

Mary Elizabeth Long

Isle of Wight County Press

4 January 1941

DEATH OF MISS M. E. LONG.

NEWPORT RED CROSS COMMANDANT.

Widespread regret has been felt in the Newport district this week and among her comrades of the Red Cross service in other parts of the Island at the death, on Sunday morning at her home, Hillside, St. John's-road, Newport, of Miss Mary Elizabeth Long, who had been the highly efficient and much-esteemed commandant of the Newport Women's Voluntary Aid Detachment of the British Red Cross Society for some 17 years, and was very active in many other good works in the district. Miss Long, who was only 46, was the only child of Mr. J. W. Long, a retired surveyor of the Customs and Excise services, and Mrs. Long, and profound sympathy is felt with them in their very unexpected and irreparable loss. She became a member of the Newport V.A.D. just before the last war, and throughout the period of hostilities gained valuable practical experience of nursing at the Gatcombe House, Northwood House and The Castle (Ryde) War Hospitals. Naturally gifted by temperament for the merciful work of attending the sick, she was chosen to lead the V.A.D.s at Newport, soon after the detachment was re-formed after the war and she had held the position with conspicuous success and devotion ever since. On the outbreak of the present war she took charge of the staff of the first-aid post at the County-hall and had done regular night duty until the illness which led to her untimely death seized her three weeks ago. In spite of the highest medical skill it unfortunately proved fatal. During her long service as commandant of the V.A.D. she was responsible for training hundreds of women in first-aid and home nursing, and the fact that her detachment has several times won H.R.H. Princess Beatrice's shield in the annual inter-detachment competitions is ample proof of her success as a teacher. Her practical work was equally as good as her teaching, for she always gave an active and experienced lead in all the work of the detachment, and applied her knowledge in innumerable voluntary acts of service to anyone in need of nursing skill; in fact, she fully deserved description as an "angel of mercy" because all her kindly acts were done in so self-sacrificing a way that few except those who directly benefited were aware of them. Yet another example of her service to the community was her management for many years of the Newport Red Cross Ambulance. She was responsible for the provision of nurses to accompany cases and often did this duty herself, frequently ministering to patients on long journeys to distant places on the mainland. Her value as a leader of Red Cross work was officially recognised a few years ago by her election as an honorary member of the society, a distinction rarely given to a serving member. The honour was mainly bestowed because she assisted Miss Waistell, of Freshwater, in inaugurating V.A.D. training camps at Osborne, and had consistently supported those camps ever since. During the last year or so she had given valuable assistance in training A.R.P. first-aid personnel. Her passing is a great loss to the Red Cross service in the Island.

The Funeral.

