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Peoria State Hospital and Dr. George A. Zeller

A Historical Review

For Listing in the National Register of Historical Places

By Tom Edwards
Peoria, Illinois

February 18, 1980

Commissioned by Carl F. Reardon
East Peoria, Illinois 61611

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By Tom Edwards for Carl F. Reardon

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PEORIA STATE HOSPITAL AND DR. GEORGE A. ZELLER

A HISTORICAL REVIEW

For: Listing of Peoria State Hospital in the National Register of Historical Places.

Compiled by: Tom Edwards, Natural Solutions, Peoria, Illinois, February 18, 1980.

Commissioned by: Carl Reardon, East Peoria, Illinois

I. Points of Major Historical Significance

1. It was the site of the bold pioneering work in mental health of Dr. George A. Zeller, first superintendent of Peoria State Hospital and leader in "non-restraint, non-imprisonment, non-resistance," and in considerate, gentle care and treatment of the mentally ill. He "fearlessly . . . dared to introduce innovations," wrote his successors at the helm of the hospital. Professionals from throughout the nation and from abroad came to witness the methods of operation at the hospital.

2. Opened in 1902, it was the first hospital in the state, and quite likely the nation, to be developed entirely along the "home" type concepts of environment and care advocated by Dr. Zeller. Individual two-story residential buildings for groups of patients are arranged along curvilinear streets in a campus-like setting with broad lawns and gardens, a commons within each group of buildings, and facilities in the overall complex for the social and recreational amenities of life along with places of work. This was an advancement of the "cottage" plan of separated buildings housing about 60 patients and started in Europe.

3. It was the second cottage-type mental hospital development in Illinois (Kankakee State Hospital, 1879, was the first. But Kankakee was laid out in rectangular rather than curvilinear patterns, and only six of its old buildings are left. Moreover, some of the buildings of the Kankakee complex were barred, and limited use of restraining devices continued there.)

4. Peoria State Hospital is the last such complex of its vintage left in Illinois virtually intact and with its original integrity.

II. Summary of the Pioneering Achievements of Dr. George

A. Zeller

The major achievements of Dr. Zeller are considered to be:

- Non-restraint of patients -- not the first in the state to advocate it or pursue it, but the first to practice it 100%.
- Non-imprisonment -- Zeller was evidently the first in the state to totally eliminate locking patients up, to remove all the bars and gratings from doors and windows, and also to totally eliminate "seclusion" (solitary confinement) of patients. In this he was a world leader.
- The eight-hour tour of duty for hospital workers -- First such institution in the state, or the world, according to Zeller, to adopt this. (Zeller later wrote that it was 10 years before another like institution followed suit.)
- First in the state to put women in charge of the wards of "insane men," instead of, and rather than, men, who had historically been in charge of such wards.
- Narcotic drugs -- Evidently the first in the state, at least, to totally abolish the administration of narcotic drugs, routinely used in those days to keep patients in a soporific condition. Zeller considered this to be a very definite form of restraint, and held that any patient that became agitated or otherwise troublesome needed personal care and attention with no substitutions.
- Development of the "home" type atmosphere of grounds layout and building design and operation, including all the social amenities of normal community life.

Of his paper, "Mechanical and Medicinal Restraint," read at a statewide mental health conference attended by the governor on October 19, 1906, his biographers, fellow professionals, Drs. Maxim Pollak and Walter H. Baer, wrote:

"It is a classic in medical literature and deserves close study by every student of medicine in general and psychiatry in particular. Not since the famous open letters of the immortal Semmelweis, directed about a half a century before to the leading obstetricians of his day accusing them

of murder because they refused to accept the contagion theory of puerperal fever and permitted thousands of women needlessly to die following delivery in their hands -- not since Semmelweis, we repeat -- did a medical man brand and inflict with such fire the prevailing practices of his day. No wonder the paper was received in silence and was not deemed worthy even of rebuttal."

Other "firsts" that have been credited to Peoria State Hospital under the administration of Dr. Zeller are:

- First mental health institution in the state to have an on-site nurses training program (1906).
- First mental health facility in the state to "segregate tubercular patients," and, evidently, "colonize epileptics," and establish a co-educational insulin unit.
- First hospital in Illinois to establish a children's unit.
- First to appoint a trained dietician to a mental hospital (1907).

Some of Zeller's state firsts may also have been national firsts, as he closely followed mental health's developments abroad.

Other areas in which he is considered to have been either a leader or a pioneer are:

- Phototherapy (variously colored environments to influence patient mood).
- Industrial re-education.
- Encouragement of dancing, music, and other normal social activities and gatherings.
- Beauty care, barbering, and general upkeep of social appearance and hygiene of inmates.
- Regular dental service (instituted in 1907).

Zeller considered his major achievements to be in implementation of mental health reforms and new treatment procedures. In his biennial report to the legislature in 1908, he wrote:

"Few of these principles are new. Most of them have been agitated and urged ever since the minds of men turned

to the amelioration of the mentally afflicted. We claim no credit for their discovery, but we do take pleasure in presenting the observations of a complete bi-ennial period, during which 2,000 of the most violent, destructive and dangerous insane in the world have been cared for without once having to resort to mechanical restraint, without using a single grain of narcotic on any ward, except in the hospital for the sick, without a screen or a bar on any door or window, and without turning a key upon a single patient, night or day, and with women caring for more than 800 insane men." (Italics added.)

In quoting this passage, the Illinois Blue Book of 1927-28, in a brief history of the hospital, added:

"Dr. Zeller makes the unqualified assertion that this has been done successfully, and we have vindication of his system in its adoption by all of the state hospitals of Illinois. (Italics added.)

"Since its opening, this institution has been visited by thousands of men and women interested in the care of the insane, and by many distinguished men and women in other professions and vocations, representing all states and many of the countries of the old world."

Other accomplishments in and out of the field of mental health were:

- Assisted Peoria Judge Samuel D. Weed draft the law changing the embarrassing court procedure of "trial by jury" for entrance to a state mental hospital, which triggered other changes to eventually allow voluntary commitment, which resulted in more voluntary commitments "in Illinois than any other state of the union."
- Pressed for statewide abolition of abuses, which led to an order in 1913 of the State Charities Commission and Board of Administration, of which he was then a member, abolishing restraint, seclusion, or corporal punishment in all institutions of the state.
- He was active in developing knowledge and a cure for pellagra, a disease which posed a problem for a while at the hospital.
- He spent 2 extra years in the U.S. military service in order to work on the cholera epidemic in the Philippines. (He served from 1899-1902.)

- Wrote fictional stories based on real life cases, stories which Rudyard Kipling is reported to have read and admired.

- Purchased and donated to the state in 1931 what is now Jubilee College State Park near Peoria, itself now listed in the National Historic Site Register.

III. Dates and Data of Peoria State Hospital

Authorization of construction -- 1895 by Illinois Legislature.

First Building -- completed in 1898, but was razed.

Built on the old Kirkbride plan of maximum security and restraint, it looked like a feudal castle. It was razed without ever being used, and replaced by the present "cottage" plan first championed in Illinois by Dr. Andrew McFarland. Accounts vary as to why it was razed. One is that it was over an old coal mine and developed cracks. However, that may have been an excuse, as Governor John R. Tanner was reportedly anxious to implement the "cottage" plan adopted in 1897.

Opening -- February 10, 1902, was the opening date of the "cottage" units that replaced castle-like original building.

Original name -- Illinois Asylum for the Incurable Insane.

It was renamed Illinois General Hospital for the Insane in 1907, and Peoria State Hospital in 1909 when the name of all such institutions in the state assumed the name of the community in which they were located.

First superintendent -- George A. Zeller, a medical doctor, born in 1858 in Spring Bay, an Illinois River town 10 miles north of Peoria, and who practiced medicine in Peoria before becoming superintendent. Zeller was named superintendent in 1898 while the complex now there was just getting under construction, but left for U.S. military service in the Spanish-American War late in 1899, two years before the hospital was opened. He was reappointed superintendent November 1, 1902 upon his return to Peoria from the Phillipines nine months after the hospital was opened.

Zeller left that post in 1914 to serve as State Alienist, and in 1918 became superintendent of the just opened Alton State Hospital. In 1921 he returned to Peoria State Hospital as superintendent, in which post he served until 1935, when he retired. He was invited to continue living on the grounds as superintendent emeritus, which he did until his death three years later. The new mental health zone center constructed in the City of Peoria in the 1960's was named for him.

Capacity -- Its bed capacity upon its opening was 700, which quickly grew to 2,000 by 1909 with the completion of more residential units and two hospitals, and continued to grow to a bed capacity of over 2,600 by 1920.

Number of buildings -- Unclear as reports generally referred only to residential buildings and hospital. However, by 1909 it apparently had 32 buildings; grew to 33 residential buildings plus an unspecified number of other buildings, probably by 1920 when its maximum bed capacity was reached; then grew to 43 buildings by 1949; and is now listed as having 46 main buildings with several ancillary buildings.

Site -- On an oak forested bluff of the Illinois River valley on the south edge of the Village of Bartonville. The original site was 318 acres, grew to 700 acres with the acquisition of a nearby farm site (which is now owned by the Peoria Park District), and there are now 325 acres with nearly the same boundaries as the original site.

Ranking with other state mental hospitals -- It was the 8th of 12 hospitals for the mentally ill opened between 1851 and 1917, and the second built under the "cottage" plan of a number of separate residential buildings.

IV. Narrative Overview

"We decided to make our 'state home' (Peoria State Hospital) with particular emphasis on the word 'home'.

With that statement of concept, Dr. George A. Zeller developed a gracious "campus" arrangement of buildings and grounds at the hospital for the mentally ill that became renown because of his work. Zeller, a physician rather than a psychiatrist by training, was the first superintendent of the hospital, the first building of which opened February 10, 1902.

Rather than blocks of buildings, he had the hospital laid out with curvilinear streets, following the woodland contours of the riverbluff site, built "homes" in the best locations on the beautiful site for the residents to live in rather than wards.

With the site's great oak trees along the bluff of the Illinois River, and with the addition of lovely gardens and winding roads, and solid, spacious, attractive buildings, Zeller attempted to create an Eden, believing that a place of environmental beauty and comfort would help in patient well being and recovery.

"Walk through the grounds of the hospital today and you will hardly sense you are in an institution," wrote his biographers, fellows from his profession, Maxim Pollak and Walter H. Baer, the latter his successor at Peoria State Hospital.

And the Eden he worked to create on the grounds he as

assiduously pursued, also, in patient care -- and indeed, he did create a mental health Eden, one that professionals and other "thousands" from this continent and abroad came to witness.

Peoria State Hospital was once one of the world's leading institutions for kind, gentle, trusting care of the mentally ill and progressive treatment in an age when callousness, and even brutality, were the norms.

"This institution has been noted for a large number of innovations and reforms in the care and treatment of medical patients," stated a history of it in the Illinois Blue Book of 1927-28. "It abolished the use of narcotics; it eliminated every form of restraint; banished all forms of imprisonment; it was the first institution in Illinois to adopt the eight-hour day for all its employees; it was the first to place women attendants on male wards; it segregated its consumptive and colonized its epileptics."

Dr. Zeller, though assuredly an innovator, was much more of an implementer. He was not the first to condemn restraint. Dr. Andrew McFarland, second superintendent of Jacksonville State Hospital (1851, the first in the state) from 1854 to 1870, strongly advocated more humane treatment, including elimination of restraints for most patients, work as therapy, and a "cottage" plan of housing consisting of two-story buildings. But McFarland believed that perhaps as many as one-fourth of the patients would still require

restraint, whereas Zeller abolished it in the space of the first three years of his administration at Peoria State. McFarland's view was adopted by the Rev. Frederick Howard Wines, a Presbyterian minister who was named the state's first executive secretary of the Board of State Commissioners of Public Charities in 1869, and who served the state until 1912.

But it was Zeller who "fearlessly . . . dared to introduce the innovations championed by them (McFarland and Wines) in theory," wrote Pollak and Baer in their biography.

Zeller, who was appointed superintendent of Peoria State in 1898 when construction was just beginning, was serving in the U.S. military (doing extraordinary service in the Phillipines battling cholera) while the hospital was being built and for most of the first year of its operation (1902).

Upon taking over the reins again after his return, within three years after his return, Zeller:

- eliminated use of all restraining devices for patients ("forever," he said).
- removed all the bars and gratings from the windows and doors, which had been installed in his absence.
- kept the previously locked doors of the seclusion rooms "ajar day and night," and kept the doors of all the

- residences unlocked day and night.
- placed female attendants or nurses in charge of every ward, including those of men (general practice in those days was to have male attendants).
 - modified the McFarland plan of construction to eliminate quadrangular and row placement of buildings to the present gentle curvilinear arrangement now there, many connecting passageways between buildings. ("These things formed part of the institutional atmosphere against which he constantly fought," wrote Baer.)
 - and, generally overlooked, abolished the administration of narcotic drugs to any of his patients, which were routinely used in those days to keep many patients in a soporific condition. Zeller considered this to be a very definite form of restraint, and that any patient that became agitated or otherwise troublesome needed humane care and attention with no substitutes.
 - put the employees of the hospital on an eight-hour day, the first mental health facility in the state and, according to Zeller's writings, the nation to do this.
 - providing opportunities for social amenities such as music, dancing, and beauty culture.

