

## **Annual report : 1948/49 / Roundway Hospital, Devizes.**

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1948 — 49

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**ROUNDWAY HOSPITAL**  
...  
**DEVIZES**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**For the Year ended 31st March, 1949**

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DEVIZES



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## THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE.

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DR. A. C. MOWLE, Lansdowne House, Devizes (Chairman).

MISS M. F. AWDRY, Circus House, Circus, Bath (Vice-Chairman).

J. F. BEAVEN, Esq., Springfield, Holt, Nr. Trowbridge.

E. J. COUZENS, Esq., The Close, Great Somerford, Chippenham.

R. S. GILBEY, Esq., Crudwell Court, Malmesbury.

THE LADY K. McNEILE, Nonsuch, Bromham.

W. J. RENDELL, Esq., Lymington House, Devizes.

DR. J. M. C. SPEER, "Campfield," Devizes.

F. SWANTON, Esq., Overton, Marlborough.

MRS. F. A. TONGE, 15, Walcot Road, Swindon.

GEO. WARD, Esq., 3, Addison Road, Melksham.

## OFFICERS OF THE HOSPITAL.

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Medical Superintendent	...	J. M. C. SPEER, M.D., B.Ch. (Belfast), D.P.M.
Deputy Medical Superintendent		W. M. PINKERTON, M.B., B.Ch. (Belfast), D.P.H., D.P.M.
Assistant Medical Officers	...	RICHARD H. ARMIN, M.B., B.Ch. (Cambridge), M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (London), D.P.M. DUNCAN M. ANDERSON, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O. (Belfast). JAN DANIK, M.B., Ch.B. (Lwow, Poland, 1932). HENRYK PODLEWSKI, M.B., Ch.B. Edinburgh, 1947).
Consulting Surgeon	...	A. C. MOWLE, M.A., M.B., (Camb.), M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (London).
Chaplains—		
Church of England	...	Rev. H. G. DUDLEY.
Roman Catholic	...	Rev. A. DALEY.
Nonconformist	...	Rev. J. O. DOBSON.
Secretary, Finance and Supplies		
Officer	...	J. S. DEAVIN.
Matron	...	Miss F. LAING.
Head Male Nurse	...	A. E. BEAVIS.
Engineer & Clerk of Works	...	H. WILTSHIRE.
Storekeeper	...	A. BYRNE.
Occupational Officer	...	Miss J. M. JACKSON.



REPORT OF CHAIRMAN  
of the  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
to the  
ANNUAL OPEN MEETING, July 20th, 1949.

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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

The Visiting Committee of the Wilts County Mental Hospital continued to manage the affairs of this Hospital until July 5th, 1948, on which date its functions and responsibilities passed to the new Management Committee, constituted and appointed in accordance with the provisions of the National Health Service Act, 1946. The Chairman and Members of the Management Committee are appointed by the South-Western Regional Hospital Board, being selected from lists of nominees provided by the Wilts County Council and various other local bodies and interests. The Committee derives its statutory powers and responsibilities through the Regional Board from the Ministry of Health; it therefore renders an account of its stewardship through these channels, and not, as heretofore, to the County Council and the local ratepayers. It is for this reason that, for the first time, an Annual Open Meeting has been arranged, to give the Committee an opportunity, which it otherwise would not have, of explaining its work to the local public and maintaining an intimate link between the Hospital and the community which the Hospital serves.

A change of management is always liable to lead to temporary difficulties and uncertainties, and the new Committee applied itself immediately to the task of ensuring that the transfer should be as smooth as possible. The fact that this was accomplished without any serious disturbance of the administration of the Hospital must be attributed largely to the enthusiasm and loyalty of the Officers and Staff, many of whom were subjected to a period of considerable overwork and intense strain immediately after the change-over. On the management side, the fact that the majority of the members of the new Management Committee had already been serving on the former Visiting Committee (some for many years) ensured continuity and brought the inestimable advantages of past experience to the new regime. The routine of the life of the Hospital continued unchanged after the appointed day, and the service to the patients and to the public remained unaffected.

