The Manchester Royal Infirmary was established by Charles White and local industrialist Joseph Bancroft on 24th June 1752. It started out as a cottage hospital in Garden Street, Withy Grove.

The first out-patient to be treated was John Boardman, aged 22. He had been suffering from scrofulous for 15 months (a skin disorder commonly known as King’s Cure, the belief being that the only cure was to be touched by a King). He was treated and eventually cured and discharged on 23rd October.

The first in-patient admitted was 12 year old Benjamin Dooley; suffering from 'sordid ulcers of the leg'. As the hospital only housed 12 beds it was soon apparent that larger premises would be required. The Lord of the Manor, Sir Oswald Mosely, donated land at the top of Market Street (now known as Piccadilly Gardens) and a new hospital was opened on Monday 9th June 1755. The hospital grew in size over the years to accommodate a Lunatic Hospital, public baths and out-patients department.

In 1908 the MRI moved to its present site on Oxford Road, which required the clearance of a number of large houses. The location was chosen due to its proximity to the medical education department at Owen's College. It was designed by the architects Edwin T Hall and John Brooke.

King Edward VIII officially opened the new building, on 6th July 1909. He was so impressed with the new facilities that he knighted hospital Chairman William Cobbett on the spot.

Notable developments during this time included the establishment in 1909 of a radiology department led by Dr A E Barclay and the founding of the Holt Radium Institute in 1921.
The site continued to expand with the addition of a nurses’ home in 1930 and a private patients’ home in 1937. During the Second World War the hospital was hit twice by overnight bombing; parts of the nurses’ home were damaged during the first incident on 11th October 1940 and the tower of the teaching block was damaged on 23rd December 1940, resulting in its collapse the following day.

The MRI continued to grow with the establishment of the National Health Service in 1948 and a neurological block was opened in 1950. In the latter half of the 20th century the hospital developed closer ties with The University of Manchester and set up specialist departments in neurology, orthopaedic surgery, cardiology, clinical haematology and oto-laryngology.

Despite the continued growth, some parts of the Infirmary were starting to show their age and major rebuilding took place with a new surgical complex and an A&E Department opening during the 1980s. The MRI became part of Central Manchester Healthcare Trust with the reorganisation of the NHS in 1991.

Over the years the MRI has hosted many medical breakthroughs, including the first in the UK to carry out 1,000 cochlear implants. The Manchester Diabetes Centre was established in April 1988 and was the first of its kind in the UK and we were also the first centre to host a dedicated Blackout Clinic.

The MRI, together with our Royal Manchester Children’s Hospital, are the only hospitals in the region which undertake kidney transplantation and in 2008 the MRI celebrated 4,000 transplants over its 40 years of service.

In August 2009, a number of our services moved to the new wing of the Manchester Royal Infirmary (pictured above) including Renal in-patient wards, Haematology Unit, Short Stay Ward and two of our Acute Medicine wards.

On 23rd March 2012 the new MRI wing, together with the other new hospitals on the Oxford Road site (Royal Manchester Children’s Hospital, Saint Mary’s Hospital and Manchester Royal Eye Hospital, were officially opened by Her Majesty The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh.