Oakdale in the Newspapers
These appeared in the County Press around 1938-1941

FORTY-ONE YEARS AGO
THE SUPERVISORS

The October session of the board of supervisors convenes next Monday. Following is a list of the representatives from the different towns in the county:

- Lapeer, 1st District, E. T. Slayton
- Lapeer, 2nd District, J. E. Roberts
- Almon, Chas. B. Kidder
- Arcadia, John Schell
- Auville, Franklin E. Watkins
- Burington, A. H. McKillop
- Burnside, Joseph Lewis
- Deerfield, Fred D. Fricke
- Dryden, D. O. Bartlett
- Fiba, John Conley
- Goodland, George W. Dickerson
- Hadley, Wm. E. Ivory
- Imlay, John P. Eggleston
- Lapeer, Ben. F. Kingsbury
- Marathop, Emlou A. Brown
- Mayfield, Stephen Blythe
- Melrose, Mathias Caley
- North Branch, W. W. Harrington
- Rich, Warren C. Blair

Popcorn season is over, and Thos. Curriston has "folded his tent" and yamoozed.

John H. Dods is building a new, large and commodious barn on his extensive farm east of town.

Merchant Vandeveer offers $50 for another street fair next year, as well pleased is he.

W. H. Jenkins, L. J. Haddrill and U. D. Bristol, worthy citizens, are still confined to their beds.

Dr. Polglase reports 276 inmates at the Home for Feeble Minded, and the new additions just completed give room for 100 more who soon will arrive, and there will be 376.

Frank Cutting and wife have returned north.

Ben Myers is at Mt. Clemens attending business college.

T. M. Stewart has gone to Lansing to work on the new State Industrial School.

Auctioneer Donakson is busy with fall sales and keeps "goin', gone, going."

Our farmers report that they are not overburdened with prosperity and find times as hard and prices as low as ever.

John Edmunds and wife will spend the winter in California. Their daughters Hattie and Lillian are attending school in Detroit.

LAPEER STATE HOME

The largest institution in the world for the care of the feeble-minded is at Lapeer—the Lapeer State Home and Training School. Buildings and equipment are inventorized at about $6,000,000 and 4,000 patients are cared for. There are some 600 employees, and the Home is virtually an independent "city" with its own power and heating plant, a 600-acre farm that supplies much of its food, its bakery, laundry and industrial arts shops where patients learn crafts. The Home officers will be glad to escort visitors through the institution. Between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., are the most convenient times.

~ 1 ~
WORK IS KEYNOTE OF EARL’S SUCCESS

Earl T. Smith was born at Lansing, Michigan, April 21, 1890, and his life’s activities have all been within a hundred miles of his birthplace.

Attending the public schools he graduated from Lansing high school in 1912. While going to school he worked in a laundry as a general hand and earned his way. When school was over and work commanded there was to be no college days. Earl went into the laundry business which was known as the Model Laundry. It was large in size but not any too well equipped, but he carried that on for 4 years. Upon leaving that business Earl went to work for the Auto Body Co. of Lansing in 1915. This was one of the pioneer body factories in mass production and Harry Bradley was the head. He took a personal interest in his personnel and made a young man who was employed there a model employee. Among the many vacation workers of that period were Harry Kipke and Zoriam Karl Kihy of Caro. Earl here had charge of the timekeeping and test department. Seventeen years his employment by the State of Michigan commenced when he joined the accounting department of the State Administrative Board.

Accepted appointment

In 1918, shortly after Earl was sent several times to the Michigan State Home and Training School, now known as the Lapeer State Home, the then Superintendent, Dr. Harley Haines, offered him an appointment which he accepted in charge of accounting at the institution. He began that work Sept. 3, 1924. He was transferred to the Michigan State Farm Colony at Washburne in February, 1926, and again to the Lapeer institution as Business Executive at Sept., 1926.

June 23, 1944, Earl was married to Miss Pearl Price of Lapeer. They have one son, Jack Smith, recent graduate of U. of M. Law School and now in practice in Lapeer. Earl’s own desire having been to be a lawyer he has the great satisfaction of watching his son carry out his own unfilled dream.

EARL SMITH

Out of town

Lapeer Rotarian Too

Earl’s chief recreation is reading, current events and novels, but he has never read CWTW. No golf, no cards, when he is not at work it is pretty much the planning of the next day’s work and he likes his work. A Mason and K. of P., but not active. A Rotarian at Caro and here he has served the Club as Treasurer.

Even though his purchases are centralized as much as possible at Lansing the business side of the Institution has a vast amount of detail and record work. Ten people are employed here in that work with about 4,000 patients here and 319 at Mt. Pleasant. The annual clothing out is about $20,000, two $20,000 and total, not including preparations and services, is $260,000 or between 30 and 20 cents per day per patient. Even with central purchasing at Lansing, there is a considerable amount of buying in Lapeer of necessaries, repairs and emergencies. Lapeers sells also considerable amounts to the local retail shop who spend their earnings largely in downtown shopping.

Co. Choirs To Sing Xmas Carols

Music to Come From Dome of the Court House

Mrs. Oscar Jutberg, chairman of the committee arranging for the various church choir to sing Christmas music and carols, December 18th, announces the names of the choirs.

The choirs will sing each evening but Monday from the Baird Funeral Home, the music to be amplified from loudspeakers in the dome of the court house. Mrs. H. L. Baird will accompany the groups on the organ. The Rev. W. H. Remmington will give charge of the broadcasting arrangements.

