

by robbing the gutters and drain installations from fascist homes in the neighborhood. The owners usually disappear before the Army moves in. We have to be fast in our stealing before the native population returns because that is the first place they go for their pillaging. The bigshot racketeer has stolen from them for so long, they feel they are entitled to anything they

can find. Of course, we still feel a little like the conquering army and take what we need, although many people are getting soft about the Italians and think we should go easy on them. I don't forget that just a little over a year ago they were shooting at us with an aim to kill."

## 26

Five months after the 38th set up its tents at Montecatini the hospital was entering its final days at that location. It had arrived there November 10; it would close its operations officially, the Daily Bulletin of April 20, 1945, would record, "at 0930 hours." Major Snyder was administrative officer of the day and Captain Harney was medical officer of the day. Alternates were Lieutenant Brower and Captain Payne.

During the last day of operation, the Bulletin would further disclose, sixteen patients were admitted and 361 dispositions were made to clear completely the roster of patients.

The Bulletin that day was a short one. It listed only the promotions of three officers and summarized in one paragraph news of the action on the Eastern Front. Two nurses, Second Lieutenants Sara J. Green and Marie A. Tetzlaff, three days earlier had been promoted to first lieutenant. "Announcement is also made," said the Bulletin, "of the promotion to Major of Captain Stanton W. Pickens, 170th Evacuation Hospital, a former member of this command."

The *News in Brief* summary revealed:

"Moscow has finally announced the opening of the great Russian offensive across the Oder and reports that the Red Army are pushing the Germans back in a mighty drive toward Berlin. The Germans say that the Russians are advancing on a 40-mile front and have made a crossing of the river where they are getting non-stop reinforcements across the Oder. At several points the Russians are reported a little more than 18 miles from the outskirts of Berlin. The Russians who crossed the Neiser River have captured three towns, one about 50 miles from Dresden."

Next day's Bulletin—of Saturday, April 21, 1945—had but the one announcement:

"THE HOSPITAL WAS MOVED FROM ITS LO-

CATION AT MONTECATINI TERME, ITALY, TO A NEW SITE APPROXIMATELY 1 KILOMETER SOUTH OF MARZABOTTO, ITALY—COORDINATES, L772311.

"DISTANCE TRAVELED FROM OLD LOCATION: APPROXIMATELY 55 MILES.

"THE HOSPITAL WAS ERECTED IN THE NEW LOCATION AND READY TO RECEIVE PATIENTS BY 2400 HOURS."

The Bulletin of April 22 also was terse. It reported: "THE HOSPITAL OFFICIALLY OPENED AT 0100 HOURS.

One other announcement warned:

"All personnel are instructed to remain within the camp limits, as the areas immediately adjacent to the hospital have not been checked for mines. The area between the eastern border of the camp and the creek is expected to be heavily mined."

The warning was emphasized in the Bulletin of Monday, April 22:

"The surrounding area is heavily mined and information from G-2 is that there are many booby traps scattered about. All personnel are again warned!! Until further notice, the area east of the east water tower is out of bounds."

Lieutenant Colonel W. H. Pennington in that Bulletin declared that "it is very gratifying to see the results of hard work and interest on the part of all members of the command during the move and erection of the hospital. The Commanding Officer takes this means of thanking each and every one who has labored to make the rapid move possible."

Colonel Pennington announced that he had welcomed into the 38th the following officers, nurses, and enlisted men:

Captain John C. Todd, assigned to the 38th from the



A portion of the Montecatini race track provides a street between the 38th's tents. The hospital was stationed at Montecatini following the period at Pisa. It moved from here on April 21, 1945, to Marzabotto.

168th Infantry Regiment. Captain Todd, from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, was assigned to the Dental Service as a replacement for Captain Jack Raymer.

The following personnel were attached for temporary duty from the Second Auxiliary Surgical Group:

*General Surgical Team 21-1*

Captain Edgar H. Keys, MC  
 Captain Francis W. Chamberlain, MC  
 1st Lt. Eunishis H. Sorenger, ANC  
 2nd Lt. Madelyn N. Parks, ANC  
 Tec 4 Dale J. Clayton, MD  
 Tec 3 Tavner E. Henry, MD

*Neuro-Surgical Team (15th Evac)*

Captain Donald Work, MC  
 Captain Gourand, MC  
 1st Lt. Blanche Bird, ANC  
 2nd Lt. Dorothy Coveny, ANC  
 Tec David Morrison, MD

*General Surgical Team 37-3*

Major Arthur A. Weinberg, MC  
 Captain Morris J. Bloom, MC  
 2nd Lt. Eva L. Ross, ANC  
 2nd Lt. Marcia N. Webb, ANC  
 Tec 4 John J. Gunn, MD  
 Tec 5 Vernon Johnson, MD

