

Lethem, Dorothy B.

Publication/Creation

1915-1915

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/cv6qcnvh>

License and attribution

You have permission to make copies of this work under a Creative Commons, Attribution, Non-commercial license.

Non-commercial use includes private study, academic research, teaching, and other activities that are not primarily intended for, or directed towards, commercial advantage or private monetary compensation. See the Legal Code for further information.

Image source should be attributed as specified in the full catalogue record. If no source is given the image should be attributed to Wellcome Collection.



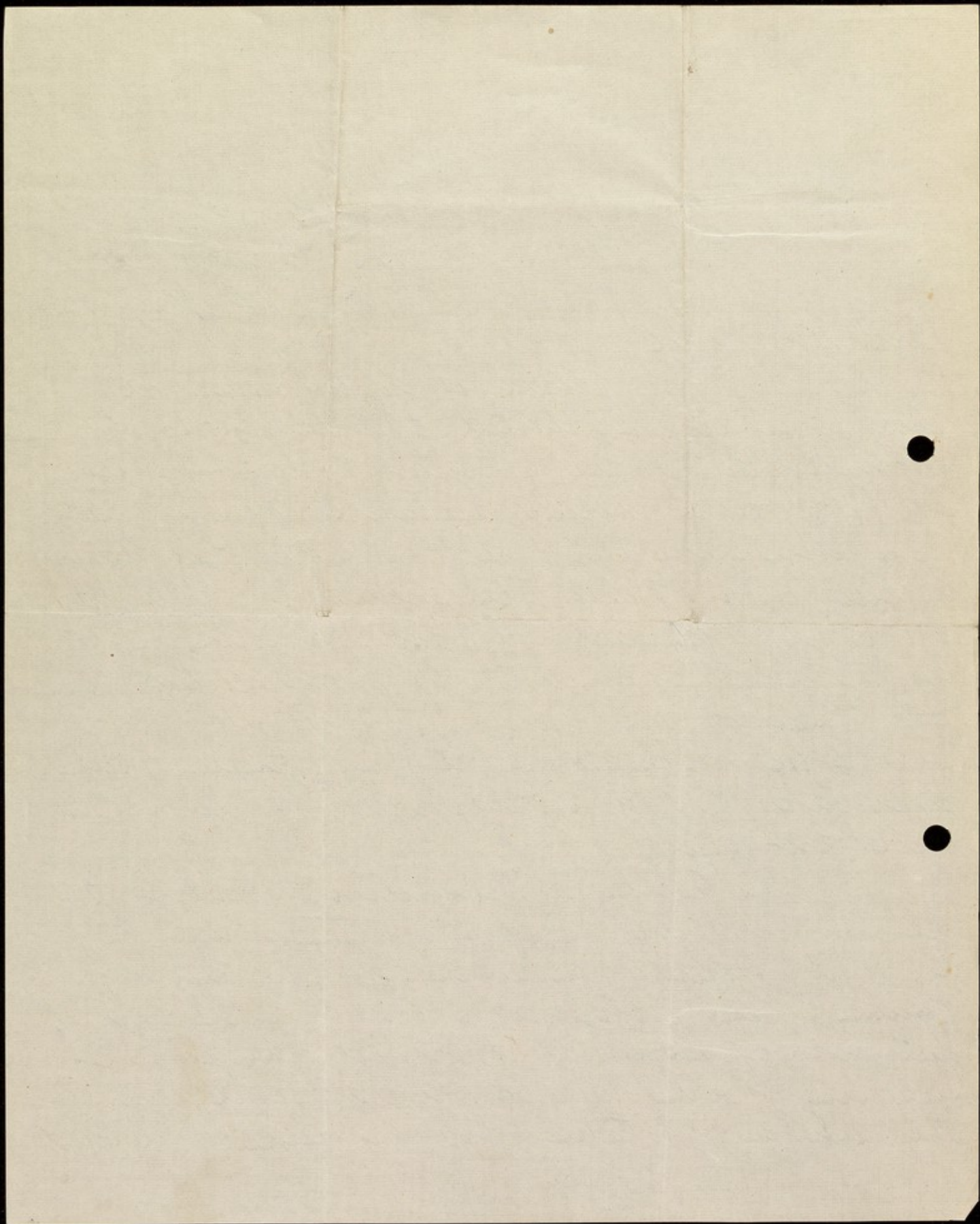
Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

Plompton Hall
Nr. Rearsborough.
5th May 1915

Dear Mrs Horrie,

There is no improvement today. Miss Lethem started the day badly by springing out of bed & trying to go for the tee bed, she next started lecturing on Lloyd George & the Insurance Act & other subjects, her lecture lasting from 7 am till midday. When she did come downstairs she looked so wild that Mr Bateson came with us & prevented her ~~from~~ leaving the garden. She has now gone to lie down for a bit (3pm) then we will take her for a long walk & see if that will help any.

