

CR0/3/11

Royaumont News-Letter



New Series.

JANUARY, 1936.

No. 1.

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

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

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

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

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, 23, Courtfield Gardens, S.W. 5.

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

Editorial.

The new series, as we have boldly printed at the top of this number, must start by wishing all readers the best of health and luck in 1936. The illness of our Chairman, Inglis, and of our Secretary, Smieton, distressed us all very much, both of them do valuable work for our Association and we missed them terribly. However we are glad to say that they are both much better and were able to be present at the last Royaumont Dinner. As it was impossible this year to have a General Annual Meeting in their absence and as really there did not seem to be anything very particular to discuss, we decided at a small Executive Committee meeting held in Salway's flat that any suggestions anybody wanted to

make could be made at the Dinner. There it was agreed that in future the NEWS-LETTER should come out once a year instead of twice, as with the best will in the world the bulk of news like Alice in Wonderland gets "smaller and smaller," and it was felt that one good number would be better than two indifferent ones. Another item of welcome news in these hard times is that in future the ticket for the Dinner will only cost 6s. We are most indebted to Salway (Mrs. McIntosh), who for the last two years has arranged to let us have the Dinner at the Forum Club. This is so much nicer than having it in a restaurant where we were always rather on sufferance, and where conversation in

LONDON :

THE WOMEN'S PRINTING SOCIETY, LTD.,

31, 33, 35, BRICK STREET, PICCADILLY, W. 1

an ordinary tone was impossible. Royaumont members who have not been at a Dinner since the restaurant days should make a point of coming to the next one, also to be held at the Forum, and see for themselves if this is not so.

Our seventeenth Royaumont Dinner was one of the most successful not only as regards the actual dinner (which personally I am always too excited to notice much), but there was a delightful feeling of intimacy and good will, age perhaps has made us less shy and more friendly. Then it was so cheering to see our Chief, who never looks a day older, Miss Hamilton, Miss Nicholson, Dr. Savill, the Robin and Miss Courtauld, all familiar faces whose presence makes these Dinners such a success. Our guest of honour, too, was an old friend, none other than Mrs. Hacon (Mrs. Robichaud). Memories were buzzing in the air when she rose to make a speech. Miss Hamilton wittily reminded her of the occasion when she chased her along the corridors at Royaumont in pursuit of her bed which Mrs. Hacon had captured. The Robin remembered Mrs. Hacon's collection of hats (she collected many other things too), we saw her as "a spy from the Committee" peeling potatoes beside us in the scullery, to each of us Mrs. Hacon's presence brought back some memory, for she was as much a part of the hospital as the beds with which she juggled so aptly. And while on this subject of the guest of honour would it not be a good plan to have one of our French friends across next December, M. Daviaud perhaps, who in a charming letter to the Médecin-Chef says how delighted he was to see Miss Hamilton when she was in France recently. Readers of *Life Errant* will remember Miss Hamilton's description of M. Daviaud, who certainly was a prince among plumbers!

On the Sunday following the Dinner, Richmond (Mrs. Haydon) very kindly gave a tea party in her house at Kensington Gate. Although there were not very many present it was a jolly affair and one or two Royaumontites who had not been able to go to the Dinner were there. One remembered other tea parties at which, if not the hostess, Richmond was the chief entertainer, when we gathered round a bonfire Scout fashion on the edge of the Asnières Woods and after having eaten and drunk all we had, smoked and listened to her singing "Raggle Taggle Gipsy," and other

favourite songs before hurrying back to our various jobs.

The following new year's wish sent to our Médecin-Chef by Viscountess Esher may interest Royaumontites:

DECEMBER 31ST, 1935.

May the vibrating truths of master minds
Invade us utterly,
Deep down where none can know except
Not for self glory, but [ourselves,
Inspiring us to urge in little ways
Great thoughts in others, who perhaps
Have tried and failed so far
To hear the music of the world.

ELEANOR ESHER.

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

January 19th, 1936.

My dear Unit,

I hope I shall not be too late to wish you all a very happy New Year, and to hope that those who do not belong to the Royaumont Association will join at the earliest possible moment. From all sides I hear how very much those present enjoyed the Dinner this year, and how many more who could not come were with us in spirit. I look forward to the time when we shall muster 100. Richmond's delightful tea party gave us a further opportunity of meeting and recalling Royaumont days.

I was glad to hear at Christmas that M. Delacoste was very well. He said: "Je suis de votre avis pour l'union nécessaire des deux peuples britanniques et français—et j'espère vivre assez pour voir rassembler autour de cette force invincible la vieille Europe encore grincheuse, et la jeune Europe, qui n'a pas assez de patience." M. Delacoste says, too, that he has a cousin, Madame Delarue, a Professor of French at Belmont College, Hyde Park, N.W. 1, who would be very pleased to meet any of the Royaumont unit.

Dr. Weinberg is coming to London at the end

of July to take part in the International Congress of Microbiology. He says: "Nous traversons actuellement les moments les plus difficiles, car nous sommes sans nous en douter en pleine reconstruction de la société, en pleine révolution, qui se fait sans effusion de sang, mais provoque, quand même, beaucoup de malheurs partout dans le monde."

It has been a very wet winter for us in Cornwall, but we have fortunately escaped floods, snow, frost and fogs, so cannot grumble—in fact the rain has filled our empty springs and ponds very satisfactorily. I was reminded of Royaumont days last week, when I struggled into the Red Cross uniform of an Assistant Director, and judged in the competition of four Cornish teams for the County Cup.

I hope we may see Miller down if there is a big meeting this year, as I know she often does Red Cross lectures. With all good wishes,

Believe me,

Yours affectionately,

FRANCES IVENS-KNOWLES.

*Salway sends the following with the Royaumont
Dinner Account (printed on page 4):*

The seventeenth Annual Dinner was held at the Forum Club on November 30th. Although sixty tickets were purchased we sat down fifty-seven.

Everybody enjoyed the good dinner and appreciated the cigarettes given by Miss London and the crackers presented by Miss Courtauld.

Mr. Knowles was our only guest as Madame de Magiore and Miss Williams, Chairman of the Forum Club, were unable to attend.

After the dinner and speeches all adjourned to the salon, where everybody could talk to their heart's content.

