

#### THE CULLEN HOSPITAL GIFTS

There was only one hospital, Hermann, located in the Texas Medical Center in 1945, although the M. D. Anderson Hospital and Tumor Institute, then operating in temporary quarters in "The Oaks" at 2310 Baldwin Street, was destined to be located there when the Legislature approved construction funds. Major hospitals then operating in Houston in addition to Hermann, were Memorial Baptist, downtown; Methodist, St. Joseph's and Houston Negro, near-downtown, and Jefferson Davis, the city-county hospital, on Buffalo Drive (now Allen Parkway). There was an acute shortage of hospital beds to serve the growing community.

H. R. Cullen, the oil man-philanthropist, electrified the community in March, 1945, when he announced \$1,000,000 gifts each to Memorial, Hermann, Methodist and Episcopal hospitals, the gift to the Episcopalians enabling that denomination to establish its first hospital in Houston, St. Luke's. A few weeks later he gave another \$1,000,000 to St. Joseph's Hospital. While Mr. and Mrs. Cullen gave the money with no strings attached, the Methodist and Episcopal hospitals constructed their facilities in the Texas Medical Center, after each denomination had raised funds, principally from within their own memberships, for facilities costing in the range of \$3,500,000. The gift to Hermann Hospital enabled it to construct a new facility on its Medical Center grounds. Memorial and St. Joseph's expanded their facilities on site.

The Hermann Hospital expansion, and the new Methodist and St. Luke's hospitals were magnificent additions to the Texas Medical Center. In later years both Methodist and St. Luke's hospitals expanded their facilities and services. Later additions to the Medical Center's hospital facilities included the Shrine Crippled Children's Hospital, the Texas Children's Hospital and the Ben Taub Hospital, operated by the county hospital district.

Mr. and Mrs. Cullen, who previously had given \$800,000 to the Baylor College of Medicine to enable it to complete its construction program in the Medical Center, were praised for their generosity in a resolution by the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, and in an article in the March, 1945, issue of Magazine HOUSTON.

"Resolved that the Board of Directors of the Houston Chamber of Commerce in regular session assembled on the 13th day of March, 1945, hereby expresses to Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Cullen the genuine and profound gratitude and appreciation of the Board and the entire membership of the Houston Chamber of Commerce for their generous and magnificent gifts recently made to Hermann, Memorial, Methodist and Episcopal hospitals in the sum of one million dollars each, or an aggregate of four million dollars. These gifts are important and significant not alone because they enable the beneficiary institutions of mercy and healing to carry on a much more effective work, but also because they serve as a worthy example and inspiration to the people of Houston and other benefactors to support and enlarge the activities of these institutions and other institutions contributing to the welfare of the community. These gifts are but additions to the numerous and significantly worth-while benefactions made by Mr. and Mrs. Cullen to institutions and causes for education, culture, health, and the general improvement of the life of this community, notable among which are those

to Houston University and the Houston Symphony Orchestra. They are further expressions of the generous natures and the intelligence of the givers, and of their interest in and support of all worth-while community projects for the betterment of the people.

"Houston is no exception to the rule that great cities are created by great citizens. It has been fortunate in a long line of men and women of vision, courage, and unselfish devotion to its interests. Mr. and Mrs. Cullen are among this group; by their unselfishness and generosity they exert a profound influence in the achievement of the highest aims of the community.

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be spread upon the minutes of this meeting and that an engrossed copy thereof be sent to Mr. and Mrs. Cullen and copies be furnished the newspapers of our city.

"Resolution presented by Mr. Hines Baker, and upon motion of Mr. H. O. Clarke, seconded by Mr. Earl Hankamer and numerous others, it was unanimously adopted by the Board of Directors of the Houston Chamber of Commerce, March 13, 1945.

(s)

George Sawtelle, President

(s)

E. A. Blackburn, Secretary-of-the-Board"

THE H. R. CULLENS GIVE  
\$4,000,000 TO HOSPITALS

Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Cullen, well known for their numerous philanthropies, again reflected their exceptional generosity, when they presented \$1,000,000 each, to the Memorial, Hermann, Methodist and Episcopal Hospitals. A million apiece was given to Memorial and Hermann on March 2. They then donated an additional \$1,000,000 to the Methodist Hospital of Houston on March 3 and another million dollars was given the Episcopalians for a hospital to be built, on March 7.

The Methodist Hospital will construct a new hospital with the money given by Mr. and Mrs. Cullen, the location yet to be announced. Mr. Cullen, in confirming his gift to the Methodist Hospital said:

"Mrs. Cullen and I have decided to do the same thing for the Methodist Hospital that we did for the Memorial and Hermann Hospitals as announced in the press this morning."

"We have been very much impressed with the very fine work the Methodist Hospital is doing in the rehabilitation of crippled children and we are anxious to see this work continued."

No strings whatever were attached to the gift, the use of the money being left entirely with the hospital authorities.

Bishop A. Frank Smith of the Methodist Church, Chairman Raymond P. Elledge of the hospital board and others identified with the institution's service, which started June, 1924, were generous in expressing appreciation of the gift and commending Mr. and Mrs. Cullen for their contribution, which, it was pointed out, will make real a dream of many years, that of erecting a new hospital and providing all the facilities for meeting the needs of those seeking relief from sickness and injuries.

