



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. O.A., 82, Lancaster Gate, London, W.2.
Telephone: Paddington 8440.

NOVEMBER—DECEMBER, 1944
Vol. XXI. No. 3.

HEADQUARTERS REPORT FOR OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER

There is not much to report about the work at the Headquarter Office during October and November as there has been no Meeting of Council since the 21st of September which has already been dealt with in the previous issue of the Gazette.

The high-light of these months has been the number of Life members who have joined the Association and who have written such delightful letters. They are all glad that there is such a bond to hold together those who have served in the A.T.S. The nearer they come to demobilization the greater appears the need for the friendly comradeship of the Association.

We have had many Annual subscriptions too, and it is especially encouraging to find members renewing their subscriptions as they would otherwise miss the Gazettes which they find very interesting.

Mrs. Davin, the new Secretary of the A.T.S. Benevolent Fund, came to see the General Secretary on November 15th. It was a pleasure to see her and discuss many things with regard to the Fund and the importance of keeping in close touch with the Association as so many applications come to Headquarters and have to be passed on. In the case of the Service Women's Benevolent Fund (which assists ex-Service women of the last War) the applications for assistance are always addressed to the Comrades Association concerned and in due course, after investigation, passed to the Fund for the grant. This has always made a real bond between the S.W.B.F. and the Comrades Associations. In the case of the Service Women's Benevolent Fund there is just the one Fund which covers all ex-Service women of 1914-1919, but the same would apply even more closely to the A.T.S. Benevolent Fund which was initiated by the Council of the Association.

Sad to say, very few new designs have come in for the proposed new Badge, and none for the Poster. However, there is still time before the closing date, MONDAY, 15th JANUARY, 1945, and we hope that many interesting designs and suggestions will arrive by that date for the consideration of the Council.

C.S.M. C. Kemp called on the 31st October
(Continued in next column.)



Christmas & New Year Greetings From the President

To all my comrades I send every good wish for Christmas and New Year, and may 1945 bring us peace. My thoughts will travel round the world on Christmas Day and will bring with them my warmest greetings to my comrades and friends.

FLORENCE SIMPSON.

Christmas, 1944.

Dame Helen wishes all her Comrades a happy Christmas and a splendid New Year. In their Service, in their work and in their homes may they have—and take—the opportunity to help one another and to serve the country.

Miss Ireland sends greeting for a happy Christmas, with sincere good wishes for the New Year to all Comrades, old and new.



COUNCIL MEETING

Will all members of Council please note that the date of the next Meeting has been fixed for SATURDAY, JANUARY 20th, 1945, at 2.30 p.m. The Agenda will be sent, as usual, ten days before the Meeting but this information is now given in order that members may have as long a notice of the Meeting as is possible.

to say how sorry she is at being unable to attend Meetings of the Council, the journey from Blackdown being too great. Corporal D. Barker, W/151447, has been appointed in her stead. Cpl. Barker is a member of K Company, No. 5 London District Group, and works in the War Office (A.G. 15). Unfortunately unforeseen circumstances will prevent her attending the next Council Meeting but we are hoping to welcome her in January.

The January Meeting will be a very interesting one as there will be the question of the Badges and Posters for discussion, as well as the Agenda for the Annual General Meeting. All RESOLUTIONS from Branches should reach the General Secretary NOT LATER than WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17th,

Subscription and Gazette,
Life, £5. Annual 5s.

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.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Twenty-fifth Annual General Meeting of Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps and Territorial Service Comrades Association will be held on Saturday, February 24th, 1945, at the Service Women's Club, 5, Buckingham Gate, London, S.W.1, at 3 p.m.

The Branch Secretaries' Meeting will be held before the Annual General Meeting, at 2 p.m., at 5, Buckingham Gate.

It is hoped that as many Branch Secretaries as possible will try to be present as this informal meeting gives every opportunity for discussing the many difficulties and problems which these war days present.

The Agenda of the Annual General meeting will be published in the January—February issue of the Gazette.

COMRADES' ASSOCIATION SUBSCRIPTIONS

Will all members please note that, in order to save work and postage, all Membership cards and receipts for 1945 will be enclosed with the January—February issue of the Gazette. If no receipt and card is enclosed, the General Secretary should be informed as in such case the postal order may have gone astray.

CALAIS, 1917—18

Mrs. Rumbold (3383 Newing F./Wm.) was with the R.A.O.C. at Calais and moved with the Depot to Vendroux and she wrote to the Editor when the B.L.A. were taking Calais to say how vividly those times came back to her. Vendroux was not a village (let me enlighten the new generation of Comrades who may have wondered as I have where this magic place was situated) but the name of the people to whom the land taken by the R.A.O.C. belonged.

The camp was midway between Calais and Guines. Mrs. Rumbold wondered if the Germans in this war occupied the site of Queen Alexandra Camp or Queen Mary Camp in Calais. "In the critical days of 1918 we were the people in Calais when the Germans were making an all out bid for the Channel ports. I remember how furious we were when told that we should be evacuated if the enemy broke through. Every night for a week we slept packed and ready to the sound of guns, but fortunately we did not have to leave.

"How proud we old W.A.A.C. are to think we were the pioneers of Women Auxiliaries and how proud we are of our daughters, the A.T.S., who so ably 'carry on.'

"Best wishes, good luck, and Happy Memories to all old Calais and Vendroux Comrades."

BRUSSELS, 1944

The A.T.S. with Rear H.Q. 21st Army Group are billeted in Brussels in a building previously occupied by the Gestapo. They are having a tremendous welcome from the Belgians who are as kind as they can be and make each girl at home in their families in their off-time.

One writes: "There is a place called Cafe Blighty which is really a N.A.A.F.I., but so good one wouldn't know it, with waitresses, and a band and ham and lager and fruit. We have been invited to teas and dinners and dances and the opera, also to see over the biggest shop in Brussels. Once, at the opera, the people in the next box (our box cost us 15 francs each as the management made 'un petit arrangement') were all women, shiny and beaming and very kind and motherly, longing to air their English 'we have waited so long to hear it,' and they too asked us to go and visit them. The food is marvellous and the people in the market are so kind."

NEWS OF COMRADES

Mrs. Margaret Ambler, who served as a sergeant in the A.T.S., came and lunched with the General Secretary on October 31st. She was then interested in the problem of finding a suitable job!

Miss A. Whitley writes that she has left Ilford and is now in Hereford. She misses the pleasant meetings of Ilford Branch. We hope she may be able to find other comrades in Hereford and maybe start a Branch there.

Miss B. M. Hassell, the Chairman of Nottingham Branch, as well as of the Club there, sends news of the Annual General Meeting of the Club. It has been decided to change the old rather cumbersome name to that of "Ex-Service Women's Club." Mrs. Lloyd, the President of the Club, came all the way from Midhurst. The George Hotel gave them an excellent tea and the evening was happily spent at the Club. Indeed, we may say that the Socials at the Ex-Service Women's Club are always very jolly affairs.

