

THE LIONESS

VOL XXXIX

MAY 1966

No. 2



THE LIONESS

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WHO'S WHO

W.R.A.C. Association,
Duke of York's Headquarters,
King's Road, London, S.W.3.

GENERAL SECRETARY

MAJOR E. B. DIXON (Retd.)

(All correspondence re membership and distribution
of THE LIONESS)

EDITOR

LIEUT.-COLONEL M. S. F. MILLINGTON,

O.B.E., T.D. (Retd.)

(Contributions and personal column advertisements)

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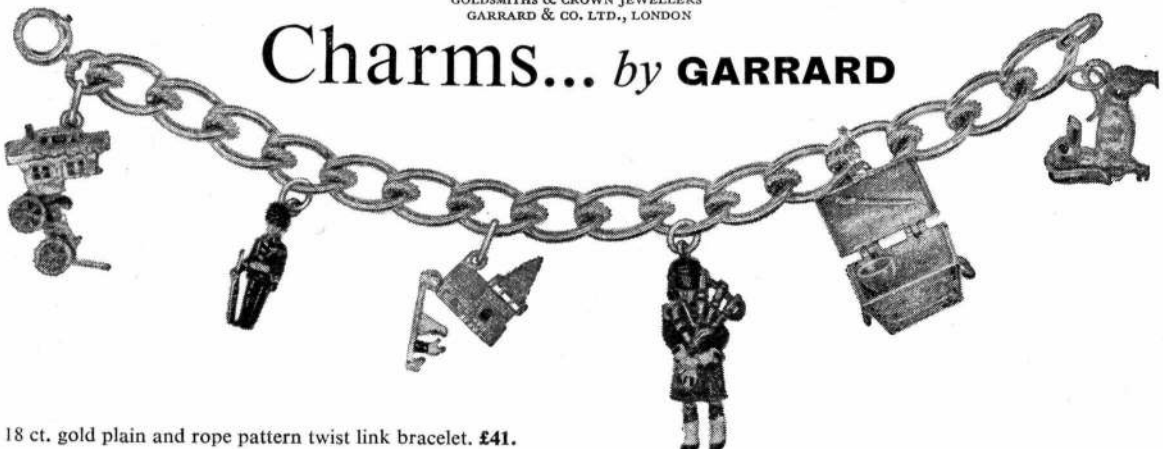
Personal column: 3 lines 4s. 6d., each additional line
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Photo by S. P. Lam

"The Tanglin Hilton" (Warrant Officers and Sergeants' Mess, Singapore)



THE LIONESS

Vol. XXXIX

May, 1966

No. 2

Editorial

THE pessimists who said we were mad, but mad, to travel behind the tartan curtain in March were refuted on Saturday 19th, for the warmth of the Scottish welcome, and the sun which shone all day out of a cloudless sky, went a long way towards making our A.G.M. and Secretaries' Meeting happy and notable occasions. The smart new Town Hall at Milngavie, banked with pot plants and spring flowers, made a perfect setting and we are most grateful to the Committee for all the trouble they had obviously taken to make the necessary arrangements for the invasion from south of the Border. Numbers were slightly down on last year, but many Branches had made a special effort to attend and all the Areas were represented.

Our President, Dame Regina Evans, in her opening address spoke of plans for celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the Women's Services, in May 1967. Full details will be published later in *THE LIONESS* and it is also hoped to obtain wide publicity through the Press, broadcasting and television. Stories of wartime service in Q.M.A.A.C. or the A.T.S. which might be used for this purpose would be welcome and should be sent to the General Secretary NOW. She will forward them to the Public Relations Officer at the Ministry of Defence, who will be consolidating publicity on behalf of all three Services—Navy, Army and Air Force. It is suggested that Branches might take advantage of any publicity in their Areas and launch a recruiting campaign to obtain new members and make 1967 a record year for the Association in more ways than one.

As a result of the increase of subscriptions, which will take effect on 1st January, 1967, 4s. a year will be credited to *THE LIONESS* account. Individual copies and bulk orders have been sold at 1s. each for some time and the price for these will remain unchanged. Members could help to keep the cost of postage down by notifying their changes of address as soon as possible. The recent increase of a halfpenny per copy on stamps added about £30 a year to our postage bill.

The Co-ordinating Committee of British Service and Ex-Service Organisations, on which your Association is represented, is concerned with the need for better parking facilities for disabled drivers, which vary widely in different localities. They feel that these should always include exemption from charges and time limits in all meter zones and the recognition of the official yellow badge throughout the country, irrespective of its place of issue. The councils of Brighton, Bristol, Liverpool,

Luton, Manchester, Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Woolwich already provide these wider facilities and other towns are gradually being persuaded to follow their example. Members living in areas not mentioned above are asked to help by pressing their local council to extend whatever concession they already provide. It is difficult enough for the able-bodied to cope with modern traffic conditions which must be almost impossible for the severely handicapped. Among them are some of our own members whose welfare is very much our concern.

NEW WARRANT OFFICERS AND SERGEANTS' MESS, SINGAPORE

THE Commander Far East Land Forces, Lieut.-General Sir Alan Jolly, K.C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., officially opened the new Warrant Officers and Sergeants' Mess in Singapore on 4th October, 1965. He and Lady Jolly, and those invited to the ceremony, toured the Mess and "christened" the bar afterwards.

The Mess has been planned to get the best of both worlds—air-conditioned bedrooms, but with public rooms opening on to a patio and terraces, ideal for entertaining in the tropics. The bedrooms with their teak fittings look rather like ships' cabins, and the teak air-conditioning fitment in the bar adds to this effect. Its position on the bluff overlooking the sports grounds, its eight-storey skyscraper height and its modern décor have named it quickly the "Tanglin Hilton."

Association News

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 1966

THE Annual General Meeting was held at 3 p.m. on Saturday, 19th March, 1966, in the Town Hall, Milngavie, Scotland, the President, Dame Regina Evans, D.B.E., presiding.

The President opened the meeting by speaking of the loss the Association had suffered by the sudden death, last March, of Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal. Dame Regina Evans also spoke of the death, last June, of the Dowager Duchess of Northumberland, and of Lady Aspley's death in January this year.

Members present stood in silent remembrance for one minute.

Dame Regina said she felt the good weather was a welcome to Scotland, and deemed it a great honour to preside at the meeting. She continued by saying that next year would be the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the Women's Services. It was proposed to make it a celebration year for all three Services combined. The

arrangements were being sponsored by the Ministry of Defence, and the W.R.N.S., W.R.A.C. and W.R.A.F. were represented on the Committee.

The President said she hoped everybody would enjoy the day. It was intended to hold a Drumhead Service in the Albert Hall during the morning, with a Garden Party in the afternoon. An exact date could not be given, but it would probably be in May 1967 and special arrangements would be made for railway tickets for trains to London.

Dame Regina concluded by reading a telegram from Miss K. Acland, O.B.E., and messages from Colonel D. H. I. Wilson, O.B.E., Chairman of Southern Area, and Mrs. Wentworth Reeve, O.B.E., T.D., J.P.

The General Secretary read apologies for absence from 50 members.

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday, 13th March, 1965, having been circulated in the May issue of THE LIONESS, were taken as read and signed as correct.

2. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting.

3. Election of Officers

- (a) *Chairman of Council.* As there was only one nomination the President declared Colonel Hammond, C.B.E., to be elected. The President moved a hearty vote of thanks from the Chair to Miss V. K. Stead for her services as Chairman for the last two years. This was carried unanimously.
- (b) *Council Vice-Presidents.* The four Vice-Presidents of Council—Mrs. N. Giles, Miss B. Harvie Anderson, O.B.E., T.D., M.P., Mrs. A. J. Marsden-Smedley and Miss M. M. Thomson, T.D.—were eligible for re-election. As there were no further nominations the President declared them to be elected.

Reports

4. Report of Council

The Report of Council (printed elsewhere) was read by Miss V. K. Stead, O.B.E., T.D., J.P., Chairman of Council.

5. Hon. Treasurer

Mrs. A. J. Stevenson reported that investments had been increased by the purchase of a £50 Bond in the British Legion Housing Association. The market value was still below cost of investments, but had risen slightly since the previous financial year. Subscriptions for 1965 were down on the 1964 figures. This was reflected in the capitation fees paid to Branches. THE LIONESS had been underwritten by £187 17s. 9d. Printing and especially postage had increased by nearly £140. Administrative expenses had increased, partly due to bank charges, which the Association had never before had to pay. Sundries showed an increase of £40. This included the

administrative expenses of the appeal for the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund. Council had agreed to pay these as the Association's contribution to the Memorial Fund.

The Reunion account had also shown a loss of £92 10s. 6d. However, in spite of subsidising THE LIONESS and the Reunions to a total of £280 8s. 3d. which, Mrs. Stevenson said, were two of the Association's most valuable activities, £50 had been invested, and a balance of £117 7s. 9d. carried forward to the current year.

The Treasurer concluded by presenting the Audited Accounts to the meeting, copies being available for inspection in the hall.

