

Epitaph On My Days in Hospital

By Vera Mary Brittain, VAD

(29 December 1893 – 29 March 1970)

I found in you a holy place apart,

Sublime endurance, God in man revealed,

Where mending broken bodies slowly healed

My broken heart.



Miss Annie Munro
Fairfield
Lynne Regis
Dorsetshire
Angleterre



R. E. Clarke Esq
Instr. Ambulance Dept.
83 Pall Mall
London

A. Fawcett

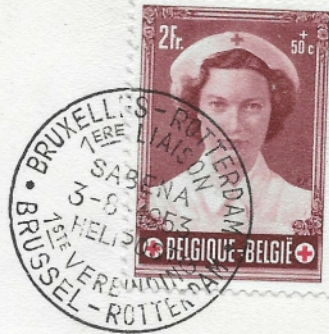


She hasn't a sword
and she
hasn't a gun,
But she's doing
her duty
now fighting's begun.



Premier VOL HELIPOST

Bruxelles-Rotterdam



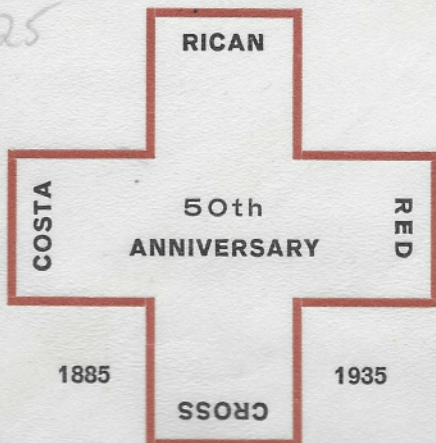
M. J. D E L L E N B A G
Statenweg 172
R O T T E R D A M
Pays-Bas



J. A. WESTON
APARTADO 1032
SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA

FIRST DAY COVER

£25



Mr Douglas Gould,
3 Belgrave Villa,
Huddersfield,
England.

INGLATERRA

Ethel Gordon Fenwick

(née Manson)

26 January 1857 - 13 March 1947



At the age of 21 she commenced nurse training at the Children's Hospital in Nottingham as a paying probationer nurse, and then at Manchester Royal Infirmary. Her expertise was soon noted and it was not long before she left for London, where she worked in hospitals in Whitechapel, and Richmond. In 1881, at the age of 24, Ethel was appointed Matron of St Bartholomew's Hospital, a post she held until 1887 when she resigned her post to marry Dr Bedford Fenwick, becoming known professionally as Mrs Bedford Fenwick.



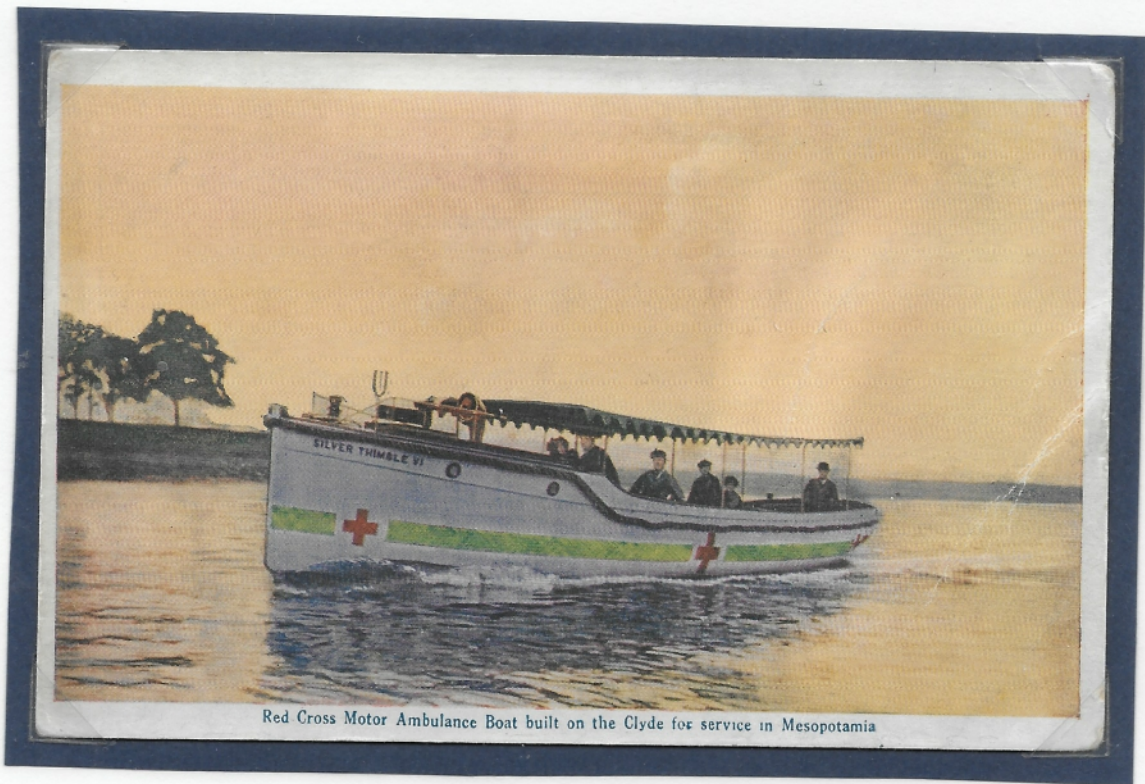
Mrs Bedford Fenwick was the founder of the Royal British Nurses' Association in 1887. She was instrumental in founding the Florence Nightingale International Foundation, the premier foundation of the International Council of Nurses, and was its president for the first five years. She extended significantly the training period for nurses, and campaigned for the state registration of nurses in the United Kingdom. This was achieved through the Nurses Registration Act 1919, and when the register opened in the UK in 1923 Ethel Gordon Fenwick registered as "Nurse No. 1".

