



## Maldon Hospital

*Committed to care since 1859*

### 100 YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

#### Thanks to Maldon People

The Centenary of the Maldon Hospital provides an opportunity to pay tribute to all those staunch supporters, past and present, who year after year, have helped in one way or another to keep our doors open.

Our records show in some instances that three generations of some families have been actively associated with the welfare of the Hospital; and it is pleasing to see that the quality of mercy is not strained with the passing of the years.

It is doubtful whether any township, similar to Maldon, raises so much money per head of population for its hospital each year, and, on behalf of the Committee of Management of the Maldon Hospital, I thank everybody concerned for their generosity and continued support.

Your committee decided in view of the significance of this year that it would be appropriate to include A Story of the Hospital in this Centenary Annual Report.

This necessitated a great deal of research into Hospital records, minute books, annual reports, etc., and old newspaper files. It has produced some interesting facts.

I commend this story of a hundred years to all our Hospital friends and feel it will fill a gap in Maldon's early history.

A. R. DABB, President

August 31, 1859, promised to be a reasonably quiet day in Victoria. A political storm was subsiding. The O'Shanassy Government had just received a severe battering at the polls and former Ministers were licking their wounds. The Tarrangower Times had noted that Maldon townsfolk had been "unusually active" since the result of the elections had become known. In high circles some concern was being expressed at the falling off in the escort returns from the goldfields.

There was all the excitement of a suspected murder at Malmsbury. Some folk seemed to be mildly interested in trouble between far distant Franco and Austria. Shareholders in Melbourne were discussing the date for a start upon the railway between the Big City and Essendon.

Turn the spotlight now upon Maldon. Here people are still talking of an earthquake shock that had recently been felt in the Bendigo area. Only a few days ago they had celebrated the opening of telegraphic communication between Maldon and Melbourne. Altogether, that August day was quite a normal one in the town that clung to the skirts of Mount Tarrangower - the little town with its picturesque population of Australian miners and Chinese, busy in the quest for gold; with its plans for many buildings still to come.

#### First Patient

But it was a day that is notable in the town's history. For it was on August 31, 1859, that the first patient was received and treated in Maldon's Hospital. His ailment - nothing more dramatic than rheumatism. So began, in this unspectacular way, the story of one hundred years of public service, for which Maldon citizens have good reason to be thankful.

The patient's name is unknown. Unfortunately, many early Hospital records have disappeared. But he was received in a temporary wooden structure. Exactly where this was situated seems to be a matter of

doubt but it was not very elaborate because the big, permanent Hospital was already planned, and its foundation stone was to be laid within a year. Meanwhile the wooden structure was, at least, fitted out for the medical care and nursing of a limited number of patients. It was, indeed, the culmination of much hard work and public agitation; for the need for a hospital on the busy goldfield had long been recognised, and forcefully voiced.

### **People's Leader**

The Maldon gold diggings first came into the news in 1853, and gold quartz was found in January, 1854. There was a rush of eager gold seekers to the camps at the foot of Mount Tarrangower and the settlement started to grow rapidly. In 1859 much development was still to come, but there was already plenty of activity in the town which was beginning to develop a "mushroom growth", marked by the erection of many public buildings. By 1861 the population was to grow to 3,341, and Maldon to become eighth in the list of Victorian cities and towns. So it is not surprising that the public demand for medical facilities had become irresistible by 1859.

### **Hospital Wanted**

The campaign was spear-headed by a number of good citizens and by the municipal council who had applied in February of that year for a government grant of £3,000 towards the establishment of a hospital. Most prominent amongst these pioneer fighters for this essential institution was Robert Cleghorn Mackenzie, a quite remarkable young citizen who was to become the Hospital's first President, and whose memory is perpetuated by a marble tablet in the present entrance hall. He is worthy of special study for his sense of public duty and community service was outstanding.

