

## Press Release

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# Queen's Nurse Murder Story Becomes TV Drama

Research into a real crime that took place in 1920 is the basis for a feature length murder mystery to be shown on Channel 5 at 9pm on 23 December.

'Agatha & The Truth of Murder', starring Ruth Bradley as Agatha Christie, with Pippa Haywood and Tim McInnerny, has the famous crime writer using her 11 day disappearance in 1926 to try to solve the murder of Florence Nightingale Shore. Shore was a god-daughter of Florence Nightingale, and a decorated World War 1 army nurse. But in 1920, only months after her return to England, she was beaten to death on a train on the London to Brighton line. The murder was never solved, in spite of the involvement of Scotland Yard and the famous pathologist Sir Bernard Spilsbury.

'There is no evidence that Agatha Christie actually tried to solve this crime', says Rosemary Cook, whose book 'The Nightingale Shore Murder' is the only biography of Florence Shore. 'But it seems very likely that she knew about it. The newspapers at the time dubbed the suspect 'the man in the brown suit' – and Christie later wrote a book with that title, about a murder on an underground train.'

The drama shows Agatha Christie teaming up with Mabel Rogers, a close friend of Florence and a fellow nurse, to try to solve the mystery of her death. Florence and Mabel were both Queen's Nurses trained by the QNI.

'In the research for my book, I uncovered a new suspect for the crime', Rosemary Cook says. 'A man called 'John Smith', who said he was standing on the platform and saw Florence in the carriage when the train stopped and she was discovered. But it shouldn't have been possible for him to know as many details as he did of the crime scene, unless he was actually in the carriage. It will be fascinating to see what conclusions the film draws about him, and about the other suspects'.

Rosemary Cook is a former Director of the Queen's Nursing Institute and she found original coverage of the murder in a 1920 issue of Queen's Nurses' magazine in the QNI archives. She spent two years researching the crime and the investigation before publishing The Nightingale Shore Murder.

### Ends

Notes for Editors:

- The Nightingale Shore Murder was published by Matador in 2015, and is available from the QNI shop.
- Rosemary Cook is a nurse by background and former Director of The Queen's Nursing Institute. She is now Chief Executive Officer of the Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine, based in York. She is a member of the Dringhouses Local History group, and is currently writing a history of the York Home for Nurses.

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