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Royaumont News - Letter

War-time Economy Edition FEBRUARY 1945 No. 8

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

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

President: Miss RUTH NICHOLSON, M.S.

Vice-Presidents: Miss ELIZABETH COURTAULD, M.D. Miss CICELY HAMILTON

Chairman: Miss ETTA INGLIS *Hon. Secretary:* Mrs SANDERSON

Hon. Treasurer: Miss F. M. TOLLIT, 12 Woodchurch Road, N.W.6

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

EDITORIAL

How seldom in life things work out as one imagines. Many of us, in the old days of the Royaumont Dinners, had laughingly pictured the future of our Association with only a few aged ladies meeting for bread and milk in an upper room, but somehow in such imaginery meetings our "Medecin Chef" was always there—one just couldn't see our Royaumont Dinner taking place without her. No doubt the years which have passed, and may still have to pass, before we can meet again will make the gaps in our ranks easier to bear, but when we do we shall all think of our late Chief with admiration and regret. We all have our own special memories of her, doctors, sisters, orderlies and the like, for she made it her business to know everyone in the hospital, from the oldest hand down to the latest inarticulate and homesick newcomer. Apart from "Miss Ivens's" skill and charm of manner, of which others have written in this number, what endeared her so much to us all, and especially to the orderlies, was her sense of humour, for she would laugh wholeheartedly over our vagaries, sympathising with the chauffeur who has lost her way and had difficulty in making herself understood in French, and expressing amused astonishment at the strange people the Committee from time to time thrust upon her. It was really amazing that anyone who had worked all her life in the "red tape" atmosphere of hospitals could have kept herself so free from it, and retained her sense of humour, and therein perhaps lay one of the reasons of the success of L'Hôpital Auxiliaire 301 Abbaye de Royaumont.

Mrs Ivens-Knowles never lost her interest in the Royaumont Association, coming up to London frequently from Cornwall to attend our meetings. She took a keen interest in 1939-40 when we sent out canteens to Metz, and later in our work of forming another Royaumont Unit. She was very anxious that our Association should not be allowed to slide into the background, and it was she who proposed the enlargement of its Committee with representative members in Scotland.

So what better memorial of her can we have than to carry it on?

The late Mr Knowles was well aware of her interest and suggested that some of her jewels should be given to the Royaumont Emergency Fund. This has been done, and the jewellery has been put in the bank until the Emergency Fund Committee can meet and discuss how best to deal with it. And may we take this opportunity of drawing attention to this Fund, in the hope that members in difficulties will not hesitate to apply to the Committee (Tollit, Banks and Smieton, i.e., Mrs Sanderson). With so much universal misery in the world today, we cannot believe that there are not some of us to whom this Fund might be a boon.

Miss Nicholson's letter will be read with much interest. We are delighted that she has agreed to be our President, and on behalf of all our readers send her a hearty welcome. We hope that when she comes south we shall often see her at our meetings.

We also welcome our new Vice-President, Miss Hamilton, who has always taken a great interest in all our doings.

This editorial cannot close without a word of appreciation of, and regret at the death of, Katherine Grandage, which took place in a London nursing home in October 1943. Although older than most of the orderlies at Royaumont, Grandage was always eager and ready for anything. She did most useful work in the X-ray room there, and was a most energetic and helpful member of all our Association activities in this war, interviewing candidates for the Royaumont Relief Unit up to quite a short time before her last illness. Her many Royaumont friends greatly miss her.—*Editor*.

IN MEMORIAM

We have asked several old friends of Mrs Ivens-Knowles to write about her and we feel that the following letters will be of great interest to all Royaumontites.—*Editor*.

Letter from Our President

45 RODNEY STREET,
LIVERPOOL,
16th January 1945.

DEAR FRIENDS,

As this is the first *News-Letter* since the death of our late Chief, I should like to write a few lines in appreciation. It is of course hardly necessary as we all knew and respected her so much, but I feel everyone will probably like to put on record some account of her activities as this is the close of an epoch.

My own association with her began in December 1914 when the Unit met in London for our send-off. It was not an auspicious beginning, as some of you will remember. The Medecin Chef herself was suffering from antrum trouble and was really far from well, and did not give the impression of the energetic, inspiring woman she soon showed herself to be. There were many delays before we were actually "pushed off" by Dr Elsie Inglis into the most tempestuous seas known for some time. On the other side we were not exactly greeted with effusion, no arrangements, except the offer of the bare, cold and dark Abbaye de Royaumont, equipment delayed and at one time apparently lost on the journey. We certainly felt no one wanted us, but that acted as a stimulus to Miss Ivens, and the fighting spirit, which has been well seen to her last day, appeared, and her indomitable character began to show itself and her boundless energy carried her through all obstructions. In spite of many more ups and downs, by the early spring everything was in order and the hospital opened. Then followed numerous inspections by French Generals, Médecin Chefs, Government Officials, and it was now the social charm and tact of the Royaumont Medecin Chef, with the addition of being able to make herself understood in the French language, which helped in the acceptance of the hospital as one to be used. Even then it needed visits to as near the front line as possible and interviews with those in charge of the casualty clearing stations and the exhibition of her persuasive powers before we began to receive regular convoys of blessés and became recognised as a real hospital.

During the various pushes we all remember the long hours spent in the theatre where Miss Ivens never seemed to tire when some of us could hardly stand up. No slacking was ever allowed, everything had to be well done. The gratitude and respect of the soldiers was certainly earned and was appreciated, and the more demonstrative and sometimes, perhaps, rather fulsome adoration and praise of the French visitors was thoroughly enjoyed. There is no doubt France was most gallant and admiring to our Medecin Chef and ourselves and showed it in the only way she could by the bestowal of the Chevalier d'Honneur and all the other medals.

