The 1922 Grand Bazaar in aid of the funds of the Royal Lancaster Infirmary

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About 30 years ago a patient, who knew I was interested in local history, gave me a brochure of the 1922 Royal Lancaster Infirmary fund-raising Bazaar. The Bazaar was held in the Ashton Hall of Lancaster Town Hall and was a four-day event with the object of raising £10,000. The brochure has suffered over time, mainly due to the rusting of the metal staples, but it has 161 pages of details of the event, photographs, lists of local personalities of the day, a comprehensive history of the Infirmary and many interesting advertisements.

The officers of the Infirmary are listed and I was intrigued to see that Mr W George, MC, is listed. He was assistant surgeon, but also a general practitioner living at 2 Dallas Road. He gave the 'George' Cup for the local doctors' annual golf competition, which is competed for to this day. [See page 92 for this year's results.] Mr Daniel is listed as an anaesthetist, but I know he came to do surgery with an interest in urology. He gave me a medical examination when my wife and I applied for our first house mortgage – this was in 1962, at his surgery in King Street.

On page 19, the brochure begins the story of the Infirmary and goes back to its roots at Dr David Campbell's house in Castle Grove in 1781. The history is comprehensive and I have selected a number of pages for inclusion in this article.

In reading this history I noted the grumble that the original site was a bad choice – 'a larger piece of land' . . . 'would have relieved their successors of much trouble!' I like the record of gifts of game from the King's 'bag'! More seriously, the

2004: cannabis reclassified

Following the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the Misuse of Drugs, the drug is downgraded from class B to class C by the Home Secretary, David Blunkett.

2005: sixth and final Shipman Report released

Concluded probable number of Shipman's victims between 1971 and 1998 was 250; recommended reforms of the

monitoring of controlled drug transactions.

2006: Health Act

Post Shipman, strengthened governance and monitoring arrangements for controlled drugs. All designated bodies such as healthcare organisations and independent hospitals are required to appoint an Accountable Officer. A duty of collaboration placed on responsible bodies, healthcare

organisations and other local and national agencies including professional regulatory bodies, police forces, the Healthcare Commission and the Commission for Social Care.

2006: ketamine

Ketamine is listed as a Class C drug. Its use reached relatively high levels of popularity in 1999-2000, especially in squat/warehouse scenes.

The Story of the Infirmary.

The Royal Lancaster Infirmary is no mushroom growth, for it was on the 10th January, 1781, a hundred and forty-one years ago, that it was born. The present handsome building is the fourth in which the charitable and divine work of ministering to the sick has been carried on in Lancaster. The first building used for the purpose was on the south side of Castle Grove, the residence of Dr. David Campbell, the originator of the scheme, who devoted much of his time and money to further the good work. The "Cumberland Packet," a Carlisle journal, of January 16th, 1781, stated:—"On the 10th January, 1781, a number of gentlemen determined to establish a Dispensary for furnishing the sick poor with advice and medicine gratis." This brief announcement was peculiar to the times. In the seventeenth century newspapers did not "spread themselves," professional gentlemen "did not advertise," and good men "did good by stealth."

The first General Dispensary was established in England in 1770, and four years later there were said to be similar Institutions in one or two other places. Lancaster was thus almost in the van in charitable work, but it is strange that the scheme was regarded by some prominent people

the buildings were opened by their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York (now King George V. and Queen Mary), and his Royal Highness announced the gracious pleasure of his illustrious grandmother, Queen Victoria, that the Institution should be known as "The Royal Lancaster Infirmary." The proceedings were marked by great enthusiasm. The late Alderman Huntington was Mayor, and he entertained the Royal guests and a distinguished party to luncheon at the Town Hall; and the late Alderman Greg was President of the Institution. The Duke of York was presented with a gold key by the architects with which to open the door of the Institution; and the Duchess of York received purses for the Building Fund. Members of the Reception Committee were presented to their Royal Highnesses, who were afterwards driven around the town.

The title "Royal" was confirmed by the late King Edward VII., and by the present King on ascending the throne. Their Majesties, the King and Queen, have frequently shown their interest in the Infirmary. Gifts of game were sent from the King's "bag," and a few years ago their Majesties signified their gracious pleasure to become Patrons of the Institution.

A great Bazaar followed the opening of the Infirmary, to raise the £3,500 still owing on the Building Fund, and to provide the furnishings of the new building. A sum of £4,200 was asked for, and £3,814 was raised, leaving a deficiency of £35 12s. 3d. The estimate of the Committee as to the cost of furnishing proved too modest, and the report of the first year's working showed a debit balance of something like £1,000. The Committee tackled that debt, and before the War

