

History of the College of Nursing.

In 1916 when the College of Nursing was in its early beginnings, Miss Cox Davies and Miss Rundle happened to hear that Mr. Asquith's house in Cavendish Square was for sale and they went to have a look at it. Miss Cox Davies decided at once that this was a suitable site for a Nurses Club and for the College of Nursing a project very dear to all their hearts for some time. They put the suggestion of trying to acquire this property before the committee at once and Miss Cox Davies was asked how she proposed to find the money. She suggested that some rich person should be asked to be banker until the money could be collected as she thought it was an ideal chance. She was laughed at and asked if she had anyone to suggest as banker. She suggested Lady Cowdray as the only really rich woman with whom she was intimate at that time who was likely to be interested in such a scheme. The Committee again laughed at her and told her it was her funeral and if she liked to set it in motion she could.

She wrote to Lady Cowdray whose Secretary replied that Lady Cowdray was shortly to leave town and if the matter was urgent, her only free time was five minutes while travelling in her carriage from her own house to a dinner party on some close date. Miss Cox Davies accepted the invitation and sat beside Lady Cowdray in her yellow carriage for five minutes on her way to a dinner party. She outlined her scheme. Lady Cowdray neither by look nor gesture intimated her feelings but asked for certain pieces of business information to be procured about the site saying "I do not know whether I can think of anyone to help you but I cannot touch it without this information. Feeling still more hopeless, Miss Cox Davies left Lady Cowdray but procured the information demanded and sent it at the time requested. She was told that if Lady Cowdray could do anything about the matter she would hear on a certain day. During this day Miss Cox Davies went about her business at the Royal Free Hospital and had almost given up hope when she received a telegram from Lady Cowdray giving her authority to instruct certain lawyers to proceed on Lady Cowdray's behalf. Later Lord Cowdray came with Lady Cowdray and viewed the place, heard what was wanted and together they decided that the Nurses must have what they wanted - a Club facing on Cavendish Square and College premises at the back on Henrietta Street.

In 1922 the place was finished but it was not until some years after the first negotiations had been carried out that Miss Cox Davies had the least idea that the Cowdrays intended to

finance the whole scheme. The Cowdrays put up the money for the Club and for building the College of Nursing and for all the equipment. Miss Cox Davies was the main mover in the collection of the £30,000 as an endowment which was invested in the site of the College of Nursing. She has done this, I understand, during the last five or six years. When the College was built there was absolutely no money for salaries to start the working of the College and when Lady Cowdray realised this she guaranteed £1,000 a year for seven years to meet this need until they could collect the endowment which Miss Cox Davies has since achieved. The last year of the seven years period ends this year, 1934.

The administration of the College of Nursing is as follows:

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| Secretary and her staff who manage) all the business side |) | Miss Rundle, now retired, succeeded by Miss Goodall, who had been her chief assistant |
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| Director of Education | Miss Parsons |
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| Secretary of Education | Miss McEwen |
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There is no full time teaching staff but courses of instruction are arranged to be given by outside lecturers on various subjects as required.

No one is eligible to take courses at the College of Nursing unless they are State Registered Nurses. The idea of the whole Institution is to give opportunity to qualified Nurses for extending their education and knowledge generally.

It is governed by a Council.

(Noted dictated by the Secretary, 20th July 1934)

Royal College of Nursing. (Portland Place)

About the same time as the project for building the premises of the College of Nursing was being carried out, some other anonymous donor is reported to have left £100,000 for the foundation of a College of Nurses under the direction of Mrs. Bedford Fenwick. Mr. Bedford Fenwick is said to be a Trustee of the Fund and Mrs. Bedford Fenwick has a salary of £500 as Director or Head of the College.

The College is situated in Portland Place just opposite the buildings used by the General Nursing Council. The subscribing members are said to grow less and less and as a College it is said to be quite a dead place. No classes of any kind take place there. It is not known for what the rest of the fund is used other than the up-keep of this house and the salary of Mrs. Bedford Fenwick.

It was once rumoured that this £1000,000 was that which came later than the 1930 Endowment Fund (District Nurses) but this is now known not to be a fact.

The 1930 Endowment.

This is the name given to ^{a sum of} £100,000 given by an anonymous donor for relieving distress among District Nurses. The donor put the money in the hands of Trustees, five men and six women. All the women have to be connected with the Nursing profession. The men are important personages in the world and represent the legal, medical professions as well as the world of finance. The administration of the money is in accordance with the terms of a Trust Deed drawn up by the donor. Each year the donor arranges for a social lunch or dinner at the Savoy to which all the committee entrusted with the administration of the fund are invited and at which they all sign a menu which is transmitted to the donor through his lawyer.

When the money market went down and income from the fund went from 5% to 3½% another £20,000 was added to the fund through the donor's legal representatives. At regular intervals a report is submitted to the donor giving an account of all the cases relieved and those which are on the waiting list. Recently when the report gave a certain number of needy cases which it had not been possible to relieve, £1,000 was sent to the Committee not for investment but for additional relief.

Every year at Christmas every person on the relief list is sent a Christmas present. The Secretary of the Committee is responsible for ascertaining any particular need and if this information is not forthcoming, a cheque for £2.0.0 is sent as a present to buy anything that is wanted.

Miss Cox Davies, former Matron of Royal Free Hospital, now President of the College of Nursing, Miss Finch, former Matron of University College Hospital and Miss Darbyshire present Matron of University College Hospital are three of the women on the Committee.

When the Trust Deed was drawn up the committee was detailed by name by the donor. No one on the committee has the least idea who the benefactor is and it is a point of honour with them not to try to find out.

(The above note was dictated by the Secretary, 20th July 1934)