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## History of the Bangor State Arsenal: its Reincarnation as a Convalescent's Home

Elizabeth Hanson

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HISTORY OF THE  
BANGOR STATE ARSENAL





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# HISTORY OF THE BANGOR STATE ARSENAL

ITS REINCARNATION AS A  
CONVALESCENT'S HOME

“I was a stranger and ye took me in”  
. . . “I was sick and ye visited me”

By ELIZABETH HANSON

## DEDICATION

This little book is lovingly dedicated to the poor unfortunates  
whose lives have been clouded by sickness and  
suffering. May they ever have friends  
who will help bear their bur-  
dens is the wish of  
the Author



The proceeds of this book are to be given to help the  
needy sick

## INTRODUCTION

It has been my endeavor in this little book to place before you in condensed form the facts: What more fitting place for a Convalescent Home than the State Arsenal property? where those brave men marched out for the last time to face suffering and death, many of them have left loved ones who need such a home who might never have been obliged to accept charity had those noble men been less brave.

ELIZABETH HANSON



**T**HERE was a petition presented to the Legislature in 1911 for the State to give the State Arsenal Building for a Convalescent Home. The bill was referred to the next Legislature. If a sum could be raised by private charity and thus relieve the State of too great a burden, no doubt but what the next Legislature would be more willing to pass the bill favorably.



"Freely ye give, freely ye receive."

"A friend should bear his friend's infirmities."



## HISTORY OF THE ARSENAL

Asa Davis, Gentleman, and wife, Elizabeth, conveyed to the State of Maine Nov. 13, 1838, lot of land in Bangor, west side of Essex Street, near Samuel Eastman's dwelling house, for four hundred and twenty dollars, thereby making an appropriation for paying the expenses already incurred in the erection of a magazine, shed and fences at the Bangor Arsenal, and for completing the same.

**Resolved**, that there be allowed and granted for the purpose of paying the expenses already incurred in the erection of a shed and fences and for completing the same, the sum of Eight Hundred Dollars, and the acting Quartermaster General shall be accountable for the expenditure thereof. Approved Feb. 19th, 1841.

## REPORT OF 1861

The Arsenal located here became the centre of Military operations, and proved extremely useful through bloody years.

Gen. Hodsdon in his report of 1861, says: "The use and occupation of the State Arsenal and lot at Bangor almost throughout the entire season for rendezvousing and quartering the Second Regiment and numerous squads of recruits and detachments and companies of volunteers."

For this reason and through the careless but natural inter-meddling of the soldiers with the small arms and appendages deposited there, the State has experienced severe loss and damage to its property aside from the injury to the buildings, inseparable from the tumultuous character of the occupation.

### SECOND MAINE IN CAMP

Near the Arsenal on Essex Street, barracks were erected for a portion of the troops, while others slept in the building which was lined along its sides with rude bunks. Each Company had a Company cook, and was supplied with provisions by the State. The officers had as caterer, an old and well known citizen of Bangor, named Murry, who owned for many years a famous restaurant. The men were kept well in hand, and under instructions of capable drill masters made rapid progress.

Adjutant John Reynolds was a proficient military man in those days, and he took charge of nine Companies, while Lieut. Palmer drilled Capt. Emerson's Company.

Few of the men had any idea what was in store for them. Yet they were anxious to learn, having a desire to make a good showing in the large Cities which they expected to visit during their three months tour.

Of course the Camp of the Regiment was an attractive spot, not only to relatives and friends of the volunteers, but for the citizens in general, and the small boy in particular.

Each pleasant day large crowds gathered and watched with much interest the movements of the men, witnessed the drill, and many an admiring glance were given stalwart youths as they sauntered to and fro before their barracks, clad in their smart uniforms. When an officer, dressed in his new suit came down town he at once became the center of an admiring throng, and many of the stay-at-homes envied him. Alas! many of them were never seen again for before that summer had gone their bodies lay in unknown graves, or wasted away in rebel prisons. Not only was the display warlike on Essex Street, but a military ardor prevailed the business and even in domestic circles, men talked war, clamored for haste on the part of the Government, and even in the advertisements in the daily press the war was a prominent feature." "Red, white and blue note paper for sale by E. F. Duren." F. Meinecke headed an ad. "Victory or Death," and "announced that he would sell his stock of Embroidery cheap as he was going to war." T. A. White had bales of "mixed twilled Flannel" for the Army. "Ladies who are disposed to donate handkerchiefs (all linen) and towels, for the use of the volunteers are requested to leave them with the Ladies Sewing Circle over the store of Chas. Hall, 24 Main Street."