6. "The Lioness"

The Editor reported that the rising cost of living had again caught up with THE LIONESS. Due to rising costs of production new estimates for printing THE LIONESS were obtained from three printers. Eventually Council decided to place the contract with the R.A. Press, starting with the August number. A minimum trade increase of 3½ per cent would have to be counted on each year and strict economy would be necessary. Items might have to be cut or omitted to keep down to 20 pages per issue. Blocks would have to be paid for and should again be sent whenever possible. Colonel Millington thanked contributors for the interesting articles sent in during the year and ended by saying that Q.M.A.A.C. items would be particularly welcome for a special number, as part of the celebrations of the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the Women's Services next year.

7. Reports of Committees

(a) *A.T.S./W.R.A.C. Benevolent Funds.* Brigadier Dame Mary Railton, D.B.E., said that the report covered the first full year of the administration of the A.T.S. and W.R.A.C. Benevolent Funds since their amalgamation in 1964, and she was pleased to say everything had gone very smoothly. The Funds, jointly, had been able to meet expenditure from income for the first time for many years, and had even been able to add a little to the capital investments. This very satisfactory state of affairs had been brought about by a combination of four things:

- (i) the considerable savings in administrative costs as a result of the amalgamation and giving up the office in Elizabeth Street;
- (ii) a gratifying increase in the number of subscribers and of donations to the Fund;
- (iii) an increase in dividends as a result of the investment of three generous legacies, and
- (iv) a reduction in the number of applications for help.

The Trustees believed it was important that the capital of the Funds should be built up to enable them to meet any demands likely to be made upon them in the future, particularly from the large numbers of ex-A.T.S. who were getting near to retirement age.

Most of the grants during the year had been to the hard core of needy cases that would always require help. Only a few applications disclosed hardships due to

causes other than chronic sickness, disability, or desertion of the wife by her husband. Hardly a week passed when the Committee did not have an application on behalf of a sufferer from multiple sclerosis. A total of 618 cases were considered during 1965; four-fifths of those helped had served in the A.T.S.; 547 were actually helped by the funds, 30 came from overseas and 42 from Scotland. A total of £5,833 was spent on grants, an average of just over £10 per case, although some had considerably more. Dame Mary gave a résumé of some of the cases helped, and concluded by saying how much the baby woollies, that were knitted by members of the Association, were appreciated and expressed the Trustees' thanks to S.S.A.F.A., The Forces Help Society, The British Legion, The Earl Haig Fund (Scotland), and all the welfare workers and other organisations who made the work possible by visiting the applicants, administering the grants and giving so much practical help and advice.

(b) *Museum.* Brigadier Dame Mary Railton reported that the Museum had been honoured with the gift of a number of uniforms worn by the Princess Royal. They included Her Royal Highness's A.T.S. Service Dress, No. 1 Dress, No. 2 Dress, greatcoat, tropical kit and Mess Dress. The new show-case was now devoted solely to the display of those uniforms.

Dame Mary thanked Colonel Cooke for the generous gift of a display board; also the W.R.A.C. Headquarter Mess for the loan of some of their surplus silver, which was on display in the Silver Room.

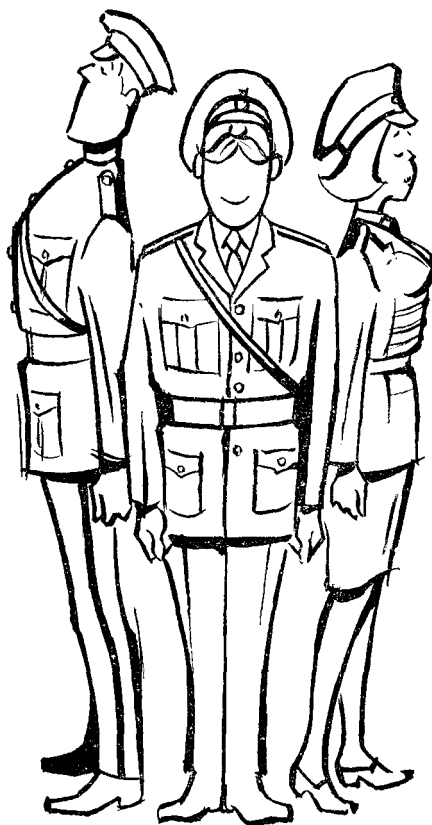
Interest in the Museum had been maintained, and during 1965 there had been 3,307 visitors. Donations in the collecting box amounted to £21. Financially it was a struggle to keep the Museum's head above water, and donations were always welcome. One very easy way of making a little money had been through the sale of badged Scripto pens. Nearly 2,000 had been sold last year, making a profit of £13 5s. 1d.

(c) *Grand Reunion.* Mrs. A. J. Stevenson reported that the Grand Reunion was held at the Rainbow Room, Derry & Toms, on 13th March, 1965; 582 tickets had been sold.

It had been a great disappointment to all who attended that at the last moment Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal had been prevented from attending, as she had to be in Stockholm for the funeral of the Queen of Sweden.

The speech which Her Royal Highness had intended to make was read in her absence by Brigadier Dame Mary Railton. The Director, Brigadier Dame Joanna Henderson, and Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan had also spoken. The W.R.A.C. Staff Band had played selections during the evening.

Mrs. Stevenson said that, unfortunately, expenditure had exceeded income by £72, which had been charged to the General Funds of the Association. If more members attended the Grand Reunions the loss would be less, as certain standing charges could not be reduced.



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8. Resolutions

- (i) "That the subscriptions be raised to meet the rising cost of production of THE LIONESS and for the administrative expenses, and that the Rules be amended accordingly."

The President said this Resolution was put forward by Council, under Rule 4 of Standing Orders for General Meetings, as a motion of urgency. In accordance with the Rules, Dame Regina Evans took the decision of the meeting as to whether the motion could be considered. This was put to the vote and carried. The President then called upon Colonel Hammond, Chairman of the Executive Committee, to speak for the motion.

Colonel C. E. Hammond, C.B.E., said that, in spite of the rising cost of living, the subscriptions had remained the same for the past ten years. THE LIONESS had been in the red by £186 in 1965, and the Association could not continue to lose money at that rate and still meet the other commitments, such as subsidising the Grand Reunions.

Council had instructed the Executive Committee to look into the whole question, and to submit proposals for any suggested increase in subscriptions for the Annual General Meeting to consider. Colonel Hammond concluded by proposing that the Resolution be adopted and that the new rates of subscriptions be:

Annual	.....	.....	7s. 6d.
Four-year	.....	.....	£1 10s. 0d.
Life	.....	.....	£7 10s. 0d.

Four-year members on a current subscription to have the option to convert to Life by a further payment of £6 6s.

Mrs. A. J. Stevenson seconded this Resolution.

Mrs. J. Wells, Canterbury Branch, moved an amendment to the Resolution, that the annual subscription be raised to 7s. This was seconded by a member of Dumfries Branch. After discussion the amendment was put to the vote and was lost.

After further discussion the original Resolution was put to the vote and carried by a large majority. It was agreed that the breakdown should be:

Branch	.....	.....	2s. 0d.
Association	.....	.....	1s. 6d.
THE LIONESS	.....	.....	4s. 0d.

- (ii) "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 1st November following the Annual General Meeting."

The Resolution was proposed by Miss V. K. Stead, Chairman of Council, seconded by Miss C. Kelly, Glasgow Branch, put to the vote and carried.

9. Any Other Business

The President announced that the following Area Reunions would take place:

Western: Saturday, 14th May, in Manchester.

Northern: Saturday, 24th September, in Harrogate.

The President proposed that a hearty vote of thanks be passed to the management where the two meetings had been held. This was agreed by all present.

Miss M. M. Thomson, T.D., proposed a vote of thanks to Dame Regina Evans for presiding at the meeting. This was carried with acclamation.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Saturday, 11th March, 1967.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.20 p.m.

REPORT OF COUNCIL

BEFORE I give my report, I wish to express our pleasure that Dame Regina Evans was able to accept Council's invitation to her to become President of the Association. We all wish her a long and happy reign.

The Annual General Meeting last year was followed by the Grand Reunion in the Rainbow Room. You will agree that it was a most enjoyable evening.

On Sunday morning we attended service at the Military Chapel, Chelsea Barracks, where the collection was taken in aid of the A.T.S./W.R.A.C. Benevolent Funds. We were indebted to the Padre for this kind gesture, and the funds benefited by £20.

I am pleased to announce that Miss Katherine Acland has become the second Life Vice-President of Council. I am also delighted to say that two new ex-Service Branches have been formed, one in Stafford and the other in Ulster. I must particularly congratulate Ulster Branch for a membership of over 100 in less than a year. A most encouraging effort. We have also had 20 new life members since last March.

Representatives of the Association and Benevolent Funds attended the Memorial Services for Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal in Westminster Abbey and York Minster. A wreath was sent on your behalf to Harewood House.

Council has sent a donation towards the restoration of Harewood Church, to commemorate the first anniversary of the Princess Royal's death.

Miss Davey, a member of Aldershot Branch, laid the Association Wreath at the Remembrance Day Parade at the Cenotaph. A small contingent went to the Service in Westminster Abbey. A representative of the Q.M.A.A.C., A.T.S. and W.R.A.C. attended the Dedication of the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey, when the cross was planted by A.D.W.R.A.C. London District.