Inside the hospital itself allegiance to the Chief was very strong. There were times, of course, when grumbles were heard—when the impossible was expected—wards to be tidied and arranged for a photo in the morning when heavy dressings

were being done—all the beds to be pushed out to the cloisters so that wounds could be exposed to sunlight and various other flaps. But, on looking back, one realises it was all due to immense enthusiasm and progressive action, and our grumbles were the signs of weariness.

Between the end of Royaumont and the beginning of my work with Miss Ivens in Liverpool, Dr Henry, Madame Manuel and I had a delightful holiday in the ben in the South of France. She entered into the joy of the journey, the beauty of the scenery, and the long walks in the mountains and by the Mediterranean with the same zest and pleasure as in the organisation of Royaumont. In fact she was a most pleasant companion.

In Liverpool I found her determined to get things done. Soon both she and I were on the staff of the Maternity Hospital, and then began a wholehearted adoption of midwifery. No stone was left unturned till the old-fashioned antiquated hospital was abandoned for a modern large building. This had been talked about by the Committee for years, but Miss Ivens did more than talk. The same ability, indefatigable energy, tenaciousness and sometimes roughshod methods were used to get done what she wanted. Her kindness to her patients was great and she spared herself not at all to give them every chance of recovery. She was much loved and respected by them, and those of you who were present at her wedding will never forget the crowd on the Cathedral steps when she came out with Mr Knowles—a crowd composed of women of all ages and babies in arms or on their feet, the product of her skill.

After that I saw very little of Mrs Ivens-Knowles but heard of her doings both in London and Cornwall. I gather that she continued organising and helping in many medical and social affairs with great success. Certainly from the letter I had from her, written only a month or so before her death, she seemed to be doing more than most women of half her age. No doubt she "worked herself to death," but it was a death she would have chosen in full strength and working to capacity. She seemed to be received by the Cornish people as she was received by the French during the 1914-18 war and was allowed to help and lead them. She was also able to give her husband fourteen years of great happiness. He survived her only a short time, but her Royaumont Association still goes on. It will never be the same without its real lifelong head, but as you have been so kind as to ask me to take her place, I will try, with the help of you all, to keep it going.

I was due to retire from hospital work in December but have been asked to remain on at the Stanley Hospital for the duration. After that I hope to find some sort of a place in which to live the rest of my days, in the Southern Counties of England, and therefore will be nearer headquarters and quite free to attend meetings and dinners.

My love to you all.

Yours,

RUTH NICHOLSON.

Letter from Dr Margaret Joyce

I first knew Frances Ivens when she was in her late 'teens. She came of pure English stock belonging to a Warwickshire family of good repute noted for its handsome looks and skill in sport. She herself was a healthy-looking girl with lovely brown eyes and beautiful teeth. The first time I stayed with her she met me at the station driving a high-stepping Arab horse in a tall dog-cart. She lived with her brothers and sister in a village and I do not think she ever spent an idle moment. She was a keen gardener, played the organ at church, ran the village tennis club and other local enterprises, and entered eagerly into all pursuits of the countryside.

I think she was about 22 years of age when she decided to come up to London and study medicine. She was a very happy student. Her brilliant examination results and the important posts she was given show how hard she worked, but then—as throughout all her life—she entered with zest into the various activities and diversions of college life. She was elected "students representative," which office she filled with dignity on all formal occasions, and was a successful advocate when controversies arose between the authorities and the students. A festival dinner was held in her honour and that of her friend, O. MacDougal, when at their final M.B. London examination they both gained 1st class honours and brought home much-coveted gold medals to the Royal Free.

Of her work in London and Liverpool and Royaumont other people will tell.

When at the age of 60 she was due to retire from hospital work, she surprised all her friends and colleagues by announcing her approaching marriage with Mr Chas. Knowles, the well-known barrister—an outstanding authority on Railway Law and the author of several learned books. Many great professional careers have closed their last chapter in a cathedral to the sound of funeral marches and accompanied by signs of mourning. Miss Ivens indeed ended her Liverpool career with a service in the cathedral, but to the joyful sound of the Wedding March amid happy anticipations for the future. The precincts of the cathedral were thronged by hundreds of women who had passed through her hands in the wards of out-patient departments of the hospitals where she had worked, all anxious to show their gratitude to her skill. Inside the building every available seat was filled.

The last 12 years of Mrs Ivens-Knowles were very happy ones. The few years she worked in London were very successful. The holidays which she and her husband were able to take at Killagorden, their delightful home in Cornwall, were much enjoyed both by them and their numerous visitors. When at length they were able to settle there permanently, they were supremely happy.

The gardens were old and romantic but extensive and neglected. Mrs Knowles set to work with great energy, first to reclaim them and later to transform them into one of the most beautiful of Cornish gardens. Later she succeeded in raising many rare specimens of plants and shrubs rarely grown in England. All was done with great

method and accurate records kept. Both she and her husband considered that the best way to help any of their villagers who needed assistance was to give them well-paid work. I was often reminded of hospital days when I saw Mrs Knowles, accompanied by her head gardener and his underlings, set out upon their daily round. She was dressed in an overall, arms well away from her body, hands encased in rubber gloves, wrists flexed and fingers spread out, so as not to contact anything—exactly in the attitude of a surgeon about to begin an operation. Each plant was visited in turn—a top-dressing would be prescribed for one, leaf-mould or a mulch for another. I am never sure whether I was awake in my deck-chair or dreaming when I heard her say to the head gardener—"And now, Godrich, about the Maurandia. Nothing seems to make it thrive; we will have it up to the theatre and get to the root of the matter."

