

April 16, 1930 Front Page



DR. WILLIAM J. KAY

DR. WM. J. KAY DIES SUDDENLY

1930

**Throat Infection Proves
Fatal to the Superinten-
dent of Mich. Home**

Dr. William J. Kay, superintendent of the Michigan Home and Training School and beloved citizen of Lapeer, died this morning shortly after midnight, following an illness of only a few days from a streptococcus infection in his throat. His condition was not thought to be serious until about 24 hours previous to his death.

Dr. Kay has been a resident of Lapeer County since 1897 following his graduation from the Detroit College of Medicine in June. During his long residence here he became so enshrined in the hearts of the people of the community that his death is felt as a distinct loss to many, many people of Lapeer, and surrounding countryside.

First Practised in Attica

When Dr. Kay first came to Lapeer County he lived in Attica where he practised medicine for five or six years. At the same time Dr. H. E. Randall was practising medicine in Dryden and the two young doctors formed a partnership and moved to Lapeer, occupying the building which is now used by the Michigan State Telephone Co. at the corner of Court and Clay streets. After a few years Dr. Randall moved to Flint but Dr. Kay continued the practise of medicine, later purchasing the residence and office at the corner of Cedar and Clay streets. In September, 1924, Dr. Kay was appointed superintendent of the Michigan Home and Training School by Gov. Griesbeck.

Honored by Gov. Griesbeck

Dr. Kay's appointment, following the appointment of the former superintendent, Dr. H. A. Haynes, to the superintendency of the University Hospital at Ann Arbor, came not as a result of Dr. Kay's political activities, but in recognition of his preeminent success in the field of medicine and because of his understanding of sociological problems and his study of educational work among the under developed. Not only had Dr. Kay been highly successful in the practise of medicine in the local field but was recognized throughout the state as one of the most successful general practitioners and students of medicine. He was significantly honored by his associates by being chosen president of the Michigan State Medical Association.

Was Born in Canada

Dr. Kay was born on April 5, 1867, in Bellmore, Ont., son of Dr. and Mrs. John Patterson Kay. His father was a citizen of the United States and had served as surgeon during the Civil War.

Dr. Kay was a member of the Lapeer Rotary Club, the Masonic Lodge, the K. of P., the Consistory and Shrine.

He was particularly interested in educational work and served on the Lapeer Board of Education for several years.

He is survived by his widow, one daughter, Miss Elaine Kay, at home, one sister, Mrs. Louis C. Cramton of Washington, D. C.; two brothers, Fred B. Kay of Lapeer and George Kay of Baltimore, Md. An older daughter, Burnice (Mrs. Ralph White), died in 1921, leaving two sons, William Kay White and Burne Kay White, who have since made their home with Dr. and Mrs. Kay.

Funeral Services Friday

The body will lie in state from 1 to 3:30 o'clock Friday afternoon at the Presbyterian church. The funeral service will begin at the church at 3:30. Burial will be made in Mt. Hope cemetery, Lapeer.

Oakdale in the Newspapers

April 23, 1930

May 14, 1930

THE LAPEER COUNTY PRESS

Gov. Green Issues Proclamation on Dr. Kay's Death

STATE OF MICHIGAN
EXECUTIVE OFFICE
LANSING

FRED W. GREEN
GOVERNOR

April 16, 1930

In the death this morning of Dr. William J. Kay, Superintendent of the Michigan Home and Training School at Lapeer, the State of Michigan has lost one of its most valuable servants, a man who was a true and kindly father to those many unfortunate "children" who had been placed under his care during the five years he has had charge of that institution.

Dr. Kay was appointed Superintendent September 12, 1924, when there were 2368 patients committed to his care. The number has increased until today there are 2910 patients in the Home, which is crowded far beyond its capacity originally intended, but which Dr. Kay had expanded through his indefatigable labors to provide for those committed to the Home.

Recently he had found delight in the knowledge that the State, tardy as it was, had arranged to increase the accommodations of this institution. He had been giving careful attention to the details of the building plans with a view of arranging for the maximum comfort of the patients, whom he thoroughly understood.

FRED W. GREEN
Governor

DR. DIXON HEADS MICHIGAN HOME

Supt. of Epileptic School
Succeeds the late Dr.
Wm. J. Kay as Supt.

Selected solely because of his fitness for the position Dr. Robert L. Dixon was appointed superintendent of the Michigan Home and Training School late yesterday afternoon by Gov. Green. The appointment came entirely unsolicited on Dr. Dixon's part.