Your Council met four times during the year and dealt with all current business. The Association continues to be represented on the Joint and Co-ordinating Committees of the British Service and Ex-Service Organisations, The British Members' Committee of the World Veteran Federation, and the Women's Voluntary Services Advisory Council.

I know you will be sorry to hear that Mrs. I. O. Holliss, our Honorary Treasurer since November 1962, retired on 1st April last. I would like to express our grateful thanks to her for her devoted work for the Association, and to wish her well in her retirement. Mrs. A. J. Stevenson, who took over as Treasurer, has very kindly consented to continue in office.

A message of congratulations was sent to the President of Bradford Branch, Miss Gummersall, on attaining her 90th birthday in January this year.

Successful Reunions were held by Southern Area last May, at the American Museum in Bath, and by Northern Area in September, in the Lounge Hall, Harrogate.

Once again I would like to thank all the Branch officers for their voluntary work in their Branches for the great good of the Association.

Finally I must thank Miss Thomson and the Scottish Area Committee for their hard work in preparing for the meetings here today. We appreciate the organisation that has gone into such an undertaking and we are very grateful to them.

A.T.S. Dinner Club

THE A.T.S. Dinner Club held their Annual Dinner at Derry & Toms on 16th October, 1965, and 158 members and guests enjoyed a very happy and successful evening. Amongst those present were the Chairman, Dame Mary Tyrwhitt, D.B.E., T.D., and the Vice-Chairman, Dame Leslie Whateley, D.B.E., T.D.

The Dinner Club would welcome any ex-A.T.S. who would like to become a member and particulars may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, Miss L. Parker, Rush Common House, Abingdon, Berks.

The next Annual Dinner of the A.T.S. Dinner Club will be held at Derry & Toms on Saturday, 15th October, 1966.

W.R.A.C. DIARY, 1967

Last year a great many customers were disappointed because orders for diaries exceeded the number available. If you would like a W.R.A.C. diary for 1967, please send your order, with cash, to:

C.H.Q. W.R.A.C.,
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King's Road,
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by 1st June, 1966. This will enable us to include it when we send the order to the manufacturer. We cannot afford to order a large number surplus to our known requirements and risk having them remain unsold. To make sure of getting yours please order now.

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Scottish Reunion

"I WOULDN'T have missed it for anything." This remark by a member of the London Branch expressed the feeling of many at the Scottish Reunion held at Milngavie Town Hall on Saturday, 19th March, 1966. They came from Liverpool and Leeds, Canterbury and York, Derby and Wolverhampton, Birmingham and London, New Zealand and Northern Ireland, as well as Ayr, Dumfries, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling.

To the skirl of the pipes the President, Dame Regina Evans, D.B.E., accompanied by the Reunion Chairman, Miss M. M. Thomson, T.D., and the Provost of Milngavie, John Buchanan, LL.B., took her seat on the platform. Others on the platform were the Director, Brigadier Dame Joanna Henderson, D.B.E., Hon. A.D.C., Brigadier Dame Mary Railton, D.B.E., Colonel V. K. Stead, O.B.E., T.D., J.P., Chairman of Council, Mrs. Buchanan, Lieut.-Colonel G. E. M. Saunders Davies, T.D., A.D.W.R.A.C. Scottish Command, Major E. B. Dixon, General Secretary, Capt. W. M. Shiells, B.Sc., Reunion Secretary, and W.O.I.G. T. Stewart, W.R.A.C.

Provost Buchanan welcomed "This monstrous Regiment of Women" to Milngavie. This was followed by the gracious messages received from Her Majesty The Queen and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. Among others, apologies were received from Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan, G.B.E., LL.D., D.Sc., whose message of good wishes was read to the gathering. The Chairman said that Dame Helen was much in our thoughts

and that a card of greeting and good cheer was being sent to her from all at the Reunion.

The Chairman expressed thanks to the Provost and Council of Milngavie, Lieut.-Colonel Philips, T.D., and officers of the 1st Battalion Glasgow Highlanders, whose Regimental Band and Pipers supplied the music, and to all members of the Reunion Committee, and especial thanks to the Secretary, Capt. Shiells, and all serving members of the W.R.A.C. who were helping in any way.

Dame Regina Evans in her Presidential Address said she was very appreciative of the great honour conferred upon her and that it gave her great pleasure in that going about the country she met so many people that she would not otherwise have encountered. She spoke of her predecessor, Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal, so greatly loved by all who knew her and to whom we owed a debt of gratitude. Her Royal Highness had shown unsurpassed devoted and whole-hearted interest in every aspect of Service life. Dame Regina went on to speak of the Memorial Fund to Her Royal Highness. Thanks to contacts by Colonel Hammond among the rose growers, the memorial garden at Guildford was being established at no cost to the Fund. Contributions would therefore be used to set up a Fund to aid long-term needy cases that were outside the present scope of the Benevolent Funds. The President closed by saying that she had a warm corner in her heart for all members of the Association and that she hoped they would have a small corner for her.



Photo by courtesy of "Milngavie and Bearsden Herald"

Scottish Reunion. Left to right: Mrs. Buchanan, Dame Regina Evans, Provost J. M. Buchanan, Brigadier Dame Joanna Henderson, Brigadier Dame Mary Railton

In her address Brigadier Dame Joanna Henderson, D.B.E., W.R.A.C., said that she was delighted to be home in Scotland as she had joined up some 25 years ago at Cameron Barracks, Inverness, where she found her first duty, dressed in overall, women workers, ankle length, was to escort the chimney-sweep round the camp. Her memories of those days were as clear-cut as last year's visit to W.R.A.C. units in the Far East, Aden and Singapore. This year she had visited Germany, where she saw W.R.A.C. members competing for the Macfie Cup for skiing. This had been a sad year for the T.A. and would see the disbandment of many units, only a few W.R.A.C. being left in mixed signals. She thanked the T.A. for their devoted service and assured them of a warm welcome in the Regular Army.

A vote of thanks was proposed by W.O.I.G. T. Stewart.

While refreshments were being served a collection was taken on behalf of the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund. The sum of £37 was raised.

Despite the counter-claims of a General Election and a needle match at Murrayfield the Reunion was attended by some 250 serving and ex-Service members. Among kent faces spied in the body of the hall were Colonel C. E. Hammond, Mrs. A. J. Stevenson, Lieut.-Colonel Millington, Lieut.-Colonel Heaney, Mrs. Russell Simpson, Lady McFarlane, Miss Innes, Mrs. Neilson, Miss B. Harvie Anderson, accompanied by her consultant, Dr. Skrimshire breezed in from the hustings.

Time passed all too quickly. The band struck up the Regimental March, "Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill"; this was followed by "Auld Lang Syne" and the Reunion closed with the National Anthem.

"We'll meet again some other day. . . ."

News of Old Comrades

Mrs. Rumbold writes to say that the Bournemouth Corporation has agreed to put the three Services badges in plants or flowers in their Lower Pleasure Gardens next year. There is a large stretch of sloping turf that will show them off beautifully and she hopes any member visiting Bournemouth in 1967 will go to see them. Perhaps other corporations would follow Bournemouth's example if the idea was put to them.

Miss Frances MacKenzie writes that she is now living in a very isolated area and would like to hear from any Q.M.A.A.C. she served with at Etaples, particularly Mrs. Ethel Jones (Uzzle) who used to live at Hastings. Her address is c/o Mrs. Willis, Ingoe Mill, Maften, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

We congratulate **L/Cpl. Harrison** and **Pte. Phillips** on gaining first and second prizes in the biennial Women's Services cookery competition at Olympia on 26th January. To gain these awards they had one hour in which to prepare and cook, in front of a large audience in the Salon Culinnaire Theatre, filet de sole bonne femme and crêpes au citron for four people.

Branch News

BRADFORD. The 13th January was a great day for our President, Miss A. C. L. Gummersall, when she celebrated her 90th birthday. The Secretary visited her and had the pleasure of opening and reading to her all the beautiful cards and telegrams she received, which numbered over 60. She was especially delighted to get a card of congratulation from the Chairman and members of the W.R.A.C. Council. Members of her family celebrated with her on the special day, and on 17th January Miss Gummersall gave a party to the members of Bradford Branch when she was in excellent form. A most enjoyable time was had by all who were able to be present. We were pleased that Mrs. Goodman, the first secretary of the Branch, had been able to accept. Our President expressed her thanks for all the cards and gifts and the beautiful flowers she had received. In February 17 of our members and friends enjoyed an outing to the Bradford pantomime. Due to incapacity several members were unable to attend our February meeting, but those present stood in silence as a mark of respect to the memory of our dear friend and comrade Miss E. Cocksedge and to Mrs. West, the mother of our Chairman. Our sympathy goes out to their respective families. Our best wishes are sent to Mrs. Edith Lumb for a speedy recovery after her recent spell in hospital, also to Mrs. Etta Wilson and to Miss N. Julian, who has just celebrated her 80th birthday but is not enjoying very good health at present.

