



Mr. Alfred Jones outside the new premises in Sunnysdene Road, Purley, in 1933. Mr. Cyril is at the wheel of the Model A Ford, and young Mr. Alfred is in the Austin 7.

CATERHAM'S COTTAGE HOSPITALS

FOR over a century Caterham has been served by a Cottage Hospital. There have been three in all, each one larger and better equipped than its predecessor.

The Temporary Cottage Hospital was the first, comprising a two roomed cottage standing in half an acre of garden on the Godstone Road, Riddlesdown, beside the path leading to Kenley Common. Dr. Diver, of Northcote, Caterham Valley, began it in order that, as Parish Doctor, he could give proper care to severely ill patients from his widespread practice which covered Caterham, Warlingham, Farleigh, Woldingham and Coulsdon. It was financed by Mrs. Cole of Flintfield, Caterham, in the sum of £50, and she also furnished the premises. The annual rent

was £10 16s 0d. It opened in May 1872, with Mary Ann Reynolds as "nurse and general manager". At the opening a service was conducted by the Rev. Percy J. Watts, vicar of St. Lukes, Whyteleafe.

In its first year 17 patients were treated, 9 medical and 8 surgical – 11 female and 6 male. As well as the two in-patients accommodated at any one time the nurse also visited urgent cases outside.

The Second Annual Report of the Temporary Cottage Hospital presented in May 1874 stated "*Although the Hospital is meant for none but those who are either unable to pay for their medical treatment at home, or whose residencies are not convenient for the purpose of their treatment, all but those exempted by special circumstances are expected to pay something (more or less according to their*



The Temporary Cottage Hospital in the Godstone Road, Riddlesdown, 1872-1875.

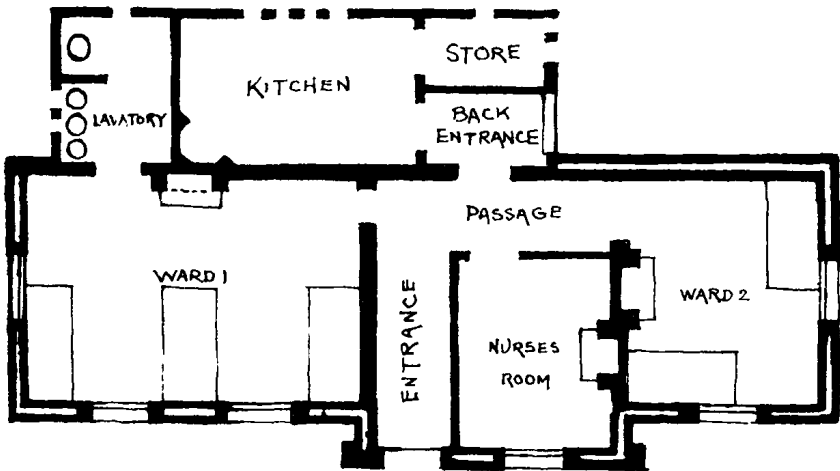
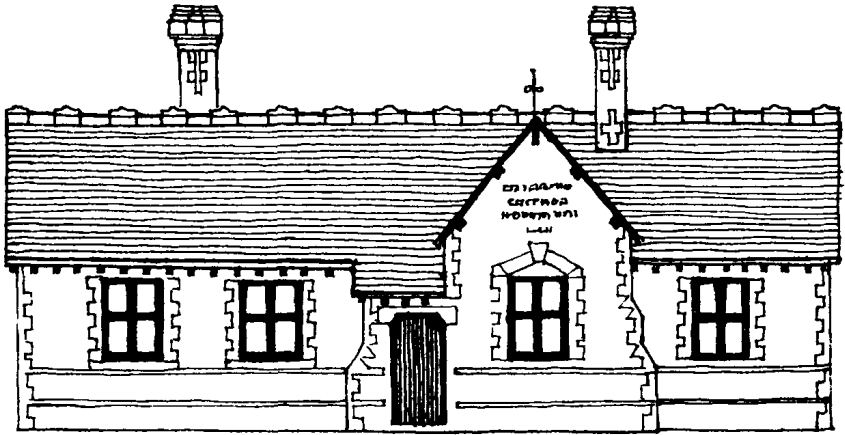
means) towards their maintenance". The Balance Sheet for the year ending May 1874 shows that six patients contributed sums varying from one shilling to two pounds eighteen shillings, and the total of all their contributions was fifteen pounds nineteen shillings and sixpence. The nurse also paid one pound seven shillings and sixpence "for the maintenance of her mother, for a time".

