

Q Those for Army purposes for carrying officers about and carrying arms stores had naturally nothing to do with the Red Cross.

3967 Q Did the Government provide a number for other purposes.

A They provided a certain number for other purposes.

3968 Q Lord Hugh Cecil: Not for medical purposes?

A Not for medical purposes.

3969 Q Sir Archibald Williamson: The others were more or less runabouts.

A Yes. There

3970 Q ~~There~~ were larger boats?

A Yes, there were one or two that could be used for carrying stores.

3971 Q Most of the others were little boats for personal purposes.

A Yes.

3972 Q What is the rise of tide at Basra?

A It may go up to 4 feet or more. It varies so much that I hesitate to give any figure as the river is so extraordinary.

3973 Q If there is a 4 feet rise and fall, and I assume that it would be more at spring tides, the draught of the vessels used in the river as a rule being less than 4 feet, the ~~previous~~ question will do quite well.

A It ~~may~~ ^{might} but there are certain parts of the year when there is practically no rise. The rise and fall are not consistent.

3974 Q There is a difference in the level of the river at different times of the year.

A Yes.

3975 Q So that there is some danger of a vessel being caught out of water and not being able to float again.

A Yes. The change is very rapid sometimes. It appeared to be a most extraordinary river as regards tides and floods. I could find out very little with regard to it even from people who had lived there a long time.

3976 Q Commander Wedgwood: do you know the rise and fall at F (?)

3977 A Sir Archibald Williamson: What is the rise and fall at Kurna?

A That is the highest point where there is a rise and fall. Only at certain times of the year does the tide actually turn the stream. The stream is ^{nearly} always running down.

3978 Q The water backs up.

A Yes. About the end of July the tide actually turns the stream, but that is only in certain months of the year.

3979 Q Have you been at Abadan.

A Yes.

3980 Q What facilities are there here for building or putting boats together?

A There are comparatively few even there.

3981 Q Here were the boats belonging to the Blossy Lynch hire and other boats on the river belonging to the Germans put together.

A I do not know, but I imagine at Abadan.

3982 Q There were at least 20 steamers on the river before the expedition went there, ~~were~~ ^{were} there not.

A I did not know that there were so many.

3983 Q I will ask you how many there were. a: 9

- 12
3984
- Q I do not know, but I thought there were very many fewer than that.
- 2 But what there were were put together on the river, were they not.
- Q That I do not know.
- 3985 2 Why did you go to Mohammera instead of to Abadan to make arrangements with regard to the building ^{of your} of boats.
- Q The War Office or the Admiralty or the Staff Office had made arrangements for re-erecting at Abadan a very large number of boats, and they required all the labour and all the machinery, and we were especially told not to interfere with anything there.
- 3986 2 In other words the Red Cross was put aside by the Naval and Military authorities on the spot for other work.
- Q Yes, they wished to have their work done first.
- 3987 2 They did not even like ^{us} you to make arrangements for yourself at Mohammera.
- Q No. That was largely due I think to not understanding the circumstances.
- 3988 2 You say in your Statement that it was possible to put together boats as far back as about a year ago. Boats were put together before the Expedition ever started.
- Q Yes.
- 3989 2 Is it not a fact that in January 1915 the Government was putting together gunboats at Abadan.
- Q I was not aware of that. I did not know that it was so early.
- 3990 2 You have since received permission to put

76

1915

13

put together the hospital steamer at Mohammera
 for in the river, have you not.

Q At Mohammera, but we are unable to do it
 because all the arrangements have ~~not~~
 been cancelled, and there is not now
 long enough time for making the necessary
 preparations. We have to go to Bombay
 and have it done there.

40

3991

Q Are you unable to make arrangements
 for it to be done at Abadan or Basra

A For some reason or another it is not desired to
 rebuild any more vessels at Abadan.

3992

Q For the Red Cross?

A For anybody, - not more than they have on hand.

3993

Lord Hugh Cecil: Do not they propose to rebuild in
 the future?

A It is not desired to do more than they
 have on hand. I think that the general
 impression here is that ^{re}building is
 undesirable.

3994

Sir Archibald Williamson: Is it not possible
 that they had ^{have} some on hand that they
 cannot undertake more work.

A Yes, that may be so.

3995

Q Do you not anticipate a great risk of
 losing this vessel if you send her under
 her own steam from Bombay

A We certainly think there is a risk.

3996

Q She is urgently needed is she not.

A Most urgently needed. I think the most
 urgent need at the present time with
 regard to transport is river hospital ships.

3997

Sir Nevill Lytton: What is the size of the ship.
 A 150 feet.

14
3998 Q What is the tonnage.
A There is a displacement of 220 to 230 tons.

~~It is a river ship.~~
3999 Q It is the vessel spoken of in the last paragraph of your Statement.
A Yes.

4007 Q Is there not a very big ship which the Red Cross are providing.
A That is the one.

4002 Q That is the biggest?
A Yes. You cannot have bigger boats than that because of the bends in the River. They can carry about 70 hospital cases on stretchers and probably about 150 sitting cases. It is fitted out as a floating hospital, and it can be moved if necessary.

4003 Chairman: What is the freeboard.
A I cannot tell you the freeboard exactly. The draught is 2 feet odd - under 3 feet.

4004 Q Do you mean freeboard, or draught. I was asking the freeboard. Would she be safe?
A She could be strengthened where necessary.

