

NINTH INTERIM REPORT OF NO.1 NEUROLOGICAL HOSPITAL, RCAMC., CASF.

There follow the Interim Reports for January, February and March, 1941. These are being sent out together inasmuch as they arrived at the same time. We are planning a glossary of Cross expressions, but those readers who bring to the reading of these reports a moderate knowledge of Latin, of Chaucer, and a mobile sense of humour will have no difficulty whatever in their interpretation.

A letter from Captain Martin Nichols, recently Fellow at the Montreal Neurological Institute and at present a prisoner in Germany is added as an item of interest. Dr. George Chorobski, also a former Fellow to whom he refers, is, we know, living in Poland somewhere. Also Dr. Arne Torkildsen, for many years a Fellow and Interne at the Neurological Institute, has been heard from in Norway, where he and his wife and little girl are living and active.

Hackwood Park,
Basingstoke, Hants.
January 31st, 1941.

"New Years Day was quite quiet. It was a beautiful sunny but cold day. At 5 P.M. we had the Sergeants up for sherry and Xmas cake and a toast to the New Year. Many of the Officers were invited out for dinner.

"We had a little snow on the 2nd January and occasionally during the month, but it never out-lasting 24 hours. It has remained very cold at nights and early mornings.

"On the 4th, we had a number of Molotov bombs scattered near us in the park, on the 15th two heavy hi-explosives about a mile from the house, one of which was a direct hit for the mouth of a well, another destroyed a cottage. Mostly, however, the engines drone by and fade with other aims.

"Our precautions are taken and as adequate as it is possible to be with incalculables. Our guard mounts the roof where we have placed anti-fire apparatus, as soon as a signal is given and remain until the 'all-clear'. Others man the hoses, and watchers are changed every hour, night or day. Helmet and respirator are worn from 'alert' to 'all clear'. In addition every day or two we apply our gas-masks and wear them for $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 hour, to accustom ourselves to the inconvenience. Black-out is total. One could pass 5 yards from the building and never know it is there. On the roads at night a faint ray of head-light is allowed and by it we can see the thin white line that marks the middle for some feet ahead. The lights must be visible for approachers for 30 feet but not visible 300 feet. Frequent fog adds to the intrigue and subtracts from safety and speed. One learns to be an expert.

"On the other hand, a Winter has passed and we are in an English Spring, (even late in January) we hope! Anyway there are snowdrops, yellow (gold), purple and white, in parks, an occasional lark is vocal, the grass has remained eternal green. Not yet the primroses, the lambs, the hedgerows in bloom. One sees through the rainy season and ignores the mud, for there are ridiculous Spring hats in the store windows. Darkens the aperture of vision for sandbags and sees young couples in parks and on rivers. Ignores broken and shuttered window panes for there are bright colored packages of seeds and bulbs showing through the intervals, between. Our piano is tuned, not to continental, but to concert pitch.

"Casualties among the staff included mild respiratory and grippe-like affections in (a), Col. Cone, with residual hoarseness and the tedium of 'inclining his heart to keep the law' of no cigarettes. (b) Captain Stewart, whose catarrhal rhythm has been basis for sinusoidal concurrent. (c) Captain Richardson, who has had grippe-seizures on several occasions with a day or two in bed. (d) Col. Russel has from January 25th to 31st been in bed with some rather ill-omened symptoms, so that we had physicians from the 15th Cdn. General Hospital come to make radical chest research. Fortunately all C.K.R.'s cells were innocent and he made gradual repair. Is now getting up.

"This month has marked the final vacating of the temporary operating room which was really a patient's ward, and the occupation of the new suite, whose preparation was outlined in last month's letter.

"At the same time the x-ray apparatus was erected in the 'garden' ward. It had occupied $\frac{1}{2}$ of a ward also. Consequently our bed space was increased and the bed capacity rose to 110, and all full. We are unfairly saddled with many cases which are incurable and await Canadization. There are no pre-embarkation bed-stations and we are the Good Samaritan's Inn. One sad feature appears in the fact that this hospital is to some extent the clearing-house for epileptics, paranoids, manic and mental (psychotic) and depressive neurotic cases; also for posttraumatic brain-sectioned men, whose re-eligibility is nil. This means that the restorable percentage to duty is the rare exception and ambition for purposeful records is thwarted. However the recalling of moribund men, by good surgery, to life with restrictions is a relative aim and the lowering of pensionability is a fulfillment of obligation.

