WOMEN IN HEALTH & MEDICINE, 1700 - 1950

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The Staff of the Military Hospital Endell J. W.C.

INTRODUCTION

The changing face of medicine

In 1891, less than 1% of doctors on the British medical register were women

By 2003, all UK medical schools had more female than male students and in 2019, female doctors made up 48% of the workforce

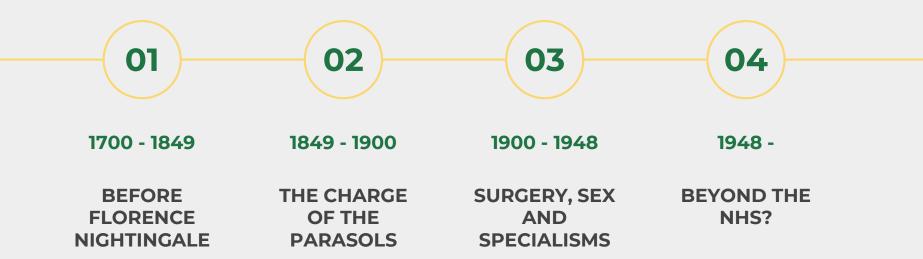
Similar pattern across the western world



WOMEN IN MEDICINE

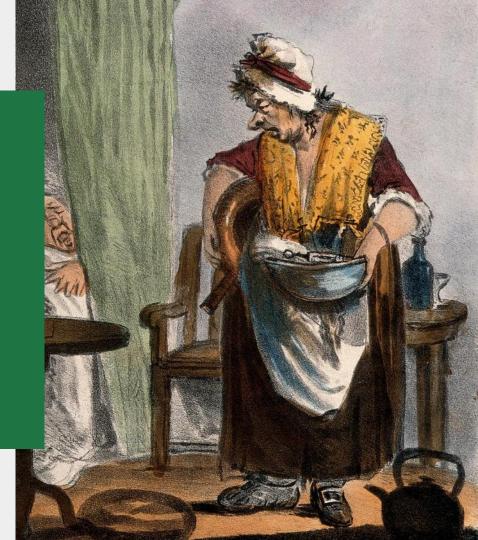
	1891	1931	1951	2011
Women doctors	0.4%	10%	12%	43%
Women nurses	99%*	90%	89%	89%
Women midwives	100%*	100%*	100%	99.6%

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01 BEFORE NIGHTINGALE

1700 - 1849



"For a woman's mind is not so strong as a man's, nor is she so full of understanding and reason and judgement, and upon every small occasion she casts off the bridle of reason, and like a mad dog, forgetting all decency, and her self, without choice, she sets upon all, be they known or unknown."

> —Levinus Lemnius, 1556

Dorothea Erxleben-Leporin (1715 – 1762)

1740 Petitioned Frederick the Great to attend University of Halle (approved 1741)

1747 Began to practice locally

1753 Accused of quackery by male colleagues

1754 Granted medical degree

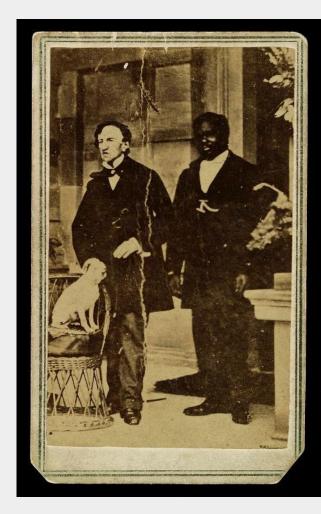


James Barry (c. 1789 – 1865)

c. 1789 Born Margaret Anne Bulkley in Cork

1809 Began studying medicine at University of Edinburgh as James Barry (qualified 1812)

1815 Became Assistant Surgeon in the Army, served across Empire until retirement in 1859



18TH CENTURY NURSING



HOSPITALS

A number of the voluntary hospitals founded in the 1700s



PRIVATE

Individual patient care, from monthly nurses to end of life



RELIGIOUS

Religious hospitals more common in Europe

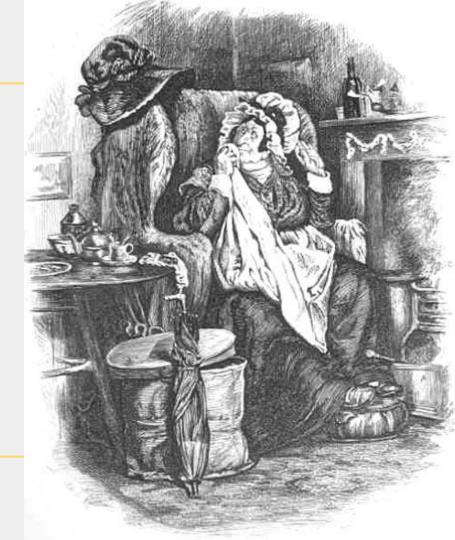


MILITARY

From the mid-18th century, women worked in military hospitals

"She was a fat old woman, this Mrs. Gamp, with a husky voice and a moist eye ... She wore a very rusty black gown, rather the worse for snuff, and a shawl and bonnet to correspond. ... The face of Mrs. Gamp the nose in particular — was somewhat red and swollen, and it was difficult to enjoy her society without becoming conscious of a smell of spirits. Like most persons who have attained to great eminence in their profession, she took to hers very kindly; insomuch, that setting aside her natural predilections as a woman, she went to a lying-in or a laying- out with equal zest and relish."

