

The Adelaide Hospital, Dublin, 1839-2008

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Introduction

'The use of history is to give value to the present hour'. This epigraph by Emerson was used by the late Dr David Mitchell in his important history of the Adelaide Hospital. It is appropriate also for this brief overview of the story of the Adelaide which seeks to bring the story further than did Dr Mitchell in 1989 for I glance towards the period up to the present year, 2008, and seek to suggest both the importance of the Adelaide for further healthcare research and that the Adelaide approach still has value for 'the present hour'.

1. The Foundation of the Adelaide Hospital, 1839-1860

The 'Adelaide Institution and Protestant Hospital' opened first for the reception of patients on Monday, 11th March 1839 at No. 43 (later renumbered 39) Bride Street, Dublin! This tiny little Hospital had 14 beds to help cater for the needs of the Protestant poor in the very run-down slum area around St Patrick's Cathedral. The well-off Walsh family of Dundrum Castle, Co Dublin were largely responsible for this initiative. Dr Albert Walsh, then just 26 years of age, was led by his religious convictions and awareness of medical need to establish the Hospital; he was strongly supported by his brother, Frederick, a lawyer and John, who like his father John, was a substantial merchant at Sir John Rogerson's Quay.

At a meeting earlier in 1838 the promoters had chosen the name: 'The Adelaide Institution'. In May 1839 Adelaide, the Queen Dowager was invited to be patron of the Hospital. Adelaide was the eldest daughter of the Duke of Saxe Meiningen and the consort of William IV (died 1837) and a woman of character and piety. Apparently well acquainted with illness throughout her life she died in 1849 aged 57. Her piety and fortitude was obviously admired by Protestants in Ireland and her royal patronage would help the fledgling Hospital. Later Queen Adelaide sent £25 as a donation. Her coat of arms helped give the Adelaide its own coat of arms adorning the Hospital's image on nurses' badges until 1998. It remains the coat of arms of the Adelaide Hospital Society.

The object of the founders of the Adelaide was

"to provide for respectable, but reduced, Protestants when visited with sickness or accident, a more select asylum than the Public Charitable Infirmaryes."²

The close association between the development of hospitals and the various Christian denominations was no accident: holiness and healing went together and Christian charity gave impetus to most of the hospitals in Europe until governments assumed wider responsibilities for healthcare. Thus in seeking a Protestant hospital for Protestant patients Dr Walsh and his colleagues shared a general outlook in which religious welfare was seen as paramount:

"It was, therefore, deemed advisable to establish a hospital that should combine with medical and surgical treatment, the more important advantage of religious support and help which the patients might receive from the several clergymen who were members of the Managing Committee."³

This Protestant commitment shaped the character of this 'Peculiar Place' and led to controversies which took different forms right up to the present day in an island marked by religious conflict and sectarianism.

Voluntary hospitals in the nineteenth century, like the Adelaide, depended almost entirely on charitable gifts and donations. Indeed the Adelaide Hospital did so for much longer than any other Irish hospital and only received State support from 1960. Crucial to the survival of the Adelaide was a will made on 16th May 1830 by a Richard Cave Esquire, who left his residuary estate, after the death of his sister Anne, to be contributed to such charitable institutions in the City of Dublin as his Executors and Trustees might consider most deserving and most in need of assistance. In September, 1838 they allocated £1,000 Government Stock to be applied in aid of the funds of the Adelaide Hospital and this was confirmed by a decree of the Court of Chancery 23 February 1841. In a Deed of Trust, 25th July 1845, executed by Henry Low, Joseph Cowper and Frederick William Walsh, "Trustees nominated and appointed on behalf of the Adelaide Hospital" it was declared that the £1,000 had been vested in them in aid of the Hospital.⁴

The Bride Street venture was by this stage in real difficulty because it was too small (there were only 20 beds and, therefore, less than the 40 beds required for medical education) and in real financial difficulty. The Adelaide was founded in the heyday of the famous set of Dublin clinicians such as Robert Graves, William Stokes, John Cheyne, Philip Crampton, William Wilde and so many more of their ilk; indeed Robert Graves, who died in 1853, is listed as Consulting Physician to the Adelaide in its early period: the enthusiasm of men such as these for technological, diagnostic and therapeutic innovation would have led their contemporaries to be quite dissatisfied with the Bride Street venture. The origins of the Adelaide in Bride Street and its later re-birth in Peter Street relate closely to the existence of the private medical schools which apparently filled the vacuum left by the conspicuous omission of surgical teaching from the curriculum of the School of Physic in Trinity College. In 1810 John Kirby opened his 'Theatre of Anatomy and School of Surgery' in No 28 Peter Street and in 1839 he became the first consulting surgeon in the newly founded Adelaide Hospital. There were four private medical schools close to the Adelaide Hospital and Adelaide staff lectured in them. In Peter Street 'Kirby's School' had a continuous existence until 1889 (as the Ledwich School of Anatomy Medicine and Surgery) when it was absorbed into the College of Surgeons.

The Bride Street Hospital struggled on until it closed in 1847 but wisely it was decided to use the Cave money and any other gifts either to purchase or build a premises more suited to the needs of a hospital. The Ward Rules of the Bride Street Hospital provide a glimpse of the atmosphere in which care was given in Bride Street:

WARD RULES

Patients are required to behave with propriety and respect to all authorised Visitors and to give the strictest attention to the prayers and scriptures when read for them. It is also earnestly requested that they study the Word of God for themselves.

No communication whatever is permitted between the Male and Female Wards.

Convalescent patients are required to assist the Nurses in all duties connected with the establishment such as cleaning the wards, washing etc., at the desire of the Matron and with the permission of the Medical Officer on duty.

No patient to go out without special permission from the medical attendant.

