

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE WELLCOME INSTITUTE LIBRARY

THE ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS 'MUNIMENT COLLECTION'

by

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The collection of manuscripts and memorabilia which had been accumulated in the library and museum of the Royal Army Medical Corps came to the notice of the Wellcome Trust some ten years ago when items relating to the career of Sir David Bruce (1855–1931) were used in the Film Unit's work on the history of trypanosomiasis. The trustees of the RAMC Museum were glad to be able to provide suitable storage and adequate catalogues for the material by placing it on permanent loan with the Trust, the final agreement for which was signed in October 1991. A detailed catalogue has now been prepared, with indexes to subjects, places and personal names, and copies are available for consultation in the WIHM Library and at the National Register of Archives.

Contemporary Medical Archives Centre collections usually relate to twentieth-century medicine in Britain, so this, with a date span of several centuries, is an unusual deposit. The earliest item is a draft letter of appointment of King Charles II's Surgeon General, and there are several items from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but coverage is mainly from the Crimean War (1854–1856) onwards.

It was also an unusual collection for any archivist to deal with. Despite its name, the Muniment Collection is not an ordered accumulation of the Corps' own records. Rather, it has similarities to ephemera collections encountered by librarians, in that the cataloguer has to invent and impose an order on the material. However, there are archive accumulations within the Collection, runs of reports or personal papers, of great interest to historians. I hope in the following pages to show the different kinds of material which can be found, and, by delineating the developments which the Collection has undergone, to explain some of the eccentricities of the catalogue.

The Collection came to the Wellcome with a brief catalogue simply listing the acquisitions in the order in which they were accumulated, and this order has been retained as far as possible, the "RAMC" reference number being the original accession number. In some cases a run of reports or a group of personal papers was given a single accession number, but in other cases, each volume or bundle has been given a separate one. Where the first method was applied, whether to small accumulations such as RAMC 198 (seven

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volumes of Sir Joseph Fayrer's notes of cases in the Calcutta Hospital Medical School) or to large ones such as RAMC 1816 (24 boxes of papers of Sir John Boyd), the archivist has been able to devise a logical order for the material within that group. It should be noted, however, that related material which came to the Collection at a different time will be elsewhere in the catalogue; Fayrer's scrapbooks at RAMC 177–180, for instance, and his operations registers at RAMC 1090. Where each volume is numbered separately, items appear in the catalogue in no order whatsoever: a prime example being the reports of the Pathological Board in the Crimea (RAMC 192, 194, 195, 196 and 197) which have a volume of similar size and date but no connection listed in their midst (case notes of the Royal London Militia, RAMC 193). In some cases, loose papers have been bound into volumes, which at least encouraged their treatment as a group, although there is often little logic to the order in which they are bound,¹ but in other cases, such as the papers of East India Company surgeon Alexander Simpson, different types of papers are grouped under separate numbers. Simpson's diplomas and certificates of training are RAMC 221, illuminated poems in his praise are 222, and his apprenticeship indenture and commissions are 223.

The Collection had its origins in the library for medical officers set up by Sir James McGrigor, who was Director General, Army Medical Services, from 1815 to 1851. When the Army Medical School was established at Fort Pitt, Chatham, in 1860, the library was housed there, and moved with it to the Royal Victoria Hospital at Netley near Southampton in 1863, and to Millbank in London in 1902 when the School was renamed the Royal Army Medical College. Material given to the library in the early days appears to have been mainly printed books and official records. The library must have been seen as a place of deposit for the latter, for instance in the case of the records of the Pathological Board in the Crimea. Other records appear to have been retained by their creators and deposited much later by the creator's heirs or by collectors as historical documents. An example is RAMC 208–212, correspondence and reports of William Fergusson, Inspector of Army Hospitals in Portugal during the Peninsular War, given to the Royal Army Medical College, after who knows what wanderings, in 1913.² This is magnificent source material for the history of military medicine: detailed reports on Portuguese hospitals, returns of sick and wounded, pathological observations on the army in Portugal, letter books for 1809, 1812 and 1813, and loose correspondence, including personal letters and material about hospitals in the West Indies, dating from 1788 to 1823. Some of the loose material has been bound into volumes, possibly after deposit in the Collection; the sections of each volume are listed as they are bound, although this is not always a logical order.

A "Muniment Room" was established in 1952, and a separate Acquisitions Book started. This volume and all the correspondence about accessions are now housed in the filing system of the Contemporary Medical Archives Centre. The acquisitions register reveals

¹ For example the papers of Sir William Leishman (RAMC 563), in which letters, abstracts, notes and minutes are arranged neither by date nor subject nor record type.

