

Annual report of the Devon Mental Hospital Management Committee for the year 1951 : Exminster Hospital, Digby Hospital, Wonford Hospital.

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

**DEVON MENTAL HOSPITAL
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

FOR THE YEAR

1951



EXMINSTER HOSPITAL
DIGBY HOSPITAL
WONFORD HOUSE HOSPITAL

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DEVON MENTAL HOSPITAL
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



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**DEVON MENTAL HOSPITAL
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**List of Members
1951/52**

CHAIRMAN :

REVD. SUB-DEAN SHELMERDINE, The Rectory, Silverton

VICE-CHAIRMAN :

SIR ARTHUR C. REED, Cumbre, Exeter

OTHER MEMBERS :

R. H. BAKER, Esq., Millbrook Braunton

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Honiton

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DR. J. RUSSELL, The Hospital, Digby, Exeter

J. G. WARNE, Esq., 97, Bonhay Road, Exeter

A. J. WITHYCOMBE, Esq., Redcot, Exeter

GROUP OFFICIALS :

Secretary : R. Seal, Exminster Hospital, Near Exeter

Deputy Secretary : D. W. Miller, A.H.A., The Hospital, Digby, Exeter

Finance Officer : R. E. Wilman, A.C.A., F.H.A., 26, Queen Street,
Exeter

Deputy Finance Officer : C. H. Heath, A.I.M.T.A., A.H.A., 26, Queen
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Finance :

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W. MADDICOTT, Esq.

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O.B.E.

DR. H. SCOTT-FORBES

DR. J. RUSSELL

J. G. WARNE, Esq.

A. J. WITHYCOMBE, Esq.

House :

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(*CHAIRMAN*)

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(*VICE-CHAIRMAN*)

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MRS. E. KELLY

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MRS. J. D. R. MURRAY

MISS B. PARKER

REVD. SUB-DEAN
SHELMERDINE

J. G. WARNE, Esq.

A. J. WITHYCOMBE, Esq.

DIGBY AND WONFORD HOUSE
HOSPITALS :

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(*CHAIRMAN*)

A. J. WITHYCOMBE, Esq.

(*VICE-CHAIRMAN*)

H. W. H. GODDARD, Esq.

MRS. R. M. A. HODGE

G. W. A. JACKSON, Esq.

MRS. J. D. R. MURRAY

ALD. H. C. PEDRICK

ALD. MRS. J. M. PHILLIPS,

O.B.E.

SIR ARTHUR C. REED

DR. H. SCOTT-FORBES

REVD. SUB-DEAN
SHELMERDINE

MRS. E. E. TINKHAM

COL. C. P. TREMLETT

Farm :

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G. W. A. JACKSON, Esq.

R. LAWRENCE, Esq.

J. B. MARTIN, Esq.

J. G. PAUL, Esq.

P. D. ROWSELL, Esq.

SIR ARTHUR C. REED

REVD. SUB-DEAN
SHELMERDINE

J. J. WALE, Esq.

J. G. WARNE, Esq.

THE SECOND ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DEVON MENTAL HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Management Committee have pleasure in presenting their Report covering the year 1951.

We regret that Miss E. M. Vicary, who had served as a Member of the Committee since July, 1948, and who for many years was a Member of the former Committee of Visitors to Exminster Hospital, died during the year, and we take this opportunity of recording our appreciation of her services. Mr. C. A. Jackson was appointed to fill the vacancy.

Rota visits of inspection to all parts of the Hospitals have been made by Members of the Committee in compliance with Section 188 of the Lunacy Act, 1890.

The continued overcrowding causes grave anxiety, and until the need for additional beds can be met by providing alternative accommodation for senile cases or erecting new wards, this will continue.

A start was made during the year on the work of electrical re-wiring of the Digby Hospital and it is hoped that work on the T.B. Extension Block, replacement of boilers, etc., and improvements to the sanitary accommodation at the Exminster Hospital will commence during the coming year. The first stage of the modernisation of the Kitchen at Wonford House Hospital has been completed.

We have decided to build up a Pedigree Dairy Herd at Exminster Hospital which will necessitate the provision of a Milking Parlour and other improvements to the Dairy.

The Joint Consultative Staffs Committee met at intervals during the period covered by this Report, and we acknowledge the great value of such opportunities of discussion and consultation between Management and Staff.

It has still not been possible to recruit a full Nursing Staff. This matter is discussed in more detail in the reports of the Medical Superintendents.

The Reports of the Commissioners of the Board of Control on their inspections of the Hospitals were received with considerable pleasure. These reports testify to the high standard that has been maintained in the care and treatment of patients.

In conclusion, the Committee wishes to place on record its deep appreciation of the loyalty and hard work of the Officers and Staffs of the Hospitals in this Group.

T. G. SHELMERDINE,

Chairman.

R. SEAL,

Secretary.

