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Text Of The Industrial School Investigating Commission's Report

Vergennes Probers Urge Changes At Reformatory

(Continued From Page One).

of child helping that the handling of cases of dependency and neglect is, in most instances, preferably non-institutional. Families, it is stated, should not be broken up for reason of poverty alone.

DISTRIBUTION AND TREATMENT OF PROBLEM CASES.

"(1.) Mental defectives constitute a special problem and should not be imposed upon an institution for delinquents.

"(2.) Dependent and neglected children and many children with wayward tendencies, including truants, can best be handled by non-institutional treatment. In general these cases call for either (a) Family rehabilitation work which improves home conditions and discipline and secures adjustment to the neighborhood and community; or (b) Foster home placements which leave the child in a normal and helpful home and community environment.

"(3.) The following agencies should be available for readjusting attitudes of the wayward, problem and delinquent child.

"(a) THE FAMILY. With the friendly guidance of a family case worker, many families become capable of caring more adequately for their problem children.

"(b) THE COMMUNITY. Since it is desirable, so far as possible, to leave children in normal social relations and surroundings, the community should see to it that schools, recreation and religious life may be needed to supplement the resources of the immediate family. Through a program of family case work procedure can be made for enlisting community facilities to supplement the influence of the immediate family.

"(c) THE STATE AND THE LAW. Communities and governmental jurisdictions should have a suitable program of family case work and child placing, but there remain cases of delinquency for which institutional treatment seems desirable or necessary.

"Where it may be repeated that an adequate program for Foster home care will flown the institutional population. Also that institutional population can be kept lower than otherwise by a discriminating use of probation and parole. Further, by the placing out of children committed, after a period of institutional life, in working, or other foster homes.

"(4). The Foregoing Considerations Imply:

"1. The development of facilities for individual studies of children which will reveal their intelligence level, personality traits and social attitudes.

"2. A more refined system of classification and distribution accordingly. (See Section 3.)

"3. As developed in Section 9, the foregoing also implies an expansion of Field Work.

CLASSIFICATION.

"(a) A more refined classification would make possible the individualized treatment which is necessary to the best handling of problem children.

"2. The testimony presented bears. This would involve a rough distinction of the following classes:

"1. Mental defectives and subnormal; 2. Incorrigibles; 3. Detention cases calling for institutional care; 4. Delinquents who need only the friendly counsel and contact of a family case worker or probation officer; 5. foster home placement; 6. cases for placement in working homes; 7. cases for parole.

"3. There seem also to be cases which might better receive institutional care in a private institution such as Kurn Hattin rather than in a school for delinquents as such. Also there are cases of dependency or dependency or neglect might much better be placed by the state in such a schoolhome as Kurn Hattin, providing a satisfactory co-operative arrangement could be arranged. Such co-operative arrangement might well serve purposes of economy as well as of social policy. The co-operative arrangement existing between the State Department of Public Welfare and Brattleboro retreat in the case of the mentally diseased, suggests the possibility of a similar arrangement as indicated above.

"(b) 1. The present size of cottage groups involves: (a) an increase of disciplinary problems and difficulties; (b) excessive crowding of the dormitories for boys; (c) ensure time activity groups at which activities are too large for one master and, or matron to handle effectively.

"In other words, cottage groups at present are much too large, running above forty (40) and fifty (50) in some cases. Smaller groups, preferably not over twenty-five (25) or thirty (30) at the outside, would permit (a) the forming of groups more homogeneous in age, mental and personal traits, etc.; (b) the development of more personal relations between children and the matters or matrons; (c) a closer approach to normal home life and conditions.

"2. Testimony presented before your committee indicates that in some cases members of the staff have an inadequate knowledge of the individual children coming under their supervision. Such knowledge indispensable to an adequate handling and training of children implies not only small groups and individual studies of children, but also a careful study by masters, matrons and teachers of each individual case. Such study should be made possible by adequate case records of the cases—history and analysis of personality and family background and social history.

