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Miss M.P. Lean,

A.A.N.S.

I embarked on the 23rd April, 1917, on the "Karoola". I had very little duty. We reached England on the 17th June, 17. We stayed in England for three weeks, and then received our orders for France.

I was detailed for duty at No.25 British General Hospital, which was a very large tented hospital, principally for skin cases. I was detailed to the skin lines and I found the work most interesting, but very heavy. The patients would be covered from head to foot with their skin trouble and their dressings would need changing very often.

All the skin patients that were able had their meals in the central dining hall, of which I was subsequently in charge for 13 months. Here I had many troubles as the patients who attended the central hall were very well in themselves, their skin condition not interfering with their appetites, and being situated by the sea it was a kind of tonic, and therefore I had great difficulty in making their rations go round. The grumbles and growls were very numerous. Some idea of the work here might be gauged when I say that some days the number of patients that passed through for meals as many as 1,220 a day. We have had as few as 800. The staff of this dining hall consisted of a Sergeant and two orderlies and another sister and myself, also four convalescent patients helped, which meant that I served on an average between 500 and 600 meals a day. There were three large dining tents and the patients would go in one end and receive their food as they came through in two's with their utensils. They would then pass through into the dining hall and when finished would leave by another door, where there was provision made for each of them to wash up their own utensils. They would then take these back to their respective wards.

When Armistice was signed two large dining hall with every convenience were in the course of erection. They were not finished however, until Xmas Day, where they had their Xmas dinner. They were so huge that they were capable of seating 1,000 patients at one meal.

The patients were very well provided for in the way of amusements, having many excellent concerts and cinemas.

We were very comfortably billeted in Franch Villas.

It was an R.A.M.C. personnel and the medical men shewed us every consideration and courtesy possible and arranged all sorts of sports, Badminton, teas, etc.

I stayed here until it closed in March, 1919, when I crossed to England. I was then detailed for duty at No.3 A.A.H., Dartford.