EXMINSTER HOSPITAL

Medical Staff

Medical Superintendent :

S. M. ALLAN, M.D., Ch.B. (Glas.) D.P.M. (Lond.)

Senior Hospital Medical Officer and Deputy Medical Superintendent :

J. W. FISHER, M.R.C.S. (Eng.) L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.H., D.P.M.

Senior Hospital Medical Officers :

T. J. K. BROWNLEES, M.R.C.S. (Eng.) L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.M.

A. JACK, M.B., Ch.B. (Glas.)

Junior Hospital Medical Officers :

J. R. ROCYN-JONES, L.M.S.S.A. (Lond.)

C. P. BURGESS, M.B., Ch.B. (Edin.)

G. STONEHILL, M.R.C.S. (Eng.) L.R.C.P. (Lond.)

Officers

Secretary : R. SEAL

Steward : W. CONNETT

Matron : MISS G. SYKES, S.R.N., R.M.P.A.

Chief Male Nurse : W. H. NEWNS, S.R.N., R.M.N.

Engineer : J. FAIRCLOUGH

Building Foreman : T. E. REDDAWAY

Farm Bailiff : J. BAKER

Pharmacist : B. C. T. SNOW, Ph.C., M.P.S.

Laboratory Technician : M. C. LANGLEY, A.I.M.L.T.

Church of England Chaplain : REV. W. PARRY, B.A.

Roman Catholic Priest : REV. P. J. TOBIN

Free Church Chaplain : REV. R. H. NORMAN

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT FOR THE YEAR 1951

EXMINSTER HOSPITAL,
NEAR EXETER

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the Medical Superintendent's Report for the year 1951.

On the 1st January 1951, there were 1609 patients on the Register, 607 males and 1002 females.

Classification of the above :—

	Male	Female	Total
Voluntary	118	144	262
Temporary	1	7	8
Certified	488	851	1339
	<hr style="width: 50px; margin: 0 auto;"/>	<hr style="width: 50px; margin: 0 auto;"/>	<hr style="width: 50px; margin: 0 auto;"/>
	607	1002	1609

Admissions

Including statutory transfers, the admissions were as follows :—

	Male	Female	Total
Voluntary	132	165	297
Temporary	5	12	17
Certified	102	165	267
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	239	342	581

Emergency Admissions

Section 20/21—2 males, 8 females—Total 10.

Discharges

The patients discharged, transferred and died was as follows :—

	Male	Female	Total
Discharges	170	221	391
Transferred	1	5	6
Died	75	117	192
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	246	343	589

Classified thus :—

Voluntary	122	151	273
Temporary	—	4	4
Certified	49	71	120
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	171	226	397

Discharged Recovered

	Male	Female	Total
Voluntary	85	105	190
Temporary	—	1	1
Certified	38	35	73
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	123	141	264

The recovery rate therefore, was 51.7% male, and 41.6% female making a total of 45.7%.

Resident

There were on the books at the end of the year a total of 1601 patients, as follows :—

	Male	Female	Total
Voluntary	121	155	276
Temporary	—	3	3
Certified	479	843	1322
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	600	1001	1601
Emergency Admissions	1	2	3
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	601	1003	1604

Deaths

There were 192 deaths (117 female and 75 male). This represents 12.2% of the average number in daily residence (12.6% female and 12.4% male). It should be noted that 133 deaths (83 female and 50 male) were of patients over the age of 65 years. This draws attention to the problem of the care of the senile sick.

General Health

There were no epidemics during the year. Only two cases of dysentery were reported—a continuation of our good record. Three cases of tuberculosis were notified : two pulmonary and one other. This compares with 13 cases for 1949-50, and 17 for 1947-48.

Treatment

Our Special Treatment Units were fully employed during the year. Insulin Therapy has been further developed and 57 patients were so treated. The number discharged was 38, a percentage of 66. Electric Convulsive Therapy was carried out on 317 in-patients with good results. Out-patients treated at the Hospital numbered 12. Deep narcosis is used in selected patients. The Antabus treatment of chronic alcoholics has continued and 15 patients treated. All were discharged and attempts were made to continue the treatment at their homes. Persistent treatment is vital in these patients and co-operation of relatives a necessity.

In August Mrs. Zair was appointed as Occupational Therapist in charge of the Female Department. By the end of the year great progress had been made in organising the work and a new room was earmarked for conversion to an occupational centre. The Male Department continues to expand, and a great many patients have benefited.

Clinics

The Exeter Clinic is still working, and it is expected that shortly it will be expanded in co-operation with the Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital. The Bideford Clinic begun in November, 1950, has been most useful to patients in the North Devon area, and by the end of 1951 it had become quite busy. Active treatments are carried on there and the results have been most encouraging.

Entertainments

All the usual forms of entertainment were continued. The Staff Pantomime 'Jack and the Beanstalk,' staged in January, was a great success, and was played for nine performances to crowded houses. The Dramatic Club also put on two one-act plays. This acting opportunity will be of great help to future pantomimes and plays.

