the night of the bombardment from the sea, when the shells whizzed over
the camp—some of them so low as to make the gravel on the parking-
ground fly round—and many others. On each and every one the cars were
out either as a convoy or in ones and twos, and it remains a miracle that
none of them was ever injured. There was but one accident, when a lorry
was knocked over by a train, the unfortunate driver losing her leg.

On May 6, 1919, the Calais convoy was relieved by the R.A.M.C. convoy;
and the former returned to England, bringing most of its ambulances with
it in the Channel ferry. Thus the convoy's last drive together was from
Richborough to London.

IV.—A TOWN VOLUNTARY AID DETACHMENT.

By Miss KATHERINE ACLAND.

Acting County Controller, Hertfordshire.

Formation.—The St. Albans detachment was originally formed in 1911,
by the two Vice-Presidents of the St. Albans Division of the Hertfordshire
Branch of the British Red Cross Society, the late Countess of Verulam, and
Lady Thomson, together with Mrs. A. N. Boycott, under the auspices of
the Territorial Force Association.

A committee was formed, and the Secretary and Assistant County
Director of the Herts B.R.C.S. came from Headquarters to explain the
work of a voluntary detachment with the result that Mrs. Boycott, herself
a trained nurse, was appointed commandant, and Dr. S. Clarke, M.O., with
Miss Irene Phillips as the first quartermaster.

Lectures in First Aid and Home Nursing were given according to the
St. John Ambulance Association syllabus, and the first War Office inspection
was made on May 31, 1913, the late Colonel S. C. Robinson, C.B., County
Director, being present.

The first inspection was held at Townsend House, the stables being used
to provide a temporary ward.

The following year the detachment made more ambitious efforts. The
inspection was held in the Drill Hall, where the detachment proceeded to
provide a quartermaster's store, and from that equipped wards, dressing
station, kitchen, etc. The Gas Company lent gas-stoves for the occasion,
and the cooking demonstration proved a draw for the whole neighbourhood.

Colonel Poynder, R.A.M.C., expressed his entire satisfaction with
the work of the detachment as exhibited in this demonstration.

Training.—Members of the detachment besides attending lectures and
rehearsals worked at the St. Albans and Mid-Herts Hospital, and so gained
practical experience.

Personnel.—The detachment was extremely fortunate in its original
commandant, Mrs. Boycott, a very highly qualified trained nurse, to whose
sense of discipline and organizing ability much of its success is due. She
always had the highest ideals for the detachment, and during the war the hospital which was under her charge was run on lines which would well compare with one staffed by regular trained nurses.

She was much helped by Lady Thomson, the Vice-President, who gave invaluable help as Assistant-Commandant during the whole period of the war. Following Miss Phillips, Miss Wix did splendid work as quarter-master and Miss Silvia Glassop's cooking will never be forgotten! In fact, she gained such a reputation that the C.O. used to send his men from the field ambulance to her for instruction. She or her deputy attended the hospital daily with at least two members of the detachment working under them, and four other helpers washing up.

The present Countess of Verulam worked enthusiastically as a nurse, and her example was of the greatest value.

It is impossible to make any particular mention of the original members, but when the detachment was mobilized in December, 1914, it was found that there were sufficient nurses to do the duty required of them in addition to those who served at home and abroad in military hospitals and the supply never failed until the hospital closed on January 31, 1919.

It is curious to compare the rather frivolous attitude adopted by the authorities before the outbreak of war with the help and encouragement which is afforded to V.A.D.'s at present after the serious work adequately performed by them has been recognized. One Territorial colonel announced "that he was not going to have any of his men messed about by a lot of girls trying experiments." Another asked for "a few girls and a few flowers to brighten the wards before an official inspection."

Equipment.—Under the original 1911 scheme the Abbey Institute, St. Albans, had been fixed on as a temporary hospital, but this building was requisitioned by the War Office on the outbreak of war. Bricket House was, therefore, secured in the first week of August, 1914, and prepared at a few hours' notice at the request of the military authorities as a hospital suitable for receiving forty patients, the detachment holding itself in readiness for immediate service.

An elaborate scheme of "promise" had been made in 1911, and these were all called up and the hospital fully equipped. Lady Verulam and Lady Thomson opened a fund for providing extra comforts for the patients which met with generous response.

**Activities.**

(a) War Time.—Bricket House was temporarily occupied by the 6th Field Ambulance when stationed in St. Albans district in September, 1914. The detachment was mobilized on December 9, 1914, and the hospital opened in full working order and remained in commission until January 31, 1919.

