

## FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE AND NURSING IN THE CRIMEA

Florence Nightingale (12 May 1820 – 13 August 1910) was a nurse who contributed to developing modern nursing practice and has set examples for nurses which are standards for today's profession. Her Environmental Theory in which she stated in her nursing notes that nursing "is an act of utilizing the environment of the patient to assist him in his recovery" that it involves the nurse's initiative to configure environmental settings appropriate for the gradual restoration of the patient's health, and that external factors associated with the patient's surroundings affect life or biologic and physiologic processes, and his development.

**Her notes on the Environmental factors affecting health include:**

- Pure fresh air- "to keep the air he breathes as pure as the external air without chilling him/her."
- Pure water- "well water of a very impure kind is used for domestic purposes. And when epidemic disease shows itself, persons using such water are almost sure to suffer."
- Effective drainage- "all the while the sewer maybe nothing but a laboratory from which epidemic disease and ill health is being installed into the house."
- Cleanliness- "the greater part of nursing consists in preserving cleanliness."
- Light (especially direct sunlight)- "the usefulness of light in treating disease is very important."

Any deficiency in one or more of these factors could lead to impaired functioning of life processes or diminished health status.

She was born in Nightingale, Italy. She was the younger of two children. Her British family belonged to elite social circles. Her father, William Shore Nightingale, a wealthy landowner who had inherited two estates—one at Lea Hurst, Derbyshire, and the other in Hampshire, Embley Park—when Nightingale was five years old. Her mother, Frances Nightingale, hailed from a family of merchants and took pride in socializing with people of prominent social standing. Despite her mother's interest in social climbing, Nightingale herself was reportedly awkward in social situations. She preferred to avoid being the centre of attention whenever possible. Strong-willed, Nightingale often butted heads with her mother, whom she viewed as overly controlling. Still, like many daughters, she was eager to please her mother. *"I think I am got something more good-natured and complying,"* Nightingale wrote in her own defence, concerning the mother-daughter relationship.

Nightingale was raised on the family estate at Lea Hurst, where her father provided her with a classical education, including studies in German, French and Italian. As for being home schooled by her parents and tutors, Nightingale gained excellence in Mathematics. From a very young age, she was active in philanthropy, ministering to the ill and poor people in the village neighbouring her family's estate. At seventeen, she made the decision to dedicate her life to medical care for the sick resulting in a lifetime commitment to speak out, educate, overhaul and sanitize the appalling health care conditions in England. Only announcing her decision to enter the field in 1844, following her desire to be a nurse was not easy for Nightingale. Her mother and sister were against her chosen career, but Nightingale stood strong and worked hard to learn more about her craft despite the society's expectation that she become a wife and mother. Despite the objections of her parents, Nightingale enrolled as a nursing student in 1844 at the Lutheran Hospital of Pastor Fliedner in Kaiserswerth, Germany.



Pastor Theodor Fliedner was in charge of the "Kaiserswerth" foundation in London. Fliedner brought four nuns along with him to the newly established hospital in Dalston. In 1850-and because of a disease that had spread in Jerusalem, the people of the city were in desperate need for help; at the same time, an official from "Kaiserswerth Foundation" travelled to Jerusalem to preach Christianity to the Jews; so Fliedner wrote a letter to Gobat asking him about the possibility of sending clerics to work in Jerusalem, and requesting to do that if possible. Upon that request, Gobat sent two female clerics to help as nurses and to work as teachers in the "Clerical School" in Jerusalem.

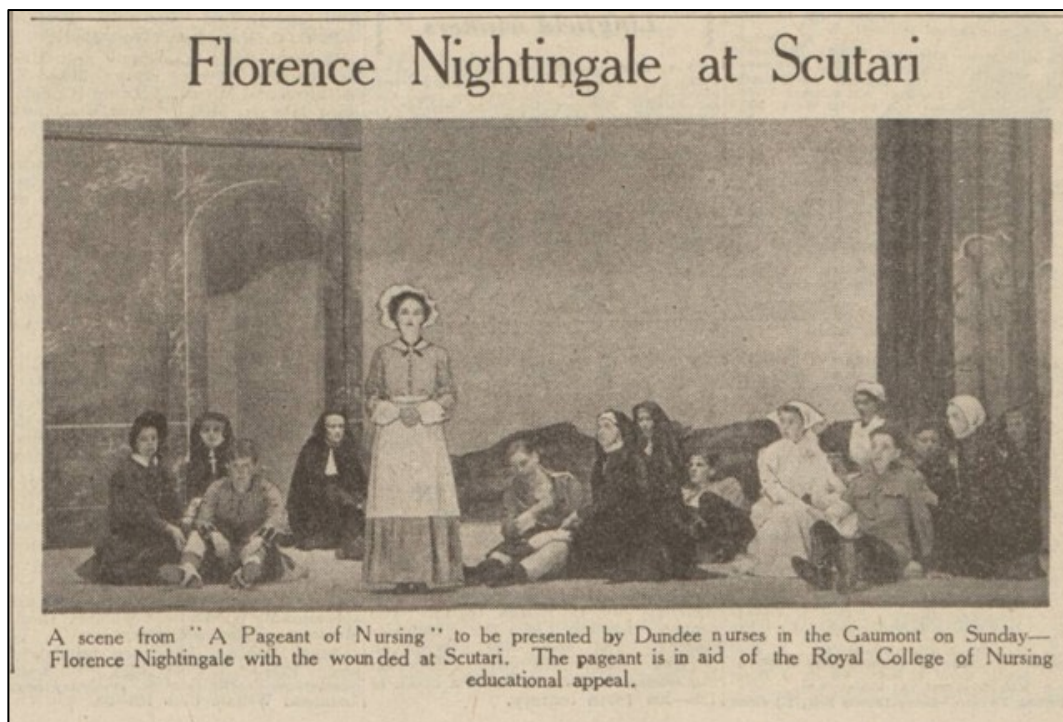
Due to contacts between Fliedner and the King of Prussia at that time, and upon request of the king, Fliedner sent another four female clerics to Jerusalem. It was also decided that a small Hospital be built to supply medical aids and services to the Arabs, in addition to a school for Palestinian and German girls. The King of Prussia-in addition to several other German, Dutch, and British foundations and organizations- supplied financial donations to supply the project.

On 17 April 1851, Pastor Fliedner had a meeting with four clerics in Jerusalem, and after several weeks of long search, they rented a house near the church of the "Holy Sepulchre". In this house Fliedner established the hospital and the "Girls' School". That was the beginning of an establishment for helping the Palestinian girls, and this great establishment is still standing high until this day, represented by the current Talitha Kumi.



### **Florence Nightingale, circa 1858**

In 1854, Britain was involved in the war against the Russians (Crimean War). British battlefield medical facilities were deplorable prompting Minister at War, Sidney Herbert, to appoint Nightingale to oversee the care of the wounded. She arrived in Constantinople, Turkey with a company of 38 nurses. The introduction of female nurses in the military hospitals was a major success. Sanitary conditions were improved while nurses worked as capable assistants to physicians and raised the morale of the British soldier by acting as bankers, sending the injured man's wages home, wrote letters to their families and read to the wounded.



