

THE LIONESS

VOL XXXIX

FEBRUARY 1966

No. 1





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Reunion notices: Notices of forthcoming reunions where
admission is charged may be inserted at a cost of 1s. 6d.
a line.

**CONTRIBUTIONS FOR NEXT ISSUE BY
31st MARCH**

What's in a Name?

J. W. Plant

PLENTY, we discovered, when the business of making a record was seriously discussed with a professional man of music. As a recording date had been agreed, time was limited to make up our minds and a "help-us-find-a-new-name" campaign was launched upon our own long-suffering fellow W.R.A.C. Recruiters.

The members of the group had lived with the name of "The Travellers" for nearly two years, and seemed to get a mental block when trying to think beyond it. The frantic atmosphere of "the night before a christening" pervaded the office. Horrible visions of arriving at the studio nameless haunted our dreams. Lunchtimes took on a new look and were entirely devoted to thinking up new names and promptly discarding them. Too ambiguous; too controversial; must have a military flavour were phrases much in use.

One Recruiter (who prefers to remain anonymous) insisted on prefixing all her ideas with an announcement: "Ladies and Gentlemen" (holding her cheese roll as if it were a microphone), "I have much pleasure in presenting 'The . . .'" Many compères would have envied her style, but it did not produce any suitable names. Most of the names lived a few minutes and were uttered aloud to test reactions; others just died on the lips of their

authors and the survivors of the lunchtime session were listed and shown to our young and with-it corporal clerk. With the candour of the young she decimated the remainder and they bit the dust mostly to the tune of "It's already been done."

One enterprising member of the staff, seeking inspiration, scanned the pages of the various military publications which gather dust on tops of filing cabinets, but she tended to get side-tracked, particularly when she got to long-forgotten do's and don'ts and the awful fates in store if one did.

At last, when we were almost submerged in a welter of discarded names, and feeling quite weak from the impact of hearing "Ladies and Gentlemen, I have much pleasure in presenting 'The Kit-Bags,'" Capt. Harrison came to the rescue. Having spent the first 20 years of her life in the fair land of France, she was able to think bilingual thoughts on the subject of names. Her suggestion of "The Militaires" was accepted immediately and unanimously. Thinking about it afterwards when the normal calm had returned, we were rather glad that Capt. Harrison named "the child" as it were, as the formation of the group was her idea originally.

So Amendment 1—with effect from 1st November, 1965:

Delete—"The Travellers."
Insert—"The Militaires."



Photo by Messrs. Lawton & Co.

Top table at the A.T.S. Dinner. Left to right: Colonel J. Fisher, Miss V. K. Stead, Dame Mary Tyrwhitt, Brigadier Dame Mary Railton, Dame Regina Evans, Miss L. Parker, Miss A. G. Learnmouth, Dame Leslie Whateley, Miss B. Culleton



THE LIONESS

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February, 1966

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Editorial

FOR those who think of winter as a long dark tunnel, through which one must crawl towards spring and summer, January, when *THE LIONESS* goes to the printers, is perhaps the worst month of the year; when this number actually comes out in February there will, at least, be a glimmer of light at the other end of the tunnel and our meetings in March to look forward to.

This year we are breaking with tradition and holding our Annual General and Secretaries' Meetings in Glasgow to coincide with the Scottish Reunion. We hope that all members will support this experiment and do their best to make the occasion a success.

Although this is a new departure for us, a number of other organisations often hold their Reunion or Annual Conference weekends in various parts of the country. Most of them are, of course, in a better position to subsidise these events financially than we are, but it does seem reasonable that the burden of making a long expensive journey should not always fall on the same members.

Our Treasurer, Mrs. A. J. Stevenson, has come up with a suggestion to make money for the Association or Benevolent Funds. Her idea is that members should collect trading stamps, green, pink or any other colour, and send them to the General Secretary. These could then be redeemed for cash or goods to be used as prizes for the next Benevolent Fund draw. The General Secretary would be pleased to accept stamps at any time but would be even happier if Branches or Areas organised the collection, and sent them on in bulk, as this would save postage and make accounting easier.

Charitable appeals are very much in our minds at the moment. As well as our own Princess Royal's Memorial Fund, which is still open, we give publicity in this issue to two that will be of special interest to all members, the National Army Museum and the Star and Garter Home at Richmond. The Golden Jubilee of the Home is being celebrated this year. Although women are not admitted to the Star and Garter, they were, as the article tells us, largely responsible for its building after the First World War. Special reference is again being made to Women's Organisations, and to women individually in their role of homemaker.

Members are reminded that their subscriptions for 1966 are now due and are asked to help our hard-working Branch Secretaries and Treasurers by paying them as soon as possible.

Association News

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THE Annual General Meeting will be held in the Main Hall, The Town Hall, Milngavie, Glasgow, on Saturday, 19th March, 1966, at 3 p.m.

Agenda

1. To confirm the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday, 13th March, 1965 (circulated in the May issue of *THE LIONESS*).
2. Business Arising from the Minutes.
3. Election of Officers.
4. To receive the Report of Council.
5. To receive the Report of the Hon. Treasurer.
6. To receive the Report of the Editor of *THE LIONESS*.
7. To receive the Reports of Committees.
8. Resolutions:

That the Rules of the Association be amended as follows:

Para. 4, Officers.

"The Chairman of Council shall be appointed for three years and will take office on November 1st following the Annual General Meeting."

9. Any other Business.
10. Date of next Meeting.

BRANCH SECRETARIES' MEETING

MEMBERS of Council hope to meet all Secretaries at their Meeting, to be held at 11.30 a.m. on Saturday, 19th March, 1966, in the Main Hall, The Town Hall, Milngavie, Glasgow. Lunch will be served at 1 o'clock in the Lesser Hall, The Town Hall, Milngavie. Please notify the General Secretary by 1st March, 1966, if you are able to attend.

Q.M.A.A.C. REUNION

THE Q.M.A.A.C. Reunion will be held on Friday, 11th March, 1966, from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. in the Central Mess of the H.Q. Club, Duke of York's Headquarters, London, S.W.3. Tickets, price 5s. each, may be obtained from the General Secretary, W.R.A.C. Association, Block "E," Duke of York's Headquarters, London, S.W.3, after 1st January, 1966. Stamped addressed envelope, please.

REMEMBRANCE DAY, 1965

THE Service of Dedication at the Field of Remembrance was attended by representatives of the Association, and the Cross was planted by Lieut.-Colonel

J. L. Rankin, A.D.W.R.A.C. London District. Members also attended the service in Westminster Abbey on Remembrance Sunday. As usual a contingent took part in the Parade at the Cenotaph, and the Wreath was laid by Miss D. E. Day, of Aldershot Branch, on behalf of the Association.

On Sunday, 21st November, the Chairman of Council, Miss V. K. Stead, accompanied by Lieut.-Colonel M. S. F. Millington, attended the Association of Jewish Ex-Service Men and Women Annual Remembrance Parade and Service at the Cenotaph, Whitehall.

Reunions

SCOTTISH, 1966

THE 1966 Scottish Reunion will be held in the Town Hall, Milngavie, Glasgow, on Saturday, 19th March, 1966, from 6.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m. It is emphasised that the reunion is not restricted to those who have served, or are serving, in Scotland, but is open to all members of the Q.M.A.A.C., A.T.S. and W.R.A.C. Everyone will be made most welcome.

Tickets, 8s. 6d. each, can be obtained from:

Captain W. M. Shiells, W.R.A.C.,

Secretary, Scottish Reunion Committee,

H.Q. W.R.A.C. 52 (L) Div./Dist.,

25 Park Circus, Glasgow, C.3.

Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope with your application and make your cheque or postal order payable to the "Scottish Reunion Account."

WESTERN AREA, 1966

THE Western Area Reunion will be held in the Shakespeare Hotel, Manchester, on 14th May, 1966, from 3.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. There will be a buffet, and tickets at 8s. 6d. each may be obtained from Miss A. G. Learmouth, 2 Beeston Grove, Grassendale, Liverpool 19.

320 (LANCS.) BN., W.R.A.C./T.A.

A FEW members of the Permanent Staff who were stationed at Palm Court, Park Lane, Salford, when the Battalion disbanded in 1961 met at the Grosvenor Hotel, Manchester, for a "Natter and a Nosh-up."

Mrs. Hopper, who was a Civilian Clerk at Battalion H.Q., organised the get-together and contacted the members. Madge Harvey (Wade) and Alice O'Connor are both at Eccles with the P/Staff of T.A.; Doris Stones is still at Bury with the old company; Edna Clark (Q.M.) is obviously enjoying her civilian job with a catering firm at Prestwich near the old H.Q. Mrs. Cox (R.S.M.) travelled up from Leicester to join us. As at all such gatherings, time passed all too quickly and as it was five years since some of us had seen each other we had much to talk about. Promising to meet at the Western Area Reunion, and hoping to see lots more of the old Battalion there, we went our several ways.

E. M. C.

Women's Memorial of World War I

A Story of the Star and Garter Home for Disabled Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen, 1916-66

PATRON: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

THIS may seem a very appropriate title to an article for THE LIONESS but, as it chiefly concerns men, you may wonder a great deal. It seems strange that women should have been largely responsible for producing a home for men, but this is virtually true in the case of the Star and Garter Home—a home with a small "h."

The term "disabled" rings in our ears as a condition which we all hope, whoever we are, will never be our lot. To those who are in the Services leading a super-active life, with only occasional and temporary periods in the grip of the medicos, it is a remote thought.

But what must it be like suddenly to find that, through no fault of our own, we received an injury (in peace or war) which meant we lost the use of our legs permanently, and thus became dependent on others?

A young soldier, grievously disabled from a sniper's bullet in the spine whilst crossing the Rhine in 1944, in telling the story of his life, says:

"I realised that on my arrival at this home of many surprises I was starting a new life—ward life—under expert medical and nursing care. Kindly sisters and nurses and a feeling of great comradeship amongst those whose new life I was to start to share."

