

A casual examination of the 38th Hospital's admissions and dispositions records, which survive fortunately in detail, will reveal readily that the award of the Meritorious Service plaque to the unit was deserved.

An analysis of the work done by the hospital, for instance, during its stay at Beau Site, Tunis, Tunisia, prepared and released November 4, 1943, by Captain George C. Snyder, the registrar, and covering the period from the opening of the hospital there on June 21, 1943, to the closing on the following August 24, reveals:

TOTAL ADMISSIONS	2940
Status:	
Disease (American)	1963
Injuries and wounds (American)	826
Others (Dis., inj. and wounds)	102
P.O.W. (Dis., inj. and wounds)	49
The 2940 admissions consisted of:	
American	2789
British	59
French	7
Civilian	36
P.O.W.	49
Battle Casualties:	
American	346
British	2
French	5
P.O.W. (German, Italian)	14
Total patients transferred to other hospitals	1251
Total patients discharged to duty	1671
Total AWOL	7
Total deaths	11
Total number of diagnoses	3328

An analysis of the period from the opening of the hospital five miles north of Paestum, Italy, on September 29 to its closing October 15 discloses continued activity in the opening phase of the service in Italy:

TOTAL ADMISSIONS	1544
Status:	
Disease (American)	1336
Injuries and wounds (American)	144
Other units (Dis., inj., wounds)	64
P.O.W. (Dis., inj., wounds)	0

The 1544 admissions consisted of:

American	1480
British	24
French	0
Civilian	40
P.O.W.	0

Forty-three Americans and one British were listed as battle casualties; total patients transferred to other hospitals, 746; total patients discharged to duty, 761; total deaths, 2; total AWOL, 35.

From Paestum the hospital moved to Caserta, where it was stationed from October 16 to November 6. During this three-week period, Captain Snyder's analysis of the detailed records of the unit reveals, the hospital admitted 1,389 patients, classified as: disease, 541 Americans; injuries, 262 Americans; battle casualties, 551 Americans; other units, diseases, injuries, and wounds, 23; and P.O.W., 12. Patients transferred to other hospitals numbered 1,073; discharged to duty, 286; deaths, 17; AWOLs, 13; total diagnoses, 1,798.

The bitterness of the enemy resistance during the four months after the 38th transferred from the Caserta station is quickly revealed in the hospital records from its opening three miles south of Vairano, Italy, to its closing on March 24, 1944, after 137 days of operation. Some of the more important figures of the analysis provided by Major Snyder include:

Total admissions, 9,793; total diagnoses, 11,657; admissions for disease, 5,642; injury, 1,046; for battle casualties, 3,105. Of the 9,793 admitted, 9,527 were Americans, 69 were British, 8 were Canadian, 22 French, 60 Italian, and 43 were war prisoners. The battle casualty figures showed: 3,016 American; 7 British, 1 Canadian; 15 French, 7 Italian, and 38 were prisoners of war. Only 63 patients died during the Vairano period, and 111 were listed as AWOL.

Only 311 admissions to the hospital were recorded during its short stay, from March 29 through April 7, two miles southeast of Carinola. Of these patients, 301 were Americans and only 10 were battle casualties. There were no deaths.

It was a far different story, however, at Nettuno. During the two-month operation there, following the Anzio landings, admissions to the hospital numbered



Chaplain Kirkpatrick, right, greets incoming Chaplain Sansom, who succeeded Chaplain Jones.

7,979. Battle casualties and injuries exceeded other illnesses. The totals from April 9 through June 7 were: disease, 3,733; injury, 789; battle casualties, 3,457. Of the 7,979 admissions, 6,943 were Americans. The largest group not American was composed of prisoners of war, 767, all of them battle casualties.

Of these almost 8,000 admissions, dispositions included 1,398 returned to duty, 6,230 evacuated to bases, 35 AWOL, and 104 died. Battle casualties generally were not severe, as indicated by the average stay of 1.2 days in the hospital of those in that category.

From Nettuno the hospital moved to Doria Pamphilia, Rome, for a stay of three weeks—from June 9, 1944, to June 30. Total admissions there were 2,470 patients. Ten deaths occurred. Disease accounted for three-fourths of the admissions. Half the patients were returned to duty after an average stay in the hospital of 5.4 days.

The same general level of work by the hospital was recorded at the next station, Major Snyder's analysis reveals. The hospital opened "officially at 0900 hours, 2 July, 1944, 4 miles North of Massa Marittima, Italy, and closed 1000 hours, 17 July, 1944, after 16 days of operation," and during that period admitted 1,860 patients, of whom 598 were listed under disease, 229 injury, and 1,033 battle casualties. Of the 1,860 admitted, 1,797 were Americans, and 36 were war prisoners. 10 died during the period there.

