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AUSTRALIAN ARCHIVES
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MATRON E.S. DAVIDSON.



Matin Dandson day merenes for 6 h so for Mesaines put. Dan in finis 18 homes typhing as measure 2800 4 trains with 500 patient. on each went mi in 24 hours Heavy bombing. To 38" British daling, Hoy Calis. RAME office ans. Derlen! to study in sharps 60 English VAD + and Rider as Suca Hospite Corso Torino RAME medices office. 35 ans. dider. 45 English British adj wrote that I in Derter work was shootning excellent.

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 grists district in the orderine furnith some of its next vasible interior correct, but the all privates assume which we can be a substantial to the control of the con

TELEPHONE: CENTRAL 4780

## COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO "THE SECRETARY."

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE.

MELBOURNE. 9th July 1926

No.

Dear Bean.,

The right woman is Matron G.E. Davis., R.R.C. of Guelederne Private Hospital, 209 Dandenong Road, Windsor Victoria. who was in charge of all the nurses in India for the three years. She went out first with No.3.A.G.H. to Lemnos. She has R.R.C.1st Class; Kaisar i hind 1st Class and was Mentioned in despatches. Australian nurses were scattered over India - ran a Hospital at Bushire in Persia : and vessels to Mespotamia , Persian Gulf but had no hospital there. The hospital at Bushire was inspected by Matron Davis who can give all particulars. She reckons she has not the pen of a ready writer and does not know a nurse who has but could supply all material and probably put whoever was responsible for writing on to original material. There will probably be letters published in Nursing Journals. and others available etc. and photos. I have told her you would probably be communicating with her.

Herewith the material we have.

Yours sincerely,

El Buther

P.S.I hope you received Allens Book safely ?.



14/15



## INTERVIEW WITH MATRON DAVIDSON, A.A.N.S.

Departure from Australia in 1914 on "Shropshire".

Work in Egypt at N.Z. Hospital Abbasia.

Work at Mena House and Hezireh Palace Hospitals during Gallipoli campaign.

Feb. to June 1916. Work at Sporting Club and Anzac Hostel Hospitals.

Arrival in England. Posted to Harefield and then to A.L.F. H.Q. till
Feb. 1917.

Transferred to France to 2nd A.c.H. and then a C.C.S. Wounded admit during Messines push. Shelled from Lille.

July 1917. Transferred to 58th (Brisish) Stationary Hyspital at Calais. Conditions in mud. Raids by German planes.

Moved to Italian front. Opening up a hospital in Genoa. Smooth working - all Tomnies taken in. After armistice 250 Austrians admitted. Good relations between nurses, patients and orderleys. Good work of V,A,D's.

Return to England Jan. 1919.

I left Melbourne with the let Contignation October 20th 15 on the troposlin "Significant and landed in 1854 on Becomby 85

I left Melbourne with the left Continuent on October Soth 1916 on the troopship "SHEOFSULES" and Landed in Astron Broomber 5th 1914 and proceeded with it to Gurre and was earthly control the New Zeeland Hospital at Abbassia. Hiss Convers the present that the New Zeeland Hospital at Abbassia. Hiss Convers the present Latron in Chief and Rise Finly were on the troopship "Sheopships". In this hospital, the C.C. was no H.A.W.C. with the Kyyrital ray and the Matron was a C.A. regular and we had lew Zeeland notherly with a few New Lealand orderlies and a few Lyroc'. In four days time we were reinforced with 4 Queensland markes, we were billeted at the Ucliopolis House Hotel, a good 25 miles sway and rode on a trea to and from the hospital. I had charpe of the Acute Insumonia word and during the 47 months I was there, I had something like 60 cases of Pheumonia, and until the "Kywrre" came and we had reinforcements, I was alone in this ward with only orderlies.

at the end of March, I was transferred to Mens House (No. 2 A.G.H.) and was at this heartful when the first nounced arrived from Gellapoid (May 1925). At the end of May, Mens House blosed and I went with the unit to Gezireh Pelace. On the 6th Amount I returned to Mens se eating matron with seven Saeters. It was then a convelencent depot but was increased to a General Hospital of 500 beds.

