



Q.M.A.A.C. and A.T.S.
Comrades Association
GAZETTE



GENERAL SECRETARY: Mrs. Johnston, Q.M.A.A.C. and A.T.S. 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. and A.T.S. 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.**

The Birthday of Her Majesty Queen Mary

We print below a copy of the letter sent to Her Majesty Queen Mary, Commandant-in-Chief, Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps, by Dame Florence Simpson, D.B.E., President of the Comrades Association, on the occasion of Her Majesty's Birthday on the 26th May, together with the most gracious reply received.

The continued interest of Her Majesty Queen Mary has been, and is, a great source of pride to those who had the honour of serving in the Corps which Her Majesty graciously honoured by giving it her name, and also to all those who have during these past years endeavoured to make the Comrades Association a living example of good comradeship. This ideal and inspiration, it is hoped, will continue in the future with the Auxiliary Territorial Service.

To The Lady-in-Waiting.

25th May, 1943.

Dear Madam,—Will you kindly convey to Her Majesty Queen Mary, on behalf of the members of Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps and Auxiliary Territorial Service Comrades Association, the expression of our humble duty and loyal greetings and good wishes on behalf of Her Majesty's Birthday.

I feel sure that Her Majesty, who has always shown such a sympathetic interest in the activities of the Comrades Association, will be pleased to know that over 2,500 serving members of the A.T.S. have joined the Comrades Association and that eight of their number are now serving on the Council.

Yours very truly,

FLORENCE SIMPSON.

President, Q.M.A.A.C. and A.T.S., Comrades Association.

To Dame Florence Simpson, D.B.E.

26th May, 1943.

Dear Dame Florence,—I am commanded by Queen Mary to thank you and the members of Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps and Auxiliary Territorial Service Comrades Association warmly for your kind thought and good wishes on the occasion of Her Majesty's birthday.

The Queen is touched by your continued remembrance of this anniversary, which owes its chief value to the loyalty and kindness which it evokes. Her Majesty never loses interest in the Comrades Association and is particularly pleased to hear that over 2,500 A.T.S. members have joined, no less than eight serving on the Council!

This splendid continuity seems to the Queen to be one of the happiest features of a fellowship that already has great traditions.

Yours sincerely,

CYNTHIA COLVILLE.

Headquarters Report for April and May

A meeting of Council was held on Wednesday, March 31st, when 14 members were present, with Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan in the chair. The Chairman welcomed Junior Commander E. Walker (Chester), R.S.M. A. Glass, Staff-Sergt. C. Kemp and Private J. K. P. Reynnders, who attended for the first time as representatives of the Active Service Branch. The other four representatives of the Branch, Chief Commander Lady Apsley (retired), Senior Commander Viscountess Swinton (retired), Chief Commander M. F. Patrick and Senior Commander B. Harvie-Anderson sent apologies for absence.

Miss Davy, Miss Ireland, Mrs. Powell, Miss Binks, Miss Turner, Mrs. Grundy, Junior Commander M. Bilbrough, Miss Slee (Hon. Treasurer) and Mrs. Johnston (General Secretary) were also present.

Mrs. Eager, Miss Batty and Miss Billington regretted that they were unable to attend the meeting.

The main business of the meeting was to deal with the investment of surplus funds, and a resolution was duly passed authorising the Honorary Treasurer to invest such moneys in Government securities.

The following dates were fixed for future dates of Council Meetings:—**Wednesday, July 28th; Wednesday, September 29th; and Wednesday, November 24th.**

Members of Council have been informed individually of these dates and it is hoped that this longer notice of future meetings will enable them to make arrangements to be present.

The General Secretary is pleased to report that Chief Controller J. M. Knox, C.B.E., Director of the A.T.S., has honoured the Headquarters Office by presenting a charming portrait of herself. This makes a delightful addition to the pictures we already have.

It has been a great pleasure to welcome Lady Swinton, Mrs. G. D. Hardy (Secretary, Edinburgh Branch), Sergt.-Major E. M. Watson, Miss E. E. Court and Private Mary Knaggs, who have found time to visit Headquarters.

On Wednesday, May 19th, the General Secretary had, by the kind invitation of Chief Commander D. K. Rollinson, the pleasure of speaking to Company Commanders and officers in charge of Companies of the 3rd London District Group at Group Headquarters. She was very glad to have this opportunity of explaining about the activities of the Comrades Association as well as the great need of building up the funds of the A.T.S. Benevolent Fund. This Fund was initiated by the Council of the C.A., but is run by an A.T.S. Committee, with Lady Apsley as Honorary Secretary.

A Gift from Canada

And what do you think it is? A CAKE. All in capitals, as it is quite the finest thing in cakes that has been seen in this country for many a long day! It smells delicious. In fact, the General Secretary, had she not been honest and kind-hearted, might have been tempted to purloin it when it arrived so carefully packed. A great temptation, valiantly withstood!

This cake has been sent from Vancouver by three ex-Q.M.A.A.C. members who served at Pont de l'Arche. Mrs. B. W. Parker, who served as Caroline Bott as cook, and who is the maker of the cake, Mrs. C. Belfield (Florence Holly, storewoman), and Mrs. F. Fenton (Jennie Evans, mechanic).

It is a fine fruit cake and weighs 3 lbs. 10 ozs.

Mrs. Parker writes: "I have been wondering for a long time how I'd like to do something to help bombed London and could not think what to do, when it suddenly dawned on me that I had a Christmas cake untouched, so decided on sending it along to you to be raffled amongst the old and new W.A.A.C., or however you think best. I had prepared it for icing but was advised not to have it done. I hope the cake arrives in good condition. I know whoever gets it will find it good; it was made last August."

In accordance with the wish of the senders it has been decided to raffle the cake, but, in order that all Branches can have an equal opportunity of winning it, it is suggested that EACH BRANCH (that wishes to participate) should have a raffle among its own members and then send the name of the WINNER of their raffle to Headquarters. In that way we shall have the names of the winners of all the Branch raffles, which will be then "put in the hat," and the first name drawn from the "hat" shall be the WINNER of the CAKE.

Now will Branch Secretaries please note these IMPORTANT DETAILS. The price of the tickets, 1s. each. Date of Draw, Saturday, 17th July. Place of Draw: 5, Buckingham Gate, London, S.W.1.

Will the Secretaries of Branches, which are participating in the raffle, please arrange for their own tickets, none are being issued from Headquarters. Ordinary slips of paper with name of the member and name of Branch should be sufficient.

When the Branch has drawn its own winner, please send the winning ticket to the General Secretary, Q.M.A.A.C. and A.T.S. C.A., 82, Lancaster Gate, London, W.2, NOT LATER THAN WEDNESDAY, 14th JULY. Please do not send to 5, Buckingham Gate.

It has been decided that the proceeds of the raffle shall be given to a Special Fund, known as the 1935 Fund, which is part of the Service Women's Benevolent Fund but which has a wider scope. The cash should be sent to the General Secretary at the same time as the Winning Ticket of the Branch. All details will be published in the July-August "Gazette." The Winner of the Cake will be notified personally, as well as the Secretary of the Branch to which she belongs.

A.T.S. Officers Selected by New Method

The A.T.S. has now adopted the new Army method of selecting officers, which has proved so successful in discovering latent powers of leadership. Instead of attending one short interview for questioning by senior officers the candidate for a commission now goes on a 48-hour course, at which discipline is relaxed, ranks are discarded, and she mixes freely with testing officers, including professional psychologists. She is tested on her practical ability to cope with problems, on her intelligence, and on her human sympathy and understanding of other women. Every private or n.c.o. has the right to ask her officer to be sent before the board. If she passes successfully she goes to the normal eight-week O.C.T.U. course.

With acknowledgments and thanks to The Times, of the 25th May.

May we send our best wishes to the first little "A.T.S.-let," of whom we have heard, the son of Chief Commander N. Bernays, who arrived last February.

Westminster Abbey Parade

Sunday, 2nd May, was very overclouded and although the weather tried to misbehave it did manage not to rain for the Church Parade to Westminster Abbey.

The five Groups fell-in in Eaton Place and numbered in all about 1,750 A.T.S.

At Eaton Place a Company had placed one of their houses at the disposal of the auxiliaries taking part in the parade, and they were able to leave their gas capes there and have a drink, soft drinks being provided by the respective companies for their own auxiliaries.

Tea was provided for officers at another house.

The parade was led by the Guards Band, and the A.T.S. Band was in the centre. Auxiliaries from the A.T.S. Provost were on duty with each Group.

The parade moved off soon after five o'clock, led by Chief Commander King-Farlow. Each Group was headed by a Senior Commander or Company Commander.

I hurried on to the Saluting base as soon as the parade moved off. The Salute was taken by Chief Controller Knox in Birdcage Walk, and very smart the auxiliaries looked.

I again saw them as they reached the Abbey. I had the pleasure of being with my C.O. and remarked that it made me feel very proud being in khaki again, and she agreed. It was the first Abbey parade in which she had not taken part, and was very envious of her Second-in-Command, who led our Group. I have only taken part in one parade, when Chief Controller Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan took the salute, and I remember feeling very glad then that I was allowed to serve again.

I had a very good seat in the Abbey, being between the Choir and the High Altar.

After the Service the Groups were taken by their Commanders to different places for dismissal. M.E.C.B.

The Future of the Women's Services

A most interesting Lecture was given on the 26th May, at Birkbeck College, by Chief Controller Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan, G.B.E., on "The Future of the Women's Services." She touched on past history when speaking of Florence Nightingale and the great work done for both Army and civil nursing; on to the last and present wars in which women have served and are serving with the Navy, Army and Air Force in "combatant" capacities. Dame Helen then gave an outline of the use which could be made of women in the future, and the necessary training in a form of Militia. Training in housecraft as well as in specialised trades now necessitated by the technical development of the Services. It is to be hoped that such training as envisaged by Dame Helen will be possible after the war is over. By this means women would be better fitted to serve the country both in peace and in war, should the latter disaster ever come again.

A good contingent of the A.T.S. was present, the majority being from the 3rd London District Group, commanded by Chief Commander D. K. Rollinson. In the audience were Air Chief Marshal J. Frefusis Forbes, W.A.A.F., Chief Commander D. Rollinson and many of her officers. Among the ex-Service women were Miss B. Ireland, Q.M.A.A.C., Miss W. Clark, Q.M.A.A.C., Mrs. A. E. B. Johnston, Q.M.A.A.C., and Miss E. Richards, W.R.A.F.

MARRIAGES

Our congratulations and best wishes go to Junior Commander Grizel Margaret Clerk Rattray, A.T.S., who was married to Mr. E. R. Warner, at All Saints' Cathedral, Cairo, on the 19th May, 1943.

Also to Subaltern Edith Barbara Swainson, A.T.S., whose wedding to Lt. Robert Nicholl Wilson, R.A., took place at the Priory Church, Lancaster, on the 22nd May, 1943.

Branch Reports

Ilford

Our April meeting was held at Mrs. Thomas's house, when we were honoured with a visit from Mrs. Hardy, of Edinburgh. We were very glad when the doctor ordered Mrs. Hardy to have a holiday, and as London is her native town, she came here for a rest and we were pleased that a meeting had been arranged. We were all very pleased to see Jerry and hope it will not be too long before we see her again. Our May meeting was at Leech's house at Newbury Park, when we were again honoured with the presence of Miss Hammon (otherwise Fatima). We had a very nice tea at both houses, and I am sure if anyone had looked in they would not have believed there was a war on. We all thank Fatima for helping to give us such a nice tea and I am sure we all did justice to the spread. Our next meeting will be at Fords, 27, Albert Road, Ilford, on Saturday, June 19th, when we hope Druitt might be our guest.

London Branch Gazette Report

MAY-JUNE, 1943

The outstanding feature of our reunions during the last few months was the arrival of Miss Edith Thompson, on leave for one month. A special reunion was arranged for the 25th March and a very good gathering met to give Miss Thompson a hearty welcome. Amongst those present were Dame Florence Simpson, Miss L. Davy, Miss B. Ireland, Mrs. Powell and many others.

