

THE STORY OF FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE

By **AMY STEEDMAN** ILLUSTRATED BY M. V. WHEELHOUSE





CHARLOTTE MASON BEEHIVE MELTON MOWBRAY

© Copyright 2022, Charlotte Mason Beehive.

Bechive. This new and unabridged edition of 'The Story of Florence Nightingale' is a brand new transcription, prepared by Rachel North for the exclusive use of Charlotte Mason Beehive. It is taken from the original twentieth century publication by T. C. & E. C. Jack, which has now entered the public domain.

Cover design by James North

All rights reserved. This book or any portion thereof may not be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever without prior written permission from the publisher.

Charlotte Mason Beehive charlottemasonbeehive.co.uk

CONTENTS

CH	IAPTER I	
-	Dawn	5
_		',
_	IAPTER II	
	Preparation	.12
СН	IAPTER III	
	The Burden and the Heat of the Day	19
	The Burden and the Heat of the Bay	.17
СН	IAPTER IV	
	Faithful to the End	.30
	IAPTER V	
1	Work at Home	.39
OT 1		
	IAPTER VI	40
-	Eventide	.48
	70,	
	PLATES IN COLOUR	
	PLATES IN COLOUR	
	1.	
	Eventide	1
0	15Ventude	+
, E	The dog lay quite still under her hand	.11
	1	
-	Eyes full of adorning gratitude watched her pass	.26
	"Miss Nightingale's Carriage"	36



Eventide (see page 48)

THE STORY OF FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE

CHAPTER I

DAWN

IT was in the year 1820 when spring was once more sowing the earth with flowers that, on the 12th of May, a little English baby was born in the beautiful old city of Florence. The Villa Colombaia, where the baby first saw the light was close to the Porta Romana, and outside the grim old city gate, the fields under the grey olive trees were bright with rainbow coloured anemones and golden tulips, and the city itself was gay with flowers.

No wonder then that when the baby girl came to such a flowery corner of the earth, they should call her after her fair birthplace, the City of Flowers. The baptismal water was poured over her little fair head by Dr Trevor, Prebendary of Chester, who gave her the name of Florence and signed her with the sign of the cross "in token that hereafter she shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under His banner against sin, the world and the devil; and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto her life's end."

The promise has been made for many a new little soldier enrolled under the King's banner, but seldom has it been fulfilled so royally as it was by that little maiden who was born under the blue Italian skies and who was to make the name of her birthplace shine in golden letters upon the roll of fame.

So was that this baby started life with a beautiful Christian name added to the specially fitting surname of Nightingale. Her father had taken this name when he succeeded to the property of a great-uncle, so here was the small maiden surrounded at once with the magic of flowers and music, entwined in the call of her, and even a golden halo hovering around, for the word Nightingale in Italian is Filomena, and every one knows that Santa Filomena is one of the best loved and most honoured of saints.

Florence was not the only baby in the Villa Colombaia. She was, in fact, only the new baby. The little sister, who was now the old baby, could certainly not boast of any great age, for she had only been born the year before, when Mr and Mrs Nightingale were in Naples. She, too, had been called after her birthplace, the old Greek settlement of Parthenope, so had quite as dignified a name as Florence, but, indeed, neither of the children, as they grew up, were the least impressed by the dignity of their calling. Florence in a very short time became simply "Flo" and Parthenope became "Parthe" or even "Pop.

Mr and Mrs Nightingale and their two babies did not stay very long in Italy. The next year found them back again in England, preparing to make a home for themselves. The house of Lea Hall on Mr Nightingale's estate was not quite suitable, so, while a new house was being built, they lived at Kynsham Court. By the time Florence was five years old, however, the new house, called Lea Hurst, was ready, and Mr Nightingale had also bought an estate at Embley Park on the edge of the New Forest, so it was in these two beautiful homes that Florence and her sister spent the sunny days of their childhood.

DAWN 7

Mr Nightingale loved to have everything about him as beautiful as possible, and Lea Hurst was a specially charming home. The windows facing south looked over lawns and gardens and wooded slopes across the valley where the Derwentwater wound its way, like a silver thread to the hills beyond, and on every side the view was lovely. But, surely, most charming of all must have been the sight of the two little maidens in their dainty muslin frocks, Leghorn hats and sandal shoes, as they played about the garden slopes, among the beds of purple pansies, blue forget-me-nots and crimson wallflowers.

The children had each their special garden in which they worked diligently, planting, weeding and watering, but it was Florence who was particularly fond of flowers. It seemed as if the City of Flowers had laid its charm upon her besides having given her its name.

The two little sisters were very fond of their dolls, too, although they showed their fondness in very different ways and brought up their families on quite different plans. Florence's dolls were all delicate and needed constant care. They spent most of their lives in bed, going through dangerous illnesses, while they were most carefully nursed by their little mother who doctored them and tempted their appetites with dainty dishes until they were well again. Parthe's dolls, on the contrary, were scarcely ever in bed at all. They led stirring lives of adventure, and when an accident happened, and an arm was broken, or a leg came off at the joint, it was Florence who tenderly "set" the arm and put the injured leg in splints.

And if it was interesting to nurse dolls, how much more worth while was it to take care of live animals! Florence looked upon all animals as her friends, more especially those who were unfortunate and rather ugly. Anything that needed her care appealed at once to her tender heart. It was she who welcomed and admired the very

commonplace kittens which the stable cat hid from less friendly eyes; the old pony that was past work knew his little mistress loved him as well as ever, and that she always had an apple or a carrot hidden in her pocket for him. The birds, even the shyest of them, seemed to know and trust her. A pet pig and a donkey also came in for a share of her affection and all dogs were her special friends.