We are very sorry to hear that Miss Mabel Wain is suffering from Fibrositis and she is afraid that she may have to give up her work. Much sympathy, Wain; we hope that you will soon be better.

Miss E. Cocksedge, famous for her chocolates, says that she has just returned from attending the wedding of another Waaclet; this time the son of Mrs. Lumb. Another wedding was also in the offing, that of Mrs. Ross's daughter. It is possible that some of our newer members do not know that a box of chocolates made by Cocksedge was raffled and made One Hundred Pounds for one of the war efforts. The Branch (Bradford) are arranging a dinner party for Christmas and in the New Year are entertaining wounded soldiers; everything at the tea-party will be home made. Lucky soldiers!

A letter from Miss Margery Thornhill, lately a Corporal in the A.T.S., tells us that she has been discharged on medical grounds. The result of hard work and the shock of losing all her belongings in a raid. She is very sad at leaving the Service; Thornhill also served in Q.M.A.A.C. as a Forewoman (Patrol Section) at Bristol, Bedford and other places, so she can feel that she has done her bit.

Miss Florence Vidler, of Toronto, has sent her subscription for 1945, with the usual donation towards the funds of the C.A. She writes "We are having our Annual Dinner on November 11th; also a draw for Quilts and a Sale of Work. We want to get 100 dollars if we can which is to go to the 'British War Victims Fund.' It is very hard to try and keep Clubs going, so many members are on war work; some are nursing at local hospitals. My own work just consists of being a blood donor, and although I do not wish to brag, I think 12 donations from a person nearly 49 is not too bad." Nor do we, Vidler. It is wonderful and most helpful. Many thanks for the charming Christmas card; it is the first we have had so far.

We are delighted to welcome Senior Commander Grosbie as a new Life member, as well as Chief Commander B. C. Gardner, Subaltern E. Hovenden, Senior Commander M. Friswell and C.S.M. Patrie, all of whom

have joined the Comrades Association during November, making a total of six with Junior Commander F. E. Ferguson, who is at present stationed in Northern Ireland.

Miss E. M. Shearman sends us a new address, Memmie, 6, Cross Road, Birchington-on-Sea, Kent. It is regretted that this was inadvertently omitted from the last issue of the "Gazette."

In September and October we had the great pleasure of welcoming yet more Life members, as well as several in August, and we are hoping to publish a list of all who have joined since the beginning of the year. Meanwhile our good wishes and welcome to Senior Commander V. E. Watson, Senior Commander N. E. Baines, Chief Commander A. C. Maconochie, Junior Commander I. C. Neilson, Junior Commander A. M. Master, Controller M. G. Heaton, Sergeant D. Eastwood, Subaltern A. M. Melliard, Senior Commander D. M. Beston, Subaltern P. M. Lane and Chief Commander B. Boyle. We also thank many Life members who joined before the "Gazette" subscription became an integral part of the subscription to the Comrades Association, and who have since sent in their Life subscriptions to the "Gazette."

C.S.M. C. Kemp has regretfully had to resign from Council, as she is now stationed at Blackdown and is no longer able to come up to the Meetings. She called at the office much to the pleasure of Miss Clark, and the General Secretary, with whom she had tea. Many reminiscences of the old Corps and the present Service added to the happy hour spent together. It was a pleasure to welcome Mrs. Flora Davin, the Secretary of the A.T.S. Benevolent Fund, who lunched with the General Secretary on November 15th. A most interesting time was spent discussing benevolent problems, as the General Secretary is also Hon. Secretary of the Service Women's Benevolent Fund, and has had long experience of the many needs of ex-Service women. It was agreed that close co-operation between the A.T.S. Benevolent Fund and the Comrades Association is a vital necessity.

A new member, Corporal A. I. Brooke, who lives at 71, Burley Wood Crescent, Leeds 4, was stationed at Liverpool for 18 months as a member of the 10th I.O.M. Platoon and hopes that she will have news of auxiliaries who served with her through the "Gazette." She sends her very best wishes to C.M.S. H. Whitaker, of Huyton, Liverpool, and Douglas I.O.M. and good wishes to all her other friends.

Miss Alice B. Anderson writes to the Editor from 24, Hillside Crescent, Edinburgh, and says kind things about the "Gazette." She would like Pat Maher (in Canada) to write to her again as she has lost her address "and she may not know I'm still alive and working very hard hoping to get back to Scotch House, Le Touquet, some day!" She has no definite news of her house and fears that the R.A.F. may have "dusted" it when dealing with F.B. sites, but she hopes for the best and sends good wishes for Christmas to all friends at home and abroad.

Comrades may not know that the Treasurer of the Bradford Branch (Mrs. Armitage) was Creswell, and the Secretary (Mrs.

Ward) was Whitehead. They served together in Calais and Vendroux, and hope that they may get in touch with comrades who served with them.

Mrs. A. Whitley (Nan), who served as a Forewoman Tailoress with the D.L.I., as well as at Birmingham, Hastings, Rugeley and Clipstone, sends greetings and kindest remembrances to the members of Oxford, Iford and Bristol Branches. She has the most pleasant memories of the happy times she has had with them. Mrs. Whitley is now living at Hereford. She has been working in an Ordnance Factory for four years but has had to give it up owing to a breakdown in health. Every week she has four W.A.A.F.s to her home for a chat, and a comfortable homely few hours which they enjoy. She has not come across any A.T.S., but is hoping to do so in time. Miss Mould was Secretary of Bristol when she used to attend the meetings.

BRANCH REPORTS

BRADFORD

In spite of the rain—and cold—nine members braved the weather, and met in our club room. A cosy warm room, which the Bradford Lambless Ex-Service men so kindly and generously offer us, without any remuneration. We are indeed fortunate to have such a grand place to meet in. It is also central, and that means so much, when we come in from all districts. We are grateful to the lads we served with last time. We had a surprise visit from a lady reporter, who was an interested listener, when we explained about our Association, and marvelled at the friendships we had kept up for so long. Before she left she arranged to have a photograph taken, when we have our Branch Dinner to put in the paper. We are gaining publicity! After a chat over tea and cakes, we said good-bye until the following day, when we were meeting to have tea with Mrs. Bukes, at her home. Nine of us attended Mrs. Bukes's party, and thanks to our hostess (known to many as Kitty Murdoch) we had a grand time, and a lively time, too, especially when Tony, Mrs. Bukes's curly-haired adopted little son, entertained us. He had us in tucks with laughter at his funny little ways. Our hostess provided a gorgeous tea. Cakes, all home-made, lovely to look at, delightful to eat; meat patties which just melted. We all enjoyed it so much, and later, as the time came to say good-bye £1 was handed to our Treasurer for our funds. During the evening Mr. Bukes told us some interesting stories of his daily travels, and we do thank Mr. and Mrs. Bukes for the good time we had.

