

# FORT STANTON



UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

*J. Ross Thomas,*



# THE UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE SANATORIUM

FORT STANTON, NEW MEXICO

**T**HE Sanatorium for Tuberculous Seamen at Fort Stanton, New Mexico, is one of twenty-one hospitals conducted by the United States Public Health Service. These hospitals have no connection with those owned by the Army or Navy but are controlled by the Public Health Service (formerly called the Marine-Hospital Service)-a bureau of the Treasury Department.

In addition to caring for the beneficiaries of its Marine-Hospitals the Public Health Service has numerous other functions. It conducts a national leprosy investigation station and sanatorium in Hawaii and a large laboratory for research, the Hygienic Laboratory in Washington, D. C. It inspects and licenses establishments both in the United States and abroad which manufacture vaccines and antitoxins for interstate traffic. It assists state boards of health, when requested, in the suppression of epidemics of yellow fever plague, typhoid, meningitis, etc. It administers the national quarantine at most ports in the United States as well as those in the Phillippines, Hawaii and Porto Rico. It conducts the medical inspection of all immigrants entering the United States, about 1,000,000 per year in number, certifying for rejection those afflicted with certain mental and physical defects. The medical officers in this service, of which there are about 140 in the commissioned corps, also prepare for publication articles on hygiene which are mailed just as other government bulletins are, to applicants.

When Fort Stanton was established in 1855 it was for controlling the Mescalero and White Mountain Apaches. Burned and abandoned in 1861 upon the approach of Confederate forces it was reoccupied in 1863 and rebuilt in 1868. It was a fort only in name, although a high adobe wall once existed on the brow of the hill behind the officers' quarters, presumably for the protection of that portion of the ground against invasion. The station never was attacked by Indians although some exciting skirmishes occurred in the neighborhood. Two wood cutters were killed by Indians near the gap in the Capitan Mountains, their horses coming in showing arrow wounds. The bodies were found literally feathered with the barbarous missiles. The cavalry promptly gave chase, assisted by two companies of infantry mounted on draft horses, and down the Bonito to the Hondo and through the Pecos Valley thundered the troops, although it is said that many an infantryman found himself at a sad disadvantage without a saddle on a bucking mule and failed to be in at the finish a week later when the guilty Indians were caught.

Gwendolen Overton in "The Heritage of Unrest" has well portrayed army life at this and other frontier stations in the old days when General Overton, then a lieutenant, was stationed at Fort Stanton. In this connection Emerson Hough's "Heart's Desire," which has immortalized our neighboring town White Oaks, is descriptive of early life in this neighborhood.

Many exciting tales are current of the old days. The commander of Troop "D," 8th cavalry, now an officer in the U. S. Indian Service, while in temporary command at Fort Stanton, was fired at by a mutinous soldier upon the parade ground but with characteristic coolness continued on his way to the office and sent for the culprit. "You missed me twice at a hundred yards," he said reproachfully. "Your marksmanship is a scandal and disgrace to the United States Army. Sergeant, take this man up to the target range and keep him there until he has fired a thousand practice rounds." One who is familiar with the hard kick of the old Springfield rifle will appreciate the subtle irony of the sentence.

The gun house of army days is a carriage shed now. The guard house where "Billy the Kid" was once confined is the present carpenter shop. Billy (Bonny) has long since gone and Sheriff Pat Garrett, by whose hand he fell in the grim execution of duty, has also passed away, dying "in his boots" as became an exponent of frontier law and order. The farmhands's plow occasionally turns up a shred of Indian pottery; sometimes a skeleton is found with an arrow-head

between the ribs; and gray haired, silent men, with scars upon their bodies are living in the neighboring hills who could bear witness to many a scene which has stirred old Fort Stanton.

The Army, its work accomplished, departed and in 1898, just one hundred years after the organization of its first Marine-Hospital, the U. S. Public Health Service reopened the station as a sanatorium for tuberculous beneficiaries. Since that time over 2,000 men have been treated here.

Tuberculosis is best treated in sanatoria. Rest for long and recurring periods is necessary for the successful treatment of the average consumptive. But the average consumptive feels well, therefore his feelings are not a proper guide to his conduct, and he should be under constant medical supervision. He requires treatment for many months, during which he must be superintended without being bored, and taught to accept fresh air as a religion. When the temperature sinks toward zero in the winter nights, the officer of the day, making his quiet rounds after the lights are out, finds many a backslider with his tent flaps down. Such must be reassured, or shamed, or forced into the way again. There are many useful hints to be given even on so simple a matter as keeping warm in a bed outdoors in winter.

An isolated sanatorium has certain advantages from a medical standpoint, and some disadvantages in its administration. Fort Stanton is isolated; it is thirty miles from a trunk line and seven from the cowtown terminus of a branch road running two trains per week. It is dependent on its own resources for its electric light, ice plant, laundry, dairy, dairy, abattoir, and water supply, and has its own postoffice, telephone system and fire protection, its own architect, electrician, engineers, plumbers, gardener and cowboys.