The next Dinner will be held on November 28th, 1936, and the tickets will cost 6s. instead of 7s. 6d.

*Those present at the Seventeenth Annual Dinner
were:*

Mr. and Mrs. Ivens-Knowles.
Dr. Buckley.

Miss Courtauld.
Dr. Dobbin.
Dr. Estcourt-Oswald.
Dr. Logan.
Dr. Maitland.
Dr. Nicholson.
Dr. Savill.
Dr. Walters.
Miss London.
Miss Hamilton.
Sister Peters (Mrs. Phillips).
Sister Nicholson.
Sister Whitworth (Mrs. Cadman).
A. L. Anderson.
Anderson (Mrs. Petit Pierre).
D. Anderson.
Burrard (Mrs. Dashwood).
Banks (Mrs. Simmonds).
Collum.
Chapman.
Cannon (Mrs. Walford).
Grandage.
Howard Smith.
Mrs. Hacon (Mrs. Robichaud).
E. Inglis.
V. Inglis.
Kennedy (Mrs. Clements).
Leng.
Mrs. Large.
Leishman.
Martin.
Merrylees.
Miller.
Mackay.
Middleton.
Main (Mrs. Breakey).
Morgan.
MacGregor (Mrs. Hallam).
MacNaughton (Mrs. Crowther).
Prance.
Paley.
Smeal.
Salway (Mrs. McIntosh).
Smieton (Mrs. Sanderson).
Tozer.
Tollit.
Tindall Lucas.
Thorne (Mrs. Newton).
Wilson.
Warner (Mrs. Hodgson).
Yeats.
Young.

Those who bought tickets and could not attend: Mrs. Aubrey Carter, Arthur, Mrs. Phillips, Mrs. Robinson, Moor, Ross (Mrs. McGregor).

Telegrams of good wishes and apologies for absence were received from:

Dr. Winifred Ross, Sister Rose-Marris, Davidson, Rolt, Don, Sister Morris, V. Ricketts, M. W. Brown, Dr. Butler, Richmond, Warren, Miss Gray, Carter (Mrs. R. P. Hills), Murray and Moore, and others.

Royaumont Dinner, 1935, Balance Sheet.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
In hand, December 1st	-	-	5 12 8	Printing cards	-	-	13 0
60 tickets at 7s. 6d.	-	-	22 10 0	Printing envelopes	-	-	3
Arthur's gift	-	-	7 6	Stamps for abroad	-	-	3 0
Miss London's gift	-	-	12 6	Stamps	-	-	13 0
Miss Courtauld	-	-	11 0	Cigarettes	-	-	12 6
Mrs. Clements, per postage	-	-	2 0	Crackers	-	-	11 0
				Tips	-	-	1 10 0
				60 dinners at 5s.	-	-	15 0 0
							£19 2 9
				In hand	-	-	10 12 11
							£29 15 8
							£29 15 8

In sending the Statement of Accounts, Tollit says: "I am sorry to say there are still thirty-six subscriptions for 1935 still due, besides a fair number for 1934. I do wish people would pay up without me having to write and remind them."

Will all readers do what they can about this and send any arrears that may be due at once to Tollit, who has a very boring and thankless job as our Treasurer.

Royaumont Association Statement of Accounts, 1935.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Brought forward from 1934	-	92	7 11½	Printing and Postage of NEWS-			
Received in Subscriptions	-	13	8 0	LETTER	-	-	16 16 3
				Wreath	-	-	1 0 0
				Stationery	-	-	6
							£17 16 9
							£105 15 11½
							£105 15 11½
							17 16 9
Balance in hand			£87 19 2½				

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

The British Medical Association World Tour, 1935.

Mackay has asked me to give my impressions of this tour in about 300 words! This task can, therefore, only be attempted by writing for the most part in note form.

The B.M.A. had never before held an Annual Meeting in Australia, though it had met three times in Canada. In accepting the invitation of the Melbourne Branch to hold the 103rd Meeting in that City, the Council decided to combine the visit with a World Tour in which contact should be made with other branches of the B.M.A. *en route*. As many members had previously visited Canada an alternative route was arranged through America, the two parties joining forces at San Francisco. Members were permitted to be accompanied by their wives, husbands, children or lay friends, and with these additions, the party finally numbered about 250, their ages ranging from 80 to 16. The Tour lasted from July 26th to November 8th, and about 27,000 miles were covered in the time.

The following are the most vivid of the impressions that remain:

That high winds, fog and icebergs were encountered in the North Atlantic in the height of summer. That Niagara was not despoiled of its beauty even by advertisements and hideous power stations. That the great open spaces in Canada have to be seen to be believed and that the wireless, possessed by every house, has brought their inhabitants into the circle at our own firesides. That the Canadian taxi driver is a fund of accurate information. That the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway over the Rockies and Selkirks is one of the greatest romances in the world. That the flowering trees and shrubs of Honolulu are indescribably beautiful. That the Hawaiian "Farewell" song is a most haunting tune. That the Fijian "Fire Walking" ceremony has no "hanky-panky" about it. That every New Zealander could be taken for a Britisher. That the Maoris are a charming and cultivated people. That the Australians are the most delightful hosts, very sensitive and intensely loyal to the Empire. That every member of the party had to be prepared to act as an Ambassador of Britain, as every word uttered had wide influence. That Sydney Harbour really is beautiful and the new

Bridge adds dignity to it. That Dutch ships' officers have a delightful sense of humour. That the natives under Dutch East Indian rule are extremely happy and have magnificent physique. That the Medical Services in Malaya are quite equal to our own. That the ports of Colombo and Bombay made us feel like Oliver Twist. That the mud golf course at Aden was one of the most pathetic sights of the tour. That the crowded Italian troopships brought back very poignant memories. That the Suez Canal War Memorial, both in character and position, is just as much of an inspiration on the part of the French as the placing of the statue of Ferdinand de Lesseps to guard its northern end. That the Mediterranean is not always blue and sunny. That visiting Malta is like going back to the Age of Chivalry. That Notre Dame de la Garde still watches over Marseilles. That the Bay of Biscay can still disturb the most hardened traveller. That the health of the party remained extraordinarily good in spite of five weeks on end in tropical heat. That some of us managed to travel 27,000 miles without catching a flu!