CANTERBURY. Meetings are held each month, sometimes in members' homes, but we have also had theatre outings, a Garden Party at our President's home, visits to Chilham Castle and the W.R.A.C. Depot at Guildford and a sale in aid of the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund which realised £7 10s. We also sent a donation of £5 to the Benevolent Fund and have knitted children's garments for this. The Standard was taken on parade at the Battle of Britain Parade at Canterbury Cathedral, the Remembrance Day Parade, our annual service, the Isle of Thanet Festival of Remembrance and to two funerals of members. Our Annual Dinner and A.G.M. were held in November. Christmas gifts were sent to two invalid members and sick members have been visited. About 12 new members have joined during the year.

CHELTHENHAM. The Branch had a busy and cheerful year in 1965. In April they met at Dowty House, where they saw some excellent films shown by Black and White Motorways Ltd., after which arrangements were made to attend the Southern Area Reunion. About 20 members, including Branch officers, went to the American Museum at Bath on 28th May and very much enjoyed the day out. In July the Branch were given a most enjoyable evening at Quennington Court. Miss Eva Pelly took her guests round her most historic and beautiful home, parts of which date back to the Hospitallers, and after refreshments a short meeting was held in the drawing-room. Then in October the usual autumn meeting and Bring and Buy Sale were held in the Secretary's flat in Cheltenham;

25 members attended. It was a very cheerful evening and arrangements were made for the annual Christmas Party in December. The Bring and Buy Sale was organised by Miss N. Sheward and Miss C. Lowsley Williams and made the historic sum of £11. On 10th December we met at Pasmoor House for the Christmas Party. Twenty-five members were present and were very pleased to have Brigadier Dame Mary Railton with them for the evening; each member brought something towards the cold buffet supper. As washing-up facilities were rather limited we reverted to our early traditions and each arrived with knife, fork, spoon and plate! It was unanimously voted the best party ever.

GLASGOW. Since the beginning of the year we have had three meetings. In January we had a very successful Coffee Evening in aid of the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund, and handed over the sum of £17. This was the proceeds of the collection taken at the dinner in November and of this function. In February we had a St. Valentine's Day Party. On 15th March we had our Annual General Meeting, and the following members were appointed Office Bearers: President, Mrs. T. B. Calderwood; Vice-President, Miss J. McVean. The Secretary and Treasurer remain the same. The Scottish Reunion took place on Saturday, 19th March, in Milngavie Town Hall. It was a very successful meeting and was attended by members of all Branches throughout the country.

LEICESTER. The New Year started with the Secretary's nightmare, the A.G.M. Despite the bad weather there was a good attendance and the officials were all re-elected. Miss M. Palmer, W.A.A.C., was elected Vice-Chairman and Mrs. Newman (ex-Capt. Price) Assistant Secretary. We were pleased to welcome Miss M. Palmer on transfer from H.Q. Area, who braved the very bad weather to attend her first meeting with us. Our visit to the Phoenix Theatre to see the most controversial *Birthday Party* was aptly described by one of our members as "Not quite our cup of tea, but most enjoyable and very well done." Mrs. Cox, our Secretary, visited ex-S/Sgt. May Rodgers, who is now living with her mother at 219 Silesby Road, Barrow-on-Soar, Leics., telephone Quorn 2033. May is making very good progress and keeping cheerful despite her disability. She has passed her test for an invalid car and hopes to be soon in possession of a Morris 1000 from the Ministry of Pensions. We are pleased to welcome her as a new member of the Branch and look forward to seeing her at our meetings. She would be pleased to see friends old and new at her bungalow in this lovely part of Leicestershire.

LONDON. We have had some very good meetings during recent months. In January we were entertained by the Acton Male Voice Choir. In February we were given a show of colour slides by Miss Laurie which included various parts of London and of Westminster Abbey. In March we held a successful Bring and Buy Sale; also that month friends of the Branch came to give us their

Revue, which consisted of some very lovely sketches and tuneful songs. Eight of our members travelled to Glasgow for the A.G.M. and Reunion and spent a most enjoyable day. Our one regret was that our Chairman, Mrs. Giles, was not with us owing to illness; we hope that by the time this is in print she will be fully recovered.

SALISBURY. We had several happy evenings during 1965. In April we were invited to Landford by Mrs. Pyke, who is a very faithful member. Unfortunately it was not the weather to pick daffodils as our host had previously promised. In May a party went by coach to Claverton Manor for the Southern Area Reunion, stopping *en route* for a picnic lunch at Heaven's Gate. Here the show of evergreens and flowering shrubs was much admired. The American Museum was full of interest; the bedspread room particularly impressed some of the members, and after a general tour of the Manor and gardens we found ourselves in the smoky atmosphere of the kitchen where gingerbread was being made and we were able to sample the efforts of the cook. June saw us at Colonel Macfie's, where we had the most unusual entertainment by the local children, members of the Pond Club; they put on a water show which we all enjoyed very much. As usual the wonderful sausage sizzle which only Colonel Macfie can produce, followed by strawberries and cream, made us very contented members as we journeyed home. We held our September meeting at Colonel Gibson's house at Woodgreen; once again our thanks to her and her sister. The figures were forgotten and a delicious buffet was all set for us. The garden is a picture and was much appreciated by us all. In October we visited the Tintometer factory where instruments are made for measuring colour; this proved very interesting as we were able to see some of the staff actually at work. November again brought the Parade of Remembrance and we assembled quite a goodly number for the occasion. Our Standard Bearer, as last year, was Miss Bowker. Mrs. Pyke very kindly laid our wreath for us. This was at very short notice as Colonel Gibson was indisposed and unable to join us. A donation of £5 was sent to the Benevolent Fund during the year; also, in response to the appeal for the Rose Garden in memory of our late President, H.R.H. The Princess Royal, £6 12s. 6d. was collected and forwarded to Headquarters. We shall be sorry to lose Colonel Wilson, D.D. Southern Command, and the Branch wish her well in her new posting. At the same time we look forward to Colonel Lipscomb joining us when she finally gets settled in at Southern Command.

STAFFORD. We continue to have a good attendance every month and have gained very useful knowledge in a variety of ways from the most interesting and instructive speakers. At the October meeting the Probation Officer told us how to keep out of trouble and in November the Beauty Counsellor showed us how to change our faces. This meeting was particularly enjoyed by one member who "took the treatment." The December meeting, a Christmas Party, was thoroughly enjoyed by members,

together with families and friends, in the right atmosphere, no less than the Sergeants' Mess. We are most grateful to the R.S.M. of the Engineer Regiment in Kitchener House for the use of all the facilities of the Mess and for arranging for his Mess Caterer to produce such an excellent spread; this was talked about with inner satisfaction long after the plates had been left empty. The Police Officer at the January meeting told us how to prevent crime in the home and I understand that some of the members have now renewed the locks on their windows and doors. February brought us a talk on fire prevention in the home by a member of the Fire Service. Both these speakers brought colour slides. The member of the Borough Council at the March meeting had a barrage of questions after his talk on the rating system. We all now know how our money is spent. We are sorry not to have been able to welcome any of the H.Q. Area members. Do they all live so far from Stafford?

ULSTER. Despite the ravages of the influenza epidemic the Branch held its first Annual Reunion Dinner, presided over by Mrs. Ogilvy Graham, O.B.E., in the Midland Hotel, Belfast, on 26th February with an attendance of 97. We were extremely pleased and honoured to welcome Lieut.-Colonel M. S. F. Millington, O.B.E., T.D., as our guest speaker. Listening to her we were made even more aware of the need to help our less fortunate comrades. We hope Colonel Millington enjoyed her visit to her native land as much as we enjoyed having her with us, and it will not be long before she returns again. The majority of the guests came from Ulster, but we were glad to see some from Dublin, England and also one who had journeyed from Spain. As they say in these parts, the "crack" was good. On 14th March our Annual General Meeting was held. The Chairman, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer were re-elected, and the Committee is now Miss Gwen Angus (Belfast), Mrs. Henrietta Cheeseman (Bangor), and Mrs. Mary Johnston (Whiteabbey). The Treasurer reported that we were on the right side of the books and it was agreed to send £10 to the Benevolent Funds. So few people have time for monthly gatherings we are to continue our policy of quality rather than quantity with regard to meetings. We intend to meet again on 6th June at Ballydrain House, just outside Belfast, for a meeting combined with supper and a modest Bring and Buy Sale.