One of Dr. Diver's patients, Mr. C.J. Braine of Sunnyside, Whyteleafe Road, Caterham, became interested in the Hospital and offered to pay £200 or so for a new and larger building as a memorial to his late wife Eudora. A "Committee of

Management" was formed, comprising Mr. Braine, Mrs. Cole, Mr. Danvers, Mr. A. Smith and Dr. Diver. The latter found a suitable site in Croydon Road, Caterham, and the land was to be had on a building lease of £5 p.a. To expedite matters, Mr. Braine bought the land himself.

The Committee Minutes for 1875 describe the new Hospital as being designed for "*the benefit of the poor of the neighbouring parishes suffering from illness or accident*".

The final Balance Sheet for the Temporary Cottage Hospital was drawn up in August 1875, and was as follows:



Proposed plan and elevation of the Cottage Hospital to be built in Croydon Road, Caterham. It operated from 1875-1903.

Temporary Cottage Hospital
Balance Sheet from 1st. May 1874 to 23rd. August 1875.

	£	s	d.		£	s	d	£	s	d
To Balance in Bank				By Butcher	24	17	7			
last a/c	27	15	7	By Baker	6	5	11			
To Subscriptions and				By Grocer	19	10	0			
Donations	115	16	0	By Beer, Wine						
To Receipts from				& c.	17	3	3			
Patients	6	9	0	By Milk	8	11	1			
To Proceeds of Sale				By Butter	5	7	0			
of Honey and								81	14	10
Garden Produce	1	3	3	By Laundress				7	7	0
To Proceeds of Sale of				By Sundries per						
Little Articles of				Mrs. Cole	5	16	5			
Clothing made and				By Sundries per						
given for the purpose	0	10	7	Dr. Diver	3	0	0			
				By Sundries per						
	151	14	5	Nurse	5	1	9			
To Balance received										
from a Parishoner								13	18	2
to close the a/c				By Fuel				12	14	9
of the Temporary				By Printing & Postage				1	7	3
Hospital	0	11	7	By Rent & Repairs &c.				14	2	0
				By Wages &c.				21	2	0
	£152	6	0					£152	6	0

Audited:- T.W. Greenwood, Rocklands, Caterham Valley.

The new Cottage Hospital was opened on 23rd. August 1875. It had one larger and one smaller ward and could take five patients, and there was a hall suitable as a convalescent room, the nurse's apartment, kitchen, bathroom etc. There were also "two annual presentations having attached to each a month's residence at St. Margaret's Home, Margate" which had "been given to the

Cottage Hospital by Miss Hunt of Fryerne Chaldon, and a child's cot has been presented by a parishoner, which will be called "Little Mary's Cot"."

Dr. Diver was to direct the Medical duties and his visits "would be entirely gratuitous". Mary Ann Davis was appointed nurse at £18 p.a.

Sir William Jenner of University College Hospital became a patron.

Ten years later Mrs. Cole gave £320 for the addition of another ward, and a further extension was built with £300 raised by local residents. Eight patients could then be accommodated, but it soon became apparent that still greater facilities were required. The Hospital's "*Register of Cases Under Treatment*" illustrates the increasing pressures on the Hospital which eventually led to the third Cottage Hospital being opened in 1903: the 17 admissions in 1875 had leapt to 55 in 1887 and to 108 in 1902. Once the third Hospital was open admissions soared again, to 166 in 1904 and 273 in 1910.

