



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



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Telephone: Paddington 8440.

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NO REGRETS FROM THE EDITOR

This is grand! There is no room for me to do more than congratulate you all, thank you for your good wishes, and ask you to KEEP IT UP.

HEADQUARTERS REPORT FOR AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER

The Council Meeting held on Wednesday, September 21st, was of special interest. Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan was in the Chair with the following 18 members present:—Mrs. Richard Addis (our new Editor who was especially welcomed), Miss Billington, Miss Clark, Miss Davy, R.S.M. A. Glass, Mrs. Grundy, Chief Commander B. Harvie-Anderson, Miss Ireland, Mrs. Mayhew, Mrs. Powell, Mrs. Pratt-Barlow, Subaltern R. Pryse, Miss Saunders, Senior Commander The Viscountess Swinton, Senior Commander E. Walker, Miss M. Slee, Hon. Treasurer and Mrs. Johnston, General Secretary. Apologies for absence were received from Chief Controller L. V. Wheateley, who was away from London, Senior Controller G. H. Fraser, Rytler and Miss Turner, both away on leave, Miss Bilbrough on account of illness, Lady Apsley and Mrs. Rumbold. The Council were very sorry to receive C.S.M. Kemp's resignation and appreciated her nice letter. C.S.M. Kemp has been posted to Blackdown and cannot, therefore, attend the Meetings.

At the Meeting held in July it had been agreed unanimously that Miss R. Worthington-Evans and Miss E. Lethbridge, joint Secretaries of the Duchess of Northumberland's Comforts Fund for the A.T.S., be elected Honorary members in recognition of their great help and interest. The Chairman had the pleasure of telling the Meeting that Miss Worthington-Evans and Miss Lethbridge were delighted at being made members of the Association and thus having the opportunity of keeping in touch with the Service in which they take so great an interest.

The Treasurer's Report gave the Meeting a tremendous surprise and thrill as it will all members who read the following extract from it:—"The month of August is usually one of financial stagnation, but on this occasion it has proved the high light of the financial year. During last month I received from a donor, who wishes to remain anonymous,

ANONYMOUS GIFT OF £1,000 TO COMRADES ASSOCIATION

The wonderful present of **ONE THOUSAND POUNDS** has been given to the Comrades Association by a friend who wishes to remain anonymous. You can read about it in the H.Q. Report, but we would like to take this opportunity of thanking the Donor on behalf of all readers of the "Gazette."

(Continued from previous column.)

mous, a gift of **ONE THOUSAND POUNDS** to the funds of the Association for use in whatever way Council may decide. This splendid gift is rendered doubly valuable as the donor places no restriction on the dispersal of the capital sum, and is willing that the whole or any part of it should be used, if considered desirable, for immediate post-war activities."

It was proposed by the Chairman and carried unanimously that the cordial thanks of the Council be conveyed to the anonymous donor for the munificent gift.

After which the members had the very interesting task of studying the designs sent in for the Poster and Badge Competition. There were three designs for a Poster, two of special interest and seven designs for the Badge, some of which were beautifully executed.

Council were of the opinion that sufficient time had not been allowed for the competition as ex-Service women living abroad and members of the A.T.S. serving overseas had not had an opportunity of sending in designs. It was therefore proposed by Mrs. Pratt-Barlow, seconded by Senior Commander Walker and carried unanimously, that the closing date for the Competition, for Posters and Badges, be postponed until **MONDAY, JANUARY 15th, 1945.**

A letter from Mr. Birrell, Secretary of the British Legion, with regard to the possibility of establishing Homes for physically incapacitated and ex-Service men and women, was read. The scheme was highly commended.

In order to save postage, will all members of the Council please note that the next Meeting of Council has been fixed for **Saturday, November 25th, at 2.30 p.m., at Lancaster Gate, London, W.2.** Agendas will be posted to members, as usual, ten days before the Meeting.

THE NEW BADGE

Such excellent designs have come in for both the badge and the poster that the competition is being kept open until **JANUARY 15th, 1945**, to give people overseas a chance to compete. Members nearer home may also have found time short in this busy summer so here is their opportunity too.

1. A Comrades Association Badge to be worn by members.
2. A Poster.

The aim of the Poster should be to depict the scope of the Comrades' Association and its value to serving personnel after demobilisation.

The competition is open to all serving or ex-Service personnel.

Prizes have been offered in both sections.

In order to help those who do not know the objects of the Comrades Association, the following extract is given from the leaflet: "Experience has shown that there is a great bond of friendliness between those who served together. They want to meet, they are quick to help each other. Their comradeship gives pleasure in good times, it affords help and comfort in days of illness or hardship, it is waiting if your work takes you to a strange town. The Association exists to keep those who have served in touch with one another and to deal as a representative body with the things that an individual cannot handle alone."

All designs should be addressed to:—
The General Secretary,
Q.M.A.A.C. & A.T.S. Comrades Association,
82, Lancaster Gate,
London, W.2.

SERVICE WOMEN'S BENEVOLENT FUND

The Hon. Secretary has to thank Miss Howson, of Norfolk, for the very nice parcel of clothing she sent. Unfortunately, there is no place at 82, Lancaster Gate, where clothing can be kept so the parcel was passed to Miss L. Saunders, Secretary of London Branch Comforts Fund, who was good enough to distribute the contents between four families where the husbands are serving as well as sons. Most appreciative letters have been received.

A.T.S. WITH THE BRITISH LIBERATION ARMY

The first A.T.S. on the Normandy beach-head had, by the middle of August, settled in to their camp and were hard at work. After their arrival most of them spent their first day in France on duty in their offices—large tents in adjacent fields. Within twelve hours the clerks were taking dictation and typing out letters and orders as calmly and efficiently as if they were still in England. The Army officers, some of whom had been in Normandy several weeks, were delighted to see their A.T.S. again, all of whom had been sent to France by special request of their branches.

After breakfast on the first morning the A.T.S. Officer, Subaltern Margaret Marshall, and her senior N.C.O.'s, Staff Sergeant McClymont and Sergeants Loe and Mundy, piled into a jeep and set off on a tour of the camp. The A.T.S. lines are in the middle of the camp area so that none of the girls are more than two or three fields away from their work. The auxiliaries were confined to barracks for their first day or two and they spent their off duty time unpacking their kit, washing their "smalls" and experimenting with their tommy cookers. They were able, however, to make their first acquaintance of the French people because the camp area contains farms where the residents are still carrying on. French farmhands drive round the camp at intervals in a donkey cart to milk the cows which are tethered in the fields.

Soldiers, including pioneers and sappers had worked at full pressure to prepare a real "luxury" camp in what had been a field of thistles four days before the arrival of the A.T.S. Two large marquees had been put up as sleeping quarters, and smaller tents are being used as sergeants' and officers' lines, and as the company office. One spare tent has been fitted as the ironing room. Drinking water and electric light are laid on. Hot water is provided by a stove and showers were put in as soon as possible.

The A.T.S. are still in the same high spirits in which they landed on the beach. They were thrilled by being so near the front line and pleased with the comfort of the camp as they had expected to rough it at first.

Mail began to arrive at the camp fairly soon after the girls landed, one girl actually received a letter while still in convoy.

A further 1,000 A.T.S. are already mobilised for services with the B.L.A. and a larger contingent left shortly afterwards.

PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT

For the benefit of our new members who may not know that the Annual General Meeting of the Association is held on the last Saturday in February each year, we would like to announce that:—

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of Q.M.A.A.C. and A.T.S. COMRADES ASSOCIATION will be held on SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24th, 1945, in LONDON.

Let us hope that all the lights will be up by then!

P.S.K. AND A.T.S.

By Irena Wachlowska

The following is a translated extract from an article written in the Polish women's monthly paper called "Ochotniczka," which is their word for an "auxiliary." The production of this paper has really been a marvel of achievement because they have written, collected and proofed all the material themselves, and it has been printed in their mobile printing press wherever they have been, and distributed amongst their members in all the scattered units, where the minutest fragment of Polish reading matter is as welcome as water in the desert.

K. S.

Two sister military organisations, the Pomocnicza Sluzba Kobiet (P.S.K.) and the Auxiliary Territorial Service, have one important aim in common to aid in attaining victory. We did not have to be taught this, it is known by every conscious and intelligent woman, regardless of nationality, race or descent. Only a united effort of will power and energy can be of use in war. The British women understood this and based their organisation on it.

Our women were similarly organised in the Women's Military Cadet Organisation, and they were trained for the same type of duties. The unexpectedly quick war of 1939 in Poland did not permit the full expansion and use of this organisation and after the occupation of the country our duties were of an entirely different character.

The A.T.S. on their own ground could continue the formation and training of their units in a country that was free, though heavily hit by war.

When a new Polish army started to be formed in Russia, we Polish women volunteered as well, ready to carry and take over the heavy duties of the common war. We were not able to start from the beginning, forming, training and organising our units; we had to start right there where we were most needed, the training and the organisation being carried out at the same time. We passed through different countries, climates, frontiers—all the time working, cementing our organisation, training our girls. After every big move, when we stopped to rest for any length of time, we always restarted and continued our preparations for the last march. The rests did not mean for us relaxation—on the contrary, double intensity, double work.

It was on one of these rests we first met the A.T.S. We had to pass through an officer's training course, and it was specially organised for us at the A.T.S. Training Depot in the Middle East. After the first meetings, we went to a beautiful camp to discuss the programme and dates. The camp, situated amongst trees and gardens, looked hospitable and friendly, and as we got to know this camp better we found how well it was organised and by women alone. The Command, administration, training, medical care, all in the hands of women. The initial work had been done by a very small cadre of A.T.S. officers and N.C.O.s from Great Britain, and after the first course the cadre had been enlarged by

other officers and N.C.O.s, trained and recruited from all the many nationalities in the Middle East.

When we first arrived on the course we were met with curiosity. Many blue British and black eyes looked at us. We were able to converse in several common languages and without any difficulty we spoke to each other. We felt wonderful. The training started with English drill, which seemed funny to us at first, but later as we got accustomed to it we found that we liked its rhythm. Lectures on several subjects opened to us the secrets of A.T.S. organisation, gave us a view of many military matters. The A.T.S. by that time were well organised, regulated, united. This uniformity struck me later when visiting some A.T.S. camps. These camps are built comfortably, even when they consist of tents dug in the sand. They all have a large canteen and a nice mess room, one of the A.T.S. subalterns being entirely responsible for it.

The A.T.S. girls are working in male units, but the discipline is in the hands of their own officers and these women have the power of command over the girls. They are working in many fields, their aim is to replace a soldier wherever possible. They are not allowed in field units, although probably many girls are anxious to fight the enemy direct. When wondering why the A.T.S. are not trained in small arms we were told that the women's duties are manifold and though the blood may be calling the other duties have to be carried out as well.

The A.T.S. girls are working with a smile and good humour. They are quiet and well balanced, knowing that their families are in a strongly defended country and receiving letters often from their relatives. Different with us, where each girl has somebody waiting here or there, somebody who fights, somebody who waits or possibly does not wait any more. We have, therefore, to call more on our wills and energy!

There are some basic differences between the A.T.S. and P.S.K. The A.T.S. is one of the Services and so an integral part of the British Forces and their representatives are treated accordingly. The ranks are substantive in war time, and can only be lost by disciplinary action or in connection with a posting to another appointment holding a lower rank. The British soldiers understand it and treat the auxiliaries as their comrades; their ranks are the same as their own, their training similar though shorter and non-combatant.

Education and civil occupation alone do not qualify an auxiliary for a commission. The training of an officer is equally divided into training and observation of the candidate, her organising abilities, her powers of command, her character, her approach to other girls and even her appearance. There is close collaboration between A.T.S. officers, N.C.O.s and girls but they live at a distance when off duty. They always have separate rooms, they have separate messes and clubs. In one camp I visited there was only one A.T.S. subaltern in the camp, but she had her own tent and bath and she took her meals alone. Possibly it was not very pleasant, and it must have been very lonely for her, but according to A.T.S. regulations no other solution was possible.

WHO IS THE SENDER?

on Tuesday, September 26th, a letter arrived for the Editor with the postmark DERBY, 3.45 p.m. September 25th, 1944. The envelope contained a blank envelope carefully gummed down containing a Postal Order, F3/48 414007, value 5s., with the post office stamp of Castle Donnington, September 25th, 1944. The sender had not given her name or address and the Postal Order is therefore being kept until the member who posted it sends her name. This should be sent to the General Secretary. **Will members please note that subscriptions should**

NOT be sent to the Editor, they should be sent to the GENERAL SECRETARY, Q.M.A.A.C. and A.T.S. Comrades Association, 82, Lancaster Gate, London, W.2, who will send a receipt and pass the subscription to the Hon. Treasurer.

And another point. If the Gazette should fail to reach any member who has paid her subscription, she should NOT write to the Editor, as the Gazettes are sent out from Headquarters Office, 82, Lancaster Gate, W.2. Her letter should be addressed to the GENERAL SECRETARY who will deal with the matter at once.

BRANCH REPORTS**BRADFORD**

In July, only seven members met at the club, but we were delighted to have two of the A.T.S. with us, whom we had met before, at the home of Miss Cocksedge. We enjoyed our evening together, and had cakes and tea, and a real good argument on various subjects. Gwen, one of our A.T.S. girls, was most interesting to listen to. She certainly had her own views about all the topics we discussed, but she knew what she was talking about all right, and we thoroughly enjoyed listening to young ideas, about so many diverse subjects, which ranged from the war to Gracie Fields and then on to the Duke of Windsor and back again to the war. Then August; eight members were present this time, which is really good considering that these two months are holiday months. Miss Julian and Miss Fieldhouse did not forget us, and we were all delighted to receive a telegram from them at the beginning of the meeting, sending their greetings and best wishes from Cornwall. We chatted happily together and had tea and sandwiches, cakes and pastries, each one contributing to the little homely feast. Then it was time to catch our various buses. Always the last ones, as we stay just as long as we possibly can, and we each one went home with a bag of Miss Cocksedge's home-grown pears tucked underneath our arms. A gift we appreciated very much, and which we enjoyed later. E. WARD.

BRISTOL AND WEST OF ENGLAND

In spite of transport difficulties we managed to get together on the 15th July, when we met for tea at the Cosy Cafe, Bristol.

