

**THE OSWESTRY AND DISTRICT HOSPITAL**

**SOUVENIR  
BROCHURE  
1969**

**THE OSWESTRY AND DISTRICT HOSPITAL  
LEAGUE OF FRIENDS**

**FOURTH  
ISSUE**

## INTRODUCTION

The publication of the first Hospital brochure nearly six years ago gave delight to a great many people, and this Edition will, I am sure, be well received.

When the Hospital services became sublimated into the Welfare State it was realised there would still be a great deal to be done, quite apart from that which would pertain to the Hospital Boards and Management Committees.

The convening of a meeting in the Guildhall in 1952, initiated by Mrs. Gardiner Turner and Miss Joyce, the Matron, resulted in the formation of the League.

Since that date very many amenities for the happiness and comfort of both patients and staff have been provided.

The Annual Hospital Garden Party — when the Hospital is “Open” to visitors — has been an occasion of social enjoyment.

In sponsoring these, the League and the patients and staff have derived much pleasure, and the many thousands of visitors have also enjoyed the privilege of closer and intimate knowledge of our hospital.

This Brochure will be received as a souvenir of their visit to the hospital, perhaps treasured by the thought of a happy recovery and return to health.

It is our hope that its pages may impart to the reader some of the enthusiasm — some of the pride and warmth — which is shared by the League of Friends for the Oswestry and District Hospital.

T. MILTON FRANCIS, *Chairman.*





*View of Hospital from Road.*

## OSWESTRY HOSIPTAL

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Until 1866, there was no place in Oswestry or in Ellesmere for the reception and treatment of accident cases — the nearest was Shrewsbury. In Oswestry the Dispensary gave some help with medical cases, but, as its name implied, this was of a limited nature, although it had the backing of the medical profession and a strong local committee.

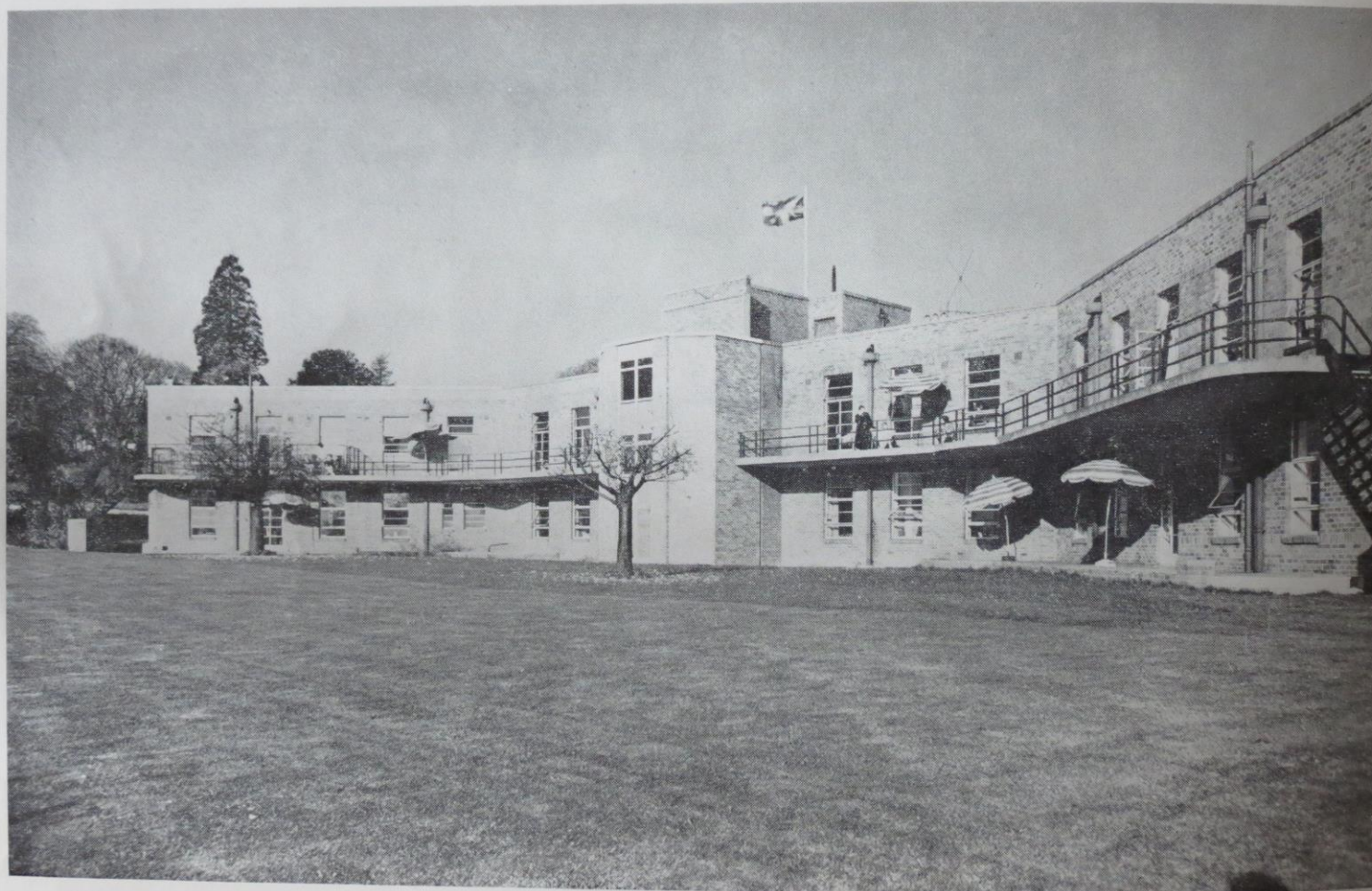
In 1866 however, after much effort, a number of residents started a local hospital in a house in Castle Street, but although much useful work was done here it was inadequate to deal with the great need of the time.

