



REVUE INTERNATIONALE DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

SUPPLEMENT

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INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

SEVENTEENTH AWARD of the FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE MEDAL

Last year was marked by an event which occurs every two years for the purpose of honouring exceptional devotion to duty. In 1959 the Florence Nightingale Medal, which is awarded by the International Committee of the Red Cross to recipients proposed by the National Red Cross Societies, was awarded to twenty-seven nurses in sixteen countries whose names were given in the 426th Circular of the ICRC¹.

Most of the National Societies concerned, in order to pay the honour due to this distinction and to respond to the wish expressed by the ICRC, arranged for presentation ceremonies to be held, which in some cases were very moving and were conducted, in general, with solemnity and dignity. The Revue internationale wishes to thank the Societies which were good enough to accede to its request by supplying information for the publication of this article; it will be seen that the photographs accompanying some of the reports show interesting aspects of the presentation ceremonies.

We regret that owing to the postponement of the ceremonies in some countries to dates which have not yet been decided our article is not as complete as we should have wished since we are unable to give a comprehensive view of an event which is one of the important features of the Red Cross movement.

¹ See *English Supplement to the Revue internationale*, May 1959.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

We are glad to see, however, that there are within our movement persons of exceptional merit who find fulfilment in the accomplishment of their duties and thus arouse new energy whereby the Red Cross ideal will continue to be upheld.

AUSTRALIA

The ceremony of the Florence Nightingale Investiture held on June 11, 1959 in Melbourne, was of particular solemnity since it took place in the presence of the President of the Australian Red Cross Society, H. E. Lady Slim, the wife of the Governor General of Australia, who was to present the award to the two recipients chosen by the ICRC, *Miss Phyllis Mary Daymon* and *Miss Patricia Downes Chomley*. On her arrival at the Society's headquarters Lady Slim was welcomed by the Vice-President, Sir John Latham and in the presence of the directors of this Society and a distinguished gathering the medals were awarded to the recipients.

The award was made to Miss Phyllis Mary Daymon, now in charge of the Talking Book Library at the National Headquarters in Melbourne, for her outstanding service as a Red Cross auxiliary for many years. Miss Patricia Downes Chomley received her medal for her distinguished services to nursing; she also served with distinction for five and a half years in the Australian Imperial Forces in the Middle East and South-West Pacific. The accounts of this ceremony in the Press made mention of the moral value of this distinction and recalled the fine records of the two recipients.

CHILE

The Chilean Red Cross has kindly given us an account of the ceremony for the commemoration of the Centenary of the Birth of the Red Cross Idea, and the presentation of the Florence Nightingale Medal to the recipient chosen by the ICRC. The numerous press cuttings appended showed the interest taken

by the Press in the activities of the Red Cross in Chile. We are giving a general description of the ceremony and extracts from speeches given on that occasion.

The official presentation took place on June 24, 1959 at the Windsor Theatre, Santiago; the personnel of the Red Cross sections in the capital and neighbourhood, the President of the Society, members of the Central Committee, leading figures of the Church and economic and social circles, and members of the diplomatic corps were present at the ceremony which was held with all due solemnity. The President of the Chilean Red Cross, Dr. Augustin Inostrosa, gave an address in which, after recalling that 1959 marked the Centenary of the Birth of the Red Cross Idea, he spoke in praise of the recipient of the Florence Nightingale Medal, *Mrs. Amanda Brieba de Lorca*, voluntary aid of the Chilean Red Cross, and said :

“ The term “ medal ” presupposes an entire programme of duties which candidates must perform ; they must be imbued with a lofty sense of humanity, give untiring devotion to duty and have that great capacity for hard work which is typical of the British nurse... Mrs. Amanda Brieba has worked under the Red Cross emblem for 45 years ; she was one of the first women to sign the register of the Ladies Committee of our Society ; since then the Red Cross has been her guide and standard. Throughout the years and every day she has stimulated our action by her unflinching enthusiasm ”... President of the Ladies Committee for over twenty years she is still its Honorary-President—the summit of a whole life’s service to others.

For many years Mrs. Amanda Brieba worked with the Central Committee ; she organised the first dental clinics and directed the Statistics Department which bore the mark of her own efficiency.

At critical times such as the earthquakes in the north (1922) and the south (1939) she gave proof of her ability to meet emergencies and her strong character.

Under her expert and careful guidance, the *Papudo* Preventorium was established and developed.

The President recalled how convincing Mrs. Amanda Brieba could be when addressing an audience and exhorting it to uphold

the principles of the Red Cross. Finally, after mentioning the names of the three Chilean nurses who had already received this distinction, he pinned the medal to the recipient's uniform and transmitted the greetings, affection and admiration of the Chilean Red Cross.

The President of the Nursing Committee of the Chilean Red Cross, Mrs. Maria Luisa Torres (who also holds the Florence Nightingale Medal) spoke of the moral value of this award which she described as the highest distinction to which a nurse can aspire. In speaking of the recipient's great qualities, she laid stress on three by which the work of Mrs. Amanda Briebe de Lorca was inspired—unselfishness, self-sacrifice and self-denial—which fully justified the choice of the Chilean Red Cross in submitting her candidature. At the close of her speech Mrs. Torres said that she wished to pay a tribute to her on behalf of the Nursing Committee of the Chilean Red Cross (of which she was one of the founders) and herself, as well as several thousands of her colleagues who, on this solemn occasion, took part in her joy and looked upon the distinction received from Geneva as a personal honour.

