

N.W.F.P.

BURMA

SINGAPORE

IRAQ

IRAN



CEYLON

EGYPT

PALESTINE

CYPRUS

ITALY

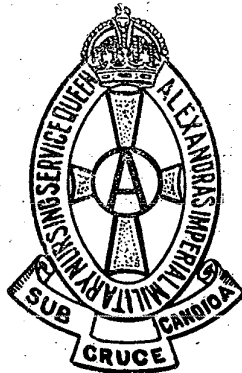
EASTERN FRONTIER

Slogan

Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is a progress, working together is success.

QUEEN ALEXANDRA'S IMPERIAL MILITARY NURSING SERVICE

By J. A. Patterson, Q. A. I. M. N. S.



As early as 1799, in 'Regulations to Regimental Surgeons for the Better Management of The Sick in Regimental Hospitals instructions were laid down regarding the duties of the nurse, including her pay of one shilling a day. By 1800, matrons, head nurses and nurses were employed, but generally speaking, the women employed in attending the sick and wounded of the Army at that time were not trained nurses, but mostly the wives of the soldiers. It was not till 21st October, 1854, when the Pioneer of nursing—Florence Nightingale left England with a party of 40 nurses for the Crimea, that nursing in the Army can be said to have begun.

It was due to Miss Nightingale's wonderful forethought that the Nursing-profession as it is to-day in all countries, was created.

In 1844 it was ruled that all nurses before being accepted for the Army Nursing Service, must receive previous training in a civil hospital. Today all candidates must be State Registered Nurses under the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, a great advance on 1800.

Many ladies of the Royal Family were and are still keenly interested in the nursing profession as a whole, the chief ones who have been most closely connected with army Nursing being H. H. The Princess Christian, who was a great worker for



the service during the South African War and after that in 1902, H. M. Queen Alexandra became the first President of the new service, named after her, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service and of the Territorial Army Nursing Service, both forming the Army Nursing Services of Great Britain.

The Q. A. I. M. N. S. which was formed after the South African War, was well established in 1914, when the first Great War started. At that time it was only 300 strong, but before the war ended it had, with its reserve increased to 10,404 fully trained nurses. Added to the numbers of Q. A. I. M. N. S. and its Reserve was the Territorial Army Nursing Service, which was administered by its own Matron-in-Chief, as apart from the Matron-in-Chief of Q. A. I. M. N. S. After the 1914-1918 War when demobilization had taken place, the Sisters of the regular branch of the service, returned to peace time routine nursing in military hospitals both at home and abroad, serving in Hong Kong, Singapore, Shanghai, Egypt, Malta and Gibraltar and when the amalgamation of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service with Queen Alexandra's Military Nursing Service for India took place in 1926, the former, for the first time sent its members to India, to nurse British troops in that country, and also the families of the troops.

On the outbreak of this present war when the British Expeditionary Force sailed for France, a very important part of it was the medical section for advance posts, casualty clearing stations, general hospitals, ambulance trains, hospital carriers and hospital ships, all of which were, with the exception of the advanced posts, staffed with members of Q. A. I. M. N. S. and its Reserve, T. A. N. S. and its Reserve and V. A. Ds, State Registered Nurses, employed with the Q. A. I. M. N. S. These women had the great honour of being the only women members of the army to sail with the B. E. F. Many of them have since given their lives for their country at sea when hospital ships have been bombed by the enemy, some have been lost at sea in transit to and from seats of war, others have been torpedoed and have spent as long as three weeks, in open boats while still others have lost their lives in trying to escape from countries overrun by the foes of England. Our hearts go out too, to our friends and companions who are prisoners of war in Hong Kong and Malaya, some of whom had been stationed in those countries for several years previous to the outbreak of hostilities.

Although members of the Q. A. I. M. N. S. have held the equivalent rank of Officer in the Army since 1926, it was not till 1941 when they came under the Defence (Women's Forces) Regulations 1941, that they were granted Commissions under the Women's Forces (Officers Commissions) Order 1941 and in consequence, they wear the badges of Lieut. Captain, Major, Lieut-Colonel, Colonel and Brigadier, the highest rank held by the Matron-in-Chief of the whole British Army Nursing Service. The highest rank in India is that of the Chief Principal Matron, who is also head of the Indian Military Nursing Service.

