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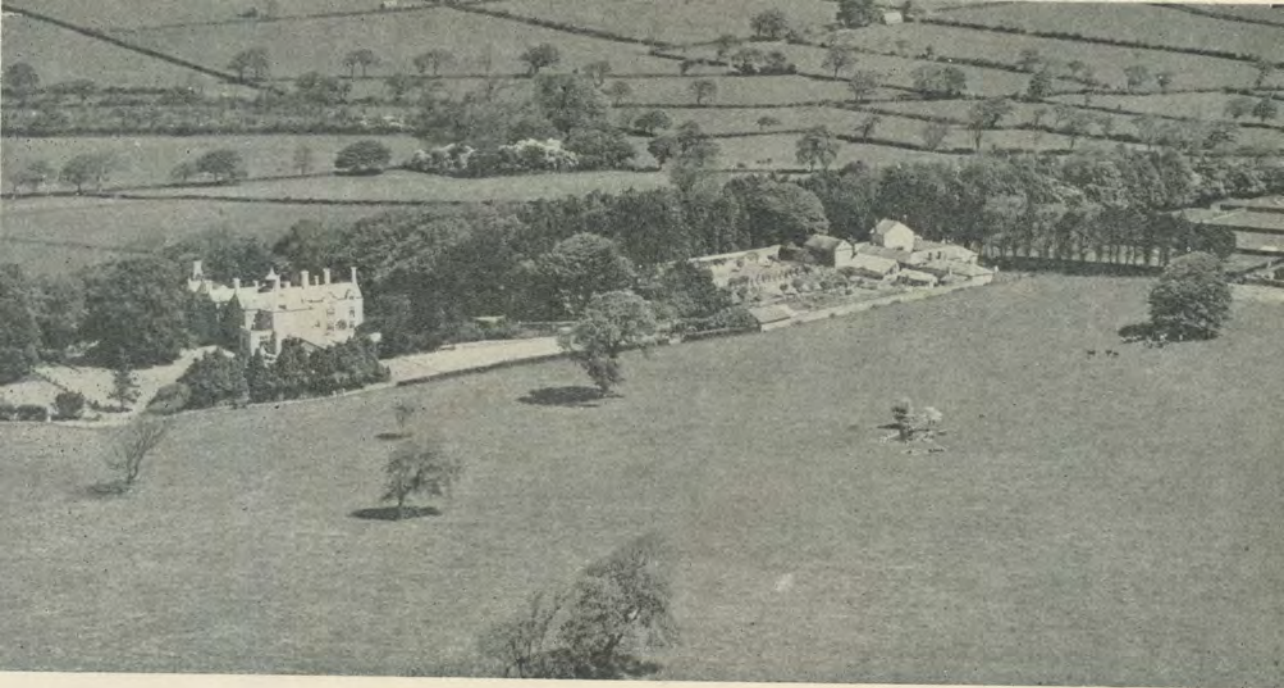
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The Prince of Wales' Orthopædic Hospital, Cardiff

The Prince of Wales' Hospital was organised towards the end of the year 1916. One shudders at the recollection of the events of that period, when the western world was in turmoil—Europe a shambles. All the wealth, skill and courage of the great nations were devoted to the stern business, not of life as it should be lived, but of carnage. The whys and wherefores will be debated through the centuries, but the record of the maimed and dead is not susceptible to argument. It was a sad time and a bad time, but it had its compensating glories, chief among which was the tremendous stimulus given to medical and surgical work of all kinds and in all countries. Centres of miraculous healing, repair shops of surpassing efficiency were established in this country to undertake the work of re-fashioning the maimed. The full story will never be written, but could it be set down, no one in touch with work done in Cardiff will doubt the honoured place won by the Prince of Wales' Hospital.

Its primary purpose was the fitting of artificial limbs to sailors, soldiers, and airmen resident in Wales and Monmouthshire, or serving in Welsh Regiments, who lost their limbs during the Great War. Equally important was the work of training them in the use of these limbs. The difficulties were enormous, the delicacy of the exacting work almost beyond belief. Perfect accuracy of fitting was essential, yet no two limbs were identical. Nevertheless, from the opening of the Hospital in the year 1917, to the 7th May, 1924, 2,576 pensioners (92 officers and 2,484 men) were fitted with artificial limbs and trained in their use, 3,413 artificial limbs being made on the premises.

From 1917 to 1919 the Hospital was used exclusively for this purpose. As the war obligations became fulfilled, however, it became possible to use part of the premises for the treatment of civilian crippled cases, particularly of children, and since 7th May, 1924, the Hospital has been entirely devoted to such cases.



AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF CROSSWAYS COUNTRY BRANCH.