² This information about the origins of the Fergusson papers is recorded in Colonel William Johnston's *Roll of Commissioned Officers in the Medical Service of the British Army who served on full pay within the period between the accession of George II and the formation of the Royal Army Medical Corps, 20 June 1727 to 23 June 1898*, Aberdeen University Press, 1917. The Accessions Register simply lists 'Col Johnson CB' as the depositor. There is also an excellent study by J. F. S. Ritchie, 'A surgeon's surgeon: George James Guthrie, F.R.S. (1785–1856)', University of London BSc dissertation, 1992.

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what a close connection there was between the Muniment Collection and the main library. Most of the first 200 accessions have no entry in the "donor" column, which implies that they were transferred from the main library holdings. Many are volumes, both manuscript and printed, but in about 1957 a collection of "books of historical value" was established in the library and at this date the acquisitions register bears witness to the return of early printed books to the library.

The acquisitions register assigns each accession to a "section": books, MS books, photographs, documents or diplomas, and there are indications that at first each type of item was stored in a different location. Sometimes a new accession was even filed with material on a similar subject; accession number 426, a photocopy of a Crimean War requisition for a wooden hospital building, for example, being subsumed into RAMC 27, a file of cuttings about the Crimean War. Sometimes the curators seem to have gone back through the acquisitions, removing or transferring material which they felt would be more appropriately housed elsewhere, usually to the library or to the Museum. Some certificates of Sir John Hall's training, and the grant of arms upon his knighthood, are on display at the Museum and were not catalogued with the bulk of papers. Some items, especially those marked "unclassified", were simply "disposed of".

Modern printed books are recorded as having been returned to the library at various times, the date usually not specified, and some bound "collected papers", which usually include manuscript and typescript items. These probably went to the open shelves of the College Library. The danger of keeping unique materials in the same conditions as printed books which are easily available is highlighted by a note in the register beside the entry for RAMC 95, the famous collection of Sir Charles Bell's watercolours of wounded soldiers after the battle of Waterloo: "N.B. Various mss & sketches were stolen from the Library about 1930". Fortunately the "collected papers" seem to have been returned eventually to the Muniment Collection, but treated as a new acquisition: General R. J. Blackham's papers, for example, originally accessioned as number 17, returned in 1970 as number 588. These interconnections account for some of the numerous gaps, especially in the early years, in the numbering sequence.

A historical museum had been established at the RAMC barracks at Mytchett in Surrey (sometimes described as being at Ash Vale in Hampshire, since that is the nearest railway station) and the museum curator, always a retired officer of the Corps, was responsible for the Muniment Collection. The attitude of successive curators helped to shape its development. The founding curator was Major-General (Robert) Eric Barnsley (1886–1968), whose long service, starting in the Territorial Force in 1912 and covering both world wars, gave him a very high profile in the Corps. 507 accessions are recorded during his term of office and the register is annotated in detail, but mainly on the subjects of the accessions rather than on their origins. They include memoirs, diaries, photographs and memorabilia of officers, probably all of whom Barnsley knew and had served with. Most of these cover war-time service: men involved in exciting missions are more likely to record their thoughts than those involved in everyday routine. Perhaps more important are further examples of official records kept by their creators: Sir Percy Tomlinson's reports from the Middle East and the liberation of Europe during the Second World War (RAMC 408), for instance, and Brigadier Julian Taylor's reports from Changi prisoner of war camp, Singapore (RAMC 439).

