



THE QUEEN ALEXANDRA'S ROYAL ARMY
NURSING CORPS ASSOCIATION

GAZETTE

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THE Q.A.R.A.N.C. ASSOCIATION GAZETTE

Patron :

HER MAJESTY QUEEN MARY, *Colonel-in-Chief, Q.A.R.A.N.C.*

Vol. 1 No. 4

OCTOBER, 1950

Editorial

ONE LIVES and learns. A very true saying, and one that certainly applies in attempting to penetrate the realms of editorship. Last issue it was thought that a superhuman effort on our part would result in a GAZETTE labelled July being in members' hands in that month, and we foolishly traded on that supposition. Not so—we now know that we are only one bit of the great publishing machine, essential no doubt, but far, very far, from being the deciding factor in the time of appearance of the GAZETTE. The lesson has gone home and our course is being shaped accordingly, with our aim undeterred.

Some of our members are beginning to creep into the pages of the GAZETTE, not without a great deal of hesitation on their part and persistent encouragement from us. We have ventured to boldly force them out of their anonymity, believing that it will arouse more personal interest and perhaps create contacts. Whether they can have the law on us for this we know not and throw ourselves entirely on their mercy. It is in a good cause, we plead. Material for the GAZETTE must be in our hands in the first week of the month preceding month of issue.

We are changing the months of issue of the GAZETTE to February, May, August and November from 1951, and at the end of that year propose to have the first eight issues bound inexpensively if there is any demand from members who want to keep all back numbers.

This October issue is a bumper number just to round off our first year and gives you pictures of an historical event. If we are well supported, we hope to now and again repeat the venture until more pages and pictures become part of every GAZETTE printed.

You will find a renewal form for membership and GAZETTE subscriptions in this issue. *Fill it in and send it off to us, or your Branch Secretary, now.* It will get lost, or you will forget about it, if you delay. We are still receiving half-crowns for the 1950 membership subscriptions, which became due 1st January last, and far, far too

many members have not even yet remembered! It makes the record-keeping very difficult, as you will realize if you give it one thought. Half a crown is much more difficult to bear in mind than half a guinea, but that remedy would not commend itself to many! We have tried something else this time by giving you the opportunity to fill in the form for one, two, three or as many years as you wish. We would have liked to introduce a Banker's Order form, but our bankers say that it is not a suitable method for the payment of such small amounts. We hope members will note and be duly grateful, and remember that the Association has to run on these small amounts. Post your renewal forms today.

Middle East Visitor

Brigadier A. Thomson, C.B.E., R.R.C., K.H.N.S., Matron-in-Chief and Director of Army Nursing Services, was due to leave London by air on the 25th September for an extensive tour of the Middle East.

She proposes to visit all military hospitals in Malta, Tripolitania, Cyrenaica, Cyprus, Egypt, Asmara, Khartoum and East Africa, and to meet all Q.As. serving in these areas.

She will be accompanied by Colonel A. S. Watson, R.R.C., Deputy Director of Army Nursing Services, Middle East Land Forces, during the tour, with the exception of East Africa, when she will be accompanied by the Assistant Director of Army Nursing Services of that Command, Lieut.-Colonel N. P. de B. Bampton, R.R.C.

Brigadier Thomson will be away until the middle of November.

Korea

It has been decided to send additional Army nurses to the Far East. Q.As. will be sailing shortly, if they have not already left before this is in print, to nurse the sick and wounded British officers and men from Korea.

Numerous inquiries from applicants for Q.A.R.A.N.C. commissions have been received by the D.A.N.S. since the Korean campaign started. The Nursing Corps is still very much below strength.

Field of Remembrance

The Q.A. Association has accepted the commitment of arranging for this year's tribute to members of the Army Nursing Services on the Empire Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey, 8th to 16th November inclusive. The opening Service is at 12 noon on Wednesday, the 8th, after which the Association representatives will plant their crosses. It is hoped that as many members as possible will attend wearing medals and their Association badge.