It was good to meet again in such numbers, and Miss Thompson gave us her impressions of the South Africans and told of their wonderful kindness to the English children whom she had under her care out there.

She also told a number of amusing anecdotes concerning the children. By all accounts they are having a wonderful time, and Miss Thompson must find it a most interesting life and it must have been with very great pleasure that on her return to England she was able to meet some of the parents and able to convey to them personally the news of their children's welfare.

At the close of the evening, Miss Ireland thanked Miss Thompson for sparing an evening out of her very precious leave to spend it with London Branch, C.A., also expressing pleasure at the presence of the President of the C.A., Dame Florence Simpson.

Members had many questions to ask, and Miss Thompson was kept fully occupied, and it was an evening to be remembered.

Although nearly three years have elapsed since Miss Thompson departed from England, she did not look a day older; in fact, all thought she looked much younger and in excellent health.

REUNIONS have been fixed for June, July, August, September as follows:—

The first Thursday in the month at 6.30 p.m. and

The Third Saturday in the month at 2.30 p.m.

COMMITTEES.—The next Committee Meeting has been fixed for Saturday, 17th July, at 2.30 p.m.

SPECIAL EVENT.—A very special fruit cake has been sent from Canada to Mrs. Johnston, General Secretary, and it has been proposed that this should be raffled and the proceeds devoted to the 1935 Women's Benevolent Fund. All Branches are being invited to participate in the raffle. London Branch members are asked to show their appreciation of the gift in the usual manner, by their generous support, friends invited to join in.

Raffle tickets (London Branch) can be obtained at future reunions or by written application to the Hon. Secretary, Mrs. Mayhew, at 11, Denmark Avenue, Wimbledon, S.W.19. Tickets, 1s. each. Postal Orders made payable to L.B., Q.M.A.A.C., and crossed, must accompany application. Names and addresses should be clearly written and enclosed. To save unnecessary expense and correspondence, only applications for five or more tickets will be acknowledged unless a stamped addressed envelope is forwarded with enquiry. Final Draw will take place in London on Saturday, the 17th July, under the direction of the General Secretary, Mrs. Johnston. Closing date for sale of tickets for London Branch will be the 19th June. For further particulars, see other announcements in the "Gazette" by Mrs. Johnston. London Branch, let's show what we can do to help ourselves and others also in raising a record sum for this very excellent Fund.

B. MAYHEW, Hon. Secretary.

Comforts Report

April, 1943.

Since the last financial year, 42lbs. of wool has been purchased at a cost of £11 8s. 6d., and distributed among members of London Branch.

The balance at the bank was £15 12s. 1d., and this has been augmented by the sums of 13s. raffle, plus £3 0s. 4d. donations from individual members, making a total of £19 5s. 5d. to date. The only other expenses in addition to the purchase of wool are 5s. 2½d. postage account and 5s. hire of locker, leaving a small balance of £4 6s. 4½d. This amount will not be sufficient to carry us through the year, so any ideas for increasing this sum will be welcomed.

Letters have been received from the Regiment, thanking members for the parcels received at Christmas and also for 60 garments sent this month. Here is the letter:—

Dear Miss Saunders.

Will you kindly convey to your Committee and workers the Regiment's thanks for the splendid parcel of woollies received to-day, made up as follows:—

Two scarves, two pullovers, eight pairs mittens, four helmets, 44 pairs socks—60 articles.

We very much appreciate the splendid help you are giving us.—Kindest regards, sincerely yours,

A. GRIFFITHS, Chairman.

The following list of people have contributed garments:—Misses Owen, Kelly, Stone, Starling, Winks, Machin, Burnett, Benson, Jarratt, Hayward, Moyes, Pitt, Saunders, Perry, Lawson and Junior-Commander Bilbrough.

Donations in money are gratefully acknowledged from:—Misses Burr, Billington, L/Cpl. Manning, A.T.S., Collins, Winks.

Total garments to date number 789 already sent to the Regiment. There are another 40 ready to go, leaving 171 to complete our target of 1,000, so please return all garments as soon as possible.

With many thanks,

L. SAUNDERS.

Glasgow and West of Scotland

On the 17th April we had a very hearty party at the Club of W.A.A.C.s, W.R.A.F.s and other women members of the British Legion. As usual, our members had baked and "spread," and the catering was "super."

Mr. Lannaburgh, chairman of the Glasgow District Area H.Q. Branch, in a breezy way, befitting a naval man, put before us his hopes and plans for founding a club in Glasgow worthy of the "boys and girls" (age no barrier) who had served and are serving their country, and hoped we might all lend a hand in the good work.

Questions about the possibility of our sharing their quarters met with a cordial response, and we demonstrated our approval of the scheme by promising to hand him a contribution from everyone present.

We agreed to discuss the scheme as it affects us at a later date.

Then Major Pettigrew, whose work for the Legion is whole-hearted and sound, told us what the Legion is demanding of the Government for mobilising women. We were anxious to know what steps are being taken to organise ex-Service women and were interested to hear of different social customs influencing plans in England and Scotland. We shall be surprised if men and women who worked together in uniform cannot work together out of it.

The discussions were so enthusiastic that the tables set for whist were not required.

Although suffering great discomfort and pain with her arm in a splint, Miss McLelland, M.A., chairman of the Club, carried this meeting through most enthusiastically, and we owe her a debt of gratitude for having arranged the afternoon.

It is a pleasure to welcome back to the Club from Folkestone, after 13 years, Mrs. Parker, nee Jacobs, of Camp 5, Rouen. "Sister" Fleming was also at Camp 5, and has continued to take an interest in Mrs. Parker and in the Club by providing evergreens each Christmas. As her home is at Skelmorlie I hope to arrange a meeting with her and Parker shortly.

I was interested to receive from one of our members, E. C. Smith (Smithie), herself a W.A.A.F., Christmas copies of the W.A.A.F. and the Women's Auxiliary Magazines, which will be handed round.

E. M. GILCHRIST.

Nottingham

To our Comrades in other Towns.

