THE PRIVATE LUNATIC ASYLUMS OF THE EAST RIDING

by

J. A. R. and M. E. BICKFORD

Private Asylum,

MOOR COTTAGE,

Near Brands-Burton, Yorkshire;

Only 8 Miles from Beverley, 9 from Driffield, 12 from Bridlington Quay, 5 from Hornsea, 17 from Hull, and immediately adjoining the Road to Scarborough.

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INTRODUCTION

The medieval attitude to madness is well illustrated by an enquiry held by a jury in the liberty of Beverley in 1285:

> Richard son of Walter le Pessoner of London, clerk, imprisoned at Beverley, killed Brother Walter del Hospital by misadventure. On 17 Oct. 1285 Brother Walter lay asleep on his bed in his chamber at Beverley and Richard the clerk whom he much loved lay sick in the same chamber. And being by the sickness rendered frantic and mad, Richard rose and, by the instigation of the devil, smote Walter on the head as he slept, first with a form and afterwards with a trestle, so that the brains came out. He then went to the men in the court and the kitchen with blood and brains on his hands. And when they asked him what he had done, he said, laughing, 'I have killed my dear master, Brother Walter; come and see where he lies slain, he will never speak another word.' And he brought them to the slain man . . . Being mad he was taken and imprisoned and still persists in his madness.

No change in attitude towards the mentally ill was apparent for several centuries, and lunatics and idiots were left at liberty unless they were thought dangerous or caused trouble to other people. In the eighteenth century some pauper insane began to be confined with criminals, vagabonds and the unemployed in houses of correction and workhouses. From that period, too, some lunatics of higher social standing were cared for individually or in small private madhouses. Even in the early nineteenth century, however, most were still kept at home.

Under an Act of 1742 it was provided that 'persons who by lunacy or otherwise are furiously mad, or so disordered in their senses that they may be dangerous to be permitted to go abroad' were to be apprehended (under warrant from two justices) by constables, churchwardens or overseers of the poor, and locked up in a secure place, if necessary in chains. If a lunatic or his family could not pay for his upkeep this became the responsibility of the parish or town where he lived. Complaints about the injustices which occurred under this legislation were made in many parts of the kingdom. From Hull Dr. Darling wrote to the great poor-law reformer Thomas Gilbert in March 1787 'in behalf of a very unhappy description of paupers, a proper provision for whom, according to my apprehension, does not appear to have been established by the legislature. I mean maniacs.' Ralph Darling (1728-98) was a medical practitioner; he was also an alderman for a number of years, and twice mayor of Hull. He pointed out in his letter that the house of correction in Hull was undoubtedly secure, but it was intended for rogues and vagabonds. At the time of writing four of its nine rooms were occupied by lunatics committed there by warrant.

> Paupers ought not to be considered as criminals; on the contrary they are entitled to relief; and moreover, if maniacs, to such treatment as is not furnished in a house of correction where no medical efforts are used for their recovery. Would you not then, sir, think an alteration in the treatment of these people requisite? E.g. that in this and every town and district, where a workhouse or house of industry is . . . the managers be authorised and obliged to build a proper number of cells or rooms for the reception and accommodation of maniacs . . . with a further obligation upon the overseer to adopt the said approved methods for the recovery of such maniacs. I am confident that your known humanity and zeal in the cause of the poor will improve [their] hurt.

Anything like a precise number of the insane in England was difficult to obtain. A select committee of the House of Commons carried out a survey in July 1807 but the results were unsatisfactory. Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Cumberland and Cambridgeshire were said not to possess a single pauper lunatic between them. The total ascertained number of insane persons in Hull and the East Riding at that date was 33. Three were in houses of industry, five were in York Lunatic Asylum, and 25 were unconfined. These 33 may be assumed to have suffered from extreme forms of a disorder not less common then than now, but one which was much better tolerated in a society with a wider range of 'normal' behaviour than ours. Their treatment can only be a matter for guess-work. By inference the three in houses of industry would have been ill cared for; those 'not confined' probably more fortunate; and least enviable the five in the asylum at York.

The asylum had been the result of an independent enquiry by a committee of York gentlemen headed by Archbishop Drummond, which reported in 1772 on the need for an institution where the pauper lunatics from the whole of Yorkshire could be cared for. A sum of £2,500 was immediately subscribed; and further sums were paid over the next decade to ensure that the poor would be provided for. The establishment was the third of its kind to be founded in the north of England. It opened in 1777 with accommodation for 54 patients. Unfortunately the governing body began with a deficit, and its finances were mismanaged. This resulted in many abuses, in particular to overcrowding, which in turn led to extreme ill-treatment of some patients. It was the unexplained death of a Quaker patient there that prompted William Tuke's efforts on behalf of the insane, and resulted in the opening of the Retreat of the Society of Friends.

Criticism may have produced a temporary improvement in conditions at the York asylum; new staff were appointed in 1797, and in 1804 Dr. Hunter, the physician, was allowed an assistant, a former pupil, Dr. Best, who succeeded him as superintendent in 1809. But by 1813 there were further grave suspicions of malpractice. Thanks to the prolonged efforts of Samuel Tuke, grandson of the founder of the Retreat, and of Godfrey Higgins, a West Riding magistrate, a full

enquiry into the affairs of the asylum was arranged. A fire at the asylum on the eve of the enquiry began under circumstances which strongly suggest that it was caused deliberately. The apothecary and his wife were out for the evening, and she had the only key to the flockroom in which the fire started. Dr. Best had been called into the country; and the elderly steward locked the asylum gates in order, as he said, to prevent plundering. Four patients perished in the fire, and of another five no trace was ever found. However, there was enough evidence to condemn staff and governors alike. No official visits had been made for 28 years, and no one unconnected with the asylum was permitted to visit without written permission from the superintendent. Between 1777 and 1811, Higgins estimated, the deaths of 144 patients had been concealed. The steward had kept two sets of account books whereby the superintendent had made a profit of about £1,400 a year. The matron made a charge on every article purchased for the asylum. Many patients were housed in disgusting and insanitary conditions. An attendant called Parkin, from Hull, had made several pauper women pregnant. The head keeper, James Backhouse, had got with child a respectable young woman from Louth; he had been ordered by the assessors of the poor of that parish to pay £30 in three instalments towards maintenance. The facts were concealed from everyone except Dr. Hunter, who arranged for the fine to be paid out of asylum funds; and Backhouse was given a piece of plate on his retirement.

As a result of the enquiry all the staff were dismissed and Dr. Best resigned. The new physician was paid a fixed salary, to which the former board of governors had never been willing to agree; and management was put in the hands of a committee. The number of admissions fell considerably after 1814, in spite of a reduction in charges for paupers in 1816, and the opening of a new block for female patients the following year. The asylum continued to discourage the admission of paupers; and York did not have its own institution until 1906.

Under the County Asylums Act of 1808 the magistrates of Yorkshire, wishing to make provision for the whole county, had asked the governors of York Lunatic Asylum to allow their premises to be incorporated in the plans. The application was refused, on the grounds that the asylum had not been intended for the reception of paupers! It was subsequently decided that each of the three ridings should make separate provision; and there the matter rested for several years. The needs of the West Riding, with a population in 1822 more than twice as large as that of the North and East Ridings together, were the most pressing. Godfrey Higgins's struggle to reform the York asylum had been prompted by the proved ill-treatment of a West Riding patient there; and it was largely due to Higgins's zeal that the West Riding Pauper Lunatic Asylum was opened at Wakefield in 1818.

Meanwhile in Beverley, at the Easter Sessions 1811, the East Riding justices had determined 'to provide for their own lunatics independently

of the other ridings.' Petty constables were asked to provide lists of lunatics in their respective townships, and at Michaelmas William Beverley, Jonas Brown and the Revd. J. Gilby were deputed to confer with the Hull justices respecting the erection of an asylum. Nothing more is recorded on the subject until 1815, when a new committee set up to investigate the care of pauper lunatics in the riding recommended that 'whereas no lunatic asylum has been established under the powers of 48 Geo. III . . . the building committee be empowered to contract with the proprietors of the refuge for the insane in Sculcoates for their reception and maintenance.' It was almost 30 years later that the East and North Ridings joined forces to provide for their 'vagrant and pauper lunatics.' The North and East Ridings Lunatic Asylum was opened at Clifton, near York, in 1844. This proved inadequate within a few years of its opening; but it was not until 1865 that the East Riding built its own county asylum at Walkington, near Beverley. Thus in the first half of the century people in this area who were mentally ill, and whose families were unable or unwilling to care for them, had little practical alternative but to go to a workhouse or a private asylum.

To meet this need a host of licensed houses had sprung up, creating what has been described as 'the trade in lunacy.' In addition to the Friends' Retreat which had opened in Fulford, close to York, in 1796 and was intended primarily for Quaker patients, there was — about 1800 — a group of such houses in and around the city of York, several run by people connected with York Lunatic Asylum. Dr. Hunter had his own private asylum at Heslington in 1790; Dr. Best took it over on Hunter's death; and C. Atkinson ran it in 1815 after his dismissal as apothecary from the York asylum. Dr. Best was also for a time the proprietor of a house on Barker Hill, in Fulford. Dr. Belcombe, physician to the Friends' Retreat and life-long rival of Hunter and Best, owned a house for the insane at Clifton, and another in the Groves in York. In Gillygate the notorious James Backhouse was licensed until 1830 for six men, one of whom had been with him since 1800. Two houses in Acomb, kept prior to 1829 by Richard Wellfoot and Margaret Duffitt, took three patients each. A couple of miles north-east of York, at Osbaldwick, Preston Hornby kept a small licensed house, as did John Beal at Gate Helmsley; and others followed further afield in the county.

A licence from the justices was not necessary if only one person was to be housed. A number of people were prepared to care for the insane in their own homes. This arrangement must have been expensive but it had the advantage of privacy for the relations, no documents of any sort being necessary. A man advertised in the *Hull Packet* of 18 February 1788 that he had for many years 'had the management of sundry reputable characters suffering under that misfortune' and was available for similar employment at Mr. Watson's (baker), Salthouse Lane, Hull. In 1826 'a seriously disposed female, between 40 and 50 years of age, of active habits, who has lived several years in London, and who would

give the most respectable references' advertised anonymously in a Hull newspaper that she was willing to care for the insane. Others in the East Riding who would receive a single lunatic included the Misses Binnington of Beverley, Miss Jane Routledge and Mark Fielding, surgeon, both of Cottingham, and the Revd. Arthur Jacques, vicar of Willerby (near Filey). G. H. Fielding, surgeon of Sutton near Hull, advertised in 1838: 'To those mentally afflicted, or invalids. A respectable medical gentleman of years and experience, with a wife but no family, would be happy to receive under their protection, a lady of repectability.' Another surgeon who took mental patients was Henry Cautley, M.R.C.S., L.S.A. (1821), who was in practice in Hedon in 1822, and was still there in 1861 in partnership with John Cautley, M.D. His interest may first have been aroused during his five years' apprenticeship to William Matterson, a surgeon of York and at one time joint proprietor of the retreat at Heworth.

Licences for larger numbers, required by law since 1774, were renewable annually, for a fee of £10 or £15 according to whether the number confined was under or over ten. In 1828 the amount charged was related exactly to the numbers taken. Sureties had to be obtained and there were heavy penalties for failure to obtain a licence. The licensee was not necessarily the proprietor. Between 1774 and 1828 selected J.P.s visited each asylum at least once a year. After 1828 three visits a year were obligatory and could be made without notice by day or night. The justices were accompanied on their visits by an appointed physician. It was their responsibility to ensure that patients were not improperly admitted, that they were adequately cared for and were discharged when fit. Visitors' minutes were used by the clerk of the peace to prepare an annual report, a copy of which was to be sent to the Metropolitan Commissioners in London. First appointed in 1828, the commissioners had from 1842 the task of inspecting and reporting on all provincial asylums and of improving the quality of care provided. From 1845 they were known as the Commissioners in Lunacy.

Two classes of patient were recognised, private and pauper, and the formalities for admission were slightly different. For the former the name of a friend or other person directing the reception of the patient, and the name of the medical man issuing the order, had to be given. After 1828 the certification had to be done by two doctors acting independently. In the case of pauper patients no formal certification was required until 1819. After 1828, in addition to the medical certificate, there had to be an order signed either by two magistrates or by the overseer of the poor and the clergyman of the patient's parish. The parish frequently made a small contribution to the upkeep of a lunatic cared for at home. If confined in the workhouse a grant of about 4*s*. a week was made, and if admitted to a private asylum something between 8*s*. and 10*s*., the exact sum to be determined by the justices. No details of payments for private patients in East Yorkshire asylums have been found; but some proprietors are known to have charged no more for

private patients in reduced circumstances than for the paupers they received. After 1834 it was illegal to leave a dangerous lunatic in a workhouse for more than fourteen days.

Conditions in workhouses were hard, even for the healthy. F. M. Eden included the Hull workhouse in Whitefriargate in his survey of *The State of the Poor*, published in 1797. The diet of its 300 or so inmates was meagre, though not more so than elsewhere. The number of lunatics is not mentioned, although Hull corporation minutes record an order to transfer lunatics then in the house of correction to cells in Charity Hall, as the workhouse was called, in 1790. Reporting on the establishment in February 1849 the inspector of poor laws said: 'I have this day inspected the rooms and yards dedicated to the insane, and consider it my duty to state that they are wholly unfit for the purpose.' Mr. Farnall went on to describe how he found two noisy violent women confined next to the sick men's dormitory; much of their time was spent strapped into chairs. They had little opportunity for exercise or fresh air, as the small yard had to be shared with 28 elderly or sick women, nine children and two other insane persons. Following publication of Mr. Farnall's report the editor of the *Hull Advertiser* pointed out that under section 45 of the Act 4 & 5 William IV cap. 76 (1834) any person wilfully detaining in a workhouse any lunatic, insane person or idiot should be deemed guilty of a misdemeanour. Hull Borough Lunatic Asylum opened five months later.

'There were fourteen private asylums, all told, in the East Riding, including Hull, during the nineteenth century. They varied enormously in size, from Hull and East Riding Refuge which in 1842 accommodated 115 patients to Mr. Allanson's house at Rillington which took three. The average life of these houses was a little over 20 years but here again no two were alike. The house in Park Street, Hull, survived for only two years; but that in Marfleet Lane, itself a continuation of Summergangs Retreat (established in 1823), was in existence until the end of the century. One house frequently carried on in different premises under another name. For example, Sculcoates Refuge became Hull and East Riding Refuge; bought by Hull corporation in 1849, it changed its name to Hull Borough Lunatic Asylum, which in turn moved to less cramped surroundings outside the city boundary and became the present De la Pole Hospital, Willerby.

