

Old Comrades



Association

GAZETTE.

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

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NOTICE.

Subscriptions are due and all Gazette subscriptions must be sent to the Gazette Treasurer, Q.M.A.A.C. O.C.A., Duke of York's Headquarters, King's Road, London, S.W.3. All postal orders to be crossed.

HEADQUARTERS REPORT.

The Council met at 5 Buckingham Gate, London, S.W., on Thursday, January 29th, 1931. Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan presided.

Clothing.

We have received a most useful supply of clothing of all sorts this month and our cupboards are looking somewhat fuller. Not that members need cease to send, for we are still in need of many things. As usual we want you to send us everything you can spare.

Our grateful thanks are sent to the following for all the good things they have sent, and for their time, trouble and expense in packing and mailing: Miss M. U. Hodgkinson, London Branch (2), Miss A. G. Brown (York), Miss McKnight (2), Mrs Macdonald (2), Mrs. Bowden, Mrs. Whitaker, Miss Winter (shoes), Anon. (a very nice parcel of woolies, etc.), Mrs. Spaul, Mrs. Hamilton, and Miss Ireland.

"ARE THEY DOWNHEARTED?"

A little company of women sitting round a square table deep in momentous decisions. The subject—whom shall we ask to our Christmas Party—Bellahouston? Erskine? Ralston? Ralston, yes if only we could have them, but then! they can't come, we've thought it all out before. Suddenly a wave sweeps over someone's brain, "If Ralston can't come to us, can't we go to Ralston?" And so it is settled.

A preliminary visit to see if those in command will allow us, a consultation, who shall come and sing and play, for alas! the talent in our Club doesn't run along the artistic line. We cast envious thoughts to London and its jolly concert party, but wishing won't let Cornercrakes be taken for Nightingales even in the densest fog, so we appeal to our staunch old friends who come to the rescue with all the grace of being asked to perform before Royalty. A note pinned to the notice board bears the legend that any good friend who would like to help with fruit or sweets or cigarettes, might place her name below.

The long looked for night comes at last. Off we run in our friends motor cars, as one of our party says "Don't we choose our friends well? We not only get them to do the entertaining but we get them to drive us there!" Cheery everyone is although some of us hide under our coats no little trepidation, wondering, shall we be able to

carry a little of the brightness with us that we fain would to those who live apart the long days through.

Gaily they left old England, hale, hearty mentally and physically singing as lustily as anyone "It's a long way to Tipperary" and "Wipe the tee-ar baby dee-ar from your eye-ee." Back they brought them, hollow mockeries of their youth, their days and their months lengthening into years, helped along by a stick or a chair on wheels, some never raised from their backs day in, day out. No longer can they share the joys of home and children and the brisk going about their daily business. Who are they, now so dependent on the kindly care of doctor and matron and nurses?

They are our paralysed.

Ours, aye ours; do we who have the use of hands and feet and body and mind ever pause to remember? Are we always mindful of those who have taken the burden off our shoulders, who tend them day by day, those who are hands and feet to them whose own have become mere useless lumber? Men, who, in the height of their manfulness occupy themselves in making tiny bead ornaments to make good the time and earn a few extra pence, and even then only a small percentage can do it.

But I am sad and I make you sad and we must hurry, for haven't we feet to run and hands to work and minds to play and our audience is waiting and there must be no sadness for them, at least for to-day.

Inside, the men who can walk are already in the Hall, along come those whose only means of locomotion is a wheeling chair, and we admire how, with one hand, they turn first one wheel then the other and wiggle their way along, dexterously avoiding bumping into the door posts. Light beds on small rubber wheels carry patients, some raised on pillows, some lying motionless guided past us by careful orderlies. Soon all are in, doctors, matrons, nurses, orderlies and little kitchen maids. Some of us go with them, the rest arrange the good things we have brought on little trays, one for each man; if he doesn't want it now he can carry it away for a quiet picnic later. The Hall is bright, cheery fires flicker and glow on either side, at one end a neat little stage, in the middle a billiard table, and at the other end a modern arrangement for a cinema show awaits silently for the kindly friend who is going to make it live. All over the floor are our guests, beds occupy the front half, then come the wheel chairs, each little corner with its disabled tenant, and stretching to the back on ordinary chairs, one side men, on the other the dapper blue and white of the nurses, their little caps atop of the kindest faces an ill man or even a well one could wish to waken to.

Now we may begin.

Mr. Marshall opens with some bright delightful music, Mr. Rae follows with a song and Miss Andross with her tale of the jackdaw and its evil spirit. Then Mr. Purves

who had been there before—many a time—on the same old jokes that he had when each Regiment had its troupe of pierrots to entertain the men and lighten the burden of the war. Next Miss McKenzie sings the sweetest of Mrs. Kennedy Fraser's—blessings on her for giving us them—Hebrew Melodies. On they come again, one after the other. The audience begins to waken and asks for more. The fruit lies on the billiard table as the matron says, looking most festive—but it's time for the interval.

Round go the girls with the little trays. We bring out the artistes from behind to be introduced, poor things, their faces look rather long and subdued, they fear they haven't reached their audience, and are amazed when they are told that the men are humming the lilt of the songs and laughing quietly at the jokes. Out they come and soon everyone is scattered talking to this one and that one and some slip away to visit the less fortunate ones who had perforce to stay in wards.