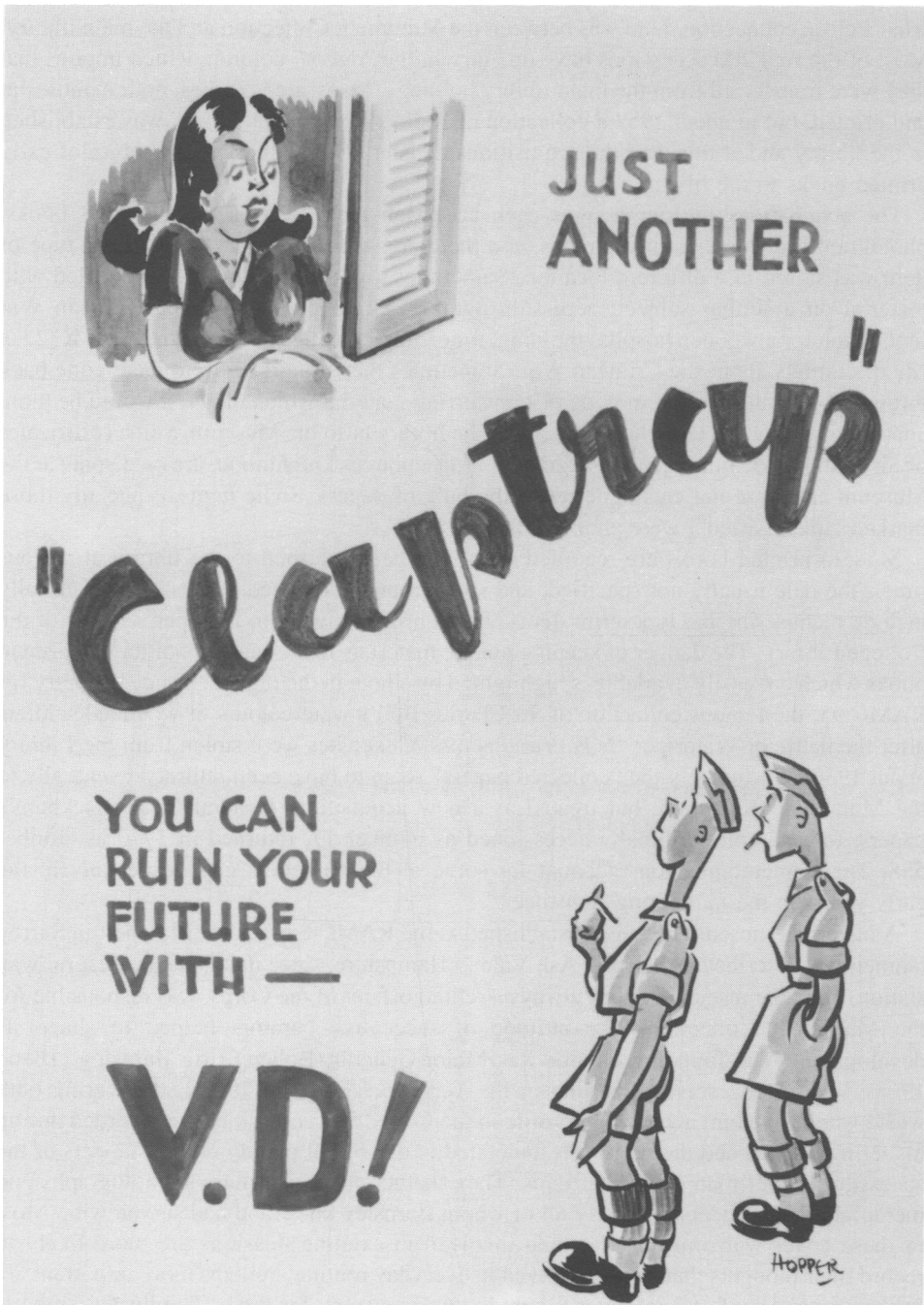


Figure: One of the drawings for public health posters preserved in the papers of Sir Ernest Cowell (1886–1971), Chief Surgeon under Eisenhower's command in North Africa and Italy during the Second World War (RAMC 466/48). Senior officers' papers often reveal interesting details of the medical planning behind military operations.

Barnsley published articles in service journals and in general historical publications, which made the Collection better known. Interesting accessions of older papers came to the Collection from heirs of army medical personnel and from banks in which they appear to have been deposited for safekeeping. The earliest diaries acquired by Barnsley are those of James Goodall Elkington, a surgeon who served in the Napoleonic Wars (RAMC 336). Other diaries and memoirs cover the Boer War, the Crimean War and Indian Army service in the nineteenth century, the most detailed probably RAMC 391, the memoirs of Deputy Surgeon General William Cattell (1829–1919), who had served in the Crimean War, South Africa and India, including the Afghan War of 1879. Only a few are from other ranks: a Rifle Brigade Corporal's letters from the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny (RAMC 339), Boer War diaries of Corporal Dyer, 19th Bearer Company (RAMC 375) and Staff Sergeant J. H. Gibbons (RAMC 438), and memoirs of George Swindell, serving with the 77th Field Ambulance on the Western Front in the First World War (RAMC 421).

Barnsley also took in commissions and certificates of medical officers, nurses and orderlies; hospital reports from British and foreign stations; and a volume of regulations and instructions to medical officers of the Ordnance Medical Board, 1795–1853 (RAMC 286). His most exciting acquisition is RAMC 397, the large accumulation of papers of Sir John Hall (1794–1866), given by Hall's granddaughter, a resident of Cape Town, South Africa. Whether the papers had gone to South Africa with her is not known, but historians of military medicine have every reason to be glad that they have found their way to a repository. Hall's career in the Army Medical Department spanned the first half of the nineteenth century, taking him to various parts of the world where the army was involved in imposing or maintaining Britain's might. The papers include reports and correspondence from the West Indies, 1841–1843, Cape of Good Hope, 1846–1851, Bombay Presidency, 1851–1854, and the Crimea, 1854–1856. He was Principal Medical Officer in the latter campaign, fighting the inefficiency of the regimental medical system, the blinkered attitudes of commanding officers and the interference of Florence Nightingale. The papers are an important source for military history and for many aspects of nineteenth-century life.