A fortnight later, Miss Gummersall, our oldest member, entertained us to tea. Just the same cordial welcome awaited us, and the usual tea-table laden with good things, to which we all did full justice. I think some of us must miss a meal before these parties come off, so that we can "tuck in" unrestrainedly. After tea two prizes, really useful ones, were raffled, Miss Cocksedge winning the first and Mrs. Ross (Colston) the second. Time flew by, as we chatted away, and all too soon we had to thank

ARMISTICE DAY, 1944

Mrs. Mayhew reports that the following four Members formed the Deputation on November 11th to lay a Wreath on the Cenotaph:

Miss L. Saunders, ex-Q.M.A.A.C., Miss D. Hayward, ex-Q.M.A.A.C., Cpl. Reynnders, A.T.S., R.S.M. Glass, A.T.S.

The wreath was laid by Miss L. Saunders, who is one of London Branch Council Representatives and a Member of London Branch Committee.

The wreath consisted of laurel leaves, with a large bunch of silk poppies and blue ribbon, with the Association's initials stencilled in gold.

The Deputation was an extremely smart one and did credit both to the services in which they serve and served and to the Association.

Miss Gummersall for the grand little "do" she had given us, which enriched our funds once again, as almost £1 was handed to our Treasurer.

At our October meeting, at the club, 12 members were present, and we spent a pleasant evening together discussing plans for the future. The following Wednesday we attended the wedding of Mrs. Lumb's boy. A laughing, blue-eyed sailor. Mrs. Lumb was Edith Swithenbank in the old days, and served at Derby. Then on Remembrance Sunday, three members—Miss Julian O.B.E., Mrs. Armitage and myself—marched with the ex-Service men to the cenotaph, where wreaths were laid by the Lord Mayor on behalf of the citizens, and Captain Law-Green on behalf of ex-Service men and women. In spite of heavy rain, we went through the service, which brought back vivid memories, until the last words were spoken—"They shall not grow old—We will remember them." And as the years go by they are remembered, by this simple but impressive service held at the cenotaph.

Then on the Wednesday, 13 of us were guests of Miss Julian and Miss Fieldhouse. We had a delightful time. First we had tea—everything one could wish for: iced cakes, vanillas, warm mince tarts, delicious little savouries, trifle. I'll stop now, but I could go on. After this feast, we sat round the fire, and during the evening we did a bit of "raffling" and "auctioneering," and to finish a happy day we had a "Bring and Buy Sale." We had made preparations for this beforehand, and each one of us had taken our contribution. A grand assortment was set out, and so varied, but useful, were the things that it was really hard to choose, which to take and which to leave for someone else. Eventually we had sorted ourselves out, and the things we would each one like best, and to see all the smiles everyone must have been satisfied with their "buys." This time £3 7s. was handed to our Treasurer, and we are grateful to our hostesses—Miss Julian and Miss Fieldhouse—for a most enjoyable time. We went home with lighter purses, but heavier baskets, and happier hearts. We send our greetings to other Branches and hope that before long peace and security will be restored to everybody.

E. WARD.

BELFAST

The Northern Ireland Branch met on Tuesday, October 3rd, in Fitzroy Hall, Belfast. We had a "Brains Trust," which was both interesting and instructive. Junior Commander Forbes was Question-master, and she had a very able group with her on the platform, namely, Mrs. McCloy, who was introduced as a philosopher; Dr. Muriel Fraser, physician; Mr. C. J. A. Woodside, surgeon; Mr. Douglas, schoolmaster; and Mr. Marshall, traveller.

Dr. Olive Anderson was in the chair. Controller Mrs. Graham was unable to be present as she had to be in London.

We had a ballot for two cakes, which brought 17s. 3d. into the funds.

The very precious ingredients for the fruit cake were kindly contributed by Miss I. Baird and Miss Worling, and the sandwich cake was presented by S/Major E. S. Jackson, A.T.S.

HELEN H. BELL.

BIRMINGHAM

Here it is the day before you are expecting contributions and I really don't know what to write. Our club met on October 7th and on November 4th, which last I did not attend as I was visiting my mother.

On October 7th, members of our branch met at Mrs. Katie Pearce's house. Those present were Mrs. Ethel Cooper, Marjorie Pers, Sammie (wearing her Civil Defence uniform), the Misses Dipples, Mrs. Glover, Mrs. Mabel Pearce and Mrs. Robinson, from Marston Green.

I can't tell you how dreadful I felt to read that the Germans had killed Ada Pitt. I often came across her in London at dinners and at the club and on national occasions.

One day I recollect well was when we were each taking snaps of the Comrades who were to line the route in Hyde Park of King George V's Jubilee Drive. Three of us stood on two hired chairs to watch King George and Queen Mary drive by. Afterwards we changed letters and photographs. The last time I saw her was on a damp Saturday night just before Christmas, 1942. We nearly went to a play called "It happened in September," but ended up at her room at Lambeth Hospital. She was growing some bulbs for a friend's birthday. She gave me a copy of "On Waactive Service" to keep. A lovely nature.

The other Comrade who shared the chairs at the Jubilee Drive was Mrs. Clarke (Etta Lawrie), from Suffolk. I visited her last August and found her busy caring for evacuees and doing train escort duties and everything else that is asked of Queen's Messengers and the W.V.S.

We send best Christmas wishes and New Year greetings to all Comrades. E. A. R.

BRISTOL AND WEST OF ENGLAND

Our Secretary, Miss Mould, very kindly invited the members to tea at her house in Bath on Saturday, September 23rd. We appreciate her kindness very much and really cannot thank her enough, and her family, for their welcome; otherwise a meeting would have been impossible.

Those present included:—Vice-President Sims, Mrs. Cheeseman, Mrs. Clay, Miss Cole, Miss Fisher (with two friends all en route for Chepstow), Miss Robinson (Bobby) and her charming Mother, Mrs. Skidmore, Miss

Smith, Mrs. Symons, ex A.T.S. (travelled from Swindon), Mrs. Webb, also Miss B. Davidson (Goody-two-Shoes of Rouen) and now in Australia, sent her good wishes.

We were especially glad to welcome still another ex member of the A.T.S. (We now have several at this Branch.) We do enjoy comparing notes with them on the Rules and Regulations and similar joys of the past and present Services. Evidently the splendid comradeship and keen service which we experienced, now permeates the A.T.S.

Rouen, Calais, Le Havre, Etaples and Boulogne were well represented by members present, and the talk thrilled round these names once more in the news.

We missed Mrs. Whiting, and sympathise with her in the difficult time she is having at present.

Miss Mounstephen made another valiant effort to attend, getting so far, when the bus service failed her again. We were very sorry not to see her.

We decided to hold our next Meeting in November, in Bristol, catering arrangements permitting.

After a very enjoyable time we wended our various ways home. ETHEL WALKER.

LONDON

The Beetle Drive arranged for November 18th was well attended and was greatly enjoyed by everyone. Quite a number of our Members who had not been seen for some time turned up and found the same welcome ready for them. The following gave prizes, which were greatly appreciated:—Mrs. Courage (Donation), Miss Edgar, Miss Leeming, Miss Williams, Miss Binks, Miss Parker, Miss Ireland, Mrs. Mayhew.