YORK. On resuming our meetings last September, Mrs. Cockram brought transparencies and a projector to give us a very pleasant evening showing us the wonderful scenery and places she and her husband had visited on their holidays. In October, one very foggy night, a representative of Sirdar wools came and gave an interesting talk to 25 members and friends. We also held a jumble sale for funds, which we used for Christmas presents. All members rallied round with help one way or another, making it a huge success. The A.G.M. was held in November. Lieut.-Colonel S. A. E. Heaney, M.B.E., T.D., A.D.W.R.A.C., was invited to become our President; we

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are very pleased to say she has graciously accepted. The Christmas parcels were made up in December; we have to thank Mrs. Leach, Miss Smallwood and Miss Potter for delivering them. The letters received from these people show they were greatly appreciated. Our now annual visit to the Theatre Royal to see York Light Opera Society present *Kismet* was enjoyed by us all. No meeting was held in February, but March brought us to our Annual Dinner. This year we had the pleasure of Major Chandler; we enjoyed her company and wish her well in her new posting. Once again we must thank Sgt. Harrison for an excellent dinner, also Mrs. Louie Metcalfe for helping during the day. Lieut.-Colonel Heaney and the Secretary went to Glasgow for the A.G.M. and Reunion; we had a wonderful time and would like to thank all concerned for making us feel so welcome, especially the young officer in charge of Provost at Milngavie. Mrs. Oldfield, our blind member, thanks the person who has been making inquiries for her. The address is 84 Rowntree Avenue, Burton Stone Lane, York. She would be pleased to hear from anybody who knew her or had a photograph of the same gun site. Our sympathies go out to Lilian Kitson, who lost her mother, with whom she lived and was very close; we hope she is feeling better.

Trek North-East I

L/Cpl. A. M. Burt and L/Cpl. G. M. A. Usherwood

ON 1st October, 1965, two W.R.A.C. set off with nine men from the comparatively civilised atmosphere of 13 Signal Regiment to "rough it" for ten days on the River Meuse. P.R.I. provided the transport and we arrived at the starting-point of our journey, Charlesville-Mézières, in France, after an uneventful journey. We camped close to the river and after everything had been unloaded from the bus, everyone set to and assembled the canoes. Once the canoes were made up and the tents put up, our first campfire meal was cooked; this was to be the first of many semi-cold, semi-cooked meals. About four hours later most of the members turned in for an early night. Although we awoke to the sound of rain we were not put off and managed to cook breakfast, after which everything was packed into the canoes. Then came the big launch.

After a rather difficult entry because of the steepness of the banks, we set off. It was slow progress at first and then, to everyone's dismay, it started to rain again. However, we carried on regardless and after an hour's paddling we met our first portage. Each canoe was then dragged out of the water and carried over the weir. This took rather a long time as the canoes weighed a great deal, but eventually we were ready once more and, in the pouring rain, a line of canoes made their way down river. After two hours' solid paddling we arrived at a French hamlet and immediately made our way to the nearest café. When we told the waiter that we had canoed ten kilometres from Charlesville-Mézières he took pity on us and managed to get us a good French meal even though they were officially closed. Feeling better, we set off once more and paddled a further ten kilometres to reach our first stopping-place.

We reached Montherme soaked and camped under a bridge facing the town, which was set into the lovely hills of the Ardennes. Just as everyone was about to prepare supper, a Frenchman appeared and said that we were not to camp there. However, we continued to get the meal ready and half an hour later the same gentleman re-appeared, but this time in full official regalia—a hat! Eventually we came to an agreement and he allowed us to camp and, with much dubious help from the local children, we put up the tents, but they did succeed in getting us fresh water, which we were sadly lacking.

Once again most of us turned in early as we had found the first day hard going. We were wakened by the sound of children's voices. Once breakfast had been eaten and the canoes repacked we set off with the good wishes of the local inhabitants ringing in our ears.

For the next couple of days we passed through some of the most beautiful French countryside. Both sides of the river were flanked by the Ardennes mountains, and, as the weather had taken a turn for the better, we saw for the first time the vivid colours of the banks. We paddled through a number of pretty, but to us nameless, villages and at long last reached the French/Belgian

border. This was Givet and everyone celebrated the achievement; and so inspired were we that the next day being fine (so we thought!) we set off even earlier than usual. After passing under a bridge 25 yards down river, we paddled into seemingly thick smoke which turned out to be dense fog. We struggled on by barge-dodging for a matter of one kilometre and then gave it up as a bad job, which was just as well for 50 yards downstream there was a weir. With the canoes secured to a barge, we all repaired to a café to have a welcome cup of coffee and to wait for the fog to lift. We had hoped to reach Dinant by lunchtime but, being held up for at least two hours, we only just made it by six o'clock.

For the next few days we paddled on without hindrance and as we pushed further into Belgium we noticed how flat the surrounding countryside was becoming. People were still very friendly and curious whenever we stopped for lunch or for the night. The only real setback we had was when one of our male members was overturned by the wake of an overtaking barge with the loss of one loaf of bread. It was during this part of the journey that we ceased to be the only occupants of the river; we had started beyond the last navigable point and were not accustomed to barges overtaking us or bearing down on us at 30 kilometres an hour! But we (with the exception of our dampened friend) overcame the tempestuous waves and soon began to enjoy them.

We now had our sights fixed on Liège. We pitched camp a good way out of the city itself but managed to get into the "west end" by catching a number of trams and buses; and a good time was had by all!

Now two-thirds of our trek was over and we felt we could relax a little as Holland did not seem so far away. The countryside had flattened out considerably now and it was at this stage that we met our first really big lock. Up till then the majority of them had been manually operated and quite ordinary, but this looked like a fly-over from the M1. Once through we passed over the border into Holland. Having nothing to declare we paddled past a long queue of barges waiting for the customs. The water was fairly calm here, but as we got out of the area more barges were coming towards us and the water was getting rough again. However, as Maastricht was only a matter of four kilometres away we canoed on. At Maastricht we found it rather difficult to find a camping site, but then one of the party noticed a small canal behind an old barge and it was down here that the best camping spot of the whole trip was found. Surrounded by Dutch children we heaved the canoes out of the water and immediately began to get everything unpacked and ready for the night. Some of the children who were watching us could speak English and they started to ask us all about the trip. Most of them were very interested and, considering their ages, they spoke excellent English.

We spent from Saturday evening until Monday morning resting and cleaning up in preparation for the last long haul. The rest was evidently needed since on Sunday nobody crawled out of their sleeping-bags until 11

o'clock. Monday morning soon came round and for the final part of the journey we had to paddle up a canal from Maastricht to Roermond, which was our destination. This part of the journey proved to be the hardest for, being a canal, there was no current at all, and unfortunately there was a wind against us which made things even worse. There was a time when we stopped for a smoke and drifted back, which was very disheartening. Our very same friend capsized once more but this time without loss, which was fortunate for him. (He never did hear the last of either capsize!) We managed to paddle down half of the canal on the Monday and that night we all went to the "local" and had a celebration. Roermond was now only 20 kilometres away; we all felt happy because the trip had gone so well, and yet sad at the same time since the end was in sight and the past fortnight had been so enjoyable.

The next and final day we paddled into Roermond. Our rendezvous with the welcoming committee was five kilometres past the town itself and here we encountered our last and hardest portage, although the canoes weighed considerably less. But with the end in sight nothing was going to stop us from arriving on time and 20 minutes later we rounded the last bend in fine formation to be met by two three-ton trucks, the 2 i/c, our own O.C. and a few stalwart supporters of the W.R.A.C. The Public Relations Officers had heard of our trip and they were soon on the scene with camera and tape recorder.

It was over; once back in camp eight of us invaded the dining hall and we found that egg, sausage and chips had never tasted so good!

T.A. News

51st HIGHLAND DIVISION

AT the request of Lieut.-Colonel The Lady Martha Bruce, who commands the W.R.A.C. (T.A.) in the Division, Pipe-Major John MacLellan, Chief Instructor of the Army School of Piping, Edinburgh Castle, has written a pipe tune, "The W.R.A.C. of the 51st Highland Division." The tune was first played at a W.R.A.C. Regimental Dinner held in the Banqueting Hall of Stirling Castle on Friday, 18th March, 1966. Major-General F. C. C. Graham, C.B., D.S.O., Colonel of The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and of the Divisional W.R.A.C. (T.A.), presided and the guests included Brigadier Dame Mary Railton, D.B.E., and Brigadier Dame Joanna Henderson, D.B.E., A.D.C.

Limping Home on D-Day

Mrs. M. W. Marks (nee Hemmans)

I WAS a member of a predictor team which had been in action many times, and now we had been posted south. We were all grumbling and feeling "browned off." When we arrived at our new site we found it to be

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not Nissen huts, but tents—and we had to help erect them. We relieved an all-male battery, and we thought they should have been staying in the tents, not us. We were also put under censorship. No letters could be sent without officers reading them and there was no leave for three weeks.

We couldn't understand the sudden discipline and extra precautions, but we were soon to find out. Early on 6th June we got the alarm. I grabbed my clothes together in the darkness of the tent and ran down to the Gun Park. On the way I fell over a tent rope and had to limp the rest of the way. I felt really sorry for myself, but was told to carry on until a relief could come to take my place.

The number one of our team reported "Ready for action"—and then we began plotting, identifying and counting aircraft back from the big raids. I saw through my telescope Stirlings, Wellingtons and Halifax bombers limping home, some on two engines, some on three; Wellingtons with the rear gun turrets smashed to bits. I remember thinking how many gunners must have been wounded in those planes. It was terrible to see the planes limping over us and not to be able to help. Some didn't get very far before they crashed.

I forgot about my injured ankle. I was kept so busy and saw so much that a twisted ankle seemed trivial to me. We were relieved at 8 a.m. for breakfast, and I had to be carried back as I couldn't walk. When I hear the song, "Coming in on a Wing and a Prayer," I always remember D-Day.

