FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE:
Saint, Reformer or Rebel?

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Introduction

The name Florence Nightingale clearly symbolizes the nursing profession. Perhaps no name is better known by modern nurses. They have been told of the deplorable conditions in hospitals as recently as the mid-nineteenth century and concurrently how many of the revolutionary changes that followed the Crimean War (1854-1856) were due to the efforts of one woman—the miraculous, saintly "Lady with a Lamp," the "Angel of the Crimea." This portrait focuses narrowly on her Crimean War activities, portraying a composite Miss Nightingale as "the delicate maiden of high degree who threw aside the pleasures of a life of ease to succour the afflicted . . . gliding through the horrors of the hospital at Scutari [and] consecrating with the radiance of her goodness the dying soldier's couch." But, does this tell the entire story?

G. Lytton Strachey, for example, in 1918 disagreed with this uncritical portrait and reminded his readers that "the Miss Nightingale of fact was not as facile fancy painted her." Even Sir Edward Cook, however, in his classic 1913 two-volume study had striven to produce a human portrait rather than the "plaster saint" that had emerged from other sources. And, contemporary to the strong reaction against Strachey's iconoclastic approach, Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews, while proposing in 1929 that "a great commander was lost to England when Florence Nightingale was born a woman," did not neglect to point out that much of her success had been made possible because she was in fact so "quick, violent-tempered, positive, obstinate and stubborn." And even later, in 1951, Mrs. Cecil Woodham-Smith, in the tradition of Sir Edward Cook but with the Verney-Nightingale papers at her disposal, produced what most believe to be the first complete picture of Miss Nightingale—the woman of many faces with an abundance of faults as well as qualities.

Despite their efforts the earlier Crimean portrait, its narrow focus notwithstanding, still prevailed in the popular mind. As a result the full significance of her life was not appropriately recognized. As the articles in this collection will demonstrate, it is possible that her greatest contributions stem not from the Crimean War experience but from postwar

activities, her prodigious writings (200 books, articles, reports and over 12,000 letters) and especially her determination to create a profession. Little has been written in monograph form since the Woodham-Smith biography. However, an examination of the wealth of articles and papers that have appeared after 1951 permit a true picture of Florence Nightingale to emerge—not a saint certainly but no less effective because of what she accomplished as a reformer and "rebel with a cause." Evelyn R. Barritt, for example, in her 1973 article entitled "Florence Nightingale's Values and Modern Nursing Education" (*Nursing Forum*, XII, 1973), stresses how Miss Nightingale "made better health and better education her two objectives." In the process of building her case, Barritt introduces the reader to the highly-regarded but unpublished Stanford University dissertation by Mildred E. Newton. "Florence Nightingale's Philosophy of Life and Education" was completed in 1949. It emphasized how "deep religious convictions made service to God [Nightingale's] basic goal in life." She credits Miss Nightingale with five major accomplishments in addition to the precedent-setting Nightingale Training School at St. Thomas Hospital. These include: (1) improved and reformed laws affecting health, morals and the poor; (2) reformed hospitals and improved workhouses and infirmaries; (3) improved medicine—by instituting an army medical school and reorganizing the army medical department; (4) improved health for natives and British subjects in India and other colonies; and (5) established nursing as a profession with two missions—sick nursing and health nursing. In a similar view, Elmer Belt notes:*

> Her superior knowledge, her appreciation of social trends, the exactness and and truth of her statements, her dependability, availability and endless helpfulness endeared her to the leaders of her day. Her idealism, backed by positive demonstrable knowledge of human needs, brought about profound changes in their attitude toward general problems in human welfare. Through her influence a new humanitarianism was ushered in. To her originality we owe the vast public health programs which have resulted in better and healthier lives for all of us. The dreams of Florence Nightingale are today's realities.

As expressed by Evelyn Barritt, "Miss Nightingale's values for nursing education are viable today. Time provides an excellent test of values."

*Elmer Belt collected a valuable collection of Florence Nightingale materials that was then presented to the University of California Biomedical Library in honor of Dean Lulu Wolf Hassenplug for her successful creation of the school and its ten year direction. Kate T. Steinitz, Librarian of the Elmer Belt Library of Vinciana catalogued the collection and this work is available in the New York City Public Library.

But, if she can be remembered in some ways as timeless it is more important than ever to appreciate that this incredible woman was nonetheless Victorian.