Nursing Staff

In February, 1951, Miss J. Barrell, Deputy Matron, retired after thirty-seven years' service. She was a most conscientious and loyal servant of the Hospital, and she left with the good wishes of all. Miss I. Pridham, Senior Assistant Matron, was appointed in her place.

The recruitment of female Student Nurses is almost at a standstill despite the opening of the Preliminary Training School. At the end of the year a scheme was prepared for attracting French girls to nursing posts here, and the outcome is awaited with interest.

The Male Staff are approaching full strength. At present, four

male nurses are doing general training at the Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital.

Ten male nurses were certificated during the year.

Laboratory Report

Specimens examined :—

Bateriological	1077
Biochemical	1025
Hæmatological	680
Histological	18
Post-Mortems	137

Clerk of Works' Department

A great deal of redecorating of wards was carried out, and much necessary outside repair work done. During the war this work was neglected, and so there is much leeway to make up. Special jobs completed included the installing of a new double-draw-plate oven in the Block Kitchen, new storage tanks to ward 19, toilet facilities in the Building Yard, a new Screen in the Church, new boundary wall to the male ward gardens, complete tiling of the Centre Kitchen and much needed repairs of roof gutterings. The building staff are to be congratulated on getting through so much work.

Engineer's Department

In this Department there was also great activity. The laying of underground electric cable was completed and much rewiring was done. Concealed radiators were installed in a number of wards and the heating made more efficient. Plate-warmers and tea urns have been fitted in large numbers, and this has helped the staff in their ward catering. Large new calorifiers have been installed in strategic places to overcome much of the hot water shortage. A new Cold-Room was fitted in the Nurses' Home. The Laundry has had to be expanded to deal with Wonford House clothing, and much new equipment has been installed. The whole engineering staff are to be thanked for their great efforts.

General

In addition to Miss Barrell, mentioned earlier, Ward Sister M. Curtis retired during the year, and Deputy Charge Nurse L. Saunders was awarded a disability pension. I wish to thank all of them and hope they will live long to benefit from their labours.

I wish to thank the Management Committee and the House Committee for their confidence and their willingness to help in all circumstances.

To my Medical Colleagues, all officers and staff generally, I give my thanks for the splendid way the work of the Hospital has been carried through another year.

I have the honour to be,
Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,

S. M. ALLAN,

Medical Superintendent.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE BOARD OF CONTROL

EXMINSTER HOSPITAL,
EXMINSTER,
21st February, 1951

The patients in residence at this Hospital number 1611 (609 men, 1002 women). Of the total, 260 are voluntary, and 10 are temporary patients. During 1950 there were 591 direct admissions of whom 308 came in voluntary, and 21 were temporary patients. In the same period 409 patients left or were discharged and 46 were allowed out on trial, but in no case was a money allowance given. The nursing staff consists of 109 male and 42 female full-time nurses, and 73 part-time nurses. Eleven male and 2 female full-time nurses, and 12 female part-time nurses are on duty each night. Sixty of the men and 34 of the women (12 of them part-time) are certificated or registered as mental nurses. It is calculated that 5 part-time nurses are the equivalent of 3 full-time members of the staff. These figures show clearly how very serious the shortage of female nurses at this Hospital remains. The contrast between the two sides brings this out very clearly, for whilst in the male side there is one nurse to every 5 or 6 patients, in the female side there is only one nurse to every 11 or 12. There are no ward orderlies or ward maids to take some of the domestic duties off the shoulders of the nurses. It is true there are 3 male porters who carry out some of the heavy tasks, but unfortunately, the transport of meals is not part of their functions. A shortage of women nurses is general throughout the country, but few Hospitals can be in as bad a position as Exminster. Dr. Allan and the Matron are much concerned at the position and we sympathise with them in their difficulties. We feel some relief might be obtained by the employment of ward orderlies and ward maids.

Exminster is now used as the Preliminary Training School for all the mental institutions (with the exception of Moorhaven) in this area. There are at present 24 names on the register, and the school has now begun its third session. It is housed in part of the condemned block of buildings no longer used by patients. The Sister Tutor, Miss Pridham, was recently appointed Deputy Matron, and when she takes up her new duties the school will continue under the assistant, an unqualified male tutor.

In our visit to the wards and departments we believe we have seen all the patients in residence and we gave 3 special interviews. The patients were quiet and well behaved and their surroundings are both comfortable and homely. The furnishing of the wards has been much improved in recent years. The female wards were well provided with pot plants and flowers, but the male wards were not

so well off in this respect. The number of daily papers and periodicals in each ward is satisfactory. Strip-lighting has improved the artificial illumination of all parts of the Hospital materially. In the past year the redecoration of the wards has been continued and the majority of them are now bright and cheerful. Male 1 has been refloored throughout, and in M 3—a sick ward—a fitted wash basin has been installed in the dormitory, and a w.c. installed just off this dormitory. We were interested to learn that the use of commodes has been abandoned in the Hospital generally, and that in the sick wards wheeled chairs which can be used over the w.c. pans substituted.

