

Excellency Earnest Lester, Governor of the State of Washington, was in the city, accompanied by Miss Florence Lester, his daughter. The event proved auspicious for Saint Elizabeth's since Miss Lester offered her help to further the sale of the "Tags". Her popularity, as well as that of her father, was an added inducement of the success of the project. The results of the day's work was \$641.86.<sup>64</sup>

An even greater honor to commemorate the anniversary was the visit of Governor Lester to the Hospital itself. During the afternoon, the City Commissioners telephoned to say that the Governor wished to visit Saint Elizabeth's and that the guests would arrive in a few minutes. Sister Gertrude of Providence, Superior, accompanied by two sisters met the distinguished visitors and welcomed them most cordially. Sister Gertrude then conducted the Governor and his entourage to the community room, to the chapel, to the surgeries, and to the rooms of the sick.<sup>65</sup> Everyone was pleased with the enviable distinction bestowed upon Saint Elizabeth's and enjoyed the publicity which the anniversary occasioned.

The year, 1918, will be memorable for many reasons, but particularly two outstanding ones: the termination of World War, 1, and the terrible Spanish Influenza Epidemic. In the early days of October, the "flu" made its appearance in the Valley. By the

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64. Chronicles, Saint Elizabeth Hospital. Vol. 1. p. 135

65. Ibid., p 136

fifteenth of the month, it had made such rapid progress that it was soon evident that an emergency hospital would have to be established.<sup>66</sup> Extra beds were put in the hall or in any place that could accommodate one. No patient was refused as long as a bed was available. Some of the victims lived only long enough to receive the Last Sacraments.<sup>67</sup> These were harrowing days for everyone. The doctors and nurses were not immune; and one after another they succumbed to the dreaded disease. Death claimed many of the devoted helpers. Not yet had the wonderful drugs of sulpha and penicillin been discovered.

In order to prevent the spread of the disease, Mayor Forrest Sweet issued a proclamation prohibiting all assemblies or public gatherings of any kind. School and churches were closed indefinitely.<sup>66</sup>

Sister Gertrude of Providence, Superior, realized the ravaging situation for what it was and suggested to the Health Department to advise the City Commissioners to take immediate steps to meet the emergency. With reluctance the plan of a temporary hospital was approved. It was established in the Episcopalian Manse, November first. During November and December over four hundred patients received care in the improvised hospital. The Sisters were asked to

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66. Chronicles, Saint Elizabeth Hospital, Vol. 1. p. 130

67. Ibid., p. 162

68. Ibid., p. 163



take charge of this project but because of the scarcity of nurses and of the increased number of patients at Saint Elizabeth's as well as the overworked personnel, the request could not be granted. The Hospital gave every possible assistance by supplying medicines,<sup>69</sup> hospital supplies, nurses and by visiting the sick. Sister Martha will long be held in loving memory by the people of Yakima, for her zeal and devotedness. The hospital chronicler wrote:

"Sister Martha, visitor, rendered heroic service in the homes and among the poor. Going from house to house wherever she would be called during the day. She spent her nights by the side of the dying or night watching with stricken families for whom she could procure no help. Though frail and delicate herself, God gave to this devoted, self sacrificing religious a super-human strength and endurance. Her work was truly admirable as the following figures show. Number of patients visited, 487; Number of night watches, 9; Number of deaths in home, 23; Number of dead prepared for burial, 11; Medicine, food, clothing, bed linen distributed amounted to \$279".<sup>70</sup>

For some time the question of obtaining applicants for the School of Nursing was a problem. During June, 1918, a campaign was carried on to obtain recruits for the Student Nurse Reserve Corps for the United States Army. Saint Elizabeth Hospital filed an application with the local recruiting officer, requesting that a certain number of students be trained at the hospital. During October, the histories and standing records of

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69. Chronicles, Saint Elizabeth Hospital, Vol. 1. p. 163  
 70. Ibid., p.163

eleven young women were received from the Council of National Defense. On November first, the eleven young ladies arrived, coming from Idaho,<sup>71</sup> Montana, California, and Washington. The arrival of these student nurses was most suspicious as the Influenza was raging at its height in Yakima, and every iota of help was eagerly sought.

