American Red Cross base hospital no. 38 in the world war. United States army base hospital no. 38, organized under the auspices of the Jefferson Medical College and Hospital, stationed at Nantes, France, 1918-1919, by W. M. L. Coplin.

American Red Cross Base Hospital No. 38

2-1923

American Red Cross Base Hospital No. 38 in the World War - IV: American Red Cross Base Hospital No. 38 - The Jefferson Medical College and Hospital Unit

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WAR is the summation of all tragedies, the pinnacle of all follies, the abysmal depth of all horrors; the conjoined, co-ordinate, contemporaneous supremacy of flame and famine, of holocaust and hate, of disease, disaster and death, of slaughter and starvation; it is the insanity, the infanticidal, homicidal, suicidal mania of nations, the paranoia of civilization, the darkness of doomsday, out of which shines but one lone star, red- and purple-rimmed, the light of the Samaritan who feeds and clothes, arrests bleeding, binds wounds, bears anesthetic, sedative and opiate, nurses with tender hand, brings water to lips athirst and dying, wipes off the sweat of agony, takes the last faltering message to loved ones at home and, when comes the end, closes staring eyes, composes limbs, enshrouds and coffins, covers with the flag the soldier loved and for which he died, and bears the fallen victim to his last rest, his dreamless sleep of peace eternal. These servants of the lowly Nazarene, these purveyors of mercy and kindness, all out of har-
mony with the fields in which they labor, amid scenes no pen has described, ply their calling from projectile-swept field and shell-torn trench to bomb-wrecked and fire-swept hospital far in the rear, along lines of communication, at ports of embarkation, on hospital ship in port and at sea, until at last, the returned soldier rests on the bosom of loved ones at home, or bivouacs forever on Fame’s eternal camping ground.

Much, if not most, of this work was done by those who enlisted to serve in Base Hospitals. Officers, nurses and hospital corps men, often detailed or detached from an original Base Hospital, at one time or another served in every position from firing line back through the apparently unending labyrinth of “communications.” To bear its share of war’s grim burden, Base Hospital No. 38, of The Jefferson Medical College and Hospital, was organized. Founded in 1825, and nearing the centenary of its existence, the work was not new to the parent institution which, through almost one hundred years, had sent its graduates to every battlefield and into every disaster in the nation’s history, had given Silas Weir Mitchell and William Williams Keen to the work of the great Civil conflict, and in the World War its graduates to the number of 1462, and more than 370 undergraduates, served in every professional capacity from Surgeon-General Merritte W. Ireland (Class of 1891) to the humblest positions in the service of their Country. A bronze tablet, erected by living alumni, testifying to
the patriotism of Jefferson graduates, has been placed in the College building; upon this roll is inscribed the names of 25 sons of this venerable institution who gave their lives to the country in the war of 1917-1918. Even though they were not members of this organization, let their names be entered here as of that noble host who made the supreme sacrifice that mankind should move onward with the advancing suns:—

Frederick George Carow
Boaz Baxter Cox
Reese Davis
Joseph Edward Dudenhoefer
Thomas Reed Ferguson
Frank Harris Gardner
Percy Stevenson Gaston
Burgess Allen Gibson
Francis Findlay Hanbidge
Frederick Arthur Henderson
John Hislop
Carl Edward Holmberg
Robert Lord Hull
Richard Lawrence Jett
Harry Milhern Lavelle
Justin A. McCarthy
Casper Joseph Middlekauff
Gustav Lewis Norstedt
Russell Cisney Parson
Wendell James Phillips
The Jefferson Medical College Base Hospital, organized under the direction of the American Red Cross, and known as Base Hospital No. 38, was rendered possible by the generous contributions of Adeline Pepper Gibson and Henry S. Gibson. Organization was begun May 3, 1917. Before the summer had ended officers and enlisted men had been selected, necessary commissions obtained, and most of the preliminary work completed. The Muster-Roll, embracing 35 officers, 100 nurses, 6 civilians and 200 enlisted men, is given in full, with details of services, in Appendix A.

Major W. M. L. Coplin was designated Director, and Chief of the Laboratory Division; Major J. Norman Henry, Chief of the Medical Division, Major Charles F. Nassau, Chief of the Surgical Division. When transferred to active service, Major John S. Lambie, M.C., U. S. A., was detailed by the Surgeon-General as Commanding Officer of the organization which, by mobilization, became United States Army Base Hospital No. 38.

