

Recognizing Nurses with a historic poem this National Nurses Week

Published 05/06/2020

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As COVID-19 confines thousands to hospitals around the country, nurses are in high demand. The UMB School of Nursing has answered this call by offering qualifying May 2020 graduates an [“early exit”](#) opportunity. The early exit was announced April 27, 2020 and allows newly minted BSN and CNL nurses to join the workforce and help fight COVID-19 in local Baltimore hospitals. While it may not be the commencement celebration these nurses had in mind when they started their education, many are answering the call and jumping headfirst into the COVID-19 fight.

MY GENTLE NURSE.

Late in the endless, sleepless night,
When gloom engulfed hospital hall,
Who hath heard the night bell sound,
And heeded soon my anxious call?
My gentle nurse.

When in delirium's fitful dreams,
The fever racked my throbbing brain,
Who hath soothed the fever's rage,
And brought sleep to mine eyes again?
My gentle nurse.

When fretful convalescence came,
The leaden-winged hours dragged by,
Who hath found a means to cheer,
And turn to smile each weary sigh?
My gentle nurse.

At length when health and strength return,
And back into the world I go,
Who hath bid me kind God-speed,
Her gracious duty finished so?
My gentle nurse.

As long as memory keeps her throne,
As long as gratitude shall live,
Who shall hold a place alone,
The tenderest that my heart can give?
My gentle nurse.



In the midst of this global pandemic falls National Nurses Week, May 6 to 12, 2020. During this monumental time the HS/HSL wishes to show our thanks to our UMB nurses past and present with a fitting poem from the 1905 *Bones, Molars, and Briefs Yearbook*. We know nurses on the front lines of this illness are all experiencing “endless, sleepless nights,” soothing your “fever racked” patients through “fitful dreams” and “throbbing brain”, and blissfully cheering on all those lucky enough to have “health and strength return.” For so many patients today, you are their sole cheerleader and adopted loved one, so for “as long as gratitude shall live,” we thank you.

The “Gentle Nurses” poem was featured in the 1905 *Bones, Molars, and Briefs Yearbook*. The Yearbook was curated by students of

“Gentle Nurses” poem in the 1905 Bones, Molars, and Briefs Yearbook.

the Schools of Medicine, Dentistry, Law, and Pharmacy. Some early yearbooks also featured the

graduating classes of the University Hospital Nurses Training School, a predecessor of today's School of Nursing; however, the 1905 Yearbook includes no mention or photograph of the students in this school, only the Gentle Nurses poem hints at the nurses training in the same hospital as medical students and faculty. Early yearbooks commonly featured the poetry, literature, satire, and art pieces of students at the University and provide excellent glimpses into the culture of the time period. Please view the content in the UMB yearbooks and shared in this Blog within this light.