

HEADQUARTERS, FIRST MEDICAL BATTALION  
Office of the Commanding Officer.

Fort Devens, Mass.  
August 29, 1941.

NOTES FOR THE PRESS AND NEWS REELS.

Under most favorable conditions evacuation of battle casualties is a back breaking task due to the necessity of hand carrying wounded soldiers from the field to the nearest medical station from one half mile to one mile to the rear. From there on back to field hospitals patients are carried in ambulances. This is not difficult under favorable conditions, that exist only in well controlled training exercises. In actual combat, and even in maneuvers, roads are congested with combat troops and vehicles moving to the front, bridges over wide and deep streams often are destroyed, trees are felled across roads. These are but a few of the obstacles to the ready evacuation of casualties. As the flow of casualties to the rear cannot be stopped by such obstacles they must be over come.

Unbridged water ways constitute one of the major obstacles. Dependence cannot be placed on river crossing facilities furnished by other units so the medical battalion quickly improvise crossing facilities with material always at hand. Some of these are:

1. Raft composed of brush wrapped in the canvas top of a truck. Will carry personnel, equipment and battle casualties.
2. Improvised boat of branches cut and fitted to form a frame over which is stretched the canvas top of a truck. The bottom of the "boat" is strewn with fine brush to form a firmer floor. Will carry personnel, equipment and battle casualties.
3. Often motor transportation is needed on far side of the stream to carry great numbers of casualties or because distances are great. The "Jeep" with improvised litter racks or even the cross country type ambulance can be floated across by wrapping the chassis in large canvas tarpaulins.
4. When narrower creeks have to be crossed, and it is impractical to construct a bridge, two or more rafts as described in "1" above may be lashed side by side forming an improvised pontoon bridge.
5. Any "Jeep" can be converted to use as a casualty carrying vehicle within 15 minutes by installing the rack demonstrated.

"The motto of this battalion is (translated) 'Ready for Anything'".

6300 pounds Ambulance,

*Thomas G. Pousey*  
THOMAS G. ROUSEY,  
Lt. Colonel, Medical Corps,  
Commanding.