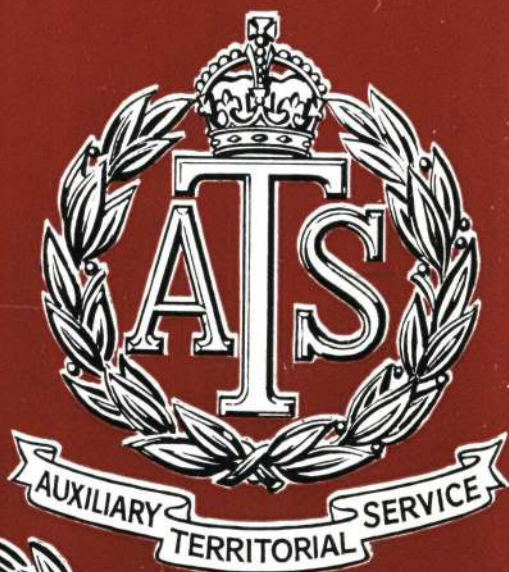
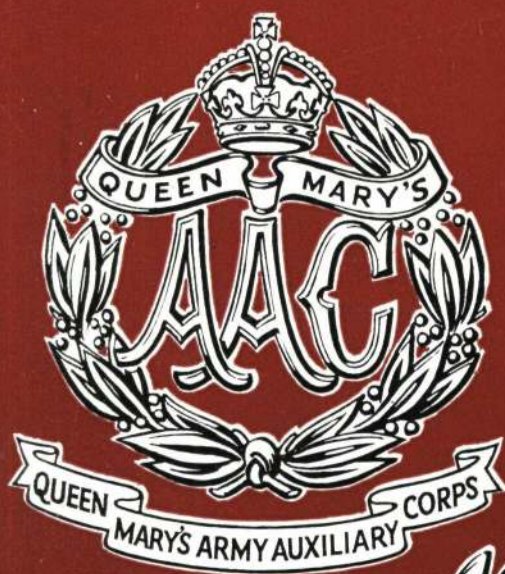


THE LIONESS



THE LIONESS



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W.R.A.C. ASSOCIATION ADDRESS BOOK

General Secretary

(to whom all communications should be addressed re Membership and Distribution of *The Lioness*)

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CONTRIBUTIONS FOR NEXT ISSUE BY
JULY 1

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Colonel M. Railton, C.B.E.



THE LIONESS

Vol. XXVII

May 1954

No. 2

Editorial

For the first time for over two years we have succeeded in including all contributions sent for this issue of *The Lioness*, including those received late and others held over from the last issue, and unless there is something radically wrong with our calculations, there will be no overmatter, i.e. material which we have sent to the printer in the hope that he may find some way of getting it in, but he fails, and there we start the next issue with some type already set up and space mortgaged. Perhaps, next issue, we shall be able to dig into the file of articles, some of which were written over four years ago and which have been piling up ever since. Among these are two whose authors' names appear in the columns of this issue—Sgt. Rolls, one of the survivors from the *Empire Windrush*, and Pte. Michaels, whose wedding is announced to 3rd Officer Cooper of the U.S. Merchant Marine.

We have been asked to publish the fact that it has been decided to extend the system to the Union Jack Women's Services Club of ex-Service individual membership, a system which has been in force for many years in the Union Jack Club itself. This individual membership is open to a limited number of ex-Service members of all the Women's Services below commissioned rank who have completed not less than four years' service since 1939. Application forms for membership may be obtained from the Warden, Miss C. M. Purdy, The Union Jack Women's Services Club, Exton Street, London, S.E.1. The subscription is 7s. 6d. per annum and the facilities include restaurant and snack bar in the families' club and beds at reasonable prices, although first consideration has to be given to serving members.

The Earl of Athlone and the Directors of the Dunkirk War Memorial Trust Corporation are anxious to bring to the notice of all Associations the proposal to re-establish at Dunkirk, as a lasting memorial of the last war which brought so much suffering and so much honour to the town, the Seamen's Institute for officers and men of the Merchant Service which was originally erected as a memorial to those who fell in the First World War. Today a bomb-gutted shell is all that remains of a worthy memorial where many thousands of merchant seamen found recreation and refreshment in the years between the wars. Although it is true that none of us took part in the evacuation from Dunkirk, many husbands, fathers or brothers were there and there can be no Army man or woman who does not feel lasting gratitude to the prompt action of the seamen who were responsible for one of the most miraculous operations of history. War damage has been allowed but a further sum of six thousand

pounds is needed before this Institute can rise again. If it is raised, not only will the Seamen's Institute and its Chapel be rebuilt, but a Chaplain will be appointed jointly by the Missions to Seamen and the Colonial and Continental Church Society. If any member of the Association would care to send a donation to this memorial she should send it to the Secretary, The Dunkirk Memorial Trust Corporation Limited, 4 Buckingham Palace Gardens, London, S.W.1.

A few simple statistics, although they make dry reading, must be of interest to all mothers of children under five. In spite of all the efforts of Road Safety Committees the reduction of the number of casualties amongst children is almost entirely amongst those of school age. The average number of road deaths amongst them in 1930-32 was 21, while in 1950-52 it was only 10. This reflects great credit on teachers, police and local committees and the Ministries of Transport and Education have not been idle. But when we turn to the under-fives we find that the decrease for the same years is only from nine to seven. In a recent conference held under the auspices of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents the Society's Director-General, Maj.-Gen. B. K. Young, C.B.E., M.C., made an appeal to all women's organisations to help in the campaign to reduce this tragic figure. The responsibility of the parents is inescapable; children under five cannot be expected to cope with traffic, nor read the Highway Code, but their parents can make sure that their own road behaviour and courtesy is first-class. They can also remember that their own example teaches their children more than anything else, make their children play in safe places and use their influence to persuade the local authority to provide more safe play places. What can we do to help?

Gratuities

One or two people have recently woken up to the fact that they never received a gratuity. If anyone else is in this fortunate position she should write to the Central Moribund Accounts Office, Government Buildings, Droitwich, Worcestershire, and not to any official of the Association.

Lost Property

The following articles are held at the Association Office, having been found at the Reunion: One blue and silver filigree earring; One Q.M.A.A.C. badge and brooch.

REUNION WEEKEND

GRAND REUNION, 1954

The Grand Reunion took place on Friday, March 26, at the Seymour Hall, W.1. The programme opened with a display of Physical Recreation and Training by members of No. 12 Battalion trained by Miss Nightingale, the Staff Warrant Officer for P.T. at London District, accompanied by the Corps band.

An innovation was made in that no outside speaker attended. The Princess Royal honoured us with her presence and introduced the Director who gave us an interesting account of the activities of members of the Corps outside their purely military duties. These activities ranged from the Madame Prunier Cooking Competition to the Handicrafts Exhibition and the Inter-Services sports. Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan followed with a short speech which left us feeling that the present service is a worthy successor to those who served before. Finally the Royal messages were read and messages of regret for the absence of Dame Florence Simpson and Dame Leslie Whateley. The buffets were open and the usual struggle for refreshment ensued. Many friends met, some of them for the first time for years. The band played throughout the evening. During the evening an appeal was made for the Benevolent Funds by Col. Railton and, as a result, the funds will benefit by £86.

Q.M.A.A.C. REUNION

The Q.M.A.A.C. Reunion took place on the evening following the Grand Reunion in the canteen of 101 Field Regiment, R.E., by courtesy of the Officer Commanding and the T. & A.F.A. About 125 members of Q.M.A.A.C. were present and were delighted to welcome, as usual, Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan. Excellent refreshments were provided by personnel of 327 (County of London) Battalion (T.A.) which were served by the Catering Committee of the London Branch of the Association. After refreshments many members adjourned to the Drill Hall for singing and dancing and the proceedings ended at 10.30 p.m. Miss Ireland has asked us to add to this account, on behalf of all Q.M.A.A.C. who were there, her grateful and appreciative thanks to Capt. A. Keefe, W.R.A.C., Mrs. Stevenson, Mrs. Lumsden, Mrs. L. Richards, Mrs. E. Richards and Miss I. Browne, all A.T.S., for all that they did to make the Reunion so successful. Grateful thanks too to C.S.M. Welstead and L/Cpl. Bark, 327th Battalion W.R.A.C. (T.A.), for the delicious refreshments which they so kindly prepared. The kindness of all of them was indicative of true comradeship.

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday, March 27, 1954, at the Duke of York's Headquarters by kind permission of the County of London Territorial and Auxiliary Forces Association. In the absence of the President, the Chair was taken at 3 p.m. by Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan.

1. *Minutes.* The Minutes of the Annual General

Meeting held on Saturday, July 4, 1953, having appeared in the November issue of *The Lioness*, were taken as read and signed as correct.

2. *Apologies.* Apologies for absence were received from Dame Florence Simpson, D.B.E.; Dame Leslie Whateley, D.B.E.

3. *Business Arising.* There was no business arising from the Minutes.

4. *Election of Officers.* Chairman of Council: Only one nomination having been received, Dame Regina Evans was declared to be elected. Council Vice-Presidents: Four nominations having been received for four vacancies, Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan, Mrs. R. King, Mrs. Russell Simpson and Dame Leslie Whateley were declared to be elected.

5. *Report of the Council.* Dame Regina Evans read the Report of the Council for 1953-March 1954. This was adopted and is printed at the end of these minutes.

6. *Report of Hon. Asst. Treasurer.* The Honorary Assistant Treasurer presented the report on behalf of the Honorary Treasurer who was prevented by illness. She emphasised the need of more subscriptions and referred with appreciation to the donation of £42 2s. od. from 16th Battalion W.R.A.C., M.E.L.F.

7. Reports of Committees.

(a) A.T.S. Benevolent Fund. Miss Acland, on behalf of the Committee, stated that 4,000 cases had been dealt with since the fund's inception, and between 30 and 40 considered each week. Grants were often given to young people starting a home. The Employment Office continued to fill a very real need. Much of its work was advisory and is still producing excellent results. Over 4,000 women had been found posts since its inception.

(b) W.R.A.C. Benevolent Fund. Col. Railton reported that total investments amounted to £14,000. A number of donations had been received from Units and Branches of the Association; these were very much appreciated. A further £2,000 had been received from the Army Benevolent Fund for which they were indeed grateful. As a result of the W.R.A.C. Handicraft Exhibition £50 had been given to the Fund. Mrs. Holliss had been succeeded as Treasurer by Col. E. Stilgoe and Mrs. Lumsden, the General Secretary, had taken over the work of Mrs. Greenwell. Appreciation was expressed for the good work done by Mrs. Holliss and Mrs. Greenwell. Since November, 29 cases had been dealt with and £183 had been expended. Early this year, in conjunction with the A.T.S. Benevolent Fund, a small pamphlet giving details of both funds was issued to all serving personnel.

(c) *The Lioness.* Col. Cowper expressed the hope that further pages would be made available in future. It was impossible under present conditions to include all that was sent in. Major Berry, business manager for *The Lioness*, stated that it was now solvent. The main problem was lack of space. Mrs. Rumbold emphasised the desirability of six issues a year as soon as possible, this was seconded by Mrs. Clark, Bristol, and carried nem. con.

