

Mary Seacole

Mary Jane Grant was born in Jamaica in 1805. Her mother was Jamaican, and her father was a Scottish man in the British Army. Her mother was a nurse and ran a boarding house. She helped heal sick people. Mary began helping her mother when she was young. She learned many of her nursing skills from her mother.

Mary married Edwin Seacole. They traveled to many places together. Mary learned many things about caring for the sick during her travels. The things she learned, plus what she had learned from her mother, helped her treat people with diseases everywhere she went. Mary's husband and mother both passed away. After her mother's death, Mary took over the boarding house by herself.

In 1853, the Crimean War began. Mary heard stories of how badly wounded soldiers needed medical care. Mary was a skilled nurse and felt she could help. She volunteered to take care of the wounded men. Mary was turned away. She was told her help wasn't needed. Mary believed this happened because she had brown skin. At that time, people were often treated differently and unfairly due to their skin color. Mary volunteered many times but was told "no" each time. Eventually, Mary paid to sail to the war zone where she set up a hospital known as the "British Hotel."

There she cared for many injured soldiers. She did not let anything stand in her way.

When the war ended, she received a medal of bravery. In 2016, a statue was built to commemorate her in London.



Questions

1. Where did Mary learn to treat sick people?
 - her husband
 - her mother
 - when she was in college
 - at the "British Hotel"
2. When did the Crimean War begin?
 - 1805
 - 1836
 - 1853
 - 2016
3. Why did Mary receive a medal?
 - She was brave, persistent, and helpful.
 - She was smart, kind, and gentle.
 - She was beautiful, tall, and had long hair.
 - She was a good public speaker, smart, and had a nursing degree.
4. Which statement from the text best supports your answer to number 3?
 - "Her mother was a nurse and ran a boarding house."
 - "Mary's husband and mother both passed away."
 - "Mary began helping her mother when she was young."
 - "She did not let anything stand in her way."
5. Why wasn't Mary allowed to treat soldiers during the Crimean War?

6. Can you think of a time when you had to be persistent? Write about it.

Answers

1. Where did Mary learn to treat sick people?

- her husband
- her mother**
- when she was in college
- at the “British Hotel”

2. When did the Crimean War begin?

- 1805
- 1836
- 1853**
- 2016

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4. Which statement from the text best supports your answer to number 3?

- “Her mother was a nurse and ran a boarding house.”
- “Mary’s husband and mother both passed away.”
- “Mary began helping her mother when she was young.”
- “She did not let anything stand in her way.”**

5. Why wasn’t Mary allowed to treat soldiers during the Crimean War?

She had dark skin. People at that time were treated poorly based on the color of their skin.

6. Can you think of a time when you had to be persistent? Write about it.

Answers will vary.