Any visitor here would soon realise that disablement does not, in all cases, mean complete dependence on others.

From the moment of passing through the stately entrance one observes many patients moving briskly about, mostly in wheel-chairs—some electrically propelled with fascinating controls specially designed. Some can be seen making their entrances and exits through doors—some with difficulty, but with determination. Others using the many lifts leading to the nine floors of the massive building. One would hesitate to offer assistance for fear of creating embarrassment—or would it be a feeling of guilt, because we happened to have the full use of our arms and legs?

Just how did this wonderful place start? This would be a long story and too long for an article like this.

Many folk think that it takes its name from what we all know as the oldest and most chivalrous order of this country—that of the Garter and the Star, its most precious emblem. No title could be more appropriate, considering its close connection to those servants of Her Majesty—her sailors, soldiers and airmen.

In fact, its origin is very different. It takes its name from the old Star and Garter Inn, which had stood on the top of Richmond Hill since the days of King Henry VIII.

It was in 1916, when war casualties were mounting, that the home opened in a small way with 65 disabled

patients in what was left of the old hotel. This was done through the auspices of the British Red Cross Society.

It was soon realised that there was going to be a permanent need for such a home and that a more spacious building would have to be provided. As was said at the beginning of this article, the women of the Empire, responding to a special appeal put out by the British Women's Hospital Committee, enabled a start to be made on cessation of hostilities. In July 1924 the new building was opened by Their Majesties King George V and Queen Mary. It was designed by Sir Edwin Cooper, R.A., to hold 200 patients.

Most patients are accommodated in their own single rooms, which are all well furnished, but the more seriously disabled are in open wards.

The home is equipped as an almost complete medical unit which specialises in physiotherapy. The social side is well provided for with most amenities. It has a fine memorial chapel. There is a spacious dining room and a large common room which has full facilities for concerts. The Nuffield Trust has provided for first-class workshops to cover occupational therapy and also a pleasant patients' canteen.

The home cares for all sailors, soldiers and airmen who have become disabled in peace or war—Regular, Territorials and war period. It is not part of the National Health Service, and is not, as many people think, part of the British Legion. Voluntary donations are urgently needed.

1966 is our Golden Jubilee Year, which it is aimed to make a special occasion, with special reference to Women's Organisations.

Visitors are always welcome. Why not come and see it for yourself?

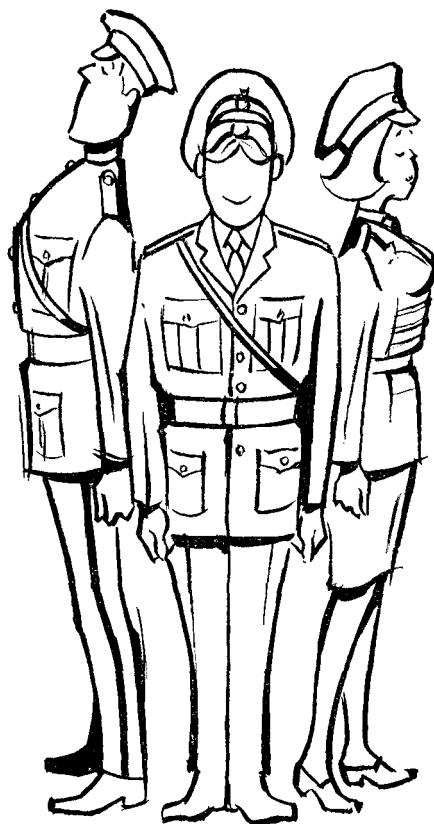
Sight for the Blind

WE have been asked to draw members' attention to the fact that many blind people are spending needless years in darkness when we could give them back their sight. We can do this by arranging that after death our eyes, when we have no further use for them, are given to bring sight to someone else who cannot see.

Eyes of all colours are equally valuable and it does not matter what age you are or whether you have worn spectacles for years. It is simple, legal and does not disfigure, so will not cause distress to relatives and friends.

The time factor is obviously important, so your next of kin and executors should know what to do. The best way to make sure that your wishes are carried out is to fill in a simple form. These, and full particulars, can be obtained from:

The Director-General,
The Royal National Institute for the Blind,
224 Great Portland Street,
London, W.1.



Official Tailors
to
the W.R.A.C.



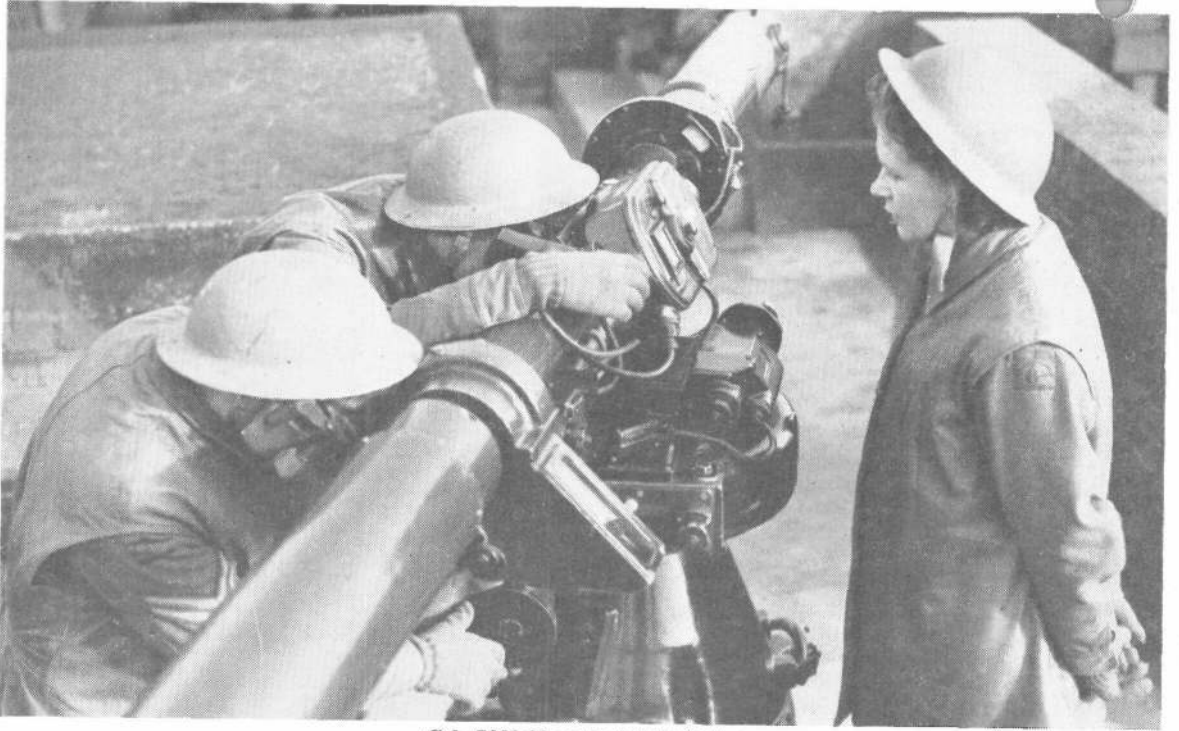
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Cpl. Oldfield on the height-finder



Mrs. Oldfield in the Blind Shop, York

Photos by courtesy of the "Yorkshire Evening Press"

Then and Now

A NEW shop for the blind has recently been opened in York. It is run by Mrs. D. Hunter, the local appeals organiser for the R.N.I.B., on the lines of Oxfam and deals in second-hand clothes, mainly for children.

Mrs. Oldfield, a blind member of York Branch, is one of its supporters. She rips and reknits wool for the shop and does some beautiful work both by hand and knitting machine. In addition to these activities she is making a scrapbook, learning to use a typewriter and to play the mouth-organ.

During the war Mrs. (then Cpl.) Oldfield served with (M) H.A.A. and used to cover up for her No. 2 on the height-finder who was unable to get "on target." This required extremely good sight and it is ironic to think that Mrs. Oldfield is now blind. In spite of her handicap she still sets a wonderful example and is always cheerful and willing to help others.

Commissioning Ceremony

W.R.A.C. OFFICER CADETS

THE Commissioning Ceremony of the Thirty-ninth Course of W.R.A.C. Officer Cadets will take place on 14th April, 1966, at 3.15 p.m. at W.R.A.C. College, Camberley.

The Ceremony will be preceded by a Service at 2.30 p.m.

Applications for tickets, together with 2s. 6d. each for tea, should be sent by 24th March, 1966, to:

The Administrative Officer,
W.R.A.C. College,
Portsmouth Road,
Camberley,
Surrey.

Snow in Swansea

Elizabeth Saxon

In Swansea the snow never falls
with the same soft assurance as elsewhere.
It drops furtively, melting quickly,
a dampness in the air,
little more. Not the lush covering
it forms in the mountains.

The children run into the streets,
clutching at flakes which would be
unnoticed in the Beacons,
called sleet if one was to see
them in the Midlands, where snow
is a too familiar inconvenience.

In Swansea they are pleased with the snow,
always hopeful that one crisp winter
it will not go
quite so quickly.



...beauty at a moments notice

Now you can be sure of your beauty always... no matter how busy you are. It's so easy... with Creme Puff. Just a few touches... and you're perfectly lovely again. Creme Puff—a delicate blend of rich foundation and fine face powder, gives a velvety even finish that lasts for hours. Luxury Mirror Compact with puff 6/-. Pastel-blue Pack with puff 4/6.

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A Journey from Tripoli, Libya, to England

THE journey was not really planned, it just happened, and on Monday, 5th April, 1965, we departed from Prinn Barracks, Tripoli, at 1025 hours to drive to England. The route we intended to follow from Libya took us through Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Spain, Portugal and France, crossing from Boulogne to Dover on Saturday, 1st May, 1965. Except that we did not have time to visit Portugal we did do just that thing and were on time for the Boulogne/Dover ferry, which was the only booking we made for the whole journey. For those of you who like statistics and may not have the time or inclination to read on, the following may be of interest. DISTANCE COVERED: 3,700 miles from Tripoli, Libya, to Hythe, Kent.

