

CHRISTMAS AND SURGERY ATTENDANCES AT THE WILLIAM BUDD HEALTH CENTRE

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It is common experience that the volume of work tends to decrease during the holiday months. As most workers have holidays with pay, this is to be expected in the summer time when the weather is kinder and in the short Whitsun and Easter breaks. In December, however, the weather is usually bad and respiratory infections are common yet the approach of the short Christmas holiday reduces the number of people who come to our consulting rooms. This is confirmed by the attendance register at the William Budd Health Centre.

The Knowle West Housing estate has a population of over 30,000 belonging for the most part to the same social group and enjoying a high level of employment, including a large proportion of married women. About 12,000 are patients of the general practitioners at the centre. Attendances are recorded at each morning and evening session in age groups 0-5, 5-15, 15-65 and over 65. For this paper only the working population, i.e., the 15-65 age group has been taken: Sundays, Christmas day and Boxing day are not included as the numbers then are small and noted as emergency attendances.

The figures for the three winter months, November, December and January have been recorded as graphs. Figure 1 shows the daily attendances for 1955-1956. A glance is sufficient to confirm what we all know, that Monday as a rule is the busiest day. The fall in attendances begins about the second week in December, is more marked in men than in women, and is followed by a sharp rise immediately after Boxing day.

Figure 2 (a) (b) (c) shows the weekly attendances for three consecutive years with the decline in numbers following much the same pattern. The rise for the week after Boxing day is actually much greater than appears because, while all the other figures are for six days attendances, this one is for four days only.

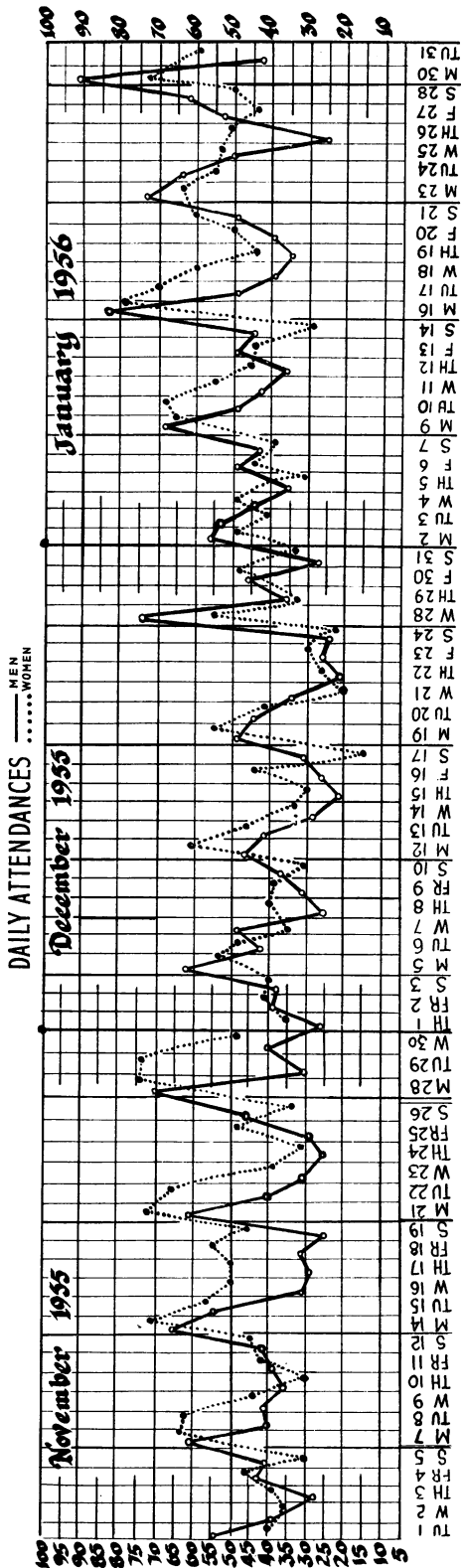
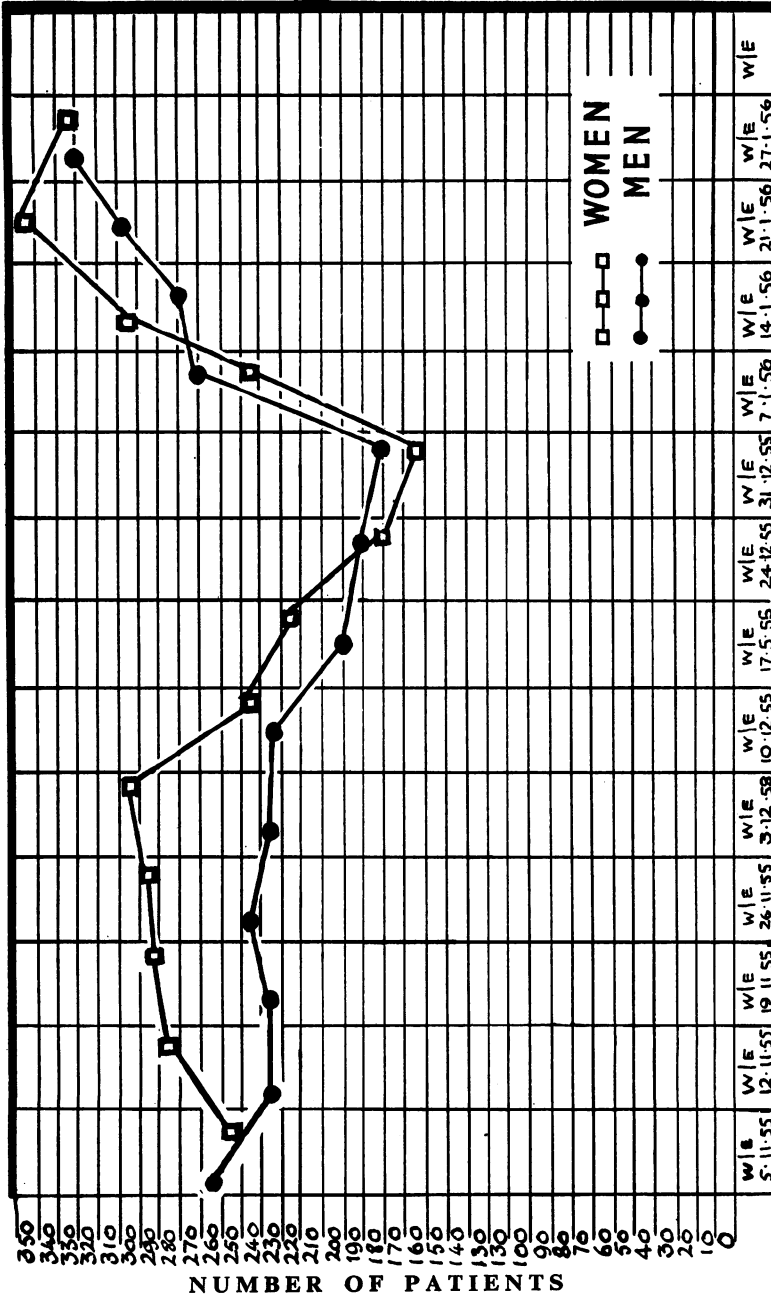