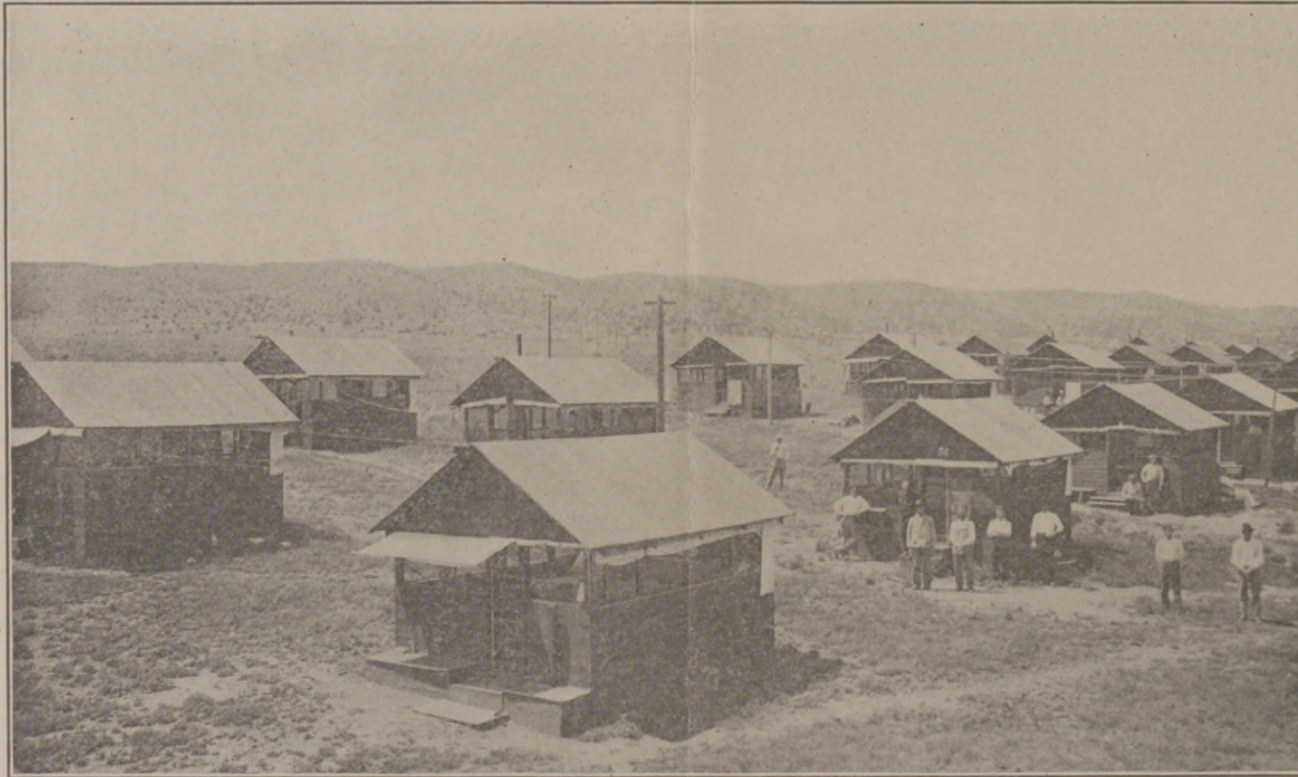
Two hundred consumptives do not require much medicine. Luxurious housing is not possible and expensive hospital apparatus not needed. But they do need constant care, and even a sailor gets homesick. He must be encouraged and amused, protected from his own irregularities and guarded from the carelessness of others. If, discouraged by an exacerbation of his disease, he ceases to try, recourse must be had to discipline and routine nursing until he again responds. He must be well fed, and always, in summer or in winter, with his cooperation, or in spite of his opposition, he must feel on his face the air stirring from the plains and hills, and be so trained that the hum of the mesa wind over his pillow is a familiar and welcome lullaby. Fewer cases and those too sick to walk to the dining-room are placed in the hospital for better nursing. Here doors and windows are kept wide open and bed shelter and verandas utilized to enable them to sleep outdoors with the nurses within easy call. Tent-houses, each accommodating two, shelter the majority of patients. Here they find privacy subject to no interruption so long as rest hours are observed and order and an open tent maintained. They decorate their homes, inside and out, according to individual tastes. Here is an amateur photographer whose tent is a veritable studio; yonder one of more plebian state with a carefully tended patch of lettuce and young onions beside his door. This man has planted a tree to windward and a few stalks of corn, "just to watch them grow;" that one breeds pigeons in a little cote elevated on a pole, and eyes with suspicion his seaman neighbor's cat. As with village boys, their amusements run in periods. When the irrigation ditches are first filled in the spring, water wheels of jack-knife construction appear and miniature mills of various kinds. Again the fad will be the making of cactus canes or dressing horns or the snaring of mocking birds; and when the fishing fever is on, the physician in charge of ambulant sick call knows just how they feel, includes in his liberty list every one with a pulse rate below 80, and goes along himself. The patients have a pool table in a well ventilated room, and are allowed to play cards, croquet and quoits. Carefully selected cases are allowed to play ball and to go camping in the mountains, ten to thirty miles away. Golf they do not understand, as is evidenced by the boast of one patient, who returned, from the links breathless but triumphant, announcing that he has made the course in "thirty minutes." There is a library of 2900 volumes from which about 10,000 numbers are drawn each year. The amusement hall in which a 4-reel moving picture show is given each week is open during the day for a reading room. It is well supplied with newspapers and periodicals, while five large double doors on each side, extending from floor to ceiling, throw the room well open to the air. About fifty patients whose disease is well under control are allowed to do light work a few hours daily, but they are given the usual bi-monthly physical examination and a special weekly quiz. These men earn from ten to thirty dollars apiece monthly, some on the regular payroll as waiters, etc., some from private employment by officers and some from enterprises such as shoemaking, barbering, dressing furs and repairing clothes. The total amount earned by patients in this way is over \$10,000 per year. A cured case who, upon being discharged as a patient, desires to remain in New Mexico, is given preference among applicants for employment, and of the sixty-seven attendants many are recovered consumptives; some of these work for a few months, trying their strength and earning money to begin life anew, and some remain for years from love of the country.

