

Miss J. Hall.
A.A.N.S.

37

I embarked on the 20th August, 1915, on the "Kyarra" doing a little duty, i.e. about every third day. We had two or three deaths from Cerebro Spinal Meningitis (?) We arrived at Port Said, and went to No. 2 A.G.H. Ghezirah Palace which was a large hotel that had been commandeered. We had lovely rooms overlooking the Nile.

I was in the surgical ward on night duty, and in the medical ward when on day duty. We had many cases from Gallipoli. It was a well equipped Hospital, and we had everything we wanted.

I was transferred to Mena House Hospital after two months. Mena House Hospital had been converted into a convalescent camp Hospital. It was very interesting there. The Hospital was delightfully situated almost at the foot of the pyramids. When it closed down, I went to No. 3 A.A.H. Heliopolis where most of the patients were convalescent men awaiting boats. It was a very large Hospital, but we were not as happy at the Sporting Club as at Mena House.

I remained at No. 3 A.A.H. until it closed, and then went to No. 1 Australian Stationary Hospital, Ismailia, where they had very severe cases, as it was just after the Romani Stunt. It was handed over to the R.A.M.C. after three weeks, and I was transferred to England, on the Hospital Ship "Esquiba". Here we had an Australian Matron and Nursing Staff, with an Imperial Male personnel and things went very smoothly. The cases were not acute, but the men were very sick. We arrived in London after a very uninteresting voyage, and I went to the 1st Birmingham War Hospital. This was a British Hospital, and seven of us were loaned.

They had very heavy surgical work and the administration was excellent, everything running very well. It was a very large Hospital that had previously been an Asylum. They were extremely kind to us. From there I was transferred to France, and when at Boulogne received orders to proceed to No. 2 B.G.H. at Le Havre, where we only kept very severe cases.

The Hospital was a large refreshment room of a Railway Station, and considering that it was an improvised building it was very convenient. The trains brought the wounded right to the Hospital and the boats came up on the other side, and took the patients to England, thus saving a great deal of the discomfort of transport. The patients were very good, but their wounds were dreadful. There was a great shortage of clean linen. The food was very good and plentiful. We were billeted some distance from the Hospital, and had to come to and from the Hospital in ambulances. All the Australians were later recalled, and I went to No. 3 A.C.H., Abbeville, after about 10 weeks at No. 2 B.G.H.

The Unit of No. 3, had just crossed from England, and the Hospital was not really equipped when I got there. I stayed for a few days, and then went to No. 3 A.C.C.S., which was a large tented Hospital with about 400 patients. The Staff numbered 14 sisters, and we had only just started working when we were bombed so badly that we had to leave and go as refugees to another British C.C.S. near by. In a few days, we returned to No. 3 A.C.C.S., and worked hard for a few weeks. We were only about 3 Kilometres for the firing line, and so we got some heavy cases. I was then in the acute abdominal ward, where a large percentage of the patients died, as they were so badly wounded. We worked there for three weeks, and then we were shelled again. The next day the bombing began at mid-day, and was so severe, that the patients and we were evacuated in ambulances to St. Omer. I then went to No. 3 A.G.H., Abbeville, where I have been practically ever since. I remained - just doing alternative surgical and medical work, until it closed down. The work was extremely heavy at Armistice time, as we had a bad epidemic of influenza the patients dying in great numbers. We felt the cold of the first winter there, as we had no fires, but things gradually improved until in 1918, we had stoves and other comforts in the Huts.