

Colonel Richard Jennings's photographs of British hospitals in Malta

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Cottanera HP Malta 1904.

Left hand man of standards is C.O. (still Major, I think) R. Jennings.

Some of the rest look young enough still to have been serving in the 1920s, albeit immensely senior by then.



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Peter Steele
& Martin

Cottowara Feb 54 -



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RAMC 659/3

Patients' Christmas Party at Military

HP in Valetta Town ~~1908 (?07)~~
1906 or '07

Note that the Matron of this HP eventually became Matron-in-Chief
I'm afraid I can't recognize her in the photos, but I can remember her as
a charming "eddyhead" who stood like a general's man & was, I believe, held in
terror by her staff.



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The sportingly got-up man near the RAMC
659/3

Camera was the C.O., Lt Colonel R. Jennings.
The lady talking to him was Mrs Jennings

VERY tentatively I suggest that the straw letter
sent was (Major?) TOBIN ??



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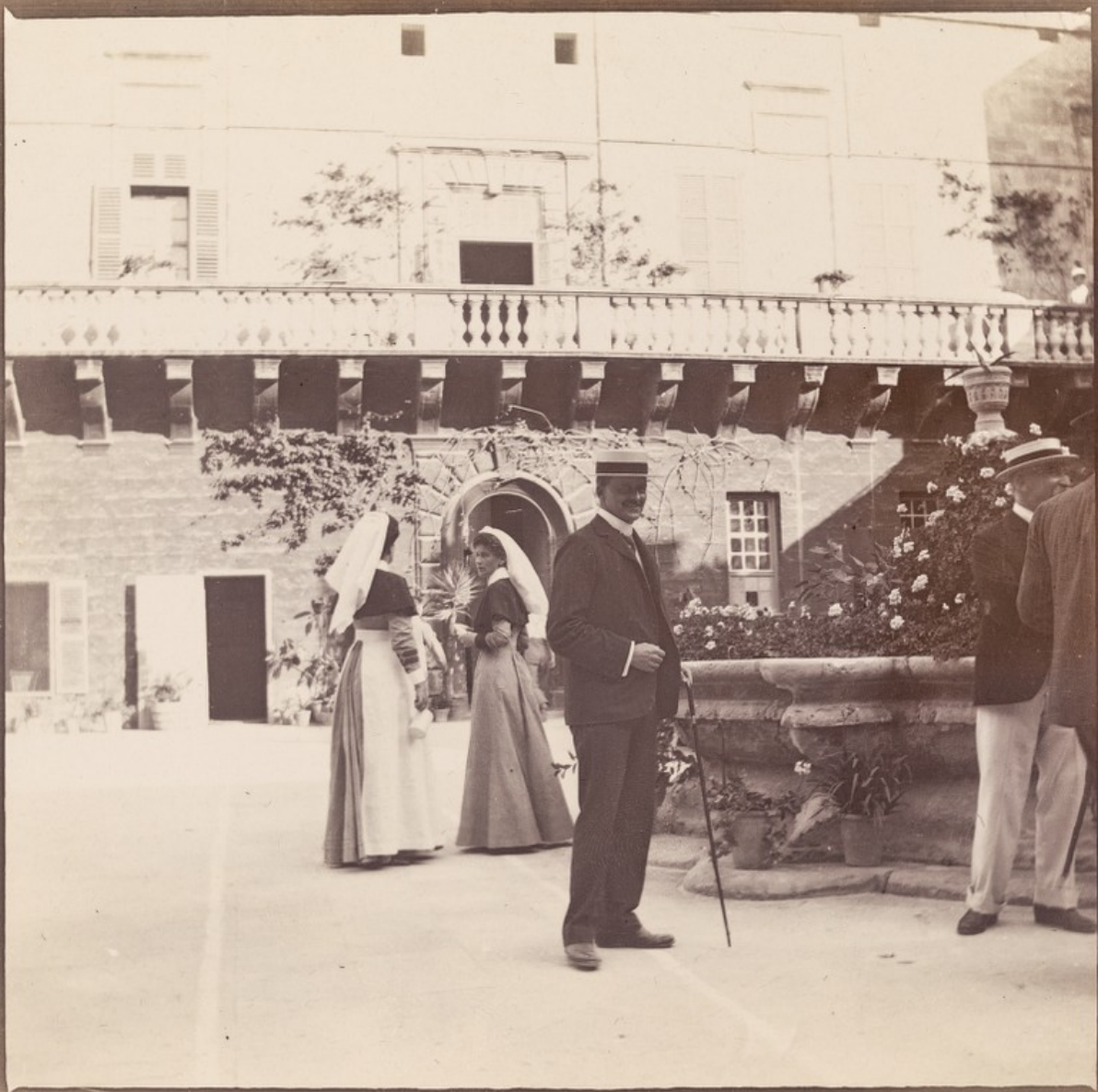
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RAMC 659/3

This is obviously "suds corner" when the officers & nurses took tea away from the lvi folk!