Irregular habits, smoking, want of cleanliness, wilful injury to the clothes or furniture of the Hospital, with immoral or indelicate language, shall subject the offender to instant dismissal.

That the housekeeper allow no food to be given to the patients except what the dietary of the Hospital directs unless by a special order of the Medical Attendant.

That all such food as the Hospital cannot make use of be returned to the Housekeeper.⁵

Rev Charles Stuart Stanford, D.D., of St Michan's Parish, Honorary Secretary and Dr Albert Walsh with their provisional committee from 1850 onwards sought to re-establish the Hospital. Rev Charles Stuart Stanford (1805-1873) was a key figure in the reestablishment of the Adelaide: he was in the van of the evangelical Protestant literary movement as a former editor of The Christian Examiner and Dublin University Magazine and he published amongst other works A Handbook to the Romish Controversy (1855)⁶ The key meeting that led to the reopening of the Hospital was held at Dr Walsh's house, 16 Merrion Square on 11 September 1857 where it was resolved to acquire No 24 and No 25 Peter Street. An appeal was made to the landed Protestant establishment and it was successful. For example, the Dowager Lady Dunsany in a long letter giving £100 stressed that the "success of the Hospital and its good name will so mainly be involved in its sewerage".⁷ Indeed 'cleanliness next to godliness' became the hallmark of the new Adelaide ethos. The support of the Church of Ireland – the Primate was elected patron – and its evangelical wing in particular was marked. The Earl of Roden became President until his death in 1870: Robert Jocelyn, third Earl of Roden (1788-1870), with an estate at Tullymore Park, Castletwellan, Co Down, was an ardent Conservative and Orangeman with strong evangelical convictions. It is in this context that at the last meeting on 28th September 1858 before the Hospital opened in Peter Street, that the 'Fundamental Principle of the Institution' was stated:

"That in order to obviate some misconceptions, which appear to have gone abroad in reference to the strictly exclusive character of the Adelaide Hospital, the Fundamental Principle of the Institution be stated as follows:- The Fundamental Principle upon which the Adelaide Hospital has been established being, that it should remain an essentially Religious and Protestant Institution: it is hereby declared, that in order to perpetuate such its original constitution, that no person shall at any time hold any appointment in connexion therewith, or to vote or take any part in any of its proceedings, or be permitted access to the Hospital to communicate Religious Instruction, or for any purpose of religion whatsoever, who is not a member of, or does not profess the doctrines of, the Protestant Reformed Church."⁸

It is interesting to note in this context, the statement of Dr James F. Duncan, in his Inaugural Address in the Adelaide Hospital on 2 November 1858 that the Hospital was

"not only a temple dedicated to Science and Humanity, as every other hospital throughout this city may be properly regarded – it is also an institution consecrated to the still higher purposes of Religion and Truth. The man who looks upon sickness as a mere casualty, having no peculiar meaning or importance attached to it, takes a low and a mistaken view of the purpose for which it is appointed. With the Bible in our hand, we cannot fail to regard every visitation of illness, the most trifling as well as the most severe, as a providential dispensation, sent by the great Author of our being for the wisest and best of purposes... Sickness is one of the natural, though not always one of the direct, consequences of a state of sin. It is designed, in some measure, to correct us for our misconduct in leaving the path of innocence..."⁹

2. **From Exclusivity to Inclusivity**

The Adelaide Hospital over the course of its development moved from exclusive care (given by Protestants to Protestants) to be a notable advocate of inclusive care (treating each patient as they would wish). In the early days of the Hospital there was a significant public controversy over the Protestant character of the Hospital initiated by Rev Dr John Spratt, a Carmelite Friar from the Carmelite Friary in nearby Aungier Street. This is an episode which remains to be fully analysed by historians. Dr Spratt objected to the Hospital not admitting a Roman Catholic priest to attend to Catholic patients in the Hospital. Within the Adelaide itself there were divided opinions in the 1860s as to how to approach the treatment of Catholic patients which led to the resignation in 1864 of Rev Dr Charles Stanford who opposed a completely restrictive practice. The Adelaide built up a very substantial reputation for the care of the less well off in the Liberties and these were very largely Roman Catholic. Hence the strict approach associated with the more evangelical-minded leaders like Roden, gradually dissolved while the Hospital retained its very distinctive Protestant character. The Fundamental Principle has evolved in the ecumenical temper of the second half of the twentieth century to the position outlined in the Charter of The Adelaide & Meath Hospital, Dublin incorporating The National Children's Hospital approved by the Oireachtas in 1996: in effect this maintains the focus for Protestant participation in the Hospital but allows for the freedom of conscience and the free profession and practice of religion in the Hospital, which is to have “a multi-denominational and pluralist character”.

Indeed the Adelaide has been well described as a ‘peculiar’ place. It has at least from the 1980s been a leading advocate of what in the Irish context might be described as a ‘liberal’ approach in medical ethics. The Adelaide name has come to represent a unique combination of distinctive elements which are focused upon providing a very personal approach to patient care. The elements include a Christian commitment to the charitable care of others, especially ‘the sick poor’; a public spirited commitment to voluntary participation in bringing healthcare to others; an inclusive approach to medical and nursing practice which cares for each patient in accordance with the wishes of the patient; a commitment to be a teaching hospital with a particular regard for advancing nurse education and a distinctive contribution by the Protestant community to the healthcare of all people.

3. **Character and Achievements, 1860-1960**

The Adelaide was an entirely voluntary hospital both in terms of its governance and funding until 1960. It is difficult now to conceive of a hospital without State funding but in large part the character and achievements of the ‘Peculiar Place’ – the Adelaide Hospital – was shaped by its voluntary ethos which reflected very strong Christian and Protestant values.