Let us see how far, on the one hand, a sweet, shy, delicate flower of Victorian womanhood she was not and yet, on the other, the Queen who gave her name to the age honored her profusely and once said of her in what might be viewed as the ultimate compliment: "She has a wonderful, clear and comprehensive head. I wish we had her at the War Office."

Florence Nightingale was born on May 12, 1820, the younger daughter of William Edward and Frances Smith Nightingale. William was the wealthy son of a Sheffield banker and Frances was the daughter of the renowned early abolitionist William Smith. Stimulated by their wealth, they loved to travel and the only children, two daughters, were born during a long stay in Italy with both being named after their birthplaces. The elder, born in Naples during 1819, was named Frances Parthenope—Frances after her mother and Parthenope after the old Greek settlement on the site of Naples. The youngest was born at the Villa La Columbaia, Florence, Italy and accordingly named Florence.

The father Edward originally had Shore as a surname but, upon inheriting the Derbyshire estates of Lea Hurst and Woodend from his mother's uncle Peter Nightingale, he took the donor's name as well. Later, upon becoming High Sheriff in Hampshire, Edward purchased Embley Park there. The result was that much of Florence's early life was divided between Lea Hurst in the summers and Embley Park in the winters. Being a highly cultured country gentleman, this father of two bright daughters not only could accept but actually arranged for them to receive a liberal education. He personally taught them Greek, Latin, German, French, Italian, history and philosophy while a governess was brought in to teach music and drawing. The result, in Florence's case, was what some biographers describe as one of the best-educated women in Europe. The *London Times*, for example, in an October 30, 1854 story called "Who is Mrs. [Sic] Nightingale?" described her as a "young lady of singular endowments" with a "knowledge of the ancient languages, of the higher branches of mathematics, in general art, science and literature."

Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that the life for a woman of status in the mid-Victorian world was rigidly circumscribed. "Delicacy" reigned and the women of her social class were restricted to society matters, appropriate entertainment and other such pursuits. Much was forbidden to women except what might be considered commonplace or trivial matters. Notably, however, these were the peaceful and

prosperous years following the Napoleonic wars when new inventions abounded and great changes emerged in technology and the social realm alike. England's military and naval power enabled her to generate respect on land and sea. International trade flourished. The just and beloved reign of Queen Victoria, bolstered by the assistance of her beloved consort Albert, was symbolic of the place of Britain in international affairs. Through the first half of the century, "splendid isolation" was the predominant philosophy. Its success was reflected in the "Crystal Place" Exhibition of 1850.

But, if this world satisfied many, Florence Nightingale resented the self-abnegation that tied women of her social class to nothing more than "gentle sweetness." So frustrated was she in this futile, wasteful existence that she craved "for something worth doing"—escaping when possible into a world of her own. Many authors note that this desire to be somebody and do something useful was reinforced by a calling from God. One frequently-quoted note, written at the age of seventeen, read: "On February 7, 1837, God spoke to me and called me to His Service." Chafing, therefore, at the minimal opportunities open to a woman of her class, she developed a love of animals and the less fortunate. She began visiting many cottages to care for the sick. As reiterated by Newton and Barritt, it is clear that to Miss Nightingale, "serving God meant serving mankind." Soon afterwards, she began to visit a number of hospitals in London and the countryside. Her future was opening before her.

Secular nursing, however, was unfortunately one of the lowliest professions a Victorian woman could pursue. Generally placed on the level of a maid or menial drudge, nurses were a caste of questionable morals at best. The only respected nurses were those attached to a religious order. But there were too few of these and hospitals, in general, were only for soldiers, the poor or those affected by an epidemic disease. Charles Dickens was responsible for the generally-accepted stereotypes of nurses in the characters of Sairy Gamp and Betsy Prig—his "fair representation of the hired attendants on the poor in sickness." They were old, sloppy, careless, selfish and drunken. And, not only was the nursing considered to be beneath Florence's station in life, but was hardly even recognized as a work of mercy or philanthropy. Not surprisingly, any mention of interest in such an occupation was greeted negatively by her family. Fortunately, many contacts and friendships seemed to stimulate her during those difficult years: Sidney Herbert and his wife, neighbors at Wilton House in Hampshire; Chevalier Bunsen, the Prussian Ambassador to England and his wife; the American philan-

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thropist Samuel Gridley Howe and his wife Julia Ward Howe and the Bracebridges, a group of traveling friends.

