

L'Hôpital auxiliaire 137.

725A/2/1/72

Hotel Claridge.

WOMEN'S HOSPITAL CORPS.



UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE
CROIX ROUGE DE FRANCE.

Oct 9. 14.

UNION DES FEMMES DE FRANCE.

Dearest Mother

Altogether have meant to write to you but there have been incessant interruptions although we have not had a busy day.

Roger Gibb came in today, as he wishes to help with our work here. He is returning to London tomorrow morning & will take this letter. We have several untrained helpers already & we felt it would not be so awkward to accept matters from another as it would be so awkward if he came over & then had not enough regular work to fill his time. We have been joined by Mr. & Miss Ellis who have brought a motor ambulance with them & a motor lorry for the exclusive use of our hospital. We hope to get special permits from the English Ambassadors, the French authorities which will enable the ambulance to pass in & out of Paris. This is a beautiful motor with springs from which the stretchers are hung. The Ellis brothers & sisters are bringing & maintaining both cars themselves & are looking out for us rather over crowded quarters. They are quite young but seem sensible & nice. I think when they learn their way about they will help our work very much.

WOMEN'S HOSPITAL CORPS

CRUX ROUGE DE FRANCE

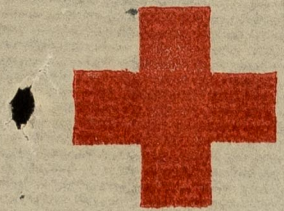
UNION DES FEMMES DE FRANCE



The arrival of the ambulances & the fitting in of the stretchers
caused a crowd of several hundred people to collect opposite
our door. We usually have a crowd there but at moments of
particular excitement it doubles or triples itself in no time.
The funerals take place early in the morning. They are rather
specially touching. There is always the military picket, sometimes
also a police picket. The men walk on either side of the hearse
with their guns reversed. Then we come behind two or three
or more men - unless relatives happen to be able to come.
On the way to the church everyone in the street salutes or
cries - & women come out & put flowers on the coffin -
If the ceremony is Catholic, it is very interesting. The service is very
interesting - a beadle with a heavy silver knobbed stick
walks in front of the coffin thumping on the floor. After mass
a vessel with Eau Benite is handed to us with which we have
to sprinkle the coffin. It takes one straight back to the
middle ages. In the service this morning there was little
humanity & nothing but ceremonial but of course this
varies with the officiating priest. A dear little abbe' came
here one day to see one of our poor Frenchmen & he just
stood at the end of his bed & raised his hands to bless him
& said "Oh Mon Brave" "Mon Brave" in a voice that made
us cry. After the service today an old woman came
to us & said "Le mort est un Anglais. We told her
no: that he was a Frenchman - a brave Frenchman

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WOMEN'S HOSPITAL CORPS.



UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE
CROIX ROUGE DE FRANCE.

UNION DES FEMMES DE FRANCE.

+ then she took our hands, & kissed them saying
"Un Français qui vous ayez soigné - merci mesdames
merci - merci."

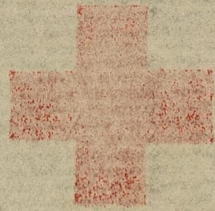
These poor wounded French men, mutilated, broken, children
tortured by the fear of the German invasions, & horror
stricken (wound more than our own men) by what
they have gone through. They have no power left well

We try to help them so very hard but I don't feel we
have succeeded yet - but we have had some desperate
cases - fractured skulls - gangrenous limbs - etc etc etc
I cannot bear them dying away from their own people
& I feel we are able to help them less than we help
our own Scotch & English who understand us &
to whose friends we can write so much more readily.

One of our doctors was told his night nurse spoke French
fluently & being diffident herself asked the nurse to
question a newly arrived French patient. The nurse
plunged at once into "Où avez vous le pain" which
was it a great success.

WOMEN'S HOSPITAL CORPS

UNION DES INFERMIERES DE FRANCE



UNION DES INFERMIERES DE FRANCE

We think it is ^{an} important sign of confidence that the French Government should be returning to Paris. As soon as the President comes back - & has a little time to spare - Madame Perouse is determined to bring him here to inspect our Hospital. A ward has been called after him Salle "Poincarre" & she thinks he will be much gratified. Let us hope he will.

It is quite a new experience the so popular. We are inundated with visitors: distinguished military & lay. The Duchess of Westminster has sent 6 other doctors & many of her nurses to see over our hospital & the French Red Cross is continually taking people round. It is one person's duty to deal with visitors.

This is rather a dull letter. I am apologetic but all the time interruptions have gone on - & I was up most of last night so that I am sleepy -

I am so glad to hear that Colin is happy & "unafraid" that sounds alright -
Very much love to all my dear ones
Always
Lga,

Write please for Alan & Ivy & send my news.