Mrs. Amanda Briebe de Lorca expressed her gratitude to the International Committee for the distinction awarded to her and said that during her stay in Geneva, in 1938, she had realised the importance of the Florence Nightingale Medal and learned to appreciate the sterling qualities of those to whom it was awarded. She said with great modesty that she failed to understand why such an honour should be paid to her.

After saying that her forty-five years service with the Chilean Red Cross had been the happiest time of her life, and that her work on the Ladies Committee had filled her existence with the greatest joy, Mrs. Amanda Briebe de Lorca recalled an incident of her visit to London in 1938, as a member of this National Society's delegation to the XVIth International Conference of the Red Cross¹. Following a suggestion made by her, which met with the unanimous approval of women delegates to the conference, a moving ceremony was held at the foot of the Florence

¹ See *Revue internationale*, June 1938.

Nightingale statue. When it came to an end the President of the Florence Nightingale Foundation presented Mrs. Amanda Briebe de Lorca with the British Red Cross badge and asked her to wear it always in memory of that day; she could not have imagined, at the time, that she would later wear the badge of that remarkable woman, Florence Nightingale.

She expressed her thanks to the Swiss Chargé d'affaires for his presence, which gave full significance to the commemoration of the Birth of the Red Cross Idea, pervaded by the spirit of Henry Dunant. She addressed the audience in moving terms, saying that they were there to share the great joy and pleasure afforded to her during a ceremony which would ever remain in her memory.

The Chilean press associated itself with this dual ceremony by publishing articles and photographs in honour of a compatriot and the National Society.

DENMARK

In Denmark two servants of humanity in an isolated community far removed from the comforts of civilisation were awarded the Florence Nightingale Medal. Both of them are professional nurses who have pursued a long and fruitful career in Greenland, *Miss Signey Henriette Vest* and *Miss Dorothea Frederikke Bengtzen*.

As regards the former, the presentation was made on May, 25, 1959, at the headquarters of the Danish Red Cross in Copenhagen. Miss Dorothea Bengtzen was presented with the Medal on June 8, 1959, by the chief medical officer at Godthaab, Greenland, who represents the Danish Red Cross in that country. The ceremony at the headquarters of the Danish Red Cross in Copenhagen was held in the presence of the President, Professor Louis Le Maire who, in a short address, emphasized the significance of this award. He said: "The name Florence Nightingale sounds in itself beautiful, it has almost a poetic ring. But to nurses as well as to the Red Cross there is also a special appeal in this name, and this year when celebrating the centenary of

the birth of the Red Cross idea it may be an occasion to recall the fact that this idea took rise in the efforts of this outstanding woman, it being well known that, precisely, her deeds inspired Henry Dunant ”.

“ The Danish Red Cross rejoices in awarding the medal which bears the name of Florence Nightingale to two nurses who have worked in Greenland. This medal is regarded as the most distinguished appreciation of work among sick people and we are glad to know that in the most northern part of our country there have worked nurses who are worthy of the highest distinction which may be awarded to members of the profession ”.

The President then recalled the recipient’s fine record ; he spoke of the heavy responsibility incumbent upon her when, from 1933 to 1946, she was the only person in the district with medical training ; thus she often had to perform duties normally dealt with by a doctor. The President said “ We have also to think of her on a dog-sledge, accompanied by Greenlanders ; she also learned the Greenland language, which is in no way ordinary. Until a proper hospital was established in 1952 she had to administrate a primitive outpost nursing station.”

Miss Vest recruited her personnel among the natives ; first of all she trained native women in midwifery and simple nursing care and, when a hospital was set up, she trained local helpers. The President concluded his speech by saying “ Miss Vest, I want to say that in our centenary year we could not pay a tribute to a more deserving nurse than you and your colleague in Greenland. You have done a job which has made your name respected and given lustre to your profession. Few more than you have deserved to wear this medal carrying the name of Florence Nightingale and it is with the greatest pleasure that I hand you this medal, to which I add our warmest congratulations ”.

It can well be imagined how hard it must have been to work in a place which has contact with the outside world only once a year and where the situation might occur that essential supplies could run short in the meantime. This exhausting task, unfortunately, affected Miss Vest’s health and she had to retire

when only fifty years old. At present, conditions in Greenland have undergone a radical change and in future nobody will be faced with such harsh conditions as those she endured.

The Copenhagen press published accounts of this event; we have before us, in particular, an article accompanied by a moving photograph of the moment when Miss Signey Vest, the medal pinned to her dress, is presented by her "adopted children" (a youth and a girl, both from Greenland) with the diploma accompanying the medal.

With regard to the ceremony held at Godthaab on June 8, 1959, it was a great occasion. It was attended by the Governor of Greenland and by many people and took place in the Hall where the Greenland Provincial Council holds its meetings. Everything was made as festive as possible—thus nurses formed a lane at the entrance to the Hall.

Before presenting the medal the Chief Medical Officer Dr. Preben Smith gave a short address in which he first spoke of Florence Nightingale and then recalled the work accomplished by Miss Bengtzen. He said "All who know conditions in Greenland are well aware of the fact that 26 years of work is a very long time... This is a great day, not only for Miss Bengtzen, but for the entire health service in Greenland".