Yet, the 1840's were difficult years for Florence. In 1842, for example, she had asked some friends what could "an individual do towards lifting the load of suffering from the helpless and miserable?" By 1844 she seemingly had decided that her future lay in hospitals working with the sick. Consulting the much-respected Samuel Howe on this matter, he urged her to "go forward." From 1844 to 1851, meanwhile, she read voraciously, studied hospital reports, sanitary reports, materials describing the Kaiserswerth Institution in Germany, founded by Pastor Theodore Fliedner and his wife, Friederike. During all that time, however, the family quarreled openly and shamelessly over this determination of hers to become a nurse. Finally, in 1849-50, no doubt out of frustration, she left on a trip to Egypt with the Bracebridges. While stopping in Paris she observed the work of the Sisters of Charity. She recognized that their organization, discipline, attitude and sensitivity made them far better nurses than any in England. Conveniently, they gave her an introduction to their house in Alexandria where she inspected both their schools and hospital. On the way back, in the summer of 1850, she stopped off at the Institute of Protestant Deaconesses at Kaiserswerth on the Rhine near Dusseldorf. Pastor Fliedner's institute had grown since 1833 into a training school for nurses of the sick and for women teachers. Religiously-motivated, the institution emphasized simplicity and common sense. Though some biographers point out how later in life she spoke negatively about the quality of nursing there and described the hygiene as "horrible," this first visit nonetheless made a great impression on her. She returned to Kaiserswerth in 1851 and spent four months there (July to October) —completing a training course in sick nursing. Once back home, she wrote an anonymous account of Kaiserswerth entitled "The Institution of Kaiserswerth on the Rhine for the Practical Training of Deaconesses." She said later of that visit: "Never have I met with a higher love, a purer devotion, than there. There was no neglect. It was the more remarkable because many of the deaconesses had been only peasants: none were gentlewomen when I was there." The experience was clearly a turning point in her life.

More hospital visits followed during 1852-1853 (Edinburgh, Dublin, Paris). The objections of her mother and sister did not cease but to her credit she persevered. Though, at one point, while she was with the Sisters of Charity in Paris, the family called her back home to care for her dying grandmother. Quite tellingly, she returned without

hesitation—family ties were still strong despite her purported rebellion. Soon after the grandmother's death she was asked to become Superintendent at the Institution for the Care of Sick Gentlewomen in Distressed Circumstances or the Harley Street Nursing Home. Though opposed to her interest in the position, once she began the duties her mother and sister accepted the inevitable—it had not been easy. While the position was but her first administrative post, many of her ideas were already revolutionary. She installed bells for the patients to ring if they needed help and lifts to hurry food to upper floors thus assuring that nurses could remain on the floors at all times. But her biggest challenge came from the Home's governing committee when she abolished the religious requirements for admission. They balked but the nursing care had improved so significantly during just one year that her ideas prevailed. She proved early that she would not be afraid to question authority and, in the process, provided a sample of what was possible through hard work and a willingness to experiment.

Following her one year commitment, all indications are that she was still dissatisfied. She had become acutely aware of deficiencies in hospitals everywhere and was not satisfied with her accomplishments in just one. So, after spending most of early 1854 at Middlesex Hospital, London, during a cholera epidemic she was more ready than ever to do what she could to alleviate problems on a broader scale. This explains, for example, why she expressed an interest in the superintendency at the more prestigious and newly-rebuilt King's College Hospital in London. Her highly-placed friend, Sidney Herbert, had already asked her to supply him with facts and figures to document what she called the sorry state of the pay and the accommodations for nurses. But, History had other plans for Florence Nightingale since, later in 1854, the Crimean War began. In 1853, a rekindled quarrel in Turkey, since dubbed the "Eastern Question," gave Russia the excuse to assert herself militarily. With England concerned over its crucial overland route to India, and France worried about its interests in the Holy Land both joined Turkey in opposing Russia. Because Russia had recently constructed a major sea base at Sebastopol in the Crimea this became the object of a joint British and French attack across the Black Sea through the Crimea. But, not only was the Crimea unknown to the allied armies when they arrived in September but the military strength of Russia had been underestimated as well. It was expected to be a quick punishing campaign. Instead, however, the incredible hardships of a Russian winter and multiple diseases, dragged it out into a full year of fruitless, degrading war.