On let February 1916 I was transferred to the Grd Auxiliary Reputate Sporting Slub Helicovits, a large hospital of 500 beds and we had not the earl-convelencents. We had one big drassing room, which, when in full working order, put through something like 1,000 drassings per day. The tenniscourts at this heavital were cored over and Screened round and when the number of beds in the housies, were increased, at the tame of sychmician of bellicois, 500 beds were not into good accommodation was then brought up to 1,700 but fortunately was not messed to be a considerable was found and the second of the considerable was not messed.

about the middle of March, I and my nursing staff were morel out of M. J. Auxiliary Mossital and Me. 2.4.0. Mossital model of the March Mossital and Me. 2.4.0. Mossital color of the Cairo to see about aquipping the best and arranging for the bed linen and them arranged and mut up 500 beds. Jour the middle of April I returned as Matron to the Foorting Slub and found there an entirely new staff of nurses and stayed there until June 24th, when the Sporting Club ups closed and on July 7th I and 45 murses left agypt for Saplend. He was selected the billeted at Hardfeld for a while and then I was routed as Secretary to the Matron-im-Chief in London and stayed with her until the middle of Footnury 1217, when i see remainered to day and they sent to a tensor by Themaring Station. The 0.45% was composed of buts and tensor and was the meanest 0.5% to the firing line. The staff commissed of 6 murses and there I took charge of a ward (nuts) as well as administrative duties. The administrative duties are the commissed to 20 and preparations generally were made for the administrative duties were very slight as I only had these 6 nurses and the Messines push. During the first 18 hourst that would were received from the Messines push, 2.000 were admitted to the compile, and the Messines push, 2.000 were admitted to the people of the Messines push, 2.000 were admitted to the people. The description of the Messines made of the second word word and bonded. Once a shell case and exploded near

explode until it had emadded itself in the ground. We were being shelled from Lills and the cause of our metting these shells was, that an observation perioon was on top of us and the boohes shelled this and the shalls dropped on us, and these shells came unconfortably closs. One least of shell weighing 53 lbs. came down on the Sisters' (mertars one avening.

On the 14th July, I was transferred to the 38th British Stationary Hospital at Jalais where the madical parconnel were H.A.M.J. exacts the Sisters, who were anstralians. When I arrived the casp was under canyas and the lunes for the atients and the Sisters querters were being built. My staff was increased daily by twos and threes until it reached its full number, 35. While we were still under canyas, we had the honour of entertaining the Matron-im-Shief H.I.F. and the Matron-im-Onief B.I.F. Fortune tay for them they came the night they did, as two nights after we were blew out. At one of clock in the morning the first tent came item and then by worsely 3 are and, as two highes after we were alown out. At one o'clock in the morning the first tent came down and then by morning 3 or 4 others were down and the remainder were in such a ctale that they could not be used. The Sisters' hats were the first hats to be completed at the hospital, the sisters always being considered next to the matients, actions first, mursing sisters next, and that was the general thing throughout the whole time I was with the 38th Stationary Hospital. Although the Sisters' huts were not quite completed, the J.C. instructed that we buts were not quite completed, the O.C. instructed that we should move into them, which we did group right through the mad which frequently came over the top of our gum boths, with care the matients' merumess were kept over them. When the matients' merumess were kept over them. When the medical to get bright, the bothe would come over every wight now began to get bright, the bothe would come over every wight now began to get bright, the bothe would come over every wight now began to get bright in succession. At first we had no protection at all and the Sisters would make due-outs for tranks on top, but afterweads beautiful due-outs were built. Just as they were completed, the unit was ordered to be ready to move in 46 hours. Myidently the luck was on our side, because very shortly eiter we laft a bomb fell almost on the Sisters' due-out and blaw one end of it out. The whole unit was ready to move end he it was undecided where we were to go we were given leave from 4th November to 15th November 1917 and then were called suddenly back to France to proceed to Italy were given leave from 4th November to 15th November 1917 and then were called suddenly beek to Frame to moved to Italy and we went down on a hospital train which took 60 Saclieb V.A.D's. and Saters, and I being the only Batton was put in charge of the lot. The only casualty that occurred on the journey was the loss of one V.A.D. Be disappeared. By a strange coincidence her mane are Nuclear. I she staff on the train country to the control of the country down received no lamburctions until 1 o'clock and we were to board the train at 6, they had made no preparations of all.
After reporting at Boulegae from Sagland a mistake was made as regards myself and the Extron-In-Chief's orders were that I should proceed by car to Abbeville, instead of which, I was sent by cer to Seleis and than had to report on the 11.6 train beak to Abbeville. The trin on the train to listly wasminteresting and we arrived at Genes on Konnay at 6 o'clock and were taken to the lossital, forso foring. The hospital was a large boys school and this hospital, been so that the second school and this hospital, been so that the second school and this hospital, be made to be second to the second school and school and the second school and school and the second school a

Here again the Sisters were the first to be considered. They were the first people to be billeted. We stayed in one of the principal streets, we had our own kitchen and mess rooms and our own Knglish servants - it was a mile and a querter from the hospital and trasport was provided, and with few exceptions, the Sisters never hed to welk to and from the heapital Bott was the importal motel which was beautifully formished, and a portion of it had been commendeered by the Covargant. We findly not waitly at the heavits. We finally got settled at the hospital, by the Government. We finally got estiled at the hespital, after we had got the Italian equipment out and our own in, which was quite a work of art. We got up 520 beds and after we had been there three months, we really thought we had been to ship the state of 20 years services and the whole thing went just like clockwork.

