Inventory of the Department of Mental Hygiene - Stockton State Hospital Records

Collection number: R320

California State Archives
Office of the Secretary of State
Sacramento, California

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Descriptive Summary
Title: Department of Mental Hygiene - Stockton State Hospital Records
Dates: 1852-1994
Collection number: R320
Creator: Stockton State Hospital, 1851-1853; Insane Asylum of California, 1853-1897; State Commission in Lunacy-Stockton State Hospital, 1897-1921; Department of Institutions-Stockton State Hospital, 1921-1945; Department of Mental Hygiene-Stockton State Hospital; Department of Health-Stockton State Hospital, 1973-1978; Department of Developmental Services-Stockton State Hospital, 1978-1986; Department of Developmental Services-Stockton Developmental Center, 1986-1994
Collection Size: 132 bound volumes, 17 file folders, 247 photographs, 520 photographic negatives, 1554 photographic slides, and 1 audiocassette tape.
Repository: California State Archives
Sacramento, California

Abstract: Stockton State Hospital first opened its doors in 1851, and remained a functioning state hospital until 1995. The records of the Department of Mental Hygiene-Stockton State Hospital cover the years 1852-1994 and consist of over 130 bound volumes, one cubic foot of textual records, and over 2,300 photographic prints, negatives and slides.

Physical location: California State Archives
Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English
Access
While the majority of the records are open for research, any access restrictions are noted in the record series descriptions.

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Preferred Citation
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Acquisition and Custodial History
The California State Archives acquired the Department of Mental Hygiene-Stockton State Hospital Records in a series of transfers according to state law.

Administrative History
Stockton State Hospital first opened its doors in 1851. Established just one year after the California entered the United States, and just a few years after the Gold Rush, state lawmakers worked to create a hospital that would provide general care to the tremendous number of residents that had recently moved into the northern regions of the state. Though
Stockton served as an effective general hospital in its early years, lawmakers soon realized that citizens with mental health concerns also needed proper facilities.

As early as May 1852, the State Legislature ordered Stockton State Hospital to specifically care for the state's mental health patients, in addition to the general patients already under the hospital's care (Chapter 67, Statutes of 1852). One year later, under the supervision of Dr. Robert K. Reid, the hospital's first superintendent, Stockton State Hospital shifted its practices away from general health care and officially became California's first hospital specifically dedicated to mental health practice (Chapter 149, Statutes 1853).

Stockton State Hospital was overseen by a variety of departments during its 143 years as an institution for mental health. The State Commission in Lunacy, established in 1897, originally oversaw Stockton State Hospital (also known as the Insane Asylum of California) until 1921. After 1921, the department designated to oversee state hospitals in California was re-named the Department of Institutions and Stockton State Hospital fell under its jurisdiction (Chapter 610, Statutes of 1921). In 1945, the Department of Institutions became the Department of Mental Hygiene and remained so until 1973 (Chapter 665, Statutes of 1945).

In 1973, the State of California made an attempt to more effectively administer the complex and interrelated programs of physical and mental health and consolidate these programs under one department called the Department of Health (Chapter 1593, Statutes of 1971). This consolidation, unfortunately, proved to be adverse, especially to patients with mental health needs. In 1978, the Department of Health was re-evaluated, then segmented into several smaller and specifically directed departments, including the Department of Mental Health, Department of Developmental Services, Department of Social Services, Department of Health Services, Department of Alcohol and Drug Abuse, and the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (Chapter 1252, Statutes of 1977). At this time, the Stockton State Hospital was placed under the Department of Developmental Services.

In 1986, Stockton State Hospital was renamed the Stockton Developmental Center (Chapter 224, Statutes of 1986) and remained open for ten more years, until the fiscal year of 1995-1996, when it officially closed its doors due to downsizing of the State's Developmental Centers under the Coffelt Settlement Agreement (Governor's Budget, 1996).

**Scope and Content**

The records of the Department of Mental Hygiene-Stockton State Hospital cover the years 1852-1994 and consist of over 130 bound volumes, one cubic foot of textual records, and over 2,300 photographic prints, negatives and slides.

