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MEDICAL DEPARTMENT REPORT

231st Station Hospital
APO 598

Comprising a History of the Organization
from 1 January 1945 to 8 May 1945 (V-E Day) and
a Supplement, to 30 June 1945

1945 1st

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231ST STATION HOSPITAL

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT REPORT

1 January 1945 to 8 May (V-E Day)
With Supplement to Date of Redeployment

1. Introduction: a. The problems of operating the hospital did not change radically, during the period under review, from what they had been during the previous year, except in two respects:

(1) From the first of the year until 8 April 1945 the patient census was above the T/O strength for the staff and equipment of this hospital and hospital plant. This organization was activated as a 750-bed hospital. From its original strength cuts were made twice in strength of staff. Yet, from 1 January 1945 until 20 March 1945, the patient strength never fell below 1,000. Not until 8 April 1945 did it reach the assigned 750-bed strength. This fact occasioned a great strain on the personnel and equipment of the organization, which required ingenuity, improvisation and plain hard work to overcome.

(2) Although discipline remained good, personnel began to show the psychological strain of continued overseas service. By a liberal pass and leave policy, and repeated instruction in prevention of venereal disease, the AWOL and VD rates of the hospital staff were kept at zero. Another measure adopted to raise morale was the expansion of entertainment and recreation services as outlined below in this report.

b. A detachment of German prisoners of war was stationed on this post on 28 April 1945. An enclosure had been fenced in, but all work in providing shelter was done by the Germans themselves. They were assigned to duty performing manual labor in the kitchens and as orderlies. A detail of POWs was set to surfacing the roofs of the Nissen hut buildings on the post with tar.

c. During this period, 20 enlisted men were transferred to combat forces in addition to those who had already been transferred in 1944. They were replaced by Limited Assignment men who had been transferred from line organizations.

It has been noted that Limited Assignment men from combat units have been more disciplined than men from non-combat units. It is believed that this is due, in part at least, to their better understanding of the significance of their jobs.

2. Changes in Organization; a. Changes in Higher Headquarters; (1) The VII Hospital Group (Prov) was disbanded and its functions assumed by the 805th Hospital Center under authority of General Order 10, United Kingdom Base, Com Z, ETO, dated 3 Feb 45.

(2) Effective 2400 hours, 14 April 1945, Eastern District, United Kingdom Base, was disbanded under authority of Sec I, General Order 32, United Kingdom Base, Com Z, ETO, dated 28 March 1945.

b. Reorganization of Hospital; This hospital was reorganized on 21 March 1945 under Column 18, T/O and E 8-560, 28 Oct 44, per ltr AG 322, OPGC, Hq Com Z, ETO, Subject: Organization Order No. 204, dated 21 March 1945. The organization continued to occupy 4210 U.S. Army Hospital Plant, located at Morley Hall, Norfolk, England.

c. Changes in Attached Organizations: Organizations listed below were attached to this post for rations, quarters and administration only, on the dates indicated:

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Atchd</u>	<u>Reld</u>	<u>Authority (this Hq)</u>
553rd Med Hosp Ship Plat (Sep)	12 Jan 45		SO 13, 13 Jan 45
		17 Jan 45	SO 17, 17 Jan 45
556th Med Hosp Ship Plat (Sep)	12 Jan 45		SO 13, 13 Jan 45
		17 Jan 45	SO 17, 17 Jan 45
690th Hosp Ship Plat	22 Feb 45		SO 55, 24 Feb 45
		12 Mar 45	SO 70, 11 Mar 45
710th Hosp Ship Plat	22 Feb 45		SO 55, 24 Feb 45
		6 Mar 45	SO 64, 5 Mar 45
716th Hosp Ship Plat	22 Feb 45		SO 55, 24 Feb 45
		6 Mar 45	SO 64, 5 Mar 45
549th Med Hosp Ship Plat (Sep)	25 Mar 45		SO 84, 25 Mar 45
		31 Mar 45	SO 89, 30 Mar 45
558th Med Hosp Ship Plat (Sep)	25 Mar 45		SO 84, 25 Mar 45
		31 Mar 45	SO 89, 30 Mar 45

