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5. FUTURE PLANS

Nightingale Medicine Chest



By Arlene Kent-Wilkinson RN, PhD,
Professor, College of Nursing



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Future Plans

OUTLINE

2025

- ✓ Banners, Posters, Handouts
- ✓ Updates to 2023 CoN Webpage
- ✓ Publication of Manuscripts
- ✓ Conference Presentation Abstracts
- ✓ New Display Alcove in A Wing Corridor

Future Plans

- ☐ FNMC CoN Memorabilia (mugs, notebooks, pens, etc.)
- ☐ FNMC Student Scholarships
- ☐ FNMC Foundation
- ☐ FNMC Loans to Museums

Florence Nightingale Medicine Chest in Canada



POSTER



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Nightingale Medicine Chest in Canada

Nightingale Medicine Chest in Canada: Exploring the Secrets and Provenance

Kent-Wilkinson, A. (PI), Vandenberg, H. (CoPI), Johnson, L. (RA), & Jagoe, L. (RA)

This historical artifact, a cabinet style MEDICINE CHEST once belonging to FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE has been in Canada for over 100 years, and at the University of Saskatchewan (SK) since 1956.

Medicine chests, often owned by affluent individuals were used on long journeys to store medical remedies for common ailments, typically contained opium-based painkillers, laxatives, smelling salts and other herbal tinctures. Constructed from wood by highly skilled cabinet makers, chests like this were fitted out by chemists and sold at apothecaries in London, England in the 18th and 19th century

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Did this medicine chest really once belong to Florence Nightingale?
2. Did Florence Nightingale take this medicine chest to the Crimea?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Material (object) history methodology model (Elliot et al., 1994) includes an archival document search and step-by-step analysis of:

1. Material 2. Construction 3. Provenance 4. Function 5. Value of object

EVIDENCE of AUTHENTICITY

Archival Documents

- USask archival and newspaper articles over the years about the medicine chest and/or its custodians: Daily Star, 1914, 1917, 1918; Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 1933, 1940, 1942, 1954

Genealogy Data Bases

- Revealed information about the custodians: birth, marriage and death certificates, children, immigration, country census, etc.

Qualitative Component

- Discovery of living descendants, a niece and nephew of custodian Alice Weaver - Jean and Robert Thomas validated the family connection to Florence Nightingale/provided family album pictures



Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en
sciences humaines du Canada

Canada

UPDATED JOURNEY OF NIGHTINGALE MEDICINE CHEST

1854–1856

Medicine chest allegedly taken with Florence Nightingale to the Crimean War

1890 (approx.)

Medicine chest gifted by Lady Verney (1819-1890) sister of Florence Nightingale (1820-1910) to Mr. Isaac Milsom (1858-1933) head gardener and Mrs. Mary Ellen (McNabb) Milsom (1862-1917), friends of both sisters

1912

Mr. and Mrs. Milsom and family immigrated to Canada, for Isaac to do landscaping for the City of Saskatoon, SK

1918 (approx.)

Medicine chest given by Mr. and Mrs. Milsom to Dr. Hugh D. Weaver (1867-1942) and Mrs. Alice (Thomas) Weaver (1880-1954) friends from the Saskatoon Horticultural Society

1956 (approx.)

Medicine chest donated from the estate of Dr. and Mrs. Weaver to the University of Saskatchewan, College of Medicine, by Dr. Lewis Herbert Thomas (1917-1983), nephew of Alice Weaver

1974 (approx.)

