

Dr Compston and the Military Hospital, Newhall Hey.



As the war progressed the number of casualties returning from battle necessitated the use of public and, on occasion private, buildings as auxiliary hospitals. These were essentially annexes of established hospitals, were still under the control of the military and administered by the Red Cross. The patients were usually not seriously wounded or were undergoing rehabilitation. There were two Auxiliary Military Hospitals in Rawtenstall, at Pike Law and Newhall Hey. They were funded by voluntary subscription, with the Newhall Hey Hospital receiving large donations from the Hoyle family at Lea Bank amongst others.

They were staffed by volunteer doctors and many of the auxiliary staff were local part time volunteers. There was a Commandant, a Quartermaster and Matron and further support was provided by the voluntary first aid organisations. Dr EL Compston acted as Senior Medical Officer of the Newhall hey Hospital, probably due to his long association with the St John's Ambulance service.

The Newhall Hey hospital was opened in 1915 with a public inspection on opening being held on 27 March 1915. It was extended in 1916 with the Kitchener Ward being opened on 14 October 1916 at a cost of approx. £400 which was largely met by Liet-Col Craven Hoyle of Lea Bank.. It closed in March 1919 and treated nearly 700 patients.

After closure Dr Compston continued as a local GP and homeopath whilst the Matron, Miss Newsome, was appointed Matron of the tuberculosis hospital at York.

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Reports:

Opening, 1915

THE MILITARY HOSPITAL AT RAWTENSTALL OPENED TO THE PUBLIC THIS AFTERNOON

...the Military Hospital Newhall Hey House Rawtenstall, which will be open for inspection by the public from 2 to 5 o'clock this afternoon (Saturday). The Committee and officials who have charge of the same have been working quietly but most energetically for some time past and their labours have been met with much success. The premises have been beautifully decorated and admirably arranged, and twelve beds, along with other necessary equipment, have been installed. The Hospital will be under the supervision of a fully qualified and trained Hospital nurse, supplied by the St Johns Ambulance Brigade from the Headquarters in London, and she is expected to arrive at any time. Through the generosity of Miss Carrie Whitehead of Holly Mount, a resident cook has been appointed, namely Mrs Cartwright, whose excellent services will be remembered in connection with the Central Canteen at the old Technical School. Information has been sent to the Army Authorities that the premises will be ready for the official inspection on Tuesday next, after which they will be ready for the reception of the Soldiers.

Donations in the shape of money or goods will be thankfully received at the Hospital this afternoon, or at any time, and we feel certain there will be a most generous response for such a patriotic and deserving object.

The appeal for subscriptions towards the funds of the above hospital is being well responded to, and the following donations have already been guaranteed:-

	£	s.	d.
Amount previously acknowledged	571	9	0
Mr Robert Worswick JP CC	20	0	0
Mr J T Cunliffe	10	0	0
Cotes Bros	10	0	0
Rev J S Addison	3	3	0
Mr and Mrs T Gaskell	2	12	6
Rev C E Little	2	2	0
Mr L Duncan	2	2	0
Mrs Duncan	2	2	0
Mr George Taylor, Rawtenstall	1	0	0
J B		10	0

The employees at the following mills have sent donations for the equipment of a cot to be named after the mills:¹

¹ 'cot' in this instance being a bed.

Green Bridge Mill (2 cots)	10	0	0
Myrtle Grove Mill Cot	5	0	0
Sagarholme Mill Cot	5	0	0
Whitwell Works Cot	5	0	0
The Employees of Mitchell Bros (Waterfoot) Ltd Cot	5	0	0
Lower Mill Cot	5	0	0
Albion Mill Cot	5	0	0
Hall Carr Mill Cot	5	0	0
Spring and Isle of Man Mill Cot Water	5	0	0
Reedsholme Works Cot	5	0	0
The Sir H W Trickett Ltd Cot	5	0	0
Total	685	5	6