It is an arresting fact that most of the cripples in this country might have been straight and whole, if only their parents or those responsible for them, had been taught certain simple facts about cleanliness, proper feeding, open air and sunshine. Cripples, unlike poets, are not "born"—they are "made"; the manufacturing process is one of the ugliest and most deplorable phenomena in the world today.

The civilian work of the Prince of Wales' Hospital is aimed first at preventing and eradicating deformity, and secondly at enabling cripples to live and work in such a way as to discount their initial handicap to the utmost possible degree. It is now one of the most active of the Centres engaged in Orthopædic Surgery and does an indispensable work, a work which may in the end result in making the cripple as rare a figure as he is now deplorably common. Some idea of the extent and growth of the work is given by the following statistical table:—

			1925		1928		1931		1934
In Patients	..	..	396	..	465	..	542	..	571
Out Patients	..	..	2,504	..	1,960	..	1,895	..	1,960
Operations	..	..	505	..	464	..	427	..	387
Number of Surgical Appliances made in hospital workshops			2,204	..	4,240	..	5,368	..	6,810

The Hospital in Cardiff has 64 beds, about one-third of the accommodation being used by adults and the remainder by children, but, it is pleasant to record, the work is no longer confined to this one Centre.

In 1924 the Hospital Committee was asked by the Welsh Board of Health to consider the possibility of establishing a Country Branch, so that the output of the Hospital might be increased and the waiting list of children needing operations reduced. Numerous sites were inspected, and in the spring of 1926 a two-months' option was taken on Crossways Estate, near Cowbridge, thirteen miles from Cardiff. Unfortunately, the disastrous General Strike and Coal Strike supervened and the option lapsed.

The financial plight of the district made it impossible to re-open consideration of a Country Branch, until, in December, 1928, the opportunity again came for the acquisition of Crossways at a remarkably low figure. The Committee felt it to be their duty to raise the necessary money from reserves and by overdraft from the bank rather than allow the property to pass into other hands. The purchase was approved by the Ministry of Health and the Medical Branch of the Board of Education. The Crossways Estate comprises 66 acres of freehold land, a mansion and a large range of useful

outbuildings. The site is eminently suitable for a Country Branch Hospital, and now that it has been economically adapted provides accommodation for 68 beds, so that the Hospital has now 132 beds in all. The capital outlay for this work amounted to £14,000. Donations amounting to something over £1,700 have been received.

The control of the intricate work done by the Hospital is allocated, under a scheme approved by Charity Commission, to four Committees: Executive, House, School Management, and Medical Board. The Hospital is recognised by the Welsh National Medical School for the Teaching of Orthopædics, and is the only Hospital in South Wales and Monmouthshire devoted solely to Orthopædics.



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You are now about to put this booklet on one side, but before you do so, will you consider whether you can make a contribution? Whatever it is, large or small, it will be welcome. When applied to the work we have in hand it will make many lives happier and more complete.

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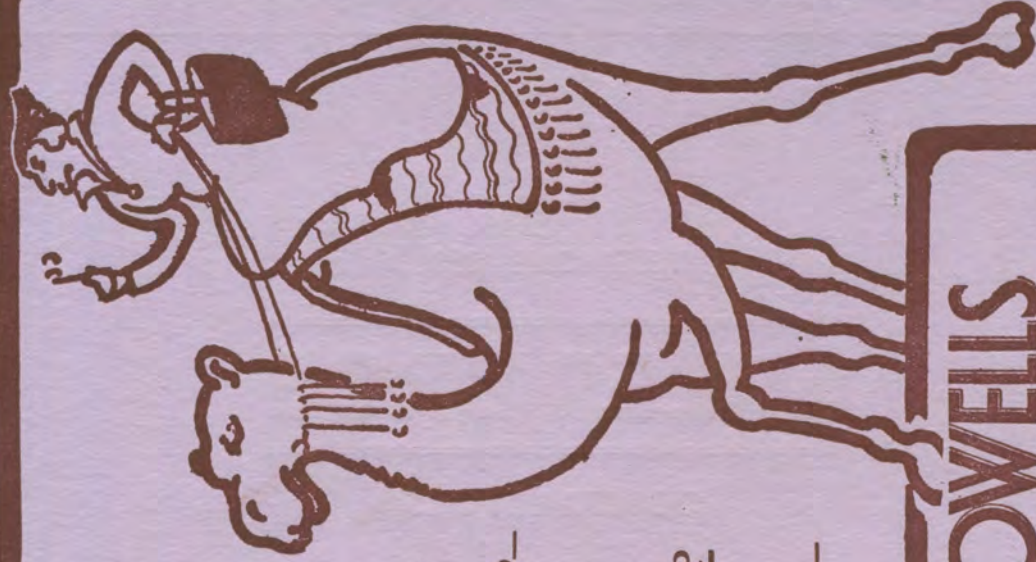
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