Hospital expenditure was also increasing yearly, although the average cost per patient decreased as the quantity of patients increased (£3 18s 0d. in 1900, £3 8s 8d. in 1901 and £3 6s 3d. in 1902).

Until the end of 1901 patients' occupations were listed in the Registers, and this shows that almost all of them were from the working class. Large numbers of domestic servants and labourers are represented, and there are 7 varieties of railway worker, numerous shop and farm workers, a cabinet porter, chalk cutter, dressmaker, excavator, gasfitter, horsetrainer, housewife, limeburner, mason, photographer, pig dealer, policeman, publican, safemaker, shoeblack, soldier, wardrobe keeper, whitesmith and many others. Several tramps, one gentleman and an accountant are also recorded.

Their ailments were as diverse as their occupations and included frequent injuries and concussion due to bicycle accidents, sciatica, anaemia, ulcerated leg, varicose veins, phthisis, bronchitis, general debility, gouty heart, cut throat, gastritis, chlorosis, rheumatism, cancer, senile decay, painters' colic and many more. Successful operations were also carried out for appendicitis and infected tonsils and adenoids. Infectious diseases were not treated here, patients being sent to somewhere more suitable. Sometimes patients were sent to convalesce in Margate or Eastbourne, although some did not fare quite so well: a tramp with a dislocated hip was treated and then sent to Bletchingley workhouse.

A few specific examples of cases treated are as follows. On 1st. August 1882 three men were admitted:

(i) Mark Lamb, aged 46, engine driver, suffering from shock and injury to legs following a railway accident, was an in-patient for 85 days.

(ii) Alfred Burgess, 27, rope burner, suffering from scalded legs and general shock, was a patient for 27 days.

(iii) John Lee, 34, labourer, was treated for 116 days for fractured ribs and general shock to the nervous system.

All three were attended by Dr. Diver, at a weekly cost of seven shillings each.

In 1884, on 20th. October, Louisa Carpenter, aged 18, was admitted for 20 days suffering from an ailment that went with her occupation – she was a domestic servant with housemaid's knee. She was attended by Dr. Eady for five shillings a week.

On 17th. December 1886 William Longhurst, a 17 year old labourer, was admitted suffering from the bite of a rabid dog. Treated by Dr. Eady, his weekly payment was three and sixpence for the 14 days of 1886 that he spent there, and seven and sixpence for the next 63 days until his discharge on 4th. March 1887.

Free treatment was given to those who could not afford to pay, regardless of whether they were local residents or not: Thomas Willett Dean, a 58 year old chimney sweep with no home was admitted on 14th. October 1895. He was there for 159 days undergoing treatment for various fractures and other injuries, external and internal, received in a railway accident, and he was not charged anything. Neither was William Scott, 54, shown as a tramp (deleted) and then as a haymaker of no address, who was admitted on 11th. July 1899 for 7 days with gallstone colic. He was discharged "*well*".

The success rate was high. For example, in 1902, out of 108 patients admitted 81 were discharged "*well*", 8 "*much improved*", 5 "*improved*", 2 were sent to other hospitals more suited to their cases, 1 was discharged "*incurable*", 7 died and 4 remained in the hospital. The number of patients treated in this year

"would have been still larger had there been room for their accommodation".

To replace this excellent establishment a new hospital was planned. A Hospital Committee was formed, one of the main instigators being Mr. Walter Newman who *"had his whole heart bound up with its welfare"*. Sadly, he *"did not live to see the fulfilment of the works he began, and towards which end he laboured so assiduously"*. Mr. J.F. Rea and Mr. E. Marcuse took over as Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretary, the latter sparing *"neither time nor trouble to secure the amount necessary to open the building free from debt"*.

