

Old Comrades



Association

GAZETTE.

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NOTICE.

All Subscriptions Are Now Due.

EDITORIAL.

EMPLOYMENT ABROAD.

From the Malay States a member writes making the following suggestion, which seems a very good one:—

"I am wondering if you would think it a good idea to invite members in all parts of the world to send in helpful letters dealing with the chances of obtaining employment (for women, of course) in their particular corner of the globe. Full particulars to be given of cost of passage, minimum outfit necessary, conditions to be expected, rates of pay, qualifications required, any special training that it would be advisable to undergo before leaving home, climatic conditions, prospects generally, and any other useful hints that might occur to the writer, who might be urged neither to lay on the grey or the rosy tints unduly!

I could give you some useful information about conditions out here, for example, where the field is by no means over-stocked for English women.

"O.C.A. members seem to fairly pepper the whole globe, and if they would all give their advice the results would be valuable.

"If the writers, where possible, would give reliable addresses where enquirers could apply for employment, it would be a good thing."

In these days, when unemployment, even for the highly skilled, is so terribly difficult to obtain, such information would be most welcome. If members abroad will only follow up this with all the information they can give, we will be extremely glad to publish it. As this member in Malay says, it is useless to paint too rosy or too grey a picture of any prospects—but just to give all possible advice and information. Perhaps members abroad do not realise the straits of some of their comrades at home. Stenographers and book-keepers—and those that comprise both in their capabilities, to mention only one "category," are being turned from their employment almost daily and in numbers. Our members—although they may look it—are no longer in their early twenties, and have therefore years of experience. They ought to be of great use to employers. Will members overseas really make an effort and reply to this suggestion? After several years of trying to get articles for the Gazette out of members I am not always very optimistic, but this time I do hope for a good and helpful response.

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At Headquarters Office I have my own especial drawer into which the General Secretary puts from day to day all

letters—notes, etc., that come to me. Sometimes she adds her comments to the various letters, and generally gives me all the helpful information she can. In a letter recently received the writer complained that there was so very little news of Old Comrades to be found in the Gazette, and asking if more could not be printed, the General Secretary, drawing a red pencil under this complaint adds, "Nobody sends the Editor any news. She has great difficulty in collecting any." This is absolutely so. Members do not trouble to send news. Where they imagine it is to come from we have not yet discovered. A paper in the ordinary way has its reporters and that is what we lack altogether. Well, perhaps not altogether. There are two or three members—not counting the General Secretary—who send in all that comes their way, and readers of the Gazette have to thank them for most of the news.

Miss Edith Thompson appealed for news and matter for publishing, in the Gazette of August last, but little was forthcoming. I feel if she is not able to wake members up it's a pretty bad case! Now, after all this grouse (Old Comrades will realise I have not absolutely forsaken Army ways) I would like to thank our V.A.D.-W.A.A.C. who so kindly gave us her "Diary" to print. It has been much appreciated and is a very interesting record of hard work done for our wounded in that far away 1915.

HEADQUARTERS REPORT.

A meeting of the Council was held on January 14th, 1932, at 5 Buckingham Gate, S.W.1 Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan presided. During the course of the proceedings a vote of thanks and appreciation was passed to all those who acted as stewards and helpers at the Annual Dinner held on November 21st, 1931.

Clothing.

We have received very useful parcels from the following: Miss A. L. Brown, Miss Norah K. Crundall, Anon. (green coat), and knitted baby clothes from Miss Kate Davy. Our thanks go to each.

Gazette.

Miss E. M. Warrior asks us to thank on her behalf all those who have sent her such kind messages with their Gazette subscriptions and to say how much she appreciates them. She would also like it made clear in this issue of the Gazette, that all subscriptions to the Gazette which were paid in November at the Dinner or otherwise, started in January. Certain members seem to have expected to receive the December number. Some time back the question of Gazette subscriptions was extremely troublesome—subscriptions falling due each month and the subscribers having to be notified the previous month. After a strenuous effort Miss Warrior got them all adjusted—so that now all subscriptions fall due in January.

If any member wishes to obtain a copy of the December Gazette, which contains a report of the Twelfth Annual General Meeting, the Extraordinary Meeting, Treasurer's Report, etc., and also the speeches at the Twelfth Annual Dinner, Miss Warrior still has some available, price 3½d. per copy.

BRANCH REPORTS FOR FEBRUARY.

Irish Branch.

It is with much regret that I am resigning the Secretaryship of our Branch, which I have held ever since it started six years ago. But as I have ceased to live in Dublin I find it impossible to be sufficiently active so far away.

The Branch is very fortunate in securing the services of **Mrs. O'Meara**, who has kindly consented to take on the office of Branch Secretary. Will all members note that in future subscriptions and all communications should be addressed to her at Ard-Muire, Baily, Co. Dublin. Will members try to help her by sending in their subscriptions without delay—they are due on January 1st of each year.

I feel sure that many members who failed to send me their subscriptions for 1931 have no intention of deserting the O.C.A., but they must be struck off as having resigned if they send no communication.

I wish the Branch every success in the future, and shall, of course, remain a member.

EVA C. FINNY (late Branch Secretary).

Brighton.

Wednesday, February 24th.—A small Whist Drive for members and their friends will be held at Jay's Cafe, 5 St. James's Street, to start at 8 p.m. Players pay 1s., including refreshments. Prizes. Do all come who can.

Sunday, April 10th.—Country ramble to find primroses. Details to be settled at the Whist Drive.

H. A. BARON.

Norfolk.