MOBILIZATION AND TRAINING

The organization was mobilized October 15, 1917, and
went immediately into training at the Second Regiment Armory, North Broad Street near Susquehanna Avenue, Philadelphia. The novitiate in Philadelphia extended from the date of mobilization to June 21, 1918, when the unit embarked for France. During this period of preparation it was decided, at the suggestion of the Director, to inaugurate a new and hitherto untried plan of preparing officers and enlisted men for active hospital duty in the overseas service. Previously the custom had been to assemble the personnel of Base Hospitals at some training camp, for example, Allentown, where military and certain didactic instructions could advantageously be given. Obviously the functions which hospital corps men are supposed to perform differ materially from those of any other military unit. Necessary though a knowledge of policing and military drill may be, the men should know something, the more the better, of hospital organization and the care of patients; consequently, it was decided to institute two courses of instruction, one didactic, the other practical.

The former was inaugurated October 24, 1917, by an Introductory Lecture by William W. Keen, M.D., Sc.D., LL.D., Hon.F.R.C.S. (Eng. and Edin.), Emeritus Professor of Surgery, The Jefferson Medical College, in which he outlined the history of hospital organization and duties as he knew them in Philadelphia and in Army hospitals during the Civil War. This was followed by lectures given by members of the Staff and
others, covering problems of hospital administration, the care of patients, treatment of injured, transportation, sanitary science, antisepsis and on other subjects bearing directly upon the functions of Base Hospitals. In addition to lectures given by officers the organization was favored by the co-operation and assistance of Professors A. P. Brubaker and Randle C. Rosenberger, of the College Faculty.

Through the courtesy and cordial co-operation of the Jefferson Hospital, Pennsylvania, St. Agnes, St. Joseph’s, Philadelphia General, Philadelphia Hospital for Contagious Diseases, Frankford, Episcopal, Lankenau, Presbyterian, Jewish, and Samaritan Hospitals, valuable instruction was given to small groups of men detailed to the institutions named. Subject to unit organization and authority, each hospital assigned details of men to laboratory, operating room, ward, and accident room, where they saw useful, practical service. The courses, both didactic and practical, were continued throughout much of the winter, thus affording the men some familiarity with the nature of the work they might be called upon to perform in France. Concurrently, officers improved in every possible way their knowledge by special work in laboratories, X-ray departments, surgical and medical clinics, and the specialties. Some of the officers were detailed to the Rockefeller Institute, New York, for special training. It is a pleasure to acknowledge the co-operation and invaluable assistance
given by the institutions named, to place on permanent record this highly merited recognition, and to thank them for their helpful aid in the new project.

EQUIPMENT

To the cash foundation given by Adeline Pepper Gibson and Henry S. Gibson, generous citizens of Philadelphia, contributions by others, including $5000 given by Mrs. Thomas P. Hunter for operating rooms, brought the total to $79,992.39, practically all of which was expended for equipment. In addition to cash contributions many gifts were made directly; these include an ambulance by the Residents of Logan, another by employees of the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company, another by the Philadelphia Teachers Association, another by the West Philadelphia Auxiliary No. 4 of the American Red Cross, another by the Fotterall Square Association, and one given by Mr. and Mrs. Arthur H. Lea—a total of six ambulances; through the efforts of Mr. Norman L. Barr and Mr. William C. Haddock, Jr., and their friends, a delivery truck was supplied. Mr. David B. Martin, Jr., presented a completely equipped officers’ car, which, unfortunately, did not get across the sea but gave excellent service during the period of training. The American Red Cross, Washington, D. C., gave a carload of dressings; the local Red Cross and many Auxiliaries, including the Navy League, also aided. The Emergency Aid assisted generously. Spe-
cial mention should be made of the members of the Women’s Auxiliary of the Jefferson Hospital, who gave many hours of earnest productive effort, supplied materials and devoted the summer of 1917 to the preparation of dressings and the packing of supplies that greatly enlarged the surgical equipment. This work was carried on under the auspices of Mrs. Alba B. Johnson, Mrs. Joseph W. Wear and Mrs. Bessie Dobson Altemus. They secured the services of Miss Katharine C. Strohmaier, a nurse experienced in the preparation of surgical material, and with her worked valiantly with most gratifying results. Unfortunately, the names of other enthusiastic workers are not available, but we wish to acknowledge our sincere appreciation of their assistance.

The contributions, including cash of $79,992.39, a special fund given nurses $8,001.54, and supplies valued at $34,318.58, make a total value of $122,312.51.

SERVICE IN THE AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

On June 21, 1918, 6 officers and 192 enlisted men under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel John S. Lambie, M.C., U. S. A., embarked on the S.S. “Nopatin,” New York, and 29 officers under the command of Major Coplin, boarded the S.S. “President Grant.” The latter, on account of an accident to the refrigeration plant, was compelled to return, sailing finally on June 30, 1918. Passengers on the S.S. “Nopatin” landed at Brest July 5th, left July 10th and
THE JEFFERSON UNIT

arrived at Nantes, France, July 11th; on July 17th they were joined by the remaining officers. The Nursing Corps had sailed from New York on May 18th and upon arrival in France the nurses were assigned to duty in Base Hospitals at Nantes, or to stations nearer the line of combat.

