

D-Day: Stories from the Walls



The Provision of American Medical Services at or via Southampton during WWII

During the Maritime Archaeology Trust's National Lottery Heritage Funded D-Day Stories from the Walls project, volunteers undertook online research into topics and themes linked to D-Day, Southampton, ships and people during the Second World War. Their findings were used to support project outreach and dissemination.

This Research Article was undertaken by one of our volunteers and represents many hours of hard and diligent work. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our amazing volunteers.

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Introduction

This article deals primarily with American Army medical services and those associated with the 14th Port, Southampton. However, the effective cooperation and interfacing with the British and Canadian medical services cannot and must not be overlooked.

Provision of medical services to support the armed services was paramount and the organisation and deployment of American Army medical services was a logistical triumph in its own right, as was the treatment afforded to the combatant casualties.

The operation of Hospital Ships and Landing Craft plying between England and the Continent immediately the Normandy invasion commenced is addressed in a separate article. Although the Americans used Portland up until September 1944, the principal port used to receive sea-borne casualties post D-Day was Southampton. The Americans also used air evacuation from the Continent to the United Kingdom but this method is not explored in this article.

The American Army medical and related units include General hospitals, Evacuation Hospitals, Field Hospitals, Station Hospitals, Hospital Centers, Convalescent Hospitals, Hospital Ships, Medical Units, Medical Clearing Companies, Motor Ambulance Companies, and Medical Sanitary Companies – Medical Units include sub-units such as Medical Battalions of various types, Surgical Groups, Gas Treatment Units. These units in a given theatre of war often combined with other units, or changed in make-up according to the needs of the period – this article makes no attempt to catalogue such changes which were fluid in nature. It should be noted that American terminology has been followed.

There were also a number of Quartermaster Graves Registration Companies, whose personnel were responsible for procuring, storing and distributing almost anything used by the American armed forces and also included was positive identification of bodies, collection of personal effects, supervision of burials, registration of graves, and completion of burial reports, in line with established operational doctrine.

Planning for D-Day and Subsequently

When war was declared between America and the Axis countries on 8 December 1941, the American Army was already represented in the United Kingdom by a 'Special Advisors Group' attached to the US Embassy and which included a medical representative. Although D-Day was over two years away, the need for American medical representation was needed by February 1942 when the first American Army personnel arrived in Northern Ireland, to be followed by many, many more troops. Initially, the troops were able to use the medical facilities of the British and Canadian services.

Assessment of the need evolved over time and in February 1943 was finalised at 95,000 hospital beds needed for American forces – construction of hospitals with many difficulties encountered proceeded in the UK, and by D-Day, 85,050 beds were available to US forces. This would rapidly increase as some of the constructed hospitals were dual purpose, initially as barracks but designed for rapid conversion to a hospital. Tentage was also utilised. The location of the hospitals over the UK had to take account of war zone evacuation plans which were advanced from previous experience and amended to take account of the Channel crossing and subsequent transportation in the UK. A rehabilitation and conditioning programme for wounded personnel was instituted within the UK for the European Theater for *"returning a soldier to his full strength and spirit as soon as possible so that he could go back to his duties with confidence"* leading to a convalescent centre at the 16th Station Hospital being established at Bromsgrove. Arrangements for joint US/UK dental care, prevention of outbreaks of disease especially where large numbers of troops congregated at new camps were instituted together

with a US veterinary force to ensure good food hygiene – an army marches on its stomach – particularly when troops moved to the Continent.

Considerable emphasis was placed on ensuring that US Army nurses who were young and limited to graduate registered nurses, and had less than 30 days Army service when departing America, were on arrival in the UK quickly brought up to unit standard – fruitful cooperation between the US Army Nursing corps and the UK’s Military Nursing Organisations for exchange visits within the UK proved extremely beneficial [Fold3Planning]

The *website <https://history.army.mil/html/reference/Normandy/TS/MD/MD6.htm> gives a detailed review of planning for the Normandy invasion together with evacuation of casualties. Two aspects deserve attention:

- *“US Army surgeons in the European Theater learned from British experience in the Western Desert, and from early American operations in North Africa and Sicily, that whole blood-while highly perishable and difficult to store and transport-was indispensable for controlling shock in severely wounded soldiers. Blood, administered as far forward as possible in the evacuation chain, saved lives that plasma alone could not. In response to this growing weight of evidence General Hawley in July 1943 decided to establish an ETO whole blood service, modelled on the highly successful British Army Transfusion Service. The American blood bank took shape during late 1943 and early 1944, planned and supervised by an ad hoc committee headed by Colonel Mason, then chief of the Operations Division, and including Colonels Cutler and Middleton, the commander of the 1st Medical General Laboratory, and the chief of the Supply Division. No T/O blood bank unit existed, so General Hawley improvised one” [*Website: 174] (ETO is the American acronym for European Theater of Operation).*

- *“Planned Landing of Medical Units, 6-14 June 1944”. [*Website:170]*

Utah Beach ^a	June	Omaha Beach	June
6 auxiliary surgical teams	6	12 auxiliary surgical teams	6
1st Medical Depot Company, advance platoon	7	1st Medical Depot Company, advance platoon	6
42d Field Hospital	7	13th Field Hospital	6
45th Field Hospital	9	51st Field Hospital	8
3 auxiliary surgical teams	9	449th Collecting Company	11
463d Collecting Company	10	450th Collecting Company	11
564th Ambulance Company	11	577th Ambulance Company	11
464th Collecting Company	11	5th Evacuation Hospital	11
91st Evacuation Hospital	11	24th Evacuation Hospital	11
565th Ambulance Company	12	451st Collecting Company	12
493d Collecting Company	12	452d Collecting Company	12
128th Evacuation Hospital	14	575th Ambulance Company	12
566th Ambulance Company	14	41st Evacuation Hospital	12
501st Collecting Company	14		

^a Small portion of troop buildup schedule, exclusive of brigade and corps units.

Source: First US Army Report of Operations, 20 Oct 43-1 Aug 44, bk. II, an. 2, pp. 60-61.

Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley near Southampton

Situated between 1863 and 1966 in what is now Royal Victoria Country Park, the Royal Victoria Hospital at Netley was initially designated US Navy Base Hospital Number 12. The RMS *Aquitania* had brought the Special Navy Advance Group 56 from New York to Greenock on 5 February 1944 to man the 1,000-bed hospital [Wikipedia: Aquitania] This institution had a staff of Navy medical personnel,

U.S. Navy physicians, nurses, and Hospital Corpsmen [Navy Medicine Live] but during December 1943, two-fifths of the Army 58th General Hospital were at Netley, “their mission was inventory and preparation of part of the Royal Victoria Hospital for transfer from British RAMC to US Naval Service, with Lt. Colonel Frank R. Bailey as the Officer in charge” [58GH]. However, 232nd Army Station Hospital assumed control in March 1945 at Block E, designated “Hospital Plant #4121 with a bed capacity of 805”. This lasted until 12 June 1945 when control was handed over to 121st Station Hospital but they were

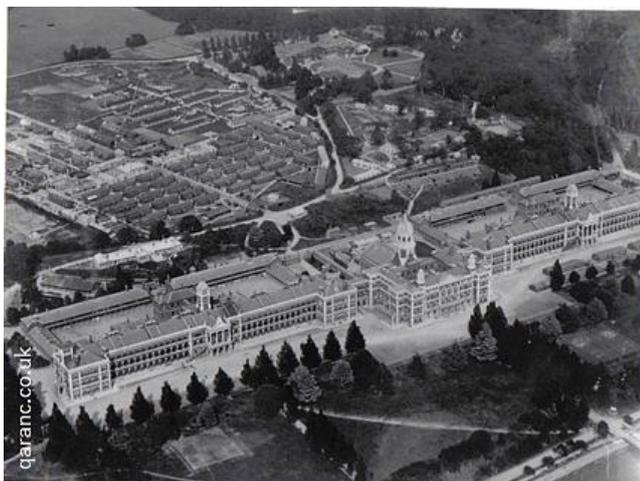


Figure 1: Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley (Undated)
 Source: Unknown. Courtesy Alexandria Edwards (nee Rainey)
<https://www.qaranc.co.uk/netleyhospital.php>



Figure 2: Nurses at RV Hospital Netley WW2 (Undated)

Sources: <http://www.hants.gov.uk/rh/archives/ww2.pdf>



Figure 3: RV Hospital Station c. 1900

again redeployed from Ringwood on 12 September 1945 to relieve the 305th Station Hospital at Netley, until 30 November 1945 [232ASH]. The 28th General Hospital were for one month at Netley between 15 January and 15 February 1944 [28GH].

A hospital/ ambulance train ran directly between the 14th Port Southampton and the hospital, with a pedestrian tunnel from the station into the hospital, affording cover to the patients during transfer from train to hospital. The main railway line had required a spur into the hospital, ¾ mile long built in 1900, and the spur’s steep gradient often required a steam locomotive at either end of the train.

The Royal Victoria Hospital (the British Empire’s oldest military hospital) was returned at 12:00 hours, 19 July 1945, with ceremony by the United States Army to the Royal Army Medical Corps. Lieutenant General Sir Alexander Hood, Director General, RAMC, received the key to the building from Brigadier General Charles B. Spruit, United



Figure 4: RV Hospital - Return to R.A.M.C.
 Source: <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/28th-general-hospital/>

Kingdom Base Surgeon. The last Army hospital to be located at the Royal Victoria Hospital annex (block E) was the 500-bed 121st Station Hospital, under command of Colonel George Thatcher, MC [28GH].

Hospital Trains

Hospital Trains were operational units of the US Medical Department and in some cases were part of the onboard resource of hospital ships. *“The means of transporting sick and wounded from Evacuation Hospitals in the combat zone to another Hospital in the Communications Zone consists of Hospital Trains, Hospital Ships, and occasionally, Motor Convoys and Airplane Ambulances. The usual method of transporting patients from the Evacuation Hospitals in the combat zone to General Hospitals in the Communications Zone was by means of Hospital Trains”* [WW2HT]. Although also used in the First World War, in 1939, America had no hospital trains and a programme of conversion of Pullman cars and new units were procured, for use in America for returning casualties which it was estimated might reach 32,000 to 36,000 per month at peak.