Following the presentation of the medal the Governor of Greenland and the head nurse paid a tribute to Miss Bengtzen who said, in her report, "It was a very great day which I shall always remember with gratitude, veneration and joy. The entire town (Godthaab) seemed to participate and I have received many telegrams and flowers from nearly all parts of Greenland".

The years which Miss Bengtzen has passed in Greenland have been very fruitful and her record gives a striking picture of her devoted and energetic service throughout her career. She went to Greenland in 1933 and worked in various towns in the island until 1952, when she was appointed as Matron of the first Red Cross children's home at Egedesminde in Greenland. Like her colleague, Miss Vest, during the first years of her work in Greenland, was the only person with medical training in her district and she, also, had to perform duties usually dealt with by a doctor. Her record emphasizes her ability to get on well with

the Greenlander people, whose language she spoke ; she had no other escort than natives of the island when making her visits by dog-sledge throughout the district.

Miss Dorothea Bengtzen is now employed by the Danish Government but she still remains in close contact with the Danish Red Cross.

FRANCE

Three French nurses were awarded the Florence Nightingale Medal in 1959 :

Miss Hélène Rouvier, registered nurse, tutor-sister and supervisor in Morocco, *Miss Emma Ruidavetz*, registered nurse and Matron of the Barbier-Hugo Neurosurgical Hospital at Bab-el-Oued near Algiers, and *Mrs. Marguerite Patrimonio*, registered nurse and tutor-sister in Morocco.

Many persons were present at the ceremony organised by the Algiers Branch of the French Red Cross, held on June 19, 1959 at the Barbier-Hugo Hospital and attended by representatives of military and civilian circles, the medical profession and the Church and Mr. Vust, Delegate of the ICRC in Algeria, in order to pay a tribute to Miss Ruidavetz and to share her joy at the award of the Florence Nightingale Medal which the correspondent of a local newspaper described as the highest reward to which nurses could aspire.

The President of the Algerian Committee of the French Red Cross, Miss H. Lung (who was accompanied by members of the Ladies Committee) pinned the Medal to the recipient's uniform and expressed her deep admiration for the fine example of charity and courage set by Miss Ruidavetz throughout her career. She said " Our Province of Algeria is proud of you for from your youth onwards you have understood that the finest vocation on this African soil is to give one's heart. This building where we are meeting today is the proof of your success and shows what a strong personality upheld by faith can achieve. We thank you for being a good pilot under the Red Cross Flag and for all you have done to keep brotherly feeling in our hearts ".

The General-Delegate of the French Red Cross in Algeria, Mr. L. Imbert, then congratulated Miss Ruidavetz. On behalf of the President of the French Red Cross, busily engaged in the preparation of the Centenary celebrations, the General-Delegate recalled the brilliant and numerous services rendered to the Red Cross by the recipient. Her first post, after leaving the Faculty of Science, was in a dispensary in Algiers; in 1938 she was entrusted with the direction of the Nursing School of the "Union des femmes de France", and at the same time she gave her services to the Barbier-Hugo Hospital, which had just been established. When appointed as Matron she organised and improved this institution, increased the surgical equipment and directed the personnel and Secretariat. Mr. Imbert said that Miss Ruidavetz had thus contributed in making the Barbier-Hugo Neurosurgical Hospital widely known as a unique establishment in North Africa, and it was therefore with great joy, and the gratitude of the Red Cross, that they were presenting her with the exceptional distinction which she so fully deserved.

Miss Ruidavetz expressed her thanks with great humility and said she felt overwhelmed to be the object of such a stirring ceremony; she said that neither her acts nor her merits justified such a great display but the reward she had just received shed so great radiance throughout the world that she rejoiced from the bottom of her heart to have been chosen by the ICRC. In speaking of nurses she said "May the great figure of Florence Nightingale be the constant ideal from which their vocation will draw still greater strength."

Miss Ruidavetz then spoke of Solferino and recalled the ceremony held in memory of Henry Dunant's idea, which she attended as the representative of the nurses of the French Red Cross; she finished her speech with some words of great spiritual worth:

"May the communion of men of goodwill through God recall to peoples thirsty for riches and eaten up with pride that one principle at least should remain intangible—"Inter arma caritas".

The Press, through the numerous articles and photographs

published, showed that the ceremony had been of interest to a very numerous public.

* * *

There was also joy in Morocco, when the General-Delegation of the French Red Cross in Morocco, during a small ceremony held in November 1959 at the headquarters of the Casablanca Delegation, presented the Florence Nightingale Medal to Mrs. Marguerite Patrimonio, registered nurse and tutor-sister.

The ceremony was presided over by the Minister of France, Mr. Auboyneau, accompanied by the principal members of his staff and the military authorities. The presence of the Moroccan Red Crescent, represented by Mr. Mohamed Sebti, Vice-President, Dr. La Raki, Secretary-General, the Treasurer and one of the delegates, Dr. Kabbage, as well as a delegation of American Red Cross nurses, gave greater and more solemn significance to the ceremony.

