

Monroe County Asylum 1888 (Rochester, New York)

“The Insane Of Monroe County.

The whole number of patients in this institution during the year ending September 30, 1888, was 390, as against 379 during the year ending September 30, 1887. The number in its care October 1, 1888, was 290, as against 276 October 1, 1887, of whom 124 were men and 166 women. The average during the year was 283, as against 270 the preceding year. The current expenditures for the year were \$39,791.32; the average weekly cost of supervision, maintenance and care was \$2.66; for the preceding year it was \$2.24.

There have been no material changes in the buildings of this institution during the year, other than ordinary repairs and interior improvements of some of the wards. The detached building, completed and occupied by men at the close of 1887, is still devoted to this purpose, and seems properly to meet the objects for which it was intended. It has two wards for about 50 patients each, one of which is set apart for quiet and orderly farm laborers, and the other for feeble, demented and filthy cases, the latter having night attendants. The occupation of this building relieved the crowding in the main building, and enabled a readjustment of the patients, thus facilitating a better and more satisfactory administration. The entire capacity of the institution is for 300 patients, and at no time during the year has it reached this number.

The only lands belonging to the institution are 35 acres. This lack has, in part, been supplied by the rental of additional lands. The number of acres rented for the past year was 100. This, as well as the asylum lands, has been cultivated by the patients, among which are many good farm laborers. The net income from the rented lands, for the year, is said to have been about \$1,000.

Attention is here called to the report of the standing committee on the insane respecting this asylum, which has been adopted by the Board. The recommendations of the committee relating to the acute insane are approved by the Board.”

SOURCE: Twenty-Second Annual Report of the State Board of Charities for the Year 1888, Transmitted to the Legislature January 30, 1889, Albany: The Troy Press Company, Printers, 1889, Pages 34, 35.

“3. Monroe County Asylum (Rochester). Visited by Commissioners Milhau and Craig, October 12, 1888. This asylum is independent of the Willard Asylum act, and exists by virtue of prior statutes, chapter 82 of the Laws of 1863, and chapter 633 of the Laws of 1870. Its government is in part administered by three trustees elected by the board of supervisors, and a warden, who is also elected by the supervisors, but it is chiefly in the board of supervisors, under the statutes.

By the rules of the board of supervisors, a physician is elected every year, while the warden is elected once in three years. There is nothing in the statutes requiring that the warden shall be a physician. The medical supervision is at present by the warden, Eugene H. Howard, M.D., a regular physician of good standing, with an assistant, Ezra B. Potter, M.D., both of whom are resident medical officers in the asylum.

Exhibit J, hereto annexed, gives the day and night reports, the year’s census and statistics, and a comparison of the capacity and the population of the wards, with statement as to custom respecting commitment of acute cases.

Number of male patients 125, number of male attendants nine, number of female patients 165, number of female attendants thirteen.

The buildings, including the annex, have been described in former reports. The unsightly privies for men and women in rear of the main building have been removed. The dark rooms in the main building, formerly used for seclusion of disturbed patients, have been given over exclusively to the storage of spare beds. No mechanical means of restraint are used, unless for surgical reasons, except protection sheets similar to those at the State

Homoeopathic Asylum for the Insane, which, as the superintendent states, have been used seldom for more than one night at a time, and never continuously on successive nights so long as a week, on the same patient.

The basement of the front of the main building is now divided into two kitchens, in each of which a well-paid cook is employed, one for the officers and employes and the other for the patients; an ironing-room, in which fourteen patients were at work on the day of inspection; sleeping-rooms, for the cooks and the one attendant of the working patients, and a dining-room for the workers. No patient sleeps in this basement, but the women patients who work in the kitchens, and the men patients who work in the barns and yards, take their meals together in this dining-room. This mingling of insane men and women appears to be a dangerous experiment, unless accompanied by strict surveillance of attendants.

Ward 7, for disturbed women, occupying the rear basement of the main building; Ward A, for men disturbed or needing special care; Ward 5, for women less disturbed than No. 7; Ward 4, for women quiet and most self-controlled or convalescent; Ward 3 for women workers and dements, and Ward 1, for old and feeble women, all in the main building, and the two divisions for men, in the annex, were successively, in the foregoing order, inspected by the visiting commissioners.