4005 Admiral Sir Cyprian Bridge: You would have to raise the sides, I suppose.

4006 Q I do not think it would be necessary to do that. ^{what is her horse power.}
A 300 break horse power.

4007 Q What is her speed.
A Her speed ought to be about 9 1/2 knots.

4008 Q This vessel is going to steam across from Bombay to Bassora.
A Yes.

4009 Q About what month of the year.
A January I think.

4010 Q That is the best time.
A Yes.

(78)

Chairman: Thank you - The witness withdraws. (apt)

45-84
16.9.16.

B

**STATEMENT BY CAPTAIN J. S. O'NEILL, I.M.S.,
128th Indian Field Ambulance.**

Embarkation at Marseilles.

1. The ambulance arrived from the front in France at Marseilles on 3rd December, 1915, with full personnel and equipment as follows:—

Medical officers	...	...	4
Assistant surgeon	...	...	1
B.N.C.O. and men	...	...	3
S.A.S.	...	...	6
Havildars	...	...	4
Ward orderlies	...	...	8
H.S.C.	...	...	2
Sowar	...	...	1
A.B.C.	...	...	134
Drivers	...	...	34
Cooks	...	...	5
Bhists	...	...	8
Dhobis	...	...	4
Sweepers	...	...	6
H.S.K. Asst.	...	...	2
Private servants	...	...	4
Syces	...	...	11
Total	...	...	237

Transport:—

- 9 G.S. waggons.
- 2 water carts.
- 6 ambulance waggons.
- 1 bicycle.
- 5 chargers.
- 1 horse.
- 67 mules.
- 11 riding ponies.*

Tents (obtained at Marseilles):—

- 12 D.F. bell tents.
- 24 S.F. "
- 4 marquees.
- 8 80-lb. tents.
- 2 160-lb. tents
- With medical and surgical equipment, dressings, &c.

2. The ambulance embarked from Marseilles for Basra on three separate transports.

The six ambulance waggons had to be left behind as there was no room for them on the transports then available. Of these ambulance waggons only one had arrived at the front up to 1st June, 1916.

Dates of Embarkation at Marseilles and Arrival at Basra.

3. The ambulances embarked as follows:—

I. On H.M.T.S. "Crosshill":—

- 1 medical officer.
- 1 S.N.S.
- 99 personnel.

With no equipment or transport. Sailed from Marseilles on 10th December, 1915, and arrived in Basra on 17th January, 1916. Part of this did not arrive at the front until 15th February, 1916.

II. One medical officer embarked on H.M.T.S. "Toronto" on 14th December, 1915, and arrived in Basra on 19th January, 1916, and at the front on 15th February, 1916.

III. Two medical officers, with the remainder of the personnel, all equipment and transport (less six ambulance waggons which had to be left behind at Marseilles) embarked on 14th December, 1915, on H.M.T.S. "Georgian," and arrived at Basra on 8th January, 1916; part of the personnel and transport not arriving at the front until 8th April, 1916.

Disembarkation at Basra.

4. The personnel and equipment and transport which arrived by s.s. "Georgian" was disembarked at Magil Camp, 3 miles north of Basra.

* Obtained at Marseilles.

The ground was impossible for wheeled transport on account of the torrents of rain, so that the G.S. waggons could not be loaded up to bring the equipment to camp, so all stores, &c., were left on the wharf under a guard.

Embarkation for the Front.

5. On 13th January, 1916, the following personnel and equipment embarked at Magil Wharf, Basra, for the front on s.s. "Salimi":—

- 2 medical officers.
- 3 S.A.S.
- 2 hrdrs.
- 6 ward orderlies.
- 1 H.S.K.
- 32 A.B.C.
- 2 cooks.
- 2 bhists.
- 1 dhobi.
- 2 sweepers.
- 1 private servant.
- 1 weighman.

With three sections of medical and surgical equipment and tents, tarpaulins, &c. The transport carts, water carts and animals had to be left behind, and did not arrive at the front until 8th April, 1916.

River Transport to the Front.

6. During the passage up the Tigris River it rained in torrents almost daily. There were no proper awnings for the steamer, so that the personnel got soaked, and there were no covers at all for the two barges which were towed up river by the s.s. "Salimi," and on which the personnel travelled. One dhobi was washed overboard from one of the barges and was drowned.

Wounded in Camp, Sheikh Saad.

On 18th January, 1916, s.s. "Salimi" arrived at Sheikh Saad. Here ten medical officers went ashore and dressed all cases that required it of the 900 sick and wounded British and Indian in camp there. The camp was in a sea of mud. Some of the cases had still their first field dressing on their wounds. From the 7th and 8th January, 1916, and on my arrival there was only one medical officer in charge.

Disembarkation at Orah.

7. The ambulance equipment and personnel brought up on s.s. "Salimi" was disembarked at Orah Camp on 19th January, 1916. Camp was pitched on the left bank of the river and all equipment stored. The river had risen 10 feet and had washed away the "bridge of boats" across the main river and on the Wadi River. At this camp there were about 600 cases sick and wounded in 21 C.F.A. in a muddy camp.

Evacuation of Wounded.