(d) *Regimental Museum.* The Chairman of the Museum Committee reported that the main function of the Museum continued to be instructional. The number of outside visitors had increased considerably during the year and included representatives from the women's services in America, Australia, Denmark and Holland. A table show case and an island case for uniforms had been purchased and were already in use. There had been gifts to the Museum from Bradford Branch, 8th Independent Company and Miss Gummersall, and the Committee wish to thank these two branches and Miss Gummersall for their generous support. Their gifts have been of real value to the Corps and they have set an example which it is hoped others may follow in the future.

8. *Branch Resolutions.* "That Norfolk Branch considers it essential to the good of the Association that addresses of Secretaries and Branch Meetings should be included in every issue of *The Lioness*. Their omission loses casual members to the Branch meetings." After much discussion it was put to the meeting but was not carried.

9. *Any Other Business.*

(a) A suggestion was made by Mrs. Weddell that there should be a blazer pocket badge of the Association. This was dropped, after discussion.

(b) The question was raised of the desirability of a Grand Reunion on a Saturday in 1955, as only a Friday had been possible this year. Mrs. Russell Simpson, Edinburgh, pointed out that this would make impossible a Scottish Reunion next year as early spring was the only convenient time. After discussion it was agreed that the Area Chairmen be consulted and the decision left to Council. Col. Hull called attention to the Northern Area Reunion on September 18, when Dame Regina had promised to attend and at which all members would be welcome.

The Chairman complimented the W.R.A.C. Band on their admirable performance and 12th Battalion, W.R.A.C., on their very fine P.T. Display at the Reunion and expressed appreciation to 101 Regiment R.E. for the use of their Drill Hall for that occasion, and the Q.M.A.A.C. Reunion in the evening.

REPORT OF COUNCIL

It will be remembered that last year our Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday, July 4, on the eve of the Coronation Review of ex-Service men and women. The first item in your Council's Report this year is therefore to record the very great success of this parade, which was inspected by The Princess Royal before setting out. Places were allocated to 400 members of this Association. Our Contingent was led by the Association Standard carried by Mrs. Chitty and supported by two Branch Standards. Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan acted as Contingent Commander. The first three ranks were filled by members of Q.M.A.A.C. and the last two by A.T.S. who had served in the Middle East. Thus there was a good display of medals where they were most conspicuous. The onlookers included large numbers of ex-Service women, the Chairman of Council having been given a seat in Her Majesty's Box. The Association was well represented in the

march to the Cenotaph on Remembrance Day, and a wreath was laid by Mrs. Kimble of the County of London Branch. In September our Honorary President, The Princess Royal, paid a representative visit to Trinidad and was able to see ex-Service personnel in the locality. On the suggestion of Mrs. Rumbold it was agreed that three oak trees be planted in the grounds of the W.R.A.C. Depot to represent Q.M.A.A.C., A.T.S. and W.R.A.C. Accordingly on November 28, the Q.M.A.A.C. tree was planted by Dame Helen, the A.T.S. tree by Dame Leslie Whateley and the W.R.A.C. tree by the first Director of the W.R.A.C., Dame Mary Tyrwhitt. Your council has met regularly, received reports, and dealt with Branch appointments and other current business.

Appeal for Museum

Are you a hoarder, do you find you never have enough room to keep all your possessions or, again, are you one of those who prides yourself on those neatly tied-up bundles of paper? But do you remember what is in them? Have you ever made time to look through all those photographs taken when you first joined the A.T.S. before the War? If you are as busy as the rest of my friends and myself the answer will be "No" to all but the first of my questions and "Yes" to that one.

Perhaps you have not realised that these bad habits of ours are denying posterity something which might be valuable to it and which we owe to it. The Museum Committee is concerned by the shortage of A.T.S. Exhibits and we are quite sure it is not due to lack of interesting material. Photographs or enlargements, not snapshots, of the pre-war period and any interesting records of unusual jobs and overseas service during the war are much needed. When I think of the stories that my ex-A.T.S. colleagues tell me of their experiences I know the Museum could have many interesting records. There is a complete set of routine A.T.S. Documents in the Museum and these are not wanted.

This is not just an appeal to fill up the Museum. It is an appeal not to withhold anything which might help those who have and will follow in our footsteps to help them serve their country to the very best of their ability. If you are wondering what you did in 1940 can possibly have to do with the W.R.A.C. in 1954 I will explain. During the three years I have been working as Director of the World Bureau of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts I have been most forcibly struck by the number of times doubtful decisions have been turned into wise ones because I have been able to produce historical data dating back as far as 1928.

Start looking and thinking and writing to-day for "Tomorrow is often the busiest day of the week" and if you are in any doubt as to whether your contribution is what is needed write and ask, sending a description, to Lt.-Col. M. S. F. Millington, O.B.E., T.D., Depot/Women's Royal Army Corps, Queen Elizabeth Camp, Guildford, Surrey.

LESLIE E. WHATELEY.

The New Director

The appointment of Col. M. Railton, C.B.E., as D.W.R.A.C. has hardly come as a surprise to any who know her but it is none the less welcome for nobody could be better suited by temperament or experience to fill so important a chair. Starting life in the F.A.N.Y., Col. Railton is the first Director of the W.R.A.C. to have been promoted from the ranks, being appointed 2nd Subaltern in the 12th Oxford M.T. Company in July, 1940. She remained with M.T. Companies until after their conversion into mixed units and commanded her first General Duties Group as a Senior Commander in May, 1943. Subsequently, sandwiched between tours of regimental duty, she held the appointments of D.A.D.A.T.S. A.G.19, A.D.A.T.S. A.G.15 and senior W.R.A.C. Staff Officer in Eastern, Northern, and Southern Commands. She was also the first Vice-President of the Regular Commissions Board which dealt with all the original applications for regular commissions in the W.R.A.C. and she has had a spell as Deputy Director at the War Office. Her knowledge of her own Corps is unsurpassed, but that is not all. Since its establishment Col. Railton has been Chairman of the W.R.A.C. Benevolent Fund Committee; she is also an active Chairman of the Southern Area of the Association and is well known by all the comrades in her Area. She will assume her new office with the affectionate good wishes of all past and present members of our three Corps.

Forthcoming Events

Branch Meetings and Dinners

BOURNEMOUTH. Coach trip to Figsbury Camp for the Southern Command W.R.A.C. Handicraft Exhibition, June 19.

BRISTOL. Monthly meetings held the first Thursday in the month at Region House, Portland Square, 7 p.m.

HARTLEPOOL. Meetings on first Wednesday in the month in the Sergeants' Mess, 426 (Durham) Coast Regiment, R.A. (T.A.), West Hartlepool.

LONDON. Meetings every first and third Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Service Women's Club, 52 Lower Sloane Street, S.W.1. June 17: Lecture, Dame Lillian Barker. October 7: Handicraft Exhibition—it is not too early to start your entries.

NORFOLK. Meetings first Wednesday in every month, 6-9.30 p.m., in Ladies' Room at Railwaymen's Club, 11 Thorpe Road, Norwich.

PORTSMOUTH. Meetings monthly at the Drill Hall in St. Paul's Road, off Commercial Road, Portsmouth.

SALISBURY. Meetings on the last Thursday of the month at the local Cadets H.Q., Evelyn House.

Miscellaneous Dates

June 2-19 Royal Tournament.

„ 11 Royal Tournament, Ladies' Foil v. Foil, Individual Championships—Earl's Court.

„ 16-19 Cricket: Inter-Command Festival, Aldershot.

- | | |
|----------|---|
| June 23 | Cricket: Army v. Middlesex, Twickenham Green. |
| „ 29-30 | Athletics: Army Individual Championships, Aldershot. |
| July 14 | Athletics: Women's Inter-Services Championships, Halton |
| „ 16 | Cricket: R.A.F. v. R.N., Uxbridge. |
| „ 17 | Cricket: R.N. v. Army, Chatham. |
| „ 19 | Cricket: Army v. R.A.F., Park Royal. |
| „ 22 | Cricket: Combined Services v. East, Aldershot. |
| „ 23 | Cricket: Combined Services v. South, Chertsey. |
| „ 26 | Lawn Tennis: Army Individual Championships, Aldershot. |
| Aug. 2-4 | Lawn Tennis: Women's Inter-Service Championships, Wimbledon. |
| „ 5 | Cricket: Combined Services v. New Zealand, Halton, Bucks, R.A.F. Station. |
| „ 6-12 | Cricket: Army team touring Devon and Cornwall, playing two county matches and a combined counties team. |
| „ 13 | Cricket: Army v. Civil Service on the Guildford County Ground. |
| „ 14 | Cricket: Army v. Sussex at Horsham. |
| Sept. 7 | Swimming: Women's Inter-Service Championships, Portsmouth. |
| „ 8-9 | Ditto, Eltham. |
| „ 18 | Northern Area Reunion, York. |

Birth

PEARCE.—On November 13, 1953, at Battle Hospital, Reading, to Madge (*nee* Horsley, W.R.A.C.), wife of Petty Officer M. E. L. Pearce, R.N., a daughter (Penelope Joy). Present address: 22 Harbour Avenue, St. Budeaux, Plymouth.

Marriages

COOPER—MICHAELS.—On January 23 in London, 3rd Officer Elsmore Beach Cooper (U.S. Merchant Marine) to Barbara Mary Michaels (ex-W.R.A.C., Singapore). Present address: 420 Fairview Avenue, Fort Lee, New Jersey, U.S.A.

SHEVILL—TWISSELL.—On September 26 at St. Saviour's, Bath, Eveline Twissell (Pte. A.T.S.) to Mr. R. G. Shevill.

Deaths

BARNES.—On January 5, in Snowdon Road Hospital, Bristol, Mrs. Joyce Barnes (Pte., A.T.S.).

CORMACK.—On April 2, suddenly, Dorothy (*nee* Gammage), beloved wife of Fergus Cormack, of 52 Aldenham Avenue, Radlett, Herts.

STUBBINS.—On July 10, 1953, at Cambridge, Mrs. Stubbins (*nee* Kettle), Unit II, Wimereux, after a long and trying illness.

WATSON.—On January 30, at Hove, Miss Grace Watson (Q.M.A.A.C.).

They Whitened Their Stripes

It is with pride that we report the part played by a small party of the Corps in the dramatic story of the loss by fire of *H.M.T. Empire Windrush* on March 28. The Director who greeted Sgt. Rolls, L/Cpl. Harrison and Ptes. Waters, Buckwell, Davies and Frost on their arrival with other survivors at Blackbushe Airport, told us: "I was immensely proud to see Sgt. Rolls and her party emerge from the aircraft looking as though they were about to go on parade; the N.C.O.s had even found time and means to whiten their stripes. They confided to me that, when they paraded with the Mixed H.A.A. Battery at Gibraltar during their brief stay on the Rock, 'no one could pick out the survivors.' Sgt. Rolls added that the only thing that was worrying them a little was that they had not managed to get a telegram sent to their Company Commander in Egypt and they knew she would be anxious about them."

Sgt. Rolls also told of the two hours during which the order to abandon ship was carried out. At twenty minutes to seven on Sunday morning, while still in their bunks, the six W.R.A.C. received orders to go to their stations. Rapidly they dressed and fell in with the remainder of the troops, standing to attention while the wives and children were got off the ship. Then came their turn and some idea of the speed of operations is given by the fact that they were afloat in their lifeboats by five minutes past seven, twenty-five minutes after being warned.

