

On May 31 and June 1, 1945, forty enlisted personnel were transferred from the 38th and twenty-two were received from other units of the medical service in anticipation of the forthcoming disposition of the organization.

The Daily Bulletin of Friday, June 1, listed 135 patients, with 13 admissions, 17 dispositions, 140 vacant beds, and 31 wards in operation.

"Within the next few days," the Bulletin noted, "there will be several showdown inspections for all officers, nurses and enlisted men. The purpose of these inspections is to check for all shortages and overages of G.I. clothing and equipment, preparatory to any future movement of the unit. Complete cooperation of all individuals is expected and any instances of evasion or disobedience of these instructions will be dealt with promptly and severely."

That same day the transfers were announced:

"The following enlisted men were transferred yesterday to the 171st Evacuation Hospital:

"Tec 5 William C. Bercaw, Tec 5 Harry D. Coder, Pfc William Elkin, Tec 5 Edward L. Evenson, Tec 4 Frederick Federspiel, Tec 5 Delbert P. Jones, Pfc John L. McMahon, Pfc Joseph E. Mederos, Cpl Joseph Pajak, Pvt Steve J. Pardikes, Cpl John J. Piwowarski, Tec 5 George R. Porter, Tec 5 Walter A. Rex, Tec 4 Gardner C. Sellers, Pfc Milton J. Smoliar, Pfc Melvin R. Smith, Tec 5 Howard J. Spry, Tec 5 Theodore Stack, Tec 5 John A. Stefanchik, Pfc Roman B. Golankiewicz, and Tec 5 George W. Brannon.

"The following enlisted man was transferred yesterday to the 163rd Medical Battalion:

"Pvt Tracy G. Akers.

"The following enlisted men are transferred to the 38th Evacuation Hospital from the 171st Evacuation Hospital:

"Tec 3 Louis A. Anderson, Pfc Robert R. Beamer, Jr., Tec 4 Alfred L. Blackler, Pfc H. H. Brandenstein, Pfc Patrick Camderlengo, Tec 5 Ivan W. Fuoua, Jr., Tec 5 Leonard C. Kimble, Pfc Ferinin Martinez, Tec 4 Eugene McClain, Tec 5 Dewey J. Nunez, Cpl Ireneo M. Ortego, Sgt. Anthony C. Pisa, Tec 5 Noah W. Ragsdale, Pfc Herman W. Ripkoski, Tec 5 Henry S. Roy, S/Sgt Maurice J. Rosen, S/Sgt Simon Schultz, Tec 4 Frank

N. Semeraro, Pfc Jasper Sexton, Pfc Gordon C. Swenson, and Tec 5 William Young.

"The following enlisted man is transferred to the 38th Evacuation Hospital from the 163rd Medical Battalion:

"Pfc Marcus B. King, Jr.

"The following enlisted men are transferred to the 7th Replacement Depot and will leave tomorrow, 2 June, 1945:

"Pfc Charles L. Ogle, Pfc Harry W. Coats, Pvt Willard G. Riano, Pfc Daniel J. Trivison, Tec 5 James L. Ambrose, Pvt Paul E. J. Cook, Pfc Charles L. Neubauer, Tec 5 Michael Angarano, Tec 5 Joseph D. Dubendorfer, Tec 5 Paul W. Edger, Cpl Robert G. Folmar, Pfc Harold L. Galusha, Tec 4 Leroy M. Goodyear, Tec 5 William E. Griswold, Tec 5 Alfred G. Hafner, Pfc Helke A. McCoughin, Pvt Jack L. Shobert, and Pvt Donald E. Waring."

Closing down operations began June 1. The Bulletin announced:

"Within the next few days, there will be several show-down inspections for all officers, nurses and enlisted men. The purpose of these inspections is to check for all shortages of G.I. clothing and equipment, preparatory to any future movement of the unit. Complete cooperation of all individuals is expected and any instances of evasion or disobedience of these instructions will be dealt with promptly and severely.

