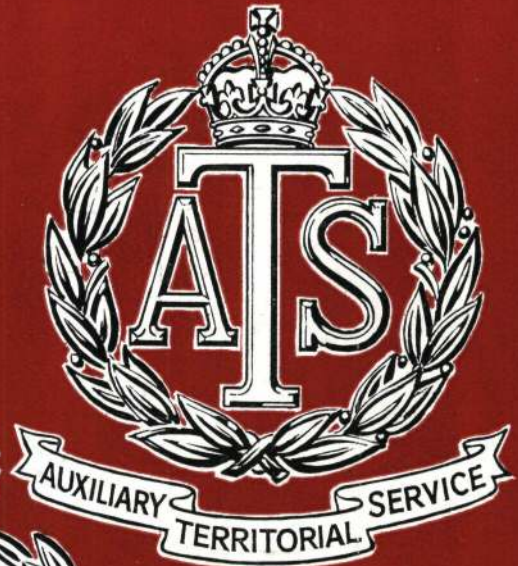


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THE LIONESS



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THE LIONESS

Vol. XXX

February 1957

No. I

EDITORIAL

TIME is an incalculable commodity. To the ardent young women who landed at Boulogne in March, 1917, for service with the armies in France, 1957 (if it ever occurred to them to look so far ahead) must have seemed a lifetime away, a last foothold on the brink of the grave. The W.R.A.C. recruits of today look back on 1917 as a pre-historic date in the archives of their Regimental History. Yet to the middle-aged woman who pauses at this landmark in her busy active life to look back on the springtime of her service, the decades have a tendency to telescope, the past is not so long ago, nothing has changed as much as one would think. The years imperceptibly passing over her head leave a few grey hairs and an occasional kindly wrinkle, but inside (though the young can never understand it) she feels exactly the same person.

WHAT have we got to show for the 40 years which span three generations of Service women? First, the success of our primary object—victory in two World Wars: Facing the difficulties and disillusionments of a post-war world, it is easy to be cynical about the value of winning wars, but we fought for bigger things than gain or glory, and nothing that has happened since has taught us that those things were not worth defending. The Women's Services made their special contribution to those victories, and the story of their efforts is one of which we can all be proud.

SECONDLY, there is the W.R.A.C. itself—now so fully accepted as a permanent part of the Regular Army that we begin to take its existence as a matter of course. The ex-Service women are generous in their appreciation of the active Corps and their interest and pride is a continual encouragement, but they themselves are the founders and architects of the Corps, and the serving women do not forget it. We welcome this chance of paying a tribute to our distinguished forerunners, without whose fine example the Regular Service would never have been more than a visionary day-dream.

LASTLY, there is the W.R.A.C. Association. The Association is too often treated as a society of ex-Service women, valuable only to protect their interests and keep them in touch with each other. In fact, it is the spiritual centre of the Corps, the common ground between old and young, active and retired, the thread of continuity running through the whole lifetime of a Service woman. Without the Association there would be no meaning to the promise, given to every new recruit, that once we join the Corps we belong to it for ever. When we

meet on March 23, to celebrate our 40-year anniversary with our Commandant-in-Chief, H.M. Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother, and our President and Contoller Commandant, H.R.H. The Princess Royal, we shall not be commemorating the faded glories of a dead past, but rejoicing in a living growth which is rooted in the past, flourishing in the present and throwing out hopeful promise for the future.

OUR Regimental Historian (Col. J. M. Cowper, T.D., 4 Hillside, Lancaster) tells us that this 40th anniversary coincides with the completion of her first draft, up to the end of the Second World War. The final revision is finished up to 1938, and no more sidelights on those early years can be incorporated, but there are still a few weeks in which to brush up our memories of the A.T.S. In the reminiscent mood engendered by our 40-year jubilee, we hope that many Old Comrades are rummaging through their relics and re-reading their letters and diaries. Now is the last moment for sending in those illuminating titbits which Col. Cowper so badly needs to build up the background of the picture.

THOSE who would rather study Regimental History than compile it should make this anniversary the occasion of a visit to the Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London, S.E.1. This is a National Museum and admission is free. The visitor will be impressed by the amount of space devoted to the activities of women at war, and by the number and quality of the exhibits and pictures illustrating their work in two World Wars. It brings home to us afresh that we are celebrating 40 years of great achievement, and in that achievement every single one of us has played a part.

WE end on a prosaic and all-too-familiar note. In these celebrations, no one must be left out. It will be tragic if memberships lapse because subscriptions (due on January 1, 1957) have not been paid, or if members lose touch because they have failed to notify a change of address. At this very moment it may be happening to someone. Please make sure that it is not you.

PRINCESS ROYAL'S DAY

Corps Day will be celebrated this year on Sunday, April 28, when the W.R.A.C. Depot, Queen Elizabeth Camp, Guildford, will be open to all serving women and old comrades from 2.30 to 5.30 p.m. H.R.H. The Princess Royal hopes to be present.

BOULOGNE 1917—

ADA GUMMERSALL, Q.M.A.A.C.

IN February 1917, there appeared in *The Times* a short paragraph saying that women of good character were required in France to serve as telegraphists, telephonists, postal section, clerks, cooks and waitresses, to relieve men urgently needed in the front line. By noon that day my application was in the post. I heard nothing further until March, when *The Times* informed us that everything was ready to receive the women, except beds which had been overlooked in the furnishing of the hostels and camps.

Things began to move in April. We applicants for service were passed by a selection committee, medically examined, and finally received a calling-up telegram. We presented ourselves at the Connaught Club, Marble Arch, at the end of April. My recollections of the Club are of dear Miss Ireland giving us P.T. in Hyde Park, watched and chased by children's nurses complete with prams. I was sent to France at the end of May with about 30 others, postal section and clerks. We were fitted out in Selfridge's basement with khaki blouse, coat and skirt, and overcoat with officers' buttons. We also got stout bloomers with a large pocket at the knee—we named them dreadnaughts. We were issued with khaki stockings and army shoes, thick leather with nail-studded soles that struck sparks from the cobblestones of old Boulogne. Our hats were shaped like a bowler with the brim cut off. Mine developed a peak at the top like a Welshwoman's—my friends recognised me by my hat.

The boat that carried us over to France held the first contingent of the American Red Cross who took over the Casino at Boulogne. We went aboard and were handed life-jackets and shown by the sailors how to adjust them. We occupied the top deck with the American Red Cross officers, but discipline forbade us to chat to them. One of them offered a chair. I accepted it. He then offered his magazine. I accepted it. After that I sat silent except to murmur a polite thank-you when the deck tilted and he stopped my chair from sliding into the sea. I was obeying orders.

When we arrived at the Boulogne docks we were met by Mrs. Patoñ Beeton. She assembled us on the quay and marched us complete with suitcases to the Hotel du Commerce, where she gave us a pep-talk (containing much sensible advice) on how to conduct ourselves as befitted Englishwomen in a foreign land. Then she dismissed us to a supper of bully, pickles, bread and margarine and tea.

My first job in Boulogne was to sweep the hotel yard, which to me seemed as large as Trafalgar Square. Not one of us really knew what we were up against at that time, especially the kitchen staff. Huge fore-quarters and hind-quarters of beef had to be hacked into joints, and vast quantities of rice boiled in water without sugar or milk to be served as a sweet with a spoonful of plum-and-apple. The alternative was a horrible preparation of boiled army biscuit flavoured with the aforementioned

jam. Dried milk, dried powdered potatoes and bully varied our diet. Bread was scarce and we made out with army biscuit, to the detriment of many dentures and 40 per cent. of our digestions.

We had been there over a month when into our hostel came Mrs. Burleigh Leach (afterwards Dame Florence Simpson). She went round among the girls giving encouragement and comfort. When she came to the household staff, who were standing in a group, she put her arms round as many of us as she could encompass and said "My poor Legion girls, what can I do to help?" One of us spoke up and told her that so far we had had no off-duty time, and after that we had two hours off duty daily. My first off-duty was spent in drawing the rations. I was the first woman in Boulogne to do it, and the soldier who supplied me told me with tears in his eyes, that I was the first Englishwoman he had seen for six months. A few weeks later word came from the War Office that the morale of the men had greatly improved since the arrival of the Women's Army.

We had a wedding in Boulogne—a most romantic affair. One of our women was walking down the street when she met an old sweetheart of hers. He had asked her to marry him and go with him to Canada. She had refused and he had emigrated alone. Now here they were in France together, and when he proposed again he was accepted. They consulted the Padre, he consulted a high Army authority, and a military wedding was arranged. They were married in the English Church in Boulogne and a cottage was rented for them at Hadelot. Some of our women formed a Guard of Honour at the entrance to the church as the happy couple mounted the ration-cart, drawn by a mule, *en route* for "Honeymoon Cottage" at Hadelot. After that wedding I shall always maintain that the Army Council believes in encouraging love and romance, but there was one faint protest from the bridegroom—"If I had known that our bridal coach was the ration-cart, I'd have hired a taxi."

