

## The Gables, 13 Church Street, Lyme Regis Originally known as Nuremberg House

Graham Davies, July 2021

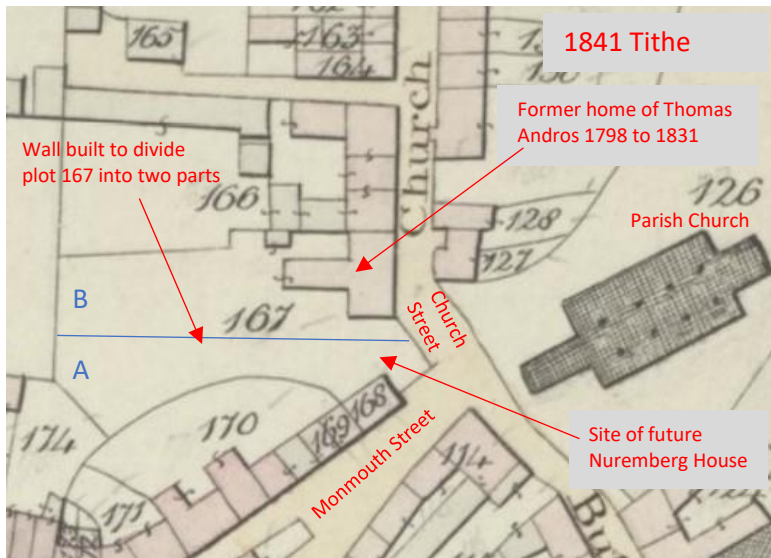
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The Gables is a distinctive building situated on the north-west corner of the junction where Monmouth Street meets Church Street. Built in c1890/91, the original name was Nuremberg House. Home of the Lyme Regis Cottage Hospital from 1897 to 1927, it was subsequently purchased and called 'The Gables' boarding house by Mr Reginald W Baker.



In 1841, Charles Andros owned the house and garden, plot 167, shown in the annotated tithe map below. This was sold to Thomas Brown in 1865 and subsequently to Henry Randall builder, in 1888.



**Indenture of conveyance, dated 31 October 1865**, between Charles Andros, Commander Royal Navy, Guernsey; Thomas Godfrey Andros Esquire, Jersey; Amias Charles Andros, Civil Engineer, Westminster; Edwyn Breton Andros, Lieutenant in Military Train, Aldershot (the vendors) and Thomas Brown, Ironmonger, Lyme Regis (the purchaser). For £500, Thomas Brown agrees to buy the property recorded as plot 167 on the Tithe map. At the time of sale, the former Andros home had been divided into two tenements with William Manfield as tenant.

Summary

Henry Randall divided plot 167, see blue annotation above.  
A – Building of Nuremberg House with yard and Workshops.  
B – Former Andros house with remaining garden which was sold to the National School trustees in 1891.

**Indenture of conveyance, dated 29 May 1888**, between Thomas Brown, Engineer, 53 New Oxford Street, Middlesex (the vendor) and Henry Randall, Builder, Lyme Regis (the purchaser). For £500, Henry Randall agrees to buy the property described as plot 167 on the Tithe map. At the time of sale, the former Andros home had been divided into three tenements with Samuel Pulsford, Mark Wiscombe and William Long as tenants.

