

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HYGIENE

CAMARILLO STATE HOSPITAL

BOX 'A'
CAMARILLO

April 15, 1963

Mrs. Daniel Tolmach
656 Douglas Avenue
Oxnard, California

Dear Jane:

A good size book would result if one were to enumerate all the developments that Dr. Garrett has been a part of and spearheaded since he first came to this hospital in 1937. As you know, Dr. Garrett entered State Service in 1927, but since the Resolution that the Board has asked me to prepare has to do principally with his work at this hospital, I will begin with his arrival as the first Assistant Superintendent of Camarillo State Hospital, in 1937.

When he was appointed to this position by Dr. Thos. W. Hagerty, there were only two other physicians on the staff besides them. When he arrived, construction had been completed only on the front wards of what is now known as the Male Unit. The rest of the wards of the Male Unit were under construction and nothing else that now exists in the way of physical plant at this hospital had even been started: So Dr. Garrett has from the very beginning helped to envision, plan and bring into fruition the forty million dollar plant that now represents the Camarillo State Hospital.

Since this hospital opened in the mid-thirties, just about the time the first major break-through in psychiatry came, heralded by psycho-analysis, insulin shock therapy, convulsive shock therapy, Dr. Garrett, along with Dr. Hagerty, was one of the pioneers in changing the attitude toward the care and treatment of mentally disturbed patients in institutions from one that emphasized custody and security, to one that began to dignify the patient as a person, and by liberalizing the attitudes in caring for patients so that they were given yard privileges, home visits, etc., to an extent that was unheard of before.

As Chief Clinical Officer of this hospital, Dr. Garrett has been instrumental in formulating developments and putting into operation the following developmental steps of modern psychiatric treatment at this hospital: Insulin shock therapy (the first in the State), electro-narcosis therapy (first in the Country), one of the first children's units in the United States; a pioneer in developing a strong Psychiatric Social Service Department and Psychology Department, as part of the therapeutic team of the hospital. In addition, under Dr. Garrett's leadership, Camarillo early developed a sound Psychiatric Nursing Education Department. This hospital, under his direction, is one of the first in California to receive a fully approved three year Residency for psychiatric residency, and during the last ten years was one of the first hospitals in the Department of Mental Hygiene to develop a basic Research Department.

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While all these treatment, training and research activities were being developed under his leadership, the daily admission rate of this hospital kept climbing and climbing until it became one of the very largest in the United States. Although this admission rate continues to be large, the population of this hospital, under Dr. Garrett's direction, has dropped in the last ten years alone from approximately 7200 to now just below 6000.

I could go on and on, Jane, but this may give you enough meat to realize the tremendous accomplishments of Dr. Garrett since he first came to this hospital in 1937; at least I hope it will help.

Sincerely yours,

Louis R. Nash

LOUIS R. NASH, M. D.
SUPERINTENDENT AND
MEDICAL DIRECTOR

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