“Hospital Trains were equally organized in Britain. Upon request from the United States Army, the British Ministry of War Transport assembled from its own rolling stock a total of 39 (Hospital) Trains for American use in Britain (and eventually across the Channel, after the D-Day operation). While the medical equipment came partly from British and partly from American stocks, the Hospital Trains were entirely staffed by US medical personnel. The Trains included kitchen, surgery, pharmacy, and staff accommodation cars, as well as 36-litter ward cars, coaches for ambulatory patients, and diesel heating and power plants” [WW2HT]. More background can be accessed at <https://www.med-dept.com/articles/the-hospital-train-in-the-e-t-o-1944-1945/> and at <https://www.med-dept.com/articles/ww2-military-hospitals-european-theater-of-operations/> and archived narrative [Fold3: Narrative]

British Red Cross Ambulance Trains were also in use, see <https://www.qaranc.co.uk/ambulancetrains.php> There were approximately 30 in operation by beginning of the Second World War and a typical ambulance train (British terminology) would have 14 carriages including staff carriages for nursing and medical staff permanently stationed on board. These trains were also used to convey civilians from bombed cities in Britain [Ambulance Trains].

Medical Services associated with 14th Port

The evacuation of US casualties from northern France was jointly undertaken, by the Medical Department providing medical personnel, care and equipment, and by the Transportation Corps providing transport which was routed through Portland until September 1944 and primarily via Southampton until 19 August 1945 when the last casualty was transported to America on the USAHS *Adela E. Lutz*. The procedure for return of overseas casualties ultimately to America was a process prescribed by the War Department. Removals from Normandy started on D-Day but did not arrive in UK until 9 June due to delays in forming convoys. As described in another article about 14th Port, Landing Craft were used to ferry casualties to the Hospital Ships waiting offshore, even bringing casualties back to England, until such time as the Hospital Ships could dock at Cherbourg or Le Havre. The Landing Craft discharged their patients at hard into waiting military ambulances for onward travel to military hospitals. The British used trains where possible whereas the Americans tended to use ambulances unless long distance travel was required, say to port of embarkation on the west coast bound for America.

One of the first hospital ships to return to Southampton was the *Lady Connaught*, departing Utah beach on 9 June 1944 having been anchored offshore since the previous day, taking 449 patients discharged at Southampton the next day – two of the five British hospital ships were manned by the British and the other three by Americans including the *Lady Connaught* with a complement of the 13th Hospital Train. The *Lady Connaught* thereafter carried both American and British casualties. [Google

Book: 363-369] On 1 March 1945, the 10th Hospital Train, attached to 14th Port, was awarded the Meritorious Award for outstanding services rendered in the period following D-Day – this Hospital Train had completed 45 crossings of the English Channel between 6 June 1944 and 31 December 1944.

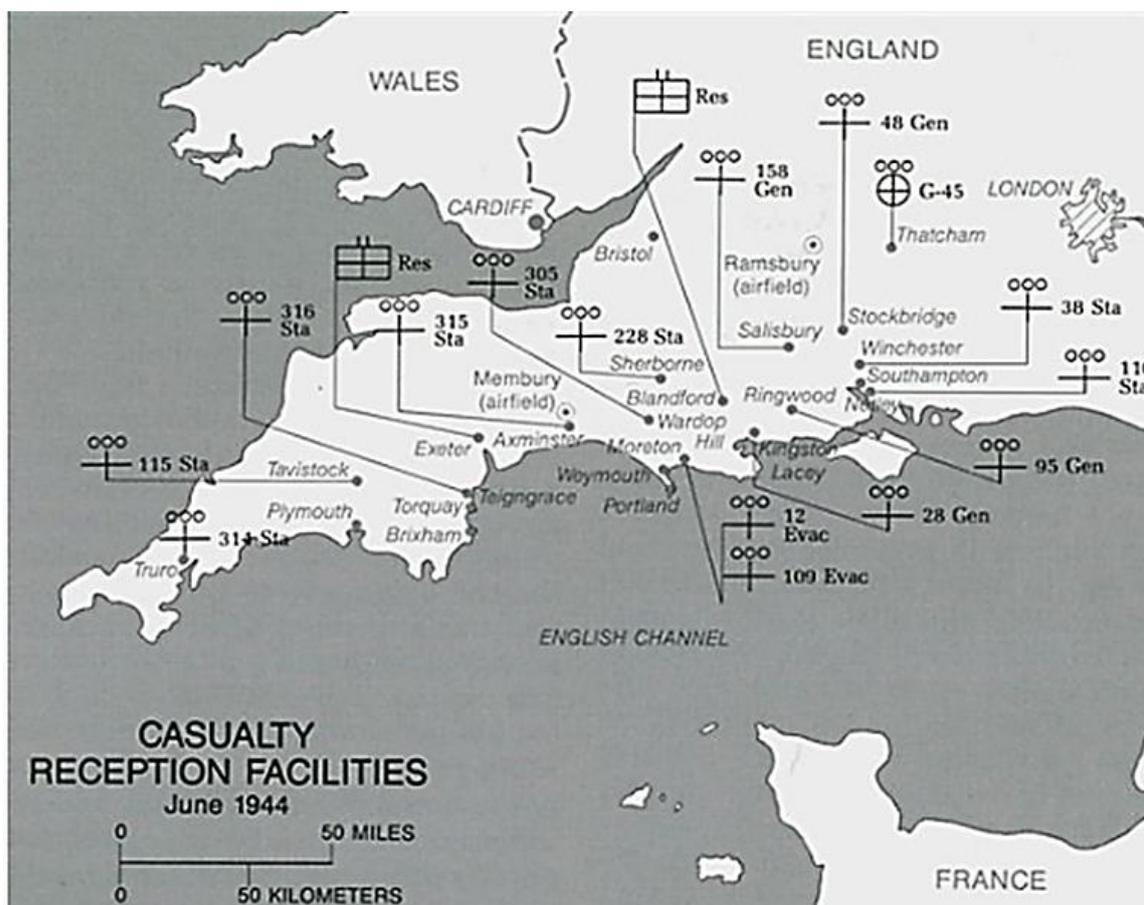


Figure 5: Casualty Reception Facilities Established for Normandy Invasion

“The different Base Sections in southern England set up Field Hospitals (when necessary, supplemented by other medical units) under canvas or in requisitioned buildings to serve as Holdings Units for inland or direct Rail and/or Air Evacuation”.

Source: <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/29th-field-hospital/>



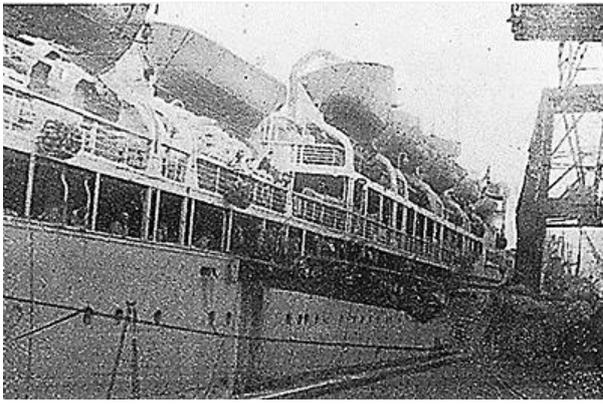
Figure 6: Southern Railways Emergency Ambulance Crews on Stand-by at Southampton Docks. (Undated – WW2)

Source: <http://www.hants.gov.uk/rh/archives/ww2.pdf>

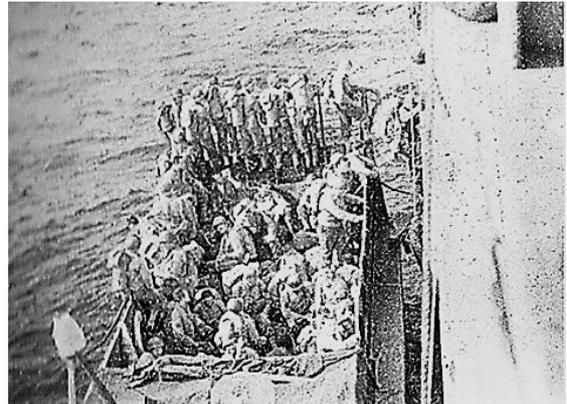
Reference HRO: 139M86/8/2

As a forerunner to American Medical Services at the 14th Port, the Dock’s owners, Southern Railway, had emergency provision as shown in Figure 6. Medical Units associated with the 14th Port at various times, other than the above-mentioned Hospital Trains, included Headquarters 186th Medical Battalion, 703rd and 724th Medical Sanitary Companies, 509th and 510th Medical Collecting Companies, 93rd Gas Treatment Battalion, 110th Station Hospital, 46th Field Hospital and the 655th Ambulance Company. For the purposes of this article, the 703rd Medical Sanitary Company is discussed in some detail together with brief

references to associated medical Units. Mention should also be made of other Medical Units who were deployed from D-Day. Until the French harbours such as Cherbourg and Le Havre were usable by the Allied forces, the deployed Medical Units including nurses had to reach shore via Landing Craft, as did the regular troops, as shown in Figure 7.



The unit board the *Devonshire* at Southampton ready to cross to Utah Beach, Normandy



Personnel climbing down the ship's hull off Utah beach to board the landing craft to take them ashore

Figure 7: 108th Evacuation Hospital in transit to Utah beach

The 703rd Medical Sanitary Company comprised non-white personnel, typically African-American. First Lt. James W. Summerower from Chicago was one of the first Officers in the U.S. Army with African-American background, having enrolled as a private and in four years reached officer status with the 703rd [Veterans Research] (As of 31 August 1944, there were also at least 16 other non-white companies of the Transportation Corps in Southampton) [Lest We Forget].

