

Old Comrades



Association

GAZETTE.

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EDITORIAL. H.M. The Queen.

On May 24th Her Majesty the Queen, our Commandant-in-Chief, celebrated her birthday, and the following telegram was despatched to Buckingham Palace:—

The Lady-in-Waiting,
Buckingham Palace.

The ex-members of Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps throughout the British Empire send their loyal greetings and humble duty to their Commandant-in-Chief.

(Signed) FLORENCE SIMPSON.

In acknowledgment to the telegram, the following was received from Her Majesty's Lady-in-Waiting:—

Buckingham Palace,
May 26th.

Madam,

The Queen commands me to thank you and the ex-Members of Queen Mary Army Auxiliary Corps for their kind and loyal message.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) ELIZABETH MOTION.

ROUEN RE-UNION, 1930.

On Saturday, April 12th, a very happy evening was spent in the Drawing Room of the Club, when the Rouen members celebrated their annual reunion.

The gathering seemed rather smaller than usual, or was it that we missed so much the presence of Dame Helen, who through a previous engagement was unable to be with us. This was a matter of great disappointment to all our members, though we much appreciated her kind message of regret and good wishes for the evening's success. We were happy, however, to see Miss Davy, always one of our staunchest supporters; also Miss Ireland, who is a great favourite with the Rouenites.

We numbered just over forty, and friends seemed to find plenty of opportunity to chat, this being always one of the chief features of a reunion, as all Waacs know. As the years pass we lose some of our old friends by marriage and removal, but gain others, so perhaps it is a case of what we lose on the roundabouts we make up on the swings! Still, we do like to see both old and new friends, and wish more would take advantage of our pressing invitation and bring their husbands along also.

Perhaps we are getting a little old for games nowadays—but folks seemed to enjoy the music, competitions, and a few musical items kindly contributed by the Roamers Concert Party. We take this opportunity of publicly thanking the latter for their very welcome addition to our programme; also Mrs. Callow, one of our own Rouen members, who so generously provided a competition and the prizes for same.

The various billets and camps were well represented by Mrs. Buss (Wood), Mrs. Callow (Cathie Hall), the Misses Burnett, Butlin, Dipple, Long, Machin, Norden, Winks; also the Misses Bushell, Fordham, Rouse and Mrs. Tye (from Pont de'Larche) and other members. We also welcomed very heartily Mr. and Mrs. Pontet and little Elsie Pontet; and a very happy surprise to many was the unexpected arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Owens and their little daughter, who created quite a pleasurable flutter after an absence of several years. Mrs. Owens is better known to her Waac friends as "Burgess of Casualties," and Mr. Owens as an "Aussie" in Rouen.

Letters of goodwill and regret for absence were received from Miss de Putron, Dr. Proctor, Mrs. Senn (Harcourt Brown), Mrs. Hyde, Misses Laird and Oswald, Neale, Gibbs, Mrs. Stocker (Paterson), Mrs. Davis (Cottrill).

Those members who worked at the "Casualties," Rouen, will be interested to hear that through the medium of an advertisement in a London newspaper announcing the Social, a letter was received by the writer from a Mr. Charles Reynolds, which is published for the benefit of readers who may be interested.

20 New Church Street,

Newtown, Mid-Wales.

"If I am correct, you were engaged at the Casualty Branch, G.H.Q., Rouen, and you will remember the undersigned in the Typing Department.

The attached cutting attracted my attention to-day, and I sincerely trust you will enjoy a happy reunion.

Kindly convey my kind regards and good wishes to Misses Watson, Fearnside, Field, Partington, Blackburn, Brown, Johnson, and all who remember me.

With all good wishes."

Charles G. Reynolds.

It was very gratifying to receive this letter, and in consequence the writer feels that Mr. Reynolds is entitled to a full account of the Rouen Reunion. It was indeed a case of a voice from out the past, and revived memories of the old war days!

The evening passed all too quickly, finishing to the strains of Auld Lang Syne, and thus passed another milestone in the annals of the Waacs of Rouen.

E. M. WINTER.

(This was intended for publication in the May issue of the Gazette, but the first copy was apparently lost in the post, as it never reached our Headquarters' office. Ed).

SIGNALS REUNION. Telegraphs.

Shanghai Camp, August 23rd. Note the date, and gather in the flock. Husbands and families welcomed Sunday. All particulars, F. M. Robinson, G. Div., C.T.O. London, E.C.1.

A NIGHT WITH THE W.R.A.F.s.

As a guest of the W.R.A.F.s and representative of the Association, I spent a most enjoyable evening on the occasion of their 7th Annual Re-union Dinner which was held on April 5th at the Comedy Restaurant. From the moment I entered the room I knew I was going to enjoy myself and have a good time, and I sure did. For one thing I kept telling myself I was having an evening off and for another, everyone was so jolly and friendly one could not help having a good time. There was, of course, plenty of chatter and laughter, and I wondered who would win if the same number of W.A.A.C.s and W.R.A.F.s were put together and told to talk their hardest. There was certainly not quite so much noise as we make at our dinner, but then there were less people to make it. I think it would be a draw if the two services were well matched in numbers. The speeches appealed to me because they were short, sweet, and witty with a dash of romance of the service which made them all the more appetising to the listeners. I should like very much to reprint all the speeches as they appear in the W.R.A.F. O.C.A. leaflet for May, but I dare not without permission from the editor of the Gazette and also of the W.R.A.F. editor. However, I am just going to give a quotation from Miss George's own article of one speech made by Group Captain Rees, V.C. "The health of 'Our guests' was proposed by Mrs. Powell in an amusing speech punctuated with apt quotations, Group Captain Rees, V.C., who had had W.R.A.F. under his command at Turnberry (some of whom were present) responded with the engaging modesty characteristic of all the best V.C.s. He referred to the pleasure he felt in meeting old friends with whom he had served, recalled the good work and excellent marching of the W.R.A.F., and ended with a statement which he attributed to Lady Godiva, 'thank goodness, I am getting near my close!'" Air Marshal Sir Edward Ellington represented the Air Force. On replying to the toast of the Air Force, Sir Edward said—here again I quote from the leaflet—"When the war was ended and demobilisation took place and you all left us, of course at first all was confusion." Another reference to the speech of Air-Marshal Sir Edward Ellington herewith: "There is one criticism I have never heard of a speech, and that is that it is too short, so I will finish and thank you very heartily for the way you have responded to the toast of the Royal Air Force." I thought our readers would enjoy reading these extracts taken from the speeches which I frankly admit I have cribbed from the W.R.A.F. leaflet. I think they are much too good for the W.R.A.F.s to keep to themselves, and I am sure you will think so too. The evening finished up with a dance, to which friends and husbands were allowed to attend, and there did not seem to be any lonely people in that bright room. I thoroughly enjoyed every minute, and I thank the W.R.A.F.s for giving me the invitation.

