

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE  
GENDERED ATTITUDES AND  
PRACTICES FROM WITHIN THE  
MILITARY TOWARDS THE ANZAC  
NURSES OF WORLD WAR ONE.**


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## **STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY**

The thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the School of Humanities and Social Science Thesis Library being made available for loan and photocopying subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

AAMC	Australian Army Medical Corps
AANS	Australian Army Nursing Service
AGH	Australian General Hospital
AIF	Australian Imperial Force
ANZAC	Australian and New Zealand Army Corps
AWM	Australian War Memorial
CCS	Casualty clearing station
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NZANS	New Zealand Army Nursing Service
NZMC	New Zealand Medical Council
NZMCNR	New Zealand Medical Corps Nursing Reserve
NZTNA	New Zealand Trained Nurses' Association
QAIMNS	Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve
RSL	Returned & Services League of Australia Limited
UNA	Journal of the Royal Victorian Branch of the Australian Nursing Federation.

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## **ABSTRACT**

During World War One, nurses from Australia and New Zealand volunteered their services in Britain and Europe. As women, they were met with resistance as their presence was not considered appropriate because war was a man's domain. Consequently, the Australian and New Zealand nurses were subjected to discriminatory rules and regulations imposed by a gendered hierarchical order within the military establishments of their respective countries. This thesis will examine those gendered practices and attitudes from within the nursing services of Australia and New Zealand. This comparative study will establish any similarities or differences between the two countries, an area of research that has not been fully explored.

## INTRODUCTION

When World War One was declared in 1914, Australian and New Zealand nurses volunteered their services in response to the war effort. The formation of the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS) in 1902 and the New Zealand Army Nursing Service (NZANS) in 1915 provided the opportunity for qualified nurses to serve overseas during World War One. Approximately 2,286 nurses served with the AANS in England, India, Egypt, Europe, and on transport ships.<sup>1</sup> Over the course of the war, 626 New Zealand nurses are known to have served in general hospitals, casualty clearing stations (CCSs), and on transport ships throughout England, Egypt, and Europe.<sup>2</sup>

Rose Gertrude Fanning (Figure 1), my Great Aunt, was one of those nurses who enlisted with the NZANS during the war. Rose departed on 8 April 1915 for Cairo, Egypt as one of the first fifty nurses to leave New Zealand. She was stationed in Egypt until 1916 and was mentioned in dispatches for her noteworthy actions and services. Rose was then transferred to Brockenhurst in 1916 and was later promoted to Sub-Matron. In October 1917 and August 1919, Rose was brought to the notice of the British Secretary of State for War for valuable services, and in June 1918, was awarded the Associate Royal Red Cross 2<sup>nd</sup> Class medal.<sup>3</sup> Rose remained on active duty abroad until she was appointed Matron of the Pukeora Military Sanatorium, New Zealand, in 1920.<sup>4</sup> Rose Fanning was among the many other nurses who, as

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<sup>1</sup> Kirsty Harris, *More than Bombs and Bandages: Australian Army Nurses at Work in World War 1* (Newport: Big Sky Publishing Pty. Ltd., 2011), 2-3.

<sup>2</sup> Sherayl McNabb, *100 Years New Zealand Military Nursing: New Zealand Army Service – Royal New Zealand Nursing Corps 1915-2015* (Hawkes Bay: Sherayl McNabb, 2015), 374.

<sup>3</sup> New Zealand Military Nursing, “Honours & Awards by Awards – World War One”, <https://www.nzans.org/Honours/WW1%20Awards%20by%20Award.html#S> (accessed 15 June 2021).

<sup>4</sup> Rose Gertrude Fanning, *Military Personnel Files*, Archives New Zealand, [https://ndhadeliver.natlib.govt.nz/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps\\_pid=IE11341031](https://ndhadeliver.natlib.govt.nz/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE11341031) (accessed 14 June 2021).



women, were inhibited by the patriarchal system within the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) military establishment of World War One.<sup>5</sup>



**FIGURE 1: Rose Gertrude Fanning  
Private Photo.**

Historical literature surrounding World War One has largely prioritised the soldiers' experience in war.<sup>6</sup> Very little attention has been directed towards the nurses' experiences of the gender-based rules and regulations of the military, despite increasing scholarly interest in gender studies. War was considered a male domain and the nurse's involvement challenged the perceived roles of women during the years preceding World War One. Scholarly sources

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<sup>5</sup> The term 'ANZAC nurses' will be used throughout this thesis when referring to the collective AANS and NZANS.

<sup>6</sup> Joan Beaumont, *Broken Nation: Australians in the Great War* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2013), John Crawford and Ian McGibbon, eds., *New Zealand's Great War: New Zealand, the Allies and the First World War* (Auckland: Exisle Publishing Ltd., 2007), Patrick Lindsay, *The Spirit of Gallipoli: The Birth of the Anzac Legend* (Melbourne: Hardie Grant Books, 2006), Alistair Thomson, *Anzac Memories: Living with the Legend* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1995).

that discuss the role of women during the early twentieth century will assist in determining the gendered attitudes and practices towards the ANZAC nurses. For example, in *Damned Whores and God's Police: The Colonisation of Women in Australia* (2016), Anne Summers discusses how women's perceived function was to produce children and encourage those around them into civic obedience.<sup>7</sup> Joy Damousi describes how women were the embodiment of the traditional ideals of females as self-sacrificing and devoted mothers. She further adds how war reinforced and strengthened those perceived roles within the social order of females as nurturers and males as warriors.<sup>8</sup> Melanie Nolan examines traditional gender roles for women in New Zealand during World War One. She proposes that the war did not liberate women as men were the breadwinners, and married women were classed as dependents.<sup>9</sup> It was because of those contemporary gendered perceptions, Rose Fanning, and all the nurses who enlisted in World War One were subjected to discriminatory attitudes and practices within the military.

The inclusion of women in war influenced how the ANZAC nurses were treated. The presence of women in war saw the gendered attitudes in society being extended to the nurses, but in a military setting war was considered a man's domain. A range of scholarship has recently addressed the gendered practices and attitudes within the Australian and New Zealand military medical establishments. In *Expertise, Authority and Control: The Australian Army Medical Corps in the First World War* (2020), Alexia Moncrieff argues that the nurses'

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<sup>7</sup> Anne Summers, *Damned Whores and God's Police: The Colonisation of Women in Australia* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2016), 528.

<sup>8</sup> Joy Damousi, "Marching to Different Drums: Women's Mobilisations 1914-1939," in *Gender Relations in Australia: Domination and Negotiation*, eds. Kay Saunders and Raymond Evans (Sydney: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1992), 351, 356-57.

<sup>9</sup> Melanie Nolan, "'Keeping New Zealand Home Fires Burning': Gender, Welfare and the First World War," in *New Zealand's Great War: New Zealand, the Allies and the First World War*, eds. John Crawford and Ian McGibbon (Auckland: Exisle Publishing Ltd., 2007), 500.

experiences were shaped by the gendered order of command.<sup>10</sup> Katie Holmes suggests that the relationship dynamic within those areas between the nurse and the patient was perceived as a significant hindrance to the conventional order of gender interactions in terms of authority.<sup>11</sup> Jayne Krisjanous and Christine Hallett's article, "New Zealand's ANZAC Nurses: Marketizing the Great War for a 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Fit" (2022) explores the gendered representation of the nurses in the Anzac legacy in New Zealand.<sup>12</sup> While Janet Butler's article "Journey Into War: A Women's Diary" (2006) discusses how the nurses were perceived as a threat to the discipline and order, therefore fraternisation with the men onboard the transport ships were prohibited.<sup>13</sup> Edna Pengelly, of the NZANS, speaks on this subject in her memoir, *Nursing in Peace and War* (1956), where she expresses her disapproval of those gendered restrictions.<sup>14</sup>

There is a vast assortment of historical scholarship on the experiences of nurses during the war, from their departure to their repatriation back to Australia.<sup>15</sup> Jan Bassett, Kirsty Harris and Ruth Rae are major Australian contributors to the literature on the experiences of the World War One nurses.<sup>16</sup> Jaclyn Hopkins contributes to the scholarship on the

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<sup>10</sup> Alexia Moncrieff, *Expertise, Authority and Control: The Australian Army Medical Corps in the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 8, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.newcastle.edu.au/10.1017/9781108784382> (accessed 10 October 2021).

<sup>11</sup> Katie Holmes, "Day Mothers and Night Sisters: World War 1 Nurses and Sexuality," in *Gender and War: Australians at War in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Joy Damousi and Marilyn Lake (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

<sup>12</sup> Jayne Krisjanous and Christine Hallett, "New Zealand's ANZAC Nurses: Marketizing the Great War for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Fit," *Journal of Historical Research in Nursing* 14, no.1 (2022).

<sup>13</sup> Janet Butler, "Journey into War: A Women's Diary." *Australian Historical Studies* 127 (2006).

<sup>14</sup> Edna, Pengelly RRC., *Nursing in Peace and War* (Wellington: Wingfield Press, 1956).

<sup>15</sup> Janet Butler, *Kitty's War: The Remarkable Wartime Experiences of Kit McNaughton* (St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 2013), Rupert Goodman, *Our War Nurses: The History of the Royal Army Nursing Corps 1902-1988* (Brisbane: Boolarong Publications, 1988), Ruth Rae, "Soldiers of the Anzac Mounted Division and Nurses of the 14<sup>th</sup> Australian General Hospital – Desert Correspondences in WW1," *Australian Defence Force Journal* 147 (2001).

<sup>16</sup> Jan Bassett, *Guns and Brooches: Australian Army Nursing Service from the Boer War to the Gulf War* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1992), Kirsty Harris, "All for the Boys: The Nurse-Patient Relationships of Australian Army Nurses in World War 1," in *First World War Nursing – New Perspectives*, eds. Alison S. Fell and Christine E. Hallett (New York: Routledge, 2013), Harris, *Bombs and Bandages*, Kirsty Harris, "New Horizons: Australian Nurses at Work in World War 1," *Endeavour* 38, no.2 (2014), Ruth Rae, *Scarlet Poppies: The Army Experience of Australian Nurses during the First World War* (Canberra: The Australian College of

correspondence of Australian nurses through their letters.<sup>17</sup> Sherayl McNabb's comprehensive book on the military nurses of New Zealand, and Sherayl Kendall and David Corbett's book, *New Zealand Military Nursing: A History of the R.N.Z.N.C. Boer War to Present Day* (1990) were used to describe the history and experiences of the nurses of the NZANS.<sup>18</sup> *While You're Away: New Zealand Nurses at War 1899-1948* (2003) by Anna Rodgers gives a generalised overview of the members of the NZANS.<sup>19</sup> Two published memoirs by New Zealand nurses were also consulted, Hester Maclean who was the Matron-in-Chief of the NZANS provides a first-hand account of her intent to gain recognition for the New Zealand nurses and Edna Pengelly's memoir provides a narrative of her experiences as a wartime nurse.<sup>20</sup> In addition, extracts from two Australian nurses' diaries and one New Zealand nurse's diary were quoted from three secondary sources.<sup>21</sup>

Despite the increasing number of studies that have focussed on gender, comparisons of gender discrimination between World War One ANZAC nurses from different nations have been overlooked. This thesis aims to identify the discriminatory gendered attitudes and practices towards the ANZAC nurses of World War One and to formulate a comparative study of Australia and New Zealand. To locate the gendered attitudes and practices within

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Nursing, 2015), Ruth Rae, *Veiled Lives: Threading Australian Nursing History into the Fabric of the First World War* (Canberra: The Australian College of Nursing, 2015).

<sup>17</sup> Jaelyn Hopkins, "My dearest Girls': Letters from Australian Army Nurses," in *Beyond Combat: Australian Military Activity Away from the Battlefield*, eds. Tristan Moss and Tom Richardson (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2018).

<sup>18</sup> Sherayl Kendall and David Corbett, *New Zealand Military Nursing: A History of the R.N.Z.N.C. Boer War to Present Day* (Auckland: Sherayl Kendall & David Corbett, 1990).

<sup>19</sup> Anna Rogers, *While You're Away: New Zealand Nurses at War 1899-1948* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003).

<sup>20</sup> Hester Maclean, *Nursing in New Zealand: History and Reminiscences* (Wellington: Tolan Publishing Company, 1932), Pengelly, *Nursing in Peace*.