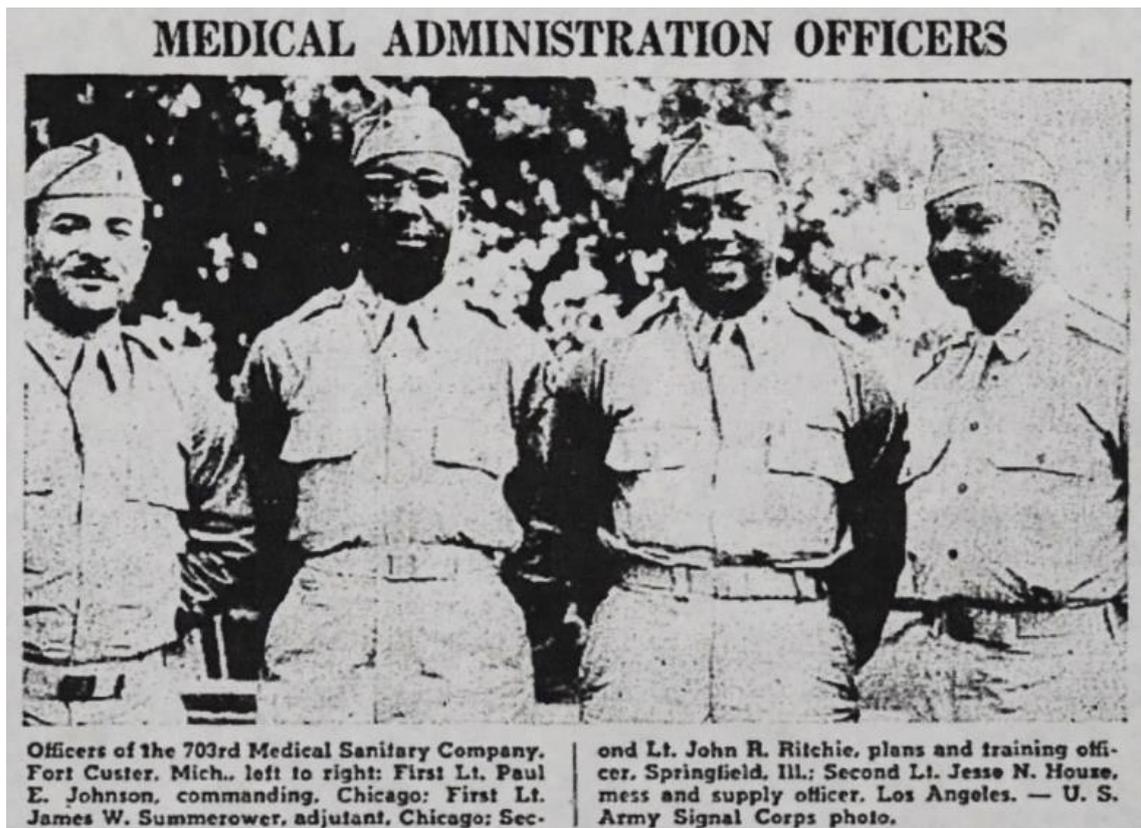


Figure 8: 703rd Officers as Named at Fort Custer
From an Undated issue of *The Chicago Defender*
Source: See Bibliography

Based at Fort Custer, Michigan until it transferred to UK in late 1943, the 703rd Medical Sanitary Company, comprising four Officers and 120 Enlisted Men, was based at Millbrook on the western edge of Southampton housed in a tented camp in a public park. There were 23 tents, only 3 had floors, and

as the park did not have drainage, in wet weather mud was “*the order of the day*” [Fold3 Millbrook] but floors were completed by 17 September 1944 facilitating “*the tents to take on a ‘home’ aspect for most of the personnel*”.



Figure 9: Casualties Arriving at the Hards (Undated)
Source: see bibliography

The primary mission of the 703rd was “*to supply the litter (stretcher) teams necessary for the evacuation of waterborne casualties for 14th Port to either a Holding Station or to Transit Hospitals*”. Various personnel interchanged with other medical units in the area, and on 3 September 1944, the 703rd was formally attached to the 14th Port for rations, quarters and administration. During this quarter, 2nd Lt. Alnutt, responsible for Plans and Training in the 703rd, took seven days leave at a course on Shakespeare at Stratford-upon-Avon courtesy of an

arrangement “*arranged by the British Council collaborating with the Director of the Stratford-Upon-Avon festival Company, the Canadian Legion Education Services and the United States Army Special Service Division*”. Alnutt enthused about the course.

When casualties began arriving after D-Day at Southampton for unloading at the wharves and hards, the 703rd was assisted at the hards by the Second Platoon of the 736th Medical Sanitary Company who were also based at Millbrook from 3 May 1944 until 12 August 1944 when the 736th departed for Weymouth destined for the Continent. [736MSC]

Not long before the end of 1944, the 703rd was relocated at the Ordnance Compound Camp (US) at Southampton, where the conditions of the run-down barracks being used were poor lowering morale, and their mission had been extended to include for the out-loading of Class II patients bound for America. 1st Lt. James W. Summerower, initially Personnel Adjutant, was appointed Public Relations Officer effective as of 3 January 1945 and on 14th January 1945, their Commanding Officer, 1st Lt. Paul E. Johnson was promoted to Captain. On 20 January 1945, the 703rd Panthers basketball team were awarded the First Half Championship Plaque, 14th Port.

On 13 February 1945, “*several hundred guests jammed a comfortable ballroom, artistically decorated with crepe streamers of red, white, blue, and green, plus huge hearts spangled with witty inscriptions, to attend the third annual dance sponsored by this Negro Medical Sanitary Company stationed at a south coast *port. Guests arrived in large numbers at an early hour and many of them came from far away sections of Wales and England. The presence of such a large number of persons symbolizes the excellent reputation for courtesy and kindness established by the members of this unit during its eighteen months in the United Kingdom*” The orchestra played a variety of numbers including local folk tunes with a distinctive American twist. The blend of conservative English dancing and the antics of the jitterbug created a distinctly new type of dancing” [Fold3 Dance] (*port=Southampton).

The next day, the unit moved to Camp “C”-27 which was eagerly received due to the poor conditions at the Ordnance Compound and on 18 March 1945, the 703rd received notice of the award of the Meritorious Service Plaque with great pleasure, especially as they were the first unit of its type to receive this award. The Meritorious Service Award Plaque, to any Unit, is “*awarded, for superior performance of duty in the performance of exceptionally difficult task, and for the achievement and maintenance of a high standard of discipline, during the respective periods indicated, to:*

703rd Medical Sanitary Company – 6 June 1944 to 6 August 1944. The 703rd Medical Sanitary Company actively participated in the evacuation of battle casualties from the continent to 14th Port during this period. This duty was performed in an exemplary manner, often under the most adverse conditions of

weather, time, and very unfavourable circumstances. The high standard of speed and efficiency enabling the successful completion of this duty is directly attributed to the special attention given by personnel of this until to the efficient and adequate preventative maintenance of vehicles and material. Personnel were noted for their enthusiastic willingness and cooperation in the execution of orders. The military discipline, courtesy and uniform appearance of the members of the 703rd Medical Sanitary Company were superior at all times". This citation was issued on 16 March 1945 by the United Kingdom Base Headquarters. [Fold3 703MSUP]

This award had been preceded by a written commendation dated 10 July 1944 from the Headquarters of 93rd Gas Treatment Battalion stating: [Fold3 93GTB]

1. "I wish to commend the officers and enlisted personnel of the 703rd Sanitary Company for the excellent manner in which they performed their mission in the evacuation of casualties in Area "C" while under the jurisdiction of this Headquarters.
2. Their adherence to duty and the efficiency of their workmanship were an important contributing factor in the saving of the lives of many of our wounded soldiers".



Figure 10: Meritorious Service Award Insignia
Worn on right sleeve of service coat, lower edge four inches (10cm) from the cuff.

Source:

<https://www.veteranmedals.army.mil/awardg&d.nsf/374fbd6468877ab385256b6600590a90/40d4c51e99b7e87f85256b66006551021OpenDocument>

An inspection by off-site high-ranking personnel, a regular event throughout the period of the 14th Port, was conducted on 3 May 1945 and its finding fully supported the award of the Meritorious Service Plaque, finding excellent attributes being displayed by the 703rd Company. The report finished with "it appears to be a superior unit in every way". [Fold3 Inspection]

The appreciation of the 703rd Medical Company was also recognised by the 217th Hospital Ship complement aboard USAHS St. Olaf in a letter dated 9 March 1945 to Lt Colonel R. Moursund, 14th Port's Evacuation Officer concerning 14th port generally including "We are particularly grateful to the officers and men of the 703rd Medical Sanitation Company; we have never associated with a unit performing so smoothly and efficiently. May we ask that you express to all concerned our gratitude". [Fold3 St. Olaf] This was previously echoed in a letter dated 14 December 1944 by the Captain of SS Santa Maria to Colonel Kiser, Port Commander, complementing the entire 14th Port operation. [Fold3 Santa Maria]

The 703rd Medical Sanitation Company at Southampton "unloaded more than 120,000 battle casualties from D-Day to VE-Day, and during the same period loaded more than 30,000 patients headed for the United States. This operation involved more than eighty-two different ships and eighteen different hospital trains and the number of patients handled represent better than seventy-five per cent of the total number evacuated here" [Fold3 703 Stats].

Finally, mention should be made of 1st Lt. James W. Summerower. He died in 1994, having married his wife Fannimae, a teacher, in 1941. They had no children but established the "Fannimae H. And James W Summerower Educational Foundation mainly supporting kids with education scholarships". This Foundation, which still exists, bestowed at least 800,000 dollars, and Fannimae also separately established several business monetary awards in memory of her husband. She died in 1999 [Foundation].

The Appendix below summarises some of the American Medical Units which used the 14th Port Southampton.

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Appendix

Selection of Medical Units Embarking or Disembarking at 14th Port Southampton

Arranged: **UNIT** Transiting **Chronologically** at Southampton

See links for more complete history.

