

Clinical and other Notes.

AN IMPROVED DIRECTING LAMP.

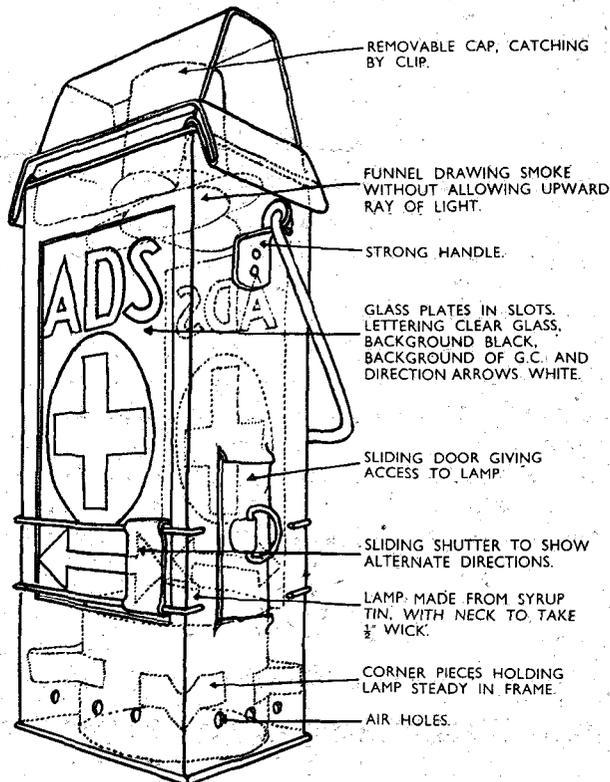
BY QUARTERMASTER-SERGEANT J. A. HOGARTH.

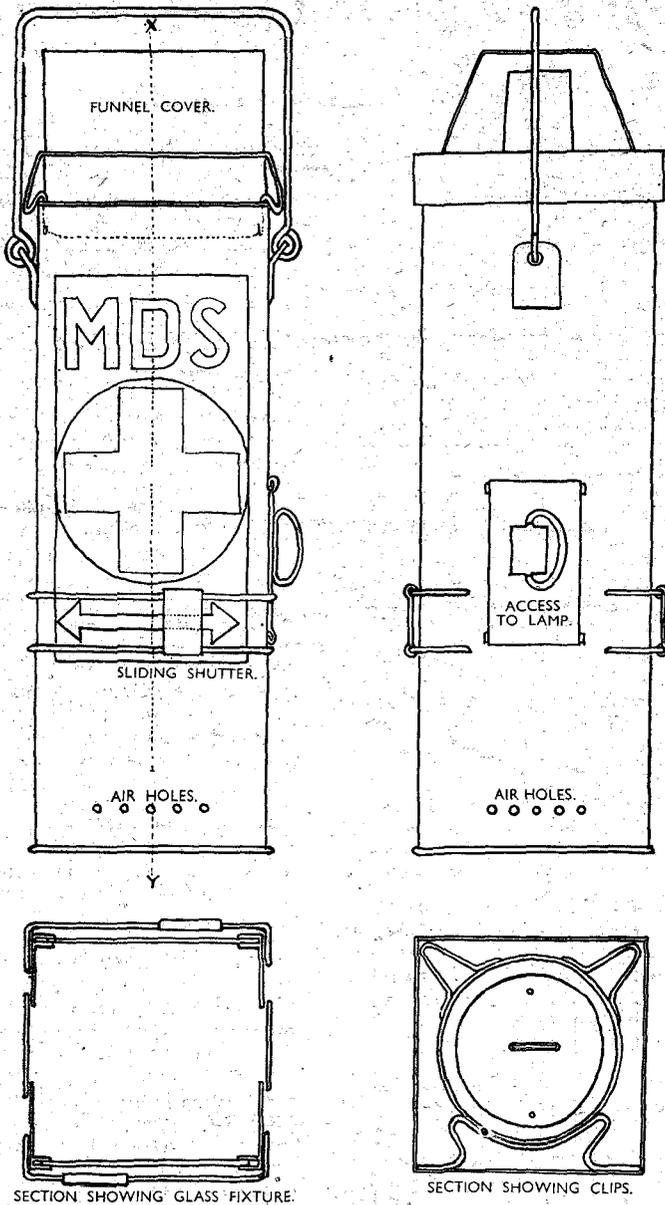
Royal Army Medical Corps.

As the number of hurricane lamps available in AF G 1098 equipment of a mechanized Field Ambulance was not sufficient to signpost all routes leading to Field Ambulance Dressing Stations and, further, that the four gallon petrol tin suitably adapted to cover the lamp was quickly damaged and became unfit for use, the urgent necessity for a stronger and less bulky lamp was apparent.

The minimum number of lamps required is 24 (i.e. 12 for H.Q. and 6 for each Coy.).

The following lamp has been improvised and made within the unit :





CONSTRUCTION.

The body and lid were made from beaten out, 4-gallon, non-returnable petrol tins, the wire guides for the sliding shutters from packing case wire and the carrying handles from fencing wire. The lamp was constructed by letting a wick holder of tin into the lid of a 2-pound syrup tin, care being taken to provide an air vent at the top of the lid.

The glasses for the two sides are $8\frac{1}{2}$ by $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches. They were coated with black enamel paint, then the letters (as required), the 4-inch diameter circle and the double-headed arrow, scraped off. These were then coated with white enamel and when dry the Red Cross was painted on the white circle. One head of the arrow may be covered at will by sliding the shutter.

OPERATION.

The lamp should be filled three-quarters full with paraffin and the wick adjusted so that it is just level with the top of the wick holder, NOT HIGHER. The lamp is then placed between the steadying clips and the lid placed on top. The shutter on the side of the lamp can be slid aside to allow the lamp to be lit. Adjusted as above, it should burn without attention for at least thirty-six hours and has proved wind proof.

I am indebted to Lieutenant-Colonel A. S. Pern, *T.D.*, R.A.M.C., for criticism and advice when making the lamp, and for permission to forward this description for publication.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS FROM A MOBILE SURGICAL UNIT.

8.12.41.

“ . . . The work comes in spasms. Between the spasms there isn't much leisure as one has to get going making up expended supplies and seeing that things are straight again for another run of cases. Then moves are frequent and they take up quite a time. In the last month we have moved 12 times. And that is not counting the various journeys I have been on my own to get supplies, information, to spy out the lie of the land and so on. . . . Just now it is difficult to realize the magnitude of the world-wide convulsion being staged by the human race. Being mixed up in a campaign all on our own in this desolate place narrows the mental horizon; the more so since the horizon of the desert seems limitless. The untouched blankness of the desert is not so desolate as the field of battle when the fight has rolled on. The derelict vehicles, the scattered bits of ragged uniform, the shallow holes scratched in the stony ground for protection; all these serve to emphasize the intense loneliness of this place. Not that we are lonely. There are always many of us together and we are occupied and that is much. . . . We happen to be in a place where water is easier to get so I gave an order for a gallon per man to be issued to all members of the unit for washing purposes—the first decent wash any of us have had since leaving Cairo. Of course, until the first few days of November we were near the coast and able to bathe so it is little more than a month since we had a bath. You'd be surprised what a lot of water a gallon seems when you have managed with less than a mugful for a few weeks. At last Bob has rejoined us, just at the moment when it looks as if the work is going to slack off for a time. George is still away, but I gather he may be starting after us soon.