

A tribute to Nurse Edith Louise Cavell - 1865 - 1915.

Edith Louise Cavell was born in 1865 in the Norfolk village of Swardeston, about 5 miles south of Norwich. She was the eldest of four children of the Rev'd and Mrs Frederick Cavell.

As a child Edith loved to sketch and paint in the countryside near her home. She was fond of, and accustomed to, children and was often found helping her parents with the regular distribution of charity to the poorer parishioners.

She left home for Norwich High School at the age of sixteen and by the time she was nineteen she had become an accomplished governess.

In her mid-twenties she went abroad for the first time and worked for a family in Brussels, becoming fluent in French.

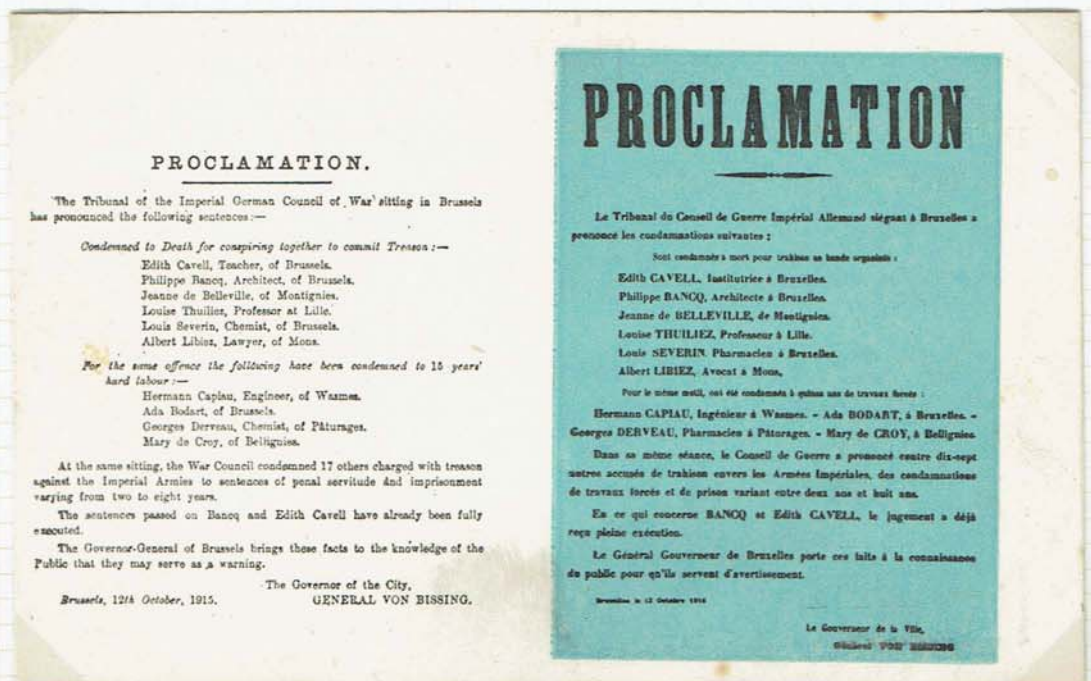
By 1903 she was an Assistant Matron and was training nurses in the well known Florence Nightingale principles, and, in 1914 on the outbreak of the first World War, she took charge of the Red Cross in Brussels. During the first few months of the War she sheltered about two hundred allied soldiers and helped to get them away through Holland after which they mainly passed on to England and then rejoined their units.

On the 5th August, 1915 Edith was arrested and, after a hurried "trial", was found guilty of treason and was sentenced to death. She was actually executed on the 15th, October, 1915 by firing squad.



1915. October 12th.

Proclamation by the Tribunal of the Imperial German Council of War sitting at Brussels that six people, including Nurse Edith Cavell, had been condemned to death for conspiring together to commit treason. Signed by the Governor of the City, General von Bissing.



Unused, divided back card produced by Dobson, Mollie & Co Ltd, Edinburgh and London and stating the actual document was at that time in a private collection.

1916, July 31st.

Miss Edith Cavell.



Special picture postcard produced by Interdite Vize, Paris, No. 870, artist-signed "Carrey". The picture side showing Miss Cavell having just been "Martyred" by the Germans.

The card is addressed to Kent and cancelled by Army Post Office R.18, together with the rubber stamp "A.C.Evans" (an Officer Commanding the writer's unit) and a red hexagonal Passed by Censor marking.

Nurse Edith Cavell.

Unused real photograph type picture postcard of Miss Cavell, together with a magazine article setting out details of her arrest and eventual execution.

Miss Cavell was arrested on August 5th. Apparently it was not till August 31st that the American Minister heard of the arrest.

Prevarications

He wrote instantly to the German authorities, but it was not till September 12th that he received a reply. On that date the American Minister was informed that the charge was of assisting British and French soldiers and Belgians of military age to cross the frontier in order to take up arms against the German army. A Belgian lawyer had already been employed by her friends to defend her. The trial took place on the 7th and the 8th of October. Sentence was deferred.

The American Minister received an undertaking that he would be informed of the result of the trial in good time, and this promise was repeated at six o'clock on the evening of October 11th. At eight o'clock on the evening of that same day—more fateful than he realised at the moment—the American Minister learned from an outside source that sentence of death had been passed on Miss Cavell at five o'clock, and that she was to be executed at two o'clock on the following morning.