LOCATION

At Nantes, a quaint and beautiful city on the Loire, designated as one of the American Hospital Centers, was also stationed Base Hospital No. 34 which, at the time "38" arrived, was receiving patients. Base 38 was located in the Grand Blottereau, which was later to receive three other hospital organizations. The Grand Blottereau is a park surrounding what had been a small gem of a chateau with its exquisite grounds, partly wooded, containing tall trees, veritable monarchs, small shrubs and hedges and all intervening types of woodland growth. Along one side extended a beautiful walled road of rural France, no longer in good condition. On another side ran a small tributary of the Loire, and just beyond flowed the slowly moving majestic river. One boundary was formed by the botanical and agricultural gardens of Nantes; off from a corner lay the town of Doulon, really a part of the historic old city.

THE HOSPITAL IN FRANCE

Physically, the plant included 21 wards, also diet-kitchens, personnel barracks and mess-hall, officers' bar-
racks and mess-hall, nurses’ barracks and mess-hall, ablution sheds and barracks, receiving wards, quarter-master supply buildings, mess supply building, operating pavilion, and laboratory, a total of about 50 buildings, all of temporary construction. They were supplied with electricity and running water, and an emergency sewerage system was installed, which became inadequate on account of the unexpected numbers of patients and the unanticipated floods which inundated that region of France and impeded drainage. The original barracks were constructed of composition board, felt-tar-paper roof, and concrete floors laid directly on the ground; the window space was adequate and, unlike many other hospitals, all sash were glazed. The material composing the walls was an asbestos and cement preparation about one-eighth inch in thickness, received in large sheets, for all the world like cardboard, and scarcely as resistant to force, though more so to rain and fire. This composition substitute for wood was brittle and readily perforated. Baseballs frequently penetrated the walls, and on one occasion a football found its way through into Headquarters Office. The artificial board, resembling large slates, was applied over a wood frame and securely nailed in position. It was supposed to be fireproof. Roofs were made of rather inferior lumber and covered with felt-tar-paper held in position by wood strips that sometimes warped and became detached, thereby opening joints, loosening the tar paper and permitting leaks. Notwithstanding
obvious defects, the general result was satisfactory, and constituted considerable improvement over much of the temporary construction seen elsewhere in the A. E. F. For temporary service the plumbing was acceptable. When heat became available it was supplied by stoves of all possible grades: some were of French, others English origin, conserved fuel and yielded little heat; units supplied with American stoves were more fortunate, especially where those large, cast-iron types, once used in country schools, were available. They were probably fuel-wasters, but gave results, even though, under forced firing, lurid flames belched from pipes projecting but a short space above the roofs. To French natives this looked like intolerable extravagance, but Americans demand results even at higher cost. In many places heat was badly needed long before it became available; this, and many other delays, however, were unavoidable—part of the inevitable when a nation, unprepared and largely inexperienced, is precipitously forced into a conflict of such unprecedented magnitude.

The overflow, at one time amounting to approximately 2000 patients and convalescents, administered by the organization, was sheltered in tents erected on a contiguous section of the park. The extraordinary rains of 1918 in France rendered the soil so soft that the temporary roads soon became a veritable mud-plant through which officers, nurses, convalescents and enlisted men waded for weeks; part of this plain was under water for many days
but the hospital, more fortunate than one of its neighbors, was not reached by the flood. The climate of France in the winter of 1918-1919 was a revelation; one could but wonder who first had applied the term "sunny" to France; it was still more difficult to determine why; Captain Tripp said that it was either raining or "getting ready" to rain all the time.

The buildings which "38" was to occupy were only partly completed when the organization arrived; officers and enlisted men proceeded to assist in the construction, the latter doing admirable work in many ways; in this detail, as elsewhere, the men showed to advantage their enthusiasm, industry and splendid capabilities.

When officers and men reached their destination and settled down for service, not only were the buildings incomplete but the equipment, purchased, packed and forwarded before leaving the United States, had not arrived; nobody seemed able to locate it. Officers were dispatched to several ports, Bordeaux, LaRochelle, St. Nazaire, Brest, and wherever it was thought the possessions of "38" might have landed. Eventually some of the equipment was located, but much that was sadly needed never arrived. Ambulances, motor truck and motorcycles with side cars, went elsewhere; the beautiful officers' car, given to the organization by D. B. Martin, never got beyond Newport News, and it was badly needed. Transportation was always inadequate and rarely available when most needed. Until August the
tenth, about one month after the arrival of "38," no Supply or Quartermaster's Depot was provided in Nantes, and not until a month later was any provision in active function.