On two consistent was speed to cend Australian Eurape to the forward B.C.C.S's, and whilst there one was awarded the A.R.F.C. All the patients were English boys, either wounded or sick,

sometimes we were busy, Sometimes not. We had a very bed time of the Influenza in January and again towards the end of

time of the intrinsize in sampary and spain toweres the sun of the year, in November: After the /rmistice was signed, we took in about 250 Austrians. They were very good boys and gave us no trouble, we were at 60 mone, a year and 2 months, not once did 1 have a complaint from the Sieters about the patients and only on one or two coussions was there my trouble between the Sieters and the Orderlies. The whole of the personnel tried to do their very best to help each other.

The staff in their spare time had a great deal to interest them

in the way of climbing mountains, welks, visiting the various places of interest around the town, which is a wonderful place. blaces of interest around the town, which is a wonderful places. After the Armistice was signed, leave was given for the Sisters who wished to visit Mome and all the principal towns of Italy, about 25 availed themselves of this great privilege. Apert from the 35 Australian Sisters, I had 5 Margish V.A.D's. sent by Wisse McCarthy and I have nothing but good to say of them. About a fortnight after the Armistice was signed, when the work was lessening, the Sisters gave the Officers a dinner and then the Officers gave the Sisters a dinner. They were both most

On the 23rd December, our last patients were sent away and we felt as if we were a shin without a rudder. They were most excellent petiants, so expresistive of everything that was done for them and they thought there was noone like the Australian Sisters. When the boys passed from the Convelscent Camp, next the hospital, they always used to cheer us. On the Srd January 1919, the D.M.S. mad. D.M.S. Italy gave a large dense to all the nurses in the No. 11 Ceneral Hospital, which was then empty, there were about 500 guests present. On the 15th January, there were about 500 guests present. On the 15th January, the first helf of the unit left Gence and on the 16th the second helf left and we joined at Le Harve and crossed the channel together. I was sent straight from waterlook Station to Southell as Marron and my staff to No. 2 A.A.H. Southell is a hospital for Australian soldiers, but a great number have now been sent home and the others expect to go shortly. felt as if we were a ship without a rudder. They were most

The Sisters' work was absolutely excellent at all times. As our Adjutant writing to me after we had left said, he thought he knew a lot about Murses but he never found a staff so excellent at work and joviel at play as the Australian Sisters at 38th Stationary.



I left Melbourne with the let Continuent on October 20th 121c on the trapedity "SHRWSHIM" and landed in agrot on December 5th 1914 and Gooded with it to character the Section of Continuent of the Section 1914 and Section 1914 a

At the end of March, I was transferred to Mana House (No. 2 A.G.H.) and was at the bestial when the first wounded arrived free Gallkooli (May 1915). At the end of May, Mana House closed and I went with the unit to Gezireh Palace. On the Cth August I returned to Mana as acting Matron with seven Sisters. It was then a convalencent depot but was increased to a General Heevitgle Of 500 bear.

On let February 1916 I was transferred to the ord huriliary Respital (Sporting Club) Helicolis, a large hearital of 500 beds and we had not by somi-convelencents. We had one big dressing room, which, when in full working order, mutthrough something like 1,000 dressings per day. The tenniscourts at this host itslewer roofed over and screened round and when the number of beds in the heavital were increased, at the time of exacution of Gellipoli, 500 beds were not into each Pavilion (2) and it was just one sea of beds. The hostiful accommodation was then brought up to 1,700 but fortunately was not meeded.

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explode until it had embedded itself in the ground. He were being she lied from Malla and the cause of our cetting these shells was, that an observation balloon was on top of us and the boubes shelled this and the shells came unconfortably close. One piece of shell weighing 55 lbs. came down on the Sisters' Quarters one evening.

