

DH PHOTOGRAPHS

~ THE EARLY YEARS ~



THE HISTORY OF  
THE DORSET HOUSE SCHOOL OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

(An extension of the following illustrations etc., may be seen in the Albums of the History of Dorset House - Volumes 1. 2. 3. 4. 5., in the Library).

---

The Dorset House School of Occupational Therapy was the "Brain Child" of Dr. Elizabeth Casson.

Photographs

1. Dr. Casson

Story of Dr. Casson - (see copy of early history of Dorset House 1930 - 1949).

Dr. Casson was a member of a big family in Wales.

In her 20s she worked under Octavia Hill in House Property Management. (Octavia Hill was the Founder of the National Trust).

After this Dr. Casson decided to take a medical course.

She had, first, to take her Matriculation, to obtain entry to Bristol University.

She then took her Medical Degree.

She had a war-time appointment, (in Gt. War I), at a service hospital at Hemel Hempstead.

Then, with an interest in Psychiatry, she took an appointment at the Royal Holloway Sanatorium, Virginia Water, and took her Diploma of Psychological Medicine.

While there, she wrote a thesis, re Psychological Conditions - (in the Library) and won the Gaskell Prize for this.

From there she visited the U.S.A. to study the use of Occupational Therapy, which she felt should have a great value and should be spread in this Country.

On her return she started Occupational Therapy at Virginia Water.

She then decided to open her own clinic at Bristol.

She borrowed some money and bought DORSET HOUSE.

2. Dorset House Floodlit. 3 floors above ground in the front, and two "basement" floors - with windows on to the back sloping garden.
3. Back of Dorset House
4. Dr. Casson & her car Dr. Casson leaving Dorset House for a meeting, and being seen off by her dog, Bran.
5. The D.H. Greenhouse Dorset House had a lovely garden and an excellent greenhouse, and prize plants. Mr. Hedford was its very good gardener.
6. The drawing The house was planned and furnished in a most friendly, non-institutional way.
7. room There were small wards and some private rooms and several comfortable sitting rooms.
8. The Hall This hall was built out of the former stables at the bottom of the garden, and above it were the students study-bedrooms and sitting room.  
(Mr. Hugh Casson, (now Sir Hugh) - Nephew of Dr. Casson, planned and supervised these alterations.
9. The Pottery Used by Staff, Patients and Students.
10. Margaret Morris exercises in the garden These exercises were used for patients, and the students took a teaching qualification in them. They were very attractive, effective and pleasant.
11. Dr. Casson & fellow Sowptonists At a sale of work held at Dorset House, with items made by staff, patients and students.  
Dr. Casson supported much public work in Bristol and the Hall and garden (seen above) was frequently used for social gatherings.
12. The first O.T. Room One of the front rooms of the house - (Miss Tebbit - (now Mrs. Owens) - the first Head of the first O.T. Course)  
This was later extended to other rooms.
13. Allendale, from the Downs After extending the original Dorset House to two more beside it, Alva & Litfield, Dr. Casson also bought Allendale, further down the road.  
  
Here she asked Miss Macdonald, who took over the school & O.T. department from Miss Martha Jackson, in 1938, to open a Curative Workshop. On her study visit to America, on grants from the Pilgrim & York Trusts, Miss Macdonald had made a special study of O.T. for Physical Conditions, so was glad to open a demonstration treatment unit.
14. The garden at the back of Allendale The garden, as well as the ground-floor rooms, was used for treatment. The rooms were equipped for heavy and light work.

