

CUS417/2.60

DRAFT (Confidential).

*which are stated to be
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inefficient, expensive
and unsatisfactory.*

Dear Sir,

It has been reported to the Committee of the Association that Colonel Bruce's report, or some extracts from it, relating to the administration of the Canadian Army Medical Service, has been published in Canada, and that it contains certain references to Voluntary Aid Hospitals. Among them is included the Queen's Canadian Military Hospital, Beachborough Park, Shorncliffe, which is operated and maintained by the Association.

I am directed by the Committee to state for the information of the Board of Enquiry which it is understood has the report in question under review, that some mistake has apparently been made in describing the Queen's Canadian Military Hospital as a Voluntary Aid Hospital. The fact is that it is classed by the Army Council as a Primary Hospital, and has been so regarded from the time of its inauguration.

Apart from the fact, however, that the Hospital is a Primary Hospital, it could not in any case be described as coming within the scope of the animadversions in the report in question on Voluntary Aid Hospitals in general, and for the following reasons:-

- a. That the wards were specially built for Hospital purposes, with all the latest sanitary and other improvements.

- b. That the medical staff is resident and is not drawn from the neighbouring civil practitioners.
- c. That there are 12 trained and properly qualified nursing sisters at the Hospital by whom all the nursing is done. The V.A.D's who by the way have all passed their Home Nursing First Aid Examinations, merely assist the trained nurses in their work.
- d. That there is a splendid operating room at the Hospital, constructed at considerable expense, and most modern and up-to-date in its equipment and furnishings.
- e. That the Queen's Canadian Military Hospital was offered to the Army Council as a Hospital for the general use of His Majesty's Forces, especially for sick and wounded from the Front, and that it has been regarded from the first as a Primary Hospital.
- f. That Lady Sargent, who personally conducts the St. Anslem's V.A.D. Hospital, Walmer, visited the Queen's Canadian Military Hospital, a few days ago. It is understood that this particular Hospital is mentioned as a model V.A.D. Hospital in the report. Lady Sargent expressed herself as delighted with the Hospital, and stated that it was the finest she had ever seen.
- g. That the Hospital is within a couple of miles of Shorncliffe. It is frequently inspected by the A.D.M.S. and other officers, and the reports regarding it, both written and personal, have always been of the most gratifying and satisfactory character.
- h. That all operations are performed by Lt.-Col. Donald Armour, M.B., F.R.C.S, who is the Surgeon-in-Chief of the Hospital. It is not necessary to say anything about Colonel Armour's position in the profession, which is generally recognised.

The two resident medical officers are properly qualified under the laws of Canada, and have occupied the position of house surgeon in

the Toronto General Hospital. One of them is an experienced bacteriologist, and the other a qualified radiographer. Any cases that have occurred of secondary hemorrhage at the Hospital have been promptly and satisfactorily dealt with by the resident Medical Officers, and no complaint can be made against them in this connection. Both Colonel Armour (Surgeon-in-Chief) and Sir William Osler (Physician-in-Chief) are thoroughly satisfied in every way with the qualifications of the two gentlemen, and with the manner in which they have carried out their duties. Colonel Armour visits the Hospital two or three times a week, or more frequently if desired. He is in communication daily on the telephone with the resident Medical Officers about the cases. No less than 1402 patients have passed through the Hospital since it opened in October 1914; 509 major operations have been performed, and the deaths have only numbered 18 - 12 being surgical cases and 6 medical cases.

It would appear, also, from certain statements in the Press, that the report mentions the fact that the Association receives 75 Cents per day for each Canadian patient taken care of, and adds that a similar arrangement is in force with every other V.A.D. Hospital in the Shorncliffe area. This statement is apt to give rise to some misapprehension. We understand that every Hospital in the country, military or otherwise, primary or auxiliary, where Canadian patients are taken care of, (other than Canadian Government Hospitals) receives a daily payment to cover rations and attendance from the Canadian Government. In some of the V.A.D. Hospitals payment has also it is believed, been made of so much per day per bed as the remuneration of the medical officers, but no attendance of that

kind is paid to the Queen's Canadian Military Hospital - where the resident medical officers are paid by the Association, as are the nurses and all the other staff except the V.A.D's, *and the officers and men lent to the Association.*

With reference to another statement - that although the Hospital has been advertised as a Canadian Hospital, it renders very limited service to Canadian patients, it may be said that the Hospital was offered to the Army Council by the Canadian War Contingent Association through Her Majesty Queen Mary, and was accepted as a Hospital for the general use of His Majesty's Forces. Belgian, English, Irish, Scotch, Welsh, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand and South African soldiers have passed through the Hospital. At times it has been full of Canadian soldiers - at others the patients have been of various origins. Anyone sent from Overseas by the War Office is received. The Hospital has no power of selection. From time to time, when it appeared that the Hospital was not getting a fair share of Canadians, representations were made that the matter might receive attention from that point of view - having regard to the fact that the nurses, medical, and some of the other staff were Canadian, that the funds were provided from Canadian or Anglo-Canadian origin, and that the general atmosphere of the Hospital was Canadian.

It is true that the Government is supplying the Hospital with a Quartermaster and 15 other ranks, and the

Association is grateful for this assistance; but it has always been understood that these men were light duty men, unfit for service at the Front, and that it was better for them to be occupied than to be idle. In any case, the arrangement only dates from the early months of 1916. With the exception of the Quartermaster, the men are constantly changing. As they improve in health, and are fit for other work they are transferred elsewhere. The pay of these men represents the only contribution that is made to the Association by the Canadian Government in addition to the 3/- per day before mentioned; and in this connection it may be stated that the Association has expended, and is still expending, thousands of pounds annually for the benefit of Canadians at the Front, and in other ways.

It certainly cannot be said that there is any lack of skilled nursing at the Queen's Canadian Military Hospital in view of the fact that we have an experienced matron and 12 trained nurses, also 15 Voluntary Aid Assistants. ~~The writer of the report does not realise that the~~ Voluntary Aid Assistants are practically women orderlies, but unpaid; ~~that~~ they do a lot of the cleaning work in connection with the wards, and ~~that~~ their principal function is to assist the trained nurses to keep things properly going in the Hospital. In many respects they are considered to be better than men orderlies, and much more suitable for the work that is required of them. Their labour is given from a desire to help in the War, and it is

very doubtful whether the same work, both in quality and in extent, could be obtained from paid labour. The V.A.D's are all ~~Canadian~~ ladies belonging to prominent Canadian families, and their devotion and self sacrifice cannot be too highly appreciated.

So satisfied is the Association with this Hospital, its accommodation, equipment and operation, that if desired it is prepared to ask the Army Council for special enquiry to be made on the subject, and that the Canadian Army Medical Service may be represented at such enquiry.