In 1825 there were four private asylums in the East Riding, three taking paupers, with room for a maximum of 75 patients. By 1844 there were places for about 240, in seven houses, four of which took paupers. By 1854 the number of establishments had dropped to five, only two taking paupers, and their combined licences were for just over 100 patients. The majority of pauper lunatics were now being accommodated in the two public asylums, at Clifton and Hull. Comparison with other counties for these 25-30 years is difficult. Provision here certainly seems generous when it is realised that at the peak of the 'private

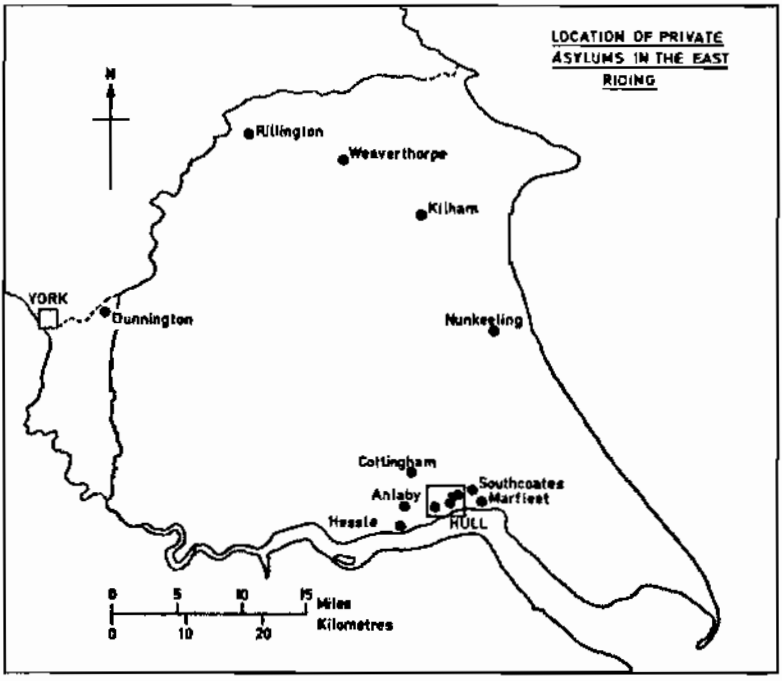
asylum business' (about 1842) the county of Devon, with a population and acreage roughly twice that of the East Riding, had three houses and the East Riding seven. The numbers catered for in the Devon houses is not known; but at that date Devon had 611 pauper patients, and accommodation for only 100; whereas the East Riding with 187 pauper lunatics had places for all but fourteen. The West Riding also had seven private asylums at this date, and a pauper lunatic asylum, but these provided room for just over half of its 1,027 pauper lunatics; there was, indeed, constant pressure on some of the East Riding asylums, particularly Hessle House, to take paupers for whom there was no accommodation locally in the West Riding.

The task of the magistrates in supervising private asylums was not at all easy. In the early days they were given no guidance as to the form their enquiries should take, beyond a recommendation that they should make their visits unannounced and that the practice of religion should be encouraged. Often they confined their comments to the frequency with which prayers were said and to the sanitary arrangements at the house; where the magistrates were friends or neighbours of the proprietor the task of probing further must have been disagreeable. John Conolly, a prolific writer on the treatment of the insane, who went to school in Hedon and lived later in Hull, noted in 1849 'the unwillingness of country gentlemen in general to perform a task which is unpleasant . . . and exposes them to unmeasured censure and annoyance.' The appointment of the Commissioners in Lunacy did much to stimulate a more critical attitude towards the keepers of private asylums. It is conventional to say that the commissioners were instrumental in producing an improvement in the lot of mental patients; it will be seen that there was little to be said in defence of Moor Cottage, or even of Hessle House; and where, as at Marfleet Lane, conditions were poor, the commissioners albeit grudgingly recognised that the owner had a very small margin for profit. But there are a number of cases, like Claxton Grange in the North Riding and Field House, Anlaby, where the commissioners criticised beyond what was necessary or reasonable. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that they were intended to engineer the removal of mental patients from small and not very efficient private asylums into large, inhumane, publicly owned ones.

Many different conditions were included in the diagnosis 'lunacy' or 'insanity.' Generally speaking the words 'idiot' and 'imbecile' are synonymous with the present day term 'severe mental deficiency.' 'Mania' covered most acute and severe mental illnesses occurring in adult life. Information about medical treatment of patients is confined to the records of Hull and East Riding Refuge and Field House. Even here the extent of the 'psychiatry' practised can be measured by F. W. Casson's statement that he considered warm baths and purgatives to be efficacious in almost every case of insanity. However, the fact of removal to an atmosphere of encouragement, a reasonable diet and a settled régime were important factors in recovery. In the small asylums

the patients were usually regarded (and referred to) as part of the family, and the position of the proprietor as father-physician assisted the 'moral management' on which, for example, the Tukes's system of treatment was based.

Licences were issued by the justices in Quarter Sessions, and records of these and other details required by law from asylum proprietors were kept hy the clerk of the peace, in the East Riding at the Sessions House, Beverley. Some of this work was, however, done at a fairly early date at Sculcoates Hall, an 18th-century building in Jarratt Street, Hull, in which the Petty Sessions were held. Jonas Brown was the resident magistrate in 1822, but other East Riding justices attended weekly. Pearson Fox, deputy clerk of the peace, looked after documents relating to Sculcoates Refuge and in 1828 he became the first clerk to the East Riding visitors. In 1833 Charles Fox succeeded his father, who had recently died; in 1838 he was secretary to the newly licensed houses at Rillington and Dunnington, but in 1842 the visitors to the latter were allowed a secretary of their own. Pearson and Charles Fox themselves



visited several of the asylums in the course of their duties. Some of the documents they handled are preserved in the Humberside County Record Office at Beverley. The bulk of the material, consisting of certificates of admission, discharge and death, visitors' and commissioners' reports, and miscellaneous correspondence, belongs to the period 1829-50.

An attempt has been made in the following pages to give a short account of each private asylum in the East Riding. They have been arranged in chronological order of opening, which has resulted in the separation of some establishments which because of their common ownership naturally belong together. Two licensed houses in Hull have, on account of their very short existence, been placed at the end.

SCULCOATES REFUGE, HULL (1814-about 1840)

The first institution to be established in the East Riding for the care of the insane survived the longest. Eventually it became Hull Borough Asylum, now known as De la Pole Hospital, Willerby. No provision was made for the insane in Hull under the County Asylums Act of 1808. But developments in York had been noted by at least one Hull medical man, and before many more years had passed a private asylum on the lines of the Friends' Retreat was founded in Sculcoates by Dr. John Alderson and his friends. Alderson was an excellent physician, popular, public-spirited and professionally successful. A man of many interests (a friend referred anonymously to his 'hobbyhorsism') he was one of the founders of a literary society in Hull in 1792, and was active in promoting a Bill to establish a nightly watch and other services in Sculcoates in 1800. He was one of the founders of the London Geological Society, and published an essay on the geology of the Hull and Beverley area in Nicholson's *Journal* of 1799. He was honorary physician to Hull General Infirmary from 1792 until his death. In 1810 he wrote 'An Essay on Apparitions accounted for independently of preternatural agency', but when his interest in mental disease was first awakened is not known. Samuel Tuke's *Description of the Retreat* was published in 1813, immediately before the decision to found an asylum in Sculcoates was announced, and the notice of its opening in May 1814 leaves no doubt that John Alderson and his partners were acquainted with Tuke's work:

> In this institution every attempt consistent with humanity will be made to restore the patient. No coercion, no restraint, but what is absolutely necessary to protect the attendant and to prevent self-destruction will ever be employed. Those moral means which are so well pointed out in the late publications on this subject, and so well exemplified in a neighbouring institution, will be had recourse to in order to bring about that desirable object, health of mind.

Alderson's colleagues were Mr. Betty and Mr. Ellis. William Snow Betty (1785-1830) practised as a surgeon in Hull until about 1827, and died at Skirlaugh after a long illness. In 1814 he was in partnership with William Ellis, about whom much more is known. Ellis was born in Lincolnshire in 1780, and the family moved to Hull when the father died. About 1795 William was apprenticed to a Hull surgeon, possibly Dr. Alderson, for it was he who provided Ellis with a certificate of approbation for his Membership of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1800. As 'chemist and druggist' he originally had a shop in Bridge Street; in 1800 he took a Mr. Harris into partnership; William Snow Betty succeeded Harris after their removal to No. 10 Dock Office Row. Ellis later had a distinguished career in the care of the insane, but it may have come about purely by chance. In 1811 he applied, unsuccessfully, for the post of surgeon at Hull General Infirmary left vacant by

the retirement of Mr. Kirkman. The invitation to join in founding the refuge soon followed.

A suitable house had been found in Sculcoates, not far from the infirmary. It was called 'Cannon Place' and had been the home of John Todd the iron-founder, and later of his partner Duncan Campbell. Todd had moved to more elegant quarters in Wright Street about 1810. Campbell advertised the house for sale or to rent in November and December 1813. It was of moderate size, built about 1795, with two drawing-rooms, breakfast- and dining-rooms, and two kitchens on the ground floor, and six lodging-rooms above, with the usual outhouses. As the proprietors said:

> the place is well-adapted; it is large, airy and well-secured. It has an acre of garden ground, walled, for recreation and employment. The distance is near enough to admit daily attendance, and yet sufficiently retired to seclude it as well from the prying eye of mere curiosity, as to remove its subjects from intruding themselves upon the public notice.

The house stood at the corner of Boteler (later Gibson) Street and Cannon Street, opposite the foundry. Nothing can be seen of the old asylum now, except perhaps a few yards of wall across the end of Gordon Avenue. This short row of artisan-style dwellings was erected in 1889-90 on part of the site. Todd and Campbell's foundry became in 1874 the engineering firm of Rose, Downs and Thompson.

The house was licensed initially, and for the next five years, for ten patients only. W. C. Ellis purchased the licence and Christopher Machell of Beverley stood surety for him. Jonas Brown, the resident magistrate at Sculcoates Hall, the Revd. John Gilby and Alexander Forbes, M.D., were appointed visitors. The asylum prospered; on 23 October 1815 Ellis wrote to Thomas Grimston:

> we have room to take in the patient you mention. The terms are 18s. per week finding them everything except clothes. Our establishment was not originally intended for paupers, but in consequence of the number of applications we have had and finding that the magistrates do not intend to erect a place for them, we are about to make some alterations when the present price will be reduced.

Ellis's interest in the mentally ill led him to publish and offer for sale an open letter he had written to Thomas Thompson, the Hull banker, in 1815 entitled 'Considerations on the necessity of proper places being provided by the legislature for the reception of *all* insane persons.' Ellis obtained his M.D. at St. Andrew's in 1818 and was invited to become the first medical superintendent of the new West Riding County Asylum. At Wakefield and later at the Middlesex County Asylum at Hanwell Ellis was able to develop further his liberal ideas on the treatment of the insane; he was knighted for his services in 1830. His successor at Hanwell, John Conolly, who became even better known

as a writer on the subject of insanity, had by an odd chance been at school in Hedon around 1800-8 and lived from time to time in Hull, where his mother Dorothy Stirling had an academy, until his marriage in 1817. It is likely that the two families were acquainted.

Shortly before Ellis's departure for Wakefield W.S. Betty succeeded him at Sculcoates Refuge and at midsummer 1819 licensed it fot an unlimited numbet of patients. Extensions, commenced that year, were opened in 1820, and the charge for pauper patients was halved. The original house was teserved for 'gentlemen' or private male patients. On the ground floot they had three day-rooms and one which served the dual purpose of bathtoom and billiard-room. The master and matron each had a room at the back overlooking the yard. Above were the staff sleeping quarters, a mangle toom and three single bedrooms and four dormitories for gentlemen. The new wing, built out to the east, contained the pauper quarters, with male and female quarters strictly separated. There were two day-rooms fot either sex, and four large dormitories for the men. The females were stated to sleep two or four to a room; thirteen rooms on the ground floor wete only eight feet by six in size, and faced a covered walk along one side of an exercise yard. Above them wete six larger tooms which, though they had no windows, opened onto a gallery presumably lit by skylights. The paupers' exercise yards were enclosed; and the gardens, which would be reservcd fot the private class, wete surrounded by a wall twelve feet high, over which it was unlikely that patients would escape. Private female patients went to the refuge at Summergangs after 1823, and about 1835 several pauper females were sent too.

Further enlargemcnts completed by 1826 made it possible to accommodate 100 patients, though the average number in residence was between 60 and 70. Acute cases could now be separated from the chronic and convalescent. 'The strictest attention', the proprietors stated, 'will be paid to furnish warmth, ventilation and every other comfort to the apartments.' There were hot and cold baths, and every patient would have a bed to himself! An important feature of treatment was 'the alternate use of recreation and employment.' Patients came principally from Hull and the surrounding district, but there were a certain number — perhaps 10 per cent — from Lincolnshire.

From the opening of the establishment there must have been staff not medically qualified who were responsible for the day-to-day care of the patients, but few of their names are known. In 1822 Joseph Else was 'governor' of the asylum, and was resident; Richard Harrison, one of the 'keepers', lived at No. 8 Charterhouse Lane. Else was suceeeded in 1826 by John Walker, who had at one time been a cabinet-maker, upholsterer and paper-hanger. These occupations he resigned on undertaking the governorship, but he retained the agency of the Sheffield fire insurance office in Hull. He may have been the John Walker who had been employed at the Friends' Retreat to look after patients from 1799 to 1801.

On his appointment Walker exchanged a house in Savile Street for two rooms at the asylum with meals provided. He had not been there for long when he found himself in trouble with the East Riding magistrates. At Michaelmas 1825 it was noted in the minutes of Quarter Sessions that as Mr. Walker had requested an investigation of certain charges made against him, a committee of enquiry consisting of R. M. Beverley and George Schonswar as well as the usual visitors had been asked to undertake it. No specific accusation can be found. The report of the justices at Easter 1826 simply stated: 'it appears to this court that the Refuge for pauper lunatics at Sculcoates has been conducted in a manner of which this court cannot approve; and that it is inexpedient to commit paupers from this Riding to that place.' It was not until 1828 that they directed their pauper lunatics at Sculcoates 'to be removed from thence and placed in the asylum kept by Mrs. Taylor at Cottingham, where in future all pauper lunatics should be sent.' That the order did not take immediate effect is proved by entries in the Roos overseers' account book for 28 January 1829 'To taking William Hurr to the Refuge at Sculcoates 10*s.* 0*d.*', and on 21 July 'To the proprietors of the Refuge for Wm. Hurr's funeral £4 19*s.* 8*d.*' In any case the Taylors normally took only female patients.

The recently appointed clerk to the visitors, Mr. Pearson Fox, also had his difficulties about this time; on 17 April 1826, writing from Sculcoates Hall to the clerk of the peace at Beverley, he complained that:

> the magistrates thought there must be some mistake in the returns of pauper lunatics confined in the Refuge . . . as there appeared to be only eleven in my return. In consequence I went to the Refuge to ascertain the fact and was informed by Mr. Walker . . . that when I got the account they had fifteen pauper lunatics which they considered as belonging to the East Riding. Four of them however belonged to the town of Beverley, consequently there were only eleven belonging to the parishes of the East Riding; two of whom have been discharged since the return was made.

John Walker was clearly able to juggle with figures. The neighbourhood probably derived more amusement from his pet monkey 'Pug', which in 1830 was involved in a lawsuit. Mrs. Judith Thom accused the monkey of having stolen a dress-cap and a lace collar. The suit was tried at Sculcoates Hall before Jonas Brown, Joseph Sykes and the Revd. R. Sykes. The accusation of felony (damage to the lace collar) was clear enough; but the more serious offence (malicious trespass) could not be proved; and damages were settled out of court after considerable altercation.

