

Appeal for funds : at the request of the Serbian government the London committees are providing two new field hospitals & a motor transport section to accompany the Serbian division in Russia / London Units of the Scottish Women's Hospitals for Foreign Service (National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.)

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LONDON UNITS
of the
SCOTTISH WOMEN'S HOSPITALS
FOR FOREIGN SERVICE.
(NATIONAL UNION OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETIES.)

APPEAL FOR FUNDS.

At the request of the Serbian Government the London
Committees are providing
Two New Field Hospitals & a Motor Transport Section
to accompany the Serbian Division in Russia.

SERBIA'S TRIBUTE:

The Crown Prince wrote:

“The Serbian nation will never forget what Scottish
Women have done for them.”

Joint Treasurers of the London Units:

THE LADY COWDRAY,
THE HON. MRS. SPENCER GRAVES,
Scottish Women's Hospitals,
66, Victoria Street, Westminster.

HOSPITALS RUN BY WOMEN.

The idea of organising hospitals for service in war time to be run entirely by women occurred to Dr. Elsie Inglis in the autumn of 1914. She broached the subject to some of the leaders of the Scottish Federation of Women Suffrage Societies and they determined to act upon it. A Committee was formed and an appeal sent out for £1,500. The response surpassed expectation, and a hospital was soon equipped. It was offered to the British Government, and refused. The needs of the British Army, it was stated, were fully met by existing organisations.

OFFER OF SERVICES TO BELGIUM, FRANCE, AND SERBIA.

Balked of their desire to serve their countrymen, the Scottish Women's Committee approached the Belgian, French, and Serbian Governments, and their offers of help were gratefully accepted.

WORLD-WIDE SUPPORT.

More money was required, and more poured in. It came in from the four quarters of the Globe, not only from our Colonies, but also from neutral countries, and at the moment of writing the amount subscribed exceeds £130,000. One most touching contribution came from an Indian Ranee, who, in the strict seclusion of *burdah*, had heard the story of women fighting death and disease in the world beyond her ken.

Here in our own country, special efforts have been made by the Manchester district, which finances the hospital arrangements for Serbian refugees in Corsica, and also by Wales, and by London. British golfers subscribed the cost of one hospital as a memorial to Miss Neil Fraser, who died in Serbia.

The Princess Louise has taken the greatest interest in the work, and contributed an ambulance fitted with all the latest improvements for work in Serbia. H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught showed his appreciation by presiding at a meeting in aid of the funds in Canada, addressed by Miss Burke. President Wilson was likewise interested, and granted Miss Burke an interview.

WORK FOR THE BELGIAN ARMY.

The first work done under the auspices of the Scottish Women's Hospitals was at Calais. Here Dr. Alice Hutchison and others worked through a typhoid epidemic, which was for a time the scourge of the Belgian Army. She had the honour of having the lowest percentage of deaths from typhoid of any hospital in Calais.

WORK AT ROYAUMONT FOR THE FRENCH.

A more ambitious undertaking was the fitting up of the ancient Abbaye of Royaumont as a hospital for the French. Here, Mrs. Harley, sister of Lord French, was Administrator, and the brilliant dramatist, Miss Cicely Hamilton, Clerk. The head physician was Dr. Ivens, of Liverpool. Dr. Agnes Savill, of Harley Street, London, was radiographer, and Mrs. Eliz. Butler, bacteriologist. Special features of the hospital were its laboratory and X-ray equipment.

The French authorities began by treating Royaumont with caution, and sent only simple cases to it, and examined these most carefully when they left, to see if the experiment were dangerous. But this attitude changed, and the hospital came to be looked upon as something quite out of the ordinary. The French authorities made a special request that it should take only the most serious cases, and discharge them when convalescent.

They also asked that the number of beds should be doubled, and that another hospital should be equipped.

GIRTON AND NEWNHAM UNIT AT TROYES.

This one was financed by past and present students of Girton and Newnham Colleges, and stationed at Troyes. It was the first hospital under canvas used by the French in this War. Mrs. Harley was again administrator. The chief medical officer was Dr. McIlroy; the senior physician, Dr. Laura Sandeman; the bacteriologist, Dr. Ellen Porter, and the radiographer, Dr. Stoney.

TRIBUTES TO THE HOSPITAL.