"(c) Several witnesses expressed the opinion that certain children, especially those committed for dependency and neglect, are not helped by the school regime and discipline but are frequently harmed by contacts with delinquents; while the more delinquent are more likely to be improved by the school discipline and regime. This testimony emphasizes the importance of:

"1. Not committing dependent and neglected children to an institution for delinquents.

"2. Forming smaller groups and developing a more refined classification based upon individual studies, and

"3. More individualized treatment adjusted to the personal abilities and handicaps of the particular individual concerned.

EDUCATION RATHER THAN COERCIVE MEASURES.

"The primary aim of the State Industrial school should be the training of delinquents in habits, their attitudes, and behavior tendencies. This readjustment of the delinquent in attitude and behavior is primarily a work of education, vocational training and recreational activities. Harsh and severe discipline is not ordinarily effective. Coercive measures are usually less effective than more indirect measures of discipline and training through occupation, education, group activities and the personal contact, friendship and influence of the personal qualities and character.

"In this connection the quality and morale of the staff personnel becomes the critical and decisive factor. It must be recognized that workers with delinquents are confronted by various difficulties. Those due to home background and to personality difficulties, as well as to mental level, are increased at Vergennes by:

"(a) Crowding of the institution; 2. Excessive size of cottage groups; 3. The combining of boys and girls in a single institution.

"Of more decisive importance is the quality and training of personnel. Given a staff of requisite personal character and caliber, as well as of suitable size, and effective leadership and direction by the superintendent, such a staff can maintain conditions in which normal progress will be reduced to a minimum.

"As previously indicated, the staff, to function effectively, must have a thorough knowledge of the individual child, his or her personality-traits, behavior-tendencies, mental level and family and social background.

DISCIPLINE.

"Discipline while requisite should be regarded as incidental to the training and readjustment of attitudes. Such punishment is desirable, the punishment should be severe, not excessively severe or brutal, and should be designed to develop inner controls of motive and interest.

"According to one expert of national prominence—Dr. C. D. Carstens—'Schools that I find of the greatest value are those that fill the lives of the boys and girls with compelling interests, that there is no great amount of time for going off and getting into mischief.'

SOME SUGGESTIONS.

"In the light of these considerations it may be said that adequate leadership and educational, vocational and recreational programs which keep the children busy should relieve the necessity for physical punishment and severe disciplinary measures. The division of the school population into smaller cottage groups would also be very helpful in this connection.

"In line of the testimony presented by numerous witnesses, your committee offers the following suggestions:

"1. In an institution for delinquents some corporal punishment seems inevitable. However, no inmate should be permitted to participate in the corporal punishment of another inmate.

"2. A better system of control of the administering of corporal punishment seems desirable.

"3. The testimony presented before the committee shows: 1. A few cases of corporal punishment of excessive severity. 2. Cases in which such punishment was inflicted by a master under the influence of impatience or of temper. 3. Cases in which there could be no question of a wrong and unscrupulous nature.

"In this testimony and the cases considered lead your committee to the conclusion that certain members of the staff, as recommended under Sections VI and VII, should be removed and others admonished.

"The investigation also suggests the possibility and desirability of a more definite control of disciplinary measures by the superintendent and the chief matron than hitherto exercised in any effective way.

"As previously noted, punishment and discipline should be incidental to training and readjustment of attitudes. Such readjustment should frequently occurring among the school population can be effectively approached only by way of knowledge of the motives and causes inducing such conduct. Since these motives and causes frequently lie in the field of abnormal psychology and personality difficulties, determination of motives and causes requires a psychiatric study and analysis of the individual. The principle involved in such frequently occurring forms of conduct as 'truanting' 'Stealing, lying, pugnacity, truancy, sex deviations and perversions; as well as to personality difficulties and defects as such.

"Testimony before your committee indicated that a high proportion of disciplinary cases develops in consequence of infraction of the rule prohibiting the use of tobacco by inmates. Presumably a more adequate psychiatric knowledge of such children, supplemented by more effective programs of activity and self-expression, would result in a considerable reduction of such infractions connected with tobacco.