The bound volumes are organized into the following record series: Board of Director Meeting Minutes, Commitment Registers, Patient Indexes, Daily Medical Reports, Discharge/Parole/Patient Death Volumes, Financial Volumes, Dr. Robert K. Reid Medical Journals, and a Map Book of San Joaquin County from 1912. The majority of volumes come from the Patient Index and Commitment Register Series, which are especially relevant to the researcher with an interest in the medical history of individual patients under the care of Stockton State Hospital.

Other record series within the record group include Biennial and Annual Reports, Hospital History Files, Correspondence, Maps, and Newsletters. These records cover the period between 1919 and 1965. The photographs, negatives, and slides within the record group cover the years between approximately 1912 and the 1980s, with the majority of the images coming from the hospital under its identity as the Stockton Developmental Center.

At the time of this writing, most of the images within the Photographs Series are restricted from public research under California Welfare and Institutions Code Section 5328 because they contain confidential patient information. Patient confidentiality laws may also restrict bound and unbound records from this collection.

The researcher with an interest in the history of the mental health profession will find the Department of Mental Hygiene-Stockton State Hospital records particularly useful. Stockton State Hospital has the designation of being California's oldest institution dedicated to mental health. As a result, the records reveal very different medical practices from those currently used within the mental health profession. For example, sterilization of hospital patients often occurred regardless of a patient's mental disposition.

In addition, some of the earliest Stockton State Hospital records document patient delusions, which are often reflective of the time in which they occurred. Within the documents, there are the descriptions of several patients who believe their mental illness to be a result of an adverse reaction to electricity, for example.

The Department of Mental Hygiene-Stockton State Hospital records may also be relevant to the genealogical researcher. Many records reveal a patient's full name, nationality, and home address at the time of institutionalization. The earliest patients to stay at Stockton State Hospital were often born outside of California and outside of the United States. A researcher may trace ancestral history within the State of California through Stockton State Hospital records.

**Accruals**

No further accruals expected.
Related Collections at the California State Archives
Artifacts from the Stockton Developmental Center- Department of Developmental Services. See Accession number 96-03-07.
Dept. of Finance Records
Dept. of Mental Hygiene Records
Dept. of Public Works Records
Dept. of Developmental Services

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.
Mental health
Stockton State Hospital (Calif.)
Mental illness--Treatment

R320.001 Series 1 Board of Director Meeting Minutes 1861-1906
Physical Description: 5 volumes
Arrangement
Arranged chronologically by date.
Scope and Content Note
The Board of Director Meeting Minutes for Stockton State Hospital represents almost 50 years of the hospital's earliest business agenda. Initial members of the Board for the Insane Asylum of California, as the hospital was first known, met on a monthly basis to discuss matters of finance and administration. During these meetings, treasury balances, payroll assessments, awarded contracts, and outgoing bills were often discussed.
In Stockton State Hospital's bill records, a useful summary of early San Joaquin, Sacramento, and San Francisco county business exchange exists. Payments for transportation, goods, and advertisements were made from the hospital to notable companies like Sacramento Stage Line, the California Steam Navigation Company, San Joaquin Brewery, the Sacramento Bee and Union newspapers, the Stockton Evening Herald, and the Alta California newspaper.
The Board of Director Meetings Minutes also describe the election of new officers, the employment of new hospital staff, and the discussion of communications written and read aloud to the board. Some of the more interesting of these communications came from Dr. John F. Morse of Sacramento regarding his positive assessment of the hospital (May 11, 1863) and from several small town sheriffs inquiring about pay-offs for the capture of the hospital's escaped "convicts", as the hospital's patients were once known.
Board of Director Meeting Minute Volumes:
R320.001 (01) Board of Director Meeting Minutes, Aug. 5, 1861- April 10, 1866.
R320.001 (02) Board of Director Meeting Minutes, April 1, 1878- Mar. 10, 1884.
R320.001 (03) Board of Director Meeting Minutes, April 10, 1889- Mar. 8, 1889.
R320.001 (04) Board of Director Meeting Minutes, April 10, 1889- Oct. 22, 1896.
R320.001 (05) Board of Director Meeting Minutes, June 12, 1900- Oct. 10, 1906.
R320.002 Series 2 Commitment Registers 1856-1920

