

MARCH
APRIL } 1942

Old Comrades



Association

GAZETTE

GENERAL SECRETARY: Mrs. Johnston, Q.M.A.A.C., O.C.A., 82, Lancaster Gate, London, W.2.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

All contributions for the Gazette should reach the Editor, Q.M.A.A.C., O.C.A. Gazette, 82 Lancaster Gate, London, W.2. **not later than the 21st of the following months:- January, March, May, July, September and November.**

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28th, 1942

The Twenty-second Annual General Meeting of the Association was held at 5, Buckingham Gate, London, S.W.1, at the hour of 3 p.m., with Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan, Chairman of Council, in the Chair.

ABSENCE of the PRESIDENT. The Chairman expressed the deep regret of the President, Dame Florence Simpson, who was unable to be present owing to illness.

The new VICE-PRESIDENT. The Chairman said it was a great pleasure to have with us our new Vice-President Chief Controller Jean Knox. A very hearty and spontaneous welcome was given to Chief Controller Knox.

Minutes.

The Minutes of the Twenty-first Annual General Meeting, having been published in the Gazette of March-April, 1941, were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

Business Arising.

The General Secretary reported that she had written, as instructed, to Mrs. Garrard, expressing the thanks and sincere appreciation of the Meeting for all the work she had done during the past fourteen years as Editor of the Gazette.

Report of the Council.

The report of the Council (copy attached) was read by Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan, Chairman of Council, and adopted.

Report of the Hon. Treasurer

The Treasurer's Report (copy attached) and Balance Sheet (copy attached) were read by Miss Billington, Hon. Treasurer, and adopted.

The Report showed that the adverse balance of £57 10s. 3d. of last year had been reduced to £29 9s. 9d., due to an increase in Life subscriptions of £52 10s. Nearly all being from members of the A.T.S.

The total membership of the O.C.A. is 1,068, a decrease of 45 since last year.

No Capitation fees had been received from BLACKPOOL, NEWCASTLE, PLYMOUTH, CARDIFF, HASTINGS and the Transvaal.

The Chairman deplored the decrease in membership and in the number of subscribers to the Gazette. She hoped that members would remind themselves and others how desirable it is that they should not let their subscriptions lapse.

Apologies for Absence.

The Routine business being concluded, the Chairman asked the General Secretary to read messages and greetings received from the following:—Chief Commander Cowper, Olive Longman, Subaltern Walker, Mrs. O'Meara, Subaltern Samuda, Mrs. Austin, Corporal Thorp, Sergt. Chambers, Hall (of Southborough), who sent a special message to Signals, two Vice-Presidents Miss Edith Thompson and Mrs. Pratt-Barlow, concluding with the appended letter from the President:—"I have been laid up with bronchitis and am still in bed. Will you give my warmest greetings to my Old Comrades on Saturday and express to them my feeling of disappointment and regret at being deprived of the pleasure of seeing them all. I had looked forward so much to this and to the tea-party after the Meeting. When the question of adding A.T.S. to the title of the O.C.A. comes up, I should like them to know that I am entirely in favour, and of any other measure that will form a close link between the Old and the New. I hope it will also be remembered that Queen Mary expressed her approval of all that had been done to cement the bond of comradeship."

Title of the Association.

The Meeting then considered Item 5 on the Agenda, the addition of the words "and Auxiliary Territorial Service" after the word Corps and before the word Old in the title of the Association.

A member stated that as the number of A.T.S. members was small there was no need to change the name.

The Chairman reminded the Meeting that, though Q.M.A.A.C. numbered some 57,000, less than 2,000 had joined the O.C.A. Members of the A.T.S., in the midst of their work, could not be expected to give as much time as they might wish to the O.C.A.

Simons (London) considered it the natural sequence that the name of the O.C.A. should have the addition as membership is open to the Auxiliary Territorial Service.

Mrs. Samuel (Bournemouth) agreed.

Trotter (Bournemouth) stated that Bournemouth Branch was in favour of the addition.

After a full discussion the Resolution was put to the Meeting:—

"That the words 'and Auxiliary Territorial Service' be added after the word Corps and before the word Old in the title of this Association."

By a show of hands the Meeting, with one exception, voted in-favour of the Resolution.

The Chairman congratulated the Meeting on a good piece of work and said how very glad she was that the Resolution should have been passed with practical unanimity. The change had been made in three steps, first membership was opened to ex-A.T.S., then to serving members and the story was completed by adding their name.

Chief Controller Knox expressed her pleasure and her sincere appreciation of the generosity of the O.C.A. in opening it membership to the A.T.S. and hoped that they would be worthy successors of Q.M.A.A.C. The Chairman pointed out that Chief Controller Knox had been one of the first to join the O.C.A. as a Life member.

Life Membership Subscriptions.

Haines, Secretary London Branch, stated that after ten years one payment was received by Branches from the Hon. Treasurer of the O.C.A. in respect of Life members. London Branch had 211 Life members and the capitation fees were only received for 37 of these members. She wished to point out the great disadvantage a Branch suffers when it has a large number of Life members who joined 10 or more years ago. If Life members were still accepted on the present basis, this big financial problem would become more acute as the years went on. She reminded the Meeting that a Branch had to meet the cost of postage, printing, stationery, etc., for Life members for whom capitation was no longer received. Martin (London) suggested that Life members of ten or more years standing should make a donation each year. She considered the suggested subscription of £3 was too big.

The Chairman explained that the sum of £3 had been put in by Council with the view of getting a concrete proposal from the Meeting.

Ireland (London) stated that the original Life subscription of 25s. had been fixed as it was thought that 10 years would be the probable life of the O.C.A. She hoped that Chief Controller Knox would not think that they were trying to fleece the A.T.S. but as members of that Service were likely to live for 50 years or more it would also prove beneficial to them.

