

Teresa

# ROYAUMONT & V.C. ASSOCIATION of THE SCOTTISH WOMEN'S HOSPITALS NEWS LETTER



JANUARY, 1965

No. 4—Series 2

**Object of the Association:** To maintain our war-time comradeship.

**Subscription:** Five shillings per annum, payable 1st January, for the year.

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**Hon. Editor:** Miss M. S. Miller, Meadowbank Cottage, New Galloway, Castle-Douglas.

## EDITORIAL

A Happy New Year to you all and good health in 1965!

On June 11th, 1964, the Royaumont and V.C. Association held a luncheon to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the opening of Royaumont-Hôpital auxiliaire 301 at the Abbaye de Royaumont, Seine et Oise, France.

I wonder how many of us remembered that 1964 was to be the 50th Anniversary of the opening of Royaumont? I certainly did not, until our President mentioned the fact at the Tea-Party in Edinburgh in August, 1963, and suggested our having a special commemoration of the event. It was arranged finally that we should have a luncheon at the Overseas Club, Princes Street, Edinburgh, on June 11th, 1964. A full description has been sent by Moffet to the present News Letter and appears later on in the paper. Accompanying this is a very interesting account of the various steps that led to the Foundation of the Scottish Women's Hospitals and to the opening of Royaumont. Moffet sent out all the notices and organised the luncheon. Ramsay had a busy preliminary and exhausting search trying to find out the names and addresses of so many

of the old staff who, at differing times, had been at Royaumont and V.C. There were many who did not belong to the Association, others with whom we came rarely in contact, chiefly because of the distance separating us, or just because of circumstances drawing a dividing line between the distant past and the present. Over 100 notices were posted. Moffet's Report will tell you the result.

When I returned home from Edinburgh after the Tea-Party of August, 1963, with thoughts centred on the coming Anniversary, I felt it was an appropriate moment to dip once again into the annals of the old Abbaye by reading Antonio Navarro's "The Scottish Women's Hospital at the French Abbey of Royaumont." What an interesting bit of history it makes, and how proud we are of those pioneers who worked so hard during the fateful winter 1914-15 trying to put some order into what was a despairing chaos! A great change had been wrought by the time that I, and others, arrived in August, 1915, and I am sure that we, new orderlies, did not fully realise, in the excitement of our arrival in France, the Herculean task involved in transforming a dusty, abandoned 13th century Abbey into—as near as was possible—a modern hospital.

I find, too, that re-reading the old Letters gives one back somehow the spirit of enthusiasm that inspired the work of all in those bygone days. Shall we ever forget the beauty of the place—the gentle, undulating countryside, the orchards and rich forests carpeted with, in springtime, les muguets, about which the blessés loved to sing, the long straight roads, the pièces d'eau bordered by the tall poplars so characteristic of the French landscape. It is so difficult not to be sentimental about Royaumont, and how good it was to be alive and able to celebrate and participate in its 50th anniversary!

### The Centenary of the Birth of Dr Elsie Inglis

The year 1964 was the centenary of the birth of our Founder, Dr Elsie Inglis. She must have visited Royaumont, but I do not remember, for I never saw her there. Most of us have read so much about her wonderful personality and work, a part of which we helped to carry out at Royaumont, that she appears a very familiar figure.

Leng and I went to the Service held on the 16th August in the Dean Cemetery, Edinburgh, where she is buried, and there I met, after many years, Violet Inglis (Wendy)—little changed from the old days. We had a short time together but hoped to meet again at the Commemoration Service in St. Giles on the 1st November. Unfortunately, however, I had to leave Edinburgh before then.

The Service was attended by her relatives, matrons past and present of the Elsie Inglis Memorial Maternity Hospital, Edinburgh, and by members of the Scottish Eastern Association of the Medical Women's Federation. Some lovely wreaths were placed on her grave.

In the Hospital, babies born on the 16th August were given christening cups, suitably inscribed, by the board of management for the Edinburgh Southern Hospitals. The board has agreed that a plaque be incorporated in the new wing of the hospital now in course of construction. When the alterations have been completed the Scottish Eastern Association will establish a "Garden of Remembrance" as a permanent memorial.

In the "In Memoriam" column of the News Letter you will see that we announce the death of five of our members—"Tippy" Butler, Minchin, Salway, Dr Savill and Stein. After a serious illness at the end of 1963 Salway made a brave effort to attend the 50th Anniversary luncheon in Edinburgh and, to a certain extent, she seemed to have recovered her old love of laughter and fun but when lunching alone with her the following week she expressed doubts about her recovery. To many of

her friends she was known as "Scally" (the Scalliwag) for she was full of fun and "espièglerie," to use a French word that describes that quality better than any other. Our President has written a tribute to her memory in "In Memoriam." (See also Oliver's letter to the Editor in "From Far and Near.")

One of our members writes suggesting that those who can conjure up some amusing stories or incidents at Royaumont and V.C. would be welcomed. During the First World War most of us fully recognised that to possess a sense of humour—when the occasion called for it—was absolutely necessary to one's sanity. Without it life would have been a pretty grim affair so, with the hope that this sense is still viable, let us have something funny or something more introspective, perhaps, according to one's way of thinking.

Dr Henry has given us for this number of the News Letter a long list of reminiscences drawn from looking at dozens of "snaps" of staff and of blessés.

### Letter from our President.

Hare and Hounds Hotel,  
Westonbirt,  
near TETBURY, Glos.,  
1st January, 1965.

