



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



GENERAL SECRETARY: Mrs. Johnston, Q.M.A.A.C. and A.T.S. C.A., 82, Lancaster Gate, London, W.2.
Telephone: Paddington 8440.

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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.**

**QUEEN MARY'S ARMY AUXILIARY CORPS
AND
AUXILIARY TERRITORIAL SERVICE COMRADES
ASSOCIATION**

THE TWENTY - FIFTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE SERVICE WOMEN'S CLUB, 5, BUCKINGHAM GATE, LONDON, S.W.1., ON SATURDAY, 24th FEBRUARY, 1945, AT 3 P.M.

Nearest station to Buckingham Gate: Victoria.

It is much regretted that, owing to the difficulty of catering and the still greater difficulty of Staff, it is impossible to arrange for a Reunion Tea at the Club after the Annual General Meeting.

BRANCH SECRETARIES' MEETING

The Branch Secretaries' Meeting will be held on Saturday, 24th February, 1945, at 5, Buckingham Gate, at 2 p.m.

It is hoped that as many Branch Secretaries as possible will try to attend the Meeting, as it gives an excellent opportunity for the discussion of many Branch problems.

AGENDA OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

1. To confirm the Minutes of the Twenty-fourth Annual General Meeting held on the 26th February, 1944.
2. Business arising from the Minutes.
3. To receive the Report of Council.
4. To receive the Report of the Hon. Treasurer.
5. Resolution by Council:—That the Badge of the Association be a wreath of laurel enclosing a lioness rampant on a beech-brown background, with the name of the Association inscribed on a scroll.
6. To approve the list of Representatives recommended by Local Branches for election to Council for the coming year.
7. To elect the Hon. Treasurer.
8. To receive the Report of the Editor of the Gazette.
9. Local Branch business.
10. Other Business, if any.

A. E. B. JOHNSTON,
General Secretary,
82, Lancaster Gate,
London, W.2.

COUNCIL MEETING

Will all members of Council please note that the date of the next Meeting of Council has been fixed for **WEDNESDAY, 21st MARCH, 1945, at 6.15 p.m.** The Agenda will be sent, as usual, ten days before the Meeting.

HEADQUARTERS REPORT

FOR DECEMBER, 1944

This Report covers the latter end of November, as there was a meeting of Council on the 25th, too late for publication in the last "Gazette." There were fourteen members present, with Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan in the chair, Miss Bilborough, Miss Clark, Miss Davy, Mrs. Grundy, Miss Ireland, Mrs. Mayhew, Mrs. Powell, Junior Commander R. Pryse, Mrs. Rumbold, Miss Turner, Mrs. Richard Addis (Editor of the "Gazette"), Miss M. Slee (Hon. Treasurer), and Mrs. Johnston, General Secretary. Apologies for absence were received from Lady Apsley, Corporal Barker, Miss Billington, Miss Cliff, Chief Commander Harvie-Anderson, Chief Commander Patrick, Miss Saunders, Lady Swinton, Senior Commander E. Walker and Chief Controller Whateley. The Hon. Treasurer's Report was not a formal one, as all the books were with the Auditor. The business before the meeting was chiefly routine, as the Agenda for the Annual General Meeting and the consideration of Badge designs would not be laid before Council until the 20th January.

The General Secretary thanks all members who so kindly sent cards, calendars and greetings for Christmas and the New Year. She wishes that more members could come to Headquarters and see the cheery effect of so many charming remembrances intended for all Comrades. There have been no visitors to the office, so she and Miss Clark enjoyed the gay effect all by themselves. We have to thank Miss M. E. Roberts, the President, Officers and members of the Canadian Legion, Ex-Service Women's Section, Calgary Branch, Mrs. D. M. Ashton, Junior Commander E. Turnbull, Mrs. Richard Addis, Miss Florence Vidler, of Toronto, Miss W. Norton, Oxford Branch, North Staffs Branch, Ex-Service Women's Club (Nottingham), Mrs. L. W. Chilvers C.S.M. C. Kemp, Chief Commander Rollinson, Miss Katherine Simons, and Miss Molly Howes, all of whom sent delightful cards or calendars. It is very pleasant to be thus remembered and so to feel how very real is the bond of comradeship; these greetings had come from Canada, Australia, Africa, America, and all parts of our own little island.

OBITUARY.—Mrs. M. Webb, née M. Grundy, U.A., Q.M.A.A.C., of Queen Mary Camp, Calais and Harfleur, died suddenly on the 5th December, 1944, at St. Joseph's Hospital, Preston, Lancashire.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

The following members have sent Christmas and New Year greetings to all members of the C.A., especially their own friends, hoping that 1945 will bring an end to the war, with victory, and the possibility of a Reunion in 1946: Miss MOLLY HOWES in Kenya, Mrs. O'MEARA and Eire Branch, S/Sergt. H. PERRY, Miss TEDDIE SLEE, Corporal A. E. JARMAN, Pte. K. M. PARFITT, W/139443, Sergt. M. E. CARTER, Miss A. D. BURROW, Miss B. BRIDGES, Subaltern I. CHANDLER and Pte. D. CHANDLER, Miss E. M. RUST, Miss ELLA HUGHES, and Sergt. E. O. DAVIES, W/1714.

We heartily reciprocate their good wishes and hope that this year will bring the longed-for Peace and Victory, with happiness and health for them all.

Edinburgh and East of Scotland Branch Annual Report

for year ended 31st October, 1944

The Committee beg to submit the following Report for the year ended 31st October, 1944.

The present Committee consists of:

President: Miss Alice Low, O.B.E.

Chairman: Miss M. A. Finlay, M.B.E.

Deputy Chairman: Miss M. Innes.

Hon. Secretary and Treasurer: Mrs. G. D. Hardy.

Benevolent Fund Secretary: Mrs. Hutchings.

Committee Members: Misses Abbey, Baxter, Cowie, Fairley, Ferguson, Molyneux, Roberts, Mrs. Beaton, Mrs. Hogg, Mrs. Hutchings, Mrs. Simpson.

The membership of the Branch now stands at 42 Annual and 26 Life members.

We regret to record the death in February last of Miss Mary Campbell, who served at Aux-le-Chateau. The sympathy of the Branch was expressed to her sister by our Chairman.

On Armistice Day a wreath was laid on the Stone of Remembrance by Mrs. Hutchings on behalf of the Branch. A spray was also placed in the hall of the Club.

A very pleasant Reunion was held on January 22nd. We were sorry that our President was unable to be present, but fortunately she was in Edinburgh on two later occasions and met members at the monthly evening meetings.

We were very pleased to welcome as a new member this year Miss Ann Hall, who served in the A.T.S. for nearly three years, latterly at Stirling, and who has now been discharged on medical grounds. We were also glad that Mrs. Cairns has rejoined the Branch.

The Benevolent Fund Secretary reports that there have been no calls on the Fund during the year.

We should like all members of the Active Service Branch, who may find themselves posted to Edinburgh, to know that they will be welcomed at the meetings of the Branch on the first Tuesday of each month.

Members are reminded that the Annual Subscription is due at the beginning of each year, and that only those subscriptions paid before October 31st can be included in the current annual membership.

THE NEW YEAR HONOURS

All Comrades will be glad to read of Controller Lady Maud Baillie's award of the C.B.E. and will join in sending her congratulations through the "Gazette." Lady Maud served in Algiers for some time, and we have had many tributes to her in letters from the Middle East.

AUXILIARIES GAVE TOYS IN MEMORY OF A COMRADE

Mrs. Ivy Morris (née Seaward) had just been discharged from the A.T.S. when a V-bomb demolished her home, killing a number of people, including herself and several relatives. A staff-sergeant and a party of auxiliaries from her old company attached to an R.A.O.C. depot attended her funeral. When they saw how many local children had lost their homes and their toys in the bombing, the A.T.S. decided to give them a Christmas present as a memorial to their friend.

