

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	MNT.505
Historic Name:	Farren Memorial Hospital
Address:	330-340 Montague City Rd
City/Town:	Montague
Village/Neighborhood:	Montague City;
Local No:	
Year Constructed:	1900
Architectural Style(s):	Renaissance Revival;
Architect(s):	Eyre, Wilson Jr.; Farren, Bernard;
Use(s):	Abandoned or Vacant; Hospital;
Significance:	Architecture; Health Medicine;
Area(s):	
Designation(s):	
Building Materials:	Roof: Sheet Metal; Wall: Brick; Foundation: Stone, Cut;
Demolished	No



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

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FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

12-0-044
12-0-044a

Greenfield

MNT.505

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town/City: Montague

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Montague City

Photograph



Address: 330-340 Montague City Rd, Montague MA

Historic Name: Farren Memorial Hospital

Uses: Present: Vacant Care Center

Original: Hospital

Date of Construction: 1900

Source: *The Turners Falls Reporter*, November 7, 1900, 1.

Style/Form: Eclectic American Renaissance/Beaux Arts

Architect/Builder: Wilson Eyre, Jr./ Bernard Farren

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone

Wall/Trim: Brick Masonry

Roof: Originally tin panels (replaced with sheet metal).

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Major modern brick additions added in 1965 and 1975

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

- c. 1919 portico entrance and dependencies installed
- c. 1928 New masonry wing constructed on the south and east sides
- c. 1940 removal of cupola
- c. 1950 masonry addition to north side of main building; removal of wooden dependencies.
- c. 1965 Construction of new brick wing
- c. 1975 Wing added to 1965 addition
- c. 1990 Installation of new windows/doors/alterations

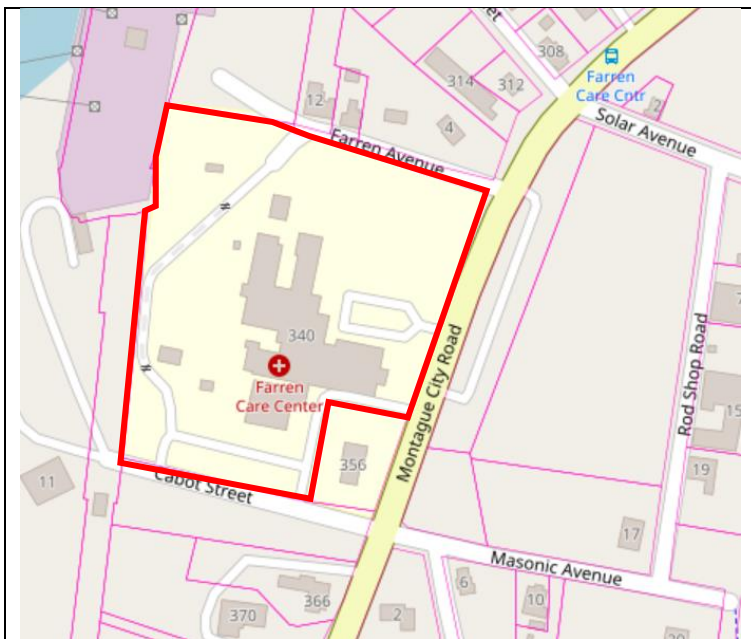
Condition: Fair

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 7.316

Setting: The east-facing Farren is set back off of Montague City Road and bound by Farren Ave on the north. On the west, is an open field and beyond that the Connecticut River. The south side of the newer addition is a large parking lot.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno

Organization: CSL Architectural Consulting

Date (*month / year*): 2/22

RECEIVED

FEB 10 2022

MASS. HIST. COMM.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MONTAGUE

330-340 MONTAGUE CITY RD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

MNT.505

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The original Farren Memorial Hospital, designed by Wilson Eyre, Jr, is an eclectic and restrained American Renaissance/Beaux-Arts building. Constructed in 1889-1900, the Farren is a two-and-a half-story brick building, with each story separated by intermediate cornices. A triangular pediment tops the projected entrance. In keeping with the Beaux-Arts style, among its features are symmetrical proportions, brick masonry construction, decorative pilasters, triangular pediment, arched windows and doors, an elevated first story and ornamental chimneys and cupola. It is a unique building within the town of Montague. Only the Neo-Classical Carnegie Library in Turners Falls, designed by William McClean, has similar stately features to those of the Farren.

