

**LONG ISLAND STATE HOSPITAL.
BROOKLYN, N. Y.**

Prior to 1824 the town system of caring for the poor appears to have prevailed throughout the State of New York, except in New York City. Chapter 331 of the laws of 1824 provided for the establishment of county poorhouses and the appointment of superintendents of the poor. This act was made mandatory on the part of certain counties of the state, but was left discretionary with others. The County of Kings was one of those exempt from its provisions. At that time the town of Brooklyn maintained a poorhouse of its own and presumably cared for most of the poor in the county. The milder class of lunatics was kept in the town poorhouse, and those that could not be cared for there were boarded in the Bloomingdale Asylum. That arrangement continued until February 20, 1830, when the Board of Supervisors appointed three superintendents of the poor, who entered upon their duties the 7th of April following. On that day they rented from the town of Brooklyn the poorhouse belonging to the town for a term of one year. At that time there were in the Bloomingdale Asylum three insane persons boarded at the expense of the town of Brooklyn. On the 12th of the same month these superintendents of the poor purchased a farm, consisting of 70 acres, in the town of Flatbush, and shortly afterward constructed a county poorhouse, to which the paupers in the Brooklyn almshouse were removed on April 9, 1832. As had been the custom under the town system, those insane persons who could not be cared for comfortably at the almshouse were boarded at the expense of the county, at Bloomingdale.

On August 14, 1837, the superintendents of the poor entered into a contract for the erection of a lunatic asylum and workhouse on the county farm for the sum of \$2070. This building was completed the following spring and on May 6, 1838, the four lunatics then at Bloomingdale were removed thereto. The superintendents appear to have been progressive, for on May 23, 1838, they gave orders "to have a shower bath constructed in the lunatic hospital." This building appears to have served the needs of the insane of the county for about six years. Chapter 203 of the laws of 1844 provided for the erection of a new lunatic asylum in the County of Kings, at an expenditure not to exceed \$6000. Just when the new lunatic asylum was completed there are no available records to show, but about eight years later it appears to have become inadequate for the accommodation of the insane of the county, and chapter 278 of the laws of 1852 authorized the county to create a loan not to exceed \$50,000 for the extension of hospital accommodation in connection with the

almshouse in said county. This evidently was intended for asylum as well as hospital purposes, for chapter 255 of the laws of 1853 authorized the Board of Supervisors to raise money by a further loan of \$50,000 to be applied in completion of the hospital and lunatic asylum on the county farm. A still further loan of \$35,000 for the lunatic asylum was provided for by chapter 92, laws of 1855. The lunatic asylum last referred to is the one now in use in the County of Kings, and is known as the Long Island State Hospital.

This building was planned to consist of an administration building and four wings, two on either side, but when opened in April, 1854, for the reception of patients, only one wing on either side had been erected. On April 30 of that year the asylum contained 81 men and 97 women patients. Dr. T. M. Ingraham was the first superintendent (or resident physician, as the position was called until 1873, when it was changed to medical superintendent), but his name does not appear in any of the asylum records extant. Dr. E. S. Blanchard was resident physician from August 1, 1854, until August 1, 1855. He was succeeded by Dr. Robert B. Baisely, who held the position until May, 1857. Dr. Baisely was succeeded by Dr. John P. Lansing, who in turn was succeeded by Dr. Edwin R. Chapin on May 7, 1858, who held the position of medical superintendent until November, 1873. During his incumbency the number of patients increased from 268 on July 31, 1858, to 718 on July 31, 1873. Four additional wings were added to the hospital, two on either side, the first two being occupied on June 1, 1861, and the latter two on July 1, 1869. In the spring of 1864 what was known as the old asylum building, erected in 1844, afterwards called "The Lodge," was removed to the rear of the new building and occupied by female patients.

Dr. Chapin was succeeded in November, 1873, by Dr. Carlos F. MacDonald, who held the position until the 10th of August following, when he was succeeded by Dr. James A. Blanchard, who was followed by Dr. R. L. Parsons on August 1, 1877, and he by Dr. John C. Shaw on August 1, 1878. In January, 1877, what was known as the Hospital for Incurables was fitted up for 267 patients. The class of cases was apparently composed of dotards, idiots and epileptics. It was maintained as a separate institution until May, 1884, when it became a part of the lunatic asylum and was called "The Annex."

