

**Report of the visiting justices of the County Lunatic Asylum, Forston,
Dorset : Epiphany sessions, 1840 / Dorset County Lunatic Asylum.**

Contributors

Dorset County Lunatic Asylum (Forston, England)
Templer, James A.
Quick, T. A.

Publication/Creation

Dorchester : Printed by T. Patch, County Printing Office, [1840?]

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/d57tjwcu>

License and attribution

This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

REPORT

OF

THE VISITING JUSTICES

OF THE

COUNTY LUNATIC ASYLUM,

FORSTON, DORSET.

EPIPHANY SESSIONS, 1840.

DORCHESTER :

T. PATCH, COUNTY PRINTING OFFICE.

REPORT
OF
THE VISITING JURORS
TO THE
DORCHESTER COUNTY PRINTING OFFICE
DORCHESTER
1810

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
Wellcome Library

R E P O R T.

AT the last Michaelmas Sessions the Visitors reported that they intended to order Mr. Evans to prepare plans and estimates for the erection of eight new cells, four over the end of the male wing, and four over the end of the female wing, with a stair-case down to the airing court in each wing from the upper gallery; this has accordingly been done, and the estimated expense is £350 for the new cells, and £85 for building an open shed extending from the end of the coach-house to the bakehouse, and ranging with the front of the stable. With regard to the first of these buildings, the reasons on which the Visitors thought it right to recommend it, was the fulness of the present wards, arising from the number of incurable Patients with which the Asylum has gradually become filled, so that many recent cases have been of necessity rejected: and also from the original construction of the building, the impossibility of keeping a proper classification of the Patients, as from the ward of the second stair-case down to the airing grounds, the Patients of the upper gallery must necessarily become mixed with those in the lower wards, in going and returning from the grounds, thus destroying that complete separation of the classes on which much of the proper regulation of the Establishment depends.

The second building is one for holding straw, which is at present kept either over the stables, or in a shed at some distance from the main building—this during the late wet weather has proved a serious inconvenience, as the Servants

and Patients have to bring it some distance in the wet; and it being used for bedding in the lower ward for dirty Patients, it is not in that dry state in which it ought to be. This shed will also enable the Patients to be employed in wet weather.

During the last year the Asylum has been in general healthy, having been free from any epidemic or any disease of an infectious character. The Visitors think it right to state, that they have every reason to continue to be satisfied with the conduct of the Superintendent and Matron in the care which is taken of the Patients, and the general management of the Asylum.

During the last year there have been

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Admitted	11	17	28
Discharged	6	9	15
Died	3	7	10

Admitted since the opening of the Asylum.

Admitted	124	152	274
Discharged	52	63	115
Died	25	33	58

Remaining in the Asylum	47	56	103
-------------------------	------------	------------	-----

Of the 28 thus admitted in the last year, the Superintendent states with regret, that only 6 were recent cases of whom any reasonable hope of cure could be entertained; the other 22 were cases of long standing, some having been confined in other Asylums, and the whole 22 may be deemed *incurable*. On the subject of these cases, the Visitors think it right to observe, that they fear the wording of the Act which mentions "Dangerous Lunatics, Insane Persons, and Idiots," has led Parish Officers to believe, that persons in an unsound state of mind may be kept at home, until some positive instance of danger to the life of some one has occurred. This has caused many (it is to be feared) to be kept till the disease has attained such a height,

or has become so permanently fixed, that but little hope could be entertained of a cure. The unhappy individual has thus become a burden for the rest of his life on the Parish, whereas had he been sent at an earlier stage of his disease to the Asylum, there would have been a fair prospect that he might have been restored in a sound state of health to his family and friends. The Visitors therefore wish to impress on the Magistrates the necessity of their using their influence to urge the parochial authorities to send to the Asylum any cases which may occur in their parishes as soon as any decided symptoms of insanity have shown themselves. The Visitors report that Matthew Clapp, the criminal lunatic, continues still in the Asylum, as he has lately shown such decided symptoms of mania, that they could not avail themselves of the order obtained from the Secretary of State to remove him to the Gaol. There have been 15 discharged this year, being less than the preceding year by 3; but this is to be accounted for by the great number of incurables lately admitted, added to those before in the Asylum.