Moreover, he immediately began bringing in the people "languishing in the county almshouse about the state," the purpose for which the construction of Peoria State Hospital had been authorized by law. On his arrival, not one of the 690 inmates present had come from those in the almshouses,

who were considered hopeless cases.

By November, 1905, with eight more residential structures added to the original seven, and with three other buildings intended for other purposes converted to residences, there were 1,449 patients nearly all from the almshouses, at the hospital living "a community life closely resembling the normal," his bio graphers noted.

Perhaps no mental hospital has ever gone through such an amazing transformation in so short a period -- and in a time when mental hospitals were considered virtual prisons.

During his career, he constantly fought "everything that formed the 'institutional' atmosphere," and had to fight every step of the way to institute his practices, and was continually defending them against bureaucratic and professional attacks, and negative sensationalistic stories in the press. And he expressly avoided hiring persons trained in the old order of mental institutions, was thankful that he had not been encumbered by training in the psychiatry of that day, and purposely "ignored the experts."

His obituary in The Journal Star stated:

"He introduced the 'cottage plan' whereby patients are permitted to live in surroundings as near like their homes as possible while undergoing treatment."

"Like all new ideas, the plan was at first ridiculed. But when large numbers of cured patients began to be discharged from the hospital, the scoffers were quieted."

(Reportedly, he had a 30% discharge rate, phenomenal in those times.)

"Some of the most famed mental specialists from Europe came to Peoria to inspect the local hospital and within a few years the 'Zeller treatment' was established throughout the world."

A Peoria Journal Star feature article of 1973 upon the closing of the hospital related, "Once all this formed one of the truly pioneering mental hospitals in the country. Its patients went to church in town. They were allowed out to shop. Some of them worked at farms in the area. They were free to roam these lovely grounds almost at will, mingling with the hundreds of people employed here as steamfitters, bakers, nurses, doctors, maintenance people, and the rest."

As a result of his pioneering work, the Illinois State Legislature passed a bill in 1913 abolishing restraint in state mental hospitals.

Engraved on a tablet placed on a boulder in front of the Zeller Memorial Building, the former receiving unit at the hospital, is this tribute from his friend, A. L. Bowen, director of the Illinois State Department of Welfare:

"Here stood a man embodying all that is good in the state -- its humanitarian instincts, purposes and desires -- its demand that mercy shall be meted out to those who have felt the whip and suffered the confinements of the narrow cell. If you would see his monument, look about you with

spiritual eyes and recognize his work in all states and all lands, among men who suffer the greatest of all human plagues."

V. Inception and Site

The inception of Peoria State Hospital, as well as the work of its first superintendent, Dr. George A. Zeller, welled from the philanthropy and charity of man.

The authorization of the institution in 1895 was the result of a long campaign and legislative lobbying efforts of the Peoria Woman's Club for the establishment of a hospital for the thousands of persons deemed "incurably insane" languishing in deplorable conditions in the county "almshouses" about the state.

The original 318-acre site (now 325 acres) in Bartonville was offered by that community, and the land purchased and donated to the state through volunteer subscriptions from the community. One of the prime donors as well as the head of the local committee to establish the site was Joseph P. Barton of the founding family of Bartonville.

VI. Sources

Sources for the foregoing material were:

- 1 -- The 5th and 6th Biennial Reports of the Illinois Asylum for the Incurable Insane, 1904 and 1906.
- 2 -- "Befriending the Bereft, the Autobiography of George Anthony Zeller, M.D." published in the Asylum Light, magazine of Peoria State Hospital.
- 3 -- "The Friend of the Bereft, George Anthony Zeller, M.D., 1858-1938," by Maxim Pollak and Walter H. Baer, his successors at Peoria State Hospital, a biography published in the Journal of the History of Medicine.
- 4 -- Illinois Blue Book of 1927-28, "Peoria State Hospital."
- 5 -- Fiftieth anniversary pamphlet of Peoria State Hospital.
- 6 -- File of newspaper clippings, letters, and other printed materials regarding Dr. George Zeller and Peoria State Hospital at the Peoria Public Library, Peoria Historical Society, and Zeller Zone Center, Peoria.
- 7 -- Telephone interviews.
- 8 -- Tours of the present hospital complex.

Appendix to
Peoria State Hospital and Dr. George A. Zeller

A Historical Review

By Tom Edwards for Carl F. Reardon

Dr. George A. Zeller
(from "A Tribute")

He had the ruggedness of the mountains on the exterior, but within him there beat the heart of a child, the sympathy of a true humanitarian, whom God had placed in a position to challenge superstition, ignorance and mysticism.

It was here (Peoria State Hospital) that he challenged the world. And it is here that we might well erect a monument such as appears in many places throughout the world. If you would see a monument already present, look about you. His monument is in the liberty that the patients enjoy in Illinois institutions and in many other institutions. A monument embodying this freedom is the kind of monument that I hope the State of Illinois will be able to erect on these grounds; a monument to a man, a monument to an achievement that extends throughout the whole universe wherever man and women suffer and are unfortunate, and wherever there is need, a monument to a man who was a friend and a challenger.

This hill, from which we bury Dr. Zeller today was to him, home . . . He loved it because it was here that he achieved success; it was here that he worked out his ideals for the care and treatment of these patients, and it was here that he found the greatest pleasure in life. He had a varied career, as a soldier, teacher, as a scientist, and as a student, in all of which he excelled, but it was here in the care and treatment of these people that he found his greatest joy.

By A. L. Bowen, Director
Illinois Department of
Public Welfare
July 1, 1938

Photographs from:

Sixth Biennial Report

OF THE

Commissioners, Superintendent and Treasurer

OF THE

Peoria
Historical Society

No. 7476

ILLINOIS

Asylum for the Incurable Insane

AT PEORIA

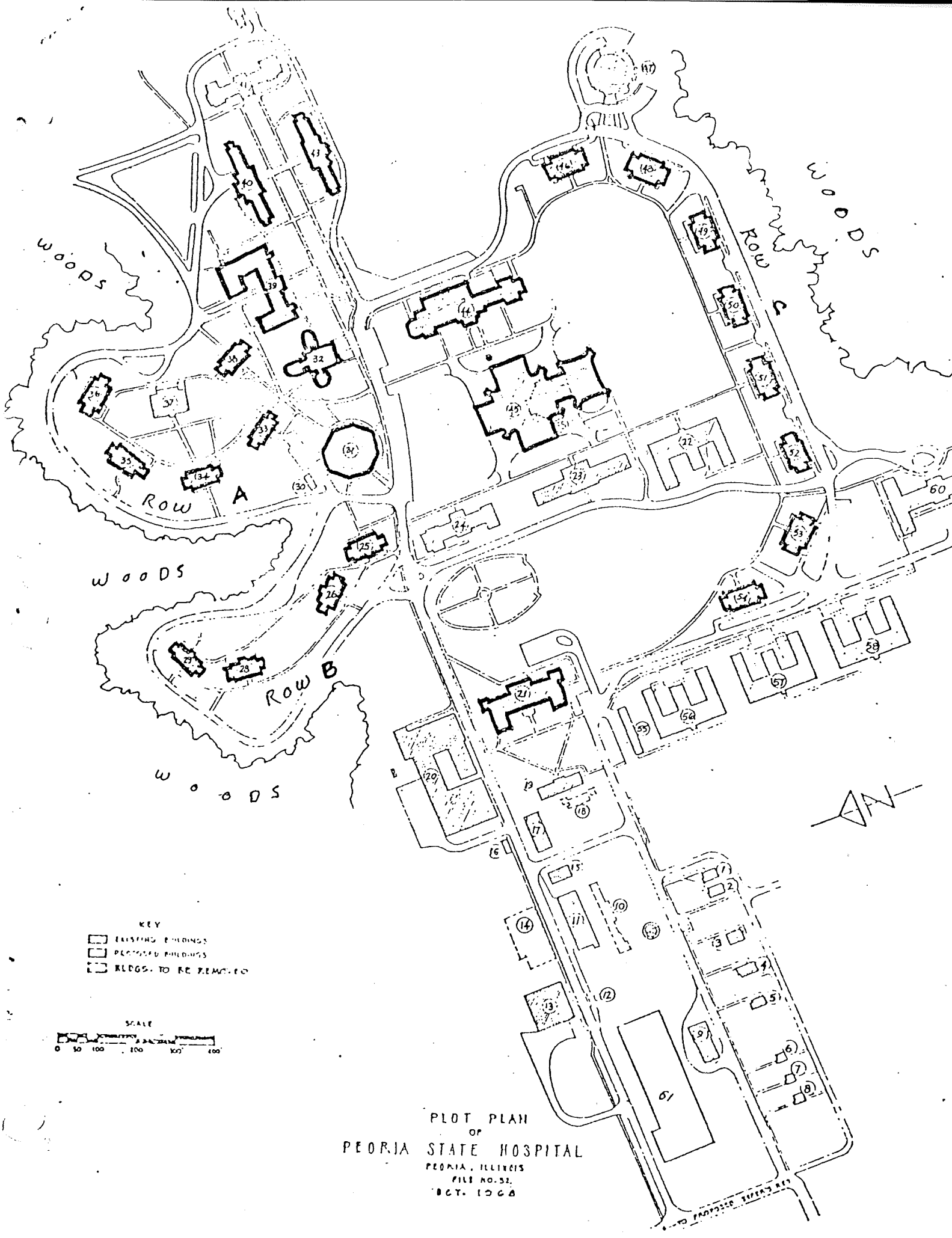
JUNE 30, 1906.

Postoffice Address,
No. 1201 Terminal Station, Peoria, Illinois.

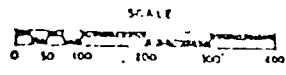


SPRINGFIELD, ILL.
PHILLIPS BROS., STATE PRINTERS.
1907.