John Walker was governor of the asylum until it closed. He was regarded by the general public as the proprietor; although he seems to have had no financial stake in it, and was never the licensee, magistrates' clerks constantly referred to 'Mr. Walker's asylum.' Not medically qualified, he nevertheless wrote most admission notices, and occasion-

ally signed the death certificates, of pauper patients. W. S. Betty retired as licensee in 1822 and Richard Casson succeeded him. In 1825 he was joined by Christopher Alderson, who had earlier acted with his father as visiting physician. Christopher was also joint proprietor of Summergangs Retreat and physician to Hull General Infirmary until his early death in February 1829. This was followed in September by the death of his father, at the age of 73. Few in Hull and the East Riding would be able to remember a time when John Alderson was not the leader of the medical profession in the town, and his funeral was one of the most impressive it had ever seen. The hearse was accompanied by a seemingly endless procession, consisting of eight mourning coaches as well as one for servants; over 80 gentlemen, including medical men, walking in pairs; Daniel Sykes, M.P., president of the Mechanics Institute, whose carriage was followed by more than 100 members of the institute walking in threes; and fourteen private carriages and the gigs of several tradesmen, which brought up the rear. It was characteristic of the time that no obituary notice referred to John Alderson's part in establishing Sculcoates Refuge. His statue now stands in front of Hull Royal Infirmary. John's son James, then in practice in Queen Anne's Square, London, returned to Hull to succeed his father. James Alderson was undoubtedly the most distinguished medical man Hull has ever produced, as well as being noted for his services to the town.

James Alderson and Richard Casson were joint owners of the refuge from 1830 to 1838. Richard Casson came of a family long established in the East Riding. His father was a miller who settled in Hull on his marriage to Ann Mowld. Richard had been apprenticed to Dr. Fielding, and married Mary Frances Wood in 1817; they lived first in Bridge Street and later in North Street. Richard Casson was a surgeon to Hull and Sculcoates Dispensary and practised as surgeon and 'man-midwife' in addition to his duties at the refuge.

The services of the refuge were in great demand, with 70 to 80 admissions a year being common from 1830 onwards. Most of the patients were in states of great dejection or excitement; and that the majority were soon discharged, recovered or relieved, indicates that the kind and liberal principles on which treatment was based were successful, there being literally no drugs or other forms of treatment available. Not everyone who might have benefited from its services was able to do so. There was, for example, the sad case of Mr. Faulkner, an actor and one of the managers of the Theatre Royal, Hull, then part of the York 'circuit.' Three of his children were at school in Hull. Faulkner had been very depressed and made several attempts at suicide, before taking his life while playing in York in April 1826. Although Dr. Alderson and his asylums must have been known to everyone in the area, and Faulkner was obviously mentally ill, his friends did not seek medical advice until it was too late.

By 1836 it had been decided to build a new asylum which would replace both Summergangs Retreat and Sculcoates Refuge. The latter

had lost much of its privacy with the spread of industry and private building around it; and it was becoming clear that this area between Beverley Road and the river was unhealthy, being low-lying and imperfectly drained. It is not certain when the refuge closed; the patients were transferred to the new premises north of Anlaby Road by easy stages. Paupers from the Hull parishes were removed to the new asylum in June 1839. Those for whom the East Riding justices were responsible remained in Sculcoates Refuge until after Easter 1840, when orders were given for them all to be placed with Benjamin Hornby at Dunnington. John Walker remained in charge until they were removed. When the post of clerk to Hull Borough Asylum was advertised in 1849 he was one of the unsuccessful applicants.

MOOR COTTAGE, NUNKEELING (1821-51)

The proprietor of the asylum at Nunkeeling, near Brandesburton, was John Beal. Originally a husbandman of Acomb, he had worked at the Friends' Retreat in York. A minute of the Retreat committee of 25 November 1799 noted that Beal had been accepted 'on the 18th on trial as assistant in taking care of the patients, etc., concerning whom the committee had some previous conference; and it is now agreed to engage him for one year at £18 per annum'. Beal left the Retreat in July 1801 on marrying Jane Fisher, aged 20, also of Acomb. She had worked at the Retreat as laundry-maid from May 1799 to May 1801, at a salary of £6 a year. A son Joseph was born at Acomb in 1805. In 1811 the Beals were in charge of a house for the insane at Gate Helmsley but they sold it in June 1821 to James Martin and moved their 'family' to Nunkeeling.

Beal had been acquiring property in that area since 1817: two farmhouses, with closes of pasture and arable, in all about 35 acres, at Nunkeeling; a house and garden in Brandesburton; a beast-gate on Starr Carr; and common rights on Brandesburton Moor. In the deeds to his property John Beal is described as 'gentleman' and no doubt he regarded himself thus. In 1829 he subscribed to Poulson's *Beverlac*. The clerk to the justices persisted in referring to him as 'husbandman' or 'yeoman' until his retirement, and his son also. Probably the asylum and the farm were run as parallel concerns.

Today Nunkeeling with Bewholme is a hamlet with a population (in 1971) of 225 in scattered farm-houses; the church is roofless, the graveyard full of nettles. A hundred and fifty years ago, with the same population, the church had recently been rebuilt; the surrounding farmland included a good deal of rough ill-drained waste. Half a mile from the church by field paths, but out of sight behind a low rise, lay the farm-house still known as Moor Cottage. Then, as now, it was a most secluded retreat. Every other private asylum in the riding was

situated in a town or village. Mr. Beal chose for his asylum a position so remote that it was unlikely to be glimpsed except by the occasional farm-worker.

That may be why there are still stories connected with it. A ghost comes down the path from the church to the cottage. An underground passage connects the two buildings, and from it men emerge at night time into the farmyard. Formerly there was a flagstone in the yard which could be lifted up to reveal the opening of a tunnelled passage. The mystery may be explained by an item in a Hull newspaper of 1823:

> Extensive seizure — On the 21st October a most extensive seizure of contraband articles, spirits, tea and tobacco, was made by Mr. Gleadow, commander of the *Bee*, cutter, at Brandesburton Moor on the premises of Mr. J. Beale, keeper of a lunatic asylum. The number of casks amounted to 313, 24 of which contained tobacco, 25 were of tea, and the remainder of spirits, principally gin; in all about 976 gallons. The total quantity of tobacco was about 720 lbs. and of tea 250 lbs.

Oral tradition links Frodingham Beck with smuggling, and John Beal's establishment would make an ideal inland depot. No account of proceedings against him has been found; the minimum penalty was a heavy fine — usually £100. The asylum had then been in existence for two years.

When it opened in the autumn of 1821 there were expected to be upwards of ten patients, and they were housed in a comparatively new building adjacent to the original farm-house, a long low timber-framed building in which Beal and his family lived while the new accommodation was being built. The 'old house' ceased to be habitable some 60 years ago and nothing remains of it today. The new Moor Cottage was and is a comfortable well-proportioned farm-house. In front were two living-rooms, and behind, a kitchen and a room used as a surgery. Above were the sleeping-quarters of the proprietor and his family. This block provided a façade for the asylum proper, which was erected behind it before 1828; a further extension to the rear in 1841 made possible a more elaborate separation of patients. The rear extensions were arranged so that male and female patients, both private and pauper, had their own day-rooms and exercise yards. The yards were enclosed or walled round, and there was a refractory room for the unmanageable gentlemen. Four staircases led up to the four sets of bed-closets and dormitories — those for the servants were carefully cut off from the rest. One of the ladies' sections was provided with a water-closet, and there were three privies. A covered channel took water from the pump in the back kitchen across an airing yard, to wash out the privies.

Most of the rooms in which the parients lived have since been pulled down and farm buildings put up in their place, but the old back kitchen remains with its range and its pump, and the dairy beyond. Outside,

the stone reservoir which supplied fresh rainwater for the wash-house can still be seen; and above the kitchen door are several small windows (to the former dormitories) with bars set into the brickwork.

The asylum was licensed for 30 years. Joseph Beall (he invariably used this spelling) joined his father in partnership in 1830 and became sole proprietor in 1839. Visitors' reports cover 1834-51, giving details of admissions, discharges and deaths, commenting on the general state of the asylum, and suggesting improvements. As a rule 'it was in as good order as its structure made possible', as Richard Bethell said in 1842. The principal problem was drainage, attention to the yards and water-closets being alternately recommended and carried out throughout the period. Accommodation which the visitors described as 'clean, airy and sweet' in 1842 'deserved almost unqualified censure' according to a commissioners' report of 1844. Inadequate ventilation and overcrowding were often referred to, though the number of patients was never more than 29 (in 1841). There was not sufficient heating, particularly after the new rooms were added. The visitors suggested that the stove should he lit in October 1841, but the rooms were still damp and cold when they came in December. Only once did a patient complain that there was not enough food; the asylum physician, asked to investigate, declared there was no justification. The conduct of the asylum was said to combine regularity with homeliness; and shortly before its closure the commissioners felt impelled to praise the arrangements made at Moor Cottage for local clergymen to visit — Dr. J. H. Alderson of Rise was one who did so — and for patients to attend church.

Although occasionally accepred from further afield, for example from Worksop, Penrith and London, patients came principally from the East Riding, one or two being from Hull. There were frequent references to the 'very excited state of rhe inmates', particularly the females. This appeared to be aggravated by hot weather (in August 1835, 1837 and 1839) but it was in April 1843 that Dr. Forge, the visiting physician, suggested thar one very excirable patient should have her hair cut. No amusements or occupation seem to have been provided for the patients and although the asylum 'from its retirement, the salubrity of the air, extensive grounds for exercise, and the great facility for bathing' was made to sound attractive in Mr. Beal's advertisement (1828), there is no evidence that the patients benefited from its situation. In December 1850 the commissioners found that some of the female patients had not stirred out of doors for several weeks.

From time to time the asylum received a patienr who was more than usually difficulr. In November 1837 it was recommended that one patient should be decently clothed, in a material which she could not, when greatly excited, tear and destroy. The commissioners, while complaining of excessive restraint at Moor Cottage, were compelled to nore that another patienr had escaped three times, and had attempted to murder one of the atrendants and to set fire to the asylum. Certainly

mechanical restraint was used, rather than management or distraction. In 1834, and again four years later, the visitors had suggested that when irons were necessary they should be covered with leather or lint to prevent their injuring the skin. One death from typhus was recorded in 1834. In 1836 an epileptic from Foston on the Wolds was a patient for a short time. On discharging a Bridlington woman, hitherto regarded as incurable, in 1830 Mr. Beal wrote to the clerk to the justices at Sculcoates expressing his pleasure at being able to send her home to her family 'so far recovered as to be considered cured.'

John Beal's wife had died in 1830, but he married again and after his retirement in 1839 the couple moved to Hull, first to Neptune Street and then to Poplar Cottage in Holderness Road. Elizabeth Beal died there in 1842. Her husband kept up his interest in the affairs of Moor Cottage until his death in 1844. The number of patients declined from that time; although the asylum was still licensed for 25 patients there were never more than eleven, and in 1846 only seven, when the visitors came. Admissions averaged two a year. Joseph Beall was warned by the magistrates when they renewed his licence in 1850 that, on the insistence of the Commissioners in Lunacy, they could not do so for another year 'unless the house was made eligible.' His application for renewal was refused, before C. W. Strickland and Richard Bethell, on 14 September 1851.

Francis Forge, M.D., of Driffield was visiting physician to Moor Cottage throughout its existence as an asylum. He was paid £2 10*s*. for a visit in 1835 but by 1840 his fee had risen to four guineas. Mr. Williams was surgeon to the asylum and Mark Grundon had some connection also; both were from North Frodingham. The visiting justices in 1834 were J. Sampson, Richard Bethell and J. Dobson. Charles Constable visited in 1839, George Wray and Charles Whatley in 1840. In 1850 Richard Bethell was still a visitor (he was chairman of the East Riding Quarter Sessions for many years) and was assisted by W. F. Bethell, E. W. Smith, George Wray and W. L. Palmes.

After the asylum ceased to function it is probable that Joseph Beall continued to live at Moor Cottage. A Mr. H. Beall farmed there in 1886.

SUMMERGANGS RETREAT, SOUTHCOATES (1823-36)

Dr. Alderson had profited from keeping an asylum in Hull, and in 1823 his friend Joseph Ayre announced his intention to do the same. Dr. Ayre was not a Hull man. Born in Lincolnshire, and orphaned in infancy, he had gone to sea at the age of fourteen and saved enough to study medicine at Guy's Hospital and in Edinburgh. He proceeded M.D. in 1807 and came to Hull the following year; from 1811 he was on the staff of Hull General Infirmary.

The house he chose for his asylum stood on the north side of the Holderness road, about a mile from Hull. He leased the house, with about five and a half acres of garden and parkland, from John Broadley, who had acquired it in 1814. Before that it had been the home of a friend of Dr. Ayre, J. K. Picard the white-lead manufacturer, and earlier of Charles Pool, a former mayor of Hull. The house had been modernised in Picard's time and given a slightly Italianate appearance, with the addition of a semicircular porch, a wrought-iron balcony and a cupola. Stables and domestic ranges were incorporated in the design, and the whole was regarded by its former owner as 'the most gentlemanly and prettiest place of its size between Hull and London.' The house was not large, on two floors only; but inside an impression of space and elegance was created by a lofty entrance hall in the centre of which the staircase rose, dividing into two flights at mid-floor level, and continuing as a balcony all round to form the 'salon.' The arrangement was similar to that in Sir Henry Etherington's house at North Ferriby, built at about the same time.

Joseph Ayre announced the services of his asylum in March 1823 with a circular:

> the plans pursued in the moral and medical treatment of our patients . . . are those adopted by the Society of Friends at their Retreat near York; the whole of our establishment being formed after the model of that justly distinguished and well-conducted institution. The immediate management and superintendence of the patients devolve entirely upon ourselves; the domestic department is under the care of Mr. and Mrs. Taylor who for the last twenty-five years have been constantly engaged in the care of the insane, and who possess satisfactory testimonials of their kindness and attention towards them.

Associated with Dr. Ayre were two surgeons, D. R. Cundell of Charles Street, Hull, formerly in the army, and William Lunn of Charlotte Street, who like many other doctors at the time was qualified purely by reason of his experience and from having been in practice prior to the Medical Act of 1815. His son was a surgeon at Hull General Infirmary, and his grandson became the first ophthalmic surgeon in Hull, adopting the name of Rockliffe. The visitors were the same as for Sculcoates Refuge, and the first visiting physician was William Hume Bodley, M.D., physician to Hull General Infirmary. He was succeeded by Dr. Matthew Chalmers, later mayor of Hull.

Mr. and Mrs. Taylor came from Acomb near York. Joseph Taylor had completed twelve months at the Friends' Retreat in 1797, at a salary of £21. On his resignation it was stated that he had not been altogether satisfied with his position there. Of his career between that date and his appointment at Summergangs nothing is known, but several small asylums existed in Acomb at this period. His second wife was Catherine Dowey, and they had two children, Joseph (b. 1803) and Catherine Anna (b. 1805) whose baptism was registered shortly after

that of Joseph Beal at Acomb. The Taylors did not stay long at Summergangs; in 1825 they left to establish their own asylum in Cottingham; and Jane and Robert Gofton, the latter until recently a tallow-chandler, took charge of the retreat at Southcoates. Another resident keeper was Mr. Kitching, a former grocer and cheesemonger.