Physical Description: 34 volumes
Arrangement
Arranged numerically by patient number within each volume.
Alternative Form of Materials Available
Due to the fragile condition of the original volumes, researchers are required to access this series on microfilm (MF 8:10(20) - MF8:10(36)).
Scope and Content Note
Stockton State Hospital's commitment registers are especially valuable for researchers who are interested in specific patient histories, as they contain the most detailed descriptions of individual patients. The registers include a commitment date and identification number for each patient, as well as the patient's full name, age, nationality, time lived in California, marital status and "evidence of the presence of insanity". Registers created at the end of the 19th century and after, often included additional details like commitment history, the address of a friend or relative, and instructions in case of death.

Individual patients within these volumes can be located if a commitment date or patient number is known to the researcher, otherwise the volumes should be used in conjunction with the Patient Indexes series (R320.003) which are first arranged chronologically, then roughly alphabetical.

See Appendix A in Master Finding Aid at the California State Archives for specific volume numbers.

R320.014 Series 3 Synopsis of Commitments 1865-1926

Physical Description: 5 volumes
Arrangement
Arranged chronologically by commitment date.
Alternative Form of Materials Available
Due to the fragile condition of the original volumes, researchers are required to access this series on microfilm (MF8:11(21)).

Scope and Content Note
Registers used to summarize information contained in Commitment Registers (see Series 2.). Includes patient number, date of admission, name, nativity, county sent from, age, marital status, occupation, cause of insanity, classification, duration of illness and may include date of death or discharge.

R320.014 (01) Synopsis of Commitments, 1865-1906
R320.014 (02) Synopsis of Commitments, Patient Numbers, 5814-10108. July 1873- June 1887
R320.014 (03) Synopsis of Commitments, Patient Numbers, 10109-14354. July 1887- June 1900
R320.014 (04) Synopsis of Commitments, Patient Numbers, 14355-22574. July 1900- June 1916
R320.014 (05) Synopsis of Commitments, Patient Numbers, 22575-30811. June 1916-Feb.1926
Series 4 Patient Indexes 1852-1969

Physical Description: 30 volumes

Arrangement
The volumes within the series are first arranged by volume title, then chronologically by date, and then alphabetically by patient last name.

Alternative Form of Materials Available
Male Patient Indexes (1852-1955) and Female Patient Indexes (1857-1955) are accessible on microfilm. Due to the fragile condition of the original volumes, researchers are required to access these records on microfilm (MF8:11(18) - MF8:11(20)).

Access Information
Volumes in this series that are less than 75 years old are restricted under California Welfare and Institutions Code Section 5328 because they contain confidential patient information.

Scope and Content Note
Stockton State Hospital's Patient Index series covers a period of over one hundred years. The researcher can find indexes under the names Patient Indexes-Male, Patient Indexes-Female, Supervisor's Register of Patients, Synopsis of Commitments, Admissions Book, Index Book, Record of Operations, or Record of Acute and Chronic Cases. Regardless of name, most Patient Indexes provide the same type of information regarding patient history.

Patient Indexes usually include a patient's full name, hall or ward that the patient was assigned to, the date on which the patient was admitted into the hospital, and any remarks that hospital staff may have recorded regarding patient status (more often than not, this space was used to document a patient's date of death or discharge). Some volumes include a patient identification number. Other volumes include information regarding patient disposition or supposed "cause of insanity".

Along with the previous patient information, Patient Indexes often include a volume and page number. The researcher should use these numbers in conjunction with volumes within the Commitment Registers (R320.002) series.

See Appendix B in Master Finding Aid at the California State Archives for specific volume years and patient number ranges.

Series 5 Daily Medical Reports 1893-1896

Physical Description: 8 volumes

Arrangement
Arranged chronologically by date.

