

THE DIPLOMA OF THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES.

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THE SCROLL OF HONOUR

ISLA STEWART.

Amongst all those whose names are inscribed on the Scroll of Honour none is more worthy than that of Isla Stewart, Matron of St. Bartholomew's Hospital from 1887 to 1911. Of all the Matrons of the leading London Hospitals, she alone stood by the nurses throughout the long struggle for State Registration, not because controversy was congenial to her, for by nature she was peace loving, genial and affectionate. But she realised that her duty to her profession necessitated her active support of the reform, and she never hesitated as to her line of action, but followed the dictates of conscience.

Miss Stewart entered the Nightingale School at St. Thomas's Hospital in 1879 and was reported to Miss Nightingale as the most promising pupil of her class, an estimation of her ability which her future career proved to be well founded. After four years of work as a Ward Sister at St. Thomas's she was appointed Matron of the great small-pox camp at Darenth under the authority of the Metropolitan Asylums Board during an epidemic, which she regarded as one of the most interesting experiences of her life.

In 1887, a great sphere of influence and opportunity opened to her by her appointment as Matron and Superintendent of Nursing of St. Bartholomew's Hospital; how well she used it is known not only in this country, but all over the world wherever nurses are organised. She was jealous for the prestige of the Nurses' Training School, and its reputation stood high throughout her Matronship, lasting nearly a quarter of a century.

She at once associated herself with the State Registration movement, and was one of the first members of the Royal British Nurses' Association and a Signatory to the Royal Charter.

Of Scottish descent (she was a Stewart of Appin), sturdy and independent, it is recorded of her that "she never for a moment compromised on any question of policy, but boldly stood forth at every turn of the struggle as a champion of democratic progress." And, again, during the years that she held the position of President of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland its influence was "felt in every phase of nursing progress, and it unfailingly stood forth as the defender of the rights and opportunities of the great rank and file of nurses. Its aims have been high, its pronouncements sound." As President of the Society for the State Registration of Nurses, she was in the forefront of the fight, and never once failed to preside and speak at its meetings when outspoken action was necessary.

The League of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses, founded by her, and the first Training School League to be organised in this country, is testimony to her far-sighted wisdom. She was a keen supporter of the International Council of Nurses, and attended and took a prominent part in its meetings and Congresses in Buffalo, Paris, and London.

As an Organising Matron in the Territorial Force Nursing Service on its foundation, she took a keen interest in its welfare, and in the selection of the Nursing Staff for No. 1 (City of London) General Hospital, which was supplied entirely by certificated Nurses of St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

At her death widespread homage was paid to her as a loyal friend and comrade, and much loved Matron. As a pioneer she will for all time be a shining example of devotion to public and professional duty in the face of extraordinary opposition.

MARGARET BREAY, F.B.C.N.

Miss Margaret Breay received her professional training in the Nursing School of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, from 1885-1888. Shortly afterwards she was appointed Sister at the Metropolitan Hospital, Kingsland Road, E., for the nursing of which St. John's House, Norfolk Street, Strand, was at that time responsible. At the end of a year she transferred to the St. John's Maternity Home at Battersea, and on obtaining the Diploma of the London Obstetrical Society, remained on as Superintendent of the Training School, and of the indoor and outdoor departments. In October, 1891, she returned to the Metropolitan Hospital as Matron.

In 1893 she was offered, and accepted, the position of Matron of the Hospital built by the Universities' Mission in Zanzibar but, acting under medical advice resigned in 1895. Since 1896 she has been associated with Mrs. Bedford Fenwick in her work for the organisation of Nursing, especially as Assistant Editor of *THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING*, through which paper, under Mrs. Fenwick's courageous policy as Editor, the granting of legal status to trained nurses in Great Britain was greatly influenced, and it has rendered many services to the Nursing Profession as a whole.

Miss Breay, who was a signatory to the Royal Charter R.B.N.A., was for many years Hon. Secretary of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, and of the Society for the State Registration of Nurses, now the Registered Nurses' Parliamentary Council, which office she still retains. She was invited by the late Miss Isla Stewart when the Territorial Force Nursing Service was founded in 1910, to serve on the Standing Committee of No. 1 General Hospital, and did so to the end of the Great War. She is a Councillor (Foundation Member) of the International Council of Nurses, and acted as Hon. Treasurer from 1904 to 1925, when she was appointed an Hon. Member of the Council.

She is a Vice-President of the British College of Nurses.

HELEN LUCY PEARSE, F.B.C.N.

An outstanding personality in the Nursing World is Miss Helen Lucy Pearse, Superintendent of School Nurses under the London County Council, of wide views and keen social sympathies.

Miss Pearse, who was trained and certificated at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, subsequently held the position of Assistant Superintendent at the Lambeth Infirmary, and of Matron at the North Staffordshire Infirmary, Stoke-on-Trent, and at the Great Northern Hospital, London; but her life's work has been done in the position of Superintendent of School Nurses under the London County Council, to which she was appointed in 1907, and when the staff numbered twenty-seven nurses. Under her direction it has developed until it now numbers over 350 nurses and is still increasing; while the praise of the work of the School Nurses and its effect for good upon the health of School Children, and in reducing the incidence of infectious disease has been most marked.

Miss Pearse has taken a deep interest in the organisation of the Nursing Profession, was a keen supporter of the Society for the State Registration of Nurses, and a member of the Central Committee formed with the same object.

From its inception she has been an ardent supporter of the work of the International Council of Nurses, has attended its Meetings and Congresses and acted at Copenhagen in 1922, and at Helsingfors in 1925, as an Official Delegate of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain, of which she is Hon. Secretary. She is also a Vice-Chairman of the Royal British Nurses' Association; and was President for some years of the National Union of Trained Nurses, and is at present President of the Matrons' Council.

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