Her colleagues of the Newport V.A.D. formed a guard of honour, men of the A.R.P. first-aid party acted as bearers, and officials of the British Red Cross Society from all parts of the Island and of the local A.R.P. services attended in uniform at the funeral services in Newport Parish Church on Wednesday morning, and many went on to the interment at Carisbrooke Cemetery. The Acting Vicar (the Rev. C. L. H. Beardmore), the Rev. L. J. D. Wheatley, and the Rev. E. G. Keed (Baptist) officiated, and Miss K Lower, L.R.A.M., accompanied the singing of two verses of the hymn "He who would valiant be" and played "O rest in the Lord" at the close. In an eloquent tribute to the deceased lady, the Rev. E. G. Keed said her life was remarkable for untiring devotion to duty in the home and in her many activities outside it. Those who had the privilege of her friendship knew that her life was dominated by a high sense of loyalty, a deep love for others, an insight and understanding sympathy which imparted strength and a tireless readiness to serve. As commandant of the V.A.D. her sense of duty was exercised most unselfishly, and she and her lifelong friend (Sister Hawes), who was called away 11 months ago, did a great and enduring work for the detachment. They exercised their mutual affection for the welfare of the members, and it might be that if they had been less mindful of the stern demands of duty they might both have been alive today, but it was not in their nature to refuse such calls. They expressed humble gratitude to God for their lives of service. The chief mourners were Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Long (parents), Miss Dinwoodie (cousin), Miss O'Connor, Mrs. Drabble, Mrs. Curtis, and Miss H. Parker. The representatives of the Island branch of the British Red Cross Society present were Mrs. Leveson-Gower (deputy president), Capt. H. J. Ward, D.L., J.P. (county director), who also represented Dame Bery Oliver, of the headquarters of the B.R.C.S., and Mr. Arthur Andrews, J.P., C.A. (chairman of the branch committee), Miss Waistell, Mrs. Aspinall Oglander, A.R.R.C., and Mrs. Pim (assistant county directors), the Hon. Mrs. Kindersley (county secretary), Sergt. M. F. Callaghan (late county secretary), Mrs. H. J. Ward (vice president), the Mayor and Mayoress of Newport (Capt. and Mrs. J. S. Brown), Mrs. L. M. Gibson A.R.R.C., Mrs. A. E. Harvey, and Mrs. G. F. Quinton (members of the County Committee), and Mrs. Wheatley (county anti-gas officer). The officers and ex-officers of the Newport V.A.D. attending were Miss G. Quinton (assistant commandant), Mrs. Gracey (superintendent), Miss Cowdery (quartermaster), Miss Sanders (assistant quartermaster), and Miss D. Minns (ex-quartermaster), and the other Island detachments were represented by the following commandants or other officers as well as members: West Wight, Miss Life; Wootton, Mrs. Leal; Newchurch, Miss Morgan; Sandown, Miss Porter; Sandown and district, Miss Parsons; Ventnor, Mrs. Sharpe; Ryde, Mrs. Fardell; Shanklin, Miss Hayles; Cowes, Mrs. Brown; East Cowes, Mrs. Egerton; and Yarmouth, Miss Tallant. Others attending in uniform were the matron and nurses of the military hospital at Parkhurst and the women A.R.P. ambulance drivers and first-aid personnel. The members of the first-aid party who acted as bearers were Messrs. Rodway, Wearne, Freeman, Smith, Coward, and Campbell. Those also attending included Dr. W. S. Wallace (also representing Dr. J. Fairley, county medical officer, and Mrs. Wallace), Dr. and Mrs. J. H. Jones, the Ref. W. H. Mackinnon, Capt. H. A. Drudge (county A.R.P. ambulance officer), Mr. W. H. Margham (Newport ambulance transport officer), Mr. F. W. H. Cool (representing Mr. K. W. Johnston, Newport A.R.P. officer), Mr. A. B. Shaw, M.B.E. (first-aid post staff), Miss M. Dabell, the Misses Etheridge, the Misses Welby-Pryer, Mrs. Adams, Miss Ellis, Miss Way, Nurses Kirkup and Cheverton, Miss Minns, Miss Bailey, Miss Rugg, Mrs. W. I. Bright, Mrs. W D. Way Buckell, Miss Crews, Miss Wiles,

Miss Crofts, Miss Liddell, Miss Jordan, Mrs. Squibb (representing Miss Rich), Mr. G. R. and Miss Sherwin, Mrs. V. Wadham, Miss Chandler, Miss Webb, Mrs. Groundsell, Ald. Mrs. E. R. Chandler, J.P., Ald. J. H. Deacon, and Messrs. F. Bright, W. H. Dann, J.P., W.C. Black, G. C. Russell, C.C., E. A. Walmsley, C. H. Cowdery, S. W. Trewell, F. Chiverton, T.C., A. F. Hart, C. Martin, S. W. Ibbotson, C. Sprake, W. G. Sibbick, and E. J. Bartlett. There were over 40 beautiful floral tributes, including those from the county director and county officials of the Red Cross Society; the officers and members of her detachment; Lady Hobart (vice president, Newport District, B.R.C.S.) and Sir Vere Hobart; the Mayor of Newport and members of the Ambulance Committee; the Military Hospital, Parkhurst; officers and members West Wight detachment; officers and members Cowes Cowes Detachment; St. John Ambulance Service, Newport; medical officers, Newport first-aid post; Newport first-aid post staff; office and report centre staff; Mesdames Buckell, Jones, Wallace, and Groundsell (trained nurses at first-aid post); and the Newport A.R.P. ambulance service. Messrs. H. and F. Damp made the arrangements.

Transcription by Kate MacDonell for the Friends of Newport and Carisbrooke Cemeteries,

© 2020

<https://www.foncc.org.uk>