

ANNUAL REPORT, 1938

Provincial Training School,
Red Deer, Alberta

(D.L.McCullough, B.A. (Sen. Mod.), M.B., D.P.H., D.P.M., *Medical Superintendent*)

MOVEMENT OF POPULATION

On January 1st, 1938, there was 215 patients (112 male, 103 female) in residence, and 214 (111 male, 103 female) on December 21st, 1938.

During the course of the year there were 14 additions—9 first admissions (7 male, 2 female) and 5 transfers from Ponoka and Oliver (2 male, 3 female).

There were no re-admissions, but one patient had previously been in Ponoka (1935) for five months as an epileptic.

Separations totalled 15; 5 patients discharged on parole (1 male, 4 female), 5 males transferred to Oliver or Ponoka, and 5 deaths (4 male, 1 female).

The admissions were all, without exception, of the voluntary type. Their ages ranged from 5 to 25 years, with an average of 13 years and 2 months.

The ages of the 5 patients discharged on parole averaged 22 years and 1 month; of the 5 patients transferred to Oliver or Ponoka, 25 years and 9 months; and of the 5 who died, 27 years and 7 months.

The net result has been a decided reduction in the age incidence of those in residence, quite contrary to the usual trend.

One of the patients transferred had been here for over 13 years and two over 15 years. Of the 5 who died, 1 had been in residence in the Training School for about 13 years, 1 almost 15 years, and 1 for 3 months short of 20 years.

There was only 1 elopement, that of a girl just admitted from Ponoka following her sterilization. She was returned later.

In addition to the 5 paroles, 3 boys were tried on farms in the Fall. Two were returned, and 1 is still on trial.

These and other interesting facts are set out clearly in the appended Tables. Table 10 shows the deaths covered such diverse conditions as Status Epilepticus, Diabetic Coma, Broncho-Pneumonia, Pernicious Anaemia and Cerebral Compression due to spontaneous subdural haemorrhage.

Table 11 shows 41% of our population to be of the totally helpless type from either physical or mental causes; 19.6% are epileptic.

NUMBER OF DEFECTIVES

Thirty-six applications for admission were added to the waiting list (23 male, 14 female), bringing the total at the end of the year to 179. These are all active cases, many of them of a pitiable or tragic nature. This total comprises:

	Male	Female	Total
Infirmery (physically helpless) (sex ignored).....	43
Low Grade (mentally helpless).....	34	21	55
School Children (under 16).....	13	20	33
Adult Group (over 16).....	30	18	<u>48</u>
			179

Forty-one suspect forms were received (24 male, 17 female), bringing the number of defectives known to us but not definitely seeking admission to the Training School to 539.

Table 14, summarizing these figures, shows 214 patients (111 male, 103 female) in residence at Red Deer; 188 (130 male, 58 female) mental defectives "not insane" in Ponoka, Oliver and Claresholm, and 539 cases reported, bringing the total of known and ascertained mental defectives for the Province of Alberta 10 1,120.

DEFECTIVES EUGENICALLY STERILIZED

No new cases were presented to the Eugenics Board during the year, as all possible cases had already been presented and the new admissions old enough for sterilization had already been operated on at Ponoka before being transferred here. Four cases approved of by the Board late in 1937, but held back owing to mumps, were operated on. Table 15 gives the status praesens.

Of the 117 patients who have been through the Training School and have been sterilized:

- 46 are still in residence (21.5% of the population at the end of the year);
- 22 are in other mental institutions;
- 4 are deceased;
- 42 are out, adjusting well or reasonably well, and are definitely not sexually delinquent; five of these were married before sterilization and ten have married since;
- 3 are out and have returned to previously well established habits of sex delinquency.

This is not a large enough group to permit of definite conclusions, but as far as it goes it does dispose of the argument that sterilization will favour promiscuity and sex delinquency.

HEALTH OF PATIENTS AND STAFF

Although there were many individual cases of illness and many minor accidents and injuries, the health of both patients and staff, as a whole, was satisfactory, and we were spared the recurrent waves of widespread epidemics of the previous year, disrupting routine and dislocating various activities.

In January spontaneous fracture of the thigh occurred in a debilitated, bed-ridden cripple. Healing occurred in reasonable time.

In February and March "colds" and "sore throats" gave rise to an unusual amount of acute otitis media. For several weeks lancing of our ear drums was an almost daily occurrence, sometimes two and three in a day. Four of the staff were affected. Later acute laryngitis and sinusitis were not uncommon.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Provincial Training School,
Red Deer, Alberta

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CHANGES IN POPULATION

On January 1st, 1941, there were in residence 216 patients (113 male, 103 female), and on December 31st, 1941, 251 patients, although there were 62 admissions.

