



## COMPANY AID STATIONS

The company aid station was typically located at or near the company post of command. Modern readers are used to the term “command post”, but in WWI these were referred to as “posts of command” (PCs). They used available shelter, such as culverts, shell holes, or other natural terrain features. During open warfare, these posts were commonly within rifle and machine gun range of the enemy and subject to artillery fire including gas attacks. As few as two corporsman or medics were assigned to each company, though in active combat operations the number assigned could increase. In the Navy company aid stations, the senior corporsman was commonly a Pharmacist’s Mate 2nd or 3rd Class.

The aid rendered at the company aid station was rudimentary, and depended on available personnel, supplies, and the nature of the operation under way. Since these were very forward positions, the supplies consisted of whatever the corporsman could carry. Troops carried a small first aid kit that was used for smaller wounds or for tourniquets. Corporsman carried these along with medium and large dressing kits. (See “Wound Care at the Front” for details). They also carried iodine to cleanse wounds and morphine. The morphine was contained in pre-filled 15 mg syringes called Greely Units. This was typically given as a shot in the shoulder, leg, or buttocks through the uniform with no alcohol or other skin prep. Other inventory of the company aid station could include splints. The splints at this level usually were makeshift, using boards, tree branches, or the wounded man’s own other limb or his rifle. Thomas traction splints might be available from time to time, but were mostly stocked at the battalion aid station.

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Novels of the Great War



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References:

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