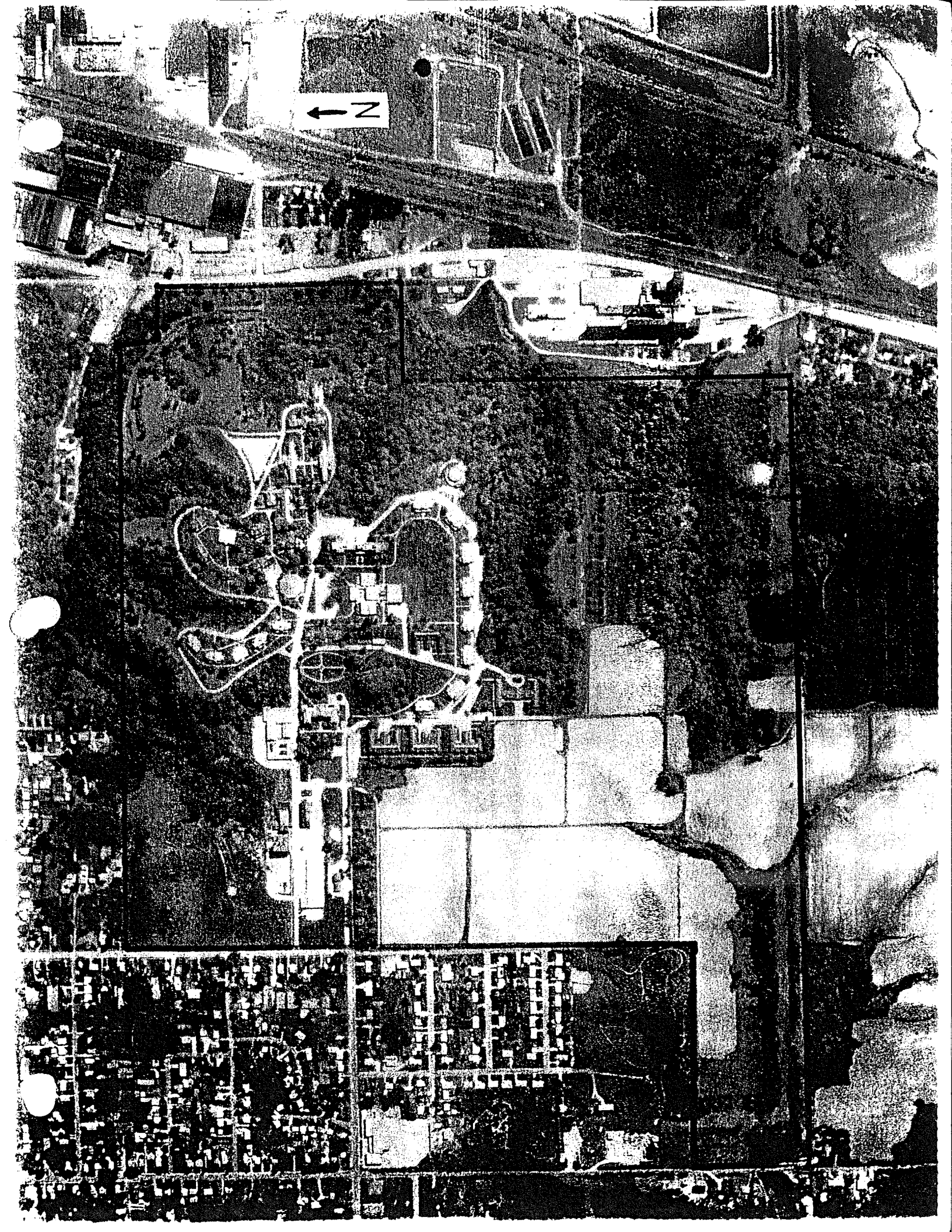


- KEY
- ▭ EXISTING BUILDINGS
 - - - - - PROPOSED BUILDINGS
 - - - - - BLDGS. TO BE REMOVED

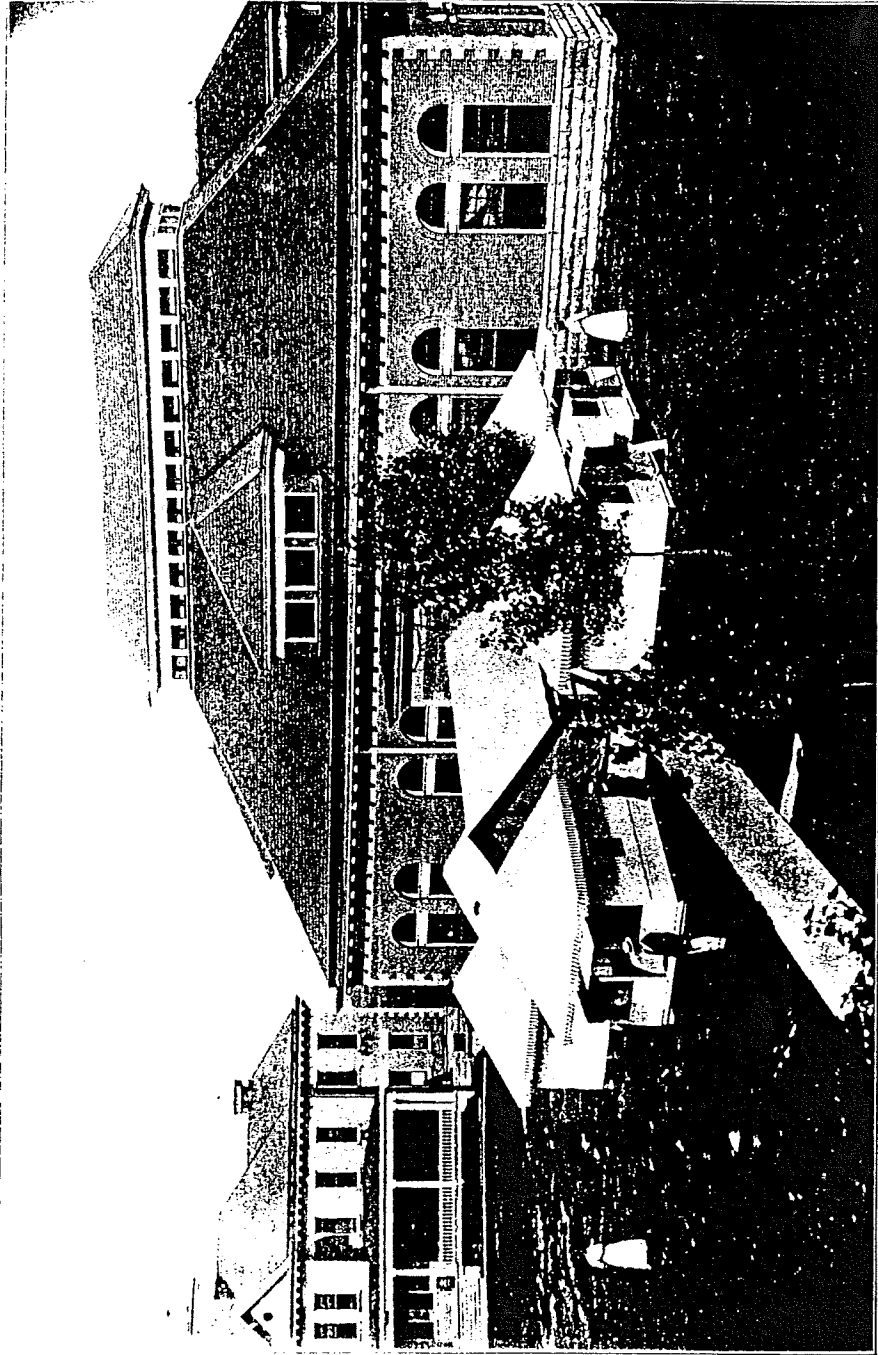


PLOT PLAN
 OF
 PEORIA STATE HOSPITAL
 PEORIA, ILLINOIS
 FILE NO. 52
 OCT. 1968

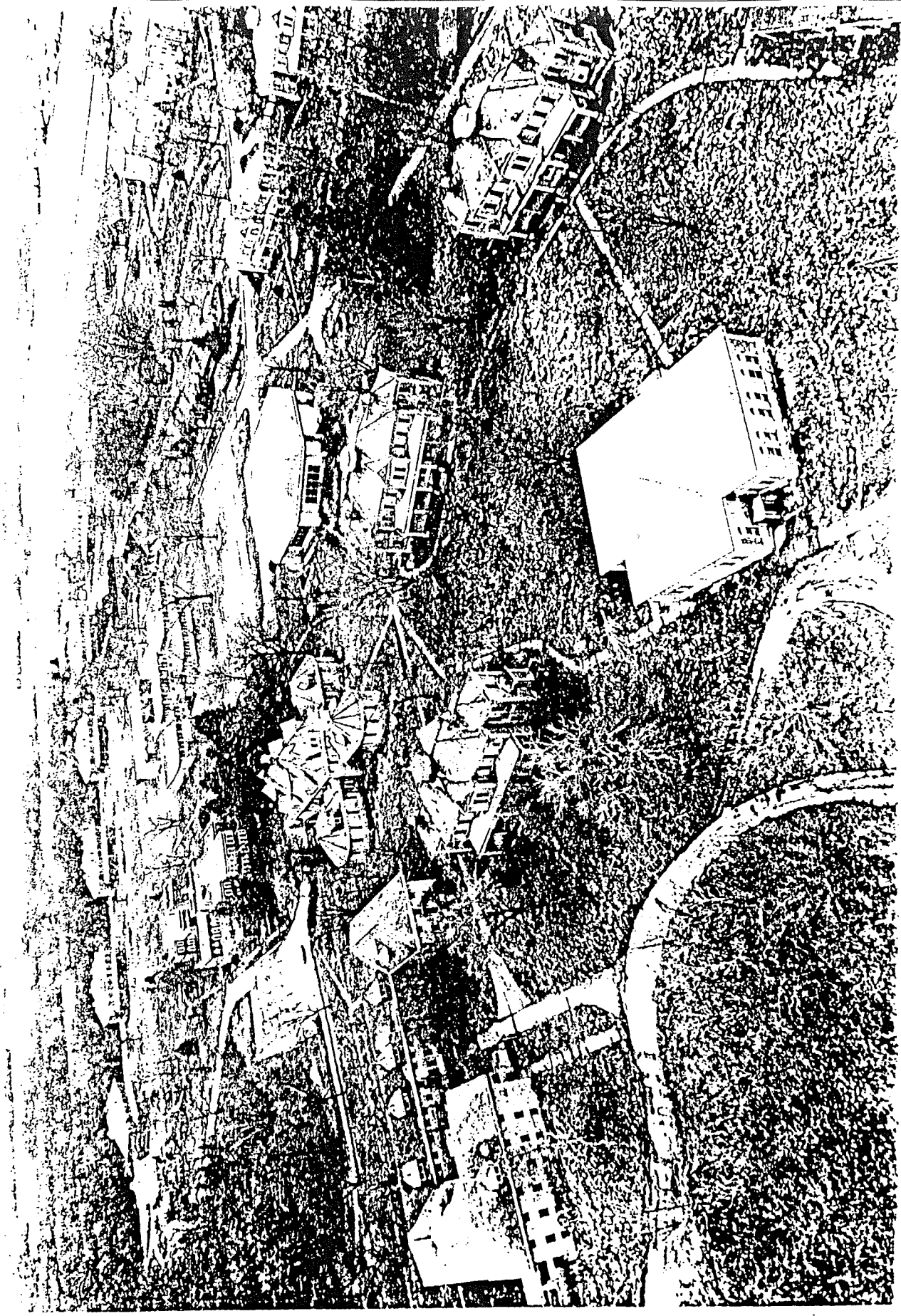
PROPOSED TRUCK WAY



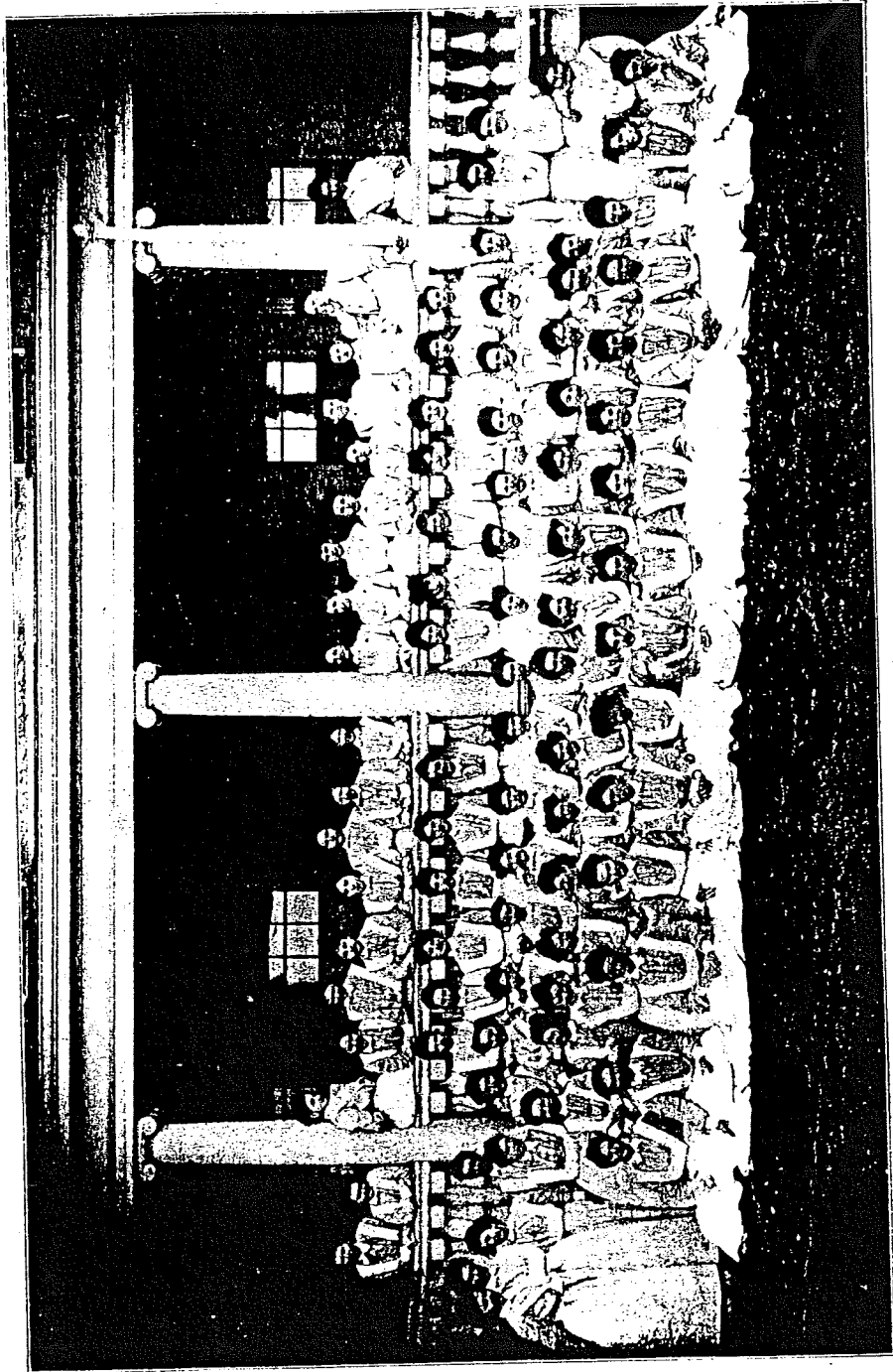
THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST TUBERCULOSIS.



Tent colony for consumptives. Annex to the Women's Hospital.