No, she will do absolutely nothing for me, so Miss Bateson & her sister have to help, at present she will do any thing for them. She is taking her food well, in fact her appetite is enormous she is also sleeping well unless on Sat night when she would not take her powder. On Sunday



she had a strong powder & I may have to
give her one tonight, unless she calms down
before then. On Sunday when she was so
bad she rolled about the fields & lost
the bangle she got at Lursey, we have
looked well round but can't find it,
of course we can't remember all the
places in the fields where she was.

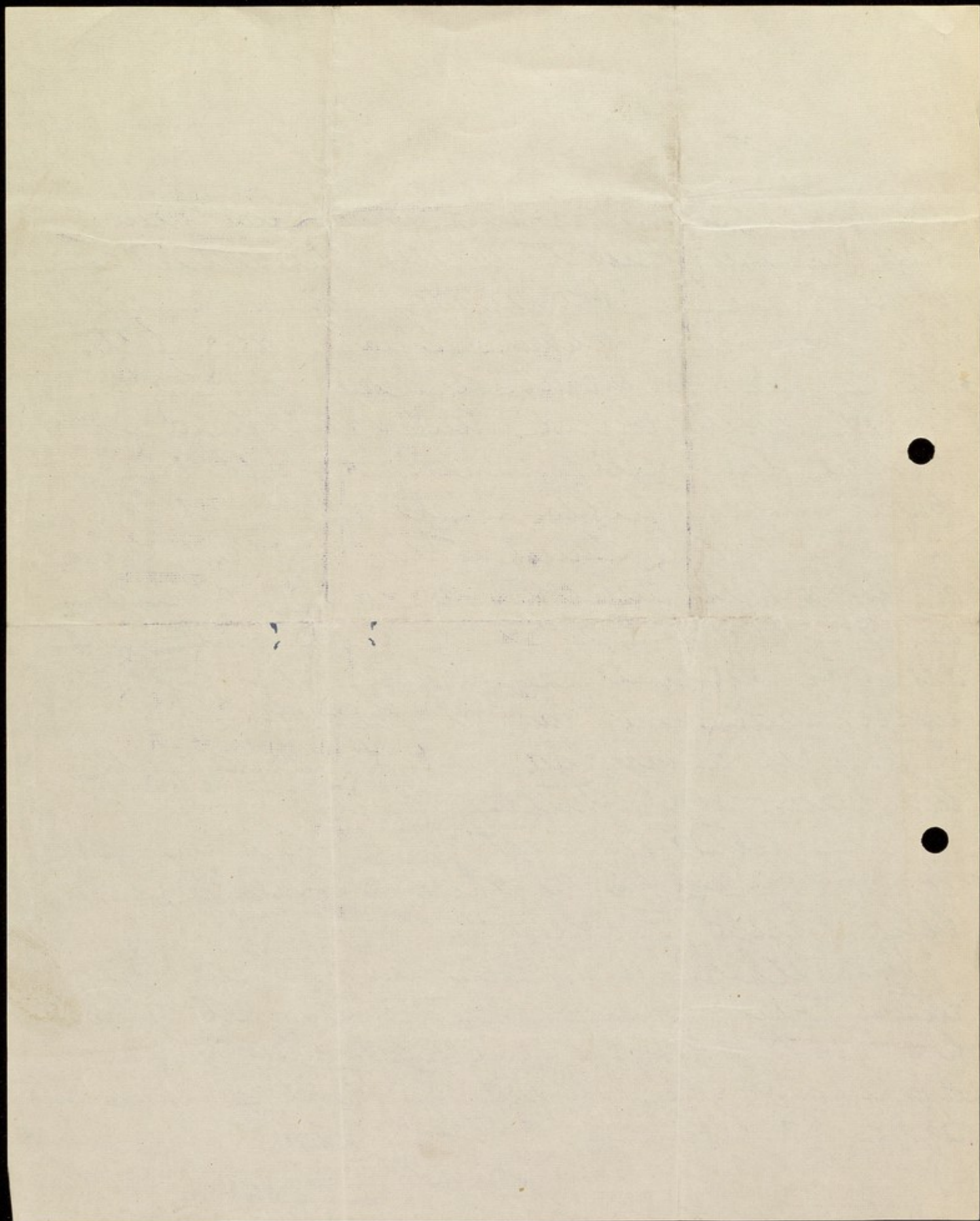
I wrote to Mr. Pithem today & asked him
to engage Miss Bateson as well, as send
another nurse, as it is impossible for
one to go out with her these days, she is
worse than she was at Huddersfield.