When they returned to their unit they spent the next few weeks making 25 stuffed toys. They also subscribed to buy about 40 books and games. On Christmas Day two of the auxiliaries took the presents and distributed them to the children.

THE FIRST MIXED BATTERY SERVING ON THE CONTINENT

A.T.S. members of a Mixed Heavy A.A. Battery of Royal Artillery who helped to defend Britain in the blitzes, the tip-and-run raids and the fly-bomb attacks, are now in N.W. Europe.

The Battery was stationed on the East Coast when the Brigadier went round the gun-sites to announce that they were to go overseas. When the A.T.S. heard the news they cheered so long and so loudly that he could not speak for several minutes. None of them had previously volunteered for overseas service because the operational numbers were not allowed to do so, and the cooks, clerks and orderlies did not want to leave their batteries. Then they heard that they could go abroad as a complete unit, eighty per cent immediately volunteered. The others, who had compassionate reasons for staying in this country, were replaced by volunteers from other units.

The A.T.S. took with them beds, pillows, sheets and blankets, and live in hutted camps, which are heated by stoves. They have been issued with special warm clothing, including service dress and two suits of battle dress, long woollen pants and woollen stockings, leather jerkins and four pairs of boots and shoes. They have also been given rubberised jackets and trousers, and rubber knee boots, and the Duchess of Northumberland's Comforts Fund has sent a good supply of woollies, including balaclavas, scarves and gloves.

Before leaving England they spent three weeks preparing for mobilization in the Midlands, where the auxiliaries were inspected by A.T.S. who visited them. An advance party of Gunners and A.T.S. flew to the Continent to open up the camp. The rest followed by sea.

Two of the auxiliaries in the first battery to go overseas had embarkation leave weddings. L/Cpl. Till (née Horrill) of Plymouth, a predictor operator, married a R.A. sergeant serving with another battery. Pte. Gomersall, of Mirfield, Yorks, was married to a sailor in the Royal Navy. She and her sister, Pte. Armitage, who is in the battery, are also predictor operators.

The battery has its own drum and bugle band, composed of 24 A.T.S., all operational numbers, and five R.A. buglers. With their drum-major leading in her leopard skin and the drummers and buglers following in service dress with white belts and gloves and red, blue and yellow dress cords, the A.T.S., all wearing side caps, the band has become a familiar sight in the areas where the battery has served in the last two years. Now they are looking forward to their first parade on the Continent.

Serving in this battery is Pte. G. Golland, B.E.M., a radiolocation operator, who was decorated by the King recently for carrying on with her duties and so enabling the guns to keep on their target after a German plane had dropped bombs all over the gun-site, including incendiaries, which fell under the cabin in which she was sitting.

Ptes. Beryl and Muriel Smith, 19-year-old twins, of Didsbury, and two other sisters, Ptes. Irene and Millie Taylor, of Coleford, Gloucester, are also members of the unit.

This first Mixed Battery to be chosen for overseas service was also one of the first to be formed in 1941. A large number of the A.T.S. officers and other ranks have served with it since its formation, and many of the auxiliaries have married gunners whom they met while serving on the same or adjacent sites. The Battery was formed near Sheffield and later stationed for fourteen months on the Humber during some of the heaviest raids on the area.

BRANCH REPORTS

LONDON BRANCH

Dear Old Comrades,

The New Year opens with a very happy piece of NEWS in big print: "Warm Greetings London Branch. Hoping see everyone February 24. (Signed) THOMPSON." It seems as though Miss Thompson is going to work the miracle again and arrive in time for the A.G.M., so London Branch stand by and be ready for that emergency reunion at short notice. News has been received of Bunny Aston, who will be particularly remembered by "Shanghai Camping Club" supporters, where Bunny was one of the popular helpers at our week-end parties. Well, Bunny was married in 1943 in Edmonton—she is now Mrs. Pearce, of Whitelow, Northern Alberta, Canada. All her friends will wish her all the happiness possible.

Then next we hear of the approach of the wedding day for our old London Branch member Urquhart, who, it will be remembered, went to seek for her fortune in Australia. We all wish her the very best of good wishes for future happiness, and hope that one day she will be able to pay us a visit, bringing her husband with her. Whilst on the subject of marriages, our heartiest wishes go to Mr. and Mrs. Downer (née Saunders), on the occasion of their marriage on 1st January. Mr. Downer being an ex-Service man of the last war and a supporter of ex-Service Associations, will, I am sure, find always a ready welcome whenever he cares to venture amongst us, and we can feel that we have gained another Ally in this happy alliance. I spent a very happy day with Mrs. Downer at her school just a few days before she said farewell to her "charges." Mrs. Downer will indeed be a loss to the educational world, but no doubt will find a way of giving some of her time and talents to other good works, not forgetting the Old Comrades.

Another item of interest was a visit paid to an Exhibition of Arts and Crafts by Soldiers and Auxiliaries, arranged by the Army Education Scheme—London District. Amongst exhibitors, I noticed the name of R.S.M. Glass, A.T.S., who is a member of the Active Service Branch of the Association and a Member of Council. In the Embroidery Section some fine specimens were shown by Pte. Pickles, A.T.S., which were outstanding for fineness of stitches, and an excellent piece of Ecclesiastical Embroidery by the same exhibitor. In Tapestry work Pte. Stovin, A.T.S., was awarded first class for a Tapestry Galleon. There were some good exhibits by the men. Many ex-Q.M.A.A.C.s will be reminded of the beautiful work we used to see produced by the Disabled Men at their exhibitions.

Rather fewer members than usual attended the Annual Meeting of the Branch, but nevertheless it was a pleasant one, and was followed by tea in the dining room. Members have asked the Committee to arrange two "Bring and Buy Sales," a Theatre Party, and a Beetle Drive.

COMFORTS REPORT.—The target having been reached for the Middlesex Regt., the sum of £12 10s. remained in hand. The Committee agreed that as this sum had been collected specifically for the Regiment, it should be applied in some way for their benefit, and it was proposed and carried that a cheque be sent to the Middlesex Regt., Prisoners of War Fund. This was sent and two extremely nice acknowledgments were received. I hope to be able to give the text of these in the next issue, as I still have more news relating to the Branch which I should like to include in this issue.

Miss Burnett gave a good report of her workers; they had knitted 142 garments for the Merchant Navy.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.—Many thanks to Mrs. Palmer for the hand-worked cosy sent by her to the Branch. This will be put on sale at the next "Bring and Buy."

REUNIONS will be held on the third Saturday in the month until further notice.

As my Christmas and New Year Message did not reach you, I can only repeat just a small thought that was part of it, and that is to offer a welcome to those whom we hope soon to meet in London Branch as the result of our past years of Comradeship, and hope for the future, let us say in the words of Longfellow:

"Ah, how good it feels, this hand of an old friend."

Now, to end with the very nicest message from our President, Dame Florence, which is in reply to the card we all autographed at the Annual Meeting.

"My dear Mrs. Mayhew,—A thousand thanks to you and to my very dear, faithful friends of London Branch. Christmas would not be the same without your Greetings, which I always look forward to, and have never been disappointed; they have reached me all over the world. Will you give them my love, and tell them how touched and how grateful I am."

—Signed, Florence Simpson.
We, too, look forward to receiving a message from Dame Florence, and with still greater pleasure to her personal visit, which we hope will be at the A.G.M.

Sincerely,

B. MAYHEW,

Hon. Sec., London Branch.

The many friends of Miss L. V. Saunders, of London Branch, will be interested to hear that she was married on January 1st to Mr. A. Downer, of Swanley, at St. Nicholas Church, Sutton.