"A study of the school population (date 1927) made by representatives of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene in connection with the comprehensive survey of Vermont, suggests that in many instances children have failed to seek medical aid where medical aid was desirable in connection with hypertrophied tonsils, caries and other physical conditions. This is not ordinarily a matter of fault. It may be due to the lack of harsh discipline. This analysis not only suggests harsh undesirable consequences of harsh discipline but the desirability of adequate provision for routine physical examination leading to the detection of physical defects requiring corrective treatment.

IMPROVEMENT OF DISCIPLINE.

"In view of the foregoing suggestions, your committee believes it would seem possible to improve school discipline and reduce the instances of delinquency requiring punishment in the following ways:

"1. Provision for more individual self-expression and the sublimation of sex impulse, through hobbies, music, art and athletics.

"2. Play groups including boys and girls of comparable age and interest, under adequate but not too rigid supervision. It is recognized that such play groups would at first increase involve difficulties for each group. Mixed play groups under suitable supervision would presumably help to reduce certain tensions, as well as certain rule infractions developing under present school conditions.

"3. THE POINT SYSTEM and provisions for good behavior, encouragement of work, co-operative attitude, etc.

"4. THE PRINCIPLE OF DEPRIVATION for delinquents. To quote Dr. Carstens again: 'If there are more opportunities for the boys to repeatedly play that the boys on probation the principle of deprivation can be applied in many instances to take the place of physical punishment.'

"5. ABANDON HAIR CROPPING. The testimony before the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, 1927 study by The National Committee of Mental Hygiene, is to the effect that cropping of hair in many instances, with school children avoiding; eighty-five (85) children not being scrolled. This same study found that the trade training program was not adequate.

"2. VOCATIONAL TRAINING. (a) Shop work; (b) agriculture; (c) home economics.

"In all these lines it would seem possible to develop more extensive and effective programs involving definite training which would facilitate the placing of boys in industry on discharge to meet social living and self-support. It has been suggested that courses of study in co-operation with outside industries, similar to those of the St. Johnsbury and Springfield school systems might be introduced. There are perhaps, however, certain limitations in the vicinity of Vergennes in virtue of which such programs could not be carried out as successfully as those of St. Johnsbury and Springfield.

"3. GROUP RECREATION. The desirability of mixed play groups under adequate supervision has already been remarked on.

"4. HOBBIES. Such hobbies as the building of ship models; developed by Mr. Ford, and similar lines, represent a form of individual self expression and of absorbing or compelling interest which should contribute not only to the occupation of the child in whole some ways but to the reduction of disciplinary incidence and problems.

"4. THE BAND. The band represents a form of individual self expression and of group activity which undoubtedly is of great value to those participating. Orchestral work, glee clubs, etc., would also serve a similar purpose.

"While the band is important, its activity should be fitted in and adjusted to the school program as a whole. In the past it would seem that in too great measure the rest of the program has been adjusted to and organized around the band. There is question as to whether the band should be the dominant factor in the school hours, when many of the children at least should be under school hours.

"6. SEX EDUCATION. The experience of sex deviations and perversions revealed by The National Committee study of 1927 suggests the desirability of provision for sex education which includes physiology and hygiene of sex and also ethical and social aspects. In the case of girls, particularly, it is important to prepare them for normal sex life and for motherhood as duties.

"7. FARM WORK. Farm work, kitchen work, boiler room and firing, etc. Testimony seems to indicate that in some instances hours of duty have been excessive, either because the hours were long or because time thus spent might better be given to school. Your committee doubts the advisability of a night tour of duty for boys under 16 years. There is only in the shift too long but after night work the boy finds it difficult to get normal sleep during the day time.

"8. DISCIPLINE. The desirability of a more effective control of punishment has already been discussed. There should be a clear policy definitely known to the staff and adhered to by all, with adequate provision for personal checkup, action and responsibility in emergencies. Such a policy should be formulated by a staff of suitable caliber and trained institutional morale—i. e.—by a staff of adequate training, experience and personal qualities in desirably close, intimate and friendly relations with the children

FIELD WORKERS.

"The importance of adequate case histories setting forth the family and social background of the child—his school history—his mental level—his personality traits, etc., has already been remarked on. Such case histories are indispensable for a full investigation of a child's home and social history, as well as for certain special examinations referred to.