Dr. Dixon has been superintendent of the Michigan Farm Colony for Epileptics at Wahjamega, near Caro in Tuscola County since that institution was founded 16 years ago. His management of that hospital and training school has been so successful that it has become one of the outstanding institutions of its character in the United States. It was entirely fitting and just that the appointment to the larger institution at Lapeer should go to Dr. Dixon. He will move to Lapeer within a few weeks and assumes his new duties at once, coming here daily until he is able to move here.

Dr. Dixon's family consists of his wife, one son, Robert, Jr., who is a senior at the University of Michigan, and one daughter, Elizabeth, 11, at home.

Dr. Dixon is 52 years old. He is a member of the Caro Rotary Club and has always taken an active part in community activities. Dr. Dixon's successor at the Wahjamega institution has not been appointed yet.

August 19, 1931

Laying of Michigan Home Corner Stone Was Big Event In History

Governor and Other Notables Present at the Time

(Contributed by Geo. N. Lawrence)
Thirty-seven years to the younger generation may be a long time to look ahead, but to those who attended the cornerstone laying June 26, 1894, of the first cottage erected on the State institution grounds west of Lapeer, it would seem but a short period of time. It was the

Heverer of the Commission Mayor S. N. Vincent, Wm. E. Brown, Geo. N. Lawrence, C. E. Palmerlee, E. C. Roberts, B. F. Loder and B. F. Perkins, the four last named being appointed to assist in the work. The writer of this story is the only member of the Lapeer group on the platform, still living, that assisted the Grand Lodge members in the cornerstone laying.

Mayor Vincent Gives Address
"Fellow Citizens: It being an official duty it is as well a lifetime

port of which I leave to wiser heads and tongues more eloquent who are to follow me, is assigned to that order whose history dates back to a time more ancient than golden fleece or Roman eagle; skilled workmen with the square and compass, triangle, trowel and level, under the direction of their Grand Master Mechanic and Architect known to all Christendom. Gentlemen, welcome; yea, thrice welcome, everybody!"

largest demonstration ever enacted in Lapeer in which a crowd estimated at over 25,000 were present at the spectacular ceremony. It has meant much to the citizens of Lapeer, and the State of Michigan in caring for the unfortunates. It will be a sweet memory to those who took part in the program and a sad recollection to read the names of those who have died since that time.

The Michigan Home and Training School, formerly known and named the Michigan Home for the Feeble-Minded and Epileptic, under the authority of Act 208, P. A. 1893, was located by the board of building commissioners at the City of Lapeer, Lapeer County, on a tract of land containing 710 acres. Just west of Lapeer was selected as an ideal place for the school so much needed in this State. One hundred acres is occupied by buildings and play grounds.

This review may be of more than ordinary notice in this issue of the centennial number because of the men who were active in securing the Home which has become a small city by itself at the western city limits of Lapeer.

Epileptics Separated

As cottages were erected and a large waiting list to be housed, it was necessary to segregate those stricken with epilepsy in order to give the other children an opportunity for school training.

In 1915 a location was selected at Wahjamega in Tuscola County, four miles from Caro and 11 miles from Vassar. The "Michigan Farm Colony" site consists of 1,510 acres of land and was purchased for \$53,500. Since that time the Home at Lapeer has taken the name of "Training School."

The late Dr. William A. Polglase was the superintendent at the Home. Harry S. Evans, steward, and Frank DesNoyer, engineer, are about the only ones remaining that were present at the opening of the training school. Miss Anna Schill, a former nurse under the regime of Dr. Polglase, was formerly superintendent of Hurley Hospital at Flint, prior to her marriage.

Masons Lay Cornerstone

It was during the term as governor of the late John T. Rich that the cornerstone of Cottage A was laid by members of the Grand Lodge

privilege to stand before so many thousand people from all parts of commonwealth of Michigan, and to extend to you, on behalf of the city of Lapeer, a most cordial welcome and to thank you for your presence on this occasion. Among our distinguished guests here today, is our esteemed townsman, the Hon. John T. Rich, the present and may I say, the future Governor of Michigan, with his staff; also, that other former ex-Governor whom we so much delight to honor, the Hon. Cyrus G. Luce, of Coldwater; also good and generous octogenarian, ex-Governor Josiah W. Begole, of Flint; also the Hon. W. B. Baum, of Saginaw, who, as a member of the legislature introduced the bill

See Next Page For
Complete Article

LAPEER COUNTY PRESS & LAPEER COUNTY CLARION

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 1931

"Sandy" was admitted to the Lapeer County Infirmary, on November 28, 1928, "Sandy" was born in Canada and was 70 years old at the time he wrote this article for the newspaper.

