

# An Untold Story: How The Royal Army Medical Corps Saved Lives During the Second World War

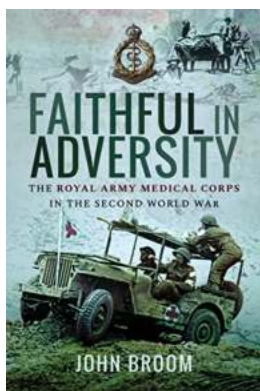


The Second World War, one of the deadliest conflicts in human history, left behind countless tales of heroism and sacrifice. While the brave soldiers on the

battlefield often steal the spotlight, it is important not to overlook the tireless efforts of the medical personnel who worked diligently to save lives. In this article, we delve into the enduring contributions of The Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) during the Second World War.

## The Royal Army Medical Corps: A Historical Overview

The Royal Army Medical Corps, formed in 1898, played a crucial role in providing medical support to the British Army during times of conflict. Comprising of doctors, nurses, stretcher bearers, and medical orderlies, the RAMC was well-prepared to tackle the immense challenges presented by the Second World War.



### Faithful in Adversity: The Royal Army Medical Corps in the Second World War

by Abraham Rabinovich (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 23981 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 431 pages  
Lending : Enabled



## Medical Challenges on the Battlefield

The horrors of war brought forth unprecedented medical challenges. From treating gunshot wounds and shrapnel injuries to combating diseases, the RAMC had to adapt and evolve to tend to the needs of the soldiers on the front lines.

The widespread use of tanks and heavy artillery during the Second World War led to severe casualties, resulting in limb amputations being a common occurrence. The RAMC became proficient in managing these challenging cases, providing amputees with prosthetics and rehabilitation to help them reintegrate into society.

Diseases also posed a significant threat to soldiers' lives. The RAMC played a pivotal role in preventing and treating diseases such as malaria, dysentery, and trench fever, which were prevalent in the harsh conditions of the war. Their efforts helped ensure soldiers remained fit to fight.

## **Emergency Medical Services and Field Ambulance Units**

In order to efficiently provide medical aid on the battlefield, the RAMC established Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Field Ambulance Units. Comprising of highly trained medical personnel, these units worked tirelessly, often under unimaginable circumstances, to save lives.

The EMS played a crucial role in evacuating wounded soldiers from the front lines to casualty clearing stations and field hospitals. Equipped with mobile operating theaters, they were able to perform life-saving surgeries almost immediately after injuries occurred.

Field Ambulance Units were responsible for providing initial medical treatment to wounded soldiers on the battlefield. These units operated close to the action, often risking their lives to ensure the wounded received the care they needed. Their bravery and resilience were instrumental in reducing the mortality rate among injured troops.

## **Medical Innovation and Advancements**

The Second World War spurred significant medical innovations and advancements. The RAMC played a role in this by embracing new techniques and technologies to improve patient care. One of the pivotal developments during this time was the and widespread use of penicillin as an antibiotic. This groundbreaking discovery revolutionized the treatment of infectious diseases and saved countless lives.

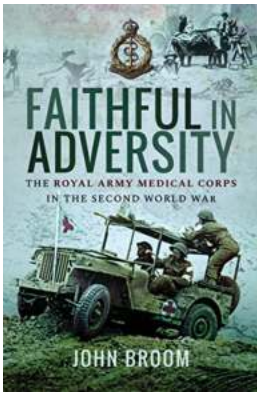
The RAMC also championed the use of blood transfusion and pioneered the establishment of blood banks near the front lines. This allowed for immediate access to blood when needed, reducing the mortality rate from severe bleeding and shock.

## **The Role of Nurses in the RAMC**

The nurses within the RAMC played an integral role in providing compassionate and dedicated care to the wounded soldiers. Often working in challenging conditions, these brave women showcased unwavering commitment and resilience.