But hard as she worked in the garden (one of the men once said to me, "There are none of us so good at a ditch as the mistress"), she soon began to take a leading position in the County of Cornwall. Before the war her time was much taken up by attending Committees in various parts of Cornwall and her work for the Red Cross was invaluable.

She died as she would have wished—working at full pressure to within a few hours of her death.

MARGARET JOYCE.

Letter from Dr Catherine Chisholm

30 ST. ANN STREET,
MANCHESTER,
23rd January 1945.

I feel that I have no place in the Royaumont *News-Letter* for I was never in the Unit nor at Royaumont, and my acquaintance with Mrs Knowles was entirely in civil life.

Still, I can quite understand what an outstanding chief she would make. Her forceful personality, her refusal to have any fools around, her power of stimulation, would all help to create a keen band of workers.

I knew her as a surgeon I could trust to operate well; one who thought of and attended to every detail in the recovery of her patients, and so they did well and became her devoted admirers.

I knew her also as the leader in all the feminist movements which were gathering headway before the last war, and particularly as the leader of our younger medical women whom she never ceased to spur on to further achievement. She showed that if they were to hold their own as medical women they should do at least as well as their male colleagues, and then add that little bit more by which they would succeed. Such a woman was outstanding as, to her professional attainments, she added a real interest in others, especially in those with whom she had worked and a desire to help in any way she could.

CATHERINE CHISHOLM.

Letter from Our Vice-President Dr Courtauld

Miss Ivens and I both began our studies at the Royal Free Hospital Medical School in October 1895, and for the next 5 years we lived with other students at College Hall, Bloomsbury. Miss Ivens's room was next to mine, and we gradually seemed to become friendly and from time to time would go to each other's room and make cocoa, have a chat, after evening work was over. Miss Ivens was a fine student, never content until she had got to the bottom of any job she was doing. I remember watching her in the dissecting room one day and being so impressed by her patience and perseverance as she searched for a small nerve and not satisfied until she had traced it out from its origin to its end. She was a fine worker and determined to get on. And she succeeded in this, for she passed the final M.B. examination with honours. Another student in College Hall, a friend of us both, also passed with a gold medal, and we gave them a dinner at the Holborn Restaurant. I felt so proud of them both as we toasted and cheered them. And then we all separated.

I went to India and only occasionally did I hear from Miss Ivens. But I knew that, after some hospital posts, she had settled in Liverpool and was making not only a practice but a fine reputation. And then in 1915 I had an invitation to join the staff at Royaumont, and being on leave in England I gladly accepted it.

Looking back over the years spent at the Abbaye, full of work and enterprise, I recall most the wonderful leader we had in our Medecin Chef. She had a personality which seemed in some degree to penetrate each one of her fellow-workers. We were not just led but we were fellow-workers. Then I also remember and admired her thoroughness. Nothing was glossed over. Many of us must remember her often long and patient efforts to splint a leg just as it should be and also be as comfortable for the patient as possible. Nothing would satisfy her but the best. I remember that we had in ward "Mary" a blessé with a bullet lodged in the back of his nose. Day after day Miss Ivens would patiently dig for it, and then one day up went her arm with hand holding the forcep and the bullet. Staff and patients and all immediately sang a verse of the *Marseillaise*.

After her retirement from her work in Liverpool she had a very happy time in her delightful house in Cornwall. She became a great gardener. I was there once and noted how her big library of medical books in Liverpool had been succeeded by many volumes of books on gardening. With her usual thoroughness she was looking after her plants with the same enthusiasm as she had looked after her patients. And then the last few years were busy ones, superintending Red Cross work about Cornwall.

And so she has passed on after a busy life, a useful life, and I feel sure a happy life. And I feel sure also that she will not be forgotten by

any of us who have known her and worked with her.

DR COURTAULD.

Letter from Cicely Hamilton

I am glad that my last personal memory of our Medecin Chef is connected with her Cornish home. I saw her several times afterwards but only on committee occasions, in connection with the Royaumont canteen; at Killagorden we were hostess and guest—and the recollection is a happy one. In a sense I was there on business, collecting material for a book; and I realised, from the help she gave me, how thoroughly she had entered into the life of her adopted county. She was a mine of information with regard to its conditions and industries; knew not only what I ought to see in the neighbourhood but who was the person to show me. I realised also that her retirement from practice had not meant a leisured life—a form of existence in which she could never have been happy; even in those days, when peace was still with us, she was active in local public work—and, with the outbreak of war, those activities must have more than doubled.

From Royaumont days I remember her pleasure in flowers, and Cornwall is pre-eminently the county of the flower-lover. Whether cultivated as hobby or as market industry, you find beauty in every type of garden. Vegetables, no doubt, when the war came along, ousted roses and majestic daffodils from the Killagorden grounds; but, in pre-war days, her flowerbeds were its mistress's pride and delight.

When one thinks of it, a good ending to a life of usefulness! Happy in the companionship of a husband of like tastes; happy in her garden; active to the last—and with death, when it came, coming swiftly.

CICELY HAMILTON.

Letter from Nancy

It is difficult to write of Mrs Ivens-Knowles for my heart is full of appreciation of one of the most brilliant and delightful women I have ever met. I knew her first in 1897, and through all these years the impression left upon me is of a most unself-conscious being, with a great sense of humour and the merry lightheartedness of a child. No matter to what age she had lived, her spirit would have been ever young and gay.

