

# WITH OUR RED CROSS BASE HOSPITALS in FRANCE

## Red Cross Doctors and Nurses First to Carry American Flag To The Front

**T**HE boy who goes to war today faces torpedoes, bombs, liquid fire, deadly gases, quick-firers and siege guns. Never before have the means of dealing death been so numerous or so ingenious, or so terrible.

Yet he has a better chance of coming back home, safe and sound, than he would have had in any great war that has been fought. Base hospitals, as they have been evolved in the present war, together with superior methods of surgery, are responsible for that.

Roger Babson, the statistician, is quoted as saying that fourteen out of fifteen men have been safe hitherto in the Great War—and the losses at first were vastly greater than the losses now. He continues:

"Under present conditions, where man power is being saved, not more than one in thirty is killed. Only one man in 500 loses a limb, a chance no greater than in hazardous conditions at home."

M. Andre Tardieu, French High Commissioner to the United States, has given out figures showing that the percentage of casualties in proportion to the mobilized strength of France has fallen from 2.39 for the first six months of 1915 to 1.28 in the last six months of 1916.

How does it happen that soldiers today are safer than ever before?

### Learning How to Care for the Wounded

The answer, as suggested above, is that the nations have learned how to take care of their soldiers. Camp sanitation, scientific rationing, business organization of the supply service—these things count, but the big vital factor in saving husbands and sons for the women who wait at home is the efficiency of the medical service.

The second answer, also, is the Red Cross. As Lord Wantage, father of the British Red Cross movement, said: "However well organized an Army Medical Service may be, it never has been, and never will be, able to cope adequately with the sudden emergencies of war on a large scale, and voluntary organizations, unimpeded by official restrictions, are alone capable of giving auxiliary relief and of providing extra comforts and luxuries with the requisite promptitude and rapidity."

That is why, when America entered the war, the first organized forces of the United States to go abroad were Red Cross base hospital units which had been mustered into the United States Army Medical Corps. That is why right now you would find American doctors and nurses desperately hard at work behind the lines in France, trying to keep British and French soldiers from slipping out of the "Wounded" into the "Death" lists. Because of the Red Cross they are ready, just as soon as they are needed, to perform the same service for American boys.