15. A patient cutting the hedge For shoulder exercise.
16. Allendale Patient With compound fracture of middle phalanx of R. 3rd finger. Was given woodwork.
17. Ditto Tendons of flexors supplying 4th and 5th fingers and ulnar nerve cut above wrist. Was given sandpapering, weaving, basketry, block printing and stool seating.
18. Ditto Laceration of R. forearm 8 months ago. Limitation of movement. Was given some woodwork.
19. Ditto Fractured R. Humerus. Stiff shoulder & elbow. Was given woodwork.
- 
20. St. Margarets Clevedon In 1939 - 1941 the Blitzes came to Bristol and Dr. Casson had to move the patients to Clevedon, Somerset.
21. Mt. Pleasant Clevedon The school stayed in Bristol for a while. It had moved to the upper floors of Allendale, but this was taken over, so it moved back to Dorset and the adjacent Houses.
- The Blitzes became worse, so the students were sent home and taught by correspondence.
- Meanwhile, the Ministry of Health, having seen the Physical & Psychiatric Workshops, asked Dr. Casson & Miss Macdonald to cater for war-time short courses for O.Ts. for the Emergency Medical Services throughout the Country. The long courses also continued.
- The school found a new home at Barnsley Hall Emergency Hospital Bromsgrove, Worcester-shire, under the care of Dr. A. Shepherd, and was very grateful for this.
22. Weaving class outside hut Several of the temporary huts were put at the school's disposal, for residence and teaching and treatment rooms.
23. Samples of students & patients work Some O.T. was also done in the mental hospital, in the grounds of which the Emergency Hospital had been built.
24. Dr. Shepherd lecturing to students Dr. Shepherd and other doctors and staff from the hospital helped with the teaching of the students.
25. A one legged patient being taught to use crutches on steps A staff member of the Treatment Unit, (run under Miss G. MacCaul) instructed certain patients.

26. Miss MacCaul & patient Using roller loom for flexion and extension of wrist.
27. The Princess Royal talking to patients The Princess Royal visited the school and hospital, at the request of her Mother, Queen Mary, who had met Dr. Casson.
28. Dr. Shepherd & The Princess Royal
29. The Princess Royal in the School Dr. Shepherd, E.M.M., Dr. Casson, the Princess Royal and Matron Hyatt.
30. The Princess leaving The Guard of Honour - Matron, Princess Royal, Dr. Shepherd & E.M.M.
31. The other side of the Guard of Honour

While we were very grateful for the welcome and help we had at Barnsley Hall, we had some problems, in very bad weather, with mud and rain and snow.

The War-time courses - run in addition to the full 3 year courses, covered 6 months, and were organised in 3 categories.

1. War Emergency Diploma Courses - for physiotherapists and nurses.
2. 1943 Certificate Courses - for social workers, teachers, or others who held some suitable qualifications and had had several years of experience in appropriate field.
3. Auxiliary Courses - for younger candidates, who were prepared for work under O.T.'s supervision.

Miss Macdonald was responsible for the allocation of candidates to hospitals when the Ministry of Health required the trained personnel, and for advice and help in opening some new departments.

---

At the end of the War the Emergency Hospital was to be closed and the School had to move.

After much consideration it was decided not to try to return to Bristol, where the premises had been taken over, but to remain more central in the country, i.e. to go to Oxford.

It was difficult to find suitable quarters in Oxford, as, at the end of the War, premises were almost impossible to find and any available were desperately expensive.

