

Old Comrades



Association

GAZETTE.

Duke of York's Headquarters, London, S.W.3.

JANUARY, 1931.

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QUEEN MARY'S ARMY AUXILIARY CORPS OLD COMRADES' ASSOCIATION.

ELEVENTH ANNUAL DINNER.

SPEECHES.

After the Toasts of The King and The Queen—our Commandant-in-Chief had been drunk, Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan made the following announcements:—

DAME HELEN:

Old Comrades, you have probably had two surprises, both rather distressing ones. The first is my presence in the Chair (cries of "No!") We all hoped and expected to have our President with us this evening, and I am very sorry indeed that she should be absent from what has proved to be our very biggest dinner. **We actually have 654 persons present.** I have a letter from the President, who is at present in Switzerland and who says that she had hoped very much indeed to be with us, but that she is attending a Conference and that she is sure we realise that it is to her something of very great importance which should have brought her to the decision that she must stay there and not be back in time for the Dinner. She asks me to express her greetings for the New Year, her most heartfelt and sincere regret at her inability to be with us, and her assurance that her thoughts are with us this evening. I know our thoughts will be with her and that we very deeply regret that she is not making the announcements this evening.

The second thing that you may have noticed with surprise and alarm, or shall we say with alarm and despondency, is the sudden disappearance of the guest on my right. It is not that the concourse of 654 gave him cold feet, but Sir Frederick—let me give him his full title in his absence—Professor Major-General Sir Frederick Maurice, K.C.M.G., C.B., used to know, during the War, all the big personalities of the War—his staff job brought him into touch with them. Amongst those, he knew Marshal Joffre very well, and he has been asked to go to broadcast about him this evening. He will be back in twenty minutes or so and he will then reply to the Toast of H.M. Forces. In the meantime we shall carry on with the other speeches and shall take that one at the end.

(Dame Helen then read the various messages that had been received, and called for a show of hands as to the future dates for Annual Dinners. She explained the position, and mentioned the four different possibilities, as follows):

- (1) That the Dinner be held each year in November.
- (2) That the Dinner be held each year in December.
- (3) That the Dinner be held each year in January.
- (4) That the Dinner be held in November of one year and January of another, alternately.

On a show of hands a very large number voted for (3) and a slightly larger number for (4).

It was agreed that this be reported to the Council, who would make the best arrangements possible.

Dame Helen then reported that for the next Dinner a January date could not be obtained, and the choice lay between 14th December or 21st November.

On a show of hands the November date was chosen by a very large majority.

TOAST—The O.C.A.

Proposed by Lady Baden-Powell.

Reply by Miss C. Entwistle.

LADY BADEN-POWELL:

Madam Chairman, friends, first of all I want to say how very delighted I am to be here with you for your Dinner to-night, and what a very great pleasure it is to me to be associated once more with Q.M.A.A.C. I feel that it is a very great honour to be invited to propose the Toast of the Old Comrades' Association, for there is no doubt that this Association is an important and very valuable asset to the community. As individuals, we may go our own way, but when bound together for a specific purpose we can accomplish so much. Unity is strength, and your Old Comrades' Association is fostering that most precious factor all the time.

I was told the other day a very good definition of an "old friend"—it is that an old friend is someone who knows all about you, but still likes you. Well, if all Old Comrades around us to-night have got those kindly feelings towards one another, there must be a wave of glorious heartening thought going from all of us towards the Association at this moment. Kind thought and a generous optimism are of value in every community, and here in this large community of ex-Service women, I am sure we have a very powerful influence for good.

Personally, I had the good fortune to see something of you in the war—here and in France—and though the years pass quickly and memories become blurred, there is no doubt that all of you have got what one might call an "indescribable something" about you—a glamour, a prestige—what you will, from having worked and achieved things, a power within you enhanced by having served and done your bit for your country during the Great War.

My husband attends a great many dinners for ex-Service men, and when I asked him this morning what special thing struck him most when meeting his Old Comrades, he said that it was the wonderful and almost fanatical loyalty to one another and to the Regiment or cause which they served together.

You served your Corps in War; now you are serving her in peace, by keeping up the close warm personal friendships, by giving your help where possible towards funds for helping those in need, and there is no

doubt that you are, in your own surroundings, able to give an example of fine citizenship to those around you. Nobody can render service as you did and remain what you might call a "nonentity." You are marked as being "someone who served," and you have in all probability some special niche in which to serve now. Our country is not at this moment at her best and brightest. She needs all sections of good men and women to stick together and show a plucky, optimistic example, and you can all do that, whether it be in your work, your office, your club, your school, or in the heart of your own home.

I am connected, as you all probably know, with another Association—the Guides—whose business is with the present generation, and striving to give them the inspiration to become the fine women the Empire needs. And I would like, if I may, to pay tribute to the many members of Q.M.A.A.C. who, having come forward to serve in the war, came forward again also later to serve in the cause of the children of our land.

One of the proudest moments of my life was when your great leader, Dame Helen, agreed to join hands with us. She is now, to a large extent, my Chief—an example, and an inspirer—and I would love to see yet more of her followers following her into our ranks.

We are growing steadily, day by day, touching the lives of nearly a million children and bringing happiness, interests, and many benefits into lives that would otherwise be lacking in something.

But I must not talk about my hobby. I am proposing the toast of the Old Comrades' Association, and I do this with all my heart. May the Association continue to hold and to bind you all together in a happy, strong, army of women, and succeed and prosper well in 1931. I propose the toast of the Old Comrades' Association, coupled with the name of Miss Entwistle.