Another accession of great importance, for which Barnsley appears to have been negotiating just before he died in 1968, is the Longmore papers. Sir Thomas Longmore served as surgeon to the 19th Foot (the Green Howards), 1843–1858, including two years in the Crimea, was the first Professor of Surgery at the Army Medical School, wrote training and ambulance manuals, and represented Britain at the Geneva Convention in 1864 and 1884. His papers include a small number of reports from the Crimea, reports on the setting up of the Army Medical School, correspondence and memorabilia from the Geneva conferences and a large amount of correspondence with almost every eminent figure in military medicine of the 1860s to 1880s, as well as family and personal papers. The papers of his wife's family, the Moorsoms, were given to the India Office Library, and the Longmore papers appear to have gone initially to the RAM College Library, being entered in the Muniment Room acquisitions register only in 1975 as RAMC 1139.

Occasionally material was purchased for the Collection: a letter book of Sir John Hall (RAMC 508), a copy of the 1829 regulations for granting pensions to disabled soldiers (RAMC 1182), the 1799 warrant to allow the Inspector of Regimental Hospitals the same rate of pay as the Physician and Surgeon General (RAMC 1330), a book of anatomical drawings from the Army Medical Museum, published in 1841 (RAMC 1339).

Correspondence accompanying RAMC 508 shows that the money for the purchase came from the RAMC Officers' Mess Fund, and other items have been purchased by the Army Museums Ogilby Trust. A ground plan of the hospital for Crimean War casualties at Arenkioi (RAMC 362), recorded in the acquisitions book as having come from a London art dealer, seems from the accompanying correspondence to have been a gift.

Major-General Barnsley edited some of the memoirs and diaries in the Collection in the hope of having them published in their entirety, but usually, as correspondence reveals, the contents were insufficiently original to interest a publisher. The edited or abridged versions survive in the Collection alongside the originals. Similar material from elsewhere which had been published was added to the Collection by successive curators, including RAMC 704 (P), the memoirs of Surgeon Walter Henry.³

After Barnsley's death, his own papers were placed in the Muniment Collection. As well as the diplomas and photograph albums so typical of many of the twentieth-century personal accumulations in the collection, he had kept reports and a diary from his service as Assistant Director of Medical Services, Headquarters, East Africa Force, during the Italian invasion of Kenya in 1941. His five-year diaries cover the Second World War and his years as Colonel Commandant of the Corps, and the files of material which he was using for his research on Sir Thomas Longmore and Sir John Hall include notes, publications and even some of their correspondence. It is possible that the latter are strays from the main accumulations of papers, but the Longmore papers were still in private hands at the time of Barnsley's death, which indicates acquisition from other sources.

Over the years some interesting accessions came to the RAMC's collection from other collectors. Sir Charles Burtchaell, for instance, seems to have left a number of files at the RAM College's Department of Army Health, which were added to the Muniment Collection in 1964 as RAMC 446. These are mainly reports from the First World War, on subjects including casualty evacuation, medical services for Indian troops, criticisms of both British and French army medical services, and the introduction of steel helmets, but there is also earlier material such as Sir Ian Hamilton's report on Japanese medical services during their war against Russia in 1904, and accounts of Red Cross work in the Balkan wars of 1912–1913. Colonel H. A. L. Howell's collection (RAMC 561) is an example of collected papers and the work produced by his research all mingled together. It has been bound into three volumes, one of correspondence and contributions for Colonel Johnston's *Roll of Medical Officers*, one of notes and drafts for his own research and one of original and copy records. These latter vary from published criticisms of the Army Medical Services, 1804 and 1897, and Howell's reports of his own experiences in the Bombay plague epidemic of 1899–1901, to correspondence about the identity of the Medical Officer in Gibraltar in 1779–1783. His twelve volumes of notes, transcriptions and cuttings for his history of army medical services were given a separate accession number, 562.

Reprint and pamphlet collections started by two of the professors at the Army Medical School, Sir Thomas Longmore and E. A. Parkes, came to the Collection in the 1960s. The

³ Walter Henry (1791–1860) served in the Peninsular War, 1811–1814, in India, 1814–1817, on St Helena, 1817–1821, where he took notes at the autopsy on Emperor Napoleon I, in Ireland and England, 1821–1827, and in Canada, 1827–1837. The memoirs, edited by Pat Hayward, were published as *Surgeon Henry's trifles*, London, Chatto and Windus, 1970.