G. L. BUCKLEY.

IF—

(*With apologies to the late Rudyard Kipling.*)

Dedicated to the night orderlies at Royaumont and particularly in memory of June, July, August and September, 1916.

I.

If you can make your walls of dusty sacking,
And in an unswept barn by daylight sleep;
If you can laugh when furniture is lacking,
And keep your things in one ungainly heap;
If you can smile when gramophones are braying,
And Etienne shouts at Cardew till he's blue;
If you can listen to the black boys laughing,
And make allowance for their laughing too.

II.

If you can hear the staff who stamp and chatter
When Buckley call her fire-brigade to arms;
If you can bear it when the Sisters chatter
To fetch the tea they find so full of charms;
If you can hear the victims in the theatre,
And only pity when they groan or scream;
If you can know the cars have just been sent for,
And weave it all into a blissful dream;

III.

If you can rise, though no one comes to call you,
And share one candle with five gloomy friends ;
If you can eat cold porridge in the cloisters,
When in the darkness salt with sugar blends ;
If you can feed your Sister to her liking
On eggs and coffee, jam, or something roast ;
If you can answer wisely when our Binkie
Offers a sausage on a piece of toast :

IV.

If, when the marmite fire sinks lower,
And, spite of all your efforts, goes quite dead,
You then can face St. John's in gusty moonlight
And calmly meet the ghost without a head ;
If, when your men are restless, and the kitchen
Echoes with laughter and resounding fun,
You still can keep your temper 'mid the turmoil,
And whisper gently—"Think of Blanche—or
Jeanne" :

V.

If you can carry stretchers by the dozen,
Polish the brasses, count three hundred sheets ;
If you can work with all your heart, though
knowing
The day staff always disbelieves your feats ;
If you can crowd the unforgiving minute
With three hours' work and never feel the
strain—
Yours is our world, and everything that's in it,
But—though I seek you—it is still in vain.

*By the late GERALDINE MACKENZIE,
whose tragic death, after that of her
husband, took place in Paris some years
ago.*

MISS HAMILTON has kindly allowed me to print
the following extract from her book "Modern
Ireland," which is to be published this spring. It
should be of great interest to all who are interested
in the question of Sweeps and Charities.—ED.

There are fifty-three hospitals in the Irish Free
State which participate in the takings of the
Dublin Sweep ; only one, I believe, a Protestant
institution, has looked the gift horse in the
mouth and declined to handle the profits of
a gambling system. The other fifty-three,
whether municipal institutions or run by the
Church, have no scruples about ill-gotten gains.

With the opening of the new hospital at
Mullingar the number will rise to fifty-four ;
this Mullingar hospital is an actual creation of
the Dublin Sweep, the necessary funds having
been allotted for the purpose. It is a building
in the modern concrete style, white and shining
with much glass and standing on the outskirts
of the town. The majority of the hospitals
benefiting—twenty-nine out of fifty-three—are
situated in the Irish capital ; of the remaining
twenty-four, nine are in Cork, four in Limerick
and three in Waterford. An institution which
has specially benefited is the National Maternity
Hospital ; a building containing eighty beds (at
the cost, I was told, of about £1,200 per bed) run
entirely on electric power from the Shannon
scheme and provided with every latest con-
venience for medical and surgical advantage.
A luxury hospital from the point of view of
patient and of doctor alike ; and which I was
assured had (thanks to the Sweep) arisen in
place of a hospital anything but up-to-date—the
building that housed it was in places near to
falling down. Incidentally the young doctor
who showed us round mentioned that our
English maternal death-rate was higher than
that of Dublin ; whereupon I asked him if he
thought this lesser Irish risk of motherhood was
due to absence of attempts at abortion. His
reply was, he could not give an opinion, but he
added that attempted abortion was extremely
rare in Ireland ; by the Catholic, destruction of
unborn life is held to be a mortal sin and in his
experience he had only come across two cases—
one, he believed, accidental.

*The following interesting account of a great fire
was sent by MINCHIN.*

The Forest Burns.

(First-hand impression of the great forest fire
ravaging the Mountains of the Moors on the
Western Riviera.)

LE LAVANDOU,

July 26th, 1934.

The forest is burning.

I write from the balcony of my villa above the
little Mediterranean port, a wet muslin tied
across my nose and mouth, the air full of ashes,
and—alas !—little wings of insects.

For thirteen torrid days and nights we have
hardly had the smoke out of our throats. The
heat this year has been intense, even before the
fire. For weeks all had been dry and parched,
a hot wind prevailing, needing only a spark to
set all going.

That spark came forth at noon on Friday,
July 13th (thirteen days ago as I write), at the
second bay along the coast from here. The
baked hillside flared—and then the wind got
up. By evening everything in its path was
blazing as it tore onwards towards the east.
From the little "place," the village meeting
place down by the shore, we could see the
summits crowned with leaping flames—dark red,
sinister as a wild beast. The valleys along the
coast were smoking like volcanoes.

Next morning, the 14th July (the national
fête), the fire spread backwards against the wind.
Amazing the progress made in the teeth of the
blast, creeping on until at sunset it was back
over our village. Then the wind dropped
suddenly, the blaze diminishing with it.

On Sunday all seemed calm until after lunch
the tocsin rang from the church and people
streamed up the hill. The fire was on the
mountain over the back of our villa. My men-
folk seized hatchets and spades and were off.
I put cans of water and bottles of wine down in
the cellar to cool, and, coming up suddenly on
the back porch, saw a wall of fire on the ridge
above roaring like an express train. The troops
were there by this time, and, as the afternoon
wore on, our gardener came and fetched my cans,
and we went up and distributed them. The
Chasseurs Alpains were blackened from head to
foot, and the Senegalese could not be any
blacker ! They had cut corridors in the under-
growth, and at sunset the wind dropped again.
This is still the main factor, they cannot really
stop the fire in a wind.

We were dead beat, sleep having fled us since
the heat-wave. By 10 o'clock we were in bed
and just dropping off (it had got cooler) when
the tocsin rang again. It was down on the
railway line this time, and a detachment of
Chasseurs clattered down from the hill, where
they were on night duty, but the Senegalese,
who were at the Mairie, had got to it at the
double and had it well in hand.

