



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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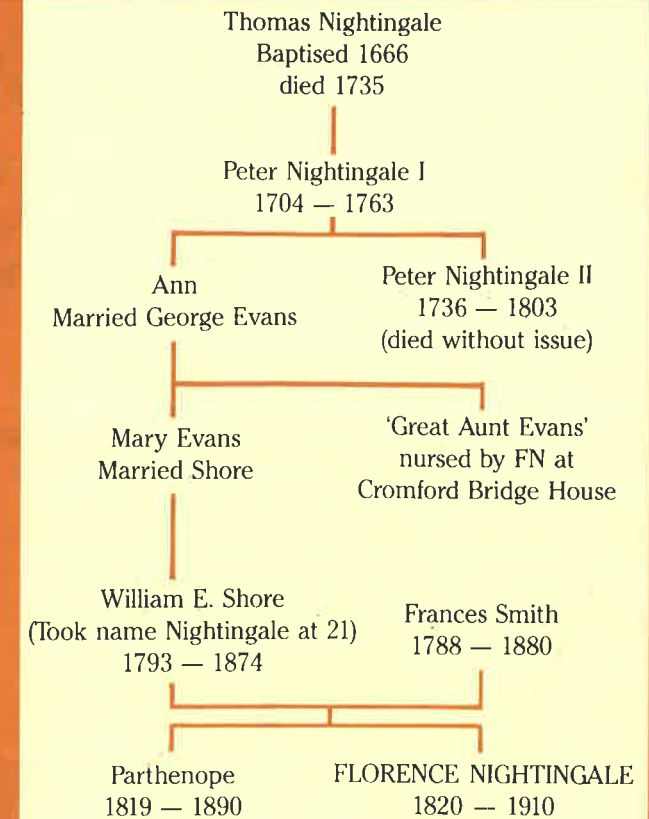
There is a museum at St. Thomas' Hospital, London devoted to the life of Florence Nightingale.

Written by G & M Wigglesworth.

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Florence Nightingale
1820 — 1910



Chronology

- 1820 Florence Nightingale born in Italy
- 1821 Work on Lea Hurst begun
- 1825 Embley Park bought as main residence
- 1837 FN experiences a call to serve God
- 1851 Works for a few weeks in a German hospital
- 1853 Appointed Superintendent of the Institution for the Care of Sick Gentlewomen in Distressed Circumstances
- 1854 Outbreak of Crimean War & FN goes there
- 1856 War ended
- 1860 Starts first Training School for Nurses
- 1880 Nurses her mother at Lea Hurst
- 1902 Confined to her bed
- 1910 Florence Nightingale died

The life of Florence Nightingale

Florence Nightingale was born on May 12th 1820 in the city whose name she was given. Her parents, Fanny and William, had spent the last two years travelling in Europe but in 1821 they returned to England.

Florence's father was born William Shore but had changed his name to Nightingale when he inherited a considerable estate from his great uncle, Peter Nightingale II. The family fortune had been built up in the eighteenth century, started by Thomas Nightingale and added to by his son Peter I. In addition to extensive lead and mineral rights, they owned land and property in Lea, including Lea Hall and the Lea lead smelting works. Peter II founded Lea Mills and the Hat Factory.

It was natural, therefore, that when the Nightingales decided to settle in England they should come to Derbyshire and Lea Hurst was built. However, almost immediately Florence's mother, Fanny, had decided it was inadequate. She found it cold, too far from the social life of London and much too small. Florence herself once told friends, "It has only 15 bedrooms." They therefore acquired another residence at Embley Park in Hampshire and Lea Hurst was used during the summer.

Nevertheless, it was during her visits to Lea Hurst that Florence's commitment to nursing gradually took shape. From a very early age she had been dissatisfied with the empty social life that her mother and sister so much enjoyed and in February 1837 she wrote in her private notes, "God spoke to me and called me to His service." It was only several years later that she realised what that service was to be but soon she was spending much of her time visiting the poor and sick in their cottages in Holloway. In 1843 when the family was due to return to Embley she begged to remain but her mother wouldn't hear of it. Two years later she

was allowed to nurse her grandmother and shortly afterwards she looked after her old nurse through her last illness.