On November 18, 1918, death claimed Sister Mary Dumpna, as a victim of the Influenza. When the doors of the Hospital had been thrown open to the Influenza patients, Sister Dymrna gave of her time and energy without stint. In her capacity as pharmacist, Sister work early and late filling prescriptions to alleviate the sufferings of the sick.<sup>72</sup> Sister Mary Dumpna's life was Saint Elizabeth's holocaust offered on the altar of sacrifice.

After six weeks, the churches were opened, December 8, 1918, the public gatherins were again permitted. The Catholics crowded their churches, and the altar-rails were filled by those who during these trying time had been deprived of the consolation of their religion.<sup>73</sup>

As one reads the chronicles of Saint Elizabeth's, one cannot but be impressed by the recurrence of the same theme- the need for more beds. Eighteen months had not passed since the west wing had been remodeled and

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71. Chronicles, Saint Elizabeth Hospital, Vol. 1. p. 163

72. Ibid., pp. 168, 169

73. Ibid., 169



opened to receive maternity cases, yet the number of patients far exceeded the accommodations. In order to increase the bad capacity, the open decks on the west end of the fifth floor was inclosed and<sup>74</sup> eight more rooms were thus made available.

It was not until October 22, 1919, that Saint Elizabeth Hospital had a Laboratory. The physicians had made extensive use of Bacteriology but had had to submit to delays as the specimens had to be sent to Seattle for analysis. Lieutenant James F. de Vane, bacteriologist, was placed in charge of the new department. He was recognized for his skill in the Yakima Medical circles because of the unusual experience he had acquired during his service in the United States Army Medical Corps, in China, Japan, Hawaii, and the Philippine Islands. He had had experience with the various forms of dysentery, leprosy, skin eruptions, fevers, tropical<sup>75</sup> and contagious diseases of all kinds.

Only two weeks had passed when the benefit of a laboratory and Bacteriology Department proved that its incorporation as a part of Saint Elizabeth's had been of great value. Mr. Otto Wagner was admitted to the hospital with a strange skin disease which appeared in large tumors on his face, neck and limbs. After extended treatment without showing improvement, the county physician ordered a Laboratory test. Mr. de Vane's "tropical experience served him well", as it was proved without a

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74. Ibid., pp 182, 183. Yakima Morning Herald. Oct. 23, 1919

Appendix

75. Ibid., pp 182, 183

doubt that the patient was a leper. Mr. Wagner had most likely contracted the disease in the Philippine Islands during the Spanish American War. He was placed in strict isolation until the county commissioners could provide a place for him. During this wait, Father O'Sullivan, S.J. instructed the patient and baptized him. Mr. Wagner made his confession and received Holy Communion before he was removed to his living tomb. The Sisters visited him frequently, providing Mr. Wagner with reading material and little delicacies to eat. He was found dead four months later.

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November 7, 1919, the doctors of the hospital called a meeting with Sister Gertrude, Superior, for the purpose of discussing plans for the standardization of Saint Elizabeth Hospital. Requirements as outlined by the American College of Surgeons were studied and every means used to make a standardization possible.

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One of the first steps toward this goal was the formation of a Hospital Staff. Invitations were sent by Sister Superior to the doctors of the city and the surrounding districts. Fifty doctors met in the lecture hall of the hospital. The rules and regulations were discussed and each doctor pledged his cooperation and support. The organiza-

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76. Chronicles, Saint Elizabeth Hospital, Vol. 1. p. 184

77. Ibid., p. 186



tion would be known as the Staff of Saint Elizabeth Hospital, incorporation every doctor in the district as a member of the staff. Elections were held and the following officers chosen: Dr. J. R. Thompson, President; Dr. F. F. Nagler, Vice- President; Dr. M. J. Maguire, Sec.-Treas.. On the Executive Committee were: Drs. C. J. Lynch, J. F. Scott, W. L. McClure, E. S. West, and A. J. Hilton. Dr. Leroy Beebe, Interne; J.E. de Vane, Bacteriologist; Sister Gertrude of Providence, Supervisor of Records; Miss Marcia Madsen, R. N. Record Keeper.

