

THE PATRICK STEAD HOSPITAL

*This is an abbreviated version of one of the Museums booklets
June 2015*

PATRICK STEAD was born in Edinburgh in 1788, and educated at Perth Academy. He trained in a merchant's office in London, and later became connected with the firm of Truman, Hanbury and Co brewers; working in the department responsible for supplying the grain to the brewery.

By 1820 he was at Yarmouth. In 1821 in partnership with John Robinson, Stead acquired the small maltings and brewery in Bridge Street Halesworth. The partners needed extra malting capacity to meet their contracts for supplying malt to the London brewers. With his keen mind for business, Stead soon realised the importance of the River Blyth for getting the malt to Southwold harbour, and thence to London via the Coasting trade.

During the 1830's Stead committed himself to Halesworth because of the quality of barley grown in the surrounding area. He purchased land next to the Bridge Street premises, and acquired the Quay Maltings. On both sites he built more malthouses and kilns. Stead also extended the Navigation to serve the Bridge Street maltings, by building a lock connecting the Quay basin to the old river. He owned his own wherries, and was also a River Commissioner. Stead struggled to keep the Navigation open and the harbour at Southwold clear of silt. However, by 1846 he told a Royal Commission that the effects of the railways would be to do away with small ports. It was this belief that probably decided him to sell up. Stead was over 60 when the Truman partners offered £18,000 for all his property in Halesworth. Stead accepted the offer and within two years he had returned to Scotland, where he died aged 81 in 1869.

In his will he left an initial £1,000 to aid the Rector of Halesworth and three elected parishioners, to establish an Infirmary or Hospital in the Town. Finally out of an estate valued at £56,000 the trustees would receive over £25,000.

THE HALESWORTH TIMES July 27 1869.

'His donations and charitable bequests, wherever he resided during his life, were always conspicuous for their quiet and unostentatious character, in which he was so well assisted by Mrs Stead. He bequeathed a very considerable sum for the purpose of building a Hospital or Infirmary in Halesworth, thus in death, as in life, exemplifying the Christian doctrine.'

On the death of Mrs Susan Stead in 1875, payment of the first £1,000 was made. At a Church Vestry meeting in 1876 Frederick Cross, Charles Lenny and Benjamin Roe were elected co-trustees with the Rector, of 'Mr Patrick Stead's Charity Fund.'

Because of some irregularities in the will, there was room for doubt whether legally the wishes of Stead could be carried out. However, the difficulty was removed and the Town became the possessors of some £25,000.

BUILDING THE HOSPITAL. In a conveyance dated 1880 between the misses Crabtree and the Trustees, the land on which the Hospital was to be built was

purchased for £200. Mr Henry Hall of London supplied the building plans, and by August twenty tenders had been received. The one supplied by Samuel Howard and Sons, Halesworth for £4,430 was accepted.

The builders Messrs Samuel Howard and Sons had their business premises in the New Cut. Samuel had three sons Lawrence, Edward and George. The latter helped draw up the final plans for the Hospital, and with his brothers helped in the building work. After Samuels death the firm carried on as Howard Bros until the Second World War. At a Church Vestry Meeting on the 11th April 1882, Mr Cross reported that the Hospital had been erected and was a fitting memorial to the Donor, and an object of great public utility. It was explained that the laying out of the grounds had caused much trouble and expense, but the work was accomplished, and that a respectable person engaged by the Trustees now occupied the Lodge. The accounts showed that the cost of the building was £4,200 4s 10d and that road making and gas fitting added a further £942 to the expenses. There was therefore a balance in hand of about £21,000 from which the only outlay would be the furnishing of the premises. The meeting was also informed that the surgeons in the Town would act as medical officers, and advise the Trustees as to the fittings and equipment needed.

The doctors in practice in the Town at the time were Drs F Haward and Pryce Morris. Dr Percy Warwick joined them in 1883.

PATRICK STEAD HOSPITAL 1882 – 1914. The Patrick Stead Hospital opened on September the 6th 1882 and was intended to house a maximum of six male and six female patients, with an additional two cots for special cases.