(2) The 1366th Labor Supervision Company was activated on 2 March 1945 under T/O and E 2-20T, dated 9 Jan 45, per authority contained in letter, AG 322, OPGC, Hq Com Z, 21 Feb 45, Subject: Organization Order 119,

(3) The organizations listed below were activated on this post on 20 April 1945, under authority of Organization Order No. 205, Hq Com Z, ETO, dated 21 March 45, and Par 3, SO 88, Hq 805th (US) Hospital Center, dated 18 April 1945:

282nd Medical Mess Detachment
 4003d Signal Switchboard Operations Detachment
 436th Military Police Gate and Patrol Detachment
 437th Military Police Gate and Patrol Detachment

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3. Professional Service: a. Medical Service. (1) Infectious Disease Section: Following a suggestion seen in the Naval Medical Bulletin for April 1944, the Infectious Disease Section had been giving a unit of plasma to mumps cases when a rise of temperature or vague lower abdominal pains suggested the imminent danger of a developing orchitis. There were some very striking results manifested by drop in temperature, alleviation of pain, and either complete aborting of the orchitis or tempering of its manifestations. Often, the temperature and pain disappeared in as little as twelve hours. Carrying this one step further, one unit of plasma was given to each admission as soon as the diagnosis of mumps was made. This has been done with approximately fifty patients to date. The series is yet small, but only one case of orchitis has developed out of fifty treatments. This compares most favorably with an estimated incidence of 20% to 30% complications last year.

Captain Joseph Hillel, O-496445, MC, was in charge of the Infectious Disease Section.

(2) Neuropsychiatric Section: Insulin-narcosis treatment has been continued, with a turnover of 14 patients every ten days. This number was the largest which could be handled, though more patients could have benefited by the treatment if trained personnel had been available.

Because of the time consumed by it, abreaction was used less frequently. In some abreaction treatments, hypnosis was used without sodium pentathol.

Until April, a steady decline in the number of admissions to the NP section took place. This is ascribed to the fact that the end of the European War was clearly in sight and became more fully confirmed each day. In April, the number of NP admissions rose again. The increase seemed to come from Limited Assignment men who had been reclassified from combat duty with the ground forces to non-combat duty with the air force, and who were suffering from recurrent attacks of nervous disorders. Air Force ground crews who had been stationed for long periods overseas were also prominently represented among the NP admissions.

Major Thomas A. March, O-474601, MC, was in charge of the Neuropsychiatric Section. In January, Major March made a psychiatric examination of Pvt George E. Smith, accused of the murder of Sir Eric Teichman. Inclosed is a letter relating to this incident.

(3) Respiratory Disease Section: In cases of acute and severe tonsillitis that have failed to respond to routine treatment at station dispensaries, a penicillin drip has been used orally with encouraging results. It was applied only to severe throats. Upon admission, a clinical estimate was made of the expected time of hospitalization, based on previous experience with routine treatment. In our experience, this was about ten days. The patient was then given 25,000 to 50,000 units of penicillin in 1,000 cc of distilled water, to drip into the mouth at 60-80 drops per minute. This procedure took from 6 1/2 to 8 hours. The patient was encouraged to swallow as much of the fluid as possible. It was felt that this would allow contact with infection deep in the pharynx. In the small series treated, the estimated hospitalization period was cut about in half. The method was not particularly difficult for the patients, though it was trying to some.

Captain Halden C. Woods, O-1684778, MC, was in charge of the Respiratory Disease Section.

(4) The Chief of Medical Service, Captain Benjamin M. Hair, O-1821437, MC, was promoted to the grade of Major on 16 April 1945.

b. Surgical Service: (1) General. (a) The number of surgical admissions continued at about the same rate as in the closing months of 1944. However, just before V-E Day, there was a sharp drop in admissions from the Air Force because of decrease in flak.

(b) In April, nearly all the ward tents were closed. Five were taken down and removed.

(c) Non-absorbable sutures were used in larger quantities than before, especially cotton, in place of catgut.