Dear Members,

Last year was the fiftieth Anniversary of the opening of the Scottish Women's Hospital at Royaumont. The event was celebrated by a most enjoyable and successful Lunch held in Edinburgh on June 11th, 1964, details of which will be found elsewhere in the News Letter. All Members of the Association were invited and Ramsay and a small Committee wrote to other Royaumontites, whose addresses she had, in the hope of getting into touch with "lost sight of" staff. Much work was involved and Ramsay and her Committee are to be congratulated on the success of their efforts.

A tea party was held in London on September 25th especially for those who could not attend the Edinburgh reunion. The tea party was a small but very pleasant affair, marred only by the news that Salway had died some days previously and that no one present had been told.

The Royaumont and V.C. Association continues to carry on undaunted and our Meetings and Reunions are an unfailing source of enjoyment. The Committee work very hard to keep in touch with all Members and I trust that to help our Hon. Editor to continue producing her excellent News Letters, you will give her all the information you possibly can. I know that Stewart, our Hon. Treasurer, will welcome Members' subscriptions.

I thank the Committee who have made 1964 such a memorable year and with best wishes for 1965 to all Members,

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

SMIETON.

### Letter from our Chairman.

Whyteknowe,  
Peebles,  
Scotland,  
January, 1965.

Dear Members,

1964 has been a varied year for Royaumont and V.C. Members. To celebrate our longevity, and 50 years is no mean achievement, we had two Reunions, the Luncheon in Edinburgh, and the Tea Party in London.

At the Luncheon we were delighted to welcome Littlejohn, now Mrs Hedderwick, who went out with the original Unit in December, 1914, and, at the Tea Party I was very glad to meet several Members whom I had not seen for years.

These were the two cheerful events of 1964. But during the year we lost many old friends, among them, Mrs Savill, Butler, and Salway. Salway's death was a great shock as she had seemed so fit and well at the Luncheon and had helped to arrange for the Tea Party to be held at her Club.

The numbers at the two gatherings were very good and would have been much higher but for "doctor's orders" which kept several from travelling. Unfortunately one cannot find a date to suit everyone but we hope to do better this year.

With best wishes to you all for a healthy and happy 1965.

Yours ever,

RAMSAY.

### 50th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Scottish Women's Hospitals.

Our Chairman writes:

Lately I was looking at the "History of the Scottish Women's Hospitals," and it struck me that perhaps some of the younger Members of the Royaumont and V.C. Association might not quite realise what we meant by the "50th Anniversary" which we celebrated last year. It is an amazing story and can well bear repeating.

War was declared on August 4th, 1914. On the 12th the Scottish Federation of Women's Suffrage Societies had a Committee Meeting in Edinburgh. In the Minutes of that Meeting we read (I quote from the "History of the S.W.H."):

"Dr Inglis proposed that the Federation should give organised help to Red Cross Work.

Miss Mair proposed that St. George's School, Melville Street, should be applied for and equipped as a Hospital.

Dr Inglis proposed that Melville Street School be equipped as a Hospital STAFFED ENTIRELY BY WOMEN—and if not required at home to be sent abroad."

And so the scheme was launched.

I think we should remember the Women who were the central directing power on "the Scottish Women's Hospital Committee" sitting in Edinburgh. And again I quote from the "History of the S.W.H.":

"Miss S. E. S. Mair of Edinburgh and Mrs James T. Hunter of Glasgow were respectively President and Chairman, and Mrs Laurie of Greenock was Hon. Treasurer of the Society from its beginning. After Dr Inglis' departure to Serbia in May, 1915, Miss J. H. Kemp was Hon. Secretary. Dr Beatrice Russell, Mrs Wallace Williamson, Mrs Walker, and Mrs Salveson, the Hon. Secretary and Conveners respectively of the Personnel, the Uniforms, the Equipment and the Cars Committee have worked with untiring zeal."

It was found impossible to obtain the houses in Melville Street and it was decided to offer the Unit to the War Office.

This offer was declined.

On 20th August, just eight days after that first Meeting, letters were sent to the Embassies of Belgium, France, and Russia.

On October 20th Dr Elsie Inglis spoke at Kingsway Hall, London, on behalf of the Hospitals, and from that date money began to flow in, in a steady stream, until at the end of the war, from a start of £115, the sum of £449,000 had been reached.

On 7th November, 1914, France accepted the offer of help.

On 19th November, 1914, just three months after the S.W.H. had offered a Hospital for service abroad, Dr Hutchinson and Sister Linton went to Calais to see what help could be given to the Belgians.

On 5th December the Unit for Royaumont under Miss Ivens arrived in Paris, and went to Royaumont the next day. From that date most of us know how the Hospital developed and how much work was done there.

Villers Cotterets has not yet reached its 50th year. It was not opened until 1917, and worked from July, 1917, to May, 1918, when it returned to Royaumont.

### The Edinburgh Reunion and Luncheon Party.

Moffet submits this Report of the above:

On June 11th, 1964, the Royaumont and V.C. Association held a luncheon to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the opening of the Hôpital Auxiliaire 301, Abbaye de Royaumont, Seine et Oise, France.

The Committee did a great deal of work trying to trace any old Royaumontites who had lost touch, and invitations were sent to all present members and many who are no longer members. In all, over one hundred letters were posted.

Forty-four letters of regret were received and twenty-five acceptances. The remainder did not reply. Telegrams were received from Figgis, Jamieson, Evelyn Moore ("John"), and Merrylees. Acceptances: D. Anderson, M. Anderson, (Madame Petitpierre), Don, Dow, Jamieson, Littlejohn (Mrs Hedderwick), Leishman, Lindsay, B. Macpherson (Mrs Bruce), Manson (Mrs Falconer), Miller, Moffet, A. Nicholson, Ramsay-Smith, Rolt, Rose Morris, Rutherford (Mrs Riordan), Salway (Mrs McIntosh), Simpson (Mrs Gray), Sinclair, Smieton (Lady Sanderson), Stewart, Thorpe (Mrs Victor Smith), Torrance, Warren.

