

Europe's Highest Paid Stage Favorites Entertaining Her Fighting Soldiers

How They Devote Themselves to Nursing the Wounded and Amusing the Men in the Trenches

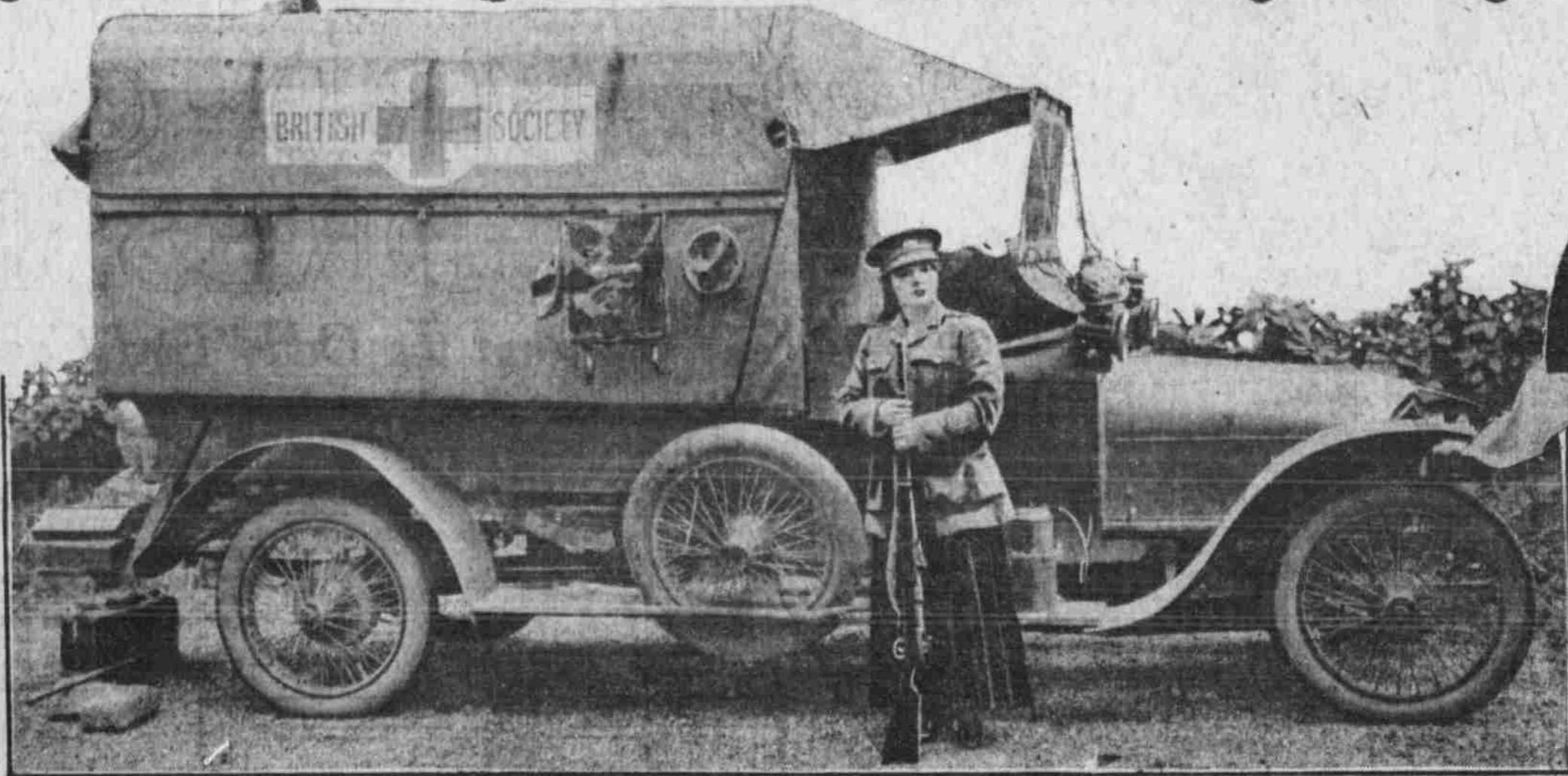


PHOTO BY OTTO SALOMO

"PIOU-PIOU," as the French common soldier is called, and Tommy Atkins, as the English private is nick-named, though much of the time half frozen in the trenches of the allies—and frequently food for German powder—nevertheless are having in one way a very enjoyable and unusual time. These common soldiers of the French and English armies find themselves being nursed and entertained by the most famous and highest-paid actresses, singers, dancers and beauties of Europe.