It was a beautifully sunny, frosty morning, just the morning for a winter wedding. Some of us had been rather anxious as to what kind of weather we should be greeted with after the previous few days, but all was well. The church looked very inviting with its Christmas decorations.

London Branch was represented by Mrs. Courage, Mrs. Mayhew and Miss Hayward. When we arrived the church was almost full, and the bride was just going up the aisle. The bride looked most attractive in a petunia coloured chiffon velvet dress made in the Tudor style, with a head-dress of net and flowers to match. She had one small attendant, a little niece, who was dressed in a cyclamen velvet frock and who looked very sweet.

The Vicar of Swanley, a friend of the bridegroom, officiated at the service. The reception was held at Wilson's Rooms, where a large company sat down to a delightful meal. The two-tiered iced wedding cake was made by two sisters of the bride; it looked beautiful, and tasted even better. We congratulate them on the splendid result of their work. After several amusing toasts, the bride and groom left. We understood they were going to Bournemouth for their honeymoon.

I think everyone present had an enjoyable time. At any rate, we three old comrades did, and we do wish Mr. and Mrs. Downer a happy life together. The New Year started very happily for them, and we trust it may continue so. We are very glad that we shall not be losing Saunders from our London Branch life. She will continue to serve on the Council and London Branch.

LONDON BRANCH, FIXTURES FOR 1945

Bring and Buy Sale on Saturday, 21st April, at 3 p.m.

Bring and Buy Sale on Saturday, 20th October, at 3 p.m.

Whist Drive on the 3rd May (Thursday) at 6.30 p.m. Tickets 1/- each.

It is hoped to arrange a Beetle Drive in September. Please watch the "Gazette" for the date.

Theatre Party: Miss Billington will arrange this, probably some time in March. Date will be announced at the A.G.M.

REUNIONS.—From March until September reunions will be held on the first Thursday in the month at 6.30 p.m., and on the third Saturday in the month at 2.30 p.m.

COMMITTEE MEETING.—The next Committee Meeting will be held on the 21st April at 2.15 p.m.

ILFORD BRANCH

Our first meeting of the year was at Mrs. Smith's at Harold Wood. It was a dreadful day, but four brave people weathered the storm and went to Mrs. Smith's. As usual, it was worth while; there was a lovely fire to greet us, and a grand tea, to which, although few, we did good justice, and I am afraid there was not much left when we had finished. We were pleased to know Mrs. Smith's daughter is on the mend, and we hope she will soon be well enough to return to her home and her loved ones. Druitt was away enjoying herself at Bournemouth. We missed her, but hope she will be at our next meeting, which will be on 3rd February at my address.

I was glad to be able to spend a day with Mrs. Hardy recently, when she was in London, but sorry she could not stay a few extra days and so meet all Ilford Branch; better luck next time, Mrs. Hardy.

Ilford Branch have all paid me their subscriptions for the year, which I am forwarding to the General Secretary.

Although rather late, I should like to wish all comrades a very happy New Year and may it bring us peace.

PADDY PARKER.

EIRE BRANCH

I feel that I must start the New Year well and send a few lines to the "Gazette." First of all, a happy New Year to all Comrades, and very many thanks to Eire members for continuing their membership and sending in their subscriptions. We have not had a Branch meeting since 1942 owing to transport difficulties, but perhaps we may be lucky in the near future and arrange a gathering. A wreath was laid on our behalf on the Memorial at the Remembrance Day ceremony in the Memorial Park, Islandbridge, Dublin. I could not attend the ceremony this year, but a few of our branch wrote saying that they hoped to be there. I bought the wreath out of funds and therefore did not ask for contributions. During the year our Branch helped a member to take her family to G.B.

I am very busy and doing some interesting work. I should like to send an account to the "Gazette," but that is not possible. I hope that some of our members will write for the "Gazette." Miss Montgomery has published one book and has another ready for publication. Why not an article for the "Gazette," Miss Montgomery, please. All subscriptions due for 1945. Thank you.

ANN O'MEARA.

Please, Miss Montgomery.—Editor.

BRADFORD BRANCH

We had a grand turn-up at our November meeting. Fourteen were present, and we were all delighted to see Mrs. Bottomley (Pearly White, 2365, who served at Abbeville). She served in the A.T.S., too, from the beginning until last year, and since her discharge has done war work continuously. This was the first meeting she has been able to attend in 1944. It must have been a big effort, because she lives well out of town. We discussed many things, but the chief topic was our Branch Dinner.

The previous Wednesday Mrs. Ross' (Colson's) daughter, Betty, was married. It was a grey November morning, but all the dark clouds in the world could not dim the radiance of the bride. I am enclosing a cutting of the wedding. This was the fourth W.A.A.C.-let wedding last year.

We had our next meeting on the 18th of December. Eleven members were present, and we had to report the loss of Mrs. Lawton, who had been a member from the beginning of our Branch. She served at Harfleur, and was then May Whitaker. She also joined the A.T.S., and served for quite a while in the Midlands. She has a daughter in the Service. She died quite suddenly, just before Christmas.

On the 20th we had our Dinner. We had looked forward to this great event for a long time, and every minute of it was enjoyed by everyone. Twenty-four of us. The Dinner itself was super, and beautifully served. We had the choice of goose or chicken, and all that goes with it, and Christmas pudding, which was delicious. We had a private room afterwards, where we made merry. We toasted, in sherry, the King, Queen Mary, Our Association and our guests. Miss Gummersall, our Chairman, proposed the toasts and Miss Mair, whom we were delighted to have with us, replied for our guests. We had four guests, Miss Mair, Mrs. Harvey, Miss Fieldhouse, and a lady member of the Press. Mrs. Harvey is Miss Cocksedge's sister, and Miss Fieldhouse is Miss Julian's friend, and they are very great friends of all of us. We had hoped to have the two little A.T.S. girls, who have joined with us whenever they could. They have moved away, but until the last possible minute had hoped to attend the Dinner. Their disappointment would be as great as ours. They wired during the afternoon to say they were unable to make it. We enjoyed listening to Mair's speech, and judging by the looks of all the sparkling eyes and happy faces, we certainly had a great time. Mrs. Ross and Mrs. Goodman made little speeches, too, and all too soon we had to break up. We ended by all holding hands and singing "Auld Lang Syne," and looking forward to a New Year and hoping from our hearts that it will bring "Peace on earth, and goodwill towards men."

In the Bradford Report in our last number we spelt Mrs. Bakes's name incorrectly. We offer her our apologies now.—Editor.

NORTHERN IRELAND

The Annual General Meeting of the Northern Ireland Branch was held in Fitzroy Hall, Belfast, on Tuesday, 12th December.

Dr. Olive Anderson was in the chair. There was a very small number of members present.

It was suggested that we meet less often, perhaps about four meetings in the year.

Controller Graham, A.T.S., was elected President, and Dr. Olive Anderson Vice-President.

Senior Commander Swettenham was elected Chairman, and Miss Goodbody Vice-Chairman.

(Continued in next column.)

A.T.S. ACTIVITIES

A.T.S. WORK FOR R.A. MARITIME REGIMENT

Women working at a depot in a Northern port are proud of wearing an unusual regimental flash on their sleeves—the red anchor and white reef knot on a blue ground, denoting the R.A. Maritime Regiment, the soldiers who man the guns on merchant ships.

Gunnery returning from sea, often after years away from home, report to this depot and are fed, re-kitted, checked in and their action reports made out before being sent on leave pending new assignments. Requests for R.A. personnel to serve on outgoing merchant ships are received here, and gunners are indentured from regimental headquarters according to commitments. A.T.S. help in all these jobs.