A. ESTCOURT-OSWALD.

Letter from Collum

I am not sending you anything in praise of la Colonelle as most people already will have read my appreciation—"From a Friend"—published in *The Times* of 11th February last year; but I thought Old R's might like to have some excerpts

from the letters of Mr Knowles, who himself died on 2nd November last:—

"On the Thursday morning"—our Chief died on Sunday, 6th—"she preceded me down to breakfast in as cheerful spirits as usual. I followed shortly and found her lying full-length face downwards on the dining-room floor nearly unconscious. Fortunately I was able to get in touch with Dr Andrews, for whose professional capacity she had great admiration, and he came along quite quickly. He at once saw it was cerebral haemorrhage. He arranged for a private room at the hospital for which she has done so much, and called up the ambulance. The Matron told me she was quite unconscious when she arrived, and in fact she never regained consciousness right up to the end, which came peacefully Sunday morning. . . . The catastrophe must have been the work of a moment. Our housekeeper had only left her a minute or so before I entered, and she told me how she was laughing and talking with her. So what exactly happened in that moment of time will never be known. All agree that she passed over in the way she would have chosen: working at the things she was so interested in up to the very end: no pain: and no long lingering illness. . . . I shall do my best to keep up the garden, where she found so much happiness, as a memorial to her. It has become one of the show-places around here. There will, I expect, be matters for consideration about the Royaumont Association a little later on, when I have gone into her affairs a little deeper. Then I will get in touch with some of you again.

"The funeral was yesterday (Wednesday) and Kenwyn Church was full although the notice could only be short. She lies in a beautiful spot in an exceptionally beautiful churchyard. The coffin was draped with the British and French flags which I believe came from Royaumont." (Mr Knowles himself now lies there, too.) There was a long account of the funeral in the *West Briton & Cornwall Advertiser*, 10th February 1944, from which I take the following extracts:—

"Dr Ivens was . . . a University scholar and gold medalist in obstetric medicine. She studied at the Royal Free Hospital, London, in Dublin and Vienna. She was clinical lecturer in midwifery and gynaecology, University of Liverpool; hon. consulting gynaecological surgeon, Stanley Hospital; hon. consulting surgeon, Liverpool Maternity Hospital; an ex-President of the Federation of Medical Women, and a member of the Consultative Council of Medical and Allied Sciences, Ministry of Health. She was surgeon-in-charge of the Scottish Women's Hospitals at Royaumont and Villers Cotterets, in France, from 1914 to 1919. Dr Ivens-Knowles was chairman of the Cornwall Committee of the Friends of the Fighting French and a most enthusiastic supporter of this work. She was a Governor of the High School and a former president of the women's section of Truro British Legion. She was a regular attendant at Truro Cathedral. Dr Ivens-Knowles, who was 73, was county medical officer of the British Red Cross Society in Cornwall, and her passing is a severe loss to

that organisation. She was also chairman of the Wounded, Missing, and Relatives Sub-Committee, chairman of the Staffing and Equipment Sub-Committee for Convalescent Homes, and, as county organiser, she had latterly been working on the new 'Guides' scheme, under which the Red Cross had undertaken to provide attendants for Service patients moving from one hospital to another or to their homes.

"In 1930, Dr Ivens-Knowles married Mr C. M. Knowles, barrister-at-law, who, before his retirement, was the assistant legal adviser to the Home Office. In 1937 Mr Knowles was appointed a county magistrate. He is a joint chairman of Cornwall Quarter Sessions, chairman of Cornwall Agricultural Wages Committee, and chairman of the Military Service (Hardship) Committee for Cornwall. Mr Knowles' first wife was Dr Lilian Knowles, formerly Miss Tomn, who was Professor of Economic History at London University, and was an Old Girl of Truro High School. Their only son, Major Francis W. G. Knowles, is a prisoner of war in the Far East." From the long list of those present I take the following:—"Mr C. H. Ivens and Mr Hamilton Cowley (nephews), Mr J. P. Paull, Major and Mrs W. J. Russell, and Mrs G. B. Asher (family mourners), Dr M. D. Barfett (representing Medical Women's Federation, also the Royaumont Association)." Through the kind offices of Morgan's sister-in-law at Truro, the Association's wreath of palm with pink and red carnations and Christmas roses, tied with a tricolour ribbon, was in time for the funeral and was placed on the coffin.

In April of last year Mr Knowles wrote:—"I should have written to you ere this but I have been ill and quite out of action. I tried to continue my previous activities but the moment came when I found myself at the end of my physical resources and in a state of utter exhaustion. . . . I have had several dreary weeks in bed, and am now only pulling round slowly. I now have the melancholy job of deciding what is to be done with Frances' jewellery and other personal effects, the valuers having done their work. There are certain articles of jewellery which I think might appropriately be sold for the benefit of the Benevolent Fund which is, I believe, still one of the surviving activities of the Royaumont Association. I can think of no other appropriate destination for the Royaumont jewel, for instance, which members gave her for a wedding present. Also her engagement ring and a diamond bar brooch. The first question is whether that project would be acceptable to Royaumont: and if it is, what steps are necessary to give it effect. With whom should I get in touch and to whom should the articles in question be sent?" I communicated at once with Banks, Hon. Treasurer of the Emergency Fund, and with our Hon. Secretary, asking that a Committee meeting should be called to whom I could pass on the offer, meantime writing to Mr Knowles that I had done so and that, as founder of the Fund and as a member of the Committee, I could assure him in advance that the Committee would gratefully accept his offer. The flying bomb attacks on London, follow-

ing swiftly on D-Day, and official requests not to travel, caused the meeting to be postponed—and just as I was about to write and tell him that the date had at last been fixed, I saw in *The Times* that he was being buried that very day. I forwarded copies of the correspondence immediately to the Executors, who turned out to be Barclays Bank—the only son is a prisoner of war in the Far East—and they asked the Executors' solicitor in Truro to investigate. Strictly speaking, as the Association could not produce a Minute to show that the offer had been officially accepted in Committee, we probably had no legal claim, but I am happy to be able to tell our members that, after consultation with "certain relatives of the late Mrs Ivens-Knowles," it was decided that Mr Knowles' intention should be duly carried out, and that our Hon. Treasurer, Emergency Fund, has duly received the Royaumont jewel and the engagement ring and has insured them and placed them in a bank pending arrangements for their sale. I am sure I voice the opinion of the Association in putting on record, here, our appreciation of the action of the Executors as well as our gratitude to the late husband of our beloved Chief.

