Caius WW1 War Dead

January 1915 was a fairly quiet period for members of Caius who were serving in the Great War. From the start of the war, significant numbers of men were repatriated from the front for treatment and convalescence in the military hospitals. A substantial one (the 1st Eastern General) was established in Cambridge, staffed largely by the doctors from the old Addenbrooke’s Hospital. Because of the reputation of the college in medical education, there were many Caian medical students and trained doctors in the services and many of our medical students worked at the hospital acting as dressers, like Arthur M Horsey who died in 1917.

The 1st Eastern General initially opened at the Leys School, and then at Trinity College when school reconvened in September 1914. Trinity had wards opening onto the court with beds in the covered walkways but this, too, was inconvenient when the new term started in October. The prefabricated hospital subsequently found a more permanent home on land where later the University Library was built.

The 1st Eastern Hospital contained 1500 beds by the end of 1915, later rising to 1700. The wounded were ferried to the hospital from the station in fleets of ambulances serviced by Marshalls Garage in Trinity Street. The hospital itself had a post office, shop, tennis courts and a cinema for the use of staff and patients.