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to be together again because union with our officers and men brought us a feeling of security. With our families and friends far away from us our unit at this time took on a new meaning, for whenever we were all together it would be home, and to us in the pitch darkness of the early morning even "Goat Hill" was home. A few of our officers were up late as it was, to greet us. The slow southern drawl of our Commanding Officer was easily distinguished as he talked to some of the nurses.

Our unit had a mess set up and we were the only nurses in that whole area that were fortunate enough to eat out of our mess kits. The attire of the nurses was anything but G.I., slacks of all colors and clothes of all types were worn, for most people had not yet received their baggage. Our stay here was brief because arrangements had been made to send us out on detached service. After two days we were all sent to our assignments, with the exception of the Chief Nurse and her assistant. On the morning of 14th May, we left the staging area, a number of us were assigned to a General Hospital, the remainder to three or four station hospitals. Without exception we enjoyed this short assignment although we knew it was temporary, we were sorry to leave.

Our first permanent assignment overseas was caring for German and Italian prisoners of war. Our hospital, known as POW #129, opened at 0001 hours on the 25th of May. The site chosen for the hospital was sandy and hilly and devoid of trees. Our location was desirable for we were only fourteen miles from the city of Oran and about two miles from the village of St. Barbe du Tlelat. It was in this area that we experienced the intensity of Africa's summer heat, and not once did it rain during our eighty-two day stay. Here on this sandy little hill which was visited daily by little "Sirrocos", we began admitting patients. Our admissions arrived at a comfortable pace, and we were able to care for them with little difficulty. Our first patients were prisoners who had fought in the Battle of Tunis. Later during the Sicilian invasion we received patients from that area.

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Caring for patients in a Prisoner of War Hospital presented problems that one does not have to cope with when caring for American or Allied soldiers. The German and Italian prisoners themselves presented a great problem. Their apparent dislike for one another made it necessary for us to separate them. This we handled by giving each nationality a side of the ward tent. Later during the Sicilian campaign, it was necessary to put each group in a separate ward. Accounting for patients was far more important here, for the problem of escape was one that was always left in mind. However to my knowledge, no escapes were reported while we were at this hospital. Language presented another problem to our nursing staff since the majority had little knowledge of either Italian or German. This was handled by interpreters which were available at all times both in our officers and enlisted group.

Our patients were for the most part convalescent and presented few medical and nursing problems. As the days wore on each nurse became a little browner, her hair and skin dryer. We managed to keep ourselves clean with the aid of helmet baths. About three weeks before we left Africa, showers were installed for us. We were all grateful for this luxury and everyone made ample use of them. One of our enlisted men took over our problem of keeping clothes clean for he scouted around and found French and Arab women to care for our laundry.

Our prisoner of war hospital kept us busy and occupied for $2\frac{1}{2}$ months. During this time we had become very familiar with the techniques of handling our patients as well as living within a stockade. Our hospital expanded on up the hill and German tents were put in use. After $2\frac{1}{2}$ months of taking care of prisoners, German medical officers and corpsmen were brought in as well as American administrative personnel and we turned our hospital over to these groups. This was not difficult for many of our patients were already occupying German tents. On August 7th at 0900 hours we discontinued our

contacts and duties with this hospital and moved out of the stockade.

We did not have to move far for our new bivouac area was just across the road. It was here that we lived in anticipation of our next move. Before leaving this new area we had an opportunity to try pup tent life. At last orders were received for our departure and on the morning of August 31, we left this sandy, windswept area that had been our home for the past few months. 0900 was the hour set for our departure and as this was a new venture, enthusiasm was at a high ebb and everyone was anxious to get started.

On the morning of August 31, 1943 the nurses of the 16th Evacuation Hospital Unit were packed and ready to leave, sitting on bed rolls and barracks bags. Soon a long string of ambulances could be seen coming over the hill, and before long both nurses and luggage were on their way to Ain El Turck in time for lunch. Our 'C' rations were eaten to the accompaniment of the Beer Barrel Polka, chorused by Italian prisoners. That afternoon was a busy one for our new quarters possessed luxuries such as showers, tubs and irons. Our efforts at cleaning and scrubbing continued the next day but were interrupted by a meeting called by our Chief Nurse.

It was at this time, 1300 hours, that we were told to be packed and ready to leave at 1800 hours that evening for we had to board the ship, HMS Duchess of Bedford at 1900.

Again we were on our way, but not until we had assumed the role of bell hop and assisted in piling our bags and bed rolls on the trucks. Too few trucks necessitated the nurses sitting on top of the baggage and it was in this manner we rode from Ain El Turck to Mers El Kebir. Our ride had a touch of the Mardi Gras about it for soldiers, sailors, and French civilians all hailed and clamored as we rode by. After leaving the trucks we procured our "A" bags and stood in our usual alphabetical boat mounting order, waiting our turn to go up the gang plank.

