

OFFICE-MATERIAL SCHOOL  
FOR THE NAVY CORPS,  
PRINCETON, N. J.

18 October 1918

A. C. Braisted, Surgeon General, U.S.N.  
Bureau of Medicine and Surgery,  
Navy Department, Washington, D. C.

My dear Surgeon General,

As per instructions from Doctor Murphy, U.S.N., I am writing you concerning the events that have come to pass at this station since my last informal note of three weeks ago.

The number of students at the school here has been augmented to some five hundred men and including the personnel of the station the total is about six hundred.

The sanitary condition of the town of Princeton is, in general, very good. But there is a very large Malaria belt located just a few miles away from the School.

I have made a personal investigation of this Malaria belt, and as a result of my inspection, I realize that a large sum of money would be required to rid us of this danger. To cover the back waters of the Carnegie Lake, as well as the Raritan Canal, with Petroleum oils would not be sufficient. A very extensive draining process is needed to eliminate the Anopheles from their breeding areas.

We have had five cases of Malaria at this station in the short time that we have been located here.

The spacing of the cots in the rooms has by necessity been reduced to the minimum. We are crowded to the roof, and I have made it a strict rule that the cots be placed no nearer than five feet, one from the other. I have also required that every man air his bedding all day long in front of his window, and that all windows be kept open day and night.

The lower study room is a large affair, holding two hundred men. The ventilation is poor because there are no exhausters to draw off the CO<sub>2</sub> air. We depend entirely upon natural ventilation.

The University has promised to take up the matter of proper ventilation in the very near future.

The first meeting of the Military Board of Health which I organized, was held at this school two weeks ago. It is composed of,  
 Capt. S. Prestley, Medical Corps, U.S.A.  
 Dr. J. Carnochan, University Physician.  
 Mr. M. Margerum, Princeton Board of Health.  
 and myself.

We have gone into the matters of:-

1. Malarial districts
2. Venereal districts, here and in Trenton
3. Barber shops, restaurants, "Jigger" shops and movies.
4. Epidemic Influenza

We began early to combat Influenza, and throughout I have had the hearty co-operation of Admiral Goodrich in all that I have attempted for the prevention of the spread of the disease at this station. I had my first case September 5th and immediately took steps to isolate all contacts. The Board of Health of Princeton closed the Movies, the restaurants, all of the soda fountains and recommended that the schools be closed. The people of Princeton thought that we were too drastic in our measures and some of the professors deemed us too panicky. But our record to date will show that we were wise in fighting the disease with these stringent precautions.

All liberty to New York, Philadelphia and Boston was withdrawn and the personnels of all the Naval units were restricted to the limits of Princeton. As a result, we had at this School, only five cases during the month of September.

On October 1st, two hundred and fifty boys arrived from Pelham Naval Training Station, leaving there, it is assumed, in a healthy condition. When these boys arrived at the School they were closely examined for the symptoms of Influenza. Each boy removed his outer clothing-hat, shoes, coat, etc., and these articles after being tagged were placed in the disinfecting room where they were subjected to an all-night exposure to the Barium dioxide-formaldehyde method of sterilization. Each one had his nose sprayed with a solution of Chlorazene and menthol and his throat subjected to a similar treatment. They then went to their rooms for a hot bath.

All boys who looked suspicious were sent to the sick quarters for further observation.

The first week in October showed the fact that the epidemic was at hand, and the admissions to the sick quarters became so numerous, not only at this School, but also at the Naval unit connected with the University, that temporary quarters were opened at the old athletic field house on Varsity field. I established a first aid station there and used it to good advantage in isolating contacts and carriers.

The second week of October showed the disease to be on the wane. Yet we are keeping up our daily inspections of the personnels of both schools. The restrictions are still in force and in all probability will continue in force until the first of November. This week we admitted only eleven cases.

The third week marks the lowest point in the progress of the disease. From October 14th to this date, we have admitted three cases.

It is obvious that the men who came from Pelham Bay on October 1st were the ones who infected the school, they having probably picked up the disease en route, either on the subways or railroad trains.

I have, therefore, suggested to Admiral Goodrich, that the next class be sent to this station by trucks instead of by the regular means of transportation in order to determine just where one is liable to contract the disease. The Admiral has taken kindly to my suggestion, and has written to the Commandant of the Third Naval District to this effect.

At a later date I hope to be able to give you more interesting data of the work that I am doing here in combating this epidemic.

I beg to remain,

Yours respectfully,

*David H. ...*