

REPORT OF THE PSYCHOPATHIC PROBATION DEPARTMENT
 LOS ANGELES COUNTY
 FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1939

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Number of Cases Placed on Probation in 1939	Women - 827	
	Men - <u>907</u>	
		1734
Number of Cases on Probation Dec. 31, 1938	Women - 1128	
	Men - <u>995</u>	
		<u>2123</u>
TOTAL CASES HANDLED ON PROBATION IN 1939		3857

FIRST DISPOSITION OF CASES PLACED ON PROBATION IN 1939:

Placed at Resthaven	69
Placed at McCracken Home	73
Other Homes and Sanitariums	936
Home on Probation	332
Left Jurisdiction of the Court	36
Placed at Rancho Los Amigos	238
Returned to Jail	2
Cases Dismissed, Committed or Died before Leaving Psychopathic Ward	<u>48</u>
	<u>1734</u>

FINAL DISPOSITION OF ALL CASES:

Committed to Patton	63
Committed to Norwalk	29
Committed to Camarillo	98
Committed to Sawtelle	4
Died	488
Left Jurisdiction of the Court	94
Dismissed as Rehabilitated	187
Dismissed (Social Adjustment)	138
Miscellaneous Dismissals	42
Cases Disposed of Before Leaving Ward	48
Cases Remaining on Probation, December 31, 1939	<u>2666</u>

3857

Total Number of Cases (Women)	1955	
Returned to Court for Commitment	103	- 5.3%
Total Number of Cases (Men).....	1902	
Returned to Court for Commitment	91	- 4.8%

OFFICE ROUTINE AND FIELD WORK:

Visits to Patients at Home	767
Calls at Sanitariums	900
Accompanying Patients to Rancho, Clinics, etc.	144
Office Callers	4014
Case Histories to Sanitariums	1308
Letters and Telegrams	1446
Court Orders Covering Placements	1553
New Admissions Interviewed	4078

FINANCIAL DIVISION:

New Cases Investigated	701
Field Calls	592
Interviews at Office	575
Court Orders, Vouchers, Reports and Legal Forms	1917
Letters	3346
Number of Guardianships Handled in 1939	279

REPORT OF THE PSYCHOPATHIC PROBATION DEPARTMENT

DECEMBER 31, 1939

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The Psychopathic Probation Department submits its Annual Report, showing the volume and scope of work performed for the year ending December 31, 1939.

A number of matters have affected this department in the past year, such as (1) a broadly amended law governing the procedure in the care of the mentally ill; (2) an amendment which allows probation for stimulant cases; (3) the establishment of an Alcoholic School by this Department; and (4) the encouraging results in the rehabilitation of the early cases with the use of newly discovered medical treatment.

The new law has greatly increased the work of the Department as it allows patients to be examined privately or in the Psychopathic Ward, without hearing, and necessitates that social and financial reports must be prepared and presented to the Judge before placement of the case is made. These reports must be presented as soon as possible after the petition for examination has been filed, hence it means that the Probation Officers must, within five days, go to any point in the County to interview patient and relatives, and also cover their daily case load in the Psychopathic Ward. With only four Officers in the Department to cover this work, it has been a stupendous task and has been met only because of the efficiency and loyalty of the employees. The following figures show increase in the number of petitions filed, necessitating personal interview, social and financial history in each case, prepared by the Psychopathic Probation Department.

PETITIONS FILED

	<u>1938</u>			<u>1939</u>			<u>1940</u>		
	<u>MENTAL</u>	<u>ALC</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>MENTAL</u>	<u>ALC</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>MENTAL</u>	<u>ALC</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
JAN	314	11	325	293	45	338	346	105	451
FEB	259	19	278	257	38	295	321	120	441
MCH	<u>261</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>328</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>376</u>	<u>305</u>	<u>79</u>	
	834	69	903	878	131	1009	972	304	

41% increase over 1938)
26% increase over 1939)

Total petitions filed, first 3 m-
1938, 1939 and 1940

PERCENTAGE OF CASES PLACED ON PROBATION

	<u>1935</u>	<u>1936</u>	<u>1937</u>	<u>1938</u>	<u>1939</u>
PETITIONS FILED	2722	3210	3405	3808	4078
PLACED ON PROBATION	948	1229	1357	1544	1734
Proportion Placed on Probation, of Total Petitions Filed:	35%	38%	40%	40 $\frac{1}{2}$ %	42 $\frac{1}{2}$ %

The number of petitions filed in 1939 shows an increase of approximately 67% over 1935. The work has been handled, however, with the same number of Psychopathic Probation Officers.

In order that patients may be moved from the Psychopathic Ward as quickly as possible, in an effort to affect a saving for the County and prevent overcrowding in the Hospital, reports must be made at once on the patients admitted daily. This has meant an average daily case load of four new cases for each officer. There are also twenty-seven sanitariums caring for psychopathic cases which must be visited weekly, in addition to patients in their homes, concerning whom the Officers must make visits and reports to the Court.

FINANCIAL DIVISION

A steady growth in the number of psychopathic cases has brought a proportionate increase in those cases requiring financial aid from the County, notwithstanding an increase of \$5.00 per month in Old Age Assistance, which reduced the amount being spent by this department by a like amount. The greater case load has caused this department to exceed its budget allotment by \$11,887.00 for the first half of 1939-40. It is expected that the increase in case load for the coming year will more than offset the saving occasioned by the increase in Old Age Assistance.