Dickens, Martin Chuzzlewit (1844)





02:

THE CHARGE OF THE PARASOLS

1849 - 1900

"The danger was not in the acts performed in the class-room, but in the thoughts that might be excited there. There could be no more important topic than the proper education of women; the great interests, nay, the very existence. of our civilization depended on their proper education; but this proposed medical education, if carried out, would be a curse to that civilization." —Thomas Laycock,

in The Times, 22 April 1870

WOMEN DOCTORS

SOPHIA JEX-BLAKE (1840 – 1912)

1869 Admitted to Edinburgh Medical School 1877 MD Berne and accepted onto Medical Register

ELIZABETH GARRETT ANDERSON (1836 – 1917)

1865 LSA 1866 Accepted onto Medical Register 1870 MD Paris



1849 MD Geneva, NY 1859 Accepted onto UK Medical Register

AN APPEAL

• For LADIES who may wish to join Ms. SOPHIA JEX-BLAKE on a truly BRAVE and HISTORIC ENDEAVOUR:

To enter MEDICAL COURSES at the UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

As supported by The Scotsman Newspaper.

"The inferior sex is always plaguing the superior sex in one way or another, and now it seems that the inferior sex are winning our scholarships over our most sacred heads. This is a matter which must be looked into. We will stand a great deal, but this is going a little too far; we must agitate; members must pledge themselves on the hustings to a bill providing that any one of the inferior sex who gains a scholarship must not have it at any price whatever, or we shall all be undone." -Daily Review, 1

April 1870

THE "PROFESSIONAL IZATION" OF NURSING

THE MEDIA & THE MYTH

THE REALITY

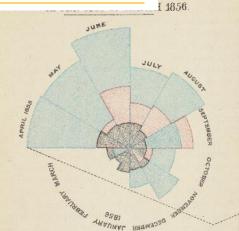


DIAGRAM OF THE CAUSES OF MORTALITY IN THE ARMY IN THE EAST.

1855

AARCH

APAUARS.

JANUARY 1855

1. APRIL 1854 10 MARCH 1855.

NECEMBER

JULY JUNE EMBEN APRIL 1854 CRIMEA OCTOBER HEAMENE

The Areas of the blue, red, & black wedges are each measured from the centre as the common vertex.

- The blue wedges measured from the centre of the circle represent area for area the deaths from Proventible or Mitigable Lymotic discases, the red wedges measured from the centre the deaths from wounds, & the black wedges measured from the centre the deaths from all other causes. The black line across the red triangle in Noo? 1854 marks the boundary of the deaths from all other causes during the month. In October 1854, & April 1855, the black area, waineides with the red; in January & February 1855, the black area, wineides with the black. The entire areas may be compared by following the blue, the red & the
 - black lines enclosing them.

MARY SEACOLE (1805 - 1881)

"I have seen her go down, under fire, with her little store of creature comforts for our wounded men; and a more tender or skilled hand about a wound or broken limb could not be found among our best surgeons."

The Times, 1857



BETSI CADWALADR (1789 - 1860)

"Her nature was undoubtedly peculiar, imaginative, impulsive and adventurou ; but the mountain region which produced her, and the state of society which surrounded her in early life, moulded and impressed upon the native metal the form and stamp which it has never lost."

Jane Williams





VS.





Florence Nightingale

Ethel Gordon Fenwick

FOR V

Ethel Gordon Fenwick (nee Manson) (1857 – 1947)

- Pro-registration
- Pro-suffrage
- Held nursing to be a profession
- Thought that nurses should be educated ladies

VS.

Florence Nightingale (1820 – 1910)

- Against registration
- Not sure about suffrage
- Held nursing to be a skilled trade
- Thought nurses should be from all

classes Plorence

Nightingale

"WAKE UP SLACKERS!"



(ROYAL) BRITISH NURSES ASSOCIATION FOUNDED MIDWIVES ACT (REGISTRATION) (ROYAL) COLLEGE OF NURSING FOUNDED

"WAKE UP SLACKERS! Very many of our readers must have met types of workers who spend much of their leisure in criticising the College and other efforts made to improve their profession. The nursing profession in Great Britain will never attain its full fruition or rights until the self-seekers amongst its members are awakened to a higher standard of professional conduct and service, or they are reduced to insignificance by the working nurses with a higher sense of responsibility and self-respect."