<sup>21</sup> Butler, *Kitty's War*, Hannah Clark, "Sisters in a Distant Land: The Exploration of Identity and Travel Through Three New Zealand Nurses' Diaries from the Great War," *Women's Studies Journal* 30, no. 1 (2016), Olive Haynes, *We Are Here, Too: Diaries & Letters of Sister Olive L. C. Haynes, No. 2 AGH, November 1914 to February 1918*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., edited Margaret O. Young (Adelaide: Australian Down Syndrome Association, 1993).

each military service, research was conducted based on primary and secondary sources. Secondary sources were consulted to provide an account to contextualise the nurses' experiences during World War One. This study uses a range of primary sources obtained from the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, the National Archives of Australia, and the New South Wales State Library. Such items include nurses' narratives and personal correspondence to determine the gendered attitudes and practices experienced by the Australian and New Zealand nurses. One published memoir was obtained through a public library, while extracts from three memoirs were quoted through edited collections and secondary sources. New Zealand nurses' diaries, manuscripts, and official reports were accessed through online repositories of The Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand, Archives New Zealand, the Auckland Museum and the National Army Museum of New Zealand. The New Zealand online repository, Papers Past, was a source for the New Zealand Nursing Journals, *Kai Tiaki*, used to quote from war-related nursing articles. There are limitations when consulting nurses' letters and diaries as the sources may not be a true representation of their experiences. The nurses were cautious in presenting themselves as not being virtuous, an argument expressed by Janet Butler.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, those issues do not reduce the importance of the sources used in understanding nurses' experiences during the war.

This comparative study contains four chapters beginning with the nurses' recruitment and concluding with their repatriation back to Australia and New Zealand. Chapter One will explore the recruitment of nurses, their motivations for going to war, and gender in the context of war. Chapter Two will highlight further gender barriers within the medical hierarchy. This discussion will include the preference for male orderlies and enforced

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<sup>22</sup> Janet Butler, "Nursing Gallipoli: Identity and the Challenge of Experience," *Journal of Australian Studies* 27, no. 78 (2003): 53.

military rules and regulations within the CCSs. Chapter Three will explore the interactions between the nurses, soldiers, and medical personnel with the perception that the nurses' presence was a threat to discipline and order. Chapter Four will argue how the role of the nurses was secondary to that of the returned soldiers during the post-war period. It will focus on the lack of recognition of the returned nurses to the ongoing issue of financial discrimination, limited government assistance, and re-employment difficulties.

By drawing on scholarly and primary sources, this thesis will determine how and why the adversities faced by the ANZAC nurses were indicative of the conservative gendered attitudes of the early twentieth century. Furthermore, the study will compare similarities and differences experienced by the World War One nurses of Australia and New Zealand, an area of research that has not yet been fully developed. It will therefore contribute to knowledge in gender studies of World War One.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **BEFORE THE WAR**

The role of the World War One nurses was considered secondary to that of the men who enlisted. War was a male domain and did not include the involvement of women, particularly near the frontline. Rules and regulations had various degrees of discrimination based on the nurses' gender. This was demonstrated when the ANZAC nurses volunteered their services at the onset of World War One. Chapter One discusses the process of departure for the battlefield for the ANZAC nurses, and their motives for enlisting. It will also examine how gender influenced the experiences of the nurses before their departure and the administrative, and military opposition, they encountered.

### **NURSING TRAINING PRIOR TO WAR**

Nursing training at the beginning of the twentieth century was constrained by a gender-based hierarchy which meant that few nurses challenged the authority of doctors. It is reasonable to assume that the nurses experienced the same disparities when they enlisted. In New Zealand, doctors communicated knowledge to nurses and this relationship encouraged nurse dependency on medical knowledge. Often male doctors were the educators of this knowledge, therefore male dominance was maintained.<sup>23</sup>

A gender-based social order also existed within the Australian medical establishment at this time, demonstrated by a 1913 article that appeared in the nursing journal *Una*. This stated that nursing was predominately women's work, and its success would depend on the nurses

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<sup>23</sup> Jan A. Rodgers, "Nursing Education in New Zealand, 1883 to 1930: The Persistence of the Nightingale Ethos" (Master of Arts thesis, Massey University, New Zealand, 1985), 97.

being ‘pre-eminently womanly’.<sup>24</sup> Medical authorities accepted the role of military nursing on account of their maternal instincts of sympathy, courage, stamina, practicality, intelligence, and sense of humour. Furthermore, their most ‘primitive function of acquired domesticity’ was believed to be a quality that inspired women to undertake military nursing.<sup>25</sup> This confirmed that nurses were expected to demonstrate female qualities. Apart from nursing, there were very few prospects for women to undertake occupations or participate in activities that were considered gender appropriate. Therefore, women who wanted to work were expected to exist within this gendered order.

## **THE FORMATION OF THE NURSING SERVICES OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND**

Australian and New Zealand nurses served in the 1899-1902 South African War as individual nurses or part of an independent unit. However, World War One was the first time Australian and New Zealand nurses were involved in dedicated Army services, the AANS and the NZANS.<sup>26</sup> Members of the AANS and NZANS worked skilfully and heroically to care for the servicemen while upholding the values and expectations of their gender and profession. However, this was not recognised as the nurses, working within the environment of war, did not represent the preferred image assigned to women in World War One. Instead, the nurses challenged the contemporary view that women should be at home writing letters and making useful items to send to the soldiers.<sup>27</sup> But as the war progressed, the nurses were respected for their compassion and work.

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<sup>24</sup> *UNA: The Journal of the Victorian Trained Nurses’ Association XI*, no. 4 (30 April 1913): 37, quoted in Butler, *Kitty’s War*, 11.

<sup>25</sup> Arthur Graham Butler, “The Australian Army Nursing Service,” in *First World War Official Histories*, 1943, chapter XI, section III, p585-86. Digitalised from the Australian War Memorial, <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1416683> (accessed 1 September 2021).

<sup>26</sup> Peter Rees, *The Other ANZACs: The Extraordinary Story of Our World War I Nurses* (Crow’s Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2009), xii.

<sup>27</sup> Krisjanous and Hallett, “New Zealand’s ANZAC Nurses,” 37.



The AANS was established on 1 July 1902, and was essentially a reserve force, as stipulated in Section 9 of *General Order 123 of the Military Forces of the Commonwealth 1902*.<sup>28</sup> An Army Nursing Service Reserve was organised from those trained nurses who were qualified and willing to serve in stationary field hospitals, which are types of base hospitals for the evacuees when required during a national emergency.<sup>29</sup> The AANS formed part of the Australian Army Medical Corps (AAMC) and was responsible for supplying each military unit with two general hospitals, two stationary hospitals, and a clearing hospital.<sup>30</sup>

The New Zealand 1886 *Defence Act* was amended in 1906 and approved the formation of the New Zealand Medical Corps (NZMC). This was an exclusive male enterprise with no specification for nurses to serve New Zealand in times of war. It was not until 1908 that the Act was further amended to include the creation of the New Zealand Medical Corps Nursing Reserves (NZMCNR). The function of the Nursing Reserves was to provide nursing care to the wounded and sick New Zealand troops.<sup>31</sup>

Under the 1886 *Defence Act* of New Zealand, nurses wanting to serve their country in World War One were not permitted to enlist. Realising this limitation, on 31 December 1914 a nursing deputation including Hester Maclean, the Assistant Inspector General of Hospitals, lobbied the Minister of Defence for trained nurses to care for their own troops overseas.<sup>32</sup> This meeting was a significant development in the formation of the NZANS because, on 11 January 1915, the Minister of Defence presented a memo to the New Zealand Cabinet. This memo summarised the major proposals for the NZANS, and it was on this day that the NZANS was established.<sup>33</sup> Hester Maclean, who later was appointed

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<sup>28</sup> Bassett, *Guns and Brooches*, 26.

<sup>29</sup> Goodman, *Our War Nurses*, 11.

<sup>30</sup> Harris, *Bombs and Bandages*, 40.

<sup>31</sup> Rogers, *While You're Away*, 32.

<sup>32</sup> Kathy Stodart, "Army Nursing Service Goes to War," *Kai Tiaki Nursing New Zealand* 21, no. 3 (2015): 12.

<sup>33</sup> McNabb, *100 Years New Zealand Military Service*, 49-50.

Matron-in-Chief of the New Zealand Army, wrote in her autobiography that the nursing service would never have been formed if it was not for World War One.<sup>34</sup> Both the NZANS and the AANS worked closely with the ANZACs, but they were not considered part of the ANZAC force, a term that was restricted to male soldiers and male medical officers.<sup>35</sup>

## **THE MOTIVES OF THE ANZAC NURSES IN VOLUNTEERING FOR ACTIVE SERVICE**

War intensified and reinforced the definitions of gender and the associated expectations of males and females within the social order. Therefore, war became a test of manliness as men symbolised fighters and providers, while women were the embodiment of motherhood and child-bearers.<sup>36</sup> The nurses challenged those perceived gendered roles when they volunteered their professional services where the need arose.

The AANS and NZANS nurses volunteered their services during World War One for various reasons. Many nurses felt it was their patriotic duty to offer their professional services to the troops, their country, and the Empire.<sup>37</sup> This was the case with Mary Duff, a New Zealand nurse, who expressed her wish to do all she can for the ‘brave fellows who have to face so much danger and suffering’.<sup>38</sup> The desire to nurse the wounded and sick troops of their own countries was a dominant theme, as was the case during the debate over sending a contingent of New Zealand nurses overseas. Dr. Marshall Macdonald, the President of the Dunedin branch of the New Zealand Trained Nurses’ Association (NZTNA), expressed that the nurses had a very strong desire to be given the opportunity to

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<sup>34</sup> Maclean, *Nursing in New Zealand*, 85.

<sup>35</sup> Krisjanous and Hallett, “New Zealand’s ANZAC Nurses,” 39.

<sup>36</sup> Damousi, “Marching to Different Drums,” 351.

<sup>37</sup> Harris, *Bombs and Bandages*, 42.

<sup>38</sup> Rogers, *While You’re Away*, 45.

serve at the front and to nurse the New Zealand troops in Egypt.<sup>39</sup> Another contributing factor was the desire to be with brothers or sweethearts who enlisted in the expeditionary forces of Australia and New Zealand.<sup>40</sup> For example, the Australian Sister Elsie Cook followed her husband who had previously left for war. In her diary, she recalled how together they would ‘do their bit for the Empire’.<sup>41</sup>

For other nurses, participation in the war gave them the opportunity to travel and the chance to gain new personal experiences.<sup>42</sup> The Australian nurse, Sister Evelyn ‘Tevie’ Davies, wrote to her mother in March 1916 describing the possibility of travel to Luxor, Egypt. She commented that it will be ‘fiercely hot but I’ll get some good photos’.<sup>43</sup> Travel diaries were a customary gift and were given to the nurses when they departed for overseas. The diaries were a form of narration to highlight their travel experiences.<sup>44</sup> The New Zealand nurse, Mildred Salt, wrote in her diary on 17 August 1915, ‘I went by train to Cairo, it’s a wonderful place we call home’.<sup>45</sup> Diaries were also a means of expressing defiance and anger, and to challenge practices.<sup>46</sup> For example, the New Zealand nurse, Fanny Speedy, recalled on arriving in Alexandria how the heat was ‘like a furnace door opened in one’s face’.<sup>47</sup> Her entry can be accredited to the uniforms the nurses were required to wear, as the

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<sup>39</sup> Rogers, *While You’re Away*, 49.

<sup>40</sup> Bruce Scates and Raelene Frances, *Women and the Great War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 6.

<sup>41</sup> Elsie Cook, 19 September 1918, Diary of Elsie Cook, PR 82/135, Australian War Memorial, quoted in Scates and Frances, *Women and the Great War*, 6.

<sup>42</sup> Scates and Frances, *Women and the Great War*, 6.

<sup>43</sup> Evelyn Davies, 17 March 1916. Letters from Evelyn Davies to Her Family, 1915, 3DRL/3398(B), Australian War Memorial. Digitised Manuscript from the Australian War Memorial. <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P11012841> (accessed 31 July 2021).

<sup>44</sup> Butler, “Journey into War,” 205.