The Crimean War began and soon reports in the newspapers were describing the desperate lack of proper medical facilities for wounded British soldiers at the front. Sidney Herbert, the war minister, already knew Nightingale, and asked her to oversee a team of nurses in the military hospitals in Turkey.

In 1854 she led an expedition of 38 women to take over the management of the barrack hospital at Scutari where she observed the disastrous sanitary conditions. With an incredible amount of hard work the nurses in Nightingales' charge brought the Scutari hospital into better order and 46 more nurses had arrived in the Crimea by December. Despite a rise in the number of nurses the workload was overwhelming. At one point less than 100 nurses had 10,000 men under their care. By February 1855 the death rate was running 42% due to defects in the sanitation system resulting in outbreaks of cholera and typhus fever. The War Office ordered immediate reforms in the sanitary system and by June the rate fell to 2%. The war ended with the fall of Sevastopol in early 1856, a key strategic town that has been held by the Russians for over 11 months, and the signing of The Treaty of Paris.



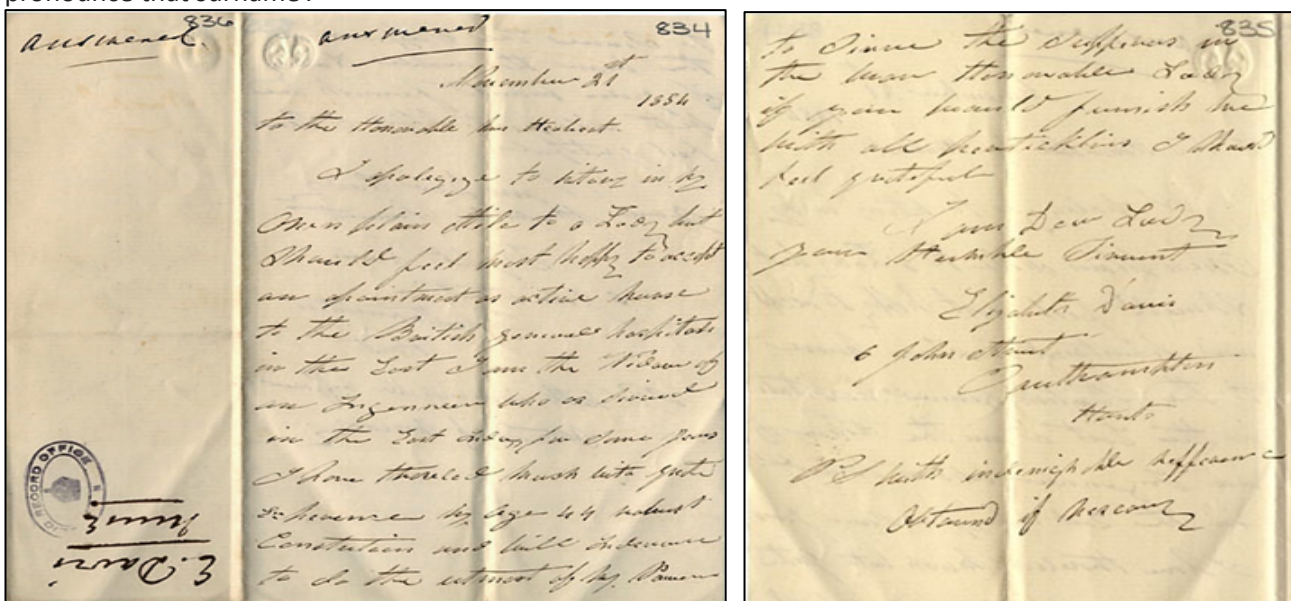


Photograph of Elizabeth Cadwaladyr. Used with permission from Betsy Cadwaladyr.

Elizabeth Cadwaladyr was one of sixteen children born to Dafydd Cadwaladyr, second son of Cadwaladr and Catrin Dafydd, and his wife Judith Erasmus. She was christened on 26 May 1789 at Llanycil parish church near Bala, Merionethshire. All that we know of her life comes from "The Autobiography of Elizabeth Davis, A Balaclava Nurse, Daughter of Dafydd Cadwaladyr".

Elizabeth (Betsy) spent her early years on the hill farm of Pen-Rhiw. The death of her mother when she was about five years old affected Betsy deeply, and in order to escape the strict regime imposed by her father, who was a Methodist preacher, and the elder sister who looked after the household following the death of their mother - and whom Betsy disliked intensely - she went to live with her father's landlord, Simon Lloyd of Plas-yn-dre when she was nine years old. There she was treated kindly and learnt 'all sorts of housework and needlework, in cooking and baking, in brewing, washing and ironing'.

She was also taught to read and write, to dance and play the harp and to speak English. She recounts in her autobiography how she got into trouble with her father for dancing while she still lived at home. 'He talked to me very gravely, and asked how he could go into the pulpit and speak of the wickedness of the world, while his own child did such things. He remarked that his other children did not want to go to dances, and he could not think why I did'. Betsy replied, 'I can't help it - when I hear music, something tickles my feet, and I can't keep them quiet'. Despite being happy living with the Lloyd family Betsy suddenly decided that she wanted to see the world, so she stole out of the house in the middle of the night and ran away to Chester where she had an aunt. The aunt gave her money to take the coach back to Bala, but instead Betsy took a package boat to Liverpool. She was about 14 years of age. Betsy found employment in domestic service in Liverpool, Chester and London at various times of her life, and her employers' travels enabled her to travel widely. It was while she was in Liverpool that she changed her name from Elizabeth Cadwaladyr to Elizabeth Davis 'on finding that the English people could not pronounce that surname'.