Medicine chest given by the College of Medicine to the College of Nursing

2020–2024

Medicine chest research conducted, supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada



QR CODE: Select on this QR Code to learn more about the Nightingale Medicine

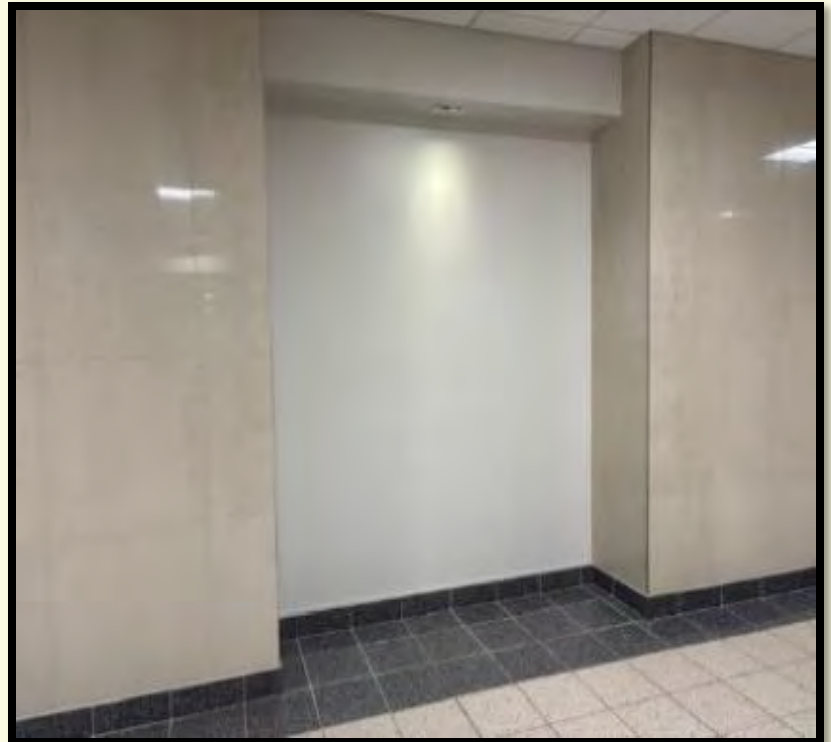
Chest in Canada; the founder of modern nursing Florence Nightingale; and the custodians of the chest who were prominent citizens in early SK history



Nightingale Medicine Chest in Canada



Current Location
5-foot Display Case
E-Wing, 4th Floor Health Sc



Future Location
Wall Alcove - Display case
A-Wing Health Sc

Open Shelf

Open Shelf

Open Shelf
For
Nightingale
Books

Open
Shelf
FN Museum
Memorabilia

Open Shelf
For
Nightingale
Memorabilia

Open
Shelf
FN Books

Journey of the Nightingale Medicine Chest



Kick space

Kick space

Kick space

Kick space



Future CoN Memorabilia

(Draft Mockups)



Future CoN Memorabilia

(Draft Mockups)





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Note Book



Future CoN Memorabilia

(Draft Mockups)





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Student Scholarships

Nightingale Medicine Chest
Student Scholarships

Nightingale Medicine Chest
Foundation





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College of Nursing Website

About the College (webpage)
Historical Florence Nightingale Medicine Chest



University of Saskatchewan. (2022). *Historical Florence Nightingale medicine chest in Canada* [webpage]. College of Nursing, USask, Saskatoon Campus, SK.
<https://nursing.usask.ca/about/florence-nightingale-medicine-chest.php>

Future FNMC on Loan to Museums



- Florence Nightingale Museum in London, England
- Western Development Museum Saskatoon, SK



References

Kent-Wilkinson, A. (2021, May 26). Where in the world is the Florence Nightingale medicine chest? *International Nursing Review*, 68(2), 166-171.

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Kent-Wilkinson, A. (2025, January 6). *Nightingale medicine chest in Canada introduction video* [Youtube: 10: 41 minutes]. College of Nursing, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK. <https://youtu.be/55lsYne3DKo>

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University of Saskatchewan. (2025, April 29.). *Research continues on historical nursing artifact at USask (by Kylie Kelso). Green & White.* <https://greenandwhite.usask.ca/articles/2025/research-continues-on-historic-nursing-artifact-at-usask.php>