In 1858 Nos 24 and 25 Peter Street were transformed into a hospital containing several wards and were opened for the reception of patients on 18th October 1858. The stables at the rear were converted into fever sheds for patients with infectious diseases. According to The Irish Builder 1 January 1898:

“Rapid as was the transformation of the old houses 24 and 25 Peter Street, into a Hospital, the work was still incomplete within, while symmetry without was unfinished till the adjoining house, 26, was altered and consolidated with the main building, by which the Hospital was so enlarged as to contain 120 beds; with a large ward exclusively directed to the diseases of children.”

The Hospital was now in full working order and under the management of a Board of Governors. Through major philanthropic gifts and donations the Hospital was subsequently able to expand and develop.

In 1874 Lord Farnham (died 4 June 1884) provided £2,000. In the same year the estate in fee simple of the Domville family in Peter Street came to be sold in the Landed Estates Court and this enabled Nos 22 and 23 Peter Street and the fee simple to be purchased. In 1878 the ground lying between the rear of the Hospital and Wood Street (including the old Presbyterian Church and three old tenement houses on the south side of Wood Street) was purchased and a new fever wing was erected on this ground. In 1887 the fever wing was named the "Victoria House" in commemoration of the Queen's Jubilee.

From other legacies and donations, especially a legacy of £2,400 from a Miss Batt, a donation of £1,000 from the Misses Brooke and a gift from Colonel the Hon. Charles Crichton amounting to £3,500, a new wing named the "Madeline" wing was added, named in memory of Crichton's deceased wife, Lady Madeline Crichton. It was opened on 14 October 1879.

After the purchase of the Domville property one of the old houses (No 27) being in a state of decay, was taken down and on its site was erected the Nurses' Home at a cost of £2,800 which was opened in 1885. (A perspective view of the new Nurses' Home was given in The Irish Builder, 1 February 1889). A Miss Fetherston-Haugh (died October 1889) bequeathed a sum of £6,000 to build and endow a sanatorium in which patients emerging from the Adelaide Hospital would have every chance of being restored to perfect health. The Fetherston-Haugh Convalescent Home was situated at Newtown-Little, Rathfarnham (near Orwell Bridge, Rathgar). It was a stand alone building in the centre of grounds of about four and a half statute acres. (A perspective view was given in The Irish Builder, 15 July 1894). It was opened for patients on 20 July 1894. A generous anonymous donation supplied 24 beds fully fitted with bed linen. The Convalescent Home was sold in 1961 for £19,700 and the 'Victoria House' part of the Adelaide Hospital was rebuilt and enlarged and renamed the Fetherstonhaugh Wing.

In 1895 the Governors of the Adelaide Hospital purchased the old "Ledwich School of Medicine", 28 Peter Street, at the rear of which they built a new laundry, opened in 1899. All these major achievements of the Victorian age in respect of the physical development of the Hospital and its services were indeed remarkable given it was entirely a charitable foundation.

The total income of the Adelaide Hospital for 1896, for example, including a Hospital Sunday Fund award of £536.0s.7d amounted to £6,416.9s.2d; and the total amount of expenditure, £7,763.8s.8d, leaving a deficit of £1,346.19s.6d. There were then 135 beds with the average number occupied during the year of 100. The number of inpatients was 1,073, of whom 642 were cured, 360 relieved and 71 died. There were 312 patients admitted to the Fetherston-Haugh Home, all of whom were discharged. To complete the Victorian achievement the Alexandra Nurses' Home, named in honour of Queen Alexandra, was opened by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland on 15 December 1902 along with a new Operating Theatre and Dispensary. The configuration of the Hospital in 1903 included beds for 140 patients: there were 15 wards in the main building with 105 beds and the Victoria Building (Fever) had 7 wards with 35 beds.

Medical Developments

The medical work of the Adelaide Hospital was governed solely by a Medical Board for which nearly complete records survive. According to David Mitchell

The Medical Board was a self-perpetuating elite, which made its own rules, and rarely changed them. It controlled its own funds, which were the students' fees. Each new member of the medical board, before taking its seat, paid £500 or thereabouts. Of this £100 went to the Hospital funds and the rest to his predecessor or his executors... There were six seats on the medical board most of them occupied by three physicians and three surgeons.

The Medical Board appointed annually three members to represent them on the Managing Committee or later Board of Management.¹⁰

From the start in 1858 the Adelaide Hospital was a teaching hospital with No 27 Peter Street affording accommodation for nine resident students until 1866. With the proximity of the Ledwich School of Medicine until 1889 the Hospital was well placed for clinical teaching. The key medical achievement associated with the early Adelaide must surely be that of Kendal Franks and the development of antiseptic surgery which he propounded in the Adelaide Inaugural Address at the Opening of the Clinical Session of 1882 which was published in the Dublin Journal of Medical Science building upon Pasteur's experiments showing that living germs caused infectious disease.