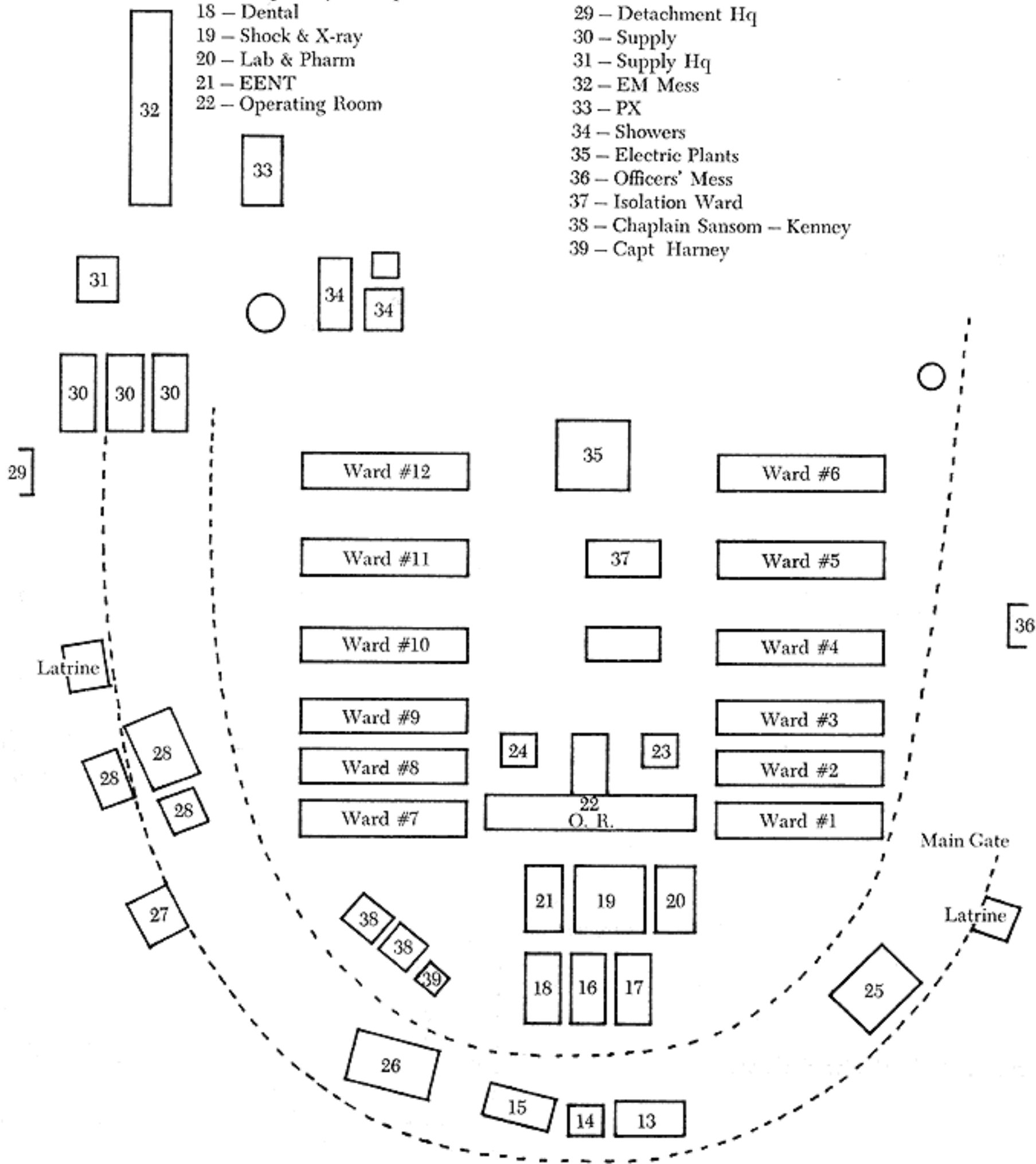
The newly located hospital on this day listed 92 patients under treatment and 670 vacant beds. The

next day the patient roll had almost doubled, to 175. The next two days it went to 277 and 318. Items in the Daily Bulletin's *News in Brief* that day—April 26—in concise form revealed:

"Marshals Zhukov and Koniev have joined up to the northwest of Berlin and the city is now completely surrounded. This dramatic news came swiftly behind the Moscow announcement that a link-up had been made south of the city earlier in the day, trapping thousands of Germans between the rivers Spree and Oder. Reports from within Berlin by correspondents say that the fires inside the city are so intense that the heavy rains that have been falling for the last couple of days are hardly noticeable to the troops bitterly fighting inside the capital. The Nazis continue to say that Hitler is still in the capital but hourly his chances of escape lessen. . . . In Bavaria, American Third Army troops were last reported within 18 miles of the Austrian frontier. Other American forces driving down the Danube are about 55 miles from Munich. In the north, British troops are fighting in Bremen and to the west, Canadian troops were last reported within 4 miles of the naval base of Emden. . . . RAF Lancasters yesterday dropped 6-ton bombs in Hitler's Berchtesgaden home. They also bombed Hitler's mountain refuge some 5 miles away. American bombers attacked rail targets near Berchtesgaden and more than 300 other American

- 1 Thru 12 – Wards
- 13 – Gen Hq
- 14 – CO's Office
- 15 – Registrar & Evacuation
- 16 – Receiving
- 17 – Dispensary – Prop Exch.
- 18 – Dental
- 19 – Shock & X-ray
- 20 – Lab & Pharm
- 21 – EENT
- 22 – Operating Room

- 23 – Medical Hq
- 24 – Surgical Hq
- 25 – American Red Cross
- 26 – Chapel
- 27 – Bakery
- 28 – Patients Mess
- 29 – Detachment Hq
- 30 – Supply
- 31 – Supply Hq
- 32 – EM Mess
- 33 – PX
- 34 – Showers
- 35 – Electric Plants
- 36 – Officers' Mess
- 37 – Isolation Ward
- 38 – Chaplain Sansom – Kenney
- 39 – Capt Harney



Layout of the Hospital Area at Montecatini. The curved broken lines indicate the race track.

heavies bombed the Skoda arms plant in Czechoslovakia. Last night, RAF bombers attacked Kiel and an oil storage depot in Norway. . . . Both Fifth and Eighth Army troops are sweeping north beyond the river Po. Fifth Army troops are near Mantur, 10 miles beyond the river. Thousands of more prisoners have been taken. . . . About 250 Super-Forts today bombed airfields in Japan. In Burma, British and Indian troops advancing down from Meiktila have captured the important base of Toungoo. Their advance continues. The capture of Toungoo follows an advance thru the jungles of more than 160 miles in 21 days during which these troops have killed nearly 5,000 Japanese. . . . The announcement has been made in Washington of the promotion of General George Patton to 4-star rank for his brilliant offensive operations in Germany."

On the last day of April, a little more than a week after it had been established at Marzabotto, the hospital was again on the move. The Daily Bulletin of April 30, 1945, reported:

"THE HOSPITAL WAS MOVED FROM ITS LOCATION AT APPROXIMATELY 1 KILOMETER SOUTH OF MARZABOTTO, ITALY, TO A NEW SITE APPROXIMATELY 3 KILOMETERS SOUTHEAST OF FIDENZA, ITALY —COORDINATES, P918923.

"DISTANCE TRAVELED FROM OLD LOCATION: APPROXIMATELY 95 MILES.

"THE HOSPITAL WAS ERECTED IN THE NEW LOCATION AND READY TO RECEIVE PATIENTS BY 2000 HOURS."

The next day, May 1, the Bulletin reported: Number of patients, 1; admissions, 1; vacant beds, 199. *News in Brief*, in the May 2 Bulletin, included: "The German Radio announced last night that Hitler died yesterday in his Chancellory in Berlin. It said that Hitler had appointed as his successor, Grand Admiral Doenitz, Commander and Chief of the German Navy since 1943. Doenitz then broadcast a message revealing that Germany would fight on. . . . The Russians have cleared two districts in the center of Berlin as well as another hundred blocks of buildings. They are nearing the Tiergarten."

The principal announcement in the Daily Bulletin of May 3 reported the presentation of the Bronze Star Medal "to Major William R. Pitts, a member of this command." The citation declared:

WILLIAM R. PITTS, (0468119), Major, Medical Corps, United States Army. For meritorious services in support of combat operations, from November 1942 to March 1945, in North Africa and Italy. Serving as Assistant Chief of the Surgical Service and as neurological surgeon for an evacuation hospital, Major PITTS, in addition to performing a large number of



In boots, sweater, and scarf knotted turbanlike, Lieutenant Sara Moran stands in tent doorway.

general surgical operations, has operated on more than 118 patients with brain injuries. The extremely low mortality rate incident to these operations was achieved as a result of his professional skill, attention to detail and close supervision of all cases. Normally the only neurological surgeon in the hospital, Major PITTS worked long hours without relief in a manner which provided an inspiration to his associates and reflects the finest traditions of the Medical Corps. Entered military service from Charlotte, North Carolina."

