

Mixed Fortunes: The Postwar Lives of East Melbourne's Great War Nurses

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Abstract

There has been considerable popular and academic interest in Australia's Great War nurses in recent years, but little attention to their lives after the war. This article partly redresses this omission by focusing on the experiences of 54 nurses connected with East Melbourne. It argues that the long-term physical, psychological and aspirational effects of the war on these women were complex and multiple. Some flourished professionally, but at least one, possibly two, committed suicide. Some endured chronic difficulties due to ill health, financial need and challenging marriages. At least a third returned overseas, typically combining work and travel. The most common pattern was continued nursing, sometimes in new specialisations or management, although many postwar careers were disrupted periodically by ill health or financial problems. These new understandings contribute to a more complicated interpretation of the long-term effects of the Great War.

Introduction

More than 2,700 Australian women served in army nursing services during the Great War of 1914–1918. Most joined the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS) (2,498), and most others the Queen Alexandra Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve (QAIMNSR) (259).¹ The AANS members in particular have generated considerable interest in the lead-up to and during the war's centenary. More than twenty years after the two standard histories of the AANS, Rupert Goodman's *Our War Nurses* (1988) and Jan Bassett's *Guns and Brooches* (1992) has come publication of a number of major works, notably by Peter Rees, Kirsty Harris, Janet Butler and Ruth Rae.² Whereas Goodman and Bassett covered army nursing since the South African War (1899–1902), the more recent works have concentrated entirely on Great War nurses and nursing.

Great War nurses have also figured in the research undertaken by many local historical societies, schools, clubs, churches, hospitals and similar organisations into the men and women who enlisted from their community or institution. Details of their wartime service has appeared in various forms besides books, including websites, exhibitions, and commemorative events.³ This focus on the nurses' war service has generally meant that attention to their lives before enlistment or after discharge has been minimal. This is hardly surprising given the ready availability of their war service records and most Australian army hospital unit diaries on the websites of the National Archives of Australia and the Australian War Memorial. In addition, government grants available to local groups for the Great War centenary targeted commemoration of war service in publications, exhibitions and memorials.⁴

Returned nurses have not had a high profile in studies of the postwar lives of Australians who served. Marina Larsson examined the devastating effects of the war on the subsequent lives of wounded and disabled soldiers and their families but did not include former army nurses.⁵ In their recent investigation of soldier settlement in New South Wales, Bruce Scates and Melanie Oppenheimer devoted a chapter to women but concentrated mainly on settlers' wives.⁶ The experiences of a few nurses who overcame major impediments and acquired a soldier settler block have been studied by both Marilyn Lake and Selena Williams, but their work by no means exhausts the subject.⁷ And, although there is a large project currently underway—'Diggers to Veterans: Risk, Resilience and Recovery in the First AIF', led by Janet McCalman—its focus is on men's health and life courses in a particular population, the number of nurses having been judged too small to include.⁸

There is some attention to postwar lives in the existing literature about army nurses. Janet Butler devoted several pages to Kit McNaughton's life after the war but it was not the focus of her study.⁹ Jan Bassett explored the subject in a preliminary way through the records of organisations set up to assist army nurses in sickness, distress or difficult circumstances, in particular the Edith Cavell Trust Fund in Victoria.¹⁰ Kirsty Harris used her extensive AANS database to examine the nurses' professional lives after the war; her approach was comprehensive with individual examples but essentially broad brush in its treatment of the

subject.¹¹ Ruth Rae has also provided a valuable overview of army nurses' postwar legacy in various fields at home and overseas.¹²

There have been no full-scale biographies of significant army nurses. The *Australian Dictionary of Biography (ADB)* has entries on 42 Australian army nurses from the Great War but details about their lives after the war are cursory and based on limited sources. The *ADB* entry on Rachel Pratt MM, for example, was originally published in 1988. It described her after the war co-owning a rest home, holidaying in England, and living independently of her family in suburban Melbourne and the Dandenong Ranges till her death in Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital in 1954. Her photograph, according to the author, showed a 'gentle, somewhat wistful expression'.¹³ A very different picture of Pratt's life emerged recently in the Monash University series '100 Stories'. 'No prospect of ending it' (her words) cited Pratt's medical records to set out the war experiences and subsequent neurosis that left her suicidal, the ineffective treatments she endured and the horrors that haunted her until her death.¹⁴ In that account she was tormented not wistful. The progressive release of medical and repatriation records will surely result in her biography and those of others being reviewed.

Research on life after the Great War for Australia's army nurses has therefore to date been limited to hardship on the one hand and professional work on the other. For a more complete picture of their experiences, both individual and shared, we need detailed biographical studies of army nurses and in a sufficient number to constitute an identifiable group, for example nurses trained at a particular hospital or connected to a particular location.¹⁵ Jan Bassett concluded that 'a large number of returned nurses found their hopes and dreams turn to fears and nightmares', but, as this paper shows, the picture was much more nuanced than that.¹⁶

East Melbourne's Great War Nurses

The postwar lives of one group of returned Australian army nurses have been investigated in detail in the East Melbourne Historical Society (EMHS) Great War project. The EMHS has researched the men and women connected with East Melbourne at the time of their enlistment or commission, drawing on a database compiled by military historian Major-General Michael O'Brien (Rtd). Volunteers have to date (July 2017) written up the war service of 542 people, 69 per cent of the 781

identified. The accounts are freely available on the EMHS website emhs.org.au.

Fifty-five Great War nurses were found with a connection to East Melbourne through family, employment or church attendance when they enlisted. They have had a high profile in the project. Their biographies cover their lives before enlistment and after demobilisation, as well as during the war.¹⁷ They were the focus of 'Gone to War as Sister', an EMHS exhibition and publication in 2015, and represented in the EMHS's 2014 exhibition, 'For King and Country'. Before the project, only the highly decorated Matron Jessie McHardie White was relatively well known.¹⁸ The lives of the remainder were little known beyond their family connections.

Available biographical information varied considerably from nurse to nurse. Some were prominent or newsworthy, such as the one who had attracted widespread notoriety when she eloped as a teenager.¹⁹ Some were familiar figures as, for example, a hospital matron in a country town. Others came from families sufficiently prominent in their community for their major and minor activities to be reported. All could be identified using genealogical resources such as birth registrations and electoral rolls.

These nurses lived or worked or worshipped in the small suburb of East Melbourne (including Jolimont), on the city's eastern edge. In 1914, the boundaries encompassed grand residences, terraces, workers' cottages and apartment buildings such as Cliveden Mansions and Queen Bess Row. Many of the larger residences had rooms for rent, a boon for nurses working in the various hospitals in East Melbourne or the city. East Melbourne was also the location of several large trained nurses' homes, which functioned as employment agencies for nurses. St Peter's Eastern Hill, the prominent high church Anglican parish in East Melbourne, had a branch of the Guild of St Barnabas, a social and devotional group specifically for nurses. Of the 55 nurses identified, 24 of them were parishioners of St Peter's or members of the Guild.²⁰

Most of these nurses had come to East Melbourne from elsewhere in Melbourne or country Victoria but occasionally from further afield.²¹ Born in the 1870s and 1880s, they were the children of English, Scottish and Irish immigrants who in the main had come to Victoria in the 1840s or as part of the population explosion during and after the gold rushes of the 1850s. Most were raised in Victoria, although a handful

came to Melbourne from elsewhere already trained as nurses. Some had comfortable upbringings because their fathers owned land, ran successful businesses or practised a profession. Others were born to parents who struggled to make a living in the boom-and-bust cycles of the 1880s and 1890s. A significant minority of these women were raised by their mothers, who had been widowed young and forced to support themselves and their children, for example by running their late husband's (struggling) business, taking in lodgers or operating a wine hall.

