

History Topic: Lives of significant individuals- Florence Nightingale

Year 2

Term 2

Key information

Born: 12 May 1820 in Florence, Italy
Lived in: England, UK
Occupation: Nurse
Died: 13 August 1910
Best known for: Founding modern nursing
Also known as: Lady with the Lamp



In 1854, the Crimean War broke out – a war with Britain, France and Turkey on one side, and Russia on the other. British troops went off to fight in the Crimea – an area in the south of Russia, now part of Ukraine. News soon reached home of soldiers dying from battle wounds, cold, hunger and sickness, with no real medical care or nurses to treat them.

Help was needed fast, and the Minister for War – called Sidney Herbert – knew just the person... He asked Florence to lead a team of nurses to the Crimea!

When they arrived, the nurses found the Army hospital in Scutari (the area where wounded soldiers were sent) in a terrible state. It was overcrowded and filthy, with blocked drains, broken toilets and rats running everywhere. Imagine the smell!

There weren't enough medical supplies or equipment, and wounded soldiers had to sleep on the dirty floor, without blankets to keep warm, clean water to drink or fresh food to eat. Not surprisingly, disease spread quickly and most of the soldiers died from infection.

Florence Nightingale truly cared for her suffering patients. At night, when everyone was sleeping, she'd visit the soldiers to make sure they were comfortable. She'd also write letters home for those who could not write themselves. Since Florence carried a lantern with her on her night visits, the soldiers would call her 'The Lady with the Lamp'.

Florence was loved and adored by all of the soldiers. They called her 'The lady with the lamp' because she walked around the wards at night with a lantern. Florence spent the rest of her life trying to make hospitals a better place for everybody. Florence changed the world by making nursing an honourable profession and changing how sick people were cared for across Britain and the world.

Key Vocabulary

Infection- an illness caused by spreading germs.

Crimean War- the war that Florence Nightingale served in.

Patient- A person who is ill in hospital.

Red Cross- The award given to Florence for the amazing things she did.

Injured- Somebody who is hurt.

Nurse- Somebody who works in a hospital treating patients.
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Wound- An injury where the skin is cut or broken.

Compassion- concern for the sufferings or misfortunes of others.
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Community- A group of people sharing the same location.