Many days did not pass before these came to be of use, for ere three months had passed they were hurled into a mighty battle, a battle of raw recruits, it is true, yet one in which blood flowed freely. Some of the blood that carried with it the life spark and which could not have been checked by all these neat packages of bandages, even had the fair ones who made them in the far northern homes, been there to have applied them.

The morning of May fourteenth was a cloudy one, and the heavy laden banks along the horizon suggested rain; at eight o'clock the Second Maine Regiment, which then as now, held a warm place in the heart of every Bangorian, took up its line of march from Camp Washburn, headed by the Bangor Cornet Band, they with steady steps and proud bearing marched down Essex Street, and into Broadway as far as the First Parish Church, they marched along a line of sad but excited humanity,



although our City was to see other exciting and sad days—days when staid old men rushed through the streets half mad and crying aloud for vengeance; she had never before in her history been so wrought up as on that May fourteenth. The time had come, the war heretofore had been a thing of news brought from a distance by electric current and the mail, but now! the Second Maine Regiment was going, yes, had already started for the front. Would they go into Battle? Would they ever return, and when? These were the questions asked by every thoughtful one. No wonder the people of Bangor were excited, yet little did they dream of the scenes of death and carnage through which their friends were to pass.



## REPORT OF FEBRUARY 19th, 1841

BY GENERAL DILL

At that time there were three State Arsenals, one at Portland, one at Bangor, and one at Bath. The Arsenal at Bath seems to have been given up about 1847 and thereafter the military property of the State not in the possession of the militia companies was kept in the Portland and Bangor Arsenals. During the Civil War both the Portland and Bangor Arsenals were extremely busy depots. For some time after the war the Arsenals at Portland and Bangor were continued in use as military storehouses, but in 1875, the Portland Arsenal was moved from Bramhall Hill (on grounds now occupied by the Maine General Hospital) to a position near the Maine Central Railroad. At this time the Quartermaster General reported that the Portland Arsenal had

been repaired and painted and would answer the immediate purpose of a military storehouse, but being of wood could not be regarded as a safe place of deposit for the more valuable stores belonging to the State. At the same time he said: "The Bangor Arsenal is in very good repair and contains the most important part of the military property now on hand." In 1876, the Legislature authorized the sale of the Portland Arsenal building, but no customer appearing, the building was not sold and property continued to be stored there until 1878. On July ninth of that year the Portland Arsenal building was sold at public auction, the Mayor of Portland being the highest bidder and obtaining the building for the use of the State for the sum of fifty dollars. The stores at this time at Portland were transferred to Bangor and filled the Bangor Arsenal to its full capacity; indeed, the Quartermaster General reported that owing to lack of room at the arsenal he had been unable to call in and store the cannon then in the possession of towns and individuals.

From 1878 to 1889 the Bangor Arsenal was the only military storehouse in the State. In 1889 the State purchased the present campgrounds at Augusta and erected there a military storehouse. From that time to this, practically all serviceable property appertaining to the National Guard of the State and not in the hands of the several organizations has been stored at Augusta and the Bangor Arsenal contains no military arms and equipment of present day pattern.

After the first few years there were but few resolves and those for the salary of the keeper, the sum of \$100 per year was appropriated for the purpose. Mr. Henry R. Cowan holding that position at the present time.

## REPORT OF F. A. PATTERSON

ARCHITECT  
BANGOR, MAINE

I have examined the State Arsenal Building on Essex Street and find it in very poor condition. To put it in condition for permanent use would cost as much if not more than to tear it down and rebuild.

The building is located on ledge, and in order to get a basement, blasting would so weaken the present walls that they would in all probability fall down. In examining the building thoroughly I have concluded that the material in it would best be used by taking it down and use it in rebuilding.

The lumber and slating on roof is worth about what it would cost to tear it down. The brick could be taken down and cleaned, and are worth about \$400. The granite that is in the building is worth about \$150. If the slate were not broken in taking off they are worth about \$70 above the expense of removing them. What lumber is in the building is in a rough state and worth no more than what it would be worth to tear it out and pile it up. There are several smaller buildings on the ground which I was unable to look inside, that might be worth \$75 or \$100. All of the buildings, some loose material laying around there, fencing, etc., could probably be sold or used over, and worth in value from \$800 to \$900.