The majority were trained in one of Victoria's hospitals, such as the Melbourne, Women's, Children's, St Vincent's or the Homeopathic Hospital in the capital, or in a regional hospital such as Bendigo or Wangaratta. Several had trained elsewhere in Australia and one in England. Generally they had at least a decade of nursing experience behind them when they enlisted.²² Their experience after training reflected nursing as it was in 1914: hospital work (public and private, general and surgical, adults and children) and private or home nursing.

Some of the enlisting nurses had held supervisory positions as sisters in Melbourne hospitals or had run country hospitals. Among the highly experienced was Jessie McHardie White who owned and operated Crathie, a hospital in East Melbourne. Rosa Quarterman, Ethel Giddings, Clara Ross and Agnes King had all been hospital matrons in mining and farming communities where accident victims and emergency cases were commonplace.²³ Others had specialised training in theatre or infectious diseases. Nothing in their professional experience, however, could have prepared them for their work in the war, either the daily churn of patients or the nature of injuries.

When they enlisted, most joined the AANS, although several enlisted in the Queen Alexandra Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve (QAIMNSR) in England.²⁴ There were East Melbourne nurses among the AANS first appointed to go to the front in September 1914 and East Melbourne nurses in the last ships sailing just before hostilities ceased in November 1918. They served in virtually every location to which the AANS was sent for duty, including Egypt, the Western Front, England, Greece, Italy and India, as well as on hospital ships and troop transports. All serving East Melbourne nurses received at least one campaign medal. Eight were decorated with the Royal Red Cross for

exceptional services in military nursing, while several of them and five others were also mentioned in despatches.²⁵

Army nurses encountered danger and occasionally died from illness or injury. This was true for the East Melbourne nurses. One, Margaret Roberts, drowned with other nurses and personnel when their ship, the *SS Osmanieh*, sank after being torpedoed near Alexandria Harbour on 31 December 1917.²⁶ Others had narrow escapes. Patricia Blundell was rescued with all hands when the *SS Barunga* was sunk in the Bay of Biscay in July 1918. Helen Lawrence was fortunate not to be injured when the 1st Australian Casualty Clearing Station on the Western Front was bombed in July 1917; her colleague Rachel Pratt was awarded the Military Medal for nursing under fire.²⁷

Between 1914 and 1918 the lives of these East Melbourne nurses changed almost beyond imagining. They treated horrific injuries in extraordinary numbers in extremely difficult conditions. They practised new techniques and specialities in theatres and on wards. As family members, some lost parents and siblings at home while they were overseas. Some lost brothers on active service, causing unremitting grief in the family. Some may have lost fiancés. Some returned ill even before the war ended. Many returned well but exhausted. Some were to have recurring health problems resulting from the war. Some had acquired a taste for travel and continued adventure. Most were single on their return; many remained so and needed a livelihood. The great majority had decades of life ahead of them: 44 of the 54 (81 per cent) lived beyond the average life expectancy of 51 for women born in the 1880s, with 24 (44 per cent) living into their 80s and beyond.²⁸ The vast majority returned home in 1919 and 1920, some having last seen Australia in 1914. This article examines the rest of their lives.

Life after the War

Fifty-four of East Melbourne's 55 nurses survived the war. Only Margaret Roberts had died on active service. A small number had been invalided back previously or were working in Australia when hostilities ceased. Most of the remaining 54 returned to Australia in 1919 and 1920. They were posted on duty on the hospital ships and troops transports that brought 250,000 Australian service personnel, wives and families back from England and Europe.

In 1923 the secretary of the Returned Army Nurses Club observed that 'many of our nurses are now following other callings besides the

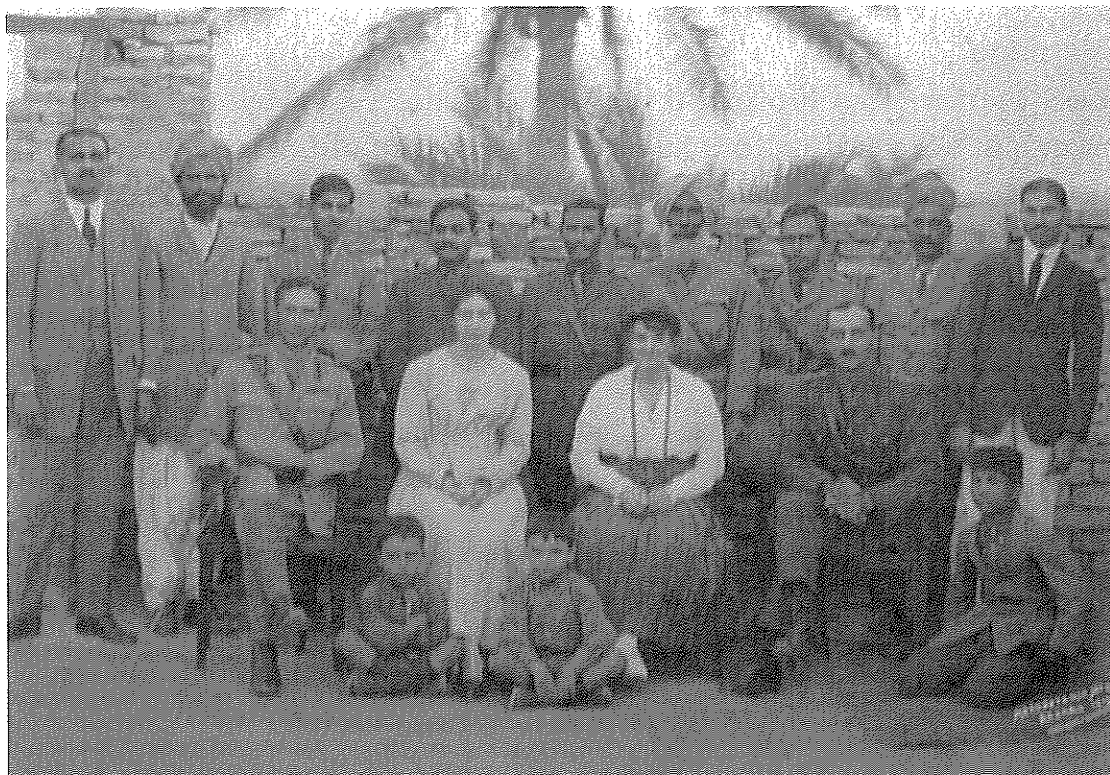
varied channels open to our profession ... Others have pursued the taste for travel engendered by war travel.²⁹ Many of the East Melbourne nurses did indeed travel for work and/or pleasure soon after demobilisation and in subsequent decades. However, unless they married before or on their return the East Melbourne, Great War nurses resumed nursing. They continued to work in the profession until circumstances such as marriage, health problems, inability to gain a position or (occasionally) inheritance made work impossible or unnecessary.