In the meantime patients were pouring in, food was difficult to obtain, clothing for re-outfitting men not available or the quantity insufficient, and no laundry nor any means for washing hospital linen and soiled apparel had been provided. A hand laundry was organized by employing French women and using galvanized garbage cans as wash-tubs and boilers, indeed for practically all laundry and many other purposes requiring water-tight vessels. These were some of the difficulties. Telegraphic requisitions in the Central Supply Depot were promptly filled, some original equipment came along, often in small deliveries, and, although it seemed very slowly, things shaped up and the roughest part of the voyage smoothed down to fairly easy sailing.

These were strenuous times; officers and men were working on and in incompletely completed buildings, preparing quarters, fitting up kitchens and mess-rooms, organizing laundry service, unpacking and checking supplies, developing a drug store and dispensary, erecting beds, outfitting wards, operating rooms and dressing rooms, arranging for care of the dead, installing telephones, erecting and testing out sterilizing apparatus, putting up delousing plant, organizing receiving ward and providing places and methods for handling clothing and personal
belongings of incoming patients and industriously laboring over hundreds of unrecalled minor details. Miss Melville and her little band of seven, doing all the nursing humanly possible, were also working in operating rooms, preparing dressings, unpacking supplies, assisting in everything, working like bees every day from early morning to far into the night; there were many, many days of such stress. Through it all everybody must be fed and housed, often badly and inadequately. But each day marked progress and out of the chaos and disorder came success and everybody was glad, even though the saddest of our labors, caring for the sick and wounded, was only beginning.

As early as July 22nd, 182 sick and injured from the Soissons front were received and cared for, although the buildings were not finished until several weeks later. By September over 1000 patients had been admitted. It was originally contemplated that for each Base Hospital provision for 500 patients would be adequate. Before leaving the States the personnel had been increased to that of a thousand bed Base; shortly after arrival in France it became obvious that, at any time, the organization might be required to shelter 2000 incapacitated soldiers; early in November, 1918, the daily census reached 2412 patients. It is believed, however, that every possible attention was given and that the enormous expansion did not weaken the efficiency of the organization, notwithstanding the fact that, at one time, only 10 officers
Colonel W. M. L. Coplin, M.C.
U. S. Army
Director and Chief of Laboratory Division
Base Hospital No. 38

Major J. Norman Henry, M.C.
U. S. Army
Chief of Medical Division
Base Hospital No. 38
Maj or CHARLES F. NASSAU, M.C.
U. S. Army
Chief of Surgical Division
Base Hospital No. 38

Lieutenant-Colonel
JOHN B. LOWMAN, M.C.
U. S. Army
Major JOHN R. FORST, M.C.
U. S. Army

Major MICHAEL A. BURNS, M.C.
U. S. Army
Major J. Howard Gaskill, D.C.
U. S. Army

Major Mark D. Hoyt, M.C.
U. S. Army
Major John F. Park, M.C.
U. S. Army

Captain Harry W. Baily, M.C.
U. S. Army
CAPTAIN J. ALLAN BERTOLET, M.C.
U. S. Army

CAPTAIN FRANCIS F. BORZELL, M.C.
U. S. Army
CAPTAIN LOUIS D. ENGLERTH, M.C.
U. S. Army

CAPTAIN CHARLES E. HAYS, M.C.
U. S. Army
Captain FRANK H. HUSTEAD, M.C.
U. S. Army

Captain MAURICE C. JAMES, M.C.
U. S. Army
CAPTAIN SAMUEL P. MAUNEY, M.C.
U. S. Army
Died in France

CAPTAIN HENRY K. MOHLER, M.C.
U. S. Army
Captain HUBLEY R. OWEN, M.C.
U. S. Army

Captain GUY H. SWAN, M.C.
U. S. Army
CAPTAIN RALPH M. TYSON, M.C.
U. S. Army

CAPTAIN ERNEST G. WILLIAMSON, M.C.
U. S. Army
Lieutenant
HAROLD S. DAVIDSON, M.C.
U. S. Army

Lieutenant
WINTER R. FRANTZ, M.C
U. S. Army
Lieutenant
WILLIAM L. MENG, M.C.
U. S. Army

Lieutenant
JULIAN E. MEYER, M.C.
U. S. Army
LIEUTENANT

J. DONALD STONE, D.C.

U. S. Army

JOHN H. CHAPMAN, D.D.

Chaplain
remained at the Base; 3 of these were largely occupied in administrative capacities.