‘The Hospital is situated on high ground on the Bungay Road. It is a handsome structure in the Elizabethan style built of red brick with a stone front. It has east and west wings and stands in well laid out grounds of about 3 acres. It has 10 beds, and an annual income from investments of £600.

“One wing is for male and one for female patients. Inside the building the very newest improvements have been obtained. With an abundance of windows the cheerful sun meets the visitor at every turn. Already many have derived great and lasting good from the institution.

“The Trustees have been most successful in their choice of matron and nurse, both of whom are gratefully spoken of by all who have been favoured by their skilful and Christian attentions” KELLY’S DIRECTORY 1883 & LAMBERTS ALMANACK 1885.

The first death at the Hospital was that of Ellen Crane aged 10, the daughter of John and Charlotte. Ellen was buried in the Halesworth Cemetery on the 11th November 1882.

After the Hospital had been in operation for about two years a balance sheet was prepared –

6TH SEPTEMBER 1882 TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 1884.

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
	£		£
Payments by Patients	55 13s 6d	Provisions coal gas & stationery	619 17s 7d
Grass sold	2 8s 6d	Medical appliances & medicines	87
Investments	1234 16s 9d	Salaries to Medical Officers	104 10s 0d
		Matron's salary; porters & servants wages	239 2s 2d
		Insurance, repairs alterations	
		Further furnishment & sundries	178 0s 0d

There was a balance in hand of about £92, while the money standing in the name of the Trustees was £11,889.

In 1892 Miss Azubah Atkinson was the nurse-in-charge. By 1900 her title had changed to matron.

Number of patients treated 1895 -55; 1899 –62; 1903 – 54.

PATRICK STEAS HOSPITAL 1901

Name	Age	Occupation	Place of Birth
STAFF			
Azubah Atkinson	47	Matron	Lincolnshire
Elizabeth Atkinson	45	Nurse	Lincolnshire
Arthur Prentice	34	Nurse	Halesworth
Caroline Flatt	26	Cook	Wissett
PATIENTS			
Louisa Harper	33		Halesworth
Kate Crisp	22	Domestic	Wingfield
Hannah Smith	50		Wenhaston
Alice Barker	23	Domestic	Westleton
Ellen Goddard	6		Wenhaston
Francis Hall	61		St. Cross
William Emmerson	62	Coachman	Knodishall
George Catchpole	10		Blythburgh
OTHER			
Jane Atkinson		Boarder	

BOOK OF REGULATIONS AND BYELAWS. (Printed by W. P. Gale 1905.)

The medical arrangements of the Hospital were under the supervision of a committee comprising of the Medical Officers.

Applications for admission by a patient are to be signed by a clergyman, surgeon, magistrate or churchwarden. Admissions were subject to the filling in of four forms.

Form of Letter of Recommendation; Form of Undertaking of Friend of Patient; Form of Medical Certificate for Admission and Form of Ticket of Admission.

Regulation 10. If on admission the Medical Committee considered a case unsuitable for treatment, the relative or friends shall remove the same if condition so permits.

No patient is allowed to remain in Hospital longer than eight weeks, unless the medical committee decides otherwise.

No woman would be admitted as a patient or be allowed to remain on the Hospital after the sixth month of her pregnancy.

Persons suffering from infectious diseases, consumption, lunatics, persons disordered in their intellect, and persons having incurable ulcers, and those unlikely to receive benefit from hospital treatment, were inadmissible as patients.

Patients are required to pay a weekly sum according to their needs. The sum expected by the Trustees is from 2s 6d upwards. In special cases the Trustees may dispense with any payment.

BYELAWS

Male patients are not allowed in the female wards, and no female patients in men's wards.

There is to be no cursing or swearing, or use of indecent or abusive language; no playing of cards or dice and no smoking in the Hospital.

Friends of patients are allowed to visit between three and five p.m. on Sundays, Wednesdays and Saturdays only.

WORLD WAR I. The outbreak of the War in 1914 resulted in the Hospital being used as a War Emergency Hospital. Up to 1st November 1915, 164 sick and wounded from the battlefields of France and Belgium were treated. They are under the care of local doctors and the matron Miss Read. Many gifts have been sent to patients in the way of eggs, produce and cigarettes; this generous and kindly feeling has been gratefully acknowledged. Mr Z. Sones junior deserves special thanks for having provided weekly entertainments which have been much enjoyed.