Queen Alexandra Camp

THE 13th September, 1950, will be remembered as a very especial date in the history of the Q.As., the day on which the ceremony of the official opening of Q.A.R.A.N.C. Depot and Training Establishment took place on the parade ground of Ontario Camp, Hindhead. The weather was kind in that it did not rain, but the cold wind blowing reminded Q.As. that now they were a Corps of the Army they must prove their military toughness. Incidentally their friends and well wishers, the 500 spectators, had to share the penetrating breeze. It was more than worth that inconvenience. There were no others, for the whole function ran smoothly and easily, an outstanding example of excellent administration with foresight and much hard work on the part of the Depot team.

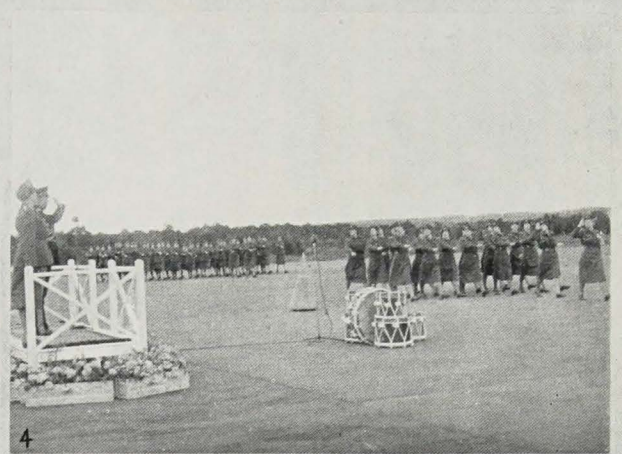
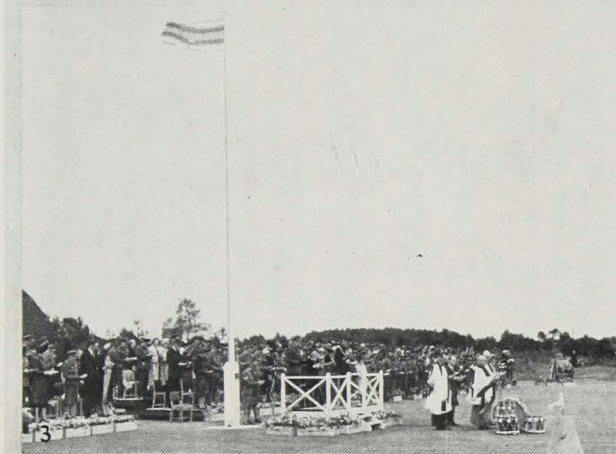
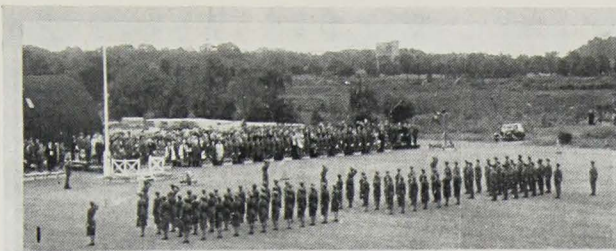
The ceremony commenced at 3 p.m. by the three companies of the Depot and Training Establishment marching on parade to the Band of the R.A.M.C. : H.Q. Company (24 men of the R.A.M.C.), Officers' Training Company, Q.A.R.A.N.C. (24), and the Recruit Training Company, Q.A.R.A.N.C. (37). The three companies were commanded by Q.A.R.A.N.C. officers, Capt. A. A. Nichol, Capt. M. M. Mount, and Capt. M. J. Scannel, respectively.

Major E. M. Turner, M.B.E., R.R.C., Q.A.R.A.N.C., was Parade Commander, with Adjutant Capt. M. M. Church, Q.A.R.A.N.C., and R.S.M. A. L. Underwood, R.A.M.C.

