

Ninety-first annual report for the year 1950 / Barnwood House Hospital for Mental and Nervous Disorders, near Gloucester.

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Hospital for Mental and
Nervous Disorders,
Near Gloucester.

Ninety-first
Annual Report

For the Year 1950.



Printed by H. OSBORNE, Gloucester.

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REPORT OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE

The Report for the year 1950, which the Committee now present, is the Ninety-first.

The average number of patients resident in the Hospital was 126, as compared with 133 in 1949. Despite this fall in number the total income from patients reached a higher figure than ever before, all of this being applied in meeting the increased costs of their maintenance and treatment—costs which also have reached a record level. If the principle is accepted that the income from patients' fees should suffice to cover the expenditure incurred in maintaining them, then it follows that any increase in expenditure must require a corresponding increase from fees. As the very low fees of old patients who died were withdrawn, so was the opportunity taken of fixing the fees of the new admissions who replaced them at rates in accordance with actual costs.

Nevertheless, during the year the Committee considered 35 applications for admission or continuance of maintenance at reduced rates of payment. All of these were granted.

As an alternative to payment of periodic fees, the method of commutation of fees for life in return for payment of a capital sum, which was here introduced in 1949 and adopted for two patients during that year, was extended to two more

patients during 1950. Since one of these patients died, there were at the end of the year three maintained on a life basis.

As was done during the previous two years, the accounts in their revised and fuller form, together with the comparative tables, are being forwarded to the Governors in a separate booklet.

The structural alterations during the year have not been extensive. While extending to more of the patients' bedrooms the installation of lavatory basins with hot and cold water supply, it was found necessary to renew many feet of the supply pipe line, which had become badly corroded and was restricting the flow. The exterior painting of the ancillary premises, commenced last year, was continued and almost completed before the extremely wet weather prevented further outside work of this kind. Following the installation of the new syphon damp-course system at Avenue Cottage, the electrical wiring was renewed and the interior of the house redecorated throughout. Modern fireplaces, in replacement of obsolete fixtures, were fitted in the eight staff houses in Welveland Lane, and new bathrooms and sculleries were built on to the two farm cottages there. A farm stockman's cottage on the old Hillview Farm was repaired extensively to remedy the effects of subsidence.

In October the Committee learnt that Ermine Cottage, which adjoins the Trustees' property at Barnwood, would shortly come on to the market, and they were able to secure it freehold with vacant possession for the sum of £1550. In addition to the main road frontage, there is sufficient ground to provide sites for two more staff houses with frontage to Welveland Lane should they ever be required.

At Woodchester Park considerable work of repair to the roof and to the walls of the Mansion House was found to be necessary and was carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the Architect. The Cottage and such rooms in the Mansion House as are complete, together with some forty-eight acres of fields and woodland have been let to a tenant for use as a school.

Some expenditure was incurred at Bownham Park in repairing and rebuilding the stone boundary wall, but the cost of this work was more than offset by the money obtained from the sale of the timber. Gravel Hill House was connected to the overhead electric mains, and was rewired.

Shortage of staff has prevented the decision of the Committee, mentioned in last year's report, to use Bownham for the reception of lady patients, from being implemented. Consequently the Committee are considering letting the premises to a suitable tenant. They are, however, glad to report that the search for a Sister Tutor has at last met with success, and that they have welcomed the arrival of Miss Thomson in this important capacity.

As a result of the improved facilities at Park Farm, which were for the first time available during a full year, it was possible to increase the quantity of milk produced to some 23,000 gallons (as compared with 16,700 gallons during the foregoing year). All this was disposed of to the Milk Marketing Board. The farm at Barnwood, besides serving its primary function of supplying all milk, eggs and much other fresh produce required by the Hospital, was able to produce 5,500 gallons of milk from its T.T. and Attested herd for sale wholesale.

In view of the revolutionary legislation of the Town and Country Planning Act, an attempt was

made to assess the possible effects on the Trustees' properties at Barnwood, Woodchester, Bownham and Crickley; and, after consultation with the surveyors, figures were decided upon and claims for loss of development values under the Act were made.

At the same time it was decided to make application for the various estates to be regarded as functional charity land, on which, under the Act, no development charge is imposed so long as the land remains functional.

Notification has just been received from the Minister that all the Trustees' land held on the 1st July, 1948, is in fact so regarded. This important clarification means that the Trustees may, providing the necessary planning permission is given, develop any of the land for the purpose of their function without the payment of a development charge.

The Committee regret to record that Colonel A. A. H. Beaman, who had been a Governor since 1936, died during the year.

Lady Ashton of Hyde was elected to the General Committee and Captain Peter Gibbs was elected to the House Committee.

Two of the staff retired on pension—Charge Nurse Thomas G. Harris (thirty-five years service) and Elsie Organ (twenty years service).

