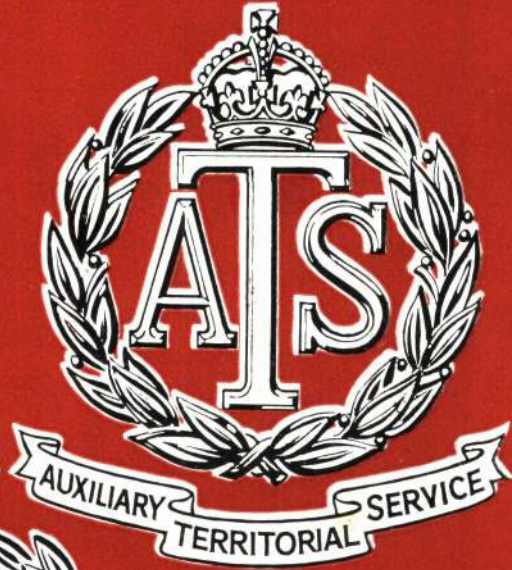


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WRAC Association Address Book

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(Up to October 31, 1961)

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Major B. ROSENBAUM, War Office (PR 2(b)).
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Photo by W. Dennett

W.R.A.C. Window in Guildford Cathedral



THE LIONESS

Vol. XXXIV

November 1961

No. 4

Christmas Message from our President

H.R.H. THE PRINCESS ROYAL

In these unsettled and anxious days the spirit of service and comradeship fostered by the Association binds us closer together. May the coming year bring happiness, peace and prosperity to all our members.

MARY

Editorial

THE very generous gift of a complete set of the Q.M.A.A.C. Old Comrades Association Gazettes has given us many happy and interesting hours, and we hope that our readers will enjoy the short extracts that we plan to publish from time to time. The location of the Corps H.Q. brings back the past very vividly to the Editor, for it was here that she took her first real plunge into Army life, on one of the officer courses run by Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan during the autumn of 1938. Shades of the Grenadier Guards drill instructor who taught us to form fours and echoes of his despairing "Ladies, please . . ." as we stumbled about in high-heeled shoes, still linger just round the corner in the November dusk. *The Times* may not have reported our take-over bid in 1961, but it certainly saved our London clothes from the dust of the drill hall floor when Miss Kindersley taught us to relax and make our minds "smooth as a billiards ball" during those P.T. classes 23 years ago.

STILL living nostalgically in the past, we wonder how many of our readers began their Army life at Queen's, later Queen Elizabeth camp, Guildford. We wish the Depot and Training Centre a happy and successful stay at Hobbs Barracks, Lingfield. Building a new home is a thrilling experience for any housewife, and we can all look forward with the keenest interest to the day when the Corps will take possession of a permanent barracks planned and built with its own particular requirements in mind. And so, with our thoughts turned hopefully to the future, we wish all our readers a very happy Christmas and good fortune in the coming year.

Link with Australia

THE recent appointment of Lord de L'Isle and Dudley as Governor of Australia is of particular interest, as many will remember that his wife served in the A.T.S. Lady de L'Isle and Dudley (Jacqueline Vereker) joined 10th City of London Company in November 1938, her attestation paper being witnessed by her father, Lord Gort. She was posted to the War Office in 1939, first on the personal staff of the Director A.T.S., Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan, and later as A.D.A.T.S., A.G. 15. She married in 1940 and relinquished her commission the following year owing to the birth of her first baby. In spite of family ties, she did not give up all her associations with the Service, as she became an active member of the Council of the Duchess of Northumberland's A.T.S. Comforts Fund.

News from New Zealand

THE New Zealand Women's Royal Army Corps has formed an Association and a very successful inaugural meeting was held in Wellington on April 24, the eve of Anzac Day, and also the eve of our own Princess Royal's Day. A message of congratulations and good wishes was sent to their newly elected President, Major M. J. Hardcastle, on behalf of all members of the W.R.A.C. Association.

W.R.A.C. Museum

Can any member help us to trace a copy of the Army List for January 1939 for the Corps Museum? This edition contains the first list of A.T.S. officers and would be of great historical interest.

Bishop Dedicates W.R.A.C. Window

THE lovely new Cathedral Church of the Holy Spirit on Stag Hill was bathed in sunshine on the afternoon of Saturday, September 2, when the Bishop of Guildford, the Right Rev. G. E. Rein-dorp, dedicated a window presented to the Cathedral by the Women's Royal Army Corps. The coloured glass panels of the window were designed and executed by Miss Moira Forsyth, A.R.C.A., M.G.P., F.I.A.L. One of the main panels shows the Corps badge, and the second the collar badge surrounded by the motto: "Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re." In the two smaller panels below an English translation of the motto encircles the Princess Royal's cypher used on the Corps buttons.

Music for the service was provided by the W.R.A.C. Staff Band under its Director of Music, Major J. B. MacDowall, M.B.E., A.R.A.M. The large congregation included the Mayor and Mayoress of Guildford, serving and ex-service members of the Association with their friends, and a contingent of new recruits who had joined the Corps only about 36 hours before.

The Bishop, in an inspiring address based on the theme that the present is merely a moving line joining the past and the future, said that when the W.R.A.C. Depot went to Lingfield it would leave behind a memorial not only in this beautiful window but in the part played by the Corps in the life and work of the community. During the singing of the last hymn a collection was taken in aid of the Cathedral and the W.R.A.C. Benevolent Fund, and realised £43 17s. 8d.

After the service Brigadier Dame Mary Railton, D.B.E., Deputy Controller Commandant, unveiled a statue of Faith, which stands on the south wall outside the window. This statue was another gift from the Corps, who collected £2,537 for the building fund, and is proud to have taken even a small part in the building of this great cathedral in whose life and worship we are privileged to share.

UNIT NEWS

12 BATTALION

ON Saturday, August 26, 1961, 12 Battalion, W.R.A.C. was "At Home" to families and friends of all ranks serving in the unit. About 250 visitors came from all parts of the country, including places as far away as Aberdeen, Bristol and Pontypridd. The afternoon opened at 1400 hours and there was a full programme of races with sideshows for those who were not athletic. The proceeds from the sideshows, which included a bran tub and a treasure hunt, went to the W.R.A.C. Benevolent Fund. The sports, which were hotly contested between the Companies, included an officers' race on flower pots and a wheelbarrow

race for parents. The winners were presented with their prizes by Col. L. E. Baldwin, O.B.E. There was also a splendid selection of booby prizes. After tea, which was served in the Dining Hall and prepared by the Battalion cooks, a display of drill was given by a squad of volunteers from "A" and "B" Companies. This was most impressive and greatly appreciated by all the spectators. The Band of the Queen's Royal Irish Hussars provided light music throughout the afternoon and played for the drill display. They brought the proceedings to a close by Beating Tattoo at the end of a most successful and enjoyable afternoon.

In September, Kingston Gate camp was for three days turned into a film set for a B.B.C. TV programme. The film unit came down in a fleet of cars and vans to take the outside shots of a serial starting in October. Road blocks were set up and "wounded" men were seen running through the woods. One member of 12 Battalion W.R.A.C., going about her duty, suddenly found she was in the middle of a scene. She was going to the help of someone who "looked really badly hurt," when she heard an angry voice shout "cut" and the "hurt" man was suddenly cured. No. 12 Battalion are naturally taking a personal interest in the serial, and are eagerly waiting to see what their Army home looks like on television.

17 INDEPENDENT COMPANY

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS ROYAL visited 17 Independent Company, W.R.A.C., at Shoeburyness on May 29, 1961. The sun was shining brightly when Her Royal Highness arrived at Horseshoe Barracks. Accompanied by D.D.W.R.A.C., Col. J. E. R. Rivett-Drake, M.B.E., the O.C., Major W. G. Merrells, and the C.S.M., W.O.2 E. A. Germain, she inspected the W.R.A.C. quarters and took a special interest in the new foam rubber mattresses, the girls' toy animals and personal ornaments, etc., which brighten the barrack rooms, and commented on the attractive floral arrangements. In the Dining Hall, H.R.H. talked to the Messing Officer, Lt. D. E. C. Dean, R.A., Sgt. R. G. Smith, A.C.C., and civilian members of the staff. The Princess Royal had luncheon in the Officers' Mess with Capt. G. E. Hurry, R.N., Superintendent Proof and Experimental Establishment, and other officers. After luncheon, escorted by a Landrover and N.C.O.s from 140 Provost Company, W.R.A.C., she went to the Proof and Experimental Establishment, New Ranges, to see experimental assistants (gunnery) at work. Here she met trials officers, W.O.2 C. Ainley, W.R.A.C., and other members of the Company. In spite of the heavy rain which fell during the afternoon, H.R.H. toured the ranges and saw three rounds fired at Churchend battery. After this, H.R.H. had tea with the superintendent's wife, Mrs. Hurry, and other officers' wives. Everyone hopes that the Princess Royal will visit Shoeburyness again and that next time the sun will shine for her all the time.



Courtesy: Surrey Comet

12 Battalion W.R.A.C. "At Home"

News from T.A. and A.E.R.