<sup>45</sup> Mildred Salt, 17 August 1915, Diary of Mildred Salt, MSX-8899\_125.TIF, Alexander Turnbull Library. Digitised Diary from the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, [https://ndhadeliver.natlib.govt.nz/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps\\_pid=IE16599586&dps\\_custom\\_att\\_1=emu](https://ndhadeliver.natlib.govt.nz/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE16599586&dps_custom_att_1=emu) (accessed 31 July 2021).

<sup>46</sup> Butler, *Kitty’s War*, 67.

<sup>47</sup> Fanny Helena Speedy, 16 June 1915, Diary of Fanny H. Speedy, MSX-8899, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, quoted in Hannah Clark, “Sisters in a Distant Land: The Exploration of Identity and Travel Through Three New Zealand Nurses’ Diaries from the Great War,” *Women’s Studies Journal* 30, no. 1 (2016): 23.

materials and designs were not suitable for the conditions.<sup>48</sup> Their uniforms were inadequate and inappropriate for winter. They were forced to use their uniforms as bandages and their boots did not withstand the harsh terrain.<sup>49</sup> They wore their uniforms off-duty with minor adjustments as if the nurses were always on duty because the Army considered private dress as overly sexualised.<sup>50</sup>

In enlisting for service overseas, many nurses were attempting to escape lives of social restrictions and long working hours with low salaries.<sup>51</sup> However, their service pay was often below their civilian salary before the war as their officer status was not recognised in comparison to their male counterparts.<sup>52</sup> The Australian 1907 Harvester Judgement was established to set a 'fair and reasonable' wage, otherwise known as the basic wage.

The basic wage needed to meet the social needs of the employees' families and was, therefore, considered as 'primary welfare'.<sup>53</sup> Although Australian women had the right to vote, their prospects for economic equality were limited regarding their ability to earn a reasonable income as a single person, or as the breadwinner.<sup>54</sup> Consequently, many nurses suffered financially in the post-war period which will be examined in Chapter Four.

New Zealand did not have an agreement comparable to the Harvester Judgement, however, the women faced similar inequalities, and this affected the wages of the nurses.

Conventional beliefs claimed that 'a woman's place was in the home' and this was used as a justification for not paying equal wages for occupations outside the home in comparison to

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<sup>48</sup> Clark, "Sisters in a Distant Land," 23.

<sup>49</sup> Bassett, *Guns and Brooches*, 48.

<sup>50</sup> Holmes, "Day Mothers," 52.

<sup>51</sup> Butler, "Journey into War," 206.

<sup>52</sup> Kirsty Harris, "Work, Work, Work: Australian Army Nurses after the First World War," in *When the Soldiers Return*: November 2007 Conference Proceedings, ed. Martin Crotty (Brisbane: University of Queensland, School of History, Philosophy, Religion and Classics, 2009), 184 <https://search.informit.org.ezproxy.newcastle.edu.au/doi/10.3316/informit.725598887294194> (accessed 31 July 2021).

<sup>53</sup> Adam Jamrozik, "From Harvester to De-Regulation Wage Earners in the Australian Welfare State," *Australian Journal of Social Issues* 29, no. 2 (1994): 162.

<sup>54</sup> Di McDonald, "Nation, Race and Citizen: Australia as a Social Laboratory," *Agora* 39, no. 4 (2004): 57.

the males.<sup>55</sup> The pay rate for nurses was based on the same rationale surrounding work for women. Any comparisons of the pay rates for nurses were made against other forms of employment for women, or between the levels of nursing staff. Pay rates between hospitals varied, as revealed in the New Zealand 1909 annual report published in the *Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives*. For example, a sister at Auckland Hospital earned more than a sister at Wellington Hospital. Job security was guaranteed if the nurses did not press for higher wages and carried out their work in a diligent manner.<sup>56</sup> This indicated that nurses should maintain attentiveness and were in no position to make unnecessary demands. Specifically, they were to remain subordinate if they wished to remain employed.

## **RECRUITMENT OF THE NURSES**

The recruitment process was not without its difficulties. In 1903, during its formative years, the AANS implemented several terms and conditions. Australian nurses had to be registered with the Australasian Trained Nurses' Association and be appropriately qualified nurses who had completed their training at a recognised training hospital.<sup>57</sup> Prospective nurses needed to be unmarried or widowed and must be of British heritage, or a naturalised British subject.<sup>58</sup> To be deemed competent for enlistment the nurses needed to be certified in first aid and attend three out of four lectures annually on the administration in military hospitals, military surgery, and hygiene.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Jan C. McLeod, "Activities of New Zealand Women During World War 1" (B. A. Hons. Thesis, University of Otago, 1978), 15.

<sup>56</sup> Jan A. Rodgers, "'A Paradox of Power and Marginality': New Zealand Nurses' Professional Campaign During War, 1900-1929" (Ph. D. diss. Massey University, New Zealand, 1994), 68-70.

<sup>57</sup> Rae, *Scarlet Poppies*, 32.

<sup>58</sup> Goodman, *Our War Nurses*, 15.

<sup>59</sup> Rae, *Scarlet Poppies*, 32.

The nurses who had been recruited during the very beginning had no prior military experience. Therefore, their medical experience and motivation for war service was necessary to manage the many aspects of military nursing.<sup>60</sup> More than three thousand nurses gained military and war experience while serving overseas, and while working in all theatres of war beside the male members of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF).<sup>61</sup> The Australian nurses recruited to serve overseas were expected to look after the Australian soldiers. However, most of these nurses were assigned to Australian and British hospitals and nursed Allied soldiers from varied backgrounds.<sup>62</sup> The nurses were recruited to work in various locations, including Europe, the Middle East, India, and England, as well as in transport and hospital ships in the Mediterranean.<sup>63</sup>

The New Zealand Government objected to its nurses serving their country as a full army division was not supplied. Therefore, it was not necessary under Army regulations to provide a fully equipped hospital. It was also argued that England had enough available nurses.<sup>64</sup> The NZTNA refused to accept this judgement and in December 1914, the government agreed to contact the British War Office with an accepted offer to send fifty nurses. The nurses were required to have completed three years of training in a general hospital and were to be given the rank of honorary officers.<sup>65</sup> The recruitment age was twenty-five to forty-five years of age for sisters, and twenty-four to forty years of age for the nurses. Potential recruits were expected to be both trained in New Zealand and native-born

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<sup>60</sup> Harris, *Bombs and Bandages*, 46.

<sup>61</sup> Harris, "New Horizons," 111.

<sup>62</sup> Harris, "New Horizons," 114.

<sup>63</sup> Victoria K. Haskins, "Australian Nurses and the 1918 Deolali Inquiry: Transcolonial Racial and Gendered Anxieties in a British Indian War Hospital," in *Australians and the First World War: Local-Global Connections and Contexts*, eds. Kate Ariotti and James E. Bennett (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 69.

<sup>64</sup> Rees, *The Other ANZACs*, 70-71.

<sup>65</sup> Rees, *The Other ANZACs*, 71.

New Zealanders.<sup>66</sup> Between November 1914 and March 1915, the first group of nurses departed from Australia and New Zealand.

The first twenty-five Australian nurses sailed with the First Expeditionary Force on 1 November 1914 from Albany.<sup>67</sup> Although the nurses' point of departure was from their homeland, on two occasions ANZAC nurses from both Australia and New Zealand departed together. On 25 March 1915, a cable was sent from the Australian Government asking for twelve New Zealand nurses who could be prepared to sail on 31 March 1915 for Melbourne.<sup>68</sup> The Australian Government outlined conditions for the nurses, which included an age limit of between twenty-five and thirty-five years. The nurses were expected to be unmarried, a regulation not included in the 1915 NZANS regulations, and needed to be qualified to the Australian Standard of medical and surgical nursing in a hospital of not less than one hundred beds. The nurses were also required to pass strict medical examinations.<sup>69</sup> The New Zealand nurses and their Australian colleagues left Sydney for Egypt on the *Kyarra* on 13 April 1915.<sup>70</sup> In July 1915, the Australian authorities called for volunteers to set up Infectious Hospitals in Egypt, and three New Zealand nurses were accepted and joined the AANS.<sup>71</sup> On 8 April 1915, the first fifty New Zealand nurses departed Wellington on board the *Rotorua* bound for Egypt, led by Hester Maclean as the founding Matron-in-Chief of the NZANS (Figure 2).<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Kendall and Corbett, *New Zealand Military Nursing*, 29.

<sup>67</sup> Goodman, *Our War Nurses*, 22.

<sup>68</sup> Kendall and Corbett, *New Zealand Military Nursing*, 23.

<sup>69</sup> McNabb, *100 Years New Zealand Military Service*, 53.

<sup>70</sup> Rogers, *While You're Away*, 55.

<sup>71</sup> Kendall and Corbett, *New Zealand Military Nursing*, 29.

<sup>72</sup> Rogers, *While You're Away*, 57.



**FIGURE 2: The First New Zealand Army Nursing Service (NZANS) Nurses to Leave New Zealand, on the Deck of the SS Rotorua, April 1915.**

**Reference: PAColl-0321-001**

**Alexander Turnbull Library, New Zealand**

## **OPPOSITION TO THE RECRUITMENT OF THE NURSES**

Although women were granted the right to vote in all Australian states by 1908, and in New Zealand in 1893, the war preserved the conventional gender stereotype of a woman as passive and at the mercy of men.<sup>73</sup> It was through these prejudices that nurses had to negotiate their intentions for active service. They had to convince the authorities, both non-military and military, their contributions would be valuable, that nursing is an acceptable profession for women, and that their travel will be within the confines of respectable

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<sup>73</sup> Carmel Shute, "Heroines and Heroes: Sexual Mythology in Australia 1914-18," in *Gender and War: Australians at War in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Joy Damousi and Marilyn Lake (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 23.



feminine conduct.<sup>74</sup> However, their argument was not entirely persuasive, and this was reflected in the opposition faced when the Australian and New Zealand nurses were recruited. The Australian Commanding Officer, Colonel Fiaschi, believed that women did not belong near the frontline.<sup>75</sup> His resentment drew the attention of Matron Grace Wilson, whose diary entry dated 17 August 1915 described the Colonel as ‘very hard,’ and detailed how he had said the ‘sisters were all too soft’ and expected almost half of them would not survive the war.<sup>76</sup>

The ANZAC nurses were subjected to similar discriminatory attitudes and practices before they departed for active service in an environment that favoured the contributions of men. This, however, did not disrupt their intentions of volunteering their services in the war effort. Further resistance from the senior medical staff of the military occurred after the ANZAC nurses arrived at their respective posts, who firmly believed that women did not belong close to the frontlines. The following chapter will examine these issues, together with the consequences of unfavourable living conditions and adverse rules and regulations.

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<sup>74</sup> Butler, *Kitty's War*, 11.

<sup>75</sup> Bassett, *Guns and Brooches*, 48.

<sup>76</sup> Grace Wilson, 17 August 1915, PR01870.pdf., Australian War Memorial. Digitalised on Demand Diary from the Australian War Memorial, <https://awm.gov.au> (accessed 6 August 2021).

## CHAPTER TWO

### DURING THE WAR

During World War One, approximately 2300 Australian nurses served with the AANS and approximately 550 New Zealand nurses served with the NZANS.<sup>77</sup> As women, they had hoped to leave behind a life that was governed by a gendered social order. However, this was not the case and, instead, they were met with resistance from within the military and medical officers who considered their presence as women in war to be inappropriate. This chapter focuses on why and how this gendered attitude impacted the lives of the nurses.

#### NURSES IN THE CONTEXT OF WAR

The Australian and New Zealand military nurses have a history of being ‘in but not of’ the military as they are nurses rather than military personnel.<sup>78</sup> The experiences of the ANZAC nurses were similar on account of them being recognised as officers and being subjected to military law. This was the case in the AANS because, under the *Army Act*, they were commissioned officers even though ‘a woman could not then in a legal sense be either an officer or a soldier’.<sup>79</sup> This reinforces the nurses’ position as non-combatants and were therefore outside the military system. Women had to adopt new roles that were previously reserved for men, but those new roles were of very little significance as male personnel still held authority over the women. Field hospitals were considered critical establishments in the treatment of wounded soldiers; however, they were exclusively managed by men. The nurses’

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<sup>77</sup> Kirsty Harris, “Rubbery Figures’: The Puzzle of the Number of AANS on Active Service in WW!,” *Sabretache* 49, no.1 (2008): 10, New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage, “New Zealand Army Nursing Service in the First World War”, <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/first-world-war-nurses> (accessed 29 July 2022).