The Adjutant-General's arrival followed and was received with a general salute, after which he inspected the parade and returned to the saluting base to declare the Q.A.R.A.N.C. Depot and Training Establishment open, while the Corps flag, flown for the first time in our history, fluttered out in the breeze displaying the old Q.A.I.M.N.S. colours, chosen by Queen Alexandra in 1904 for the cap badge ribbon, with the new Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps badge superimposed in the centre of the flag in gold and silver with the lettering in black. The Adjutant-General gave the information that the name of the Camp was to be changed from Ontario Camp to Queen Alexandra Camp.

A Service of Dedication beginning with the National Anthem followed, conducted by the Chaplain-General, Canon F. L. Hughes.

The presentation of medals and awards by the Adjutant-General came next. The first recipient was R.S.M. Underwood, Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. Then followed two awards of a silver compact to the best all-round student on Basic Course No. 11, Lieut. J. M. Brooks, and a leather writing case to the best all-round recruit so far enlisted, Private J. L. Reeve. The *Nursing Mirror* gave these two awards. Lastly, the very first Q.A. recruit, Private A. Catherall P/1000001, was presented with a memento, a small clock, from the Depot officers.



QUEEN ALEXANDRA CAMP

[Photos: Gale & Polden Ltd., Aldershot

1. The General Salute. 2. Inspection of Recruits. 3. Service of Dedication.
4. The Adjutant-General taking the Salute. Officers' Training Company with Recruit Company following.

Then came another historical moment. The parade marched past the saluting base in line to the strains of the Q.A.R.A.N.C. march, "Grey and Scarlet," played for the first time in public. This march was arranged by Capt. Brown, Director of Music, R.A.M.C., from the suggestions given by Professor A. Lewis, of the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Birmingham University, and members of the Q.A.R.A.N.C. Depot Staff.

The brisk martial theme of Purcell's "King Arthur" is followed by the quiet, peaceful note of the traditional air, "The Gentle Maiden." The sharp contrast of tune illustrates the dual role of the Q.A. within the Army structure, woven inextricably by history into the pattern of their life.

The Band swung into the tune of the Grenadier Guards while the parade advanced in review order for the general salute, after which with the parade standing at ease the Adjutant-General addressed the assembled company. The Adjutant-General expressed appreciation of the work of the Q.A., spoke of the obstacles surmounted in their recent reorganization, thanked those who had given such unstinting help, praised those responsible for the organization of the parade and those taking part, and spoke encouraging words to those first recruits of a Nursing Corps. He said that it was the first time he had taken the salute at a parade of men and women together and he congratulated the Commandant, Colonel E. M. B. Dyson, upon the success of her command. He spoke of our beloved Colonel-in-Chief, Queen Mary's unfailing interest in all that concerned Q.As., and said that it would be the wish of everyone present that a message of loyalty should be sent to Her Majesty from the gathering. Sir James Steele throughout his address never once forgot the true aim of the Q.As., to bring to the men and women of the Army skilled nursing care wherever they may be and to ensure that *nursing* as a profession shall be recognized within the Army by becoming an integral part of its military structure.

Finally, the Band of the R.A.M.C. leading, the parade marched off the ground to the lilt of "Grey and Scarlet." The guests, full of admiration, were taken to the Depot Mess, beautifully adorned with flowers, where an extremely good and tempting tea was served amidst excited chattering Q.As. and their friends.

The Commandant received many congratulations on what she had achieved. Major E. M. Turner was praised on all sides for her controlled dignified command of the parade.

All who took part on parade and behind the scenes are to be congratulated but one could not help but remember that these two had been through much as P.O.W. and it was good to see them prominently taking the lead on such an historic occasion. Another P.O.W., Major T. O. Sinden, R.A.M.C., as Quartermaster, has been guide, philosopher, critic, friend to the Depot through its teething difficulties and the staff there would not think this record complete if his name was not brought in.

It should be mentioned to their credit that of those on parade the officers in training had been at the Camp only thirty days, the recruits from a fortnight to a month.

