

### *In the Beginning*

In the beginning, Jamaica Hospital was a vision. A vision in the minds of some stalwart men who wore moustaches and sideburns, and of some far-seeing ladies who wore bustles-the inhabitants of the village of Jamaica in the year 1883. That's not so long ago in the history of the world, but it's a long way back in the annals of Jamaica and Long Island.

In 1883, Jamaica had a population of 2,500. You could have carried away nearly all of them on a single train of the Independent Subway (although it is doubtful that many of them could have been persuaded to descend below Hillside Avenue and get aboard). Travel was mostly by stagecoach over toll roads, which extended westward to the East River ferries and eastward to the farms and the seashore, or by the Long Island Railroad, whose trains chugged haltingly and tediously to the Flatbush Station.

Jamaica ladies who made shopping trips to the city were frequently enjoined by the local press to watch closely their handbags and other personal articles, especially on the ferries, because of the agility of sneak thieves and pickpockets.

Chester Alan Arthur was in the White House as the twenty-first President of the United States, having taken office following the assassination of President Garfield. Queen Victoria, only two generations removed from King George the Third of Revolutionary War fame, sat on the British throne, in the forty-sixth year of her long reign. Grover Cleveland, later to serve two terms as President, was in the Governor's chair at Albany.

In Jamaica, much of the current discussion centered around the method to be followed in putting in a village water supply. The point in controversy was whether the village should finance the project or let it out to a private company. A local weekly newspaper, the Democrat, argued that if a private concern could do it and make a profit, the village should do it instead, and save the profit. At this time, each Jamaica household drew its water from an individual pump or well.

Hoodlums congregated at night along Fulton Street (Jamaica Avenue), and made life miserable for respectable citizens who found it necessary to be out after dark. The Democrat called attention to this blot on the community escutcheon. "There are", wrote the paper's editor, "several of our young village youths who make a habit of carousing the streets after dark and taking liberties that are unlawful. We give them a gentle hint to be careful, as they are being looked after."

One building, standing at the northeast corner of what is now Jamaica Avenue and Parsons Boulevard, and not demolished until 1940, served as Town Hall, Opera House, jail-and hospital. The cells were the village's only accommodation for the injured or ill who for one reason or another could not be transferred to hospitals in Brooklyn or New York.

The village had just one telephone. It was in the office of the newspapers, the Standard, and any Jamaican so extravagant as to want to phone to the city had to go to the city had to go to the Standard office and make his call from there. There was no mail delivery service, and apparently no demand for it. When such a service was proposed, a couple of years later, the editor of the Democrat put his foot down. : "We don't want any", he wrote. "Everybody in town knows exactly when the mails arrive, and can go and get what's there; examine the same, and go about other business. To have letter carriers dropping in at any time of the day and leaving letters, etc., might be a nuisance. Don't want any, thanks."

At about the same time the editor, faithful guardian that he was of the status quo, argued against any change from gas to electricity for lighting purposes. "It costs more than gas", he wrote, "and the light is unsteady. The poles and system of wires required make its use otherwise objectionable. The current is not readily dividable, so as to make it applicable to the lighting of dwellings, and while the electric light will be used where a great deal of luminous power is required, and where the expense is not chiefly considered, it does not look at present as if it would ever displace illuminating as in the field which the latter occupies."

The streets in the village were unpaved-roadways and sidewalks alike. It was a common custom for the householders to deposit their garbage in the roadways. The local paper crusaded against this practice on several grounds, among them being that it made the road-bed uneven, and travel hazardous. However, the editor had no patience with those who were chronic kickers about the village thoroughfares. "The main street", he wrote on one occasion, "is now in fine condition and is as dry, hard and level as anyone can desire. When the weather moderates it may not give as good satisfaction. Let us enjoy what is good while we may, and be quiet when it is otherwise." Later some grading work was done at the intersections, pleasing even the editor. He wrote: "The raising of the crosswalks on Fulton Street has made a decided improvement in their appearance, and a great convenience to pedestrians, who can cross the street without getting over their shoes in mud. If some of the crossings on the side street had the mud dug off, one might see that there was a crossing."

Medical fees, like all other elements of the cost of living, were very reasonable. One of the most prominent physicians, Dr. W. D. Wood, used to charge fifty cents for a call to his office, with medicine thrown in. Many years ago an elderly patient told this writer of his astonishment when Dr. Wood later raised his fee to seventy-five cents and medicine extra.

Dr. Wood was too busy with his practice to take on other duties as we note in the following letter printed in the Democrat on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 1885.

"To the Chairman of the Town Committee:

"Dear Sir, -I respectfully decline the nomination for Justice of the Peace, in this town.

"With thanks to the Committee,

"I remain very respectfully,

"W.D. Wood, M.D."

Dr. Wood continued to practice his profession in Jamaica until his death in 1903. He was never officially connected with the Jamaica Hospital because at the time of its incorporation in 1892 he was already seventy-one years of age. His son, Philip, however, was a member and the first Vice-President of the Medical Board.

The following obituary is taken from Ladd's "Origin and History of Grace Church, Jamaica": "The death of Doctor William D. Wood, October 7, 1903, reminded the older members of the parish of the virtues of his long and useful life in this community. He completed all the years allotted to man in his strength, yet at the age of eight-two, and during illness which he could not resist, he still desired to live and do good. He was a faithful and affectionate husband and father, an honorable and liberal citizen, and an assiduous, considerate and charitable physician, successful in the skill and judgment, which he had acquired in over fifty years of practice in Jamaica and vicinity.

"His life as a Christian and church man was exemplary in the highest degree. He did not neglect his duties to the Church and her ordinances because of the duties or distractions of his profession. Doctor Wood was a constant and zealous attendant at both Sunday services of the Church, continuing such till his last sickness, which began in the middle of August, made it impossible for him to leave his home. He was a liberal supporter of the Church and her benevolence. His memorial there is the stately processional cross borne before the choir, to whose services he ever gave generous aid.

"As Vestryman he welcomed the members of the Vestry in later years to his home, and encouraged them and the rector in their progressive measures for the enlargement and beautifying of the Grace Church and a consistent administration of its affairs.

"As a friend, to his companions, he was genial and true hearted; to the poor and suffering he never spared himself in order to relieve their pain, or to console them in their sorrows and loneliness.

"To this rector Doctor Wood was ever helpful and sympathetic, encouraging by word and deed, and always staunchly adhering to the traditions and to the faith and Church in which he was born, baptized and confirmed, being true to his English parentage. He served the Lord Christ to the last in ministering to those who were hungry, thirsty, sick and in prison."

A horse car line ran from Grand Street, the present terminus of the elevated, down along Fulton Street (Jamaica Avenue) and over the turnpike to Brooklyn. It was to be replaced on December 17, 1887, by an electric trolley car line, the first to go into regular

operation anywhere in the United States. Curiously, Jamaica never has had full recognition for this distinction. The Encyclopaedia Britannica says Richmond line was run experimentally in the fall of 1887 and began regular service in February 1888. Since the Jamaica trolleys were in regular operation two months earlier, it is obvious that the editors of the encyclopaedia have been misinformed.

Jamaica's adjustment to the change from horse car to trolley service was stormy, but quickly accomplished. Horses reared in terror at the sight of the new-fangled, self-propelled monsters. Dogs, barking excitedly, chased the cars all along the route. Many residents complained of the speed and recklessness with which the trolley cars were driven, and called them a menace to life and limb of man and beast. And there was much debate about the relative merits of horses and electricity when the trolley cars were bogged down, a few months after they began operation, by the stupendous blizzard of '88.

But in 1883, when our story begins, Jamaica still was served by the horse cars, which had been in operation since 1837. The fast-growing metropolis of New York City, which then centered well downtown, around Union Square, lay remotely over the western horizon. And in the office of the Long Island Democrat, the editor sat and viewed with alarm the dizzy pace of Manhattan life.

"Scarcely a week passes", he wrote, "in which someone is not killed in the City of New York by an elevator. While most of these accidents occur through carelessness of the victims in getting off or on while the elevator is moving, still the fact remains that the introduction of the elevator has added greatly to the risks of life. While we navigate the air on elevated roads, and mount from six to ten stories high to our offices by stream, there must be more danger than when we kept nearer to the surface. But the ambitious spirit of the age will not be satisfied until we have added balloon navigation to our present means of travel. In many ways this is a fast age, and "slow and sure" is an obsolete motto and not applicable to this generation."

We may be sure that the editor was glad to live in Jamaica, where there were no elevators to endanger life or limb. Where the lamplighter still made his leisurely rounds at dusk and touched a flickering taper to the gas lamps along Fulton Street. And where oxen still hauled many of the plows, which turned the furrows in neighboring fields. The fast age had not reached Jamaica. "Slow and Sure" was a motto still fairly generally observed.

Of that we are quite well aware, because slow and sure are the adjectives, which best describe the evolution of Jamaica Hospital. In 1883, people of Jamaica foresaw the need for an institution where the ill could be made well. So they held a Hospital Fair and raised the sum of \$179.40. This money was held intact during the following nine years, and was the nucleus of the fund with which the Jamaica Hospital was finally opened in 1891, a short distance east of the southeast corner of Fulton and Canal Streets (now Jamaica Avenue and 169<sup>th</sup> Street).

*An Institution is Born*

On May 24<sup>th</sup>, 1883, an event occurred which was to end the isolation of the Long Island communities. This event was the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge.

To the world at large, the story was of a great spectacle. The New York City newspapers featured the booming cannon fire, the ear-splitting shrilling and tooting of steamboat whistles, and the presence of dignitaries. President Arthur was there with members of his cabinet, and Governor Cleveland with his staff. Also the Mayors of New York and Brooklyn, and Senators and Representatives from many States. There was hardly a cloud in the sky. The new bridge itself and its approaches on both sides of the river were decked with bunting and with flags, which whipped proudly in the cool breeze. Thunderous roars of applause went up at the ceremonial climax, when the President and his escort began moving across the bridge from New York to Brooklyn in "twenty glistening" coaches drawn by the handsomest horses in the city".

In Jamaica, properly enough, the editor of the Democrat viewed the opening of the bridge in the light of what it would mean to Jamaicans. He wrote:

The Great Bridge between New York and Brooklyn was formally Opened on Thursday last amid great rejoicing, and with impressive Impressive ceremonies....Plans already are being laid for an elevated road to join the Long Island Railroad at Flatbush Avenue (with the bridge), and when this is done Jamaica will be truly a suburb of New York City.

As a direct result of the opening of the bridge, the Long Island Railroad inaugurated a rapid transit line between Jamaica and Brooklyn. This was known, for short, as "The Rapid". When it went into operation, the old stagecoaches became obsolete and soon were abandoned. Cast in a new role as a charming suburb within commuting distance of New York, Jamaica began to grow.

There still was no hospital, but most of the people who were to play to dominant parts in organizing the Jamaica Hospital already were on the scene, and others who were to be important figures in its later development were beginning to appear.

Among the physicians practicing in Jamaica at this time were Drs. P.P Kissam, Wm.D. Wood, Clinton A. Belden, Charles K. Belden and C.H. Barker. The Long Island Democrat of January 9, 1883, notes that "Dr. A. F. McKay, Homeopathic Physician and Surgeon, who has recently come to reside among us, has opened an office in the Rod and Rifle building,; The Rod and Rifle Club was later to become the Jamaica Club. For many years it was housed in its own home at the corner of Herriman Avenue and Grove Street, now 161<sup>st</sup> Street and 90-th Avenue. A few years ago the club sold this property and leased an entire floor in the Chamber of Commerce Building, which it has since occupied. It remains today the outstanding social club of our community. On March 13, 1883, the local paper reports that "Isaac L. Hardenbrook of this village has passed the examinations of the Medical Department of the University of the City of New York, and

will receive his degree as Doctor of Medicine at the commencement to be held this evening at the Academy of Music." The Academy of Music stood on the north side of Fourteenth Street just east of Union Square, the center of the social life of the city at that time. It was the scene of most of New York's brilliant concerts and entertainment for many years and was only demolished about fifteen years ago, long after the center of night life has moved far uptown.

Dr. Hardenbrook practiced in Jamaica for many years thereafter, and was a member of the first Medical Staff of Jamaica Hospital.

The genial President of our Jamaica Hospital Board of Trustees, Mr. C. A. Ludlum, was receiving press notices early in life. In a local paper of March 27, 1883, I found the following:

A young men's club to be known as the "Crescent Club" was organized last week. The following officers were elected: President, M.D.Fosdick; Vice President, Howard Sutphin; Treasurer, C.A.Ludlum; Secretary, C. Doughty; Steward, G.H. Creed, Jr. The object of the club is social enjoyment and to totally ignore bar and And billiard room.

Mr. Ludlum tells me he has since reformed.

On January 3, 1884, occurred one of the bright social events of the year. The Rev. Edwin B. Rice, rector of Grace Church, was married to Miss Zelia C. Hicks, eldest daughter of Major George A. Hicks, a well known citizen of Jamaica. The ceremony was performed at Grace Church by the Bishop of Long Island. Six other clergymen, friends of the bridegroom, were in the chancel. Among the ushers was young George K. Meynen.

In February, 1885, was note that "Mr. George Kissam Meynen has been awarded that Dr. Valentine Mott Medal by the faculty of New York University Medical College, for the best volume of notes on clinical and operative surgery" as well as being the recipient of Prof. Schaffer's special money prize No. 2, for the best notes on orthopedic surgery.

Dr. Valentine Mott, in whose memory the Valentine Mott Medal was given each year to the graduating student having the best notes on clinical and operative surgery, was one of the pioneer teachers and surgeons of America. He was born at Glen Cove, Oyster Bay, Long Island, on August 20, 1785. His father, Dr. Henry Mott, was a native of Hempstead, L.I. who practiced in Hempstead and New York City for many years.

Valentine was privately tutored until 1804 when he entered Columbia College, Where he attended a full course of medical lectures. Meanwhile he studied medicine in the office of a relative, Dr. Valentine Seaman.

He graduated in 1806 and went almost immediately to Europe for further study. There was at that time practically on opportunity for acquiring accurate information and clinical experience in this country.

On his return to American in 1809 he was made Professor of Surgery at Columbia College, which was merged with College of Physicians and Surgeons in 1813. He continued as Professor of Surgery until 1826, when he resigned to found with Drs. Hosack, Mitchell, Francis and others the ill fated Rutgers Medical College. This new institution, in spite of the presence on its teaching staff of the best medical talent in New York, continued in existence only four years.

Dr. Mott, however, continued in his brilliant surgical career, and at his death on April 26<sup>th</sup>, 1865, left a name and reputation that will always be remembered in the history of American Surgery.

Dr. Meynen graduated in 1885 and established his practice in Jamaica. He at once saw the need of a hospital in Jamaica and became active in all future efforts to obtain one.

During the late 1880's, Jamaica was busy growing. There was no organized movement for a hospital, probably because our neighbors in Flushing had established, in 1884, the Flushing Hospital and dispensary, the first hospital in Queens County. However, the feeling persisted that Jamaica should have a hospital of its own. On December 12, 1887, the Standard said in an editorial:

This need becomes more apparent every year and is worthy of the attention of our people. A large institution is not wanted, but to go longer without any place to take the sick or wounded ill not be creditable.