Committee Members supplemented the tea ration with cakes. Miss Leeming made a very charming hand-made bag, and it was decided to American Auction it, Miss Bilbrough acting as Auctioneer, and the grand sum of £1 4s. was raised. This was a grand help to our funds and many thanks to you, Miss Leeming. The sum of £1 11s. was raised by the sale of tickets. The prize winners were as follows:—

Ladies.—1st, Miss Robertson; 2nd, Miss Parker; 3rd, Mrs. Gordon.

Gentlemen (Ladies playing as).—1st, Miss Redgrave; 2nd, Miss Dodd; 3rd, Miss Williams.

Booby (Ladies).—Mrs. Franklin.

Booby (Gentlemen).—Miss Watson.

Reminds.—Annual Meeting of the Branch, December 16th, at 3 p.m. Nominations are still required for Council and Committee please.

Reunions.—The third Saturday in the month at 2.30 p.m., until further notice.

NORFOLK

B. MAYHEW.

Xmas Greetings to all members and Comrades wherever they may be, and may the New Year bring Peace to our Land and Empire, and the World in general, when we can hope to return to our happy reunions.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to have an Autumn meeting for members, but possibly a New Year "get-together" can be arranged. The black out is still a difficulty, as we are not favoured with "lights up" yet, and also the transport is a problem, but this should be overcome once in a while.

Letters from members have been very scarce recently, but we trust that everyone is keeping fairly well. Our thanks are due to Mrs. V. Rumbold who has attended several Council Meetings as our branch representative this year. L. W. CHILVERS.

NORTH STAFFS

Since sending in the last report we have acquired two new members, Mrs. James (nee Harriss), who was a Junior Commander in Signals, and Miss Hutchings, who is a serving member of the A.T.S. with the Military College of Science near here.

Our monthly meetings have been quite enjoyable but for various reasons not very well attended. We hope to have a party early in the New Year at a time when some of our long distance members will be able to come. H. CLOUGH.

NOTTINGHAM

Last month the Women's United Services Club held its Annual General Meeting. The President, Mrs. Lloyd, who now lives at the Vicarage, Midhurst, Sussex, was invited and everyone was delighted to have her grace the meeting with her charming personality and to chat over old times. After the meeting we all adjourned to the George Hotel, where a high tea had been arranged. Later we trooped back to the Club for toasts and that that goes with them.

On Armistice Day several ex-Service Women attended a service at the War Memorial on the Trent Embankment. Our oldest member, Mrs. Armison, placed a wreath on the Memorial. Next day several members attended the Armistice Service at the Albert Hall, Nottingham.

At the last Q.M.A.A.C. meeting held in November we were pleased to welcome Mrs. Browne, an ex-A.T.S. Officer, a native of Newcastle, who was visiting another member, Mrs. Gerrish. N. OSLER, Branch Sec.

OXFORD

Members from this Branch met at the War Memorial, St. Giles, Oxford, on November 11th, and a chaplet of poppies was laid thereon.

Many thanks to the following for their subscriptions towards cost of the wreath:—Mrs. Payne (Hon. Treasurer), Miss Cancellor, Mrs. Ody, Mrs. Wihlin, Mrs. Parslow, Miss Irvine, Mrs. Watts, Miss Britnell.

Thanks also to Senior Commander Haynes and to the Company Commander of A Company, S.M.D. Gp. A.T.S., for allowing Jackman to sell poppies within the company; the official receipt is not yet to hand, but I understand from the Hon. Sec. of the fund that somewhere near £16 was collected.

We were very pleased indeed to welcome Miss Chancellor and hope to visit her at the herb farm, where she does such interesting work with her uncle.

Welcome is also extended to Pte. Eva Oakland, A.T.S., a recent office colleague of Jackman's, and who is serving now with 2nd Echelon and impatiently waiting to proceed overseas. How old 2nd Echelon Waacs will enjoy her—I know I do! Whereas we worked in the shadow of the Rouen Cathedral these girls will probably take over the H.Q. used by the Gestapo when in Brussels, but the work will be more or less as we knew it. All good wishes to every Comrade wherever she may be. G. M. JACKMAN.

Chief Controller Whateley Visits A.T.S. with B.L.A.

Chief Controller L. V. L. E. Whateley, Director of the A.T.S., has returned from a visit to Belgium and France to see for herself the conditions under which the A.T.S. are living and working there.

During a three days stay in Brussels she managed to visit every A.T.S. unit serving with 21 Army Group. She inspected quarters, including the blocks of flats formerly occupied by the Gestapo and still equipped with German furniture. She saw the A.T.S. hairdressers' shop where "customers" are using curlers found in a captured store originally intended for their "opposite numbers" in the Nazi women's service. While seeing the cells which the Germans used for political prisoners she heard how Belgians had returned in the hope of finding friends or possessions and one woman had asked permission to retrieve her wedding ring from the hiding place she had made for it behind a brick.

The Director saw the advance party of about 30 A.T.S. who are serving with the Second Echelon and whose job is to take over the documentation of soldiers in the fighting line. She also visited the smallest A.T.S. detachment in Belgium, 27 auxiliaries and one officer who, with the help of two soldiers for the heavy work, form the entire staff of a W.O.S.B. which has been opened near Ghent in order that men actually in the fighting line may have as good a chance of being returned for commission as men in home commands. These A.T.S. had arrived only two days before, having been the first women to land at Ostend since its liberation.

While at the W.O.S.B. the Director was told of the three A.T.S. drivers who had been loaned from Brussels to the advance party of Army officers and who not only drove all round the country collecting stores and furniture but also did all the cooking in an improvised cookhouse. When Chief Controller Whateley arrived the stores from England were still being unpacked but she was given tea in a large mug.

Throughout her tour she was driven by an A.T.S. driver, a member of the mixed car company which has operated the staff car pool both in Normandy and Belgium and drove from Bayeux to Brussels. She also visited canteens and the leave hotel where A.T.S. will act as dance hostesses in their off duty time for men returning for a short rest from the front line.

Chief Controller Whateley went on to Paris where she saw A.T.S. signal operators, drivers and clerks working at S.H.A.E.F. She talked to as many auxiliaries as possible and was interested to find that many of them are learning French and have made firm friends with local families. There are now nearly 1,000 A.T.S. serving with the B.L.A. and others will soon be going out.

APOLOGY

The article on "Civvy Street" in our last number was written by C.S.M. M. Hunt, who had been on the unemployed list since October, 1943. Her name was omitted by mistake.

A.T.S. HELPED TO BEAT FLYING BOMB Canvas "Towns" on South Coast

Operational A.T.S. in Anti-Aircraft Command made history when they suddenly left their comfortable static gun sites and moved by road and rail to play their part in the battle against the flying bomb. Overnight they became mobile-minded.

They settled down to a life in open fields. In spite of having to rough it in tented camps their health actually improved. Alarm bells ringing days and night for weeks on end did not wear them out. They learned the new drills evolved to replace the ones they had been taught to combat piloted aircraft, and how to use the latest equipment.

