

THE DONALD FRASER HOSPITAL

(CHURCH OF SCOTLAND)

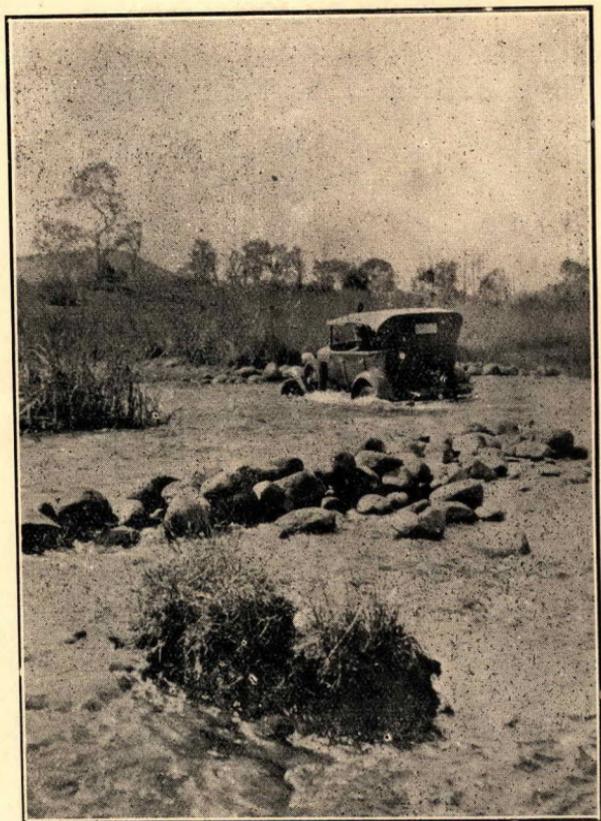
P.O. SIBASA, N. TRANSVAAL.



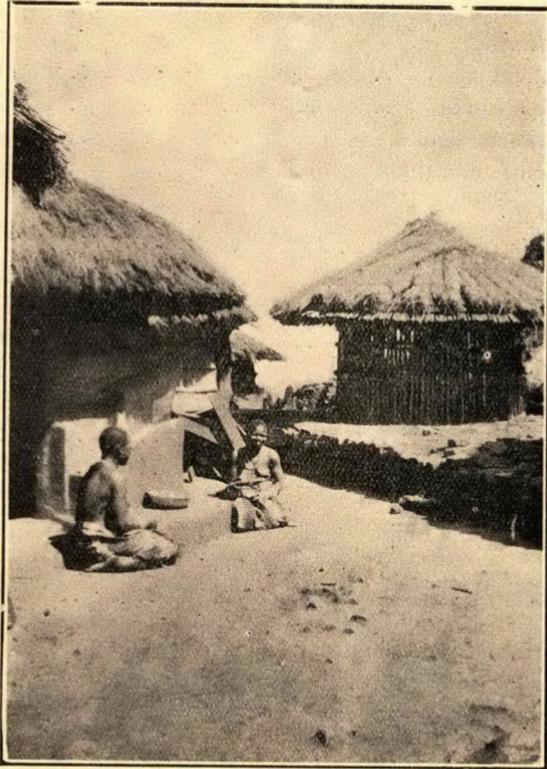
REPORTS for 1935 and 1936



THE HOSPITAL



STUCK IN A DRIFT



A VENDA KRAAL

Report for 1935.

STATISTICAL.

Out-patients.

Individuals	..	..	..	..	..	1,040
Attendances	..	..	..	..	..	2,787
Visits to homes	..	..	..	..	..	94
N.R.C. recruits	..	..	..	..	..	843

In-patients.

In hospital on 1 : 1 : 35	..	..	..	..	..	9
Admitted during 1935	..	..	..	..	..	205
Total under treatment	..	..	..	..	..	214
Discharged cured	..	..	..	..	..	140
Discharged improved	..	..	..	..	..	32
Discharged not improved	..	..	..	..	..	17
Died	..	..	..	..	..	20
In hospital on 31 : 12 : 35	..	..	..	..	..	5
Daily average	..	..	..	..	..	13
Operations Major	..	..	..	..	..	22
" Minor	..	..	..	..	..	47
Obstetric cases in hospital	..	..	..	..	..	12

Staff.

Matron : To 31st Jan., 1935, Miss S. Mortimer, R.N, R.M.
 1 : 4 : 35 to 31 : 7 : 35 Miss H. Tinker (acting)
 From 1 : 8 : 35 Miss B. Sargeant

Probationers : Second year Four.
 First year Five.

COMMENTS.

Staff. Early in the year we suffered a great disappointment through the resignation of our Matron, Miss Mortimer, owing to ill health. She had been with us for just over two months, and was keenly interested in the work, and we had hoped that she would continue to render valuable service in its development. It was therefore with much regret that we had to bid her farewell.

After her departure we had a very difficult time for two months, and then we accepted an offer of temporary service from Miss H. Tinker, who spent over four months with us. During that time she rendered excellent and willing assistance, for which we are very grateful, not only to her, but also to Dr. and Mrs. Paterson who made it possible for her to come to us.