Scope and Content Note
Stockton State Hospital's Daily Medical Reports include three years of patient information as observed by hospital physician A.W. Horisholt. On a day-to-day basis, Dr. Horisholt would evaluate patients, then record his detailed findings within the Daily Medical Report volumes. The most descriptive entries within these volumes can be associated with newly admitted patients. Dr. Horisholt would record the patient's full name, physical description (including identifying features like scars), family and medical history, marital status, place of birth, evidence of mental illness, and medical diagnosis.

Patients already admitted into the hospital would also receive assessment from Dr. Horisholt, but in less detail. Such an entry might only state that a particular patient is "...decidedly better to-day [sic]", however this small bit of information could still be useful to a researcher interested in early mental health practice or genealogical studies.

The majority of volumes within this series contain information on male patients under the care of Stockton State Hospital, however one volume contains information specifically dedicated to female patients (under the care of physician Henry E. Lauderson). This volume's identification number is R320.004(10) and covers April-June 1895.

The researcher should be aware that the first volume within this series (created sometime before July 1893) was not received by the California State Archives.
Series 6 Discharge, Parole, and Patient Death Volumes 1862-1994

Physical Description: 13 volumes

Alternative Form of Materials Available

Register of Deaths (1862-1921) is not restricted and is accessible on microfilm. Due to the fragile condition of the original volumes, researchers are required to access these records on microfilm (MF8:11(19)).

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically by date of discharge, parole, or death.

Access Information

Volumes in this series that are less than 75 years old are restricted under California Welfare and Institutions Code Section 5328 because they contain confidential patient information.

Scope and Content Note

The majority of volumes within the Discharge, Parole, and Patient Death series contain information regarding the movement of patients from Stockton State Hospital. Beyond discharges, paroles, and deaths, other types of patient movements recorded in these volumes include escapes and leave of absences. The series also includes a visitor's register and three volumes pertaining to religious ceremony.

Early death volumes within the series often include information about the burial of patients who have died during their stay at Stockton State Hospital. Volumes created between 1861 and 1897 may include cemetery plot numbers that can be associated with one of two cemeteries that were located on Stockton State Hospital premises. The researcher interested in the history of Stockton State Hospital's cemetery property and the subsequent rezoning of cemetery land will find the Discharge, Parole, and Patient Death Volumes especially useful.

Later death volumes within the series also include information about patient burials at non-Stockton cemetery locations. Through these records, a researcher with an interest in genealogy may discover the cemetery location for an early family member.

See See Appendix C in Master Finding Aid at the California State Archives for a list of volume titles.
Series 7 Biennial/Annual Reports 1867-1961

- **Physical Description:** 7 volumes
- **Arrangement**
  - Arranged chronologically by year.
- **Scope and Content Note**
  - The Biennial Reports series is comprised of small bound reports created every two years for the Governor of California. The series includes volumes from 1867, 1886, 1892, and 1896, and therefore is not inclusive. These small printed booklets include Director's Reports that often provide updates on hospital development and patient care, Treasurer's Reports that include matters of hospital finance, Superintendent's Reports that describe medical data, and statistical tables that detail such information as patient nativity, patient age, patient occupation, supposed cause of insanity, cause of death, etc.
  - The Annual Reports series contains three reports that cover the period between 1958 and 1961. Like the Biennial Reports, the Annual Reports were created for the Governor of the State of California and summarize the administrative policies and medical practice objectives of the hospital. Additionally, the Annual Reports include useful histories of the hospital as well as descriptions of treatment and business services.
  - R320.006 (01) Insane Asylum of California Biennial Reports, 1867.
  - R320.006 (02) Insane Asylum of California Biennial Reports, 1886.
  - R320.006 (03) Insane Asylum of California Biennial Reports, 1892.
  - R320.006 (04) Insane Asylum of California Biennial Reports, 1896.