What a connecting link it is when the discovery is made that you know the place where a man comes from and have seen his old home, "And the concert," "Fine songs," they say, and "Isn't she great!" "My, he's a good comedian that!" while one poor man falters in a low whisper how he would like to see the lady that sings the songs of the Highlands and great is his pleasure when she comes and he can say "thank you" to her himself. Others we try to talk to but they answer not a word, not indeed by the movement of an eye do they denote whether it is pleasure or pain they feel. Indeed one of our people unfortunately, on beginning his song, let his eye light upon a man propped up with pillows, motionless, expressionless, unable even to blink an eyelid, and it so overcame him that it was with difficulty he kept himself from running off the platform.

The short interval has done everyone good. We felt we knew our guests and they us, and it would have done your heart good to see their appreciation and hear their chuckles of delight. One man nearby whose eyes had scarcely opened before and whose only notice had been a slight rolling of his head in the direction of the music opened his eyes completely and burst into a regular guffaw. I had asked Matron about him and was told his brain as well as his body was partly paralysed. Another's hand started twitching whether through extra excitement we could not say. In a moment it caught the doctor's quick eye and forward he went, laid his hand on the poor sufferer's and immediately the nervousness was stilled; such is the power of sympathy.

It is over now, the doctor calls for three cheers, even the man with his withered arm has pulled the one that still has a little power from underneath the blankets and flops it on to the bed clothes. We buy a few of the pretty bead flowers, our guests become patients again and are moving off to the wards. Out come little tables, nurses appear with cups and saucers and Matron says, "Now come along and have a cup of tea."

Soon we are in the cars again, the last goodnight waved, a feeling of happiness and elation holds us even till we reach our own comfortable beds. One feels as if a fire crackled and blazed in the room and we fall asleep to the dancing lights and shadows of its cheery company. Alas, morning comes too soon, we think and wonder why we should waken while it is still night. No cheery blaze greets us, the fire has gone out, and in its place only the grey ashes, and home it comes to us in all its reality and awfulness, the tragedy of the lives of those men we tried to make laugh the night before. "How thankful I am" said one of us, "my brothers were killed outright."

"Land of hope and glory, Mother of the free," we sing—but—what a cost!

To-day I opened a book, an old one of Hugh Walpole's. The first sentence caught my eye:

"'Tisn't the life that matters, 'Tis the courage yer brings to it."

I read on, the words passed on in procession but it was the refrain that danced along the lines:

"'Tisn't the life that matters, 'Tis the courage you brings to it."

Glasgow,

M.H.L.

BRANCH REPORTS FOR FEBRUARY.

Oxford.

The Annual General Meeting was held before Christmas at Miss Haynes's house, and was a formal meeting only. Our Christmas party took place on January 16th at Miss Brown's tea-rooms in Market Street, arranged by Miss Haynes. Twenty members accepted the invitation, but only 14 turned up, and of these four were Waaclets, who are always so very welcome. A letter from Mrs. Grundy was passed round and we are glad to hear that she is sufficiently well now to be taking a slight part in winter sports in Switzerland. We all wish her a speedy recovery of her usual good health and spirits. We sat round the fire and talked while the guests assembled, and then sat down to a good tea. The table was prettily arranged with crackers and Christmas decorations, but the crackers were not as successful as they should have been, as one of the very young visitors did not like them, so we divided them up for the other young ones to take home. After tea, competitions and games, arranged by Miss Payne, were the order of the day—there was much fun in making animals (?) from pipe cleaners, and this is a form of amusement we can recommend to our friends. It brings out skill and ingenuity both in making, and in guessing what others had made.

J. M. PAYNE.

Manchester.

The fourteen members of the Manchester Branch who attended the London Annual Dinner, had a grand time. Five of these had not attended before. Four of them (like myself) never met a soul they had worked with during their Army days. But one other, Nell Savage (Signals, I believe) met heaps she knew and was so excited, which was very nice to see. She thought everything wonderful. Dr. Peake, our Branch representative on the Council, kindly invited all to lunch at 5 Buckingham Gate, on the Sunday. Those who did attend had a fine time, and, say, Dr. Peake is a gem. The London Dinner Club has actually started here again. Cards and cash are the order of the evening. Bigg has supplied the cards and Steve is banker.

Miss Robinson is hostess for our Whist Drive on January 30th. We are looking forward to the Children's Party, February 7th, our first venture in this line.

Manchester members wish to thank the London Dinner Committee for the splendid way they did things. They also thank Miss Andrews for her offer of a sight-seeing tour on the Sunday, when she must have felt tired out. We were pleased to meet again Mrs. Garrard, Miss George (the Brew lady), also all our leaders; they are wonderful.

V. STEAR.

Brighton.

At the local General Meeting, held at the end of November, the following were elected to serve on the Committee: Mrs. Anscombe, Mrs. Ambrose, Miss L. M. Ashton, and Miss E. Ustonson (O'Brien). The local Dinner was held on Thursday, December 11th, at Chichester Mansions, 18 Marine Parade. We were delighted to have Miss Ireland as guest, though her time with us passed all too quickly, and we were glad that Miss Billington, Treasurer of the O.C.A., was able to come too.

A goodly number managed to get to the Dinner in London, where we much enjoyed ourselves.

We have just had a very jolly evening at Chichester Mansions. We started off with a Whist Drive, 7.30—9 p.m., with thirty players, and the first lady's and gentleman's prizes were won by Waacs—Mrs. Ambrose and "Mr." Newnham. Then very excellent refreshments, everything at 2d. each, including crab sandwiches! After that we danced till 11.15, with a pianist and violinist as orchestra, and very nice too. All this entertainment for 1/3, refreshments extra—very good value! There were thirty-six members and friends present.

Another evening is being arranged for Wednesday or Thursday, February 25th or 26th. It may be competitions so please get your wits ready sharpened. Those interested will be notified when things are settled.

H. A. BARON.

Leeds.