- **736th Medical Sanitary Company. Second Platoon. 3 May 1944.** *“On 3 May 1944, the Platoon was moved to Millbrook Medical Camp, Hampshire, (from Devon) where they were instructed to unload casualties off the Hospital Carriers and LSTs bringing in patients from the battlefield. A hasty but strenuous training program was set up for handling litter patients. When the casualties really started coming in from the Invasion beaches, Second Platoon was tasked with unloading the different landing craft, working in conjunction with the 703d Medical Sanitary Company (also stationed at Millbrook –ed). Wharves and hards could accommodate only 5 LSTs at once, and after being cleared of casualties, the ships remained docked or beached until reloaded with troops and cargo vitally needed in France. All units temporarily stationed on site were placed under control of Headquarters, 93d Medical Gas Treatment Battalion (CO > Colonel Joseph W. Palmer, MC –ed). When off-duty, some men were allowed to have passes to Southampton or engaged in sports. On 11 June 1944, the Company (i.e. the Platoons) was reunited at Millbrook Medical Camp. When the 93d Med Gas Tr Bn was withdrawn it was replaced by the 186th Medical Battalion which took charge of the hards at Southampton, replacing the 33d Medical Battalion (CO > Colonel Frederick K. Knoblauch, MC –ed). The 736th would move to the boats and landing craft bring the patients out to the waiting ambulances or led the ambulatory cases. They handled a lot of American wounded, German PWs, and some French casualties during the job. On 12 August 1944, 3 Officers and 107 Enlisted Men departed Millbrook, and transferred to Camp # 14, Weymouth”, where the next day they embarked on LC184 (US) and LST#1237 (B) for Utah beach”.* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/736th-medical-sanitary-company/>
- **28th Field Hospital. Circa (assumed) mid-May 1944.** Deployed for the Aleutian Islands Campaign (3 June 1942 – 24 August 1943), the unit returned to Seattle in February 1944, then arrived in the UK during May 1944. *“After arriving in the United Kingdom, and preparing for possible field operations related to D-Day, the 28th Field Hospital operated 3 separate Hospital sites in England. The unit functioned as part of the casualty reception group in southern England, being based at Southampton together with the 46th Field Hospital. Under Southern Base Section command, both units placed detachments near the wharves and hards to receive the most urgent medical cases from the arriving LSTs. A Platoon of the 28th Field occupied a bombed-out brewery on the waterfront using some of the intact premises for wards, operating rooms, and x-ray department, and set up supply, headquarters, and other facilities in tents in the rubble above ground. Such units were often reinforced with auxiliary surgical and shock teams and with medical gas treatment elements. Sanitary company personnel on board ships transferred the patients to the shore, where the non-transportable were tagged, and went directly to the Holding Units such as the 28th or 46th Field Hospitals for immediate treatment. Sanitary and Ambulance Companies carried the other patients to waiting ambulances for further inland evacuation. Expansion of air evacuation combined with a lesser number of casualties from the D-Day invasion combined with the opening of FUSA hospitals on the continent, rendered much of the elaborate network of holding units in the United Kingdom superfluous. Accordingly, Communications Zone Headquarters redeployed the 28th Field from*

Southampton and returned it to regular duty. Crossing to the Continent was successfully carried out mid-August 1944 with the organization immediately assigned upon arrival". <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/28th-field-hospital/>

- **51st Field Hospital. 5 June 1944.** Having arrived from New York aboard USAT *Cristobal* at Swansea on 9 March 1944, the unit via Ross-on-Wye and Andover arrived at the Marshalling Area in Southampton on 5 June 1944. On 7 June 1944, "half of the organization's vehicles, with 9 Officers and 51 EM sailed on an LCT, the other half of the vehicles with 8 Officers and 68 EM travelled aboard another LCT, while the remaining 3 Officers and 72 EM boarded an LCI. After an uneventful trip, the convoy arrived off the coast of Normandy the morning of 8 June. A number of fruitless attempts were made to land, but each time the landing crafts were signalled to stand off. Finally, the order came to – land in spite of danger – and the Hospital came ashore in the Easy Green sector, Omaha Beach, at 1600 hours, 8 June 1944, with neither interferences nor casualties". <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/51st-field-hospital/>
- **5th Evacuation Hospital. 7 June 1944.** From Wokingham, two echelons travelled to "Marshalling Area, Camp C-17 near Southampton and Camp C-14, Marshalling Area, Southampton, England. No provision had been made to house the ANC Officers, so the Nurses were temporarily housed at the 46th Field Hospital. On D+3 (9 June 1944) the day ended when Colonel Charles L. Baird's group (second echelon) departed from the Marshalling Area and arrived at the Port of Southampton around 2000 hours. Upon arrival immediate preparation was made to load vehicles, equipment, and supplies aboard the Liberty Ship USAT David Caldwell. Personnel were issued life preservers and eventually shown to their quarters. Meanwhile, 1st Lieutenant Frank H. Threlkel's group remained in the Marshalling Area until 12 June 1944, when they were instructed to proceed to Port. Prior to departure, every man was issued chewing gum, matches, insecticide & louse powder, water purification tablets, seasickness tablets, and two vomit bags. After a short delay due to congestion at the port, the men embarked on the British Infantry Landing Ship Empire Mace at 1750 hours. At precisely 2100, HMT Empire Mace, LSI (L) slipped into the treacherous waters of the Channel, following other numerous ships bound for the shores of France. The following morning at 0200 hours, aboard the Empire Mace, an air alert was sounded as it seemed that enemy fighters had been sighted. All the personnel jumped from their bunks, and already dressed and life belted, waited for the inevitable. Although no action was taken by the ship, ack-ack could be heard from other vessels in the distance. Alert terminated in ten minutes but everyone preferred to remain awake in case of another attack. After five more hours of sheer night, light streaks appeared in the sky. And about 0700 a bluff appeared in the distance – the French coast. Within a few minutes HMT Empire Mace dropped anchor about one and a half miles off Omaha Beach. At 1430, all personnel debarked in barges and ferries. In the meantime, the group under command of Colonel Charles L. Baird, with the motor convoy, had begun unloading at 0100 with the first 10 vehicles transported on rhino ferries. During the transfer from ferry to shore some difficulty was experienced and 3 trucks drove into the sea. At the command "Take off" the drivers had insisted that the water was too deep, but the Officer would not relent and in they all plunged up to their heads! Some of the drivers could swim but one couldn't. Eventually the 3 men reached shore unharmed, but without their trucks. The rhino ferry backed off safely and unloaded the remaining trucks further on the beach. Due to some interference by the Luftwaffe, it was impossible to retrieve the waterlogged trucks until the next morning. Meanwhile those men on board the USAT David Caldwell spent the night watching the huge barrage of anti-aircraft and machinegun fire thrown up each time an enemy plane came over. <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/5th-evacuation-hospital/>

- **91st Evacuation Hospital. 8 June 1944.** Having been deployed in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Palermo in 1943, the Hospital redeployed to Bristol then to Tortworth Court, Felfield by April 1944. On 5 June 1944, the Hospital moved to the Marshalling Area at Camp Hursley. *“The organization departed from Camp Hursley (Marshalling Area) for the Embarkation Port (Southampton Port) on 8 June 1944, and boarded the SS Thomas Wolfe, a Liberty Ship. The unit’s supplies and equipment were loaded onto the vessel first, while its personnel waited on the docks. Loading of the ship, including all unit equipment and personnel was completed at 2000 hours on 8 June. The convoy to which the 91st Evac Hosp had been assigned set sail for the coast of France the following day. SS Thomas Wolfe was the flagship for the convoy of 30 ships, which sailed without escort to Normandy. The personnel disembarked over the side of the ship on rope ladders into LCIs at 1400 hours on 10 June 1944, and landed at Utah during the next half hour.* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/91st-evacuation-hospital/>
- **44th Evacuation Hospital. 13 June 1944.** Having arrived at Maidenhead on 26 November 1943, the hospital did not move to Southampton for nearly seven months, and *“6 marriages took place between April and May. 35 Officers, 40 Nurses, 2 Red Cross workers, and 193 Enlisted Men, left by rail, unloaded at Winchester, and proceeded by truck to Cp. Hursley. The same evening, the vehicle party including 4 Officers and 58 EM arrived with 56 vehicles too. the unit received movement orders at 0355 18 June and at 0730 the group left by motor convoy for Southampton. The same afternoon, it was 1700 hours, the unit embarked on 2 LCIs and anchors were weighed at 2000 hours. After rendezvousing with a convoy off Portsmouth, the convoy left at 2300 with destination the beaches of France. On arrival at the landing beach, designated Omaha, at about noon of 19 June, waves had become rollers blown by a strong wind and the makeshift harbor was crowded with vessels, and it was next to impossible to land on the beach itself! The pitching of the craft had been almost unendurable until they passed through the breakwater of concrete-laden ships. Inside there was still considerable chop but the cases of seasickness began to improve and soon many were able to enjoy the self-heating cans of split pea soup which had been issued”.* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/44th-evacuation-hospital/>
- **Medical Detachment, 70th Tank Battalion. 14 and 20 June 1944.** *“3 June 1944 - Headquarters Company, A + C + D Companies, departed from Dartmouth, B Company, departed from Torcross. The residual groups, consisting of elements pertaining to Headquarters Company, Service Company, Medical Detachment, and rear echelon personnel, departed from Southampton on 14 and 20 June 1944, arriving at Omaha Beach, Normandy, France, on 16 and 23 June respectively”.* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/medical-detachment-70th-tank-battalion/>
- **45th Evacuation Hospital. 15 June 1944.** *“The fast troopship Aquitania reached Scotland, arriving at Greenock, early in the morning at 0400 hours, 24 November 1943. Troops debarked at 1400 hours and almost immediately entrained for Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire. The 45th Evac Hosp left Wotton-under-Edge the morning of 13 June, entraining at 0700 hours for Hursley, Hants where it arrived midday. The organization departed 15 June reaching Southampton at 1400 hours. After boarding HMS Glenearn at 1720 hours, the Hospital set sail for the Continent. The 45th Evacuation Hospital landed at Omaha Beach at 1500 hours on D + 10 (16 June 1944)”.* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/45th-evacuation-hospital/>
- **39th Field Hospital. 17 June 1944.** This unit consisted of three platoons, (1st, 2nd and 3rd AFCF or Air Force Clearing Station) all of which landed at Newport on 11 March 1944 from Brooklyn Naval Yards. They then went to Grove, near Wantage, at AAF Station 519 and this would be

the last time they were together for the remainder of the war. *"The 1st AFCF proceeded to the Marshalling Area at Hursley on 12 June 1944, then the unit departed from Hursley at 1000 hours, June 17. Destination was Camp C-13, Southampton. At 2200 hours the unit boarded LCI No. 421 (during an air raid), and left to anchor outside of the main harbor. On June 19, First Platoon made a rough trip across the Channel to the Continent. After first arriving off Omaha Beach, orders were received to proceed to Utah Beach in order to discharge some troops of another unit. Because of a rough sea, 3 more days were lost at sea. Finally, with everyone being a bit anxious, the unit returned to Omaha Beach, where it debarked around 22 June 1944".* The 2nd AFCF went via Portsmouth and the 3rd AFCF went via Portland. <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/39th-field-hospital/>