There are no visitors' reports extant, the only information coming from notices of admissions, etc. from 1829 onwards. The house was never licensed for more than ten patients, all of whom were to be female. There were rarely more than three or four admissions or discharges a year, and on average one death. Although it was intended originally for private patients, after 1829 an occasional pauper was admitted, and in 1834 six were transferred from Sculcoates to the retreat in a bunch. As in the case of Sculcoates most came from the East Riding and Lincolnshire; only one from as far away as London. One had previously been confined in Mrs. Orton's asylum at Gateshead Fell, co. Durham. One, a niece of Thomas Jackson of Ferriby, was later moved to Hessle. One was the sister of a Cambridge don; another the wife of a bone-merchant in Wincolmlee. Two were admitted from Cottingham Retreat when it closed. An unfortunate woman was accidentally burned to death in 1833.

In 1826 Dr. Ayre had moved to London where he set up as a physician in a house off Portman Square. The licence for Summergangs Retreat had been acquired by John Alderson and Richard Casson in the summer of 1825, shortly after the Taylors' departure for Cottingham. James Alderson became partner in his father's place in 1829. The retreat closed in 1836, when the property was sold by Broadley's executors to W. E. and B. M. Jalland. The house was demolished and Holderness House built on the site. The proprietors had meanwhile transferred their patients to a smaller house they had leased not far away in Marflect Lane.

THE RETREAT, COTTINGHAM (1825-34)

A house in Northgate, Cottingham, belonging to George Ringrose was leased by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Taylor after they had been at Summergangs Retreat for two years. Bringing some of their patients with them, they established for the first time an asylum of their own, in the summer of 1825. The bouse was visited in that year by Joseph Smyth, Daniel Sykes, the Revd. Robert Cross, and Daniel Ferguson, and F. Turnbull was the visiting physician.

The house, of which no trace remains, was too large for the Taylors and their two grown-up children, Catherine and Joseph, now a surgeon; but it was not large enough to hold in comfort ten pauper and ten superior female patients — the number for which it was licensed. As this number was not always achieved, the patients were in fact not often

uncomfortably crowded together. When submitting the plans to the justices five years after moving in, Mr. Taylor said that the patients' day-space could be enlarged by turning the coach-house and one of the sheds into sitting-rooms.

From 1828 to 1834 there were 20 admissions. Seven of these were in the second half of 1829, and must have represented the East Riding paupers moved from Sculcoates Refuge that year by order of the justices. Apart from these there was an average of two admissions a year. Two men were admitted, one in 1828 and one the following year, both private patients. Most patients were from the East Riding; four came from Hull, three from Lincolnshire, and one each from the West and North Ridings.

In 1831 Joseph Taylor was criticised by J. R. Pease and Jonathan Broadley for failing to notify the clerk of the peace of all discharges, whatever the cause. The names of two patients had remained in the returns for Cottingham Retreat for two years, although neither was present. One had been discharged in September 1828; while the other, a pauper from Kilham whose admission certificate of 6 June 1828 was signed by Thomas Atkinson, surgeon of Kilham, committed suicide a month afterwards.

There is no record of any major malpractice, but in 1834 the justices refused to renew Mr. Taylor's licence. The decision must have been unexpected, as he had some difficulty in finding homes for all his patients. Three were discharged to their relations, and the woman from the West Riding, who had been sent to Cottingham on the authority of her second cousin the previous December, remained at the house in the official charge of Miss Catherine. The patient from the North Riding was received by Miss Jane Routledge, and another by the surgeon M. S. Fielding, both of Cottingham. Mr. Taylor arrived with his last patient at 12.30 a.m. on 13 August at the door of Sculcoates Refuge, his licence having expired at midnight!

The patient taken by Mark Fielding was Mary Wood, mother-in-law of W. C. Ellis the great asylum reformer, whose career in improving conditions for the insane had commenced at the refuge in Sculcoates. Mrs. Wood had been deranged for fifteen years, and prior to her reception at Cottingham Retreat had been living with the Misses Binnington of Beverley as a lodger. Her son-in-law signed the medical certificate of admission in July 1833; and Dr. Fielding accepted her on the authorisation of Joseph Ayre, M.D., 'acting as friend to the relatives.'

Since the asylum was in all probability their only source of income, the implications of the closure were serious for the Taylors. However, by the autumn Miss Catherine Taylor had completed negotiations for the lease of a house in Hessle, to which the Taylors removed with the patient from the West Riding and which opened as a small private asylum soon afterwards.

Joseph Taylor junior remains an enigma. He became a Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries in 1827, and practised as a surgeon in Cottingham. Only a rather absurd court case in 1834 tells us anything about him. He had sacked his servant, James Parrott, for repeated disobedience and had refused to pay him his due wages. Parrott had been engaged to look after the horse and gig, to feed the cows and pigs, and to wait at table. He summonsed his employer and won his case, though Mr. Taylor quoted Chitty's *Treatise on Law* against him in court. Worse than this, Parrott accused his employer of instructing him to steal meat from the butcher's shop. A week later a notice in the newspaper announced that Parrott had recanted *in toto*.

DUNNINGTON HOUSE, DUNNINGTON (about 1825-1880)

The village of Dunnington, in the wapentake of Ouse and Derwent and the Liberty of St. Peter, lies between the roads to Hull and to Stamford Bridge, five miles east of York. Dunnington House stands on the south side of the village overlooking the green. It is an attractive red-brick building of the late Georgian period with gracefully curved and ornamented garden walls. An estate of modern bungalows now crowds close behind it, where once lay a long range of apartments and out-houses added when the house was converted to an asylum for the insane. These buildings, demolished in 1936, extended almost as far as Water Lane, and were known in the late 19th century as 'The Alley.' The house as it now stands probably accommodated the proprietor and his family, and in the rooms at the rear lived servants, attendants and patients. They could take their recreation in a large pleasure garden with summer-house (for the ladies) or on the bowling green (for the men). Indoors the latter had a billiard-room, and the women a work-room; there were four other day-rooms and eighteen bedrooms. The domestic quarters included an ale-cellar, a brewery combined with laundry and wash-house, two potato houses and a boot-room, and one privy for men and three for women. There was a refractory room, ominously close to the cold shower, with a dovecot above. There were no restraining walls round the premises.

The asylum opened some time prior to 1826. A letter addressed in April of that year to John Lockwood, clerk to the justices at Beverley, consisted of one sentence: 'I admit a certain number of patients into my establishment and these are persons of distinction.' It was written from Dunnington House and signed by Preston Hornby. He had lived in Dunnington for at least a year before this. From about 1790 he had carried on business as an apothecary in Petergate, York; then in October 1814 he had opened a private asylum 'in the retired and healthy village of Osbaldwick.' Mr. Hornby claimed that he had cared for individuals suffering from derangement of mind for more than 20 years;

and would 'follow the system so successfully observed at the Friends' Retreat, York.' He is not known to bave obtained a medical qualification, although he occasionally described himself, when signing certificates, as surgeon as well as apothecary, and in 1828 was medical adviser to the Eagle Life Assurance Co. for York.

At first Dunnington House was licensed to take two or more insane persons. According to the annual report of 1830 there were twelve inmates, one of whom was stated to have been admitted in August 1815. She came from Ripon. The original licence was issued from the court of the Liberty at York Minster. In 1838 the Commission of the Peace held by the Dean and Chapter was allowed to lapse, and Preston Hornby had tben to apply for renewal of his licence to the clerk of the peace for the East Riding. In November 1838 there were ten male patients, two of whom were private, and six females, two of them privare. (In 1828 there had been only one pauper patient, a woman from York.) The establishment consisted of Presron Hornby, then aged abont 60, and his wife; his son Benjamin and his wife; a snrgeon called Macaulay who lodged there, acting as medical attendant; and eighr assorted children who, together with the patients, brought the numbers up to 36. Mosr of the patients came from near-by villages — like Huggate, Londesborough, Sand Hutron, Hutton Bonville and Hnttons Ambo — but at one stage there was a little influx from Millom in Cumberland.

Initially the general running of the asylum mer with the visirors' approval. Prayers were said every evening, and a sermon read on Sundays, as the church was closed for repairs for a time. The house was clean and the patients were in good health, none being under restraint. It was stressed, however, thar 'two strong, healthy able-bodied keepers, in no way connected with his family' should be immediately engaged for the female and male sides respectively by Mr. Benjamin Hornby. Benjamin, who had practised for many years as an attorney in York, had evidently assumed responsibilities ar Dunnington and became the licensee on Preston's death rowards rhe end of 1841. Suitable keepers had been engaged before the end of 1840, and Mr. Richard Hay of York succeeded Macaulay the following year. After the church reopened, no more than two patients are recorded as having been fir to arend.

In April 1842 George Legard, W. C. Maxwell and the Revd. D. R. Carver revealed nothing more about the asylum, afrer visiting, than that Dr. Simpson of York had been appointed visiting physician in place of Dr. Baldwin Wake, who had died in March. Later that year C. J. Newstead, a solicitor of Lendal, York, was appointed clerk ro tbe Dunnington visitors at a salary of £5 a year. The appointment was confirmed annually thereafter; in 1857 it was held by John Holtby. In March 1840 rhe magistrares had ordered that 'all the pauper lunatics of the riding now in rhe refuge at Sculcoates be immediately removed' and placed in rhe asylum at Dunnington. The order cannot have taken effect for some time; the number of patients in the house till 1842

averaged 21. But some time between 1842 and 1846 the licence was altered to cover 50 patients, of whom 35 could be paupers.

No reports are available after 1842 for the next eight years, but having been regular in their quarterly visits to Dunnington so far, there is no reason to suppose that the visitors suddenly neglected their duties. However, reports of the Commissioners in Lunacy which exist from May 1847 onwards indicate that there had been a marked deterioration.

At that date, they noted, the weekly journal was not up-to-date and the entries had not been made in the proper columns; in several cases entries were found to be quite incorrect; later on, use of the strait waistcoat had not been recorded, though the commissioners appreciated that restraint was used sparingly. Faults in the records were the responsibility of the medical attendant, now William Procter of York, who was also blamed for outright neglect of very sick patients on several occasions in 1850. In March the commissioners recorded:

> we found one male patient wearing a waistcoat today, not on account of violence but to prevent him from tearing his clothes; he is so feeble as to be unable to stand and is quite incapable of being violent, but in the medical journal he is stated to be so. This patient suffers from extreme ulceration of one leg to which neither dressing nor bandage are applied. We understand however that it is washed with warm water and oil occasionally.

The general administration of the asylum was criticised: the rooms were crowded, ill-ventilated and dirty; patients and their clothes were offensive; the clothes of the pauper patients were scanty and torn. In July little improvement could be observed. 'The general care of the asylum appears to be very unsatisfactory and we have reason to think it is owing to the want of a proper understanding and arrangement between the proprietor and the members of his family who are engaged in conducting the establishment.' The visitors consequently warned Benjamin Hornby in October 1850 that unless he was prepared to take his son into partnership, or to pay him a salary in his capacity as acting superintendent of the asylum, the justices would have no choice but to suspend his licence at the following Easter Quarter Sessions. When April came, the licence was granted to Robert Harrison Hornby, Benjamin's son, and he continued at the asylum for the next 25 years, combining his duties there with the office of registrar of births and deaths for the parish. The visitors who signed the report in October 1850 were D. R. Carver, C. A. Darley, G. J. Lloyd and Thomas Simpson, M.D. Dr. Simpson had qualified as M.R.C.S. in 1818; he was physician to York County Hospital and the county asylum and had at one time been a lecturer at York School of Medicine.

Dunnington House continued to be licensed for 50 persons until 1856, though the number of pauper patients received gradually dropped. In 1866 the licence covered 40 patients but in March that year only 30 places were filled; there were 20 male and 10 female patients. At this

period particular attention was paid to the segregation of the sexes and the various classes of ailment, and to security. A prospectus of about 1870 says: 'Its domestic comforts, gardens and pleasure grounds attached render it equal to any other establishment in the kingdom . . . The amusements are varied and numerous; the billiard table and bowling green afford ample exercise for those whose unhappy condition renders walking or riding from the house improper.' These assurances would carry more conviction if they were not identical with the advertisement issued in the first *Medical Directory* of 1847.

His second wife Mary was licensee after R. H. Hornby's death in 1878, and in 1880 the institution was still active, with 27 inmates, all the females being private. Mary died in September that year; a son, Robert Frederick, had been associated with her but did not renew the licence. He was still living at Dunnington House in 1889.

THE RETREAT, HESSLE (1835-48)

The travelled and experienced Taylors were wise enough to begin their next venture in an area not under the supervision of the East Riding justices. Hessle is only five miles from Cottingham, but it was then in the county of Hull; and it was to the Hull magistrates that Miss Taylor applied for a licence in the autumn of 1834. It was issued to commence on 1 January 1835 and permitted her to look after twelve female patients, either private or pauper.

Hessle House was described in a directory of 1840 as a 'neat mansion.' Before the Taylors took it it had been the residence of Samuel Burstall, but had been unoccupied for some time. It stood on the east side of Town Street, now Southgate, just below the church, occupying a site about 100 yards square. The school for girls kept by the Misses Ellis lay on its northern boundary and the turnpike road to Hull on the south. A post office stands where the school used to be, and a draper's and other shops mark the site of the asylum. The grounds were extensive and the house faced south across the garden; behind it were outhouses for cows and hens, a stable with haylofts above, a wood-house, a dovecot and a bottle-house. The property was surrounded by high walls, and within them was a piece of ground about 800 square feet in area enclosed by walls nine feet high, probably intended as a shelter for fruit trees in that wind-swept spot. Remains of some of these walls could be seen in 1970 but have since been cleared for a car park. The house was said to comprise 31 rooms, but none can have been large. Nearly half the ground floor consisted of a passage fourteen feet wide with an arched entrance from the street. From it a narrower passage led to a large dining-room/day-room for the patients. This was probably built or converted by the Taylors. The plans, dated 1836, show only one privy in a corner of the yard.

No reports or correspondence exist for the early years of this asylum, but for its last few years there is sufficient to give a picture of its increasingly unsatisfactory state.

The magistrates first appointed to visit it were those later responsible for Hull and East Riding Refuge, with Matthew Chalmers as the visiting physician. In 1836 Hessle was excluded from rhe newly formed municipal borough so that from January 1837 the Taylors came once more under the jurisdiction of the East Riding. Among those who signed reports at Hessle were J. R. Pease, J. S. Egginton, T. B. Locke and Edward Gibson. F. R. Horner of Sculcoates then became visiting physician. From its opening Francis Bine Anderson acted as medical atrendant to the asylum. He had practised as physician and surgeon in Hessle since 1820. Larer he was a lecturer in therapeutics at Hull School of Medicine and was a president of the Norrh Lincolnshire and East Yorkshire B.M.A. Between 1837 and 1842 admissions at Hcssle Retreat averaged only two a year; at the Epiphany sessious 1843 the licence was extended to cover 30 insane persons; and in 1847 there were ten admissions, all from the West Riding.