We were delighted to have Mrs. Cheeseman with us again, after a spell of illness. She was looking better, though there is still room for improvement.

We were delighted to welcome Mrs. Haydon, who has recently left the A.T.S., and we are hoping she will join us on future occasions.

We are very glad to have three new members—Miss A. V. Amrdew, Miss L. L. E. Hobbs and Mrs. D. I. H. Symons—and are hoping to meet them shortly.

Our next meeting will probably be in Bath, during September.

Our friends in Southern England, in the track of the fly-bomb, are continually in our thoughts and we would extend our sympathy to those who have suffered loss and damage. May this menace very soon be a thing of the past. B. M.

EDINBURGH AND EAST OF SCOTLAND

At our August meeting we had the pleasure of a visit from our President, Miss Alice Low. There was a good turn-out of members to meet her. Mrs. Whiteford brought along a visitor from the South, Mrs. Woods (May Hall), and Miss Cairns came to rejoin the Branch after a long absence.

In June, Queen Marie of Yugoslavia visited the Elsie Inglis Memorial Hospital here, when Miss S. P. Morrison, a member of Edinburgh Branch, was presented to Her Majesty. Miss Morrison was with the unit in Malta and in Serbia from 1915–1917. Queen Marie said that the Serbian people do not forget the noble work carried on by the Scottish Women's Hospital in Serbia. Miss Morrison joined the Q.M.A.A.C. in London in 1917, serving in Newcastle and Inverness.

We do not meet as frequently these days, but it is good to know that the Women's United Services' Club, now taken over by the Y.W.C.A., is so much appreciated by our sister Services. They are full of praise for the Y.W.C.A. and their helpers, and like the homely atmosphere of the club. They only wish they had more sleeping accommodation, which is so hard to find these days. G. D. H.

ILFORD

Our July meeting was held at Mrs. Spaul's and took the form of a whist drive and sale. Mrs. Spaul and her friends had worked very hard to make it a success. We had nine tables for whist, but unfortunately like our English climate the afternoon was a wet one so the drive had to be in the house instead of in the garden, as Spaul had arranged. We were pleased to welcome several soldiers from the local hospital, who had been invited for the afternoon. I think they all enjoyed themselves and one gave a hearty vote of thanks for the pleasure it had given them. I was sorry more of Ilford Branch members did not turn up to help swell the numbers, but some were away and Mrs. Smith, who should have been part hostess with Spaul, was unable to come owing to the illness of her daughter. She has to go into a sanatorium, but we wish her a speedy recovery. The proceeds of our afternoon brought the sum raised to £12 6s. Half of the proceeds were given to Dr. Barnardo's Home and the other half to the Mission to Seamen. Please do not doubt the figures. We thought we would aim at £10, but when the money was all

counted it reached the sum stated. "Well done, Spaul," we do thank you for all the hard work you put into this to make it such a success. A very nice letter has been received from the Mission to Seamen. No meeting was held during August as two were held in July. The September meeting was held at my house, when six members came along, and we had a very happy time. Mrs. Thomas has left her war-time work, and amused us with the work and her account of experiences. Our next meeting will be on Saturday, 7th October, at Ford's, at Ilford.

I was very fortunate to be able to go to "Oversea" the week after the ban had been lifted and took a friend with me. We had a very nice four days there and enjoyed it. I should like to pass on our thanks to Miss Taylor for the way she has carried on and kept "Oversea" in such a good condition. Her job has not been easy, for when one sees the damage that has been done quite near we know she must have had some very awful times. We are grateful and wish we could go there more often. PADDY PARKER.

LONDON

London Branch held a Bring and Buy Sale in aid of Branch Funds on the 16th September. An excellent attendance caused keen competition for the purchase of goods on sale and the sum of £3 7s. 6d. was raised. The Committee thank all who contributed to the success of the venture, and to the help given by the sellers.

SPECIAL EVENT.—A Beetle Drive will be held on Saturday, 18th November, at 2.45 prompt. Donations of 1s. per head will be given to Branch Funds. Organiser, Miss Bilbrough. Gifts of suitable prizes will be greatly appreciated and should be sent or handed in to the Club, 5, Buckingham Gate, and marked with the name of giver, and these will be acknowledged in the December "Gazette." A.T.S. of Active Service Branch are especially invited to come along and bring their friends—make it a good mixed Battery, but instead of Doodle Bugs—it will be Beetles. Tea will be available at popular prices.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—The 24th Annual General Meeting of London Branch will be held at the Service Women's Club, 5, Buckingham Gate, S.W.1, on Saturday, 16th December, at 3 p.m. In accordance with the agreement at the 1939 Annual Meeting no elections have been held since then, but the Committee feel that the time has arrived for nominations to be made. The Committee hope that you will make a note of the date of the Meeting and support the work of the Branch by attending and putting forward suggestions for the future activities of same. The present Committee consist of the following Members, who are all willing to stand for re-election.

Hon. Treasurer—Miss D. Hayward.

Hon. Secretary—Mrs. B. Mayhew.

Asst. Hon. Sec.—Miss W. Binks.

Committee Members

Mrs. Eager, Mrs. Courage, Miss Rogers, Miss D. Porter, Miss Hannen, Miss L. Saunders, Miss Billington, Miss Bilbrough.

All nominations should reach the Secretary at 25, Denmark Avenue, Wimbledon, S.W.19, by 10th December, 1944. Will Members please ascertain whether the Member

is willing to stand before sending in the nomination.

Nominations are also required for Council Representatives. The four following Members are at present serving on Council and are willing to stand again:—

Miss Bilbrough, Miss Saunders, Miss W. Binks, Mrs. B. Mayhew.

AGENDA.

1. Minutes of the 23rd Annual General Meeting.
2. Matters arising from the Minutes.
3. Honorary Secretary's Report.
4. Honorary Treasurer's Report.
5. Report of Ilford Sub-Branch.
6. Report of (a) Wool Comforts Fund; (b) Knitting for Merchant Navy.
7. Election of 1945 Committee:—
 - (a) To elect Honorary Secretary
 - (b) To elect Asst. Hon. Secretary.
 - (c) To elect Honorary Treasurer.
 - (d) To elect Committee.
8. To elect Representatives on Headquarters Council.
9. To discuss future Activities.
10. Any other Business.

Future Reunions: November 18th at 2.30 p.m. December 16th, at 2.30 p.m.

Next Committee Meeting: Saturday, 16th December, 1944, at 2.30 p.m.

B. MAYHEW, Hon. Secretary.

FINAL COMFORTS REPORT, SEPTEMBER, 1944.

I must apologise for not sending in this report before but with the flying-bomb season in full swing and the planning of evacuation for literally thousands of children, my time has been fully occupied.

The last parcel was sent off in May and the following letter was received from the Welfare Officer thanking us for the garments:—

Dear Miss Saunders,—May I, on behalf of the personnel of this Battalion, thank you and your lady helpers for the 55 pairs of socks you have so kindly sent along.

H. V. MORRISH, Lieut.,

Bn. Welfare Officer, The Middlesex Regt.

Our final total was 1,010, comprising 734 pairs of socks, 25 pullovers, 150 pairs of mitts, 31 pairs of gloves, 49 scarves, 20 helmets and our now famous knee caps.

