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THE DUVAL COUNTY HOSPITAL

The site of the "old" Duval County Hospital, tracts 27 and 28, in a subdivision of Northeast Jacksonville known as Oakland, (today the original property is situated at the corner of Jessie and Franklin streets) was purchased by the Duval County Commissioners on June 4, 1870 (166). One thousand dollars was specified as the monetary consideration involved (167). During the early eighteen-seventies the following buildings were constructed; a wooden building which served as a hospital ward, a brick building which was used as an asylum, a small "double-roomed" building called the dead and wash house and several small, one story buildings, one a kitchen and another a chicken house. In 1877 a new and more spacious one story building was erected and called "the new hospital." (168) Thus, it will be seen that, in 1877, there were three buildings available for the reception of patients. The group of buildings as a whole was called "the Duval County Hospital and Asylum" and sometimes was referred to incorrectly as "The County Poor House." (169)

No records were kept for the Hospital and Asylum up to March, 1876, but from March 1 to December 31, 1876, there were 31 admissions and 9 deaths. (170) When the county commissioners came into office about January 1, 1877, it was said that the county was "burthened" with a large number of pensioners for whom the outlay of money was unnecessarily large. In the Hospital and Asylum an average of 8 patients was being maintained for whose care a superintendent received a monthly salary of \$45, a physician \$25 and a cook \$10. The county commissioners discontinued outdoor relief, Dr. C. J. Kenworthy was placed in charge of the Hospital and Asylum, and Dr. Columbus Drew was engaged as the "County Physician." A Mr. Wright served as superintendent. During the year 1877, 136 patients were admitted to the institution, 115 of whom were under medical treatment. There were 28 deaths during the year. In December, 1877, the per capita cost was reduced from \$8 per patient monthly for attendants alone to \$3.73 per patient monthly for total maintenance. (170,171)

Dr. Drew's "Report of Cases of Disease" treated at the Hospital from January 1, 1877, to January 1, 1878, is as follows:

DISEASE	ADMITTED	DISCHARGED	DIED	UNDER TREATMENT
Valvular Heart Disease	1	1		
Epilepsy	1	1		
Fever, Remittent	16	15		1
Fever, Intermittent	16	14		2
Fever, Typho-malarial	3	2	1	
Pneumonia	3	1	2	
General Debility	4	3		1
Inflammation of the Brain	1		1	
Bronchitis	1	1		
Abscess of the Liver	1	1		
Congestion of the Liver	2	2		
Eczema of the Foot	1	1		
Acute Motritis	1	1		
Phthisis Pulmonalis	13	2	10	1

DISEASE	ADMITTED	DISCHARGED	DIED	UNDER TREATMENT
Scrofula	1			1
Chronic Bright's Disease	2		2	
Chronic Paralysis	3		1	2
Opium Habit	1			1
Ascites	1	1		
Chronic Rheumatism	3	2		1
Marasmus	1		1	
Dog Bite	1	1		
Fractures	3	1		
Ulcers	3	2		1
Burns	1	1		
Syphilis	13	5	4	4
Gangrene of the Legs	1		1	
Caries of Bone	2		1	1
Cystic Testicles	1	1		
Gonorrhea	1	1		
Urethral Stricture	2	1		1
Perineal Abscess	1	1		
Cataract	2	2		
Prolapsus Uteri	1	1		
Pregnancy	1	1		
Old Age	4	1	3	
Injuries from Cars	2	1	1	60
Total	115	68	28	19

An editorial on the Hospital and Asylum appeared in a local paper during the fall of 1877. The style is so quaint and the subject matter of such interest that the editorial is presented here almost in its entirety.

THE DUVAL COUNTY HOSPITAL AND ASYLUM

On last Sunday (October 7, 1877) a reporter of the Sun and Press visited the above institution to ascertain in what condition it is, and what improvements have lately been made. On approaching by the Oakland Road, past the graveyard, the old building which formerly and still fulfills the conditions of an asylum, comes in sight first; to the rear of this about 25 feet, is the old hospital ward; back of this is the double-roomed building called wash and dead house; east of the asylum, some 75 feet, but further back from the road, is the new hospital, while between these two is the well and bath house, and back of this again, the kitchen and outbuildings, which include a chicken house--all fronting to the south, and one-story buildings. Around these county buildings, a suitable fence is now being put up, which keeps out the hogs and restrains the inmates from taking extended walks. The asylum has had a cheap verandah put up on the south side . . . and has been oadapboarded . . . to keep out the rain . . . Inside it is divided into 4 ordinarily sized rooms--the 2 larger of which are the male and female wards, with each 8 or 10 inmates . . . The other 2 rooms the Superintendent's and a general storeroom. All these rooms are kept in a cleanly a condition as possible. . . Whitewash, etc., has been used freely. The inmates here, on being questioned, said they had good food with good treatment, and their appearance would indicate it. . .

The old hospital ward is a structure about 40 feet long by 10 or 12 wide with 4 rooms and supplied with light and ventilation by 4 doors, but windows are now being placed in each apartment. One of these rooms is the syphilitic ward, 2 will be used as sleeping rooms. . . and the 4th is the provision room, where is flour, rice, hominy, sugar, crackers, coffee, tea, onions, butter, lard, salt, beef and pork and other groceries from Holbrook's, in variety and quantity sufficient to show that all the inmates of the place have good food, as indeed they all admit. The dead and wash house (The name "dead and wash house" is quite striking but, nevertheless, appropriate. It was the custom in those days always to wash the bodies of the dead--sometimes with ceremony. Mr. Zephaniah Kingsley, who died about thirty years prior to this period, directed in his will that his body "be exoused from the usual indiscreet formalities and parade of washing.") is a new building about 15 feet square and supplies what has been needed there. The well-house is also divided into 2 rooms, one of which contains the new well, with its force pump and 150 feet of hose, and the other a bathing tub and other aids to cleanliness.