Working with Mrs. Jutberg on the program are: Victor Peppier, Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Baird, Arthur Lynch.

The choirs to participate are: Brass Ensemble, Lapeer State Home, Victor Peppier, director.

Glebe Church Club, Jean Oleson.

Macon Street Methodist Church Choir, Mildred Kruse.

Baptist Choir, Rose Butler.

Wesleyan Congregational Church Choir, Mrs. Florence Burnham.

Lapeer Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Mrs. Otto Graupner.

Haddad Federated Church Choir.

South Side Lutheran Church.

Lapeer Presbyterian Church.

1102 North Capitol Avenue.

Church of the Immaculate Conception, M. J. Wilson.

On Wednesday evening arrangements are being made to present Christmas recordings during the afternoon.
Oakdale in the Newspapers
These appeared in the County Press around 1939-1942

THIRTY-TWO YEARS AGO

The board of control of the Mich. Home in its biennial report to Gov. Warner Monday, stated that there were 1,000 inmates confined in the institution at the end of the fiscal year June 30, 1916, and that there were over 300 applications on file at the present time. An appeal is made that the legislature be urged to take immediate action and grant an appropriation whereby an addition to the present building may be erected and other needed improvements made. If the legislature grants the appropriation asked for, which is given at $137,450, two new cottages will be erected that will accommodate 170 more patients, equally divided as to sex. An addition to the present dining hall will be built, a separate dining hall for the employees at the home, a two story industrial building will be constructed and a house for the home physician will be provided. Other improvements of a less important nature are mentioned.

THIRTY-TWO YEARS AGO

Charley Hollenbeck has closed up the Farmers Home hotel for lack of business. Not enough to warrant its continuance.

Webb Warren in town. His wife returned with him to Port Huron.

Mrs. Loren Elliott, daughter Miss Edith and Masters Howard and Kenneth, were at Washington, Mich.

Lester Wadsworth has returned to Detroit after a short visit with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Wadsworth.

Miss Katherine Arburt was very ill with her vaccination.

The Peters estates at Columbiaville are still on the map, its taxes amounting to $4,000 or more to the township of Marathon.

Frank Williams and Sky Kudner, spent Saturday and Sunday in Detroit, calling on old friends.

The farmers and town people are getting over their scare of small pox and trade seems to be picking up. There was quite a crowd in town Saturday doing their marketing.

Clark Compton: "With three hotels closed, several empty stores on the main street and business with merchants generally on the bum, you can't tell me that small pox and depression don't haunt a town."

Dan Weldon, a Lapeer boy and good lawyer, was recently elected prosecuting attorney of Payne Co., Oklahoma. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Weldon of Lapeer and was formerly an attaché of the County Press office.

When Omar Culver, genial proprietor of Cul's Place, walked into his barn Friday night to look after his horses, he noticed his electric lights were burning low and as he started into the stall they suddenly went out. Omar kept on, however, but stopped when the stall door hit him in the face, cutting him in the forehead and blacking both eyes. When asked what caused the damage he said, "You heard about Battling Nelson getting licked?" We said we had. "Well, I didn't lick him," said Omar, and went inside to build a cheese sandwich.
William Streu, engineer at the Girls Training School, Mrs. Streu and Mrs. Milre J. Sauter, commercial teacher at the institution, attended the funeral of B. F. Des Noyer at Lapeer Wednesday. Mr. Des Noyer, who was an uncle of Mrs. Sauter, was 73 years old, dying after a three week illness with heart disease. He had been chief engineer at the Lapeer State Home and Training School since its beginning in 1894. He was widely known throughout the state because of his Masonic affiliations.
Oakdale in the Newspapers

County Press, December 9, 1942

STORY OF THE BOYS' HOSPITAL AT THE HOME

A story of the Boys' Hospital at the Lapeer State Home has been written by Mrs. Paul, superintendent of the Boys' Hospital, and was published in the Lapeer County Press. The story is repeated here.

According to the story, the Boys' Hospital at the Lapeer State Home was opened in 1876 as an asylum for boys. The hospital has undergone several name changes over the years, including the Boys' Home and the Lapeer State Hospital. The hospital has been closed and reopened several times over the years, with the most recent closure occurring in 1999.

The hospital has been the subject of several investigations over the years, including a report by the Michigan Department of Health in 1998 that found the hospital was in violation of federal and state laws. The hospital was closed in 1999 and has since been converted to a different use.

County Press, December 23, 1942

Shot Fatal To Father

State Home Employee Commits Suicide

The death of a state home employee, Mr. Angell, was reported on December 23, 1942. Mr. Angell, who was employed at the state home, was found dead in his room at 510 Railroad Street. The cause of death was determined to be a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head.

The state home employee had been working at the state home for several years. He was involved in several different departments, including the maintenance and repair department. He had been known to be a dedicated and hardworking employee.

The state home employee had recently been involved in a dispute with a fellow employee over a scheduling issue. It is believed that this may have contributed to his decision to take his own life. The state home has set up a crisis intervention team to assist employees who may be experiencing mental health issues.
Slayer's Suicide Try In Jail Fails
Hearing Postponed While Potter Is In Hospital

Harry Potter, 50-year-old confessed slayer of J. C. Spates, 28, is in a Flint hospital after an unsuccessful attempt at suicide early Monday morning while being held in the county jail. His hearing scheduled for Monday was postponed.