Elizabeth Hope-Clarke CBE

1870 (Calcutta) - 1950 (Wimbledon)



A woman of private means, Miss Hope-Clarke set up the Silver Thimble Fund after her own silver thimble wore out while making clothes for troops in the trenches. It occurred to her that many others too might have spare or worn thimbles - and other items made from precious materials (tributes) - in their sewing baskets that could be recycled for cash. This modest, yet inspired idea mushroomed into an extraordinary fund-raising campaign that had a huge and direct impact on the supply of medical and ambulance equipment across all fronts during the *Great War* - and thereafter.



Silver Thimble VI

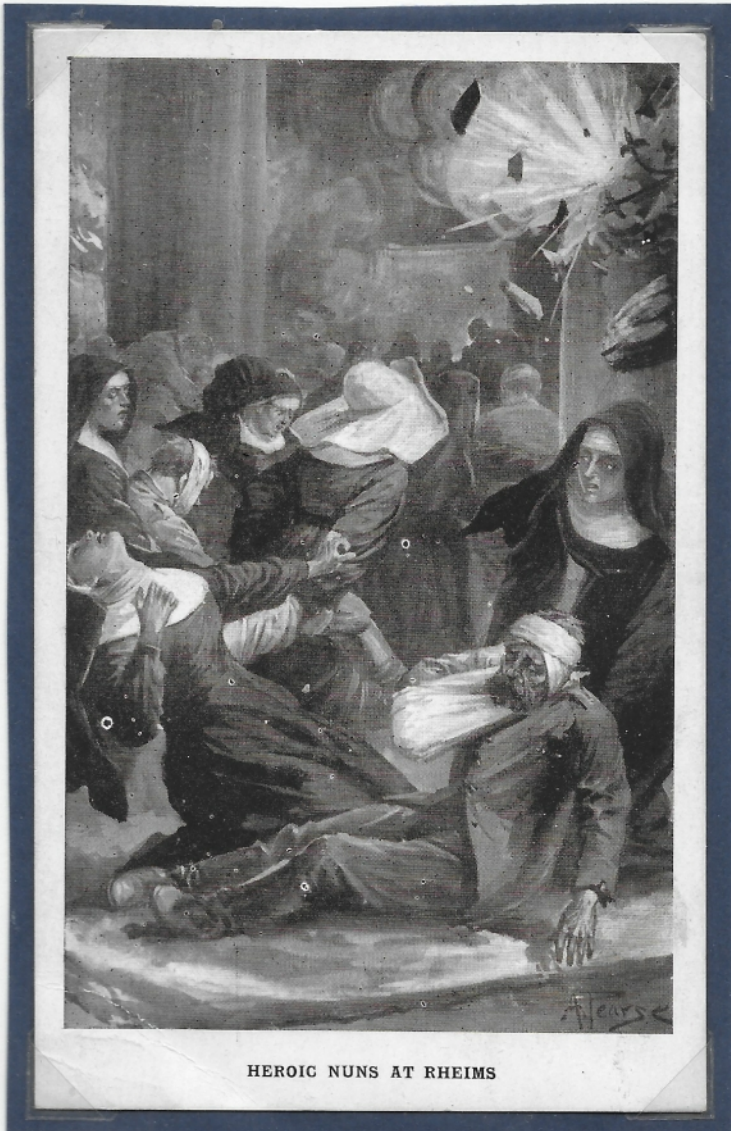
Red Cross Motor Ambulance built on the Clyde for service in Mesopotamia (Iraq) during the First World War.