The local Voluntary Aid Detachment helped enormously. The men transported the casualties from the train station to the Hospital. The ladies section performed helpful nursing duties.

An appeal was launched for X-ray apparatus, and in response £150 was quickly raised and the apparatus soon installed. In 1916 a plant for supplying electricity was installed in Wissett Road, and the Hospital was first to substitute electricity for gas.

In 1915 members of the Glamorgan Yeomanry, who were billeted in the area, gave a highly successful concert in the Corn Hall. Proceeds amounted to £29. In December a Regimental Concert was equally popular and £27 was divided between Regimental funds, Halesworth War Hospital Depot and the YMCA.

After the War an oak framed picture memorial was received by the Hospital in appreciation of its war work. It bore the inscription:

‘During the Great War of 1914-18, this building was established and maintained as a Hospital for British sick and wounded. The Army Council in the name of the Nation thank those who have rendered to it this valuable and patriotic assistance in the hour of its emergency and they desire to express their deep appreciation of the whole-hearted attention which the Staff of this Hospital gave to the Patients who were under their care.’ On the back of the picture were the following names Matron Miss Cecilia Reed, S.R.N., Sisters Jessie Ellis S.R.N., Shingles & Mallett. Nurses Mrs Orford, Mrs Lambert, Mrs Moore*, Mrs Everett & Maidwell. There were others, who like Sister Macpherson from Edinburgh, worked at the Hospital during the early part of the War before moving on. Also worthy of mention are the many ward orderlies who gave unstinting help. The Doctors at the time were Percy Warwick, P.J. Nyssen & J. Aylen.

* Red Cross Nurse.

THE HOSPITAL TO 1948. The income from investments and contributions from patients was sufficient to meet expenses, but after the War annual reports were issued which clearly showed that changing conditions necessitated the use of the invested funds. In 1921 the Hospital did receive a grant of £250 from the East Suffolk War Relief committee as compensation for the loss of general income when the Hospital cared for the sick and wounded.

1932: Patrick Stead Hospital Trustees - Rev. Newberry, Rev. Sparey. Mr Parry, Mr Roe, Capt Steward & Mrs Scrimgeour. Hon. Medical Staff – Drs Nyssen, Ayter, Melville-Hocken, Marriott & Stephen. Hon. Consulting Surgeons Drs Charles & Noon. Hon. Dental Surgeon – Mr Burton. Treasurer Mr Peto; Secretary Mr Rodwell; Hon Secretary (contributory Scheme) Capt Rush R.N; Matron Miss Read.

In 1933 234 patients were treated (113 as inpatients).

In 1939 a Maternity wing was opened, and during the first four years 108 babies were born there.

On the outbreak of the Second World War the Hospital was again used to receive the sick and wounded from the armed forces. In the event of an invasion the hospital would be able to take between 40 and 50 casualties. The First Aid Post was situated there, and a Gas Cleansing Chamber was erected. Blast walls of brick were built to protect the building. Unfortunately during the period 1942-45 the monthly accounts submitted to the Trustees show that the Hospital was operating with a deficit. In September 1942 this was £315, and in August 1943 £208. This was despite receiving many donations including contributions from the War Ministry in respect of casualty beds and medical fees. In October 1942 it was reported to the Trustees that pigs belonging to the Hospital had been sold for £21 13s 5d. Fees for Maternity patients were also raised to £4 4s 0d a week for non-contributory mothers, and £3 3s 0d a week for those paying in to the Contributory Scheme and making future bookings.

In 1944 1,920 patients were treated. After the end of the War the Hospital was back to operating with a monthly credit balance (£436 in October 1945). However, the Trustees were not satisfied with receiving 2s 6d a day from the Public Assistance Board for outpatients, and were asking for 10s. In 1947 the Maternity fees were raised again.

On Victory Day 1946, the Hospital provided two floats for the parade. One carried the Matron, Mrs Stephenson, Sister Barnes and Nurses Haward, Hamilton, Revell, Hogg, Hodges and Self. The other float carried a 'doctor and patient' and Sister Butler and Nurse Lee.

