

# LETT ALLENTOWN WORK HARD FOR A HOSPITAL CAMP HERE

## Camp Crane An Ideal Spot for a Hospital for Sick and Wounded Sent Home from the War Zone Abroad

While there are rumors afloat that Camp Crane will be discontinued shortly, The Morning Call interviewed Lieut. Col. Howard Mac C. Snyder, the commandant, regarding this and his answer was that so far there had only been indefinite information. He stated that he did not feel at liberty to publish anything relative to orders for demobilization of the camp but, "I believe," he added, "it to be the policy of the war department to discontinue the camp as I have received no information that it will be utilized for other purposes than demobilization which will not require a considerable period of time." About 1,000 officers have been discharged here, most of whom have come from Hoboken and the sea-side ports. There is a hope that Allentown's camp can be maintained for hospital purposes for several more years if Surgeon General Ireland can be brought to see the advantages of this site and strong efforts should be added to those already made, by the Chamber of Commerce and the men of influence in the city. This section of Pennsylvania has many injured and there is a commendable pride that a state should prefer to honor the men who have made the great sacrifice by caring for them within its own confines. There are only two hospitals established in the state thus far, at Carlisle and in Somerset County. These places will naturally not be ample to provide sufficiently for the many ill and wounded and it would appear that another hospital camp in the state could be utilized.

There are features in Allentown's Camp which are not excelled in any other.

First—It can readily be transformed to care for at least 3,000 sick and injured men.

Second—From the standpoint of economy this camp is very economically maintained, in fact far more economically than many others because of the short hauls necessary. The roads in the camp are good and located in the city there are good streets. Some camps are located considerable distances from centres of population. Fort Reilly is four miles and Camp Funston eight miles from the nearest settlement. Another point is the good local markets. The mess for the camp can depend entirely upon the local market and about all their purchases are made in the city.

Third—The fact that the camp is within approximately two hours of the port of debarkation at Hoboken, means that the injured and sick could be readily transported from ships to camp.

Fourth—The camp is entirely steam heated, one of the finest steam heat plants in the country having been just lately completed, thus assuring comfort from the winter weather. Another important feature is the proximity of the Allentown Hospital, one of the best equipped hospitals in the country, which would to a large extent be at the disposal of the camp.

The compactness of the camp, its splendid equipment and its able corps of physicians here would all be in its favor.

Fifth—The interest the city has manifested in the camp from its very inception and the personal interest the people have taken in the officers and men of the camp would not be lessened. Just as the men from all parts of the country have at their gathering here found the people among the most hospitable in all the world, so the sick and injured of the state, would find a second home here. The personal attention on the part of the people is a foregone conclusion. They have readily opened their homes to Camp Crane and as a hospital the big heart of the community would more than ever be manifest. Relatives of the sick and injured from all parts of the state could reach their sons readily on account of the fine trolley and railroad facilities.

Let a strong effort be made for the establishment of a hospital Camp here. It is not too late. The stroke of a pen on the part of the Surgeon General can change plans already made. Unless sufficient leases have already been concluded for hospital sites, Allentown has claims that cannot be excelled. It has always been the hope of Allentown people that they might share in ministering to Pennsylvania's injured and sick.

The camp has a well established amusement hall equipped at a cost of \$6,000 to \$8,000, by the funds of the camp with good bowling alleys and other apparatus and a moving picture equipment. Every night there are moving pictures. The city itself has excellent theatres and places of amusement. The camp is only a few hours from Philadelphia and New York where the best talent could be readily secured. All these things mean a great deal for the morale of the soldier and the pleasure of the convalescent.

The average number of medical officers here is 400. The highest number has been 652.

Financially the camp has been a great benefit to Allentown. Approximately five million dollars have been spent here already. The disbursements of the camp for contracts alone have been about a million and a half, and the other monies expended raise the amount to the sum named.

Most of this money has found its way into local circulation.

The camp was opened in June, 1917, and was personally selected by Col. Persons over many bidders. The Colonel became its first commandant and is most favorably remembered. The men gathered here were of an exceptionally high standard, coming from all the colleges of the land.

As high as 5,000 men were cared for at one time. It had one of the largest motor equipments in the coun-

try until the motor corps was established last summer.

The second commandant was Col. Slee. He made a tremendous sacrifice when he entered the service. He had established a vaccine plant in the Poconos and was devoting most of his time to laboratory work. He furnished much of the vaccine to the government. When he entered the service it meant his giving up horses and animals which he had brought to immunity needed to get a standardized product and it will take years for him to replace this. Allentown is in hopes of having Col. Slee settle here permanently.

The present commandant, Lt. Col. Snyder who took charge on October first has been in the regular army corps for fifteen years, practically since he graduated from Medical College. He is only thirty-eight years of age. He was with an embarking corps when he was called to take charge here. While he regretted that he could not continue to overseas, he expressed himself that he could not have found a pleasant place at home than Camp Crane and Allentown. And Allentown feels very close to him on account of his frank manner and kindly interest in men and things hereabout.