For thirty years Mrs. Marguerite Patrimonio has held the post of director of nurses in Morocco and her achievements in this capacity were brought to the notice of the ICRC. The Medal was presented to her, in behalf of the International Red Cross, by Mr. Paul Restany, General-Delegate ; Mr. C. Vautier, delegate of the ICRC in Morocco, the delegate of the French Red Cross in Casablanca and numerous associates of the French Red Cross were present.

The article published by the local French Press concerning this event is accompanied by a photograph which illustrates the pleasure of the General-Delegate and the joy of the recipient.

On that day Mr. Restany, in behalf of the French Red Cross, also bestowed decorations on women who, during the past years, " have given generous and valuable aid to the French Red Cross ".

* * *

The delegation of the French Red Cross to the Moroccan Red Crescent in Rabat also saw the presentation of the Medal to one of its helpers, Miss Hélène Rouvier, supervisor of the professional training courses of the Moroccan Red Crescent.

The ceremony was held at the Ministry of Health of the Moroccan Government on October 20, 1959, in the presence of H.R.H. Princess Lalla Malika, President of the Moroccan Red Crescent, and several leading members of the Society, the principal heads of departments of the Ministry of Health, and the Director of the Press and Information Department of the Royal Palace. The Medal was presented by the General-Delegate of the French Red Cross to the Moroccan Red Crescent.

It is agreeable to note the mixed nature of this ceremony where Moroccan and French representatives of the Red Cross movement united in showing their satisfaction in the reward made to a nurse who well deserved it. In his letter to the ICRC concerning the ceremony, the President of the French Red Cross said that the meeting was very cordial and showed the spirit of fellowship which animates the two institutions.

The French editions of the Moroccan Press gave an account of the event and cited the words spoken by the recipient when expressing her thanks. She said, in particular, " My finest reward was the day when I started to serve in Morocco... "

In her letter of thanks to the ICRC, Miss Rouvier expressed her gratitude in moving terms, and also her joy to receive " this exceptional mark of esteem " which, she said, " is especially due to the great association I have the honour to serve and of which I continue to be a loyal member ".

Thus the Florence Nightingale Medal has once again proved the impartial character which the Red Cross principles should confer on every humanitarian action ; we are very glad and we hope that this impartiality, from frontier to frontier, will touch the spirit and heart of men in every sphere.

GERMANY
(FEDERAL REPUBLIC)

In 1959, two Red Cross nurses in the Federal Republic of Germany were awarded the Florence Nightingale Medal: Generaloberin *Luise von Oertzen*, and the Vice-President of the

Lower-Saxony Branch of the German Red Cross, *Mrs. Luise Sophie Knigge*.

On May 21, 1959, in the Werner-Schule building at Göttingen, in the presence of the Committee of the Association of the Parent Establishments of the Red Cross, the medal was presented to Mrs. Luise von Oertzen by the President of the Red Cross in the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr. H. Weitz.

Dr. Weitz spoke in glowing terms of the fine record of the recipient who has served the Red Cross for many years; he extolled her merits and her devoted service in behalf of Red Cross nurses entrusted to her care. During her career Luis von Oertzen has not only pursued her nursing duties; she has always made strenuous efforts to further the independence and moral and professional interests of nurses, in particular during the war and the post-war years when she had to fight to save the very existence of the parent establishment of which she was in charge. From 1939 onwards, in her capacity as Head "Generaloberin", she visited her nurses in the fighting areas in Poland, and as far as North Africa. Later she returned to her own country where an important task awaited her, i.e. visiting nurses, victims of bombardments, in hospital in the parent establishments under her direction. After the war her intervention was again required and by her efforts the relief fund for Red Cross nurses, financed by donations, was established in 1948. When the German community of Red Cross Parent Establishments (Verband Deutscher Mutterhäuser) was founded she became the President of this association in 1952. We can but rejoice to see the award of the Florence Nightingale Medal to a nurse with such a fine record and endowed with such a remarkable personality.

A ceremony of a similar imposing and cordial nature took place in Hanover, attended by members of the Lower Saxony branch of the German Red Cross and the President of the Society, Dr. H. Weitz, who had come for the special purpose of presenting the Florence Nightingale Medal to Mrs. Luise Sophie Knigge. Mrs. Theanolte Bähnisch, wife of the Governor of the "Land", and Mr. Hausmann, President of the Lower Saxony Branch of the German Red Cross, who were present at the ceremony, offered their congratulations to the recipient.

Mrs. Luise Sophie Knigge, like her colleague the Generaloberin Luise von Oertzen, is deeply imbued with the Red Cross spirit and played an outstanding role during the events from 1939 to 1945. She was Head Nurse at the Friederike Foundation but it was the Second World War which gave Mrs. Knigge the occasion to accomplish acts which deserve to be recalled. Although it was strictly forbidden by the authorities, she cared for prisoners of war, especially those working in labour camps in her own district (Poles, French, Belgians, Americans and Russians) which, in view of the political situation, was a difficult task.

Later, after the events in 1945, she extended her charitable efforts to refugees, either by giving them shelter or by organising vast relief actions in their behalf. In 1945 she was elected Vice-President of the Lower Saxony Branch of the Red Cross, where she showed great ability in reorganising the social work of the Society and in connection with women's employment and public health.