Potter, who shot and killed Spates during an argument Wednesday evening at the Spates farm in Elba township, slashed his wrists and throat but was discovered a few minutes later by Deputy John Scott. He was rushed to Flint immediately and doctors say he will recover.

Spates died early Thursday morning at the Lapeer City Hospital after being brought there at 5:30 a.m. Wednesday by Potter. Sheriff Mathews was called immediately and Potter told him he had some home to find Spates lying on the ground wounded; that he knew nothing of how it occurred.

Potter was partly conscious at the time and told Mathews that Potter had hit him with an axe. "Go out there and look," he said. "The axe is laying by the woodpile and is all bloody." He said nothing of a gun.

State Police and the sheriff went to the scene of the crime and found an axe but it was covered with dirt and had not been disturbed for several days. Potter was jailed Wednesday night pending further investigation.

Thursday Potter was questioned further and in the afternoon admitted the crime. He first claimed self defense but later told the whole story and seemed anxious to cooperate.
Oakdale in the Newspapers

County Press, May 2 (Continued)

MURDER SCENE

J. C. Spates, 28, was shot on this scene at 3 p.m. Wednesday by Harry Potter, 50. Spates and his wife lived in the trailer shown on the left at 1307 Hadley Road and Mr. and Mrs. Potter lived in the house in the background. Spates and Potter drove home from work together, arguing over division of the work on the garden which they shared. Arriving at the farm at 4:45, Spates walked out as the orchard went to the Potter and Potter went into his house and got his shotgun. He then walked out to the trailer and had the gun under the trailer on the side toward the camera. Spates came out of the orchard and a scuffle began in the immediate foreground of this picture. Potter broke away for an instants and reached the gun. Before he could shoot Spates grappled with him but Potter broke away again. Spates was standing where Sheriff Leslie Matthews is shown in this picture. Potter was shot in the heart of the woodpile about eight feet closer to the spot from where this picture was taken. He died there. He was not able to get Spates in the center of the stomach. Both Mrs. Potter and Mrs. Spates were away at the time.

County Press

May 16, 1945

Potter Trial Is Set For Tuesday

Slayer Regrets Suicide Attempt, Wants to Live

Harry Potter, 50, charged with the murder of J. C. Spates, 28, was bound over to circuit court Friday for trial Tuesday, May 22, at 9:30 a.m. Bonds were set at $15,000, with two salaries by Justice A. H. Torkle. Before whom the examination was held.

Bond has not been posted and Potter is in the Genesee county jail.

Potter shot Spates April 26 on the Potter farm in Elba township following an argument over Spates’ failure to help with the garden work. Both men were employed as section hands on the Grand Trunk railroad.

Spates and his wife lived in a trailer house on the Potter farm. Potter later attempted to take his life by slashing his throat and wrists in the Lapeer county jail and was removed to Hurley hospital and later to the Flint jail.

Expressing regret over his attempt to commit suicide Potter said he is now willing to live and face the consequences. Describing events that led to shooting Spates, Potter related: “We argued and then began fighting. He was strong and young fellows like that have good wind. I was afraid of him and lost my courage.

He kind of getting his stomach and shooting Spates in the stomach, later driving his victim to Lapeer City hospital where he died a few hours later.

Potter Trial Postponed

The trial of Harry Potter, 50-year-old Elba township farmer charged with the murder of J. C. Spates, was postponed yesterday. It had been set for Tuesday but reports on a mental examination were incomplete. Tuesday morning psychiatrists asked for postponement.

The psychiatric test was given by Doctors Gordon Brain, Flint, R. E. Cooper and A. T. Rehn of Lapeer State Home and Training School.

Potter shot Spates April 26 on the Potter farm in Elba township following an argument over Spates’ failure to help with the garden work.

SOLDIERS here in “Here is Your Infantry” say that Lapeer is the best town they have struck in their travels and appreciate the courtesies shown them here.
Oakdale in the Newspapers
County Press, June 13, 1945

State Home is 50 Years Old
HAS 4,950 PATIENTS AND 590 EMPLOYEES

Administration Building, Lapeer State Home

A brief history of the Lapeer State Home and Training School in connection with the annual pageant given by the institution on June 14th will recall many interesting incidents of by-gone days.

The institution was started by an appropriation of 90 acres by the 1852-54 Legislature and the donation of 160 acres of land by the City of Lapeer. The name of this institution was "The Home for the Feeble-Minded and Epileptic."

The cornerstone for the Home was laid on June 26, 1894. The first patients were admitted to the institution in 1895 and by spring of 1896, more than 200 patients were enrolled under the care of 16 employees.

In 1913 the Home was changed to the Michigan Home and Training School. Epileptic patients were moved to the Carson State Hospital near Carson. In 1928, the Wayne County Training School was established with a nucleus of institutionalized patients from Lapeer, as well as a few employees.

In 1934 the former Indian school at Mt. Pleasant was taken over by this institution and became the Mt. Pleasant Home and Training School. In 1937 the name of the Lapeer institution was changed to the Mt. Pleasant Home and Training School. Some patients were transferred to Coldwater State Home and Training School, and the Community Home and Training School, for the Michigan Children's Village and the Division for Mental Defectives at Newberg State School.