The halls and rooms were found generally in clean condition. Some of the beds in the annex were more or less soiled. In several of the wards a cross-examination of the attendants disclosed the fact that it was their habit to bathe more than one patient in the same water, to wit: In Ward A, having two bathrooms, four cleanly patients in the same water in one room, and three patients in the same water in the other room; in Ward 5, three patients in the same water in one bath-room, and two patients in the same water in the other bath-room; in the demented ward of the annex, two patients in the same water, and in the quiet ward of the annex, occasionally more than one patient in the same water, when the bathing has been in part committed to other patients. These habits of bathing more than one patient in the same water are direct infringements of express orders, given by the warden to the assistant physician and the attendants.

In the annex, the patients, being men, are classified in two divisions, viz.: the ward for the more quiet and cleanly cases, many of whom are workers, and the ward for the more demented classes. Each division consists of day-room on second floor and one associate dormitory on the third floor. Between the two day-rooms, which together occupy the entire superficial area of the second floor of the building, there are open doors and free communication of patients. The quiet day ward has been improved with tables and chairs for the spaces about the center of the large room, and cheap lambrequins at the windows; while the desolate appearance of the division for dements has not yet been so relieved.

The basement of the annex contains the dining-room, the bakery, the kitchen, the store-room, the sleeping-rooms for the employes and the carpenter shop. In the kitchen and bakery are employed a paid cook and baker; and in the carpenter shop a paid attendant is assigned to supervise the work of several patients. An extension is occupied on the basement by a boiler-house, and on the upper floors by the waterclosets respectively of the day-rooms and dormitories. The odor from these closets is less offensive than last year. Experts have pronounced the plumbing good and sanitary. It is believed that the cement floors about the urinals are more or less absorbent; and it is expected that this source of unpleasant and impure air will be removed, and a floor of proper material substituted.

A case book is kept, and there are accumulating proofs of a wise and conscientious medical supervision by the superintendent.

The large number of patients employed, to wit, 211 out of a total population of 290, and the number out riding, speak well for the management and medical supervision.

In the main building, as well as in the annex, filthy and cleanly classes are associated on the same wards; and nowhere is there any distinction between acute and chronic cases in classification, except on Ward 7; but patients are generally received on Wards 5 and A.

There are not sufficient wards and means for classification of the men, even if all acute cases should be eliminated.

The cost of maintenance per capita per week has been two dollars and sixty-six cents for the year ending September 30, 1888.

The said exhibit states that while acute cases of pauper insane are held in this asylum, acute cases of such indigent insane as are committed under section 14 of chapter 446 of the Laws of 1874, are sent to State hospitals. But most of the commitments in this county are of the indigent insane, who were never paupers, and they are not made usually under said section 14. The movements of insane population in this asylum, showing over one hundred commitments and receptions the last year, and the well-known practice of committing indigent insane as pauper insane, together with the returns of census from each of the four State hospitals, classified by counties (Exhibits A, B, C and D), prove that in this county the indigent acute insane are habitually in great part detained, and deprived of State hospital treatment.

Copies of the physicians' certificates in the commitment papers, for the past year, are in a separate roll to be herewith filed for reference.

The remarks hereinafter made respecting the commitment of acute cases to, and their detention in exempted asylums, do not apply to this asylum; but the underlying principles which should govern, are the same, and do apply.

Your committee are of opinion that the medical supervision, which is not criticised, does not justify the making of this county asylum, with its reduced rate of maintenance and absence of proper facilities, a mixed asylum for the treatment of acute as well as the care of chronic insane.

It is to be hoped that the supervisors of Monroe county, will continue to respond more and more to the trustees and the superintendent of this asylum, by increasing the cost of maintenance and making needed improvements, to the end that the standard of care in the Monroe County Asylum may more and more approach that of the Willard Asylum for the Insane.

Postscript. - The following is a copy of a letter received from the warden:

Monroe County Insane Asylum.

Medical Officers. - E. H. Howard, M. D., E. B. Potter, M. D.

Rochester, N. Y., Dec. 2, 1888.