In 1887 the first women students were admitted to the clinical teaching at the Adelaide Hospital after strong opposition in the 1870s to such a step – the male students thought it would prevent them “from being instructed on subjects highly necessary to our professional education, which could not with delicacy be entered into in the presence of a lady”.¹¹ One of the most famous Adelaide women doctors was Kathleen Lynn (1874-1955) celebrated for her concern for the poor and as a radical republican activist. She founded St Ultan's Hospital in 1918. She enrolled at the Adelaide Hospital in October 1895; when she applied for a residency in 1898 she was refused because of the absence of female accommodation. It was not until 1913 that the Medical Board allowed female students to apply for residence. On graduation in June 1899 Lynn won the prestigious Hudson Prize for the Adelaide student who was awarded the highest marks in the final medical examination as well as the silver medal.¹²

Nursing Developments

It was proposed in 1858 to establish an Adelaide School of Nursing ‘in which Protestant nurses may be trained.’ A Miss Bramwell, who had been with Florence Nightingale in the Crimea, arrived in December 1858 as Honorary Lady Superintendent. It appears she encountered a range of disciplinary problems and remained for only eight months in office. As Dr Mitchell observes she “probably found the Irish very difficult to understand.”¹³ The Hospital then introduced a better system of management including a Superintendent (Mr John Reid), a Matron (Mrs Sarah Ruttle) and a Store Keeper (Mr Healy). In fact it was Mrs Ruttle who established the Adelaide School of Nursing in 1859 and she served as Matron until 1872. In July 1861 Mrs Ruttle was given permission to spend one month at Kaiserwerth to study the pioneering system of nursing there where the famous deaconesses were trained as nurses. Mrs Ruttle developed a programme for females between 25 and 35 years of age who would agree to accept Matron's authority; upon completion of their training they would be enrolled in the Register of Adelaide Hospital Trained Nurses. Ireland, due to her work, now had its first professional training for lay women as nurses. It soon developed into a

standard three-year training programme with examinations at the end of the first and third years. The Probationers' Agreement, drawn up by a new Nursing Committee, signed by the nurse students from 1888 remained unchanged for a hundred years. The famous navy dresses with white spots were similar to those worn by the nurses at St Thomas's Hospital, London where Miss Bramwell had trained and have been worn ever since in the Adelaide, but now, much modified, only by students. The Adelaide Hospital badge for nurses was first awarded in 1902.

In 1887 when the new nurses' home came into use it was possible for the first time to employ only Adelaide trained nurses.

The 1913 Rules for Probationers and Nurses set out the position prior to State registration of nurses which was introduced in 1919. There were two classes of probationers: paying and ordinary. All were to be Protestants, over 22 and under 33 years of age, and to have a 'good general English education.' They had to be found physically fit after examination by a member of the medical staff. Paying probationers paid £13 per quarter for their first year of training, and nothing thereafter. They received no salary and had to supply their indoor and outdoor uniform during training. They could leave at any time on giving one week's notice to the matron. At the end of their third year they were admitted to the 'Examination for Nurses', and those who passed received the Hospital Certificate. Ordinary probationers were subject to the same entrance conditions, but the only charge was a non-refundable entrance fee of £15. They served a three months trial period, during which they could leave on giving one week's notice, or correspondingly be asked to leave. Those who survived the trial period agreed to serve the Hospital for four years unless permitted to leave, or dismissed for misconduct, inefficiency or neglect of duty. Lectures to nurses were given by the matron and by members of the medical staff. The divisional nurses (Sisters) gave practical instruction in the wards. In the Hospital a maximum of 64 hours per week was worked. All nurses had three weeks holiday in the year, and those who stayed on after their four years contract got four weeks holiday.

The salary scale went from £10 for the first year to £20 for the fourth. Nurses who stayed longer on the staff could earn from £30 in their fifth year to £40 after the ninth year of service. Those engaged in out-nursing received in addition 'a commission' which varied from £7 to £15 per annum 'according to the nature of the cases nursed.' Paying probationers disappeared after the Great War, and although they were provided for in the revision of the Rules in 1923, none seem to have applied.

In 1939 Lynn Doyle (pen name of the writer Leslie Montgomery) wrote a 12 page booklet on his experiences of the Adelaide entitled Adelaide Hospital A Hundred Years A Hospital. What impressed Doyle most was "the almost incredible cleanliness of the nurses. Not a hair out of place; and skins like roses and lilies". As David Mitchell confirms 'there was not a cleaner hospital in Dublin; contract cleaners were still an undiscovered species'. Lynn Doyle says

Everywhere I found a note of personal interest and friendly cooperation, the atmosphere of a home rather than of an institution, an almost conscious feeling that this was a Hospital maintained by free-will, where the patients were also friends

Doyle notes the outstanding achievement of the students in the Adelaide School of Nursing winning the Gold Medal, the highest award given by the Dublin Metropolitan School, in 1927, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1936 and 1937 and the Silver Medal in 1925, 1927, 1928, 1929,

1933, 1934, 1936 and 1938. One gets the impression that the outstanding reputation of Adelaide nurses was forged in these years. In an Adelaide Centenary Book published in 1950 as part of a fundraising campaign Dr David Mitchell gives a detailed portrait of the work in the Adelaide in 1950, which is an invaluable short account of how each area and ward of the Hospital was used and of the state of hospital care at the mid-point of the twentieth century prior to the transformations yet to come.

4. **Facing Hospital Reform, 1960-1998**

It became evident during the 1950s that the seven relatively small teaching hospitals associated with Trinity College, amongst which was the Adelaide, must face reform. The increasingly complex hospital care at a level appropriate for university medical education required to be delivered in suitable premises with much increased financial resourcing. This initially led to the 1961 Federation Act which ultimately envisaged the amalgamation of these hospitals into one modern university teaching hospital. It has proved enormously difficult to achieve this vision but great advances have been made in an era of unprecedented change in both healthcare and health policy.¹⁴ The mentalities which shaped the voluntary hospital movement until the mid-twentieth century came under increasing pressure as traditional values were under attack from statist, economising, secular and latterly neo-liberal philosophies. The medical arguments, not always as evidence-based as proponents of it assume, for increasing scale in order to achieve the necessary volumes for specialised care has come to dominate hospital reform in Ireland. Ultimately the seven hospitals have been subsumed into two: St James's Hospital (1971) and The Adelaide & Meath Hospital, Dublin incorporating The National Children's Hospital (1996).¹⁵ It now appears that both these hospitals will form one 'Trinity Hospital' in coming years. The balance sheet of gains and losses must await some future historian.