The Crimean War, in fact, was almost totally dominated by blunders and mistakes—ranking undoubtedly as one of history's most useless wars. To begin with, no nation was really prepared for the war in general and in particular for supplying the armies in the Crimea. A disastrous cholera epidemic, with the accompanying lack of supplies, led to virtual chaos and disorganization. As British casualties mounted, for example, the Turkish government gave them the huge barracks at Scutari across the straits from Constantinople—this became the hospital for better or for worse, poorly equipped though it was.

As depicted by Sidney Godolphin Osborne in his *Scutari and its Hospitals*, the conditions were beyond imagination, with more deaths attributed to typhus, cholera and dysentery than to battle wounds. No man was more effective at informing the British public of this abominable situation than the *London Times'* Irish war correspondent, William Howard Russell. He was hated and certainly feared by generals and physicians alike and for good reason. He accurately reported many weaknesses and failures of the war effort. He exposed the inefficiency, corruption, idleness and incompetence that had crept into the British military since the days of fighting Napoleon in 1815. The English military establishment was solidly entrenched and self-protected. As a result, the fighting men were neglected, supplies were lost and there was no hope for the wounded, sick and starving.*

Noticing, however, that the Sisters of Charity and other religious made the conditions in the French hospitals far better than the British, Russell asked symbolically: "Why have we no Sisters of Charity?"

Russell's reports aroused horror and anger among the British public. Reacting immediately, Florence Nightingale, after gathering a group of nurses, wrote a letter offering their combined services to Sidney Herbert, the newly-appointed Secretary of War. Ironically, he had simultaneously reacted just as strongly, sending her a letter to ask if she would consider organizing just such a group willing to go to the front. He promised his complete support and assured her of sufficient supplies and personnel, medical and otherwise. Once she accepted he installed her as "Superintendent of the Female Nursing Establishment of the English General Hospitals in Turkey" and sent instructions to the commander-in-chief, Lord Raglan, the chief medical officer, Dr. John Hall and the purveyor-in-chief that they were to assist her in every way possible. Problems might have been anticipated, however, because the

*The extent of the incompetence, ill-preparedness and corruption is well-depicted in Mrs. Cecil Woodham–Smith's *The Reason Why* (London: McGraw-Hill, 1953).

military leaders blindly refused to admit that anything was wrong. The army medical department not only looked down on "women nurses" but felt threatened and resentful at this insertion of a well-placed friend of Secretary Herbert's in their midst. Both Herbert and Florence must have anticipated the worst because he authorized a commission of inquiry into the state of the hospitals and asked that Florence herself keep him well informed through regular reports.

On October 21, 1854 then, she, 38 nurses (10 Roman Catholic sisters, 8 Sisters of Mercy of the Church of England, 6 from St. John's Institute and 14 from various hospitals) and her friends the Bracebridges left for the Crimea. They arrived on November 4, the eve of the disastrous unwelcome Battle of Inkerman. This part of Florence Nightingale's career is well known. Osborne spoke, for example, of the "complete absence of the commonest provision for the exigencies of the hour." The difficulties she faced cannot be exaggerated: the corrupt military and medical establishments, incredible conditions, inexperienced help or none at all. But, her "quiet resolution and dignity, her powers of organization and discipline rapidly worked a revolution" (*DNB*, p. 17). In the words of the already-quoted *London Times* article of October 30, 1854:

> While we write, this deliberate, sensitive and highly-endowed young lady is already at her post, rendering the holiest of women's charities to the sick, dying and convalescent. There is a heroism in dashing up the heights of Alma in defiance of death and all mortal opposition, and let all praise and honour be, as they are, bestowed upon it; but there is a quiet forecasting heroism and largeness of heart in this lady's resolute accumulation of the powers of consolation, and her devoted application of them, which rank as high and are at least as pure. A sage few will no doubt condemn, sneer at or pity an enthusiasm which to them seems eccentric or at best misplaced; but to the true heart of the country it will speak home, and be there felt, that there is not one of England's proudest and purest daughters who at this moment stands on as high a pinnacle as Florence Nightingale.

Florence Nightingale remained in the Crimea until August, 1856. The wounded had christened her "The Lady of the Lamp" and, as a sample of her work, a death rate at Scutari that had risen to 42% in February, 1855 was brought down to 2% in June of that same year. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem, "Santa Filomena" accurately expresses the deep veneration that her courage and endurance, despite her own illness, had engendered. The other poem that symbolizes the

Crimean War is Alfred Lord Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade." The failure and ineptness that it represents makes it easy to understand why she was welcomed back as such a heroine.