Through the courtesy of the "Gazette" Editor, I am sending you an open letter. Now that the A.T.S. are eligible for membership to our Association, have you found any difficulty in obtaining sufficient rations to offer to any new members, or have you solved the perplexing problem?

We generally meet on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon (alternately) once a month, and a few members bring a contribution for tea. Should any A.T.S. wish to join the Nottingham Branch, our members feel there would not be sufficient refreshment to go round.

I have written to the Ministry of Food regarding the position and a representative called to see me and viewed the question very favourably, but I have since been advised by the Ministry that no permits can be granted.

Our members would appreciate your views and would like to hear what other towns are doing.

Everyone will be sorry to hear that Mrs. Peters has been very poorly lately, suffering from shingles. We hope she will soon be about, and visiting the club once more.

We haven't seen Mrs. Elnis or Mrs. Roberts lately, and hope they will be able to come to our next meeting. Mrs. Jackson's spare time is devoted to a neighbour in distress. We hope she will soon be with us again in the near future.

N. OSLER, Branch Secretary.

THE STORY OF THE ASSOCIATION

The story of the Association was printed in the May-June issue of the "Gazette" last year. Since then over 2,500 new members have joined the Association, most being members of the Auxiliary Territorial Service, and we feel sure that they will be interested to learn about the Association and how it came to be formed. Therefore we are making no apologies for re-printing this very interesting account.

"In 1916, the third year of the war of 1914-1918, the manpower situation was serious; every possible man was needed for the fighting line, men were withdrawn from industry, from all forms of civil life, and, at last, from the Services of the Army itself. Then the Commander-in-Chief of the British Armies in France was asked whether he would accept women to replace fit men for duties on the Lines of Communication, and he agreed. The women for such duties had to be uniformed and disciplined, so, in February, 1917, the Army Council formed the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, and, before the year was out, 10,000 women were serving overseas as cooks, clerks, signal personnel, postal sorters, drivers, bakers, storewomen. They did most of the jobs, in fact, which auxiliaries do to-day, except those like the duties on gun sites, which are the result of recent technical development. There are differences, of course; telegraphists, for instance, instead of teleprinter operators. By the summer of 1917 the authorities decided that the experiment was a success, and the Corps was extended to home service. Some 57,000 women passed through the ranks.

In October, 1917, the Italians, who were then fighting as our Allies, were badly defeated by the Austrians and Germans, and help had to be sent to them. In November, the Russians, who had also been our Allies, made peace, for they were in the throes of a political crisis. As a result, considerable German forces were liberated for use on the already depleted Western Front. In March, 1918, they attacked there in greatly superior numbers, and only the magnificent courage and staying power of our men prevented them from breaking through and separating us from the French. In the background, members of the W.A.A.C. were also doing their best, and the Queen, as a mark of her appreciation "of the good service rendered by the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, both at home and abroad, since its inauguration, and especially of the distinction which it has earned in France," assumed office as Commandant-in-Chief, and gave the Corps its name. That is how it became Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps.

The Armistice was signed on November 11th, 1918, but it was not till September 27th, 1921, that the Corps was completely disbanded and ceased to exist, though by the end of 1919 only a few remained.

In December of that year the Old Comrades' Association was formed, and Branches came into existence in all the larger towns. Each Branch arranged regular reunions, at which members could meet, and developed all sorts of friendly activities. More than one had a hut or cottage outside the town, at which week-ends or holidays could be spent. London Branch—the biggest—even had a couple of boats on the Thames at its camp near Datchet, due largely to a donation from the British Colony at Shanghai. In the winter there were dances, whist drives, sing-songs. A newcomer to a town or district could be sure of a friendly welcome from comrades whose service experiences were like her own. Sometimes an enterprising branch planned an entertainment for soldiers in hospital or for the children of ex-Service parents.

These social activities culminated in the Annual Dinner, which was held in London and attended by 500 or 600 members, arriving in parties from all ends of the country. It was one of the biggest ex-Service dinners to be held; indeed, it was rumoured to be outnumbered only by the R.A. The guest of honour was always a distinguished soldier, who gave us news of the Army with which we had served. Lord Gort, Lord Ironside and General Sir Andrew Thorne were among many who have replied to our toast of "His Majesty's Forces."

The "Gazette" was founded in July, 1920, and has been published regularly ever since. It brings news of ex-Service women from every part of the world, tells of the doings of Branches, and is a link between our widely scattered members. Its arrival is looked forward to in Canada, Australia, Africa and America, as well as at home.

The Association has never been rich. It was started when the Corps was almost at an end; it could not give financial help to members who were ill or needed training, and could only occasionally afford a few pounds in very special cases. The best that could be done was to place those in need of assistance in touch with funds set aside for ex-Service personnel. Of these, the ex-Service women had their full share in proportion to their numbers from the United Services Fund and the British Legion. There is reason to think that funds may not be so plentiful after the present war; that is why the Association initiated the A.T.S. Benevolent Fund, for the Council of the Association realise how often quite a little money, spent in the right way at the right time, may restore a worker's health, save a business from disaster or provide the tools or the training by which a living can be earned.

The Association has had its share of great occasions. Its members have marched with the British Legion procession to the Cenotaph on Armistice Day year by year; they have been present at all sorts of functions. Two of these especially stand out. On May 11th, 1935, the Association had the honour of lining part of the route along which King George V. and Queen Mary drove during the celebration of the Silver Jubilee. Every ex-Service organisation was there, and we dipped our standards as the King went by. In 1937 the Association was allotted places, both sitting (for the old and the invalids) and standing to watch the Coronation procession. Those who stood were on the steps of the Victoria Memorial, and had a specially magnificent view. On the 27th June of that year the Association was well represented among the 80,000 ex-Service men and women assembled in Hyde Park to greet a King who had himself served, and who addressed us as Old Comrades.

In the following year (1938) the Auxiliary Territorial Service was formed on a Territorial basis; with the declaration of war on September 3rd, 1939, it entered on full-time service. At the next Annual General Meeting of the Association membership was opened to ex-members of the A.T.S.—it was still an OLD Comrades Association. But that did not last. At the Annual General Meeting of February, 1941, membership was extended to serving personnel, while in February, 1942, the words "and Auxiliary Territorial Service" were added to the name and the word "old" was dropped.