By 1891, public opinion had crystallized. The population of the village had more than doubled since the first Hospital Fair in 1883, and stood at 5,363, according to the Eagle Almanac. On March 10, 1891, the following notice appeared in the Democrat:

A meeting of the organized Circles of the King's Daughters of this village will be held at the residence of Miss Jenny Lewis on Saturday evening, March 14<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30 o'clock. As this meeting is for the purpose of completing arrangements for the Hospital Fair, which is to take place on April 9<sup>th</sup>, it is necessary that all members be present.

Evidently the meeting was fruitful and produced a wide awake publicity committee, because on April 7<sup>th</sup> the Democrat carried the following four news items:

A fair in aid of the hospital fund will be held at the Opera House (which also was the Town Hall and jail), this village, on Thursday and Friday next under the auspices of the several circles of the King's Daughters acting in concert. Miss Mary Gale and Miss Amberman are in charge of the arrangements.

Elsewhere in the same issue:

The societies of King's Daughters Arcade on Thursday and Friday afternoon and evening at the Town Hall. Everything imaginable will be for sale. Supper will be served for fifty cents. Ten cents admission.

And finally, in the same issue, a fourth story calculated to stimulate public interest in the cause:

A gentleman has donated two lots of ground in our village for a hospital purpose, and now the ladies intend to raise money sufficient to erect a handsome and suitable building.

The issue of the Democrat of the following Tuesday tells how it all turned out. The Fair, or Arcade, was a great success socially and financially. The Democrat's account is so complete, and so typical of the exuberant style of writing in use in the nineties in rural journalism that I have copied it in full.

The King's Daughters Arcade for the benefit of the Jamaica Hospital was held at the Opera House on Thursday and Friday afternoon and evening, April 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, and was one of the most successful affairs of the kind given in the village.

The combined organization of the King's Daughters was composed of the following circles: Crown Circle connected with Grace Episcopal church; the Mission, Every Day Ten and Benignant Circles of the Presbyterian church; Worker in His Name Circle of the Reformed church and the Emergency Circle of the Baptist church; together with a circle composed of young girls called the Busy Hands and a circle of children known as the Little Laborers; making in all over one hundred members, and last but not least by any means a circle of King's Sons numbering twelve members.

The large room of the opera house was tastefully decorated with arches of evergreen behind which the numerous booths were arranged to form an arcade, which not being cumbered with any heavy drapery looked airy and beautiful.

The motto of the order was suspended from the Stage curtain and was composed of a silver cross on a deep purple ground and in silver letters the general motto:

LOOK UP, NOT DOWN,  
LOOK FORWARD, NOT BACK,  
LOOK OUT, NOT IN,  
LEND A HAND

The flower table in charge of Miss Gardiner, assisted by a bevy of fair young ladies, was arranged in Japanese style, and blossomed a perfect bower of beauty beneath the huge and gaudy umbrella that formed its roof.

The lemonade well under the superb management of Miss Jenny Lewis was never known to contain so cool or delicious a beverage and was patronized to such an extent that the charming young lady attendants had all the work they wanted to supply the crowds of thirsty applicants, who left with beaming faces happy in the possession of a pretty little souvenir in the form of a silver cross.

The apron table in the care of Miss Ette Bedell, assisted by a number of other young ladies, was so successful that their large supply was nearly exhausted the first night, and a great deal of credit is due these most faithful workers.

The bag table contained a perfect wilderness of bags of all descriptions, useful and ornamental, large and small, and the gracious lady manager, Mrs. Chas. Smith, and her graceful helpers made every visitor so welcome and entertained them so pleasantly that they were loath to move on.

The agate wear table in charge of Mrs. Jarvis and Grant Morrell was one of the reigning features. The wear was generously donated by the firm of Lelance and Grosjean of Woodhaven, and the visitors showed their appreciation of the fact by a generous patronage; all the articles were sold.

The art table, Miss Nettie Amberman, manager, was draped in white and artistically trimmed with pale pink pomegranate blossoms, and proved to be one of the most attractive tables. All of the beautiful specimens of artistic handiwork exhibited for sale were representative of our own home talent, and made a showing not to be ashamed of; connected with this table was a smaller one where visitors could try their fate for the small sum of ten cents a chance, presided over by two little girls, Maggie Snediker and Aggie Cornell. The wee cards were called Kismets, and were all hand painted and decorated with daisy ribbon; these were designed especially for the fair and were original in every particular. They were all sold and netted the table the neat sum of \$20.00.

The idea of the miniature hospital was originated and carried out by its amiable manager, Miss Louise Meynen. It consisted of twenty-four perfectly made cots furnished with bedding complete, each bed containing a doll who was supposed to be suffering with some disease. One had a broken limb, which was skillfully set in a plaster paris case, in real surgical style by Dr. G.K. Meynen, who kindly lent his valuable assistance and furnished all the details in miniature of a bona fide hospital.

The fancy table presided over by Miss Mary R. Gale was situated in front of the stage and reached the whole length. It fairly groaned beneath its burden of lovely articles, and assumed a most gorgeous appearance from the variety of colors that adorned it. Every kind of fancy work imaginable could be found here, and beside the quantities from our own Jamaica, there were specimens from Ohio, Chicago, Washington, and New York City.

The refreshments tables took up a greater part of the spacious stage and made a beautiful and inviting appearance decked with snowy damask, and dainty dishes, and a very animated one when the dishes were filled with goodies, and the tables crowded with smiling faces; this department was under the able government of Mrs. S. J. Hendrickson and Mrs. Philip Remson assisted by Miss Benham, Mrs. Lowery, Mrs. McGerry and others.

Miss Hester W. Boyd had the supervision of the ice cream table, assisted by a pretty group of bright eyed young girls, becomingly arrayed in dainty lace cap; and all found their time fully occupied in waiting on the worn and impatient visitors.

The linen table was especially dainty in all its appointments. Here were to be found the most beautiful drawn work and exquisitely embroidered linen. It was well patronized and the smiling faces of the lady attendants were equally attractive to the liberal purchasers; This table was in charge of Mrs. Stuart and Mrs. Clerke.

The Confectionery booth under the fair hands of Miss Florence N. McCormick was one of the sweetest places in the room; the large number of her young assistants made a charming coterie and attracted large crowds of both old and young; a quantity of candy made by the ladies was in great demand and all voted this table one of the best.

The mystery table was under the management of Mrs. J.H. Hobbs circle, Miss Mamie Everitt in charge, assisted by twelve young ladies, who deserve a great deal of credit for their perseverance and faithful, earnest work, their unknown packages contained a fair equivalent for the price asked, and all the purchasers seemed to be well contented with their bundles; besides arranging all of this, they have together made a quilt which is to be kept in reserve for the coming hospital.

The country store and post office was a unique feature of the arcade, the King's Sons arranged this booth under the wise direction of George Schoonmaker and A. M. Morrell, Jr. and was very successful; the post office created a fund of amusement as there were foreign as well as local mails.

Donations were made by Weschler and Abraham, lamp, E. Ridley & Sons of a painted wall pocket toilet case and whiskbroom and holder, from A. Schlank a fine lamp, from Louis Miller a handsome chair, from Mrs. Distler another handsome chair, from Granville Yeaton a beautiful plush album, from James Goggns a ladies handsome silk skirt, from Woolley Bros. a carving knife and fork, from Mr. Greenbaum a lady's cloak, and from F. U. Patten enough wall paper to cover a room in the hospital.

Votes were taken on Weschler & Abraham's lamp to be presented to the young doctor in the village receiving the largest number; Dr. P. M. Wood was the lucky winner.

Two prizes were put up for the ministers. The plush album, and the chair presented by Louis Miller. Rev. Dr. Poulson received the former and Rev. J. H. Hobbs the latter.

The silk skirt was to be voted to a King's Daughter, Miss Victoria Henery being the recipient.

The carving knife and fork was to be given to the person guessing the number of peas in a quart jar. Sidney Sullivan received it, guessing within five of the number.

A very handsome plush sofa pillow embroidered with poppies was presented to Miss C. M. Amberman, president, and a beautiful hand painted screen wall pocket to Miss Mary Gale, Vice President, from the ladies as a mark of their approval of the good management and nice arrangement of all the affairs these ladies had under their supervision. It is needless to say that these kind tokens of regard were most gratefully received.

The arcade was a grand success in every particular as the ladies have cleared above all expenses the very handsome sum of One Thousand Dollars; and they all wish it to be distinctly understood that they do not intend to try to build a handsome edifice, only to begin on a simple scale. It is proposed to hire two or three rooms in a convenient locality and to furnish them in readiness so that a proper place can be had when needed, and the King's Daughters expect to supply this to the village and to continue it until at some future time a hospital may indeed arise.

All the work, and it has not been easy, and each and every one of the ladies connected with the affair deserve equal honor and credit: has been most cheerfully done and "In His Name" offered with a true and heartfelt prayer, and a faithful knowledge that He will indeed bless the effort His noble followers have made, and lay with reverence at His hold feet.

Thus the example was set. Quickly the whole village of Jamaica get behind the project. Various entertainment was held, and all of them brought additions to the fund. Items in the contemporary press tell the story.

In one Issue we find:

The West End Tennis Cub has ceased to exist. A resolution was passed before the disbandment, to donate the funds in the treasury, amounting to \$7.00, to the hospital fund.

In another issue:

A company of children, the leaders of whom were Emma Williamson and Willie Burtis, grandchildren of William Williamson of Jamaica South, managed a fair recently, selling aprons and other articles made by themselves, and realized the sum of \$25.25, which they presented to the hospital fund. The ladies in charge highly appreciated the gift, and consider that the little folks deserve a great deal of credit.

In still another issue:

At a game of baseball last Wednesday about \$10 was realized for the hospital fund.

And on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 1891, the following appeared under the caption:

### **OUR HOSPITAL**

The citizens of Jamaica will in a short time see in full operation an institution long talked of, an emergency hospital. The building recently leased by the United King's Daughters, who have the hospital project in hand, is rapidly being renovated and rendered suitable for the purpose to which it is to be devoted. It is proposed to open the institution on the Fourth of July. In connection with the opening the ladies propose to give a sort of fete on the grounds around the building, which is a quaint old structure and which will doubtless appear picturesque on this occasion. The grounds will be decked with the national colors, and there will be opportunities to part with money at fruit stands, lemonade wells, ice cream and candy tables, all the proceeds to go to the hospital fund. The rent of the temporary house, \$15 a month, is to be provided by each local circle of the King's Daughters respectively. The site of the new building is an important question soon to be decided. Among the latest offers to sell is that of two lots on Division Street, near the railroad.

Three weeks later, on June 30, 1891, we find a news item:

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The subscription list on behalf of the proposed emergency hospital in Jamaica is constantly growing. The amount so far pledged is \$5,350, and there will doubtless be no trouble whatever in raising the full amount required. The question of a site has not yet been determined upon. The lots in Division Street are being pressed, but the United King's Daughters, by whose efforts the money was raised, which will pay for the necessary land, do not take kindly to them. No such a building should ever be erected near a railroad, especially near a depot.

And then an important notice:

### **COME ONE, COME ALL**

The organized Circles of King's Daughters will hold a Festival, on the grounds of the Temporary Hospital, adjoining Fulton and Canal Streets, on July 4<sup>th</sup>, afternoon and evening.

Cake, lemonade, ice cream and confectionery will be for sale. The Hospital building will also be open for inspection. Ella W. Everett, Sec.

Once again the ladies scored a success. The Democrat of July 7<sup>th</sup> tells us briefly:

The King's Daughters fair held in the yard of the temporary hospital on Fulton Street, just east of Canal Street, was very largely attended after the firebells were rung. We learn something like \$200 was cleared. The hospital is progressing finely. The interior of the building is being painted and the walls papered as rapidly as funds are raised. Three beds have been put up and are in order. Donations of any useful articles will be thankfully received by the committee.

Thus, without any further fanfare, the temporary Jamaica Hospital was open. The first patient was admitted on July 28<sup>th</sup>.

The building was an old dwelling of one and a half stories, of frame construction. It sat well back from the street, surrounded by shade trees and a well-appointed lawn. Entrance was through a gateway in a gleaming picket fence. Inside, off the front wall, were three rooms. One contained two beds, and the others contained one bed each. This was the total capacity of the original Jamaica Hospital. Behind these rooms were the living quarters of the matron, Mrs. Mary Van Nostrand. Neither doctors nor nurses had any official connection with the institution, but all the village physicians were invited to bring their patients in for care and treatment.

From 1891 through the first four months of 1898, 236 persons were received a patients in the temporary building. And although the original plan was to handle only accident cases, necessity dictated a different course. When the temporary quarters finally were abandoned, the Democrat told the story of achievement:

In less than seven years, 236 patients, many of them severe surgical cases, were received in the temporary building.

Though the original design of the Hospital was the care of victims of accident, our cases have not been exclusively of that character, but persons and sufferers from fevers, rheumatism, paralysis, sun stroke and general debility have also received treatment, and there were only 22 deaths of patients in the Hospital.

With and without fetes and fairs, the community supported the cause handsomely from the start. For example, on the day the first patient was admitted, two contributions were received. One, of \$50, had been raised at a picnic held by the Distler Hose Company. The other, of \$4.50, constituted all the money in the treasury of the Lott Society of Woodhaven.

While the Jamaica Hospital's first home was temporary, the Hospital itself was permanent. So the founders applied to Albany for a charter of incorporation, which was granted on February 20<sup>th</sup>, 1892.

With the incorporation of its hospital, Jamaica bade farewell to an era. An era during which the village was peopled largely by descendants of the earliest settlers. Some of its residents had gone to school when the poet Walt Whitman was a Jamaica village schoolmaster. It was a community of God-fearing people, beautiful trees and well-kept gardens. At the same time, it was more or less unavoidably a village of gaslit and frequently very muddy and unsightly streets, with only one telephone in town, with no central water supply, and with opposition being voiced in the press to such improvements as electric lighting and home deliveries of mails. But just about the time Jamaica Hospital was founded, a change set in. The Democrat on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 1891, recorded that "twenty-one subscribers for telephones have been secured in this village. It is probable that a central telephone office will be established at Dykes and Watts real estate office." The surmise was correct. The real estate office became the first Jamaica exchange. The first telephone, Jamaica 1, was given to J. Tyler Watts, and was from that time held by the Watts family until 1940. With the institute of the dial phone the number became JA.6-0001. Naturally, the practicing physicians of the village were among the first telephone subscribers.

Merchants along Fulton Street had begun installing electric lights early in 1888, a few weeks after the electric trolley line opened. And on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 1887, a local newspaper boasted:

Some 25 houses in the village are having water pipes put through them in anticipation of the turning on of water from the new Water Works. Who says Jamaica is not moving?