"Investigation before and supervision after work-placements; maintenance of contact with parole cases; foster home placements; and transfers, involve the services of a field worker.

"The evidence presented makes it clear that the present staff does not meet this requirement for investigations, follow-up work and the preparation of adequate Case Histories. Miss Anderson, who impresses your committee as a competent individual, has a visiting load of one hundred and twenty (120) children. This load represents a policy the added necessity of typing records, and yet Miss Anderson, in addition to doing her field work, is expected to keep and type her own records.

"Since more attention to field work and placing out as substitutes for detention is desirable, and since adequate case histories and records are indispensable to classification and individualized treatment, your committee recommends strongly that one or two additional field workers suitably trained and qualified for such work.

PSYCHIATRIC CLINIC.

"The foregoing discussion has emphasized the importance of personality analysis and study—determination of social attitudes, etc., as essential to an adequate classification and to individualized treatment. It is also valuable as a basis for effective maintenance of contact and follow-up work in parole cases.

"It seems highly desirable to your committee that the facilities of a psychiatric clinic, or at least of a competent psychiatrist or psychologist should be made available to the state school. Such service could, at some points and the houses of correction, might also profit well by the use of such facilities, the cost of establishing a psychiatric clinic would not necessarily be borne by the state industrial school alone. The services and the expenses thereof might well be shared by the several institutions named.

VISITING COMMITTEE.

"In view of testimony presented and in connection with the investigation, your committee recommends that the department of public welfare be authorized to appoint a visiting committee of three (3) members, at least one (1) of whom should be a woman. Such committee should inform itself by personal visitation at least twice a year regarding the policy and working of the school, morale of staff and inmates, and should also offer opportunity for the presenting of complaints by members of the staff or children committed to the institution. Ordinarily the recommendations of such committee should be communicated in duplicate to the superintendent of the school and to the commissioner of public welfare, but in special cases recommendations might be communicated to either of these alone or to the governor if the circumstances seem to warrant such action.

INCORRIGIBLES AND OLDER BOYS.

"Testimony presented by the records of the school indicates a rejuvenile number of transfers to the State Prison at Windsor during the years 1930 to 1935. In this period fifteen (15) boys have been thus transferred at the following ages:

Age 15 years	3 boys
Age 16 "	4 "
Age 17 "	2 "
Age 18 "	4 "
Age 19 "	3 "
Total	15 boys

"If the experience and judgment of penologists is to be accepted, the resultant association of juvenile delinquents with mature criminals threatens to make these boys criminals too.

"In cases of transfer to Windsor are made as a counsel of desperation, these cases of transfer should not be recorded as "discharged" but should be rated and recorded as "transfers." Discharge when effected should mean discharge, not to be discharge by and from the Industrial school.

"In this connection, it may be noted that the incorrigible so-called, frequently corrigible when conditions requisite to suitable discipline and training exist and the staff is of requisite personal caliber and experience.

"The transfer of these boys to the State Prison at Windsor and other evidence indicates clearly a serious gap in the facilities for handling cases between the Vermont Industrial school for boys and the House of Correction which is practically combined with the state prison at Windsor. No suitable provision is made for older boys and for confirmed cases.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS.

"The scope and efficiency of the work and discipline of the Vermont Industrial school depend upon a number of factors among which may be distinguished the following:

"1. The appropriations by the General Assembly for the maintenance and support of the school.

"Your committee recommends that the committees of the General Assembly on state institutions study the school situation in the light of the present recommendations and consider the making of a more adequate appropriation for the industrial school.

"In this connection a minor adjustment seems highly desirable. The present appropriations are inclusive of the allowance from productive enterprises are treated as a general fund of the state. It would seem highly desirable to adjust the state's system of accounting so that there would be an adequate provision for auditing but permitting a refund to the school of its net earnings. Such an adjustment would put a premium upon the development of productive enterprises which have value not only for giving occupation to the inmates but also in connection with their training and vocational education. Under the present scheme of procedure, the school turning its earnings into the general funds, loses the cost of seed, fertilizer, material and labor involved in its productive undertakings.

"2. Material equipment.