"Sandy" was only a kid when the first train came to Lapeer 60 years ago. Mrs. Hart put on a feast for the train crew and the crowd when the first train came from Pt. Huron. "Sandy" remembers the log roads that ran through Lapeer and how hundreds of loads of shingles and lumber used to go along its streets. It used to take a strong team to bring a load of lumber up Nepessing Street. In those days "Sandy" took to traveling but he always came back to Lapeer. He was here when the smallpox epidemic broke out at the Michigan Home. Earlier he was the teamster that drew the first load of lumber and first keg of nails to the Home site for the first cottage.

"SANDY" KERR

February 14, 1934

June 5, 1935

August 19, 1936

VF LAP CHG OAKDALE

HOME ANNEXES INDIAN SCHOOL

2-14-34

Supt. Dixon and Michigan Home Employees Start Work There

Dr. R. L. Dixon and a group of Michigan Home and Training School employees were in Mt. Pleasant the fore part of the week making arrangements for conditioning the Indian School there preparatory to establishing approximately 500 inmates there. The institution is to be under the supervision of the Michigan Home staff and to be conducted as a branch of the local institution.

Of the local employees Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Stier and Mr. and Mrs. Frank Walts will be stationed at Mt. Pleasant permanently as cottage supervisors. Mr. and Mrs. Burt Grossbeck will have charge of the dining room. At present Kenneth Kerr is also stationed there assisting in taking an inventory.

Carpenter and Painters

Alan Morey, carpenter, Ted Holcomb and Myron Phillips, painters, and Roy Bentley, superintendent of construction here, are temporarily stationed at Mt. Pleasant re-habilitating the institution.

The Mt. Pleasant plant was the property of the Federal government and used as an Indian school until recently when it was abandoned for that purpose and turned over to the State of Michigan for use as a training school. It is expected that only boys between school age will be housed there. The boys will be taken from the local institution and from the waiting list at 1873.

The Mt. Pleasant plant is in excellent condition but some accommodations must be rearranged to fit for the new purpose. The value of the plant is placed at a half million. There are 37 buildings and 320 acres in the Mt. Pleasant property, 200 acres of good farming land, well equipped.

To Learn Farming

The boys will be taught agriculture, care of all kinds of live stock, carpentry, plumbing and use of machinery. When they are qualified, they will be sent out to work on probation for farmers, reporting regularly to authorities at the institution. When they have proved their ability to carry on satisfactorily they will be released permanently.

The acquisition of the Mt. Pleasant property will not curtail the building plans for this year, Dr. Dixon expects, as the building program calls for accommodations for 1,000 patients and there are 1,373 on the waiting lists.

STATE OKEHS HOME BUDGET

June 5, 1935

Nearly a Million Dollars to Be Spent There Next Year

Officials at the Michigan Home last week received official word from Lansing that the institution's budget for the next two years will be \$955,190 for each year, an increase of nearly \$240,000 over the last two years.

Although the budget is some \$87,000 less than that requested by the Michigan Home, the amount will still be sufficient with careful planning to carry the institution along on the same basis as at present.

No building is contemplated at the Home in the next two years, the appropriation providing no funds for that purpose.

The \$955,190 appropriation will be spent as follows:

Personal service	\$404,000
Supplies (material and contractual)	456,040
Outlay for equipment	35,150
Operation of farm	60,000
	<hr/>
	\$955,190

Besides this amount, the Home gets about \$55,000 worth of produce from its farm, which is not included in this budget.

Dr. R. L. Dixon, superintendent, says it is not expected that it will be necessary to make any salary cuts to fit the expenses within the limits of the budget.

Kitchen Curtains Start Fire at Nepessing Lake

Farewell Party

A farewell party was given Thursday evening by the employees of the Lapeer Hospital at the Michigan Home at the Knutson home in Lapeer, for the Misses Margaret Haskins and Elizabeth DeVew, who are entering the St. Camillus School of Nursing, Borgess Hospital in Kalamazoo. Contests and games were enjoyed and dainty refreshments served. The girls received lovely gifts.

October 14, 1936

Waiting List Jammed at M.H.T.S.—Dixon

VF LAP CHG OAKDALE

A plea for increased facilities to care for the mentally deficient and mentally deranged of Michigan was voiced by Dr. Robert L. Dixon, medical superintendent of the Michigan Home and Training School, Lapeer to members of the Lions club of Port Huron at their weekly meeting Wednesday in Hotel Harrington.

"More than 1,300 persons, actually adjudged mentally deficient, are on the waiting list of the Lapeer school," he said. "No other state in the union has so many cases needing control without provisions being made for them."

"Everyone recognizes the sociological principle that the rights of society predominate over the rights of an individual, and that because of this some persons should be removed from the life of society," he said. The second great sociological principal that we seemed to have forgotten is that for every right that society asserts, there is a commensurate obligation. We have the duty to take care of these cases."