Amongst the discharges is C—. M—. who was some years since in the Asylum, and was removed on her friends undertaking to provide for her—after which her mania returned, and she was kept chained at home until she managed to escape from her place of confinement, when she was sent again to the Asylum, where she remained nearly three years. She is now recovered, and has been discharged. The Visitors have to regret that a major part of the Patients now in the house are incurable, many having been in other Asylums.

The number of deaths amounting to ten, is greater than the preceding year, when only *seven* occurred; this can be accounted for by stating, that of the ten, one was 72, 73, 76, and 78, respectively. One female also was sent who had been bed-ridden 14 months; another who had refused all food for nearly three weeks, and who while in the Asylum,

was obliged to be fed by force—both of these died. Even this number of 10 per cent. cannot be considered a large average as at Glasgow, Lincoln, and the West Riding of York, it appears to have been in the same ratio of 10 per cent. and in others much higher. At Blooming Dale in New York, in 1836 it was 9 per cent., in 1837, 10, and in 1838, 15.

The same system of employment continues to be carried on with the most beneficial effect, and all who are willing to work are employed in some way or other, and no instance of accident has occurred from the use of any of the tools employed in the several trades—thus adding another year's experience to what has been observed in this and other similar establishments, that Patients do not often injure themselves with the edge-tools of their respective trades.

It is to be regretted that a sufficient market cannot be found for the various articles that could be made in the Asylum, such as straw bonnets and hats, hassocks, and other straw work. One hundred pair of Lancaster clogs have been made this year for the use of the Gaol.

The fund entitled the *working* fund, and which is employed in giving indulgencies to those who work, and in small sums to those discharged, is as follows—

WORKING FUND.

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
Cash received.....	53	14	1	Paid for Materials and Indulgencies & Gifts Owing for Materials.. Balance in favor of the Fund	40	16	2
Due for sundries	20	17	0		14	15	9
					18	19	2
	<u>£74</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>1</u>		<u>£74</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>1</u>

As much observation has lately been made on the necessity or otherwise of restraint, on Patients suffering under violent mania, it may be observed, that there have scarcely ever been more than three in one day, which have required any restraint,

either by being confined to their cells, or by having the leather cuffs placed on them, and then only for a very limited period of perhaps not more than a few hours at a time. Frequently the Asylum will be found without any person under restraint for a considerable time, sometimes for a fortnight or more.

The Visitors have with pleasure to report, that a letter has been received from the Rev. J. Bartholomew, the executor of Mrs. Elizabeth and Mrs. Susan Marsh, late of Sturminster Newton, in this county, stating that two bequests of £25 each, have been made to the Asylum by the above-mentioned ladies, to which Mr. Bartholomew has added a donation of £25 more, making in all £75, which bequests he now offers to pay to the Treasurer. The Visitors therefore intend to order this and all other future legacies, to be invested in the public securities, and the interest to be placed to the contingent fund.

The expenses of the year amount to £1824. 11s. 9d. exclusive of the annual sum of £135 arising from Mr. Brown's benefaction, making a total of £1959. 11s. 9d. being an excess over the preceding year of £125. 16s. 3d. but this has arisen chiefly in the two articles of bread and flour, in which there is an excess of £76. 18s. 4d.

The present amount of the contingent fund is £53. 14s. 10d.

The price of the maintenance will still continue at 6s. 5d. per week.

(Signed)

JAMES A. TEMPLER, Chairman.

Dec. 29th, 1839.

This report was adopted at Quarter Sessions.

MAINTENANCE ACCOUNT,

	£.	s.	d.
Amount received from Parishes; - - - -	1765	10	11
Received from Mr. Browne's Benefaction Fund	135	0	0

£1900 10 11

for the Year ending December 25th, 1839.

	£.	s.	d.
Meat, Suet, &c. - - - - -	257	12	9
Bread - - - - -	303	17	7
Flour - - - - -	64	12	6
Butter - - - - -	12	14	4
Rice, Oatmeal and Pease - - - - -	35	8	6
Drugs, Surgery, &c. - - - - -	25	18	4
Cheese - - - - -	69	8	9
Soap - - - - -	20	6	0
Grocery - - - - -	48	8	10
Candles - - - - -	10	11	11
Coals - - - - -	137	8	8
Hay, Straw, Corn, and Pollard - - - - -	74	6	2
Garden Labor, Seeds, &c. - - - - -	44	2	5
Wine and Spirits - - - - -	5	10	0
Malt and Hops - - - - -	115	4	9
Brooms, Brushes, Cooperage, &c. - - - - -	20	12	2
Linen, Clothing, and Bedding, - - - - -	96	14	10
Tin and Earthenware, Ironmongery, &c. - - - - -	22	7	11
Stationary, Postage, and Carriage - - - - -	19	19	0
Sundries - - - - -	13	6	4
	<hr/>		
	1428	11	9
Officers' Salaries and Servants' Wages - - - - -	396	0	0
	<hr/>		
	1824	11	9
Balance paid to Contingent Fund - - - - -	75	19	2
	<hr/>		
	£1900	10	11
	<hr/>		

