Florence Nightingale
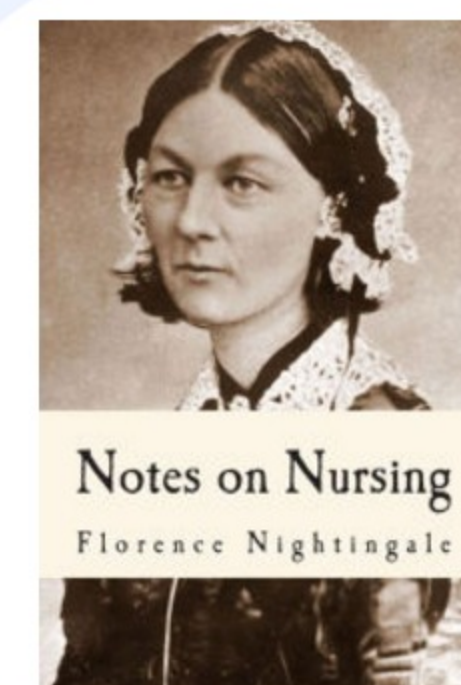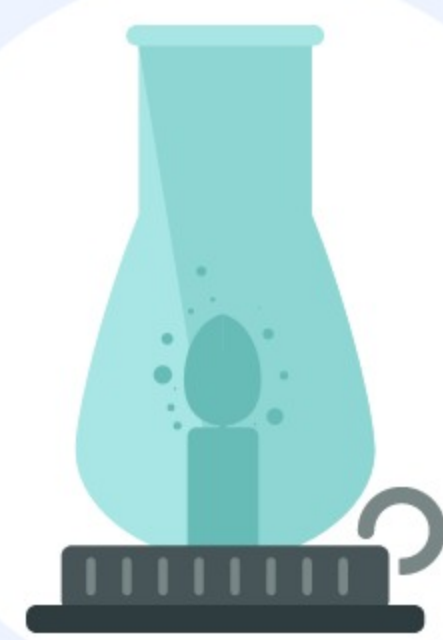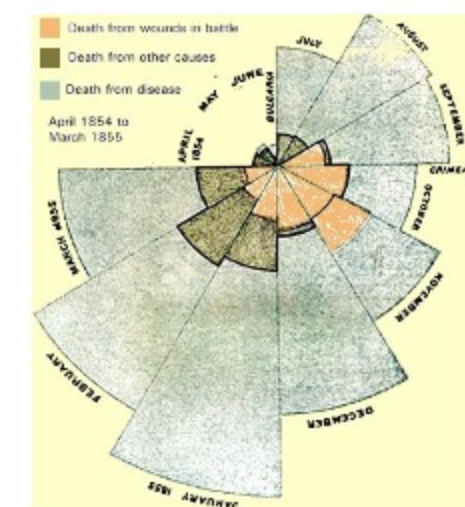
Clinical Audit Pioneer

Her famous audit

Florence Nightingale and her nursing team arrived in the Crimea in November 1854 and were greeted by an appalling scene: hospitals with no beds or blankets, poor sanitation, contributing to emaciated, weak and dying soldiers.

Closer inspection of the Scutari Barracks by Nightingale identified a plethora of fundamental problems: inadequate medical records, no systematic recording or reporting, bureaucratic inertia, etc.

Nightingale employed her substantial statistical skills to create polar-area diagrams in order to gain a better understanding of what was happening and to use her data in order to campaign for change.

The Times newspaper picked up on Nightingale's findings and subsequent pressure on the British Government led to a number of important interventions. For example, the Sanitary Commission and Nightingale worked to improve hygiene for soldiers. Sewers were flushed out and ventilation improved. Better food, medications and medical equipment were made available. In a short time frame the death rate dropped from 42% to 2%.

Other achievements

- 1820 born
- 1844 commenced her nursing career
- 1854-5 led a team of nurses to the Crimea
- 1858 first female member of Royal Statistical Society
- 1859 wrote Notes on Nursing
- 1865 the first 'Nightingale Nurses' began work in Liverpool Workhouse Infirmary
- 1883 first recipient of the Royal Red Cross
- 1907 first woman to be awarded the Order of Merit
- 1908 honorary freedom of the City of London
- 1910 died.

Famous quotes

'Rather, ten times, die in the surf, heralding the way to a new world, than stand idly on the shore'

'The first requirement in a hospital is that it should do the sick no harm'

'I attribute my success to this - I never gave or took an excuse'

'To understand God's thoughts we must study statistics'