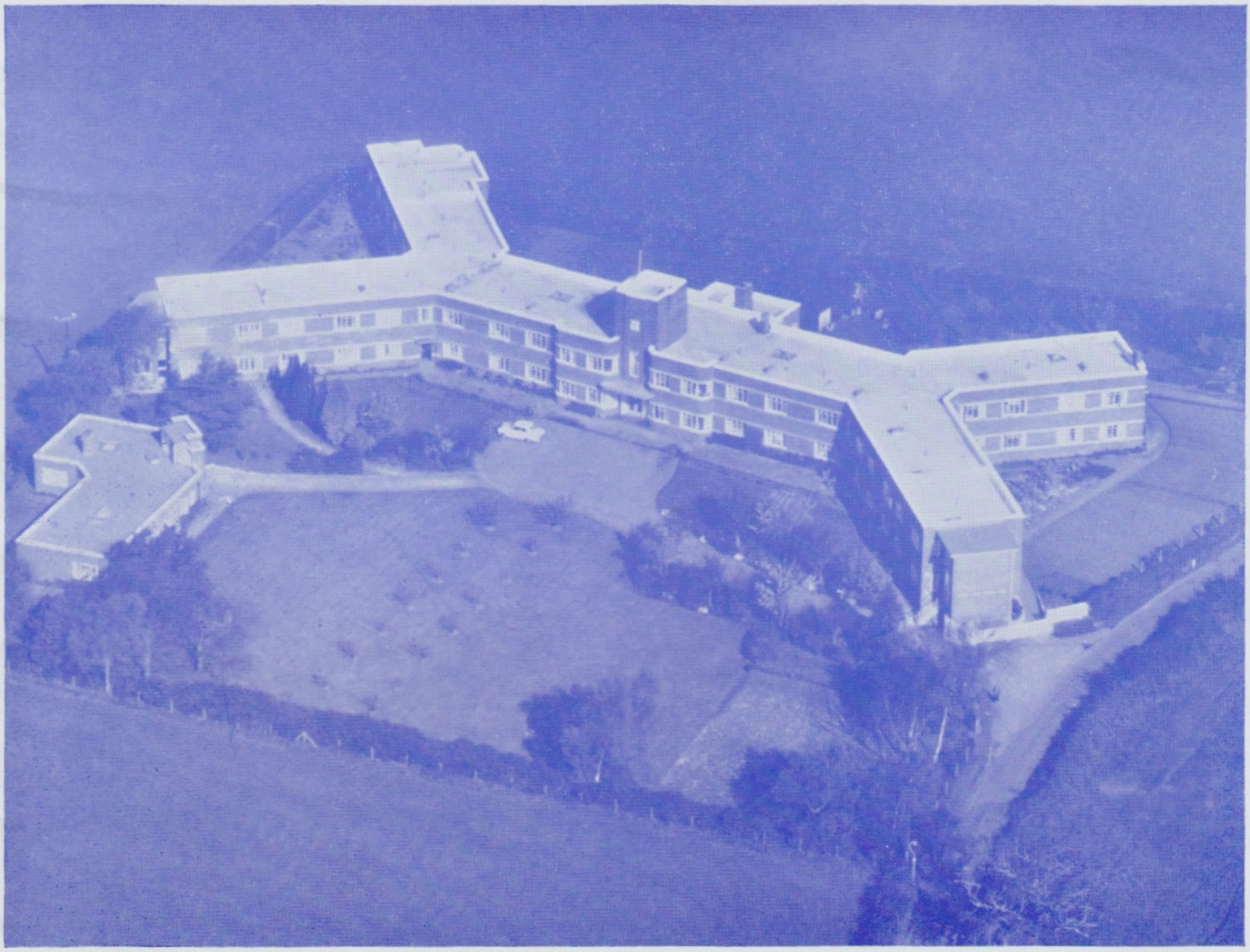
ANNUAL REPORT

OF

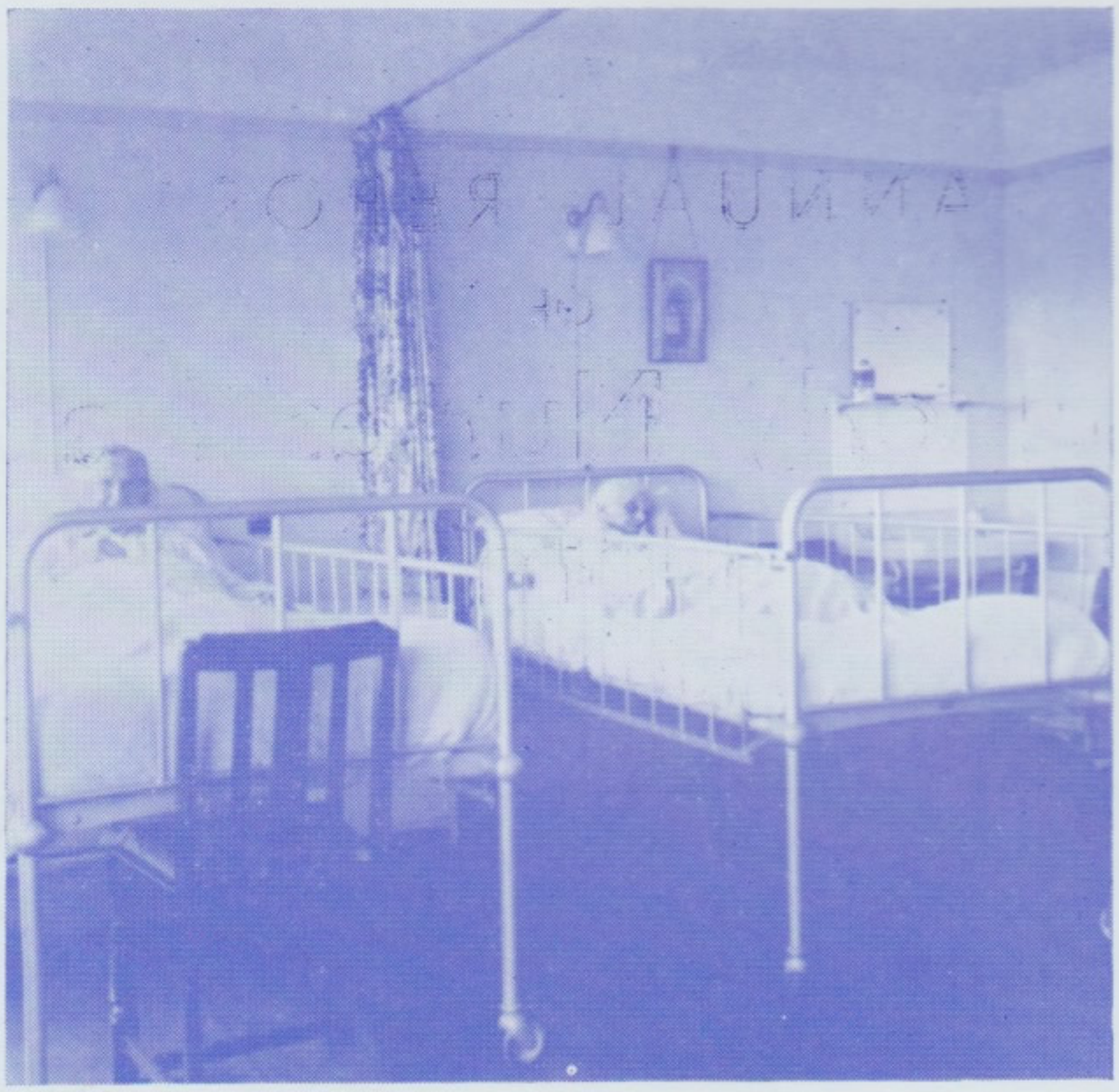
The Elderly Nurses National Home.

BOURNEMOUTH



AERIAL VIEW OF THE HOME

Year ended December 31st, 1965



THE SICK BAY

with Miss P. Tillott, aged 90 and Miss F. Thompson, aged 93

BED SITTING ROOM

The Elderly Nurses National Home
Bournemouth

Patrons:

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A SHORT HISTORY OF THE HOME

In 1929 the Matron of a Bournemouth Nursing Home was dangerously ill and her recovery doubtful, although she was surrounded by every comfort that skill and sympathy could suggest. During this illness an appeal for help came to her from an elderly member of her profession, who was living in circumstances of unrelieved poverty. The contrast between her own security and the wretchedness of one of her own profession struck deep into her spirit and she vowed that if she recovered she would spend all her leisure time and all her strength of body, mind and spirit on the provision of homes for nurses who, because of their devotion to what was then such a badly paid profession, had been unable to save enough to provide for themselves. She did recover, and immediately set about her task, even though most people would have considered that task insurmountable.

