



Amy Hill Autograph Book Introduction



Photo by Hamilton,
Ralph Hill,

V.A. HOSPITAL, CLEVE HILL, DOWNEND.

Amy Hill was a VAD nurse.

Cleve House, then owned by Mr and Mrs Cave, was converted into a hospital and used throughout the war for convalescing soldiers.

It was staffed by Red Cross nurses of the local VAD or Voluntary Aided Detachment.

Here is Amy at home with her family. Amy is on the right in the darker dress; her sister Winifred is on the left and their mother Caroline Hill is in the front. One of her brothers' stands behind, possibly Arthur.

Amy lost two of her four brothers in 'The Great War' within weeks of each other, her eldest brother Arthur and her nearest brother Harold. She named her first son Harold.



Wounded soldiers would come off the hospital trains with the mud of Flanders still on them. Nurses like Amy had to clean them up and look after them. Some of them were only 17 years old or less, most were 19 years or older. Women were not allowed to fight, so this was something Amy could do.

Convalescing Soldiers This is one of the wards where Amy worked with some of the patients. These soldiers needed things to do to, Amy gave them her autograph book to write in.



Some wrote poems, others drew pictures and cartoons.



Some were too ill and shocked to write more than their name, regiment and where they were wounded. Look closely at the one in the nearest bed, there are very few smiles.



One of the drawings could be of this room, see the wall lamp and the notice behind the bed? It is in one of the drawings.

As they got better they were organised concerts and outings to aid their recovery.

The Cleve Hill hospital was open throughout the war. For Amy it was an experience that coloured her life as she went on to marry one of the Australian soldiers she had nursed and lived most of her life in Australia.

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