Opening Kitchener Ward, 1916

NEW HALL HEY MILITARY HOSPITAL
OPENING OF THE KITCHENER WARD
COL COATES & VOLUNTARY AID WORK
COL HOYLE'S GENEROSITY

“Through the munificence of Lt Col J Craven Hoyle, a new wing has been added to the New Hall Hey Auxiliary Hospital. It is capable of holding 25 additional beds, and the work has been carried out on the latest principles of military hospital construction. The addition, which has been named the “Kitchener Ward”, is a plain, simple, substantial building, 90 feet long and 25 feet wide. It has a south aspect and although it is a self-contained wing with separate entrance and exit it has inter-communication with the existing hospital. Leading from the entrance hall are the bath rooms and lavatories, and in one corner of the ward is the dressing room. The windows of the main ward are of special hospital type, and made to admit the maximum ventilation without draughts. They are placed on both sides so that the ward can be fully flushed. The Building is of brick with concrete floor and boarded roof, and whilst only designed as a temporary building, has every appearance of comfort and convenience. The ward is heated by hot water on the low pressure system and is lighted by incandescent gas lights. Each pair of beds are provided with a locker, and two beds are placed between each window. The building was erected in almost record speed, only 4 weeks elapsing between the commencement of the operations and the putting on of the roof. The whole of the work was carried out from plans prepared by Mr a. Brocklehurst, architect, Waterfoot, who superintended the operations. The following were the contractors:- Builders – Messers P. Drake and Son, Haslingden; joiners – Messers Hoyle and Bolson, Waterfoot; painters – Messers Coupe Bros, Rawtenstall; plumbers – Messers Lord and Hodgson, Waterfoot; heating – Mr Joseph Dixon, Waterfoot; and ventilation- Mr J Hargreaves of Bury.



On the platform, left to right: Harry Whitehead, Robert Worswick, Col W. Coates, Mrs Craven Hoyle, the Mayor (Coun Crabtree), Col J Craven Hoyle, Mrs Fothergill, Mrs JT Cunliffe.

THE OPENING CEREMONY

The opening ceremony was performed on Saturday afternoon by Colonel W. Coates, C.B, D.L., of Manchester, before a good number of people. His Worship the Mayor of Rawtenstall presided, and he was accompanied on the platform (which had been erected outside the new building) by Lieut. Col. J. Craven Hoyle T.D., D.L., Leabank Hall, Cloughfold.; Mrs Craven Hoyle, Mrs J.T. Cunliffe; Miss Carrie Whitehead; Mrs Illingworth Law, Mrs Richard Ashworth; Mrs Fothergill; Mr James I Law (secretary of the committee); Dr Compston (supt of the hospital); Mr Harry Whitehead J. P.; Mr Robert Worswick J.P., C.C.,; and others.

COST DEFRAID BY COL. HOYLE

The Major said they had met that afternoon to open the extension to the New Hall Hey Military Hospital. He had only attended one meeting of the committee since he became Mayor of the borough, so what he was going to say was from the facts which had been given to him. He understood that the cost of the extension, which had been called the "Kitchener Ward", he supposed after one of the greatest soldiers England ever possessed, had been defrayed by Colonel Craven Hoyle. He also understood that the approximate cost was somewhere about £400, and they all tendered their sincere thanks to Col Hoyle for his generous gift. (Applause) His worship said that after Col Hoyle's generosity they had the equipment and maintenance of the "Kitchener Ward" and the balance sheet which had been placed in his hands showed that there was practically only £40 left to go on with. He thought that he could safely appeal to the people of Rawtenstall to once more show their generosity by helping forward that noble hospital. He had received a letter from Mr Henry Hirst, their treasurer, regretting his inability to be present owing to being seriously indisposed. In the letter there was a cheque of £25 towards the cost of equipment of the hospital (Applause) Proceeding, His Worship said that he thought the hospital had done real national service since it was opened. The first mention of a hospital was made in February 1915, and in July of the same year it was actually receiving patients. He thought that spoke highly of the promoters to get this hospital going in such a short time. He understood that when it was opened the hospital had 12 beds, but it was not long before it had 20 beds going, and now they had 26 going. He understood that the additional building would accommodate another 25 beds, so they could safely appeal for further donations, especially as it was something like 18 months since they had made their last appeal. He hoped that the appeal would be met, and that they would find the people respond as generously as they did 18 months ago. He had great pleasure in handing Col. Coates a silver key with which to open the "Kitchener Ward".