<sup>78</sup> Bassett, *Guns and Brooches*, 2-3.

<sup>79</sup> Butler, “The Australian Army Nursing Service,” 545.

minor position as merely medical workers were reinforced by their gender, as their opinions on war service were seldom requested.<sup>80</sup>

Pre-war relations between doctors and nurses contributed to gendered perceptions of the nurses during World War One, as training textbooks directed that a nurse's duty was to obey the medical doctor.<sup>81</sup> An article in the July 1912 issue of *UNA, the Journal of the Victorian Trained Nurses Association*, reminded nurses to obey the doctors' instructions, to encourage the patient's trust in the doctor, and to never critique his treatment.<sup>82</sup> It was the ideal of being both a 'good woman' and a 'good nurse' that the nurses held during the war, together with the Victorian attitudes of feminine virtue and compliance.<sup>83</sup> Major General Neville Howse, the Australian Director-General of Medical Services, had the opinion that war was a 'man's affair', and women would be a 'liability, not an asset'.<sup>84</sup> Colonel Charles Ryan, the principal medical officer of the Commonwealth forces in Victoria, believed that the nurses would be more useful for Australia by making bandages and warm clothing for the men. Furthermore, he felt that women should remain within their own domain to the best of their skills and understanding.<sup>85</sup>

Casualty clearing stations were medical hospitals close to battlefronts where wounded soldiers were evaluated, and emergency first aid administered. Gendered attitudes were displayed when military and medical personnel debated as to whether the nurses should be attached to these facilities. While on the Greek island of Lemnos in 1915, the Australian Commanding Officer Colonel Thomas H Fiaschi claimed he would prefer to have a hospital with no

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<sup>80</sup> Anne Summers, *Angels and Citizens: British Women as Military Nurses 1854-1914* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1988), 98.

<sup>81</sup> Harris, *Bombs and Bandages*, 139.

<sup>82</sup> Butler, "Nursing Gallipoli," 55.

<sup>83</sup> Butler, "Nursing Gallipoli," 53.

<sup>84</sup> Kirsty Harris, "Giving the Dope: Australian Army Nurse Anaesthetists During World War 1," *Journal of Military and Veterans Health* 21, no.3 (2013): 49.

<sup>85</sup> Shute, *Heroines and Heroes*, 32-33.

sisters.<sup>86</sup> Sister Olive Haynes of No. 2 A.G.H. recalled, while stationed in Heliopolis in 1915, ‘this is a beastly place, and we are not wanted’.<sup>87</sup> This observation demonstrates the gendered attitudes of the military towards the ANZAC nurses. Captain John E. F. Deakin of the Australian Army Medical Corps, while stationed at the No. 2 Australian Stationary Hospital on Lemnos in 1915, was also of the opinion that women did not belong in frontline areas. Deakin’s opinion of the nurses did not improve. In an article in the January 1917 issue of *The Medical Journal of Australia*, Deakin believed that the orderlies were capable of performing the same medical duties as the nurses.<sup>88</sup> In 1916, Colonel George Barber, the Australian Deputy Director of Medical Services, and Colonel Wilfred Giblin, a military surgeon, ‘strongly opposed’ the presence of nurses because of their risk of injury or death.<sup>89</sup>

## **MILITARY RULES AND REGULATIONS**

The Australian and New Zealand nurses experienced similar issues regarding their rank, marital status, and wages. Military rules and regulations within the AANS and NZANS were a point of contention and the subject of confusion among the ANZAC nurses. This became obvious during the army’s unpredicted administrative attitude regarding the status of rank.<sup>90</sup> Nurses were not considered part of the army yet were given the status of officers upon enlistment, and were officially eligible for the same privileges and considerations as the men.<sup>91</sup> In November 1916, General Godley, the Commander of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, and the II Anzac Corps, wrote to James Allen, the Minister of Defence,

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<sup>86</sup> Bassett, *Guns and Brooches*, 50.

<sup>87</sup> Haynes, 13 March 1915, *We Are Here, Too*, 33.

<sup>88</sup> Butler, “Nursing Gallipoli,” 51.

<sup>89</sup> Bassett, *Guns and Brooches*, 60.

<sup>90</sup> Rae, *Scarlet Poppies*, 229.

<sup>91</sup> Goodman, *Our War Nurses*, 28.

making it clear that the nurses did have the status of officers.<sup>92</sup> However, this was not reflected in the treatment of the nurses during their time overseas.

When the first contingent of nurses of the NZANS left for active duty in 1915, the nurses were the first of many to experience a lack of respect in accordance with their rank. The nurses were assigned a small area of the ship for outdoor exercise as they were not permitted to walk the deck.<sup>93</sup> On hospital and transport ships, the doctors and nurses were of a similar social status, yet the nurses were allocated second-class accommodation.<sup>94</sup> Edna Pengelly, who served with the NZANS from 1915 to 1919, commented on the military's position concerning their status. On November 6, 1916, her diary entry read, 'Sisters have no status at all, clinical machines are what we are supposed to be – or ought to be – I suppose – to please them'.<sup>95</sup> These words indicate that the ANZAC nurses were not regarded as equals in a male-dominated environment.

Restrictions in age and marital status limited the number of nurses qualified to enlist for active duty. In accordance with the 1914 AIF Standing Orders, any member of the AANS who married would have their contract terminated.<sup>96</sup> AIF soldiers were not subject to the same scrutiny, as marital status was not a condition for enlistment as 20 per cent of men of the AIF were married.<sup>97</sup> AANS Elsie Cook was married when she enlisted, in October 1914, and the Australian and British matrons in Egypt were aware of Cook's marital status. Cook was not dismissed, however, in December 1915, she was notified by Nellie Gould, the Matron of No. 2 Australian General Hospital, that she would not be promoted.<sup>98</sup> Cook later recalled, 'Miss

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<sup>92</sup> McNabb, *100 Years New Zealand Military Nursing*, 74.

<sup>93</sup> McNabb, *100 Years New Zealand Military Nursing*, 71.

<sup>94</sup> Krisjanous and Hallett, "New Zealand's ANZAC Nurses," 32.

<sup>95</sup> Pengelly, *Nursing in Peace*, 65.

<sup>96</sup> Goodman, *Our War Nurses*, 30.

<sup>97</sup> Beaumont, *Broken Nation*, 755.

<sup>98</sup> Bassett, *Guns and Brooches*, 39.

Gould informed me I was not to be promoted because of my being married, very disappointed'.<sup>99</sup>

The wages of nurses, as female officers, differed from that of male officers. The Australian Matron-in-Chief's salary was less than that of a Major and the salaries for nurses during the war were less than the male rank-and-file soldiers.<sup>100</sup> Australian nurses were the most poorly paid in Lemnos, the site of four stationary hospitals for the Australian and New Zealand forces. This made it difficult for them to purchase additional food from the canteens and vendors.<sup>101</sup> The New Zealand nurses had been granted officer status, but their pay was lower than the male Non-Commissioned Officers. This was brought to the attention of Major Roderick Gunn, the Principal Medical Officer of the New Zealand Featherston Military Training Camp, who felt that the discrepancy in pay was unjustified.<sup>102</sup> This discrepancy did not improve post-war when nurses sought reemployment in civilian hospitals, which will be further discussed in Chapter Four.

## CONDITIONS WITHIN THE MILITARY HOSPITALS

AANS and NZANS nurses were assigned to military hospitals throughout Britain and Europe (see Figure 3). These nurses faced similar working and living conditions because of the gendered order of authority. For female nurses to operate efficiently as primary healthcare workers it would mean that they would require unlimited access, and command of the wards, and the men would be required to surrender some authority.<sup>103</sup> The chain of command within the medical establishment favoured those with medical qualifications, influenced by

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<sup>99</sup> Cook, 23 December 1915, quoted in Bassett, *Guns and Brooches*, 39.

<sup>100</sup> Bassett, *Guns and Brooches*, 55.

<sup>101</sup> Rees, *The Other ANZACS*, 107.

<sup>102</sup> McNabb, *100 Years New Zealand Military Nursing*, 92.

<sup>103</sup> Carol Adams, "Lads and Ladies, Contenders on the War-How Trained Nurses became Primary Caregivers to Soldiers during the Second-Anglo War," *Social History of Medicine* 31, no.3 (2018): 558.

conflicting masculine chains of command. The gendered order distinguished between competitive masculinity and the promotion of men before women. Therefore, these hierarchical structures could not be separated and were frequently interrelated.<sup>104</sup> Although nurses held the rank of officers, their authority only went as far as their medical knowledge as they could not implement power beyond nursing issues. It was only the medical men who controlled the delivery of medical treatment to the soldiers.<sup>105</sup>



**FIGURE 3: Arrival of the First Detachment of Australian Nurses on Lemnos, Greece, 1915[AW Savage, photo album, PXE 698, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales].**

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<sup>104</sup> Moncrieff, *Expertise, Authority and Control*, 8.

<sup>105</sup> Moncrieff, *Expertise, Authority and Control*, 9.

The ANZAC nurses experienced substandard living conditions while stationed at the military hospitals. The nurses' accommodation was unsatisfactory compared to that of the men, and the medical officers were accused of being remiss. In a letter to Lieutenant Colonel A. G Butler, Sister Young described the conditions in Lemnos in August 1915 'our medical officers were so neglectful, they are having their smoke and recreation tent up, while we did not even have a bath tent'.<sup>106</sup> When Australian Director General of Medical Services, General R. H. J. Fetherston, visited the facility in October 1915 he was appalled at the treatment of the nurses. He arranged for replacement tents and warmer clothing for the nurses, however, the changes occurred just before they left Lemnos.<sup>107</sup> General Richard H. J. Fetherston attempted to correct another injustice in 1918 while stationed in Egypt. Unlike the medical officers, the nurses were expected to pay for the breakages they incurred while on duty. He made the funds available and requested to government to rule on this matter. However, Major General Howse was less attentive in his concern for the AANS and this problem continued.<sup>108</sup> The women of the NZANS were also subjected to challenging conditions within the general hospitals. When they arrived in Egypt, they found nursing in tents and pavilions in the heat and the sand very difficult.<sup>109</sup>

Nurses of the AANS and NZANS were also stationed at auxiliary hospitals throughout England to rehabilitate sick and wounded soldiers before they returned to the battlefronts. Medical care was placed under the control of the doctors while the 'women's work' of nursing, housekeeping, and emotional support was allocated to the nurses.<sup>110</sup> The presence of women in military-domestic hospitals altered the relationship between the nurses and the

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<sup>106</sup> Louise E. Young, Sister, [Nurses Narratives], 19 July 1918, AWM41 1065, Australian War Memorial, Canberra, <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C2773343?image=1> (accessed 20 July 2021).

<sup>107</sup> Bassett, *Guns and Brooches*, 50.

<sup>108</sup> Michael B. Tyquin, *Neville Howse: Australia's First Victoria Cross Winner* (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1999), 123.

<sup>109</sup> Kendall and Corbett, *New Zealand Military Nursing*, 48.

<sup>110</sup> Moncrieff, *Expertise, Authority and Control*, 112.



patients. Unlike the medical facilities on the Western Front, the nurses were actively involved in daily activities at the auxiliary hospitals where they had more freedom to interact with the soldiers.<sup>111</sup> This type of interaction was considered suitable and was within the boundaries of the non-fraternisation rule, which will be further discussed in Chapter Three.

By mid-1916, a shortage of medical officers prompted a discussion surrounding the training of nurses as anaesthetists.<sup>112</sup> Although nurses were administering chloroform before World War One, particularly in remote areas and during home births, the continuation of this practice threatened the order of hierarchy within the medical establishment.<sup>113</sup> To counteract this problem, an article was published in the *British Medical Journal* in March 1914 arguing that only an experienced anaesthetist would be able to identify and rectify any complications that arose. Furthermore, if nurses were capable of administering anaesthetics they could undertake other tasks, and ‘the door will be opened to every kind of unqualified practice’.<sup>114</sup> Despite ongoing opposition, several ANZAC theatre sisters were trained by the British Army in the use of chloroform and ether.<sup>115</sup> None of the Australian nurses who trained in administering anaesthetics continued to do so once they returned to Australia.<sup>116</sup> The New Zealand nurses also experienced difficulty in seeking work in a civilian hospital post-war as anaesthesiology had become a specialised branch of medicine only for the doctors, and thus had become a closed male field of medicine.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Moncrieff, *Expertise, Authority and Control*, 125.

