

WALLER COUNTY

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY JUDGE
HEMPSTEAD, TEXAS

In view of Dr. Sadler's remarks it would seem little else ^{need} be said. But it just might be helpful that I now make a few additional observations that have come to me in my official capacity.

First, this magnificent facility that lies before us is an established fact: the plan, the brick, the mortar, the modern equipment and the experienced personnel - they are all here. But to make a success of the undertaking more need be considered.

The underlying purpose has been to bring to our people in their hour of need, the most modern facilities so that to their greatest convenience, comfort and ^{least} expense, their sick bodies may be nursed back to health.

This high service has been undertaken on the reasonable assumption that not just a few, but all of our people be responsive to it and patronize this institution, giving to it their full loyalty and support. It is entitled to as much. I am confident it will receive no less.

In this connection a Womens Hospital Auxilliary should, ~~be~~ be organized to assist the Board and the Superintendent to carry on the work of the Hospital in the alleviation of pain and human suffering. Such an undertaking is a most worthy one to which we might well dedicate a portion of our time and means. In sickness, nothing is so important as health.

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As a rule, Hospitals do not make money. They are a service institution and it is not contemplated that this Hospital will be an exception. It is felt, however, that in the long run this Hospital can be self supporting. In the meantime tho it may well be necessary that County funds be used to make up a deficit. How much this defecit will be no one can say now with any certainty. For the year 1952 a contingent fund of \$20,000.00 has been set up for this purpose. We are equally as hopeful it will not require that much as we are that it will not requize more. But in large measure the amount of the deficit - the difference between income and out-go, the amount of tax money required to maintain this hospital, will be in direct proportion to the extent it is patronized by people who can afford to pay for services received.

There seems to be some impression abroad that this Hospital is for Charity patients only. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Any Hospital will do a reasonable amount of Charity, intentional or otherwise and in the course of its operation this Hospital too will perform services for which the patient, his relatives or friends cannot pay at the time. But charity patients - those who presently do not have th~~e~~ funds with which to pay for emergency or urgent treatment - will be admitted only on certificate of need by the attending physician and facilities available at the time. But where the need exists for such admissions it is the responsibility of the local

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community to supply it. It is definitely not the responsibility of some other city or county hospitals. They have been doing our charity work for us in the past. Isn't it high time that we assumed our own responsibility? But those receiving treatment for which they cannot pay should be impressed with their obligation to pay for such treatment when their health has been restored and they are able to pay. Their failure to do so might deprive some other worthy person of these facilities.

But suppose it should cost the County \$20,000.00 in 1952 to maintain this Hospital, what does that mean to the individual tax-payer?

85 percent of all advalorem taxes, taxes on property, in Waller County are paid by corporate interests and mineral interests - RR's, pipe lines, Power lines, Telephone lines and minerals. That means that the remaining 15 percent is paid by the run of the mill tax payer - taxes on cattle, land, business, etc. So 15 percent of \$20,000.00 would be \$3,000.00, ^{which} would be paid by John Doe. The population of the County being approx. 11,000 that means ^{less than} ~~about~~ 30¢ per person or \$1.50 for a family of 5. Would that be too much for an average family to pay to have such facilities as these available in time of need? That is a question for you to answer. Some may say but look at the number of people who pay no taxes. I say there are none who do not pay taxes directly or indirectly. If he is a land owner he pays taxes directly; if a tenant he pays indirectly.

For the success of this worthy undertaking I urge each

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and every one of our people to put a shoulder to the wheel and make of it a financial success as well as a success as a service institution. Who would exchange life or good health for any amount of wordly goods.

Dr. Brooks, on behalf of the Commissioners' Court of Waller County I hand you this key to the County Hospital Building and into the hands of you, your board, ~~mmx~~ the Hospital Superintent and her staff, we commit the operation of this institution, urging that our people be given the highest type of service at the lowest possible cost to the patient and the County.

Above is substance of address by
John C. Wiggins, County Judge on
occasion of dedication ceremonies,
Waller County Hospital, August, 1951
1951.
John C. Wiggins