

Castalia, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 1861.

Mrs Hopkins:

Dear Madam,

Seeing in the Dispatch of yesterday, that persons wishing information on the subject of Nurses for the Soldiers, should apply to you, I beg leave to trouble you with a few inquiries, which I hope you will answer.

I had, I may say, received my commission from the Surgeon General, — when suddenly obstacles were placed in my way by the objections of friends, whose opinions I ought to regard. — I will tell you some of them. — They say, I am entirely too young — I don't feel very young, but will settle the matter by asking if 24 years and 4 months

is too young for a nurse? I know, my dear Madam, I will necessarily be exposed to many things that will be disagreeable and painful, yet I feel that this is no common occasion, and that if I can be of any service—without being exposed to all those most disagreeable sights connected with a sick room, I must go.—

Will you not tell me exactly what is expected of a nurse? and if they are all, irrespective of ages, expected to perform the same duties.—

I have very little experience as nurse, but I hope I could learn, for my heart is willing, & I think that would influence my hands.—

I cannot bear to think of those of our brave soldiers,—who have raised up their arms in defence of their homes & firesides,—languishing on beds of pain, with no friendly hand sigh to give aid & comfort.—

I am going to ask you some very plain questions, - but I hope you will understand me, - for my friends have said that such things will be expected of me. If a soldier should have his leg amputated - or be wounded in his stomach would it be expected of a young lady to dress those wounds?

Perhaps you may think it strange for a young person to desire such a work, - but I try to go forth in the missionary spirit, - feeling that many whilst lying wounded & sick, may be led from darkness into light - the marvellous Light of the Gospel. -

Will you not, if practicable, give me an immediate reply? - I write to me candidly, as all my future movements will depend upon your answer,

I remain,

Yours very respectfully -  
W. L. D. Lewis.

Mrs Hopkins.

My address is -

Miss L. D. Lewis.  
Cobham Depot,  
Albemarle Co.,  
Va.

Leust Groo, June 24<sup>th</sup>, 1861.

Dear Mrs Hopkins,

Let me thank you  
for your promptness in answering my  
letter of the 11<sup>th</sup> inst. and your kindness  
in advising me so candidly. I feel  
much better satisfied that the plans  
proposed for myself should fail,  
when I think that you do not consider  
it "a proper position for a young  
girl to be placed in."

When I look at the matter in one  
light I am sorry that I cannot  
go for I believed that I could  
do some good to the sick. I had  
no fancied hope of ever being a  
Florence Nightingale, but I felt  
that his was an example to  
imitate, and the restless desire took

possession of my health, that I should undertake the arduous duty of administering to the necessities of the sick & wounded;— I did not form such an idea rashly. I thought of it calmly.— I thought I doubted my abilities, yet I determined to learn.

I am sorry that I have troubled those whose duties it was to procure nurses.— If you are acquainted with Dr. C. B. Gibson, Surgeon General, will you not ask him to excuse the trouble I gave him; & my apparent fickleness of character. I would never have given up except at the earnest solicitation of friends whose opinions it was my duty to regard.

As I cannot be of any actual service to our gallant defenders— I will strive to be of some use in an indirect manner, in procuring comforts for the sick.— Several of my friends have promised to make Hackberry cordial & wine.—

If I can I will also try & collect funds  
for the same purpose.

I trust my dear Mrs Hopkins that  
your labor of love may be blessed. &  
that you will not only receive the  
thanks of your approving country women  
but the smile of Heaven.

I have a brother in the service, if  
accident should befall him, & he  
should be carried to the Hospital  
that you have charge of, may I  
commend him to your kind care?  
His name is Robert H. Lewis of the "Albemarle  
Light Horse" Co.

With great respect, I am,

Yours &c.

Lizzie D. Lewis,

Cobham Depot -

Albemarle Co.,  
Va.

Mrs A. G. Hopkins,

Castalia, June 11th, 1861

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Miss L. D. Lewis

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