He was the son of a Dr. Mackenzie of Edinburgh, and had a barrister and an Indian army officer as brothers. He arrived in Adelaide from Scotland in 1849 to follow the calling of a squatter. But gold discoveries in Victoria lured him away from his sheep - rather unhappily it seemed then, for gold proved to be an uncertain mistress. But it was Maldon's gain.

Robert Cleghorn, having struck trouble, was helped by his cousin, Lachlan McKinnon - later well known as one of the proprietors of the Argus - to obtain the post of an Assistant Goldfields Commissioner. As such, he served at Bendigo, Castlemaine and Blackwood, and was transferred to Maldon in 1856 as Warden and Police Magistrate. He was then only 27. But he at once made his mark in the community, and must have had all the qualities of a leader.

### **Made His Mark**

Paying a tribute to his memory when he died at the age of 37 in 1866, the Tarrangower Times said:  
"He identified himself with every movement having for its object the advancement of Maldon, and the benefit of its inhabitants. He has been, since its inauguration, President of the Maldon Hospital Committee, and always most energetically attended to the duties pertaining to that office. Up to recently he was Chairman of the Trustees of the Maldon Cemetery, and for years held office as a warden of the Episcopal Church in Maldon."

Add to these posts high office in Masonic ranks - the Mackenzie Lodge was named after him; Presidency of the Maldon Garrick Club and of the cricket club; membership of the Volunteer Cavalry; and general civic duties, and you have a picture of the driving force of the young man who did much to stir up the public, and to get Maldon its Hospital. No wonder the shops closed when the townsfolk heard of his death.

It is probably not generally known, by the way, that one of the largest single charitable contributions of £1000 was given to the Hospital by the family of the late R. C. Mackenzie. This money was received from England about 1940 - a tribute to his memory.

His had been the leading spirit in the long series of public meetings which led, in April 1859, to the voting by Maldon Council of £100 towards the proposed Hospital. Nearly twelve months earlier the

Tarrangower Times had declared that “there is now every possibility of the Maldon Hospital becoming a fact”, and already members of the public were promising subscriptions. Public and press agitation burned fiercely throughout 1858 - so fiercely that it seems to have aroused uneasiness in the ranks of the Castlemaine Hospital Board which feared competition for its funds!

### **Rapid Progress**

On March 10, 1859, a public meeting requested Robert Cleghorn Mackenzie to convene a really big gathering - the request being signed by James Warnock, Thomas Tobin and 25 other citizens; and this meeting was duly held at the Kangaroo Hotel five days later. Among other things, it appointed a committee to collect subscriptions and generally to start up the machinery for the actual creation of the Hospital. This committee comprised Messrs. Mackenzie, Hall, J. W. Wright, Palmer, Thompson, Felix, J. Wright, Warnock and Smith, together with clergy of all denominations and medical men as ex-officio members. It was this committee which henceforth pushed on with the campaign - to victory.

### **Fierce Campaign**

Events now moved rapidly. A public meeting on April 29 adopted plans for a temporary building. A Hospital Committee was appointed to manage the institution. Towards the end of May tenders were out for the erection of part of the permanent hospital; plans for future management and organisation had been drawn up.

### **Hospital Work Starts**

The first meeting of public subscribers was held in mid-August when rules were drafted for the government of the Hospital. It was announced that the temporary building was ready for patients and that a dispenser, Mr. W. T. Walmsley, and his wife, had been appointed. By August 19, the temporary hospital, with accommodation for six patients, was really in working order and open for business! And this, as related, came to it in the form of the first patient on August 31. Incidentally, this same patient was discharged on October 7.

This is mentioned in a medical report presented to the House Committee meeting on October 31, by W. T. Walmsley. Attached were the signatures of Dr. C. H. Hardy, Dr. Adrian Kupferberg, Messrs. S. J. Thomas, M.R.C.S.L., M. T. Mason, M.R.C.S.L. and R. C. Mackenzie. The report also mentions that the first death occurred at the Hospital on October 2, and that six patients had been admitted since the institution was opened - a rather surprising total. More might have been expected. But hospital activities were now in full swing.