From the boats they and the rest of the women with children were able to watch the evacuation of the troops still on board. It was a terrifying but inspiring sight; by now the ship was well afire with flames lighting the decks and clouds of smoke enveloping the ship as the men waited at attention for the order to leave. Owing to the failure of the electricity the lifeboats had to be lowered by hand or chopped away from the davits. This caused some delay during which the flames gained ground. In all, two hours saw the "Abandon Ship" completed and everyone away, but not before some of the men had their feet burned by the heat of the decks.

Landed at Algiers, the survivors were greeted with overwhelming kindness and hospitality by the French. The W.R.A.C. were taken, with the families, some miles outside town to a holiday camp, normally closed during the winter but specially opened for the occasion. There, in lovely surroundings, they found fires lighted, hot water and food. There they were seen by Col. W. Odling, late Royal Artillery, who flew out specially from the Adjutant General's Department of the War Office to ensure that everything possible was being done for the survivors. He told us that he was "enormously impressed" by the six W.R.A.C. who were busy cleaning their buttons, having left the ship properly dressed and who immediately volunteered for any work that was needed. Incidentally we are informed that the Ship's Commandant, the R.S.M. and the W.R.A.C. were the only people who left the ship properly dressed!

News of Comrades

Dame Florence wrote her Christmas news and describes how, at 10.30 on Christmas Day itself the native men, women and children came up from the Kraal to receive their presents and afterwards were refreshed with tea, orangeade and jam buns. The temperature in the shade was 95! At 7.30 p.m., when it was dark, they lighted the Christmas tree and the children came up and sang and danced on the grass. The tree was on the stoep and they had arranged glass jampots, covered with orange crinkly with lighted candles inside, along the edge of the stoep. Jerry (aged 17, son of the head man) played the guitar to accompany the dancing. They all processed back to the Kraal carrying the jam pots. It was quite entrancing to see the coloured lights winding their way across the field. **Dame Florence** goes on to say that she had decided to postpone her visit home till next year and, in a later letter, she tells us that she has already started agitating about a passage in April or May. By the time this appears in print **Miss Edith Thompson** will be out there on a visit so we shall expect to hear news of **Dame Florence** from another source on her return.

From Edinburgh branch we hear that **Mrs. G. D. Hardy's** new address is Whiteville, Cromwell Lane, Burton Green, Kenilworth, Warwick. Her news was in the November *Lioness*. A strong bond of friendship still exists among the members of the W.A.A.C. who served in Wimereux and from Edinburgh we hear how glad they were in September to have a visit from **Wattie (Watson), Parkie (Mrs. Guyver) and McBride**. They had several very happy meetings and **Wattie** and **Parkie** joined in a tramp over the Pentland Hills, reminiscent of route march days. The Edinburgh contingent consists of **Ellis (Mrs. Burr, whose younger daughter spent part of her honeymoon in Wimereux), Fairley, Gibson, Kennedy, Kerse (Mrs. Wilson, who is President of the Women's United Services Club), Murray (Mrs. Gill, now home from India), Wann and Spong (Mrs. Sparrow, now resident in Edinburgh)**. They keep in touch with **Armour (Mrs. Brown), Elphinstone, Foster (Mrs. Mitchell in Australia), Fulton in Canada, Maxwell, Milburn (Mrs. Davies in Bath) and Rutherford in New York**. They sent their best wishes for a happy New Year to all those they knew in Wimereux, but they were unhappily received too late to be included in the last issue.

Our correspondence includes a letter from **Mrs. Armstrong**, who has at last reached this country from Canada and has gone back to Brighton, where she is staying at Cook's Hotel, Old Steine, Brighton 1. She tells us of **Mrs. Austin's** sad news, formerly of Brighton and now living in Toronto, Canada. She lost her husband on Christmas Day in a car accident and she has our deepest sympathy. Then both she and Brighton Branch send news of **Miss Thornton, O.B.E.**, who is in a nursing home at Patcham Grange, Old London Road, Patcham, Brighton, having had a stroke four years ago which left her paralysed all down one side. The branch members visit her as often as possible, but she

would be very pleased to hear from any of her old comrades. She served in Q.M.A.A.C. and was "R.S.M." at Fenham Barracks. She was also a lifelong friend of Miss Grace Watson, the news of whose death is given on another page.

Our other correspondents include Lady Coventry, who sent us a copy of a very fine "Part II Order" for she has changed her name by marriage to The Hon. Mrs. Fisher-Hoch. Her husband is a serving gunner working at the War Office, but they have made their home at The Plas, Llanstephan, Carmarthen, which came to her on her mother's death. She declares herself delighted to be living in Wales again. Isn't it funny the way we all love to fly back to the bit of the world that we all call home? Mrs. Butler (known to the A.T.S. as J. Comd. Sybil Bennett) is one who has at last taken up pen and paper to write to us. Her letter is in a reminiscent mood, recalling how she borrowed a typewriter before the war for a fortnight to qualify for enrolment as a clerk! She also describes how, thinking herself very smart in her new uniform, she walked home followed by a couple of goggle-eyed boys shouting: "Look at the lady soldier." On the outbreak of war she and five others reported at a Record Office for duty where their first task was to overcome the diffidence of the elderly male civil service clerks who had previously made up the whole staff. After that they turned out to be a grand bunch of teachers to whom nothing was too much trouble. Except that her address is 22a De La Beche Road, Sketty, Swansea, she gives us no news of herself except what we can deduce from the fact that a very young hand appears to have used the block previously and a firm impression of a pencil pressed hard upon the paper is clearly discernible on the page beneath.

Gillian Watt (Addis nee Dearmer) has met several ex-A.T.S. in Uruguay and one ex-Q.M.A.A.C. who has kept in touch with Miss May Lloyd of Bristol and Miss Anne Cridland of Exeter. She is Mrs. Daniels and was E. K. I. Webb of R.E. Signals at Boulogne and Etaples.

Promotions and Retirements

—Or should it be the other way about? Certainly it is the retirements which cause the vacancies to fill which people are promoted. At the beginning of September this year the first members of the Corps to complete fifteen years' full-time service will retire with retired pay. The normal period required before retired pay is earned is twenty years but if, for any reason such as age, an officer is called upon to retire before she has qualified for full rates of retired pay she may, provided she has completed fifteen years, receive a modified amount.

The first officers to retire in this way include the Director and Colonel S. Cooke, both of whom have completed their tours in their present ranks. The two vacancies for Colonel caused by the promotion of Colonel Railton and the retirement of Colonel Cooke are to be filled by the promotion of Lieutenant-Colonel C. W. Hull, O.B.E., T.D. and Lieutenant-Colonel A. C. D. Hind, M.B.E. They have the congratulations and good wishes of us all.

Annual Dinners

Ayr. The New Year was again welcomed in with our Reunion Dinner on January 2. There was a splendid turn-out of our own members and we were pleased that a number of the Glasgow Branch were with us. It was a very happy evening, and generally agreed to be the best reunion yet.

Brighton. On January 26, we held our Annual Dinner at the Seven Stars Hotel. In spite of the fact that it snowed heavily all day 19 members attended, several coming from the surrounding country districts, and a most enjoyable evening was spent.

Edinburgh. Since our last notes, when we were enjoying Christmas in the warmth of an Indian summer, winter has come and demonstrated its infinite variety—ice, snow, rain, gales and, frequently, a combination of all four. It was on such a night as this that our Branch Annual Dinner was held at the Royal British Hotel. The commissioner dared not challenge the gale and drowning rain by wielding his vast umbrella. Had he done so he would certainly have been carried off like any thistledown. Undaunted, however, he opened our car doors for us and enabled us to get a flying start as, our skirts kilted and high heels or no, we flew through the tempest to the shelter of the lighted doorway and the blissful peace and warmth beyond. The cynic might comment: "Better to have stayed at home!" Not at all. We had a delightful evening amid comfortable and beautifully decorated surroundings—an ideal setting in which to meet our guests and dine together. We were very fortunate in having as our guests Lady MacCall, Chairman of the W.V.S. in Scotland, and Major Hunter Cowan, who was until recently D.A.D.-W.R.A.C., 3rd A.A. Group, and stationed in Edinburgh. The toast of "Our Guests" was aptly proposed by Mrs. Barbara Whitham (A.T.S.) and they delighted us with amusing speeches well suited to our reminiscent mood. Those present included seven members of Q.M.A.A.C., who served together in Wimereux in 1917, an achievement of which our Branch is proud and dares to think unique. Their news appears on another page.

Hartlepool. Our dinner in February was voted the best so far. Our guest of honour was Col. H. L. Lister, accompanied by his good lady. He was well known to most of us as he was our first C.O. in 1939.

Preston. Thirty-eight members and friends sat down to a most enjoyable dinner at the Stanley Street Drill Hall on January 28. Once more we catered for ourselves. Mrs. Bucklee prepared the fowl and vegetables and other necessities were provided by other members. The meal was beautifully cooked and piping hot. A doll was filled with about forty small gifts to be given later to winners of games organised for our enjoyment. A lovely box of chocolates given by one of our serving members, Capt. Bertha Walmsley, was later raffled and raised £1 9s. This brought the profit on the dinner up to £3 7s. 2d., which was an improvement on last year. Many prizes were brought by various members, but we ran out of games and had to invent other means of giving the

remaining few prizes away. We are indeed grateful to the T.A. for allowing us to use their room for our dinner.

Salisbury. Col. M. Railton was the guest of honour at our annual dinner in December. We had a most enjoyable evening and a number of serving members were welcome visitors.

Band Notes

The Band has made two records of popular marches which are available from the Director of Music, W.R.A.C. Staff Band, W.R.A.C. Depot, Queen Elizabeth Camp, Guildford, Surrey, at 6s. each, plus 1s. for postage and packing. Record No. 1 contains "The Lass of Richmond Hill," "Greensleeves" (Slow March), "Contemptibles," "Auld Lang Syne"; Record No. 2, "Imperial Echoes," "Red Cloak" and "Holyrood." Money should accompany the order and cheques should be made payable to the W.R.A.C. Staff Band Fund. Orders will take approximately three weeks to complete.

From a humble start in 1949 when a small band of very enthusiastic but mainly inexperienced women gathered together, the Band has progressed to its present position of being up to strength with trainees ready to take their place. Since its formation the Band has travelled nearly 21,000 miles, of which over 8,000 were in 1953. Marriage has very rightly claimed a number of members, including the Drum Major who was a member of the A.T.S. Band, for who can resist an attractive young bandswoman, resplendent in her green uniform, nylon stockings and gold stripes?