In August we welcomed Miss B. Sargeant to fill the post of Matron. She has entered on her duties here with enthusiasm and we hope that she will be very happy here.

Developments. A new building to serve as nurses' quarters was completed in the first half of the year. This is a simple building containing one large dormitory, a classroom, night nurses' bedroom, bathroom and lavatory.

A new kitchen and laundry has also been completed and is proving most useful. This has also set free a room in the main hospital block as another ward, and this will be fitted up as such in the near future.

Of even greater benefit and usefulness has been the installation of electric light and of a water borne sewerage system, both of which had been greatly needed in the hospital.

Donations. A very valuable donation of hospital equipment and linen was received during the year from the Premier Mine Hospital near Pretoria. The tables and cupboards received have added greatly to the usefulness of the operating theatre, while the linen has greatly improved the comfort and appearance of our wards. The receipt of this equipment valued at about £200 was the occasion of great rejoicing in the hospital.

Finance. The extensions to the buildings were made possible by a special grant of £500 from the Native Affairs Department, given on condition that a further £500 was forthcoming from other sources, and that the whole amount of £1,000 was spent on buildings and equipment. We were able to meet this condition with the help of a loan of £100 from the Mission Council, which we hope to repay at an early date.

The year has also been notable for the fact that it has seen the recognition of the hospital by the Provincial Council, which has made us a grant of £100 per annum. Of this amount, however, only £50 was received during 1935 the balance being

due before the end of the Council's financial year in March, 1936.

The Union Public Health Department has also arranged to make us a grant for the treatment of patients suffering from certain infectious diseases.

Probationers. Four nurses completed the first year of their training in July, but to our regret one of these has since given up and has entered on training as a teacher. Five new probationers were accepted for training during 1935 and four of these are likely to continue the course.

Unfortunately there is great difficulty in getting local Venda girls for training. Partly this is due to the very small number of girls who attend school in these parts, and partly to a very deep rooted tribal dislike for the kind of work involved in nursing. With one exception all our probationers are girls who come to us from the Pietersburg district. From this district we receive many more applications than we can accept.

Evangelistic. Prayers are held in the morning and evening in the wards, those in the morning being conducted by the doctor assisted by the local elders. On Sunday evenings the nurses attend family prayers in the doctor's house. A Bible class for the nurses is held on Sunday afternoons and has been conducted for the last six or seven months by my mother to whom our thanks are due. The doctor has also started a Bible class for teachers and young men who can understand English.

Report for 1936.

STATISTICAL.

Out-patients.

Individuals	..	..	..	..	..	947
Attendances	..	..	..	..	..	2,594
Visits to homes	..	..	..	..	..	130
N.R.C. recruits	..	..	..	..	..	340
Vaccinations	..	..	..	..	..	5,780
Outstation clinics: Individuals	..	..	..	..	..	1,671
Attendances	..	..	..	..	..	3,445
Total for all stations including vaccinations and recruits:						
Individuals	..	..	..	..	..	8,573
Attendances	..	..	..	..	..	11,893

In-patients.

In hospital on 1. 1. 36.	..	..	..	..	..	4
Admitted during 1936	..	..	..	..	..	210
Total under treatment	..	..	..	..	..	214
Discharged cured	..	..	..	..	..	144
Discharged improved	..	..	..	..	..	22
Discharged not improved	..	..	..	..	..	20
Died	..	..	..	..	..	17
In hospital on 31 : 12 : 36	..	..	..	..	..	11
Daily average	..	..	..	..	..	12.3
Daily units	..	..	..	..	..	4,476
Operations Major	..	..	..	..	..	31
Minor	..	..	..	..	..	96
Total	..	..	..	..	..	127
Under general anaesthesia	..	..	..	..	..	74
Dental extractions	..	..	..	..	..	122
Confinements in hospital	..	..	..	..	..	10

Staff.

Matron : To 17 : 8 : 36 Miss B. Sargeant
 From 18 : 8 : 36 Miss W. G. Aitken, R.N., R.M.

Probationers : Third year. Three
 Second Year. Three
 First Year. Three

COMMENTS.

Developments. The principal development during 1936 has been the establishment of three outstation dispensaries, which has been made possible through the co-operation of the Union Public Health Department and the Berlin Mission. These dispensaries have been started on three stations belonging to the Berlin Mission, and have been placed in charge of Native nursing assistants, two of whom were trained at Elim Hospital, and one at the Crown Mines Hospital. These girls are subsidized by the Public Health Department, while the Berlin Mission provides them with board and lodging, and maintains the dispensary. The doctor visits the dispensary at regular intervals. While the attendances at each dispensary have not been very great, there is no doubt that the presence of these nursing assistants at them is greatly appreciated, and that very useful work is being done. The total number of individuals treated at the hospital and the outstations combined was 2,453 while the total attendances were 5,773.

