

LOOKING BACK

PIONEER REVIEWS LIFE OF HOSPITAL

By Charles Franklin Adams, Major,
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The Base Hospital at Camp Greene, North Carolina, was constructed of wood with overhanging eaves; the roofs covered with tar paper and fine large ventilators running through. The ground was hilly and the buildings were set on pilings of pine with the bark on which were braced with criss-crossed poles, same giving a good arboreal effect, and allowing perfect ventilation through the floors to the ventilators as one or the other end of the buildings was eight or ten feet from the ground. It was laid out in the form of a rectangle and consisted of four streets, A, B, C, and D, with eight wards on a street, besides four isolation wards, four barracks for enlisted men, (orderlies, etc.), the administration building, officers' ward and quarters, numerous warehouses and later three buildings for the nurses, four large buildings for convalescents and a beautiful Red Cross building.

I arrived in the latter part of October, 1917. There were about thirty medical officers already assigned, about two hundred patients, eighteen of whom were chronic ear cases from the Northwest, waiting for the S. C. D. Board to take action.

The evenings were already becoming cool and the officers would assemble back of their quarters, around a big fire made of tree stumps and waste wood, there to wile away the time telling stories and dreaming of their future usefulness 'Over There.' There were very few who were not longing to get across to render first aid or be otherwise useful near the firing line.

We were not busy for two or three weeks; then the unprecedented cold weather began to develop and our beautiful tropical hospital was found to be misplaced. The carpenters got busy and sawed holes in the roofs for stove pipes, meantime in the most urgent cases pipes were run through the windows by removing a pane of glass and fitting in a piece of tin with a hole large enough to admit a stove

pipe. Those first stoves were dinky little things—wood burners. If they had been larger they would have appealed more to the imagination. After a while we were provided with small coal stoves for the wards and finally two large coal stoves with pipes that ran straight through the roof instead of through the windows.

It was a very cold winter. The buildings were of green lumber, unpainted, ventilators in the roof wide open and the walls unsealed until after the middle of winter. At bed-time we would take off our shoes, put on more socks and our bath robes, get into bed and shiver until morning. During all of that winter there was but one officer who became sick enough to go home and be discharged on account of illness. Fuel became scarce so at times the surgeons with the best scouts in his ward were able to keep the most comfortable, yet notwithstanding the chilliness of the wards and operating rooms, the mortality was quite as low as in any general hospital that was better heated. It was uncomfortable rather than unhealthy. It was impossible to keep pretty records with ones fingers too numb to hold a pen steady, but not too cold to make adequate records.

Lieutenant Michel Saliba of Greenville, North Carolina, after three months' training at Camp Greenleaf, oculist and aurist, was assigned to the hospital before it was finished and took up his residence at the Dowd House in Camp Greene with Captain, afterwards Lieut.-Col. William L. Sheep and Captain Way, Lieutenants Scruggs and Robinson. Shortly afterwards Captain George A. Renn, an oculist from Norfolk, Va., arrived. He was made adjutant and later became lieutenant-colonel and commanding officer of the hospital.

The hospital was opened September 17, 1917. In October, Lieutenants J. C. McConnell, C. W. Banner and C. F. Adams arrived in rotation as named. There were in the camp at that time about 18,000 National Guard troops from the Northwest.

October 26, 1917, we opened our

first clinic. We had no equipment. Captain Renn brought with him from his office in Norfolk a satchel containing a head mirror, ophthalmoscope, tongue depressor, nasal speculum and condensing lens which were our outfit for a few weeks. I sent home for an assortment instruments which helped somewhat.

The Commanding Officer on October 29, 1917, appointed Captain C. W. Banner, Chief of the Ophthalmology-Otolaryngology Clinic by priority of commission. November 21, 1917, Lieutenant Cicero J. Ellen of Greenville, N. C., arrived from Camp Greenleaf. In December Captain C. W. Banner was ordered to Chicago for instruction in Oral and Plastic Surgery, Lieutenant C. F. Adams succeeding him as Chief of Clinic.

March 25, 1918, the clinic was moved from Ward C-1 to a new building on the corner of A Street and the road, an entire building have been erected for the use of the Dental Surgeons and the Ophthalmic and Otolaryngologists. This was the beginning of a new era. A good equipment, painted walls, dark rooms operating rooms and everything that goes to make the practice of medicine a success and a pleasure.

THE DISPENSARY BOYS.

Sgt. First Class Del Sesto
Is the foreman of the gang;
And he is ably assisted
By the well known Cpl. Wrang.

Next, comes Pvt. First Class Doherty,
Who you will always find within;
And he is always there to serve you
With his everlasting grin.

Then there is beaming Hoffman
From way up North, in Troy;
And he is well known by the nurses
As the modest little boy.

These lads have been most faithful
While the trouble it did last;
And we always hope to find them
Just the same as in the past.

C. P. DAVIS

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