The clothing of male patients is now fairly satisfactory and is, on the whole, better than that on the female side. Male suits are still sent to the laundry for washing and this does not improve their appearance or conduce for a long life. We wonder if the better patients' suits could be sent to a dry cleaners when cleaning is needed. The suits so treated should last much longer. Female patients are encouraged to wear their own dresses, and in many cases their own under-clothing as well, and provision is made in the laundry for this.

A scheme is now being considered by which the Exminster Laundry would do the washing of both the other Hospitals in the Group—Digby and Wonford. A modern calender from Digby would be added to the present machinery. In the course of our visit to the laundry today it seemed to us that whilst this unit was sufficiently spacious to deal with the extra wash, the present equipment would probably be found to be insufficient. The present dryers in particular, which are of an obsolete type, would be inadequate. Re-arrangement of the ironing boards would economise space, and lead to less conjection between them and the calenders.

One of the most unsatisfactory features of this Hospital is the lack of proper facilities for the preparation and service of meals at the main kitchen. This fact is recognised and discussions have been taking place, we are informed, over a long period as to how the position can best be improved. The possibilities are two : an entirely new kitchen on a different site, or modernisation of the present premises involving the provision of electric lifts to convey the food trolleys from the kitchen to the various levels of the wards. There is much to be said for each solution, but the governing factor will we imagine, be the need for economy. We would plead for a rapid decision as the present state of affairs is profoundly unsatisfactory. We saw the dinner being served yesterday. Large tins containing the food, some without lids and others with covers of the wrong size, to be placed in hoists in the kitchen and then raised to the level of the open semi-circular corridor where the patients of both sexes await in the cold to receive them. These heavy tins are then transported to the wards. Some of them were carried yesterday by single patients—the patients we saw were women who supported

part of the load with their bodies. The tins seemed far too heavy to carry unaided and the method of transport is obviously unhygienic. The food reaches the wards much cooled and has to be served on to cold plates as no plate warming facilities exist in the wards. We are glad to be able to add that during the past year some properly insulated food containers have been purchased and are used for a few of the wards. Until some decision is reached, however, about the future of the kitchen department it would be uneconomic to purchase more of them.

We spent some time in the male occupational departments which are well organised and where a large number of male patients are employed. Handicrafts on the female side can hardly be said to exist, as great difficulty is being experienced in filling the position of occupation therapist. We visited the one class which is held which gives occupation to 20 to 25 women. Dr. Allan has a scheme for improved premises for a Centre both on the male and female side of the Block. The male centre is being made at the present time out of the old kitchen. The dining-hall of the Block may become available as the female centre if Dr. Allan can arrange that the various wards of the 'Block' dine in the day rooms of the wards instead of centrally.

The Recreation Hall has recently been redecorated and otherwise improved. A velvet drop-curtain for the stage and velvet curtains for the windows and also a loud-speaker for the stage have been purchased out of the Hospital free monies. The Hall is, as it should be, the focus of the recreational life of the Hospital. Weekly dances and bi-weekly cinema performances are given, and in addition there are frequent 'socials,' and physical training classes for both sexes are held. A dancing class is temporarily suspended as the Deputy Matron who held it has now left. The Exminster Pantomime is the great event of Christmas, and this year 9 performances were given. The performers were all members of the staff including the band which numbers 14.

During 1950, 155 deaths have occurred, 68 men and 87 women. A further 38 have died this year (17 men and 21 women.) The mortality rate is 9—7% (11.4 male and 8.7 women.) Twenty-six injuries have been sustained as the result of accidental falls. These injuries have mostly been fractures occurring in elderly patients. No inquests were held in 1950.

There are 7 cases of pulmonary tuberculosis (4 men and 3 women), there is also one male member of the staff under treatment for this disease.

It is proposed to alter the structure of the present Sanatorium in order to make a unit suitable for the treatment of active cases of tuberculosis received from the whole area. Quiescent cases it is proposed to return to their own hospitals for further observation

when this new unit is in operation. There will then be 38 beds (19 for each sex.) Day space will be provided by converting the verandahs into dayrooms.

A number of influenza cases have developed during recent months, and at the time of our visit there are 6 cases under treatment. There are 4 typhoid carriers and 2 dysentery carriers. The Hospital is otherwise free from zymotic disease.

We found the infirmary wards to be satisfactory and adequately equipped. Re-organisation of the storage of drugs in the poison cupboards in the wards continues.

The laboratory is satisfactory. It carries out only routine work and any material requiring more detailed examination is sent to the Devon & Exeter Hospital.

A new portable X-ray apparatus is expected shortly and will be shared with Digby and Wonford.

In the operating theatre a new steriliser and a new autoclave have been installed and the lighting has been greatly improved.

A Dental Surgeon visits the Hospital each week.

