

Savernake Cottage Hospital's very own Who's Who

Name: The Hospital Donkey



This lovely creature seems to have been crucial in many ways to life in the hospital – it drew water from the well, pulled the cart to Marlborough to collect medicines and also seems to have transported nurses. There are several mentions but we have never discovered its' name.

1899 Report referred to the difficulty of getting water from a 250 foot deep well, it was raised by means of gearwork operated by a donkey or a man.

1901 Gift of shoes for the donkey

1903 Report of water connection with town mains “There is one being who would, I feel sure, join very heartily in the note of thanks for having the water laid on at the hospital and that is the old hospital donkey!”

As we see in the photograph – the donkey continued to be used to pull the cart although he was retired some time later..... The cart driver was Buster Cox's uncle who lived at High Walls in Marlborough – long since demolished to make way for new Road.



There was a wonderful story concerning the nurses going down in the cart to Marlborough, but the donkey refused to walk on at one point. It was opposite the Roebuck Public House..... the usual driver was rather found out – The Roebuck was for sure his traditional stopping place!

I love the cat sitting proudly on a nurse's lap in the cart.

1907 June 1st Newspaper Report; The Hospital Donkey

Having won two second class prizes at Whitsuntide sports, the rider Mr Lawrence of the Roebuck Inn kindly presented Mr Mundy's prize of three fancy flower pots to the hospital

1916 The hospital donkey was sadly killed by a Motor Car - so soon after being retired.