In 1885 a farm was purchased at St. Johnland and 56 patients were transferred thereto before the close of the following year. Upon the resignation of Dr. Shaw, February 1, 1887, Dr. John A. Arnold

was appointed general medical superintendent, and Dr. G. Newton Ferris was made superintendent of the Flatbush Asylum, while Dr. D. A. Harrison was placed in charge of the St. Johnland branch.

In 1890 Dr. Harrison was succeeded at St. Johnland by Dr. John L. Macumber, and Dr. Walter S. Fleming was appointed medical superintendent at Flatbush. Dr. Arnold resigned as general medical superintendent March 1, 1892, and Dr. Fleming as medical superintendent September 1, 1892. He was succeeded by Dr. William E. Sylvester.

On January 1, 1891, the name of St. Johnland was changed to Kings Park. On July 1, 1895, the institution known as the Kings County Lunatic Asylum at Flatbush and Kings Park became the Long Island State Hospital, the portion at Kings Park being transferred to the state for the consideration of one dollar, while the Flatbush institution was leased to the state for five years with the privilege of renewal in consideration of the same sum. This lease has been renewed and the state continues its occupancy of the premises.

Dr. Sylvester resigned as general superintendent on June 30, 1897, and was succeeded by Dr. O. M. Dewing. A law passed in 1900, which took effect April 24 of that year, made each department of the hospital a distinct institution, that at Brooklyn being known as the Long Island State Hospital, Flatbush, and the one at Kings Park known as the Long Island State Hospital, Kings Park. Dr. Dewing then became superintendent of the Kings Park State Hospital, and Dr. R. M. Elliott superintendent of the hospital in Brooklyn. Dr. Dewing succeeded Dr. Elliott on June 1, 1904, and held the position until his death March 15, 1910. He was followed on June 1, 1910, by Dr. William L. Russell, who was succeeded by Dr. Robert E. Doran on May 1, 1911. Dr. Doran died September 23, 1911, and Dr. Elbert M. Somers was appointed as his successor on January 18, 1912.

The state abandoned the use of the so-called Annex Building in 1906 and thus decreased the capacity of the Flatbush establishment to 655 beds. In 1911-12 the State Commission in Lunacy appropriated \$100,000 for the complete remodeling of the main building and wings to make them fireproof and to remove the archaic, gloomy and forbidding features which they contained. Although greatly crowded at the present time, the wards have been modernized to such an extent that the interior of the institution is on the whole pleasant and attractive. The use of the grounds and buildings of the abandoned rifle range at Creedmoor, a few miles distant from Brooklyn, during

seven months of the year affords a pleasant diversion from hospital routine for patients who are able to travel thereto. The present plan of the state authorities is to increase slightly the buildings of this institution and to convert it into an adequate reception hospital for the insane of Kings County, transferring to a nearby county branch, to be acquired, patients found to be appropriate therefor.

After several years of successful negotiations on the part of the city and the state, a law was finally enacted and approved by the Governor, August 8, 1913, authorizing the transfer of the Long Island State Hospital, which had been under lease from the city, to the State of New York in exchange for the state's interests in the property of the Society for the Reformation of Juvenile Delinquents on Randall's Island and the sunken meadows adjacent thereto. This act was approved by the sinking fund of the City of New York April 6, 1913, and the exchange of properties took place in 1914. The land of the Long Island State Hospital, together with the Potter's Field included in the agreement of transfer, comprises 35 acres.

CREEDMOOR.

In 1908 by act of the Legislature (chapter 473, laws of 1908) the rifle range at Creedmoor became available to the state for use as a site for the Long Island State Hospital. The area comprises approximately 195 acres, and is situated in the town of Queens, 13 miles from the main hospital.

Creedmoor, however, was not used for hospital purposes until the spring of 1912, when on April 13 five men and one woman patient, in charge of attendants, were transferred there. The number of patients was soon increased to 37, who continued to reside permanently in the Seventh Regiment building, which has been equipped with heating and lighting facilities. Fifty acres of land are under cultivation and the vegetables and farm produce raised for the use of the hospital have materially lessened the necessity of buying food supplies in the open market. Since it has not been settled whether the state will use this site for the construction of hospital buildings, it continues to be utilized as a farm colony branch of the hospital.

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