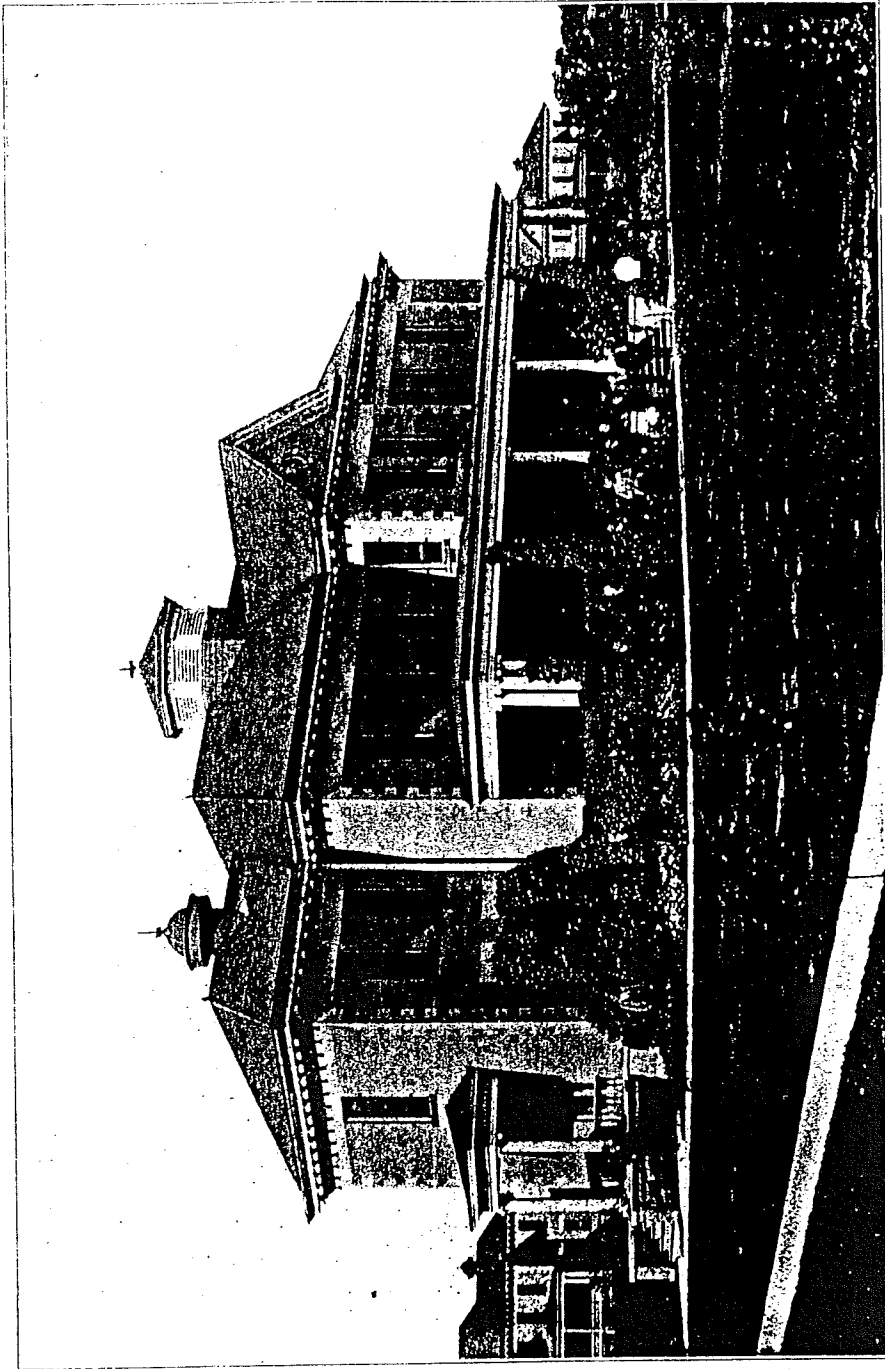


THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST CRUELTY.

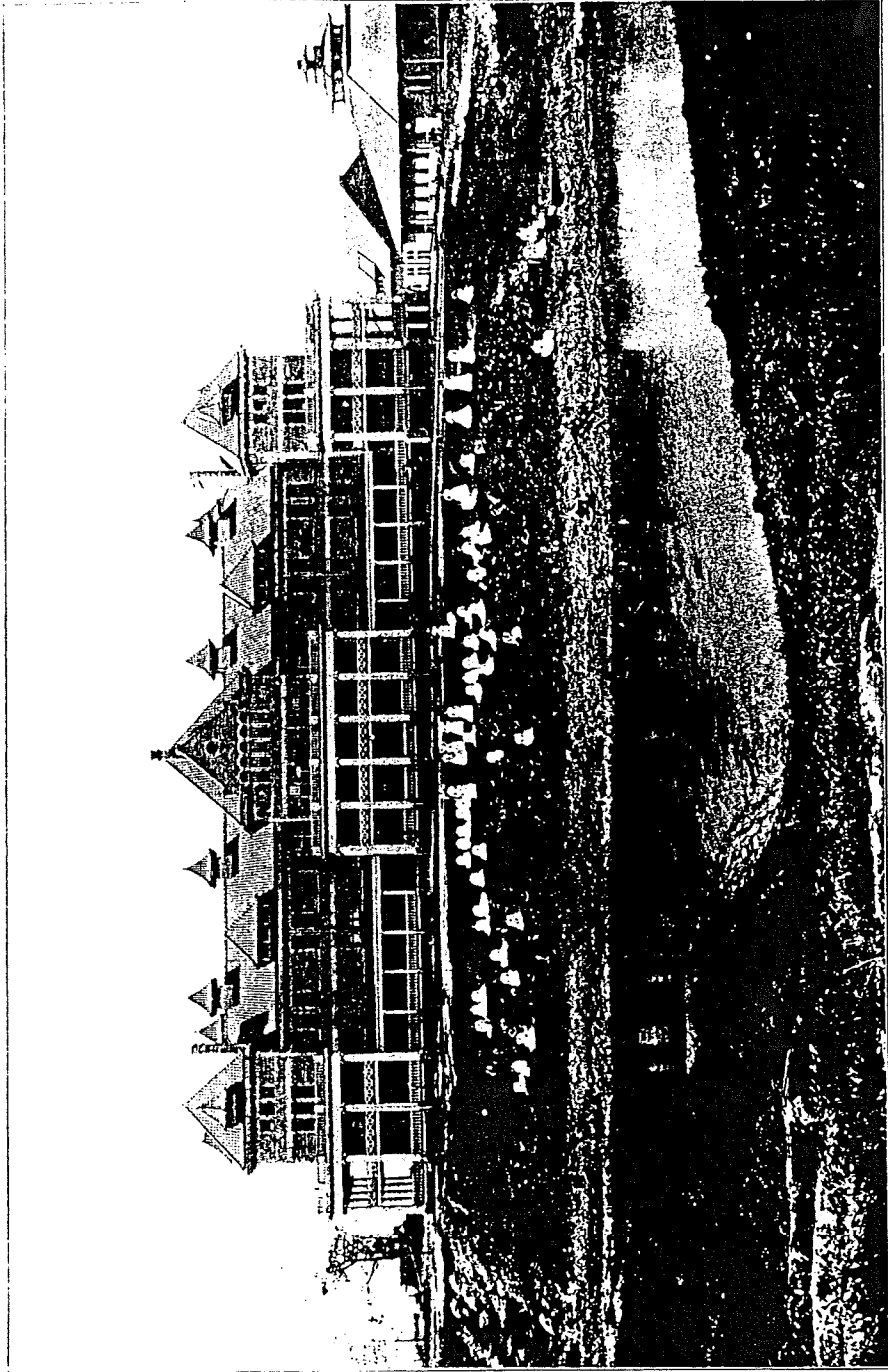


These attendants and nurses care for 700 insane men.

17-289

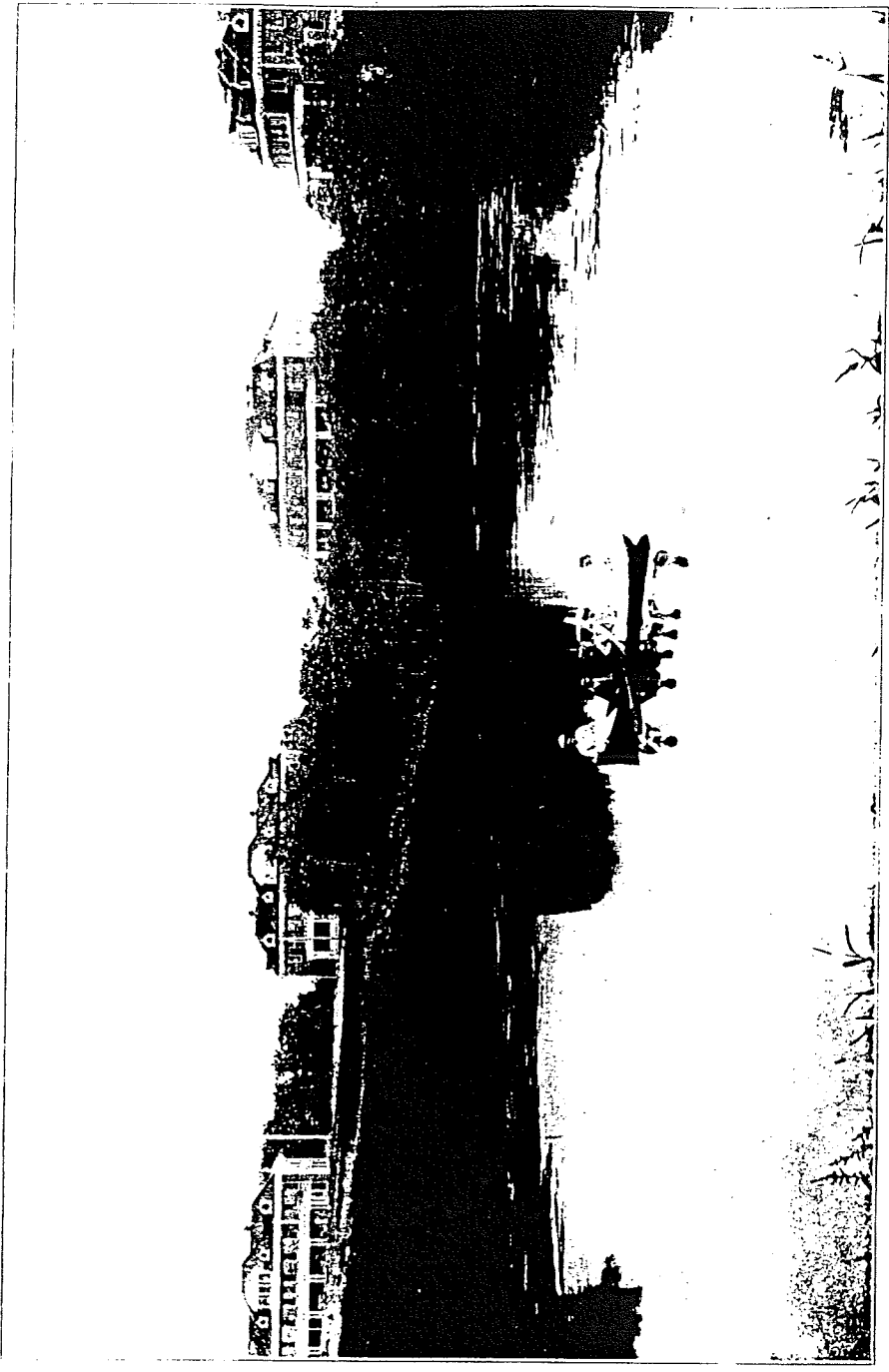


TYPICAL COTTAGE, VINES AND FLOWERS, PLANTED AND CARED FOR BY INMATES



THE NURSES' HOME, WITH GROUP OF INMATES IN THE FOREGROUND.