(d) The Coagulum Contact Method of skin grafting continued in use, with uniformly excellent results.

(e) Several blood transfusions reactions occurred, undoubtedly because of the Rh factor. It is recommended that station hospitals be equipped to examine patients' blood for the Rh factor.

(2) Orthopedic Section. (a) The Battle of the Ardennes Bulge posed new problems for the Orthopedic Section because of the tactics adopted by the Air Force to repel the Germans. Bombers took off almost every day regardless of weather. An increase in the number of crash take-offs and crash landings resulted.

Injuries incurred in plane crashes have characteristics different from missile wounds or injuries incurred from parachute jumps. They are characterized most prominently by multiplicity of fractures. Fractures of vertebrae and all limbs in the patient occur frequently. Often, treatment for one injury is prejudicial to treatment of the others; e.g., a fracture of the spine requires hyperextension which adds to problems of treatment of associated fractures such as fracture of femur. In plane crashes, complications are often made even more difficult by burns and head injuries. The latter sometimes render the patient uncooperative or even resistant.

The Orthopedic Section used policies described in the Annual Report for 1944 to treat the crash-landed patients, the only difference of consequence being the great increase in numbers of patients. Primary debridements were done on fresh air combat casualties, followed by secondary closure, when possible, on the fifth day. When the defect was too grave to permit secondary closure, skin grafting was done about the tenth day, using Padgett's Dermatome. Most of the secondary closures of skin grafts were performed on the ward, leaving the patient undisturbed in traction suspension.

(b) Fractures of long bones were retained in skeletal traction by Kirschner wire through the bone involved, until sufficient callus had formed to prevent shortening or displacement when applied in plaster spicas which were modified for greater ease of handling on long journeys.

(c) These past four months were also characterised, as previously,

by total absence of any anaerobic infections, such as tetanus or gas gangrene, and a pyogenic infection rate of less than one percent.

Captain Theodore K. Himelstein, O-501659, MC, was Chief of Orthopedics Section.

(3) Because of the illness of the Chief of Surgical Service, Lt Colonel Pedro L.W. Platou, O-481453, MC, the service was put in charge of Acting Chief, Major Conrad G. Collins, O-1703641, MC, during April and up to 8 May.

c. Dental Service: (1) The number of sittings in the Dental Surgery has remained large. Exclusive of examinations, sittings totalled over twelve hundred in January and stayed at an average of a thousand per month subsequently. Just before V-E Day, a sudden increase in patients was registered, attributed to the fact that Air Force personnel took advantage of the slackening of their duties to have their teeth surveyed, cleaned and worked on.

Five hospital trainloads of patients (a total of 1155) were surveyed and all necessary dental service initiated.

(2) Vincent's Stomatitis was treated effectively with penicillin. Cure was effected after two treatments.

(3) Penicillin was also used in the treatment of Pericoronitis. Cure was effected after one treatment, in contrast with sulfa drugs which required three days to cure.

(4) When Steele's facings were unavailable, facings were constructed from acrylic resin. When advisable, bridges also were made of acrylic. When the service ran short of bridge backings, new ones were cast in the laboratory.

(5) Lt Colonel Joseph J. Karow, O-263041, DC, was Chief of Dental Service.

d. Mass Admissions: Five hospital trainloads of casualties were evacuated at Wymondham (Norfolk) railhead, transported by ambulance, bus and truck to Morley Hall and admitted to the hospital.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Number of Patients</u>
3 Jan 45	324
23 Jan 45	152
4 Feb 45	135
28 Feb 45	305
30 Apr 45	239
Total...	1155

4. New Construction and Equipment: a. In spite of the large patient census, with its heavy load of work, a number of new construction jobs were completed, mostly by unit labor.

(1) The system of covered ways was extended to include the Nurses' Area.

(2) In January, all ward tents were winterized.

(3) In February, a brick structure was built to accommodate Linen Supply, which had outgrown its facilities.

(4) In March, a double Nissen hut was erected for expansion of Red Cross activities. The new hut was used as an addition to the already existing clubhouse.