The adventurous spirit may still find solace here. There is a cave on the reservation still unexplored in its entirety by civilized man, for after traveling a half day's journey, he remembers that it is a half day's journey back and that he is already tired. There may be treasure there, traditions so affirm; there may be another opening; the Indians are said to have known it, but the discoverer of either is still unhailed. There is good quail and pigeon shooting on the reservation, and a day in the mountains is occasionally rewarded by a deer, wild turkey, bear or wildcat. Few places east or west are more favored by birds of song.



### Facts About Fort Stanton

Situated in South Central New Mexico.	Area of reservation, 45 square miles, nearly all inclosed in fence.
1898. Occupied by Public Health Service as a Sanatorium in	Number of cattle, 2300
Altitude, 6,231 feet.	Milk produced per year, 41,800 gallons.
Annual mean temperature, 52° F.	Beef and veal, government brand, slaughtered per year, 112,700 lbs.
Highest temperature in 28 years, 95° F.	Number of horses, 60.
Lowest temperature in 28 years, - 20° F.	Average number of patients, 200.
Average annual snowfall, 22.3 inches.	Average length of stay, 17 months.
Annual precipitation, 17 inches.	Number of medical officers, 7.
Average number of clear and partly cloudy days per year, 313.	Number of pharmacists, 2.
Average relative humidity, 53 per cent.	Number of nurses, 10.
Average date of frost in spring, May 6th.	Number of attendants, including farm hands, etc., 67.
Average date of frost in Autumn, October 5th.	Daily average cost of a ration per patient, .5663 cents
Average hourly wind velocity, 6.6 miles.	Daily average cost of maintenance per patient, \$1.61.
	Cost of upkeep per year, about \$115,000.00.



PANORAMIC VIEW, SHOWING THE TENT HOUSES OF TYPE "B" AT THE UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE SANATORIUM, FORT STANTON, N. MEX., 1912



BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE U. S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE SANATORIUM.---FORT STANTON, NEW MEXICO



SACRED HEART CHAPEL, FORT STANTON, NEW MEXICO

CATHOLIC CHAPEL FOR PATIENTS AND ATTENDANTS OF THAT FAITH





COMMANDING OFFICER'S QUARTERS



OFFICER'S MESS BUILDING NO. 4



A WINTER SCENE AT THE TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM OF THE UNITED STATES  
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE AT FORT STANTON, N. MEX.



SUMMER



A PART OF THE BEEF HERD



A WEEK IN THE NEIGHBORING MOUNTAINS--PATIENTS ON LEAVE FROM THE SANATORIUM



TENT HOUSE, TYPE "B," USED AT THE UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE  
SANATORIUM, FORT STANTON, N. MEX.