After full discussion and Amendment "That the Life subscription be increased to £2 10s." was moved by Miss M. Slee, seconded by Miss Hatfield and carried. It was agreed that the words £3 be deleted and replaced by £2 10s.

The Resolution "That the Life subscription be increased to £2 10s." was put to the Meeting and carried. 43 in favour, 4 against.

Proposal from Edinburgh Branch.

Item 7 on the Agenda, with regard to some special commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the Corps, was considered.

The Chairman pointed out that the date of the formation of the Corps was early in February, 1917, thus was already past.

Mrs. Samuel (Bournemouth) asked if Edinburgh was wishing to have some form of jollification or did they wish a subscription to a war charity or some such object. Miss Davy stated that the idea had been a social function.

Trotter (Bournemouth) said that Bournemouth was not in favour of any social gathering.

Ireland (London) suggested that funds might be raised to buy a Bren Gun, Tommy Gun, or Airman's outfit. These might come within our means.

This proposal received general approval and was referred to Council.

Change in the New Title

Mrs. Powell (London) moved that the word "Old" be deleted from the title of the O.C.A. This was seconded by M. Slee (London).

As this Motion was not on the Agenda, the Chairman asked the Meeting if they were willing that it should be dealt with. Permission was given, nem. con.

After discussion the Resolution was put:—"That the word Old be deleted from the title of the Association." This was carried by 28 votes, 42 in favour, 14 against.

Election of Representatives on Council.

The General Secretary read the list of Representatives nominated by Branches and the following were duly elected:—

Birmingham, Mrs. Powell; **Brighton**, Miss Turner; **Bristol**, Miss Pratt; **Edinburgh and E. Scotland**, Miss Davy; **Glasgow and W. Scotland**, Mrs. Garrard; **Headquarters**, Miss Billington, Mrs. Johnston, Mrs. Pratt-Barlow; **London**, Miss Haines, Miss Binks, Mrs. Eager, Miss Saunders, Subaltern Billbrough; **Norfolk**, Miss R. Batty; **Oxford**, Junior Commander Grundy.

Election of Hon. Treasurer

It was moved from the Chair that Miss Billington be re-elected Hon. Treasurer. This was carried by acclamation.

Other Business. A.T.S. Benevolent Fund

The General Secretary read the first Report of the A.T.S. Benevolent Fund which had been received from ex-Chief Commander Lady Apsley, Hon. Secretary of the Fund. The Chairman stated that it was a very good report, she felt sure that members would be interested in it.

New Year Message from H.R.H. the Princess Royal

The Chairman informed the Meeting that the original Letter of Greeting from The Princess Royal was on view as members would like to see it.

The Meeting then closed.

REPORT OF COUNCIL, 1942.

Naturally enough, the year, from the O.C.A. standpoint, has been a quiet one. You will remember the important step taken at last year's Annual General Meeting when MEMBERSHIP of the O.C.A. was opened to serving members of the A.T.S. Several life and annual members joined. There was, indeed, great competition among the young officers as to who should be the first life member. During the summer The Princess Royal applied for life membership and soon after your Council, at the suggestion of the President, invited her to become our Honorary President. I am proud to tell you that she has accepted. All of us, both Waacs and Ats, welcome her most cordially for herself, for her own great qualities and outstanding devotion to duty. It is a special pleasure to members of Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps that the daughter of our Commander-in-Chief should be among us, and some of us remember her visit as a young V.A.D. member to the Waacs in France. Members of the A.T.S. too are glad to think that one of their own officers shares the Presidency of the O.C.A. At about the time that she became a member the Princess Royal assumed office as the first Controller-Commandant of the Auxiliary Territorial Service, a post which corresponds to that of Colonel-Commandant in, for instance, the Artillery or the Royal Engineers. Last summer also Chief Controller Knox was invited to become a Vice-President and accepted. I am glad to be able to report that the Benevolent Fund, initiated for the A.T.S., is making good progress under the secretaryship of Lady Apsley, who has become another of our life members.

The BRANCHES have not found it easy to arrange meetings though most of them have been able to hold some reunions during the summer months. The branches in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide have all kept in touch with the General Secretary. Their members are working hard for the troops and have sent many parcels of comforts to this country. The Secretaries of Northern Ireland, Tees-Side and Oxford are all serving.

THE SERVICE WOMEN'S BENEVOLENT FUND has had fewer applications even than last year, 22 in all and an expenditure of £143. A self-propelling chair was provided for a member, who though rheumatism prevents her walking, is enabled to earn her living as a cook and to do the household shopping in her chair. The British Legion helped with this and also with the fees which enabled a member to spend 6 months in a convalescent home. She had served in the A.T.S. as well as in Q.M.A.A.C. The six months has restored her to health and she is now in a Government job. There have been grants for spectacles, dentures, surgical boots and extra nourishment. Help with the storage of furniture was given in one especially hard case of air raid damage. It is particularly pleasant to report that three of the members who have been helped have made donations to the Fund. During the past year there has been but one

application for a parcel from the CLOTHING CUPBOARD. It was, therefore, agreed to send the beautiful woollies rescued from Chesham Place to Miss Bertrand at the Albany Institute, Deptford. They have been most thankfully accepted. It is long since Miss Bertrand has seen such lovely wool or such good knitting.

The usual ARMISTICE DAY wreath in the form of our Badge was ordered from the Poppy Factory at Richmond and laid on the Cenotaph by Miss Haines and Miss Rogers.

At the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING on the 22nd February, 1941, 94 members were present, and 92 at the tea which followed, a number were in the uniform of one or other of the Services.