(5) Kitchens and latrines on all wards were painted, and also the interiors of all department offices.

(6) An enclosure for German prisoners of war was built.

b. Equipment: (1) New equipment installed included a new X-Ray machine in the Dental Service, a new centrifuge in the laboratory, a public address system to all wards, and an intercommunication system from the telephone exchange to the Officers' Quarters. A beauty shop was equipped and staffed for female personnel.

(2) Furniture, orthopedic appliances and office machines were kept in repair by detachment personnel. Plumbing and electricity installations, which had been made prior to this organization's occupation of the site, caused much trouble to the Utilities Department. Several men were kept busy constantly with them. Pipes froze frequently because they were not wrapped. Electric power lines were not made for the heavy load they had to carry, and consequently fuses were blown out often.

5. Mess Department: a. In April, a new system was initiated for taking special diets to the wards. Instead of individual wardmen picking up the special diets for their particular wards, a special diet truck was equipped to service the whole hospital. At meal times, one dietitian and a special diet cook accompanied the truck to all wards.

b. A section of the Patients' Mess was converted into a bakery. From it, two freshly baked products were provided daily for all messes.

c. Food waste was cut drastically and maintained at a level of about 3 ounces daily per person. This was done by weighing waste on all wards and keeping records of it.

d. The Ration Breakdown room was remodelled and new shelves installed.

6. Entertainment and Morale Factors: a. The installation of a public address system in all wards provided an opportunity for entertainment of bedridden patients. A broadcasting studio was at once set up in a room in the Receiving building and was christened "WLMG". Detachment personnel took over the job of broadcasting. Radio programs were tuned in for news and special events. A record library was collected, and patients' requests were incorporated into programs originating in the studio. Detachment personnel and patients organized their own shows for the broadcasts.

b. The Gable Gators, the organization's dance band, continued to play for parties and dances both on and off the post. On 7 May, when the news of the cessation of hostilities in Europe first spread in London, the Gable Gators were playing at Rainbow Corner. As related in Yank magazine (British edition) for 18 May 45:

"Hundreds of GIs were gathered in the Rainbow Corner Red Cross Club at Piccadilly when bundles of Stars and Stripes were tossed out free. The paper, a V-E Extra, bore the huge banner outline: 'Germany Quits'.

"Rainbow Center quickly became the focal point of the excitement. A GI band which had been playing for a dance at the club moved out to the balcony and serenaded the mixed Allied crowd milling around on Shaftesbury Avenue. Although it was almost impossible to move, jitterbugs and oldsters took the cue and danced as long as there was music."

c. For a second time, men of the detachment joined with the Norwich Philharmonic Chorus in the Chorus's Good Friday presentation of Handel's "Messiah" in Norwich Cathedral.

d. A new building was erected for the Red Cross staff. The new building was named the "Medo-Club" and was used for dances, shows and indoor sports. The old building, named the "ARC-ade Club", retained its former functions.

A most prominent feature of the new club was the organization of dances of, for and by the patients. These were extremely successful.

SUPPLEMENT

9 May 1945 to 30 June 1945

1. General: During this period the organization felt the full impact of the Redeployment Program. The hospital plant was closed, a training program put into effect and personnel were classified for retention with the unit or transfer out. The unit was classified in Category II, for shipment direct to one of the Pacific theaters of operations, and corresponding administrative procedures were adopted, including a thorough check of all personnel records.

2. Changes in Organization: a. No significant changes in higher headquarters occurred during this period.

b. Unit: Colonel Linwood M. Gable, O-164897, MC, was relieved of command on 13 May 1945. From 13 May until 20 May 1945, Lt Colonel R.B. Warriner, Jr., O-312259, was Commanding Officer (GO 13, 231st Sta Hosp, 13 May 45). On 21 May 1945, command was assumed by Lt Colonel Joseph Cohen, O-486306, MC, (Auth: par 35, SO 132, UK Base, 12 May 1945, and GO 14, 231st Sta Hosp, 21 May 45).

The hospital was officially closed as of 2400 hours, 8 June 1945, under authority of letter, European Theater of Operations, 18 June 1945, subj: Opening and Closing of Hospitals.

c. Attached Organizations: Per Par 8, ltr UK Base, 28 June 1945, subj: Assignment and Attachment Order No. 91, the following units were released from attachment: 436th MP Patrol Det, and 437th MP Patrol Det.

3. Professional Service: a. Policies and practices contained in previous reports continued as before. The biggest professional problem was the evacuation of 474 patients in two days on 9 and 10 June 1945. (Per VOCCO, 805th Hospital Center). This was accomplished with the cooperation of the Dispensaries of Air Stations serviced by this hospital. All the available ambulances within a radius of twenty miles were borrowed so that patients could be transported in comfort to their new hospitals - the 65th General Hospital and the 163rd General Hospital.

b. Medical Supply: packed and shipped all Medical Supply Items of property in three days after the evacuation of patients. Ironically, Prisoner of War regulations (forbidding the labor of POWs on Sunday) prevented the employment of Prisoners of War on the busiest day, so that Detachment personnel, unaided, are to be given the credit for this performance. It is believed that a record was set.

4. Training Program: After the closing of the hospital plant, the buildings and grounds were thoroughly policed. Then, an accelerated training program was adopted for the purpose of reconditioning all personnel physically and orientating them on the medical problems of service in the Orient. At the same time, all personnel were encouraged to take furloughs and leaves.

5. Personnel Administration; a. Adjusted Service Rating Scores were computed for all personnel, and physical inspections made.

b. Redeployment adjustment of officers and nurses was effected, chiefly during the last week of June.

c. Enlisted men over 42 years of age were transferred to the 10th Reinforcement Depot on 10 May 45, in preparation for their discharge from the service. (See picture.)

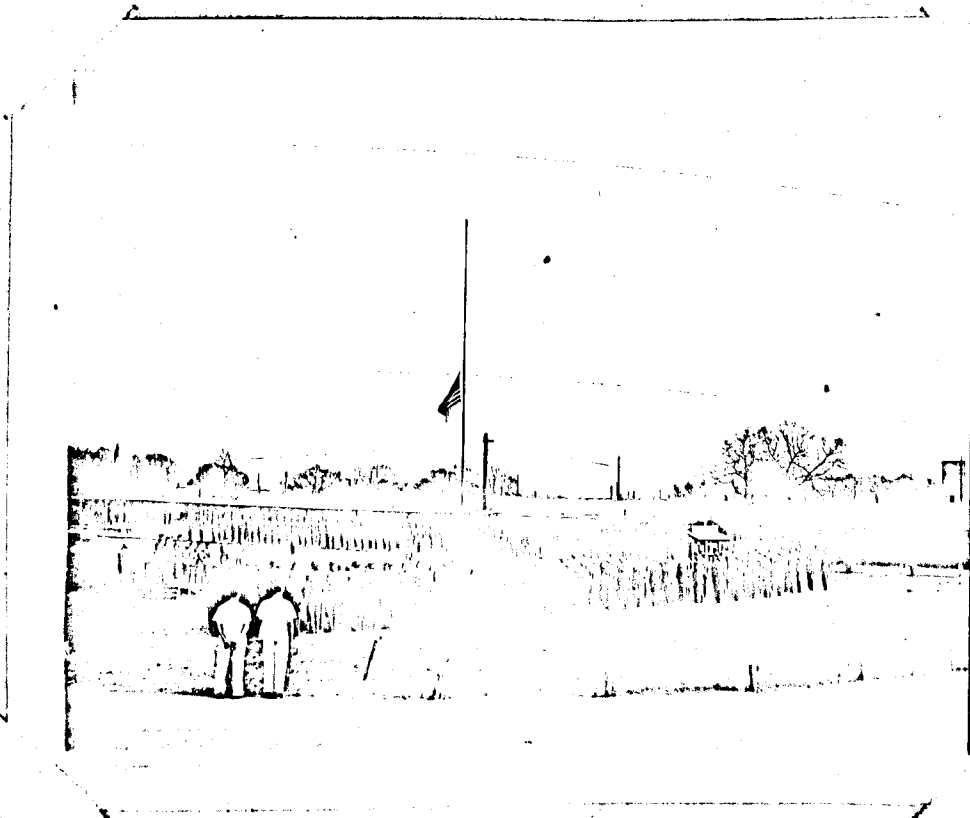
d. Records were inspected on 28 June by a team from the Inspector General's Department.