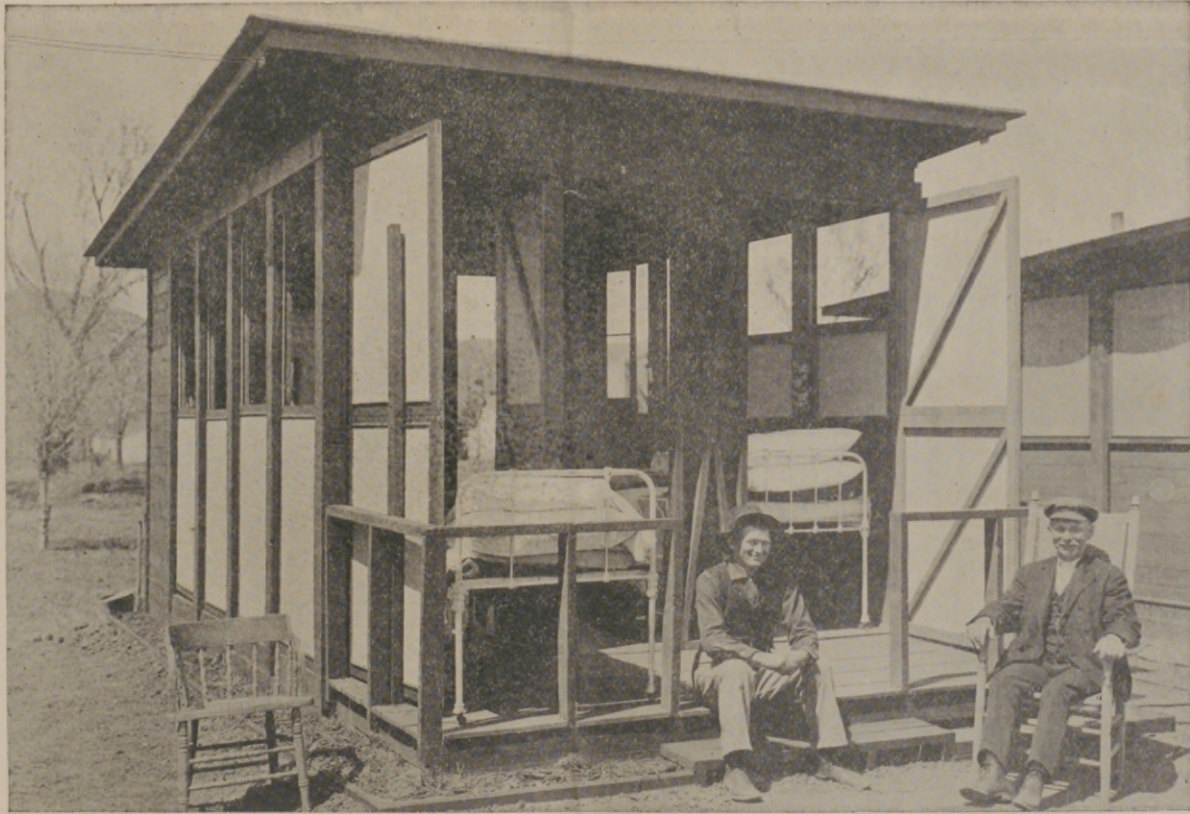
MODEL OF TENT HOUSE, TYPE "A," USED AT THE UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE SANATORIUM, FORT STANTON, N. MEX.





