

The Nursing Profession is proud to be associated with the heroes who rescued the 300 British prisoners from the Nazi prison ship the *Altmark*.

Miss Silvia Helen Vian, S.R.N., who was trained at Guy's Hospital, and was later the Matron of the Royal United Hospital, Bath, is the sister of the valiant Commander, Captain Vian, of the destroyer *Cossack*, who gave the order to board the *Altmark*, the Nazi prison ship, and rescue the 300 British prisoners in duration vile, which was done with amazing dispatch and little loss of life.

Miss Vian has been "somewhere in France" on military nursing duty since the inception of the war.

Commander J. C. Townley, who dodged the *Queen Elizabeth* safely across the Atlantic, and into dock at New York, is, of course, a romantic. When Captain of the *Aquitania* he met on board his wife, then a Sister in Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, going out East with the troops. Lost his heart, and two years later, in 1917, they were married—and have lived happily ever after.

The appointment by the Ministry of Health of the eleven Regional Registered Nurse Officers, under the reorganized scheme for the Civil Nursing Reserve, without these important posts being advertised has, we learn, aroused a sense of injustice in the Nursing Profession, and it may be that the matter will be brought to the notice of the House of Commons.

The fact also that one of these Officers is the wife of a well-paid hospital secretary, a Registered Nurse retired on marriage from active practice, is considered unfair to younger members of the profession still engaged in professional work. So much distrust of Government appointments has been aroused by favouritism to family connections that it is to be regretted that criticism can be advanced concerning these valuable unadvertised appointments.

A full official list of the 11 appointments appears on page 46 of this issue.

Miss Dorothy Sandys Coode, S.R.N., has been appointed the representative of the Royal College of Nursing on the Civil Nursing Reserve Advisory Council, Ministry of Health.

Miss Coode was trained at St. Thomas's Hospital, London, 1900-1903, and was long connected with its Nursing School.

We have none of us forgotten the fine stand made by Miss Alice M. Brownlow, the Matron of the Farnborough County Hospital, Kent, when wrongly accused of mismanagement, and how she was exonerated. The enquiry cost £1,500, and there were 31 witnesses called for the Kent County Council and 46 on behalf of Miss Brownlow. An amazing new development has occurred, the Kent County Council has just appointed Miss Nora Christine Iles, of Guildford, to be Superintendent Matron on the nomination of the Ministry of Health.

The Ministry's directions indicate that the Matron of the hospital shall assist the Superintendent Matron and be subject to her control.

An absolutely untenable position for both Miss Brownlow and Miss Iles. We are surprised at such an appointment being accepted.

There is very little doubt that through Sister Tutors the College of Nursing is permitted to use its influence in L.C.C. Hospitals to procure from the members a systematic collection of funds. In our opinion any form of coercion in this particular is entirely unjustified in rate supported hospitals.

We note that in *The County Officers' Gazette*, the Guild of Nurses takes strong exception to such a policy.

We also note that the writer of the complaint appeals to Dr. Somerville Hastings, Chairman of the Public Health Committee, L.C.C., asking if the Council would give a square deal to victimised nurses? We fear any such appeal would receive scant consideration by the Public Health Committee, the Chairman of which has very determinedly refused to place a Registered Nurse upon it, although invited to do so by the British College of Nurses on more than one occasion. We believe that Dr. Hastings is quite satisfied that medical practitioners and even a *midwife* can represent efficiently the profession of Nursing. Unless Registered Nurses prove themselves possessed of a professional conscience, and take action upon their own behalf, they will continue to suffer suppression—and not only themselves but their patients will suffer in consequence. Note deplorable standards of nursing in connection with the Civil Nursing Reserve. Now it is hoped to be improved.

Trained nurses have protested to the Ministry of Health that twelve days' annual leave under the Civil Nursing Reserve is totally inadequate. The Minister of Health is to issue instructions on the subject, as employing bodies are only entitled to give leave amounting to twelve days at present.

Miss D. E. Phillips, who has resigned her appointment as Sister at Wellhouse Hospital, Barnet, after completing 31 years' service, has been awarded a pension of £82 5s. 6d.

*The Mental Health Services' Journal* has usually an amusing pen picture. Headed "A.R.P. Exercise," last month's depicts an unfortunate patient with severed jugular, a frantic Sister exclaiming to officious auxiliary, "No, No, Miss Wimsey, never a tourniquet around the neck!" Patient just saved from strangulation!

The news of the resignation of Dame Joanna Cruickshank, R.R.C., S.R.N., of the position of Matron-in-Chief of the British Red Cross Society will be received with regret, as she was known to be in favour of the organisation of highly qualified nurses in connection with the Service. Both in U.S.A. and in Scandinavian countries the Red Cross nursing services are constantly advancing, and we need reform in this particular in England.

Miss Ruth E. Darbyshire, R.R.C., S.R.N., has succeeded Dame Joanna as Matron-in-Chief of the British Red Cross Society.

Nurses in Public Assistance institutions in Essex are to be permitted for the duration of the war to retain their posts after marriage.

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