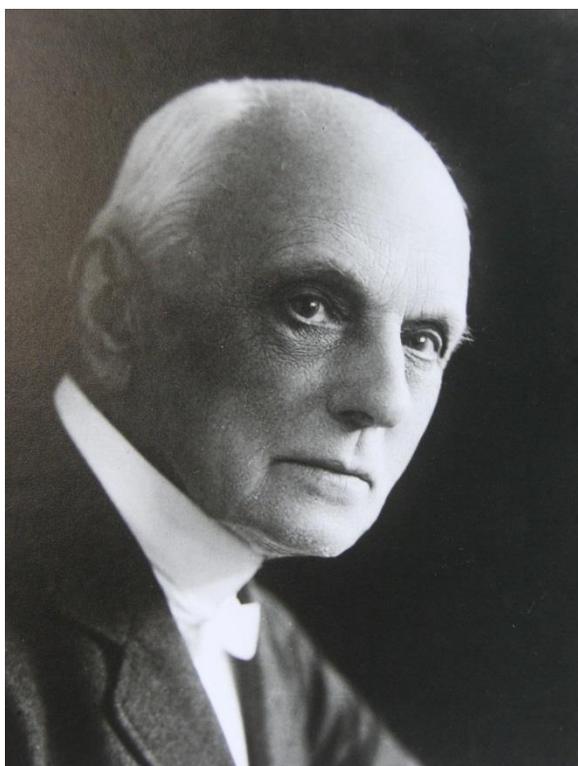


Savernake Cottage Hospital's very own Who's Who

Name: Rev J O Stephens

That Savernake Cottage Hospital exists at all is largely down to a compassionate train of thought from the Rev Stephens, Vicar of Christchurch Savernake, coupled with a good deal of this gentleman's energy and enthusiasm. His attention had been caught by the plight of a local farm labourer who had suffered a serious accident. The unfortunate man had to be carried some miles to reach a doctor, but was so seriously wounded he then had to undergo a further long journey to reach a hospital, arriving in a distressed condition. Rev Stephens conceived the idea of a cottage hospital – a very modern way of thinking – in order to bring treatment much closer to home. He was spurred on by Mr P.D. Maurice a local surgeon, from what was to become a long line of medical practitioners well known and much



loved in the area.

The Rev Stephens was to become the first Hon. Sec. of the hospital –

but it was the speed of his actions, coupled with huge local support, that got the first hospital established in under a year that I find impressive. An unthinkable feat in this day and age! The first public notice dated December 1865 to the opening of the original hospital on June 28th 1866 must surely set something of a record.

He was honoured in April 1878 by the presentation of his portrait and during our research we discovered two photographs of him in Wiltshire History Centre at Chippenham. At the moment we are unable to verify which was the portrait, but someone reading our pages must surely recollect the picture which would have hung in Savernake



Hospital's Gilbert Scott building. Please contact us and let us know!

The first Savernake Cottage Hospital was in a converted building known as the Old Training Institution (now known as "Copelands") on Forest Hill. This building was offered, together with furniture for the hospital by George Frederick, the then Marquis of Ailesbury and Lady Caroline, the Marchioness of Ailesbury.

We have yet to establish the date Rev JO Stephens died, but research is, as usual, ongoing.