Marriage

Less than a third (16 or 30 per cent) of the East Melbourne nurses married.³⁰ Several factors such as their age made marriage after the war relatively unlikely for these and Great War nurses as a whole. Most were by then in their thirties and even well into their forties. Some may have lost fiancés during the conflict and had neither inclination nor opportunity to marry. However, as the East Melbourne nurses' lives showed, spinsterhood was not a foregone conclusion; several married in their forties and/or married men younger than they were. Three had married during the war and resigned in accordance with army regulations.³¹ Mary McKinnon fell in love with the purser on a hospital transport in late 1915. She transferred to nursing repatriated men in Melbourne, her civilian fiancé found a shore position, and they married in 1917. Two who were posted to English hospitals married patients. Margaret Ousley met Robert Mennie in a military hospital in Netley; within a few weeks they had decided to wed before his imminent return to the front. Ousley's matron was appalled at the loss of her 'excellent little nurse': Mennie was a 'corporal ... a very plain Scotsman from Aberdeen', she wrote, while Ousley was impetuous due to her 'partly French' heritage. Undaunted, Mennie and Ousley married that month and lived the rest of their lives in Scotland.³²

Marriage led to life in another country for several nurses. Constance Brooks and Major Charles Emil John Clerici CIE OBE married in Bombay in 1919, having met at the Officers' Club there. They moved directly to Baghdad in Mesopotamia (now Iraq, then a British protectorate) where Clerici was deputy director of the postal service. They escaped the major anti-British uprising there in 1920, leaving for Melbourne with their new baby shortly before it broke out. In 1921 they returned to India and Clerici held senior positions in the Indian Postal Service in Bengal and Assam over the next decade. He and Constance

regularly entertained and mingled with leading figures in the British Raj and Indian nabobs before finally returning to Melbourne when Clerici retired in 1931. Eileen Watson married in Fiji in 1921. Her husband, a veteran of the Western Front, was an executive with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company whom she had met the previous year when visiting her sister, herself the wife of a CSR executive. They lived in Fiji until 1937.³³



Constance Brooks (front right) and Charles Emil John Clerici (front left) in Basrah 1919
(Family collection)

A handful of nurses married soon after their return to Australia. Some, like Lyla Stewart, married Australian or New Zealand soldiers they met during the war or on the ship home.³⁴ Lily Payne married soon after demobilisation, her husband being a much older grazier from the Wangaratta region where she had grown up. (Her twin, Violet, who returned from the war with her was left to care for their infirm mother.)³⁵ But marriage some years after their return was slightly more common among these nurses. In 1926, for example, Maud Frey married the overseer of a property near Menindie in New South Wales where she had worked as a bush nurse. The couple moved to Wentworth and became

prominent in the local community.³⁶ Tasmanians Muriel Thompson and Ruby Hornsey both married in 1929. Thompson had returned from the war in indifferent health and cared for her aged parents in the 1920s. Soon after her Anglican clergyman father died, she married an Anglican clergyman twenty years her senior and lived the remainder of her life in New South Wales.³⁷ Hornsey wed a comfortably-off local widower 30 years her senior.³⁸ Ethel Giddings likewise married a widower living near her in Mildura; marrying in the mid-1940s, they were both in their mid/late 60s. Marriage brought her welcome companionship as well as much-needed financial security.³⁹

Most (9 of the 13) nurses who married after the war wed men who had served overseas. In at least half of those unions the consequences of war-related injuries and illnesses emerged and worsened with passing years. Ada Rundell (the only physiotherapist in the group) married a soldier she had met in a military hospital overseas or in Brisbane. She was 46, he was 32 and tubercular when they married in 1921. He died two years later, and she continued her physiotherapy practice.⁴⁰

Helen Lawrence married Ethelwyn Cobb in 1924 and moved to his soldier settler block in Red Cliffs, Victoria. Red Cliffs was hailed as a success but many settlers including the Cobbs experienced serious financial difficulties and health issues. Helen had severe rheumatism, thrombosis and cancer, her husband various respiratory complaints including pneumonia and emphysema. Both needed assistance: she at home and he on the block. Poor returns from the block in some seasons worsened their situation. The Edith Cavell Trust Fund, which assisted sick and needy Victorian army nurses, provided small grants on several occasions.⁴¹

The postwar married life of Winifred and William Watson was no less challenging. Winifred (née Smith) was a well-qualified, experienced and decorated nurse serving in England when she resigned in 1917 to marry Watson, a patient whose ill health rendered him unfit for service. Their postwar lives were wracked by illnesses, inability to work, accidents, financial hardship and disappointment, as well as by his chronic alcoholism and abusive behaviour. By 1947, Winifred was an 'old frail lady'. William died in 1948, she in 1951.⁴²

More tragic was the story of Eileen Newton, who married Edgar Cullen in Melbourne in 1920. Cullen had had a chequered military career in the AIF and the Royal Flying Corps including 141 days hospitalisation (and pay loss) with gonorrhoea. They lived in NSW then Victoria where Cullen managed Claude Neon Pty Ltd and where they apparently lived a busy social life. In October 1937, 48-year-old Eileen Cullen died at her home in Kew, poisoned. At the inquest her husband attested to her care with poisons in the home and her sister and brother testified to her happy family life. The coroner returned an open finding on how and by whom the poison was administered. Eighteen months later Edgar Cullen quietly remarried.⁴³

'Work Work Work'

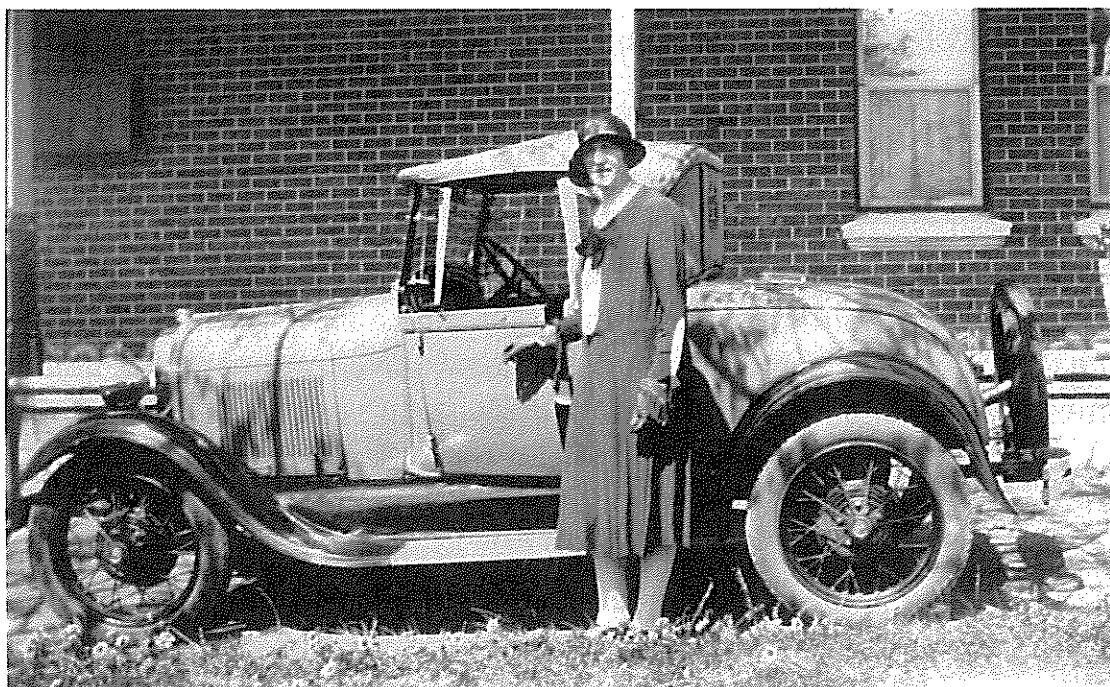
Those East Melbourne nurses who did not marry almost without exception returned to their profession as soon as their health permitted. For a few, recovery took months if not longer: Muriel Robertson was bedridden for more than a year in Caulfield Repatriation Hospital.⁴⁴ These women needed to work to support themselves until they qualified for the aged pension at 60 or became eligible for a repatriation pension—a period of years, even decades. Few if any of them appear to have returned to their prewar positions; perhaps their health prevented it, perhaps the older forms of public hospital and private nursing no longer appealed. Certainly many were attracted to the new fields of nursing that had emerged, notably repatriation and infant welfare, and some moved between them.