This hospital was under the direction of the military authorities, and not, like Royaumont, under the French Red Cross. It was described by the Curé de St. Savine as the most perfect he had seen in France. Dr. McIlroy was given the official title of *médecin en chef*, with military rank, an honour hitherto withheld from women.

This unit did not stay long at Troyes. It had the distinction, conferred on few voluntary hospitals, of receiving orders to follow the French Expeditionary Force. The staff showed their organising capacity by packing up and clearing away in something like 48 hours. The new destination of the hospital was Serbia, and since the invasion of that country, it has been stationed at Salonica.

WORK IN SERBIA.

More chequered is the history of the hospitals with the Serbian army. There were 5 in charge of the Scottish women at the time of the invasion. They fell back before the enemy and improvised hospitals and dressing stations where they could. By degrees their equipment had to be abandoned, and finally doctors and nurses had to choose between the rigours of a retreat across the Albanian mountains, and the certainty, if they stayed with their wounded, of falling into the hands of the enemy. Some chose the retreat, some stayed with their patients.

It was an anxious time for relatives at home. For a while telegrams came through with the one word "well," and then they ceased. For about four months nothing was heard of the members of the units, and the newspapers were full of those re-assuring conjectures that only serve to betray anxiety.

During that silence white flags waved from Serbian windows, and Serbian roads were sprinkled with the white powder that denoted surrender—while the mountain passes of Albania were black with the manhood of a nation in full retreat.

Dr. Inglis and others became prisoners, and lost the last of their equipment. When she remonstrated at the confiscation of her last hospital, a German replied: "What can you expect when you made it so perfect?"

A SERBIAN'S APPRECIATION OF WOMEN'S WORK.

Dr. Curcin, who organised the retreat of the foreign missions, and to whose foresight the women who retreated with him believe they owe their lives, speaks in the highest terms of their courage under these difficulties. "The bearing of the women," he writes in the September number of the *Englishwoman*, "was beyond all praise . . . I don't hesitate . . . in giving my opinion that the British women behaved better than anyone, better than any man. As regards powers of endurance, they were equal to the Serbian soldier. . . . As regards *morale* . . . nobody was equal to them. . . .

Only then, in Albania, did I get the true opinion of the work the British women did before in Serbia during the epidemics . . . I saw that the capacity of an ordinary Englishwoman for work and suffering is greater than anything we knew before about women. . . .

My women fellow-travellers generally made me feel ashamed in all that concerns courage, endurance, and good temper. The women did exactly as we did—and more; and they were always satisfied with less. . . . The women always gave us of the little they had themselves, and they affirmed that they had had enough when they had had nothing. They took away their last wraps . . . to put on exhausted Serbian soldiers. . . . They gave their last silver or nickel money to the Austrian prisoners who dragged themselves along the road."

RETURN OF THE DOCTORS AND NURSES.

After months had passed, news came to England of the doctors and nurses. Nearly all had got through, and everything considered, their health was remarkably good.

SERBIAN GRATITUDE.

In recognition of their work, the Serbian Government bestowed upon Dr. Inglis the decoration of the White Eagle, the highest order in Serbia, for the first time given to a woman. The Hon. Mrs. Haverfield and others were decorated with the order of St. Sava.

"The Serbian nation," said the Serbian Crown Prince, "will never forget what the Scottish women have done for them."

THE DESIRE TO RETURN TO SERBIA.

There is one thing that the Serbians did not seem to expect of the British women who had experienced with them the horrors of invasion, and that was, that they should ever want to return to Serbia. Their anxiety to do so has been to them one of the most gratifying surprises of all.

"Many of the Englishwomen who have been in Serbia," writes Dr. Curcin, "have already returned to the Serbs, or are on their way back to them."

WORK OF THE LONDON COMMITTEE.

This brings us to the work of the London Units in particular, for it is through the London organisation that the ardent wish of many to return to the Serbian Army has been realised. To begin with,

the activities of the London Committee were so much interwoven with those of Edinburgh as hardly to form a distinct branch of work. But from the first, large numbers of its members shewed an eager desire to work for the hospitals in any way in which they were able. To begin with, besides their personal service, they offered subscriptions, beds, and other gifts in kind, and a motor ambulance. In February, 1915, the Society offered to act as London Agent for the Hospitals, and undertook all the practical work in connection with the sending out of the *personnel* and equipment, which had to be transacted in London.