CHRISTMAS CHEER (OR RAFFLE).—Members will be pleased to know that our local effort has proved most successful, and our thanks are due to all those members who gave prizes or money for prizes and to those who sold coupons. We are also grateful to Mair, who shouldered the full burden of the distribution and collection of the books of coupons, etc. The profit amounted to nearly £9. The winning numbers are as follows: 652, 517, 283, 2451, 966, 153, 507, 1619, 1106, 41, 989, 1704, 2213, 726, 932, 1893, 2187, 2091, 470, 1255.

ANNUAL MEETING.—The Leeds Branch Annual Meeting was held on Wednesday, 7th January, 1931, in the women's section, British Legion, Club Room, at 7.30 p.m.

Fourteen members were present at the meeting. Mrs. J. Hall (nee Benson) was re-elected Vice-Chairman, and E. E. Mair and A. Annikin were re-elected as Joint Secretaries. Further business discussed included a decision to hold a Whist Drive and Dance on Tuesday, March 3rd, in Leeds, to be held at either Ward's Cafe, Commercial Street, or Embassy Club, Cookridge Street. Tickets will be available on February 4th, the date of our next monthly meeting. We shall be pleased to welcome members who do not live far from Leeds, such as Bradford, Castleford, and Brighouse, etc., etc. Tickets will be either 2/- or 1/6, according to the room engaged.

It was also decided to run a Savings Club amongst those attending the monthly meetings for the next Annual Dinner in London. Miss D. Denton was unanimously elected treasurer of the fund. (We have not forgotten her success as Bazaar treasurer two years ago).

A jolly evening closed as usual with refreshments, provided on this occasion by Miss Thompson, and a wonderful iced cake by Miss Amy Smith.

A happy New Year to all Old Comrades.

A. ANNIKIN.

Golder's Green.

The Annual General Meeting of our Branch was held on Tuesday, December 2nd. There were 10 members present. Everything has been going on successfully throughout the year; we have had quite a good attendance at our monthly meetings, which are usually spent in talking and knitting woolies. When we have a fair supply of articles they will be forwarded to the clothing cupboard.

In March, 11 members spent an enjoyable evening at a theatre, and also another good evening was spent at the O.C.A. concert, and we were relieved to see that **Our Rupert** had been adopted by Miss Garnham, and sincerely hope that he is behaving, as a well brought-up member of a sub-branch should do.

A ramble to Pinner and Northwood was arranged for one Sunday in June, but the weather was very unkind to us, but three members braved the storm, but, alas, the leader of the ramble (I confess I am the culprit) did *not* brave the storm, so it was a real rain-water washout, but the brave three amused themselves somehow.

We have a membership of 26 this year—22 annual, 4 life, 1 new member, and a loss of 4.

There has been 54 communications sent up to the present date. The present Secretary was again elected, and Mrs. James is again willing to stand for election as our Council member.

Mrs. Thorborn and Mrs. Franklin, and Misses Mitchell and Finney were elected on the Committee for the coming year.

The meeting concluded with many thanks to our Chairman, and everybody wishing everybody else a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year, and may I extend the good wishes to all of our Old Comrades.

M. SETTERFIELD.

Norfolk.

The new year has started well for the Branch. It was most gratifying to know that nine members out of our small branch of 14 had purchased tickets for the Annual Dinner in London, and all members present were delighted to meet Mrs. Clarke again—a member of the Branch who lives in a most isolated spot in the Fen area. A most enjoyable week-end was spent in London by mem-

bers, and Miss E. Thompson's invitation to tea at the Club for the Branch on Sunday afternoon was greatly enjoyed by those able to be present. We all thank Miss Thompson very much for thinking of us at such a busy time, especially as her time in England, before sailing to Canada, was so limited.

Our first Branch meeting of the year was a small celebration held on January 22nd at 84 Thorpe Road, Norwich. Miss Howson made an admirable hostess, and a happy evening was spent by all at the flat. Every member who could possibly get up to the City was there. A letter of apology was received from Mrs. Paston, Tasburgh, but we hope to have her with us once more in the summer. Our hostess regaled us with delicious home-made dainties, which everyone appreciated. Later in the evening, members enjoyed the fun of picking a little gift from the tray—I cannot help wondering what would have happened if the novelty corkscrew had been chosen before Taffy's turn! But "All's well that ends well." Taffy had the corkscrew, and then gifts were set aside for our three Waaclets and our absent members—always remembered at our New Year meetings. At the close of our scramble, Miss Howson passed round "the glass of Christmas good cheer," and the members present toasted the "O.C.A.," the "Norfolk Branch," and "A happy journey with safe return for Miss Thompson on her trip to Canada." After this came the hurried good-byes—trains and buses will not wait even for O.C.A. meetings; and so closed our first Branch meeting of the New Year.

Our next meeting has been arranged for Thursday, February 19th, at 122a Thorpe Road, Norwich. The Misses Newberry and Prothero will be our hostesses.

L. W. CHILVERS.

Plymouth.

We have had a splendid year. All our members are very happy together. Our meetings have been held each month, also our whist drives, which have been very jolly, although not always a financial success. I feel very proud when I hear our friends say, "Wednesday?—Why, that is my day with the Waacs." We have also secured **six** more members and we are proud to welcome them.

Our Annual Outing was held on July 23rd, and we took a day trip to Clovelly and Bude—together a great success.

Our Annual Dinner was held at the "Blue Bird" Cafe, Pomphlett, on January 3rd. A very enjoyable evening. Mr. and Mrs. Barker served us with a very nice dinner. Many thanks were voted to Mrs. Popplestone, who kindly sent us a lovely trifle and also a novelty to each member. We all expressed good wishes to Mrs. Shewring (Ada Warne) for a speedy recovery, and good health to her baby son. Only two members were able to attend the London Dinner. Greetings were sent to London by telegram.