- **35th Evacuation Hospital. 18 June 1944.** *"From Stone, Staffordshire, the 35th arrived at the Marshalling Area, Southampton 18 June. Their advance party comprising 6 Officers, 50 Enlisted Men and 22 heavily-laden vehicles, boarded a ship which was to sail in convoy to Omaha Beach, Normandy, arriving 19 June 1944".* Bad weather delayed the echelon. *"The remainder of its personnel (except Nurses) left the Marshalling Area at Southampton on 22 June 1944, and arrived at Omaha Beach the following day. The Nurses arrived on 24 June 1944".* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/35th-evacuation-hospital/>
- **2nd Evacuation Hospital. 19 June 1944.** (From *"Remenham, Henley-on-Thames, at 1230 hours, 19 June 1944, the Hospital was once more on the move to Camp Hursley Marshalling Area, England, where it arrived around 1600 hours. Processing at the camp was swift, methodical, as everyone already en-trucked the following day heading for the Southampton docks. After being re-grouped and duly processed, a partial payment worth US\$ 4.00 was received in French Invasion currency. On 19 June 1944 the organization boarded the SS Léopoldville, a former Belgian passenger ship, to cross the Channel. The time was 1600. The ship sailed at 2130 hours and lay off the Isle of Wight that night and the following days. She only started crossing 22 June 1944, but because of rough seas debarkation at Omaha Beach was impossible. After transferring onto LCIs the unit eventually landed on Omaha Beach at 0800, 23 June 1944".* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/2d-evacuation-hospital/>
- **4th Convalescent Hospital. 20 June 1944.** *"In accordance with orders from The Surgeon, First United States Army, the 4th moved from Cookham, England, by train to its Marshalling Area near Southampton. Upon arrival (20 June 1944 –ed) the unit was split for the cross-channel journey and on 23 June 1944, Detachment "A" (forward echelon) consisting of 23 Officers, 108 EM, and 8 ARC workers embarked at Southampton, arriving at Omaha Beach, at 1400 hours".* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/4th-convalescent-hospital/>
- **34th Evacuation Hospital. 20 June 1944.** *"From Altrincham to Tidworth to staging area at Southampton, on 22 June 1944 the Hospital group boarded HMS Empire Broadsword (LCI built in the UK and launched in August 1943, served in the ETO with British forces, and sunk by a mine on 2 July 1944) and had their first taste of a troopship. The first night was spent at anchor just outside the port and the following day the crossing took place in convoy. The 34th Evacuation Hospital landed on Utah Beach on 23 June 1944".* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/34th-evacuation-hospital/>
- **12th Field Hospital. 25 June 1944.** Arrived at Glasgow from New York on 20 October 1943 and deployed to five miles northwest of Cardiff, then Chester, then to Fernhurst, Sussex in early March 1944, then the unit received orders to move to Weymouth where they arrived on 27 April 1944. *"Shortly thereafter, the 12th was assigned to ADSEC, ComZ, with Headquarters at Bristol for setting up a Holding Unit for non-transportable casualties returning from the D-Day*

invasion of France. The Hospital was to be established under tentage. The setup would include a centrally-located OR surrounded by twelve (12) wards. On 17 May 1944, the unit surgical setup was materially supplemented by attachment of 3 Surgical Teams under the direction of Major Ernest A. Maxwell, MC. These Teams consisted of 9 Officers – 3 Nurses – and 6 Technicians. In addition, an Orthopaedic Team was equally attached for a short time and also a Team for treatment of Gas Casualties. The majority of incoming patients were surgical cases, many in shock, and required the use of plasma, whole blood, and penicillin. A Blood Bank was therefore eventually attached to the Hospital. The first patients were not received before 9 June 1944, and their numbers proved less than anticipated. A preliminary triage took place at the unloading docks, after which the non-transportable casualties were brought to the Hospital by ambulances. The cross-Channel evacuation program from France to the United Kingdom involved air evacuation (by the IX Troop Carrier Command) and sea evacuation (by a variety of ships, such as Landing Ship Tanks and British Hospital Carriers). For June 1944 the respective numbers were 6,469 (air) and 20,923 (sea); for July 1944, they reached 19,490 (air) and 18,195 (sea). On 12 June 1944, the unit was ordered to have all equipment ready for rail shipment to Swansea by 15 June. After some discussions with higher Headquarters, the 12th Field was not closed until 22 June 1944. All vehicles and motor personnel were ordered to the Marshalling Area at Hursley, Hants., in the vicinity of Winchester on 20 June; followed by the remainder of the personnel who proceeding by rail, departed on 22 June. Upon arrival, everyone had to wait in the streets for over 2 hours until the necessary transportation arrived. The Nurses were billeted at the 46th Field Hospital some 12 miles away. Officers and EM were meanwhile cared for at the Marshalling Area proper. French Invasion Currency as well as some emergency items necessary for the Channel crossing were distributed, after which, adequate food, and movies provided for entertainment. After due processing, briefing instructions were given 24 June 1944 and final preparations made for departure. On 25 June, the organization proceeded to the Port of Embarkation at Southampton. 21 Officers and 159 Enlisted Men made the journey by motor convoy, with the Motor Officer and personnel remaining behind to board another vessel. Due to the confusion however, the Nurses were not there, and were to make the crossing in yet another vessel. On 25 June 1944, the Officers and EM boarded LCI 495 and experienced a pleasant voyage, arriving at Omaha Beach on 26 June 1944 at about 2400 hours (transfer of personnel and baggage to landing craft started at 2330 hours –ed). The 12th Field was one of the first ADSEC medical organizations to reach Normandy”. <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/12th-field-hospital/>

- **635th Medical Clearing Company. 25 June 1944.** *“On 25 June the advance party of 6 Officers and 66 Enlisted Men left [from Hursley] at 1212 hours by convoy. An LCI was docked in a small town near Southampton waiting to transport the Company to its new destination, Normandy, France. After spending two days aboard the LCI transport, the Company finally disembarked on Utah Beach at 0830 hours on the morning of 27 June 1944 (D+21 –ed). Ambulances from the 429th Medical Collecting Company had been sent to transport the unit’s personnel and equipment to a location 4 miles east of Sainte-Mère-Église. On 27 June at 1125, the motor party left the Marshalling Area and arrived at Southampton at 1400. A night was spent on the docks in accommodations for the purpose. The following morning, the remainder of the unit boarded MT212 and departed the docks at 0600. The convoy of LSTs and liberty ships assembled at the harbor’s mouth and under their balloon barrage set off for France. The voyage was smooth and uneventful and ended at sunset when the vessel dropped anchor near Utah Beach. The motor party remained aboard for the next two days, finally disembarking on the afternoon of 30 June, and joined the advance party later that evening”. <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/635th-medical-clearing-company/>*

- **635th Medical Clearing Company. 27 June 1944.** Departed New York on 19 January 1944 aboard SS Empire Mace and arrived at Greenock on 1 February 1944, then deployed to Stone, Staffordshire followed by Widnes on 1 April 1944. Thereafter, sent to the Marshalling Area at Hursley near Southampton on 23 June. *“On 25 June the advance party of 6 Officers and 66 Enlisted Men left at 1212 hours by convoy. An LCI was docked in a small town near Southampton waiting to transport the Company to its new destination, Normandy, France”.* (The small town is not identified) *“After spending two days aboard the LCI transport, the Company finally disembarked on Utah Beach at 0830 hours on the morning of 27 June 1944 (D+21 –ed). Ambulances from the 429th Medical Collecting Company had been sent to transport the unit’s personnel and equipment to a location 4 miles east of Sainte-Mère-Église. On 27 June at 1125, the motor party left the marshalling area and arrived at Southampton at 1400. A night was spent on the docks in accommodations for the purpose. The following morning, the remainder of the unit boarded MT212 and departed the docks at 0600. The convoy of LSTs and liberty ships assembled at the harbor’s mouth and under their balloon barrage set off for France. The voyage was smooth and uneventful and ended at sunset when the vessel dropped anchor near Utah Beach. The motor party remained aboard for the next two days, finally disembarking on the afternoon of 30 June, and joined the advance party later that evening”.* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/635th-medical-clearing-company/>
- **5th General Hospital. Circa 5 July 1944.** *“The FIRST General Hospital to reach Normandy was the 5th which stood down from operations in Britain on 7 May 1944. Lt. Colonel Maxwell G. Keeler’s organization, the initial unit of its type to enter the European Theater in 1942, staged at Tidworth on 3 July 1944, waiting for its embarkation to the continent. After embarking at Southampton, England, the unit’s 58 Officers, 102 Nurses, and 500 Enlisted Men, with their vehicles, came ashore at Omaha Beach on 6 July 1944”.* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/5th-general-hospital/>
- **77th Evacuation Hospital. 7 July 1944.** Originally arrived in Britain on 17 August 1942 at Liverpool. At Tidworth Park, then Frenchay Hospital, Gloucestershire, then in October 1942 to North Africa, the Sicily in autumn 1943, back to Liverpool 25 November 1943, Everleigh Manor, Wiltshire, Gloucester, then Tunbridge Wells 27 April to 27 May 1944. *“On 28 June 1944, the entire unit en-trucked for Tunbridge Station and boarded trains with destination Eastleigh, from where the Officers and Enlisted Men continued by motor convoy to Area C-5, and the Nurses to Area C-22, both staging areas about 15 miles from Southampton. On 7 July 1944, it was approximately 1500 hours”,* when the British Empire Lance *“arrived off Utah Beach”.* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/77th-evacuation-hospital/>
- **107th Evacuation Hospital. 8 July 1944.** *“On 7 July 1944, the 107th Evac left Denbigh, North Wales, by train for Southampton, where it arrived the next morning. The next three days were spent at the camp, well hidden in the dense, soggy woods, in getting last minute instructions and equipment. Free time was spent with movies. It rained continuously. 11 July 1944, it was time to go, so, clad in fatigues, dressed in impregnated clothing, loaded with individual gear and packs, the 107th Evac Hosp departed England for the continent. Channel crossing would take place aboard a British transport, the SS Victoria. The Nurses went into the hold with the other Officers; the EM were set up everywhere else. The voyage itself was uneventful, except conditions which were appalling. The ship proved poorly ventilated, men and women were packed like animals, the sea was rough with many sick notwithstanding anti-seasickness pills, and food (not many felt hunger) was distributed in the form of 10-in-1 rations. Fortunately, the sea voyage was short and around noon 12 July 1944, the French coast was in sight. It was a beautiful and sunny day. After being transferred to the smaller LCTs, everyone moved on to*