The balance of my petty cash account of £1 19s. 7d. has been sent to the Treasurer and this with the balance of the Wool Fund of £10 10s. 4d., leaves us with a total of £12 9s. 11d. in hand.

My warmest thanks are due to those comrades who have so loyally supported the effort. I was grieved beyond measure to hear of the death through enemy action of one of the best of my knitters—Miss Pitt. She would always find time to take wool to knit for the regiment. She with other Service personnel are indeed of the "Salt of the earth."

Thank you all for helping to keep our promise of 1,000 garments and "Good luck to the next effort"—"The Merchant Navy."

LOUISE SAUNDERS.

NORFOLK

Some of our branch members spent a very enjoyable half-day in Norwich on July 24th. Five of them—The Misses West and McDermott, Mesdames Pastow, Selvage

and Chilvers—met at Thorpe Station at 2.15 p.m. After greetings, it was decided to take a bus into the city to a cinema. A happy afternoon was spent at the Haymarket. "Pygmalion," the main picture, was a good choice—both for those that had not seen it previously and others who had, and the supporting film and the News reel were interesting, too.

At the end of the programme, they met the Misses Newberry and brother outside, and repaired to the restaurant above for an appetising meal of bacon, potatoes and coffee—reminiscent of Service days and jaunts on precious half-holidays. The restaurant closing at 7.30 p.m., members sauntered round the old Castle Meadow—now very up to date with its wide road and pedestrian crossings—to the Royal Hotel, where the last half-hour was spent in the empty lounge. Members were able to toast The O.C.A., The Branch, Absent Friends, and Serving Members, in the modern style. It was regrettable that Miss Howson could not be present owing to business, and Mrs. Rumbold, due to evacuee friends.

Buses and trains leaving at 8.40 p.m., we were obliged to part early, but all agreed that we had spent a few very happy hours together, in spite of the war.

The Secretary has recently received two letters from Molly Howes in Kenya Colony. Her health is still far from good, but she was going to the coast for a holiday, so we trust the breezes will prove beneficial. It is only a small journey of 360 miles to the coast! Recently a letter has come from Mrs. Robinson (Smith, Wimereaux), who has been ill for 16 weeks. Although steadily improving, she has to take life very slowly, going one pace at a time—hard work for her, I'm sure those that know her will agree! The letter also contains news of Golding (Wimereux), who was in Torbay Hospital, undergoing an operation to the eyes. We hope that this has proved successful. Also of Nora White (Wimereux II), who is still having treatment for her hand. She fell on a broken bottle at Christmas, 1942. We look forward to hearing of the success of her latest treatment. Mrs. Stubbins (Kettle Wimereux II) has been spending a holiday at Thetford, and has now returned home to Cambridge.

If possible another afternoon meeting will be arranged in the near future, members being notified individually.

L. W. CHILVERS.

NORTH STAFFS

I am afraid that there is nothing very active to report from the Branch this month. Most of the members have been busy on their own account. Mrs. Smith had bottled about 500 jars of fruit last time I saw her. This keeps her restaurant supplied with fruit in the winter. Those of us who had the delicious fruit salad at our last Christmas party will look forward to a repetition of the same—we hope! She has also had a boy evacuee staying with her, as well as her own two boys home for the holidays.

Our next meeting is on Monday, October 2nd, when we hope to have a social evening at the Nell Gwynne Restaurant. Our meetings are now held on the first Monday in the month—and we should be pleased to

see any members of the Comrades' Association who are stationed in the district on that evening at 6.30 p.m. H. CLOUGH.

NOTTINGHAM

Since my last contribution to the "Gazette" we have had a few changes. Joysit, of J Company, A.T.S., has been transferred further North. We all miss her and wish her God-speed. We have been pleased to welcome visitors. Mrs. G. Williams, of London Branch, who is staying a few weeks in Nottingham; Miss Marshall, who unfortunately has been demobbed through ill-health; Miss Muriel Walsh, who spent a week with me. We were able to contact Miss Susie Stokes, of Swansea, who was visiting one of our members, Miss Enid Gott. We had a very enjoyable reunion. Our latest member, Mrs. Gerrish (late A.T.S.), brought her small son, Michael. Mrs. Tippet brought her wee grandson. The babies stole the day, which is not surprising as they are both so attractive. We were pleased to see Freda Calvert, who had just left hospital after a month's treatment. We all sincerely hope that you will feel some improvement, Freda, and that you will soon be restored to full health.

Once again we of the Nottingham Branch have been represented at a luncheon meeting of the National Council of Women when a most interesting talk was given on International Affairs as pertaining to women under stress of war and in the occupied countries. These glimpses of continuous women's activities are enthralling and make us realise the scope of the world to which we belong and in which we, as ex-Service women, must play our part.

There have been two outings for the members; one to Derbyshire, where tea was obtained in some beautiful ornamental gardens. The second was to Nuthall, to a farm belonging to a brother of one of our ex-WRAF members. Tea on the lawn, and Stirland, the ex-WRAF mentioned, is a wizard in the way in which she makes a war-time table appear pre-war.

Our thoughts still go out to our Comrades in the South and elsewhere, where one lives a front line life.

N. OSLER, Branch Secretary.

A.T.S. OFFICERS BECOME ARMY ENGINEERS

Four young A.T.S. subalterns are the first women to take over important administrative appointments in the "works" service branch of the Army. They were the first members of the A.T.S. to be included in a course for officers of the Royal Engineers at the School of Military Engineering in Northern Command, and after passing successfully they have all been posted to appointments formerly held by men. Subaltern Boagey, who last year gave up her job as a lecturer on architecture at Leicester College of Art to join the A.T.S., has been appointed Assistant Deputy Commander, Royal Engineers, for a large area in Western Command. Two Kent women—Subaltern Hovenden and Subaltern Gilman, of Goudhurst—hold similar appointments in Eastern Command. Subaltern Brock is a staff officer, Royal Engineers, in Eastern Command.

A.T.S. ARRIVE IN FRANCE

A Lance Corporal tells her story of the arrival of the main contingent of the A.T.S. Continental Group in France in August.