At once the American Minister exerted himself to use the few remaining hours left to him by the shortness of the notice to save the life of Miss Cavell. He got a petition for pardon drawn up and sent to the German authorities; he sent the Secretary of his Legation to seek out the Spanish Ambassador, and the two went to the Director of Civil Affairs, the Baron von der Lancken, to beg for a postponement of the execution. The Baron at first denied that sentence had been passed or was to be carried out during the night; but he was induced, apparently, to make inquiry, and then had to avow that the statements were correct. It required some urging to induce him to ask by telephone for mercy from the German Governor. The Governor replied that he had, after "mature deliberation," decided not to intervene. Accordingly, Miss Cavell was executed at the appointed hour.



Miss Edith CAVELL



One Colon stamp of Costa Rica issued to commemorate the diamond jubilee of the Red Cross Movement, and featuring both Edith Cavell and Florence Nightingale.

Nurse Edith Cavell.

Special labels produced in sheets with multiple designs, apparently just four in all, and published by Winox Limited, of Richmond, Surrey, England.



Cinderella items which are quite sought after for their thematic appeal, particularly for Zeppelin and Shipping types. Normally produced in two operations with the central vignette in black. The above example has both the vignette and border in grey-black.

Nurse Edith Cavell.



Special label produced in remembrance
together with real photograph type picture postcard
showing the Tomb of Miss Cavell.



Tomb of Miss Edith Cavell
killed by the Germans 12 October 1915
at the National Shooting Plain

Nurse Edith Cavell.

Nurse Cavell was regarded as a heroine by the allies for her actions during the First World War, both in her treatment of the injured, and for her assistance to those who sought to get back to the allied lines without capture.



Two examples of propaganda postcards produced shortly after the end of the War which show vividly what the Belgians thought of her having been killed (murdered) by the Germans on the 12th, August, 1915.

Nurse Edith Cavell.

Special labels produced in sheets of multiple designs with the central vignette in black and the border in various coloureds. All anti-German Propaganda types and published by Winox Ltd, of Richmond, Surrey, England.



Nurse Edith Cavell.

Patriotic silk postcard, plain type, asking us Not to Forget Miss Cavell, heroine nurse of World War I. Used with pencilled message only and sent under cover.



Unused Belgian produced postcard showing the monument to Edith Cavell, and one of her colleagues Marie Depage, situated outside the Edith Cavell School in Forest.



Nurse Edith Cavell.



Complete pane of eight labels from a specially produced booklet commemorating Nurse Cavell. Sold in aid of Red Cross Funds and each calling her the Martyred Nurse and with anti-German propaganda.

Nurse Edith Cavell.

1917, August 12th.

Soldier's cover to England from the War Zone in Belgium and with manuscript S.M. Soldier's endorsement at the top.

No stamp was necessary but a patriotic label featuring Nurse Cavell has been applied in lieu and this has been "cancelled" by a bilingual Belgian Military-post datestamp, No 4.



These labels were produced in aid of Red Cross funds and were sold in specially prepared booklets containing panes of eight labels.

Nurse Edith Cavell.

Heroine nurse of World War I and executed by the Germans on the 12th August, 1915. She was honoured by several Countries in a number of different ways.



E. Cavell

"I have seen death so often that it is not strange or painful to me. I am glad to die for my Country."

BRUSSELS, October 12th, 1915.

Silk postcard, printed on the actual silk, showing Nurse Cavell with her two dogs, and believed produced in France.



Abide with me; fast falls the eve tide.

THE MARTYR NURSE

Tuck's "phototype" picture postcard of "The Martyr Nurse"; having a sub-heading "Carte Postale" for use on the Continent. Unused.

Jarrolds' Chrome Photo Series postcard showing five different vignettes of Edith, her birthplace and her home Parish Church at Swardston, the Memorial monument and her grave in Norwich.

Used from Norwich to London on 14th September, 1937.

EDITH CAVELL
1865-1915
Nursing in the Great War

NURSE EDITH CAVELL was the daughter of the Rev. Mr. Cavell, who was a clergyman in the parish of St. Andrew's, Norwich. She was born on 4th October 1865, and was educated at the Norwich School. During the Great War she served as a nurse in Belgium, and was executed by the Germans on 12th October 1915. Her body was buried in the German cemetery at Tyne, Belgium, but was later re-interred in the cemetery of St. Andrew's, Norwich.

Belgian Sanatoriums, Isolation Hospitals and Nursing Colleges (First Series).
Sheet of labels printed by heliogravure by Jean Malvaux of Brussels and sold in aid of such establishments. Edith Cavell is remembered by the "Edith Cavell Nursing College in Brussels; the centre label in the fourth vertical column.

25 VUES DE SANATORIUMS ET PRÉVENTORIUMS BELGES.

25 AANZICHTEN VAN SANATORIA EN PREVENTORIA IN BELGIË.

HÉLIO ETAB. JEAN MALVAUX

Belgian Sanatoriums, Isolation Hospitals and Nursing

Colleges (Second Issue)

Sheet of Charity labels, in red, and sold in aid of these establishments. The Edith Cavell Nursing College is shown on the second label on the top row.

25 VIES DE SANATORIUMS ET PRÉVENTORIUMS BELGES - SERIE 2



25 AANZICHTEN VAN SANATORIA EN PREVENTORIA IN BELGIE - 2^{de} REEKS

Valentine's photographic type picture postcard of the Edith Cavell Memorial in the centre of Norwich, since removed to the outside of the Cathedral. Unused.

Small coloured postcard showing Edith's grave which is situated in the Cathedral grounds, between the Church of St Luke the Physician and St Saviours, just outside the south wall. Unknown publisher - unused.

