

Hoveton Hall Red Cross Auxiliary Hospital

February 1916 – January 1919

Mrs Susan Heard Beevor, was owner of Hoveton Hall, and Commandant when it opened as a Red Cross Auxiliary Hospital in February 1916. A call went out to the local parishes for volunteers.



“A new Red Cross Hospital is to be opened shortly at Hoveton Hall, and the call for duty at Hoveton Hall has come to some of our members in the parishes. Offers of help in the future will be gratefully received. J Gough Poole, Rector.”
Waxham Rural Deanery Magazine, Barton Turf & Irstead News (February 1916)

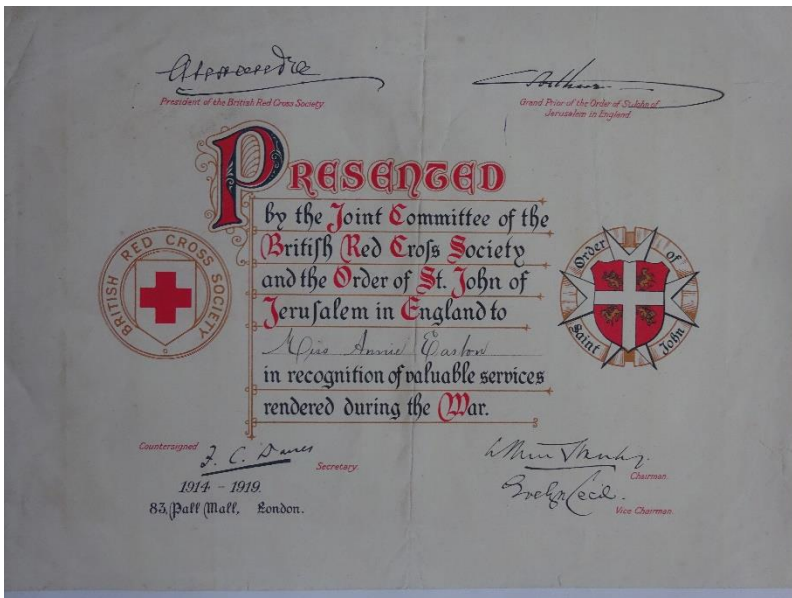
There is a record of 16 ladies from the neighbouring parishes of Ashmanhaugh, Barton Turf, Beeston, Irstead and Neatishead who volunteered for nursing and general duties during the three years it was opened.

- Mrs Susan Beevor (Hoveton Hall) Commandant, whole time,
- Beatrice Bowman (Ashmanhaugh), Nurse 6 hrs weekly.
- Florence Bowman (Ashmanhaugh), Nurse 3 days weekly.
- Sarah Emma Car (Neatishead), Nurse 6 hrs weekly.
- Agnes Culling (Gardener’s Lodge, Neatishead), 2 days weekly
- Dorothy Dove (Beeston Hall, Neatishead), Nurse 18 hrs weekly.
- Annie Easton (Neatishead), Nurse 12 hrs weekly.
- Margaret Galpin (Barton Turf), Nurse 7hrs weekly.
- Gertrude Galpin (Barton Turf), Nurse 7hrs weekly.
- Eleanor Gibbs (Smallburgh), General Service, full-time.
- Bertha Mason (Irstead Old Hall, Irstead), Nurse 1 day per week.
- Charlotte Pejot (Irstead Rectory, Irstead), Nurse 3 hrs weekly.
- Evelyn Pinching (Beeston Hall, Neatishead) Nurse 5hrs weekly.
- Julia Poole (The Vicarage, Barton Turf). Wife of Rev J Gough Poole. Nurse 1 day weekly.
- Muriel Rose (Point House, Neatishead) Nurse 4hrs weekly
- Winifred Sands (Thorpe Hamlet, Norwich), Nurse and general service, full-time.
- Christabel Stevens (Barton Hall, Barton Turf), Nurse 4 hrs weekly.
- Mary Elizabeth Weaver (Weymouth Street, London W1) whole time, Sister-in-Charge 1917-1918; Matron February 1918, £2 2s 0d per week.
- Violet King, (Hoveton Hall), Cook, served for 597 days.

Miss Annie Easton, lived at The Saddlery in Neatishead, where her father, Charlie was a harness maker. Miss Easton worked as an Infant Teacher at Neatishead School, having previously attended there as a pupil. With the local call for nursing volunteers at Hoveton Hall and four brothers Charlie, Herbert, Alfred and William away fighting in the trenches, two of whom were killed in action, she must have felt compelled to do what she could to help with the war effort.

Photo right: Annie, taken from a Neatishead School photograph in the 1930s. (Neatishead Nostalgia)

Photo below: Annie's certificate in recognition of her valuable service as a nurse during World War One. (Neatishead Nostalgia)



So, in addition to her teaching responsibilities she volunteered for nursing duties at Hoveton Hall where her Red Cross record card indicates she worked 12 hours weekly, received no pay and worked there from February 1916 to 22 January 1919. After the war she continued teaching and remained at Neatishead School until she retired in 1950.

Some men stayed for a year or even more at these hospitals, but for the most, stays were of about three or four months. Having endured the horrors and trauma of the battlefield, the men were no doubt eternally grateful for the care they received back in England from these bands of voluntary women – from every social class and background – who gave of themselves so unselfishly with love and compassion.

Claire Penstone-Smith, November 2018

Neatishead, Irstead & Barton Turf Community Heritage Group