At that time, after the First World War, inflation was having its effect on the meagre savings of the nurses. The continuation and acceleration of inflation since the Second World War has accentuated the needs of the elderly nurse. This is well illustrated by the fact that the nurse, Miss Thompson, who first had the inspiration and worked so hard for the establishment of Homes for her sisters in need, is now, at the age of 93, ending her days in the Home of her vision.

To return to 1929, Miss Thompson, who believed that ideas should be followed by action, gathered round her a group of colleagues and members of the Medical Profession and lay friends to pioneer the scheme for this Home. Two of the most diligent workers were a Bournemouth surgeon, Mr. W. S. Richardson, and his wife. Mr. Richardson, now 92, is the President of the Home and he still visits it almost daily.

In such a brief history it would be quite impossible to mention the names of the many people who have given long and devoted service and help to the Home since 1929, but one cannot read the full story without being deeply impressed at such a record. Particularly prominent throughout the whole period have been members of the Clerical, Medical and Banking professions, the last-named having provided us with Honorary Treasurers throughout the period. Mention, however, must be made of the names of the donors of the land on which the Home was built, the Misses Cooper-Dean, and of Lord Nuffield, who provided a great deal of the capital needed for completing and extending the Home.

The average age of the nurses in the Home is 80 and there are a number in their nineties. Nearly all of them served in the First World War and many of them carried on during the second. In war and peace they have served all over the world and the total sum of this service it would be impossible to surpass.

Many of the nurses are able to take care of themselves for some years in self-contained flats, but for those who are not able, bed-sitting rooms are provided with full board. There is also a well-staffed Sick Bay, and it is a particular feature of the Home that only on a doctor's advice does a nurse go to hospital. Otherwise she stays in the Home to end her days, with all the care and attention which is due to one who has herself so cared for others.

One request only is made to readers of these notes, and that is that they should visit this Home and see for themselves the practical results of this story of devotion.

ANNUAL REPORT

THE concluding remark in the Short History of the Home in this Report is an invitation to visit the Home to see how well the resident nurses are cared for. To those who have previously visited the Home this invitation is extended in order that they may also see the many improvements which have been made during the past year.

These improvements are considerable, both in the main building and the Staff quarters, and it would be quite impossible to speak of them in any detail here. All the work done was really necessary, however, to bring the buildings up-to-date, to meet requirements in fire protection, sanitation, heating, etc., and to make good the deterioration of past years. Speaking on behalf of the members of the General Committee, I am sure that we are all very pleased with the improvements and we realise how much we owe to Mr. Arthur Cripps, the Chairman of the Land and Buildings Committee, for the excellence of the work done.

Our gardens have also been improved, particularly by the renewal of all the roses in the Edith Cavell Rose Garden and the advance in the shrubs planted last year in the adjoining Hillier Garden. The replacement of the roses was made possible by a legacy under the Will of Miss Edith Swaffield, a resident of the Home who died last year. Our gardener, Mr. Spiller, continues to maintain the gardens well, both from the angle of their beauty and their economic value to the Home.

There have been some important changes in our Staff during the year, the chief one being the resignation of Mrs. Smith as Matron in September and the appointment of Mrs. Spiller as her successor, but with the title of Warden. Unfortunately, Mrs. Smith suffered a good deal of ill-health during her twenty-one months at the Home. The Committee most wisely decided that we had in Mrs. Spiller the proper and best person to take her place. As Mrs. Spiller has been at the Home from the time it was built, her experience and knowledge of it cannot be surpassed and we are confident that the administration will, under her direction, continue at its best in efficiency and kindliness.

Our President, Mr. W. S. Richardson, recently celebrated his 92nd birthday, but he still visits the Home several days each week and attends many of our Committee meetings. This is an inspiration to all of us.

