

IMPERIAL YEOMANRY HOSPITALS, 1900-1902

With the object of establishing a hospital in support of British war effort in South Africa, on 29 December 1899, Lady Georgiana Curzon and Lady Chesham, issued an appeal from Blenheim Palace to the British public for subscriptions. The result far exceeded their expectations, and every post brought generous donations in cash and in kind.

The Queen - then Princess of Wales - allowed herself to be nominated President; the present Princess of Wales and the Duchess of Connaught gave their names as Vice-Presidents of the Imperial Yeomanry Hospitals.

The working committee was composed of the following: Adeline, Duchess of Bedford, the Duchess of Marlborough, the Countesses of Essex and Dudley, the Ladies Chesham and Tweedmouth, Mesdames S. Neumann, A.G. Lucas, Blencowe Cookson, Julius Wernher (now Lady Wernher), and Madame von Andre. Amongst the gentlemen who gave valuable assistance, the most prominent were: Viscount Curzon, M.P. (later Lord Howe), Hon. Secretary; Mr. Ludwig Neumann, Hon. Treasurer; General Eaton (later Lord Cheylesmore); and Mr. Oliver Williams.

President: THE QUEEN.

Vice-Presidents: THE PRINCESS OF WALES and DUCHESS OF CONNAUGHT.

Chairman of Committee: COUNTESS HOWE.

Vice-Chairmen of Committee: COUNTESS OF WARWICK and VISCOUNTESS VALENTIA.

Hon. Secretary: EARL HOWE.

Treasurer: LUDWIG NEUMANN, ESQ.

Military Adviser: MAJOR-GENERAL LORD CHEYLESMORE.

Hon. Civilian Director and Treasurer in South Africa: J.G. HAMILTON, ESQ.

General Committee:

Ninety ladies, whose names are given in the first volume of the Imperial Yeomanry Hospitals Report.

General Working Committee:

Lady Georgiana Curzon (Chairman).

Adeline, Duchess of Bedford.

The Duchess of Marlborough.

The Countess of Dudley.

The Countess of Essex.

The Ladies Tweedmouth and Chesham (who went to Deelfontein in early days of Imperial Yeomanry Hospitals).

Mrs. S(igmund) Neumann.

Mrs. A.G. Lucas.

Mrs. Blencowe Cookson.

Mrs. Julius Wernher (now Lady Wernher).

Madame von Andre.

Finance Committee:

Viscount Curzon, M.P. (later Earl Howe).

Mr. Ludwig Neumann.

Adeline, Duchess of Bedford.

Lady Chesham.

Lady Georgiana Curzon.

Press Committee:

The Countess of Dudley.
The Countess of Essex.
Madame von Andre.
The Duchess of Marlborough.
Lady Georgiana Curzon.

Transport Committee:

Lady Tweedmouth.
Mrs. Julius Wernher.
Mrs. S(igmund) Neumann.
Mrs. A.G. Lucas.
Lady Georgiana Curzon.
Assisted by Major Haggard and General Eaton.

Gifts and Purchase Committee:

The Countess of Essex.
Lady Tweedmouth.
Mrs. A. G. Lucas.
Mrs. S. Neumann.
Lady Georgiana Curzon.
Assisted by General Eaton, Colonel Sloggett ¹, Mr. Fripp ² and Mr. Oliver Williams ³.

Medical, Nursing, and General Staffs Committee:

The Duchess of Marlborough.
Adeline, Duchess of Bedford.
The Countess of Warwick.
Lady Chesham.
Madame von Andre.
Lady Georgiana Curzon.
Assisted by General Eaton, Colonel Sloggett, Mr. Fripp and Mr. A. Downing [sic]⁴

The chief workers in Ireland were: The Countess of Longford, Lady Annette La Touche, and Mrs. Pirrie; but they were only on the General Committee, not on any of the subcommittees.

From first to last, various staffs numbered over 1,400 persons, and 20,000 patients received medical aid in the different Yeomanry Hospitals.

