

terribly strained. Our only intercourse with the outside world was the arrival of the train from Ladysmith every morning with the sick. You may imagine how anxiously I looked for it, for, until it arrived, I did not know if my husband, who was in the town, was alive or not. Besides the sick and wounded, the train brought us just enough provisions to last for the day, and when ordinary provisions failed, we were reduced to horse flesh and mule, and 4 oz. of mealie (ground Indian corn) per day. The whole time we were only allowed one gallon of water a day per person, and that in such a hot climate was a great trial. We could easily have drunk it all, and, for the sick, of course, we really needed plenty of water.

We used to watch the Boers digging entrenchments, and also trying to dam the Klip River. Though this last expedient never really injured the town, it was very embarrassing to us in the Hospital, where, in wet weather, we were sometimes over our boot-tops in water in going from tent to tent.

The scarcity of food affected us most, of course, with regard to our patients, and, in time, we had little to give our enteric cases but one tin of condensed milk per day between 60 patients, and a little starch. It was hard to keep cheerful under these conditions, but one had to, for any depression on our part was at once communicated to our patients. He's a keen observer is Tommie. "Sister looks down this morning, there's bad news," one man would say if one of us did not look as bright as usual, and this would quickly spread round the ward, so, however we felt, we were bound to look cheerful, and this, though the siege went on for four months and the town was bombarded from 14 to 16 hours a day, and when the relief came we had almost given up hoping.

Only on three occasions was the monotony relieved, in December, when the wounded, happily not many, were brought in from the taking of the guns, and again later in the month, then on the 6th of January, we were wakened at 2.30 by the assault of the Boers on Waggon Hill. This was a time of great excitement and anxiety, for we could see that the position was unsafe for our men who, at one time, seemed so hopelessly outnumbered that we almost despaired of Ladysmith being saved. Not until late at night did we realize that the position was gained and Ladysmith saved.

By this time many of our wounded had been sent to a convalescent camp, where they were looked after by orderlies only, as Sisters were at a premium. The morning after the Waggon Hill fight we took in 100 severely wounded men, losing three cases (hopeless from the first), the

first day, and three more during the week. All the rest recovered, which, considering the shortness of provisions, was good.

I must mention that quite early in the siege I commandeered the services of civil orderlies. They consisted of a station master, clerks, and superior men, who proved themselves very capable. From time to time, as orderlies knocked up, we gave other members of the civil camp notice that their services would be required within 24 hours, and if they had refused then their rations would have been stopped.

Out at Intombi we had a very large marquee made into an operation theatre. This was entirely controlled by Sister Bond, who has for eight years been a Sister of the Army Nursing Service. Owing to the fact that she had no ward, her name has been comparatively seldom mentioned, but you cannot say too much about her, for she is splendid in every way. When Sister Dowse most unfortunately contracted enteric, her place was taken by Sister Noble, who, both in Ladysmith and Intombi, had charge of the officers' hospitals, and returned every four days. It was very unfortunate that Sister Dowse should have developed enteric, but we hope that all the same some notice will be taken of her services at the close of the war.

When the siege was raised at last, the arrival of the relief column was quite unexpected, and we could hardly realize that the weary, anxious time was over. The arrival of the hospital train marked a great day for us. It took 60 surgical cases down to Mooi River and the different hospitals, and returned every four days. It was perfectly equipped, and greatly appreciated by the Sisters.

I must also mention the assistance we received from the Red Cross Society, which sent us in supplies with the first provisions that reached the town. Without it we should have been badly off; as it was, we were supplied with down pillows, sheets and pillow cases as fine as cambric, meat essences, champagne; everything we asked for, and of the best, was furnished to us in the most business-like manner. We have reason to be very grateful to this Society.

Lastly, I must mention that Lady White sent each Sister three guineas to buy something as a memento of the siege."

Mrs. Ludlow was wearing her memento, a charming medallion, on a gold chain, bearing a suitable inscription telling of the siege of Ladysmith. It is marvellous, considering the strain she has undergone, that Mrs. Ludlow is looking as young and sprightly as ever, and is longing for further work in her country's cause.

M. B.

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