Nevertheless, there have been changes; and it seems worth while recording them in this, the First Annual Report of the Management Committee. One of the first changes brought into effect after July 5th was the re-naming of the Hospital. This was in accordance with the express wish of the Minister that, in the new National Health Service, the essential unity and equality of all branches of the hospital service



should be signified by omitting the word " mental " from the names of hospitals for the care of the mentally ill. The Management Committee chose the name " Roundway Hospital " on account of local associations, since the Hospital itself lies within the boundaries of the parish of Roundway.

On the administrative side the Medical Superintendent remains, by law, the chief administrative officer of the Hospital; his Report, which follows, is a detailed record of the work done and progress made during the twelve months to March 31st, 1949. The senior lay administrator, now styled the Secretary of the Hospital, has had his responsibilities increased by taking over the duties of Clerk to the Committee, in addition to his former duties as Clerk and Steward to the Hospital. The new establishment envisaged by the National Health Service required that the work of the Committee, as well as the work of the Hospital, be performed by the whole-time administrative staff; so that it was no longer possible to retain the part-time services of Mr. Guy Jackson, who thus terminated an unbroken connection with the Hospital of some 43 years in the capacity of Clerk to the Committee. The deep regret of the present Committee at this inexorable turn in events is mollified by the fact that we are still able to avail ourselves of Mr. Jackson's services in an advisory capacity in the more difficult legal problems which from time to time confront us.

This alteration in the conception of the administrative establishment of the Hospital, combined with a logical effort to decentralise some of the administrative routine, has resulted in an appreciable raising of the status of all heads of departments. Although not members of the Management Committee, they are asked, as occasion arises, to attend meetings of the Committee when their help and advice is required. The endeavour to utilise the experience and invite the co-operation of the Staff has been taken one step further by the establishment of the Staff Consultative Council, a representative body selected by the Staff themselves. Although the functions of this body have not yet crystallised clearly, the Management Committee is already indebted to the Council for many suggestions which have been acted upon, and for others which will be achieved in time.

No Statement of Accounts is included in this Report, but it is felt that the public would appreciate some simple figures about the finances of the Hospital. During the year ended March 31st, 1949, the daily average of patients in the Hospital was 1331.8, and the gross Maintenance Expenditure was £209,000. This results in an overall maintenance rate of about £3 per week, a very favourable figure in comparison with general hospitals and with other local institutions. These figures take no account of Capital Expenditure, which by decision of the Minister remains the responsibility of the Regional Board. Building difficulties are so considerable at the present time that it is unlikely that any substantial building programme will take place for a number of years, in spite of the fact that development is urgently needed. The Committee has taken over many plans and projects from the former Visiting Committee, and is engaged in completing them and pressing for their realisation. Great tribute must be paid to the past efforts of the Visiting Committee in this direction, efforts which have so far been largely frustrated by the onset of War, and by the

stringent years which have followed. It will be a determination of the New Committee to realise the developments which the Old Committee contemplated and planned.

In concluding this Report, the opportunity must be taken of paying special tribute to the long-standing and invaluable services of Canon Gowing, Chairman of the Visiting Committee for 16 years until the 5th of July last. His connection with the Hospital was abruptly terminated by the march of events, as was that of many other earnest and loyal public servants of his generation. The record of their work is an encouragement to us all to shoulder the responsibilities which we have taken over from them.

A. C. MOWLE,

*Chairman.*



## REPORT OF THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT.

### To the Management Committee of Roundway Hospital.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit to you this first report on the work of the Hospital since the 5th July, 1948, as on that day the direction and control of the Hospital passed from the former Visiting Committee, appointed by the Wiltshire County Council, to you, Ladies and Gentlemen, the Management Committee appointed by the South-Western Regional Hospital Board.