Our Honorary Life Vice-President, Miss F. Thompson, is still with us in our Sick Bay, having passed her 93rd birthday in January. She is very frail and I am afraid her memory does not carry her back to the days, thirty-seven years ago, when her inspiration and purpose launched the campaign which led to the building of the Home. Needless to say, she is nursed most devotedly by our Staff and is visited almost daily from without and within the Home.

The ever-increasing drive which we make for funds, the difficulties in obtaining suitable staff and the continued applications for admittance to

the Home are a few of the reasons for a heavier pressure of work on the Office, and we are most fortunate in having in our Secretary, Mr. Edward Slingsby, and our Assistant Secretary, Mrs. Benedict, two people who are devoted to the Home as well as being very experienced and efficient.

We are fortunate indeed in all our Staff, both nursing and domestic. Visitors to the Home can see how well it is kept and how the residents are looked after.

A most important addition to our Staff during the year was our Chef, Mr. John Crane, who has made a marked improvement in the catering, both from the gastronomic and economic angles. He is also the principal comedian of the Bournemouth Light Opera Company, and without doubt this unique combination of talents adds to the total sum of happiness in the Home.

I must conclude by speaking about our resident nurses, the care of whom is the one and only reason for the existence of the Home and the cause to which all our endeavours are aimed. Each year a number pass from this earthly Home to one where there is no more toil or care but only happiness far beyond human understanding. Each year a few more join us in the Home to end their days in such happiness as, with God's provision, we can help make possible. All the Committees at the Home are working to this one end. The Land and Buildings Committee see that proper accommodation is provided and that the buildings and grounds are maintained. The House Committee concerns itself with the welfare of the residents, their amenities and social activities. The Finance Committee is, of course, concerned with the essential provision of money to meet our needs both for capital and ordinary expenditure, and also with ensuring that the money is properly expended. On the subject of Finance for the past year, I think it would be better if I left this entirely for the Treasurer to report in his statement, only adding here my thanks and those of all at the Home to the great many who have helped us, some with donations and subscriptions and others with gifts in kind, or services rendered to the Home and the nurses. They may rest assured that what money they have given will be used economically and well and what they have done is in a most splendid cause.

Hugh Stewart.

Chairman.

Hon. Treasurer's Report

The Accounts of this year have borne the major proportion of the sum I mentioned in my last Report as being required to execute overdue maintenance and necessary alterations and additions to the structure of the Home. Therefore, as a result of this, the sum spent on repairs and renewals of both property and equipment has risen from £1,949 to £7,259, a rise of £5,310. But for this, the position would have been precisely the same as last year, when we showed a net deficit of £9,119 —this year the figure is £14,417.

The position has been helped by a very worthwhile increase in the total of donations and subscriptions received of £1,033, which is the result of casting the net of our Appeal farther afield. As the result of a very generous gift of £5,000 from the Sembal Trust, together with various other legacies and gifts received during the year, our Capital Account is only down by £4,871. We have appealed to various other nationally known Charities during the course of the year but so far without success. The matter is, however, still being pursued.

One disturbing piece of news is the Chancellor's proposed Selective Employment Tax, which, if Charities are not exempted, will add more than £1,000 to our operating cost each year. I trust that Mr. Callaghan will think again.

In extending my sincere thanks to all those who have so generously helped us in the past, I would ask them to continue to do so and to bring to the attention of their friends this very worthwhile cause which now, more than ever, needs all the support it can get.

Obituary

It is with deep regret that we record the deaths during the past year of the following nurses: —