On Thursday, 11th June, 1964, the weather was more than kind and, in bright sunshine, 22 staunch, and quite hale and hearty Royaumontites assembled in Overseas House, Princes Street, Edinburgh, to enjoy the Reunion and a delicious lunch (so everyone said), and talk their heads off.

Our President, Smieton (Lady Sanderson), and our Chairman (Ramsay-Smith), with Miller (News Letter Editor) and most of the Committee were present.

It was especially pleasant to welcome Littlejohn (now Mrs Hedderwick) who was out with the first contingent, and has, through our advertisement in the Press, joined the Association. Also, having Rutherford (Mrs Riordan) all the way from Victoria, Australia, was a pleasure to all who had not met her for many years. Little Andy (Madame Petitpierre) who was over from France visiting her daughter in Essex, motored up to be present. Rolt, too, who had not been to a Reunion for some years, got a big welcome from her many friends. Another whose membership had lapsed and who has rejoined was Thorpe (Mrs Victor Smith) now living at Moffat. Don was another member whom we had not seen for some years. She had just returned from a world tour in time to stop on her way back to Angus and join the party. It was nice to see Torrance back in our midst after some years' absence.

When going about among the members it was most encouraging to hear them say how happy they

were to meet so many old comrades and to know that the Royaumont and V.C. Association was still very much alive and flourishing.

Three more Overseas members sent deep regrets at not being able to be present, Dr Leila Henry and Clarke (Office), both living in Montreal, and Barclay (Mrs Golding) from S. Rhodesia. It was very unfortunate that Sister Lindsay, Warren and Jamieson were prevented at the last moment from being present owing to illness. We missed them, and greetings were sent from everyone present to all three. Daunt, too, had been ill and could not make the tiring journey to Scotland.

The Committee feel the venture was well worth while, and hope future reunions will continue in the same spirit for many years to come.

We are grateful to all those who wrote to thank us for organising the luncheon.

### Tea-Party in London

Because many members of Royaumont and Villers-Cotterets Association were unable to come to Edinburgh from the south to the Anniversary Luncheon, it was decided to have a Tea-Party in London on 25th September, 1964. Of course it was not possible to fix a date to suit everyone and thirty-five regretted inability to be present owing to illness or absence at that time, but they all sent best wishes for a successful Reunion and kindest remembrances to all who had known them. In the end there were 18 present including Sister Adam's (Mrs Bushby) daughter.

Acceptances: Adam (Mrs Bushby), Mrs Alison, Big Andy, Howard Smith, Large (Mrs Wilson), Leishman, Macfie, Marriott (Mrs Lake), Merrylees, Middleton, Moffet, Moore ("John"), Parkinson, Ramsay-Smith, Rose Morris, Salway (Mrs Macintosh), Smeal, Smieton (Lady Sanderson), Whitehorn.

Mrs Bushby's daughter very kindly brought some colour photographs of Royaumont which she and her husband had taken when they were there last summer. She projected these on a screen and everybody was delighted to see them.

The Tea-Party was at the Overseas Club which provided an excellent tea in a lovely double room looking on to the Park. Everyone was in great form and, though of course we all looked a bit older, there was no sign of age in the buzz of talk.

The one tragedy was the unexpected news of Salway's death. At the Luncheon in Edinburgh she seemed to have made a complete recovery from her serious illness, and it was she who made the arrangements for the Tea-Party to be held at her Club, so we were all very shocked and saddened.

We thank Nicky and Dorothy Anderson for their telegram.

If members think it would be a good idea to have an annual Tea-Party in London, as well as in Edinburgh, will they please let Ramsay know, and she will put the matter before the Committee.

### In Memoriam

With great regret and with deep sympathy to their relations and friends we announce the death of several of our members.

**Butler ("Tippy")** was present at nearly all the London Reunions. We missed her very much when the rendezvous was changed to Edinburgh and, although she was not able to come so far, she always sent us Greetings. She died, after an operation, in a Nursing Home at Woking, on March 26th, 1964.

**Dr Agnes Savill**, Dermatologist and Electrotherapist, died on 14th April, 1964. She held many posts in London as a specialist in Skin Diseases. In the 1914-18 War she was chief of the Electrotherapeutic Department, Scottish Women's Hospital, Royaumont, France.

She was author of several books on her own subject, was editor of her late husband's *Clinical Medicine* and in 1955 published *Alexander the Great and his Time*.

**Minchin (Madame Steinmann)**. We received the following announcement of her death from Zurich:

"Una Eleanor Steinmann, née Minchin, was delivered from her sufferings on June 2nd, 1964.

She passed away in a Nursing Home near Zurich. Her ashes have been put into her beloved husband's grave in Ober-Winterthur."

**Salway (Mrs McIntosh)** died suddenly at Trunkwell House, Beech Hill, Nr. Reading, Berkshire, on September 12th, 1964.

Our President writes the following tribute to her memory:

The unexpected death of Salway shortly before the 50th Anniversary Tea Party in London in September, 1964, came as a great shock to all those who knew her.

She was a great personality and did outstanding work at Royaumont in nursing and helping the wounded. At Villers-Cotterets in 1917 and early in 1918 during the great rush, she acted as postman, which duty she performed with great efficiency accompanied by the faithful "Spot," an aged fox-terrier who had been left behind by some British troops.

