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THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA.

THE IMPERIAL YEOMANRY FIELD HOSPITAL.

WE have received from Mr. Charles Stonham, Officer Commanding and Chief Surgeon Imperial Yeomanry Field Hospital, a further letter, dated Pretoria, October 23rd, 1900, in the course of which he gives the following details with regard to further wanderings of the hospital:

III.

THE MARCH TO BARBERTON.

On reaching Pretoria on August 28th we sent our ambulances on to the Irish Hospital established in the Palace of Justice and camped near the racecourse. We had lost many transport animals, and those still alive were worn out with long marches and scanty rations. The Field Hospital and Bearer Company combined had to requisition for seventy fresh animals, but were only able to draw ten, sixty being the total number allowed for the whole brigade. All units were in this respect as badly off.

The day after our arrival in Pretoria Major Hale and I went to No. 3 Model School Hospital (commanded by Major Ford, R.A.M.C.), to which we had lent our detachment for the time being, and made all arrangements for the detachment, exchanging one or two sick men and providing for the sending home of most of the St. John Ambulance men who were time-expired. We drew a few stores and changed a couple of carts, so that we should be ready to march at once when orders arrived. For these we had not long to wait, as we received marching orders for the following day.

On August 30th we struck camp at 7 A.M., marched through Pretoria at 9 A.M., passing the recently established Yeomanry Branch Hospital in the grounds of Beckett's House at Sunnyside. It looked most business-like with everything in full swing, orderlies and nurses coming to the railings to see us pass. On the opposite side of the road was the Langman's Hospital.

On September 1st we arrived at Balmoral, having camped the night before two miles south of Bronkhurst Spruit. We had to pass along the road where our animals had perished in such numbers during the storm of July 25th-26th. The stench was abominable and nauseating. We passed through Middelburg on September 3rd, and sent our sick to the hospital there. We camped at Wonderfontein on September 4th. Next day as we were inspanning we heard heavy gun fire to the north-west of us, and after marching about three miles our artillery and mounted troops, with two ambulances under Major Hale, were ordered back. The Boers under Commandant Trichardt had attacked a party of Canadians guarding the railway but had been beaten off. Our ambulances took five wounded men from the Canadian camp to Wonderfontein railway station to await a train for Middelburg.

On September 6th we joined General French's division at Carolina, and rested here till September 9th, when the division marched into the hills in the direction of Barberton. Major Hale and Mr. Green with two ambulances followed Mahon's cavalry, the rest going with the main convoy. About 10.30 A.M. our advanced guns engaged the enemy, and the convoy parked at the foot of a hill on which two of our guns were placed. The guns soon drove the enemy from the opposite hill; the action was most exciting, especially at the finish, when the mounted Boers broke cover and made up the hill we had been shelling as hard as they could go, under a perfect hail of shell from the battery. The division now advanced, crossed the hill we had been shelling, and camped about 8 o'clock in the valley. Our casualties in this action were 5 wounded; one man shot through the head died in our hospital on September 12th. The next morning we were fairly in the mountains; the roads were very bad, broken by numerous drifts over the winding Komati River. On September 12th we camped at the foot of Roodehoogte, an exceedingly steep pass about half a mile long, and the remainder of that day and the two next following were taken up in getting the troops and convoy over the pass. Our turn to ascend came on September 14th, and the next day we marched to the top of the Devil's Chute, about 7,500 or 8,000 feet above sea level, from which there is an extensive and beautiful

view, with Barberton about 20 miles distant. The Chute is a winding road about 3 miles long, descending about 2,500 or 3,000 feet to the lower but still hilly and broken ground. Many waggons and animals which had come to grief in the descent bore witness to its difficulties. Our mules were now thoroughly done up; we had lost so many that, even after inspanning our horses, our teams were reduced to six animals, and we only just managed to creep into Barberton on September 17th, when we sent our sick to the Boer hospital. This march to Barberton will certainly rank as one of the great marches of the campaign; and the Boers, and indeed the English residents there, thought it impossible for us to enter Barberton with our heavy guns and convoy. But French pushing on and arriving two days before he was expected, caused the Boers to beat a hasty retreat, leaving large quantities of stores and over forty engines. At Barberton we were detained for lack of transport till October 2nd.

AT BARBERTON.

We obtained supplies and a few fresh vegetables, which were very welcome, as we began to feel the absence of the latter severely, indeed, this is one of the chief drawbacks to long marches through absolutely barren country.

Unfortunately, there was absolutely no forage to be obtained, and our transport animals had to pick up a living as best they could on the veld. Needless to say, they died daily. A few days before we left a small quantity of forage was issued; had it not been for this, most of the poor animals would have died.

FROM BARBERTON TO MACHADODORP.