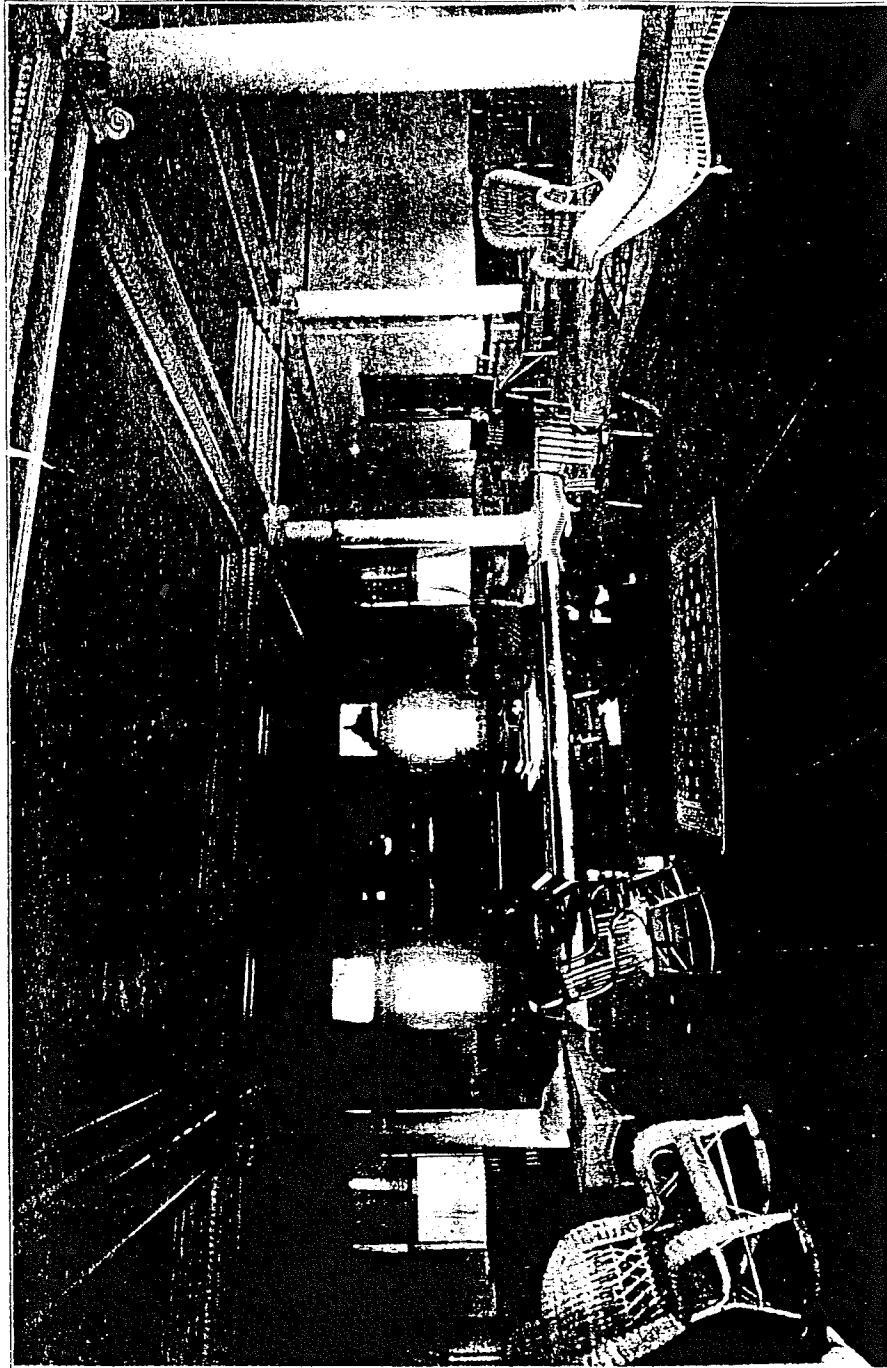
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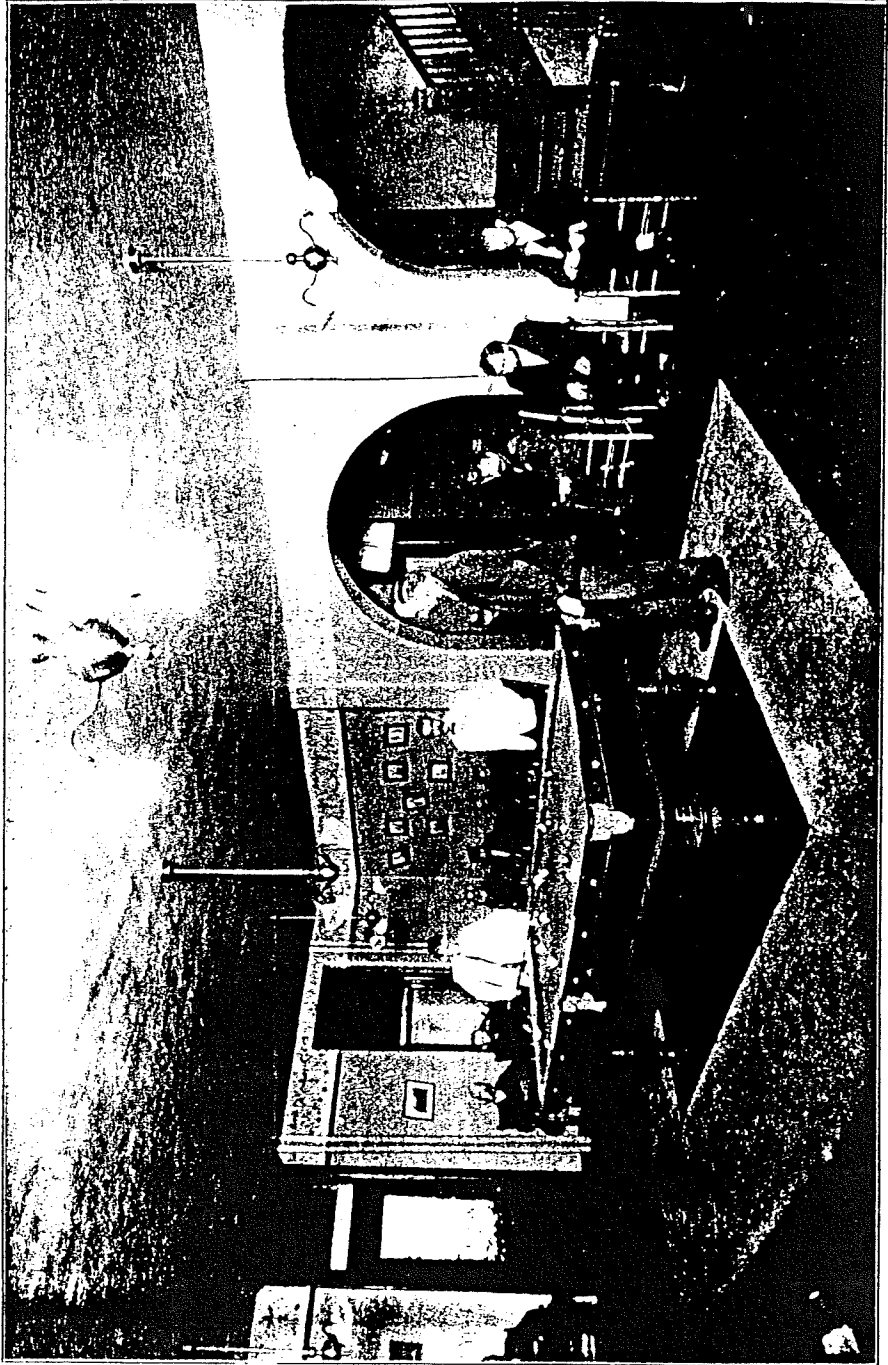
FOUR OF THE EIGHT NEW COTTAGES.



THE INSTITUTIONAL LIBRARY.

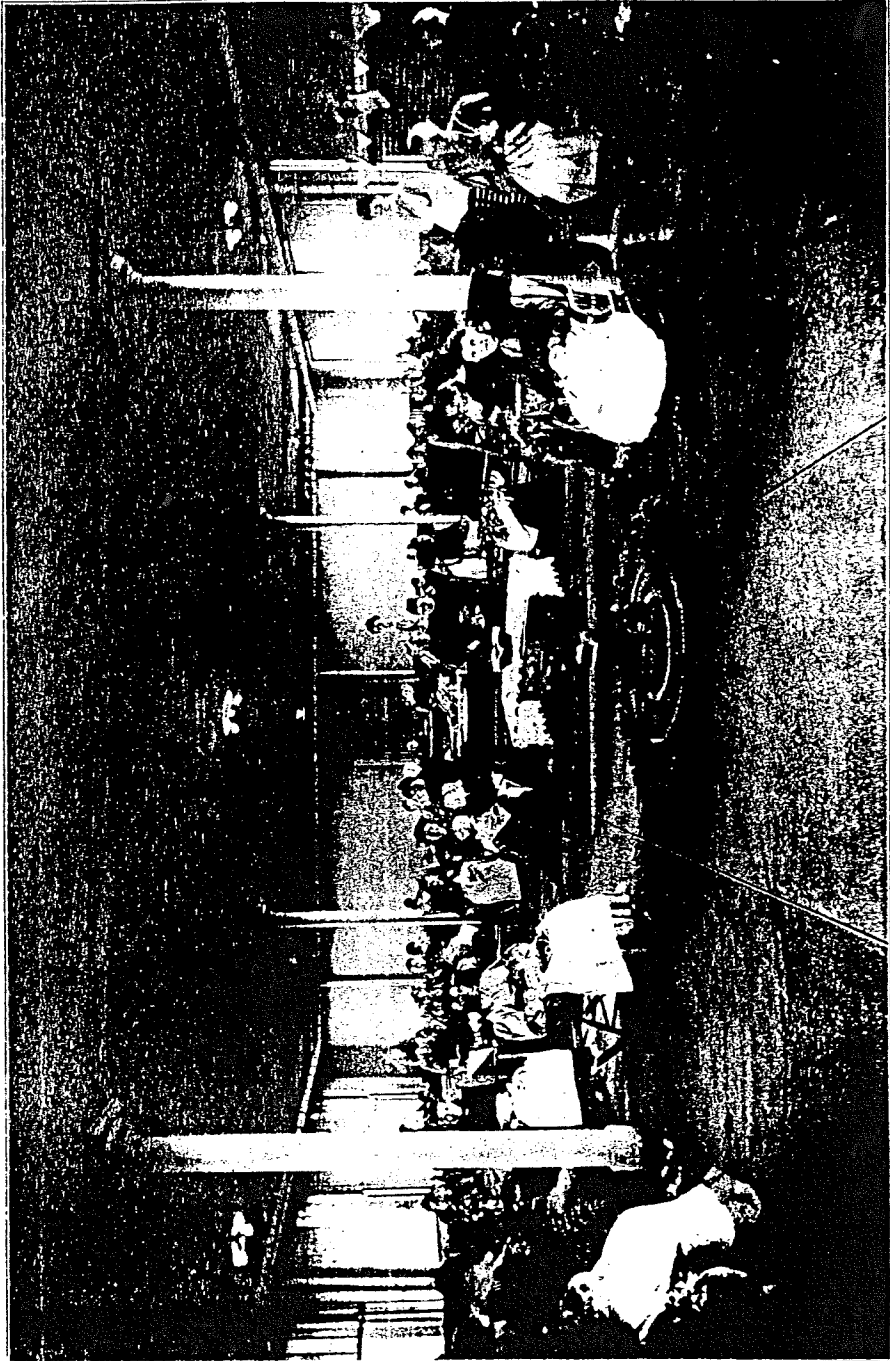


THE LOBBY.—EACH OF THE EIGHT NEW COTTAGES HAS A SIMILAR DAY ROOM.



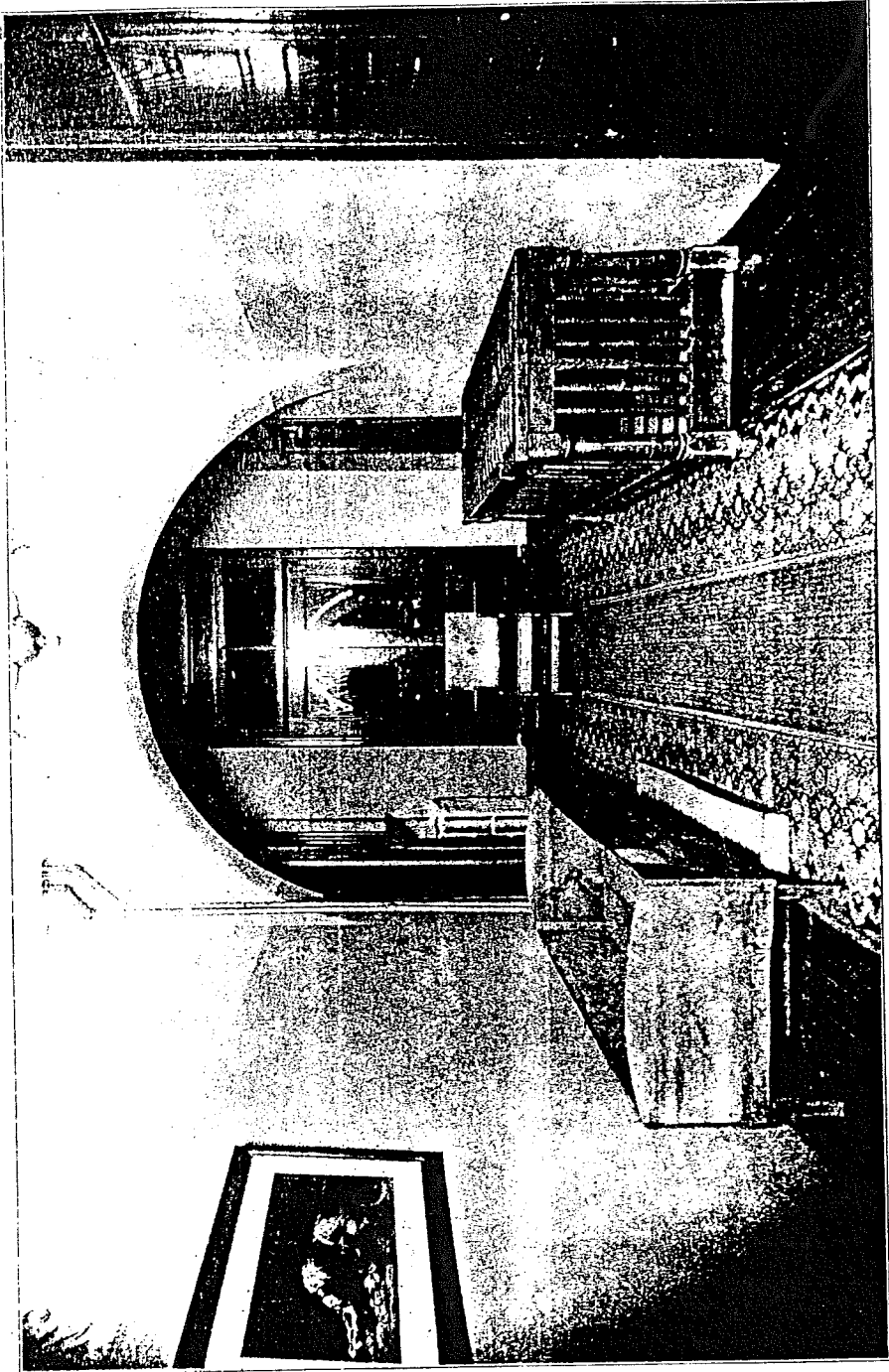
DAY ROOM OF A COTTAGE FOR MEN.