On behalf of the staff and patients, I should like to mention how pleased we are that the members of the new Management Committee are those who have known us so well in the past.

I prefer to think of this Report as the Ninety-Eighth Annual Report of the Hospital, as its function continues, whatever may be its designation or control, and two years hence we hope to celebrate its centenary.

There have been many changes in the Hospital since its opening day, ninety-eight years ago, but I doubt if there has ever been such a transformation in its life, in so short a time, as that which has occurred in the last nine months. The introduction of the National Health Service Act has caused the staff to make many adjustments, some of a very striking character, in mental hospital administration, yet the transfer has proceeded with a smoothness and lack of disturbance, for which much credit is due to all concerned.

For a long time it had been the aim of the former Visiting Committee to raise the standard of the medical and nursing care of the patients to as high a level as possible. To-day the Hospital takes its place on equal terms with other hospitals, and for this reason alone I welcome the change in our affairs.

There is another striking fact, common to other hospitals, and that is the increased admission rate. I neither regard this with any alarm, as it could be, wrongly, interpreted as a reflection on the mental health of the community; nor do I regard it as wholly due to the introduction of the new Act, but rather as a recognition by the public of the necessity for the early treatment of nervous and mental disorders, and of the part this Hospital can contribute to the welfare of the community. The increased admission rate has not called for a similar increase in the number of beds, as it has been largely balanced by a greater discharge rate, although the accommodation problem is still an acute one, particularly on the female side of the Hospital.

There has been an even more noticeable increase in the attendances of patients at our Out-Patient Clinics, and it is here that one becomes aware of the value of our psychiatric assistance to the health of the public.

This increase in the admission rate to the Hospital, and in attendances at Clinics, indicates a pleasing change in outlook by patients and relatives, and leads one to believe that the barrier of the stigma of mental illness, which has existed for so long, is at last falling down.

The facility of discharge now extended to Health Service Certified patients, which formerly only applied to private Certified patients, appears to operate, on the whole, satisfactorily.



While there is every reason to feel some satisfaction with the work the Hospital is performing, yet, given more accommodation, equipment, and the female staff at normal strength, there is still much more that the Hospital could contribute to the mental hygiene of the community.

The long term plans, which should equip the Hospital thoroughly, will, of course, take a considerable time to materialise into new buildings, but short term plans for the immediate development of our services cannot be effected too quickly, as all the while the demands made upon us outpace our capacity to meet them.

The following is a summary of the numerical changes during the year ending the 31st December, 1948:—

	Males.	Females.	Total.
No. of Patients on the books January 1st, 1948	500	838	1338
Admitted during the year ... ..	149	231	380
Discharged ... ..	108	196	304
Died ... ..	28	53	81
No. remaining on December 31st, 1948	513	820	1333

The admissions numbered 380, 57 more than the figures for the previous year.

The discharges numbered 304.

There were five fewer patients on the books at the end of the year 1948 than on the 1st January, 1948. The total number under treatment was 1718. The daily average number present was 1331.8. The highest number resident at any time in 1948 was 1358.

At the end of the year the resident male patients numbered 19 less than the authorised night accommodation, and the resident females 149 more.

There were six temporary admissions during the year (two males and four females), and 208 voluntary cases (91 males and 117 females).

A comparison of the number and status of the patients admitted to the hospital during 1946, 1947, and 1948, is given below:—

	1946.			1947.			1948.		
	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.
Voluntary	45	89	134	67	92	159	91	117	208
Temporary	1	2	3	2	7	9	2	4	6
Certified	66	94	160	76	79	155	56	110	166

304 patients left the Hospital, of whom 88 had recovered (32 males and 56 females).

19 had a probationary period of trial, and in 11 cases money allowances were granted. Assistance in gifts and clothing were made, where necessary, from the Hospital After-Care Committee, irrespective of the status of the patient.