6. Plans: The organization was designated as a Category II unit, scheduled for direct shipment to the Pacific. It is not possible to make plans as of the close of this report because readjustment of enlisted personnel has not been effected, and movement orders are not known. Orders are being complied with as they are received.



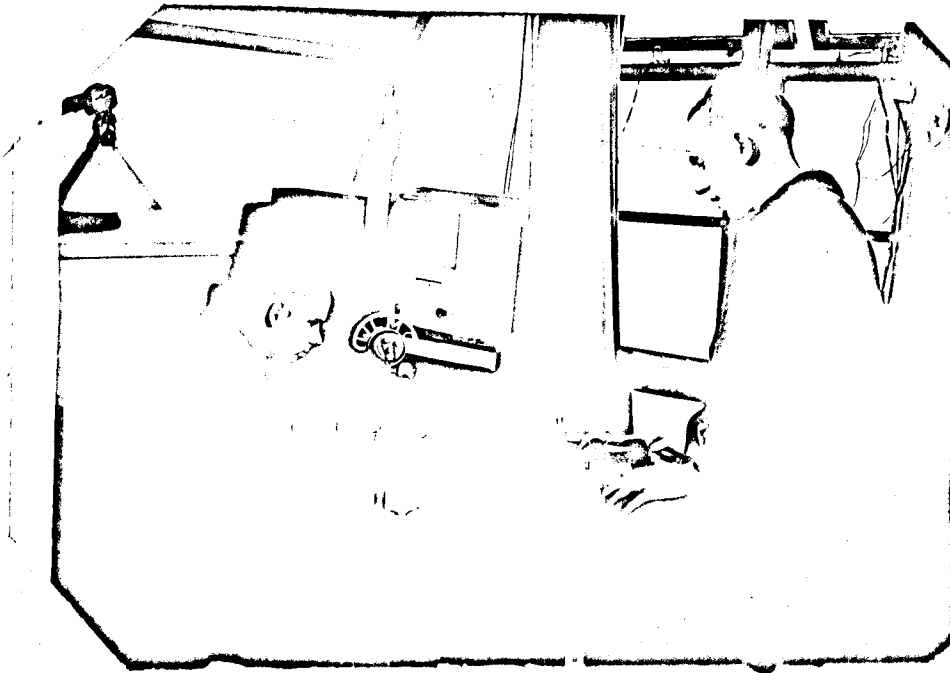
COMMANDING OFFICER

Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Cohen, O-486306, MC



TAPS FOR A GREAT SOLDIER

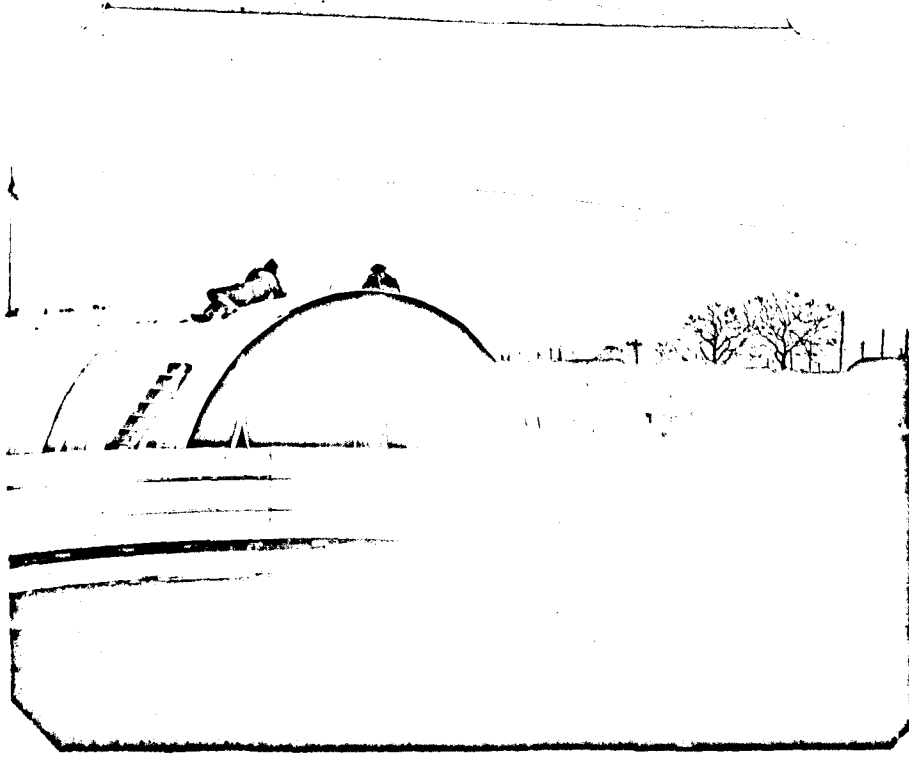