On the N-th July, I was transferred to the 38th British Stationary Hospital at halis where the medical personnel were R.A.M.C., except the Sister's quarter were Ametricians. When I arrived, the camp was under conveners Ametricians. When I arrived, the camp was under conveners Ametricians. When I arrived, the camp was under conveners Ametricians. When I arrived, the camp was under conveners Ametricians. When I arrived, the camp was under conveners and the Sister's quarter was an accordance of an arrived, the camp was under conveners and the sister's and the sist On the 14th July, I was transferred to the 38th British Stationary Hospital at Calais where the medical personnel were was almost impossible to walk about as the men were sleeping was anothe increased to well anothe as the ann are several clong the corridors. The day after we arrived we moveled our first equipment belonging to the Italian Medical Services, our own equipment had not arrived. The petients were English townies

Here again the Sisters were the first to be considered. They were the first people to be billeted. We stayed in one of the principal streets, we had our own kitchen and mees rooms and our own Marlish servants - it was a mile and a quarter from the hospital and transport was provided, and with few exceptions, the Sisters mayer had to wake to and from the hospital. It was the imperial books which were becutifully furnished, and a portion of it had been commandeered by the Caramant was finally out satilad at the hospital. by the Government. We finally got settled at the hosnital, after we had got the Italian equipment out and our oun in, which was quite a cort of art. We got up 550 beds and after we had been there three months, we really thought we had the best hemsital in Genor, under the menagement of our excellent O.C. who was an R.A.W. repulse of 20 years services and the whole thing went just like clockwork.
On two consistent was saked to send Ametralian Murses to the
forward B.C.O.S's, and whilst there one was awarded the A.E.E.C
all the petients were saglish boys, either wounded or sick. sometimes we were busy, semetimes not. We had a very bad time of the Influence in January and again towards the end of After the Irristice ass signed, we took in about 250 Austrians. They were very good boys and gave us no trouble. As no me marked thing, rectically the whole time we were at Genea, a year and 2 mining, not come did I have a complexity from the Sisters shout the pitings and only on one or two occasions was there any trouble between the Sisters and the Orderlies. The whole of the personnel tried to do their very best to help each other. The staff in their spare time had a great deal to interest than in the way of dimbing countries, sales, visiting the verious clases of interest round the town, which is a wonderful misco-affer the Armstice was Sagand to bow, which is a wonderful misco-way sales and the great property of the way of the town or before the way of the countries of the sales and the great property town or their the sales and the great property town or their the sales and the sales are the sales are the sales and the sales are the sales and affect to visit how and it has principal towns of thely, about 25 areled themselves of this great partialization of the from the 35 Australian Sisters, I had 5 Anglish V.A.D's. sent by size McGarthy and I have nothing but good to say of them. About, a fortnight after the 'mastice was signed, when the work was lessening, the Sisters are the Officers of them and then the Officers gave the Sisters a dinner. They were both most the Officers have the distors a dinner. They were both most emjoyable.

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The Sisters' work as specified y smallest all times. As our adjutant writing to me after we bed left each; he thought be known to the bout heres but he never found a staff of excellent at work and joined at play as the australian Birthers at 58th Stationary.

Spain both 34. 20

## INTERVIEW WITH MATRON R.S. DAVIDSON ON 4.4.19.

I left Melbourne with the let Contingent on October 20th 1914 on the troopship "CHECKENIES" and landed in Egypt on Becember 5th 1914 and proceeded with it to Gairo and we de alab for duty at the New Zeeland Hownital at Abbassia. Hiss Conyers, the present Matron in Oniet and Miss Finly were on the troopship "Shrowships". In this bosnital, the C.C. was an R.A.M.O. with the Egyptian Army end the Matron was a Q.A. reguler end we had New Zeeland nationts with a few New Zeeland orderlies and a few Egypos". In four days time we were reinforced with 4 Quensland nurses, Ne were billeted at the Meliopolis House Motel, a good 22 miles away and rode on a trem to and from the hossital. I had charpe of the Acute Phenuonia word and during the 42 months I was there, I had something like 60 cases of Panuonia, and until the "Kysra" came and we had reinforcements, I was alone in this ward with only optorlies.

At the end of March, I was transferred to Mena House (Mc. 2 A.G.H.) and was at this hoevital when the first wounded arrived from Galipoit (May 1915). At the and of May, Mena House closed and I went with the unit to Gezireh Felace. On the 6th August I returned to Mena cas cating Marrow with seven Sisters. It was then a convalescent depot but was increased to a General Mospital of 600 beds.

On lst February 1916 I was transferred to the 3rd Auxiliary Hespitel (Sporting Glub) Heliopolis, a lerge hospitel of 500 base and we had mostly seni-convelescents. We had one big drassing room, which, when in full working order, put through socething like 1,000 dressings per day. The tenniscourts at this hospital were roofed over and screened round and when the number of beas in the hearital were increased, at the time of evapuation of Gallipoli, 500 beas were put into each Pavilion (2) and it was just one sea of beas. The hospital accommodation was then brought up to 1,700 but fortunately was not needed.

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sanded until it had embedded itself in the ground. We were being shelted from idlle and the came of our estime these shells was, that an observation belicon was on top of me and the books shelled this and the shells dropped on us, and these shells came unconfortably close. One piece of shell weighing 58 that came down on the Sisters' Quarters one evening.

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