



The Fighting Sullivans

Ansty Family's Fine Record

Six Daughters and Three Sons Serving

At Ansty, a charming old-world Wiltshire village, a family has made history by having the largest number of young women in one branch of H. M. Forces. Mr. and Mrs. George Henry Sullivan, of 73 Ansty, have given all their six daughters as members of the A. T. S. as well as their three sons for the Army. Their father and grandfather before them fought and bled for England and freedom.

"The fighting spirit must run in their blood," said Mrs. Sullivan on Tuesday to a representative of the Western Gazette. "Grandfather John Sullivan served for 21 years in 5th Dragoon Guards and fought in the Crimea and in the Indian Mutiny, dying at the age of 74 years. My husband, George Henry Sullivan, did 19½ years in the Army. He fought in the Boer War with the East Yorkshires, and at the outbreak of the 1914-1918 conflict, he returned to the Colours, this time with the Wiltshire Regiment. He served in France, was twice wounded, and for seven months was a prisoner of war in Germany."

One Son an Officer

We have a family of three sons and six daughters, and they are all serving" added Mrs. Sullivan, with justifiable pride. All the sons are serving in the Regular Army. Albert John, the eldest (33) is a Corporal in the Dorset Regiment (transferred from the Wilts), and he has 11 years' service. His brother, John Albert, three years younger, has 12 years' service, and is a Captain in the Wilts Regiment. Before the outbreak of war he had served seven years in India and was home in civilian life when the present war broke out. He is married. One son, Reginald Walter, 25, is a staff-sergeant in the Indian Army Corps of Clerks.

All the daughters have been in domestic service and they joined the A. T. S. in pairs. Ivy, aged 22 and Mollie, aged 21, were the first to volunteer. They joined the Gloucester Company, and they have 19 months' service to their credit. Three months later Dorothy (32) and Phyllis (24) followed them into the A. T. S. They are serving in Wales and are awaiting posting to an A. A. Battery. As soon as

Millicent became of age, she, too, volunteered, but Edna Ruth, who is only 17, could not be left at home. Father was quite willing for her to go, but mother naturally felt a pang at parting. She bravely faced up to the situation, signed the consent form, and Edna Ruth beat the existing record of five sisters in the A. T. S. by making a family of six.

“My husband was an Old Contemptible” added Mrs. Sullivan, “but when the L. D. V. was formed, he again joined up to help his country.”

Their Advice to Others

When the Western Gazette representative called upon Mrs. Sullivan, two of her daughters were home on leave, and each said it was a grand life in the A. T. S. and they would not like to go back in domestic life. They had excellent billets, plenty of entertainment and good food. In fact, there was plenty of everything in the Army and they had no regrets at all at having joined up. Their advice to other girls was: “Join the A. T. S., as soon as you can, see life and broaden your mind a bit.” One of the girls said she had had eight stations in 15 months, and had travelled over practically the whole of England and Wales.

Asked if she was not proud of her family, Mrs. Sullivan said “I leave that to others, but father is proud of his girls.” She added that all the family were born at Sutton Mandeville, except Dorothy, who was born at Tisbury. They all attended the Council school at Sutton Mandeville or Swallowcliffe.

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