The Adelaide Hospital, like all other Dublin voluntary hospitals, faced continual financial difficulties. For example, at the end of the period of Victorian expansion which we have briefly described the Hospital had in 1903 a debt of £5,489 which was very considerable and an appeal was launched to clear it.¹⁶ By the 1930s the financial situation of the Dublin voluntary hospitals was extremely serious as there was a growing demand for hospital services. This led to the introduction of the Hospitals Sweepstakes in which the Adelaide Hospital refused to participate on ethical grounds.¹⁷ It stood alone in remaining a purely voluntary funded hospital until 1960. The situation of the Adelaide Hospital depended in the 1940s and 1950s entirely upon the success of fundraising which was not as successful as required. For example, a special appeal 'The Adelaide Campaign' in the five years 1950-1955 brought in only £7,700. We may take the following report as representative of this effort:

On 29 November 1956 the Irish Times reported that Miss Margaret J.F. Doran, Matron of the Adelaide Hospital had announced that the Pound Day Appeal had raised all but £1000 to pay the cost of building and construction work in Victoria House and made a further appeal in the hope that the balance might be raised by the end of the year. The next fundraising event was scheduled for Thursday, 6th December in the Hospital Boardroom featuring Molly Dunlop, Frank Cowle, The Trostan Singers, Hilda Armstrong and Jean Fitzpatrick.¹⁸

Though the State offered financial support as early as 1953 it was only in 1959 that the Board of the Hospital consented to a scheme whereby the Department of Health would pay for 'eligible' Health Act 1953 patients at the real cost of £12 per week; this was not acceptable to the Department and in 1960 the Hospital had to 'join the Sweep' or face permanent closure. The payment of the deficit for running expenses came from the Hospital

Trust Fund which was by then composed of both State and Sweepstakes income. This was to mark the end of the financial independence of the Adelaide Hospital. A new situation obtained whereby the Hospital was funded by way of Government grant and by way of patient income derived from private patients who paid through their Voluntary Health Insurance cover introduced from 1957. The Hospital continued to rely on voluntary fundraising such as the Matron's Pound Day, the support from the Ladies Linen Guild, the Ladies 'Tea Bar' in Outpatients and many other initiatives and special appeals.

In confronting the period of hospital reform the Adelaide had one particular legal advantage in that it had been granted a Royal Charter on 27 November 1920 just prior to the signing of the Treaty creating the Irish Free State in 1921. It was this exceptional legal framework which facilitated the Adelaide ethos to be redefined and amended in the agreement which led to the Oireachtas approval of the Charter of The Adelaide & Meath Hospital, Dublin incorporating The National Children's Hospital in 1996 just prior to the transfer of the Hospital to Tallaght on 21 June 1998. Mr David FitzPatrick, who was Chairman of the Medical Board of the merged hospital, wrote in 2006 in relation to the voluntary tradition:

'It would now seem that had the Board of the Adelaide and the Adelaide Society not been prepared to take such a firm stand on this as a matter of principle that tradition might well have been lost.'¹⁹

5. The First Ten Years at Tallaght, 1998-2008

The Adelaide Hospital was founded as an independent Protestant voluntary hospital by charitable men and women, and for over a hundred years was maintained by subscriptions, donations and bequests provided by their successors. Today it has become a constituent part of a much larger Hospital at Tallaght and has been so for ten years. The inexorable pressures of change in terms of hospital care, religious and cultural change in Irish society and the development of national control of all health services (as expressed in the Health Act, 2004 and the Health Service Executive) have totally altered the context in which the values embodied in the Adelaide might be expressed.

In 1994 the voluntary body known as the Adelaide Hospital Society which had been enshrined in the Royal Charter was incorporated as a charitable body under the Companies Acts. It continues to have an independent role in seeking to advance healthcare while at the same time sharing in the governance of The Adelaide & Meath Hospital, Dublin incorporating The National Children's Hospital. It also continues to have responsibility for student nurse entrants to the Adelaide School of Nursing whose students are part of the School of Nursing and Midwifery at Trinity College, Dublin since 2002 when the nursing degree was introduced.²⁰

Elsewhere I have told the fraught story of the first Board of The Adelaide & Meath Hospital, Dublin incorporating The National Children's Hospital in the period 1996-1999.²¹ The Hospital at Tallaght with over 600 beds, a new award winning design on a campus of over thirty acres, a range of modern facilities and equipment undreamt of by our predecessors, a most comprehensive range of health services including psychiatric care (St Loman's Hospital also relocated and integrated with the other base hospitals) and an annual revenue budget of over €200m has on so many levels been a wonderful success story. It has a distinctive ethos and culture shaped by its hybrid origins and its current setting in one of Ireland's fastest growing new cities, Tallaght. It remains a symbol of inclusive care anchored in its Charter. Of course the Hospital is not immune from the many well documented ills of the Irish health system. It faces an ever more challenging and even hostile external

environment as the nation struggles to achieve a better health system. Recent thinking concerning the vital importance of active citizenship in a pluralist democracy ought to underline the importance of the voluntary principle in hospital governance; as yet there remains a very serious 'disconnect' between the official rhetoric and the actual practice of governance and administration in our health service.²² There are great dangers that the precious intangibles which produce quality personal patient care which so typified the Adelaide at its best will be eroded by centralised control and micro-management by bureaucrats who have the power but little responsibility for patients at the point of care. The Adelaide Hospital Society continues to seek to preserve such intangible values and to 'inoculate' them into our health system.

