

Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Genesee, Greene, Hamilton & Herkimer Counties 1883

Essex County. - The poor-house of this county was visited July 20, 1883, accompanied by Commissioner Foster and the State Commissioner in Lunacy. Its inmates at that date numbered 64, of whom nine - four men and five women - were insane. The others were mostly aged, infirm, idiotic or feeble-minded. There are no special accommodations for the insane, these being domiciled with the other inmates. We selected two cases and recommended their removal to State asylums as follows: To the State Lunatic Asylum: **James Kerr**, a single man, 27 years old, admitted May 13, 1882; was at large in the yard with a billet of wood, weighing 10 or 12 pounds, chained to his ankle; form of insanity, melancholia; clean in his person and habits, not noisy, but inclined to run away, and considered dangerous. To the Binghamton State Asylum: **Roxana Winter**, a married woman, 60 years of age, an inmate nine years transferred from the State Lunatic Asylum; is subject to paroxysms of great excitement and violence, and at such times is filthy in her person; was found locked up in a dark room, with no ventilation except from a small inner grated window. These cases, Superintendent Holt informs me, were removed in accordance with our recommendations, August 7, 1883. The other insane were quiet, harmless cases, and said to be generally good laborers. The garden, a large plot of land, giving promise of an abundance of vegetables, was being tilled entirely by an insane man. The buildings throughout were clean, and the grounds in good order.

Franklin County. - Commissioner Foster and the State Commissioner in Lunacy accompanied me in a visit to the poor-house of this county, July 23, 1883. It then had 65 inmates. One of these was a quiet, aged insane man, and nine were insane women. We advised the removal of two of the latter to the Willard Asylum, viz.: **Margaret Sullivan**, admitted October 15, 1878, then 30 years of age, having never been at any State asylum; is a noisy, violent, filthy patient, and tears her clothing; was confined in a nearly dark ill-ventilated room, with strong iron grated doors, sitting on a bed with no clothing, except an old dress thrown over her shoulders, and it was said she is thus confined most of the time. **Ellen Premo**, a congenital, feeble-minded insane epileptic, 17 years old, an inmate about one year; is destructive, violent and noisy, and most of the time confined or secluded.

This county has 26 chronic insane at the Willard Asylum, and it has been its policy heretofore to retain no excited nor violent cases in the poor-house. It has no proper accommodations for this purpose, nor are attendants employed. We advised that the use of the cell-like, iron door rooms, be discontinued for the confinement of either insane or other inmates, and that, hereafter, no insane requiring special attention be retained. The cases, other than those referred to, were quiet and orderly, and we saw no necessity, at present, to advise further removals. Superintendent Hadley informs me that **Margaret Sullivan** and **Ellen Premo** were removed to the Willard Asylum, in accordance with our recommendation, August 8, 1883.

Fulton County. - The poor-house of this county was visited November 19, 1883. It was said then to contain 61 inmates, about equally divided between the sexes. Of these, three men and two women were classed as insane. I saw and examined these cases, but there were none requiring special mention. All were of the chronic class, and most of them had long been inmates. They were in the association of the other paupers, and, it was stated, receive the same care and attention. There were two children in the institution, both boys, aged respectively twelve and fourteen years. The former is congenitally deformed in one of his hands, and is also weak-minded; and the latter was a truant from his home, having before been an inmate. Among the others, was a feeble-minded young woman, **Jane Birdseye**, 25 years old, recently admitted, being *enceinte*. She had already borne two children outside of the institution. I advised her removal, when in proper condition, to the Newark Custodial Asylum. My visit was in the early evening, and in the absence of the keeper. The house does not admit of classification, nor even of a separation of the sexes, except when confined in their rooms. The inmates were generally of a low order of intellect, and many of them were quite aged and infirm.