*Photo by courtesy of
Dumfries and Galloway News*

**Capt. Brown
with members of the
W.R.A.C. (T.A.) in
Dumfries.**

98 (BORDER COUNTIES) COMPANY, W.R.A.C. (T.A.)

CAPT. M. BROWN, who has retired from the W.R.A.C. (T.A.) after serving with the Dumfries Company since 1949, was entertained to dinner in the Cairndale Hotel and presented with a W.R.A.C. brooch in gold and enamel by S/Sgt. G. Gibson on behalf of the unit. Before joining the W.R.A.C. (T.A.), Capt. Brown served with the A.T.S. from 1938 to 1945. Her retirement will be a great loss to the Territorial Army, but she will be able to keep in touch with the Corps, as she is a staunch supporter of the Association and Chairman of the Dumfries Branch, which includes many of her former unit among its members.

52 (L) DIVISION/DISTRICT COLUMN, R.A.S.C. (T.A.)

DURING the last fortnight of June, 102 (Glasgow and S. Lancs) Company, W.R.A.C. (T.A.), and 103 (N. Lancs) Company, W.R.A.C. (T.A.), attended annual camp at Buddon, Carnoustie, with their affiliated R.A.S.C. (T.A.) Companies as part of 52 (L) Division/District Column, R.A.S.C. (T.A.). As the emphasis was on driving instruction a record number of girls passed their driving tests at camp and, with their R.A.S.C. Companies, the W.R.A.C. took part in initiative map-reading schemes involving much footslogging across country. The training highlight was the column three-day exercise in which the W.R.A.C. Companies played an important and active part. To supply 528 Company, R.A.S.C. (Infantry Brigade Transport) (T.A.), operating in the Elgin area, supply and POL points were set up in the Dinnet area of Deeside by 577 Company R.A.S.C. (M.T.) (T.A.) and supplies and POL were ferried from Buddon to Dinnet locations daily by 102 (Glasgow and S. Lancs) Company, W.R.A.C. (T.A.). The W.R.A.C. drivers, including the advanced learners, with laden vehicles, confidently tackled the 150-miles round trip over the scenic Cairn-o'-Mount road with its steep and twisting gradients. Meanwhile, 909 Company (Motor Ambulance), R.A.S.C. (T.A.), were operating in the Banchory area, ably supported by 103 (N. Lancs) Company, W.R.A.C. (T.A.), who daily evacuated battle casualties 80 miles back to base at Buddon. In two instances the casualties were genuine, including one sufferer from acute toothache. Sections of W.R.A.C. were called out at all hours. Some had only time for a meal and a few hours' sleep before setting off once more. Others had a rude awakening at 0400 hours to be told their section had received orders to move out again. On the second Sunday, C.R.A.S.C. held his inspection, followed by a church service and march past. Camp ended on a recreational and social note with the Column Sports and a dance in the evening of the last day. Among the many visitors to the camp were A.D.W.R.A.C. Scottish Command, Lt.-Col. P. Lipscomb, W.R.A.C., and C.W.R.A.C. 52 (L) Division/District, Major J. S. M. McVean, W.R.A.C. (T.A.).

72 MOVEMENT CONTROL REGIMENT, R.E.

IN 1955 authority was given for some of the appointments in this Regiment to be filled by W.R.A.C. instead of men, and it thus had the distinction of being the only unit in which W.R.A.C. could serve in the Army Emergency Reserve. We had a very successful camp this year at Longmoor, which is in very pleasant country, approximately halfway between Aldershot and the South Coast. As Longmoor is also the H.Q. of the transportation branch of the Royal Engineers, all the facilities of a well-established station were available, including good hatted accommodation instead of tents. The work to be done divides itself into purely military training and technical training. The latter consists of learning how to solve all the problems in connection with military movement, whether it be the movement of a force by air to one of the trouble spots or the routine movement of a few men by rail in the U.K. or the sea passage of guns, tanks or stores to some distant part. In addition to lectures, visits are made to docks and airfields to study the problem on the ground. Visits have been made to London Airport, Southampton Docks and the R.A.F. Transport Command Station at Abingdon. At all of these the unit is not only given a welcome and the know-how but gets an opportunity to meet the people behind the job.

To a layman the work of Movement Control can probably be described as working out on paper how best to fit into the ship, aircraft or train whatever has to be moved, seeing the loading is done and solving any snags which arise. It will be appreciated that loading an aircraft, for example, with stores of differing weights and sizes requires much care and thought if the balance of the plane is to be right even when flying in bumpy conditions. After loading, records of what has been despatched must be kept and advice sent to the receiving Movement Control. Thus it will be seen that the work appeals to those with clerical training, although the unit also needs drivers, cooks and regimental duty women. The military training this year included shooting both on the miniature and open ranges, as a result of which several very useful shots were found. A visit was made to the Army M.T. School at Bordon, Hants, who arranged an exhibition of all the latest types of vehicles now coming into service, as well as a demonstration of driving under conditions likely to be met with on active service. During the 15-day camp, which is the only training done each year, all is by no means work; trips are made to local towns such as Southampton and Portsmouth, and dances are also held in the camp.

The War Office has now given authority for another Movement Control Regiment in the A.E.R. to become a mixed unit, so a number of new vacancies exist. If you are interested, you can obtain full details, without any obligation, on application to Lt.-Col. D. F. Densham-Booth, M.B.E., R.E., H.Q. A.E.R., R.E. (Transportation and Movement Control), Longmoor Camp, Liss, Hants.



Photograph by courtesy of Fox Photos Ltd.

Sappers teaching W.R.A.C. (A.E.R.) to shoot on the range at Longmoor.

42 (LANCS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (T.A.)

SINCE camp, training has been partially suspended, because of the holiday season. There have, however, been two big events. On September 17, Regimental Day was held in the grounds of the R.A.P.C. (Officers' Accounts) H.Q. at Ashton-under-Lyne. Over a period of years many silver trophies have been presented to the Regiment and are competed for annually. Families attend; pony rides, ice cream bars and races, etc., are arranged for the children. This year it was a wonderful sunny day and everyone enjoyed themselves. We now look forward to next year. On Saturday, September 23, the C.O. (Lt.-Col. I. W. Herbert, T.D., Royal Signals, T.A.) was dined out in the Officers' Mess at the end of his tour as Commanding Officer. Other guests included Major-General C. I. H. Dunbar, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O. (G.O.C. 42 (L) Division T.A., N.W. District), the C.S.O. Western Command, the Chairman of Cheshire T. & A.F.A., as well as the Secretaries of the Cheshire and West Lancs Associations. Our Honorary Colonel also attended the dinner. In all, over 60 officers and guests were present. Dinner was cooked and served by W.R.A.C. members of the Regiment, who produced an excellent meal and were congratulated on their efforts by everyone present.

SPORT

Cricket

IN the Inter-Service Championships this year the Navy beat the W.R.A.F. to win the cup outright for the first time since 1951. The results of the other Inter-Service matches were:

Army v. Navy. Army 94, Navy 98 for 2. Navy won by 8 wickets.

Army v. W.R.A.F. Army 170, W.R.A.F. 171 for 4. W.R.A.F. won by 6 wickets.

The Army team was more successful in its other matches which showed some good play and exciting finishes. In the annual fixture against the Civil Service, the Army won by 2 runs, Capt. MacLagan taking 8 wickets for 25. In a match against Miss Egan's XI, which resulted in a draw, W.O.2 Kitchen scored 53 runs. Their final match was played against Yorkshire at Oxford in glorious sunshine. The Army went in first and declared at 102 for 8. Yorkshire batted forcefully and scored the winning run after a loss of 6 wickets, and with only 11 minutes to spare.

Memories of a Metropolitan Mayor

K. ACLAND

TWELVE years ago, when I was first elected to the Chelsea Borough Council, my nephews and nieces remarked: "What fun we'll have when you are Mayor. Who will you have as your Mayoress?" I replied: "I shall never be Mayor of Chelsea." However, it did happen, and I was fortunate enough to get my niece from Ireland to become one of the best and most popular Mayoresses any Metropolitan Borough has ever possessed. Once when a V.I.P. congratulated me on my election to office, I somewhat flippantly responded: "I always think there is something comic about a Mayor, don't you?" The answer came as quick as lightning: "Nothing at all comic about the office of Mayor—but some Mayors are very."

The civic service takes place on the Sunday after the election. The Mayor attends in robe, chain and badge, attended by the Mace Bearer and accompanied by the Aldermen and Councillors. Shortly afterwards I took the oath as a J.P. and swore "to be faithful and bear true allegiance to our Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth the Second in the office of Justice of the Peace and to do right to all manner of People after the Laws and Usages of this realm without fear, favour, affection or ill will."

The Mayor, the first citizen of the borough, takes precedence of everyone except royalty. It is the honour and duty of the Mayor to receive any member of the Royal Family who comes officially into the borough, and in Chelsea we were very fortunate in meeting H.M. The Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh, Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother, Princess Margaret with Mr. Armstrong-Jones, the Princess Royal, the Duchess of Kent and Princess Alexandra at their visits to the glorious Chelsea Flower Show and on many other occasions.