All the week the fire snarled round the
country, breaking out suddenly here and there,

always the plaything of the wind, till on Monday,
the 23rd, a huge outbreak started at la Londe.
Looking out suddenly on my balcony I saw the
now familiar orange glow, and in a short time
the sun was completely obscured by the huge
volume of smoke that filled the sky to the west.
People coming through brought news of its
progress—at 2 o'clock at la Londe, at 5.30 at la
Verrerie, and by evening in the forest behind
Bormes—the great State-owned Forêt de Dom.
We had been there only a few weeks before, to
the house of the Garde-Forestier in the depths of
the forest ; I had admired his trees, great sixty-
foot giants towering straight above the house—
I believe there is nothing left now. No one
could sleep—it is even difficult to concentrate
on anything, an unrest is abroad while the
devouring element ranges round, appearing now
on one front, now on another, moving with
incredible swiftness. At 10 o'clock we got in the
car and motored up through Bormes, on into the
hills. What a strange and ghastly sight !
A veritable inferno beyond on the crests, on an
immense front now, stretching for miles into the
night. This was the wilderness, no towns at
hand, only isolated farms and inns—and what
of the animals, the teeming life of the forest ?
Troops were there, but whole regiments could
not avail now, the monster was loose. We
could do nothing, sadly we turned away.

Tuesday at 8 a.m. brought a hurried call from
the Mairie ; the fire was in the valley below
Bormes, with the wind blowing in this direction.
On it swept, the smoke filling the air with ashes.
At 2 o'clock suddenly the warning rang from the
village, and from the back I saw a column of
smoke behind the last villa above us. That
house had been threatened twice before. This
time I thought it would go, but almost as
I looked the wind veered, bearing slightly away
and below it.

My villa was now between the two fires, in
a hollow, one fire sweeping toward it, the other
down to the sea. Would the wind change ?
A villager passing, having lost his own head,
tried to panic me. I snubbed him severely, but
was a moment afterwards before I could steady
myself again. I took the animals into the house.
Our wolf-dog, scenting an age-old enemy, was
sniffing uneasily, doubling to and fro. Sunset
came, and with it the respite of the dying wind,
which had come daily as a relief so far.

Yesterday: the worst of all! Three fires at once by afternoon. The sky obscured by the great column from la Verrerie, black at the base, red-tinged—it is not far. The Forêt de Dom behind, sending over a sulphurous haze, and a new outbreak at le Rayol to the west rolling out to sea, immense, meeting the others in the vault overhead until the sun is darkened and the islands in front blotted out. A real storm wind blowing, catching up people's hats down at the Café, over-turning tables—and the western fire rolls on down the plain and on to the hills toward Cap Bénat at the extreme end of the bay. Some campers from the woods motor hurriedly around, and soon after they must send for others in boats.

Sunset comes, and for the first time the wind does not abate, the daily gain on the fire cannot be made. During dinner we hear a shout from the next villa, and, looking out, see the flames in the woods at the end of the bay. Blaze after blaze breaks out, until it looks as if a dozen towns were illuminated—where there is nothing but wild forest. It is wooded there right to the sea, and the wind sweeps on till the fire is reflected in the water.

And now we see warships coming up, submarines and torpedo-boats move quickly to anchor until the bay is well policed, and a cruiser sends out a blinding searchlight, piercing the darkness. The light moves slowly along the coast, picking out now the shore, now the country beyond. We imagine the powerful telescopes behind it, missing nothing in their diligent search, as proved by the tiny light of a picket-boat which suddenly speeds along its beam.

Down on the "place" all is animation, with the Mairie, brilliantly lit, as headquarters. They have got the electric light going again, after being cut off for hours. Lorries of soldiers and naval firemen arrive and depart. All night long the searchlights work, occasionally flashing in at our window with blinding whiteness, and sometimes siren wails.

The forest is burning.

What of the causes? The "maquis," dense undergrowth of aromatic plants and spiky bushes, dry as tinder, catches at a spark and spreads at once. It should be "cleaned" away in the spring. The pine trees burn slower, but are deadlier in their task of propagating the fire.

Their great pine cones, full of resin, explode as they catch, and shoot forward, blazing, to an incredible distance—twenty, thirty, fifty metres even. Easy to understand a fire spreading, easy too, to see how those who fight it can get surrounded and cut off. While they are engaged on one "front" another fire may break out behind and creep round before they can escape. Then the "mistral," at once the purifier and the curse of this coast: a wind that gets up in a moment from a dead calm, sweeping down from remote inland gorges, with hurricane force, flattening the sea, and driving all before it.

And the remedy? Private owners of forest land tell me that the Government charges for clearing their woods are such as would come to more than the loss of the timber. So it is not done. And as to the great state forests, clearings are cut, it is true, but the only thing would be really great wide corridors, cut during the winter by whole battalions of soldiers. These would be effective, where the hasty cutting and felling after a fire has started cannot be. The heat is too intense and the wind too capricious to allow of working to any scheme. The lighting of "counter fires," too, is risky in the extreme in the path of the wind, too easily they become as deadly as the main fire.

When will the danger be mastered? Who can tell? The forest is burning.

Do Royaumontites Remember:—

A certain orderly who put the bed brush into the hand of a rather indolent Sister and said: "Now, Sister, I am ready to make the beds with you!" (Quiet acquiescence of Sister.)

The "landscape painter" who did not at all like to clean out the —s?

The orderly who, on her day off, set out for Paris wearing the cutest little "patch" under her right eye!

Our summer fête to "Cicely" before her departure? Did Royaumont ever look so "faërique"?

The great Air Raid of March, 1918?

The "flap" when we were told that we were no longer to be allowed to stay in Paris overnight?

When the stoves in the cubicles were sent up

to V.C. and one miserable little stove was installed to take their place? When, as a result, our towels, toothbrushes, water were all frozen, necessitating washing in the half cold water of our hot-water bottles? Had "la Colonelle" been having a peep at the anthracite?

When the Arabs used to sit up in their beds, legs crossed, clap their hands and sing just like the bagpipes being "tuned in"?