Summary

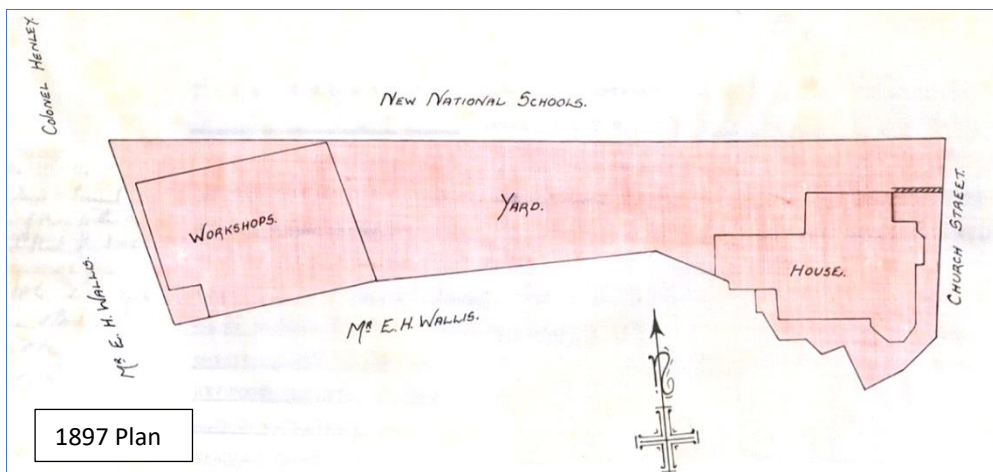
Henry Randall was born in 1842 at the Talbot Arms, Uplyme where his father, William, was the inn keeper. William Randall brought his family to Lyme Regis, circa 1848, to become the inn keeper of the Golden Hart Inn situated in the Butter Market (19<sup>th</sup> century name for the lower part of Church Street). In 1868, Henry married Harriett Anne Baulch from Chard. The 1871, 1881 and 1891 census records described Henry Randall, his wife Harriett and son Henry, living in the Butter Market, with Henry's occupation as joiner, builder and house builder respectively.

George Vials, architect, did a lot of secular work in Lyme Regis between 1884 and 1901. Henry Randall was the builder of choice for some of these projects, including Poulett House and Chapel, Gatesfield, Drill Hall, St Michael's College and the National School.

Following his purchase, in May 1888, of the former Andros house and garden in Church Street (ref 167), Henry Randall divided the property and built Nuremberg House with yard and workshops in part A (see Tithe map on previous page). Still living in the Butter Market in April 1891 (census), Henry Randall, wife and son, probably moved into Nuremberg House later in that year. On the 18<sup>th</sup> February 1891, he sold the former Andros home and remaining garden (part B) to the Archdeacon of Dorset and the minister of Lyme Regis parish church, for £500, for the purpose of a National School and teachers residence. George Vials was the architect and Randall the chosen builder of the new National School and the conversion of the three existing tenements to a master's house. The school was officially opened on the 28<sup>th</sup> May 1892 by the Bishop of Salisbury, Rt Rev John Wordsworth.

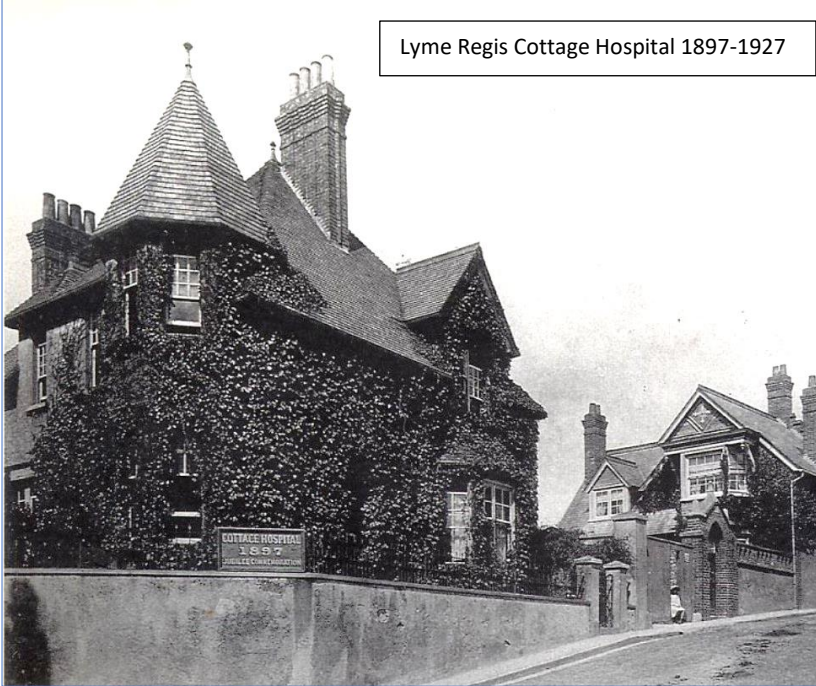
In 1897, Henry Randall sold Nuremberg House, its yard and workshops, to the trustees of the Lyme Regis Cottage Hospital. Henry retired to Plymouth. Their only child, Henry Randall Jnr (born 1869,) had lived with his parents during their time at the Butter market and Nuremberg House. He was a joiner by trade and must have worked for his father. He accompanied his parents to live in their new home at 51 Beaumont Road, Plymouth, from where he set up business as a joiner on his own account. He married Miss Nellie Florence Monk in 1904 and lived in Beatrice Avenue, Plymouth. Henry Randall Snr died in 1912.