For the past few years she has turned her attention to students, especially those from Hungary who took refuge in Lower Saxony. Her latest achievement in this respect was the establishment of a students' home in Lodyweg (Hanover); she has also displayed great social activity in behalf of the Elsa Brandström Home in Hamburg.

In an article published in the official bulletin of the German Red Cross it was said that Mrs. Knigge's career had been characterised by her devoted service and unfailing self-sacrifice for the alleviation of the suffering of her fellow-creatures and that through her efforts the German Red Cross had been stimulated and encouraged in its social work far beyond the boundaries of Lower Saxony.

INDIA

The presentation of the Florence Nightingale Medal took place on April 18, 1960, during the Annual General Meeting of the Indian Red Cross Society. The President of India, Dr. R. Prasad, presented the medal to Dr. (Miss) *Mary Edith Mckay*.

Buchanan, Principal of the College of Nursing, New Delhi. Dr. Buchanan comes from a family of medical missionaries who worked for many years in India. Following her parents' example, she herself has worked in various capacities in Indian hospitals since 1936; in 1943 she entered the service of the Government of India and continued to work in that capacity until the College of Nursing, of which she is now the principal, was established in 1946. She has made a very valuable contribution to the planning and development of nursing education in India and it is mainly due to her initiative that a course for the master's degree in nursing was started in 1959, under the auspices of the Delhi University.

Dr. Buchanan made another contribution to nursing in India with her book entitled "A Study Guide in Nursing Arts", of which the object is to stimulate nursing students in making a "self-directing and self-testing" approach to the principles and practice of nursing. This book is in wide use among students and nursing instructors in India and abroad.

Through her high sense of duty and devotion to her profession, Dr. Buchanan sets an inspiring example to students who come into contact with her. This distinguished service under the Red Cross emblem could not fail to draw the attention of those who, every two years, award the Florence Nightingale Medal to nurses who have shown exceptional devotion to duty in the noble cause of nursing.

JAPAN

On June 5, 1959, a solemn ceremony was held in the Auditorium at the Headquarters of the Japanese Red Cross on the occasion of the presentation of Florence Nightingale Medals to three nurses of this Society: *Miss Aki Oku*, registered nurse, *Miss Koto Imaru*, registered nurse and midwife, and *Mrs. Oshie Kinutani*, registered nurse, midwife and social worker.

In the presence of Their Highnesses Princesses Chichibu and Tokamatzu, Honorary Vice-Presidents of the Japanese Red

Cross, the President of this National Society, the President of the House of Representatives, the President of the House of Councillors, the Minister of Health, the President of the Nurses Association and the delegate of the ICRC in Japan, Her Majesty the Empress of Japan, Honorary President of the Japanese Red Cross, personally pinned the medal on the three recipients.

Speeches were made by some of the guests, including Mr. H.C. Angst, delegate of the ICRC, who expressed his satisfaction to see that three Japanese nurses were among the twenty-seven recipients chosen by the International Committee. He gave a picture of the heroic attitude of Florence Nightingale during her nursing career, particularly during the Crimean War. He recalled the shocking conditions, hardly imaginable today, suffered by the wounded in that war and described Florence Nightingale's courageous efforts to help them. He said "There, amid cholera, typhus and a mortality rate of over 60%, she went nightly, lamp in hand, from litter to litter. Thus, she became known as *The Lady with the Lamp*. May the memory of her lamp flicker on as an inspiration to those who are already dedicating their lives to service above self and to those younger generations who may consider nursing as a career."

After a few words of thanks by one of the recipients, and a few songs by a choir, the ceremony came to an end.

We are giving a short summary of the careers of the three recipients:

Miss Aki Oku is Chief Instructor at the Nursing School at the Osaka Red Cross Hospital, where she held her first post as a nurse in 1918. During the Manchurian and Pacific conflicts she served in field hospitals and on hospital ships.

Miss Koto Imaru started her nursing career forty-seven years ago; she served as head nurse at the Kyoto Nursing Hospital before taking up her present post at the Blood Laboratory of the Physical Constitution Research Institute.

Mrs. Oshie Kinutani is the first recipient of the Florence Nightingale Medal to have suffered from a radiation disease. She was chief nurse at the Hiroshima Red Cross Hospital when

the city was destroyed by the atom bomb on August 6, 1945. In spite of her own suffering she spared no efforts in assisting other bombed victims. She retired in 1946, after over twenty years of service to others.

KOREA
(REPUBLIC OF)

“ On this happy occasion, I sincerely hope all Korean nurses will follow the example set by *Mrs. Keum-Jon Lee Whang* and there will be many more nurses to receive the Nightingale Medal in the years to come ”.

These words were spoken by Dr. Chang Whan Sohn, President of the Red Cross of the Republic of Korea on May 22, 1959, after Mrs. Syngman Rhee had pinned the Florence Nightingale Medal on Mrs. Frances Lee Whang. The Secretary-General of the Society¹ informed us that the ceremony was observed in the same manner as for the first presentation in 1957². Mrs. Whang is the second Red Cross nurse in this country to be awarded the Florence Nightingale Medal; Mrs. Hyo Chung Lee, the first of this Society's nurses to receive the award, was present at the ceremony.