On one occasion at the beginning of the flying bomb battle, the guns from a mixed battery on the coast hit a flying bomb over the sea. It came streaking towards the gun site in flames, and the order was given: "Lie flat!" The men dropped but the A.T.S. were so carried away with excitement that they stood and cheered. The bomb fell 200 yards away from the gun site.

After that, the A.T.S. were told that, although their enthusiasm was understood, they must take cover in future and not expose themselves unnecessarily to danger.

The guns of another mixed battery, sited at a well-known peace-time resort, hit a bomb as it came over the promenade one Saturday night. It demolished a church, and the Regimental Commander approached the vicar inviting his congregation to a troop service to be held the following day at Battery Headquarters.

His offer was accepted, and the townspeople sat side by side with the men and girls who had prevented the bomb from reaching London, but which had helped to destroy their church.

A collection was made during the service, which formed the first contribution to the church restoration fund.

Many A.T.S. will look back when peace comes to the day when the King and Queen arrived at their site and chatted to them about the part they were playing in the battle; the Princess Royal, their Controller Commandant, visited others, and Mr. and Mrs. Churchill went to the site where their daughter Mary is a plotting officer.

AN EX-Q.M.A.A.C. W.A.A.F. WRITES FROM PALESTINE

One of the original members of the Edinburgh Branch is now serving with the M.E.F. as a S/O W.A.A.F. She is Miss Catherine Crombie, and we print here some extracts from her vivid letters about her travels in Palestine.

" . . . I passed through Cairo on my way to our station, and was struck with the beauty of the flowering shrubs and plants but also by the frequency of ophthalmia among the Egyptian children, who go about shading their eyes and looking down. I was surprised at the number of our men who had married Egyptian women. On my first off-duty day in Palestine I went a glorious trip to Nazareth. We journeyed up among the lovely hills above Haifa for an hour admiring the flowers and trees in bloom and the brightly coloured birds, like

jays. The town spreads up three hillsides, and is beautiful. Tiny streets, camels and donkeys all over the place. The sweet little nuns who keep an orphanage in the convent and caves of the Holy Family speak French; they really think they have the house of Joseph and Mary. Certain it is that they have a section of street of the Nazareth of Christ's day, and it was impressive to see and walk upon a street that Christ must have trod. The coptic church built over the clear, cold, delicious water of the well of Mary is inexpressibly tawdry. We came back in an Arab bus; imagine coming round hair-pin bends, the driver barely holding the wheel, taking money and giving out tickets at the same time.

I think you'll have to increase your subs. to C. of S. Huts. I went on a lovely trip to Acre and Nahariah to see the Crusader's fortifications in their bus. The Irish driver made a wonderful tea, and the whole thing cost 1s.

One afternoon we spent at a colony, Ramat David. It was interesting to see these gentle Jews living on their farm. The women work and the babies are well cared for in the children's quarters. Most of them came from Russia. It surprised me to see Arabs walking about the colony all quite at home.

When going on sick leave I was driven to Jerusalem along the Plain of Esdraelon and up to Nabes. It clings to the slopes of Mount Gerizin, where the two or three hundred remaining Samaritans eke out a bare existence. We drove through wild gorges to Ramallah, from where we had our first view of Jerusalem. This area has been the scene of highway robberies since time immemorial and hardly a week passes now without someone being held up by terrorists. All along it are stone observation posts and burnt-out police stations.

The people of Jerusalem are more colourful than those in the North. The women wear bright embroidery on their black dresses, and the men wear coloured cloaks. The best thing to see in Jerusalem is the Mosque of Omar. We visited the Mount of Olives and Bethlehem on another day, and I was interested to see that the shepherds must have come up to the hills to get there. I went to Jerusalem on leave another time, and visited Jericho and the Dead Sea, where I did not bathe as people looked so uncomfortable bobbing about on top of the water. My legs shone with salt crystals even after a short paddle. The Wilderness of Judea is the last word in awfulness—a hot, dry, shadeless, grotesque and frightening place after sweet little Bethany. It is a perfect setting for the story of the Good Samaritan."

There is no room for more of S/O Crombie's travels, which is a pity, but we are sure you will have enjoyed this short account of them.

RESETTLEMENT AFTER RELEASE FROM WAR SERVICE

(Reprinted from the Ministry of Labour Gazette)

The Government have decided to set up a Resettlement Advice Service to assist the resettlement of men and women released from war service.

The purpose of this Service, which is being set up by the Ministry of Labour and National Service, is to make available to men and women released from the Forces and war industry everything possible in the way of advice and information on problems arising from the various aspects of re-settlement. Apart from questions on subjects falling within the ambit of the Ministry's normal functions, e.g., placing in and training for employment, men and women released from war service may be expected to have all kinds of domestic and other problems on which they will be anxious to obtain advice. It is intended that in operating the new Service there shall be a sympathetic appreciation of these problems and every effort will be made to give to ex-Service men and women the advice they seek and to put them into the way of obtaining the help they require.

For the purposes of this Service, Resettlement Advice Offices will be established in every town in which there is an Employment Exchange. The number will, therefore, be about 400. Some of these Offices may need to be open for part of the week only, i.e., on the days when the public from the surrounding country customarily visits the town. The needs of enquirers in remoter areas will be met either by visits of an officer from a Resettlement Advice Office or by an invitation to attend the nearest Resettlement Advice Office. The subjects on which enquirers may be expected to seek information will be many and diverse; in a good many cases they will relate to the responsibilities of other Government Departments, Local Authorities, Voluntary Organisations, etc., and it will not, of course, be possible for Resettlement Advice Offices to undertake the duties of these Departments and bodies. It is the intention that officers in the Resettlement Advice Offices, who will be specially trained for the work, shall give the maximum possible service and render every possible assistance to enquirers. They will refer callers to other places only when they are quite certain that the needs of the applicants cannot be satisfied at the Resettlement Advice Offices. Even in cases which must be "passed on" they will assist the enquirer further, e.g., by providing him with printed matter or, where desirable, by helping him in completing any necessary forms, or in making an appointment for him to see the appropriate Department or Organisation. Every effort will be made to save men and women avoidable journeys or written requests for information.

TWO A.T.S. AWARDED B.E.M. FOR GALLANTRY DURING THE BUILDING OF SECRET INVASION HARBOURS

The British Empire Medal (Military Division) has been awarded to two A.T.S. members of a mixed A.A. battery who went to the rescue of men trapped under 2,000 tons of concrete after an accident which occurred during the building of the famous prefabricated invasion harbours.

They are Pte. Vera Crowhurst, aged 24, of Brighton, and Mrs. Betty Harcup, aged 25, who was a lance-corporal until her discharge from the A.T.S. last month. Mrs.

Harcup is the wife of a sailor in the Royal Navy and lives at Faversham.

The battery with which they were serving was part of the coastal defence of the port at which the construction work was being carried on in secret several months before D-Day. While one of the huge concrete units was being rolled it suddenly lurched and fell from the rolling walls killing three men and injuring and trapping about 15 others.