one of the piers, part of the Omaha Beach artificial (Mulberry) harbor complex". <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/107th-evacuation-hospital/>

- **623rd Medical Clearing Company. 12 July 1944.** *"On 11 July 1944 all personnel of the 623d departed Dursley by train for the Marshalling Area near Southampton, where once again they were billeted in pyramidal tents awaiting further instructions and embarkation details. Five (5) days were spent in the Marshalling Area, and finally on 17 July, the unit left for the port of Southampton, boarding the steamer Crossbow at 1300 hours the same date. Shortly thereafter, the vessel left her berth at Southampton and all unit members were informed of their destination; Omaha Beach, Normandy. The outfit was due to arrive later that evening, but due to heavy fog, its transport spent the night anchored in the English Channel. The trip was resumed at 0400 on 18 July 1944. After debarking from the large steamer into smaller LCAs (British Navy Landing Craft Assault –ed), the unit finally landed on Omaha Beach at 1800 on 18 July 1944".* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/623d-medical-clearing-company/>
- **595th Ambulance Company, Motor (Separate) 12 July 1944.** *"After boarding the SS Dan Beard (Liberty ship) at Pier # 38, Southampton, England, on 18 July 1944, the vessel started her Channel crossing. The organization debarked at Utah Beach, France on 24 July 1944"* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/595th-ambulance-company-motor-separate/>
- **53rd Field Hospital. 13 and 14 July 1944.** Having reached Glasgow from New Jersey aboard Queen Elizabeth on 27 April 1944, the unit arrived at Hagley, Worcestershire the same day. It departed Hagley on 7 July for Tidworth. *"On 12 July, it departed once more, moving to the C-5 Marshalling Area in the vicinity of Southampton, England. On 13 July, part of the Hospital moved by motor convoy, followed by another group of personnel on 14 July. The whole unit then crossed the Channel toward the continent (France) by ship (Napier) arriving 15 July 1944 at Transient Area B (Utah Beach)".* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/53d-field-hospital/>
- **307th Airborne Medical Company. 13 July 1944.** *"Operations were concluded on 11 July 1944. After spending a night on the beach in pup tents, the unit embarked from Utah Beach on 13 July, reaching Southampton, England, and proceeding by train, returned to its Leicester base the same day".* Following service in Holland, rest and recreation in France, service in Belgium (Battle of the Bulge), then Germany, France and Germany, *"the 82nd Airborne Division was relieved of Occupation duty by December, and then prepared its return to the United States via the United Kingdom. The whole Division finally embarked on the Queen Mary, which departed Southampton, England on 29 December 1945, arriving in New York on 3 January 1946.*
Captain (later Major) Jerry J. Belden, MC, O-375276, was awarded the Silver Star Medal (GO # 44, 7 August 1944) the Bronze Star Medal (GO # 28, 1945), the Purple Heart (GO # 48, 1945), and the French Croix de Guerre with silver star (GO # 54, 1945), following his service in the European Theater of Operations". The citation for award of the Silver Star: *"The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress 9 July 1918, takes pleasure in presenting the Silver Star Medal to Major (Medical Corps), Jerry J. Belden (ASN: O-375276), United States Army, for gallantry in action while serving with the 307th Airborne Medical Company, 82d Airborne Division, in action against the enemy in Normandy, France, on 6 June 1944".* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/307th-airborne-medical-company/>
- **39th Evacuation Hospital. 14 July 1944.** From Devonsdale Park, Cheshire, the Hospital arrived at the Marshalling Area, Southampton. *"On 15 July, the advance party boarded one of the ships and headed for Normandy, arriving at Utah beach at 20.00. On 17 July, the remainder*

of the Hospital boarded Liberty ships and headed for France. The Nurses were on a separate vessel, while the men embarked on an LCI". <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/39th-evacuation-hospital/>

- **623rd Medical Clearing Company. 17 July 1944.** Arriving from Staten Island aboard USS *Exceller* on 6 May 1944 at Greenock, the unit was based at Wolverhampton then Dursley in Gloucestershire whence they departed on 11 July 1944 for the Marshalling Area at Southampton. *"Five (5) days were spent in the marshalling area, and finally on 17 July, the unit left for the port of Southampton, boarding the steamer Crossbow at 1300 hours the same date. Shortly thereafter, the vessel left her berth at Southampton and all unit members were informed of their destination; Omaha Beach, Normandy. The outfit was due to arrive later that evening, but due to heavy fog, its transport spent the night anchored in the English Channel. The trip was resumed at 0400 on 18 July 1944. After debarking from the large steamer into smaller LCAs, the unit finally landed on Omaha Beach at 1800 on 18 July 1944"*. <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/623d-medical-clearing-company/>
- **595th Ambulance Company. Motor (Separate). 18 July 1944.** Arrived aboard the USAT *James Parker* at Bristol from Boston on 23 February 1944, then deployed to Audlem in Cheshire, then to a Marshalling Area at Pinkley Park, Wiltshire. *"After boarding the SS Dan Beard (Liberty ship) at Pier # 38, Southampton, England, on 18 July 1944, the vessel started her Channel crossing. The organization debarked at Utah Beach, France on 24 July 1944"*. <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/595th-ambulance-company-motor-separate/>
- **2nd General Hospital. 22 July 1944.** *"On 22 July 1944 the Hospital finally headed for the Continent! The organization en-trucked for the Winchester Marshalling Area, driving through an overcast morning to Southampton harbor, to board the freighter Lady of Man. For the 30 hours that the unit was on board, they lived on 10-in-1 rations, slowly traveling to an anchorage point off the Isle of Wight, waiting for darkness, and mine-free lanes before heading for the French coast. On 24 July 1944, a cloudless day, the ship approached the French coastline near Cherbourg and set for Utah Beach. Upon arrival, an LCT came alongside to take everyone off to one of the floating piers that dotted the sandy beach"*. <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/2d-general-hospital/>
- **25th General Hospital. 27 July 1944.** *"At 0830 hours, July 27, 1944, the main group entrained from Tidworth, England, and moved to the Southampton Marshalling Area, C-5, where they all embarked on the British Llangibby Castle July 23, for movement across the Channel to France. They reached Utah Beach on July 30, 1944"*. <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/25th-general-hospital/>
- **58th General Hospital. 27 July 1944.** *"On 25 November 1940, permission was granted by the Secretary of War for the formation of a General Hospital unit sponsored by the Western Pennsylvania Hospital, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, which would be officially known as US Army General Hospital Unit No. 58. Early in December 1943, personnel (enough to run a 250-bed station hospital) were detailed to Wheatley, England, to help prepare a Station Hospital for operation. Later in the month, a small group of Officers, Nurses, and EM were called upon to prepare for occupancy by the US Army, the Royal Victoria Hospital at Netley, near Southampton, England. On 27 July 1944 the long-anticipated move (from Shipton Bellinger, Salisbury Plain) to the Marshalling Area was started, bed rolls, packs, and barrack bags were completed and the 58th entrained for Southampton. At noon 29 July 1944, orders were received to depart from the area and everyone proceeded afoot to the docks, approximately*

six miles away. Duffel bags and other packs were transported. After a short wait at the docks, all male personnel boarded the Llangibby Castle joining the Nurses who had already boarded. There were other hospital units on the same ship. The ship weighed anchor promptly and the 58th was en route to France, the date was 29 July 1944. The sea was calm and the crossing uneventful. The Nurses slept in staterooms, 2 on bunks and 1 on the floor, while male personnel slept in hammocks. Meals were tasty but not plentiful. Abandon ship drills and other exercises were held so that everyone knew his proper position in case of emergency. Religious services were held while crossing the Channel. The sighting of Cherbourg was welcomed and after reaching this point the ship proceeded along the coast to Utah Beach. Once arrived, the ship dropped and unloaded in an orderly manner all cargo and equipment into LCMs and all passengers and personal baggage onto a rhino barge for the short trip to shore". <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/58th-general-hospital/>