There are two items of news which I think are sufficiently important and sufficiently relevant to be reported to this Meeting. The first concerns our descendant, the Auxiliary Territorial Service. Last June all ranks were included as part of the ARMED FORCES OF THE CROWN, the other ranks, who have always had military badges, were given military titles; the officers were granted King's Commissions and authorised to wear military badges. This is the natural outcome of the development which began when the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps was formed in 1917. It ought to have happened before we were dispersed, but it is largely due to our service in a previous war that it has happened now. Let us be glad and proud that it has come to our successors. I think the conscription of women is also a big step. As citizens it is our right to serve, though some of us, alas, are too old to be called up.

This brings me to my second piece of news. You all know something about the HOME GUARD. Essentially these are men in civilian employment, who are either over military age, under military age or reserved. In their free time they train for LOCAL DEFENCE. Part of their value is their intimate knowledge of their own locality. They are part time, unpaid. They live at home, but if mustered may have to be fed.

To any woman who has served it will be obvious that, in such a Force there are jobs for women, jobs on which it is wasteful to employ a potential fighting man. If there is invasion not only clerks will be needed but messengers, on foot and on bicycles, drivers, telephone orderlies, stretcher bearers, cooks, storewomen, armourers. At present there is no authority to use women except as civilian helpers, which we all know is not an effective arrangement. Those of us who have been working for the Home Guard are convinced that the right answer is not the formation of a new service but the enrolment of women IN the Home Guard itself for appropriate duties. A memorial to this effect has been addressed to the Secretary of State for War signed by many well known names. Many members of Parliament are interested. One of them, Dr. Edith Summerskill, has formed a training organization, Women's Home Defence. There are already some 50 local units, many in London. They offer their services to the Home Guard. They also learn to shoot. Not that they expect to be armed, but they would hate to see a Tommy gun lying about unused if the Germans were advancing.

I commend this organization to you. I know several ex-Service women are in it already, I hope more will be. There is room in it for all who are able to spare some hours a week for voluntary services. Let us be prepared to give all we can.

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER, 1941.

I am pleased to report that the Expenditure shown on the Balance Sheet, exceeds the Income by only £29 9s. 7d., as against £57 10s. 3d. for 1940, this is accounted for by the fact that our total Income for 1941 is £124 8s. 10d., as against £94 3s. 3d. in 1940, due to the increase in Life subscriptions of £52 10s. The total Expenditure is £2 5s. 11d. more, but we now have to pay for the telephone, the account for which was £3 2s. 10d. Although the reserve for Audit fee is shown on the Balance Sheet as £8 8s. the Auditor has consented to do the auditing for £6 6s.

We should like to express sincere appreciation to those members who have subscribed to the Augmentation of Funds, although no reminders have been sent out this year, they have nobly sent in their donations.

The total membership for the year is 1,068, as against 1,113 in 1940, a decrease of 45. During the year 90 members of the A.T.S. have joined the O.C.A. as annual members, and 33 as Life members, making a total as under:—

Serving A.T.S. annual members	90
Serving A.T.S. Life members	33
Ex-A.T.S. annual members	2
Ex-A.T.S. Life members	2
Q.M.A.A.C. annual and Life members	941
	1,068

During the year 16 new Q.M.A.A.C. have joined the O.C.A. and 47 old members have rejoined. The strength of the respective Branches is as under:—

Branch	Annual	Life	Total
Adelaide	12	1	13
Birmingham	17	3	20
Blackpool	—	—	—
Bournemouth	6	8	14
Bradford	4	—	4
Brighton	21	9	30
Bristol	15	8	23
Cheltenham	3	5	8
Edinburgh	46	27	73
Glasgow	24	9	33
Headquarters	87	190	277
Eire	13	6	19
Leeds	12	15	27
Liverpool	12	6	18
London	177	211	388
Manchester	23	14	37
Newcastle	—	2	2
Norfolk	19	1	20
Northern Ireland	1	3	4
Nottingham	1	1	2
North Staffs	9	—	9
Oxford	19	9	28
Plymouth	—	2	2
South Wales and Cardiff	—	4	4
St. Leonards and Hastings	—	4	4
Tees-Side	9	1	10
Transvaal	—	1	1
	530	540	1,070
Grand Total			1,070
Less two members belonging to two Branches			3
			1,068

No Capitation fees have been received from Blackpool, Newcastle, Plymouth, Cardiff, Hastings and the Transvaal.

Gazette Fund.

The expenditure exceeds the Income by £12 19s. 5d., owing to the increased cost of paper and printing. In 1940 the expenditure was £38 4s., in 1941 it was £66 11s. 6d. The receipts are £3 11s. 1d. less than 1940. There are only 290 subscribers to the Gazette out of a membership of 1,056, if only more members would take the Gazette, for as things are at present the Gazette does not pay for itself. Before the War we paid £7 8s. for 600 copies of an 8 page Gazette, now we pay £9 12s. for 350 copies of an 8 page Gazette, which we sell at 7d., but the printing costs roughly 6½d., and postage 1d., making the cost for each copy 7½d., so we lose a ½ on each copy, if there were more subscribers and we could buy 400 copies, the charge for printing would remain the same, and we should make a profit on each copy of ¼d.

During the year 1941 new and lapsed subscribers took the Gazette numbering 49, even so the number is very small.

H. M. BILLINGTON, Hon. Treasurer.

HEADQUARTERS REPORT FOR FEBRUARY AND MARCH, 1942.

