shops, a pub and a church. The nearest sizeable town is an eightpenny bus-ride away. The young mothers push their prams to the shops and back, escort their children to the school in the morning and home again in the afternoon, visit us to collect their Welfare foods—and almost die of boredom. That is why we have started a Molesey Mother and Baby Club.

We rent two rooms at the Youth Centre one afternoon a week, for ten shillings. There is a big playroom for the children, with a tea bar where we prepare and serve tea, and a smaller clubroom for the mothers, set out with chairs at small tables. Between the rooms is a hall where prams are parked. Here one of our members sits to take the weekly subscription (6d., including tea and biscuit). Both rooms are comfortably heated.

To get the club going, we first fixed up a few speakers, beginning with a British Red Cross Society children's nurse, and going on with an American wife and a nursery school teacher. We then arranged with our local press for some advance publicity. We made four posters and displayed them at the two welfare clinics, at the Youth Centre and at the W.V.S. Centre. We persuaded the Council to duplicate 200 copies of a leaflet, and distributed it to mothers through the clinics, the Infants' School and our own Welfare Foods distribution counter.

Between 30 and 40 mothers have joined

the club, and we have received many congratulations on our initiative in providing them with a social diversion and a brief break with their children each week. Our members love the work of minding the children; an improvised play-pen, with blankets lent by the Housing Officer, is established in a corner for the tiny ones, and the others have plenty of room to run about and plenty of excellent toys to play with, including a rocking-horse. The mothers bring new magazines and knitting patterns which they exchange with each other, and they have also established a little clothing exchange among themselves.

Although there was some falling-off in attendances during the school holidays, enthusiasm still abounds and future prospects look good. Running a weekly club entails plenty of work and worry, but the rewards are great. All our own members take great interest and pride in it, even though they are not actively concerned. The One-in-Five specialist sees the mothers as a sitting target; the Civil Defence member envisages a large new batch of recruits for the Welfare Section when the children get older and Mother has some free time; the American who came to talk to us is co-operating in arranging reciprocal social events with American wives in the autumn; we sell the mothers National Savings stamps and certificates, and they collect salvage to swell their own funds; and, of course, they are already listed as potential Housewives. And future W.V.S. members, too, one hopes!

G. Wilson

Ashington's first Old People's Choral and Handicraft Exhibition—a three-day event—proved to be one of the most outstanding and successful ventures ever staged in the town. A special service was held in the Central Hall, Ashington, on the Sunday. A member of Ashington's No. 1 Darby and Joan Club was awarded a trophy for gaining most points in the Handicrafts Section. Another member, aged 90, was awarded a special trophy as the oldest competitor.

Two-Way Holiday

The following article, reprinted by kind permission of The Glasgow Herald, shows how pleasant a holiday at home can be if at the same time it is providing a holiday away from home for someone else.

LAST year we made no holiday plans. There were just vague murmurs from me about "a rest" probably being necessary some time.

As we have lived for the past two years on a very beautiful estuary in southern Scotland, no hardship was involved; but the fact remains that our grandfathers who prescribed "a change" as the cure for every minor upset were, as our young folk say, "on the beam." I therefore set about arranging a change, not a change of scene, but a change of company and ideas, which eventually taught us quite a lot about other places and other folk, too.

Our first visitor came, through the good efforts of the W.V.S. in our local town, from a children's home in Glasgow. She was 16 years old and one of the nicest visitors I have ever had, and the most helpful.

She spent with us her fortnight's holiday from her job in a city baker's shop, during which she taught our four-year-old son to play ludo and snap, introduced my husband and me to a number of rock-'n'-roll tunes, made friends with half the village, stimulated me into visiting most of the local tourist attractions such as museums and various buildings connected with Robert Burns, and for her part learned to type on my machine.

I think she also learned a lot about home, as distinct from institutional, housework, catering and child-care, which I hope will come in useful when she has the home of her own she has not yet experienced.

We had several expeditions to the sea-side, and to our local town for shopping and sightseeing, which would have been impossible without the extra pair of hands to cope with the four-year-old while I coped with the baby.

Our visitor had never before been so far as our 77 miles from Glasgow, and revelled in the short car trips about the countryside. For our part, we are looking forward to seeing her again before very long.