When the time arrived, we puffed our way up, each of us grasping tightly a too heavy "A" bag. Accomodations were found for us quickly and most of us found the living quarters more comfortable than we had experienced on other such occasions.

Our stay here was another brief stop-over for we were destined to be on the move again. About 1130 hours on the second morning, September 3rd, we received orders to be packed and ready to leave the ship as soon as lunch was over. Lunch was set ahead to 1200, we ate rapidly and were waiting for the landing barges at 1240. The nurses from the 95th Evacuation Unit filled the first barge so it was necessary to wait quite some time before we were off. A good bit of waiting was in store for us that afternoon for all the baggage of the two units had to go with us. When we docked with our load our previous experience at bell hopping was put to good use. Not only did we have to stand watch over the bags which were stacked on the shore but carry them as well to the trucks which parked a short distance away. When each bed roll, each "A" bag was placed on the trucks, we finally got under way. It was late afternoon and we weretired, dirty and hungry. The trucks bumped blissfully along until ours developed spark plug trouble. We met the remainder of our nursing group on the dock at Oran. Nurses were stretched all along the pier, like all good soldiers, off their feet and resting. In a very short time we loaded on a very small boat resembling a launch, our baggage accompanying us on a flat barge. We made a hurried trip to the USS Acadia, an American Hospital ship, for it was nearing 1900 and the ship was soon due to leave the harbor. Once aboard the Acadia we were immediately assigned bunks. Our welcome had an air of graciousness about it even though our coming was somewhat unexpected. In a moment of exploration I arrived on deck just in time to see one of our Red Cross Workers, speeding away from us on the small boat we had just arrived on. I learned that none of the Red Cross Workers were to accompany us on the Acadia, the reason being that they were not medical personnel.

The trip on the Acadia was a pleasant one. We enjoyed our contacts with all the ship's personnel. We were provided with an evening's entertainment by the corpsmen on September 4th, our last evening on board the ship. We had a very enjoyable time listening to their original songs and skits.

The next day we arrived at the harbor of Bizerte about 1400. It was 2000 and dusk when at last we disembarked. The trucks took us through the shambled city of Bizerte to a General Hospital where we remained until orders for sailing were received.

Our arrival at the General Hospital was apparently not anticipated for no preparation had been made. We were assigned quarters in large ward tents. Corpsmen arrived quickly with bundles of cots which we unpacked and helped set up. A cold snack of 'C' rations and fluids was served us in the officers' and nurses mess. We were informed however, that beginning in the morning our meals would be served in the enlisted mens' mess. Meals were not pleasant in this mess for it was only partially set up and overcrowded. Nurses, enlisted personnel and Italian prisoners all shared the same accommodations. Swarms of flies and lack of eating space were major difficulties here. We ate in these conditions and griped legitimately.

It was in Bizerte that we experienced our first air raid. The forty-five minute air alert, with its waves of planes dropping their loads and the constant pounding of ack-ack guns, seemed like an eternity. We spent only a few more days at this hospital when orders came for us to move.

We boarded the HMS Newfoundland on Friday, September 10, about 1000. This ship was also a hospital ship and looked very much like the Acadia we had ridden on only a short time before. All of our nurses except the Principal Chief Nurse were assigned quarters in the lower deck. These were comfortable and the dining halls were adjacent. The ship was a lovely one, boasting decks with lounge chairs, comfortable recreation rooms and a bar which was open several

several times daily.

We availed ourselves of these luxuries and made ample use of them. The food was excellent and plentiful. Sunday morning, September 12, about 1000 hours we arrived at the Gulf of Salerno. The sound of guns booming on shore greeted us long before we reached it. Shortly before noon an unidentified plane dropped a bomb near the port side of the ship. Two more such visits, and we began to move out of the harbor. The ship went ahead at a fast speed and we were told that we would remain about twenty miles out for the night. We enjoyed an evening of pleasant activities and went to bed at the usual time. Early the next morning, September 13, about 0500 we were awakened by a noise caused from a bomb which had dropped very near us. However, we were all asleep again in a few minutes. Shortly after we were again awakened, this time by a terrific explosion, jarring and rocking the ship, which we soon learned was caused by a direct hit directly aft of the bridge of the ship. Our bunkroom was unusually quiet as we dressed. Although no alarm sounded we were ready for orders in a very short time. After what seemed a very long time, but actually was only a few minutes, one of the British sailors told us to follow him. We passed through a large iron door and stepped into ankle deep water which was warm and filled with debris. After walking along away in this narrow passageway, we finally came to a dining hall where we sat and waited for further orders. It was dark in here, bantering and talking went on just as usual. We were soon told to follow the sailors up the narrow stairs that were located at the end of the dining hall to the deck. On reaching the top deck we saw our ship was in flames. Once on deck we immediately went to the life boats. When the first boat was almost filled, the rest of the nurses were asked to go to the other side of the ship to load in the second boat. They crossed over through heavy smoke, looked for the boat and saw it far down below resting in the water already loaded with survivors. We were told to climb down to the life boat, and the climb down the ropes though shaky was fairly rapid. The life boat was overloaded and it was