The total number of deaths during the year were 81 (28 males and 53 females). The death rate was 6.1% for the year, as against 6.8% for the previous year. The cause of death was confirmed in 58 cases by post mortem examination.

The commonest causes of deaths during 1948 were:—

Cardio-Vascular Diseases	...	32
Senile Decay	...	17
Diseases of the Nervous System	...	9



It is of interest to record that two patients who died were aged 91, while 16 others were aged 80 years and over, and 29 were aged 70 years and over.

Two Inquests were held by the Coroner, one concerning a patient who died from the effects of poison, which was self-administered before admission; the other being a case of a patient who died after an operation for prefrontal leucotomy.

### **General Health.**

There is little need to comment on the general health of the patients, which has been good.

During the year the dietary has been kept under review, and little complaint can now be made regarding either quantity or quality, but the distribution and service of food still requires attention.

Efforts have been made to improve the clothing of the patients, but there is more work still to be done in this direction.

A number of accidents occurred during the year, the majority occurring in elderly women, as a result of accidental falls.

### **Treatment.**

Electro-Convulsive Therapy continues to prove a most useful form of treatment for depressed patients, and, with careful selection of case, is safe and effective. Its use in the treatment of out-patients has been developed, and now we hold regular Out-Patients' sessions at the Hospital. For those patients needing this form of treatment, and in whom contra-indications to its use are present, curare is used to minimise as much as possible muscular spasm.

Last Autumn the Insulin Therapy Department, on the Male side, was established, and, to-day, this Department is working to capacity. A similar unit has not yet been started in the female wards mainly because of lack of female nursing staff, also because of inadequate accommodation.

Mr. McKissock has continued to visit the Hospital at regular intervals, and has now performed the operation of prefrontal leucotomy on some 40 patients. The results from the operation have been almost invariably satisfactory, and 75 per cent. of those patients operated on have now returned to their homes and are leading useful, active and happy lives, which otherwise they could not have done.

Most recently admitted cases of Epilepsy and allied disorders, and those patients in whom these conditions are suspected, are sent to Bristol for electro encephalographic examination. This new method of examination enables an exact diagnosis to be made in certain doubtful cases, thus making possible more exact application of treatment and aids very considerably in prognosis, a most difficult problem in this distressing group of diseases. An electro-encephalographic department should be established in this Hospital, not only for in-patients, but also for cases not requiring hospital care in this area, as there is a big population to serve, and much time and transport could then be saved.

Those patients suffering from the effect of injuries to the head, and exhibiting personality changes, are now treated with Afenil, with encouraging results.

A new Dental Room, completely equipped for all dental work, has been fitted out in the Annexe, and our Dental Surgeon attends three sessions weekly.



Increasing use is made of our enlarged and now well-equipped surgical theatre. Dr. Mowle, and the other surgeons, visit the Hospital regularly, and almost any operation can be undertaken on the premises.

Dr. Hickson, Ophthalmologist, continues to hold Eye Clinics, at monthly intervals. It is hoped that arrangements can be made for more frequent sessions.

The Chiropodist holds three sessions each week, and his work tends to increase in volume and value. Here, again, lack of accommodation prevents further expansion of this very useful form of rehabilitation.

It is being kept in mind to develop other forms of Physiotherapy, when circumstances permit.

The new X-Ray plant is in constant use, but we anxiously await the very necessary new development room.

The electro-cardiograph, not yet delivered, will, no doubt, prove a most useful piece of equipment.

Endocrine therapy, massive vitamin therapy, and malaria therapy are all used on appropriate cases, while all other modern remedies for disease, such as penicillin, etc., are applied with that skill and knowledge demanded to-day.