Following the publication of a letter in the Times on 8 July 1915 asking for donations of silver thimbles, Miss Hope-Clarke was inundated. She set up the Silver Thimble Fund with the patronage of Queen Alexandra and under the Presidency of Lady Maud Wilbraham to provide extra humanitarian resources for British and Commonwealth troops. All this she administered from her private home in Crescent Road, Wimbledon, London. £60,000 was collected to buy 5 Launches for Mesopotamia (operated by the British Red Cross Society and Order of St John of Jerusalem), 15 motor Ambulances, Mobile X-Ray Units, a mobile Dental Surgery as well as making donations to specific War Charities. Beds were also sponsored in hospitals to alleviate suffering of war casualties. The first two motor ambulances were named Wimbledon and Merton in honour of the areas of London where the charity was based.

RHEIMS CATHEDRAL



The cathedral was hit by some 300 shells but the rose window was saved by being dismantled and removed during World War I. The first shell hit on Sept. 19, 1914 and by Nov. 11, 1918 the cathedral wasn't much more than battered walls, enfeebled buttresses and rubble.



HEROIC NUNS AT RHEIMS

The Nuns at Rheims showed great bravery in rescuing the wounded then lying in the cathedral while it was being bombarded. Five of them paid for their bravery and humanity with their lives and six others were seriously wounded.

