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[983]

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."

Salomon ⁵⁰₁₂₃

No 1 Australian Gen Hospital.
Sutton Henry.
Wiltshire. 27. 6. 19

R.M. Jackson

So.

Not having been in an active theatre of the war my experiences will not be very interesting. as I have been asked to relate my experiences since leaving Australia this is my attempt.

after four weeks service in our Base Hospital.

No 7. A. G. H. Keswick, Adelaide, South Australia with fourteen other Sisters we embarked for India on May 31st 1917. On the "SS. Rhwa" arrived at Bombay. on June 19th.

I was detailed for duty at the 34th Welch Hospital Deolali, Bombay Presidency. & began duty on June 24th.

The Personnel of this Hospital was composed of Royal Army Medical Officers & Orderlies. with fifty five Australian Sisters & twenty nurses of the St Johns Ambulance Corps. which made up the Nursing Staff. we had our own Australian matron.

The Hospital had previously been a garrison occupied by the Regular Army Regiments. Each bungalow was converted into a ward. which were situated some little distance apart. The hospital area being a mile long & half a mile wide.

My service at this Hospital was eighteen months, during this time we nursed cases of. Malaria, Typhoid, Cholera, Plague, Small-pox. Dysentery, Scarletina, Leprosy. various

other medical cases including one of Hydrophobia (a typical case). In surgical wards the cases were not of actual casualties, but of Septic Wounds. & immediate operations. The majority of our Patients were British Tommies, Mauritian Labour Corp. French Algerians & Turkish Prisoners of War.

The climate of India is certainly very trying. The heat necessitated the wearing of Topies from 8 a.m. till 5 p.m. In the monsoon season it is more trying as the heat is not lessened, but is humid.

Orders came through for us to embark for the United Kingdom on November 24th. We travelled overland to Colombo, & boarded the SS. Willshire at Colombo to Pt Suez, from there we went to Cairo, & were billeted at the 45th Indian General Hospital for a fortnight, then left Pt Said for Marseilles by the "Kaiser-i-Hind", disembarked at Marseilles for Paris then Le Harve. Arrived in London on Jan 6th.

After 14 days leave I reported at No 1 A. G. H. Harefield, after three days duty I was transferred to No 3. A. G. H. Hops Dartford. for duty for a fortnight. Then came to No 1 A. G. H. Sutton Veny, & have been on duty here since February. My health since I came at has been good. I had two attacks of Spanish Influenza but not very serious.

Ruby. M. Jacka. S/No.



Australian War Memorial

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