By now Florence knew where her vocation lay but her parents were horrified. Eventually, after many angry and hysterical scenes, Florence's mother was prepared to consider Cromford Bridge House becoming a nursing home. It had recently become empty following the death of Florence's Great-aunt Evans, whom she had also nursed. But Florence was not to be fobbed off in this way. She now spent all the time she could studying everything that had been written on nursing and she was also able to visit a nursing institution in Kaiserswerth in Germany. Finally in 1853, despite continuing opposition from her family, she was appointed to manage The Institution for the Care of Sick Gentlewomen in Distressed Circumstances in London.

A year later war had started in the Crimea and horrific accounts of the conditions were published in The Times. The Secretary of War wrote inviting Florence to lead a small party of nurses to Scutari (in fact she had already been planning to go privately) and in less than a week she had left London with 38 nurses.

Florence Nightingale as the Lady of the Lamp whose shadow the sick soldiers kissed as she passed through their wards at night has become a legend. But Florence was not just a ministering angel with kind words and a gentle touch. She was a powerful organiser and a strict disciplinarian, working tirelessly, often against considerable opposition, to improve conditions. These had been truly appalling and in the first six months 75% of the deaths had been caused by diseases such as cholera.

By the time she returned to England less than two years later she had become a national heroine who was to be summoned to Balmoral by Queen Victoria. Yet she shunned all publicity and had

travelled back to England incognito. After only one night in London she had caught the train to Whatstandwell and then walked up to Lea Hurst to join her family.

She shrank from public life and once the immediate excitement was over the general public heard little of her and when, in 1907, she became the first woman to be invested with the Order of Merit many people were surprised to learn that she was still alive, yet until the last few years of her life she had worked ceaselessly. Her experiences in the Crimea had convinced her that health administration in the British Army must be completely reformed and she saw this as her next great mission. She wrote endless letters, produced endless statistics and plans and endlessly badgered politicians into bringing about improvements. At the same time she was determined to improve the quality of hospitals and nursing. In 1860 she founded the first Training School for Nurses at St Thomas's Hospital in London, using the £45,000 which had been raised when a Nightingale Fund was set up in the last months of the Crimean War.

Although most of her life following the Crimea was spent in London Florence retained her connections with Lea Hurst. In Holloway she set up a reading room and another in nearby Whatstandwell. She provided books there and for Lea Primary school as well as providing the services of a doctor for the village poor. Once a year star pupils of the school were invited to tea at Lea Hurst. In 1880 she organised the setting up of a Penny Bank for the pupils and her will included a small legacy to the school's Head Master. Upon the death of her father in 1874 she nursed her mother at Lea Hurst until her death in 1880. During this period a typhoid epidemic broke out in Holloway and Florence remained until necessary improvements were made to the water supply and drainage before returning to London. There she lived for another thirty years until her death in 1910.

The Florence Nightingale Trail : Route

The route of about six miles starts from the A6 at Whatstandwell and goes via Holloway, Lea, Dethick, Lea Bridge to rejoin the A6 at Cromford.

This leaflet sets out to add interest to a short drive through some of the beautiful landscape and villages of Amber Valley. It can be done solely in the car or very short excursions from the car on foot can be made. Parking is difficult on the narrow streets and lanes so drivers are asked to take great care not to create danger or obstruct access to houses and farms and other commercial premises.



The numbers (e.g. *1) refer to the description opposite relating to the various things to be seen).

At Whatstandwell turn off the A6 towards Crich.

In 50 yards park briefly on the vacant ground on the left by the canal tow path. *1 *2

In 20 yards turn left to Holloway.

In 1 mile at the steep hill you can take a short walk. Go along the path over the stile to the left behind Bracken Cottage for a view of Lea Hurst which will be to your right. *3

200 yards from Bracken Cottage turn left at the T junction.