COLLUM.

Report of Royaumont Association Meeting held on 25/11/44

Our Hon. Secretary, Mrs Sanderson (Smieton), very kindly gave a luncheon party at Moor's Hotel, 10 Craven Hill, London, to members of the Royaumont Association Committee, and afterwards a meeting was held. It was the first meeting for over a year, chiefly owing to war conditions. Nearly all the Committee were present, and it seemed quite like old times to hear everybody all talking at once. There was one gap in the ranks, and that a big one—our President, Mrs Ivens-Knowles, whose death is a sad loss to all Royaumontites.

Two members came from Scotland for the meeting—Ramsay and M'Leod. They thought it well worth the long journey.

Moor provided an excellent lunch and afterwards everyone met for coffee and cigarettes in a sitting-room, thoughtfully provided by Moor. After a half hour's gossip, which everyone enjoyed, a general meeting was held.

Items on the agenda included financial reports—£112 16s 8d (balance), £233 8s 9d (balance), E.L.F., Dinner Fund, £6 14/- (balance).

The kind offer of Mr Knowles (now, alas! dead) of the Royaumont jewel belonging to our late President, to be given for the benefit of the E.L.F. Collum and Banks are kindly dealing with the matter.

Morgan gave a report on the R.R. Unit and said the Unit was ready for immediate use, and two others were standing by. 33 volunteers had come forward to form new units. Funds were satisfactory, the balance being £509 7s 3d, £400 being in P.O. savings.

The re-election of Committee then took place. It was unanimously agreed to ask Miss Nicholson

to become President and Miss Hamilton as Vice-President. All Royaumontites will be delighted to know that they have both accepted.

The rest of the Committee were re-elected *en bloc*.

Other matters discussed were a visit to France by members of the R.R.U., if any war organisations were going from this country.

Letters to be written again to our old blessés in France, and a proposed meeting in Scotland of the Royaumont Association, sometime next summer.

The meeting lasted an hour-and-a-half and everyone on saying good-bye felt they had had a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon.

Those present were—Inglis (chair), Tollit (Hon. Treasurer), Mackay (Hon. Editor), Smieton (Hon. Secretary), Banks (Treasurer E.L.F.), Morgan (R.R.U.), Collum, Mrs Allison, Salway, Ramsay, M'Leod, Big Murray, Howard Smith, Betty (Bruce), Percival, Wilson and Carter.

Apologies for absence from Miss Nicholson, Miss Courtauld, Miss Loudon, Dr Savill, M'Gregor, Little Andy, Butler, Middleton, Rolt and Miller.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Withyfold,
Wonham Way,
Peaslake, Guildford.

DEAR EDITOR,

With the approval of the late Mr Knowles, and, I gathered, of our Chief's step-sister, Mrs Pymn, it had been arranged that, after the war was over, I should do a short biography of Mrs Ivens-Knowles. As Mr Knowles wrote—"It"—i.e., the biography—"seems to me to offer a wonderful opportunity for a book combining a history of the development of a remarkable character with a history of solid achievement." Now that Mr Knowles, too, has gone, it will be more difficult of accomplishment, but if Mrs Pymn and our own members, and her colleagues and friends in Liverpool, will help me, I still hope to try, when Major Knowles returns to his home and documentation becomes available. Will all who possess data or documentation likely to be of assistance write to me now and tell me what they can lend me when the time comes? I should also like to know how many of our members would subscribe to such a memoir if published.

Yours,

COLLUM.

P.S.—Guildford Branch A.V.F. asks us to extend a welcome to our contemporary *The AVF News-Letter*, published at the office in Queensberry Way, S.W.7, of the Association des Amies Volontaires Français (price twopence or 3/6 per annum), which started in April 1944, and contains a two-sheet *Juniors News-Letter*, subscription 1/6 per annum. Among the revised objects of the A.V.F. are these:—To encourage and assist mem-

bers of the French Forces and their families by moral and material support; to provide a link between all those French people co-operating with the Allies, and those who sympathise with the French Movement, and to help the widows and dependents of fallen French soldiers. Woollen comforts, games and French books are urgently required.

Scottish Women's Hospital Royaumont Relief Unit

DEAR EDITOR,

Herewith short account of the latest activities of above Unit.

The S.W.H. Royaumont Relief Unit has been going ahead quietly, recruiting new members, etc. The number of volunteers is now 31. There has been a certain amount of fading out of some of the earlier recruits, due to the long wait; but the Committee had been warned by the Council of British Societies for Relief Abroad that there might be a prolonged period of waiting for the call to go to France, and advised to keep the Unit together at all costs.

There is, of course, no guarantee that the S.W.H. R.R.U. will ever be called on as the whole matter rests with General de Gaulle. Should he apply to the Government for Relief Units to go and help in France, we stand as good a chance of anyone else; but if he does not ask help from our Government, no British Units of any kind will be sent to help the French.

The old Royaumontites who have volunteered to go are Big Andy, Middleton, P. Williams, Rolt, B. Bruce, Howard Smith and Simms.

Yours,

MORGAN.

