

Wartime Medics



The annals of the victorious Fatherland Liberation War is decorated with the feats of the medics of the Korean People's Army who devoted their blood, patches of their skin and even their lives without hesitation to save their priceless comrades-in-arms on the burning hills.

Honour of Frontline Medic

Newspaper *Rodong Sinmun* dated January 23, Juche 40 (1951) carried a medic's notes titled *On a Snowing Evening*. It read in part:

The thermometer which I measured a soldier's temperature read 39 degrees. I thought I must give him an injection immediately. However, distilled water had run out. Having no other way, I decided to build fire and boil water to make distilled water. A few minutes later, water drops began to form on the lid of the sterilizer I had hung over the fire. ... Later, he recovered his health completely and went to the front again. Like this, I have treated about a hundred wounded soldiers over six months of the war. Whenever wounded soldiers whom I treated have recovered their health and go to the front again, I feel an infinite sense of honour and delight."

Assistant Doctor Who Has Been Thought to Be Dead

Enemy tanks crawled forward desperately, mashing the earth. However, the assistant doctor focused all her attention to a syringe. She had already drawn two syringefuls of blood from her and was injecting it to a wounded signalman. The tanks approached nearer and nearer, bullets and shells cracking here and there around.

However, she could not speed up the blood transfusion, and she must carry it through. When she finally finished and pushed the soldier up the slope, she felt a sudden pain on the right leg. A splinter hit her. She lost consciousness. Two days passed, and when she regained her consciousness, bleeding had been stopped naturally....

She was hardly visible under her two haversacks, first-aid kit, two rifles and pistol, and the large-built signaller on her back. However, she managed to move forward, clenching her teeth. It seemed that the more she advanced, the steeper the mountain path became. She moved on and on, sometimes on all fours and other times creeping, forcing her way through a dozen-kilometre-long distance in the enemy area. When she finally passed the enemy line with the wounded on her back, she lapsed into unconsciousness....

Scouts who were on their way to the enemy area on reconnaissance mission found a woman officer in a dead faint. One of them took a membership card of the Workers' Party of Korea out of her breast pocket, and shouted, "Look. This is the assistant doctor of the 3rd Regiment who has been thought to be dead!"

She was Ri Hung Ryong, an assistant doctor of the 3rd Regiment of the 45th Infantry Division, who had distinguished herself by treating 184 wounded soldiers alone so that they could go back to their positions on Height 1211.

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