Most of the girls come from seafaring towns, or have relatives in the Navy, like Private Linskill, of Hull, whose fiancé is serving in a submarine. She has the interesting job of interviewing each returning gunner and preparing a report on his operational history. This department also deals with the complicated pay problems of the men who have been at sea for years.

The A.T.S. cooks have their own difficulties, too, as the numbers of men to be fed vary from day to day, and the arrival of a convoy means hundreds of extra meals to be served. Lance-Corporal Frazer, of Stranraer, and Private Bedloe, of Margate, think nothing of the difficulties so long as they are stationed near the sea and can cook for seafaring men.

Private Tovey, another Hull girl, works in the Quartermaster's Stores, issuing kit to replace that which has been lost or worn out, and also completely re-equipping survivors. This is a big job as the seagoing gunners require naval gear, such as duffle coats, hammocks, sea-boots, stockings and life jackets, as well as ordinary Army clothing.

The A.T.S. of the R.A. Maritime Regiment work long hours and cope with many rush jobs, but they are more than rewarded by the exciting tales they hear of fights with enemy aircraft, E-boats, and submarines, and stories of foreign parts.

"SHOP ASSISTANTS" AT FOOD DEPOT OF THE LIBERATION ARMIES

Two A.T.S. Technical Officers and sixty other ranks are now helping to manage what must be one of the biggest provision "shops" in the world. Items such as a 1,000,000 lb. of bacon, 400,000 tins of salmon, and 4,000,000 lb. of potatoes are among the 380 different commodities always in stock to supply the Armies of Liberation in Europe and the East.

It is the job of the A.T.S. at this R.A.S.C. Supply Reserve Depot in Western Command to see that orders from the War Office are promptly executed, and that an average of 1,500 tons of food a day is delivered to their

The Treasurer, Miss Baird, and the Secretary, Mrs. Bell, were both re-elected.

A Committee was formed of the following members: Miss Worling, ex-Q.M.A.A.C.; C.S.M. Jackson, A.T.S.; Senior Commander Hind, A.T.S.; C.S.M. Hughes, ex-Q.M.A.A.C.; and serving A.T.S.; Mrs. Hicks, ex-A.T.S.; Junior Commander Maguire, A.T.S.; and Miss Dales, ex-A.T.S.

HELEN H. BELL,
Hon. Secretary.

overseas "customers" in the right quantities and in perfect condition.

There are no showrooms or counters in this mail order shop, which is in a large, converted mill in Western Command. Each "department" consists of warehouses stacked to the roofs with cases of provisions.

Most of the food is tinned and special tests are made on samples of consignments for tropical climates and jungle conditions. Tins are kept in temperatures of 100 degrees F. and 130 Degrees F. for ten days, and if they can stand up to this, the rest of the consignment is suitable for shipment. Working with the War Office analysts is Private Bagot, of Manchester, who not only does the documentation, but as a non-smoker is a useful food taster.

Responsible for the vast stocks as Assistant Provision Officer is twenty-five-year-old Subaltern M. Gillman, of South Shields. She was assistant manager at a provision store before joining the A.T.S. Her job is to see that the shop is never out of stock, and that items ranging from a few thousand salt tablets to hundreds of tons of flour are there to fulfil orders at twenty-four hours' notice.

Subaltern W. Booth, of Stroud, Glos, is responsible for the accounting side. A store cashier in civilian life, she now deals with bills each of which may amount to as much as £137,000.

Working long and uncertain hours are the six A.T.S. shipping clerks, who ensure that deliveries catch the right boat at the right time and place. These include Corporal V. Watts, of Crouch Hill, and Corporal H. Hammond, of Sheffield, who make out all bills of lading; and Sergeant Bradshaw, of Fleetwood, and Private M. Reed, Wallasey, who make last-minute check ups to see that the goods are in perfect order.

In addition to food, the store also stocks cigarettes, of which there are seldom less than 370,000,000 on the premises.

BOMBS DID NOT STOP THESE DRAUGHTSWOMEN

Rain, wind, mud and bombs have not stopped four draughtswomen from doing their job. With their gum-boots covered in mud, they have plotted anti-aircraft gun-sites; they have climbed a huge cinder-dump dragging a heavy chain, with the rain beating on their long water capes; and when a flying bomb landed uncomfortably close, they have thrown themselves down in the open while the bomb skimming overhead. Then they went on measuring A.T.S. quarters for repairs to doodle damage, or making plans for a new mess in the big military garrison to which they are attached.

These auxiliaries, who are working for the Royal Engineers, can do all the surveying, taking of levels, and measuring of land and buildings for maps and plans of Army property. One auxiliary may be drawing the guardroom for a gun-site, while another is making a design to add a cloakroom to a canteen, so that it can be used on dance nights. While some draughtswomen are working with T-squares and rulers at their desks, others will be taking their turn at crawling through bushes and under barbed wire and camouflage netting to lay out the measuring tape in a straight line.

When she was taking drain-pipe levels, Private Muriel Flach, of Ealing, watched enormous rats being picked out of a manhole. Out-

side, she says she "has held the levelling rod until it swayed before my eyes," while indoors she is designing a garden for the post-war officers' mess.

Private A. Rose, of Leigh-on-Sea, has been "brought up on building," for her father is a builder, and so was her brother before he joined the Sappers and also went into a drawing office. Her mother designs houses—which get built—as a hobby in her spare time. Private Rose found that she knew a lot about the job already when she first became a draughts-woman.

The three others have all learned an entirely new job in the A.T.S. Private J. Landesberg, of Worthing, hopes that it will help her to write architectural articles when she returns to her civilian job of journalist.

Lance-Corporal I. Smith, of Chatham, prefers to be out of doors. She was a lady's maid before the war, but she always wanted a chance to do something like her present work. Her ambition is to stay in the A.T.S. as long as she can after the war, and then to go round the world as a ship's stewardess.

They got a big chance to fight the fly-bomb. Besides plotting and designing gun-sites, they measured sites for huts to be put up, when Army quarters were destroyed. When they saw huts quickly erected on the sites they had plotted, they felt that they were really getting results for their work. But V-bombs held up some of their work, and they are glad when they can get back to their rat-holes and cinder-dumps.

A.T.S. HAVE THEIR OWN "BROADCASTING HOUSE"

In a camp attached to one of the largest Ordnance Depots in the world, the A.T.S. have their own broadcasting system, inaugurated by the Group Commander. Their "Broadcasting House" is at Group H.Q., and the "announcers" are the Orderly Officer of the day and the Group Commander on special occasions.

There is a microphone at H.Q. and an amplifier which relays programmes to the loud-speakers installed in each hut. Every week a Wireless Committee, consisting of a representative from each Company and the Entertainment Officer, meet to discuss the programme for the following week. With the "Radio Times" on the table in front of them, they choose items from the Home and Forces services and blend them into one programme. This is then entered in a notebook so that the Orderly Officer can change the station accordingly.

Broadcasting hours are from 06.00 hrs. to 07.00 hrs. and 14.00 hrs. to 23.59 hrs. The day starts off with a rousing record of Reveille. Formerly the orderly N.C.O.s, starting at 05.00 hrs., had to walk round the camp ringing hand-bells, since the loud speakers were installed this is no longer necessary, and not one auxiliary has been late in the morning.

After Reveille comes "Records—by request." The girls enter their requests in a notebook the night before—often there is a long queue for this—and in the morning the Orderly Officer plays the tunes they have chosen.

During this hour Birthday Greetings are broadcast, and announcements are made which could never be confused with those of the orthodox B.B.C. Each hut in this camp is named after a battle or a blitzed area, which results in rather astonishing announcements, such as: "Many happy returns to Patsy in

Crete, from her friends in Dunkirk, and they have chosen this record for her twenty-first birthday." The girl who is going on marriage leave wakes up to hear, "Seven Days of Heaven," and "My Hero," two records played for her by friends in "Dieppe."