While a nation waited to shower her with admiration and laurels she characteristically returned quietly, her own health greatly impaired, to the family home at Lea Hurst. If anything, though, the haunting experiences of the Crimean War had convinced her more than ever that changes must be made. Some of her suggestions during the war had resulted in improvements, for example, in the training of medical personnel. Queen Victoria, meanwhile, showered her with multiple expressions of devotion. In January, 1856 she sent a personal letter of thanks with a beautiful, enamelled and jewelled brooch designed by the Prince Consort himself. It read "Blessed are the Merciful." The note ended: "It will be a very great satisfaction for me to make the acquaintance of one who had set so bright an example to our sex." And, in September of that same year, Florence visited Victoria at Balmoral, not missing the opportunity in the words of the Queen to "put before us all that affects our present military hospital system and the reforms that are needed: we are much pleased with her." Such powerful support along with the continued devotion and friendship of the ever-faithful and highly-placed Sidney Herbert led, for example, to the creation of a Royal Commission established "to examine the sanitary condition, administration and organization of barracks, military hospitals and the organization of the Army Medical Department." For this group she prepared a lengthy, confidential and privately printed report entitled "Notes on Matters Affecting the Administration of the Army" which included a Supplement on "The Introduction of Female Nursing into Military Hospitals in Peace and War." Significantly, this latter document had been requested personally by the Secretary of State for War, Lord Panmure, known not so affectionately by many as "the Bison." In this one case, as with many others, Miss Nightingale proved that "the Bison himself is bullyable."

Four subcommissions were generated by this Royal Commission's massive study and these smaller groups were authorized to carry out the reforms suggested by the commission. For many years, then, plagued by continuing ill-health,* she became nonetheless the authority on sanitary and hospital affairs, finding herself consulted routinely on all

*Upon her return from the Crimea it was diagnosed that her nervous system was ruined and heart affected, and that she would suffer routinely from recurrent spells and prostration. From the age of 36 on she was to remain confined almost exclusively to her bedchamber.

matters affecting Army health. Though in a confined environment, she filled her waking hours with blue books, reports and conversations with Sidney Herbert and the other members of her "Cabinet."* In time, she even made herself an expert on the sanitary needs of the Army in India.

Meanwhile, looking back to 1855, the only recognition for her great contribution that had been approved was the "Nightingale Fund," inaugurated for the sole purpose of opening a training school for nurses. By 1860 a £50,000 sum had already accumulated and some sources carry the final total to as high as £300,000. The result was the opening of the Nightingale School and Home for Nurses at St. Thomas Hospital, London. A handpicked choice, Sarah Wardroper, became the first Superintendent though Florence herself carefully monitored the progress and gave counsel, support and her personal touch on a regular basis. She cautioned, for example, that if women chose to enter a vocation, secular as well as religious, they must be as qualified as men. Much of her correspondence and many of her suggestions and addresses to graduating classes were printed for private circulation and therefore served as invaluable aids for the St. Thomas School and many others throughout the world.

She called upon her earlier successful experience in the Crimea where she had developed "eight fundamental principles regarding sound organization and administration" making them, in the words of Evelyn Barritt, the guidelines for her new school:

1. Certain goals or tasks require organized group effort, hence organization.
2. Each organization has a primary purpose.
3. Financial control provides administrative control.
4. Leadership of an area requires expertise in that area.
5. Hierarchical leadership roles with clear lines of authority and responsibility are needed.
6. Groups require clearly defined rules and regulations to function together as an organization.
7. Decision-making must be based upon the use of accurate data.
8. Efficient use of manpower is essential to an organization.

An example of her wide-ranging influence is the now-famous letter to Dr. Gill Wylie of Bellevue Hospital, New York City, in response to

*In addition to Sidney Herbert, several loyal, dedicated friends comprised what has been called her personal "Cabinet"—her brother-in-law, Harry Verney; Arthur Clough, the poet; Dr. Sutherland, a sanitary expert; and her Aunt Mai. Much of what she accomplished would not have been possible without their help.

his queries concerning a possible opening of the first such American Training School for Nurses. Miss Nightingale willingly and thoroughly answered all of his questions on such topics as the relationship that must exist between nurses and medical men, the importance of proper discipline and accordingly the need for a hierarchy of women culminating in the Superintendent, to whom "all reprimands" should be referred. Another indication of her thoroughness was the enclosure of an Appendix which specified "steps" that made up the training program at St. Thomas Hospital. The clear result of her work was that a profession had been created and the leap to the United States seemed guaranteed. Not surprisingly, in 1873, the first three American Nurse Training Schools were opened at Bellevue and also The Connecticut Training School in New Haven and the Boston Training School. At all three the Nightingale effort served as a model.