EARLY SPRING. VIEW OF THE MOUNTAINS FROM GARDEN. FRUIT TREES IN BLOOM

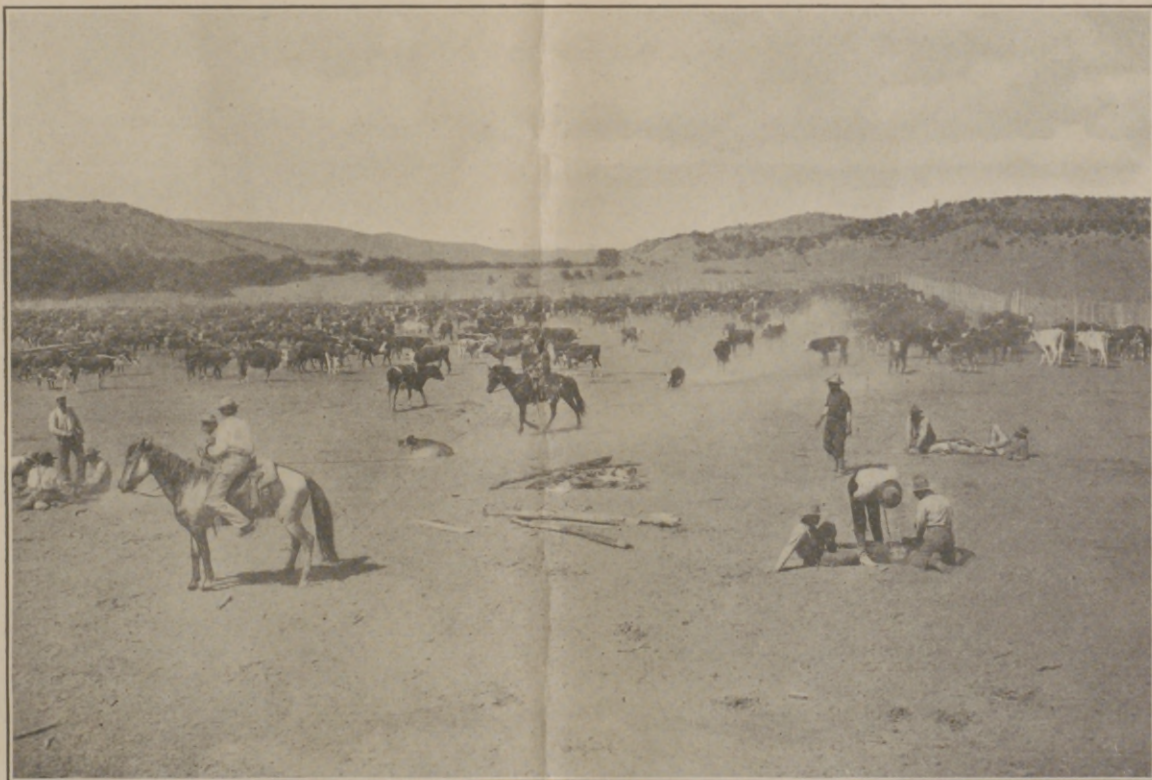




IN LICENSED MEN'S ROW



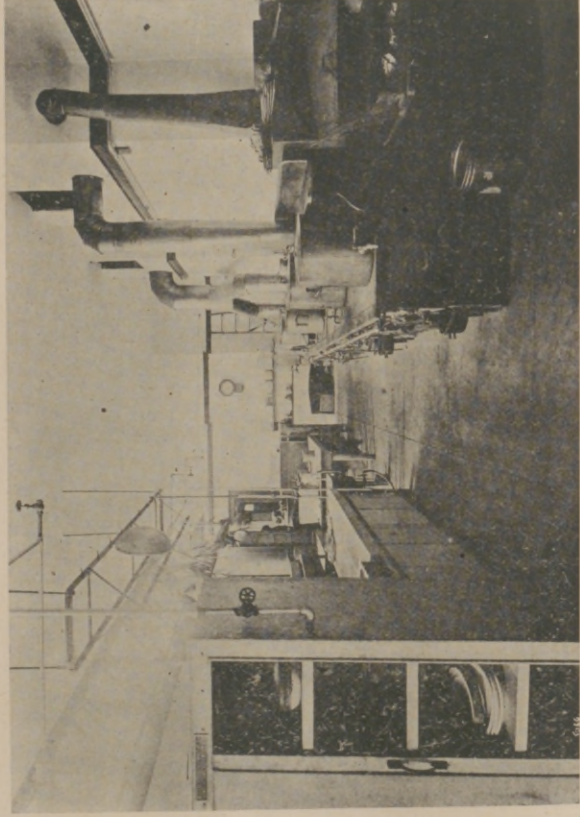
MASTERS', PILOTS', AND ENGINEERS' TENT HOUSES, TYPE "A," USED AT THE UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE SANATORIUM, FORT STANTON, N. MEX.



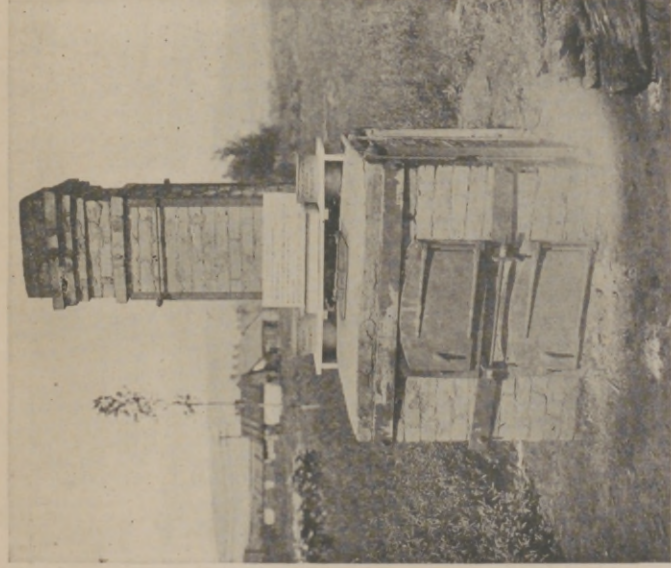
A ROUND-UP OF THE BEEF HERD, SHOWING THE BRANDING OF CALVES AT THE UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE SANATORIUM, FORT STANTON, N. M.