6. **The Adelaide Hospital Society and further healthcare research**

This brief overview of the history of the Adelaide Hospital is suggestive of some key themes or aspects of research which would prove most illuminating when conducted in the light of the recent developments in medical and nursing history.²³ A comparison of the Adelaide Hospital and St Vincent's Hospital (1834) - Ireland's first Catholic hospital - would throw further light on the denominational imperatives in Irish medicine in the last two centuries and how they both accommodated themselves over time within the wider hospital system and to health policies in respect of a range of areas such as their different Christian approaches to medical ethics and to the professional evolution of the nursing profession provided by their denominational nursing schools.²⁴

The extensive Adelaide archive, now in Trinity College, will be of great value in the history of patient care, a hitherto neglected aspect of Irish medical history. The history of each medical speciality remains to be written and the records of the Adelaide Hospital will greatly assist in this task. The doctors in the Adelaide will provide an interesting sample to study; it should be remembered that it was in 1839, the year the Adelaide opened, that the Irish Medical Association was formed by doctors. In 1858, when the new Adelaide was opened in Peter Street, the Medical Act of 1858 was passed establishing the General Medical Council and with it the registration of medical training and professional regulation of the medical profession in Ireland. The story of the Adelaide is, therefore, coterminous with the story of the medical profession's development. A great deal of research is required into the careers of many distinguished doctors associated with the Adelaide – one thinks of many like James Little, Regius Professor of Physic who presided over the Trinity College School of Physic in 1912 when celebrations of its bicentenary took place; he served on the Adelaide Hospital staff for 45 years and attained every distinction open to a hospital physician. When the story of each medical speciality is fully written men like Walter George Smith, the pioneer dermatologist who commenced his practice in the Adelaide, will receive their due acknowledgement. Another interesting doctor is Lambe Atthill (1827-1910) who helped set up the first gynaecological hospital clinic in the Adelaide in 1868 when he was invited to join the staff and he worked in the Adelaide until 1878 when he was elected Master of the Rotunda Hospital. Amongst the 'Super Irish Scientists' produced on a poster by The Irish Times 22 January 2008 is Denis Parsons Burkitt (1911-1993) a famous Adelaide trained doctor of the twentieth century. Burkitt was a world renowned pioneer in describing 'Burkitt's Lymphoma' when he worked in Uganda showed the geographical incidence of this particular cancer and he also was famous for identifying the importance of fibre in the diet.

Irish nursing history has only recently been studied by professional historians.²⁵ The Adelaide archives should be used to provide a detailed history of the Adelaide School of Nursing, founded in 1859 as the first professional training school for lay women, and place it in the context of the development of the nursing profession generally.

The Adelaide Hospital pioneered social work in Irish hospitals. It served the people of the Liberties in Dublin and much detail about social conditions, poverty and disease will be found in the records of the Lady Almoner from the period when Dr Ella Webb stimulated such a social service from 1918 onwards. This led to the appointment of Miss Olive Crawford as the first qualified lady almoner in 1921 and so began social work in the Irish hospital system. In fact Dr Kathleen Maguire, the first Adelaide woman student who qualified in 1891, read a paper on the Social Conditions of the Dublin Poor in 1898 leading to those wonderful women who, with her, set up the Alexandra Guild Tenement Co., to acquire and manage tenement houses at minimum rents. The Guild was the first organisation to employ a trained social worker in 1899.²⁶

Conclusion

Dr Denis Burkitt, a great Christian doctor, once wrote in an autograph book lines that for me well describe the 'Adelaide' approach to patient care at its best:

“Attitudes are more important than abilities.
Motives are more important than methods.
Character is more important than cleverness.
And the heart takes precedence over the head.”

In an Irish health service which has so clearly lost its way and is so crisis-laden these are sentiments which badly need to be rediscovered in healthcare. I will conclude this historical overview of the Adelaide with the words of the late Joe Cowell, Head Porter in the Adelaide Hospital, who for almost 40 years served the Adelaide and died in January 2008:

“In looking back, one should remember people, and this I do, but I will keep their memory a personal thing. I shall not inscribe them here, there would be too many meriting my limited accolades. Instead I will remember, if I may, the Adelaide Hospital.”²⁷

REFERENCES

¹ The principal printed source for the history of the Adelaide Hospital, Dublin is David Mitchell A 'Peculiar' Place The Adelaide Hospital, Dublin Its Times, Places and Personalities 1839 to 1989 (The Blackwater Press, Dublin [1989]) upon which I have drawn in great part for this paper; the extensive archives of the Adelaide Hospital, Dublin were placed in Trinity College, Dublin in 2007. The collection which has been assigned the accession number TCD MS11270, contains approximately 70 boxes of archive material and about 50 bound volumes of board, committee and other records including medical artefacts and instruments. When fully calendared this will be a prime source for historical research. The Somerville Large library – representative of a doctor's collection – has been transferred to the Department of Early Printed Books in Trinity College, Dublin. In addition there is an oral history project set of interviews from 1998 with a number of Adelaide staff in the archives at University College, Dublin.

² 'History of Dublin Hospitals and Infirmaries From 1188 Till the Present Times (39) Adelaide Hospital, 1839' in The Irish Builder, 1 January 1898

³ *ibid*

⁴ See Manuscript 'Account of The Adelaide Hospital, Dublin dated 1889' in Adelaide Hospital Dublin Visitors Book in possession of The Adelaide Hospital Society

⁵ Reproduced in Mitchell, *op. cit.* pp34-35

⁶ Details on Charles Stuart Stanford are given in Clergy of Dublin and Glendalough Biographical Succession Lists, compiled by Canon J. B. Leslie and revised and edited and updated by W.J.R. Wallace, Ulster Historical Foundation, Diocesan Councils of Dublin and Glendalough, 2001) pp1074-5