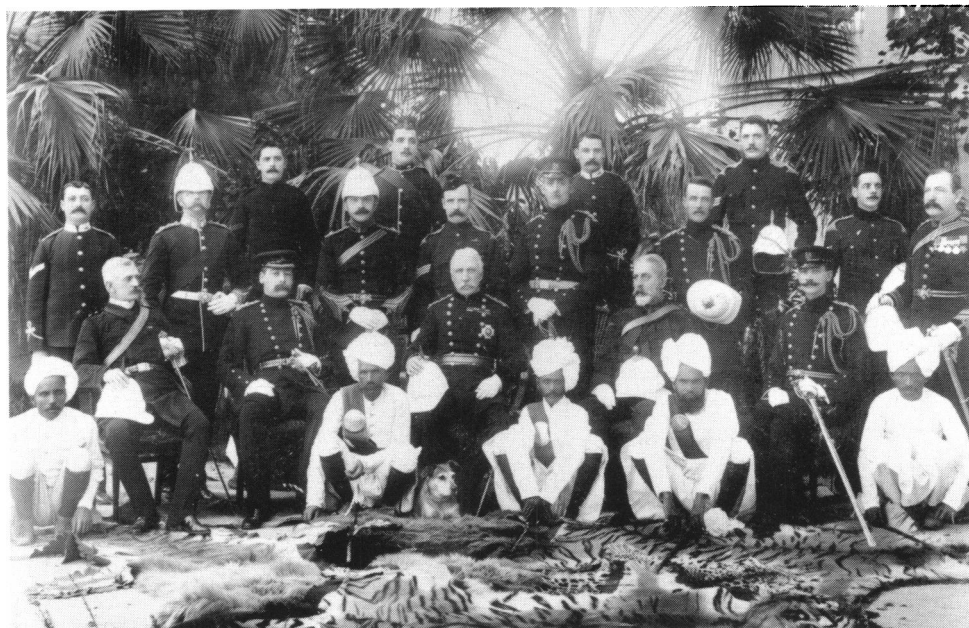


Plate 1 (a): Lieutenant-Colonel J. Courtenay Haslett (1856–1939) and his staff (RAMC 801/22/10). Group photographs are very common amongst the memorabilia in the Muniment Collection. Many photographs, including this magnificent study, were placed in the Mytchett Collection by the RAMC Museum curators, where most have lost all clues to their provenance and, in some cases, to their identity.

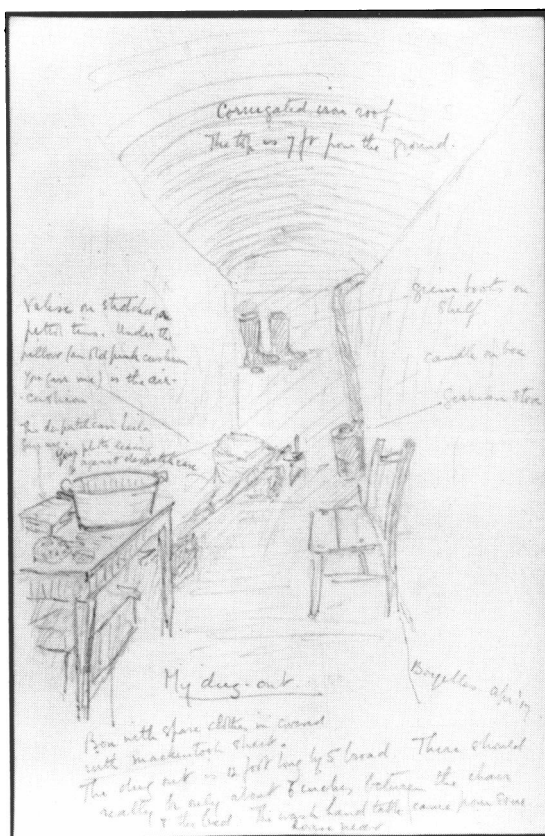


Plate 1 (b): Sketch by Lieutenant-Colonel G. W. G. Hughes of his accommodation on the Western Front during the First World War, enclosed in his photograph album (RAMC 850). Unusual enclosures in albums and diaries are noted in the catalogue.



Albanian woman & child.



A Red Cross Hospital

Plate 2: Photographs of the Balkan War of 1912, taken by Arthur Martin Leake (1874–1953) whilst he was serving with the Red Cross mission to Montenegro (RAMC 101/1). There are vivid photographs in albums, scrapbooks, and illustrated diaries and memoirs throughout the collection.

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former (RAMC 423) is bound into nine volumes and covers such subjects as casualty evacuation, antiseptics, and the Geneva Convention; the latter (RAMC 474), maintained by his department for many years after Professor Parkes's death, is on a much larger scale, bound into seventy-six volumes on a wide variety of topics. There is a list of the contents of each volume in the first box of each collection.