Incredibly, despite her interest in the school and its students and the time consumed by this mammoth undertaking, she still managed to accomplish much else as well. Most of this was done through her voluminous writings—letters, papers, reports, pamphlets and even books. Her most famous book, *Notes on Nursing*, originally published in 1860, is a special, timeless book that went through multiple editions even in her own lifetime and has just been re-issued once again in a modern version.* And, her equally-popular *Notes on Hospitals* (1859), which provides a myriad of details, arrangements and plans pertaining to civilian institutions, has also proven to be equally as lasting and invaluable. In short, for almost 45 years, this incredible woman, while "cooped up" in her sickroom, managed to spread many ideas and support her many causes through the power of the pen. It is therefore appropriate that Jean Nelson, in a 1976 article entitled "Florence the Legend" (*Nursing Mirror*, May 13, 1976), concludes that it is "daft" to think that Florence Nightingale can be understood and appreciated without reading her own words. To Nelson, therefore, "the power of the woman bursts from every page, and it is exciting reading for any nurse."

She was honored on numerous occasions even before her death—becoming a living legend. In 1907, for example, she was bestowed with the Order of Merit, "for outstanding intellectual prowess," by King Edward VII, the first time this honor had even been awarded to a woman. And, the following year, she received the Freedom of the City of London—this having been granted only once before to a woman, the

**Notes on Nursing* ed. by Muriel Skeet; foreword by Jean McFarlane, Edinburgh; New York, 1980.

Baroness Burdett-Coutts. Similar awards were received from France, Germany and Norway. Sadly, however, senility had set in during these last years so that the magnitude of this recognition may have been lost on her. Finally, during the last six months her sight, memory and eventually all sensation left her before death on August 13, 1910 at the age of ninety. She had asked for a simple burial so the family refused the government's offer of burial in Westminster Abbey. She was buried instead in the family's East Wellow, Hampshire plot. Also at her request, the inscription on the tombstone reads simply: "F.N. Born 1820. Died 1910."

It is this more multi-faceted woman, then, that emerges from the pages that follow. She was the powerful force who not only brought reform and improvements to nursing and nursing education but also to more far-reaching fields such as the army and medicine, public health, governmental legislation, statistics and especially the status of women. This is the impact expressed by Cook when he coined the phrase "Nightingale Power," meaning "Opportunity, Industry, Mental Grasp and Strength of Will." Or, by Woodham-Smith, when she concluded that "in the midst of the muddle and the filth, the agony and the defeats, she had brought about a revolution." Her greatest memorial, then, was clearly and appropriately her work--a realization best described by Stephen Paget for posterity in his *Dictionary of National Biography* article:

> Miss Nightingale raised the art of nursing in this country from a menial employment to an honoured vocation, she taught nurses to be ladies, and she brought ladies out of the bondage of idleness to be nurses. This, which was the aim of her life, was no fruit of her Crimean experience, although that experience enabled her to give effect to her purpose than were otherwise possible. Long before she went to the Crimea she felt deeply the "disgraceful antithesis" between Mrs. Gamp and a sister of mercy. The picture of her at Scutari is of a strong-willed, strong-nerved energetic woman, gentle and pitiful to the wounded, but always masterful among those with whom she worked. After the war she worked with no less zeal or resolution, and realized many of her early dreams. She was not only the reformer of nursing but a leader of women.

Not surprisingly, meanwhile, when an individual becomes a legend in one's own lifetime much of what makes up that legend is often the narrow perspective of an awe-struck author. The public's perception of a particular event or contribution often approaches the mythical.

Hence the emphasis over the years has been on Florence Nightingale as the "Angel of Mercy" or "Angel of the Crimea"; "Heroine of Mercy" or "Soldier's Heroine"; "Lady of the Lamp" or "Lady in Chief." Fortunately, however, the discriminating reader can also search harder and find the works that speak of her as a "Heroine of European Philanthropy," "Pioneer of Progress" or "Pioneer Among Women," "Lady with a Brain," "great religious thinker," "passionate statistician," "leader in religious thought and civic thought," "woman of renown" and ultimately "maker of history."

