HMC.

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Miss E. Pitchford.
A.A.N.S.

I embarked on the 5th June, 1917, on the "Khiva" and disembarked at Bombay, on the 21st June, and was detailed for duty at Deolali, a large garrison Hospital of 3500 beds. A portion of this was set aside for convalescent patients, but the sisters did no supervising here, the work being done by orderlies.

We had an Australian Matron and Nursing Staff, of about 76, and we found this number quite adequate, until we had a bad epidemic of influenza, and 20 of our staff had just left for Egypt. We then had no time off duty as many of the staff had just left for Egypt.

We took in medical and surgical cases, but later took only malaria and dysentery from Mesopotamis. We had a good deal of surgical work amongst the Turkish prisoners of war, but these were mostly shoulder and head wounds. They made very good patients. Our hours off duty were every second half day when possible, and varied with the severity of the work, and the number of staff.

We were billeted in bungalows and were extremely comfortable, each sister having her own room and bath-room. It was quite cool during November and December, but later it got very hot, in April and May, and during the monsoon season in June and July it was most trying.

We were made members of the Officers' tennis club, and had the use of their library, which was well stocked with books. We had one troupe of convalescent boys who used to give us concerts, and we enjoyed them very much.

We got on very well with the R.A.M.C. personnel, once we began to know them, and they us.

I was there, until November, 1918, when I crossed India to Colombo by train, and here we embarked for Suez. On arrival we entrained to Cairo, where we were billeted at the 45th General Hospital, only doing occasional duty.

I was there for about a fortnight, and then left for England, via Port Said, to Marseilles. We then came across France, reaching England on the 6th June, and after 14 days furlough, I was detailed for duty at No. 2 A.A.H., Southall. This was the limbless centre for Australians, and most of the patients were re-amputations. The work was fairly heavy, but we worked under excellent conditions. The wards were very well equipped and the food was plentiful. I stayed here until it closed in May, 1919, and was then transferred to No. 3 A.A.H., Dartford, where I am now awaiting transport to Australia.

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