On 20th January, 1916, I loaded up 300 sick and wounded on s.s. "Selimi," working until 2 a.m. The awnings of this steamer leaked badly, and were inadequate. On afternoon of 20th January, 1916, I went with two sections of field ambulance with tents to "H.Q." nullah, 1½ miles up stream, with three days' rations, equipment and dressings, with seven A.T. carts and eight pack mules, and camped in the nullah during the night. At 11 p.m. the nullah was flooded and the tents had to be struck and all equipment removed to the banks of the nullah. On 21st January, 1916, we bombarded the enemy's position at Hannah at 7.45 a.m. We advanced about 1,500 yards, and, following up the main advance, we established an advanced dressing station near the river bank in the old reservg line trenches.

The wounded began to come in at 9 a.m., both British and Indian, then it commenced to rain in torrents. Tarpaulins were rigged up over the trenches and then seven circular tents (disguised with mud) were pitched and the wounded, British and Indian, were treated as they came in. Bearer parties were sent out from time to time and all wounded found were brought in. The ground was under water in places, the trenches were flooded, and all the wounded were soaked to the skin and suffering greatly from cold and exposure. At the A.D.S. warm tea and

brandy were provided, also blankets. At one time I managed to get as many as 35 men into one circular tent, the normal accommodation being 17.

Transport of Wounded.

8. All the mule carts brought with the A.D.S. were loaded up, two lying-down cases or four sitting cases to each cart. Mattresses were placed on the carts and tarpaulins spread over patients as far as available; but owing to the slimy and muddy condition of the ground and the flooded nullahs mules and carts stuck fast, the road being almost impossible for wheeled transport.

The carts conveyed the cases from the A.D.S. to the H.Q. nullah, and from there they were conveyed to the combined field ambulance at Orah by the s.s. "Salimi," the P. and S.A. "Jalnar," the motor boat "Aerial" and L10 rendering service also.

9. All available regimental transport carts, some 40 in number, were brought up to the A.D.S. during the night, and these were also filled up with wounded and conveyed towards the rear. When all the tents at the A.D.S. were filled the remainder of the wounded had to remain out in the open in mud and rain, being covered by blankets or tarpaulins as available. Evacuation continued all through the night, and in the morning of the 22nd January, 1916, more mule carts were brought up, although the roads were still almost impossible for wheeled transport.

10. I brought up the L10 minesweeper with two whaleboats lashed to her, and took down in three trips, with the "Aerial" assisting, about 100 cases, also all the stragglers and wounded which were still remaining on the mule carts stuck fast in the mud between the A.D.S. and camp Orah were also picked up. A number of wounded died from exposure during the night. Two of our kahars (stretcher bearers) died from exposure.

We had to retire 1,200 yards and then an armistice of five hours was arranged to enable us to clear the battlefield and bury the dead.

About 2,000 casualties came through my A.D.S. during this engagement on 23rd January, 1916. All night we loaded up the barges on P7 with wounded, working until 6.45 a.m. the following morning. The decks of these barges were inadequately protected with "kutcha chitai" covering. Ninety-five stretcher cases were brought from the muddy camp at Orah and placed on these barges to be sent down the river.

On 24th January, 1916, the H.D.S. personnel and equipment returned to Camp Orah and assisted in the work of the combined field ambulance at Orah.

11. The remaining section of 128 I.F.A. which was detained at Basra arrived at Camp Orah on 27th January, 1916, minus transport. From this date onwards a regular evacuation twice daily by the motor boat "Aerial" was instituted from the A.D.S. to Camp Orah, and collecting stations were established in the reserve trenches behind the firing line.

On 6th February, 1916, 128 I.F.A. was pitched as a unit for the care of sick and wounded, but was inadequately supplied with transport.

The camp was several times flooded during this month, and the condition of the ground made it almost impossible for anything but pack transport and river transport to be used.

On 20th February, 1916, a "maheyla" was provided for part of the equipment and rations of the ambulance.

12. On the 8th March, 1916, the date of the attack on the right bank of the river, motor ambulances had not arrived, but the one or two large horse ambulances which had arrived did yeoman service. The ambulance with which I worked dealt with 452 wounded on this date, all working through the night until 4 a.m. on the following morning.

The evacuation was good on this occasion, and steamers came up regularly to relieve the pressure on the ambulances.

13. During the month of March rains were frequent, and the camp was threatened several times; the "bund" also had to be made on the marsh and river sides of the camp.

On 19th March, 1916, a storm arose, and about 30 maheylas were carried from the left to the right bank of the river (including the ambulance maheyla).

On 20th March, 1916, H.M.H.S. "Sikkim" arrived at

Camp Orah. She had accommodation for 150 lying-down cases, and she was the first attempt at a hospital ship for the Tigris.

On 1st April, 1916, the river rose again and the camp was swamped.

On the attack on 5th April, 1916, motor ambulance transport was used, also the horse and mule tongas, and the river evacuation was excellent; but some of the steamers—which had brought up horses and mules, and where the decks were covered with litter—had to be hurriedly washed down and then utilized to bring down the wounded. This was necessitated by the shortage of transport.

14. The remaining personnel of the ambulance left behind at Basra arrived between 8th and 12th April, 1916, and were detained on account of the roads being flooded and the country a swamp. Of the ambulance waggons only one arrived at the front until the date of my departure, 1st June, 1916.

The G.S. waggons were taken over by the S. and T., rendering the ambulance immobile owing to the general shortage.

General rains and storms prevailed during April when the ambulance was in camp at Orah.

The ambulance moved to the right bank of the river at Orah on 20th April, 1916, and eventually advanced up river to Falayah on 3rd May, 1916.

