Ruth Hovey
Nurse, U.S. Army Medical Corps

Ruth Hovey grew up in Hartford, Connecticut. She went to nursing school in New York City and graduated in 1914. She was working at Hartford Hospital when the United States entered World War I in 1917. She signed up to go to France and work in a hospital treating soldiers injured in the war. There were 65 nurses and 26 doctors on her ship from New York to Europe. They stayed in England for a few days of training and then went to France to start their work.

The first hospital that Ruth Hovey worked at was big. Doctors and nurses treated over 1,000 patients a day there. After a year at that hospital, Ruth Hovey left to work at a smaller hospital closer to the fighting. One night the Germans started bombing the hospital. The doctors and nurses scrambled to find shelter for themselves and their patients. Explosions shook the hospital and a bomb destroyed part of the roof. Ruth Hovey stayed up all night and calmly took care of wounded soldiers. In the morning the nurses, doctors, and patients left the hospital for someplace safer. For the next three days Ruth Hovey and some of her friends worked day and night in an operating room at the new hospital. She wrote to her mother, "We simply had no time to think."

After the war, Ruth Hovey returned to her home in Hartford. She married one of the doctors she had worked with in France. In 1919 she was awarded the "Croix de Guerre" ("Cross of War") by the French government. Ruth Hovey received the medal for her brave actions during the bombing of the hut hospital. She was very proud of the award and always displayed it in her home.