This is a very bad report to send you,
but I am only stating facts.

I will certainly wait till some one else
comes & I hope to be able to give you
better news tomorrow.

Miss Pithem was delighted to have the
letter today & I think you should write to her,
but I don't think she will read, but if you
send a magazine it can be tried. Will write
again tomorrow.

Yours truly
A. Andrews



760.

DR GEORGE M. ROBERTSON.
TELEPHONE NO. 1391 CENTRAL.
AT HOME, 2 P.M.

TIPPERLINN HOUSE,
MORNINGSIDE PLACE,
EDINBURGH.

26th July 1915.

Dear Pierce,

Many thanks for your letter regarding Miss Letham. I am inclined to agree with you from the history that the case is more allied to Dementia Praecox than to M.D. Insanity but so far as I could observe during my interview the symptoms were merely those of Mania. The nurse however is firmly convinced that she suffers from hallucinations.

With regard to the nurse who was sent to look after her, lest there may be any misunderstanding, I desire to inform you that I received a very long telegram, almost a letter in length, requesting me immediately to send a mental nurse and I had to telephone to the Station Hotel in York to find out where the nurse had to be sent and how. I thought it was a case coming to the Asylum and I sent one of my charge nurses immediately by train. On arrival she wrote us to say that Miss Letham wished her to take permanent charge of the case in a farm and I at once informed Miss Letham that the nurse had to be sent back and I instructed a nurse from Harrogate whom I knew to take her place. Miss Letham refused this second nurse and then a nurse from one of the homes in Edinburgh who had finished doing special duty at Craig House went and our charge nurse returned. That has been my entire connection with the case till the other day when I was called in consultation by an Edinburgh Doctor.

The girl's sister who is very high strung and managing and at the same time very pretty, seems to boss the show and apparently imagines she knows more than anyone else. I gave her a grave warning of the strain she was

Trenton House,
Morningside Place,
Edinburgh.

26th July 1916.

Dear Fierce,

Many thanks for your letter regarding Miss Letman. I am inclined to agree with you from the history that the case is more allied to dementia praecox than to M.D. Inasmuch as far as I could observe during my interview the symptoms were merely those of dementia. The nurse however is firmly convinced that she suffers from hallucinations.

With regard to the nurse who was sent to look after her, I fear there may be any misunderstanding, I desire to inform you that I received a very long telegram, almost a letter in length, requesting me immediately to send a mental nurse and I had no telephone to the Station Hotel in York to find out where the nurse had to be sent and how. I thought it was a case coming to the region and I sent one of my charge nurses immediately by train. On arrival she wrote me to say that Miss Letman wished her to take permanent charge of the case in a room and I at once informed Miss Letman that the nurse had to be sent back and I instructed a nurse from Barrackgate whom I knew to take her place. Miss Letman refused this second nurse and when a nurse from one of the rooms in Edinburgh who had finished doing special duty at Craig House went and our charge nurse returned. That has been my entire connection with the case till the other day when I was called in consultation by an Edinburgh Doctor.

The girl's sister who is very high strung and managing and at the same time very pretty seems to have the show and apparently imagines she knows more than anyone else. I gave her a grave warning of the strain she was

subjecting herself to in having her sister at home and I strongly urged the family doctor to send the same sister away for a holiday.

Yes, I am over head and ears in work of one kind or another. I have really two asylums to look after which are managed on entirely different principles in addition to my lecturing and this year I had to take over the extra-mural lecturing as well and give an additional course and besides all this there is my consulting practice which has increased since Sir Thomas died. I would be quite unable to tackle this were it not that I have learnt to train my subordinates to do their duties and then to depute to them as much as possible and then supervise them. When one has a very big establishment it is impossible to do everything oneself. If one attempts it important matters must be neglected. The only way to do is to train officials in their respective departments and to see that the work is done. As you are aware I have for many years that a highly educated and a highly trained staff should be introduced into asylums. I have done so here and I have more than a dozen trained hospital nurses of good education and ability and it is with their help that I manage the work. My Assistants also have always been decidedly above the average seeing that this is an asylum from which they get promotion.