Unit News

DEPOT AND TRAINING CENTRE

ON both 5th February and 5th March parties of eight would-be skiers left the W.R.A.C. Depot to spend a week skiing in Aviemore, Inverness-shire.

There were exclamations of delight when we arrived at the Coylumbridge Hotel and went up to our rooms, which were very compact eight-bunk dormitories with bathrooms attached. The hotel, which was opened by the Duke of Edinburgh in October 1965, is very modern in both design and amenities. The section we stayed in was called the Mountain Lodge and was completely self-contained, although we were allowed to use all the hotel facilities, which included a Scalextric racing track and a coffee bar which stayed open until 2 a.m.

The next day saw us off to the Ski Slopes, which were ten miles away from the hotel up a winding mountain road. There was not much snow, but the two main runs were well covered and the beginners skied on large patches further down the mountain. During the first part of the week the snow was icy and very fast for skiing, but on Thursday there was a heavy snowfall which made the conditions much easier and more fun for inexperienced skiers.

There were two chair-lifts, the higher one going right up to a dizzy 4,084 ft. at the top of the Cairngorm. A T Bar Tow was also provided to assist one to the top of the slopes. This, however, was more a source of amusement and exercise than of locomotion as few of us were able to remain aboard it as far as the summit.

There was always plenty to do in the evenings. Twice a week there was a film show in the hotel dining-room; we saw *Tiara Tahiti* and *The Ipccress File*. There was dancing in the lodge or at surrounding hotels to either beat groups or local folk-dancing bands. The skating rink was opened halfway through the week and we spent a great deal of our time before dinner trying out our ski movements on skates with some disastrous results!

The most surprising thing to us was our almost unbounded energy. We skied all day, skated before dinner and then went dancing. It was astonishing no one collapsed from sheer exhaustion! We, in fact, sustained only one casualty, and that whilst skiing.

On the last day we went up to Inverness to get the train and spent the afternoon looking round the lovely old castle and harbour. As it was Sunday no shops were open, but we managed to find a tea shop where we stocked up with Edinburgh rock and shortcake for the return journey.

We arrived back at the Depot absolutely exhausted but very proud of our progress. Next year may see us either in Scotland or abroad, but we are all determined that it will see us on skis.

2 INDEPENDENT COMPANY

ON 27th September ten of us set off for ten days' Adventure Training in Italy. We travelled for 36

hours by boat and train, passing through breathtaking Swiss scenery at the break of dawn and later the more humid vineyard countryside of the Po Plain, finally arriving at our first destination of Lake Garda late the following evening.

We spent four nights at a very new and spacious youth hostel near Torri del Benaco: we were delighted to find that we had three bedrooms at our disposal, each with a balcony overlooking the cobalt-blue waters of the lake. The following days were spent exploring the surrounding mountains. One memorable day we walked until we almost dropped in order to take full advantage of the modern cable car to scale the heights of the mountainous chain of Monte Baldo, a height of over 6,570 ft.; it really was bald on top! The view from the top of the mountain was beautiful as the whole of the lake and the surrounding countryside could be seen.

Before embarking upon our final part of the trip we spent a free day in the ancient and beautiful city of Verona, visiting, amongst other antiquities, the Roman Amphitheatre and Juliet's Tomb. We felt, however, that Juliet's Tomb had been grossly overcommercialised. We then travelled by train to Venice, where everyone was enchanted to find the renowned gondolas very much in evidence; however, because of the exorbitant prices, our main means of travel became the water-bus. The three days in Venice were less demanding physically, but we soon found how easy it was to get hopelessly lost in the maze of narrow streets that cover the 100 islands upon which the city of Venice is built.

Then we paid a brief visit to the Lido di Venezia for a dip in the Adriatic Sea before starting the long journey home, bringing with us numerous stories of romantic cities, an abundance of grapes and of course the inevitable spaghetti which had arrived with unfailing regularity for us all each supper-time.

W.R.A.C. in Malta

THERE are only a few W.R.A.C. stationed in Malta: two officers—one working on the staff of H.Q. Malta and Libya and the other working as Administrative Officer with 235 Signal Squadron (COMCAN)—and just under 30 women. These are mostly Comcen Operators, but there are also clerks, both R.A.P.C. and shorthand writers, employed in the Pay Office and H.Q. Malta and Libya, and two N.C.O.s of the W.R.A.C. Provost who form part of the Provost Company R.M.P. All are administered by 235 Signal Squadron (COMCAN).

We thought that readers might be interested in a first impression of Malta, formed by Pte. Waind, a newly arrived member of the unit. She writes:

"I landed at Luqa Airport in brilliant sunshine on Saturday, 29th January, 1966. Luckily I didn't travel alone, as there were some other W.R.A.C. Comcen Ops. on the aircraft.

"On the journey from the airport I sat and gazed out of the window at the passing scenery. How different it was from the cold and rainy England I'd left only four

hours before! Malta seemed a quaint and colourful place, with its cream houses and brightly coloured window shutters and doors.

"As we drew nearer to St. David's Barracks, Imtarfa, which is on a hill in the middle of the island, I couldn't help feeling rather nervous. What would it be like? How would they accept us? When I look back now I laugh at my fears, for there was nothing to be nervous about as the small number of W.R.A.C. here makes for a very friendly atmosphere.

"My first day at work in the Tape Relay Centre up at Fort Bingemma was fascinating. The fort forms part of the famous Victoria Lines, an old series of fortifications built on the high ridge of land stretching right across Malta. We have to go to work in transport as the barracks is some miles from the fort. Sitting in the back of the truck I watched the winding road fly past as we climbed upwards. Small houses, rather like the ones you see in pictures of the Holy Land, appeared here and there along the roadside. The funny-looking 'cactus trees' fascinated me—I was later told that these are prickly pears!

"When we arrived at the fort I was shown round the T.R.C., which wasn't as big as I had expected it to be. Then there was the view from the battlement—oh so lovely, across the island to the sea, which was so very blue and clear. This was a sight I shall never forget! You wouldn't think that this tiny island in the vast Mediterranean was the proud possessor of such beautiful scenery.

"Malta—famed for its fruit and beautiful lace—Malta, the island in the sun!"

Pte. Waind was lucky in that she arrived in an abnormally dry winter—we usually have gales and rain! Her feelings about the beauty of Malta are, however, shared by us all.

The W.R.A.C. accommodation in St. David's Barracks is very good indeed. Nearly all the women are in single rooms, and the whole block is centrally heated, a rarity in Malta, but very necessary in the winter when the weather is often very cold and damp, particularly at Imtarfa, which is on high ground. There is a most pleasant sitting-room with a kitchen attached, where cooking can be done by those off duty who don't want to go to the Mess—there is even a Kenwood Mixer!

During the winter months we have taken part in various sports activities for which it is too hot in the summer—Inter-troop sports competitions and hockey against various teams. We have not yet managed to get a match with the W.R.N.S., but are still hoping. At Christmas-time we were very busy with entertainments and dances, and we also gave a party for 20 Maltese orphan girls which was a great success. Their ages ranged from three to 14—a three-year-old called Maria stole the show.

Amongst entertainers who have visited the island, we have welcomed Jimmy Edwards and Harry Secombe. The bouquet was presented to the leading lady of the Harry Secombe Show by Pte. Plumbridge, one of our

R.A.P.C. clerks (who also does sterling work as a volunteer announcer with F.B.S. Malta). Members of the cast of the show (including Anita Harris the singer) were served with refreshments by a W.R.A.C. Comcen Operator, Pte. Lees.

Visits to many places of interest have been made this winter, including the Malta Television Studios and Farsons Brewery (the largest brewery on the island). A party also went on a conducted tour of U.S.S. *Cadmus*, which was berthed in Grand Harbour, Valletta, for some months.

We have welcomed many newcomers lately, but some of the old-timers are due to leave us, such as Sgt. Hamilton, our Admin. N.C.O., and L/Cpl. Scott, W.R.A.C. Provost.

S/Sgt. Penfold, our Senior Comcen Op., hopes, with a few other supporters, to take up the W.R.N.S. challenge of the Walk Round Malta in under 21 hours, the present W.R.N.S. record. The island is 19 miles by 11 miles roughly, so we wish them luck!

The Signal Officer-in-Chief, Major-General P. E. M. Bradley, C.B.E., D.S.O., visited 235 Signal Squadron last November, and at the moment we are awaiting our Annual Inspection in April by the Deputy Commander, Malta and Libya, Brigadier The Lord Grimthorpe, O.B.E., A.D.C. In June we are looking forward to a visit from D.W.R.A.C., Brigadier Dame Joanna Henderson, D.B.E., Hon. A.D.C., who will, we hope, enjoy her visit as much as we shall enjoy having her with us.

Emily Joins Up for a Day

PENSIONER Mrs. Emily Newton was 21 years old for a day and "joined" the Women's Royal Army Corps at Donnington. Mrs. Newton, aged 69, was the victim of a practical joke—a joke which turned out well.

Someone put Mrs. Newton's name and address on a W.R.A.C. newspaper coupon and sent it to the Army recruiting office, then the Army found out about the hoax and Mrs. Newton was invited to "join" the W.R.A.C. for a day. It was arranged for her to visit C.O.D. Donnington, where she could have gone if she had really joined up.