Cissy Haward spent her entire career at the Patrick Stead. In July 1942 her salary was £3 10s 10d, (Matron Mrs Stephenson's salary was £11 9s 0d per month.) rising in 1943 to £4 8s 4d. In 1946 because she was a part-time nurse, her 'Board money' was raised from 14s to £1. She retired in the 1970's

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME.

The future of voluntary hospitals: HALESWORTH TIMES 14th February 1940. 'There is a steady growth in interest in the idea of the regional Management of Hospitals, which was given a remarkable stimulus last December by the million pounds gift by Lord Nuffield for Hospital regionalisation. The Government discussed the future of the voluntary Hospitals. Under the Sankey Scheme Regional Councils would be established with a central co-ordinating council, presumably administering Lord Nuffield's Trust. The new organisation is expected to help in the matter of regular voluntary contribution. The aim is to make the Voluntary Hospitals part of a complete National Hospital Service. In due course we shall hear what the Governors of our Patrick Stead Hospital think of this regional scheme.'

THE HOSPITAL 1948-1989. When the Hospital became incorporated in the National Health Scheme in 1948, it came under the Eastern Regional Health Board. In May the Board wrote to the Trustees asking if they would continue for the time being as a 'House Committee' until the detailed admin was completed. This became a permanent arrangement in July. By 1950 the Patrick Stead Hospital came under the Ipswich Group Hospital Management Committee.

CHRISTMAS AT PATRICK STEAD 1953. Christmas week commenced on Sunday evening with carols sung by the Rev. Hulbert and St. Mary's Church Choir. On Tuesday evening the Beccles Salvation Army played and sang carols. All the carol singers were served with refreshments. Carols were sung in the wards on Christmas Eve, by the staff. The entrance hall was decorated as a Swiss Village Scene, the general wards as Swiss summer and winter scenes and the maternity wards with scenes from Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. An illuminated Christmas tree (originally given to Holton School by the Earl of Stradbroke) stood in the entrance hall. Christmas Day started with each patient finding a stocking on the bed. The Rev. Hulbert conducted Holy Communion in 'A' Ward. Visitors during the morning included Sir Robert and Lady Gooch. Dr. Cursham carved the turkey for the patients' Christmas Dinner. The turkey was cooked and delivered by Mr. Ellis. Father Christmas (Mr. Clare) visited the Hospital at 3.30 p.m. and distributed presents from the Christmas Trees to each patient and each member of staff. He had a special stocking for Gail Thompson who was born on Christmas Day. Patients' visitors were

entertained to tea. Music was enjoyed during the morning and evening with the aid of an amplifier supplied by Mr. Ian Carter. On Boxing Day, the patients in 'A' Ward enjoyed a quiz session during the morning, and a film show was given in the afternoon by J. W. & D. A. Newby. A baby was born on Boxing Day – Stephanie Calver. The staff all worked very hard to make Christmas time a happy one for the patients. The Nursing Staff Party was held in Matron's sitting room on the 1st January. REPORT ON THE PATRICK STEAD HOSPITAL 1965. 'This is a General and Maternity Hospital of 31 beds: Male General Ward 9; Female General Ward 8; One four bedded all purpose Ward; 8 Maternity Beds; 1 Bed Private Ward & 1 cot.'

Average bed occupancy general 13.48. Maternity 5.39.

