

The British College of Nurses, Ltd.

A COLLEAGUE FROM Victoria, Australia, sent us "The St. Arnaud Mercury," giving an account of the opening of the Nurses' Home of St. Arnaud's District Hospital":

NIGHTINGALE BRICK SHOULD BE INSPIRATION FOR SERVICE.

"A brick from the home of Florence Nightingale, which is one of 315,000 bricks in the nurses' home, was the subject of an eloquently delivered and inspiring address by Miss M. Avery (Secretary-General of the Australian Nursing Federation), who unveiled it after the home had been officially opened.

"The brick, which was a special gift between English and St. Arnaud nursing organisations, was brought from England by Mrs. J. P. Feeny (Gooroc) who, at the time was returning from the Copenhagen conference of the Associated Country Women of the World.

"For Sunday's ceremony it was covered by a canvas carrying an enlarged and coloured replica of the badge of the St. Arnaud Hospital.

Speaker's Link with St. Arnaud.

"Miss Avery opened her address by saying she was pleased to be present for two reasons. The first was that she was there as a representative of the Australian Nursing Federation, and was therefore representing the nursing profession, and the second was because of a strong family link with St. Arnaud.

"Miss Avery said that her people, and their people were well-known identities of the town in the very early days. Her grandmother practised here as a midwife, and delivered to her credit more than 2,000 babies destined to become St. Arnaud-ites. The speaker introduced a note of humour by referring to the big families of those days, and saying they would help to fill the vacancies in the nursing profession if they existed today.

Beloved Patron of Nursing.

"Miss Avery said the brick she was to unveil was one taken from the last home of the beloved patron of nursing, Florence Nightingale. It was a gift to the St. Arnaud Ex-Nurses' League from the Royal College of Nursing, London, through a former president, Miss McLoughlin, to a close personal friend in Miss L. E. Wheeler, of St. Arnaud.

"To members of the nursing profession, the simple brick to be unveiled was of great significance because of its close personal link with Florence Nightingale, considered to be the founder of modern nursing. Miss Avery continued.

National Importance of Nursing.

"Describing nursing as a profession of extreme national importance, Miss Avery said no country could prosper without a nursing service, because its survival depended on its ability to care for the weak, which was the direct object of nursing."

"It was Florence Nightingale—born before her time—who thought fit to establish nursing training, and it was Florence Nightingale who first awakened the people of England to the need for planned hospital administration and nursing care.

Wide Influence.

"The Florence Nightingale influence spread even to the then comparatively remote New South Wales where, in 1867, there was erected a home, which was the first for nurses adjacent to the hospital in which they served. It was Florence Nightingale who approved of the plans before they were executed, and under her guidance Miss Lucy Osborne and five nursing sisters sailed from London to establish a nursing service in Australia.

"Recalling the Coronation, Miss Avery told how messages of loyalty from the nursing profession, bound in book form, had been presented to the Queen. One such message was from Australian nurses, who, in their expression of loyalty, dedicated themselves anew in the service of mankind.

"Surely, in the light of the Queen's gesture of dedication, and the example of Florence Nightingale's devotion, we, as nurses can do nothing but to accept the challenge," Miss Avery said.

"As she unveiled the brick, which is set in the wall of the entrance foyer of the Home, Miss Avery said: 'May God bless this home and brick, and may it constantly remind and perpetually inspire the lamp which the Queen has lit by her selfless service to humanity.'"

Miss M. Avery, in her speech, having stated that the Nightingale Brick was donated by the Royal College of Nursing, correspondence ensued in which it was stated by the Manager and Secretary of the St. Arnaud's District Hospital, that the inscription on the plaque was quite correct:

26th April, 1954.

Miss A. S. Bryson,
Honorary Secretary,
The British College of Nurses, Ltd.,
19, Queen's Gate,
London, S.W.7.

Dear Madam,

re THE NIGHTINGALE BRICK

Receipt is acknowledged of your letter of March 18th, 1954, re the matter of the Nightingale Brick, and was placed before my Committee at a meeting on April 23rd, 1954.

When the Nightingale Brick was received by the Hospital Committee of Management some years ago a card accompanied it which read—

THIS BRICK FROM THE LAST HOME OF
MISS FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE, O.M.,
10 SOUTH STREET, LONDON, W.1 WAS PRESENTED
BY THE PRESIDENT AND COUNCIL OF THE
BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES LTD.
TO THE DISTRICT HOSPITAL, ST. ARNAUD'S,
VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA.

The inscription on the plaque has never been incorrect, and reads—

THIS BRICK FROM THE LAST HOME OF
MISS FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE, O.M.,
10 SOUTH STREET, LONDON, W.1, WAS PRESENTED
BY THE PRESIDENT AND COUNCIL OF THE
BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES LTD.
TO THE ST. ARNAUD DISTRICT HOSPITAL

It is regretted that an error was made by Miss Avery in the Unveiling Speech, however, this was due to no fault of the Hospital Committee of Management. A corrected statement has been published in the "St. Arnaud Mercury."

Yours faithfully,

J. A. McLAREN,
Manager and Secretary.

Dates to Remember

Annual General Meeting

FELLOWS AND MEMBERS of The British College of Nurses, Ltd., are notified that the Annual General Meeting is to be held at 19, Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7, on Friday, July 23rd, 1954, at 3 p.m., and it is hoped that as many as possibly can will attend.

Excursion to Blenheim Palace

Fellows and Members are reminded that the Excursion to Blenheim Palace, the home of the Dukes of Marlborough, and the birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill, is scheduled to take place on July 29th, 1954, leaving 19, Queen's Gate at 12 noon.

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