MISS ENTWISTLE:

Lady Baden-Powell, Dame Helen, our Guests, and Old Comrades, I consider it a great honour to have been asked to respond to the toast of the O.C.A., proposed by Lady Baden-Powell this evening. On behalf of all the ex-Waacs—I say all, because I think those who are not fortunate enough to be with us this evening would like to know they were remembered and included in these few words—I wish to thank you for your kind toast of the O.C.A. We feel you have a better understanding of good comradeship than most people because of your close connection with the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides. The esprit de corps of the women who served was of the highest standard. They were always willing to give each other a helping hand in time of need. I know there has been many a time they have risked getting into trouble themselves to get me out of a scrape. If anyone was in trouble or down and out, she was always sure of the sympathy and friendship of her colleagues. The same spirit reigns to-day that reigned in 1917, when the Corps was in its infancy. If there is any member present down and out, or who knows of another member in need, she has only to get in touch with Headquarters and they will do all in their power to help her. It is not a question of charity—the unwritten law still remains, that it is the duty of every Waac to help any other who is less fortunate than herself.

I should like to take this opportunity of referring to another organisation which has a larger scope than our O.C.A. because it includes all, both men and women, who served, and that is the British Legion. As one ex-Waac to another, I should like you all to join it and participate in either receiving or helping its good work. As you all know, one of its chief activities is Poppy Day, and I think you will be pleased to hear that the first poppy planted in the Garden of Remembrance this year in Bootle, Liverpool, was in memory of all ex-Waacs who died in the great war. I think this in itself proves the staunch feeling which existed and still exists, and we hope will continue to exist between men and women who served.

TOAST—H.M. Forces.

Proposed by Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan, G.B.E., LL.D., D.Sc., F.L.S.

Reply by Major-General Sir Frederick Maurice, K.C.M.G., C.B.

DAME HELEN:

In his book on "Strategy," our guest, Major-General Sir Frederick Maurice, tells a story of how the elder Von Moltke was talking to his staff officers, and he said that the enemy always has three courses open to him, and he usually takes the fourth. This emphasises the strong military spirit that prevails amongst us, because the O.C.A. is in just that case—it had three courses open to it, about which we used to be told—it might have gone on a year or two until the women were re-settled in civil life; or it might have petered out after three or four years; or it might have survived as a handful of enthusiasts indefinitely. But the O.C.A. has taken the fourth course. Here we have the largest dinner we have yet had, so it is clear that the Service spirit is still strong amongst us. The O.C.A. is a great benevolent organisation; it is also a great social organisation, and Entwistle has made it quite clear to us that it is very much alive and kicking.

Now it is a special pleasure, when we have our biggest Dinner, to be able to welcome the guests. It is a very great pleasure to welcome Lady Baden-Powell. She is, as you know, the wife of a great soldier, the defender of Mafeking. As she told you, she herself visited us in France, and she was serving in France in a canteen. But we welcome her specially here because of the Scouts and the Guides, because she is the exponent of good comradeship and of all those qualities we value in the younger generation, and we are very glad, those of us who can manage it, to be her comrades in this great enterprise. She is an inspiring comrade to possess.

We have a great many guests here to-night whom this is the only way we can find to thank for their good help to the O.C.A. There is Mrs. Vernon Hope, who does endless work for the whole ex-service community at Leeds; there is Miss Homershaw, who takes unlimited trouble in auditing our rather complicated accounts. There is Miss Mercer, of the Territorial Messes, who is always kind to our Christmas Party at the Duke of York's Headquarters and on many other occasions. There is an old friend of the Corps, Major Matthews. There is Captain Holiday, of the City Branch of the Legion. But I am going to spare our guests a complete list. I must, however, mention our very good and very old friend, Mr. Howarth, of the United Services Fund, and his assistant, Mr. King. Then we come, Old Comrades, to our good friends of the other Services. We welcome, we respectfully salute to the Senior Service in the person of Miss Taylor, and we are glad to encourage the Junior Service in the person of Miss George; we are particularly pleased to have with us a member of Q.A.I.M.N.S., I think I may say the only serving soldier present this evening, namely, the Matron-in-Chief of the War Office.

That brings me to the guest whose name is specially associated with this toast, General Sir Frederick Maurice. Sir Frederick had already seen service at Tirah and in South Africa before the great war; he was in the Retreat from Mons, and after he was Director of Military Operations on the Imperial General Staff; he is not only a soldier who can fight, but he is a soldier who can write about fighting. His book "Forty Days in 1914" was a bit before our time; his book on British Strategy may be rather above our heads, but his book "The Last Four Months" is about something we remember very clearly indeed. It was a time of great endurance, of great deeds, of great virtue, and we are proud to have had our little share in the background.

We have had a great many messages from Signals to-night, and we have had a signaller replying for the O.C.A. and it is therefore appropriate that I should top things off by telling you a Signal story. I remember, Old Comrades, in the spring of 1918, I am always extremely proud to remember, that not one of you was moved back for her own safety, the only reason we were moved was for duty elsewhere. The people who were nearest to being moved were certain signallers who were rather far forward, and some of the authorities who were feeling fussy just then—

and they had every reason to feel fussy—suggested that those signallers should be removed to a safer region; I was told that the Director of Signals went along to the G.H.Q. and said, "Of course, if you want to cut the communications with Second Army, it is your own affair, but if you remove those women you won't be able to carry on." The answer to that was that the signallers were not moved.

