

Royaumont News-Letter



New Series.

JANUARY, 1937.

No. 2.

Objects of the Association : To maintain and strengthen our war-time comradeship.

Subscription : Half-a-crown per annum **due December 1st** for the following year.

President : Mrs. IVENS-KNOWLES, C.B.E., M.S. (Lond.).

Vice-Presidents : Miss RUTH NICHOLSON, M.S., Miss ELIZABETH COURTAULD, M.D.

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Hon. Editor : Miss C. F. N. MACKAY, 31, Markham Square, Chelsea, London, S.W. 3.

Subscribing Members can have letters addressed to them c/o the Hon. Treasurer at her house, where they can also consult the Association Address Book.

Editorial.

You will all, it is to be hoped, get this number of the ROYAUMONT NEWS-LETTER before the New Year is very old, and with it many good wishes for 1937.

We have again been privileged to live through stirring times, and Royaumontites abroad must often have thought of London, which was so much in the limelight. We have too, this last year, suffered a great loss in the death of Miss Gray, who was one of the most distinctive characters we had at Royaumont and Villers Cotterets, a true Scottish woman in the best sense, with an honest bluntness and a strong sense of humour that endeared her to everybody. "Disorderly" as we affectionately called her, with her sister, who was a trained

nurse, left their quiet little home in Fife to join the S.W.H. in 1914. Sister Gray died at Royaumont, and with great courage "Disorderly" carried on, always kind and sympathetic to others, often helping inefficient orderlies out of their difficulties, always making light of her own. I remember the first night staff at Royaumont which consisted of two sisters, Miss Gray, Fairlie and myself, when we lived on pieces of cold pudding and such-like delicacies left over by the people on day duty. Our meals were presided over by the matron, Miss Todd, who used to look at us wonderingly and say, "I don't know how you can eat it," and I always remember that when Fairlie and I groused at the fare, "Disorderly" would

look up smilingly from her congealed pudding and say in her slow, deliberate way: "Well you know we must just remember there's a war on, and it will take the cooks a little time to realise that we do *work* in the night and sleep by day." Of her work and efficiency others more competent to judge have written; there is no doubt that her death is deeply regretted by all who knew her and will make a great blank among us, her war-time companions.

Our Eighteenth Annual Dinner was, because of this, and also owing to the absence of our Médecin-Chef, Miss Nicholson, and Miss Hamilton, rather less amusing than usual, although we made the best of things and spent quite a jolly evening. Miss Courtauld kindly took the Chair, while we were all glad to see Miss Alice Williams at the reception. Miss Williams who is an aunt of our "Williams" (Lady Smyth) has always been most interested in Royaumont, and as President of the Forum Club she had been most kind about letting us meet there.

On the Sunday following the Dinner we had a most delightful tea-party in Carter (Mrs. Hils') charming house, where it was nice to meet Royaumontites who had not managed to come to the Dinner, among them Richmond, who is at present acting in "Jane Eyre" where she takes the part of Mrs. Fairfax and does it very well too. Carter made a perfect hostess and we were only sorry that Churchill (Mrs. Latham) could not be present too.

I should like to thank all Royaumontites who have so kindly contributed articles and news for this number. Please make a note of my new address where I shall always be glad to see Royaumont members and to get letters from them.

**Letter to the Royaumont Unit from our
Médecin-Chef.**

KILLAGORDEN,
TRURO,
CORNWALL.
December 31st, 1936.

My dear Unit,

On the last day of the year I am writing to wish you all a very happy 1937, and to tell

you how sorry I was to miss the dinner this time, I think the second only that I have missed. The disappointment has almost been made up to me by the many delightful letters that I have received from so many of you, which gave me very great pleasure.

I hope that many more of you will pay Cornwall a visit, and imitate Mrs. Alison, who brought her family over to see us in the summer and Rolt who bravely brought her car down to the narrow lanes and precipitous hills of Cornwall. The Robin and Dr. Courtauld were here for our Spring Flower Show and were, I hope, duly impressed by the pin-eyed and thrum-eyed polyanthus they saw. Next week we are hoping to welcome Dr. Ross, so tongues will wag and Royaumont will be lived over again.

Old friends in France have not forgotten us, and Michelet sent many good wishes to the "dames." He is very thrilled because his "country house" in "Savoie" is called "Belvedere," as he says like the Duke of Windsor's.

Princess Murat says: "J'ai souffert avec vous devant la conduite du Duc de Windsor, mais vous devez être fière de votre admirable nation qui a su sauver honneur et la destinée du grand empire. Ici cela va moins bien mais vous connaissez notre France et son vrai caractère et j'espère qu'elle sera sauvée."

The Comtesse Guy de la Rochefoucauld says: "Quel admirable pays que la Grande Bretagne avec quelle dignité et quel honneur vous avez supporté l'épreuve que vous venez de traverser—tant bon Français en a été dans l'admiration." She is very sad about France too.

I am afraid M. Delacoste has had a strike, but I have not yet heard from him. Dr. Weinberg was in London for a Conference but could not manage to pay us a visit in July—always very busy.

I cannot close without referring once more to the sad loss we have sustained by the death of dear Miss Gray, but I can only say that her influence at Royaumont was so wonderful and so much appreciated by us all that her memory will always be with us.

With all my good wishes,

Believe me,

Your affectionate chief,

FRANCES IVENS-KNOWLES.

Miss Gray.

From our Médecin-Chef.