The Laboratory is kept very busy, and could become an even more valuable department if it were better accommodated. The following list of investigations carried out indicates its usefulness:—

<i>Urines.</i>				<i>Faeces.</i>			
Chemical	...	...	700	Bacteriological	...	...	320
Bacteriological	...	...	16	Microscopical	...	...	18
Sugar estimation	...	...	93	<i>Sputa for T.B.</i>	...	...	60
Microscopical	...	...	121	Other organisms	...	...	18
<i>Blood.</i>				<i>Other Exudates</i> ...			
Films	...	...	120	<i>Sewage Effluent</i>	...	...	4
Counts	...	...	230	<i>Cultures, etc., P.M. Specimens</i>	...	...	12
Ureas	...	...	3				
Sugar estimation	...	...	40				
Glucose tolerance curve			14	<i>Milk.</i>			
Sedimentation Rate	...	...	68	Methylene Blue Test	...	...	8

### Occupational Therapy Department.....

This department has continued its valuable work, and Miss Jackson and her two assistants are kept very busy. During the Summer, it is hoped that the department will be moved to its new quarters, where the increased accommodation will allow both male and female patients to benefit in body and mind from this healthy form of therapy.

The Library has not yet been developed as we had hoped, but more books are appearing on the shelves, from which much benefit is derived by the patients.

The Recreation Hall is in almost daily and evening use. The Dances, Old-time and Modern, Cinema Shows, Concerts, Musical Sessions, Whist Drives, Physical Training Classes, etc., are attended by many patients on all occasions.



The Hospital recently joined the Council of Music, so that now monthly concerts, by first-class artistes, are held in an effort to assist in the recovery of the patients. The artistes, on each occasion, preface their recital with an explanation of the item to be rendered, which arouses more interest and attention, and adds to the pleasure of the audience. The theory that a direct appeal to disturbed emotional states, by appropriate music, has a beneficial effect on the mind is not without foundation.

The acquisition, recently, of another billiard table will add greatly to the interest of the many inter-ward snooker and billiards competitions among the male patients.

Outdoor games for the younger patients, of both sexes, are encouraged. On the day of the Annual Sports, last Summer, the weather was very good, and a very enjoyable athletic and social occasion was shared by many patients, staff and friends.

The liberty of the grounds has been extended to many patients, both male and female, and permission to visit Devizes is seldom withheld. Week-ends at home are allowed frequently, and prove useful as a preliminary test of fitness for final discharge from Hospital.

The Canteen Tea Rooms, and Gardens, are much used by patients and their visitors, and the staff use the Tea Rooms for social purposes each evening.

### Out-Patients' Clinics.

The numbers of patients attending the Out-Patient Clinics puts a heavy strain on the medical staff. Two doctors visit Victoria Hospital, Swindon, each Monday afternoon, and Dr. Methven, of Pewsey Colony, assists in the work there. Even with this valuable help, each session is almost a double one, according to Ministry of Health standards. The Clinic at Odstock Hospital, Salisbury, on Fridays, where Dr. Methven also assists the two doctors from the Hospital, will soon be as heavy a one as at Swindon, while the Trowbridge Clinic on Tuesday afternoons almost requires two doctors in attendance. The Devizes and District Hospital Clinic, fortnightly at present, is growing, and will shortly require weekly attention.

The Psychiatric Social Workers, three in number now, attend the Clinic in their area, and are invaluable in their work there; but, even with their assistance, the purely clerical work to be done would require the attendance also of a competent shorthand typist. The accommodation for the Clinics, at the various hospitals, is not ideal, but has been improved, although there is still much to be done before adequate comfort for the staff and patients is achieved.

The problem of the out-patient clinic service, in all its aspects, is exercising the minds of the medical staff constantly, as it is realised that this work forms a natural and invaluable extension of their intramural activities.

The following is a summary of the numbers of new patients examined, and attendances:—

	Sessions.	New Cases.	Attendances
Victoria Hospital, Swindon ...	48	197	869
Odstock Hospital, Salisbury ...	50	106	526
Trowbridge and District Hospital	52	61	380
Devizes and District Hospital ...	25	41	107



## **Buildings and Estate.**

During the period under review, very considerable additions, alterations and improvements have been carried out to the buildings and estate. The alterations to the Main Kitchen, including the installation of the Refrigerator Room, have been completed.

