

MARGARET BREAY, S.R.N., S.C.M.

On Tuesday, December 19th, 1939, the pure and gallant spirit of Margaret Breay passed into the Light. To associate death with her sweet mortality would indeed be faithless.

She existed on earth in an aura of purity, pre-eminently devout, consecrated to the service of humanity—valiant, incorruptible.

On Friday, December 22nd, Margaret Breay was cremated and her ashes scattered in the Garden of Peace at Brighton. A few friends attended the service, representing the following Nurses' Organisations, of which she had been an active member and officer:—

The International Council of Nurses and The National Council of Nurses of Great Britain, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, S.R.N., Founder.

The Royal British Nurses' Association, Miss Isabel Macdonald, S.R.N.

The British College of Nurses, Miss A. M. Bushby, S.R.N.

The League of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses, London, Miss S. A. Griffith, S.R.N.

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, Editor, and Miss Maude Angel, Secretary.

Miss Henrietta Hawkins, life-long friend.

The coffin was covered with lovely flowers, to which the following expressions of appreciation were attached:

Sheaf of white flowers, tied with purple ribbon. "For dearest Braikie with undying love from Matrona, 1885-1939, and after."

The International Council and the National Council of Nurses, sheaf of white chrysanthemums. "With profound appreciation for National and International Service to the Nursing Profession."

The Royal British Nurses' Association, pink chrysanthemums. "With sincere regards."

The British College of Nurses, golden flowers. "With love and gratitude for innumerable benefits."

The League of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses, a shield, the badge of the League (the arms of the Hospital), white on a ground of purple violets. "In affectionate remembrance."

From Miss Helen Dey, President of the League, a chaplet of exquisite flowers. "In affectionate remembrance."

The staff of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, a sheaf of flowers. "With gratitude for half a century's incomparable devotion to duty."

Miss Henrietta Hawkins, violets.

Those who have been parted from their nearest and dearest in this world can alone estimate the loss of vital human affection which will inspire their lives no more.

A BLESSED RECORD.

In the year 1885, Margaret Breay entered the School of Nursing attached to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, and no pupil ever exceeded her devotion to duty. She loved her work in all its variety. The cleanliness and order of the wards, the basis of good nursing, was her pride. The intimate association with, and magnetic handling of the sick was a mutual joy; perfect manners, dignity and generosity characterised

her every action; a gracious and lovable personality indeed—in whose career Matron took special pride, realising that a character so gracious, an intelligence so cultured, must, in the future, prove a rare asset for the Nursing Profession.

Margaret Breay was awarded the Clothworkers' Prize at the end of her first year's service, and gained the much-prized Certificate of the Hospital, after examination, at the termination of three years' arduous training in 1888.

At that time the London Obstetrical Society was rendering the community valuable service—having, with sympathetic vision, instituted training, examination and certification in midwifery for nurses.

Mothers and babes made an urgent appeal to Margaret Breay. She studied obstetrics, gained the certificate, and was at once appointed Matron of the Battersea Maternity Home, where her wonderful "hands" and maternal instinct found just the work she loved.

At the end of two years' maternity service, she was offered and accepted the post of Matron of the Metropolitan Hospital, then under the direction of St. John's House, of which that remarkable woman, Sister Dorothea of All Saints' Community, was in charge, and with whom, it was indeed a privilege to work.

On the handing over of St. John's House to the Sisters of St. Peter's, Kilburn, Margaret Breay joined the



MISS MARGARET BREAY, S.R.N., S.C.M.
Hon. Treasurer, International Council of Nurses, 1904-1925.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)