Our first meeting of the year was held on January 7th, at 32 Grove Road, Norwich, when we had a good muster of members, a few of whom arrived in the afternoon, and so were able to enjoy a "tea and chat" half-hour round the fire. Gradually long-distance members rolled in, and we were delighted to welcome Miss D'Olier, a member of the London Branch, staying down in Norfolk for the Christmas holidays; and brought along by Mrs. Rumbold, of Great Yarmouth, who kindly gave her hospitality for the night—the return train service being hopeless to the rural district of Great Ormesby! All members having arrived and greetings being over, letters were read from absent members, and it was good to know that all were getting along well. One card of special interest received by the branch was from Miss Molly Howes, in Kenya Colony. Being up country—miles from anywhere—this little card, which she designed and painted, contained a small photograph of herself taken out yonder.

Following this task, a little dinner was served; and, amid much fun and laughter and the popping of crackers—the health of the O.C.A. was drunk, with a thought for absent friends. Later, settled once again round the fire, we chatted about the good times we had at Christmas, etc. One of our members was well in the forefront with home-made "peppermint creams" and "cokernut kisses," which found a ready sale, the profit from which goes into the "copper box." A little gift was forthcoming for all members present and absent, and for our Waaclets, and, amid much hilarity, each one had their choice from the tray, the pocket corkscrew being easily the most popular gift!

All good things come to an end, and, as per usual, time slipped away very quickly. The Misses Newberry and Prothero very kindly offered to take Yarmouth members to the station in their car, thus enabling them to linger a few moments longer; after which they took Miss Green to her home at Wymondham. The latter was a very kind thought and much appreciated, for it enabled her to stay with us until the end, instead of leaving Norwich on the 9 p.m. bus.

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, February 11th, at 122a Thorpe Road, Norwich, when we hope to have Miss E. Thompson, C.B.E., with us. This will be a red letter meeting for the branch, and we look forward to a record muster.

We shall regret losing Miss McDermott from our meetings, but wish her every success in the new work she is taking up in the Isle of Wight in the spring. Mac has been the most regular member of our branch, having only missed one meeting since its formation in 1928, and then only through delay in the postal delivery! However, we shall look forward to having her back with us for the autumn and winter months.

L. W. CHILVERS.

Bournemouth.

As it is some time since a report from the Branch appeared in the Gazette, a short summary of its recent history may be of interest, though nothing of importance has happened. The Annual Meeting took place on November 7th and the Officers and Committee were re-elected with the exception of two members of the Committee who are not able to attend meetings. Mrs. Jones, for so long the kind friend and hostess to the Branch, was elected as our first honorary member.

A satisfactory financial position was disclosed. The numbers of the Branch increased to 28 during the year.

On January 4th we held our first Christmas party at Cavendish House. A programme of progressive games had been arranged by Mrs. and Miss Jones, and an excellent supper provided. We had a very cheering evening and eleven members turned up. Miss Jones won the first prize and Mrs. Stocker the second, in the games competition.

The party broke up about 11 p.m., and we were all very grateful to Mrs. and Miss Jones for the trouble they took over the arrangements, which must have entailed quite a lot of work.

E. W. TROTTER.

Manchester.

December and January.—On December 19th we held our biggest social event of the year—our Annual Reunion Dinner. There were 21 members present, including our President, Miss Matley, and Mrs. Beggs, who has just been made an honorary member.

We were sorry not to have had a larger attendance, but various circumstances prevented members from being present. Two of our members, Mrs. Frankenburg and Miss Robinson, had just been bereaved, each of them losing their father.

The dinner, however, was very enjoyable. We were very pleased to see Mr. Hughes, the manager of the restaurant, and I think he was equally pleased to see us. We did full justice to the excellent dinner provided, and toasted the King, the Queen, and the O.C.A.

After rising from the tables we assembled round the grill fire where the time passed very quickly telling anecdotes and having a little community singing.

January seems to have been a month of Whist Drives. We have held three and they have all been very successful. We are indeed very grateful to Capt. Garrard for the delightful gifts which he so kindly sent us as prizes for our Whist Drives. I myself am especially pleased, for I was fortunate enough to win one on January 22nd.

We had a Committee meeting on Friday, January 29th, at which it was announced that we were losing one of our members—Miss Blease. She had been Hut Secretary, and Mrs. Mayor was elected to fill the vacant post. We are indeed sorry to lose Blease, both because of the work which she did and also because of her cheerful smiling face. As she is going to Liverpool to live, perhaps she will join the Club there—if so, our loss will be their gain.

We keep getting occasional new members and they are very welcome, for we do not want our numbers to dwindle.

One month of 1932 has gone—we hope it has been a happy one for all and that there are eleven still happier ones to follow.

H. FOSTER.

Montreal.

October 6th, 1931.—Twelve W.A.A.C.s and four W.R.A.F.s met at 13 Milton Street, Montreal, to say Hello! to Miss A. Forbes, D.A. who came with a V.A.D. friend, who is also teaching school in Montreal. I will leave it to Miss Forbes to tell you what her impressions were, but I think she is going to like our Montreal.

December 8th.—By kind courtesy of Captain and Mrs. R. Smillie, we were invited to their home, Apt. 10, 2209 Wilson Avenue, N.D.G., to-night, to well talk over many things, but of course I was there to collect subscriptions and donations towards our Christmas Box for Boys at St. Ann's Hospital. Our turn-out was disappointing. After promising to come it really is not fair. I know the present hard times are hitting a few, but we have consolation in knowing the other fellow is no better off, in fact not so well off. Three W.A.A.C.s and one W.R.A.F. turned out.

Our married members who have kiddies are trying to keep their pecker up, and I here again say cheer up, for better times are coming.

B. REID.

Liverpool.

Club meetings will be held at the Bluecoat Chambers, School Lane, on the following Friday evenings: February 12th and 26th, March 11th, and on the 18th there will be a special "Grand National" whist drive.