The recognised forms of modern treatment are available and the results compare favourably with those of other similar establishments. There is at present no neuro-surgeon available but leucotomies are occasionally carried out by a local general surgeon.

The general physical condition of all patients is satisfactory. Many, however, are old and a number, on account of physical infirmity, have to be treated in bed. They are well looked after and treated with kindness and consideration.

Clinical meetings continue to be held, and there are out-patient clinics at Exeter and Bideford each week.

(Signed) I. COFFIN DUNCAN,
J. FRASER M. CAMPBELL,
Commissioners of the Board of Control.

DIGBY HOSPITAL

Medical Staff

Medical Superintendent :

J. RUSSELL, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.M.

Senior Hospital Medical Officer & Deputy Medical Superintendent .

J. SCOTT, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., (N.U.I.) D.P.M., L.M., (Coombe)

Officers

Matron : Miss F. N. HENRY, S.R.N., R.M.N., R.M.P.A., M.R.C.N.

Chief Male Nurse : C. S. POYNTON, S.R.N., R.M.N.

Clerk, Steward and Deputy Secretary : D. W. MILLER, A.H.A.

Chief Engineer and Clerk of Works' : D. V. CUMMINS

Farm Bailiff : H. J. HOOPER

Pharmacist : E. HODGE, M.P.S.

Church of England Chaplain : REVD. G. E. DEANE

Free Church Chaplain : REVD. E. C. HOPE

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT FOR THE PERIOD 1st JANUARY 1951, TO 31st DECEMBER, 1951

THE HOSPITAL, DIGBY,
EXETER

To : The Devon Mental Hospital Management Committee.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is my Report for the year 1951 when the final figures at 31st December show 369 patients in residence, an increase of 9 males and 12 females.

Direct Admissions (Mental Treatment Acts, etc.)

1951	Male	Female	Total
Certified	6	6	12
Voluntary	47	77	124
Temporary	1	2	3
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	54	85	139

Emergency Admissions

Section 20	17	30	47
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The high percentage of voluntary patients (89%) is noteworthy, showing, it is hoped, the changing attitude to the treatment of mental illness.

As previously reported, additional accommodation for female patients is becoming urgent, and provision must be made at once for all activities (Sewing Room, etc.) not immediately connected with the nursing of patients to be removed from the patients' accommodation, while in the near future additional wards must be provided. The limits of improvisation permitted by existing accommodation have now been reached, and any further increase in numbers and overcrowding will be to the detriment of efficiency in treatment and nursing. The limitations apply particularly to ground floor accommodation which is so necessary for elderly patients.

Discharges

	Male	Female	Total
Recovered	8	31	39
Improved	13	18	31
Not Improved	4	7	11
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	25	56	81

Thirty-four patients died, an increase on the numbers in previous

years and mainly reflecting the increase in the admissions of elderly patients. Of the 34 deaths, 20 were in persons between the ages of 65 and 80 and 7 in persons over 80.

Nursing Staff

Recruitment of student nurses, both male and female, has come to a standstill. Candidates for training have not been up to the standard required, and it has proved best not to send indifferent candidates to the Group Preliminary Training School established at Exminster Hospital.

The small nucleus of female full-time nursing staff and students, ably supported by the very efficient part-time nursing scheme operated by the Matron is providing a high standard of nursing care. Fourteen part-time nurses are certificated in mental nursing while the Regional Board's sympathetic approval in permitting the grading of 3 general trained nurses as Staff Nurses has been very encouraging in the effort which is being made to attract 'women of good education and of a kindly disposition' to this part-time work. Throughout the year the Matron has had a 'waiting list' for her part-time scheme.

Mr. Cyril Gibbons and Mr. Michael Leach passed the Final Mental Examination of the General Nursing Council and the following students passed the Preliminary Examination: Student Nurses Hazel Darch, Doreen Taylor, Lena Hollett, Barbara Drew, Janet Channon, Dennis Goss, William Hooper, Harry Jennisson and John Foster.

Sister Phyllis Ray was promoted to the office of Assistant Matron, a well-merited promotion and one received by the staff as a fitting recognition of the good work done by our nurses elsewhere during the war years. There is great difficulty in filling the senior nursing appointments, nor have we been able to obtain the services of a Sister Tutor, Psychiatric Social Worker and a Certificated Instructress in Occupational Therapy.

Visits

Statutory visits were made by the Commissioners of the Board of Control and the Ministry of Pensions.

General

The increased financial stringency has made the work of Mr D. W. Miller (who as Deputy Secretary to the Management Committee acts as Clerk and Steward) and Mr. D. V. Cummins, the Clerk of Works' increasingly difficult in reinstating the Hospital after its military occupation but the results of their efforts over the last three

years are much in evidence and are frequently the subject of favourable comment by visitors.

I have to thank my Deputy, Dr. Scott, for his able support.