Dr. A.B. Sloan, of Chicago under the direction of the American College of Surgeons, visited Saint Elizabeth's, August 15, 1920. The purpose of Doctor's visit was to inspect the different departments of the hospital so as to establish a rating for the institution. Accompanied by Sister Gertrude, the Superior, Dr. Sloan, visited each floor taking special notice of care given to the patients, examining the work done by the X-Ray and Laboratory Department, the surgeries, the charts and general management. In concluding the tour he closely examined the Record Department. He reported favorably on the hospital and Saint Elizabeth's was accepted as a member hospital of the American College of Surgeons.

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December, 1919, will never be forgotten by the Sisters who were

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78. Chronicles, Saint Elizabeth Hospital. Vol. 1. p. 185, Yakima Herald, November 1919. Appendix.

79 Chronicles, Saint Elizabeth Hospital, Vol. 1. p. 194 Yakima Daily Republic, Dec. 1920, Appendix

stationed at Saint Elizabeth's. It was the coldest winter in the history of the Valley. At places the mercury dropped to 40 degrees below zero. Added to this was the shortage of fuel caused by a nation-wide coal strike which had started in November. A fuel administrator was appointed in order to have an even distribution of the fast diminishing supply of coal. Sister Martha, who had been appointed to visit the outside sick and poor, spared no effort to relieve the suffering among the poor.<sup>80</sup> The inmates of the hospital suffered no discomfort but the worry and strain on the sisters was heavy.

The surgery, usually the doctors' criterion of a hospital, received special attention at Saint Elizabeth's. Every doctor seemed to take a personal interest in its improvement; gradually new instruments replaced the old; highly polished metal equipment glistened in the glass cases and surgical kits; and everywhere one felt the atmosphere of up-to-date service. In November 1920, the Staff doctors made a gift of a Howle Fracture Table to the surgery. This donation represented a goodly sum of money. Their gifts of a Multiscope and X-Ray equipment brought the value of their donations to \$3,000.00. With these additions, the X-Ray Room was up to a standard

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80. Chronicles, Saint Elizabeth Hospital. Vol. 1. p. 186



that could compete with any other institution of its size.<sup>81</sup> This expansion and improvement spelled "progress" and the medical staff were proud of their achievements.

The old hospital property, down on North Fourth Street, had been a source of concern for all. It was considered a fire hazard. To the delight of all, the building was torn down in June, 1915, and the wood was sold for \$900. The City wished to purchase the grounds for a public park. But the permission from the Community's higher Superiors to sell could not be obtained. Negotiations were reopened in 1920; this time the Sisters sold the property for \$12,000 payable in annual installments at 6%. This sale relieved the sisters of the burden of paying taxes on an unoccupied piece of land. The entire transaction was managed by Commissioner A. B. Cline.<sup>82</sup> With this sale all ties were now severed with the old Saint Elizabeth's. Today one of the city parks occupies this land which continues to serve the community in its health program.

The Medical Staff were not the only ones who took an interest in the improvement of the Hospital. The members of the Grand Army of the Republic, felt a patriotic pride in contributing their gift of a sixty-foot flagpole to replace the old one atop of the Hospital. The O.A.R. were

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81. Chronicles, Saint Elizabeth's Hospital. Vol. 1. p 197.

82. Ibid., p. 197

in charge of the actual ceremony of dedication and of the flag-raising. Rev. J. M. Sullivan, S. J. the chaplain of the Hospital, opened the exercises with a prayer. Addresses were delivered by the Honorable Rovig, Mayor of Yakima, Dolph Barnet, state Vice-Commander<sup>83</sup> of the American Legion and Dr. Reed of the Grand Army. Such gifts and the interest attendant upon the publicising of the events, made the people of Yakima, hospital conscious, and helped to create a feeling that the Hospital really belonged to the people of the Valley.