The annual party for disabled men—from the Mossley Hill Pensions' Hospital—was held at the club rooms on the 2nd of January. The men arrived in time for a "high tea." After they had done full justice to that they carried on with whist and music, but the evening passed far too rapidly, and it was very soon time for our guests to have supper and say goodbye. We had arranged for them to be conveyed from and to the hospital in one coach. So that they were a merry party when they waved farewell to us.

The Club members and their friends concluded the evening with dancing.

The January meetings are being devoted to strenuously practising table tennis, but in February we are looking forward to a whist drive—and a visit one evening of a really uncanny fortune-teller.

F. M. BRAGG, Hon. Sec.

THE CAMEL CORPS.

By C.W.H.

In previous issues of the Star and Garter Magazine we have given accounts of the activities of various societies in London which have been formed for the purpose of entertaining war-disabled men. These societies, such as the "Lest We Forget Association," "The Not Forgotten Association," "The Adair Wounded Fund," and the "Stock Exchange War-Wounded Entertainment Fund," have been the means of bringing a great deal of sunshine into the lives of those whose physical disabilities debar them from many of the pleasures of life enjoyed by normal people.

Patients of the Star and Garter Home, in common with those of other ex-Servicemen's hospitals and homes in the London district, benefit by these entertainments, and often, when you are passing the Star and Garter Home at Richmond, you may see wounded men being loaded into char-a-bancs, motor-cars or vans (for the patients in wheel-chairs) to take them to a theatre, concert, football match, or party. One of these organisations which is, perhaps, not so well known to the general public, but which, nevertheless, holds a firm place in the affections of Star and Garter patients, is that known as the "Camel Corps." This curious title is apt to be misleading, for the "Camel Corps" has nothing to do with camels, and is not a corps.

What has become to be known as the Star and Garter as the "Camel Corps" was started by Miss Amy Burgess, a member of the London Postal Staff, some years ago. During the war Miss Burgess did good work for the Star and Garter by raising funds amongst her fellow workers in the Post Office to endow a bed at the Richmond Home. When the new Home was completed and the

patients took up residence in 1924, Miss Burgess had the happy thought of continuing the work she had done during the war by entertaining the most badly disabled patients.

And so, with the help of her colleagues, Miss Burgess began to give parties once a month, sometimes in Holy Trinity Church Hall, or, when weather permitted, in Richmond Park. As nearly all those invited were chair cases, the long procession of patients in bath chairs, hand-propelled tricycles, or invalid motor chairs, made a very striking spectacle. This procession recalled to one of the patients who had served in the East the trek of the camels across the desert, and so these monthly outings became known as the "Camel Corps," the name by which they have been known ever since.

The parties became more and more popular with the patients, and eventually it became necessary to look for a larger hall. Through the kindness of the principal of the Wesleyan College at Richmond, the Sunday Schools and grounds of the college were placed at the disposal of Miss Burgess for the parties, and these have proved admirable for the purpose. The increased space available at the college has made it possible for more guests to be invited, and now at least sixty patients attend each party.

The parties are thoroughly enjoyed and eagerly anticipated by all who attend them, and especially by the very badly disabled patients, some of whom are completely helpless, unable to move hand or foot. Miss Burgess and her band of lady helpers from the various Post Offices attend the Home in force on party days, and give assistance to all who require it, pushing the helpless ones in the invalid chairs, or taking the less badly disabled by car, to and from the party. At every party a first-class concert is part of the programme, and, thanks to the co-operation of Mrs. Neville Strange, we often hear some of the finest London artistes. A feature which strikes you at "Camel Corps" parties is the informality, cheeriness, and friendliness of everybody present.

In addition to the monthly parties, Miss Burgess organises two trips to the Sandgate Home each year, while concerts in connection with the "Camel Corps" are also given at the Richmond Home from time to time.

Although the "Camel Corps" was begun by the ladies of the Post Office, interest in the movement soon spread to the male members of the Post Office staff, and they are becoming equally eager to help with the work.

As one who enjoys the parties and is proud to belong to the "Camel Corps," I doff my hat to Miss Burgess and her loyal helpers.—From the "Star and Garter Magazine."

NEWS OF OLD COMRADES.

Miss Hilda Newbold, who served at Bostall Heath and the Staff College, Camberley, called at the headquarters office recently. She now lives in Stony Stratford and often sees **Miss Dawson-Smith**, who lives nearby. Miss Newbold asks for news of two of her officers—**Miss Lithiby** and **Miss Mary Jones**.

Miss A. B. Beeston, 19 Kanika Road, Whangarie, North Auckland, New Zealand, has found a new member for the O.C.A. in the person of **Mrs. Evans (Pilcher-Clayton)**, whom we are very glad to welcome. Mrs. Evans went to New Zealand fifteen months ago from Canada. Perhaps Mrs. Evans will write and give us news of herself and any other ex-W.A.A.C.s she may be in touch with?

Miss M. Webber is also in New Zealand—at the Albert Hotel, 241 Queen Street, Auckland. While we in London are basking in fogs she tells us that "we have had some lovely weather this month. Our summer started early and we hope it will continue. There are some lovely beaches around Auckland and bathing is in full swing."

Will Josephine Davies, who was at the London Annual Dinner, please write to **Miss D. Aldred**, 225 Oldham Road, Newton Heath Manchester.

Mrs. Hotson (Daisy Hayes) would like the address of **M. K. T. Edwardes**, late G.H.Q., Calais. She wishes to be remembered to all members of the Vendreux unit. Her address is Dunmail Cottage, Grasmere

Miss C. M. Ford says she only comes up to London from her home 7 Birchwood Road, West Byfleet, Surrey, one week-end a year, and that to attend the Annual Dinner, which she thoroughly enjoys, especially talking over old times.