"Many serious and interesting cases have entered our surgical wards.

"To-day as Col. Cone was travelling to another hospital to see a casualty to which he had been called, he came upon a traffic accident upon the highway. Four men were injured in a collision of two heavy lorries and two were still buried in the debris. He immediately sent the two less injured back here in the station wagon he had been using and remained there until an ambulance could arrive to fetch the others. Meanwhile he helped uncover these two and ministered to them until the ambulance arrived. All four were admitted. Two were freed in a couple of days, the other two in a couple of weeks.

"Early in the month, Major Harold Graham, whose home is Regina, was attached to this unit for the opportunity to attend the clinics of Sir Harold Gillies, plastic surgeon at neighboring Park Prewett Hospital. He is a Nose, Ear and Throat specialist and had been on duty at The Red Cross Hospital at Taplow. While here he assisted us on cases where head and face wounds involved his line.

"We had also Major W.E. Baker, a pre-war Sherbrooke otorhino-laryngologist, who contributed even more similar service, as he had no extramural appointments.

"Towards the end of the month, also, Captain Gerald Franklin, a Montreal Dental Surgeon, was similarly attached to the unit. He also attended Sir H. Gillies' clinics, foreseeing a possible maxilo-facial set-up here and its needs.

"An ebb to this tide of personnel, took away, protestingly, our R.C. padre, Captain A.B.J. O'Neill, called by duty of hierarchy to another unit, the Royal Cdn. Artillery. His loss was keenly felt, not only by his votaries, for he was a fount of good humor and enthusiasm. He has a larger parish but the one-third of us who are of his faith are practising less o'kneeling since his obiter altho' we have the occasional ministrations of Captain McNeil from a nearby Air Force Squadron.

"A serious problem is to persuade the various hospitals in areas where casualties occur, that they should act, preferably, as dressing stations for head wounds merely, rather than undertake intervention and radical repair.

"Were these cases immediately sent here, immense advantage for the patients and de-congestion of cases in the emergency rush and confusion.

"Lighter items may make a framework for conclusion. Some of our surgeons had the opportunity to hear Trueta on his special plaster-closed fracture technique, at the Bramshott Hospital. Several have also witnessed the Roger-Anderson mechanical reduction and retention of fractured long and short bones.

"Majors Childe and Hyland and later, Captains Jekill and Franklin, have been dinner guests at Lord Camrose's. Others of us have shared the hospitality of Lord and Lady Lymington, near here. In turn, most of us have gone informally to Brigadier Bruce Reford's and Mrs. Reford's. They are royal and insatiable hosts. Of course many other splendid homes have made us welcome.

"Some idea of the mileage that we have invested in professional and unit service may be got from the figures on our 4 station wagon meters. Each has upwards of 10,000 miles registered since December 1st."

Hackwood Park,
Basingstoke, Hants,
February 28th, 1941.

"Memo' random' for the month of February" will be the most appropriate term for this outline.

"February has been a month of numerous visitations, mostly of distinguished officials. On the 8th Lord Dawson of Penn, King's physician, and Mr. E. Ross Carling, outstanding Surgeon of the Emergency Military Service, made an announced appearance and, though done most kindly and with apparent conviction of our efficiency, still it was of the nature of an inspection.

"On the 11th instant, The Honorable Vincent and Mrs. Massey, High Commissioner for Canada, came officially to inspect the Hospital and meet the personnel. Unfortunately, Lt. Col. Russel and Major Hyland had to be away in London where they were witnesses at Old Bailey Court in a case of a young soldier they had examined for sanity, as he had shot a civilian.

"Considerable attention was devoted to the preparations for the Commissioner's visit. He and Mrs. Massey were especially invited to luncheon and accepted graciously. The event went most happily. Every patient was seen by them and engaged in conversation. Some of the patients were making hooked rugs and these were duly admired. One that Mrs. Massey admired was later sent to her as a gift. Opportunity was taken to show them some of the cases and their histories, illustrated by the x-ray proofs. They were greatly impressed.