Repatriation Nursing

At least 17 of the 54 East Melbourne returned nurses continued caring for sick and wounded soldiers at some time after the war.⁴⁵ Some did this for the rest of their professional lives. Ruth Cecil and Katie Fegan, for example, who had both served overseas since 1915, nursed at Caulfield Repatriation Hospital throughout the 1920s and 1930s.⁴⁶ Annie Kidd Hart and Agnes King enjoyed distinguished careers as matrons of large repatriation facilities. A veteran of Egypt, England and France and decorated for her services, Kidd Hart spent her postwar life at Randwick Repatriation Hospital in New South Wales where she was matron for ten years from 1927 to 1937. She died shortly after retiring at the age of 62.⁴⁷

Agnes King had also served in Egypt, England and France. Her postwar career was entirely in repatriation hospitals, where she blended

the ability she demonstrated before the war as a matron of country hospitals with her wartime work of nursing sick and wounded troops. On returning to Australia, she nursed at Caulfield Repatriation Hospital in Melbourne, then in 1927 was appointed matron of the Repatriation Sanatorium in Perth. After six years there she became matron of Keswick Repatriation Hospital in Adelaide. In 1936 she was appointed matron of the Rosemount Repatriation Hospital in Brisbane. A keen motorist, she drove herself the 2,000 kilometres from Adelaide to Brisbane. In 1938, King returned to Caulfield Repatriation Hospital. She was matron there at the time of her unexpected death in 1942 at 58 from septicaemia. Agnes King had travelled throughout Australia, Egypt, France and England, By contrast, her two sisters had rarely left their home in Mansfield in Victoria's high country.⁴⁸



Matron Agnes King and her car (Family collection)

Infant Welfare Nursing

Like repatriation nursing, infant welfare (or baby health) was another new and expanding field. Numerous baby health centres opened in Melbourne and country Victoria in the latter years of the war and the 1920s. For some returned nurses, this form of nursing was a welcome contrast to the horrific injuries they treated during the war. It was also usually light physically compared with hospital work.⁴⁹ Specialist

training was required to work in infant welfare centres, however, and this was expensive. Bessie Johnson enumerated the costs thus: loss of salary for four months, an entrance fee, and two months board while living out. The Edith Cavell Trust Fund provided Johnson and several other nurses with grants for training in infant welfare and sometimes midwifery.⁵⁰

At least nine of the East Melbourne nurses trained or worked in infant welfare during the 1920s and 1930s. Generally they were former Children's Hospital (Melbourne) nurses and/or friends of Annie Purcell, an East Melbourne Great War nurse who was a powerful figure in the field. Most of them nursed in infant welfare centres in Melbourne, although Dora Macartney and Violet Payne spent several years in country towns. Payne later went to Africa as a missionary working with mothers and babies. (We learn about her later.)

Purcell moved into the burgeoning field of infant health following two years in India after the war. After a year as sister at the Camberwell Baby Health Centre, she became matron of the Victorian Baby Health Training Centre in 1924 with 120 nurses in Melbourne and 50 in country areas under her authority. She threw herself into the work with passion. She did further training in Sydney, met Dr Truby King (the New Zealand health reformer regarded as the leader in the infant welfare field), lobbied determinedly for the cause, gave innumerable talks to mothers of new babies, and dispensed advice on every imaginable aspect of baby care through newspaper columns and on local radio. In 1929 she resigned to open a private residential mothercraft home and baby health centre in the Melbourne suburb of Brighton but it foundered in the Great Depression. Purcell did not return to infant welfare full time and became matron of the Geelong Grammar preparatory school. However, she continued to be a recognised authority on infant and maternal health. In 1938 she gave a stirring address to the Tasmanian maternal welfare conference in which she reflected on the progress and challenges confronting the Victorian movement over two decades and the strategies adopted to deal with them. It was a striking analysis and, as usual, full of tips for the audience: educate *all* mothers, co-operate completely with the medical profession and lobby the government.⁵¹

Dora Macartney would have known Purcell from their Children's Hospital training days and as a fellow parishioner of St Peter's Church in Eastern Hill in East Melbourne. After several years in repatriation

nursing, Macartney was appointed to run two new baby health centres in western Victoria in 1924. She gave talks on baby care, nutrition, sleeping and any topic that focused on ways to benefit the health of babies and their mothers. She ran regular clinics in Camperdown and Terang and was an indefatigable home visitor to those who could not attend them, either riding a bicycle or being driven by the baby health centres' lady volunteers. The results were plain to see: far fewer cases of the dreaded and often fatal summer diarrhoea. Exhausted, Macartney resigned in 1928. An Edith Cavell Trust grant allowed her to take a break as she had no pension. In early 1929 she started up the baby health centres in Ringwood and Mitcham on the outskirts of Melbourne and remained there, doing the same work she had done so successfully in Camperdown and Terang, until ill health forced her to resign in 1934. She died soon after from tuberculosis.⁵²

Hospital Management

During the 1920s and 1930s, many small private hospitals and convalescent homes were owned and operated by trained nurses. At least 11 of the 54 East Melbourne nurses turned to this means of income generation at some time after the war, with varying success. Emily Dilnot ran St Alban's Private Hospital in Oakleigh for nearly fifteen years until she retired in 1937; the position provided both Emily and her mother with a home.⁵³ Irene Bonnin returned from Adelaide in 1928 to run the prominent St Ives Hospital in East Melbourne.⁵⁴ Katie Brooke owned and operated St Leonard's Hospital in Berwick in the 1930s but apparently struggled to maintain it as it was in a rundown condition when she died there in 1939.⁵⁵

To operate a hospital a nurse needed patients to generate income, consistent good health (as she would likely staff it herself) and a good reputation to survive in a competitive environment and during a depression such as that of the 1930s. Ethel Giddings' brother in Mildura helped her set up her own hospital there, soon after the war. She competed with the Mildura Public Hospital for some years until persistent ill health forced her to give it up.⁵⁶ Minnie Hobler had to sell her recently purchased hospital in Kew at a loss in the early 1920s when her health problems forced her to seek an easier source of income.⁵⁷ Even Annie Purcell's experience and reputation in the infant welfare field could not protect her when she set up a private mothercraft home and baby health centre in 1929. The depression put paid to any prospect of

financial success and, as her debts mounted, Annie turned to the Edith Cavell Trust Fund for assistance, as Hobler had and Giddings would. By 1932 she had given up the venture altogether.⁵⁸