The Administration Block has had its central heating system installed. The new Sanitary Blocks, mainly for the use of the staff, have been completed. The roads, garden paths, and tennis courts have been re-surfaced.

The Cinema Projector Room has been enlarged and modernised to take the new double projector, so that now our Cinema equipment is equal to that prevailing elsewhere.

A considerable amount of interior decoration of the Wards has been carried out, but much still remains to be done.

Delays in our plans have occurred for the more central accommodation of the Clerical Staff, and a hut is being used as temporary offices for the present.

Work has not yet begun on building of the staff cottages and dining-room, but approval for these works has been received from the Regional Hospital Board. The much-needed alterations to the Bake-house have also been approved.

Many other alterations, of a minor nature, have been effected, which have added to the comfort or convenience of the patients and staff. The burnt-out Barn at the farm has been re-built. A fire, believed at the time to be accidental, occurred in this Barn last Summer, resulting in its total loss. This fire was later followed by three other outbreaks in the Dutch Barn, resulting in the loss of, or much damage to, a considerable quantity of hay. Investigations as to the origin of these fires have not yet disclosed the cause. The prompt action of the Hospital Fire Brigade, on each occasion, prevented more serious damage.

## **Farm.**

Last season on the farm has been, on the whole, a satisfactory one. The T.T. dairy herd has maintained a good supply of milk, almost sufficient to meet the requirements of the Hospital. The production of the vegetables has been increased considerably, but still falls short of our requirements.

Considerable attention has been given to the Orchards, which should result in an increased supply of fruit.

The acquisition of more farmland would allow the Hospital to become a self-contained unit.

## **Staff.**

Recruitment of female student nurses for mental nursing is most difficult, and a serious problem still confronts the Matron in her efforts to prevent the numbers of her female nursing staff from falling to danger point.

There are 69 whole-time nurses and 32 part-time nurses on the staff, whereas our normal complement should be some 200 nurses.

The male nursing staff is at adequate strength. Five male nurses have been seconded for general training.



The domestic and artisan staff are almost sufficient to cope with everyday needs.

The training of the nursing staff has now to conform to G.N.C. standards, and a preliminary training course forms part of the curriculum. Plans are prepared for a preliminary training school at the Hospital, to which neighbouring mental hospitals will contribute their quota of candidates.

Miss E. Higgins, our Sister Tutor, has retired through ill-health, but Mr. Greenaway has undertaken her work. The services of another Tutor will be necessary when the training school opens.

Mrs. O'Callaghan, Assistant Matron, has resigned, and left our service to take up another post. This vacancy on the staff has not yet been filled. An Additional Assistant Matron is also required.

The following members of the staff retired on pension:—

H. A. Bowsher (Night Superintendent)	...	34 years' service
H. Long (Carpenter)	...	24 years' service
H. W. Neate (Lorry Driver)	...	23 years' service
G. Elloway (Tailor)	...	19 years' service
W. J. J. Dudley (Stoker/Driver)	...	15 years' service

Mr. Deavin, the Secretary, and Mr. Wiltshire, the Engineer, and their respective staffs, have had a hard year's work.

Negotiations are still in progress at Regional Board level regarding the appointment to the Hospital of more part-time consultant medical and surgical staff.

Dr. W. Rosenberg and Dr. H. Hamerski have left to take up General Hospital posts, and their places on the medical staff have been filled by Dr. J. Danik and Dr. H. Podlewski.

My sincere thanks are due to the Medical Officers, the Officers and Staff of the various departments of the Hospital, for their ready and willing assistance during this exacting period of change.

I am very grateful to you, Mr. Chairman, and the members of the Management Committee for your great interest in the affairs of the Hospital, and your invariable help and encouragement to me at all times.

I am, Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

J. M. C. SPEER.



## REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE BOARD OF CONTROL

who visited the Hospital on 15th and 16th February, 1949.