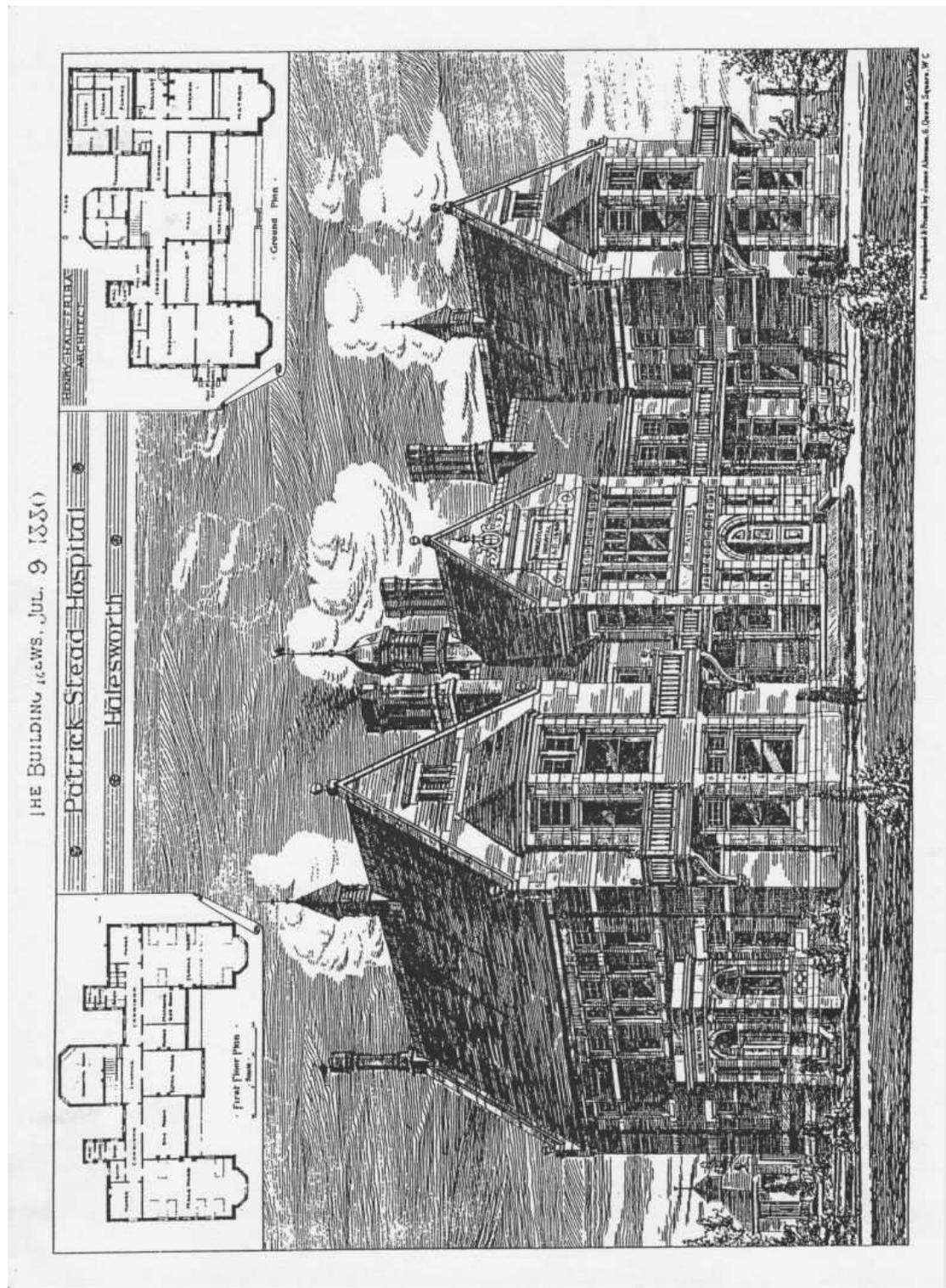
Establishment: General Practitioner, admin clerk, matron, 3 sisters or staff nurses, one midwife sister (others part-time), 3 SEN nurses or nursing auxiliaries (4 ½ part-time), cook and assistant cook (both part-time), 3 domestics (+5 part-time), seamstress, porter & a gardener.

1974: Total hospital staff 50 – 34 nursing, 14 on domestic side and two secretarial.