We are admitting at present at the West House over 500 patients a year nearly as many as Claybury and the large London asylums. Whenever we get overcrowded the patients are drafted off to other asylums where there are vacancies. This has been done because Bangour, the city Asylum for Edinburgh, has been taken over by the Military Authorities.

subjecting herself to it having her sister at home and I strongly urged
the family doctor to send the same sister away for a holiday.
Yes, I am over head and ears in work of one kind or another. I have
really two systems to look after which are managed on entirely different
principles in addition to my lecturing and this year I had to take over
the extra-work lecturing as well and give an additional course and be-
sides all this there is my consulting practice which has increased since
Sir Thomas died. I would be quite unable to tackle this were it not that
I have learnt to train my subordinates to do their duties and then to be-
lieve to them as much as possible and then supervise them. When one has a
very big establishment it is impossible to be everywhere oneself. If one
attempts it important matters must be neglected. The only way to do it
is to trust officials in their respective departments and to see that the
work is done. As you are aware I have for many years had a highly edu-
cated and a highly trained staff which should be introduced into asylums. I
have done so here and I have more than a dozen trained hospital nurses of
good education and ability and it is with their help that I manage the
work. My assistants also have always been decidedly above the average
rank that this is an asylum from which they get promotion.
We are admitting at present at the West House over 500 patients a year
nearly as many as Glasgow and the large London asylums. However we
get overcrowded the patients are shifted off to other asylums where there
are vacancies. This has been done because Glasgow, the City Asylum for
Edinburgh, has been taken over by the Military authorities.

DR GEORGE M. ROBERTSON.
TELEPHONE NO. 1391 CENTRAL
AT HOME, 2 P.M.

TIPPERLINN HOUSE,
MORNINGSIDE PLACE,
EDINBURGH.

3

When last I heard of Mrs. Geddes from her brother-in-law, Dr. Chalmers Watson, I was told that she was practically recovered although she was as she had always been a woman rather different from the usual type and with whims and ideas of her own. They are now living I believe at Scriven Park, the house concerning which there was a lawsuit regarding the ^{crucial} ~~paternity~~ of a child born in California. It is many months now since I last saw her. Chalmers Watson looked after ^{her} principally himself but he called in all and sundry for advice. I saw her about half a dozen times but I believe that Clouston also was called in to express an opinion. She remained acutely excited for about a year. The most interesting feature of her case was that her urine was crammed with diphtheroids to such an extent that it was not clear and they deposited in the bottom of a glass.

With kind regards and best wishes,

I am,

Yours truly,

George M. Robertson

Dr. Bedford Pierce.

FIBERLIN HOUSE
MORNINGSIDR PLACE
LONDON

When first I heard of Mrs. Geddes from her brother-in-law, Mr. Chalmers
Watson, I was told that she was practically recovered although she was as
she had always been a woman rather different from the usual type and with
views and ideas of her own. They are now living I believe at Brixton
Park, the house concerning which there was a lawsuit regarding the part-
ship of a child born in California. It is many months now since I last
saw her. Chalmers Watson looked after practically himself but he called
in and sought for advice. I saw her about half a dozen times but I
believe that Watson also was called in to express an opinion. She
remained acutely excited for about a year. The most interesting feature
of her case was that her urine was crammed with diastereoids to such an
extent that it was not clear and they deposited in the bottom of a glass.
With kind regards and best wishes,

Yours truly,

W. G. B. Gowen

Dr. Bedford Pierce.

W. G. B. GOWEN

749,

DR GEORGE M. ROBERTSON.
TELEPHONE NO. 1391 CENTRAL.
AT HOME, 2 P.M.

TIPPERLINN HOUSE,
MORNINGSIDE PLACE,
EDINBURGH.

23rd July 1915.

Miss Letham.

Dear Pierce,

I saw in consultation to-day a Miss Letham who I was informed was for a very short time with you at The Retreat as a voluntary patient. I would be much obliged if you would kindly inform me of your view of her case. Is she a case of ordinary mania, the elated stage of Manic Depressive Insanity or do you think her case partakes more of the nature of Dementia Praecox. I had considerable difficulty in trying to find out whether she suffers from hallucinations. The nurse stated that she carried on imaginary conversations with imaginary people but her sister states that these were merely imaginary conversations which she carried on with herself owing to her state of excitement and to pass the time.

With kind regards,

I am,

Yours truly,

George M. Robertson

Dr. Bedford Pierce.