I would thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, for your continued confidence.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

JOHN RUSSELL,

Medical Superintendent.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF THE BOARD OF CONTROL

THE HOSPITAL, DIGBY,
EXETER

2nd May, 1951

Fifteen months have gone by since this Hospital was last visited on behalf of my Board. This period has been one of steady and satisfactory progress in many directions.

There has been a slight but definite improvement in the numbers of female nurses and several local girls have come forward for training. After three months at the Preliminary Training School at Exminster training is continued at Digby, and as there is no Sister Tutor, the Matron and Head Male Nurse share the duties of one between them. The new lecture room and quarters for the trainees are well equipped, and everything is being done to make training attractive and interesting. Improvements to the resident nurses quarters are at present being made; the bedrooms are being re-furnished and each is to have an electric fire. Educational films for the nursing staff are shown weekly.

A further Medical Officer with the rank of S.H.M.O. is to be appointed and a furnished flat has been prepared for him. This doctor will also have certain duties at the Wonford Hospital but will be resident at Digby.

The electric rewiring of the Hospital has to be carried out and already some equipment has been purchased. Fluorescent lighting has been introduced into a number of the wards.

The redecoration of the Entertainment Hall and the main corridors is now complete, and rubber has been laid on the floors of the female corridors.

The windows of the Hospital are now being kept clean under contract.

These improvements affect the Hospital as a whole, but the individual wards have not been forgotten. Arm-chairs made in the workshops are appearing in increasing numbers in the dayrooms. Ward sanitary annexes are having terazzo flooring laid and new lavatory basins and w.c. pans have been installed in several of them. Blinds and curtains have been acquired for certain dormitories and dayrooms. A new dormitory for F.1 has been made out of a room used as a Staff Messroom during the period Digby was a Military Hospital, and has been furnished with modern hospital beds, a new hardwood floor has been laid and a lavatory for night use built.

Dr. Russell and the Hospital Management Committee must be congratulated on all these improvements which must have been difficult to achieve in the time and in face of the stringent need for economy.

The patients in residence today number 349 (163 men, 186 women) and of these 58 are voluntary patients. In my tour of the Hospital I believe I have seen all these patients and spoken to many of them. They were quiet and contented in demeanor and hardly any of them had any requests to make and none any complaints.

During 1950, there were 111 direct admissions (45 men, 66 women.) Eighty-three of the admissions were those of voluntary and 2 were those of temporary patients. Ninety-four patients left or were discharged.

The wards were particularly well provided with flowers and there was a plentiful supply of daily papers and periodicals. One ward on each side is used as a Club ward, and here the patients can sit up until 9 p.m. or later. A supper meal is given to these patients.

Although occupations are better organised on the male than on the female side, a good percentage of both sexes is usefully occupied and it is hoped eventually to use the present male occupation centre for both men and women.

Rooms on both sides are being set aside as hairdressing salons, and a woman hairdresser is already employed on the women's side one day a week.

I saw a good dinner being prepared in the kitchen and later being eaten in the wards. It consisted of spam fritters with cauliflower and potatoes, and with semolina and jam as pudding. On the female side the food is conveyed in electrically-heated trolleys from the kitchen to the wards, and the food is served on to separate plates for each patient before leaving the kitchen. A similar system will be introduced on the male side shortly. To facilitate this improved service of meals certain alterations are about to be carried out in the kitchen. The boilers are being moved out into the scullery to make room for the trolleys, and the scullery itself is being re-arranged and re-equipped.

Very shortly, Exminster Hospital will undertake all the laundry work for the Group, and the Digby Laundry premises will become available for other purposes.

The present nursing staff consists of 35 male and 21 female full-time and 43 female part-time nurses. Four male and 7 female nurses are always on duty each night. Twenty-one of the men and 19 of the women are certificated and registered as Mental Nurses.

During 1950, 20 patients died, 9 men and 11 women, one of the

former being a Section 20 case. In 5 instances the cause of death was verified by subsequent post-mortem examination. The mortality rate for the year was 5.7%. In 2 cases death was due to tuberculosis. No inquests have been held.

At the present time there are 5 patients (2 men and 3 women) suffering from tuberculosis in its pulmonary forms. Verandah treatment is available for all such cases. All nurses are Mantoux tested.

Last week the Mass Miniature X-Ray apparatus visited the Hospital and the patients, with few exceptions, and many of the staff were examined. The results are not yet known.

The Hospital is entirely free from zymotic disease. In January and February of this year there was an epidemic of influenza affecting both patients and staff. Ninety-seven patients (63 men and 34 women) as well as 5 resident and 50 non-resident nurses were victims of the disease.

Today 21 patients (10 men and 11 women) were being nursed in bed, nearly all being in the admission and infirmary ward on each side. The standard of nursing care appeared to be good. Recently a steriliser has been added to the equipment of the male admission ward. The medicine cupboards are satisfactorily kept and are regularly inspected by the Pharmacist.