The nuly sign of mismanagement before 1847 was a complaint that the food was insufficient. On 18 August 1841 the visitors held an investigarion at Hessle House, interviewed the servants separately and found to their great satisfaction that there were no grounds for complaint; the patients were well cared for and no undue severity was employed. For the next two years their reports were favourable. Extensive repairs were being carried out in the lower part of the house in October 1844. The following month two patients ran away but were soon recaptured. In April 1845 the house was said to be clean and tidy.

On rhree occasions in 1846-7 the justices thought that patients had been wrongly certified prior to admission. One was a woman from Wakefield; Dr. Horner decided, and rhe justices agreed with him, that she was not insane and discharged her to her home. There she was again certified, sent once more to Hessle Retreat and as promptly discharged. Three medical gentlemen of Wakefield who had originally certified the woman complained to the Commissioners in Lunacy not only of her discharge — she was suffering from 'puerperal insaniry' they claimed, not brain fever — but also of the fact that she had made the journey from Hull to Wakefield alone by traiu. The commissioners, appealed to by both sides, decided withour having seen the patienr thar she *was* insane, and warned the Hessle visitors that though they were entitled to discharge her, they should exercise great care before deciding to do so for a third time.

Of the two other cases one involved a pauper from Sculcoates Poor-Law Union who had been sent to Hessle on the grounds that while pregnant she had developed epileptic fits. The justices ordered her immediate discharge in June 1847, as not only was she perfectly sane but the order was incorrectly completed. A month later they had to direct the Wakefield Board of Guardians to remove a woman in whom

they could find no evidence of insanity. In response to a complaint from the board the commissioners reminded the East Riding visitors that though they should discharge the patient if convinced that this was the proper course to take, it should be decided only after careful consideration. In any future examination 'it will be well that their attention should be directed to a delusion under which the brother . . . alleges her to labour, with regard to marriage with a king.'

Although the justices had particularly requested a visit in 1846 to decide on the mental state of the private patient from Wakefield, the commissioners appear not to have complied. When they came to Hessle in July 1847 they were not entirely satisfied with what they found:

> Many of [the patients] were a good deal excited which might in some degree . . . be ascribed to the heat of the weather; but there is a want of order and arrangement in the establishment which was in a state of noise and confusion very far from satisfactory or agreeable. The rooms however were clean and tolerably well ventilated. Three of the patients were under physical restraint . . . and had been pretty constantly so for a considerable time past. The names of these persons are not properly entered as they ought to be in the medical journal, nor is the nature of the restraint specified — an omission on the part of the medical officer which is extremely serious and reprehensible . . . One of the patients referred to is fastened by a chain. She is stated to be and no doubt is a very violent and dangerous person; but if means cannot be found of taking charge of her without constant occasion of this kind she ought not to be confined here. Another is fastened by a rope round her waist. And a third is . . . in a strait waistcoat, an amount of restraint rarely met with nowadays, and which with proper management might to a great extent be dispensed with.

Forwarding this report to Charles Fox, Miss Taylor pointed out that two of the violent patients referred to had been admitted on 29 June and 16 July respectively.

The visiting justices, following on the commissioners' heels, found the privy in the patients' yard in a filthy state. They also investigated complaints about the diet which the commissioners had concluded was adequate. There had been a fairly rapid turnover of patients and some changes of staff in this year. The allegations about the food were made on oath to the three justices by a servant, Ann Russell, who had recently been discharged for misconduct:

> I have been servant to Miss Taylor for two months — I knew that Miss Taylor kept an asylum for insane persons. I was engaged as house servant to attend upon the patients; I did so as far as I was able; I was employed to take them their food from time to time. There was no particular time for breakfast — they have cocoa and bread. No stated time for dinner: gruel,

> mutton, soup or fish . . . For tea they had cocoa and bread but they never had tea but once since I went to the asylum and that was in consequence of there being no cocoa in the house. They had no bread after tea which was of no particular time, sometimes six and sometimes seven o'clock. In my opinion the quantity I took was not sufficient, I mean for the pauper patients, they frequently asked for more and the cook and myself have sometimes taken food to them without the knowledge of Miss Taylor. I never mentioned . . . that they had not sufficient food for I knew that my time was not long to be there.

In reply to questions she added that the patients (except private) were not allowed any butter and very little sugar; they never had meat more than three times a week and then only half a pound each. If there were vegetables there was no bread. Miss Sophia Cherry, who had been 'assisting' at the retreat for a year, confirmed that meal-times were irregular, but thought that on the whole there was enough to eat. Another servant agreed with her and said that if there were shortages it would have been Miss Russell's fault; Miss Taylor's confidence in her had been misplaced. This servant had been at the retreat for six or seven weeks only and 'thought that she was under notice.'

No action was taken immediately as a result of these statements made in July, but on 27 December 1847 Miss Taylor wrote to R. Pease:

> on Tuesday last at Sculcoates Hall I received the most cruel insult and injustice, the circumstances of which case you are most likely already aware of. Believing that you would desire me to have fair play, I appeal to you for protection . . . and beg . . . that you will cause the matter ro be investigared in my own house as soon as possible.

Whar was said at the meeting before Christmas can be inferred from statements made at the enquiry held at Hessle House on 1 January 1848. Ann Elsom, Ann Houghton, Harriet Hall and Dr. F. B. Anderson gave evidence before three of the visiting justices. The first witness, from Limber near Grimsby, had left Miss Taylor's service on 23 December, having been with her for thirteen weeks.

> When I first came thete were two little girls . . . to assist me. Thete was a cook also but she left on the Tuesday after I came . . . There was no other servant in the house for nine weeks out of the thirteen beside myself. I had to cook, to attend to the patients, to go errands and other work with the assistance of two or three of the convalescent patients. The patients were always locked up for the night between seven and eight o'clock, excepting those above-mentioned.

She had also ro wait upon Miss Taylor and her parents, and had got to know them well.

> during this time I have several times seen Miss Taylor intoxicared. She seldom began to drink before eight o'clock at night

. . . I used sometimes to bring a quart . . . of rum, but sometimes it was gin and once whisky. I got the spirits from the house of Mrs. Wilson who keeps the Granby. [Joseph Wilson was proprietor of The Marquis of Granby at Hessle and also a brewer]. I have brought into the house four or five bottles a week, sometimes six. Mr. and Mrs. Taylor took each about a wineglassful. Miss Taylor always sat downstairs; Mr. and Mrs. Taylor sat upstairs . . . Miss Taylor sometimes went to bed so late as one, two, three o'clock in the morning. She was often much intoxicated, but never so bad but she could walk upstairs . . . When I saw her intoxicated I always stayed with her to undress her, put out her candle and lift her into bed. Miss Taylor kept the rum in a decanter in the closet of her parlour . . . after I had done my work I used occasionally to sit a little while with Miss Taylor. She sometimes offered me rum; I once or twice took some, but it gave me a bad headache.

Ann Elsom could not write so she made her mark. Miss Taylor was asked if she had anything to say to the witness but she declined.

Dr. Anderson, giving evidence next, said that he had been a constant visitor to Hessle asylum for the past twelve years, going several times a week at all hours, sometimes as late as midnight, and had never known Miss Taylor to be intoxicated or to smell of drink. 'Mr. Taylor does drink, however; and I cannot recall visiting in the afternoon without the old Mr. Taylor being there drinking rum and water.' Ann Mary Houghton, proprietor of an academy in Hessle, supported him: 'I have often spent the evening with [Miss Taylor] . . . and I never saw her tipsy in my life . . . but I have taken rum and water, and ale to old Mr. and Mrs. Taylor who are both about eighty years of age.' Joseph Taylor was then 84 but his wife was some years younger; and it was said she had more to do with the patients than her daughter. The last witness, Harriet Hall, had started work at the retreat a fortnight before Ann Elsom left; for three weeks she had been the cook, but at the time of the enquiry she was waiting on the patients. She also attended Miss Taylor, often quite late, but had never seen her intoxicated or indeed taking drink. 'Mr. Taylor had to have rum, he could not live without it . . . Old Mrs. Taylor would take a glass, but never more than one a day.' Harriet Hall also made her mark.

No verdict is recorded; but the commissioners had already made their views clear, and this time the justices agreed. In any case the North and East Ridings Lunatic Asylum was now open. When they visited on 24 May 1848 the commissioners wrote: 'the privy in the yard is as bad and as offensive as ever, and during this hot weather the nausea is especially felt . . . From what we have seen today we are only more fully conscious that the establishment should be immediately broken up.' Miss Taylor was absent on the occasion of their visit. When she sent their report to the magistrates' clerk at the end of May she announced her intention of closing the asylum. She had found a house

at Attercliffe, near Sheffield, and as soon as the necessary formalities were complete she would remove her family thither.

There were then fifteen patients in Hessle Retreat, four of whom were private. Two who had come from the West Riding would return with the Taylors, but there was difficulty in finding anyone willing to take the pauper patients. The violent patient whom the commissioners had noted the summer before 'in handcuffs and chained to the floor as usual' had already been sent to the North and East Ridings asylum. The medical superintendent Dr. Hill had said that he 'would make every effort to ameliorate the poor creature's pitiable condition.' A pauper of Paull, she was certified as a dangerous lunatic by Henry Cautley of Hedon and was sent by the overseers of Paull to Sculcoates Refuge on 7 July 1834. On 24 August she was one of six female patients transferred to Summergangs Retreat and was removed from there to Hessle in February 1837. The Sheffield union declined to take back four of their patients, though two of them were not considered by the justices to be mentally ill. Dr. Hill when approached would admit none but *bona fide* East Riding patients. Later, however, he agreed to take two of them and the other two were discharged on 8 June 1848.

The Taylors' patients tended to be peripatetic like themselves. Agnes McLeod of Bainton was confined in Sculcoates Refuge until the justices' quarrel with Joseph Walker, when (5 March 1827) she was removed to Cottingham Retreat with the classification of county pauper. On the withdrawal of the Taylors' licence she returned to Sculcoates Refuge on 12 August 1834. She was removed to Hessle on order of J. R. Pease and Henry Broadley on 21 February 1837. When Catherine Taylor asked John Walker for the patient's order and certificates he said 'he had forgotten to send for them to Summergangs, at which place Agnes has lately resided.' Agnes McLeod is included in a list of names pencilled on the back of a visitors' report for Dunnington of 2 March 1841. Possibly these were the East Riding pauper patients transferred from Sculcoates Refuge when it closed.

The Taylors did not own Hessle House; it was leased from William Rudston, blacksmith of Hessle. It was empty for some time after they left it, and was sold by Rudston's executors in May 1851 to Samuel Harpham Tatham and his brother Charles, boot and shoe makers of Hessle. Perhaps a building in the yard that appears to have been a glue-boiling shop dates from their ownership.

MARFLEET RETREAT (1836-98)

When Summergangs Retreat closed James Alderson and his partner solved their immediate problem by taking a small house not more than a quarter of a mile away. It stood on the town side of what was then Marfleet Lane, renamed Craven Street about 1856. It was a three-storied house set well back from the road in two acres of garden and paddock. Its southern boundary now corresponds approximately with Waller Street, and Craven Street School stands on the site.

Alderson and Casson had already decided to build a new asylum to replace both Summergangs and Sculcoates; and when that opened they relinquished the licence for Marfleet Lane to Robert Gofton and his second wife Elizabeth. Oddly enough this small institution, abandoned by its founders after two years, had a longer life than any other private asylum in these parts. The house was licensed by the Hull justices for sixteen female patients in 1836, but for only ten after 1839, of whom two or three could be paupers. In September 1844 there were only four residents, and the numbers remained small. In 1844 Gofton paid £15 10*s*. for his licence. One of the patients came from Kirk Hammerton; one was transferred from the asylum at Hessle.

The Goftons retired in 1852 and went to live in Hunmanby, near Filey. The new proprietor was Sarah Campbell, who had been the matron of Hull and East Riding Refuge until 1851; when the latter was purchased by the Hull justices in 1849 Mrs. Campbell was rather pointedly informed that her contract would be renewed for one year only. She died in 1869 and was succeeded as proprietor of Marfleet Retreat by J. Brown, who was the last known licensee. The name is common enough, and he is hardly likely to have been the John Brown who occupied one of John Beal's cottages at Nunkeeling in 1845. G. H. Perritt, M.R.C.S., L.S.A., of Dyke Street, Hull, was surgeon to the retreat in 1849; the medical attendant in 1859 was John Anningson, M.R.C.S., L.S.A., of Holborn Street. In 1874 Owen Daly of Albion Street was visiting physician. From 1858 to 1874 T. H. Travis the stipendiary magistrate was one of the visiting justices, and Mr. Gresham was their clerk.

Little is known about the early years of the asylum, beyond the fact that the house was well conducted. In 1868 the Commissioners in Lunacy reported that the patients were quiet, well clothed and kindly treated, but that they were all lethargic, and could be roused only with difficulty to take interest in anything. Four years later the report of the annual inspection suggests a lowering of standards. The commissioners found the premises quite unsuitable for use as an asylum and Mr. Brown a person unfit to undertake the care of the insane. On the first count it is strange that no criticism of the building had been made by visiting justices or by the commissioners over the previous 35 years. The plans submitted to the licensing authority when the retreat first opened show that the house was a private residence hastily adapted, one outhouse being labelled 'Day-room for extra female paupers.' Even in March 1872

the commissioners were prepared to make allowances: 'We are aware that the payments are very low, perhaps too low to enable Mr. Brown to provide proper attendants; but the furniture should not have been allowed to deteriorate, and some of the bedrooms much need colouring and white-washing.' Mr. Brown had made several other errors. He had one more patient than his licence allowed; and one woman was found strapped into her chair, and no record made of it in the medical journal. 'The majority of the patients are of the imbecile class but more might be done to amuse them, and they should be more in the open air.' More serious was the discovery that a legal document authorizing the admission and detention of a patient had been signed by two gentlemen who were partners and was therefore invalid. Just prior to the commissioners' visit a member of the committee had pointed out to Mr. Brown that the form contained omissions, and he had accordingly filled them in himself!

In spite of criticisms the asylum filled a need and remained open until 1898. It had long before been overtaken by housing development; and Hull Borough Lunatic Asylum, which had not been built when Marfleet Retreat opened, moved to more attractive surroundings a decade before it closed.

THE RETREAT, RILLINGTON (1837-about 1870)

There were a few cases in the East Riding of a gentleman, usually a doctor, caring for an insane person in his own home. If he decided to take an additional patient or two he must take out a licence and his house would then be classed as an asylum. Visitors would be appointed and records have to be kept. The retreat at Rillington was one which began in this way and never developed into an institution. Thomas Allanson of Rillington House was qualified by virtue of having been in practice before 1815, and he had practised in Rillington since 1817. He took out a licence for two or more private patients at Michaelmas 1837 and there never appear to have been more than two in residence. These two were still with him in 1850. One came from Whitby; she was stated to be very mischievous and destructive, and had before been confined with Mr. Hare of Leeds; she was admitted to Mr. Allanson's house in October 1837. The other woman, who had been previously in Marfleet Retreat, came from Kirk Ella and was sent to Rillington on the authority of her brother Thomas Thompson, an attorney of Hull, also in October 1837. As, however, there were certificates for both women dated 1831, it seems possible that they had been resident with Mr. Allanson for some years but that he was not aware until 1837 that a licence was required for two patients.