As Mayor I joined the T.A. Association and much enjoyed the meetings I attended. We had two very happy Borough Council meetings conferring civic honours on three T.A. Regiments who were celebrating their centenaries. Once I had the honour of taking the salute on the steps of the Town Hall as one of the three Regiments marched through Chelsea. The greatest thrill of all was dining, not on a ladies' night, in the R.A. Mess at Woolwich, when the Master Gunner (at that time General Sir Cameron Nicholson, Governor of the Royal Hospital) received a model silver gun presented to the Mess by one of the T.A. units stationed at the Duke of York's H.Q. Two W.R.A.C. lieutenant-colonels supported me! Another memorable occasion was being present at the installation of Field-Marshal Lord Alexander as Constable of the Tower of London.

It was a great joy that we had such happy relations with the Governor and everyone at the Royal Hospital. We went to many official happenings, the outstanding occasion being the luncheon given to General de Gaulle. We attended two celebrations of Founders Day when the Pensioners

were inspected, the first year by Field-Marshal Lord Montgomery, and the second by the C.I.G.S. My last public duty was accepting on behalf of the Council from the Governor a beautiful oak panel salvaged from the bombed part of the Royal Hospital, to be used in the Town Hall for the inscription of the names of the Mayors of Chelsea.

The Mayor is the official Returning Officer at Parliamentary Elections (the Town Clerk doing the detailed work) and I had the pleasure of announcing the local result at the General Election, and of visiting each of the polling booths, both at the Parliamentary and L.C.C. Elections, accompanied by the Town Clerk. The Mayor also takes the chair at all Council meetings. In Chelsea we have 36 Councillors and 6 Aldermen and meet once a month at 6 p.m. (except in August and September). The Mayor and Deputy Mayor are ex-officio members of all committees and sub-committees. At the Town Hall there is a lot of correspondence to be dealt with, many interviews, tenders to be opened and documents to be sealed. Besides all this, many societies, such as the Family Welfare Association, the R.N.L.B.I., S.S.A.F.A. and the British Legion, like the Mayor either to take the chair or to attend their annual meetings and to patronise their bazaars and coffee mornings.

The Mayoress and I went to many meetings at the Mansion House, and the kindness of the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress was memorable. We attended the banquet at Guildhall in honour of Prince Philip, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester and Princess Alexandra on their return from their world tours, and I was twice bidden to the Mansion House with my 27 Metropolitan colleagues to dine to meet the Common Council. I need hardly add that innumerable embassy and other cocktail parties fell to our lot.

We officially attended different church services, including the installation of the Dean of Westminster in Westminster Abbey, and four special services in St. Paul's Cathedral. I went to Chelsea churches of all denominations, and the outstanding remembrance of my time in office is of the wonderful friendship which greeted us everywhere.

The Mayor is expected to make appeals for charity. We raised £12,800 for World Refugee Year and the Mayoress and I flew to Germany to see the camp which Chelsea cleared. For the Chelsea Old People's Welfare £1,400 was subscribed, and £800 sent to the Jubilee Trust Appeal. It was a great privilege to get to know some of the wonderfully good work that goes on without ceasing in the Borough by the British Red Cross, St. John Ambulance, W.V.S., Old People's Welfare Committee, the Citizens Advice Bureau and other voluntary organisations, as well as by the officials of the Council. This work is lovingly done without any recognition except the gratitude of those who benefit from it, and this will always be the happiest recollection of two happy years.



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Visit to New Zealand

W.O.1 K. M. HOLMES

WHEN I first heard of my posting to Singapore in August 1959, I realised it would be a good opportunity to try to visit my brother in New Zealand. After a lot of spade work, I was extremely fortunate in being allotted an indulgence passage on the V.I.P. Hastings taking the C.-in-C. F.E.A.F. to New Zealand on November 14, 1960. It was a very pleasant and comfortable journey, staying overnight at Darwin and Richmond. At Richmond I was transferred to a B.O.A.C. Comet as that was flying direct to Wellington where I wished to visit the N.Z. W.R.A.C. On arrival at Wellington on November 16, 1960, I had the pleasure of meeting the Director of the New Zealand W.R.A.C., Major L. M. Knights, at Army H.Q. As two N.C.O.s were to be posted to Singapore later in the year, it was interesting to discuss the various differences in dress and pay, etc. Also at the H.Q. I met the Matron, R.N.Z.N.C., and Miss V. Fox (ex-S/Sgt., 140 Provost Company) who is a public servant in Royal Engineers Branch. I stayed at "Fort Dorset" for the night and met the C.S.M., Sgt. Joan Hay (ex-W.R.A.C.) and Sgt. Hobbs, R.N.Z.N.C., and Lt. Walker who told me that W.O.2 Rose Murphy was "laid on" to show me around Wellington the next day. I was very pleased at this as I knew Rose Murphy when she was serving in 12 Battalion and stationed at Sloane Court. I knew she had joined the N.Z. W.R.A.C., but had no idea I would meet her. We went on a scenic tour of Wellington the next day and it was a lovely sight. I realised why it is called "Windy Wellington" as I was in my beige linen uniform and felt very cold, and everyone else was in No. 1 dress or B.D.

I spent the next two nights at Trenthan where W.O.2 Murphy is stationed and shares a very nice house with Anne Faulkner (ex-Sgt. 140 Provost Company and now a public servant). I was shown around the military camp, saw the women's quarters and met some of the Maori girls who are employed as clerks, T.P.O.s and drivers. They were all most intrigued with my uniform, especially No. 3 dress. I was entertained in both the Fort Dorset and Trenthan Sergeants' Mess, and must confess there appeared to be more British people than Kiwis! Living next door to W.O.2 Murphy is Mrs. Beryl Burrows (née Ward) who was a bat-woman at Larkhill and Aldershot, and is now the proud mother of two bonny girls. I enjoyed meeting the officers and women of N.Z. W.R.A.C. very much indeed and I am very grateful to Major Kingston for enabling me to do so.

I left Wellington at 0700 hours on Saturday, November 19, 1960, and travelled to Auckland by Land Liner, which is a super coach and very comfortable. The driver gave a running commentary on places of interest as we passed through. In this way I saw much more of the lovely countryside than by air. We stopped once for lunch. Otherwise, drinks and snacks were served on the coach. I arrived at Auckland at 2130 hours, prompt on

time after a journey of 450 miles. My brother was there to meet me and it was a very happy reunion after 14 years absence. We then set off to drive to Kalkone, a distance of 160 miles. I did not see much on the last part of the journey as it was dark and I was very tired, but the magnificent Harbour Bridge at Auckland was a sight worth seeing.

I was most impressed with the climate, scenery and the friendly hospitable people of New Zealand. I would have liked to visit South Island, but did not have the time and I gather from all the people who live there that it is much better than North Island. The Bay of Islands is very lovely and is famous throughout the world for its big-game fishing. There are 365 islands, one for each day of the year. The beaches at Paihia are also lovely but the road leading to them is pretty bad. I visited Waitangi, a landmark of historical importance, where the Treaty of Waitangi was signed over 120 years ago. My time was far too short in New Zealand and all too soon I was on my way back. I returned on an R.A.F. Hastings on its way back from Christmas Island. Making my own way to Whenuipi, the R.N.Z.A.F. station, I had intentions of having a look around Auckland, but the R.N.Z.A.F. movements staff had other ideas and I was whisked away to the Sergeants' Mess and given a room for the night. We set off at 0800 hours the next day and had a pleasant uneventful journey back. It was a wonderful experience and it still seems unbelievable to me that I have actually been on the visit that I had dreamed about for so long. Our slogan "Join the Army and See the World" is absolutely right if one sets out to make the most of one's opportunities.

On the Moor

OFFICER CADET C. R. BENTLEY

THIS year the Manchester University Officers Training Corps went to Plasterdown Camp, Tavistock, for annual camp, sharing for a fortnight what had once been a military hospital with the Universities of London, Leeds and Birmingham. In spite of the tranquil, if somewhat bleak, surroundings of Dartmoor, the sheep that lazed in the middle of the road, the surrounding hills and the bare moor, the fortnight proved to be as eventful and hectic as most military camps seem to be. As most of us had been doing exams., and had had very little exercise at all for the period of some months, the powers that be decided to make us fit, and to our horror sent us out on a cross-country run! I still remember the agonies of that exercise, and it is no consolation at all to look at a map and realise just how short the distance we ran was. This "fitness" scheme was followed up the next day by a route march, my chief memory of this being the undignified dash back to barracks when the clouds, thinking we were on the point of wilting, thought they would offer their assistance with a refreshing downpour.

Then there was the day when Manchester and Birmingham had a joint map-reading exercise. We divided into groups of about four, one girl to each

Manchester section and set off "up hill and down dale" with the same variation in the weather. Everything was so typically English—first it was cold, then it rained and finally the sun made the long uphill climb to our lunchtime rendezvous a real test of endurance. But, of course, the Army had our welfare at heart, and the cup of tea which welcomed our arrival quite made my day. The afternoon was completed by all the Manchester groups meeting and finishing the course walking in single file along the river to the beautiful Dartmeet.