CAR: 1961 Morris Mini Minor—LT 32287, left-hand drive with Arabic number plates.

OWNER: Captain, now Major, Joan Temple.

CO-DRIVER: Colonel Helen Wilson.

PETROL USED: 102 gallons, super.

PUNCTURES: 1 in Spain.

ACCOMMODATION: 1 night in each of 11 different hotels; 2 nights in each of 4 different hotels; 2 nights driving all night; 1 night in a Moroccan train; 1 night in the residence of the French Consul General, Fez; 3 nights in a flat lent by friends, near La Linea, Spain.

TOTAL: 26 nights.

It may be of interest to note that of the 15 different hotels we stayed in, we were only on two occasions, for one night in each case, without a private bathroom and/or shower, a standard which we could not hope to approach in this country. We lived well, but by far the best hotel was the first one we stayed in, the Ulysse Palace on the island of Djerba. This is a spectacular white modern building right on the beach. It is classed as a "luxe" hotel and certainly deserves the classification. Every room has its own bathroom and a balcony overlooking the sea. All furnishings, amenities and food come up to this standard. We fell for it right away and booked in for two nights. We never regretted it and found that the "luxe" price by English standards was very reasonable.

Before we left Tripoli the car had been extensively serviced and furnished with spares. We also had a thief switch fitted as a security measure. The switch immobilised the ignition when switched on, and when a locking device was set, the horn went off at intervals if the car was touched. This caused a great deal of amusement but as far as we know the car was never tampered with. In addition to our personal luggage, which was quite considerable, and the spare parts, we carried a jerrycan of fresh water, a jerrycan of petrol, a can of oil and a large supply of food. We also had a Bluet International gas stove, various cooking utensils and thermoses, two old

Army blankets, torches and first-aid kit, so we were self-supporting. We intended to have a picnic lunch most days and feed in our hotel in the evening.

As well as our photographs, still and cine, we kept the following records. A log giving times of arrival and departure and details of petrol used and a diary called "The Journey Book."

We also kept a complicated book called "Finances." The various currencies were very difficult and we never really understood them, but we think we finished all square and did arrive back in England with travellers' cheques in hand.

The weather varied. We were never too hot, but up in the mountains of Tunisia and Algeria it was very cold and we had heavy rain in Hammamet and Tunis. In Morocco the weather was gloriously sunny and pleasantly warm. The only time we began to feel almost too hot was in Madrid; after that it became cooler as we drove into European spring weather.

The main roads in Libya and Tunisia were good. Except for rough and jagged edges where the tarmacadam joins the sand and occasional large pot-holes they present no serious problem, particularly as there is not a lot of traffic, at least by English standards. Most people seem to think we must have driven through endless miles of desert; in fact, the drive from Tripoli to the Tunisian frontier and the southern part of Tunisia were the only times we travelled through what could be described as scrub and desert country.

The Algerian roads were good on the whole, but we travelled over difficult mountainous country, including cols nearly 4,000 feet high, with spectacular hairpin bends. In some places there was a sheer drop down the mountain side with crumbling edges, and on one occasion, when descending a twisting mountain road, we negotiated some rocks which looked very much like an ambush. We often wondered what would have happened if we had stopped. The coastal road in Algeria between Djidjelli and Bougie is described in the A.A. Route as "A famous Corniche road with many hairpin bends, requiring caution." It did indeed require caution, particularly as our horn had ceased to function at that point.

Our most spectacular moment was when we came on a bridge, which had been blown during the Algerian war, and we had to ford a fairly wide river swollen by recent heavy rain storms.

We were so concerned at the time that we did not think of taking any photographs. We have regretted this ever since, as it would have been a wonderful subject for cine. The roads in Morocco were quite good, except for a two-mile stretch outside Fez which was under repair and was nearly the straw which broke the camel's back, or, more accurately, completely ruined our already delicate suspension. The roads in the south of Spain were so bad that they do not bear description. The pot-holes were in a class of their own, but some road-making activity is going on so they may improve. The main route north is quite good on the whole.

Before we set out we made a sort of pact not to take offence at anything we said about each other's driving. This worked like a charm and we both "back seat drove" madly and soon discovered that it was most helpful to the driver to be warned of the odd camel, donkey, child or aged native who looked like stepping in front of the car, not to mention the pot-holes which appeared unexpectedly. We shared the driving; under normal conditions we did two hours at a stretch—at night one hour—and once, after driving all night, we had to change every ten minutes! On that occasion we had driven 365 miles from Algiers to Tlemcen, halfway across Algeria! We had not intended to do so when we left Algiers at 1700 hours, but as the moon rose it became so brilliantly clear that we could see the whole countryside bathed in moonlight. It was too beautiful to stop, so we went on. Dawn found us at 2,000 feet on top of the Col d'Krilat, an unforgettable sight with the red-gold dawn glowing behind the jagged mountains in the east, and the full moon, hanging in the dark blue western sky, like a pale yellow pendant.

We have often been asked if we had any trouble with the car and in spite of extensive servicing before we left Tripoli we had a lot of drama in Algeria and Morocco. Almost all our trouble originated from a broken plug lead which was difficult to locate and was one of the few spares we did not carry.

Not surprisingly, in view of our tortuous route, we had suspension trouble and from Tlemcen until we were able to obtain a spare part in Gibraltar we were very down on the passenger side. The petrol gauge never worked so we used one of our carved olive wood sticks as a dip stick. This was not very accurate and from time to time we ran out of petrol. We became all too familiar with the interior of several garages in Algiers and one in Oujda in Morocco, where we abandoned our car for one day and one night while we went to Fez by train. The mechanics were very willing and full of ideas but seemed quite unable to adjust the engine correctly. After some anxious moments we eventually reached Fez by car, where, with the aid of the French Consular Service, the engine was tuned and went like a bird all the way home. In all our dealings with garages and mechanics we were very conscious of our lack of knowledge of the French language and of the inside of motor-cars! One of our most frustrating moments was in a garage in Algiers where we wasted an entire morning because Marshal Tito was visiting the city and everyone had been ordered to go and clap him. There were no mechanics available to do even the simplest repair and it was almost impossible to make a telephone call. We had two frightening moments, one when we ran out of petrol coming into Algiers in the dark, with fast-flowing traffic flashing past, but as luck would have it we were able to push the car into a nearby petrol station, which was closed, and fill up from our jerrycan. The second was when we had to be towed back into Oujda by a Moroccan taxi. The driver was well meaning, but *would* go too fast. Eventually the tow rope broke and Joan went off with the taxi driver to bring assistance, while I

sat anxiously by the road-side smoking my first cigarette for four years. However, after half an hour Joan returned with several mechanics and we eventually limped into Oujda on one cylinder.

One of the things which we will always remember about the journey was the glorious wild flowers, particularly in Tunisia and Algeria, where we started to collect and press them. Needless to say we did not have the proper equipment, but we stuck them into our French phrase book, and in consequence every time we wanted to speak more than our very mediocre French, our efforts were preceded by a shower of pressed, or perhaps I should say squashed, flowers. It is surprising that we are not still in Tunisia, because there were so many different flowers there that we had to restrain ourselves from stopping every few hundred yards to pick them.

We visited many historic and fascinating places but perhaps the two most interesting in North Africa were Kairouan in Tunisia and Fez in Morocco, two of the three Holy cities, the other being Mecca. It is said that seven pilgrimages to Kairouan equal one to Mecca. We spent a gloriously warm sunny afternoon in Kairouan, which is a city of many mosques, the most important being the Great Mosque built in the seventh century. Fez is a city of contrasts, ancient and modern, Arab and Jew. It is the intellectual centre of Morocco and in the Medina, the old city, you see Moroccan life going on around you as one imagines it has gone on for hundreds of years. It is completely natural and genuine. We spent two full days in Fez and were shown round by expert guides. As well as seeing the old city and other places of interest, we were taken to a vantage point on the heights outside the city where we had a splendid panoramic view stretching away to the snow-capped Atlas mountains. At night, from the same place, we saw the city sparkling with a million lights while we drank delicious mint tea in the warm night air.

Spain was gay and colourful; we spent a Sunday in Seville, visiting the cathedral, the largest Gothic building in the world, which contains, among other rare and interesting things, the tomb of Christopher Columbus. We were fascinated by the narrow street known as Sierpes, where no traffic is allowed, and sat in the sunshine enjoying paella and sangria, while all Seville and his wife and family strolled by. That evening we stopped for a short time in Cordoba, one of the great historical towns of Spain, full of interesting buildings, including perhaps one of the most curious religious buildings in the world, the Mosque, dating back to the eighth century. Originally built by the Moors on a Christian site, the Mosque was later consecrated and part of it converted into a Roman Catholic cathedral. It now looks like a cathedral within a mosque.

Toledo was another place which fascinated us, a walled city built on a rocky hill with the River Tagus flowing by to the south. The narrow streets are like a maze and we had great difficulty in finding our way about. Unlike the Sierpes in Seville, traffic is allowed everywhere and

driving and walking is hazardous in the extreme. Toledo is the souvenir hunter's paradise as there are hundreds of shops full of the famous engraved steel work, pottery and other crafts. Madrid contrasted sharply with Toledo as a modern city with wide streets and fast-flowing, well-regulated traffic. We were impressed by the general post office, which looks like a cathedral, and the lovely fountains in all the main squares.

We spent only two days in France, and decided to motor all night on the last night of the journey, so that we could make a brief detour into the Chateau country. It was well worth the effort. We visited Chenonceaux and walked in the grounds of the fairytale Chateau and later drove through Amboise, Blois and along the banks of the Loire. In the evening we visited Chartres and went into the beautiful cathedral with its superb rose windows.