Staff. In August Miss W. G. Aitken joined the staff as Matron of the hospital. This released Miss Sargeant for district work, and she has devoted her time to visiting among the people and carrying on propaganda on behalf of the hospital. She has also been able to develop Sunday School work very successfully.

Probationers. Three probationers completed their second year of training, and are now in their third and final year. Three others completed their first year, and three new probationers entered upon training towards the end of the year. All the girls are now showing keen interest in their work, and seem likely to develop into very useful nursing assistants.

Unfortunately there is still very great difficulty in securing local girls for training, but we hope that this will gradually be overcome as more girls reach the necessary educational standard.

Donations. With the increase in the European staff it has become necessary to provide further accommodation, and this has now been made possible by a very generous donation from overseas. Work has been started on a staff cottage, and it is hoped to have this completed in a few months' time.

This donation also enabled us to purchase a motor lorry,

which is proving of very great value especially for the transport of goods from Sibasa to the hospital, for which we had hitherto to depend upon waggons which could be obtained only with difficulty. The lorry is also of great use when building operations are in progress. Unfortunately in December just as we were realizing its full usefulness, the lorry was involved in a serious accident, in which one of our best workmen was killed. The man had been the first patient in the hospital when it was opened in 1934, and after his recovery he asked for work and had been with us ever since. His death was a great shock to us all. This accident has seriously affected the progress of the buildings we have started, but we hope soon to have the lorry in use again, and work in full swing once more.

The Hospital. In the hospital itself many improvements and additions have been effected. The buildings have all been made mosquito proof, and it is worth noting that none of the staff have contracted malaria while they have been here. A small clinical laboratory has been fitted up and is proving very useful. The hospital is now very well equipped for doing efficient work. It is in the treatment of the patients in the hospital and the training of the nurses that we feel that our most effective work is being done.

Evangelistic. The usual activities mentioned in the preceding report, have been continued, with the exception of the doctor's Bible class which was not held for several months in the latter part of the year, but which will resume again shortly. The doctor has also been able to conduct occasional services at Gooldville and other stations of the mission. It may be well to state here however that we do not regard medical work as a mere means to an end, but that we believe that it is in itself a practical expression of the Gospel. Especially we do not consider the hospital to be an agency to promote the interests of one mission or denomination. It is open to all and the agents of all missions have free access to the patients, whenever it is desired. We greatly appreciate the ready co-operation which has always been shown by the other missions at work in the district.

General. During the year a census was taken of the population of the district as part of the general census of the whole country. This revealed that we have in the Sibasa area a total population of 153,000.

Good rains fell during the year and this resulted in the best harvest the district has had for several years. This, however, did not prove an unmixed blessing. Much of the crop was used for making beer, and a large proportion was exchanged for goods at the local stores. No provision seems to have been made for possible bad years in the near future. In some cases the harvest was so good that the people are not making more than half-hearted attempts at ploughing this season, and in a few months' time they will probably find themselves running short of supplies.

The large and numerous beer drinks which have taken place as a result of the good harvest have led to an unusually large number of assaults and even murders. As District Surgeon I have to report upon these cases and they are often a revelation of the savage cruelty and evil which still prevail. In one case a man, enraged by some children, seized a little girl about four years of age, slipped a riem round her neck, and held her suspended by this for several seconds. He then let her drop to the ground, and while she lay there unconscious, struck at her with an axe. Fortunately she recovered and seems none the worse for her terrifying experience.

In another case a man, believing his mother-in-law to have caused the death of his children by witchcraft, visited her kraal one night, attacked her with an axe, and brutally murdered her. A small girl who was in the same hut was also severely injured and died from her wounds a day or two later.

Apart from the medico-legal work the District Surgeon has to undertake the medical care of the police and prisoners, attend to all cases of infectious disease, and carry out vaccination schemes. The very large number of persons vaccinated this year will be noted in the summary already given. I should like to record my sense of the value of this appointment as District Surgeon, and to express appreciation of the interest taken by the Department of Public Health in any reports or recommendations I have made to them.

Another unfortunate result of the heavy rains was that the rivers all became flooded, and it was exceedingly difficult to get about the district for several weeks. Again and again our car stuck in drifts and had to be towed out by donkeys. This imposed such a strain upon it, that it became necessary to exchange it for a new car during the year. We are delighted to note that work has at last actually begun on bridging the two worst drifts on the road from the hospital to Sibasa. For this we must express our thanks to the Additional Native Commissioner, Mr. A. W. Biddell, to whose persistent efforts it is due.

SUMMARY OF HOSPITAL STATISTICS FOR FOUR YEARS.

1933 to 1936.

Total number of in-patient admissions	678
Discharged cured	411
Discharged improved	151
Discharged not improved	53
Died	52
In hospital on 1 : 1 : 37 .. .	11

Total	678
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Operations	Major	77	
	Minor	258	
		335	

	<i>Admissions</i>	<i>Daily average</i>
1933	94	6.1
1934	169	10.75
1935	205	13.0
1936	210	12.3

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