"I have no idea who filled in the coupon," said Mrs. Newton with a large grin, "but I'm grateful to them; they put my birthday down as 15th August, 1944, so that makes me 21!"

Mrs. Newton was shown round the unit and in the "Q" Stores she was "kitted out" with a standard-issue green forage cap by regimental storewoman Pte. Marina Denton from Shipley, Yorkshire. "It's very smart," she smiled. But she could not be persuaded to try on a pair of P.T. shorts! "I think it's a bit too cold," she said.

Mrs. Newton of Northfield, Birmingham, used to work in an office canteen in Birmingham. "So I'm very interested in the catering side of the Army." In the event of a shortage of woman-power at Donnington Mrs. Newton will certainly be in the front of the queue wanting to "join up" and do her bit—even if she is nearly 70.

Obituary

Lady Apsley, C.B.E.

MEMBERS will have read with deep regret of the death of Lady Apsley in January this year. A former M.P., world traveller, authoress, pilot, sportswoman, ex-Chief Commander A.T.S. and past National Chairman of the British Legion Women's Section, Lady Apsley had been a prominent figure in Gloucestershire for many years. She suffered a serious hunting accident in 1930, and was obliged to spend the rest of her days in a wheelchair, but overcame this handicap with indomitable courage and continued to lead an active and vigorous life until her last illness.

Lady Apsley served as a V.A.D. during the First World War, was invited to form the A.T.S. in Gloucestershire in 1938 and continued to command the Units in that area for some months after the outbreak of war. Later she became Senior Welfare Officer for the county and Hon. Secretary of the A.T.S. Benevolent Fund on its formation in 1940. She continued to take a close interest in the Fund, the Association and the welfare of all ex-Service women.

In her maiden speech in the House of Commons Lady Apsley quoted the following words from Shakespeare's *Henry VI*: "Yield not thy neck to Fortune's yoke, but let thy dauntless mind still ride in triumph over all mischance"; these perfectly summed up her attitude of mind towards her own difficulties, and the example she set of courage and selfless devotion to duty will long be remembered by all who were privileged to know her.

C. E. A. writes:

"It was with much sorrow that I read of the death of Lady Apsley. In 1938 she was invited to form the A.T.S. in Gloucestershire and became the Territorial Commandant. I was working at that time in Bristol with Lady Apsley and she invited me to become her Adjutant. I was very glad indeed to accept and had the great privilege of helping her to recruit and set up the A.T.S. Units in Gloucestershire. I remember vividly the care and trouble Lady Apsley took in the selection of the volunteers and her efforts in that direction were amply rewarded. She set us all a wonderful example by her courage, enthusiasm and sense of service. When the war broke out she continued in command of the General Duties Group in the Bristol/Bath area and for a short time also included Units in Cardiff and Newport. She was indefatigable in her duties, visiting the isolated Units and encouraging us all in the difficult and trying time at the start of the war. After Lady Apsley retired from this command she never ceased to be actively interested in those of us who had served with her as well as the countless other members of the Service through the Benevolent Fund. We who knew her as a friend and a Commanding Officer will always remember her with loyalty, affection and deep admiration."

Mrs. E. Baker

THE Secretary of Canterbury Branch regrets to announce the death of Mrs. E. Baker (Dickie), an ex-A.T.S. lance-corporal who served from 1939 to 1945.

Mrs. O. M. Bulmer

HARTLEPOOLS Branch regret to announce the death of Mrs. Olwen Bulmer (*née* Wyatt), who had been a life member of the Association since 1948. Mrs. Bulmer served in the A.T.S. from 1939 to 1944 with the rank of sergeant.

Miss E. Cocksedge

BRADFORD Branch mourn the loss of Miss Emma Cocksedge, one of their oldest life members, whose death occurred on 19th February, peacefully, after 18 months in hospital as a result of a fall. She was a very gracious and retiring lady, who will be remembered by many for the superb chocolates and other confections she made after the 1918 war, and again during 1939-45 when she supplied chocolates in exchange for sweet coupons. She also shared the food parcels she received from relatives in California. She is especially remembered by Mrs. Rose Tye of London, with whom she served as a cook in the Officers' Mess at Pont-de-l'Arche, Rouen Area. Her brother from California, who is her next of kin, flew over for her funeral; the Branch was represented and a poppy wreath was sent.

Mrs. F. M. Heritage

HULL Branch announce with regret the death of Mrs. Florence Heritage, who served as a clerk in the A.T.S. from 1941 to 1946.

Mrs. R. H. Hill

BIRMINGHAM Branch regret to announce the death of Mrs. Rose Hill, who served in Q.M.A.A.C. as a hostel forewoman and had been in indifferent health for some time.

Miss L. N. Johnson

CANTERBURY Branch announce with regret the death of Miss Louisa Johnson on 3rd March, aged 75. Miss Johnson served in the A.T.S. from 1940 to 1946 and was very proud of a certificate she was given for good service. She attended meetings regularly and will be greatly missed by her friends and associates.

Miss M. L. McQuaker

AYR Branch regret to announce the death of their Vice-President, Miss M. L. McQuaker, on 29th January, 1966. Miss McQuaker was one of the original members who formed the Branch in 1946 and had given faithful service to it throughout the years. During the war she was a sergeant in the 40th Ayrshire Coy. A.T.S. and served with the R.S.F. Training Centre. She will be greatly missed by her many friends.

Miss E. Turner

MANCHESTER Branch announce with regret the death of Miss Elsie Turner after many years of illness as a patient in hospital.

Mrs. P. Walter

IT is with deep regret that we announce the sudden death on 23rd February, 1966, of Pam Walter, ex-W.O.II A.T.S. She served in the Middle East during the war and afterwards helped to form the Middle East Association and was their secretary right up to her death. She was honest, true, loyal and a very hard worker. Mrs. Walter was a member of the Committee of the County of London Branch and, on its closure last year, transferred to London Branch. Her punctuality and willingness to help at all times endeared her to everybody and she will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Miss F. M. Wise, M.B.E.

WE announce with deep regret the death on 19th December, 1965, of Miss May Wise, after a long illness. She joined the A.T.S. in the early days of war and, after training at Aldermaston, she was posted to Shrivenham, where she quickly gained promotion. She moved with her Unit to Tonfanau and from there was posted to Bletchley (Intelligence). It was here, as W.O.I, she was awarded the M.B.E. for Exemplary Service. May Wise was a great disciplinarian with a delightful sense of humour, and all ranks who served with her, particularly in the days at Shrivenham, have lost a great friend. We extend our sincere sympathy to her sister, Mrs. Passingham, and family.

Miss M. C. Withy

NORFOLK Branch regret to announce the sudden death of Miss Mora Withy on 31st January, 1966. Miss Withy joined the F.A.N.Y. in 1939 and later transferred to the A.T.S., leaving as a Junior Commander in 1945; at the time of the East Coast Floods disaster she joined the W.V.S. and later became their Norfolk County Organiser. She will be greatly missed by her many friends and also by the charitable organisations for whom she did so much.

Q.M.s Take Note

UNDER the auspices of the Q.M. Dinner Club, and by kind permission of the Imperial War Museum, it is hoped in 1967, in commemoration of our 50th Anniversary, to have a film show of the W.A.A.C. 1917-19. The Imperial War Museum expect to have their own cinema at the Museum by then, which will accommodate 250 people. It is considered that a suitable date might be the evening before the Q.M. Dinner in May, as more Q.M.s come to London for that event than for the Reunion in March. Sorry, Scottish W.A.A.C.s, but we think it must be shown in London!

M. DRUITT.

An Unusual Job

CCARRYING out an unusual job for a girl is 25-year-old Cpl. Elizabeth Hollingsworth of Burntisland, Fifeshire, the first woman N.C.O. to hold the appointment of Instructor on the staff of the School of Electronic Engineering at Arborfield.

Cpl. Hollingsworth, daughter of a 1914-18 Scots Guards father who served throughout the Second World War in the Home Guard, was educated at Mary Erskine School, Edinburgh, and was formerly employed as a works study engineer with Ferranti.

After joining the W.R.A.C. she was trained by R.E.M.E. and qualified as a telecommunications technician, after which she was posted to the Signals School at Catterick for 16 months before returning to Arborfield to take up her job as Instructor at the Electronics School where she helps to train men of the R.E.M.E. and the very few members of the W.R.A.C. selected for this specialised field. Later this year she is to take an advanced course in electronics.

Regular Forces Employment Association

LAST year the R.F.E.A. found interesting and varied employment for 76 members of the W.R.A.C. in places as far apart as Belfast, Taunton, Edinburgh and Lincoln. If you have mislaid the address in your area it can be obtained from any big post office.

W.R.A.C. H.Q. Mess

THE Annual General Meeting of the Headquarter Mess was held in the Duke of York's Headquarters on Monday, 25th April.

Colonel L. Cowper, T.D. (Retd.), has given the Mess a silver ash-tray that was originally presented to her by H.R.H. The Princess Royal. To enable more people to see this generous and historic gift it has been put on display in the silver room of the Museum, on temporary loan from the Mess.