The concert to Professor Weinberg, when some of us, dressed in *Japanese* costume, made a triumphal entry into the Cloisters singing "Rule Britannia," "Scots wha hae," "The Minstrel Boy" and "The Men of Harlech"? The lantern procession after in the twilight and a full moon? Morgan will remember.

"Cicely's" Pierrot mime?

The burst pipe in the cubicles and the water rushing over the bed of a certain orderly, and the two sweeps who were cleaning the kitchen stoves being requisitioned to help?

The fire in Elsie and "la Colonelle's" wonderful blue silk dressing gown?

The night orderly who received the day staff with a waterproof apron over her uniform and a tortoiseshell pince-nez attached by a black moiré ribbon round her neck (rather grimy!)?

Binky's smudgy face and apron on night duty in the kitchen?

And many, many other things.

Now, Royaumontites, I have given you a start. Let's have more.

A WHITE CAP.

MORGAN, our distinguished artist, whose picture of the Cloisters at Royaumont is reproduced in MISS HAMILTON's book "*Life Errant*," sends the following amusing account of the Jubilee in Africa.

Nothing was further from my thoughts than to rush into the limelight and appear in print in the ROYAUMONT NEWS-LETTER—till in an unguarded moment I accepted an invitation from Mackay to tea at her club. My memory of Mackay at Royaumont was of a kind, good-natured, gentle creature, suffering from the misfortune of being born the wrong side of the Tweed. But my judgment was at fault, as I have

discovered to my cost. She lured me into her net and played on my sympathies with tales of the difficulty of filling the ROYAUMONT NEWS-LETTER, etc., until I promised to do what I am now doing. Having only just returned from the wilds of Central Africa she saw in me an easy victim. Still I must admit that I have had so much pleasure in reading the ROYAUMONT NEWS-LETTER that I feel it is only fair to do my turn!

I returned last July, after an absence of two years spent in wandering in a Baby Austin from Capetown to Lake Nyasa. I had hoped to get through to Nairobi but the rains were against me and after eight months in Nyasaland I had to give up the idea. As a rule the rains are over in March but when I left in May they were still going strong.

On my way to the coast I stayed with friends at the lower Zambezi Bridge in Portuguese East Africa and celebrated the King's Jubilee there in a most novel and I think unique manner.

We decided to take the wireless and go "off into the blue" for a supper picnic and listen in to the King's speech. So, a party of seven of us—four men, three women and an infant in arms—we went off in two cars. We found an ideal spot about twenty-five miles away off the road. There we off loaded and put up the aerial and made huge bonfires to keep off mosquitoes and lions.

After an excellent supper of sausages, eggs and bacon, etc., we got through to England and listened to the King while we were watched by an astonished ring of natives. They were delighted at our whole performance and the ring got bigger and bigger. It was a marvellous thing to sit in the light of these bonfires and hear on one hand the King's voice and then the babble of the excited natives, and in the distance the roar of a lion.

At 10 o'clock we packed up, took down the wireless and became a lion hunt. We knew there was a marauding lion in the neighbourhood as every night he came to the camp at the Bridge and took a pig or a donkey—so we meant to try to get him. The three men with guns and spotlights got on to the box body Ford and I followed in the saloon. After about five miles we ran into a pride of four magnificent lions and training the spotlights on to them we managed to get one. The others scattered and, although I heard one

in the grass near me, no one spotted him. Next morning when they came to collect the body they found from the spoor that one lion had been stalking us all the time and his footmarks had nearly obliterated our wheel marks.

It would be interesting to hear how other people spent the Jubilee night but it would be hard to have had a more interesting experience.

The following may amuse Royaumontites. The Editor pleads not guilty of having written it. "Scotus" for all his information was not I guess at Royaumont?

At Royaumont.

WITH SCOTS NURSING NIGHTINGALES.

By SCOTUS.

"As if in atonement to an ill-treated founder," declares A. de Navarro, "a world-wide war transformed the Abbey of Royaumont into a hospital for the care of the French wounded." And this was one of the Scottish Women's Hospitals for Foreign Service.

Being fortunate enough to come through the war, the present writer, who was gassed in France and Belgium, with subsequent spells of hospital life, feels that scant praise has been given to our heroic women nurses. Strangely scant compared to the galaxy of books and articles in laudation of fighting or daring raids on the enemy lines when the true heroes fell in action and received only a wooden cross, while decorations for valour were bestowed, not infrequently, on the undeserving, as the dead cannot dispute such awards.

Now, as Remembrance Day comes round again, it is surely fitting to recall the less lauded heroism and self-sacrificing devotion without which our Maidens of Mercy could not have maintained their cheerful kindness, nor the wounded benefited by their sisterly, sometimes motherly, care and comforting concern which ensured sound recovery, thereby saving tens of thousands of lives which would assuredly have perished without hospital skill and treatment. Though diverse statistics were kept about our wounded, missing, and killed, the total lives saved by surgical skill or some special treatment is never likely to be known with reasonable

accuracy, especially on account of the great difficulty of eliminating likely duplication in the case of many who were wounded a few times and recovered.

A ROYAL FOUNDATION.

Royaumont (about twenty-two miles from Paris) was a royal foundation by Louis VIII. in 1228. After being destroyed once by fire in 1760, restored next year, demolished by the Red Commune, its chequered career was brought to a peaceful close by the foundation of an orphanage in the last quarter of last century.

How speedily the Scottish Women's Hospitals were organised will be gleaned from the fact that the unit for Royaumont left Folkestone on the morning of 4th December, 1914, thanks to the untiring energy of Dr. Elsie Inglis, whose name is a household word.

The accommodation in this hospital provided 400 beds, with a well-equipped X-ray department and laboratory, and by the 20th of September, 1916 (or, say, about twenty-one months from its inauguration), some 2,250 patients, largely surgical cases, had been admitted. Though these figures may seem small as a total, a rough analysis of what they signify and involve in actual routine details or procedure sets them off in a much more favourably and creditable light. An average monthly flow of about 100 fresh surgical arrivals, necessitating upwards of three surgical operations per day, taxes the organisation of a small hospital to a greater degree than would at first appear to the casual and inexperienced reader.