R. S. ANDREWS.

BRANCH REPORTS FOR JUNE.**Norfolk.**

A most enjoyable day was spent at Aldeburgh on May 18th. Miss Edith Thompson invited Norfolk members over to lunch and tea, prior to her leaving England for a tour in South Africa. It was a beautiful spring morning which tempted members to turn up in full force from seaside and country, and at 10 o'clock, eight members clambered into the "Iris" for the lovely ride through some of the prettiest parts of Norfolk and Suffolk. A slight detour, and we were able to pick up Mrs. Paston en route, this making our number up to nine—and no one grumbled at the driver for taking us ten miles further round than he need have done!

At 12.30 p.m. we arrived at Aldeburgh and received a jolly welcome from Miss Thompson, who was very pleased to see such a goodly number from our small branch. A most delicious lunch was provided for us, and being really very hungry after our long journey in the open air, we thoroughly enjoyed all the good things set before us. At the conclusion of the meal, we toasted the "O.C.A.," followed by the "London Branch" who were at Shanghai on that day and so thoughtfully sent

such good wishes for a happy time—and also to our hostess, Miss Thompson.

Resting after lunch, we were able to inspect Miss Thompson's collection of Waac photographs, and many were the exclamations of joy when an old pal was spotted! And again when one of our own members was picked out "working in France." Snapshots were taken by some of us out on the lawn, and then we went out to see the "Sights of Aldeburgh."

Miss Thompson took us first of all to the house of a friend, where we were invited to ramble through the wonderful old world garden, ablaze with gorgeous spring flowers—and trees laden with blossoms of wonderful pleasing hues. A happy half hour was spent in the garden, wandering around, and then we were taken indoors to see a fine collection of "Samplers" which we all admired—and a wonderful collection of jugs of various sizes and colours—150 in all in that room, I believe our hostess told us, nestling on their ledge above the wainscoting.—The pleasure of having the opportunity of admiring that wonderful collection of jugs, is one that we shall always remember. But we had tarried long enough and with many thanks to our host and hostess for showing us around, we set off towards the sea. The weather was ideal for our ramble—not too hot—and our next halt was at the old Town Hall quite on the sea front, where we were able to go inside and look around—again thanks to Miss Thompson. On coming out—and after the removal of the "Eldorado Ice Cream" vendor—a snapshot was taken of the group, which shows up the quaint staircase outside the Hall quite well. A considerate policeman on point duty held up the traffic during the operation! A brisk walk along the sea front—more snaps taken on the sea wall, and back to the "Gables" for a most appetising tea, to which everyone did full justice and thoroughly enjoyed. How the time seemed to fly! Six o'clock and the "Iris" at the gate ready for the return journey, and looking quite cosy with the hood up! With many thanks to Miss Thompson for a very happy day, we climbed in and started for home. The return was quite uneventful until 13 miles from Norwich, when we ran out of petrol! Members saw visions of the last trams and buses home from Norwich being missed! However, nothing so serious happened to mar the day—our driver getting a lift to the nearest petrol pump and back, losing only 20 minutes. But the "Iris" had to jump along the last few miles! Mrs. Paston was able to get out at Tasburgh, and then we made our final dash to Norwich in record time, Yarmouth members having only a few moments to spare to catch the last train! One and all voted it a very happy day, and thanking Miss Thompson once again for inviting us over, and wish her every happiness during her visit to South Africa—taking greetings from Norfolk members to any Old Comrades she may meet out yonder.

Our next meeting is arranged for June 29th at "Holly Lodge," Southtown, Great Yarmouth—Mrs. Rumbold and Miss McDermott entertaining us. It is to be hoped that all will turn up.

L. W. CHILVERS.

Hastings and St. Leonard's.

There has not been any report sent in from this branch for some time.

We have met once a month, during the winter, at "Oversea" where Miss Taylor has had a cheerful fire, and some of those rough, wet nights it was a real warm welcome.

We just gather round the fire and talk of old times, and the affairs of to-day, usually getting quite excited over both. Then coffee and cakes, a kindness we fully appreciate and thank Miss Taylor for.

For the April meeting we met at the White Rock Pavilion, and had a happy evening, listening to the Municipal Orchestra.

This month we met at "Oversea" and gave a hearty welcome to Mrs. Russell who has come to live at St. Leonard's from Southsea.

We hope to see her at the future meetings.

There are no arrangements made for the next three months. Miss Taylor will be pleased to see any member who can spare time to call at "Oversea."

We would extend our sympathy to Mrs. Benham (nee Woodward) in her sad loss of her little boy, Colin.

N. ADAMS.

Newcastle.

During the summer we have arranged to meet only about once a month, and members will be notified individually as to where and when the meetings are to take place.

On the 7th of April we were the guests of Miss Weaver and Miss Allnutt, but, unfortunately, not very many of the members were able to be there. However, those who did turn up had a very enjoyable evening and a good game of bridge.

