

The Principle of Family: Race, Religion, and Gender Inside the Friends' Asylum in the Nineteenth Century

When Friends' Asylum for the Relief of Persons Deprived of the Use of their Reason was originally created the founders had certain expectations and ideals for the Asylum. The Asylum was progressive in its treatments in some respects but its initial focus on treating the Quaker community complicated how patients were dealt with in the Asylum. On one hand the Asylum eventually let in people from diverse religions; however, they were initially allowed in out of financial necessity and were thus charged more. There were female patients in the Asylum from the beginning, but it took awhile for the Asylum to hire female doctors. There was one patient of color in the early history of the Asylum but the family of the superintendent's wife had raised her. The Asylum had complicated relationships with patients who were not Quaker white men because they did not fit the expectations for what a patient should be. This continues to hold back the Asylum in its treatment of some people. The way the Friends' Asylum treated women, people of color, and non-Quakers reflect both the beliefs at the time and the original aims of the institution.

Original intent of the Asylum

The purpose of Friends' Asylum was to treat only Quakers and, despite the many non-Quakers being treated there throughout the years, this goal did not appear to explicitly change. Upon the Asylum's founding, the Managers warned of, "the indiscriminate mix, which must occur in large public establishments, of persons of opposite religious sentiments and practices ... [which] was calculated to fix, still

deeper, the melancholy and misanthropic train of ideas;"¹ it was this mixing that Friends Asylum would try to avoid. The mix of different religions in asylums was thought to negatively affect the mental health of Quaker patients. The concern that people who were not the ideal patient made it harder to recover from mental illness effected the treatment of people with different identities within the Asylum. For example, an asylum was formed "with the necessary medical assistance, and wholly under the care and notice of Friends, for the relief and accommodation of persons thus afflicted; including members and professors with us, of every description."² It thus appears, that the asylum was originally open to all people with diverse cases of insanity so long as they were Quakers.

Since the Asylum was intended for a specific type of patient, Isaac Bonsall, the first superintendent at the Asylum, could take "care to develop the principle of the staff and patients as family."³ This meant that moral treatment was important in the asylum, but also the community's shared values, like the Quaker religion, were used create a bond and a motivation for improvement. It also meant that, like many families, only one religion was practiced within the asylum. Religious meetings were also used as part of the moral treatment in the asylum. "The cultivation of religious sentiments and practices was ... a means of promoting self restraint; thus attendance at meeting and regular Bible readings were two devotional practices

¹ *An account of the rise and progress of the asylum proposed to be established near Philadelphia for the relief of persons deprived of the use of their reasons* (Philadelphia, Kimber and Conrad, 1814), 26.

² *An account of the rise and progress of the asylum*, 4.

³ Charles L. Cherry, *A Quiet Haven: Quakers, Moral Treatment, and Asylum Reform* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1989), 151.

utilized.”⁴ The Quakers who ran the asylum thought that the patients would be able to use the restraint encouraged by religion to control their thoughts and behavior. The management hoped that banishment and other forms of moral treatment “would shame the patients into proper conduct and provide incentive for self-discipline.”⁵ Religious meetings could also work as a reward for patients who did behave properly or as a way to inspire control in order to be cured. It is unclear whether the Managers thought any religion could promote the same way of life or only Quakerism, in an environment like the Asylum, could. Either way, Quaker religious activities were thought to be important for self-discipline and treatment, which would ignore non-Quakers who were eventually treated in the Asylum. It would mean that non-Quakers did not have the same privileges and treatment once in the Asylum.

The decision to admit non-Quakers

In 1834 the Contributors to the Friend’s Asylum made the financial decision to admit individuals who were not Friends or professors.⁶ Unfortunately, the discussion surrounding the decision will never be known because the records on the decision were lost in a fire at the Clerk’s house. Since the contributors made the decision we do, however, know that treating non-Quaker patients was a way to raise money for the asylum. The Contributors to the Asylum were responsible for the finances of the Asylum. For example, they were in charge of approving which

⁴ Cherry, *A Quiet Haven*, 149.

