

PERSONAL

U. S. NAVAL MEDICAL SUPPLY DEPOT

AMDM-PVT

Navy Yard, Mare Island, Cal. 13th May, 1920.

My dear Admiral:

Notwithstanding the letter from the Bureau of Navigation stating that hereafter recruits would be sent to the Training Station at San Francisco and not to Mare Island, Admiral Jayne thinks the contrary should be the case, as he believes that the health of recruits is better at Mare Island. He informed me that living on Goat Island he was impressed with the large number of deaths there during the last epidemic of influenza. On account of this he requested Dr. Fiske to make a report upon the relative morbidity and mortality of the two stations for a period of six months. Fiske did so and by statistics proved that Mare Island was more healthful. This report was referred to Captain Price and Dr. Brooks who presented evidence to the contrary - for instance, Fiske included cases received at Goat Island from ships and transferred to Mare Island, and others which had been transferred to Mare Island with one disease and, while there, developed another which proved fatal. Fiske got his data from Farenholt, and Brooks, from the Executive Officer of the hospital, and here there is a discrepancy, so altogether there is a lack of clearness as to the findings. Admiral Jayne told me yesterday that having gone so far he hated to give up and might appoint a board to look into the matter.

Dr. Fiske noted several passages from previous reports of Surgeons-General, indicating that Goat Island was not a particularly healthy location for a Training Camp, and the Admiral lays considerable stress upon this point. Personally I think there is a slight difference in favor of Mare Island on account of climatic conditions and I think mortality, especially of pulmonary cases, would be influenced by transferring them to the hospital at Mare Island, the transfer by ambulance boat necessitating several changes and considerable exposure. Only selected cases should be transferred. The number and kind of both medical and surgical cases to be transferred varies according to the disposition and perhaps biased judgment of the medical officer at Goat Island - I mean by this, if he is surgically inclined he will keep all surgical cases, and if not he will transfer them.

With kindest regards, I remain,

Very sincerely,

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*There is quite a difference of opinion between the
Commanders of the 1st Division and the Commanders of
the Station in this matter.*

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