

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MINNESOTA HOSPITALS FOR INSANE.

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The State Legislature, at its session in 1866, passed an act establishing the First Minnesota Hospital for Insane, and appointed commissioners to locate the same. It was located at St. Peter, the citizens generously presenting the State with a fine farm of two hundred acres, one mile south of the city. An appropriation of fifteen thousand dollars was made for provision and support of the insane. Temporary quarters were obtained in the city of St. Peter, and opened for the reception of patients in October, 1866, to which the patients, previously boarded at the hospital in Iowa, were brought. Dr. Samuel E. Shantz, of Utica, New York, was elected by the trustees superintendent and physician. Under Dr. Shantz the temporary hospital was organized and directed until his death in August, 1868, when he was succeeded by Dr. Cyrus K. Bartlett, of Northampton, Massachusetts, who remained in office until his resignation, January 1, 1893.

At the session of the Legislature of 1867 forty thousand dollars was appropriated for a permanent building on the farm provided. Plans were obtained and the building commenced. Appropriations were made from year to year for building purposes, until the plans as originally contemplated were completed in 1876. Two detached buildings, one for men and one for women, each accommodating two hundred and fifty patients, were subsequently erected, the whole comfortably accommodating nine hundred patients, but often, of late years, containing one thousand, by crowding.

The main building of the hospital is of hammered limestone, the walls lined with brick, and the roof slated. It

contains a centre building of four stories, with offices and the chapel, and two wings of three stories each, containing eighteen separate halls for distinct classification of patients. The additional buildings are a laundry, boiler and engine house, gas house, electric light house, carpenter shop, ice-house, slaughter house, barn, straw shed and root cellar, granary and carriage house, stable and pump house, storehouse and steward's office.

On the 15th of November, 1880, about seven o'clock in the evening, fire was discovered in the basement of the north wing, occupied by males, and it appeared to have several points of origin at the same time. The progress of the flames was rapid, and the patients were removed under great difficulties. The whole north wing was destroyed, except the stone and brick walls, with all the bedding and furniture, and most of the clothing. The Legislature of 1881 promptly made an appropriation of one hundred and five thousand dollars for rebuilding in a fireproof manner, which was done, and the basements of the other wing were also made fireproof by removing all wooden joists and arching with stone. Fifteen thousand dollars was also appropriated for waterworks for better protection, and expended for that purpose, giving the hospital a steam-pump of 450 gallons per minute capacity, and a reservoir containing 135,000 gallons, which was located 160 feet above the basement floors of the buildings, and from which water is carried in an eight-inch pipe to all parts of the hospital, with fourteen hydrants at convenient points outside always ready for immediate use.

Additional land has been purchased from time to time, until the farm now contains over eight hundred acres.

#### THE SECOND MINNESOTA HOSPITAL FOR INSANE.

This institution is located at Rochester, Olmsted county, and the history of its organization is as follows:—

By a special law passed by the Legislature of 1874 it was decided to levy a tax of ten dollars each on all liquor dealers, to raise a fund for the establishment of a State Inebriate Asylum, and when completed it was to be maintained by a

continuation of the same tax. As soon as a sufficient fund was accumulated the inebriate asylum board purchased a farm of one hundred and sixty acres within a mile and a half of the city of Rochester for nine thousand dollars. They secured plans and began building in 1877. Strong opposition was raised by the liquor dealers against this tax as discriminating and unjust. Test cases were tried in the courts, and the constitutionality of the law was sustained. Efforts were made in the Legislature to repeal the act; and it became apparent that room was more needed for the rapidly increasing number of insane than for the inebriates. The Legislature of 1878, considering this point, and in view of the determined opposition to the inebriate asylum being built and maintained on the plan proposed, repealed the act levying the tax and changed it into the Second Minnesota Hospital for Insane, with the proviso, however, that inebriates should be admitted into the institution, and cared for and treated at the expense of the State, on the same basis as were the insane.

The building was in an unfinished condition, consisting of a centre and small east wing, which were only under roof, without inside finish and without any out-buildings, such as laundry and engine house.

The Trustees examined the property, accompanied by Dr. Bartlett, Superintendent of the First Hospital, and recognized the unsuitableness of the structure for the purposes of an insane hospital, and the fact that it would necessarily require many changes to adapt it to this new object. Owing to these objections the Hospital Trustees (being the same Board as for the hospital at St. Peter) hesitated to accept the transfer; but the urgency for room was so great that they reluctantly accepted it, in order to do the best they could for the State under the circumstances. An appropriation of fifteen thousand dollars was made for the transfer as a fund to be used in preparing the buildings for occupancy. This was done in the summer of 1878.