The Band gave 27 concerts in 1953, including six in the Surrey Education for Schools series to a total of 3,000 school children. It has beaten Retreat 11 times, marched through 23 towns on recruiting drives, appeared on the stages of many cinemas and taken part in processions of all sorts from fireworks to Christmas parties and many fetes. The highlights of the year included a B.B.C. Recording for an overseas broadcast, playing for the first time at the Royal Tournament in front of the Sovereign, a week on the Grand Parade Bandstand at Eastbourne where more programmes were sold than for any previous band, taking part in the S.S.A.F.A. Tattoo at the White City and the Tattoo in the Edinburgh Festival, sailing down the Thames on a barge in the Coronation Royal River Pageant, a week at Rhyl in the North Wales Horse Show, taking part once more in the Lord Mayor's Show and playing at the International Hockey Festival at Nottingham. Here teams from six countries competed and were watched by a mighty gathering of women hockey players and many thousands of school children—potential recruits?

The year was also marked by the Band's first overseas tour. On September 15, the full Band with Lts. Goddard and Waycott embarked on the s.s. *Wansbeck* for a 14 days' tour of B.A.O.R. All units, both male and female, shewed the most magnificent hospitality and kindness which made the whole tour a very happy one.

Travelling from Holland to Bad Oeynhausen and Berlin, the Band played to many audiences,

including Germans and Dutch, and twice beat Retreat. A most memorable and moving occasion was that of Beating Retreat in The Hague where the notes of Bandswoman Trussell's cornet rang out across the ancient city and were recorded on the Dutch radio, as well as marches and speeches. The presentation of a bouquet of flowers to Mr. Goddard was typical of the enthusiasm and interest shown throughout the tour by the audiences and a kindly Dutchman sent newspapers containing a description of the Band. On being translated one was led to believe that the drummer was clad only in a leopard skin!

Correspondence

Dear Madam,

In the August number of *The Lioness* mention is made of a possible Chelsea Pensioners' Scheme for ex-Service women. I would like to suggest that something might be done about that now, if possible. There are many of us who served in World War I who are now getting on in years. I myself am 59 years old, a widow with no children or near relatives. The time is coming when I shall not be able to look after myself and such a place as a Service hospital would be far better than an old folks' home, even if one could get into one. There are so many old folks. I cannot work now and by the time I am 70 (if I live as long) I may not be able to do anything for myself. I am lucky as I own my own house, but there are many worse than I am in their health and only living in one room or maybe just tolerated by friends or relatives.

I think it could be managed, if funds and premises could be found, right now.

What do you think, Ma'am?

Sincerely yours,

DORIS M. PRUDENT, ex-W.A.A.C.

63 Harrison Road,
Swaythling,
Southampton.

November 2, 1953.

Dear Madam,

I have intended writing this letter ever since Monday but, instead, have spent all my spare moments listening to radio reports on the royal progress of H.M. The Queen and her Consort through Australia. This morning I went into Hobart and felt very nostalgic when I saw signs of the removal of some of our gay bunting. Alas, the Queen has gone but she has left behind many many happy memories. For three days I spent my time 'twixt home and the nearest spot Her Majesty would be passing, getting as many glimpses as possible of our beloved Queen but I think you would all prefer more to hear of the ex-Service Men and Women's Parade which was held last Sunday afternoon. The parade was due to begin at 12.08 p.m. after the Queen and Duke had attended Morning Service. It was quite a surprise to find that we were not expected to be in our places before 11.40 a.m. but I guess they know we ex-Service folks are easy to "get fell in." For the very first time I wore my medals and had to take a lot of good-humoured banter from my neighbours as I left home. Arriving

at the beautiful green lawns surrounding our Cenotaph on Queen's Domain, I took my place with ex-members of the A.W.A.S. and the W.A.A.A.F.—alas, I could trace no A.T.S.—and 10,000 men. At last the moment arrived and what a cheer went up. The Queen and the Duke placed a beautiful wreath on the Cenotaph after the playing of the National Anthem. The State President of the Returned Servicemen's League made an address of welcome to which the Duke replied. This was followed by a tremendous cheer and then the State President called for three cheers for the royal children. Then the Queen and Duke inspected the parade from a Land Rover, after which each planted a tree of commemoration. I was quite within feet of the Duke as he planted his poplar. It was a most thrilling day and one which we shall all long cherish, along with other memories of this wonderful history-making visit of Her Majesty The Queen and H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh.

Yours in comradeship,

ANNE I. BROOKE (MRS.), ex-Cpl., A.T.S.

16 Wilmslow Avenue,
New Town,
Hobart,
Tasmania.

February 26, 1954.

Sport

The **Army Women's Squash Rackets Championships** were held in London from December 15 to 18 and it was most encouraging that the entry was bigger than last year and there were five competitors who had never previously taken part in the championships. Major D. L. M. Portway won the title for the fourth year running, beating Major N. Christy in the final 9—2, 9—1, 9—6.

The **Inter-Service Hockey Matches** were played in March, that between the Navy and the Army taking place on the 11th on the very pleasant ground at the Officers' Club, Aldershot, in the first whispers of spring sunshine. There was a small crowd, which included Tom Webster, who gave his report next morning in the *News Chronicle* in his own inimitable fashion of caricature. The Navy on the side lines had the more powerful lungs and the Navy in the forward line had the more powerful push. This latter fact resulted in a win for the Navy by two goals to nil. For, while the two teams mid-field were very evenly matched, the Army forwards could never summon up sufficient combination of skill and strength to get the ball into their opponents' goal which, after all, is the ultimate object of the game. The next day the Army team once more set forth, this time to meet the Air Force. Since the Air Force had drawn with the Navy in their match on March 10, each side scoring four goals during that game, this match was only for second or third place in the final placings as far as the Army was concerned. Nevertheless it was a determined team that took the field. Once more the sun was shining, the field beautifully smooth, and everything set for a good game of hockey. A good game it was too. There were few Army supporters

but they more than made up for their lack of numbers by their enthusiasm. The Army team lost their nerves of the day before and played like an experienced team. After the most exciting game they came off the field victors by the narrow margin of two goals to one, thus placing them second, with the Navy winners of the cup and the Air Force third.

The **Inter-Unit Netball Tournament** proved very popular this year with 52 entries, of which one was a team from B.A.O.R. The winning unit teams in each command were called to Aldershot, where a two-day tournament was held on March 1-2. The teams were divided into two sections, each of three teams, in which the results were as follow: Section A, winner, 7 Independent Company of Southern Command, followed up by C team of 11 Independent Company of Northern Command and 2 Platoon, 15 Independent Company of Western Command; Section B, winner, "A" Company, 14 Battalion from B.A.O.R., followed up by "B" Company, 12 Battalion of Eastern Command and the Scottish Command (M.) Signal Regiment. The final match resulted in a victory for the Southern Command team by 14—8. Maj.-Gen. A. D. Campbell, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C., until recently so good a friend of the Corps in his capacity of vice-Adjutant-General and now G.O.C. Aldershot District, presented the cup to the winning team and medals to both winning team and runners-up.

Another item of interest in the world of sport is that S.M.I. J. Marmont and a member of the W.R.A.F. were selected to attend the All England Women's Trials for Netball. We have heard no more except a rumour that Miss Marmont was not selected to play for England. We would like to congratulate her and to express the hope that if the rumour is true she will have another chance later and be more successful. Lastly, the Women's Services in the 1954 Royal Tournament have been asked to give a display in indian club swinging.

Cricket v. Civil Service

All members of the A.T.S. Cricket Club will already know that it has very reluctantly closed down. The keen playing members could get all the cricket they wanted and the others were too hard to rouse! We cannot but regret this decision, particularly when we were hoping that the annual Ex-A.T.S. v. W.R.A.C. match would turn into an unofficial summer reunion. Perhaps an A.T.S. team can still sometimes be raised and the rest of us have the pleasure of watching them play. In the meantime the Army Women's Cricket Association have arranged a number of matches which are published under **Forthcoming Events** and its members would be delighted to see any serving or ex-Service members of the Army at any of them. They particularly ask us to draw the attention of readers to the match arranged against the Civil Service at the County Ground at Guildford on August 13. By kind permission of the Commandant of the Depot the Band will play during the afternoon. It is very much hoped that as many people as possibly can will make the effort to come and watch that match.

NEWS FROM THE T.A.



[Courtesy : Aldershot News]

Major T. A. Taylor, T.A., inspects "B" Company on taking over Command of 310 (S.C.) Bn. T.A.

"B" Company, 310 Battalion (T.A.), have sent us a photograph of their first inspection by their new Commanding Officer, Major T. A. Taylor (T.A.). Major Taylor, like the new Director, started her military career as a F.A.N.Y. and was embodied with the 7th Wiltshire M.T. Company. In January 1940 she went to the M.T. T.C. at Camberley as an instructor and, while there, she became an officer. From January 1943 to September 1944 she was in the Middle East where her company consisted of Jewish personnel of some 20 different nationalities, also Arabs, Greeks and Ethiopians. They worked in Ordnance Depots, moving the vehicles between workshops, maintenance shed, kit shed, paint shop, etc., and also on convoy duty.

All types of vehicles up to three-ton were collected from the ports of Alexandria, Port Said, Suez and Haifa and delivered to the depots at Tel el Kebir, Cairo and Mena. Then, in September 1944, Major Taylor went to the Central Mediterranean where at first she was attached to Military Headquarters Balkans at Naples with a platoon of British clerks and was also M.T.O. with male drivers. After that she went to Bari in East Italy, and had detachments in Trani and Athens. We are glad that she is bringing to her new appointment

so much experience and wish her the best of luck.

From Cheshire T. and A.F.A. we have received an account of the Western Command Finals of the W.R.A.C. (T.A.) Drill Competition which was won by 321 (Cheshire) Battalion, represented by their "B" Company. The judges were drawn from W.R.A.C., The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and an R.S.M. of the East Lancashire Regiment and the cup was presented by the B.R.A., Western Command. Congratulations to the winners.

From the Buckinghamshire T. and A.F.A. we hear that the new T.A. Centre at High Wycombe is the most up-to-date Centre in the country. It has special accommodation for a platoon of W.R.A.C. but so far no advantage can be taken of this fact for nobody can be found to undertake to command the platoon. In view of the need for increased military strength to fulfil our commitments in N.A.T.O. and throughout the British Commonwealth it is to be hoped that this appeal will catch the eye of someone who is able and willing to take on this job. Full particulars can be obtained from Lt.-Col. D. L. C. Reynolds, Secretary of the Association, at his office in Oxford Road, Aylesbury.

A Long Flight

A tui, we were told by Lady Freyberg, is a rare New Zealand song bird whose sweet song is to be heard first of the dawn chorus and is the last to stop singing as night falls. In appearance it is like a bright starling with the addition of two tongues of white feathers on its breast which is the reason why it is sometimes known as the Parson Bird. Entranced, we continued to listen to Lady Freyberg's account of the New Zealand Women's Army Corps, the members of which were affectionally called "Tuis" when they first arrived in Cairo during the late war.

Lady Freyberg's mission was unique for she had been intimately connected with the N.Z.W.A.C. in Cairo and, later, was the wife of the Governor-General of New Zealand when the decision was made to include the corps in New Zealand's Regular Army. She was at our Depot to present to the W.R.A.C. a stuffed tui to commemorate the alliance between the two corps which H.M. The Queen approved a year ago. In accepting this gift the Director told us something of how the alliance came about. The suggestion originated in New Zealand and an unofficial letter was received from the N.Z.W.A.C. asking whether we would welcome such a move. Needless to say we were delighted and when our Controller Commandant and Commandant-in-Chief, H.R.H. The Princess Royal and H.M. Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother, had also expressed their pleasure, the initiative—to use a military phrase—passed back to New Zealand. A formal request was made through the Governor-General, back to England, for approval by Her Majesty. This was duly given in 1953. Since then the alliance has been far from formal in that constant correspondence has enabled us to pursue a common aim and the grant of the word "Royal" to the title of the N.Z.W.R.A.C. has brought us even more into line.