After one more backward glance, we shall end our story of pre-hospital Jamaica. We close the era with the village suffering growing pains. In the spring of 1891, workmen were constructing the Adikes Brothers building at the corner of Fulton and Ray Streets (Jamaica Avenue and 153<sup>rd</sup>). In digging the foundation, they undermined the

building just east of their construction, causing it partially to collapse. Several workmen had narrowly escaped from severe injury or death. This accident naturally made the headlines in the local press. I mention it here because one of the Adikes, the Secretary of our present Board of Trustees. The building which partially collapsed was owned by Mr. Richard Neil, the father of Dr. Howard W. Neil, the 1939-1940 president of our Medical Board.

### *The First Permanent hospital*

The first permanent Jamaica Hospital was formally opened on June 18<sup>th</sup>, 1898, in A new building erected on the east side of New York Avenue, a short distance north of South Street. It was opened, not because the Trustees had a great deal of money in their keeping, but rather in spite of the fact that they had very little. The controlling fact was that the community was growing very rapidly, and the little temporary quarters were woefully inadequate. The new site had been selected in 1892, when the Trustees had a chance to buy five lots for \$1,000, and made the investment.

In April 1897, Jamaica Hospital's total cash on hand was \$3,000, but it seemed imperative to gamble on the future. In the short few years since the opening of the temporary building, our sleepy Long Island village had changed to a bustling suburb. To the west, the truck farms that had lain between Jamaica and East New York had become, first, real estate developments, and then, with startling speed, populous communities – Richmond Hill and Woodhaven. Outright annexation of Jamaica to the City of New York was only a year away. So was the Spanish-American War, with a consequent overwhelming demand for Long Island hospital facilities, although that was something the Trustees couldn't have foreseen.

Nevertheless, the decision was made. Plans were drawn up under the direction of a Building Committee composed of Mrs. C. H. Harris, Mrs. PH. Remsen and Mrs. J. A. Kehlbeck. Jamaica was divided into zones, and intensively canvassed for funds. Ground was broken for the new hospital on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 1897, and the cornerstone was laid a month later, with all the village clergymen participating in the exercises. Miss Mary R. Gale, the president of the Board, laid the cornerstone, using a silver trowel presented to her by other members of the Board of Trustees.

A Jamaica builder, Valentine Bangert, had the general contract. The trustees authorized him to employ Stephen Carman of Jamaica to do the mason work, and George W. Perry of Jamaica as plumber. A pair of Jamaica architects, Messrs. Tuthill and Higgins, had drawn the plans. The over-all cost of construction was set by contract a \$10,500.

The new year, 1891, dawned with ominous symptoms of world unrest. The people of Cuba were fighting to free themselves from Spanish domination. Americans were

strongly favorable to the Cuban cause. During January, the United States battleship Maine was sent to Havana, ostensibly on a friendly visit, but also, perhaps, to protect American lives and property. The Maine entered Havana harbor on January 25<sup>th</sup>. Three weeks later the battleship was blown apart by a tremendous explosion, with a loss of 266 American lives. An American board of inquiry made an investigation and reported on March 21<sup>st</sup> that the explosion had occurred outside the hull of the ship. On April 25<sup>th</sup>, Congress declared war. Volunteers were immediately called for and the war spirit spread over the country. Jamaica produced her share of volunteers. Thousands of others passed through Jamaica on their way to Camp Black, in Hempstead, the principle mobilization point for New York State. Camp Black was named after the incumbent Governor of the State.

Then, as now, concern was being expressed about the large number of men rejected as physically unfit for military service. The editor of the Democrat put it this way:

“In the Civil War the rejections by army examiners amounted to 13 percent. Now they are about 40 percent. The race is not running down. Ninety percent of them cannot be enlisted.”

The fact is that in the 1880's and 1890's a very large number of people thought cigarette smoking was pretty close to the root of all evil. We find this superstition reflected in the Jamaica youth who had been known to smoke cigarettes died of pneumonia. The headline on the story of his death was:

#### Died From Smoking Cigarettes

Another interesting story reflecting this anticigarette viewpoint is the following, taken from one of our Jamaica papers:

#### Cigarettes Mad Him Insane

Simon Koplahn, a tailor, of Riverhead, became suddenly insane on Monday. He attempted to commit suicide by jumping into the river, but was rescued and taken into custody. He became violent and attempted to take his life several times during the day. He quieted somewhat in the evening and was placed in the jail for the night. Tuesday morning he was removed to the Almshouse at Yaphank. Koplahn is about twenty-one years of age and went to Riverhead about three year ago from Patchogue, and for the past year has been employed B. J. R. & J. H. Perkins. He was an industrious and steady young man. Overwork and the incessant use of cigarettes are believed to be the cause of his insanity.

Cigarettes or no cigarettes, Uncle Sam raised a sizeable army. Camp Black in Hempstead became a Mecca for visitors, especially on Sundays, when the roads to the

eastward were crowded with travelers on bicycles and in horse-drawn vehicles of all sorts. Contemporary news items record that the fair sex was plentifully represented on these excursions and gave color and spirit to the to the scene.

In the midst of all this excitement, Queens County was cut in two. The eastern part became the new county of Nassau. The western part, including Jamaica, became part of New York City.

Meanwhile the King's Daughters, who never had relinquished their leadership of the Jamaica Hospital movement, single-mindedly concentrated on building and equipping its new home. On April 5<sup>th</sup>, the local papers carried a gentle hint: "The Jamaica Emergency Hospital has no objection to being a legatee under the wills of wealthy persons who have no needy relatives."

On April 19<sup>th</sup>, the following news item appeared in the Democrat:

The various circles of the King's Daughters will hold a supper and Cake Sale, on Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, from 5 to 8 P.M. The proceeds will be devoted to the purchase of gas fixtures for the new Jamaica Hospital, which will soon be ready for use. A substantial supper will be furnished for 35 cents; ice cream for 10 cents per plate; and home-made cakes at reasonable prices.

In the same issue, this item appeared:

The Jamaica Emergency Hospital will remove from its present quarters on Fulton Street to its new building some time before the first of May. The plans of the directors had to be altered somewhat on account of this removal, which until a few days ago was not contemplated. As yet the new building is not completed, but the lease of the present building expires May 1<sup>st</sup>, and the owner refuses to let it monthly. Miss Gale, president of the association, said the managent had intended to celebrate the occasion, but it will be deferred until the completion of the hospital building, which will be about the middle of June.

Just as the original, temporary Jamaica Hospital was made possible by the small contributions of many people, so the first permanent Jamaica Hospital was financed through the good will of all. Slowly but surely the fund grew.

The supper and cake sale held in Fraternity Hall netted \$100. About two weeks later, on a Saturday afternoon, children of the town raised another \$19.50. One group held a fair on the east end of Richters Hotel stoop, on Beaver street, and took in \$7.00. Another group of children, from seven to twelve years old, put on an entertainment in the carriage house behind the Liberty Avenue home of

Ex-Mayor Twombly. Tickets were sold at ten cents each. This paid not only for admission but for ice cream and cake as well. The net proceeds were \$12.50. The Democrat carried a story on it:

A temporary stage was erected, with a mammoth American Flag as a curtain. There were potted plants, small flags, etc., as decorations. Through the courtesy of B. F. Everett, camp chairs were provided for the visitors. The program consisted of singing, dialogues, recitations, etc., and were under the supervision of Miss Anna Twombly and proved decidedly interesting. Those taking part were: Anna and Bessie Twombly, Edith Hyatt, Ethel Wood, Anna Everett, Lillian Scott, Bessie Scott, Everett Lockwood and Willie Tenny.

Along about the same time, we read in the contemporary press that Jamaica had said goodbye to the slithery mud which for so long had constituted the surface of Fulton Street. From the Democrat of April 26<sup>th</sup>:

Jamaica, last Wednesday, had a gala day in honor of its newly paved Fulton Street. This street, which now presents a smooth surface from the easterly end of the village (that was) to the lower end of the 26<sup>th</sup> Ward, was the especial object of the celebration, and right heartily did the business men and the citizens generally enter into the festivities. There was a grand procession of fire companies, societies, tradesmen, etc., and with banners flying and bands playing, great enthusiasm was created.

Even on this gala day, we learn that the Jamaica Hospital is not being neglected. In the same issue, the editor of the Democrat comments that the Jamaica Improvement Celebration, having a surplus of \$75 in its treasury, has turned the money over to the Jamaica Hospital building fund.

Yet in spite of all the community enthusiasm, there wasn't enough cash to finish the building. After much discussion, however, it was announced that the building would be finished anyway. The Brooklyn Times carried an item explaining the decision. The Times pointed out that a small mortgage an encumbrance which the Trustees didn't want was going to be necessary. The Trustees were won over by the argument that it would be better to have a mortgage, however distasteful, than to have to undertake new work later, when the building was being used for hospital purposes. The Brooklyn Times, added, however, that contributions were still needed, that the Trustees had done a most noble work so far, and still depended on public cooperation.

For the record, the amount of money raised by the mortgage was \$2,500. The Trustees defrayed the rest of the \$10,500 building cost with cash.

Meanwhile, churchwomen of all faiths continued to be the Jamaica Hospital's best friends. In the Democrat of April 24<sup>th</sup>:

A number of ladies connected with St. Monica's Roman Catholic Churches, of Jamaica, with Mrs. Dr. T. J. Flynn, have collected \$170.00, With which they have furnished a room in the Jamaica Hospital.

Elsewhere in the same issue:

The ladies connected with the Reformed Church are putting forth special efforts to raise a sufficient sum with which to furnish a room at Jamaica Hospital.

A few weeks later the triumphant opening of the first permanent building was to become an accomplished fact. But before we record that historic occurrence, let us preserve for posterity a picture of what our community was like in that crowded year of 1898.

The bicycle craze was at its height. Everybody was riding the "Safety", which had replaced the high wheeler of the 1880's. Clubs of wheelmen and wheelwomen were numerous. The ladies rode encumbered by voluminous long skirts, leg o' mutton sleeves and wide brimmed hats. Most men had shaved their beards, but still gloried in villainous moustaches. They wore derby hats or hard straws, depending on the season, and the wing collar was giving way to the high stiff collar which was to become a familiar adornment down through the early 1900's. Thus garbed, the clubs of wheelmen and wheel women took scheduled trips through the country and were an early factor in the movement for better roads.

But such goings-on! We read in an 1898 issue of the Democrat:

There is a remarkable craze this year for the very low-dropped handled bars, but it is not clear where the advantage lies. The average would be scorcher is hardly ever seen holding the grips, but as a rule clasps the handle bar right at the stem. This is regarded as decidedly foolish and dangerous practice.

And in another issue that spring:

It seems Jamaica's quiet Sundays are things of the past. Fulton Street on Sunday was a sort of pleasure ground with many travelers. Camp Black seemed to be the place of interest and wheelmen and wagons were numerous. Several times during the morning between eight and twelve o'clock the wheelmen were counted and they averaged over 100 a minute. At eleven o'clock over 600 were counted passing a given point in less than five minutes. In the afternoon a steady stream of them were passing homeward bound.

Accidents were numerous, but none very serious. Wheels were seen all along the roadway laid up for repairs. The car track upset a great many. In returning home the St. Patrick Wheelmen had spill near New York Avenue. One of the number went to cross the track and fell. His follower ran over him,

and in less time than it takes to tell, six or eight lay in a heap. The first man to fall cut quite a hole in his head, and one of the others had his leg cut. No matter how hard the cyclist is bumped, as long as his wheel is whole and he can stand up, he is ready to go it again.

At about the same time, there came the first harbinger of yet another form of transportation:

John H. Eldert has bought one of the Barrows Electrical carriages now on view at the Electrical Show in Madison Square Garden, New York City. They cost \$1,200 each. Frederick W. Dunton is president of the Barrows Company.

Mr. Dunton was one of the most prominent real estate developers on Long Island. Two of his outstanding developments were Hollis, Connecticut, and Dunton was later to become one of the outstanding workers for and benefactors of Jamaica Hospital.

Against this background, the new hospital building on New York Avenue was opened on May 1<sup>st</sup>. On May 4<sup>th</sup> the first patient was admitted. The name of this unsung hero or heroine, who braved the tumult of hammer and saw, is not on record. But the surroundings to which he or she came were anything but what should be expected in a hospital. It was many weeks before the building was to be really ready to receive Patients.

The pioneer Jamaica Hospital Medical Staff consisted of eleven members- Dr. George K. Meynen, Philip M. Wood, Austin J. Blanchard, Ralph Macfarland, Henry A. Auger, Charles K. Belden, J. C. Wharton, Samuel Hendrickson, T. J. Flynn, Herbert T. Noble and Isaac L. Hardenbrook. Of this pionerr group only one member, Dr. Noble, is alive today.

The organization meeting of the Medical Staff took place on Friday evening, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1898. Miss Mary Gale, in her capacity as President of the Hospital Association, called the meeting at her home on Fulton Street. Drs. Meynen, Flynn, Auger, Blanchard, Noble, Wharton and Macfarland attended. The Staff organized by electing Dr. Meynen as President, Dr. Wood as Vice President and Dr. Blanchard as Secretary. Drs. Augers, Hendrickson and Macfarland were chosen as the Executive Committee. A committee made up of Drs. Auger, Noble and Wharton was appointed to draft by-laws.

The formal, ceremonial opening of the first permanent building occurred on Saturday, June 18, 1898. The event was recorded in considerable detail in the Long Island Democrat of June 21<sup>st</sup>. We read that the Rev. L. K. Moore of the Methodist Episcopal Church read the Parable of the Good Samaritan and offered prayer. Rev. Edgar Tilton, Jr., of the First Reformed Church, Rev. Ignatius Zeller of St. Mary's R. C. Church, Rev. F. Hartig of the Second Reformed Church and Rev. Edwin Richmond Of the Baptist Church made brief addresses, suitable to the occasion. Rev. J. Howard

Hobbs of the Presbyterian Church, receiving the building from Miss Mary Gale, President of the Board of Trustees, offered the Prayer of Dedication, and Rev. H. O. Ladd of Grace Episcopal Church gave the Memorial Address on the life and character Of Miss Cornelia King, in whose memory the operating room was built and equipped By her niece, Miss Mary R. King. Mr. Ladd also pronounced the benediction. Having Set forth those salient facts, the story in the Democrat continues:

We are proud that we have a hospital, which, although small, is equipped in a thorough manner with the most modern appliances. The Rooms were crowded with people, many of them from out of town, among them being a delegation from the recently formed county of Nassau where a similar hospital is to be built. Mayor Van Wyck and Controller Coler had both been invited, but sent their regrets. The credit for the satisfactory structure and admirable arrangement of the rooms and appliances is in a large measure due to Mrs. C. H. Harris, the chairman of the building committee, upon whose shoulders, through force of circumstances, almost all of the responsibility for supervision of the work has fallen. The others associated on the committee with her were Mrs. Kehlbeck and Mrs. Philip Remson.

On the first floor, beginning at the front door, at the left, is the Office furnished by Crown Circle, King's Daughters. Opening out of this is a physicians' room, furnished by Mrs. James C. Hendrickson. At the right of the entrance is the dining room for the private patients, furnished by Mizpah Circle, King's Daughters. On this, the south side of the house, running out into the extension, are two large wards. They are both of the same size, and have six beds in each. The women's ward at the right of the staircase was furnished by the women of the Dutch Reformed Church. On the other side of the staircase is the male ward, furnished by the women of Grace Episcopal Church. In the northeast corner is the only private room on the first floor; it was fitted up by Mrs. A. A. DeGrauw, In memory of her mother. The windows here, as are nearly all the windows in the house, are fitted with Venetian blinds.