May 12, 1921, was a red-letter day in hospital history. It was the first time that National Hospital Day had ever been celebrated. The date was chosen because it was the anniversary of the birthday of Florence Nightingale, the leader in the field of nursing for women. The main purpose of this event, commemorated throughout the United States, was to make the public more familiar with the work of the hospitals in its own vicinity.<sup>84</sup> Everyone, the newspaper editors, civic leaders, doctors, and the personnel of the hospital entered<sup>85</sup> into the plans to make this first Hospital-Day a memorable success. Mayor Rovig issued a letter to the public, urging the citizens to participate in the celebration, "The hospital", he wrote, "constantly

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83. Chronicles, Saint Elizabeth Hospital, Vol. 1. pp. 204, 205

84. Ibid., p. 206

85. Ibid., p. 207



serving humanity"; the majority of people have no conception of the actual work such institutions are accomplishing. Therefore. Saint Elizabeth Hospital is going to open its doors to the Yakima people, May 12, and I sincerely hope that all who are able will avail themselves of the invitation to visit the institution." <sup>86</sup>

"Hospital-Day" had come to stay; today we take it for granted. Like other annual "days" commemorated throughout the nation, we now scarcely give a thought to the reason why such a name came into prominence - so habituated are we to take such occasions as one more link in the chain of activities which unite us in the service of our community.

In April of 1923, the Tuberculosis Sanitarium of Saint Elizabeth Hospital was closed. For seven years the Sanitarium had taken care of a large number of the county patients. In time, the number of attendants needed to care for these patients had increased the cost of maintenance far beyond the working budget and county appropriations. Hence, new arrangements had to be made. The patients were gradually removed to State Hospitals, and other sanitariums erected for the special care of tuberculosis patients. The separation was also necessitated by a concern for the general good of surgical and medical cases. For two years, from 1923-1925, the building which had housed the tubercular

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86. Chronicles, Saint Elizabeth Hospital, Vol. 1, p. 207

patients, served as an isolation ward.<sup>87</sup> On September 7, 1925,<sup>88</sup> this building was completely closed and sold for \$300.

In the fall of 1926, the Hospital installed oil burners to replace the old coal furnace that had been in use since the erection of the new Hospital. This meant another \$2,000, to provide for the sinking of a tank with a capacity of 480<sup>89</sup> barrels of oil. Today, this item seems very insignificant to us as we envision all the modern conveniences with which we are surrounded; but such an innovation in 1926 seemed almost incredible. No more shoveling coal, by night and day, to keep the boilers going!

Saint Elizabeth's had no place for patients who needed to be isolated; no place for patients with contagious diseases. Some provision was necessary for these cases. Therefore the Sanitorium which had been closed, September 7, 1926, was replaced. On June 20, 1927, the Rev. J. M. Sullivan, S. J. blessed the foundation of the little building located back of the main building which now serves as a department for contagious diseases. It was called the<sup>90</sup> "Annex of Saint Elizabeth Hospital". This building was later remodeled and is now used for sick children.

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87. Chronic les, Saint Elizabeth Hospital, Vol. 1. p. 243

88. Ibid., p. 267

89. Ibid., p. 267

90. Ibid., p. 267, 270



The School of Nursing was well established; the number of students continued to grow, but the nurses' quarters remained the same size. For many years the need of a nurses home had been apparent but conditions did not seem favorable to build until 1929. On March 7, the contract was signed for the construction of a new building, and the work was given to Mr. W. W. Yeaman, contractor of Yakima. The architect was Mr. J. Maloney. The approximate cost was to be \$160,000. This building was to be three stories in height and accommodates one hundred students. Plenty of space for classrooms, offices, parlors, and a social hall were provided for in the plans.<sup>91</sup> The work began shortly after March 7th. The weather was favorable and the foundation was laid so rapidly that on July 19, all was ready for the laying of the Corner Stone. Rev. Conrad Brusten, S. J., presided at the ceremony and gave the occasional address. Three months later, October 8, 1929, the nurses took possession of their new quarters. To the nurses, who had endured the crowded conditions of their old quarters for so many years, the New Home seemed luxurious and almost palatial. They needed no fire on the hearth to provide a memorable "House Warming". The Home was<sup>92</sup> perfect. The delighted and enthusiastic nurses organized a bazaar to