A handful of these nurses ran public hospitals in country Victoria or further afield. Sometimes they moved on quickly because of poor salaries or the lure of a better position. Eliza Rowan, for example, found herself in charge of a bankrupt private hospital in Deniliquin in the Riverina in 1929.⁵⁹ Two East Melbourne nurses, Clara Ross and Beatrice Keppel, were particularly successful as matrons. After returning from additional experience in London nursing paralysed patients, Ross became matron first of Castlemaine Hospital from 1925 to 1927, then Kitchener Memorial Hospital in Geelong. Chosen from 29 applicants she remained there until she retired in 1939. She was a traditional matron, intensely hardworking but deferring to the authority of doctors and board members. She found time to be active in various military and civilian nurses' organisations in Victoria, including the Returned Nurses Association, the College of Nursing, the Nurses Board and the Matrons' Conferences.⁶⁰

Beatrice Keppel returned to Melbourne after the war, nursing at the Women's Hospital in Carlton then in 1922 opening her own hospital in Melbourne. Originally from Queensland and perhaps looking for a larger professional canvas, Keppel accepted the position of matron of Stanthorpe Hospital in south-east Queensland in 1925. She made a strong impression on the hospital and the community for her kindness and organisational ability. Tragically Keppel died in 1932 when the car she was driving hit an embankment near Stanthorpe and overturned.⁶¹

Schools and Institutional Nursing

A nursing appointment in a school, university college or a hostel provided work that was less physically demanding than many alternative spheres and often came with accommodation. At least eight of the East Melbourne nurses held such positions either as a temporary respite or for the longer term. Minnie Hobler deliberately sought positions in Melbourne private schools after ill health forced her to sell her own hospital.⁶² After years of arduous work and travel with the Victorian Bush Nursing Association, Edith Cameron was employed as a nurse with the Melbourne University Union from 1927 at least until 1934.⁶³ Jessie Gemmell spent much of her postwar working life in the 1920s as matron of the preparatory school at Geelong Grammar. Her receipt of

a repatriation pension following her discharge suggests that her health ruled out hospital nursing.⁶⁴

Housekeeping and even domestic duties were usually included when these positions were residential. Eleanor Kendall found this when matron of Ormond College within the University of Melbourne from 1931 to 1934 and the Presbyterian Ladies Hostel in East Melbourne from 1934 to 1943.⁶⁵ Jessie Gemmell, a decorated Great War matron, detested these chores and reputedly sorted the soiled laundry of Geelong Grammar boys with fire tongs. Annie Purcell, who had succeeded Gemmell at Geelong Grammar in the 1930s, finished her long and public career at The Friends School in Hobart. She died there shortly after taking up the post of matron but she had been there long enough to apply the reforming zeal she had shown in the infant welfare sector to the school's housekeeping arrangements and to incur the wrath of the school's traditionalists.⁶⁶

Travel

As the Returned Army Nurses secretary observed, war service had fostered a taste for travel in some of her members.⁶⁷ Her observation certainly held true for the East Melbourne nurses; at least 18 of the 54 who survived (33 per cent) travelled overseas on one or more occasions after the war. Like Australian women travellers before them, they 'embarked on many different voyages, for holidays and periods of recreation, for visits to family and ancestral homes ... for the experience of being there and ticking off the sights'.⁶⁸ The opportunity to revisit places in England and Europe where they had been during the war was an additional impetus. An enterprising nurse could combine work and overseas travel. Accompanying wealthy individuals or families on a long sea voyage as nurse or companion offered opportunities. Minnie Hobler accompanied a wealthy cousin on extended trips to Europe.⁶⁹ Estelle Lee-Archer had gone to England in 1925 keen to return to 'some of the old haunts during the War'. Employed to care for an invalid traveller she visited many tourist locations in Europe. She had gone to England travelling third class but returned to Australia eighteen months later in first class, presumably with the same patient or another.⁷⁰

For some the lure of working overseas again was irresistible. Clara Ross spent time in England in the early 1920s studying treatment methods for paralysis.⁷¹ Annie Purcell went to Madras (Chennai) in 1920 to work with the Lady Amphill Nursing Service, which provided

nursing services to British expatriates and wealthy Indians. She stayed there two years. An unsigned article in the Victorian trained nurses' journal *UNA* probably by Purcell warned of the various pitfalls of such a posting.⁷² Ruby Dickinson worked in England in the 1920s and visited again in the 1930s. She and her travelling companion, a former AANS colleague, returned to Australia via the United States in late 1939.⁷³

Alice Searl and several other former AANS colleagues travelled to the United States in 1920 after returning to Australia in 1919. Wartime friendships with American nurses or troops and/or tales of life in America may have been the attraction. Alice remained there almost continuously for 25 years, working mainly as a private nurse/companion in California. Several members of her family visited and she herself travelled around mainland America and Hawaii. She returned to live in Australia in 1944.⁷⁴

Nesta Edwards left Australia in 1921 to work in South Africa. Friendships with nurses from South Africa in wartime hospitals in France, freedom from family responsibilities, the climate, and love of travel were probably all contributing factors. She spent the remainder of her professional life there, returning to live in Melbourne only in 1947 at the age of 64. For most of these years she lived in Kearsney near Natal, first as a boys' school matron treating rugby injuries and dispensing cod liver oil and then as matron of the local hospital. Edwards retained her friendships in Victoria throughout and was able to draw assistance from the Edith Cavell Trust Fund for Victorian army nurses during several bouts of ill health. She also contributed articles about her travels in South Africa to the Victorian nurses' journal.⁷⁵

After wartime nursing in India, Katie Brooke ran several country hospitals in Victoria. Perhaps she found that life dull because in 1922 she moved to Ocean Island near the equator. Ocean Island was part of the Gilbert and Ellice Island group, then a British crown colony and rich in phosphate. As the nursing sister with the British Phosphates Company, she ran a well-equipped, well-staffed hospital, which treated British, Chinese and locals as well as providing district nursing for the company's white employees. Brooke had ice supplies, electricity, sewerage, fresh and salt water, and company amenities. The colonial administrator lived on Ocean Island so there was a good social life. Her native servant, whom she described as 'a pearl above price', mastered her recipes for gem scones and mayonnaise, and was no doubt the reason

Brooke could host five-course dinner parties comparable to those at a top hotel in Melbourne. Brooke stayed four years, from 1922 till 1926, twice the normal period for Europeans on the island. She returned to Australia and ran private hospitals until her death in 1939.⁷⁶

Violet Payne spent most of her professional life after the war as a missionary sister in Africa. Hearing a sermon in 1926 on missionary work in Tanganyika (now Tanzania) so inspired the infant welfare nurse that she applied immediately to the Anglican Church Missionary Society to work there. After the requisite missionary training, she went to Tanganyika in 1928. Payne served in various mission stations including Buigiri, Kilimatinde and Berega, areas where leprosy and infant mortality were rife. She learnt Swahili (she had deliberately learnt French before joining the AANS). She worked with the famous 'jungle doctor', Paul White, and was a member of his team, which was credited with significantly reducing infant mortality in villages and rural areas. White's engaging 'jungle doctor' books for children and radio programs familiarised many Australians with the work. Payne might easily have been one of the 'white Sisters' who appear in his stories.⁷⁷ Payne's Christian faith linked together her nursing service in the Great War and in Tanganyika. She had long felt called to missionary work: 'I feel it is the same spirit that made me volunteer for service as a nurse in the World War, although I could have done work at home'. Age (66) and poor health finally forced her to resign from missionary work in 1946 after eighteen years in East Africa.⁷⁸