Towards the end of the year the Committee heard with regret that the Rev. E. H. J. Noott, who has been Chaplain of the Hospital since 1936, would be moving to Withington after Easter in 1951. The nomination of his successor is receiving their deliberations, and it is hoped will be announced by the time this report is presented.

Finally, the Committee use their annual opportunity for recording their grateful appreciation of the services which are rendered to them, and to the patients, in so many directions by their Physician Superintendent, Dr. G. W. T. H. Fleming, upon whom the growing complexities of the work, and of the properties under his charge, throw ever-increasing responsibilities; and of those of his Assistant Medical Officers, of whom the Senior, Dr. J. K. C. Liddell, has to the regret of the Committee and of his colleagues retired from the Staff (January 1951) after more than twenty years of valued service. The Committee take this opportunity of expressing both their thanks, and their cordial wishes to Dr. Liddell in his retirement; and they also desire to recognise the distinction and ability with which Dr. Ashby directs their Research Department, and the increasing attention paid to his work in scientific circles. In expressing to Miss MacMillan, the Matron, and her Nursing Staff, their constant recognition of the care and devotion expended upon the patients, the Committee are indeed glad to know that the long pressure due to shortage of staff, so cheerfully faced and overcome, has been greatly mitigated in the past few months, which should bring them welcome, and well-earned, relief. To their Staff in all other Departments the Committee record their appreciation of manifold activities, no less essential than the direct Nursing services, to the well-being of a great Institution, all of which are so efficiently discharged.

W. I. CROOME,
Chairman.

REPORTS
OF THE
COMMISSIONERS OF THE BOARD OF
CONTROL

BARNWOOD HOUSE,
GLOUCESTER.

23rd May, 1950.

Paying the first visit of the year to-day I have seen all the patients in residence. They are 122 in number, 45 gentlemen and 77 ladies. Of these 18 gentlemen and 27 ladies are here as voluntary patients and 2 ladies are here as temporary patients. Two ladies are absent on trial or leave.

In 1949 there were 113 direct admissions and only 14 of these needed certification. Departures or discharges during this period numbered 88. Five patients were transferred to other Statutory care and 20 died. Since the last visit there has been no epidemic illness of any importance and the health of the patients has, in general, been good. I notice that it is not found to be necessary to use mechanical restraint or seclusion in this hospital.

During the course of my visit I found all the dormitories and the various rooms both in the main building and in the outlying villas, Lynnthorpe, The Manor House and Crickley Court, to be in excellent order and spotlessly clean. The furnishing is on the whole good with a particularly high standard of comfort. I was impressed by the attractiveness of the grounds and gardens at all the branches.

I heard no complaints of any sort during this visit and the nursing and care of the patients here, many of whom are of great age, appeared to me to be of a high standard.

There are 23 male and 26 female nurses with an average of 12 of each on duty each day and six of each at night. Twelve of the men and 19 of the women are Certificated or Registered in Mental Nursing.

I should like to thank Dr. Fleming for his help to me during this visit.

(Sgd.) E. N. BUTLER,
Commissioner of the Board of Control.

BARNWOOD HOUSE,
GLOUCESTER.

2nd October, 1950.

The patients in residence at this Registered Hospital to-day number 127—44 gentlemen and 83 ladies. In the course of my visit I believe I have seen them all. There were no requests for private interviews but the majority of patients had some conversation with me.

The standard of comfort is high at Barnwood and all the day rooms and dormitories are excellently furnished and in a good state of decorative repair. Bedridden patients enjoy every nursing care and I was glad to find that the beds of many of these patients had been moved out on to the verandahs to-day—the first sunny day for a considerable period.

Since the beginning of the year there have been 93 direct admissions (39 gentlemen and 54 ladies) of whom no fewer than 80 were those of voluntary patients. In the same period 76 patients left or were discharged and 20 patients died, death being due in each case to natural causes.

The nursing staff consists of 22 male and 30 female nurses, 12 of the former and 14 of the latter being certificated or registered as mental nurses. Four nurses of each sex are always on duty each night.

My thanks are due to Dr. Fleming for his helpful assistance during an interesting visit.

(Sgd.) I. COFFIN DUNCAN,
Commissioner of the Board of Control

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT

I have the honour to present my report for 1950.

There were in the Hospital on January 1st, 1950 79 certified patients, 2 temporary patients and 48 voluntary patients.

Twenty certified patients, 2 temporary patients and 96 voluntary patients were admitted during the year, a total of 118 compared with 114 in 1949.

One hundred and twenty-nine patients were discharged, transferred or died. These changes left the numbers on the books on the 31st December, 1950 as follows:—

		<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Certified Patients	...	28	47	75
Temporary Patients	...	—	1	1
Voluntary Patients	...	14	28	42

Two hundred and forty-seven patients of the three classes were under treatment during the year as compared with 242 in 1949 and 270 in 1948.