After tea many guests wandered round the different departments of the Depot asking innumerable questions. Gramophone records of "Grey and Scarlet" were available for those who desired to make the purchase. It costs 17s. 6d. Inquiries were made as to whether there is a score for the piano but at present it is only written for a military band.

General Sir James Steele, the Adjutant-General, will not forget this parade. It was his last public engagement before retirement and as he was driven slowly away through lines of Q.A. and R.A.M.C. the band played "Auld Lang Syne." It is doubtful if the Depot staff bade good-bye to some of their other admiring friends before midnight, but when they were allowed to retire it must have been with a solid feeling of satisfaction. Something attempted—something done.

We who have the honour to belong to the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps through its Association, have every reason to be proud of the Corps Depot and Training Establishment, and we can have every confidence that nursing history is being built worthy of our past traditions. It is felt that the Association should make some presentation to the Depot. It will be recalled that we made a gift to the Victory (Ex-Services) Club. Now it is the Depot of our serving members with which we must link the Association through some permanent expression of our good wishes. Our choice is wide as there is much a new regimental Depot requires and even more still that they might desire to possess.

Q.A.R.A.N.C. Sports

News from Hamburg

Last year's winner of the Medforth Cup, Lieut. R. M. Burnside, Q.A.R.A.N.C., participated in the B.A.O.R. Tennis Championship held at Hamburg from 3rd to 8th July, 1950.

A very high standard of play and good sportsmanship were seen throughout the tournament. Our representative, after a hard-fought battle, lost in the ladies' singles.

Later in the championships, however, Lieut. Burnside, with her partner Mrs. Finlayson (wife of Lieut.-Colonel W. F. Finlayson, R.A.D.C., also of B.M.H., Hamburg) carried off the ladies' doubles. This well deserved victory did much to alleviate the disappointment felt here at the failure of Lieut. Burnside to retain the Medforth Cup.

Musing on Matrimony

DRESSED in my best utility and decorated with the proverbial flower, I proceeded on my way to attend the wedding of a nurse friend. Most unusual for me, I even took a taxi, and that was after the fares went up too, but as I felt a real dog that day I willingly spent the half-crown plus threepence.

With the mistaken idea that I was creating an impression, I arrived with great dignity at a church, and, after asking the usher if this was Mr. So and So's wedding and receiving an answer in the affirmative, I solemnly took my place in a pew. Then I looked round at the other guests, a most unladylike thing to do of course, but it was fortunate on this occasion that I had a lapse and allowed myself to revert to type, as I suddenly discovered that I was attending the wedding of the wrong Mr. So and So! The result was panic and it took a great deal of self-control not to run out of the church. However, I succeeded in retaining the dignity with which I had entered and in keeping the movement of my limbs at slow motion until I passed through the door; then I ran, tumbled into another taxi—one and six this time plus threepence of course—and eventually arrived at the right wedding. By this time I was late and the bride was there before me, so I had to creep in very quietly and take an inconspicuous seat at the back of the church. So much for my grandiose ideas and it serves me right.

At the reception, which was everything a wedding reception should be, I came all over sentimental and just could not take my eyes off the bridegroom. He was the complete answer to a maiden's prayer. After I had gazed my full, emitted many sighs for lost opportunities, I came back to earth and thought of a correspondence which was in one of the London evening papers some time ago, and wondered if the bridegroom had noticed it.

A miserable and apparently unfortunate husband said that nine out of ten nurses made useless wives. Why he had continued marrying them so frequently or whether it was his first or tenth which proved finally to do credit to her profession was not stated. Possessing every fault found in woman since the creation of Eve, nine of the ten were lazy, bad cooks, careless, untidy housewives, with maternal instincts apparently entirely absent. Needless to say, the writer did not get away with it. By the time the correspondence finished he truly deserved some pity as he must have felt the meanest of worms. The replies written by many of the more fortunate husbands, who were obviously very happily married to nurses and undoubtedly content with their lot, should have made him go to earth and remain buried for ever in spite of the most refreshing rainfalls.