On October 1st we received orders to march the following morning, as we were to proceed by the Devil's Kantoer. We were only to take such waggons as we could find full teams for. We left 2 officers and 35 men with 7 waggons, who camped near the station. These were sent on by train, and we found them waiting when we got to Machadodorp. On October 2nd, Major Hale, Dr. Green, and I, with 28 men, moved off with 10 carts, after passing a most disagreeable night in consequence of the very high wind and perpetual dust storms, marched 18 miles, and camped at the North De Kaap River. The rest of the column going 4 miles further on. During the night a series of heavy thunderstorms commenced, and lasted practically without intermission for eighteen hours. Two men in the ammunition column were killed by lightning, and others injured. Some mules were killed. On October 3rd we commenced the ascent of the Kantoer by a very bad road, in parts excessively steep, winding up the mountain for about seven miles. This day we did about four miles in pouring rain, accompanied by heavy thunder and lightning. The next two days were occupied in getting the waggons up. From the top of the Kantoer a magnificent view of the mountains surrounding the low ground in which Barberton lies was obtained. On October 6th we reached Godwan River Station, and had again to cut down our convoy, as there was another hill to be ascended at Waterval Onder which, according to accounts we received, was worse than anything we had yet done. We left Mr. Green with all the baggage, and what little stores we had—two carts, and all the men but eight, to go on to Machadodorp by train. Major Hale and I with eight men and the rest of the waggons, empty except for kits, marched to Nootgedacht through a beautiful valley, which had it not been for the wind and heavy dust storms would have been most enjoyable. On arriving at Waterval Onder about midday on October 8th, we saw the hill of which we had received such terrible accounts, and were agreeably surprised to find that there was really nothing formidable about it—indeed in the afternoon we marched up it without difficulty with our usual ten span of mules. The following day we reached Machadodorp, where we found the rest of our men and waggons who had preceded us by train.

French's division and some of Buller's troops were at Machadodorp, making a very big camp. On October 11th we received orders to cross to the north of the line at day-break and take over the sick from the field hospital which was to replace us in Mahon's brigade. This, in view of the fact that the yeomanry, volunteers, colonials, and reservists were being sent down, looked like an early return home, and, although we were sorry not to accompany General Mahon, as

we had been with him for three months, yet we were all delighted at the prospect before us. We remained at Machadodorp until October 21st, when we entrained for Pretoria, arriving there on the 22nd. During our stay at Pretoria we admitted nearly 100 patients, sending them down by sick convoy as opportunity offered.

[Major Stonham concludes his letter by stating that he hopes to give details of the medical and surgical work done when the Field Hospital and Bearer Company are finally relieved of their duties.]

RETURN OF THE IRISH HOSPITAL.

THE Irish Hospital Corps arrived at Southampton from South Africa on Tuesday, November 20th, and proceeded to Dublin. They left Pretoria on October 15th and reached Cape Town on October 20th. The train was "hung up" for three nights owing to the danger of travelling after dark until Norval's Pont was reached. At Cape Town they were received by the Mayor (Alderman O'Reilly), the Rev. Dr. Walsh, Vice-President, and several members of the Irish Association. The Mayor congratulated Sir William Thomson on the work which the hospital had done, and Dr. Walsh invited the officers to luncheon in the name of the Association. The voyage home in the *Dilwara* was prolonged to twenty-six days, owing to the weather.

Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, the Commander-in-Chief; General Tucker, commanding the Seventh Division, and several other officers saw the company off from Pretoria, and Lord Roberts made a short address to the men, in which he thanked them for their services.

The total number of patients treated in the wards at Bloemfontein and at Pretoria was 2,748, while there were over 2,500 "externs." The death-rate of 2,748 patients was 3.7, and of the wounded 6.1.

The enteric cases numbered 671, of which 501 were treated in Pretoria. The death-rate at Bloemfontein was 12.6, and at Pretoria 11.9, or on the gross number treated 11.7. Eight of the cases died within 48 hours of admission, and 4 within 72 hours. Some were moribund when received.

Of the company, Dr. Counihan, Dr. Pounnden, and Mr. Percy Stewart, and six men were attacked by enteric, and two by dysentery. Drivers P. J. Murphy and P. Lalor unhappily died, to the great regret of their comrades.

The Palace of Justice at Pretoria will no longer be used as a hospital, but has been handed over to General Baden-Powell as a barrack for the headquarters of the South African Police. Number 2 General Hospital has had its tents increased in number, and as it is very well equipped, it will be sufficient to meet any probable demands upon it.

The officers who have returned are Sir William Thomson, Dr. George Stoker, Dr. J. B. Coleman, Dr. Pounnden, Mr. J. MacIlwaine, Mr. Percy Stewart, Mr. Douglas Thomson, Mr. Edwards, Colonel Nixon, R.E., and Hon. Rupert Guinness, financial commissioners representing Lord Iveagh, have also returned to England. Dr. Counihan, Mr. Lurring, and Mr. Hogan remain in South Africa in official employment.