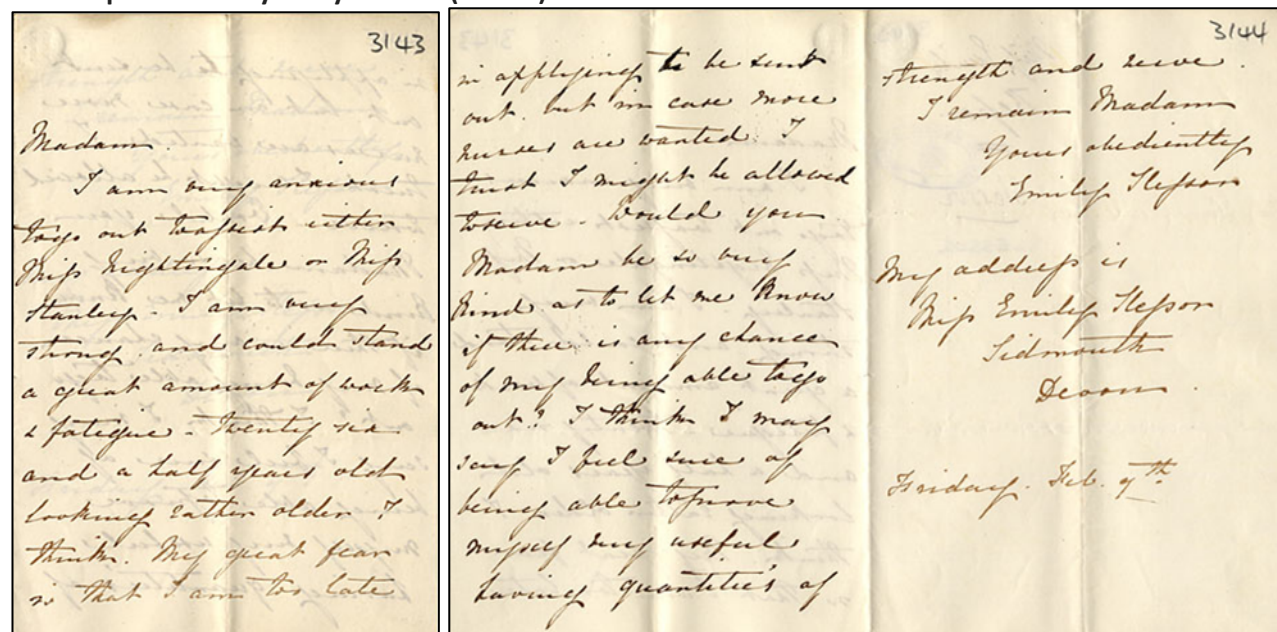


Detail from letter from Elizabeth Davis to the Honourable Mr Herbert. The letter is a request from Davis to become a nurse in the Crimea. Back in London she lost all her savings and later was 'deprived' of 'a fortune' promised her by her employer. She then took to nursing, first of all in Guy's Hospital and then nursing private patients, and as a result of reading one of William Howard Russell's newspaper accounts from the Crimean War of the suffering of the soldiers, she volunteered in 1854 for nursing service in the Crimea.

She joined a party of nurses and 'Sisters of Mercy' under a Miss Stanley and eventually reached Scutari. This was the main British Hospital and was under the control of Florence Nightingale. Strong-willed Betsy did not like Florence Nightingale and was angry at being made to mend old shirts and sort rotting linen instead of being allowed at the centre of the action, the Crimean Peninsula.

She therefore left for the hospital at Balaclava and immediately set to work to treat the infested wounds of the soldiers. She nursed the men for six weeks before being put in charge of the special diet kitchen. Being an excellent cook she made sure that the soldiers had good food produced from the best ingredients. However, overwork and ill health meant that she was forced to return to Britain, leaving with a recommendation from Florence Nightingale for a government pension. However, her comments on affairs in the Crimea are extremely scathing and she had little good to say about Florence Nightingale. Betsy was devoutly religious, and the small Welsh Bible given to her by the Rev. Thomas Charles of Bala when she was young remained her 'constant companion'; but her love of the theatre, her thirst for adventure and for seeing the world, was also strong. She died in poverty at the home of her sister Bridget in London in 1860.

#### Transcript of letter by Emily Slesson (c.1855)



Madam, I am very anxious to go out to assist either Miss Nightingale or Miss Stanley. I am very strong and could stand a great amount of work and fatigue. Twenty-six and a half years old looking rather older I think. My great fear is that I am too late in applying to be sent out but in case more nurses are wanted I trust I might be allowed to serve. Would you Madam be so very kind as to let me know if there is any chance of my being able to go out? I think I may say I feel sure of being able to finance myself very useful having qualities of strength and nerve.

I remain Madam  
Yours obediently  
Emily Slesson

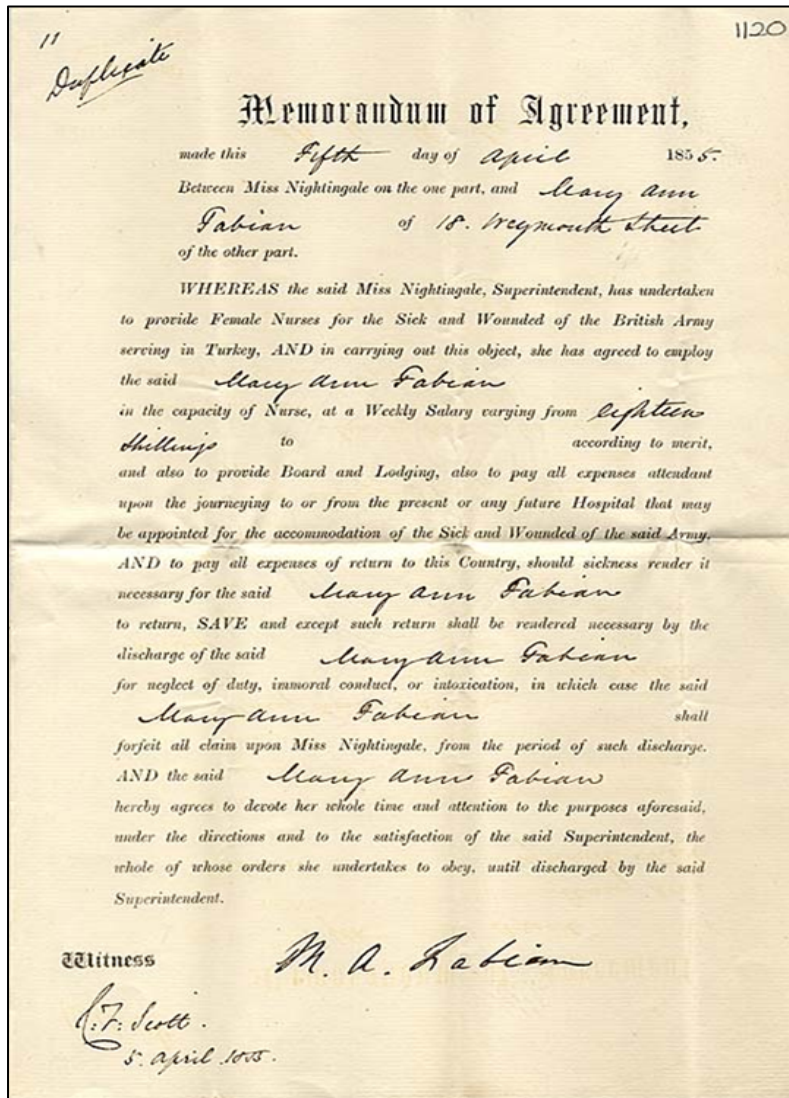
My address is: Miss Emily Slesson, Sidmouth, Devon. Friday Feb 9th

#### Transcript - Memorandum of Agreement - made this fifth day of April 1855.

Between Miss Nightingale on the one part and Mary Ann Fabian of 18 Weymouth Street of the other part.

**WHEREAS** the said Miss Nightingale, Superintendent, has undertaken to provide Female Nurses for the Sick and Wounded of the British Army serving in Turkey, AND in carrying out this object, she has agreed to employ the said Mary Ann Fabian in the capacity of Nurse, at a Weekly Salary varying from eighteen shillings to [blank] according to merit, and also to provide Board and Lodging, also to pay all expenses attendant upon the journeying to or from the present or any future Hospital that may be appointed for the accommodation of the Sick and Wounded of the said Army. AND to pay all expenses of return to this Country, should sickness render it necessary for the said Mary Ann Fabian to return, SAVE and except such return shall be rendered necessary by the discharge of said Mary Ann Fabian for neglect of duty, immoral conduct, or intoxication, in which case the said Mary Ann Fabian shall forfeit all claim upon Miss Nightingale, from the period of such discharge.





AND the said Mary Ann Fabian hereby agrees to devote her whole time and attention to the purpose aforesaid, under the directions and to the satisfaction of the said Superintendent, the whole of whose orders she undertakes to obey, until discharged by the said Superintendent.