Since the last visit a deep-insulin unit has been started on the male side, but no facilities for this form of treatment so far exist on the female side.

At present Dr. Russell and his deputy, Dr. Scott, form the Medical Staff of the Hospital, but as indicated earlier in this entry there is reason to expect that another medical appointment will be made shortly.

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

WONFORD HOUSE HOSPITAL

Medical Staff

Medical Superintendent :

B. J. MULLIN, M.C., L.R.C.P. & S. (I.), D.P.H., D.P.M.

Senior Registrar :

A. C. AUSTIN, L.R.C.P. & S. (Edin.)

Officers

Matron : Miss E. A. LENTON, S.R.N., R.M.N., S.C.M.

Chief Male Nurse : T. T. HAY, S.R.N., R.M.N.

Steward : E. BECK

Pharmacist : E. HODGE, M.P.S.

Chaplain : REVD. W. A. P. GLENN, A.K.C.

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT FOR THE YEAR 1951

WONFORD HOUSE HOSPITAL,
EXETER

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the Medical Superintendent's Report for the year ended the 31st December, 1951. The following is a summary of the statistics :—

There were on the Hospital Books on the 1st January the names of 134 patients, 41 male and 93 female. Ninety-five patients were admitted, 71 were discharged, and 12 died, leaving the names of 146 patients on the Register—51 male and 95 female on the 31st December, 1951.

Admissions

Admissions according to sex and status :—

	Male	Female	Total
Voluntary	50	23	73
Temporary	1	—	1
Certified	12	9	21
	—	—	—
	63	32	95

There was an increase of 12 patients over the total number of admissions in 1950. The number of male admissions exceeded the female for the first time in several years. The pressure of admissions noted in 1950 continued and the Hospital was always full. An additional ward of 8 beds was opened on the female side, thereby raising the statutory number of female beds to 100, and the total number of Hospital beds to 153. Seventy-eight per cent of the admissions were on a non-certified basis.

Discharges

According to sex and status, the discharges were as follows :—

	Male	Female	Total
Voluntary	39	24	63
Temporary	—	—	—
Certified	8	—	8
	—	—	—
	47	24	71

The total number of patients discharged was 71, of whom 22 were recovered, 42 improved and 7 not improved.

Deaths

Six male and 6 female patients died. The average age at death was 74 years. All the deaths were from natural causes.

General Health

There were no cases of contagious disease and no epidemics. The general health of the patients and staff was good. The routine examination of the nursing staff for tuberculosis was continued with the assistance of the Tuberculosis Officer, and the co-operation of the Radiological Department of the Exminster Hospital.

Special Treatment

Electrical Shock Therapy and Insulin Therapy, either in combination or by themselves, were in regular use. The results have been satisfactory.

Occupation and Recreation

The Occupation Centre and the adjoining Recreation Hall were artistically redecorated, and provided a cheerful atmosphere for work and play which was appreciated by the patients and the staff. Apart from the special instructions given in the occupation centre, a considerable amount of useful work is done in the male and female wards. It is gratifying to observe the individual attention given to all patients capable of co-operating, and the results are encouraging.

Kitchen

The first stage of the modernisation of the kitchen was completed with the installation of new equipment and a new cold-storage cabinet. The immediate results were not only an improvement in the standard and variety of the dietary, but marked saving in time and labour.

Nursing Staff

The male staff was up to establishment. The shortage of full-time female nurses continued, and a relatively large number of part-time nurses were engaged to make up the deficiency. The standard of nursing on both sides of the Hospital was excellent, and reflected great credit on the Matron and the Chief Male Nurse.

Nurses Training

There is a comprehensive scheme of training, with the co-operation of the Preliminary Training School at the Exminster Hospital, and seconded to the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, Digby Hospital and Exminster Hospital for special instructions and more varied experience.

The following passed the examination of the General Nursing Council :—

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION : Student Nurses Wendy Mavis Hunt Ellis Raymond Whittles, Kenneth Buck and Ronald Albert Knowles.

FINAL EXAMINATION : Nurse Eileen Frances Brady.

Visits

The Lord Chancellor's Visitor, the Commissioners of the Board of Control and the Representative of the Ministry of Pensions paid their statutory visits.

I am happy to report upon the loyal and efficient co-operation of the Medical Officer, the Heads of Departments and the staff generally, to whom my heartiest thanks is due.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, the Members of the Management Committee and the House Committee for your valued help and advice.

I have the honour to be, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

B. J. MULLIN,

Medical Superintendent.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF THE BOARD OF CONTROL

WONFORD HOUSE HOSPITAL,
EXETER

3rd May, 1951

Many improvements have been effected here during the period which has elapsed since the last visit. Several wards have been re-decorated throughout and the ward kitchens have been modernised and provided with refrigerators. External painting has been done. A new cinematograph projector and screen have been acquired. The kitchen is in process of being refloored and the walls are being renewed as well ; as soon as this work is finished the new kitchen equipment will be installed.