"Officers', nurses', and enlisted men's lists, which will be distributed, are to be checked by all personnel to see that they are correct. *All* equipment and clothing listed *will be* in the possession of each individual, and any excess will be turned in."

The June 4 Bulletin had the announcement:

"Any individual *not* desiring to be returned to the United States will report to the adjutant today."

Three days later, further reflecting the preparations for closing, the Bulletin announced:

"There will be an 'odds-and-ends' clearance sale in the PX at 1300 hours today, for unit personnel. First come, first served!"

The next day there was another:

"All kerosene stoves will be turned in at Supply Headquarters, regardless of where or how obtained."

June 10 the Bulletin revealed plans for the subsequent preparation of a history of the unit. "Pictures of the hospital are needed for the annual history," it declared. "The Commanding Officer would be grateful for any pictures of the hospital installations at Montecatini, Marzabotto, Fidenza, or Salsomaggiore. Anyone having pictures and wishing to donate them please leave them with adjutant."

In the Bulletin two days later a more insistent notice ordered the turning in of GI equipment:

"When this unit moves to a redeployment area, all hospital equipment must be turned in. In order to assess our shortages and overages, a *final* count of all GI equipment must be determined. From time to time, announcements will be made that certain items will be turned in. This means that *all* items of this class, whatever the source or the method of procurement, will be turned in to the supply department. *No variation of this order will be tolerated.* Any officer or nurse retaining GI equipment after it is ordered turned in will be subject to disciplinary action and NCO's will be automatically reduced to privates. Individuals will be held responsible for equipment in their rooms."

This notice, word for word, was repeated in the next two issues of the Bulletin and on June 14 the first list of items to be turned in was carried. June 15 the Bulletin announced further:

"Effective this date, all enlisted men will carry a permanent pass which will be good in Salsomaggiore only. Curfew in Salsomaggiore is 2400 hours and all enlisted personnel will be off the streets at that time. While on pass all members of this organization will be in proper uniform. Passes will be issued in Detachment Headquarters this afternoon."

Colonel Pennington announced in the June 17 Bulletin:

"General Martin will be here at 1600 hours today. All departments of the hospital will be thoroughly policed and military courtesy will be strictly observed."

Warning not to discuss future movements of the 38th with civilians or personnel unauthorized to possess such information was published in the Bulletin of June 23, nor, said the announcement, could mention of any future movements be made "in any correspondence to friends and relatives in the United States or elsewhere."

The June 29 issue of the Daily Bulletin announced: **THE HOSPITAL OFFICIALLY CLOSED AT 1200 HOURS, 28 JUNE 1945.**

The final Status of the Hospital report that day, with Captain Todd as officer of the day and Lieutenant Brower as alternate, revealed:

"Number of patients, 0; admissions, 1; dispositions 20; vacant beds, 0; wards in operation, 0."

The Daily Bulletin during the following weeks was



This snapshot of Major George Snyder armed with his shooting iron explains why he was called by his 38th comrades "the sheriff."

devoted in the main to notices concerned with the turning in of various types of Army equipment. On July 1 the Bulletin emphasized the necessity of compliance:

"These instructions are repeated for all concerned. Government property which is not authorized for issue to individuals will be turned in to Supply immediately. GI clothing or equipment which is privately owned by officers and nurses may be taken away or turned in. Under no circumstances will it be left or discarded. Individuals occupying rooms are responsible that no property is left in them. This is an official order and will be obeyed by all personnel."

The order for moving from Salsomaggiore was posted July 2. Under MOVEMENT SCHEDULE it said:

"All personnel will move from this location tomorrow morning, 3 July.

"Transportation for movement will be here by 0700 hours, 3 July.

"Immediately after breakfast, enlisted men will deposit their baggage at the main entrance to the building. The Detachment Commander will designate the vehicles in which the enlisted men will ride.