Witness: [signature] R.F. Scott

5 April 1855

[signature] M A Fabian.

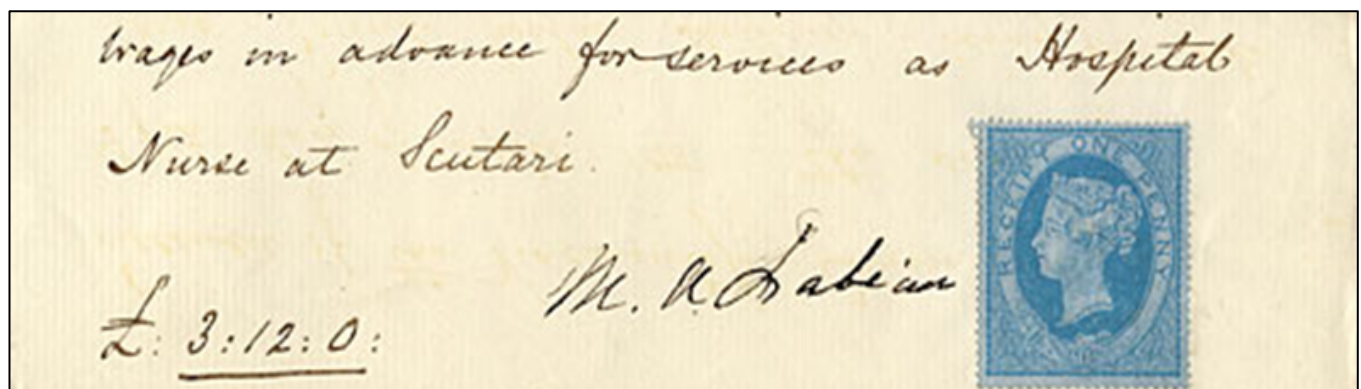
In response to the worsening situation in the region, Florence Nightingale was appointed as "Superintendent of the Female Nurses in the Hospitals in the East" by her friend Sidney Herbert, Secretary of War. Nightingale arrived at the Barrack Hospital in Scutari, a suburb on the Asian side of Constantinople, Turkey, on the eve of the Battle of Inkerman, November 4th 1854, with 38 nurses.

The conditions were appalling and Welsh nurse, Elizabeth Davis, reported that "The first that I touched was a case of frost bite. The toes of both the man's feet fell off with the bandages. The hand of another fell off at the wrist. It was a fortnight, or from that to six weeks, since the wounds of many of those men had been looked at and dressed.... One soldier had been wounded at Alma.... His wound had not been dressed for five weeks, and I took at least a quart of maggots from it. From many of the other patients I removed

them in handfuls."

With an incredible amount of hard work the nurses in Nightingales' charge brought the Scutari hospital into better order and 46 more nurses had arrived in the Crimea by December.

Despite a rise in the number of nurses the workload was overwhelming. At one point less than 100 nurses had 10,000 men under their care. By February 1855 the death rate was running 42% due to defects in the sanitation system resulting in outbreaks of cholera and typhus fever. The War Office ordered immediate reforms in the sanitary system and by June the rate fell to 2%.



Detail from the receipt from Vicountess Canning to M Fabian for four weeks wages for services as a nurse at Scutari.

The party that went with Florence Nightingale to Turkey to nurse the wounded and sick English soldiers had 38 women. Of those 38, one was Florence Nightingale herself; one group was Catholic Nuns from Bermondsey Convent in London wearing black habits; one group was Catholic Nuns from an Orphanage in Norwood wearing white habits; one group were from Miss Sellon's order of "Sisters" called "Sellonites"; they wore black habits. The rest were hospital nurses wearing the one-size-fits-all uniform designed by Miss Nightingale for the trip. The civilian nurses got paid by the government, but the religious "sisters" did not get paid. Their expenses were paid by their church or order. The sisters had almost no experience at nursing at all.

The Crimean War (1854-1856) changed the face of military nursing for men and especially women forever. When Florence Nightingale was appointed as "Superintendent of the Female Nurses in the Hospitals in the East" nursing was not thought of as a suitable profession for women. Despite the success of Florence Nightingale's nursing staff in the Crimea, there were mixed reactions to the continuing employment of women as military nurses. However, the draft Regulations for Inspector General of Hospitals, 1857, contained a section for women nurses to be employed in General Hospitals. It took six years for the first woman to appear in the British Army list, when Jane Shaw Stewart was appointed Superintendent General of Female Nurses at the General Hospital at the Army Training School for military nurses at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley in 1863. Stewart resigned in 1868 and was replaced by Mrs. Deeble, who along with six nurses from Netley was sent to South Africa during the Zulu War (1879-80). Female military nurses again saw action in Egypt and Sudan between 1882 and 1885 when 35 women were sent to the region.

In 1883 the Army Services Committee recommended that every military hospital with over 100 beds have a staff of female nurses. Several proposals to form nursing corps were tabled, from both military and civilian organisations, but each with a different set of criteria for qualifications and in 1896 the War Office decided that an army nursing reserve could not be the responsibility of a civilian organisation. In March 1897 the Army Nursing Reserve was formed. In the same year the War Office met for discussion with voluntary medical organisations and agreed to establish a Central British Red Cross Committee as the sole channel for offers of medical help in wartime. The experiences of high death rates due to poor standards of care in the South African War (1899-1902), similar to those in the Crimean and Boer Wars, led to more reorganisation of the Army Nursing Service. In March 1902 the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service (QAIMNS) was formed, replacing the Army Nursing Service.

The 1907 Territorial and Reserve Forces Act led to the formation of the Territorial Force Nursing Service in the following year. Following a report on the Japanese voluntary aid system the British Red Cross was reorganised in 1905. The links formed in that reorganisation led to the War Office developing a scheme of voluntary aid organisation based on mixed Voluntary Aid detachments (VADs) organised for their local Territorial Forces Associations by the Red Cross in 1909.

In 1907 the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry was formed and throughout the First World War ran field hospitals, drove ambulances and set up soup kitchens and canteens for troops. The organisation, based in Westminster, is still in existence today. After World War I there were further changes and valuable additions were made to QAIMNS by adding the Military Families Nursing Service and the Queen Alexandra's Military Nursing Service India.

Throughout World War II the Army Nurses served in every campaign and in 1949 QAIMNS became Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps (QARANC) and was integrated into the British Army. QARANC still forms part of the Army Medical Services to this day.

#### Detail from Regulations for Admission To The Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service

Mary Ann Brown – A QAIMNS nurse (pictures

right back)

Scottish QAIMNS Reserve nurse Mary Ann danger of working as a nurse.

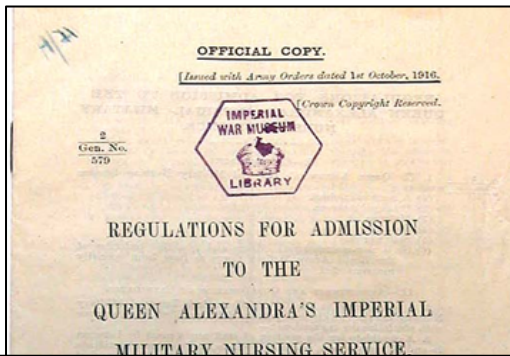
On December 16th 1915 she said: "The blown up by the Turks yesterday, there were were all killed"



Brown's diary reflects the

hospital on the beach was 16 patients in it. I think they





The Crimean War ended in 1856, and Florence returned to England. She was a national heroine, and many Victorians bought ornaments of Florence Nightingale to display in their homes. Florence also received thousands of letters from the public thanking her for the work she had performed during the war.

