SOME PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS
OF SISTER CAVELL.

It was as Sister Cavell I knew her—the title
comes readily to my mind than any other—and,
amongst all the members of our fraternity one in
the course of work most of necessity meet, she
stands out in my memory, the ideal Sister.

It was in 1901, as one of sixty probationer-
nurses, I, in common with the rest, was interested
in the coming of two new Night Sisters, one of
whom was Sister Cavell, whose name during the
past fortnight has become familiar in every
country in the world.

When coming on duty the first time she ran the
gantlet of a good many pairs of eyes, and only
a heightened flush showed she was not altogether
inured to new experiences.

I see her yet; slightly built, of average height,
neat and trim in appearance, her brown hair
tidily tucked away under the Sister Dora cap,
beneath which the eyes looked out with a clear,
steady gaze, betokening a quiet determination
which should carry her far. She had a sweet, kind
face, which at once inspired confidence. She
did not look strong, and this, combined with her
sensitive features, made one feel one would like
to shield her from all unpleasant things.

After a lapse of fourteen years, which in a busy
nurse’s life is full of incident, the happenings of so
long ago have faded from the mind, and only
generalities stand out, but the memories that
remain are altogether pleasant, and life is richer
for them.

Probationer-nurses—like other people in the
initial stage of knowledge, who have yet to buy
life’s experience—are apt to discuss and criticise
their superiors, and calmly settle matters of
discipline, ward-management, diagnosis, and treat-
ment which puzzle much wiser heads; but I never
heard Sister Cavell adversely discussed. Somehow
she did not give anyone the opportunity; she
lived on too high a level, and was so conscientious
in all the details of her life and work that one could
only admire and wish to emulate. Hers was no
assumed interest; she always remembered any-
thing we told her about our patients, and was ever
ready with helpful suggestions for their comfort.

To the nurses she was a true friend; in her
manner there was just that touch of aloofness
which perhaps in the interest of discipline is
advisable; but withal she was very approachable,
and so ready and able to give us information about
anything we wanted to know.

We all thought her very clever; she had the
gift of imparting knowledge, and in my probationer
days was the only Sister who lectured to the nurses.
She gave us a good deal of what would have been
her leisure to help the senior probationers in their
preparation for examination. I have still by me
some test papers which Sister Cavell gave me to
answer, and which, after examining, she initialed
and returned with some added notes of her own.

These are a few recollections, imperfectly given,
of a sweet, lovable woman, who did life’s work
acted by the highest motives, and who in her
lifetime was unknown outside her immediate
circle. Yet in that life she accomplished much, for
I am sure many, like myself, feel they owe a very
great deal to her quiet influence, and have always
remembered her with much affection and respect.

By her death she has become an inspiration to
the world, and has led and will yet lead many to
a higher level by way of service, suffering and
sacrifice, the path she herself so heroically trod.

Mary Caroline Day.