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[6/20] 41  
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[1047]

The Official War Historian of the Commonwealth Government (Dr. C. E. W. Bean), after his study of the collection of private war records preserved in the Australian War Memorial Library, wrote :—

"The private diaries in this collection furnish some of its most valuable historical records, but, like all private memoirs which were not compiled with any historical purpose, they should not be regarded as first-hand evidence except where it is certain that they are so. The diarist is almost always sincere in his desire to record accurately, but he is subject to no obligation or inducement to indicate whether he is recording his own observations or incidents told him by friends or heard at third or fourth hand at the mess-table. Thus, in some of the diaries in this collection, scenes described with vivid detail, and without any warning that they are told at second or third hand, have been found to be completely inaccurate in important details. A certain number also have been written up or revised long after the events, though doubtless usually from notes made at the time. In most cases the student must rely on his experience and on internal evidence to guide him in judging what is and what is not likely to be historically accurate."





Australian Red Cross Society  
(R.C.S.)


Miss Nellie 116  
Miss A. H. Stone

18.6.19  
Red Cross Rest Room

Dear Miss Nellie

I am making an attempt to write a few of my experiences as promised & am sorry to have kept you waiting so long but trust you will excuse me for this once. Left Island 7.6.17. Embarked at Sydney 2.6.19 on R.M.S. Woolstan - had 24 hrs ashore in Melbourne when we called there during which time we paraded before the Mayor in chief & his Executive Staff - to say nil of Camera Club & Publicans etc. Called at Adelaide where the People gave us a very warm welcome - dinner for us in cars owned by members of Automobile Club. Luncheon provided at Town Hall - after which we were driven around the City of Adelaide by members of the above Club - The Streets were beautifully decorated for the occasion at Fremantle - our next port of call all was quiet as were all the ports

89  
116

on the mountain  after a rough trip  
 between Adelaide <sup>600 miles</sup> & Darwin  
 Ten ~~to 12~~ days later we reached  
 Ceylon - went ashore at Colombo  
 Stayed two days there & two days  
 in Stanley where we had a delightful  
 time - during which time the  
 mine Sweepers did some good work  
 as ~~several~~ ships had been sunk  
 in that vicinity.

Just before reaching Bombay  
 we were advised of the loss  
 of the "Ungolia" that of course  
 caused us much delay to try  
 & escape the same fate - which  
 we fortunately did -

There we took on the crew of  
 the ill-fated Ungolia &  
 many of our native crew  
 remained there - the latter  
 readily took their places  
 on the ship  
 we called at Aden for a few  
 hrs then finally landed at Suva

3

  
Australian Red Cross Society  
(A.R.C.S.)

Red Cross Rest Room

Several of the Sisters were ill for a time coming over - I think chiefly - owing to their just having been inoculated & vaccinated prior to embarkation that being what they attributed it to together with an occasional rough sea.

There were nearly 300 Sisters on board & the Captain of the ship feared greatly relieved to get rid of so many women - as he naturally feared a panic if anything happened to the ship - there being other lady passengers besides.

From Suez 90 Sisters proceeded to Cairo & the remainder to Alexandria there to await embarkation our next mode was to Solowia I was one of a party of 30 who embarked on the Humbereen - where there were about 90 medical officers (British), & some troops as well



Col' Earl Kitchener of Khartoum - O.C. Troop

The Officers were very kind to the  
Sisters on board & gladly gave  
up the 1st Class Cabins to us  
while they used the lower ones  
of course we travelled in darkness  
at night & lived in our life belts  
had a good deal of Boat drill  
exercise also.

We were accompanied by two  
destroyers who were kept rather  
busy dodging around - once  
we sought seclusion for an  
afternoon at Crete - then came  
out again when darkness  
set in.

The journey across  
took 5 days - altogether when  
we were safely landed -  
we arrived in Palermo on 12 Aug

1917 - were driven to a British  
Hqpt - Staffed with British, U.S.  
& personnel & Australian Sisters  
it was a canvas Hqpt -  
1500 Beds - we arrived in  
the busy time of the year




Australian Red Cross Society  
(R.C.S.)

