

May Duggan (1888 – 1974)

May Duggan enlisted in 1915 and saw service in multiple theatres of war including close to the front line on the Western Front. She continued to care for wounded and ill veterans in work at repatriation hospitals post war.

May Duggan was born and went to the local school in Tarnagulla near Bendigo. The family later moved to Malvern in Melbourne. May's father Daniel Duggan, had a successful career in business and public life including as Member of the Victorian Legislative Assembly 1894 – 1904.

May's first overseas postings were at hospitals in and around Cairo, Egypt, caring for sick and wounded troops based in Egypt and from the Gallipoli campaign.

She later worked in a series of hospitals and a Casualty Clearing Station which received mass casualties from the Western Front. Perilously close to the front line, on one occasion May was ordered to retreat and leave the wounded. She refused to do so.

After some time recuperating in hospital herself May was posted to the No.3 Australian Auxiliary Hospital located in Dartford in Kent which specialised in treatment of war-related damage to the nervous system and neuroses. A few months later May was promoted to Sister.

May's brother younger brother Daniel also served in France. In 1918 he was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal.

After the war, May travelled to the United States with fellow veteran Genevieve Kennedy. She returned to Melbourne and worked at the Caulfield Repatriation Hospital. Later she joined the Brisbane Repatriation Hospital before returning to Melbourne to work as Sister in charge of the Repatriation Commission Outpatient Clinic in its new facility on St Kilda Road.



Service summary: 1 AGH (Heliopolis, Egypt); Hospital Ship ('Runic'); 14 AGH (Abbassia, Egypt); 2 BGH (Le Havre, France); 38 BSH (Calais, France and Genoa, Italy); 3 ACCS (Poperinge, Belgium); 3 AGH (Abbeville, France); 3 AAH (Dartford, England).

Graduated St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne: 1912

Enlisted: 1915

Final rank: Sister

Medals: 1914/15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal

Image source: *Table Talk*, 17 June 1915, p. 3.

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