

*Mental Nursing Committee* : Mr. Buckley, Mr. Craddock, Miss Hillier, Miss Holland, Miss Lane, Dr. Rees Thomas, Dame Kathrine Watt, Miss Willis.

*General Purposes Committee* : Mr. Buckley, Miss Calder, Miss Dey, Mr. Diamond, Miss Pearce, Miss Willis.

*Uniform Committee* : Mr. Craddock, Miss Hillier, Miss Lane, Miss Pearce, Dame Kathrine Watt, Miss Willis.

Chairman and Vice-Chairman hold *ex-officio* seats on all Committees.

## Christmas, 1948.

THERE had been quiet stirrings of Christmas at Moorfields for several weeks before the date, and preparations were really advanced as time passed . . . nevertheless on Christmas Eve a great number of things were unfinished, and the hospital became a very busy community. Garlands half-hung showed promise of splendours to come and armfuls of berried holly awaited the decorating teams, whilst sprays of mistletoe were tenderly laid aside, lest they shed their fruit.

As the day passed and each task was finished, while others began, we did wonder if all would be ready!

It was, and the peace and joy of Christmas arrived with the carols in the evening. The long choir of nurses and sisters, headed by our Matron, Miss MacKellar, passed into each of the wards bearing the warm, glad tidings of a Child laid in a manger, and finally into the hall, singing "Silent Night."

Early on Christmas morning, Father Christmas and his satellite fairy came jingling in upon the sleigh, from which they distributed gifts to all the patients and gave to the children their filled stockings. How long the night had seemed to the children awaiting the morning! The nursing staff, too, had a surprise awakening and wondered if perhaps they saw or were dreaming while the Christmas fairy pirouetted and Santa Claus looked genially in.

After breakfast we visited the different wards and admired the decorations, from the opulence of coloured chandeliers in Victoria to the familiar nursery tales of Wonderland in the children's ward and the snowset scene of Sedgewick, with its village and ice-bound lake.

At eleven o'clock we gathered in our little chapel and sang carols at a simple service in honour of the Child of Bethlehem, and Matron spoke to the children who were with us.

Then the dinner, with traditional turkey, plum pudding and crackers, with that comfortable sense of repletion induced by happiness and a good meal. Visitors were expected at two, so the patients all settled down for a nap to be fresh for their coming.

Soon they were here, a merry throng full of good cheer, and several who suggested being kept in for Christmas! In each ward a large iced cake occupied the place of honour and these were cut for tea with great ceremony, as due to works of art. The subsidiary dishes were neglected by children who had decided that they must save a place for a piece of cake and could not risk filling it.

The trees were lit as it grew dark and the fairy lamps sparkled across the ward, diffusing beams of royal purple and amber across the cots, where little heads, grown suddenly tired after a long and happy day, could no longer resist sleep; across the beds, on to the older people to whom sleep comes readily, and over the white aprons of the night nurses coming on duty. Christmas Day was over and Moorfields slept.

Boxing Day dawned bright and clear, the day waited for by many former patients. For it was the day for the children's party held in the Outpatients' Hall. At three o'clock, when all were gathered around the tree, and such a tree, towering up to the high central dome of the hall, and everywhere hung with presents of many kinds . . . a sight

for wonder, expressed in the round eyes and parted lips of the children awaiting the guardian of these treasures.

Then, with a fanfare of horns, came Father Christmas, drawn by his coachmen and attended by the fairy and two little black boys. To cheers he dismounted and began to distribute the gifts, one to each and marked with his name, too. It seemed that such a tree was inexhaustible but one by one the green pinnacles were stripped of their loads and the last child had taken his present from Santa Claus, who remounted his sleigh and drove off to more cheers.

Next came the children's tea, and how they enjoyed it; indeed some little boys provided for the future what they could not then eat, by filling their pockets. Hugging their presents, they then went back to see the nativity play, presented by Sister Tutor Spon and acted by the Preliminary Training School students from Dorothy Sayers' series, "The Man Born to be King."

In the evening was the nurses' dinner and we were feasted with turkey, making merry with crackers; then the plum pudding, brought in flaming in brandy and besprigged with holly, and the many toasts drunk enthusiastically, especially to Miss Lewzy and her helpers who had prepared the wonderful dinners and baked the cakes.

During the week came the sisters' and the doctors' dinners and, as the finale, the play. This was Esther McCracken's "Quiet Wedding," produced by Mr. Gordon Ferguson Richardson and presented by the combined nursing and medical staff. A large audience consisting of many past and present patients and other friends of Moorfields saw the two performances, on December 29th and 30th, and showed their enjoyment by the great applause they gave.

A. D. M. GRIFFITHS,  
Second Year Nurse,  
Moorfields.

## King Edward's Hospital Fund for London.

### HOSPITAL CATERING TRAINING CENTRE.

A CENTRE is to be established under the auspices of King Edward's Hospital Fund for London, at St. Pancras Hospital, St. Pancras Way, N.W.1 (now part of University College Hospital), where it is intended that training will be offered in all branches of Hospital Catering.

It is also intended that the Training Centre, which will provide meals for patients and staff in the hospital, shall be a model catering department, in layout, organisation and equipment, and include all modern labour-saving devices. It will, however, be at least six or twelve months before the Centre is ready to take trainees.

A large number of applications was received in answer to an advertisement for the post of Officer-in-Charge of the Centre, and Mr. C. C. A. Gibbs was appointed. Mr. Gibbs has had wide experience in catering and has successfully held the post of Catering Officer to St. Mary's Hospital since April 1st, 1946.

## Diphtheria: New Low Record in 1948.

DEATHS from diphtheria in 1948 were the lowest on record. They totalled 100 in the 126 Great Towns, which cover about half of the population of England and Wales. Notifications of cases numbered 5,182—also a new low record.

There has been a steady decline in diphtheria since 1941 when the Ministry of Health's diphtheria immunisation campaign got under way. In that year deaths and cases in the Great Towns provisionally totalled 1,487 and 27,613 respectively—fourteen times more deaths than last year and over five times as many cases.

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