We are having a v. busy time. Only 2 Annos' institute of S. We are admitting patients at the rate of \$500 a year - all the Scotch patients, a Danpau & a military hospital

May 17, 1915

Dear Mr. Lethem,

I shall be away on Wednesday, but my colleague,
Dr. Mackenzie, will do all that is necessary.

There is no improvement. Miss Lethem demanded
£5 from me and, as I demurred, said she would send tor-
pedoes and Lord Kitchener to destroy me. In general
she has many strange delusions of grandeur.

I remain,

Yours very truly,

May 12, 1911

Dear Mr. Jackson,

I shall be away on Wednesday, but my colleagues,

if possible, will do all that is necessary.

There is no improvement in the labor market.

Ed. Brown and I returned, and she would send for-

phones and Ford Viceroy to be sent to the general

and the very strange behavior of the

I remain,

Yours very truly,

way can be arranged.

Yours truly
Wetherill

TELEPHONE N° 1084 CENTRAL

725

RATHLIN,
INVERLEITH PLACE,
EDINBURGH.

16th May 1915

Dear D^r Pierce

I have yours of
the 14th and much
regret its contents.

We are very adverse
against having Dorothy
detained under an
order. My daughter
and I will come to
York on Wednesday
and see if no other

1847
KATHLEEN
INVERMOUTH PLACE
HAMBURG

1847
KATHLEEN
INVERMOUTH PLACE
HAMBURG

AND

6, PARK SQUARE,

LEEDS.

BY APPOINTMENT.

TUESDAY } 1.30 TO 4 P.M.

FRIDAY }

TELEPHONE { YORK N^o 112.
LEEDS N^o 381X.
3877.

THE RETREAT,

YORK.

14. May. 1915.

Dear Mr Lethem

I am sorry to say that Miss Lethem does not improve, she is restless excitable & unapproachable in conversation.

At times she is quite pleasant but she suddenly changes & has been very disturbing to others. singing & thumping the piano regardless of the comfort of anyone, or stalling about the corridors taking apparently no notice of what is said to her -

She does not understand her position as a voluntary Boarder - and I am sorry to say is unfit to remain in that capacity.

I fear there is no alternative but to place her under certificates and I enclose

with this form for petition. in case you
would like her to remain at the Retreat.

It will be quite easy to arrange
for her removal to an institution in
Scotland or to Scalabr Park if you
would prefer this. The same form
would do for Scalabr Park with the
necessary alterations, which alterations
would have to be initialed in the
margin, but the Scotch forms are different.

I have myself little doubt but that
Miss Lethem will recover but it looks
as if the attack will not pass off
very quickly.

I remain

Yours very truly

Richard Dence.

If Scalabr Park be selected - the words
underlined should be altered to
"the asylum known as Scalabr Park
Burslem Wharfedale" -

RD

do so. But probably
there is no need just
now ^{but} for you know best.

She has always been
constipated + both D'Cole
of London + D'Gilman
insisted on her keeping
regular. D'Gilman
advised Reguline + it
was doing very well.

Perhaps I might
tell you that her
menstrual period is
due on the 23rd, she

721

21, ASHFIELD ROAD,
BIRKBY,
HUDDERSFIELD.

14 V 15

Dear D'Pierce,

My father seems to
think I should come
over to Leeds + see
you + tell you any thing
you might want to
know about my sister.
If you would like me
to do so, at any
time I shall gladly

is as a rule regular.
Last period was good but
previous ones were very
scanty. The excitement
began when the flow
began she was most
amenable to treatment
previous to that except
at the previous menstruation.

Six or seven years ago
when she was just at
she had amenorrhoea
for several months, was
worst at each when
the period was due. As

menstruation returned she
improved.

I hope you do not mind
me telling you these things.
My father would not likely
say anything & I thought
you might like to know.
If I have stepped beyond
the province of an anxious
sister with some medical
knowledge please forgive
me.

Yours truly
Cecil R. Norme

Unless I hear from you
I shall take it that letters
are all right.

We hope to hear
better news of her in
the near future tho'
we know it means
patience. Being the
youngest of us all she
is very dear to us.
I we want to do the
best for her.

21, ASHFIELD ROAD,

BIRKBY,

HUDDERSFIELD.

11.6.15

Dear O'Peave,

I understood from
my father, Mr Lethem,
that we may write
to our sister. If at
any time you think
we should not do
so is it too much
to ask you to let
me know direct as

Is it wise to send
a magazine or some
small gift occasionally
to let her know we
remember her? Let me
know what you think
is best & we will abide
by your knowledge.

& love us.