During this period 2,298 in-patients were treated, 336 operations (mostly
major operations) were performed and 2,168 out-patients received attention. In addition, massage was provided for disabled men. The hospital was used for troops (both officers and other ranks) stationed in the district, and was at no time used as a convalescent auxiliary hospital.

The first serious cases to receive attention were the victims of an aeroplane crash in 1915—both the pilot and observer being seriously injured—the observer remaining in Bricket House Military Hospital three months.

The first air raid over St. Albans caused great consternation as an emergency appendix operation was in progress when all the lights were suddenly cut off, and the operation had to be completed by hastily lighted candles. The patient did well and was proud of his recovery.

Cases of every description were treated, with the exception of infectious cases.

The staff of the hospital consisted of the commandant, assistant commandant, two or more trained sisters as required, with the members of the detachment working on day shifts from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., and 1 p.m. to 8 p.m., and night shifts from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. The quartermaster was in charge of stores and linen, and the commandant's secretary undertook the clerical work. The commandant organized a sewing room where many willing helpers unable to nurse gave their services in mending hospital linen and attending to soldiers' kits. One member had this department under her special charge.

The trained sisters were engaged by the commandant; at one time Canadian sisters took duty at Bricket House.

R.A.M.C. officers stationed in the district attended the hospital for the whole period, with the exception of three months in 1915, when all medical units had been sent overseas.

Their duties were voluntarily undertaken by local medical practitioners. Orderlies for duty were supplied by the R.A.M.C.

The hospital did its full share of work during the great influenza epidemic of 1918-19, and it was finally closed on January 31, 1919.

The massage and electrical treatment for discharged and disabled soldiers was continued after the hospital was closed.

The finances of the hospital were most admirably administered by the Treasurer, Dr. A. N. Boycott, who on its closing handed over £777 to the Herts Demobilization Committee. Over £12,000 passed through the hospital account.

(b) Peace Work.—The detachment was kept together after the war. Courses of First Aid and Home Nursing lectures are given annually. Notices of these are always sent to the local press, and this publicity helps recruiting.

Members work at the civil hospital and at the massage clinic, and on various occasions such as big public gatherings.

In November, 1924, V.A.D. Herts, Thirty-Eight, was re-registered under
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the new scheme. In 1927, Mrs. Boycott became Hon. Commandant, and Miss Peake an original member, who had served in military hospitals during the whole of the war, took over the active work of running the detachment.

Mrs. Dunham is the new Lady Superintendent and Dr. Kenneth Bates, Medical Officer.

The first War Office inspection was made on October 30, 1926, when the County Controller, Brigadier-General R. H. Hare, C.B., C.M.G., was present. The detachment was again inspected on October 29, 1927, by Colonel Rutherford, D.S.O., A.D.M.S., E.A.A., and Major Phillips, D.S.O., M.C., R.A.M.C., when Miss Acland was present as Acting County Controller in the absence of General Hare.

Lectures are given each month, and all necessary equipment for inspections is borrowed as required, as the hospital stores were given away when the hospital was closed.

A team from the detachment won the Hertfordshire Inter-Detachment Round of the Stanley Shield Competition in the spring of 1927, and was only defeated in the eastern area competition by one mark, by Essex.

The detachment is at present well up to strength under its excellent Commandant, Miss Gertrude Peake, and is fortunate in having in its ranks a fully qualified London hospital nurse as well as its own lady superintendent.

Miss Wix (sometime Lady Mayor of St. Albans) still acts as quartermaster, with Miss Green as A.Q.M., and there are at the present time nine mobile members (four of whom have done their week's training at a military hospital, whose reports have been universally satisfactory) and thirty-three immobile members, including the commandant's secretary, one dispenser and three cooks.

The keenness and efficiency of the detachment, and its ability to attract more recruits, are most hopeful signs of the progress of the new scheme for V.A.D. work in the county of Hertfordshire.

V.—INSPECTING A VOLUNTARY AID DETACHMENT.

By Major M. B. H. Ritchie, D.S.O.

Royal Army Medical Corps.

In a charming village nestling in the valley ten miles from nowhere, bustling market town, popular seaside resort, or one of England's stately homes that still harbours butlers bland of visage and footmen fleet of foot—somewhere within the broad shires of the A.D.M.S.'s area, a voluntary aid detachment awaits your inspection. You, let me say, have been reversing round the market square among the sheep pens trying to find the map reference until the school children came to put you wise. In hut or hall dedicated to every form of uplifting institution for which rural England is