Then on the 30th, on the invitation of the Matron, we visited the Diocesan Refuge here and spent a very interesting time. We were shown all over the premises by her assistant Miss Grant and had the work that was done explained to us, and then had a nice cup of tea before we left.

In May we have had only one meeting, which took place at Miss Floyd's and took the form of a sewing meeting, when Mrs. Lester kept us busy—some of us perhaps not too happily (!!)—hemming and stitching at garments. We are to continue the good work on the 11th of June, again at Miss Floyd's.

M. MOYES.

Manchester.

Now the holiday season has commenced it is getting quiet at the club and the monthly whist drives have now ceased for the summer months.

Several of the members attended Lectures at the Memorial Hall on May 17th and 19th given by the Anthroposophical Society, and of course were delighted to meet our beloved President, Dame Florence. Those who attended these lectures were very much interested and long to hear more. There are rumours of picnics in the air but nothing definite has been decided yet. The hut is booming and members from other clubs will be sure of a hearty welcome. The country around is glorious now, so come along.

M. BIGG.

Brighton.

Wednesday, June 25th, Meeting at Mrs. Anscombe's house, 15 Bristol Gardens, Kemptown, at 7.15. We hope to get some tennis near, and want any to come who can either to play or watch.

We had a delightful time on Sunday, May 4th. We met as arranged below Ditchling Beacon, and with Mrs. Ambrose, a local member, and her mother as guides, to both of whom thanks. We rejoiced in bluebells and red campion and primroses, and further along, after some hedge-climbing, we found lots of cowslips. We climbed part way up the beacon for tea, and sat down a merry party. 12 of us, with a glorious view of the Weald spread out before us, and the North Downs far away in the mist, and a train or two, like toys, chuffing away in the distance. One the "Southern Belle" making a bee line for London Town, otherwise no disturbing sounds of traffic. Only the birds—cuckoos, larks, thrushes, blackbirds—and, of course, our fairy laughter!!

H. A. BARON.

Leeds.

Leeds branch received a great surprise at their April meeting when they were honoured by a visit from Dame Florence Simpson. Fortunately for us Dame Florence happened to be paying a flying visit to Leeds on the day of our usual monthly meeting, and it was very amusing to see the astonishment on the faces of the members as they strolled into the club room.

A representative gathering of members were able to be present at a meeting in Leeds on May 16th at which Dame Florence was also present and the members were able to learn more about the subject, i.e. Anthroposy, which Dame Florence has so much at heart. We hope she will come again soon.

Rambles have been arranged for the month of June and at our July meeting further rambles will be fixed.

Do try to come if you can.

A. ANNIKIN.

Glasgow and W. of Scotland.

Change of Address: Will members and friends please note that the Club address is now

316 Bath Street,

Corner of North Street.

Take car to Charing Cross. The club will be very cosy though the rooms are smaller, and as it is very central we hope it will be well patronised.

Dame Florence Simpson's Visit. We were delighted to be able to entertain Dame Florence once more before leaving our old club. The day was fine and sunny and Glasgow was looking its best when she arrived from Edinburgh, so we hope she and her party carried away a good impression of the second city of the Empire!

Our Hut. The booking is excellent and a warm welcome is given to all from Mrs. Holms. The woods are blue with bells and everything is fresh and green. There are only a few week ends vacant, so apply at once.

E. M. GILCHRIST.

Bristol and West of England.

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held at White-ladies Road Picture House, Clifton, Bristol, on Saturday, the 5th April, 1930.

Lady Taylor presided, and there was a good attendance of members, Bristol, Bath and Weston-super-Mare being represented.

The Secretary (Miss Pearce, of Bath) presented her report of the past year's work, and stated that she had received a number of enquiries from prospective members, a number of whom she expected to be present at the Social, which had been arranged to follow the meeting.

The only business before the meeting was the election of a President and Secretary for the forthcoming year.

President.—Lady Taylor was unanimously elected President for the coming year.

Secretary.—After some discussion it was decided to appoint "Social" Secretaries to cover the activities of members at Bristol, Bath and Weston-super-Mare, the following being elected:—

Bristol,—Miss M. Hall,
1 Lansdown Place,
Clifton, Bristol.

Bath,—Miss D. Pearce,
1 Pierrepont Place,
Bath.

Weston-super-Mare,—Miss Smith,
"Kinver,"
Chesham Road,
Weston-super-Mare.

Miss B. Mould, 11 The Tynning, Bath, being elected General Secretary of the Branch.

At the conclusion of the business a successful social was held.

On Sunday, the 11th May, a visit to Abbott's Pool was arranged.

Unfortunately the weather was rather unsettled and this undoubtedly prevented many who would like to have joined the party.

However, members from Bristol and Bath met at the Suspension Bridge and enjoyed a truly delightful walk through Leigh Woods to Abbott's Pool.

Miss Hall had arranged for tea at a cottage near the Woods and those who risked the elements were well rewarded by the sights, sounds and scents of the countryside—truly just now at its best, with the profusion of flowers and the fresh green of the hedgerows.

Some time in June we hope to accept our President's invitation to her hut at Berrow, and we hope to give full details in the next issue of the Gazette.

B. MOULD.

London.

