

Edith Cavell: A life and death remembered



Author keen to recognise forgotten heroes

It is easy to forget that Edith Cavell was not alone in helping hundreds of allied soldiers escape German-occupied Belgium.

In August 1915, 34 other people involved in the underground resistance movement were arrested by the Germans and many of those went on trial alongside Cavell just a few months later.

On October 7, in the Senate Chamber of the Belgian parliament building, 22 men and 13 women stood in a military trial charged with various crimes including conveying soldiers to the enemy, circulating propaganda pamphlets or assisting in the illegal transmission of letters.

And while many of them received harsh sentences, including five to death, their names are mostly unknown.

Author Monica Kendall, right, is one of a handful of people looking to change that by giving all of the individuals who aided the allied troops



the equal recognition they deserve. She said: "Edith Cavell was a marvellous lady, but it is a shame that all of the others involved are ignored. That is why I am trying to bang the drum about them all."

"There is this whole story that has been distorted by propaganda, and it is like no one else other than Edith existed. There was a whole network of people who were



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■ A postcard of the execution of Nurse Edith Cavell. Picture: SUBMITTED

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working together, which is much more interesting.”

Ms Kendall, 61, of London, is the distant relative of Amy Hodson – a British schoolgirl whose family lived in Brussels during the war and

knew Edith Cavell, as well as others involved in the underground network. She used extracts from the schoolgirl’s diary to learn more about those who went on trial.

Ms Kendall added: “They were all helping to do what they felt was right. And what was extraordinary, was that all these different people of all different backgrounds were help

to get these guys to safety. “Unfortunately they were eventually infiltrated and that was their downfall.”

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The woman who helped 800 allied soldiers

A soldier’s account of Edith Cavell