It is very fortunate that there is very little to report as the Annual General Meeting, with its Minutes, Reports and so on, will more than fill the pages of the Gazette. There is, however, one very delightful piece of news which will make every Comrade, old and new, tremendously proud and pleased. Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal, Controller-Commandant of the A.T.S. and the Hon. President of Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps and Auxiliary Territorial Service Comrades Association, has been graciously pleased to honour the Association by presenting a most charming photograph of herself in uniform, to grace the Headquarters Office. It is hoped that any Comrade who finds herself in London will come to see it and also please the General Secretary by lunching with her.

It is possible that the severe weather has kept visitors away from the office but it has been a pleasure to see Miss Woolven, of the Service Women's Benevolent Fund, Miss Hodges, Mrs. Allen, who was Forewoman Burden, and Subaltern Bilbrough.

The date of the next COUNCIL MEETING has been fixed for MONDAY, 27th APRIL, 1942, at 6.15 p.m., at 5, BUCKINGHAM GATE, S.W.1, as usual.

BRANCH REPORTS

Norfolk

As rather a stranger to the meetings of recent months, owing to being so very busy, I am pleased to deputise for our Secretary in supplying news of Norfolk Branch, as she unfortunately has her hands full with her mother, who recently had a fall.

I am sure the other members will feel very sorry about this; only recently Mrs. Stubbs came up the stairs very cheerfully to give us all New Year greetings, and now at present she is helpless.

The last meeting, in early February, was very successful, all within travelling distance attending, and enjoying the very liberal hospitality of Mrs. Chilvers. I really think I had better not say much about this for fear of the Food Ministry!!

The weather, of course, was very bitter, but our hostess had a beautiful fire, and after doing full justice to the gorgeous meal provided, we all gathered round, and drank a toast to Absent Friends. There were then many letters and cards to be passed round and members' doings (and trials!) discussed.

Mac was unable to come owing to the difficulty of catching her return train, but we were glad to know she has such a good and congenial post, although it means much hard work. All members were very delighted with the Christmas Greetings from Mrs. Rumbold and interested in the news of her two "children." Good luck to Barbara in the business world, and we also hope Hugh gets on in his new venture.

Poor Molly Howes! We are glad to know she is going on well after her operation. All wish to thank her for the snaps and letters which were passed round at the meeting.

Mrs. Baker (née Selvage) sends best wishes from Toronto. And we also had news of another Old Comrade—Miss Gore-Brown, who is now busy in North Wales with evacuee children.

One cannot see much daylight at present in this ghastly war, but we hope that at our next New Year meeting things may be brighter. Anyway, Norfolk Branch sends greetings to all Old Comrades, and says—cheerio.

E. HOWSON.

Nottingham

At the wish of Miss Osler, who was not able to be present at our last meeting, I am sending an account of the Nottingham activities.

The meetings held at the Club in Heathcote Street in February and March were very enjoyable. In February, we had the great pleasure of showing goodwill to one of our old standing members, Swinscoe (whom we must now remember to call Mrs. Roberts). But by whatever name she goes, there could have been no doubt of the good wishes expressed for her happiness, and the toast proposed by Mrs. Carter went with acclamation. I do not know why, on this occasion, the other single members should come under fire, but no doubt the opportunity given to the married (and shall I say more mature?) members was too good to miss.

It was decided then that we should make up a party to finish our March meeting at the Repertory Theatre, and arrangements were made for seats to be booked. After a very happy afternoon at the Club last Saturday eleven of us mustered for the show which went under the title of "The Scarlet Band," which was quite good and not so lurid as its title might suggest. We all expressed a wish that more of our gatherings should end in this way, as the longer hours of daylight allow our distant members to stay later in Nottingham.

Recently we have been thinking over ways in which the Club might extend its activities, and are hoping shortly to be given the name of a mine-sweeper to which we can send such things as books, cigarettes and minor comforts of that kind, to cheer the lives of the men on that particular job.

E. M. HASSELL.

Birmingham

On Saturday, January 11th, we had an outing to the pantomime at our one un-bombed theatre. We saw Jack Buchanan in "Cinderella" at the Theatre Royal. I expect we were keeping up our morale by attending the matinee there. Several people came who had not been at the meetings lately owing to war work and we made the most of the interval by exchanging news. Mrs. Hunt was a civilian again after three years in the A.T.S. Only ill-health brought about this exchange of uniform for civvies. Her big son came too. He is in a school-boys training scheme. Mrs. Katie Pearce's daughter is married to a soldier. Mrs. Jones' daughter has married an airman. Mrs. Glover's daughter is a Waaf. These wars get handed on from one generation to another! Mother was in one war, daughter in the war after.

Our meeting was on January 31st. A letter was read from Mrs. Cross. Her son is in the Navy. Sgt. Willetts had a few hours leave from her camp and was able to come and give us news of Marjorie Peers who now has her crown in the Balloon Barrage. We met again on Saturday, February 21st—a freezing day. However eight or nine people came and we talked about the forthcoming Annual General Meeting in London which Miss Dipple hoped to attend. Mrs. Mabel Pearce read us a letter she had received from Mrs. Fifield. We look forward to the time when she can attend the Club again.

E.A.R.

Ulford

We were very pleased to see a letter from Mrs. Cheesman in last month's Gazette, but wish she had put her address in the letter. Some of the members would then have written her. Mrs. Thomas has now received Mrs. Cheesman's address from Mrs. Johnston and thanks her very much for sending it.

We have not been having any meetings owing to the blitz and dark nights, but several of us have been meeting at the Club on Saturday afternoons, and thoroughly enjoyed them. After the Annual Meeting we thought it would be rather nice to try and arrange our meetings again now that the longer nights are coming, so we are writing all the members to see how many we can muster. Of course we all miss S/Major Druitt, but she very often writes and wishes us to continue the meetings. If any of our members see this letter and would write Mrs. Thomas or myself we shall be pleased to see them at her address 94, Whyteville Road, Forest Gate, E.7., on Wednesday, 15th April at 7 o'clock when we hope to be able to arrange meetings.