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91. Chronicles, Saint Elizabeth Hospital. Vol. 1. pp. 284, 288, 289

92. Ibid., p. 289

be held in the social room. The proceeds were to be used to buy furnishings for the new rooms. When the bazaar was over and the nurses had balanced their accounts, they had the surprising sum of <sup>92</sup> \$1033.

The evacuation of the Nurses' Department in the Hospital meant another period of remodeling. This part of the hospital afforded space for new surgeries; for a maternity department; for rooms to accommodate sixteen patients; space for nursery; for bathrooms; and for two sterilizing rooms. The fifth floor which had been used for the maternity department <sup>94</sup> was remodeled so that it could be used for medical and surgical cases. The need for such expansion had been a crying one. Now, again, for a brief period, there was room to move about freely and to make further progress.

Typhoid fever which formerly had wrought such havoc annually in the Valley, was now almost a thing of the past. With improved sanitary conditions, with the water supply carefully safe-guarded, and with the use of vaccines and anti-toxin, the bacteria seemed conquered. However, a new and more insidious plague-infantile paralysis- visited the Valley. Because of its sudden appearance and the lack of knowledge how best to deal with it, rendered it much more fatal than the old Typhoid plagues. So many patients were brought to the hospital in the summer of 1934, that a

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93. Chronicles, Saint Elizabeth Hospital, Vol. 1. p. 290

94. Ibid., p. 290



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special wing had to be opened for its exclusive care.

Everyone was alert to the danger of "polio" as it became known; everyone was eager to help those stricken by the dreaded disease. The different clubs wished to show their appreciation for the work done for the afflicted patients by Saint Elizabeth Hospital. One instance will be typical of the interest manifested. The Cyro-Club, directed by Mr. Eugene Auve, put on a carnival. The proceeds, \$406, were presented to the Hospital as a token of gratitude. <sup>96</sup> The attitude of the entire community was friendly and helpful. It seems to be ever thus when a public calamity is hared by all.

Records of success in sports; in travel, and in achievement in almost every field, and even in babies, make the headlines of the daily papers. Saint Elizabeth's Hospital shows in 1935, the rather unusual record of six sets of twins in the Hospital at the same time. It was the nursery this time which was bulging with infants. The pictures of the twins appeared <sup>97</sup> in papers throughout the entire country.

There are always improvements going on in a hospital; from kitchen to surgery, from attic to basement, as new methods are adopted or new inventions introduced. This time the Laboratory and X-Ray departments

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95. Chronicles, Saint Elizabeth Hospital. Vol. 1. p 290

96. Ibid., Vol. 2 p 25

97 Ibid., pp. 26, 27

needed more modern equipment. During 1935, the X-Ray department was improved by the installation of KX4 unit, General Electric Diagnostic Table, Sick Urological Table, Mobile Shock Proof Unit, and Fluoroscope and Trivision Sterioscop<sup>98</sup>. The Laboratory Department received a calorimeter, and other small additions for blood chemistry and serology analysis. Dr. Ralph Shirey, in charge of the X-Ray Department and the Pathologist of the Hospital, donated a Sanborn Basal Apparatus and a General Electric Refrigerator for the Laboratory. Dr. Shirey had come to the Hospital in 1926, to take charge of this department which consisted of two rooms. He had been a loyal friend of Saint Elizabeth's ever since and by his efficiency had improved the scientific work of the department. The doctors on Saint Elizabeth's Staff praise his work most highly.<sup>99</sup>

1935 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the city of Yakima. Gigantic civic celebrations were planned for in advance to commemorate the frontier days. The city officials, to make the occasion more festive passed an ordinance that all men of the town were to grow whiskers and the women were to be gowned as the ladies were in 1885.