- **108th General Hospital. 27 July 1944.** *"On 7 July, orders were received moving the Hospital from Llandudno, Wales, to a small transit camp at Danebury Hill, Stockbridge, Hants. On 27 July, the unit left Danebury at 0900 hours by motor convoy for the Marshalling Area at Southampton, arriving mid-afternoon of the same day. The British transport ship HMS Llangibby Castle sailed out of Southampton at exactly 1530 hours, 29 July 1944. In addition to other branches of the service, 3 General Hospitals were on the same vessel, consequently, only Nurses had cabin space. Officers and Enlisted Men slept either on deck or in hammocks. The ship was part of a large protected convoy en route for Utah Beach... (designated code: "Watson"). Short off shore, everyone was lowered over the side into LCTs and headed for the beach, where an advance party of 4 Officers were waiting (they had travelled with a ship carrying the 56th General Hospital). Motor transportation was provided for the Nurses, while Officers and Enlisted Men marched to the transit area "B", 4 miles away. <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/108th-general-hospital/>*
- **12th Evacuation Hospital. 29 July 1944.**
*"The 12th Evac began receiving casualties at midday June 7, 1944, mainly wounded soldiers of the 90th Infantry and 101st Airborne Divisions evacuated via Utah Beach. The next day a first batch of German prisoners-of-war were in the mix. For the first time, the Hospital had to work full 12-hour shifts as the patient census continued to increase. Between June 8 and June 30, 1944, it received 1,309 patients and performed 596 operations, averaging 60 admissions and 27 operations per day. Personnel also had to handle evacuation out of the Hospital, borrowing ambulances and using off-duty soldiers to carry litters and drive patients to the Hospital Trains that stopped about 4 miles away. Some personnel who had volunteered for special duty in April finally learned their assignment: to operate on specially-equipped Landing Ships Tank (LST) bringing back casualties from the invasion beaches. On each LST, an Army Surgeon (assisted by 2 Surgical Technicians) performed surgery while two Navy Doctors (aided by 2 Navy Corpsmen) handled all the patients on cots. The 10 men selected from the 12th Evac (4 Surgeons and 6 Technicians) were already detached in May 1944, working at several hospitals to refresh their skills and build up teamwork.
From D+1 (June 7) onwards, the LST (H) ships shuttled across the Channel, carrying reinforcements over and returning with the wounded. Round trips took 24 to 48 hours, as the ships landed in France, unloaded their passengers through the bow doors, loaded for the return trip, and waited for the next high tide to make the trip back. Overall, the men on DS from the 12th Evac averaged four roundtrips, and one member, Private Edward R Bloch, was slightly wounded when a naval mine damaged his ship. Despite his wound, Bloch helped move the wounded to another ship and stayed with them to provide first aid. He received the Purple*

Heart, the only member of the 12th Evacuation Hospital to be awarded the medal during World War II.

The hospital based at Moreton Park, Dorset closed down and on 29 July 1944, all vehicles, drivers, and equipment were moved to Southampton. Personnel left the next day, with the Enlisted Men marching 4 miles and the ANC Officers riding in trucks. On the afternoon of July 30, 1944, all the staff embarked on a British transport that steamed across the English Channel the next morning. Officers and EM men were fed en route from different messes, and Nurses were assigned cabins while the men had to find somewhere a free spot to stretch out during the night. The journey was uneventful although scenic: the weather was clear and the sea placid as the ship steamed past Omaha Beach, now cleared of D-Day's bloody debris to serve as a landing point for troops, vehicles, and supplies, and finally anchored off Utah Beach". <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/12th-evacuation-hospital/>

- **108th Evacuation Hospital. Circa 30 July 1944.** "Once at Southampton, (from White Paris, near Salisbury) we boarded the English troop transport Devonshire, and sailed for Utah Beach on the Normandy coast. We landed on 31 July 1944 (D+55), the next day the Third Army officially went into action. We first had to transfer to landing craft, the men clambering down the steel ladder into the tossing crafts waiting alongside our transport". <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/108th-evacuation-hospital/>
- **28th General Hospital. 10 August 1944.** "Motor convoys consisting of 2½-ton trucks and British-made buses were to move for Eastleigh, via Exeter, England. Leaving its bivouac at Bishops Court, in Devonshire, on 10 and 11 August 1944, the 28th General Hospital en-trucked for the marshalling yards near Southampton in order to prepare for another overseas movement. A final processing took place, followed by more instructions and issue of French currency. The entire group finally left by motor convoy at 1100, 12 August 1944, and after reaching the Southampton docks marched another 5 miles to board the waiting ship. The organization left the United Kingdom on 13 August, passing the port of Cherbourg, early the next day, dropping anchor off Utah Beach. An LST then picked up the men around 1830 hours and after moving closer to shore, debarked them on Utah Beach, France, 16 August 1944". <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/28th-general-hospital/>
- **7th Convalescent Hospital. 11 August 1944.** "Orders were received to leave the Staging Area (at Camp C-5, Winchester) and head to Southampton. Most of the day was spent preparing everything, and at 1600 hours, the men boarded Army transport and left for the embarkation area. Arriving in Southampton at approximately 1745, the staff unloaded their personal equipment and boarded the transport ship HMS Empire Gauntlet. The trip across the English Channel was calm and uneventful. Early in the evening of 12 August 1944, the landing barges approached the now anchored transport ship and personnel of the Hospital descended down rope ladders on the side of the vessel and loaded into the waiting craft". <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/7th-convalescent-hospital/>
- **29th Field Hospital. 12 August 1944.** After a deployment to Alaska in 1942/43, the unit deployed to Prestwick in late May 1944 where the first patients arrived on 9 June 1944. This was followed by redeployment to Kington later in June. Initially this unit in America received inadequate training but by the time they were at Kington, operational experience and significant change of personnel with other units had been very beneficial. The unit left "Kington on 11 August by train, arriving at the Staging Area outside Southampton, England, late that same night. The vehicles travelled separately in convoy carrying the housekeeping equipment only as the main bulk had already been shipped by truck the day before to the

Swansea docks. The vehicles with accompanied personnel consisting of 2 Officers and 20 Enlisted Men, left the area 12 August, and embarked on LCTs, landing on Utah Beach, France 14 August 1944. The same day, 11 Officers and 108 EM boarded the SS Léopoldville, while 13 Nurses embarked on the Llangibby Castle (2 Officers were lost to illness before departure). The Nurses debarked on Utah Beach 16 August at 2200 hours and joined the vehicle convoy. The personnel on the Léopoldville remained off shore another day completely loaded so that the personnel and equipment were only landed on 17 August at 1200 hours". <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/29th-field-hospital/>

- **100th General Hospital. 18 August 1944.** "The 100th prepared their move to France, first being transported to Brockley Hall Camp on 4 August 1944, and then finally on to a staging area at Moorhill Camp, Southampton on 18 August. The unit remained in the camp for only 48 hours, at which point it was finally moved to Southampton where all personnel were loaded aboard the SS Léopoldville at approximately 1330 hrs on 20 August. This ship would later be sunk in the English Channel by a U-Boat attack. Despite almost running aground in the artificial shallow water wharfs, Higgins Boats were used to ferry the 100th personnel, along with other American forces to Utah Beach". <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/100th-general-hospital/>
- **15th General Hospital. Circa 21 August 1944.** "The final move (from Blandford) was made by motor convoy to a place called Eastleigh, a dirty place, with outdoor sleeping under tentage, honey buckets for latrines, K-rations for food, but fortunately hot water for washing. From there another move took the men to Southampton, where everyone boarded a luxury liner. In the early hours of 23 August 1944, with a Destroyer escort, the 15th General Hospital set sail for the Continent. When dawn broke the ship, along with a vast armada of miscellaneous vessels, was off Utah Beach, Normandy, France". <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/15th-general-hospital/>
- **105th Evacuation Hospital. 2 September 1944.** "On 22 September the 105th entrained and headed for Southampton and Staging Area C-5" (from Bournemouth where they had been since 5 September 1944). "Officers and Enlisted Men were to travel on the English steamer SS Duke of Wellington, while the Nurses were to cross on a Dutch boat, SS Mechlinburg. After a safe crossing everyone transferred to LSTs and LCTs and stepped on to the grounds of Omaha Beach. The day was 5 October 1944". <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/105th-evacuation-hospital/>
- **152nd Station Hospital Blood Bank. 17 and 18 September 1944.** The unit was divided into two parties, arriving at the Marshalling Area near Southampton on 16 September. The vehicle party moved to Southampton on 17 September 1944 and boarded LST696 arriving at Omaha beach on 19 September. The marching party boarded the *City of Canterbury* at Southampton docks on 18 September, and it too arrived at Omaha beach on 19 September. https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/Medical_Department_Army_Blood_Program_in.html?id=IGWGSHE3aaYC&redir_esc=y
- **280th Station Hospital. 3 October 1944.** "Preliminary Movement Warning Orders were received on 21 September 1944, with Final Movement Orders following on 2 October 1944. The next day, the marching column and vehicle convoy departed the Shortgrove estate arriving at the Southampton Marshalling Area on the evening on 3 October. 6 days later, the entire unit boarded the old P&O Liner, Llangibby Castle. The unit landed at Utah Beach after a short delay due to rough weather on the same day". <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/280th-station-hospital/>

