

**SURGEON REAR-ADMIRAL EDWARD SUTTON (1870-1940). C.M.G., D.S.M. (U.S.A.),
R.N., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. (Eng.). - Deputy Director-General of the Naval Medical Service.**

"His commands were always happy ones; although small in stature his word was law and we all revered him."

British Medical Journal (1940)

Edward Sutton (1870-1940) [Epsom College 1883-1886] was a bachelor who, in retirement, became famous as an amateur grower of chrysanthemums, winning many first prizes, but as a serving naval officer he had a varied, distinguished and challenging medical career. He was the son of Dr H. G. Sutton of Sittingbourne, Kent, and after Epsom College he received his medical training at the London Hospital, qualifying M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. (Eng.) in 1893. He then joined the Royal Navy and within ten years was promoted to Staff Surgeon. In 1924 he was promoted to Surgeon Rear-Admiral, before retiring from the service in 1929. As surgeon on H.M.S. 'St. George' he served in the naval expedition under Admiral Sir Harry Rawson, C.B., which was sent to punish the King of Benin for the massacre of the political expedition of 1897, and which ended with the capture of Benin City. For his actions he received the General Service African Medal with clasp (1897). As surgeon on H.M.S. 'Bonaventure' Sutton organised the base hospital at Wei-hai-Wei Garrison (Port Edward) for the treatment of casualties in the advance to Peking under Admiral Sir H. H. Seymour, and received the China Medal. From 1911 until 1913 he was Principal Medical Officer of the East Indies Squadron, and gained a clasp for services in the Persian Gulf. In 1913 he was awarded the Sir Gilbert Blane Medal of the Royal College of Surgeons, a medal awarded annually for important advances in naval medicine. During the First World War he received the rarely awarded American decoration of Distinguished Service Medal, for services to the American destroyer fleet which was based at Queenstown, Cork.

After the First World War Edward Sutton was placed in charge of the Naval Hospital at Haulbowline, Queenstown (1918-1919), and from 1920 to 1923 he was appointed Deputy Director-General of the Naval Medical Service. In 1923 he was second in command of the Royal Naval Hospital, Haslar, and from 1926-1929 he was Principal Medical Officer at the Royal Naval Hospital, Chatham. He reached the rank of Surgeon Rear Admiral in 1924. Edward Sutton was the author of *The Fitting Out and Administration of a Naval Hospital Ship* (1918), which for many years was the standard textbook on the subject. In his obituary it was said: "I was fortunate enough to have served under him in the Royal Naval Hospital Ships 'Drina' and 'Plassey' for two and a half years with the Grand Fleet. His ability, integrity, sound common sense, tact, and good nature brought out the best in everyone, whether officer or rating. He was a good clinician, but his forte was administration, and he probably did his best work as such." In his student days, Edward Sutton was a member of the London Hospital Rugby XV.