Genesee County. - Visited May 1, 1883. The number of insane in the asylum department of the poor-house then was men, 9; women, 12; total 21. Of these, six men and four women were paying patients, and three men and eight women were chargeable to the county. Two deaths had occurred since January 1, 1883. The county has four insane at the Willard Asylum, but none in any of the State hospitals. Of the insane in the care of the county, three of the men, it is said, labor upon the farm, and one woman assists in domestic work. One

male and one female attendant are employed. The asylum building is greatly dilapidated, and has no proper conveniences for its purposes. I made a careful examination of all the insane present, and recommended to the superintendents, in writing, the removal of the following cases to the Willard Asylum, viz.: **William L. Spaulding**, excited and violent, suffering from injuries of the face, inflicted by **George Wicks**, a fellow patient; **Chauncey Hayden**, at times very violent, found strapped to a bolt in the wall of the room; **George Wicks**, noisy, vicious and treacherous, and at times violent; **John Nolan**, returned from the Buffalo State Asylum about two years ago, very turbulent; **Catherine White**, in bed, with no clothing except a light cotton skirt, and very filthy; **Betsy Walkley**, at large in the yard, filthy, and her clothing torn and disordered; **Eliza Porter**, feeble and filthy, lying on a bench in the open air, in the yard, with an old woollen blanket over her head; **Mary Coffee**, a spiteful, treacherous woman, striking other patients as opportunity offers; **Emma Main**, disturbed, and at times quite violent; **Margaret Haley**, violent and noisy; **Polly Bassett**, in bed with a woollen blanket drawn over her head, at times very noisy; and **Lorinda Lounsbury**, crippled in her lower extremities from long confinement at home, at times disturbed and noisy, suffering from injuries inflicted by **Mary Coffee**. An additional building for the aged of both sexes is being added to the poor-house of this county, and the old buildings are to be repaired and improved.

Visited June 16, 1883, accompanied by Commissioner Letchworth, Dr. Croff, attending physician, the board of superintendents of the poor, and ex-Supervisor Markley, of the building committee of the poor-house. The number of insane was the same as at the time of my visit, May 1, with the exception of one - **Lorinda Lounsbury** - who had been removed and was being cared for in a family by relatives. We made a careful examination of the disturbed, violent and filthy cases referred to in my last report. A few of them were more quiet than then reported, but their condition generally was but little, if any, improved. After a full consideration of the subject, the superintendents decided to remove these cases to the Willard Asylum. They visited that institution the following day to arrange for their reception, and subsequently informed me that the removal would be made at an early date.

Visited September 12, 1883, with the State Commissioner in Lunacy. The number of insane was 16 - seven men and nine women. One of the men, recently admitted, had been in the

Buffalo State Asylum. Since my last visit, in company with the Commissioner of the district, June 16, 1883, the following insane had been removed from the institution, viz.: **George Wicks, John Nolan, Mary Coffee, and Polly Bassett**, to the Willard Asylum; **Chauncey Hayden** to the Wyoming county poor-house, and **Margaret Haley** to her home. Of those whose removal was Recommended May 1, 1883, the following were still in the institution: **William L. Spaulding**, emerging from a period of great excitement and violence; **Catharine White**, extremely filthy, her room being disordered and besmeared; **Betsey Walkley**, very filthy and turbulent; **Eliza Porter**, filthy and disturbed, in the yard with an old blanket over her head and shoulders; and **Emma Main**, just recovering from an attack of prolonged excitement, during which she had inflicted severe injuries upon her attendant. I immediately communicated with the superintendents with regard to these cases, renewing my recommendation for their removal to the Willard Asylum, and the State Commissioner also addressed them upon the subject. They informed me that they would meet September 22, to consider the matter.