This period was one of great industrial activity, coupled with a rapid expansion of major engineering projects. The woollen and calico mills of Morda, the coal pits and brickworks of the Morda Valley were in full swing, while the Oswestry-Newtown section of the Cambrian Railway, and later the Vyrnwy-Liverpool pipeline were constructed. The lack of adequate safeguards resulted in a high accident rate in these and other projects.

A scheme was discussed with the object of building a hospital for in-patients on a site adjoining the Dispensary. But this was found to be unsuitable and in 1868 it was decided to buy land in what is now Welsh Walls at a price of 2/- per square yard, "provided the medical gentlemen connected with the Institution approved."

The Institution was the title of a committee founded by Mrs. Ormsby-Gore (The Mount) and the Hon. Mrs. Kenyon and known as The Oswestry and Ellesmere Cottage Hospital and Nursing Institution.





*View of Hospital from Maesyllan*

On November 1st, 1869 the foundation stone was laid by Sir Watkin Williams Wynne, P.G.M.

The building was completed and opened in 1870 by Mr. J. R. Ormsby-Gore. The cost of building and equipment was £2,000, and there were twelve beds provided.

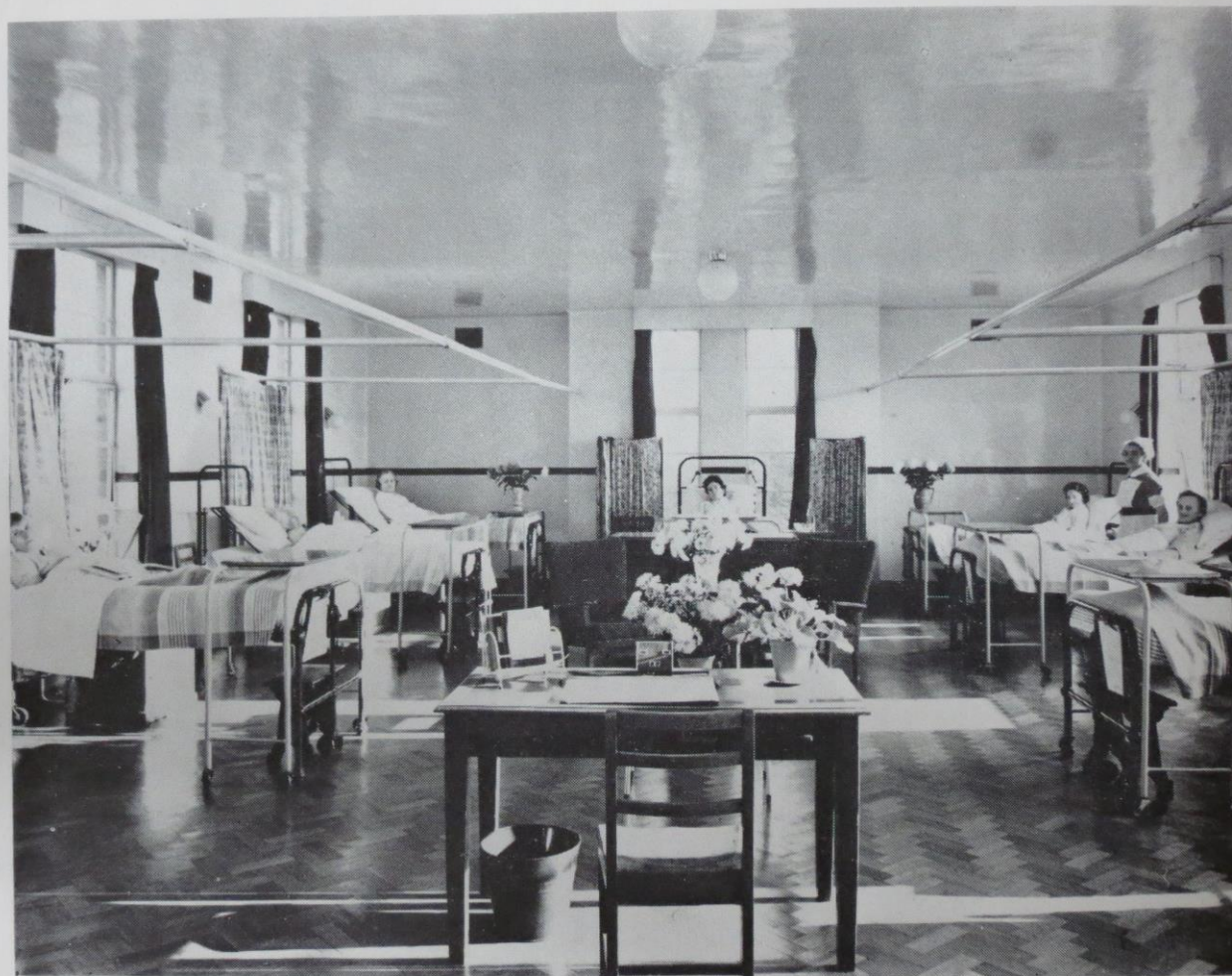
The first Lady Superintendent was Miss Piele, who had the assistance of three nurses. The early minutes of the Committee quaintly refer to the nurses as "Nurse Mary", "Nurse Jane" — whether through affection or because surnames were an unnecessary perquisite of nurses in those days is not clear.

