

## TWENTY-THIRD AWARD OF THE FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE MEDAL

Nurses from twenty-five countries have been selected to receive the Florence Nightingale Medal this year. It is an honour which the ICRC, on the recommendation of National Societies, bestows every other year on women who, by a resolve to serve that is sometimes nothing short of heroic, have followed the example of the "Lady with the Lamp" and proved themselves worthy in the humanitarian sphere. They have responded to an appeal to which they are determined to remain true.

On learning of the high distinction they were about to receive, some wrote to the ICRC. Here is an extract from a letter received from Miss Semmelmann, a Norwegian nurse, about the active solidarity that surrounds the daily and sometimes thankless task of relieving physical and moral suffering:

*No task can be fulfilled by one person only. If I have accomplished anything in nursing it is in co-operation and by the help of colleagues and other persons. I have loved my work and I have never felt it as a sacrifice or a burden, but as a privilege.*

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We are publishing an account of the ceremonies for the presentation of the Florence Nightingale Medal. It is not complete because some countries have not yet sent in reports. These we may publish as and when we receive them.

## CZECHOSLOVAKIA

At a meeting of the Presidency of the Czechoslovak Red Cross held in Prague on 1 July 1971, *Mrs. Marie Hájková* received the medal and the diploma from Dr. F. Valíček, President of the National Society.<sup>1</sup> The ceremony was attended by other officials of the Czechoslovak Red Cross including Dr. M. Brož, Secretary-General.

Mrs. Hájková was intensely active during the Second World War, in refuge camps and helping the families of deportees or internees with food and clothing. She was arrested and interned at Theresienstadt, where she tended and encouraged her co-detainees. She returned to Prague seriously ill, but was still able to summon up strength to bring relief to the insurrection victims, to save children's lives during air raids and to transport, in the midst of the fighting, wounded persons whom she nursed back to life. At the end of the war, she participated in receiving French deportees from the Oranienburg camp and was put in charge of an important service in a rural hospital.

## GREAT BRITAIN

*Miss Gwyneth Ceris Jones* was presented with the medal by the Duke of Edinburgh, Chairman of the Council of the British Red Cross, at the General Assembly of that National Society, in London.<sup>1</sup>

Her activities were both practical and theoretical. In 1939, she was mobilized and assigned to the British Expeditionary Force in France. Later she was successively appointed Matron of Westminster Hospital and London Hospital. She was also Chief Nursing Officer of the British Red Cross, responsible for advising and assisting the Society in all nursing matters, the publication of textbooks on nursing, and the introduction of new teaching methods.

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<sup>1</sup> *Plate.*

## GREECE

In the festival hall at Hellenic Red Cross headquarters, *Mrs. Aristeia Papadatou* and *Mrs. Olinga Fikiori* received the medal from Mr. C. Georgacopoulos, President of the Society.<sup>1</sup> The ceremony was attended by the members of the Administrative Council of the Red Cross, benefactor members, relatives and a great many guests. The two nurses had fulfilled their task with the utmost devotion for almost fifty years, in time of war as in time of peace.

## REPUBLIC OF KOREA

*Mrs. Oak Soon Hong* and *Miss Shin Young Hong* were presented with the medal at the celebration of the twenty-second anniversary of the National Red Cross Society, on 27 October 1971.<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Park Chung Hee, First Lady, pinned the medal on their uniforms in the presence of thousands. The ceremony was attended by the authorities, foreign diplomats and representatives of various social organizations. Gifts and flowers were offered to the two nurses, who had particularly distinguished themselves—one of them during and following the 1950 war, and the other through her unflagging efforts to improve nursing.

## NORWAY

In the absence of the President of the Norwegian Red Cross, it was Mr. P. Røisland, Acting President, who presented the medal to *Miss Helga Dagsland* and *Miss Elsa Caroline Semmelmann*, at a ceremony held at Trondheim, on 16 June 1971, during the Convention of the Norwegian Nurses' Association.<sup>1</sup> The ceremony was attended by nurses from every part of the country, guests from abroad and representatives of the authorities. Mr. Røisland stressed the exceptional qualifications of the two nurses.

Miss Dagsland had worked in various army lazarets from 1940 to 1944, and had subsequently done a remarkable job in

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<sup>1</sup> *Plate.*

the Norwegian Nurses' Association and the Red Cross. Among other posts held, she had been Assistant Director of the School of Advanced Nursing Education. Miss Semmelmann had distinguished herself at Tromsö during the difficult post-war period. Her great achievement was the founding of a school for nurses at Hammerfest. Like Florence Nightingale when she founded the first school in London, she had to struggle before she was able to carry out her plan, but she achieved her purpose through tenacity and wisdom. The school was inaugurated in 1964, and Miss Semmelmann carried out many different tasks there for some time after.