Other collections within the Collection include reprints and reports on the subjects of dysentery, meningitis, and typhoid, put together by Major-General Albert Sachs (RAMC 810) and newspaper cuttings on the subject of army medical officers' rank and status, and on the history of the RAMC (RAMC 171–176). Sir Alexander Drummond had deposited some records of his own career in 1987 (RAMC 2008), including liaison letters with the DGAMS when he was Director of Medical Services, Middle East, in 1953. On his death, a very interesting addition was made to the accession: a box of reports and correspondence on the arrangements for Polish refugees released into British hands from the USSR in 1942, and a collection of papers of and about Sir Anthony Bowlby, including Boer War letters and diary and reports and correspondence about surgery and casualty evacuation in the First World War.

Colonel E. E. Vella's interests were in the history of pathology in the army. As well as his photographs and reprints and copies of papers on the subject (RAMC 451, 1178 and 1675), he gave to the Collection RAMC 1801, which includes some photographs and reports of Major A. P. Prior's work in Middle East Force in 1942 and in Belsen Concentration Camp in 1945, and one of the most exciting of all the accessions: RAMC 1242, nine boxes of lantern slides made by Sir David and Lady Bruce, covering work on brucellosis in Malta, 1884–1889, and on trypanosomiasis in Zululand, 1894–1897, and Uganda, 1903. These vivid photographs show the environments in which brucellosis and trypanosomiasis flourished, the effects of the diseases on their victims, and the work of the scientists attempting to find the causative organisms and their vectors, as well as conventional pictures of their travels and of the native people and their customs. Attached to the slides and to the boxes in which they are stored are Sir David Bruce's descriptive labels, which have been transcribed in a detailed list of the photographs, Appendix D of the catalogue.⁴

Major-General Barnsley's successors added material to the collection at a greater rate than he had, a further 800 accessions accruing between 1968 and 1977. Among the earliest are seven volumes of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century manuscript lecture notes transferred from the library. These were accessioned as numbers 513–516, since they are four distinct groups, but it is interesting to note that 513 and 515 are companion volumes to two which were already in the Muniment Collection: RAMC 293, volume 2 of John Pennington's notes on Alexander Monro II's 1778 lectures at Edinburgh Medical School, and RAMC 295, volume 1 of Edward Burton's notes on Everard Home's 1807 lectures at St George's Hospital. There is no clue in the accessions register to the source of the original accessions.

Some of the material given to the Museum before General Barnsley's death had not yet been catalogued, and was accessioned rapidly in February 1970 as numbers 542–560, each

⁴ Reports and correspondence of Sir David Bruce, and Lady Bruce's drawings of micro-organisms, can be found elsewhere in the CMAC, in the collections of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (WTI/RST).

given a brief description and the “Donor” marked simply as “Found uncatalogued in Muniment Room”. Material probably given by Barnsley’s old comrades includes RAMC 543, Colonel W. W. O. Beveridge’s war diaries as ADMS Sanitation, General Headquarters, during the First World War. Among the earlier material is a letter book of the Medical Officer, Fort Leith, Edinburgh, 1885–1889 (RAMC 550), and there are test cards for colour blindness, printed by the Japanese Army Health Material Factory in 1916 (RAMC 554), and an interesting variety of photograph albums: Lady Ridley’s Hospital, 1915–1919, a convalescent hospital for officers, 1918–1919, a nurse’s service in the Boer War, and tuberculosis hospitals for Gurkhas in Britain and Malaya, 1951–1960 (RAMC 555–559). Items were still “found in Muniment Room” years later, such as a copy letter of c. 1899 from the Professors of Pathology and of Hygiene to the Principal Medical Officer at Netley about inadequate laboratory accommodation, which was accessioned as RAMC 1123 in 1974.

A new curator, General Alastair MacLennan, appointed in 1968, seems to have encouraged various departments of the Royal Army Medical College to deposit material. Sometimes there is no more clue to origin than the register’s note “RAM College” or “RAMC Headquarters”. Thus, a certain amount of research was needed to throw any light on the origins of RAMC 522, a set of magnificent photographs of Burma in 1885–1887. The accession register claims them to have been “compiled by H. M. Burton, Army Medical Staff”; reference to Johnston’s *Roll of Medical Officers* suggests that this must be Lieutenant-Colonel F. H. M. Burton, who served in Burma in those years, but there is no indication of how his albums might have come to the College. One can be a little more confident with the scrapbooks accessioned as RAMC 525, since they concern research and exhibitions at the Army Medical School: Sir Alexander Ogston’s notes on his gunshot wound research, and material about an exhibit at the Museum of Pathology. It seems that they were preserved in their respective departments, even when the School moved to London, and were produced when MacLennan appealed for material of historical interest.