**Indenture Dated 14th July 1897 Mr H Randall & Others to Messrs Lister & Others, Conveyance of Nuremberg House and premises in Church Street, Lyme Regis.** This indenture made the 14th July 1897 between Henry Randall, Builder of Lyme Regis (first part), Francis Wills, Bank Manager of Lyme Regis (second part), the Committee (third part) and the Trustees, Arthur Lister, Cuthbert Peek, Edward Reginald John Talbot, Henry Octavius Bickley, and Francis Edmund Radford (the fourth part). For the sum of Nine hundred pounds, Henry Randall conveys unto the Cottage Hospital trustees all that messuage or dwellinghouse situate in Church Street opposite the Parish Church and called Nuremberg House together with the yard, workshops and premises ... bounded on the North by The New National Schools, the South by Monmouth Street, the East by Church Street and the West by a close of land owned by Henry Cornish Henley Esq (as described in the plan below). Summary



1897 Plan

Lyme Regis Cottage Hospital 1897-1927



The Cottage Hospital's time in Church Street has already been written about in the booklet, *The Story of Lyme Regis Hospital 1873-1973* (see Appendix), and more recently in the article by Lizzie Wiscombe in the *Museum Friend*, January 2020 (Issue 35), pp 27-31.

The hospital left its former home at Keble, Cottage, Sidmouth Road to take residence at Nuremberg House, Church Street in 1897.

It moved to its final location at Hernelee, Pound Road in 1927.

The trustees sold the former hospital building to Reginald Walter Baker for £1,560.

**This Conveyance is made the 22nd day of June 1927** Between Alban James Woodroffe of Rhode Hill Uplyme Esq, and Alfred Douglas Pass of Wootton Fitzpaine Esq, Harold John Ramsbotham of Sunny Field Cottage Lyme Regis Solicitor, The Rev Earnest Bramwell of the Rectory Uplyme, and the Rev George Frederick Eyre of Westhill Lyme Regis (called the Vendors) of the one part and Reginald Walter Baker of 21 Broad Street, Restaurant Proprietor (the Purchaser) of the other part ..... The Vendors have agreed to sell the unencumbered fee simple in possession of the hereditaments to the Purchaser, Firstly All that messuage in Church Street formerly called Nuremberg House with outbuildings formerly used as the Cottage Hospital but are now unoccupied, and Secondly All that messuage adjoining the first premises being No 9 Monmouth Street part of which premises was formerly used and occupied with the first premises but is now unoccupied, and the other part is in the occupation of Grace Goldsworthy as tenant of the Vendors.

Extracts

In 1927 Reginald and Margaret Baker were proprietors of the Cosy Café, Clarence Hotel and the Rock Point Private Hotel, all properties in Broad Street. They named this most recent acquisition *The Gables* boarding house.

Margaret was the driving force & brains behind the business ventures, whilst Reginald's interests lay in Town & County politics. He was mayor of Lyme Regis, 1928-31.

1930

**"The Gables"**  
*Boarding House,*  
**LYME REGIS.**

Minute from Sea Front. Liberal Table  
Highly Recommended. Electric Light  
Throughout. Garage. Separate Tables.

DANCE HALL FOR USE OF VISITORS

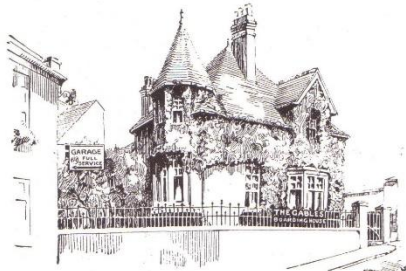
*Terms Very Moderate.*

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LYME REGIS

# THE GABLES HOTEL

(Unlicensed)  
CHURCH STREET



Minute from Sea. Electric Light Throughout.  
Wash Basins (h. & c.) in Bedrooms. Lounge. Smoke Room.  
Separate Tables. Seating Accommodation for 80.