In the foreground the CO's wife with her boy (approx 7) who is the author of these notes.

This picture explains why the notes are so vague!



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THIS IS THE 'GEN.'

The purpose of this small pamphlet is to supply, in limited measure, answers to essential questions concerning the methods of infection, spread and control of the Venereal diseases.

Perhaps more than this, it is a challenge—concerned not only with the giving of information on this subject, but to the soldier of today upon whose shoulders falls the responsibility for the introduction of a wiser and healthier attitude of mind to these questions.

One of the great innovations during the recent war was the right of every soldier to receive the 'gen' on what was happening—well! this is the 'gen'.

The traditional 'old soldier's welcome to the rookie'—"You're not a man 'till you've had the Pox" has died a well deserved death; now the 'gen' must take its place. You will, no doubt, still hear many and varied tales about V.D. from those who like to 'shoot a line' and are not fussy about their facts; if what you hear does not fit in with what you read in this pamphlet—FORGET IT.

There are two ways in which you can acquire your knowledge—this is the easy way; the choice lies up to you.

~~_____~~
Royal Army Medical Corps.
September, 1946.

Q. What are the Venereal diseases?

A. They are a group of diseases which affect the body mainly through the sex organs; the most important (serious) of these are :
Syphilis (pox) and Gonorrhoea (Clap).

Q. How are they caused?

A. Syphilis and Gonorrhoeas are caused by definite living germs, provided that they are allowed to enter the body. Mere neglect of personal hygiene will not cause V.D., although it may be responsible for many other serious diseases.

Q. Is there any other cause for these diseases?

A. NO. If the germ of either of these diseases is in the body, then that person suffers from the disease for which that particular germ is responsible. If, however, there is no germ in the body, the person does NOT suffer the disease.

Q. Do Venereal Diseases affect both sexes?

A. Yes, both men and women can be affected.

Q. How are they caught?

A. The germs are passed from person to person by direct bodily contact; this occurs mainly through the sex organs during sexual intercourse.

Q. Can V.D. be caught in any other way?

A. Yes, strictly speaking. Next to the sex organs the eyes are a possible source of infection, or any injured body surface which is exposed to infected material, but actually, less than one in a hundred thousand people are infected in any way other than through sexual intercourse with an infected person. (Forget the tale of the lavatory seat!!).

Q. Is anybody immune to V.D.?

A. NO. Nobody is immune, naturally or otherwise, to V.D.; they can and will attack any person exposed to infection by the germs, and there is no limit to the number of times that any person may contract the diseases.

Q. Are there any signs by which V.D. may be recognised?

A. Syphilis shows up as a small, painless sore or ulcer which appears about five to eight weeks after infection and is usually on or near the sex organs. This sore may vary in size from the head of a pin to a shilling piece, and because of this and the lack of pain, may be overlooked. Gonorrhoea shows itself as a discharge of matter from the sex organ which appears some three to seven days after infection and is usually accompanied by a burning pain on passing water.

Q. *Are there any other signs?*

A. Not until after the first signs have disappeared, which does NOT mean that the disease is cured ; it is merely spreading throughout the body. In Syphilis there is usually a body rash some six to twelve weeks later. In Gonorrhoea there may be no further sign for many years.

Q. *Is there any simple method of finding the disease?*

A. NO. There is no simple way of telling whether or not V.D. is present. Other than the first signs—which may be missed—the only methods of tracing the existence of V.D. involve delicate tests which must be carried out in a medical laboratory, If you have heard of any other way of telling—FORGET IT!

Q. *Can you have more than one disease?*

A. YES. A person may suffer from Syphilis and Gonorrhoea AT THE SAME TIME.

Q. *What do these diseases do?*

A. If they are not treated in time, then, over a period of years, they do great bodily harm : Syphilis destroys or damages important nerves, muscles, bones and organs, and can, eventually, cause blindness, paralysis, heart disease, insanity and even death.

Gonorrhoea can, in the same way, cause arthritis (crippling disease of joints), heart disease, blindness and sterility (inability to produce children).