I should like to take this opportunity for thanking Mrs. Gwen Foster (a friend) for helping me with the refreshments at the Whist Drives; also Mrs. Harris (Waac), although she is unable to come in time for whist she always comes to help with the washing up. We are also very grateful to Mrs. Hambly (a friend) for raffling a doll and giving us the proceeds, which amounted to £1/3/-. We have some very good friends.

I must not forget to mention our parade on November 11th, 1930, and I felt very honoured to place the wreath on the Memorial. This is the first time the Waacs have been represented at the Plymouth Armistice Parade.

Our Children's Party will be held on Thursday, January 15th.

After three years of struggle I am able to get our Branch to show a profit (although not large) and I feel now it is worth while.

A Happy and Prosperous New Year to all "Old Comrades."

O. FOSTER.

Liverpool.

I am glad to be able to report that we have made a really good start in 1931—two new members enlisted, and one old one has come to life. If only we can continue to increase at that rate all the year we will surely have a

record membership by 1932. So please take note all ye members—and do your best.

On the 10th January we had our annual party, and entertained 40 unemployed ex-Service men. They all came through the British Legion, and we have to thank the Secretary, Captain Smith, who was also one of our guests, for the trouble he took in choosing the men and making all arrangements with them.

The most popular part of the evening's entertainment was undoubtedly the community singing of old Army songs.

After supper the men all lined up round a huge bran tub, and each had a lucky dip. Some got socks, others a tie, handkerchiefs, etc., and all a packet of cigarettes and matches. We then insisted on a "dress parade." The men entered very heartily into the fun and parade in great style.

Our last meeting this month is to be a Whist Drive, and we are hoping for a very successful evening, and if that should be so, we'll have much pleasure in arranging other drives towards the end of February and March.

Meanwhile we are to be found at 18 Colquitt Street every Friday evening.

F. M. BRAGG.

Montreal.

I just don't know where to start in giving you a resume of the last six months of 1930, but here goes:—

SEPT. 9th.—A card party was held at 13 Milton Street at which was raffled a French handbag. The results were most satisfactory and go towards our Emergency Sick Fund.

SEPT. 30th.—At Mrs. K. McPhee's home in Lachine a very enjoyable evening was spent. There were three tables for "500." Unfortunately the attendance was small, Lachine being rather far away for most of our members.

OCTOBER 28th.—At 3736 Clarke Street, the home of Mrs. Martin Keane. There were seven tables for "500," with good financial results.

NOVEMBER 11th.—Mrs. E. Rouse (Q.M.A.A.C.) and Mrs. B. Reid (W.R.A.F.) placed a wreath on the Cenotaph in Montreal. They were afterwards joined by Mrs. Blacke (late Connaught Club).

In the evening we held our Re-union at the home of Capt. and Mrs. Redfearn, 1287 Van Horne Avenue, Outremont, which they had most generously loaned to Mrs. Algar (Q.M.A.A.C.) in order that we might have a real good time and "Wow"! Did we? Socially and financially it was a huge success. It is difficult to find words in which to express thanks.

Our Christmas work has been a bit heavier this year than usual owing largely to the great unemployment, and you know when one does not get enough to eat it brings down the grade. We have received so much help from non-Service friends as well as those of the Services, that I wish you would find space in the "Gazette" to say "Thank you" for us, and particularly for assistance given to a Waac and her three children.

Special thanks go to Colonel and Mrs. Gregor Barclay, who personally went and played Santa Claus to this Waac and her family. We hope good times will be her's again soon. We also wish to thank the members of the Scotia and Electra Chapters of the E.S. Montreal, as well as members of the "Carry-on Club," Y.M.C.A., who helped out so well not only at Christmas but throughout the year.

Unemployment out here is still very bad for women as well as for men.

My trip to the Old Country had to be postponed and I was very vexed at not being at the Annual Dinner on January 3rd. I regret to report the death of Mrs. Ridgeway's husband. He died on December 17th last.

Mrs. Rowse is still very sick, pleurisy having set in. She is receiving treatment at the Victoria Hospital.

Montreal sends greetings to all members of the O.C.A.

B. REID.

Birmingham.

The Annual General Meeting was held in December, and the accounts for the year approved. Fifteen members of this Branch attended the Annual Dinner on January 3rd, and all had an enjoyable evening. Many of them

travelled by the excursion and arrived back in Birmingham at 3 a.m. Sunday. The Leeds party would have a still longer journey, and one does appreciate the enthusiasm of all these members who will undertake such a double journey in 24 hours. This is the spirit that keeps the O.C.A. alive.

Subscriptions for 1931 are now due, January has brought in a good number, but there are more to come, and I shall be glad to have them as soon as possible. Ours is a United Services Club, meetings are held every Wednesday in our own Club Room, and we have welcomed several new members, W.R.A.F. and W.R.E.N. in 1930.

But I should be very glad to see some new Q.M.A.A.C. members and I can promise them a good welcome.

E. L. DIPPLE.

Glasgow and West of Scotland.

LONDON DINNER.—As there was no cheap fare only four of the fourteen members who intended to be present were able to attend this brilliant function. It was a great satisfaction to the Scotch Branch, who proposed the change of date, that the attendance did not suffer in consequence. In spite of disappointments, Mrs. Pettigrew, treasurer, has begun to collect sixpence or more a week from dinner enthusiasts and if not used for the purpose for which it is intended it comes in very handy at Christmas time when handed out in neat little envelopes.