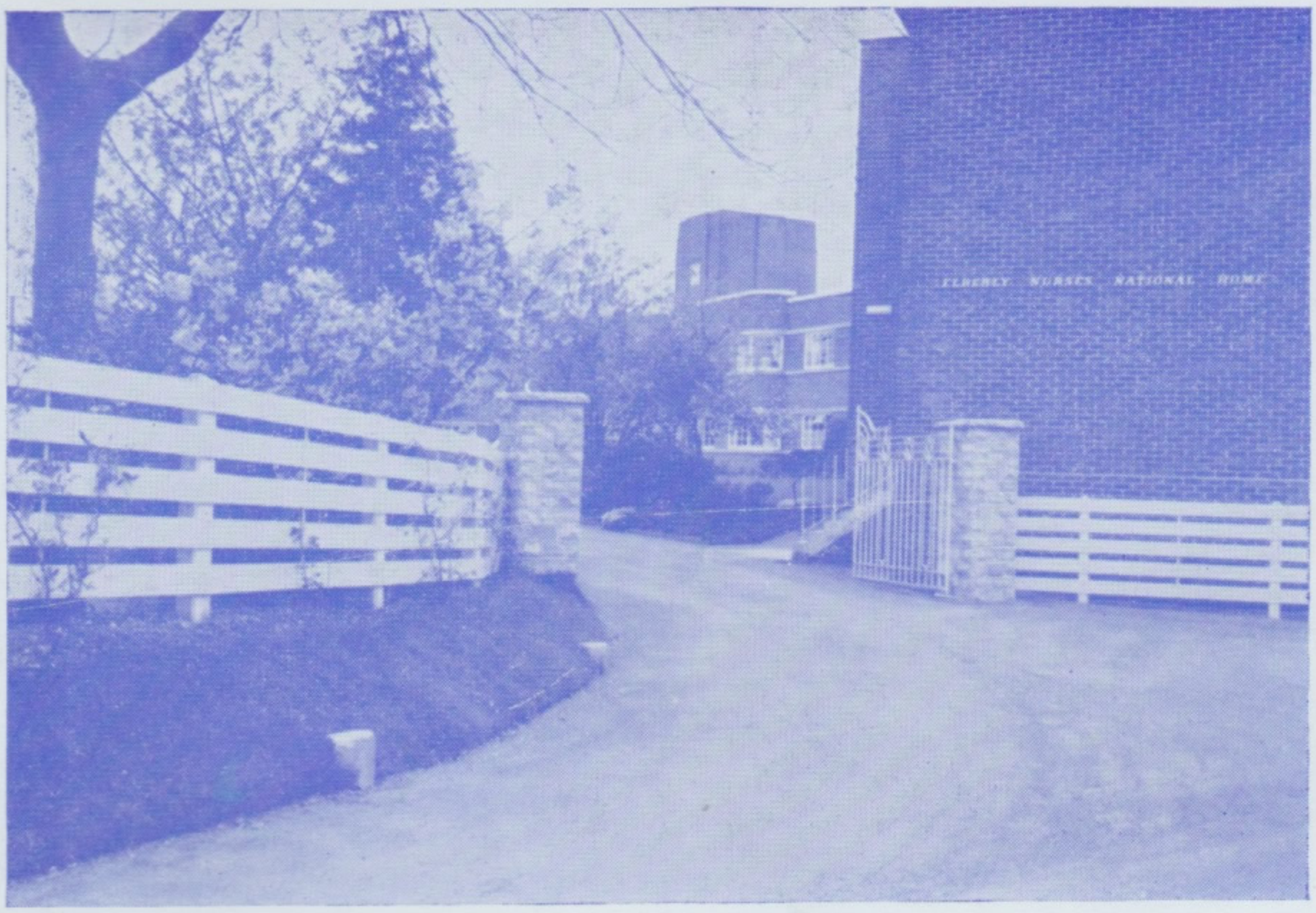
Alice Petitt
Emma Jane Field
Felicia Blanche Austin

The Chapel

There is a room set apart as a Chapel, dedicated by the Bishop of Winchester on 8th December, 1947. The Chapel, beautifully furnished by Mr. and the late Mrs. W. S. Richardson, is in memory of their daughter, Sybil Margaret Richardson, M.A. (Oxon), who lost her life by enemy action in London. The Chapel is always open and is much appreciated as a place of meditation and quiet. Holy Communion is celebrated there regularly.

Notice to Subscribers

Subscribers are earnestly invited to consider adopting the scheme involving the execution of a Deed of Covenant. It enables the Home to secure, as an addition to your subscription, recovery of income tax at the standard rate from the total tax previously paid by you. So, at little, if any, extra cost to you, your gift to the Home is greatly increased. Please think about this. It can make such a difference to our finances.



THE ENTRANCE

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