<sup>112</sup> Butler, *Kitty's War*, 134.

<sup>113</sup> Harris, “Giving the Dope,” 45.

<sup>114</sup> “The Administration of Anaesthetics by Unqualified Persons,” *The British Medical Journal*, 1, 2881 (1916): 425, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25316375> (accessed 19 September 2021).

<sup>115</sup> Harris, “Giving the Dope,” 45.

<sup>116</sup> Harris, “Giving the Dope,” 49.

<sup>117</sup> Rogers, *While You're Away*, 133.

## PREFERENCE FOR MALE ORDERLIES

Working alongside the male orderlies challenged the nurses' place within the medical establishment because women in authority defied the existing gender norms. Some senior military men believed that orderlies could do the work of the nurses, justifying their argument that women did not belong near the frontline. The nurses refuted this claim, believing their training had given them the skills to provide effective and professional care to the soldiers.<sup>118</sup> The ANZAC nurses oversaw the wards and were able to give orders to the orderlies, but they did not have official authority.<sup>119</sup> Consequently, they were vulnerable in settings where doctors and medical orderlies 'closed ranks' against them.<sup>120</sup> The 1914 *Standing Orders for the Australian Army Medical Services* specified that nurses were to oversee the orderlies regarding patient care, and discipline of the patients and staff was managed by the Warrant Officer ward master. The work of the Australian nurses was not given priority over the orderlies, and the attitudes of the medical officers undermined the nurses' authority.<sup>121</sup>

In 1903, Colonel Ryan, the Australian Principal Medical Officer for the No. 3 Military District, referred to possible tensions between the orderlies and the Australian nurses.<sup>122</sup> 'Soldiers', he wrote, 'are very conservative as to their rights and privileges and resent keenly any condition of undue interference'.<sup>123</sup> The nurses were recipients of threats of personal violence and insults by the orderlies and non-commissioned officers in hospitals where the Commanding Officers did not approve of the nurses' presence.<sup>124</sup> AANS nurse Nellie Morrice

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<sup>118</sup> Marianne Barker, *Nightingales in the Mud: The Digger Sisters of the Great War 1914-1918* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1989), 3.

<sup>119</sup> Christine Hallett, "Stoic and Care in the Face of Carnage," *Nursing Standard* 28, no. 48 (2014): 20.

<sup>120</sup> Christine Hallett, *Veiled Warriors: Allied Nurses of the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 23.

<sup>121</sup> Harris, *Bombs and Bandages*, 106.

<sup>122</sup> Butler, "Nursing Gallipoli," 52.

<sup>123</sup> Charles Ryan, Colonel, Australian Army Nursing Service, Victoria, Lecture 2 *The Journal of the Royal Victorian Trained Nurses' Association (UNA)* vol II, no. 7 (1904): 100,

<https://victoriancollections.net.au/items/6034a2bbacc7b00d389f7323> (accessed 9 October 2021).

<sup>124</sup> Butler, "Nursing Gallipoli," 52.

observed how nurses were subjected to ‘disrespect and disobedience of the orderlies, both of which we had to tolerate’ while working in the 3 AGH in England in 1915.<sup>125</sup> The orderlies did not respect orders issued by the women, and the position of the nurses became untenable.<sup>126</sup> In August 1915 while stationed at Lemnos, she observed the officers in charge of a ward giving instructions directly to the orderlies, disregarding the nurses’ authority over them.<sup>127</sup>

The nurses of the NZANS faced similar concerns over the presence of the orderlies, as outlined in an October 1915 article in the New Zealand nurses’ journal, *Kai Tiaki*. The article stated that the nurses were dissatisfied with the orderlies treating the most serious cases as the nurses felt that they alone would provide the very best of care for their patients. In 1915, the nurses’ position was under threat when a Special Inspector was sent by the British War Office to investigate the state of the NZANS medical facilities in Egypt. The decision was made to reduce the number of medical staff, and some of the New Zealand nurses would be allocated to other hospitals to oversee inexperienced orderlies performing genuine nursing duties.<sup>128</sup> The Matron-in-Chief of the NZANS, Hester Maclean, objected to this decision, writing in her autobiography that the New Zealand nurses were sent to look after the men and ‘not simply to supervise’.<sup>129</sup> Maclean wrote that many of the New Zealand doctors, while dressed in their soldiers’ uniforms, disregarded the chain of command given their professional and social status, adding that ‘they were afraid to lower their dignity’.<sup>130</sup> The AANS and the NZANS nurses had similar experiences when their position within the level of command was brought

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<sup>125</sup> Nellie C. Morrice, Head Sister, [Nurses Narratives], 1915, AWM41 1013, Australia War Memorial, Canberra, <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C2773292?image=1> (accessed 24 July 2021).

<sup>126</sup> Butler, “Nursing Gallipoli,” 52.

<sup>127</sup> Rees, *The Other ANZACs*, 107.

<sup>128</sup> Rogers, *While You’re Away*, 67.

<sup>129</sup> Maclean, *Nursing in New Zealand*, 165.

<sup>130</sup> Maclean, *Nursing in New Zealand*, 168-69.

into question. Their presence was disputed by the military hierarchy because of their gender, therefore their authority over the orderlies was refuted.

This chapter focussed on the continued gendered attitudes and practices endured by the ANZAC nurses within the theatre of war. As war was perceived to be a male domain, the role of the nurses of the AANS and the NZANS was undermined by discriminatory rules and regulations. Despite the nurses enlisting in different nursing services with variations in protocol, their positions within their respective nursing services were equally overshadowed by the inclusion of male orderlies. This challenged the gendered authority between the men and women and was a concern for the nurses. Their presence was the subject of considerable criticism from the medical officers from both the AANS and NZANS. Nurses were also subjected to regulations specifying whom they could interact with, and their movements were restricted. Chapter Three will discuss why the AANS and the NZANS headship imposed those limitations, and how nurses were impacted by those decisions.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **INTERACTIONS BETWEEN NURSES, SOLDIERS AND MEDICAL PERSONNEL**

Mateship between the soldiers of World War One is an iconic part of the Anzac legend, but relationships that formed between both nurses and soldiers during the war also helped to influence the experiences of the Australians and New Zealanders. The importance of those friendships rested in the everyday experiences of war, for example, what the nurses and soldiers offered and received from each other.<sup>131</sup> For many of the soldiers, the nurses were the only feminine link to home which created a psychological connection that the doctors or male orderlies could not provide.<sup>132</sup> However, relationships between soldiers and nurses were prohibited by the military, and restrictions were introduced to prevent any incidents of familiarity and fraternisation between the nurses and the men. This chapter will discuss the reasons why the Australian and New Zealand militaries considered such interactions inappropriate. Those discriminatory constraints were controversial in the eyes of the nurses because personal and professional interactions with the soldiers were important in maintaining morale. This chapter will also examine the reasons behind some nurses' objections to the constraints that were placed upon them and identify instances of personal and professional relationships, despite the regulations against them.

#### **FRATERNISATION AND FAMILIARITY**

In the early twentieth century, purity and chastity were increasingly becoming the moral principles for women and men. Nonetheless, as they were gendered ideals, men were not required to maintain chastity. It was thought of as the woman's responsibility to maintain this

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<sup>131</sup> Butler, *Kitty's War*, 73.

<sup>132</sup> Harris, "All for the Boys," 74.

ideal for both men and women. Therefore, it was the fault of the women if this expected norm was not upheld.<sup>133</sup> Submissiveness and selflessness became the ideal ingrained Edwardian principles for women during the early twentieth century.<sup>134</sup> The respectability of the World War One nurses did, to a certain degree, protect them from social persecution connected to indiscretions of those Edwardian principles. However, the nurses were not entirely free from accusations of sexual immorality.<sup>135</sup>

At the commencement of World War One, senior medical officers believed that hospital camps were not suitable places for women and the prospect of sexual liaisons was a risk to discipline and order.<sup>136</sup> In 1916, the Australian army introduced strict restrictions on the nurses' interactions with soldiers. Nurses on troopships were specifically asked to abstain from observing men while they slept, as noted by Sister Kit McNaughton of the AANS.<sup>137</sup> Her diary entry of August 1915, while onboard the troopship *Orsova* bound for Egypt, recorded how Major Arthur James Mills of the AIF said that it 'wasn't a nice thing to do' and would make the men 'dream dreams'.<sup>138</sup> This comment suggests that the women would be the subject of the men's dreams and could evoke sexual tension, therefore reinforcing the gendered argument that the presence of women at war was considered problematic.

Despite their status as officers, the ANZAC nurses were not permitted to socialise with men or to speak to other ranked personnel while off duty. Those regulations of no contact between the nurses and the soldiers were to forewarn the nurses of the risk of men to their virtue.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Moncrieff, *Expertise, Authority and Control*, 143.

<sup>134</sup> Janet Lee, "A Nurse and a Soldier: Gender, Class and National Identity in the First World War Adventures of Grace McDougall and Flora Sandes," *Women's History Review* 15, no. 1 (2006): 86.

<sup>135</sup> Lee, "A Nurse and a Soldier," 86.

<sup>136</sup> Butler, *Kitty's War*, 22.

<sup>137</sup> Butler, "Journey into War," 216.

<sup>138</sup> Butler, *Kitty's War*, 22.

<sup>139</sup> Holmes, "Day Mothers," 46.

Furthermore, the non-fraternisation rule indicated apprehension within the military about the young, single women living and working alongside the soldiers.<sup>140</sup> Nurses who had serving male relatives or boyfriends of different ranks were prevented from seeing them because of the differences in their status.<sup>141</sup> Many nurses resented the new discriminatory social restrictions which came with their badges of rank. Nurse Christine E. Stom of the AANS wrote in a letter home: 'If we are friendly with our orderly, we are familiar, lacking in dignity and should be suppressed. If we converse amicably with the MOs (Medical Officers), we are flirtatious creatures, and old enough to know better'.<sup>142</sup>

The New Zealand Army imposed similar regulations of which Fanny Speedy, a nurse with the NZANS, also disapproved. She expressed her opposition by conveying that such rules 'were made by a man who is not in favour of the nurses' and was an 'insult to both nurses and soldiers'.<sup>143</sup> In 1916, Colonel William Collins, a surgeon with the New Zealand Medical Corps, issued orders to the nursing staff while onboard the transport ship *Marama*. Sisters were to have no communication with the officers, except when carrying out their nursing duties.<sup>144</sup> Edna Pengelly, of the NZANS, was onboard this transport ship and noted in her diary on 9 June, 'a chalk line on deck to divide the men from the women'.<sup>145</sup> This was a move to prevent any form of communication between the men and the nurses by minimising the risk of fraternisation.

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<sup>140</sup> Haskins, "Australian Nurses," 69.

<sup>141</sup> Barker, *Nightingales*, 3.

<sup>142</sup> C. E. Stom, Staff Nurse, Personal Narratives, Extracts from letters, 21 June 1917- 30 September 1918, 12 June 1918, AWM41 1068, [Official History, 1914-18 War: Records of Arthur G. Butler], Australian War Memorial, Canberra, <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C2773346> (accessed 4 January 2022).

<sup>143</sup> Fanny Helena Speedy, 4 December 1915, Diary of Fanny H. Speedy MS595, quoted in Rodgers "Paradox of Power and Marginality," 176.

<sup>144</sup> McNabb, *100 Years New Zealand Military Nursing*, 148.

<sup>145</sup> Pengelly, *Nursing in Peace*, 51.