Open Day: March 18th Heywood Centre

WHEN you come to the end of an Open Day

And the guests have all departed,
You look around—more work to do—
And wish you'd never started!
The Mayor has been, the Town Clerk too,
And the County Organiser,
With several other well-known guests
And Press from 'Advertiser.

VARIOUS recruits may come from them
To help to swell our ranks.
They spoke of all the work we do
And never expect thanks.
We sort and stock, unpack and stack
All clothes in different sizes.
However hard we work, alas!
There's never any prizes.

SO cheer up, girls, and start again,
When you think you've had your
innings;
Just give another extra spurt
And start at the beginning.
And when you're getting rather tired
Of dresses, suits and bedding,
Think what a debt of gratitude
We owe to Lady Reading.

W.V.S. will have the honour, with other organisations, of lining part of the route when H.R.H. Princess Alexandra visits Durham on the 17th of this month.

A Link with Florence Nightingale

THE story of Florence Nightingale is too well known to need re-telling here, but in this month which marks the 138th anniversary of her birth in Florence (on May 12th) it is perhaps appropriate to call to mind a continuing personal link with this great woman. In the north-west of London, at 19 Lisson Grove, is the direct descendant of the nursing establishment in which Florence Nightingale first proved her outstanding ability as an administrator.

The original establishment was opened in Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, in 1850, but three years later it was moved to Upper Harley Street and Florence Nightingale was appointed Lady Superintendent. Under her able guidance economies were effected, the scope of the institution was widened to make it available for a larger circle of patients. Miss Nightingale drew up an advertisement asking for subscriptions to "The Institute for Gentlewomen during Illness," and then began to receive the widows and daughters of clergy, service and professional men. The institution was never intended to be a charitable one, and soon it became solvent.

It was from the Harley Street address that Florence Nightingale recruited many of the nurses who went with her to Scutari. However, in 1897 another move was made and the name changed to the Hospital for Invalid Gentlewomen. It became bigger and better known, but

with this development financial responsibilities increased, and when Florence Nightingale returned from the Crimea she found the hospital in difficulties. The letter which she then wrote to *The Times* is still quoted in part in the annual reports of the hospital: "I ask and pray my friends who still remember me, not to let this sacred work languish and die for want of a little more money." The hospital was able to continue its work, and when, later, the freedom of London was conferred on Florence Nightingale, she asked that an oak, instead of a golden casket, be used so that she might give part of the money thus saved to the hospital.

In 1909 the present hospital was erected in Lisson Grove, and shortly after the opening by H.R.H. The Princess of Wales (the late Queen Mary) Florence Nightingale died. Members of her family consented to the re-naming of the hospital — The Florence Nightingale Hospital for Women. There was, however, a period

during which it was not used for its original purpose. During the Second World War, it was taken over by the Local Authority and converted into a First Aid Post. Later, it was requisitioned and used to house homeless people in the Borough. It was not until 1946 that the premises were de-requisitioned, and, despite many setbacks and difficulties, patients were once more received on August 12th, 1947.

The hospital is justly proud of its traditions and links

with the past. It has inherited and acquired many historical treasures, among them the gold and white Coalport cup and saucer bought by Florence Nightingale in Constantinople as a gift for one of the doctors.

The Florence Nightingale Hospital for Gentlewomen, which in 1948 was exempted from the National Health Service, remains a voluntary small modern hospital of 38 beds. There are two eight-bed wards and the remainder of the beds are in double or single rooms. The charge to patients in single rooms is eight to eleven guineas a week, and in cubicles four guineas. It continues to serve that part of the community for which it was

traditionally endowed, and its calm and friendly atmosphere seems to hold a kindness and peace which is apparent as soon as the threshold is crossed. P. R.

American Wives

THE wives at the American Embassy take a great deal of interest in W.V.S., and recently at the request of Mrs. Frances Adams, who acts as liaison between them and the London Region, arrangements were made for a party of ten to see W.V.S. work in the Region. Three tours were organised, each one being accompanied by a W.V.S. member who was able to give the background to the various jobs that were being done.