This gradual development indicated no lack of interest. In the autumn of 1940 the Council of the Association inaugurated the A.T.S. Benevolent Fund, which, though under the auspices of the Association, is managed by a special committee of ex-members of the A.T.S., and is for the benefit of A.T.S. personnel alone. The idea is that now, while officers and auxiliaries are earning regular pay, they can afford to put something aside towards solving the problems of those—themselves or others—who meet with difficulties and can be set on their feet by a little well-timed help.

Some day the war will be won and peace will come again—peace and demobilisation. At first, perhaps, many auxiliaries

will be glad to get out of harness, but as time passes you will want, as your predecessors did in 1919 and 1920, to hear of old friends and discuss old adventures. Then you will be glad that a Comrades Association is waiting to welcome you. Meanwhile if you join and attend Branch Meetings, you will have a share in determining the policy of the future. We hope that many will do so. The Active Service Branch now numbers some 200 Life members and 2,500 Annual members. This Branch has eight representatives on the Council of the Association. The General Secretary, Q.M.A.A.C. and A.T.S.S. Comrades Association, 82, Lancaster Gate, London, W.2, will be glad to answer any questions and send forms of application for membership.

LETTERS

Volunteer No. 18, Middlesex Land Corps,
Laleham Park, Near Shepperton.

My Dear Norah,

Sunday.

Here I am doing my land work stretched out on my mattress outside the tent door, trousers rolled up and no shoes and stockings and feeling at perfect peace with everyone and everything. I arrived yesterday. It's a glorious setting for a camp in Laleham Park—magnificent trees, green grass and little red huts sleep six) dotted about. There are three others with me in the tent—one is a Jersey girl, whose parents have been deported to Germany; just like Audrey to look at, age about 32. Of the other two, both about 50, one was at Regent Exchange in her single days and the other is a grandmother, who has got fed up with minding her grandchildren while their mothers go dancing; so she has come for the season. They are all very jolly indeed, and I am doing my best to cope with them in spite of my advanced years. There was a call for 20 volunteers to work to-day. Of course I volunteered, like the conscientious person I am, but the Jersey girl drew off (it was a ballot) and she wanted to go specially, as she is only down for a week. So I let her go in my place. After I aired the tent and dried the ground sheets, etc. (we sleep on the ground with palliasses stuffed with straw), I toddled down to Shepperton to try and get a cup of coffee, but no, nothing doing. Now we have had lunch—bread, butter, cheese, Worcester sauce and tea. At 6 p.m. we have our chief meal.

Our night was not too good, but considering it was the first one there was nothing to complain about. We were mostly too cold, but while the staff were at dinner to-day I managed another blanket each. So to-night we shall be set with bells. I think to-morrow we are planting potatoes, and then there are tomatoes to be done something to in glasshouses. The Regent Lady says if it turns wet or cold she is going to apply for the glasshouses, but not otherwise. The weather is so perfect at the moment it does not seem possible that it can ever alter.

Do you remember our first summer at Etaples? Well, to-day I feel as if I had put a tuck in those 26 years. I don't expect the feeling to last over to-morrow when I have done eight hours planting spuds.

We walk about 400 yards to wash—tin bowls all in a row in a marquee, and dip the water out of the top of a water-cart and this at 6 a.m. B.S.T., and after a wakeful night. One does need to be a "happy girl"!!! Well, Norah, I must close. I just wondered if you thought this would be worth putting in the "Gazette." Don't put any of your balmy footnotes.

And when I come home will you come down again and spend a day? I did enjoy the last one. Give my kind regards to Kitty and love to yourself.

Yours ever,

MINNIE.

EX-SERVICE WOMEN'S CLUB IN N.S.W.

26, Victoria Street, Bondi Junction, N.S.W., March 26th, 1943.
Dear Mrs. Johnston.

It is many months since I received any mail from your part of the world. However, the "Gazette" arrived to-day, and I was pleased to read my letters have reached you. Your membership is growing by leaps and bounds with the admission of the A.T.S. to the Club. We have not done anything about the Women's Services as yet but the annual meeting is next month.

No doubt it will be discussed then. We have had some very successful meetings this past year in spite of brownouts and crowded transport, our expenses have been light owing to the difficulty of buying wool and materials—coupon trouble mostly. However, we have helped the Services by cash donations to the various appeals. The Club Auxiliary gave up the work at the Anzac Buffet. They changed our days of work and that did not suit the members, who always arrange for Thursdays off because of club meetings. Instead, they work at the Service Womens Club—a very posh place, and something we sadly missed during our days in France. We have two or three members serving with the A.W.A.S. I see Mrs. K. Roberts has written to you, and most of the members with families have daughters and sons serving in the Forces. We still knit for the Navy. They supply the wool, and I like knitting, and so we are able to supply lots of comforts each month. Miss Thompson sent me a few "Gazettes" from South Africa. They are always welcome at the Club. We had a very interesting speaker at our last meeting—Miss Scott, an ex-W.A.A.C., and secretary of the Y.W.C.A. They do a lot of good work for the Service girls. We have promised to spend an evening at their Club soon. The war news is very much brighter. How thankful everyone will be to have peace once more. My family are all away. I do not think I am telling State secrets when I say my son is in Darwin, and got a great thrill seeing the light between the Spitfires and the Zeros. My husband is away, too; though he managed to be home on leave in November and so was able to attend the annual dinner.

I am hoping to have some mail soon. I have no news of my sisters for months. They live in N.E. England, though I heard from an aunt in Bath. They were well.

Best wishes from Mrs. Peachley and all Club members.

Yours sincerely,

E. MILLS.

214, Park Road, Rosedale, Toronto 5, Ontario, Canada,

March 26th, 1943.

Dear Mrs. Johnston,

I do hope you had as good a Christmas as was possible under war conditions.

In many ways we do not know there is a war, but there is a decided absence of many of the things that come into the country, which are really luxuries. There is very little wool to be had, and candies are very scarce. At least, the hard-boiled sugar kinds. However, we have a great deal to be thankful for.