necessary to wait for a motor boat to tug us out of danger and to the St. Andrew, another hospital ship. On board the St. Andrew hot tea was served almost immediately and following this a roll call was taken of all our personnel. All of the members of the American nursing groups were accounted for, but six British nurses and eight officers were reported missing as well as a number of enlisted men.

As soon as it was possible to do so the Captain set his course for Bizerte. When we left, the burning Newfoundland could be seen in the distance. Although there was considerable apprehension among the nurses most of them slept very well that night. It was about 1400 hours when we docked at Bizerte. We were quickly removed from the ship, loaded in trucks, and in a few minutes were on our way to the Station Hospital. Two nurses were admitted as patients in another Station Hospital nearby who were casualties of the bombing. A third nurse was admitted a few days later. The three nurses received the Purple Heart Medal.

At the Station Hospital we were admitted through the Receiving Department for it was anticipated that there would be a number of casualties among our group. The hospitality of the personnel of the Station Hospital was unequalled.

Arrangements had been made for us to take showers immediately, the nurses had contributed from their own supplies of powder, soap and many other luxuries and necessities. An appetizing lunch of sandwiches and lemonade was served after we had all cleaned up. The ten days spent at this hospital were made as pleasant as possible for us, and none of the nurses will ever forget the kindness extended by all the personnel. Other hospital units were equally as kind for it was not long before large amounts of clothing was sent to us.

On the twentieth of September we were on our way to Italy for a second time. This time we were passengers on a Landing Craft, Infantry. We embarked in the evening, but did not sail until early the next morning. Once we were on our way, our troubles began almost immediately for most of us became seasick. Our diet of

K rations became extremely unpalatable as we bobbed along over the rocky sea. Land was a welcome sight even though an air raid alert sounded as we were preparing to disembark. "Ducks" carried us quickly from the craft to the shore where trucks were waiting for us.

Our first glimpse of Italy was not a pretty one for everything about us seemed to reek of the ravages of war, bomb craters, ruins, and tired and worn looking soldiers and civilians. As we bumped along in the trucks we were happy that our nomadic twenty-five days had ended. None of us wanted anything more than to get back to our own hospital unit.

On the morning of September 23rd the Nurses reported for duty. The hospital at Paestum was in full swing and everyone was very busy. Our officers and enlisted men had worked endlessly those first few days and it was much to our regret that we were not on hand to help set up our hospital. The nurses went to work enthusiastically on being assigned to their wards. Even the rain which pelted down daily did not wet their enthusiasm. This was our first experience at caring for American soldiers and it was a pleasant one well worth any hardship on our part. We had been with our Unit only a few days when the peace and tranquility of our organization was upset. A terrific rain storm accompanied by a fierce gale of wind leveled our hospital in only a few minutes in the early part of the evening on September 28th. Only a few tents withstood the force of the raging wind, the rest were completely flattened and the whole area both hospital and living quarters was a tangled mass of debris. As soon as it was possible to do so all officers, nurses and enlisted men who were not on duty reported for work in the hospital area. Here there was much to be done for most of our patients in the overfilled hospital were under fallen tents. As soon as ambulances and trucks arrived from nearby units the work of evacuation our patients began. Surprisingly, our patients suffered little from this experience, their morale was high and they appeared to have suffered little physically. Our patients

were evacuated quickly for in ninety minutes the job of removing a thousand patients was finished. The sickest of our patients were taken to a nearby farmhouse, the rest to a tobacco warehouse in which a quartermaster unit was housed. All of our nurses were on duty for there was much to do getting patients between dry blankets and in dry clothes. Everyone was busy for medical care and treatment of the patients was continued just as it had in our tent hospital. The rain continued all night but the sun came out in the morning and despite our catastrophe the world seemed much brighter. The warehouse had already assumed a hospital air regardless of the long rows of tobacco leaves which were hanging from the ceiling of the wards. In a few days all of our patients were in the warehouse for those that had been taken to the farmhouse were transferred over to this building. All of our nurses were relieved at 1600 hours on the 29th of September when the nurses from the 8th Evacuation Hospital took over our makeshift hospital. It was at this time that the nurses went back to their own tents to pick up their own scattered personal belongings.