There are many uses for the wireless link between H.Q. and the rest of the camp. The arrival of telegrams or urgent messages is announced on the air, if there is a fire or raid the picquet is summoned by loud-speaker, and if the black-out is not perfect, the Orderly Officer says "The lights of Normandy are showing, will the Orderly N.C.O. please attend to them."

Another feature is a News Bulletin of camp news, sports, entertainments, etc., read by the Education Officer.

In the gay hairdressing salon with its green painted furniture, chintz cushions, flowers and magazines, there is a loud-speaker installed so the A.T.S. have music wherever they go until the day ends for them at 23.59 hrs. with a fanfare of bugles and trumpets as the record of "Lights Out" is played.

There is only one rule—the switch must be left on at night so that Reveille will automatically come through in the morning.

The C.O. of the R.A.O.C. garrison is so enthusiastic about the scheme that he is adopting it for the men's quarters.

The Editor still thinks the old days were best when the O.O. woke each auxiliary with a cup of tea and tucked her up at 22.00 hrs. But, of course, she is an old fogey.

A.T.S. PACK EQUIPMENT FOR AIRBORNE AND PARATROOPS

In a section of a large Ordnance shed covering 11½ acres of ground, A.T.S. with nimble fingers and quick eyes pack equipment for airborne and paratroops.

They have a personal pride in such epic adventures as the invasion of France and Holland and the stand at Arnhem. They helped. And the men they work for so willingly know it, for quite often a letter comes from overseas thanking the A.T.S. for the grand work they are doing, pointing out how vital it is for the men to receive their equipment well packed, and wishing them luck.

Only the most skilled packers work on this job, for careless packing might mean the loss of lives. Sometimes the auxiliaries end their working day with roughened hands and broken finger-nails, but none have ever been heard to grumble. They are too proud of the fact that the equipment they pack is worn by the most front-line troops of all. Like the men for whom it is intended, there is nothing humdrum about the packing; for the most part airborne and paratroop equipment is packed for immediate issue.

Just as the Germans never know where or when these men will drop from the skies, so the Ordnance girls never know when a lorry with the blue Bellerophon on the back will draw up outside the shed and paratroops will leap out waving indents. This means that equipment is needed in a hurry for 20, 30 or 40 men.

The indent is given to the A.T.S., who check off the items with the catalogue numbers, see that the articles are serviceable, and pack them.

"We always ask where they are going," says the Corporal in charge. "They never tell us, and we know they won't before we ask them. We wouldn't want them to," she adds with true feminine logic.

The girls pack crash helmets for parachutists and glider pilots, mortar bomb and sten gun carriers, large thermos jars encased in padded

canvas containers, so that they cannot break however they fall. There are special kitbags, large canvas water carriers, rubber life belts to be worn over the equipment, small rubber hot water bottles with chemical refills which heat up instantly with the addition of a teaspoonful of water, and an ingenious carrier for kit which straps on the back, all of which have to go neatly into boxes. Then they pack brandy flasks carried by the medical staff, and fighting knives and knuckle dusters. The Corporal in charge gave a realistic and blood-thirsty demonstration of their use in battle. "A paratroop showed me himself," she explained.

After the invasion of Holland, a paratroop brought back presents for one of the A.T.S. in the Depot. "You'd never guess what he brought," says the Corporal. "Dutch money and a bunch of black grapes the size of pennies—I had four of them!"

A.A. TO R.A.P.C.

Five hundred Ack Ack girls who helped to defend our cities during the blitzes have now been transferred to work with the Pay Corps.

At first many of the auxiliaries were bitterly disappointed. They had grown accustomed to the open-air life and excitement of manning the instruments on gun-sites, but when it was pointed out to them that their present work, whilst not so glamorous, was vital to the war effort, they tackled it cheerfully.

Everything possible has been done to make the change-over easy for them. To keep the A.A. team spirit, people who were in the same battery have been kept together wherever possible. Not only do they work side by side in pay offices, but they are billeted in the same house or neighbourhood.

Before being transferred to pay duties, each auxiliary was interviewed by a Personnel Selection Officer, who noted her capabilities and tried to ascertain whether she would be happy and efficient in her new job. Only those with a moderately high standard of mathematical knowledge were accepted.

Now that the auxiliaries are settled in their new work, they are proud of their R.A.P.C. badge. In the words of Private M. Ross, of Falkirk, who, with three friends from a battery in S. Devon, is now working in Western Command, "It is good to feel that having accomplished one job, we have been given an opportunity to do something else really worth while." Her three companions, Private D. Deacon, of Gosforth, Private M. Rattray, of Paisley, and Private E. Smith, of Wakefield, all plotters from the same battery, also feel that office life has its compensations. Regular hours, the assurance of a good night's rest, and comfortable offices are among them.

The other plotters from a battery in Cornwall, Private M. Wright, of Pendlebury, and Private E. Taylor, of Rawtenstall, confess that they were upset at having to change jobs, but everyone in the Pay Corps has made them so welcome that they can't help but feel pleased about it.

SCHOOL FOR BRIDES

The syllabus of a popular spare-time course that is being run in an A.A. Brigade in the Eastern Counties has nine periods, each divided into a lecture and a time for practical work. Subjects include the financial side of house-keeping ("can we afford it?"), lectures on house buying, decoration, maintenance and repair, cooking, Parliamentary and Local Government, how to run a committee, home nursing and invalid cookery, preparation for a baby and its care from crèche to day school.

NEWS OF COMRADES

MRS. BATTERHAM, who served as Alice May Harry, and married first Mr. Hollerhead, writes to send us a subscription for a Life Gazette. She has been a Life member of the Comrades Association since August, 1931, when she was in England for a holiday. Mrs. Batterham had four sons, all of whom have served. Her eldest son is a Prisoner of War in Japanese hands, the second son was pilot of a Lancaster bomber and was killed, the third son is fighting in New Guinea, and the youngest was badly wounded in the Middle East and is now out of the Army. She herself works at an aerodrome during the day, and at week-ends and some evenings she works as a V.A.D. at a Military Hospital. Without doubt, that is a wonderful record for one family, and we congratulate Mrs. Batterham on the great spirit shown by herself and her sons.

Sergt. A. MEREDITH has now been posted to Winchester. She likes her new station very much, and sends good wishes to all Comrades.

We are delighted to give the news that Mrs. ALICE MARWOOD has been granted an Alms-house at Walton-on-Thames. The Trustees say that she was chosen on account of her excellent Army references. It is very nice to know that Mrs. Marwood will now be comfortably settled in a home of her own.

MRS. M. SAVILL, ex-Sergt. W/8434, A.T.S., still misses the Army life, though it is now over a year since she was discharged. She worked for some time at the Recruiting Offices in South Street, Romford, and had some amusing times there. This was in the early days as far back as September, 1938. We are sorry to learn that she lost her eldest son in H.M.S. Hotspur.

MRS. OLIVE CASTLE (Baker, Aldershot and Pirbright) sends greetings to all Old Comrades for the New Year.

MRS. ETHEL MILLS, the Hon. Secretary of the Ex-Service Women's Club in New South Wales, was busy making preparations for the Annual Dinner when she wrote in October, her letter arriving on the 14th December, so it was just two months on the way. They were inviting some British Servicemen to the dinner and looking forward very much to a happy evening. One can imagine the many questions as to WHAT had been happening in the Old Country. They had had a visit from Miss HENTHORN, who has been living in Melbourne. Mrs. Mills also gave the news that Mrs. KILGOUR ROBERTS was returning to England. A new Anzac House is being contemplated, and £350,000 has already been contributed towards the cost; it is to be a centre for all ex-Service men and women. We are sorry to hear that Mrs. PEACHEY's mother is ill and hope that she is better long ere now.