Table 10, attached to this report, shows that of the 252 in residence, 101 (40%) were totally helpless either physically or mentally, or both, 37 (14.7%) were epileptic, 20 (7.9%) were Mongols, and 4 (1.6%) were psychotic (insane) as well as being mentally defective.

Additions.

During the year, 62 patients (34 male, 28 female) were admitted. All were voluntary. Fifty-eight were first admissions—one, a female idiot of 17, had been on the waiting list for fifteen years. Only four were re-admissions.

Of the 58 first admissions, 8 came from Ponoka and 1 from Oliver. Seven of the 8 cases received from Ponoka were girls following eugenic sterilization, the other was a boy of only twelve for whom there had previously been no room at the Training School. The patient from Oliver was a child of eight.

The ages of the newcomers ranged from 3 years to 29 years, the average for the whole group being 12 years and 1 month.

Twenty (34.5%) of the first admissions were idiots, 21 (36.2%) were imbeciles, and 17 (29.3%) were morons. Or, taking the classification used at the Training School—29 (50%) were of the bedridden, infirm type; only 2 (3.4%) were of the mentally helpless “low grade” type, the type now forming by far the largest part of the 243 names on the waiting list; 16 (27.7%) were capable of attending either the sense training or grade school class, and 14 (2.4%) were “full-time workers,” or so-called “helpers,” mostly the latter. It is interesting to note also that 10% of these first admissions were epileptic, 12% were Mongols, and 19% were definitely delinquent.

Of the 4 re-admissions (all girls), 1, aged, 23, was returned for nocturnal enuresis, 2 as generally unsatisfactory (conduct and temperament rather than lack of ability), and 1 because her employers were moving to the Coast. Two had been paroled in 1940 and 2 in 1941.

Separations.

The outgoing patients totalled 27 (18 male, 9 female), and consisted of 11 discharges (7 male, 4 female), 2 (1 male, 1 female) transfers to other Provincial institutions, and 14 (10 male, 4 female) deaths.

Of the 11 patients discharged, 5 boys and 3 girls went out to work. All were morons and “full-time workers.” One had been in residence over 12 years, one almost 7 years,

and 2 others over 5 years. As indicated above, 2 of the girls were returned later in the year. Three others went home—one, an infirmary case, was taken home three days after admission by her lonesome mother; another infirmary case went home for Christaas, developed pneumonia and died; the third was a child who went home epileptic, psychotic and unimproved.

Of the 2 patients transferred, 1 went to Ponoka, actively psychotic, the other to Oliver following strangulation of a fellow patient.

The 14 deaths included 1 from accidental drowning, 1 from strangulation, 1 from mesenteric thrombosis, and 1 from tumour of the brain. Other causes are given in Table 9c. Of the 14 deaths, 12 (9 male, 3 female) were idiots. One of the female idiots had been in the Training School almost fifteen years; and of the males, 1 had been here over 22 years, another 20 years, and a third almost 17 years.

Applications for Admission, etc.

During the year, 67 applications for admission (38 male, 29 female) were received. Only 34 of these (18 male, 16 female) were filed, leaving the total of those on the waiting list (Table 11) at 243 (127 male, 116 female), despite the 58 first admissions made during the year, admissions to the Mental Hospitals, and names removed owing to death, etc.

Twenty-seven suspects (14 male, 13 female) were also reported during the year (Table 12), bringing the number of known defectives still at large, but not on the waiting list, to 352 (189 male, 154 female).

These are about the average yearly figures for applications for admissions and for suspects.

EUGENICS ACTIVITIES

During the year, 7 patients (5 male, 2 female) were sterilized. Since the Sexual Sterilization Act came into force 12 years ago, 147 Training School patients (omitting 2 out-patients) have been eugenically sterilized before admission to the Training School. Ninety-one of the 147 have been discharged. The other 58 still in residence form 23% of our total population.

Of the 91 patients discharged (33 male, 58 female), 14, all girls, are known to be married, whilst only 2, both of whom had been flagrantly promiscuous before admission to the Training School are known to be immoral, 1 of them married.

STAFF CHANGES AND ACTIVITIES

During the year the staff increased from 55 to 81. This was mainly due to the opening of the farm dormitory and the new building and partly to the introduction of a 9-hour day for nurses and attendants, instead of the previous 9 ½ -hour day. The increase consisted of 15 student nurses (12 for the new buildings and 3 for the 9-hour day); 2 attendants (1 for the farm dormitory and 1 for the 9-hour day); 5 domestics, 1 kitchen maid, and 1 laundry maid. New appointments were: 1 full-time occupational therapist (Mrs. Vernon) and 1 assistant medical officer (Dr. E.B. Akhurst). Other changes were the placing of a student nurse instead of one