Miss Dorothy B. Cook hopes to be home in 1933 and will then try and look up old friends and also visit headquarters. She lives at 6 Baikal Road, Shanghai, China. If she has been there during all this present excitement, perhaps she will write us her experiences for the Gazette? Such an article would be very interesting.

Mrs. E. Rouse, 807 Jean Talon West, Park Extension, Montreal, Canada, has sent a photograph of a group of Women's Legion members whose names she gives as:—**Jackman, Turner, Allan, Parkin, Tarrant, Rosebrough, Ashby, Stannard, Covey**. The officer in this group is **Miss E. Archibald**. She would like to hear news of these and to know what is happening to them.

Mrs. L. White, 21 Meeching Road, Newhaven, Sussex, complains that there is not enough news of Old Comrades published in the Gazette, and remarks that "there is seldom any news of the old Southern Command."

Sending her subscription for the Gazette, **Miss G. Lamb** asks us to alter her card to **Mrs. G. Rose**, so that we gather she has recently married. All her Old Comrades will send her their very good wishes.

Miss Eva Norden (182) writes: I am sure Old Comrades from Cauchoise Billet and Casualty Branch, Rouen, will be sorry to hear that **Mrs. Riseborough (A. Philip, 184)** has undergone a very serious internal operation during the latter end of last month, but up to the present is making steady progress toward recovery.

Miss Peggy McWilliams, of Rue de Notre Billet, Rouen, and Casualty Branch, Rouen, is doing very well in her post at Cape Town, South Africa. She often visits **Mrs. McLelland (nee Scrutton)**, another "Cauchoise Billetee."

Writing from "Boisdale," Wimboyne Road, West Wyalong, New South Wales, Australia, **M. Davey** has heard that the "O.C.A. may be disbanded," and hopes this is not so. By this time she will know we are as alive as ever—perhaps a little more so. She says she is so glad of the Gazette and to be able to read all the doings of those fortunate enough to live near the various Branches and able to take part in all the O.C.A. "does."

DIARY OF A V.A.D. 1915 (Concluded).

May 2nd.

We are only to feed the non-ambulance trains, but any of the ambulance trains may drop bad cases here, and then they are brought to us to wait until the hospital sends for them.

On Friday morning two very bad cases were brought in, left by No. 4 A.T. One of these died at No. 5 a few hours later.

Of course, when there are dressings to be done, the M.O.s from the hospitals come down, we are to get everything ready, and help them if they want us.

Last night we had our first train to feed, 753 men evacuating from Boulogne and Etaples. About 25 dressings were done. We were determined that the feeding should go well, and we were certainly quicker than the other people had been; F.B.—and I were to feed, with an orderly each to collect mugs and help us generally. We took alternative coaches. Another orderly did the distributing of the loaves and tins of bully beef, while the fourth brought us fresh supplies of cocoa. G.—mixed the cocoa and in the intervals helped with the dressings, while P.—lent a hand all round and supervised us all. The train came in at 9.45 p.m. and we did it in an hour, which was really good, as we are so few. We simply tore along, and the orderlies were splendid. I think the M.O.s were pleased with our arrangement of the dressing-station, and I know the way we did the feeding made them open their eyes a bit!

May 3rd.

This is quite a picturesque little town, with some very nice old houses and a lovely river, the Somme. This

morning G.—and I went for a walk along the towing-path, and it was really very nice.

We have decided to change shift at mid-day and mid-night, and I think it will be a better arrangement. If an improvised train should come in, the two who are off duty will have to be roused as we must have the whole staff for these.

To-day the orderlies are making the wooden partition joining on to the "sentry-box" where the dressings are kept, in order that we may keep our stores separate.

The M.O.'s were simply wonderful; not only did some of them sit up all night with us waiting for trains, but they were also frightfully busy at the hospitals operating all day. They were always cheery about it, and so awfully nice to the men. Two or three of them come down to do dressings as a rule, and once or twice, if the rush is very heavy, a sister is sent for to help us, but as a rule we managed alone.

The rush seems over for the moment, and I am taking a day off in bed as I feel a bit done up! The extraordinary part about it is that there is at present nothing at all in the papers to account for all these wounded. The men down last night were from Ypres, and they said that we were only just holding our own. Most of them seemed a bit gloomy about the situation and everyone says you mustn't believe half they say. Train loads of German prisoners went through yesterday and the day before, and the troop trains going up never cease.

Thursday, May 20th.

We have had a fairly quiet time lately. One train of just under 1,000 on Tuesday night and another expected to-night. On Tuesday afternoon the Matron of No. 5 stationary hospital came to tea with us; she was very nice. Afterwards we went to see the new train No. 15, Princess Christian's, which is being put together here. It is really gorgeous inside, even more so than we had been led to believe. Yesterday the two Infirmieres from the French Red Cross came to tea. They were very nice and friendly. In the evening the Commandant, M., C. and T. all turned up from Gournay, and spent the night with us. This morning we had a formal inspection and I really think the Commandant was quite pleased with all we have done.

We witnessed a very interesting ceremony this morning. A French Captain was presented with the "Legion d'Honneur" and the Chef de Gare (I think it was) with the "Medaille Militaire." The official who did it announced, after the drums had been beaten and the bugles blown, that he had the honour, in the name of the President of the Republic, to make M. Le Capitaine so and so Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur. He then advanced, touched him on each shoulder with his sword, kissed him on both cheeks, and pinned the medal on his breast. Then there were more drums and speeches, and the other one was kissed and had his medal pinned on. Then everybody shook hands all round, and a small child presented a bouquet to someone—I couldn't see who!

Whit-Sunday, May 23rd.