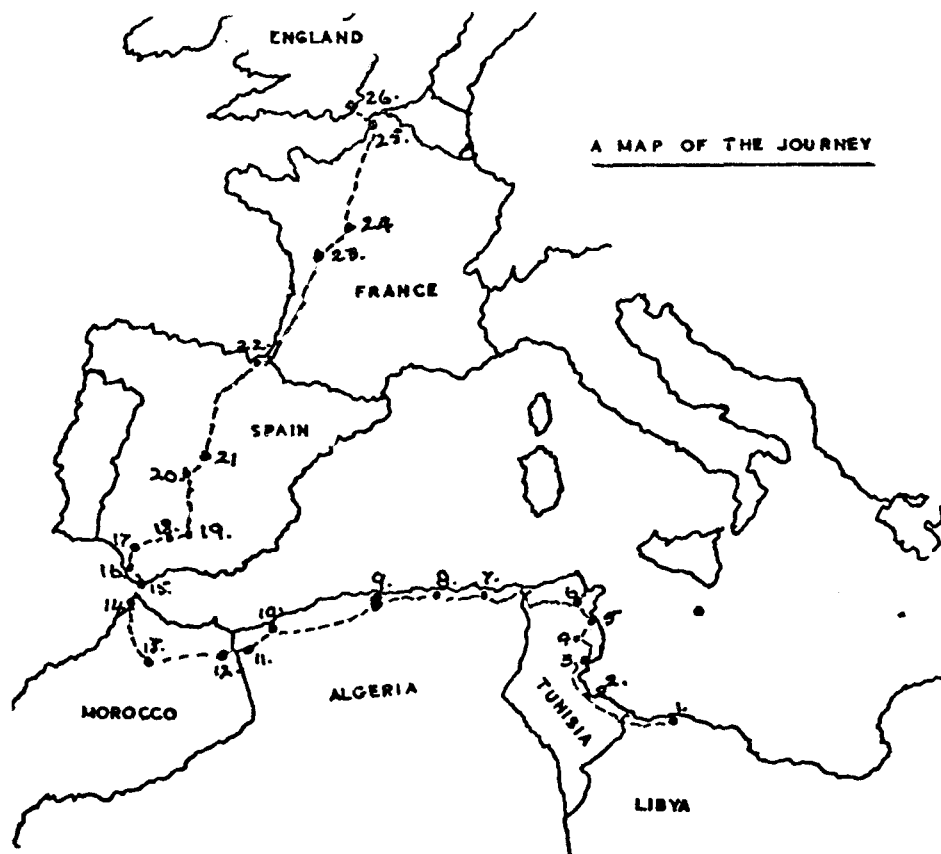
That night we drove on to Boulogne; unlike our previous night drive it was black as pitch without a single star. We could not help wondering if we really would make the last lap and felt more elated than tired when we drove onto the quay at Boulogne at 0400 hours. We embarked at 0730 hours and sailed into Dover on the *Lord Warden* as the sun was breaking through the mist. Joan's parents were waving to us from the top of the cliffs and gave us a wonderful welcome home. Much to our surprise we had arrived and we began to feel that we

had achieved something.

The story of our journey would not be complete without mentioning some of the people we met, particularly those who showed us quite extraordinary kindness and helped us on our way.

The gentleman in Sfax who leapt on his bicycle and led us through the winding streets to the Hotel des Oliviers, and, when coming into Algiers after an exhausting drive through the Grand Kabyle mountains, the charming gentleman with the white Volkswagen who drove in front of us to guide us to our hotel. In Seville a gentleman escorted us on a bus, in Madrid another presented us with a town plan. These and others went out of their way to give us help and information.

Apart from the many good friends in Tripoli without whose help we would not have started at all, our friends the French Consul General and his wife, who lavished hospitality on us when we eventually met in Fez, and the kind friends who lent us their flat in Spain, there were three people who stand out as truly good Samaritans. Firstly, a splendid and unforgettable French lady called Madame Legal, whom we met in a garage in Algiers; she took us over completely—not only did she organise our car and our hotel, but she took us out in her own car for a whole day, gave us a superlative lunch and finally introduced us to her hairdresser. She made what would



A MAP OF THE JOURNEY

ROUTE

1. TRIPOLI
2. DJERBA
3. SFAX
4. KAIROUAN
5. HAMMAMET
6. TUNIS
7. BONE
8. DJIDJELLI
9. ALGIERS
10. ORAN
11. TLEMCEN
12. OUJDA
13. FEZ
14. TANGIER
15. ALGECIRAS
16. IEREZ
17. SEVILLE
18. CORDOBA
19. BAILEN
20. TOLEDO
21. MADRID
22. SAN SEBASTIAN
23. POITIERS
24. CHENONCEAUX
25. BOULOGNE
26. DOVER

otherwise have been a rather gloomy day into an exhilarating and fascinating experience. Secondly, the French Consul in Oujda who came to our rescue like a fairy godfather. He contacted our friends in Fez, changed our money, arranged a hotel for the night, bought our train tickets to Fez and personally ensured that everyone did his best for us. All this in spite of the fact that he had only arrived in Oujda from Poland the previous day and was about to go away with his family for the Easter weekend. No one could have done more and his help was indeed timely. Lastly, but in a rather different category, the unknown gentleman we met in the Hotel Zalah in Fez, who offered to act as our guide during our first visit to the city when we arrived too late to meet the guide who had been arranged for us. He devoted the entire day to us, taking us out in the morning, afternoon and again after dinner. Although he spoke very little English he was an excellent guide and drove us round in his open Chevrolet with the wireless blaring cheerfully.

He behaved with great courtesy and correctness, refusing any payment. However, he was pleased to accept two packets of cigarettes which we pressed on him. We came to the conclusion that we bore charmed lives!

To us the kindness and help which we received from these good people was the outstanding feature of the whole enterprise and the memory of it will remain with us long after the details of the journey have been forgotten. We wondered if foreigners would receive the same generous help in this country and we resolved to be specially nice to any foreigners we might meet in the future.

D. H. I. W.

T.A. News

WEEKEND TRAINING—WITH A DIFFERENCE

SEVERAL months ago C.W.R.A.C. 43 (Wx.) Div./Dist. ordained that cooks and orderlies should again be practised in setting up camp and feeding drivers as they came in after a map-reading exercise. Thereafter the Honorary Colonel and C.W.R.A.C. met; the Honorary Colonel was told of the proposed programme and said: "Would you like to use the wing that is only occupied during the three-day event?" So it was that on Saturday, 16th October, we found ourselves on the road to Badminton. The early fog had cleared and the weather was autumnal perfection as we assembled in the side courtyard. The wing allotted to us consisted of ten bed-



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rooms, a large kitchen (with four Esses installed when Queen Mary stayed at Badminton during the war), scullery and pantry, and the old servants' hall, with multitudinous stags' heads suspiciously regarding the invasion. The gleaming copper pans were a reproach to those struggling with the kettles camp, saucepans aluminium 7-pint and pans frying which we brought with us. The officers were the guests of the Duke and Duchess overnight, so the 20 cooks and orderlies spent Saturday afternoon settling in, cooking their own supper and preparing for the hoped-for arrival of 30 drivers on the morrow (if their map-reading led them aright). In addition to hunting in the morning and feeding and exercising her dogs (seven in the house and 11 outside), the Duchess had arranged for a selection of comedy films to be shown after supper. Friendly relations had been established (who discovered the footman's name was Fred?) and a good night's rest enjoyed, though the hooting of the owls, the belling of the deer and the music of the hounds (at 0630) were a novel—not to say startling—experience to some. After breakfast those not involved in the cooking went to church—though attached to Badminton House it is the parish church of Badminton village. The Duchess then showed the officers round the house and we learnt a little of its three and a half centuries' history. The drivers successfully reached their rendezvous, the Duke and Duchess honoured the officers with their presence at lunch, and the stags' heads looked even more suspicious. Thereafter packing-up proceeded apace, though tourists seemed somewhat startled at the sight of uniformed figures gathering up "W.R.A.C. Entrance" signs. By 1600 hours we were homeward bound—somewhat plaintively comparing our own cottages, flats and villas with a stately home which has "only 60 rooms." Any resemblance between a wing at Badminton and any W.E.T.C. anywhere is purely coincidental. . . .

This be Ghana

Two Expatriates

I MUST confess to being a little startled when an "expert" on Africa gave advice on what clothes to take. "Take a long skirt, a pair of knee-length boots and a pith-helmet," she said. So I stepped ashore in Africa wondering fearfully if I was about to see Major Norman clad thus, with the appropriate foot resting on a dead lion. Nothing of the sort happened, and it was a relief to see the Major looking cool and smart in normal tropical uniform. We have both found the contrast between the imaginary Africa and the real to be at times startling, and at others so close to all we have read that we feel we have been here before.

The beaches are really marvellous—white sand, swaying palms, coconuts and pounding surf, miles and miles of it. Our favourite stretch is near the village of Pram-Pram some 25 miles from Accra, and Major N. has become a "capitalist landowner" complete with half-finished beach hut in a truly superb setting. So we are about to become "sappers" with, of course, a little local help. Terms such as 4×4 timber, shiplap boarding and cries of "Where's the solignum?" and the reply "All over your back" are not uncommon, but we are fast becoming expert in brush handling and, though a lot has brushed off on us, work proceeds at a merry pace. When the heat overcomes us we retire to the warm green sea or to the "bashah" for a snooze. In case you don't know what a "bashah" is, it's a coconut-palm-covered shack which fits nicely into the scenery and provides welcome shade from the tropical sun. The main edifice, when built, will be the "bolt-hole" for emergency exits and in case our sense of humour slips. After a few months here one's sense of humour either doubles or dies, so having both arrived with fairly sound ones we have fallen into the first category and now find difficulty in suppressing it on "important" occasions. This also may be because of the climate and we have noticed it's only the "mad dogs" who walk with us in the midday sun. It's hot, of course, and if one sweats (not glows) it's with great satisfaction to see others doing it too. With average temperatures in the eighties, rising to ninety midday, and humidity at about 95° , the hot blanket of air wraps itself around one to enable us to enjoy, or otherwise, the expensive luxury of a "Turkish bath." However, each evening at about 5 o'clock a delightful breeze blows over Accra from the sea and makes the climate almost ideal.