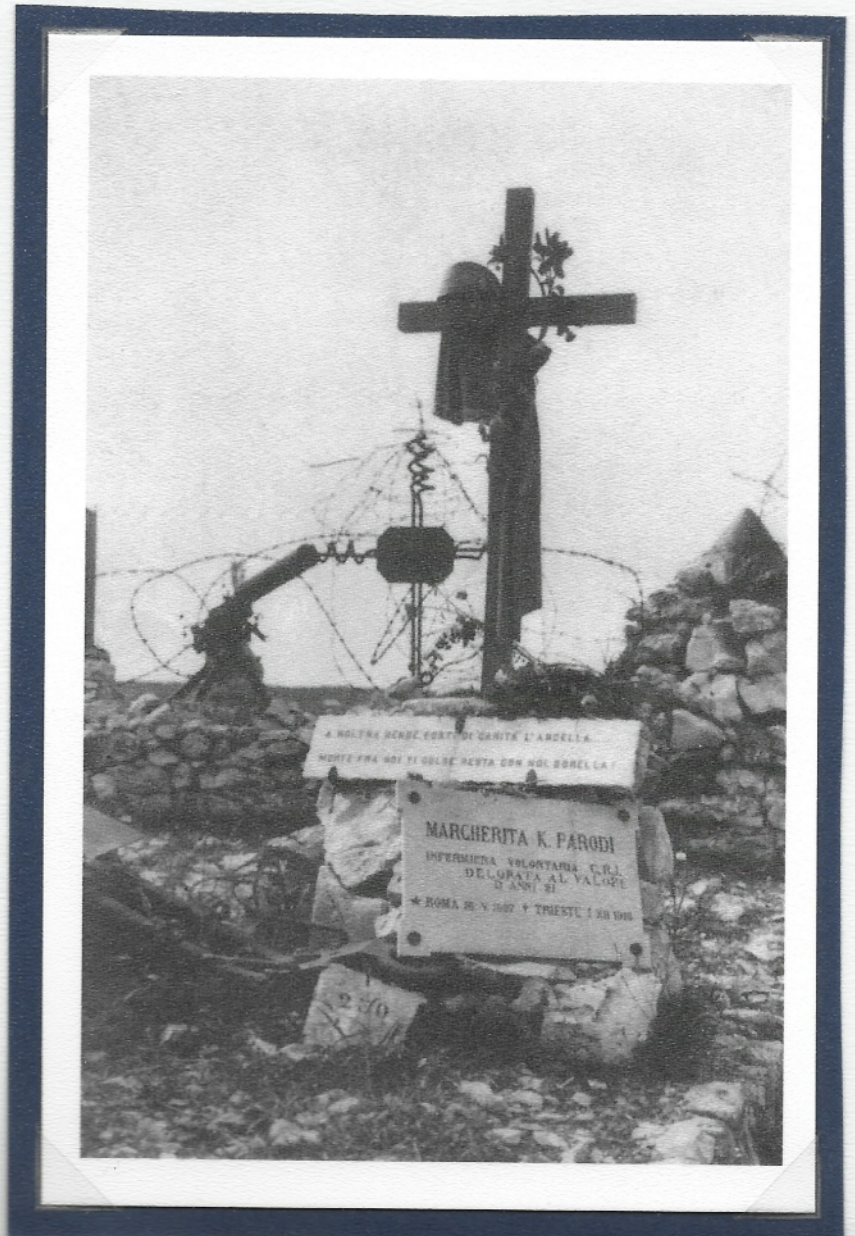
Margherita Kaiser Parodi

(1897-1918)

Margherita Kaiser Parodi was born in Rome on May 16, 1897. She decided to volunteer at the age of eighteen starting with her mother Maria and her sister Olga at the CRI Hospital of Cividale in Friuli, employed by the Third Army of the Duke of Aosta. On May 19, 1917 she was involved in a bombardment with the mobile hospital n. 2 of Pieris, in the Gorizia area. Despite the violence of the Austrian fire, she remained in her post, providing immediate care to wounded soldiers. For her behaviour, her abnegation and the spirit of human brotherhood towards the Italian infantrymen, the General Staff of the Royal Army awarded her the Bronze Medal for Military Valour with the following citation: "for having remained calm in her place to comfort the sick entrusted to her care, while the enemy bombed the area where the hospital in which she was working was located".



The end of the conflict coincided with the outbreak of the Spanish epidemic, a serious form of influenza that caused tens of millions of deaths on all continents from 1917 to 1920. Despite the high risk of contagion, Margherita Parodi remained with the seriously ill soldiers. The fatigue, the cold and the vigils at night at the beds of the dying weakened her body and compromised her state of health, so much so that on 1 December 1918 she became a victim of the disease in the hospital of Trieste.



Sister Cecylia Maria Roszak

(1908 - 2018)



A Polish nun who risked her life by hiding Jews from the Nazis during the Second World War died on 16 November 2018 at the age of 110. Sister Cecylia, believed to have been the oldest nun in the world, died in the Dominican convent in the city of Krakow, southern Poland, where she had lived for nearly 90 years.

The medal of the Righteous bears the Jewish saying: "Whosoever saves a single life, saves an entire universe" (Mishnah, Sanhedrin 4:5). The full meaning of this is demonstrated when survivors' families - with children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren - come together for the honouring of a rescuer. Often, they represent a sole surviving branch of an extended family that perished.



In 1938, with a group of nuns, she went to Vilnius in Lithuania to establish a new monastery, but the plans were scrapped when war broke out. During the fighting, the sisters reportedly hid around a dozen Jews from Nazis. German authorities arrested Sister Cecylia's superior and closed down the convent in 1943. On 29 March 1984, Israel awarded the Mother Superior Anna Borkowska and the nuns Imelda Neugebauer, Stefania Bednarska, Malgorzata Adamek, Jordana Ostreyko, Helena-Diana Frackiewicz and Cecylia Maria Roszak the "Righteous Among the Nations" medal, which it gave to non-Jewish people who risked their lives during the war to save Jews.

Élise Rivet

Élise Rivet, also known as *Mère Marie Élisabeth de l'Eucharistie*

(January 19, 1890, Draria, Algeria-March 30, 1945, Ravensbrück concentration camp, Germany)