Noble duchesses visit them at the front with gifts of pipes, cigarettes and tobacco. Famous headliners in vaudeville warble music hall ditties to them in trenches.

The Photograph Below Shows Ida Rubenstein, the Idol of the Parisian Stage, Entertaining in her Nurse's Dress a Wounded Turco. The Poet D'Annunzio Threatened Suicide Because Mlle. Rubenstein Would Not Smile Upon Him Half so Charming as She Is Smiling for the Poor Soldier. On the left Is Seen Mlle. Rubenstein in One of the Very Different Dresses She Wore Before the War.

An Unusual Photograph from France Showing Anna Held, the Well-Known Musical Comedy Star, About to Start for the Trenches in Her Ambulance. Miss Held Is in Her Service Uniform. Her Gun, However, Is Only to Be Used for Defense. German Helmets Decorate the Car's Front, and on the Right Is Anna Held in One of the Frivolous Dresses She Wore Before the War Sobered Her.



And when they are wounded and sent to the hospital they have the joy of being nursed by grand opera prima donnas, ladies of the celebrated Russian ballet and prize beauties of the Paris stage.

Literally "Piou-Piou" and Tommy have turned the tables on fortune's darlings of the opposite sex. Those pipes and cigarettes and tobacco, and warm socks knitted by fair hands, and songs heard in the trenches which they never would have heard otherwise, and tender nursing in the hospital, exalt them in the same way that applause in the theatre and offerings of flowers, jewels, pet dogs of pedigree and limousines formerly exalted the givers.

"Piou-Piou" and Tommy have been transformed into prima donnas, and great singers and dancers whose notes and pirouettes have a market value of a dollar or so apiece are the first to do them honor.

Mina, Calve, the idolized Carmen of New York Metropolitan Opera audiences, is a Red Cross nurse in the French hospitals at Toulon.

It is reported that Calve is an excellent nurse, shirking none of the disagreeable duties of that profession. Her greatest reward comes with "Piou-Piou's" amazement and delight on learning that it is the great Calve herself who has just sung to him at his bedside the "Cigarette Song" from "Carmen." Calve enjoys it as much as "Piou-Piou" does. She writes about it to her friends:

"I sing ditties to the wounded to soothe them and lull them to sleep when they are getting better—sweet songs of France that make them shed tears of joy, and war songs for those who, after the healing of their wounds, are going back to defend poor France."

Ida Rubenstein, most famous of all Russian dancers, whom D'Annunzio loved, and for whom he wrote his drama "Saint Sebastien," presented to France in Paris a fully equipped hospital, including her own services as nurse. It is said that she devotes not less than sixteen hours out of each twenty-four to these duties—Ida Rubenstein, who up to the beginning of the war was probably the most luxurious, petted and spoiled stage beauty in Europe!

Mme. Lina Cavalleri, probably the most celebrated opera singer and beauty in the world, is devoting all her time to the care of wounded soldiers in French hospitals. Although not a robust woman, she performs all the duties of a nurse. And when her grateful charges are convalescent she delights in astonishing them with such singing as they never dreamed of hearing—and never would have been able to hear without first serving as a target for a German bullet.

During holiday week Tommy Atkins, at the battle front in Flanders, enjoyed a perfect riot of English plum pudding and English music hall entertainment. Seymour Hicks and his London theatrical company, together with half a hundred vaudeville artists, crossed the channel and motored to the firing line in Belgium. Their arrival threw a whole army corps of Tommies into spasms of joy.

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Lina Cavalleri, in the Costume in Which She Nurses and Sings to Wounded Soldiers.