

Second Section

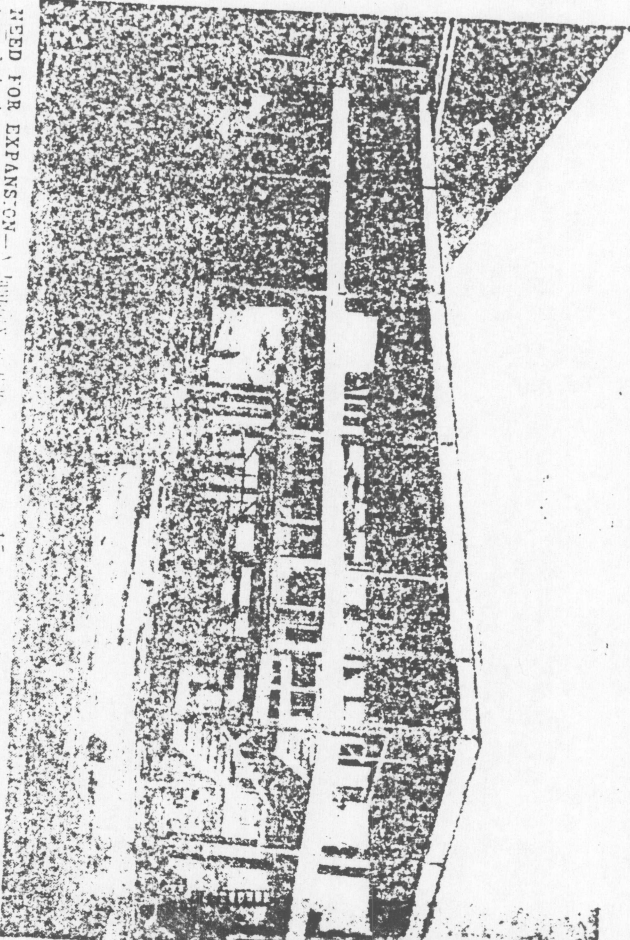
# Statu Island Adventure

Second Section

STATEN ISLAND, N. Y., FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1960

# Willowbrook Grows To Be Nation's Largest

21



NEED FOR EXPANSION—A highway interchange is under way on the east side of the hospital. Willowbrook State Hospital is under way on \$75 million expansion program. The hospital is the largest in the nation.

By IRVIN ENDRESS

Willowbrook State School's \$45 million expansion program in the making for nearly eight years, has made the institution the largest treatment and care center for the mentally retarded in the nation, State Department of Mental Hygiene officials said today.

They said more than 5,700 patients are now on the institution's rolls. The number of employees there has gone over 1,700, making it one of Staten Island's largest employers of employment.

The expansion in patient enrollment has been made possible by construction and use of five additional infirmary buildings, a large kitchen and a new cafeteria on the Willowbrook grounds at a cost to the State of more than \$7 million.

Dr. Harold H. Bernstein, Willowbrook's director, said one of the new infirmaries on recent work has all but eliminated the large waiting list of infant patients. Willowbrook laundry plant, the mental Hygiene Department for several years.

SO SHORT of space have Willowbrook and other such facilities in the State been in recent years that only "handicap cases" have been admitted to care and treatment in state institutions.

Less than 100 children under 15 years of age now are on Willowbrook's waiting list, Dr. Bernstein said.

OTHER work still under way includes expansion of a common patient needs center, remodeling of an annex for psychiatric children, and two other institutions for others who specialize in the care of the mentally retarded.

State now comes near to Willowbrook's size, state officials say. The last expansion, planned for years before, was set into motion with an initial \$5 million appropriation in 1952, which has a patient enrollment state appropriation in 1962.

Although the infirmary buildings now have been put to use, other major construction and modernization continue at the island facility.

Still under construction is a huge \$750,000 addition to the Willowbrook laundry plant. The addition is expected to be completed late next year.

The new structures came into existence after several years of fact-finding studies by state architects working with specialists laid down by psychiatrists and other mental health experts.

The last expansion, planned for years before, was set into motion with an initial \$5 million appropriation in 1952, which has a patient enrollment state appropriation in 1962.