Major Snyder's next analysis, dated October 20, 1944, revealed:

"The 38th Evacuation Hospital officially opened at 1300 hours, 17 July 1944 at Cecina, Italy, when a detail took over 18 patients from the 33rd Field Hospital. The main hospital opened at 1200 hours, 19 July 1944, 8 miles North of Cecina (Route 168). The hospital was closed at 0700 hours, 13 September, 1944. Forty-five patients were moved to the new hospital location at Pisa."

Of the 2,390 patients admitted during this period of almost two months, 440 were battle casualties, 417 were injured otherwise, and 1,533 were listed under disease. Of the 440 battle casualties, 362 were American soldiers, 24 were British soldiers, 11 were Brazilian, 24 were civilians, and 19 were war prisoners. 25 deaths were recorded.

On December 2, 1944, Warrant Officer Frank B. Pedrick, acting registrar, provided the analysis of the Pisa operation:

"The 38th Evacuation Hospital officially opened at 0900 hours, 15 September 1944 at Pisa, Italy. On opening day 27 patients were admitted thru Receiving and 45 patients were transferred from Ward 602, 8 miles North of Cecina, Italy, to the new hospital wards. The hospital closed 1700 hours, 3 November 1944 after being flooded out and 529 patients evacuated."

Total admissions were 2,853. Injuries were 424 and battle casualties 704. Of the 2,853 admissions, American Army personnel totaled 2,091, British 386, and Brazilian 263; 27 were war prisoners. In the battle casualties category, 524 were American, 32 British, 73

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38<sup>TH</sup> EVACUATION HOSPITAL

The 38th Evacuation Hospital unit sailed from New York on August 6, 1942. That date marked the beginning of its overseas service. The dance at Montecatini, as the ticket reveals, celebrated two and a half years away from American soil, during which it had achieved an enviable record of caring for many thousands of ill or wounded American and Allied service men and women, war prisoners, and natives of the sectors in which it had been located during those thirty months.



This picture of Lieutenant Russell was made the day she said goodbye to Italy and her overseas service.

Brazilian, 5 Italian, and 25 prisoners of war. 23 deaths were recorded, 1,161 soldiers were returned to duty, and 19 were reported AWOL.

The next analysis provides a summary of the hospital's operation at Montecatini, a period covering more than five months. Introducing this report, the continuing analysis reveals:

"The hospital opened at 1530 hours, 4 November 1944 at Lucca, Italy, when 7 officers, 7 nurses, and 10 enlisted men set up 15 beds for emergency cases only. The main hospital opened at 0800 hours, 17 November 1944 at Montecatini. The installation at Lucca closed 1000 hours, 15 November 1944. The hospital at Montecatini closed 0930 hours, 20 April 1945 after having been in operation 157 days."

During the Montecatini operation, the summary discloses, more than 9,000 patients were admitted, of whom 8,705 were American service personnel, 170 were British, 16 were Brazilian, 1 was French Army and 24 were Italian Army and 1 Italian Navy, 73 were civilians and 39 were prisoners of war. Battle casualties totaled 1,813, of which 1,758 were American soldiers, and 39 were war prisoners. Amazingly, only 10 deaths occurred. Almost eight times that many, 79, were reported AWOL. Diagnoses, reported in detail in the complete analysis, totaled 10,163.

From Montecatini the hospital moved for one week to Marzabotto. The continuing analysis records:

"The hospital opened 0100 hours, 20 April 1945, when Platoon 'A' with 2 officers, 6 nurses, and 15 men

took over 27 patients from 'B' Platoon, 32nd Field Hospital, 2 miles South of Paretta, Italy. Main hospital opened 0100 hours, 22 April 1945, at Marzabotto, Italy. The hospital was closed 1500 hours, 29 April 1945."

Battle casualties and injuries accounted for all but 90 admissions during the brief stay at Marzabotto. Here the battle casualties were proportionately heavier by far than at the other locations. Of the 948 admissions that week, 820 were casualties. But more than half of all admissions were prisoner of war patients—581. American casualties totaled 183. Brazilian casualties were next heaviest, 37. Deaths numbered 11.

After Marzabotto the hospital was set up at Fidenza. Of this period of service the continuing analysis of admissions and dispositions reveals:

"The hospital opened at 2000 hours, 30 April 1945, two (2) miles South of Fidenza, Italy, and closed at 0800 hours, 26 May 1945. 136 patients remaining were transferred to the new location at Salsomaggiore, Italy."

Total admissions during the almost one month at the Fidenza location were 1,165, of which a little more than one-half, 651, were listed in the disease category. Injured patients totaled 279 and battle casualties 235. But at Fidenza considerably more than one-third of the patients, or 479, were war prisoners, and almost one-half these prisoner patients, 215, were casualties of the fighting. Ten deaths were recorded and 42 AWOLs.