The daily average number of patients on the books during the year was 128 compared with 136 in 1949.

Of the direct admissions during the year, the percentage of voluntary admissions was 74, compared with 81 in 1949 while that of certified patients was 12, compared with 12 in 1949.

DISCHARGES

Ninety-nine patients left the Hospital during the year. Of these 22 males and 35 females were discharged recovered, that is, 48% males and 52% females and 50% of the total direct admissions.

Thirty patients were discharged relieved and 12 were discharged not improved, either to the care of friends or to other hospitals.

DEATHS

There were 30 deaths during the year, 16 male and 14 female, the average age at death being 71. Of the 30 deaths 14 had been in the hospital less than 1 year.

The general health both of patients and of staff has been very good during the year.

RESEARCH

During the year research has been continued into the mechanism of electro-shock therapy with the help again of the Burden Neurological Institute at Bristol. To Professor Golla and his staff we are grateful for much advice and help.

Dr. W. Ross Ashby attended the International Congress of Psychiatry in Paris in September and demonstrated his brain machine. He is now working on the construction of a new and more complicated machine.

Mrs. Bassett has carried out a great deal of routine psychological work and has been more particularly interested in the psycho-galvanic reflex and the effect of leucotomy and electro-shock treatment on it.

The Second Volume of Recent Progress in Psychiatry, which I have had the honour of editing

since it first appeared in 1944 was published during the year. The Third Volume is due in 1955.

NURSING STAFF

The shortage of female nurses has been relieved by the employment of a number of nursing assistants. The large increase in wages granted by the Whitley Council has not made the slightest difference in the supply of probationers.

Miss Thomson has been appointed Sister-Tutor and commences her duties early in the New Year.

GENERAL MATTERS

The amount spent on repairs during the year was £4,253 compared with £4,187 in 1949. The amount spent on furniture was £803 compared with £949 in 1949.

I wish again to express my appreciation of the loyalty and help I have received during the year from the Medical Officers, the Matron and all the staff; particularly to Miss MacMillan and to Miss Clargo who has also had to continue the work of Sister Tutor.

To the Chairman and the Committee, I wish to express my indebtedness for their great help and guidance.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING,

Medical Superintendent.

REPORT
FROM DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH

(DR. W. ROSS ASHBY, *Director*)

During the year 1950 our researches have continued to be co-ordinated closely with those of the Burden Neurological Institute under Professor F. L. Golla. Our chief aim has been to elucidate the action of convulsive treatment, especially in its endocrinological and cybernetic aspects, in the hope that a better understanding of its mode of action will enable us to improve its therapeutic power.

The endocrinological and biochemical problems were studied in conjunction with the Endocrinological Department of the Burden Neurological Institute, where a complex and somewhat difficult series of experiments have been directed to discovering to what extent the reaction to convulsive treatment is mediated through the pituitary gland and in particular through its secretion of adreno-corticotrophic hormone. This hormone is known to play an essential part in the body's reaction to stress, and evidence obtained in previous research at Barnwood House has suggested that it may play a corresponding part in the course of modern methods of treatment. The series of experiments is now nearing completion, and the results will shortly be ready for mathematical analysis. To supplement these

studies we have also developed methods for testing how the pituitary's secretion of gonadotropic hormones is affected by convulsive therapy. These studies form part of a longer-term programme and it will be some time before their results are available.

Work on the cybernetics of the brain is also proceeding and is yielding results of high interest. These studies treat the brain as a dynamic system in which communication and co-ordination are of essential importance, and attempt to discover why the brain sometimes fails to co-ordinate its activities efficiently. The research, involving as it does an integration of cerebral physiology and mathematical physics, requires its own specialised techniques, which are having to be developed as our knowledge progresses. One essential method is the construction of mechanisms on new principles for the purpose of testing predictions from the mathematical analysis: if the mathematical analysis is correct the new mechanism should behave in a way seen hitherto only in the neural mechanisms of living organisms. Several such machines, opening up a new branch of science, have been developed in the Research Department. The first machine was described in September at the International Congress of Psychiatry in Paris, and was later demonstrated at the Conference arranged by the *Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique*. Its purpose has now largely been fulfilled, and a new machine, which uses much more advanced principles and from which we expect to learn much, is now under construction. Its principles, and how it explains certain hitherto mysterious aspects of brain function, have been described in a book which will shortly be published.

In conclusion I would like to express my appreciation of the support and guidance so unfailingly given throughout the year by Dr. G. W. T. H. Fleming and by Professor F. L. Golla.

Publications during 1950:

The origin of adaptive behaviour. International Congress of Psychiatry, Paris, 1950.