After the speeches the bird was given an escort of an officer and two warrant officers and was trooped the length of the front rank of the unit, preceded by the Corps Band. In the presence of Lt.-Gen. Sir Kenneth McLean, whose interest in the Corps is well known, Brigadier L. F. E. Wieler, Deputy Commander Home Counties District, and Brigadier L. E. Thornton, the senior Army Liaison Officer of the New Zealand Army, the tui took up an honourable place in our Corps Museum where we shall treasure it for all time.

Warrant Officers, Class I

Some time ago we were sternly reproved for not having reported in *The Lioness* the move of one of our senior R.S.M.s, an omission of which we were entirely innocent as the rumour proved to be unfounded. However, as soon as we had removed *The Lioness* office to what Mr. Pepys referred to as "the waste spaces of Lancashire" someone conceived a general post amongst R.S.M.s and never thought of telling us. As they have all long A.T.S. as well as W.R.A.C. service we thought that their present locations would be of general interest, so here they are. W. D. Andrews, 12 Battalion, London; M. Ashworth, Germany; G. Baylis, Signal

Training Wing, Catterick; H. Bell, 328 (Ulster) Battalion (T.A.); J. Castellano, 305 (East and West Riding) Battalion (T.A.); M. E. M. Carter, 321 (Cheshire) Battalion (T.A.); E. M. Clarke, 304 (Surrey and Sussex) Battalion (T.A.); A. Elston, 307 (Northern Command) Battalion (T.A.); J. B. Fletcher, 26 Independent Company, H.Q., A.A. Command; M. A. Gilmour, 314 (Scottish Command) Battalion (T.A.); S. Glover, 327 (County of London) Battalion (T.A.); F. Hardwick, 11 Independent Company, Chilwell; F. J. M. Hadley, School of Instruction; E. E. Harrison, Drivers' and Clerks' T.C.; A. Hildyard, Depot; K. M. Holmes, M.E.L.F.; K. F. Hughes, 303 (Kent) Battalion (T.A.); J. C. Macdonald, 319 (W. Lancs) Battalion (T.A.); M. Manley, 326 (City of London) Battalion (T.A.); J. Marmont (to whom we owe an apology about rank in the November *Lioness*), Army School of Physical Training; D. E. M. Nightingale, Staff W.O. P.T., London District; M. E. Norcott, 316 (Scottish Command) Battalion (T.A.); K. M. Paxton, M.E.L.F.; G. F. Porteous, 329 (Western Command) Battalion (T.A.); J. M. Roberts, 1 Independent Company, Edinburgh; L. Routledge, 306 (Northumbrian) Battalion (T.A.); O. A. Rutter, F.A.R.E.L.F.; M. Ryan, Germany; C. M. Savage, 3 Battalion, Catterick; H. L. Sanders, 301 (Eastern Command) Battalion (T.A.); E. J. Smith, Depot [sic]; M. Spokes, F.A.R.E.L.F.; M. A. V. Taylor, 310 (Southern Command) Battalion (T.A.); R. Van Os, 320 (E. Lancs) Battalion (T.A.); A. Whittaker, M.E.L.F.; J. Wiffen, 323 Battalion (T.A.); H. H. O. Woollard, Staff W.O. P.T., Southern Command.

W.R.A.C. Overseas

F.A.R.E.L.F. members of the Corps have undoubtedly got their own back for our omission of their news in the last issue of *The Lioness* for they have now started their own *Far East News*—an excellent little publication, which we are delighted to receive. We will try to glean from it such items of news as we can for such limited space as we can allot in this Journal, but we hope that *The Lioness* herself will not be forgotten!

Comrades who have been stationed at Nee Soon will be sad to hear that "A" Platoon is no more. The first twelve auxiliaries arrived there in January, 1947, followed by another twenty-eight in May of that year. These figures are admittedly open to correction for there are no records and they were obtained from Ah Tong, the cook, who has been with "The Misses" since they first arrived. On October 10, 1953, the Women's Royal Army Corps moved out of Nee Soon, after women had been there for nearly seven years. Idly turning the pages of the first three issues—no less—of *Far East News* we feel that all past and present members of the Corps would like to hear about the new quarters. The junior ranks have rooms for three people. Not only does this afford them extra privacy, but room to make the most of the furniture provided. One room at the end of the block is the rest room, neatly furnished with true eastern bamboo furniture, wireless and pick-up. Their dining room is now three times as big as it was and

all ranks hope it will serve as a dance hall as well. The senior ranks are housed in one large block with single rooms for the warrant officers and larger rooms each for three sergeants. Other attractions are bed-side lamps and the new drop-centre dressing table. These dressing tables at first caused many a hot word, due to the fact that when one wants something from the lower drawer, one is apt to forget that when sitting on the stool—supplied with the dressing table—the drawer is level with the shins. No doubt this difficulty has already been overcome by practice. The Sergeants' Mess ante-room occupies the whole of the top floor, surrounded by a balcony, a most delightful place in the cool of the evening.

The Hong Kong detachment have now, in conjunction with the Royal Hong Kong Defence Force Women's Auxiliary Army Corps, formed a Women's Services Hockey Club, which is already known as the S.H.C. One Saturday night an excited team from this club embarked in S.S. *Tak Shing* to play a match at Macao. The bunks were small and the weird eiderdown-like cover just would not stay where it was, so sleep was hard come by. On arrival at Macao they were met by two members of the opposing team and hurried off to consume eggs, bacon, toast and tea—possibly to incapacitate them for the coming match—which took place soon after breakfast. There was quite a crowd of spectators: Hong Kong's Army hockey team, Macao's men's team, all the supporters of Macao's ladies' team and quite a large number of Service men. In spite of much hard work on the vocal chords of the spectators—not to mention the players—the match ended in a goalless draw. Lunch at the Sports Club proved that there was no ulterior motive in the breakfast for course after course appeared, glasses were kept filled and incessant conversation was punctuated by shouts of enquiry about the state of the game going on outside between the Army "B" team and the Macao men's team. After toasts were drunk the team split up, some to watch hockey and others to explore the town. The boat sailed home at 4.30 p.m. with everyone hoping that the return match was not too far distant.

Hong Kong also gives news of a dance held in conjunction with the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps in aid of the Relief Fund for the fifty thousand inhabitants of Kowloon rendered homeless by a big fire on Christmas night. As a result \$ (HK) 1,000 were sent.

Other than much general news, which has had to go to Singapore and back again before *The Lioness* heard about it (!) these numbers of *F.E.N.* contain articles on a Regimental Chapel, the New Zealand Women's Royal Army Corps, Leaves in Hong Kong and Ceylon, the Army Art Society, the Burma Club and Careers in the Police, all of which are of interest and may be used as space permits. We are indeed grateful to *F.E.N.* for permission to reproduce, extract or use articles as and how we like. Congratulations on the first three issues and good luck!

East Africa writes to *F.E.N.*, just to say that they exist, that one of the officers on the Head-

quarter Staff also does the administration for the detachment and that there are now two other officers of the Corps filling male vacancies in the Command. As all these officers should be readers of *The Lioness* we hope that this will catch someone's eye and inspire her to write.

Gibraltar news includes success in the Open Table Tennis Championships, with C.S.M. Mallard retaining the singles title and appearing in both other finals. H.M.S. *Vanguard* is in dock again and parties of W.R.A.C. have gone over the ship, the technicians of the party being particularly interested in the equipment. Everyone came away with a photographic memento of her visit, not to mention a magnificent tea.

Northern Army Group tells us of their Handicraft Exhibition in July, of the tour of the visiting W.R.A.C. cricket team from the United Kingdom in August, and also of the Band, the last being fully reported in Band Notes.

Headquarters Mess

The Army Council has recognised the Depot Mess as the *Headquarter Mess of the Women's Royal Army Corps*. Particulars have been circulated to commands for the information of all officers on the active list who are automatically members of the Mess, but retired officers of the Corps may become Honorary Members for the Annual Subscription of 10s. 6d. Full particulars may be obtained from the Hon. Sec., W.R.A.C. Headquarter Mess, Queen Elizabeth Camp, Guildford, but, for the information of retired officers, the following extracts from the rules are published:—

4. *Honorary Membership*. Retired Regular Officers (including Short Service and Extended Service) may become Honorary Members of the Headquarter Mess.

5. *Membership and Honorary Membership of Messes*. All Members and Honorary Members of the Headquarter Mess are Members and Honorary Members respectively of all recognised W.R.A.C. Officers' Messes at home and abroad.

7. *How to Pay Subscription*. Bankers Orders duly completed to the Honorary Secretary of the Headquarter Mess, from whom the necessary form can be obtained.

9. *Object*. The income of the Fund may be expended on:—

- (a) Loans or grants to the maintenance fund of the Messes of the Corps.
- (b) Grants towards expenses incurred on occasions when distinguished and special guests are entertained at the Headquarter Mess or elsewhere, as guests of the Corps.
- (c) Assistance to social and sporting objects organised by officers for the Corps.
- (d) Purchase of Corps property and maintenance of existing property.

EDINBURGH TATTOO

It has been decided that a grant of £50 from the G.O.C.-in-C. Scottish Command should be spent on a new instrument for the Band. This grant was made in addition to individual amounts for personnel taking part in the Edinburgh Tattoo.

Apology

Since writing the Editorial we find that we have indeed miscalculated but, fortunately in the right direction, and we have space to include the following articles. That on "The First Wacs" is reprinted by kind permission of *The Legionary*, the national magazine of the Canadian Legion, to the editor of which we are much indebted. That on "Leave in Malaya" was the prize-winning essay in a competition held in the Far East over a year ago—in fact, nearly two years—and its author is now in America, the news of her wedding appearing in this issue of *The Lioness*. We cannot find the article we thought we had by Sgt. Rolls and think we must have used it. The articles on Sinai and on the Military Observer's job have both been held in our files for three years and over. We offer our sincere apologies to the writers who have had to wait so long and to those whose efforts have still not appeared, but there are about three thousand more words available for editorial in the present issues, which we hope means that we shall be able to publish more articles of general interest.

Cheshire Guild of Hand-loom Weavers

Mrs. Lees has joined the ranks of editors in producing a news sheet for members of this Guild and we are grateful to her for letting us have a copy. We have just received Number 5 and as we have not been able to comment on the first four issues we should like to take this opportunity of reminding all past and present members of the Corps who are interested in this craft that we have an expert in our midst. The Guild is growing apace and its plans include the organisation of a lecture and film show, a "get together" show in May, summer schools, visits to workshops and other things of value to weavers. There are hints about looms, how to sell work and where to get materials.