On October 17th, 1936, our dear Miss Gray passed away, and the sad news leaves us with a sense of grief and personal loss. Such characters as hers are few and far between and though she has gone from us the memory of her goodness, loyalty, unselfishness and singleness of heart will remain as a precious possession.

It is given to few to have the gift of making and keeping innumerable friends, but Miss Gray was one of these, and to know her was to love her.

MISS GRAY'S NIECE wrote:

"She loved her associations with Royaumont and we never tired hearing of the wonderful things you all achieved there. The beautiful bronze chrysanthemum wreath from her old friends in France was given the place of honour on her grave as we all felt that is what she would have wished.

"It was my privilege to be with her during the last few days and she was so brave and interested in everything till the last, although she was suffering a good deal of pain."

We have also received the following, which the author desires to be published anonymously:

A LAST VISIT TO "DISORDERLY."

Those who attended the eighteenth Annual Dinner of the Association were met by the news of the passing of "Disorderly" Gray.

After that the evening was different from all the others, though our pleasure in meeting each other again remained undiminished.

The origin of her nickname, like that of the other special Royaumont words, is probably "wropped in mystery." There is no doubt, however, that she was very proud of it and always used it as a signature when writing to other members of the Unit.

To those who never had the privilege of seeing her in her own home in Edinburgh, it is only necessary to say that it was "Disorderly all over." The furniture, the pictures, the subdued yet beautiful colouring, all fitted in with her personality. Everything was, of course, as

neat as a new pin, but the whole was arranged for the comfort of the guests. Furniture was near the window in summer and round the glowing hearth in winter.

Last May she seemed so little changed that it was difficult to realise how frail she had actually become. The weather was, unfortunately, too cold to allow her to go for a drive in the car. Instead, she presided with great dignity and charm over the teapot at one end of the groaning table, exchanging good stories with the company, but always keeping a watchful eye to see that everyone ate far more than was good for them. Afterwards we adjourned to discuss old memories and present plans round the fire. As she solicitously tucked us into our coats and scarves in leaving, it was almost possible to believe that we should see her again at the Dinner, as she had so much hoped. Her mind was so alert and her sense of humour so keen.

In some ways she always seemed a survival of an older age, yet her understanding of the younger generation was complete. Never obtrusive, her strength of character and real goodness had an influence far wider than she in her modesty would have ever dreamed. She leaves the world much richer by the gift of her most gracious presence.

And TOLLIT writes:—

On October 18th, Sister Lindsay wrote me: "I know you will feel as sad as I do at the news I have to give you. Dear Miss Gray died last night after a bad heart attack. I saw her about a month ago and we had such a happy week-end together. I thought her looking much better than of late. A fortnight ago she had three bad heart attacks, but seemed to recover from them. However, yesterday she took another bad one and had not strength to get over it, and she slipped away quite quietly. I feel so sad about it, and yet I am glad she had not to linger a real invalid through the winter."

You will all remember her work at Royaumont and the plucky way she carried on after the death of her sister, and her own severe illness. She was taken ill at Boulogne, and when I visited her in the Red Cross Hospital on my way home on leave, she was so ill there seemed little hope of her ever returning to Royaumont. But in about six months she was back there

working as hard and as cheerily as ever. Much as I admired her at Royaumont it was not until after the War that I got to know her really well. On ten occasions we had the pleasure of entertaining her for about ten days when she came South for the Annual Dinner. In our talks over old days, old comrades, and Royaumont stories we had many a good laugh, but I never remember her saying a hard or unkind thing of anyone. She always looked for, and helped to bring out the best in everyone. Twice I visited her in her own home, and in 1933 we went a week's motor coach tour in her beloved Scotland. Her interest in everything and everyone and her keen sense of humour made her a delightful companion. The tribute of an R.A. member will, I think, find an echo in all our hearts. She wrote: "Her influence must live on. Those of us who knew and loved her should be the better for having had the privilege of knowing her, and if we gain nothing from her influence, it is our own fault. She always seemed to me a model of all the virtues, and with it all she was so intensely human and understanding, and without the smallest inkling that she was different from the rest of us. Such souls are rare, and can ill be spared in these troublous days of misunderstandings."

Our sympathy must go out to her own folk. She took such a keen interest in her nieces and nephews, and their children, that they will miss her sorely.

Correspondence.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,

As Scotland—well called Bonnie—is yearly attracting greater numbers of tourists, it is possible that some among your readers may like to know of addresses at which I stayed during a recent pleasurable tour. I can assure them that all the establishments mentioned can be highly recommended, and the proprietors (whose names I append), can be counted on for cleanliness, attention to the comfort of their lodgers, and extremely moderate charges.

St. Catherine's, North Berwick (Miss Loudon).
View of Bass Rock. Excellent Cuisine.
Bathing in the sea and in bath, hot and cold.

Grange Cottage, Dornoch (Miss Davidson).
Motor-car available for excursions through the Butts and Bens. Golf for them as can play it.
Journey north to Dornoch can be broken at Inverness and time spent at the Loch, looking for Monster!

Auchendean, Dulnain Bridge, Inverness-shire (Miss Ross). Desirable Residence. Proprietor slightly insane on subject of local bird population but in such time as she can spare from it makes her guests in every way comfortable.

Kingsmuir Hall, Peebles (Miss Ramsay-Smith).
Peebles for Pleasure! Need I say more?

Fernbrae, Perth Road, Dundee (Miss Winstanley). Charming garden, most comfortable bed. Visitors attacked by influenza, housemaid's knee and kindred complaints have the advantage of a first-class operating theatre on premises. Delightful society.