The handsomest and most complete part of the hospital is the hospital operating room. It is in a special addition in the centre of the north side of the house. It was entirely constructed and equipped by Mary Rhineland King in the memory of her aunt, Miss Cornelia King. Miss King, who died about a year ago, at the age of 75 years, gave her life to charitable work. It was her great desire to see a hospital in Jamaica. A large bronze memorial tablet inscribed to her is placed on one of the walls of the operating room. The walls and floors are in white enameled tile, and all the plumbing is nickeled. All the furniture in the room, with the exception of an etherizing stretcher, presented by the Tamaqua Wheelmen, was given by Miss King's niece.

The broad hall, which runs through the building, was furnished by the Monday Afternoon Club, of Richmond Hill.

One of the finest wards in the hospital is the children's ward, On the second floor over the women's ward. It has been furnished in A lavish manner, as a memorial to Mabel F. Brenton, wife of Ellsworth S. Skidmore. It contains almost everything that could be thought of for the comfort and amusement of the little ones. On the same floor is a private room, handsomely furnished by the Catholic people of Jamaica. It is one of the most attractive of the private rooms, and is to be called St. Monica's private room. Bird's eye maple furniture, a heavy brass bedstead, handsome rugs, pictures and hangings are among the furnishings. Other private rooms are furnished by Mrs. John R. Carpenter, Mrs. S. A. Higbie and Mrs. Robert Higbie (jointly). A special room has been reserved by the trolley road for its employees and the victims of its accidents.

The large ward over the main ward is assigned to memorial beds. Among them is one given by Mrs. Carrie Burtis in memory of her son, Willis, and another by Mrs. S. S. Engs of Richmond Hill, in memory of her daughter. As furnished, the hospital will accommodate 26 patients in wards and 5 in private rooms.

The top story or attic is large and commodious. It is so arranged that it can be fitted up as a ward in case of need.

All the sanitary arrangements throughout the building are of a modern type. The number of baths is especially noticeable. The house is screened, and is lighted by electricity throughout.

No regular fund has yet been obtained for operating the hospital, but it is thought that as soon as the results of the women's work so far become apparent, no difficulty will be experienced in the matter of funds. As a result of a personal appeal to Mayor Van Wyck by Mrs. Harris, the Board of Estimate has appropriated \$1,000 a year of the City's money for the hospital. For this appropriation the charity patients of the city in that part of the borough of Queens will be cared for. The doctors of Jamaica have offered their services to the hospital without compensation.

By design the outside of the new building was made as plain as possible, it being the idea to put as much money as possible into the necessary equipment of the interior. The main part of the building is 51 by 30 feet, with a wing on the south 26 by 38 feet. On the north is a small ell 15 by 10 feet. It is the operating room, planned so as to get the northwest light.

The lower floor is constructed on the English basement plan. In the front is the kitchen and ward dining room. On the south side is the heating plant, which furnishes both direct and indirect heat. There are also laundries and cupboards on the floor.

On the north side is the entrance for receiving patients. A feature of the house is the width of doors and windows, for convenience in moving patients and for better ventilation. Near the receiving door is the emergency room, fitted up with a few beds for patients who stay only a few hours. There is a large lift running from the basement to the attic. It is commodious enough for several stretchers. In the closets in the basement is a complete collection of all manner of utensils of agate ware, given by Mrs. A. Cordier.

Jamaica Hospital was past the landmark of its ceremonial opening and dedication. Most of its beds still were waiting for their first patients. During the public inspection, some people were heard to say that the new building was bigger than it needed to be, and that it would be a long time before every bed was filled.

Little they knew of what the next few months would bring!

### *For God and Country*

The Jamaica Hospital had been settled in its first permanent home only a few weeks when heavily loaded transport ships began carrying sick and wounded American soldiers home from the war in Cuba. They were landed at Montauk Point, where the War Department had established a hastily improvised debarkation and hospital center, Camp Wikoff, named in honor of Col. Charles A. Wikoff, named in honor of Col. Charles A. Wikoff who was killed on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1898, at San Diego, Cuba.

Soon this camp among the Montauk dunes was filled with 24,000 troops-17,000 infantry and 7,000 cavalry. Its hospital facilities were tremendously over taxed. Soldiers were dying by scores, without the semblance of adequate care. Some had grievous wounds. Others were suffering from the dreaded yellow fever or from malaria or their after effects. Hundreds of them were shipped in to New York City for treatment. One day two soldiers died on a New York bound train just before it reached the Jamaica station. They were not Jamaica boys, but they were some mothers' sons, and the tragedy of it spurred Jamaica into quick and effective action.

The Jamaica Hospital wasn't yet completely finished and ready for its full complement of patients, but the Trustees decided to throw it open anyway, for the wounded soldiers. They soon filled every available inch of space in the new building. Dr. Noble tells me cots were placed even in the elevator shaft. Jamaica's epic of service

in the hour of need is well described in H.O. Ladd's "Origin and History of Grace Church," as follows:

An opportunity for Grace Church to cooperate with other churches in Cooperate with other churches in Jamaica and villages, in a work of Christian humanity and patriotism in the summer of 1898, brought together their active workers in caring for the sick and wounded soldiers transported from Cuba in the Spanish American War. The Jamaica Hospital Relief Society was organized to relieve the hospital authorities from the great care and expense involved in such humane work. On Long Island were located two great camps of United States soldiers of this war, Camp Black at Hempstead, for the concentration and instruction of volunteer regiments and recruits from the eastern states, and Camp Wikoff at Montauk, to receive the sick and wounded brought back from the West India Islands and malarial districts of the South. There were at times 10,000 to 20,000 soldiers in each camp. A great military camp was inaugurated in a few weeks at Montauk Point, where steamboats and transports landed direct from Cuba the fever stricken and wounded soldiers.

Thousands lay in long rows of hospital tents, sick and dying and exposed to infection from innumerable flies and insects, that filled the hot tents. The water was also a detriment to health or recovery. These soldiers died by scores and hundreds every day, and the burying grounds opened on the Point swept by the Atlantic breezes were rapidly dotted with wooden headboards.

There was a call to distribute these invalid and dying soldiers into the hospitals in the seaboard cities along the Long Island Sound, and in New York and New Jersey.

The Jamaica Hospital Board surrendered temporarily their new building on New York Avenue and facilities for nursing to the Jamaica Hospital Relief Society, which men and women of all the religious societies in town joined, contributing to its funds. They also offered and gave their personal services to the Society to nurse and care for thirty-four patients first brought from Camp Wikoff, and subsequently to another installment which filled the hospital to its utmost capacity.

The officers of the Jamaica Hospital Relief Society were president, Rev.H.O. Ladd, secretary, Richard W. Rhoades; treasurer, Stanley Jordan; vice presidents, Mrs. Clinton a. Belden, Mrs. W. E. Everett, Mrs. Lewis L. Fosdick, Mrs. Erwin Richmond, Mrs. Feodor Barnhardi, Mrs. T. J. Flynn, Mrs. T. W. Lewis, Mrs. Franz Hartig. Executive committee, chairman, J. Browne, Jr., Mrs. Manning Smith, M.D., Mrs. W. E. Everett, Mrs. L. L. Fosdick, Mrs. C. A. Belden. Committee on volunteer aid, Mrs. Manning

Smith, M.D. Mrs. Philip H. Remson. Committee on Sustenance and clothing, Mrs. Charles H. Harris, Mrs. R. Purchase, Miss Maude Ryder, Miss Carey, Mrs. E. E. Detheridge.

Miss Gale, the president of the Hospital, Mrs. Harris and Mrs. Remson of the Trustees and the whole Medical Staff directed by Dr. George K Meynen, the Chief Surgeon, gave unwearied effort, and there was a gratifying harmony between the management and voluntary helpers. Mrs. J. Browne, assisted by the firemen of Jamaica, attended daily to the arrangements for supplies, transfers and night watching. Rev. Dr. Ladd superintended and effected the transportation from Camp Wikoff with the cooperation of the medical authorities there.

When the hospital seemed full, one Sunday evening, twenty-five additional patients arrived, and were disposed of, severely testing the skill and patience of those in charge. The citizens of Jamaica and Richmond Hill, and Hollis and Queens contributed liberally with supplies, and the churches made offerings, which were increased by private gifts of individuals.

Some of these soldiers were very sick, others convalescent from malarial and typhoid fevers. Not one patient died, in the three or four months that the hospital was thus used. The soldiers were mostly members of the U. S. Cavalry regiments that had been in the battles and trenches around Santiago. They showed their gratitude in many ways. Extra trained nurses were provided with the voluntary ones, who served in the emergency.

Mrs. Eldora Ward, the superintendent of the hospital, directed with skill the volunteers who offered themselves from the homes and churches of Jamaica. Those who served for Grace Church in this capacity as nurses were Miss Gale, Mrs. Kirby, Mrs. Detheridge, Mrs. George K. Meynen and Miss Pauline Goodman. From other congregations Misses Alma Chadwick, Kittie E. Lampman, Louise Baker, Mrs. Manning Smith, M.D., Misses Luckey and Gertrude B. Browne.

The attendants in care of sustenance and diet were Mrs. C. K. Beldin, Mrs. F. F. McClintock, Mrs. Manning; Smith, M.D., Misses Luckey and Gertrude B. Browne.

Dr. H.S. Harris, Chief Surgeon of the Cavalry Division Hospital, Montauk, and the chairman of the Committee Military Affairs at Washington for President McKinley, wrote letters, expressive of their appreciation and gratitude for the work done by the officials of the Society, and the citizens. There were in all fifty-eight (soldiers) under their care for several months.

An accurate account of the receipts and expenditures were kept by the Executive Committee, and by request reported afterwards with vouchers to the War Department at Washington, from which was received over \$850 in reimbursement, of which was expended about \$350 in providing an X-ray apparatus for the hospital, and the remainder was given to the building fund of the hospital.

That is the record of Jamaica, and Jamaica Hospital, in caring for the sick and wounded soldiers of the Spanish-American War. Jamaica took its contingent from Montauk, where men had been dying wholesale, and saved all the lives with which it was entrusted.

The war ended on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1898, with the signing of a peace treaty, and the nation went back to its peacetime pursuits. That is, all went back to peace time pursuits except the thousand of dead, the invalids and the permanently disabled.

### *We Grow*

In our early years, we could receive patients, but we couldn't go and get them. We acquired our first horse drawn ambulance in 1902, when the City allocated funds for its operation and maintenance. Up to that time, the injured and the seriously ill were brought to the receiving entrance by delivery and express wagons.

Of course the ambulance was an improvement, but it had its limitations. It could make only one trip in the same length of time that our present equipment uses to make half a dozen trips. The oldest member of our present equipment uses to make half a dozen trips. The oldest member of our present Medical Board, Dr. L. Howard Moss, remembers the old ambulance well, because he became a member of the Jamaica Hospital staff in 1903. Up to that time, incidentally, Dr. Moss had to operate all his cases at his patients' homes, and carried around a complete surgical kit, even including a portable operating table, for that purpose. Well, Dr. Moss tells me that once after he joined our Staff, the old horse-drawn ambulance was out on a call when an emergency summons was received. A child, whose home was on the south side, was acutely ill. To wait for the ambulance to return would have endangered the child's life. Some resourceful person thought of a baby carriage, which was stored in the hospital attic. It was hauled out and sent to get the child, with precious minutes saved. This story of the perambulator ambulance made all the metropolitan newspapers.

Cold figures show that in these early years in its new home, the Jamaica Hospital was increasingly fulfilling its function of service to the community. In the fiscal year ending February 20<sup>th</sup>, 1900, 253 patients were cared for and 93 operations performed, whereas only 236 patients had been cared for in our entire seven years in our temporary home. During the year ending February 20<sup>th</sup>, 1901, 491 patients were treated and 196 operations performed.

Of course these figures seem small by comparison with our more recent record of service. For instance, in 1940, the records show that we had 6,193 bed patients, 7,351 clinic patients, and 3,370 operations performed. And yet, as we all know, we are again cramped for space.

In April 1901, the Board decided to organize a training school for Nurses, which we operated for many years thereafter. It opened a month later with Mrs. C.H. Harris as President and Mrs. E. H. Ward as Superintendent. One member of the first graduating class, Miss Jennie Rebecca Burrill, still is active in her profession. She confines her work largely to private cases at the Jamaica Hospital.

In the same year that the Nurses' Training School was established, our young Jamaica Hospital went through the saddest experience of its whole career. The staff was split into factions over the relative merits of Homeopathy and Allopathy. The schism has long since ended, but it was very real at that time.

The roots of the dispute went back in 1796, when a German physician, Dr. Samuel Christian Friedrich Hahnemann, noted the effects of quinine on the human body, and published a paper asserting a new medical principle the "law of similars". The gist of it was that the symptoms of a disease should be noted, and that a drug which would produce similar symptoms in the healthy should be used as the treatment. Hahnemann called his new system "homeopathy". All doctors who disagreed with him he called "allopaths".

Homeopathy never became very popular in Europe, but it did become popular in America, and there was a rather deep feeling of ill-will between homeopaths and the medical profession generally. The public took sides, too. Even as late as 1910, I was frequently asked by laymen whether I practiced homeopathy or allopathy. My invariable answer was that I practiced neither, that I simply tried to treat my patients to the best of my ability, with whatever means I considered best.

The medical profession has been largely reunited by the tremendous growth of specific remedies, such as vaccines, antitoxins, serums and the like, plus such drugs as salvarsan, sulfanilimide and hundreds of others too numerous to mention.

However, in 1901, the Jamaica Hospital staff consisted of three homeopaths and eight so called allopaths. The latter considered it impracticable longer to conduct the affairs of the Hospital, and particularly of a Training School, with such a mixed staff. So the three homeopathic members presented their resignations, which were accepted with the provision that all privileges of the hospital be left open for them.

But the matter didn't rest there. Members of the Board of Trustees and townspeople by the hundreds took sides. In the end the three homeopathic physicians were again placed on the Staff, and the so-called allopathic staff resigned. This, as I said before, was the saddest experience of our career. The doctrinal schism robbed Jamaica Hospital of some

of its finest men-Dr. G.K. Meynen, Dr. P. M. Wood, Dr. H.M. Auger and Dr. A. J. Blanchard, among others. However, Dr. Maynen, our first President, was to come back to us later.

On September 23, 1902, it was announced that Jamaica was to have a second hospital. This proved to be the Mary Immaculate Hospital, with which our Jamaica Hospital has served the community so well during the succeeding years. The Mary Immaculate opened in a temporary building on the old Dr. Kissam place on the north side of Fulton Street between Bergen Street and Grand Street. The Democrat described the property at the time as a "twelve room house with all improvements and it has a barn in the rear."

