



Dame Kathleen Raven 1910-1999

Nurse

Kathleen Raven was born on 9 November 1910 - the year Florence Nightingale died. She trained at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London in the early 1930s and was Night Superintendent during the Blitz. She emerged with the nickname "pocket battleship".

She was appointed Matron at the LGI in 1949 and established one of the first assistant nurse training schemes to be run in association with a teaching hospital.

She succeeded in maintaining a high standard of work in a happy atmosphere and worked to improve the working conditions of all grades of staff both under her direct control and nationally. The House Committee and Board of Governors responded favourably to many requests to improve conditions for the nursing staff including a reduction in nursing hours.

Sisters with many years of service at the LGI were given personal sitting rooms and she introduced "Beau Parlours" where nurses could entertain their boyfriends.

Miss Raven showed vision and foresight, recognising the value of study and refresher courses and encouraged staff to take advantage of them. Monthly study days for Sisters were introduced to attempt to produce uniformity of training for student nurses.

She took an active part in national nursing affairs, serving on many important committees and was a member of the General Nursing Council of England and Wales.

In 1957 Miss Raven was appointed to the Ministry of Health and was Chief Nurse from 1958-1972. She was instrumental in introducing Intensive Care Units into the UK in 1961.

Appointed D.B.E. in 1968 and appointed Vice President of the Royal College of Nursing in 1972.

In 1997 she endowed the Kathleen Raven Chair in Clinical Nursing at Leeds University.

Dame Kathleen retained an interest in the LGI Nurses' League and was Vice President.

