

UMPIRE OF THE INSANE DANDRIDGE IS A BORN LEADER

In baseball an umpire has the final say on whether a man is out or safe. Harry Dandridge umpires more important decisions — he decides between life and death; between sanity and insanity.

It was no accident when Dandridge, a psychiatric aide at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D.C., was honored recently. He was awarded the title of "Psychiatric Aide of the Year." Dr. Winfred Overholster, superintendent at the hospital, made the presentation which had been approved by the National Association for Mental Health.

Dandridge, a husky man of 25, looks as if he might be a professional fighter. But there the resemblance ends.

He is dedicated to just two things — his family and his work. He possesses an almost uncommon love for his fellow man. His good deeds and devotion to duty are legendary among his co-workers.

Love for his job and pride in what he is doing is what keeps Dandridge and others like him in their chosen field. It certainly isn't the financial reward.

Public officials who, year after year, refuse to recognize the importance of handling our unfortunate insane, keep salaries low.

When he started as a psychiatric trainee, Dandridge made only \$2200 a year. Since promoted, he still makes only about \$3000—much less than he should receive for the responsibility he has.

The salary he receives—far less than he could get in other lines of work—doesn't stop him from doing a top-flight job.

He doesn't believe in the "Snake Pit" type of treatment, a treatment still found in some mental hospitals. He feels strongly that patients can be rehabilitated through kindness better than by abuse and indifference.

When Dr. Francis J. Tartaglino, clinical director said "He is never satisfied with what he has already done, but is always searching for some other means of doing 'a little bit more' for those under his care," he explained why Dandridge is an outstanding psychiatric aide.

Harry Dandridge is employed in Howard Hall which is St. Elizabeth's maximum security ward for criminal cases. Soon after his assignment, Dr. Bernard A. Cruvant, psychiatrist in charge of service for this area of the hospital, was struck by Dandridge's innate qualities of natural leadership, resourcefulness, and zeal in administering to the needs of the patients in his care.

There are about 175 patients in Howard Hall. The population of the hospital is around 7,500. Some of Dandridge's patients are of criminal bent, extremely dangerous and sometimes violent. That is when Dandridge's particular skills and personality are brought into play. His innate kindness, coupled with exceptional physical prowess, enable him to soothe the savage feelings of a potential killer. He has won their respect and affection. They appreciate his kind but firm attitude. They are reassured and calmed by his manifest fearlessness and indifference to personal discomfort in caring for the needs of disturbed and untidy patients. On a number of occasions Dandridge has stepped in to prevent the occurrence of possible tragedy.

His approach to violent patients is such that he handles them without ever producing any injury to the patient.

Here is the official report of one such incident. On a bleak, winter day in a dangerously disturbed ward a delusional patient removed a dagger-shaped piece of glass from a window pane, fashioned a handle for it by wrapping a sock around its

base, and attacked a nurse. Dandridge rushed to the nurse's aid, overpowered and disarmed the patient in such a gentle manner that he sustained no injury, although Dandridge and the nurse were injured.

The report concludes, "It is though (Dandridge's) entire existence had been intended for this heroic act. Without selfless medical men, nurses, attendants, and people like Harry Dandridge, life in a mental hospital can be a literal hell on earth."

GRAND OLD MAN OF ST. LOUIS

In 1863 a boy named Aaron was born in Franklin County, Mississippi. Sixty-three years later, that boy, born a slave, was making a 33,000 mile trip around the world, a junket won after competition with 285 of America's most outstanding race leaders.

Today, at the age of 90, Aaron W. Lloyd serves as receptionist and official greeter at Homer G. Phillips Hospital, St. Louis, a fitting climax to a life spent in serving.

Beloved by patients and staff members, Aaron Lloyd is a picturesque figure about the hospital. He is a man spiritually unmarred by the years of hardship which preceded that 90th birthday.

For time was not always kind to Aaron Lloyd.

The hard, unyielding soil of Mississippi in the 1880's held out no promise to young Aaron.

But the sprawling city of St. Louis did hold out that promise of opportunity.

And Aaron Lloyd went to meet it.

In 1885 he began work as a porter in a sewing machine company in the Mound City. Always in his mind was the resolve not to just live in his chosen community but to become a part of it.

Affiliating himself with the Missouri Knights of Pythias, he later became Grand Chancellor, a position he held for 39 consecutive years. During that time membership increased from 600 to 7,000.

In 1920 Lloyd was a prime factor in the powerful Citizens Liberty

League advocating equal benefits for Negro citizens of St. Louis. Through the efforts of Lloyd and his co-workers Negro citizens of St. Louis obtained their first judge of a Justice of Peace Court, first Negro State Legislator, uniformed police (89 by 1952), and city firemen.

Lloyd holds the distinction of being the first member of his race to serve as a deputy license collector in the old City Hall during Republican Mayor Henry Ziegenheim's administration.

He is also the first Negro to be chosen as a member of the executive board of Local 410, American Federation of Labor, which is composed of employees of all City and County institutions such as hospitals, penal institutions, Civil Courts building and the Municipal Courts.

And that's the story of the Grand Old Man of St. Louis.

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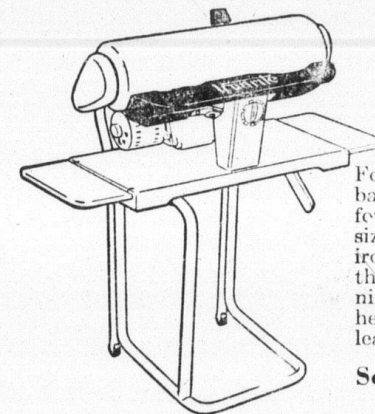
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INDIVIDUAL WINNERS in the Senior Play Grounds were, left to right, front: Bonnie Mancari, Marilyn Snowden, Marilyn Merner, Cathy Becker, Pat O'Connell and Maureen Sheridan. Middle Row: Gerry Snowden, Art Paquet, Danny Fagan, Mike Sharratt and Pat O'Neill. Back Row: Sandra Putherbough, Gerry Fagan, Gerry Anderson and Barry Howson and Ruby McCarthy.

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