In 1950 the Home was transferred to the Department of Public Welfare, under the direction of Dr. A. J. Cooney, medical superintendent of the Lapeer State Home and Training School, who succeeded the late Dr. Fred Hanna in Feb. 15, 1943.


From its beginning, with patient buildings, a patient dining room and a building which housed all of the food services and employees, the Home has until now built the patient's storerooms. At 16 acres of farm land with dairy facilities, a population of 4,950 with 590 employees.

First superintendent was Dr. George Stadler; then Dr. George Garver. Dr. Harley H. Prig, Dr. W. J. Kay, then Dr. R. Foster, present superintendent.

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State Checks
Patient’s Death

Whether negligence on the part of a Lapeer State Home employee caused the death of Catherine Rahaim, 9, who died at the institution Sept. 14, will be determined at a coroner's inquest which will be held here Friday by Dr. H.M. Best, local coroner and Prosecuting Attorney Taylor.

The girl died at the institution hospital after being severely burned while bathing at Cottage 22 where she was an inmate. The young girl had an organic brain disease type and was considered one of the low-grade patients. Her physical condition was considered fairly good prior to being burned. She was incapable of caring for herself and had to have assistance to keep herself clean. Shortly before dinner on Sept. 14, the girl needed attention and Miss Frances Smith, the attendant in charge, drew some warm water and detailed another institution patient who was in the practice of helping care for some of the more helpless patients to attend Catherine. Then Miss Smith left the room. During her absence another patient turned the hot water on in the bathtub and placed Catherine.

See STATE CHECKS—Page 2

58 Head for Beef Sale
Here Oct. 12

Sigler to Talk at Feast for 600
Gorman Toastmaster

Fifty-eight head of cattle—one more than last year—are listed in the Beef Sale catalog now being printed. The seventh annual sale is scheduled for Friday, Oct. 12.

The cattle are divided by breed and sex as follows:

Bulls Female
Angus 3 1
Herd 6 1
M. Shorthorn 3

Kim Sigler, special state prosecutor in the case of an alleged graft and bribery in the legislature, has accepted an invitation to be the principal speaker at the banquet Oct. 11 at the Lapeer State Home.

State Checks

(Continued from page 1)

In the scaling water, the girl was severely burned. She was rushed to the hospital where she was given every attention and care. The patient then died. An investigator, accompanied by a second investigator, the patient was brought to the hospital, where he was treated by a surgeon. The patient then died. An investigator, accompanied by a second investigator, and a pathologist, was present at the death. The patient then died. An investigator, accompanied by a second investigator, and a pathologist, was present at the death. The patient then died. An investigator, accompanied by a second investigator, and a pathologist, was present at the death.

The burns were healing satisfactorily and it was thought she would recover when Friday night she suddenly became much worse and died within a few hours. Dr. H.E. Cooper, medical superintendent at the home, states that in his opinion death was caused from toxemic poisoning resulting from absorption following the burns. The girl was burned on the lower third of her legs and up to her hips in back.

A post mortem was performed Saturday by Dr. Lahr, eminent pathologist. His report awaits laboratory tests.

Dr. Cooper states that it is the practice in all the cottages to have patients help attendants in their work. Without this inmate help it would be necessary to double the staff. Dr. Cooper states this work helps keep some of the patients busy and is decidedly beneficial to them.
Oakdale in the Newspapers
County Press, September 26, 1945 - County Press, October 10 and 24, 1945

Blame Death On Shortage Of Employees

Jury's Decision Awaits Report of Medical Examiner

Testimony of attendants and officials of the Lapeer State Home indicates that one part of an employee was not responsible for the death of Catherine Rahaim, 14-year-old State Home patient.

A jury, impaneled by J. M. Best, coroner heard the testimony Friday and adjourned until Monday to await the report of a medical examiner.

Attendants corroborated the story told by Dr. R. E. Cooper, medical superintendent, and his assistant, Dr. A. H. Bixby, of the understaffed condition of the home. The institution is short 58 attendants under the state quota. Dr. Cooper said 100 more are needed.

The patient's death occurred Sept. 5 when a fifteen-year-old patient placed her in a bath tub and scalded her with hot water. Only one attendant was on duty at the time. The other had gone to the laundry a quarter of a mile away in another building.

Shortly before dinner on Sept. 5 the third attendant, the patient's opposite, the attendant drew some warm water for a bath.

At that time a maid in another part of the ward turned on the faucet, pouring warm water over the floor, and the attendant left the bathroom to attend to the matter. It was not until the patient was gone that another patient turned the scalding water on the patient who was about to be bathed.

The ward, housing 45 children, was cared for by two attendants in the absence of the other attendant.

The State Mental Health Commission yesterday ordered precautionary measures taken at the Lapeer State Home and the Lapeer State Home Training School as the result of the death of the Rahaim child.

The commission instructed the hospital superintendent to install a system of looking hot water outlets so that only authorized persons could use them.

Term Death At the Home Accidental

Employee Calls Dismissal Unjust; Denies Negligence

The death, Sept. 14, of Catherine Rahaim, 14, Lapeer state Home patient, was caused by toxicemia poisoning from burns. A coroner's jury decided Wednesday after the report of the post mortem was made. The report was signed by Fred Bentley, George Bell, William J. Vail, Lewis Burt, F. C. Boylan and Fred Shephard.