There was a great community effort involved in the project: *"Few are there in Caterham and the surrounding villages who have not subscribed to the building fund and the equipment of the institution"*. Contributions *"ranged from the hundreds of the men of means down to the single copper of the school child"*.

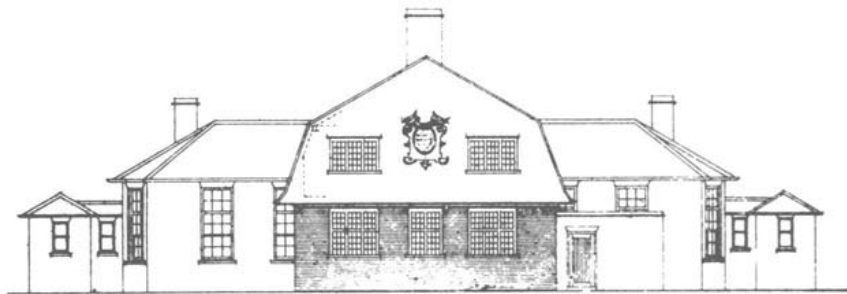
The architect, Mr. T. Ballantine, estimated the building costs at £3,400 and the lowest tender for the job, from Messrs. Vaughan and Sons, was for £3,434. This was accepted. The building fund stood at £3,011 13s 11d., and Mr. Garland Soper then gave a further £250. The remainder was raised by collections.

Sir William Jenner, Bart., senior physician of University College Hospital, became a patron of the new Hospital, just as he had been of the old.

The foundation stone was laid on 4th. October 1902, by Mr. Garland Soper, and

it would appear from the Committee's Minute Book (entry for 22nd. Oct. 1902) that he committed a slight faux pas in his speech there: *"The Chairman explained that any omission made by him at the laying of the foundation stone with respect to the name of the Queen Victoria was an unintentional oversight.....By reason of this oversight Mr. Soper offered on behalf of his wife to erect a marble or other suitable plaque or bust, whichever the committee preferred.....The Committee thought a plaque would be preferable"*. (One hopes that this was just a slip of the pen!)

The new building itself was very up to date and of a high standard throughout. The entrance led into the Central Hall, which contained a gilded bronze bust of Queen Victoria, made by Mr. Gascombe-John, and presented by Mr. Garland Soper to atone for his earlier oversight. Also there were *"three boards, which briefly narrate the history of the hospital and its founders"*. Leading from the Hall were the two chief wards, each 30 foot long by 20 foot wide, designed to contain initially six beds apiece, with room for eight each if it became necessary. In the middle stood a Shorelands patent stove, which had a 12" cold air pipe leading in to it from outside the building. The hot air escaped into the ward, and the smoke was carried away beneath the floor to a flue in the corner. The windows were operated by a noiseless patent winding gear. The sanitary facilities, whose installation had been supervised by Mr H.R. Martin,



Elevation of the Cottage Hospital in Croydon Road, Caterham, opened in 1903.



GROUND FLOOR PLAN.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN.

SCALE 1" = 10' 0"

Plan of the building shown opposite.





The staff and patients of the 1875-1903 Cottage Hospital, drawn from a photograph taken at the turn of the century.



Mr. W. Garland Soper,
Chairman of the Hospital Committee.

were at the end of the ward, and were of the most modern style. The wards' walls were of granite plastering painted with a green enamel "*which, by the way, has been applied twelve months too soon, as in the process of drying the colour has been eaten away in patches*". The floors were of a patent composition.

Behind the wards, facing Beechwood Road, were four apartments: the operating room and bathroom on the left, and the nurses' room and "special" ward on the right. The Doulton ware bath was fed with hot water from the kitchen, where a Herald range with two ovens and a special boiler provided the hot water for the whole building. It was piped from the boiler to the circulating cylinder, and 2 inch flow and return pipes carried it through the Hall and round each of the wards, to the offices and then to the operating room and bathroom. It also heated the linen cupboard on the first floor in the domestic block.