After the War she was active in the formation of the Royaumont and Villers-Cotterets Association, of which she was the Hon. Treasurer for

many years. She was most kind and generous in helping in the activities of the Association, who have lost in her a true friend. She was at Royaumont and Villers-Cotterets from 11th October, 1916 to 21st January, 1919. SMIETON.

**Stein (Dr N. H.)**. At 5 Great Stuart Street, Edinburgh, on Tuesday, 5th January, 1965, Nettie Hunter Stein.

Stein was at Royaumont from June, 1917, till July, 1918. She then qualified M.B., Ch.B. and practised in Edinburgh.

As we go to Press the death at Colchester, on 19th February, 1965, has just been announced of **Dr Estcourt-Oswald ("Nancy")**, at the age of 90 years.

She was at Royaumont from November, 1915, to 2nd May, 1916, and 1st October, 1916 to 30th October, 1916.

### A Hospital in France

By Collum

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### CHAPTER 11.

Luck—or the sound instinct of these eleventh-century monkish builders, whose life was so inextricably mixed up with the fresh-water system of the country — had placed the abbaye on the artificially deflected arm of one stream, and within the borders of another, both emptying into the Oise. This second stream became the boundary of the French military zone, and twelve kilometres within the boundary was the junction of C—, always an important railway pivot on the Nord system, destined in this way to become a key station. Here had been established one of the most important *Gares Régulatrices* of the military system for evacuating wounded from the north, through Paris, to the zone interior. The administrative medical officer in charge of this G.R. had borrowed from the Camp Retranché de Paris (whose zone was extended far to the north of the capital when Gallieni took charge of Paris and set to work to improvise its modern defences) all the hospitals within a twenty-kilometre radius of his headquarters, and among them our abbaye. Our hospital thus became attached, through this G.R., to one of the French Armies on the Northern Front, and eventually obtained its wounded direct from the front, as they were distributed through the G.R. at the junction of C—. And C— was destined, during the first Somme battle of 1916, to be one of the busiest and most important distributing centres for

one of the greatest battles of the war, just as Senlis—historic little city!—in the second battle of the Marne resumed for itself—and for us—its importance of 1914.

So chance—or destiny—flung our little emergency unit of women into the one spot in the whole of France where it could prove of greatest value during that great struggle, and that later struggle—for Paris—in June-July, 1918, and where it could also seize the opportunity to translate its experiment into successful enterprise, its improvisation into a perfected organisation, functioning at high tension during two critical periods of stress and strain.

My personal recollections of the hospital begin from the last days of February, 1915. I found the unit established and, as the French say, already thoroughly *habitué*. There were two wards on the ground floor of the abbaye, and one on the second floor, in a very beautiful pillared and vaulted room that had once been the monkish library. Its tall church windows looked out to the south-west on the park. North-east, they gave on to a terrace that had been cunningly built up on the top of the cloisters, and ran round the four sides of the cloistered court, trim, patterned with grass plots and miniature paths, with a fountain in the centre. Seventy patients were in hospital, of whom perhaps one half were suffering from slight wounds. The rest were *malades*—poor fellows whom their first winter in the trenches had surprised with weak chests, internal disorders, or physical disabilities of some kind or another. Many of the patients were men of the Territorial Army and its Reserve who, in the first overwhelming rush of the invasion, had been hustled into the front line to hold up with their outraged patriotism, their red trousers and bad boots, and their old rifles with the sword-bayonets, the flower of the German machine-made army. And, *honneur aux héros!*—they had done it!

My first experience of war at close quarters was in these above-mentioned great rooms, white-washed, with sloping eaves, famous to us ever after as the Cow-sheds. Here, on arrival, I was confronted with seventy piles of filthy, tattered clothing, most of it in sacks, ranged in some semblance or order round and across the room, each sack with a number, from one upwards, corresponding to rough pencil entries in a penny note-book, giving the owner's name and the ward he was in, and the date of his admission. Some of the patients had just been pronounced convalescent and I was told they would shortly require their kit, disinfected, clean, repaired. In March and April we had a steady flow of wounded from the Somme, from Albert and Douellens—names that sound British to you to-day. They arrived nightly from our G.R. at about eight o'clock. Sometimes we had as many as a score or more, sometimes as few as half a dozen. The

Cow-sheds, with their stinking, crawling burden, became a nightmare. I remember our first great field-day with the soiled clothes, when we had prevailed upon a village washerwoman of pre-Marne days to get her fires and boilers going again. The pile was higher than my own head; we packed the clothes into half a dozen ticking mattress cases, hauled them down the oak stairs and took them by motor to the village; the reek of them penetrated into the inhabited wing of the hospital and brought a horrified C.M.O. on the scene, who at once acquiesced in our scheme, cost what it might.

By May we had brought order out of chaos. A still larger room at the very summit of the big building had been reconnoitred and commandeered—a room, I call it—but it ran the length of an entire wing; one could have set a row of cottages, with their back-yards, inside it. We had rigged a pulley from the entrance-hall up the well of the great oak staircase, through a hole in the ceiling that must have dated from monkish days, and secured to an oaken log in the vast attics. By this means the sacks and accoutrements were hauled up and let down—a great relief to the present chronicler who, aforesaid, had shouldered them up the innumerable flights of that fine but interminable stairway. Up here, in the then desolate topmost regions of the building, we sulphured the contents of each sack, sorted and marked the dirty linen and all kit and uniform that required repair. Army stocks were for the moment exhausted. Patients had to go out of hospital in the same kit in which they came in, whether destroyed or not because there was literally nothing to give them to replace it. Eventually we gave all the mending to a voluntary working party of Frenchwomen in the village who, for nearly three years, undertook to mend all the kit and clothing of the men in a hospital that grew, at last, to 400 beds—though, by then, we had our supplies of military kit, and only those garments worth repairing were sent to the wash.

