

The Petoskey Record.

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PETOSKEY, MICHIGAN, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, 1905.

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Republican in Politics.--Independent in Opinion.

The City Pest House.

Alderman Flsk, in company with Aldermen Jarman and Mullenhagen, made a visit to the city pest house and dumping grounds last week, and reports several matters that need the attention of the council. The pest house is very poorly furnished—in fact, is not provided with the necessary articles for the comfort or care of any one who might be sent there. Mr. Flsk's plan is for the city to purchase a set of comfortable springs, an iron bedstead, a few chairs and other necessary articles which could be easily fumigated after using. In addition to these, a cheap mattress and a few other such articles that could be burned after using and replaced with new ones. He proposes to have one of the empty rooms up stairs fitted up with wire clotheslines, where the bed linen and blankets may be hung and kept aired ready for use. Every article of furniture in the building should be plain but comfortable and of a nature that will stand repeated scrubbing and fumigation. He would be glad to receive magazines or books which would help convalescing patients pass away the lonely hours. It would require but a small appropriation to make the pest house a habitable and comfortable place, and the city can well afford the expense.

T H E S T O R Y

In the early birth of Petoskey, about 1900, it was known as the city of death. Other than being snow bound in from other cities, it was exposed to disease. Which forced the city to quarantine the city and build a Pest House .

In 1902, the City of Petoskey purchased land out on River Road from Mr. Joseph Omler. Sometime in 1903, the City of Petoskey built a Pest House for small pot, T.B., and other exposable disease. This house was for people who couldn't afford to go to the hospital.

Because of the name it got people were afraid to go there. It was a place where respectable people wouldn't be found dead in it. On the other hand it was a quarantine place and if you had a contagious disease you must go there. It was called "The House of the Dead".

Report of the
F E E T H O U S E
of
the City
of
Potosky, Mich

By Elsworth M. Marsh

REPORT PREFACE

In 1971, this report was written by Elsworth M. Marsh, a student of Government. In a government class, which Mr. Marsh attended, the subject was the Pest House. Mr. Marsh was interested in it, and investigated it.

In Mr. Marsh's investigation of the City Hospital, people of the city didn't or did not want to remember the hospital. In his investigation, he found two men who was willing to talk about the hospital. It was Mr. Bacon, who was hundred-one, and Mr. W. Bannister, who lived in the house after it was a Pest House.

In the early 1900s, there was a lot unexperimental disease, which was a great hazard to the city, so they built a Pest House. The City Ordinance (Charter) gave the city the right to purchase land for such hospital. The Pest Houses served the city, in the way the clinic does now.

CITY ORDINANCE

The City Ordinance, is set up to protect the city. The Charter of the City of Potosky, in February 14, 1916, Chapter Twenty-Section 6, on Public Health stated: The City Council may purchase land and erect there on or otherwise provide one or more hospital, pest house, or quarant-ine building either within or without the city limits, and provide for appointment of the necessary officers, Attendant or employees for the care and management thereof and for the care and treatment therein, of such sick and diseased person as the Council or The Board of Health of the city shall deem proper; and by direction of the Council or the Board of Health; person having malignant, infection, or contagious disease, or who may have been exposed to such disease, may be removed to such hospital, pest house, quarantine building and detained and treated, when sat-isfy so requires; and the Council may provide such restraints and punishment as may be necessary to prevent any such hospital, pest house, or quarant-ine building.

INTERVIEW

In Mr. Marsh investigation, the two men, who was interest in talk-ing about the Pest Houses, were Mr. Joseph Bacon and Mr. Walter Bannister. Mr. Bacon told me how it was back then, and Mr. Bannister was a man who lived in the house.

Mr. Joseph Bacon: I'M hundred-one you know, lived in the main part of town, at the time.

Mr. Marsh: Can you tell me much about the Pest House.

Mr. Bacon: Yes!, it was cold, people didn't like going there. I had some neighbor that came down with small pot, they didn't want to go. I reported them to the Health Officer(Dr. John Peddin).

Mr. Marsh: You helped out, when you could?

Mr. Bacon: Yes!

Mr. Marsh: I heard that the Pest House was a place to dump the dead. I heard that when they feed them they sit the food just inside of the fence, if they got up to get it, they would eat

Mr. Bacon: No!, there were Nurse , all the time and doctor would come, to see their patient.

Mr. Marsh: Do you know when it started or ended

Mr. Bacon: Yes!, it was started when my son was born, he is sixth-five.

Mr. Marsh: About 1903 than?

Mr. Bacon: Yes!, do you want to here a story, I was staning in a store and in come Indian. The StoreKeeper said, just aminte I'll be right with you. I told the store-keeper to servce him first. When the Indian letf, I told the storekeeper, why I want him to go first. He was broken out with small pot.

Mr. Marsh: Why would a City do such a thing? It's up to the city to build such house.

Mr. Bacon: There was about forty case of small pot alone in a day.

Mr. Bacon toke Mr. Marsh to his room, to talk old time, but Mr. Marsh had to go. But he couldn't bush Mr. Bacon off.

Mr. Marsh: Helo!, Mr. Walter Bannister?

Mr. Bannister: Yes!

Mr. Marsh: I'M Mr. Marsh, may I come in?

Mr. Bannister: Yes!

Mr. Marsh: I heard you lived in the Pest House.

Mr. Bannister: Yes! , and I tore it down

Mr. Marsh: Do you know when it started and when you tore it down.

Mr. Bannister: No!, see I had a fire out on the farm and the city gave me the house to live in.

Mr. Marsh: Okay, when you moved back out on the farm you tore it down. Do you know when

Mr. Bannister: Yes, no I don't know when I tore it down. See when I went to tear it down , Mrs. Starr want to live in it again. She went to the city to ask not to tear it down. The City gave me the go head.

Mr. Marsh: How much rent did the city charge you to live there?

Mr. Bannister: Nothing!

Mr. Marsh: Well!, I got to be going and thank you very much for Your help.

Mr. Bannister: Well! come again. Ho! there was sme body who lived there, Geoge Washington.

Mr. Marsh: The Geoge Washington lived there!

Mr. Bannister: No, a ~~man~~ who live there and work at the dump, he was a wineo. He was killed there.

The neighbors are making quite a hub-bub over the recent location of the pest house, and are circulating a petition for its removal.

TPR WED 5/30/1883