The highlight of the fortnight was the "unit exercise." This took place at the beginning of the second week and involved spending one night under canvas. The male units were divided into attacking and defending forces and it was our responsibility to decode the messages of both sides and duly inform each of their enemy's movements. There were some masculine comments on our three-tonner loaded with what we thought to be necessary equipment—dozens of blankets, extra woollies, pillows, etc., and also to our insistence on stopping in Okehampton for sweets, chocolates and lemonade. When finally our tents were pitched, our beds made, our "office" organised and our wood collected, we settled down to our primus cooked lunch. The decoding, which employed us in shifts for the next 24 hours, proved to be rather more difficult than it looked, but we enjoyed it all the same. This was also the occasion chosen for the "breaking in" of our new boots, a painful although necessary process. You can imagine our feelings when, on returning to camp the following afternoon, tired, dirty and footsore, we learned that there was to be a unit photograph in best battledress an hour or so later, to be followed after dinner by a cocktail party in civilian clothes. After the photograph we reported to "polish glasses," but were met instead by what seemed a vast quantity of food waiting to be cut, spread and arranged; undaunted, we set to work, and the day was concluded by a very successful party. It all seems so smooth and easy now, but at the time, when we were drawing lots for the one and only bath, chaos seemed to reign.

Next morning we were honoured by a visit from our Commander, W.R.A.C., Lt.-Col. A. R. Robertson; we hope she did not think too badly of our attempts at 10-minute lecturettes. Quite the most horrifying aspect of this exercise was the tape-recorded version which some of us heard afterwards. Perhaps the most popular part of the programme was the convoy exercise. We set out on a beautiful day, two to a vehicle. The passenger was responsible for the map reading, but all learner-drivers were given an opportunity to drive. The next day, our last, saw us in Plymouth taking part in a Civil Defence rescue exercise. We really were a funny sight, dressed in denims and steel helmets, and carrying ladders, axes and spades. My most uneasy moment that afternoon was being rescued from a roof by some London medical students. The stairs had "fallen in" and I was let down on a stretcher by ropes. Camp was concluded with a dinner at a nearby hotel, a very pleasant ending to a very memorable fortnight.

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TEA and TALK

M. V. MAUNSELL-THOMAS (NEE BRODIE)

I WONDER how many of those who attended Mrs. King's tea party last summer actually worked together in the Q.M.A.A.C.? Much of my own service life was very isolated. I did not join the W.A.A.C. until the end of 1917, having been a V.A.D. in France from early in 1915. I remember Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan calling at my hospital in a magnificent uniform with, I believe, a three-cornered hat that I never saw again. I was unofficially enrolled then and, before I left France, saw the very first W.A.A.C. arriving at Rouen in small detachments and thought how smart they were and how well drilled.

My next move was to Connaught House where I got my lectures and was drilled in the basement. During this time I looked carefully at the staff and noted who had the best-fitting uniform and found out who her tailor was. Then followed a fortnight at a camp on Salisbury Plain where it was always drizzling and I never saw either a bird or a rabbit. I learned quite a lot but the country was so bleak. Back to the Connaught Club and that awful evening when we waited so anxiously for the envelope with our names on it to be set up on the rack. Had we passed?

After a short time at Bristol I got my orders to take about 50 W.A.A.C. and open up at the Remount Depot at Shirehampton. I felt so raw and inexperienced going off in charge, but I had to hide my fright. We had very nice quarters in two large private houses and it was a wonderful experience getting to know the girls. Some came from large manufacturing towns and were full of wit but very rough, hardly knowing right from wrong, others who came from unhappy homes had never had anyone to take a personal interest in them before and were so responsive. The camp was three miles round, mostly cookhouses, and the work was most strenuous, quite non-stop. With over 100 girls, I had no administrator to help for several months and the 1918 flu epidemic hit us badly. I was in this camp on the morning of Armistice Day and happened to be alone in my office at 11 o'clock and heard the hooters of the ships at Avonmouth announcing the news—that peace had come. Like thousands of others, I broke down completely and cried as I had not cried all through those anxious and sad years. Luckily, no one saw me.

Soon after this an SOS went out for administrators who could speak German. I volunteered and was sent with eight others to join the Army of Occupation in Cologne. We were attached to the Military Police and our duties were to stop women smuggling contraband goods out of occupied Germany into the unoccupied zone. We went to railway stations, etc., and searched the women, while soldiers dealt with the men. We also did passport duty in Cologne station, sometimes till two o'clock in the morning if the Paris-to-Berlin express was late.

When these duties came to an end I returned to London expecting to be demobbed, but Dame

Florence Leach asked me if I would take over the last of the W.A.A.C. stationed at St. Pol near Arras. So off I went to St. Pol as Senior Unit Administrator with Miss Taylor, so capable and reliable, and with such a beautiful singing voice, as my 2IC. The camp was mainly engaged in searching the battlefields for the fallen, who were each given a service in the new cemetery, whether they had been identified or not. From our camp went out the body of the Unknown Warrior. On the night of November 8, 1920, three remains of unknown soldiers were brought in separately by ambulance from three different battle areas and laid in our small camp chapel. The G.O.C., General Wyatt, went to the chapel, chose one of the remains and placed him in a simple little wooden coffin, and guards were posted. Very few people knew what was going on, but next morning a notice was put up saying: "The Camp Chapel will be open from 1030 to 1130 hours in order that all ranks who wish to do so may view the coffin containing the remains of the Unknown British Warrior." The hushed thrill in the camp all that day was marvellous. The Unknown Warrior was taken to Boulogne in an Army ambulance with a bodyguard of eight sergeants. There the French Army took over until next morning, when the Unknown Warrior, in a magnificent coffin sent out from London, was taken over by an escort of the Royal Navy. The beginning, so simple and sincere, was wonderful.

There was much of interest in the camp, which was a happy one, and some of us remained there until September 26, 1921. By that time, our uniforms, which had never been renewed, were very much the worse for wear and only just held together until we were finally demobilised.

Now at my home in Scotland I look back on those days very often. They were so full of interest and good friends.

Looking Back

The following extract from the *R.A.O.C. Gazette* was published in the *Q.M.A.A.C. Gazette* for November 1921:

"Thirty khaki-clad W.A.A.C., the last contingent of that fine army (Q.M.A.A.C.), arrived at Victoria on the 26th on their return from France, where they had been doing duty in connection with the Graves Registration. They certainly all looked particularly fit. After receiving the congratulations of their friends they were whisked off to the Helena Club for the night. The next day, at the War Office, they received their demob. papers, etc., and departed for their various homes, except a small party of about a dozen, who had been deputed to place a wreath on the Cenotaph the next day, which was inscribed as follows: 'A tribute to the fallen from the last batch of W.A.A.C.s leaving France, 28.9.21.' Thus ended a glorious episode of the war."

Trip to TUNIS

L/CPL. W. J. MARSHALL

WHAT to do over Whitsun? That was my main problem a few weeks before the holiday. I wanted to do something quite different from the things I do every other weekend, perhaps to go away for the four days—but where? Then I heard on the wireless that there was a tour going to Tunisia for the Whitsun holiday. That's it, I thought, that is where I will go—new scenery, a different type of people, and the excitement of visiting a new country. Even the thought of “getting away from it all” thrilled me.

Then the great day dawned; my friend Valerie and I went to meet the tour. It was starting from Tripoli at 6.30 p.m. on the Friday evening and, of course, the usual hustle and bustle was going on. The tour consisted mainly of American families, so we felt a bit out of everything, being the only two British girls, but we soon settled down to the long journey ahead of us. Our first stop was at the Customs, leaving Libya, where the Arab people have a way of looking at you that makes you feel the word “tourist” is written all over you. They believe in taking their time but, finally, with passports and identity cards checked, we were off again. Eventually we reached the border where, once again, we got out to have our papers checked, and the same slowness of procedure followed. As the sun began to rise we started to take an interest in the surroundings. Nearer Tunis the scenery improved, and even to see some mountains for the first time since I arrived out here made me homesick for Scotland. The small villages seemed so picturesque in the fresh morning sunshine. We reached Tunis about seven in the morning and went straight to our hotel, where we found we had been given a beautiful suite. It was a double room on about the fifth floor, with a balcony and french windows in each room. We had a dressing room, sitting room, complete toilet furnishings and shower. After we had cleaned up, we went down for breakfast. Tunis is a French-spoken country, and any readers who have been to France will know that breakfast there is rolls and coffee, but somehow we managed to get an English breakfast of eggs and bacon. I still marvel at how the waiter understood our very poor French. Later in the morning we went to see what the city of Tunis looked like. My first impression was the cleanliness of the place. The people obviously took great pride in their city, which was beautifully laid out. Down the main street was an avenue of trees, and open-air cafes with large, gaily-coloured umbrellas. The policemen in Tunis must be the finest dressed in the world, as they wear light blue uniform with white accessories. The shops were a treat just to walk through. Most of them were built in arcades, and you could always find something to catch the eye in the centre of the arcade; maybe it would be a goldfish pond, or a small fountain decorated with flowers and miniature rock gardens. Although clothes are much more expensive than in U.K., they are really

fashionable, as most of them are imported from Italy and France. After a few hours in Tunis, I began to feel at home; the people are clean, friendly and very helpful. They love having visitors in their country, as they feel so proud of it. Although Tunisia is next door to Algeria, they never seem to bother much about trouble outside their own country, and appear to go about their work and pleasure with an almost lighthearted attitude.