The professional boundaries between the nurses and the soldiers were always apparent among the nurses, and social decorum was a priority.<sup>146</sup> Imitating family relationships of that of a mother, or an older sister, brought a feeling of warmth and security to the nurse-patient connection. Additionally, those familial interactions could keep the nurse and patient protected from the risks of flirtation or romantic liaisons.<sup>147</sup> They considered the actions of handholding, massaging the heads of their patients, and a supportive touch, as effective in helping to alleviate their emotional pain.<sup>148</sup> It can be assumed that these actions allowed the nurses to justify their direct contact with the patients, and therefore could not be misinterpreted by the military as being too familiar. The Australian and New Zealand medical establishments had similar social restrictions placed on their nurses to prevent fraternisation and familiarity, constraints that the ANZAC nurses believed were unjustified.

## **CORRESPONDENCE OF THE NURSES WITH SOLDIERS AND SOLDIERS' FAMILIES**

Correspondence presented a platform in which relationships could be retained over a distance while providing a space for the writer to convey their experiences, emotions, and news.<sup>149</sup> Nurses and soldiers were often anxious to hear about news from family members, and events occurring in their home countries.<sup>150</sup> Correspondence sent by the nurses and soldiers was censored by the military to restrict news information from the battlefield. However, self-

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<sup>146</sup> Christine E. Hallett, "'Emotional Nursing': Involvement, Engagement, and Detachment in the Writings of First World War Nurses and VADs," in *First World War Nursing – New Perspectives*, eds. Alison S. Fell and Christine E. Hallett (New York: Routledge, 2013), 97.

<sup>147</sup> Christine E. Hallett, "Argonauts of the Eastern Mediterranean: Military Nurses on Hospital and Transport Ships, 1914-18," *Journal of War & Cultural Studies* 10, no.3 (2017): 208.

<sup>148</sup> Harris, "All for the Boys," 74.

<sup>149</sup> Hopkins, "My dearest Girls," 123.

<sup>150</sup> Rae, "Soldiers of the ANZAC Mounted Division," 54.



ensorship was a form of personal editing. The writer was acutely aware of what could cause anxiety, confusion, and displeasure for the recipients at home.<sup>151</sup>

For the men who enlisted in World War One, physical fitness was considered more important than a specified level of literacy, as literacy was not a prerequisite for enlistment to the AIF. However, it was essential that the nurses who joined the AANS, and the NZANS, were competent readers and writers, which created a degree of inequality between the nurses and soldiers.<sup>152</sup> For those soldiers with low levels of literacy, or the inability to grasp a pen, it was difficult to communicate with their families. It was the nurses who helped ease such adversities, writing on their patients' behalf, and reading to the soldiers their letters from home.<sup>153</sup> The soldiers depended on the nurses to write letters for them and, in return, the nurses gained the soldier's trust by offering emotional comfort.<sup>154</sup> Although this action of letter writing contained elements of familiarity, which went against both the AANS and NZANS army protocol, the ANZAC nurses considered this form of communication between the soldiers and their families essential in improving the welfare of their patients.

The nurses were often the last females from home that the soldiers had an association with before their deaths. The soldiers had their own connection with family, home and identities as Australians and New Zealanders. The nurses could act as the role of mother, sister, and girlfriend. This brought a sense of familiarity and intimacy, which went against army regulations. The nurses voluntarily wrote letters to the deceased soldiers' loved ones to reassure them that they were kept comfortable and did not die alone.<sup>155</sup> The nurses were not only providing physical care but also emotional support through letter writing.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Hopkins, "My Dearest Girls," 123-4.

<sup>152</sup> Rae, "Soldiers of the ANZAC Mounted Division," 53.

<sup>153</sup> Rae, "Soldiers of the ANZAC Mounted Division," 53-54.

<sup>154</sup> Harris, "All for the Boys," 77.

<sup>155</sup> Krisjanous and Hallett, "New Zealand's ANZAC Nurses," 40.

<sup>156</sup> Rae, "Soldiers of the ANZAC Mounted Division," 56.

Once the ANZAC nurses reached their postings overseas, they began writing about their patients, which were most likely genuine expressions of what the nurses thought about them.<sup>157</sup> Some nurses could imagine their patients as heroic and carefree boys who bore their suffering with no complaints. Their letters home strengthened the soldier's qualities of courage and sacrifice. Those qualities of a soldier became part of the emerging Anzac legend and this language echoed popular opinions.<sup>158</sup> Often their diaries contained emotive language, demonstrated by an extract from Sister Margaret Tucker of the NZANS published in *Kai Tiaki, the Journal of the Nurses of New Zealand* in April 1916. Tucker was onboard the New Zealand hospital ship, the *Maheno* (Figure 4), receiving wounded soldiers from Gallipoli, describing them as 'the bravest of the brave' and 'one's heart aches when from early morn till late at night'.<sup>159</sup> Correspondence provided reassurance to those at home waiting anxiously for news about their loved ones, portraying them to be heroic and strong. This form of letter writing did not depict any type of familiarity.

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<sup>157</sup> Hallett, "Argonauts of the Eastern Mediterranean," 208.

<sup>158</sup> Holmes, "Day Mothers," 46.

<sup>159</sup> Margaret S. Tucker, February 1916, "Diary and Observations of a Hospital Ship," *Kai Tiaki: The Journal of the Nurses of New Zealand* 9 no. 2 (1916): 78, <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/periodicals/KT19160401.2.21> (accessed 17 January 2022).



**FIGURE 4: Hospital Beds on the *Maheno*.  
Reference: 1/1-002217-G.  
Alexander Turnbull Library, New Zealand.**

Letters from soldiers to their families often describe their feelings towards the nurses.

Brockenhurst General Hospital, the No. 1 New Zealand Hospital in England, was a facility where the soldiers recovered and convalesced. The patients participated in a range of activities which included concerts, lectures, and picnics. One patient wrote in a letter home, ‘We are treated like lords here, the nurses are real good sorts’.<sup>160</sup> Corporal Cecil W. Berry wrote home to New Zealand in August 1915, while convalescing in a hospital in Alexandria, Egypt. He

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<sup>160</sup> Hallett, *Veiled Warriors*, 186.

described the New Zealand nurses as ‘angels in a very real sense’ and that he observed one nurse sitting on a soldier’s bed reading to him his letters from home.<sup>161</sup> Correspondence was also sent between the nurses and soldiers, especially as some soldiers preferred not to relate their experiences to their families to prevent causing them further distress.<sup>162</sup> Considering all the points discussed, their letters and diaries did not contain any forms of fraternisation and familiarity that contravened what was deemed appropriate in terms of immoral behaviour.

### **PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL INTERACTIONS BETWEEN THE NURSES**

Friendships and relationships between the nurses and the soldiers developed over a substantial period. As their futures were uncertain, those personal and professional interactions were often regarded as being profoundly genuine.<sup>163</sup> Therefore, the fraternisation and familiarity restrictions placed on the nurses of Australia and New Zealand were unrealistic. Nurse Grace H. Burns of the AANS recalls accompanying soldiers to the pyramids of Egypt in 1915, during which a soldier wanted to speak, giving the reason, ‘I have not spoken to a lady for three or four months’.<sup>164</sup> Soldiers did not always have the opportunity to speak with members of the opposite sex, therefore any form of communication was embraced.

Similarly, nurses of the NZANS expressed their thoughts on the possibility of romantic relationships. In May 1917, Fanny Speedy, after witnessing the departure of eight men, recorded ‘I shall miss them, Cargill the longest. The romance I fancied was growing, could

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<sup>161</sup> Cecil W. Berry, Corporal, Letter to Mr C. R. C. Robieson of the Tourist Department in Wellington, from a Hospital in Alexandria, The Press, 23 August 1915, in Glyn Harper, *Letters from Gallipoli: New Zealand Soldiers Write Home* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2011), 200.

<sup>162</sup> Rae, “Soldiers of the ANZAC Mounted Division,” 56.

<sup>163</sup> Rogers, *While You’re Away*, 152.

<sup>164</sup> Grace H. Burns, Staff Nurse, 1915, [Nurses Narratives] Staff Nurse G Burns, 1915, AWM41 950, Australia War Memorial, Canberra, <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C2773234> (accessed 5 February 2022).

only be in my imagination for he is already engaged'.<sup>165</sup> Some liaisons were conducted discreetly, as was the case with Erle Crawford of the New Zealand Wellington Battalion.<sup>166</sup> He described, in his diary, how he had 'met Sister Whitta in Red Cross storeroom'.<sup>167</sup> When romances did occur, the nurses were seen to be at fault by the medical establishments. On one such occasion, a nurse with the AANS in Lemnos was sent home and dismissed after being discovered in a tent with a medical officer. The medical officer was not blamed, as he remained on Lemnos while the nurse's reputation was damaged.<sup>168</sup> Meanwhile, the military overlooked instances in which soldiers married nurses and did not resign. In 1915, an Australian sergeant conducted a secret romance with a senior nurse of the 3 AGH and later married with the matron as a witness. The sergeant remained in Greece and the Australian nurse was sent home.<sup>169</sup>

#### **DEOLALI AND THE NURSES OF THE AANS**

Unsubstantiated allegations of immoral conduct against the ANZAC nurses were a distinct possibility with the introduction of non-fraternisation restrictions. In 1918, accusations of impropriety were made against nurses of the AANS stationed at No. 34 Welsh Hospital Deolali, India.<sup>170</sup> Two Australian nurses had spoken to a non-commissioned officer while having afternoon tea at a lodging house owned by the widow of a non-commissioned officer. Colonel Seddon assumed it to be an 'immoral house' despite having no evidence.<sup>171</sup> On 7 May

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<sup>165</sup> Fanny Helena Speedy, 17 March 1917, Diary of Fanny Helena Speedy MS1703, quoted in Rogers, *While You're Away*, 152.

<sup>166</sup> Rees, *The Other ANZACs*, 241-42.

<sup>167</sup> Erle S. Crawford, 22 January 1917, Diary of Erle S Crawford MS-Papers-4140, quoted in Rogers, *While You're Away*, 152.

<sup>168</sup> Susanna De Vries, *Australian Heroines of World War One: Gallipoli, Lemnos and the Western Front* (Brisbane: Pirog Press, 2013), 174.

<sup>169</sup> De Vries, *Australian Heroines of World War One*, 174.

<sup>170</sup> Samraghni Bonnerjee, "'This Country is Rotten': Australian Nurses in India During the First World War and Their Encounters with Race and Nationhood," *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 65, no. 1 (2019): 60.

<sup>171</sup> Bassett, *Guns and Brooches*, 78-79.

1918, the Camp Commandant, Colonel H. Seddon presented to the Acting Matron, Alma Bennett, a list of five nurses who had been accused of inappropriate conduct with soldiers. One nurse was alleged to have had intimate relations with a Turkish prisoner of war, an orderly, and an Indian of lower caste.<sup>172</sup>

The court came to the judgment that the nurses should be exonerated of all charges after two of the cases did not proceed due to mistaken identity, and Colonel Seddon was placed on leave. The Australian Government censored this incident at the request of the Viceroy of India. The AANS had a common culture of secretly rebuking the nurses for moral indiscretions. The names of the nurses would not be recorded. However, some were sent back to Australia to work.<sup>173</sup> In December 1918, General Richard H. J. Fetherston, the Director General of the Medical Services of Australia, wrote a report referring to the ‘scandalous treatment’ of those nurses. He further stated that ‘speaking to a non-commissioned officer which in the eyes of many Imperial officers, is an unpardonable sin’.<sup>174</sup> General Richard H.J. Fetherston appeared to have overlooked the fact that it was he who had been responsible for introducing the badges of rank for the nurses of the AANS, which prevented them from socialising with non-commissioned officers.<sup>175</sup> Perceived social expectations led to assumptions of impropriety against the ANZAC nurses. The fault was directed at the nurses by the military authorities and their reputations were damaged.

The presence of women in the male-dominated realm of war was not accepted, and this was reflected in how gendered attitudes influenced policies relating to the nurses. Those policies

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<sup>172</sup> Rae, *Scarlet Poppies*, 183.

<sup>173</sup> Bonnerjee, “This Country is Rotten,” 63, 65.

<sup>174</sup> Richard H. J. Fetherston, General, 13 December 1918, NAA:MP367/1 527/27/531, False Accusations Against Australian Nurses Serving in India, Confidential Minute Paper, National Archives of Australia, Canberra, <https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/DetailsReports/ItemDetail.aspx?Barcode=358541&isAv=N> (accessed 18 March 2022).

