

ORIGINAL LETTER
WRITTEN BY
FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE
TO SIR JOSHUA JEBB
AUGUST 21, 1861

Hampstead NW
Aug 21/61

My dear Sir J. Jebb
I am sorry I have come
upon you at such an important
time & glad that you approve
the scheme.

Dr. Parkes Carter tells me
that it is impossible to have a
Meeting of Committee or of Council
for a month - as every body is
out of town - so you will not
be troubled for that time. And
I think we may still begin at
King's Coll. Hosp. in October.
I have an answer from
Mr. Majoribanks about the
financial part of it. And he

©2010 GANNETT HEALTHCARE GROUP

see no difficulty in allowing
the N.C. Hosp. £500 for 2 years,
if the Committee approve. We
will postpone purchasing £800
stocks & add to the Capital:
in order to have the £500 to
pay down at once to St. John's
House, if such is the decision
of the Committee, when it meets.

About another subject, as to
which you were so good as to
write to me viz: the making
these Nurses (of St. Thomas) training
Centres themselves.

I have received the enclosed.

The North Hospital has, you see,
taken two of the Nurses (second
class Certificate - one of them,
Meredith, of doubtful character,
by Mrs. Wadsworth's own showing)
and advertised them as trainers.
Our training will thus fall into
discord, I fear, and our Committee
be blamed.

Would it not be well that
the Committee should propose that
all appointments for special
service, such as training others,
should be submitted to the
Committee, so that persons
engaging Nurses for such an
object, might have the advice
of the Committee? Otherwise the
Comm^{ee} should take no responsibility
in the matter.

Would you be so kind as to
bring this before them the next
time you meet?

I have marked on our Annual Sheet the two places, P^s 2 & 4, where these Nurses are mentioned.

Miss Wardrop is herself very much alarmed at this occurrence, which is evidently a mere job on the part of the Bath Hospital people. She wrote to me about it as soon as ever she had seen the enclosed Advertisement: but too late to prevent it. She says she warned the Bath ^{Hospital} Managers what sort of woman Medhurst was - "not so trustworthy" she said "as the others" - & that they did not say a word to her about putting them in such a position as that of training others.

Further, would it not be well to Certificates no Nurses, not fit to be Head Nurse - which certainly

should not be done under 2 years training? And still there would be many good Head Nurses, not suitable as trainers of others.

[It certainly never came into my head that any Hosp^l would take our "second class" certificates as "superintendents" (vide printed paper). These are things we could only learn by experience. And I am very anxious that the Committee should consider this matter.]

At the same time you will be glad to hear that Miss Wardrop gives a very good account of the 6 Nurses detained at St Thomas for a second year. She says they will be quite equal for taking places as Head Nurses, if they choose

To leave the Hospital after the
second year - & that they already
do & know more than many
Head Nurses -

It is only for future
consideration that I trouble
you with this subject now -

I trust - that Lady Amelia
is better - & that she will
quite recover at Brighton -

Believe me

Sincerely & gratefully yours
J. Nightingale

Please let me repeat that I
attach no blame to Mrs. Waddopen
& Mr. Shiffell - I believe that
Stone, & even Medhurst, are far
better than the sum of Provincial
Hospital Head Nurses. I also
believe that, four or five years
hence, Mrs. Waddopen & Mr.
Shiffell themselves will not
recommend for a certificate
women like Stone, far less like
Medhurst -

I think it important the
Committee should bear in mind
& raise the standard, year by
year. At the same time, I
think more has been done the
first year than we were at
all entitled to expect.

Yrs.
J. N.

Hampstead NW

Aug 21 / 61

My dear Sir J. Jebb

I am sorry to have come upon you at such an inopportune time & glad that you approve the scheme H. Bonham Carter tells me that it is impossible to have a Meeting of Committee or of Council for a month < as every body is out of town < so you will not be troubled for that time < And I think we may still begin at King's Coll: Hosp: in October. I have an answer from Mr. Marjoribanks about the financial part of it. And he sees no difficulty in allowing the K.C. Hosp. £500 for 2 years, if the Committee approve < He will postpone purchasing £800 stock to add to the capital: in order to have the £500 to pay down at once to St. John's House, if such is the decision of the Committee, when it meets. About another subject, as to which you were so good as to write to me viz: the making these Nurses (of St Thomas') training centres themselves < I have received the enclosed. The Bath Hospital has, you see, taken two of the Nurses (second-class certificates < one of them, Medhurst, of doubtful character, by Mrs. Wardroper's own showing) and advertise them as trainers. Our training will thus fall into discredit, I fear, and our Committee be blamed. Would it not be well that the Committee should propose that all appointments for special service, such as training others, should be submitted to the Committee, so that persons engaging Nurses for such an object, might have the advice of the Committee? Otherwise the Commee should take no responsibility in the matter < Would you be so kind as to bring this before them the next time you meet? I have marked on our Annual Sheet the two places, Pp. 2 & 4, where these Nurses are mentioned. Mrs. Wardroper is herself very much alarmed at this occurrence, which is evidently a mere job on the part of the Bath Hospital people. She wrote to me about it as soon as ever she had seen the enclosed Advertisement: but too late to prevent it. She says she warned the Bath Hospital Managers what sort of woman Medhurst was < "not so trustworthy" she said "as the others" < & that they did not say a word to her about putting them in such a position as that of training others. Farther, would it not be well eventually to certificate no Nurse, not fit to be Head Nurse < which certainly should not be done under 2 years' training? And still there would be many good Head Nurses, not suitable as trainers of others. [It certainly never came into my head that any Hospl. would take our "second-class certificates" as "Superintendents" < (vide printed paper.) These are things we could only learn by experience < And I am very anxious that the Committee should consider this matter.] At the same time, you will be glad to hear that Mrs. Wardroper gives a very good account of the 6 Nurses retained at St. Thomas' for a second year. She says that they will be quite equal for taking places as Head Nurses, if they choose to leave the Hospital after the second year < & that they already do & know more than many Head Nurses - It is only for future consideration that I trouble you with this subject now

-

I trust that Lady Amelia is better < & that she will quite recover at Brighton.

Believe me

Sincerely & gratefully Yours

F. Nightingale

Please let me repeat that I attach no blame to Mrs. Wardroper & Mr. Whitfield - I believe that Stone, & even Medhurst, are far better than the run of Provincial Hospital Head Nurses. I also believe that, four or five years hence, Mrs. Wardroper & Mr. Whitfield themselves will not recommend for a certificate women like Stone, far less like Medhurst - I think it important the Committee should bear in mind to raise the standard, year by year. At the same time, I think more has been done the first year than we were at all entitled to expect.

F.N.