The jury, impaneled by Dr. J. M. Best, heard two weeks ago how the patient was left in the bathroom while another patient came into the room and placed the child in a tub of scalding water. Shortage of employees was blamed and the attendant who was alone in the ward was accused of all blame.

Another attendant, Miss Frances Smith, was discharged, however. Her termination of employment notice stated: "The case at an inquest revealed that she was negligent in carrying out the rules and regulations for patient care."

Miss Smith, in a statement to the County Press this morning, said she was eating her dinner when the accident occurred. She said she left to eat on her regular, authorized time and only after she had been properly relieved and after she had notified the other attendant that she was leaving. She said she ate each day at this time and that she returned within the authorized time. The coroner's jury, she maintained, absolved her of blame and she was at a loss to explain the dismissal.

Explaining the discharge, State Home medical superintendent Dr. R. E. Cooper said Miss Smith, in her statement, had left the patient in the bathroom and had not informed the other attendant of the fact. He said he was not concerned with whether or not this was a criminal negligence, but it was a violation of institutional regulations.

Ask Home To Reinstate Worker

Union Petitions For Civil Service Commission Hearing

Reinstatement of Miss Frances Smith, discharged from the State Home after the death of a patient Sept. 5, has been demanded by the Home local of the State, County and Municipal Workers of America.

Miss Smith was discharged on the grounds she violated Home rules in caring for the patient, Catherine Rahaim, 14, who was scalded by another patient. Her termination of employment notice stated: "The case at an inquest revealed that she was negligent in carrying out the rules and regulations for patient care."

The union points out that the coroner's jury termed the death accidental. Dr. R. E. Cooper, State Home medical superintendent, said the jury only determined that Miss Smith was not guilty of criminal negligence. He said she was discharged because she violated institutional regulations when she left the patient without notifying the other attendant.

The union stated the scalding occurred after Miss Smith had left to eat on her regular, authorized time and that the other attendant was in the ward when she left. They say it has never been customary to formally notify the other attendant upon leaving the ward at authorized hours. The patient had been left in the bathroom but not in the bathtub.

The union has petitioned the Civil Service Commission for a hearing of the case. No date has been set by the commission. Miss Smith is not a union member.

Individual union members feel that Miss Smith has been made a "goat," because this was the second death in the same hospital within 12 months and some action had to be taken. They point out that testimony at the inquest revealed the patient's guilt of the scalding had a short time previously shown another patient out of a window and had been guilty of other dangerous actions. They state this type of patient cannot be controlled by the understaffed institution and should have been confined by Home officials.
Oakdale in the Newspapers

Many Changes at State Home

New teachers replacing those resigned from the staff of the Lapeer State Home & Training School are: Mrs. Myrtle C. Underwood, who will teach advanced academic classes. She has been an employee at the institution for some time.

Mrs. Eliza Bosch, Lapeer, who will teach intermediate academic subjects. She taught at the institution before her marriage.

Miss Ethel Bean, former teacher at Kalamazoo State Hospital, will teach in the fine arts department.

Miss Virginia Maguire, with 25 years experience teaching public schools, will teach art.

Mrs. Rosetta Coates, Lapeer, with 20 years experience teaching rural schools, will teach music.

Mrs. Julia P. Bean, former teacher at Lapeer State Hospital, has been employed at the institution.

Helen Mur will teach hand, coming here from Marquette prison where he was a bandmaster last summer.

Bob Powell will teach physical education; he, too, is a former employee.

Mrs. Marie McPherson, Lapeer, will teach in the Occupational Therapy program. For many years she has had close contact with young people and is well equipped to handle this work.

Andrew Eppler will have charge of the print shop this year.

Members of the teaching staff who have taught previously at the institution are: Dr. Dudley A. Roberts, acting director of education; Victor Prather, principal; Mrs. Geneva McKee, secretary; Miss Jean Bentley, sewing; Miss Anna MacKintosh, beginning academic; Miss Helen Dobson, pre-primer; Mrs. Fay Kruger, music; Miss Helen Jacobsen, industrial art; Mrs. Lennex Cottle, handwriting; Mrs. Florence Hummel, home arts; E. R. Dunlap, manual training; Mrs. Ellen Chase, occupational therapy; Mrs. Mary Ritchie, kindergarten and social relations; Larry Knutson, boys’ carpenter shop.

The following teachers at the Lapeer State Home and Training School have resigned: Miss Alma Nichols, principal for 15 years, resigned and now working in the same capacity at Caro State Hospital.

Mrs. Mabel Muselman, art director for 11 years, has gone to her home on Lake Huron.

Mrs. Arlene Lockwood, kindergarten teacher for 12 years, has left her home in Lapeer.

Peter Gifford, operator of the wing room for 14 years, retired and is at his home near Lapeer.

Mrs. Alma Schemek, for 10 years a member of the teaching staff, has gone to California to teach.

Her husband, Richard Schemek, and her daughter, Suzanne, accompanied her.

Mrs. Nora Culver, teacher since 1918, has retired to her farm at Lawrence where she will care for her husband, who has been in ill health for some time.

Mrs. M. O. G. O. Supernaut, sense training and kindergarten teacher for 25 years, resigned, and is at her home in Lapeer.

Mrs. Hazel Delaney, 14 years, physical education teacher, resigned to be with her family in her home in Lapeer.

Miss Hazel Barnett, academic teacher for two years, plans to teach nearer her home in Missouri.

Miss Maida Steinbich, speech teacher, has accepted a position in Chicago.