Memorial Retreat for the Commander in Chief, President Franklin D. Roosevelt.



STUDIO WING

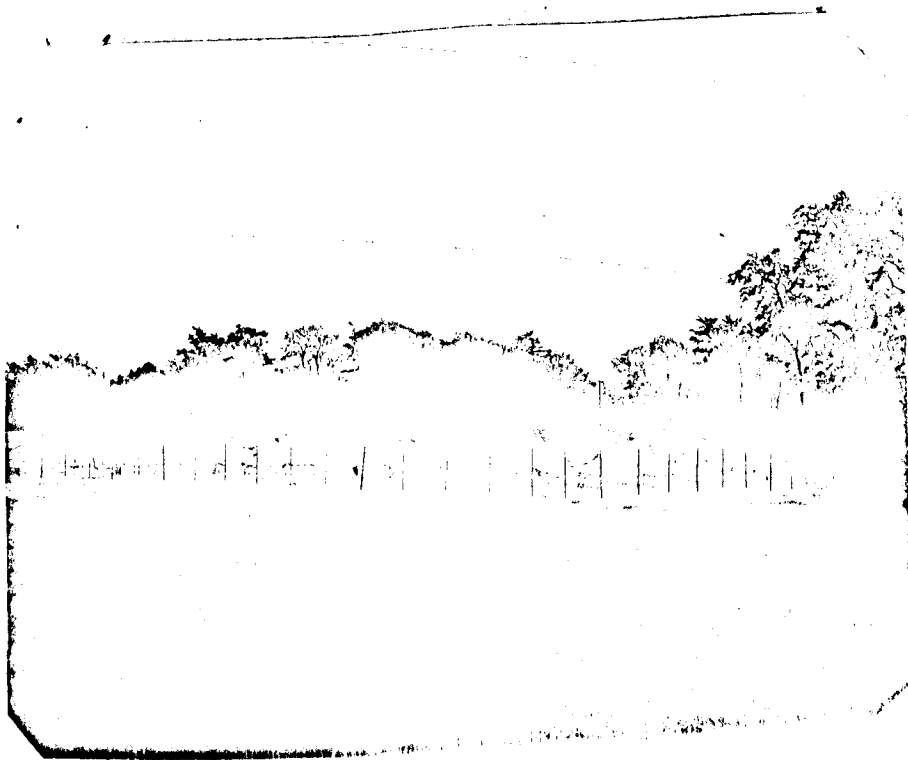
Krat announces for a patients' request program, assisted by an ambulatory patient.

(Pfc Lenard A. Kratoska, 36657549)
(Patient unidentified)



RED CROSS' MEDO-CLUB

On its way up, the new club is shown with some of the rehabilitating patients who built it under Utilities' supervision.



THE CAGE

POW enclosure supervised by 1366th Labor Supervision Co.
On the far left can be seen a mess hall being constructed by the prisoners.