In the middle of a large number of accessions transferred in 1970 from the College Library (RAMC 561–648) are two, 598 and 599, from the Pathology Department. They are important records of research by two of the gods of the army medical services, one T. R. Lewis’s 1871 notes for the Sanitary Commission of the Government of India, the other Sir David Bruce’s 1893 cholera and rabies experiments at the Army Medical School. They seem to be the only items from the College laboratories which had not been put into the Library before MacLennan sought them for the Muniment Collection: among those already in the Library were Bruce’s service diary as Senior Medical Officer, 3rd Mounted Brigade Field Hospital in the Boer War (RAMC 569) and notebook of cholera literature from the Army Medical School (RAMC 600), splendid photographs of the Bruces’ life in Zululand in 1894–1896 (RAMC 596), papers of Sir William Leishman (RAMC 563, 595, 627) and of Percy Lelean (RAMC 565–567) and numerous letters from such distinguished correspondents as Sir Patrick Manson (RAMC 578) and Sir Ronald Ross (RAMC 572–573). Mixed in with these is material of very different origin: orders and petitions dating from the continental campaigns of the eighteenth century (RAMC 582–584, 633), correspondence about medals won in China by Assistant Surgeon Andrew Moffitt in 1863 (RAMC 579, 636), volumes of nineteenth-century watercolour plates of injuries of the brain and of the femur (RAMC 585, 617), a herbarium of the medicinal plants of Mauritius, 1865 (RAMC 592), sketch plans of advanced dressing stations for the Battle of

the Somme, 1916 (RAMC 602–603), and many other letters, photographs, reports, catalogues, etc., including the Blackham papers returning to the Muniment Collection as RAMC 588, as mentioned above.

Material continues to be transferred from various parts of the College. In 1986 a box of reports on medicine and public health in the Far East after the Second World War was accessioned as RAMC 1900, its origin recorded as “Regimental Headquarters”; Colonel William Johnston’s letter book and order book from his command of No. 1 Bearer Company during the first Boer war in 1881 (RAMC 2047 and 2095) came to the Muniment Room in 1987, the origin of RAMC 2095 recorded only as “RAM College”.⁵ Useful sets of reports also come from other army depots, such as the Armoured Fighting Vehicles Sub-Committee of the Military Personnel Research Committee of the Medical Research Council, 1944–1946 (RAMC 1783) and the Army Personnel Research Establishment, 1973–1974 (RAMC 1920).

The precedent seems to have been established for once again putting publications into the Muniment Collection (most of the original accessions of books having been returned to the Library) with the accession in 1970 of twenty-three books “ex libris Major-General Barnsley”. Some of these are of relevance to the history of medicine and some to the history of the RAMC, but there are oddities such as five first editions of Rudyard Kipling novels and poetry. Any reference works which library or museum no longer found of current use tended from that time to go into the Muniment Collection, often in batches, such as RAMC 880–898 and RAMC 910–922, which are all recorded as being “ex Mytchett”, which implies the Museum, but might mean offices in the barracks. It is an inefficient use of space and of staff time to treat books in the same way as archives, and so the CMAC policy has been to separate the published material, unless it was annotated or not easily obtainable elsewhere. It is listed as Appendix E of the Muniment Collection catalogue, but is stored with the Early Printed Books. There is an entry for each volume on the Wellcome Institute Library Database and Catalogue (WILDCat) and items can be ordered in the same way as Early Printed Books.

The Museum curators accumulated a separate collection of memorabilia, known as the “Mytchett Collection”, at the Barracks. This was accessioned into the Muniment Collection in 1971 as RAMC 801. It includes a collection of commissions, some of which seem to have been separated from papers in the Muniment Collection,⁶ probably for display in the Museum, but it consists mostly of published material and photographs. The material was arranged roughly by subject: biographical articles, histories and photographs of military hospitals, histories of the RAMC and of individual units, and memorabilia of some of the medical service personnel who have won the Victoria Cross. There are also a few small collections of personal papers, including diaries of the service of Lt.-Col. Harry Russell (1877–1967) in Mesopotamia, 1916–1919; copies of correspondence held elsewhere;⁷ and a register of Army Hospital Corps offenders, 1857–1881. The miscellaneous photographs (RAMC 801/22) have been sorted into six sections, basically

⁵ There is no way of telling where they had been kept since Johnston’s death in 1914. Since the acquisitions register recorded the depositor under ‘author’, RAMC 2047 is recorded as having come from Colonel Johnston, despite the fact that by then he had been dead for seventy-three years.

⁶ Other diplomas of Thomas Murray are at RAMC 215, and various commissions and appointments of Colin Paterson at RAMC 217.

⁷ Of Florence Nightingale and Sir James McGrigor. There are microfilm copies of the McGrigor items in the Muniment Collection (RAMC 799).

chronological, with odd oversize group photographs in the last section (RAMC 801/22/50–63). Any information recorded about sources was used to preserve the integrity of separate accumulations; Colonel William Dick's photographs grouped together at 801/22/2, for example. It seems that, once it had been put into the Muniment Collection, the Mytchett Collection was treated as complete: similar material was thereafter put straight into the Muniment Collection.⁸ Many photographs acquired after this date were put into a large album entitled 'A pictorial history of the Royal Army Medical Corps' (RAMC 2005).