### **Gift of Land**

Here, then, was the “Hospital-in-being” - the real fruit of the public-spirited leadership of R. C. Mackenzie. He had received splendid help from many stout colleagues; and in the next few years many prominent in Maldon's early history figure in the lists of Life Governors, Presidents and Committee members. It is interesting, too, to note that the land on which the present Hospital stands was donated by the late David Hutton, grandfather of Mrs. T. M. Baxter and Miss A. E. Hutton of Maldon. Another member of the Hutton family prominently associated with the Hospital was David Hutton's son, Robert Hutton, who was, for many years, Secretary of the institution.

### **Stone is Laid**

The temporary building, opened in 1859, was soon replaced. The foundation stone of the permanent structure was laid on June 25, 1860, and building of the first section was begun - to be enlarged to a two-storey building later. The architect was D. R. Drape and the builders Messrs. Hornsby and Briscoe. Arrangements for the laying of the stone were made by the Southern Cross Lodge - it was not unusual for Freemasons Lodges to officiate at such ceremonies. Members of the Southern Cross and Mackenzie

Lodges assembled in full regalia for the occasion. In a cavity of the stone they placed membership scrolls of the Lodges, names of the Hospital Committee, coins and newspaper's of the day. Five sovereigns were thoughtfully placed on the stone "for the refreshment of the workmen" and a good time, no doubt, was had by all!

### What Buildings Cost

Although much has been lost, some early records of the Hospital were recently turned up. In a Register of Patients 1872, were found particulars of the cost of the original buildings, and dates of construction. They show the gradual development of the institution - and the different costs of other days! According to these records the total cost of the building was £2548/13/6. Compare the costs in 1959, when the building is insured for over £30,000! The total of £2548 odd is made up as follows:

June 1859	Wooden building	£110
May 1860	Male ward	£554/16/-
October 1862	Female ward	£763/5/-
April 1867	Middle buildings	£78/5/-
April 1870	Kitchen	£67/7/6
September 1868	Closets	£25/-/-
1875 (no month given)	Dining room	£150/-/-

### Forgotten Books Tell Story of Passing Years

Presumably references to a kitchen and dining room refer to a rebuilding operation to replace more or less unsatisfactory structures.

Such were the beginnings of the story of the Hospital which for just on a century has looked down on the roofs of a developing, and changing, Maldon. It has seen the town rise swiftly to a peak of activity, only to sink into a more peaceful old age as the voices of the departing gold seekers died away. Throughout the years the stream of sick and suffering folk has flowed through its doors; hundreds of new, little citizens have been carried out through them by proud mothers. Generally, the building's story has been a peaceful one.

### History in Books

Moments of sensational drama were rare - save for the drama of illness, recovery, death. Outside the walls could be wars, political upheavals, economic storms. Inside, they went on quietly with the job of healing and nursing - doctors, nurses and staff in a community service.

A voyage of discovery through some of the old Committee Minutes Books reveals some highlights. But it forces the conclusion that, in essentials, life in the Hospital was much the same a century ago as it is today. Year after year the management and committee face similar problems, and make similar decisions. Ordering of supplies, raising and spending of funds, staff discipline, plans for renewals and additions - all these figure continually in the record.

### Easter Fair

One interesting medical change is noticeable - the decline in the numbers of children admitted for treatment. Registers of patients, even as late as 1900, mention quite a number of children. They are comparatively scarce today - proof, surely, of medical and dietary progress.

As you turn the musty pages of these ancient books some entries catch your eye. In 1865 the Ladies' Benevolent Association was formed to relieve distress - the Hospital was, of course, for many years also a Benevolent Asylum. In 1865 one sees, too, that the Christmas Day menu in the institution included not only soup, roast beef and plum pudding but also porter. In those days, indeed, the Committee frequently called for tenders for the supply of wine, beer and brandy - luxuries which do not figure in

today's order book. In 1879, for instance, we find the Committee discussing the desirability of supplying "China tea and loaf sugar" to inmates; and then dealing with tenders received for these items: brandy, ale (best brands), port wine and stout. Note that brandy was quoted at 5/3 a bottle and ale ("best brands") at 13/6 a dozen!