Q. *Can V.D. affect children?*

A. YES. Gonorrhoea can infect a baby's eyes at birth causing serious inflammation and possibly total blindness.

Syphilis may attack a child developing in the body of an infected mother and can cause terrible deformity or insanity in the child.

Q. *Can V.D. be cured?*

A. YES. These diseases can be definitely cured if they are treated early and continuously by a qualified doctor. The longer they remain untreated the more difficult complete cure becomes—after many years, this may be impossible. Quack "cures" are worse than useless—they may cover up the signs and leave the disease to do untold damage in the body.

Q. *Is the cure effective?*

A. The completed cure will get rid of the disease *i.e.* kill all the germs, but it cannot repair damage already done to the body; thus early treatment is essential not only to ensure complete cure, but also to reduce the risk of serious damage to vital body organs.

Q. *Can V.D. be prevented?*

A. Substances containing mercury are known to have a destructive action on V.D. germs. These preparations—called phrophylactics—are contained in the official E.T. Packets which may be obtained, free of charge, from ALL army units. These 'packets' should **always** be used as a measure of protection against infection.

Q. *Are 'French letters' of any use?*

A. It is dangerous to rely on 'French Letters'—or condoms.

Q. *What can be done to reduce the risk of infection?*

A. If you have exposed yourself to the risk of infection through sexual intercourse, report to your unit M.O. or E.T. Centre—if possible within two hours after intercourse—having first used an official E.T. 'packet' immediately before and after exposure.

Q. *Can a soldier be 'crimed' for contracting V.D.?*

A. NO. Not if he has reported to his unit M.O. or E.T. CENTRE for treatment. Any soldier who fails to take this precaution can, rightly, be charged with concealing the fact and thereby endangering the health of his fellow soldiers.

Q. *Are brothels safe?*

A. NO. Brothels, licenced houses or prostitutes are definitely NOT safe; their medical certificates are worse than useless. The 'good-time girls' or 'easy pick-ups' are commonly dangerous sources of infection.

Q. *Is there any sure protection?*

A. YES. There is one **sure** protection and **one only**, that is to avoid sexual intercourse with an infected person. In this way, any man and women who have not had sexual intercourse before marriage, and so have not exposed themselves to the risk of infection, can, by remaining faithful to each other during their entire married life, be sure that V.D. will not enter their family circle. That is the only **guarantee** you can have of not contracting V.D.—but remember! there is no easy way of telling whether or not a person is suffering from V.D.; although all sores and scars in the region of the sex organs should be treated as danger signs, these may not always be present to give any warning. Alcohol is one of the most important factors in Venereal infections: by its stunning action on the brain it removes control and prevents clear thinking. It is to your advantage to develop healthy interests and make full use of ALL the recreational facilities which are provided for your welfare and entertainment.

There is no shame attached to seeking advice or treatment for V.D. It is a crime to yourself and society if you neglect to do this. You may be the source of infecting your entire family. Think these things over carefully—It **could** happen to YOU!!

From General Sir Hubert Gough, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.,
K.C.V.O., &c.

7.8.'54.

DEAR MR. BARBER,

Many thanks for your letter and the copy of your verses recalling our desperate, but in the end decisively successful, struggle in March 1918.

You paint the picture very well, if I may say so; and I am keeping your letter and verses among the family records!

Yours sincerely,

HUBERT GOUGH.

21st MARCH, 1918

Sinister the outlook over NO MAN'S LAND;
What devilry is brewing in the heart of THE FATHER-
LAND?

* * *

In BERLIN'S UNTER DEN LINDEN stroll two
generals deep in thought,
Discussing their next offensive, and where it will be fought.
GERMANY must win this year, her troops are tried and
ready—
Replacements appear adequate, and the nation's pulse
seems steady—
But the Allied Blockade's stranglehold is forcing some to
fear
Whether, without some great success she'll survive another
year.

THE EASTERN FRONT'S collapsed, and now a million
men are ours
To launch against THE WESTERN FRONT, and crush
the ALLIED POWERS.
From ARRAS to LA FERRE the plan shall be complete
BREAK-THROUGH—
To separate THE ALLIES is what we mean to do—
Attacking further north again we'll roll up the BRITISH
line—
The enemy, defeated, will then our Peace terms sign.

* * *

Dark and silent stretches now the battlefield before
The watchful sentry at his post—the hour is half-past four;
There's nothing much to see in front as ground mist hides
the view—
It's strangely quiet—last enemy shells fell just 'fore
half-past two.

Suddenly from out the sky a deluge falls around:
H.E., MINENWERFER—machine-gun bullets spray the
ground—
“Torrents” and “tornados” of blistering blasting shell
Swoop over like a violent storm stirred up from depths
of hell.