I know our members of London Branch who used to love to spend the week-end with us at Datchet will be sorry to hear that Miss Winifred Boar who so often came with us passed away during an operation. Winnie was always so cheerful and let us pull her leg terribly. We shall miss her, especially Druitt. A letter of sympathy was sent on behalf of the Branch to her sister and father.

PADDY PARKER.

London.

Firstly, I must apologise to my Branch for not sending a report to the last issue of the Gazette, I was on the sick list, so perhaps I may be forgiven this time. So now here is all the news.

The following telegram was sent to our President of the O.C.A., Dame Florence Simpson, "Season's Greetings from O.C.A. London Branch" and in reply Dame Florence wrote: "My most grateful thanks for the kind telegram of greeting and good wishes from my dear and faithful Old Comrades, London Branch, O.C.A., Q.M.A.A.C. I wish to all a Happy New Year and may it bring us Victory, Peace and Re-union." Signed Florence Simpson. A cablegram was sent to our President of London Branch, Miss Edith Thompson, as follows: "Greetings from London Branch." Greetings were also received from Mrs. Griffiths, Chairman of, and Committee of the Comforts Fund of the 10th Btn., The Middlesex Regt., and these were especially sent to the knitters of our Branch with all appreciation for the great work done, "with Christmas Greetings and every good wish for the New Year." Sgt. Giles, A.T.S., sent greetings and Eva Mason "All best wishes for 1942."

Re-unions are still being well attended and you will see from Miss Saunders report that the "Comforts Knitters" have done well.

Comforts Report.—Miss L. Saunders sends the following report: "A parcel was sent off to the Middlesex Regiment just before Christmas containing 76 beautifully knitted garments from our members. The Secretary had also sent another parcel direct containing 47 garments, making a grand total of 123. There would have been many more but we were held up for wool owing to the Personal Service League giving priority rights to knitters for Russia. Many apologies to those waiting for wool, but our loss was Russia's gain. Once more many thanks are due to our regular knitters whose work seems to get better and better every time, also to those who supply us with the money to purchase the wool. Our latest donations come from the Misses Ireland, Benson, Billington, Burnett, Tapscott, Burr and Mrs. Johnston, Rose Eager and Mrs. Courage. Mrs. Eager sold chocolates and raised another 7s. for the Fund. Gifts of knitted garments have been sent through the post by Sgt. Chambers, A.T.S., Kent; Miss Davy, Melton Mowbray; Miss Moyes, London and Miss Burr, London. These together with those collected at the club, bring our total sent to date, to the grand total of 517. In our

New Year's parcel we hope to include four pairs of socks which arrived too late for the Christmas parcel. Other knitters who have sent garments since Christmas are the Misses Burnett, Benson, Burr Behenna, Garratt, Pitt, Moyes, Rogers, Machin, Winks and Saunders. I am ordering a fresh parcel of wool for our next re-union, but as there is already 18 lbs. in circulation there should still be a number of garments to come in. The Treasurer has the Balance over from last year of £9 15s. 10d. but our two parcels since Christmas will swallow this amount and we shall soon have to be thinking of raising some more money. I hold £1 17s. 5d. being the amount of donations received to date this year. The Secretary has received a letter of appreciation from the Regiment, thanking us for our Christmas parcel and for our effort on their behalf. It is nice to know our "Comforts" are appreciated by our "Comrades" in the Army—be they young or old." Signed L. Saunders.

I should like to add to Miss Saunders report, that once again thanks to our members great effort, every man in the Battalion received a knitted garment at Christmas, and I have since met a number of these men who have personally thanked us for our work.

Re-Unions.—Future re-unions will be held as follows: Thursday, 2nd April, 6.30 p.m.; Saturday, 18th April at 2.30 p.m.; Thursday, 7th May; Saturday 23rd May; Thursday, 4th June and Saturday, 20th June. Thursday re-unions all at 6.30 p.m. and Saturdays at 2.30 p.m. A number of requests have been received asking for a social evening or function to be held, circumstances permitting, it is hoped to arrange a Beetle Drive for Thursday, June 4th, at 7 p.m. prompt, and and proceeds to be given to some war effort of the Branch. Suggestions will be welcomed at next re-union.

A few members have suggested that our Branch do knitting for the Merchant Navy, this was discussed at Committee and they feel that in view of having adopted a Regiment for this purpose, it would not be possible for our members to raise still further funds for another scheme, but it is recommended that those wishing to do other knitting should apply for wool through one of the organised associations now in existence who will supply wool free of charge to knitting parties, and to whom all finished garments must be returned. Miss Saunders does feel that she has as much as she can do just at present, with the collection, supply and distribution of the wool and dispatch of garments to the Regiment adopted. It does entail much work for her. Any member wishing to organise any further working parties for any war effort please forward suggestions, but they must be prepared to do the work in connexion with same.

News of Old Comrades.—The Secretary who was spending a few days at Overseas had the pleasure of meeting one of our Old Comrades Fordham who was on sick leave, she sends greetings to all friends. Sgt. Lily Ling was also on short leave and is looking very fit and doing good work with the A.T.S. somewhere in Surrey.

Date of next Committee Meeting.—The next committee will be held on Saturday, 23rd May, at 4.30 p.m. Will members please make a note of this date, no further notices will be sent. B. HAINES, Hon. Secretary.