⁵ Cherry, *A Quiet Haven*, 152.

⁶ Minutes of the Contributors, 1834, Friends Hospital Records, Quaker and Special Collections, Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania.

buildings were built on the grounds and keeping track of how much was grown on the Asylum's farm. It is telling that the Board of Managers, who were in charge of admitting new patients and supervising new employees, did not make the decision to admit non-Quakers. It indicates that the Asylum was motivated by money to change the Asylum policy and was concerned with the longevity of the Asylum.

The announcement of the decision makes it clear what motivated the Asylum to admit non-Quakers. It says:

The continued deficiency in the receipts from the Board of Patients at the Asylum to meet the unavoidable expenses of the house payments of interest as presented in the report of the Managers again claiming the attention of the Contributors. It was after mature deliberation agreed to allow the managers during the ensuing years to admit such patients not members or professors as they may deem suitable provided that such admission shall in no case exclude any members of our religious society.⁷

The non-Quakers were to fill space, and thus, bring in revenue when Quakers did not fill up the beds. They did not take spaces away from Quakers because the Managers needed to approve patient's admission and could privilege members from the community of Friends. Thus, the Asylum's decision to admit non-Quakers was more complicated than a simple decision to open the doors of Friends Asylum to a larger community.

⁷ Minutes of the Managers, 1834, Friends Hospital Records, Quaker and Special Collections, Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania.

Once the decision to admit non-Quakers was made the Contributors still renewed their permission for the Managers to admit individuals who were not Quakers or professors each year. The decision was made annually because Contributors were hoping the asylum would be financially stable enough to support itself without the extra income from non-Quakers. In 1842 the time seemed to come to stop admitting people of other faiths so the Contributors asked for a statement from the Managers of patients who were members of the Society of Friends and those who were not.⁸ The following year at the meeting the Managers reported that there were 39 patients who were members or professors who paid on average \$4.14 per week and \$161.50 total, while there were 19 patients who were neither a member nor a professor who paid \$6.94 per week on average and a total of \$132.00.⁹ The asylum made more profit per person on the patients who were not Quakers, but weekly Quaker patients brought in more revenue. As a result of the report, it was not until a few years later that the Contributors decided that the asylum no longer needed the extra financial support of patients who were not Quakers.

Despite admitting non-members for just over ten years the Asylum did not want to stray from its original intentions. In 1845 the Contributors “concluded to discontinue the authority hitherto given to admit such patients [non-Quakers] into the asylum.”¹⁰ The decision must have not been the best financially for the Asylum

⁸ Minutes of the Contributors, Third Month, 8th, 1841, Friends Hospital Records, Quaker and Special Collections, Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania.

⁹ Minutes of the Contributors, Third Month, 16th, 1842.

¹⁰ Minutes of the Contributors, Third Month, 10th, 1845.

because the following year the Contributors again gave the Managers permission to admit patients who were not members or professors. The decision to admit individuals who are not members or professors appears to be permanent because the Contributors do not annually grant permission to admit non-Quakers after this point. The lesson in the financial benefit of admitting non-Quaker patients did not mean the Managers saw other benefits to admitting patients of various religions, however.

Religious life for non-Quakers

Patients who were not members of the Society of Friends were mostly treated the same as members or professors once within Friends' Asylum. While this is a good thing in some respects, it also means that the patients did not get to practice their own religions. The non-Quaker patients received the same medical and moral treatments as Quaker patients, but they did not get the same privilege of attending their own religious services. There is no mention of whether or not patients could bring their own bibles or prayer books so they could practice their religion on their own. Instead, if patients wanted to attend any form of religious services they attended Quaker meetings.¹¹ In fact, many non-Quaker patients did go to meetings. William Garrow, an Episcopalian, attended meeting multiple times while at the Friends Asylum and he was not the only one.¹² Many other patients who

¹¹ Quaker first-day (Sunday) Meeting for Worship was open to anyone, not only members or professors. While they could not participate in business decisions, anyone was welcome to attend worship services.