After much hunting the school was moved to

- 18 Nissen Huts at the Churchill Hospital, which had been built to house the staff for the 'Lend/Lease' hospital used by the Americans, and later, for Italian prisoners of war - The 'camp' was surrounded by barbed wire and overlooked by a watch-tower - (removed when we arrived) and the huts were covered with "pin-up" girls, which we had to scrape off as we could not compete with them! The huts were in poor condition, and we had to partition and paint them. The school first had 18, but gradually moved on downwards and took over 24 huts.
32. The front of the huts
33. Path between huts & trolley with coke bins for coke fires
34. General Lecture Room
35. Recreation hut - also used for lectures
36. The Library
37. The Art Hut Miss Griffith teaching.
38. The Woodwork Shop Mr. Maggs teaching.
39. The Metalwork Shop Mr. Nott teaching.
40. The Demonstration Treatment Hut Dorset House was the first school in the country to set up a demonstration treatment room. Miss Kidston supervising.
41. A.D.L. Demonstration Miss Davidson and class.
42. Recreational Class Taken indoors (see photo 35) in bad weather.
43. Ditto
44. A Student's Sitting Room Lockers behind partitions and drawers, for students' work.
45. Canteen This had to be run on oil for the first few years, as there was no gas laid on. Later, run on electricity.
46. Basketry (& pottery) Workshop Miss Rowland teaching. This was one of the "ablution" huts for the former occupants of the side: washing troughs covered by boards to make tables, but advantage of water being laid on.
47. Weaving Hut
48. Kings College Hosp. London O.T. Dept. Light Workshop. Students went here for clinical practice under Miss MacCaul.
49. Ditto Heavy Workshop. Miss Starling in charge. Students went to a number of Oxford and other hospitals for clinical practice, as they do today.

During the years at the Churchill Hospital the school celebrated, in 1951, its 21st

Birthday and at the Open Day  
Dr. Casson received special presentations.

Between 1946 and this date the school had  
been formed into a non-profit making  
Company - (see Pamphlet 1)

In 1954 Dr. Casson, aged 76, died rather  
unexpectedly, after a short illness.  
A Memorial Service was held in Oxford and  
many tributes were made to her valuable  
work and interests. (See Albums, Vol.3)

---

When the School moved to the Huts in the  
Churchill Hospital it was only expected  
that they would remain there for about  
2 or 3 years, but it took a long time and  
hard work to raise the money needed, for  
the move to be achieved. An appeal was  
launched and, ultimately the School moved  
into its new home in the autumn of 1964.  
(see Pamphlets 2 and 3).

50. Photo of Harberton House This was the hostel the school had bought in 1946 and it was thought that it might be necessary to build the school in its grounds - (3½ acres) - Plans were made for this, but abandoned, in favour of the premises at 58 London Road, Headington.
51. The Elizabeth Casson Wing Built on to the original building - at the near side on the next photo.
52. 58 London Road The front of the buildings.
53. 58 London Road Showing how the Casson Wing was joined on. This wing included Lecture, Demonstration and Workrooms, etc.
54. Anatomy Dept. Miss Gann demonstrating to a group of students.  
4  
In 1965 the Princess Royal, who had visited the school at Bromsgrove, was invited to open the new premises and agreed to do so, but, sadly, she died suddenly.  
We were very honoured that Her Royal Highness, Princess Marina, kindly agreed to do so.
55. The arrival of H.R.H. Princess Marina Being greeted by E.M.M. - in cap and gown, which had to be worn as University authorities were present. (E.M.M. had, when negotiating for State Registration, done a research degree at Oxford - completed in 1955, on the origin and development of several remedial professions, including Occupational Therapy).
56. Sir Hugh Casson conducting H.R.H. to the platform Sir Hugh Casson - Chairman of the School since the death of Sir G. Peto in 1956.

57. H.R.H. speaking She was followed by Sir Hugh Casson and E.M.M. (see Album - Vol.4 - for copies of speeches)
- Order on Platform -  
Id.Lieutenant of Oxford, H.R.H.  
Sir Hugh, Lady in Waiting, Mayoress  
E.M.M.,Vice Chancellor - University.
58. Giving of bouquet By senior student, Miss J. Blakeney (Mr. G. Bredin, Vice Chairman of School, in background)
59. The Unveiling of Dr. Casson's relations were particularly  
60. the Memorial in the invited to attend this unveiling.  
Casson Wing
61. H.R.H. in the Mr. Maggs in the background.  
Woodwork Shop The student doing technical drawing.
62. H.R. Highness And discussing the use in basket making, etc.  
observing hand  
splint
63. H.R. Highness And discussing arm positioning, etc.  
observing weaving
64. H.R. Highness And discussing this with the student/patient.  
observing sling  
suspension
65. H.R. Highness Which two students were demonstrating.  
discussing pottery
66. Students & Guests In the centre of the front line is  
seeing H.R.Highness Dr. Yeaxlee, for many years Psychology  
off Lecturer for the School.