## PHILIPPINES

The formal presentation of the medal to *Miss Teodorica A. Rabina* and *Miss Annie Sand* took place on 5 December 1971 at the Plaza, Makati, Rizal, on the occasion of the National Assembly of the Philippine National Red Cross. Dr. Manuel Lim, Chairman of the Society's International Affairs Committee, pinned the medal on them in the presence of Mr. Paul Calderara, ICRC honorary delegate.<sup>1</sup>

Miss Rabina started as a nurse in rural areas and organized a great many relief operations when there were floods, typhoons or volcanic eruptions. During the Second World War, she nursed wounded soldiers and civilians, often at the risk of her life. She was assigned to the evacuation of the Cavite and Bataan population, in 1940, and later sent to the front, at the time of the Japanese landing at Iba. At the end of the war, she founded and organized sections of the Nurses' Association in several provinces.

Miss Sand's nursing career began in 1928. At Cebu she was Chief Nurse at the Southern Islands Hospital and at the same time Principal of its School of Nursing. She was subsequently appointed Chief Nurse at a Manila hospital for communicable diseases then being used for sick and wounded prisoners. It was a time of constant bombing, when there was hardly any water or electricity. Under heavy gunfire, she used to crawl to the wounded

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<sup>1</sup> *Plate.*

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE MEDAL



TWENTY-THIRD AWARD



**SOUTH AFRICA :**

**Miss Doreen Henrietta Radloff**

**KOREA (REPUBLIC) :**  
**Mrs. Oak Soon Hong and**  
**Miss Shin Young Hong**



**GREAT BRITAIN :**

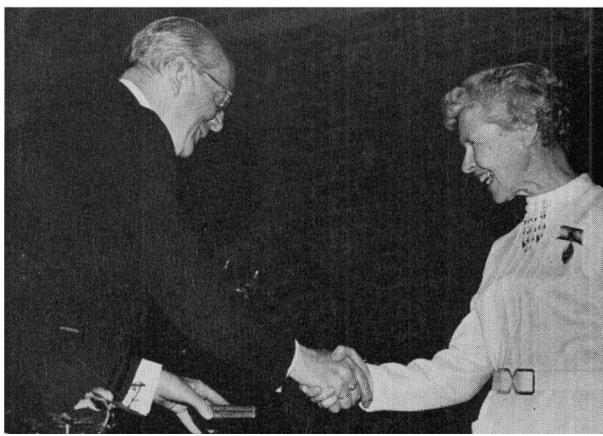
**Miss Gwyneth Ceris Jones**

GREECE:  
M<sup>me</sup> Olinga Fikiori...



... and M<sup>me</sup> Aristeia Papadatou

NORWAY:  
Miss Helga Dagsland





NORWAY :

Miss Elsa Caroline Semmelmann

PHILIPPINES :  
Miss Annie Sand...



... and Miss Teodorica A. Rabina

CZECHOSLOVAKIA :

M<sup>me</sup> Marie Hájková



U.S.S.R. :

M<sup>me</sup> Maria  
Zakharovna Chtcherbatchenko...

... and M<sup>me</sup> Zinaida Ivanovna Smirnova





U.S.S.R. :

M<sup>me</sup> Matliuba Ichankhojaeva

YUGOSLAVIA :

Mrs. Razija Ajanovic thanks the ICRC, on behalf of the medallists and of the families of the four nurses who gave their lives on active service.



and give them comfort and reassurance. During the fighting in Manila, emergency care was given to friend and enemy alike. After the war, Miss Sand was designated to organize the nursing services of the National Orthopedic Hospital. Finally she was appointed Nursing Consultant of the Department of Health.

## SOUTH AFRICA

The medal was presented to *Miss Doreen Henrietta Radloff*, of the South African Nursing Association, by Mr. J. J. Fouche, President of the Republic, at an official ceremony held in Pretoria on 16 November 1971.<sup>1</sup>

From 1941 to 1946, Miss Radloff worked in military hospitals in South Africa, Egypt and Italy, nursing wounded soldiers of both allied and axis forces. As Organizing Secretary of the South African Nursing Association for twenty-five years, she has played an outstanding part in the development of nursing care in South Africa and in neighbouring countries.