In these circumstances the visitors' reports could scarcely be momentous. The patients' quarters were comfortable and clean; there was a large garden and they were out of doors a good deal. The woman from Kirk Ella was quiet and did a little work in the garden; in September 1850, three months before she died, she had been 'agreeably engaged in watering the plants.' Earlier it had been noted that she read the Bible and occasionally went to church. The other was sometimes wildly excited and would be strapped to her chair in case she injured herself. But both had a good deal of exercise.

The visiring justices included Sir T. D. Legard, Mark Foulis, Henry Willoughby, E. C. Taylor, Arthur Stepbens and the Revd. Robert Ellis. Dr. N. A. Travis, M.D., was the visiting physician; he was paid £25 for eight visits between 1839 and 1840. The following year Mark Foulis and Henry Willoughby visited unaccompanied by Dr. Travis, who was abroad; they suggested that until he came back Dr. Borton, a physician to Malton Hospital, should be asked to make a periodic inspection. At two visits in March and June 1842 the visitors repeated that 'no physician has attended the establishment since June 1841.' But by June 1843 Dr. J. J. Wright had been appointed.

The Commissioners in Lunacy had on several occasions to reprove Mr. Allanson for not keeping his books properly and not observing the regulations. He failed always to note the use of mechanical restraint and to report on patients' progress in the correct book; their criticisms had little effect on him and he had made no notes when they came again. In 1849 in a covering letter to Charles Fox, the clerk to the visitors, Mr. Allanson wrote: 'I transcribe and forward a copy [of an entry] made in the visitors' book . . . it being the only note made in the various books kept for the purposes of the institution.' He referred to an entry similar to many others: 'There are the two patients only who have been so long confined here. Nothing unusual in their condition.'

Thomas Allanson's principal source of income was his practice in Rillington. He was also the public vaccinator, and as parish medical officer received £28 a year. He was popular in the neighbourhood, and his interests included botany and antiquities. He had been called upon in 1830 to examine a skeleton found less than a foot below the surface of the soil, on Mr. Simpkin's farm between Rillington and Thorpe Bassetr. Mr. Allansnn decided that it belonged to a woman of between 40 and 50; the jaw had been broken and the chin perforated by a pitch-fork. That field had been under the plough for fourteen years. He concluded that she had been murdered. Allanson wrote a long poem describing the village as he had known it in the first half of the 19th century, and the changes it had undergone. He prepared it for one of the penny readings at Rillington on 1 Janaury 1867, with the title 'A few facts concerning Rillington.' It is reprinted in *Rillington*, by N. A. Huddleston (2nd edn. 1955).

When Thomas Allanson died in 1871 there was a large attendance at his funeral, the most imposing the district had known for many years.

The bearers were from the Order of Druids, of which he had been an early member. His wife Margaret and son William survived him. There were two daughters, one of whom died in infancy, and the other, Emma, married an Atkinson. Henry Dodd, M.R.C.S., who sueeeeded to Allanson's practice and other posts, did not apply for a licence to take the insane. The solitary patient from Whitby may have died earlier. There is no record of her discharge.

HULL AND EAST RIDING REFUGE, HULL (1839-49)

The only private asylum in the East Riding certainly built for the purpose, Hull and East Riding Refuge had only a short life before it became Hull Borough Lunatic Asylum. It was erected by James Alderson and Richard Casson on land bought from Daniel Sykes in 1838 for about £4,000. Before the building was finished Dr. Alderson offered to sell his share to Mr. Casson for £1,995. The Cassons were not wealrhy and the transaction was not completed until 1842, Mr. Casson borrowing £1,600 from R. Tindall of Ellerker in 1841, and a further £500 the following year. Dr. Alderson soon afterwards moved to London, became the first physician to the newly opened St. Mary's Hospital in Paddington, and was later elected president of the Royal College of Physicians.

There is nothing now to show the site of this asylum; even a stone which marked it for many years has disappeared. It stood between Kimberley Street and Londesborough Street; northwards irs grounds extended to Trinity Street and eastwards to West Parade, occupying about eight and a half acres. An ill-drained lane, later called Asylum Lane and now Argyle Street, ran up to it from Anlaby Road. The railway had not then been builr, and there was little but cultivated land hetween the refuge and the site of the present Paragon Station. To the west the wolds beyond Kirk Ella were clearly visible.

The plans of the asylum cannot be traced. They are referred to on several occasions in the Hull corporation records, as when, for example, the licence was alrered to allow for an increase in the numher of patients, and when the asylum buildings were to be enlarged. A plan produced for the corporation in 1888 when the site was to be developed shows the general outline of the asylum, which included a chapel to the east side of the main block, erected during the period of private ownership. The house was originally licensed for 100 patients, hut the number was increased to 115 in 1843. A mere nineteen were private patients, while there were places for 48 male and 48 female paupers. A new day-room had already heen added behind the female airing ground. To accommodate the further increase in numbers it was proposed to convert one of the gentlemen's day-rooms to the use of

the male paupers. The extra fifteen beds were to be provided by putting four 'turn-up' beds in the billiard room, the same number in the nurses' room, and two in the gentlemen's room below, overlooking the men's yard. Another two beds could be found by removing the keepers' beds from downstairs to a three-bed-room upstairs; and four more 'by making the refractory women's room into a 'dirty' bedroom.'

The asylum does not appear to have had an official opening. Planned as early as 1837, it was still in the course of erection in November 1838. The first death there was recorded un 7 March 1839; but the pauper lunatics from the Hull parishes were not transferred from Sculcoates Refuge until June. Richard Casson was sole proprietor and his younger brother William was the resident surgeon. The superintendent was John McPherson and Catherine Restou the matron. Both were under 40. There were also a cook, two housemaids, a laundrymaid, three nurses aud two keepers — John Rimington aud Richard Hoduett. The visitors at the outset were William Lowthrop, W. B. Carrick and Thomas Newmarch, and Matthew Chalmers was physician.

The refuge provided only part of Mr. Casson's income. He still had a busy practice in Hull: in January 1839 he was called to give evidence in the case of a man accused of having murdered with cantharides a girl servant he had previously seduced. Casson was one of the proprietors of the *Hull Advertiser* and at one time a town councillor. He shared with his son au enlighteued and humane feeling for the insane; on Twelfth Night 1842 he gave a ball for about 100 of thc patients in the dining-hall of the new asylum. The visitors present were much impressed by this demonstration of the advantages of the 'soothing system.'

The following year Mr. Casson sold rhe refuge to his eldest son, and for reasous unknown moved to London, to No. 22 Gracechurch Street, in the City, where he rubbed shoulders with shellfish-sellers, hatters and gilders. He shared his surgery and practice there with another Yorkshire surgeon, Arthur William English, whose medical educatiou had begun at Hull School of Medicine in Kingston Square. English remained in London unril 1851, but moved later to Lincolnshire and then Whitby. Richard Casson died iu London in 1847. The *Hull Advertiser* described him as amiable, upright and benevolent, with a steady attachment to Liberal principles, and a friend of the poor.

Francis Wood Casson was born in Hull in 1818 and qualified as a surgeon at University College, London, before joiniug his father's practice in North Street. Francis paid Richard £2,865 for the refuge in November 1843, plus £29 due to his being in arrears in his paymeuts to Mr. Tindall. To do this and to cover foreseeable demands he borrowed £3,000 from Hull Beuefit Building Society.

When the Commissioners in Lunacy first began visiting houses in the provinces it was a general complaint by medical superinteudeuts that pauper lunatics were brought in so late — by reason of the very

much lower cost of maintenance in a workhouse — that no cure was possible. The Hull refuge was no exception; there were many examples of paupers admitted in the last stages of disease, with little or no medical history to be obtained from the relieving officer. In November 1843 a female pauper lunatic was brought from Blighton near Guisborough in the last stages of illness; she was wrapped in a blanket which had been thrown over her head. On arrival at the refuge she was perspiring profusely and within eight days she was dead. But her parish would be absolved from having to explain her condition. Towards the end of 1848 the hospital case-book showed that of the 36 patients admitted in the past nine months, more than 20 had been 'in bad health' or 'very emaciated.'

At this time the refuge was regarded as being among the best conducted of the provincial houses licensed to receive pauper lunatics. In particular the diet was good. Breakfast consisted of liberal helpings of oatmeal and milk, bread and tea. Sample dinner menus about 1844 were: 8 oz. meat with 14 oz. potatoes; 1 pint soup with 8 oz. bread; ox-head soup with greens, barley and peas; 1 pint meat hash with potatoes and herbs, and 8 oz. bread; fish and 14 oz. potatoes; with a pint of small beer two or three times a week. In 1848 it was noted that 'a number of the patients who are weak, as well as all those who work are on extra diet.'

The Commissioners in Lunacy were regular visitors. A member of the commission in September 1842 who came to Hull in the course of his duties was Dr. Southey, brother of the poet laureate. Visitors' reports cover 1845-9. In spite of the size of the refuge, and the unavoidably uniform appearance of its galleries, wards and yards, the asylum was almost always found clean, warm and comfortable. Though some of the bedrooms were in September 1845, for example, rather crowded, these as well as the day-rooms were adequately ventilated. At that date, of the 106 patients in residence about half were usefully employed in the garden and about the premises — in the kitchen, the laundry and the sewing-room. The same number attended prayers on Sunday, which were read by the matron. Books and newspapers were always available; a billiard table was in use in 1846, when cricket also was being played. One or two long-stay patients were sent to Hull on errands.

Some criticism was almost inevitable. In 1848 the windows of two single rooms could not be opened; and the suits worn by the Sculcoates paupers were ragged, the union being behindhand in providing new ones. Mr. Casson not infrequently had more patients than his licence permitted. In extenuation it should be said that for some private patients he received no greater payment than for paupers. In the last month of its existence as a private establishment one day-room and two privies were not as clean as they might be. The medical visitation book and the case-book were, however, as always, very carefully kept by the superintendent. Perhaps reluctantly, the commissioners con-

cluded that 'on the whole we have no reason to be dissatisfied with the general condition and management.'

Instrumental coercion was seldom used at the refuge. The visitors rarely found more than one patient restrained by a muff, straps or wrist locks, and seclusion was not often imposed. Indeed, the commissioners' report on the use of restraint in private licensed houses in 1847 shows that Hull and East Riding Refuge was perhaps the most liberal establishment of its kind in Yorkshire. Out of a population of 115 lunatics, eight of them criminal, only one was under restraint. The refuge compares favourably with the Friends' Retreat in this respect; referring to the same date (*c.* 1850) D. H. Tuke says that 'not more than 5 per cent reckoning the night as well as the day were restrained by strap or waistcoat, including patients in seclusion.'

Towards the end of this decade the refuge became involved in a struggle by Hull corporation to avoid implementing the law, as it had successfully done twice before. The Lunatics Act of 1845 made it obligatory for local authorities to provide asylums for their pauper insane, and gave them the choice of managing them themselves, or of leaving that responsibility with the justices, who had borne it hitherto. Hull council decided for reasons of economy to take the latter course, and to provide a building by purchasing Mr. Casson's premises — or rather, half of them, since only half his patients were of Hull origin. This solution was rejected by the Commissioners in Lunacy as being totally unrealistic. The justices then explored the possibility of building an asylum for which the corporation would find the money; but when it was found that the lowest estimate was not far below the price Mr. Casson was asking for the refuge, they decided to purchase it entire. At first he valued it at £7,800 and the grounds at £1,200, but later agreed to reduce his estimate ro £5,500. Then in 1848 the Hull justices made a last effort to avoid purchasing the property. In a letter to the East Riding magistrates they stated that pauper lunatics sent to the refuge were cruelly treated and rarely cured; and suggested that the borough and the riding should come to some joint arrangement. The proposal was not accepted, and the Hull justices finally agreed to pay £11,000 for the asylum and for five and a half acres of extra land on which the commissioners insisted. Their approval was also sought and obtained for the appointment of Francis Casson as resident medical officer, in spite of the corporation's recent criticism of his management.

Mr. Casson had stipulated, and it was agreed, that he should be able to have a small asylum for private patients, for choice not more than a quarter of a mile away. He told the justices that he could reduce the refuge staff from twelve to nine. He would act as medical officer for £150 a year with free rations for his family; otherwise he would require £160. The final arrangement was that his salary should be £400, to include board for himself, his family and the staff of nine. If the number were increased an additional £21 each a year would be granted. The refuge closed on 2 July 1849, opening immediately as Hull Borough

Lunatic Asylum. Ten of its patients went to Field House, Francis Casson's new private asylum.

The refuge had had an average of 50 admissions a year, approximately 60 per cent coming from Hull, 24 per cent from Lincolnshire, and 12 per cent from the East Riding. There were rarely more than a dozen private patients. The numbers discharged cured compared very favourably with the figures of half a century later: 23 per cent were discharged cured at six months and a further 8 per cent within two years; 30 per cent were discharged within five years either improved or not changed.

THE RETREAT, WEAVERTHORPE (1843-56)

John Atkinson, surgeon, licensed his house in the isolated village of Weaverthorpe in 1843 to receive eight patients, male and female, and lived there with his wife and two adolescent children. The building, only slightly altered, still stands to the east of the village stores in the main street. Originally it had been three small cottages. For the patients there were twelve bedrooms, a sitting-room each for men and women, and a common dining-room.

The asylum was always cleau and comfortable and the patients well cared for. Books and newspapers were available; prayers were read every morning, and several of the patients attended the parish church on Sundays. Indeed, in 1845 a male patient who had been suffering from severe depression was so mueh improved that he was taking part-duty as clergyman. The Commissioners in Lunacy did not approve of this, but commented favourably on Mr. Atkinson's firm refusal to allow any form of mcchanical restraint on the patients. If one of them was much excited, an attendant would always stand by until the phase had passed. A feinale patient, eonvalescent and about to be discharged, told the commissioners in 1847 that 'her treatment had been unfailingly kind and eonsiderate', and two or three years later other patients said the same.

Around 1850 a lack of occupation, partieularly for the men, was noted. The asylum was then filled to capaeity — there were twelve private and one pauper patients — and the visitors recommended that there should not be more than three beds in one of the rooms. There was only one newspaper, and the few books available were all of a religious nature. The commissioners were quick to note when they visited a few months later that soine lighter reading had been provided. Suitable oeeupation had, Mr. Atkinson said, been found for the men, and the ladies were encouraged to take outdoor exercise. But while out gathering mushrooms a female patient had eseaped.

In 1853 John Atkinson sold the house and asylum to John Bell and moved to Heworth, where he was for a short time proprietor of another asylum. It had been converted from a private house by two surgeons

of York about 1840. It could accommodate about 35 patients; as a rule over half were paupers. John Atkinson's son Harry Leigh Atkinson had qualified as a surgeon in 1853; two years later he joined his father at Heworth, becoming superintendent when his father left to practise in Kilham. In 1860 H. L. Atkinson left Heworth and went to Australia, where he became surgeon to the hospital in Bendigo. John Atkinson's brother William also worked briefly at Heworth before proceeding to Ripon as house surgeon.