The inclusion of Ellesmere in the title, and of gentlemen from the neighbouring town on the committee was underlined in 1870 when it was decided to arrange for one of the nurses to become resident in Ellesmere, which was looked upon as an outstation of the Oswestry Institution. This nurse was paid 9/- per week from the Oswestry funds, the balance coming from subscribers in Ellesmere. The Lady Superintendent's commencing salary was £30 and in 1872 nurses were paid £24 per annum.

A Ladies' Working Committee was formed in 1876 and in later years this became known as the Ladies' Linen League. In the early years the members of this committee took an active part in the administration of the hospital and in the appointment and oversight of staff and care of the patients.

The Linen League has now been disbanded, after many years of devoted service, and grateful thanks are due to Mrs. Bardswell and her willing helpers.





*The Women's Ward.*

In 1876 the committee had advertised for a "certified midwife." As there was no accommodation for maternity cases the midwife presumably attended confinements in the homes of the people. As will be seen later this problem of maternity facilities in the hospital was not solved until the hospital moved to the present building.

In 1876 the committee appointed a nurse to take control of nursing under the Superintendent's (Matron's) supervision. She was given no title, but it could be said that here was the first "sister."

Much excellent work, however, was done by an auxiliary service — the Oswestry and District Nursing Association — which continued to function until the responsibilities were taken over by the National Health Service in 1948.

The first X-Ray installation was in 1902, when the purchase of a "Röntgen Rays" apparatus was authorised. This was after the Boer War, during which one ward had been set aside for the care of the wounded.

Now in 1968 the X-Ray Department — with modern equipment — is open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, a radiologist being in attendance each Monday from 2 to 4 p m for special examination.

By 1894 the increased demand for treatment and nursing led the committee to consider plans for additional accommodation for six extra nurses and for male and female isolation wards. A fund of £1,800 was raised and the work was completed in 1896.





*The Men's Ward*

The question of fees repeatedly cropped up and perhaps it will be found of interest to give the table of fees which was adopted in 1897 They were as follows:—

**In Cases of Accident:**

Where the weekly wage does not exceed 20/-

Married Man — Free

Single Man      (a) If not in any Club nor insured against accident—free.  
                         (b) If in a Club or if insured against accident—2/6d per week.

In all other cases of accident—£1 1s. 0d. per week.

