

## MISS GERTRUDE ANNA ROGERS, S.R.N.

### THE PASSING OF A PIONEER.

It is with profound regret—regret which will be shared not only by members of the Nursing Profession in this country but in many parts of the world where her influence is felt—that we record the death of Miss Gertrude A. Rogers, from 1883 to 1912 the beloved Matron of the Leicester Infirmary, during which time she took an active and leading part in the movement for the organisation of nurses, being an early member of the British Nurses' Association, and one of the Signatories to the Royal Charter granted to the Association by Queen Victoria in 1893.

Miss Rogers was trained as a Lady Pupil at the Leicester Infirmary, entering as a pupil in 1875, and subsequently remaining there as Sister until 1879 when she responded to an invitation to help, as Lady Superintendent, to found a hospital in Blomfontein, where she worked for several years under Bishop Webb. At the time of the Boer War she went to the front, and for her work in this connection received, some years later, the South African Medal.

On her return to England Miss Rogers worked as Sister for a few months at Guy's Hospital and then, in 1883 she was appointed Lady Superintendent of the Leicester Infirmary, a position she held with distinction until 1912. The Chairman of the Board, Sir Edward Wood, when speaking of Miss Rogers on the occasion of a presentation to her on her retirement, said that the Board of the Royal Infirmary desired to place on record their sincere appreciation of the sound judgment, great ability, and unfailing courtesy which had always characterised her work: "Especially," he said, "the Board acknowledge Miss Rogers' great work in the development of the training school for nurses in connection with the Infirmary. They realise that it is in a large measure due to her ability and personality that Leicester has become a prominent training school and has built up for itself a high reputation in the hospital world."

Miss Rogers was far ahead of her time in her methods and ideas. She started the first Preliminary Training School for Nurses in the provinces, and in 1903 founded the Leicester Infirmary Nurses' League, which is now a large organisation, uniting Leicester Royal Infirmary Nurses all over the world.

As already indicated she played an important part in the early work for State Registration of Nurses and was closely connected with us in our work in this connection. She was a Vice-Chairman of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain, President of the Leicester Royal Infirmary Nurses' League, a Vice-President of the National Council

of Nurses of Great Britain, in the work of which she took an active interest. She attended the Meetings and Congresses of the International Council of Nurses in Paris, London and Cologne, and was an inspiring leader in many forward movements. After her resignation of the position of Lady Superintendent of the Royal Infirmary, Leicester, Miss Rogers went to live at Clevedon, and though at first she attended the meetings of the League of the Royal Infirmary, Leicester, and many friends went from time to time to see her there, as the years went by it became more and more difficult for her to leave Clevedon, though during the Great War she did good work at St. John's Gate, in connection with the organisation of the Trained Nurses' Branch of St. John's Ambulance Association.

To the end she took a deep interest in all that concerned the nursing world.



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Miss Hughes, Matron of the Royal Infirmary, Leicester, writes that she attended Miss Rogers' funeral on December 21st. A Requiem Mass was held in the morning, and a short service took place subsequently at the graveside at the old Church, Clevedon. A number of former Leicester Sisters were present and there were a large number of floral tributes. A beautiful wreath was sent from the Leicester Royal Infirmary Nurses' League—to our Founder President.

"There have been many letters sent to me since, showing the very deep affection of those who knew Miss Rogers.

"A woman with strong religious feeling, a high sense of vocation, and a mind readily made up, she has been a power for good in the Nursing World."

Those who, like ourselves, were privileged to work with her and to enjoy her friendship know what a rare personality has passed from us. To her our loss is wholly gain, but the charm, the quiet forcefulness, the courage, the self-forgetfulness, the high professional conception, the sense of fun, and the deep religious feeling combined to form a character as delightful as rare. In the years to come the life and example of Gertrude Rogers will be to many a fragrant and inspiring memory.

E. G. F.

For as in the days of winter,  
When snowdrifts whiten the hill,  
Some birds in the air will flutter  
And warble to cheer us still:  
So, if we would hark to the music,  
Some hope, with a starry wing,  
In the days of our darkest sorrow  
Will sit in the heart and sing.

Phoebe Carey.

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