

# Mollie Hyde Parker MBE

1908 – 1998

Mollie Hyde-Parker died on 14 September 1998 at the age of 90. She had been born (19 March 1908) into a Suffolk farming family, her father having been agent for several large estates in the Sudbury area. She had little formal education, and helped her parents on the family farm until, in her teens, a relative in Sussex arranged for her to be privately educated. Despite having no skills, and against her parents' wishes, she then moved to London and found a job as a desk clerk.

Towards the end of the 1930s she joined the WAAF, and was initially based in the Midlands. It was here that she found the friends with whom she walked, and climbed many classic routes in the Lake District, Wales and Scotland. Her first two Alpine seasons were 1938 and 1939.



After the war she climbed, mainly guideless, every year until 1971 in all the principle European mountain areas including Austria, Spain, Scandinavia and Ireland, as well as all parts of the Swiss and Italian Alps. Every year too she spent numerous weekends climbing and scrambling on British hills.

During the Second world War in the WAAF she was promoted to Squadron Officer and sent first to Northern Ireland and then to Bomber Command Headquarters, and was mentioned in dispatches. After the war she joined the Royal Corps of Signals in London, where she worked on the care and rehabilitation of returning prisoners of war. This assignment continued for the rest of her working life, holding her subject to the Official Secrets Act. During this period she helped many people, young and old, not necessarily in the services, and sometimes from remote and beleaguered parts of the world. It was for this work that she was awarded the MBE.

As a young woman she is said to have been very attractive, with blue eyes, auburn hair and a great sense of humour; a delightful companion. In later years she remained active for as long as her hip trouble would allow. She loved the mountains more than anything else.

Livia Gollancz