**Medical and Surgical Cases:**

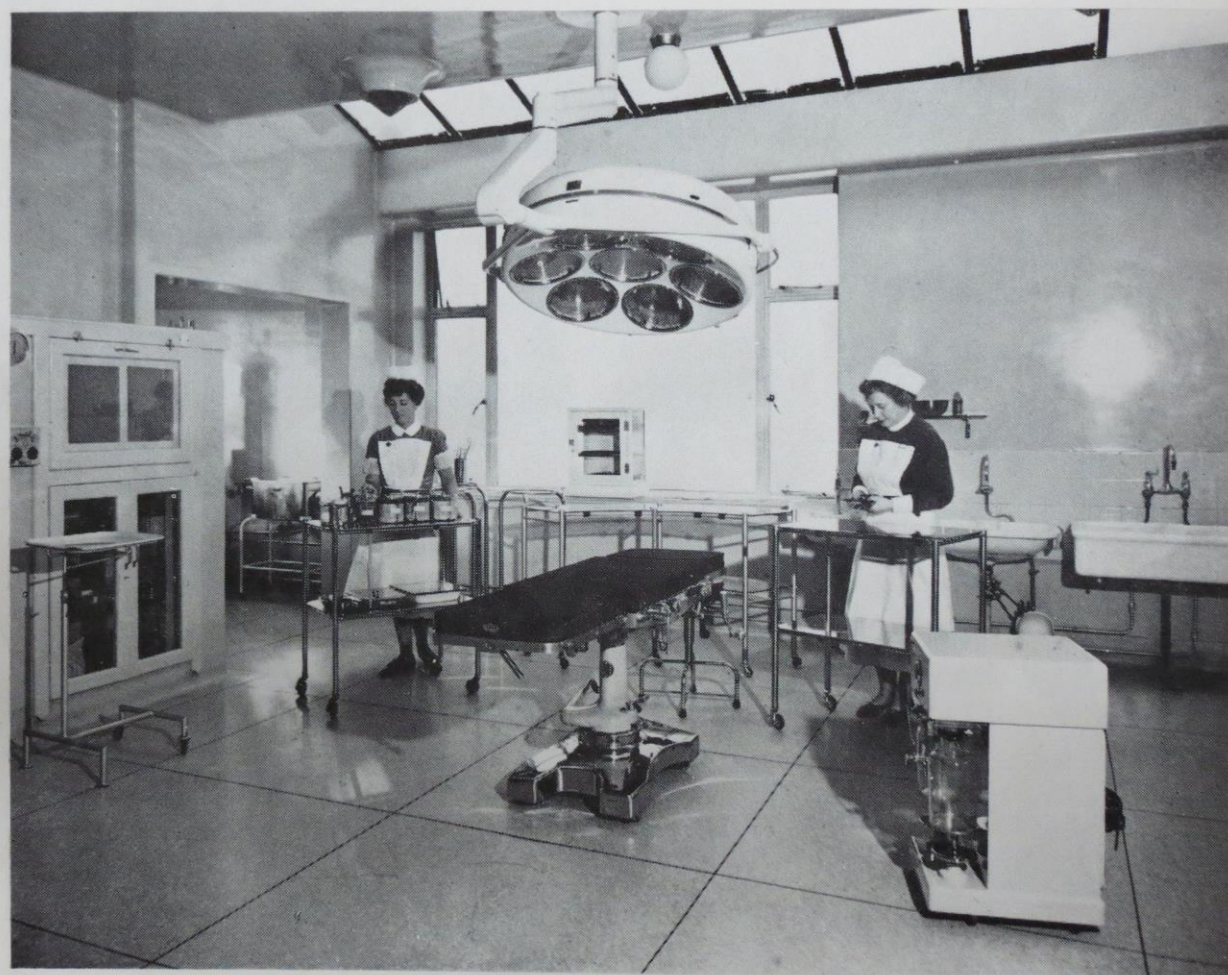
1. Wages not exceeding 20/- — Married and single men — 5/- per week.
  2. Wages not exceeding 40/- — Married and single men — 10/- per week.
- In all other medical cases — £1 1s. 0d. per week.

**Private Wards:**

£3 3s. 0d. per week including nurse.  
(There is no mention of fees payable by women.)

In 1906 the first endowment of a cot was made.





*Operating Theatre*

In 1907 the Ellesmere Cottage Hospital was opened, but it was not until 1922 that Ellesmere was dropped from the title of the Oswestry Committee.

During the years between the turn of the century and the Great War, the story is one of gradual improvement of small facilities and there is no item of major interest to report.

The Great War made changes inevitable, and by 1917 no less than twenty beds were allocated to wounded soldiers.

The changes in the general pattern of life which occurred after the 1914-18 war caused the committee to broaden its representation, and in 1922 representatives of the Lady Visitors, the Free Churches, the Lower Montgomeryshire Meeting, the Trades and Railway employees were added.

In 1922 and 1923 further additions were made, including the installation of a lift, and improvement of the out-patients' facilities and in 1925, a new X-Ray apparatus was installed.

In 1926 some of the members of the committee gave two trophies and other prizes for a whist competition at the request of an organisation which, from that date on, did much valuable work—the Oswestry Whist Committee—and who provided a regular flow of income and gifts to the Hospital.

The year 1932 saw the formation of another voluntary body, whose work was to provide a district nursing service. The Oswestry Cottage Hospital Nursing Association took over this service from the direct responsibility of the Hospital, but the closest co-operation was maintained until the National Health Service took over the service.

