



THE HOSPITAL AT BURGHLEY

It became apparent early in the war that existing military and civilian hospitals would be unable to cope with the number of wounded and as a result buildings such as universities, hotels and private houses were hastily converted into hospitals. Burghley was classified as a 'Class B' Convalescent Hospital which meant the patients were not bedridden.

The Soldiers wore blue uniforms with a red tie, known as 'Hospital Blues'. They were treated as though still on active service. They had to obey orders and needed a signed pass if leaving the hospital for any reason. They could visit Stamford on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, the object being for "getting fresh air and exercise, not to spend the time in the streets..."

The Commandant and Matron was Nurse Mildred Cathcart. Additional nursing staff; Nurses Mary Cathcart, Musgrove, Jones, and an Orderly called Partridge, helped with the day to day cleaning and nursing duties. Doctor Greenwood, a local doctor, gave additional medical care as required.



Before the first soldiers arrived there had been a great deal of searching around the servants' quarters to find enough beds for them to use. Some alterations had to be carried out including additional plumbing for sinks in 'Orange Court', now the Orangery Restaurant, where the soldiers were to be accommodated.

The first soldiers, 15 Belgian officers, arrived at Burghley in October 1914; British soldiers were first admitted a month later. Initially there were 15 patients being cared for at any one time, but in 1916 this figure increased to 20.



Nurse Mildred Cathcart

*Monday Porridge Rabbit Pie Breakfast
Dinner Hare Soup Cold Beef
Supper Cold Leg of Mutton*

*Tuesday Porridge Mutton Chops Breakfast
Dinner Hare Soup Cold Beef
Supper Cold Meat*

*Wednesday Porridge Sausages
Dinner Lentil Soup Beef Steak Pudding
Supper Bread and Cheese*

*Thursday Porridge Boiled Eggs
Dinner Fish Rice Soup
Supper Bread and Cheese*

*Friday Porridge Cold Ham Breakfast
Dinner Stewed Steak Sage Pudding
Supper Cold Meat*

*Saturday Porridge Sausages Breakfast
Dinner Roast Beef Apple Tart
Supper Bread and Cheese*

*Sunday Porridge Sausages
Dinner Roast Beef Apple Tart
Supper Bread and Cheese*

MENU FOR A WEEK

Monday
Breakfast - Porridge, Rabbit Pie
Dinner - Hare Soup, Cold Beef
Supper - Cold Leg of Mutton

Tuesday
Breakfast - Porridge, Mutton Chops
Dinner - Stewed Rabbits, Pancakes
Supper - Cold Meat

Wednesday
Breakfast - Porridge, Sausages
Dinner - Lentil Soup, Beef Steak Pudding
Supper - Bread and Cheese

Thursday
Breakfast - Porridge, Fish
Dinner - Stewed Hare, Bread Pudding
Supper - Cold Meat

Friday
Breakfast - Porridge, Boiled Eggs
Dinner - Fish, Rice Soup
Supper - Bread and Cheese

Saturday
Breakfast - Porridge, Cold Ham
Dinner - Stewed Steak, Sage Pudding
Supper - Cold Meat

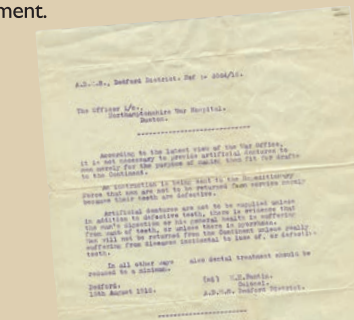
Sunday
Breakfast - Porridge, Sausages
Dinner - Roast Beef, Apple Tart
Supper - Bread and Cheese

HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATION

Rationing was introduced during the war and the hospital was sent reminders about how much food was to be given to the patients. Supplies were allocated on an 'amount per patient' basis, eg; 3 oz. fish per patient and staff member per day, 4oz of jam per person, 6lbs of 'B' grade tea per week for the hospital. Hospitals able to grow fruit could request extra sugar for jam making. In 1917 the situation must have deteriorated as the sugar allocation reduced from 3/4 to 1/2 lb per patient per week.

Petrol was strictly rationed and even Lady Exeter's request for extra fuel to take soldiers for rides in her car was refused.

Many patients must have taken advantage of their stay in hospital to have dental treatment, particularly extractions and the fitting of false teeth. In 1914 this was a luxury for many of the soldiers as dental care was often very expensive in this period. In 1916 the administrators soon put a stop to 'unnecessary' dental treatment.



In 1917 the hospital was warned of problems of tetanus in soldiers suffering from 'Trench Foot'. This condition, caused by prolonged exposure of feet to damp and cold conditions, affected many.

Other recorded injuries included; gunshot and shrapnel wounds, pyrexia (a fever of unknown origin), pneumonia, trench fever and the effects of gas attacks. While Mildred Cathcart was responsible for the nursing and medical needs of the soldiers the administration was shared with the Marchioness. Ordering food, medical supplies, uniforms and completion of numerous forms must have taken much of their time.

Items ordered included: 14 mugs, 8 chairs, 1 puzzle, 1 quoits, 14 pairs of men's felt slippers, dark green blinds, 24 pairs of socks, 8 screens - 5' 10" high, 2 doz. breakfast plates, 2 teapots, 2 jugs, 6 egg cups, 15 bed spreads, 1 kettle, 4 candlesticks 2 enamel basins and 1 dozen teaspoons.



PRECAUTIONS TO TAKE.....

Zeppelin Raids

England was attacked from the air by Zeppelins. Stamford was threatened as it had a munitions factory and blackout procedures were introduced in December 1915. Instructions issued say what was to be done if a Zeppelin was sighted.



"On first sign of alarm, by messenger, hearing zeppelin engines, sighting them, or by hearing an explosion, immediately put out, or properly screen all lights.....
Get the women and children out into the open away from buildings.....
A favourable night for zeppelins is when the barometer is fairly steady at thirty degrees, and somewhat cloudy. Heavy rain, continuous snow or a high wind, they do not like....."

Burns from Blister Gas

Precautions had to be taken in case Gas Bombs were dropped:

"If a Gas Bomb explodes and you are in the street, or in a damaged building, you may become splashed with liquid gas. If you are you will develop SERIOUS BURNS unless the following simple treatment is carried out immediately:-

Dab up with a rag or a pocket handkerchief any liquid on the exposed skin of your hands or face....The rag used is dangerous and should be burnt or buried at once.

Rub into the areas of skin which have been exposed to the liquid gas Anti-Gas Ointment No. 32 until it vanishes. If Anti-Gas Ointment is not available wash with hot water and soap, it will be equally effective"