We are having quite a slack time again now. A big train of 950 on Thursday night was the last excitement. The weather is very hot and we have been for some lovely country walks.

On Friday afternoon B. and I were taken over the R.E. train by the C.O. They are making 16 miles of sidings here; it is called the "Triage." It was very interesting seeing their quarters; everything in vans like our place at Boulogne. We went into the officers' mess, and they turned on the gramophone for us; it made me feel quite home-sick.

Saturday, May 29th.

The beginning of this week was quite slack up to Wednesday. We were called up at 2.30 a.m. that morning to feed a train of 840 cases which came in rather late at 5 a.m. Then we had another train that night—just under 1,000 cases.

Then on Friday, yesterday, we had another train of convalescents from Boulogne, about 800. The weather, thank goodness, is cooler again; we have been having it very hot.

The following is a copy of our first monthly report:—
Summary of work done in first month, May 1st-28th, 1915.

	1st wk.	2nd wk.	3rd wk.	4th wk.	Tot.
No. of men fed	1,803	4,745	2,330	2,677	11,555
No. of dressings	70	566	85	210	931
No. of Casual out-patients	1	11	6	3	21
No. of cases left by A.T.s	—	3	—	—	3

We have also fitted out the dressing stations with eight home made cupboards containing shelves, used respectively for splints, train blankets, pillows, old linen and extra blankets, wool, lint and gauze, bandages and poisons, this last being kept locked up. These are for storing our things instead of the old arrangement of keeping them in the "sentry box." We have also made improvised soiled dressing bins from empty kerosine tins, scraped clean, with wooden lids made and rope handles. On the tressle table stand several 7 lb biscuit tins, polished like mirrors, and containing cut dressings. Adjoining the dressing station, with more canvas stretched on laths, we rigged up a "scullery," which is divided into two parts by a red curtain. Behind the curtain we do the washing up, the mixing of the cocoa, and all the "dirty work." In the other part we have tea and keep as a fairly tidy place in which to receive visitors and so on. Here we have a delightful folding table (nicknamed the "old cow," because it had a habit of folding up, or sitting down, just as a cow does at unexpected moments) which has been given us by Captain D. of the R.E., who was very distressed one day on finding out that we had our tea off a packing case. B. has also made us two beautiful chairs out of barrels, upholstered in red, with straw stuffed cushions, and we have a nice little canvas camp chair lent by Lt. H. an R.T.O. There is also a large cupboard which is my especial glory hole, as the scullery is more or less my domain. With a lot of wild flowers in empty, polished-up cocoa tins, and maps pinned up on the walls, the place really looks quite nice.

In the little store that we built on to the "sentry box" we have put up a lot of bookcases, and have started a fine lending library, which is much appreciated by the men on duty in the station and round about. The books are a lot that were left over when the Boulogne Nurses' Club Library was started. The "sentry box" itself is now used as a sort of office by P., and a place for keeping the mugs, baskets, buckets, and other feeding equipment.

The cases in the trains we have been feeding the last few days have been on the whole fairly lightly wounded. There was a bad gas case last night, and a few bad wounds on Wednesday night. The ambulance trains, on the other hand, have been going through with some awful loads..

Thursday, June 3rd.

I am now on the boat just leaving Boulogne on my way home for a week's leave. Yesterday Mrs. F. and the Commandant came over in the car to Abbeville, bringing R. in my place while I am away. I left Abbeville with them about 5 p.m., getting to Boulogne at 7, an hour quicker than by train! It was a very nice drive.

We had not been very busy latterly. A few trains dropped some cases with us. Once we had a young German left for half an hour while they decided which hospital was to have him. As it is said that there is typhus in the German Army, neither of them were very keen on him. He was very badly wounded in the shoulder and spine and has since died.

The night before last No. 17 left 8 cases with us, all pretty bad, especially one spine, and the one who was off his head.

Saturday, June 19th.

Since I came back from leave—over a week ago—we had no trains until last night. Things seem to have been fairly quiet at the front for nearly three weeks now, and we hear many rumours and theories on the subject. Some say that we have been asked by the French to lie low for a bit, some say that we have no shells, and some say that we are spending all our energies in the Dardanelles. However, it seems likely that the lull is over now for a little.

The French have been frightfully busy the last few days.

Our train last night was an evacuation from Boulogne with 1,050 men on board, nearly all very slightly wounded. We had rather an excitement in the middle, as the French thought we had finished, and sent the train off, much to our fury, and the consternation of the unfortunate men who had no cocoa. We were able, however, to get it shunted back.

G. has gone home on sick leave, so R. is still here.
Sunday, July 4th.

We have had absolutely nothing to do since I last wrote. I have never known such a complete absence of anything doing. The hospitals are empty, and the ambulance trains kept for days at the base—every department is feeling it. B. has gone home on a week's leave, and one G. has come to take her place.

The only excitement is the advent of a rival show. Three women and a man have appeared, backed by a General, with a motor soup kitchen to feed the wounded. They were very taken aback to find us already installed here, and they have certainly been very nice about it, and quite realise that they are rather superfluous. Everybody is trying to get them sent where they would be really wanted, but the old General has got his back up about it and says he has sent them to Abbeville and at Abbeville they are to stay. Very trying for us and for them, especially as there is no work for anybody just at present.

We have taken advantage of the lull to go for some nice excursions. One day I went to Crecy with one of the V.A.D.s from the hospital, and another day to the Foret de Crecy with G. That was really lovely.

Sunday, July 11th.

We have had slightly more to do lately, as they have started sending some of the ambulance trains by a new route, via. St. Pol. They do not, therefore, touch Boulogne, so that many more serious cases are dropped here, as this is the first place with hospitals that they come to. We help with the unloading, get the men tea, water, or anything else they may want. The stretchers are carried into our shed, and the ambulances loaded from there.