### How the Red Cross Prepared

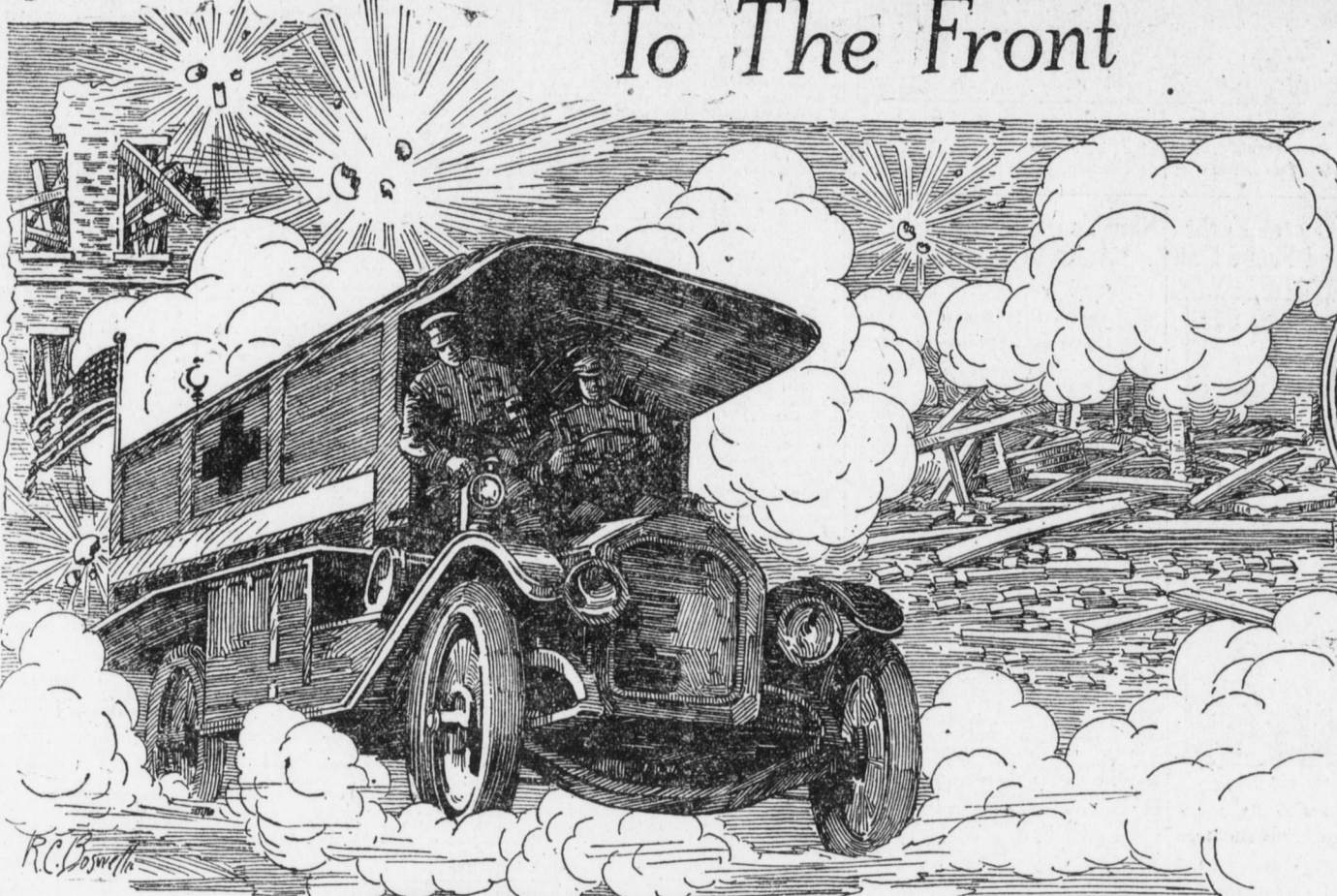
Two years before America entered the war, and thus suddenly had need of all the medical service at her command, the Red Cross began the organization of its base hospital and ambulance company units.

Under the direction of Colonel Jefferson R. Kean, who had been detailed to the Red Cross from the Medical Corps of the Army, the Military Relief Department set out to enlist the aid of the Red Cross chapters throughout the country in providing trained personnels of doctors and nurses available for instant duty in time of war or national disaster.

Altogether a total of forty-seven base hospitals were organized, financed, and largely equipped. The national treasury of the Red Cross was scarcely drawn upon at all in this work. Not only did the chapters recruit the staffs for each of these units from their city hospitals, but in several cases they undertook to purchase the necessary equipment and to make the required amount of hospital supplies in the chapter workrooms.

In New York six hospitals were organized, in Chicago four, and in Philadelphia four. The New York County chapter, not content with the minimum requirements laid down by the Department of Military Relief and the medical authorities of the Army, went ahead on experiments to develop improvements in equipment. With some of the most prominent surgeons and doctors in the United States enlisted on the staffs, the chapter organized a committee on research and standardization. The work of this committee has now resulted in the development of a new type of movable food kitchen to be attached as a trailer to ambulances or field columns. It has made similar experiments in the field kitchen attached to base hospitals.

Other cities show the same initiative. All over the country the greatest interest was shown in the organization of these great reserve relief agencies.



As a result of these activities of Colonel Kean's department, the Red Cross had available at the time of the declaration of war thirty fully organized base hospital units. Each was practically fully manned with a staff of twenty-four surgeons and doctors and sixty-five nurses. The non-professional personnel of more than one hundred and fifty enlisted men was not gotten together until after the beginning of the war. Each had bed equipment, surgical apparatus, linen supplies, etc., sufficient to care for five hundred patients.