We haven't seen any large game yet except crocodiles and baboons, and they were caged in the grounds of Accra's luxury hotel! But although Accra is a modern city by African standards, a short ride into the outskirts shows that there "be the bush" and Africa. The countryside is tremendously colourful with lush greens blending into the rich red laterite soil, which is also what most of the side roads are made of. Inland from the Accra plain the silk-cotton trees soar into the sky to make one visualise, because of their enormous height and girth, the primeval forest long since departed.

Having set the jungle scene we say that ju-ju and tetish live with us and Major N. has already had a "sign" put on her car. Consider the surprise one day on inspecting the car tyres to find a turnip-like object protruding behind the off-side wheel. Closer investigation and much tugging revealed that the "turnip-top" was of a rubbery substance attached to yards and yards (at least six feet) of white wood with mysterious symmetrical holes down its length. Roars of laughter and cries of "Awuni" brought forth her houseboy, who pronounced with a beaming smile and many giggles that this "be good ju-ju." After much interrogation the mystery of how it got into the car body drainage hole, and who put it there, remains unsolved. In consequence, apart from the acquired nervous habit of daily checks to ensure all wheels are still on and increasing one's life insurance, it makes a good dining-out story.

One most interesting experience was a visit to the Psychic and Traditional Healing Centre at Larteh-Kubease where drumming, dancing, spirit possession and pouring of libation were the order of the day. The "High Priestess" and her Junior Satellites started off with a swaying, hypnotic dance to a continual background of drumming and deep-throated chanting. It was splendid to watch the twitching bodies and we were full of admiration at the physical stamina maintained in prolonged dancing in a confined area at a temperature in the nineties. After an hour of dancing our guide told us that the "High Priestess" was demanding to know who the "strangers" were (this, of course, was us) and after a hurried explanation the pronouncement was that libation must be offered to the gods. We had come prepared and, armed with a bottle of John Haig whisky, presented with due deference, the pouring of libation began. This consisted of sipping a small amount, if you liked whisky, or pouring it on the ground if you did not. As the sun was not over the "yardarm" (British Navy influence) we did the latter; however, after another hour and a half we created our own "yardarm" and when the second bottle appeared we drank gratefully, declaring that possession by good "Scots Spirit" was indeed an entrancing thing!

Referring to the tradition of libations in Ghana, after a recent traffic accident the accused driver was exonerated from drunken driving by successfully pleading that he was not drunk in charge but had been pouring a libation around his wrecked vehicle. We are bearing this in mind for future reference.

The W.R.A.C. was represented at the annual "Adwira" festival held recently at Akropong and met the Paramount Chief, whom we found to be a charming gentleman. What a sight this festival was, with the throbbing rhythms from the drums and lines of swaying people in colourful kente cloth following the many chiefs through narrow and crowded streets. A tiny boy wearing a huge gold-feathered headdress also followed closely on the Chief's palanquin borne on the sturdy shoulders of a very tall African. We were told that the boy represented the soul of a dead chief. After dark, when attempting to leave,

some difficulty was experienced in manoeuvring the car through the main street, which was a maze of vehicles of all shapes and sizes. One "Mammy Wagon" crowded with people bore the legend "Look These People, They Talk What They Don't Know," which we thought so apt for much of the human race. Anyway there were headlights blazing, horns hooting and chaos everywhere. After some considerable time and prompted by a restrained comment from Major N. such as "We should organise something, Miss Wolstenholme," the next that was seen of the R.S.M.'s tiny figure was, in the glare of headlights, calmly and competently organising drivers of Cadillacs, Mercedes, Mammy Wagons and the lot. In the meantime Major N. had discovered a Ghanaian corporal amongst the seething crowd and was engaged in deep conversation. This was abruptly terminated by the "dulcet" (!) voice of the R.S.M., some hundred yards along a miraculously cleared street, screaming "For Pete's sake, Ma'am, come on!" and on we came to the cheers and handshakes of the local populace.

The Ghanaians are a naturally happy people and the greeting of "Good morning, Sah-Mam," is normal. The habit of occasional elevation to one of importance can be disconcerting as happened at the Accra Sports Stadium. We were told that rather than circle the arena stands we must walk across the centre of the arena because "You be chiefs." Our subsequent nonchalant stroll, we hope, resembled that of chiefs. Sometimes we find that tomorrow will always do for something that *must* be done today, and bargaining, whether for an orange or a new Training Depot, is also a must, so fall into line or go "bush." As a constant reminder of this we have a short motto which is flashed out when troubles beset us: "It's the greatest mistake to do nothing because you can do only a little."

We cannot end this story of Ghana without mentioning the very handsome Canadian captain at the Military Academy who said, in his slow drawl, that he went to collect his car from the Tema docks and found that when being lowered from the ship the car had been dropped rather heavily. But "This," he said, with a glassy look in his eyes, "could happen anywhere, so what did it matter if the bonnet was smashed in, the wing hanging off and all the windows shattered?" Now his eyes took on a mad gleam as he said, "But what really made me blow my top was when I saw the footprints going over the top of the roof!" This possibly typifies things that can and do happen, and since the uneducated Ghanaian has eliminated "is" and "are" from the English vocabulary, they will agree and say, "This be true, this be Ghana."

Unit News

12 INDEPENDENT COMPANY

THIS unit has been well represented at various events in London recently. A group were present at the El Alamein Reunion and we also went to the Festival of

Remembrance in the Albert Hall, where we had a member of the unit performing in the Irish Dancing Team. A detachment went up to the Festival of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey and all groups were complimented on their turnout and bearing.

Our hockey team in their new blue and black colours are now a familiar sight either off practising or away to matches. They have been doing well in their matches so far and there has been a distinct improvement on last year's standard.

We have just held a clerks' upgrading course from BIII to BII. Twenty-four of our own women and two from 6 Indep. Coy., Woolwich, took part. They all seemed to enjoy it and found it most interesting, but the main impression was that the women who worked at the Ministry of Defence enjoyed the opportunity to get back into uniform for two weeks! The results of the course were received with joy by most students, as 21 out of the 26 women taking the test passed.

We were pleased and honoured by the visit paid to us on 1st December, 1965, by Brigadier Dame Mary Railton, D.B.E., Deputy Controller Commandant. Dame Mary spoke with many of the women and left saying how much she had enjoyed her visit.

On 4th December, 1965, a group from the unit went on a trip to Stratford-on-Avon and Coventry. Although the weather was traditionally wet it did nothing to impair the cheerful spirits of everyone. The modern design of the cathedral produced heated arguments and many varied opinions. Everyone returned to camp tired, but happy and contented with a day well spent.

29 COMPANY

WINTER seemed to arrive in Rheindahlen all too quickly, and a considerable amount of snow fell in November—much earlier than usual. However, the chilly wintry weather spurred both ski and skating enthusiasts to active participation, and skating once a week for many members of the unit has now started. Two officers from the unit also hope to take part in the Army Ski Championships at Oberjoch, and have already started skiing, thanks to the earlier falls of snow.

The numbers in the unit have increased in leaps and bounds, and it is sincerely hoped that the younger members, who have recently arrived direct from training, will enjoy themselves and explore much of Germany and the surrounding countryside whilst they are stationed over here. We have lost a number of senior ranks to postings to hotter climates, and wish them well in their new appointments.

HEADQUARTERS AND TRAINING ESTABLISHMENT, W.R.A.C. PROVOST

THE last few days before Christmas always seem to go by with a rush and this year, at Kensington, has been no exception.

The junior ranks had their Christmas lunch on 21st December and this was followed in the evening by a very successful dance in the Junior Ranks' Club. That morning

a mixed basketball/netball match was held with London District Provost Company, R.M.P.—officers and senior ranks versus junior ranks. The rules were somewhat doubtful, but the umpire blew up every so often and awarded several penalties for good measure. It was a hilarious game and ended with the satisfactory score of 10-all. The previous night a visit was paid to the Scala Theatre to see the pantomime *Peter Pan*, which everyone enjoyed.

Several members of the unit went carol-singing on two evenings in aid of the Children's Society—armed with official collecting boxes and carol sheets, giving a fairly varied repertoire of carols. A total of £10 10s. was collected—a splendid achievement and a very satisfactory contribution to this worthy cause.

Twelve (maximum number allowed) members of the unit visited Northcliffe House in Fleet Street on 17th December, 1965, to see the production of the *Daily Mail*. The visit began at 9 p.m. when we were shown into the London News Room into which are fed news stories from all over the world. The room was very brightly lit and there were row upon row of desks at which sub-editors in their shirt-sleeves were busy editing the stories to fit the layout of the paper and writing headings and captions.

Nearby was the Tape Room where teleprinters for all the news agencies—Reuter, Associated Press, etc.—are constantly watched as they electrically relay a world-wide coverage of events. It was exciting to realise that we might be the first to read about a big news "break" as we stood watching the teleprinters typing out their news.

We were then taken downstairs to the Linotype machine room where the typesetting is done. Each machine has a different kind of type. The operators, using a keyboard similar to a typewriter's, tap out the lines of type from molten metal. We were given a demonstration of how one of these complicated machines works and were all allowed to type out our names—so we all walked away with a souvenir, our own personal signature in block in heavy lead!

We were shown a copy of the first *Daily Mail* to be printed, dated 4th May, 1896. It was amusing to see the old advertisements and to read some of the items in the "Personal" column.

In the next room the assembled lead pages were laid out locked in their frames and we had fun trying to read the back-to-front news. When each page is ready a papier-mâché mould is made from it and from this plates are cast which are bolted on to the rotary presses. When the last plate has been bolted on all is ready for the presses to run. They are fed by enormous reels containing more than five miles of paper, and print, cut, fold, count and eject the paper as copies of the *Daily Mail* ready for distribution.