PATIENTS, DECEMBER 25th, 1839.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
In the Asylum 25th December, 1839,	45	55	100
Admitted since,	11	17	28
Discharged since,	56	72	128
Died since,	9	16	25
Remaining in the Asylum December 25th, 1839,	47	56	103

ADMITTED.

Cases not exceeding Six months' duration and first attack.	Cases not exceeding Twelve Months' duration, and first attack.	Cases not exceeding Two Years' duration and first attack.	Cases of more than Two Years' duration.	Cases of those who have had previous attacks.	Total.
57	23	15	129	52	276

DISCHARGED.

Cases cured not having been insane more than Six Months before admission.	Cases cured not having been insane more than Twelve Months before admission.	Cases cured having been insane Two Years and upwards before admission.	Cases cured having had previous attacks.	Cases not cured, but discharged as improper objects.	Total.
61	10	18	23	3	115

AGES OF PATIENTS ADMITTED, DISCHARGED & DIED.

ADMITTED.

From Ten to Twenty.	Twenty to Thirty.	Thirty to Forty.	Forty to Fifty.	Fifty to Sixty.	Sixty to Seventy.	Seventy to Eighty.	Eighty to Ninety.	Total.
8	41	65	74	47	26	13	2	276

DISCHARGED.

1	21	33	32	8	17	3	—	115
---	----	----	----	---	----	---	---	-----

DIED.

1	3	7	15	11	9	10	2	58
---	---	---	----	----	---	----	---	----

Average Number of Patients during the Year,

Of those who have been Discharged Cured, only 12 have since been Re-admitted.

ACCOUNT OF PATIENTS EMPLOYED.

MALES.		FEMALES.	
In the Garden - - -	10	In the Laundry - - -	8
Stable - - - - -	1	In the Kitchen - - -	3
Tailoring - - - - -	1	Helpers in Wards - - -	6
Shoemaking - - - -	1	Straw Platting - - -	10
Helpers in Wards -	10	Knitting, Sewing, &c.	20
Attending Steam Boiler	1		
Picking Flock, &c. -	6		
Total -	30	Total -	47

DIETARY.

BREAKFAST.

Milk Porridge, with 6 oz. of Bread.

DINNER.

Two Days, 6 oz. of Cooked Meat, with Vegetables.

Two ditto, 1lb. of Suet or Rice Pudding.

Two ditto, Soup, with 6 oz. of Bread.

One ditto, Bread and Cheese.

Ale with Dinner, Daily.

SUPPER.

6 oz. of Bread, and 2 oz. of Cheese, with Ale.

Patients who are actively employed, extra diet.

A comparative table of cures, collected from reports of the various Asylums of the Kingdom, taken from the last Wakefield Report.

From 1796 to 1836, York Retreat, for the Society of Friends,.....	46.45
1823 to 1833, Gloucester, 3 classes of patients admitted,	45.34
1818 to 1838, Staffordshire, 3 do. do...	44.9
1812 to 1838, Nottingham, 3 or 4 do. do.	43.43
1820 to 1837, Lincoln, 3 do. do.....	39.83
The Opening to 1839, Lancaster, 3 do.	38.83
1782 to 1839, Montrose,	39.26
1827 to 1838, Perth, opulent patients admitted	34.68
1814, to 1835, York, 4 classes of patients do.	31.5
To 1838, Glasgow, 3 do. do.....	27.53
From 1836, to 1839, Dundee, 3 do. do.	20.44

1818 to 1839, Wakefield, only paupers do...	43.92
Opening to 1839, Dorset, do. do.....	41.0
1829 to 1838, Suffolk, do. do.....	38.26
1836 to 1839, Edinburgh, do. do.....	25.0
1831 to 1837, Hanwell, do. do.....	20.98
1833 to 1837, Maidstone, do. do.....	23.69

T. A. QUICK, M. D.

MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT.

