

Mapperley Hospital, Nottingham and George Hine: a creative relationship

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Sneinton Hermitage, situated in a village to the east of Nottingham, was one of the first asylums for pauper lunatics to be built under the provisions of the County Asylums Act 1808. The hospital was designed by Richard Ingleman and work began in 1810 and was completed in 1812. The finished hospital served both the County and the City. This provision soon became too small and was supplemented by the building, in 1857–1859, of a hospital for fee-paying patients to the north of Nottingham. This was the Coppice Hospital, designed by the Nottingham architect T.C. Hine.

When this provision also proved to be inadequate for the expanding city, the City Council resolved to build its own asylum for pauper patients. An architectural competition was established, which attracted seven entries, and the winner was George Hine, son of the designer of the Coppice Hospital. A site was secured at Mapperley on the northern fringes of the city. This was long and narrow, bordered by a major road to the east and a deep valley to the west. Work began in 1875 and the hospital opened in 1880. The architect adopted the 'corridor' plan in which each ward could be entered individually without passing through another. There were gallery wards on the ground floor for more disturbed patients and wards for less disturbed patients on the first floor, with their dormitories on the second floor. There was a large hall on the ground floor for communal meals, with a chapel above. The design separated the genders. Ventilation towers were a conspicuous feature of the hospital.



When the new hospital again proved to be too small, Hine was engaged to extend it. This he did by building another hospital to the south, which was virtually a replica of the first and was completed in 1888. The drawing shown here is an architect's impression of the hospital on completion. The new wing, to the right, served male patients and the original part of the hospital was adapted to accommodate female patients.

In his work at Mapperley, Hine had shown his grasp of the requirements of mental hospital design. His firm of architects designed a further 15 hospitals or major extensions of existing hospitals. His plans showed incremental development incorporating new ideas in hospital design. His work included: Claybury, London County Council (LCC), 1887–1893; Dorset County Asylum (CA), 1890; Sunderland Borough, 1891–1895; Banstead, Middlesex CC, 1893; Newport, Isle of Wight, 1893; Sleaford, Lincolnshire CC, 1897–1902; Bexley, LCC, 1898; Berkshire CA extension, 1898; Hill End, Hertfordshire CC, 1900; Tone Vale, Somerset & Bath CA, 1901; Horton, LCC, 1901–1902; Hellingly, East Sussex, 1901–1903; Bromsgrove, Worcester CA, 1901–1907; Netherne, Surrey CA, 1901–1907; and Long Grove, Epsom, LCC, 1903–1907. Hine was appointed consultant to the Commissioners in Lunacy and elected an Honorary Member of the Royal Medico-Psychological Association.

Mapperley Hospital became internationally known under the leadership of Duncan Macmillan. He was medical superintendent from 1930 until 1966 and introduced liberal ideas in the care of patients, which included the unlocking of wards, community facilities and hostels for long-term patients no longer in need of hospital care. These measures reduced the time patients spent in hospital. He also developed special services for the elderly centred on a multidisciplinary assessment ward. From 1972 the hospital accommodated the Department of Psychiatry of the new Nottingham University Medical School. The hospital closed in 1994.

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