The idea of the "get together" show is to invite members to submit one or more articles of their own handweaving work. The show is to be held in the large oak-panelled room at Bishop Lloyd's House, 53 Watergate Row, Chester, on May 28 and 29 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Light refreshments will be available at a low cost. Whether the member is a child weaving her first scarf or a weaver with years of experience, it is thought that the exhibits will be of interest, not only to members of the Guild, but to the general public who are cordially invited to go. It is hoped that there will be demonstrations of spinning, weaving, bobbin winding and other kindred crafts so there should be plenty to see for those who live in Cheshire. We hope that many readers will go and encourage the members of the Guild in their most valuable work.

The First W.A.C.S.

BY COLONEL E. RIVERS-MACPHERSON, O.B.E.
late Gordon Highlanders and R.A.O.C.

How well I remember the excitement that spread over the old British Expeditionary Force in France in 1917 when it was known that ladies, duly enlisted

in the newly-formed "Women's Army Auxiliary Corps," would be shortly arriving to take over certain duties at the bases and so release men for front line service.

In due course the Amazon Army landed at Boulogne and I joined a large band of sightseers (mostly men) to view this unique event. The gallant ladies, clad in their coats-frock, wearing a sort of modified R.C.M.P. hat, marched up the road from the Gare Maritime with a swagger and élan that astonished us.

Soon all formations at the bases received their quota of "Wacs," and they were functioning in no time at their widely divergent tasks. Their aptitude for quickly assimilating technical work quite alien to their civilian occupations was most impressive. For example, a certain "Worker" (as they were officially termed) was put in charge of a gun section in a base depot and in less than two months she had mastered all the intricacies of medium and heavy gun spares. In civil life she had been employed by a dry cleaning firm! It was the same wherever they were placed: they got on with their job.

At first their officers were only given limited authority to administer their respective hostels. All misdemeanours had to be dealt with by the Officer Commanding the formation to which they were attached. This led to a great deal of embarrassment on the part of the unfortunate Commanding Officers, and Orderly Room became a nightmare. The wording on the charge sheet was decidedly quaint, as "Having a glad neck" (turning down the collar of the coats-frock instead of buttoning it up as per orders). The most frequent delinquency was "wearing silk stockings contrary to Standing Orders." Here I did sympathise with them, as the ration stockings (wool) were reminiscent of the alms houses and vastly different from the regulation issues to-day.

Our powers of punishment were limited to fines and to depriving them of so many days privileges, but up to this day I never discovered what these privileges were! One had to be most careful, too, in phrasing one's admonitions, as I discovered one day. A certain Worker had repeatedly appeared in front of me for the same offence. I concluded my remarks, using a hackneyed military phrase. "Worker Smith," I said, "if this sort of behaviour goes on I shall certainly take steps to have you confined." The wretched girl, throwing discipline to the winds, gave me one look and fled from the room!

On another occasion my Sergeant Major, a great stickler for correctness, shook me to the core when he produced a charge sheet worded as follows: "Worker Brown, flirting without permission in the Ledger Office." I never discovered what could be done *with* permission and the S.M. never enlightened me.

That was the lighter side but I should be lacking in chivalry if I did not place on record not only the Wacs' devotion to duty, but their bravery as well. How proud we all were when one of our Workers was awarded the Military Medal for bravery during a rather severe air raid in which several of the girls

were killed. By her example she guided her frightened charges to their dug-outs, with bombs falling all around, and thus saved many lives. Yes, gallant ladies of the Commonwealth, pioneer Amazons of the First Great War, I salute your cherished memories.

Leave in Malaya

By MRS. COOPER (LATE PTE. B. M. MICHAELS)

Two weeks on a plantation may not be everyone's idea of leave but it can, nevertheless, be an interesting experience. This I discovered while staying with friends who manage the Selborne estate near Kuala Lipis, a small town bounded on two sides by jungle.

Three thousand acres of gutta-percha trees, a factory, a large labour force and a squad of Special Constables on guard against bandit attacks; these are the responsibilities of Mr. and Mrs. Marsh, the "Tuan" and "Mem" of Selborne, one of only two such estates in the world and, incidentally, the only one in the British Empire.

The plantation is reached by driving along a disused railway track (destroyed by the Japs), then by running one's vehicle down a ramp onto a pontoon which crosses the Jelai river by means of an overhead cable. Depending on the skill of the Special Constable steering the pontoon, one lands level with the opposite ramp and can drive straight up the path to the bungalow. It usually happens, however, that one finishes a few yards either to the left or right of the landing-point, depending this time on the flow of the tide.

During my stay I watched the women picking the gutta-percha leaves and emptying baskets full into waiting lorries. At the factory they are put through a grinding and milling process to extract the delicately-fine elastic-like fibres and sap which, mixed with latex and other products, is formed into blocks and shipped to Britain and the U.S.A. for use in making submarine cables, golf balls and fillings for teeth.

The estate boasts a school and a cinema which was well patronised by the workers who were great fans of "Cowboy and Imjim" and gangster films. The more noise the more they loved it and cheered on the actors heartily. On a platform at the back was the "Royal Box," as we called it, four ancient plush chairs for the Tuan, Mem and any of their guests. Below us, on forms, were the Malay and Indian labourers, shouting to each other, slapping their infants, cracking peanuts and scattering shells, all with gay abandon. Then silence reigned as the ancient projector crackled into action.

One showing I noticed that Oni, the amah to the family, was not as usual sitting in the projection room with Aziz her husband, Mr. Marsh's syce, who showed the films. To my comments my hostess replied that they had quarrelled and he had divorced her according to Moslem rites by stating "I divorce you" three times. However, all ended well for a few days later Aziz came marching up to the servants' quarters, hair oiled heavily as only a Malay can, sporting a new sarong and songkok. In his hands were a kati of rice and two dead ducks. A worthy peace-offering!

The bungalow was right by the river and fishing was abundant. Also along the jungle track in the evening one could bag quite a lot of jungle fowl, which makes an excellent "curry tiffin." One evening, armed with double-barrelled shot guns and a lot of hope, we decided to try for wild pig. I was careful to pick out a handy tree with low branches—just in case. A wounded boar can be nasty with his tusks and it is not considered cowardly to drop everything and run. We were lucky enough to get three that evening but our joy was shortlived when we discovered that the jeep was stuck and we had to set to and push it out of the mud.

All too soon my leave was over and again, in the armoured car, accompanied by a police escort, I rattled along the now familiar track en route to the air strip and bade my friends farewell. An hour and a half later, in a Malayan Airways plane, the lights of the causeway seen below dropped behind us. Singapore with its harbour, seen from the air at night, is a beautiful sight. The multi-coloured pin-points sparkle and the lights of the Cathay Building stand out as a landmark. Thinking about my leave, although not sorry to be home, I felt what a great opportunity it had been to see something of a little known product of Malaya and I realised what a debt Britain's export trade, and all of us, owe to the people up-country, working under difficult and often dangerous conditions.

Obituary

MRS. JOYCE BARNES

Although only in her middle twenties, Mrs. Barnes had been suffering from T.B. for some years and spent most of her time in hospital. We send our deepest sympathy to her relations.

MRS. DOROTHY CORMACK

Mrs. Holliss writes:

Those of us who served at Bicester C.O.D. during the war will remember with deep affection Dorothy Gammage, Company Commander, "B" Company, who went to Bicester from Reading and subsequently was posted to Aldershot District. Those of us who have been in contact with the Comrades' Association since the war will also remember with deep affection Dorothy Cormack, Honorary Treasurer for the past five years—one and the same person, married since the war, a good friend to all of us and a tower of strength when we needed help and encouragement. We shall miss her very much. Our sincere sympathy goes to her husband and to her mother at this time.

MISS NORAH NIXON

We have only just heard from Mrs. King of the death of Miss Norah Nixon of Q.M.A.A.C. She served in Dieppe and Boulogne and later went to Egypt to run Y.W.C.A. hostels in Cairo, Alexandria and Amman. About 18 months ago she went to Australia and Tasmania, where her grandfather was first Bishop and where she was very busy publishing a book of letters and memories of her grandparents from 1843 to 1863. She died in Hobart and was a daughter of the late Col. F. W. Nixon, R.E.

An Unusual Job

BY AN EX-W.R.A.C. MILITARY OBSERVER IN GERMANY

I wonder just how many Service men and women have heard of Public Relations, and if they have, just what it means to them.

I must confess that until I was posted to B.A.O.R. I never knew that such a service existed, and even then I did not know what they did. It was about June, 1948, that I saw a notice in orders to the effect that Public Relations Branch at H.Q., B.A.O.R., was running a month's pre-release course in journalism, and a year later, remembering that notice, I applied for the course.

On returning from leave in October, 1949, I was summoned to the office of the D.A.D.P.R. (Deputy Assistant Director of Public Relations) who told me that my course had been brought forward so that I could join P.R. on the "Agility" Exercise (Rhine Army's Autumn manoeuvres).

Then I discovered the object of P.R. Very briefly, they present the Army to the public. And how do they do it?

In each theatre there are teams of military observers and photographers (usually Officers and Sergeants), who cover every aspect of military life—parades, sporting events, weddings, christenings, funerals, training, regimental stories, exercises, and the day to day work of soldiers and the W.R.A.C. (the latter commonly known as local boy or girl stories).

These stories and photographs are sent via the

War Office to local papers and regimental and technical magazines.

I was very lucky in being allowed to extend my course to three months and then I signed on and became the first and only W.R.A.C. military observer in Germany.

I can honestly say that the eighteen months I spent with P.R. were the most interesting of my Army service. I had the chance to travel all over the zone—Berlin, Hamburg, the Ruhr, and to the leave centres. I learnt a lot about different arms of the Service—how war dogs were trained, how Bailey bridges are built, how R.E.M.E. workshops are run, what it felt like to ride in a Centurian tank, and how British families are issued with rations, to mention a few.

Perhaps the most memorable occasion was watching the 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards slow march past, in line, with the Colonel of the Regiment (the C-in-C. B.A.O.R.) taking the salute; the most exciting—the "Agility" and "Broadside" exercises. Then I had a realistic experience of how our Infantry, Cavalry and the R.A.F. worked in war time; the saddest—covering the military funeral of a friend.

Another part of my work was to compile the two weekly Army News Broadcasts for the British Forces Network.

It was with great regret that I had to leave my "most unusual job" and return to England on Python.

Sinai

After an hour's run along the canal road on Thursday, October 26, 1950, a party of W.R.A.C. arrived in a truck at the ferry at Koubir. The customs officials said that women were not allowed to cross but eventually, on being told that these were no ordinary women but military personnel, the objection was withdrawn and in five minutes the party reached the other side, the first women to do so. All day they kept along the coast, passing El-Musa or the well of Moses, about half-an-hour from the ferry. They camped by the sea but turned inland first thing next morning. After a little over two hours of rough road through hilly country the convoy reached the sea again and continued along the Gulf of Suez, camping the night in Wadi Feiran. On the way they had passed the ruins of a Turkish fort and admired the crystal clear blue of the sea in the sunlight. After reaching camp that night the Padre held a short service and they sang a few hymns. On either side steep rocks rose and gave them shelter; there were also trees and the hills were picturesque.