The big news of that day's *News in Brief* in the Bulletin, however, was the announcement under "FINALE:"

"All enemy land, sea and air forces in Italy have surrendered unconditionally to Field Marshal Alexander. Nearly a million men are involved. The terms signed on Sunday at the Royal Palace in Caserta in the presence of Alexander and his staff with a representative of the Russian government present, called for the cessation of hostilities at 12 noon GMT yesterday in Northern Italy and in Western Austria. President Truman has sent a special message to the troops of the Allied Armies in Italy in which he praised the gallant forces and said that this will be very interesting news to the Japanese, interesting indeed. Mr. Churchill, giving the news to the Commons last night, said

this surrender brought to a conclusion the work of as gallant an Allied Army as ever marched."

The news from the Eastern Front, as reported in the same issue of the Bulletin, was equally cheering:

"German resistance in Berlin ended yesterday afternoon after a house-to-house battle lasting just over a week. The Commander of the garrison was among the 70,000 Germans taken prisoner yesterday. Another 80,000 Germans have been killed and more than 120,000 captured southeast of Berlin where the enemy pocket has been wiped out."

The final item in the day's *News in Brief* was dramatic:

"Moscow says one of the prisoners taken in Berlin was the German radio commentator Fritsche. They say Fritsche declared that both Hitler and Goebbels had died by their own hands."

By May 7 the number of patients in the hospital, which was then ending its first week at Fidenza, had increased to 368, of which 31 were new admissions. Ten wards were in operation. No hospital news of general interest was reported. But on the over-page the *News in Brief* continued to be lively and of significance. Among the items:

"Admiral Doenitz has issued an order to U-Boats to cease hostilities and return to base. He told U-boat men that the continuation of the struggle is impossible.

"A broadcast declaration by Mr. Churchill announcing the end of the war in Europe is likely to begin the next few days. It is expected to give the news of Germany's unconditional surrender to Great Britain, the United States and Russia. There will be similar announcements from Washington and Moscow at the same time. On the night of V-E Day, the King will broadcast at 1900 hours G.M.T."

And the next day, May 8, the Daily Bulletin on its first page carried the single announcement, under "Chaplain's Notice," that "A service, giving thanks to God for V-E Day, will be held in the chapel at 1600 hours today."

But the over-page was devoted to a tremendously significant announcement. Set in double-spaced lines across the page in a square framed top, sides, and bottom with the words "V-E DAY," was the welcomed message:

"Today is Victory in Europe Day. The official announcement will be broadcast by the leaders of all the major powers today at 1300 hours GMT. The King of England will broadcast to his people at 1900 hours. The King has sent his congratulations to General Eisenhower on the success of the Allied Armies. First news of Germany's capitulation came from an agency correspondent yesterday afternoon. It said the surrender was made at 0241 hours GMT yesterday in the school-

house at Rheims, General Eisenhower's Headquarters. The surrender was signed for Germany by Col. General Gustav Jodl, new chief of staff of the German Army. Lt. General Smith signed for General Eisenhower and Major General Susladatov signed for Russia. The Germans were repeatedly asked if they understood the significance of the terms. They replied, 'Yes,' and said they would be carried out by Germany. The Germans in Prague and Norway have also agreed to the terms of unconditional surrender."

Below this announcement, under "FAR EAST," was the four-line report:

"American Super-Fortresses have made their 18th attack on the southern island of Japan. American carrier-planes have again attacked airfields on an island off Okinawa. In Borneo, Allied warplanes are operating from the airfield captured by Australian troops on Tarikan Island."

The next day, Wednesday, May 9, the Daily Bulletin in the *News in Brief* summary reported:

"The end of the war in Europe was celebrated throughout the Allied Nations yesterday with great rejoicing, tempered only by the statements of the Allied leaders that Japan still remained to be subdued. Although the official end of the war was timed to take place at one minute past midnight last night, an earlier announcement had been made by Supreme Headquarters that a cease-fire had been given early on Monday. It has now been confirmed that the final terms of surrender were signed early Monday morning at General Eisenhower's Headquarters in Rheims.

"At home there was no let-up in the war production and no holiday was declared in any of the cities. Many of the larger cities report that the celebration was confined to a short period on Monday night when the news was first released in the States. New York reports that the streets around Times Square were jammed thruout Monday night with the celebrators but that the curfew which was not lifted limited the hour of the celebration and sent most pleasure-seekers home early in the evening."

On May 26, less than a month after it had been established at Fidenza on the last day of April, the 38th moved again. The Daily Bulletin recorded the change in location:

THE HOSPITAL LOCATED 3 KILOMETERS SE OF FIDENZA, ITALY, CLOSED AT 0800 HOURS AND OPENED AT 0800 HOURS AT SALSOMAGGIORE, ITALY.

On the day of the moving the hospital listed 154 patients, 14 admissions, 40 dispositions, 206 vacant beds and seven wards in operation. The largest group of patients during the stay at Fidenza had been 507 on May 11.