John Atkinson probably took some of his patients with him to Heworth, as in 1851 there had been twelve inmates at Weaverthorpe, and when Bell took over there were only two. However, in 1854 there were six admissions, the highest recorded. The house was said to be in good order, the rooms recently papered and the walls whitewashed. The weekly record had not, however, been kept up. After Mr. Atkinson left Weaverthorpe the justices (the same as for Rillington) made only two visits to the asylum, one in December 1853 and the other in May 1855. This was a cause of much anxiety to their clerk, Charles Fox. The chairman of the magistrates evidently took no notice of his remonstrances, for in April 1856 Fox wrote to Robert Swann, clerk of the peace at Beverley, in the strongest terms:

> It is quite certain that the matter cannot rest there, as I feel persuaded that the commissioners will not suffer it . . . and this affair I am confident will be so treated by them that I scarcely like to anticipate the unpleasantness their comments and reflections may create. The limited number of patients is no excuse whatever for the visitors' long neglect . . . I feel so strongly that I am induced to take steps for seeing some of the visitors personally and I think of going into that neighbourhood purposely, as that appears to me the only remaining course.

Charles Fox and Dr. Wright the visiting physician made strenuous efforts to arrange that Mr. Marshall of West Heslerton, who lived at no great distance from Weaverthorpe and would willingly visit, was appointed to the commission of the peace. But their work was in vain as the new proprietor renewed the licence at Midsummer 1856 for seven months only; and the asylum closed at the end of the year. Ordinarily it had taken patients from places near by — Foxholes, Bridlington, Bempton, Filey and Driffield. One or two came from further afield, e.g. from Bradford and Haworth.

John Bell was born in New South Wales in 1813, his father a colonel in the army. He became a Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries in 1837. Why the Weaverthorpe asylum in his hands proved unprofitable is uncertain, but since there was already a medical man in the village, F. M. Dowsland, there may not have been enough general practice for both. In 1868 Bell was practising in Bishop Wilton but returned to Weaverthorpe in 1876. He was still working there in 1889 and was medical officer to Driffield Poor-Law Union. He may occasionally have cared for a mental patient in his home, because to the end of his professional life he described himself as 'late asylum proprietor.'

FIELD HOUSE, ANLABY (1849-55)

When Hull and East Riding Refuge closed Francis Casson opened a private establishment in Anlaby, much further away from the borough asylum than the justices had recommended. The premises were purchased in January 1849 from John Warren, a market-gardener of Anlaby. In June six patients from the refuge were in Anlaby helping to prepare the new house, which was advertised at the end of the month:

> FIELD HOUSE, ANLABY: For the reception and recovery of the insane. Mr. F. W. Casson . . . has erected the above-mentioned house (which will be ready for occupation July 1st) expressly for the accommodation of a limited number of private patients of both sexes, who will be under the care and supervision of himself and Mrs. Casson, widow of the late Mr. Richard Casson, surgeon, Hull. The situation is healthy and retired, being four miles from Hull, and about a mile from the Hessle Station on the Hull and Selby branch of the York and North Midland Railway. Every attention will be paid to the comfort of the lunatics: billiards, books, gardening and other amusements . . . being provided . . . The medical treatment will comprise all the recent improvement in psychological science.

It is not certain that the house was in fact newly built. The deed of sale included 'the dwelling house with conveniences and outbuildings thereto belonging, lately erected' by the former owner. Moreover, within living memory a carved over-mantel above one of the fire-places bore the date 1830, though this might have come from an earlier house on the same site. Field House, which was much larger than the original Sculcoates Refuge, certainly appears on the plans as though designed for the purpose of an asylum.

The house stood west of First Lane, Anlaby, less than a quarter of a mile from the village. The grounds covered about eight and a half acres. In the outbuildings was stabling for two horses, room for a carriage and accommodation for a groom above the saddle room. The house itself was rectangular, measuring 66 feet from east to west. The main entrance was in the south front which presented a classical façade surmounted by a pediment. The whole was built round a small paved courtyard, which contained two pumps for drinking water and two mortuaries. On the ground floor, to left and right of the entrance, were the matron's room and the reception room for new patients. The symmetrical design of the building made possible an exact division — female patients were in the western half and males in the eastern. A long corridor running from front to back of the house on either side gave access to a range of day-rooms, four for women and five for men, and ended in a spiral stone staircase, lit by a high round-headed window. On the first floor were two passages corresponding with those below, from which opened large well-lit dormitories, seven on the female side and eight on the male side. Downstairs there were four water-closets and a large bathroom. The

domestic quarters included a large kitchen, and scullery, laundry and wash-house. The accommodation for the matron, the male attendant and the servants seemed ample. There can have been few more comfortable private asylums in the country.

The house was licensed for twenty male and fifteen female private patients. The visitors in 1849 were J. R. Pease, Joseph Sykes, T. B. Locke and John Smith, with F. R. Horner as visiting physician. F. W. Casson styled himself 'medical visitor' to the asylum as he was not resident. His widowed mother lived at Field House and supervised its management with the help of her younger son Edward. In March 1850 Mrs. Chapman, who had recently failed to gain a similar post at York Lunatic Asylum, was appointed matron. At the end of 1850 there was only one attendant for the men; if he required assistance he had to call upon the under-gardener, who slept in the billiard-room. Another male keeper had been engaged by February 1851.

Neither the local visitors nor the Commissioners in Lunacy were able entirely to approve of Field House. In October 1849 the justices complained that though they had been appointed in April they could not perform their duties, as under the Act 8 & 9 Vic. cap. 100 (1845) visitors could be appointed only at the Michaelmas sessions. This left an asylum far too long without official inspection. However, they had visited Field House on their own initiative and discovered eighteen private patients and ten paupers. The licence made no mention of pauper patients. Worse still, none of the ten had first been taken to the principal asylum of the county of origin, as provided by section 54, 8 & 9 Vic. cap. 126 (1845). Mr. Casson evidently took advice on his position, and received a prompt reply from the secretary to the commissioners, saying that it was in order for him to take pauper lunatics provided that he did not exceed the total number of persons covered by the licence. Francis Casson could not resist apologizing for having taken the ten patients direct from the poor-law overseers instead of via the county asylum. They all came from Lincolnshire, which had no asylum as yet.

When, however, the commissioners made their first visit to Field House on 15 December they were not happy about Mr. Casson's attitude to the regulations. He was reminded that his licence did not cover paupers; moreover, he was sole proprietor and not resident. This was now contrary to the law, whatever the terms of the arrangement made earlier between himself and Hull corporation. Such a large and important place as Field House needed a resident proprietor. The visitors like a Greek chorus repeated these admonitions when they came after Christmas; and added that the [amended] rules of Hull Borough Lunatic Asylum provided that the resident medical officer should not engage in any employment elsewhere. Mr. Casson protested: he really could not see why, when the refuge with 100 patients had had no resident medical man, it was necessary at Field House. To lose the licence would be a serious matter for him financially; and the place

was, in any case, not fit for a family residence. (He had seven children at this time.) However, in February he announeed that his brother, having completed his studies, would be the resident superintendent. More than a year later the commissioners discovered that Edward Casson had still to obtain his medical qualifications! Meanwhile, the medical visitation book was being signed by both the Cassons, a further breach of the regulations. Fortunately in March 1852 the visitors were able to report that Edward Casson, who was absent on their last visit to Field House, had been in London for the purpose of taking his diploma, and had been successful. He had exhibited it to them.

At the beginning the asylum records were unsatisfactory. Charles Fox, clerk to the justices, had to keep a register at Sculcoates Hall of admissions and removals of all patients in the area; he had difficulty in sorting out those Mr. Casson sent him initially from Field House. Mr. Casson made the excuse that he had been too busy to copy the certificates; but he had not sent a complete list by November. Eventually he admitted that some of the original orders must have been mislaid or lost: John Walker had once told him that a lunatic had destroyed a number of documents, and the missing ones might have been among them. On their first visit in December 1849 the commissioners found notes on new patients mixed up with continuation notes on those transferred from the refuge, and this made reference difficult. Later that month the visitors found one patient under restraint and anothcr in dark seclusion hut no entries had been made in the medical journal; nor was there any sign of the asylum case-book. Mr. Casson apologised for its absence and explained that he sometimes had to take the books home with him. No further complaints were made about records.

At first the standard of care appears to have been good. The apartments were clean and tidy; beds and hedding were of reasonable quality; and patients could have fires in their bedrooms. Some rooms were carpeted, and there were blinds at the windows. Suggestions with regard to improved ventilation, and a better supply of reading matter, were quickly acted upon hy Edward Casson. The diet of the pauper patients was satisfactory, and all the patients had access to the grounds. A variety of occupations and amusements were available to rhem. The ladies enjoyed skipping, playing ball and le gracé (hoops), and helped with the gardening. In July 1850 rhey complained of the heat out of doors. 'Trees must be planted to provide shade', the commissioners nored. There were no seats in the garden, but these had been produeed by March 1852. Cricker and bowls could be played; and indoors a billiard table attracted the attention of a man who would otherwise keep to his bed. Another man, very violcnt and excitable, who had tried to run away, was found to enjoy 'brapes' and draughts as well as billiards. A female patient had 'burnt a good draught board' in 1850. Divine service was performed every Sunday afrernoon, and some patients went to church in Anlaby. On 22 February 1854 it was recorded that 'the first Wednesday service was held at 7.00 p.m.'

As happened so frequently elsewhere, the lack of information about pauper patients was cause for comment. Of a woman brought from Nottinghamshire it was said that: 'The relieving officer who came with her knows nothing whatever of her family connections but it is understood she has been idiotic from birth.' Frequently such patients were brought in on improper grounds. Mr. Casson wrote of one man who was physically ill: 'this case is one not fit for an asylum, and ought to have been sent to a hospital. Had I not feared the journey back again to Sheffield would have caused his death I should not have allowed him to stay here.' Other causes of wrongful admission occurred. A woman was sent all the way from West Boston in Lincolnshire on the authority of a friend, not of her husband. She was very ill physically and suffered from depression and religious mania as well. She died a few months afterwards; but on Mr. Casson's request an investigation was held by the authorities, who declared 'that great blame attaches to the medical men who signed her certificate of removal to this asylum. It is to be regretted that a coroner's inquest was not held in this case.' Another lady was placed in Field House by someone appointed administrator of her late husband's estate. After examining her the commissioners decided that she *was* mentally ill, but considered the executor's attitude harsh and unbecoming. In one young woman, subject to violent and ungovernable outbursts of temper, they could find no evidence of insanity and ordered her discharge. 'Mr. Casson must surely be aware', they commented, 'that the law does not allow an asylum to be converted into a House of Correction by parents of . . . undutiful or rebellious children.'

The pauper patients came principally from Lincolnshire; one or two were from Yorkshire parishes, and one each from Northamptonshire, Nottingham and East Anglia. Of the private patients over half were from Hull; fewer than one fifth from the East Riding. Several had been under the care of someone in the country; one, a lieutenant in the Royal Navy, had been under Mr. Cautley of Hedon. Two had previously been at Moor Cottage, Nunkeeling. One was a young Norwegian emigrating to America, and there were two or three sailors. Occupations were varied, drapers and servants being commonest. One 49-year-old domestic seemed to work extremely long hours. She was on duty until 3 or 4 a.m. and then was up again at a quarter to six! A lace-maker was said to have been an idiot from birth. One patient was a doctor and two were school teachers, of whom one 'has always been a proud obstinate woman . . . and has lately beaten the children very severely without occasion, so much so that their parents have not let them return to school.' The male teacher was confined at Field House for five years, and was discharged at the request of the Gainsborough governors, not much better for his stay. In 1853 an omnibus driver was admitted; he had attempted to set fire to his vehicle and horses. One or two were criminals but the commissioners recommended their transfer, Field House nor being sufficiently secure. Some admissions were attributed to railway 'mania', precipitated by loss of money in railway investments.

Although there was now a line to London, some people still preferred to travel by sea in the packet. Telegraph wires were in use and one patient said that the sparrows listened to the messages they were transmitting, and flew to his window to repeat them to him.

From the medical case-book it can be seen that Mr. Casson fulfilled his promise to provide the most up-to-date treatment, and how his patients must have regretted it! It was only in a very general sense 'psychological' and was not only vigorous but rigorous. If one method did not work it was quickly replaced by another. Cold baths and cold compresses to the head were used for excited patients; and warm baths for the weaker ones, with hot bottles or mustard poultices applied to the feet. Bleeding was not so common by 1850 as it had been, but small amounts of blood were often taken by dry or wet 'cupping'; and 'blistering' was often ordered. An eighteen-year-old girl admitted in 1853 in a violently excited state had her hair kept wet with aqui-acetum; it was cut short soon after. Antimony tartrate was then rubbed into her neck until blisters were produced seven days later. These disappeared too quickly, so after three days the treatment was repeated. She was luckier than others who had their heads shaved and the ointment rubbed into the scalp as well as down the back. These treatments cannot have been easy to administer in view of the extreme violence of some of the patients.

Such drugs as were available were given with great freedom; Mr. Casson believed in the efficacy of purgatives for all forms of insanity. Those most commonly used were croton oil, magnesium sulphate and castor oil, which were prescribed alike for constipation and mental disorder. Great attention was paid to the diet; when patients did not eat readily, eggs were given in soup, beef tea, rum and milk, or brandy. Infusion of gentian and peppermint water, or quinine added to a tonic, were used to stimulate appetite. To control violent patients morphia acetate and various other drugs were given, including digitalis. The stethoscope was mentioned for the first time in 1854.

There were two refractory rooms at Field House, one being remembered as 'the padded room' a century later. Restraint was, however, employed only when all else failed. Seclusion was used for stated short periods, perhaps two hours at a time. The strait-waistcoat and 'muffles' were in use until 1853 at least.

Visitors and commissioners agreed that as a rule the patients were treated with great kindness. An exception occurred in December 1849, soon after Field House opened. A young woman who had run away was seen by Simon Appleton near the Anlaby brickyard on the Hull road; she wore no hat, shoes or stockings and was very cold. A boy had come up on a pony and tried to take her back, but Mr. Appleton would not let him, and engaging Mr. Wilson's cab had taken her back himself. When they reached the main gate of the asylum they were met by two men and a woman who refused to let the cab go farther. The female servant pulled the patient out of the cab saying, 'I'll serve you out for

this, my lady, I'll give it to you . . . none of that nonsense here!' They went off up the drive, which was of new gravel and about 200 yards from the gate to the house; and the servant could still be heard saying, 'You walked away, you shall walk back . . . I'll let you know where you are.' The incident was reported to T. B. Locke, who passed the letter on to F. W. Casson. Mr. Casson said that this was the first intimation he had had of the escape: neither he nor his mother had been told. The matter was investigated on 27 December, when the young woman involved said she was considering going back to her husband. The clerk had written to her family but had not received a reply. Leave of absence was frequently granted. One patient often visited her sister in Hull, but was glad to come back. A male patient, often violent, was 'never detained against his will; Mr. Casson let him come and go as he pleased.'

