



Miss Ada L. Ward, of the Lena Ashwell concert party, which has been entertaining soldiers at the front, was entertained at a Vancouver Canadian Club luncheon in May, 1917.

Miss Ward said: This is the first opportunity I have had of meeting a men's Canadian Club in my journey across the continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific. You have had many speakers from the front. I know that you have had doctors and soldiers and nurses probably, and war correspondents, and they have all given you different aspects of the war. I come to you in a new light as an entertainer. I found myself in France with all a woman's heartbreak and anguish for what was happening there, but I determined that whatever happened the boys would have a good time if I and others could give it to them.

In the early part of the war Lady Rodney, well known English lady, lost her boy, a bright lad of wonderful promise. In order to perpetuate his memory she not only erected a hut where the men could meet and secure social comforts, but she also decided to give them what her boy had so greatly appreciated—music and healthy entertainment. She wished to send out parties to France to cheer up the men. It was not an easy task. She collaborated with Miss Lena Ashwell, the brilliant English actress, who, as some of you know, was educated in Toronto. She is a splendid woman. Through her Lady Rodney got into touch with the professional workers, and enlisted on her side also Princess Victoria. This triumvirate, or perhaps I should say triumfeminate, had a great many difficulties to surmount, with the War Office especially, but as I daresay those of you who are married know that when a woman wills she will, and so these

ladies melted down all the red tape, if I may use a mixed metaphor like that, and finally won the hearts of the authorities.

Now those entertainments are given under the aegis of the authorities at the front, and I often receive requests such as "May she come back to us again." I do not sing or play—I sketch. I may say that I lisped in sketches, for the sketches came. And drawing is really the only subject in which I have consistently failed to pass my examinations. Since I was well known in England as a cartoonist, my name was brought before Miss Ashwell. It happened that someone said that they wanted Ada Ward if they could get hold of her. That was a great pride and joy to me. It happened one day when I was in my office in London the telephone bell rang and a voice said: "Do you think you could be ready to go to France on Saturday? We are sending a concert party there. We have a quartette, two ladies and two gentlemen singers, a violinist and a pianist, but we want a comic (laughter). We are short a variety turn. We have had a conjurer and ventriloquist in the past but we want a change."

That was Miss Lena Ashwell. I went to see her, and then discovered that I had to entertain before Princess Victoria, who, I was told, was very particular as to what should be sent. They only engaged the very best it appeared.

I can assure you that it is something of an ordeal to face a real live princess, and I felt not a little awkward. However, I drove up to the West End in a taxicab with my blackboard and chalk, faced the ordeal, and was told to join the party on Saturday. Finally I landed in that fair, sunny land of France, war-worn and shell-shattered. We found that no delays were looked for and that we had to be-