

Checked with broadcast

2/2/43 No. 29

Following is broadcast after 9 o'clock news tonight by a W.R.N.S. Officer, Second Officer Kellard, who was on duty at the Casablanca Conference.

At about six o'clock on Friday night the Director called me into her room and said that a few Wren Officers were wanted for a very special job. She couldn't tell me anything except that we should leave on the Monday. So we spent the weekend washing and ironing shirts. We knew it was something very special when we got to Euston, and when we found we had morning tea and eggs for breakfast served on the train, we were certain it was something really big.

We were the first women to sail in one of His Majesty's warships on duty, and we were made full members of the wardroom. We had all our meals with the ship's officers, and I was very honoured when I had dinner with the Captain and the destroyer captains the night we arrived at Casablanca. Of course we took part in the traditional Saturday night at sea, and the youngest Wren Officer replied to the famous toast of Sweethearts and Wives.

We had no idea where we were going until the day before we arrived, though, of course, we knew it was an important conference, and we made our own guesses when we were told that one of the gentlemen was in the habit of working very late.

We left the ship for the camp, where the conference took place. The villa where we slept was quite close to our office, and we shared it with the American W.A.C.S., who became good friends of ours. It was hard work and very long watches - sometimes fifteen hours at a stretch.

All the secretarial work of the conference on the British side was done by the five of us, all Wren officers. Of course, it was fascinating work and highly confidential, and we were well guarded, with sentries galore and six armoured jeeps driving round and round the perimeter of the camp day and night without stopping.

We didn't have much time off, but we did manage to have a look round the town. There was practically nothing to buy - no silk stockings or underwear, but we did get plenty of oranges

But we still had to get home. At first it was brilliantly sunny and calm, but three days out we struck that very bad storm and I got shot right out of my bunk and finished the night in an armchair. We also had two U-boat contacts and we heard six depth charges go off which shook our ship, but nothing more happened - to us anyway; and we arrived right on time - from African sun to England and winter

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