The next day they reached the Monastery of St. Catherine, built on the traditional site where Moses saw the Burning Bush. On the way they had seen Gebel Musa in the distance where it is believed that Moses received the Ten Commandments and in the evening, in their own camp they had a short service and the Ten Commandments were read. They had the chance of seeing all over the monastery, also a fourth century gospel, a photostat reproduction of the Codex Sinaiticus, the chapel of the Burning Bush, the Basilica with its twelve pillars each

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depicting a month of the year and the carving round the pillars representing the days, and its chandelier, given to the Monastery by Queen Catherine of Russia, and the building where the bones of monks are deposited ten years after their death.

On Sunday, October 29, 1950, some of the party went to the 5 a.m. Mass at the Monastery. Others climbed up to the top of the mountain where the Padre held a service in the chapel built on the summit. At 11 o'clock the journey home began. That night they camped in Wadi Makkatan. The next night they crossed the Konbri Ferry at 10.45 p.m. and were soon speeding along the Canal Road back to Fayid where, after a good meal, they went to bed.

The Royal Tour

Dame Helen has received several newspapers with most interesting accounts and pictures of the Queen in New Zealand and Australia. She would like to say thank you but the senders did not give their names. Please will they accept her cordial thanks herewith.

Corrigenda

We regret that the cost of Association Badges was wrongly quoted in the last issue. They are 1s. 6d. each and NOT 9d. as stated. The following amendments to the Branch Secretaries List have been received and should be read instead of those previously stated:

Bath.—Mrs. Ferguson, 16 Lime Grove Gardens, Pulteney Road, Bath, Somerset.

Derby.—Miss H. Rice, 99 Normanton Rd., Derby.

Leeds.—Capt. B. Elliott, W.R.A.C. (T.A.), Dewsbury Road Camp, Leeds 11.

Oxford.—Miss J. M. Cleaver, 48 Woodstock Road, Oxford.

Sheffield.—Mrs. D. Olivant, 87 King Street, Knutsford, Cheshire.

6 Ind. Coy.—Lt. B. B. Turner, Zebra Camp, Watchfield, Nr. Swindon, Wilts.

7 Ind. Coy.—W.O. II J. T. Cullen, W.R.A.C., Station Road, Didcot, Berks.

8 Ind. Coy.—W.O. II E. M. A. Trodd, W.R.A.C., No. 4 Camp, Lower Arncliffe, Bicester, Oxon.

Southern Command (M) Signal Regiment.—Sgt. K. Russell, 2 Squadron, The Compound, Queen's Avenue, Aldershot, Hants.

In the following branches the name of the Secretary only has been altered, the address remaining as before:

12 Bn.—W.O. I Andrews.

2 Ind. Coy.—Delete W.O. II Bell.

3 Ind. Coy.—C.S.M. A. B. Deacon.

9 Ind. Coy.—W.O. II M. Hope.

26 Ind. Coy.—2/Lt. M. E. Scott.

3 A.A. Gp.—Sgt. Rae.

4 A.A. Gp.—Sgt. Embrow.

Amend title of unit from 321 Battalion to 328 (U) Battalion. 13 Ind. Coy. and 25 Ind. Pl. are disbanded. Add at end:

Drivers and Clerks T.C., W.R.A.C.—W.O. I E. E. Harrison, Figsbury Barracks, Winterbourne Dauntsey, Nr. Salisbury, Wilts.



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News from Branches

Ayr. During 1953 the attendances at the meetings were excellent, a fact which was in no small way due to the varied programme which included reminiscences of a trip to America and the wonderful week spent in London by some of the members for the Coronation. A new note was struck by the hilarious *Tramp Supper*. Will we ever forget those delicious hot dogs and fried onions? Other branches please note. Our money-making effort was once again a Basket Whist Drive. The climax of the year was our annual Christmas party for the children from St. Leonard's Home. Eighteen children were entertained and, through the kindness of members and friends, each departed laden with gifts of toys and clothing which were distributed by Santa Claus (alias Nancy Rayworth).

Bath. We have had a very active year finishing with our Annual General Meeting and supper on April 7. During the year we have helped the British Empire Cancer Campaign in Bath and on Poppy Day we were asked to produce all the sellers for the Guildhall area of Bath. We had a sale of work in October and Col. Railton came down to Bath for it. We also had a jumble sale in that month and have been able to send contributions to the W.R.A.C. Benevolent Fund and local charities. We did not have a great deal of support for our outings, with the exception of the visit to the Handicraft Exhibition at Salisbury. At the Christmas suppers all the regulars turned up and we had a very happy evening.

Belfast. Our Annual Reunion Dinner took place in the Union Hotel, on Saturday, March 13. Thirty members attended and those present included Lt.-Col. T. Morris from H.Q., Northern Ireland District, Dr. Olive Anderson, Q.M.A.A.C., and Miss Edith Kaye, who came as a guest from the Southern Ireland Branch. The occasion was a very enjoyable one and it was pleasant seeing so many old familiar faces. New members from the W.R.A.C. were welcomed by our chairman, Miss N. N. Arnold, who spoke of the increased attendance at meetings.

Birmingham. The highlight of our year, our second Old People's Party, was a huge success. Some thirty old folk, several of whom had not been outdoors since Christmas, braved the elements on a foul February day and thoroughly enjoyed the welcoming "cuppa," the entertainment and meat tea, followed by a sing-song. All the arrangements worked slickly and the member-helpers sat down to a tuck-in at the close of festivities. We have had several most interesting evenings this winter. In spite of the fact that we have no cooking facilities our Chairman succeeded in fixing a cakemaking demonstration in which the demonstrator rose to the occasion and showed us how to make the most scrumptious party cake needing no cooking. Our treasurer's sister gave us another very pleasant evening with her demonstration of flower arrangement and we were all agog to rush out and buy chickenwire and an armful of flowers. Our officers, who are responsible for this excellent programme, are: President, Miss E. Dipple; Chairman, Miss E. E. Mapp; Vice-Chairmen, Mrs. Price and Mrs. Weddell; Secretary, Miss V. M. Norris; Treasurer, Miss Hardstaff.

Bournemouth. Fourteen came to a supper party held at Kelly's Restaurant on March 10. A raffle for a home-made cake and a brooch, given by two members, produced 10s. 6d. for the W.R.A.C. Benevolent Fund and we hope to raise more money in this way at future meetings. Support has come so far from about a third of our members who attend regularly but we hope that the remaining two-thirds will also make some contribution to the Branch effort.

Brighton. On February 6, 11 members went to see "Sleeping Beauty on Ice" which was much enjoyed and at our February meeting we had an unexpected visitor, Mrs. Armstrong, who has just returned to live in Brighton from Canada. Mrs. Meg Body (Gay) has transferred to us from Worthing and also joins in all our activities.

Bristol. Our Christmas party on January 14 took the form of an American Supper to which everyone brought something to eat. It was most enjoyable. We had to cancel the February meeting because of inclement weather but, later in the month, about 20 members saw the pantomime, "The Merry Gentleman" at the Theatre Royal. The quarterly meeting on March 4 was combined with a Bring and Buy Sale at Legion House. Miss M. Clark (A.T.S.) represented Bristol at the London Reunions and others attending included all Q.M.A.A.C. Signal Section Comrades: Dauncey (Mrs. Wilkie), Etaples; Lloyd, Etaples and Hardelet; Rogers, Quellily and Rouen. London Branch gave us a cordial welcome and it was nice to hear Dame Helen speak so highly of her Signals.

Chelmsford. Our activities recently included our Christmas party and a visit from three members of the Officers' Wives Club from an American Air Base. We are also indebted to Mr. Roger Massey who gave us a very vivid and amusing description of his holiday experiences in France and Spain. All meetings have been much enjoyed, the informal evening spent with the Americans discussing everyday life on both sides of the Atlantic being both interesting and enlightening.

Derby. A great co-operative effort has been made to raise money for the Benevolent Funds. Some applications were made for assistance by ex-Service women in Derby and it was then discovered that the work of the Association was not well known in the town in spite of the fact that reports of the meetings are regularly published in the Press. It was therefore decided to put on a pantomime, partly to make money and partly for the sake of the publicity. There were three performances, the first being opened by Major B. M. Balmer, M.B.E., a serving officer of the W.R.A.C., the next by a W.R.A.C./T.A. officer and the third by a warrant officer. The total cost of the production was £70, largely because of the regulations about fire-proofing and it entailed a very great deal of work and anxiety. Nevertheless it was an outstanding success and £16 was sent off to the Benevolent Fund. Even more important Mrs. A. R. Jones, Treasurer of the Branch and the leading spirit in the pantomime, achieved her object in getting publicity and the *Derby Evening Telegraph*, on December 2, 1953, devoted a three-column

headline and quite a lot of space to the objects of the Association. Mrs. Jones is now satisfied that the existence of the Association is well known in Derby, also the need for more recruits in the regular W.R.A.C. and the T.A. She asks that the thanks of the Branch be expressed to the members of the two T.A. units who acted as ushers. Other news from the Branch is that Sgt. Moffit, the Recruiting Sergeant in Nottingham, placed the Branch wreath on the Memorial in Derby in November.

Edinburgh. Mrs. Walling, who will be remembered by those who served in the early days of the A.T.S. at the Duke of York's Headquarters, has recently joined the Branch and gave us an interesting and instructive talk on welfare work in the prison service. Another new member is Miss Gallacher (A.T.S.).

Gibraltar. We opened our 1954 season in festive spirit by holding an American cocktail party on Twelfth Night in the W.R.A.C. Games Room. The idea that all members brought something to eat and drink proved very successful and resulted in a varied and tasty buffet, and drinks to suit all tastes. On this occasion we invited the husbands of our ex-Service members and took the opportunity of offering our congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Kearly, Mr. and Mrs. Packer and Col. and Mrs. Worsley who all celebrated their wedding anniversaries on or near that date. The February meeting was held at the home of Mrs. Tindall-Carill-Worsley (*nee* Davidson) when, in spite of a very wet evening, 19 members were present. This Branch has 100 per cent. Service members and ex-Service members still come in. Newcomers are Mrs. Tippet (*nee* Marshall) who was an E.A.G., Mrs. Tovey (J. Comd. Horsley) who served in G.D. 1941-46, Mrs. Young (*nee* West) who was a Staff Officer, and Mrs. Newbigging. The last named is our own L/Cpl. Grevatt who married in Gibraltar last June and has recently returned to be with her husband who is still serving on the Rock.

Hartlepool. We had a very pleasant evening surprise at our January meeting when tasty refreshments were most kindly provided for us by our chairman, treasurer and another member. These members had conspired together to give the Branch a New Year treat and it was a great pity that the attendance did not come up to the heights required to do this treat justice. In February we had a most unusual meeting. We were given a lecture and demonstration on "The care of the skin and how to apply cosmetics." At least two of our members went home looking very glamorous after acting as models. The meeting was enjoyed by all present and our kind thanks are due to the lady who gave up her evening to instruct us. The month of March brought us together for another talk, this time on "Birds" and this proved very interesting and, to many of us, enlightening. The talk was given by the brother of one of our members, Mr. Peter Hogg, a local birdwatcher of some repute.