<sup>175</sup> Bassett, *Guns and Brooches*, 79.

indicated that at the time women were viewed as passive and at the mercy of men.<sup>176</sup> Those gendered policies impacted the lives of the ANZAC nurses, and despite originating from different countries, their experiences were very similar. The ANZAC nurses were seen as a distraction to the men, whether they were soldiers, patients, or medical officers. Therefore, any form of contact was seen as being too familiar, and restrictions were introduced. However, the uncertainty of war and natural human emotions led to personal relationships between the nurses and the men. The ANZAC nurses, in their professional capacity, strongly believed that physical touch, reassurance, and writing letters on behalf of the patients, were key factors in improving the soldiers' state of mind. The gendered restrictions did not take these factors into account. Despite those limitations, the ANZAC nurses maintained their professional integrity. Nonetheless, on repatriation, their services during World War One were not recognised to the same extent as the men's contributions to the war, which will be the subject of Chapter Four.

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<sup>176</sup> Shute, "Heroines and Heroes," 23.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### REPATRIATION

When the ANZAC nurses volunteered their services during World War One, women were still regarded as reliant on men within Australian and New Zealand society. Political and medical authorities in Australia and New Zealand saw the role of the nurses as secondary to that of the soldiers, and therefore not considered equal because of their gender.<sup>177</sup> This final chapter focuses on the nurses following their return home, and on the issues encountered during their continual struggle to gain recognition within the political and military establishments. Further topics which will be discussed include difficulties in obtaining employment and financial assistance in comparison to the soldiers. This chapter also examines how the nurses of the AANS and the NZANS are remembered, and how the concepts of sacrifice and bravery are gendered.

#### THE RECOGNITION OF THE NURSES' SERVICES

There was a gradual acceptance of the ANZAC nurses among older medical officers after initial opposition. Honorary Assistant Surgeon at Sydney's Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Major J. Morton, paid tribute to the Australian nurses in a 1917 article in the *Medical Journal of Australia* writing 'they did a splendid service and have established themselves as a necessary factor within the military organisation'. He added that the Australian soldiers had certainly experienced a better level of care by the nurses in comparison to that given by the orderlies.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> Rees, *The Other ANZACs*, 308.

<sup>178</sup> J. Morton, M.B., Ch.M. (Syd), "Some Impressions of Medical Work at the Front," *Medical Journal of Australia*, 27 January 1917, p. 76, <http://digitised-collections.unimelb.edu.au/handle/11343/23182> (accessed 3 October 2021).



The work of the New Zealand nurses was similarly recognised. New Zealand Minister of Defence, James Allen, released a statement after the first of the NZANS sisters returned to Wellington on 28 April 1919, thanking them for their contribution, adding that the country, the soldiers and their families were grateful to the kind and sympathetic nurses for their valued work.<sup>179</sup> New Zealand nurses were invited by women's groups to speak about their services and experiences and the soldiers were invited by men's groups.<sup>180</sup> It was not until World War Two that the NZANS nurses were recognised, and addressed as officers, when they could officially wear emblems of rank on their uniforms.<sup>181</sup>

Many Australian nurses returned from World War One suffering from poor physical and mental health.<sup>182</sup> Unlike the AIF soldiers, the Australian nurses did not receive medical care in repatriation hospitals.<sup>183</sup> Many nurses found it difficult to secure war service pensions due to the nonexistence of documented proof to support their claims for the pension.<sup>184</sup> Only two Australian nurses were wounded and because many nurses treated their illnesses themselves during the war, they were less likely to be hospitalised and, therefore, no records were kept.<sup>185</sup> Furthermore, in 1919 the British government, concerned with a lack of storage space, destroyed the medical records of the AIF without notice. This meant that records essential for claims for pensions did not exist, making it more difficult to access financial

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<sup>179</sup> Kai Tiaki, "Reception to Returned Sisters," *The Journal of the Nurses of New Zealand* xii, no.2 (April 1919): 83, <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/periodicals/kai-tiaki-the-journal-of-the-nurses-of-new-zealand/1919/04/01> (accessed 30 January 2022).

<sup>180</sup> Krisjanous and Hallett, *New Zealand's ANZAC Nurses*, 34-35.

<sup>181</sup> Jill Clendon, "New Zealand Military Nurses' Fight for Recognition: World War One – World War Two," *Nursing Praxis in New Zealand* 12, no. 1 (1997): 27, retrieved through ArticleReach, University of Newcastle, <http://www.arldocdel.iii.com/1578667.pdf> (accessed 29 September 2021).

<sup>182</sup> Selena Williams, "Soldier Settlement for Returned Army Nurses Post First World War," in *When the Soldiers Return: November 2007 Conference Proceedings*, ed. Martin Crotty (Brisbane: University of Queensland, School of History, Philosophy, Religion and Classics, 2009), 178.

<sup>183</sup> Williams, "Soldier Settlement," 176.

<sup>184</sup> Rae, *Veiled Lives*, 398.

<sup>185</sup> Margaret Hutchison, "'Old Age in Not a Disability': Debating Aged Care for Nurses of World War 1 in Post-1945 Australia," *Australian Historical Studies* 52, no. 1 (2021): 67.

assistance.<sup>186</sup> This lack of evidence, along with the inability to secure proper medical treatment, hindered the nurses' repatriation back to civilian life. However, this began to change with an increase in public and political support for the Australian nurses.

In September 1952, it was brought to the attention of the Australian Returned Sailors', Soldiers' and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia that war widows were eligible for medical treatments in repatriation hospitals, however retired Australian nurses were not. The nurses found it difficult to fund their hospital treatment after years of receiving poor wages.<sup>187</sup> It was not until 1 July 1958 that the extension of medical treatments in repatriation hospitals to all Australian World War One nurses was approved by the Australian Cabinet under the Liberal Party. In 1973, this was applied by the Australian Government under the Labour Party to nurses in nursing homes who were suffering from chronic illnesses, however many of the nurses had passed away at this stage.<sup>188</sup>

The New Zealand soldiers also received a higher quality of medical treatment than members of the NZANS. The treatment of sick New Zealand nurses who were invalided was inadequate as the authorities did not provide private facilities for their recovery. Hester Maclean, Matron-in-Chief of the NZANS, became aware of this and objected to the nurses being placed in the general wards and not in private rooms such as those provided for the male officers.<sup>189</sup> The Australian and New Zealand did not receive the same quality of post-war medical care as the servicemen, and it was these attitudes and practices within those establishments that continued to favour the males of World War One.

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<sup>186</sup> Stephen Garton, *The Cost of War: War, Return and the Re-Shaping of Australian Culture* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 2020), 174.

<sup>187</sup> Bassett, *Guns and Brooches*, 109.

<sup>188</sup> Bassett, *Guns and Brooches*, 110.

<sup>189</sup> Rogers, *While You're Away*, 182.

## POST-WAR EMPLOYMENT

The Australian and New Zealand governments introduced policies to assist the returned servicemen in earning an income, however, this was not often extended to the nurses. The Australian Soldiers' Settlement Scheme provided 'land for heroes' for returning soldiers.<sup>190</sup> This system was noticeably masculine in context as it only supported the heroic deeds of soldiers. Furthermore, nurses had some prospect of receiving land allocation only if they married or had male relatives who could farm the land.<sup>191</sup> There remained some initial opposition at a Commonwealth level to the inclusion of Australian nurses in this scheme. In September 1919, the Controller of the Repatriation Commission stated his opposition. He argued that expanding eligibility to nurses would allow 'others', such as those who deliberately avoided military service, to acquire land. Therefore, the nurses were equated to malingerers as their war service was not deemed as important as the male soldiers by the Commonwealth.<sup>192</sup>

Although Australian nurses had limited access to land allocation, members of the NZANS had experienced their own gender-based restrictions, such as a lack of post-war employment opportunities. In April 1917, Hester Maclean enquired about post-war employment for the New Zealand nurses who wanted a change in occupation.<sup>193</sup> The Discharged Soldiers' Information Department informed her that the main function of the Department was to assist the discharged soldiers in obtaining suitable employment, and had no current intention of helping 'the ladies in the Nursing Service'.<sup>194</sup> Consequently, some nurses were met with

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<sup>190</sup> Williams, "Soldiers Settlement," 175.

<sup>191</sup> Rae, *Veiled Lives*, 357.

<sup>192</sup> Williams, "Soldiers Settlement," 177.

<sup>193</sup> Rogers, *While You're Away*, 184.

<sup>194</sup> Kai Tiaki, "Demobilisation," Kai Tiaki: *The Journal of the Nurses of New Zealand* xii, no. 1 (January 1919): 11, <https://www.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/periodicals/kai-tiaki-the-journal-of-the-nurses-of-new-zealand/1919/01/01> (accessed 31 January 2022).

employment difficulties, and this was brought to the attention of Hester Maclean. In October 1919, an article appeared in *The Journal of the Nurses of New Zealand*, titled “Out-of-Work Nurses,” in which she stated there had been no preference given by the Hospital Boards to those repatriated matrons and sisters seeking re-employment.<sup>195</sup> The assistance that was given to post-war servicemen and servicewomen for reemployment indicates gender-based favouritism at the expense of the ANZAC nurses. The Australian and New Zealand governments believed that women should be placed below men, hence their opposition to providing nurses with post-war employment assistance.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The inequalities concerning the nurses’ salaries continued long after they returned home. In July 1920, a group of NZANS nurses at the Rotorua Military Hospital, New Zealand, wrote to the Director-General of Medical Services. They brought to his attention that their matron, who was very experienced and knowledgeable and whose responsibilities came after the Officer Commanding, received the same salary as that of a sergeant (a non-commissioned officer ranking below a staff sergeant and above a corporal).<sup>196</sup> Sisters, with many years of experience, were paid less than a sergeant with six months of training, an indication that the nurses were not held in the same regard as the men of the NZEF. While some nurses acknowledged that many men were married and thus breadwinners, they also believed that they were entitled to a higher rate of pay than the male staff with no medical training.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Hester Maclean, “Out-of-Work Nurses,” *Kai Tiaki: The Journal of the Nurses of New Zealand* xii, no. 4 (October 1919): 174, <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/periodicals/KT19191001.2.37> (accessed 11 February 2022).

<sup>196</sup> Rogers, *While You’re Away*, 188.

<sup>197</sup> Rogers, *While You’re Away*, 188.

Australian nurses were also subjected to gender-based financial discrepancies. Members of the AANS were not eligible for post-war financial assistance until the 1917 *Australian Soldier's Repatriation Act*, one year before the end of the war. It was then that the women were included in the definition of 'soldier' which was defined as being 'is or has been, during the present war, a member of the Army Medical Corps Nursing Service enlisted or appointed for or employed on active services outside Australia'.<sup>198</sup> The Australian nurses' salaries during World War One and the post-war period, as well as disability and service pensions, were determined on the belief that women were not, and should not, be the sole provider. Many of the nurses were unmarried and, therefore, did not have dependents and this meant they were entitled to only fifty-four per cent of the male basic wage.<sup>199</sup> The nurses were eligible for service and disability pensions, according to the 1914 *War Pensions Act*, based on estimated salary entitlement as a working woman.<sup>200</sup> Furthermore, the rates for the pension under the *War Pensions Act* were based on rank and, as they were classed as 'honorary officers', the nurses received a wage equivalent of lower ranking personnel.<sup>201</sup> Many nurses faced financial hardship as a result of the gender-based rates of payments.

Organisations such as the Queensland War Nurses' Fund and the New South Wales Sub-Branch of the Returned Army Nursing Sisters were established during the war to administer funds to nurses facing financial hardship. The Edith Cavell Trust Fund was the largest and wealthiest of these Australian organisations, with money being raised by public request.<sup>202</sup> Many nurses returned home sick, or infirm, and had no place to live if they could not work, because to be employed as a nurse came with it the benefit of accommodation. Eleanor

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<sup>198</sup> *Australian Soldiers' Repatriation Act 1917* (Cth) 4, 2(b), [http://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/num\\_act/asra1917371917381/asra1917371917381.pdf](http://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/num_act/asra1917371917381/asra1917371917381.pdf) (accessed 30 January 2022).

<sup>199</sup> Williams, "Soldier Settlement," 176.

<sup>200</sup> Williams, "Soldier Settlement," 176.