Series 8 Financial Volumes 1864-1932

- **Physical Description:** 21 volumes
- **Arrangement**
  - Arranged chronologically by date.
- **Scope and Content Note**
  - The Financial Volumes series for Stockton State Hospital includes several different types of financial records. Within this series, the researcher can find payroll records, employee time books, purchase records, patient deposit ledgers, and patient cashbooks that cover a period of almost 70 years. Financial volumes related to staff not only reveal the wide variety of workers employed by the hospital (including secretaries, stenographers, porters, shoemaker, laundresses, waitresses, and chaplains), they also reveal wages and length of employment, as well as terms of discharge.
  - Financial volumes related to hospital patients provide the names of patients as well as a payment history for hospital stay. Along with a charge for hospital care, patients were also charged for laundry service and new clothing.
  - See Appendix D in Master Finding Aid at the California State Archives for a list of volume titles.
Series 9 Dr. Reid's Medical Journals 1850-1856

Physical Description: 5 volumes

Arrangement
Arranged chronologically by date.

Alternative Form of Materials Available
Due to the fragile condition of the original volumes, researchers are required to access this series on microfilm (MF8:10(19).

Scope and Content Note
Included within these journals are a series of short notations about hospital patients under the supervision of Dr. Reid. Volumes one through four in this series run chronologically, starting in 1852 and ending in 1856. The entries include details such as patient name, nationality, and age, as well as mental disposition. A researcher with an interest in a particular hospital patient may find Reid's journals useful. Dr. Robert K. Reid's medical journals do not include private thoughts about the medical profession or details about Reid's role as a physician at Stockton State Hospital.

The fifth volume in the series contains Dr. Reid's Meteorological Observations. Beginning in 1850, Reid recorded daily meteorological observations, including three daily temperature recordings, taken at 8 a.m., 2 p.m., and 8 p.m.. He also recorded cloud, wind, and rain observations, and in 1853, began recording daily barometric pressures. Dr. Robert K. Reid's Meteorological Observations journal continues through 1856.

Series 10 Hospital History Files 1907-1985

Physical Description: 5 file folders and 1 audiocassette tape

Arrangement
Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Access Information
Access to audiovisual material requires the production of use copies.

Scope and Content Note
Stockton State Hospital's History files contain published histories about the psychiatric profession in the late 1800s, as well as a variety of ephemeral materials, like picture postcards from the 1930s. The researcher interested in the history of mental health facilities in California will find the report entitled, "Hospitalization of the Mentally Ill During California's Early Years: 1849-1853" of particular use. Also useful is an early pamphlet produced by the hospital (sometime before the 1960s), which details information about the hospital including its visiting hours, as well as rules about food and clothing, gifts and correspondence, visits, leave of absences, and discharges. The pamphlet also includes a useful section on the treatment programs offered by the hospital.

Stockton State Hospital's History files also include three bound classroom notebooks created in 1919. These small books contain notations created during a ceramics class and a chemistry class and presumably belonged to a hospital patient. Another classroom notebook contains notations from a 1948 German course. These particular materials lack specific details about hospital administration and psychiatric treatment.
Series 11: Correspondence Files 1913-1948

R320.010, Box 1, folders 6-9

Series 11 Correspondence Files 1913-1948

Physical Description: 4 file folders

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Access Information

A number of the records in this series are restricted under California Welfare and Institutions Code Section 5328 because they contain confidential patient information. California State Archives staff should review materials in this series before granting access to its contents.

Scope and Content Note

The Correspondence Files from Stockton State Hospital are comprised of various typed and handwritten letters created in the early 1900s. The series is divided into letters of gratitude, letters regarding commitments and releases, and letters pertaining to clothing requests and patient belongings. It also includes correspondence that is medical in nature.

Stockton State Hospital Patients and their family members authored many of the letters within the Correspondence Files. For the most part, these letters contain positive assessments of individual hospital experience. Though the letters may reveal only one side of a patient’s experience, they may provide the researcher with useful information on first-hand experience.

R320.011, Box 1, folder 10

Series 12 Maps 1912-1974

Physical Description: 1 file folder and 1 volume

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically by date.

Scope and Content Note

Two map books exist within the Stockton State Hospital Maps series. Dr. Asa M. Clark’s map book of San Joaquin County from 1912 is a leather bound volume containing reprints of assessor’s maps of the region surrounding Stockton State Hospital. The map book is useful as a tool for understanding the development of San Joaquin County in the early 1900s, but may be more interesting as a document that once belonged to an early superintendent of the hospital.