When Edward Casson left Field House in May 1853 it suffered a quick succession of acting medical superintendents who were in the process of qualifying and left as soon as they could obtain better appointments elsewhere. The commissioners laid the blame for this on the proprietor and the small salary he was prepared to pay. The day-rooms which in 1850 had been found nicely painted and papered (albeit by a patient illegally transferred from Hull Borough Lunatic Asylum) were in June 1853 shabby, bare and comfortless, such furniture as there was being the worse for wear and several windows broken. This was hardly surprising when the staff was so small and the patients so violent. The case-book records that on 6 March 1854 'Mr. P– has been very abusive to one of the atrendants, tearing the hair off his head and kicking the panels out of the doors.' However, a 'well-built water closet has been installed upstairs for the female patients', it was noted in November 1854. The medical case-book entries had become very brief; but a list was kept from April to May of visirs and leaves. It reveals the sad case of a poor fellow of 74, the cause of whose illness was his discharge — on the grounds of his age — from the militia, to which he had belonged for 49 years. This had upset him terribly. His family visited him frequently. He was given purgatives at first and as he improved a mixture of ammoniac and gentian were administered. Ale was ordered but he would not take it. The improvement did not last; he became weaker and weaker and died on 22 September. Nowadays he would in all probability have made a perfect and speedy recovery with electrical treatment.

The appointmenr of William Day as house surgeon in November 1854 held out some hope that the house could continue as a private asylum. He held diplomas from the Royal College of Surgeons and the Society of Apothecaries, and informed the visitors that he had been in charge of lunatics for several years. He was the son of a Somerset surgeon. Dr. Day drew up a list of duties for the male attendant which pleased the commissioners until they discovered that the attendant could not read. They redoubled their criticism of the asylum from the books to the drains, and of Mr. Casson 'as he clearly did not intend to reside at

Field House.' Under the Act of 1828 private licensed houses for 100 patients or more were required to have a resident medical superintendent, while smaller houses were to be visited by a medical man not less than twice a week. The Act of 1845 modified this only in details. F. W. Casson was therefore justified in being non-resident at Field House. The borough asylum, too, was licensed for fewer than 100 patients on opening. There were also difficulties with F. R. Horner, the visiting physician, who on several occasions altered the treatment which Dr. Day had, with the approval of Sir Henry Cooper, ordered for the patients, with the result that 'all the good effects of the course pursued has been lost.' Dr. Horner repudiated the assertions; and Dr. Day left on 1 June to work at the borough asylum. He was succeeded at Field House for a short time by Thomas Walton, L.S.A., of Sculcoates, who had worked there for six months in 1853. Walton was resident on the night of his appointment only and the commissioners wrote: 'We therefore express our unqualified disapprobation of such a proceeding.' But there was a new attendant who could read and they gave him a copy of the rules.

The house faded rather than closed. On 24 April 1855 Pearson, the head attendant, left and William Brenton succeeded him. At the beginning of May Charles the under attendant left. On 3 May 'Nurse left and Cook succeeded her in the office.' In September F. W. Casson sold to a Mr. Gooding, who intended to continue the licence but did not do so. The licence expired on 17 October and the asylum closed on that day, all the patients having been removed. Most of them were discharged to their homes. One woman went to Marfleet Retreat and another to Gate Helmsley. The number in residence had decreased gradually from 30 in 1849 to fifteen in 1855.

The house was still standing though derelict in 1960, but has since been demolished. A large room called 'the ballroom' could be seen. It appeared to have been created from the former matron's room, the reception room and the entrance hall, a new front entrance then being made on the east.

THE RETREAT, KILHAM (1858-about 1866)

From Heworth John Atkinson moved to Kilham, where his brother Thomas had been in practice 20 years earlier. Thomas's son Thomas Parkin had succeeded him and lived in Eastgate. A few yards beyond the old poorhouse was a house now known as Clackna Farm, which John Atkinson bought and adapted for use as an asylum. No plans of it survive. The house has the date 1774 on one of its rainwater pipes. Two extensions which appear to have been made considerably later at the eastern end have no windows facing the road. On the south side the building overlooked a large yard and garden, with an orchard and a stream beyond.

There were never more than six patients in the asylum, which was very much a supplement to John Atkinson's income as a surgeon. Like Weaverthorpe it was well conducted and the visitors almost invariably found the patients comfortable. The visiting physician was T. T. Pierson, L.R.C.S.(Edin.), of Bridlington Quay; and the visiting justices (in 1859-60) were Sir Henry Boyoron, E. H. Reynard, Thomas Prickett, Joseph Hordern, the Revd. J. H. Brown and the Revd. Y. G. Lloyd. They, like the visitors to Weaverthorpe, were remiss in the performance of their duties and were with difficulty persuaded to make the required number of visits. During the early years of its existence Dr. Pierson had constantly to remind the clerk that a visit to Kilham Retreat was overdue. There was also some doubt as to whether it was legal for more than one magistrate to go. 'One of the magistrates who had lived in the West Riding said he had not known of a visit paid by *two* magistrates', Dr. Pierson wrote. A satisfactory procedure for fixing a date convenient to at least two of the visitors was not worked out until 1860, when the required four visits were made.

Thomas Pierson's letters were no doubt something of a trial to Charles Fox, who contrived to miss meeting the doctor at Kilham in December 1858, and in doing so missed 'a nice sirloin of beef which was ready on the table', as Pierson was quick to point out in his next letter. The correspondence had its rewarding moments:

> 23 March 1858 . . . with regard to my last visit, I was very much pleased with the gentlemanly conduct of E. Raymond (*sic*) Esq. on his first visit; although I had once had a note from him respecting some of my Spanish fowls, I was until this personally unknown to him. He told me he was very glad to have made my acquaintance that day and if ever I come into his neighbourhood he should be glad if I would call and see him. Poor Mr. P. and Sir H.B. were sent into the shade, this being quite foreign to their pasture; and you might have supposed to look at them that someone was about to light a squib under their coat tails. The other two who were absent are of the same class, not at all sociable but of course are civil enough when I meet them;

but to me it is a very great pleasure to meet with a gentleman to transact business with . . . he was also very pleased with the place and its management: he sent Mr. A. the next day a couple of rabbits!

The visitors were not inattentive to the welfare of the patients. On one visit in 1859 they noted that a water-closet had been installed and the garden walk extended. At a later visit Dr. Pierson asked Mr. Atkinson about the water-closers, 'a very important consideration, in the opinion of our clerical friends', and was told that they had been obliged to nail them up to stop the patients from using them; since they did not do so properly it was better they should not use them at all. There was some reason in this argument, Dr. Pierson reflected: 'a horse could be taken to water but it could not be made to drink.' In 1863 it was suggested that an air-brick should be inserted in the outer wall of the water-closet.

Enthusiastic as he was over the affairs of the retreat, the formalities gave Dr. Pierson some trouble at first. On 17 August he apologised to the clerk to the justices for having inadvertently filled up a certificate given him by a patient's husband, to the effect that she was insane. This woman had been known to him since she was a girl at school, and her medical attendant had asked him to see her in the lock-up at Leven. He thought her very dangerous: a place of safety was indicated, and at first it had been proposed to remove her to Gate Helmsley or to an asylum at Wakefield; but one of the justices suggested that Kilham would meet all the requirements of the case. The woman's husband had called on him with the certificate and he had filled it up without thinking. A later examination had showed the woman to be suffering only from the effects of drink. Dr. Pierson's anguish was extreme: 'I have only now discovered my error . . . I must throw myself upon the clemency of the visiting justices . . . and must endeavour to study the Act more carefully in future . . . If only Mr. Parkin Atkinson had been at home this would never have happened.'

By 1863 the asylum was in difficulties. In July the previous year the Commissioners in Lunacy suggested that T. P. Atkinson should be appointed medical attendant to the asylum in consequence of his uncle's 'continued indisposition'; and on 2 September he confirmed that he had commenced his duties. John Atkinson did not recover sufficiently to take charge of the asylum again; he died on 10 May 1863. His daughter Emily had become joint licensee at the beginning of the year and decided to carry on temporarily with help from her cousin. It was not an easy time for Atkinson. There had been a prolonged epidemic of diptheria in Kilham in the early spring and among the many who died were three of his children, a daughter of eight years and two young sons, all buried in the first week of March. The loss was not made easier to bear by an editorial in the *Driffield Times* on 17 March:

> [Kilham] apparently cannot boast of its number of loyalists, as to all appearances the nuptials of the two illustrious personages [the Prince of Wales and Princess Alexandra] to be celebrated on Tuesday next will pass over without any demonstration whatsoever; there are no preparations making, not even so much as to give the old people or the Sunday scholars a cup of tea. We believe that something might have been done, and at a trifling expense, to mark a red-letter day, and to fix it in the memory of the young, something to talk about when they grow old.

When the commissioners visited Kilham in the summer they found everything in order at the house with the exception of a minor error in the papers of a patient recently admitted. But they concluded that in view of the difficulties being experienced by the proprietress and the medical attendant 'and from what we have observed today, we think it may probably be found the most expedient course not to carry on the establishment further than the term of the existing licence.'

The following year John Atkinson's younger brother William, who had worked briefly at Heworth Retreat and from 1862 to 1864 at Ripon Dispensary, joined his niece at Kilham. In March 1864 he notified the office at Beverley that they would not after all renew the licence; Emily had decided to discharge the patients, but would continue living in the house. Something evidently caused her to change her plans; the house continued to receive the insane, and when Sir Henry Boynton and Dr. Pierson visited on 29 March 1866 there were three patients in residence and one had recently been discharged. The patients were comfortable and the house was in good order, as it always was.

Thomas Parkin Atkinson had died suddenly on 17 March 1866. The *Driffield Times* did not refer to the asylum in its obituary but stated that:

> his friends and the whole district deplore deeply his premature death. He was the pioneer of every local movement having for its object the good of the village and neighbourhood. The National School at Kilham which is one of the best in the East Riding owes its existence and much of its success to the late doctor.

Two sons and two daughters survived him, and his wife Harriet lived on in Kilham until 1899.

William Atkinson made an attempt to carry on his nephew's practice but the executors swiftly forestalled him. He had been passed over and the practice sold to S. N. Harrison, M.R.C.S.(Eng.), L.R.C.P.(Edin.), 'a gentleman legally qualified to practise medicine and surgery under the Medical Act of 1858.' William had studied at Edinburgh University, and obtained there a licence to practise midwifery in 1830. Without the Kilham practice it would be uneconomic for him to continue the small business of the retreat. By 1868 he had taken up practice at Norton and remained there until his death in 1876.

ALBION STREET, HULL (1857)

A licence was granted here for one year only to Humphrey Sandwith. A native of Bridlington and surgeon there in 1822, he had been tempted to London to become editor of the *Watchman*, a publication of the Wesleyan Methodists. Not being successful, he came back to East Yorkshire, and was appointed physician to Hull General Infirmary in 1842. His son Humphrey, also a doctor, accompanied Sir Austen Layard on his archaeological expeditions to Nineveh, and was at one time colonial secretary to Mauritius.

PARK STREET, HULL (1861-2)

This asylum was licensed for about two years by George Burn, who then became bankrupt. The same thing had happened to him when he was proprietor at Gate Helmsley, in the North Riding. Burn had mismanaged that asylum; the commissioners had criticised the state of the linen and had found that 'two patients were expected to sleep in a bed hardly large enough for one.' At Park Street Burn's household expenses for 1862 were given as £150. His liabilities amounted to over £1,500. Notwithstanding, in 1864 he was again the licensee at Gate Helmsley.

CONCLUSION

Private asylums were still thought of unfavourably at the beginning of this century, but a reappraisal is now desirable. There can be no argument that the treatment meted out to lunatics in gaol or workhouse was bad. Certainly there were things to criticize in most of the asylums considered here; but at least the patient was regarded as a sick person, and his progress towards recovery was encouraged even in the worst institutions. There is evidence that even severely disturbed patients were managed kindly.

The opening of these asylums brought forth large numbers of unsuspected illnesses, for patients formerly kept at home now at last had somewhere they could be treated. This treatment consisted of little more than a regular routine, occupation and recreation, the preservation of physical health, and the maintenance of a non-critical background. The brief existence of Mr. Casson's asylum at Anlaby perhaps indicates the first gropings for a medicinal as opposed to a 'moral' cure. The techniques and agents employed were therapeutically useless but the attention the patient received was on the whole beneficial, and results were little less satisfactory than those of today.

The best asylums in the riding were kept by medical men who, like the lay proprietors, frequently acknowledged their indebtedness to the principles advocated by the Friends' Retreat at York. The least satisfactory proprietors were those who had no other source of income. The smallest asylums aimed at a homely atmosphere where the patients dined with the owner and his family, and where daily prayers were read, the parish church attended and country walks taken.

Deliberate cruelty is nowhere recorded. Indeed, the majority of patients enjoyed a degree of freedom not to be found in public psychiatric hospitals till another 100 years had passed. Confining walls were the exception, and physical restraint was decreasingly employed. Food was better than it would have been for pauper patients at home.

Private asylums were opened because local authorities were slow to provide what the public conscience demanded. Legislation eventually compelled the establishment of public asylums, and the increasing criticisms of the Commissioners in Lunacy, presumably with this end in view, speeded the private proprietors out of business. It is ironical that the erection of the enormous Victorian public asylums, like the one built at Willerby in 1884, made the lot of the confined mentally ill infinitely worse than it had been under private enterprise.

SOURCES AND SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Most information comes from the notices of admission, discharge and death of patients sent to the clerk of the peace; from reports of the Commissioners in Lunacy and of the visiting justices; from licences enrolled in Quarter Sessions; and from miscellaneous papers, such as correspondence and accounts. In Yorkshire this material varies considerably in scope and quantity between one riding and another, the East Riding being the most fortunate. An exact description of the documents available is to be found in the calendars of the record offices concerned.

HUMBERSIDE COUNTY RECORD OFFICE, BEVERLEY

Papers for individual houses:	
Field House, Anlaby	QAL/3/1-8
Moor Cottage, Nunkeeling	9-15
Cottingham Retreat	16-20
Dunnington House	21-9
Hessle Retreat	30-5
Kilham Retreat	36-8
Rillington Retreat	39-41
Sculcoates Refuge	42-5
Summergangs Retreat, Southcoates	46-8
Weaverthorpe Retreat	49-53
Plans required under the Madhouse Act of 1828 (for all the houses except Kilham and Rillington)	QAL/3/54-61
Order Books of Quarter Sessions, 1814-59 (indexed)	QS
Letter from W. C. Ellis to Thomas Grimston	DDGR/43/35

Various deeds formerly in the East Riding Registry of Deeds

Parish registers for Brandesburton and Sculcoates

KINGSTON UPON HULL CITY RECORD OFFICE

Quarter Sessions records	CQB
Letter from Ralph Darling to Thomas Gilbert	BRL 1606/7

YORK CENTRAL LIBRARY, ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT

Papers for Gillygate, Acomb House, Grove Hall, Acomb, and St. Maurice's House, York (including Annual Reports, 1829-33)	K119-123

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY RECORD OFFICE, NORTHALLERTON

Papers for Claxton Grange, Clifton House, Gate Helmsley, Heworth, Huntington and Osbaldwick (covering 1837-50) QAL

BORTHWICK INSTITUTE OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH, UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Minutes of the board of governors, the Friends' Retreat, Fulford, near York

Parish registers for Acomb and Rillington

DE LA POLE HOSPITAL, WILLERBY, NEAR HULL

Journal of admission of patients to Hull and East Riding Refuge (1839-45), including those previously confined in Sculcoates Refuge and Summergangs Retreat

Reports of visitors to Hull and East Riding Refuge (1845-9)

Historical medical register for Sculcoates Refuge, Hull and East Riding Refuge, and Field House, Anlaby (*c.* 1827-50 but incomplete)

Old case-book, Field House, Anlaby

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