"Perhaps the greatest import of their visit, however, was that pains were taken to indicate the unfair delay in the erection of the unit's additional huts and our helplessness to cope with the long waiting list of would-be admissions in the face of this official inaction.

"It is to be recorded that almost immediately after their return to London, word came of the full authority for these huts and of the appropriations therefor. I append a letter from the High Commissioner with his fullest appreciation. (This is on file).

"Later in the month, we were the recipients of a visit from Brigadier Phelan, the Deputy Adjutant General and received his very frank and fervent congratulation. He was quite obviously surprised at the results obtained in many of the surgical cases and the potentiality of the Unit's special raison d'être as well as the organization and equipment. Certainly since his and Mr. Massey's visit there has been prompter and more willing cooperation.

"On the 21st February Mr. L.A. Dykes, who is the regional Hospital officer for the Emergency Medical Service, came to look the Neurological Unit over in the interests of the E.M.S. as the seat of the regional center for Head Injuries for the Hampshire District. He was delighted with the set-up and the personnel and has been charming in all subsequent associations.

"Among other visitors were our own Director of Medical Services, now Brigadier Luton, Sir James Charlton, a manufacturer of munitions with Canadian Associations, Major Scott, Chief Commissioner for the Canadian Red Cross Society, who has ministered to our needs for linen and dressings supplies with a fairy godfather hand, several chief surgeons of English Emergency hospitals and Major Max Rabinowitch, who spent two days here giving us special instruction in 'Gas' and anti-gas equipment and protection.

"During this month regimental drill parades were re-instituted and the men had to appear for $\frac{1}{2}$ hour's stiff drill on the square in front of the house. This was thought wise as their work was mostly within doors and exercise in the open seemed insufficient.

"There has developed an extensive travelling consultative practice among our Neurological personnel. At Headquarter's direction, one or a pair of the Medical Staff is called to go to often distant points to examine mental patients and make report. Sometimes it is a soldier who is awaiting or has undergone Court Martial and an opinion of the man's mentality is asked. It is virtually a chief consultant's duty, without the appointment rank.

"To a lesser extent, the Surgeons go occasionally on similar errands but for cases of injury and usually the patients are brought here for x-ray and treatment.

"Several Nursing sisters are to be posted here in the near future, from No. 1 Cdn. General Hosp. for training in neurosurgical nursing as there will be cases of this type under treatment at that station very shortly.

"Military medical societies at different points have invited several of our Officers to their sessions in the capacities of experts to give special talks on diagnoses, in neurology, and on the initial care of head and spine injuries. Majors Botterell and Hyland as well as Lt. Col. Russel have complied in the case of the Cdn. Base Units Med. Soc. at Bordon. Lt. Col. Cone has done the same at 1st Cdn. Division Headquarters, for their association.

"One of our Nursing Sisters, N/S Ogilvy, has had to be boarded medically unfit and returned to Canada.

"Major W.E. Baker, who has been attached here as Ear, Nose and Throat specialist, is now slated to return to Canada to resume a combattant command there.

"On the 28th February, the O.C. was a guest with Brigadier Luton, Col. Rae, O.C. No. 15 Cdn. Gen. Hosp., and Col. J.C. MacKenzie O.C. No. 5 Cdn. Gen. Hosp., at a special dinner given by the Cdn. Base Units Med. Society.

"During the month, Colonel Russel was the weekend guest of Dr. Gordon Holmes at his home near Sandhurst. It involved a competition of golf as well. Another day Lt. Col. Russel spent in London with his nephew, Fl. Off. Dal Russel, who was on his way back to Canada, to engage in instruction under the Empire Air Training scheme.

"Our bed-state is now 115, highest to date. The shift of Operating room and x-ray has allowed the resultant spaces to be used as wards. There still exists a waiting list. All surgical cases are admitted, it is the medical applicant that has to mark time.

"Our laboratories are giving efficient service. We have a new and larger microtome for bigger sections. We have instructed our American confreres in the use of their new photo calorimeter. Our reports and case-histories are being universally praised for their completeness and clarity. The surgeons are adapting a cystometer to measure recovery of bladder tone in the paralyses following severed spines."