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST IDLENESS.



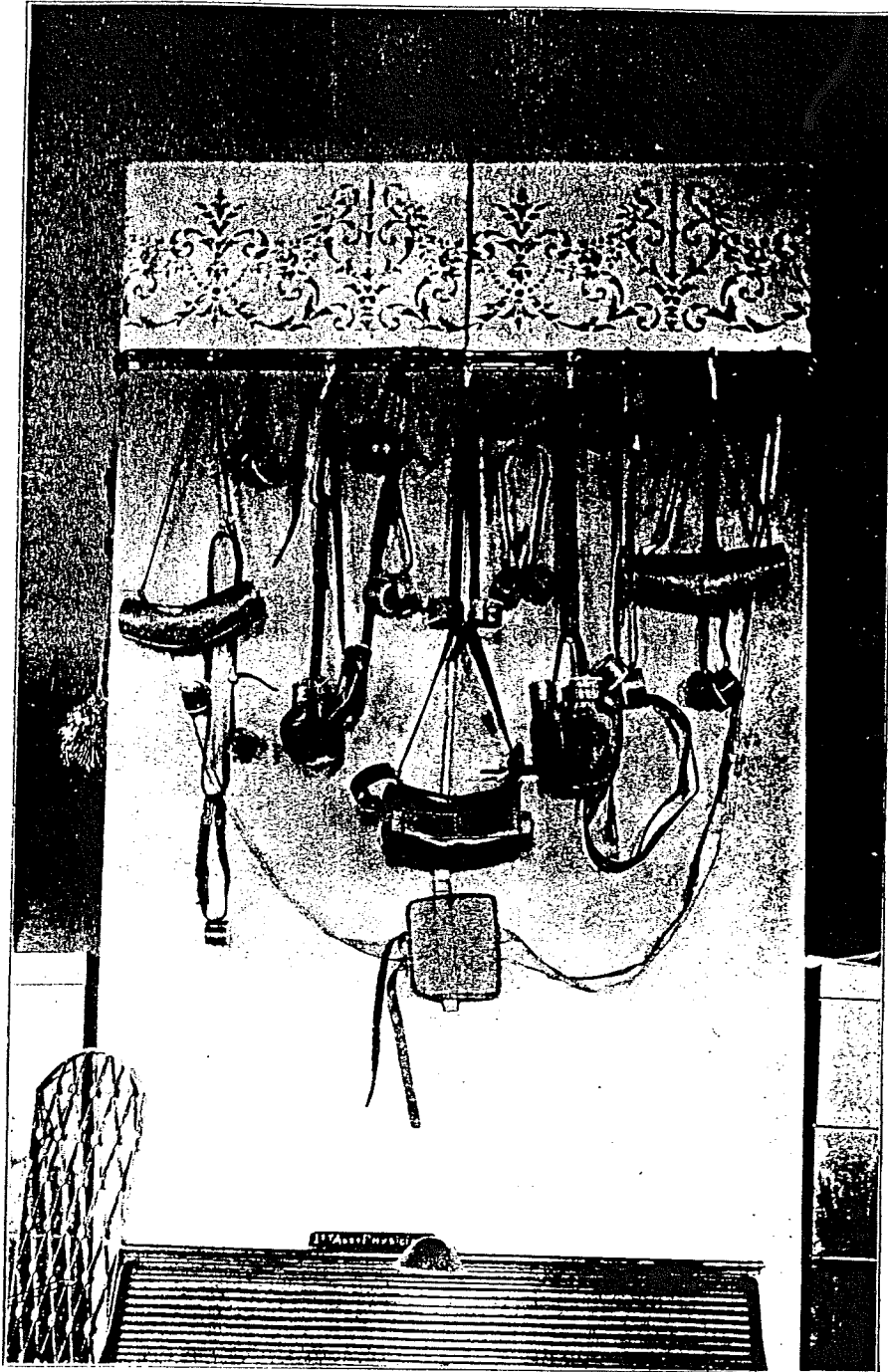
The Industrial School, in which 105 old ladies are employed at needle work.

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST RESTRAINT--THE AGE OF WOOD.



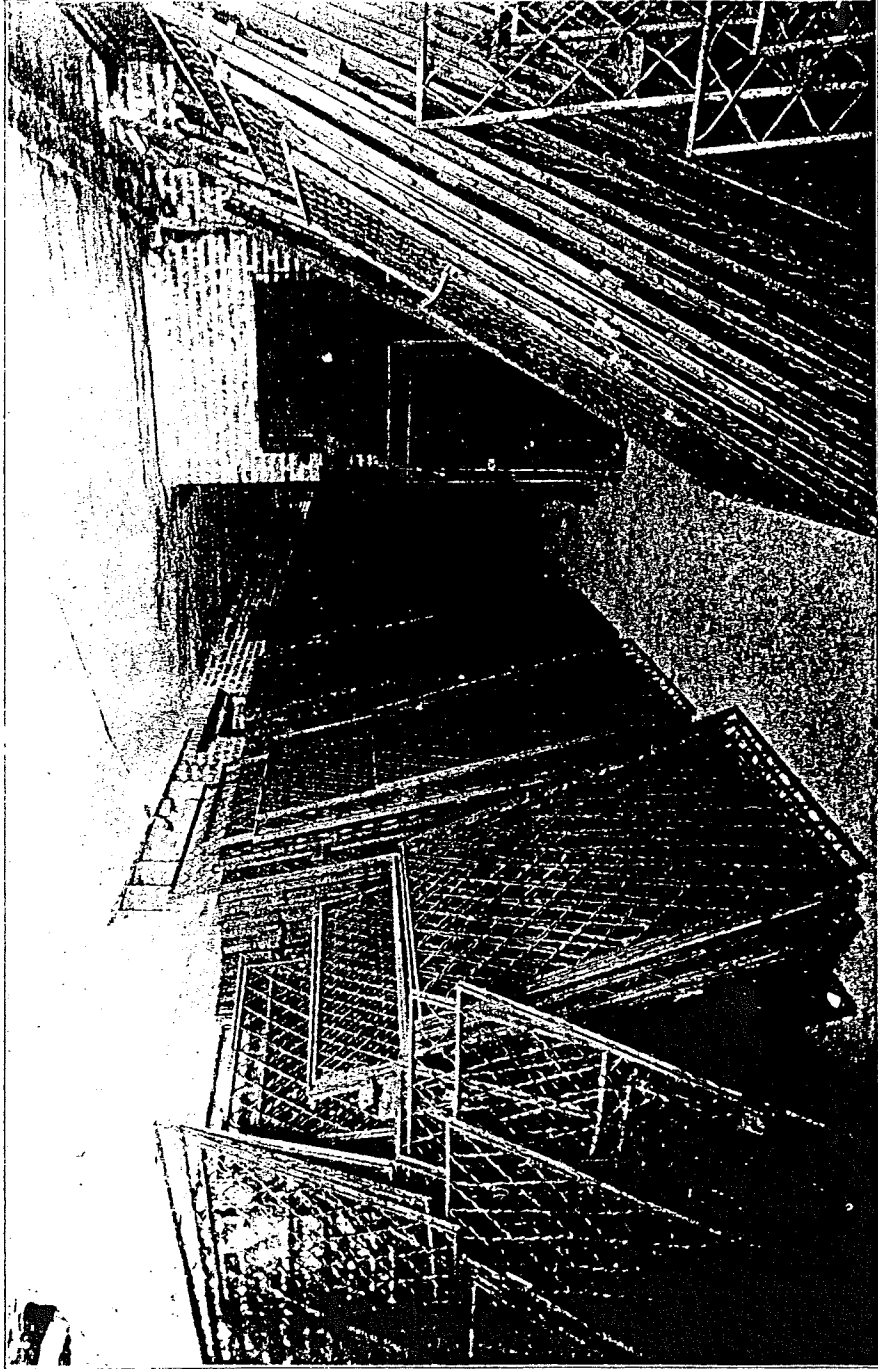
The object to the right is the famous, or infamous, Pitca crib. To the left is the box-bed in which a naked woman lived forty-three years in an almshouse. In the center is the so-called "hock," or "strong chair." All abolished.

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST RESTRAINT.—THE AGE OF LEATHER.



So-called "humane" restraint apparatus, consisting of the leather "muff," "mitts," "anklets," "wristlets" and the famous "bed saddle." Wholly abolished in 1905.

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST IMPRISONMENT.



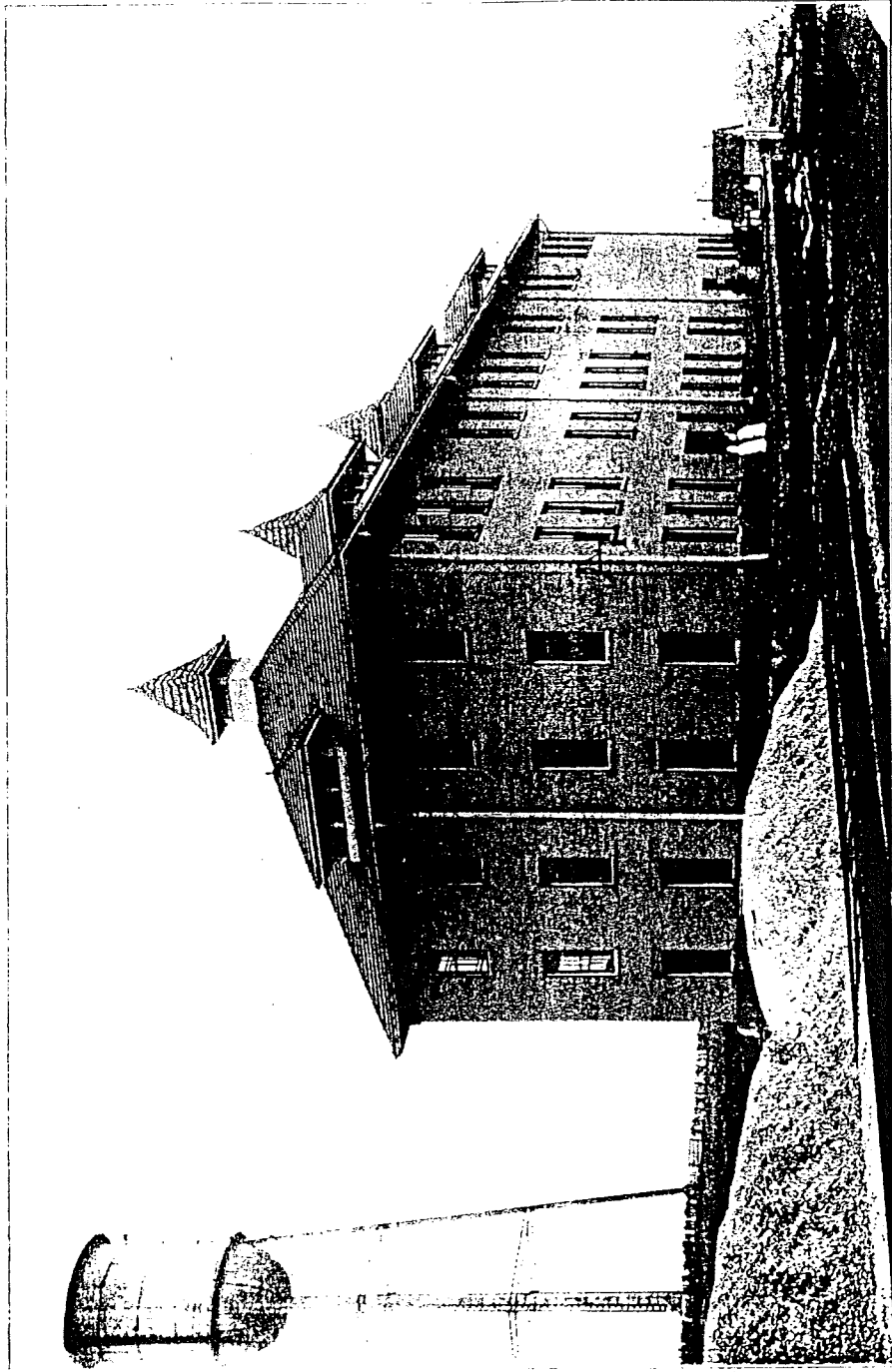
A part of the six thousand dollars' worth of iron grating removed from the windows and doors of this institution in 1905.

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST RESTRAINT.—THE AGE OF IRON.