**Sister Violet Payne, CMS Missionary
1928–1946** (Church Missionary
Society, Records, MS 13606, Courtesy
State Library Victoria)

Hardship

Violet Payne returned to Melbourne and lived with her widowed twin sister Lily (also in the AANS), who now operated a convalescent home. She worked intermittently for several years until their diminishing health and inability to work brought closure of the home. Violet then nursed Lily and kept house for her, while Lily in return supported her from her own ever-shrinking resources. Violet inherited Lily's house on her death in 1957 but, despite receiving a repatriation pension, scarcely had the means to pay household expenses. The Edith Cavell Trust Fund noted she was 'in great distress and financial need', and made small grants on several occasions. By 1964, Violet was in 'necessitous circumstances' in a rooming house. She died in 1969 in a Melbourne hospital, aged 89.⁷⁹

Violet and Lily Payne were just two of over 700 Victorian AANS who received assistance from the Edith Cavell Trust Fund (ECTF).⁸⁰ Thirty-one (57 per cent) of the East Melbourne nurses sought grants, usually when illness resulted in lost income and medical and pharmaceutical bills. Roughly one third of these made just one application, a third made between two and four, and a third made five or more applications. Hardship resulting from failed hospital ventures qualified for assistance, as when Minnie Hobler and Annie Purcell lost their hospitals and Eliza Rowan found herself running a bankrupt one. The ECTF also provided grants to nurses who faced expenses when training in midwifery or infant health such as fees, uniforms and accommodation on top of reduced income. The fund made a grant to Annie Purcell towards her time in India and to Violet Payne during her missionary training. It assisted Nesta Edwards in South Africa during two periods of illness; as a Victorian army nurse she was eligible for assistance.

The most frequent applicant among the East Melbourne nurses was Eliza Rowan. She made more than twenty applications between 1919 and 1959 and received assistance totalling £475. Rowan had returned from India in 1919 medically unfit and she never regained full health. Influenza, depression, rheumatism and dental problems plagued her in the 1920s. She could nurse only intermittently but needed work for the accommodation it provided. Financial difficulties and the scarcity of suitable positions exacerbated her health problems, although in 1934 she had been working and living at Caulfield Repatriation Hospital for

eighteen months. She had no repatriation pension. In 1950 Rowan, then caretaker of the ECTF's holiday house for nurses at Dromana, applied again. With worsening health, and despite the aged pension, she was unable to buy more than 'bare necessities in food and some medicine': comfortable shoes, firewood and new glasses were beyond her reach. The ECTF provided her with £35–40 a year throughout the 1950s. A note on her ECTF file in 1953 described her as being 'in a sad plight'. Rowan's last application was dated September 1958. She died in Dromana in 1970, aged 85.⁸¹

Beryl Tucker applied for ECTF grants twice in the 1930s. She had been deemed unfit for general service in 1919 after duty in India and on a hospital transport ship bringing severely wounded Czech troops from Vladivostok to Singapore. After the war, she and another former AANS nurse ran a hospital in Sea Lake, an isolated rural town in the Victorian Mallee. She had suffered 'a nervous breakdown' in 1937 and again in 1939 and received small ECTF grants towards recuperative holidays. In 1939, she was living in Stansbury, a small remote fishing village on Yorke Peninsula in South Australia. She died there on the night of 5–6 October 1941. The coroner deemed her death 'suicide by drowning'.⁸² Her death and that of Eileen Cullen meant at least one and possibly two of the surviving 54 East Melbourne nurses committed suicide after the war.

Determination and Character

When war broke out in 1939 several of these nurses were living in England and determined to serve again in whatever capacity they could. Emily Dilnot, then in her mid-50s, applied to rejoin the QAIMNSR but was tactfully turned down.⁸³ Minnie Hobler worked as a nurse but possibly in a voluntary capacity. Her accounts of her hair-raising escapes during the Blitz were reported in her local Queensland paper.⁸⁴ Recovered after more than a year's hospitalisation following her Great War service, Muriel Robertson had been living in genteel poverty in London with her twin sister since 1928. She contributed to the new war effort, and was awarded certificates for anti-gas training, first aid, 'her splendid efforts as a Voluntary Poppy Day Worker' and her hospitality to overseas forces in England. It was a very different role from her nursing in India and the Persian Gulf during the previous war.⁸⁵

Finally, an account of the postwar lives of East Melbourne nurses must include the mark some made on those who met them after the war.

School boys remembered Jessie Gemmell sorting their dirty laundry with tongs and Nesta Edwards' stoic unflappability: 'Sister had been in the First World War and was therefore prepared to do things which some nurses wouldn't do'.⁸⁶ Annie Purcell so impressed the Prince of Wales when she met him at Caulfield Repatriation Hospital that he recognised her instantly two years later in Madras.⁸⁷ Agnes King's sisters at Caulfield Repatriation Hospital mourned their 'dear matron and friend' when she died in harness in 1942.⁸⁸ Queenslander Beatrice Keppel was celebrated when she died as a 'true type of that noble band of "women of the west"'.⁸⁹ Returned servicemen in Perth's repatriation hospital lauded Agnes King as 'a soldier's nurse'.⁹⁰ Those in Castlemaine described Clara Ross as a 'princess'; others regarded her matronship of Kitchener Hospital in Geelong as a 'generalship'.⁹¹

Conclusion

Most of the 54 nurses in this study had long lives ahead of them on their return from the Great War. Overall, their postwar years were made up of mixed personal and professional fortunes and achievements. Some flourished, living happily and making significant contributions to the nursing profession or their community. On the other hand, one possibly two committed suicide, and there were chronic cases of hardship caused by ill health, financial need and challenging marriages. More usual, however, was the pattern of continued nursing interrupted periodically by ill health or financial problems. Annie Purcell, for example, received grants from the Edith Cavell Trust Fund in the 1920s and 1930s for her passage to India, midwifery training, business debts and recuperative holidays. In those same decades she was a formidable and influential figure in infant welfare in Victoria and matron in a prestigious school. Violet Payne's story was similar. She applied to the Edith Cavell Trust Fund at several difficult times in her life but in between them spent eighteen years in Tanganyika (Tanzania) where she made a major contribution to reducing infant mortality. Payne's life showed that there were many instances of professional success among these 54 women, as well as intermittent difficulties and even prolonged hardship. She and others flourished and became leaders in their field, among them Annie Purcell in infant welfare, the repatriation matrons Agnes King and Annie Kidd Hart and civilian matrons Clara Ross and Beatrice Keppel.

This study of the postwar lives of 54 Great War nurses connected with East Melbourne has illustrated what can emerge when a local

history project steps beyond the period of enlistment and follows up the fate of the people from their community or institution. War service in this exhibition was put in the broad context of an individual's life rather than being the sole focus. Some sense was thus gained of the war's varying impacts on particular individuals and across the cohort as a whole. Patterns, similarities and differences that appear in the experiences of a group as large and broad as the East Melbourne nurses provide important new perspectives and insights into the lives of Australia's Great War nurses over all. They also contribute to a more complex and nuanced understanding of the war's impact on Australian society generally.