In 1933, the matron, having reported that “the noise made by the children was affecting the comfort of other patients”, a children's ward was inaugurated in the former out-patients ward. The out-patients were then accommodated in a hut which was presented by the Orthopaedic Hospital, Gobowen.





*New Labour Ward*

In 1934 the hospital accommodation was 21 beds, and during that year there were 94 accident cases, 40 admissions for medical treatment and 280 for operations. The X-Ray department had dealt with 483 patients and the District Nursing Services had attended 93 patients in their homes, making an average of 68 visits each. 159 casualty cases were treated, without charge, at the Hospital without admission to beds.

In January 1935, the *Advertiser*, in a leading article, made the suggestion that one of the ways that Oswestry could best celebrate the Jubilee of King George V was to provide a fund for the development of the Cottage Hospital.

At the Annual General Meeting of the Hospital (Lord Harlech, presiding), a special sub-committee was appointed to discuss the raising of funds for a rebuilding scheme, and decided that the building in Welsh Walls should be replaced by a modern building on a new site. Mr. Fox Davies was appointed architect.

In May a public meeting, which had been called by the Mayor, formed a strong "Ways and Means" Committee and a general committee for the work of raising £20,000.

It was announced that the new hospital would have accommodation for 32 beds, including a maternity ward, male and female medical and surgical wards, children's ward and four private wards, kitchens, etc., X-Ray department, operating theatre, out-patients' department and nurses' home.

An offer of land on part of Maesyllan by Lt. Colonel R. Longueville was gratefully accepted.



Amongst the many money-raising efforts which were launched in aid of the appeal was the Oswestry Hospital Fair, which was held in Cae Glas Park for five days in 1937.

All manner of stalls, sideshows, entertainments, competitions (including one for a motor car), auction sales with whist drives and dances in a great marquee made this a memorable occasion, which resulted in a considerable sum being raised for the Building Fund, the target of which had by then been raised to £30,000, including the Nurses' Home.

Patients were transferred to the new hospital, which became known as "The Oswestry and District Hospital" on September 11th, 1939. The outbreak of war influenced the timing of the move. The Civil Defence authorities erected a First Aid Post and Anti-Gas centre adacent to the Out-patients' Department.

The management of the Hospital passed out of the control of the local committee on the formation of the National Health Service. It was formally taken over on July 5th, 1948 and came under the control of Group 15 Hospital Management Committee, under the Birmingham Regional Hospital Board.

Thus ended a long period of voluntary effort by generations of local people of all stations of life, who had at hearth the high ideal of the care of the sick and suffering. The provision of buildings, equipment and services has been dealt with in some detail in these notes, but the story of this Hospital and the auxiliary services it has provided, really is the story of the service of countless people who have served in various ways in its management, in raising funds and to the great services of the honorary Medical and Surgical Practitioners and the Nursing Staff throughout the years.



**Back Row:** Mr. Hough (Hospital Secretary), Dr. T. Madden, Dr. D. Johnson, Mr. A. Lutton, Dr. Symon, Dr. Green, Dr. Cadbury, Dr. Hodnett, Dr. John, Dr. Thomas.

**Second Row:** N/A. Mills, N/A. Davies, N/A. Edwards, N/A. Ambrose, N/A. Lincoln, N/A. Martin, N/A. Walley, N/A. Griffiths, N/A. Parry, N/A. Roberts, Miss Dawson, Mrs. Ellis, Miss Lloyd.