In the afternoon, we went to the hairdresser's, where we were rather surprised to see Arab women having their hair done. The salons were immaculately clean, with every modern equipment installed, but the assistants spent more time talking than really working, so we spent the next three hours having just a shampoo and set. Although we came out looking a lot better, our purses felt rather “light.” Walking along the street again, we were even more surprised to see the Arab women wearing cotton dresses underneath their baracans which, I might add, were in a very fine material, and not the thick kind we are used to seeing in Libya. High-heeled shoes were also worn by many of them.

We felt we had had quite a lazy day, so on Saturday night we decided to “live it up a little.” First we had dinner with two American friends in the hotel, then off we went to see the night life of Tunis. We stopped at one nightclub and spoke to the manager; he said the place was still very quiet, and if we were to come back at about three in the morning, it would be much brighter. To us it already looked like the local dance hall on a busy night. The nightclub resembled something out of Las Vegas, with its brightly coloured lights and large chandeliers hanging from the beautifully decorated ceilings. In one corner of the club was a casino where, I expect, thousands of pounds changed hands every night. Appearing on a cabaret show was a team from Mayfair, London. We spoke to one of the girls, who originally came from Yorkshire. Music is always being played in the streets of Tunis, and it reminds you more of France than a Middle East country.

Sunday opened another new and exciting day, as there was a tour organised for us to see the surroundings of Tunis. First we went to the memorial grounds of the American servicemen who lost their lives in the Second World War. It is impossible to describe the layout and structure of this beautiful place; the grounds cover about four acres in which every inch of land is used up with either flowers or fountains. There is a small chapel surrounded with mosaic work depicting the operations and points of battle. At the entrance is a building where you can enjoy the comfort of plush chairs and soft drinks. The floors of this are gaily decorated with mosaic marble and covered with very thick carpets. I believe most of the money used to keep these grounds up to the high standard they are is provided by the servicemen's families whose loved ones are buried there.

The next place we stopped at was a small village

called Carthege, which is built on a hill and, in the rather hot sun, you felt it a lot steeper to walk up than it really was. Right on top of this hill was a hotel, which seemed rather amusing to us because the village consisted of about 200 people, obviously very poor, but in contrast, the hotel was magnificent, and you wondered if it was a mirage. The hotel was rather aptly named "Above the Blue Sea," and was almost surrounded by the lovely blue Mediterranean. I was sure anyone staying there just sat on the patio and watched the sea. On enquiring how much it would cost to live one night in the place, we were told £5 per person, and that was without a midday meal.

Our next visit was to the "Grounds of Sacrifice." I found this rather disappointing mainly because my imagination could not really take in and enlarge what the guide tried to put over. It seems that the old ruins we were now looking at were where little children were sacrificed to the gods. As families had about 12 children each, they seemed to think one or two out of the family did not matter. I found this rather depressing, and soon turned my attention to where I heard the sound of laughter. I followed the sound, and discovered I had come across a rather secluded beach which stretched for about two miles. There were about a dozen girls, all in lovely bright bikinis, and they gave the impression that they had been let out of a harem for the afternoon, but they were obviously enjoying every minute of freedom.

At our next stop I did not have to use my imagination quite so much, because the ruins I was then looking at were still in very good condition. It was actually an old Roman stadium, but as we did not have a guide who could speak English here, we were left at rather a loss. One other point of interest at this place was a factory where bird cages were made, only they were not cages like we are used to seeing in U.K. These were built very much like a palace in the Middle East, with little doors and windows, and ranged from about 2 ft. by 4 ft. They were very brightly painted in blues, yellows and pinks. The owner remarked that it took 17 men over two weeks to build one of the larger cages.

Our last call was at a cathedral about two miles outside Tunis, which is attended by large numbers of Catholics. This is a new cathedral built alongside the old one. The Tunisians like to have the feeling of being high up and always seem to build the things that are important to them high up. Wealthy people consider it helps their prestige, as well as the fact that it is much cooler.

On returning to Tunis, we were absolutely amazed to see that what looked to us like the whole of the city had turned out. They were all walking along the main road in large numbers. We soon discovered that Sunday night was "family night." Every member of the family went out for a walk, followed by a meal when wine and toasts were drunk to everyone's health and happiness. It gave you the feeling they were celebrating all the weddings in the family every week. About ten o'clock the town began to look like its old self again, and it was pleasant to walk along the sea front in the peace of the evening and see the moon

shine over the water. Those readers who have been to the Middle East will agree with me, I think, that nowhere in the world does the sun rise and set so beautifully as in these countries. After a most exciting, but exhausting, day we once again returned to our very comfortable rooms, where we were surprised to find we had been sent a bottle of champagne by one of the guests who had left the hotel that morning, and who had been very helpful in giving us points of interest about Tunis.

Next morning, bright and early, we had to leave Tunis in order to get back to Tripoli by late evening. We had to stop at Sfax for three hours to let the tyres of the bus cool down, because there are no garages in parts of the desert we had to come through, so you have to make sure your transport is in perfect order. Sfax is a lovely small place, very much like Tripoli, with its two cities, one new and one old. The new one is, of course, very modern and spacious. I notice as I travel around the Middle East that in most of these cities there is a "square," with a church or cathedral right in the centre. I guess it is the old belief in putting important things where everyone can see them. When we finally reached Tripoli, although very exhausted, we knew we would never forget our interesting, educational and happy visit to the beautiful city of Tunis.

BRANCH NEWS

ALDERSHOT. A Branch of the Association is being formed and hopes to start regular meetings soon, probably on a Tuesday evening. Anyone who is interested in joining is invited to contact Capt. K. N. Edwards, M.B.E., T.D., J.P., at Brooklands, Church Lane East, Aldershot, Hants.

BOURNEMOUTH. Our summer activities started with a meeting at Mrs. Rumbold's flat early in May, then a coach trip to Weymouth and Portland for the Southern Area Reunion at the end of the month. In June some members joined the local W.R.N.S. Association for an evening mystery coach tour in the New Forest. The annual raspberry tea party took place at the Secretary's home at Stapehill in June, and we were pleased to welcome a new member, Miss M. A. Miles, on that occasion. Owing to gales and rain Miss Carr postponed her supper party in July, and we were fortunate to have a fine evening when it took place on September 8. Once again she and Miss Parrett provided a wonderful feast which we were able to have out of doors in the sunshine.

BRADFORD. Our members met on September 11 to start their autumn session but, due to illness and holidays, the numbers were depleted. Our President, Miss Gummersell, turned up as usual, and delayed her autumn holiday to be present at the Northern Area Reunion. She, and other ex-Q.M.A.A.C. members, including Miss Julian, O.B.E., our Chairman Gertie Armitage, and Dolly Ross, are pleased to know that Mrs. Rumbold will be attending to represent their Corps. We also look forward to welcoming Dame Mary Railton

back to Northern Command. Our congratulations go to Mrs. E. M. Slack on the birth of a granddaughter, and our best wishes for a speedy return to health to both Mrs. Edith Lumb (Q.M.A.A.C.), who is now convalescent following a recent operation, and to Bertha Marsh who, after recovering from a major operation, had the misfortune to break an ankle. Our thoughts will be with Julie and Mabel when they are soon to celebrate a happy partnership of over 40 years; their devotion to each other is an inspiration. Members are looking forward with particular interest to the Festival of Remembrance in November, as the guest speaker this year is to be Viscountess Swinton of Masham. We take a great pride in this event and attend in full force, take part in the "March of the Units" and sell programmes.

BRISTOL. No meetings were held in July and August, but the British Legion (Bristol County) commemorated their 40th anniversary and on Sunday, July 2, a Drumhead Service was held at College Green, and our standard, with other Old Comrades Associations, was carried by Mrs. Budd (A.T.S.). We started our autumn session on September 7 with a quarterly meeting and a bring-and-buy sale, at which Mrs. Morgan kindly priced the articles. It was very encouraging to see members from Winterbourne, Yatton and Radstock. The Secretary read a long and interesting letter from one of our members, Miss E. M. Wilmot (A.T.S.), who is now working with the Chief Justice at the High Court, Enugu, Eastern Nigeria. The Branch send her their greetings.