London Gazette**PROMOTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS
REGULAR ARMY**

Major: Cpts. K. E. Griffiths, A. L. Shepley Taylor.

Major (Q.M.): Capt. (Q.M.) W. D. Andrews.

Captain: Lieuts. B. Neville, F. A. Routh.

Lieutenant: 2/Lieuts. A. E. Pavey, C. D. Green, P. M. Jackson, A. H. S. Ferguson, P. M. McPherson, V. A. Leahy, A. T. E. Sealey, M. C. Younge, F. S. Harlow, J. M. Perry, J. R. Read, E. Tye, N. G. Hughes, A. K. Brown, F. M. MacFarlane, V. J. Muxworthy, A. M. Collins, B.Sc., E. A. Saxon, B.A.

2/Lieutenant: A. M. Collins, B.Sc., and E. A. Saxon, B.A., on probation, are confirmed in their appointments, E. M. Greene, L. E. Reynolds, E. W. Jones, T. L. N. Hanson Lester, K. C. S. Swallow, M. M. Fleeman, S. C. S. Bonavia, A. M. Williams, S. Taylor, M. R. Lloyd.

2/Lieutenant (on probation): A. A. Hutchison, A. C. Smith.

LIMITED SERVICE REGULAR COMMISSIONS

Major: M. G. Campbell.

Lieutenant: D. M. Hurrell, G. Dexter.

2/Lieutenant: D. M. Hurrell, G. Dexter.

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SHORT SERVICE COMMISSIONS

Lieutenant: 2/Lieut. M. J. Evans (amends February entry).
 2/Lieutenant: M. S. Crawford, U. E. Godfrey, M. J. Evans (amends February entry).
 2/Lieutenant (on probation): M. M. McCarthy.

**RETIREMENTS, ETC.
REGULAR ARMY**

Lieut.-Colonel: R. D. Allerton, M.B.E.
 Major: M. E. Crawford.
 Lieutenants: S. E. D. Berwyn Jones, J. P. Tyler.
 2/Lieutenant: V. Peters.

SHORT SERVICE COMMISSIONS

Major: D. L. Job.

Officers' Postings

(Up to 31st March, 1966)

Major E. J. Bowles, M.O.D., D.A.A.G. A.G. 16.
 Major J. Cato-Symonds, School of Signals.
 Major M. K. Cavanagh, 251 W.R.A.C. Signal Squadron.
 Major B. I. Forbes Adam, M.B.E., W.S.L.O., H.Q. Eastern Command.
 Major B. M. Godin, 4 Company, W.R.A.C.
 Major C. L. Harling, S/Capt. "Q," H.Q. Berlin Infantry Brigade.
 Major E. A. Hine, D.A.D.W.R.A.C., H.Q. Eastern Command.
 Major E. M. Miseroy, Trials Establishment, R.A.
 Major A. L. Shepley-Taylor, Depot and Training Centre, W.R.A.C.
 Major M. M. Sims, H.Q. Cyprus District.
 Capt. P. M. Farwell, S.C.A. 44 (Home Counties) Div./Dist.
 Capt. K. M. Hahn, R.A.P.C. Worthy Down.
 Capt. A. S. Nicholson, British Embassy, Bangkok.
 Capt. (Q.M.) M. Sharp, M.B.E., 61 (City of Edinburgh) Signal Regiment (T.A.).
 T/Capt. J. E. Blakeley, W.R.A.C. College.
 T/Capt. L. H. Campion, Holding and Drafting Company, W.R.A.C.
 T/Capt. F. A. F. Chandler, Depot and Training Centre, W.R.A.C.
 T/Capt. M. Y. Charlwood, S.O.P.T., H.Q. Western Command.
 T/Capt. J. M. Clements, A.C.O. (W.S.), Sheffield.
 T/Capt. P. M. C. Downe, 12 Independent Company, W.R.A.C.
 T/Capt. S. M. Elderkin, 9th Signal Regiment.
 T/Capt. G. Head, W.S.L.O., H.Q. Northern Command.
 T/Capt. M. H. Paterson, 251 W.R.A.C. Signal Squadron.
 T/Capt. A. I. Purton, H.Q. B.A.O.R.
 Lieut. J. S. Bryan, 18th Signal Regiment.
 Lieut. A. T. E. Sealey, 262 Signal Squadron.
 2/Lieut. R. A. Bickerdye, Depot and Training Centre, W.R.A.C.
 2/Lieut. S. C. S. Bonavia, 9 Independent Company, W.R.A.C.
 2/Lieut. A. F. Brown, W.R.A.C. College.
 2/Lieut. D. M. M. Byrn, 9 Independent Company, W.R.A.C.
 2/Lieut. S. J. Chalcraft, 4 Company, W.R.A.C.
 2/Lieut. M. S. Crawford, C.O.D., Donnington.
 2/Lieut. M. H. Dennis, 241 Signal Squadron.
 2/Lieut. M. M. Fleeman, 6 Training Regiment, R.C.T.
 2/Lieut. U. E. Godfrey, Holding and Drafting Company.
 2/Lieut. E. M. Greene, Trials Establishment, R.A.
 2/Lieut. T. L. M. Hanson-Lester, 24th Signal Regiment.
 2/Lieut. L. A. James, School of Artillery.
 2/Lieut. E. W. Jones, 9 Independent Company, W.R.A.C.
 2/Lieut. M. R. Lloyd, 16 Independent Company, W.R.A.C.
 2/Lieut. J. Lowe, Asst. W.S.L.O., H.Q. Northern Command.
 2/Lieut. S. W. Morgan, H.Q. and Training Establishment, W.R.A.C. Provost.
 2/Lieut. H. Mugford, 51 (H.) Div./Dist. (T.A.).
 2/Lieut. S. J. Poat, W.R.A.C. College.
 2/Lieut. L. E. Reynolds, Depot and Training Centre, W.R.A.C.
 2/Lieut. D. P. Rogers, School of Artillery.
 2/Lieut. D. F. Rumsey, H.Q. Northern Command.
 2/Lieut. J. L. Ryves, R.A.C. Centre.
 2/Lieut. A. C. Smith, 251 W.R.A.C. Signal Squadron.
 2/Lieut. K. C. S. Swallow, 8 Independent Company, W.R.A.C.
 2/Lieut. S. Taylor, 6 Training Regiment, R.C.T.
 2/Lieut. J. F. Tugwell, J.A.R.I.C. (U.K.).
 2/Lieut. A. M. Williams, Depot and Training Centre, W.R.A.C.

BRANCH DIRECTORY

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15 Independent Company, W.R.A.C.: S/Sgt. Gray, W.R.A.C., Administrative Wing (15 Company, W.R.A.C.), R.A.C. Centre, Bovington Camp, Wareham, Dorset.
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28 Independent Company, W.R.A.C.: W.O.II P. A. N. Wildgust, W.R.A.C., H.Q. Middle East Command, B.F.P.O. 69.
29 Company, W.R.A.C.: W.O.I M. Tindall, W.R.A.C., H.Q. B.A.O.R., B.F.P.O. 40.

W.R.A.C. Squadron, 6 Training Regiment, R.C.T.: Sgt. V. M. Downie, W.R.A.C., Houndstone Camp, Yeovil, Somerset.

W.R.A.C. Wing, Army School of Physical Training: W.O.I J. Whitehead, W.R.A.C., H.Q. and Depot, A.P.T.C., Queen's Avenue, Aldershot, Hants.

W.R.A.C. Detachment, Army School of Education: W.O.II A. E. Davey, W.R.A.C., Wilton Park, Beaconsfield, Bucks.

W.R.A.C. Detachment, R.P.O. (R.A.): S/Sgt. E. H. C. A. MacColl, W.R.A.C., Preston Barracks, Brighton, Sussex.

W.R.A.C. Detachment, P. and E.E.: W.O.II E. Jones, W.R.A.C., Horseshoe Barracks, Shoeburyness, Essex.

W.R.A.C. Detachment, R.S.M.E.: S/Sgt. C. H. Duncan, W.R.A.C., 18/40 R.S.M.E. Squadron, 12 R.S.M.E. Regiment, Gordon Barracks, Gillingham, Kent.

24 Signal Regiment: W.O.II R. A. Franklin, W.R.A.C., 3 Squadron, 24 Signal Regiment, Catterick Camp, Yorks.

233 Signal Squadron: W.O.II J. Henderson, W.R.A.C., Camp Commandant (N.I.C.), Thiepval Barracks, Lisburn, Co. Antrim, N. Ireland.

Regimental Wing, R.A.O.C., C.O.D. Donnington: W.O.II D. Jones, W.R.A.C., Regimental Wing, R.A.O.C., Parsons Barracks, Donnington, Wellington, Salop.

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For Sale. No. 2 Dress, good condition. Height 5 ft. 5 in., bust 38 in., hips 40 in. Box No. 3/66.

For Sale. Officer's No. 1 Dress, good condition. Height 5 ft. 5 in., bust 34 in., waist 25 in., hips 38 in. Hat, shirt, tie. £5 5s. Box No. 4/66.

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.).

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.



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