A REALLY MODERN HOTEL, with every convenience  
Terms: 2 to 3½ guineas per week. Special off-season Terms.  
QUOTATIONS FOR PARTIES

**DANCE HALL GARAGE**  
FULL SERVICE A.A. & R.A.C.  
CARS FOR HIRE - Chauffeur Driven or Drive Yourself.

GRAMS: OWENS, LYME REGIS. PHONE 49. J. B. OWEN, M. INST. B. E. PROPRIETOR

J B Owen was the proprietor of the Gables Hotel and the close-by Monmouth Hotel in the 1930s. He also ran a garage in Coombe Street.



Above is the social hall of the Gables where dances and entertainments were held.



To the left, the spacious dining room seating 80.

From the 1960s there was a change from hotel to self-catering units to holiday apartments.

1967

★ Member of the Lyme Regis and District Hotels and Restaurants Association  
Member of the Catering Association of Great Britain

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- ★ Excellent food with choice at all meals
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The Gables 1970  
Self-Catering Hotel

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Well stocked bar; Lounge & TV; Large well equipped games room; Central heating; Free parking; Approx. 150 yards from the beach; Everything supplied including linen, towels etc.


Self-catering mini-breaks and part week bookings up to Spring Bank holiday and after mid September.

Please send stamp for brochure and tariff to the resident proprietors—**Pamela & Jim Moseley** at **The Gables Hotel, Church Street, Lyme Regis DT7 3BS**. Telephone: Management 2536; Visitors 2886.

1979

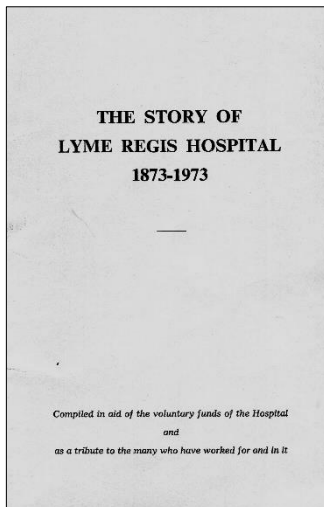
2003

## THE GABLES HOTEL



Holiday apartments  
Tel: 01297 442536 www.smoothhound.co.uk / hotels/gables3.html  
Proprietors: Alan & Christine Simpson

## Appendix



This booklet was published in 1973/74. The names of the authors are not recorded. There is a foreword by Geoffrey Tiarks, The Bishop of Maidstone, who was a former vicar of Lyme Regis.

The hospital became the Lyme Regis Nursing Home in 1995/96.

Part of the booklet has been transcribed here where it relates to the hospital when in Church Street. There are a few points in the text which have been addressed in the light of recent research carried out for this article.

### Transcript:

#### AT THE GABLES<sup>1</sup> — 1897-1927

The Gables, now an hotel, then belonged to a Mrs. Freeman and was occupied by Mrs. Sansom, a "beer retailer".<sup>2</sup> Situated as it was in the older part of the town the hospital was soon accepted as an integral part of the community both by the old and the young, and its use increased steadily. These were anxious years which included the period of the First World War with the many difficulties caused by rising prices and shortages of both staff and supplies, but throughout the work of the hospital expanded, especially in the out-patients' department.

<sup>1</sup> By 1973, the Gables name had only been in existence for 46 years.

c1891-97            Nuremberg House  
1897-1927        Lyme Regis Cottage Hospital  
1927-present day    The Gables

<sup>2</sup> Nuremberg House was built by Henry Randall, who lived there with his wife and son until 1897.

The most necessary alterations were soon carried out and the wards prepared. The men's ward, now with four beds, was on the ground floor, and the women's above it, with a private room and one for the nurses.

An important and up-to-date addition was made in 1903 when the famous surgeon Lord Lister made the generous gift of an operating theatre, which was built behind the men's ward. By that time the antiseptic methods of Lord Lister were widely accepted and had worked a revolution in surgery. His brother, Mr. A. Lister, with his family lived at High Cliff; his niece Miss Lister had been one of the most tireless of the Hospital Ladies, and the family provided all the money necessary for the equipment of the theatre. Not every small hospital then possessed a theatre and the little room at The Gables became very active. A number of smaller operations were performed here successfully, especially for tonsils and appendicitis, often by Dr. Lumsden who came to Lyme in 1915, and whose skill in surgery was widely recognised.