RAMBLING.—A most interesting lecture was delivered at the Club this month on this subject and, given good weather, several members hope to take advantage of the Lecturer's, Miss McFarlane, offer to take a Saturday afternoon in early spring, rambling with an experienced guide and drinking in the beauties of nature.

WHIST DRIVE.—The monthly whist drive took place in the Club on Saturday, 31st January. The entertainments' committee, whose convenor is Miss Smith, work hard to make these social evenings a success. The proceedings go to buying extras for the Club, and our latest "extra" is an electric standard lamp with shade, which is a great addition to the lounge.

REPRESENTATIVE.—As already stated, we regret the resignation of our representative, Miss Mainland, but are glad to have secured Miss Ottman, who is known to a few in Glasgow, to represent us on the Council.

E. M. GILCHRIST.

LONDON.

There are no special activities in connection with the Branch to report for January as the children's party did not take place on the 17th January owing to a difficulty in fixing up a room. It will, however, be held on Saturday, February 14th, at the Duke of York's Headquarters, and we are all looking forward with pleasure to the event.

The members' social will be held on Thursday, March 5th, this year, and we hope to make this a real cheery affair, so book up the date in case you forget. Any suggestions in the way of games, competitions, etc., will be welcomed by the Hon. Secretary. Also bring along your 1931 subscriptions please!

We hope to ramble somewhere on Sunday, March 22nd. Meet early and have lunch wherever we happen to be at that hour. Arrangements are quite complete at present, but if members will write and enclose a stamped addressed envelope, I will give all details later on.

For the benefit of those members who did not have their Gazettes last month, I am giving details of the Competition which will be run until the end of June. In order to swell the funds which are none too flourishing, a competition has been started. Here it is:

The Competition.

A prize is offered to the member who earns 10s. or more for the funds in the most original way. The money must be earned any time between now and the above date, and a letter saying how the cash has been earned should accompany each donation. A list will be published each month, giving the amount received and the method of earning, and the members themselves shall vote for the prize-winner. The account stands as under:—

Mrs. Powell, 10s., will not divulge her secret.

Miss R. S. Andrews, 10s. 6d., told a war-time tale to the "Evening News" which earned half a guinea. Total £1 0s. 6d.

The subscriptions are very tardy so far. Hurry up, London Branch, and send in your subs.

R. S. ANDREWS.

Report of the Hockey Team.

Here is a brief report of the activity designated hockey:—

We have fifteen members in the team, all very keen and active.

Matches arranged to date	...	...	9
Matches played	...	...	7
Matches scratched	...	...	2

Won 4 matches, lost 1 match (2 practice matches).

Goals scored: For, 19; against, 9.

We wish to express thanks to London Branch for again granting us a loan at the commencement of the season, and this will be repaid at the very earliest opportunity.

E. M. SMART, Hon. Secretary Hockey Team.

Edinburgh and East of Scotland.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY.—The Annual Christmas Party for children and nephews and nieces was held in the club on Saturday afternoon, December 20th. Forty-six little ones spent a very enjoyable afternoon, and after having a scrumptious tea and games, they were visited by Santa Claus, who brought a toy for each child. Will all members who so very kindly sent donations for the party accept sincere thanks.

CHRISTMAS DONATION TO DISABLED SOLDIERS.—At the annual general meeting of the Branch, it was agreed that a present of £5 be sent to the disabled soldiers at Edenhall Hospital to enable the men to have a Christmas party. The gift was greatly appreciated by the men.

ENTERTAINMENT TO LADY HAIG'S POPPY FACTORY WORKERS.—It was also decided at the annual general meeting that the Branch would give a party to the disabled men from Lady Haig's Poppy Factory. On the 21st February we look forward to entertaining 65 disabled men from the factory.

LONDON DINNER.—Miss F. M. Lush, our Benevolent Fund secretary, represented the Branch at the annual general meeting and re-union dinner held in London on January 3rd.

MARY INNES, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer.

EX-SERVICE WOMEN'S CLUB,

Dear Madam,—I wonder could you spare a space in some issue of the Gazette to publish a little information in order to make it easier for new-comers to find us in Sydney.

Several letters have been addressed to the "Allora," but as we have been gone from there for several years, it is possible that all are not forwarded.

If you would publish the address—184 Liverpool Road, Ashfield, N.S.W.—there would be no delay in connecting with me, or in getting any information that is required. We do not have correspondence addressed to the club-room at all.

With greetings from the Sydney Branch, and thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

C. E. PEACHEY, Hon. Sec.

184 Liverpool Road, Ashfield, N.S.W.

NEWS OF OLD COMRADES.

Are there any members living near Neepawa, Manitoba, Canada? **Mrs. B. Sheldon** (nee **Slater**), who was with Records at Rouen and Wimereux, lives there and would be glad to know. We send her our sympathy in the loss of her little daughter.

We were glad to have a visit at Headquarters from **Mrs. Stephens** (nee **Knight**). She was accompanied by her son John, who promptly bought his mother an O.C.A. badge out of his own money! Mrs. Stephens is an active member of the Newquay Branch of the British Legion.

and we suggested to her that she should start a branch of the O.C.A. in Cornwall.

Although not able to undertake the entire work, she expressed her willingness to do what she could if ex-W.A.A.C.s living in Cornwall would write to her. Her address is "**Seaway, St. Mary's Road, Newquay, Cornwall.**" Mrs. Stephens served at Raglan Barracks, Devonport.

From Miss Edith Thompson, C.B.E.