¹² Superintendent's Daybook, First Month, 19th, 1840, Friends Hospital Records, Quaker and Special Collections, Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania.

were not members or professors attended meetings occasionally as well. Perhaps this was because if they wanted to practice any religion at all they had to go to Quaker meetings. This denial of certain privileges to non-Quakers shows that the Asylum's relationship with them is more complicated than just opening their doors.

One patient, who eventually attended meetings, did not appear to enjoy the religious life in the Asylum. In 1840, Susanna Bowie escaped the Asylum and "took the night line of cars for Lancaster, with an expectation of making her way if possible to Bethlehem to join the Moravians."¹³ The Moravians were a Protestant denomination that lived in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania and were very similar to the Quakers. Susanna Bowie entered Friends' Asylum as a Presbyterian, which makes it interesting that she would want to escape to join the Moravians.¹⁴ While we do not really know the reasoning behind Susanna Bowie's escape we can assume that she was dissatisfied with life within the asylum. However, just four months after her escape attempt she started to attend Quaker meetings occasionally.¹⁵ It is surprising that she would attend meetings so soon after running away from the Asylum, but it is possible that Bowie wanted to be a part of the community at the Asylum and felt that attending Meeting was one way of doing so. Perhaps this was the best way for patients to connect with their religions or perhaps patients wanted to learn more about the religious practices of the people who ran the Asylum.

Types of religions within the Asylum

¹³ Superintendent's Daybook, Fourth Month, 21st, 1840.

¹⁴ Minutes and Register of the Committee of Admission, Friends Hospital Records, Quaker and Special Collections, Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania.

¹⁵ Superintendent's Daybook, Eighth Month, 23rd, 1840.

Despite the predominate Quaker religion and moral treatment in the Asylum people of many different faiths sought treatment there. It appears that the Managers of the Asylum did not discriminate when it came to whom they allowed into the Asylum. While Episcopalian and Presbyterian were the most common non- Quaker religions at the Asylum, there were people of many different faiths in the Asylum. The asylum also treated many Menonists, Catholics, and German Baptists or Dunkers. No religion appears to be barred from treatment even though no religion other than Quakerism appears to be practiced at the Asylum either. In 6th month 1853 the first Jewish person was admitted to the Asylum, which means that the Asylum was not just open to other Christian denominations.¹⁶ The diversity of patients within the asylum probably had little to do with the religious acceptance of Quakers considering the selection of asylums and hospitals that were not affiliated with a religion at the time. Instead, it is likely patients from all over the United States and of differing religions sought treatment at the Friends' Asylum because of the unique treatment, which included moral treatment, and because of the reputation of the Asylum.

It is particularly interesting that Jews were admitted into the asylum, considering that they were members a completely different religion. In both 1897 and 1898 there were four Jews who were patients at the asylum. In addition, many of the Jews migrated from Russia or Germany.¹⁷ During this time Philadelphia "became home by 1905 to 100,000 Jews, two-thirds of them from Russia," which

¹⁶ Superintendent's Daybook, Sixth Month, 10th, 1853.

¹⁷ Case Histories, Friends Hospital Records, Quaker and Special Collections, Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania.

could, in part, explain the increase of European Jews in the Asylum in the late 1800s.¹⁸ Unfortunately we do not know a lot about what their experiences were like at the Asylum because the Superintendent stopped keeping detailed records in 1894. Instead, the Daily Records used symbols to keep track of the patient's activities and mental state. Based on the symbols, we do know that the Jews in the Asylum did not participate in religious activities within the Asylum.¹⁹ This could mean that they primarily practiced religion privately or they simply were not able to observe any religion other than Quakerism in the Asylum. The differences in how each religion was treated in the asylum were not as clear as the differences between the opportunities for and treatment of men and women.