Now it is with those things in mind, with those great times in mind, with what they meant to the future and the safety of our Nation, with the splendid example of the men with whom we had the honour to serve, in our minds, that I give you the toast to their successors of H.M. Forces, and that I couple with it the name of General Sir Frederick Maurice, who was one of them at that time. His Majesty's Forces.

Major-General SIR FREDERICK MAURICE:

Dame Helen, ladies, I believe there are some gentlemen, though I can't see any, so I will add, Ladies and Gentlemen, I think you will agree with me that even on so festive an occasion as this it would not be appropriate to begin a reply to the toast of H.M. Forces without making some reference to that great soldier who has just passed away. The memory of Marshal Joffre is perhaps in these days a little dimmed by time. It is sixteen years since the retreat from Mons and the first Battle of the Marne. It is fourteen years since he gave up command of the French Armies on the Western front. His memory has also been a little splashed by controversy, controversy in which he kept a resolute and complete silence, but to all who had the honour, as I had, of meeting him in those dark days at the beginning of the war, his loss is a very real one. We had a great love and a great affection and a great respect for a great character. He was a peasant boy from the Pyrenees; he used to run about bare-foot in his little village as the son of the village cooper, and he was the first Marshal of France created under the French Republic. That, itself, is a proud record, and he well earned it. He first made his name on the River Niger in the year 1893. He was then leading a small column of French soldiers through the country of the Touregs on the flank of a large column. That large column was surrounded and cut to pieces. Its commander was killed. The refugees fled into Joffre's column, and Joffre, perfectly calmly, fell them into his own ranks, marched ahead, defeated the Touregs and occupied Timbuctoo.

In 1914, when the world appeared to be crashing about his ears, when his country was exposed to invasion, when the little army was in imminent danger of disaster, he was just as unruffled as he had been on the Niger in 1893, and it was that same calm which wrested victory out of defeat and produced the Battle of the Marne. He understood us British and he loved the British soldier, there was no greater pleasure in his life than to meet one of his old British comrades in Paris in the last years of his life, and on the several occasions when I have been in Paris I have always gone to see him and he has always greeted me with the greatest joy and spoken with the utmost enthusiasm of what our men did in those days.

May his crown be a more lasting one than we poor mortals can award.

Well, I felt I ought to pay that little tribute on the first public occasion on which I had the chance of speaking about a man for whom I had so much respect.

Now to the Toast: You have just honoured the toast of H.M. Forces. I believe that is a traditional toast at this Dinner and in that, in these days, you are an exception. I happen to have to attend my full share of public Dinners, and this is only the fourth occasion since 1918 on which I have heard the toast of H.M. Forces. Two of the others have been at the Royal Academy Dinner and the Lord Mayor's Banquet of 9th November. Those two occasions are, like yours, I am happy to say, ruled by the Laws of the Medes and Persians, but the toast of H.M. Forces has practically disappeared from the list of toasts of the Dinners of the City Companies, and, indeed, of most big public functions, and I think that is symptomatic. There is a curious sort of feeling about to-day that in toasting H.M. Forces you are toasting war. Well, you all know that is not so. There is no one who less wants war

than the man who knows most about it. We are still far too apt to think of war in terms only of that great struggle through which we went between 1914 and 1918, but in point of fact, if you look back into the history of our country you will find that only once in a hundred years have we been concerned in a great cataclysm of that kind, and please God we may never be so concerned again; but, in the meantime, in the intervals between these hundred years, the work of the British Empire has to be carried on, and a part of that work is the maintenance of order and peace in its outer parts, and it is that work which those Forces which you have just toasted are doing from day to day. You all know what is going on now on the North-Western Frontier of India. There you have miles of frontier inhabited by wild men who have to be kept in restraint. I spent a year and a half of my life amongst these wild men and day in and day out the members of H.M. Forces along that frontier are keeping peace and order; day in and day out in the interior of India they are being called upon, because they are the one impartial body, to keep order in riots between Mohammedans and Hindus; day in and day out along the frontiers of Kurdistan the airmen who are keeping peace and order in Mesopotamia are called upon to act, and day in and day out the men of the Fleet are called upon to keep peace and order, to subdue piracy on the rivers and along the coasts of China and of the Persian Gulf. I wonder how many of you realise that in the last eighteen months there have been eleven raids into the Sudan from the hills of Abyssinia? Hardly any of this work gets into the newspapers, and it is perhaps just as well it should not, but that kind of work is being done by H.M. Forces in all parts of the world, under all conditions of climate, with the same steadfast devotion to duty and with the same love of home and country as have always inspired them in the past.

Therefore, ladies, you are right in honouring the toast of H.M. Forces. Whatever covenants we may sign, whatever agreements we may enter into with other nations, as long as we have a great Empire with vast land frontiers, bordered by unruly people, so long do you require Forces; they are, in fact, your military police, doing in other parts of the Empire just the same work as your police are doing here in London for you, and so long as you have these frontiers and that Empire, so long will you require these men, and you may rely upon it that they will in the future, as in the past, be inspired in doing that work by a love of country, by a love of justice, and by the love of peace.

There were calls for Miss Ireland and Miss Thompson, who spoke as follows:—

MISS IRELAND:

Madam Chairman, our guests, Old Comrades, I feel a fraud in standing before you this evening and having such a marvellous reception from you. I have done nothing for the O.C.A. during the past year except to participate in some of the joy promoted by the various Branches. It has been my privilege and pleasure to attend a Re-union in Sunderland and a Luncheon in Newcastle, and the Re-union Dinner at Brighton, and I should like to take this opportunity of thanking any old comrades from those particular Branches present this evening for the marvellous time they gave me, and for the efforts they made to arrange Re-unions in Newcastle and Sunderland, and to thank the Brighton Branch for changing the date of their Dinner in order that I might attend this and also be free to attend the Annual General Meeting of my own Branch which was fixed for the date originally arranged for their Dinner.