¹ Colonel (later Sir) Arthur Thomas Sloggett CB.,CMG. (1857-1929), Lieutenant General. Joined Royal Army Medical Corps 1881; Indian Frontier 1884; Senior Medical Officer, British Troops, Dongola expedition, Sudan 1896; Nile expeditions 1897-1898; Khartoum, Sudan 1898; South African War 1899-1902; Principal Medical Officer, Home and London Districts 1903-1908; Principal Medical Officer, 6 Div, India 1908-1911; Director of Medical Services, India 1911-1914; World War I 1914-1918; Director General, Army Medical Service 1914-1918; Col Commandant Royal Army Medical Corps 1921-1928 Registered 1880; MRCS Eng 1880, LRCP Edin 1880

² Mr (later Sir) Alfred Downing Fripp KCVO., CB of Portland Place, London (1914). Sir Alfred Downing Fripp b. Blandford, Dorset 12 September 1865 d. West Lulworth, Dorset 1930; married Lady Margaret Scott Haywood Reigate Parish Church, Surrey 8 June 1898. Registered 1889; M 1889 DF 1893 RCS Eng., LRCP Lond 1889, MB BS 1889, MS 1893 U Lond.

³ Mr. Oliver Williams of Oldham (1914). Registered 1889; MB CM 1889 U Edin.

⁴ Mr. A. Downing; I believe that this was an error

When the staff returned to England, medals were presented to them by the Queen at Devonshire House, Piccadilly, the residence of the Cavendish family.

DEELFONTEIN BASE HOSPITAL: Opened March 5, 1900; closed March 31, 1901. Originally with 500 beds, subsequently increased to 1,000 beds. 6,093 in-patients, including 351 officers, were treated there.

MACKENZIE'S FARM, MAITLAND CAMP, BASE HOSPITAL: Opened August 2, 1900; closed March 31, 1901. Originally with 100 beds, subsequently increased to 150. 1,066 patients treated.

EASTWOOD, PRETORIA, BASE HOSPITAL: Opened August 18, 1900; closed September 30, 1901. Originally with 400 beds, subsequently increased to 564 beds. 5,227 in-patients, including 466 officers, and 1,095 out-patients, treated.

ELANDSFONTEIN BASE HOSPITAL: Opened June 29, 1901; closed December 19, 1901. Originally with 50 beds, subsequently increased to 138 beds. 823 in-patients, including 27 officers, and 900 out-patients, treated.

CHESHAM CONVALESCENT HOME AT JOHANNESBURG (for Officers only): Opened March 1, 1901; closed October 10, 1901. 8 beds. 79 patients received.

FIELD-HOSPITAL AND BEARER COMPANY, with 100 beds, left England in March, 1900; opened at the seat of war in South Africa on 12 April, 1900; closed 1 April 1901, having remained three months longer than was originally arranged for. Subsidy of £3,000 received from Government for this purpose.

REFERENCES

- 1) Wilson, Lady Sarah. South African Memories: Social, Warlike & Sporting from diaries written at the time. Edward Arnold, London. 1909
- 2) Watt, S A. Military History Journal 7 (4), The South African Military History Society. DEELFONTEIN (A hospital in the Karoo during the Anglo-Boer War, a cemetery today).
- 3) Commissioned Officers of the Medical Services of the British Army 1660-1960. Vol.I. W Johnston. Gen.Ed. FNL Poynter. Publ. The Wellcome Historical Library, London. 1968
- 4) Cloete, Pieter G. The Anglo-Boer War: A Chronology. J P v d Walt & Son, 2000
- 5) The Medical & Pharmacy Register for the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope. 1902
- 6) The Medical Register. General Medical Council. 1914. Publ. Constable & Co. Ltd, London.
- 7) The Register of Medical Practitioners and Dentists for the Union of South Africa for 1st January 1935
- 8) Plarr's Lives of the Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. Vol. II (Mace-You). Revised Sir D'arcy Power. Publ. John Wright & Sons, Bristol. 1930.