

Tamar Stone

Asylum...Institution...Sanitarium....

Bed project (doll bed) © 2004

Spec Sheet

Metal Bed with chain link mattress support: 14 (W) x 24 1/4" (L) x 10 (H)

Pillow case (*vintage cotton, machine sewn*): 4 1/2" (W) x 7 1/2" (L)

Pillow (*vintage cotton, filled with cotton stuffing, machine sewn*): 4" (W) x 7" (L)

Blanket: (*vintage cotton, machine sewn*) 23" (W) x 32" (L)

Top flat sheet: (*vintage cotton*) 23" (W) x 30 1/4" (L)

Bottom flat sheet: (*vintage cotton muslin*) 21 1/2" (W) x 30 1/4" (L)

Mattress: (*cotton ticking, stuffed cotton batting, hand tied, machine & hand sewn*)

13" (W) x 23 1/4" (L) x 2" (H)

Pillowcase front

Sanitarium...

Pillowcase back

...a place for hysterical women.

Pillow front

Asylum...Institution...

Pillow back

...a place where insanity is made.

Blanket top side

Early on the morning of 18th of June, 1860,
as I arose from my bed,
I saw my husband approaching my door
with two physicians, both members of his
church and of our bible-class....
The trio approached my bed, and
each doctor felt my pulse,
and without asking a single question
both pronounced me insane.
So it seems that in the estimation
of these two M.D.'s
insanity is indicated by the action of the pulse
instead of the mind!
Of course, my pulse was bounding at the time
from excessive fright; and
I ask, what lady of refinement and fine
and tender sensibilities would not have
a quickened pulse by such an untimely, unexpected,
and even outrageous entrance
into her private sleeping room?...

Blanket back side

This is the only medical examination I had.
This was the only trial of *any kind* that
I was allowed to have,
to prove the charge of insanity
brought against me by my husband.
I had no chance of *self defense* whatever....
My husband insisted upon it
that I had not protection in the law,
but himself, and that he was doing by me
just as the laws of the State allow him to do...
but now know it to be sadly true;
for the Statute of Illinois expressly states
that a man may put his wife
into an Insane Asylum
without evidence of insanity.
This law now stands on the 26th page,
Section 10, of the Illinois Statute book,
under the general head of '
Charities'!
The law was passed February 15, 1851.

Elizabeth Parsons Ware Packard

Flat top sheet *front side*

I was condemned
as insane
on the subject of spiritualism...
I claimed the protection
of my personal liberty under the flag
of religious toleration.
Not withstanding all my arguments,
and vigorous resistance,
by fighting single-handed
and alone
my six strong men captors,
for forty-five minutes...

Flat top sheet *back side*

I was finally taken from my sick bed,
bruised and sore
from this brutal assault,
and carried in my undress to the cars,
with the handcuffs dangling at my side,
leaving my little girls screaming
in agony
at this unnatural bereavement
of their tender, loving mother.
And yet,
this is a land of religious freedom!
It may be a land of freedom
for the men,
but I am sure it is not for
the married women!

Tirzah F. Shedd, July 7, 1865

Flat bottom sheet *front side*

This was not my world....The monotony was lulling.
I was quiet and non-thinking for a long time...
you can't get very far trying to rationalize
the workings of a sanitarium for the insane....
I bit the pillow case and
tore it a little with my teeth.
I gave the sheet a pull.... I continued joyously
in a purely infantile revolt....
I gave the sheet a skillful jerk; it, in turn,
gave a grand muslin whistle and nearly halved.
The Head Nurse entered.
A band was slipped over my chest.
My hands were bound;
my feet were tied to the foot of the bed
with a cleverly made noose.
I watched the process with interest.
I did not mind.
It was something new; broke the monotony.
It was a bother to my 'keepers' and
I was in a mood to appreciate that fact.
Jane Hillyer (date unknown, c1920's)

Flat bottom sheet *back side*

I was between two mental patients.
One who laughed all night, and
another who would scream
if you touched her bed.
It was hard not to brush against her sheets
if you moved
'cause the beds are so close together
and I had to be really careful.
I was also across from a heroin addict
who cried and screamed all night.
She was going through cold turkey and
she was really sick,
she was shackled to the bed.

*Dee P., prisoner,
Cook County Jail, 1968*

Mattress *top side*

Mattress *back side*

**“This institution is a branch of the ___ County Jail.
It is known as the ___ Brand Institute for Women**

CONDUCT RULES

(for untried and un-sentenced inmates)

Bed Areas & Bed assignments are made
ONLY by an officer.

Do not change your bed without permission
from the officer.

There are to be **NO** more than three inmates
to a bed area or cell at the same time.

Only two inmates are permitted on one bed
at a time, and both are to be sitting up,
with feet on the floor.

When lying down on your bed, your shoes
must be off.

Do not hang towels, clothing or laundry in
such a way that officers cannot see...

1973

Sanitarium
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