**D**O the good and benevolent inclined people of the State realize that there is not a convalescent home in the State? Charity in abundance, mission workers overlap in the homes of the very poor. There are working girls' homes and children's homes and play-grounds, old couples' homes and numerous other institutions of a benevolent and philanthropic nature. Why will not some one with means and a philanthropic heart start a fund for this needy charity?

Let us hope with Mr. Carnegie's 'Peace Offering' that the State Arsenal will never be needed, but that the War spirit will be replaced with "Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men."

Every hospital should have a Convalescent Home. The convalescing is half the battle. Boston has several, St. Luke's Home supported by Episcopalians; Sunny Bank Home by the Mass. Homeopathic Hospital; Home at Waverly by Charity from different sources; Home at Milton also; Adam's Nervine, Jamaica Plain, Women's Home, money left by Mr. Adams, Men's Home by Mrs. Adams, no insane cases allowed. Much good is done by all of these homes, the Adam's especially, as working women who have broken down under hard work are kept one year if the case demands.

If a sum could be raised to board the needy sick until a home is established, much good can be done. If individuals would give \$1.00 per year a few could be taken care of, not only patients from hospitals, but any one from homes and elsewhere who have not the means to be well cared for.

There are many cases which would never reach the tubercular stage if right steps were taken, therefore it seems important that such a home were established for people without means who need rest and treatment until they are strong enough to resist the terrible disease. Not only tubercular cases but all worthy cases we hope to reach.

# REPORT OF TUBERCULOSIS SOCIETY

BY DR. WILLIAM C. PETERS, MEDICAL DIRECTOR

The attending physician submits the following report to the Directors and Members of the Bangor Anti-Tuberculosis Association.

This report covers the activity of the class for the year ending with the last meeting, September 23, 1911.

It is impossible to accurately report the work done by the Clinic for its ramifications extend beyond the knowledge of any one person. The work done in any one family may go on as an educational influence throughout a much larger number of people than the few who come under the influence of the persons doing the work. At the Class we have a well defined plan which is somewhat as follows.

The medical history is recorded, also the patient's pulse, temperature and respiration. Examination is made of the nose, throat and chest and the sputum is examined either by the clinician or the State Board of Health. Before leaving the Class the patient is instructed in the use of paper napkins; the necessity of burning all sputum and of keeping his mouth covered when coughing.

A daily journal is kept by the patient in which is recorded the events of his daily life including hours of sleep, amount and kind of food, etc.

On a special card the nurse keeps a record of her visits to the family, including temperature, pulse and general observation. The nurse as a social factor in the home of the Tuberculosis patient is tremendously important. It is not only the patient who receives attention, but other members of the family are directed to their family physician or other medical institutions for such medical aid as seems necessary. Frequently other members of the family are found to have the disease in the incipient form or in a condition which predisposes to Tuberculosis. This is particularly true of children and the Pre-Tuberculosis stage is now a well recognized condition and is especially

common among ill-nourished children in families where the disease already exists.

The larger part of our cases are treated at home under the supervision of the nurse and here the Association is a tremendous factor for public health by reason of the work it does in guarding the rest of the family and the intimate friends from infection.

To show what happens when the nurse does not step in and do this work, we cite the following case. One child in a family of six was known to have Tuberculosis and finally died. Subsequent examination showed but two members of the family to be free from the disease.

During the past year fifty new cases are found to be in a moderately advanced stage, the remaining half being about equally divided between incipient, advanced and Pre-Tubercular. Of the incipient cases, nearly all improved under treatment. The moderately advanced cases usually improve for a time but a longer time must elapse than the Class has existed before accurate data of results in such cases can be compiled. The far advanced cases all grow worse but it is in such cases that the protection of other people is of the utmost importance.

The great need of this Association has been the service of one trained person to devote his or her time to the work. Such a person we now have in Miss Rose who has already begun to organize the work along up-to-date lines.

The one other immediate need of the Association is a local sanatorium or home where incipient and moderately advanced cases may be cared for at an expense of about six dollars a week.

Respectfully submitted,

WILLIAM C. PETERS,

Medical Director.



## REPORT OF THE NURSE FOR THE TUBERCULOSIS SOCIETY

From 1900 to 1909, inclusive, there were 11,556 deaths in Maine from tuberculosis, 9429 being from the pulmonary form of the disease and the remainder from other forms. In Bangor there have been 170 deaths of pulmonary tuberculosis in the same time and 473 deaths from other forms. It is not explained why Bangor has such a high percentage of tuberculosis of other forms than pulmonary compared to that of the State.