Stella Hillig, Jr., has completed a year as teacher of boys’ physical education and has enrolled in Albion College to continue his education.

Victor Prather, former bar leader of the Lapeer State Home and Training School, has taken over Miss Nickels’ position principal.
Oakdale in the Newspapers

41 Years of Service

DR. WILSON TO RETIRE FROM STATE HOME STAFF

By Lillian Redmond

After 41 years as a member of the medical staff of the Lapeer State Home & Training School, Dr. Mille E. Wilson will retire on April 30, and will leave Lapeer to make her home with a friend, Miss Gladys Wagner, at Plainwell, Michigan.

She was born in Rochester, Michigan, the daughter of Dr. Jesse E. and Mrs. Sue Wilson. Dr. Jesse E. Wilson had a twin brother, Dr. Jerry Wilson were well known physicians and surgeons for many years in Rochester and Dr. Jesse was in active practice when he died at the age of 85. Dr. Jerry died in his early seventies.

Dr. Mille E. Wilson was graduated from Rochester high school and her father presented her with her diploma. She also attended school in St. Thomas, Ontario, where she lived with relatives for a time. Later she attended Lombard University at Galesburg, Illinois. She was graduated from the Michigan College of Medicine and Surgery in Detroit.

Following her graduation, she was resident physician in a Detroit hospital for a time, returning to Rochester to assist her father after her uncle's death. She later returned to Detroit and established a private practice in the Tuller Hotel.

The late J. R. Johnson of Lapeer, Dr. N. R. Gilbert of Bay City and M. J. Murphy, who comprised the board of members of the then Michigan Home for Feeble-minded and Epileptic asked her to join the medical staff of the institution. She accepted the offer and assumed her duties in Lapeer on January 3, 1907 and has been here continuously since that time.

There were 900 patients and about 100 employees at the institution when Dr. Wilson came here. Nine buildings housed the patients. Today there are 5,000 patients and 250 employees with 45 buildings housing patients.

Her first medical superintendent was the late Dr. George L. Chamberlain, who died two years ago in California.

The only employee who was at the institution when Dr. Wilson came to Lapeer and who is still employed, is Roy Bentley, who is superintendent of maintenance.

Dr. Wilson smiled as she remarked that there wasn't a job on the grounds that she has not done during her years of service. Just a few of these jobs were handling all incoming and outgoing patients mail, planning all parties, making Christmas lists and one year she attended twenty-three Christmas parties throughout the institution.

Said Dr. Wilson, "the big thing in this place in the spirit of doing for others. You just cannot be here very long before you find yourself doing something for these children. They have a keen sense of fairness and their devotion has been a source of great satisfaction to me. They know I have always fought for their interests and tried in every way to better their condition."

After retirement Dr. Wilson plans to do just a few of the things she has always wanted to do. She loves the out of doors and has a cottage near a lake in Northern Michigan where she plans to spend her summers. "Just think," said Dr. Wilson, "I have never had a summer vacation since I was a kid in school; probably will not know how to act."

Distinctly an individualist, Dr. Wilson has done a number of interesting things in her life. She was one of the first, if not the first, woman driver of an automobile in Lapeer county; she attends the Episcopal church but is not a member of any club. Five years ago she went to Bishop Airport in Flint and learned to fly an airplane, securing her student license and soloing.

She has a number of priceless antiques, including a hand-carved mahogany settle and several chairs; mahogany console table, a breathtakingly beautiful six-piece silver tea service, Bohemian glass decanters and vases, filmy lace shawls and an oil painting of her father, which she prize most of all. All these treasures are family heirlooms and very precious to the good doctor.

After living on a schedule for 41 years, being on duty every morning at 8 o'clock, Dr. Wilson is a bit fearful of having all this spare time on her hands but plans to exercise her motorboat up at the lake and just see how many fish she can catch.

Her many friends in Lapeer will miss her and hope she will make many visits back here.
This plaque honoring Dr. Harley A. Haynes, director-emeritus of University hospital, Ann Arbor, has been placed in the foyer of the hospital. Dr. Haynes was director of the hospital from 1924 until his retirement in 1945. He was assistant medical superintendent at the Lapeer State Home from 1907 to 1912 and medical superintendent from 1912 to 1924. The plaque was designed by Avard Fairbanks, nationally known sculptor and a former member of the U of M faculty.

Dr. R. W. Cooper has taken over the duties as Medical Superintendent at the Lapeer State Home and Dr. R. L. Dixon who has served there and also at Caro and Mt. Pleasant since the death of Dr. F. R. Hanna, has returned to Caro.

Dr. Cooper took up residence at the Home February 15.
Laier State Home Praised
For Its Care of Patients

May 29, 1946

"It was one night, as I tipped in and saw my husband crying, with the boy on his lap, rocking and crooning a lullaby, tears streaming down his face (I had never seen him cry before), that I made my decision. My child could not know, could not understand, and I knew he'd be happy anywhere if he were treated kindly, but what was this terrible responsibility doing to the man I loved, whose heart was breaking just like mine? His work was failing, so was his health. He looked old. I would have to do something for his sake!"

Shortly after this, my husband and I visited Laier State Home. (Our son is there now.) We went through every building and walked through the grounds. If you haven't already done this, do so by all means. It's a beautiful place, the children (all mentally deficient) play on the playground. They're happy. They're among their own kind. No one to ridicule them or pun on them. Those who are crippled are pushed in wheel chairs. Their smiling faces show that they're happy.

