

**CENTRAL ISLIP STATE HOSPITAL.
CENTRAL ISLIP, LONG ISLAND, N. Y.**

In 1887 Dr. A. E. MacDonald, general superintendent of the New York City asylums, suggested, as a means of relieving the dangerous overcrowding of these institutions, the establishment of a farm colony, where able-bodied chronic insane patients could have plenty out-of-door living, exercise and occupation.

This suggestion being approved by the Mayor of New York and his Commissioners of Public Charities, a tract of 1000 acres was secured at Central Islip, 43 miles from the city, at a cost of \$25,000. Architects Withers & Dickson, of New York, prepared plans for three groups, one of the groups having, in addition to the dining room, a small bakery and kitchen. These buildings, planned for temporary use, were completed in the early spring of 1889, the intention being that they would be replaced by brick buildings if the experiment proved successful. (They have been renovated from time to time and are still in use.) Dr. H. C. Evarts was retained as physician in charge, being assisted by Dr. J. T. W. Rowe and Dr. John Caldwell, all being transferred from the asylum at Ward's Island. On May 6, 1889, the first draft of 40 able-bodied men patients was sent from Ward's Island, followed during the month by 100 additional patients. With their help some 15 or 20 acres of the land were cleared during the summer and fall of 1889.

The experience of the succeeding three years demonstrated the complete success of the experiment. The patients not only gained in mental and physical health, but sufficient quantities of all kinds of vegetables were raised for self-support.

The first draft of women patients, 40 in number, was transferred to Central Islip from the institutions on Blackwell's and Hart's Islands on September 29, 1892, and were assigned to work as housekeepers and to other work suitable for women.

In 1893 contracts were let for three groups of one-story brick pavilions, each group consisting of three detached wards and a dining room. On January 1, 1895, Dr. George A. Smith, superintendent of the Hart's Island (New York City) Asylum, became the first superintendent of the farm colony, Doctor Evarts being transferred to Hart's Island as physician in charge. Dr. Rowe had resigned the

previous year, his place having been filled by Dr. H. M. McKay, formerly of Hart's Island, who was now the only assistant, Dr. Caldwell having resigned to go into private practice. Dr. McKay one month later exchanged places with Dr. George B. Campbell, of Hart's Island (now medical examiner of the Bureau of Deportation). At the end of that year the three new groups were completed, furnished and equipped ; 700 patients were transferred from the institutions on Ward's and Hart's islands, and the medical staff was increased to four assistants, the hospital census being 1000.

No time was lost in placing these patients at work clearing land and laying out lawns, gardens, roads and planting trees.

On February 28, 1896, by act of the Legislature, the New York City asylums for the insane were transferred to state care, under the name of the Manhattan State Hospitals, with three divisions, namely: Manhattan State Hospital East (male department), Manhattan State Hospital West (female department), on Ward's Island; and Manhattan State Hospital at Central Islip for both sexes. At that date there were 30 buildings at Central Islip. In 1912, not including a group of four in process of construction, there are 118.

The census has increased from 300 to over 4400 and the medical staff from superintendent and one assistant to 29 assistants.

On November 1, 1897, Dr. M. B. Heyman was transferred from Hart's Island to this hospital as acting first assistant physician, vice Dr. George B. Campbell, transferred to Ward's Island. On December 1, 1901, Dr. Heyman was promoted to first assistant physician, a position he still holds. In 1900 acute cases were received from New York City and sections of Long Island, the average admissions for the year being between 1500 and 1600 patients.

On June 1, 1905, by act of Legislature, the name of this hospital was changed to Central Islip State Hospital.

The hospital consists of two colonies, the north and the south. The north colony consists of 21 one-story, disconnected buildings, six congregate dining rooms and one central kitchen; the south colony consists of 23 buildings, with connecting corridors, two congregate dining rooms and two kitchens.

In 1897 three similar one-story brick pavilions were added to the group already mentioned. These buildings are all disconnected. There is one large central kitchen for this colony, from which food is distributed to the several dining rooms, each dining room being equipped with heated serving tables.

In 1911 there was completed a new group called the Smith Group for 600 patients, 300 men and 300 women, consisting of six two-story buildings, the second floor being used for sleeping quarters, the first for recreation and bathing; and a central kitchen with two serving rooms and six dining rooms, the serving and dining rooms situated on each side of the kitchen. This allows a separate dining room for each pavilion by which perfect classification of the patients at their meals as well as in their separate pavilions is possible.