Though elaborate detail is not within the compass of a short article like this, when liberal allowance in time is made for ward routine, for preliminary procedure, for operations with complications demanding subsequent care and attention required by the new arrivals, a faint idea of this incessant service to suffering soldiers may be gleaned. More formidable still, however, is the daily grind of special treatment, which is surpassed by the sickening routine of dressing running wounds that refuse to heal and of bandaging all sorts of cases.

FIRST TO BE RUN BY WOMEN.

Constitutional strain as endured by the nursing staff of a war hospital is certainly inestimable. Surely the heroism evinced at

Royaumont is outstanding in its merits, and is as memorable as it is praiseworthy, all the more so as this hospital was the first in France to be conducted entirely by women, including the very head surgeon, Dr. Frances Ivens.

The Royaumont staff was composed of seven women doctors, ten fully-trained nurses, eight orderlies, three chauffeuses, all devoting their energy and skill to succour and solace suffering soldiers of our Allies, the French, whose quiet gaiety enabled them to be almost invariably cheerful.

The ladies of Royaumont faced the formidable task of installing their hospital, and overcame the unforgettable difficulties of converting a roomy thirteenth-century edifice built for monastic simplicity into a modern infirmary. Their herculean achievement is all the more meritorious as this historic abbatial foundation had been uninhabited for ten years. Instead of giving the wards numbers, it was decided to name them.

By unanimous choice the beautifully spacious library ward on the first floor was called "Blanche de Castille," after the mother of the Royal founder. The ward on the second floor was styled "Elsie Inglis." Two other wards running north and south were rather appropriately named "Jeanne d'Arc" and "Marguerite d'Ecosse." A fifth ward was known as "Millicent Fawcett."

300 CASES IN TWO WEEKS.

Later, in the following spring, when the accommodation had to be nearly doubled, the magnificent oak-panelled guest hall was transformed into another ward called after Queen Mary. These were all fully taxed during the Somme push (July, 1916), when over 300 gravely wounded cases were admitted in the first two weeks. So overwhelming were the duties at that period, that for eight successive days none of the staff got more than sixteen hours' sleep in all, or two out of the twenty-four. At another rush period it was considered an incredible luxury to get three hours of undisturbed sleep per diem.

On the administrative side, Miss Cicely Hamilton evinced rare resourcefulness, and her gifted attainments found happy expression in tableaux, fêtes, and concerts. The Christmas dinner (1914) was a triumph, followed by tableaux portraying the history of the Abbey in

its chequered phases up to date. Miss Hamilton's running commentary was so sparkling in humour that it convulsed her listeners with continuous and reparative laughter. "No country had ever witnessed such a banquet of humour and originality," declared M. le Directeur de Santé, who had never before experienced so unique an evening's entertainment in spite of his world-wide travel.

The writer cited at the beginning aptly declares:—"How grateful must be the pious Founder, St. Louis, to the Dames de Royaumont for reviving at his beloved foundation in superabundant measure the old monastic practices of mercy and hospitality."

No wonder the *Dames Ecossaises* endeared themselves and were in turn called beloved "Seesters" by the wounded French *poilus*, whose parting expression rings in our ears even now: "*Vive les Dames Ecossaises!*"

(Reprinted from "*The Weekly Scotsman*," November 9th, 1935.)

The Education of our Well-Loved Chief.

"ROYAUMONT"—the word brings up innumerable and vastly varying pictures.

An avenue of great trees leads up from the gateway to the massive pile of grey stone buildings, standing stern in their venerable strength alongside the ruins of the martyred Abbey Church. Prison-like perhaps this first view of the Abbey; but go on, passing through the ruined pillars and foundations of the old Church, turn right-handed, here the great arms of the front aspect extend a welcome to all comers seeking sanctuary and rest. In the midst, set back between the wings, is a wide generous door, outside it the beauty of the Abbey's reflections in running water amid green lawns, inside warmth of comfort for body, mind, and spirit, under the ægis of the Scottish women 1914-1918.

Grey stone wards with groined roofs supported by stone pillars; rows of cots with bright red blankets; and an atmosphere of marvellous skill, devoted service, and of loving response from the patient sufferers there. That is "Royaumont."

Over all floats the spirit of cheeriness.

Skilled and unstinted service.

Cheeriness, comfort, calm.

No wonder that working at Headquarters at

Creil one often overheard the following :
 "ROYAUMONT—T'en va la bas ?—T'a de la chance P'tit Choux, on y est bien. Ah—qu'on est bien à ROYAUMONT."

Our Chief led gallantly and greatly, and one and all aided and abetted her to the best of their ability in whatever their line of service, in theatre or ward, in kitchen, mending-room, or garage.

All of us who were privileged to be with Miss Ivens in the first beginnings, admired perhaps most of all her quiet courage and persistence in overcoming the somewhat understandable hesitation of the high French Authorities, who would not at first send high-skilled work to Royaumont. These women surgeons, women doctors, were an innovation, they had still to prove their technical and practical ability in a sphere which they entered as total strangers. With infinite patience Miss Ivens gave herself up to this wearying work. She went round visiting French War Hospitals, watching operations, speaking with her fellow professors, gradually permeating their minds with growing recognition of her high ability. Without her patient victory and winning of this trust, the Scottish Women's Hospital at Royaumont would never have made its way, and in this, very specially, she was the creator of what was to become a bye-word all over France and far beyond, as one of the finest War Hospitals on all the Fronts.

Small wonder that in this concentrated effort, for a moment she should miss a detail of every-day organisation.

SCENE.

One winter evening in the chauffeurs' Den at the Abbey stable, a little removed from the main building.

One of the six drivers entered late from an ambulance journey, flung herself down to warm at the fire, and found a heated indignation meeting in full swing, the subject being the abuse of the ambulances. These cars had been bought with our hardly saved money and personal sacrifice, and for precious personal service for the beloved "Poilu." They were constantly used for heavy cartage of market and other goods, for lack of a lorry.

"Another killing journey for somebody's 'bus—an ambulance ordered to take Miss Ivens

to Clichy Hospital, go on to the vegetable market while she is at the operations, and pick her up on the way home. That vile road, all cobbles and pot-holes—it *must* be stopped—we must all of us refuse to do the market job, the ambulances are being knocked to pieces."

"Well," said the late-comer, "why not definitely ask for a lorry?—the Hospital certainly needs one—put it to Miss Ivens strongly."