Later in 1916<sup>3</sup> Mr. A. Lister bought for the hospital the adjoining house just round the corner in Monmouth Street then occupied by Mrs. Goldsworthy. She retained possession of the lower part while more ward space was provided on the first floor and later still, since the stairway to it made its use as a ward impossible, the attic was used as a nurse's room. Behind the house was a large yard, part of which was fenced off and let to Mr. Randall and Mr. Radford. A couple or more sheds were erected there, one for four bath-chairs. It was not, however, considered possible to house the donkey and chair offered in 1899 which were regretfully refused in view of the expense and the space required. The much-frequented out-patients' room was at the back of the house and access to it was by the side door. The mortuary was also in an out-building and later another shed housed the X-ray apparatus.

3 The conveyance took place in 1907.

**Conveyance of No 9 Monmouth Street, Lyme Regis Dorset: Indenture dated 10 June 1907** between Jane Wiscombe of the one part and Arthur Lister, Henry Octavius Bickley, Edward John Reginald Talbot and Francis Edmund Radford all of Lyme Regis the present Trustees of The Lyme Regis Cottage Hospital of the other part. In consideration of the sum of two hundred and sixty pounds paid to Jane Wiscombe by the said Trustees Jane Wiscombe as beneficial owner conveys to the Trustees the dwelling house and shop No. 9 Monmouth Street now in the occupation of Grace Goldsworthy.

Summary

Though both site and premises were a great improvement on the two earlier ones they were far from ideal. The Gas Works were close by, the smell from which was unpleasant; there was a noisy flow of horse-drawn traffic; there were also the busy St. Michael's Ironworks up the road. The playground of the National School was under the Hospital windows and the noise from it during many hours of the day must have been disturbing even though the teachers kept their pupils indoors when any patient was seriously ill. Very disturbing, too, were the bells of the parish church opposite, then rung far more frequently than now, and here too an agreement<sup>1</sup>, was reached that they should not be rung in the case of grave illness.

Inside the house the staircase presented the gravest inconvenience. It was narrow and almost spiral, and patients in the upper wards had to be carried up and down either by the doctors, by obliging neighbours or by casual passers-by, even after operations. Later this difficulty was partially overcome by making a section of the banisters detachable, and the hinges on which it hung may still be seen. There were open coal fires in all the rooms, including one in the operating room which had to be doused for fear of combustion when ether was used there. Certainly the boy who was paid one shilling a week to carry up the coal earned his money.

During the first years at The Gables the running costs of the hospital rose steadily but slowly as its use increased, but from 1913 until 1924 they rose very steeply and at the same time income decreased in spite of generous gifts from members of the Committee and their friends. For one thing the salaries had to be increased; nurses and indeed all hospital staff were at a premium during and after the First World War, and nearby at Rhode Hill there was also quite a large hospital run by the Red Cross. The effects of the war on the hospital were mainly economic but a few direct results were experienced. The Committee was asked in 1914 to consider the possibility of receiving any casualties from the sea and it was agreed to keep two beds available for sailors from battleships in the bay. Some of the Committee were anxious to offer six beds for the wounded "who were lying all along the French coast with no available accommodation", but this was felt to be inadvisable and impracticable. The Rhode Hill hospital, which was in fact that very day (1918) receiving a convoy of wounded, was far better suited to nursing such cases, they felt, both because of its position but still more because of the more careful discipline it could impose.