—TO SINGAPORE 1956

THE W.R.A.C. Company, being stationed in a military area outside the town, was not directly involved in the Singapore riots, but because of the curfew, civilians were unable to get to work and consequently the W.R.A.C. had to turn to all sorts of unusual jobs. G.H.Q. clerks and O.O.M.s, plus most of the Company H.Q. staff, including W.O.2 Greig, the Education Instructor, manned the switchboard and teleprinter room continuously and very successfully. Clerks and signals operators assisted Sgt. Savage, the cook N.C.O., in the cook-house and somehow everyone was fed. All the civilian staff are Asian and they remained loyal and came to work whenever the curfew permitted, often getting in by some strange route through the back lanes. Large numbers of troops engaged on security work were entertained in the W.R.A.C. N.A.A.F.I. Morale generally was very high.

Two officers and 50 O.R.s took part in the Remembrance Day parade and service at St.

Georges' Garrison Church, Singapore. The Salute at the March Past was taken by the C.-in-C., Gen. Sir Francis W. Festing, K.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O., and the band taking part was the Pipe and Drum band of the 1/6 Gurkha Rifles.

The usual number of weddings have taken place. In October, Capt. Heather Skinner married Capt. Richard Mackaness of the Kings' Dragoon Guards in the Garrison Church, attended by three bridesmaids, one being Capt. Morley, W.R.A.C. A Guard of Honour was provided by the bridegroom's regiment and the reception was held in the residence of Chief of Staff, who himself gave the bride away. The following week Capt. Brampton married Major Lindsay, R.A., at the Garrison Church and a very cheerful reception took place in Tanglin Officers' Mess. Three W.R.A.C. have married members of the Australian contingent lately, one of the most interesting weddings being between Cpl. Whalley, W.R.A.C. and Cpl. King, R.A.A.F. Mrs. King, the groom's mother, came

from Australia for the wedding and did much to help her future daughter-in-law. Because of the riots it was impossible to hold the reception in the correct place and the Sergeants' Mess came to the rescue and lent their Ante-Room. The food arrived five minutes before the bride and was hastily organised by W.O.2 Glass and Sgt. Tutty. The groom was very late, having had difficulty in getting through the road blocks, and the gentleman giving Cpl. Whalley away had to obtain special permission to come off duty for the wedding. However, an excellent reception finally took place in the true Australian manner with a Chairman—Father McBride. It is delightful to note that the Australians start receptions with a loyal toast, "Be upstanding, charge your glasses and drink to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth."

Finally, we regretfully say goodbye to our A.D.W.R.A.C. Lt.-Col. Rivett-Drake and welcome in her place Lt.-Col. Pooley who had the good fortune to travel on the new troopship *Nevasa*.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Reunions

Grand Reunion HER MAJESTY

QUEEN ELIZABETH THE QUEEN MOTHER has graciously consented to attend the Grand Reunion to be held at the Seymour Hall, London, W.1, on Saturday, March 23, 1957, at 7 p.m. Past and present members of Q.M.A.A.C., A.T.S. and W.R.A.C. are heartily invited. Tickets (price 5s.) are limited and will be allotted in order of application. Please apply early (enclosing postal order or cheque for correct amount, and stamped addressed envelope) to Reunion Secretary, W.R.A.C. Association, Duke of York's Headquarters, London, S.W.3.

Q.M.A.A.C. Reunion

Past members of Q.M.A.A.C. will hold their reunion on Friday, March 22, 1957, at 7 p.m. at Central Mess, Duke of York's H.Q. Tickets (4s. each, including refreshments) may be obtained from the Reunion Secretary. (See next column.)

Reunion Service

A special service will be held in the Chapel of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, on Sunday, March 24, 1957, at 10 a.m.

Accommodation

*The Reunion Committee regret that they are unable to arrange accommodation in London.

Promotion of H.R.H. The Princess Royal

ON the promotion of Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal to the honorary rank of General, which was gazetted on November 23, 1956, a telegram of loyal greetings was sent by the Chairman of Council on behalf of the W.R.A.C. Association. In reply, Her Royal Highness sent the following message:

"PLEASE convey my sincere thanks to all members of the W.R.A.C. Association for their telegram of loyal greetings sent on the occasion of my promotion to the rank of Honorary General. I was much touched by this kind thought. Thank you all so much."

News From the T.A.

Sport in Eastern Command

IN spite of long-distance travel, inter-unit sporting events were well supported in 1956. Six teams competed in the netball tournament held at the T.A. Centre, Albany Street, on March 24, 1956. The cup was won by Eastern Command (M) Signal Regiment (T.A.), and Lt.-Col. S. M. Crawley made the presentation. Seven teams took part in the rifle shooting contest at the Duke of York's H.Q. on April 15, 1956. The shield was won by 301 (East Anglian) Battalion W.R.A.C. (T.A.), and presented to the winners by Major G. Saunders Davies. A badminton and netball match was played against the regulars of Eastern Command, the badminton being won by the W.R.A.C. (8 matches to 1) and the netball by the W.R.A.C. (T.A.) (11 goals to 10). For the winter season, as well as the netball and shooting contests, inter-unit badminton, darts and table-tennis competitions have been arranged, and we look forward to many

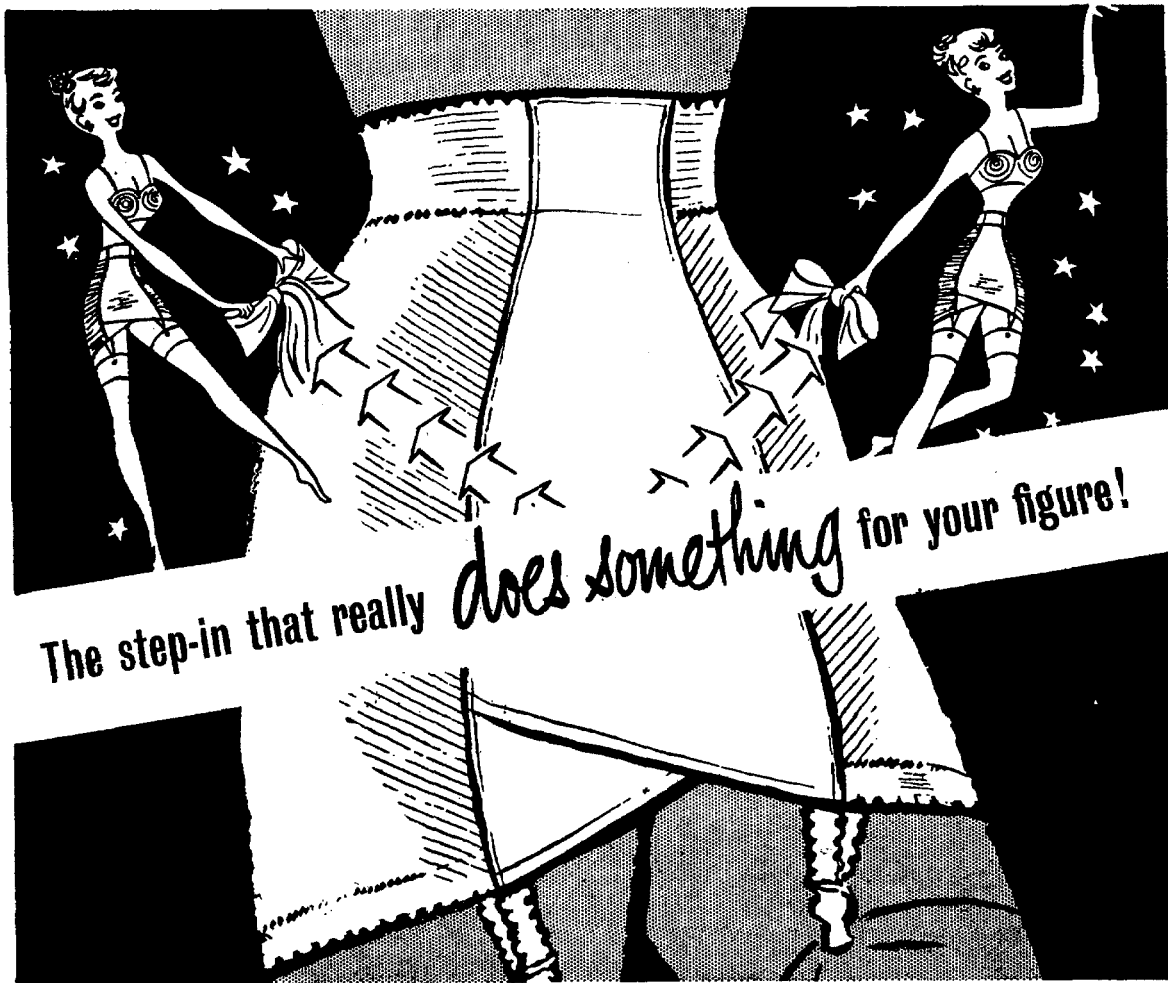
bearing by Major E. W. Gibson, D.A.D.W.R.A.C. S.W. District, and had to answer questions on the Highway Code and road problems put by C.S.M. A. Preston, R.A.S.C. Marshals, recorders and judges were provided by all the participating units and, to ensure fair play, were partnered by members of the R.A.S.C. and R.A.E.C. C.S.M. W. Meyer, R.A.S.C., ensured that everything was as comfortable as possible for the competitors accommodated in Blandford Camp, S/Sgt. Hurman, A.C.C. (in charge of the messing for the weekend) provided a hot meal for every woman on arrival, and Sgt. D. Parkes, W.R.A.C. (T.A.), supervised their midday meal on the Sunday. It was a great day for the Dorset platoons, for 70 Independent Company won the Firbank Cup and two members of the Company, Pte. A. Wallis and Cpl. A. Hasketh, were the first and second individual prize-winners. Pte. J. Richardson, 71 Independent Company, was placed third. The prizes were presented by Col. T. E. Stoneham, R.A.S.C., who congratulated the women on their efforts and on the standard of their driving. As a small token of thanks for all their valuable co-operation over the past eight years, 70 (Somerset and Dorset) Independent Company, W.R.A.C. (T.A.), presented to Col. Stoneham a silver ashtray for the Officers' Mess. The units were also pleased to have with them Col. C. W. Hull, D.D.W.R.A.C., and Major A. McIlwraith, D.A.D.W.R.A.C., Southern Command, as well as the Mayor and Mayoress of Blandford Forum.