THE NURSING MIRROR, 1917

NURSES REGISTRATION ACT – FOUNDING OF GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL

THEMES

LOOPHOLES IN THE "LAW"

All of the early women doctors benefitted from loopholes – it had simply been assumed that women wouldn't apply. These were subsequently closed until the Enabling Act of 1876

WEALTH & EXCLUSIVITY

2

All the early women on the medical register had similar backgrounds – wealthy families, who were primarily from non-conformist religious backgrounds

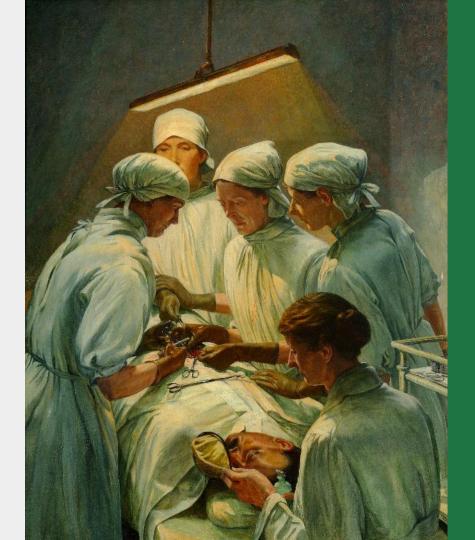
SEPARATE SPHERES

3

The main argument used by all these women for the need for women doctors was that women needed medical treatment by their own sex

03: SURGERY, SEX & SPECIALISMS

1900 - 1948

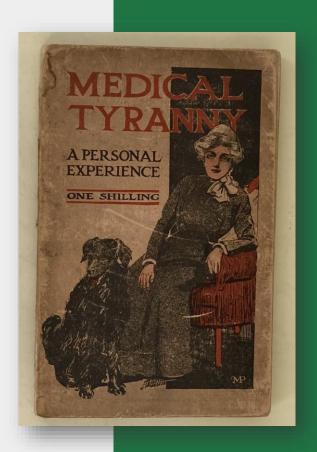




1892

Beatty v. Cullingworth

"The question now is, am I, a nurse and a woman whose best years of life and health have been devoted to the relief of suffering in others, and whose health broke down in the service, to be debarred from all medical relief because forsooth, I claim a right over my own body?"



"The people and the nations who practise artificial prevention of conception and who therefore have no restraint in their sexual passions are likely to become effeminate and degenerate. The removal of the sanction of matrimony and the unhindered and unbalanced sexual indulgence that would follow would war against self-control, chivalry and self-respect."

> —Dr Mary Scharlieb, *BMJ,* 1921

Marie Stopes (1880 - 1958)

1900-2 Degree at UCL

1904 PhD in botany

1918 Published Married Love

1921 Opened the Mothers' Clinic in Holloway

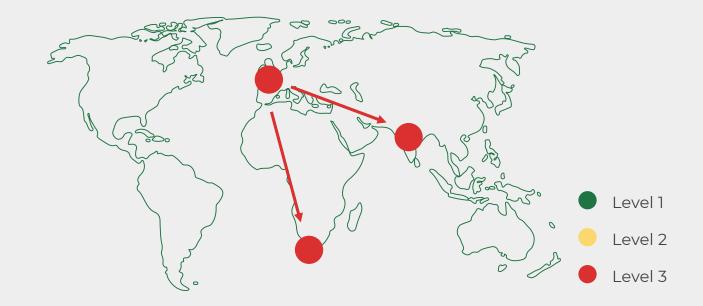


"the writer remembers one miserable little boy sitting down to a bread and scrape dinner by himself in a dirty room, his mother being out at work. I visited again when the mother was in and found that the fact that her child had been reported verminous, had so disgusted her that she decided forthwith to give up the work, which in her case was not necessary, and the boy got better dinners and was never again reported as verminous."

Mrs Enid Eve, Chief Health Visitor and Sanitary Inspector, Holborn, 1921



ACROSS THE GLOBE



04: THE NHS & BEYOND



NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

Your new National Health Service begins on 5th July. What is it? How do you get it?

It will provide you with all medical, dental, and nursing care. Everyone—rich or poor, man, woman or child—can use it or any part of it. There are no charges, except for a few special items. There are no insurance qualifications. But it is not a "charity". You are all paying for it, mainly as taxpayers, and it will relieve your money worries in time of illness.

CONCLUSIONS

SEPARATE OR EQUAL?

For almost a century, the main argument for women's role as medical and health practitioners was that women should treat women.

AN EXCLUSIVE PRACTICE

2

A small group of elite women fought to enter a maledominated world, simultaneously preventing others from following in their footsteps.

THANKS!

Do you have any questions?

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https://bit.ly/WomenGPs

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