

## New Willowbrook Buildings To Increase Capacity by 960

Most of the \$5,000,000 appropriated in March, 1952, for an extensive building program at Willowbrook State School today is still waiting to be spent as officials of the Department of Mental Hygiene and state architects continue to study specifications for the new buildings.

The outcome of present negotiations, however, will be the construction of at least five of the most modern infirmary-type buildings in the state, designed explicitly to meet the needs of infant-care at schools for the mentally retarded.

Dr. Harold Berman, director of the school, said it has been agreed that the new buildings, six in all, will be constructed at the north-easterly end of the Willowbrook property, nearest Willowbrook road and Forest Hill road.

Eventual construction of the buildings will bring to 34 the number of permanent buildings in use by the school and will increase the school's capacity by 960. Dr. Berman said the present census is 3,381 and that the new buildings would increase the census to "well over 4,000."

### Space Needed

He added that the demand for additional space in schools such as Willowbrook has increased so that admission is based on "hardship." Enlargement of the faculty, it is believed, would make admissions much easier.

The school official said the new buildings will be H-shaped and will include modifications drawn up during recent months in keeping with

recommendations of Dr. Berman and other school authorities.

Only one of the six new buildings, Dr. Berman said, will be a duplication of present ward-infirmaries on the Willowbrook property. The decision to include one such building was based on a desire to speed actual construction, although no ground breaking date has yet been set.

An innovation of the more modern buildings will be the use of connecting corridors at the ward levels to kitchens, in order to facilitate feeding of patients. The buildings will each house about 160 infants and children in wards featuring playrooms in four areas.

In the center (crossbar of the H-shaped buildings), will be situated offices, pantry and other features to facilitate care within easy proximity of all wards. New modifications, however, are still being studied, Dr. Berman said.

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## Mental Health Society To Use Home as Clinic

Marshall Cottage of the Society for Seamen's Children will be lent to the Staten Island Mental Health Society for use as a mental health clinic, it was announced today.

The announcement was made by Miss Louise H. Irving, president of the society, which has been using Marshall Cottage as a home for children needing special study. The building is at 657 Castleton avenue, West Brighton, adjacent to St. Vincent's Hospital.

An agreement will be signed shortly. It is expected to be for three years.

Dr. Jay T. Wright, president of organization predicted full operation of the clinic by fall.

The mental health group will have complete use of the building, now used to house ten children and two housemothers.

### Teachers' Workshop Set

The primary purpose of the mental health clinic, Dr. Wright said, will be the prevention of mental illness, particularly of children. This will be done in cooperation with parents and teachers.

Teachers' workshops will be conducted in the fall in cooperation with the Board of Education. It is expected that many children requiring professional help will be sent to the clinic.

Psychological service will be provided by Dr. Wright, Dr. Timothy Costello and William Lyles, a vice-president of the society and a psychologist with the Board of Education's Bureau of Child Guidance.

The program of the clinic will be determined by the society's clinical facilities committee, made up of Dr. Samuel Reback, Dr. George Trefousse, Dr. Harold Berman, Dr. Costello, Dr. V. F. Davis and a rotating member from each of the cooperating Island agencies.

Dr. Davis will be medical director, with Dr. Milton H. Horowitz associate director and Dr. Richard M. Silverstein director of education and children's facilities.

### Cites Community Aid

Explaining how the Society for Seamen's Children decided to offer the use of its building, Miss Irving said:

"We believe that agencies should work for the good of the community as a whole, as well as for the specific purpose for which they are chartered.

"Aware of the urgent need on Staten Island for a strong mental health program for children, the society is eager to give the fullest cooperation through the newly organized Mental Health Society to meet this very real community need."

Marshall Cottage was erected in 1925 to care for children needing special study and the experience of living in a group.

The society itself goes back 107 years. It was organized "to give relief and protection to the destitute children of seamen." In the last five years the society has also accepted for care special cases of non-seamen's children. The children are not all orphans.

Originally the society had a large building on its five acres of grounds; it housed more than 100 children.

In 1925 the society, a pioneer in the use of foster home care, took its final step away from institutional care for children. It now has 99 boys and girls in 50 foster homes on the Island. Since its inception, the society has cared for more than 4,600 children.