

THE NATIONAL ASYLUM FOR DISABLED VOLUNTEER SOLDIERS.

REPORT

OF THE

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF MANAGERS

OF THE

NATIONAL ASYLUM FOR DISABLED VOLUNTEER SOLDIERS,

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1867.

MARCH 3, 1868.—Referred to the Committee on Military Affairs and ordered to be printed

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives :

The board of managers of the National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers beg leave to submit the following report :

At the date of the last report the board had established but one branch or asylum at Augusta, Maine, and were temporarily occupying the State institution at Columbus, Ohio, which, with its property, had been turned over to us by the State, and were aiding the ladies' institution at Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

CENTRAL BRANCH, NEAR DAYTON, OHIO.

Because of the unhealthiness of the Ohio Soldiers' Home, after a careful examination, by committees, of other sites, and full hearing of all parties claiming interests at other points, the board determined upon a location of the central asylum at Dayton, Ohio, about three miles from the city, for which they purchased, at a cost of (\$46,800) forty-six thousand and eight hundred dollars, about four hundred acres of land in a body, most eligibly situated on the heights commanding the city. The board was aided in the selection, as between other nearly equally eligible sites, by the munificent donation of (\$20,000) twenty thousand dollars from the citizens of Dayton, who, under the lead of Hon. Lewis B. Gunckle, secretary of the board, evinced the liveliest interest in the success of the institution. Most vigorous measures were taken to get the necessary buildings ready for the accommodation of the disabled soldiers, who came forward for succor faster, almost, than accommodation could be got ready for them. Congress, with that untiring beneficence which has always distinguished its action towards the brave defenders of the Union, had given to the asylum the lumber composing the temporary buildings at Camp Chase. With the aid of this material, under the direction of the local manager, Mr. Gunckle, buildings were most rapidly and economically constructed, to meet the call on the asylum in that locality, so that there are now comfortable accommodations for (600) six hundred soldiers, which were filled up quite as fast as they could

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be got ready. There are now at that asylum (579) five hundred and seventy-nine disabled soldiers, and as soon as the necessary buildings can be made ready it is not doubted the number will exceed a thousand. A large portion of the work has been done on the ground by the inmates, some of whom have received a small remuneration for their labors, an expenditure that has been found at once economical and beneficial. The whole number of beneficiaries of this branch, during the year, has been seven hundred and twenty. The average daily cost of the ration to each soldier, for the last three months, has been, at this branch, 30 5-8 cents. Workshops are being established at this branch, and a school, under the charge of Rev. William Earnshaw, the efficient chaplain, has been carried on with much success. Its pupils have been so instructed as to be fitted to earn support for themselves, and some found situations in business—a result which demonstrates the practical benefit of the institution to the soldier, and relieves its revenues for still further usefulness. The central branch is under the direction of General Timothy Ingraham, acting governor, who lately relieved Major E. E. Tracy, a faithful and efficient officer, who had leave of absence because he had entirely broken down his health in the service.

THE EASTERN BRANCH, NEAR AUGUSTA, MAINE.

During the year this branch, situated about four miles from Augusta, filled up to its capacity with rapidity, more room being imperatively required. Plans were made for a detached hospital, and another building for a dining-room, with dormitories over it and workshops underneath, with kitchen and steam laundry attached. This last has been built of brick made on the premises, and was nearly ready for occupation at the date of this report, thus nearly doubling the capacity of the buildings.

When completed, the accommodations of this asylum will be amply sufficient for six hundred beneficiaries. The large farm, which is very productive in hay and grazing, required a great extent of farm buildings. Those upon the place have been, during the summer, brought together and refitted, ample cellar and storage room provided, as that it is believed the farm will hereafter be a source of profit to the institution. This work has been done economically and substantially. To save the expense of transportation, a brick-yard has been opened on the farm and successfully worked. Ample shop room for remunerative employment will be furnished the inmates capable of work. A school, under the charge of Rev. Moses J. Kelley, chaplain, is at work, and is doing much good. To afford easy means of communication, and as a school of instruction for such of the disabled soldiers as might choose such employment, a telegraph line from the asylum to the city of Augusta has been established, and a class of learners begun which will give means of livelihood to a number of beneficiaries, and soon relieve the asylum far more than the original outlay. One of the fears expressed as to the location of this asylum so far north and east, was that the climate would be unfavorable to the health of the beneficiaries. It must be borne in mind that all are disabled, and more than one-third are received into the asylum from the sick bed at home, or the hospital of some public institution.