In 1865 they erected in the hall the marble tablet in memory of the first President, Robert Mackenzie.

An important entry in the minutes some years later refers to the holding of the "first Easter Fair". This happened on April 2, 1878. How much this annual Fair has since meant to the Hospital is well known to the Maldon people and to the Hospital Committee alike.

### **Fashionable Function**

According to the press, this first Fair attracted the greatest gathering so far seen in Maldon and raised £157/13/1, which was divided between the Hospital and the Benevolent Association. Year after year, in the Minutes, reference to the Easter Fair appears - and to the work done for it by the Maldon Fire Brigade.

The now traditional Hospital Sunday gatherings were started some years later and helped substantially to raise funds. Sometimes, it appears, over 1,000 coins were placed in the collection boxes - what coins is not stated. Similar gatherings were held in Castlemaine, and there was great fashion rivalry between the fair ladies of Castlemaine and Maldon on these occasions. The Band would march through Maldon streets and a combined choir would sing. Altogether it became quite a fashionable Sunday event.

### **Merry-Go-Round**

In connection with the Fair, by the way, the Hospital acquired a merry-go-round during the early years, and in 1889 one finds the Miners' Association wanting to hire it for a function. The Hospital Committee asked £5 for the hire, £1/10/- for turning, and "10/- for a player". The miners declared that the price was too high, and obviously felt hurt about it. The dispute was settled happily some time later.

There are gaps - sometimes of years - in the collection of record books. But those surviving present a kind of pageant of Maldon life. Names well-known even today figure in the Committee's activities. There are gleams of humor, too. Here for instance is an entry in a record book of 1893. It is a reference, apparently, to a person who was unpopular - whether a patient or a staff member is not clear: "Have seen the pet beast and think he is too good to be here. The waxworks would be his proper sphere".

### **Inventions Adopted**

There is a story of progress in these volumes. In May 1879 one sees that the Committee agreed to have repairs made to the "galvanic machine" - this is the first mention of electrical equipment, for this was long before the days of X-rays. It refers, presumably, to an old fashioned coil for administering "electric shocks". Grand-parents of the present jet-age generation may recall such machines. In 1908 the Committee dealt with the question of installing a telephone. In 1937 it is noted that Mr. W. B. Rewell "had been good enough to install an electric wireless set". Today a T.V. set is providing some amusement in off-duty hours at the Hospital.

Some other similar entries inform us that it was decided in 1889 that gas should be laid on for lighting and cooking. In 1900 it was decided to buy a "laughing gas appliance"; and in the same year electric bells were installed in some of the wards.

### **Matters of Discipline**

So it goes on from year to year - sidelights and highlights. The same scenes with different players.

Beards give place to moustaches; moustaches to clean-shaven faces. But patients remain fundamentally much the same - though medical treatment improves and changes. In December 1905 one finds an entry: "That the Doctor's attention be drawn to the annoying and unbecoming conduct of the patient - and he be asked to ascertain if he (the patient) is still a fit subject for an inmate". Of what the conflict complained of consisted is not stated. The signature of the well remembered Dr. Gray is attached to these minutes.

Matters of discipline appear from time to time in the records. There is an intriguing minute in June 1902 which declares "That Dr. Allan be informed that he must not bring patients without first procuring a properly filled-in ticket, and that the matron be treated with respect". Twelve days later the sequel appears: "Dr. Allan tendered his resignation as honorary consulting surgeon" and a sub-committee was formed to see him and to ask him to re-consider the matter! This Dr. Allan duly did "provided it was stated what his duties were to be; what remuneration he was to receive; and at whose request he was to attend the hospital".