The kitchen house has 2 rooms, 1 of which is the kitchen proper, which was kept in a very cleanly condition and here is the Sunday dinner for all the well ones consisting of a joint of meat with rice pudding.

The new hospital building, occupied 3 weeks, is 85 feet long by 22 wide, with an 8 foot verandah all around it, while inside the ceilings are 14 feet high. It is divided into two wards--male and female--which are separated by the nurse's room and the dispensary; the whole interior, even to the beds with their moss mattresses and white coverlets being clean, sweet and airy as any housekeeper would desire. No communication is allowed between these wards, not between the hospital and asylum, without a permit from the superintendent, Mr. Wright. The bill of fare for those in the hospital is, of course, better than for the asylum inmates, and the order left by Dr. Drew for a patient, comprised milk, rice, chicken broth, etc., which shows that nourishing food is considered a necessary adjunct to this department. In front of this building the ground has been laid down with bermuda grass and a pleasant lawn will be the result soon. . .

The work of reconstruction at this institution has been carried out by Dr. C. J. Kenworthy, of the County Commissioners, who is working at it as a labor of love and deserves recognition for the good he has accomplished. . . (168)

Christmas dinner at the Hospital and Asylum in 1877 was a great event. (172, 173) The following appeared in a local paper on the last day of year 1877:

If those who liberally responded when called upon for donations to a Christmas feast for the people living in a county asylum, could have been present and seen the joy of those people they would have been a thousand times repaid. . . The table was spread in the female ward of the hospital, and around it were gathered the inmates--to the number of about thirty--and a few invited guests. At the head of the table sat County Commissioners Kenworthy and Francis. . . and at the foot Dr. C. Drew, physician to the institution. . .

There was roast beef, turkey, chicken, chicken pie, boiled ham, and other meats; vegetables of all kinds; an enormous plum pudding, cakes, ice cream and coffee. After dinner several resolutions were handed up by inmates, one of these thanking the people of Jacksonville for their goodness of heart in providing this feast, and another. . . complimentary to the Superintendent, Dr. C. J. Kenworthy and the physician, Dr. C. Drew, for their courtesy, kindness and sympathy during the year past. The resolutions being disposed of, some nuts, raisins and candy were distributed, and tobacco and cigars given out. The rules were generally

suspended and every person enjoyed himself in whatever he liked. (Nearly sixty years later, on April 18, 1936, when Dr. R. B. Molver was president, the Staff gave another "Hospital Dinner." On this occasion Dr. R. H. McGinnis, after thirty-five years of gratuitous service, was honored at the time of his retirement. A plaque, upon which a profile of Dr. McGinnis had been mounted, was presented by Dr. G. Knox Simpson, Chief of the Department of Surgery, and was accepted on behalf of the Hospital by Mr. Frank E. Jennings, Chairman of the Welfare Board. (167)

. . . As it is the close of the year in which much has been done for the institution, it seems fitting to say something about the improvements inaugurated and carried to a successful ending. A majority of our readers will remember the filthy hovel for it deserved no better appellation which passed for a county poor-house two or three years ago . . . The difference between the place then and now is as distinct and broad as the difference between hell and heaven. In the first place the ground was cleared of all rubbish . . . plowed, set with Bermuda grass, and no lawn in the city is smoother or looks better. A substantial fence was built and whitewashed. The two old buildings were thoroughly purified, fitted with good glazed windows and blinds; whereas before, the only openings were the doors . . . East of these a new hospital building was erected . . . A few feet from the north-west corner of the Hospital, . . . is the kitchen. A small building close by the kitchen contains wash and bath rooms and in the north end a compartment for laying out the dead. A well was sunk in the open place between the various buildings, fitted with a forcing pump and about 200 feet of hose. The wisdom of this provision was demonstrated a few days ago, when the hospital took fire . . . and was promptly extinguished by the use of the . . . hose . . . The aggregate cost of the above improvements was about \$2,500. . .

The cemetery connected with this institution has been fenced and put in good order. Each grave is numbered, and an entry of all the known particulars concerning the deceased is made in the hospital record. How was it before? The dead were buried, to be sure, among the pines and saw-grass, no distinguishing mark to the grass, and the cattle grazed and hogs rooted above them. . . (173)

In the late eighteen-seventies and early eighteen-eighties the institution grew little. In 1885 it still could boast of only the three one-story buildings for the reception of patients. Accommodations were, however, more adequate. Thirty male and 10 female patients could be hospitalized, but still the demand for admission exceeded the accommodations. In 1885 the buildings were identified as being situated on high ground in Oakland, a half mile north of the fairgrounds. The broad verandahs and abundant foliage, flowers and vines were pictured as giving the institution a homelike appearance, and the buildings were described as being clean and well ventilated. Four thousand dollars was the per annum operating cost, \$1,200 of which was furnished by the United States government because of the marine patients who were hospitalized there.

From 1885 to the late eighteen-eighties Dr. H. Robinson served as superintendent, without pay, while Dr. Drew served as the attending physician, with a small salary, estimated to reimburse him for the medicine he furnished the sick. Sister Mary Ann of Saint Joseph's Convent made frequent visits to the institution and was loved by all. (174, 175, 176, 177) Patients who suffered with yellow fever during the epidemic of 1888 were not hospitalized there. (For later history of the Duval County Hospital see "The Duval County Hospital" by Dr. R. H. McGinnis, circa 1925, and the Florida Times-Union, June 1, 1924, and April 12, 16 and 18, 1936.)

The pictures of the hospital shown in the accompanying illustrations are as it appeared about 1915. (178) No pictures of the building described are available.

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