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HOW DID MALTA BECOME ONE OF WW1'S BIGGEST HOSPITALS?

Presented by Kevin Fong

The nurse of the Mediterranean: Video transcript

Malta, a tiny speck of land in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea; an island with a medical tradition that can be traced back some 500 years.

During the First World War, Malta earned the name the Nurse of the Mediterranean with over 100,000 injured soldiers from all over the world pouring into her overflowing hospitals.

This was war on an industrial scale, with numbers of injured that no-one had seen before.

By the end of the war, there were 27 hospitals with over 25,000 beds filled with servicemen.

There's a difficult truth to face with what happened here in Malta during World War One. Medicine found itself profoundly out of step with the horrors that modern machines of warfare could bring.

Nevertheless, what was achieved here is simply remarkable, and despite the scale of the challenge, many thousands if not tens of thousands of allied soldiers came to owe their lives to the Nurse of the Mediterranean.