After the allopath-homeopath upheaval, Jamaica Hospital was left with a Staff consisting only of Drs. Macfarland, Noble and Hicks. The vacancies were left to be filled slowly and carefully, to maintain the highest standards. Dr. J. L. Casselberry was added, and later Drs. L. Howard Moss and J.L. Bukley. In 1903 the first Consulting Staff was appointed. It consisted of the following surgeons:

Dr. William Blackman, Dr. William F. Campbell, Dr. Ernest A. Gallant, Dr. William Tod Helmuth, Dr. George Clinton Jaffrey, Dr. John H. Schall (in genito-urinary surgery), and Dr. Richard W. Westbrook (in orthopedic surgery).

Appointment as Consulting Physicians went to Drs. Charles B. Bacon, Edward Chapin and Walter P. Winchell.

The Consulting Gynecologists were Drs. Walter Gray Crump and J. Frederick Haller. Dr. Alton G. Warner was appointed Consulting Occulist and Aurist, and the Consulting Electro-Therapeutists were Drs. William Lathrop Love and Anso D. Mabie. James P. Ruyle, D.D.S., was appointed Consulting Dentist.

In 1907 the first Associate Staff was appointed. It consisted of Drs. J. A. Payne, Arthur Ginnever, Robert F. Ludwig, G. H. Reichers, Henry Stoesser, M. M. Kittell, Dr. R. Rogers, W. H. Freeman, Robert Fount, J. Cannon Gain, Louis F. Licht and C. H.L. Mosely.

In the same year Jamaica Hospital was left its first legacy, receiving \$500 by the will of Mrs. Elizabeth Denton. Mrs. Denton's bequest was followed in the next 24 months by other substantial remembrances. Mrs. John R. Carpenter left us \$300, and Dr. John Ardoneaux, in the will, left us \$6,000. These gifts were received with the deepest feelings of gratitude and invested in first class mortgages as the nest egg of an endowment fund.

In 1909, for the first time, the State Board of Charities put our institution on its list of First Class Hospital.

In 1908 the senior medical body at the hospital ceased to be known as the Medical Staff, and became the Medical Board, as at present. Two newcomers, Drs. V. W. Weed and M.

W. Herriman, were added to the Associate Staff. The following year Dr. W. E. Jenner became Jamaica Hospital's first Pathologist, and Dr. J. E. Shuttleworth, who was to be prominent among us until his untimely death in 1930, was appointed to the Associate Staff.

In these formative years, Jamaica Hospital was keeping increasingly busy. In 1909, there were 355 paying patients, 398 city cases and 125 free patients. There were 525 operations and 33 maternity cases.

Hospital fees were still extremely moderate. A ward bed could be had for a dollar a day for a medical case, or eight dollars a week for surgical case.

In December, 1909, Dr. C. Otto Stumpf was elected to membership on the Medical Board. In December, 1910, Drs. Alfred E. Baker and William H. Jessup were elected to the Associate Staff. On November 13, 1911, Drs. George S. Comstock, Norman C. Goodwin, Frank J. Weigand and the writer were elected to the Associate Staff. In 1912, Dr. Bulkley resigned from the Medical Board and moved to California, and Dr. Jessup was elected to fill the vacancy. At the same time, the Board of Trustees appointed an attorney, Mr. Stephen H. Voris of Jamaica.

Late in 1912 we were busy becoming financially prepared for strenuous years that lay ahead. Miss Ann Nostrand left us \$2,000 by will, and Miss Margaret Thompson left us \$2,000 by will, and Miss Margaret Thompson left us \$500. And in November of that year there was a ten-day campaign to secure for the Jamaica Hospital a \$50,000 endowment. An executive committee of 20 prominent citizens, with Mr. Percy G. James as chairman and Mr. William A. Warnock as treasurer, supervised the drive. A promotion expert, Mr. A. F. Hoffsommer, got out large quantities of advance literature. Then 47 teams of 10 men each canvassed the entire Fourth Ward for ten days, in conjunction with 20 similar teams of women under the chairmanship of Mrs. R. W. Higbie, who in 1902 had led in the organizing of the Jamaica Hospital League, which for many years gave us Herculean support. Leaders with Mrs. Higbie on the Hospital League were Mrs. F. F. McClintock, Mrs. W. J. Ballard; Miss Eveline Ham, Mrs. W. C. Baker and Mrs. T. R. Chapman.

The November 1912, drive went well over the top. More than 6,000 contributors were lined up. They pledged \$59,331.68 to the endowment fund, and another \$4,136.95 to meet a current deficit in the operating fund.

Other events occurring in this period of our history are important to note. Mrs. James A. Kehlbeck was elected President of the Board of Trustees for her 11<sup>th</sup> consecutive term..And Mrs. Eldora H. Ward, Who had been Superintendent of Jamaica Hospital since 1902, resigned. Miss Fern O. Morgan, R. N., filled the vacancy in January, 1913, with Miss Marjorie D. Clement, R.N., as her assistant.

Occasionally in life we meet with people who are so closely associated with some activity or institution that the mention of the one automatically brings to mind the other.

Such was the case in the association of Mrs. Ward and the Jamaica Hospital. Jamaica, during her administration of the hospital, was still essentially a village, though politically a part of the City of New York. It was just beginning the tremendous growth it was later to attain, but one could still walk the street and greet a friend and neighbor perhaps 50 percent of the people encountered. And everybody who knew Jamaica Hospital knew Jamaica Mrs. Ward. Her efficiency as an administrator was matched only by her kindness toward all those with whom she came in contact, whether patient, physician or subordinate. For fourteen of the most critical years in the history of Jamaica Hospital her one ambition was the success of the institution which she headed. Small wonder then that the Trustees saw her departure with extreme regret.

In a way, Mrs. Ward saw us through another era. We began this chapter by telling about our acquisition of our first horse drawn ambulance. But even the horse which drew it was to sniff the fumes of gasoline in his time. Nowhere did the automobile catch the public fancy more quickly than right here in our own part of Long Island. Suppose we look wistfully backward for a moment to sense the atmosphere of Jamaica in the first decade and a half of the present century.

January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1901, was a unique date in history for it marked not only the beginning of a new year but also of a new century.

All the world looked forward to this new century with hope and with apprehension. What would this new century bring us? In what ways would it improve our civilization over the last century? What suffering in the form of war or pestilence would it bring to us? These questions were reflected in the special articles and editorials of the contemporary press.

Jamaica Hospital began the new year and century by announcing on January 1<sup>st</sup> that plans were in formation for the holding in the near future of a Hospital Fair. The Democrat of that day carries the story as follows:

*With the opening of the New Century active preparation will be made by the King's Daughters of Jamaica for the Biennial Hospital Fair, to be held in Colonial Hall on Thursday and Friday, April 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. At a recent meeting of the Hospital Board it was decided that all raffles, gift enterprises or anything partaking of the nature of a lottery should be excluded from the Fair. Some unique and interesting features are promised and will be duly announced in the Democrat.*

The fair was held as advertised and proved to be a huge success netting about \$1,100 to the hospital.

Colonial Hall, a large white frame building with a wide porch fronted by tall Colonial pillars stood on the south side of Jamaica Avenue between New York Avenue and Puntine Street (165<sup>th</sup> street). Set well back from the street with a wide expanse of well-kept lawn, it was one of Jamaica's best examples of Colonial architecture. When it was

demolished some year later in the name of progress, its going was mourned by many an old Jamaican.

The Democrat of April 30<sup>th</sup>, 1901, tells us that a building boom has been in progress in Jamaica for some time past. It states that in the six months since July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1900, 108 new buildings had been erected at a cost of \$500,000, in addition to 82 alterations costing \$75,000.

The same issue contains Jamaica's first recorded reference to the automobile traffic problem. It says:

*Something should be done by the authorities to prevent young Vanderbilt from running his automobile at such a rapid pace through the public streets and thoroughfares. Narrow escapes are reported nearly everyday that he comes out this way. Last Sunday several runaways were averted only by the alertness of the drivers.*

On April 16<sup>th</sup>, as if in answer to this plea, we read:

*A state law has just been passes which regulates the speed of automobiles to eight miles an hour in the villages, and fifteen miles on public highways outside the villages; requires them to be stopped at request or on signal from the driver of a restive horse, and remain stationary until passed; obliges the owner to register at the Secretary of State's office his name and address, with a brief description of the vehicle, to pay a fee of \$1.00 and to place on the back of the vehicle his name in letters at least three inches long.*

That, of course, was the parent of our present automobile registration law. A year later, the following item appeared in the Democrat:

*The 100-mile endurance test for automobiles will take place on Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup>. It will be held under the direction of the Long Island Automobile Club, and the course begins and ends at Flushing. It is a very winding one, this being necessary in order to get 100 miles of improved highways. The entries have closed and the list is long one. It is anticipated that at least fifty machines will compete. Machines will be sent away in the order of entry and the allotment of observers will take place on the morning of the test. The starting point is the fountain at Flushing and the first place to be reached is Bayside. The road from Jamaica to Flushing will be the homestretch of the course. The contest is purely one of endurance, but the course must be covered within a time limit. Stations will be established for receiving supplies and oiling.*

On June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1913, we of the Jamaica Hospital recognized that the automobile was here to stay. On that day we discarded our horse/drawn ambulance and replaced it with a shiny new Cadillac ambulance, the purchase price of which had been subscribed by a number of public/spirited Jamaica residents.

*Our Strong Right Arms*

No history of Jamaica Hospital would be complete without a chapter on the noble people who emerged from time to time as leaders in its development. This chapter turns back the years and puts the spotlight on Jamaica Hospital's Hall of Fame. No effort is made to acknowledge the help of all who have had a hand in our growth. The community served now by Jamaica Hospital is a very large one, and our benefactors are legion. But over the course of fifty years, some people have played such important roles in Jamaica Hospital's development that their names are indelibly inscribed in letters of gold on the scroll of good works.

Our first great benefactress had no direct connection with Jamaica Hospital at any time. She merely created a movement, which was to fling itself into good works everywhere, and which in our community concentrated on establishing the Jamaica Hospital. I refer, of course, to the King's Daughters. Its founder was Mrs. Margaret McDonald Bottome, of Brooklyn. Her husband, Rev. Francis Bottome, D. D., was an Englishman by birth, who entered the Wesleyan Methodist ministry as a missionary in Canada. He later moved to Brooklyn, where he was received into the New York East Conference, and where he met Miss Margaret McDonald, who was active in church work. This mutual interest drew them together and led to their marriage.

She was a woman of beautiful character, and was a prolific writer on religious topics. To influence the largest possible number of young people, she conceived the idea of an organization of your women and children, to be divided into groups or circles. Each circle was to devote its efforts and collective talents to some specific object.

The movement spread, and became known as the King's Daughter's, an interdenominational order unrestricted as to membership in any church. Once founded, the order branched out rapidly across the United States and Canada, and even into Great Britain. Its members cast about for worthwhile projects in their communities, and then saw these projects through, with all the energy and imagination at their command. The order still is active today in America's smaller communities. Monuments to the King's Daughters' labors crowd the American scene. Offhand, I can list King's Daughters hospitals at Temple, Texas; at Brookhaven, Mississippi; at Portsmouth and at Staunton, Virginia; and at Martinsburg, West Virginia.

From 1893 to 1896 a son of the founder of the order, the Rev. William McDonald Bottome, was rector of Grace Church, Jamaica. He took a great interest in extending the work his mother had begun, but the order had been active in Jamaica for years previously. It was in 1891, you recall, that the King's Daughters held their famous Hospital Fair, which led very soon thereafter to the founding of our first Jamaica Hospital.

Among the King's Daughters in Jamaica, the dominant figure over a period of great many years was Miss Mary Gale. Every public movement has behind it some particular force, usually an individual, who by his own personality, energy and determination pushes the

project through to completion. In the case of Jamaica Hospital, this force was Mary Rosina Gale.

To the older residents of Jamaica, Miss Gale needs no introduction. But every member of the community, new or old, should know the story of this remarkable woman. Miss Gale was born at Albion, New York, in Orleans County, on September 22, 1843. She was one of ten children were young, the family moved to New York City, where Mr. Gale entered politics. He was elected to the Assembly, and subsequently served as Clerk and afterwards as Judge of the old Marine Court. While on the bench, Judge Gale moved his family to Jamaica, purchasing a large estate on Fresh Meadow Road. The southern part of his property overlapped the present site of Jamaica Estates.

As the end of his judicial term, Mr. Gale moved his family to Virginia, where he purchased a farm. A short while later he died, leaving a widow and eight living children, but little money. The family moved back to Jamaica to settle permanently.

Mary became a schoolteacher, and continued to teach until she was retired on a pension. Most of the time she taught in East Jamaica, now Hollis. She lived in Jamaica and is said to have walked daily to and from school, regardless of weather. She was much loved by both pupils and parents, and many of her old pupils are among the best known residents of Jamaica today.

Miss Gale was a lifelong communicant of Grace Church, and was widely known for her humanitarian efforts. She was a dynamic apostle of good works.

Despite the pressure of her duties as a good, old fashioned, conscientious schoolteacher, she always found time for constructive leadership in the community. She set the pace for her fellow members of the King's Daughters in establishing Jamaica Hospital in its original temporary quarters. And when we got our first permanent building, it was largely a monument to Mary Gale's energy and vision. She also was the first President of our Board of Trustees.

Late in life she married a bachelor of about her own age, Louis P. Weysser. In her eighty-eighth year, in January 1931, she came to the Jamaica Hospital to die. It was fitting that she should have spent her last hours in the house of mercy she had done so much to establish.

There is little in our present building to remind us of Mary Gale. The present Medical Board contains not a single survivor of the years when she was most active. It would be fitting, when the opportunity arises, to name some new pavilion ward, addition or special room or department in Mary Gale's memory.

Everybody who has ever had even a 24-hour acquaintance with Jamaica knows King Park and the King Mansion, which stands in it, facing Jamaica Avenue. However, not every Jamaican knows the story of the King family and its relation to American history on the one hand and to the development of Jamaica Hospital on the other.

The Kings have been Jamaica's most famous historical family. They trace back to Rufus King, who was born in 1755 at Scarborough, Maine, which was then a part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. He graduated from Harvard in 1777, in the midst of the War of the Revolution.

He studied law and was admitted to the Bar. In 1783 and 1784 he served in the Massachusetts General Court, or legislature, and then was elected to Congress, serving from 1784 to 1787.

New York then was the seat of the young United States federal government, and while in New York as a congressman, Rufus King met, wooed and won Miss Mary Alsop. They were married in 1786 at the Alsop home on William Street in New York City. Among the wedding guests was James Monroe, later to become President of the United States. Alsop Street, now 150<sup>th</sup>, was named after Mary Alsop.

Rufus King gave up his Massachusetts residence and took a home on Park Row, Manhattan. He became active in New York politics, and later was elected as United States Senator from New York. He probably was the only man ever to serve as Representative in Congress from one State and as Senator from another.

In the years that followed, Rufus King became interested in finance. He moved to Wall Street, where he had his office in his home. His next-door neighbor was Alexander Hamilton, and together they promoted and founded many enterprises. Among other things, they were the founders of the city of Paterson, New Jersey.