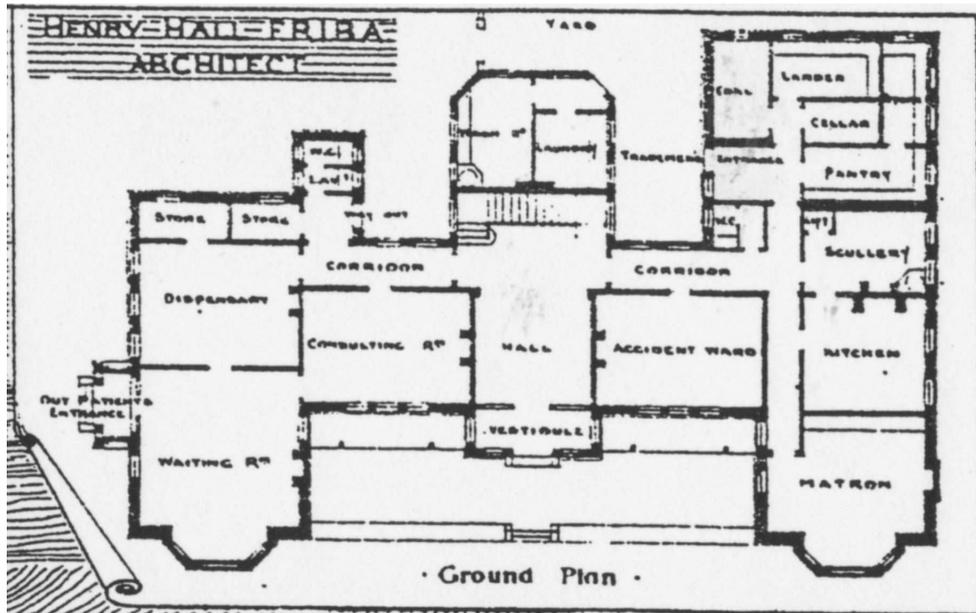
1988: The Hospital has 31 beds, 21 general acute beds under General Practitioner control, and a 10 bed G.P Maternity Unit. It provides a 24-hour casualty service. There is also Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy & X-ray departments.

In the same year there was a proposal by the District Health Authority to close the maternity unit. Campaign against this was organised by STAUNCH (Stand united against the closure of our Hospitals). More than 12,000 signed a petition to save the Maternity Unit, and letters were sent to Buckingham Palace, Government Departments and individual MP's.

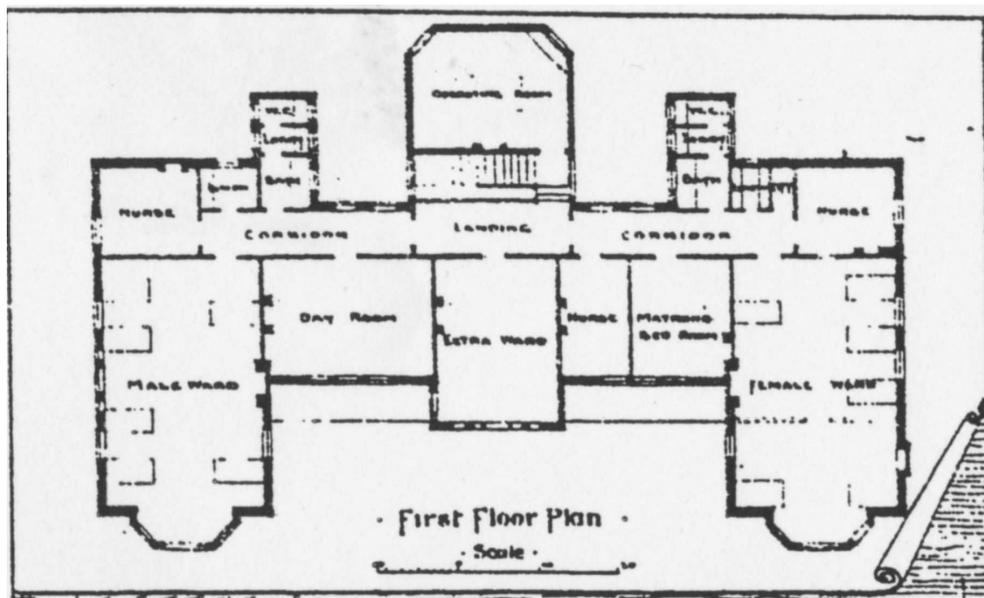
Despite this effort the Unit was at closed due to staff shortages, and in January 1989 the Great Yarmouth and Waveney Health Authority voted to make the closure permanent.



A picture of the Patrick Stead Hospital from The Builder 30 October 1880



Enlarged image of the Ground Floor



Enlarged image of the First Floor

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