"... we packed and we had the afternoon off with tea and a film which was a Goodbye to England Party and a 21st Birthday Party for one of us as well. The next morning we were up at 2 a.m.! We left our billets in shuttles (18 A.T.S. and kit bags to a shuttle) at 4 a.m. and we arrived at the marshalling area at 9 a.m. where we had breakfast and a wash and were given all our sea kit; comprising bags, vomit, 3; lifebelt, compo rations, tommy cookers, chocolate and cigarettes. We were out of the area by 11 a.m. which was very good as we numbered over 400. Then to the port and we lugged our kit bags and all our packs to the ship but weren't allowed on. At last we staggered into the bowels of the ship which was a big Trooper and very crowded. We were put into the steerage hold over the engines where it was hot and there were tables and benches. Then we were allowed on the top deck where, with Canadian soldiers, R.A.F. and airborne troops we took a last look at England. The night was stuffy and we didn't sleep much but we felt we had truly been soldiers as we had exactly the same quarters and treatment. We woke at 6 a.m. (forcibly!), breakfasted at 7.30. No one was sea-sick but lots were atmosphere-sick. All the men were charming to us and very considerate. One could see why we were winning, they were Real Men. We were delayed by fog and we shivered a bit and we stood for some time in full equipment before embarking on the L.S.T. that landed us. The Canadians helped with our kit bags and the crew of the trooper started "We'll Meet Again" with an accordion and we all sang. We bumped in lorries over fields and down lanes and we arrived at 12.45 in our camp. We were given food but although it was the first since tea-time we didn't really want it, we had tea and found our tents. They have lovely hospital beds and new pale grey blankets and new bouncy pillows. The tents are dug into the ground about 3ft. 6ins. and covered with a kind of cocoanut matting. There is a useful pole which we hang our things on, and a ledge all around the end that isn't dug out before the tent walls begin. Four to a tent which is heaven and we are going to have wardrobes they say. Some belonged to S.S. troops and have German names carved on them. They are putting up a proper wash house, meanwhile there are cold water taps. The hot water the Press talked so much about is a Sawyer stove! We were able to sleep till 10.30 the next day. Sunday was free and we made our tent so cosy. The weather is wonderful and we shall all be brown. The Pioneers are working so hard to make this camp comfortable for us, less than a month ago it was a field of thistles. They have been marvellous. My office is in a bell tent in an apple orchard, everywhere is deep in dust from the roads. One of the nicest sights that I have seen was a huge American black soldier, covered with a large grin, arm in arm with a wee Frenchman, talking to him in school-boy French.

Now for a mobile bath . . ."

THE QUEEN WITH A.T.S.

BAKING AND COOKING FOR THE ARMY

On July 31st the Queen spent a large part of the day among the officers and auxiliaries of the A.T.S. in a number of military establishments in South Eastern Command and in the London District. Her Majesty, who wore a pearl-grey ensemble and grey hat with shell-pink curled ostrich feather, was accompanied by the Princess Royal, wearing the uniform of the A.T.S., as Controller-Commandant.

This morning the Queen and the Princess went first to the A.T.S. Wing of the Staff College. Here they visited the lecture rooms and saw A.T.S. officers at their training in preparation for staff posts, at not only A.T.S. establishments but also Army static headquarters, where their work is exactly the same as that of male staff officers apart from tactics or discipline. Special interest was shown in a map-reading class in the ground; the Queen watched and questioned officer-students using the prismatic compass and the protractor.

The next visit was to an Army static mechanical bakery. Passing between the lines of a guard of honour of auxiliaries wearing the badge of the R.A.S.C. over their tunic pockets, the Queen and the Princess went into large, warm, spotless rooms where girls in white blouses and trousers tended machines that kneaded dough and formed, weighted, and counted loaves at steady speed, turning out many thousands a day for the Army's tables.

From baking the visitors went on to see cooking at a training centre of the Army Catering Corps. Here were A.T.S. officers training to be messing officers, and auxiliaries learning the work of cooks. As the Queen discussed with one and another the economical cutting-up of meat and the making of delicious-looking salads, she put the youngest and most shy-looking of them completely at ease.

After luncheon, taken in the mess at an A.T.S. Group Headquarters, the Queen and the Princess drove to the A.T.S. Officer Cadet Training Unit, which has the use of handsome buildings and grounds that once housed a public school for boys. Their chief object here was to see the staff of auxiliaries—clerks, orderlies, and cooks. A number of these girls formed an extremely smart guard of honour, and another squad did some admirable close-order marching drill.

TWO LANCE-CORPORALS AND TWO PRIVATES RESCUE VI VICTIMS

One morning some Auxiliaries in Southern England were roused by a flying bomb which fell about a hundred yards from their requisitioned house. Ceilings fell down, windows were dragged out by the blast, but the A.T.S. were undismayed. They put on their tin hats and set out to give what help they could at the scene of the incident.

They found people trapped in two cottages. By the light of their torches they removed rubble and gave first aid to the injured, then carried them back to their home. Most of the victims were suffering from severe shock and head injuries. The

A.T.S. gave them tea while waiting for the ambulance to arrive.

Their C.O. received a letter on behalf of the Local Rescue Service, in which the writer said: "I must express the admiration which I personally and the members of the Rescue Service attending, felt at the extremely efficient work that was done by the A.T.S., and the care and attention given to the casualties."

A.T.S. CORPORAL DESIGNED THE S.H.A.E.F. "FLASH"

The flaming sword of liberation, the distinguishing flash worn by all members of the British and U.S. armies, including A.T.S. and W.A.C.S., serving at the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Forces, was designed by a 23-year-old A.T.S. corporal.

Corporal Doreen Goodall, who was studying dress designing before the war, joined the A.T.S. in 1940 as a pay clerk and is now working as a draughtswoman in the operations branch of the Headquarters. She is the only woman working in the topographical office where her colleagues are three British soldiers and three Americans. One of her duties is to assemble maps in sections for the use of high ranking officers and she worked on those used at the Quebec conference. Information received in draft form has to be transferred to the appropriate map and the layout of forces and details of the countryside over which they are operating filled in. On one occasion she attended an exercise manoeuvre and saw her work put to practical use.

The S.H.A.E.F. flash which Corporal Goodall herself was one of the first to wear is symbolic of the Allied aims. The sword of liberation is shown against the black background of Nazi oppression surmounted by the blue skies of peace; there is also a rainbow including the colours of the Allied nations. The original design was autographed by General Eisenhower.

A.T.S. TRAIN FOR POST-WAR HOME

Auxiliaries are learning domestic science at a well-equipped centre under the tuition of experts. This is the first large centre to run domestic science courses, designed to equip Servicewomen fully for after the war.

Some of the new labour-saving devices which the A.T.S. are taught to use will be on the market for the first time after the war. They are given instruction in the use of the fittings of the kitchen of a Portal House, and in the use of a washing machine type which it will be possible to hire after the war.

Cookery lessons range from porridge making or mixing a salad to the preparation of a six-course dinner, and include such subjects as fruit preserving. Auxiliaries are taught how to lay a table correctly, and how to do their own plumbing, carpentry and home decorating, and to mend electric fuses. It is easier to mend a fuse than to thread a sewing machine yet how few women can tackle the job!

The scope of the course is wide, for besides learning dressmaking, students are able to receive instruction in woodwork, and modelling.

NEWS OF COMRADES Old and New

The General Secretary was delighted to get a letter from **Jean K. Anderson** who has been a Life member since 1927. She sent us a Gazette subscription for 8 years through her friend, **N. Wilkins**, who returned to England, or rather Wales, early in the year. We are sorry to learn that Anderson has been laid up with pneumonia, she was still in hospital when she wrote her long and interesting letter. We hope that she is now quite well again and able to deal with her garden where she grows everything needed to keep the household in vegetables, as well as raising her own seeds which she says are much healthier than those which are bought. At the time she wrote it was winter in Australia and she was longing for some warmth so that she could sit out when she was well enough to get out of bed. Like all our Comrades abroad she expresses her sympathy with comrades in the Old Country who are having a harrassing time with the dreadful doodle-bugs. Fortunately it takes more than this form of nuisance to upset the morale of anyone over here!