The imposing original east-facing building is situated at the end of a circular drive approximately 150 feet from the entrance point on Montague City Road. On the west, is an open field and beyond that the Connecticut River. Non-contributing additions were attached in 1965 and 1975 to the original structure on the south side. A large parking lot is located on the further south side. To the north is a lot and a few recent residences.

Eyre's attention to detail is paramount in so many of the features. The central projected massing that traverses the entire building is arresting. Flanked by symmetrical three-bay, recessed, cross-gabled extensions on both sides, the Farren presents an imposing front elevation. Among the notable design elements are the rectangular corbels supporting the central cornice and the punctuated engaged pilasters that separate the windows, dividing the building into distinct bays. From photographs taken approximately 10 years after the construction, the existing blind windows atop the pilasters in the central mass were an original feature. The original architraves are still in place. Blind arches, still in evidence, framing rectangular double-hung windows were also part of Eyre's original intention. The low-sloped dormers are still present on the cross gabled roofs. The ocular window with a rusticated masonry surround beneath the central pediment is still in place, The colored glass and mullion pattern seems to have been altered at some point over the last 50 years. The large end chimneys with open-work masonry cowls are still existing, as are the blind ocular upper windows with rusticated surrounds on the middle-level of the cross-gabled extensions.

Photographs from 1910-1920 show two balconies at the upper level in the middle bays. These were removed at an unknown date. The most unfortunate destruction was the removal of the wooden ornamental lantern cupola with a spiral finial. Only the base of the dome remains. As noted, the main elements of the original building are still in place. As is common with under-valued historic buildings, many alterations have occurred over the last 120 years. The most notable was the construction of a new brick south and west wing in 1928 that doubled the square footage of the original building. Given the erection of this extension nearly a century ago, we deem this addition as part of the original building.

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Other significant alterations are the following: removal of the ornamental cupola; addition of a portico onto the main entrance; and a masonry addition to the north side of the main building .It has proven impossible to assign specific dates to these alterations with the exception of addition of the portico over the original entrance. A 1920 photograph shows that it existed, albeit in a different form from the present enclosure.

The most significant alteration was an addition built in 1965, funded in part by a \$400,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health. (*Public Health Service Grants and Awards by the National Institutes of Health*, 1964). The addition housed an 82-bed ancillary unit and a diagnostic and treatment center. The rectangular, brick masonry building addition is not harmonious with the original built form and is not a contributing resource. Additional construction occurred in 1975 when an extension of the 1965 wing was completed. This is not a contributing resource.

Despite these alterations, the original Farren Memorial Hospital remains significant and still presents itself as a distinctive and important structure

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Montague City was first settled in 1792 for the purposes of a navigation canal; it became a manufacturing center in 1885 when manufacturing firms moved in." Development in Montague City through brickyards, railroads, and the Farren Memorial Hospital was tied to efforts of industrialization in Turners Falls starting in the 1860s.

In the late 1880s, Bernard Farren, a leading citizen of the town, pushed for the creation of a community hospital, which was completed in 1900. An account of the preparations appeared in the *Turners Falls Reporter* on April 13, 1899:

"B. N. Farren, Esq. for forty years one of the leading citizens of the county, a man of exquisite culture and fine tastes, well-traveled, with the broad mind that comes of wide observation of all countries and people, has decided to create and endow for the benefit of mankind locally a hospital that shall be the home and shelter of the invalid poor without fee or without price, or the refuge of the well-to-do sick who may desire the best that is vouchsafed mankind in treatment and care at a commensurate compensation. It will be unlike anything of the kind usually set up ostensibly for the good of our fellow man in that it will be devised, maintained and controlled in the wisest manner without bickerings, fretful jealousies or unwieldy management and will be the poor man's haven of rest in the time of his direst need – sickness – without thought or bother of its cost. Mr. Farren asks no favors in disclosing his plans. He simply asked the town to mend the road above what used to be the Volney Warner place to his own residence, a wretched piece of highway, and restore the county road to its true location near the electric railroad tracks, so that travel might be farther diverted from a building that must be kept quiet, and surrounded with beautiful lawns. The interested gentleman will buy, if he can, the small building now owned by the Burnham heir's and move it away from the premises, as will the Rugg store be got out of the way. He has plans already drawn for the buildings he intends to erect and for such changes in the Oakman mansion as may be necessary. He will come to Montague City very soon and will begin work at once, if nothing unforeseen interferes with his plans.