Since the beginning of April Exminster Hospital has undertaken the whole of the Wonford laundry work. The new system appears to be working very well.

There are today 131 patients (41 men and 90 women) in residence ; 50 are in the voluntary class. I believe I have seen all these patients, and I gave 5 special interviews. Of the 131 patients, 110 are 'Section 4' cases and the remainder are National Health patients. The 'Section 4' cases pay £1.1.0 a week with a further guinea for a private bedroom.

Since the last visit there have been 47 admissions (27 men and 20 women). Thirty-eight of these were voluntary patients and 1 was a temporary admission. Thirty-six patients left and were discharged, and 9 patients died. Death in each case was due to natural causes.

The general health has been excellent. There has been no case of dysentery, and no patient is suffering from tuberculosis, and no case was notified as suffering from this disease during 1950. Yesterday a case of erysipelas occurred on the male side and another patient developed lobar pneumonia.

The patients undergoing treatment in bed today appeared to be enjoying every nursing care and attention. All modern forms of treatment are carried out here. Patients suitable for the operation of pre-frontal leucotomy are admitted to the Royal Devon and Exeter and are operated on there.

The whole Hospital is in admirable order ; the rooms are comfortably furnished and well warmed.

Although there are some empty beds on the male side, the women's wards are nearly always full and there is a waiting list of voluntary patients anxious to be admitted. Dr. Mullin feels that by opening an

eight-bedded dormitory, at present closed, on the women's side he could cope with the waiting list, and this possibility is at present engaging his attention.

The present nursing staff consists of 19 men and 21 women—6 of the latter being part-time only. Four men and 3 women are always on duty each night. Eleven men and 13 women are certificated or registered as mental nurses. As will be gathered from these figures the shortage of women nurses persists. I was glad to hear, however, that the Hospital now has 13 student nurses in training, of whom 8 are men and 5 are women.

My visit has been both interesting and pleasant, and I must thank Dr. Mullin for his helpful assistance.

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

FINANCE STATEMENT FOR THE DEVON MENTAL HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Minister of Health has this year given his consent to the publication of accounts, and a summarised statement for the year ended 31st March, 1952, is attached.

Expenditure during the year has been greater than ever before, but improved buying methods have in part offset the general rise in prices which has occurred. Additional and improved services have also added to expenditure, but perhaps the greatest single increase has been in salaries and wages. Since the Committee is instructed by the Ministry of Health that all rates of pay must be in accordance with Whitley Council decisions, wages are an item over which little control can be exercised. Increases in the National wage rates cannot be foreseen, and this has led to difficulties. As a result of representations to the Regional Hospital Board it has been agreed that as from the current fiscal year additional sums of money will be made available to meet this incalculable factor.

In spite of increased costs the Committee balanced its budget, actual expenditure being some £5,000 less than the maximum approved by the Ministry. Though this is mainly attributable to the continued difficulty of recruiting nursing staff, it could non-the-less not have been achieved but for the constant endeavours of each sub-committee charged with the task of approving expenditure. They have used the limited funds available not only with the greatest economy compatible with efficiency, but also in such a way that the greatest benefit to the patients was obtained.

Considerable sums of money come to the Committee from the central Hospitals Endowments Fund. These, together with voluntary gifts, are available for the provision of additional amenities and comforts which would otherwise not be possible. Over £2,600 was spent in this way, adding materially to the welfare of both patients and staff.

DEVON MENTAL HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
Summary of Accounts — Year to the 31st March, 1952

HOSPITAL EXPENDITURE	£	£
Gross salaries and wages (Including National Insurance and Superannuation)	264,275	
Provisions	93,018	
Uniforms and Clothing	13,714	
Drugs, dressings, medical and surgical equipment	5,605	
Fuel, light, power, water and laundry ...	32,437	
Maintenance of buildings, plant and grounds ...	22,639	
Domestic repairs, renewals and replacements ...	30,443	
All other expenses	62,934	
	<hr/>	525,065
LESS : Direct Credits (Staff board and lodging, Canteens, Farms and Gardens, etc.) ...		71,656
		<hr/>
		453,409
ADD : Group Administration		887
		<hr/>
		<u>£454,296</u>

INCOME

Accommodation and treatment of private patients	11,680
Miscellaneous	489
	<hr/>
	<u>£ 12,169</u>

ENDOWMENT AND OTHER FUNDS

RECEIPTS	CAPITAL	REVENUE
	£	£
From Minister of Health under Section 7(5) National Health Service Act, 1946		2,396
From other sources :		
Subscriptions and Donations under Section 59, National Health Service Act, 1946		66
Cash in hand at 1st April, 1951		2,847
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>£ —</u>	<u>£ 5,309</u>

PAYMENTS

For purposes relating to hospital services or research	2,640
Cash in hand at 31st March, 1952	2,669
	<hr/>
	<u>£ —</u>
	<u>£ 5,309</u>

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