It was soon felt, however, that this was not enough for London's share of the national work, and in March, 1915, a special London Committee was formed to raise its own units for service with the Scottish Women's Hospitals. Miss Kathleen Burke was appointed Organising Secretary of these units, and set to work to raise money, and to make the work of the hospitals known, not only in London, but all over the world.

The London Committee finances a ward of 25 beds at Royaumont. It has given to that hospital a travelling X-ray car, fitted up after a model supervised by Mme. Curie. The advantages of it are at once apparent. It can travel from place to place, locating bullets in cases where a journey by car to the stationary X-ray apparatus might be fatal to the patient. The time saved is incalculable, and arrangements are fitted up in it for developing photographs *en route*.

THE LONDON-WALES UNIT COMMANDEERED FOR BRITISH WOUNDED AT MALTA.

London and Wales together equipped one of the hospitals that worked in Serbia. It was sent out under Dr. Alice Hutchison, and was detained for a short time by Lord Methuen at Malta for service with our own wounded, who were pouring in from the Dardanelles. Of its work Lord Methuen wrote :

" As I have written to Sir Ralph Paget, it is not in my power to express my gratitude sufficiently for the help given me by the Serbian Unit. There came the first avalanche of wounded and no further aid from home was due for a fortnight, so sooner than see my men neglected, I took it on myself to detain the unit for one fortnight. They leave here blessed by myself, surgeons, nurses, and patients alike, for they have proved themselves most capable and untiring workers. They never made the smallest difficulty, and would not have been sorry had I ordered them to remain another week."

(Signed) METHUEN.

THE HELP OF AMERICANS.

At the beginning of 1916 the London and headquarters Committees arranged to send the London Organising Secretary, Miss Kathleen Burke, to America to appeal for funds. The proceeds (£13,000) were mainly used to equip a hospital for the Serbian Army at Salonica, now under the charge of Dr. Bennett. It sailed early in August, and was accompanied by Mrs. Harley in charge of a motor transport section.

On September 9th, Miss Burke sailed again for America to make a further appeal in the U.S.A. and Canada.

LONDON UNITS FOR WORK WITH THE SERBIAN DIVISION WITH THE RUSSIAN ARMY.

The London Committee in July, 1916, undertook to equip 2 Field Hospitals and a particularly large motor transport section for use with the Serbian Division in Russia. The hospitals are under the charge of Dr. Inglis, whose staff consists of 4 doctors, an X-ray operator, a dispenser, 17 fully trained nurses, 16 orderlies, besides cooks and laundresses; while the accompanying transport column, under the Hon. Evelina Haverfield, comprises 8 ambulances, 2 kitchen cars, a repair car, 4 lorries, and 3 touring cars with a large staff of chaffeurs and cooks. The business arrangements are in the capable hands of Miss Henderson, the Administrator.

The whole contingent, numbering about 76 persons, sailed on August 29th for Russia, and arrived close to the Roumanian front in the Dobrudja at the end of September.

At Medjidia, a Base Hospital was set up with a Field Hospital nearer the front, but after a fortnight the evacuation of Medjidia was ordered and the Hospital was forced to retreat with the Army. Weather and food conditions were exceptionally bad. A cable received in November, announced the safe arrival of the Unit and its equipment (except for a lorry and motor kitchen) at Odessa.

URGENT NEED OF FUNDS.

This is the most important individual enterprise which the London Committee has yet undertaken, and we urgently ask for your unstinted support. The claim of Serbia, heroic and dispossessed, is too poignant to be rejected. We ask you to help her gallant and much enduring soldiers; to help the French, who for so long have carried on the greatest battle in history; and to help women to make good their claim for service. Sustained effort is necessary to raise the money to maintain the work already in hand.

Contributions should be sent to THE LADY COWDRAY, or THE HON. MRS. SPENCER GRAVES, 66, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.

LONDON UNITS

of the

SCOTTISH WOMEN'S HOSPITALS for FOREIGN SERVICE (The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies)

*I enclose Contribution towards the London
Fund for supporting Hospitals in France
and for the Serbians.* £ : :

Cheques to be crossed "LONDON COUNTY AND WESTMINSTER BANK,
VICTORIA STREET BRANCH."

To THE LADY COWDRAY, or to THE HON. MRS. SPENCER GRAVES,
Hon. Treasurers,
66, VICTORIA STREET, WESTMINSTER, S.W.

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