Other features were larders with wood and slate shelves, a roomy dispensary, the matron's room, the paying ward (at 3 guineas a week) and the pantry, all on the ground floor, and the bedrooms on the first floor. The various rooms were

connected by electric bells and speaking tubes. Outside, traversing the length of the end of the bathroom and nurses' room, was a verandah, facing Beechwood Road.

At the bottom of the garden, near the old building "*which is to be pulled down at once*", was the mortuary, partly underground and with a flat lead roof making it a "*not at all prominent*" structure.

On the front of the building, facing Croydon Road, was put a carved stone panel, with a cherub beneath the inscription which read: "*Caterham Cottage Hospital Rebuilt 1902 In Commemoration of Queen Victoria*".

Staff were trained at the hospital, and then, as now, a nurse's life was not an easy one. A Miss Townshend was appointed as a Probationer, "*she receiving no remuneration but giving her services in exchange for Board and Laundry*".

THE ROYAL OPENING

Two princesses were aboard the Special Train for Caterham leaving Charing Cross at 2.45 p.m. on Tuesday 3rd. June 1903. The train, in the capable hands of Mr. W.G. Smith, Superintendent of Redhill, and Mr. W. London "*the well-known guard*", was hired at a cost of ten guineas plus the first class fare for every passenger. The royal ladies were Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, fifth child of Queen Victoria, (she began life as Princess Helena, but on marrying Prince Christian took his name), and her daughter Princess Helena Victoria (usually known as Princess Victoria). The purpose of their visit was to open the new Caterham Cottage Hospital, of which Princess Christian had "*graciously consented*" to become a patroness.

The crowds were thronging around Caterham station half an hour before the Special Train was due in. The newspaper report said that the train was late, having been due in at 3.15 p.m., but the Committee Minutes record the scheduled arrival time as 3.25 p.m. However, the wait did not make the crowd restive and there was little for the 25 extra policemen

and the local Fire Brigade (who were there to "guard the street with the police") to do, except to regulate the traffic.

When the train arrived, the two princesses stepped down onto the crimson baize covering the platform. Princess Christian, "dressed in a costume of half-mourning, was presented with a bouquet of flowers by Miss Dorothy Marcuse, and Princess Victoria, who wore a gown of blue with a similar coloured toque and a light dust coat, received from the hands of Miss Doris Soper a bouquet of roses"

The princesses and their entourage walked through the covered way and the booking hall on the red carpet and then went outside to where one of Mr. Garland Soper's carriages awaited them. "Amidst considerable cheering" the royal party were immediately driven off to the hospital.

The day had begun "a cheerless sort of day" and by 8 a.m. "rain fell in a business-like fashion", but luckily "the rest of the day was glorious, the heat being tempered by a stiff breeze".

Flags and bunting decorated the whole route, and were lent by the Urban Council who also allowed their workers to assist in the decorating of the route under the supervision of the District Surveyor, Mr. H.R. Martin. The decorations began



Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, who opened the new Cottage Hospital on 3rd. June 1903.

at the cottage "Rodin" at the bottom of Church Hill, this being "gay with flags, with bunting in front of the trees", and these proliferated everywhere, for example "By the fountain in the square there was a Venetian mast, bearing midway on its length a crown, underneath being a flag trophy from which festoons of flags spanned the roads" and at "the premises of Mr. R.G. Knight...the Royal arms were festooned in the national colours, the fascia draped with bunting, and flags over the entrance to the yard". Almost every shop and private house between the station and the hospital had its decorations.

A large area in front of the hospital had been railed off for specially invited guests, whose invitation cards were of a "novel design, beautifully printed in colours by Mr. Alec J. Braid, and it is to be regretted that these handsome mementoes of the occasion had to be given up, instead of merely exhibited by their possessors". The occupants of the enclosure formed a "brilliant and unique" sight: "the majority of the assemblage was composed of ladies, the wonderful creations of the modiste in billowy lace and costumes of rich harmonious tints coupled with the beautiful surroundings made the scene one not easily to be forgotten".