❖ ❖ Three Centenarians ❖ ❖

WITHIN three months Fulham W.V.S. have joined in celebrating the birthdays of three centenarians. Mrs. Emma Weeks, whose photograph (taken on her 104th birthday) is reproduced below, will be 106 on May 28th. She is now in Fulham Hospital, and is still a member of W.V.S. Two Darby and Joan members, Miss Hogan and Mrs. Stringer, reached their centuries in March and April respec-

tively. The Mayor and Mayoress of Fulham visited Miss Hogan, and another Darby and Joan member knitted a bed-jacket, which was given to her on behalf of the Fulham W.V.S. Autumn Green Club for the Housebound. Mrs. Stringer was well enough to attend a party given in her honour at the Hazel Green Darby and Joan Club. Good wishes and good health to them all!

Mrs. Emma Weeks, photographed on her 104th birthday. With her are the Mayor and Mayoress of Fulham and the Matron and Sister of Fulham Hospital. Good wishes to her on her 106th birthday on the 28th of this month.

[By courtesy of the executors of the late Mr. William Clamptit, Fulham.]

From the Centres

ACTON. We were very pleased to be able to help a young Hungarian couple who had just had a new baby. The father was most grateful for a very nice carry-cot which was given by the Heston and Isleworth Centre.

ASHBOURNE. In response to a request from a relative living in the South of England, we called on an old lady now living in an almshouse. We have arranged to visit and take her magazines regularly.

ASHINGTON. When the first Old People's Choral and Handicrafts Exhibition ever to be held took place recently, it proved to be the most outstanding and successful venture ever staged in the town. One Darby and Joan Club member won the Silver Trophy for the most points in the Handicraft Section and another was awarded a special trophy for being the oldest member (90 years).

BACUP. Homes, jobs, furniture and household necessities have been found over a period of time for 37 Hungarian refugees in this town. The Rotary Club have helped us enormously by arranging transport for various goods.

BATTERSEA. We were glad to help an Anglo-French family from Tunisia with clothing. The father of the five delightful and well-mannered children had been born in Malta, and was consequently a British subject, but none of them spoke English. The Town Clerk was most co-operative and arranged transport for furniture from Chelsea to Battersea. On leaving the Centre, the father remarked, "The God he is good in England."

BIRMINGHAM. A few months ago the Matron of the Loveday Street Maternity Hospital asked us if we could find someone to play the organ for the services in the Hospital Chapel each Sunday morning. We were fortunate in finding a lady to do this temporarily, and who has now joined W.V.S. and goes to the hospital to give this service every Sunday.

For Emergencies

*Two urns
specially made
for use in
emergency work
and presented
by their makers
—a local firm
of kitchen
ware—to Dudley
W.V.S.*

[By courtesy of
Midland United
Newspapers Ltd.
The Herald Press,
Dudley

BLACKBURN. During the recent bad weather we came to the rescue of a very distressed family. Snow had caused the roof of their house to collapse, and all the bedding was quite useless. We managed to fit the family with dry clothing and also provide the necessary bedding.

BROADSTAIRS and ST. PETER'S. One of the members of our Marigold Hard of Hearing Club, who is also on the Committee for the Deaf and Dumb Association in Canterbury, suggested that an expedition should be arranged to Canterbury for the re-opening of St. Margaret's Church, which is to be used entirely by the deaf and dumb. Accordingly, 23 members went by coach to Canterbury, where they enjoyed the service and the address given by the Archbishop of Canterbury. A tour of Canterbury followed by tea completed a very successful afternoon.

BURY. We have been able to obtain furnishing grants for two Hungarian families. A Hungarian lady, now a W.V.S. member, has been invaluable in acting as interpreter and supervising purchases.

CHELTENHAM. We never lack helpers to deal with the increasing number of customers at the Anglo-American Club. American servicemen come in as soon as the doors are open, and British servicemen follow later in the day.

CHESHAM. Three of the Hungarian boys living in Chesham gave very well-chosen gifts to their hostess in appreciation of her many kindnesses to them. In her home they are treated as a mother would her own sons.

COULSDON and PURLEY. We have been very busy preparing two flats at Sanderstead provided by the British Council for Aid to Refugees. We were particularly fortunate in being given much useful bedding, cooking utensils and furniture from various sources. With the Saturday aid of three husbands we have papered, painted and distempered the walls, laid lino on the floors and varnished surrounds. Boy Scouts cleaned windows and tidied the gardens. When the families eventually arrived, they wept with joy and hugged us. We arranged for a priest to

call on them and for the children to go to school.