JUNIOR MEDICAL OFFICERS' QUARTERS



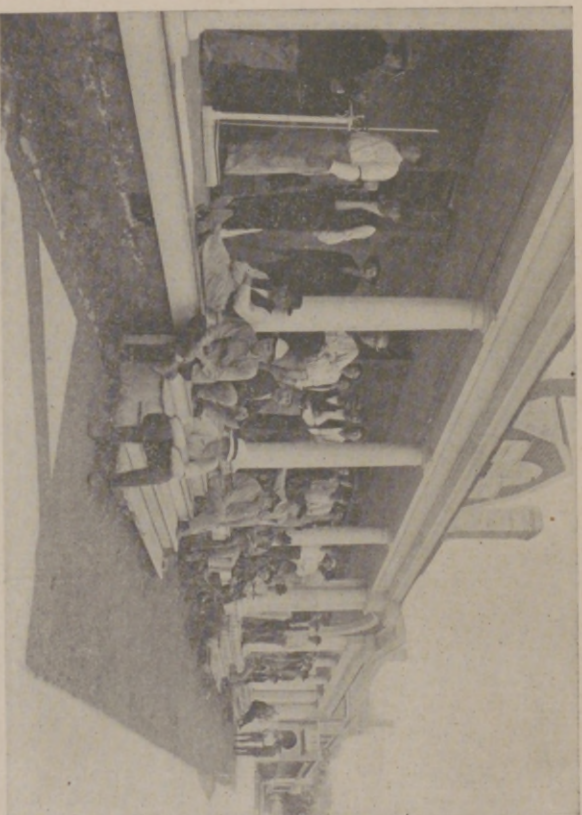
SECTION OF KITCHEN SHOWING RANGES AND STEAM COOKERS



ONE OF THE CREMATORIES---PAPER CUPS ARE BURNED HERE



THE LIBRARY



WIGH-DAY... EXECUTIVE BUILDING

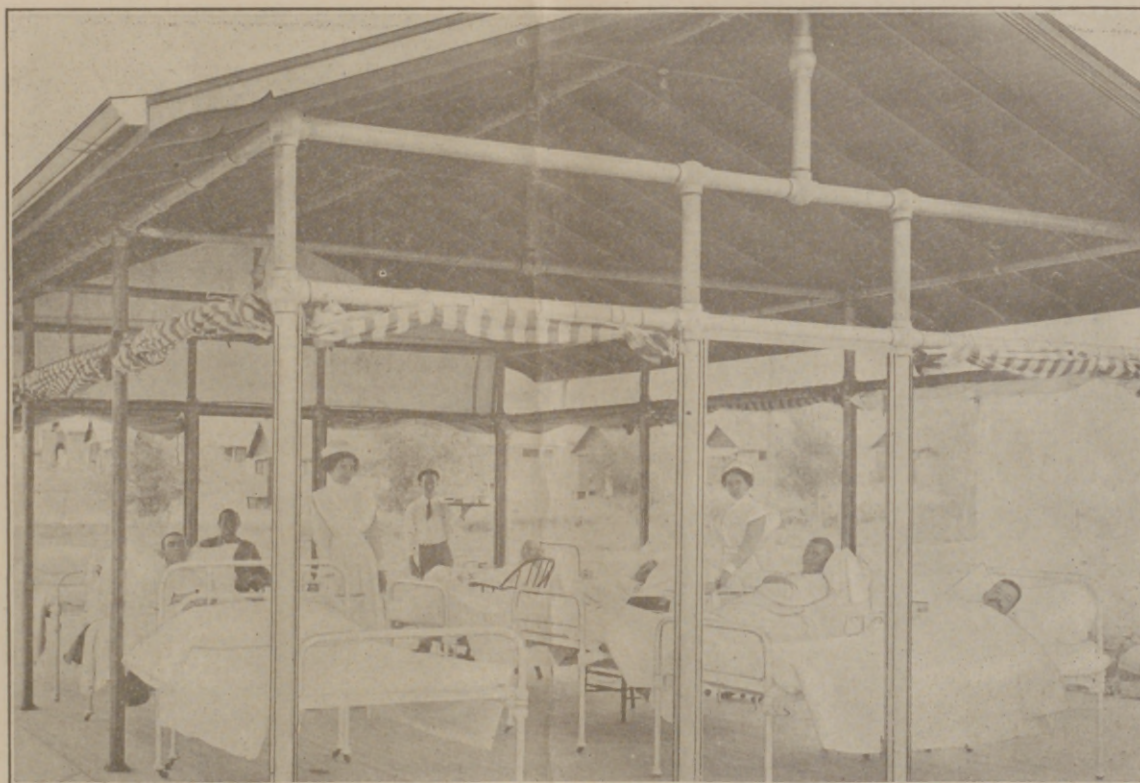




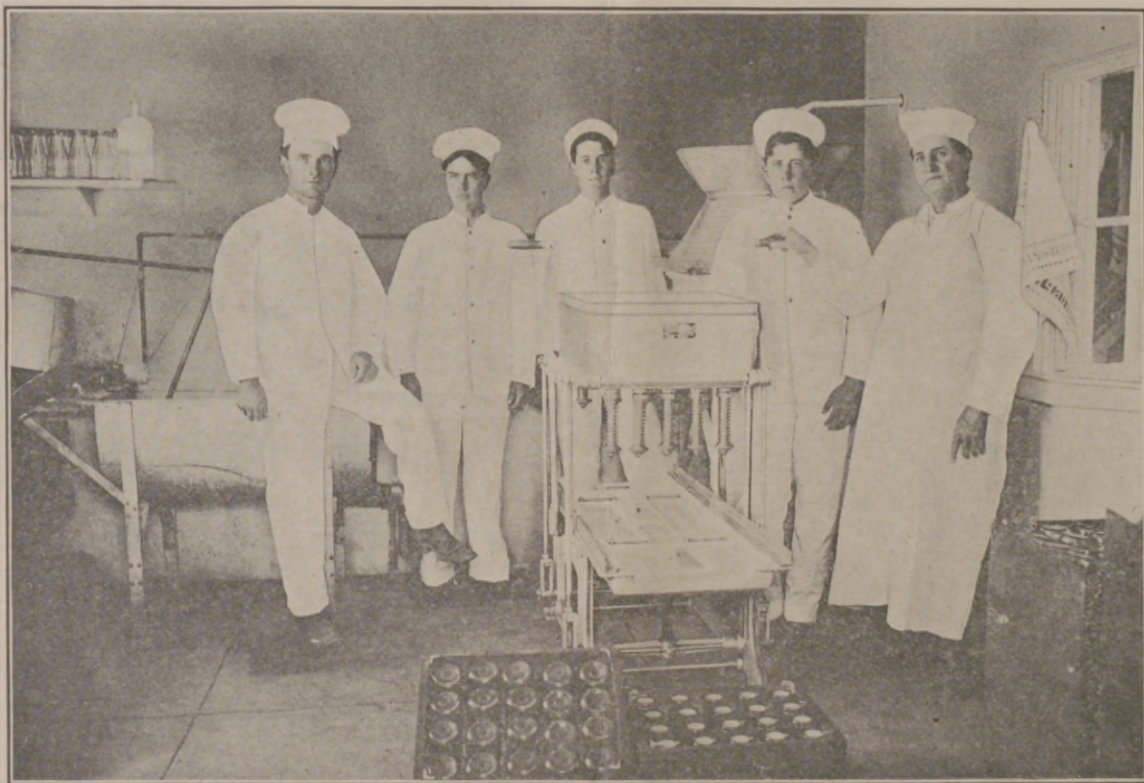
MAIN DINING ROOM, UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE SANATORIUM  
FORT STANTON, N. MEX.



