

125th Anniversary of the NSDAR Hospital Corps

*Celebrating the 125th Anniversary of the DAR Hospital Corps, DAR is honoring unsung nurses everywhere. This is our chance to say **Thank You** to all those that are in the profession currently and retired.*

The Spanish–American War was a ten-week conflict that occurred in 1898. Cuba had been wanting independence from Spain since 1895, an effort largely supported by the United States. To ensure the safety of American citizens and property in Cuba, the United States sent the battleship USS *Maine* to Havana in late January. The *Maine* exploded and was destroyed with large loss of life. American newspapers whipped up war fever, and held Spain responsible for the ship's destruction. The United States Congress enacted a joint resolution demanding independence for Cuba, and President William McKinley signed it. In response, Spain severed diplomatic relations and declared war on April 23. On April 25, Congress declared that a state of war.

The Spanish–American War began on April 25, 1898, and ended on August 12, 1898. While 2,910 Americans died during the war, just 345 were combat deaths. The rest died of disease. The U.S. military barred women from serving in any capacity prior to the war. Although the Army had 791 male nurses; there were too few to provide needed care. Soldiers resisted being transferred from combat units into the nursing corps. Congress quickly authorized the military to hire female nurses—but on contract, not as military personnel. The army reached out specifically to the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), to recruit women nurses. Dr. Anita Newcomb McGee, was asked to lead the DAR's recruitment efforts.

Source: *Highlights in the History of the Army Nurse Corps*; Editors: Carolyn M. Feller, Lieutenant Colonel, AN, USAR and Debora r. Cox, Major, AN. U.S. Army Center of Military History, Washington, DC 2001



Provided by the
Iowa Society Daughters of the American Revolution
Commemorative Events 2022-2024