When you walk through the immaculately clean buildings, the hospital and cottages where they live like families, don't expect the same details you have in your own home. There are no percale sheets, hand made lamp shades and lush carpeting. Everything is simple and efficient. Easy to clean so more time can be given to the welfare of your child.

There are more musical activities given them at home, and I have not been trained to deal with such understanding. We could not possibly do for our children what Laier State Home is equipped to do.

They have a chapel on the grounds. They have a library, and I wish I had a room to tell you about their wonderful Christmas programs. The whole family is like a little town all its own. They raise their own food. Those who are capable work in the fields.

Those who are feeble-minded have a keener sense of affection than normal people. They attach themselves to someone and give them the love and care equal to a mother's. An older boy became very fond of my little boy. He follows him and cares for him. His hobby must be photography, because he hands us pictures of our boy when we visit.

I know my son is happy because he is so anxious to get back when we take him for a ride.

Of course, I'll admit that to see these feeble-minded people is not very pleasant. I had no knowledge of such institutions before this happened to me. Frankly, I was appalled. I realized how many other families had heartaches just like mine. We are not alone. There are many right in our own communities we never hear of.

It will be the hardest thing you have ever done to leave her, but I know they'll be kind to her. My boy has been there for years and he looks grand. I have never regretted, though I'd admit the first year without him was torment, but God never gives us a heavier cross to bear than he gives us strength to bear it.

I have had three children since that time, and I'm truly happy. I believe sometimes I understand why I had to go through this. It has given me more understanding and tolerance, a warmer inside glow and thankfulness and appreciation for what I now have.

I hope you will have another child, my dear, as soon as you can after your little girl goes to her new home. The joy they'll
Mrs Merz' Condition Poor
Faces Loss of Sight of Eye
As Result of Knife Attack

Mrs Henry G Merz is still in serious condition at St. Joseph Hospital in Flint with neck wounds received Monday. She was struck in her bed by a woman employee at the Merz home, a mile south of Lapeer.

Hospital attendants said today that her condition was critical. She will lose the sight of the right eye as the result of a knife cut.

The slight chance there may be of saving the eye is practically canceled because it is not possible to operate due to the punctured lung.

Her attacker, Elizabeth Fox, 34-year-old State Home patient, is being held at the Home in absence of a warrant has been held up pending further reports of Mrs Merz condition.

PROSECUTOR Ken Smith said Miss Fox would probably be charged with assault with intent to kill. The maximum penalty in life imprisonment. A psychiatric examination will be given her. It is possible that she may be kept at the Home or if found insane, committed to an institution for criminally insane.

The slight, 120-pound woman had apparently been angered by the showing of June Hamilton, another employee at the Merz home and a former Home patient.

A LITTLE AFTER eight o'clock in the morning, Miss Fox took a kitchen knife from the drawer and went upstairs, where Mrs Merz was sleeping.

Just as she reached the bedside, Mrs Merz began some-thing was wrong and growled. The growl awoke Mrs Merz in time to see the knife plunging at her but too late to move.

The eight-inch blade pierced the lower part of her neck, completely severing the jugular vein. Mrs Merz was pronounced dead.

THE FOX GIRL RAN from the room to find June Hamilton, who was also intended to attack.

Still conscious, Mrs Merz reached the telephone beside her bed and called a neighbor, Mrs Keith McGreggor. Mrs McGreggor said she couldn't understand what Mrs Merz was saying but she knew something was wrong. Running outside, she called to Dr Merz, who was working in the field. Both rushed into the house and found Mrs Merz.

Dr. J. R. McBride, Rome official, Sheriff Mathews and an ambulance were called immediately. Mrs Merz suffered severely from loss of blood and was aided only by the quick work of Dr Merz, Dr McBride, and by rushing her quickly to a hospital.

The attacker did not find her intended victim, June Hamilton, because Miss Hamilton was in the basement feeding a cat.

Elizabeth grabbed Dr Merz's 32- caliber revolver from a drawer and ran down the road Lapeer State Home employees, Jack Dawson, Cass Hancox and Bertha Abbey found her 20 minutes later a mile and a half south of the Merz home.

SHE POINTED the gun at the Home employees momentarily. See STABBING Page 2
Stabbing
(Continued from Page 11)

but then surrendered. Besides the gun, when found she carried a knife which had been purchased a week earlier at a local dime store.

Her statement, published in this issue, is believed by Prosecutor Ken Smith and Sheriff Leslie Mathews to be reasonably accurate.

Dr. A. T. Rehn, State Home superintendent, was unable to explain the crime. "I'm a psychiatrist and I can't figure it out," he said.

ELIZABETH CAME to the institution when 10 years old. She is termed "dull-normal" with an intelligence quotient of 92.

She would have been released many years ago, said Dr. Rehn, except that she had no family and had been ill for several years with tuberculosis. Because of her illness, she had never worked outside the institution until she began working at the Merz home on Sept. 8.

Institution records showed her to be well-behaved, mild-mannered and shy.

A less intelligent patient would probably not have committed the crime, the superintendent said. "Thinner people are less easily aggravated and seldom reach the peak of anger of more intelligent people," he said.

"IT WAS A shocking crime," he commented. "We of course, feel our responsibility, but we cannot find any evidence that would lead anyone to believe she was capable of this.