"Officers and nurses will leave in 4 buses from the vicinity of the side gate at 0800 hours. Major Crawford will be in charge of the officers' bus; Major Boyd, Major Calder and Captain Wright will be in charge of the 3 nurses' buses. Rosters will be on the officers' bulletin board indicating which bus the officers and nurses will ride. It is necessary that you ride in the bus to which you are assigned. Hand luggage may be carried on the bus with you.

"A luggage detail will go to the officers' and nurses'



Moving day again. Lieutenant Lela Russell, awaiting her transportation, is seated behind Lieutenant Bessie Fullbright's luggage, ready for the departure of the 38th to a new location.

quarters between 1800 and 1900 hours this evening to carry down any luggage which may be ready at that time. Other luggage will be carried down by the owners tomorrow morning before 0730 hours. All officers' and nurses' luggage will be loaded on one truck at the side entrance of the floor beneath the officer-nurse quarters. Nurses' luggage will be loaded *first* since it is to be unloaded last at a separate point.

"Officer-nurse buses will not travel in the main convoy and must take off by 0800 hours.

"C" rations will be aboard the vehicles. No water will be available except from your own canteens.

"Breakfast tomorrow morning will be served as follows:

"Enlisted men: 0545  
Officers and nurses: 0630."

On July 5 that day's issue of the Official Bulletin of the Florence Redeployment Training Area appeared in the records of the 38th. That was Number 30 of that publication and the items published in it, its masthead proclaimed, were "Official Orders of this Headquarters." It was signed by George W. Fair, AGD, adjutant general, "by command of Brigadier General George W. Fair."

Interestingly, and further anticipating the imminent disbanding of the unit, the Official Bulletin of the Florence Redeployment Training Area of the Fifth

Army noted on July 5 that the Area's new telephone number, effective the day before, was LIQUIDATE 1811.

July 6 the 38th's Daily Bulletin announced that the regular professional and administrative officer of the day rosters were being discontinued. It added:

"An 'Officer of the Day' roster is hereby placed in effect. The tour of duty will be from 1100 hours to 1100 hours. The Officer of the Day will be responsible for handling cases of illness at other than regular Dispensary hours, and will handle such administrative matters as may arise in the absence of the Commanding Officer and his Staff. He will inspect the Guard at intervals during his tour of duty. The Officer of the Day will remain in the camp area during his tour of duty."

The single item in the Daily Bulletin of July 10, signed by Captain Snell by order of Lieutenant Colonel Pennington, announced that "All Coke bottles will be returned to the empty tent near the showers as soon as possible."

On July 12 the 38th headquarters received from the Fifth Army headquarters, office of the Surgeon, a letter dated July 10 from Brigadier General J. I. Martin, Fifth Army surgeon. It was addressed to members of the Fifth Army Medical Service. General Martin wrote:

"Two months have gone swiftly by since the resounding victory of our armed might over the enemy in Europe. In that brief interval, the military destinies of all of you have been reshaped and the part you will take in our nation's continuing battle against the forces of evil aggression has become clear. Some of you will carry the fight to the enemy in the Pacific; some will support the effort from the continental United States; some will be separated from the service and deservedly return to your homes and families.

"Now also, I have been ordered from Fifth Army for a new assignment. It is difficult to put into words the emotions which I feel upon this leavetaking. For anyone who has watched this medical service of ours develop from its formative stages in the early planned days of North Africa, and has seen it mature into the magnificent organization that functioned so well throughout the twenty hard months of the Italian campaign, such a leavetaking necessarily must fill the heart with sadness.

"But I go secure in the knowledge that those of you I leave behind will continue to carry high the standards of medical service established under such duress in the past, and that those of you who will accompany me toward our new goal will let Fifth Army's record serve you, as it will me, as a guiding light toward future accomplishment. For the superb spirit of cooperation and devotion to duty you have evidenced, I offer you my deeply heartfelt thanks. I shall be everlastingly proud of you. Good-bye, good luck, and may God bless you all."