OUR BIRTHDAY PARTY.—The tenth anniversary of the Branch should not really be celebrated until June, but as Miss Thompson was on the eve of leaving us for a trip to South Africa and we could not properly celebrate the occasion without our President, we decided to have our party before she went away, and it was arranged for

Saturday, May 10th, and members and friends from far and near assembled in the Lysbeth Hall, Beta Cafe, Soho Square, W., on the night of nights. One hundred and sixty-five people sat down to dinner, and the noise prevented the excellent music from being heard at first, but the band obeyed instructions (to play until they won) and played on. It was very successful in the end. After they had played a few very nice pieces, they gave up in despair and turned on the old war-time favourites, one after another, and the diners could not resist. Spontaneously they took up the old songs and choruses, and I can see them now, each table swaying in rhythm with the music. It was Chatter versus Music, and Music won. The arrangements were in the hands of the Committee, and everybody helped with the work, also many members lent a hand on the evening of the dinner so that the work should be as light as possible. Stewards were placed at each table, and they discharged their numerous duties in expert fashion, and with the spirit that Old Comrades alone know. Nobody bothered whether she was with her own friends or with somebody's else's, because the whole affair was meant to be entirely informal and topsy-turvy. Our one and only official guest of the evening was Captain Garrard, brave man! but I feel sure he enjoyed himself as much as any man could when he suddenly finds himself outnumbered by the other sex. Mr. King, of the Service Women's Benevolent Fund, who, as an Honorary Member of the Branch, is entitled to attend any of the social functions run by the Branch, was a very able companion for Captain Garrard, and shared the honours of being the only men present. I hope they found us quite sporty and that they forgot they were in the minority before the evening was spent. As our party was to be quite informal no set speeches were arranged for. Miss Thompson, in a few remarks, gave an outline of the work of the Branch and its various officials during the ten years of its existence, and at the same time introduced our guest. Captain Garrard gallantly replied, and as he stood there amongst his 164 fellow diners he seemed quite at home in his unique position of chief guest at a ladies' dinner. The King was toasted with musical honours and then the members' choice of speakers. "We want Dame Helen!" the shout went up. We got her, and Dame Helen entertained us with her breezy and witty remarks. "We want Miss Ireland!" as if anything could be complete without our Vice-President! Could we do without her? No! A few words in obedience to the demand delighted her listeners, and then "We want Miss Andrews!" came as a crash on the ears of the unfortunate Hon. Secretary, and she for once felt she had nothing to say—in fact, nearly speechless—and wishing fervently she had been born a worm so that she could wriggle out. She got to her feet and managed to stammer out a few words, which seemed to set some of her hearers guessing and others wondering how far she would go on with the chin-wag. However, nothing more dreadful followed than a few remarks on the progress of the Branch within the last five years, and the bold Hon. Secretary retired as gracefully as possible. "We want Miss Davy!" the next call, and Miss Davy very aptly responded by asking the company to toast the Roamers, and we did so with pride and great pleasure. This caused it! "We want Miss Taylor!" Miss Taylor rose to her feet, and, insisting that the concert party should share in her compliment, she made them stand up also. It was nice to see the concert party rise in obedience to the request of their leader. Many thanks, Miss Davy, for giving us the opportunity to pay such a great compliment to our concert party.

No more speeches, and a general move was made so that the tables could be cleared away to make room for dancing. While this was going on, war-time songs and choruses lead by the concert party were sung, and I believe that the band was fired pro tem, the drum taken over by Paddy Bell, and the piano by Miss Winter. At any rate, there was a queer row going on and plenty of laughter in the Ingle Nook. The band having refreshed, again took over, and then we started our "Once-upon-a-time" dance; we danced the Polka, Valeta, La Rinka, Maxina and other relics of the past, including the lancers, much to our great joy. The few young guests kept a discrete silence and

copied their elders. The band was kept very busy until after 11 o'clock when the dancers began to show signs of breaking up—time, I mean, not physically; it would take many nights such as these to do that. There are still a lot of people who depend on tubes and 'buses, and it behoved us to draw a halt some time before midnight, so we sung "Auld Lang Syne" and "The King," and took ourselves off, some to catch their Nos. 11, 29, 24, etc., and parties going the same way home were packed into taxis by impatient drivers, while others who still had some lingering conviviality to dispose of found their way to neighbouring cafes in Soho, and goodness knows when they arrived home—their milk would not be stolen from the door-step that Sunday morning because I expect they took it from the milkman as he arrived with it. Many members turned up the following Thursday to discuss what they termed the jolliest evening they have had yet and to say how much they enjoyed what Miss Thompson described as "A care-free, informal and happy family gathering." I look back on that evening with satisfaction and great happiness.

It was regretted that many of our folks were prevented from being with us; three of those I specially mention because they have all been zealous workers for the branch. Mrs. Parkes, whom we all know as a staunch supporter, was prevented through illness. We hope she is very much better by this time. Miss Bartlett, another member who was one of the early workers of the branch, and is still amongst its band of willing helpers. Mumps was the unromantic cause of her absence; mumps in the office. We hope that Bartie is still mumpless, and regret very much that such an unwelcome visitor should have been admitted into her thoroughly respectable office on the eve of our party, but one need not be blind to fail to detect the presence of such an alien, even in the foreign office. Hard luck, Bartie. Another prominent worker for the branch we missed was Miss Billington, and I have nursed a very guilty secret regarding a message she entrusted me to deliver to the members present which I forgot. Here is the message now: "Best wishes for a very happy evening; wish I could be with you." Thank goodness that's off my conscience! There is nobody more sorry than I that the message was forgotten in the hurry and hustle, and I apologise most sincerely.

Let me whisper! In June, 1941, we are due to celebrate our coming-of-age—in case you are misled, the coming-of-age of the branch. Any offers to purchase tickets for the celebration? I don't know who will send out the notices then, but I fancy they will read like this: To celebrate the coming-of-age of the branch, a gathering of those members who are still interested in dancing and dining will be held, and the following arrangements are being made for the comfort of the revellers.

Indigestion and aspirin tablets will be issued with each ticket.

A hall with padded floor will be engaged for the occasion, in case of draughts, and it will be furnished with divan beds for those too weary to travel home.

The menu will be carefully chosen, and an attempt made to cater for each diner. Nuts or hard pastries will be excluded, likewise, crusty rolls.

Very soft drinks, please! Still lemonade, soda water, soda and milk. Adam's wine only will be served, but those who wish to dash it, may order burgundy, Wincarnis, etc.