Note.—Morgan sends the above account. We should be glad to have readers' views and suggestions about the use of the funds we have collected for France. [Editor]

SCOTTISH WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

Royaumont Relief Unit

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

For the Year to 30th April 1944

To Balances, 1st May 1943—		
At Bank	£122	8 8
Post Office Savings Bank	355	2 1
	£477	10 9
„ Subscriptions and Donations	22	19 0
„ Interest on Post Office—Savings Bank Deposit	8	17 6
	£509	7 3

By Secretarial Expenses, including Advertising and Postages	£10	7 0
„ Balances, 30th April 1944—		
At Bank	£135	0 8
Post Office Savings Bank	363	19 7
	499	0 3
	£509	7 3

We have prepared this Statement of Accounts from the Books and Vouchers, and certify it to be correct and in accordance therewith. We have verified the Deposit at the Post Office Savings Bank.

HARTLEYS, WILKINS & FLEW,
Chartered Accountants,

1 Central Buildings, Westminster,
S.W.1.

Royaumont Association

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

In hand December 1942	£91	7 2
Subscriptions paid in 1943 and 1944	32	3 0
P.O. Account Interest	4	16 10
	£128	7 0

Paid out—		
Stationery & Postage	£2	9 10
2 News-Letters	9	17 6
Wreath (Miss Ivens)	3	3 0
	15	10 4

Balance in hand, November 1944	£112	16 8
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Stationery and postage includes expenses of General Meeting, 1943.

FROM FAR AND NEAR

Mrs Alison is now back in her London home and very busy driving for the W.V.S. as well as being chairman of our S.W.H. R.R.U., and her kind hospitality is much appreciated by members of this Committee.

Alison Anderson (Lady Blood) is now a Colonial Governor's lady, her husband having been made Governor of the Gambia in 1942, since when he has been knighted.

Berry P. we are sorry to hear is much crippled with rheumatism. She is living with her married sister in the South.

Bunyan: Miller met Bunyan at Yeaman's, the first time since 1918, although she has been at one or two dinners. She teaches in Leith and is still most amusing and entertaining.

Burrard (Mrs Dashwood) is now living in the converted stables of the home at Foxhill, Farnborough, of her father, who died in 1943. Sir

Sidney Burrard had had a distinguished scientific and military career in India, where his investigations into the intensity and force of gravitation led to exciting discoveries about the earth's crust, including the existence of a buried range of mountains underlying the Plains of Northern India.

Cannon (Mrs Walford) is now living in Norfolk running her home. Her husband is back from India and her daughter hopes to go on the stage.

Collum says that, as she was aged 30 when she went out to Royaumont, she has taken no active part in this war beyond doing the entire work of her home and cultivating extra ground for vegetables, and Fire Guard duties. When she was over age for voluntary F.G. duty, she was asked to go through the special course for F.G. instructors, and she and an artist neighbour, one year her senior, trained all the 250 F.G.'s of the parish of Shere. During the flying bomb attack, being situated high up with an extensive view to S.E., E. and N., and practically on the borders of Shere and Abinger parishes, she was on permanent night observation and report duty for the head warden at Shere village, thus saving the wardens' post unnecessary investigations when explosions, which sounded to them as though in their parish, were actually in Abinger. Abinger Church was totally destroyed, as members will have seen in the Press. She understands that only "strays" came her way, but she could both hear and see the flashes of the Croydon hits, so that it seemed quite "noisy" enough! She is still trying to carry on with her soil researches.

Dr Courtauld writes to Millar that, in spite of a little shortness of breath and a chronic cough, she gets around on her game leg with a stick and is able to do little jobs about the house. They have had a few visits in the district from flying bombs. One exploded in the village nearby and a good many of the windows at Perces were blown out, the glass crashing down and making a great noise on the gravel. Somewhat startling!

Dow J. writes: "I have a full-time job with the Edinburgh Branch of the B.R.C.S. and spend my days in the stores packing hospital supplies or sending out clothing to bombed-out people. We had a tremendous influx from the London Hospitals last August and still have many patients here, some of whom have lost everything and have to be clothed from A to Z."

Millar met **Don** this summer. Many of us remember with pleasure her charming interpretation of songs. Don lives at home looking after a big house with little or no domestic help. She had Polish officers billeted on her at the beginning of the war but they have now all left the district.

Another friend of Royaumont, **Marshal Franchet d'Esperey**, who consolidated the French positions between Rheims and Villers Cotterets in 1918 and thus began the check of the German offensive, died at the age of 86 in 1942.

The French sculptor, **Charles Geoffroy-Dechaume**, who designed and himself carved the Royaumont Monument, died at his home in Valmondois, Seine-et-Oise, in July 1943. It will be remembered that this distinguished athlete was crippled in the last war, in which he was a volunteer. To quote the Hon. Neville Lytton in *The Times* of 25/7/44: "... in June 1940 his great love of England and his perfect confidence that Great Britain would succeed in standing up to Hitler inspired him to write a magnificent letter to Marshal Pétain, wherein he warned him that the million British soldiers buried in French soil would rise up as witnesses against him were he to betray the sacred alliance. Thank God! he lived long enough to see the whole of France united against the hated Hun." The Poet Laureate also wrote a tribute to him, saying he was "the France of our hearts, the cherisher of all that is noble among men ... our enduring, faithful friend." Royaumont's sympathy goes out to his wife and family, just as theirs, we may be sure, went out to us when flying bombs were launched, not so very far from their home, against us. There was a cane depot in the forest near Isle Adam. Readers know, of course, that another depot was in the mushroom caves at St. Leu d'Esserent, and still others in the limestone caves at Thiverny, near St. Leu, and at Trossy et Maximin, near Creil—all of which were bombed by the R.A.F.