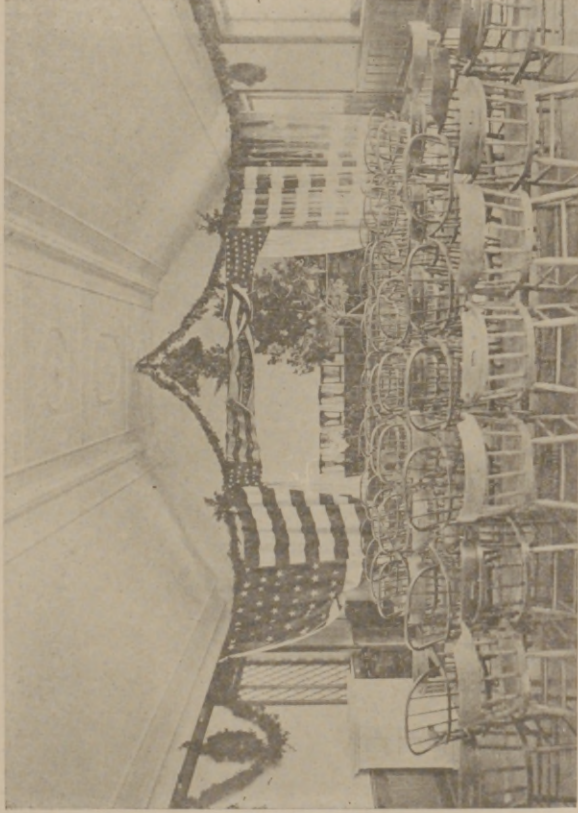
LIBRARY HALL. GETTING THE SCORE BY INNINGS WHEN HOME TEAM IS AWAY



A BED SHELTER USED AT THE UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE  
SANATORIUM, FORT STANTON, N. MEX.



MILK BOTTLING ROOM, DAIRY AT U. S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE SANATORIUM  
FORT STANTON, N. MEX.