A report of the surgical service of the 38th Evacuation Hospital during the five months preceding June 1, 1945, as compiled from dispositions of patients, survives among the records of the unit to provide interesting statistical information.

The report, summarized to reveal quickly totals in the various categories, shows that during the January 1–May 31, 1945, period, the Charlotte unit handled 4,697 cases, of which 3,724 involved American personnel, 721 were war prisoners, 181 were Brazilian, and the remaining 71 included Italian, British, South African, Russian, and French.

Of the 4,697 patients treated, the figures further show, 1,032 were returned to duty, 736 were sent to convalescent hospitals, and 2,911 were transferred to hospitals in the rear. Eighteen deaths occurred during the five-month period.

The figures relating to American personnel reveal that of the 3,724 cases, 1,561 were battle casualties, 939 were injuries, 1,160 were disease, and 64 were self-inflicted wounds. Only five Americans died.

The great majority of the prisoner of war cases were battle casualties, 636 of the 721. The other 85 cases were in the disease category. Seven deaths were recorded in this grouping.

Of the other foreign patients, Italian civilians, 29 in all, made up the largest group. Forty-nine Italians

were treated. Nineteen British composed the next largest non-American group.

A study of the detailed report shows the 38th's surgeons performed operations of numerous kinds, the largest single type of which included debridements, the removal of foreign substances of many kinds—bullets, shell fragments, metal pieces, dirt, and grass from exploding mines—numbering 1,758. In general surgery, the report further reveals, the largest category was hemorrhoidectomies, 46; next largest, appendectomies, 39.

The records of the 38th include, too, for that same period, with the exception of an interval of less than three weeks—January 1, 1945, through May 12, 1945—an analysis of admissions that gives additional important figures indicating the extent of the unit's work in this closing period of the war.

Total admissions during those four and a half months, including 705 patients remaining January 1, 1945, numbered 8,987, of which 2,727 were listed as battle casualties. More than half the total, however, were classified under diseases—4,820. The remaining, 1,440, were admitted for the treatment of injuries.

More than four-fifths of the patients were Americans—7,393, or 82.2 per cent. The next largest group, 1,044 or 11.6 per cent, were prisoners of war. Sixty-eight point six of the battle casualties, 1,871 of the 2,727, were personnel of the American Army; almost all the remainder, 770, or 28.2 per cent, were prisoners of war. Almost nine-tenths, 89.4 per cent, of those treated in the disease category were Americans. Almost five per cent of the total, 234, were war prisoners. The comparatively few other patients in the various categories were British, Brazilian, Italian, and French military personnel and civilians.

In the final weeks of the 38th's hospital operations and contemporaneously with the encampment at Salsomaggiore, Major L. E. Fleming had been serving at a little substation hospital at Alessandria, a few miles southwest of Milan. Shortly before the unit left Salsomaggiore he returned to it, and when at the Florence Redeployment Training Area in the late summer Lieu-

tenant Colonel Pennington was transferred, Major Fleming succeeded him and served as the 38th's last commanding officer.

"The hospital, of course, had been closed since late June, about a week before we left Salsomaggiore," Dr. Fleming recalls, "and at Florence our activities in the main were connected with the transfer of our personnel. Some were being sent home for discharge and some were slated to go to other units for further service, probably in the war in the Pacific. But the war with Japan was over, of course, in late August and so in late September we were pretty well deactivated. The enlisted men were the first to go. I remember at the last we were quartered in an old tobacco factory at Florence and I think that the Catholic chaplain, Captain Natalini and I were the last ones out." He got home, he remembers, on October 10.

"The 38th had ended a notable career of service," Dr. Fleming summarizes the more than three years of experience since the unit's beginning training with activation at Fort Bragg. "I wonder if people today realize that we handled some 50,000 patients."

Pharmacist Joe Neil believes he was the last of the 38th's enlisted personnel to leave Florence. "I got orders to go to Naples where I'd catch the ship home," he remembers. "I had been staying in a tent near the University of Florence and I hadn't had any duties to amount to anything since the closing of the hospital about a week before we left Salsomaggiore. It must have been about the middle of August when I left Florence, the last enlisted man of the 38th, as far as I knew, to leave.

"At Naples I hung around about ten days waiting for the boat on which I was to go home. While I was in Naples I was billeted in a stable down at the race track. About the end of August I got my ship and we started for home. We were going through the Strait of Gibraltar on September 1, I remember, when we heard on the radio that the Japanese had formally surrendered to General MacArthur on board the Missouri."

Sergeant Neil was separated from the service at Fort Bragg on September 15.