

something a little extra- a little homey- a little more of a "specialty" and they certainly do appreciate it.

Its funny how it runs. Right after supper there's usually a call for lemonade. Then, as the evening progresses, they ask oftener for chocolate. The cakes begin to go at about 7 o'clock, and by 8:30 unless we're unusually short of men they're all gone, and we're selling sweet crackers and factory cakes of various sorts. We always keep bottled vichy lemonade on hand but until the home-made runs out there's very little call for it. When it is wanted its usually quite late- near the end of the evening. I don't quite understand the psychology of that.

The men wander back in the tent with their bowls to the big green tables and soon we begin to get pretty messy but nobody cares much. On ordinary evenings some men are always writing at some of the tables, some playing checkers and others just sitting, the room gradually fills. It gets somewhat smoky, but not very because we've so much air. Someone begins to play the piano, the men gather around, sometimes they all sing, I like those evenings best and once or twice they've taken partners and danced in the clear space between the tables. Its a mighty good thing to see and hear anything so gay right here on the edge of going to the front. I wish I could make you see that picture- a big oblong tent, rather dimly lit by electric lights that haven't a strong enough battery; gay, red, white and blue streamers and Japanese lanterns on the ceiling; the air hazy but not thick with smoke; men in O.D. everywhere- the whole tone of the room olive drab because of the men in it, talking, writing, playing often just sitting idly around; and then the tinkle of the tin-pan piano-sometimes competing with a victrola on the other side of the room- and a chorus of "Me in my gal" or "The Perfect Day" or "My Indiana Home". Sometimes a man brings in a violin or guitar and then we get the whole tent interested. In the meantime I'm kept on the jump pretty nearly the whole evening. I've cut away the top of the counter so my big jars are easy to ladle from on the counter shelf, and I stand three in a row, hot chocolate, cold chocolate, malted milk and lemonade. There's always someone waiting, sometimes eighteen or twenty. I think often of the stories of the Belgian soup line and of how they wouldn't take anyone who wasn't a past mistress of the art of ladling. Well, I'm on the road to qualify! Its some job to fill bowls, give out cakes and make change, especially when you're sure to get American bills right in the midst of the rush, but we don't have enough steady rush to justify the use of checks and a cashier.

There's one thing I don't do as well as Miss Neff- no, two- its to jolly the men. I can't. I'm not born that way. Oh, I don't mean to say I'm just a machine or that I can't drop in a decent word occasionally, but jollying in general isn't in my line. I don't worry much about it, I just can't do it- thats all, but I often wish I could. And yet after all I get along pretty well. The men must feel my good will. I feel such a lot of it that it must get over somehow. The skeleton of the regiment stays put here in Contres you know, while various groups of enlisted men pass in and out, so there are a lot of men who come back night after night and who are real personalities, not just faces. Really friendly faces too, sometimes I look around the crowd and feel all warm and comfortable inside as I recognize man after man whom I know I can count on for a real smile and, for that matter, anything under the sun I might want him to do for me.

At about nine o'clock the rush lets up, the men dwindle and by quarter past there are only enough left for a good gossip. Sometimes they lean over the counter, sometimes they sit around the piano. Then's the time for war stories and personal experiences. Fleming is full of them, he's had six months at the front. Lieutenant Lawrence usually drops in and treats all around to malted milk. Sometimes a little brawny Irishman who's had a pretty bad case of shell shock gets talking and my word! he's Celtic all right. We're all spell-bound by his brogue and his experiences.

I'm usually the first to go. I hate to keep Marie up and she always waits for me, but the men sit around and talk until nearly ten when they have to hurry to their billets.

Usually all entertainments are held in the Grove, so everybody can see, but sometimes its too bad weather, so they come into the tent. Those evenings are full of color. Night cantos that we had a movie. Rip Van Winkle- very poor, but fun. The company puts up their sheet