Dr Jane Lorimer Hawthorne, who deputised for Dr Agnes Savill in the X-ray department in 1915, died on 10th January 1943 at the Middlesex Hospital. She was the daughter of the late Sir William Lorimer, LL.D., and her devoted work at the Hospital for Mothers and Babies at Woolwich, between the wars, is her memorial. Collum has grateful recollections of all she did to teach her the elements of radiography when she first went to the department as a photographic orderly.

"**Jamie**," **Leishman**, **Betty** and **Millar** had a reunion last July at Leishman's flat in Glasgow. Needless to say, the evening was a tremendous success, from the supper which began it to the last of the stories which ended it!

Kennedy (Mrs Clements) is hoping to sail for America shortly.

Macgregor (Mrs Hallam) is still living in Kent but had a very trying time with "doodle bugs."

B. Macpherson (Mrs Bruce) is working at King George's Club for Officers, South Audley Street, London.

Jean Macpherson has still her little flat in Merchiston and Millar sees her often.

Main's (Mrs Breakey) address is now 602 Keyes House, Dolphin Square. She is as busy as ever organising the blood transfusion at the Middlesex Hospital as well as running her home. She sometimes sees Forrest, who is working at the British Red Cross, St. James's Palace.

Bobbie's husband, now an Air Vice-Marshal, was made a K.C. not long ago, and they attended a tea party at the Palace later and met the Princess Elizabeth.

The following postcard from Viarmes, written the 25th January, has only just (February 14) reached **Merrylees**, to whom the Committee deputed the task of contacting old friends in the Royaumont area: Nous remercions beaucoup toutes les Dames Ecossaises de Royaumont; les batailles ont épargné les communes de Viarmes et d'Asnières, il n'en a pas été de moins de celles situées de l'autre côté de l'Oise, aussi que de Precy qui ont été violemment bombardées. Le Memorial pour les Morts Anglais de la Grande Guerre n'a pas subi de dommages. M. Delacoste est mort pendant l'occupation. Nous espérons également que vous êtes toutes bien et pensons que vous devez être bien occupées à passer toutes les plaies causées par la guerre. Vous pouvez croire que nous comprenons la part prise par le peuple anglais dans la lutte contre l'Allemagne, par sa ténacité. Recevez, Mademoiselle, nos meilleurs vœux.—Le Maire. From the curious description of our monument it would appear that the present maire—whose signature is illegible—is a recent importation, but writing on behalf of others who remember us. Merrylees has not yet heard from Daviaud, but heard that Emile Rouilly, "le Spécialiste," fell victim to the rigours of the German occupation in July 1943, after two years' painful illness, brought on originally by over-fatigue when he and Madame and their son Robert's wife, Jeanne, had to evacuate in a hurry from Etampes-sur-Marne to Orleans in May 1940, and aggravated after their return, when the Armistice was signed, by lack of the proper diet and medicaments. He, who so hated to be unoccupied, had to pass two suffering years bedridden, and grieving over Robert's deportation as a prisoner of war to Germany just after the Vichy administration had promised him release and Spécialiste had cycled to Troyes to meet him, only to find that he had been sent to Germany that morning. News was regularly received from Robert, who was put to work for a small private master in the country near Coblenz, until last April, since when they have heard nothing. Etampes was liberated almost without resistance, says Madame in her long letter to Merrylees, "a great comfort since the Boche in retreat is often greedy." Food in the towns is hard to get, but Madame, though unused to the work, has turned their large garden to good account, and is a small eater! She has nothing to complain of on that score—if only Robert might return to them! "It was with deep regret that I learned of the death of the admirable Miss Ivens, who also has left us far too soon. Please give my kind regards to all those who knew 'Spécialiste' and for whom he had such warm feelings."

Middleton now drives for the W.V.S. Supervisor of the Land Army in Essex. Not long ago she took Young for a drive to Eastbourne, which was quite like old times!

Millar writes: "The best of living in the Scottish Capital is that one is always seeing friends passing through from the South or, better still, those who are able to spend a few days among us and have been lucky enough to find hotel accommodation. Life has been quite gay in spite of war conditions, and much brighter 'o' nights' since the blackout restrictions were reduced. The Princes Street crowd has taken on a much nimbler step and become a quick-going procession of the Services and busy civilians. The weather has been very cold and the snow quite thick, followed by a devastating thaw which turned every street into a quagmire. Fortunately, we are now enjoying a dry seasonable spell. The Scottish Orchestra with such soloists as Moiseiwitsch, Solomon and Kentner has given us a series of excellent concerts, and the Wilson Barrett Co. has delighted theatre-goers by producing some old favourites. Ivor Novello's "Dancing Years" was a great attraction at Xmas and New Year.

Millar is still at the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, doling out meals, supervising probationers' cooking efforts in the kitchen, and practical nursing in the Preliminary Training School. Will any Royaumontite passing through Edinburgh please come and see her. She will get a warm welcome and a good cup of tea. Address—Nurses' Classroom, Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh.

Moffat (Moffie) is kept very busy at massage. She has a large and successful practice in and around Brechin.

Nicky is kept very busy at her "Comforts" Depot. Her official position is Planning Officer for Northumberland. She goes up to London occasionally to attend Red Cross conferences, and manages, at the same time, to make a few visits (one to Little Andy always) and see one or two shows.

Oliver has a secretarial job with the British Red Cross. She is now living in London.

Paley has been farming since 1940. "I am now building up a small herd of pedigree shorthorns which I find intensely interesting." She is also Hon. Secretary of the local Nursing Association.

Percival is working in a Government office in Holborn and sometimes sees Mackay.

