Buckle up!

**DAVIES:** The engine was already rattling away loudly with smoke puffing out from behind. Its metal frame shaking as it vibrated on the spot eagerly wanting to pull off.

**ROBERT:** The rain thudded on the bonnet and splattered in the muddy puddles in front of the two giant front wheels.

**DOROTHIE**: Are you getting in or are you just going to stand there getting wet all night?

**LOTTIE**: Yes. I guess I should. I’ve never actually been in a motor car before.

**DOROTHIE:** Then you’re in for a smashing treat. Climb on up.

**DAVIES:** Dorothie was dressed in an old bomber jacket, brown trousers and a large pair of brown boots and she was sporting a hat with covered most of her head.

**DOROTHIE:** Next time I do suggest wearing something a little warmer. It can get frightfully chilly out here.

**ROBERT:** The cabin was completely exposed. No glass windscreen nor doors to protect the driver or the passenger.

**LOTTIE:** Does it go fast?

**DOROTHIE:** That and bumpy too. But you’ll get used to it a jiffy. You’re the new girl, I presume?

**LOTTIE:** *(Offers her hand)* Lottie. It’s wonderful to meet you. I’ve heard so much about you. I’ve read about you in the paper back home.

**DAVIES:** But Dorothie wasn’t listening.

**DOROTHIE:** Buckle up!

**LOTTIE:** But there is no belt?

**DOROTHIE:** Then hold on to what you can.

**DAVIES:** The ambulance leapt forward and tugged towards the main road.

**ROBERT**: The roads were dark and narrow. The wheels sloshed through the mud beneath them.

**LOTTIE:** Is this really a road? Don’t you have any lights?

**DOROTHIE:** We can’t use them during the black outs.

**LOTTIE:** But how can you see where you’re going?

**DOROTHIE:** Memory.

**LOTTIE:** Memory?

**DOROTHIE:** You pick things up quickly – landmarks and rest is just – luck really.

**LOTTIE**: Luck?

**DAVIES:** The young nurse looked petrified as she hung on to the front dashboard. The ambulance began to pick up speed moving quickly up the road and around the bends. The wind started sweeping through her hair as the rain battered her face.

**DOROTHIE:** Scarf!

**LOTTIE:** I beg your pardon?

**DOROTHIE:** I have a spare scarf which my dear mother knitted and sent to me. Remind me to give it to you when we return.

**ROBERT:** Lottie was thrown from side to side as the ambulance bounced over the potholes in the uneven road.

**DOROTHIE:** Do you see that smoke ahead?

**LOTTIE:** Yes.

**DOROTHIE:** That’s where we’re heading.

**LOTTIE:** Will there be injured men?

**DOROTHIE:** Plenty of the little Blesses

**LOTTIE:** Blesses?

**DOROTHIE:** That’s what we call them. Just keep beside me and do as I say and we’ll out of there in no time.

**DAVIES:** Just then an explosion lit up the sky and for a few seconds they could see the road in front of them. And it wasn’t much of one either.

**LOTTIE:** Do we ever get fired on?

**DOROTHIE:** Only occasionally. Most of the time they see the red cross on the side of the vehicle and leave us alone. They’re supposed to. It’s the loose ones which one needs to watch out for.

**LOTTIE:** Loose ones?

**DAVIES:** A piece of shrapnel hit the front of the cab and dented it before bouncing off.

**DOROTHIE:** The bombs which get side-tracked and end up hitting us by accident.

**ROBERT:** Another gust of wind took the nurses breath away.

**DOROTHIE:** Still want to be a nurse my girl?

**LOTTIE:** I do. Yes.

**DOROTHIE:** She didn’t think you had it in you? The Sister, I mean?

*(Pause. DOROTHIE smiles)*

You’re going to do just fine.

**DAVIES:** Ahead they could see a group of wounded shoulders being taken out of a heavily damaged car. A bomb had exploded a short distance from it and forced it to crash on the side of the road.

**ROBERT:** The ambulance gave to a screeching sharp holt. On the road by the mangled car. Dorothie was out of the cab at once organising the wounded. The nurse sat there staring around at the sight in front of her. For a few moments her heart sank, and she felt a sudden urge to be sick, but managed not to her. Her whole body turned cold. So, this was War. This is what it was really like.

**MRS ANDREWS:** It was the first time that my Great Grandmother had met her. I’d only read stories about her from the local newspapers.

**DAVID:** Lady Feilding, you mean?

**MRS ANDREWS:** My Great Grandmother was surprised by her.

**DAVID:** Why was that?

**MRS ANDREWS:** She wasn’t what she’d expected. My Great Grandmother used to refer to her as woman doing a man’s job.

**DAVID:** Times were slowly changing. She wasn’t the only woman creating surprises. It was at this point, I thought we could have the first audio clip about one of the other unsung heroes of the War.