Tuberculosis kills its victims at the age when they are most efficient industrially, when the community can least afford to lose them. The following mortality table will illustrate this fact. It gives the deaths in Maine in 1909 of tuberculosis and the ages of the persons who died: From infancy to five years, there were 25 deaths, 10 to 20 years, 98 deaths; 20 to 30, 214; 30 to 40, 168; 40 to 50, 98; 50 to 60, 85; 60 to 70, 77; 70 to 80, 50; over 80, No. stated 1, the total being 830.

## FOOTSTEPS OF ANGELS

By H. W. Longfellow

When the hours of days are numbered,  
And the voices of the night,  
Wakes the better soul that  
Slumbered to a holy calm delight.

Ere the evening lights are lighted,  
And like phantoms grim and tall,  
Shadows from the fitful firelight,  
Dance upon the parlor wall.

Then the forms of the departed  
Enter at the open door.  
The beloved, the true hearted,  
Come to visit me once more.

He, the young and strong,  
Who cherished noble longings  
For the strife, by the wayside  
Fell and perished, weary with  
The march of life.

They, the holy ones and weakly,  
Who the cross of suffering bore,  
Folded their hands so meekly,  
Spake with us on earth no more.

And with them the Being Beauteous,  
Who unto my youth was given,  
More than all else to love me  
And is now a saint in heaven.

With a slow and noiseless footstep  
Comes the messenger divine,  
Takes the vacant chair beside me,  
Lays her gentle hand in mine.

And she sits and gazes at me,  
With those deep and tender eyes,  
Like the stars so still and saintlike,  
Looking downward from the skies.

Uttered not, yet comprehended,  
Is the spirits voiceless prayer,  
Soft rebukes, in blessings ended,  
Breathing from those lips of air.

O! though often depressed and lonely,  
All my fears are laid aside,  
If I but remember only  
Such as these have lived and died.

## WAITING BY THE GATE

### I

Beside a massive gateway built up in years gone by,  
Upon whose top the cloud in eternal shadows lie,  
While streams the evening sunshine on quiet wood and lea,  
I stand and calmly wait till the hinges turn for me.

### II

The tree-tops faintly rustle beneath the breeze's flight,  
A soft and soothing sound, yet it whispers of the night ;  
I hear the wood-thrush piping one mellow descant more,  
And scent the flowers that blow when the heat of day is o'er.

### III

Behold, the portals open, and o'er the threshold, now,  
There steps a weary one with a pale and furrowed brow ;  
His count of years is full, his allotted task is wrought ;  
He passes to his rest from a place that needs him not.

### IV

In sadness then I ponder how quickly fleets the hour  
Of human strength and action, man's courage and his power.  
I muse while still the wood-thrush sings down the golden day,  
And as I look and listen the sadness wears away.

### V

Again the hinges turn, and a youth, departing, throws  
A look of longing backward, and sorrowfully goes ;  
A blooming maid, unbinding the roses from her hair,  
Moves mournfully away from amid the young and fair.

### VI

O glory of our race that so suddenly decays !  
O crimson flush of morning that darkens as we gaze !  
O breath of summer blossoms that on the restless air  
Scatters a moment's sweetness, and flies we know not where !



VII

I grieve for life's bright promise, just shown and then withdrawn ;  
But still the sun shines round me, the evening bird sings on ;  
And I again am soothed, and beside the ancient gate,  
In this soft evening sunlight, I calmly stand and wait.

VIII

Once more the gates are opened ; an infant group go out,  
The sweet smile quenched forever, and stilled the sprightly shout.  
O frail, frail tree of Life, that upon the greensward strows  
Its fair young buds unopened, with every wind that blows !

IX

So come from every region, so enter, side by side,  
The strong and faint of spirit, the meek and men of pride.  
Steps of earth's great and mighty, between those pillars gray,  
And prints of little feet mark the dust along the way.

X

And some approach the threshold whose looks are blank with fear,  
And some whose temples brighten with joy in drawing near,  
As if they saw dear faces, and caught the gracious eye  
Of Him, the sinless Teacher, who came for us to die.

XI

I mark the joy, the terror ; yet these, within my heart,  
Can neither wake the dread nor the longing to depart ;  
And in the sunshine streaming on quiet wood and lea,  
I stand and calmly wait till the hinges turn for me.

*W. C. Bryant.*

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All communications should be addressed to  
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