

# Glover, Hannah Elizabeth (c. 1855 - 1946)

**Born** c. 1855 England

**Died** 1946 Australia

**Occupation** Nurse

*Written by Shurlee Swain, Australian Catholic University for the Australian Dictionary of Biography*

Elizabeth Glover was born in England in the mid 1850s and trained as a nurse at the Winchester and Queen Charlotte Hospitals before migrating to Victoria<sup>1</sup> in order to take charge of the St Kilda Nurses' Home and, later, the Melbourne Nurses' Home. She was also, for a time, assistant matron at the Melbourne Hospital where she 'earned a reputation as an astute administrator and disciplinarian' (Grehan, p.198). At the beginning of the twentieth century she went into business on her own account establishing the Mena Private Hospital in East Melbourne, leaving after twelve months to establish the larger St Ives Private Hospital which she ran for many years.

Glover was a leader of the profession in Australia, a founder and inaugural secretary of the Royal Victorian Trained Nurses' Association in 1903 and acting as managing director of the associated club. She represented Victoria on the Federated Council of Nurses when it sought to affiliate with the International Council of Nurses in 1914. A member of the Nurses Association Board from 1903 to 1941, Glover was insistent that nurses should see themselves as members of a profession rather than a trade. In response to a call from Vida Goldstein that conditions for nurses should be improved she replied: 'We are professional women and work for the benefit of mankind not for twelve hours but twenty-four hours if the necessity arises' (quoted in Godden, p. 177). 'A nurse's life was necessarily one of self-sacrifice, and unless a woman recognised that fact it would be as well for her not to enter the nursing profession' (*Brisbane Courier*, 23 April 1903). She argued for increasing the educational qualifications of nurses, but resisted moves towards central control, arguing instead for the autonomy of matrons (*Horsham Times*, 12 September 1905).

In 1904 Glover was appointed by the Federal Government to establish the Australian Army Nurses' Reserve from which the nurses sent to World War I were drawn. She stood down from this position in 1913 but when war was declared was approached to become matron of Australia's first field hospital, an appointment which she refused. When illness broke out in the Broadmeadows camp Glover argued for the need for trained nurses to be appointed dismissing suggestions that they would be at risk in such an environment (*Argus*, 15 May 1915). Throughout the war she used the resources of the Trained Nurses' club to organise the collection and distribution of comforts to nurses posted overseas and was one of the founders of the Edith Cavell Trust, designed to care for nurses on their return, arguing that 'nurses deserved as much consideration as soldiers' (*Leader*, 13 November 1915).

In 1908 Glover established the Kerami guest house in Marysville. She became an active member of the local tourist association and was acclaimed for her 'energy and enterprise' (*Riverine Herald*, 31 December 1915). In this capacity she successfully lobbied government to fund walking tracks in the district, one of which was given her name. She died in 1946.

## Published Resources

### Book Sections

- Godden, Judith, "'For the Benefit of Mankind': Nightingale's Legacy and Hours of Work in Australian Nursing, 1868 - 1939", in Rafferty, Ann Marie and Robinson, Jane (eds), *Nursing History and the Politics of Welfare*, Routledge, London, England, 1996, pp. 177 - 190.

### Journal Articles

- Grehan, Madonna, "'From the Sphere of Sarah Gampism': The Professionalisation of Nursing and Midwifery in Colonial Victoria", *Nursing Inquiry*, vol. 11, no. 3, 2004, pp. 192-201.

### Online Resources

- 'Nurses and their Hours', *The Brisbane Courier* (Queensland), 23 April 1903, p. 9, <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/19231611>.

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<sup>1</sup> From her obituary in the *Advocate*, she arrived about 1897.