For over thirty years Mrs. Whang has been engaged in nursing. After graduating from the English Department, Ehwa Women's University and the School of Nursing at Severance Hospital, Seoul, she went to Canada in 1927 to continue her nursing studies at Toronto University. At present Mrs. Whang is a lecturer on nursing at Yonsei University, Medical College.

Among many distinguished guests and white-capped student nurses were also present the Scandinavian medical representatives from the Korea Medical Centre, a large hospital recently established in Korea by the Scandinavian countries.

¹ Recognised on May 25, 1955, see ICRC Circular No. 409.

² See English Supplement to the *Revue internationale*, May 1958.

NORWAY

A tribute was paid in 1959 to two members of the Norwegian Nurses Association, *Miss Karen Lovise Naess* and *Miss Borghild Kessel*, who were both awarded the Florence Nightingale Medal and to whom the Association gave full support when submitting their names to the ICRC.

It was in the extreme north of Norway, among the Lapps, the nomad people, that Sister Karen Lovise Naess chose her future field of work, when her sense of humanity was aroused in 1930 on hearing of the action undertaken by the Norwegian Finn's Mission.

The need of medical and nursing care was cruelly felt by these families who lived in tents and were continually on the move; Sister Karen, therefore, settled amongst them in the little village of Kautokeino, totally isolated by snow in winter and in summer and at a distance of two and a half hours journey to Alta, where there was a doctor. Thus Sister Karen Lovise Naess was called upon, in the most harsh living conditions and with difficult means of transport, to give first medical care to the sick of those areas with the help, in the most serious cases, of the advice of the nearest doctor, given by telephone... For twenty-nine years Sister Karen Naess has given herself entirely to this work, i.e. eight and a half years as district nurse and nineteen years as matron of a home for sick and aged people and has shown remarkable zeal in looking after the sick, giving material and psychological aid to the inhabitants, acting as adviser for the young people of the district, looking after Lapp orphans, in fact doing all she could to help or to heal. Her name is dear to everybody in the district, who called her "The Mother of the Finnmark".

Let us add that she is a State Registered Nurse of the Ullevål Nursing School.

Miss Borghild Kessel, a State Registered Nurse from the same school, has been engaged with mental disorders during her career. After various studies abroad in Canada, the United States and the Florence Nightingale International School

(Public Health Division), she was appointed by the Oslo municipal authorities as travelling inspector at the office for mental patients placed in the country after leaving hospital. For fifteen years she devoted her efforts to the improvement of these persons' living conditions. The war and its tragic consequences gave her another field of action; in 1940, under the auspices of the "Nansenhjelpen", she participated in help and relief work in behalf of Finnish civilians and a little later she carried out her charitable work in her own country. In 1947, Miss Kessel was appointed Director of the State School for Public Health Nurses and she has since then devoted all her efforts to the training of these nurses who are now doing such magnificent work throughout the country for the development of public health.

Mr. Ulf Styren, President of the Norwegian Red Cross, when presenting the medals to the two recipients, recalled the high value of this award which, he said, had been instituted not to crown a career, however deserving of merit, but to reward outstanding acts of devotion and as a recognition of exceptional moral and professional qualities.

Other speakers paid a tribute to the two recipients, in particular the Director of Public Health, the President of the Norwegian Nurses Association and the President of the Norwegian Red Cross Nurses Association. In their speeches Miss Karen Lovise Naess and Miss Borghild Kessel expressed their sincere thanks to the International Committee of the Red Cross for the great honour it had bestowed upon them in making this award. This fine ceremony was widely commented in the Press.

THE NETHERLANDS

On August 17, 1959, in a setting which emphasised the solemnity of the occasion, H.M. Queen Juliana of the Netherlands presented *Miss A.E.W.C. Engelberts*, a State Registered Nurse and Midwife, with the Florence Nightingale Medal. The ceremony was held in one of the spacious rooms of the old Hall of the Knights in the centre of The Hague. At the end of

the hall a row of Red Cross nurses were seated next to the rostrum, flanked by a deputation of the Red Cross Corps. Among the official guests were the Provincial Governor, the representative of the Minister of Social Affairs and Public Health and the first Secretary of the Swiss Embassy who represented the Swiss Government; three nurses, bearers of the Florence Nightingale Medal, were present. Music and flowers gave a pleasant note to this solemn ceremony.

H. M. the Queen arrived at 11 a.m. and was escorted to her place by Dr. F. H. A. de Graaff, Chairman of the Netherlands Red Cross. After welcoming and thanking Her Majesty, and the official guests, Dr. de Graaff gave a review of the work of Florence Nightingale and the circumstances which led to the institution of the medal which bears her name. The Chairman then spoke of Miss Engelberts and her work.

After leaving the Secondary School, in spite of her delicate health, Miss Engelberts enrolled as a student-nurse at Wilhelma Hospital, Amsterdam. Following her career step by step, Dr. de Graaff drew a picture of a woman of many qualities, always to the fore when duty called and doing more than her duty. She gave many proofs of her qualities during the Japanese occupation and often risked her life during her work in a missionary hospital in Java.

In caring for the sick she was always on the look out for improvements in equipment and surroundings. Even now, after her retirement from the post of Director of one of the big hospitals in Rotterdam, she will take up a post in Netherlands New Guinea where her ability, practice and devotion are urgently required.