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An article in the June 17, 1899. *Turners Falls Reporter* reported on the progress and the work of the prominent architect Wilson Eyre, Jr.:

“B.N. Farren is quietly perfecting his plans for the hospital he will build at Montague City, and expects to begin work on the structure in the next few weeks. Yesterday he started a gang of men getting out stone on the fine ledge in his meadow below the Montague City railroad station under the leadership of the very expert stonemen. Patrick Cunningham and Michael Sullivan. Mr. Farren’s **architect, Wilson Eyre, Jr.** of Philadelphia has just come to consult with this principal as to details of construction. The Burnham House, adjoining the Oakman mansion, has been purchased and will be moved off as soon as possible so that work can be commenced without delay.”

The hospital was dedicated on October 23, 1900: “Dedication day, Oct. 23, 1900, was one of the most notable events in the history of the town of Montague. It was important in the history of Franklin County too, too, for the sick from all towns are given kind and tender care by the nurses and Sisters of Providence who manage the institution. Formal presentation was made by Bishop Corrigan of New York, a personal friend of the donor. ... The hospital, at the time of the dedication, was completely equipped- but was not endowed.” *1754-1954 Town of Montague* book.

The motivation for the creation of the hospital was apparently two-fold. First, it was empowered as a memorial to Bernard’s son, B. Frank Farren, who died soon after his graduation from Seton Hall college. A second reason for building the hospital was critical need.

“ ... His tender heart had also been often stirred by the sufferings of men in his employ who had been injured while in the performance of their duties in the rough work in which they were engaged, and fully realized the want of suitable provision for their care and comfort while in the surgeon’s care. He had even seen his own brother, William, go to his death on one of these sad occasions. After much thought, he decided to erect and endow as a memorial to his son, B. Frank Farren, a hospital which should be open to the public without regard to the patient’s creed or religion.”

Farren Memorial operated as an independent facility until 1984, when it was joined with Providence Hospital and Mercy Hospital, both western Massachusetts facilities, into Providence Systems and then Sisters of Providence Health Systems. Farren Memorial Hospital operated as a general care facility until 1988, when it was converted to a long-term care facility. The occupied, fully functional facility was bought in 2021 by Trinity Health New England and closed soon after. The hospital is currently vacant but being minimally maintained.