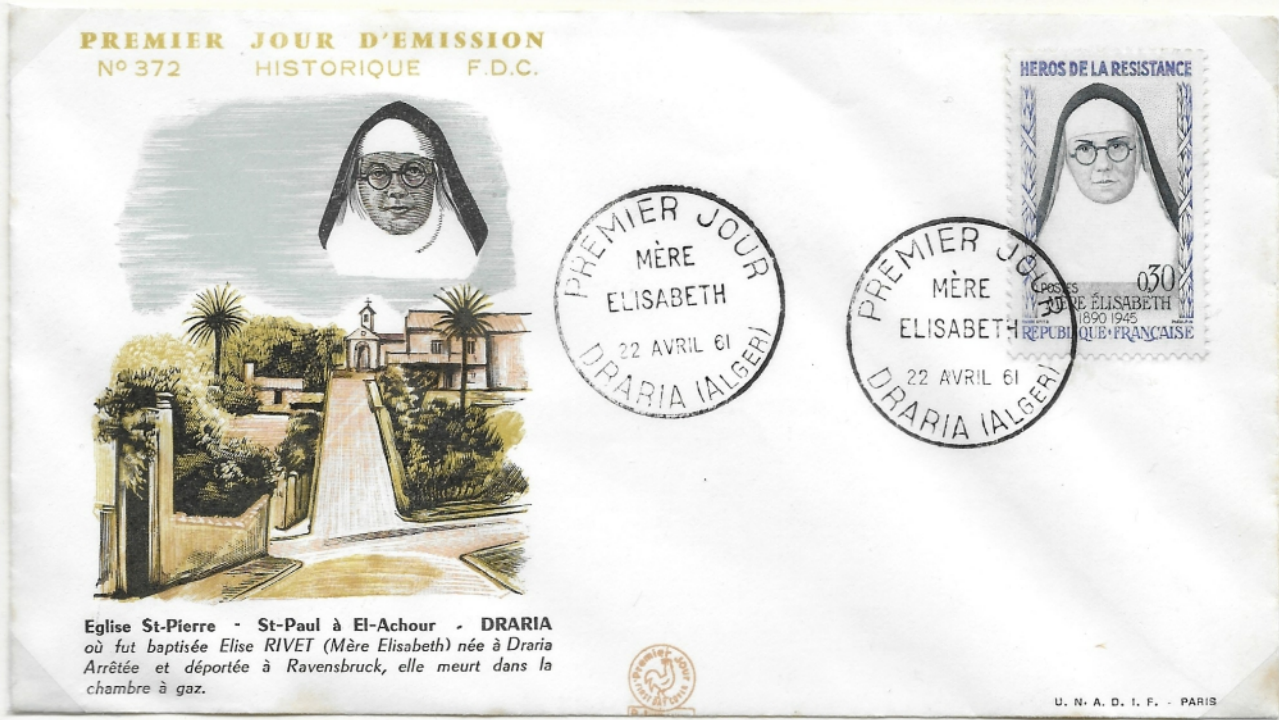


1961
Heroes of the Resistance

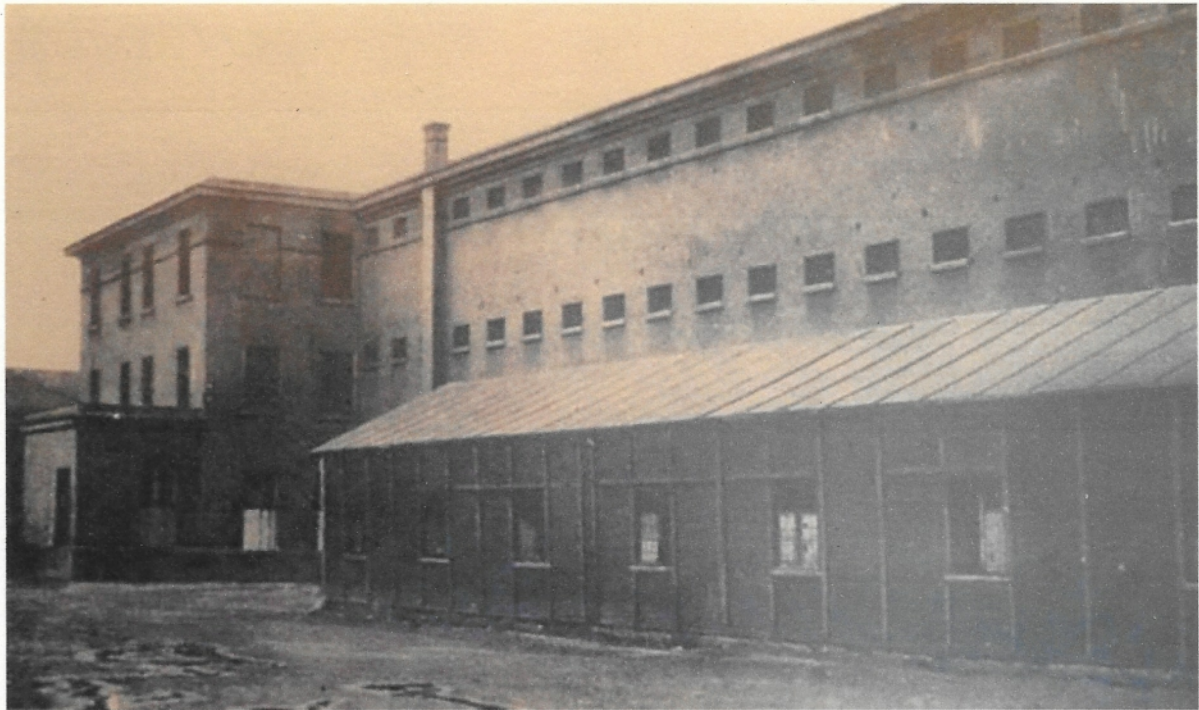


1996
Righteous Among The Nations

Rivet was born to an Alsatian mother and French naval officer father. After the death of her father in 1910, she moved with her mother to Lyon. She worked for a time in a hair salon before joining the convent of the medical sisters of *Notre Dame de Compassion* in Lyon in 1912. In 1933 she became *Mère Marie Élisabeth de l'Eucharistie*, the convent's Mother Superior.



After the fall of the French Third Republic to Nazi Germany in World War II, she began hiding refugees from the Gestapo and eventually used her convent to store weapons and ammunition for the *Mouvements Unis de la Résistance* (MUR) at the request of Albert Chambonnet. On March 24, 1944, she and her assistant were arrested by the Gestapo and taken to the Montluc prison in Lyon.



Montluc Prison, Lyon

From there, she was taken to Romainville, before being shipped to Ravensbrück Concentration Camp near Berlin. There, stripped of her religious garments, she was forced into hard labour.



