

BETWEEN THE COVERS RARE BOOKS

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[Photo Album]: Military Hospital South Africa 1947

South Africa: 1946-1947

\$950



Oblong small quarto measuring 7" x 10". Green plastic photo album with "postcard album" stamped in gilt on the front board. Contains 98 black and white or sepia toned gelatin silver photographs measuring between 1½" x 2½" and 3½" x 4½" with some captions. Album is near fine with slightly bowed boards with fine photographs.

A collection of photos from the Baragwanath Military Hospital, also referred to as BMH, in South Africa shortly after World War II beginning in 1946. Commissioned in 1940, BMH was built in response to the hostilities of World War II and the large number of casualties. The British War office requested that South Africa create two hospitals with a total of 1,200 beds for the Middle East Command. Fueled by a war that was not going well for the Allies, the hospital was completed and able to admit its first patient six months after its approval and was named "The Imperial Military Hospital, Baragwanath". By the end of the war the hospital was treating men from both the Middle Eastern and Far Eastern Commands, most of whom suffered from Tuberculosis.



The photos here show the hospital post war where British and Commonwealth soldiers were still recovering from their war wounds and disease they contracted while fighting. The album appears to have been kept by one of the medical staff of the hospital and shows uniformed men on and off duty in South Africa. The barracks and tented encampments used throughout the facility are shown here with men posing for pictures. One photo shows an orderly dressed up in scrubs with a face mask and a knife tucked into his belt. There are photos of the coast depicting battleships, including the HMS Bermuda, as well as men swimming during their leisure time with action shots of diving and men lounging on beaches. The city of Johannesburg is seen in pictures of the locals, the town center, and shops. One drug store has a sign that announces they speak English. In 1947 the Royal Family made the journey to South Africa and stopped at BMH to visit soldiers and present medals to those wounded in action. The photos here show the preparation for the Royal family with men laying a carpet for the King to stand on when handing out the medals. There is a distant shot of the Royal Family standing in front of the crowd and a photograph of the crowd as they stand aside while the Royals pass through. The hospital was eventually bought by the government of South Africa and began to focus it's care on the indigenous black population. It is now the largest hospital in South Africa.

An intriguing collection of post war photography from a military hospital. [\[BTC#402134\]](#)