A joyful experience has shown that the health of the inmates of this home is better by a very appreciable per cent. than either of the others, and very much superior to that of the inmates at Columbus. As illustrating this fact, as well as showing the class of diseases and disabilities with which the beneficiaries of this institution are afflicted, there is appended hereto as an exhibit a portion of the very detailed report of Surgeon B. B. Breed, who has had medical charge of this branch. The whole number received into this branch during the year is four hundred and forty-two (442) The whole number of inmates at date is two hundred and seventy-five (275.) The average cost of the ration

daily to each soldier and employé at this branch for the past month is thirty-seven cents. The eastern branch has been under the care of Major Nathan Outler since the last report, and has been conducted with zeal and fidelity by that officer.*

THE NORTHWESTERN BRANCH AT MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN.

Immediately upon the completion of the contract of purchase of the site of the northwestern branch, about three miles from the city, as shown in the former report, preparations were made for the construction of commodious and substantial buildings for the accommodation of the disabled soldiers seeking its care.†

Meanwhile the buildings on the ground were fitted up and others suitable for use erected, to give as much temporary accommodation as possible. Our operations were obstructed by the loss by fire of one of our principal buildings, but no serious pecuniary loss was sustained, as by the care of Doctor E. B. Wolcott, local manager, an insurance upon the structure approximating its value had been effected, which was paid. The foundations for a permanent building have been put in, and the work will be prosecuted vigorously in the spring, as there will be need to meet the increasing wants of the institution. This branch has not become so fully in operation, for want of accommodation, as to admit of industrial and school organizations to the extent that it is contemplated to carry out the same in the coming season. The location proves to be a very healthy and desirable one, and its relief is already greatly appreciated by the disabled soldiers of the northwest. The whole number to whom relief has been administered during the year at this branch is (183) one hundred and eighty-three. The number of disabled soldiers now present is (146) one hundred and forty-six. The cost of the daily ration to each soldier at this branch for the past three months is twenty-nine cents (29 cents.) This branch is much indebted to the care and energy of Dr. Woolcott, local manager, who has been untiring in his efforts to bring it up to the most efficient standard, and in addition to his other duties has acted as its treasurer. The northwestern branch has been under the charge of Major Theodore Yates, deputy governor, who shows promise of fidelity and ability.

OUT-DOOR RELIEF.

By the tenth section of the act of establishment, the board are empowered to administer out-door relief to the soldiers entitled thereto, at an expense not exceeding the average cost of maintaining an inmate in the asylum. Owing to the calls on the establishment for relief, because the board has not sufficient accommodations, it has been found necessary to support some of those who had claims therefor at charitable and State institutions. Great care has been taken that nobody should be aided who was not precisely within the purview of the act of Congress. After mature deliberation it was determined by the board that the rate of support in any institution should not exceed forty cents per day where the beneficiary did not require to be hospitably treated with medicine or surgically as a sick man, and seventy-five cents a day where he did so require treatment. Accordingly (158) one hundred and fifty-eight totally disabled soldiers have been helped in the New Jersey home at an average of (10) ten dollars per month each for both sick and well, or 33½ cents per day for all care and

* Since the date of which this report is made, on the fifth day of January, the main building at this branch was destroyed by fire, arising from a defective chimney flue, which has involved a loss of fifty thousand dollars.

† The remembrance of Congress is called to the munificent donation of the ladies of Milwaukee of nearly one hundred thousand dollars towards the purchase and building of this asylum, as mentioned in the former report.

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support. Twenty-four (24) soldiers have been supported at the Maryland Soldiers' Home in Baltimore, and eight (8) under the charge of the Ladies' Union Relief Association of New York city from time to time during the year, and (120) one hundred and twenty at the Indiana Soldiers' Home, and (71) seventy-one at the Soldiers' Home, Rochester, New York. Out-door relief has also been administered by several members of the board in cases where such relief was but a temporary necessity or would enable the soldier to become self-supporting by a slight advance to him for a short time. The board cannot better illustrate the working of this mode of relief than by incorporating the report of the efficient secretary of the board, Mr. Gunckle, as to the manner in which he has given aid and relief to those who needed it, evincing at once practical assistance and economical relief.

REPORT OF HON. LEWIS B. GUNCKLE.

I have the honor to report that I have administered "out-door relief" during the past year to eighty-five disabled soldiers, and assisted through State and local institutions one hundred and twenty more, making two hundred and five in all, and expended therefor \$5,001 47, being an average only of \$24 39 to each man. I append hereto an exhibit showing to whom the money was paid, and giving name, residence, disability, family, &c., of each beneficiary. It will be seen that of the eighty-five to whom I gave relief myself fifty-two reside in Ohio, five in Pennsylvania, seven in Indiana, eight in New York, five in Michigan, three in Illinois, three in Iowa, two in New Jersey, and one in Wisconsin.