Inmates at forced labour in the Ravensbrück concentration camp between 1940 and 1942.

Courtesy of US Holocaust Memorial Museum

Rivet volunteered to go to the gas chamber on March 30, 1945, in place of a mother only weeks before Germany surrendered unconditionally, she was 55 years old. On 10 November 1945 she was posthumously awarded the Croix de Guerre with star. In 1961, the government of France honoured her with her portrait on a Heroes of the Resistance postage stamp. A street bearing her name was inaugurated in Brignais (Lyon) on December 2, 1979, in 1996, she was recognized as Righteous Among the Nations and in 1999, a lecture hall at the Institut des Sciences de l'Homme in Lyon was named *Salle Élise Rivet* in her honour.



MOBILE FIELD MEDICAL UNIT



The word 'Ambulance', derived through French from the Latin word 'ambulare', was originally used to designate a movable hospital. Since the Crimean War it has become a generic term for all vehicles or conveyances for the sick and wounded. The correct definition for a Field Ambulance is now a "Mobile Field Medical Unit".



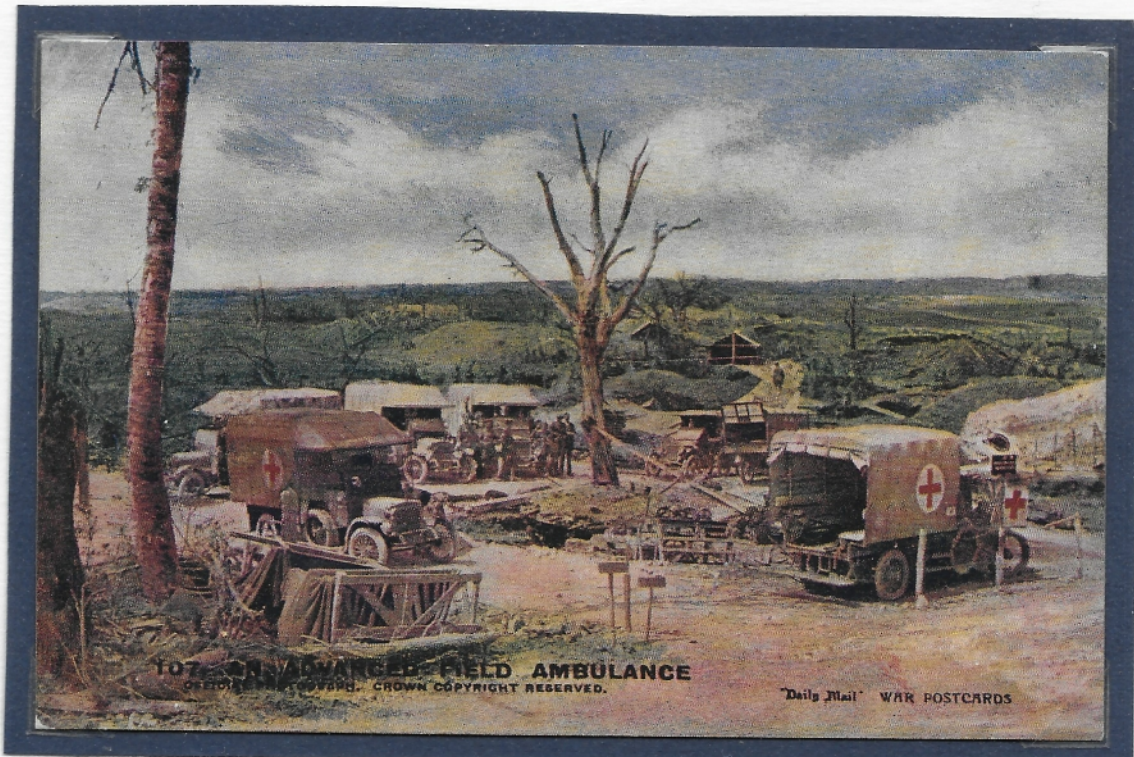
'A Section' 129 Field Ambulance somewhere in Flanders.