33, Lacrosse Terrace, Glasgow (Miss Miller).
This establishment can be heartily recommended for tea and supper.

Trusting the above information may be of use to your large circle of readers,

I remain, etc.,

CICELY HAMILTON.

A Reminiscence.

From ROLT.

I'd been regaling them round the fire in the Orderlies' Sitting-room with the horrors of the "Grand Guignol." There was a hushed silence and then someone said they must go and see it on their next Paris leave! Would I go with them? I didn't really much want to go again, as I'd had "the creeps" for days after my last visit, but the pleasure one derives from being "Showman" combined with the curious fascination of being terrorised, made me at last consent, and we arranged a party there and then. There was "Little Inglis" and one or two others. Were they "Peter" Williams and Armstrong? I can't remember.

The "creepy" atmosphere of the place gripped you as soon as you set foot inside the dimly-lit theatre, with the attendants flitting about like ghosts in the semi-darkness and whispering in sepulchral tones, and so when the

curtain went up on some light (and wildly improper!) comedy you breathed a sigh of relief. Short-lived relief, however, as the comedy was soon over and the horrors began! Even after all these years I can still feel the gruesomeness of it all and I can hear again that very realistic "wind" howling round "the lonely cottage on the moor" (depicted on the stage in a fitful green light) and I feel cold shivers up my spine as I think of us sitting there in the darkness gripping the arms of our chairs and pressing as close as we could to each other as the plot developed and worked up to a ghastly climax.

Suddenly the lights went on and the Manager strode on to the stage. "Alert Numero I." he cried, "Quittez le théâtre!"

The spell was broken and we streamed out into the streets, in a Paris air-raid, with a sense of utter relief, and one of the party expressed the feelings of us all when she said "Thank Heaven! I should have screamed if it had gone on another minute!" We walked calmly back to our hotel with the anti-aircraft guns popping away and a fine display of "fire-works" in the distance.

SALWAY sends the following with the Royaumont Dinner Account (printed on page 6):

The eighteenth Annual Dinner took place on November 28th, 1936, at the Forum Club, by arrangement with Mrs. McIntosh.

It was with great regret that everybody read the following telegram on arrival:

"Have caught cold and dare not venture journey in weather conditions. Very disappointed, please express deep regret. Love to all and best wishes for a happy evening."

"IVENS-KNOWLES."

In the absence of La Colonelle, Miss Courtauld took the chair and Miss Estcourt-Oswald proposed the toast to Royaumont and Miss Courtauld that of Absent Friends.

There were fifty tickets sold but only forty-five sat down to dinner.

Telegrams were sent from Anderson and Mrs. Blood, Miss Hamilton, Mrs. Hacon and Davidson, Jamieson, France, Sister Morris, Arthur and Stewart.

Letters of regret from:

Miss Nicholson, Miss Martland, Mrs. MacLaren (Bruce), Bibby, Brown, Mrs. Bushby (Sister Adams), Butler, Mrs. Crowther (Macnaughton), Mrs. Carter, Day, Don, Doig, Eastwood, Flett, Hardie, Howard Smith, Leishman, Mrs. Phillips (Sister Peters), Ricketts, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Walford (Cannon).

Date of next Dinner November 27th, 1937.

Those present at the Dinner were:

Miss Courtauld, Dr. Ross, Mrs. Saville, Miss London, Dr. Buckley, Miss Estcourt-Oswald, Mrs. Alison.

Miss Winstanley, Sister Lewis, Sister Cocking, Mrs. Cadman (Sister Whitworth).

Collum, Morgan, Berry, Martin, Newton, Mrs. Sanderson (Smieton), Ramsay Smith, Merrylees, Tatham, Middleton, Webster, Miller, Tozer, Stables, Mrs. Longrigg (Anderson), Mrs. Clements (Kennedy), Rolt, Chapman, Young, Inglis, Mrs. Hills (Carter), Mrs. Latham (Churchill), Wilson, Mrs. Simmonds (Banks), Oliver, Stewart, Mrs. Large, Mrs. Dashwood (Burrard), Mrs. Hodgson (Warner), Paley, Tollit, MacKay, Mrs. Hallam (MacGregor), Mrs. McIntosh (Salway).

Royaumont Dinner, 1936, Balance Sheet.

[illegible]

Royaumont Association Statement of Accounts, 1936.

	£	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>		£	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
In hand from 1935 - - -	87	19	2½	Printing of NEWS-LETTER - - -	14	0	0
Subscriptions for 1935 and 1936 -	16	14	0	Address Leaflet - - - -	7	15	0
Subscriptions in advance - - -	18	0	0	Postage - - - - -	17	6	
				Wreath for King George (including tartan ribbon) - - -	2	4	1
				Wreath for Miss Gray - - -	1	1	0
				Poppy Wreath - - - -	1	0	0
	£122	13	2½		£26	17	7

£	s.	d.
122	13	2½
26	17	7

In hand December, 1936 £95 15 7½

F. M. TOLLIT (*Hon. Treasurer*).

Bulls.