I am glad to say most of the snow and ice has now disappeared. We have had a very bad winter—the most severe since I came to Canada in 1928. There has been so much rain and ice and many hundreds of people injured in falls on the streets. At present the weather is lovely, but we know only too well we may get a lot more wintry weather yet.

I should like to say how much I enjoyed reading "Service with the Army." It was awfully interesting, and made me realise how little I really knew of the Service I served with. A great many of the "old girls" here are now with one or other of the Services. A great many with the St. John Ambulance Association. Some of us are blood donors. I have now made my third donation and received a bronze badge. After six donations we get a silver one.

This month of March has been Red Cross month. They need a great deal of money to carry on their work of mercy, but I think they will reach their objective.

I do hope this will reach you safely and that my "Gazette," etc., will arrive here in the meantime. I trust all is well with all members of the Association. With all good wishes,

Sincerely yours,

FLORENCE VIDLER.

Mrs. Elsie Addison, about whom there was an article in the January-February "Gazette," served in France as Forewoman Barnes at E. and G. Depot, Etaples, where she put on several dances for the Sergeants in No. 6 Con. Camp. She served later at Calais. She went to Canada and married Sergt. Adam Addison, whom she had met while at Etaples. She gives news of Bertha Barret, who was also at Etaples at H. Depot. She has lately lost her husband and has had a serious operation; also of Dr. Helen Douglas, who is still practising in Winnipeg. Mrs. Addison would very much like to hear from old friends if any of them see this notice. Her address is:—1502, Jeanne d'Arc Avenue, Maisonneuve, Montreal, Canada.

The King's Birthday Honours

At a Council meeting, held on 2nd June, the Chairman, Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan, expressed the pleasure and pride felt by all members of the Comrades Association in seeing the names of so many of the Auxiliary Territorial Service in the Honours List.

It was unanimously agreed that congratulations be sent through the medium of the "Gazette" to all who have received honours. We feel that our congratulations are still warmer when the recipient is also a member of the Comrades Association and so better known to us.

We therefore especially congratulate **Senior Controller Leslie V. L. E. Whately** on receiving the C.B.E. She is a Life member of the Comrades Association, in which she takes a great interest, and she is always most helpful in every way.

Chief Commander Katharine Acland, **Chief Commander Josephine Murray**, and **Chief Commander Alba Windham** are also Life members of the Association and we send them our heartiest congratulations on receiving the O.B.E. (Military Division).

We also send congratulations to the following, and hope that some day that they, too, will join the Comrades Association: **Chief Commander Rosamund M. Hicks**, O.B.E. (Military Division).

Junior Commander Barbara W. Davey, M.B.E. (Military Division).

Senior Commander Mildred L. Nicoll, M.B.E. (Military Division).

Junior Commander Mary M. Oakey, M.B.E. (Military Division).

Senior Commander Dorothea F. Phillips, M.B.E. (Military Division).

In addition our congratulations go to:-

Sergeant Eleanor Haigh,
Corporal Maisie Jones,
Sergeant Norah Walker,
C.S.M. Eileen Whitehead,

who are recipients of the British Empire Medal (Military Division).

Many Old Comrades will be delighted to hear that **Miss Joan Carpenter**, Superintendent, W.R.N.S., has been honoured with the C.B.E. She was for several years the Secretary of the Ex-Service Women's Club at 5, Buckingham Gate, London, S.W.1. Members will always remember her friendliness, helpfulness and unfailing courtesy. We send her our sincere congratulations.

With acknowledgements and thanks to the British Legion Journal of June, 1943.

An Impression

I have just been watching the Home Guard March. They came from Hyde Park, along Piccadilly, up Charing Cross Road and along Oxford Street to Marble Arch, which was the end. I was at the corner of Charing Cross Road and Oxford Street, so they had come a longish way when I saw them. Going six abreast, they took three-quarters of an hour to pass us. I have seldom seen anything more impressive. They were old and young—I noticed a sergeant-major with three rows of ribbons—ex-soldiers who were still soldierly, boys trying to look as like them as possible, and very complete civilians. It was most clearly a citizen army; surprisingly rugged, on the whole, considering it was London, with a glint of humour in a large proportion of faces. There was something about the extreme simplicity, battle dress, tin hats, respirators at the alert, rifles, everyone exactly alike except for the flashes of the different battalions and occasional badges of rank, which fairly caught one's breath, for these were the ordinary citizens, working at civilian jobs six days a week—and who do not learn to retreat. For a moment I saw them as the medieval archers, who also defended their country, with their rifles sticking up as the ends of bows must have done. They are, after all, the same people, out for the same thing.

They did their stuff extremely well and took their left turn cleanly. The men were followed by some guns and the rear was brought up by three excessively smart taxis of the newest pattern and clean and shiny beyond dreams, crammed with the men and arms of the London Transport Column. That carried out the citizen army touch very prettily.

NEWS OF COMRADES OLD AND NEW

We are very sorry to hear that **Miss E. M. Shearman** has been so ill and that she has now been discharged from the A.T.S. When she wrote in April she was still in Manchester after a long spell in the hospital there. We hope that she is now well enough to return to her home, which is in London. She writes that old Comrades may be interested to know that she has met **Lily Staindrin**, who served under Miss Horniblow at Rochford and Hythe. She is now Mrs. Dixon, her husband is at sea, and she has a married daughter and a big son. **Miss A. M. de Putron**, who was D.C. at Rouen, appreciates the new rule about Life subscriptions to the "Gazette" for Life members of the Association, and has sent her cheque for the life subscription. Miss de Putron's School, The Beehive, moved to Shropshire after the war began.

Miss E. H. Pratt, who was also a D.C. in France, has moved from Kew Gardens to St. John's Wood. It is some time since we had any news from her; she is very busy and we rarely have the pleasure of seeing her at Council Meetings.

Private D. O. R. Manning has charge of a cookhouse and caters for one officer and 23 O.R.s. She seems very contented in her new station.