Ipswich. The Annual General Meeting of the Ipswich and Suffolk Branch was held on Saturday, February 6, at the home of our Chairman, Miss J. Horniblow. Miss Horniblow gave us a most delightful tea before the meeting when we were able

to get acquainted with our newest member, Mrs. M. Pizzey. Unfortunately our other two new "recruits" were unable to attend. In her opening remarks Miss Horniblow commented on the fact that the members had seated themselves in the form of a horse-shoe and hoped it was a good omen for the coming year. The treasurer appealed for an increase in membership, pointing out that although the benevolent cases were increasing year by year this was not the case where members were concerned. The success of the Social in November led to the decision to have a party in March at which one member volunteered to sing and another to find a pianist. The rest of the evening was devoted to a Beetle Drive at which Mrs. Simpson and Mrs. George tied with the same number of points and had to toss for the prize. Mrs. Simpson won. Miss Robertson won the "Booby."

London. We opened this year with very poor attendance due, we hope, to the bad weather, and we had to abandon the January Whist Drive. In February the numbers improved and we ran a Beetle Drive. Then in March we had a visit from the Century House Choral Society who gave us a most entertaining musical evening. On March 18, we played the Radio game, "The Name's the Same" and would like to thank Mrs. Mackenzie for her organisation of such an amusing evening.

Norfolk. The New Year's Party and Raffle on January 6 was a great success. £10 7s. 6d. was cleared for the rent of room and Branch funds. Members brought the refreshments, sandwiches, pastries, trifle, fruit, etc. and, together with tea and a bottle of sherry, a happy time was spent together. Wintry weather on February and March meeting nights reduced attendance. We are grateful to Miss Brock who so often visits Miss Wilson (A.T.S.) who is ill in a remote country village and to Mrs. Robinson for arranging the gift of a pair of blankets and a dressing jacket, for Miss Wilson lives in a converted hut.

Salisbury. In November we organised a Whist Drive to help swell the Cadet funds as we meet in their H.Q. and, later, another for the W.R.A.C. Benevolent Fund. A lecture on the "Tintometer," an instrument for measuring colour, which was arranged for the January meeting, had to be cancelled owing to the winter weather conditions. This was carried forward to the February meeting and proved to be a great success for everyone enjoyed discussing this unique industry. We hope to arrange for a party to tour the works in the near future.

Southampton. We held our Annual Meeting in the Sergeants' Mess at Carlton Drill Hall on October 7, 1953, when the following officers were elected: Chairman, Miss G. O. Davies; Vice-Chairman, Mrs. V. Hoare; Honorary Secretary, Miss J. B. Revell. The committee consists of Miss M. Chick, Mrs. P. Pannall (recently returned from Malta) and Miss A. Stott. After a vote of thanks had been made to the retiring members and especially to Mrs. V. Hoare for all her hard work during the past year we started to discuss our plans for our Annual Party for the unfortunate children of the town. Once again we sold programmes at the

Festival of Remembrance held in the Guildhall. A Jumble Sale was arranged and proved a huge success from the financial point of view and most of the proceeds went towards the party. We had a Beetle Drive and a Whist Drive (to which friends were invited) and we also paid a visit to the local gas showrooms for an interesting demonstration on "Cake Icing."

Rifle Shooting

At the Inter-Service Rifle Meeting held at the R.A.F. Station, Uxbridge, on February 16, the W.R.N.S. won with a score of 1,565 points, the W.R.A.F. being second with 1,538 points, while the W.R.A.C. gained 1,524 points. For the first time this year the team were helped by the Small Arms Wing at the School of Infantry, Hythe, where they received three days' training at the beginning of February. By kind permission of the Commandant, Capt. Pennell acted as coach and members of the instructional staff assisted. This was most encouraging and we hope that it may happen again next year, in which case there is every chance that we shall give a better account of ourselves. Major G. E. M. Saunders-Davies has again been selected for the Army Forty (Small Bore). We offer her our best congratulations.

Personal

For charges and particulars please see Contents page.

Edinburgh.—When in Edinburgh stay at the Women's United Services Club, 12 Drumsheugh Gardens. All ex-Service women welcomed. Special terms for serving W.R.A.C. Write for the brochure to the Secretary. Phone No.: Edinburgh Central 4952.

Come and spend your holiday at Trelawne, Lancaster Gardens, Clacton. All Comrades and friends welcomed. Every attention and comfort with good food. Small hotel run by ex-A.T.S. Write as above or phone Clacton 979.

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W.R.A.C. (T.A.) officer needed in Liverpool for a mixed R.A.S.C. (T.A.) unit. Any ex-A.T.S. or W.R.A.C. officer willing to undertake these duties should apply to the Adjutant, H.Q., 4 A.A. Group Column, R.A.S.C. (T.A.), T.A. Centre, Rose Lane, Mossley Hill, Liverpool. Telephone: Allerton 2342.

For Sale.—Officer's No. 1 Dress. Height 5ft. 5½ in., bust 36 in., waist 26 in., hips 37 in. £15 or nearest offer. Also hat, 6¾, 30s.; gloves, 7, 10s.; shoes, 5, £1; and 2 shirts, plus collars, 10s. each. All hardly worn and in excellent condition. Box No. 4/54.

For Sale.—Officer's No. 1 Dress, Wetherill. Greatcoat £15. Tunic and Skirt £10. Height 5 ft. 8½ in.; bust 34 in.; hips 38 in. Hat 6¾, shoes 7, 2 shirts and 4 collars, 14in., tie, £5. Two Moss. Bros. tropical shirts, £1. All excellent condition. Apply Mrs. White, Rossland, Hatch Beauchamp, Taunton.

For Sale.—Officer's No. 1 Dress jacket and skirt, greatcoat, cap, etc. Also khaki greatcoat and white riding mac. All in perfect condition at reasonable price. Will sell separately if required. Height 5 ft. 4 in., bust 34 in., waist 24 in., hips 36 in. Box No. 5/54.

Channel Islands.—All comrades and friends welcome at the Coronation Guest House, Kensington Place, St. Helier, Jersey (3 min. beach and 5 min. main shopping centre). Open all the year round. Phone Central 3539 or write as above.

For Sale.—£5. Excellent condition A.T.S. Officer's khaki greatcoat. Length 44 in., bust 34 in. Apply Miss M. L. Phillips, Fedu Hir, Uplands, Pontardawe, Swansea, S. Wales.

Wanted for W.R.A.C. (T.A.), Aldershot. Full-time driver-instructor. Essential ex-N.C.O. M.T. qualifications. Apply O.C., "B" Coy., 3ro (S.C.) Bn., W.R.A.C. (T.A.), Beaumont Barracks, Aldershot.

For Sale.—Officer's No. 1 Dress, £17. Green greatcoat, £20. Khaki battleblouse, £1. B. 34 in., w. 24 in., h. 36 in., ht. 5 ft. 6 in. Three khaki shirts, 13 in., 15s. each (to incl. two collars, 13½ in.). One green shirt, 13 in., plus two collars, 13½ in., £1. All clothing is in excellent condition. Prices are quoted but offers welcomed. Apply Mrs. C. R. Edmonds, 22 Rowlands Avenue, Waterlooville, Portsmouth, Hants.

For Sale.—Officer's khaki kit. Greatcoat in excellent condition (5 ft. 6 in., 32 in. bust). Riding mac, almost new, fit tall slim figure. Shirts, M.T. kit, etc. Box No. 6/54.

Officer's suit (skirt and blouse) by Hector Powe, good condition, fit 5 ft. 4 in.; 32 in. bust. Approval. £3. Box No. 7/54.

The Service Women's Club, 52 Lower Sloane Street, London, S.W.1, exists for the comfort and convenience of service and ex-service women of all ranks. It provides accommodation and the usual amenities of a ladies' club at most reasonable rates and new members are always welcome. For full particulars and brochure please write to the Secretary. Tel: SLOane 9131.

Wanted.—Officer's khaki service dress, skirt, tunic and greatcoat. Height, 5 ft. 7 in.; bust 36 in.; waist 30 in.; hips 40 in. Officer's khaki service dress, skirt, tunic and greatcoat. Height 5 ft. 4½ in.; bust 32 in.; waist 24 in.; hips 36 in. Officer's baratheia battledress blouse and skirt. Height 5 ft. 5 in.; bust 34 in.; waist 24 in.; hips 36 in. Also shirts and collars, 13 in. neck, 13½ in. collar. Box No. 8/54.

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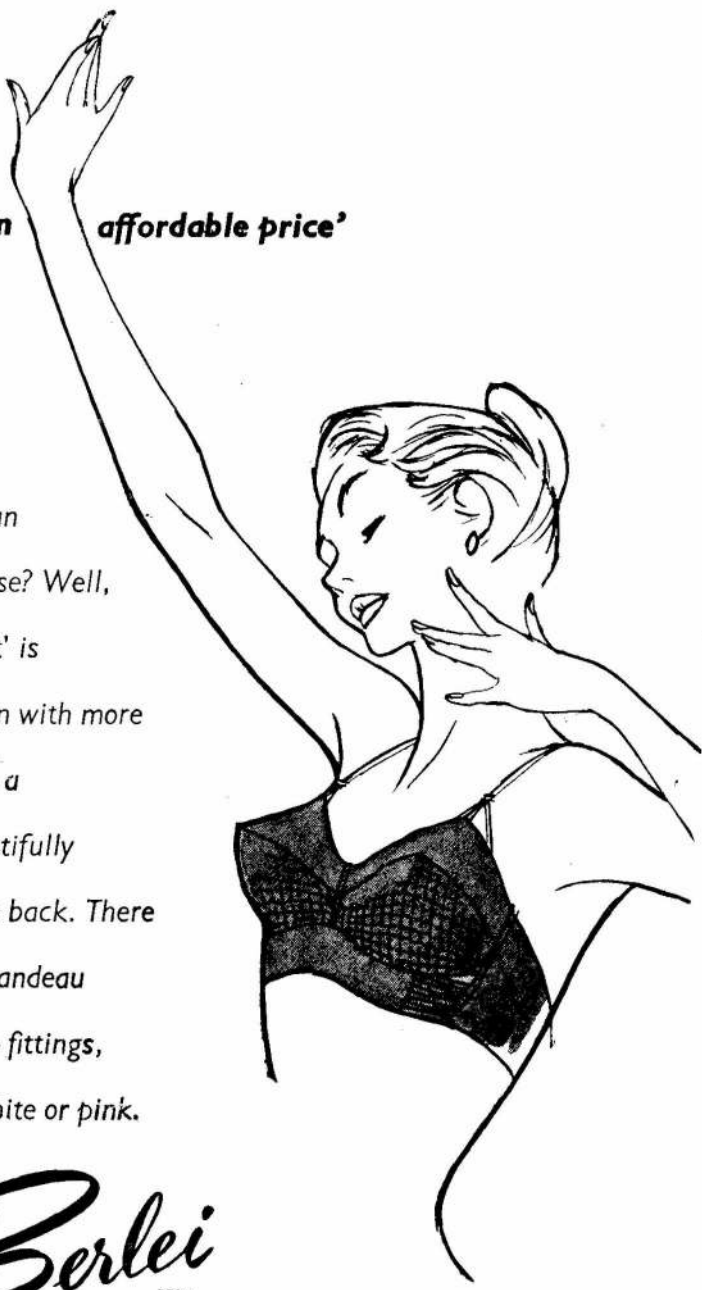
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