Aldershot W.R.A.C. (T.A.) Invade France

ON July 21, "B" Company 310 (Hampshire) Battalion W.R.A.C. (T.A.) left Aldershot on a map-reading scheme to Canterbury. Threading their way through unknown Sussex and Kent lanes they arrived at Canterbury in the evening. There they were kindly accommodated by the 12th Independent Company W.R.A.C. Next morning khaki-clad figures gave place to glamorous civilians and the party left Canterbury in the early hours of

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way at night is not quite as easy as it seems. Many did not get home till 5.30 a.m., nearly time to start getting ready for their civilian jobs, but in spite of this, the weekend was voted a great success and the Company is now looking for another foreign port to visit.

304 (Surrey and Sussex) Battalion

THE rain did its best to ruin our camp at St. Martin's Plain, Shorncliffe, in June, but it takes a lot to dampen the enthusiasm of the W.R.A.C. (T.A.) and in spite of appalling weather it was a very successful camp. An extensive programme which included driving, clerical and First Aid training and a Junior N.C.O. Cadre was carried out. The social and sports side were well looked after, a Unit dance, a day trip to France, visits to the Military Tournament, sports, netball competition and a camp concert being the chief highlights. Our visitors were numerous and we were delighted to welcome Lt.-Gen. C. F. C. Coleman, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., G.O.G.-in-C. Eastern Command, Brigadier Dame Mary Railton, D.B.E., A.D.C. and Col. M. K. R. Colvin, O.B.E., T.D., D.D.W.R.A.C. Eastern Command.

Our Honorary Colonel, Col. A. H. Charles, T.D., spent a whole day with us. He took the salute at a March Past after a ceremonial parade. In the afternoon he toured the camp, visited the Sergeants' Mess and dined with the officers at night. Before leaving he presented the Battalion with a silver cup which he requested should be a Sports Trophy. The Companies competed for the Trophy in July and amid great excitement "C" Company became the first holders by a one-point win over "B" Company. Col. Charles was present at the meeting and presented his cup to the winners.

L/Cpl. Jones of "C" Company was selected to play for the Eastern Command W.R.A.C. (T.A.) netball team, and the Battalion Rifle Shooting team came third in the Eastern Command W.R.A.C. (T.A.) Inter-Unit Rifle Shooting Contest.

307 (Northern Command) Battalion

ON the afternoon of Sunday, September 9, a convoy of vehicles moved off from the Drill Hall, manned by members of "A" Company and members of the local unit of the R.N.V.(W.)R. This was the start of Exercise "Helpmate," a combined exercise in which we were called out to aid the local police and civil defence in a stricken area with all means of communication out of action. The vehicles were given a map-reference by R.T., and if they arrived there, they would find a task set for them. The team in the vehicle had to decide what action to take and report such action back to base. The next map reference would then be transmitted. Back at base, while some of the W.R.A.C. plotted the course of the vehicles, others prepared tea to which 24 Navy and W.R.A.C. sat down.

"A" Company's Christmas Party was a great success. In spite of thick, murky fog, petrol rationing and the uncertainty of late buses, the labours of the usual hard-working few were well rewarded by the sight of the numbers there. The dance hall (which had been adorned by Christmas

decorations, mistletoe and a tall tree) was comfortably full and dancing was a pleasure rather than a crowded shuffle. There were a number of competition dances in which everyone joined, and after an interval for refreshment, dancing continued to the end of an enjoyable evening.

321 (Cheshire) Battalion

UNEXPECTED talent was discovered in "A" Company when members of that Company decided to do something "seasonable" for Christmas. W.O.2 "Topsy" Miller was determined that a pantomime should be given and consequently wrote and produced her version of "Red Riding Hood." This was given to an audience of 350 in the Drill Hall, Bidston Road, Birkenhead and again to an audience of 300 at St. Saviour's Church. The production received very good press notices in the local papers and the audiences were most enthusiastic. "A" Company also collected £26 10s. 4d. for St. Dunstan's when members went carol singing round the Wirral at Clatterbridge Hospital. Last but not least a Christmas tree and 40 presents were given to the orphans at the Overchurch and Woodchurch Homes.

Western Command (M) Signal Regiment

SEVENTY members (including 35 W.R.A.C.) of No. 1 Squadron and 62 L. of C. attended Remembrance Service at Woolton Parish Church, Liverpool on November 11. There was a short service at the War Memorial, the Last Post being sounded by a member of the British Legion, and the whole ceremony was very impressive and moving.

No. 2 Squadron in Eccles accepted an invitation from the 9th (Prestwich) Battalion Home Guard Rifle Club to a Shooting Competition, the Squadron winning by a short head, 164 to 126 points. The Provincial Exhibitions, Ltd., kindly gave permission to the Squadron to erect a Stand at the "Home and Handicrafts" Exhibition in Manchester, which gave the Squadron an opportunity to meet the public direct. All ranks participated and the results are very encouraging.

Aberdeen University O.T.C.

ON Remembrance Sunday, 27 W.R.A.C. Cadets, along with equal numbers of Aberdeen University Contingent O.T.C. and of the University Air Squadron, paraded to King's College Chapel for the Armistice Service. The parade was inspected outside the chapel by the Rector of the University, Admiral Sir Rhoderick McGrigor, G.C.B., D.S.O., LL.D., who presented the sash of honour to L/Cpl. Edna Farrell, the best Cadet of the year. After the Rector had taken the salute the parade marched back to H.Q. to the music of the O.T.C. Pipe Band. Among those present at the service and at the short reception which followed the parade were the principal, Sir Thomas Murray Taylor, C.B.E., Q.C., D.D., LL.D., F.R.S.E., and Lady Taylor, Brigadier Sir A. D. Buchanan-Smith, O.B.E., T.D., Chairman of C.O.M.E.C., and a son of a former principal of the University, members of the Military Education Committee of the

University of Aberdeen and D.A.D.W.R.A.C., Highland District, Major E. R. Robinson, W.R.A.C.

Cambridge University O.T.C.

EIGHT Cadets spent 15 days at the W.R.A.C. Depot during the summer vacation and thoroughly enjoyed it. In return, Lt.-Col. A. Cecil visited the unit on October 16, 1956, as did Lt.-Col. S. F. M. Nimmo on October 11, 1956. The main W.R.A.C. exercise in the Michaelmas Term was combined with an R.A. and R.A.C. "live shoot" at the P.T.A., Stanford. After seeing the firing the women carried out a complicated "discovery and recovery" project. Picking up a weak radio S O S they had to locate by applied map reading an ambushed party in a dense wood. Advancing on foot across a "mined" bridge, they evacuated one stretcher case (with rather vivid lipstick and greasepaint wounds) and one "walking wounded," in spite of enemy activity in the area. The noises off were introduced by an attached male officer and the entire operation was commanded by a W.R.A.C. Cadet. The comic relief was supplied by O.C., W.R.A.C. Wing, sprawling over a trip wire designed for the patrol leader.

News of Old Comrades

MRS. PAWSEY (better known as **Peggie Whittall**) writes to us from 588 Bell Street, Pascoe Vale, Victoria, Australia, where she is staying with another member of the Q.M.A.A.C., **Mrs. Ennis** (formerly **Rostron**). Mrs. Pawsey lived for 14 years in Canada after the First World War, returned to England in 1934, and went to Australia about a year ago. She would like to get in touch with any of her old friends, especially **Mrs. J. F. Denby** (Rivett), **Mrs. Rumbold** (Newing), **Mrs. Ward** (Whitehead) and "**Bobby**" **Bradley**, who is believed to have married and settled in Australia, too.