We were a small staff in those early days. We fed in a tiny annexe to the great monks' kitchen, so crowded up that sometimes three would share two chairs. We were still lacking many of our stores. I remember we used to eat (with a secret grimace) our meat and pudding, army fashion, off the same enamel plate. They were short-handed in the scullery and sometimes after a meal there would be a call for volunteers to wash up, and a doctor, a chauffeur, and an orderly might be seen dabbling together in one greasy bowl, indulging in a friendly squabble over the only available wet cloth for drying purposes.

Our bedrooms were simply empty cells, with stone walls, oak floors, and lead-paned windows. If you were lucky you got a bed, a bag of ticking filled loosely with straw, and a couple of blankets, with a tin jug, a basin and a pail. Other furniture

you manufactured from packing-cases. Packing-cases were "acquired." We had not then a proper store-keeper and stores were just unpacked and dumped in an empty unlocked room till required officially. Naturally they were usually "acquired"—officially—long before this. There was great competition between the wards. It was improvisation carried to excess. One wing of the Abbaye was an inhabited château, and there was a kind of No-Man's-Land in between our domain and that of the *châtelain*. Here had been heaped, pell-mell, all the débris of the Nunnery that had been expropriated fourteen years before, and much of the rubbish of the château. It was a happy hunting-ground for us and wonderful were the articles of furniture contrived from the broken woodwork and smashed boxes and iron lumber piled there in confusion. We had sitting-rooms between us. The doctors' room was moderately conventional, with two arm-chairs, a couple of little round tables, and a couch borrowed from the château. So was the Sisters' room, though here packing-cases did duty as tables. The orderlies' room was the best of the three, for it was a beautiful vaulted room built up by loving, but rather muddled nuns on the site and to the supposed pattern of King Louis' retreat-cell and his secret staircase to the Abbaye church adjoining. Still, if it did not follow the precise lines of the original chamber, it was a fine room, and the whole hospital loved it, despite its appalling untidiness. Firewood was bought by the hospital in four-foot lengths, unsplit. To save labour in sawing and splitting the logs, the fire in this room was built up with the end of the logs in the open grate, the rest of the wood sticking out into the room, among people's legs, and getting a kick farther in as the business ends burned down. It was all very messy, very jolly, very friendly—and it was all a very long time ago, though actual years that have passed are hardly four.

#### From Far and Near.

Adam (Mrs Bushby). It was most interesting to read of the visit of her daughter and her husband to Royaumont, and those who were able to be present at the Tea Party in London had the added enjoyment of seeing the coloured photographs taken at Royaumont. Mrs Bushby writes: "I wrote to Monsieur Henri Gouin asking if he would permit them to see the Abbaye. He replied telling me that Royaumont is now open to the public and that if he was in residence when they arrived he would like to meet them—which he did. He was a most charming host and spent half an hour with them showing them round the Abbaye as well as his private apartments. He is the 'Henri Gouin' we knew as a boy of 14 years. He wondered if any of us remembered him?"

After the visit of her family to Royaumont, Mrs Bushby received from Le Directeur, Cercle Culturel de Royaumont, a letter that had been sent to Royaumont by one of our blessés, explaining that he had been with us for 8 months in 1918. He wants us to know that he is still alive and remembers with gratitude what we did for him then. Mrs Bushby passed on the letter to me and I replied to it at once. I had a charming reply from the old patient. If any Royaumontite remembers him, the Editor will hand over the two letters that are in her possession. His name is Charles Royer. His address Langevus, Commune de Moncetz, par Chalons-sur-Marne. Mrs Bushby wonders if he was "that little dark man who always made himself so useful, folding sheets and towels and doing many odd jobs?"

Mrs Alison. She has had another lovely cruise. "We touched down in Florida, Hollywood, and Miami (horrid, soulless place!), Nassau, enchanting, Jamaica, Curacao where our great fat ship, Reine del Mar, sailed down the main street, Panama Canal, most interesting, Venezuela, Caracas, a mass of sky scrapers, Peru, most interesting with its pre-Inca Temples of the Moon and Sun pattern, and lovely embroideries, Chile, then back by Madeira, Vigo, La Rochelle to a most unpleasant spring in London.

College (Mrs Gordon Lennox). We hope College has made a good recovery from the illness that prevented her from attending the luncheon last year in Edinburgh. We all send best wishes to her and we hope to see her in Edinburgh this year at the Reunion.

Daunt. We are sorry to hear that our Irish colleen has had a rather tiresome time in bed, but we are glad she is able to be up now and get around with the aid of a stick. She would like so much if someone would write and tell her all about the parties in celebration of the 50th Anniversary—who were there, how they looked, in fact, about anything and everything. She sends her loving greetings.

Dow. Dow and her sisters had rather a stormy winter with illness, but the way now seems clear for their annual visit to Switzerland. They go by plane and leave on March 12th.

Rutherford (Mrs Riordan) stayed with Dow last June and came to the luncheon also to a very enjoyable tea party given by our Chairman in the grounds of her home in Peebles.

Dunderdale (Lady Clow). On behalf of her Mother, Mrs Oddy, writes to thank the Association for "sending the news over the years. I know she would like me to wish the members many happy times together."