Oversea comrades may be interested to hear that my intended visit to New Zealand is not coming off at present, much to my disappointment. To cheer me up, however, I am quite unexpectedly going to Canada again, and hope to reach Saint John early in March, and remain in Canada until the end of May. I shall be visiting all the big cities so hope I shall come across many Old Comrades, and am greatly looking forward to seeing my good friends in Montreal and Toronto again. Two years ago I missed a great many people through not getting their addresses in time. If they will write to me, care of the Canadian Pacific Railway, I shall hope for better luck, though it will not be possible to go far from the beaten track.

It has been a great pleasure to have Christmas greetings from distant members in Canada, Australia and South Africa.

Among ex-officers I have recently met in London are **Miss Bartels** and **Miss Curtis**, who have given up tomato growing in the Channel Islands and returned to administrative work; **Miss Jacobs**, who has left Australia House and has a most interesting new post which should give her any amount of scope, **Miss Heyworth**, who is doing welfare work in a large London business house, **Miss J. Collins**, who is keenly interested in local government in Berkshire, **Mrs. Balcombe**, who has just obtained a post in England on her return after some years in South Africa, **Miss Ethel Thomas**, who is now secretary to Sir Felix Brunner, **Miss Jessie Horniblow**, who is now living in Ipswich, where she has an organizing post, **Miss Osborne** who is once more keeping goal for the Lincolnshire hockey team, and **Miss J. Bryce**, who is playing for the Scottish international team.

I hear that **Miss Ewing** formerly Controller Western Command is in charge of the Ministry of Labour Training Centre at Lenzie near Glasgow. Miss Ewing has been in Belfast for several years.

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Miss M. Swaddle, 163 Kingston Road, New Malden, Surrey, would be glad to hear of any members who were at Boyton Camp, Wilts, in 1918.

Mrs. Freda Collingwood, 273 Pine Street, Durban, S.A., writing on the 17th December, 1930, says: "It was so nice to see Miss Edith Thompson a few months ago, and I very much enjoyed the two chats I had with her. I had to have an operation a few weeks ago, and I am nearly well now." We hope Mrs. Collingwood is, by now, restored to health, and will continue well.

Mrs. Amy E. Killin (Lloyd, 1189), c/o Goods Office, Rhodesia Railways, Umtali, S. Rhodesia, sends greetings to all and wishes for the success of the O.C.A. In her letter of December 8th, 1930, she says: "The other day I showed my son, aged six years, my medals. After duly admiring them, he asked if he could keep them. I said, 'Not till I die.' He said, 'When are you going to die, mother?'"

Mrs. E. Hewitt (F/w Newton), of Unit 6, Boulogne, and Prior Park, Bath, would be very pleased to hear from any of the members who remember her, especially **F/w Vicary** and **F.w Leach**. Address 6 Lincoln Avenue, Bourne-mouth.

Mrs. M. Pearce, 254 School Road, Yardley Wood, Birmingham, asks for news of the following: **Miss Ethel Waller**, 18955, American P.O., 902, A.E.F.; **Miss Lily Stribling**, 21043, Queen Elizabeth Camp, Vendroux; **Mrs. Guy**, 53, Hampshire, Rolleston, and A.E.F.; **Mrs. Lewis**, 53, Hampshire, Rolleston, and later Administrator at Taunton; and **Miss J. G. Tizzard**, 53, Hampshire, Rolleston, and A.E.F.

Mrs. Arthur P. Mills (Mabel Guest), Hopkinton, Concord, N.H., writes: I hope to pay a visit home next summer, when I will look you up at the social one Thursday evening. It has been cold here these last two days, and we have had a little snow, but it won't last for long; we shall soon have some nice weather again. I am living in a very pretty country town eight miles from Concord, the capital of New Hampshire. I have planted a green privet hedge round our house and as soon as it grows big enough we are going to have a white gate. Won't that make it English-looking? We have a nice garden of one acre at the back where we grow lots of vegetables and flowers. I just love it here and have some good times. We often on a Sunday take our lunch and go for a long walk through the woods. I often think of you all and wonder what you are doing at the re-unions, and sometimes wish I could come in and see you all, but roll on next summer, and I will be there once again. Please give my love to Miss Ireland. Just tell her to come over and have a cup of tea with old Guestie, you may come along, too. I've room enough to put half-a-dozen of you up. Wouldn't I just love to see some of you at my door! **Jarvis** says she is coming to pay me a visit some day, but she is living about 330 miles away from here. Still, I have hopes she will come.

Does anyone know the whereabouts of **Jarvis "Major"** and **Jarvis "Minor"**? They were gardeners at Etaples cemetery. **Miss H. Howes**, Box 6, Lumbwa, Kenya Colony, wants to get in touch with them again. In the course of her wanderings through Cyprus, Egypt, Turkey and India, since her demobilisation, she has lost their address.

Miss Bushell 129 East 76th Street, New York, is very anxious to meet with any ex-W.A.A.C. in New York.

Mrs. Little (nee **Izzard**), of 1320 Chalmers, Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A., sends best wishes to all Old Comrades.

From Mrs. N. Howlett (Martin 895), 41 Rue de la Ferme, Neuilly, Seine.

I read in to-day's "Daily Mail" (30th December) of the W.A.A.C.s reunion once more, it is with regret I have never been able to be present at any of the meetings.

I know a great many of my friends from Rouen attend.

My object in writing is to ask, if **Doctor Proctor**, who was M.O. of No. 8 Gen. Hp., should be at the Reunion I should like to thank her for her great attention to me and for saving my life, which she undoubtedly did, when I had a very serious attack of pneumonia and pleurisy. It was a bad finish to my career as a W.A.A.C. and incidentally to some of the happiest days I have known. I would like her to know I am happily married and have three happy children. She will perhaps remember me, as I was under her care for 3½ months after which I left for Isleworth, where I had a relapse and unfortunately remained another four months.