The unbounded energy of W.R.A.C. P.T.I.s does not seem to wane when they leave the Army. **Mrs. Pritchard** (Cpl. Skarrat) proved that there is more than one way of reaching Australia when she set off with her husband last May to hitch-hike to Melbourne. They are reported to have arrived safely in time for the Olympic Games. **W.O.2 Goldberger** holds a responsible position in British European Airways, and **W.O.1 Garston** has joined the Order of St. John and British Red Cross Society Services Hospital Welfare Department. After nearly three years as a Welfare Officer at Plymouth, in Egypt and in Cyprus, she is now stationed at the Military Hospital, Colchester. **W.O.2 Windeler** (now **Mrs. Wolfgang**) has travelled round Canada, Iceland, Germany and the Continent, working first with a French Canadian doctor on a defence project in the frozen north, and then at jobs ranging from a season with a repertory company to a short sentence (on the staff, we hasten to add) in Holloway Gaol. Finally she married into the U.S. Air Force and "settled" for the six months or so of a Service tenancy in a beautiful cottage in Yorkshire.



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The Army Dinner for Her Majesty The Queen

LT.-COL. E. M. SYKES, W.R.A.C.

(who was present as an usher)

IT was November 27, 1956, a unique occasion in the long history of the British Army. Her Majesty The Queen had graciously consented to dine with her Army in the beautiful setting of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, and behind the floodlit face of the historic buildings everything and everyone was ready to welcome her.

The Great Hall, where dinner was to be served, was a scene of splendour, with its oak panelled walls and crystal chandeliers, the scarlet carpet running between the long white-clothed tables, the gilt backed chairs, the flowers, the sheen of priceless silver (a piece lent by every regiment and corps of the Army), the soft glow of candles in the many silver candelabra, the waitresses in neat navy blue dresses and white aprons, caps and gloves. Looking down on the scene were paintings of most of the monarchs of England since Charles II, and at the far end, immediately behind the top table, a painting of Sir Christopher Wren, who designed the Royal Hospital on the orders of King Charles II in 1682, "as asylum for aged and invalid soldiers."

In the vestibule outside the Great Hall, the State Trumpeters of the Household Cavalry in State Dress waited to herald the approach of Her Majesty. The Band of the Scots Guards was there, too, and was to play during and after dinner. The Colonnade and the Evans Ward, which lead from the vestibule to the Council Chamber, were lined along one side by the Chelsea Pensioners dressed in their scarlet coats, medals shining in the bright lights; on the opposite side were massed flowers and the larger pieces of silver lent by the various regiments and corps of the Army.

The guests assembled in the Council Chamber, a magnificent room with a shining parquet floor, white Adams fireplace and great bowls of chrysanthemums standing on pedestals in each corner. Every regiment and corps of the British Army was represented by its Colonel or Colonel Commandant, the bright scarlet of their Mess Dress making a vivid display of colour against the panelling. Among them were three women, Dame Helen Gillespie and Brigadier C. M. Johnson representing the Q.A.R.A.N.C. and Brigadier Dame Mary Railton, representing the W.R.A.C.

Adjoining the Council Chamber in the State Dining Room, the Field Marshals, Privy Councillors and other dignitaries gathered. This was indeed a notable assembly—the scarlet of the Field Marshals, the dark blue of the First Sea Lord, the lighter blue of the Marshal of the Royal Air Force, and the civilian evening dress of the Privy Councillors mingling against a background of egg-shell walls, gold curtains and carpets of dark claret. On a circular table in one corner stood a single bowl of flowers 6 ft. high and 3 ft. across, consisting solely of mauve and pink orchids and roses, with a white card simply inscribed "Presented by the Armies of

the Commonwealth." Into this stately room, on the stroke of 8 o'clock, came the members of the Royal Family, each escorted by a member of the Army Council, and the scene was set for the arrival of Her Majesty The Queen.

Her Majesty was received by the Rt. Hon. John Hare, Secretary of State for War, and Field Marshal Sir Gerald Templer, C.I.G.S. and conducted to the State Dining Room where those assembled were presented. A few minutes later the Royal Procession was formed up, and moved slowly through the Council Chamber on its way to the Great Hall. First came the Queen's Piper, then two Queen's Gurkha Orderly Officers in ceremonial dress, marching in slow time to the skirl of the pipes, and then Her Majesty The Queen, radiant in a glorious gown of gold and silver brocade, with the broad blue riband of the Garter, her magnificent jewels scintillating in the bright lights as she moved slowly through the Evans Ward and along the Colonnade. Escorting Her Majesty was the Secretary of State for War, and a few paces behind came Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother escorted by Field Marshal Sir Gerald Templer, H.R.H. Princess Margaret with Field Marshal The Lord Ironside, H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester with Field Marshal The Viscount Alanbrooke, H.R.H. The Duchess of Gloucester with Field Marshal The Earl Alexander of Tunis, H.R.H. The Princess Royal with Field Marshal The Viscount Montgomery, H.R.H. The Duchess of Kent with Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck and the Mistress of the Robes with Field Marshal Sir John Harding. With a Fanfare of Trumpets the procession entered the Great Hall where the other guests had already been ushered to their places. Her Majesty proceeded slowly through the Hall to the centre of the top table, where she stood, surrounded by members of her family and of her Army. The Chaplain General said Grace and dinner was served.

After the tables had been cleared and the port served, the Secretary of State for War proposed the Health of Her Majesty, the band of the Scots Guards played the National Anthem, and a few minutes later, the Secretary of State rose and began his speech, to which Her Majesty was graciously pleased to reply. How delightfully Her Majesty referred to her husband "who in his capacity of what might be described as a multiple Colonel-in-Chief, has asked me to tell you how very sorry he is not to be here tonight," and how appreciatively the whole speech was heard by its distinguished audience.

In the State Dining Room after dinner, many of the guests were presented to Her Majesty and other members of the Royal family, each of whom was attended by a member of the Army Council. Her Majesty and all the members of the Royal Family

really seemed to be enjoying the occasion and making the most of that opportunity of meeting and talking to so many senior officers. The band of the Royal Artillery played in the passageway outside the Council Chamber, and in the Chamber the whole atmosphere was one of pleasure and pride, pleasure in the renewal of old acquaintances and pride in that opportunity to do honour to The Queen.

The time came for Her Majesty to depart, and thereafter the guests began to disperse, but there cannot be anyone who was privileged to be present on that historic and unique occasion, from the members of the Army Council to the four W.R.A.C. who acted as cloakroom attendants, who did not carry away the memory of an unforgettable evening.

Remembrance Day in Scottish Command

WE were honoured to receive an invitation from the British Legion (Scotland) to take part in the Annual Festival of Remembrance in the Usher Hall, Edinburgh, on Sunday, November 11, 1956. Women of Scottish Command (M) Signal Squadron joined with the other services in the march through the auditorium to the seats behind the organ and formed part of the colourful background to the platform; and this year, for the first time, we also took part in the programme which traditionally follows the act of remembrance and thanksgiving. W.R.A.C. Cadets of Edinburgh University O.T.C. gave a display of Scottish country dancing in which male cadets from the unit took part in the foursome reel. The grace and perfect execution of all dances were greatly appreciated by the audience.

The final item, performed by 1 Independent Company, W.R.A.C., took the form of a pageant telling the story of the service of women with the Army leading up to the formation of the W.R.A.C. and its role of the present day. They entered one by one, in the spirit and manner of the age and generation depicted, each well timed to follow her own story narrated by Major Heaney, and to the accompaniment of appropriate music—Boadicea, with her spear and shield; the camp-follower wife with her washing board; F.A.N.Y. in the handsome scarlet tunic and blue riding skirt; Q.M.A.A.C. in 1914-18 khaki; A.T.S. and its many trades open to women in 1939-45; the W.R.A.C. in the dress worn in various theatres in which they may serve at the present time; and, finally, a W.R.A.C. officer in full ceremonial dress. They were given a great ovation.

A detachment from 1 Independent Company, W.R.A.C. in battle blouse and Hunting Stewart tartan skirts represented the W.R.A.C. at the Edinburgh Remembrance Day parade and service at the Stone of Remembrance, and personnel of 314 (Scottish Command) Battalion, W.R.A.C. (T.A.), took part in Remembrance Day services in Galashiels, where O.C., "A" Company, laid the wreath on the memorial, Musselburgh and Dunbar.

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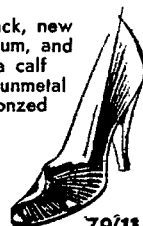
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A Chinese Wedding Feast

MAJOR P. RILEY, W.R.A.C.

NOT long ago the No. 1 Cook in the Sergeants' Mess at Singapore appeared in the camp with some invitations for members of the W.R.A.C. Company to attend the wedding feast of his eldest son. The invitations were magnificent in pink and gold with English and Chinese writing, pink being the traditional wedding colour for the Chinese.

The day arrived, and at 7 p.m. two officers and four warrant officers and sergeants made their way to the Choy Watt Restaurant. We found Cooky standing on the steps to greet us, resplendent in a light fawn suit of American pattern, looking exceedingly smart. We fought our way through the crowded room to a table where we found our place-names, and sat down with three Chinese gentlemen, one European male, and a Chinese lady. There were 200 guests in all, mostly male Chinese, with a sprinkling of Cooky's children and one or two women, the only Europeans being the seven at our table. As soon as we sat down bottles of beer appeared on the table, as we had warned them that we liked beer better than brandy. Normally the Chinese take tumblers full of neat brandy and refill your glass immediately you have taken a sip.