## USSR

The medal was presented to *Mrs. Maria Zakharovna Chtcherbatchenko* at a formal ceremony held in Kiev, on 25 September 1971, at which Mr. Ossolski congratulated her on behalf of the delegates of all the Republics participating in a Red Cross seminar.<sup>1</sup> She was awarded the distinction for bravery in the Second World War, when she tended the wounded and the sick at the risk of her own life. In the bitter fighting which took place in 1943, she managed to save more than a hundred wounded soldiers. She is now working in the ex-servicemen's section and is a member of the Kiev Committee of the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

*Mrs. Zinaida Ivanovna Smirnova* was presented with the medal on 20 September 1971, in the Togliatti House of Culture, by Mrs. Khlopova, Vice-President of the Red Cross in that town.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Plate.*

At the outbreak of war, Mrs. Smirnova volunteered as a nurse for the wounded and the sick. She was on several fronts, and a great many soldiers owe their lives to her. At Belgarode, under enemy fire, she saved more than sixty whom she herself dragged off the field. She was wounded six times and each time returned to her task as soon as she had recovered from her injuries.

*Mrs. Matliuba Ichankhojaeva* received the medal from Mr. Ibadov, President of the Uzbekistan Red Cross, in the Tashkent House of Culture on 25 February 1972.<sup>1</sup> For thirty-eight years she was a nurse in one of Tashkent's paediatric polyclinics, gave devoted care to thousands of children, and trained other nurses in child care. At the time of the Tashkent earthquake, she spared no effort in nursing the victims who were sheltered in camps, and in organizing epidemic control.

## YUGOSLAVIA

The formal ceremony for the presentation of the Florence Nightingale Medal took place in Belgrade, on 24 December 1971, in the presence of members of the Yugoslav Red Cross Committee, representatives of the Health Service and Army Health Services, nursing associations, and a number of nurses who had previously been awarded the medal. Dr. D. Mesterović, President of the National Society, delivered an address in which he dwelt on the significance of the distinction and paid tribute to those whose exemplary merit had caused them to be distinguished by the ICRC. He particularly evoked the memory of the four nurses who had died and whose relatives were present. The ceremony was an occasion for pride and for sadness, and it ended with an address by one of the recipients, Mrs. Ajanović, who thanked the ICRC and sent out a message of peace to nurses throughout the world.<sup>1</sup>

Here is a record of the services of the four nurses who are no longer living:

† *Miss Dobrila Petronijević* distinguished herself through her activity as a nurse with the resistance forces. As there was a great

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<sup>1</sup> *Plate.*

shortage of nurses, she ran rapid courses for nursing aides. During the evacuation of the wounded, she was caught in the enemy advance and detained. She was tortured. She took poison in order not to reveal the names of the wounded and died rather than betray those she had nursed.

† *Miss Darinka Nestorović* interrupted her medical studies, early in the war, to join the partisans as a voluntary nurse. She was always in the front-line, tending and comforting the wounded. As there was no doctor, she herself treated soldiers and civilians. In a mountain attack, the wounded were carried into underground caves, and there she remained with them for twelve days and twelve nights, while the enemy were searching for them. To avoid capture, she preferred to die among the wounded for whom she had cared.

† *Mrs. Jovena Ivanka Karadžozova* supplied the partisans with medicaments and materials from the very start of the hostilities. Her professional qualities and her resolute character were well known in the army hospital installed in a mountain area, where she devotedly nursed the wounded and the sick. As there was no doctor, she frequently carried out minor operations herself. Later she organized the training of nurses. But the medal is a tribute to her bravery.

† *Miss Miliesa Stanojlović* joined the partisans at the age of eighteen. Day and night she tended the wounded. As the enemy advanced, the hospital of which she was in charge was constantly being transferred from one place to another. She showed great organizational skill and managed to find food and medicaments for the people for whom she was responsible and whom she never left. But one day she fell into enemy hands. She saved the lives of "her" wounded, but died as the victim of self-sacrifice.

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During the Second World War, *Mrs. Razija Ajanović* devoted herself to war orphans and supplied the partisans with medicaments and medical materials. Since that time, she has been very successful

in the Red Cross school in training nurses who specialize in child care. All the trainees are war orphans.

*Miss Slavijanka Vlahčeva* also supplied the partisans with medicaments and medical materials. She tended the wounded and was herself wounded. When peace came, she devoted herself to tubercular cases, instituted a home nursing service, and organized vaccination and health education for families. After holding the post of director of a nursing school, she was appointed Head of the Department of Medical Education in the Ministry of Health, and had the task of organizing a network of schools for nurses throughout the country. Later she established TB hospitals in several towns.

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