300 yards turn right along Church Street to Lea passing *4 & *5.

In $\frac{3}{4}$ mile turn right up Lea Road to Lea Village passing *6 *7 & *8.

1 mile from the last cross roads and just past Lea Hall (*8 viewed from the road) turn left to Dethick and at the T junction in $\frac{1}{2}$ mile turn left to pass Dethick.

At the bottom of the hill after almost a mile turn left to Crich along Riber Road, bear right at the next two junctions to descend Lea Road towards Cromford to reach Lea Bridge. *9 *10 *11

Either first walk down the track to the left of Smedley's Car Park and pass the Lodge & the Coach Road on your left. As you approach Wharf Cottage the Hat Factory was on the right. *11 At this point you can return to Smedley's or continue (a further mile) straight on past Wharf Cottage, along the tow path of the dried up canal & over the railway to the main Cromford Canal. Turn right along the canal and over the river. At the next footbridge at High Peak Junction leave the canal by crossing the railway and river to the right. At the road turn right back to Lea Bridge and Smedley's and your car.

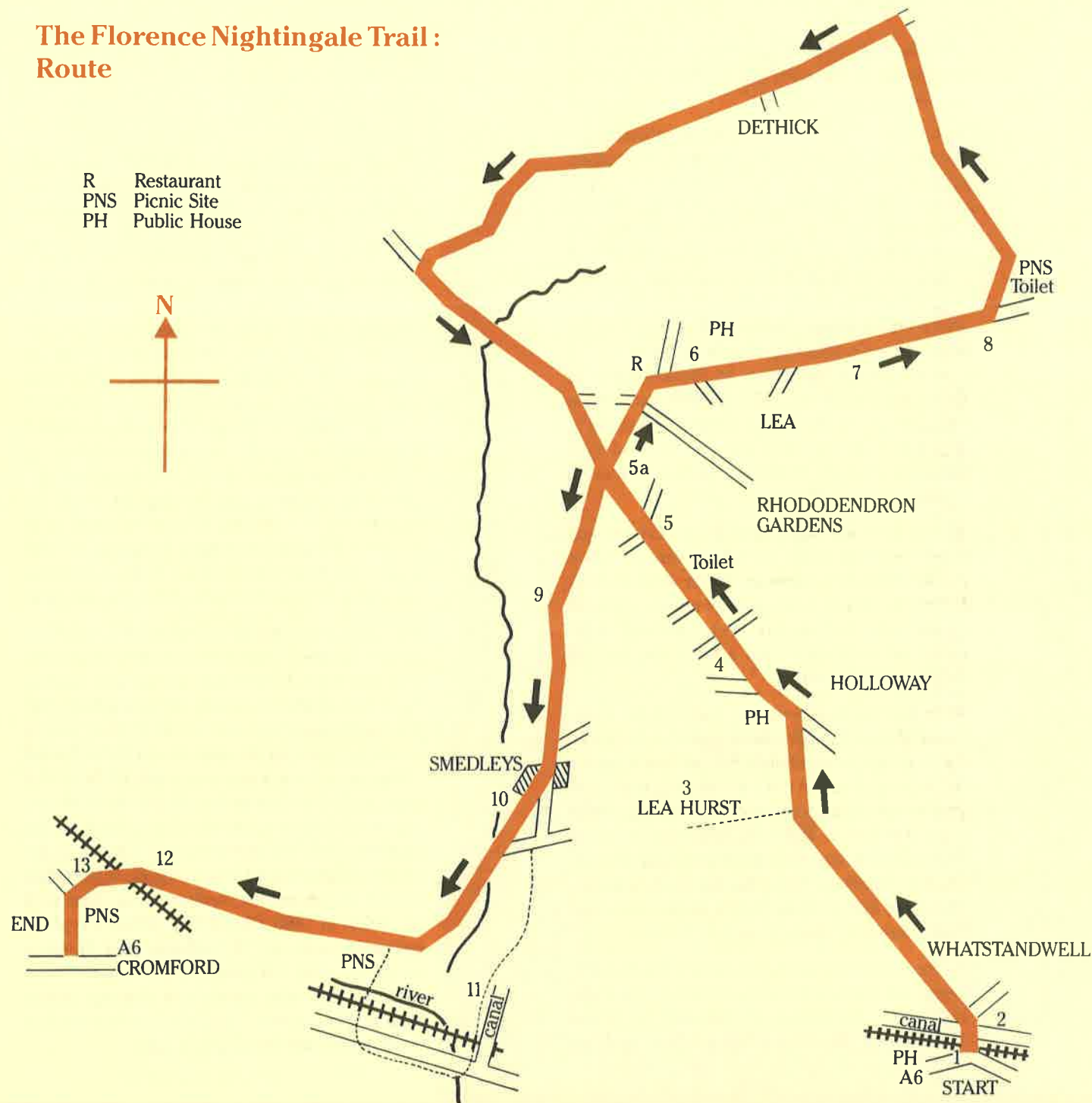
Or at Smedley's Mills, turn towards Cromford, passing *12 & *13 before rejoining the A6.