I went up to Kut on H.M.H.S. "Sikkim" and assisted at bringing down the sick and wounded from there after the surrender. A large number of these cases were treated in my ambulance.

15. I wish to make the following suggestions and recommendations:—

- (1) The barges which were towed up the river carrying personnel should have a protecting rail or ledge to prevent people falling overboard. I believe this recommendation was submitted to the authorities early in the war, but nothing was done.
- (2) The river craft, steamers and barges should have proper awnings or protection for wounded, as the leaky awnings and kutcha chitai in the rains were most inadequate.
- (3) The four steamers at Camp Orah in January, 1916, s.s. "Mejdieh," "Blosse Lynch," "Jalnar," "Mosul," could have been used to convey the wounded down stream after the heavy engagements of Sheikh Saad and Hannah, and cleared the hospital camps at Sheikh Saad and Orah; whereas they were used by the staff, which could have encamped in tents on the banks of the river, as they eventually did do, but too late to be of benefit to the wounded and suffering.
- (4) More motor boats and launches for wounded should have been provided so as to go up stream to the A.D.S. and relieve the congestion at this advanced spot as soon as possible.
Small craft would be less conspicuous and not so liable to draw fire.
- (5) Motor ambulances which were presented by Indian chiefs, &c., for the evacuation of Indian wounded in France, should have been sent on to Mesopotamia, where they would have saved many lives during the drier periods of the campaign.
- (5) There appeared to be a want of proper organization in the river transport and supply department, where medical and surgical equipment, comforts, &c., were taken several times up towards the front when addressed for Amara or Sheikh Saad, and seemed to be carried aimlessly up and down the river.
- (6) A properly equipped advanced medical store depot should have been established, well advanced, at any early period, and to have been provided with modern and up-to-date drugs and equipment; whereas the ancient and laborious Indian method of getting modern and adequate supplies and equipment rapidly, on the recommendation of responsible medical men working and experienced at the front, does not seem to have been utilized as thoroughly or as often as it should have been.

15

Spice
Captain J. S. O'Neill I. U. S.

41

Chairman: We have your statement which we will take as your evidence in chief. Certainly.

Insert
pages
marked B

4012

Q A great deal of your Statement covers ground with regard to which evidence has already been given, and confirms that evidence, so that it will not be necessary for us to examine you at length on those points. In the first part of your Statement you give an account of the ambulance which arrived at Marseilles on the 3rd December 1915. Was that ambulance fully up to the necessary standard?
A Yes.

4013

Q Was it a British ambulance or an Indian ambulance?
A An English ambulance.

4014

Q Was it the ambulance for a Brigade?
A Yes, for a Brigade. That was what was originally intended.

4015

Q Under General Younghusband?
A It belonged to the 7th Division

4016

Q Who was in Command?
A General Younghusband in Mesopotamia.

4017

Q He commanded the 7th Division?
A Yes, & General Anderson in France. That

4018

Q That Division left Marseilles without its ambulances. Were you consulted at all with regard to the telegram which General Younghusband sent on that subject.

16

subject.

A No.

2 The result of separating the Division from its ambulance equipment was that the equipment arrived piecemeal, was it not.

A Yes over a considerable period.

4020 Q Were you in charge of the ambulance equipment.

A I was in charge from Marseilles to Bastia.

4021 Q When did you embark at Marseilles.

A I arrived at Marseilles ^{on the 3rd} and I embarked from there on the 14th December. I arrived at Bastia on the 8th January.

4022 Q Then you went up to the front.

A Yes. I embarked on the "Salimi" on the 13th January.

4023 Q This list of officers and men that you took up represents only a portion.

A Yes, only a portion.

4024 Q Without going into details with regard to the weather, had you extraordinarily bad weather.

{ 4025 Q Yes, it was raining practically daily and that very much aggravated the difficulties.

A Yes.

4026 Q Assuming that there had been no bad weather you would still have got a good deal of trouble I suppose from insufficiency of personnel and equipment.

A The difficulty was principally transport.

4027 Q The weather was not the cause of the whole of your difficulty.

A No.

4028 Q You had short equipment and insufficiency

17
 personnel right throughout.
 A Yes, we only had part of the personnel and equipment sent up, but that was due to ~~the~~ ^{there} being no boats to take up the whole lot. The ambulance wagons, mules, & transport cars had to be left behind. ~~The~~ Ambulance wagons had to be left behind because they would not go into the holds. We tipped them up and tried every way. A very essential portion of the ambulance equipment had to be left on the wharf at Marseilles. When we got to Magil Camp up the river we had to leave water carts, animals and everything to be marched up. If there had been river transport that would have been a very important factor in shooting them quickly up to the front. A thing that should be mentioned is that motors were left behind in France. There were no motors at all with the 7th Division, or with any of the Indian Corps going to Mesopotamia. He had five motors for each ambulance, two Ford cars and three others, but we handed those back before we left France. No motors were taken with any of the ambulances that were originally embarked at Marseilles.

He had six horse wagons.

~~Q. Why not? My dog you take no motors?~~

~~A. Because we had not got them.~~

4029 - Sir Nevill Lytton: Were the ambulance wagons too big to put on the ship.

A. The wagons would not go into the holds on the "Georgian", or practically any of the steamers

14

at the wharf at Marseilles on that day. We tried tipping them up, but they would not go into the holds.

4030

Q It was not that there was not room.
A It was because of the size of the holds on the steamers.

4031

Sir Archibald Williamson: Did they try taking the wheels off?