Their disability.—Loss of both hands, two; loss of arm, twelve; loss of leg, eleven; consumption, nine; paralysis, four; ophthalmia, eight; chronic rheumatism, two; spinal disease, three; chronic diarrhœa, four; injury from wounds received, fifteen; other diseases, thirteen. Of these seventeen have each a wife, but no children, one has a wife and six children, four have each a wife and five children, nine have each a wife and four children, eleven have each a wife and three children, thirteen have a wife and two children, ten have each a wife and one child, three have aged mothers dependent on them, and eighteen are unmarried. I have, as a rule, confined this relief to married men who did not wish (and ought not to be asked) to leave their families and go into one of our asylums. But I felt compelled to make an exception in a few cases where a small sum of money would help a poor cripple to new crutches, a broken-down mechanic to buy tools and go to work, an anxious student to finish a course in bookkeeping, or an invalid stranger to buy medicine or get home to relations and friends. While more than ever convinced of the propriety of this feature in our work and of the great good which can be done by "out-door relief," I am fearful that the demand made upon us in this way will soon tax our utmost capacity. We cannot aid all disabled soldiers. An attempt to duplicate the pension list would soon bankrupt our treasury. I have therefore been careful to confine any relief to cases clearly within the law and to continue it no longer than was absolutely necessary. In many cases I gave relief in winter and withheld it in summer. In some I gave it while an application for bounty and pension was pending, but withheld it after they were granted and received. I have in no case given more than \$10 per month—in many cases less. I have endeavored to impress upon them all that they must not expect this as regular permanent relief, but only as an occasional help when all other resources failed.

Very respectfully,

LEWIS P. GUNCKLE,
One of the Managers.

Major General B. F. BUTLER,
President Board of Managers National Asylum.

PENSIONS.

The act of Congress allows the board in their discretion to take for the use of the asylum the pensions of the beneficiaries who have neither wife, child nor parent dependent upon them. This discretion has been exercised, taking charge of the pensions of all inmates, keeping an accurate account of the same by the treasurers of the several branches, taking care that the money shall be sent to the wife, child or parent of the soldier without loss or deduction by agents or others, and in proper cases allowing some portion to the soldier himself for small comforts suited to his condition. Provision has also been made to have the surplus of pensions or earnings invested for the soldier in the future. The Commissioner of Pensions, with kindly alacrity, has assisted the board in carrying out this plan by making the commandants of the several asylums pension agents, so that there need be no cause for the soldier leaving the asylum to get his pension money or to suffer loss in its transmission.

DISCIPLINE.

It will be observed that each of the branches is placed from three to five miles from the city nearest its location. Experience demonstrates most surely the necessity for this, although economy in transportation at first blush would seem to demand the location of the asylums in the cities themselves. The soldiers without intoxicating drinks require no restraint, with very rare exceptions, and the only discipline needed is that of a well-regulated household where the word of the master is the law of kindness. If liquors can be kept from the soldier, he makes no trouble. Taught by his service the habit and necessity of obedience to his superiors, he is docile beyond other classes of men. But when influenced with drink he becomes uncontrollable, insubordinate, and vicious; hence the necessity of keeping him away from temptation, to which he is hourly exposed in the cities. Well and kindly disposed men see no harm—nay, they view it as a sort of patriotic duty—to treat a wounded or one-armed or legged soldier, little reckoning the consequences of their hospitality.

The discipline established has been designed to be firm but kind: for light offences, a reprimand or deprivation of privileges; for graver offences, confinement; for incorrigibility, expulsion. In this latter case the board has established a regulation allowing a trial by court-martial, composed of the officers and men of the branch, with appeal to the president of the board.

DISCHARGES.

The board allows any beneficiary obtaining apparent means of self-support, either from friends or because of having fitted himself to earn his living and to take care of himself, to be discharged at his own request, and, if he is well-conducted, gives him a handsomely engraved certificate of such honorable discharge, which is a recommendation to him when seeking employment. This discharge also entitles the soldier to be readmitted into any branch of the asylum, as of right, if his expectations or means of living fail him.

Beneficiaries are also discharged, without such certificate, upon their own request, and where it appears that they may be able to sustain themselves for a longer or shorter period, but they can only be again admitted upon application and approval of the board.

When the soldier is dismissed as a punishment he cannot be readmitted. If he has deserted, he can only be readmitted at the branch he left upon the recommendation of the officer thereof.