READY OF ACCEPT EVERY HOSPITAL OFFERED

Colonel Coates said it was a great pleasure for him to be there that day do open the new ward. He brought the matter before the notice of the Commander-in-Chief of the Western Command, and also his own chief, and they both asked him

in the name of the military authorities to thank Col and Mrs Hoyle and all of them for the great help they had received in Rawtenstall since the opening of the hospital in July of last year. He remembered Mrs Hoyle calling to see him in Manchester a long time ago and asking if a hospital of that size would be of any use to the military authorities. At that time they were not quite in so much need of hospitals as they were today and he saw around him a good many hospitals of that kind not kept full with patients, so he really hesitated a little before accepting the very kind offer of a hospital. Things are very much different today and they were ready to accept every hospital that was offered to them. If he told them that at the present he was engaged in arranging for 5000 more beds in this command for military hospital purposes it would give them some idea of the gratitude with which they received the gifts that day. He was very proud of voluntary aid and no one knew better that he did how much the military authorities are indebted to the various volunteer organisations in the country for the great help given during this great national crisis. In times of peace provision is only made in the regular Army medical service for some 250,000 troops, and in the territorial services for a somewhat similar number, so they could imagine the situation with which the military authorities were confronted. The provision in peace time was quite inadequate in this country in times of war. If the medical arrangements in times of peace were similar to those in times of war he was quite sure that the tax payers would have something to say about it, so that when war actually did break out they had to rely at first on the voluntary organisations and he was quite sure that East Lancashire could feel proud of its contribution to the assistance of its country in this great national crisis. They had in East Lancashire at the present time between 4 and 5000 beds entirely provided by voluntary effort, either under the St John Ambulance Association or the British Red Cross Society. Proceeding, the Colonel said there was a great difference between voluntary medical organisation and the military organisation. The Royal Army Medical Corps is more of a scientific machine. It was splendidly organised and quite ready to deal with the 250,000 troops which went abroad at first and it had done most excellent service. The Royal Army Medical Corps had its hospitals in this country which provide medical officers and stretcher bearers for the fighting lines. It also provides field ambulances 2 or 3 miles behind the fighting line, and provides hospitals along the lines of communication and at the base. It also provides a few hospitals at home. Where did voluntary organisation come in? The voluntary organisations were not crumpled by red tape like the Royal Army Medical Corps. If the voluntary organisations wanted anything they got it at once. In Mesopotamia there was a great want of river transport and the moment it was known by The British Red Cross Society and the St John Ambulance Association they supplied that want. Within 48 hours those two societies bought all the small boats throughout the kingdom and shipped them off to Mesopotamia. If that had been left to the Royal Army Medical Corps it would have taken a much longer period as the application would have gone through so many channels. There was also another side to the picture of voluntary aid, and that was it provided something which they could all do to their own advantage. Association with those brave men who had been fighting for them was something that did them all good. They say the heroism of the men and the brave way in which they bore their sufferings. It certainly tended to strengthen the mind and prevent them brooding over sorrows from which many

were suffering. They were not all required as sisters of nursing. There was the comforts section of the voluntary aid organisation, and those at home could make comfort for the troops. There were many other ways in which every one of them could help. We were out to win this war and it might be a long time before it ended. No one knew when the end would be. They would have to continue those voluntary services they are giving to such great advantage now. He hoped they would not tire but continue with the work. It took the British lion a long time to awake but when the seriousness of the position dawned on it, it lashed its tail, and now it was showing its teeth. We are at desperate grips with the enemy and before the end comes so many of them might get tired that he exhorted them all to keep on with their noble effort of carrying on the hospital. It was a great privilege to him and an honour to come on behalf of the military authorities and open the new ward. He could only repeat how grateful they were for the help given to them (Applause).