Diagnosis based on gender

Women and men in the Friend's Asylum also were not always treated the same as each other in the Asylum. For the most part it appears that male and female patients received equal medical treatment within the Asylum and one gender was not thought to be more susceptible to insanity than the other. However, it is unclear how the Managers viewed patients of different genders within the Asylum. For the most part it appears that male and female patients received the same medical care within the asylum, were admitted at similar rates, and were diagnosed with the

¹⁸ Gary B. Nash, *First City: Philadelphia and the Forging of Historical Memory* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 283.

¹⁹ Daily Record Books, 1907-1909, Friends Hospital Records, Quaker and Special Collections, Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania.

same mental illnesses.²⁰ However, there are some differences in what was listed as men's and women's causes of insanity. Women were much more likely to be admitted due to insanity caused by gynecological issues while men were more likely to be admitted due to insanity caused by intemperance or a lack of restraint normally with alcohol. These issues are fairly separate in the asylum. Obviously, men were not diagnosed with insanity due to gynecological issues but it is rare for women to be admitted due to intemperance. The difference in diagnosis says a lot about what was thought of each gender and traditional gender roles at the time. These beliefs partially explain the different treatment of men and women in the Asylum.

Activities by gender

There were many more differences between the moral treatment that men and women received than are apparent in the medical treatments. In order to catch up with other asylums and attempt to cure more patients the Managers decided to write letters to other asylums seeking out advice on other forms of moral treatment.²¹ One result of this correspondence was the establishment of classes for patients at Friends' Asylum. Originally, the classes were started because the Managers felt that they would help the Asylum be more successful in treating

²⁰ Patricia D'Antonio, *Founding Friends: Families, Staff, and Patients at the Friends Asylum in Early Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia* (Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press, 2006), Appendix B.

²¹ Minutes of the Managers, Seventh Month, 1835, Friends Hospital Records, Quaker and Special Collections, Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania.

mentally ill patients.²² The moral treatment at the Asylum included discussions with the superintendent, employment in a variety of locations in the Asylum and its farm, and religious meetings. Classes were another way to make sure that patients were getting complete treatment that would help them recover to the fullest extent. Often women were the first to be able to participate in these classes that the asylum offered.

In 1890 Dr. Carolyn Ladd Hall, a female doctor and Bryn Mawr College graduate, was hired to be the director of the Asylum's gymnasium. She was responsible for teaching a class for the female patients and female attendants, however it was not until a few months later that a class was created for the male patients.²³ It was typical for asylums to have "lectures or other entertainments in ... gymnasium halls."²⁴ It is unclear what exercises were taught and if it was usual for classes for women to be established first, but it is clear that gymnasium classes were used as a treatment for insanity in many 19th century asylums. It was also common to hold academic lessons in asylums for both male and female patients. Amariah Brigham, the superintendent of the New York State Asylum, even thought "schools should be established in every institution where patients could learn reading, writing, drawing, music, arithmetic, geography, history, philosophy, and the natural

²² Minutes of the Managers, Third Month, 1833.

²³ Minutes of the Corporation, Third Month, 10th, 1890, Friends Hospital Records, Quaker and Special Collections, Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania.

²⁴ Mary de Young, *Encyclopedia of Asylum Therapeutics, 1750-1950s* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2015), 246.

sciences.”²⁵ In 1844 the Friends Asylum followed suit and opened a school, however, the school was just for female patients. It was not until 1847 that the school began to include male patients, once it was observed that there was a “decided advantage to a class of patients for whom it is always difficult to provide sufficient employment or amusement,” to have a school.²⁶ It is unusual that classes for men started years after the classes for women. Perhaps this happened at Friends Asylum because the Managers were willing to be more experimental with the treatment of women. It is interesting that the Asylum was progressive in starting classes for women when it still thought certain activities were gender specific.