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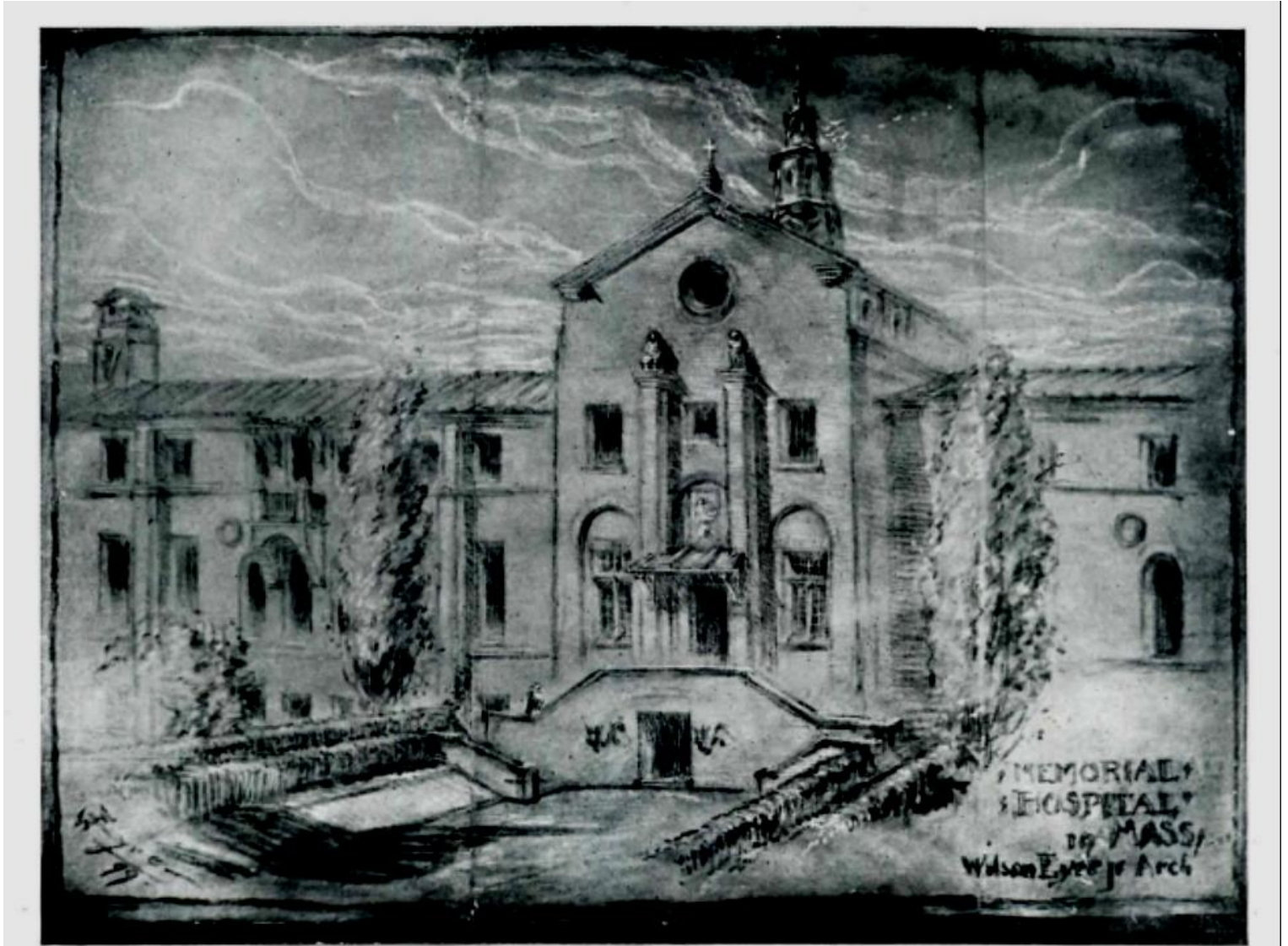
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Figures and Photographs



Drawing by Wilson Eyre. Farren Memorial Hospital, Wilson Eyre, Architect.