RETURN OF THE EDINBURGH AND EAST OF SCOTLAND HOSPITAL.

THE troopship *Dilwara* arrived at Southampton at midnight on November 19th. Through delay caused by the disembarking of 160 invalids, the staff of the Edinburgh and East of Scotland South African Hospital did not reach London until November 20th. Mr. A. H. Gordon, Joint Secretary to the Hospital, met the travellers at Southampton, and accompanied them to Edinburgh on Wednesday morning. The party consisted of Dr. Francis Darby Boyd (Physician to the Hospital), Messrs. Andrew Watt, George L. Chiene, W. J. McFarlane (Surgeons), Dr. James Miller (Bacteriologist), seven nursing sisters, five dressers, sixteen men of the Army Medical Corps (students who specially enlisted for the work), twelve second-class or berles, and six of the staff.

This did not represent all who went out. Professor Chiene, who on his arrival in South Africa was appointed Consulting Surgeon with the Forces, returned home some time ago. Mr. Wallace, who then became the head of

the hospital, suffered from enteric fever and a veld sore in one of his eyes, and was invalided home. So also was Mr. Cooper, another of the surgeons. Nurse Boyd, the sister of Dr. Francis D. Boyd, died of dysentery, and one of the men—W. Dick—died of enteric fever. The rest of the staff appear to have had good health. The hospital, as already reported in the JOURNAL, has been handed over to the charge of the military authorities, and Dr. Yule and Sister Kemp also members of the original staff, have remained, having volunteered to do further duty in connection with the hospital. Three men have been chosen to take their discharge in South Africa, meaning to remain in that country. At 12.30 on Wednesday, the members of the hospital staff paraded in uniform in the quadrangle of the old University, and were inspected by General Chapman, the officer commanding the North British District. Among those present were Sir Mitchell and Lady Thomson, Colonel Gerrard, A.A.G.; Colonel Rooney, P.M.O.; Colonel Teifer Smollett, D.A.A.G.; Sir William Turner; Dr. Andrew, the President of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh; Colonel Warburton, the Medical Superintendent of the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary; Professor Chiene, Dr. Joseph Bell, the Provost of Leith, the Master of the Merchant Company, and others. After the inspection they were briefly addressed and complimented by Sir Mitchell Thomson, who was Lord Provost and President of the Committee at the time the hospital was launched.

The party then drove to the Balmoral Hotel, Princes Street, for luncheon. Sir Mitchell Thomson presided at the luncheon, and the Lord Provost of Edinburgh was on his right. The President of the Royal College of Physicians (Dr. Andrew) and Professor Chiene were croupiers. Some sixty were present. After the loyal toasts, Dr. Andrew gave "The Imperial Forces," and Colonel Gerrard replied. Sir Mitchell Thomson gave "The Edinburgh and East of Scotland South African Hospital," and Mr. Wallace replied. Professor Chiene gave "The Lord Provost of Edinburgh"; and Provost Mackie (Leith) gave "Sir Mitchell Thomson."

Those units of the V.M.S.C. forming part of the *personnel* of the hospital, who were enlisted for one year's service with the R.A.M.C., have the option of taking their discharge or completing their year's service at home in accordance with Paragraph 177 (1) and (2) of the regulations for demobilisation of the mobilised service in South Africa. After luncheon they reported themselves to O.C., 13 Company, R.A.M.C., and to the P.M.O. Scottish District, who arranged in accordance with the desires of the men, and also adjusted their accounts.

A dinner to celebrate the return of the Edinburgh Company Volunteer Medical Staff Corps, who served in South Africa with the Edinburgh Hospital, is to be held in the Imperial Hotel on November 23rd at 7.30 p.m., when it is hoped that all members of the corps will make an effort to be present.

The total amount collected for the purposes of this hospital was £21,500.

THE WELSH HOSPITAL.

At the last executive meeting of the Cardiff Infirmary, notice was given on behalf of the Mayor to call a special meeting to consider the following resolution:

That, in consideration of the valuable services rendered by Dr. Lynn Thomas in particular, and for the honour bestowed upon Wales in general by his services to the Welsh Hospital in South Africa, of which for some time he was the recognised head, Rule 32 be altered by the substitution of the word "four" for "three" in the third line, and that Dr. Thomas be requested to accept the full position of honorary surgeon of the institution.

THE PREVENTION OF CONSUMPTION.

DUBLIN.

THE Dublin Branch of the National Association for the Prevention of Consumption, at a recent meeting, passed a resolution calling the attention of the Corporation of Dublin to the necessity which exists for homes for advanced cases of consumption amongst the poor, as it is in the advanced stages that they are most infective to their families. The attention of the Local Government Board is also directed to the infectious nature of consumption and the necessity of isolating those afflicted with this disease in unions throughout Ireland from the other inmates. The Committee also recorded its