Male and female patients in the Asylum participated in different activities outside of classes. The men in the Asylum did “light work in gardening, gathering fruits, and carpentering ... -- and for the women, -- the usual sewing, knitting and similar housework.”²⁷ Women and men’s roles and activities in the asylum are typical of the division roles of other asylums at the time.²⁸ It is interesting that the Friends Asylum followed the other asylums separating out activities that were appropriate for men and women while formally educating women first. It appears that the Friends’ Asylum was progressive in its treatment of women in some ways and not in others. This could be because the beliefs about women during the time

²⁵ Henry M. Hurd, William F. Drewry, Richard Dewey, Charles W. Pilgrim, G. Alder Blumer, and T. J. W. Burgess, *The Institutional Care of the Insane in the United States and Canada* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1916), 236.

²⁶ Minutes of the Managers, Third Month, 8th, 1847.

²⁷ Minutes of the Managers, Third Month, 9th, 1885.

²⁸ Samuel Tuke, *Description of the Retreat, an Institution near York, for Insane Persons of the Society of Friends: Containing an Account of its Origin and Progress, the Modes of Treatment, and a Statement of Cases* (York; 1813).

were changing as well. The Asylum did not appear to tailor medical treatments to specific genders the way it did with classes.

Female Staff

The Asylum was also progressive when it came to hiring female staff. The hiring of female doctors was not common at the time, but the Asylum preferred to hire female attendants. The Managers had “long favored the employment of women as nurses, ward maids, etc., in certain parts of the men’s wards,” but did not hire female doctors for many years after its founding.²⁹ In 1889 the Managers made the decision to hire Dr. Anna Broomall as “gynecologist to the asylum at an annual salary of \$200 which is satisfactory.”³⁰ Dr. Broomall was the first female doctor to work at the asylum and she was in charge of her own department. Dr. Broomall’s life beyond Friends’ Asylum is just as impressive. Born into a Quaker family that encouraged her career, Broomall eventually became the chief resident physician at the Women’s Hospital in Philadelphia while teaching at the Women’s Medical College and opening her own out-patient maternity clinic.³¹ Later, when she worked at the Asylum, she continued to teach obstetrics at the Women’s Medical College. Dr. Broomall accomplished a lot during her career and was able to help many women along the way. She helped to reduce the mortality rate in the Women’s Hospital and

²⁹ *Friends’ Asylum for the Insane: 1813 -1913* (Philadelphia, PA; The John C. Winston Company), 33.

³⁰ Minutes of the Managers, Fourth Month, 1889.

³¹ “Dr. Anna Elizabeth Broomall,” *Changing the Face of Medicine*, https://cfmedicine.nlm.nih.gov/physicians/biography_45.html.

she established her own clinic in order to “improve obstetrical training.”³² As a result, Broomall impacted a lot of women’s lives for the better.

However, the way the Managers treated her is more complicated than hiring the first female doctor. The same year a male assistant physician was hired with an annual salary of \$800.³³ Broomall, who was the head gynecologist, still made less than this assistant physician. It is possible that she had a lower salary in part because she saw fewer patients but she still made a lot less than her male counterparts. Like the female staff who ran some of the classes at the Asylum, Broomall did not interact with the male patients. Staff and patients were separated based on their gender for certain activities, like sewing and gardening, and some medical and moral treatments within the Asylum.

A few years later this changed when the Managers hired Dr. S Elizabeth Winter as assistant physician in the asylum. In 1894 “in accordance with the authority given ... to nominate a woman assistant physician,” the asylum hired Dr. S Elizabeth Winter since “she had been warmly recommended for the post by ... [the] superintendent.”³⁴ It is unclear why the Managers decided to hire a female doctor. As assistant physician Winter’s annual salary was \$700, which is in the same range as her male counterparts.³⁵ However, there is very little record about what it would have been like to be a female doctor in the Asylum. Perhaps the male physicians in

³² “Dr. Anna Elizabeth Broomall,” *Changing the Face of Medicine*, https://cfmedicine.nlm.nih.gov/physicians/biography_45.html.

³³ Minutes of the Managers, Sixth Month, 10th, 1889.