Because of pressure at other Hospitals and the urgent demand for nurses, practically all of those belonging to the Unit had been transferred to active emergency duties at or nearer the front and to needy centers at Nantes and elsewhere in France; therefore, shortly after “38” was placed in operation, Miss Clara Melville, Chief Nurse, had only 7 nurses to assist in operating rooms and to care for approximately 1000 patients included among which were many seriously wounded and sick soldiers; later the number reached more than 2000. Nevertheless it must be universally recognized that the depletion of nurses was one thing from which the organization suffered intensely; Miss Melville and her faithful little group of nurses left at the Base did heroic service and the loyal and unflagging devotion of officers and enlisted men did much to ameliorate conditions, but in a great Hospital containing many seriously ill and wounded, no one fills the place of a properly trained nurse. Our absent nurses were performing more important duties with operating teams at the front, in Hospitals on the field and along the line of communications, and on Hospital Trains, so that whatever the original organization may have suffered, the benefits to the service in the A. E. F. were no doubt greater; consequently the loss to “38” was borne though less patiently than would have been decorous. The enormous stress under which Miss Mel-
ville and those with her were obliged to work, and the splendid results achieved, are more fully detailed in the special chapter on the subject which the reader is advised to consult.

RECREATIONS

Situated near a large city in a group of hospitals forming a so-called hospital center, it was fortunately possible to arrange social occasions that greatly relieved the monotony of routine. Base Hospital No. 11 entertained the organization most handsomely at dinner one evening with a dance following, and there were more or less frequent dances at the Chateau. The Red Cross erected a large building with a stage and here were provided entertainments of various sorts, minstrel shows, amateur plays, movies and other diverting functions. Bands occasionally visited the Hospital and played in the open when possible, at other times in the receiving ward, and thither the convalescent soldiers flocked on crutches and canes, in wheel chairs or on foot. On one occasion a noted opera singer, a French prima donna, came to the Hospital and sang to the patients who were unable to get about. Other entertainers also visited the Hospital.

The Red Cross did its best to keep up the morale of the wounded and sick soldiers, and in so doing often automatically extended a helping hand to the medical officers and personnel as well; for these efforts a lasting gratitude and appreciation must abide. It also helped
the nurses, added to their rather bare barracks such important articles as comfortable chairs, a few window curtains and decorations, and in other ways rendered aid for which this somewhat tardy but none the less sincere expression of thanks is given. Details of the athletic attainments of "38" are given in a special chapter.

Here also should be recorded the untiring labor and generous help so cheerfully given at all times by Mrs. Gibson; she helped everybody; bought materials for curtains for nurses' quarters, beautified their surroundings, did everything to relieve monotony, add comfort and render recreation possible. What she accomplished was beyond words, but a still more precious memory is the way she did things; there was a graciousness in her benefactions that abides like a blessing and further hal lows the cherished memory of this charming woman who, when the time came for rejoicing that the work was about over, and the thought of home brought smiles and tears, was called to her Reward and left us grief-stricken and crushed by the tragic sorrow.

DETACHED DUTY

Shortly after arriving in France, and in common with all other organizations, which included highly trained specialists, "38" suffered severe losses from detachment of important officers to more active—it was believed more important—duties nearer the front and elsewhere in the devastated and war-swept country. Indeed, some
highly efficient men had been detached before Base Hospital No. 38 left the United States.

Originally Captain J. Torrence Rugh was chosen for the Orthopedic Division of Base Hospital No. 38. The Surgeon-General's Office requested his release as an Orthopedist of established repute was needed to direct the proper care of enlisted men in this country. Reluctantly the release was granted, his work was well done, and his promotions continuous to and including the rank of Colonel.

Captain E. J. G. Beardsley, an officer of the Medical Division, had been a member of the Medical Reserve Corps since 1909, was transferred to a larger field. The Surgeon-General's Office recognized in him a man of unusual attainments, a capable teacher and an experienced clinician. He was detailed to the Army Medical School, later to a training camp, became Chief of Medical Service, Base Hospital No. 89, Camp Sheridan, and joined the A. E. F. in France. His promotions passed through the grades of Captain and Major to Lieutenant-Colonel.

Captain George E. Price preceded the Unit and was on duty as Consulting Neurologist in Paris; later he was succeeded by Major M. A. Burns, who was also detached for permanent duty in the Capital City.

Major Thomas C. Stellwagen had also sailed in advance of "38," and was on observation duty at Queen's Hospital, Sidcup, England; later transferred to Evac-
Evacuation Hospital No. 1, to Field Hospital No. 27, acting as Surgeon for non-transportable cases, to Evacuation Hospital No. 5, with Field Hospital No. 112, and for 3 months served with Mobile Hospital No. 4. After the Armistice he resumed duty at Base Hospital No. 38 as Chief of the Department of Oral and Plastic Surgery.