Florence Nightingale Trail : Points of Interest

- *1 From the canal towpath looking down to the left can be seen the old Whatstandwell railway station platform where FN alighted on her journey home from the Crimea. She walked to Lea Hurst from here.
- *2 The house on the right just past canal bridge and opposite the road to Holloway was the location of a 'Coffee Tavern' or reading room in the foundation and running of which FN was closely involved. This was typical of her dedication to the local communities.
- *3 Lea Hurst (built in the 1820s) was used as a summer residence for the Nightingale family, their principal home being in Hampshire. Neither the house nor the grounds are open to the public.
- *4 Nightingale House, called Little London Gallery, (on the left at the top of Little London) had, on the first floor, another of the reading rooms FN established.
- *5 On the right is the school to which Florence contributed when it was rehoused by public subscription in 1859, continuing her family's traditional role as benefactors, presenting many gifts to the school and encouraging the children's studies. The original School House stands at the cross-roads (*5a).
- *6 The row of cottages now including 'The Jug and Glass' was built by Peter Nightingale as weavers' cottages, one bearing the date stone 1781.
- *7 The old Chapel on the right, endowed by Thomas Nightingale 250 years ago, was the one where Florence, one of a family of Unitarians, would have worshipped.

The Florence Nightingale Trail: Route

R Restaurant
PNS Picnic Site
PH Public House



- *8 The last house on the right (which should be viewed from the road) is Lea Hall where her ancestors, Thomas and the two Peter Nightingales, lived and built up the fortune which Florence's father (Peter Nightingale's nephew) inherited.
- *9 The large mound of waste on the right at the 'Lea Bridge' sign just before the housing estate is all that remains of the lead works developed by the Nightingales before Florence's time.
- *10 The factory, Smedley's, set up by Peter Nightingale II in 1784, is perhaps the oldest site in the world where mechanically powered spinning has continuously operated. The water in this valley was central to the operation of three corn mills, the lead smelter, the textile factory, a hat factory and to the supply to the branch canal. The industry in this valley together with lead mining and property was the source of the Nightingale wealth.
- *11 A short walk down the track to the left of Smedley's car park leads past the gatehouse and gates of the coach road to Lea Hurst and continues to the canal and wharf built to serve the local industry. The Hat Factory built by the second Peter Nightingale and which was adjacent to the wharf has now disappeared.
- *12 Wood End, a large house barely visible on the right, at the dangerous corner just before the railway bridge was built by the second Peter Nightingale two hundred years ago.
- *13 Just before the road junction at the river bridge is the large house then known as Cromford Bridge House where Florence nursed her Great Aunt and which her mother proposed as a charitable nursing home with which Florence could be involved.

Cross the river to Cromford where you can explore the buildings associated with another of the great Derbyshire industrialists, Richard Arkwright.