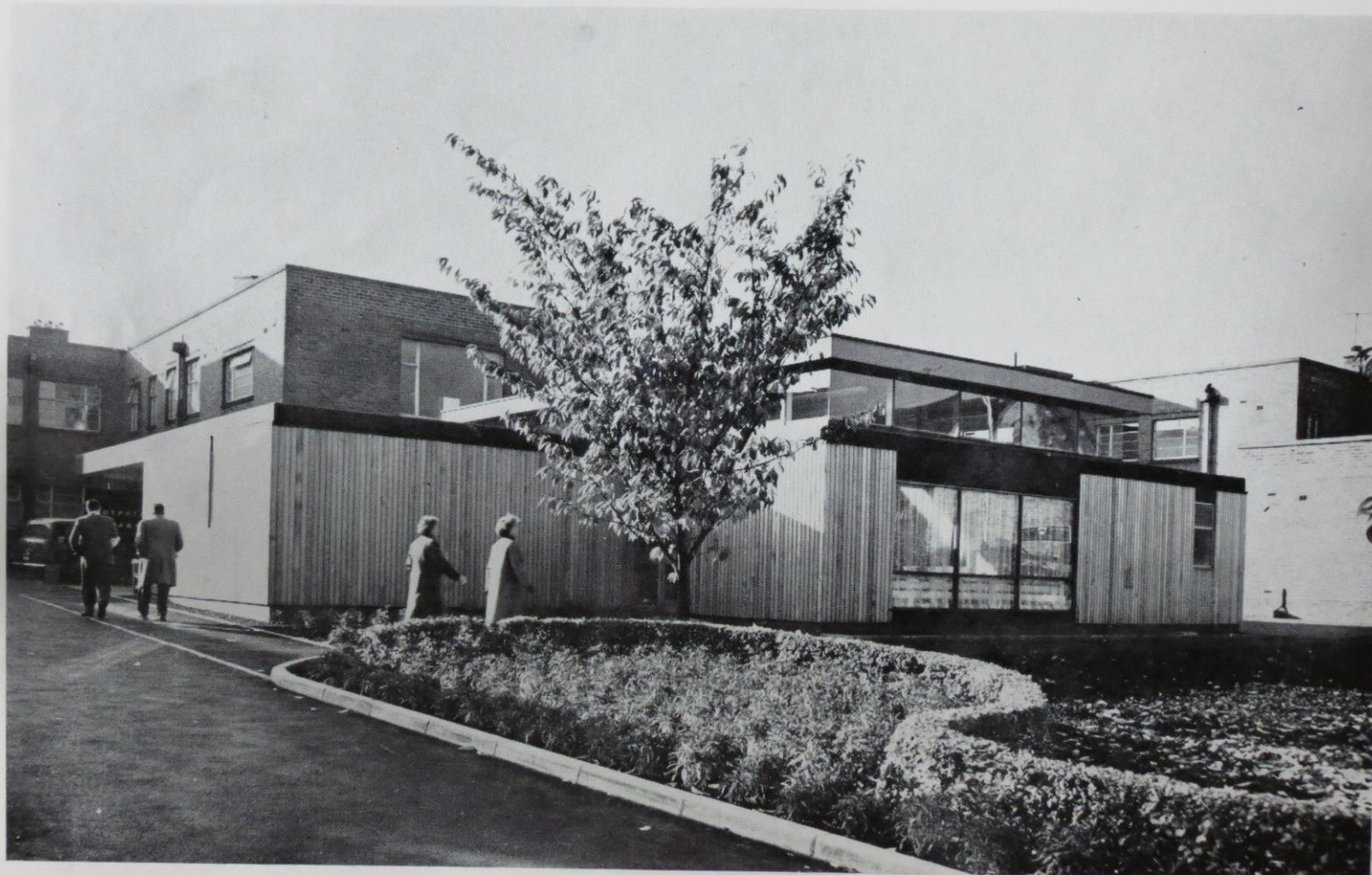
**Third Row:** Nurse Williams, Nurse Hughes, Nurse B. Morris, Nurse A. M. Jones, Nurse J. Hays, Nurse E. Frith, Nurse Pierce, Nurse Davies, Nurse G. M. Jones, Nurse H. Morris, Nurse G. I. Jones.

**Front Row:** Staff Nurse Spark, Staff Nurse Charles, Sister Griffiths, Sister Swain, Sister Williams, Matron, Sister Bowen, Sister Bellamy, Sister Gough, Staff Nurse M. E. Jones, Staff Nurse Kershaw, Staff Nurse Edwards.





Bruno Rascacci (Gardener), Leslie Jones (Porter), Mrs. M. Watkins, Mrs. Lee (Assistant Cook), Mrs. Teggins (Cook),  
Miss Arthur, Mrs. Wright, Mrs. Morris, Miss Jordan, Mrs. Butler, Mrs. Perry, Mrs. Ball.



*New Hall Outside*



Many readers will remember with gratitude former Matron, the late Miss Tugman, who was the last Matron of the Cottage Hospital and the first Matron of the Oswestry and District Hospital, and who was succeeded by Miss Joyce, who retired in 1965, and was succeeded by Miss K. Kermeen.

The Hospital now has an up-to-date Theatre and X-Ray Unit and provides facilities for various Clinics, viz:

MONDAY	a.m.	Physiotherapy
	p.m.	Psychiatric
TUESDAY	a.m.	Obstetric & Gynaecological
	p.m.	„ „
WEDNESDAY	a.m.	General Surgery
	p.m.	Physiotherapy
		Hearing Aid
THURSDAY	a.m.	Ophthalmic Clinic Ante-natal clinic
	p.m.	Physiotherapy
FRIDAY	p.m.	Chest Clinic
		Ear, Nose & Throat Clinic

The Casualty Department deals with accident cases and provides facilities for cases which cannot conveniently be treated at surgeries. Dental Surgeons also use the facilities of the Hospital for major operation cases.

Voluntary effort was not to be lost for long, following the maintenance of hospital facilities by the state.



