

ICE MEDICAL AIDE IN CHARGE  
 ROOM 405 SHELDON BUILDING  
 MARKET STREET, SAN FRANCISCO

120212

TWELFTH NAVAL DISTRICT  
 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

October 11, 1918

My dear Doctor:

The Influenza began 8 days ago in the Port Guard, which is quartered in one of the pier sheds on the waterfront in San Francisco. The Port Guard contains a little less than 600 men. They are quartered in 3 adjoining portions of the pier. The first cases were light in type, the subsequent ones more severe. The men of the Port Guard are sent in details of a half dozen to ships in the harbor coming from other than domestic ports and serve as guards on those ships. The incidence of the disease in those sent on this duty has been much greater than in those of the guard who have had other assignments. I have knowledge, personal and other, that the disease appeared in the civil population of both San Francisco and Oakland on the same day as it appeared in the Port Guard. Up to yesterday there was a steady increase in the number of cases presenting themselves but today there has been a slight decrease only 14 cases. The methods recommended by the Advisory Board of the District have been carried out with thoroughness. In addition to the cases received from the Port Guard there have been a small number of cases coming from other Naval Ships and from the men who are attached to Naval Ships building at the Union Iron Works, in this city. These cases have been transferred to the sick quarters of the Port Guard pending their transfer by water in government vessels to the Naval Hospital, Mare Island. In order to provide sufficient accommodations for this added number a portion of one of the living quarters was curtained off completely by a double partition of cloth, leaving a dead space 10 feet wide between the two partitions. The difficulties in securing water transportation to our base hospital are considerable. The demand upon the tugs on the bay is so great that we are compelled to use small vessels which could carry a maximum of only 10 patients. It was only yesterday we were able to secure a large tug by which 40 cases of influenza were transported to Mare Island.

To prevent the spread of the disease in the naval offices in San Francisco, gauze masks, secured from the Red Cross, were issued to the workers. Atomizers also have been used with 10% silvol at first and later quinine 1:10,000.

The request of the Navy Yard, Mare Island, for 6 Medical Officers has been filled; that of the Naval Hospital for the same

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 Acknowledge

Handwritten notes and signatures: "Cottle", "Mrs. Higley", "Phelps", and other illegible scribbles.

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number has also been filled. The request of the Navy Yard some days ago for 6 female nurses had been met. The hospital today has requested 21 female nurses and the Navy Yard 12 whom we have tried to secure from the Red Cross but have been unable as yet to get that number of graduate nurses. If the Red Cross fails, it will be necessary to secure the nurses from some of the Nurses' associations, and I shall do so unless I hear to the contrary from you. The nurses who have already been sent to Mare Island were secured from the Red Cross. The Red Cross was informed that the pay for nurses in the Navy was \$50.00 per month, That organization stated that the Army was paying \$75.00 and if the Navy did not pay that amount it would make up the difference. I hope the additional amount required can be met by the Bureau independent of any gift from the Red Cross. DA

*NA* Fifty Hospital Corpsmen have been sent to the Hospital at Mare Island; 80 have been sent to the Navy Yard; 6 have been sent to Los Angeles and 6 assigned to the Port Guard in this city. This has used up practically all the Naval Reserve men in the Hospital Corps School at Yerba Buena. Further demands for Hospital Corpsmen will have to be met by the assignment of USN men.

There are on duty now in San Francisco, to meet the Medical Activities at Headquarters, 6 Medical Officers. The Medical Aide; the Executive, who has supervision of the treatment of the sick; 2 Medical Officers at Headquarters proper: ( one of whom is ill with influenza), 1 Medical Officer looking out for the work at the Port Guard and the Naval Auxiliary (far more than a single man can do thoroughly) and the 6th Medical Officer with the Navy Unit at the University of California, under command of Rear Admiral Gove. This separation of Medical activities on the two sides of the bay makes direct personal supervision impossible. It was necessary to make arrangements for the care of the dangerously sick in a different manner on each side. On the San Francisco side the hospital with which a contract had been made by the Senior Medical Officer of the Naval Hospital, Mare Island, refused to take cases of influenza and influenzal pneumonia. The medical department of Stanford University has placed at the disposition of this office several beds to which we have transferred up to date 3 cases of pneumonia. That hospital has signified its willingness to receive the female yeomen who may be ill, in small numbers. These I regard as the most difficult problem we will have to deal with in the handling of the disease. On the Oakland side of the bay, where difficulties in transportation to Mare Island are even greater than they are on the San Francisco side, I have been able to make arrangements with the Merritt Hospital for the reception of a certain number of cases of influenza and pneumonia. Thus far two serious cases of influenza have been transferred to that hospital, one of whom has developed double pneumonia. The members of the Student Naval Unit at the University of California have been so far accomodated in the infirmary of the University which now is practically filled. Further cases that appear can not be handled there and will have

to be put into a civil hospital, probably the Merritt. The calls upon Medical Officers attached to Headquarters to go to the homes of those on duty in San Francisco have been numerous. Had it not been for the fact that the Red Cross has put at the disposition of this office two motor cars we could not have rendered the service. This service requires the attention of two medical officers. One is taken away from us about half the time on trial trips of Destroyers.

A number of Medical Officers have been taken ill with the disease. It has been reported to me that 6 of those on duty at Mare Island are so affected, and 1 at Los Angeles. One of our own staff in San Francisco has also developed the disease.

To meet further increases in the disease I have been looking over a building which the Red Cross is equipping as a Club House for enlisted men of the Navy and Marine Corps. If necessary we can secure 3 floors in the building, two of which may be used as wards accomodating each about 30 beds, with a 3d floor to serve as a dwelling place for the hospital corpsmen and cooks. The use of the building would be given us without expense. We would be required simply to meet the running expenses of light, water, gas and laundry. The details of personnel and equipment have been investigated so that in 3 days from the time in which the work being done by the Red Cross in the Building is completed we could take charge, if the number of cases makes it necessary. This day we have received a request from Los Angeles for a Medical Officer to replace one ill, and from San Pedro to replace one detached.

The quarantine of Naval Training Station at Yerba Buena has so far been successful.

Yours sincerely,



Surgeon General W. C. Braisted,  
Navy Department, Washington, D.C.