I like Irish bulls, but I do not like the Ayrshire variety. Last summer I spent a few days with some cousins in Galloway. My host was a bit of an antiquarian—Galloway is a happy hunting ground for archaeologists — and he said he wanted to shew me some particularly fine standing-stones in a field near the house. We walked up to the home farm,

entered a field and studied the stones. We had seen some cattle at the far end of the field, but had not paid much attention to them, as we were both interested in the stones. Then we noticed an animal detach itself from the herd and come towards us. We had two dogs with us, a spaniel, old and fat, and a little Schnauzer, the apple of my hostess' eye. By some peculiar squinting, I kept an eye on the standing-stones, half an eye on the dogs, and another half

on the approaching beast. Then I heard my cousin say, "I think we had better make for the dyke." We did! Now there are dykes and dykes. Some are crumbly and give you good foothold. Others are well-built, with very few holes or jutting out stones, in which, or on which, you can put a toe. This dyke was well-built; the footholds were high up, and my legs are short. My cousin was looking after the dogs as they could not have climbed the dyke, and it was too high for them to jump, and I was much happier by myself. I found a foothold, then another, got on the top, and then, dislodging a large stone, fell over on the other side with the dogs just before me. Fortunately we all fell clear of each other, while on the other side of the dyke the bull was bellowing forth his wrath. We saw him later trying to get through the barrier—some poles stuck through iron staples—which formed the gate into the field, but fortunately he could not get out. I said Grace when I got home.

Talking of bulls, I was told a nice story by a friend who was spending a holiday in a farm house in Argyleshire.

There was a bull on the farm, and my friend asked the farmer's wife if he was quiet. The answer came : " Och, it's a chentle peast—a wee bit saucy with strangers sometimes."

My bull was much more than saucy, he was insolent. I suppose the dogs annoyed him.

R

Notices, etc.

At the last Royaumont Dinner it was suggested that the Annual General Meeting, which has lapsed for the last two years, should be held after the next Dinner. Meantime the Executive Committee, consisting of Inglis, Smieton, Banks, Tollit, Carter, Salway and Mackay, is carrying on.

If a good number of Royaumont members from Scotland and elsewhere are coming up to London for the Coronation on 12th May, it was suggested that hospitality and a Royaumont tea party might be arranged for them, but they must let Tollit know before April 15th, as there will be a great demand for rooms in London at that time.

Will Royaumontites please note that all

subscriptions for 1937 are now due and that Tollit, who takes endless trouble over this matter, does not want to have to send out reminders to members later in the year, so please send your subscriptions as soon as possible.

The following new addresses should be noted :

MISS T. B. A. BUTLER, 295, King's Road,
Chelsea, S.W. 3.

DENNY.—24, Washington House, Basil Street,
S.W. 3.

MISS EASTWOOD.—c/o Mrs. Roberts, 14, Old Shoreham Road, Hove, Sussex.

McCOLL (Mrs. Davidson).—69, Broad Road,
Lower Willingdon, Eastbourne.

MINCHIN (Mrs. M. J. Steinmann).—70,
Römerstrasse, Ober-Winterthur, Canton Zürich,
Switzerland.

MISS V. RICKETTS.—Fryars, The Mount,
Malton, Yorkshire.

RUTHERFORD (Mrs. Riordan).—c/o B. R.
Riordan, Esq., Blayney, N.S.W., Australia. [®]

MRS. SMITH (Mard).—Sweet Briar, Lyth Hill, Shrewsbury.

MISS HOWARD SMITH.—54, Talgarth Mansions,
Baron's Court. W. 14.

STABLES.—The Hillock, Ardnadam, Argyle.

M. YOUNG.—24, Hornton Court, Hornton Street, Kensington, W. 8.

MISS WINSTANLEY kindly sent the following cutting from the "Nursing Times." Many of us will read with regret of Miss Duncan's death.

We regret to announce the death of Miss Isabella Duncan, which took place recently at Keith, Banffshire. Miss Duncan retired last January after many years' valuable service as assistant superintendent at the Royal Derby and Derbyshire Nursing Association. She started her long and varied career at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, and later held posts as night superintendent at the Victoria Infirmary, Glasgow, assistant matron at the Belvedere Fever Hospital, Glasgow, matron of the Nightingale Home, Derby, and district superintendent at East Linton, Berwickshire. From there she volunteered for war service, working

on hospital ships, and she was for some time matron of the Scottish Women's Hospital, Royaumont. Miss Duncan won the love and esteem of all with whom she came into contact, and her kind sympathy will long be remembered.

Our best congratulations to Ramsay Smith, who last June was given the freedom of Peebles. We print the account of this published in the "Scotsman," and regret that we cannot also put in the photographs of this historic event.

Freedom of the Burgh.

In the Council Buildings, after the ceremony at the War Memorial, the freedom of the burgh was conferred upon Miss Ramsay Smith, daughter of Mr. J. Ramsay Smith, the County-Clerk of Peebleshire, in recognition of her distinguished work in France during the war and of her notable work in Peebles, especially in connection with the Earl Haig Fund. In performing the ceremony of crowning the Beltane Queen earlier in the day, Miss Ramsay Smith, who is the first woman to be admitted an honorary burgess of Peebles, was fulfilling a duty that had been undertaken by her mother 31 years ago.