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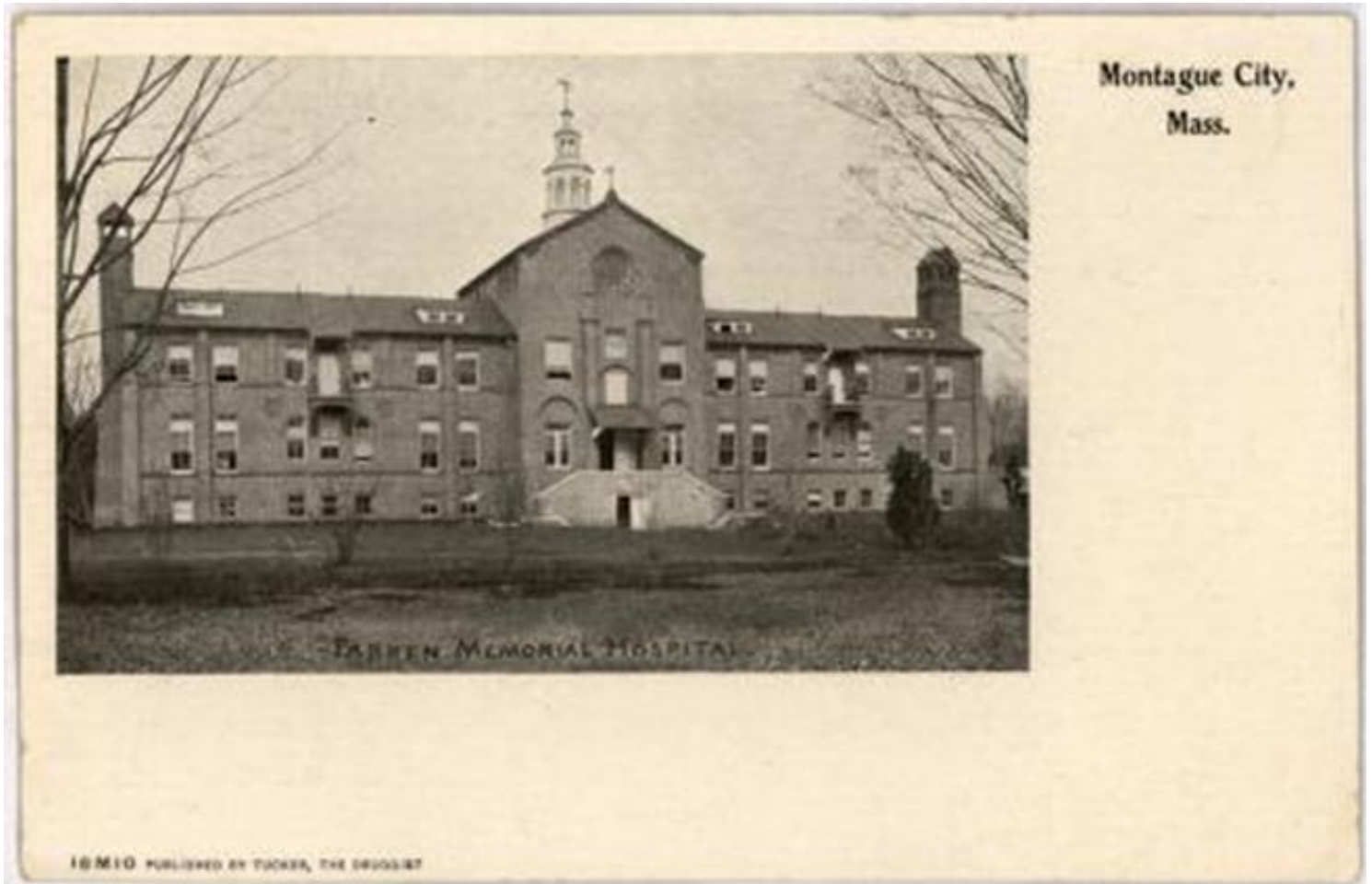
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c. 1910