Within a few days our tent hospital was back in operation again. It was not long before tents were set up and patients were admitted. Each day a few more tents went up and finally the hospital was open for business as usual. The Tobacco Warehouse was attached to the 16th E.H. and operated as a Convalescent Ward. The tent hospital and the Warehouse were operated as one hospital until a few days before we left Paestum. By the end of October we were ready to leave this area and move on to what was to be our second hospital site in Italy.

On October the 28th we left Paestum and moved on to Caserta where our next hospital was to be located. This hospital was set up in buildings which had formerly housed Italian soldiers. Although this barracks was large and an excellent site for a hospital much rehabilitation of the building was necessary for it was windowless, dirty and inhabited with vermin. In about 4 days the hospital was

ready for patients, the wards were large and airy and looked clean and inviting. The corpsmen and nurses had worked hard to get the hospital ready and the results were gratifying. Our own quarters were excellent, each nurse had plenty of space and it was not surprising that many of them unpacked all of their personal belongings. At Caserta there were many busy days, much excellent nursing care was given and each nurse was enthusiastic about her job. The holidays, Thanksgiving and Christmas were spent here and were most enjoyable occasions for parties were given on both of these days. We were soon scheduled for another move and by December 29 we were packed and ready to leave Caserta. Our next location was not far from a small village called Vairano. Here we were to operate a tent hospital again. Our ride to our new area was far from encouraging for all along the way we passed tent hospitals like our own. Each of these seemed to be covered with mud, pools of water and deep rutted vehicle tracks. Our own area was a surprise to us, here at the end of the road was an inviting looking hospital set up in a field covered with green foilage. The tents were set evenly and neatly on each side of a crushed rock road and to all of us our own hospital was an inviting and picturesque sight.

It is on this note of surprise that we bring the 1943 report of activities of Nurses of the 16th Evacuation Hospital to a close. We anticipate the year ahead as full of new experiences to each one of us.

Service. The Laboratory and Pharmacy were administratively also a part of the Ward Section.

Operating Section. The Operating Section comprised the operating room and the necessary utilities to service the section. The Dental Clinic and Laboratory, the X-Ray Department and the Dispensary were also administered by the Operating Section. This section was in charge of the Chief of the Operating section and his assistant. Surgeons were assigned to the section in such number as to provide continuous operation of the section and insure proper surgical care of the patients. Operative specialists, assigned as Ward Surgeons to the Ward Section, were always readily available for consultation and for the performance of surgery that required their special abilities.

In the initial erection of the hospital three operating rooms were available containing eleven operating tables and space for the dispensary. These rooms were designated as Operating Rooms Nos. 1, 2 and 3 for clean, septic and orthopedic surgery. Cases which were suspected as being infected with anaerobic bacteria were operated upon in an isolated section of the utility department where strict aseptic precautions were employed. The operating rooms were housed in large storage tents, two tents being joined and laced together, end to end, to form one room (Fig. No. 7). By the use of this type of tentage ample space was provided in each room for four bays, each bay being large enough to contain an operating table, the operators, anaesthetist and the necessary equipment (Figs. No. 8 and 9). Since the bays only occupied one-half of the tent space there was ample room for the passage of wheeled

litters through the tent and for tables to hold surgical dressings and supplies and for a sink and solutions for scrubbing. By the use of sheets, strung on wire with safety pins and weighted at the bottom, the room was readily and easily partitioned off into four bays or cubicles, free from dust and isolated from the remainder of the room. Each tent was provided with a wooden floor, covered with a tarpaulin, and both ends of the tent were screened. A sink, made of half of a gasoline drum was built in each room for scrub-up purposes and provided with running water obtained from the central water supply system.

The dispensary for the examination and treatment of minor wounds and for the purpose of conducting sick-call for the unit personnel was set up in one bay of the orthopedic operating room. This was changed after the storm and made a part of the tent housing the Dental Clinic. (Note: Two surgical tents are authorized to provide cover for the operating rooms, however this type of tentage has not been made available.)

When the hospital was first set-up (Fig. 4) the utilities servicing the operating rooms comprised three storage tents joined together by two large storage tent flies. The sterilizers (only one was found on the beach with the unit equipment, the second one was located six weeks later in an engineer dump) and sterile supplies were housed in one tent, the make-up table, supplies and sewing machine occupied the middle tent and the laundry, with washer and clothes linen occupied the middle tent and the laundry, with washer and clothes linen occupied the third tent. (No laundry facilities were available until after D plus 12 (22 September 1943). Until Quartermaster laundry facilities were available all linen from the operating rooms were hand