Dr. J. E. Bowers, with over ten years' experience as first assistant physician at St. Peter, was elected Superintendent, and the Rev. A. H. Kerr, who had been a trustee from the beginning of the first hospital, was chosen Steward. On



January 1st, 1879, the institution was opened for the reception of patients. Transfers were made from St. Peter, and new cases were admitted, and the accommodations for one hundred men were soon filled.

With a grant of twenty thousand dollars a new wing was built for women in 1880, and was just ready for the furniture and heating apparatus, for which they were waiting an appropriation, when the fire occurred at St. Peter. The funds for this purpose were immediately advanced by the Hon. John S. Pillsbury, who was then Governor, and the building was hastily prepared for the accommodation of two hundred patients, much to the relief of the crowded hospital at St. Peter. Since then other buildings have been erected, all in a fireproof manner, with the necessary out-buildings, and with waterworks similar to those at the first hospital, and the completed buildings — the original inebriate frame structure having been replaced by a fireproof centre and administration building — now accommodate over eleven hundred inmates.

In the summer of 1889 Dr. J. E. Bowers resigned, and Dr. A. F. Kilbourne, who had been an assistant physician at St. Peter for the previous four years, was elected Superintendent, and is still in office.

#### THE THIRD HOSPITAL FOR INSANE.

In 1885 the Legislature authorized the Governor to appoint a commission to locate a third hospital for insane. The following were appointed in accordance with that act, viz: C. K. Bartlett, F. S. Christensen, H. H. Hart, R. B. Langdon, and H. G. Stordock, representing the southern, central, northern, and western sections of the State. The Commissioners met May 12th, 1885, and organized by electing Dr. C. K. Bartlett as chairman and H. H. Hart as secretary. Although the act of the Legislature gave the Commissioners liberty to receive and accept a bonus from any town in consideration of locating the hospital in that town or city, it was the unanimous decision of the Commissioners not to invite or consider any proposition for a bonus or donation of land or money to the State as a consideration for the location

of the hospital. It was the belief that the location of a State institution should be a matter of such importance that it ought not to be controlled or influenced by any other consideration than the best interests of the State in general and the interest of the district to be accommodated in particular. The Commissioners, however, required of each of the four localities which were considered most eligible that the citizens of each should give a responsible guarantee for the sale to the State, at a reasonable price, of a suitable tract of land of not less than six hundred and forty acres; also a guarantee of suitable sewerage and water privileges, where public waterworks existed. In accordance with these ideas the following circular was issued before visiting any sites offered for examination:—

“For the information of parties desiring to call attention to any particular site or location for the Third Hospital the Commissioners would mention the following as essential points for a suitable location:—

1. That it be centrally located with reference to the population to be accommodated.

2. That it be conveniently accessible by railroad.

3. A sufficient area of good land. For a hospital of six hundred patients six hundred and forty acres should be obtainable.

4. An abundance of good water, supplied by gravity if possible.

5. Good drainage, with sufficient fall to remove sewerage and surface water without contaminating the water supply.

6. A situation near a river or lake, on elevated and dry ground.

7. Pleasant surroundings.

8. Vicinity of some city of present or prospective growth.

9. Material for building and fuel for heating to be near at hand.

In selecting a site the chief and governing consideration will be its adaptation to the ends and purposes of the institution; or, in the words of the statute, that it be the point ‘which in their judgment is most available and suitable.’ ”

The following-named places were visited and inspected: Sauk Centre, Alexandria, Fergus Falls, Detroit, Lake Park,

Brainerd, Little Falls, and Duluth. After a second visit and thorough examination of four of these cities, Fergus Falls, in Otter Tail county, was selected and recommended to the Legislature of 1886 as the location for the Third Hospital, and the recommendation was accepted, and an appropriation of ninety-four thousand two hundred and eighty dollars was made, of which twenty-four thousand two hundred and eighty dollars was for six hundred and thirty-six acres of land, including some farm buildings. Drawings and specifications for the entire buildings contemplated were prepared by W. B. Dunnell, architect, and duly accepted. As soon as one section of the hospital was completed it was opened for patients July 29th, 1890. Dr. A. P. Williamson, of Middletown, N. Y., was elected Superintendent, and remained in office until his resignation in 1892, when he was succeeded by Dr. George O. Welch, of Massachusetts, who is still in office. Appropriations have been made for building purposes from year to year, there now being accommodations for nearly one thousand inmates; and the whole plans are not yet completed.

CYRUS K. BARTLETT.

*January 1, 1893.*