I listened with much interest to Lady Baden-Powell's speech this evening. She admired the loyalty and the strong feeling of comradeship which existed amongst us; I don't think anyone could have received more loyalty and more affection from any body of women than I have received from all of you. It has been a great comfort to me and a real joy, and I tell you, Old Comrades, I appreciate it more than I can say. It goes to prove the strong feeling of comradeship and friendship which exists throughout the whole Association, and not to any specific

people who served in any specific place. I thank you again for your very kind welcome, and I wish you all a very happy New Year and trust we may all meet again, plus a few who are absent this evening, next year.

Miss THOMPSON (who was received with musical honours):

Dame Helen, Old Comrades, I was very much hoping you would think I was in New Zealand; in fact, if I had only realised this, I should have sent a telegram purporting to come from there wishing you all good luck. But I think it is probably because I have been perched up here amongst these distinguished people you have noticed me. You have probably been casting envious eyes at the distinguished guest next to whom I was sitting! As a matter of fact, I am suffering badly from an inferiority complex. Did any of you this morning read one of those numerous papers that has the largest circulation in the world? Well, you would see in that that out of 600 people present here to-night everybody is married except 50! I went to our Secretary and I asked her where she got that information, and she said a very nice gentleman from the Press had been round to see her, and had asked her what proportion of the women were married, whereupon she said she could not possibly say; upon which he said, "Oh, I expect it is the pick of the bunch!"

Now, to be serious, may I say it gives me very great pleasure to-night to see representatives of the Branches with which I am connected here, the Norwich Branch, the Irish Branch, and the London Branch.

I think I am rather lucky in being able to thank Sir Frederick Maurice for his perfectly delightful speech. Many people have been listening to him broadcast to-night, and we are very fortunate that we have heard his personal tribute to the great French soldier who has left us to-day.

Also, about H.M. Forces—we are all "ex," but they are carrying on all over the world. I have been fortunate in travelling about a great deal lately, and I think it gives you a thrill when suddenly, on the ocean, you come on one of our lonely battleships, policing the great Empire.

I am going to ask if I may propose one toast to which there cannot be a reply, and that is our Absent Friends. (The Toast of Absent Friends was drunk).

Miss LILA DAVY was then called upon to speak, and in a few words she said what a pleasure it was to her to be present. The gathering reminded her of a beautiful herbaceous border, only unlike most herbaceous borders, everyone was in full bloom at the same time. Long might the O.C.A. continue to be in full bloom.

The Late Marshal Joffre.

Before any of the toasts were drunk, Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan called upon the assembly to rise and stand in silence for a minute in memory of Marshal Joffre. After this was observed the toasts were proceeded with.

MESSAGES AND GREETINGS.

The following telegram was despatched to our Commandant-in-Chief, Her Majesty the Queen:—

"Six hundred and thirteen members of Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps Old Comrades' Association, assembled at their Annual Dinner, express humble duty and loyal New Year Greetings to Her Majesty the Queen, their Commandant-in-Chief."

(Signed) Gwynne-Vaughan (Chairman).

In reply the following letter was received:—

Sandringham, Norfolk.

"Madam,—I am commanded by the Queen to thank you for your telegram, and to ask you to be so good as to convey to the six hundred and thirteen Old Comrades' Association members of Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps, Her Majesty's deep appreciation of this loyal and kind message."

Yours sincerely,

Elizabeth Motion, Lady-in-Waiting.

From Aberdeen came:

The erstwhile signallers at Aberdeen
Would thus their cordial greetings send.
To show that memories evergreen
Shall cling to them till Journey's End.

* * *

"Celebrate and conserve with honour the histories of your gallant band." (Signed) Ex-Private M.M. (also mere male!)

* * *

"Wishing you a jolly evening and a Happy New Year with kindest remembrances and recollections. I will drink to you all at 9 p.m. Cheerio." (Signed) Corporal Phil, Boulogne.

Dozens more messages were received, among the senders were:—

Evans and Stoakes (Signals), Nell and Tommie (Signals), Wittering (Signals), Jimmy Tompkins (Signals), Billie Whan (Signals), Nell and Margaret (Signals), Stephenson (Signals), Abbeville Signals, Rose Iye (Ponty-ites), Parkes, Joan Gibson, Sorski, Dolier (Wimereux), Chapman (Bristol and Connaught Club), Plymouth Branch, Laurie (Vendroux), Gretson, Pudsey (in Athens), G. Thompson (nee Turner), Olive K. King, Patrol Section, Tyler (in Rome), D. V. Williams (in Valparaiso), Guest (in Bermuda), Pratt, Buckingham (in Marseilles), Barbara Reid and Montreal Branch; Penfold, Ling, Sherwood (Pont de Larche), Steele, B. Anderson, Nellie and Michael (Signals), Wheelhouse (Signals), "Simmie" (Calais and Abbeville), North Staffs. Branch, Gardener, Brennan, Moyes, P. Gunner, etc., etc.

Q.M.A.A.C. O.C.A.

The Annual General Meeting.

The Annual General Meeting was held at 5 Buckingham Gate, London, S.W.1, on Saturday, January 3rd, 1931. Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan presided over the meeting in the absence of the President (Dame Florence Simpson), who was unable to be present, being detained in Switzerland where she was attending a conference of great importance.