Provost Fergusson said Miss Ramsay Smith served during the Great War in the Scottish Women's Hospital at Royaumont, under the French Red Cross, and at the hospital at Villers Cotterets, in the Department of the Aisne, until it was evacuated. She had rendered such notable and distinguished service that the French Government had awarded her the Croix de Guerre with the Bronze Star, and also the Gold Badge of their newly-instituted order for their nursing service, the Insigne d'Honneur des Infirmeries. She was asked to go as secretary to the British Empire Leave Club at Cologne, and she remained there for eleven months. The Peebles Town Council, after the war, had conferred the freedom of the burgh on all soldiers and sailors who had been on service, and it was an omission that they did not similarly recognise their obligations to Miss Ramsay Smith at that time. That occasion gave them the opportunity of rectifying the omission. Miss Ramsay Smith was justly entitled to the honour. Not only did she possess

a distinguished war record, she had also given devoted service to Peebles, and he mentioned particularly the leading part she took in connection with the Earl Haig Fund. They asked her to join the small but distinguished band of honorary burgesses of Peebles, and with the honour, the highest it was in their power to confer, went their grateful thanks and their good wishes.

MISS RAMSAY SMITH'S REPLY.

Miss Ramsay Smith, in her reply, said she was indeed proud to be an honorary burgess of Peebles, and the honour was all the more valuable to her as she was born in the town and had lived within its boundaries for the greater part of her life. As a citizen of such a town, with its old historical associations and traditions, it was only fitting that one should render what service lay in one's power. She felt that hers had consisted mainly of extracting money from the pockets of her fellow-townsmen. She had organised Poppy Day since 1923, and, with the help of a willing band of collectors, they had raised the total sum of over £844. Regarding her war service, it certainly was rather unique, as she had the post of *Officier Gestionnaire* (Administration Officer) in a French military hospital in the actual war zone. That experience was one that could never be forgotten, and that day's ceremony was as unique and equally unforgettable.

The Last Survivor, 19—?

A PHANTASY.

Yes, of course she remembered what it was she had to do. It was the 28th of November, the night of the Royaumont Dinner, well, well, fancy having momentarily forgotten that. How she wished she didn't feel so stiff, if only that clever woman doctor were still . . . but no, how silly of her, that woman had specialised in babies and in the art of bringing them into the world decently and at the right moment. How well she remembered her, and her French accent, how bad it was in spite of the classes she attended with the vegetable woman's daughter at Asnières. What was it that the Médecin-Chef

used always to ask these poor sick *poilus*? Ah, yes. "Etes-vous blessé ou malade, Monsieur?" And she remembered hearing one man reply that he was both, he had *bronchite chronique* in his chest and an *éclat d'obus* in his foot. Then there was that clever Norwegian girl who always seemed to be so busy, and a queer illusive *doctoresse* who lived in an adjacent village, not to mention several pairs of inseparable friends with uncertain temperaments. Well, well, a truce to such memories, she must be getting ready. "Alas! there will be many blanks," she thought, "only two or three of us, still never say die." And so she dressed herself up in her best plum-coloured silk. It took her a long time to do so and when she was all ready (she had decided that it was too cold to go by airplane, so she determined that she would pick up one of these old-fashioned taxis) she paused. "I have forgotten something," she murmured. What was that word that was always written in the corner of the Dinner card? Ah, yes, decorations! She dived into a deep box and brought them up triumphantly. What a fine array! Yet who was it? Ah, yes, that clever woman secretary, it was she who had always been so scornful about medals. Never mind, to-night these would be the only medals worn. That thought, however, saddened her a little as she drove away in her taxi. "Absent friends, absent friends," she kept repeating to herself, "that is the toast I have to propose to-night. What can I say about them, the doctors, the sisters and the orderlies. How can I do them justice? It would take volumes." And some of the things done by the humble ones amongst them, little kind things, lifts in ambulances, cups of tea, the loan of a book, a friendly word, filled her mind. Yet, fingering her medals safely pinned on to her dress, she felt that other and more heroic feats ought to be recalled. What after all did one get medals for? That indeed, was the question.

The Dinner as usual was a great success, the noise seemed terrific, but when the Royaumontite in the plum-coloured silk dress got up to propose the toast of absent friends, she sat down quickly again, for, believe it or not, there were no absent friends, they were all there! All of them, doctors, sisters, orderlies, even the one who for a single day dressed in white from head to foot had walked gingerly across the

kitchen, before disappearing for ever from their sight.

"It's very satisfactory," she said to herself, "very satisfactory, but I think the noise is very trying and the smoke hurts my eyes, and now that I have seen them all together again, next year there will be, yes certainly, there will be one absent friend." So thinking she nodded in her chair, her seven glittering medals hanging bravely against their background of plum-coloured silk.

FROM FAR AND NEAR.

Ashton and a friend are running a tea garden and taking paying guests at Court Mount, Birchington-on-Sea.

Burrard (Mrs. Dashwood) writes: "My permanent address is now Flat 6, Kilmeny, 36 Arterberry Road, Wimbledon, S.W. 20.

"We moved here last March after living for nearly three years at Pevensey Bay, and like Wimbledon very much. Our daughter, Mary, who is nearly 14, is now a day-girl at the Wimbledon High School, and very happy there. I am ever so much better after my long illness, and was thrilled to attend the Royaumont Dinner again in 1935 for the first time for twelve years—owing to illness. I now hope never to miss a Dinner again!

"I saw Thorpe (Chauffeur) (Mrs. Victor Smith) several times this summer when she was home from India and she brought her boy, Young Victor, to row with us one afternoon on the Thames. He is a cheery lad of 10.

"We stayed at Bognor in September, and motored to Yeats' cottage, near Pulborough, to see her; but she was still away ill, and her sister was unfortunately not at home either.

"Smeal came to lunch with us last summer. She was still working at the French Embassy.

"I shall always be very glad to see any old Royaumontites who are in this neighbourhood."