Notes

- 1 Kirsty Harris, 'Work, Work, Work: Australian Army Nurses after the First World War', *When Australian Soldier Return from the War: November 2007 Conference Proceedings*, Brisbane, University of Queensland, School of History, Philosophy, Religion and Classics, 2009, p. 183. For Australian women serving in the QAIMNSR, see <https://sites.google.com/site/archoevidence/home/ww1australianwomen/qaimns> (accessed 4 July 2017).
- 2 Peter Rees, *The Other Anzacs: Nurses at War, 1914–1918*, Sydney, Allan & Unwin, 2008; Kirsty Harris, *More than Bombs and Bandages: Australian Army Nurses at Work in World War 1*, Sydney, Big Sky Publishing, 2011; Janet Butler, *Kitty's War: The Remarkable Wartime Experiences of Kit McNaughton*, Brisbane, University of Queensland Press, 2013; Ruth Rae, *The History of Australian Nurses in the First World War: An Australian College of Nursing Centenary Commemorative Trilogy*, Sydney, Australian College of Nursing, 2004–15; Rupert Goodman, *Our War Nurses: The History of the Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps 1902–1988*, Brisbane, Boolarong Publications, 1988; Jan Bassett, *Guns and Brooches: Australian Army Nursing from the Boer War to the Gulf War*, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1992. Rees, *The Other Anzacs* was republished in 2014 as *Anzac Girls: The Extraordinary Story of Our World War I Nurses* and became the basis of the award winning television drama series 'Anzac Girls' (2014).
- 3 A very small selection from Victoria includes Murray Poustie, *Remember Our Nurses: The Service and Sacrifice of Bendigo Nurses in World War I*, Bendigo, Bendigo Modern Press, 2014; Brian Membrey, *Women in Uniform: Nurses Who Served in the Great War 1914–1918*, [http://www.ozsportshistory.com/wardeaths/WW1%20-%20Women%20In%20Uniform%20\(WikiNorthia\).pdf](http://www.ozsportshistory.com/wardeaths/WW1%20-%20Women%20In%20Uniform%20(WikiNorthia).pdf) (accessed 26 January 2017); City of Moreland's exhibition *Moreland Remembers World War I: sister Allice Kitchin*, <http://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/globalassets/areas/librarieslib-4866/history/moreland-ww1-exhibition-banner-12.pdf> (accessed 26.01.2017); commemorative activities organised by the Lemnos Gallipoli Commemorative Committee honouring Australian nurses on Lemnos, <http://anzacentenary.vic.gov.au/lemnos-gallipoli-commemorative-memorial/> (accessed 26.01.2017); 'Carlton in the War: Stories of the Men and Women who Served', www.cchg.asn.au/greatwar.html (accessed 26 January 2017); Christine McGinn, 'Exhibition Honours Work of WWI Nurses', *Monash Leader*, 3 November 2015, <http://leader.newspaperdirect.com/epaper/viewer.aspx> (accessed 26 October 2016).

- 4 See for example, the *Saluting Their Service* Community Commemorative Grants funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs, September 2016 allocation, http://minister.dva.gov.au/media_releases/2016/dec/va125.htm (accessed 24 January 2017); Victorian Veterans' Council Guidelines, http://www.dpc.vic.gov.au/images/Veterans_Affairs/Commemoration_and_Education_Grant_Program_-_Commemoration_and_Community_Education_Guidelines.pdf (accessed 24 January 2017)
- 5 Marina Larsson, *Shattered Anzacs: Living with the Scars of War*, Sydney, University of New South Wales Press, 2009.
- 6 Bruce Scates and Melanie Oppenheimer, *The Last Battle: Soldier Settlement in Australia, 1916–1939*, Melbourne, Cambridge University Press, 2016, pp. 204ff.
- 7 Marilyn Lake, 'Annie Smith: "Soldier Settler"', in Marilyn Lake and Farley Kelly (eds), *Double Time: Women in Victoria 150 Years*, Melbourne, Penguin, 1984, pp. 297–304; Selena Williams, "'Not Openly Encouraged"—Nurse Soldier Settlers After World War One', MA Hons thesis, University of New England, 2010, available at e-publications@UNE.
- 8 <https://www.facebook.com/groups/DiggersToVeterans/?pnref=lhc>; communication with Janet McCalman, Lead Chief Investigator, Diggers to Veterans Project, 7 July 2017.
- 9 Butler, pp. 219–25.
- 10 Bassett, pp. 96–103. The Edith Cavell Trust Fund was set up with monies raised in Victoria to commemorate the execution by Germany of British Nurse Edith Cavell in 1915. Victorian army nurses could apply for grants from the Fund when sick or needy. See below, section 'Hardship'. See also Katie Pickles, *Transnational Outrage: The Death and Commemoration of Edith Cavell*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, pp. 133–6.
- 11 Kirsty Harris, 'Work, Work, Work', pp. 183–93.
- 12 Ruth Rae, *History of Australian Nurses in the First World War*, Volume 2, *Veiled Lives: Threading Australian Nursing History into the Fabric of the First World War*, Sydney, Australian College of Nursing, 2009, pp. 323–47.
- 13 Merrilyn Lincoln, 'Pratt, Rachel (1874–1954)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/pratt-rachel-8099/text14137>. See also the Australian War Memorial's biographical notes on Pratt, at <https://www.awm.gov.au/sites/default/files/pratt.pdf> (accessed 6 January 2017).
- 14 'No prospect of it ending' [Rachel Pratt], Monash University, *100 Stories*, future.arts.monash.edu/onehundredstories/the-hardships-of-war/ (accessed 6 January 2017).
- 15 See for example, Kirsty Harris, 'In the "Grey Battalion": Launceston General Hospital Nurses on Active Service in World War I', *Health and History*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2008, pp. 21–40.
- 16 Bassett, p. 96.
- 17 The nurses' biographies were all written by Janet Scarfe, author of this paper.
- 18 Perditta M. McCarthy, 'White, Jessie McHardy (1870–1957)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/white-jessie-mchardy-9076/text16001>. McHardy was also spelt McHardie. Several other significant Great War nurses including Grace Wilson and Alice Ross-King were excluded as their connection with East Melbourne occurred well before or well after they enlisted.
- 19 http://emhs.org.au/person/priday/stella_muriel (accessed 26 January 2017). Throughout this article, the reference is to the relevant biographical essay at emhs.org.au, not to individual sources cited within the essay.