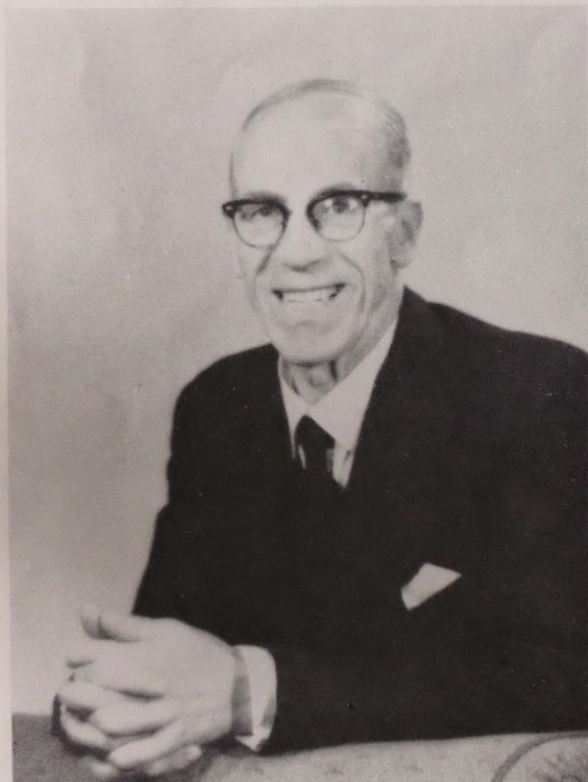
*Inside New Hall*





*Matron*  
MISS K. KERMEEN

THE OFFICERS OF  
THE OSWESTRY AND DISTRICT HOSPITAL  
LEAGUE OF FRIENDS



ALDERMAN T. M. FRANCIS  
*Chairman*



MRS. MONA EDWARDS  
*Vice-Chairman*





MR. D. E. STEVENS  
*Hon. Treasurer*



MRS. K. M. BATES  
*Hon. Secretary*



MR. WYNN EVANS  
*Asst. Secretary*

## **WHAT IS A LEAGUE OF HOSPITAL FRIENDS?**

It is an association of people who have the welfare of a hospital, its patients and its staff at heart.

## **WHAT ARE THE OBJECTS?**

To encourage, foster and maintain the interest of the public in a particular hospital.

To provide personal service for and on behalf of the patients.

To provide amenities and extra comforts for patients and staff.

## **HOW CAN THESE OBJECTS BE ACHIEVED?**

By members of Leagues visiting patients in hospitals particularly in the mental and other long-stay hospitals.

By arranging entertainments and outings for the patients.

By organising fund raising events to enable the League to buy equipment and provide amenities which may be needed.



## LEAGUE OF FRIENDS

The League of Friends of the Oswestry and District Hospital was formed during the Mayoralty of Councillor T. M. Francis in June, 1952.

The objects of the League of Friends are:—

- (a) To encourage and maintain the interest of the public in the patients and support the work of the Hospital by means of voluntary service and to provide a link between the Hospital and the community it serves.
- (b) To accept and utilise funds for the improvement of the amenities of both patients and staff and for supplementing the resources of the Hospital services in such a manner as the Committee think desirable.
- (c) To do all such other things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects or any of them.

The Committee is formed from representatives from the various Churches and Organizations in the town: St. John's, Red Cross, Rotary, Inner Wheel, W.V.S., Toc H., British Legion, Ladies' Friendly Club, Business and Professional Women's Club, Free Church Council, etc.

The Annual events arranged by The League of Friends are:—Hospital Sunday in October; Garden Party in June; Nurses' Party at Christmas; Nurses' and Staff outing to a pantomime in January, and, of course, The League of Friends is Father Christmas to the Hospital at Christmastide.