---

The school had settled in happily and comfortably, to the new premises.

The next plan was to move the Hostel, if possible, so that it might be more accessible to the school and public transport and shops.

It was decided to buy 2 houses, 1 Latimer Rd. and 60 London Rd., and to build a residence in the grounds of the School, linked with those of 1 Latimer Road.

This was completed in 1971, when E.M.M. retired and she was very honoured that it was named after her.

Miss B.G. Collins, who had been a War-time student at Dorset House, who had worked in Oxford and in the School in Melbourne, Australia and who had been the Vice-Principal of the Dorset House School for 17 years, then became the Principal.



Miss Joan King became her Vice-Principal.

Miss King had trained at Dorset House, and had, for some years, been in charge of the O.T. School in Buenos Aires, Argentina, which had been started by E.M.M. and her team in 1959. (See Album Vol.5.)

After retirement E.M.M. had a wonderful World Tour - via the Philippines; Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, Australia; Christchurch Blenheim, Wellington, Rotorna and Auckland, New Zealand; Mexico and the U.S.A., largely financed by the wonderful leaving present contributed to by former staff and students.

---



DR. ELIZABETH CASSON

## PROFILE

ELIZABETH CASSON, M.D., D.P.M.

**D**R. ELIZABETH CASSON has always shewn a tendency to surprise her friends by cheerfully undertaking seemingly impossible tasks against apparently hopeless odds. Those who knew her when she was at work under Miss Octavia Hill in Estate Management, managing house property in Southwark, were quite sure she had found her *métier* and that she and Miss Joan Sutherland and some of Miss Hill's other stalwart helpers were inseparables and fixed for life. But not so; what Elizabeth Casson had learnt in South London was that it was the Londoners themselves as well as their tenements that needed 'first aid', and she surprised her friends at the age of thirty by working for her matriculation and then becoming a qualified practitioner in medicine and surgery, ultimately achieving the distinction of being the first woman to gain the degree of Doctor of Medicine of the University of Bristol.

Her first appointment in medicine was at the West Herts Hospital at Hemel Hempsted during the first war—a most valuable experience gained under what one may call conditions of high pressure and tension. Thereafter, though she had shown that she had the 'hands' and the aptitude of a surgeon, she surprised everyone again by electing to specialize in the treatment of nervous and mental disorders and joining Dr. Moore's resident staff at the Royal Holloway Sanatorium, Virginia Water. It was there that she not only proceeded to her doctorate but also gained the much coveted distinction of election to the company of Gaskell Prize-winners.

Her attachment to Bristol, where she had graduated, and to Clifton Hill House, where she had resided under Miss Staveley, led her in due course to set up her own establishment at Dorset House on the Clifton Downs, where, with other forms of medical treatment, she organized and developed a school of occupational therapy. That she succeeded at Clifton as she had succeeded at Virginia Water, at Hemel Hempsted and under Miss Octavia Hill, we all of us know. The subsequent history of her school, and her long tenure of the office of Honorary Consultant at the Bristol General Hospital speak for themselves.

Dr. Casson comes of an interesting family. Her father, Thomas Casson, is the subject of a leading article in a recent number of *The Organ* (October, 1948), written in appreciation of his outstanding influence on modern developments in organ-building. Her brother, Sir Lewis Casson, the actor, is, of course well known. There was a Casson great-grandmother in Napoleonic times, who organized community meals and slate-quarrying for the villagers of Festiniog when the industry was at a standstill during the blockade, and further back still was another ancestor after Dr. Casson's own heart—'Wonderful Walker'—of Seathwaite-in-Dudden, who was curate there, in the eighteenth century, for seventy years. He kept school in his church on week-days, and spun at his wheel and taught all his own family to weave.