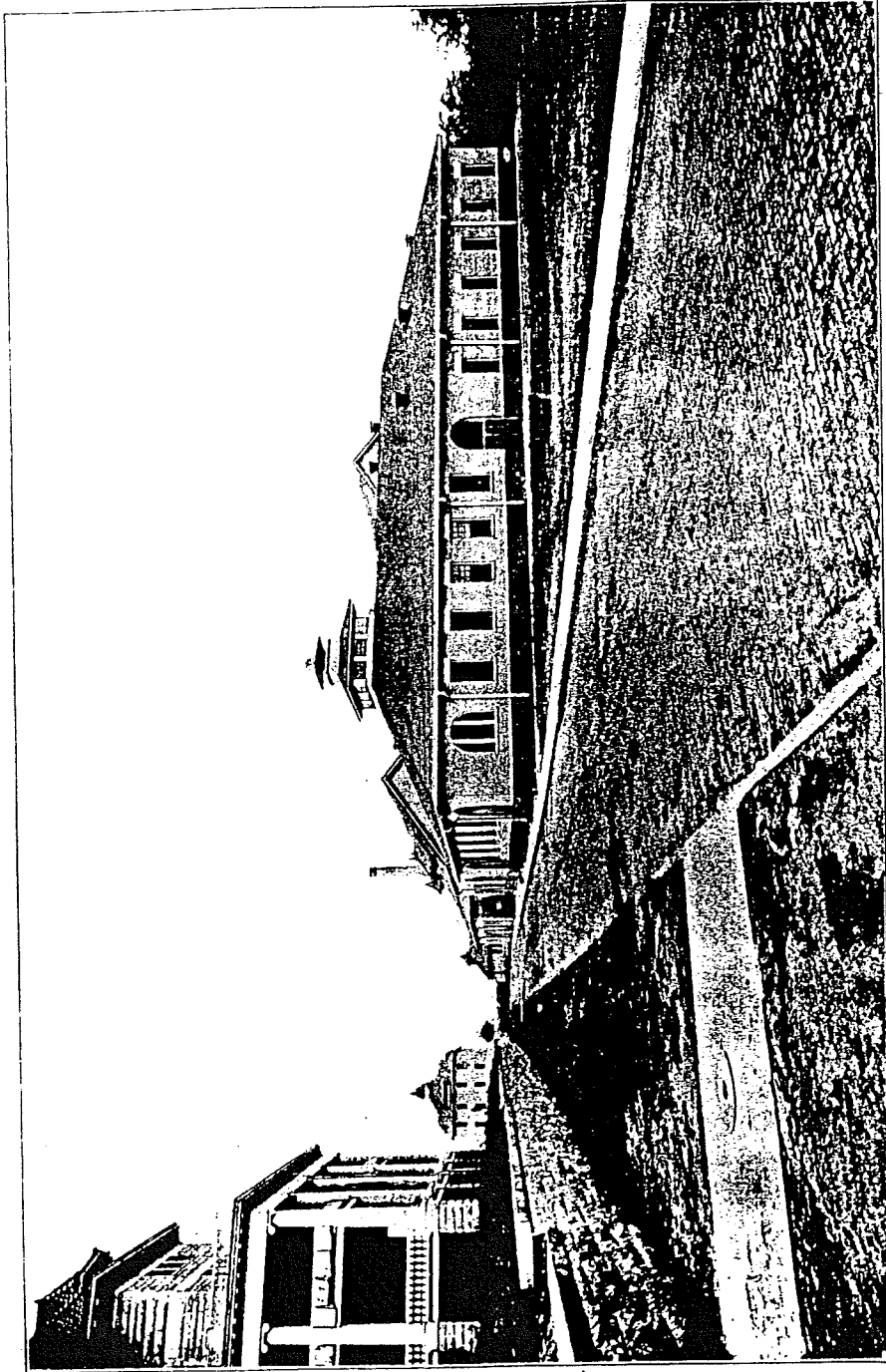


Discarded apparatus, consisting of shackles, hand-cuffs, manacles and ball and chain. donated by almshouse superintendents.

THE FIRE-PROOF SUPPLY HOUSE.



One hundred and fifty working inmates occupy the second and third floors.



CENTRAL INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS AND PAVED STREET.

KENYON and ASSOCIATES

735 No. Knoxville Ave. Phone 309 674-7121 Peoria, Ill. 61602

RESEARCH ON HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

PEORIA STATE HOSPITAL HISTORIC DISTRICT BARTONVILLE, ILLINOIS

The Peoria State Hospital has always been located at the present site in Bartonville, Illinois. The buildings for the Hospital were built at this location. The former name of the Peoria State Hospital was the Illinois Asylum for the Incurably Insane.

The design of many of the buildings reflects the then new concepts advocated by its first Superintendent, Dr. George A. Zeller, for treating the mentally ill. These concepts had been talked about earlier and practiced in a limited way but Dr. Zeller decided that Peoria State Hospital would be designed around these new concepts. He continued the cottage plan for patients instead of dormitories or small cell-like rooms. In the cottages there were private rooms, double rooms, and small wards. Each cottage had lounges with open fireplaces, dining rooms, large porches, and, above all, a residential feel in the finishes of the rooms.

Materials found in the cottages were those found in residential buildings of the time. Wood window frames and trim, hardwood floors, and baseboard. The stair balustrades are natural wood, stained. The exterior brick work often employs the buttered joint. Workmanship in the fireplaces found in the lounges is high quality masonry. Some of the lounges had wood paneling and ornate plaster mouldings. Dr. Zeller wanted the cottages to be as close to a home environment as possible. (See map, Buildings #25, #26, #28, and #29; #33 through #36, #38 - all constructed in 1899.) (Photograph #1)

The cottages were not placed in long rows with connecting runways but instead arranged on gently curving roads and walks, spaced apart for some privacy. Three of the cottage areas were sited to afford a beautiful view into the nearby ravine and woods. (See map, cottages in Areas A, B, and C.) (Photograph #2, Area C)

On the Hospital grounds, Dr. Zeller had facilities built for beauty shops, barber shops, and areas for social events such as parties, dances, concerts, and holiday events. Physical sickness was not treated in separate areas until Dr. Zeller had Talcott Hospital constructed in 1908 to house patients when they became ill with pneumonia and other illnesses. (See map, Buildings 40 and 43.) In 1937, Building 44 was constructed and bears the name Zeller Hospital. (Photograph #3, Talcott Hospital; Photograph #4, Zeller Hospital)

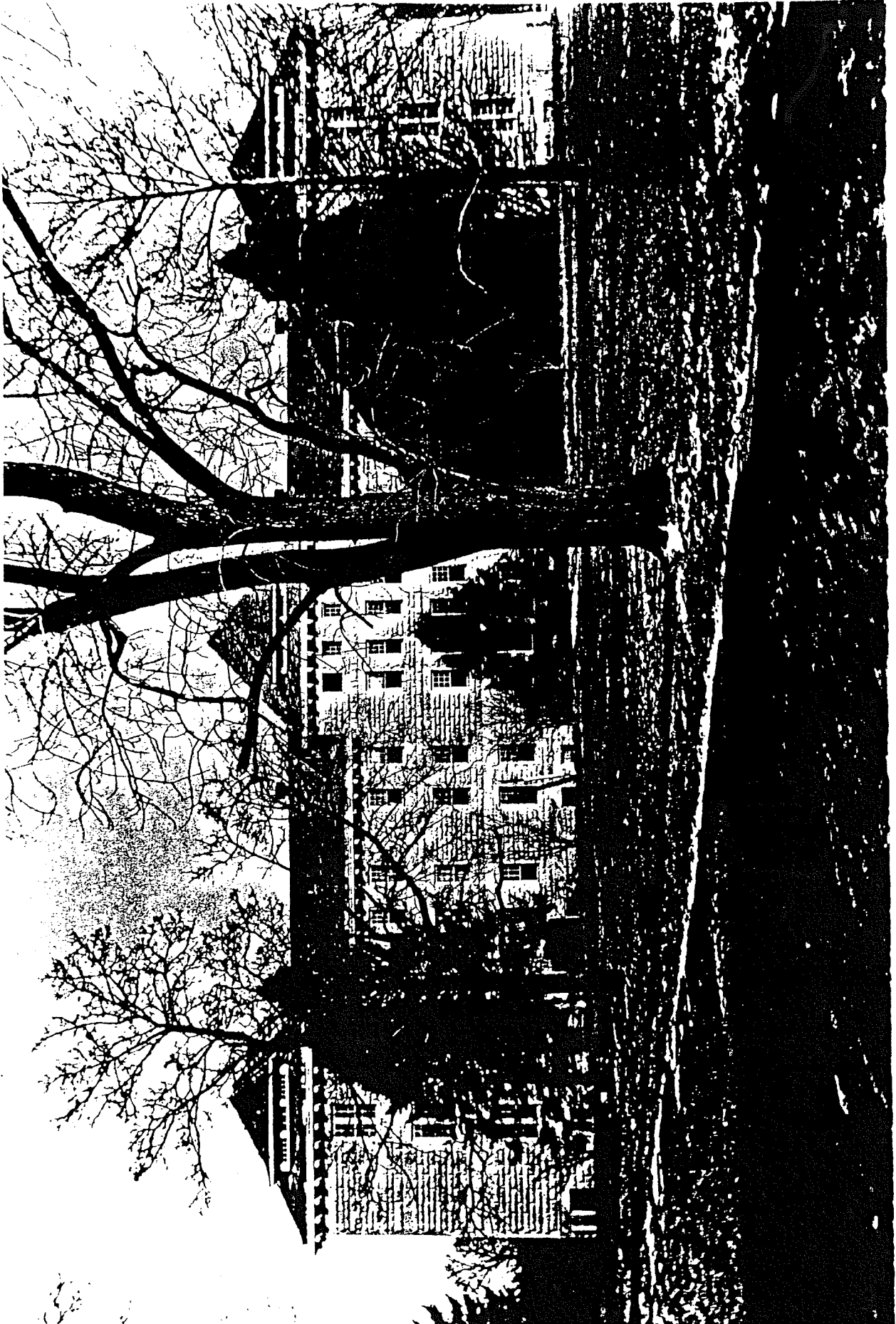
An employees' cottage, Knowles-Bigler Residence built in 1911, shows the Prairie style architectural influence, with wide overhangs and generous porches, again with wide overhangs. The entire exterior character is of long horizontal lines enhanced with heavy evergreen plantings around the building. Inside, the fireplaces and wood beam ceilings are of the Prairie style. (See map, Building 39) (Photograph #6)

Cottages for the patients varied in architectural style from Georgian Revival, as soon in Buildings #33 through #36 and #38. The pronounced lintels and stone quoins and the deep inset gables all show Georgian Revival influence. The Type C Residences #46, #48 through #54 have the proportions of the Georgian Revival with a French Renaissance gable at the third floor level. The main lounges in these cottages have handsome plaster ornaments on the ceiling beams and the supporting columns. Ionic plaster detailing is used on the columns.

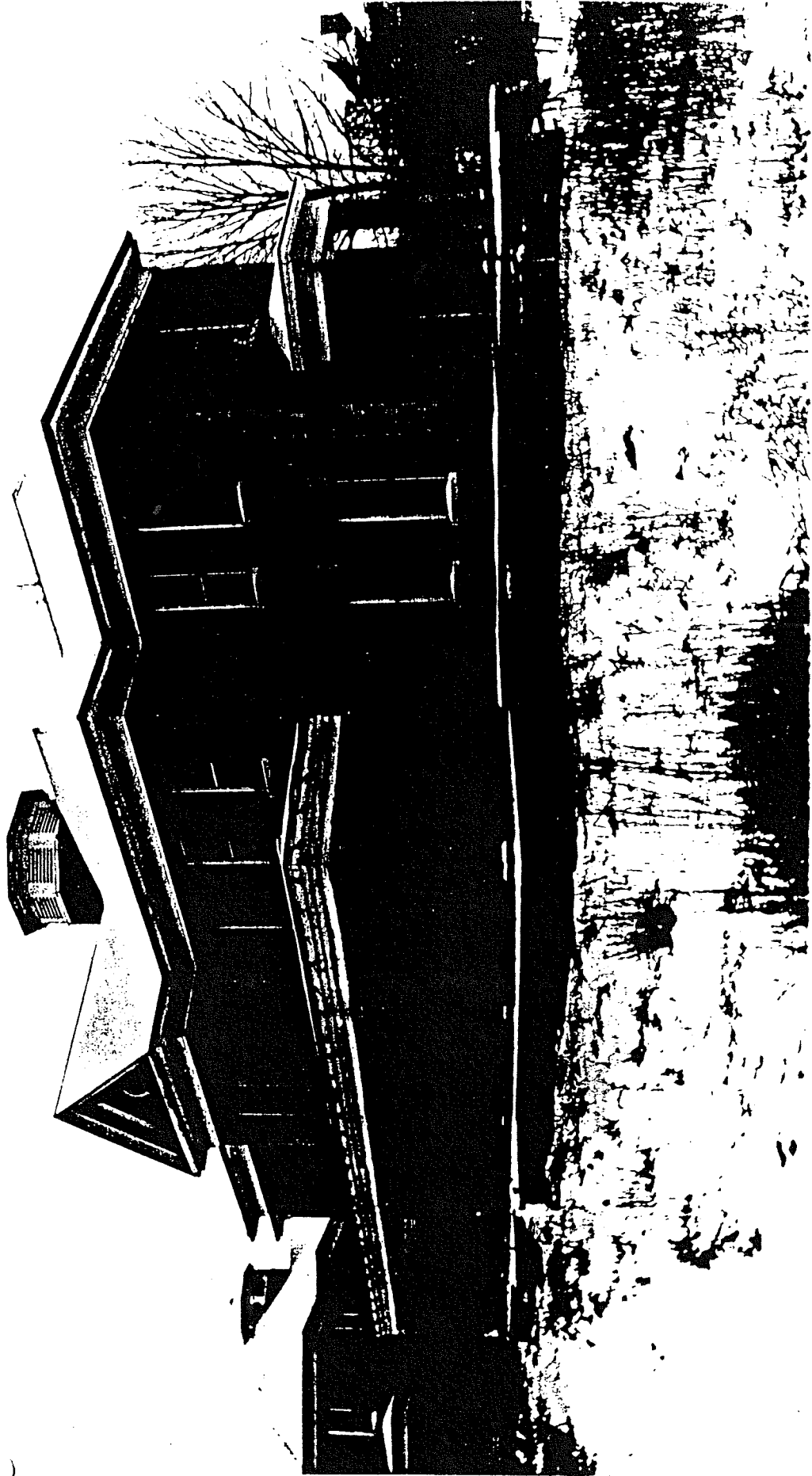
The entire complex gives a feel of a college campus or similar institution. Completely omitted from the atmosphere is the feeling of confinement. This is largely due to the design of the buildings throughout the Hospital. Generous porches are found, even on the original Administration Building with abundant landscaping around it. (Photograph #7) These buildings are a definite contrast to the other mental hospital buildings of the time which were box-like and severe and devoid of architectural detail.