The second map book within the Stockton State Hospital's Maps Series is architectural in nature. Created in 1974, it provides more than one hundred pages of "plot plans" or blueprints for a Stockton State Hospital construction project. The blueprints are extensively detailed, containing such data as building square footage, floor plan specifications, and an index of materials used in the construction of each building. The researcher interested in the architecture of Stockton State Hospital or its surrounding grounds will find this map book to be useful. The exact location of Stockton State Hospital's original cemetery is not depicted in this map.
Series 13 Photographs, Negatives, and Slides 1915-1989

Physical Description: 247 photographs, 520 photographic negatives, and 1554 photographic slides

Arrangement
Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Access Information
These images are restricted under California Welfare and Institutions Code Section 5328 because of confidential patient information. Photographs, negatives, and slides within the collection that do not reveal the identity of hospital patients are available for research. California State Archives staff should review materials in this series before granting access to its contents.

Scope and Content Note
The Stockton State Hospital Photographs Series comprises over 2,000 images, created primarily in the 1970s and 1980s. These images are restricted under California Welfare and Institutions Code Section 5328 because of confidential patient information. However, under California Government Code section 12237, after January 1, 2005, all items 75 years old or older that are on deposit in the State Archives shall be accessible to the public. This code section applies to items in the custody of the State Archives and any item deposited in the State Archives after January 1, 2005.

Photographs, negatives, and color transparencies (slides) within the collection that do not reveal the identity of hospital patients are available for research. Folders containing restricted images have been stamped RESTRICTED.

Photographic negatives (Box 2) within the collection range in date from 1963 to 1987. Negatives created in the 1960s are black and white, medium-format in size, and document Stockton State hospital buildings, staff, and patients. Images of patients are restricted because they may reveal confidential patient information. Negatives created in the 1980s are 35mm black and white and color images, and are almost entirely restricted from research at the time of this writing. These images document hospital patients while they picnic, take day-trips, and participate in Special Olympics related activities. Folders containing restricted images have been stamped RESTRICTED.

Color transparencies (slides) (Boxes 3-4) make up the majority of images within Stockton State Hospital's Photographs Series. The slides range in date from 1956 to 1984 and primarily document hospital patients while they recreate outside of hospital grounds. Also documented in these images are Special Olympics competitions, parades, and other social activities. Folders containing restricted images have been stamped RESTRICTED.

Photographic prints (Boxes 5-6) within the collection range in date from 1916 to 1987, and contain such topics as buildings, patients, and staff. The researcher with an interest in the architectural history of Stockton State Hospital can access all photographs of the building, the earliest dating sometime before 1929. The researcher may also access images of hospital staff. Photographs of hospital patients, however, are restricted under California Welfare and Institutions Code Section 5328 because of confidential patient information. Box 5 includes 219 photographic prints taken between 1980-1982 of patients at various events and activities. All photographs in box 5 are restricted because of their subject matter and date.

Box 6 includes photographic prints of the following subjects:
Original Hospital Building, undated: pre-1929. 1 item. Box 6, folder 1
Photographs Buildings, undated: circa 1910-1960. 12 items. Box 6, folder 2
Photographs of Patients, 1970-1989. 50 items. RESTRICTED Box 6, folders 3-6
Photographs of Staff, 1910-1955 6 items. Box 6, folders 7-10
Series 14 Newsletters 1960-1965

Physical Description: 8 file folders
Arrangement
Arranged chronologically by date.
Access Information
Records in this series that are less than 75 years old are restricted under California Welfare and Institutions Code Section 5328 because they contain specific patient names. California State Archives staff should review materials in this series before granting access to its contents.
Scope and Content Note
The Stockton State Hospital Newsletters series contains approximately sixty patient-produced newsletter created in the early 1960s. Created under the motto, "Of the Patients, For the Patients, By the Patients", the Stockton State Hospital Review, as it was known includes patient artwork, poetry, and other types of creative outlets. The newsletters also include information about small hospital events and activities. Announcements about birthday parties, movie nights, and other occasions were made within the patient produced newsletter and provided hospital patients with the day-to-day events taking place within the hospital.