Dr. de Graaff said to the recipient: "We need not be astonished and it gives us great pleasure and gratitude that the ICRC, in its decision of May 12, 1959, bestowed the Florence Nightingale Medal—the highest award for the nursing profession—upon you, Sister Anna Elisabeth Wilhelmina Christina Engelberts. We know that you have drawn the strength to do your work—which we have reviewed here—from a strong faith and an unshaken trust in God. You have put your great gifts of brains and heart to the service of the suffering. We request

you to accept this high decoration, awarded you by the Red Cross, as a token of immense gratitude for the exceptional way in which you have upheld the lofty ideals given by Florence Nightingale to humanity”.

Her Majesty the Queen then presented the medal to Miss Engelberts who spoke a few words of thanks and said how much she owed to those who had trained her and given her a good example.

The ceremony continued with the reading of a few selected poems, after which the musicians played an Intermezzo by a well-known modern Dutch composer.

The Chairman thanked Queen Juliana for having honoured the ceremony with her presence and Miss Engelberts was congratulated by Her Majesty and the guests.

NEW ZEALAND

The ceremony of the presentation of the Florence Nightingale Medal was held on September 3, 1959, at Gisborne, during the annual general meeting of the Dominion Council of the New Zealand Red Cross ; it preceded the nursing graduating ceremony of the Cook Hospital in that city. The recipient, *Miss Flora J. Cameron*, O.B.E., Registered Nurse and Midwife, was therefore, as the Director-General of Nursing Services, accompanied by her students when she was presented with the medal by Sir Alexander Gillies, President of the New Zealand Red Cross Society.

The stage of the War Memorial Hall had been artistically decorated for this occasion ; among the numerous persons present were representatives of the medical profession and the Red Cross, including Mr. J. B. Williams, Chairman of the Cook Hospital Board, Mr. P. L. Fowler, President of the P. B. Red Cross Centre, Miss R. D. Bunt, Supervising Matron of the Cook Hospital, etc.

In his speech, Sir Alexander Gillies recalled the exceptional significance of the award and gave an outline of the lengthy career in the nursing service service of Miss Cameron, who he described as “ a model of efficiency ”.

Her career started in 1934 at Wanganui in the Maori settlements. Miss Cameron, who had been granted a Rockefeller Fellowship, studied Medical Social work at Toronto University and visited Red Cross organisations in Canada and the United States ; she lived in outpost Red Cross hospitals in Canada during her field studies in the Great North.

After returning to her country she filled various important posts, particularly in the Senior Red Cross, for which she established Junior Red Cross centres in the Wanganui district, especially in Maori schools giving classes in First Aid, Home Nursing and Mothercraft. At the present time she holds an important post with the Ministry of Health and, as stated above, is Director-General of Nursing Services at the Cook Hospital

In acknowledging the award, Miss Cameron said she felt deeply honoured ; she would accept it humbly on behalf of those of the nursing profession whom, she felt confident, would emulate the spirit of Florence Nightingale.

THE PHILIPPINES

On April 30, 1959, during the dinner which concluded the Third Biennial National Convention of the Philippine Red Cross held at the Manila Hotel, Festa Pavilion, the ceremony took place of the presentation of the Florence Nightingale Medal. The ceremony was all the more moving as it was a homage to two nurse heroines of the Second World War, of whom one lost her life in the performance of her duty. It was moreover the first occasion for the presentation of this award by the Philippine Red Cross ¹.

The two recipients were *Mrs. Patricia Intengan*, a former nurse of the Philippine Red Cross and the late *Miss Catalina Evangelista*, Red Cross nurse and pharmacist.

Mrs. Carlos P. Garcia, the wife of the President of the Philippines, presented the medal to Mrs. Intengan and the other

¹ Founded in 1947, when the country became an independent State.

medal to the brother of the late nurse, Mr. Eleuterio Z. Evangelista.

In her response, Mrs. Intengan said: " I am very grateful to the International Committee of the Red Cross for the recognition accorded to my humble myself and my late colleague, through the Florence Nightingale Medal. I also wish to thank the Board of Governors of the Philippine National Red Cross, which nominated us to the International Committee for this award. I hope it will inspire members of the nursing profession in this country to a greater dedication to our work and to follow the example set by the great lady for whom the medal is named ".

Mrs. Intengan has exercised her profession as a nurse since her graduation in 1915 and has had experience in hospital work as a nurse, head nurse, supervisor and dietetician. In 1934 the Philippine Red Cross, which at that time was a branch of the American Red Cross, appointed Mrs. Intengan as a public health nurse and for a time she served as a dietetician in a medico-social centre of the Red Cross in a thickly populated slum district in Manila.

In December 1941 Mrs. Intengan was responsible for the organisation of centres for persons evacuated from the danger zones; when the Pagsanjan Centre was bombed by the enemy, she was ordered to evacuate the wounded and sick to Manila, a most perilous task which she carried out with great courage and determination.

After the capitulation of the Philippines, Mrs. Intengan was appointed by the Red Cross to provide food for Allied civilians interned in a camp near Manila; she continued this work until the liberation in spite of great difficulties but always with the same courage and energy.

At the present time she is a field supervisor of the UNICEF.

Mrs. Intengan has received several honours for her work including the Medal of Freedom from the United States Government, the Silver Medal from the American Red Cross and the Service Medal from the Philippines National Red Cross.