Half an hour—an hour—two hours—more than four—
The “cataract” continues on all our front to pour;
On Headquarters, roads, and railways, aerodromes, and
stores—
On battle zone, and batteries, the pent-up “avalanche”
pours.

Can visual signals now be given? Can the “S.O.S.” be
sent?
Neither, for the mist is thick, and through it there's no
rent—

Our artillery fires on targets known already to exist,
And our aeroplanes, being grounded, are unable to assist.

Daylight now increases, and the sun tries to break through
Into the inferno. All our men can do
Is hold on to their positions, while our outpost line
endures
That sense of isolation which only action cures.

And action now commences—shadowy forms approach—
Furtive figures writhe and crawl, and through our wire
encroach—
“STICK” bombs begin to hurtle and burst with flash and
roar,
As chunks of earth fly upwards, and shattered sandbags
soar.

More bombs, and now our LEWIS guns retaliate “RAT
TAT TAT”,
Mowing weeds and grasses down, and levelling daisies
flat—
“MILLS” are thrown, and rifle-fire at the “FIVE
ROUNDS RAPID” order
Keeps the nearest enemy lying low outside our outpost
border.

All our batteries are firing now—each gunner's hot and
sweats,
Loading and reloading at such speed he time forgets—
His one idea to blast away the enemy's advance,
And help his front-line comrades win for BRITAIN and
for FRANCE.

Our heavier guns in rear are hurling forth their utmost strength—
Explosive charges flaming up—their shell supply at length
Diminishing so far that their reserves are drawn upon—
Meanwhile the enemy long-range guns fire on, and on,
and on!

Thousands of poison-gas shells fall filling hollows with
their stench—
Alarm gongs clang—wet blankets drop 'fore dug-outs in
each trench—
Hostile 'planes bomb and machine-gun up and down the
line—
"HIGH VELOCITIES" plunge and crash without
warning sound, or sign.

Crescendo reaches climax from eight to half-past nine—
Enemy gunfire lifts on certain sectors of the line—
Infiltrating infantry synchronise with "ZERO HOUR"—
The Battle's joined, unequalled in intensity and power!

Telephone lines are broken and communication's poor—
Runners with urgent messages are hit before the door
Of Company headquarters has been reached, and many
die—
Clutched vital orders are found on some in clenched fist
where they lie!

The enemy advances, our forward posts are passed . . .

* * *

The heroism displayed there glows for ever from the
past—
For many a British soldier with heart for hearth and home
Died, his last shot blazing, on his lips the death-gasp foam!

* * *

And all this fearsome fighting's over forty miles in length—
THE THIRD ARMY on our northern flank is ready to
try its strength;
THE FRENCH so far are not involved, though on the
"QUI VIVE" outwards—
Their line remains on our other flank intact from LA
FERE southwards.

Amidst all this our Officers, and N.C.O.'s and men
Know their hour has come at last—they'll do their best,
and then
Hold their own and not give way—whate'er the cost they're
ready

To fight it out and, come what may, keep cool and calm
and steady!

And this they do supremely well, firing as one man—
This alone as nothing else upsets the enemy's plan—
Remembering their comrades back at Mons right up to
date
Each fires as ten, and seals the foe's new Spring Offensive's
fate.

* * *

As with a hard-pressed boxer there's retirement to the
ropes—
Reorientation of fighting force, reserves of strength and
hopes—
So now, regroupment of effectives, counter-thrusts, and
shortened lines,
Quick deployment of reinforcements, sharp observation of
hostile signs.

* * *

Braced for further conflict we now launch our counter-
attacks—
Making progress this way, in another drawing back's
The tactical necessity. . . . Finally, we feel
The measure of the onslaught, and counter steel with steel.

Several days pass by and then at last the enemy tide
Reaches to its maximum—in their positions they abide—
THE BATTLE OF ST. QUENTIN is fought out, and
either side
Counts up its gains and losses, 'midst desolation deep and
wide.

But now one battle's over, another brews elsewhere—
Rumbling guns up north hint at a new offensive there;
After that what victories and defeats are there in store?
The future cannot now be pierced but we wish that we
knew more!

* * *

1918, will Victory crown it at the last—
Or shall we still be fighting when another winter's past?

* * *

But to return to "TOMMY ATKINS" facing hell from
his lonely post—
Do not let us forget him in the midst of a mighty host—
For one true BRITISH SOLDIER, duplicated many
times,
Can ring the bells of VICTORY with everlasting chimes!

W.M.B.