MRS. KITTY DICK, who served in the A.T.S. as W/Sergt. Bottrell, W/5458, is looking forward to the peace Reunion and meetings, but has a baby on her hands at present, who is just beginning to toddle, and could not be left. She gives the news that R.S.M. MARY COOMER was in hospital earlier in the year, and had the good fortune of having her husband home unexpectedly from Africa and Italy, but he was off again with the Invasion forces; Overseas

W.A.A.C.s will remember Miss DE PUTRON, who was D.C. at Rouen and afterwards at Wimereux. Her school, The Beehive, was evacuated to Shropshire. Miss de Putron has a niece, Mary, who is a Third Officer in the W.R.N.S., and was lately married to Flying Officer C. C. R. Vick. We feel she should have been in the A.T.S.!

CORPORAL F. ROBINSON, W/179963, writing from 64, The Common, Woolwich, says how pleased she is to be a member of the Association and how much she enjoys the "Gazette." We congratulate her on her promotion, and hope the third stripe will come along in due course.

MRS. M. PROUDLEY, Forewoman Cook at Kimmel Park and Oswestry, sends good wishes for a happy New Year to all members.

MISS MARGARET DOUCH asks us to convey her good wishes to all Comrades, especially those of Calais and Beaumarais. It is now over five years since she started "her bit" for the war. Her niece, Patricia, is serving in the A.T.S., and is also a member of the Comrades Association. Miss Douch writes that Patricia is "enjoying Army life and has become engaged to an American in the Medical Corps. Her sister was married to a Canadian this year, so we have made contact with both Dominion Forces." I wonder how America LIKES being called our latest DOMINION! We certainly hope for ever closer co-operation with her, but I wonder if the co-operation will be quite so close at that!

MRS. ANNE BROOKE, ex-Corporal, A.T.S., is very pleased to belong to the C.A. and thus be able to keep in touch with Service activities and news through the "Gazette."

MRS. KATHLEEN TAYLOR, who left the A.T.S. 18 months ago, made very good friends in the Service, and is still able to keep in touch with them. She will enjoy the Reunions when it is possible to hold them again.

We deeply regret to give the sad news that MRS. WEBB, well known to many who served overseas with Q.M.A.A.C. as MINNIE GRUNDY, D.A. at Etaples and U.A., Queen Mary Camp, Calais and Harfleur, died suddenly on 5th December. It was tragic the way she met her death through an accident from which she was making an excellent recovery as far as the fracture was concerned. The cause was a clot, which did not show itself until Mrs. Webb began to try to walk. After two weeks she began to suffer from fainting attacks when trying to walk, and she died very suddenly. Minnie Grundy was always a most loyal D.A. to Mrs. Johnston at Etaples and a great favourite and much loved U.A. Our deep sympathy goes to her sister, Miss Ethel Grundy (U.A. Directorate of Forestry, Paris Plage), and to her husband and daughter.

MISS PHYLLIS CLEETER, ex-Sergt. 4131, A.T.S., now living in the Isle of Wight, sends best wishes for a happy and peaceful New Year. She was discharged, medically unfit, but we hope she is stronger now.

PTE. MARGARET HENSON, now with the District Claims Office, Leeds, writes: "I always look forward to the 'Gazette' and read with great interest of the activities of Q.M.A.A.C. and A.T.S. in various parts of the world. I have been a member of the Association for two years, and have found it a valuable means

of keeping in touch with other members who have served or are still serving. May the Association continue to increase in membership. All good wishes for the coming year.

We are sorry to hear that SERGT. SYLVIA KHEIFETZ was in White Lodge Hospital when she wrote, expecting shortly to be discharged. We hope, however, that she is making a good recovery, and send good good wishes for a speedy return to health.

MRS. A. LEES (Forewoman Annie Amoss) has two sons in the Army; one is in Italy, the other in Burma. The latter has both his Mother's and Father's Regimental badges on his belt, Q.M.A.A.C. and the Gordon Highlanders. He is quite truly proud of his parents' service with the Army, and rightly so.

We are grateful to Miss BLANCHE BAILEY, who served in Q.M.A.A.C. and the A.T.S., for a very nice parcel of woollies, which will be much appreciated by the comrades to whom they will be sent. She was one of the few in her street who felt the earthquake on the 30th December. She thought it was another flying bomb. She enjoys her work in the Income Tax Office, and quite sees now that it is right to pay tax!

MRS. C. BEDFORD (Rimes 20428, Q.M.A.A.C.) writes that she would very much like to hear from any old comrades who served at Haynes Park, S.D.R.E., or Bedford. She also served at Elston Schools, Folkestone and Bostall Heath. Mrs. Bedford is trying very hard to get a branch of the C.A. going at Scunthorpe, and we hope she will be successful. It is "up to" all ex-Q.M.A.A.C. members to try to make happy gatherings for any A.T.S. in their neighbourhood, and to encourage them to join the Association. Mrs. Bedford sends good wishes for 1945.

MISS B. HEANEY, a Life member, sends her "Gazette" subscription and good wishes; she sends her "Gazette" out to an A.T.S. Unit in the Middle East. Our deep sympathy goes to Miss GARNHAM, who lost a much loved sister on the 31st December, after a long and sad illness. She is hoping to be at the A.G.M. in February. Garnham keeps in touch with Mrs. LITTLE, who served as Izzard. She is now in America.

Before closing our news of Comrades, we would like to say how warmly we welcome the following, who have joined as Life members since November 1st: C. S. M. J. C. PETRIE, Chief Commander B. C. GARDNER, Senior Commander M. FRISWELL, Subaltern E. HOVENDEN, Senior Commander O. M. CROSBIE, Junior Commander F. E. FERGUSON, Corporal I. DEARMER, Mrs. L. GARSTIN, (Senior Commander, ret.), Senior Commander M. RAILTON, L/Corporal P. POTTS, Miss K. HAVERS (2nd Subaltern, ret.), Miss J. M. D. SIMPSON, Junior Commander I. F. GREY, C.S.M. G. WRIGHT. These last four members have transferred from being Annuals, and Staff-Sergt. E. F. HALL. We thank those old Life members who have now paid a Life subscription for the "Gazette," thus making themselves "life" for both C.A. and "Gazette," and simplifying our Records. Mrs. A. PEMBROKE, ex-Sergt.-Major, asks us to put her new address in the "Gazette": 153, Westrow Drive, Barking, Essex. She wishes to send greetings to all auxiliaries who served with her at Radcliffe, Manchester, and Wisbech.

Sergt. A. CARRIGAN, Sergt. G. M. F. WINTERBURN, Pte. J. W. NICHOLS, renewing their subscriptions, write to say how much they enjoy the "Gazette."

Mrs. C. PARKER (Worker Bott), now living in Vancouver, writes to say that there are many English soldiers and airmen now in the city. She would be delighted to see the sons of any Old Comrades who may go over to Vancouver.

C.S.M. J. C. Petrie, 601 (M) H.A.A. Battery, R.A., called at the headquarters office one Saturday in November; unfortunately, the one day in the week that the General Secretary is not there, but this did not discourage Sergt.-Major Petrie, as she sent a cheque for Life membership of the Comrades Association. She writes: "The 'Gazettes' are most interesting, especially as one is apt to forget about A.T.S. work outside A.A. Command!" The General Secretary is hoping that C.S.M. Petrie will come some day during the week and have lunch with her.

We are delighted to hear **Mrs. Ann O'Meara**, the Secretary of Eire Branch, has been appointed an Employment Officer in the Ministry of Labour. She was very disappointed that she was not accepted for service with the A.T.S., but she has been doing essential work for the war ever since which is not always easy in Eire.