THE DOOR UNLOCKED

Colonel Coates then unlocked the door and entered the new ward followed by his platform supporters. After inspecting the ward the party proceeded to the lounge, which had been erected by Lieut-Col Hoyle.

VOTE OF THANKS

Dr Compston there proposed a hearty vote of thanks to Colonel Hoyle. He said it gave him great pleasure to do so because he had come a good deal in contact with Colonel Hoyle in connection with the work of the hospital and he knew the amount of time and money that he had put into it, which showed that his heartfelt interest was in the whole affair. They had got the culmination of it that afternoon in the opening of the new ward and the new lounge. He thought that as they all passed through the new building they would see that it was a very nice ward indeed, and likely to be exceedingly useful. The lounge was a particularly pleasant place for the men to spend their leisure and the many hours they are necessarily confined indoors. He was speaking truthfully when he said that Colonel Hoyle had the interests of the men at heart. Mrs Hoyle also took a great interest in them, and Miss Hoyle helped in the work at the hospital. He had great pleasure in proposing that they give their most hearty thanks to Col and Mrs Hoyle for the noble and benevolent arrangements they had made for the comforts and well-being of the extra men who they were now accommodating (Applause).

Mr Pilling said he had great pleasure in seconding the resolution. He highly appreciated the great kindness and generosity of Colonel and Mrs Hoyle. He believed that the new addition would prove a very comfortable one. It was light and airy, and very pleasant indeed, and more than fulfilled the promise made when it was started (Applause)

Dr Compston said that they ought also to thank Mr Harry Whitehead for presenting to the committee the key with which Colonel Coates had opened the new extension (Applause)

The Mayor cordially supported the resolution and said that they had one local gentleman of whom they ought to feel highly honoured. (Hear hear) Anything

Colonel Hoyle put his hand to he did with a will that made it go whether it wanted or not. The way the extension to the hospital had been arranged spoke highly of the skilful manner in which it had been handled.

ANOTHER GENEROUS OFFER BY COLONEL HOYLE

Lieutenant-Colonel Hoyle, in replying, said that he did not think the resolution was "omnibus" enough. It did not include everybody, and he would not be doing justice to others who had as keen interest in the movement as Mrs Craven Hoyle and he had. In returning thanks for the resolution they had passed he thanked the architect, Mr Brocklehurst, and also the whole of the contractors who had undertaken the work. If it had not been for their help he would probably have had to close the purse strings a little earlier. Every man who had been associated with him in connection with the extension had given the whole of his professional services absolutely free and those contractors who were entitled to receive commissions for various fitments had foregone that commission, while those firms who had supplied fitments had also met him generously and let him have them absolutely at cost price, knowing the noble purpose which the building was going to serve. (Hear hear) He wished through the Press to let the public in the district know that they had patriotic professional men in the district, and patriotic contractors, who were prepared to do their bit to help forward anything for the comfort and restoration to health of the soldiers who were so nobly fighting for them (Hear hear) Proceeding, Colonel Hoyle said it was no use making a shell unless they were going to put something in it to keep it going. He referred to the recent visit of the Zeppelins to the north and north – Midlands and said that the people in those areas knew something of the possible horrors of war. The visitors left some disagreeable visiting cards and those towns which escaped without casualties ought to feel thankful for their providential escape, and show in a substantial manner their appreciation. (Hear hear) Continuing, Colonel Hoyle said he hoped the hospital would soon be placed in the strong financial position it was in July 1915. Mr Hirst had given them a start, and Mrs Hoyle and himself would give £250 towards the funds of the hospital – (Applause) – for carrying on the good work, which he could tell them was thoroughly appreciated by every soldier who had been in the hospital. (Hear hear) It had been his pleasure to come in the closest personal contact with every lad who had passed through and everyone who was at the present time in the hospital, and there was no single lad who had passed through it or in it who did not use every effort that laid in his power to show appreciation for the kind attention he had received in the hospital from the matron, nurses and doctors. It was home to them in every sense of the word, and he asked the public to continue to provide comforts for the hospital. He appealed to those left at home to show their appreciation of the gallant work the lads were doing at the front in protecting their mothers, wives and children. (Applause)

Colonel Hoyle then proposed a vote of thanks to Colonel Coates for his kindness in coming to open the ward, and to the Mayor of Rawtenstall for presiding over the opening ceremony. Colonel Coates made an excellent and most telling speech.

