

Robert Hawksworth

Hospital

The hospital in Naples where I was based for some six weeks, the discipline, of necessity, was somewhat relaxed. In fact the Matron was a lady of Scottish birth who adopted a more motherly approach as far as the wounded soldier were concerned and made a great fuss, in fact, of all of us. The ward staff consisted mainly of trained Italian nurses who'd been impressed into the job and they, of course, spoiled us as much as the Matron. So although we were wounded and some people were still in a lot of pain life wasn't all that bad. My main concern was the hole in my leg which refused to heal, although the doctors had saved the limb up to that point the injuries sustained to the muscle had severed certain veins or ligaments or whatever and the wound, which was some two inches in length and an inch across, just wouldn't heal, it wouldn't knit together. Fortunately for me about this time penicillin came into being and the home-made penicillin permanent drip was arranged to fit over this wound on my leg, and surely this was the cause of its eventual healing, because after a week of this treatment and a whole series of injections of Gods knows what all, the wound gradually began to heal. I'll never forget this course of injections. I had 42 needles in three days in a clockwise rotation, both in my upper arms and left and right buttock. And I felt like a pin cushion at the end of the week.