This passing reference to Dr. Casson's kith and kin and the stock from which she comes must needs be brief, though it is important because she herself is both proud of it and interested in it. A characteristic trait that must at some time have impressed her friends and acquaintances is her capacity for extending and keeping intact her circle of associates. She has not forgotten and does not forget any.

Such in brief are some impressions of an onlooker who, during forty-five years, has watched the inspired growth of Dr. Casson's work.

A.W.R.





DR. ELIZABETH CASSON.













The School Hall



The Pottery, Dorset House, Clifton, Bristol.







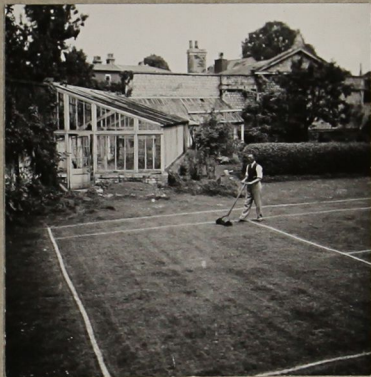
DORSET HOUSE, CLIFTON, BRISTOL.

OCCUPATION ROOM

(MISS TEBBIT STANDING SECOND FROM RIGHT)



14





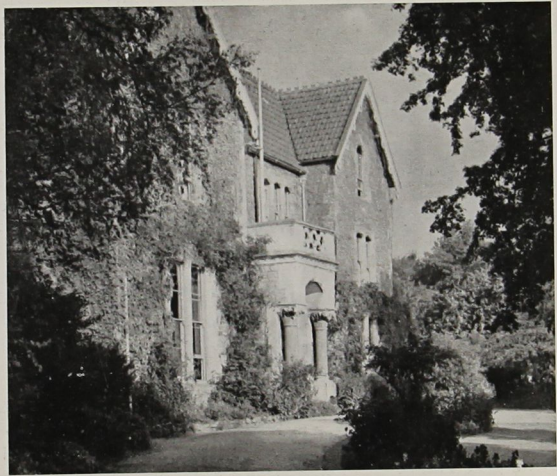












ST. MARGARET'S, WALTON, CLEVEDON



MOUNT PLEASANT, VICTORIA ROAD, CLEVEDON



DORSET HOUSE SCHOOL, BARNSLEY HALL, BROMSGROVE.  
WEAVING AND SPINNING CLASSES OUT OF DOORS







DORSET HOUSE SCHOOL, BARNLEY HALL, BROMSGROVE. DR. SHEPHERD LECTURING









The Princess Royal with Dr. Shepherd



















A library (already far too small), with a specialist press-cutting section.



The Art Hut—(showing the result of group work  
in the wall panel.)



The woodwork shop.







DORSET HOUSE SCHOOL, OXFORD      DEMONSTRATION DEPARTMENT IN WHICH  
STUDENTS STUDY THE THERAPEUTICS OF OCCUPATIONS





DORSET HOUSE SCHOOL, OXFORD.

RECREATIONAL CLASS OUT OF DOORS













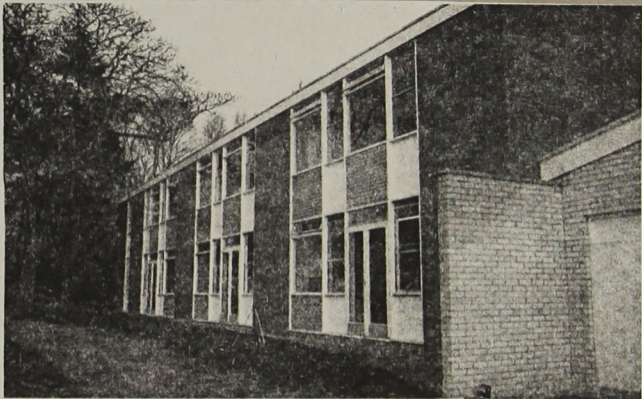






HARBERTON HOUSE, OXFORD.