EASTBOURNE. Gifts from kind friends have recently included a lovely dolls' house, complete with lighting, and a family of dolls. In answer to a blackboard appeal in our window, no fewer than four magnifying glasses were brought to us for a pensioner for whom we had been asked to find one.

FULHAM. The Mayoral Green Darby and Joan Club was the only one from Fulham to compete against other boroughs at the Bethnal Green Festival of Art. The choir members were taken by coach and were accompanied by the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress. They were thrilled to return with a Certificate of Merit.

GLOSSOP. W.V.S. were asked by the local Territorial unit to help them on a week-end exercise by feeding the participants. Five of our members gave their services and reported on a Saturday afternoon prepared to cook for forty men. This arrangement was so successful that W.V.S. have been asked to repeat the effort and in future we are to be entrusted with the buying of food and organising the equipment as well.

HARPENDEN. We are very happy to have persuaded a man who is paralysed from the waist down to join our Darby and Joan Club. He brings his basketwork to do, and has been able to sell a number of baskets. He enjoys his visits to the Club, where he can meet people again.

HENDON. A Hungarian family who have settled in Edgware have been greatly helped by one of our members who lives exactly opposite them. Other members have also helped to alter and wash curtains, as the wife had broken her arm. Much appreciation has been expressed by the family.

HOLBORN. We now provide helpers for two shifts at the Territorial Training Canteen near Tottenham Court Road. This branch of Territorials used to be stationed in Kensington, where Kensington W.V.S. looked after them. We are glad to be able to carry on their tradition.

HOYLAKES. At 8 a.m. on a Saturday in March we were called out by the Surveyor of the Urban District Council to fortify with hot drinks 40 Council employees who had been working long hours through the night to try and breach the gap caused in the sea-wall by heavy storms. The men had been working from mid-day on the preceding day until 1 a.m. Saturday, resting while the tide was in flood, and then working again all Saturday until 8 p.m. The team called out met at the Centre and prepared tea and sandwiches, which they took to the men by 10 a.m. The hot drinks were much appreciated, especially by men wet to the waist. A letter of thanks has been received from the Surveyor on behalf of the Council Parks and Foreshore Committee.

KESWICK. By kind permission of a local firm, we were permitted to arrange a display of scrap books in one of their big windows. These scrap books came from Crosthwaite school and elsewhere, and together with W.V.S. posters describing various aspects of W.V.S. work, proved a great attraction and caused much favourable comment.

LEICESTER. We were asked to collect the flowers after a Memorial Service and distribute them to the sick and poor. This we did, and took armfuls of beautiful flowers to Hillcrest Hospital for old people. The Matron and her patients were delighted and cheered by this thoughtful gesture.

MANCHESTER. We were very touched by the visit of an old lady of 81 years who called to tell us that she and the 87-year-old lady who lives with her would like to help us by knitting blanket squares. During the Christmas period this same lady called to give us a donation of 10s., despite the fact that her means were obviously very slender, to help someone more unfortunate and infirm than herself.

MIDDLETON. We were very grateful to the Middleton Ladies' Circle, who presented us with a container for our meals-on-wheels service. This gift came as a complete surprise to most of us, as the group has not long been in existence. Our

meals-on-wheels service is the first to benefit from their efforts.

NORTON. During the unusually severe spring weather the meals-on-wheels van was unable to get through from Bridlington. No taxi was available so other means of transport had to be found. A car was loaned but as it was very small and had no boot, a plumber's handcart was eventually and successfully used for the house-to-house delivery.

RICKMANSWORTH. We were glad to help Chorley Wood College for the Blind by providing members to serve afternoon teas during a period of temporary staff shortage.

ROMFORD. We were grateful for the gift of a large quantity of children's clothes and some table linen from a young German woman whom we had helped two years ago by looking after her children while her husband was in hospital. He subsequently died and she came to tell us she was marrying again and the gifts were in appreciation of what we had been able to do for her when things were difficult.

SOUTH SHIELDS. We were very glad to make a beginning with our Trolley Shops at Whiteleas Hostel and at The Charles Smith Hostel for old People at the request of Mr. Hanson, the Director of Welfare Services. We also helped to serve tea at the Club for disabled men and women recently formed by the Director of Welfare Services.