"All out" props will be installed for enthusiastic dancers who will dance the lancers in case they dance too heartily and lose their heads; a slight lean will give them strength to carry on.

Special accommodation will be provided for sticks so that the short and longs won't get mixed up, and may be easily got at if required during the evening when going round to greet Old Comrades.

Hot water bottles will be served out after the dance to put in bath chairs.

Special parking accommodation for bath chairs right outside the door.

Enough of that! We must have our little joke, and the above notice will do for 30 years hence!

As the guests of the W.R.A.F. O.C.A. on Thursday, May 29th, we had a rare treat, a lecture from Dame Helen Gwynne Vaughan, one which we could have listened to for another hour and then not felt tired, Part II of the "Development of Flying." It was moreish. Many thanks, friends, for the invitation.

A joint services reunion organised by Q.M.A.A.C. O.C.A. was held on May 15th at the club, and quite a lot of W.R.A.F.s turned up. Entertaining was made easy because there was a Court on, and the balcony was well filled with W.R.A.F.s and W.A.A.C.s admiring and criticising everybody and everything.

COMING EVENTS.—Instructions have already been issued for the moonlight ramble on the 14th of June in the May Gazette, so please turn to that and save me reprinting. Members wishing to book a bed at camp should do so at once; also they should notify the Hon. Secretary of their intention to join the rambling party. This being a special ramble, it needs special organisation and we don't want to spend the night looking for each other.

Two cars will leave the club at 5.30 p.m. (6.30 p.m.) on Friday, June 20th, for Aldershot. Will members who have seats booked, see to it that they are in their seats in plenty of time; don't forget that if one out of the sixty-four fails she will hold up the entire party, and if each member will make up her mind to be there to time, then we will move off promptly. I think the weather clerk will be on our side, so we should have a grand night.

THE CHILDREN'S OUTING.—The children will be taken to Shanghai Camp on Saturday, 12th July. Will members who are willing to help please communicate with me as soon as possible? Donations of toys, sweets, cakes, cash, etc., will be appreciated and should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, c/o The Ex-Service Women's Club, 5 Buckingham Gate, S.W.1. I have a brilliant suggestion to make to those helpers who usually go down to camp by train and to others who are going for the week-end or for the day; if a party of forty-eight can be gathered together then we can hire another bus and the same half-crown you pay for your day ticket will take you down and back again by bus from Victoria and so save that long walk to and from the station and also the tedious train journey. But send in your names and cash immediately. If I don't get the number, the bus cannot be hired.

SUMMER SALE IN AID OF BRANCH FUNDS.—On Thursday, 17th July, we intend holding a summer sale in aid of Branch Funds. Why it should be called a summer sale I just don't know except that I hate repeating and the sale is being held in the summer and any old excuse will do so that we can make a few pounds. The sale will be held at the club and all sorts of donations will be welcomed, so please get busy and make a lot of smalls. If you have anything large and expensive don't hesitate to send it along because it can be raffled either beforehand or on the evening of the sale. Helpers and stall-holders are wanted, so hurry and choose the stall you would like to preside over and start collecting and selling now. Here are a few suggestions for stalls and articles to sell, perhaps a few more suggestions could be given by Gazette readers.

Cake and Candy Stall, Handkerchief Stall, Children's Stall, (articles of clothing), Toy Stall, Stationary Stall, Woolworth's Stall, (a miscellaneous collection from a penny upwards) Swindle Stall (lotteries and wholesale swindle in charge of a Jew and a Scot).

Ramona, the Gipsy Queen, will wait upon those who would like to peer into the future, or look back on their past. Last time many were disappointed, so I advise those people to be first in the queue this time.

R. S. ANDREWS.

NEWS OF OLD COMRADES.

Miss Jane Thorpe, 1708 Octavia Street, San Francisco, California, is asking for addresses of ex-service women in that city. Recently she met **Betty Harris**, who was with her at Dienpe.

Mrs. E. J. McIver (Sean's, St. Martin's and Ostrobove Camps) is now living in Berkshire.

Mrs. Barrow (Cable, 19371) 3 Central Avenue, Eastbourne, is anxious to get in touch with **N. Coe**, 19735, who served with her in the E'ables area and in Rouen.

SHANGHAI CAMP.

Will you please leave the evening of the 24th June free—because the concert party have kindly offered to entertain us on that date at the Duke of York's Headquarters. As you all know—that is sufficient guarantee for an enjoyable time.

The money thus raised will be used to augment the funds of the Shanghai Camp—which are at present rather low. You are relied upon to support this effort to the utmost of your ability. If you are unable to come please show this notice to your friends, and in this way, atone for your absence.

The Camp Committee are relying on you to make this a great success, why not make this a precedent? Turn out in your hundreds(?) and create a record.

By the way, when sending in your application for week end bookings, a stamped addressed envelope would oblige.

E. NORDEN.
Camp Secretary.

MORE ABOUT WAR FICTION!

The reviewer of books for the "Dundee Courier and Advertiser" has been writing on "Not so Quiet" and "W.A.A.C." and has drawn from Miss Alice Low, O.B.E., the following reply:

Sir,—I read the review of the women's war books, "Waac" and "Not So Quiet," in your issue of last Thursday. Miss Smith, the author of "Not So Quiet," has given a graphic and moving description of the most sordid and terrible side of the war. She joined the Waacs as a domestic worker, and was nearly killed on the one occasion when a number of Waacs were blown to pieces by an aerial bomb. Her story must not be taken as a sample of Waac life in France as a whole.

With regard to "Waac," I must draw attention to the fact that it has nothing to do with the W.A.A.C.s (Women's Army Auxiliary Corps), and I cannot see why it was called by that name. Further, the story gives one the impression of having been written of the very early days of the war, and Waacs did not go to France until early in 1917. The ex-members of the corps object very strongly to the fact that their name should have been used as a title for a book which deals entirely with the V.A.D.s.