It is rather late after so long to thank her, but the idea of perhaps finding Doctor at the Reunion never occurred to me. I have reason to thank my service with the W.A.A.C.s at Rouen, as I met my husband there.

My best wishes for a happy and successful reunion. Remembrance to all members especially **Workers Wood**, **Paterson** and **James**, who, I'm sure, will attend.

From Mrs. K. Wentworth Thompson (G. Turner, U.A., Ripon, etc.), c/o Comm. of Police, Cape Coast, Gold Coast Colony, West Africa.

We seem barely to have unpacked and got settled before I must get started with my Christmas mail.

We had a fairly good trip out but find Cape Coast a poor place after Kumasi, where we had electric light and frigidaire. Here we endure lamps, and the food question is most difficult. The fish is good, but they only kill one goat a day and you get nasty unappetising scraps of meat at ruinous prices. The soil is so poor that anything in the way of green vegetables is non-existent. The custom appears to be that one buys a joint, a little butter, kipper and a few vegetables when a "chop ship" comes in, that is about every three weeks, and you try to eat it all up before it goes bad. Then a lean time again until the next chop ship calls.

We have a nice new bungalow but are so far from the big town that even though my husband takes cook down to the market by car in the mornings, he is always late back, and a second journey during the day is unthinkable. Anything he forgets or can't carry we go without! It is

trying if anyone comes in unexpectedly to lunch; thank goodness we brought a good many stores out with us.

I am trying to make a garden of sorts here and am getting lorry loads of good earth from some miles inland and hope in due course to grow something green to eat.

We had an ex-Service Dinner last Saturday evening. There are two of us ex-Service women, and the men-folk are sufficiently enlightened to feel that we naturally were eligible to attend, consequently the wives of ex-Service men were also asked. The table was decorated with poppies in shell cases, and the car garlands which were left unsold were used as trailers—it looked very well. One man is an accordion player, and after supper he played all the old camp songs, which we shouted lustily. A very jolly evening.

I shall think of you all on January 3rd and we will drink your health and wish you a happy and prosperous New Year.

From Mrs. M. Simmons (Mussell), Sungei Kari Estate, P.O. Galang, E.C. Sumatra, D.E.I.

Since I last wrote I have changed my address, which I give above in the hope that some of the old crowd may find time to write me. I would very much like to hear news of **Cottingham** and **Wattie**. I believe the last time I wrote them was last Christmas, but I am still waiting for a reply.

I have often wondered if any Bristol member knows anything of **Mabel Slatter**. I would very much like to get in touch with her again, but the last letter I wrote to the address she gave me in Bristol was returned marked "Unknown," and I am sorry to say I have now mislaid this one.

What on earth has happened to **Chidley**? If this catches her eye I hope she will either write or make a note that I will be in England next year.

I was pleased to see the letter from **Lloydie** in the July Gazette. I can quite sympathise with her bringing four kiddies on leave, I found it quite enough on a 26 days' journey when I came to England in 1928. I wonder if she ever hears anything of **Pool (Puddles)**? I hear quite regularly from **Brommage (Scottie)**.

If **Gammon** sees this she may be interested to hear I have just had a friend of her's staying with me.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1930.

1930 has been an outstanding year, and on the whole may be considered a very satisfactory one. Although the membership has decreased, the branch is still very much alive, and if anything more active than usual this year.

Branch Membership.

The total strength of the London Branch up-to-date as as under:—

One hundred and sixty-seven Life Members, 265 annual members, making a total of 432, thus showing a decrease of about one hundred members during the year. But the fact that many of those still interested though lapsed members have definitely promised to settle their arrears in 1931 and many more will follow suit, leads me to view the general aspect with complacency. Twenty-one new members have been enrolled during the year, seven rejoined and nine transferred from other branches. Several members have gone abroad and transferred to other branches from London Branch; three have definitely resigned, and I regret to say that two deaths have been reported.

Correspondence

The Branch correspondence is still on the upward grade. The number of communications dealt with and accounted for in the postage book from November 1st, 1929, up to the 1st of November, 1930, is 907 letters and 2,689 circular letters, total 3,596. With this particular work invaluable help has been rendered by Miss Watson, who has addressed hundreds of envelopes when notices had to be sent out.

Re-unions.

The re-union meetings have automatically developed into fortnightly affairs at the club, as the attendance throughout the year at the Duke of York's Headquarters

only averages about 12 people each night. I should like to suggest that the members consider whether it is worth while paying for a room which is evidently not required.

Entertainments.

TWO SOCIALS were arranged during the year; both were well attended. Ninety members attended the first, and 60 members and friends the social in October.

There have been no whist drives organised as these were down on the cards to take place at the Duke of York's Headquarters, and there were never enough members to support them. The same also applies to the dancing classes which were also arranged.

THEATRE PARTIES have also had rather a bad time. Out of the four on the membership card, one was organised early in the year and got so little support that half of the tickets had to be returned, the other which I could have booked seats for had to be cancelled, as the date clashed with the Inter-services Swimming Gala, and I had no hesitation in cancelling the booking in favour of a much better entertainment—as it proved to be.

LECTURES.—Of the two dates on the programme for lectures, one was given by Miss Jacobs on Australia, and the other was cancelled by permission of the Committee as no lecturer could be found who could fit in the date.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON OUTINGS.—With the exception of the few special invitation outings, these found no support whatever.

SUNDAY RAMBLES.—The Sunday rambles were very well supported, and one outstanding trip—the visit to Oxford Branch—was very much enjoyed, and that most pleasant day spent with our Old Comrades at Oxford still lingers in our memory.