Rufus King bought the famous Manor House in Jamaica in 1806. The previous history of the Manor is somewhat obscure. Little is known about it except that two pastors of Grace Church had used it as a rectory, Rev. Thomas Poyers from 1710 to 1732 and Rev. Thomas Colgan from 1732 to 1755. King greatly enlarged the original house. He built what is now the main portion of the house, attaching it to the older portion. There was a smaller cottage which sat well back from the main building. This had been occupied by the slaves who lived on the property. King moved up this smaller structure and attached it to the east end of the Manor House, where it forms the east end of the mansion to this day. About the same time, King imported from England many small oaks and other trees, which he planted on his estate. Many of these trees, which he planted on his estate. Many of these trees are still standing.

The First Citizen of early Jamaica was United States Minister to Great Britain from 1796 to 1803, and again from 1825 to 1826. He was Federalist candidate for Vice President of the United States in 1804 and again in 1808.

In 1816, Rufus King was Federalist candidate for President of the United States. With the switching of a few thousand votes here and there, our Mr. King and not James Monroe would have become the Fifth Chief Executive of the Republic. However, our townsman was defeated by a staunch friend, a man who had attended his wedding.

The most distinguished Jamaican of the day lived another ten and a half years, dying in Jamaica on April 29, 1827, at the age of 72. He is buried in Grace Churchyard.

John Alsop King, the second son of Rufus, was educated at Harrow School, England, and in France. He served in the United States Army as a lieutenant of cavalry in the war of 1812. He married Mary Ray, after whom Ray Street (now 153<sup>rd</sup>) was named. He is chiefly famous as the first Republican Governor of New York. He was stricken with a heart attack while speaking at a Fourth of July celebration in Jamaica in 1867. He was treated by Dr. William D. Wood, who was to continue active in practice right down to our own time. But in spite of Dr. Wood's best efforts, Governor King died four days later. He was buried beside his distinguished father in Grace Churchyard.

Governor John Alsop King's brother, Charles King, was President of Columbia College (now Columbia University) from 1849 to 1864.

Miss Cornelia King was truly a woman of marvelous character. She spent much of her life relieving want and suffering among those who were less fortunate than she. Late in November, 1896, when she was nearly 72 years old, Miss King went to Manhattan to spend Thanksgiving with her sister-in-law, Mrs. James A. King. There she fell down stairs and suffered injuries from which she died a few weeks later. However, it is said that on her deathbed, Miss King sent for one of her servants and ordered twelve Thanksgiving dinners prepared and sent to that number of poor families in Jamaica.

When the first permanent Jamaica Hospital was formally opened in June 1898, the rector of Grace Church, the Rev. H. O. Ladd, delivered a eulogy, which is an integral part of our Institution's history. I quote it in full:

*The closed shutters and darkened rooms in yonder Park which is now happily part of the public domain of the Greater New York are mute witnesses both of the ancestral honor and finished life of Miss Cornelia King.*

*Her memorial is fittingly prominent here among the other equipment's of the Jamaica Hospital. In the complete and costly appointments of the operating room a beloved niece and generous patroness of this beautiful charity has chosen to continue the eminently useful and benevolent work of this lovely Christian woman, whom Jamaica will ever most tenderly and honorable associate with the names of her ancestors.*

*Here where Miss King was born and where her childhood was happily passed under the venerable shade of trees of her grandsire's and father's planting, she early inbreathed the spirit of piety and benevolence, the benign influence of which she also richly inherited.*

*Here she was taught patriotism as she looked on a signature of the Constitution of the United States by a hand the dust of which is still precious in Grace Churchyard. Here she read annals of the war of the Revolution and dwelt on incidents of foreign courts concerned with our earliest national history that were described and recorded by the*

*same hand of her ancestor. Here she listened to the affairs of this State and Nation, as they were discussed by her father's associates and counselors in the administration of this commonwealth of New York. Here she drank in the spirit of a strong and vigorous churchmanship and an ever ready sympathy for the needy and distressed, from the conversations and teachings of their rectors and the faithfully sustained devotions of her church.*

*Here she learned the true meaning of Christian brotherhood, and her desires went forth to the unevangelized of foreign lands, and struggles of Christian heroes in missions of our home land.*

*Her vigorous mind was replete with experience and crowned with mature judgment as the years of her maiden life were increased. She became leader as well as a counsellor in Christian charities, in which she had long and faithfully and humbly served as a quiet worker. She had learned to seek out and devise relief for those who were overlooked by others. Obscure poverty, even in homes of those who were born and bred to better things, did not escape her kindly notice and had constant relief from her gentle hand.*

*So skill and love wrought in and through her ministrations; and enriched almost unconsciously her own life with kind deeds and with blessings that her virtues called down from Heaven by prayers of grateful ones.*

*Her social hospitality was founded on a deeply wrought and hidden charity, and to friends and strangers alike she extended a gracious welcome.*

*Fitting indeed, then, is this association of her name with large-hearted women of Jamaica, who have joined in establishing this hospice for the unfortunate and suffering, overtaken with the rude strokes of forces which have been evoked and utilized by science for the convenience and comfort and luxury of our nineteenth century culture.*

*Here in the name of Christian love, she bids the surgeon deftly to wield his tools, guided by an accurate knowledge of the structure and diseases of these human bodies.*

*Here she hands to his assistant the anaesthetic that for while shall make the patient oblivious of pain. Here she provides the antiseptic that forbids festering wounds their former place in the effects of surgery, and tells the physician to send forth the unconscious one to the care of the skilled nursing and confused comfort of cleanliness in bed and room, with manifold chances of recovery and of strength to rise above misfortune and still share the good of life.*

*What if this power is now bestowed on Miss Cornelia King by one most loving, and loyal to her kinswoman by whom she herself had been taught the ways of sweet charity? It is on her part but returning the privilege she had shared with that life now remitted to its golden and glorified silence. For being dead, she yet speaks and works with malice toward none, with charity toward all.*

*Here where her dear name has thus been written by another, in the very borderland to which so many stricken ones shall come under the swift but kindly strokes of the surgeon's hand--*

*Say not of thy friend departed  
She is dead; she had but grown  
Larger souled and deeper hearted  
Blossoming into skies unknown;  
All the air of earth is sweeter  
For the being's full release  
And thine own life is completer  
For her conquest and her peace.*

One other member of this famous King family must be mentioned in this narrative - Miss Euphemia Van Rensselaer. She was a great granddaughter of Rufus King.

I found the following item from the Long Island Press in Chester Durgin's: "Reflections of Yesterday."

*First Trained Nurse  
Lived in Jamaica*

*Euphemia Van Rensselaer, great granddaughter of Rufus King, was said to be the first trained nurse in the United States. She founded the Bellevue Training School for Nurses in Manhattan, which is still in existence.*

*The uniform adopted by Miss Van Rensselaer when a nurse during the Civil War, much to the disapproval of all her relatives and friends, is the same style worn by the nurses today at Bellevue.*

*Miss Van Rensselaer was the first women nurse to attend operations regularly. She persuaded her young woman friends to join her and help nurse the sick soldiers and also to help clean up the houses used as hospitals.*

This information was so interesting that I decided to follow the matter further. Through the kind help of a Bellevue Training School graduate, Miss Anne Johnson, Superintendent of Nurses at Kings County Hospital, I was able to get some clarifying data direct from Bellevue. It contradicts the version quoted in "Reflections of Yesterday," but introduces some other interesting details. Here it is:

Although Miss Van Rensselaer became an Assistant to Sister Helen, the Lady Superintendent of Bellevue Training School for Nurses, she was never actually a student member of the school, nor was she ever graduated as a nurse.

While an Assistant at Bellevue, she designed the uniform - one of "suitable wash material." The uniform worn today is made of the same material and changed in style of blouse and skirt and length, but is fundamentally the same type of uniform.

The cap also was designed by her in 1876.

When Sister Helen left Bellevue in 1876, the Board wished Miss Van Rensselaer to stay as Lady Superintendent. She refused, however, as she planned to join the Roman Catholic Church and the Sisters of Charity.

She and her brother, Henry Van Rensselaer, who was then studying in Europe, were baptized in Paris. She later became Sister Mary Dolores of the Sisters of Charity and he, Father Henry Van Rensselaer, a Jesuit. He died at St. Vincent's Hospital in New York. She was there with him at the time of his death.

Thus it is clear that Miss Van Rensselaer was not, as the Long Island Press item indicated, the first trained nurse in America. However, this great granddaughter of Rufus King will always remain an outstanding figure in the history of nursing.

Miss Mary Rhinelander King, who equipped the operating room in memory of Miss Cornelia King, and Miss Ellen King, both of Great Neck, are other members of the King family who were among Jamaica Hospital's staunchest supporters.

The community of Hollis figures in our history because its developer, Mr. Frederick W. Dunton, supported Jamaica Hospital loyally and powerfully over a long period of years.

Mrs. Dunton was born at Hollis, Connecticut, and came to Jamaica as a young man. He soon became dynamic figure in the community. He acquired real estate in East Jamaica, and persuaded many home seekers from New York and elsewhere to settle there. In 1885 he persuaded the Long Island Railroad to build a new station to serve his development, and to name it Hollis. This was an unpopular decision at the time, as is shown by contemporary comment in the press. The Long Island Democrat said:

*It seems strange that our people go so far for outlandish names when good ones can be found at home. Hollis seems to be the name given to the new railroad station at East Jamaica, it being within a few yards of Carpenter's Inn, Where General Nathaniel Woodhull was taken prisoner in the Revolution, and so barbarously wounded that he died soon after. Had the projectors given it the name of Woodhull, it would have commemorated the death of a worthy man who lost his life securing the liberty we now enjoy. Who can deny that republics are ungrateful?*

However, Hollis the community became, and Hollis it remains this day.

In the southwestern part of Jamaica, Mr. Dunton developed another section, which was called Dunton. Unlike Hollis, Dunton never became a closely-knit community. The neighborhood name never really caught on.

Mr. Dunton became well known throughout the country as a pioneer of the automobile industry. He was president of the Barrows Company, makers of those quaint electric carriages, which were a familiar sight a generation ago. In the decade preceding the opening of our present buildings, Mr. Dunton was to be a tower of strength in our efforts to serve a very rapidly expanding community.

### *One More the Crippled Walk*

When I started writing this history, the United States had been in just two wars during Jamaica Hospital's existence. Now, of course, we are in a third struggle, by far the greatest of all. We don't yet know, fully, what new responsibilities, inconveniences and even hardships this war will bring to us. However, we accept the challenge, sight unseen, and we are already laying plans to continue our service to the community with lessened personnel and equipment.

A defense committee of the Medical Board is actively at work laying plans for full cooperation with the national defense agencies. It may be that our function will be purely routine; that we shall be called upon to do nothing more than to continue giving conscientious and expertly supervised care to all who come to our door, seeking to be made well. In war or peace, that is our primary duty. In the field of public health, we have other duties, which have double importance in the realm of civilian morale in wartime. In this field, we are equipped to carry even more than our share of the burden. Two months before America entered the Second World War, we had opened a new department - a mental hygiene clinic. It is the first to be established in any voluntary hospital in Queens. It meets once a week under the supervision of a trained psychiatrist. Also in attendance are a psychologist, a corps of trained nurses, and social service workers. It can be expanded if necessary to cope with the nervous ailments, which accompany war. In this and other respects, we are geared to harness our collective knowledge, our facilities and our fifty years of experience, and dedicate them to civilian defense.

The years of the first World War and of the postwar readjustment were very difficult ones for Jamaica Hospital. Our facilities were constantly overtaxed and our treasury was chronically deflated. It was obvious that we had three jobs on our hands - to meet, somehow, the obligation of caring for every sick person brought to our door; to pay our bills; and to begin thinking about getting a new building for the larger duties ahead.

The first of these jobs belonged primarily to the doctors, the nurses and the administrative staff. The other jobs belonged to the Trustees and to the citizens of Jamaica and the other communities, which sent us patients. I think the record shows that the doctors and all the hospital personnel took care of their part of the task. And the citizens, to their everlasting credit, met the challenge nobly. It is my belief that virtually all people are basically fair, and that most of us are fundamentally generous. Once we are told the entire truth about "why" our help is needed, we do all we can and more.

Early in 1916, Jamaica Hospital was living from hand to mouth. It was caring for the largest number of patients in its history. But because the purpose of our existence is service, and not income, we were caring for patients at far less than cost, and operating constantly at a deficit. So one of our most influential friends set out to reinforce our position. On April 10, 1916, the following item appeared in the Long Island Farmer:

### HOSPITAL NEEDS FUND

F. W. Dunton Makes Strong Appeal for Jamaica Hospital Medical Center  
Institution - Has Himself Secured Many  
Large Pledges - Situation Explained

#### The Expenses Must Be Met

Frederick W. Dunton of Hollis, who was one of the foremost supporters of the project for raising funds for the Jamaica Hospital three years ago, is now heading another movement of the same kind and has himself secured already a large number of pledges. Mr. Dunton, whose personal generosity in such matters is well known, is untiring in his efforts for his good cause and deserves the most cordial support from Jamaica people and residents of the whole territory served by the Hospital.

In a general letter to those interested he says:

"In sums ranging from \$50 to \$100 I have secured the pledges of \$850 annually towards \$2,500 to be paid annually in quarters installments to the trustees of the Jamaica Hospital. These pledges not to become effective unless the whole \$2,500 is secured.

"The hospital runs behind \$2,500 annually. Without an explanation this statement will surprise you. You will think of the campaign, which resulted in donations up to nearly \$50,000, and exclaim: 'What! Are they after more money?' But when you take into consideration the fact that not one penny of the \$43,000 of the endowment fund raised in that campaign can be used for current expenses, that the interest only, namely \$2,100, can be so used, and when you examine the hospital statement you will see how the deficiency occurs.

"We all contributed royally to this campaign fund. It cost me \$600. Some have told me that their contribution was all that ever should be expected from them. If my \$600 contribution and the other contributions operated to put an end to the demands upon the hospital. I should not feel like subscribing a further \$100 annually as I have agreed to. What a splendid thing it would be if with one contribution we could put an end to poverty and suffering! We cannot - and to continue hospital aid to those in our midst requiring it seems impossible except through the channel therein indicated. Do you know of any other way?

The Campaign subscription cards show that:

100 people contributed

\$20 each

214 people contributed	\$25 each
2 people contributed	\$35.00 each
90 people contributed	\$50.00 each
62 people contributed	\$100.00 each
1 person contributed	\$200.00 each
5 people contributed	\$250.00 each
1 person contributed	\$300.00 each
10 people contributed	\$500.00 each
3 people contributed	\$1,000 each
1 person contributed	\$1,500 each

"Six persons gave \$1,500 towards the auto-ambulance, my contribution being \$500, which is mentioned solely for the purpose of showing that I am entitled to your consideration in this matter.

Here we have a total number of 489 persons each contributing \$20 or more would give \$5 or more annually, the sum required would be made with slight burden upon any one subscriber.

Will you contribute anything? Is so, please insert the amount in the form enclosed and mail same to me."