Edinburgh

Miss E. E. Davidson

Original O.C.A. members of the Edinburgh Branch mourn the death of Miss Davidson, known to us as "Davey," who passed away peacefully (early in March of this year), after many years of ill-health which she faced with wonderful courage. She was one of the original members of the Branch and many of us met her for the first time at a luncheon at the Green Cafe, Edin-

burgh, where we foregathered to congratulate those who had that day received the Medal of the British Empire at Edinburgh Castle. As long as she was able, Davey was one of our most active members, taking part in all our Re-unions, serving on the Committee and helping in all Bazaars and Whist Drives, etc. She looked back with the greatest possible pride on her service at Pont de L'Arche and was never tired of talking of the old days when she was in the Corps. We must be thankful that she was able to remain in her own little home until the end and this was made possible by the great kindness of her friend and next door neighbour. Miss Finlay, M.B.E., Miss Mary Innes and Mrs. Beaton attended the funeral service at Edinburgh Crematorium and, at that service, her minister used the following words: "We thank Thee O Lord for the keenness and splendid spirit which prompted her to offer her services to her country."

AUXILIARY TERRITORIAL SERVICE

The following extract from "The Times" of 26th February, 1942, which we acknowledge with thanks will be of interest. Also we have to thank the "British Legion Journal" for other items of news about the A.T.S. which are given below.

STAFF SECRETARIES FOR THE ARMY

Relieving Commanders of Office Work

A plan to enable army commanders and senior staff officers to devote more time to outdoor military activities, and gradually to release junior staff officers for other duties will shortly be put into operation as an experiment, states the War Office.

Under the scheme army commanders and senior staff officers are to be provided with highly qualified secretaries trained in Army administration, to be known as "staff secretaries." They will undertake all the duties which would be expected of a secretary were the officer holding a position of equal importance in civil life, and so relieve such officers of a great deal of paper work and in the handling of day-to-day correspondence.

It is hoped that it will be possible to select staff secretaries from Service men and women who possess the necessary qualifications and whose professional training and experience are not at present being put to full account. Opportunity to become a staff secretary is open to all ranks up to captain, or the equivalent in the A.T.S., and selected candidates will attend a two months' course. Their rank will vary from warrant officer to captain, or the A.T.S. equivalent.

A.T.S. CRITICS—A REPLY

Our girls in uniform have been a good deal in the public eye, and the Legion is giving attention both to their welfare and their future.

Many have their names on branch comforts fund lists; others are welcome guests when off duty in Legion homes; a growing number, daughters or sisters of ex-Service men, have joined the Women's Section, and after the war they will be eligible as ex-Service women to join the Legion on the same terms as men.

Already the Legion has helped some who have been invalided out of the Services to start in civil life again, helped them to get a proper clothing outfit for their new jobs, and if friendless, found cottage homes for them in suitable surroundings.

As Smart as the Men

In the last six months Major Brunel Cohen, liaison officer, London District Welfare Branch and A.T.S., and National Treasurer of the Legion, has visited over fifty units or detachments as far apart as Northampton, Weyborne, Shoburness and, of course, London, and he declares they are a very fine body of women.

In reply to an inquiry by the "Journal," Major Cohen said that generally speaking the girls are keen and well-disciplined, particularly those in mixed batteries, who seem quite as smart as the men.

All the officers, without exception, he said, are keen on their job, taking care of both the moral welfare and bodily comfort of the girls under their command.

Their Living Conditions

"What about their living conditions?" asked the "Journal."

"Very fair on the whole, though if Welfare had more money at its disposal more could be spent with advantage on the brightening up of recreation and barrack rooms; nevertheless, a good deal has been done in supplying such things as arm chairs, settees, bedmats, pictures, wireless sets, etc."

"Many articles of furniture should be supplied by Army Ordnance but, although A.O. admits liability, owing to shortage of material and the lack of labour, these articles very often take some time in materialising."

Asked how he thought the A.T.S. compared with the W.A.A.F.'s and W.R.E.N.'s, Major Cohen replied that, although his experience had only been with the A.T.S., he was confident that the other two bodies would have to be exceptionally good to beat the A.T.S. in efficiency.

Press Attacks

"You have seen the statements made in the House and the Press as to conditions in the A.T.S.?" we inquired.

"Yes," replied Major Cohen, "and I think that the many innuendoes made against this very fine body of women are most disgraceful. They have always suffered from a bad Press, most undeservedly. Now this same Press is trying to make amends by praising the Service, but the result is not the same thing as if they had never been attacked."

"People love the old adage, 'There is no smoke without fire' (though, if you ever try to light a fire with damp wood you'll find there is) and, anyhow, if you knock a man down and give him a black eye and then apologise—he still has the black eye."

Away from Home

"The A.T.S., like the other Services, is a loyal and efficient force living under unaccustomed conditions, away from home and from home comforts. Its members make the best of living under a discipline to which they are not used and willingly submit to discomforts which they look upon as unavoidable in war-time."

"So far from damning with faint praise, we should never tire of admiring and thanking such women."

"Whereas men in the Army want socks and fags, when it comes to girls in the A.T.S. they want electric hair-dryers and bright-coloured furnishings," said Lady Apsley in a talk to the Women's Section delegates at a round-table conference with war work chiefs in London.

Lady Apsley is hon. secretary of the benevolent fund of the Auxiliary Territorial Service, besides being a welfare officer for the girls in khaki and a vice-president of the Legion Women's Section.

Thirty per cent. of the girls, she said, take to Army life like a duck takes to water, fifty per cent. adapt themselves for the duration, and twenty per cent. are difficult.

Settling Down

It is these last, who take time to settle down and are homesick, whom the women of the Legion could help by friendly talks and advice, by asking them into their homes and by taking an interest in their everyday problems.

We quote some of Lady Apsley's points:

Originally designed for 30,000 women, the A.T.S. needed at least 350,000 after the fall of France left us to face totalitarian war alone.