There is a separate central heating and electric light plant for the entire north colony. There is also a two-story attendants' home connected with this colony, having a capacity for 100 attendants.

Situated among the pine trees back of the south colony is the tuberculosis pavilion, with capacity for 100.

In 1911 there was completed an attendants' home, called the Viele Home, a three-story brick building, with accommodations for 216 employees; the north wing for the men, the south wing for the women, and the central portion for married quarters. The first floor of the central portion is arranged for club or recreation rooms for the employees.

There was also completed in 1911 a physicians' home, called "The Hoffman," a two-story brick building, with mansard roof, with accommodations for 14 physicians, each physician having a study and a bedroom; the building being equipped with hot and cold water and private dining room and sitting room. This building is situated midway between the two colonies.

There is a separate heating and electric plant for the entire south colony.

There is a central administration building for the entire institution situated between the two colonies; one central store-room situated at the north colony, and one large laundry, which does the work of the entire institution.

A building for a mortuary and pathological laboratory was completed in 1909. The mortuary has a small cold storage plant arranged for keeping four bodies at a time. It is also equipped with an autopsy room with complete paraphernalia. The laboratory is equipped with all appliances and will take care of the pathological work for an indefinite period.

There are three miles of railroad track, inclusive of all switches, connecting with the main railroad, by which supplies are brought into the grounds and distributed, the hospital owning the engine and cars which distribute all supplies to the different centers of the hospital. The distance from the last building of the extreme end of the north colony to that of the south colony is two miles. The entire hospital is equipped with a telephone system.

Of the 1000 acres, 600 are cleared for lawns and cultivation.

The water system consists of a series of driven wells, pumped into stand-pipes and distributed by gravity. There are two systems, one at the north and one at the south colony. Every building is equipped with stand-pipes, hose and chemical fire extinguishers. An up-to-date fire department, under the supervision of a trained fireman from the New York City Fire Department, is maintained, the fire department being equipped with steam fire engine, hosecart and hook and ladder truck. The fire-house is situated near the central portion of the hospital proper.

The sewerage system is by broad irrigation, consisting in the collection of sewerage in tanks by gravity and distribution by pumping through iron pipes, which extend over several acres of property. By means of hydrants connected with these pipes, 150 feet apart, the distribution over the surface is governed, the hydrants being changed every day so as to prevent pooling. Some of these hydrants have hose attached so as to better direct the discharge. There are two systems, one at each colony.

Of the many men attached to the medical staff at various times, the name of Dr. A. E. MacDonald stands pre-eminent. After he ceased to be general superintendent he became superintendent of the Manhattan State Hospital East on Ward's Island, at which institution he served for a number of years and finally resigned to take a rest from his more than 30 years of arduous work in the department. Dr. MacDonald died in the City of New York on December 7, 1906.

Dr. George A. Smith, who was transferred to the hospital as its first superintendent, still occupies that position.

Dr. James V. May, who entered the service as junior assistant physician on September 1, 1902, and who subsequently became first assistant physician at the Binghamton State Hospital, and later superintendent of the Matteawan State Hospital, was appointed president of the State Commission in Lunacy by Governor Dix on December 30, 1911.

Dr. Walter G. Ryon, who entered the hospital November 1, 1897, as junior assistant physician, and who later became first assistant physician at the Willard State Hospital, was appointed by the State Commission in Lunacy as its medical inspector on January 17, 1912.

Dr. George B. Campbell, who was on the staff for a number of years acting as first assistant physician, was appointed by the State Commission in Lunacy to membership on the State Board of Alienists. He was later appointed first assistant physician at the Utica State Hospital.

Dr. M. B. Heyman, who came to the hospital by transfer from the institution on Hart's Island, November 1, 1897, as acting first assistant physician, was regularly appointed to the position December 1, 1901, and is still serving in that capacity and as assistant superintendent.

Reprinted from *The Institutional Care of the Insane in the United States and Canada*, By Henry Mills Hurd, William Francis Drewry, Richard Dewey, Charles Winfield Pilgrim, George Adler Blumer, American Medico-Psychological Association. Committee on a History of the Institutional Care of the Insane, Thomas Joseph Workmann Burgess, Volume 3, The John Hopkins Press, Baltimore, Maryland, 1916, Pages 227 – 231.
<<http://books.google.com/>>