FOREWORD

For me, as a child, Florence Nightingale was a vivid presence of whom my father and grandfather spoke with respect and admiration. My grandfather had known her well. When he was a child, she often stayed at Claydon House, the family home. Her relationship with him and his siblings was intense and intimate, and his great love and respect for her and for her determination, authority, and spiritual dedication to service was passed down to us.

It is exciting to me to have found just these qualities appreciated in this major contribution to Nightingale scholarship. This book is vibrant with the ideas of its subject and its authors. Florence Nightingale was very much a woman of her class and time, and she thought prayerfully and practically about the very new problems of nineteenth-century society. Despite her uncertain health, she maintained her intellectual energy, passion, and independence into old age.

To assess Florence Nightingale's influence on progressive thinking about the social policy of her time will always be difficult. The new perspectives revealed through this book may prove these ideas to be as widespread and long lasting as the simpler, popular image of the lady with the lamp.

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NOTES ON NIGHTINGALE