As officers of the Army, the ranks of Sister, Matron, Principal Matron, Chief Principal Matron and Matron-in-Chief are retained, but as a collective term, the members as they were once called, are now known as 'Nursing Officers' used in the same way as one would speak of officers of the R. A. M. C. as 'Medical Officers.' Holding Commissioned Officers rank, the service has now been brought into line with the rest of the Army, and the saluting of superior officers, when in outdoor uniform wearing a cap or hat, salute with the right hand, their seniors in rank of the Army Nursing Service, when passing them in the street or elsewhere and when addressing them at any time. They should return all salutes of their seniors in rank, in the women's Services, including Women Officers of the R. A. M. C., when in the vicinity of her place of duty, all salutes given by the women's forces should be returned.

When on duty Nursing Officers in uniform wearing a cap or hat, when addressing male officers of superior rank, must salute them before and after speaking to them, but will not on other occasions initiate the salute she will, however, return the salutes of all officers and men of the Armed Forces of the Crown.

In indoor uniform, when the muslim cap is worn, the head is considered 'uncovered,' and as saluting is quite incorrect under these circumstances, no salutes are given in this dress.

Caps or any form of head dress worn with outdoor uniform, should be removed on entering a building of any kind, with the exception, of course, of church.

There are several other changes which have taken place since we have come under the Armed Forces, and the Army Act, but time and space will not allow of more detail now, except to say that although we are now recognised by the state to be Army Officers, we are still nurses, which really is more important than anything else, most decidedly so. It should never be forgotten by officers of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service that they are first and foremost, members of the Nursing Profession, together with Officers of all the other Nursing Services of His Majesty, the King Emperor.

MALE NURSES IN THE ARMY

George P. Parker, R. N. (Jemadar, I.A.M.C.)

Before commencing this brief sketch of 'Male Nurses in the Army', I must thank all those who have helped to improve the status of male nurses in the army. Hardly an hour passes without leaving behind some sort of change in the present world, and recently a great change has occurred in the history of male nurses, which has given them the opportunity to prove their professional ideals in the army. Male nursing in India is still in its infancy, it was first started in Mission Hospitals. Students flocked to nursing schools with no idea of what their future might be, and these training institutions were turning out young trained male nurses, who had not many prospects and all except a few were employed in mission hospitals. Although the mission trained nurses were recognised as registered nurses by the provincial nursing councils, they were not given the same salaries as the government trained nurses if they worked in Government hospitals; but a wonderful opportunity has now been opened to them, by the great efforts of well-wishers in the army and the officers of the 'Trained Nurses' Association of India, they are now able to join the I. A. M. C. with the rank of Viceroy's Commissioned Officers.

This is the first time in the history of the world, that Indian male nurses are serving in the army. At first, they were given the same rank and pay, as that of compounders which discouraged many of them, from joining, but, afterwards by realising the real value and ability of male nurses from those who had already been enlisted, and who were the first pioneers to the nursing career in the army, their scale of pay and rank was raised. This revision was a great encouragement and brought in many more recruits.

Flesh is weak and there may be a natural desire for every human being to make money and enjoy life, but this should not be the motive of nurses in joining the army, on the other hand, it should be, firstly, to render their services to the sick and wounded who have risked their lives for the universal noble cause, and secondly, to create a way for the uplift of other male nurses.

As a male nurse who has served for eight months in the army, I would like to tell you a few things about the nature of the work we are doing.

Most of the male nurses are selected as instructors to the nursing sepoy (nursing orderlies), to teach them elementary nursing first-aid, anatomy, physiology and hygiene. It is, of course, a difficult task to teach the uneducated sepoy in their own tongue. So the instructors had to prepare a simple nursing syllabus and teach them clearly. By and by the sepoy grasped something and were able to answer the questions put up and the officers' satisfaction gave the higher authorities a good impression of the instructors and their ability. Now they are recruiting better educated men as special improvers instead of nursing sepoy.

The other nurses are posted in hospitals. Some are sent to work in operation theatres and wards to assist the Sister. It is a pity that more of them are not given complete charge of wards, other than venereal, genito-urinary, etc. They are really helpful to the medical officers in all respects and are carrying out all the duties imposed on them to the entire satisfaction of their superiors. These things have made