Red Cross Rest Room

for both malaria (of the  
"malignant" kind) & dysentery,  
the heat was intense - we  
waded off duty in the pm.  
feeling very tired after the long  
hot days - but at the same  
time happy to think we could  
at least help the Boys a little  
by feeding them to the best of  
our ability, & sponging etc -  
Shortly after our arrival the  
greater portion of the city was  
destroyed by fire - this caused  
a shortage in many ways  
esp in the food line - no  
wonder - when we think of  
the thousands of people left homeless  
& starving - there again the  
British came to the rescue  
& gave shelter to thousands of  
refugees, until at her assistance  
I heard that the French Govt  
also rendered some assistance



as soon as the  Aust Red Cross  
 heard of the fire they  
 despatched cases of food stuff  
 to the Sisters - <sup>arriving</sup> of course it took  
 weeks to get there but arrived  
 when badly needed all the  
 same - thus they could do  
 do monthly - which helped us  
 considerably to face the hard  
 work -  
 we had a good many  
 hyperthy cases - of which  
 Section I was Sister in charge  
 a few of our patients died  
 in spite of the attention  
 given them & others got better  
 likewise the malignant  
 patients, of whom there were  
 many with history of hyperthy  
 for which cases we had wards  
 set apart in the Hqs Compound.  
 during summer was our Hospital  
 was situated out among the



Australian Red Cross Society  
(R.C.S.)

Red Cross Rest Room

Hills - but when winter & rainy season drew near we were obliged to move camp in order to buy & keep a few marquees - at least - standing. Then we went to a place called "Lumber" & took over the Prisoner of War Hospital. We then nursed Turks, Bulgars & Germans & after a time erected some more marquees away from the prisoner compound & took some more Touring Patients. The Prisoners were good Patients & very grateful the only difficulty being to keep them in bed. The cold weather played havoc with the bleeding Patients amongst the P.W. & we usually got a fair number in when the weather changed - we had a busy time when we returned to Northwich the



British Red Cross Society

following year - I took over  
 1,600 Patients, for a time, during  
 & after the heavy fighting -  
 we got large convoys of  
 Patients suffering from Malacia  
 & Influenza - this was in <sup>autumn</sup> 1918  
 & at that time most of the  
 former were admitted at  
 night - between the hours of  
 12. m. - 2. & 4. am - many of  
 the Patients had Pneumonia &  
 malignant Malacia, well -  
 which of course rendered their  
 chance a very small one -  
 the Influenza epidemic did not  
 last longer than a few  
 weeks in one place - fortunately  
 but unfortunately, it was responsible  
 for many deaths while it did  
 last.



9



Australian Red Cross Society  
(A.R.C.S.)

Red Cross Rest Room

It was <sup>necessary</sup> to give

many of the Patients an intramuscular injection of Quinine on arrival and those suffering from influenza as so many gave a positive reaction when blood film was taken ~~as seen~~.

I found "Tannay's" inhalation (don't know if spelled correctly) very useful in cases of Pneumonia - just a few drops on small piece of wool placed inside improved mask - made out of perforated zinc - placed over nose & mouth & held in position with tapes around the head - I applied fresh hot frog to the wool till Patient got relief then removing same - continued the treatment at intervals during day & night. I have see Patient - (unless delirious) hold onto it for his - realizing the relief it afforded them with regard to malaria - esp



w. T. mal - I found - when large  
 doses of Quinine were being  
 given - that plenty of  
 nourishing food played a  
 big part in the Patient's recovery,  
 even small quantities of nourishing  
 food given ~~after~~ done up  
 tastily, before hand - will  
 induce the Sickest malarial  
 Patient to take it sometimes.  
 I also found in nursing  
 hospital - that frequent small  
 doses of Sodii Sulph or Mag Sulph  
 & plenty of nourishment - (in fluid  
 form) played a prominent part  
 in a good recovery -  
 Some cannot digest milk while  
 others do well on it.  
 We had some very interesting  
 Surgical work amongst the  
 exp after the heavy fighting in  
 1918 - many of these being very







Australian War Memorial

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