Queen Victoria invited Florence to meet with her in Balmoral, Scotland. They discussed Florence's experiences and how military hospitals could be improved.



*Nightingale and some of the 38 "handmaidens of the Lord" (as she called them) to nurse wounded British soldiers in the Crimean War*

She returned to England in 1856. In 1860, she established the Nightingale Training School for nurses at St Thomas' Hospital in London. Once the nurses were trained, they were sent to hospitals all over Britain, where they introduced the ideas they had learned, and established nursing training on the Nightingale model.

As a woman, Nightingale was very attractive and charming that made every man like her. However, she rejected a suitor, Richard Monckton Milnes, 1st Baron Houghton, because she feared that entertaining men would interfere the process. The income given to her by her father during this time allowed her to pursue her career and still live comfortably.

Though Nightingale had several important friendships with women including correspondence with an Irish nun named Sister Mary Clare Moore, she had little respect for women in general, and preferred friendships with powerful men.

Based on her observations in the Crimea, Nightingale wrote *Notes on Matters Affecting the Health, Efficiency and Hospital Administration of the British Army*, an 830-page report analysing her experience and proposing reforms for other military hospitals operating under poor conditions. The book would spark a total restructuring of the War Office's administrative department, including the establishment of a Royal Commission for the Health of the Army in 1857. In 1860, her best authored works was published, "*Notes on Nursing*," outlining principles of nursing. It is still in print today with translation in many foreign languages. In all, she had published some 200 books, reports and pamphlets. Using the money she got from the British government, she funded the establishment of St. Thomas' Hospital, and within it, the Nightingale Training School for Nurses.

In the 1870s, Nightingale mentored Linda Richards, "America's first trained nurse", and enabled her to return to the USA with adequate training and knowledge to establish high-quality nursing schools. Linda Richards went on to become a great nursing pioneer in the USA and Japan.

In the early 1880s Nightingale wrote an article for a textbook in which she advocated strict precautions designed, she said, to kill germs. Nightingale's work served as an inspiration for nurses in the American Civil War. The Union government approached her for advice in organising field medicine. Although her ideas met official resistance, they inspired the volunteer body of the United States Sanitary Commission.

Florence Nightingale's Environmental Theory defined Nursing as "the act of utilizing the environment of the patient to assist him in his recovery." It involves the nurse's initiative to configure environmental settings

appropriate for the gradual restoration of the patient's health, and that external factors associated with the patient's surroundings affect life or biologic and physiologic processes, and his development.

35 South St.  
July 18/78

Mr. Tulke

I will take, please, 3 dozen  
of the accompanying loop ties.  
The pattern is rather scratched.  
Could you have the kindness to let me  
have them by tomorrow (Friday) morning?

I oblige  
y<sup>r</sup> obed<sup>t</sup> serv<sup>t</sup>

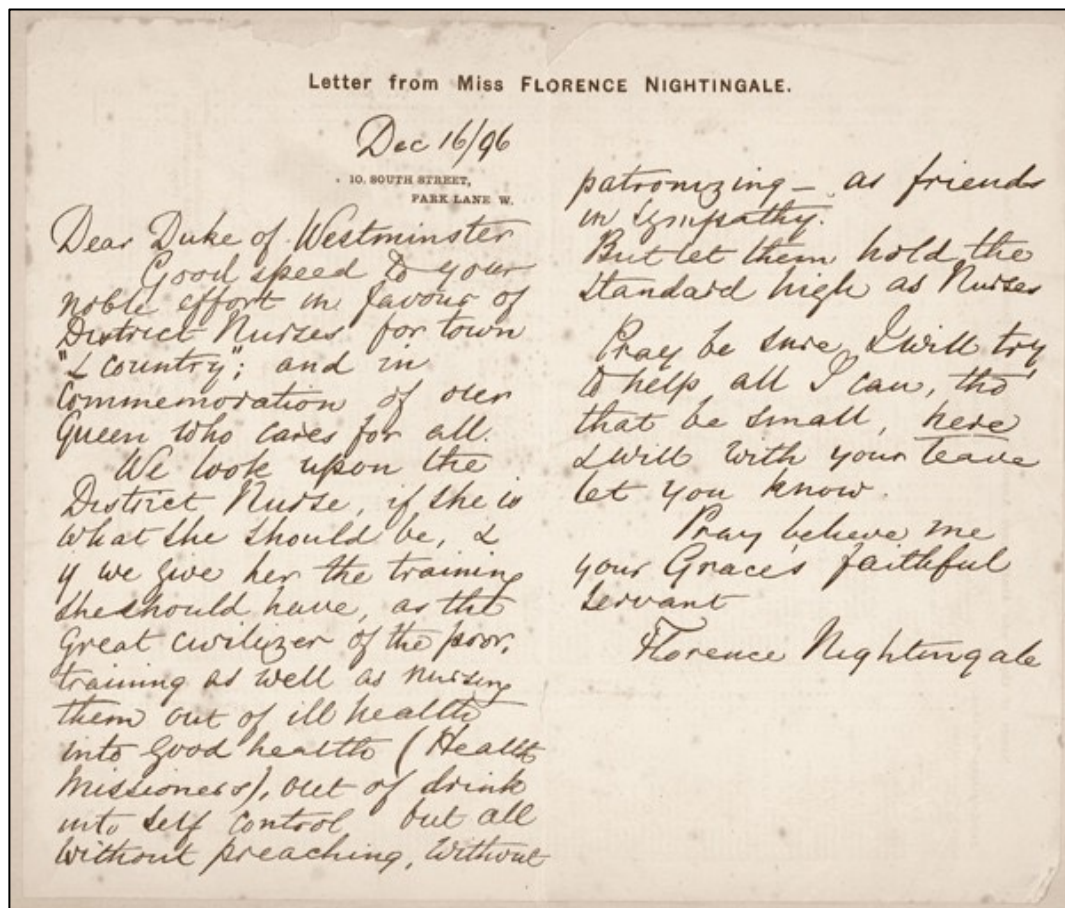
N.B. We have had  
these loop ties for  
our Nurses at  
12/ the dozen. 50

J. Nightingale

Nightingale became known as "The Lady with the Lamp." During the Crimean War, she initially made her rounds on horseback and at night used an oil lamp to light her way, then reverted to a mule cart and finally a carriage with a hood and curtains. Nightingale remained at Scutari for a year and a half. She left in the summer of 1856, once the Crimean conflict was resolved, and returned to her childhood home at Lea Hurst. To her surprise she was met with a hero's welcome, which the humble nurse did her best to avoid.

The Queen rewarded Nightingale's work by presenting her with an engraved brooch that came to be known as the "Nightingale Jewel" and by granting her a prize of \$250,000 from the British government. In 1883, Nightingale was awarded the *Royal Red Cross* by Queen Victoria. In 1904, she was appointed a *Lady of Grace of the Order of St John (LGStJ)*. In 1907, she became the first woman to be awarded the *Order of Merit*. In the following year she was given the *Honorary Freedom of the City of London*.