Major Charles F. Nassau left the Base Hospital early in July, 1918, for observation duty in Evacuation Hospital No. 1 at Toul, to the Red Cross Hospital in Paris, where he was joined by other members of the operating team consisting of Captain Mark D. Hoyt, Lieutenant Louis D. Englerth, Miss Amanda Boyer, R. N., and Privates Edward G. Ruth and Herbert W. Duke. From Paris Major Nassau went to Evreux, American Red Cross Hospital No. 109; in September to Evacuation Hospital No. 7, Souilly; to Mobile Hospital No. 1, Esnes, returning to Souilly, and after the Armistice resumed his position as Chief Surgeon with "38."

Major W. M. L. Coplin, Director, and Chief of the Laboratory Division, was detailed to Headquarters, Laboratory Service, A. E. F., Dijon, later becoming Laboratory Officer, Hospital Center, Beaune; in December, 1918, he was transferred to the Third Army, becoming Director of Laboratories for that organization, accompanying the Army of Occupation and having charge of 27 Laboratories in the occupied area, with headquarters at Coblentz, Germany.

Major J. Norman Henry, Chief of the Medical Divi-
sion, was detailed to the Army Sanitary School at Langres, August 19, 1918, to Headquarters at Toul, to the 89th Division where there were unusual opportunities for studying the problems of a division in action. After his return early in October, he became Commanding Officer of Base Hospital No. 38.

Captains Frank H. Hustead and Charles E. Hays joined Major Stellwagen in the assignments detailed above and served in the Argonne and St. Mihiel drives.

Lieutenant-Colonel John S. Lambie, detailed by the Medical Department as Executive Officer of Base Hospital No. 38, left the organization on September 2, 1918, becoming Commanding Officer of the Hospital Center at Puy de Dome and later Inspector of Hospitals in the A. E. F. Major John B. Lowman was left in command, but shortly thereafter, on account of illness, was relieved by Major J. Norman Henry, who became Commanding Officer and continued in this service until November 15, 1918, when Major Lowman, promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel, returned and resumed command.

Major John R. Forst passed through the St. Mihiel and Argonne offensives with Mobile Hospital No. 2, serving as Ophthalmologist with this organization on the Meuse, returning to the Base in October. He was in command of Base Hospital No. 38 when the patients were turned over to Evacuation Hospital No. 31, returned with the Unit and was mustered out with the boys at Camp Dix, N. J., May 8, 1919.
Captain Leonard B. Tripp, Q.M.C., U. S. A., came to the organization as Quartermaster and Supply Officer early in September, 1917. He was a rugged, skillful and efficient New Englander, one time a "non-com" of the regular army who knew the game and lived the part. When the organization was just settling down to work at Nantes, Captain Tripp was detached and made Quartermaster to the Hospital Center, a more responsible position, which he accepted and filled with highest credit.

Before leaving the United States, Captain Robert B. Pratt, an old Intern and former Chief Resident Physician in the Jefferson Hospital, had been made Adjutant; he served in Philadelphia and crossed the ocean on the "Nopatin" with the men. Captain Pratt was and is always efficient and to him in a large degree was due the perfected organization that developed in action and made "38" conspicuous on the field at Nantes. When another Hospital (No. 216) was opened along side old "38" the efficient Adjutant became Commanding Officer and gave to the new organization the same high grade administrative skill that he had manifested in the old; Captain Pratt was promoted to Major and later to Lieutenant-Colonel.

OUR HEROIC DEAD

Upon every great adventure the fates bestow some tragedy; the experience of Base Hospital No. 38 was no
exception. While in line of duty the call to higher reward was answered by six members of the Unit. In each case death was due to the stress of activities upon which the worker was engaged: the nurses in travel to detailed stations or on duty, a physician going from ward to sick-bed under war conditions, where the comforts of a modern Hospital or of a home were not available; civilian personnel and enlisted men dying from disease—all falling in line of duty. In each instance it is reasonable to believe that, had the unfortunate one avoided the rigors of war and the hardships of service, life might have been spared. They are heroes and heroines who fell outside the glamour of battle, beyond the martial call of fife and drum, but none the less they gave their lives for the land they loved.

ADELINE PEPPER GIBSON, benefactress of Base Hospital No. 38, while on active duty contracted pneumonia and died at Nantes, France, January 10, 1919. Through the many trying days of effort Mrs. Gibson gave unsparingly of all those things worthwhile. There was no opportunity to do good that was too laborious, no time of need when her interest was not aroused and her helping hand was not extended, no weariness of body that arrested her enduring endeavor, no situation she did not apprehend, and seeing act. To officers and men, to nurses and patients, often she brought cheer
and sunshine and dispelled despair and gloom. Her life with us was one continuous period of smiling, patient helpfulness, and her passing weighed upon us as the one overwhelming and unforgettable sorrow of our great adventure. A stranger to all the wearying sadness of hospital life under the shadow of grim war, the things she did and the way she did them won the hearts of all. There was a notable sincerity in her life best known to those near enough to see the warp and woof of the cloth of gold woven in the loom of duty before which she daily and hourly cast life's flying shuttle. A world peopled by such souls would be sunshine and cheer, without pain or sorrow—a paradise. This history of Base Hospital No. 38 is published as a small but—it is hoped—a fitting memorial to our lamented benefactress.