Mr R Worswick in seconding the resolution said they all knew the services their Mayor had rendered to the town, and the willingness with which he always rendered the services. He was sure they were all grateful for him coming to

preside over their proceedings that afternoon, so far as Colonel Coates was concerned, perhaps he had seen more and knew more of Colonel Coates' voluntary work than most people in the room. He had been associated with him for several years and had seen a good deal of the work he had done, both before the war broke out and after it broke out (Applause).

The resolution was carried unanimously.

The Mayor in returning thanks said that any good action he could do for mankind generally and the Borough of Rawtenstall particularly he should be only too pleased to perform.

Colonel Coates in returning thanks said he had got an advantage over the Mayor as he had something to take away with him, something that he would not only treasure but keep as an heirloom in his family. It was the first time he had the honour and privilege of being at anything of that kind and he felt very proud of the occasion. He could not say more regarding the good work they were doing than he had already said, but there was a little story which brought out the real value of the medical work of the Army and the voluntary aid. He did not tell it outside in case the strong word was misunderstood. A wounded soldier, who was asked what he thought of the battle said "Well, there is a ----- of a row, and the next thing you hear is a Red Cross nurse with her arm round your neck saying :Sit, up, Thomas, and drink this soup". (Laughter) That allowed the work the regular and voluntary service of the Army in the country were doing at the present time. (Applause)

Mrs Bessie Holt then sang one verse of the National Anthem, after which all present sang it. Doctor Compston accompanied on the piano.

The ward was afterwards open to the public and a collection was taken in aid of the hospital funds. A large number of people availed themselves of the opportunity of inspecting the new building and many were the expressions of delight at the way in which everything was arranged for the comfort and well-being of the soldiers.



Closure announced, 1919

NEW HALL HEY HOSPITAL CLOSING

700 Soldier Patients Have Passed Through

The New Hall Hey Auxiliary Military Hospital will definitely be closed in the course of the next week or fortnight. Since the institution was opened in July 1915, close upon 700 wounded soldiers have been dealt with therein, while the number of beds have been increased periodically from 18 at the opening to 66. The first increase comprised of four beds, and in April 1916 a similar number was added, bringing the total to 26. In October of the same year the bed accommodation was further augmented to 43, when Col Coates opened the "Kitchener" Ward. A good number of beds have been provided by different firms in the district, the last instalment was made in April 1917 when the War Office loaned a further 18. Miss Richardson it may be remembered was the first Matron Sister at the Hospital and in January 1916 Miss Newsome succeeded her as Matron. A trained sister was appointed in August of the same year and a second sister for night duty in the following October.

All the medical men in Rawtenstall, Crawshawbooth and Waterfoot have given their services to the Hospital; Dr E.L. Compston as senior Medical Officer and Dr J. Paton Stuart as deputy senior. The resident staff have been augmented by members of the V.A.D, the Rawtenstall and Crawshawbooth St John Ambulance Brigade, and the Waterfoot St John Ambulance Brigade (V.A.D.) The latter section which came into being in January 1917 were trained by Miss Newsome. The different sections have done duty for a week at a time and when circumstances necessitated it often for a month.

Apart from the splendid voluntary efforts from outside, some excellent concerts have been given by the patients who organised themselves into concert parties with the result that a good round sum has been obtained for the Hospital Comforts fund. Perhaps the best known of the parties were the "Ding Dongs" the majority of whom were professional artistes and concerts were given in the New Palace Theatre and the King's Hall Waterfoot. This party which included two local artistes Driver Pepper and Mr Longland were instrumental in raising about £80. Another party who styled themselves "The Mascots" gave an entertainment in the Kitchener Ward when about £20 was raised. Other concerts of an impromptu nature have been frequently given all going to show that the social life of the institution has been what one may term "Merry and Bright".

It may be added that the nurses have given their services and several of them wear service bars which denote one, two or three years service.