We were given coffee and biscuits before we left, clutching a copy of the *Daily Mail* for the following day, which we knew was literally fresh from the press!

In November the W.R.A.C. Provost Training Wing

moved to the Royal Military Police Depot at Chichester—the first stage in the integration of the W.R.A.C. Provost and the R.M.P. Capt. C. L. Swire and W.O.II Booker are now busy instructing on the new 12-week course, which includes driving, in the very pleasant and modern surroundings of the R.M.P. Depot Barracks.

During the past three months there have been many changes among the policewomen stationed in U.K. We have welcomed back a few from overseas—S/Sgt. Walton, Cpl. Mitchell, L/Cpl. Thompson and L/Cpl. Watt from S.H.A.P.E. and W.O.II Booker from Berlin—but we have waved goodbye to many more.

Our ex-R.S.M., W.O.I J. Edwards, is now R.S.M. at the W.R.A.C. Depot, where we hope she will have a very happy and enjoyable tour.

Several senior ranks have been posted overseas: W.O.II Stevenson to Cyprus; W.O.II Telford to Rheindahlen, B.A.O.R.; W.O.II McIntosh to Singapore; Sgt. Marriott to Berlin. We congratulate W.O.II Hurrell, who has obtained her commission and is now Capt. Hurrell and stationed at Hounslow.

Five junior ranks have also gone overseas: L/Cpl. Rennie to Cyprus; Cpl. Bale, L/Cpl. Back, L/Cpl. Brown and L/Cpl. Rudd to B.A.O.R.

And the inevitable few have been discharged: Cpl. Fear and Cpl. Tanner at the end of their engagements; L/Cpl. Hook and L/Cpl. McQuade on marriage.

Officers' Postings

(Up to 31st December, 1965)

Lieut.-Colonel S. A. E. Heaney, M.B.E., T.D., H.Q. Northern Command.
 Lieut.-Colonel E. E. Michell, H.Q. B.A.O.R.
 Major M. G. Campbell, W.R.A.C. College.
 Major F. M. Cook, W.S.L.O. Northern Command.
 Major A. J. H. Hodgkinson, S.O. 3 Edn., Western Command.
 Major E. I. Millington, Depot and Training Centre, W.R.A.C.
 Major E. J. Nolan, W.R.A.C. College.
 Major M. U. Walker, D.A.A.G. A.G. 16(o).
 Capt. (Q.M.) W. D. Andrews, Depot and Training Centre, W.R.A.C.
 Capt. (Q.M.) M. G. Fahy, M.S. & W.R.A.C. Records.
 Capt. J. Hands, R.A.E.C. Instructional Unit, Eastern Command.
 Capt. J. M. Hopkin, R.A.E.C. Instructor, P.T.S. Q.A.R.A.N.C.
 Capt. S. P. Richards, 1 Independent Company, W.R.A.C.
 Capt. E. D. R. Willson, R.A.E.C. Instructor, Depot and Training Centre, W.R.A.C.
 T/Capt. A. I. Cairns, P.S.O. Depot and Training Centre, W.R.A.C.
 T/Capt. S. M. Elderkin, 4 Communications Company.
 T/Capt. A. M. Gelston, 16th Signal Regiment.
 T/Capt. J. Hart, H.Q. C.W.R.A.C., East Lowland District (T.A.).
 T/Capt. E. C. Jackson, S.C. "A" R.S.M.E., Chatham.
 T/Capt. H. J. Murphy, Army Team of Lecturers.
 T/Capt. B. Neville, School of Signals.
 T/Capt. S. C. E. Orr, 16 Independent Company, W.R.A.C.
 Lieut. G. Dexter, 6 Training Regiment, R.C.T.
 Lieut. (Q.M.) I. T. Friend, R.A.E.C. Instructional Unit, B.A.O.R.
 Lieut. N. L. Heath, Depot and Training Centre, W.R.A.C.
 Lieut. D. M. Hurrell, M.T.O., H.Q. Eastern Command.
 Lieut. (Q.M.) G. W. Thompson, 12 Independent Company, W.R.A.C.
 2/Lieut. B. Blueman, 10 Company, W.R.A.C.
 2/Lieut. P. A. Carnell, R.A.C. Centre.
 2/Lieut. P. S. Dale, 8 Independent Company, W.R.A.C.
 2/Lieut. A. A. Hutchison, 12 Independent Company, W.R.A.C.
 2/Lieut. F. M. MacFarlane, 68 Squadron, R.C.T.
 2/Lieut. M. M. McCarthy, H.Q. & T.C., R.A.P.C.
 2/Lieut. L. D. Merrin, 4 Company, W.R.A.C.
 2/Lieut. V. J. Muxworthy, H.Q. Aldershot District (T.A.).
 2/Lieut. E. A. Saxon, 10 Company, W.R.A.C.
 2/Lieut. M. Venmore, 10 Company, W.R.A.C.
 2/Lieut. M. C. Younge, 16th Signal Regiment.

News of Old Comrades

WE have been asked to publish the following message from **Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan**:

"I hear that the members at the A.T.S. Dinner kindly drank my health. Here are my best thanks and most friendly good wishes to all concerned."

We congratulate **Lieut.-Colonel N. Christy**, A.D.W.R.A.C. Western Command, on being the only woman competitor in the Inter-Services Junior Gliding Championship at Bicester, and **O/Cdt. (now 2/Lieut.) Lesley Reynolds** on gaining all three awards on the last Officer Training Course at the W.R.A.C. College,

Camberley. She won the ceremonial sash, the certificate of merit and the history essay prize. We also congratulate **Sgt. S. Stephenson** for her successful appearance in the ITV quiz show "Take Your Pick." After correctly answering three questions Sgt. Stephenson used her key to open box 5, which brought her a polaroid colour camera, complete with flashgun and bulbs, as a prize.

Mrs. Maureen Lees writes to tell us that she and her friends the "Good Neighbours" have moved their display centre to 17 The Rake, Bromborough, where there is a large workshop and plenty of floor space.

Twin Record?



Sgt. May Briant



Sgt. Marjorie Briant

Photos by Natural Fotos

THE twin sisters Sgt. Marjorie and Sgt. May Briant, pictured above, retired from the W.R.A.C. last year with a total of 51 years' service between them. Is this a record?

Both had held the appointment of Chief Clerk and

Sgt. Marjorie was awarded the B.E.M. in the 1956 New Year Honours List for outstanding service. We understand they have settled down in Eastbourne and wish them many years of happy retirement.

Branch News



Stafford Branch Coffee Evening. Left to right: Major D. Jarvis, Mrs. C. M. Jupp, Miss M. E. Norcott, Mrs. B. Willson, Mrs. N. Pearson, Mrs. A. Dair

BATH. A very successful Sale of Work was held early in November and as a result £25 was sent to the Princess Royal Memorial Fund; £5 to the W.R.A.C. Benevolent Fund and £5 to the Mental Welfare Society. Gifts of money have also been sent this Christmas to our refugee friends who are now living in London and Barton-on-Sea. Our annual Christmas Dinner was held at the Fernley Hotel on 8th December and a most enjoyable time was had by all who attended. We welcome two new members to the Branch, Mrs. Lawson and Miss Holmes, whom we see often, and we also welcome Mrs. Piper, who we hope will be able to join us sometimes, although at the moment she lives a considerable distance from Bath. Our thanks go to all our members who support all we strive to do and who make this small Branch such a lively and active one.

BELFAST. Since our last report the Branch had a most enjoyable outing along the Antrim Coast Road, stopping for a meal at Carrickfergus. We had a "Tupperware" party in October which realised a profit of £1 6s. for the Branch funds! Our Annual General Meeting was held at the beginning of November; Mrs. Neilly was re-elected as Hon. Secretary and Mrs. Mitchell as Hon. Treasurer.

It was decided at the meeting to send subscriptions of 5 gns. each to the W.R.A.C. Benevolent Fund and to the Princess Royal Memorial Fund.

BRADFORD. At our A.G.M. held in November, Miss Gummersall was re-elected President; the other officers remain the same, but with some new members on the social side—Jean Bower, Dorothy O'Neil, Norah Houldsworth, Ida Webster, with Monica Bradley. We hope to provide an interesting programme. Their efforts at our Christmas Party, along with assistance from Berthe Henegan and Ivy Weston, B.E.M., were much appreciated. We had a most enjoyable evening and a sumptuous supper of seasonable fare. We were pleased to welcome friends of members and Robert and Kenneth Webster, also Marian Wilkinson and Berthe Mersh, who is recovering from an operation. Before this issue of THE LIONESS Miss Gummersall will have celebrated her 90th birthday on 13th January, 1966. All our members, and indeed all members of Northern Area who know her so well, wish to convey their congratulations and wish her Many Happy Returns. Our best wishes are sent to Miss Cocksedge, who is still in Ward 1, Halifax General Hospital, as the result of a fall when she crushed her

spine. Also to Mrs. Dolly Ross, who is recovering from a virus which prevented her from attending the Northern Area Reunion, to Miss Nellie Julian, O.B.E., and Mrs. Ette Wilson and all members who are indisposed and unable to attend meetings. Congratulations to Audrey Foulds, now a corporal on "R" Type W.R.A.C. (T.A.).

GLASGOW. Since our last report we had a very successful Bring and Buy Sale, which was held in the Club in October. Our Annual Dinner was held in the Ca'Doro this year in November, at which there were representatives from the Ayr and Edinburgh Branches. Our speaker was Mrs. Wm. Whitelaw, an ex-President of this Branch. The Dinner was not so well attended as usual, but was enjoyed by all who were there. In December we were guests of the Club at their Annual Christmas Dinner and after a very enjoyable meal we had a rare old "chin-wag."