Then the food arrived—11 courses of the most delightful dishes beautifully cooked. We began with chicken and birds'-nest soup. The nest is a gelatinous mass of a spawnlike substance with little positive taste. Then sharksfin soup, which is considered a great luxury, being expensive, highly

nutritious and very tasty. Roast chicken was followed by chicken covered with black mushrooms, the chicken so well cooked that it comes apart and is easily eaten with chopsticks. It is the custom for everyone to dive into a central dish and take what they can get as fast as possible. Beginners with chopsticks have difficulty at first, but as it is not impolite to drop food all over the cloth a good deal reaches the mouth ultimately. We went on to chicken stuffed with prunes and other delicacies, roast suckling pig, fried prawns eaten preferably in one's fingers, and a large local fish complete with eyes and tail. The sweet courses, golden diamond rice and liches (a very pleasant local fruit), brought the meal to a close.

During the meal the bride and groom go to each table in turn with a bottle of drink held between them. They pour some into everyone's glass and you all rise and drink their health. When we had got over the difficulty of having brandy poured into our glasses on top of beer, we carried out this part of the ceremony successfully and with appropriate dignity. The groom wore a dinner-jacket and the bride a cheongsam—the Chinese national dress for women, made of brocade, tight fitting, with a slit up each side to the thighs.

The meal over, we gathered ourselves together and left the table, saying good-bye to all the family. Only numbers 1 to 9 were available, No. 10 apparently being a baby in arms. What an evening—what food—and how lucky we were to take part in such an occasion.

The Birth of Sherry

MAJOR R. M. GREEN, W.R.A.C.

IT is common knowledge that hock comes from the Rhine Valley, champagne from the Rheims district of France, port from Oporto in Portugal, Frascati from the place of its name in the Alban Hills surrounding Rome. So it is that "Vino de Jerez," sherry wine, comes from Jerez (pronounced Hereth) in Southern Spain.

No vines in the world are the object of such individual care, such special and meticulous attention, as those which grow in this area. This sea of vines, bordered by the Atlantic Ocean itself, grows on soil which is unique—"Sherry soil," called for centuries "albero." By its Latin derivation the name means "white," and this soil is worked and cultivated like no other. Sherry, in its uniqueness, also requires a special grape, the Palomino. This fruit is emerald green, translucent as though each grape enclosed a brightness within. The poets call it "Seed of the Sun," which will later burst forth in the wine itself. Twenty-four distinct and separate operations enter into the cultivation of the Jerez vine each year—two per

month and 43 from the time the new shoot is nurtured until the first small bunch appears. In none of these processes of cultivation is any machinery used. Everything is done by hand with spade and hoe, pruning-shears and knife, as though tending a garden. Many of the tasks performed are exclusive to Jerez.

The Palomino grape ripens in the first half of September, and then the vintage begins with a symbolic, almost sacramental ceremony, which takes place in the city. In 1956 the festival was dedicated to Great Britain and I was one of the many spectators who went from Gibraltar to see it. It is known as "La Fieste de la Vendimia" or "Vintage Festival." The scene of the ceremony is the Collegiate Church which stands high up from the road. It has a wide façade and is approached by an equally wide flight of stone steps. A stone edifice stands on the level ground at the foot of these steps, and leading down to the road on either side of it is a cobbled, angled slope bordered by a stone balustrade. For the purpose of the Vendimia a "lagar"

(a huge, shallow square trough of wood with the actual press in the middle of it) is erected on this edifice, and above it stands a frame like that of a canopy, decorated entirely with vine leaves. Metal presses which might cloud the musts or new wine are not used in Jerez—only those of wood, natural and eternal as the wine itself.

At 11 a.m., once Mass is over, the big doors of the church are opened and the priests emerge with their attendants. In front of these doors, high-backed chairs are arranged in a horse-shoe, and on each sits a Maid-of-Honour—those dressed in blue on one side and those dressed in red on the other. Behind each stands a member of the Guard, dressed in dark blue and wearing a sword, with the white plumes of his helmet gently flowing in the breeze. The ceremony has now begun. Grapes on trays are carried down to the press and offered to St. Gines, whose statue stands in front of the press, before being tipped in. The first to make her offering is the "Queen," dressed in green, followed by the Maids-of-Honour, in twos one blue and one red. Then girls dressed in typical regional costume mount the slope from the road on either side of the "lagar," with a tall basket of grapes gracefully poised on the shoulder, and add their offering to the rest.

The priest blesses the grapes and a selected team of four vineyard workers, dressed in white shirts and trousers, black cummerbund, black and white checked cap and the special boots, start treading the grapes. They push the pulp to one corner with long-handled wooden spades, and, by means of wire mesh, the juice alone runs down into a butt. This whole ceremony is so timed that exactly at midday the tap of the butt is turned, the church bells toll and thousands of carrier pigeons are released, each with its tiny rolled message of greeting in verse or prose, in salutation to more distant parts. So, in this poetic fashion, the rest of the world is informed that sherry wine has been born.

Forthcoming Events

March

- 6 Passing-Out Parade of Officer Cadets, Hindhead.
- 6 Hockey—Inter-Service, Army v. R.A.F., Aldershot.
- 7 Hockey—Inter-Service, R.N. v. Army, Portsmouth
- 8 Hockey—Inter-Service, R.A.F. v. R.N., Vine Lane, Uxbridge.
- 15-16 Netball—Inter-Unit Tournament, Aldershot.
- 22 Q.M.A.A.C. Reunion, Duke of York's H.Q.
- 23 A.G.M., W.R.A.C. Association, Duke of York's H.Q.
- 23 **GRAND REUNION, Seymour Hall.**
- 24 Chapel Service, Royal Hospital, Chelsea.
- 25 Netball—Inter-Service Championship, Aldershot.

April

- 26 A.G.M., Headquarter Mess, Duke of York's H.Q.
- 28 **Princess Royal's Day, Guildford.**



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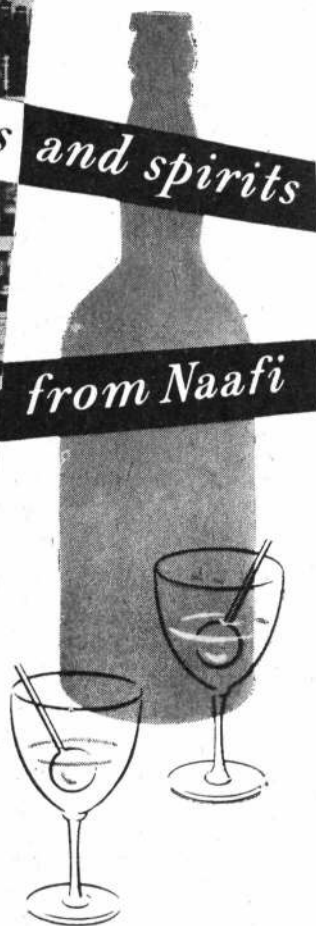


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W.R.A.C. Officer's Success in Engineering

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THE principal of Guildford County Technical College announced on July 25, 1956, that a special prize from the James Clayton Trust Fund of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers has been awarded to Capt. G. A. Sargent, W.R.A.C., attached R.E.M.E., as a result of her outstanding performance in the recent Higher National Certificate Examinations. The prize was presented publicly by Lord Brabazon of Tara on the occasion of the first College prize-giving on January 15, 1957.

Before enlisting in July, 1953, Capt. Sargent had taken a three-year course in mechanical engineering at Loughborough College of Engineering. She was commissioned in September, 1953. She continued to attend classes in her spare time, first at York Technical College and then at R.A.E. Technical College and Guildford County Technical College. In this way she was able to pass Section "A" of the A.M.I.Mech.E. examination in October, 1955, obtained endorsement to the Higher National Certificate in electro-technology in June, 1955, passed the Higher National Certificate in mechanical engineering with an endorsement in industrial administration in June, 1956, and distinctions in theory of machines and industrial administration.

Capt. Sargent has thus, subject to obtaining the requisite experience in workshops, qualified for Corporate Membership of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers and can now take her place as a fully qualified R.E.M.E. officer.

Retirement

LT.-COL. M. M. K. Marsh, who retired on January 12, 1957, had served in the A.T.S. and W.R.A.C. since 1940. Till 1942, she served in the U.K. at Regimental duty and as a Staff Captain in the A.T.S. branches of the War Office. Then, after a few months in A.A. Command, she was posted as G.S.O. 111 G.H.Q. M.E.L.F. and remained overseas almost without a break till 1948. She served in Egypt, Palestine and India, in Staff and Civil Affairs appointments and was A.D.A.T.S. A.L.F.S.E.A. from 1946 to 1948. Since 1949, she had been A.D.W.R.A.C. South West District, North West District, 5 A.A. Group and Scottish Command. Her deep interest in everything that concerned the Corps, and the active support and encouragement which she gave to the W.R.A.C. Association in her area, makes us hope that we shall not lose contact with her on her retirement, and though we are sorry to say goodbye to her as a serving officer, we welcome her as a valued addition to the ranks of the Old Comrades.