Peter (Mme. Campora), writing to Mackay from Oran, in a letter dated 16/11/44, says: "This morning—to my great delight—I got the August *News-Letter* and I see you request people to write. It was really nice to hear bits of news about people. I read the letter through from the first to last and (rather to the detriment of the lunch I was cooking) straight off, and hope you will get this letter thanking you for remembering to send the *News-Letter* to me. Very likely it has always been sent, only so many letters get lost both coming and going, and for years I have hardly had any letters from England except from my family, who write every week, and therefore

I get a percentage of theirs. Here, in this little town—"a l'intérieur," as the French say—we have been terribly out of things—to my intense regret—and anyhow it is the turn of the young ones. French girls, of course, are neither wanted nor encouraged to be in things like English ones, though they are beginning to be wanted now. My eldest girl is a glider fan: we have a very good 'centre' here, and she has all her 'brevets' except the last, when she will be a full-blown pilot of the 'ool a wife'—they all have to pass by that to become pilots of planes, you know. My second girl was an ambulance driver right up at the front with the French in the Tunisia campaign, and now that is over she has signed on for the duration in the French Army as interpreter, with the rank of 2nd Lieutenant. The two younger ones are still at school. For two months this summer we were very happy as we had a tremendous lot of British troops here. It was lovely, and the house was always crammed with the dear things—usually two different sets to look after and talk to, because I kept more or less open house for all ranks—and as the Tommies didn't like stumbling in upon their officers, they took to coming round to the kitchen. It was often brain-racking to find things to feed them with for all sorts of impromptu meals, but they were awfully sweet about bringing us their rations if they mealed here often, and we eat the rations and gave them our food, which they loved as a change, and we are lucky because we live outside the town and have a garden and poultry and things. One day who should walk in but my one and only English nephew. Wasn't it splendid luck that, in all North Africa, he should have been sent here? We had some very nice Americans around, too—but everyone is gone from here now. We missed them dreadfully at first—do still, for that matter. If only it would soon finish, but things move slowly, and I suppose the end is still a long way ahead. Well I must stop or you will think me a bore. I should like to tell you lots of things about the situation here but I suppose the letter wouldn't get through if I did. With kindest regards and warmest remembrances to everyone I knew, especially Miss Nicholson, Nicky, Buckley, Miller, Moffat, Wilson, Little Andy, Big Murray (I am so glad the latter is better)."

Peter (Williams) is hoping the Unit will set out to France. She is one of the old band who has volunteered, so also is Rolt whom she sees quite often.

France writes: "I am just ending a very happy 20 months with the Home Guard. I joined as soon as Ellen Wilkinson got it past the higher authorities! I have had a nice lot of transport work—men to training schools; and attending on range to douche out rifles, etc. We had a lovely farewell dinner and march past in Chelmsford last Sunday of all Essex Battalions. I worked for the Seventh Battalion. We have our own Battalion farewell on 3rd December and then my job closes down, alack. Anyway, the H.G. didn't stand down till the German equivalent had to stand up."

Richmond (Mrs Haydon) has just returned from a tour in France and Belgium, where she was playing in "A Soldier for Christmas." Her daughter is at home again and her husband expected shortly. She now has a flat at 50 Courtfield Gardens, S.W.7.

Rolt is busy gardening. There are few things, if any, that Rolt doesn't know about. I wonder how many jobs she took on at Royaumont and made a success of them all.

Smieton (Mrs Sanderson) writes: "When the buzz bomb came on the scene and life down here was pretty tough, we had to sleep for nearly three months in an air raid shelter. We had fighters, guns and balloons to defend us. By day I worked on balloon sites in the most out-of-the-way places on a Y.M.C.A. van. It was a grand job but rather a strain, and of course I had no time to come to London at all. Now the job is finished and I am free for the moment."

Statbles is living in Argyll and breeding rabbits "for meat and fur," which she finds very hard work. She is also a probation officer and helps with Guides; so, as she says, "If I am not running after rabbits, it is children, and both can be equally troublesome."

"**The Robin**" (Miss Loudon), writing to Tollit, says: "I had spent 5 weeks in hospital with a broken arm and was not at all keen to go to Edinburgh to shop, and I find laziness grows on one. My housekeeper, too, had been ill, and we were rather a pair of crocks. However, I trust we are both on the mend now. The accident was entirely due to my own stupidity, which did not make it any the easier to bear—two broken arms in 10 months was a bit thick! I am so glad that Ruth and Miss Hamilton are now the President and Vice-President of the R.A. It gives the Association some form."

Tollit writes: "I am now repairing linen at a hospital two days a week and going to a knitting circle one day a week. The Red Cross depot where I have worked since early in the war closed down at Xmas, as the premises were taken back by the original owners. Am looking forward very much to the *News-Letter*."

Wilson writes from Perth: "I have often thought of you during these past bad months and I do hope you escaped any damage from the doodles. It must have been very dreadful for you all and it is difficult for us to realise what you have had to bear, as we have lived in such peace here. My sister had to send her family up to us for 3 months, as it was so bad at Kingswood and schools were all closed. However, I loved having them, and they kept me cheery. Mother died in July and she has been ill for so long and such a constant care night and day, that the children were really a godsend and kept me busy. Have not had time to make plans yet, but this house is far too big for two of us. Have seen Miller again several times this year. She lets me know when she is passing through—she was up with Moffet

for a few days. Banks was in Cupar, so I had a wonderful afternoon with her in August. Buses were so crowded and impossible, I hardly expected to see her, but I went so far by train and then cycled 6 miles. Banks managed to get the loan of a bike and met me, which was grand."

Woodhouse writes from Rhodesia. She expects to return to England soon and would like a job with the R.R. Unit in France.

Yeaman lost her mother at the end of the year, and so did **Wilson**. Wilson is still being the good Samaritan at Perth Station, meeting old Royaumontites with a tea basket and booking "corners" for them.

Young is also working at the Middlesex Hospital, where she engages and supervises the domestic workers.