³⁴ Minutes of the Managers, Eleventh Month, 12th, 1894.

³⁵ Minutes of the Managers, Eleventh Month, 12th, 1894.

regarded her as their equal since she was a physician who had more responsibility than any previous woman; perhaps they did not. We do not know how the responsibilities were allocated among the doctors, and if that might shed some light on this question.

There was a division between the male and female staff the way there was between male and female patients. In 1891 the Asylum offered classes in nursing to female attendants. The Managers announced that it “has had under consideration the propriety of establishing a training school, to qualify our attendants and prepare others as nurses for the care of nervous and insane patients.³⁶ After carefully investigating the subject the Managers decided, “on the recommendation of our superintendent, to appoint Florence B. Rowe, ... as head nurse in charge of female attendants.”³⁷ The school was intended to properly train those who were already employed at the Asylum and to prepare other nurses to work elsewhere. It took some time for the school to become official. In 1894 the Asylum opened a formal nursing school. The school consisted of “a course of lectures, two evenings in the week, by Dr. S Elizabeth Winter,” which would later be joined by two other male doctors.³⁸ The opening of the training school for nurses also, interestingly, came with the addition of some male students and teachers.

Originally female staff were only in charge of other female staff and patients. Despite being highly recommended Florence B. Rowe still only had “a general

³⁶ Minutes of the Managers, Third Month, 12th, 1894.

³⁷ Minutes of the Corporation, Third Month, 1891.

³⁸ Minutes of the Managers, First Month, 14th, 1895.

supervision of the female patients and attendants,” instead of all attendants who were being trained at the nursing school.³⁹ It is interesting that a female educator would only be responsible for other females. It is unclear if this is because they thought Florence B. Rowe was not qualified to teach the male attendants or maybe they just believed that men’s and women’s medicine and treatment were very different and thus required completely different doctors. This trend of keeping female staff separate from male patients can be seen in various aspects of life in the Asylum.

The division between men and women in the Asylum went as far up as the Visiting Managers to the Asylum. In other asylums at the time female visitors were “appointed every month, by the Committee, to pay visits to those of their own sex; to converse with them, and to propose to the superintendents, or the Committee, any improvements which may occur to them.”⁴⁰ However, at Friends’ Asylum there were no female Visiting Managers at the time. According to *Friends’ Asylum for the Insane*, the Committee of Contributors considered “the subject of appointing female visitors to the Asylum,” but were “not able to unite in recommending the measure.”⁴¹ It appears that the Friends’ Asylum decided against appointing female visitors, however, the Minutes of the Contributors from this year were lost in a fire and no other records mention this decision. However, it is true that the Friends’ Asylum did not have female visitors unlike other asylums at the time.

³⁹ Minutes of the Corporation, Third Month, 1891.

⁴⁰ Samuel Tuke, *Description of the Retreat, an Institution near York, for Insane Persons of the Society of Friends: Containing an Account of its Origin and Progress, the Modes of Treatment, and a Statement of Cases*, 194.

⁴¹ *Friends’ Asylum for the Insane: 1813 -1913*, 68.

Race in the Asylum

The relationship between the Asylum and people of color was complicated by the time period and the implicit expectation of who should be admitted to the Asylum at the time. This can be seen in the fact that there was only one female patient of color for a very long time and that the staff of color only did certain jobs in the Asylum. It can also be seen because there is very little record of the patient and staff of color as well. There is little interest in Anne Verree, the patient of color, or the tasks and personal lives of the staff of color while there is abundant information on the white patients and staff. This could be because the jobs that the staff of color were doing, which appears to be mostly domestic work, were not considered interesting or a particularly important part of the work of the Asylum. Little is mentioned of the rate of pay or the specific jobs of the staff. There is no mention of the medical treatments Anne Verree received, which is especially stark in comparison with other patients treated at that time. The lack of information that would be interesting now could be because nothing of note to the Managers or the Superintendent or physicians occurred.