MARGARET B. CLELLAND.

News Notes from the Branches

OUR persistence in retaining the above heading is justified. There are two Branches now. The Australian Branch has been set up with effect from 1st September, 1950. There were nineteen actual members at that date and several others in the offing, their application forms being on the way. Miss Mavis Avery is appointed Honorary Secretary temporarily until such time as she can gather the members together to elect their Committee and officials. There is no news from Australia as a Branch other than their formation. There could not be in the time, but you will find interesting extracts from Miss Avery's letter in Correspondence.

Everyone will be delighted to welcome No. 2, the Australian Branch, and send them greetings and good wishes.

The Scottish Branch has not sent us any news in time for this issue. Probably, like some other people, they do not realize how early material must be in the Editor's hands to be in time for publication. We know that they have increased their membership from the seventy at their formation to one hundred. One hundred Scots can safely be left to work out their own salvation as a Branch!

No. 3—to be—is well on the way. It will represent for us the same area as that covered by the Birmingham R.H.A. of the National Health Scheme. The inaugural meeting is to be held at 2.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 1st November, at the College of Nursing Club, Birmingham.

Members' Reunion

THE Reunion at the Royal Horticultural Society's Old Hall, on Saturday, 2nd September, was very much enjoyed by those attending. They were fewer in numbers than last year, 386 against 608, and such is the perversity of circumstances that because of the crush last year we provided accommodation for 500 this time with the added amenities of chairs and tables and, of course, had to guarantee the catering bill for that number. Consequently we are again out of pocket over it, even though Miss Rout took the Central Committee's warning to heart and charged one shilling more than before for the tickets. For her comfort let us announce that at the function 145 badges were sold, sixty-five orders for the *GAZETTE* were received and forty-five new members registered. Apparently a case of what one loses on the swings being gained on the roundabouts, but we of course would like it both ways. Association members owe a debt of gratitude to Miss Rout for her indefatigable efforts on their behalf. There are many ups and downs in preparing for a function of this sort and some of the difficulties encountered take not a little surmounting.

The general concensus of opinion seems to give the palm to last year's event, but without a doubt this party was enjoyed too. Many members had travelled from long distances to be present. A few were most disappointed not to meet some particular friend they had hoped to see, though usually they found other well remembered faces. One or two said they had not seen a soul they knew. It is very difficult to find a really consoling reply to such a woeful plaint, but the smiling faces and the din of chatter proved that it was far from the general experience.

One of our Princess Christian Reserve members was present and enjoyed the scene and the deference paid her. Miss Roy, Chairman of the Scottish Branch, was among the Central Committee members who were all labelled to act as hostesses. We think next time everyone should bear a name disc boldly lettered. It would settle identity uncertainties and help the bashful. There are some still !

A handful of brave husbands escorted their wives and, as the party settled into its stride, became eloquent and complacent, comparing themselves with their defaulting fellows who had not put in an appearance. They enjoyed it we feel sure. Two of them had a little reunion on their own, suddenly greeting each other as old friends of student days with as much gusto as any of the war reunions going on all round them.

A plea came from the north to hold a reunion there. This idea of branches sponsoring such a function has been previously discussed and has much to commend it. Time will show what can be done. The seed is sown.

Correspondence

ONE of our members, Miss Ida Humfrey, writes as follows :

I was very interested in the account of the Old Contemptibles Association Reunion given in the July GAZETTE. I am a holder of the 1914 Star and was up at Amiens with No. 7 General during the retreat from Mons. When I retired in 1931 and came to live in Bath the Old Contemptibles Association were just starting a branch there. They were most anxious that the Matron of the Orthopædic Hospital and I should become members of the Association—but it was not possible as we could not wear the Rose (Bar). This I can explain by saying that when I was in Germany about 1920-21, an order came out to G.H.Q. signed by Winston Churchill to the effect that no woman was entitled to wear the 1914 "Rose." It was strictly confined to officers and men "within sound of the enemy's guns." Well, we were at Amiens—but I, who had up to the time this order was received been proudly wearing the "Rose" on my ribbon, was ordered by a senior officer to take it down ! Of course I did, at once—but almost

with tears. I'd been so proud of it. Somehow, I cannot think this order (of which I have a copy and will send it to you if you wish) was generally carried out, as I have met various nursing sisters who did not know of it.