All the mending has been done by the nurses on Saturday afternoons and evenings. "Really the work that has been accomplished in the institution has been marvellous" said a member of the staff to our representative, "and I cannot speak too highly of those who have in any way been associated with it". Such

good results are no doubt in a large measure due to the consummate skill of the Matron Miss Newsome.

Closure, 1919

NEW HALL HEY FAREWELL

NURSES GATHERING IN THE HOSPITAL

PRESENTATION TO DR COMPSTON AND THE MATRON

The Kitchener Ward at the Ney Hall Hey Hospital, Rawtenstall, in which during the progress of the war many maimed and battered soldiers have been nursed back to health and strength provided the setting for a very enjoyable re-union on Wednesday evening. As has already been stated in these columns the work of the Hospital has now been accomplished. The last of the convalescent soldiers has taken his departure and the wards are silent and empty.

It was to commemorate the closing of the Hospital that Wednesday evening's little affair was held, when on the invitation of Dr Compston the Senior Medical Officer and Miss Newsome, the Nurse Orderlies and others met for a farewell gathering. There were present apparently 80 to 100 Nurses and Orderlies and in addition the Mayor and Mayoress, Colonel Craven Hoyle, De Helm, Mrs Cunliffe (chairman) and a number of other members of the Hospital committee.

Dr Compston presided and in an introductory address referred to the work the Hospital had been able to accomplish during the past four years and how starting with 16 beds the place grew until they had a compliment of 66 beds. Dr Compston took the opportunity of returning thanks to all who by service and help in so many different ways had made the good work possible.

He referred to the extreme kindness of Col and Mrs Hoyle who placed that building at the disposal of the committee and who also at their own expense built that new ward in which they were assembled that night; he thanked the Matron for her efficient service, the nurses, the public, the subscribers, the ministers, the medical men, and all who contributed in various ways towards keeping the Hospital going so successfully. Now the time had come to close the Hospital. Many had come to look on the place with affection and they would also look back on the work they had done there with satisfaction.

The boys who had passed through the Hospital had been warm in their praise of New Hall Hey. All who had helped in the work there had the satisfaction of knowing they had served their country when their country badly needed their service. Col Hoyle said everybody connected with the Hospital could congratulate themselves on the work the Hospital had done. There had not been a single wounded soldier who had given up his life in that Hospital and there had not been a patient who had not gone away either absolutely cured or very much better for the treatment they received there.

The Mayor paid high tribute to the skill and services of Dr Compston and the other Medical men who had been associated with the Hospital. He had felt proud to be Mayor of Rawtenstall whilst that Hospital had been in being and likewise

he had felt proud of the way in which the Public had helped the Hospital both in service and monetary sense.

During the evening Col Hoyle on behalf of the Rawtenstall, Waterfoot and Crawshawbooth Nursing Division presented Miss Newsome a gold signet ring in appreciation of the instruction the Matron had given to those concerned.

Dr Compston's reflections



'Tis now a memory of the past:-
 The Mansion House with a fountain pond,
 And ruin like ancient Greek Fane,
 Placed in it's grounds with walls beyond,
 Near Olden Hall with latticed panes.
 Some Generous hearts the house had lent,
 And others made it's every space
 Ready that heroes battle rent
 Might find a home and healing place.
 'Tis now a memory of the past:-
 The added wards, the dressing room
 Where many busy hours were spent,
 And all made bright and free of gloom
 With atmosphere of sweet content,
 By Matron with her kindly heart,
 And Nurses with their cheerful mein,
 Who loyally fulfilled their part,
 The whole, I trow, a helpful scene.

At a time when The Nations were in a life and death conflict you did your best to help to heal and comfort those who were wounded and maimed for you. That has made your life worth living.

And now the War which has caused the death of some Nations has left them all bruised and exhausted, and like the heroes you have helped, needing the best you can give.

Let us complete the good work by ourselves living noble lives, by helping to heal the wounds of the Nations, by being kind to those about us, by making it easy for all to do right, and by meriting the divine character of "Peacemaker".

E.L.C.