Howard Smith asks if any of us have been to see the "Mods and Rockers"? She sends a description of the Hastings invasion. "Most non-rockers stayed indoors, but, as we (my sister and I) cannot bear to miss anything, we went down the town to see how things were going on. We came on a disgruntled procession escorted by police who, we heard afterwards, had been made to walk up the hill to a place on the cliff. Another group was just kept walking. None was allowed to settle, and no buses would take them on board. So I do not think they will come here again! We saw one scuffle between two police, a rocker and his lady friend, the latter kicking and scratching. People began lining the pavement, others leaned out of windows. None attempted to help until, at last, a man got out of his car just as my sister was hurrying to join in the fun, but she couldn't make it. I said I was not going as she had more hair to lose than I had."

**Jackson.** We were sorry not to see Jackson at the 50th Anniversary in Edinburgh last June. We hope that illness did not prevent her from coming as she had said in a letter to the Editor that she would like very much to attend the celebrations.

**Leng** writes from Barbados where she was with friends enjoying the sunshine and bathing in warm water. This visit was to be followed by a cruise round the islands ending in Jamaica. She flew home. "The cold of Edinburgh will be hard to bear after this!" she says.

**Sister Lindsay.** Doctor's orders prevented her from attending the luncheon although she had already accepted. She was in the Cotswolds in August but just could not face London or we might have seen her at the tea party. ("I don't blame her," Ramsay.) She was very glad to get the signed card from those who were at the luncheon.

**Littlejohn** (Mrs Hedderwick). Littlejohn now lives in Auchterarder, Perthshire. She went out to Royaumont with the first contingent in December, 1914. Those of us who met her at the luncheon were very pleased to see her and we hope she will come to the Reunion this year in Edinburgh. (When I went out in August 15th I remember one of the "cooks" was called Littlejohn. I wonder if this is one and the same? Shall be anxious to know.—Ed.)

**Minchin** (Madame Steinmann) died on June 2nd, 1964, at Zurich after years of suffering. She never recovered her spirits after the death of her husband to whom she was very devoted. Peter tried several times to get information about her last illness and surroundings, but her letters were sent back unanswered. I think she was in great need of kindness and sympathy, and she would have been

happier if she had been near friends who understood and loved her.

**Moffet** seems none the worse of her luncheon activities. She is going off soon on a holiday to Cumberland (including the Lakes) and hopes to see Rolt during her travels.

**Nicky** is always in good spirits, always on the top of the world. The Editor thinks she would be an excellent person to collect for the next News Letter some amusing incidents of Royaumont. The members have been already asked to supply some of these, but the results haven't been very encouraging—there have been too few of them. So will Nicky bring down some of her choicest from "up her sleeve"?

**Oliver**, who was with Salway after her serious heart attack in October, 1963, writes: "I was full of admiration for her. She took it so lightly, made no fuss and no complaint and, on return from hospital, when all her activities had to be restricted and reduced to a minimum her calm patience and cheerfulness never deserted her. After returning from Menton in the early spring of 1964 she decided it was unwise to live alone, so with perfect calm and common-sense she sold everything—all her precious possessions—with not so much as a backward glance."

She went to live in a Hotel in that part of Berkshire where she had many friends. I stayed with her there for a week in July, 1964, and we drove about the countryside. We called one day on an old couple who worked for her when she lived at Bucklebury and they were overjoyed to see her again. It was evident they were very fond of her, as indeed were the people of the hotel who had not known her for very long: I think she inspired affection wherever she went. She was always friendly and affectionate and ready to laugh and enjoy everything—and underneath that easy going nature there was a fine steady courage before which I feel very humble."

**Peter** (Madame Campora). Peter has had a wonderful summer in her beloved Vosges and perfect weather. She and Lucien are now much interested in the building of their new home near their daughter at Chailly, near Fontainebleau. They don't expect to get into it before the end of April as there is still a lot to do—modern plumbing, central heating and special floors. "Still," she says, "with a corner of one's own in view, one can take patience." Peter has now acquired 9 grandchildren—7 boys and 2 girls. (Happy days!—Ed.)

**Robinson** was thrilled to get news of Daunt. She writes: "She and I went to Luz for our leave after the hectic time in the spring of 1918, and we had great adventures. I nearly ended my career

when a pony I was riding up a mountain fell on the narrow track—his body on the track and all his legs sticking out over a terrific drop of I don't know how many hundred feet. We nearly went over, but I managed to roll on to his head and keep him still until the guides tied his legs with a rope and we got him up again. Daunt was on a more sure-footed mount—a donkey! I wonder if she still remembers?"

**Rolt.** We were all glad to see Rolt at the luncheon. She looked very well in spite of the rather indifferent health she has had during the last few years. She sent love to all who remember her. (Could anyone ever forget Rolt and the number of multifarious duties she took upon herself. Her nimble fingers were always engaged on some piece of work.—Ed.)

**Smeal.** Smeal sends us a very interesting account of a holiday she spent at San Marino, an intriguing little country 15 miles from Rimini, near the Italian Adriatic coast.

**Stables.** Stables has been in hospital with arthritis and is now waiting on a caliper being fitted, but in spite of those afflictions she is able to busy herself with her Samoyeds and boarding kennels. Greetings from all!

**Thorpe.** We were very pleased to meet Thorpe again and hope she will come to all the Reunions. Edinburgh is not far from Moffat where she lives now. She was in Palma at the time of the Tea Party and so was not able to be present.

**Tollit** sends her greetings to all. She had a fall while doing some shopping last June resulting in some bad bruising but fortunately no bones were broken. Stewart, who saw her recently, says she is looking very well and, apart from her lameness, is remarkably fit.

**Warren** has had a badly fractured arm but we hear it is now "on the mend." We were sorry not to see her at the Luncheon.

