

Book Reviews

ISHOBEL ROSS, *Little grey partridge: the diary of Ishobel Ross, Serbia 1916–1917*, with an Introduction by Jess Dixon, Aberdeen University Press, 1988, 8vo, pp. xvii, 93, illus., £6.95, (paperback).

Ishobel Ross, a domestic science teacher in Edinburgh, travelled to Serbia in 1916 as a cook with the Scottish Women's Hospital Unit. Her daughter has published her diary, illustrated by copious photographs, with an introduction but lacking editorial apparatus. Ishobel Ross is no undiscovered Vera Brittain: as a diarist she neither vividly describes events around her nor analyses her own responses in any depth. From her description, serving in a field hospital on the Serbian Front was closely equivalent to a Girl Guide Camp; living under canvas, putting up with the problems of open-air life, having jolly excursions with her comrades, and indulging in occasional high jinks. From time to time she expresses a conventional regret about the military situation which created this opportunity. It is hard to imagine why this diary was considered worthy of publication: an act of filial piety perhaps. Those who might find it of interest would be as well served by the placing of the original volume in some reputable repository where it could be preserved and made available to scholars. Aberdeen University Press is to be commended for the high quality of the physical production of this book.

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