The anonymous writer, on two or three occasions, couples the Waacs with the V.A.D.s in some derogatory comment on the women war-workers overseas as a whole.

The Waacs, both at home and in France, have a record they may well be proud of, and the Scottish girls, the majority of whom enrolled from patriotic motives, whatever Miss Smith may write to the contrary (page 220 of "Not So Quiet"), were among the best we had in the Corps. It was a tribute to the good behaviour and the efficiency of the Corps when Her Majesty the Queen became our Commandant-in-Chief, and we were no longer Waacs but Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps. In spite of that we are all proud to have begun our service in the Waacs.—I am, etc.,

ALICE LOW,

Late Deputy Controller, Q.M.A.A.C. Overseas.
Forebrae, Butterstone, by Dunkeld.

One wishes that Miss Low had pointed out, however, that H. Z. Smith's account of an air raid is clearly imaginary. She makes us carry mattresses a mile to a dug-out and also makes us scream!

Had it not been for these war books, most of us would never have written a word about the conduct of our women during air-raids. One took it for granted that everyone knew that they just went through them as everyday events of a war life, and moreover some of us think ourselves very lucky to have experienced them. In my particular area we were very thoroughly plastered night after night during the early parts of '18, and sometimes several times a night. It was my good fortune to be O.C. of a unit of domestic workers who had their being on the very edge of the largest ammunition dump in France, Dannes. On the other side we had what was known as the "False Area." This, on all likely nights was illuminated with tiny ground lights to draw bombs. And I may say it was

quite successful! In front of us was stationed an A.A. battery, and at the rear of the camp we had a powerful searchlight. All excellent means of attracting Jerry's attention. One night our searchlight was smashed and put out of action by machine-gun fire from an enemy plane, some of the bullets hitting our sleeping quarters and generally making what one of our P.B. men termed, "a fair muck-up" of the place. But did the Waacs scream? Not a bit of it. Having none of these dug-outs that H. Z. Smith refers to, this unit had to seat themselves on the floor of a corrugated iron passage leading to the cook-house, it being the only place that had no windows, and with blankets round their shoulders they had such a heated argument on Scotland v. England, particularly with regard to Prince Charlie (or the Pretender, according to which side you were!) that I had difficulty in making myself heard when our particular bit of the war was over. This was typical of the Waacs I encountered. In fact, I think life would have been easier if they had been somewhat scared, for then there would have been no slackness in turning out promptly when the alarm was given and I, for one would not have had to go all through the sleeping quarters feeling *under* the beds to see that they were all out. A favourite dodge to try was, on being ordered "Turn out!" to get under the bed, hoping to be missed in the darkness, and to get back into bed as soon as the forewoman had turned her back. I don't blame them now—I did then!—and many a strafe we had on the subject at Roll Call.

Does Miss Low mean in her letter that the most "sordid and terrible side of war" was behind the lines? If so, with all due respect to my one time D.C., I beg to disagree, and I think many others will, too.

MARKET HARBOROUGH TRAINING HOSTEL FOR WOMEN.

Change of Management.

Arrangements have been made between the Oversea Settlement Department of the Dominions Office and the Society for the Oversea Settlement of British Women (the "S.O.S.B.W.") whereby the Women's Training Hostel at Market Harborough, which was established over two years ago as a centre for training young women for household employment in Australia, will as from April 1st be taken over and managed by the Society.

This training Hostel was set up as the result of a proposal made at the Imperial Conference of 1926, that the Dominion Governments should co-operate with the British Government in training or testing people in this country prior to their settlement overseas. The Australian Government agreed, as an experiment, to co-operate in the establishment and management of a training hostel for women household workers. "The Elms," Market Harborough, a fine house admirably suited to the purpose, was selected as the site for the Hostel, which was formally opened by H.R.H. The Duchess of York in December, 1927. The management was entrusted by the two Governments to a special sub-committee of the Central Committee on Women's Training and Employment, which was also responsible for the appointment of the Staff.

The change of management is the sequel to the announcement, published on January 18th, that the Australian Government did not see their way at the present juncture to continue their contribution to the expenses of the Hostel, although they agreed to continue the grant of free passages to such household workers as could be placed by the State Governments.

Up-to-date, admission to the Hostel has necessarily been restricted to women who had decided to settle in Australia. In future, however, women will be accepted for settlement in Canada and New Zealand as well as in Australia. They will, as hitherto, be required to sign an undertaking, before entering the Hostel, to remain throughout the course if their progress is considered satisfactory, and, subject to their being fully approved by the Dominion Authorities, to take up domestic work overseas for at least twelve months.

The Overseas Settlement Department has agreed to continue to share the expenses of carrying on the Hostel, it being the opinion of the Department that there are numbers of suitable young women in Great Britain who

would not hesitate to avail themselves of the openings for capable household workers overseas if they could obtain the necessary training.

Since the commencement of the training courses in 1927, the Market Harborough Hostel has maintained a high record of success and highly satisfactory reports have been received periodically from Australia on the progress made by the young women who, after training, had been placed in employment in Australian homes.

The numbers sailing in 1928 and 1929 were 266 and 258 respectively, these figures representing no less than 11 per cent. and 15 per cent. of the total number of women who in those two years were granted free passages to Australia as household workers. The fact that very few of these have failed to settle down satisfactorily and happily overseas is a tribute to the Superintendent, Miss Ball, and her Staff, and to the effective system of training employed. It is a matter for real regret that the services of Miss Ball and of her assistants will no longer be available when the change over takes place, as they will then be transferred to other duties under the Central Committee.

Finally, it may be observed that from the very start, every effort has been made to avoid an "institutional" atmosphere. This has been an important factor in the success of the Hostel, as is shown by the enthusiastic references to "The Elms" and to the Staff in the letters from former trainees now settled overseas.

CORRESPONDENCE.

From Miss Marjorie Calcott. (12221.)

I have at last raised sufficient courage to write to you after searching in vain in each month's Gazette for news of any single motor driver who served with me in the old days, for so far I have been unlucky.