CAPTAIN SAMUEL M. MAUNEY came to the organization a stranger, detailed by the Surgeon-General's office when the personnel was increased to the new basis of a thousand-bed hospital. He endeared himself to all the men with whom he worked and was faithful, devoted, serious-minded and capable. During the influenza epidemic he continued at work in the wards when he should have been in bed, and it is the feeling of those about him that his devotion to duty made certain the
tragedy of his death, which resulted from pneumonia on November 1, 1918, at a time when every organization in the A. E. F. was serving to the maximum of its resources. Captain Owen, at that time in charge of the surgical division, writes as follows: "I bunked with Captain Mauney on our way over, and then, as well as afterward, during my entire association with him on the surgical service, grew to know him well and appreciate his manly qualities. I remember well the morning he became ill. He sat next to me at breakfast. During the meal he had a chill. I advised him to report off sick at once. He said that he had a number of seriously wounded boys to dress, and that he would report off as soon as he completed these dressings. While dressing patients he had another chill. It was found that his temperature was 104° F. He left his ward never to return to it, and died a few days later. There was no life given in France with greater self-sacrifice than that of Captain Mauney. Colonel Kirkpatrick, of the Hospital Center, recommended Captain Mauney to G. H. Q. for citation. Whether the family of Captain Mauney received this recognition I do not know, but no belated army medal or decoration was necessary to those who were associated with him, to keep fresh in their memories his untiring devotion to the wounded, and his untimely and unselfish death."
MERYL GRACE PHILLIPS died May 18, 1918, of pneumonia, the day her companions sailed for France. She was a graduate of the Williamsport Hospital, an accomplished nurse, a woman of unusual attainments, possessed a delightful personality, and was highly esteemed by all who knew her.

NELLIE JANE WARD died on July 5, 1918, of pneumonia contracted while on duty at Chaumont, France. Because of her attainments and superior qualifications Miss Ward had been assigned to the important work at Chaumont. She was a graduate of the Massachusetts General Hospital, long known for the high grade of women prepared in its halls, a credit to her training and an honor to her profession.

KENNETH B. CARLTON, of Washington, D. C., a member of the enlisted personnel, while home on leave, was stricken with pneumonia and died in the Walter Reed Hospital, Washington, D. C., January 13, 1918.

KENNETH J. ELLIS, of Philadelphia, an original member of the Unit, contracted pneumonia while training and died in the Pennsylvania Hospital, Philadelphia, March 7, 1918.

Both Carlton and Ellis were men of the nobler
type, esteemed by all who knew them and popular among their fellows. Their memory will ever be with us.

MEDICAL DIRECTOR, COMMANDING OFFICERS
AND OTHER EXECUTIVES

During the entire period of organization as a Red Cross Hospital, Major Coplin was Medical Director; this service extended from its inception in May, 1917, to Mobilization October 15, 1917. As stated elsewhere, Major Coplin, after reaching France, was detached for active service elsewhere and left “38” in August, 1918.

John S. Lambie, Major, M. C., U. S. A., was detailed by the Surgeon-General as Commanding Officer, serving during mobilization and until detached, September 2, 1918.

John B. Lowman, Major, M. C., U. S. A., succeeded Lieutenant-Colonel Lambie, serving from September 2, 1918, until October 1, 1918, and again as Lieutenant-Colonel from November 15, 1918, to February 8, 1919.

John Norman Henry, Major, M. C., U. S. A., previously Chief of the Medical Division, commanded from October 1st to November 15, 1918.

John R. Forst, Major, M. C., U. S. A., succeeded Lieutenant-Colonel Lowman, serving from February 8, 1919, to demobilization of the organization at Camp Dix, N. J., May 8, 1919. Major Forst brought “38” back to the United States and received his discharge with re-
remaining officers and men who completed their service with the organization.

Frank H. Hustead, Captain, M.C., U.S.A., the first Adjutant, after mobilization was succeeded by Captain Robert B. Pratt, who went over with the men and continued in office until promoted and made Commanding Officer of Base Hospital No. 216.

John A. Bertolet, Captain, M.C., U.S.A., was Registrar and Detachment Commander throughout the entire period of organization, mobilization and service of "38." He succeeded Major Pratt as Adjutant, and later, because of other more important and pressing professional duties, was relieved by Second Lieutenant Ignatius B. Thomas.