⁷ Quoted in Mitchell, *op. cit.* p41

⁸ Mitchell *op. cit.* p43

⁹ Inaugural Address Delivered in the Theatre of the Adelaide Hospital, Peter Street at the Commencement of the Clinical Session, November 2, 1858 by James F. Duncan, M.D., reproduced as Appendix 1 in Mitchell, *op. cit.* pp287-295

¹⁰ Mitchell, *op. cit.* p70

¹¹ Letter of 28 Adelaide students in 1878 quoted in Mitchell p81

¹² See the important biography M. Ó hÓgartaigh Kathleen Lynn, Irishwoman, Patriot, Doctor (Irish Academic Press, Dublin, 2006) and Marie Mulholland The Politics and Relationships of Kathleen Lynn (The Woodfield Press, Dublin, 2002) which is omitted from Ó hÓgartaigh's bibliography

¹³ Mitchell, *op. cit.* p52

¹⁴ See The Feds An Account of the Federated Dublin Voluntary Hospitals 1961-2005 by David Fitzpatrick (A & A Farmer, Dublin, 2006) for a detailed account of these hospitals in this period and 'Voluntary and Statutory Relations: the Irish Experience to 1989 in a historical and comparative context' Chapter 1 in Fergus O'Ferrall Citizenship and Public Service Voluntary and Statutory Relationships in Irish Healthcare (The Adelaide Hospital Society/Dundalgan Press, Dundalk, 2000) pp17-41

¹⁵ See Fergus O'Ferrall 'The Formation of The Adelaide & Meath Hospital, Dublin incorporating The National Children's Hospital' in The Feds *op. cit.* pp43-52

¹⁶ See Special Statement and Appeal for Debt The Adelaide Hospital, Dublin 1903; the debt was made up of an accumulated deficit of £2,267 and debt due to building the new Operating Theatre (£2,055) and the new Nurses' Home, Dispensary and Out-Patients Department (£1,167)

¹⁷ See Mary E. Daly "'An Atmosphere of Sturdy Independence': The State and the Dublin Hospitals in the 1930s" in Medicine, Disease and the State in Ireland 1650-1940 eds G. Jones and E. Malcolm (Cork University Press, Cork, 1999) pp234-252 for detailed analysis of situation

¹⁸ The Irish Times 29 November 1956 quoted in James Scannell 'A Dublin Day – Thursday 29 November 1956' Dublin Historical Record Vol LX No 2, Autumn 2007, p146; Mitchell, op. cit. pp202-3

¹⁹ The story of the Adelaide represented as the last Protestant general teaching hospital in the Republic of Ireland has been told by Professor David McConnell, who crucially led the Board of the Adelaide Hospital from the late 1980s, see David McConnell 'The Adelaide Hospital – the last Protestant general teaching hospital in the Republic of Ireland' in The Feds op. cit. pp65-78 with David FitzPatrick's very pertinent 'Editor's Note' attached.

²⁰ The Adelaide Hospital Society has developed a strong health policy contribution reflecting its values, see in particular Just Caring Equity and Access in Healthcare A Prescription for Change (An Adelaide Hospital Society Policy Paper, 2005) and the landmark research study by Stephen Thomas, Charles Normand, Samantha Smith Social Health Insurance: Options for Ireland (The Adelaide Hospital Society, 2006)

²¹ See my case study in Citizenship and Public Service Voluntary and Statutory Relationships in Irish Healthcare op. cit. pp161-224

²² See Fergus O'Ferrall 'Citizen Participation in Healthcare' in The Politics of Healthcare Achieving Real Reform eds E. McAuliffe and K. McKenzie, (The Liffey Press, Dublin, 2007) pp179-206

²³ See Greta Jones and Elizabeth Malcolm 'Introduction: An Anatomy of Irish Medical History' in Medicine, Disease and the State in Ireland 1650-1940 eds. E. Malcolm and G. Jones (Cork, 1999) pp1-17 and G. Fealy and M. O'Doherty 'Lessons from History' in Care to Remember Nursing and Midwifery in Ireland (Cork, 2005) pp11-27 for stimulating overviews of developments.

²⁴ On St Vincent's Hospital see A Century of Service: St Vincent's Hospital, Dublin, 1834-1934 (Dublin, 1934) and F.O.C. Meenan St Vincent's Hospital, 1834-1994: An Historical and Social Portrait (Dublin, 1995)

²⁵ See especially Gerard M. Fealy A History of Apprenticeship Nurse Training in Ireland (Routledge, London, 2006) and Care to Remember Nursing and Midwifery in Ireland ed. Gerard M. Fealy (Mercier Press, Cork, 2005)

²⁶ On conditions in Dublin in this period, see Jacinta Prunty Dublin Slums 1800-1925 A Study in Urban Geography (Dublin, 1998)

²⁷ Quoted in Mitchell, op.cit. p285

APPENDIX 1

The Adelaide Hospital, 1839

The first Governors were:

Marquess of Westmeath
Dean of St. Patrick's
Dean of Leighlin
Dean of Kildare
Archdeacon of Emly

Edward Litton Esq.,
Master in Chancery
Major Crawford
G.A Hamilton, M.P.
George Woods Esq.

Committee

Rev Edward Abbott
Rev J. Aickin
Rev M.F. Day
Rev Arthur Davis
Rev C.M. Fleury
Rev H.R. Halahan
Rev W.H. Krause
Rev W.A. Neville
Rev Thomas Scott
Rev W. Urwick, D.D.
Rev H. Verschoyle
John Barrett

Thomas Walker
Edward Burroughs
Isaac Butt
Joseph Cowper
W. Eddington
Joseph Gabbett
John M. Hewson
Henry Kingsmill
Henry B Law
Rev Edw. Metcalf
B.B. Smyth
F.W. Walsh, LL.D

Bankers: Messrs. La Touché and Co., Castle Street

Treasurer: Thomas Walker, Esq.