The Field Ambulance was a mobile front line medical unit (it was not a vehicle). Most came under command of a Division, and had special responsibility for the care of casualties of one of the Brigades in the Division. Each Division had three Field Ambulances. The theoretical capacity of the Field Ambulance was 150 casualties, but in battle many would simply be overwhelmed by numbers. The Ambulance was responsible for establishing and operating a number of points along the casualty evacuation chain, from the Bearer Relay Posts which were up to 600 yards behind the Regimental Aid Posts, through the Advanced Dressing Station (ADS), to the Main Dressing Station (MDS). It also provided a Walking Wounded Collecting Station, as well as various rest areas and local sick rooms. The Ambulances would usually establish 1 ADS per Brigade, and 1 MDS for the Division.

The Field Ambulance was divided into 3 Sections. In turn, those Sections had Stretcher Bearer and Tented subsections. The Field Ambulance was composed of 10 officers and 224 men.



MOBILE FIELD MEDICAL UNIT



A horse-drawn ambulance at AMS Museum, Keogh Barracks.

As with all other units, the Field Ambulances relied heavily on horses for transport, and had an establishment of 14 riding and 52 draught and pack horses. They worked the 23 wagons, 3 water carts, 3 forage carts, 6 GS wagons, 10 ambulance wagons and the cooks wagon. The Ambulance also had a single bicycle.



MOBILE FIELD MEDICAL UNIT



RAMC officers and men did not carry weapons or ammunition. By the end of 1914, each Field Ambulance also included 7 motor ambulance vehicles. A workshop to maintain them was added to the Division, although in 1916 it was absorbed in the Supply Column.



Awaiting orders behind the front line.



MOBILE FIELD MEDICAL UNIT



On 12 September 1914 a few members of the Royal Automobile Club placed themselves and their cars at the disposal of the Red Cross. The War Office permission, signed by Kitchener, stated as follows: *'I see no objection to parties with Motor Ambulances searching villages in France that are not in occupation of the Germans for wounded and to obtain particulars of the missing and convey them to hospital.'*



This enabled the Red Cross to bring in the first widespread battlefield motor ambulances to replace horse drawn vehicles. It was such a success, the horse drawn variants were quickly phased out. In civilian emergency care, dedicated ambulance services were frequently managed or dispatched by individual hospitals, though in some areas, telegraph and telephone services enabled police departments to handle dispatch duties.

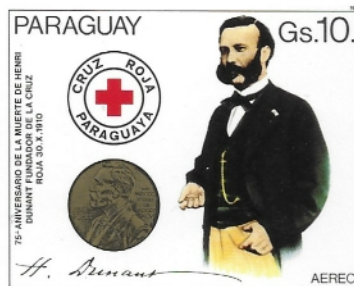
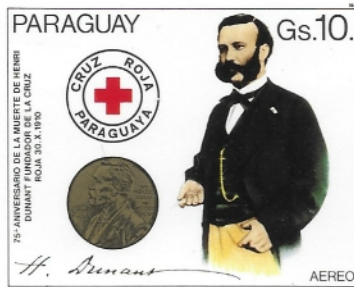
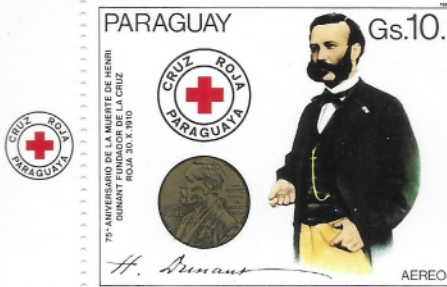
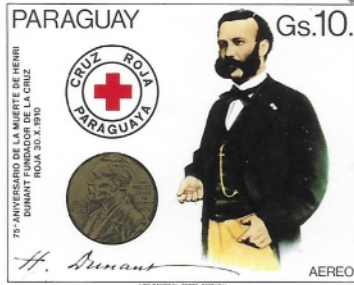




MOBILE FIELD MEDICAL UNIT



REPUBLICA DEL PARAGUAY



09519



By the end of the war, the Motor Ambulance Department had sent out 3,446 motor vehicles of various kinds, including 2,171 Motor Ambulances, to various theatres of war.