Despite being known as the heroine of the Crimean War, Florence Nightingale felt ill in August 1910. She seemed to recover and was reportedly in good spirits, however, she developed an array of troubling symptoms a week later, on the evening of Friday, August 12, 1910. She died unexpectedly at 2 pm the following day, Saturday, August 13, at her home in London. She left a large body of work, including several hundred notes which were previously unpublished.



A rare photograph of Nightingale in 1910, by Lizzie Caswall Smith

Usually, well-known people with great contributions are offered national funerals, but Nightingale had expressed the desire that her funeral be a quiet and modest affair.

Respecting her last wishes, her relatives turned down a national funeral and the "Lady with the Lamp" was laid to rest in her family's plot at St. Margaret's Church, East Wellow, in Hampshire, England.

In honour of the life and career of the "Angel of the Crimea," the Florence Nightingale Museum sits at the site of the original Nightingale Training School for Nurses, houses more than 2,000 artefacts. And up to this day, the name "Florence Nightingale" is universally recognized and known as the pioneer of modern nursing.



Crimean War Memorial located facing Waterloo Place at the junction of Lower Regent Street and Pall Mall, London.

### The 38 Nurses

The party that went with Miss Nightingale to Turkey to nurse the wounded and English soldiers had 38 women. Of those, one was Florence Nightingale herself, one was Mrs. Clarke who was a 'housekeeper' for Miss Nightingale during her time at Upper Harley Street; one group were Catholic Nuns from the Bermondsey Convent in London wearing Black Habits;



Mother Gonzaga Barrie,  
who served in the Crimea.



Sister Anastasia Kelly



Sister Stanislaus Jones

Another group were Catholic Nuns from an Orphanage in Norwood wearing white Habits; one group were from Miss Sellon's order of 'Sisters' called 'Sellonites'; they wore black Habits. The rest were hospital nurses wearing one-size-fits-all uniforms designed by Miss Nightingale for the trip.

The civilian nurses got paid by the government but the religious 'Sisters' did not get paid. Their expenses were paid by their 'church' or 'order'. The Sisters had almost no experience at nursing at all.

### The Bermondsey Nuns

The involvement of the Mother Clare Moore and her Sisters, with Florence Nightingale and her work in the Crimean War in 1854. Florence herself said in a letter to Clare Moore in 1856 –

"What you have done for the work no one can ever say; My being above you was my misfortune, not my fault. My love and gratitude will be yours, dearest Reverend Mother wherever you go; I do not presume to give you any other tribute. The gratitude of the army is yours."

### The Bermondsey Nuns included:

Georgiana Barrie	Returned home after serving. (Mother Gonzaga).
Maria Huddon	Returned home after serving for the duration. (Sister de Chantal)
Margaret Jones	Returned home after serving for the duration. (Sister Stanislaus)
Sarah Kelly	Returned home after serving for the duration. (Sister Anastasia)
Georgiana Moore	Recalled back to Bermondsey.

### The Norwood Nuns included:

Marie T. MacClean	Sent home 'Incompetent' 24 December 1854.
Elinor O'Dwyer	Sent home 'Incompetent' 24 December 1854.
Frances J. Purnell	Sent home 'Incompetent' 24 December 1854.

These three all trained at Norwood.

### The "Sellonites"

Priscilla Lydia Sellon, 1821-76, was an Anglican nun who played a part in the English Catholic Revivalist movement of the 19th century and founded an Order called the Sisters of Mercy. Devoutly religious, she had intended going abroad as a missionary but instead was "called" to work amongst the poor naval families at Devonport, being particularly active during the cholera year of 1849. For the decade 1850-60, Miss Sellon was a celebrity, as well known as Florence Nightingale. She declined to go to the Crimea with Miss Nightingale as she felt to do so might lead to a division of authority, however, the party which left for the war in October 1854 included "a number of recruits from Miss Sellon's establishment".

### The 'Sellonite' Nuns included:

Harriet Erskine	Invalided home.
Emma Langston	Invalided home.
Margaret Goodman	Returned home after serving for the duration.
Clara Sharp	Invalided home 24 December 1854.
Sarah A. Terrot	Invalided home 24 December 1854.
Elizabeth B. Turnbull	Returned home after serving for the duration.
Elizabeth Wheeler	Sent home 'Incompetent' 24 December 1854.

**Margaret (Fanny) Taylor** had been a member of the Anglican Sellonites until she opened a 'ragged school' in London. She went out to Scutari as one of the 'Ladies' in the second party and assisted FN for some time before transferring to Koulali.

Taylor authored 16 books and in: *Eastern Hospitals and English Nursing*, she described how she and FN used a lantern to see the sick when paying night visits to the wards. This led to Florence Nightingale being later idolized as: 'The Lady with the Lamp'. She became a Catholic at Koulali and later founded a new religious Order: *The Poor Servants of the Mother of God*.

**Mary Stanley**, who had recruited and organised the parties going to the war zone, later became a Catholic and was very active in charitable work. St. John and St. Elizabeth hospital in London has a bed dedicated to her memory.

**Mary Seacole** was a self-taught, coloured, nurse from Jamaica who independently went to the Crimea to provide care and nursing. Recently Mary's exploits have become known due to her autobiography being reprinted in 1984. She is buried in the Catholic section of Kensal Green Cemetery, London.

**Mother Bridgeman's nuns** came mainly from Ireland and they obtained better conditions of service from the War Office than had the Bermondsey nuns. For example: they remained under the authority of Bridgeman when not nursing, they were permitted to publicly travel in England dressed as nuns and she would not be permitted to open and read the private letters of Sisters. During her long period of work in the cities, Mother Bridgeman had developed a detailed system of nursing practice. She used it at Koulali.

Evelyn Bolster writes: Florence Nightingale's attitude to the Koulali system was one of vigorous opposition: but the superiority of the system is attested to by the fact that she began to revise her own methods to such an extent that the scheme for military nursing she submitted to the War Office after her Crimean experiences, was in many ways identical with that introduced by Mother Bridgeman."

### In Turkey.

When Florence Nightingale was made superintendent of the nurses being sent out to the war zone, the War Office used the term: 'in Turkey', which included the Scutari area. The Crimea, was part of Russia not Turkey. This enabled the Army Generals, with the agreement of the War Office, to exclude her from holding any nursing authority in the Crimea until after the armistice.

### The Civilian Hospital Nurses included:

A. Bowmett	Sent home 'Incompetent'
S. Barnes	Died whilst serving. Buried at Haydar Pasha.
Elizabeth C. Blake	Sent home suffering from Ophthalmia.
M.A. Coyle	Sent home 'Incompetent'
Justine G. Chabrilae	Died whilst serving. Buried at Haydar Pasha.
Elizabeth Drake	Died whilst serving.
J. Davy	Returned home after serving for the duration.
Emma Fagg	Sent home 'Incompetent'
A. Faulkner	Sent home 'Incompetent'
E. Grundy	Returned home at her own request.
E. Hawkins	Returned home after serving for the duration.
Ann Higgins	Sent home 'Incompetent'
S. Jones	Dismissed.
Eliza Isabella Forbes	Sent home 'Incompetent'
Rebecca Lawfield	Returned home at her own request.
Ethelreda Pillars	Invalided home.