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98. Chronicles, Saint Elizabeth Hospital, Vol. 2. p. 27

99. Ibid., p. 27



The Valley relived the days of the first settlers and of the Indians mounted on horses or cayuses and decked in their beaded finery in the parade held May 17th, 18th, and 19th.<sup>100</sup>

As so frequently happens, an occasion of this kind is marked by some tragedy, on the last day of the celebration, the cornice of the Mercy Building upon which some people had been sitting, so as to have a good view of the parade, gave way. Thirty persons or more fell onto the sidewalk. The falling bricks and bodies fell on those standing beneath on the sidewalk. Many persons were injured. Immediately ambulances, fire trucks, and cars were pressed into service. The injured were rushed to Saint Elizabeth's. <sup>101</sup>One of the injured, Mr. Victor Ruff, died shortly after reaching the hospital. Every nurse, sister, doctor, or anyone who could assist was pressed into service. It was difficult to keep order in the wild confusion caused by the inroad of relatives and telephone calls. The Yakima Daily Herald gave the following tribute:

Through the wild scene went the Sisters serene but seeing everything, giving a glass of water to this patient, easing another into a more comfortable position, getting a doctor on the job when some victim appeared in special need. The Sisters of Saint Elizabeth's Hospital are entitled to great credit for the manner in which they handled the biggest

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100. Chronicles, Saint Elizabeth Hospital, Vol. 2. p. 27

101. Ibid., p. 30

emergency with which they have been called  
to cope. 102

The winter months always bring with them the danger of pneumonia. It is always hard to care for the number of cases for the disease seems to come in waves. As a result oxygen tents are often at a premium. To help relieve the shortage Dr. J. K. Scott and Dr. J. L. McDonald donated two oxygen-tents to the Hospital. 103

Another benefactor, Mr. Alexander Miller, had been a patient several times at Saint Elizabeth's. The Superior, Sister Mary Alice, knew of his many gifts to local organizations. She called on him and asked if he would favor Saint Elizabeth's with a donation. On July 14, 1936, Mr. Miller donated \$25,000 and 2,000 shares of Sunshine Mining Stock to the Hospital Trust Fund. 104 His name is inscribed on Saint Elizabeth's list of benefactors and he is remembered daily in the Sisters prayers.

With the popularity of the automobile, the rate of accidents mounted rapidly. Some of these cases were minor injuries, others were critical and of long duration. If an accident happened anywhere within a radius of twenty miles, the injured were always brought to Saint Elizabeth's. The problem that faced the Hospital for many years was;

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102. Chronicles, Saint Elizabeth Hospital. Vol. 2, p. 40  
Yakima Daily Herald. May 20, 1935

103. Chronicles, Saint Elizabeth Hospital Vol. 2. p.40

104. Ibid., p. 48



Who was to reimburse the Hospital for the care these patients received? Many of these accident cases could not defray their own expenses and no provision had ever been made by the city or county to pay for the care which had been given them. For years Saint Elizabeth's Hospital assumed the cost of such care. Eventually it became a burden too great to bear. The outlay of money, thus expended amounted to thousand of dollars. Appeal after appeal was made to both city and county authorities to develop some financial program to cover the cost of such cases yet nothing was done.

In 1936, Doctor J. E. Bittner, Jr. undertook the promotion of a program that would relieve Saint Elizabeth's of this ever increasing financial burden. Thanks to his interest and unflagging energy. Yakima County appropriated a sum of money for the payment of the care given to county accident patients. In the City of Yakima, a special difficulty was encountered. No provision had been made in the city Charter for the payment of care given to such emergency cases. An amendment to the Charter was required. A petition was circulated throughout the city by the doctors and their friends for an amendment which would allow the city authorities to appropriate funds for the care of indigent accident cases occurring within the city limits. It was submitted to the electorate in the election of November 7, 1936. The amendment was voted in and Saint Elizabeth's