According to the official citation in the London Gazette of November 10th, the death roll might easily have been greater but for the heroic efforts of these two auxiliaries and their complete disregard for personal safety.

Mrs. Harcup, then serving as a medical orderly and Pte. Crowhurst, a hairdresser, who was also acting as assistant in the Medical Inspection room, were on duty when there was an urgent call for men and stretchers. The male medical orderly was out so the two auxiliaries rushed to the scene of the accident. They knew the wreckage might collapse on them at any moment but they crawled in and gave the men hot tea and made them as comfortable as possible with coats and blankets.

"They were the only women there," said one of the officers, "and their calmness and bravery helped to keep up the spirits of the injured men and was an inspiration to the rescue party. With a complete disregard for their own safety they stayed with the injured men and comforted and cheered them until the medical officers arrived."

MIDDLE EAST FORCES

Chief Commander B. Boyle, O.B.E., has just returned from the Middle East and has given us this account of the A.T.S. under her command. My Group spoke 43 languages, at least 50 per cent. signed their names from left to right, and one (she was Chinese) downwards. They were jolly good A.T.S., too, though occasionally a little unorthodox. Their employments, of course, varied with their capacity for speaking English—obviously you can't be a clerk until you can read and write it. Or be a switch-board operator until you can speak it. There are many jobs that you can do for the R.A.O.C. if you can manage the letters of our alphabet and the numerals. And, of course, to be a driver you only need to be 5ft. 2in. in height and able to sign your name in some language (they wouldn't accept thumb marks on work-tickets). We had to bunch them according to the languages they spoke, and we never promoted until they could speak fair English. They learnt amazingly quickly. It always made me rather ashamed of the way we are so bad at languages ourselves. They were mostly refugees and mad keen to win the war. How little we really know about war. I suppose it is because we haven't been invaded—meeting bunches of refugees teaches you fast enough. There were some grisly tales among them, poor things. We all became very fond of them as we knew them better and I always think that they faced the difficulties extremely well, because, of course, so much of what we take for granted makes no sense at all to them. Polishing

buttons, for instance, is really a very silly thing to do with them; we should think so, too, if tradition had not made it normal for us. And I'll never forget hearing a Lancashire sergeant calling a Czechoslovak nominal roll for the first time—nor will the Czechs. They worked very well; quite a number were mentioned in despatches and orders, and I for one take off my hat to them. The British girls who came out were mostly specialists—teleprinters, wireless ops., clerks for G.H.Q., etc. There was one G.D. Company of British girls who cooked for a hush hush unit all through the heat of the summer and achieved the lowest sick rate of any company. They were a very fine lot. We had, too, a very fine ambulance company of ex-M.T.C. girls, who had the best maintenance record of any M.T. unit in the command all the time I was out there. They were magnificent—some of them had been in France, Penny Otto, their Company Commander, afterwards Senior Commander, and M.B.E., had a Croix de Guerre for a very fine show she had put up in escaping complete with her ambulances and wounded after being captured by the Germans.

A.T.S. SEND MEDICAL SUPPLIES OVERSEAS

Medical supplies ranging from a septic furniture to hypodermic needles, dentists drills and the finest glass test tubes for laboratory equipment are now selected, checked and issued by A.T.S. for the fighting forces overseas.

With their men comrades of the R.A.M.C. these auxiliaries working in a vast depot in Western Command are helping to dispatch an average of 8½ tons of medical supplies every day and since the opening of the depot in 1942 not a single consignment has been late for shipment.

Records of all stock at this depot are kept by A.T.S., who check it and see that it is continually replenished to fulfill rush orders for overseas. Working in the storerooms are auxiliaries who can instantly identify 1,000 different drugs and 4,000 items of hospital sundries—a difficult job when you realise that there are twenty varieties of such an item as hyperdermic needles.

Private V. Ward works out the cubic capacity of the cases for shipment. She also sees that for dispatch, dangerous drugs are encircled with a red band; serum travels in cold storage; and corrosives and inflammable goods go as deck cargo. Special conditions of transit are also necessary for chloroform.

Dental items are the responsibility of a storewoman, Lance Corporal M. Sutton, whose "stock" includes various types of dentists drills, and vulcanisers to facilitate the supply of false teeth at base hospitals.

None of the A.T.S. at this depot have had experience of dealing with medical supplies before joining the Service. Corporal D. Hilton, who is responsible for the issue of equipment for hospital and field laboratories, was a hairdresser in Southport; Lance Corporal W. Phillips, of Cardiff, now in charge of the receipt of stores, was in the Civil Service, and Private M. Simm, who packs drugs, was a tailoress.

THREE A.T.S. SERVE IN AIRBORNE HEADQUARTERS

An A.T.S. Corporal and two Privates, all in the early twenties, and all possessing a fluent knowledge of French, have been chosen to work with the Special Air Service at the Airborne Headquarters.

These A.T.S. have shared the secrets of the men who have undertaken some of the most hazardous expeditions of the whole war, dropping behind enemy lines and working deep in enemy territory. They have also helped with the preparations of our great Airborne operations.

Corporal Doyle, of Perth, has been working for eight months in the Transmission Section which broadcasts special news bulletins to our Airborne troops in the front line and sometimes sends personal messages from their relatives to men who are not able to receive normal mail. She types these broadcasts, often translating into British bulletins prepared by Frenchmen or producing French versions from an English original. Corporal Doyle formerly lived in France and knows the Orleans district particularly well. She joined the A.T.S. before the war and served as a driver for four years. At present she is working twelve hours a day.

Private M. Jelf, of Dorchester, is a shorthand typist working on operational instructions. She previously served with the French Liaison Headquarters in this country. She was educated in Switzerland and has been in the A.T.S. for two years.

Private L. Maillard also works on operational instructions and translations of reports. He home is in Sheffield, and before joining the A.T.S. sixteen months ago, she worked in the Sheffield educational offices. Her fiancée is serving with the French Forces in Syria. She herself is half Belgian and hopes to get to Belgium to find her mother's relatives.

A.T.S. OFFICERS CHANGE PLACES WITH C.W.A.C. OFFICERS

A party of A.T.S. officers have gone to Canada where they will serve with C.W.A.C. units for 3 months; a number of C.W.A.C. officers will shortly be attached to the A.T.S. in Britain. A similar scheme earlier in the war proved so successful that when the first party of A.T.S. returned from Canada recently it was decided to arrange a second exchange.

The present draft includes officers from all parts of Britain, and the Empire is represented by Jnr. Comdr. C. Traill, of Queensland, Sub. E. Spence, from Kenya, and Jnr. Comdr. M. Bird, who was born in Canada and has relatives in Vancouver, B.C. The officer in charge of the party, Snr. Comdr. Lady Bowyer Smythe, is also an Australian having lived in Sidney until her marriage.

Most of the officers joined up at the outbreak of war or even earlier and have a thorough knowledge of Service organisation and conditions. Among the pre-war volunteers is Snr. Comdr. Creek who served with the B.E.F. in France, and Sub. Hon. Mary Boot.

