

THE REGISTRAR'S OFFICE

The Registrar of the Hospital is the Official Keeper of all records concerning patients. He controls the admission of patients, their disposition and evacuation, and stands as the representative of the Officer Commanding in communication with the Higher Medical Authorities on points relating to Hospital population. It is from his office that official returns and figures affecting patients are issued. He is the custodian of all material submitted by Medical Officers in relation to patients' wounds or illness. It is his files and records that will be searched through in the future when any facts are required concerning the hospital career of any of the thousands of soldiers who have been treated in our wards. His duties are thus comprehensive and important, requiring for their successful discharge careful organization and constant supervision. It is in the Registrar's Office that the activities of the night are as urgent as those of the day, a night and a day staff being essential to the carrying on of his functions. Visit his Office at any time in the twenty-four hours and the click and clatter of typewriters will tell of the compilation of returns, the preparation of lists or the formulation of an answer to official inquiry. The furniture of the Office itself reveals the import and the functions carried on within the four walls which contain it. It all bears witness to its purpose as a shrine of records. There are long official tables covered with an array of baskets promoting the classification of documents; desks supporting pigeon-holed structures; typewriting machines surrounded by a litter of statements and figure-covered papers, and long, upright cabinets for filing patients' Case Cards. The Office, in fact, is a veritable Clearing House for activity. This is its usual condition, but if one is to have a picture of it and its staff at their best, it is necessary to see it during the admission to Hospital of a Convoy of patients.

Some time prior to the arrival of patients at Hospital, the Registrar receives notification that a Convoy of wounded and sick may be expected. The message further indicates the total number and the proportions of stretcher and walking cases. Sometimes one, sometimes the other class predominates. At varying intervals of time after notification is received, the bugle sounds "Convoy Call," which to the wise is "word sufficient." At the same moment the Ambulance Train bearing the Convoy may be heard to reach the Railway Siding just at Hospital limits. Men on duty for stretcher-bearing move hurriedly to the scene of their labours. Lights are switched on in the Hut through which all patients pass in process of admission; the whirr of the Ambulances is heard, and if it be night their broad lights play on roads and buildings. The magic "Convoy Call" has awakened to duty a large proportion of our staff, and set the Hospital community astir with activity and interest.

The hour at which Convoys arrive are fixed by circumstances beyond our control. It may be high noon or midnight: in the hours of dawn or twilight. There may be one Convoy a day, or several. It is common, however, for them to arrive at night, thus converting a time of rest into a time of work.

The process of admitting a Convoy involves no little organization of work, for every stretcher-case is carried from the Ambulance to Admission Hut, and later to the ward in which he is to receive treatment; while walking cases are taken to the bath-houses, issued with hospital clothes, and then conducted to their wards. For Convoy purposes the men of the unit are divided into two sections, equal in strength, which take duty for alternate Convoys. This secures for every man an unbroken sleep every other night.

The distance from the Railway Siding to our Hospital is a few hundred yards