SCHOOL HOSTEL



Other side of D.H. Extension.



Original House.    Former extension.    D.H. extension.



NSC - 11697















THE CASSON WING  
built in 1964 in memory of  
DR. ELIZABETH CASSON  
1878-1954  
FOUNDER OF  
THE DORSET HOUSE SCHOOL OF  
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

















PHOTOGRAPHS TO BE SHOWN.

1. Dr. Elizabeth Casson.
2. DORSET HOUSE Front.
3. Back Garden of DORSET HOUSE.
8. The HALL of Dorset House, devised by Sir Hugh Casson. 9. The O.T. Pottery.
12. Dorset House Occupation Room under Miss Tebbit. 13. Allendale's Physical Treatment Dept.
22. Part of the School at Barnsley Hall, Bromsgrove. 23. A workshop there.
24. Dr. Shepherd at Barnsley Hall lecturing on Psychiatry. 25. A Physical patient being shown how to use crutches.
28. Dr. Shepherd with the visiting Royal Princess Mary. 29. Dr. Shepherd, E.M. Macdonald Dr. Casson & Hospital Matron with the Princess Royal.
32. The Oxford Churchill Hospital Nissen huts for the Dorset House School. 33. The Same.
34. The main Lecture Room in a hut. 35. A further useful Department.
38. The Wood-workshop Hut. 39. The Metal-workshop Hut.
40. Hut for Therapeutic Experiments. 41. Ditto.
50. The Harberton House Hostel, Oxford. 51. The Dorset House extension to these Buildings.
2. These premises purchased like this before their additions. 53. The original House, plus new extension.
55. Princess Marina being greeted by E.M.M. when she came to stress the School opening. 56. Sir Hugh Casson bringing her forward to the platform.
57. Princess Marina speaking to congratulate the School. 58. She is receiving flowers from the Head Student.
- 59 & 60. Princess Marina clarifying the Dr. Elizabeth Casson notice of the extended wing of the School in her memory.

31  
31. Photographs to be shown.

These are in order in a separate envelope.

On the notes above the numbers that follow each other indicate the photographs on either side of the numbered cards, h.e. —

PHOTOGRAPHS TO BE SHOWN.

1. Dr. Elizabeth Casson.
2. DORSET HOUSE Front.
3. Back Garden of DORSET HOUSE.
8. The HALL of Dorset House, devised by Sir Hugh Casson. 9. The O.T. Pottery.
12. Dorset House Occupation Room under Miss Tebbit. 13. Allendale's Physical Treatment Dept.
22. Part of the School at Barnsley Hall, Bromsgrove. 23. A workshop there.
24. Dr. Shepherd at Barnsley Hall lecturing on Psychiatry. 25. A Physical patient being shown how to use crutches.
28. Dr. Shepherd with the visiting Royal Princess Mary. 29. Dr. Shepherd, E.M. Macdonald-Dr. Casson & Hospital Matron with the Princess Royal.
32. The Oxford Churchill Hospital Nissen huts for the Dorset House School. 33. The Same.
34. The main Lecture Room in a hut. 35. A further useful Department.
38. The Wood-workshop Hut. 39. The Metal-workshop Hut.
40. Hut for Therapeutic Experiments. 41. Ditto.
50. The Harberton House Hostel, Oxford. 51. The Dorset House extension to these Buildings.
2. These premises purchased like this before their additions.
53. The original House, plus new extension.
55. Princess Marina being greeted by E.M.M. when she came to stress the School opening.
56. Sir Hugh Casson bringing her forward to the platform.
57. Princess Marina speaking to congratulate the School. 58. She is receiving flowers from the Head Student.
- 59 & 60. Princess Marina clarifying the Dr. Elizabeth Casson notice of the extended wing of the School in her memory.

31

Photographs to be shown.

These are in order in a separate envelope.

On the notes above the numbers that follow each other indicate the photographs on either side of the numbered cards, 1-2.