A No.

4032

Q Would they have gone in if they had taken the wheels off.

A They probably would have done so. As a matter of fact the holds were filled up with other things.

4033

Sir Melville Lyttelton: Do you think that there would have been room if the wheels had been taken off?

A They might have got them in, but they said at the time they could not get them in.

4034

Lord Hugh Cecil: What was done was done on the spur of the moment because difficulties arose.

A Yes, it was on the spur of the moment because difficulties arose.

4035

Q It was not from any deliberate plan.

A No.

4036

Chairman: Was General Joughusband in command charge of the division?

A Yes.

4037

Q Where did he join it, - in Egypt.

A I do not remember, but probably in Egypt. I do not think that he had anything to do with the Marseilles business.

4038

Q The casualties were very much heavier than had been anticipated, were they not.

A: Yes,

19

A Yes, we advanced ~~at~~ 1200 yards and had to retire and we naturally had many more casualties than we should otherwise have had.

4039 I suppose we may sum up your troubles by saying they were really due to lack of river transport.

A Yes, lack of river transport.

4040 I personally were you very short of assistance. You had to deal with 452 wounded

A I only had one section. We had to make the men work very hard the whole time, but that often occurred in France. We were in France for fifteen months. We could have easily got through if we had had ^{enough} native carts. But the rain came on and the carts could not move, and naturally, therefore, the only way was by river. If we had had a motor launch we could have managed. do so

4041 I had those who could not walk.

A Yes ^{down} to headquarters in the mud, and get on the steamer there. A certain number got into the carts, two lying & four sitting until all the carts were used up. The next day I brought up the Mine Sweeper and the "Ariel", the motor boat. In the morning we got the remainder of the regimental transport carts. None of these were attached to the ambulance at the time. They had to bring up ammunition and do the ^{ordinary} regimental transport work and everything.

4042 I could a good deal of suffering have been saved if there had been more transport facilities.

a. Yes

43
20
A Yes.

4042 2 And river craft.

A Yes. The place was actually shelled and a few men were hit until we showed the Red flag, and then it stopped. With small motor boats we could have got them all away.

4044 2 When did you reach Raska.

A On the 2nd June.

4045 2 One dhobi was washed overboard from one of the barges, and was drowned I see.

A Yes. On practically every barge that went up there was an iron deck or a deck sloping outwards, and the ordinary native of India with his nailed boots would slip towards the side and go overboard.

There should have been a coping or rail.

4046 2 Did you lose many men in that way.

A We lost one, and practically all the boats lost one or two overboard.

4047 2 Would a rail have prevented the barges from being used for other purposes.

A No, it could easily have been made moveable as is done on the Thames. People were actually standing up, it was packed full.

4048 2 The wonder is that you did not lose more men.

A Sometimes two went overboard, and the currents are very rapid. The men were all told not to stand near the edge.

4049 2 Was the river craft, steamers and barges, sufficient protection from the weather.

A No. The ordinary bamboo matting will not hold the rain at all, and men actually slept

21

on the deck.

4050 2

Do you suggest that more vessels should have been used to convey the wounded down stream.

4051 2

A Yes.

Some were used by the staff, but the state of things was never represented to the staff was it.

A Yes, and they did eventually evacuate. I think that the "Blouse Lynch" was evacuated on the 25th. You will see in my evidence before the Vincent Commission:—

"Meydeh Ligris Corps Headquarters, & 'Blouse Lynch' 7th Division Headquarters, Mosul 3rd Division Headquarters & 'Jalnat', Medical Store ~~boat~~ ^{Depot}."

4052

Q Now Hugh Cecil: the ~~Meydeh~~ ^{Ligris} Corps Headquarters, where were they where?

A On the "Meydeh". All the steamers were used as Headquarters.

4053

Chairman: In (4) you say: "More motor boats and launches for wounded should have been provided so as to ferry the stream to the ^{Blouse Lynch} and relieve the congestion at this advanced spot as soon as possible". Were motor boats and launches working when you left.

A ~~It~~, the only motor boat was the "Aeriel", the other small boats had not arrived when I left. There were tiny launches down at Basra, but they never came up to the front line.

4054

Q You suggest that the motor ambulances provided by the Indian Chiefs should have been sent

22

44

to Mesopotamia

Q Yes.

A They were kept in France.

Q Yes at Boulogne when I left there were about sixty doing nothing all along the Quay. They may have been useful for a big rush. If they had got to Mesopotamia earlier a ~~deal~~^{lot} of difficulty would have been saved, but the difficulty was to get them up.

4056 Q You say: "There appeared to be a want of proper organization in the river transport and supply department where medical and surgical equipment, comforts &c were taken several times up towards the front when addressed for Amara or Sheikh Saad, and seemed to be carried aimlessly up and down the river."

A Yes, we often found in the barges things addressed to a certain place on the river coming up the river twice and not being delivered. There seemed to be a hitch with regard to knowing what was on board the barges and to whom to take it. There was no manifest.

4057 Q You also advocate an advanced medical store being established at Basra.

A Further than Basra.

4058 Q There was a medical store at Basra, was not there

A They had an accumulation of medical stores at Basra, but I do not think there was a regular equipment.

4059 Q It was not a regular recognized medical

store

Shore depot?

A No, they had a collection of all sorts of things. What I say in the Statement is that a properly equipped advanced medical Corps depot should have been established like we had in France so that you could get at once what you wanted. That is founded on the recommendation of men actually up in the firing line ^{with respect to} ~~which is~~ ^{to} what is wanted.