Emphatically the A.T.S. is not a women's army; it is as much a part of the British Army as the Royal Engineers or Royal Corps of Signals.

Every A.T.S. girl, no matter what she is doing or where she is, has an officer somewhere who is responsible for her.

If she has a complaint, she has a perfect right to put it in writing through the proper channels. If you hear complaints, by outside people, verify the facts, getting the date, time, name, company, place, etc., if you can, and contact her officer.

Better Conditions

Ex-Service women can help with whist drives, finding billets, advising which church is the best to choose for a wedding, and in a thousand and one ways.

A great many of the earlier troubles arose from bad quarters, perhaps because the officer responsible seized an empty house and did not bother about such things as drains.

Many improvements have been made, largely through the fight put up by the British Legion. There is now better food, better clothing, better quarters, a better class of sick room orderly, and more is done to ensure the girls' comfort.

"Of course there are bad 'ATS,'" said Lady Apsley, whimsically. "I am not going to say there are not, but you cannot expect perfection in any cross-section of the community, whether they are ATS's or not."

NEWS OF OLD COMRADES

It is well that news of Old Comrades should begin with the following delightful announcement. The good wishes of all will go to **Barbara Haines**, so well-known to many of us, in her new found happiness. "The engagement is announced and the marriage will shortly take place between Major E. W. Mayhew, M.C., the Middlesex Regiment, only son of Mr. and Mrs. Mayhew of Streatham, and Barbara, daughter of the late Mr. Clement John Haines of Croydon and Market Drayton, Salop, and of Mrs. Moynihan of Croydon."

Mrs. L. M. WOOLLEY writes that her home which was much damaged in a raid has now been sufficiently repaired for her to return to it. She sends greetings and good wishes to all Old Comrades.

Mrs. C. E. PEACHEY, President of the Ex-Service Women's Club of New South Wales, sends news of the 21st Anniversary of the founding of the Club. Sixty members were present at the Annual Dinner with Dr. Mary Booth, the Hon. President, in the Chair, as Dr. Marjory Little was unfortunately unable to be present. The thrill of the evening was a cable from Miss Edith Thompson who is in South Africa. Even that distance did not prevent Miss Thompson remembering the 21st Anniversary of the Club. A great event in November was the opening of the Australian War Memorial at

Canberra when two of the Vice-Presidents, Miss E. Pace and Mrs. S. Briggs were present. Mrs. Peachey asks that a notice be put in the Gazette of the passing on of MYRTLE KIRKWOOD (née JAMES) who died in June, 1941. She had been ill for nearly two years with T.B. James went to France with the first batch of telegraphists from the Central Telegraph Office, London, and was stationed in Dieppe and Huchenville.

Mrs. GLISTER (Worker Smith of Audriucq) sends greetings to all who served with her in Audriucq.

Miss I. TURNER sends news of Mrs. HINDLEY (D. Wilkins) of Wimereux 3. She is in Kenya with her family where her husband is teaplanting. The boy is at school and her daughter has a Government job. Mrs. Hindley says that Kenya is a lovely place flowing with butter and cream. (I am sure that she only said that to make our mouths water!)

Mrs. MACK (M. O'NEILL, U.A. Wimereux 3) has left Assam as her husband has now retired and is running a Hotel in India.

Mrs. LEES, who served as Annie Amoss, a Forewoman in France, writes that her second son has lately gone out East. She works with the B.R.C.S. detachment which raised £11 for Mrs. Churchill's Red Cross for Russia Fund. We are sorry to learn that C. M. FORD has been ill and hope that she is now quite well again.

Mrs. TYSON who served as Mary DOWTHWAITE now lives in Cumberland. She has just joined the O.C.A. Her stations were Maresfield Park Camp and Bostall.

LUCY SAWKINS has not been too well of late but we hope she will feel better when the warmer weather comes. She wishes the O.C.A. every success.

A new member FRANCESCA E. V. NESPOLI has lately been discharged from the A.T.S. on account of a dislocated hip, has joined the O.C.A. She feels very proud wearing the O.C.A. badge and feels pleased "to belong somewhere again." She will be a member of Bristol Branch and Miss MOULD, the Secretary is going to get into touch with her and also with Junior Commander E. A. K. ABBOT, who served in the W.R.N.S. and the W.R.A.F. during the last war. She was unable to join either of those services this time but did succeed in joining the A.T.S. as a Volunteer, got her Commission and is now Recruiting Officer in Bath.

Mrs. RUBY MUNDY (née Fowler, 1546) writes to say how much the Gazette is appreciated by ex-Waacs in Canada. Her copy passes round to many others. She was so pleased to hear from "Billie" RUTHERFORD (now a Corporal in the W.A.A.F.) with a photo of herself and her husband, she also had letters from Mrs. HULSE and Miss DAVISON of South Australia. She sends good wishes to all Old Comrades.

Mrs. E. MILLS, Secretary of the Ex-Service Women's Club at Sydney writes on the 27th December, that Australia is very busy getting quite ready to face whatever may come. Her husband is still in Syria and her daughter is a nurse. Her son has volunteered for the Navy and if he leaves home she is going to try and get into the Army again (age permitting!) She is going to send us news later of the Women's Army. Some British Tommies from the Midlands were delighted to find that they were being waited on at The Buffet by ex-Service women of the last war. It was a great surprise to them.

Members who knew ELIZABETH SHERIDAN, who served as DEEGAN, will be sorry to learn that she died in Dublin in December last.

Errata.—It is regretted that the name of Pte. E. C. HUTCHISON was spelt incorrectly as Hutchinson in the last issue of the Gazette.