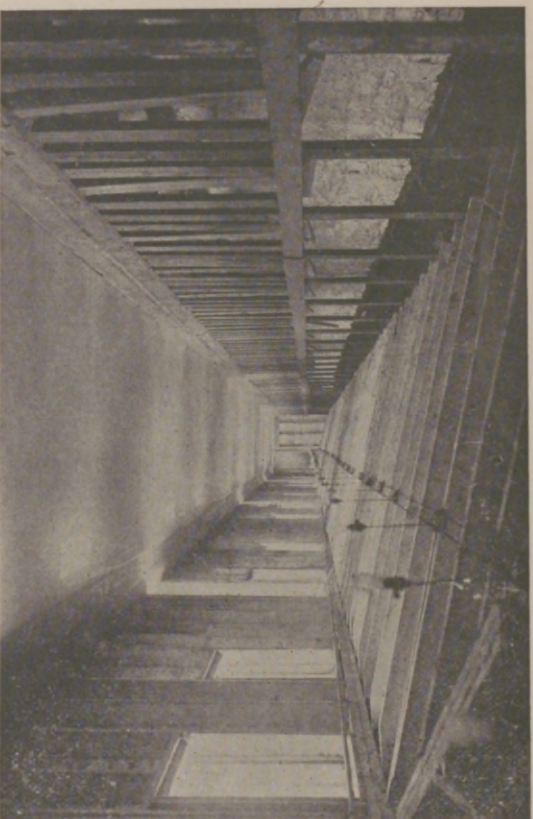
AMUSEMENT HALL



TO A HORSE RACE OR A BALL GAME



DAIRY COWS



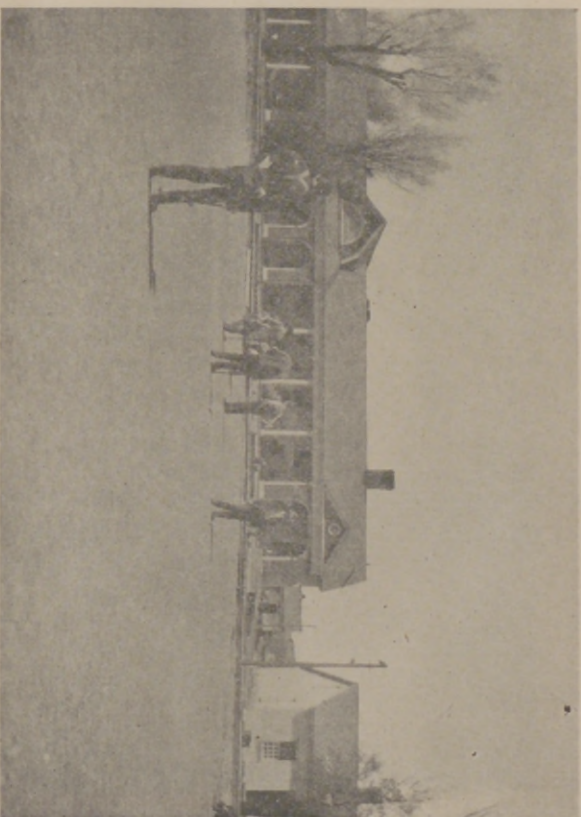
CEMENT FLOORED MILKING ROOM



GENERAL INSPECTION. OFFICERS AND ATTENDANTS



BREATHING EXERCISES FOR SUITABLE CASES



CROQUET GAME IN FRONT OF HOSPITAL.



A MASTER MARINER...Cruising without chart or compass.

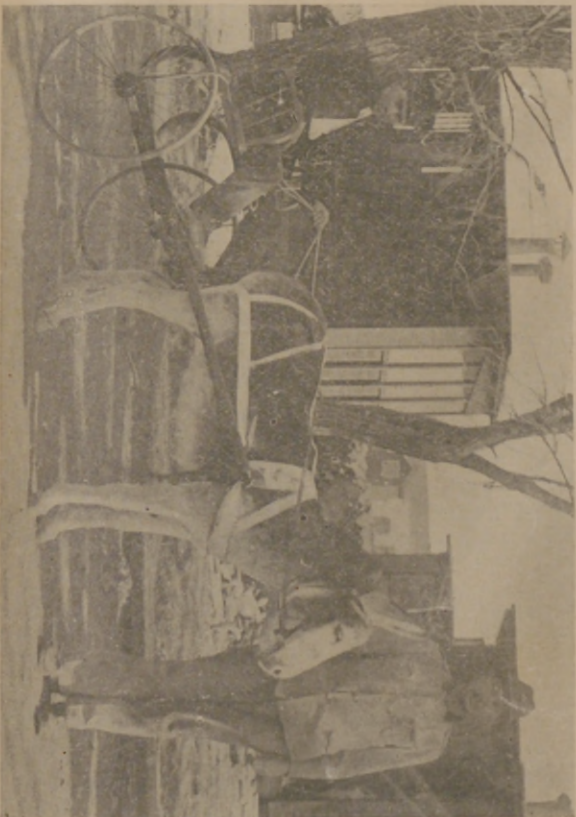




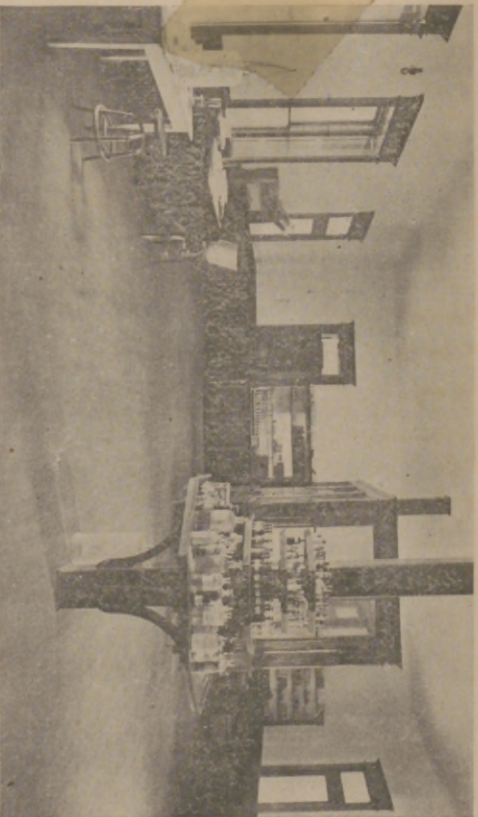
VIEW FROM THE HOSPITAL IN WINTER



GROUP OF PATIENTS WHO ARE ALLOWED TO DO LIGHT WORK



AN ESQUIMAUX SAILOR ON A GIDDY CRAFT



PART OF THE LABORATORY