We had about five of these trains during the last week, dropping from 6—14 cases each.

On Wednesday P. and I went to tea with the sisters and M.O.s on No. 7 ambulance train. It was such fun. They make the very best of their tiny amount of space. The Matron gave me a shell-case, which I have been longing for ever since I came out. On Friday we went to a concert at the Soldiers' Rooms, which was very amusing.

Monday, July 19th.

We are still very slack, though we get an ambulance train a day to meet. If the trains have not been through Boulogne they are often glad for us to give round magazines and cigarettes of which we have got a private supply.

For the last two days our goods shed has been the scenes of the most awful pandemonium. Seven thousand French troops are being moved to Alsace, and all their equipment is being loaded up here. The noise and the smell is indescribable. Huge cart horses drag the wagons up the sloping platform into the shed, and they stagger about on the slippery pavement. Then they are unharnessed and the wagons are manoeuvred into the trucks by shouting, swearing, gesticulating French soldiers. Every moment we expect to see the sides of our canvas walls stove in, and the whole structure to collapse about us. It speaks worlds for B.'s carpentering that they have stood firm so far.

Two ladies came to tea with us yesterday who have been sent here on a most interesting job. They have been sent out by the War Office to start a factory for the re-dipping of gas helmets. They are going to employ French women labour, and to oversee the work themselves.

I returned to England on Friday, the 30th July.

A CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY IN ROME.

In saying Rome, it must be understood that a good part of Italy was traversed by a party numbering sixteen, which left Victoria Station for Folkestone at 9 a.m. on December 20th, 1930, conducted by Mr. G. Ackroy, of The Catholic Association. This excellent guide having visited

the Eternal City no less than 27 times gave us the benefit of his previously acquired knowledge and introduced the party, limited to time on such a tour as ours, to the most outstanding places of historic interest.

After a pleasant crossing to Boulogne and an uneventful examination of luggage at the Customs for contraband, which was conspicuous by its absence, we were allowed to pass on to the Paris train where a most welcome luncheon awaited us. Among our party was one of those dear old gentlemen aged about 74 who was happy to find someone willing to talk to him and to listen to his voice of wisdom. Thus the journey passed rapidly enough until we reached the Gay City, so called, at 5 p.m. A waiting coach took us at once to the P.L.M. railway station where, during a two hours' wait, we had abundant time and opportunity to purchase and post picture cards to friends left behind. In due course we were entrained for the night—four to a carriage—to enable us to get a little sleep. At 8 a.m. we alighted at Avignon, proceeding by car to the Hotel de Louvre for breakfast, to which everyone did justice. In the 12th century our dining-room had been a chapel of the ancient Templars, containing magnificent stained glass windows and tiled flooring as used at that period. We visited some of Avignon's beautiful churches and after lunch a special guide conducted us over the famous Palace of the Popes, occupying two hours. Some of the wonderful frescoes and tapestries are still well preserved. We were shown the famous bridge containing a small chapel in the centre, one end of which was destroyed by water; the streets leading to the Palace are exceedingly narrow, apparently to prevent speedy attacks during wars.

We said goodbye to Avignon on Monday, December 22nd, and at 8 o'clock in the morning commenced a wonderful train journey comprising no less than 100 small tunnels with glimpses of glorious blue seas and sunshine, just as midsummer conditions would be in England. We passed Monte Carlo, Cannes, Marseilles and many southern French seaside resorts. We changed trains at Ventimiglia at 4 p.m. and left again at 6.40 p.m., Italian time, after another customs examination at which only three pieces of luggage were searched and inspected, mine being one of them. We arrived at Genoa at 11 p.m. and transferred to most elaborate rooms at the Grand Hotel, Isotta, where we spent a peaceful night, in preparation for another strenuous day's sight seeing. We saw the magnificent hospital built by a wealthy dame who gave 2,000,000 liras for its erection whilst her husband gave a similar sum of money for rebuilding the port and harbour. One of the streets, to commemorate the munificent deeds, is named the 25th of September Street, after the day chosen for the presentation. The cemetery is another interesting place, in so far that it is held to be the largest and richest in the world and every visitor makes an effort to see it. Then we had to go to the top of Portofino Vetta, a most thrilling drive by coach with hairpin bends all the way. We stayed a while for tea and photos but were timed closely as we had to be back at the foot of the mountain before dusk. After dinner we soon retired to rest for an early start the next morning, the 24th, for Rome—yes, Rome at last. The ultimate goal of our journey, reached at 7 o'clock on Christmas Eve.

Fischer's Park Hotel was our chosen rendezvous for five consecutive days. We quickly settled down to our itinerary work and pleasure combined. The first event after dinner on the evening of our arrival was a general assembly in the lounge where we found a magnificent Christmas tree, reaching right up to the ceiling illuminated by myriads of electric bulbs. Under the benign influence of merriment we soon joined in the fun in our own way and felt quite happy. At midnight we were taken to St. Silverster's Church for midnight Mass and returned under the safe conduct of students at 1.15 a.m. On Christmas Day we were free to go wherever we pleased, some going to St. Peter's and others to well-known churches of Rome.

Perhaps one thing more than any other reminded us of old England, for at dinner were served real Christmas puddings, lit up with brandy, whilst in the evening there was dancing to an excellent band for all the hotel visitors.

