

## FOREWORD

On 30 March 1996 the Liverpool Medical History Society convened a one-day meeting on 'Women in medicine during World War II'. Participants included fourteen women who had been students or in medical practice during this period and twenty-six others from fields as varied as sociology, women's history, higher education and medical history.

The meeting first heard Carol Dyhouse set the scene by delivering a paper on 'Women in higher education before the Second World War'. She was followed by six medical women recounting their experiences in a different area of medicine (as pre-clinical and clinical students, in hospitals, in the Forces, in general practice and in the Emergency Medical Service). In the second half of the meeting small group discussion on mutually agreed themes led to a plenary session in which experiences were pooled, contrasted and placed in a broader context. Finally, the medical women were invited to submit written accounts of their experiences during the war, with no restriction on length, style or content.

These accounts form the basis of the present publication with a new introduction by Carol Dyhouse. No attempt has been made to edit the accounts together thematically but an index has been added, as have two appendices, one consisting of notes on the minutes of the Liverpool Branch of the Medical Women's Federation between 1938 and 1945, the other a resumé of the plenary discussion which took place at the meeting.

*Christine Hillam*