Our visit to this Hospital during the past two days has been an interesting one. The last year has been one of much progress. Many improvements have been carried out or are still in process of being completed, and many others are envisaged.

We had the pleasure yesterday of meeting Dr. Mowle, the Chairman of the Hospital Management Committee and of discussing with him plans for the future.

The most urgent matters here continue to be the overcrowding of the female wards and the grave shortage of nurses to staff them. It must be remembered that this overcrowding is in the main due to the continued presence of 140 women patients from Park Prewett and Brookwood Mental Hospitals.

There are in residence to-day 1,318 patients (of whom 519 are men and 799 women). This figure includes 162 voluntary and three temporary patients. The nursing staff is made up of 97 male and 68 female full-time nurses and 28 female part-time nurses. There are, in addition, on the women's side eight ward maids. These figures illustrate the shortage of women nurses.

During 1948 there were 375 direct admissions, 209 being voluntary and six being temporary admissions. In the same period 290 patients left or were discharged, 88 of whom were regarded as recoveries. nineteen patients were allowed out on trial, 11 of them being given money allowances.

In the course of our tour of the wards and departments, we believe we have seen all the patients in residence, and we gave all those who desired to do so an opportunity of talking to us, and four patients had private interviews. The patients were on the whole quiet and well behaved. Their clothing is shabby, not unusual in mental hospitals to-day, but efforts were obviously made to keep their appearance as neat as possible. One difficulty with regard to women's dresses is the amount of shrinkage which takes place in poor quality woollens. How far materials could be shrunk before being made up we do not know. We question whether it is wise to dress faulty patients in dresses made of wool—a lined cotton dress with a woollen cardigan is probably more satisfactory. Not all patients who take exercise out of doors can be furnished with two pairs of footwear at the present time. We hope that efforts will be made to provide indoor slippers for all who are without them.

The occupational therapy department has made a great advance during the past year. It is now in the charge of Miss Jackson, a trained occupational therapist, who is aided by two untrained assistants. The classes are held in a large room in the Administrative building, and are attended by both sexes; smaller groups receive instruction in the wards. The new Occupational Centre at the Isolation Hospital has not yet been opened, but when it is ready for use a much larger space will be available.

The library is at present being re-organised, and the books are now all housed in the occupational centre and are looked after by Miss Jackson. A central library and reading room is badly needed. Dr.



Speer recognises this, but is faced with the impossibility of finding any space for it. For the moment the wards are badly off for books, and there is no system by which patients can attend the Occupational Centre at fixed hours to change their books personally. It is hoped very shortly to remedy this. The Wards are also short of daily papers, although we gather the number of newspapers taken has been doubled. A further increase seems called for.

The Wards generally were very clean, well arranged and well provided with flowers and plants. The large number of canaries in the day rooms give a homely note. The patients show much interest in them. Recently the furnishing has been improved, and we were particularly glad to see the new hardwood chairs which are replacing the backless benches. The ward kitchens are inadequate in size and equipment, and unfortunately the electrically heated plate warmers in them cannot be used owing to the increased load in recent years on the electric plant. The installation of hot water in the wash room of Villa 1 is under consideration. The female wards are being re-decorated gradually, but re-decoration on the male side is held up pending the re-organisation of the whole side. One of the difficulties at this hospital is the fact that the wards are not self-contained, and there is much cross sleeping. This would be difficult to remedy in the female side given the present conditions of overcrowding, but Dr. Speer is anxious to make the male wards self-contained as soon as possible.

The Central Administration building has recently had a new system of central heating installed, and we are glad to note that much asphalting of roads and ward garden paths had been completed.