HEADQUARTER AREA. Once more Christmas has come and gone. As ever it has been a very real pleasure to exchange greetings and news with many faithful correspondents. Among these Mrs. Michael Speed of New Jersey spent a lovely summer holiday in Bermuda. Mrs. Batterham, after travelling all over Australia in a caravan with her son, has now come to a halt in the Northern Territory, where she is keeping an eye on a disused mine. Being in the heart of the Bush 32 miles from doctor and shops and 210 from Darwin does not worry this veteran of the First World War. Mrs. Edith Evans received our Christmas greetings on her 80th birthday, having just come out of hospital. She went out to Sydney in 1920, so we appreciate her yearly greeting very much indeed. Mrs. Norah Nicoll sends news from Canada of a summer not much more agreeable than ours. We hope her children have now fully recovered from the after-effects of German measles. Miss C. I. McDonald, having left West Kilbride for Brighton, has now become a member of that Branch. We rejoice that she will be in closer touch with members of the Association.

As members will know, this year the Grand Reunion is to be held in Scotland. Will any H.Q. Area members who intend coming please send a postcard to me at 2 Myrtle Cottage, Netherbury, Bridport, so that we can arrange a rendezvous at the Reunion or means of recognition.

LEICESTER. The Phoenix Theatre, Leicester, was our venue in October, to see Cy Grant in *Othello*, and proved a most enjoyable evening. The Christmas Party was held at the W.R.A.C./T.A. Centre, where the T.A. girls had kindly left their Christmas decorations up, which provided a real festive atmosphere. Each member produced enough food for one person and the result was an abundance of food—varied and appetising. Kath Hockley and Watty (Watkins), T.A. sergeants, helped to lay out the buffet. The new R.S.M., Miss Hodgson, kindly helped with admin. arrangements and produced the necessary "Christmas Spirits." A most enjoyable evening came to an end all too soon. Our Chairman, Miss Nellie Whitbread, Q.M.A.A.C., has not enjoyed good health recently and the inclement weather has prevented her

from attending the meetings. We wish her well in 1966 and hope the year will be kind to her. The P.S.O., Capt. Quarrie, W.R.A.C./T.A., and the staff have visited May Rodgers at her home in Barrow-on-Soar and we hope to see her at our meeting when the weather improves.

LONDON. We have continued to have good attendances at our meetings. In October we held a successful Bring and Buy Sale. In November we were given an evening of colour slides by Mr. Eaton which covered a variety of subjects. On 11th November two of our members were present at the Field of Remembrance, when the Queen Mother was there. Twelve members attended the parade at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday, and some members were at the service in Westminster Abbey. Our A.G.M. was held in December, when our officers and committee were elected. The year ended with the Christmas Party, a very enjoyable evening with refreshments, games and singing.

PRESTON. The North-Western Secretaries' Annual Conference was held at Preston on 18th September. It was a great pleasure to meet Lieut.-Colonel N. Christy for the first time for some of us. The Preston Branch catered for tea and there was an enjoyable get-together of secretaries and friends over a well-enjoyed meal. Preston is, like other branches, hit by weather conditions and lack of attendances, although we do manage our commitments for charities. We wish each branch the very best in 1966.

SOUTHAMPTON. At the 17th Annual General Meeting on 6th October Mrs. Ruth Young was elected Chairman of the Branch, Miss Beryl Blampied as Treasurer and Mrs. Audrey Pickett as Secretary. Members were very grateful to Mrs. Young and Miss Blampied for continuing in office for the second and third year respectively, and a vote of thanks was given to Mrs. Vera Hoare, the retiring secretary, for so ably carrying out her duties in this capacity.

Activities were restricted during last year to social gatherings each month, the number attending meetings being too small to warrant speakers, but every effort is being made to keep alive interest in the Club. Our Annual Dinner was held at the Royal Hotel in April and a most pleasant evening was spent at the end of June at the delightful home of one of our members, Mrs. Barbara Thackeray, who lives in the country at Easton, near Winchester. We managed to fill a small coach to take us to the Southern Area Reunion at Claverton Manor, near Bath, an event which was thoroughly enjoyed, and we always look forward to this annual opportunity to meet up with friends in neighbouring branches. Six members attended the Grand Reunion in London and three of us spent a delightful—and most enlightening, it might be added—afternoon at the Open Day of the W.R.A.C. Depot, Guildford. The museum has grown since our last visit and is even more interesting, and all the new buildings with their wonderful facilities are, naturally, a vast improvement on the old huts. We were able to see where the Princess Royal's Memorial Rose

Garden will be and, at our last meeting, it was agreed to forward a donation from the Branch for this Fund.

WEYMOUTH and PORTLAND. In April we enjoyed a very pleasant evening; a talk was given by Miss Pitman, who told us of her many experiences during the war. Members and friends attended a demonstration held at the local Gas Showrooms. Mrs. B. Black and Mrs. K. M. Guiver represented the Association at the Mayor's Choosing Ceremony, which was held at the Pavilion Theatre, Weymouth. An officer of the Dorset Fire Service gave a most interesting talk on "Fire in the Home." All members decided to be much more careful in future. Six members attended the Southern Area Reunion, held at the American Museum, Claverton Manor, near Bath. The summer session closed with a most enjoyable afternoon tea, held at the home of our Treasurer, Miss A. Scott. Early in September members and friends had an evening tour of a brewery at Dorchester. The Annual Jumble Sale was held on 18th September; much hard work was done by all, and it proved to be very successful. Several members attended an Autumn Cream Carnival at the Gloucester Hotel; many returned home with good prizes. Early in November a party was arranged by a "Tupperware" representative. Miss A. Scott attended the Remembrance Day Service held at the local Cenotaph; she also laid the W.R.A.C. Association Chaplet. 27th November was the date of our ninth Annual Dinner Dance, which was held at Fortes. Capt. W. A. J. Clements and Mrs. Clements were guests of honour. All members were very sorry to hear that the Treasurer, Miss A. Scott, will soon be leaving Weymouth. However, she is not moving too far away and we hope to see her at some of the meetings again. Miss A. Scott is going to Bournemouth and it is hoped she will enjoy attending the meetings there. Congratulations were also given to Mrs. P. McElwaine on attaining a commission in the T.A.

WIMBLEDON. It is some time since we went into print, but we are glad to say we are still very much alive and flourishing. In April last we had a very interesting talk by a member of the National Society for Mentally Handicapped Children, and in May our President, Brigadier Dame Mary Railton, very kindly entertained us with her interesting coloured slides on her visit to the Holy Land. We ended the season in June with a general get-together; it is always nice to have a natter! Some of us spent a very enjoyable and interesting afternoon at the W.R.A.C. Depot Open Day on 7th August, and were very much impressed with all we saw. After our summer recess in July and August we opened in September with a special Bring and Buy Sale in aid of the Princess Royal Memorial Fund, which proved to be a great success. In October we once more assembled at the Spread Eagle Hotel, Epsom, for our Annual Dinner. We held our Annual General Meeting in November, the present Officers and Committee being re-elected for another year, and in December we had our Christmas Party, which was enjoyed by all.

Retirement

Lieut.-Colonel R. D. Allerton, M.B.E.

LIEUT.-COLONEL ALLERTON, who retires later this month, joined the A.T.S. in October 1939, was commissioned in May 1941, and won rapid promotion to the rank of Senior Commander. She commanded the Jamaica Coy. A.T.S. from 1946 to 1948 and, on her return, was promoted Chief Commander and posted as A.D.A.T.S. (later A.D.W.R.A.C.) I A.A. Group, an appointment she held until she attended the W.R.A.C. Staff College in 1952. After the course, like so many others of her age and service, she reverted to her substantive rank of Major.

Lieut.-Colonel Allerton is one of our most travelled officers; as well as her A.T.S. tour in Jamaica, she held the appointment of D.A.A.G. at G.H.Q. M.E.L.F. for three years and, after regaining the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, did two years as C.W.R.A.C. in FARELF. This was followed by a home posting to London District, but before long she was off again to her last appointment as A.D.W.R.A.C. in B.A.O.R.

We wish her a happy retirement and hope that she will enjoy being able to settle down to civilian life after more than 26 years of "following the drum."

Remembrance Day

D. Williams (ex-Cpl.)

THIS morning, the morning of Remembrance Day, 14th November, 1965, I achieved a 20-year-old ambition, which was one day to march through the crowded streets of London.

I had joined the A.T.S. in 1945 and had once or twice hoped to parade with A.T.S. or the W.R.A.C. but was never successful, so here I was at last marching with the W.R.A.C. Association and British Legion members. A simple service at the Cenotaph, then away behind the Band down Whitehall, Parliament Square and skirting St. James's Park back to the Horse Guards Parade. Away behind the Band—and how many Bands had I marched behind and how many Remembrance Days had I seen in my 15 years in the Forces? From the bleak plains of Salisbury to the wintry beauties of Austria, and the sun-baked sands of Egypt and the silent, watchful crowds in Germany.

The Band grew louder and I was back once more alongside the Park, with the brightly coloured leaves falling from the trees, reminding me of the poppy petals that fall every year in the Albert Hall in memory of our comrades. Beside me on my left marched a little old lady, a veteran of the 1914-18 War, who would be 80 in July and who had told me previously this would be her last march. I looked around at the other members, nearly all grey haired, who, like myself, would one day be on their "last march." When would it end, or would it never end, the remembering of fallen comrades and friends whose passing had left an empty space in our hearts?

Obituary

Helen, Duchess of Northumberland

MEMBERS will have read with regret of the death of the Dowager Duchess of Northumberland, Mistress of the Robes to our Commandant-in-Chief, who was indeed a fairy godmother to the A.T.S.

The Duchess of Northumberland's A.T.S. Comforts Fund, to which the Duchess gave not only her name but also unstintingly of her time, thought and organising ability, served the A.T.S. during five and a half years of war. Many will remember with gratitude the kindness, understanding and friendly interest with which their needs were met.