4060 Lord Hugh Cecil: Where should it be.

A At Amara, or where the field ambulances are, to save waiting. A letter sometimes took six weeks from Basra and back. 4061 ^{where were the field ambulances} A In this case at Orak, when the firing was beyond.

4062 Chairman: What you suggest is that the ancient and laborious Indian method of getting adequate supplies and equipment should be done away with.

A Yes.

4063 Q And that a system more resembling that in France should be adopted.

A Yes.

4064 Admiral Sir Cyprian Budge: You say that on the 20th March 1916 H. M. Hospital Ship "Lekkim" arrived at Camp Orak.

A Yes.

4065 " 2. She had accommodation for 150 lying down cases, and ~~it~~ ^{she} was the first time that a hospital ship attempt at a hospital ship for the "Gigors".

Q. Yes
 4066 2. That is one year and four months after we went to Mesopotamia

Q. Yes
 4067 How many sitting cases had she
 A. These were all lying down cases

4068 2. I presume you do not consider that that one hospital ship was sufficient

A. No. That is the start of the thing

4069 2. You did not put additional hospital ships amongst your recommendations

A. I say here "more motor boats than launches"

4070 2. Are you of opinion that there should be a large addition

A. A considerable addition to the number of hospital ships - yes.
 4071 General Sir Deville Lyttelton: We have had rather contradictory evidence about the Army Transport ~~cast~~ ^{cars} cast versus the Ambulance Tonga

A. Yes.

4072 2. General Gorringe who was wounded himself said he was brought back first in an Ambulance Tonga, and then changed to a transport cast with a mattress ^{or} ~~with~~ a certain amount of padding in it, and that where there was no road the cast was superior to the tonga.

A. Yes.

4073 2. He said that on a road the tonga is better than the cast.

A. Yes. The tonga itself is a good deal heavier, and it would be more comfortable if you had got a road. The ordinary cast has no springs at all and it would be very severe travelling on bad roads. Therefore when General Gorringe was brought in, ~~the~~ ^{very} ~~bought~~ ~~motor~~ ~~afterwards~~. Five motor ^{cars} ~~or~~ ^{which} arrived the next day, but the very next day to that he was wounded. They could easily have gone at 30 miles an hour

3
 4 4074 Lord Hugh Cecil: ~~it~~ ^{on a road} On a road, his statement was that

off a road

~~a tonga is better than~~ ~~off a tonga a road a tonga~~

shook violently

It would capsize.

Off a road the light

4075 2 ~~On a road road to carry an A.D. cast is better than a tonga~~

A Certainly

What was the effect of the weather on

4076 General Sir Keirville Lyttelton: ~~It is the impression~~ ~~with the mattresses~~

A After several hours of rain it was not a mattress at all; it was only a bit of calico with a lot of grass at the bottom. It is impossible to keep mattresses unless you have a covering

4077 Sir Archibald Williamson: If you are short of medical officers and equipment what steps do you take; to whom do you apply

A Through the A.D. M.S. for drop or what equipment we want

That is countersigned and goes to the advanced medical ^{store} / depot wherever it happens to be. If they ^{have} the ^{thing} ⁱⁿ stock it is sent, lent if they have not they send for it. They often send for things that do not come at all, ^{when they} ~~they~~ have not got them

4078 2 Some part of your equipment comes from the Military side and some part from the medical ^{side} I understand

A Yes

4079 2 Blankets for example

A From the S and T. Most of ^{these} ~~and these~~ things were organized differently in France, ~~and in Mesopotamia~~. Blankets and first field dressings we got from the Ordnance. In Mesopotamia we got them from the S. ^{and} T. ~~Ordnance~~

4 4080 2 Did you get anything from the Ordnance Department

A Harness and things like that

2 Transport

~~A We get that from the Supply ^{and} Transport~~

4081 2 What about food

A The food comes from the Supply and Transport ^{and the medicine} ~~and the medicine~~ ~~from the medical~~ from the medical side.

4082 2 So there are three sources

A Yes, there always ^{have} been ^{men}

3 2 4083 2 Does it rest with the medical ^{men} to apply for ^{in advance} ~~blankets~~ for all that they ^{are} likely to require ~~them~~

46
 A. Yes; it is usual. I have been on a campaign ^{for} 8 months and I used to order 6 months ahead what was likely to be required and the things ^{have come} by the time they were required.

4084 Q. In Mesopotamia there was not much anticipation of needs
 A. No. he never had had such casualties. When Gallipoli was evacuated enormous numbers of a different type of Turk took part. ~~If a man works out from a small~~ ^{very small} ~~casualties~~ ^{casualties} what he imagines will be required and suddenly there is a totally ~~different~~ change and 10 or 20 times the number of cases come in and there is the effect of the weather added he has ^{sufficient} not equipment to meet the ~~case~~ needs.

4085 Chairman: The men they were fighting against at that time were a different type of men from what General Townshend had had before.

4086 A. Yes, a different type altogether.

Sir Archibald Williamson: You spoke just now as if the medical men were at fault. Does it rest with the medical service to estimate the casualties or with the general?

A. With the general, and he is advised by the A.D.M.S.

4087 Q. Which was the biggest battle you were present at?

A. I was present at the battle of the 21st January. I was right up at the firing line. At the other battles I was working in the ambulances as a specialist in operating surgery.