This greater volume required the employment of additional clerical help and has also created the necessity for a greater number of guardianships handled by Mr. Overshiner, Financial Investigator. On January 1, 1939 there were 156 active guardianships. During 1939, 123 new petitions were filed, and in the same period 56 were discharged, leaving 223 active guardianships in force on December 31, 1939.

During 1939, \$111,461.47 passed thru the Financial Investigator's hands, in addition to real and personal property handled.

The following schedule shows the increase in patient days over the previous year, and the cost per patient day.

	<u>1938</u>		<u>1939</u>	
	<u>Patient Days</u>	<u>Cost per Patient Day</u>	<u>Patient Days</u>	<u>Cost per Patient Day</u>
JAN.	11,792	\$.63	16,593	\$.40
FEB.	11,186	.62	15,242	.44
MARCH	12,737	.47	17,037	.41
APRIL	12,906	.41	16,836	.42
MAY	14,104	.38	17,317	.43
JUNE	13,934	.39	17,463	.41
JULY	15,410	.34	19,000	.40
AUGUST	15,384	.37	20,463	.43
SEPT.	15,615	.39	20,169	.45
OCT.	16,789	.37	21,131	.45
NOV.	15,756	.37	20,996	.47
DEC.	15,908	.37	22,038	.45

At the last session of the Legislature, an amendment to Section 5077 of the Welfare and Institutions Code was enacted which materially assists the Department in taking security in cases where the patient or family have non-liquid assets. Machinery is being put in motion to facilitate the handling of such matters. The closest cooperation between the Judicial, Social and Financial units of the Department are necessary to bring about the desired results.

ALCOHOLIC SCHOOL

An outstanding contribution to the work of rehabilitation has been initiated by Mr. Howe, Psychologist and Probation Officer in this Department. He has established, with remarkable results, an Alcoholic School. While this was begun largely as an experiment by Mr. Howe, it is no longer so considered by the Court, but is a

valuable and unique factor in the rehabilitation of the ever-increasing number of stimulant cases passing through this Court. The School meets twice weekly; Mr. Howe gives his own time to these evening meetings, and the following report indicates their progress:

The Alcoholic School is a project in group self-therapy for chronic alcoholics on probation. The men meet together in an informal class to study and discuss their common problems and to give each other as much practical aid as possible, such as finding jobs, helping each other control their habit, etc. The School is held under the auspices of the Psychopathic Probation Department of Los Angeles County.

Classes are conducted twice a week in the Courtroom of the Psychopathic Division of the Superior Court, and the individual is required by the terms of his probation to attend each meeting for a period of six months, or longer. For the first month the individual is sponsored by a man older in the group, whom he must contact daily. If successful during this month, he, himself, becomes sponsor for another new man. Failure to attend class constitutes violation of probation.

As of April, 1940 the School has been in operation seven months. The first meeting was held September 18, 1939, beginning with four men. Approximately 15 admissions are made per month, 92 men having been admitted during the first six months. Of that number 55, or 59.5%, have maintained successful attendance.

Of those who were "failures", following shows disposition:

27 sent to State Hospitals
4 sent to private sanitariums
4 confined in Jail (at this date)
2 missing.

A person may join the class by coming before the Psychopathic Court on a Warrant of Intemperance signed by himself or by a relative, friend or other interested party. Probation to attend the Alcoholic School is granted at the time of hearing by the Judge of this Court. If the man signs his own warrant, he may await his hearing either in the Hospital or in his own home. If someone else signs the petition,

he is usually brought by the Sheriff to the Hospital to await hearing.

There is no cost to the individual member for the routine running of the class as such. There is cost for hospitalization in the Psychopathic Ward, which is assessed to the individual where possible. There are no dues or fees involved. "Failures" or "return probationers" are a slight cost to the Sheriff's Department when returned by them to the Ward. However, on the basis of the 55 successful cases, which might otherwise have been public charges in the State Hospital at \$30 a month, at an average of four months per patient, it is estimated that more than \$1000 a month, or a total of \$6000 for the first six months of operation, is saved the County by the Alcoholic School.

When a man violates his probation by drinking, he is usually returned to the Psychopathic Ward by the Sheriff and given a further hearing before the Court. Depending on the circumstances, he is granted continued probation or given commitment to a State Hospital, or a private sanitarium.

Roughly, fifty to sixty per cent of successes may be expected on a long range or permanent basis. The results for the latest three months have been observed to yield this figure consistently. The vast majority of the men are enthusiastic, or at least sympathetic toward the class, as shown by their aid in conducting the work of the class, such as keeping records, contacting absentees, finding jobs for one another, and the continued attendance in a number of cases, even after dismissal.

The School cooperates with the Sheriff's Department of Los Angeles County and the Los Angeles Police Department--especially the Psychopathic Detail. Unofficially, the School also cooperates with an informal fellowship of ex-alcoholics, known as "Alcoholics Anonymous", membership of which is entirely voluntary, with no formal organization, dues or fees. Branches of this organization are springing up in most major cities. Many of the men are members of both groups.

REHABILITATION WITH NEW MEDICAL TREATMENT

Another most encouraging development in the work of this Department has been in the results obtained with the new medication given patients suffering with a mental illness of short duration. An arrangement to care for these patients has been possible through the cooperation of the physicians and sanitariums and the fact that they have given their services without additional charges. These patients formerly would undoubtedly have spent long, or indefinite, periods in County or State institutions, but with an average of three months' treatment, have been rehabilitated and made self-supporting citizens again. It is the endeavor of this Department to handle with efficiency and understanding, the ever-increasing problem of mental illness.


Chief Psychopathic Propagation Officer