Even in those early days Florence was a very methodical little maiden, and kept a careful list of her collection of flowers with their names and the places where she had found them. But the earliest piece of her handwriting which has been preserved, is a medical prescription written in a tiny book about the size of a postage stamp, neatly stitched together. A very childish hand must have traced the inscription, "16 grains for an old woman, 11 for a young woman, and 7 for a child."

It was the summer months which were spent at Lea Hurst, for in winter and early spring the family went to live in their other house Embley Park, in Hampshire. There Florence and her sister were kept very strictly at lessons with their governess, for their father believed that girls should be taught quite as thoroughly as boys, and he planned his little daughters' lessons most carefully. With him Florence learned Greek, Latin and mathematics, and was extremely quick at learning all foreign languages.

The little girls were taught, too, by their mother to work their samplers and do fine sewing, so there was not much spare time in their days, but some hours were set aside for them to run about outside with their dogs and to ride their ponies over the Downs.

From her mother, too, Florence learned the pleasure of visiting the village people and getting to know them in their homes. She was always eager to be the messenger when there was a pudding or jelly to DAWN 9

be carried to an invalid, or when there was a new baby to be inspected.

She was riding her pony over the Hampshire Downs, one day, after she had been paying some visits with the vicar, when she noticed that old Roger, the shepherd, was having hard work to collect his sheep as there was no dog to help him.

"Where's your dog?" shouted the Vicar.

"The boys have been throwing stones at him, your reverence, and have broken his leg," answered the old man.

"Do you mean Cap's leg is broken?" asked Florence anxiously. She knew the name of every dog about the place. "Can nothing be done for him? Where is he?"

"There's naught can be done, Missie," said the old man, shaking his head. "He's lying yonder in the shed, and I must bring along a rope and put an end to him this evening.

Florence turned beseeching eyes upon the Vicar. "Can't we go and see?" she asked.

The Vicar nodded, and they rode over to the shed where they found the poor dog as the shepherd had said. It tried feebly to wag its tail as Florence patted its head, and it seemed to understand that she was a real friend.

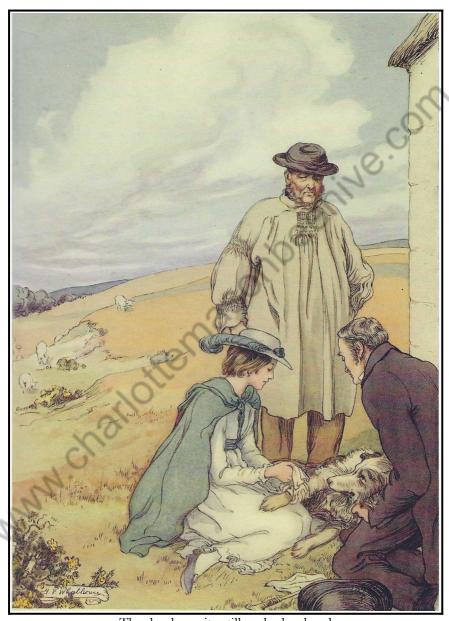
The Vicar, after a careful examination, declared that the leg was not broken, and that with careful nursing the dog might get well. Then Florence set to work to bathe the swollen leg and to follow all the Vicar's directions, and, in spite of the pain, the dog lay quite still under her hand, watching her all the time with his brown eyes full of grateful trust.

A message was sent home to explain where Florence was, and all that afternoon she watched by the side of the suffering dog and bathed its poor leg until the swelling began to go down. Then, when at last the shepherd came sadly in, carrying a rope in his hand, he found to his astonishment that Cap was able to stand up and give him a whine of welcome.

"You can throw away that rope," said Florence, "for he's going to get quite well, now. Only you must nurse him carefully, and I will show you how to make hot compresses."

Perhaps, after all, Florence was very much like other little girls, for there are many who like to doctor their dolls and who are very kind to animals and who enjoy doing kindly things for the poor, but there was one thing about her which made her different to other children, and this special thing she felt from the time she was six years old.

Long ago, on the shores of the Lake of Galilee, some poor fishermen heard the Master's call, "Follow thou Me." Others, too, heard that voice, and with one accord they forsook all at the sound of the call. All down the ages that call sounded, singling out special people for a special work, and those to whom it has come have answered one by one. It was that call which echoed in the heart of the child Florence Nightingale. Very faintly it sounded at first, and she scarcely knew what it meant, but deep in her heart she was sure that there was some special work for her to do, that she was called just as certainly as those fishermen of the Galilean Lake.



The dog lay quite still under her hand

CHAPTER II

PREPARATION

ALL through her childhood Florence had this dim sense of a call echoing in her heart, and when she reached the age of seventeen the voice suddenly sounded more distinctly. She felt sure that God was calling her to His service. She had caught sight of the gleam, and she felt she must follow it now, although, as yet, she had no idea where it would lead her.

It was decided, at this time, that as Florence was seventeen and her sister eighteen they should see something of the world, and have various masters in France and Italy to finish their education. The home at Embley was to be improved and made larger, and meanwhile the family were to travel abroad for two years.

Then followed the gayest of gay times for the two sisters. There were balls and dances at Genoa, where the Grand Dukes were "exceedingly polite" to the fair English girls. In Florence they went to Court and found every one most agreeable and courteous. They attended so many operas that Florence became quite "music mad" as she described it. Besides all this, there were interesting places to be seen, strange people to be studied, and foreign politics to be considered, so there was really very little time for Florence to ponder over the old question of what work she was to do in the world. The desire to follow the gleam waned a little perhaps in those happy days when Florence first discovered that it was rather a pleasant thing to "shine in society."

It was so very easy for her to shine. She was tall and slender and very graceful, and if her face was not strictly beautiful, it was most