Yours respectfully,  
"F. W. Dunton"

The article in the Long Island Farmer then went on to explain what the problem was, in dollars and cents. It said:

*The statement of the expenses of the hospital enclosed with Mr. Dunton's letter show that the total receipts for the year ending September 20, 1915, were \$27,234.37. Total expenditures were \$26,333.60. Bills unpaid amounted to \$3,399.36, and cash on hand to \$900.77. City bills unpaid amounted to \$1,482.09. Having to wait for these city moneys and with those collected still leaving a \$1,000 deficiency not only prevents discounting bill and other economic business methods but all the time brings the trustees face to face with with questions concerning hospital admittances, which should not arise where the wish is to welcome and care for sufferers regardless of their financial ability.*

To the above article from the Long Island Farmer we can make just one addition. Namely: P.S. Our friends and neighbors again came through.

In the summer of 1916, the infantile paralysis epidemic descended upon us. The terrible scourge made its first Greater New York appearance in Brooklyn, where few cases were reported in June. Daily there after the number of new cases reported in June. Daily there after the number of new cases increased rapidly, and by mid July the epidemic was spreading like wildfire.

On Saturday, July 1<sup>st</sup>, the Long Island Farmer printed the following:

Outbreak of Infantile Paralysis  
Alarms New York City

NEW York, July 1. - An outbreak of infantile paralysis is alarming the city's health department. Forty seven patients have died in Manhattan and Brooklyn since June 10<sup>th</sup>, according to a statement issued by the department. Forty-two of the deaths were in Brooklyn and the other five in Manhattan. Of the Brooklyn victims, twenty two have succumbed since Wednesday.

Since Thursday forty seven cases have been reported, thirty eight in Brooklyn, eight in Manhattan and one in the Bronx. The total number of known cases is now 302.

On Monday, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, the headline in the Farmer was "Infantile Paralysis Rages." By then there were 379 cases in New York City and there had been 76 deaths, 58 of them in the week just preceding.

The article went on to tell about the physicians meeting in war council to combat the scourge. It said that 100 doctors from the infected Brooklyn district gathered at the Polhemus Memorial Clinic, and were addressed by Dr. Simon Flexner and Health Commissioner Haven Emerson, who enlisted them in a systematic, concentrated fight. The article explained that Dr. Emerson told what the Department of Health was doing, while Dr. Flexner summarized all the latest medical knowledge of the disease.

From then until the end of September, the epidemic was headline news continuously. It spread into Queens in the first week of July. New cases and deaths reached their peak about the middle of August. Then some cooler weather came, and the epidemic seemed to spread less rapidly. On August 9<sup>th</sup>, the local papers reported that blood from previously infected persons was being used with apparently good results in treating victims.

Throughout the epidemic, New York City and most nearby communities were under quarantine. Children were not allowed to leave. Neither were they allowed to attend any public entertainment. Parents were advised to keep them indoors and away from possible contamination.

In the early summer of 1916, the Queensboro Hospital, now the Queensboro Pavilion of the Queens General Hospital was nearing completion. It was built for the treatment of tuberculosis patients, but with the coming of the infantile paralysis epidemic it was hastily made ready to accommodate the paralysis victims and soon was filled to capacity. This circumstance permanently changed the character of the hospital, which has been used ever since for treatment of contagious diseases.

The opening of the public schools for the fall session was delayed until September 26<sup>th</sup>. On September 27<sup>th</sup>, the Health Department declared the epidemic at an end. It had taken 2,248 lives in New York City and had left thousands of other victims crippled.

Into the task of rehabilitating these victims, Jamaica Hospital flung itself vigorously. By September 12<sup>th</sup>, we had inaugurated an orthopedic clinic under the direction of Dr. Henry C. Courten. This clinic proceeded to write on of the proudest chapters of our history.

Meanwhile a group of good citizens got together under the chairmanship of Mrs. Webster Williams and formed the Orthopedic Social Service Committee to help us broaden our service and treat large numbers of the children at their homes. This committee worked very closely with Dr. Courten and the orthopedic clinic.

On January 15, 1917, the Long Island Farmer told about our work as follows:

Infantile Paralysis Clinics  
What They Are Doing to Restore Complete Health  
To Last Summer's Victims of Poliomyelitis-  
Jamaica Hospital Treated 21 Thursday  
Were Taken There By Auto

*The saving of the little folks who survived infantile paralysis last summer from being crippled for life is what is sought to be done now through the free clinics being held twice a week at Jamaica Hospital and Flushing Hospital through cooperation with the city, which superintends the collection of the young folks in automobiles and brings them to the hospitals for treatment. At the Jamaica Hospital last Thursday, 21 young folks who were left more or less helpless by paralysis attacks were treated, being brought there by automobile in care of a nurse, former playground supervisor, who was engaged for this purpose. The automobile, provided through private generosity, is used two days a week in Flushing and two days a week in Jamaica.*

*The massage and other treatment given has accomplished most gratifying results, and often in even two or three weeks time surprising improvement is noted. It is hoped in this way to gradually restore to most of the afflicted children the use of their limbs and prevent the results of last summer's epidemic from being so serious in after-effects as it otherwise would have been.*

*The parents of children who have been afflicted in this way can help by cooperating with the authorities. In general, of course, they are only too ready to do so, but among some people, especially foreigners, there is a dread of hospitals and a fear of what the doctors may do to the children. They should understand that the treatment at the clinics is very essential to the future health and activity of their children, and that they should exert every effort to secure it for them*

Naturally, all this took money. It was decided to raise a fund, which would be used for the orthopedic clinic, and for that purpose alone. To this end many entertainment and parties were arranged. One of the largest and most successful was held in Jamaica on Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 1917. We find an item about it in the Farmer of the following day:

*Concert for Hospital Benefit*

*One of the finest musical programs in Jamaica in some time was that of last evening at the concert at Memorial House in aid of the Jamaica Hospital's Orthopedic Clinic for the children suffering from after effects of infantile paralysis. The concert was well attended and successful in every way.*

*At the close of the musical program and while the young lady ushers were selling candy, Mrs. Caroline Burtis made an address and introduced the superintendent of the hospital, Miss Saffair, who told of the work of the clinic and what a benefit is being conferred on so many young people through it, and invited people to come and see for themselves. Something like \$500 will probably be realized, and this will aid in a work which benefits families of all classes, for the plague of the summer was no respecter of persons, and will not be if it comes again next summer.*

By the hundreds the children came to the clinics. With the passing of weeks and months, their limbs grew stronger. Traces of the great epidemic, while never wholly obliterated, were minimized. And those who had created the Jamaica Hospital and supported it down through the years could ask for no better monument to their generosity than the record of Jamaica's children restored to active health. Fittingly enough, when ground was broken a few years later for our present building, it was youthful victims of infantile paralysis, restored to vigor at the orthopedic clinics, who wielded shovels and turned the first earth.

#### *To Our War Dead*

In 1917 and 1918, two of the Four Horsemen were abroad in our land - War and Pestilence. The United States entered the World War (number one) on April 6, 1917. In 1918, a pandemic of influenza ravaged the world. Both events left their mark on Jamaica.

Our present hospital building was erected largely as a memorial to the boys of Central Queens who gave their lives on the soil of France.

The boys who survived that world struggle and returned with the laurels of victory found their home community greatly changed in their absence.

On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1918, the clean government forces of our city won a major victory. After a long battle against politicians and patronage pressure groups, the office of Coroner was abolished. In its place, the office of Medical Examiner was created. This put qualified physicians, and not politicians, in charge of investigating accidental and homicidal deaths. The reform provided for a Chief Medical Examiner with central offices and laboratories in Manhattan, and for deputy and assistant medical examiners covering their various sections of the city.

An examination was scheduled to choose an assistant medical examiner for Queens. Many of the younger physicians of the borough contested for the appointment. A future, President of our Jamaica Hospital Medical Board, Dr. Howard W. Neail, won the post and has held it ever since. He has built up an enviable reputation as a medico-legal expert, and has testified in many famous trials, In recognition of his standing as a medical examiner; Dr. Neail has twice been elected to head the National Society of Medical Jurisprudence, a group of physicians, lawyers, and others particularly interested in forensic medicine.

Another and more sweeping change was wrought in our community early in 1918 when workmen riveted the last steel girders of the B.M.T. elevated line along Jamaica Avenue. For the first time, Jamaica had five-cent rapid transportation into Manhattan.

Almost instantly, a vast new population moved to Jamaica. By late spring, there was an acute housing shortage. A stupendous building boom was under way, but it took time to catch up with the demand. One of the victims of the housing shortage was this writer. I was discharged from the army in June 1918, but it was late fall before I could get a suitable location to re-established practice.

From this time on, the old Jamaica of leisurely tempo was finally and definitely a thing of the past. By the end of 1918 we were spiritually as well as physically and politically a part of the great cosmopolitan city.

Of course, many of Jamaica's newcomers and many of Jamaica's residents of longer standing failed to survive the 1918 winter. With awful impartiality, the dread plague - influenza - stole into our homes, our shops and our schools. Young and old, weak and strong were stricken. Nearly every house was a house of sickness, and all too many were houses of death.

The staffs and personnel of the Jamaica, Mary Immaculate and Queensboro Hospitals worked virtually around the clock, for weeks. Then, one bright day, we discovered that the tide had turned. The peak had been passed. The plague was under control. But the cost had been terrific. In the United States alone, 548,452 persons were dead. It has been estimated that the influenza death toll throughout the world was more than 20,000,000.

The first step toward building our present hospital was taken on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1917, two days before the United States' declaration of war on Germany. A group of men met at Kew Gardens and laid the plans. The building that finally was erected was much larger and more costly than the one they envisaged, because of the unexpected great growth of the community. But the main objective was fixed on the horizon that night in 1917.

An article in the Long Island Farmer the next day disclosed how resolutely the plans ere made. Here is the item:

*Meeting Last Night Appointed Committees  
To Raise \$200,000*

*There may be a new hospital to cost \$200,000 on the ridge between Jamaica and Forest Hills. A meeting was held last night at Kew Gardens, and 70 men formed themselves into a committee and discussed plans for the institution. The hospital will be incorporated, and a whirlwind campaign will be conducted to raise funds. It was stated that \$5,000 had been pledged.*

*The sum will be used in defraying the expenses of the campaign for money.*

*It is admitted that the new institution will take the place of the old Jamaica Hospital, even to the turning over of the \$50,000 endowment fund, which was raised several years ago. A campaign committee was organized last night; Chairman, Samuel W. Eckman, Forest Hills, Vice-Chairman, Frederick W. Dunton, Hollis; Treasurer, Robert W. Higbie, Jamaica, Secretary, D. Nelson Raynor, Jamaica.*

*An executive committee was formed, composed of one man from each of the communities the hospital is expected to serve: J. L. White, South Ozone Park; Percy G. James, Jamaica; John A. Loope, Hollis; Edward E. Buhler, Queens; E. N. Mungen, Springfield; M.F. Teepe, St. Albans; W. C. Reid, Rosedale; I. W. Backus, Middle Village; Chas. H. Schroeder, Woodhaven; Peter Albrecht, Ozone Park; Frederick W. Boschen, Richmond Hill; Alrick H. Man, Kew Gardens; E. M. Mays, Forest Hills; J. A. Rapelye, Elmhurst; Harry I. Huber, Morris Park, Eugene Pauly, Glen Morris.*

After this initial meeting, interest in the new institution increased slowly but steadily. The Trustees, through their committees, laid the groundwork for the projected drive for necessary funds.

By 1919 they were ready, and on February 24<sup>th</sup> they took the first definite steps. In June of that year, an intensive drive for funds was conducted jointly with Mary Immaculate Hospital. After the drive was over, the Trustees bought the land on which our present building stands. The purchase price was \$18,000.

In February, 1920, a radical change was made in the composition of the Board of Trustees. Up to that time, for more than twenty-seven years, the Board had been composed entirely of women. But in undertaking the erection of a new home for Jamaica Hospital, the ladies felt they needed the active help of men. So the Board of Trustees was enlarged by the election of fifteen men, in addition to fifteen women. Mr. William C. Reid was elected President of the reorganized Board, succeeding Mrs. R. W. Higbie, who had served since 1914. Since that time the Board always has been headed by a man. There also has been a gradual substitution of men for women, until the Board today is made up of twenty-six men and four women.

The women have continued active in support of Jamaica Hospital, principally through the Auxiliaries and other cooperating organizations. A list of all these organizations and their officers as of 1941 will be found in the appendix to this history.

On September 7<sup>th</sup>, 1920, a Building Committee was appointed by the Board of Trustees, with Mr. Percy G. James, founder of the 4<sup>th</sup> Ward Men's Hospital Association, as

chairman. The committee was empowered to erect a building at a cost of \$500,000, exclusive of furnishings and equipment.

On May 19<sup>th</sup>, 1922, the contract for the excavation and the foundation was let to Jacobs and Young for \$26,500, and Monday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, was selected for the ground-breaking ceremonies. On May 27<sup>th</sup>, the following article appeared in the Long Island Press:

Kiddies Will Break Ground for Hospital  
All Crippled Children in Jamaica Asked to Be Present  
Then Free Trip to Big Circus  
Automobile Dealers' Association Offers Fleet of Cars  
To Give Youngsters Treat of Their Young Lives  
Time Is Monday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, 12:30 Noon

*Crippled children in Jamaica will have one glorious time on Monday. They're going to have an automobile ride, take part in the ceremony of breaking ground for the hospital that will help injured and sick kiddies to get well. And then-*

*What do you suppose?*

*They're going to the circus!*

*Honest, they are.*

*The hospital management has all arrangements made. The cripples will be called for at their homes. Members of the Jamaica Automobile Dealers Association will supply their best cars, with swell drivers. There will be plenty of cars. No crowding.*

*They'll be on hand at 12:30 noon when two of their number, with real shovels, will pull up some earth, the very beginning of the big \$500,000 hospital. It will be on Van Wyck, Ridgewood and Lester Aves. The Otilie Asylum Band will play, some men will talk, and it will be all over except:*

*The big fun comes next, for all the cripples will be loaded into the automobiles again and the traffic cops will give the cars the right of way all the way to the circus. Whoopee!*

*Boss Butler, of the circus publicity department, promises the cripples shall see the best circus of their lives and they'll have an afternoon to remember all the rest of their days.*

The Event was duly recorded, in a more serious vein, in the Long Island Press of May 30<sup>th</sup>, 1922, as follows:

Break Ground for Jamaica's New Hospital  
Two Children, Aided By Treatment,  
Lift First Shovelfuls

Beginning of \$500,000 Building

*With thankfulness in their hearts for medical attention they had received which had returned to them the use of their limbs, two Jamaica children who were cured of the effects of infantile paralysis at the orthopedic clinic attached to the Jamaica Hospital, at*

*noon yesterday turned over the first two spadefuls of earth on the site of the new hospital. The building will stand on Van Wyck Avenue, just south of Jamaica Avenue. The ceremony was performed in the presence of several hundreds of people, all bound by close ties to the Jamaica Hospital.*

*It was with enthusiasm that this throng looked upon the simple but impressive ceremonies hold under the spreading branches of the tall maple trees that line the site of the new half-million-dollar edifice. It will take shape in the ensuing few months, and will rise as a monument to those how have worked faithfully to make it a reality. It will be an added incentive to those who will carry on the work that must be done to raise the funds still needed to complete the building.*