A new mechanism which shows simple conditioning. *Journal of Psychology*, **29**, 343; 1950.

Cybernetics. In 'Recent Progress in Psychiatry,' edited by G. W. T. H. Fleming; London, 1950.

The stability of a randomly assembled nerve-network.

Electroencephalography and Clinical Neurophysiology, **2**, 471; 1950.

Cerebral mechanisms of intelligent behaviour. In 'Perspectives in Neuropsychiatry,' edited by D. Richter; London, 1950. (Since translated into French).

(With M. Bassett) The effect of prefrontal leucotomy on the psychogalvanic response. *Journal of Mental Science*, **96**, 458; 1950.

TABLE A2.—GENERAL TABLE, SHOWING THE MOVEMENT OF THE HOSPITAL POPULATION DURING EACH YEAR SINCE 1ST JANUARY, 1939, TOGETHER WITH THE RECOVERY AND DEATH RATES.
(UNDER THE MENTAL TREATMENT ACT, 1930, VOLUNTARY AND TEMPORARY PATIENTS ARE NOW INCLUDED).

Year.	Admissions.									Total number under Treatment.			Discharged or Transferred.									Died.			Remaining on Registers December 31st.			Average Daily Number on Registers.			Percentage of Total Recoveries on the Total Number of Admissions.			Percentage of Total Recoveries on the Direct Admissions.			Percentage of Recoveries yielded by Direct Admissions on the Direct Admissions.			Percentage of Deaths on Average Daily Number on Registers.														
	Direct.			Indirect.			Total.						Recovered.			Relieved.			Not Improved.																																			
	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.															
1939	24	52	76	1	1	2	25	53	78	92	146	238	15	13	28	2	9	11	5	16	21	10	8	18	60	100	160	63	92	155	60	26	35	8	62	5	25	36	8	62	5	21	4	35	5	15	6	8	11	6				
1940	27	34	61	3	7	10	30	41	71	86	136	222	9	9	18	8	1	9	4	15	19	8	13	21	59	98	157	62	97	159	32	1	25	28	1	33	3	26	5	29	5	33	3	26	5	12	9	13	4	13	2			
1941	25	40	65	4	7	11	29	47	76	86	138	224	6	14	20	4	8	12	8	10	18	8	13	21	60	93	153	58	95	153	22	6	35	30	24	35	31	18	5	28	3	13	5	13	5	13	5	13	5	13	5			
1942	27	41	68	3	1	4	30	42	72	91	136	227	11	20	31	6	7	13	5	4	9	5	12	17	63	92	155	60	92	152	36	6	47	43	40	7	48	8	45	6	37	4	48	8	44	1	8	3	13	11	2			
1943	45	54	99	3	3	6	48	57	105	115	150	265	19	30	49	4	8	12	13	4	17	7	12	19	68	95	163	68	94	162	39	6	52	46	42	2	55	5	49	5	40	5	55	5	48	5	10	3	12	7	11	7		
1944	26	48	74	5	1	6	31	49	80	99	147	246	14	24	38	9	4	13	5	10	15	16	15	31	55	91	146	61	95	156	45	1	49	47	5	53	8	50	51	3	53	8	47	9	50	26	2	15	8	19	8			
1945	35	60	95	—	2	2	35	62	97	90	153	243	7	31	38	3	17	20	9	8	17	8	8	16	63	88	151	61	92	153	20	50	39	2	20	51	7	40	17	1	50	37	9	13	1	9	10	5						
1946	48	53	101	3	4	7	51	57	108	114	145	259	24	28	52	6	7	13	16	9	25	10	12	22	58	89	147	61	89	150	47	1	49	48	1	50	52	8	51	5	45	8	41	5	43	6	16	4	13	6	14	7		
1947	60	65	125	9	4	13	69	69	138	127	158	285	13	32	45	16	22	38	21	7	28	12	9	21	60	87	147	57	86	143	18	8	46	4	32	6	21	7	49	2	36	18	3	49	2	34	4	21	10	5	14	7		
1948	46	74	120	2	7	9	48	81	129	108	168	276	25	30	55	10	27	37	11	17	28	9	13	22	53	75	128	57	79	136	52	1	37	42	6	54	3	40	5	45	8	52	2	40	5	45	15	8	16	5	16	2		
1949	42	71	113	—	5	5	42	76	118	95	151	246	25	28	53	5	13	18	9	13	22	7	13	20	49	80	129	53	83	136	59	5	36	8	44	9	59	5	39	4	46	9	59	5	39	4	46	9	13	2	15	7	14	7
1950	46	67	113	3	5	8	49	72	121	98	152	250	22	35	57	17	17	34	1	7	8	16	14	30	42	76	118	47	79	126	44	9	48	6	47	1	47	8	52	2	50	4	47	8	52	2	50	4	34	0	17	7	23	8