4088 Q. What was the date?

A. April.

4089 Q. Did you take any part in the estimates as to what would be required in the way of beds, tents, food or medical equipment?

A. That was all done by the A.D.M.S., but as we ran short of dressings and splints and so on, a request was sent in for these things previously to any big engagement.

4090 Q. Your estimate I gather was in most cases short?

A. No, not in ours. It was short previous to our arrival. The only thing we were actually short of ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ my experience was ~~the~~ transport

3
 4091 Q. We have evidence that ^{at} ~~on~~ each occasion ^{at} ~~on~~ there were some things short, and some of them very important sometimes tents

some

sometimes beds, sometimes food and sometimes ^{bandages} ~~tools~~.

not in the latter campaign

4092 2 In every battle

A No ^{Styghy}

Lord ~~Robert~~ Cecil: hp to the 21st January

A. hp to the 21st January, but after that I believe ~~their~~ stores began to arrive and things were altered

4094 Sir Archibald Williamson: A witness here today told us that on the 14th May things were short on board the boats

A I had no thing to do with the boats

4095 2 Do the medical officers not take charge of what is provided for the sick and wounded on the boats

A Yes, they should. Allowance should be made. All the work that I did was on the land. We sent an indent beforehand ~~for~~ stretchers, blankets, splints, drugs and everything with a view to so many casualties coming in

4096 2 Were the estimates made on a sufficiently ample scale before the action and were you short because your ^{requirements} estimates were not supplied, or were the estimates not right

A As far as we were concerned the estimates were thoroughly accurate. You cannot always tell within a few hundreds.

As far as we went the estimates were fairly accurate ~~at least~~

4097 Chairman: What do you mean by "we"

A The field ambulance on the shore

4098 2 Your particular ambulance

A Yes. I can only speak with regard to my own particular field ambulance. The A.D.N.S. advised that an ^{attack} ~~thing~~ would occur and we got extra tents and pitched them and had them ready and estimated the probable casualties and had all the bandages ^{blankets and} and splints and everything like that

4099 Lord ^{Styghy} ~~Robert~~ Cecil There was a very serious shortage if I remember rightly on the 21st up to the 21st

A Yes, and before that. The 21st was the first engagement I was in

4100 2 When you say you make an estimate you mean that you draw from the store close by

A. Yes

4101 2 You do not make an estimate for the purposes of the ^{whole} campaign

A. No. Each man does his own ^{particular job} ^{estimate before} the

4102 2. ~~What was estimated before the action of the 21st January had~~ nothing really to do with the ~~supply of~~ things which were actually there ~~because they had to be brought up the river~~

A. If they had not got them there they had to be brought up. The whole thing goes from the base and ^{supplies are} pushed forward the supplies on the same scale. The whole thing is worked from a general base ~~supply up to the front~~

4103 2 The estimate ^{of that} an officer of a particular ambulance makes is only made a day or two before the actual action I suppose.

A. It maybe a week before

4104 2 But shortly before

4104

behind the firing line and are supposed to move
as the armies move forward or backward
I understand that these things were supplied by
~~these departments of the army to you or and~~
~~required them and returned~~

48
4112

Q They keep them in store in peace time
I When do you acquire ~~these~~ these things.

A When the campaign starts and go on till they
are used up

4113

Q You started up the river without beds

A We took ~~big~~ tents and tarpaulins. If a man
is only in for a few hours you put him
on a mattress on the ground ^{or} on a stretcher.

Any man severely wounded is put on a
stretcher and not moved from that. It is
not like a hospital further down like the
~~substationary~~ ^{stationary} hospital or base hospital or
hospital on the lines of communication ~~where~~
~~they have best beds complete~~

4114

Q Can you give us instances of your asking for
things and not getting them

A There ~~was~~ ^{were} several dressings and drugs and
stretchers which we asked for. We ran short
several times and they had not arrived

4115

Q That was after the 21st January

A All this was after the 21st. That was the
first campaign I attended

4116

Q You did not get them

A They had not arrived. ~~at~~ They apprehended that
that they had ^{bandages}

4117

Q Take bathys for instance; when did you ask
for them

A That must have been in April

4118

Q They had not come

A They were coming up. Stretchers were

4119

the principal things

Q When did you ask for them

A In April

4120

Q When did you get them

A The following month in May

4121

Q There were ample stores ~~of~~ at Basra I understand

A We understood that there were lots of stores at Basra ~~and~~ ^{but} there was not transport to take them up confusion with regard to

4122

Q Was there considerable ~~confusion~~ ^{amongst} the stores

A I have no knowledge of that

4123

Q Had you difficulty with regard to suitable food for the patients

A No

4124

Q We have heard of men with dysentery getting bully beef and some being short of food

A We were with Indian troops. We did not ~~go for~~ ^{give them} bully beef

4125

Q I take it that your ambulance was better equipped and worked better than ~~some~~ ^{some} ~~trains~~ ^{trains}
A Yes. We had ^{the} experience of ~~others~~ ^{others} and we stuck to what we had over and above

4126

Q Some of the ambulances were improvised
A Yes prior to the 21st January they were all improvised

4127

Q When did you leave Mesopotamia

A I left Basra on the 2nd of June

4128

Q Were things much improved

A Yes greatly improved. The last two battles ~~were~~ ^{showed} a considerable ~~advance~~ ^{advance}