C.E. Cross.

Hackwood Park,
Basingstoke, Hants,
March 31st, 1941.

"Achievement is principally marked in the surgical field and an accompanying list of 'opera chirurgica' will indicate some part of same. To it must be added, in imagination, the associated dressings which must follow, - the x-ray interventions and the essential laboratory follow-ups.

"In addition, the study of cystometrics, as mentioned in last month's bulletin, has been carried on with some further records, and the publication of the research, as to the absorption of sulphapyridine by the brain tissues of cats, is nearing completion. Another item has been the approval by Mr. Geoffrey Jefferson of Major Botterell's article "Effects of Bombing on Hospitals, Casualties", of which I sent a copy in the December issue, and has, with Major Botterell's permission incorporated the greater part in a publication, mentioning the latter as co-writer.

"A further, not inconsiderable, boost was the request by Colonel Cairns, Chief of the St. Hugh's Military Hospital for Head Injuries at Oxford, for one of our surgeons, if dispensable, to go to his neuro-surgical centre and assist him; as his advanced associates had all answered the insistent call to man mobile teams and go ajourneying in the 'field'. Major Botterell has answered the S.O.S. and is doing most praiseworthy work there.

"Mr. Jefferson has reformed his notable clinic and is asking for help once more. He has been working in adjacent hospitals since being 'Blitzed' but has a nucleus reformed and it will grow. Naturally we are prideful of these compliments to staff efficiency.

"We have just accepted to take 3 Nursing Sisters from No. 1 Cdn. General Hosp. for training in this branch and they will go back there to assist Neurosurgeon Elliott in the cases he will be prepared to cope with. Their names are N/S Gray, Douglas and Dearden. They have friends among our Sisters and will be welcomed.

"Fulfillment of our promised additional ward facilities has actually begun. A very energetic Cdn. Engineering corps has undertaken the entire job of erection, plumbing, wiring and heating and there has already appeared one building reared, roofed and reassuring. Several others are partially erected and the foundations of all are prepared.

"The advent of greater capacity will render necessary additional staff personnel and at the request of Headquarters, we have drawn up a memo of additional other ranks and submitted same for consideration. It represents some 65 further executives. As to Officers and Sisters, no submission has as yet been made. As an estimate, about 50% additional will be needed. As there are talks of 'exchanges', it is felt that any detail of the further selection of Officers may be left aside at the moment.

"Some intimations of enhanced prestige have appeared under the mention of achievements above. Those have dealt more particularly with the surgical associations. There has been no want of halo formations over the staffers of our medical neurologists. These have become medico-legal consultants, psychoanalysts and alienists for all the Canadian Forces and for a wide section of the British Area. As an instance, the other day Col. Russel and Major Hyland drove almost to the west coast, over 200 miles, to examine a suspect in the mountains of Wales. The following day Col. Russel drove far eastward to deal similarly with a ditto in a British Military Mental Institution.

"Cases of Court Martial are decided in harmony with the findings of our experts, even murder cases have hung on their pronouncements.

"Continued compliments as to the excellence of documents, and unfailing readiness to respond to calls for consultation as well as promptitude in compliance, are many and merited. They are working very hard. Our records show that to date patients in residence, plus discharged, number 487.

"Early in the month Col. Russel and Major Botterell attended the regular session of the British Committee on Head Injuries.

"Dr. and Mrs. Gordon Holmes were guests of Col. Russel here on the 15th. It was a rare sunny day and they golfed with March-hare-raising amusement.

"On the 5th instant Cols. Cross, Russel and Cone and Major Hyland drove to London and attended the Memorial Service in St. Martin-in-the-fields, for the late Sir Frederick Banting. Pretty well all the Canadian Headquarters' staffs were present as well as the Matron-in-Chief and many nurses.

"On the 19th March the Officers held a mixed celebration, mixed as to motives, viz; the farewell to bachelordom of Captain Quartermaster Davis and the bon voyage gesture to Major W.E. Baker on his departure to Canada. Only at the beginning were the Ob-sequences confused. The elements of celebration triumphed.