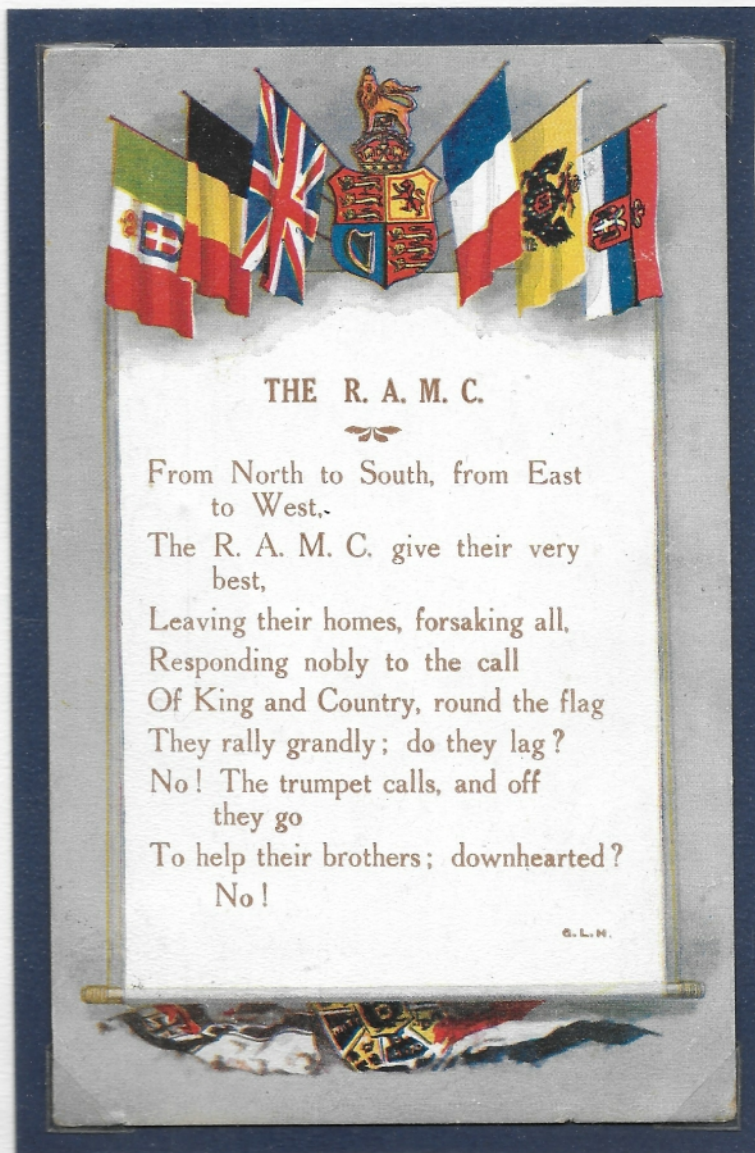
MOBILE FIELD MEDICAL UNIT



The approximate total of cases transported by the Motor Ambulance Department are as follows, bearing in mind that individuals may have presented as 'cases' on more than one occasion during the war:

France	7,250,286
Italy	398,630
Salonika	39,219
Egypt	26,209
Mesopotamia	505,676
British Isles	1,791,415
	<hr/>
	10,011,435

Some of the problems handled by the RAMC during the First World War were: Gas; Trench Foot; Gas Gangrene; Shellshock; and Lice.



Two-way radios became available shortly after World War I, enabling for more efficient radio dispatch of ambulances. Shortly before World War II, then, a modern ambulance carried advanced medical equipment, was staffed by a physician, and was dispatched by radio. It was frequently found that ambulances were hearses - the only available vehicle that could carry a recumbent patient - and were thus frequently run by funeral homes, these vehicles which could serve for either purpose were known as combination cars.

MOBILE FIELD MEDICAL UNIT

The RAMC postcard on the previous page was sent from Rolleston Camp on 12 February 1916 by a brother to his sister in Crawshabooth, near Manchester.



The following RAMC Silk postcard has its original insert which is reproduced below.

