

From Port Said I proceeded to Alexandria, and, accompanied by Chaplain Alfred Greene, I immediately commenced visiting the hospitals, convalescent homes, and convalescent camps in which New Zealand sick and wounded were located. Some of the hospitals where New-Zealanders were dangerously ill I visited several times. In only one of the sixteen institutions visited by me in the Alexandria district did I receive a complaint about treatment, and that was in a convalescent home, where some of our men desired that they receive more money per week than was allowed to convalescents by the Army Regulations.

On the 19th October I left Alexandria by transport for Mudros, where I visited as many New Zealand patients in hospitals and convalescent camps, both before my departure to and after my return from Gallipoli, as circumstances would permit. Had I not been weather-bound on a transport for three days I would have been able to see all our patients on the Island of Lemnos. The hospitals there, which were conducted by British, Canadian, and Australian medical officers and nurses, had many difficulties to contend with, and consequently the men were not so comfortable as those in hospital in Egypt. Some of the medical officers mentioned to me that they were at times short of necessary supplies, and I made representations on the subject to the authorities. However, shortly after my return to Egypt I was aware of the evacuation and of the withdrawal of our patients from Lemnos.

At Gallipoli the difficulties were very great, but the sick and the wounded were removed from the clearing-stations as quickly as circumstances permitted. Fearing congestion and consequent delays in getting the sick and the wounded away, as happened at the time of the landing and during the fighting in August, I made inquiries as to the hospital ships to be provided in the event of further large operations taking place at Gallipoli, and I subsequently learned that ample provision was made in this respect at the evacuation.

In Cairo I was chiefly concerned with our No. 2 General Hospital at Pont de Koubbeh, there being few New-Zealanders in other Cairo hospitals. This was originally an Egyptian Army hospital. No rent was being paid for the building, but an arrangement was made to pay the salary of the officer in charge, Major Byam, on the understanding that he would act as Registrar of the hospital. Before leaving I arranged with General Ford that, as for the future we would require only a small hospital in Egypt, this payment was to cease, and that if the Egyptian authorities desired again to take over the building he would provide another building suitable for our smaller requirements. Although I spent many days in this hospital no complaints were made to me. I found it well staffed and well conducted. Extra comforts were being provided for the patients by ladies of the British Red Cross Society and the Order of St. John, who had a small kitchen on the premises, where they were providing approximately one thousand dishes weekly. To further this very worthy object I handed Miss Thom, who was in charge of the kitchen, £100 of the £1,000 forwarded to me by the Canterbury Branch of the St. John Ambulance Association to provide extra delicacies for our sick and wounded.

I found about seventeen New Zealand patients in the Military Infectious Diseases Hospital at Shoubra, Cairo, where they appeared to be well cared for. Dr. Agnes Bennett, of Wellington, and several of the New Zealand nurses that went from Australia, were on the staff, and their services were much appreciated by the officer in charge of the hospital.

As I have already informed you, our patients in Egypt were, with the exception of those in the Infectious Diseases Hospital, being aggregated in our No. 2 General Hospital at Pont de Koubbeh. Arrangements had been made, on Colonel Parkes's suggestion, for the establishment of a small auxiliary hospital in Alexandria to receive those patients from Gallipoli that were not fit to undertake the train journey to Cairo, but after the evacuation these arrangements were cancelled, and an auxiliary hospital of two hundred beds was established at Ismailia, on the canal, to be worked in conjunction with No. 2 Hospital.

Regarding our medical services, I found when I arrived in Egypt that there was no Principal Medical Officer to our Expeditionary Force. I therefore discussed the question of the appointment of one with Surgeon-General Babbie, V.C., P.D.M.S., Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, and also with Surgeon-General Ford. As a result of these discussions I cabled to General Godley, advising him to appoint Colonel Parkes as D.D.M.S., which was accordingly done. Colonel Parkes will, as head of our medical services, be able to exercise a general supervision, and to recommend promotion from one unit to another. In addition to his administrative duties it was arranged that for the time being he was to retain his position as Superintendent of No. 2 Hospital.

At Malta there were no less than twenty-seven hospitals and convalescent homes and camps, all of which I visited. Several of the hospitals had over one thousand beds. There was little fault to find with any of these institutions, either hospitals or camps. In one hospital I received a complaint, which was apparently a genuine one, and which I did my best to have rectified. At a convalescent camp also there was ground for complaint, and after making representations to those in charge I had the gratification of receiving a letter of thanks from a high official for what I had done. I can only hope that causes for complaint no longer remain. General Lord Methuen, Governor of Malta, who takes a keen interest in military hospital work, showed me every courtesy and attention, and invited me to accompany him on his visits to a number of the hospitals and camps. On these visits I noticed that he evinced the greatest concern for the welfare of our patients. I desire further to say that Chaplain Tobin, who represented the Dominion at Malta, was doing exceedingly good work among our patients, nor did he hesitate to point out to the authorities where he thought improvements could be effected.

I visited Lady Godley's Convalescent Home at Alexandria a number of times, and found it to be excellently managed and a very great boon to our convalescent soldiers. For a time Lady Godley also had a home for convalescent New Zealand officers in a comfortable house which had been generously placed at her disposal by Mr. G. B. Alderson, a resident of Alexandria. In