The mass of people outside the enclosure made their own arrangements



Princess Helena Victoria, daughter of Princess Christian, who accompanied her mother at the Hospital's opening.

for viewing and recording the spectacle: *"more than one fair camerist had taken a commanding position, so as to secure an effective snap-shot of the royal party"*.

As the carriage arrived, the Drum and Fife Band of the Scots Guards and the Caterham Band struck up with the National Anthem. Seventy five Guardsmen, under Lieutenants Bearing and Brewster, formed the Guard of Honour.

Mr. W. Garland Soper ushered the royal ladies onto the dais, Dr. S. Davey and Dr. W.M. Bligh following *"in their Academical gowns"*. The Ladies' and the Gentlemen's Hospital Committees were presented to Princess Christian, and Mr. Garland Soper proceeded to make a speech summarising the background to the new hospital. He also pointed out that the new hospital *"was dedicated to the care of the suffering"* and would *"continue the beneficent work of human sympathy and skillful help"* carried out in the old one. It was, he said, *"dedicated to Queen Victoria.....who lives in the hearts of those who were her subjects"* and was *"Caterham's memorial to Victoria the Good"*, opening *"amid the fervent rejoicings of the whole neighbourhood"*.

Formally welcoming the princesses, he thanked Princess Christian for *"condescending to confer on the Hospital the smile of your Royal favour"*.

After this speech a short religious service was conducted by the Rector, the Rev. F.A. Bright, and then a number of collecting purses were presented to Princess Christian, containing between them a total of £99 4s 0d. towards the hospital costs.

After more speeches the party left the dais, and Princess Christian was given the key to use for the formal opening. The key *"itself was a work of art"*, one side being inscribed *"Caterham Cottage Hospital, 2nd. June 1903"* and the other bearing *"a coronet and the letter 'C' "*. The door was officially opened, although this was not the main entrance door which was on the south side of the building *"owing to cold winds at the north side in autumn, winter and spring"*. After Mrs. Garland Soper and Drs. Davey and Bligh had been formally presented to the Princess, the

party moved off to inspect the *"excellently built, commodius, modern building"*.

The royal ladies took *"a very deep interest in every particular"*, including the rounding off of all junctions of floors, walls and ceilings as a hygienic measure. They were especially impressed by the patent composition floors, expressing *"their pleasure on learning that the composition employed would be so much warmer to the feet of patients than stone paving"*.

Having seen all that she was supposed to see, and remarked to the doctors and nurses: *"I think it is all very nice indeed"*, the Princess signed the visitors book and partook of tea. Then, deviating from the schedule, she asked to be allowed to visit the patients in the old Hospital, where she spoke to each one and *"left a very pleasing reminder of her gracious visit"*.

The royal visitors then returned to their carriage and were taken back to the station amid more cheers from the crowd. They were slightly early, and Col. Frederick, Deputy Comptroller of His Majesty the King, took advantage of this to purchase copies of the London evening papers for the Princesses to read on the journey home.

That evening, in the Railway Hotel, a Commemoration Dinner was held for all those directly connected with the day's proceedings.

John D. Matthews

SOURCES

The following sources have been consulted and all quotations are taken therefrom: The *Caterham Weekly Press and County Post* for 6th. June 1903; the *Minute Book of the Caterham Cottage Hospital Committee*, from 23/8/1875 to 29/4/1909; the *Register of Cases Under Treatment*, from 1/1/1878 to 31/12/1911. I would like to thank the East Surrey District (Surrey Area Health Authority) Hospital authorities for allowing me to consult, and quote from, the Hospital records, and Sister Smart and Mary Saaler for their assistance. The illustrations are by John Ross.