

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE – BI-CENTENARY OF HER BIRTH -12 MAY 2020

Florence Nightingale was born on 12 May 1820 to an upper-class family in Florence, Italy (a city after which she was named). They returned to England the following year to live at Embley, Hampshire, during the winter months. They also had a summer residence at Holloway, near Matlock, Derbyshire.

In her mid-teens, Florence had a strong desire to devote her life in the service of others and, much against family disapproval, decided on nursing. She worked hard at studying the art and science of the subject.

Her most famous achievement was during the Crimean War after she heard of the horrific conditions of wounded soldiers. (In October 1854 she and a staff of 38 volunteer nurses travelled to Scutari, where they discovered mass infections, neglected hygiene and many fatalities.)

It was reckoned that, due to her innovations such as cleanliness and hand washing, the death rate was reduced from 42% to 2%. Prior to that, bad conditions had included poor nutrition, lack of supplies, stale air and a generally poor environment. Through her strong will, determination and faith in God she endeared herself to all her nursing staff and patients. Soldiers would look forward to her nightly rounds of all the casualties with her night light and, as a `ministering angel` became traditionally known as the `Lady With The Lamp`. She has since become a legend in her own right.

On her return to Britain she was instrumental in setting up the Nightingale Training School at London`s `St Thomas` Hospital`, where our Prime Minister was recently treated and now recovered from the coronavirus epidemic.

Keith Cheetham



Quote:

'I would rather, ten times, die n the surf,
heralding the way to a new world, than
stand idly by on the shore'

Ever loving God

We thank you for the life, work and witness of Florence Nightingale. Her determination and courage to seek out the best way to nurse the sick has influenced for the better the outcome of so many patients and we thank you for her legacy.

We lift to you at this time all nurses, doctors and care workers who are seeking to support and help all in their care. We thank you for their fortitude and cheerfulness as they repeatedly 'enter the surf rather than stand on the shore'.

We remember too all those who have continued to support the public through this difficult time—those who ensure we have food in our shops and on our tables, the postal workers, the rubbish clearers, the milk deliverers and all who have worked tirelessly to keep us fed and cared for.

We pray too for all who seek a protective vaccine and /or cure for this new virus; that they may be honest in their research and find a way to halt this pandemic.

We commit ourselves today to continue in new ways of loving and caring for each other when this time is passed. Amen.

The public has been asked to “shine a light” in their window on Tuesday May 12th to mark International Nurses Day, the 200th anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale and to recognise their efforts to tackle coronavirus.