Returned home after serving for the duration.  
Returned home with Florence Nightingale.  
Invalided home.  
Dismissed.

Mrs. Parker  
Mrs. Roberts  
Elizabeth Smith  
Margaret Williams  
M. Williams



Invalided home.

Mrs. Wilson

Dismissed.

### **George William Mihill**

George William Mihill was born in Purleigh Essex on 22 June 1838 to William (born 1812 Little Baddow Essex) a Journeyman Carpenter and Matilda Mihill (nee Smith 1818 – 1841 Maldon Essex). He died on 7 April 1923 in Langdon Hills.

He enlisted into The 19<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot (1<sup>st</sup> Yorkshire North Riding – The Green Howards) prior to the commencement of hostilities in the Crimea in the September of 1854 and was wounded in the final assault on the Redan at the Battle of the Alma in September 1855.

This event is most important in his subsequent life as being the first time he met Nurse Maria Elizabeth Hayden an Australian serving with Lady Alicia Blackmore and Miss Florence Nightingale subsequently Maria became his wife on 6 February 1861 in Shoreditch.

Maria Elizabeth Hayden was born in Bathurst New South Wales Australia in 1839 and died in 1922 Langdon Hills a year before her husband George. They went on to have eleven children five of whom had died before the 1911 Census but also others are also recognised in National Rolls of Honour due to their military service. On 24 March 1854 War was declared with Russia and two companies paraded at the Royal Exchange, where the Queen's Herald read the official proclamation. Arms were presented and the National Anthem played.

In April 1854, some 1,200 strong and accompanied by 15 wives, the 19th marched by detachments from the Tower to sail to war.

The first stage was to Malta, a trip of around 10 days. The 19th were divided between the Toning, a sailing ship, and 4 steamships: the Emperor, Euxin, Medway and Victoria. After a day or so of re-supply, the second leg to Constantinople took another 6 days. The Channel was rough, but the journeys were uneventful, if cramped and uncomfortable. There was a coal fire on the Victoria, which carried 'a good lot of gunpowder on board', but it was rapidly extinguished.

By early May the 19th were encamped outside Constantinople at Scutari, alongside a large cemetery near the Barracks. This was dilapidated and full of giant fleas and the men were plagued by 'Turkish cannibals', mosquitoes which bred in the stagnant pools around and carried malaria. A few men came down with the disease. For a short time the 19th used it, but found sleeping under canvas preferable. The town was hilly and irregular with narrow streets, the Turks unwelcoming and their women veiled. Dogs ran wild in the Cemetery, occasionally disinterring human remains.

May 26 was Queen Victoria's birthday. The British paraded to give 3 enthusiastic cheers for Her Majesty, watched by the French Generals, the local Turks and their harems, the white muslin veiled ladies accompanied by their eunuchs an interesting sight to the 19th!

On August 30th the 19th embarked on the old and overcrowded steamship the 'Courier'. The women were left behind, Margaret Kirwin fainting after her husband ran out of the ranks to kiss her farewell. They did not sail until September 5th, landing at Old Fort near Eupatoria harbour on September 14th.

### **The Landing**

The Light Division, were the first to land at 8.30am, wading ashore from the ships' boats and forming on the beach behind a screen formed by the Rifle Brigade, part of a British force of 26,000 Infantry, 1,000 Cavalry and 60 guns. 30,000 Frenchmen and 7,000 Turks formed the rest of the Allied force.

No enemy were in sight, but as they marched inland a light drizzle began which worsened during the night. Because of their physical weakness, the men were ordered to leave their knapsacks on board ship and land with minimal kit (spare boots, socks and shirt and towel wrapped in a blanket and rolled together with the greatcoat in the knapsack straps). These knapsacks were looted on board or when they were finally landed, most men losing their spare kit and being without for months. No tents were landed, so the men were left exposed. The French, fitter, better organised and equipped, carried full packs and 'tentes d'abri' (shelter tents).

Piquets were posted and the beaches secured. Bell tents were landed as a temporary measure for a few days, then sent back on board, not to be reissued for another month. Whilst the French pillaged without payment, British rations were reduced due to supply difficulties. One night a false alarm saw the 19th form up in shirt sleeves and no trousers, but with their belts and 60 rounds which they kept in their tents, their rifles piled in front of them.



Small scouting parties of Cossacks were seen, but little other opposition until the march to Sevastopol began on September 19th. The French, with the Turks to their rear, held the right wing skirting the sea. The 19th were still weakened by disease and the sea crossing, and many fell out or struggled to keep up. The Russians finally appeared in force and it was clear their plan was to hold the next river crossing.

Prior to the 1850s each British Army regiment had its own medical officer. Male orderlies, with no formal medical training, were seconded from the regiment. During peacetime the problems of a localised system were not apparent, but the experience of the Crimean War (1854-1856) highlighted the difficulties caused by lack of equipment and supplies, poor communication, inexperienced staff and badly managed resources. The “Crimean War” took place in the Crimea, Asia Minor, the Baltic, the White Sea and on Russia’s Pacific coast between the nations of Russia, Turkey, Great Britain, France and Piedmont-Sardinia.

The Crimean War has been characterised as one of the worst managed wars in history, with deaths due to illness and malnutrition at four times the rate of those due to enemy action. The Times war correspondent William H. Russell brought the desperate conditions in the Crimea to the attention of the British public and popularised the call for women nurses to join the forces.

“Are there no devoted women amongst us, able and willing to go forth to minister to the sick and suffering soldiers of the East in the hospitals of Scutari? Are none of the daughters of England, at this extreme hour of need, ready for such a work of mercy?” (The Times, 15 and 22 September 1854). The government and nation were greatly embarrassed. Nursing in Britain was not seen as a respectable occupation, so trained nurses were few. In February 1855, Isambard Kingdom Brunel was invited by the Permanent Under Secretary at the War Office, Sir Benjamin Hawes (husband of his sister Sophia), to design a pre-fabricated hospital for use in the Crimea, that could be built in Britain and shipped out for speedy erection at still to be chosen site.

Brunel initially designed a unit ward to house 50 patients, 90 feet (27 m) long by 40 feet (12 m) wide, divided into two hospital wards. The design incorporated the necessities of hygiene: access to sanitation, ventilation, drainage, and even rudimentary temperature controls. These were then integrated within a 1,000 patient hospital layout, using 60 of the unit wards. The design took Brunel six days in total to complete.

#### **Fabrication**

From 1849 Gloucester Docks-based timber merchants Price & Co. became involved in supplying wood to local contractor William Eassie, who was supplying railway sleepers to the Gloucester and Dean Forest Railway. Eassie's company diversified after the railway boom period, manufacturing windows and doors, as well as prefabricated wooden huts to the gold prospectors in Australia. As a result, when the Government wanted to provide shelter to the soldiers in the Dardanelles, Price & Co. chairman Richard Potter had tendered to supply Eassie design as a solution, and gained a 500-unit order.

