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Editorial

OSBORNE HOUSE

KING EDWARD VII CONVALESCENT HOME FOR OFFICERS

OSBORNE HOUSE was for some forty years the private home of Queen Victoria.

After Her Majesty's death, however, King Edward VII, after consultation with his advisers, and with the concurrence of King George V, then the Prince of Wales, gave the Osborne Estate, including Osborne House, to the Nation. The State Apartments of Osborne House and the Swiss Cottage Museum and Garden were to be thrown open to the public, and the remaining portion of the House, except those apartments which had been in the personal occupation of Queen Victoria and which were to be kept closed, was to be utilized as a Convalescent Home for officers of the Fighting Forces.

And so it has remained ever since except that established Civil Servants serving at home and abroad, Officers of the Women's Forces and certain patients recommended by the Ministry of Pensions are now also eligible for admission.

Such admission is easily arranged. A letter to the House Governor brings an application form. This completed is returned together with a medical certificate and, if the patient be accepted, an admission date is given.

All modern forms of rehabilitation treatment under trained and experienced therapists are available—massage, electro-therapy, remedial exercises and the rest—all are carried out under the supervision of the House Governor. There is a remarkably tactful, persuasive and determined occupational therapist under whom manifold activities varying between scarf making and boat-building are carried out.

There is the best nine hole golf course on the Island and this year a hard tennis court is available. In the summer there are manifold outdoor activities.

There is a minimum of rules and restrictions, the main being an insistence on punctual attendance for treatment, punctuality at meals and no discussion of your own or anyone else's ailment.



Photo by "Topical" Press Agency Ltd.

A physical exercise rehabilitation class under Mr. Lewis with Major-General Priest, the House Governor, looking on .

On admission each patient is seen by the House Governor and the following morning has a complete and thorough overhaul and a course of treatment decided upon varying, it is needless to say, with the particular ailment or injury from which he has been suffering. Thereafter each patient is examined at a weekly interval to assess progress. There is further a panel of consultants who are available and who pay regular visits. Two local consultants can be called in in an emergency.

The atmosphere of Osborne calls for a certain degree of formality in regard to meals but it is really that of a not too strict Service Mess. There are a reading room for officers—formerly Her Majesty's Council Chamber; a small lounge for women officers; a library; a billiards room and a television viewing room. There is further a small hall where entertainments and cinema shows are held.

In short, Osborne is from every point of view an ideal place in which to convalesce and build up after an illness or injury. There is a unique mixture of the Services which is of great value to all.

When there recently we asked a little housemaid whether she ever saw any ghosts. "Ghosts!" she replied in a good Hampshire burr, "ghosts, there are no ghosts here. This is far too happy a place for ghosts."