STOCKPORT. A member in uniform was preparing to alight from a tram in Stockport when a passenger thrust 25s. into her hand and said, "Save me a journey, luv, and pop this into Messrs. Blank's office and say Mrs. S. has sent the rent!" Another tribute to W.V.S. reliability.

TAVISTOCK R.D. NORTH. A chance meeting and a chat in a train has resulted in a new W.V.S. branch starting in the little village of Sydenham Damerall. Two ladies, attracted by our uniforms during a train journey, at once spoke of their interest in W.V.S. Subsequently, a meeting of those interested was organised, with the result that 19 members were enrolled.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS. A priest from the Roman Catholic Centre in London

comes periodically to meet the German-speaking girls who are members of our International Club. A Lutheran Pastor also visits them, and a quiet room is always put at their disposal so that they may have a private conversation if they so desire. The Leader of the Club, who speaks seven languages, is in touch with churches and societies where girls of other nationalities can obtain help and advice if necessary.

TWICKENHAM. One-in-Five Talks have been given to an American community of nuns in Isleworth. They were a very rewarding audience and asked some very pertinent questions.

WEST BROMWICH. When a member of the meals-on-wheels team took his meal to an old man of 75 years who lived alone, he presented her with a beautiful bunch of flowers with his gratitude and affection, and as a gesture for the recently celebrated Mothering Sunday.

WEST HAM. A local doctor asked us if we could arrange to take an elderly lady, unable to travel by bus owing to arthritis of the feet, to visit her sick husband in hospital. Special visiting times were made as it was thought unlikely that the patient would recover. The Centre Organiser accordingly took the lady regularly to hospital by car until the husband died. We continue to visit her at her home, which she greatly appreciates.

WESTON - SUPER - MARE. We work twice a week in the children's wards at the local hospital, where we read to the children and help to settle them after their parents' visits. This is a very popular job with members.

WIMBLEDON. We are very glad to have an American lady whose husband is at the American Embassy to help us while she is in England. She shops for the old folks at an old people's home and also spends one afternoon a week working with us at the Centre.

YIEWSLEY and WEST DRAYTON. The daughter of one of our members kindly cut and sewed 28 pairs of shorts out of 10 yards of flannel, with not an inch of waste.

News from Scotland



[By courtesy of the *Scottish Daily Express*
Emergency at Inverlochy. When a petrol tanker overturned and gallons of petrol poured into the gardens of nearby houses, electricity was cut off and there was no means of heating. W.V.S. supplied food and drink.

*The W.V.S. Warden
of the King George
VI Memorial Club at
Dundee enrolling five
members.*

[By courtesy of
John Leng & Co., Ltd.,
photographers

ABERDEEN. As a result of the appeal for calendars to be made out of Christmas cards, the Centre received a lovely parcel from a member in Buckinghamshire!

Also from Aberdeen comes this story of the Golden Wedding. One of our old people—a recipient of meals-on-wheels—looked hugely delighted with herself one day when W.V.S. delivered her meal. Seeing the twinkle in the old lady's eye, our member asked why she was looking so pleased. The old body, aged 90, said that she had been invited to her son's Golden Wedding, the son being 70. The member saw she was greatly looking forward to the event. Being a Golden Wedding, it was suggested that she might give a small present, but the old lady said, "Na, na, it's time he was done with such nonsense."

However, on the next visit, the old lady was rocking herself in her chair and looking very happy. Our member asked, "What are you up to now?" After some coaxing and a little teasing the old lady said, "Weel, I'm gaun to the weddin', and I've got a present for my son and it's golden." Forthwith, she went to her cupboard, and to the great amusement of our member, produced a tin of golden syrup!

BANFF. A member was visiting in the village and called at a house where she was offered a sweetie by the little girl. She unwrapped it and threw the paper in the fire. The little girl stared at her and then solemnly "ticked her off." "Don't you know we have to collect all that for Miss Geddjie?" Needless to say, the collection of metallic salvage is a regular activity in this village!

BUCKIE. These members have long helped with the local blind. They now have a regular rota of members to serve tea at the weekly classes of students being taught handicrafts.