Dame Florence sent her deep regrets at her unavoidable absence, both for the meeting and the Dinner in the evening.

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL.

It is a pleasure to be able to report on behalf of the Council the conclusion of another active and successful year in the life of our Old Comrades' Association. We have suffered a notable loss in the resignation of the General Secretary, Mrs. Robinson, after four years of office. She has gone to live in the country. Our best wishes go with her and our appreciation of the good work that she has done. Notice of her intended resignation was received on October 14th, and was laid before the Council at their meeting on October 23rd; it took effect from December 1st. To the regret of the members of the Council, therefore, there was no time to advertise the vacancy in the Gazette; they had to make some immediate arrangement, and they were very fortunate in being able to persuade Mrs. Johnston to undertake the General Secretaryship for a preliminary period of three months. It will be for the new Council to decide whether, in the meantime, the post should be advertised. Old Comrades will remember that Mrs. Johnston, ever since she came to live in London, has been in charge of the Clothing Cupboard, her appointment left vacant this very useful office, and it has been undertaken by Mrs. Garrard, whose value to the O.C.A. we already know as Editor of the Gazette. If I were giving you my own views on the O.C.A., and not reporting on behalf of the Council, I should tell you how very much we owe to certain people, how quiet, good work is always going on, and it is that which keeps the O.C.A. alive for the benefit of us all. A great many of the people who can be relied upon to help in any emergency are members of the Council, and that is why my style is a bit cramped in referring to their work. Some of the best among them are Branch Secretaries, but there

are also many Branch Secretaries whom distance prevents from joining the Council, and to these on behalf of the Council I can express our appreciation. Every member of the O.C.A. has reason to be grateful to them, and I wish they could know with what interest their paragraphs are read in the Gazette. Their work is concerned not only with the social side of the O.C.A., but with its benevolent aspects.

We have, as you know, four representatives on the Committee of the **Service Women's Benevolent Fund**, which is part of the United Services Fund—the canteen profits of the war. Rather ingeniously we have contrived to increase our strength by providing substitutes, in case any of these are away. This means that several members are in intimate touch with the help which the fund is able to give. In all 270 ex-members of Q.M.A.A. Corps have been helped during the year October, 1929—October, 1930, and a sum of £1,907 has been disbursed for this purpose. As usual, most of the applications have been due to sickness, and we are all glad to know that our comrades can be helped under such conditions. Six members have emigrated, three went with their families to rejoin their husbands in Canada, one, a shorthand typist, went to Canada to be near her relations, one, a cook, has established herself in the United States, and one went to Chili, where her married sister lived. Four members have received training fees, one in cookery, one, who had been recommended an outdoor life, in kennel work, one has undertaken a University course which will qualify her for a higher educational post. The fourth was granted maternity training.

In addition, eight business loans have been granted, three to members opening boarding-houses, one to start an hotel, one to buy a small shop, and another to help an existing business. These loans are now on an improved footing, recipients being required to sign a promissory note and making their repayments direct to the U.S.F.

Before I leave our benevolent work I must express the appreciation of Council for the many gifts which, through the **Clothing Cupboard**, have reached our poorer members. Thanks are especially due to London, Norfolk and Bournemouth Branches, as well as to individual Old Comrades and to friends of the Association. The Council hope that members will remember the Clothing Cupboard whenever their wardrobes or those of their husbands and children are being weeded out; it is a very real way of helping, especially if washable garments are sent to us ready washed. A most kind donation of seven guineas from the London telephone workers has been used to supplement our supply of boys' suits.

The number of **Branches** is twenty-seven, London, the largest, has 413 members, fifteen have over 20 members, and Eastbourne, the smallest of all, but not the least active, has 11. Our total membership has, I am sorry to say, dropped from 1,535 to 1,323. At this rate we have only seven years to live, but I will leave to the Hon. Treasurer the analysis of the figures.

The **Gazette** continues to give pleasure to its many readers, indeed, I think it improves with age; in confirmation of this I have to report that the number of subscribers is 733, only 27 less than the number last year. The Council wish to thank not only the Editor, but the Gazette Secretary, Miss Warrior, and her committee, who give their free time every month to sending it out.

Shanghai Camp has again been responsible for some first-rate holidays; we gather that criticism is in inverse ratio to the time spent there and that many Old Comrades owe a debt of gratitude to the Committee.

On **Armistice Day** 30 members attended the Cenotaph Parade in London, in charge of Miss Edith Thompson, and others paraded in different parts of the country and in the Dominions. In the evening eight members in uniform were present in the Albert Hall.

At the **Dinner** in 1929, 567 members and 12 guests were present, and our O.C.A. has been represented at the Dinners of the Association of Wrens and the W.R.A.F. O.C.A. Successful Dinners and Re-unions have been held by many of the Branches, an interesting innovation being the Anniversary Dinner of the London Branch. We have to thank the British Broadcasting Corporation for very

kindly making known our Dinner, as they do other Service Re-unions, by announcement on the wireless.

H. C. I. GWYNNE-VAUGHAN,
Chairman of Council.

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1930.

Our loss this year is £41 3s. 11d., but as our total expenditure for the year is only 9s. 2d. more than last year, our loss is not due to excessive expenditure, but rather to lack of income.

Although 89 new members have joined the O.C.A. this year and 45 lapsed members have rejoined, our total membership for the year is 151 less than last year.