in the town with pious horror. Why, does not seem clear; the brief records available simply state the fact. Within a few years of the commencement of the work by Dr. Campbell, the Dispensary was transferred to a residence on the opposite (or north) side of Castle Grove, which bears the date 1785, cut in a square. On that square was inserted a terra cotta panel, illustrating the "Parable of the Good Samaritan." The panel was subsequently transferred to the Infirmary building in Thurnham Street (now the Catholic Club and Royal Hotel), and when the present building was erected, the panel was removed and built into the stonework above the principal doorway. It is still in excellent preservation. In 1815, a "House of Recovery" was founded in Plumh Court, because of what was described as "a prevailing fever," and this building seems to have been used for seventeen years. In 1832, the year after the death of Dr. Campbell, the two establishments were united, and removed to Thurnham Street. This union and removal, and the opening of what was then called "The New Infirmary," was effected without incurring any debt, or infringing upon the funds of either charity. In 1815, there were 1,006 patients (largely dispensary), whereas last year 5,921; there were 1,454; and in 1920 there were 1,863 (largely in-patients and casualties). The Infirmary and Dispensary was carried on in the Thurnham Street premises until 1896, when the present handsome building in Ashton Road was completed. Messrs. Paley and Austin, the Architects, were hampered by the circumscribed and somewhat awkward character of the site, and had to adapt the building to the site in a way that experience, gained by working, has proved to be undesirable. It would have been much wiser had the Committee in the "eighties" acquired a much larger piece

broke out, in 1914, the Infirmary was once more out of debt, and for two years the accounts showed small credit balances. During the Presidency of the late Dr. Hall, jun., Lord Ashton contributed £2,000 for investment to help the Maintenance Fund.

The Workpeople's Committee (formed in 1889), representing the workpeople of Lancaster and district, raised up to the end of 1921 no less a sum than £7,236, largely by means of the "penny a week" system, and the General Committee have from time to time expressed appreciation of the large annual contributions from workpeople, and their belief that without such contributions the work of the Institution could not have been carried on, nor the accumulated debt in 1888, and again in 1897 (when the new Infirmary began to be occupied), wiped out.

The War changed all things, and the Infirmary suffered. The cost of maintenance increased by leaps and bounds, and the establishment of munition works in the town necessitated the immediate erection of another hospital wing, providing accommodation for twenty additional beds, together with Nurses' Dining Hall, Sleeping Accommodation, Patients' Day Room, &c. The Government was invited to contribute to the cost of the new Ward, but declined. The extra accommodation proved of great assistance during the "munition" period, and although, for the moment, the ward is not used, it is recognised as a necessary part of the ordinary accommodation of the Infirmary. There is still a debt of nearly £1,120 on the Extension Account.

There is thus accommodation for eighty beds for men, women, and children, with day or convalescent rooms, also for a few private patients

of land, which would have allowed for extensions. Had they done so, they would have relieved their successors of great trouble.

During the present year (1921-22) arrangements have been made, through the Richmond Bequest, by which additional land, to the south of the present boundary has been secured. This will be laid out as gardens, &c., for recreative and convalescent purposes.

The new building is in Renaissance style, and has a handsome elevation to Ashton Road. It faces the Ripley Park on the south, being divided from the park by an invisible fence, and the south aspect of the wards is of great advantage. The cost of the main buildings, with wards, offices, machinery, &c., was about £25,000, irrespective of furnishings, and over £22,000 was raised prior to the buildings being occupied. The largest contributor was Lord Ashton, whose gifts amounted to £6,300. The late Alderman William Smith (one-time M.P. for North Lonsdale) contributed £1,200 for the building of the Children's Ward; Messrs. Storey Bros. and Co. gave £1,000 in two sums, and many other friends made generous gifts. A collection, commemorating the Jubilee of Queen Victoria, realised £755 4s. 4d.; £680 11s. 8d. was collected and presented at the laying of the Foundation Stone; and £105 10s. 0d. was collected and presented at the opening ceremony.

The Foundation Stone of the present Infirmary was laid on the 12th July, 1893, by Mr. James Williamson, M.P. (now Lord Ashton), and the work proceeded apace. On the 24th March, 1896,

'work people' of Lancaster contributed one penny a week from 1889 to raise £27,236 by 1921.

There are very many advertisements in the brochure, including one for a tailor's shop, which is still to be found in New Street in Lancaster; and another for 'The County Cinema' in Dalton Square. (This cinema was, I think, on the west side of Dalton Square, opposite my surgery, the Dalton Square Surgery, and later it became a night club.)

The theme in the Ashton Hall was Merrie England, and both the Footlights Club and the Lancaster and District Operatic and Dramatic Society (LADOS) advertise in the brochure: the Footlights Club performed two plays. Both organisations are, of course, still performing in 2010.

The Bazaar hoped to raise £10,000 and I am afraid I have no means of finding out if the target was reached. It was quite an event and clearly required a lot of organising, and many people gave freely of their time to make it a success. Besides setting out the history of the Infirmary, the brochure gives a fascinating glimpse into the past, revealing much of Lancaster life in the 1920s.

2008/09: Statistics National Drug Evidence Centre

Number of problem drug users in England (ie dependent on heroin or crack cocaine) = 330,000.
Number of adults successfully completing treatment free of dependency = 24,970.

2009: cannabis reclassified (again)

Cannabis was reclassified from Class C to Class B in January 2009.

2010: mephedrone MMCA or 4-mmc added to Class B

The world's first generic ban of a group of cathinones based on chemical structure. MMCA was marketed as a plant

food and labelled 'not for human consumption' in order to circumvent the regulations controlling the distribution of psychoactive substances. Of the new drug, a member of the advisory committee that made the decision said: 'We've never had a drug become so popular so quickly about which we know so little.'