On Boxing Day our sight seeing began in good earnest after 8 o'clock breakfast; the first place to be seen was the great St. Peter's, which took up the whole of the morning. Cars took us everywhere and thus saved much fatigue. Words fail me to adequately describe the wonderful and beautiful sights of "Roma" and a climax was reached when, on Saturday, the 27th December—the day of days for our party—we were taken on a visit to the Vatican City for an audience of Pope Pius XI. According to custom all the ladies wore black with mantillas over their heads and the gentlemen evening dress. Cars drove us to the great bronze door, where we alighted and the Priest in charge showed our card of introduction to the Swiss Guard who allows you then to proceed through a long gallery at the end of which one mounts three flights of stairs to emerge upon the courtyard of St. Damians. Here Gendarmes scrutinise the card again to see whether the number of persons correspond with the number on the card and finally allow you to mount the papal stairs where yet another Gendarme stands on guard, after which two more flights of stairs brings you to the "Sala Clementina" named by Pope Clementine VIII., 1592—1605. Here we met a picket of Swiss Guards lined up to give a fanfare to a Court dignitary who happened to be passing. In this room we were received by a Sediario, dressed in red plush who took us to the Dean of the Hall, who in turn ushered our party into the Hall of Benedictions, where we waited for a bell to ring warning us that the preceding audience was over. Thereupon the Pope enters and everybody kneels. His Holiness walks round to each person and gives his blessing. As he does so, he stretches forth his hand for you to kiss his ring. After that he bestows his blessing on all present and their friends and relatives.

After the audience was over we were shown over many of the famous rooms and courtyards of the Vatican and finally a photograph was taken of our party. Sunday was another free day. On Monday we visited the Vatican galleries and museum, a most interesting event, requiring, in reality, some six months for a proper appreciation of the manifold treasures and works of art preserved there.

In the Vatican City, Vatican postage stamps can be bought for use in the sacred environment only and, of course, posted when there. During our stay in Rome we visited the famous catacombs of St. Agnes and others. Upon entering, one receives a taper for the purpose of lighting one on the way. A guide is provided, who describes the meaning of the various signs and inscriptions and takes the opportunity of recommending everybody to keep with the party, for cases were known of visitors being entirely lost, owing to the common habit of loitering and not found until their dead bodies were discovered. Needless to remark that after hearing this solemn recital from our guide, we kept well together!

Perhaps few people are aware of the fact that the Pope, as owner of all these galleries, is a millionaire, and such is the enormous value placed on the treasures, that it has been found impossible to cover them by insurance, as no insurance company will accept the risk.

We were indeed very sad when leaving Rome on Tuesday, December 30th, but our itinerary was far from exhausted and we were entrained for the beautiful city of Florence—"Firenze" in the vernacular, commencing our return journey, this time in a northerly direction, i.e., a different route to the outward journey. At 4 p.m. cars took us to the Hotel Esperia. It was raining in torrents so very little sightseeing could be done and even the next morning, being still wet and cold, we were taken under cover to the galleries and shown the world famous pictures and jewels of the celebrated Medicis family, old masterpieces dating away back to 1200, 1400, 1500 and 1600, by the artists of the periods, including Michael Angelo, Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, some painted on wood instead of canvas.

This being New Year's Eve we were invited to stay up to see the old year out and the new year in. To our surprise, the waiters prepared little tables covered with dainty cloths and champagne glasses, etc., brought several Christmas puddings, all alight, and proceeded to

serve everyone with ample portions accompanied with champagne. It was a surprise feast by the Director. The next day we travelled to Milan arriving at about 7 p.m. at Bertolini's Hotel just in time for dinner (it will be observed that our party missed nothing in the way of eating and drinking). Friday was given up to sight-seeing including the famous Milan Cathedral, a wonderful Gothic pile with an enormous bronze door. Leaving Milan we passed along a mountain, circling round constantly until we reached the summit, then on to Turin for luncheon at the Railway Buffet, and about two hours for a general survey before entraining at 3.10 p.m. on Saturday for a long journey through the night. Here the scenery is glorious, mountains, snow all the time, through the famous St. Denis tunnel which took seven years to build and so on and on until we reached Paris at 6 a.m. on Sunday. Breakfast at the station and then away for Boulogne and another pleasant Channel crossing to dear old England after one of the most interesting holidays of my life.

In conclusion, I hope my imperfect recital of great events may serve to induce others to take a similar Christmas holiday. I wish devoutly that everybody could see what I have seen, and I hope to go to Rome again some day!

MARY TYLER.

CORRESPONDENCE.

From Mrs. Amy E. Killin, c/o Goods Office, Umtali, S. Rhodesia.

Having just come across my last year's membership card, reminded me it is time I sent my subscription (6s. herewith). I do appreciate the Gazette, without it those 2½ years in France would seem like a dream, Waacs are so few and far between in this country.

We have high hopes of a trip home early in 1933; it is five years now since we came back. There's no place like the Old Country at Christmas time. It's too hot to do justice to the eats here and my kiddies are longing to see some snow.

A young lady the other day said she would "never have dreamt I had been in the army." I am still wondering whether that was a compliment to my "youthful appearance" or whether she had doubted my pluck. I wouldn't have missed that experience for anything, and it's nice to think of old friends—**Scottie, Olive Jessie, Puddles, May Mussel** (that was)—in fact all Henriville Camp. We should be lost without the O.C.A.

A Happy and Prosperous New Year to the O.C.A., and the leading lights who carry the burden.

From Mrs. F. R. Collingwood (Freddie Eaton), "Haslemere," Norfolk Place, Durban North, Natal, S. Africa.

I have to thank you for your letter of the beginning of the year. We have been living at 31 Grosvenor Crescent for just over twelve months, but now our new house is finished and we go into it next week-end. You will note new address at head of this letter.

Having quite recovered from my operation of last year and feeling A1. My mother, from Witney, Oxon., is staying 12 months with me, returning early in April next year, as far as we can see.