Yours truly
(Mrs) Carl R. Noire
(NB ChB)

11th May, 1915.

Dear Mr. Lethem,

By all means write to Miss Lethem regularly. I think she would be able to appreciate letters and would miss not receiving them.

She has continued in the same variable condition. Sometimes she is restless and excitable, behaving in a dictatorial, unapproachable manner, and at other times she is quite reasonable and pleasant to do with, sometimes wishful to help in any little way she can, and being thoroughly pleasant with those about her. She is not an easy case to nurse as when she is excitable she takes little or no notice of anything that is said to her. If she continues like this she will hardly be able to remain as a Voluntary Boarder. The other day she came to my office and demanded to go out of doors and into the City, and was a good deal annoyed because I told her it was undesirable. One day she went out a drive with other patients and she then stood up and gesticulated in a conspicuous way, so that she clearly must not go out side the premises. There is no need to decide whether the voluntary status shall be changed for at least another week, unless Miss Lethem herself should send in twenty four hours' notice.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Dr. Norrie, so that she may hear how things are going on.

I remain,

Yours very truly,

11th May, 1911.

Dear Mr. Taylor,

It all seems quite to me that I have written
I think you would be able to understand letters and would
also not receive them.

She has continued in the same variable condition.

Sometimes she is restless and excited, behaving in a
distasteful, ungraceful manner, and at other times she
is quite reasonable and pleasant to be with, sometimes

attempting to help in my little way the one, and being
thoroughly pleasant with those about her. She is not an
easy case to nurse as when she is excited she takes

little or no notice of anything that is said to her.
If she continues like this she will hardly be able to
remain as a voluntary boarder. The other day she came to

my office and demanded to go out of doors and into the
city, and was a good deal annoyed because I told her it
was impossible. One day she went out a drive with other

patients and she then stood up and requested in a
confronting way, so that she obviously must not go out alone
unattended. There is no need to decide whether the voluntary

status shall be changed for at least another week, unless
Miss Weston herself should send in twenty-four hours' notice.
I am sending a copy of this letter to Dr. Taylor.

So that she may hear her things are being on.

I remain,

Yours very truly,

anxious about her and
would like to hear
how she is progressing.
We are sending on
today her tennis
shoes ~~and~~ racket, sponge
and hand glove, if
there is anything else
she requires, perhaps
your motion can
procure them for her.