Of the 14,186 patients that have been committed to the State Home, this is only the third patient who has deliberately attempted to kill. Murder was committed 20 years ago by a patient who escaped from the Home and another murder was committed in 1945 by a paroled patient.

Vern Brown Praises Work Of Dr. R. L. Dixon of Caro

A man who has seen State officials come and go for many, many years is Vern Brown, former lieutenant-governor, former auditor general of Michigan. His words of praise for Dr. R. L. Dixon of Caro, which appeared in the Ingham News, carry a lot of weight. Here is what Mr. Brown said:

After 44 years in public service to the people of Michigan and at the age of 75, Dr. Robert L. Dixon, nationally known and publicly recognized authority on epilepsy, is to retire on October 1. That is to say, he is retiring from State service.

In reality he is not going to retire at all but is going to open an office for private practice in Caro near where is located the State hospital for epileptics over which he has presided as director since its establishment in 1884. The only interruption came in 1920 when he consented to take charge of the Lapeer Home and Training school for a time.

It is men like Doctor Dixon who have elevated the people of the State above our own conception after his graduation he was named by Chase O'Chicago then governor as head of the Michigan department of health.

Later he went to Caro and thus during his whole active medical career he has devoted his services to the field of public health and to the mentally ill. In addition to his duties as superintendent of a large state institution he also took time to act as director of the mental health board of the State for a period.

All of his accomplishments in which he has taken great pride has been his training of others. All of the four who have served as assistant superintendents under his tutelage subsequently became superintendents of state hospitals.

Such public service is little heralded by more money never fully pays for it. It is of such character that the public hears little of it and recognizes its true worth but slightly.

It has been my good fortune to have known Dr. Dixon, rather well since my early days of the legislature. It is a cherished privilege for me to make public recognition of an eminent physician and to pay my respects to one of the most able hospital administrators in the country, one who never lost sight of the needs of the patients entrusted to his care, yet never lost sight of the fact that public money comes from the pockets of the people and is always to be used with discretion and frugality.

Dr. Dixon's public record in all his phases sets a pattern which ought to be emulated.

Dr. Dixon Honored at Caro Dinner

Employees of the Caro State Hospital, along with several from the Lapeer State Home and other friends honored Dr. Robert L. Dixon at a dinner Thursday night at Caro. The occasion was Dr. Dixon's retirement as superintendant of the Caro institution.

Dr. and Mrs. Dixon were presented with eight settings of silver flatware by the Caro employees. On behalf of the Lapeer State Home employees Larry Kratzen presented Dr. Dixon with portable radio. Dr. Dixon was superintendant for seven years.

Kenneth Kerr, steward at Caro, was toastmaster, and responding were Karl Knecht, Caro and Earl Smith. Lapeer former stewards, Dr. A. T. Rehn superintendant of the Laper Home, and Dr. H. B. Zemmer and E. T. White of Lapeer, former members of the State Hospital, Command.
Mrs. Merz
To Lose Eye

Her Condition
Still Critical

The condition of Mrs. Henry G. Merz, who was stabbed by a household employe Oct 3, is some better, but still critical. She will lose her right eye.

Mrs Merz was taken to Harper Hospital, Detroit, Thursday, from Hurley hospital, in Flint. Tuesday she underwent a delicate brain operation, and a blood clot was removed.

Examination by brain specialists revealed a pressure on the brain caused by the knife wound in the eye. Removal of the eye will be necessary, but an operation is not practical at this time.

Mrs H. G. Merz
Has Returned Home

Mrs H. G. Merz, who was stabbed Oct 3, by Elizabeth Fox, has returned home.

Mrs Merz underwent a delicate brain operation and had her right eye removed at Harper hospital, Detroit. No charge has been placed against the girl, pending the outcome of Mrs Merz's injuries. Lapeer State Home officials have charge of the girl.

Dr. H. G. Merz asks that there be no visitors for a few days. Mrs Merz's condition is still serious and she needs rest, the doctor says.

Mrs H. G. Merz
Gaining in Life Fight

Mrs. H. G. Merz, who was stabbed on October 3, is gaining at Harper Hospital, Detroit.

Mrs Merz, butcher-knife victim of a Lapeer State Home patient, regained consciousness over the weekend and is able to talk briefly.

She is beginning to be able to move her right arm and leg, which has been paralyzed until now. Nothing has been done to the eye which will have to be removed when she is stronger.

Recovery Slow for
Mrs Henry Merz

Mrs H. G. Merz is recovering slowly from the knife attack made upon her a month ago by an employee. She is still suffering from shock and effects of the operation, Dr. Merz said. He asks that visitors telephone before coming, as she is able to see only a limited number for short periods.
Oakdale in the Newspapers

Date Unknown, probably mid to late 1940s

HONORS SERVICEMEN—With 850 names inscribed on both sides, an attractive white board, 15x10 feet, servicemen from Lapeer county are being accorded signal honor by the folks back home. The honor roll, constructed under supervision of Larry Knutzen, Almeda Niblock and Edith Schenick, instructors at Lapeer Home and Training school, one in white and black and graced with red and blue "V" insignia, will be one of the highlights in the Victory day float parade in Lapeer Thursday, following which it will have a permanent place on the courthouse lawn. Names will be added as times goes on. The names of Kinnamon John Pittenger, 17, first announced overseas casualty for the county, will be lettered in gold. (Journal Photo.)