Private McAdam, O.F.C., who is serving with a Heavy Mixed A.A. Battery at Sutton, near Hull, sends us a piece of family news which she thinks will be of especial interest to London Branch. She writes: "... the eldest son of **Mrs. G. F. Rose**, of London Branch, is a Squadron Leader in the R.A.F., and has won the D.S.O. for leading his rocket-firing Beaufighters to attack an Italian battleship, then in German hands, leaving her lying on her side. I am writing this as a very proud serving daughter of Mrs. Rose. My husband, whom I am very proud of, too, is serving with the R.A.C. in the B.L.A." Indeed you have reason to be a proud family! Congratulations, Mrs. Rose!

NO SIDE CAPS NOW FOR INDIAN A.T.S.

Indian girls serving in the W.A.C. (1), equivalent of the A.T.S., are no longer required to wear side caps with their traditional saris.

The concession has been made in deference to the wishes of the girls, who have found European headgear "uncomfortable and unmanageable."

PEGGY SCOTT

Miss Peggy Scott's new book "They made Invasion Possible" (Hutchinson) will be read with interest by all who enjoyed her "British Women in War." While personally we would rather not be praised separately from our brothers in arms, as implied in the title, we can admire the accuracy of her chapters about the A.T.S., and we realise that our parents and the general public still marvel at our indispensability. It is for these unbelievers that Miss Scott chiefly writes, and she does it very well.

CORRESPONDENCE

14, Abbots Way,
Lancing.

Dear Mrs. Addis,

I read in September-October "Gazette" what Paddy Parker had to say in praise of Miss Taylor and Oversea.

I wish to endorse every word. My sister and I spent Christmas there two years ago, and we wanted to go again this year, but there were no vacancies, for which we were very sorry indeed. We were very comfortable, and how Miss Taylor gave us such meals out of the rations is a puzzle to us to this day. I think Miss Taylor deserves all the praise she receives, and if there are any bouquets given away after the war, she should receive a large one for the way she has kept the flag flying at "Oversea."

I hope to pay a visit there in the New Year. Wishing you every success in your new job as "Editor."

Yours sincerely,
LILLY BOND,
1st A.M.T.D.

1917-19.

Ex-O.A. Jean M. Birt has written to the General Secretary to say that Miss Ada Pitt was in her Unit 2 at Le Havre and that she never lost sight of her, and is deeply grieved to learn of her death.

"She has written to me regularly all these years, and when the exchange difficulty arose she sent me the 'Gazette.' Not having heard from her three weeks ago, I sent her an air letter. This week (6/12/44) came July-August 'Gazette' from Benson (another Unit 2 member), with a letter telling me about dear old Pitt. My memory of Ada Pitt will be one of a fine loyalty, great courage, and an endearing sense of humour. She had the qualities which we women away in Australia so reverently admire in you women of the dear old land."

c/o R.S.L. War Service Fund,
Anzac House,
4, Collins Street, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia.
2nd December, 1944.

My dear Old Comrades,

Just a short letter to greet you all at Christmas, and my wish for you all is that it will really be your last war-time Christmas, and that 1945 will bring peace to the world. Everyone out here has the greatest admiration for you all at home, for you have all done a marvellous job, and my only regret is that I have not been there with you all to share your burdens and sorrows.

As you will see by the above address, I am still working for the troops, and have now completed my fifth year. The work has been very interesting, and we have had a splendid band of voluntary workers, who have to sort out the woollen garments we receive at Anzac House, for we get many socks which are not fit for men to wear!

We have nothing to complain about here so far as rationing of food or clothes is concerned, and I only wish they would cut us down a bit more and send it home to the people of England. We get 112 clothing coupons per year, which is very high compared to your 48. I have found, of course, that one has to do much renovating to keep decent, but we have nothing to grumble about. Clothes are getting costly, particularly hats, for which we have to give up three coupons.

Our Imperial Ex-Servicewomen meet at Anzac House once a month, and this month we are to give a party to the children who came

out from home to the Northcote Farm—some of them, of course, are no longer children.

I was delighted recently to get the last three issues of the "Gazette" from Miss Cox and it is so nice to get news of old comrades. Of course, the Association has had new life with the incorporation of the A.T.S., and there will be much work for the organisation to do after this war.

I had anticipated returning to England when normal shipping was resumed, but you will be interested to hear that I am to be married at the end of January to a Scot from Glasgow, whom I have known here for six years, which will prevent me from carrying out my plans, for the time being. I am trying hard to find a flat or house, but there is a shortage, so it will probably take me some time to get one.

Wishing you all the compliments of the season.

Yours sincerely,

(Miss) WINIFRED URQUHART.

Congratulations from us all. What will your new name be?—Editor.

Office of the High Commissioner,
Pretoria.
December 5th, 1944.

Dear Mrs. Johnston,

I am afraid it is a very long time since you have heard from me, but although I am seldom in the same place for long, my work has become rather monotonous from an outside point of view. The children who came out here with me four and a half years ago are now, many of them, grown up, and I have quite a large contingent of boys and girls in the South African Armed Forces. I have grown very fond of them, and shall be very sorry when the time comes to leave them.

This, it seems, is going to happen soon as I have been recalled to my old post with the Society for Overseas Settlement, and expect to get back to England at end of February or early in March. In fact, I may walk in again upon you at the Annual General Meeting, with any luck. It is two years since my last visit. I am sorry not to be able to bring my flock of children home with me, but they must stay in this country till the war in Europe ends. As you may suppose, apart from this, I am delighted at the prospect of getting home again and seeing all my friends, and this long time away has quite quenched my thirst for adventure far afield. I shall be quite content to sit at home for the rest of my days. I am being succeeded in this job by another ex-W.A.A.C., Irene Bowen, who was in the Administrative office under Joan Learoyd in the old days at Headquarters.

A little while ago, when I was travelling in rather an out of the way part of Natal, I came across Geddes, of London Branch, with her newly wedded husband, Mr. Bunting. They live at Rork's Drift. As it happened, we went on by the same train, so I was able to have some talk with them. She seemed very happy majority will have married by that time! . . .

I must admit I often long for S.A. again, after more than two years away, and am sick to death of the M.E. I think most people are who are up here. I have certainly been here long enough, but shall be on the move fairly shortly. It's just beginning to get hot up here now.

I have lately had two weeks' leave, and I went to Jerusalem, and then on to Damascus and up in the mountains behind Beirut, where I just lazed and had a good rest. I did the

whole trip by road, so saw a lot, but getting about in these parts isn't a very easy matter. Trains don't help one in the slightest.

I just missed Vera Simpson in Beirut by one day. She has been doing some course in Palestine—a Captain, and was upon leave in Syria. By now, I think, homeward bound to Kenya. She has got on very well. I was very sad not to see her. . . . and looked well, and is quite prepared to become a good South African. She and her husband are farming. During another recent tour I came across Lowe, of St. Omer and Rouen, now Mrs. Soutar, and living at Vereeniging. She and her husband have lately come from India, where he has been in business. They have kindly adopted one of my children for the duration, and she is very happy with them. Mrs. Soutar asked after Miss Pickford and Mrs. Kenyon.

It always gives one a great thrill to meet Old Comrades unexpectedly, and, of course, becomes much more difficult as time goes on. And it has gone a long way already!

I often see Muriel Hughes in Johannesburg. She is hoping to return to England when she can get a passage.

A. F. Feiling has had an adventurous life since she left the Settlers' Club at Cape Town in 1941. She seems to have been all over the Middle East and is now reported to be in Rome. I enclose a letter from her which may be of interest.