CANTERBURY. The past year has been very successful and enjoyable; meetings were held quarterly, and the Branch is lucky in that members have extended hospitality, so that no expense for hire of a room has been incurred, except for the annual dinner. In September, members visited Mrs. Wells, and enjoyed a luscious home-made tea, followed by games and competitions. A raffle for a table-lamp was won by Miss Perry. For the autumn meeting, Mrs. Brassington invited members to her flat, and the atmosphere of "old times" was recaptured with a riotous session of "housey-housey." Fourteen members attended the Annual Dinner, which was held at the Oak Coffee House, Canterbury, and followed by the Annual General Meeting, when the programme for the ensuing year was arranged. In June, the President was delighted to welcome members to a "Garden Tea" at Charing; fortunately, the weather was kind, and a clock golf competition was completed. In September, the Hon. Secretary, Mrs. Closier, also invited members to a garden tea at her home. The Branch Standard has been carried twice during the year at parades in Canterbury, first at the Battle of Britain parade and later to the Remembrance Sunday parade and service. The Branch is most grateful to the standard-bearer, Mrs. Wells, and her escort on these occasions. Although small numerically, the Branch is very much alive and attendances are satisfactory, in spite of members

having many other ties, and being scattered over a wide area in East Kent.

CHESHIRE. A coffee morning was held at Stanley Palace, Chester, in aid of the W.R.A.C. Benevolent Fund. We were very pleased with our efforts, which enabled us to send £5 to the fund. Prizes for a draw were given by kind friends and were won by the following: Chocolates, Miss Macdonald, The Convent, Chester; cake, Major Bowdon, Western Command; bottle of sherry, Mrs. D. Coathupe, Filkins Lane, Chester. We have had a very pleasant year so far. The Branch was closed for nearly three years, but we are getting fairly good attendances at our meetings again now.

EDINBURGH. Since our last report we have had the following Branch activities. The April meeting consisted of a hilarious beetle drive with a special Easter tea. In May one of the members, Mrs. Sparrow, who is also a member of the W.V.S., gave a very interesting talk on welfare work. In June there was no meeting in the club, and instead we had a very enjoyable bus run to Melrose and Galashiels. There was a small bring-and-buy sale in July with garden produce, home baking, sweets and preserves for sale. We had a very informal meeting in August and, in September, we exchanged recipes and enjoyed eating some of the results of the recipes brought along by the members.

HARTLEPOOLS. Attendance at meetings during the summer months was not too good owing to members being on holiday. In July we were entertained at the home of our Chairman, Miss V. M. McRobert, T.D. We had a most delightful supper to which everyone did justice. We were shown excellent colour slides of the Trooping the Colour, our Chairman having been fortunate enough to have a ringside seat. Flowers were sent to Miss Sawkhill during her stay in Newcastle Infirmary for observation purposes; we all sincerely hope that when she returns to the hospital in the near future for further observation she will have satisfactory results. Condolences were sent to Miss Hewlett of Harrogate and our Chairman, Miss McRobert, on the death of their mothers. At the September meeting Miss Rita Denham showed us some interesting snaps of her holiday in Spain. Also in September we had a farewell dinner for Miss McRobert who is going to Malaya for a few months holiday. This was attended by 12 members and was held at the Staincliffe Hotel, Seaton Carew. Miss McRobert presented the Branch with the book "As Thoughts Survive," by Dame Lesley Whateley, D.B.E. We all join together in wishing Miss McRobert a good holiday which will help her in this difficult time. We also hope Mrs. Shipley benefits from her holiday in Ostend, and will return home ready to look after her invalid father once more—perhaps his fortnight in hospital will have helped him also.

LEEDS. Due to resignation, we now have a change of Branch officers; Mrs. Wilson becomes Chairman and Mrs. Cook Secretary. Miss

Cobb, Treasurer, has now recovered from her accident some months ago, and Miss Edna Moss has also returned to duty after her motor accident. Our President, Miss V. K. Stead, has had another spell in hospital and, we hope, is now recuperating. Membership is still good; the June meeting was well attended, two guests being present, Mrs. Ware (Tadman) from Wallasey and Mrs. Ian Frazer from Aberdeen—a beetle drive was a great success. Recently, one of our members brought coloured slides of her visit to her brother at Hamilton, Ontario, and these were shown to the meeting, a York member being kind enough to loan and operate her projector. Two members have visited Miss Winnie Reeder in the Cheshire Home at Spofforth, and it is proposed to carry out these visits each month.

LONDON. Our first meeting since the last report took the form of a trip on the River Thames. We had very good weather and a very pleasant evening was spent by all. The boat took us from Westminster Pier to Greenwich, then back to Lambeth Bridge. The guide made the journey more interesting as his remarks were spiced with typical London humour. The remaining evenings have been the ever-popular reunions, since many members were away on holiday. About 25 members took tickets for the musical "My Fair Lady" and had an enjoyable evening at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, on September 21. On September 2 four members of London Branch met accidentally at the dedication of the W.R.A.C. window by the Bishop at Guildford Cathedral. This was a most impressive service, and it was regretted that arrangements were not made for an organised visit. It is with deep regret that we announce the death of four of our Old Comrades. Miss Thompson and Miss Davis in particular will be missed by all and, although neither was a frequent visitor (which was understandable when we discovered their ages!), they were always very popular. Nothing was too much trouble for them when it was connected with our Association, and this was especially so in the case of our well-loved and respected President who, since the inception of the Association, had always done so very much for the Association and the Branch.

MANCHESTER. We started the year with an evening at the cinema. A party of us went to see "Can Can," and very enjoyable it was, too. Then on January 13 several attended a dance which was given by the Salford W.R.A.C. (T.A.) before they were split up and posted. It was kind of them to invite us, and the dance was a great success. We held our Annual General Meeting in February. Miss J. Horsfall was re-elected Chairman, Mrs. F. Jones Social Secretary, and Mrs. E. Dugmore Hon. Secretary and Treasurer. We welcomed back Mrs. Bancroft, fit again after her illness. Our Branch has joined the newly formed Manchester and District Liaison of Ex-Service Associations, which hopes to raise money for welfare work among members. We have taken quite an interest in this, and hope that it prospers.

On April 12 a party of us went to the Manchester Opera House to see the North Cheshire Amateur Operatic Society's production of "Kismet." The daughter of one of our members had a part in the show, which we all enjoyed; it really was lovely. During the summer we held our meetings in the homes of various members, and it proved very successful, much more enjoyable than meeting in our usual barrack room.

NORFOLK. Members learnt with regret of the passing of their President, Miss Edith Thompson, C.B.E., who was beloved by all ex-Q.M.A.A.C. members, and who will always be remembered by her happy visits to Norfolk, especially of our visit to Aldborough in the old "Iris," when the traffic was held up for us to take a "snap" outside their Town Hall! The New Year's Party and draw will be on January 3, 1962. Tickets are ready for those who like to start selling early. We send our best wishes for Christmas to Norfolk members wherever they may be.

SOUTHAMPTON. Thanks to an advertisement in the local newspaper we gained three new members, and it is hoped to repeat our advertising campaign again. We have indeed begun by advertising in the local shops and also in the Library. We eagerly await results and will report on this in due course. Following the Annual General Meeting in October, we held a social evening in November and had our usual pre-Christmas bring-and-buy sale in December to raise a few shillings for our somewhat depleted funds. January being a month of ills and chills, we met as usual and played "housey" and "beetle" and generally discussed Christmas and future meetings. Our beauty demonstration in February was well attended and one member was made to look most glamorous. These are always most popular and most members seem to make a special effort to come along. March gave us food for thought and we listened with great interest to our local historian, Miss Elsie Sandell, telling us about the old inns of the town and how many of them survived rioters in the Middle Ages and the blitzes of the last war and are still catering for travellers from all parts of the world, especially our cousins from the U.S.A. We have also visited the Electricity Showrooms for a cookery demonstration and finished the evening by sampling the goods made, with, of course, the ever-popular "cuppa." Our summer meetings have, as in previous years, been outdoor ones and, although only a few members come along, we manage to enjoy the countryside by either walking along the river bank to a local inn, or just sitting on the pier chatting and having coffee. We held a very successful Annual Dinner and were pleased to welcome Col. Grierson from Southern Command as our guest speaker, who gave us a most interesting address, and also told us more about the Regimental H.Q. The Branch turned out in force for the Area Reunion at Weymouth, and once again our thanks must go to that Branch for such a splendid effort in making our tour of Portland and tea at the Pavilion so enjoyable. It was

grand to meet old friends and time went all too quickly. A number of members went up to the Annual Reunion in London, and all agreed it was the best ever and may we have more of them. We were sorry to learn that Mrs. Lumsden was resigning from her post as General Secretary; we as a Branch shall miss her but we wish her well in her retirement and hope to meet her from time to time at reunions, etc. After the summer break we returned to Blighmont T.A. Centre and held a cheese-tasting evening in September, which proved a great attraction, especially as we were able to make a cup of coffee, thanks to the co-operation of the W.R.A.C. (T.A.), with whom we have at last made contact, and it is hoped that they will come along to some of our meetings, held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7.30 p.m.