<sup>201</sup> Bassett, *Guns and Brooches*, 99.

<sup>202</sup> Bassett, *Guns and Brooches*, 97.

Harvey was from Western Australia and a member of the Australian Trained Nurses' Association. She began campaigning in 1925 to raise funds for those nurses who relied on charity. One of her fundraising efforts raised enough money to purchase a house known as the Eleanor Harvey Home, a place for aging nurses in Western Australia.<sup>203</sup>

The New Zealand nurses also faced financial hardship. The New Zealand 1915 *Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act* stipulated that the returned nurses were not eligible to apply for any financial help, such as housing loans. The Board's immediate priority was providing for the returned soldiers.<sup>204</sup> New Zealand soldiers were able to borrow money to construct their houses and this was not offered to the members of the NZANS.<sup>205</sup> When Nurse Gladys Metherell returned home in 1919, she found she could not get a loan to buy a house. She wrote to Major General George Richardson, a senior officer in the New Zealand Military Forces, hoping to reverse this legislation 'After a four-year absence, I return to find boys with only a few months service enjoying these privileges'.<sup>206</sup> The Returned Services Association lobbied the government for an amendment to *The Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act* and in 1919, former New Zealand Expeditionary Force nurses of the NZANS were included.<sup>207</sup> The gendered financial inequality experienced by the ANZAC nurses continued when they arrived home. The Australian and New Zealand governments felt it was their priority to provide for the men financially over the women.

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<sup>203</sup> Rae, *Veiled Lives*, 398.

<sup>204</sup> Rogers, *While You're Away*, 185.

<sup>205</sup> Rees, *The Other ANZACs*, 306.

<sup>206</sup> Gladys Metherell, letter to Major General George Robinson, June 1919, R24170520, Archives New Zealand, quoted in McNabb, *100 Years New Zealand Military Nursing*, 223.

<sup>207</sup> McNabb, *100 Years New Zealand Military Nursing*, 223.

## REMEMBRANCE

Australians and New Zealanders commemorate Anzac Day on 25 April every year as a national day of remembrance. This date commemorates the 1915 landing in Gallipoli, Turkey, by the Australian and New Zealand soldiers.<sup>208</sup> The contributions of the AANS and NZANS nurses were absent from the Anzac narrative for decades when compared to the more masculine roles. Most World War One nurses considered it an honour to care for their countrymen and they expected little acknowledgement in return.<sup>209</sup> Nonetheless, as late as 1992 there was still resistance in some areas to Australian World War One nurses receiving public acknowledgement. It was during this year that a sculpture was commissioned for Anzac Square in Brisbane, Australia with the design featuring a nurse standing over a wounded or sick soldier. However, a spokesman for the Returned Services League (RSL) alleged that the nurse was the main focus, and the soldier should have a more equal representation. Consequently, the design was altered, the nurse's stature was reduced, and the men dominated the sculpture.<sup>210</sup>

Contemporary narratives on World War One applied the title 'imperial heroine' to those nurses who did not survive the war. Those accounts portray those women as having the conventional gender principle of maternal sacrifice.<sup>211</sup> Post-war memorials depict the women as honorary men with the traditional masculine values of gallantry, endurance, and bravery.<sup>212</sup> The Australian War Memorial, in the nation's capital of Canberra, was built to commemorate both the men and women who died during wartime.<sup>213</sup> In February 1997, the

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<sup>208</sup> Krisjanous and Hallett, "New Zealand's ANZAC Nurses," 35.

<sup>209</sup> Rae, *Scarlet Poppies*, 227.

<sup>210</sup> Rae, *Scarlet Poppies*, 227-28.

<sup>211</sup> Sarah Christie, "Gender, Remembrance, and the Sinking of the Marquette," *Women's Studies Journal* 30, no. 1 (2016): 30.

<sup>212</sup> Christie, "Gender, Remembrance," 44.

<sup>213</sup> Ruth Rae, *From Narromine to the Nile: Jessie Tomlins – An Australian Army Sister in the First World War*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Canberra: The Australian College of Nursing, 2015), 9.

Australian Federal Government belatedly decided to pledge a site on Anzac Parade, in Canberra, for a planned Australian Service Nurses Memorial. The RSL argued against this memorial because they believed that the nurses should not be honoured before other women who had served during World War One, such as members of the Red Cross. However, the nurses donated most of the funds for the memorial and the objections of the RSL were overturned.<sup>214</sup> In April 2015, at the Anzac Memorial on the Somme, a wreath was laid for the first time to honour the nurses.<sup>215</sup>

Members of the NZANS were also commemorated to a lesser degree than male soldiers. On October 23, 1915, the *Marquette*, carrying the No. 1 New Zealand Stationary Hospital, was torpedoed in the Aegean Sea by a German submarine. Thirty-two New Zealanders drowned, including ten nurses who were a contingent of the NZANS.<sup>216</sup> In 1927, the Nurses' Memorial Chapel was opened on the grounds of Christchurch Hospital and is New Zealand's only memorial built in memory of those nurses killed at war.<sup>217</sup>

In 1935, on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sinking, the nurses who drowned were honoured with a service in Wellington. The anniversary was declared Nurses' Day, which allowed space in the nation's history to honour the nurses who lost their lives during all wars.<sup>218</sup> Following the end of World War One, the contribution of the ANZAC nurses was not recognised on the same level as the servicemen. But as public awareness intensified, the gendered narrative shifted from men being the main participants of war to including the nurses as significant contributors to the war effort.

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<sup>214</sup> Rae, *From Narromine*, 10.

<sup>215</sup> Krisjanous and Hallett, "New Zealand's ANZAC Nurses," 36-37.

<sup>216</sup> Christie, "Gender, Remembrance," 30.

<sup>217</sup> Rees, *The Other ANZACs*, 307.

<sup>218</sup> Philippa Mein Smith, "The 'NZ' in Anzac: Different Remembrance and Meaning," *First World War Studies* 7, no. 2 (2016): 199-200.



Although the nurses received recognition from some sectors of the medical community, they continued to experience gender-based discrimination from their respective governments as their roles were considered not as important as that of the soldiers. Government departments of both Australia and New Zealand favoured the returned servicemen by providing them with more financial and employment support compared to ANZAC nurses. The Australian and New Zealand governments implemented different schemes; however, they were similar in their objectives to assist the men. The same governmental assistance was not always extended to ANZAC nurses. National monuments and memorial marches on Anzac Day were centred around the heroic deeds of the Australian and New Zealand soldiers while it was evident that the work of their nurses was considered less important. The role of the ANZAC nurses during World War One was not fully recognised. This lack of recognition of ANZAC World War One nurses continued after their return home, reflecting the gendered hierarchy within the societies of Australia and New Zealand.

## CONCLUSION

The declaration of World War One in 1914 initiated an influx of Australian and New Zealand men, and women, volunteering their services. A large number of men enlisted in the military service, and many women enrolled as nurses in the AANS and NZANS. The nurses' professional and personal experiences during and after the war were governed by a gendered order that favoured male participants of war. As a result, the nurses' position within the medical and military establishments was questioned by the male medical hierarchy. Furthermore, their social and medical interactions with their patients and other male military service members were scrutinised for any perceived inappropriate behaviour. This study identifies gendered attitudes and practices within the military that had adverse effects on the lives of the nurses. This study also determines to what extent the patriarchal system existed in both countries.

Although the Australian and New Zealand nursing services were separate entities, they shared the common purpose of establishing a pathway for their nurses to participate in the war effort. Nurses had to be qualified, and of a certain age, to enlist in the nursing services. The required age range was twenty-five to thirty-five years in Australia and twenty-five to forty-five years in New Zealand. One key difference between the Australian and New Zealand nurses was that members of the AANS had to be unmarried, a rule that did not apply to male soldiers.

The nurses of the AANS and NZANS were attempting to leave behind restrictive lives within a gender-based social order, and long working hours with poor wages. However, those structures continued during the war in which the nurses were subjected to further constraints because of their gender. Despite being from two different nursing organisations from

different nations, the experiences of the Australian and New Zealand nurses were much the same. The accommodation was inadequate compared to the more comfortable facilities of the men, and the pay rates in the AANS and NZANS were not compatible with their rank in comparison to their male counterparts. It was evident throughout this comparative study that the role of the nurses was devalued, and their presence was undermined by the gendered order of male authority.

Evidence indicates that the nurses were not seen as a contributing force within the medical establishment during the war. Nurses' positions during the war were challenged because, as women, they were expected to remain home performing their maternal domesticated duties and not be placed near the frontlines of war. The employment, and authority of male orderlies were given precedence over the ANZAC nurses as the nurses had no authority over orderlies when it came to official commands.

The medical male hierarchy of Australia and New Zealand considered the nurses to be a distraction and a threat to discipline. The military establishment of both nations held the same opinion that familiarity and fraternisation between male patients and nurses were inappropriate, and this attitude attracted equal opposition and concern from the nurses of both nations. The ANZAC nurses believed that providing comfort for their patients in the form of physical touch, and writing letters on their behalf, psychologically benefited the soldiers.

This study also discusses the experiences faced by the ANZAC nurses upon repatriation to their homeland. It was revealed that their repatriation presented problems for the nurses, albeit with somewhat different instances. The nurses shared an objective, they desired to gain recognition for their services to their countries. Each country had their repatriation schemes but with one common element, they were all designed for the male participants of World War One. In 1917, the Australian Government passed the *Australian Soldier's Repatriation Act*

which implemented 'land for heroes,' a scheme that provided land for farming. New Zealand created the Discharged Soldiers' Information Department in 1915 to assist the returned soldiers by providing a source of income. The Australian 'land for heroes' scheme was problematic for the nurses. The AANS only accepted unmarried nurses, therefore, to have any hope of receiving land they needed to rely on male relatives to assist with farming duties. Consequently, the nurses in Australia and New Zealand faced financial hardship. Each nation's government legislated different acts; however, the results were the same. Minimal financial assistance was available for the nurses since the returned servicemen took priority over the nurses. Traditionally, Australian and New Zealand men were considered the sole providers by the gendered order within society and were entitled to a higher level of income. Those traditional attitudes and practices were a common theme throughout this thesis.

Although the nurses were from two separate nations, and two different nursing services, their experiences were very similar. However, there was a slight variation in how the nurses were received and supported when they returned home. This is attributed to the different government policies and repatriation departments. Each country had their own community support agencies, for example, the Australian Edith Trust Fund and the New Zealand Returned Services Association. The different support agencies had a common goal, which was to provide the nurses with financial and housing support. Collectively their experiences were similar, as the Australian and New Zealand nurses were affected by the same gendered regulations and attitudes common to both nations.

## **LIMITATIONS**

This thesis project was subject to a range of limitations in sourcing references for this comparative study. The historiography of World War One has favoured the contribution of the men as the war was, and still is, considered a male domain. Therefore, studies on gender

discrimination within war have become an important research discipline. Nevertheless, there appears to be a shortage of historical literature on the gendered attitudes and practices experienced by the New Zealand nurses of World War One. As travel has not always been an option due to time restraints and COVID restrictions, access to primary sources was limited. Reliance was placed on the administrative staff at archival establishments, and libraries in New Zealand, to email any relevant sources required for research.

Military history research material has predominantly focused on men. It is necessary to extend this scholarship to include more information about the participation of women in war. Marilyn Lake and Joy Damousi have argued that ‘offering new readings’ about gender representation during war will make ‘women visible as historical actors and as subjects of the narrative’.<sup>219</sup> Comparative gender studies that include the involvement of Australian and New Zealand nurses in other wars would contribute to this narrative and would offer a new insight into the gendered relations of those times.

Women's history has developed into a substantial quantity of academic literature and research projects covering an extensive array of topics. The originality of this comparative study of the gendered attitudes and practices towards the ANZAC nurses of World War One will contribute to the ongoing discussion and knowledge of historical gender-based inequality. What has transpired from this study is that the gendered attitudes and practices did not differ between the two countries. This indicates the conservative outlook on women of that time, which transferred to the ANZAC nurses. This thesis offers a new perspective on the history of World War One military nursing within the study of gender. The ANZAC nurses were the recipients of unfavourable discriminatory treatment simply because they were women in a male-dominated environment.

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<sup>219</sup> Lake and Damousi, “Introduction,” 1.

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