

SEVEN DAYS IN THE MADHOUSE!

Reporter Takes Kankakee 'Water Cure'

The ever-increasing problem of caring for the unfortunate insane as wards of the state of Illinois is little known to the public. To ascertain conditions, Frank Smith, TIMES reporter, former college football player and life guard who tips the scale at 200 pounds, was asked to do this series of articles. In addition to interviewing officials and other persons interested in the problem, he undertook to spend

a week as an inmate of the state hospital at Kankakee.

The story of his experiences and the statistics and other data he has secured should prove of interest to every citizen in the state as it is unfolded day by day during the next few weeks in the DAILY TIMES.

—THE EDITORS.

By Frank Smith

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Fifteen hours in a tub of dirty flowing river water.

Fifteen hours soaking in the turbid, unfiltered, unsterilized mud wash of the Kankakee river, while pleas for anti-septic to protect open wounds on my hands and arms, sustained in my struggle with attendants, went unheeded.

Fifteen hours watching violent patients wander about the hydrotherapy ward, until, captured, they were wrapped mummy-fashion in wet sheets and blankets, or tied in tubs like myself. Worst of all, a stomach-retching spectacle of sadistic brutality.

Awakens in 'Prison Tub' as If from Bad Dream

Consciousness, the dull half-light of understanding, returned to me dimly, as though I were awakening from a dream. Voices beat against my ears, music lulled me, before I opened my eyes. My throat throbbled painfully, I had the sensation of floating in warm water.

Eyes opened, I looked about in wonder.



Frank Smith

What was this place?

I tried to turn my head to take in the complete scene. No good. My neck was trapped in a canvas covering that stretched before me, tautly blanketing a bath tub.

So! I was in a bath tub. And tied in. I wriggled my body. It wouldn't wriggle much. My arms weren't free, but I could churn my feet in the water.

I was resting in a sort of hammock that held me up from the bottom of the tub. The water was warm. By stretching my neck I could look down the ward in front of me.

'Mummy' Treatment for Recalcitrants

My tub was partitioned off from other tubs. Beyond my alcove white-coated attendants were carrying a naked patient to a table. It looked like an operating table. Water-soaked sheets dangled over its sides. The struggling patient was tossed onto the table. His arms were slapped down by one attendant, while another straightened out his doubled-up legs. A narrow strip of sheeting was wrapped tightly around the right arm of the recalcitrant madman, by a third "white coat" then pulled across his back and wound about his left arm. That guy was entirely "unarmed" as far as further resistance went. Larger strips were bound around his body, from neck to toes. Blankets made the outer covering and they were

carried away to be shelved on a bed, looking for all the world like an Egyptian mummy with the wrapping pulled from its head. Memory returned while I watched these weird operations. I recalled my efforts to act the part of a violent alcoholic when I had entered Kankakee state hospital. But when had I entered? What time was it now? Daylight still showed above the screened portion of a barred window.

Evidently my act had gone over with a bang. The last memory I had was my gasping cry for mercy as one of the attendants who had hauled me over to the hydro-

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