Miss Catalina Evangelista obtained her State diploma in nursing in 1926 and in pharmacy in 1930. She was Head Nurse

and Pharmacist in the Tayabas Provincial Hospital (now the Quezon Memorial Hospital) for several years, and was there when the war broke out. During the occupation she worked for the underground by procuring medicaments and food for the guerrillas; on December 22, 1940 she was arrested.

She died on December 25, 1944. The posthumous award of the Florence Nightingale Medal honours her memory and the nursing profession.

The International Committee of the Red Cross was represented at this ceremony by Mr. John W. Mittner, delegate.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

As customary the American Red Cross arranged for the ceremony for the presentation of the Florence Nightingale Medal to be held during its annual National Convention, which took place in 1959 on June 1, in Atlantic City. This ceremony, at which some 4,000 persons were present, was most imposing, a pleasant detail being the many flags held by young nurses standing on the rostrum.

The American Red Cross was celebrating the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Red Cross Nursing Services and the award of the Florence Nightingale Medal to three Red Cross nurses: *Miss Effie J. Taylor, Mrs. Lucile Petry Leone, Miss Ruth Sleeper.*

Mr. Roland Harriman, Chairman of this Society, said in his speech:

“The Florence Nightingale award is the highest distinction that can be extended to a nurse. It is granted by the International Committee of the Red Cross only to nurses who have given increased status and prestige to their profession. It is a symbol of personal achievement and of unflinching devotion to the highest standards of nursing.

“This year three American nurses have been given this unique honour and I am proud to say that all three are enrolled Red Cross nurses. It is my happy task to represent the International Red Cross and International Committee of the Red Cross, in presenting to our guests their awards.”

Mr. Harriman said that Mrs. Leone had reached the very peak of her profession through her brilliant talents as a nurse, an administrator and an educator. During the Second World War she was the director of the United States Cadet Nurse Corps and helped to administer the greatly expanded programme of nursing education in the United States to meet military and civilian needs. In 1949 Mrs. Leone was appointed to the rank of Assistant Surgeon General of the Public Health Service, the equivalent of Brigadier-General in the Army. She is the Chief Nurse Officer of the United States Public Health Service and is active in many nursing organisations, both national and international. Her remarkable career had recently reached a climax by her election to the presidency of the National League for Nursing.

Mr. Harriman then spoke of Miss Ruth Sleeper, a leader in Nursing education and nursing services. Since 1946 she had been the Director of the School of Nursing, Massachusetts General Hospital, following her ten years service as Assistant Superintendent of Nurses at that hospital and, previously, at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital. She had taught at the Western Reserve University and the Teachers College, Columbia University. Miss Sleeper had represented nursing on the National Health Advisory Committee of the Office of Defence Mobilisation and was also honorary consultant to the Surgeon General of the Navy. She had served on many advisory committees of the United States, including the Advisory Board of the American Red Cross.

In the international field, Miss Sleeper was Chairman of the Educational Committee of the International Council of Nurses, a member of the Committee on Nursing of the WHO and was a pioneer in the International Student Nurse Exchange Programme.

Speaking of the third recipient, Miss Effie J. Taylor Mr. Harriman recalled that she was Chairman of the Nursing Services of the New Haven, Connecticut Chapter and that, as recently as 1955 and 1957, she worked day and night in supervising nursing services in disasters. That was merely the last

phase of her remarkable career ; when she took up nursing she was still a pioneer in her profession ; she had been Head Nurse and Assistant Superintendent at John Hopkins Hospital.

In 1917 she was Director of the Army School of Nursing at Camp Meade. Later she became Assistant Director of Nursing Services at the Yale School of Nursing, and then Dean. In that last post she gave inspiration to students who now hold important posts in nursing all over the world. While she was Dean of Yale University Miss Taylor was elected president of the International Council of Nurses in July 1937. Throughout the Second World War she kept open the channels of communication between nurses through the International Council, even across enemy boundaries.

Each of the three recipients expressed their thanks to the International Committee of the Red Cross and the directorate of the American Red Cross in very moving terms.

* * *

It will be seen that in accordance with the wish of the founders of this distinction, the ceremonies for the presentation of the Florence Nightingale Medal have been held everywhere with all due solemnity. They were also an occasion to celebrate one of the greatest forms of service to others: to help those who call for aid and to alleviate suffering even at the risk of one's life if need be.

The International Committee of the Red Cross rejoices to see, from the numerous proposals put forward to which it has given favourable consideration, that the spirit of service is alive throughout the world today and that the Red Cross gives it the occasion to reveal itself everywhere. It is expressed in noble and concise terms in The Florence Nightingale Pledge which was repeated during the ceremonies by several of the recipients. We think it fitting to terminate our article by recalling the terms of this pledge:

I solemnly pledge myself before God and in the presence of this assembly :

To pass my life in purity and to practice my profession faithfully. I will abstain from whatever is deleterious and mischievous and will not take or knowingly administer any harmful drug.

I will do all in my power to maintain and elevate the standard of my profession, and will hold in confidence all personal matters committed to my keeping and all family affairs coming to my knowledge in the practice of my profession.

With loyalty will I endeavour to aid the physician in his work and devote myself to the welfare of those committed to my care.