The parent Fund in Eaton Square, under its two Hon. Secretaries Miss Lethbridge and Miss Worthington-Evans, sent out more than one million gifts to all ranks of the Service. Over 54 miles of curtain material helped to brighten drab huts and barrack rooms, not to mention the piles of cushions, chairs, rugs, bath mats, games and smaller items too numerous to list. How many sick bays were cheered by gay patchwork quilts and cold feet warmed by that almost unprocurable luxury, a rubber hot-water bottle? Most imaginative of all, how many wartime brides remember how they walked down the aisle wearing a complete bridal outfit—dress, veil and even shoes—lent by the Fund?

The work of the A.T.S. Comforts Fund was indeed a labour of love and human understanding, and its sponsor and president the Duchess of Northumberland will be remembered with affection and gratitude as long as wartime thoughts survive.

Mrs. J. E. Donnell

PRESTON Branch regret to announce the death of Mrs. J. E. Donnell after a painful illness. Mrs. Donnell was a life member of the Association and served in the A.T.S. and W.R.A.C. as a Clerk G.D. and Administrative Warrant Officer.

Mrs. N. W. Harding

ALDERSHOT Branch announce with regret the death of Mrs. Nora Harding (*née* Dalley), who served in the W.R.A.C. (T.A.) from 1949 to 1958 and only resigned owing to her marriage and family commitments. She joined the Association as soon as the Aldershot Branch was formed. She had a charming friendly personality and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Miss L. J. Harlow

YORK Branch regret to announce the death of Miss Lilian Harlow at Scarborough on 3rd September, 1965. Miss Harlow served in the A.T.S. from 1942 to 1945 as a Corporal Storewoman; she had been a member of the Association since 1947.

Mrs. G. Jordan

IT is with great sorrow that I announce the death of Mrs. G. Jordan on 9th November, 1965. She had been

ill for three years and bore her affliction with great patience and fortitude.

As Ada Bowers she joined the Women's Legion and afterwards the W.A.A.C. She served as a waitress in the Officers' Mess at No. 3 Rest Camp, Folkestone. In all our service I never saw Ada lose her temper or heard her complain during her illness.

M. C.

Mrs. A. Pembroke

WE regret to announce the death of Mrs. Alice Pembroke after a long illness, cheerfully borne. Mrs. Pembroke had been a life member of the Association since 1941. She joined the A.T.S. in 1938 and was promoted to the rank of W.O.II; unfortunately her Army career was cut short as she had to be discharged on medical grounds in 1942. Mrs. Pembroke led an active public life; as well as taking a keen interest in local government she was, for many years, President of the Pitsea British Legion, Women's Section, President of the Nursing Cadets, St. John Ambulance, and Treasurer of Basildon After Care Association. Her passing will be a great loss to the local community that she loved and served so faithfully.

Miss I. J. Russell

WE announce with regret the death of Miss I. J. Russell, who was a life member of the Association. Miss Russell's seven years' service in the A.T.S. included a tour as an Ordnance Officer at G.H.Q. M.E.L.F.

In Memory

The following donations have been received in memory of the late Mrs. Roberta Sykes:

From Western Area, £10 to the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund.

From Cheshire Branch, £15 15s. to the W.R.A.C. Benevolent Fund.

The National Army Museum

THE National Army Museum is at present housed in converted buildings in the grounds of the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst. Since it was opened by Her Majesty The Queen, about five years ago, valuable exhibits have poured in from all over the country but, owing to lack of space, about 70 per cent of them have ended up in storerooms, instead of being on show to the public.

An ideal site for the National Army Museum is available in the grounds of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, and plans for the new building have been drawn up. All that is lacking is the money which must be raised by private subscriptions. £352,000 has already been

promised, and this is an excellent start, but the whole-hearted support of all serving and ex-Servicemen and women is required if the National Collection is to be properly housed at a total cost of approximately £1,000,000.

In launching the appeal Sir Arthur Bryant says: "We have so much of which to be proud; future generations, as well as our own, have a right to be able to see the story of our historic Army."

Members will recall that Q.M.A.A.C. and A.T.S. uniforms, etc., were recently given to the National Army Museum. Unfortunately these are still held in store, this means that we have a personal interest in ensuring that more space is made available so that the public can see something of the part played by women serving with the Army since 1917.

Donations should be sent to:

The Secretary,
National Army Museum Building Appeal,
Lansdowne House,
Berkeley Square, London, W.1.

Talent and Personality

A NEW talent and personality competition for members of the W.R.A.C. in Southern Command has recently been organised with individual and group awards.

The talent phase included such activities as needlework, cooking, singing, sketching, photography and script writing and took into account initiative, originality and the amount of work involved. The Group Section, for unit teams, was wider in scope with emphasis on help to the aged, orphans or other children.

The prizes were presented by Lady Darling, the wife of the G.O.C.-in-C. Southern Command. The W.R.A.C. from 6 Training Regiment, R.C.T., at Yeovil won first prize in the Group Section. They produced a three-act revue, with a cast of 40, which attracted an audience of over 500. The same unit also gained second place for Scottish Dancing and a fourth placing for Youth Hostelling.

Pte. Eva Wakefield of the W.R.A.C. College won first prize in the individual contest with a poem as her special contribution. Her unit was placed third in the Group Section for their work with old people and orphans.

London Gazette

PROMOTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS REGULAR ARMY

Major: Capts. A. Bray, M. R. Ashplant.
Captain: Lieut. J. Hands, B.A.
Captain (Q.M.): Lieut. (Q.M.) E. J. Neal.
Lieutenant: 2/Lieuts. M. J. Evans, A. I. Cairns, E. H. Seivewright,
M. L. Oldridge, P. S. Dale, B.A.
2/Lieutenant: J. Hands, B.A., W.O.I M. J. Evans, L. M. Oldridge and
P. S. Dale (on probation) are confirmed in their appointments.
2/Lieutenant (on probation): A. M. Collins, B.Sc., P. S. Dale, B.A.,
B. Blüeman, B.A.

LIMITED SERVICE REGULAR COMMISSIONS

Lieut. P. Ineson.

SHORT SERVICE COMMISSIONS

Lieutenant: 2/Lieut. A. Adamson, M.B.E.
2/Lieutenant: W.O.I A. Adamson, M.B.E.
2/Lieutenant (on probation): E. A. Saxon, B.A.

RETIREMENTS, ETC. REGULAR ARMY

Major M. E. Munro.
Lieut. P. D. Pitt.
2/Lieut. F. E. Gage.

SHORT SERVICE COMMISSIONS

Majors M. Ellis, E. S. Cowper.
Captain D. Richardson.

NEW YEAR HONOURS LIST

O.B.E.: Lieut.-Colonel M. Creagh, W.R.A.C. (T.A.).
M.B.E.: Major M. E. MacLagan.
B.E.M.: W.O.II F. Middleton.

Personal Column

For Sale. No. 1 Dress, good condition. Height 5 ft. 5 in., bust 38 in., hips 40 in. Box No. 1/66.

44 (H.C.) Signal Regiment (Cinque Ports), T.A., has vacancies at Worthing, Tunbridge Wells and Canterbury for W.R.A.C. Sgt. Permanent Staff Instructors (Type "S"). Signals experience desirable. Applicants should hold a current driving licence. Initial engagement for 12 months only. Applications stating full particulars of service should be submitted in writing to: S.R. Signals, 44 (H.C.) Signal Regt. (Cinque Ports), T.A., Yeomanry House, Boxley Road, Maidstone, Kent.

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

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. Tel.: Edinburgh CAL 4952.

Maureen Lees and her friends, the "Good Neighbours," invite you to patronise their permanent display of the work of the war blind and disabled at 17 The Rake, Bromborough. Orders taken. White Elephant Stall to defray costs. Open weekdays 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (Thursdays 1 p.m.).

BRANCH DIRECTORY

Amendments

Branch Secretaries:

Hartlepoons: Mrs. M. Jewell, 21 Whitfield Drive, West Hartlepool, Co. Durham.

6 Indep. Coy.: W.O.II P. J. Halford, Shrapnel Barracks, Stadium Road, Woolwich, S.E.18.

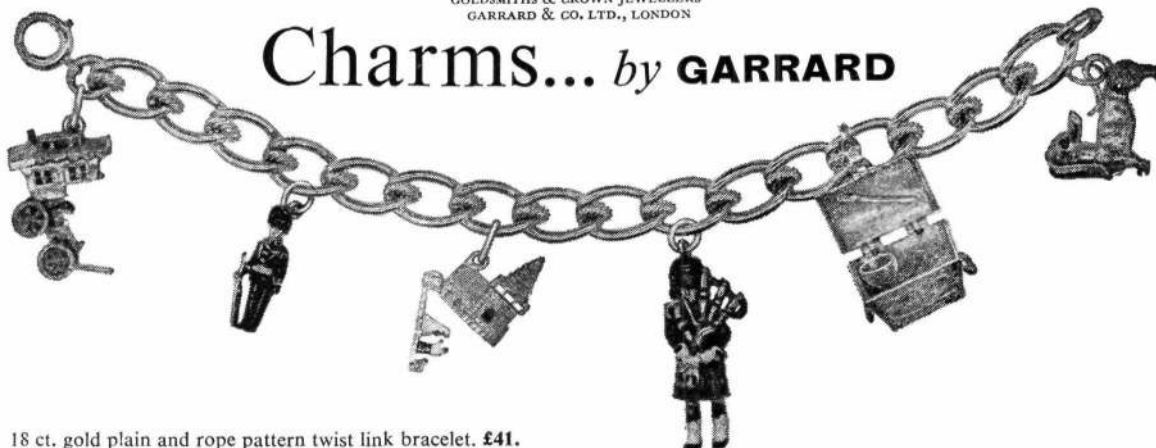
Branch Meetings:

Weymouth and Portland: First and third Monday of each month at the R.A.S.C. (T.A.) Club Room, Bingleaves Barracks, Barracks Road, Weymouth.



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