Oscar Craig:

Dear Sir - A very large majority of the cases admitted at this institution are of the indigent class, inasmuch as they would not have been dependent had not insanity occurred.

Very few could be properly classed as pauper insane.

Very respectfully yours,

E. H. HOWARD."

SOURCE: Twenty-Second Annual Report of the State Board of Charities for the Year 1888, Transmitted to the Legislature January 30, 1889, Albany: The Troy Press Company, Printers, 1889, Pages 87 - 91.

EXHIBIT J.

GENERAL SUMMARY OF DAY REPORT.

MONROE COUNTY INSANE ASYLUM,
THURSDAY, October 11, 1888.

WARD.	Number patients.	Stek in bed.	Number taking medicine.	Beds soiled.	Clothing soiled.	Excited.	Destructive.	Strong clothing.	Secluded.	Refusing food.
<i>Male.</i>										
A	35	...	3	1	1	1	...	...	...	...
B	36	...	...	1	1	1	...	1	...	...
C	42	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
<i>Female.</i>										
.....	32	...	3	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
2	38	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
3	24	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
4	27	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5	40	...	2	...	...	4	...	1	...	...
6	19	1	1	1	2	2	...	...	...	...
Totals	290	1	11	7	4	9	...	2	...	...

“**Barbara Leach** wears jacket with endless sleeves, with belt and wristlets to prevent mutilation of her eyes. She constantly attempts to dig into her eyes with her fingers.

Employment of Patients.	Female.	Male.
Farm and garden		34
Grounds		0
Laundry	27	6
Kitchen	18	8
Workshops		4
Bakery		2
Matron	1	
Out riding	38	
Yards		
Needle-work	29	2
Engineer		3
Halls	40	23
Dining-rooms	8	6

Chapel		
Parole		
Total	123	88

Copy of Night Attendants' Reports, October 11, 1888

Female:

Louisa Rearh, 1; and **Caroline Dryer**, 1; and **Jane Potter**, 4; and **May Duffy**, 4; and **Johannah Powers**, 4; dressed 9 P.M.

Mary Sloan, 1; talking at 9 P.M.; soiled and changed at 2 A.M.; sleeping during rest of night.

Lena Ludwick, 5; sleeping all night.

Caroline Shuman, 1; awake till 12 M. and sleeping during rest of night.

Laura Holland, 1; sleeping all night.

Anna Smith, 5; talked quietly to herself from 11 P.M. till morning.

Martha Green, 5; and **Maggie Reardon**, 5; and **Josephine Decker**, 5; and **Hattie Brown**, 5; noisy at 3 A.M.; quiet rest of night.

Susan Delanty, 5; awake and disturbed from 2 A.M. till morning; rested nicely till 2 A.M.

Nancy Toby, 1; and **Mary Rantz**, 5; and **Martha Green**, 5; and **May O'Ragan**, 1; **Honora O'Connor**, 1; soiled and changed 2 to 5 P.M.

Eva B. Walters, 5; sleeping during night till 5 A.M.

Male:

Frederick Krantz, A; disturbed 9 P.M.; Dr. Potter called; medicine given; rested during rest of night.

Frederick Wagner, A; soiled and changed at 9 P.M. and 5 A.M.

Frederick Schnostim, A.; epileptic fit at 10 P.M.; rested during remainder of night.

Martin Kavanaugh, A; rested till 2 A.M.; noisy from then till morning.

John Roach, A; soiled and changed 5 A.M.

William Bringle, B, and **Emet Ritter**, B; epileptic seizures about 10 P.M.

William McLean, C; soiled and changed at 1 A.M.

J. Leschendor, C; soiled and changed at 4 A.M.

William McLean, C; and **Daniel Omil**, C and A; **Mithhel**, C; and **A. Baily** talking from 2 to 3 A.M.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the copy.