"We *have*, but there's no result—the only thing is to refuse this job."

This however savoured too much of a strike, and was unthinkable; what were we to do?—a pause for grumbling thought, then: "Look here, will you give me this journey to-morrow? I'll undertake that Miss Ivens will cable for a light lorry within a week. Will you trust me?"

"It's no good trusting you, X, you'll only go and do what Miss Ivens tells you to."

"That's just what I intend doing, but, I shall do it in my own way."

With very natural mistrust they consented, on condition that in case of failure we should all go in a body to the Chief and thrash it out with her.

8.30 a.m.—As the ambulance waited at the main door of the Hospital, the chauffeur bent down to the clock on the dashboard, put it forward ten minutes and smeared its face with an oily rag. With a cheery "Good morning" the Chief took her uneasy seat on the unsprung thinly-cushioned board next the driver. Pleasant conversation beguiled the way along the Paris road till the turn was reached down that shocking cobbled street through Clichy, a two miles' martyrdom.

"How are we for time, X?"

Hastily polish the clock face with a driving glove. . .

"Good gracious!—we shall be late—I mustn't on any account keep those doctors waiting—AS FAST AS YOU CAN X."—!

Followed a furious drive, at express speed, twisting this way and that in a vain endeavour to avoid pot-holes, but succeeding only in plunging into all the worst ones, to right and left we swung. Our poor Chief was hurled against the wooden side, flung up to the roof, hell for leather we went, and presently pulled up bruised and breathless at the Hospital. The chauffeur waited while the Chief straightened her hat and entered the Hospital, then inspected the ambulance and put the clock back. By the

grace of Providence no springs were broken. Then nursing the little 'bus carefully, she went to market, did the business, loaded up, lunched frugally, and duly returned at the time appointed to the Hospital.

As the Chief once more resumed her stool of repentance she said: "X, I don't think we need drive so fast now, there is no hurry really." Then as we turned on to the Royaumont road: "I see what you chauffeurs mean, this road is terrible, we must not use the ambulances for this work—a lorry is a necessity, and I am not sure I don't also need a doctor's car for my own journeys! I shall go into Creil with one of you to-morrow anyhow, and cable straight away for a LORRY!"

Once again we took back to our hearts our well-loved Colonelle.

PRANCE.

Notices, etc.

The next Royaumont tea party will be given by Carter, Mrs. R. P. Hills, who very kindly invites us all to tea at her house, 37, Evelyn Gardens, London, S.W. 7, on the Sunday following the Royaumont Dinner.

Congratulations to our Médecin-Chef, Mrs. Ivens-Knowles, who has been appointed Assistant Director of the Red Cross in the county of Cornwall. Not many Red Cross Societies are lucky enough to have help from anyone so competent.

Dr. Savill's book on "Hair" is having a marvellous sale. She sends news of General Descoigns; he has been very ill, his present address is La Roche Tinard Andard, Maine et Loire. His daughter Marie, who worked at Royaumont for a time, now lives near Marseilles.

From a long account of Miss Edith A. Stoney, published by the *Argus* in January, 1934, the following extract is of interest to Royaumontites:

"During the war Miss Stoney's work as radiologist and engineer in France, Serbia, and Greece was recognised, among other honours, by the Croix de Guerre. Possibly the most lasting value of her work was in connection with her research on gas gangrene, caused by a germ that lies in old manured ground, and, finding its way into a wound, produces gas throughout the body unless exposed to the air. Before Miss Stoney's

discoveries it used to take about thirty-six hours to diagnose this germ, with subsequently fatal results. She proved that it could be diagnosed by the X-ray, and in the tragic months of 1918 in France she often had to deal with 150 cases in one night."

Mrs. Ivens-Knowles suggested a wreath should be sent to Windsor, so a chaplet of laurel with yellow tulips, tied with Gordon tartan ribbon, was chosen and sent from "The President and Members of the Royaumont Association of the Scottish Women's Hospitals (1914 to 1919)."

Emergency Loan Fund.

Dear Mackay,

As regards the "Royaumont Association Emergency Loan Fund," we have a balance of £248 19s. 8d. at the moment in the Bank.

Since I took over the Treasurership of this Fund, a little over two years ago, there have been four calls on the Fund and on looking through the Bank book I find that altogether there have been ten calls since 1930.

I should like to take this opportunity of thanking all who have subscribed to this Fund and to assure them that the help provided thereby has been greatly appreciated. I shall always be glad to receive further contributions, however small.

My Committee (Royaumont Association Emergency Loan Fund Committee) would like all members of the Unit who may hear of any old Royaumontites who would like to benefit under this Fund to send their names to either Tollit, Smieton or myself, who will be only too pleased to deal with the matter.

Yours sincerely,

BANKS (Mrs. SIMMONDS).

30, St. John's Road,
Putney, S.W. 15.

FROM FAR AND NEAR.

Barclay (Mrs. Golding) was home the year before last. She is now back with her family in Southern Rhodesia. We hear that she is thinking of publishing the letters she wrote home while she was at Royaumont in 1916-17, they will be most interesting to all old Royaumontites and we hope a great success.

Burrard (Mrs. Dashwood). After a long and serious illness Burrard, we are glad to hear, has quite recovered. She is now able to drive her car and takes a great

interest in everything. Her daughter, aged fifteen, is a clever girl and is going in for science as a career.

Sister Cocking is still at Newquay. She was unable to come to the Dinner owing to an attack of shingles in the arm.

Collum is now living at Peaslake, Guildford, where she has built herself a bungalow and studio.

Cranage (Costa) wrote last March: "I am in private practice in Forlì, chiefly with gynaecological patients, and I give English lessons. My husband has just gone as Captain in the Volunteer forces to Eritrea. We don't know for how long."

Fulton writes from Long Island that she spent last winter in New York, where she took a job in Fifth Avenue store.

Gamwell (Marion) is still farming in Northern Rhodesia. Her sister Hope has recovered from a serious operation she had some time ago, she also works on the farm. So far they have lived in huts but are going to build themselves a house. Early Royaumontites will remember what a clever pair they were, able to turn their hands to anything.