I hope to have good
news from you during
the week. Meanwhile

Believe me

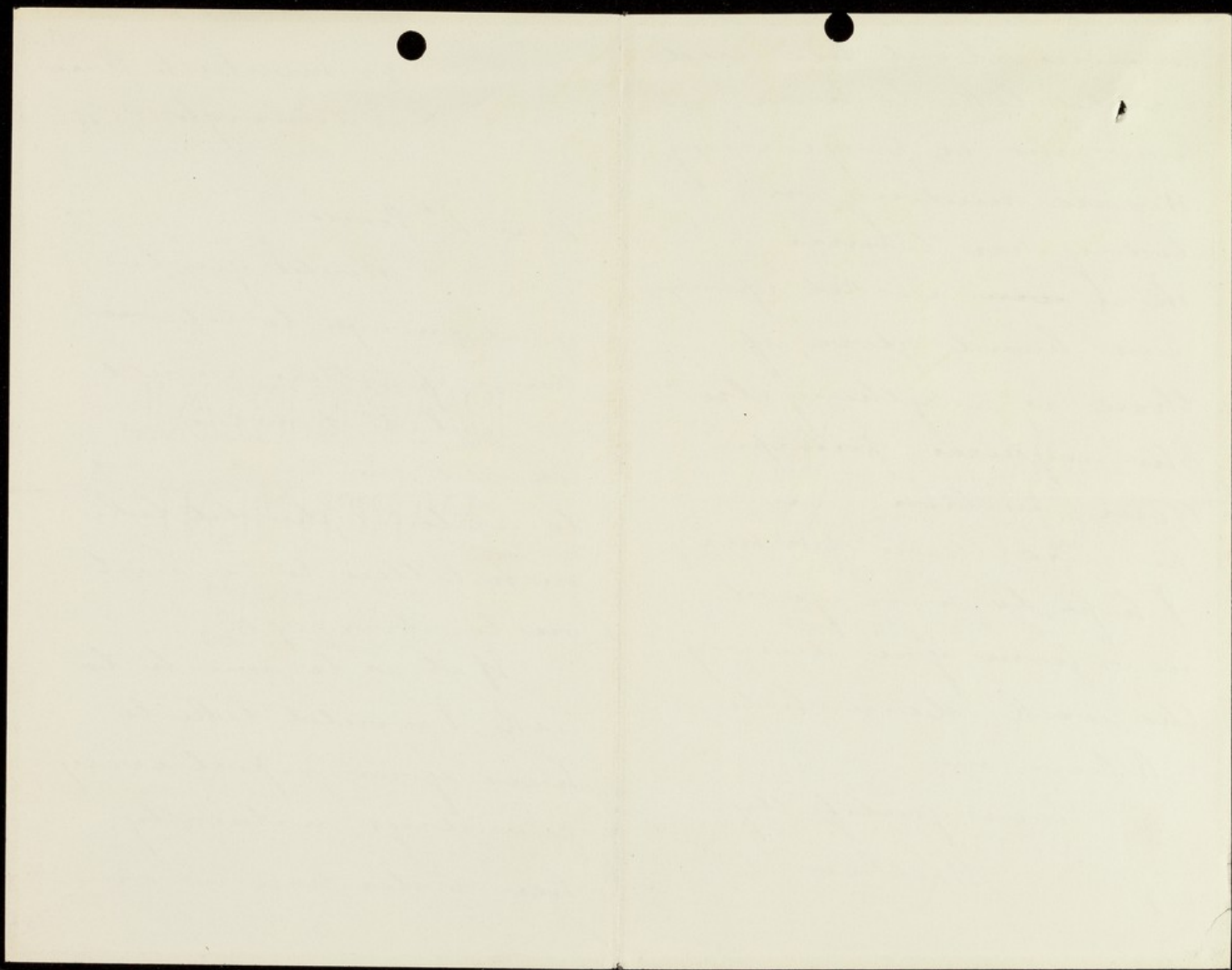
Yours gratefully
Wethem

711.
82 Inverleith Place
Edinburgh 10/5/15

Dear D^r Pierce

Would you be
good enough to let me
know if letters should
be sent to Dorothy,
should she be allowed
to write, I should like
such letters to be sent
on to above ad.

If it is ^{not} too much to
ask, I would like to
have your report every
few days, naturally
her sister here is very



May 18 1915

Dear Sir,

At the recent meeting of
the Retreat Committee the terms
for Miss Dorothy B. Leshew were
fixed at \$3 per week -

Enclose the usual form of
Agreement which kindly return to me
when completed -

Yours faithfully

W. E. Waller
Secy.

Wm. Leshew Esq.

Nov 18 1812

Dear Sir,

At the recent meeting of
the Patent Committee the terms
for Miss Dorothy A. Latham were
fixed at \$1000 a week -
besides the usual form of
agreement which chiefly relates to
the completion -

Yours faithfully
W. C. C. Allen Secy.

W. C. C. Allen

Name. Dorothy Drewis Lethem. Age. 25. Date of adm. May 7, 1915

Address

Description Single. No occupation.

Religious Persuasion

P. H.

Health good all her life. Temperament quick.
Clear thinker & clever.

Two previous attacks. One 7 yrs ago on reaching woman-
hood and ^{the} other a year ago. Recovery complete.

H. P. C.

Nervousness, sleeplessness, quick temper. very irritable
when tired. Cause - death of her mother.

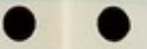
In good health and taking food well.

F. H.

Father in good health. No mental disease

Mother died aged 62 of Heart Failure

No history of mental disease in family.



Notes

May 8th 1915

(9th Gall.)

Miss Lethem had delusions to-day about her being the cause of the war, & that Lord Hithener was awaiting her orders outside the Retreat, & would kill everyone who kept her from her freedom.

May 13th 1915

(9th Gall.)

Miss Lethem has had hallucinations (aura) most of the day: Talking to & answering imaginary persons upon many different subjects.

May 15th 1915.

Transferred to 4th Gallery.

Very changeable all day, laughing crying singing & playing the piano very loudly.