SALES.—Our efforts to augment our income by small sales of useful articles found great favour with the members, and have resulted in a profit of £8 8s. 6d., excluding the sale in November which is not taken into consideration in this financial year—that sale realised just over £5.

COMBINED RE-UNIONS.—The two combined services re-unions have brought us into closer touch with our friends. I should suggest though, that any further idea of running these evenings should be coupled with organised evenings so that our visitors shall not feel lonely.

Special Events.

Under this heading come many interesting items.

ALDERSHOT TATTOO.—The trip to Aldershot for the Searchlight Tattoo has become an established social event in the Branch. Quite early in the year 32 seats were booked, and in April another booking had to be made in order to supply the demand for seats. Sixty-four seats were booked.

WEEK-ENDS AT CAMP.—Two week-ends were arranged during the camping season; one was very well supported, but the other suffered owing to bad weather. In addition to these a Moonlight Ramble was also arranged through Windsor Forest and back by river to camp, where the members taking part had booked for the week-end.

DANCE.—A special dance was organised to raise funds for the Branch in January last, and also so we should try out our memory on the old-fashioned dances. This was a great success; everybody seemed to remember the old dances, and some even dared to go further back and dance the polka. The branch funds gained from this event a sum of £4 9s. 1d. and the members some real enjoyment.

A BIRTHDAY.—The Branch celebrated its tenth birthday by a supper and dance on the 10th of May, although June was the real birthday month. Our President was going off to South Africa at the end of May, and an event so important could not rightly be celebrated without the President at the head, so it was agreed to push the celebrations on a month in order that Miss Thompson should preside over the party. It was the greatest social event of the year, was the summing up of those present.

SWIMMING.—And yet another great event of the year—or I should say of years—to be reported was the winning of the Dame Katherine Furse Swimming Cup which is competed for at the Inter-Services Swimming Gala each year. It was a great victory, especially as it has been tried for for eleven years, and there being no swimming club, there was no inducement except keenness amongst the swimmers who had tried so hard for years to hold the Cup for a year at least. The Cup has been engraved at the expense of the Branch, and can be inspected at the club any time by club members.

BENEVOLENT WORK.—The mothers and children on our after care list were entertained to a party in January last at the Duke of York's Headquarters, and the children were taken to the camp for their annual outing by various members of the Branch in July. The party was very thoroughly enjoyed by the youngsters and their parents, and the outing is, I think, one of the rare treats that they look forward to with real enjoyment, and in many cases fresh air and sunlight is required. The members feel that those few hours spent in looking after the children are well spent and the money spent by the Branch well worth while. The Headquarters "Benevolent" cupboard has benefited to the extent of some 80 garments which have been made by members of the Branch and their friends, over the making of which Miss Rogers has presided for some years.

FINANCE.—The financial position of the Branch, as you will hear from the financial statement, is quite sound, but not so sound that we can relax any small efforts to make a few pounds throughout the year; it is chiefly through these efforts that we are in this sound condition.

Capitation fees at 1s. 6d. per head for sixty life members of ten years' standing have been withheld by Headquarters Council for 1930 as a Life Membership subscription was based on a ten years' membership. This has made a difference to our income and expenditure account and placed the balance on the wrong side. However, many of the members in question have promised to pay a donation to the funds so that the Branch shall not suffer through this reduction in its income.

In conclusion, the Honorary Secretary desires to place on record her warm appreciation of the great help she has had from members in the carrying out of her secretarial duties throughout the year and to express the hope that the flag of the O.C.A. will be kept flying high for many more years to come.

MARRIAGE.

Wells—Watson.—On November 22nd, 1930, at St. Anne's Church, Grantham, Lincs., Sidney Richard Wells to Esther Doris Watson (Camp 4, Quevilly, Rouen). Present address: Odell, Kingsway, Harrow.

DEATH.

Jones.—On March 29th, 1930, at Bethel, Carnarvonshire, Blodwen, May Jones (Kinmel Park Camp, 1918), formerly of Port Dinowle.

ADVERTISEMENTS

To Let, Furnished.—Comfortable, weather-proof, wooden Bungalow at St. Agnes, Cornwall. Sitting-room, three bedrooms (sleep four), large kitchen, and sunny verandah; indoor sanitation. Beautiful view; 20 minutes' sea, village, station. Terms: May, 1 guineas per week, including plate and linen; June, 2 guineas per week, including plate and linen; July, 3 guineas per week, including plate and linen; August, 4 guineas per week, including plate and linen; September (1st fortnight), 3 guineas per week, including plate and linen; 2nd fortnight, 2 guineas per week, including plate and linen; Oct.-April, 10/- per week, including plate and linen.

Pure Home-made Chocolates, Bon-Bons, Toffees, Caramels, etc. Fancy boxes of Chocolates and Sweets, suitable for Presents, from 2s. 6d. to £2 2s. 0d. Price list on application.—Miss E. Cocksedge, 2 Bracken Road, West, Brighouse, Yorkshire.

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.	Thursday evenings, 7.30 to 10 p.m.
Golders Green.	Miss Setterfield, 12 Geary Road, Dollis Hill, N.W.10	Winchfield, Shirehall Lane, Golders Green Road (nearest 'bus stop Brent Bridge). Telephone: Hendon 1925.	First Tuesday of each month; 7.30—10 p.m.
Ilford.	Miss M. V. Druitt, 74 Belgrave Road, Ilford, Essex.	122 Cranbrook Road, Ilford. (Telephone Ilford 0058).	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	
Oxford.	(Temp.) Miss A. Haynes, 15 St. Omer Road, Cowley.	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.		
Cardiff. S. Wales. and	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