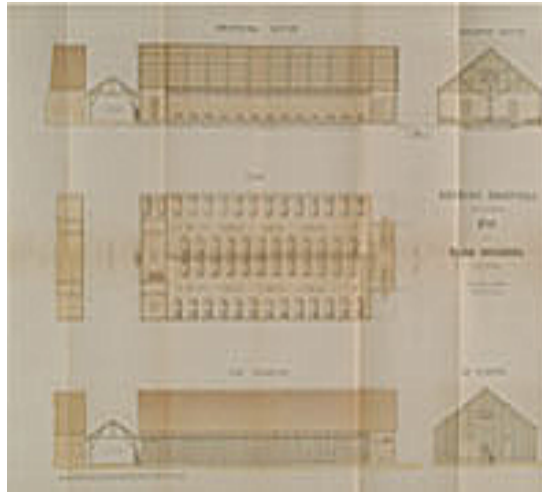
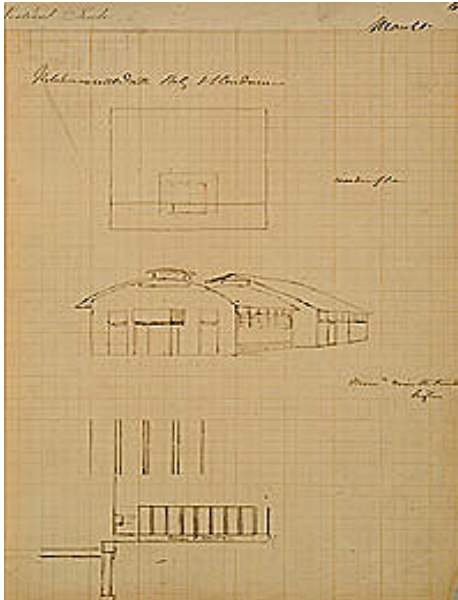
Potter then travelled to France and obtained an order from the French Emperor for a further 1,850 huts to a slightly modified design. French Army soldiers arrived in Gloucester Docks in December 1854 to learn how to erect the huts. Supply was delayed by the need to transfer the resultant packs from broad gauge GWR to standard gauge LSWR tracks, with the last packs shipped from Southampton Docks in January 1855. Having worked with Eassie on creating the slipway for the SS Great Eastern, Brunel approached Price & Co. about producing the 1,000-patient hospital. The last of the units was shipped from Southampton on one of 16 ships, less than five months later.

#### **Construction**

In January 1855, the Government had selected Dr. Edmund Alexander Parkes to travel to Turkey to select a site for the hospital, organise the facility, and superintend the whole operation. Parkes had selected Erenkoy on the Asiatic bank of the Dardanelles near the fabled city of Troy. This was located 500 miles (800 km) – then three- or four-days’ journey – from the Crimea, but importantly outside the malaria zone in which Scutari was located. Parkes remained onsite until the end of the war in 1856.

After William Eassie Snr. had seen the awful state of construction of the previously shipped British Army huts at Balaklava, he sent his son to supervise the construction of the hospital. The whole kit of parts had reached the site by May 1856, and by July was ready to admit its first 300 patients. Although hostilities had ceased in April, by December had reached its capacity of 1,000 beds, scheduled to expand to 2,200.

#### **Renkioi – Isambard Kingdom Brunel’s forgotten hospital (design and completion)**



### Management and operations

Renkioi was designated a civilian hospital, under the War Office but independent of the Army Medical Department, and hence outside the management of Florence Nightingale. It had a nursing staff selected by Parkes and Sir James Clark, including as a volunteer Parkes's sister; while other staff included Dr John Kirk, later of Zanzibar fame.

Run as a model hospital, it "demonstrated the best practices of the age". This was in contrast to the Army medical facilities, which between them had two clinical thermometers and one ophthalmoscope. Also, despite the Royal Navy's success in preventing scurvy through the provision of concentrated fruit juice, the army failed to learn the same lesson, and so its Crimean soldiers suffered from scurvy.

Renkioi Hospital however had a short life. It received its first casualties in October 1855, after the fall of Sevastopol, was closed in July 1856, and was sold to the Ottoman Empire in September 1856. But even for such short-used institutions, it was feted as a great success. Sources state that of the approximately 1,300 patients treated in the hospital, there were only 50 deaths. In the Scutari hospital, deaths were said to be as many as 10 times this number. Nightingale referred to them as "those magnificent huts".

Fortunately, the Catholic revival was taking place and the Sisters of Mercy nursing order had been formed. Five Sisters from Bermondsey set out for the war zone on October 17th but the government instructed them to wait in Paris. A government committee, under Mary Stanley, was gathering a party of 5 Catholic care nuns, eight Anglo-Catholic (C of E) nursing nuns and 38 hired nurses and Ladies. Florence Nightingale was appointed as their leader



and they left to join those waiting in Paris. The whole party reached Scutari in Turkey on November 4th, where they established two hospitals.

On December 17th Mary Stanley arrived with 15 Sisters of Mercy nuns and 31 hired nurses and Ladies. Florence Nightingale said she could not control such a large number and demanded they return home. The Army Generals intervened and asked Stanley to use her party to open two hospitals (General and Lower) at Koulali, five miles from Scutari. Stanley appointed Mother Bridgeman, Superior of the nuns, to share the running of these hospitals. Scutari and Koulali were 300 miles across the Black Sea from the fighting near Balaclava in the Crimea. So in October 1855 the army asked Bridgeman to move her nuns to the Crimea. She did this and established the Balaclava Barracks and Field hospitals on the 14th. Florence Nightingale claimed she had the right to supervise these Crimean hospitals, but the army preferred to work with Bridgeman. With the help of the War Office, the generals found a technical way to exclude her from having any influence in the Crimea.

Following the armistice of 29th February 1856, the hospitals gradually emptied. On March 16th the War Office granted Florence Nightingale authority in the Crimea and she arrived there nine days later. On March 28th, Bridgeman entrusted the remaining few patients to her before sailing home on April 12th.

Working conditions in the hospitals had been terrible and few of the hired nurses and Ladies had stayed long. So the nuns, being the most experienced and disciplined groups came to form the hard core of the staff in all six hospitals. From 14th October 1855 - 25th March 1856 the Sisters of Mercy were in sole charge of the hospitals in the Crimea.

Two Sisters from the Order's Liverpool convent died from cholera and typhus and were buried in the Crimea. A memorial to them stands in the grounds of the Old Swan Convent, Liverpool. The others returned to their work in the diseased inner cities. To understand why the official history of this period omits to mention such a large part of the Crimean nursing story, we need to be aware of the sensitive political and religious situation at that time. But that is another story.

#### **Bank of England Bank Note.**

From February 1975 till May 1994 a £10 Note was circulated with a drawing of Florence Nightingale and a separate portrayal of a ward at Scutari.

Catholic and Anglican nursing nuns formed a third of the staff and were the most permanent throughout the war. They were permitted to wear their distinctive habits. Apart from FN, the head covering of four nurses may be viewed working in the ward. Yet not one is distinguished as a nun.

In 1854 the camera was in its infancy, so the public had to rely on paintings and etchings to portray events abroad. Artists limited themselves to depicting the lay nurses at Scutari. This may have been viewed as justifiable at the time so as not to antagonise the anti-Catholic public at home.

When, over a century later, the *Bank of England* issued their £10 Note, the scene depicted was based on an old etching, not reality. 6, 493 million of these notes were printed and, if reality had been portrayed, think of the good publicity there would have been for the Catholic Community.