Dr. Dixon cited figures showing that only 55 per cent of the cases at Lapeer are hereditary. — Port Huron Times Herald.

Will accept Lapeer Savings Bank certificates on dental work, or assignments of same.—Dr. G. A. Graham. adv 8-11

Tell 'em and sell 'em for 35 cents in a County Press Want Ad.

Oakdale in the Newspapers

Date Not Known, Year 1938

November 2, 1938

Home Superintendent



DR. FRED R. HANNA has received his permanent appointment as medical superintendent of the Lapeer State Home. The announcement was made this week by Dr. Joseph E. Barrett, director of the Michigan hospital commission.

Dr. Hanna has been acting superintendent of the Home since May 15, 1937, when Dr. R. L. Dixon, former superintendent, was transferred back to the Michigan Farm Colony at Wahjamega. He has been here for the past five years when he came to Lapeer from Oakland county and joined the medical staff of the institution. He was assistant superintendent under Dr. Dixon. Dr. Hanna is the present president of the Lapeer Rotary Club, and is highly regarded in the community, which extends its congratulations.

Born and reared in Detroit, Dr. Hanna received his medical degree from Wayne University in 1911. For two years following his graduation he served as an assistant county physician for Oakland county, going from here to join the medical staff at the Lapeer Home.

ESTABLISHED 1839—VOLUME 99, NUMBER 40

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1938

LAPEER SEES ITS FIRST PICKET LINE



Construction work on the new buildings at the Lapeer State Home was completely stopped Saturday morning when this group of pickets prevented the entrance of any one of the project who wanted to return to work.

Work had stopped on the project Thursday noon, because common laborers had been receiving only 50c an hour, instead of the 70c rate which the American Federation of Labor claimed was due them. The A. F. of L., through its local, the Genesee Trades and Building Council, pointed out that the PWA grant had specified that the "prevailing" wage be paid. This, they said, meant the union scale in the vicinity, and the union scale is 70c.

When the state budget director drew up the contract, however, he inserted a 50c rate for common labor, and it was on this basis that the contractors, Sorenson & Gross, had been paying the men.

Bert A. Knight, representative of the Trades Council, emphasized that the strike was not against the contractors.

"This is our only method," he explained, "to force an investigation of this wage scale. Before the PWA will look into the matter, it is necessary to present an emergency to them, such as the stoppage of work. We don't call this a strike—it's a cessation of labor."

All the workers quit Thursday to force an investigation of the common laborer's wage. Friday, however, some of the bricklayers went back on the job. The picketing on Saturday morning was to prevent anyone from working.

Some 75 men had been employed on the job.

Date Not Known, Year 1938

New Head Is Named at Lapeer Institution

LANSING, July 25—Dr. Fred R. Hanna, who has been acting medical superintendent of the State Home and Training School at Lapeer since May, 1937, was named superintendent Monday by the State Hospital Commission. He is a Detroit graduate of the University of Michigan and Wayne University and served his internship at Receiving Hospital in Detroit.

County Press
January 26, 1938

THREE WAYS TO EASE CROWDING AT STATE HOME

**Plan 300-Bed Addition
at Lapeer, Cost
\$300,000**

In a talk with The County Press when he visited Lapeer recently, Dr. Joseph E. Barrett, director of the State Hospital Commission said he was not in favor of institutions such as the Lapeer Home being built up to too great a size.

"The Lapeer State Home is large enough now," he said. "If we were to increase its capacity greatly we would lose opportunity for personal contact work with the patients."

More Attention for Patients

"We must remember these afflicted persons are human beings entitled to the best care we can give them. I believe that in a smaller institution they can receive more attention."

Dr. Barrett said that the problem was to strike a happy medium between the best care of the patient and the least expenditure of money.

At the Children's Village at Coldwater, "baby" of the state institutions, cost per patient is \$1.58 per day. At Lapeer, the largest of the institutions, the cost is only 72¢ per day.

Three plans are in progress to relieve the load of patients that is overcrowding the Lapeer State Home:

1. Construction of a 300-bed addition this spring at the Lapeer State Home. Cost is estimated at \$300,000, and it is expected to be finished by fall.

2. Transfer of some of the patients to the Children's Village at Coldwater, Mich., where 500 additional beds are planned this year.

3. Construction of a new institution located more nearly in the central part of lower Michigan. No money has been appropriated for such an institution, and it would first have to be approved by the legislature.

At the Lapeer State Home now there are 1,600 more patients than the rated "capacity" of the institution of 2,790. The present building program will relieve only part of the over-crowding.