Sister Cocking was at the Dinner, she sometimes sees Mrs. Ivens-Knowles in Cornwall.

Collum writes: "I am delighted to be able to give you some real news. This afternoon I had a call from Mrs. Berry. I had sent Christmas Greetings via Dr. Octavia Lewin, and Mrs. Berry happened to be staying with another sister, Mrs. Kirkham (who also visited us at Royaumont, she says), at Surbiton. Now the various by-passes have brought Surbiton and Dorking very close together, in driving time, and I am only six miles from Dorking. Mrs. Berry suggested a meeting; I asked her to come and see my new cottage; she rang up this morning to know if this afternoon would suit, and Mrs. Kirkham brought her, and a sister-in-law from New Zealand (who had been in the earthquake, there) by car. It was all quickly and efficiently arranged,

characteristic of Mrs. Berry. It was a delight to see her again, 18 years older, it is true, but otherwise just the same as she was in 1915, when we had time to go for walks, have Ward parties, and get to know one another well. She was interested to hear of our Dinners, and asked after Berry, her namesake. She has been in touch with Dr. Henry, 'Nancy,' and Miss Edith Stoney—who, she tells me, has had a bad fall and injured her leg badly. She spoke of Miss Stoney as a 'saint.' She also asked after Cicely Hamilton. She was as amusing as ever, and it was extraordinary how we fell back into the relations of 18 years ago as if only 18 months had passed since we had had communication, and I found myself teasing her as of old, and getting as good as I gave, caustic little comments, but without any sting, on all sorts of subjects. Her chief interest, to-day, appears to be in restoring old cottages, and Royaumontites will be interested to learn that the famous Flatford Mill, now in the care of the National Trust, was family property of the Lewins until it was taken over, and, she says, beautifully restored.

"For years we have all refrained from breaking through the tacitly accepted barrier erected when Mrs. Berry left us, broken down by overwork, in 1918, and, like so many of us, feeling miserable and angry with herself for having thus failed to 'stay the course.' (I know, because I had to quit in August, 1918.) We heard that she preferred not to be reminded of the War. I am sure, now, that she would love to meet any of us who knew her well, especially in the more leisured days of 1915. Shall we ever forget how charming she looked in the part of Marguerite d'Ecosse at a famous Royaumont Fancy Dress party? Perhaps her memory of my own costume at that party—a skeleton—prompted her first words to me this afternoon—No, I shall not repeat them! After all, I am not alone in having a shadow that has not grown less! Her last words were 'Don't let 18 years go by again before you communicate!'

"What I should like to suggest is that we invite Mrs. Berry to be our Guest of Honour at the 1937 Dinner."

Cowan writes: "I had the pleasure of meeting Morgan and Berry in June up at Morar on the N.W. coast of Scotland. It was rather jolly seeing them. They stayed in rooms not far from where I was."

Ellis. Many of us will remember "Sally," who after the War for some time helped Dr. Maude Royden. Sally has now started a home "where children can live in a normal atmosphere in spite of the absence of their parents," at Lavender Hedge, Chessington Road, Ewell, Surrey. The number of children taken is limited to seven and a country or seaside holiday is arranged for them every August.

Will any Royaumontites who know of parents anxious to find a happy home for their children when they are abroad remember Sally—who will be glad to give all further particulars.

Goss (Mrs. Harper), writes: "I have just had Willmot (Mrs. Smith) staying with me on leave from Ceylon so we have been having great Royaumont talks. She has two sons at School in England now. I am the proud Godmother to her youngest, Christopher.

"My 'cub' Doreen is now thirteen and is at School

at Oakdene, Beaconsfield, Bucks. She and I stayed with Andy (Mrs. Petitpierre) in Pinner during the summer. Andy's elder daughter, Ann, and Doreen became firm friends. I suppose in time we shall have a kind of 'Junior Royaumont Association' amongst our children!

"I have just been very busy organising the Poppy Day for this district. I do a lot of Mothers' Union work, being an official Speaker for the Diocese of Chester as well as running a branch in Alsager.

"I hope to get to a Dinner before long; each year I hope but when the time comes find I can't afford it *this year!*

Grandage, with her usual enterprise, has gone off to Australia *via* New Zealand. She gave a delightful farewell tea party at the Forum Club before she left.

Inglis, we are all glad to know, is much better. She was at the Royaumont Dinner and has got another job similar to the one she had before. Morgan, who is sailing for S. Africa this month, has lent Inglis her flat while she is away.

Jamieson, who is now Secretary of the Scottish Branch and whose address is 6, Strathview Gardens, Bearsden, Glasgow, sends the following account of a S.W.H. Meeting held in Edinburgh. "Those present were: Miss Loudon, Lady Walker (Guest of Honour), Matron Winstanley, Matron Lindsay, Miss Gray, Miss Morris, Miss Jean Macpherson, Miss Marjorie Miller, Miss Macleod, Miss Wilson, Miss Leishman, Miss Macnaughton, Miss Sinclair, Miss Ramsay Smith, Miss Jamieson, Dr. Stein.

"Miss Loudon looks exactly the same as she did twenty years ago, and I think she should pass on the recipe. She did confess to me that her waist line caused her some anxiety.

"Miss Gray sat at the head of one of the tables most becomingly—I might almost say skittishly—garbed in royal blue, complete with jabot, and hat to match. In comparison, I fear that the rest of us were rather put in the shade with our sombre blues and greys.