WIMBLEDON. Since we last reported we have had to change our venue. We held our last meeting at the Drill Hall, St. George's Road, in March when we had a very successful bring-and-buy sale. After that, owing to the T.A. unit disbanding, the Drill Hall was no longer available. Finding a new and suitable home proved difficult, but we at last managed to get accommodated at the Wimbledon Community Centre, St. George's Road, which is situated almost opposite our old Drill Hall. There we have a very pleasant room with use of an up-to-date kitchen and we are very pleased with our new quarters which, although more expensive than the old, are very much nicer. Our meetings are still on the third Friday of each month at 8 p.m., and we held the first one in our new room in May. In June we had another beetle drive, after which we broke up for the summer holidays. We resumed in September with a very interesting Dorothy Gray make-up demonstration.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

1961

- | | |
|-------|--|
| Nov. | |
| 6—8 | Inter-Command Hockey, Aldershot. |
| Dec. | |
| 7—8 | Inter-Unit Netball Finals, Aldershot. |
| 9—12 | Army Squash Rackets, London. |
| Feb. | 1962 |
| 5 | Inter-Service Rifle Shooting, London. |
| 15—16 | Inter-Service Squash Rackets, Greenwich. |
| 20—22 | Inter-Command Badminton, Wimbledon. |
| Mar. | |
| 7—9 | Inter-Service Hockey, Plymouth. |
| 15—16 | Inter-Command Netball. |
| 16 | Q.M.A.A.C. Reunion, H.Q. Club Officers' Mess. |
| 17 | Branch Secretaries' Meeting and Luncheon.
Annual General Meeting. |
| 18 | Service in the Chapel of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea. |
| 26 | Inter-Service Netball. |

Miss M. Davis

A memory

Mrs. Wigelsworth (Irene Stephenson)

Minnie Davis will be missed, not only by "Hut 14, Etaples," and her old Q.M.A.A.C. comrades, but also by the A.T.S. and present W.R.A.C. members. She was a very loyal W.A.A.C. and, I believe, attended every reunion. She gathered us together again after the last war, when many of us had semi-retired and, through her, we re-formed the Association and became members of the Service Women's Club, where we had a number of happy times together. My last outing with Minnie was to Princess Royal's Day at the W.R.A.C. Depot on April 23. All our outings and reunions have been good, but this day was outstanding, thanks to the W.R.A.C. hospitality. Minnie said goodbye at the station in London that night; and so my memory goes back to when we first met at a station on May 4, 1917, and began 44 years of a sincere, loving and true friendship.

* * * *

Plight of St. Mary-on-the-Hill Chester

THE Church of St. Mary-on-the-Hill, beside the walls of Chester Castle, has had Army associations for over 400 years. The chapel inside the castle was always too small to accommodate the full garrison at one time and military services are still held regularly in this lovely old church which is in urgent need of repair and restoration.

St. Mary's records date from 1126 when the right of presentation of the benefice was given to the Abbey and Convent of St. Werburgh by the fourth Earl of Chester. It has gone through hard times before, during the Reformation and at the hands of the Roundheads when Chester was a Cavalier centre, gallantly defending itself in support of the king. Even in 1745 the walls of the church were pulled down and built into the city walls for fear of a siege by Prince Charles Edward, the Young Pretender. Although it escaped serious damage during the last war, an incendiary bomb that failed to explode was discovered last May, only 60 yards from the church.

It is sad to think that a church of such antiquity and which has seen the making of so much history should be in peril of its existence, and its plight will appeal particularly to all those who have served in Western Command. Anyone who would like to help to preserve it should send a donation to the Rev. Eric Mercer, The Rectory, 3 Greyfriars, Chester.

Reunions

SOUTHERN AREA

"A LOVELY day and a lovely setting"—that was the general comment of everyone who attended the Southern Area Reunion in Weymouth and Portland on Sunday, May 28. The weather was very kind and the sun shone to order when the hostesses of the home branch met their guests on the coach park. After a delayed start, the party was divided into four coaches and a delightful tour of Portland began. A guide, in the form of Councillor A. J. Pike, met us on Portland and told the party some of the interesting history of the island. He took us all round the island, ending up at Portland Bill, where we thought it safe to "let the party loose" for a while to explore wherever they wished. On the return to Weymouth, we all made our way to the Pavilion Ballroom, where tea was provided, and everyone had a good opportunity of seeing the lovely view of Weymouth Bay in between chatting to old acquaintances. The hostesses were very pleased to welcome the Lady Digby, O.B.E.; Col. J. G. Grierson, O.B.E., D.D.W.R.A.C., Southern Command; Col. D. Morgan; and Mrs. A. J. Lumsden, who travelled all the way from London for the day, as well as all the other ladies who came and made it a bumper reunion with a record number of attendances. Weymouth and Portland were very pleased and proud that their first effort at holding a reunion went so well and the appreciative comments from our friends were most welcome and heartwarming.

NORTHERN AREA

THE Northern Area Reunion was held at Betty's Restaurant, York, on September 30, and, although not quite so well attended as last year, was undoubtedly a great success. Some 85 members congregated from Bradford, Derby, Hull, Leeds and Sheffield, and we were especially pleased to welcome a contingent from Chester Branch who had forsaken Western Area for the occasion. The new Chairman of Northern Area, Lt.-Col. B. M. Ridler, A.D.W.R.A.C. H.Q. Northern Command, presided, supported by Lt.-Col. V. K. Stead, O.B.E., T.D., J.P., Vice-Chairman, whom we were delighted to see once more restored to health, and Mrs. E. M. Suttle, our indefatigable Hon. Secretary. Guest speakers were Brigadier Dame Mary Railton, D.B.E., Deputy Controller Commandant, and Mrs. V. Rumbold, Q.M.A.A.C., an ex-Member of Council. Also present were Lt.-Col. M. S. F. Millington, O.B.E., T.D., former Chairman of Northern Area, and Col. D. H. I. Wilson, O.B.E., of the School of Instruction. Q.M.A.A.C. members were well represented, and amongst those present was our old friend Miss Ada Gummersell, President of Bradford Branch (who, although appearances might belie the fact, was without doubt the oldest member there). In fact, for members of Bradford Branch it was an especially memorable reunion, bringing together Mrs. Gertie Armitage and Mrs. Dolly Ross of Hull, both of whom had served with Mrs. Rumbold in France, Mrs. Kitty Bakes, an

original member of the branch, Mrs. K. Bottomley who had travelled from her home at Flamborough Head, and Miss Nellie Julian, O.B.E., who had made a special journey from Wales.

Lt.-Col. Stead formally introduced Lt.-Col. B. M. Ridler, the new Chairman, who welcomed all those present and said how pleased she was to see such a representative gathering of Northern Area. The Secretary then read a message from Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan, and other greetings telegrams and apologies for absence. Dame Mary Railton conveyed good wishes of members of Council for a successful afternoon to all present, and said how pleased she was to be back in Northern Command where she had served for a short time some 11 years ago and of which she had some happy memories. She made an appeal on behalf of the W.R.A.C. Benevolent Fund, and asked everyone present to contribute as generously as they had always done in the past. Lt.-Col. Ridler then called upon Mrs. Rumbold, who thanked Northern Area for inviting her to the Reunion. In greeting Q.M.A.A.C. comrades, she said the Corps was founded at a time of great danger in 1916 when the manpower situation was critical, and its formation enabled men urgently needed in the trenches to be released from other duties. There was no question of training, and within 16 days of leaving home she herself was pitchforked straight into a job in France. Mrs. Rumbold paid tribute to Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan, saying the Corps today is what it is because of her pioneer efforts, and now that time is taking its toll of older comrades she felt its foundation deserved commemoration in some concrete form whilst the majority are still able to appreciate it.

A vote of thanks to the speakers was proposed by R.S.M. E. Cox and seconded by Miss M. D. Bradley of Bradford Branch. An excellent tea was then served, accompanied by renewed chatter and the "chink" of boxes receiving contributions for the Benevolent Fund. Mrs. A. Green had also organised a raffle in aid of the fund and lucky winners were Lt.-Col. D. H. I. Wilson, Mrs. Webb, Miss Dunster and Miss Bell. Frantic calculations revealed that, with the collection, raffle and donations already received or promised, the final total would be in the region of £30, and this was felt to be a very gratifying result. At 6 p.m. members prepared to depart on their homeward journeys and final farewells brought to a close a very enjoyable reunion.

Branch Directory

List of Branch Secretaries—Amendments

Maidstone.—Miss N. Court, 80 Holland Road, Maidstone, Kent.

4 Independent Company.—W.O.1 G. P. Green, W.R.A.C. G.H.Q., Far East Land Forces, c/o G.P.O. Singapore (Secretary and Treasurer).

W.R.A.C. Depot and Training Centre.—W.O.1 S. Brown, Hobbs Barracks, Lingfield, Surrey.

Obituary

Miss C. Fleming

GLASGOW BRANCH announce with deep regret the death of Miss Chris Fleming, after a very long illness, patiently borne.

Mrs. M. E. Phelps

WE regret to announce the death on July 31, 1961, of Mrs. M. E. Phelps, who was a life member of the Association.

Mrs. M. G. Overall

WE announce with regret the death of Mrs. M. G. Overall.

