

SEPTEMBER 3, 1918.

Memorandum for the Surgeon General.

Subject: Hospital ships.

Referring to your letter of August 13, 1918, on the above subject, the Chief of Staff desires to know if your office acquiesces in the idea of having sick and wounded returned from France on transports only, thus removing them completely from the protection that might be afforded to them under the Geneva Convention.

For the Director of Operations.

(Signed)            ROBERT E. WYLLIE,  
*Colonel, General Staff, Chief Equipment Branch,*  
*Operations Division.*

[1st Insl.]

S. G. O. 571.1 hospital ships.

War Dept., S. G. O., September 11, 1918. To the Operations Division, General Staff.

1. Returned.

2. Under the articles of agreement between the Secretary of War and the Secretary of Navy, the Navy is charged with the care of patients returning from France on board ships under naval control. This office was informed that, under this agreement, the return of patients from overseas forces was purely a transportation problem to be solved by the Embarkation Service and the Navy.

3. The repeated request for ambulance ships was withdrawn in view of the above policy of the War Department, but this office does not acquiesce in the idea of removing the sick and wounded returning from France completely from the protection that might be afforded them under the Geneva Convention.

(Signed)            CHAS. RICHARD,  
*Brigadier General, U. S. Army, Acting Surgeon General.*