Within a fortnight after the declaration of war on Germany, six of these Red Cross units were ordered into active service. The first unit to sail was Base Hospital No. 4, from Cleveland. Two days later, on May 11th, the Harvard Unit, No. 5, was off, with Dr. Harvey Cushing, Professor of Surgery in the Harvard Medical School, as its head. Then went four others, one from Columbia and the Presbyterian Hospital in New York, with Dr. George E. Brewer in charge; one from the Pennsylvania Hospital at Philadelphia, directed by Dr. Richard F. Harte; another representing Washington University, at St. Louis, with Dr. Frederick T. Murphy; and still another from Chicago, headed by Dr. Frederick Besley. More than twelve have now been sent to the front, and, pending the taking over of trenches by the American troops, are serving with the British and French armies.

The remainder of these forty-seven hospital units are equally prepared and ready for the call to service, whether abroad or at home, on a moment's notice.

### King George Expresses England's Gratitude

So quick was the response that King George of England, on the arrival of the first units in London, felt called upon to express Britain's gratitude. To the members of the Presbyterian Hospital unit of New York, on their reception at Buckingham Palace, he declared:

"We greet you as the first detachment of the American Army which has landed on our shores since your great Republic resolved to join in the world struggle for the ideals of civilization. We deeply appreciate this prompt and generous response to our needs."

"It is characteristic of the humanity and chivalry which have ever been evinced by the American nation that the first assistance rendered to the Allies is in connection with the profession of healing and the work of mercy."

Such were the returns the Red Cross was able to draw on the \$2,000,000 insurance—as these funds really were invested in the equipment of base hospitals, much of it before the war began. It was insurance that paid for itself not merely in the promptness with which the base hospital units were ready for service, but in the saving of lives and anxiety they effected through being ready.

### What a Base Hospital Does

Look for a moment at one of these great Red Cross agencies of mercy as it is now in operation in France. Per-



haps it is quartered in tents on the sand-dunes along the Belgian coast; perhaps it has been temporarily installed in some French hospital to undergo a period of training before going up near the actual front.

As soon as the wounded have received attention from the regimental surgeon and have gone through a cas-



International Film Service, Inc. These poilus are getting well fast at the American Red Cross Hospital in Paris, where Dr. Joseph A. Blake is in charge.

ualty clearing station, where the operations that cannot be postponed are performed, they go to a base hospital. At the base hospital only those cases are kept which can be promptly handled in three weeks or less. Men whose injuries will keep them in a hospital longer than that go back still further to the general hospitals or to England.

In the hospital you will find nurses picked from the cream of the profession in the United States, thoroughly trained, strong and devoted enough to support the doctors in their long, long days of fatiguing service.

You will find college boys and other boys, accustomed to comfort, trained for all sorts of highly skilled work, serving as members of the enlisted staff—clerks, assistants, technicians, orderlies, busy at the hard, dirty work of a war hospital, harder and more distasteful than any one who has not been there can imagine.

The doctors and nurses have labored under tremendous pressure. The size of many of the units has been increased. Some now have a thousand beds instead of the 500 originally provided for, and six of the units have had reinforcements in all classes of their personnel.

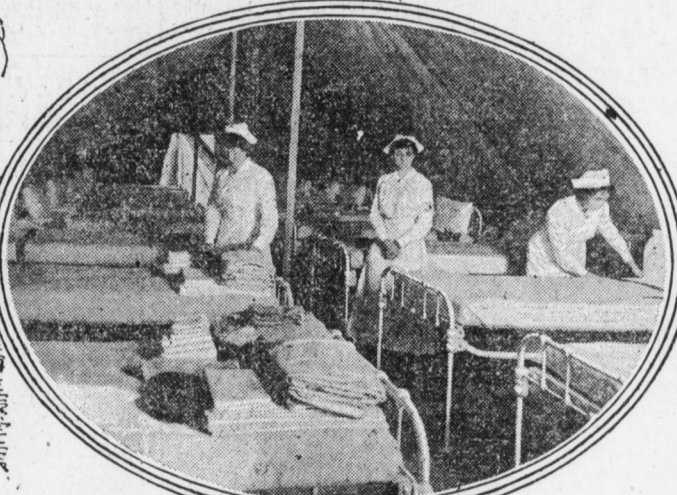
### A Hospital Under Fire

These men and women are of splendid stuff. If any proof of this had been needed, it would have been supplied by their behavior under fire when the Harvard unit was bombed by a German airplane on the night of September 4th. Lieut. William T. Fitzsimons, of the Medical Officers' Reserve Corps, and thirty-two privates were killed, and three-two persons were wounded. This cable tells the story:

"The attack occurred at 11 o'clock at night. Just at that time fortunately no convoy of wounded was being received,

surgeon relieving the other when the latter from simple exhaustion could work no longer, and the very next day, just as if nothing had happened, these same surgeons were called upon to receive and care for 200 wounded sent

outside their tents, where they were found tangled up in the tent ropes. An American nurse, although struck in the face by a fragment of steel from the bomb, refused to be relieved and remained at her task courageously to the



Brown Brothers. If there are no permanent buildings these Base Hospital Units which the Red Cross has turned over to the Army Medical Corps get right to work under canvas.

in from the trenches of the British Expeditionary Force.

"At the time the German aviator flew over it most of the surgical staff was engaged in making rounds of the wards.

"The first bombs were directly in front of Lieut. Fitzsimons' tent. He probably never knew what happened to him. The next two fell a hundred feet beyond, in a five marquee ward in which there were many patients, and the last struck the reception tent.

"Overhead there was no sound. The German aviator flew too high to be heard, but he left his identity behind him, not only in the bombs he dropped, but in the derisive handful of pennings he scattered upon the hospital.

"Although the exploding bombs created horror in the hospital, there was not the smallest sign of panic, and the work of discovering the wounded and collecting them was immediately begun. This was made cruelly difficult by the darkness, but every one sprang to it

end. A hospital orderly who worked untiringly was found later to have been struck in the head by a fragment and painfully injured. He had just tied up his head and worked on.

"In the operating room, Captains Horace Binney and Elliott, with their assistants, worked all night long. Several delicate operations were performed and their work was made all the harder by the fact that in innumerable cases the patients were in serious danger of infection from the pieces of wood and nails and dirt which had been thrown into their bodies."

### When the Wounded Come

Here is the picture of the arrival of a trainload of wounded at one of the American hospitals, as it was described by one of the doctors:

"A reasonable time before the arrival of a convoy we are informed," he writes. "Just before it comes in we are called from our billets by the expression,



© Underwood & Underwood. Nurses like these, from the finest hospitals of the country, are at work in France and ready to care for American soldiers.

with a will. Many of the injured had been blown from their cots, some even

'Train is now pulling in.' We dress as soon as possible. Simultaneously we hear 'assembly' being blown for the men. They all go on duty—every one of them. Most of the convoys arrive in the dark.

"A certain number of men are assigned to the train. Wounded are taken off promptly. The hospital trains are wonders. The wounded are handled here with great care and comfort, and sleep for the most part of the journey from the casualty clearing stations to us. The trains have operating rooms and are equipped in first-class style.

"After being taken off the train the wounded are assigned to ambulances detailed for certain wards, depending on diagnosis of case and capacity of the wards.

"After the ambulances have delivered the cases to the hospital buildings our men carry out the patients to the respective wards. The whole thing works like a breeze. A convoy of 500 patients can be taken from the trains by ambulances to the hospital and be fixed comfortably in bed in a few hours."

So the picture might have gone on. Surgical dressings used in the wards, all made by the loving hands of devoted women back in the States—the sheets, pillow-cases, the bed clothing (each jacket has its tiny Red Cross sewed near the collar)—all stand for the Red Cross and the part the Red Cross has to play in war—to relieve the pain and suffering that are its inevitable results.



Underwood & Underwood. The first detachments of the American Army to reach Europe for service were Base Hospital Units of the Army Medical Corps, organized by the Red Cross. The King of England welcomed the first unit at Buckingham Palace on May 23rd. The Queen is at the King's right. Ambassador Page