In the event the hospital felt two direct impacts of the war. The first was on the night of New Year's Day, 1915, when a pinnace carrying survivors from H.M.S. Formidable torpedoed in the Channel was driven ashore at Cobb Gate after being battered for 21 hours by a most terrible storm. When they left the sinking ship there had been 71 men in the pinnace but some had died during their long ordeal and others died or were dying on arrival at the beach. The survivors were carried to The Pilot Boat by Mr. W. J. Harding of Churnside who with his family had been first to sight the boat and by many of the townsfolk soon alerted. The sailors were rigid with cold after their long exposure in scanty night-clothes, and some could not be revived. Those who did respond to the warm rooms of the inn or of the surrounding houses and the attentions of the women were taken to other houses in the town in the Mayor's motor car. Those who needed particular nursing care were carried to The Gables also by car, though the number of these is not given. They included the ship's cook who recovered consciousness rather suddenly while being massaged and exclaimed: "Here! stop it, I say; what are you doing to me?" They were kept at the hospital until fit and provided with clothes, writing paper and all urgent needs. Telegrams were sent to their relatives. Some of the ladies from the town gave their help in the hospital during this time.

The second occasion was on March 18th, 1918 (not April 18th as in the hospital minutes) when a ship was torpedoed within sight of Lyme and sank rapidly. The crew took to the boats, one of which was brought by the Lifeboat men to the Cobb. Preparations were hurriedly made, fires lit, an ambulance summoned, hot soup made ready, but the sailors were found to be uninjured though suffering from cold and shock. Two of them were taken to the hospital where they stayed for two nights; the others were fed and made welcome in houses near the Cobb.

When the Rhode Hill hospital closed down in 1919 it offered much of its equipment to the Lyme hospital, ranging from bedsteads, sheets and blankets to the already mentioned X-ray apparatus, and even to men's shirts of which there were so many that they were sold to a local tradesman.

Taking everything into consideration the town could be proud of its hospital and letters of appreciation were received from many grateful patients, one of which may be quoted. It comes from a doctor whose son had been admitted as an emergency case for what is described as a virulent type of appendicitis. "r" . . . It was, I feel, due to Mr. Lumsden's good judgment in deciding to operate at once that I owe my son's life. Such cases . . . require the utmost watchful care and close attention for some time after-wards. This my son has had during the whole of his time in hospital . . . He speaks in the

highest terms' of the great kindness of the Matron and Nurse Hart . . . While I was in Lyme Regis I was in the hospital so frequently that I had ample opportunity of seeing what was being done there, and I, as a medical man, could not help being surprised that so few nurses could make it possible so continuously to do such a large amount of splendid work without apparently showing the strain."

## RUNNING THE HOSPITAL, 1873-1927

Certainly the work of the hospital was gaining appreciation both in the town and outside. Its success was in large part due to the harmonious co-operation between the staff and those outside, chiefly the Ladies, who to a great extent regulated its running and worked to supply its funds. Though frequently changing in detail, the main lines on which the hospital ran did not greatly vary, and much of what was true in 1897 still held good fifty years later.

The doctors of Lyme and the district always took an active interest in the hospital. Dr. Skinner was one of the promoters of its foundation and in the first set of rules the medical department was placed under his control and superintendence. Some of the doctors worked for long periods with the hospital. Dr. Cooper was deeply interested in the dispensary work, and Dr. Ramsden Wood kept up his connection for 24 years until his death in 1924 when a warm tribute was paid to him. The names of other doctors of the early days are still remembered—Dr. Bangay who also acted as secretary to the Committee, Dr. Barratt-Hine who was appointed in 1908, and later Dr. Cook who was appointed in 1915, for example. When, in 1915, Dr. Cooper resigned after doing dispensary work for four years, Dr. Lumsden was appointed; he was generous with both his time and money and was always ready with well-thought-out plans for practical improvements. Mr. Yerbury was the Hon. Dental Surgeon during the First World War, and on his resignation was succeeded by Dr. Taylor, L.D.S. For many years there is little evidence of any co-operation with other hospitals but in 1910 Dr. Russell Coombe of Exeter was appointed Honorary Consulting Surgeon.

Of the nursing staff enough has been said to show how the exigencies of finance limited both their number and their quality. In the early days the essential for a Matron was that she should be a good manager, and one was warned that she would have to leave if she could not be more economical. Her job was certainly a difficult one for not only was she working at all hours, sometimes day and night and somehow supervising district nursing as well, but she had to please the Committee and in particular the Lady Superintendents. It is a tribute to both sides that relations were normally friendly though it did occasionally happen that they were at loggerheads. In 1898 the Matron was summoned before the full Committee and told that she must "work more amicably with the Ladies' Committee", and another was asked to resign as, after having been told not to sack a servant, she did so. Gradually as the general status of nurses improved and as their salary rose the calibre of the Matrons improved; they obviously became interested in their work, identified themselves with the hospital and held their post for much longer periods. Perhaps the first of those to leave her impress on the hospital was Miss Owen who stayed from 1918 till she fell seriously ill in 1922, and whose resignation was received by the Committee with sympathy and regret and with "sincere praise for her successful administration". She was succeeded by Miss Hillman who is still remembered with gratitude in Lyme.