Entertainments for patients are numerous and well organised. In the past year a new cinema projector room has been built and equipped with twin projectors. This has greatly improved cinema performances. Two sessions are given every Tuesday. Old-time dancing now takes place weekly in the Hall, and is most popular. There are weekly dances as well, and also frequent concerts. The Hospital Band, consisting of staff and patients, is a good one, and is a great help at the entertainments. We were interested to hear that the Council of Music is to hold a concert at this hospital for the first time next month. Billiards tournaments are popular on the male side, and matches take place with outside teams. Outdoor games include cricket, football and bowls, as well as tennis—a new tennis court has been laid at the Annexe.

The present Staff dining room is a poor one, and plans have been made to build a new room adjacent to the Entertainment Hall. This, it is hoped, will be run on cafeteria lines.

The kitchen is now a modern and well-equipped unit. Only the vegetable room has still to be completed. The floor is tiled in red and the walls in white; the steamers are concentrated beneath a cowl, and the steam is extracted quite satisfactorily. There is an excellent cold room opening directly off the kitchen. New insulated food containers are in use, but still lack trolleys for transport. It is hoped eventually to have two lifts, one on each side, to supply the upstairs wards with meals.

Dinner yesterday consisted of cold bacon and beetroot salad and potatoes. There was a milk pudding to follow. The diet generally now seems very satisfactory. It is hoped, as soon as the re-organisation of the kitchen department is completed, to introduce a supper meal.



On visiting the laundry, we noticed that the hydro-extractor in the foul wash-house was in need of a protective device. A second washing machine would be a great help in this department.

During 1948 there were 28 male and 53 female deaths, a total of 81, giving a mortality rate of 6.1 per cent., a comparatively low figure. One of these deaths was from cerebral hæmorrhage following pre-frontal leucotomy. An inquest was held in this case, and also in that of a woman who took poison before admission.

Since the last visit there have been 18 fractures, nearly all of them due to accidents or falls.

Four cases of dysentery occurred in 1948, and one woman has recently recovered from this illness. We were told that Flexner dysentery occurs sporadically, but that the problem is not a serious one. The hospital has been free from typhoid for many years. The notification and death rates from tuberculosis show no significant changes for the last three years. There were five deaths from this cause, and five notifications during 1948. There are now one male and four female cases, only one of the latter cases being active. The female cases were being treated in satisfactory conditions, but there is no verandah available in the male ward.

The sick wards are well suited to their purpose, and are bright and cheerful. Overcrowding in the female ward is, however, of such a degree that it must interfere with the efficiency of the nursing. New sterilizers and dressings trolleys have been provided, but further fixed hand basins are needed in both wards. The nursing care and attention in these and other wards appear to us to be kindly and efficient.

The poison cupboards we inspected we found to be in good order. We investigated the consumption of sedatives in this hospital, and this appears to be low. Duplicate clinical records are kept, copies being filed in the wards and centrally. This copying is now done by the medical officers, and clerical assistance is recognised as being essential.

Since the last visit an excellent operating theatre unit has been provided, and also an X-Ray Room. A second dental room is being equipped at the Annexe, and the hospital dentist attends for four sessions a week. A radiographer visits twice a week and a radiologist once a fortnight. We were told that it is hoped to provide shortly a staff of consultants in many branches of medicine, some of whom will pay regular visits to the hospital.

A chiropodist now visits the hospital, and holds three sessions a week.

We saw nine male patients being treated by insulin coma, but a female unit cannot be opened because of lack of staff. Other forms of physical treatment are in use, and the results from pre-frontal leucotomy are considered to be encouraging.

Out-patient clinics are held once a week at Swindon, Trowbridge and Salisbury, and once a fortnight at Devizes. The attendance at these is steadily increasing. We were interested to hear that Dr. Methven, the Medical Superintendent of Pewsey Colony, co-operates in the Swindon and Salisbury Clinics.

Dr. Speer continues to have as his deputy Dr. Pinkerton, and as Assistant Medical Officers, Drs. Armin, Anderson, Danik and Podlewski.

(Signed) I. COFFIN DUNCAN,

E. N. BUTLER,

Commissioners of the Board of Control.



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