### **Damages Paid**

The minutes of the meeting on August 5, 1904, mention friction between the cook, the housemaid and the matron. This, and other troubles led to the matron being asked for her resignation and the annual report of 1906 mentions that her services "were dispensed with". That was not the end. The report goes on: "This led to an action being brought against your Committee which cost this Institution £56/3/0". In the accounts passed for payment by the Committee appears the brief entry "Damages and costs £56/3/0". No details are given, but presumably there was an action concerned with length of notice.

### **Matron Resigned**

Another, anonymous matron figures in a quaint entry in October 1906: "That the matron be informed that she is not to alter or in any way tamper with any of the books of the Committee". Somebody also moved - and the Committee agreed - that a drawer that could be locked should be fitted to the table. It is not, perhaps, surprising that the Committee, at its next meeting "accepted the matron's resignation"!

But these are passing - and minor - storms. For the most part the Hospital has sailed along peacefully enough, through the century. The daily average number of in-patients did not vary much. In 1906 it is reported at 21. In 1909 fifty years ago - the figure was 16.08. For the present year ended June 30 last the total was 8.8; and for the last year or two has averaged round about 9.0. Maldon's population has declined since the feverish gold days, but there is a steady demand now for a reduced number of hospital beds. Incidentally, the total cost of running the Hospital today is now a little over £15,000 per annum.

### **People Help**

In 1912 it was decided that action should be taken to do away with the Benevolent section - the cost of running the Benevolent Asylum plus the Hospital had been giving the Committee some headaches. In due course this step was taken, and the situation was relieved.

Records of later years are, perhaps, less picturesque than those that begin the story. The Hospital had long since settled down into a self-contained routine. Outside events, such as the First World War hardly penetrated into the wards. Maldon population declined gradually, and some of the demand for hospital accommodation declined, too; but there was always a steady flow of in and out patients.

### **Long Service**

The tradition of help is well sustained today. There is, for instance, the steady work of the Hospital

Auxiliary, which was formed on July 17, 1930. The office bearers then appointed were: President, Mrs. A. Haybittle; Vice-president, Mrs A. Meyer; Treasurer, Miss E. Dennis. Members present at this first meeting were Mesdames A. G. Williams, R. A. Grigg, T. Bell, R. Rewell, .L Gaynor. Apperly, West, S, Rowe, C. Stewart, N. Neilson, A. Bowe and Misses Calder, Henry and Laidler. Since its formation the Auxiliary has helped the institution in many ways - in the raising, of funds, organisation of functions and in sewing; and it is doing so today. The present office bearers comprise; President, Miss G. Brooks; Vice-presidents, Mrs. E. Rewell and Mrs. S. Rowe; Treasurer, Mrs. S. Rewell; Secretary, Mrs. R. Simmonds; Buyers, Mrs. E. Rewell and Mrs. J. Bowe, and Tea Captain, Mrs. K. Laity.

Continued work of the Easter Fair organisers has already been referred to; and in the Hospital's history the long service of at least two members of the present Hospital Committee must surely be mentioned. There is Mr. A. G. Williams, for instance, who has sat on the Committee for no less than 42 years, and been twice President. Service for 20 years, also with two spells in the President's chair. covering six years, is the record of Mr. R. A. Grigg. Such men as these, giving voluntary service, together with many others, have notably helped to make possible the hundred years of public service which the Maldon Hospital is now celebrating.

### **These Doctors Served Us**

Earlier in this story we have shown how the first medical appointment to the Maldon Hospital was that of a dispenser. But of course doctors followed, and in some years two, or even three were working together. Every care has been taken to ensure accuracy, but in cases where official records were incomplete, verbal information based on personal recollection has been accepted. It is regretted that no information is available in respect of the years 1859 - 63, or from 1878 - 85. the list is as follows:

1859 - 63	Dr. C. H. Hardy and Dr. Adrian Kupferberg (but information unavailable)
1865 - 67	Dr. I. O'Neill and Dr. Craig
1867 - 68	Dr. O'Neill, Dr. Craig and Dr. A. E. Byrne
1869 - 75	Dr. O'Neill and Dr. Byrne
1876 - 77	Dr. A. E. Byrne
1878 - 85	Information unavailable
1886 - 99	Dr. A. J. Farr
1900 - 03	Dr. Farr and Dr. E. Buller Allan
1903 - 05	Dr. Farr, Dr. Gray and Dr. Allan
1906 - 38	Dr. Gray
1939	Dr. Gray and Dr. Featherstone
1940 - 44	Dr. Featherstone
1945	Dr. Dempster
1946	Dr. Smithwick
1947	Dr. M. S. Benson and Dr. Ida M. Seward
1948	Dr. Benson
1949	Dr. Benson and Dr. H. Leggo
1950 - 53	Dr. Leggo
1954 - 55	Dr. M. Clark
1950 - 59	Dr. W. L. Champion

### **These Men have served Maldon**

In the course of its hundred years of history Maldon Hospital has been splendidly served by a number of public-spirited Presidents, of whom, as we have seen, Robert Cleghorn Mackenzie was the first. Those men have given much time to the organisation and working of the institution and to the general leadership of the Committee. The list of men who have filled this office is as follows:

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R. C. Mackenzie	1859 - 66	Wm. Wood	1914
F. E. Courtin	1867 - 71	Henry Bryson	1915
Thorns Hannay	1872	S. J. Walker	1916
Rev. J. C. T. Stretch	1873 - 74	J. T. Couchman	1917
James Warnock	1875 - 78	Frederick West	1918
Rev. J. C. T. Stretch	1879 - 80	Alfred C. Meyer	1919
James Wearne	1881	A. G. Williams	1920
John Tobin	1882	W. P. Apperly	1921
Wm. P. Gray	1883 - 84	Wm. Wood	1922
F. W. Bristow	1885	J. Bryson	1923
John Paull	1886	Rev. W. T. Abott	1924
Francis Cavenagh	1887	R. P. Jones	1925
James Elliott	1888	Wm. Wood	1926
Edwin F. Pierce	1889	T. Wearne	1927
James Fairley	1890	J. Laidler	1928
James H. Rule	1891	Pastor H. Long	1929
Rev. R. W. Cooke	1892	W. B. Apperly	1930
A. S. Robinson	1893 - 94	W. L. Rewell	1930 - 31
Wm B. Gray	1895	A. H. Robertson	1932 - 33
V. T. Rollason	1896	F. West	1934 - 35
John R. Campbell	1897	T. Wearne	1936
John Tobin	1898	C. Stewart	1937
Samuel Rodda	1899	J. J. Huish	1938
George Ralph	1900	T. H. Grigg	1939
R. L. Nankivell	1901	A. Brownbill	1940
John Somer	1902	R. A. Grigg	1941
Thomas Hayes	1903	H. E. Parsons	1942
John B. Hibbert	1904	G. R. Williams	1942 - 44
Robert D. Oswald	1905	N. H. Neilson	1944
Alfred C. Meyer	1906	A. G. Williams	1944 - 47
W. J. Faulkner	1907 - 08	Chas. Stewart	1947 - 49
J. T. Couchman	1909	Chas. Collard	1949 - 51
John Bowen	1910	A. H. J. Boreham	1951
Robert Chisholm	1910 - 11	T. F. McKeogh	1952
T. F. Rollason	1912	R. A. Grigg	1952 - 57
Pierce W. Bowe	1913	A. R. Dabb	1957 - 59

Since 1859 the Hospital has seen big changes in medical work, in nursing technique, in equipment. But there have been few changes in the system of control and administration. As in 1859, so today, a committee of citizens - now aided by a permanent manager - runs the institution. From it are drawn the Executive of office bearers, the Finance Committee and the House Committee. It was much the same a hundred years ago.

Perhaps the most vital differences between 1859 and 1959 are to be seen in the effects upon hospital work and the admission of patients due to modern social welfare legislation; and in the general control of policy and financial aid by the Hospitals and Charities Commission. These are important developments in the Hospital's story of one hundred years.

For the work of research and compilation, and the writing of this story, our thanks are due to Mr. Ralph Simmonds.