I wonder if you know of any Unit IV Boulogne drivers or any E.F.C. who also shared our billet. I was head driver attached to 318 M.T. Coy. and I feel sure some of them must be still going strong, although never mentioned in Gazette. I should like news of **Jordan**, whom I think is now married, and also **Goodyear**, otherwise "Tiny," who was such a "ray of sunshine" in the Concert Party. Hostel forewoman, **Dando** did, I think, come from or near Bristol, which is my local branch, but I have never been able to find her.

I should like to hear of anyone who remembers me either at 348 M.T. Coy., Larkhill, or 318 Coy., Boulogne, and I may add that in those days my face was not likely to be forgotten once seen with several layers of motor oil plus the local sand!

I do hope some kindred spirits of the M.T. will respond to my efforts to get in touch with them. With my best wishes to the Gazette for all time.

From Miss Le Templier, New Zealand.

Just to tell you what we have done up to date. As you know, we left Tilbury on November 29th, calling at several ports on the way out to Fremantle, which we reached on December 31st. It was a great sea journey, and both being good sailors, we thoroughly enjoyed it. Marseilles is just like any of the French ports. Then came Port Said, my first taste and smell of the East. It was great, and I did enjoy it. Took some very good photographs. We got into the native part of the town, just we two, the only white faces about, and had a great time. My great point—languages—got me or "we" escorted about by a person, much bejewelled and be-robed. He conducted us everywhere, cleared a way with an enormous stick for us to get into various native shops, and when I announced my intention of photographing the fish market—he cleared all the customers from the stalls, until I explained that the photograph would be nothing without them—so he drove them back again. The funny part was that I spoke to him in a mixture of French and Malay, which I had picked up in Havre during the war. Mrs. Kennedy did laugh. The Suez Canal, with the River Nile in the distance, was rather wonderful. It took us 13 hours to get through the Canal, and we only had to tie up twice. You see, two boats cannot pass, or really meet each other, to be correct, as the wash would be too great, so the up-going boat ties up until the other has gone by. We carry two boats of natives who do the mooring and casting off. Then came Aden, which we reached at night, but we hurried

ashore, got a car with a native driver who took us through the wonderfully constructed tunnels to Old Aden from New Aden. The former is most interesting, as it is the native quarter of the town, and we saw native life, pure and simple, as we drove through. We had dinner at the hotel in Aden, and among other things an awfully good salad. It had all kinds of wonderful herbs in which we never see at home; also the oil used was a kind which does not get exported. The last port was Colombo, also a night landing, but we went ashore, got a car, and told the driver to take us round. An election was on, so we went to the park, where it was held. Our driver, informing all and sundry that we were "English" ladies, drove into the thick of the fun, so that we might see all we could. It was amusing. Very smart cars, decorated with ribbon and silk, the colour of its candidate, flags of the same colours; in fact, everything was decorated. At one end of the park was a platform, and each candidate in turn mounted it, and shouted a speech. There were heaps of side shows, conjurors, sword swallows, snake charmers, devil dancers and all the fun of the last, and all kinds of things to eat and drink. After we had seen and heard part of the fun, we were taken to see wonderful banyan trees, whose growth is really very peculiar.

After spending three weeks in the Western Australian Bush, we returned to Perth, took a ship, and sailed inter-state right up to Queensland. So I think we can "speak and write" about Australia. It's a great country. From Queensland we motor-coached 400 miles through beautiful river and mountain scenery; then as the car did not go on, we did the other 400 miles by train. It is 800 miles from Brisbane to Sydney. At the latter city, we got a ship for Auckland, and landed in delightful New Zealand, the great little country with wonderful possibilities, and a very fine climate. We did part of North Island, then crossed to South Island, where we found the snow capped mountains. At one place, we climbed 5,000 feet and got caught in a blizzard. My word, it was cold, and down in the valley beautifully warm. We collected very fine Botanical specimens, wonderful rare alpine seeds, and in the beautiful native bush heard the wonderful singing of the native birds. The small fantails are so tame that they perch on your arm or hand; in fact, anywhere. We saw all the interesting South Island places, so are now back in North Island. We sail from Auckland on May 6th for Vancouver, take three weeks to cross Canada, sail from Montreal on June 14th, arrive Southampton June 21st, dear old England. There is no country like her, and no race like the British. When you travel and see other countries and other people and watch them at games and other things, it makes me intensely proud of all that is British, and of our British birth. Everywhere we have visited Girl Guides and the Returned Soldiers, and you would never believe what a band of sisterhood lies in the little trefoil Guide Band, and the band of comradeship in the badge of the British Legion. We landed in towns, townships, great cities, even very small townships, and in a very short time we had found friends by one or the other of these badges. People would turn up with cars to take us round. "I saw you wearing a Guide Badge, will you come and have tea with me?" We have met very interesting folk, and had a great time. We are both awfully fit and well. I am a most lovely brown. We will have lots to relate when we get back home, some very funny adventures in the back blocks of Australia and New Zealand.

ADVERTISEMENTS

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Bournemouth. "Glen Cora," 3 Hawkwood Road, (Sea Road end) Boscombe. Comfortable and up-to-date boarding establishment. Few minutes pier, shops, amusements, etc. Good food, well cooked; separate Tables. Terms from 2½ gns.; Xmas and Easter 10s. 6d. per day; special terms for long winter bookings. Mrs. A. Stocker (nee Paterson.)

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89 Belgrave Road, London, S.W.1—Hostel for business girls. Terms very moderate. Miss H. Pink. (Telephone Victoria 3911).

Eileen Yorke, Ladies' Hairdresser, 9 Sicilian Avenue, Southampton Row, W.C. (late Connaught Club). Phone: Hol 1281. First-class attention at moderate prices. Marcel Wave, 1s. 6d.; Shampoo, 1s. 6d.; Permanent Wave, whole head, 25s. Try an Old Comrade and receive satisfaction. Two minutes' walk from Holborn Restaurant.