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c.1910

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c. 1911



Farren Lobby c. 1910

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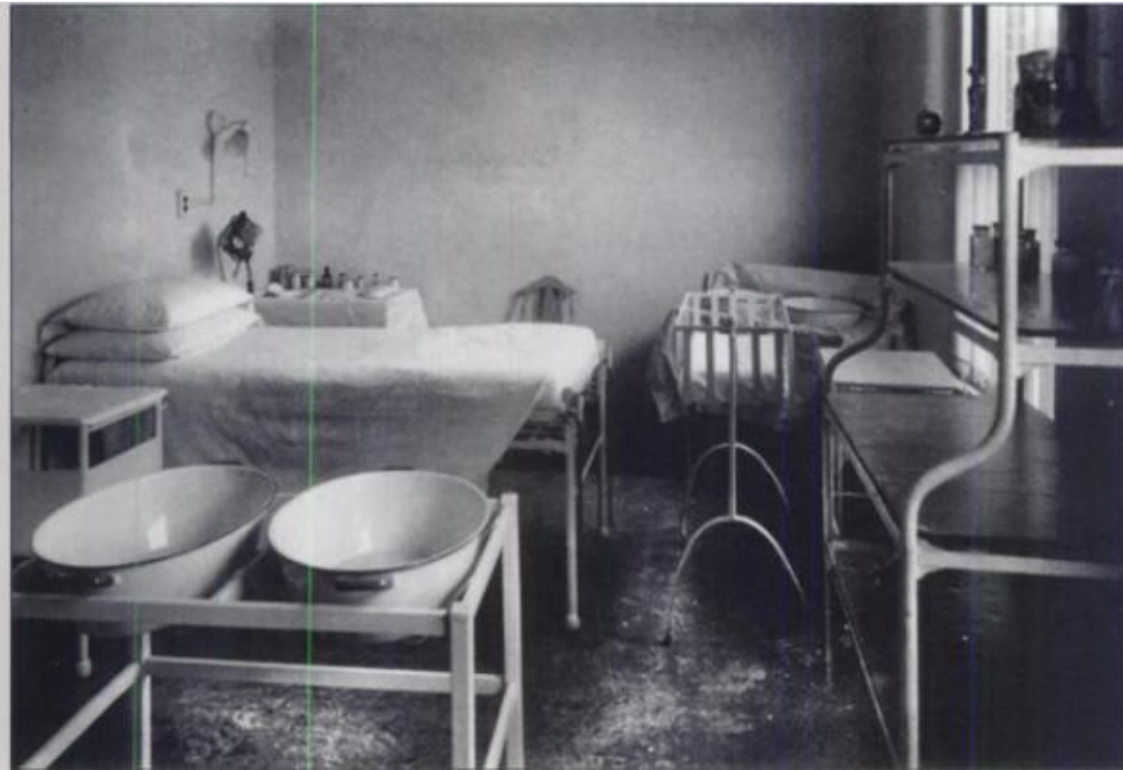
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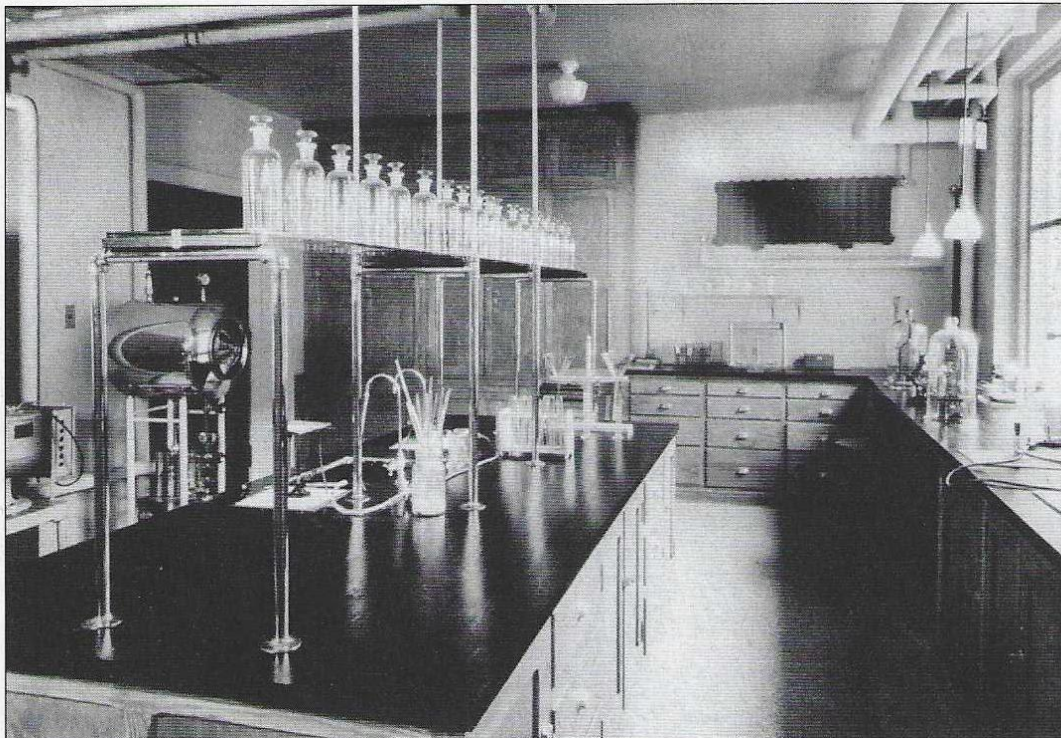
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c. 1914 Maternity Wing



c. 1929 Laboratory

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c. 1927 Common Ward Room



Chapel (2020 photo)

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February 2022 photo of entire complex. East elevations.

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Original Building (February 2022 photo)

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Farren Memorial Hospital ca. 1920

Note the addition of wooden dependencies and new front entrance.

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