If I had been well I should have been at the Albert Hall Reunion—but only as a Patron of the Bath Branch Old Contemptibles' Association, and not anything to do with my nursing record! Who the nurses were or, rather, who the nurses taking part portrayed, I cannot imagine.

* * * *

The GAZETTE is looked forward to by all in my Mess at any rate. We enjoy it! I personally like its gaily coloured cover. It is us, our Service, and one thinks back on so many pleasant things that have happened during our own time of serving—the pleasant little things. On joining the Service to be met at the station by another Q.A. who says she's glad you have arrived, has a taxi waiting and hopes you have had a pleasant journey. These meetings stopped during the war years with the uncertainty of trains, and now the independent young things would consider themselves treated as school children. I think of the vase of flowers in our rooms on return from leave or joining a new station—the friendly personal touch. I think of bathing in the Suez Canal at Ferry Post before the war, waving to the bridge of the P. & O. or Orient steamers and our mail in the Mess on our return. I think of many stations abroad and, oh, how I think of the sight of England and Plymouth Hoe from the deck of the ship bringing us back home! Home! What do they know of England who only England know?

I think of journeys in our ambulances with the Eighth Army in Tunisia, the narrow roads with minefields either side, bully beef and biscuits and flies, the kind people we met, the excitement when our King was coming to inspect the Division, the excitement of the Sisters when I was presented. I think of the families returning to their homes walking through the minefields, wife first this time, then donkey, then husband, in case a mine should go off!

I think—oh, I think I must away to the post.

CONSTANCE MABEL BOKENHAM.

* * * *

I am one of your members—elderly, a grandmother, with a young heart and a willing one. If I can assist at any time I shall be only too pleased. I like our GAZETTE very much and send this little reminiscence for it. During the 1914-18 war I was attached to the 31st General, Port Said. It was a rather crude emergency hospital converted, if I remember rightly, from a large factory or "works." Particularly I remember one lad, ill so long with acute peritonitis, and it was so very hot that I frequently lifted him out of bed to turn his mattress. He was well and truly spoilt. The time came for his discharge and I asked him to write to me when he got home. He did, and I was delighted to get his letter telling me all his news and ending up with "Your loving bed companion, etc."

HILDA SWINDALL.

Miss Mavis Avery writes from Melbourne, Australia :

Each year since our return (last four years) I have gathered the Q.As. together and we have had a Reunion Dinner. I might say that this Reunion Dinner is a grand success and several members travel many miles from the country to be present that night. We talk of the grand times we had in the Service and of the many, many delightful friends and acquaintances we made—and many a laugh is had over the various episodes which befell us whilst serving abroad. At the dinner held on 21st April, 1950, there were thirty-three ex-Q.As. present, amongst them being some English girls who have recently come to Australia.

There is an Edith Cavell Memorial at which a service is held each Anzac Day and various women's Services place a wreath. For years Australian Q.As. of the 1914-18 war have laid a wreath on behalf of those who lost their lives—now the old Q.As. have decided that our generation shall carry on the honour—so this year I placed the wreath on behalf of the Q.As. We have decided that each one will take it in turn to place the wreath for the future.

If you can, please give my very kindest regards to Miss Helen Gillespie, Miss Lawford and Miss Mildred Harris.

Regular Army Reserve of Officers

IN the July GAZETTE the alternatives available to T.A.N.S. nursing officers were briefly set out. In this issue information is given about the Regular Army Reserve of Officers for the benefit of our members who were Q.A. Regular or Reserve nursing officers.