That same day, July 10, the 38th's Daily Bulletin, listing Major Crawford and Major Rogers as officer of the day and alternate, respectively, had but one notation:

"All Coke bottles will be returned to the empty tent near the showers as soon as possible."

The Daily Bulletin of July 13, however, contained detailed instructions relating to the return of military personnel to the United States. "The objective of return to the U.S." was stated:

"a. There are two principal purposes for moving units to the United States for redeployment: first, to permit the major command to which the unit will be assigned in the United States an opportunity to prepare and recondition the unit for further service; and second, to permit the recuperation, rehabilitation and recovery of personnel of the unit.

"b. It is essential, particularly in overseas commands, that unit commanders and personnel be fully informed regarding both purposes. In this connection all personnel of such units must be informed that:

"(1) The War Department will authorize their being ordered, at Government expense, to travel to their homes or other designated place in the United States for a period of recuperation (not to exceed thirty [30] days), except when such action is precluded by military necessity.

"(2) Movement of individuals (except personnel in AAF flight and air echelons moving by air) to their homes, or other points chosen for period of recuperation, will be made through reception stations in order that transportation may be planned and utilized in such manner as to secure proper rail accommodations for all personnel."

Further recognition of the work of the 38th Evacuation Hospital was reported in the Daily Bulletin's issue of July 20, 1945—Volume IV Number 201—in an extract of General Orders No. 89 Headquarters Fifth Army 17 July, which revealed:

"The 38th Evacuation Hospital has been awarded the 'Meritorious Service Unit Plaque' for superior performance of duty in the accomplishment of exceptionally difficult tasks from 1 March to 30 April 1945, in Italy.

"All personnel in the unit are entitled to wear the Meritorious Service Unit Insignia as long as they are assigned or attached to the unit.

"The Insignia, a two-inch square of olive drab cloth with a yellow laurel wreath, will be worn centered on the outside half of the right sleeve of the service coat and shirt, with the points of the laurel wreath up, the lower edge of the insignia 4 inches above the end of the sleeve. Insignia will be obtained and distributed as soon as possible."

Not a word was in the Daily Bulletin of July 24 signed by Captain Snell as adjutant by order of Lieu-



Lieutenant Hallie Almond of Charlotte caught laughing, with Captain Perry, evidently because she appears to be posing as the unit's chief nurse.

tenant Colonel Pennington, except the listing of Captain Wright as officer of the day and Captain Collins as alternate. The same was true of next day's Bulletin, except that Captain Collins was officer of the day and Captain Gay was alternate and announcement was made of a Protestant service that evening at seven o'clock at the Baptist Church in Florence. The next day the Bulletin announced the "promotion of Mr. Walter H. King to chief warrant officer, effective 18 July." That same day Captain Gay was the last of the 38th's officers from Charlotte to serve as officer of the day. Captain Bard was alternate. Three days later the Bulletin announced the promotion of Second Lieutenant Elizabeth Closer to be first lieutenant, effective July 25. August 1 the Bulletin again was blank. Major Crawford was officer of the day and Major Rogers was alternate. The August 3 Bulletin also reported nothing happening in the unit. Captain Letterese and Major Yankauer were officer of the day and alternate. The next day's Bulletin was the same, except that Major Yankauer was the officer of the day and Captain Pugh was alternate. Sunday, August 5, with Captain Pugh and Captain Doubilet on duty as officer of the day and alternate, and Monday, with Captain Doubilet and Captain Nowacki in those roles, passed with no activity reported. The last issue of the 38th's Daily Bulletin to be preserved in the unit's collection of materials from which its members hoped to evolve its history was that of Tuesday, August 7, 1945. It was Volume IV, Number 218. It offers no eloquent valedictory. It contains only the OD roster, "By order of Lieutenant Colonel Pennington" and signed by Captain E. M. Snell, adjutant, with Captain Nowacki officer of the day and Captain McGrath alternate.