**PROMOTIONS**

As noted elsewhere a number of officers were fortunate in receiving promotion, but no special record of the fact need be made here. The writer was among the favored, and has no cause for complaint. He discussed the matter with most of those whose rank was advanced and feels strongly that those not so honored deserved recognition as much as, and in some instances probably more than those who received it. My belief is that the men promoted are unanimous in the conviction that every officer of "38" not so favored, deserved recognition that he did not receive. Such is the fortune of war, part of the game, and here is the place to say that, in many
instances, failure to receive advance in rank is frequently the result of inaction on the part of some one else and not a lack of merit possessed by the officer affected. Rarely, if ever, is it the pure maliciousness of some petty mind; occasionally it is failure to recognize merit or to reward the deserving and faithful; commonly it results from accident and is unintentional. For example, it would never do to recommend at one time the promotion of all officers in an organization; that would surely fail, so a few, here and there, are chosen; a little later another list of names is forwarded and when sufficient time has elapsed the process is repeated. “Headquarters” at one time is overrun by recommendations and “tightens up,” at another period things are propitious and “H. Q.” “loosens up”; on the former occasions chances are slim and on the latter good; by chance some of the best men may have been in the first list, and the less deserving but more fortunate in the second group; for these and less important or less obvious reasons, promotion of itself may be no proof of merit and beyond doubt, failure to receive advancement may be the luck of not only good men but of the very best—such is the fortune of war.

SUMMARY OF WORK DONE

Aside from the nearly nine thousand patients who passed through operating rooms, wards and convalescent camp, the officers, nurses and men of Base Hospital No. 38 administered to the sick and injured at the Base in
Nantes, also at St. Nazaire, Dijon, Beaune, Langres, Saumur, Paris, Dancourt, Evreux, Esnes, Souilly, LaTouche, Euverzin, Louey, Chaumont, Toul, in the Argonne and St. Mihiel drives, and after the Armistice, with the Third Army at Prum, Trier, Mayen, Neuenahr, Ehrenbreitstein, Coblentz and elsewhere—a continuous line of faithful workers extending from the parent institution in Philadelphia across paths of communication, to bases in Europe, to the battlefields of stricken France and Belgium, and beyond to the remotest outposts of the Army of Occupation along the Rhine, and in the bridgehead area to the most advanced relief station in Germany.

It was a glorious service, later transformed into a cherished and imperishable memory; a duty well done that left with the doers that sense of having striven for the best, of having achieved something worthwhile, that will ever be recalled with deep satisfaction unpolluted by egotism and untainted by vanity. Few but that may recall the passing of some possible opportunity to do more or to have done something better; such recollections, however, awaken no regret; amidst the flood of things to be done, the best, as then seen, was given gladly and fully; this is true of the humblest effort and of that magnanimity of soul that laid its all on the altar before which burned the inextinguishable flames of duty and of patriotism. Let us believe that in this record of achievement all share, all become co-heirs, and that each
may have his portion of pleasant memory that will ever be dear. Officers, nurses, civilian personnel and enlisted men may now wear uniforms of identical material—that cloth of gold, and each may know his decoration of that Order of Merit conferred by a King who wears no earthly crown. Duty’s call answered. What could be better?

Then there is something, let us hope, that is very precious, that has come back with us, something that may abide and make all better for the venture. We have seen life from a new viewpoint, from many different angles, have known death, grim and relentless, and learned much from heroic souls that are still living or have passed life’s conflict. Out of all the revolting mess of man’s barbaric combat something ennobling should have been rescued so that those who shared ought to be, indeed must be, better citizens, more hostile to wrong and more valiant for right; loving country better and seeing still more clearly the uselessness of war, the futility of strife, the immeasurable, imponderable littleness of man who arises not above petty ambitions, grasping selfishness, monetary acquisitiveness and ignoble vanity, and through the years, we should be committed to that broader brotherhood of man, that some day may see wrongs of nations brought to the arbitrament of reason and justice, and never again to the inhuman atrocity of war, the most ferocious and futile of human follies.

This volume is dedicated to a noble woman who, if she
could speak to us now, would plead the cause of Peace on Earth and Good Will Among Nations. Let each of "38" in his little sphere, bring that message home to his own life, to the lives about him, and be a worker in the weed-strewn field of civic and national politics and diplomacy where grain of a better sort should bend to the sickle today for the granary of history.
HARDING'S SPEECH AT CLOSE OF ARMS CONFERENCE

* * * The one sure way to recover from the sorrow and ruin and staggering obligations of a world war is to end the strife in preparation for more of it, and turn human energies to the constructiveness of peace.—President Harding.