EDINBURGH. Our One-in-Five Specialist was following up a contact with a view to giving the talks to a group. She had the new leaflet in her hand and, on seeing it, the contact understood that the "Dark Figure" was the speaker and the four other figures the people she wished to speak to. No more—no less!

A new Local Authority van has been supplied for use on meals-on-wheels service. The Organiser was asked what colour of paint she would like, and suggested grey. The van arrived at the office resplendent in "grey and beet" to match our crest.

Our W.V.S. Concert Party gave an entertainment in the Prison, which was greatly appreciated.

GLASGOW. The Centre have received a cheque for £550 from the Trades House Commonwealth Fund to buy a van for meals-on-wheels. This is the second van donated by the Trades House.

HAMILTON. The Darby and Joan Club entertained W.V.S. to a wonderful tea and concert. The "highlight" was a coloured film of the old people being entertained by the Local Authority at a recent Civil Defence exercise.

OBAN. W.V.S. has taken an old man, aged 104, to be X-rayed. He lives in Bonawe at the top of a three-storeyed building and is quite able to walk downstairs.

SOUTH-EAST DISTRICT. The wife of an American Serviceman has offered help for a Children's Home. This offer has come from a small Servicemen's Wives Club. We are pleased with this co-operation, and arrangements are being made to "unite" the Club and the Home.

STIRLING. There has been a W.R.A.C. recruiting week in this Burgh and new recruits were taken to see a W.V.S. emergency feeding demonstration. We were very pleased to be able to show the girls our Emergency Feeding Exercise and hope that it will be of use to them in their Service life.

The fifteenth house under the W.V.S. Housing Scheme was recently opened in Salford. It is for Jewish residents and has a Jewish warden. It will be run by a committee of Jewish W.V.S. members, and was formally opened by the Communal Rabbi, Dr. Altmann. The Mayor and Mayoress of Salford, and the Mayor and Mayoress of Prestwich were present at the opening.

"I Can Sleep Tonight"

SHE was twenty-three, but looked forty, pale and miserable. Her husband had beaten her up, not for the first time, but this time he had succeeded in breaking all her ribs and smashing her face. She had been obliged to leave home in a hurry, minus clothes, minus the two little girls, and minus hope. Her injuries were partially healed, and she was advised to come to the W.V.S. Help was given with clothing, and there was an immediate improvement in morale, new clothes make a new woman, and she was ready to fight for her children.

Could the W.V.S. help again? With advice this time. Of course they could. She can't claim the children when she goes to Court next day unless she can prove that she has somewhere for them. She has a room, but no beds. Luckily, W.V.S. have a cot and mattress; as for a bed, Welfare Services have one in stock. Bedding, well there are various bits and pieces and—there is an answer to everything, an eiderdown comes in that very day. The whole week's work becomes worthwhile as we hear "Now I have nothing to worry about, and I can sleep tonight."

Three days later a happy Mother appears again to show us the children. She has been awarded custody but—they look very shabby compared with Mother. We have two lovely coats that have just been brought in by the sewing party (they fit) some underwear and a dress each, and we feel that it is a job well done. E. C.

WORK FOR THE DISABLED

THE Merseyside County Council's Centre for handicapped disabled people is manned regularly every morning by a rota of W.V.S. helpers drawn from four W.V.S. Centres. At this Centre about 20 disabled folk do outwork for a local factory; by this means they are able to augment their pensions and also enjoy the feeling of working with other people and doing a real job. Their first work was assembling parts of cheap ball-point pens; later this was changed to the more remunerative, less intricate, job of assembling Christmas cards.

The Chairman in America

(Continued from page 7)

The major aim of the Conference is "to encourage Junior League members to plan for the future rôle of trained volunteers in service endeavours, not only in their own communities, but throughout the world." Delegates will attend workshops relating to the major areas of Junior League Service—health, welfare and recreation, education, community arts and public affairs.

[We hope to be able to include Lady Reading's speech to the Conference in next month's issue of the *Bulletin*.]

Continental Wives

(Continued from page 8)

lands, Denmark and Italy had all moved away; but those who have stayed have taken Grimsby to their hearts, and, despite the lovely scenery most of them were used to in their native lands, they now speak warmly of this rather dull town as "Home."

K. G. Waldram

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