## WHAT HAS BEEN DONE BY THE LEAGUE OF FRIENDS?

Some of the amenities provided by the League of Friends are:—

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| New Hard Tennis Court.                              | *Staff Outings to Pantomines.                |
| Planting Trees and Rose Beds.                       | *Electric Hair Drier.                        |
| Grants for Extras each Christmas.                   | *Electric Toaster.                           |
| *Television for Nurses' Room.                       | Hospital Signs.                              |
| Sun Shade Umbrellas.                                | New Lamp Shades.                             |
| Coronation Souvenirs for Patients and Staff.        | Electric Razors for Men's Ward.              |
| *Cash Vouchers for Nurses and Staff each Christmas. | Bed Tables and Lockers covered with Formica. |
| Trays for Beds.                                     | Flowers (weekly supply).                     |
| Birthday Cakes and Cards to Patients.               | Electric Floor Polisher.                     |
| Waste Paper Baskets.                                | Hospital Sunday Service.                     |
| Installing Electric Clock in each Ward.             | Electric Gate Lamps.                         |
| Christmas Cards to each Patient.                    | Conversion of TV sets to ITV.                |
| *Eiderdowns for Nurses' Beds.                       | *Christmas Party for Nurses and Staff.       |
| Stools for each Patient's Bed.                      | *Electric Fire for maids' sitting room.      |
| Weekly Magazines.                                   | Teak Garden Seats.                           |
| Pouffées.   | New Hall.                                    |
| Vases for Wards.                                    | Operation Table.                             |
| *Shoe Racks for Nurses' and Staff Rooms.            | Daily Newspapers, etc., etc.                 |
| Laying New Lawn.                                    | Electrically heated Food Trolley.            |
| *Washing Machine.                                   | Kitchen Trolley.                             |
| Teas for Out-Patients.                              | Portable Telephone for use of patients.      |

*\*It should be noted that these amenities are provided from funds which are donated specifically to the Hospital Staff.*



## LEAGUE OF FRIENDS

Highest praise must be accorded to all who have supported the League of Friends since its formation; we feel that we are carrying out our objects, especially in creating that personal interest in our Hospital which was lost when Hospitals became Nationalised.

We record our thanks to Matron and her Staff for the wonderful work they are doing, also to Group 15 Hospital Management Committee for their co-operation.

The Oswestry and District Hospital League of Friends was the second to be formed in Shropshire, the first being Ludlow. Since then we are pleased to say that each of the Hospitals in the Oswestry district has now its own League of Friends, and most of the hospitals in the county have also formed them.

The League of Friends was particularly fortunate when, at its first meeting in 1952, Mr. Harold Thomas was appointed Honorary Secretary, an office he filled until his passing in 1968.

The League is grateful that through the medium of this Brochure it is able to record tribute to the memory of our past Secretary who rendered invaluable and ungrudging service to the League and the Hospital.

*May we now appeal for more members. We not only want members from Oswestry, we are very keen to have a greater representation from the rural areas served by our Hospital; it is their Hospital as much as that of the people of Oswestry.*

*We also appeal to all ex-patients to join us and help with this great work.*

KATHLEEN M. BATES, *Secretary*

## **NEW HALL AND OUT-PATIENTS' DEPARTMENT**

Close to the heart of our late Treasurer, Mr. Peris Williams, lay the idea of the provision of a hall which he thought would be a useful asset to the Hospital; this was in 1956.

Eventually, this idea was incorporated into a plan combining both hall and out-patients' department. And in 1959 plans were prepared and submitted to the Hospital Management Committee and Birmingham Regional Board who accepted, in principal, the scheme, together with the offer of financial aid by the League of Friends.

It was not, however, until 1962 that the contract to build was placed, and in July, 1963 the Official Opening was performed by Sir Edward Thomson (past Chairman, Birmingham Regional Board) in the presence of a large and distinguished gathering.

This addition to the Hospital, incorporating the most modern equipment and appliances with its charm of design and architecture, has proved a boon and blessing to doctors, nursing staff and patients alike.

It was a great pleasure to the League of Friends to contribute £4,000 to this project, costing a total of nearly £14,000.

In 1885 an operating table was bought for £25 and an operating room was built in 1886, but electric light was not installed until eleven years later.

In 1964 a new operation table was installed. It was given to Oswestry and District Hospital on Thursday, 16th April, 1964 by the Hospital's League of Friends. The table, which cost £700, was officially handed over by the League's Chairman, Ald. T. M. Francis to Dr. Abraham Lutton, the Hospital's surgeon.

Generous donations had been given by the late Mr. Frank Batho of Oswestry, an ex-patient of the Hospital, to the League of Friends. The League then contributed the amount required to purchase the Table from Messrs. Allen & Hanbury Ltd. There are several attachments to the table which have also been provided by the League of Friends.



## MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to everyone interested in our Hospital on payment of a minimum fee of 2/6d. a year.

We also invite organizations to become affiliated members on payment of a minimum fee of 10/6d. a year.

Organizations can then appoint one member to serve on the committee.

Membership Cards can be obtained from the Treasurer:—

Mr. D. E. STEVENS,  
WESTMINSTER BANK LTD.,  
CHURCH STREET,  
OSWESTRY.

or the Secretary:—

Mrs. K. M. BATES,  
“TOWNSCLIFFE”,  
CROESWYLAN CRESCENT,  
OSWESTRY.

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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*I wish to become a member of The Oswestry and District League of Friends.*

*NAME* .....

*ADDRESS* .....

.....

*DATE* .....

*To:—*Mr. D. E. STEVENS,  
TREASURER,  
WESTMINSTER BANK LTD.,  
CHURCH STREET,  
OSWESTRY.