"Leishman whispered to me that Rolt had designed her very becoming 'two piece' blue check.

"Towards the end of the meeting—better late than never—in blew Ramsay Smith looking very handsome in a dove-grey two-piece and hat to match. She had motored over from Peebles, where she had just received the Freedom of the Borough and had crowned the May Queen."

"It was amusing to see," writes Kennedy (Mrs. Clements), of Germany, 1936, "a young officer who came into the railway carriage at the frontier to see if we were carrying propaganda literature and found myself and daughter reading film magazines.

"We had a fifty mark note taken from us at the frontier on Saturday evening and in consequence we had to spend an hour on Sunday morning in a long queue on the station at Cologne to change cheques into registered marks.

"I was disappointed with the Rhine scenery. We saw a floodlit performance of 'Jeanne d'Arc' in the old Square at Frankfurt, and the Nazi guarding the

Square was kind and helpful when he eventually understood from our halting German that we wanted to buy tickets to see the play.

"In Berlin there were flags and decorations everywhere, the Unter den Linden thronged with people at all hours.

"The enormous sports' stadium glistening in the hot sun was filled to capacity and we stood up every few minutes to sing the national anthem of the country which had won the last event.

"We were impressed by the marvellous grace when running of the American coloured sprinter, Jesse Owens, and by the wonderful effort by Rampling when the British team won the relay race after a slow start, the German girl who burst into tears when she dropped the baton in the relay race when her team were making a world record, and the English girl who put her arm round the German girl and tried to comfort her.

"The fast swimming of the Japanese and the graceful diving of the Americans. The American woman who slipped past the Storm Troopers and kissed Hitler in full view of thousands of spectators at the swimming stadium. The crowds who assembled outside Hitler's flat soon after lunch and remained there singing and cheering till he returned about eight o'clock and came out on the balcony to speak to them.

"The crowds were packed like sardines in the underground trains but all were cheerful and well-mannered.

"There were crowds of happy looking young people dancing every evening in the Kroll Gardens and other places. Hitler's long black car with several escorting cars travelling always at high speed, and there were soldiers doing the goose-step when changing guard outside the building where lies the unknown soldier."

Leng, when last heard of, was starting for India.

Sister Lewis is still with the Sassoons and is shortly going a trip round the world.

Sister MacGregor has been in the Isolation Hospital, Pentre, Rhondda, for sixteen years—"the last ten years as matron. We have a Dr. Adams here, she was with us at Royaumont and Villers Cotterets for a short time."

Macnaughton (Mrs. Crowther) has, we are sorry to hear, lost her husband, we all send her our deepest sympathy. Her address is Craig-Ard, Pitlochry, Perthshire, Scotland.

Miss Nicholson is still very busy in Liverpool. She writes: "Alison is now in Kenya. She has left Bucharest at last, but felt she never would if she did not make an effort. She is having six months' holiday visiting cousins in Kenya and hopes to get a post in London."

Sister Peters (Mrs. Phillips) writes that her sister has married again and is now Mrs. J. H. Davey. Her address is "Stone House," Gladys Avenue, Abbotsford, B.C., Canada.

Poppit (Forest) is now running a café at Slough, so if you are ever there be sure and look out for it. All Royaumontites, she tells me, will be heartily welcomed.

Mrs. Robinson, writing to Tolit, says: "Rolt came over to Swanmore not long ago. She is a friend of our new Vicar's wife, and Mrs. Phelps and I went and had tea with them. Rolt didn't look a day older than at Royaumont and we *did* so enjoy seeing her."

Rolt, whose address is Croft, Watermillock, Penrith, writes: "I had a very delightful day with 'La Colonelle' and Mr. Knowles last summer when I was staying at Falmouth, and was charmed with their lovely house and grounds. 'La Colonelle's' creative and organising genius has now been turned to the garden and I believe the reports I heard that Killagorden is one of the finest gardens in Cornwall! There is everything there that the soul of a gardener could desire and to be taken over it by the owner (from whose tongue the long Greek and Latin names fell as easily as if they'd been the names of diseases) was a great treat. There was one spot where Mrs. Knowles said with a comprehensive sweep of her arm, that those trees must go, and on returning to Killagorden a couple of days later, I was forcibly reminded of certain incidents at V.C., by finding a small army of men removing those same trees! I took away with me the happiest recollections of my visit and of Mr. and Mrs. Knowles' hospitality.

"I also saw Mrs. Robinson and 'Mrs. Higgins' when I was in the north. Their new Rector is married to a very old friend of mine and she kindly arranged a meeting and seemed amused and surprised at the amount we found to talk about—but then she wasn't at Royaumont!"

Rutherford (Mrs. Riordan) writes: "I was very sorry to hear of Miss Gray's death. What a gallant old lady she was. I am sure you will all miss her at the Dinner. I was glad to see Figgis' address in the News-Letter, we are going to Melbourne on our return so shall look her up."

Dr. Agnes Savill writes: "I have had news from the 'Wee Free.' She is very busy in the wilds of the Gold Coast and working hard all day long. She says that the native women have their babies and get up and walk away. That is true, but in many cases there are very bad after-results. She adds that 'the civilised woman owes much more to science than she has any idea of.'