Gertrude Cancellor, who has also been a Life member for a good many years, served with the E.F.C. and at Havre. She is now keeping house for a very dear Uncle in Oxfordshire. We are glad that she has now renewed her subscription to the Gazette and is going to keep in touch with the C.A. **Miss L. Saunders** has suffered, as many others of our Comrades, from the flying bombs. Her home was damaged but she considers that they have escaped fairly well when she sees the devastation around. In another place will be found Miss Saunders' last Report of the Comforts Fund as the target of 1,000 garments for the Middlesex Regiment has been reached and Miss Burnett is now taking over and will collect for the Merchant Navy. We were delighted to hear that Miss Saunders is preparing for a great day, January 1st, not merely New Year's Day, but her wedding day! We wish her every happiness and congratulate her fiancé, Mr. A. W. Downer.

Mrs. Olive King (who served as Jordan, U.A. in France) has also been unfortunate in having her house blitzed. She returned from shopping one day to find windows all gone, tiles off, ceilings down, garage doors in the drive, kitchen door in the garage, in fact, a horrible mess with glass and plaster everywhere. However, she is thankful that her clothes were safe! After a fortnight of real rest in Wales, in a real bed AND in a nightdress and no shoes, she feels able to deal with everything.

Can anyone give news of **Florence Margaret Robinson**, who used to live at Leicester? Miss Cancellor is asking—she has not heard from her since the beginning of the War although she knows that she joined the A.T.S. We are sorry to learn that **Miss M. A. Carter, M.B.E.**, had to relinquish her Commission as Senior Commander in the A.T.S. on account of ill-health. She has sent a Life subscription to the Gazette as she is more anxious now than ever to keep in touch with "Old Comrades." She has been a Life member of the C.A. since May, 1943. We hope she will enjoy good health in the future.

Sergeant E. F. Chislett, W/267, sends a new address as she has lost her home through a direct hit by a doodle-bug. She was so anxious not to drop her membership of the Association that she sent a second subscription for this year as all her papers are lost and she was not sure if she had paid! Many thanks for that and much sympathy in the loss of your home and precious belongings.

Mrs. Salisbury-Jones, better known to many O.C.'s as Chrissie Adams, writes "Now with a war-time job at the County Hall three days a week and 'Bugs' for eleven weeks, I don't feel much like visiting London. We are reduced to two rooms as a result of three flying bombs in our vicinity, so I don't want to leave home until we see the last one disposed of." She hears regularly from **Blanchard** in Washington, but has no news of **Teall** so fears that she is still interned. She was in France so it is hoped she may be repatriated some day soon. Chrissie extends a warm welcome to the new Editor if she should chance to be anywhere near Maidstone, as a bus passes the gate between Maidstone and Charing, and she would be pleased to give her tea.

We were more delighted to hear from **Miss J. C. Richman**, lately a Junior Commander, that she is quite well again, after 12 months of illness. It must have been a very trying year and it is good to know that she is once more in her own home which has been repaired after it was bombed last year. **Sergt. G. M. Hogan**, who also served in Q.M.A.A.C. at Bourges and Paris Plage, has now left the A.T.S. and is taking a course of Canteen Cookery in Liverpool and is liking it very much. She will certainly never be without a job as a cook, we wish her every success.

Mrs. E. Mills, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer of the ex-Service Women's Club in New South Wales, writes a long and interesting letter on June 9th when all Australia was thrilled by the news of the INVASION. They all heard the Allied Commander-in-Chief making his speech and their thoughts and prayers were with the brave troops making such a wonderful landing. Mrs. Mills was stationed at Le Havre in her Army days and also knew Rouen well. She finds it hard to leave the radio as the news is so exciting. The President of the Club, **Mrs. Peachey**, has asked Mrs. Mills to say that the Club will give a great welcome to any ex-Service women who come to Sydney and New South Wales after the war. Those who have visited Australia can tell of the wonderful hospitality which has been given to them by the members of the Club and of the very happy times they have enjoyed there. **Mrs. Briggs**, a member of the Club, has two sons in the R.A.A.F., one of whom is in England. **Mrs. Kilgour Roberts** is once again in "civvies" after two years in the A.W.A.S. She made no less than 800 (yes, eight hundred) scones for a tea party given by the Anzac Fellowship of Women! Mrs. Roberts served in Q.M.A.A.C. and is a Life member of the Comrades Association. She is hoping to come again to England after the war.

It is quite a long time since we had news of **Frances R. Mackenzie**, who served in Etaples, so it was a pleasure to hear from her again but we were sorry to learn that

she had a nasty fall and hurt her knees, always unpleasant but more so when one is a bit rheumatic. She is a great cook. Another of our famous cooks, **Mrs. Marwood**, is still working hard although she is well over 70. They both deserve great praise for carrying on such good work, especially in these days when the job has to be done without any young help.

Miss Gertrude Gleeson, who served at Kil-dare, has been in Farnborough Hospital, having been injured in an air-raid. **Miss Hayward** was going to visit her, despite the fact that she had only just returned from a pleasant holiday to find a blasted house.

Miss M. Stewart Reid, late A.A., Q.M.A.A.C., writes to say how very sorry she is to read of the death of two of her old Comrades, Mrs. Robinson and Ada Pitt, both of whom she knew well. She gives me an interesting account of what she has been doing with herself for the past 18 years—Housekeeper and Matron at Stockwell College, Lowther College, North Wales, Casterton School, Lancs., and at Glasgow University. Recently she has been Manageress of Residential Chambers in Nottinghill Gate but the staff problem made her decide to find a less wearing job and she is now doing clerical work for the Ministry of Supply which gives her more leisure and less responsibility. She also does some Red Cross and W.V.S. work. Unfortunately she was laid up with a badly sprained ankle when she wrote. We hope that it is quite strong again by this time.

Mrs. Nicholas (Birmingham), who served as Elsie Jones, is very interested in "A Mystery" which was printed on page 5 of the May-June Gazette. She is wondering if the W.A.A.C. mentioned there is by any chance **MARY NORMS** whom she used to know well as they served together at Audruicq. They kept in touch and spent a holiday together in Torino in Italy. If our "Mystery" should be Mary Norris, the General Secretary would be pleased to put her in touch with Mrs. Nicholas if she will write to 82, Lancaster Gate, London.

Miss G. M. Smith, who served at "D" Camp, Le Havre, and is now Secretary of the Imperial ex-Service Women's Association of Victoria, writes as follows:—"It was with very much pleasure we cabled you the sum of £25 a few days ago; which was raised by this Association to assist any members of Q.M.A.A.C. and A.T.S. Comrades Association in need of help through bombing. We are sorry the amount is not larger, but unfortunately our Club is only a small one. We hope the new menace of robot planes will soon die out and that peace will be restored again. The Melbourne Association wishes you all a big 'Cheerio' and all good wishes." The General Secretary wrote by Air Mail on August 24th to express sincere thanks for such a splendid donation and the deep appreciation Council felt at the generosity of our ex-Service sisters in Victoria. Miss Smith also sent a Melbourne Poet's Tribute to the People of Britain.

Mrs. Pratt-Barlow has had an airgraph from **ESTHER PACE** in Sydney, full of news and remembrances, she says that her great ambition is to attend an annual dinner. We hope that one day this will be possible.

We send our best wishes to **Controller Fraser-Tyler's** daughter Mary on her engagement to Lieutenant Patrick John Morgan, D.S.O., R.N. She is also serving in the A.T.S. Her eldest sister, Jnr. Cmdr. Ann Fraser-Tyler, is in France.