Waiting List of 1,500

In addition there is a waiting list of 1,500 that cannot possibly be cared for until additional buildings are erected.

Dr. Barrett said legislation would be required to permit the housing of all types of youthful mental patients at the institution, which now is reserved for the "upper types" of feeble minded.

The commission agreed with Dr. Barrett that the state could effect economies as well as provide a convenience to southwestern Michigan patients through such expansion.

County Press, April 1939

HOPE TO BUILD NEW CHAPEL AT HOME

Lapeer State Home officials do not expect that the chapel, practically destroyed by fire Saturday afternoon, will be rebuilt, Earl Smith, steward of the institution, said. "The building was erected in 1902 and has been inadequate for years since the institution has grown to its present size. If sufficient money is available from the state, we hope to put up a larger and more suitable building near the new group of buildings now going up."

The loss was set conservatively at \$20,000, although if a new building is to be put up, it would cost several times that amount. The chapel seated 350 persons, and was used for movies, plays, dances, and the annual arts and crafts exhibits.

Fifteen patients who were in the club store in the basement, were forced to escape through windows when flames blocked the stairway exit. Considerable damage was done to the stock of goods in the store and the furnishings of the club rooms.

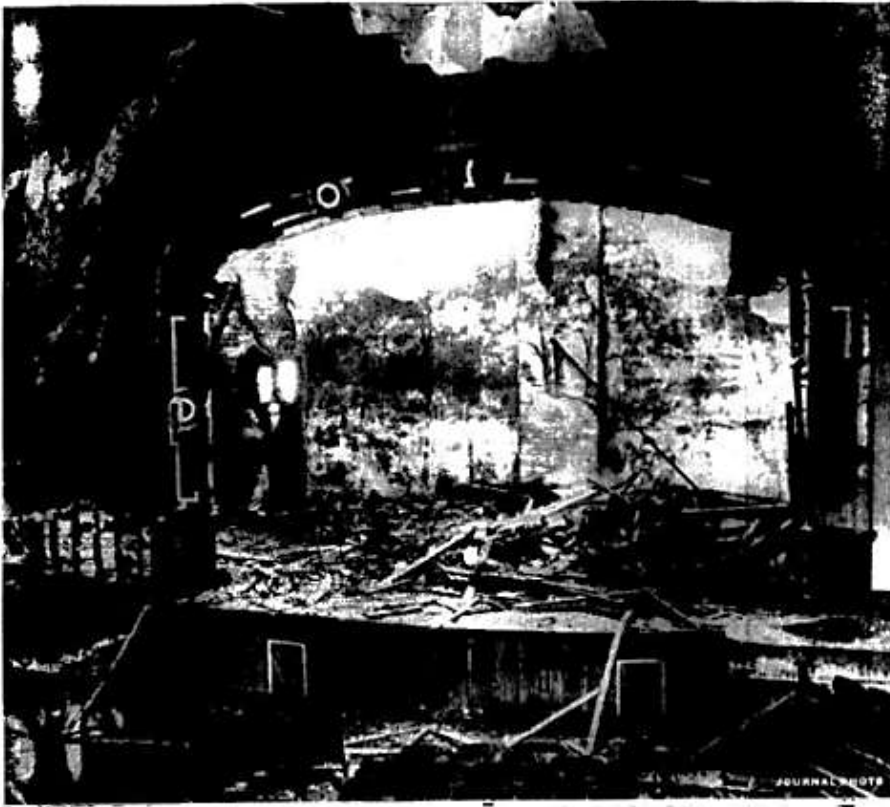
The fire broke out at 3:15 p. m. The Home and the Lapeer City fire departments had water on it a few minutes later, but flames had gained such headway in the stacks of canvas scenery and in the old wooden rafters that it could not be checked. A false ceiling of steel below the rafters confined the fire between the slate roof and this ceiling, making it difficult to quench.

Origin of the fire is unknown.

Oakdale in the Newspapers

County Press, April 1939

THE WORST FIRE IN THE HISTORY OF THE LAPEER STATE HOME



The top picture shows the interior of the chapel of the Lapeer State Home and Training school, damaged by fire Saturday afternoon, including the stage where the blaze broke out. At right is a view of the 37-year-old building showing how the fire burned through the west end of the roof during an hour and 15 minutes. Lapeer city firemen and institution employees battled to gain control of the blaze. Fifteen patients trapped in the ruin, who were aided to safety through the roof window when their escape through the door was cut off by flames.

It was the worst fire in the 44 years of the institution.

Hundreds of Lapeer hotel-gathered to watch the blaze.

Story of fire on Page 1, Part 1