"I was in Germany this summer and saw the splendid health and cheerfulness of the unemployed young men, who live in communities in the forests, working at forestry. The German motor roads too are perfectly marvellous—broad, smooth, with central green belt of grass and trees, road lines so that you never see the disgraceful two and three abreast so prevalent on our roads. No ribbon building is allowed. Then, also, the side roads, as they enter on the big main roads, do so in a very gradual way, entering by a graduated slope, so that those who are racing on the main road can see them long ahead and be prepared and *vice versa*. The concentration camps and barbed wire I did not see, but a friend who saw them for miles carried away a very sinister impression of the war spirit abroad."

Summerhayes (Mrs. MacRae) writes : "I saw Cranage in August and it was good to see her again.

"We were on our way to spend a nice gipsy sort of holiday in a caravan in the Highlands, and we stopped in Northumberland on the way as we heard she was on holiday from Italy with her two small sons. We stayed with her two days, and found much to talk about. She has a busy practice in Italy, and it sounds hard work there.

"**Oliver** is going out to Oran to stay with Madame Camford (Peter) for three months."

Williams (Lady Smyth) writes cheerfully from Australia. She has been most successful with her Australian terriers, taking every prize at Shows for them. Her eldest son draws well and writes modern poetry, the second one is going into the Australian Navy. Let's hope they may all return to England some day soon, before we are all too old to recognise them.

Yeats we are sorry to hear is ill—perhaps some of the Scottish R.A. members have news of her.

The following letters to Merrylees from Mme. Spécialiste and M. Daviau were received too late to put in alphabetically.

Mme. Rouilt writes : "Ainsi que chaque année nous avons en le plaisir de recevoir le traditionnel beau calendar dont nous vous remercions beaucoup; j'avais attendu jusqu'ici espérant toujours que notre vieux Spécialiste aurait joie vous écrire lui-même mais je vais que chaque jour passe sans qu'il y ait possibilité de sa part; comme toujours les fins d'année sont très chargées et fatigantes dans le commerce aussi quand arrive le soir le courage fait défaut enfin malgré cela la santé est bonne je dirai même très satisfaisante; et maintenant chère Miss je vais vous annoncer le mariage de Robert qui a en lieu au mois d'Août; ce fut une cérémonie très réussie et par un temps véritablement choisis, chose rare pendant toute la saison.

"Je vous adresse la photo de l'ensemble de la noce et vous pouvez prendre connaissance de toute la famille et en particulier de notre petite Jeannette qui est charmante avec toutes les qualités désirables, étant l'aîné d'une famille de sept enfants, elle sait travailler avec courage et douée d'un bon caractère, elle est native de Niort (Deux-Sèvres) mais depuis plusieurs années elle est à Château dans le commerce chez des oncles et tante, et ma foi il n'y a rien de changé pour nous tous. Robert venant travailler tous les matins à son atelier qu'il a conservé chez nous et le soir il retourne dîner et coucher dans sa nouvelle famille et le dimanche tous se réunissent chez nous.

"Et pour vous chère Miss comment cela va-t-il? nous espérons recevoir une petite lettre qui nous donnera de vos nouvelles et je vais terminer en vous priant d'accepter de tous, nos meilleurs vœux pour la nouvelle année avec toujours l'espoir de vous revoir. Amitiés."

De la part de Spécialiste bien des choses à Miss Collum.

M. Daviau writes : "Bien reçu votre gentille carte du souvenir fidèle et constant qui vous portez à vos vieux amis de France. Et pourtant cette époque

de l'abominable guerre qui vous avait rapprochée de nous paraît bien lointaine. Oui sans doute pour ceux qui ne l'ont pas recue, mais combien proche encore dans le souvenir de ceux qui en ont souffert. Si au moins tant de sacrifices consentis et subis avaient amélioré les rapports entre les peuples. Hélas, rien en ce sens n'a été atteint et l'épouvantable épreuve pourra n'avoir servi qu'à en préparer une plus effroyable encore. L'humanité est donc atteinte de folie? C'est à le croire, puisque non contente de s'employer à son bien, semble vouloir aggraver les possibilités d'une nouvelle guerre par une agitation sociale dont les conséquences peuvent être mesurées au désordre espagnol et à toute son horreur.

"Le déséquilibre mental actuel va-t-il provoquer chez vous, chez nous, quelque catastrophe dont l'air paraît saturé? Puisse le bon sens des puissances raisonnables prévaloir bien vite sur les esprits subversifs de ceux en lesquels nous ne devons voir qu'une minorité, désaxée par des idéologies dont l'application ne peut avoir que des résultats funestes. Monsieur Delacoste, malgré les bienfaits qu'il a répandus autour de lui pendant tant d'années, fait en ce moment l'expérience de la tristesse de l'imbécillité humaine, subissant les humiliations de toutes sortes, qui lui infligent, bien entendu, ceux de ses ouvriers pour lesquels il a été le plus paternel, triste récompense des bonnes actions consenties ici-bas. Notre gouvernement est bien coupable d'avoir créé l'état de choses actuel, lequel dresse l'une contre l'autre deux catégories de citoyens qui devraient au contraire s'unir pour faire bloc irréductible contre tout danger extérieur possible. Si le bolchevisme russe est à la base de tous les événements actuels, qu'attend-on pour le combattre impitoyablement.

"Je suppose que vous êtes toujours en rapport avec vos si charmantes collègues venues à Royaumont? Si oui, voulez-vous affirmer à toutes, l'expression de mon inaltérable souvenir très affectueux; à vous chère Miss, ma femme, notre fils et moi-même nous vous offrons nos vœux les meilleurs pour 1937, nous vous remercions de votre si constant souvenir et vous présentons l'expression de nos bien affectueux sentiments."