



THE MEDICAL HISTORY OF THE UNIT

BY THE REGISTRAR.

THE medical history of the unit begins on the sixth of October 1916 when it replaced Number Four Canadian General hospital in the administration of Shorncliffe Military Hospital. At that time the capacity of this hospital was about 250 beds, so that only a comparatively few medical officers were required. The Helena Hospital, a contiguous institution, and for officers only, was included in the command and employed an extra officer. The change took place without any difficulty particularly as regards the Medical and surgical departments, but the various forms and ceremonies which had to be observed in the disposal of patients were a positive nightmare to the Registrar's department for the greater part of our occupation. During Number Five's regime the hospital was doubled in size by the addition of several hutments, which however did not seem to make any great difference.

Shorncliffe Military Hospital in addition to its function as a military general hospital also represented the end of a chain ; though perhaps chain is an un-

fortunate word as it represents an ordered continuity, whereas it would have required a superlative imagination to discover any order at all in the peregrinations of patients who eventually arrived at Shorncliffe. At all events it was supposed to be the final hospital and general delivery from the Army of all unfortunates who had made the round of most of the hospitals and convalescent homes in the command. It may have been possible to have got rid of these patients before they were sent to Shorncliffe but it wasn't done. It was also quite possible to send these patients out on another trip, but being reasonably conscientious we tried to avoid it.

As a consequence of accumulating all these derelicts it was necessary to dispose of them, and this was done by the process o' boarding. Three of our own medical officers constituted the permanent board of the hospital and they were constantly employed. They readily developed a disciplinary manner and got the work done. After the Board's labours the papers were turned