Under date of November 1, 1883, Superintendent Crossman wrote me that the superintendents, on the 30th of October, removed the following insane from the poor-house of this county to the Willard Asylum, viz.: **Eliza Porter, Catharine White** and **Margaret Haley**, returned to the institution by her friends with whom she had been placed. They also, at the same time, removed one male patient who had been in the institution about four years, and who, they feared, would give them trouble in the near future, although he had generally been quiet and harmless. This left only three of the twelve insane in the poor-house whose removal was advised May 1, 1883, viz.: **William L. Spaulding, Emma Main** and **Betsy Walkley**. The latter fell down the back stairs, leading into the yard, in October, and fractured her hip, so that her removal was not practicable. The relatives of **William L. Spaulding** and **Emma Main**, who pay for their maintenance and care in the poor-house, had been requested to remove them from the institution.

Greene County. - Visited February 12, 1883. The poor-house then sheltered 87 inmates - 55 males and 32 females. Among these were six insane - three men and three women. Of the men, two had been at State asylums; the other had been held for several years in family care, and was admitted to the institution in 1882, suffering with chronic mania. This man,

Edward McMannus, 25 years old, had been allowed to roam at large until he became a terror in the community. Since his admission he had constantly been confined in a cell, or chained in the hall, to prevent his escape, and was a source of great annoyance. Two of the women are old and cause no trouble. The other, **Mary Carr**, aged 37 years, was a disturbed and violent case. She had been an inmate 13 years and had never been at any State asylum. I communicated with the superintendent, and advised the removal of these two cases, and they were promptly transferred to the Binghamton State Asylum.

This county has 26 chronic insane in State asylums, - 11 at Willard and 15 at Binghamton. I also found in this poor house a feeble-minded boy, **Charles Bibbins**, 13 years old, and recommended his removal to the State Idiot Asylum, which I learn has since been effected.

Hamilton County. - This county has no poor-house, and its insane, therefore, are sent to State asylums.

Herkimer County. - The poor-house of this county, visited January 18, 1883, is situated near Middleville, about six miles from Herkimer, and is reached by railroad from the latter place. As it is nearly new, and has never been described in any of the reports of the Board, it may be well here briefly to describe it. The building is a three-story brick structure, heated by steam, well ventilated, and has good drainage. The centre is occupied by the superintendent and his family, the left by male and the right by female inmates. An extension at the rear centre divides the grounds so as to separate the sexes when out of doors. This is also three stories, the first being used for kitchen, baking and laundry purposes, and the second and third for insane men. The hospital rooms, of which there is one for each sex, are at the extremes of the main building, and these have good sun exposure. The furnishing is nearly new, but rather scanty. The building throughout is lighted by gas, manufactured on the premises.

The number of inmates at the time of my visit was, males, 60; females, 30; total, 90. Of these, 12 were insane men and 15 insane women. The former, as before stated, were in the rear extension, and the latter in the main building, in association with the female paupers. One was under 30 years old, seven were between the ages of 30 and 50 years, and 19 were

over 50 years of age. Eleven had been at the State Lunatic Asylum, three at the Willard Asylum, and 13 had received no treatment except in the poor-house. Several of the latter were very aged, and had been in the poor-house many years, and a considerable number had been for a long time in family care before admission to the institution.

There were no insane in any form of restraint at the time of my visit. The men were allowed to go out and in at pleasure, and several of them were said to be good laborers. There is one male and one female attendant. A number of the men were sloven and untidy in their persons. The sexes dine separately, but there are no separate dining-rooms for the insane. The buildings throughout were clean and in good order, and though the day was quite cold, they were warm and comfortable.

Among the inmates were a feeble-minded young woman, 22 years of age, and an idiotic girl, eight years old. The former appeared to be a proper case for the Custodial Asylum at Newark, and the latter for the State Idiot Asylum, and I advised the superintendent to secure their removal respectively to these institutions.

This county had 28 chronic insane at the Willard Asylum, October 1, 1882. It is the desire of the authorities to remove several others from that institution and provide for them at the poor-house. Although the insane under care at the time of my visit were generally quiet, harmless cases, their future to me did not appear hopeful, associated so intimately, as they are, with paupers. It is not improbable that it may soon become necessary to remove some of the cases now in the institution to the custody of the State.