Miss Alice Edwards wrote in April from Knowle House, Red Cross Convalescent Home for Nurses at Cranleigh. She says that it is a lovely house, standing in the middle of a park, and at one time the ex-King of Siam lived there. The life has a W.A.A.C. memory about it as she sleeps in a ward with 15 other nurses, all of them very young. They are very bright and the place is run on Army lines. Edwards asks that a note of thanks be put in the "Gazette," "for all the kindness of the old Comrades who came to visit me and others who wrote to me during my long stay in Bethnal Green Hospital." She is feeling very well and we all hope that she will now keep well and send our best wishes and thanks for her messages.

Miss Edith Thompson sent the General Secretary a little letter of farewell before leaving again for South Africa. She was delighted that she was able to be at the Annual General Meeting and to meet Dame Florence and so many old comrades. She felt it was a great wrench leaving this lovely country just at this glorious season.

Junior Commander D. Beddow, A.T.S., has joined the Comrades Association and we are delighted to welcome her as member. She writes:—"You will note that during the last war I served with Q.M.A.A.C. to begin with, with a R.F. Corps unit. When they became the R.A.F. 1, with many others, transferred to form the nucleus of the W.R.A.F. and ended in 1919 as Drafting Officer for overseas personnel W.R.A.F. in London." We congratulate Junior Commander Beddow on such a fine record of service.

Can anyone give news of **Miss Lillian Smith, late W.A.A.C.?** Mr. Jack Halls, c/o Mrs. Ella Clift, 26, Chestnut Drive, Edgware, Middlesex, is anxious to have news of her. He was a great friend of hers during the last war, and when he was looking over some old photographs happy memories were revived.

We are sorry to learn that **Corporal Thornhill** has been ill and hope that she is now better.

They Fell on Faithful Service

It was with deep regret that we read of the death of so many members of the A.T.S. in an air raid in East Anglia, and we extend our sincere sympathy to their comrades and relatives; but it is with pride that we realise how faithfully the members of that fine Service are following the high traditions of their predecessors of Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps in France when many of them were killed in an air-raid. In each case there was no regard for personal safety, the others carrying on with their duty as is ever the tradition of the British Army.

We learn, too, that in the raid on Bournemouth a squad of the A.T.S. did excellent work in helping to rescue the trapped and injured.

We gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness to the "Times" of June 1st, 1943, for the very interesting article which gives an account of yet another of the activities of the A.T.S.

AMMUNITION FOR THE FRONT

Ceaseless Flow from R.A.O.C. Depots

A.T.S. GIRLS' ACTIVITIES

(From Our Special Correspondent.)

SOMEWHERE IN ENGLAND, May 31.

The immense task of supplying ammunition to the armed forces on the allied fronts must ever remain a source of wonder to most civilians. In the course of a day large quantities of A.A. shells, small arms cartridges, grenades and demolition explosives, and every type of ammunition, from percussion caps to 12in. howitzer shells, go out from the R.A.O.C. ammunition depots in Britain.

In one of the largest of these depots orders for ammunition begin coming in early in the morning on teleprinter machines which are manned by seven A.T.S. operators working in three shifts. Their office, once part of a youth hostel, is out of bounds to all but those on duty as it holds the secrets of the depot where more than 1,000 different types of ammunition are stored and the magazines hold hundreds of millions of pounds worth of explosives.

Each order as it is received is taken at once to the Control Officer, who reads it through, gives it a number, and authorises the issue.

Careful Records

After the order has been checked to see that no item has been omitted, it passes to an R.A.O.C. sergeant in the technical branch, whose job it is to detect discrepancies between, for instance, different types of components which may not make up into a complete shell. He has an A.T.S. assistant. Several copies of the order, which has hitherto consisted of the original teleprint and pencilled additions, are then typed and sent to the various branches which co-operate in the dispatch of the ammunition to its secret destination.

Repair Shop Economies

Attached to the depot is a repair shop in which it is estimated that the work of 50 A.T.S. storewomen has saved the country £1,000,000. Their job is to examine, clean and repair ammunition which has become faulty through flooding or bad storage conditions in the field. Civilian workers are also engaged on this job, and slight disciplinary difficulties sometimes arose among them. When they were put under A.T.S. supervision all these difficulties vanished.

These women can cope with anything from a belt of machine-gun cartridges to a 9.2 shell weighing more than 3 cwt. As each consignment of repairable shells is brought into the workshops they open the cases, take out, dismantle and examine the various parts, and clean or renew the components as may be necessary.

Outside the administrative offices of the depot, a model village, with surrounding country of one square mile, has been laid out on a scale of one inch to a yard. This is used to give training in siting, handling of ammunition dumps, proper control arrangements, billeting, and defence schemes.

The Junior Leader

An excellent book of addresses has been lately written by Chief Controller Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan, G.B.E., L.L.D., D.Sc., under the title of "The Junior Leader." These addresses contain much wisdom and helpful advice to all who have to do with women, especially in the A.T.S. The following subjects are dealt with:—The Junior Leader, Discipline, Loyalty, The Mechanism of the Mind, and Potted History. The price is NINE-PENCE, and the publishers are Messrs. Hutchinson and Co. (Publishers), Ltd., 47, Prince's Gate, London, S.W.7, who also published that other delightful book by Dame Helen called "Service with the Army," which has brought letters of appreciation from many Old Comrades and others in Canada and Australia, as well as those in this country.

The Colonel and The Ghost

The following poem, written during the last War, will recall many happy memories to those who had the honour of serving at the First Army Infantry School, though we fear that the opinion of the "Ghost" will shock our Highland friends, who love the bagpipes!

The Colonel met the Castle Ghost
Disgruntled, gaunt and grim,
The miserable thing took post
And thus saluted him.

You, sir, if I am not mistook
Are Warden of these courts:
Hear the petition of a Spook
Sorry and out of sorts!

Know, sir, that I am very air,
For all my seemly shape
Suction will draw me anywhere
And I cannot escape.

You have a piper in your train
Who nightly draws me in
And nightly pours me forth again
From his exhaust of skin.

Sir, when you hear the Pibroch played
It is not Scotland speaks,
You are not hearing music made
But my despairing shrieks.

Within that knavery of pipes
What you would call a reel
Is an acute attack of gripes
I am condemned to feel.

Thus spake the wraith and as he spoke
Did what at present's prized,
Like vapour or tobacco smoke
Quickly Demobilised.

" KALENDAR."

First Army Infantry School,

Hardelot Chateau, France.

January, 1919.

NOTE.—Hardelot Chateau was reputed to have a Ghost. The Commandant of the First Army Infantry School, Colonel Ronald Forbes, of the Highland Light Infantry, had a Piper among his Staff who played each night at Mess.

Co-Operating With Women's Services

High tribute to Legion work was paid by heads of the Women's Auxiliary Services at the Women's Section conference.

Following the Queen's address, Colonel Gordin Larking, chairman of Preston Hall council of management, explained the provision which was being made to treat and train tuberculous women from these Services at the newly acquired Nayland Hall, near Colchester.

Mrs. Laughton Mathews, Director of the W.R.N.S., thought this was a wonderful scheme. Apart from its practical work, however, the Legion perpetuated that spirit of comradeship which all who had served in the last war so much treasured.

Chief Controller Jean Knox, Director of the A.T.S., said that unlike Mrs. Mathews she could only speak of this war, but it was a most comforting thought that after the war the Legion, which did so much welfare work, would be ready to receive them.

"We can do much for your daughters in the Services," she said. "We can train them, we can help to give them the right spirit—the British spirit. But we cannot go back home with them afterwards."

"You have done much for us. We have never been refused any request we have made to the Legion. I hope we shall all continue together in the spirit of comradeship."

Wing Officer Melhuish, in the absence through illness of Air Chief Marshal Trefusis-Forbes, Director of the W.A.A.F., also said how much the women appreciated the welfare work done by the Legion.

She especially emphasised the good which might be done by inviting women of the Services into their homes, as so many of them did.

BRANCHES

Active Service	Mrs. A. E. B. Johnston (pro tem), 82, Lancaster Gate, W.2.		
Adelaide	Miss L. M. Smith, 52, Wattle Avenue, Brighton, Adelaide, Australia.		
Birmingham.	Miss E. I. Dipple, 17, Somerset Road, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham, 20.		
Blackpool.	Mrs. K. Fry, 136 Albert Road, Blackpool.		
Bournemouth.	Miss F. E. Lever, A.T.C.L., Craighurst, 7 Church Road, Parkstone, Dorset.		
Bradford.	Mrs. A. Goodman, 2 Tivoli Place, Little Horton, Bradford.		2nd Wednesday
Brighton.	Mrs. E. C. Jolly, 107 Preston Drove, Brighton, 6.	Aqua Restaurant, Old Steine, Brighton.	2nd Monday and 4th Wednesday, 7.30 p.m.
Bristol and West of England.	Miss B. Mould, 11 The Tynning, Bath.		Not fixed
Cheltenham.	Mrs. Mann, Cornerways, Churchdown, Gloucester.		
Exeter.	Mrs. Vicary, Castle House, Powderham, near Exeter.		
Edinburgh and East of Scotland.	Mrs. G. D. Hardy, 51 Lockharton Ave., Edinburgh 11.	Women's United Services Club, 12 Drumsheugh Grdns., Edinburgh	1st Tuesday 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, C.3.	251 Renfrew Street, Glasgow.	Every Wednesday, 7.30.
Headquarters.	Mrs. Pratt Barlow, O.B.E., 82, Lancaster Gate, W.2.		
Irish Free State.	Mrs. O'Meara, M.B.E., Cove Cottage, Dunmore East, County Waterford.		Not fixed.
Leeds.	Miss E. Mair, 27 Virginia Road, Off University Road, Leeds, 2.		5 Park Square, first Wednesday, 7.30 p.m.
Liverpool.	Mrs. E. Edwards, 8, Wyndcote Road, Liverpool 18.		
London.	Mrs. Mayhew, c/o 5 Buckingham Gate, S.W.1	See Branch Reports for dates of meetings.	Thursday evenings, 7.30 to 10 p.m.
Ilford.	Miss P. Parker, 4, Richmond Street, Plaistow, E.13.		
Manchester.	Mrs. Cornes, 12, High Bank Crescent, Prestwick, Manchester.	Raglan Café, 24 Mosley St., Manchester	2nd and 4th Thursday, 7 to 10.30 p.m.
Newcastle-on-Tyne.	Miss C. W. Maunders, 31, Norwood Avenue, Heaton, Newcastle.		Members notified individually.
New South Wales.	Mrs. E. Mills, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer	26, Victoria Street, Bondi Junction, N.S.W.	
New York.	Mrs. G. Rose. Phone Nevins 8-5250.		
Norfolk.	Mrs. L. W. Chilvers, 2, King's Head Terrace, Great Witchingham, Norfolk.		Monthly. Members notified individually.
Northern Ireland.	Miss Smyth, 18, Cedar Avenue, Carnalea, Nr. Bangor, Co. Down.		Last Saturday in the month at 7, Victoria Street, Belfast.
North Staffs.	Mrs. G. H. Clough, 3 Eleanor View, Newcastle.	Nell Gwynne Restaurant, Newcastle.	First Friday in month, 6.30 p.m.
Notts.	Miss Osler, 243a, Mansfield Road, Nottingham.		
Oxford.	Mrs. Jackman, 23 Grays Road, Headington, Oxford.		Members notified individually.
Plymouth.	Mrs. O. Foster, 2 Notte St., Plymouth.		
Cardiff and S. Wales.	Mrs. Diana Foster, 7, The Grove, Rumney, Cardiff.	Y.M.C.A., Cardiff.	Second and last Tuesday at 7.30 p.m.
Shoreham-by-Sea. (in abeyance) St. Leonard's	Miss E. Taylor, 58 West Hill, St. Leonards-on-Sea.		Not fixed.
Tees-side.	Miss E. Kendra, 21, Thackeray Grove, Linthorpe Middlesbrough.		
Transvaal.	Mrs. Widdicombe, 8 Gascoigne Street Observatory, Johannesburg, S. Africa.		

Editor Gazette—Mrs. A. E. B. Johnston, 82, Lancaster Gate, London, W.2.