The number of staff and their quality varied considerably, as we have seen, according to the funds available for their salaries, but they gradually built up to a team of a senior nurse, a junior one, sometimes a night nurse, two probationers and a general servant or ward maid.

During the days at Keble Cottage it was realised that it was not possible to run the dispensary and the district nursing from the hospital and the dispensing was given into the hands of the chemist. For a long time one of the hospital nurses was allocated to nursing in the town but this was unsatisfactory and in 1883 a separate District Nurse was appointed. The under nurse had often been capable of acting as a district nurse or simply as a midwife. Unpaid probationers were sometimes employed with board only though they might receive presents such as a dress for good or extra work. But by 1913 even a probationer was offered £18 a year and the assistant nurse £45.

By the turn of the century an advertisement for a Matron offering her £90 a year brought a large number of applications, though quite soon the salary offered had to rise to £120. The Matron was authorised to take on a night nurse when there were sufficient severely ill patients, and later one was appointed for regular duty though a bed had to be found for her outside. Gradually as the salary offered increased and the status of nurses rose, the quality of the junior staff rose also. It was rare for any of the nursing staff to be local people and they were obtained through advertising or personal contact. The probationers came through the Cottage Benefit Nursing Association until this stopped its service in 1912.

The Ladies of the Committee, as we have seen, managed the functioning of the hospital. They appointed all the staff with the exception of the Matron and fixed their salaries subject to the approval of the main committee. They reported on the equipment of all kinds needed both in the wards and in the kitchen, and at their suggestion a very active Linen League was formed to provide and keep the linen in repair. The equipment sounds primitive compared with modern standards, and had to be kept to a minimum to save money. An extra cupboard could be allowed, but a cooker must be repaired or "made to do", unsatisfactory as it was, and a fire-fighting apparatus was considered really not a necessity. An oil lamp would be cheaper than electric light for the X-ray room. Occasionally the Finance Committee complained that they had not been consulted before articles were bought, but the Ladies retorted that it was not worth troubling the gentlemen with the smaller matters, and therefore it was decided in 1912 that an expenditure of up to £5 might be left to their discretion.

The equipment in the hospital grew over the years both in size and efficiency, but until 1948 and the advent of the National Health Service it had always to be chosen primarily with an eye to its cost rather than to convenience or amenity.

With money being the key to everything the main responsibility for raising it fell inevitably on the Ladies, and at the same time the allocation of much of it was recommended to the main Committee by them. The main Committee itself was more closely concerned with encouraging large donations, legacies or gifts.

The Ladies used innumerable ways of raising small sums. Each one had her district of houses in which she tried to get a regular monthly subscription—"from the poorer class to whom the hospital chiefly ministers"—but this did not succeed. All kinds of money-making efforts were made—a regular Pound Day, a Flower Day often arranged by Dr. Cooper's wife, a market both in Lyme and in Charmouth, a Fruit and Egg Day run by the wives of the doctors and, of course, frequent Jumble Sales. Perhaps the most remunerative of all these "efforts" were the Bag Sales of Mrs. Arnold Mitchell which she held at frequent intervals and which might bring in as much as £80 a. time. In fact by the early 1930's she was credited with having made a total of £1,034.1.4 over fifteen years. There must be a number of her bags, some of them beautifully embroidered, in some houses in Lyme today.

Apart from their own "efforts", many of the societies and clubs in the town and neighbourhood were encouraged to contribute part of the proceeds from various functions to the hospital. The churches were asked, to give the proceeds of one offertory to the funds. In 1915, for example, the Liberals gave £12 after a whist drive; a football match between Lyme and Bridport brought in £22; Dorset Freemasons contributed £5, and there was the collection on the annual Queen Alexandra's Day organised over the whole district by the Ladies.

