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[1048]

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 an internal evidence to guide him in judging what is and what is not likely to be historically accurate."

Ab. Toff

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War Record.

France

Left Melbourne for Sydney May 5th 1917
two days in Sydney & embarked on
the Ulysses for England.

Sixty eight sisters in charge of Quis
Cornwall. Four Medical Officers

There were about fifteen boats in the convoy
picked up three more outside Melbourne
and dropped one again at Fremantle.

From Fremantle went to Mauritius where a
Japanese escort took us to Durban.

- Harbour very full of boats and in hurry.
The Suffolk knocked a hole in the side
of our boat which made it necessary to
stay ten days. which he enjoyed sight-
seeing.

Trip unsuccessful until a day out from Plymouth
where we were met by several torpedo boats?

Arrived at Plymouth after twelve weeks travelling

Did one weeks duty on the way over in the Tropics

- Terrible Malaria Cases which we took on at
Cape Town. There was no accommodation for
washing on the boat and we had to wash the
sheets in the bath and then on railings etc
dry. Other items ~~in~~ the Hospital was well equipped
for a small hospital in a transport.

After reporting at Head quarters ten days leave
spent in Scotland.

About 14th August reported at the Crofton War
Hospital for duty.

This consisted of First Divisions in District
schools. The schools were modern nice floors
and tiled walls which acted very well for a Hospital

The first Division I reported at was a mixed Medical & Surgical.

We arrived at the Hospital at 5/12. When all the days dressings had to be done.

The instruments consisted of one pair handaxe scissors, long forceps, and a probe or two in the Surgical Ward Invercumb.

We managed to get them done the best way we could until we could get out to buy some ^{instruments} for ourselves. Being told it was an up-to-date Hospital we did not provide ourselves with instruments.

The Cases were all kinds of wounds, a good many stumps which had to be repaired and a flap made before they could heal.

There was a shortage of linen also but that was remedied after a time. We were also supplied with instruments after a few weeks.

The next Division was a General Hospital at Roxbury. A clean well equipped Hospital with everything required to do the work.

The majority of the cases were able to walk a few feet cases where they had other wounds beside jaw wounds.

Every case was X rayed after admission and there were usually some loose teeth and fragments of bone taken out.

The work was mainly Dental and was in charge of a Dental Surgeon and three assistants all Dental Surgeons. Usually after fitting the patients with Splints they were given a month's leave when they returned to have their teeth put in. If they needed any repairs to face were sent on to the City Hospital.

The Nursing work consisted of keeping mouths clean and dressings to wounds the treatment was all done at the end of first aid as they improved once they.

The male Staff was R. A. M. C. the nursing Staff

A.A.N.S. each division had its Charge Sister with Miss Cornwall Director of the Five Divisions. These Divisions were rather far apart and a car was used to do the rounds.

We were all in billets and in some cases had to be taken to the Hospital in Ambulance.

Air raids were bad at this time and several times during the time I was in night Duty we had them but the Hospital always escaped.

Six months at Croynes when we all left and had to be different Hospitals some to France.

Went to Tringworth a camp Hospital of 200 beds mostly convalescent nursing. Old wounds and light medical work.

In Charge of two Medical wards for six months. Then two Surgical Wards.

~~That~~ A good deal of Rheumatic work was done here there were three beds fitted with all electric appliances for massage, and a large staff of men Capt Thomas being in Charge. There was also a gym where all the limb cases were exercised under the supervision of a Medical Officer A.C.S.

The Nursing staff was ~~seven~~ ^{ten} Sisters with a Sister in Charge.

The Patients left Tringworth for Australia those unfit for General service: a six months in Australia August 1918. left for France. No. 1. A. G. H.

Spent four busy months at No. 1. & during the last part we were getting patients & evacuating as fast as the patients could be moved onto England & Louisville in December came to Sutton Wing where influenza was very severe there were twelve extra beds in every ward which made nursing very difficult and also added to the risk of infection. Food was very scarce.

After the first Hospital Ship left for Australia
 the congestion was relieved and we were able to
 take the extra beds out of the Wards which
 made them much more comfortable

Was one of the unlucky people who did not go to a C.C.S.
 and have only spent three weeks in a acute surgical
 ward during two years service:

A. B. Tappin Sqn

A. A. H. S

I. A. G. H

Subton King



Australian War Memorial

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