Our loss in comparison with previous years is not too bad. In

1925	the excess of expenditure over income was	£539 11 4
1926	" " " " " "	£386 17 4
1927	" " " " " "	£114 9 0
1928	" " " " " "	£91 15 11
1929	" " " " " "	£7 7 10

For the past three years Miss Cliffe, a Life Member of Oxford Branch, has most generously sent a donation for Headquarters of £5 per month; this donation ceases this year. We are very grateful to Miss Cliffe for her generous financial assistance, and we owe her our most sincere thanks and gratitude.

We are also indebted to Oxford Branch for the refund of capitation fees at 6d. per member, to Leeds Branch for a donation of £5 from their funds, to Norfolk Branch for a donation of 20s. from their "Copper Box," to Golders Green Branch for a donation of £1 8s. from their funds, and to the London Telephone Service for a donation of £7 7s. We are also indebted to all those members who have subscribed to the augmentation of funds during the year.

The strength of the respective Branches according to my records, is as under:—

BRANCH	ANNUAL	LIFE	TOTAL
Brighton	27	6	33
Bristol	19	7	26
Bournemouth	17	6	23
Birmingham	26	3	29
Cheltenham	8	5	13
Eastbourne	10	1	11
Edinburgh	65	29	94
Exeter	13	2	15
Glasgow	42	10	52
Golder's Green	22	4	26
Headquarters	123	145	268
Ireland	17	10	27
London	258	167	425
Leeds	30	16	46
Liverpool	15	5	20
Manchester	21	12	33
Newcastle	17	3	20
Norfolk	13	1	14
Nottingham	17	1	18
North Staffs	15	—	15
Oxford	22	9	31
Plymouth	15	2	17
South Wales & Cardiff	7	6	13
St. Leonard's & Hastings	11	5	16
Sunderland	15	—	15
Transvaal	16	1	17
Tunbridge Wells	12	—	12
	873	456	1,329

Grand Total 1,329
Less six members belonging to two Branches 6

1,323

As compared with a total of 1,474 at the date of the last General Meeting.

GAZETTE ACCOUNT.—This account shows a small loss of 7s. 6d. this year owing to less subscribers, as against a profit last year of £1 4s. 4d.

SHANGHAI CAMP.—The actual receipts from visitors to Shanghai Camp amounted to £82 11s. 5d., and the running expenses £78 3s. 7d., thereby showing a profit of £4 7s. 9d.
H. M. BILLINGTON, *Hon. Treasurer.*

HEADQUARTERS REPORT.

A meeting of the Council was held on Thursday, December 18th, 1930, at 5 Buckingham Gate, S.W.1, at which Dame Helen Gwynne Vaughan presided. This meeting was followed by the Eleventh Annual General Meeting, the chair being taken by Dame Helen Gwynne Vaughan, Chairman of the Council. It was moved by Mrs. Garrard and seconded by Miss Smart that the business of the meeting be postponed to January 3rd, 1931. This motion was put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

LONDON TELEPHONE SERVICE.

Dear Madam,

In connection with the remembrance of Armistice Day Anniversary, 1930, the staff of the London Telephone Service decided to make a collection for the funds of certain institutions caring for those suffering through the War.

In this connection I have been asked by the staff to forward the enclosed remittance of seven guineas as their contribution to the Q.M.A.A.C. Old Comrades' Association. No doubt you will be good enough to forward a receipt in acknowledgment of the amount in due course.

Yours faithfully,
W. NAPIER, Controller.

The General Secretary,
Q.M.A.A.C. Old Comrades' Association.

Dear Sir, December 19th, 1930.

At the meeting of the Council of this Old Comrades' Association yesterday, the donation of seven guineas to our funds from the staff of the London Telephone Service was reported, and the Council desired me to express to you and, through you, to the members of the staff our very sincere appreciation of this gift.

It recalls the good service and devotion to duty of the women attached to the Corps of Signals during the Great War, and it enables us to have the pleasure of helping ex-Service women who are sick or in difficulties. We hope to spend your generous donation on clothing for such women and their families.

I am, Sir,
Yours faithfully,
H. C. I. GWYNNE-VAUGHAN.
Chairman of Council,
Q.M.A.A.C. Old Comrades' Association.

The Controller,
London Telephone Service.

CLOTHING.—There has been the usual heavy demand for clothing this Christmas, and while we have not been able to meet all requirements we have been able to send out quite a lot of useful things, thanks to the kindness of those whose names appear below. We were also able to put into each parcel 1 lb. of tea from the gift of Capt. Medley. This proved a great help to our less fortunate members. While talking to a Branch Secretary at the General Meeting, it was found that she was under the impression that we had no use for men's clothing and had been in the habit of sending away clothing to a local jumble sale. We will be very grateful for any men's wear available. We are constantly faced with appeals by our members for clothing for their boys and never seem able to respond. Men's clothes can always be cut down if necessary, so please let me have any you have to spare—they will be very welcome.

Our cupboards are again extremely empty. Our layettes are practically nil!

Our thanks go to: Bournemouth Branch—Miss E. M. Leedal, Miss M. Bott, Miss D. I. Poole, Miss M. Passmore, Mrs. Spaul, Miss M. E. Comley; Exeter Branch, Norfolk Branch.

BRANCH REPORTS FOR JANUARY.

London.

A BRIGHT AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR TO EVERYBODY!

I daresay the Gazette will be full of the dinner news this month, so I must not take up too much space for branch chat.

The General Meeting of the Branch was fairly well attended and was the usual chatty sort of meeting we always have. At the same time quite a lot of business was transacted. The Report for the year 1930 will appear on another page if there is room for it; if not, then members will be able to read it in the February number.