As a rule, there has been nothing of which to complain in the conduct of the beneficiaries of the institution. A few bad men have been dismissed or have deserted; all others have been obedient, tractable, and contented, without exception, when not in liquor.

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REVENUES AND DISBURSEMENTS.

By the terms of the act of Congress establishing the asylum, there is appropriated for its support "all stoppages or fines adjudged against such officers and soldiers, by sentence of court-martial or military commission, over and above the amounts necessary for the reimbursement of the government or of individuals; all forfeitures on account of desertion from such service; and all moneys due such deceased officers and soldiers which now are or may be unclaimed for three years after the death of such officers or soldiers, to be repaid upon the demand of the heirs or legal representatives of such deceased officers or soldiers."

These amounts can only be determined by the examination of the accounts of each officer and soldier, and the balance ascertained, which may come to the asylum on the settlement thereof. This, of course, is a work of long time, the accounting office having not yet got through the year 1862, so that not even an approximate estimate can be made as to the amount appropriated by the munificence of Congress for the support of the asylum.

The board of managers have received, by donations of land and money, of several associations and individuals a sum amounting to \$126,832 71. They have invested for the use of the asylum all surplus beyond the amount necessary for the outlay and expenditures, in the bonds of the United States, to the amount of \$515,100.

In commencing the organization of the establishment, and in providing for the necessary accommodation of so many men, large expenditures have been necessary, which are charged in the treasurer's account to real estate construction and repairs. It is believed, however, that no more economical expenditure has ever been made of public moneys than in the purchase of lands and construction of buildings for this object. The report of the treasurer, hereto appended, shows the exact state of the receipts and expenditures of the institution to the date of this report.

It will be seen that the institution has, during the past year, supported or aided one thousand eight hundred and sixty-seven men and totally disabled volunteer soldiers, and that the average expense of subsistence of those in the asylum does not exceed the sum of thirty-three cents per day.

By the purchase of a large amount of clothing of the Quartermaster General, at the prices which it and like stores had been sold at auction, the institution has been able to provide very cheaply for the wants of its beneficiaries in that regard. To no disabled soldier, either of the regular army of the marines or the volunteer force, whose case has been brought to the attention of the board of managers, has relief been refused or aid denied. Every pains has been taken to find and relieve every soldier who has been sustained in almshouses or like establishments in the country, and to take care of all disabled soldiers who are found begging or otherwise the benevolence of the charitable. True it is that many cases will be found of apparently disabled men, who claim to be soldiers, in large cities or on railway trains, asking relief of the charitable, or attempting to earn a subsistence by grinding a hand-organ, or other like means of appealing to the generous sympathies of the community. This prostitution of the honorable wounds and the uniform of the soldier can only be saved by the determination of every man, and especially of every woman, whose kind and patriotic hearts are touched by such exhibitions of apparent want, to refrain from giving. In many cases those so appealing for relief are impostors, and were never soldiers at all, or deserters, or were dismissed for crimes. In others they are the employés of designing men and associations, who speculate out of the apparent miseries and services of disabled soldiers.

There have been cases where the beneficiaries of our asylum have been hired

to leave our homes, where they were amply provided for, by associations owning hand-organs, to grind them through the streets, because a soldier apparently so reduced would attract the sympathy and contributions of loyal and patriotic people. Cases have been brought to the knowledge of the officers of the institution where these organ-grinders have obtained from the public by such means as high as fifteen dollars per day, which does not go to their relief, but to swell the emoluments of their swindling employers.

The board of managers would respectfully ask all citizens to discountenance these practices, by which the generous benevolence of the community is imposed upon, and before giving to any one claiming to be a soldier under such circumstances, to inquire if he has applied to the managers for relief, and if he replies that he has done so and has been refused, to communicate the fact to the president or either member of the board of managers. The munificent liberality of the nation through its Congress has done full justice to the claims of all disabled soldiers in the provision made in this establishment, and no deserving man has failed or can fail to reap the benefit of it if he chooses.

The board make this report of their proceedings with the confident hope that their action will meet the approbation of Congress and the country.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

For the board of managers :

BENJ. F. BUTLER, *President.*

JANUARY 1, 1868.

Quarterly report of sick and wounded, National Asylum, eastern branch, for the months of October and November, 1867.

This report is made for this period, so that the quarter may be changed to correspond with the date of meeting of the board of managers.

Taken on the sick report during the quarter.

TABULAR LIST OF DISEASES.

