McKENZIE, Nurse R. C.

Rebecca Clarissa MacKenzie was born in Tyabb in 1875 to John MacKenzie and Rebecca Pascoe. She had four brothers and four sisters. Rebecca studied nursing at the Ear and Eye Hospital, East Melbourne between 1898 and 1901 and then at the Melbourne General Hospital, Parkville, 1902-1905. Later she set up her own private nursing practice. The 1912 Electoral Roll lists her as a nurse, living at 236 Faraday Street, Carlton.

When war broke out, the Australian Army Nursing Service could not cope with the number of Australian nurses who wanted to volunteer. Some nurses, not willing to wait for a vacancy, paid their own way to England to join the British nursing services.

In 1915 Nurse Rebecca MacKenzie sailed to London on SS *Omrah* to join the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve (QAIMNSR). She was 40 years old. By the end of the war, more than 260 Australian nurses had served overseas with QAIMNSR.

Sister Mackenzie was sent to the St George's Military Hospital, Malta for 18 months, and then to the Armenian Refugee Hospital in Salonica. She returned home to Melbourne in 1920, and continued nursing, initially living back in Carlton and later in Hawthorn, Caulfield and St Kilda. The 1943 Electoral Roll showed she was living at 74 Wilson Street North Carlton. She died in Heidelberg in 1961.

References:
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