Miss Gray we hope to see at the next Royaumont Dinner, she was very sorry to miss the last one. "I sat by my fireside," she writes, "and thought of you all enjoying yourselves, a venerable Cinderella." She also says she heard at Christmas time from Sister Amour, who has a very good post at Johore, where she is Matron of a hospital. She lectures to Chinese girls and helps to train them as Sisters.

Writing from Montreal to the Médecin-Chef, **Dr. Henry** says: "I had tea recently with Marjorie Starr, who was one of your first orderlies at Royaumont. She is now Mrs. Manson, with three big strapping girls, and lives not very far from me. She was a friend of Miller's but has lost touch with her. I also met a cousin of Yvonne Barclay's who had just left before I got to Royaumont."

"Clarke, who used to be in the Bureau, has travelled about a good deal in recent years in nursing jobs, Barbadoes, then Rome, and now she is back at the Royal Victoria Hospital, where she is Night Superintendent of the Ross Memorial Pavilion. Sister Thompson used to be here doing private nursing. When I saw her some years ago she was about to be married to a Canadian."

Leng writes: "You ask me for a report of my travels for the News-Letter—a most alarming order! The ordinary traveller's tale is so very boring for the non-traveller. But I *did* have two very happy meetings which will interest, I think, all Royaumont."

"The first and most surprisingly unexpected meeting was at a party at the International Club at Johore, where I was introduced to Sister Amour, who was sitting at the same table. My knees did not tremble as they would have done under the same circumstances twenty years ago! Perhaps time has softened her or made me braver. Anyhow she was most charming and very interested to hear of the continued success of our Dinners and any personal news I could give her. She is the very successful and

much appreciated Matron of the (I think British) Hospital at Johore.

"The second meeting—long-arranged and much looked-forward-to—was with **Williams** in Australia. She met me in Melbourne and took me to the School boat races—just as big an event in Melbourne as the Oxford and Cambridge at home. We were all most thrilled when Geelong College won (the Smythe boys are both there). Next day we all motored up to Kongbool in Williams' car and I spent the week-end with them. It was just like old times and Williams has changed very little even if she is the mother of two large sons and a daughter. But I was rather scared when at breakfast the first morning the whole family appeared armed to the teeth with large and fearsome looking knives. When I tremblingly enquired what they were for, Williams just laughed and said 'You'll soon see.' We sallied forth—some on foot and some on horses—accompanied by about sixteen dogs and I was prepared to meet a massed attack of Aborigines at least! But it was only rabbits—which are a much greater menace to the country."

Sister Lindsay is still doing private nursing work, it seems a long time since she honoured us with her presence at a Dinner.

Macpherson, Jean, has now a flat in Edinburgh which she has made very nice.

Moore (Evelyn) was not able to come to the Dinner as she is playing in one of London's most popular thrillers, "The Two Mrs. Carrolls."

"**Big**" **Murray**, although still obliged to live rather the life of an invalid, writes cheerfully from Bradford-on-Avon. Her sister, who is M.O.H. for that town and also for Trowbridge, takes her for occasional drives in her car, as she is not able to walk much. We hope Murray will soon be better and that we shall see her at the next Royaumont Dinner.

Poppit (Forest) has been working in a cake shop to earn enough money to go out and pay her brother a visit in South Africa. She starts this month and hopes to get a job that will enable her to stay there longer than three months.

Prance, whose amusing article is printed on another page, was one of the first chauffeurs at Royaumont, she and Percival—"long before (to quote from her letter) McGregor or Young, etc., were born."

Prance has travelled a great deal and writes: "I had rather good luck lately. A booklet I did on the 'Kruger National Park,' the big South African game preserve, was taken by Gata to Cape Town and brought out for Christmas. There was no popular book on the Park. I shall not make a fortune out of it but got a lot of pleasure doing it—*Three Months in Wonderland*."

Rolt is now living at Penrith; she spent six months abroad last summer and was very sorry not to be able to attend the Dinner.

Dr. Winifred Ross has been more or less marooned in her Northern home in Inverness-shire; she writes: "I had an entertaining time during the election speaking at some meetings in Caithness; the fisher-

women are a pretty wild crowd and the meetings were lively, to put it mildly." We hope Dr. Ross will "make an effort," like Mrs. Dombey, and come south next December, when many of her old Royaumont friends will be delighted to see her.

Mrs. Russell, one of S.W.H. Committee who was much liked by all Royaumontites, met Miss Gray the other day and was inquiring about everybody. She and Miss Gray had just read Miss Hamilton's autobiography *Life Errant* and had greatly enjoyed it.

Dr. Agnes Savill writes: "According to my promise, here is my news. First, as regards 'Wee Free,' otherwise Dr. MacDougall, now Dr. Hendrie. She was home on leave recently, and called on me when in London. She has grown stout and strong, and is returning to work in private practice at the Gold Coast. There she works all day long, even in the terrific heat; she said it suits her health! She has one daughter, who lives in a school in this country: and as neither 'Wee Free' nor her husband have any relatives who can have the child at holiday time, she has to stay with the school or be boarded out elsewhere. 'Wee Free' asked me to tell you all how grieved she was that she had to return to the Gold Coast before the Royaumont Dinner date."

"As regards my own work, I have just brought out a book on 'The Hair and Scalp,' which has been

praised in a review in *The Lancet*. I began it *before* the war, but had not time to finish it till quite recently!"

Ramsay Smith when last heard of was very busy doing election work, and one old lady she motored from Peebles to Juniper Green turned out to be none other than a sister of our late Matron, Miss Tod. She it seems was also a Matron somewhere. It evidently runs in the family!

Summerhayes (Mrs. MacRae) writes: "I have been wondering if the Scottish Women will bestir themselves to send a Unit to Abyssinia. I find the British Medical Officers being recruited at present have to be under forty and unmarried, and I have to plead guilty under both those heads—but I know Scottish Women's Units don't bother about such little trifles—in fact, being of a reasonable age, and possessing a husband, would rather be considered as assets by such sensible people as the S.W.H. But I suppose it would be altogether too difficult! We should be too British in Italian eyes—though Cranage could join us (her husband is in the army in Eritrea) and that would give us a more neutral aspect."

"My 'cub' aged three, being more Scottish than her mother, joins with me in sending greetings and good wishes to all at the Dinner."