Several years before the war those entrusted with the operation of the present hospital realized that a new and greater plant was necessary, and plans for such a building were considered, but the war caused these to be abandoned until a more suitable occasion. None of them dreamed, however, that there would be such a mammoth gift as the one just made by Mr. and Mrs. Cullen, in demonstrating their faith in the work of hospitals in Houston and in providing additional evidence of great philanthropic and civic interest.

"These magnificent gifts by Mr. and Mrs. Cullen reflect their generous natures and the high intelligence with which they use their means," said Hines H. Baker, executive vice president of the Humble Oil & Refining Company and a member of the board of trustees of the Methodist Hospital. "Humanity is greatly enriched because of them, and we all owe them a debt of profound gratitude."

Mrs. Josie Roberts, the hospital's superintendent for the past thirteen years, who has been with it since it opened 21 years ago, was enthusiastic in commenting on the Cullens' gift.

"The hospital is so crowded now that we are forced to turn away an average of between fifteen and twenty patients daily," Mrs. Roberts said.

At least \$30,000 of service annually is furnished persons unable to finance hospital service, she said, and without regard to religion or denomination. More non-Methodists than Methodists are its patients. Many crippled children are among those receiving attention at the hospital, which, however, is a general hospital.

The hospital was built at a cost of about \$250,000 by the Texas Methodist Conference, about ninety per cent of the money coming from Houston.

It has had only two board chairmen. John T. Scott was chairman of the board about twenty years, being succeeded by the present chairman, Raymond P. Elledge, Houston lawyer.

The hospital board is composed of the following, besides Chairman Elledge and Mr. Baker: W. L. Clayton, R. L. Cole, E. L. Crain, Judge James A. Elkins, Mrs. W. W. Fondren, W. L. Goldston, Dr. M. L. Graves, Dr. C. C. Green, Claud B. Hamill, Jesse H. Jones, J. H. Kurth, J. W. Mills, L. L. Nelms, Neal Pickett, John T. Scott, R. A. Shepherd and T. P. Wier.

Bishop A. Frank Smith, of Houston, recognized as one of the nation's foremost ministers, said:

"The magnificent gift made by Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Cullen to the Methodist Hospital insures the erection of an institution that will be one of the outstanding hospitals of the Southwest.

"The Methodist Church is grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Cullen for this further evidence of their keen sense of social, civic and spiritual responsibility as has been revealed in all their munificent gifts and widespread activities.

"The entire Southwest, regardless of race or creed, is debtor to the Cullens whose philanthropies bless multitudes and whose example is an inspiration to all in the unselfish use of wealth."

Raymond P. Elledge, chairman of the board of trustees of the Methodist Hospital, said:

"The extraordinary generosity of Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Cullen in making a gift of \$1,000,000 to the Methodist Hospital will make possible the fruition of long range plans for the establishment of a great new hospital. This gift, coupled with the contributions of Methodists and their friends throughout the Texas Conference of the Methodist Church, will provide an institution of the first class for the service of humanity in this entire area. The splendid contribution of Mr. and Mrs. Cullen is but an exemplification of their intense interest in every deserving civic, educational and religious enterprise. This bountiful gift toward the work of healing is but an extension of their philanthropies, both public and private, that are so well known to our citizenry. Their greatness of spirit toward their responsibilities to public welfare should warm the heart of every Texan."

The \$2,000,000 given to both the Memorial and Hermann Hospitals will be used for their building programs. The three millions represent an outright gift to be used in whatever manner the hospitals may designate.

In the case of Memorial, the million-dollar gift will be used to erect and equip a nurses' home and school for 250 nurses, to be built on a plot of ground at the corner of Louisiana and Lamar, across the street from the hospital. The ground is a gift of Mrs. J. W. Neal.

Like all Houston hospitals, Memorial is understaffed, under-equipped. It has been turning patients away at the rate of 20 to 40 daily for the past four years. The Cullen gift makes possible the start of an expansion program involving additional beds and an extension to the hospital facing on Lamar.

An architect's drawing of the proposed Memorial Hospital building was shown at the meeting.

The gift to Hermann will be used to enlarge the hospital from a 250 to a 500-bed hospital; to enlarge the nurses' home to take care of 250 nurses instead of its present facilities for 150; to enlarge the outpatient department and the doctors' quarters.

In accepting the gift for the Episcopal church Bishop Quinn said:

"I want the citizenship of Houston to know how very grateful I am and the entire membership of the Episcopal church of this city is for the generous gift to us by Mr. and Mrs. Cullen for the building of our St. Luke's hospital."

Mr. and Mrs. Cullen have been noted for their philanthropies. They have donated to the University of Houston, having built the Roy Gustav Cullen Memorial Building there in memory of their son; to the Houston Symphony Orchestra, to the Girl Scouts and many other organizations.

Also attending the meeting at which the presentation was made were Robert Jolly, Memorial administrator; George W. Cottingham, editor of The Chronicle; Allan C. Bartlett, editor of The Press, and W. P. Hobby, publisher of The Post.

#### Veterans Administration Hospital

The Veterans Administration announced in 1947 its intention to construct a hospital in Houston to serve war veterans of this region. Plans for an \$18,000,000 hospital were drawn and the 205-acre site acquired at Almeda road and Old Spanish Trail, across the highway from the Naval Hospital. With World War II concluded, the Naval Hospital, which was opened in 1946, was operating at about half its bed capacity. This situation prompted Washington authorities in 1948 to transfer the Naval Hospital to the Veterans Administration, and plans for the new hospital were dropped. The Veterans Administration Hospital works in close collaboration with Texas Medical Center institutions.