During all these years of exile I have looked forward eagerly to the arrival of the "Gazette," and am greatly interested in all the new developments. I have been able to keep in touch with the younger generation of service women here, as I have done a good deal of lecturing, or rather "Talks," under the Army Education scheme here. These youngsters are very envious of the wider opportunities for girls overseas.

I see London branch is having its annual meeting next week. Never mind, I shall be there in 1945, and am sure I shall find them entirely unchanged. I have become a sort of honorary W.A.A.P. here, and have been given a badge on the strength of having done 100 hours' talking in the camps. Doesn't it sound awful?

I do wish the A.T.S. had never been christened so oddly. Such a pity they were not W.A.A.C.s; like all the other countries, and like US. However, they seem to have earned great credit for the new name. There are a number of Wrens out here from England, and a few of my girls have been allowed to join. The South African sailor women are called Swans (South African Women's Naval Service).

Warm greetings to you all for Christmas and 1945, when I hope to see you all again.

Affectionately yours,

EDITH THOMPSON.

15, Marian Macleary Street,
St. Pitts Point,
Sydney, Australia.

27/11/44.

Dear Dame Florence,

On Armistice Day I represented our Ex-Service Women at the Cenotaph. A little while before the service began a lady came and stood beside me. After a time she asked me had I been a nurse in the last war? I said no. I had been an English W.A.A.C. I asked her

if she were English, and she said yes, I am Lady Keyes. I felt a little embarrassed for the moment. She told me that you were a great friend of hers. I told her we had seen you when you were on your visit to Australia some years ago. I asked her if, on her return home, and when she saw you, would she convey the compliments of the Ex-Service Women in Sydney to you. She said she would. But somehow I felt I would like to write and say how sorry I was to hear that you had been so ill, and trust by now that you are well recovered. The blitzes and the flying bombs must have been a great source of anxiety to you, but with the lessening of that terror, it may be the means of a complete recovery for you, and I hope the day is not far distant when our beloved homeland is free from the menace. Our thoughts during those awful days were always with the people at home, and how brave they were. On November 9th we held our twenty-fourth annual dinner, and I was thrilled to have with me two women who were with me in my first camp at Bettlesfield, in Salop, and the husband of one who was in the R.F.A., to whom we were attached (the unit). We were also fortunate in being able to entertain from home boys, who are serving in the Marine Artillery. They man the guns on the ships coming from home. It was nice to have them, as we felt they belonged to us. Trusting this finds you well and in case Lady Keyes does not deliver our message in time for Christmas, I will wish you the compliments of the season and a fervent wish for a peace, a lasting one, before next Christmas. With kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

ESTHER PACE.

Rosedale,

Bermagui, N.S.W.

16/10/44.

Dear Old Comrades,

It is several years since I've written to the "Gazette." My intentions have been good, but somehow the letter has never been written. A few months ago one of the members said in the "Gazette" she still had her first Army biscuit. So have I. Alas, it is not now all in one piece. My children were showing it to some friends, and somehow it dropped and broke. They cannot believe we had to eat them. In the May-June "Gazette" there is a rather tall story of two kangaroos entering a church. I know there is always an exception to the rule, but I have lived 20 years in the Bush and have never heard of them going inside any house, and two full-grown ones would be dangerous. They would stand about 6 ft. high, and are very strong, and goodness me, how they can hop. I wouldn't like to be in the church if they were there.

We folk out here feel very sorry for all of you at home. The dreadful time you have had, and especially for the children. It is a pity they could not have been brought out here away from it all, but I suppose lots of mothers would not like their children to go so far away. They would have been well looked after. The few that did come have been very happy here, and some of them want their parents to come out. How nice it must be to have the lights on again, and I hope by the time this letter reaches you the war will be over. I shouldn't think there is much left of Calais now. I wonder where all the girls of

Queen Mary Camp are now? What a lot of "Do you remember" there would be if we could all meet again.

We have had a very dry winter, and to-night it is very nice to be listening to the rain. It is our spring now, and the fruit trees are in bloom, and I have been busy getting the garden ready.

We country folk are better off than city folk, with the rationing, as we grow most of what we want to eat, and we get 112 clothing coupons a year, which has to include house linen, 25 for a pair of double bed sheets, so sheets are being patched and made do. War-time materials are very shoddy, especially shoes, and they are expensive. It is hard on mothers of large families. Kindest regards to all old Comrades.

Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Yours sincerely,

(Mrs.) G. A. PARBERY.

3026 G. A. Smith, Calais-Andruicq.

Miss Feiling writes from the following address: S.I.M.E., G.H.Q., M.E.F.

. . . I am now waiting for a relief before I pack up and depart from Syria. In spite of all the hordes of women arriving in the M.E. from England, there still seems a shortage, as I have now waited some weeks for someone to take over from me. I am still doubtful as to my plans, but hanker after a trip to S.A., even if only for some leave and to see all my friends. So I may find myself on a ship, and I may turn up on your doorstep and see what is doing. Remember me if you make any future plans for emigration, as that is really what I am most interested in as a post-war planning scheme, both for men and women. . . .

I am keeping my hand well in with house-keeping, as I am sharing a mess with seven other officers and feeding men is oddly enough more difficult than women. It is not made easier by having to gesticulate or act what one wants, as our staff only speak Armenian and Turkish! We are living in a delightful house, and it is quite the most comfortable way I have lived since I left home. I suppose because one is free to do and eat what one likes. There is no rationing up here, and everything seems plentiful if one can afford to pay the prices, which are absolutely exorbitant. One loses all proportion of the value of money and if one stopped to compare prices with English prices, one would never buy anything. However, messing as we do is a lot cheaper than the local hotel, which charges £1 a day, and is not particularly good at that. . . .

I haven't met any S.O.S.B.W. settlers in Syria, but I think I told you there was a clique of us in Cairo that I had come across, all girls that had passed through my hands while I was in Cape Town. Most of them seem to think they will push on to England after the war, and not back to S.A., but I think the

RESOLUTION FOR 1945

Do you know that with another 200 readers the Gazette would pay its way? Once it does this it could become a far, far better thing. Can you help? There must be 200 potential members of the C.A. in our acquaintance. Let us collect them.

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 March, 1945, Mrs. Richard Addis, Woodside Frant, Sussex.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st OCTOBER, 1944

We have audited the above Balance Sheet of Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps and Auxilliary Territorial Service Comrades Association with the books and vouchers of the Association, and have obtained all the information and explanations we have required. In our opinion, such Balance Sheet is properly drawn up so as to exhibit a true and correct view of the Association's affairs at 31st October, 1944, according to the best of our information and the explanations given to us. The cash at Bank and Investments have been verified.

Dundee House, 15, Eastcheap, London, E.C.3.
9th January, 1945.

L. M. HARRIS & CO.,
Chartered Accountants.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT for the Year ended 31st October, 1944

		EXPENDITURE		INCOME	
		£	s. d.	£	s. d.
To Salaries, National Insurance and Travelling of Secretary	...	99	19 3	By Annual Subscriptions	...
" Office Expenses	...	91	12 0½	" Donations—General	...
" Income Tax	...	25	8 7	" Augmentation	...
" Miscellaneous Expenses	...	17	7 2		1032 5 6
" Gazette Printing and Postages	...	122	12 0½		1 2 6
		<u>356</u>	<u>19 1</u>	" Capitalization Fees from Branches	...
				" Interest on Investments	...
				" Gazette—Subscriptions, Sales and Donations	...
" Excess of Income over Expenditure for the year carried to Capital Account	...	930	2 8	" Sale of Badge	...
		<u>£1287</u>	<u>1 9</u>		0 2 0
					1033 8 0
					22 6 0
					50 17 2
					123 13 7
					0 2 0
					<u>£1287 1 9</u>