*Old Sol worked in harmony with the committee of arrangements for this important event, and beamed his kindest rays upon the gathered multitude. The greensward was as a velvet carpet, while the gentle old maple trees waved their branches as if to fan and cool the children still undergoing treatment, to have their deformed limbs brought back to natural shape and condition, so that once more they may romp and play with other children not so afflicted.*

*At the close of the ceremonies, the site of the hospital took on the appearance of a picnic ground. Children, parents and hospital workers, with here and there a nurse in her chic blue and white uniform, sat on the grass under the trees. Those who brought luncheons shared them with their neighbors; others enjoyed the luncheon provided for the children by the Jamaica Herald.*

*As the children and grown folks dined, the giant steam shovel arrive in tow of two large motor trucks, which pulled it to position in the middle of the field. There, with little delay, it scooped in to the cavernous interior of its giant bucket the first load of earth. Then as the grounds cleared and the children and older folks went away, the steam shovel took scoopful after scoopful of earth, making way for the foundation walls upon which will be reared a noble structure where maimed and broken bodies will be mended, where the ill will be made well, and where many a leading citizen of future generations in Jamaica will first see the light of day.*

*The formal program at the ground breaking was simple, but there was an air of impressiveness about it that made it a fitting one for the occasion. The ceremony opened with invocation by the Rev. Andrew Magill, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Jamaica, who represented all the Protestant denominations.*

*William Boardman, chairman of the ceremony committee, delivered the opening address. He confined his remarks mostly to the financial problem, which has been faced and partly solved by the building committee and its various workers.*

*A good beginning has been made upon this important task, Mr. Boardman pointed out, but a still greater task is still to be accomplished before the building which is now being started will be fully financed.*

*The building will cost \$500,000. There have been two drives in which the hospital participated. The first was for an endowment fund, which is still untouched, and the second a joint drive for the Jamaica Hospital and Mary Immaculate Hospital. The money received in this drive also is still unused and will be applied, like the former, to the cost of the building and site. There are, in addition, some funds donated by Mary Smith of Kew Gardens for an orthopedic ward.*

*In addition to all these funds, which total about \$150,000, there is still \$350,000 to be raised.*

*William C. Reid, president of the Board of Trustees of Jamaica Hospital, delivered a very illuminating address in which he outlined the work the hospital has done since its inception a quarter of a century ago. He spoke of the progress made in that time, and of the hopes and aspirations of those who have been altruistically doing their utmost to assist the hospital to give the greatest possible service, and to expand its facilities in every way possible so it could ever extend to a constantly increasing extent the helping hand, which only a properly conducted and maintained the work which not alone the Jamaica Hospital but the Mary Immaculate Hospital as well is doing, in this respect. The building for which ground is being broke, he pointed out, will be the realization of a long series of years of consistent and persistent effort. It represents a highly developed spirit of unselfish cooperation, on the part of those to whom it will be a useful monument, which will carry on for years to come the work which they started, have aided, or have done their best to assist in any way.*

*As Mr. Reid closed his address, the two children who have been treated and practically cured of the effects of infantile paralysis took the spade, and each in turn raised a spadeful of earth from a square, which had been cleared of sod. The children were Charles Weidman, formerly of Jamaica, but now of 1381 Broadway, Brooklyn, and Emma Dorman, 12 years old, of Elmont, L.I.*

*The closing prayer was made by the Rev. Mr. Irving F. Reichert, pastor of Temple Israel, of Jamaica.*

*The Rev. Father John M. Scheffe, rector of St. Mary's Church, who was present as representing the Catholic Church, did not deliver an address.*

*The Jamaica Automobile Dealers' Association donated the use of a number of automobiles to convey 200 children and their parents to the site. Bordens furnished milk for the luncheon.*

*At appropriate intervals in the program the Sousa Band of the Otilie Asylum delivered a very fine program music.*

Thus, in the simple tradition, we began building the fine new Jamaica Hospital, which still is our home. During the summer of 1922 the excavation was completed, and the

structure steadily rose. On the tenth of December, the cornerstone was laid. It was a cold, blustery Sunday afternoon, but five hundred spectators turned out.

Those of us who knew the history of Jamaica Hospital's beginnings had a feeling of exhilaration when a gracious elderly lady rose from her seat on the platform and handled the first trowelful of mortar. She was Mrs. Louis R. Weyser, formerly Miss Mary Gale, the public-spirited schoolteacher who had led the King's Daughters in founding Jamaica Hospital thirty-one years earlier, and who had laid the cornerstone of the first permanent structure on the eve of the turn of the century.

The Rev. Percy Shoemaker, pastor of the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Jamaica, delivered the opening prayer. Mr. William C. Reid, President of the Board of Trustees, spoke. So did Dr. Archibald C. MacLachlan, principal of the Jamaica Training School for Teachers, and the Rev. Andrew Magill of the Presbyterian Church. The Reverend Arthur M. Ellis, pastor of the Union congregational Church of Richmond Hill, brought congratulations from the people of that community, within the borders of which our new building is located.

Before the cornerstone was sealed, a metal box was fitted into it. This box contained a history of the Hospital, prepared by Charles M. Hoffman, our Executive Secretary. Also historical sketches of each Auxiliary, miscellaneous records and documents relating to the Hospital, and copies of the local newspapers.

At the time this ceremony took place, the Trustees had on hand about \$275, 000. Another \$225,000 was urgently needed. This represented only a little over a dollar a piece from each person in our territory. Yet the men in charge of the drive found the money very hard to get.

For a time, they were at their wits' end. They cannot, therefore, be greatly censured for having considered and almost carried out a plan that would have done injustice to the founders. This plan was to change the name of the hospital in the hope of facilitating a wider appeal for funds.

In the October, 1923, issue of Queensboro, a monthly publication of the Queensborough Chamber of Commerce, the trial balloon was sent up. The article related that the new hospital building was under construction, and added:

*When the new building is opened, the name will be changed, as it will be located in Richmond Hill, just over the Jamaica line. It is thought, therefore, that some other name, indicating the wider field of service, will be more appropriate. A prize of \$50 was offered by the Committee for the best name submitted. The contest closed October 8<sup>th</sup>, but the name proposed by the successful contestant had not been announced when Queensboro went to press.*

Luckily, nothing ever came of this scheme. Wiser heads prevailed. We still have and will continue to have the original name - Jamaica Hospital. It's an honorable title and should not be lightly discarded.

The fine new building - our present home- was completed in the summer of 1924. The first patient was admitted on August 24<sup>th</sup>. The next day the building was dedicated and formally opened for service to the community.

I could tell you about the opening, but in this as in any other history, contemporary accounts are better. Suppose we read about it, therefore, in the Long Island Press of August 26<sup>th</sup>, 1924:

*Jamaica Hospital is Formally Opened  
Kindly Aid Given*

*The new Jamaica Hospital building on Van Wyck Blvd was officially opened last night at 5:30 o'clock. A small group of about a dozen officials and head nurses, who have worked diligently to make the new institution a success, gathered in a circle in the rotunda near the main entrance while William C. Reid, president of the Board of Trustees, told of the purpose of the building and its staff, and also thanked everyone who in any way had helped to erect the building.*

*Rev. Rolla E. Hunt, pastor of the Richmond Hill Baptist Church, offered a dedicatory prayer, after which Mr. Reid said:*

*"On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Jamaica Hospital, I officially declare this hospital open for the use and service of humanity."*

*A small boy, Stanley Linsky, 7, was the first patient, to be put to bed in the hospital, but to Ruth Gibson, of Atlantic Avenue, Richmond Hill, goes the honor of being the first patient admitted. Stanley, according to the report last night, arrived at the old hospital building just as a load of nurses was leaving for the new building. It is said that he was suffering from pneumonia, and had been sent there by the Health Department. He was the first patient transferred and put to bed, but Miss Gibson was the first to be regularly admitted.*

*Ambulances from Flushing Hospital, Mary Immaculate Hospital and Jamaica Hospital, and that of the F. E. Cornell Company of Hempstead, helped transfer the 20 patients from the old building to the new. The Cornell ambulance was used through the courtesy of J. Walter Whittel.*

*All patients were moved with ease, and even though the weather was not favorable, no difficulty was experienced, so well were all plans for the transfer worked out beforehand.*

*From nurses and patients nothing but praise for the officials and the beautiful building could be heard. It was like getting to know Aladdin and his lamp. One day in an old frame building, the next in a beautifully appointed fireproof structure equipped with every convenience and comfort.*

According to the same paper, the first patient to be treated in the clinic of the new hospital was Theodore Goetschel, a carpenter, of 334 East 93<sup>rd</sup> Street, Manhattan. A news item recorded that:

*Injury occurred to Goetschel while he was helping unload lumber at Queens Boulevard and Jamaica Avenue, from a truck owned by Gude and Company of Manhattan. A large beam of lumber fell, crushing his left thumb. He was rushed to the new hospital at once. He was treated by Dr. P. A. Corn and Miss A. C. Walters, physician and nurse attending the case, for a cut and badly bruised thumb. It was necessary to take two sutures in the injured member. He was able to go home after treatment.*

Before long our comparatively large new building was to become as full and as busy as the old hospital. By the late 1930's we were to wish we had much more space, which we could well use. Lacking more room, we have dedicated ourselves to getting sixty useful seconds out of every minute in the facilities available to us. Our doors have been open uninterruptedly for twenty-four hours of every day "for the use and service of humanity," as Mr. Reid pledged at the dedication. For such is a hospital's mission.

#### *Fifty Years of Progress*

On December 30, 1940, Jamaica Hospital drew press notices from coast to coast. The previous night a nine-year-old boy, John Guerin, of 89-32 138<sup>th</sup> Street, fell on a pair of scissors while playing in his home. A blade of the scissors pierced his heart. His father picked him up and rushed him to Jamaica Hospital.

There was little time to spare. The lad was on the operating table before you could count to fifty. Deftly and skillfully a surgeon went to work. The boy's chest wall and pericardium were opened. The incision in the heart was located. It was nasty gash, and the boy was within precious few minutes of death. Racing against time, the surgeon closed the wound with three interrupted sutures.

Happily, death had been cheated. The youngster had a rather stormy post-operative period, but pulled through. Last October 6<sup>th</sup>, the Long Island Daily Press printed the sequel to the surgical drama. Here's the item:

#### *Boy With Sewed Heart Now Leads Normal Life*

*John Richard Guerin, the 9 year old Jamaica boy whose heart was pierced when he accidentally fell on a pair of scissors nine months ago, is back at school and is playing baseball, riding his bicycle and romping with his dog, Scrappy.*

*He lives upstate now because the doctors said that living out in the country would strengthen his heart.*

*Francis Leupold, superintendent of Jamaica Hospital, welcomed the boy last week when he returned for an examination.*

That was a spectacular case, because it contained all the elements of human-interest drama. Yet under the gleaming white light of the operating room, lives are saved almost every day. Not infrequently, the race against death is as closely run as in the case of John Richard Guerin. Always, the issue is an urgent one. A mother must be kept alive and restored to vigor so she can go and care for her family. A father must be saved so he can resume his duties as a breadwinner. Hospitals deal not with illness and wounds but with human beings. God-given lives of individual are entrusted to us. Each one is somebody's mother, somebody's father, somebody's son or somebody's daughter. Our responsibility is great.

It is a matter of quiet pride with those of us who have been associated with Jamaica Hospital that we have tempered our professional impersonal aloofness with sympathetic understanding. There is room for both. A patient paid us a high tribute a few years ago. On leaving, after undergoing a very serious operation, she said: "I really have enjoyed it here. I shall remember Jamaica Hospital as the meeting place of scientific objectivity and of warm human kindness.

Since we first opened our doors in the spring of 1891, many new weapons have been added to the arsenal of medicine, and we have made it a point to use all of them, whatever the cost. We have been determined, during every moment of our history, to bestow on our patients in Central Queens all the benefits of medical research as soon as they are tried, tested and approved.

A few months after Jamaica Hospital was organized, a truly great medical discovery was announced-Dr. Robert Koch's remedy for tuberculosis. The announcement came on October 22, 1891.

In November 1895, another great discovery was announced-the X ray. A German physicist, Wilhelm Konrad Von Roentgen, Professor of Physics at Wurzburg, discovered a peculiar electric ray, which could pass through various substances opaque to ordinary light rays. He noted that this ray also affected photographic plates. He called it the X or unknown ray because he knew so little about it. As we all know, this was one of the greatest discoveries ever to come to the aid of the medical professional. Indeed, it was to prove valuable to a multitude of professions and industries entirely apart from medicine. Incidentally, future Boards of Trustees of Jamaica Hospital, and of thousands of other institutions, were to suffer many headaches trying to finance proper equipment made necessary by this discovery.

It is a little startling to reflect that when Jamaica Hospital opened, there was no accepted remedy for tuberculosis, and no photographic aid to diagnosis of internal ills. Looking back, it seems as if the science of medicine was almost in a primitive state at the beginning of our institution's history. Yet in four and a half years we had the Koch remedy and the X-ray. We must set down that period as one of magnificent progress.

In 1898, Pierre and Marie Curie announced the discovery of radium. This marvelous substance, together with X-ray, has since been of inestimable value to the human race, particularly in the constant struggle to conquer cancer. Oddly enough, like Von Roentgen and so many others who have contributed heavily to the arsenal of medicine, Pierre and Marie Curie were not physicians.

The year 1905 will always be a notable date in medical history. It was in 1905 that the cause of syphilis was finally established, after baffling science for generations. Drs. Schaudinn and Hoffmann announced after extensive research that the spircoheta pallida was the specific cause of this age-old scourge of humanity. The following year Dr. August Von Wassermann and his co-workers announced their complement fixation test for diagnosing this dread disease. The cause of syphilis and a specific test for its presence having been discovered, it was only a matter of time before a cure would be evolved. This happened when, in 1910, Dr. Paul Ehrlich announced the perfection of salvarsan. The new medicine was put on the market in December 1910. Dr. Ehrlich already was well known because he had been a co-winner of the Nobel prize for medicine in 1908.

Dr. Ehrlich's original idea that he had a medicament that would cure syphilis with the application of one dose was doomed to failure. It didn't do this, and the first salvarsan was so toxic that in many cases its administration resulted in death.

However, salvarsan and its derivatives have been much improved in late years, and now constitute the accepted therapy in syphilis. Physicians at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York have recently published the results of experiments in the slow drop continuous injection method of treatment, which may approximate in results Dr. Ehrlich's dream of a one-dose cure. Our own experience with this method of treatment in a considerable number of cases has been most gratifying. The cures, if permanent, savor of the miraculous.

In the more recent years of our history as a hospital, there have been other discoveries of tremendous importance. The blood transfusion was an attractive notion in medicine's early annals, but has been perfected only in our own generation. The so-called sulfa drugs, sulfanilamide and its offshoots, may become very valuable aids in the struggle against illness and disease. And hardly a week passes without the perfection of new medical weapons which would appear very obscure to the layman but which are of the highest significance to the skilled physician.

Jamaica Hospital is proud to have lived through such a half century of progress.