4129

Q Had ~~the~~ ^{you} reserves of equipment

A Yes we had extra dressings and drugs and splints and everything like that and any amount of tents. We had a whole lot of ~~extra~~ ^{extra}

4130

tents
Commander you have an ambulance on a certain fixed scale

A Yes

2 Assuming that your anticipation of the casualties is in excess of the capacity of your ambulance then you indent on the nearest store

4131

A Yes. The fixed scale of an ambulance is 100 beds and we have often had 600 or 700 in. It is a thing that expands. Here is a photograph of a field ambulance with tents up to 600 or 700

4132

2 You talk of the ~~inequality~~ ^{of the antiquated} ~~of the antiquated~~ ^{and laborious} system of indenting
A Yes

4133

2 Would you explain the difference between what you condemn and what you ^{want} advocate.

A For instance if you ^{want} to get out anything out of the ^{Ordnance} ~~store~~ you get ^{write the things} ~~everything~~ down in triplicate. That goes down to the Babu who writes in triplicate in longhand. ~~accounts~~. You wait there about half a day. You take it down to section A or B. It may be for ^{saddlery} ~~stomach~~ or some other part of the equipment and often it that is wanted and ^{often it} may not be there at all. You probably get ^{only} a 10th of what you indent and you have wasted a lot of time. There is far too much clerical work. It would be far better to sign one paper and let them send it up and not have triplicating

Clapham

4134

2 Send it up without going yourself
A Send it up with the certificate of the Officer Commanding ^{on paper}

4135

Earl of Donoughmore Is that what is done in France
A & In France you have carbon paper and ^{have} ~~had~~

not to wait while a strip is slowly written in
Loughand as in Mesopotamia

4136
4137
4138
4139
4140
4141
4142
4143
4144

Chairman three times

A three times. ~~He sits there all day~~ I have sat in the office
for a long time while he copied out in Loughand in his
book. That never occurred in France

Q Lord Hugh Cecil: Can a motor ambulance operate in Mesopotamia

A Yes. That (handing a photograph to the Committee) is up at
Camp Arab. On the 8th March if the motor ambulance
had only come up we could have gone at 30 miles an hour
right up the whole of the right bank of the river

Q How far does the mud interfere

A In wet weather it is impossible

Q In dry weather you could use motor ambulances

A Yes

Q Is it true all over this country as far as you know

A Yes, so far as the parts that have come under my notice are concerned
Lower down at Kurna it ^{gets} absolutely flooded. As I came
down nothing was left but a little piece of road. There may
be difficulty there. Our own horse wagons stuck several
times. They started originally in January and got up to
the front in April

Q My point is only ^{is it} ~~the nature of~~ ^{wetness} that stands in the way of using
motor ambulances whether ^{it is} caused by floods or rain
- or are there rocks

A There is not a stone in Mesopotamia. You get irrigation
channels which the men can fill up. When the Tigris
rises they get filled up. It is only the water that will
interfere. The country is absolutely flat

Q Are there any roads at all

A Not on our side. There is one on the other side of the
Euphrates I believe but I have not seen it

Q You are speaking of the front

A Yes

Q There is a road from Kurna up the river

50 A. The troops marched along the road and made a road with pioneer bridges ~~over the different parts~~ and ~~these~~ carts came up

4145 2 You told Sir Archibald Williamson that you applied for medical stores including dressings and bandages to the Supply Department

A. No. to the Advanced Medical Store Depot

4146 2. We have been told that medical stores, dressings, drugs, bandages and the like are all obtained from the Medical Store Depot

4147 A. Yes. Blankets, first field dressings and clothing all that come from the Supply and Transport. In France they used to come from the Ordnance and then the Supply and Transport and then the medical. At the present moment it is put back to the medical. They change it every time. You never know when it is coming from. At the present time I do not know.

the Earl of Donoughmore. One question ^{not a} the medical one which hangs on something you said. You said it took six weeks sometimes to get a letter down to Basra and an answer back

A. Yes

4148 2. One has ~~seen~~ ^{seen} complaints ~~mostly~~ ⁱⁿ the Press ^{of the} Army Post Office. Are these complaints ^{justified} in accordance with your experience

A. Yes. Parcels did not arrive, and letters took a very long time. I came to the conclusion that the real reason was that there was no established ^{boat} ~~posting~~ ^{body}. Sometimes letters have come up on a little boat and it would be said "The letters cannot go; the ~~stuck~~ ^{have} sheep to go ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~that~~". Sometimes they could go and sometimes they had to wait

4149 2. In France there was a proper postal ~~transport~~ service and a proper postal transport

A. Yes

4150 2 There was no attempt at that in Mesopotamia

A. No

4151 Sir Archibald Williamson Did the Chief Medical Officers come round to the ambulances to see that there was ^a sufficient

of supplies

It depends on what you mean by the Chief Medical Officer. The
 A.D.M.S of the Division goes round every ambulance
 practically every day. ~~But~~ If the supplies do not come up
 from the base he can wire and he has wired for the supplies
 He always comes round to see that these are supplies. Colonel
 West White was in charge of the ~~7th Division~~ in the 7th Division
 as
 2 who was in charge ~~as~~ D.M.S of the whole expedition
 a Surgeon General Hathaway. He came up once but he did not
 get ashore; it was too wet

The witness withdrew
 reappeared to 11 o'clock on Thursday the 28th

Instant

Horace William Hill
 Shorthand Writer

Wint