The 1944 film, 'The Gentle Sex,' highlighted the arduous work of RAMC nurses during the war. The film shed light on the diverse roles nurses played, ranging from frontline medical care to providing emotional support to soldiers grappling with the traumas of war.

The Royal Army Medical Corps left an indelible mark on the history of the Second World War. Through their unwavering dedication, innovation, and bravery, these unsung heroes saved countless lives. As we remember the sacrifices made during this tumultuous period, it is crucial to ensure their stories are told and celebrated for generations to come.



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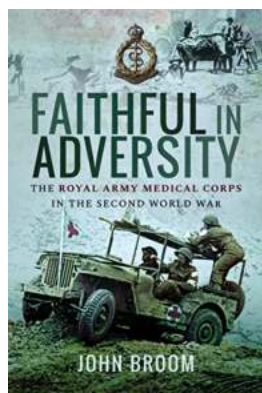
An account of the World War II heroics of the corps that “revolutionized medical care for British troops . . . Most Highly Recommended” (Firetrench).

On 28 September 1945, Field Marshal Montgomery expressed his “admiration and high regard to a corps whose contribution to victory has been beyond all calculation.”

The Royal Army Medical Corps was active during all engagements in the Second World War. From the defeat in Norway in 1940 to the hell of Dunkirk and the fall of France, from the chaos of the retreat through Greece and Crete to the war’s turning point in the vast deserts of North Africa, from the intensity of D-Day and the Normandy campaign to the reverses at Arnhem and the eventual liberation of the German death camps and Far East prison camps, RAMC personnel were frequently at the heart of the action, risking their lives to provide medical support to a mobile army in a highly mechanized war. For those taken prisoner by the enemy, maintaining the physical and psychological well-being of their fellow

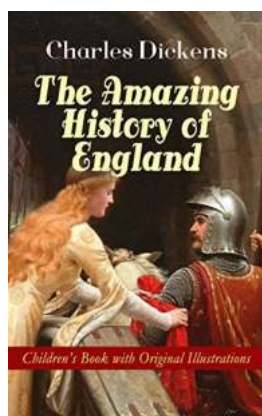
captives became an urgent necessity, while for a small number of exceptionally brave and hardy souls, attachment to commando units saw them provide medical support for some of the most daring raids of the war. Nearly 3,000 RAMC doctors and orderlies were killed during the war as a result of enemy action or exposure to dangerous tropical diseases.

Using previously unpublished archival material and personal family papers, this book sheds fresh light on the experience of the regulars, volunteers and conscripts who gave expression to the motto of the RAMC: Faithful in Adversity.



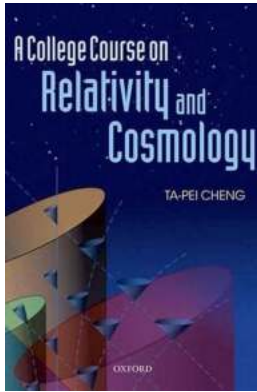
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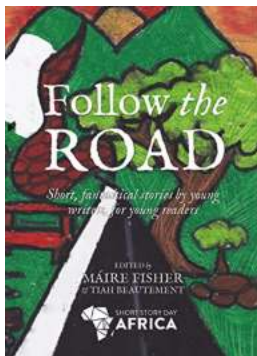
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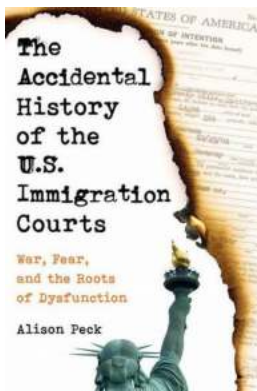
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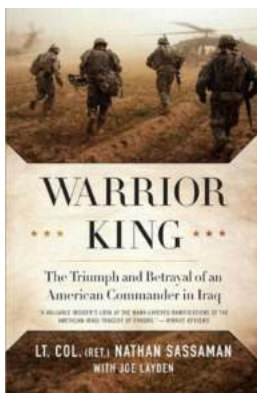
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