As well as a number of regimental officers, some of whom have served as adjutants, the party includes a Public Relations Officer, a cipher officer and two signalmasters, as well as specialists in Motor Transport, Messing and Personnel Selection.

A.T.S. WILL GO TO OO-ED "FINISHING SCHOOL" ABROAD AT THE ARMY'S EXPENSE

"Evening Standard" Reporter

Some A.T.S. will go to a co-educational "finishing school" abroad at the Army's expense before they return to civilian life.

The "finishing school" will be called a Formation College, and will be established where the Army happens to be serving at home, or abroad, during the pre-demobilisation period between the end of the war with Germany and the end of the war with Japan.

These Formation Colleges are the high spot of the Army's all-embracing pre-demobilisation programme of six to eight hours compulsory education a week.

Only those who distinguish themselves—men or women—in the general course, or those who need more advanced and specialised instruction than the general scheme provides will be admitted to Formation Colleges.

In the case of academic subjects, an A.T.S. Education officer said: "Instruction is being planned on non-academic lines, so that the ex-elementary schoolgirl who wants to learn Latin or Greek will be able to do so."

The colleges are to provide an intensive five weeks' residential course of study as a trade or professional background, and not as specific vocational training.

Civilian specialist teachers will be called in to help army instructors, and, in cases where local talent from universities or technical schools is not available, correspondence courses will be used.

The most popular demand for instruction among the A.T.S., both in the general and the Formation College course, is in domestic science.

This is because most auxiliaries want to get back to home life after they leave the Army, explained an A.T.S. officer.

Several hundred A.T.S. teachers of domestic science are to be trained as instructors.

Training has already begun at a special Army training school at Preston, Lancs, and other training schools for instructors, both in domestic science and general subjects, will be established in London and various parts of the country.

A.T.S. GET ARMY CARS ON THE MOVE

When thirteen A.T.S. drivers have been for a day's ride on an open truck, collected from any part of the South of England, vehicles in need of repair, driven home eleven jeeps or towed in a broken down ten-ton lorry, their job is still not finished. They get into dungarees, climb under the vehicles, and do the repairs. They drive the repaired vehicles back to their destination—often a depot from which they will be sent abroad to the fighting men.

These A.T.S. are all tradeswomen vehicle mechanics, working at R.E.M.E. workshops. In the charge of Staff Sergeant R. Burton, of Halifax, who trained horses in the Land Army in the last war, they are ready to tackle any job.

Usually the A.T.S. mechanics bring back their vehicles in convoy, so they go out all together packed round the lifting apparatus

on top of a breakdown lorry. Private Ann Campbell, a young Scotswoman from Stirling, says they love their open air drive in all weathers. "It feels rather like flying, sitting up there," she says.

The auxiliaries never know what they are going to collect. All they know is the number of drivers needed to go out on convoy, and they have to wait until they get to their destination before they know if they will drive home in a closed car, an open truck, or towing a lorry. But when they collect vehicles from the ports, they do know that they are directly helping to keep our armies abroad on the move.

In the workshops the A.T.S. help the men of the R.E.M.E. They tackle all sorts of repairs to get the vehicles in perfect order once more. Then they get into them and convoy them back to units.

A.T.S. OFFICER FROM SOUTH AFRICA HELPS TO SUPPLY VEHICLES TO B.L.A.

Dressed in battleblouse, slacks, a man's leather jerkin and a cap tilted rakishly over one eye, Subaltern Vera Job, technical officer in a Vehicle Reserve Depot, walked into the C.O.'s office. Her cap was the only thing that hinted at the pre-war Vera Job, who used to be a rather special kind of dressmaker. She ran a one-woman business and would make only for friends who wanted lovely and original clothes. Even now she remembers in detail the first and the last outfit she ever made.

In the beginning a friend ordered a blue and white spotted linen dress with a blue linen jacket. It was so successful that the snowball system of recommendations started.

Just before joining up she dressed a bride. Here in an office in the middle of a bleak V.R.D. camp covering 12 miles of country, she described it, her leather covered arms showing the sweep and fall of the train. "I stayed at the bride's country home for a week and sewed the dress on the lawn, then had to make my own dress overnight to appear at the wedding!" said Subaltern Job.

She had always driven her own car, so in 1940 she joined the A.T.S. as a convoy driver. In those days convoys sometimes consisted of 250 vehicles, and before Dunkirk she used to be up at 5.30, driving all over the country with very few hours sleep each night.

In 1942, as Subaltern Job, she was an administrative officer, then in charge of a Driver Training Company with 20 instructors. Finally came the R.A.O.C. course and she was then a technical officer.

Now, in the greatest possible contrast to needles and threads and silks and satins, she is, without regrets, responsible for 1,000 vehicles in the light car park. Staff cars, jeeps, ambulances, trucks, armoured cars, up to anything touching the 30 cwt. mark. The drivers maintain them when they come in from the manufacturers or Army workshops and a pool is kept for units to draw on. When a release order comes in the vehicles are checked, kitted, maintained and filled up with petrol.

Sometimes the units fetch the vehicles, sometimes the A.T.S. deliver them. "Around

D-Day it was terrific," she said, "we were working until 11 o'clock or 12 each night." In the Depot they have "Earmarks," that is vehicles earmarked and held in reserve for the 21st Army Group. They are always glad when these are not being drawn on to any great extent, for then they know things are going well.

A.T.S. "ADOPT" WOUNDED SOLDIERS

Thanks to the A.T.S., 24 soldiers back from the fighting fronts were allowed out of hospital for the afternoon of November 11th. They were the guests of the auxiliaries of a London A.T.S. company at the theatre, and afterwards at a tea-party. That was the Armistice Day tribute of these auxiliaries to the Fighting Forces.

For many months the A.T.S. in this company have been visiting soldiers in London hospitals in their spare time, taking sweets which they have saved out of their ration, and comforts bought from a fund to which they voluntarily subscribe.

It was the auxiliaries' own idea to organise a fund for comforts for wounded soldiers, and though subscription is entirely voluntary the fund grew so large that they were able to ask 24 men from one hospital to a theatre matinee.

When this "adoption" scheme was devised they were allowed to run it entirely by themselves. They asked an officer to take charge of the funds, but the administration of the scheme is run entirely by the auxiliaries. Each platoon has its representative and they meet every month to make further plans for the scheme.

A.T.S. OFFICERS LENT TO W.A.C.I.

Fourteen A.T.S. officers have been loaned to the W.A.C.I. (Women's Army Corps of India) to help with the organisation of training establishments on similar lines to those which have been set up for the A.T.S. in this country. Two Personnel Selection Officers have also been sent on loan to the W.A.C.I. and two staff officers are temporarily attached to the staff of the Countess of Carlisle, who was D.D.A.T.S. in South-Eastern Command, until her appointment as Director of the W.A.C.I.

A Senior Commander and three Junior Commanders flew to India recently and are attached to the W.A.C.I., O.C.T.U., which had been established there. Four junior officers have also been sent out, one to be attached to each of the four basic training centres which are being opened for W.A.C.I. recruits.