Best wishes too go to **Subaltern H. M. Lovett-Cameron** (nee Little) who was married on August 25th.

On September 2nd **Junior Commander P. M. Janson** was married to Lt. Roy Jackes, R.A., and we hope that they will be very happy. On the same day **Subaltern L. K. E. Charles's** marriage to Capt. F. L. Fisher, R.E., took place, for them we wish all happiness in the future as well as for **Subaltern Joy Wood** (nee Pilgrim) whose wedding to J. M. Wood, R.A., took place on September 14th.

Chief Commander I. J. J. Carlebach was married on September 23rd to Lt.-Col. A. T. B. Bignold-de Cologan (Marques de Torrehermosa), The Rifle Brigade, Commandant, Royal Military School of Music. The good wishes of many serving and ex-service personnel will go to her.

The Editor was delighted to get an encouraging letter from a member of Edinburgh Branch, **Miss M. C. Roberts**, who served in the W.A.A.C. at Rouen. She hopes that with the relaxation of the black-out and of Civil Defence duties more members will turn up to Meetings. She hopes for more publicity to attract serving members to the C.A. and asks if Comrades with ideas on how to do this could state them. She speaks of the aim of the Edinburgh Branch to keep themselves, and the whole of Scotland a really live unit; the Editor, who spent one of the happiest days of her serving years in Edinburgh, is sure that this aim will be achieved.

A new member of the C.A., **Senior Commander C. Douglas**, says that she has learned many new things about the A.T.S. from the Gazette. Other new members include **Chief Cdr. G. M. Heaton, Snr. Cdr. E. Baines, Subaltern R. Crompton-Inglefield**, and **Mrs. Gerrish**, who served in the A.T.S. as **Subaltern Heslop**. She modestly says that she has one son but Nottingham Branch speaks enthusiastically of him! Another new reader is **W/65281 L/Cpl. M. G. Sumsion** who says that her membership card arrived on the third anniversary of her first day in the A.T.S.

ON EXERCISE

Troops training to the last minute for their part in the liberation of Europe, are helped by the A.T.S. A military unit in Eastern Command, going out on one such pre-operations exercise, took with it a medical orderly, two cooks and two mess orderlies, all from the A.T.S. These girls had to be ready to work under any sort of difficult conditions, and proved themselves well up to the task.

First arriving at the appointed place, they had to prepare field kitchens. There was no time to waste and they quickly tackled the job of getting the hydro petrol burner going and collecting water from a cottage. By the time the first men arrived, hot and thirsty, tea was ready. And when the "enemy" arrived, the A.T.S. welcomed them with an appetising meal!

The medical orderly was busy with her first "casualty," skilfully dressing the arm of a "wounded" officer.

One meal achieved, the auxiliaries moved on to another destination, and set about preparing the next, which was ready and waiting when the men returned. Stew, beans and potatoes followed by a good rice pudding, were greeted enthusiastically by men, hungry after a hard day's manoeuvres. This over, the girls washed up and cleared away, and prepared the 10-ton lorry which was to act as their barrack room for that night.

The medical orderly was still busy with her casualties from the day's "fighting."

At 5 o'clock the following morning, the A.T.S. were up betimes, preparing breakfast by the fitful light of paraffin lamps. At the end of the exercise they were the last away, clearing up and taking all the scraps of food to the nearest farmer for his pigs and poultry.

In charge on this job was **L./Cpl. Teresa Jessop**, 19 years old, a medical orderly, who lives in Ellard, Yorkshire. She has one brother in the R.A.F.

One of the cooks was **Private Ratcliffe**, of Doncaster, who was a bookstall assistant in civilian life. The other cook, **Private Sarah Shaw**, known as "Sally," comes from Barnsley in Yorkshire, and has two brothers in the Services. The two orderlies were **Private K. Aiken**, of Macclesfield, and **Private M. Graham**, of Birkenhead.

SECOND ECHELON

There are more than 500 A.T.S. with Second Echelon, and they might well be called the foster mothers of the British Liberation Army. They deal not with tanks or guns but with people and their job is to find the happy solution to hundreds of human problems.

If the Prime Minister calls for the latest casualty figures, if a unit in Holland or Belgium needs urgent reinforcements, if a front line soldier, medically down-graded, has to be found a new job, if anyone wants news of a man on the danger list in hospital in France, Second Echelon finds the answer. It is the liaison between the unit in the field and the vast organisation of the Army at home; it is also the first link between the soldier overseas and his next of kin in any emergency.

A great part of a soldier's welfare as well as that of his family depends on his documents being in perfect order; officers in the fighting line have neither time nor opportunity for much paper work so Second Echelon takes over as soon as a unit is mobilised. An interesting little ceremony occurs when the Commanding Officer, accompanied by his orderly room sergeant, takes his men's documents to Second Echelon and hands them over in person. In many cases, he also hands over the sergeant who stays to help the Echelon staff.

The nerve centre of the Echelon is the P.I. Branch—Production of Information—which acts as a general clearing house of information about the personnel of the B.L.A. Junior Commander Tiffin, who is in charge of a section in this branch, is the first A.T.S. officer who has replaced an Army officer in an Echelon formation in the whole

of the British Army. Every day embarkation rolls, casualty lists and returns of all kinds come into her office.

If **Private Jones** is in Normandy, Echelon can tell you when he embarked, what his trade is, and all about his Army career, what sort of an education he had, and what he did in civil life, who is his next of kin, whether he has been wounded and if so, in which hospital he is and how he is progressing. Echelon is one of the most "human" of Army formations, for the soldiers and A.T.S. who work there make it their job to see that everyone is spared unnecessary anxiety and to ensure that a soldier's wishes are carried out as far as possible. If **Private Jones** names his mother as his next of kin, but would like any bad news to be broken to her by his sister, then Echelon will see that if he is wounded, missing, or killed, the telegram goes to the right person. If a man is in hospital in France and notified as seriously ill or on the danger list, and no further news has been received after twenty-one days, Echelon will send an urgent request for a progress report so that his family can be told the latest news.

The auxiliaries take a personal interest in "their" particular soldiers whom they have never seen and probably never will see. Whenever a man's name is in the news, the clerks who look after his documents recognise him and claim him as "one of ours." To help "their boys" they cheerfully work from early morning until late into the night, defying the flying bombs that came over their part of Southern England.

One of busiest branches of Echelon just now is E.P.W.—Enemy Prisoners of War. It is a good sign when they work overtime for it means that another few thousand Germans are out of the war. Here they can tell you how many thousand prisoners we have taken, who they are, and they can even show you what possessions were found on each man at the time. Documents found in captured enemy offices are also handled here and the clerks make a translation of each and also attach a précis of its contents. **Private Doreen Cross**, of Birmingham, is the only A.T.S. clerk working in this branch; some of her soldier colleagues are teaching her German to help her in her work.

A.T.S. are working in all branches of the Echelon, and many of the N.C.O.'s are in charge of sections and have mixed staffs of soldiers and auxiliaries. A lot of the clerks have served since the early days of the war in pay and record offices and they are reaping their reward for years of service in jobs which, but for their importance, could be very monotonous.

The Echelon A.T.S. have their complement of general duties personnel, administrative clerks, storewomen, cooks, orderlies as well as two hairdressers and a medical orderly in charge of the sick bay.