Even though a hospital was then considered to be a charitable institution for those who could afford nothing better, all patients were expected to pay according to their means. For paupers or tramps the Board of Guardians paid a certain amount, ranging in the beginning from 2/6 to 10/- a week, but later rising gradually. Patients recommended by a subscriber, or accident cases, were in 1873 to pay not less than 2/6 nor more than 10/- a week, but by 1910 this figure was raised to 10/- or 5/- for children, and then to 15/- for adults and 10/- for children, although "the actual amount dependent on their circumstances will be fixed by the Hon. Secretary or sub-Committee of Management". It was the Ladies who had the difficult job of assessing the fee to be charged, and it is not to be wondered at that in a place like Lyme where so many people knew all about each other's affairs, or thought they did, there were anomalies and complaints of unfairness. In some cases there was great and pro-longed difficulty in getting any money at all. All these enquiries and investigations both inside and outside the hospital took up a great deal of time and demanded much patience and perseverance on the part of the Ladies. The private ward was less of a problem; any patient who could afford to occupy it paid 10/- (later 15/-) and of course the doctor's fees; indeed the private ward regularly occupied provided a steady and sure income. It was stipulated that infectious cases could not be admitted to the hospital, with the exception of typhoid (or enteric), but there was much disagreement about this between the committee, the medical staff and the Matron, and it was generally ruled that a typhoid case could be admitted only if the private ward were vacant. Finally, however, in 1916 all infectious cases were excluded.

The feeding of the patients was in part also decided by the Ladies who examined the bills and the trades-men's books at every meeting, compared one retailer with another, advised a change of supplier to obtain a lower price, and rephended any apparent extravagance on the part of the Matron. It is interesting to read the list of meals given in early 1914:

Breakfast 7.0 to 8.0 a.m.—Tea, Bread and Butter, Marmalade, Eggs.

Lunch 9.30—Bovril or Milk, Broth or Cocoa, Bread and Butter.

Dinner 12.30—Meat and Pudding.

Tea 4.30—Tea and Bread and Butter.

Supper 7.0—Milk, Cocoa or Coffee or Soup, Bread and Butter.

As has been said, the problem of catering during, but still more after, the 1914 war was acute. Not only did prices rise but food was in the end rationed and many articles became difficult to obtain. Eggs were very scarce, butter was in short supply so they tried to get a firkin of it from Ireland; potatoes were short because of the disease caused partly by the ceaseless rain, and stocks of them as well as of onions were laid in. Wood was almost unobtainable so fire-lighters had to be used and even they were difficult to get.

Thanks largely to the efforts of the Ladies the cost of maintaining the patients was kept very low though it is difficult to ascertain just what is covered by the figures quoted. The cost per person is given for 1916 as 10¼d., though this of course rose and in 1919 is given as 19d., but these figures cannot cover more than food. In 1923 the figure given is 5/3½d. which probably covers laundry or surgical dressings which are mentioned in the context as being expensive.

There were some complaints from patients though very few. After the 1914 war when catering was particularly difficult an ex-soldier complained about the food but "he was not in a condition to criticize being in an excited state from trench fever. He afterwards withdrew the charge and apologised". Later another "inmate of the hospital" said that the patients were not properly fed. Miss Silva, one of the most active and efficient Ladies, produced the menus for two weeks and the Committee, though deprecating excessive economy, agreed that there were no grounds for complaint, that the statements circularised by the woman were unjustified, and that she should be warned as laying herself open to proceedings.



From the regular reports given quarterly by the Ladies to the main committee it seems that the therapeutic results achieved by their concerted efforts were at least up to average. A typical report in the 1920's runs:

Cases left in from last quarter	7
Admitted	11
Cured	8
Transferred to Bridport	1
Improved	1
No improvement	2
Death	1

There is never a mention of empty beds, and no returns were given for the out-patients' department which was always busy. This was indeed an efficient and a well-organized band of workers who under its excellent Matron, Miss Hillman, were still searching for a home more worthy of them.

End of Transcript

### References

Ancestry.co.uk  
British Newspaper Archive  
Deeds from a private collection  
Lyme Regis Museum archives and LRM Research Team's digital archives