GLEANINGS

We all like news of Old Comrades and whilst I fear I am not the best person to supply it, being a little out of touch myself, I am sending such items as I have gathered, sometimes at second or even third hand, in the hope that others, better informed, may be induced to write and remedy the deficiencies.

Minnie Davis's retirement took place on March 2nd, her farewell function (which must have been a great ordeal under the circumstances) coinciding with her father's death. I was so sorry to have been unable to attend for I should like to know if anyone applied the quotation she always brings to my mind: "Age cannot wither her nor custom state her infinite variety." No retirement could dim the perennially fresh quality which I am hoping we shall now have more opportunity to enjoy.

Mabel Roach, Connie Smith and Muriel (Kit) Walsh, have all been promoted to 1st Class officers, Mabel's dating back to last autumn. She is still living with **Audrey Stansfield** who, I regret to say, has had a serious operation from which she is still recovering. Audrey always spent herself to the uttermost and the driving of that intense spirit was probably too much for the more frail body.

Rene Stephenson (Mrs. Wigelsworth) writes that she has lost her one "ewe lamb" to the Land Army and expresses her probable incredulity had anyone told her that her daughter would also be in uniform nearly a quarter of a century later.

Hilda Tonkin (Mrs. Wheelans) is still an "evacuee" with her husband's business in Leicester, leaving one of the two boys behind in London to complete school examinations I understand.

Gladys Hazeltine who struck out valiantly in leaving the service many years ago and settling in the Isle of Wight, is back in London and working in a local Government office. Mr. Morrison should know that "Hazel" has indeed "gone to it!"

Edie Wittering, Mabel Adlam, Nell Brock, Edie Birchenough and Elsie Cottingham are amongst those who, like myself, have left Exchange life on promotion to the Treasury Class some time ago. "Birch," who lost her mother about a year ago and is living "a deux" with her sister, is a frequent and welcome visitor to the joint ménage my sister and I set up after the passing of my own mother. A serene mind coupled with healthy living have perpetuated Birch's youthful roses to an extent which has to be seen to be believed.

I caught a glimpse of **Nell Garnham** at the A.G.M. She was medically retired many years ago but was as bright as ever and is, I believe, holding down a fairly strenuous job with the pluck and efficiency characteristic of the Old Comrade.

Meg Gay was also invalided out of the service only to find herself ambushed at Brighton by Cupid! (Mem: There seems to be something in this retirement business—must look into it!)

At the A.G.M. I also had a brief chat with **Mabel Millbank** and **Mabel Adlam**. Again there was no indication of the "years the locusts have eaten!" Are all Waacs Peter Pans? Incidentally, I persuaded them into a third share in the Gazette which I trust will become individual contributions next year.

A few months ago I ran, very surprisingly (for I had not realised she was in London), into **Millie Platt**,

and more surprisingly still, found she is in the India Office which actually adjoins the Foreign Office where I joined **M. C. Bartlett** in the early months of the war. "Barty" holds such an important position that she is always more or less "on tap" and is quite unable to get away for meetings. I feel she is marked out for a still more exalted post.

Occasional letters keep me at least in infrequent touch with **Mabel Cochran** and her inseparable, **Kitty Dalton**, now Mrs. Rogers. Mabel went up the promotion ladder some time ago and is now I believe, on some kind of travelling duty.

Bobbie Bates has a charming Surrey home and an equally charming husband. I am also in touch, though a bad correspondent, with **Molly Howes**, whose news from Kenya often appears in Norfolk's reports. Poor Molly has had many physical setbacks but was on the mend though more or less incapacitated with rheumatism when last I heard.

Wagstaffe, whom Etapleites will remember as their concert party "star" was, when last I heard of her, living in Bucks where alas, she lost her husband some few years ago. Theirs was such a rare devotion that I believe this was a shattering blow.

Miss W. M. Giles, not an O.C., but as Commandant of Woodside Convalescent Home, quite as known and loved, is now living in Winchester with her sister. At Christmas she wrote that she had been up to London for minor hospital treatment but says she is well and "busy." Those of us to whom she ministered so assiduously know she could never be anything else!

She is still in touch with **Dr. Nash**, who near Southampton must have had a trying time tending a delicate mother in the "blitz." I know that our A.A., **Miss Olive Betts** now Mrs. Newton, holds high command in the A.T.S. and that "Margaret Ann" is serving under her parent, but I have heard no more of Mrs. Newton for some time, much to my regret. (I wonder if she remembers apologising for giving me C.B.!) Golders Green Branch, and I personally, owe her a very great debt, for unending kindness and hospitality. What, by the way, has happened to all the Golders Greenites?

Bunny Aston was with her sister **Bet** at Carpenders Park when last I wrote. Where is Beebe?

Well, this is all my list but there are many gaps which I should like filled in. These names of the overseas girls spring to my mind: **ETAPLES, F/W Brown** and her friend **Teddy Edwards, Tom Allen and Tim Allen, Clarice Entwistle, Belle Innes, Cis Peters, Philpot, Tiny Marshall, our little Dot Stone, Drysdale, Mc Larty, Dauncey, Louie Izzard**. (These last two I know are married, but where!)

DANNES-CAMIERS girls. **Dipple, Daynes, Billy Whan**, (Perhaps Mrs. Ruby Fowler whose overseas letters I read with much interest, would send news of her Dannes comrades).

LE TOUQUET girls. **Bessie Hogarth** (Mrs. Taylor of Ilford Branch, but no longer in Ilford), **Bertha Jerrard and Harding**.

One's heart goes out to many Old Comrades who had made home in foreign lands and who may now be in grave danger and suffering agonies of apprehension over loved ones. May we soon have welcome news of their safety—and added reason for every Old Comrade to sit down and send the rest of us what news she has.

N.M.