Diseases.	Cases.	Deaths.
CLASS I.—ZYMOTIC DISEASES.		
Order 1. Miasmatic diseases :		
Remittent fever.....	2	
Chronic diarrhoea.....	2	1
Erysipelas.....	1	
Catarrh.....	1	
Order 2. Enthetic diseases :		
Syphilis.....	7	
Gonorrhœa.....	2	
CLASS II.—CONSTITUTIONAL DISEASES.		
Order 1. Diathetic diseases :		
Chronic rheumatism.....	8	
Anæmia.....	3	
Order 2. Tubercular diseases :		
Consumption.....	15	2
Scrofula.....	2	

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Tabular list of diseases—Continued.

Diseases.	Cases.	Deaths.
CLASS IV.—LOCAL DISEASES.		
Order 1. Diseases of the nervous system:		
Epilepsy.....	3	
Headache.....	1	
Insanity.....	3	
Neuralgia.....	6	
Paralysis.....	4	
Order 2. Diseases of the eye:		
Amaurosis.....	2	
Inflammation of the conjunctiva.....	2	
Other diseases of the eye.....	1	
Order 3. Diseases of the ear:		
Deafness.....	2	
Otorrhoea.....	2	
Order 4. Diseases of the organs of circulation:		
Chronic valvular disease of the heart.....	2	
Order 5. Diseases of respiratory organs:		
Asthma.....	1	
Chronic bronchitis.....	4	
Inflammation of the larynx.....	7	
Inflammation of the lungs.....	2	
Inflammation of the pleura.....	1	
Hemorrhage from the lungs.....	1	
Order 6. Diseases of the digestive organs:		
Colic.....	1	
Constipation.....	5	
Dyspepsia.....	3	
Order 7. Diseases of urinary and genital organs:		
Diseases of the prostate.....	1	
Diseases of the testis.....	1	
Inflammation of the kidneys.....	1	
Other diseases of this order.....	1	
Order 8. Diseases of the bones and joints:		
Anchylolysis.....	1	
Caries.....	1	
Inflammation of joints.....	2	
Necrosis.....	5	
Order 9. Diseases of the integumentary system:		
Abscess.....	1	
Boil.....	1	
Ulcer.....	8	
Skin diseases.....	5	
CLASS V.—VIOLENT DISEASES AND DEATHS.		
Order 1. Wounds, injuries, and accidents:		
Contusions.....	4	
Gunshot wounds, (of all kinds).....	5	
Incised wounds.....	1	
Other accidents and injuries.....	1	
Total.....	135	3

NOTE.—No case of zymotic disease was contracted at the asylum; but the cases above reported were sufferers when received at the asylum.

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Extract from report of Major N. Cutler, deputy governor eastern branch of the National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers.

	October.	November.	Total.
Average strength of command.....	278.1	300.54	
Per cent. treated in hospital.....	10.4	10.00	
Per cent. treated in quarters.....	10.1	8.06	
Expense for attendants as per pay-rolls, except hospital stewards.....	\$46 38	\$46 38	\$95 13

The National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers in account with the acting treasurer, January 1, 1868.

Dr.

To amount paid for real estate purchased.....	\$187,942 37
To amount paid for construction and repairs of buildings	114,847 60
To amount paid for personal property purchased	49,339 27
To amount paid for current expenses, (including subsistence, clothing for the beneficiaries, medical supplies, officers' salaries, and pay-rolls of employés).....	197,521 73
To amount paid for transportation of disabled soldiers	4,750 87
To amount paid for out-door relief, (authorized by section 10 of act of March 3, 1865).....	9,980 43
To amount paid for incidental expenses of the several asylums, including travelling and other expenses of the board of managers' office expenses....	18,932 64
To amount of premium paid on \$504,750 registered bonds of the United States.....	41,631 74
To amount of deposited United States seven-thirty bonds.....	\$10,350
To amount of deposited United States registered bonds.....	504,750
	<u>515,100 00</u>

(Interest not taken up.)

To balance in hands of treasurer eastern branch.....	\$3,140 86
To balance in hands of treasurer western branch	5,981 97
To balance in hands of Hon. L. B. Guenkel.....	8,044 80
	<u>22,167 63</u>
	<u><u>1,162,214 28</u></u>

Cr.

By amount received by drafts on United States treasury.....	\$1,017,171 51
By amount received for donations for associations and individuals.....	120,960 27
By amount received from sale of property and other sources.....	9,910 36
Balance due January 1, to treasurer of Central Asylum.....	4,066 11
Balance due January 1, to acting treasurer of National Asylum	4,106 03
	<u>1,162,214 28</u>