Nurses on the Frontline in WWI
Arika Akhtar, Jessica Plaskon, and Nicole Torres
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Introduction
World War I began in 1914, and ended in November 1918. This war can also be known as The Great War, the War of Wars, or the First World War. During this war, there were over thirty thousand nurses on the frontline. Nurses played a significant role in WWI through their lifestyles, roles, and accomplishments.

Roles
- During World War I, women gained employment through nursing.
- The medicine used to treat injuries varied from marijuana, and mercury to opium.
- Black nurses also played a big role during WWI; not only did they fight for the country but also for civil rights.
- More than 2,286 nurses served overseas and more than 200 army nurses lost their lives due to the worldwide influenza epidemic of 1918.
- African American nurses created their own organization because of their exclusion from the American Nurses Association (ANA).

Lifestyles
- During World War One, nurses were on duty twenty-four/seven.
- They lived in conditions that were tough because the nurses had to clean up wounds, give treatments with limited supplies and perform minor surgeries.
- Nurses who drove the ambulances had to deal with the weather, which at times was hard because the roads were horrible.
- Being involved in this type of lifestyle proved to be physically as well as emotionally draining.
- The nurses had to deal with opposition from those who opposed the participation of women in the war as nurses.

"Food was getting beautifully less and less, meat very occasional, and lived for the most part on beans and potatoes and soup made of the same flavored with many fryings in the frying pan" – Esmée Sartorius

Accomplishments
- The Distinguished Service Medal, the Army’s highest combat award, was given to several nurses.
- The Distinguished Service Cross, the Army’s second highest military honor, was given to at least three nurses.
- The French Croix de Guerre was awarded to more than twenty nurses.
- Black nurse, Adah Belle Samuels Thoms, was the first person to be awarded the Mary Mahoney Medal.
- Clara Barton founded the American Red Cross in 1881.
- The American Red Cross established hospitals, ambulances, and recruited nurses. Also, gave aid to veterans and their families.
- Adah Belle Samuels Thoms worked for acceptance into the American Red Cross for black nurses.
- Adah Belle Samuels Thoms and Mary Eliza Mahoney got the war department in media to give black nurses recognition.
- Twenty-five black nurses are on the New York Age.

Research Question
During WWI, what impact did nurses have on the frontline?

Conclusion
During World War I, women gained a lot of opportunities in fields that were male dominated. They sacrificed their lives to save these men fighting in war. African American nurses now have gained rights in this field as well as white nurses. This can be shown through their accomplishments during this war.

References