I wish I could see news sometimes of Unit I., Wimereux. I am especially worried about "Little Watty," as she used to write me pretty regularly but hasn't written now for 18 months or so. Is she still a member? She used always to attend Buckingham Gate Club.

I suppose there are no new members in the vicinity? There is a dearth of Waacs in South Africa evidently.

From Miss Nan Coulter, 756 N. Sunset Block, Temple City, California, U.S.A.

I have been wondering if there are any ex-Q.M.A.A.C. in Los Angeles, Hollywood, or San Francisco, or in California State at all. I was a member of the Glasgow Club for many years, but owing to severe illness at home I had to give up the meetings and lost touch with the club, but I wrote and had my letter returned so I suppose they must be at a new address now. I have just recently come out here and as I travel about quite a bit I would just love to visit some of the old girls if there are any of them round about me. I have a lovely ranch here and I think this a most beautiful place to live.

I met Miss Ireland while I was visiting the London Club one year when I was there on holiday, but I don't know who is who now in the clubs.

If Miss Gilchrist is still secretary of the Glasgow Club I hope you will let her know first time you write that I'm still a keen "Old Comrade."

Mrs. Minnie Hughes (Gray), 167 Malefant Street, Cardiff, writes:—

I am so glad that there was no need to get the "wind up" over the "Extraordinary meeting," and that we are still able to carry on. I'm afraid I'm not much help as I am married and have three boys to bring up, but I look forward to and devour the Gazette. Long may it live.

Will you please remember me to Hetty MacSween and Mabel Machin (nee Price) and any others of Unit II., Wimereux, who may remember me.

BIRTHS.

Evans.—At Whangarie, North Auckland, New Zealand, on November 5th, 1931, to Mr. and Mrs. Evans (nee Pilcher-Clayton), a son—Donald Trevor.

Whyte.—On January 6th, 1932, at 299 Mosspace Drive, Glasgow, S.W.2, to Mr. and Mrs. Whyte (late F/w D. Smith, Queen Elizabeth Camp, Vendroux)—a son.

DEATH.

Silk.—On January 7th, 1932, at 2127 West Sixth Avenue, Vancouver, British Columbia, Mary Silk, 8814, worker, late of Connaught Club, Sydenham, and Caterick Camp, Yorks, aged 47. Buried January 9th, in the Returned Soldiers' Plot, Mountain View Cemetery, Vancouver.

ADVERTISEMENTS

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

Devon.—Comfortably furnished rooms. Every convenience with attendance; facing South. Five minutes walk from sea.—Apply Mrs. Waite, 1 Major Terrace, Seaton, Devon.

George IV. Hotel, Gt. Amwell, Ware, Herts. Telephone: Stanstead Abbots 39. A beautiful spot for a quiet country holiday. Saturday to Monday, 15s. Other terms on application. Teas, luncheons. Parties catered for by arrangement. Combine a ramble with your general meeting and come here for tea. Club room accommodates 50.—A. G. Brown and A. Edwards (Camp 1, Etaples).

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.

Ann Wilkinson, 159 Ebury Street, Victoria, S.W.1, ex-W.A.A.C., has opened at the above address. Knitting wools, silks, art needlework lingerie, hosiery, children's frocks and woollies; maids' uniforms ready made and made to measure.—C. Wilkinson, Garrison Headquarters, Felixstowe.

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., 4 East Avenue, Bournemouth.	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 E. M. Phillpot, 14 Florence Park, Redland, Bristol.	No permanent room fixed.	Not fixed.
Cheltenham.	Mrs. Mann, 84B High Street, Cheltenham, Gloucester.	Not fixed.	Not fixed.
Exeter.	Mrs. Vicary, The Belvedere. Powderham, near Exeter.	16 Dix Field, Exeter.	First Thursday of the month at 3.30 p.m.
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.	Mrs. O'Meara, Ard-Muire, Baily, Co. Dublin.		Not fixed.
Leeds.	Miss E. Mair, 33 Victoria Terrace, Belle Vue Road, Leeds. Benevolent Sec.: Miss A. Annikin, 2 Hollin Park View, Roundhay, Leeds, Yorks.	British Legion (Women's Section) Rooms, 14 Hanover Square.	First Wednesday in the month, 7.30 p.m.
Liverpool.	Miss F. M. Bragg, 59 Victoria Road, Tue Brook, Liverpool.	30 Bluecoat Chambers, School Lane.	Alternate 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.	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.	Miss Aldred, 227 Oldham Road, Newton Heath, Manchester.	The Continental Cafe, 14 Oxford Street, Manchester.	Every Friday, 7—10.30 p.m.
Newcastle-on-Tyne.	Miss Margaret Moyes, 1A Eslington Terrace, Jesmond, Newcastle. Benevolent Sec., Miss L. M. Floyd, 13 Beacon Street, Low Fell, Gateshead	No permanent room fixed. Interviews at British Legion, N.E. Area Offices, 10 Leazes Terrace, Newcastle.	Members notified individually.
Norfolk.	Mrs. L. W. Chilvers, 32 Grove Road, Norwich.	No permanent room fixed.	Monthly. Members notified individually.
North Staffs.	Mrs. E. Stretton 10 Sparrow Terrace, Porthill, Stoke-on-Trent.		
Oxford.	Mrs. Grundy, Woodside Cottage, Windsor Forest.	No permanent room fixed	Members notified individually.
Notts.	Mrs. Skellington, 94 Shakespeare Street, Nottingham.	Meldrum's Cafe, Lister Gate.	First Wednesday in the month, 7-9.30
Plymouth.	Mrs. O. Foster, 2 Notte Street, Plymouth.		
Cardiff. and S. Wales.	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. Houchen, Sunny Ridge, Rotherfield, Kent.		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