**Williams** and her sister are delighted with their new home in Spain. We wonder if the angry debates regarding the future of Gibraltar are having any reverberations in Alicante? We hope not, now that they have decided to live half the year in Franco's land. The surrounding country is very beautiful, and they are happy to have as neighbours a large group of friendly and charming people, all English-speaking, and of mixed nationality—Dutch, Norwegian, Swedish, Canadian, American. They are now looking forward to planning and planting their garden.

**Whitehorn.** Everyone was glad to see Whitehorn at the Tea Party. We hope she will come to the Edinburgh Reunion in the summer. The Editor

thinks she may find some relatives there. She recalls very vividly the great pleasure her singing gave to everyone at Royaumont. I think it was she who sang "The Raggle-Taggle Gypsies," or was it Don?

25th October, 1964.

Mont Rolland,  
P.Q.,  
Canada.

My dear Miller,

I have been turning over some papers which I have not seen for years and which were transferred to our country retreat when we disposed of our City house.

I did not realise that I had hoarded so many souvenirs of Royaumont and V.C. The first Royaumont dinner programme (Frascati's, London) came to light. Also programmes of concerts in the various Salles with chansons copied by one of the Blessés—verses left out that were not *comme il faut*.

I found hundreds and hundreds of photographs of Blessés—in the Cloisters and around the buildings at V.C. and Royaumont and of personnel. They are all remarkably clear and were all taken with the tiny V.P. Kodak bought for me in Paris by one of the orderlies in 1917 and still in use.

As I glance over these photographs it would seem as if there were perpetual picnics at Royaumont, groups round a piano in the Cloisters, tea parties on the Terrace, punting on the lake, "To and fro-ing" at the entrance, but then I suppose the camera only came into action at slack times.

I am tempted at this juncture to devise a Royaumont and V.C. card game: Shuffle your photos, deal them out, then look at your hand.

Here is the tall gallant figure of General Descoings, posed against the old ruined Tower and, beside him, his dowdy little wife in the long Croix Rouge veil and the moon-faced Madeleine in her orderly's uniform peeping over Father's shoulder. He must have posed so often there, poor man, sometimes with the doctoresses, sometimes with "Seesters," and often with orderlies, and there is usually a dog—was it Spot?

The next is a Farewell at the Front Entrance. Miss Ivens has come down from the operating theatre to see her blessés off—it is summer.

There is another with the same back-drop in winter—three chauffeurs in grizzly coats, ready for the Arctic. At one side stands a Blessé, a tall Arab, 6 ft. 3 ins.—what was his name? He was once 'keeper at the Elephant House at the London Zoo.

Summer is here again. Sister O'Rorke is off for a walk with a group of her blessés.

Here are Maffie and Tozer sitting on top of one of the ruined columns.

"Mammy" (Miss Courtauld) is protesting to Madame Manuel about something. (Did the latter ever find the French husband she had mislaid?)

Here is Ramsay, looking very important, off to Paris. I suppose to hatch some military "advance" with Chief of Staff.

But now I hold the Ace in my hand — the médecin Chef getting out of the Boran Ferry. The old Ferry woman beside her has a little old shawl round her shoulders. The Légion d'honneur graces our Chief's uniform—so that is why she went off to Paris alone that morning?

And here is the "Lab" with Smieton and her test tubes. What had happened to all the bottles and specimens that had accumulated over the years? I remember when Nicky was cleaning up she would find "pieces of patients"—bits of an oesophagus which one, Sparks, a Jockey at Chantilly, had mistreated when he drank sulphuric acid.

A very good photo of the old Curé, that dear old man, who walked miles every day to Royaumont with his pockets full of cigarettes and candy, and his heart full of laughter and sympathy. (I called on him years later.)

Here is one of Peter wheeling Campora round the Abbaye, and beside them two happy looking convalescents rolling in a barrel of pinard.

There are some interiors—Salle Blanche de Castille with Rose Morris and Mathieu and others whose names I forget.

Here is a small group just outside the Terrace—a tea party with little Andy, Maffie, Nicky, Johnny and others.

If I shut my eyes I can hear that record player in the Cloisters—one tune in particular. I can remember every note of it though I cannot name it. Strangely enough one never tired of it.

There are fewer V.C. photos.

One of Mrs Berry and Martland and Big Inglis planting lettuces between the huts.

A splendid photo of "Jimmy," smiling as usual, at her kitchen window calling us all to lunch.

Another of Yvonne Brock (released for some weeks from Madame Curie's "Lab" in Paris) and the "Wee Free."

Mrs Berry again with Miss Stoney. They could never get on together. I remember Mrs Berry taking me aside one day and begging me to take Stoney for a walk in the Forest. "If you do, I shall get you an egg for breakfast, and if you take

her for a walk and lose her, I'll get you two." And that was when eggs were scarce.

There are many more photographs recording happy incidents, but it's the hour of dusk—entre chien et loup—and with the spirit of Royaumont still with you, you may look among the ruins and just catch a glimpse of St. Louis or some of his monks, and if you are fortunate you may see the leper he soigné-ed looking out from his tiny window above the Chapel.

And here is one of the very last of my memories of 46 years ago—Ruth Nicholson and I are bidding farewell to our civilian clientèle and "wobbling" back through the Forest of Chantilly on our bicycles, having enjoyed un petit verre at each stop.

I see by my date that Christmas is only two months away. I hope it will be a very happy one for you and for all our Royaumont friends.

Yours affectionately,

HENRY.

### San Marino—A Journey into the "Clouds"

Paul Gallico, in one of his books, mentions a very small country he "met" on the way when motoring in Europe. In his charming manner, he describes it by saying he blinked his eyes and when he opened them again he found himself in another country! The small country was Lichtenstein.