HONORARY COLONEL

Lt.-Gen. Sir Brian Kimmins, K.B.E., C.B., has been appointed Honorary Colonel of 327 (County of London) Battalion W.R.A.C. (T.A.).

DAIRY SHOW TRIUMPH

MRS. Lloyd-Jones (J. Comd. Pakenham) and Mrs. Greenwell (J. Comd. Pepper), who have been farming together for over four years near Lewes, Sussex, achieved an outstanding success at the National Dairy Show at Olympia, in October, 1956. Their Jersey cow, Polperro, won the Buckhurst Cup, the supreme award for milk production and butter fat over a period of three years, beating all other breeds of Jersey cows. All those who served with these officers at Old Dalby and Bicester, and all who remember them as General Secretaries of the Association (Mrs. Lloyd-Jones, 1947-50, Mrs. Greenwell, 1950-52), will rejoice to hear of their great success.



Courtesy: Farmers Weekly

Polperro wins the Buckhurst Cup

London Branch Dinner

OUR Dinner last year was held at the Victory Club on October 13, and our guests were Commandant Robertson, W.R.N.S., Dame Vera Laughton-Mathews and Miss McNeil. Miss E. Thompson was in the chair, and as she said, it was indeed a "Naval occasion" in that all our guests had connections with the W.R.N.S. Both Commandant Robertson and Dame Vera gave us most interesting speeches on the past and present activities of the W.R.N.S. Dame Helen Gwynne Vaughan, in spite of a very bad cold, was obviously in very good form. Miss M. Druitt had an extra reason for celebration as it was also her birthday, and she was presented with a small gift from the Branch. We were glad that Miss Ruth Wright was able to be with us on her first visit home from New Zealand since she emigrated there five years ago.

The evening was most enjoyable, despite the fact that we missed the excellent service we have had in past years at the Service Women's Club, and that we were unable to conclude the evening with our usual sing-song around the piano.

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

Birmingham. On October 23 we held our annual dinner at the Farcroft Hotel, Handsworth, at which we had the great pleasure of entertaining the Editor of *The Lioness*. The ex-Q.M.A.A.C. and A.T.S. were pleased to hear that their service exploits were not regarded by the new generation as merely "things of the past," but more as a tradition. We held a second jumble sale on November 17 to try to clear our remaining stock, but it was most unsuccessful and we gave the residue to the Salvation Army. We had a film show on November 19 which was spoilt by a jinx on the projector making the sound go haywire. The last show at the Theatre Royal—the Fol-de-Rols—was enjoyed by 15 members of the Branch. The theatre is to be demolished, so we shall lose one of our favourite places of entertainment.

Brighton. We regret to have to report that one of our members, Meg Body (Gay), Q.M.A.A.C., had a slight stroke which affected her left arm and leg, and broke her left thigh. However, she is now progressing satisfactorily in Southlands Hospital, Shoreham-by-Sea. She is very cheerful, and is grateful to all comrades who have visited her and written to her. Three members of this Branch attended the Armistice parade in London. Our annual bring-and-buy sale was held in November, and £5 11s. 9d. was raised. We have had two interesting lectures at our meetings by members of the W.V.S. in their "One-in-Five Scheme" designed to educate one in every five women regarding the ways in which they can help in the event of nuclear warfare.

Bristol. The whist drive held in October was organised by Mrs. Skidmore (Q.M.A.A.C.), who also very kindly gave the prizes. Our annual dinner took place on November 1, and was a great success. Nearly 40 members, including some ex-Service guests, assembled at the Legion House. We were sorry not to see our President, Mrs. Bernays, who was prevented from attending by the illness of her son, Mrs. Skidmore who had had a bad fall, and Mrs. Webb who was ill. Our guest of honour was Mrs. Hankey, known to many A.T.S. as Miss Victoria King. Our annual general meeting was held on December 6, and the present officers were returned en bloc for the ensuing year. A vote of thanks was given by Miss Clark (A.T.S.) and carried unanimously for the faithful service rendered to our Branch by Miss Keynton, Chairman, Miss Morgan, Treasurer, and, last but not least, our indefatigable Secretary, Miss Cottrell, without whose help our Branch would not exist. At the Festival of Remembrance held by the British Legion at the Colston Hall on November 10 and 12, several members took part and Miss W. Brooks (A.T.S.) carried our standard.

Edinburgh. Treasure table for our July meeting proved to be a most interesting evening, members bringing along some of their old and treasured possessions and briefly telling how they came into their possession. As many of our members are on

holiday in August, no programme was arranged, but a few members came along for an informal "get together." In September our programme was called "Holiday Reminiscences." Members had had varied holidays ranging from misty isles of Scotland to a safari in Africa. In October we had a most instructive demonstration on lamp-shade-making and handicrafts. A most successful hostess whist was held during October, the proceeds of which were given to the Women's United Services Club as our donation towards their sale of work. In our November meeting we were transported through the medium of coloured films to the beautiful mountains and fjords of Norway. Films of the Scottish Highlands and Skye, known so well to us, were also shown. A vote of thanks was proposed by Miss Innes to the representative of the Scottish Tourist Board. A well-attended annual general meeting was held in December and the year's business was duly dealt with. We entertained 49 children at our annual Christmas party. Once again the children had a very happy time and "Santa," with his well-filled sack, was a most welcome visitor.

Guernsey. Two ex-W.O.s had the idea of forming a Branch of the W.R.A.C. Association and so, together with two ex-officers, an inaugural meeting was arranged and held in June. Eleven ex-Service personnel and one serving W.O. formed the Branch and now we have 20 members. At each meeting there has been a visiting speaker and so far we have had three most interesting talks on D.P. camps in Germany, the work of an N.S.P.C.C. inspector, and gardening as a hobby. We have been very fortunate in obtaining the use of the W.V.S. Centre, and we have most enjoyable meetings.

Hartlepool. Seven members of this Branch attended and enjoyed the Northern Area reunion held at Harrogate on September 29. As train and coach services were of no use to us, we arrived and departed in grand style in a Rolls-Royce taxi all the way from West Hartlepool. In October the Branch was entertained at the local General Post Office where the transit of all letters and parcels was shown and explained to us. We held our annual general meeting in November, and the President, Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer were all returned to office. The new Committee formed consisted of Miss Rita Denham, Miss Mary Hulatt and Mrs. Betty Sawkhill. It has been arranged for gifts and good wishes to be taken by members to one ex-Q.M.A.A.C. and three ex-A.T.S. who are all more or less confined to the house through ill-health. A donation has been sent from the Branch to the West Hartlepool Mayor's Hungarian Relief Fund.

Ilford. Friends of ex-Sgt. Eileen Boxley, A.T.S., who was stationed at Leicester, will be pleased to hear that she was married on September 28 to Mr. Harry Groom. We wish them many years of happiness together. Unfortunately, this happy occasion was followed, early in November, by the death of Mrs. Boxley, who had been an invalid for some years. We extend our deep sympathy to

Eileen in her loss. A party of us attended the afternoon performance of the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall in November.

Liverpool. The last few months have been particularly busy for the Liverpool Branch. We started our autumn programme with a business meeting at the beginning of September when we had some lively discussion regarding our future activities. In the middle of the month there was the Western Area reunion in Liverpool. The attendance from other Branches was disappointing, but our regular members were there in force and we were very glad to see some of our old members who had not attended meetings for a little while. We were very pleased to welcome Dame Frances Coulshed, D.B.E., T.D., as our guest of honour, and the whole evening was indeed very enjoyable. If the volume of conversation was anything to go by, plenty of reminiscences were exchanged! In October the Liverpool Branch celebrated the tenth anniversary of its re-formation after the war. To mark the occasion we held an anniversary supper which took place in the British Legion H.Q. As our guest of honour and principal speaker we were privileged to have Mrs. N. Sexon, who was the Area Convenor in 1946 when the Branch was re-formed. We were also pleased to welcome Mrs. M. V. Lees and some of the members of the Chester Branch. Once again all present appeared to have a very good time. At the beginning of November we held our annual bring-and-buy sale and, as a result of the enthusiastic support of members and their friends, we can once again face the New Year with the necessary funds to continue our activities. Several of our members attended the service at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday, when a wreath was laid by the Chairman on behalf of the Branch. Our Branch Secretary attended the Area Committee meeting held in Manchester in November. Our last meeting for 1956 was at the beginning of December and this took the form of a whist drive. During the year we have been pleased to welcome several new members and we hope that this trend will continue.

London. We held another handicrafts competition in October, but entries were very few this time, and we have decided not to repeat this competition in 1957. We then had a most interesting talk by Dame Helen on the atom. The play reading on November 1 was cancelled, but, instead, Miss Martin and Miss Norman gave us another interesting talk illustrated with colour slides. We also held a bring and buy in November, and our annual general meeting took place on December 6. We were sorry to learn at this meeting that Mrs. Giles had decided to resign as Hon. Secretary, but we are happy to welcome Miss M. Cockburn in her place. Our activities for 1956 ended with a Christmas Party on December 20.