Thus, the Peoria State Hospital is physical evidence of the revolution that took place in the treatment of mental illness from 1898 to the day it closed. Dr. Maxium Pollack and Dr. Walter Baer, successors of Dr. Zeller, carried on his concepts. Medical persons from Europe, Canada, and around the country visited Peoria State Hospital to learn from this institution.

Leslie H. Kenyon, A.I.A.



Administration Building #21



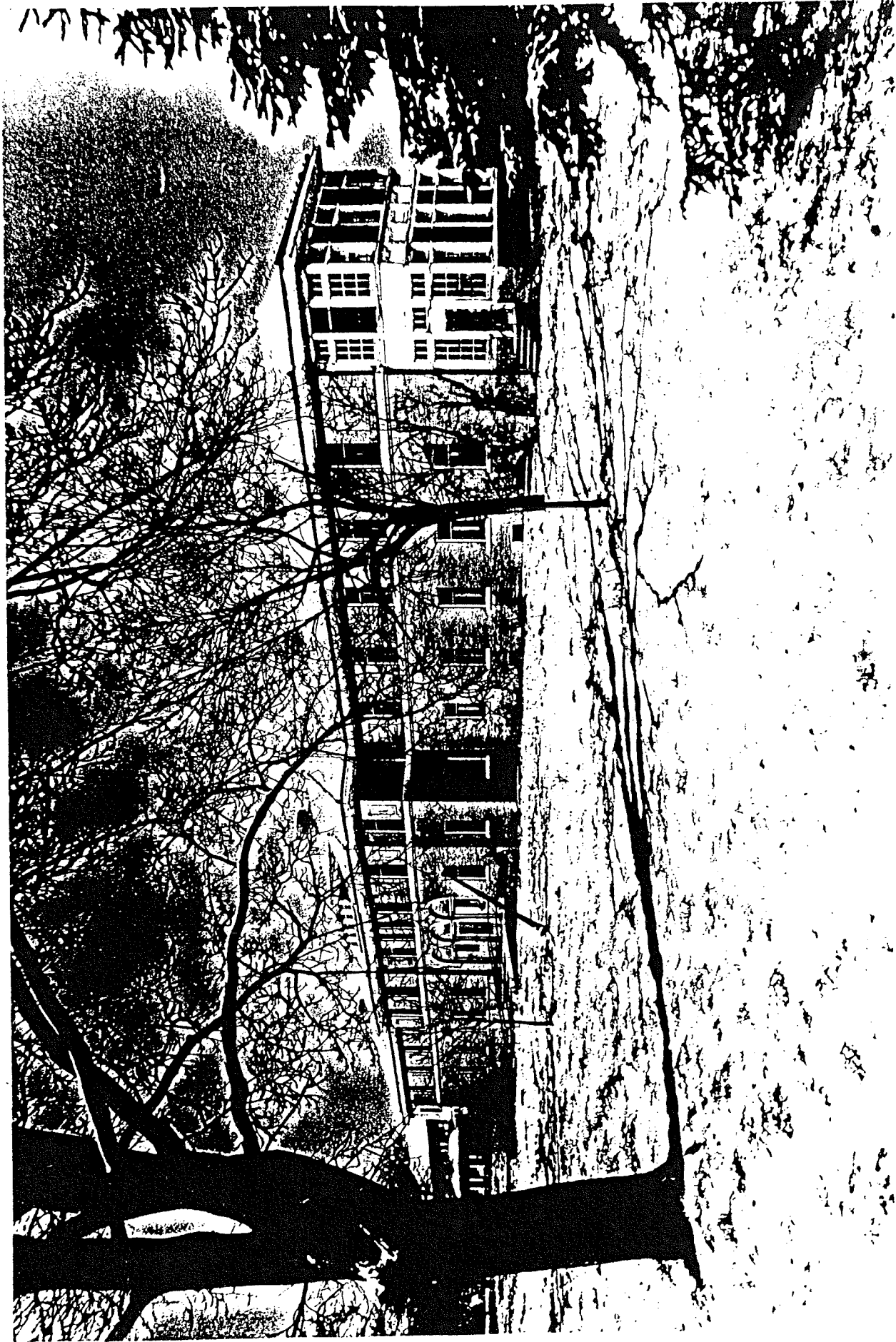
Type A Residence #25



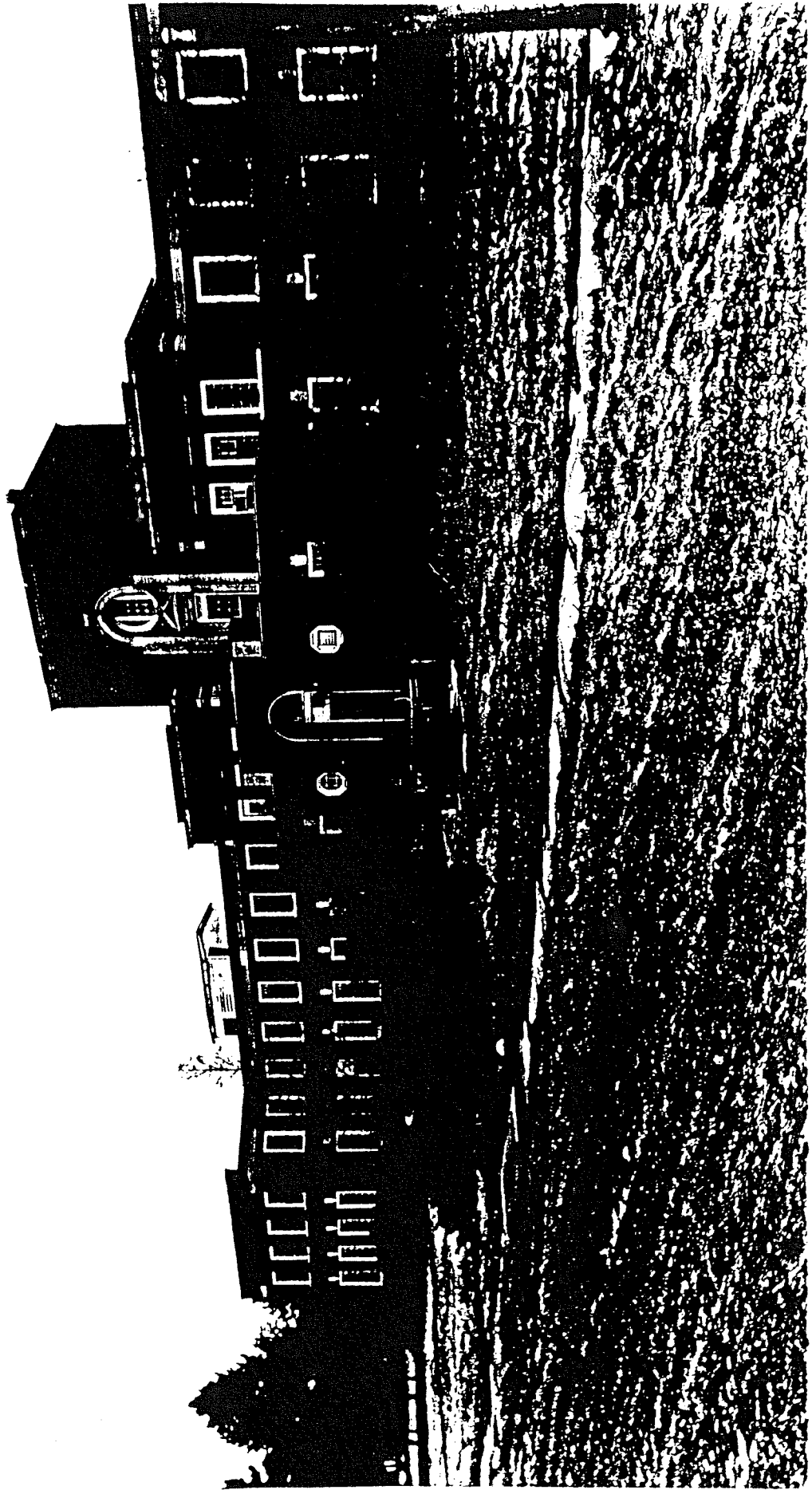
Old Administration Building #32



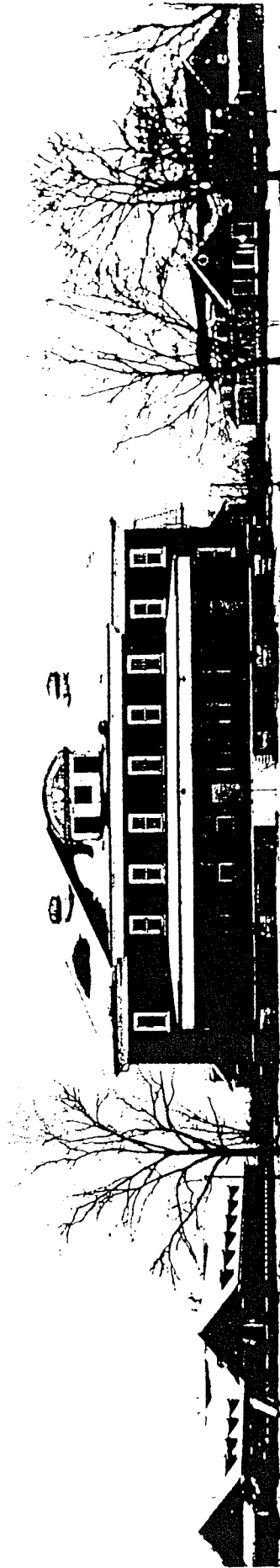
Knowles Rigler Residence #39



Talcott Hospital #40



Zeller Hospital #44



Type C Residence #46

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Dr. Zeller was also the first director of a state mental health facility to put women attendants in charge of men, to abolish the administration of narcotic drugs to quiet patients, the first to segregate tubercular patients, to hire a trained dietician and establish an on-site nurses training program. Peoria State was also the first to establish a children's unit.

Mainly, though, Dr. Zeller was a world leader in developing and providing gentle, considerate care and progressive medical treatment for the mentally ill, and in developing and providing a "home" type environment and the amenities of family and community life for their care, believing that this was intrinsic to their well being and recovery.

His achievements are embodied in his own words from his biennial report of 1908:

"Few of these principles are new. Most of them have been agitated and urged ever since the minds of men turned to the amelioration of the mentally afflicted. We claim no credit for their discovery, but we do take pleasure in presenting the observations of a complete bi-ennial period, during which 2000 of the most violent, destructive and dangerous insane in the world have been cared for without once having to resort to mechanical restraint, without using a single grain of narcotic on any ward, except in the hospital for the sick, without a screen or a bar on any door or window and without turning a key upon a single patient, night or day and with women caring for more than 800 insane men."

Quoting this passage, the Illinois Blue Book of 1927-28 comments thusly on its broad impact:

"We have vindication of his system in its adoption by all of the state hospitals of Illinois."

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Architecturally, Peoria State Hospital may be, basically, like many others.

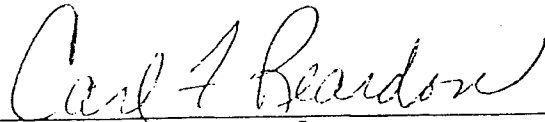
However, it is the last such complex in the state of its vintage with nearly all of its original buildings and integrity still intact, and it was the second constructed along the "cottage" plan of separate, relatively small residential units.

Opened in 1902, there were 46 major brick and/or stone buildings on the site, 15 of which were built in 1899, eight in 1904, 10 between 1904-10, two in 1915, and one in 1929, two in 1937, three in 1939, and the rest since then. Nearly all could be rehabilitated if there is economic justification for recycling them.

The buildings are essentially as they once were. The most extensive alteration to the decor has been the removal of the porches from the nurses residence.

Please advise if you need further information for this request for nomination forms.

Sincerely,



Carl F. Reardon

CFR/ak