Entry type: Person
Entry ID: IMP0255

Conyers, Evelyn Augusta

(1870 - 1944)

Born	18700301, Invercargill New Zealand
Died	19440906
Occupation	Matron, Servicewoman

Summary

Evelyn Conyers was appointed to the Order of the British Empire – Commander (Military) on 22 March 1919 for nursing service with the army during World War I. She had previously been awarded the Royal Red Cross on 3 June 1916.

Details

Born and educated in New Zealand, Evelyn Conyers migrated to Victoria, Australia in the 1890s. After training at the Children's (1894) and Melbourne (1896) hospitals she became matron of a private hospital in Melbourne in 1901.

Active in professional nurse's organisations, in 1903 she helped found the Victorian Trained Nurses' Association. When the Queen's Memorial Infectious Diseases Hospital at Fairfield was established in 1904, Evelyn Conyers became the first matron. In 1907, she and Sister Jessie MacBeth opened a private hospital in Kew.

An original member of the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS) in the Third Military District, Evelyn Conyers sailed on the *Shropshire* on 20 October 1914. Aged 45 years, she was appointed matron-in-chief, Australian Imperial Force (AIF) on 12 January 1916. She held this position until she was discharged on 6 March 1920. During this time she worked closely with the Matron-in-Chief of the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Service (QAIMNS) British Expeditionary Force (BEF) Miss (Dame from 1918) Maud McCarthy.

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After the war Evelyn Conyers returned to 'Lancewood' Private Hospital in Kew, Victoria. She was appointed to the board set up under the provisions of the Nurses' Registration Act (1923), was made a Life Member of the Royal Victorian College of Nurses, was a founder and director of the Victorian Trained Nurses Club Ltd, and a member of the Victorian branch of the Australian Nursing Federation. Evelyn Conyers also was a member of the board of management of the Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital, a trustee of the Edith Cavell Trust Fund, and belonged to the Returned Nurses' Club.

On 6 September 1944 Evelyn Conyers died at Epworth Private Hospital, Richmond and was buried with full military honours in Boroondara cemetery, Kew.

Published resources

Book
Guns and brooches : Australian Army Nursing from the Boer War to the Gulf War, Bassett, Jan, 1992

Australian nurses since Nightingale 1860-1990, Burchill, Elizabeth, 1992

Just wanted to be there : Australian Service Nurses 1899-1999, Reid, Richard, 1999

Nightingales in the mud : the digger sisters of the Great War 1914 - 1918, Barker, Marianne, 1989

Resource Section
Conyers, Evelyn Augusta (1870 - 1944), Reid, John, 2006,
http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A080104b.htm

Resource
Where are the Women in Australian science?, Australian Science and Technology Heritage Centre, 2003,
http://www.austehc.unimelb.edu.au/wisa/wisa.html

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Site Exhibition
Faith, Hope and Charity Australian Women and Imperial Honours: 1901-1989, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2003,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/honours/honours.html

The Encyclopedia of Women and Leadership in Twentieth-Century Australia, Smart, Judith and Swain, Shurlee (eds.), 2014,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders

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Digital resources



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