Manchester. The Annual Dinner of the Branch was held in November, and a pleasant evening was enjoyed. A special collection was made after the meal for the Hungarian Relief Fund and a cheque forwarded to the Lord Mayor of Manchester. Meetings continue to be held the last Tuesday in the month. Efforts have been made during the

last year to rectify the falling off of membership by sending letters to old members who have failed to renew their subscriptions, asking them to start once more taking an interest in the Association. We are still hopeful that results will follow.

Norfolk. The Hon. Secretary would like to thank all members for their co-operation again in the New Year Raffle, and for the many cards and letters received at Christmas. These included some from Kenya Colony and Canada, and one from Mrs. Liley, now travelling out to Addis Ababa to begin a new life there with her husband and baby daughter. We send them our best wishes.

Nottingham. The first meeting of the re-formed Nottingham Branch was held in the Drill Hall, Derby Road, Nottingham on Wednesday, November 21, 1956. Major L. M. Stephens, O.C. 307 (N.C.) Battalion W.R.A.C. (T.A.), was elected Chairman, and the duties of Secretary carried out by R.S.M. Mallard. We were pleased to welcome amongst our ex-Service comrades ex-S. Comd. Bottomley (ex-Signals Officer), Mrs. Veitch (ex-W.O.2 Signals) and the former secretary of the Branch, Mrs. Elderkin (formerly Capt. Burley). On December 12 a Christmas Social was held and we were joined by the members of 307 Battalion W.R.A.C. (T.A.) and Capt. Allen of the W.R.A.C. Contingent, Nottingham University O.T.C. The evening proved quite hectic and the captains of the various teams for the games must have found themselves quite stiff from their exercises, such was the enthusiasm over the "Parlour Games." The Branch meets every second Wednesday in the month and a cordial invitation is extended to any ex-Service members in the area to join the Branch.

Sheffield. Fourteen of our members attended the Northern Area Reunion at Harrogate on September 29, and had a most enjoyable evening. Ordinary meetings were held in October. In November we held our Jumble Sale, through which we all managed to survive and retain our own belongings, although one member nearly lost her apron to a persistent customer. The proceeds (£66) of our Christmas Fair in December were donated to the British Limbless ex-Servicemen's Association. This was an excellent effort for our small Branch, and thanks are due to all members and friends who helped in any way to make this such a success. The date for our Annual Dinner is February 21, 1957.

MARRIAGE

Lawless—Macdonald.—On October 23, 1956, at the United Church, St. Lambert, Quebec, Lang Lawless to Janet Cullen Macdonald (ex-W.O.2, Kuala Lumpur). Present address: 34 St. George Street, La Prairie, Box 236, Quebec.

BIRTH

Brown.—On August 18, 1956, to "Wally" (ex-C.S.M. Willoughby-Walton), wife of Major H. J. Brown, M.B.E., R.A., a second son, Peter Anthony. Present address: Plas Llanfaelog, Ty Croes, Anglesey.

W.R.A.C. Headquarter Mess

ON relinquishing command of the W.R.A.C. Depot, Lt.-Col. C. A. Cecil has kindly lent the Headquarter Mess a clock and six military prints which are now in the anteroom.

THE following additions to the Library have been received:

The History of the Royal Army Service Corps, 1939-1945, presented by Brigadier Dame Mary Railton, D.B.E., A.D.C.

Princess Mary, presented by Dame Frances Coulshed, D.B.E., T.D.

The Works of Shakespeare, presented by Col. M. D. Morgan, T.D., on her retirement.

AMONG the regimental trophies used at the Dinner given to Her Majesty The Queen and other members of the Royal Family at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, were the silver porringer presented by H.R.H. The Princess Royal to the W.R.A.C. Staff College, and the silver cup presented by Her Royal Highness to the Officers' Mess of the W.R.A.C. Depot.

THE Annual General Meeting of the W.R.A.C. Headquarter Mess will be held on Friday, April 26, 1957, in the Canteen of 327 (County of London) Battalion W.R.A.C. (T.A.), The Duke of York's Headquarters, Chelsea, S.W.3, at 2.30 p.m.

OFFICERS' POSTINGS (Up to February 28, 1957)

Major (T/Lt.-Col.) E. W. GIBSON, M.B.E., W.R.A.C. Depot.
Major (T/Lt.-Col.) M. S. F. MILLINGTON, O.B.E., T.D., A.D.W.R.A.C., Northern Command.
Major M. E. CRAWFORD, D.A.D.W.R.A.C., South West District.
Major V. I. FISHER, P.A. to C-in-C, B.A.O.R.
Major S. W. FOLLEY, 3rd Battalion, W.R.A.C.
Major H. GILDEA, 144 Provost Company, W.R.A.C., M.E.L.F.
Major J. GODOLPHIN, D.A.D.W.R.A.C., Salisbury Plain District.
Major S. A. E. HEANEY, M.B.E., T.D., D.A.P.M./W.R.A.C., 140 Provost Company, W.R.A.C.
Major A. A. LOCKE, Cambridge University Contingent, O.T.C. (W.R.A.C. Sub Unit).
Major M. H. NAIDDER, Scottish Command (M) Signal Squadron.
Major E. J. NOLAN, 14 Independent Company, W.R.A.C.
Major N. M. PYKE, S/Capt., War Office, A.G. 16.
Major E. M. H. SEEMAN DE BARCAYE, att. Medical Services and W.R.A.C. Records.
Major R. M. SHAW, S.O.P.T./W.R.A.C., Southern Command.
Major E. E. STERR, Regimental Pay Office (R.A.(C.A. & A.A.)) Leicester.
Major B. A. D. TANSLEY-WITT, D.A.D.W.R.A.C., Southern Command.
Major P. R. WYNDHAM-TATE, 9 Independent Company, W.R.A.C.
Capt. D. ATKINSON, S/Capt., War Office, Q(M) 2(c).
Capt. M. BURT, 9 Battalion, R.A.O.C., Donnington.
Capt. M. G. CAMPBELL, 316 (Scottish Command) Battalion, W.R.A.C., T.A.
Capt. E. M. CATHERALL, Movement Control, North West Ports.
Capt. G. E. DUNN, 2IC., D. and C. Trg. Centre, W.R.A.C.
Capt. M. E. D. GIBBS, S/Capt., War Office, P.A. 1.
Capt. J. HAWTREY-WILLIAMS, Adjutant, 303 Battalion, W.R.A.C., T.A.
Capt. H. MATTHEWS, S/Capt., "Q" (Mov.) G.H.Q., M.E.L.F.
Capt. M. L. MINKIN, Aldershot (M) Signals.
Capt. E. L. MORGAN, W.R.A.C. Training Centre.
Capt. D. E. ROTHWELL, S.O.P.T./W.R.A.C., Western Command.
Capt. J. TAPPIN, W.R.A.C. P.T. Wing, A.S.P.T.
Capt. M. F. TOWNSEND, S/Capt., "Q" (Maint.) H.Q., B.A.O.R.
Capt. A. G. VIVIAN, S/Capt., "Q" H.Q., Highland District.
Capt. O. WATT, S/Capt., War Office, A.G. 16.
Lt. (T/Capt.) J. BOWN, S/Capt., War Office, M.S. 2.
Lt. (T/Capt.) N. G. HARTLAND, War Office, M.P. 6 (Army Team of Lecturers).
Lt. (T/Capt.) I. J. B. G. M. LINDSAY, S/Capt., "Q" (Mov.), G.H.Q., F.A.R.E.L.F.
Lt. M. I. BAST, 2 Signal Squadron, Cyprus.

Obituary

MISS E. L. BROUGH

We regret to report the death of Miss Ella Louie Brough in Sydney, Australia, on July 28, 1956. Miss Brough served with the Q.M.A.A.C. in France in 1917 and emigrated to Australia soon after the end of the war.

C.S.M. E. DIGWEED

We learn with great sorrow of the death of ex-C.S.M. Elsie Digweed (known to all her many friends and colleagues as "Dig"), on October 17, 1956, after a very brief period of illness. C.S.M. Digweed enlisted in 1942 and served for a time with the R.A.O.C. at Corsham. She spent the greater part of her Service life with the Royal Armoured Corps at the Gunnery School, Lulworth Cove. With the reconstitution of the T.A. in 1948 "Dig" enlisted again and served for four years with "A" Company, 326 (City of London) Battalion W.R.A.C. (T.A.). She will be remembered by all who knew her for her ever ready willingness to help others, her cheerfulness in even the most difficult circumstances, her courage and endurance, and above all her unfailing loyalty.

MRS. A. E. HACKNEY

Miss N. Court, Secretary of the Maidstone Branch, writes:

It is with deep regret that I have to report the death of our President, Mrs. A. E. Hackney (née Harman). She was born at Harrietsham and had lived there and in Maidstone throughout her life. During the First World War she served in the Q.M.A.A.C. at Harfleur and Le Havre, and it was with her help and guidance that the Maidstone Branch of the W.R.A.C. Association was formed. She served for six years on the Committee of the Maidstone Branch of Kent County Association for the Blind. She was also keenly interested in the women's section of the British Legion and had been a member since its inception in 1928, serving first as Chairman and then as Secretary for several years. Four British Legion Standards were carried at her funeral. The Maidstone Branch of the W.R.A.C. Association was represented by two ex-Q.M.A.A.C., Mrs. Theobald (Chairman) and Mrs. Promhows. A poppy wreath was sent from members of the Branch and a spray from the four Q.M.A.A.C. We shall indeed miss Mrs. Hackney, but the memory of her courage despite indifferent health and her selfless life will ever be an inspiration to us.