- **189th General Hospital. 13 October 1944.** *“In the early hours of Friday, at 0105 and 0505 hours, 13 October 1944, the 189th General Hospital (unit code 1085-K), debarked at the Liverpool docks and immediately entrained for Southampton, England. K-rations and water were provided for the approximately 12-hour train trip. Upon arriving in Southampton, the organization was marched directly to a British troopship called “Cheshire”. Since accommodations were not adequate for the entire Officer personnel, the Nurses were separated from the group and transported by trucks to another ship. They would consequently not re-join the parent unit for thirteen days. The English Channel was crossed without incident in just one day. As no landing craft were available at Utah Beach, it was not until late the next day, 15 October 1944, that the Hospital was landed at Omaha Beach by means of LCTs”.* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/189th-general-hospital/>
- **324th Medical Battalion. 2, 3 and 4 November 1944.** The battalion comprised an HQ unit and four companies A, B, C and D. Arriving on or around 10 October 1944 at Greenock, Plymouth and Liverpool, the battalion assembled in Dorset at different locations. The HQ and companies subsequently moved to Camp C-13 near Southampton on 2 and 3 November 1944 whence they departed on 2, 3 and 4 November – *“All units boarded LSTs and troop ships at Southampton, England for the journey across the English Channel, and arrived at the shattered port of Le Havre, France”.* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/324th-medical-battalion/>
- **114th Evacuation Hospital. Circa 3 February 1945.** *“The unit departed Aberporth by train at 2330, for the Marshalling Area north of Camp Winchester. The train arrived at the camp at approximately 1300 on 29 January. The Hospital was scheduled to leave the United Kingdom on 3 February 1945, but due to the activity of German U-Boats in the English Channel, the crossing was delayed until the waters became safe. Finally, on 5 February 1945 the unit embarked on the Marquis for Le Havre, France. The vessel left the port at 2210 hours, arriving in France the following morning at approximately 0830. The unit’s Nurses boarded SS Borinquen at noon on 6 February, arriving into Le Havre the following evening at 2300”.* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/114th-evacuation-hospital/>
- **220th General Hospital. 6 February 1945.** *“The George W. Goethals arrived 6 February 1945 at Southampton, England, (from Boston) but there was NO debarkation and the ship with men and equipment still on board moved on to the port of Le Havre, France. The unit remained on board ship the evening of 7 February and debarked at 2230 hours on 8 February 1945”.* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/220th-general-hospital/>
- **125th Evacuation Hospital and 130th Evacuation Hospital. 20 December 1944 and 12 March 1945.** Arrived at Southampton on 20 December 1944 on board the *Dominion Monarch* from New York, deployed to Penally Camp near Tenby but not before *“T/Sgt Bernard Weintraub was killed when a large case slipped from its ropes and fell to the deck, striking him on its way and crushing his skull. The advance party, comprising 1 Officer and 5 Enlisted Men departed from Camp Penally on 25 February 1944, and two weeks later, at 0600 on 10 March 1945, the motor convoy left for the Marshalling Area. On 12 March 1945, the balance of the unit entrained at Tenby and arrived at the port of Southampton after an overnight journey. Immediately upon arrival, the personnel embarked on the MV Llangibby Castle, and crossed the English Channel under armed escort without mishap. The units arrived at the port of Le Havre, France, on 14 March 1945”.* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/125th-evacuation-hospital/> and <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/130th-evacuation-hospital/>

- **232nd Station Hospital. Circa late March 1945.** This Unit had extensive service in England, refer to link. In March 1945, split into 'Parent Unit' and 'Detachment A'. *"The parent unit was moved to Block E, Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley, Hampshire where it assumed control of Hospital Plant # 4121 with a bed capacity of 805. Lt. Col. Leonard F. Wilson, MC (O-18942) was continued as Commanding Officer, with Capt. Charles M. Slavik, MAC (O-1544959) assuming the position of Adjutant, and Capt. Courtney S. Simons III, MAC (O-1545038) as Detachment Commander. Hospital Plant # 4121 serviced units in the area as well as battle casualties and RAMPs received from the continent. On 12 June 1945, the parent unit and Detachment "A" of the 232nd Sta Hosp received orders to evacuate all current patients to surrounding hospitals, and to proceed to Ringwood, Hampshire for permanent station and duty. Both Hospital Plants that had been operated by the unit were turned over to the 121st Station Hospital. On 12 September 1945, 40% of the Hospital's personnel had completed a move to Tidworth, relieving the 127th Station Hospital of operations. The remaining 60% of the unit relieved the 305th Station Hospital at Netley. Patient strength remained low throughout the period of operation (which lasted until 30 November). All patients were received from the Tidworth and Southampton Staging Ares, and local dispensations. Orders were finally received that the 232nd Station Hospital would board RMS Queen Mary at Southampton on 28 December 1945, and sail on 6 January 1946".* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/232d-station-hospital/>
- **79th Field Hospital. 26 March 1945.** Arriving at Plymouth on 8 January 1945 from the Hudson river aboard USAT *Cristobal*, the unit was deployed to Shillingstone, Blandford and attached to 802nd Hospital Center for training. *"On 19 March, the entire hospital organization departed Shillingstone, for Camp C-5, just outside Southampton, England. The trip was uneventful with the unit being transported from the railhead to the Marshalling Area by motor vehicles. Upon arrival on 21 March, it was learned that the motor vehicle party which preceded the main group had already left for the Continent! The organization left Camp C-5, Southampton, by truck and proceeded to the its Marshalling Area where it boarded the SS Sobieski, a Polish vessel. The trip across the Channel on 26 March 1945 was uneventful with debarkation taking place at Le Havre at 1000 hours".* <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/79th-field-hospital/>
- **120th Station Hospital. Circa 20 May 1945.** *"On 28 May 1944, the Detachment, 120th Station Hospital, consisting of 3 Officers and 71 ANC Officers were instructed to depart from Cirencester Park # 2, Glos., England, for Charlton Park, Wilts., England, and report to the CO, 120th Station Hospital for permanent station, where they would help operate Hospital Plant # 4135. Pursuant to Instructions from the Southern Base Section, Communications Zone, SOS, ETOUSA, the Hospital was officially opened for patients effective 0001 hours, 20 June 1944 (ref. Hospital Orders No. 21, dated 19 June 1944, issued by Headquarters 120th Station Hospital, APO # 165, US Army, by order of Colonel Joseph Haas, Medical Corps –ed) The first patient was received 21 June 1944, and the wounded admitted during the remainder of June were almost all German Prisoners of War, recently evacuated from France by air. During October and December 1944, the Hospital mainly functioned as a German Prisoner of War Hospital. During the months of January and February 1945, the Hospital continued to operate at its maxim bed capacity of 1,311. ARC personnel started arriving at the beginning of February 1945 and immediately began to fill a much-neglected need for the patients' facilities. They set up a separate Red Cross building and utilized part of an existing building for an Arts & Crafts shop. In March 1945, 75 German PW laborers arrived. They were housed in a separate tented enclosure adjacent to the Hospital and their work did much to help with the general housekeeping and improvement of existing standards. On 28 April 1945, at 1700 hours, word was received that all patients were to be immediately evacuated to neighbouring hospitals. The majority was transferred the next day and after two days the Hospital was empty of*

patients. At midnight, 1 May 1945, the 120th Station Hospital closed. Medical supplies were collected, repacked and returned to the different depots with speed and exactness under the able supervision of Captain Edwin G. Schonwalter, Medical Supply Officer, O-1542942. After receiving the necessary alert orders, the 120th Station Hospital was instructed to move to Le Havre, France. V-E Day found the unit busily engaged in preparation for its short voyage across the Channel with destination the Continent. On this day preliminary orders were received and there was much joyous celebration within the Post to celebrate the move. On 20 May 1945 the unit bid farewell to the United Kingdom embarking on the Liberty Ship "Marine Wolf" at Southampton, England with destination the Port of Le Havre, France. Upon arrival, the organization staged at Camp "Twenty Grand" one of the many Cigarette Camps established in France". <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/120th-station-hospital/>

- **250th Station Hospital. 20 May 1945.** "On 20 May 1945, the organization departed from Grimsdyke, Hampshire, en route to Southampton Port where it would board for the Channel crossing. After successfully embarking on the USAT Marine Wolf and leaving with the evening tide, the 250th started its Channel crossing the same day. The Hospital arrived at Le Havre, France, 21 May 1945, and following debarkation, all male personnel were transported to "Camp Twenty Grand" (one of the many Cigarette camps –ed) near Duclair, and all female personnel were sent to an "Army Nurse Corps Staging Area" at Mesnières-en-Bray, near Neufchâtel-en-Bray, France, for quarters and administration during a short period". <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/250th-station-hospital/>
- **115th Station Hospital. 23 May 1945.** "As 1945 arrived, the number of admissions to the 115th started to drop for the first time since the invasion began. A number of larger hospital units had been established in mainland Europe, closer to the frontline to deal with the casualties, which explains the decrease in workload for this period. Finally, on 25 April 1945 the unit was given advance verbal warning of its transfer to the continent from the Headquarters of the 801st Hospital Center. As a result, all wards were closed down, and the remaining 48 patients were transferred to the 112th Field Hospital (located at Newton Abbot, Devon –ed). The facility at Plaisterdown Camp was officially closed on 28 April 1945, and all preparations were made for the impending move. All large medical and military equipment was packed and sent from the camp by 20 May, leaving only personal equipment and TAT ("To Accompany Troops" –ed) materiel to be moved with the unit. During the morning of 23 May 1945, the 115th left Plaisterdown Camp via motor transport for Tavistock rail station, where it boarded a train to Southampton. Upon arrival at Southampton, the unit then embarked for Le Havre, France. On the morning of 24 May 1945, the 115th debarked upon temporary piers in the bomb-wrecked port of Le Havre". <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/115th-station-hospital/>
- **101st General Hospital. 24 May 1945.** "On 5 May 1945, the unit was once again alerted for movement, and the 23 May found it departing and entraining at Taunton at 0423 hours on a typical rainy, wet night. The train arrived at Southampton the following day, and the 101st prepared for its next operation; crossing the English Channel to France. The following day, the 101st General Hospital arrived into Le Havre and immediately debarked from its transport into LCIs (Landing Craft, Infantry). <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/101st-general-hospital/>
- **74th General Hospital. 26 June 1945.** "On 26 June 1945, the unit departed from Tyntesfield Park. The personnel were transported by motor convoy to Temple Meads Station, Bristol at 0500 hours. About three hours later the entire command arrived at Southampton. There, the staff boarded the converted Liberty Ship "Marine Wolf" and weighed anchor at 1330 hours. Arriving at Le Havre the same evening, the personnel remained aboard until the following

afternoon, debarking at 1500 hours, 27 June 1945". <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/74th-general-hospital/>

- **91st General Hospital. 26 September 1945.** *"The Hospital left its Cirencester location at 0200 hours, 26 September 1945, by train. Destination was Southampton, with the unit traveling in two sections. After arrival they sailed at 1000 the same day crossing the English Channel and arriving at Le Havre, France, on the S/S Exchequer. The unit reached Le Havre harbor at 2000 hours on 26 September"*. <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/91st-general-hospital/>
- **188th General Hospital. 29 September 1945.** *"The Hospital departed from Cirencester, England, at 0250 hours, 29 September 1945, entraining for Southampton, England, where it arrived and boarded the USS "Marine Wolf" with destination Le Havre, France. The personnel debarked at Le Havre harbor at 2000 hours, 29 September 1945"*. <https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/188th-general-hospital/>