A Junior Officers' School is being opened in Delhi to which a senior officer and five junior officers, now on their way to India, will be attached. They will join the staff shortly before the college opens in order to study local conditions.

All these officers have been chosen either for their specialist qualifications or for their extensive all-round experience in A.T.S. administration. They will stay in India for about six months, or slightly longer if necessary, and will then return to this country. The purpose of their visit is to enable the W.A.C.I. to benefit from the practical experience which the A.T.S. has acquired during five years of war.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I was very interested in the last issue of the "Gazette" to read the letter from the member of the A.T.S. on her first landing in France and I wondered if anyone of our new Comrades would be interested in an extract of a letter written by a W.A.A.C. on her first landing in France on June, 3rd, 1917.

MARION L. DAVIS.

We six Signallers were attached to a draft of household W.A.A.C.s going over. We had a calm crossing. We were two in each bunk; only we didn't sleep much. When we went on deck at 3.30 a.m. it was bitterly cold and raining. We had breakfast at 5.3 a.m., and landed at 6 a.m. As we did not go further until 13.00 hours we were free to do what we liked during the morning. Le Havre was a very nice place indeed, and we walked miles and were stared at terrifically as we were the first women in uniform to be seen there. Some kids coming out of school saluted us and said "Good night and right turn." Later, we six found the train for Dieppe. We were told we should be in it for nine hours, so we made ourselves cushy. After about 30 minutes a guard shouted to us that we must "all change." We didn't believe him and sat still. He returned with some British soldiers, who helped us with our belongings. Mitchell and Connie Smith had their bedroom slippers on and we were all spread about, and only three minutes to catch the connection. By the time we were settled into our second train our soldier helpers had lost their carriage so we invited them to share ours, but they said they were sure we wouldn't want them all the time. So they found another carriage and visited us at each stop. As there were 20 stops we saw a good bit of them.

There was no one to meet us at Dieppe so we reported to the R.T.O., who took us up to the billet, where they had all retired to bed. He knocked them up, and the door was opened by Miss Thompson, with whose draft we should have gone out. It was a lovely billet—a very old hotel, with an inside courtyard. Since the W.A.A.C.s had been there everything was scrubbed. We drink our tea out of two pint bowls, which suits me O.K. We have lovely beds but no sheets, and the blankets are a bit whikery. The only furnishing in the bedrooms besides the beds is a piece of tin each to do our hair by. The bathing arrangements are too killing cubicles on a stone floor; each cubicle has a tarpaulin curtain in front, and inside two taps, a drain, and a tin foot-bath. We have roll call at 7.30, breakfast at 8, dinner at 12, tea at 16.00, supper at 19.30, a roll call again at 21.00. We are not staying here; only until further orders arrive for us. The girls who are already here say it's a lovely life.

THE LORD MAYOR'S GIFT TO CITY PLATOONS

The Lord Mayor of London has given £25 to each of the original City of London Platoons, and the Territorial Association has given them permission to have "City of London" inscribed on their tombs. We hope that the latter privilege will be of less immediate benefit to them than the former.



HAPPY CHRISTMAS

The Editor wishes a happy time for all comrades and readers of the "Gazette" and is grateful for the many good wishes she has received from them.

She would like a Christmas Box on January 15th, please. News and articles, stories and criticism from everyone. You have been wonderful so far, and she wants to know yet more about you all so that she can pass it on through the "Gazette" in 1945.

VICTORIOUS NEW YEAR



A.T.S. SURVEY OFFICERS SUPPLY THE ARMY'S MAPS

Jr. Cdr. S. Carpenter, of Wakefield, is one of the first women to be appointed as a survey officer in the Army. At 22, she is Assistant to the A.D. Survey at Southern Command H.Q. She began her engineering career early, for even as a child she preferred model trains and carpentry tools to dolls. At the age of 8, she made her mother a clothes-horse which is still in use. Her father, a Major in the Royal Engineers, now serving with the 21st Army Group, is a surveyor and civil engineer.

When she was 14, Shirley Carpenter went to Germany with five other schoolgirls; two years later, she attended the Geneva Summer School and got home to England just before war broke out. She took a B.A. Honours degree in geography at Cambridge, where she specialised in surveying. She then joined the A.T.S. in August, 1943. When she was commissioned, she spent six months at the Survey Training Centre, where she and another A.T.S. officer, Jr. Cmdr. Portway, were responsible to an Army officer for the work of 60 sappers. They worked into the early hours of the morning checking and packing maps for use in the invasion.

In her present job, Jr. Cdr. Carpenter is responsible for the distribution of maps of this country throughout the Command, and for the issue of foreign maps to Intelligence branches. Her office is papered with maps of every size, shape and colour, and there are yet more maps under a large square

of glass on her desk, and upon these maps the Army depends to move or shoot with accuracy; everyone uses them from the Airborne Corps to dispatch riders. Survey must always be "one jump ahead" of our advancing armies.

Her work involves using a computing machine, she also accompanies the A.D. Survey when he visits topographical surveyors in the field and inspects map depots in the Command. Another responsibility in the upkeep of ordnance survey pillars. If a tank demolishes a pillar, the position must be surveyed correct to one-thousandth of an inch.

"I must also be able to supply the exact position and height of gun emplacements and searchlights," she said. "At first the men were surprised to see a woman doing this job, but they are quite used to it now and are very helpful." After the war she plans to return to Cambridge to teach and do research.

Jr. Cdr. D. Portway, who holds a similar appointment in Eastern Command, is also a Cambridge graduate, having taken the geographical tripos at Newnham College, specialising in survey. She is now 23, and joined the A.T.S. last year. She, too, helped with the secret preparations for D-Day, and her present job is to look after the supply and, if necessary, the printing of maps and the administration of survey units in her Command, where close co-operation is maintained with A.A. Command. She was educated at Perse Girls' School, Cambridge, and her home is in Bungay. Her father, Colonel Donald Portway, is President of a War Office Selection Board.

DON'T WANT FLATS

A.T.S. Who Wed After War

Auxiliaries who want to marry and have a home of their own after the war would rather have a child welfare clinic nearby than a cinema. They don't want to live in flats in big cities, but prefer houses with gardens in suburban areas or small towns.

These views are based on replies to questions on "How I want to live after the war," put to a group of girls studying home-craft.

OBITUARY.

GILBERT.—Miss I. E. H. Gilbert (Gil), late signaller Boulogne, Calais, and Vendroux, passed away suddenly at Saint Leonards on October 26th, 1944.

SMITH.—In November, 1944, on active service in Brussels, Beatrice Mary Smith, A.T.S., only daughter of Captain F. A. Smith, The Royal Warwickshire Regt., and Mrs. Smith.

STOBIE.—In Glasgow, on April 21st, 1944, Lance-Corporal M. Stobie, daughter of Mrs. Betsy Stobie, of Kettins, Coupar Angus.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

All contribution 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 15th of the following months:—January, March, May, July, September and November.

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 15th of January, 1945, Mrs. Richard Addis, Woodside Frant, Sussex.