Lt. M. H. BRAILEY, 14th Battalion, W.R.A.C., B.A.O.R.
Lt. E. A. BUTLER, 16 Independent Company, W.R.A.C.
Lt. J. A. FARRINGTON, Headquarters, A.L.F.N.E.
Lt. R. C. GILES, Hong Kong Signal Regiment, F.A.R.E.L.F.
Lt. P. M. HEATH, 328 T.S.B.O. Troop, Hong Kong.
Lt. P. A. HOPKINS, 140 Provost Company, W.R.A.C.
Lt. J. V. HOSKIN, W.R.A.C. School of Instruction.
Lt. E. M. MINEROY, 12th Battalion, W.R.A.C.
Lt. D. F. PROCTOR, W.R.A.C. School of Instruction.
Lt. J. M. F. S. TAIT, W.R.A.C. P.T. Wing, A.S.P.T.
Lt. R. M. TURNBULL, 27 Independent Company, W.R.A.C.
2/Lt. L. J. EDLIN, W.R.A.C. Training Centre.
2/Lt. J. D. GORDON, W.R.A.C. Training Centre.
2/Lt. B. M. HICKEY, G.H.Q. Signal Regiment, Singapore



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SPORT

Colwall Cricket Week

THANKS to the calculated and enthusiastic chatter of our Army players during the August Cricket Week at Colwall, Service life was well advertised to many potential recruits among their fellow players. At least one of these civilian players has since applied to enlist, and no doubt there will be others from among the 150 Colwall cricketers.

There is no doubt that the experiment of sending the Army Team to the Colwall Cricket Week was a marked success. Not only did it impress the civilian players to find that the Army really does encourage a high standard of games, but it also gave our players the opportunity to learn a great deal and to practise what they learnt in play at a much higher standard than is normally possible in unit matches.

We were all accommodated in a hotel in Malvern and allocated to our new teams for the "Week." Each team was captained by one of the experienced players of the England XI or Captains of the County teams. Our people reunited, however, for the customary concert which the inhabitants of the little Worcestershire village have come to expect from the annual invasion of women cricketers. We were asked to open the show, so we gave the audience a picture of the lighter side of Service life, which was very well received.

In spite of the summer's bad weather record, we were lucky in having six clear days' cricket with only occasional stops for intermittent showers. We finally drew stumps well satisfied with a thoroughly worthwhile week from every point of view, and sincerely appreciative of the excellent arrangements made by the officials of the Women's Cricket Association.

Fencing

CPL. P.T.I. E. Thomas has qualified as a Fencing Leader, and has obtained a certificate from the British National Fencing Association. Cpl. Thomas is the first member of the W.R.A.C. to obtain this certificate.

Netball

THE Inter-Command Netball Tournament was held in the Wand Tetley Gymnasium, Army School of Physical Training, Aldershot, on Friday and Saturday, December 7 and 8, 1956. All Commands in the U.K. and B.A.O.R. were represented and there was a good attendance of supporters. The standard of play has markedly improved during the last few seasons (though the shooting continues to be a general weakness), and the American Tournament was played off in a series of very exciting matches. The result was a win for Southern Command with ten points, Eastern Command coming second with eight points. The Cup was presented by Brigadier Dame Mary Railton, D.B.E., A.D.C., D.W.R.A.C.

Farewell to Shrivenham

6 Independent Company, W.R.A.C.

THE process of drifting into suspended animation (always a depressing one) has been enlivened by a series of social events. In September the junior N.C.O.s arranged a very successful theatre and supper party in Oxford and, in October, on Hallo-we'en Night, we held a Company dance at which fancy dress was optional. A lot of hard work went into arranging the decorations and preparing an excellent buffet supper. The Rev. H. G. Tyler and Mrs. Hodder (wife of R.S.M. Hodder of the College) kindly judged the dresses and, after much deep thought, awarded prizes to Cpl. Whitworth ("Teddy Boy"), Pte. Hilliard ("Scarecrow"), Cpl. Taylor ("Peace in Our Time"—original and ironically topical) and Sgt. Fuller, Royal Berks ("Tramp"—the only man brave enough to appear in fancy dress). Early in November the senior ranks held a dinner in Zebra Camp, which they organised extremely well and which proved to be a very happy occasion.

The Company's final parade with the Royal Military College of Science took place on Armistice Sunday in brilliant weather. Only a comparatively small number of women was available to take part, but they made up in quality what they lacked in quantity. It is pleasant to hear from both staff and students of the College that we shall be greatly missed, and for our own part we shall be sorry to go. The A.T.S./W.R.A.C. have had connections with the College since the outbreak of war when, in 1939, they moved from Woolwich to Lydd camp in Kent.

London Gazette

HONOURS AND AWARDS

New Year Honours:

B.E.M.
Sgt. B. Pearson.
T.D.: Capt. J. Hayr.

PROMOTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

REGULAR ARMY

Colonel: S. M. Crawley.
Lieutenant-Colonel: D. S. Gray
Major: E. J. Bowles, B. M. W. Bass, C. M. Harris, V. I. Fisher.
Captain: V. N. A. Fawcett-Barry.
Lieutenant: D. T. Crane, P. M. Farwell, P. M. Heath, R. C. Giles.
Second-Lieutenant: J. L. Joaquim, A. M. M. Clissett, P. Blakeley,
D. V. Palmer, A. Hayllar.

Short Service Commissions

Major: P. Wyndham-Tate, J. L. Beer, E. B. Steer.
Captain: E. B. Foster.
Lieutenant: M. M. Snowden, H. I. Nelson, J. Hands.

RETIREMENTS, ETC.

REGULAR ARMY

Retirements on retired pay: Col. M. D. Morgan, T.D.
Resignations: Major P. E. Garrard; Capt. H. T. Mackaness (Skinner); Lts. M. L. M. Bagwell Purefoy (Watts), A. E. Millington (Brennan); 2/Lt. B. M. Barker (Bowen).

Short Service Commissions

Relinquishment on completion of service: Major D. E. Adams; Capt. M. Leetham.
Relegation to R.O.: Capt. I. G. Bilham, M. H. Plant.
Resignations: Lts. A. M. Beale, E. A. Evans, A. G. Gould (Middleton), P. R. White (Venner).

PERSONAL

(Please note that items for this column, answers to Box Nos., etc., should in future be sent to the Secretary of the W.R.A.C. Association and not to the Editor. For charges see Contents page.)

For Sale.—Service dress and khaki greatcoat. Height 5 ft. 3 in., bust 32 in., waist 27 in., hips 38 in. Both in good condition and hardly worn. Please apply to Mrs. Buckland, Church Crookham, Hants.

For Sale.—Khaki service dress, good condition. Height 5 ft., bust 34 in., hips 35 in. £5. Capt. E. N. Wood, 12 West Drive, Upton, Wirral.

For Sale. Officer's No. 1 Dress jacket and skirt (Weatherill's). Height 5 ft. 5½ in., bust 36 in., waist 25 in., hips 39 in. Price £19. Also green greatcoat, £14. Box No. 1/57.

For Sale.—Officer's No. 1 Dress tunic and skirt (by Weatherill). Height 5 ft. 5 in., bust 36 in., waist 26-27 in., hips 38 in. No. 1 Dress cap, size 6½. Green shirts, collars (size 13½), black shoes (size 4½), green satchel, green tie. £12 the lot or offers for separate items. Box No. 2/57.

Ex-A.T.S./W.R.A.C. N.C.O.s required as Recruiting Sergeants at Nottingham and Northampton. Three-year engagement. Apply W.R.A.C. Recruiting Officer, 21 Trinity Square, Nottingham.

The Service Women's Club, 52 Lower Sloane Street, 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.

Come and spend your holiday at Trelawne, Lancaster Gardens, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex. 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.

By the glorious Thames and Cliveden Woods. Holidays at the Court Hotel, Maidenhead (Tel. 2400). From 4½ gns. bed/breakfast, 6 gns. full board. London 45 minutes.

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 CAL 4952.

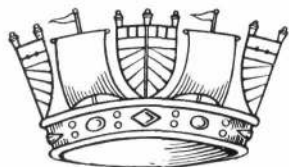
AMENDMENTS TO THE LIST OF BRANCH SECRETARIES

London. Miss M. Cockburn, 70 Highbury Gardens, Ilford, Essex.
Maidstone. Miss N. Court, 32 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone, Kent.
Reading. W.O.2 V. E. Kensett, Inniscarra, 53 Bath Road, Reading.

Southampton. Miss G. O. Davies, 21 High View Way, Bitterne Park, Southampton.

3 Bn. W.R.A.C. S/Sgt. S. Dudley, Hooge Lines, Catterick Camp, Yorkshire.

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