The articles selected for this anthology, then, are designed to show the depth and breadth of this remarkable woman. Looking at her within the context of her age and beyond she emerges as a full-fledged woman of the nineteenth century much influenced by that age and its problems in one sense, and as a woman for all time, timeless in her virtual singlehanded creation of a modern profession in another. Part I will initiate the reader to the plight of women in that early Victorian period. Charles Dickens' nurse stereotypes show the blatantly inferior pseudo-nurses Sairy Gamp and Betsy Prig with their open indifference to nursing standards. This is followed by Florence Nightingale's own bitter, impassioned 1852 essay on the plight of women in that era. Part II contrasts the 1910 portrait of Sir Edward Cook with that of the modern psycho-historian Donald Allen. This disparity will prepare the reader for the revelations of the articles that follow.

Part III, for example, provides a cross-section of descriptions about the well-documented and all-important Crimean experience. They include what many consider to have been the best of the Scutari eyewitness accounts. This is the description of Reverend Sidney Godolphin Osborne who attributed much of Miss Nightingale's success, curiously enough, to her "lively sense of the ridiculous." It is followed by a sample popular view that virtually sanctified her as one of the "heroines of modern progress," chapter 10 of what is clearly accepted as the standard biography by Mrs. Woodham-Smith, and is concluded with an excerpt from the opening chapter of a highly-praised new textbook, *The Advance of American Nursing* by Beatrice and Philip Kalisch. Part IV attempts to show how the post-Crimean exploits of Florence Nightingale were just as exciting and certainly more lasting than her accomplishments as the highly-publicized "Angel of the Crimea." It begins with Lytton Strachey's iconoclastic portrait that strongly rejects the popular saintly, delicate image and reveals instead a driven woman. In Strachey's words "she did not believe in gentle sweetness and womanly self-abnegation but strict discipline, rigid attention to detail, ceaseless

labor, indomitable will with a cool and calm demeanor." The other articles, while less blunt than Strachey, nevertheless show what Florence Nightingale as author, reformer, and "rebel with a cause" believed in and accomplished.

And, finally, in the closing section, attention focuses on Florence Nightingale's role in the founding of a profession and on her timeless relationship to it. William Bishop tells of her "message for today"; two sociologists, Elvi Waik Whittaker and Virginia Olesen, see her unique contribution as nursing's legacy of status and prestige; Monica Baly describes convincingly how "no miasma of sentimentality nor subsequent reaction of anti-myth can destroy the solid facts of her achievements: they were Herculean"; and John D. Thompson, reflecting on her as a "passionate humanist," effectively traces the progress from "Nightingale to the New Nurse." Thompson, in this recent May 1980 article, states strongly that, in his estimation, the nursing profession is currently immersed in a serious dilemma. He notes the inability of nurses to agree internally on whether "nursing is a profession in and of itself, or whether nursing is a means to develop a better health care delivery system." And, in pursuing a solution, he suggests that the same issue "lies at the heart of the two faces Florence Nightingale has presented to posterity." Once again, in 1980, this foundress of a profession has many lessons for all who have followed in her footsteps. As A. G. Gardiner said in his *Prophets, Priests and Kings*: "She was not the Lady with the Lamp. She was the Lady with the Brain—one of those rare personalities who reshape the contours of life."

Begging your indulgence, as I conclude these introductory remarks, there are several select individuals and groups whose contributions must be acknowledged for without them this book would have remained but an idea. To the students of my History of Nursing classes back to the fall of 1978 who were so understanding about the hours spent attempting to find the real Florence Nightingale and who provided so much feedback and encouragement. To my colleagues in the History Department, Career Development Center and Learning Resource Center at Thomas More College who always understood what the study of Florence Nightingale and History of Nursing meant to me and cooperated accordingly again and again. To Mary Egbers whose typing skills, friendly smile and motherly demeanor carried me through my difficult times and Francis J. Bremer who as much as anybody else made me believe I could be an author. And, in a different but somehow deeper way, my parents, grandparents, wife Maureen and two daughters Michele and Danielle must be recognized because they never stopped believing in me. My

grandmother Emma Landry, for example, who in her ninetieth year still demonstrates the "Nightingale Power" that Florence made so famous in her ninety years and my wife, Maureen, a modern nurse who reminds me constantly how the profession, if it is to not only survive but flourish and move forward, cannot settle for less than what this great pioneer and foundress believed in and fought for.

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