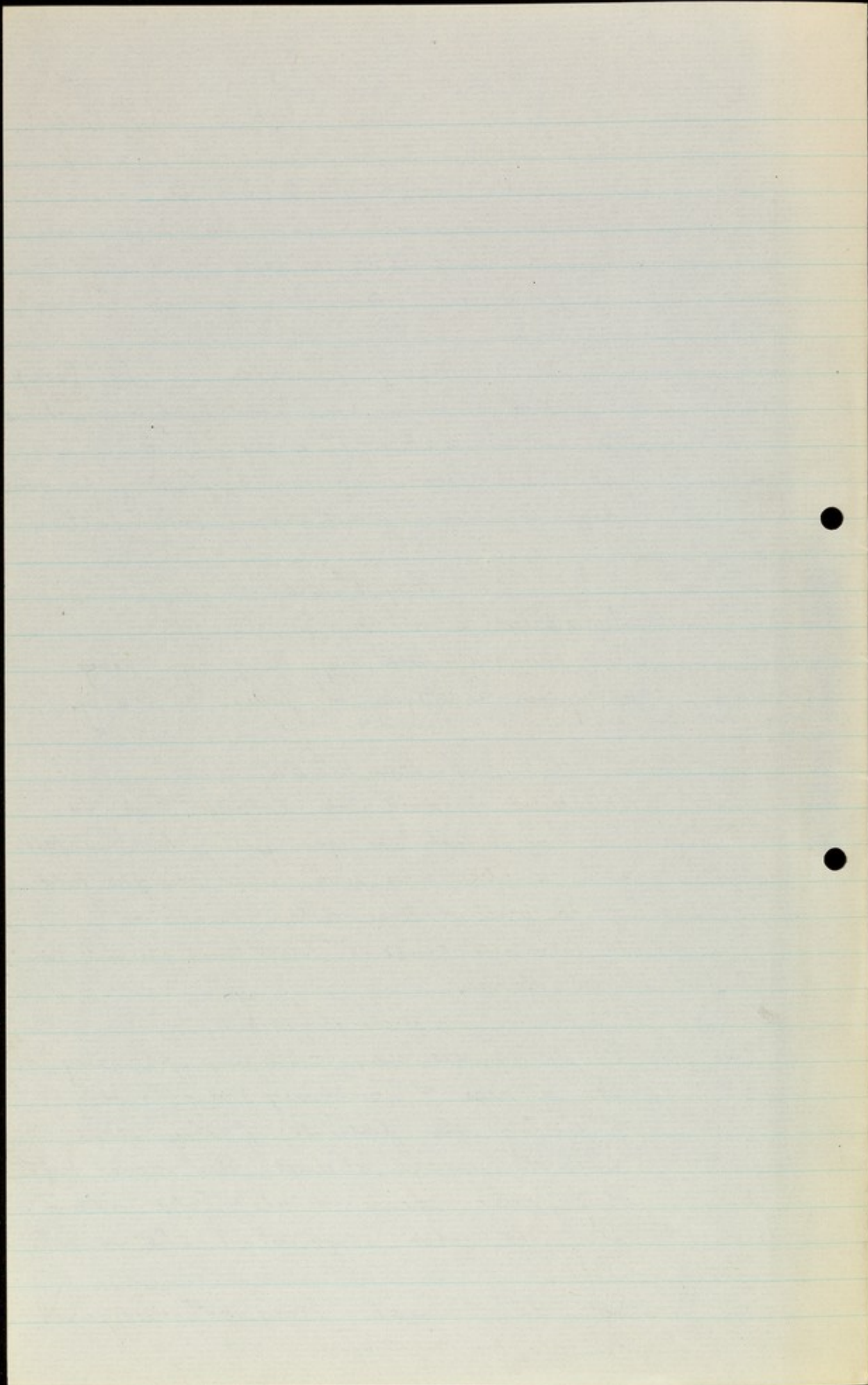
May 16th 1915.

Threatened Dr. Brock with a knife. Took her own knife which she was getting her breakfast with to strike her with, nurse caught hold of her arm & Miss Lethem snatched M^{rs} Bennett's knife & threatened to cut her own throat.

May 18th 1915

Very noisy all day singing playing the piano & talking very loudly & telling the patients if they don't like the ways things are done here they must speak to the Pope about it. She also says that she is the Pope.

Left the Retreat May 20th 1915 with her father & sister.



Name Dorothy Brewis Lethem. Ward 24k of 6/20/47

General Bodily Condition very good, constipated
Height 5 feet, 3 inches Weight (without clothes) 117 lbs

Nutrition

Injuries (if any) partially healed wound in right hand + two lacerations on right arm

Deformities none

Head & Neck

Teeth good condition Hair very healthy

Trunk well formed

Arms & Legs

Skin good condition

Complexion good Colour Pale

Tongue slightly coated Respiration 20

Pulse 94 Temperature 98

Mental Condition very uncertain

General Appearance

Conversation) Bright + witty in her sane moments

Clearness good

Orientation "

Memory "

Coherence "

Delusions & Halls. Battle

Emotional State well balanced

Complaints

Conduct & Behaviour.