- 20 Their names were recorded on honour boards that still hang in the St Peter's Eastern Hill precinct.
- 21 This overview of the prewar lives of the nurses was drawn from their biographical essays at emhs.org.au. The main sources were family birth, death and marriage data, digitised newspapers found at trove.nla.gov.au, and the nurses' service records.
- 22 Nurses applying to join the Australian Army Nursing Service were asked to document their training and experience on the enrolment form that became part of their service records. The Royal Victorian Trained Nurses Association Register of Members listed qualifications. The 1922 Register is available online at <http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/234114> (accessed 20 July 2017). See also Harris, *More than Bombs and Bandages*, pp. 16–33.
- 23 http://emhs.org.au/person/quarterman/rosa_elizabeth_kate; http://emhs.org.au/person/giddings/ethel_may; http://emhs.org.au/person/ross/clara_louisa; http://emhs.org.au/person/king/agnes_wotherspoon (all accessed 26 January 2017).
- 24 Emily Dilnot, Margaret Ousley and Margaret Roberts had been brought up in England. Each returned there from Australia at her own expense to enlist in the QAIMNSR. See <http://emhs.org.au/person/dilnot/Emily>; <http://emhs.org.au/person/ousley/marguerite>; http://emhs.org.au/person/roberts/margaret_dorothy (all accessed 26 January 2017).
- 25 Campaign medals were the 1914–15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. Jessie McHardie White, Clara Ross and Jessie Gemmell received the Royal Red Cross (1st Class), Estelle Lee-Archer, Annie Kidd Hart, Winifred Smith, Edith Cameron and Rosa Quarterman the Royal Red Cross (2nd Class). Some of them and others were mentioned in despatches. McHardie White was also made a Member of the British Empire and awarded the Greek Medal for Military Merit and the Serbian Order of St Sava.
- 26 http://emhs.org.au/person/roberts/margaret_dorothy (accessed 26 January 2017).
- 27 http://emhs.org.au/person/blundell/madeline_patricia_petrie; http://emhs.org.au/person/lawrence/helen_ruth (both accessed 26 January 2017).
- 28 <http://www.aihw.gov.au/deaths/life-expectancy/> (accessed 4 July 2017).
- 29 *UNA*, Victorian Trained Nurses Association, vol. XXI, no 4, 1 June 1923, p. 80.
- 30 Bassett estimated at least half of the nurses returning from the war remained unmarried, a far higher percentage than women in the Australian population. Bassett, p. 101. According to Harris, 'many' nurses married, including 185 during the war. Harris, 'Work, Work, Work', p. 186. Two of the East Melbourne group were widows when they enlisted: Jessie McHardie White and Stella Priday.
- 31 This was 5.45%, slightly less than the figure of 5.98% for the AANS as a whole cited in Bassett, p. 95.
- 32 <http://emhs.org.au/person/mckinnon/mary>; <http://emhs.org.au/person/ousley/marguerite> (both accessed 27 January 2017).
- 33 http://emhs.org.au/person/brooks/constance_jessie; http://emhs.org.au/person/watson/eileen_marriott (both accessed 27 January 2017).
- 34 http://emhs.org.au/person/stewart/lyla_ferguson (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 35 http://emhs.org.au/person/payne/lily_may (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 36 http://emhs.org.au/person/frey/maud_josephine (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 37 http://emhs.org.au/person/thompson/muriel_edith_lucy (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 38 http://emhs.org.au/person/hornsey/ruby_millie (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 39 http://emhs.org.au/person/giddings/ethel_may (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 40 http://emhs.org.au/person/rundell/ada_sophia (accessed 27 January 2017).

- 41 http://emhs.org.au/person/lawrence/helen_ruth (accessed 27 January 2017). See below on 'Hardship' for more on the Edith Cavell Trust Fund assistance to nurses connected with East Melbourne.
- 42 http://emhs.org.au/person/smith/winifred_jane (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 43 http://emhs.org.au/person/newton/eileen_catherine_ Kearney (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 44 http://emhs.org.au/person/robertson/gertrude_muriel_norton (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 45 Harris found only 189 AANS who served overseas worked in repatriation hospitals. Harris, 'Work, Work, Work', p. 186.
- 46 http://emhs.org.au/person/cecil/edith_ruth; http://emhs.org.au/person/fegan/catherine_agnes (both accessed 27 January 2017).
- 47 http://emhs.org.au/person/hart/annie_kidd (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 48 http://emhs.org.au/person/king/agnes_wotherspoon (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 49 Harris, 'Work, Work, Work', p. 187.
- 50 http://emhs.org.au/person/johnson/bessie_shircliffe (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 51 http://emhs.org.au/person/purcell/annie_watkins_bennett_vize (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 52 http://emhs.org.au/person/macartney/dora_lynette (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 53 <http://emhs.org.au/person/dilnot/Emily> (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 54 http://emhs.org.au/person/bonnin/irene_gertrude_hiller (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 55 http://emhs.org.au/person/brooke/katie_winifred (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 56 http://emhs.org.au/person/giddings/ethel_may (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 57 <http://emhs.org.au/person/hobler/Minnie> (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 58 http://emhs.org.au/person/purcell/annie_watkins_bennett_vize (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 59 <http://emhs.org.au/person/rowan/eliza> (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 60 http://emhs.org.au/person/ross/clara_louisa (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 61 http://emhs.org.au/person/keppel/beatrice_emma (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 62 <http://emhs.org.au/person/hobler/Minnie> (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 63 http://emhs.org.au/person/cameron/edith_clare (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 64 http://emhs.org.au/person/gemmell/jessie_ross (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 65 http://emhs.org.au/person/kendall/eleanor_jane (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 66 http://emhs.org.au/person/purcell/annie_watkins_bennett_vize (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 67 *UNA*, Victorian Trained Nurses Association, vol. XXI, no 4, 1 June 1923, p. 80.
- 68 Ros Pesman, *Duty Free: Australian Women Abroad*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 9.
- 69 <http://emhs.org.au/person/hobler/Minnie> (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 70 http://emhs.org.au/person/lee-archer/estelle_frances (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 71 http://emhs.org.au/person/ross/clara_louisa (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 72 http://emhs.org.au/person/purcell/annie_watkins_bennett_vize (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 73 http://emhs.org.au/person/dickinson/ruby_droma (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 74 <http://emhs.org.au/person/searl/alice> (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 75 http://emhs.org.au/person/edwards/ernestine_mabel (accessed 27 January 2017).

- 76 http://emhs.org.au/person/brooke/katie_winfred (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 77 'A History of Dr Paul White', http://www.jungledoctorcomics.com/?page_id=66 (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 78 http://emhs.org.au/person/payne/violet_minnie (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 79 http://emhs.org.au/person/payne/violet_minnie; http://emhs.org.au/person/payne/lily_may (both accessed 27 January 2017).
- 80 Bassett, p. 97. Grants were typically £10–40 between 1920 and the 1950s. Name index cards to applicants for grants of Edith Cavell Trust Fund, M291 (Whole Series), National Archives of Australia, Melbourne (NAA).
- 81 <http://emhs.org.au/person/rowan/eliza> (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 82 http://emhs.org.au/person/tucker/beryl_may (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 83 <http://emhs.org.au/person/dilnot/Emily> (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 84 <http://emhs.org.au/person/hobler/Minnie> (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 85 http://emhs.org.au/person/robertson/gertrude_muriel_norton (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 86 http://emhs.org.au/person/edwards/ernestine_mabel (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 87 http://emhs.org.au/person/purcell/annie_watkins_bennett_vize (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 88 http://emhs.org.au/person/king/agnes_wotherspoon (accessed 26 January 2017).
- 89 http://emhs.org.au/person/keppel/beatrice_emma (accessed 26 January 2017).
- 90 http://emhs.org.au/person/king/agnes_wotherspoon (accessed 27 January 2017).
- 91 http://emhs.org.au/person/ross/clara_louisa (accessed 27 January 2017).