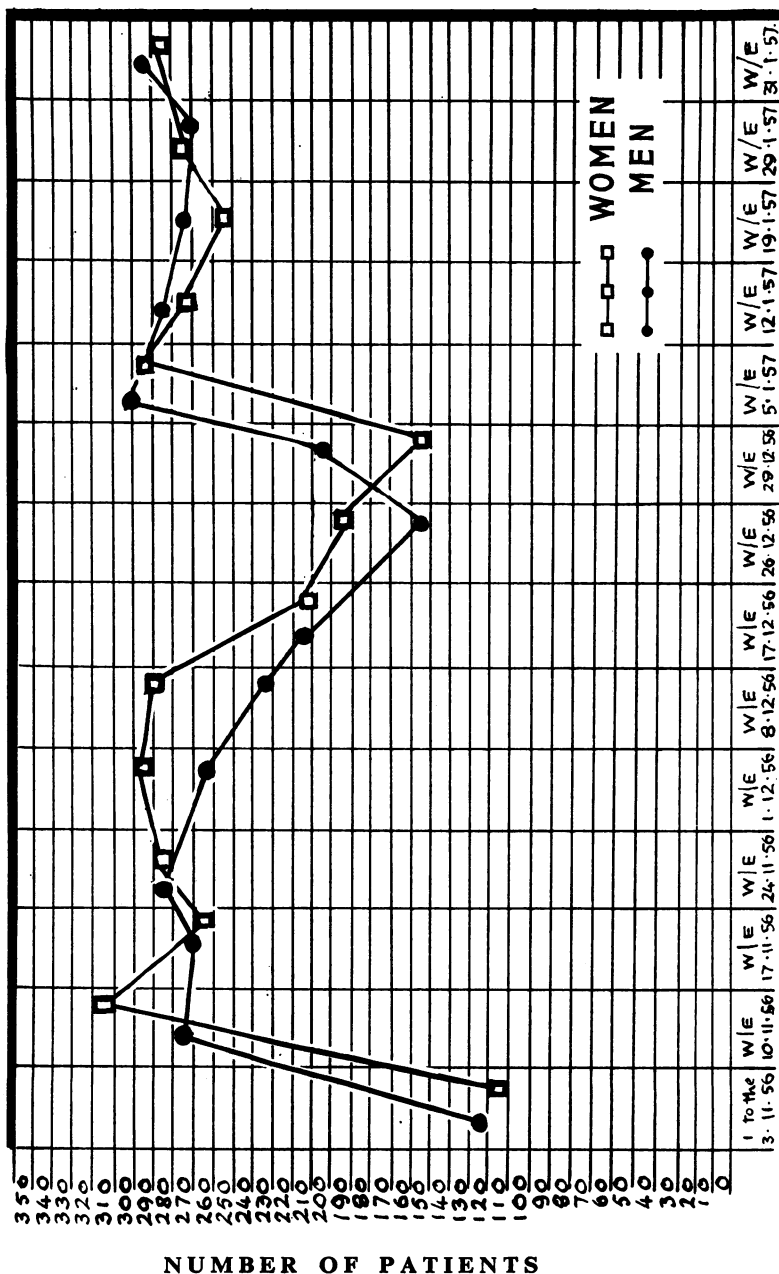
Figure 1. Variations in daily attendances at the William Budd Health Centre. November, December 1955 to January 1956



WEEK ENDING

Figure 2(a)

Weekly attendances showing the marked fall in numbers with the approach of Christmas and the sharp rise immediately afterwards



WEEK ENDING

Figure 2(b)

Weekly attendances showing the marked fall in numbers with the approach of Christmas and the sharp rise immediately afterwards

