The Australian
Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE5396

Gallagher, Flora

(1874 - 1938)

Born	18741218, Browns Flat New South Wales Australia
Died	19380120, Hurstville New South Wales Australia
Occupation	Army Nurse, Nurse

Summary

Flora Gallagher served from 1915 to 1918 as a nurse in World War I in Egypt, England and France. She was one of three female Gallagher family members from Browns Flat, a farming settlement between Queanbeyan and Bungendore in New South Wales, which later became part of the ACT, who served overseas as nurses in World War I.

Details

Flora Gallagher was the first to enlist of the three female members of the Gallagher family of Browns Flat near Burbong, now part of Kowen Forest within the eastern border of the ACT. Flora was born on 18 December 1874, the second youngest daughter of John Gallagher, farmer, and Mary Ann Gallagher (born Craig). Flora trained at St Joseph's Hospital in the Sydney suburb of Auburn and was registered as a trained nurse in March 1909. She enlisted in the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS) in Sydney in October 1915 giving her age as 33 but it appears she would have 40 years of age; her religion was Catholic and she named her mother as her next of kin.

Less than a month after enlisting Flora Gallagher was travelling to Egypt on HMAT Orsova, as a reinforcement for 2nd Australian General Hospital (AGH) at Ghezireh Palace Hotel which had been taken over to accommodate overwhelming numbers of wounded and sick patients from Gallipoli. Apart from two weeks in hospital with mumps soon after she arrived, Flora spent all of 1916 nursing in Egypt, including at the 14th AGH, stationed in Abbassia after it arrived from Australia, and at British Choubra infectious diseases military hospital in Cairo.

In January 1917 Flora was sent to England where she was attached very briefly to the 2nd Australian Auxiliary Hospital (AAH) at Southall and the 3rd AAH at Dartford before being sent to France in February to nurse Western Front casualties. She was attached to the 14th British General Hospital (BGH) at Wimereux, near Boulogne, to nurse Western Front casualties. In the middle of the year she spent three weeks in hospital in England suffering from debility and when she returned she nursed at 25th BGH at Boulogne. For the next year she alternated between nursing at the two hospitals but became increasing unwell.

Late in August 1918, after more than eighteen months nursing in France, she was sent to England and invalided to Australia. She left almost immediately on the City of Karachi. Back in Australia in October she was operated on for appendicitis at the 4th AGH in Randwick and early in 1919 her army appointment was terminated due to medical unfitness.

Early in November 1918, while she was recovering from her appendix operation, Queanbeyan held a public welcome home for Flora Gallagher. The town band marched through the streets to the hall where Mrs Forster Rutledge of Gidleigh, one of whose sons Harry had been killed at Passchendaele and another Tom commanded the 4th Pioneer Battalion on the Western Front, presented Flora with a gold medal and other leading citizens welcomed her. The large gathering danced until midnight.

In January 1920, Flora Gallagher, 46, married Lieutenant Frederick Cavin Young, 32, an engineer who had served during the war with the Naval and Military Force at Rabaul. He had suffered numerous attacks of malaria including three severe attacks in 1919.

Flora, who lived at Penshurst, died in hospital at Hurstville, Sydney on 20 January 1938, survived by her husband, three brothers at Bungendore, her sister Evelyn and niece Janet, both of whom had served overseas in World War I. She was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal and is commemorated on the ACT Memorial and the City of Queanbeyan Roll of Remembrance.

Published resources

Site Exhibition
Canberra Women in World War I: Community at Home, Nurses Abroad, Clarke, Patricia and Francis, Niki, 2015, http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/cww1

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Resource Section
Gallagher, Flora, 2013,
http://nurses.ww1anzac.com/ga.html

Book Section
The Australian Army Medical Services in the War of 1914-1918, Vol. I, Gallipoli, Palestine and New Guinea, Butler, A.G., 1930

The Australian Army Medical Services in the War of 1914-1918, Vol. II, The Western Front, Butler, A.G., 1940

Official History of the Australian Army Medical Services 1914-18. Vol. III: Problems and Services, Butler, A.G., 1943

Book
The Long Travail, Gallagher, N. J., 1987

Archival resources

National Archives of Australia, National Office, Canberra
Gallagher Flora : SERN Staff Nurse : POB Queanbeyan NSW : POE N/A : NOK M Gallagher Mary

Author Details
Patricia Clarke

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Digital resources



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