The Regular Army Reserve of Officers consists of retired Regular officers who received a gratuity or retired pay and are compulsory members, and of other officers who did not receive such gratuity or retired pay and are voluntary members.

As a result of the formation of Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps as a Corps of the Army, it has been decided to invite women officers who served in the Q.A.I.M.N.S., Q.A.I.M.N.S. (R) or Q.A.R.A.N.C. to join the Regular Army Reserve of Officers (R.A.R.O.) as voluntary members.

This appointment of women officers to the R.A.R.O. is designed to make available a number of women officers who are prepared to join for service at home or abroad at a time of national emergency or when

such emergency appears to be imminent. They will be liable to be called up without notice.

Voluntary members of the R.A.R.O. may normally resign at any time, except during a war, on giving notice of such resignation to the Army Council.

T.A.N.S. nursing officers are ineligible for R.A.R.O. Ex-nursing officers who have children under school leaving age may not join R.A.R.O. unless they can show that, in the event of their call-up, suitable arrangements can be made for the care of the children.

Nursing officers with 14 years' reckonable service will be appointed in the rank of Major; with 6 years' service, Captain. Less than 6 years' Lieutenant, unless temporary rank of Matron or Senior Commander has been held, in which case the substantive rank of Captain will be granted.

Uniform and equipment will be issued to officers appointed, with an allowance for articles not in issue from public stocks.

Age limits for joining are 54 for Lieutenant-Colonels, Q.A.R.A.N.C., and 52 for Major or below. Women officers will be removed from the Regular Army Reserve of Officers on attaining the following ages : Brigadier or Colonel, 60 ; Lieutenant-Colonel, 57 ; Majors and below, 55.

It is hoped that as many nursing officers as possible will join the Territorial Army (Q.A.R.A.N.C./T.A.). This implies carrying out the duties of an officer of the T.A. and undertaking the 8 days' training in camp each year. Members of the R.A.R.O. are not required to train in peace-time. If you are a released officer and cannot or do not wish to join the Q.A.R.A.N.C. (T.A.), but do desire to serve again in an emergency, you are invited to make application to the Under Secretary of State, AMD4, The War Office, to join the Regular Army Reserve of Officers.

18th General Hospital

"The Story of the 18th General Hospital, 1939-45," is a book that many of our members will desire to purchase. It is beautifully got up, it is well written and contains many photographs.

Copies may be obtained from Lieut.-Colonel T. P. Pratt, Harewood Barracks, Woodhouse Lane, Leeds, 2, at the cost of 3s. 6d. per copy.

Admission of Retired Officers to Military Hospitals

THE following notification has been received from the War Office :

Under the National Health Service Act, 1946 (and the other Acts relevant to Scotland and Northern Ireland), all civilians resident in U.K. became entitled, from 5th July, 1948, to free hospital treatment in National Health Service Hospitals. Under arrangements since made by the Service Departments with the Health Department, free treatment in Service Hospitals is also made available to civilians in certain cases.

Retired and released officers, since they fall under the heading of civilians, are therefore notified that they may be admitted to military hospitals as follows :

- (a) In the case of retired officers requiring treatment for disability for which they are in receipt of disability retired pay, by the authority of the D.D.M.S. Command, on receipt of a direct application by the individual concerned or by the doctor treating his case.
- (b) In cases other than (a) above :
 - (i) In emergency, on authority of O.C. hospital, who must obtain subsequent approval and covering authority from the A.D.M.S. District.
 - (ii) In other cases, by authority of A.D.M.S. District, on receipt of an application from the Senior Administrative Medical Officer of the Regional Hospital Board.

(Note with regard to cases under (b) :—Owing to the present shortage of Q.A.R.A.N.C. officers the number of beds that can be adequately maintained by military hospitals is so limited that cases of chronic illness cannot be admitted to military hospitals.)