"On the 22nd Captain Davis was united in wedlock to Miss Vera Catherine Williams of Witley in a very beautiful village church there. Three Nurses and eight Officers attended and formed a double column at the church door as the happy pair emerged, passing under an arch of the Officers' raised parade-sticks. A reception was held in an adjacent hall afterward, refreshments, wedding-cake and speeches were served. The Captain and Mrs. Davis left for a week at Torquay.

"General Odlum, Gen. Off. Comm. the 2nd Cdn. Division of the Cdn. Army, visited the Hackwood Park unit informally as a guest of the Nursing Sisters (such is their popularity) and the Officers were invited to the event. With him were several of his retinue. He visited several wards and the x-ray department and was obviously impressed with these latter although he hurried back to his hostesses as though his interest was comparative.

"On March the 10th occurred the destruction by enemy action of the Cafe de Paris in London. Next morning Cols. Russel and Cone were called to the Charing Cross Hospital to see several cases of head or spine involvement, and 3 were brought here for intervention. One with ultrainvolvement of the head has been saved from dreaded fatality, but will be unfit to resume duty. The other two will soon re-join their units.

"The subject of a discourse by Col. Cone to the 1st Cdn. Div. Med. Society during the month, was "The Abscesses of Warfare". It was illustrated by x-rays and lantern slides.

"Captain Jekill, Dental Officer, gave a lecture to the dental officers of the Cdn. Base Units.

"A practical test of the capacity of the electric generators which we brought from Canada, was made during the month, to demonstrate their sufficiency to provide light and power indepently, in the possible event of the failure of the prevailing source of power. It was found that in a five minute space the noted services could be adjusted and would function with equal adequacy.

"On the 20th, two cases of diplegia, following spinal injury were removed to hospital train with 3 nursing orderlies and Major W.E. Baker, in charge, and thus conveyed to the embarkation point and made comfortable in the ship transport. Captain McCormick accompanied them to the ship's hospital and returned. Major Baker assumed charge on the boat.

"Many visitations, other than above named, have occurred where surgeons and neurologists of British and American units have attended operations, x-ray expositions or fraternally at messes or tea-hour. Officers of Cdn. units very frequently come.

Mr. Wallace of Edinburgh Infirmary, formerly Dr. Wallace, associated with Dr. MacKenzie at Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal.- came last week and gave us the benefit of his special work on treatment of burns, especially relative to war burns.

"Captain Franklin, attached dental officer, here, has had training in gas-protection and has been giving classes to the personnel.

"In addition, A/Staff Sgt. Ealker has just come from a course in the same subject. We are being issued with anti-gas equipment and a de-contamination hut is to be erected along with those under construction.

"Home Sister Smith has just returned from a week of leave in Edinburgh.

"With fervent hopes that all those of our bond and band of co-patriotism, have been and may be, in good health and confident hope, as we are,

Ever most sincerely and re-assuringly, for every member of the team, every neurologue,"

C.E. Cross.

LETTER FROM DR. MARTIN NICHOLS

"Sorry I have not written before but we are very limited as to writing materials. It was a long time before I heard from home but now hear regularly by air mail in 3 weeks. Barbara and the baby are with her parents and thrive; Judith now ages old, 16 months, and it is almost a year since I saw her. I understand she is incredibly intelligent and walks and talks. I am here in a small hospital - part of a State Mental Home - with one general surgeon and a Jesuit priest. We let out pus and remove sequestra and even remove the odd appendix. Our patients are our old British wounded and French and Poles from nearby working camps; my rounds are in three languages for I have to speak German to the Poles as well as my limited vocabulary of Polish phrases. These Poles are very gallant and friendly. Wonder where Chorobski is. We are now getting British Red Cross parcels and they make things pleasant, also some from my cousin in U.S. We get pay here and buying books is the way to get rid of it. I have bought volume 6 of the Handbuch of Neurology and find to my delight that I can read it. I tried at Montreal and couldn't. After our hospital was ordered to wait and be captured last May I had an interesting trip into Germany up the Rhine in a coal barge. Took 3 days and was an experience. Then 4½ months in an officers' prison camp before being sent here where

-10-

scenery is a bit like Laurentians. Wish I was home to meet all the M.N.I. lot. With very best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Martin."