

Mess Etiquette

The following notes (inspired by "Notes for Etiquette in Officers' Messes") are designed to indicate the correct procedure in a well brought up A.A.M.W.S. Mess

Greetings: In the morning, when entering the Mess for the first time, all members must say "Good morning Sarg" to any sergeant who happens to be on time for breakfast, and "Good morning kids" in a general way to the other ladies present.

Greetings such as "You'll do me, you big bronzes Anzac" are not encouraged, and remarks as to why So-and-so was late for parade, owing to someone else having pinched her bath, and similar personalities, are also not in the best of taste.

Punctuality: No one should ever be late for Mess. This is very unlikely to happen, but in any event it is bad for the mess-girls' tempers and retribution in the way of a small helping will probably follow.

Circulation of the Port: As all personnel of hospital units are strictly forbidden to have alcohol on the premises, we need not bother much about this Very Important Rule, except to say that decanters (if any) in all the best messes are passed to the left down to the other end of the table and, if anything is left in them, later passed back again. It is the rule that each officer (and of course, each A.A.M.W.S.) should pour out only his (her) own port, presumably owing to the fact that the neighbours of the pourer, would probably only get a very small drink.

Acknowledgment:
For A.A.M.W.S

Dress: No member may enter the Mess unless properly dressed. Dressing gowns and pyjamas are strictly forbidden, no matter how classy they look. (Bobby pins are also out.)

Sam Browne Belts: In the Notes for Officers' Mess Etiquette, it is stated that these may be worn for breakfast or lunch, but not for dinner "owing to the discomfort". Apparently more is eaten for dinner. It is to be presumed that in the A.A.M.W.S. Mess, the place of the Sam Browne would be taken by a foundation garment, so the same rule as to the wearing of these would, doubtless, apply. In case you don't know, the belts are hung over the back of the wearer's chair, and it is important to get the right belt back after the meal, particularly in cases of O.S.sizes.

Subjects of Conversation: In Officer's Messes (believe it or not) "subjects such as 'shop', women, politics and religion" must not be discussed. This doesn't leave much except the weather for us to discuss, but a lot can be done with a little social chat about "What an appalling angle that new girl wears her hat at!" and so on.

Ladies and children are not permitted to enter Officers' Messes except on Special Occasions. This is very depressing, but we can't be worried.

Doubtful Stories: These are not encouraged, we are told, in an Officers' Mess, as they tend to lower the tone of the Mess; we must, therefore, regretfully cut these out, except, perhaps, on Special Occasions?