Le Touquet, Paris Plage—Scotch House, 44 Rue de la Paix. Re-opening April. All rooms fitted hot and cold running water. Excellent cuisine; comfortable and central; near sea, tennis, Casinos. Moderate terms. Alice B. Anderson, proprietress (ex-Wimereux and Le Touquet).

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Branch.	Name and Address of Secretary.	Address of Club or Meeting place.	Day and Time of Meeting
Birmingham.	Miss E. C. Brinsford, 167 Birchfield Road, Handsworth, Birmingham.	38 John Bright Street, Room 19.	Wednesdays. 7 to 10 p.m.
Bournemouth.	Miss E. Jones,	Cavendish House, 8 Christ Church Road.	Last Monday in each month 8 to 10 p.m.
Brighton.	Miss H. A. Baron, 25 Wellington Road, Brighton, Sussex.		On last Wednesday in the month; 7.15—10.15.
Bristol and West of England.	Miss D. Mould, 11 The Tynning, Bath.	No permanent room fixed.	Not fixed
Cheltenham.	Mrs. Mann, 84B High Street, Cheltenham, Gloucester.	Not fixed.	Not fixed
Exeter.	Miss J. Rose, 164 Sidwell Street, Exeter.	164 Sidwell Street, Exeter.	First Wednesday of the month at 3 o'clock.
Eastbourne.	Miss N. Peters, 5 Spencer Road, Eastbourne.	Not fixed.	Not fixed.
Edinburgh and East of Scotland.	Miss M. Innes, 1 Granville Terrace, Edinburgh. Benevolent Sec.: Miss F. M. Lush, 11a Gilmore Place, Edinburgh.	Women's United Services Club, 12 Drumshough Gardens, Edinburgh.	1st Saturday of each month, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Glasgow and West of Scotland.	Miss E. M. Gilchrist, M.B.E., 13 Royal Terrace West, Glasgow.	316 Bath Street, Glasgow.	Every Wednesday, 7.30.
Headquarters.	Mrs. Pratt Barlow, O.B.E. 1 Grosvenor Crescent, S.W.1.	Not fixed.	Not fixed.
Ireland.	Miss E. C. Finny, Erith Lodge, Sandymount, Dublin.		Not fixed.
Leeds.	Miss E. Mair, 29 Victoria Terrace, Belle Vue Rd., Leeds, Yorks Benevolent Sec.: Miss A. Annikin, 2 Hollin Park View, Roundhay, Leeds, Yorks.	British Legion Club Rooms, Greek Street, Leeds.	First Wednesday in the month, 7.30 p.m.
Liverpool.	(Temp.) Mrs. Ryley, 199 Picton Road, Wavertree.	79 Lime Street, Liverpool.	Friday, 7.30 p.m.
London.	Miss R. S. Andrews, 5 Buckingham Gate, S.W.1.	1st and 3rd Thursdays in each month at the Ex-Service Women's Club, 5 Buckingham Gate, S.W.1; 2nd, 4th and 5th Thursdays. Mess. Central Canteen, Duke of York's Hdq., King's Rd., Chelsea. Winchfield, Shirehall Lane, Golders Green Road (nearest 'bus stop Brent Bridge). Telephone: Hendon 1925.	Thursday evenings, 7.30 to 10 p.m.
Golders Green.	Miss Setterfield, 12 Geary Road, Dollis Hill, N.W.10.	122 Cranbrook Road, Ilford. (Telephone Ilford 0058).	First Tuesday of each month; 7.30—10 p.m.
London Sub-Branch Ilford.	Miss M. V. Druitt, 74 Belgrave Road, Ilford, Essex.		Alternate Tuesdays at 8 p.m.
Manchester.	Mrs. Stear, 8 Gainsborough Street, Higher Broughton, Salford.	The Kingston Cafe, Spring Gardens, Manchester.	Every Friday, 7—10.30 p.m.
Newcastle-on-Tyne.	Miss Margaret Moyes, 1A Eslington Terrace, Jesmond, Newcastle. Benevolent Sec., Miss L. M. Floyd, 13 Beacon Street, Low Fell, Gateshead	No permanent room fixed. Interviews at British Legion, N.E. Area Offices, 10 Leazes Terrace, Newcastle.	Members notified individually.
Norfolk.	Mrs. L. W. Chilvers, 32 Grove Road, Norwich.	No permanent room fixed.	Monthly. Members notified individually.
North Staffs.	Mrs. E. Stretton 10 Sparrow Terrace, Porthill, Stoke-on-Trent.		
Oxford.	Mrs. M. Grundy, M.B.E., West Wood House, Hinksey Hill, Oxford	No permanent room fixed	Members notified individually.
Notts.	Miss Burder, 65 Harcourt Road, Forest Fields, Nottingham.	Meldrum's Cafe, Lister Gate.	First Wednesday in the month, 7-9.30
Plymouth.	Mrs. O. Foster, 2 Notte Street, Plymouth.		
S. Wales. and Cardiff.	Miss Diana V. Viney, 201 Carlisle Street, Cardiff.	Y.M.C.A., Cardiff.	Second and Last Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.
St. Leonard's.	Miss E. Taylor, 58 West Hill, St. Leonards-on-Sea.	58 West Hill. St. Leonard's-on-Sea.	Not fixed.
Sunderland.	Miss M. M. Low, 15 Featherstone Street, Roker, Sunderland	Y.W.C.A. Rooms, Burdon Road.	Second Wednesday each month, 7 p.m.
Tunbridge Wells.	Mrs. Boylett, 114 Queen's Rd., East Grinstead.		July 20th and Nov. 25th.

All Old Comrades are cordially invited to any of the above re-unions. If no definite meetings are fixed, application should be made to the Branch Secretary concerned, who will give the necessary particulars