Medical Officers

Physicians: H.C. Beauchamp, M.D., 115 Baggot Street; Robert O'Brien, M.D., 93 Harcourt Street; John H. Power, M.D., 95 Harcourt Street, Albert J. Walsh, M.D., 57 St Stephen's Green, East; Samuel Lenox L. Bigger, M.D., 25 York Street.

Consulting Physician: Robert J. Graves, M.D., 4 Merrion Square, South

Consulting Accoucheur: Fleetwood Churchill, M.D., 137 St Stephen's Green, West.

Consulting Surgeons: John T. Kirby, 89 Harcourt Street and Maurice Collis, 19 Merrion Square.

Resident Apothecary and Registrar: Mr J. A. Tighe.

(Source: The Irish Builder 1 January 1898)

APPENDIX 2

The Adelaide Hospital, 1858

The following formed the Committee of Management:

Rev. R. Brook, A.M.	Rev. J. Hare, A.M.
Rev. D. Browne, A.M.	Rev. H.R. Halahan, A.M.
Rev. J. Carson, D.D.	G.W. Maunsell, Esq
The Hon G. Colley	James A. Kift, Esq.
Captain Cranfield	Rev. E. Marks, D.D.
F.J.L. Dames	Rev. M. Neligan, D.D.
James Duncan, M.D.	William Ryan, M.D.
Thomas Greene, Esq.	Rev. W. Urwich, D.D.
Rev. C.M. Fleury, D.D.	Rev. T. Wallace, A.B.
Rev. S. Haughton, M.D.	John Walsh, Esq.
Rev. J.A. Galbraith	E. Wright, LL.D.
H.A. Hamilton, Esq.	

Hon. Secretary: Rev. Charles Stuart Stanford, D.D.

Medical Officers

Physicians: James F. Duncan, M.D., 8 Merrion Street Upper, and Robert Mayne, M.D., 13 Gloucester Street.

Consulting Physician: Robert Law, M.D., 25 Merrion Street Upper.

Surgeons: Albert J. Walsh, M.D., 89 Harcourt Street, John Morgan, 19 Ely Place, John K. Barton, M.D., 16 Pembroke Street Upper, and B. Wills Richardson, M.D., 2 Frederick Street North.

Consulting Surgeon: Josiah Smyly, A.B., 13 Merrion Square North.

Chaplain: Rev Robert Stone, Curate of St Nicholas without

Hon Secretary: Rev Charles S. Stanford, D.D., Rector of St Thomas's.

Registrar: John Read, Esq.

Matron: Mrs Ruttle

(Source: The Irish Builder 1 January, 1898)

APPENDIX 3

The Adelaide Hospital, 1903

President: His Grace The Duke of Abercorn

Vice Presidents

Most Rev. Dr. Peacocke, Archbishop of Dublin

Col. The Hon C.F. Crichton, J.P.

Lord Iveagh, K.P.

Richard Carey, Esq.

Trustees

Of Endowment Fund:

Col. The Hon C.F. Crichton, J.P.

Hamilton Drummond, Esq., J.P.

Capt. R. Wade Thompson, J.P.,

Chairman of Managing Committee

Of General Fund:

Rev. T. Good, B.D.

Hamilton Drummond, Esq., J.P.

W.E. Ormsby, Esq., LL.D.,

Vice-Chairman

Managing Committee:

Viscount Bangor

R. Booth, Esq., J.P.

W.F. Bewley, Esq

R.F. Colvill, Esq., J.P.

Rev. J.W.R. Campbell, M.A.

F.V. Clarendon, Esq., B.A.

Rev. M. Day, M.A.

Rev. C. Dowse, M.A.

E.J. Figgis, Esq., J.P.

Thomas Greene, Esq.

Edwin Hamilton, Esq., M.A.

Rev. S.C. Hughes, B.D.

Rev. G. Mahaffy, M.A.

Capt. Lewis Riall, D.L.

J.W. Richards, Esq.

Rev. E. Robinson, M.A.

D. Ross, Esq.

G.E. Tombe, Esq., J.P.

Honorary Secretaries:

Thomas Pakenham Law, Esq., K.C.

Wallace Beatty, Esq., M.D.

Hon Treasurer: - William Fry Esq

(The Royal Bank of Ireland)

Physicians

James Little, M.D., Univ. Edin. & Univ. Dub (*Hon.Causa*); LL.D.Univ.Edin. (*Hon.Causa*)

Wallace Beatty, M.D., F.R.C.P.I.

Henry T. Bewley, M.D., V.P.R.C.P.I

Surgeons

Francis T. Heuston, M.D., M.Ch., F.R.C.S.I.

T.E. Gordon, M.B., B.Ch., F.R.C.S.I.

Gynaecologist

W.J. Smyly, M.D., F.R.C.P.I.

Ophthalmic Surgeon

H.R. Swanzy, M.A., M.B., F.R.C.S.I.

Dental Surgeons

R. Theodore Stack, M.D., F.R.C.S.I.

John Stanton, L.D.R.C.S.I.

Throat Surgeon

Horace Law, M.D., B.CH., F.R.C.S.I.

Pathologist

J. Alfred Scott, M.D., F.R.C.S.I.

Assistant Physician

George Peacocke, M.D., F.R.C.P.I.

Assistant Surgeon

Leveson-Gower Gunn, M.D., F.R.C.S.I.

Matron

Miss J.M. Fitzpatrick

Chaplain

Rev. C.W. Fleury, M.A.

Registrar

F.G. Kempster, B.A.

Source: The Adelaide Hospital Dublin Special Statement and Appeal booklet published by
The Adelaide Hospital Society in 1903