Their Commanding Officer, **Senior Commander Creek**, joined up before the war as a cook and served for some time as a sergeant. She was sent to France in charge of a section which served with the B.E.F.

There were A.T.S. with Second Echelon at that time of the war too. They were commanded by **Junior Commander J. Knox** whom we know better as the second Director of the A.T.S.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Now that I have landed on French soil and am finding life different and extremely interesting, my thoughts turn to the "Gazette," and as I sit in my tent, which is very comfortable, reading the July/August number with the note about the arrival of the A.T.S. in France, I feel, being one of them, that I must say how very well and comfortable we all are. Conditions for the girls are excellent. Girls are cooking outside in all weathers and if you were to ask them if they would like to go home their answer would be "No. Not until the war is over now." Anyway, it won't be long until we shall all be speeding home, as we feel victory is in sight, and we look forward to a world of peace once more.

Now I, as a member of the Comrades' Association, find great enjoyment in reading the "Gazette," and wish you all the best of luck in your endeavours.

W/92744 Pte. LYNAM, A.T.S.,
Rear H.Q., 21 Army Group, B.L.A.

Dear Editor,—I just loved reading the July/August number and in it you ask us to tell you things, so I just wondered. . . .

When I was manageress with N.A.A.F.I., I did what I could to help the A.T.S. who arrived in the camp. I was invited to a 21st Birthday Party and having been a W.A.A.C. I felt quite at home among them and the old spirit was as good as one could wish. The Commandant came from a distance and with the other officers joined wholeheartedly in the games. The cooks had made a better "do" than civvy street could possibly have done. The Group Commander was most interested when she heard that I had served in the last war and with the Army of Occupation, and when I told her of my life afterwards, she came to my office and asked if I could talk to her A.T.S., but she was moved soon afterwards and I had little spare time. However, I wondered if we could help or interest each other through the "Gazette."

As a W.A.A.C. in 1917 I was posted to the R.F.C. at St. Leonard's, and in June, 1918, became a W.R.A.F. Early in 1919 I went to R.A.F. H.Q. in France and on to Cologne. After demobilisation and a short spell at home I went out under the ex-Service Emigration Scheme to New Zealand. I worked in Wellington and Christchurch for two years and then went across to Melbourne, where we started an ex-Service Women's Association and met regularly in Anzac House. Mrs. Britomarte James was the President, Dr. Ethel Osborne and Miss Foster, Vice-Presidents. All three have been magnificent friends to the ex-Service Women and Miss Foster still carries on. Before starting a tea-shop on my own I made a trip to England and stayed about 18 months, becoming the first "House Mother" to the first Toc. H. Women's Section hostel, called "New June," on Tower

Hill. My lunch club for city office girls became a Home from Home, especially during the General Strike, when we all did what we could for stranded city people. I returned to Australia as assistant matron to a party of domestic workers and to them I made three suggestions, which I still think are useful.

(1) To open a Savings Bank Account and, by the time enough was earned and saved to return if one wanted to, home-sickness would have lost its sting. (2) To join the kind of church one was used to. (3) To have some hobby outside one's job, such as Guides, Toc H. or Service Fellowship.

In Australia I next ran a Toc H. lunch club in the C. of E. Women's Shelter, to which I was Asst. Matron. This gave me a chance to advise our out-of-work and down-hearted home folk to take any kind of work for a start.

I received a cheque from Toc H. and a request to use it to return to "New June." I didn't use it but I went back and looked after Padre Clayton's household when he was given a clergy house, which was used as a hostel, lunch club, etc. Ten years there and then came this war.

Please forgive all this, but I wondered if, through the "Gazette" we could help each other by telling of the things which will touch our lives, and so be able to "live to our finger tips." I appreciate your "don't worry about your powers of authorship," because I'm sure many of us who have interesting things to say do hesitate and are self-conscious. As an old member I know for certain what a tremendous help the C.A. has been and will be in the future. Mrs. Johnston (who makes one so welcome), Miss Ireland and many others have done so much more than we ever realise to make it a success. The club, too, is a real God-send to us and we owe much to those who have laboured on and "stuck it out" through the terrible experiences of the war in London. With every good wish, Yours faithfully,

FLORENCE A. DAY.

Springdale, Uppingham, Rutland

Dear Editor,—As a new member of the Comrades' Association I would like to know if there is anyone whom I could contact through the "Gazette." I joined the 45th Hampshires (Isle of Wight Rifles) in September, 1938, but was not enrolled until the following January. After serving with this Company until August, 1940, I transferred to the Royal Corps of Signals and became a switchboard operator, finally being posted to 3rd Southern Command Signals. I would like to send my congratulations to Senior Commander Gillespie on becoming an M.B.E. I had the honour of serving under her for over a year. It was with regret that I had to leave the Service, being invalided out in August, 1943.

If there are any islanders who take the

"Gazette," I would be very pleased to hear from them; also any members of the 3rd Command Signals. My kind regards and good wishes to all Comrades of the Q.M.A.A.C. and A.T.S.—Yours sincerely,

PYLLIS E. CLEETER.

Town Cottage, Town Depot,
Wood Street, Ryde, I.O.W.

"CIVVY STREET"

The return to "Civvy Street" has been a dream for thousands of girls for the past five years. Soon that dream will be realised, and the women of our Services will be plunged into problems of readjustment. They will find for a time that they are completely at sea as civilians. Their ten-day leave periods have not prepared them for the complexities of coupons. Many of them will be returning to their own homes to take up home responsibilities, and how different it will be, doing their duties alone, instead of as one of a team. There will be no break in the canteen or in the mess, with that old get-together spirit to relieve the monotony. Perhaps, for a time, they will feel lonely. The N.C.O. may find that the very fact of her old authority becomes a problem of its own. She has been in a position to get things done, but now that counts for nothing, and her manner, merely that of a good N.C.O., may be frowned on as overbearing!

Clothes assume a major importance when those who have been told what to wear and how to wear it for so long are suddenly free to choose, and here a word of warning—no frilly, frivolous clothes, for a time, at least, because after a well-cut skirt and jacket of comfortable slacks and blouse they won't feel right.

Discipline has hitherto come from outside, now it must be imposed from within—a hard task. But as the ex-Service women become accustomed to civilian life again they will carry forward the pride of their past service in the Army. Let them also remember their pride in themselves, their appearance and their achievements. In this way they will render as great service as citizens as they have as auxiliaries. Soon "Civvy Street" will not seem so bad and their Service days will be happy memories.

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

Killed in action in Normandy on July 31st, 1944, near St. Martin de Besace, Lieutenant Denis Mathers, Royal Tank Regiment, younger son of Mrs. Gibbons (nee Reid, U.A., ex-Q.M.A.A.C., Base Depot, Camiers), of 39, Engayne Gardens, Upminster, Essex.

On September 2nd, 1944, at Leicester, Justina ("Tina") Harrowing, Subaltern, A.T.S., formerly member of Red Cross Mobile Unit, Chipstead, Surrey, wife of T. Cuthbert Harrowing.

Will all contributors please note that any particulars they wish included in the next issue of the "Gazette" should reach the Editor not later than the 21st of November, Mrs. Richard Addis, Woodside, Frant, Sussex.