E. H. HOWARD

**Monroe County Insane Asylum.
Census from October 1, 1887, to October 1, 1888.**

	Males.	Females.	Totals.
Number at beginning of year	121	155	276
Admitted during the year	64	50	114
Total present during the year	185	205	390
Discharged during the year:			
Not insane, inebriate	1		1
Recovered	16	8	24
Improved	12	10	22
Unimproved	11	2	13
Died	21	19	40
Remaining at end of the year	124	166	290
Highest number present at any one time	136	159	295
Surplus over last year, on October first	3	11	14
Daily average population			283
Received on first admission	54	27	81
Received on second admission	7	7	14
Received on third admission	3	3	6
Received on further or more admissions	8	5	13
Total of cases received	72	42	114
Total of persons received	71	38	109
Chronic cases readmitted, who had been on parole more than ten days and less than one year	14	8	22
Acute cases transferred to State asylums with certificates	1	1	2
Chronic cases received on transfer from State asylums	2	3	5
Copies of certificates furnished	47	38	85

Number of weeks board - 14,959
 Rate per week charged to town and city - \$2.66
 Expense charged to town and city - \$39,791.32
 Expense charged to county at large - \$7,571.19
 Total expenditure for year - \$47,362.51

Character, Capacity and Census of Wards.

Wards.	Population.	Capacity.
1. Female hospital	32	33
2 and 3. Females demented	47	40
4. Females orderly	27	29
5. Females maniacal	40	40
7. Females disturbed	19	20
A. Male hospital	37	40
B. Males orderly	46	55
C. Males demented	42	45

Custom in Monroe County as to Commuting Cases to Asylums.

Acute and chronic cases coming before the county judge, under section 14 of Laws of 1874, are sent to State asylums. Acute and chronic cases are received here from the superintendent and overseer of the poor. Any case, acute or chronic, may be transferred from this asylum to a State asylum if special reasons exist for the transfer. Two such transfers have been made during past year. Special improvement for the year has been made in the outdoor life of the female patients, a large carryall having been purchased, and when ground is damp several loads can be taken out daily. A much larger proportion of female patients go riding in carry-all, than have ever been taken farther than the asylum grounds in any other way.”

SOURCE: Twenty-Second Annual Report of the State Board of Charities for the Year 1888, Transmitted to the Legislature January 30, 1889, Albany: The Troy Press Company, Printers, 1889, Pages 283 – 286.

“Monroe County Poor-house.

1868. - These buildings, situated about two miles from Rochester, are old and dilapidated. The sexes are kept apart at night; separate accommodations are provided for the aged and infirm, but no extended classification is practicable. Of the inmates twenty were infants, and ninety-four insane. The children, at the age of three years, are sent to the various orphan asylums of Rochester. The lunatic asylum stands near the poor-house. It is a brick building, two-stories and a basement, and has rooms for about forty-five persons. The asylum is greatly crowded, and a number of excited and violent insane were confined in the basement cells. The institution is under separate management, and controlled by trustees appointed by the board of supervisors. The insane are under the care of paid attendants, and are visited daily by the attending physician.

1878. - This county erected a new poor-house in 1872. It is a three-story and basement brick structure, with a high attic, having a front of 238 and a depth of 205 feet. The building is planned so as securely to separate the sexes, and effect an extended classification of the inmates. It is heated by steam, abundantly supplied with water, has good bathing facilities, and ample hospital accommodations. It furnishes room for about 500 inmates, besides the apartments for the superintendent. Additions within the past few years have been made to the asylum department, a resident physician employed, and many of its defects remedied. It is, however, still greatly crowded, and its further enlargement and the abandonment of the basement rooms for patients is contemplated. The farm is cultivated by the insane and paupers, and is largely productive.

1888. - There have been no material changes in this poor-house since 1878. The building is in good repair, and is fully adequate to the requirements of the county. The grounds have been graded and planted, and the sewerage improved. The water supply is from the city water-works, and is abundant. The children are sent to the various asylums in Rochester, and a part of the acute sick and surgical cases are provided for in the hospitals of the city. The institution has good hospital accommodations, and retains all of its chronic patients. The insane asylum has recently been enlarged and improved, and a detached two-story building for men was erected and occupied last year. There is a lack of land in connection with the asylum department, and for the past few years a rented farm near by has been successfully tilled by the insane. The water supply is from the same source as that of the poor-house, and the asylum has good drainage.”

SOURCE: Twenty-Second Annual Report of the State Board of Charities for the Year 1888, Transmitted to the Legislature January 30, 1889, Albany: The Troy Press Company, Printers, 1889, Page 487, 488.