Now, San Marino, the country I am describing, is even smaller than Lichtenstein, being only 24 square miles in size! This—to me—intriguing little country is really a "bite" out of Italy, so to speak, although wholly independent. It rears its little head 15 miles from Rimini near the Italian Adriatic Coast and is said to be the oldest State in the world.

Its capital town, San Marino, a fascinating fairy-tale little place, stands at the tippy top of a young mountain, Mt. Titano. In order to reach it one winds up and up and up nearly 3000 ft. above sea-level, to be rewarded by a magnificent view of the Adriatic on the one hand and the rolling hills on the other—a wonderful panorama, quite inspiring!

A prow! round the little town is like being in another world; in fact, like a page out of the Middle Ages. The houses and monuments have been rebuilt in the original style, and the Sentries, resplendent in picturesque period costume, parading on the parapets of the three fortified Towers, add to the beauty of the scene.

This miniature Republic possesses 3 or 4 friendly little hotels—listed in the Michelin Guide—as well as restaurants and other amenities which make for an agreeable stay. Amongst other things on sale in the shops, gold and silver souvenirs and pottery made by local craftsmen, can be found.

Another local "industry" is postage stamps! When I was in San Marino, I spent a good deal of my time sending post-cards to my stamp-collecting friends, the stamps in this unique little country being most attractive. Incidentally, they form quite a "fat" source of revenue for the local Post Office!

From a historical point of view, San Marino provides a good deal of interest. In 300 A.D. a stone-cutter named Marino, having become a Christian, left Rimini, where he was working, in order to avoid persecution by the Roman Emperor, Diocletian, and fled to Mt. Titano. There he practised his faith and carried on his humble occupation. He cured the ailing sons of a Roman Matron who, as a token of gratitude, bequeathed to him Mt. Titano.

Marino is the Patron Saint of the little Republic—hence its name—and on September 3rd every year an important ceremony takes place in commemoration of the birth of the Saint and the foundation of the Republic—a very picturesque sight!

During World War II, 100,000 refugees flocked to San Marino for safety. In June, 1944, it was alas!—bombarded by the Allies, but the damaged Monuments have happily since been restored.

SMEAL.

### Reminiscences

Mrs Alison remembers the night when there was a fire in one of the wards. (It was in Elsie, not Blanche, Ed.) We had for some time previously been practising fire-drill but not too seriously. Now the moment had surely arrived for us to make use of our new skill. We turned out in force, la Colonelle herself at the head with the first bucket (?). We must have looked very picturesque for we all wore dressing-gowns, and our hair floated in wild disorder down our backs. The blessés were transfixed with admiration.

The fire was quickly extinguished. All was well. The following morning the blessés described the whole scene by ecstatic exclamations of "C'était un beau REVE."

Mrs Alison writes: I remember, too, a very happy Christmas when I was dressed as Father Christmas and we had a trolley of gifts presided over by my three kids dressed as pixies (now 50-year-olds!) How they loved distributing them! (the gifts).

A LIMERICK from Smeal:

When the kitchen boiler burst,  
Jimmie was reduced to dust.  
Miss Ivens said: "That's rather hard  
I've just stamped her Insurance card."

The Editor does not know who is responsible for the following?

To the Ancient Order of Royaumont-ites  
"I'm really fine"

There's nothing whatever the matter with me.

I'm just as healthy as can be,  
I wear arch supports on both my feet  
Because without them I'd ne'er make the street.

I've painful arthritis in both my knees,  
And when I cough I always sneeze.  
I chew my food with china clippers,  
And I'm awfully fond of my old felt slippers.

My pulse is weak, my blood is thin.  
My hearing is poor, my sight is dim.  
Most everything now seems out of trim.  
But I really am fine for the shape I'm in.

The way I stagger is sure a crime.  
I'm likely to drop down any old time.  
My memory is failing, my head's in a spin.  
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

### MORAL

For us and others growing old, learn to say: "I'm fine" with a grin.

It will surely help for the shape you're in.

### A Soissons Memory for Tollit

Rolt writes:  
One morning after an air-raid when bombs had been falling all night fairly near us, we noticed in the early morning light a large gap in the garden wall of the cottage opposite. We went across to see if the old man who lived in the cottage was all right. We found him quietly sipping his coffee and contemplating a crater that had certainly not been there the day before. It was noisy outside so we enquired rather loudly if he heard what was going on during the night. He replied: "Moi? Je n'ai rien entendu. Je suis sourd." ("an ill wind" indeed.)

### Changes of Address

ADAM (Mrs Bushby)  
14 Grove House,  
High Street,  
Bushey,  
Herts.  
DON (Temporary Address)  
The Northern Hotel,  
Brecht,  
Angus,  
Scotland.

### STABLES

Boarhills,  
Arnam,  
Nr. Dunoon,  
Argyll.

## Statement of Royaumont and V.C. Association Account for 1964

RECEIPTS				PAYMENTS			
Carried forward on 1st January ...	£56	6	10	George Outram, printers ...	£15	15	0
Donation for News Letter from Arthur	1	0	0	Miller—News Letter Expenses ...	2	3	0
Donation for News Letter from Torrance	1	0	0	Bank Charges ...	0	1	6
Donation for News Letter from Warren	0	15	0				
Donation for News Letter from Daunt ...	0	15	0				
Donation for News Letter from Mac-							
pherson ...	0	5	0				
Subscriptions ...	17	10	0				
	£77 11 10				£17 19 6		
				Balance in Hand ...	£59	12	4
Royaumont Association Emergency Fund—Balance in Hand ...					£238	7	0