Medals of RAMC personnel are often donated to the Museum, and the accompanying papers and photographs have been transferred to the Muniment Collection. Earlier accessions tended to be given separate numbers for each item; thus, the scrapbooks and certificates accompanying the First World War medals of Private K. Winch were accessioned as numbers 956–961. Under a different curator, material was accessioned in batches: RAMC 1626 consists of service record books and certificates of three different Non-Commissioned Officers. There was a separate accessions book for the Museum, and the Museum acquisition numbers are noted in the Muniment Collection catalogue where relevant.

The Muniment Collection was surveyed in 1957 by the Historical Manuscripts Commission,⁹ but the catalogue produced is almost completely incomprehensible, since its author attempted to treat the collection as an archive, putting all the correspondence together, all the accounts together, etc., regardless of the origin of the material. We must be grateful that there was no attempt physically to re-arrange the material in this order, so that each accession has preserved what coherence it had. Much more useful was the catalogue produced in house, basically copying the information from the Accessions Register and providing an index of "authors". It was revised from time to time; a note in the Accessions Register after the entry for RAMC 1142 (dated 17/1/75) reads "The Revised Muniment Room Catalogue (1975) includes all serials to 1142", while the final version, which accompanied the Collection to the Wellcome, covers accession numbers 1–1420.¹⁰

The Historical Manuscripts Commission also produced lists of the two large collections mentioned above; RAMC 397, the papers of Sir John Hall, and RAMC 1139, the papers of Sir Thomas Longmore.¹¹ Since these, as well as the curator's list of the Mytchett Collection, had been used by readers before the Muniment Collection came to the Wellcome, the order and references assigned have been retained as far as possible. The detailed lists of the Hall and Longmore papers are Appendices A and C of the RAMC Catalogue, each with its own system of reference codes, explained in a brief introduction. The Mytchett Collection list, provided with more detail and somewhat re-arranged for clarity, is Appendix B.

⁸ For example RAMC 1023–1024, the photocopies and transcripts of William Fergusson's correspondence, the originals of which are at Yale University School of Medicine.

⁹ NRA Report number 5981.

¹⁰ RAMC 1420 was recorded in the Accessions Register on 26 September, and RAMC 1421 on 5 October 1978. All accessions from 1421 were recorded on printed sheets as well as in the Accessions Register until the death of Colonel Tenucci in 1983. All accessions registered by Colonel Eyeions (from RAMC 1626) are recorded only on the printed sheets.

¹¹ NRA Reports 9222 and 12602.

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It can be seen from this account that there is no way of predicting what may or may not be found in the RAMC Muniment Collection. In the first forty years of its existence it has been the repository for a great variety of material illustrative of the history of medicine and of the army medical services, but also of miscellaneous items which found their way in along with the relevant material, were in need of a home, or just seemed of interest.

The new catalogue is in two volumes. The first contains an introduction, a guide to other sources for the history of military medicine and detailed indexes to subjects, places and personal names. The subject and place name indexes list references in chronological order within each section, apart from the very large sections for the First and Second World Wars, which are grouped under sub-headings, starting with sections such as "General" and "Unit histories" and then covering the different fronts (including "Home Front" in both wars) in alphabetical order. Within each of these sub-sections, references are listed simply in order of accession number. Having found a reference number of likely material, readers should consult Volume II of the catalogue, where material is listed in detail and box numbers noted.

At the same time as it transferred the Muniment Collection to the Wellcome, the RAMC sent its "books of historical value", all the out-of-date textbooks and reference books, and any other unwanted items found in the Library's cupboards. The book collections are now held in the Wellcome Institute Library's printed book departments, to which a large number of published government reports have recently been transferred. Remaining are various records of the Army Medical School, of the Military Hospital at Fort Pitt and of the RAMC Friendly Society, RAMC seniority rolls and similar material. These seem to have been kept in the RAM College Library, but were never treated as archives, which is ironic, since they include some of the Corps' and College's own records, which the Muniment Collection, as we have seen, does not. It is likely that some of these will be offered to the Public Record Office as the most appropriate repository. Further material is accruing at the Museum, which will be added to the Collection at regular intervals. Like many of the Contemporary Medical Archive Centre's collections, the RAMC Muniment Collection is ever-developing.

APPENDIX

Curators of the RAMC Museum

- 1953–1968 Major-General (Robert) Eric Barnsley (1886–1968)
- 1968 Colonel John Moore (d.1968)
- 1968–1977 Major-General Alastair MacLennan (b.1912)
- 1977–1983 Colonel Albert Victor Tenucci (1922–1983)
- 1983–1994 Colonel Roy Eyeions