Our 1931 programme has been mapped out, and all members who have paid their subscriptions for this year should have their membership cards by the end of this month; if you have not received your card or receipt for subscription, please tell me immediately. In the meantime here are a few of the coming events in brief:—

The Children's Party will be held at the Duke of York's Headquarters, Chelsea, on Saturday, 17th January, I hope, but at the moment I have not got the date confirmed, so will all members who are coming along to help entertain the children write to me for particulars. Brighton Branch has very kindly sent a hamper of toys for the children, so that leaves only small toys for lucky dips and sweets, crackers, etc., to provide, and I shall be most grateful for any donation towards the treat.

On Thursday, 5th February, a lecture will be given at the club, 5 Buckingham Gate, S.W.1, on "London's History and Romance," and it will be illustrated with slides kindly lent by the L.G.O.C. Miss Edith Thompson has promised to give the lecture, so we should have a very entertaining evening.

The members' social will be held in March this year for a change. This is by invitation of the Committee, and all 1930 members will get an invitation. We propose to arrange an entertainment of some kind, so I expect there will be many surprises.

At the General Meeting a suggestion was put forth that each member should make 10s. for the branch in some way this year; 10s. is the minimum, but there is no maximum. This donation must be earned, and not given just as a donation from one's own banking account. That's an easy thing to do. It must be earned and also a letter sent with the donation saying just how the cash has been earned; Miss Thompson has offered a prize to the member who earns her donation in the most original way. A list of names will appear each month along with their declaration, and the members themselves will declare the winner by vote. The competition will close at the end of June. This month's donation has been sent from Mrs. Powell, but she will not divulge how she earned it. However, Mrs. Powell assures me that she has conformed with the rules set down and really earned the ten shillings.

To give readers who are interested in the following trips time to save up:—

The Aldershot Tattoo trip will be held on Saturday, 13th June, this year.

By special request of many disappointed members last year, I have arranged to take a party to Ostend and Brussels for Easter. The trip all in, including board, a whole day motor trip to Brussels and specially conducted around the famous city, board at the pension, conveyance to and from the quay on arrival and departure and all gratuities, will be approximately £2 5s., plus fare week-end return, 35s. 9d. from London. An additional trip to Ypres, Vimy Ridge and Arras can also be arranged for those of the party who wish to go for another £1. These, however, are only approximate figures, and I will gladly give particulars to any member who is interested. This trip is open to members and their friends. Book early and send a booking fee of 10s. as soon as possible because I wish to take 25 only in the party.

I am looking out for 1931 subscriptions now, and shall be glad if members will help by sending them along promptly. Don't forget to cross your postal order, and all Gazette subscriptions should be sent direct to Headquarters to me.

R. S. ANDREWS.

Glasgow and West of Scotland Branch.

VISIT TO NEWCASTLE AND SUNDERLAND.—During a "rush" 24 hours visit to these two towns a very happy time was spent on Saturday afternoon, 5th December, at Sunderland when Miss Ireland invited me to join the tea party she was giving to members of the two Branches.

It was a pleasure to meet the two secretaries, Miss Low and Miss Moyes, and their members in the bright room of the Grand Hotel and to take over the activities of their Branches and other things. On Sunday the Newcastle Branch gave a lunch in the Station Hotel and nearly the whole Branch turned out. A very successful flashlight photo was taken of the luncheon table and party and published in the paper next day.

I had never visited the north of England and therefore it was my first experience of their warm hospitality and kindness. After the departure of the London train Miss Henderson took me out of the fog and rain to her home to wait the four hours by her cheery fireside until the departure of the Glasgow train. I hope to meet some of the members here in the summer and return in a small measure the hospitality I received.

SOLDIERS' PARTY.—This took place on Saturday, 20th December, and is the best party of the year. As our club is now too small the men were entertained at the H.Q. of the Red Cross Association. As formerly, the "City Business" Club members provided the transport.

The "boys" arrived from two hospitals at 3.30 p.m. when they had a refreshing cup of tea, cakes and cigarettes before starting whist.

At 6.30 p.m. dinner was served. The menu was: hare soup (the donation of Mrs. Holmes), turkey and its accompaniments, home made fruit sponge with custard and cream and mince pies. Paper hats were distributed, and the scene, with the berry laden holly decorations, was really "Christmassy."

A concert followed until 9.30 when the prizes were distributed and the singing of Auld Lang Syne and the National Anthem brought the happy evening to a close.

Including guests, hostesses and artistes, over 100 sat down to dinner, the catering of which was done by the committee and never was work more willingly and cheerfully undertaken.

Ambulance men on night duty gave up their sleep to help and the limless were carried upstairs on the backs of these stalwart men. Judging by the many and various contributions which arrived and which are all needed to help the expenses, Glasgow ex-Service women have "not forgotten."

E. M. GILCHRIST.

Notts.

The Annual Dinner of the Notts. Ex-Service Women's Club was held this year at the Oriental Cafe, Nottingham. There were about 15 members present. We were very pleased to see Miss Watson, who had been unable to attend for nearly two years, and wish her every success in her married life. We were also pleased to welcome one new member. Though the whole affair was quite unofficial and homely, everybody seemed to enjoy themselves, and before the evening was over began talking about the arrangements for next year. The Dinner was held on 12th November. The Club has had two or three ups and downs lately through having to change its meeting place, but we hope we are now again definitely settled, and shall be glad to welcome any members who may find themselves in the neighbourhood of Nottingham on the first Wednesday in the month.

Sunderland Branch.