Anne Verree's Stay in the Asylum

This is surprising because it is still unusual that the Asylum admitted a woman of color named Annie or Anne Verree in fourth month 1821. She appears to be the first person of color admitted to the Asylum and the only one for quite some time. She was previously staying in the Pennsylvania Hospital for 14 years before being transferred to the Friends' Asylum at Frankford. Her move could have been

because she, too, was a Quaker, a member of the Burlington (NJ) Monthly Meeting, and her family thought a Quaker institution would be a more suitable place for her. Isaac Bonsall, the superintendent of the Asylum at the time, also wrote that Verree “was brought up by my wife’s grandfather and grandmother.”⁴² This indicates that Verree’s family also could have wanted her to be under their care and closer to family. This is especially likely because there is no record of her diagnosis or reason for stay. Her relation to the Asylum could also explain why she was accepted to the Asylum at a time when there were no other patients of color.

Anne Verree also had an unusual stay once she was in the Asylum. When she first arrived at the Asylum she “objected to getting out of the carriage and was very unwilling to stay.”⁴³ She was very hesitant to live in a new place but little is known about why she would not have wanted to be there. While in the Asylum, the superintendent noted that she was “somewhat useful,” in the kitchen.⁴⁴ It appears that she was one of very few female patients who worked in the kitchen. She never appears to make much trouble for the Asylum staff once she arrived there and instead she was actually helpful. Anne Verree’s medical records are quite sparse, lacking the usual details of treatment, and show that she was only “usually noisy,” once in her first three years in the Asylum.⁴⁵ This could mean she had fewer outbursts than many patients, and might be due to her diagnosis. It seems a bit unusual that someone who stayed in the Asylum as many years as Anne Verree did

⁴² Superintendent’s Daybook, Fourth Month, 21st, 1820.

⁴³ Superintendent’s Daybook, Fourth Month, 21st, 1820.

⁴⁴ Superintendent’s Daybook, Second Month, 21st, 1823.

⁴⁵ Medical Registers, Eighth Month, 1820, Friends Hospital Records, Quaker and Special Collections, Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania.

not have more recorded treatments. It is likely that Anne Verree was transferred to the Asylum as a place to live out the rest of her life. She originally entered the Asylum at 70 years old and stayed there until her death 12 years later. The night before she passed away the superintendent remarked that she appeared “to be sinking under the effects of old age.”⁴⁶

Staff of Color

Anne Verree, however, was not the only person of color in the Asylum at the time. The rest were employed as “domestics,” or household workers who would clean and cook, in the Asylum. In November 1823 “Mary a coloured,” arrived at the asylum to take over the duties of another domestic. This likely included work in the kitchen, where Annie Verree was particularly helpful.⁴⁷ It appears that the staff of color did not work as attendants or in roles more associated with the medical aspects of the Asylum, and instead did housework. In terms of staff at the Asylum the staff of color seem to have the least skilled jobs. This shows that even though there was one patient of color in the Asylum people of color were not treated the same as the white people in the Asylum.

Conclusion

The Asylum intended for the patients to be from the Quaker community, which meant that they were primarily white as well. When the Asylum was originally opened slavery was still allowed in the United States, which complicates

⁴⁶ Superintendent’s Daybook, Twelfth Month, 26th, 1832.

⁴⁷ Superintendent’s Daybook, Second Month, 15th, 1823.

the treatment of people of color in the Asylum. Women were also not seen as equal to their male peers at the time; for example, they still could not vote. These factors all, in part, explain why the women, people of color, and non-Quakers did not always receive the same treatment as white Quaker men in the Asylum. It explains why women and men did not both participate in gardening and sewing but there were also female doctors. It explains why people who were not Quaker were admitted only when the Asylum needed financial assistance and why there was only one patient of color for many years. So, while patients of different religions, races, and genders did not receive equal treatment the Friends' Asylum was still progressive relative to other Asylums at the time. The treatment of people with diverse identities would possibly not be up to some of today's standards but was still better than other asylums.