Miss E. Southorn

BOURNEMOUTH BRANCH announce with regret the death of Miss E. Southorn, one of the original life members of the Association, who died on August 6, 1961, after a major operation.

Sgt. Harry, W.R.A.C.

SGT. JANET HARRY was killed when out riding in the Episkopi Valley early on Sunday morning, July 2. She was aged 31. All members of H.Q., to whom Sgt. Harry was a well-known figure, were deeply shocked at her sudden death. She was an experienced and skilled horsewoman and a popular member, not only of the Episkopi Saddle Club, but also of the Sailing Club. She lived in Okehampton and joined No. 2 Training Company at the Depot in November 1958. She was posted as P.A. to the C.-in-C. Near East, General Sir Dudley Ward, G.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O., A.D.C., in July 1960. She became engaged to a Rhodesian airman she met that year when he was on a course in Cyprus. The funeral took place with full military honours at Dhekelia, Cyprus. It was attended by the C.-in-C. with Lady Ward, her Officer Commanding, with members of her unit and other representatives from the Army, the R.A.F., the W.R.A.F., the Saddle Club and the Sailing Club. Among the many beautiful wreaths was one from her father, Mr. W. Harry, to whom our deepest sympathy is extended.

A.M. writes:

Miss A. Leeming

Miss Annie Leeming, of Compton Lodge, Hampstead, passed away peacefully in her sleep on August 15, aged 93 years. She was a life member of the Association and, until her recent death, its oldest member. She was intensely proud of her service with the W.A.A.C. and was in charge of the sick bay at Camp 4, Rouen, from 1918-19. She had a varied and interesting life. As a girl she studied German, French and Italian; in 1890 she lived in Amsterdam, where she did nursing, and six years later she entered Guy's Hospital for training. The pay was then £8 a year for the first year, £12 for the second year, rising to £18 for the third year. After training she went to Berlin, but returned in 1903 to study midwifery at Queen Charlotte's

Hospital. She travelled with patients to many countries, including India, South Africa and most of Europe and, at the age of 70, took complete charge of a hospital in Nice for three months while the Matron was ill. In 1939 her knowledge of languages helped her to do valuable work among refugees. Last year, when the B.B.C. produced their programme "Focus on Old Age," she was one of the residents chosen to be interviewed.

Miss E. M. Thompson

MISS EDITH THOMPSON, C.B.E., who died at her home in Suffolk on August 25, 1961, will be remembered by most of us as the invaluable President of the London Branch of the W.R.A.C. Association. Those whose memories are a little longer will recall her fine work as one of the original architects of the Association and as the first editor of the *Gazette* which, when the present badge was agreed, was appropriately renamed as *The Lioness*. Earlier still, Miss Thompson had begun World War I as a V.A.D. member, but transferred to the new Corps and became its Controller of Inspection, and continued to serve till 1920. Born in 1879, the only daughter of W. F. Thompson, J.P., she was educated at Cheltenham Ladies' College and King's College, London. While still an undergraduate, she founded the *Hockey Field* as a weekly journal and, in her early 20s, became Secretary of the Bedford College Appeal. She took charge of hockey teams playing in many parts of the world and was twice President of the All England Women's Hockey Association. She dealt, between the wars, with the Overseas Settlement of British Women, and in World War II, after helping to establish the Women's Land Army, she devoted herself to the evacuation of British children to the Dominions, acting as Liaison Officer to the Children's Overseas Reception Board of South Africa, and conducting some of the parties herself. She was a woman of energy and enterprise, of unusual administrative power and of a kindness which illuminated all her activities. In one way or another her whole life was given to the service of her country and of its people. We may think of her as reposted on promotion.

H. C. I. G.-V.

W.O.1 G. R. Wild

WE regret to announce the death of W.O.1 Wild, a life member of the Association, which took place in the Queen Alexandra Military Hospital, Millbank, on September 15, 1961, two days before her 43rd birthday. Formerly the R.S.M. of 304 (Surrey and Sussex) Battalion, W.R.A.C. (T.A.), Miss Wild endured a very long and painful period of illness with great courage and patience. She enlisted in the A.T.S. in September 1941, did a two years' tour of duty in M.E.L.F. from 1947-49, and gave valuable service as an administrative N.C.O. and Warrant Officer to many Regular and T.A. units at home. Her funeral was held at the West London Crematorium, Kensal Green, and our sympathy goes to her mother, Mrs. C. D. Wild, of Clapham Park Estate, S.W.2.

News from Old Comrades

THE Secretary of H.Q. Area tells us that **Mrs. T. Chaytor** (ex-Q.M.A.A.C.) is confined to bed with rheumatoid arthritis at her home, 38 Cambridge Street, Wolverton, Bucks, and is always pleased to see visitors. She has two married sons, one carries on the Army tradition and is a captain in the R.A.E.C. serving in Malaya, and the other is Hon. Secretary for the British Legion.

Bora Emmerson, 14 Archibald Street, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, writes that she enjoyed all her A.T.S. service and counts the period she spent training at Guildford as the happiest time of her life. She would like to get in touch with **Joyce J. Hird** (née Hyde) who emigrated to Dunedin in New Zealand from Crowthorne, Berks.

Mrs. Olive Austin, who used to belong to Brighton Branch, wonders if any other ex-Q.M.A.A.C. members live near to her home in Weston, Ontario. She works for the Red Cross, loves her visits to Toronto Hospital, and thinks the Canadian people wonderful, such friendly, neighbours.

Mrs. Elsie Scragg writes that she recently had a visit from **Mrs. Ashmore** (née Horne), who lives in Ontario and had been touring the battlefields of Europe with her husband. Their friend, **Connie Davison**, also lives in the same area, and all three were cooks in the W.A.A.C.

Mrs. Doris Evans left Vancouver for Liverpool in September and will be making her home in Wales while she is in Britain. She hopes to attend the reunion in March.

The Secretary, Maidstone Branch, is anxious to know the present address of **Mrs. Mathews** (Neve), ex-Q.M.A.A.C., who is believed to be living in the Bedford area. Can any member please help?

We congratulate **Mrs. Mullins** (Eileen Peachey, A.T.S.) on attaining first place in the first stage of the British Legion Standard Bearers Competition for the Ashwanden Cup, 1962, having beaten other competitors, including her own husband, by sheer merit and good drill. We wish her every success when she competes in the next stage at the Duke of York's H.Q. at 2.45 p.m. on November 25, 1961. She would be very proud to welcome her ex-service friends to cheer her on to win.

* * * *

BIRTH

HARTLAND.—On August 5, 1961, at the Louise Margaret Hospital, Aldershot, to Elizabeth (née King), wife of Major Peter Hartland, R.A., a second son (David Charles).

Miss E. Thompson

London Branch is sponsoring an appeal in memory of the late Miss E. Thompson, the proceeds of which will be given to the W.R.A.C. Benevolent Fund. Any member of the Association who would like to contribute is invited to send a donation to:

Mrs. Giles, 6 Arlington Drive, Carshalton, Surrey.

PERSONAL

(For charges and particulars see Contents page)

For Sale. Officer's No. 1 Dress jacket, skirt, greatcoat, to fit bust 36 in., waist 28 in., hips 38 in. No. 1 Dress hat, size 7, only two years old. £25 o.n.o. — O.C., "D" Company, 12 Battalion, W.R.A.C., H.Q. Eastern Command, Hounslow, Middlesex.

For Sale. A.T.S. officer's khaki greatcoat and baratheia jacket and skirt. Size 5 ft. 3 in., bust 36 in., waist 27 in., hips 38 in. Excellent condition. —Box No. 20/61.

For Sale. Green greatcoat (hardly worn), height 5 ft. 7 in., bust 36 in., waist 28 in., hips 40 in. No. 1 Dress cap, 7½ in. Shoes 5½, and green shirts. £15 or offers for individual items. —Box No. 21/61.

For Sale. Hand-woven bathroom/nursery rugs, approximately 22 x 36. Nylon, 25s. Pure rug wool, 37s. 6d., plus 2s. postage. Formica table mat sets in stand 23s. 11d., postage 1s. 9d. Teapot stands 2s. 11d., postage 4d. Hand-woven towels 7s. 6d. each, plus postage. Orders accepted for modern cane work, trays, plant troughs, etc. State whether contemporary or self-colours woven rugs. —Maureen Lees, Coach-house, 52 Hamilton Square, Birkenhead. Tel.: Rock Ferry 4851 (evenings).

20% Discount. Carpets all grades and qualities, Axminster, Wilton, Broadlooms and Indians. City showrooms London and Manchester. Apply for introduction card to Cockade Carpet Co., 36 York Road, Ilford, Essex. Free delivery.

Wanted. Officer's No. 1 Dress. Height 5 ft. 8 in., bust 38 in., waist 29 in., hips 40 in. —Box No. 22/61.

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.

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.



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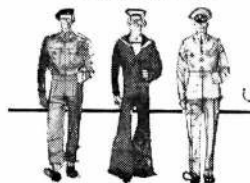
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