Our meetings during 1930 have been held as usual on the second Wednesday of each month, and in spite of our smaller membership we have had some very enjoyable evenings. Our membership for the year is 15. This number includes Mrs. Rumney, whom we are sorry to lose, as she has gone to live in America and unfortunately will be missing from our 1931 list of members. We are very sorry to hear of the death of one of our old members, Mrs. Wood, of Silksworth, who died in the Hylton Sanatorium after a long illness. Our sympathy goes out to Mr. Wood and the five small children who are left.

During the summer months we arranged picnics instead of our usual indoor meetings and these were much enjoyed, and fortunately the weather was excellent for every outing. We visited Hylton Castle on one of our evening rambles and found much to interest us. We were taken all over the Castle, out on to the roof and down into the dungeons but our Guide failed to persuade the Ghost to appear!

This was not quite so disappointing during our inspection of the Castle dungeons!

We were very delighted to be able to see Miss Ireland and Miss Gilchrist on Saturday, December 6th, when they visited Sunderland. Twenty Newcastle and Sunderland members were able to accept Miss Ireland's very kind invitation to tea at the Grand Hotel, and our thanks are due to her for a very delightful afternoon.

The following members have been elected to form a Committee to arrange meetings for 1931: Mrs. Anderton, Mrs. Way, Miss Fyall, Miss Millar.

Newcastle Branch.

It is a long time since I have had anything special to report from this Branch, but I feel that I cannot let this month go without recording how very pleased we were to have a visit from Miss Ireland, and with her Miss Gilchrist, the secretary of the Glasgow branch. Four of our members were able to accept Miss Ireland's invitation to meet her at Sunderland on Saturday, the 6th of December, when, along with a number of the members of the Sunderland Branch, we had a most delightful tea party. Then on the following day we had the pleasure of having Miss Ireland and Miss Gilchrist to luncheon with us at the Station Hotel, and a very jolly hour was spent. It was certainly a red letter day for us to have them, and I think they as well as all of us thoroughly enjoyed the meeting. We were only sorry that all our members could not be present, especially Miss Floyd, who was prevented from attending by family illness, and Miss Macfarlane, who was suffering from an attack of measles.

Then on the 10th December we held our Annual Meeting. Appointments of the various officials and committee were made the same as last year, and I am afraid there was not much "business" about the meeting. It took place at Miss White's, and was more in the nature of a Christmas party, when we had mince pies and crackers and all sorts of nice things, and altogether Miss White and her mother gave us a most enjoyable evening.

The Branch sends best wishes to all Old Comrades for 1931.

M. MOYES.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Numerology.—Your name your guide for life. Full reading 5s., Character only 2s. 6d. Old readings brought up to date 2s. 6d., U.S.A. and Canada \$1.—Send full names (maiden name if married) and date of birth to Blanche, 106 W74th Street, New York City, U.S.A.

Home-help for New Zealand or British Columbia. Ex-Service woman (Land Army), requires post as family in the Colonies. Good plain cook, domesticated, with excellent references from English schools. Character recommendations.—Helen Joyce, 511 Finchley Road, Hampstead, London, N.W.3.

Bournemouth.—Mrs. A. Stocker, "Glencora," 3 Hawkwood Road, Boscombe. Comfortable board residence, good food; separate tables; 4 mins. sea, one minute Arcade, shops, etc. Every consideration for the comfort of visitors; large shady lawn, South aspect; Moderate terms.—Telephone: Bournemouth 962.

Stormont House, 43 and 45 Longridge Road, Earls Court, S.W.5. Misses A. Crockford and O. Mainland having extended their premises, are now able to offer additional accommodation. Bed, bath and breakfast from 5/6 single rooms; from 5/- each double rooms. Lunch, tea and dinner optional; 6d. per night extra for bookings for less than three nights. Gas fires in rooms. Telephone: Frobisher, 0986.

Branch.	Name and Address of Secretary.	Address of Club or Meeting place.	Day and Time of Meeting
Birmingham.	Miss E. I. Dipple, 29 Marston Road, Erdington, Birmingham.	38 John Bright Street, Room 19.	Wednesdays. 7 to 10 p.m.
Bournemouth.	Miss Edith Trotter, C.B.E.,	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 Umpleby, "Rokeby," Long Aston, Bristol.	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 Drumsheugh 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. 11 Grosvenor Crescent, S.W.1.	Not fixed.	Not fixed.
Ireland.	Miss E. C. Finny, Erith Lodge, Sandymount, Dublin.		Not fixed.
Leeds.	Miss E. Mair, 19 Lyddon Terrace, 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.	18 Colquitt 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. 122 Cranbrook Road, Ilford. (Telephone Ilford 0058).	Thursday evenings. 7.30 to 10 p.m.
Golders Green.	Miss Setterfield, 12 Geary Road, Dollis Hill, N.W.10		First Tuesday of each month; 7.30—10 p.m.
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.	Members notified individually.
Norfolk.	Mrs. L. W. Chilvers, 32 Grove Road, Norwich.	Interviews at British Legion, N.E. Area Offices, 10 Leazes Terrace, Newcastle.	Monthly. Members notified individually.
North Staffs.	Mrs. E. Stretton 10 Sparrow Terrace, Porthill, Stoke-on-Trent.	No permanent room fixed	Members notified individually.
Oxford.	(Temp.) Miss A. Haynes, 15 St. Omer Road, Cowley.		
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.		
Cardiff.	Miss Diana V. Viney, 201 Carlisle Street, Cardiff.	Y.M.C.A., Cardiff.	Second and Last Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.
S. Wales. and			
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