"3. FARM. So far as your committee could observe, the school farm represents an adequate basis for farming activities necessary to the production of food supplies and to the occupation and training of inmates.

"(b) BUILDINGS. As earlier noted in this report, there is undesirable crowding in several boys' dormitories and in general the cottage groups are considerably above the optimum size. This condition suggests the desirability of increasing the number of cottages.

"4. THE STAFF. The decisive importance of personnel, their personality traits, experience and training, as well as of organization and morale have all been emphasized in earlier sections.

"4. POLICY AND ORGANIZATION. As earlier sections have indicated, the highest efficiency of the school requires the forming of smaller cottage groups, the development of more individualized treatment, the provision of facilities for psychiatric examination and personality studies and the development of more adequate child placing and parole work.

ORGANIZATION OF PUNISHMENT. Certain possible improvements in school discipline have also been brought out in earlier sections of this report.

"6. PAROLE BOARD. Testimony presented suggested the possibility of forming a parole board which would include members not of the institution staff. Your committee finds that such a parole board should comprise a committee the members of which are drawn from the staff within the institution, including the superintendent, the field workers and such other members as may be considered desirable. Such a parole board should sit as a committee to consider cases of potential parole.

Woodstock Inn Scene of Gay Costume Party

(Special to The Herald.)

WOODSTOCK, Aug. 15.—More than 300 persons, including scores of summer visitors, tonight attended the costume party at the Woodstock Inn. Louis Dalbeck of Boston was master of ceremonies.

Miss Pauline Brown of New York, dressed to represent "Miss West," won the prize for the best costume for women.

The first prize for men went to Raymond Knight of New York, who was dressed as an Argentine cowboy.

Other prizes were awarded as follows:

Best home-designed and made costume, Mrs. Ethel Hall Bryant, Irving, Winter Haven, Fla.; "Girls in flower girl"; men, C. Richard Williams, Woodstock. "The Wood-man"; most humorous, women, Mrs. C. E. McDonald, Woodstock, "Native woman of Haiti"; men, William Dewey, Dewey's Mills. "A Cook's Tourist"; best costume for child under 12, girl, Joan Pearsons, Woodstock, "Mother Hubbard"; boy, Peter Cram, Wayne, Pa., "Le Marquis de LaFayette."

Arthur Wilder, manager of the Woodstock Inn, awarded the prizes. Music was furnished by the Inn orchestra. The judges were A. L. Stearns of Woodstock, Ralph M. Gregory of Greenwich, Conn., and Mrs. Robert Lesher of New York.

SEEKS $5,400,000 REFUNDING ISSUE

MONTPELIER, Aug. 15 (AP).—For the refunding of a bond issue of $5,400,000 was sought from the Vermont Public Service commission today in a petition filed by the Public Service company of New Hampshire, which also operates in this state.

The company seeks to issue mortgage bonds bearing not more than four per cent interest and maturing in not more than 40 years to refund $5,400,000 five per cent bonds maturing November 1, 1934. A hearing will be held August 21 at Montpelier.

The New Hampshire Public Service commission already has granted the authorization.

CHAMPLAIN BRIDGE BILL GOES TO WHITE HOUSE.

WASHINGTON, Aug. 15 (AP).—A Senate bill extending the time for construction of a bridge over Lake Champlain between West Swanton, Vt., and Kane's Point, N. Y., was signed today by the House. It now goes to the White House.

Governor and Commissioner

GOV. C. M. SMITH.

TIMOTHY C. DALE, Head of State Welfare Department.

Patrick J. Dunn of Castleton Dies as Result of Injury

(Special to The Herald.)

CASTLETON, Aug. 15.—An injury, which he received May 26, 1935, when he was struck by an automobile while standing on his lawn on the Rutland road, resulted this morning in the death of Patrick J. Dunn, 27, well-known Castleton resident.

Dunn had been in failing health since the accident, physicians stated. Death was attributed to complication of diseases, which were caused by the accident.

Dunn was born in Poultney, April 7, 1908, a son of the late William and Ann (Delehanty) Dunn, and had been a resident of Castleton for about 30 years.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Catherine Hayes Dunn of Castleton; three sisters, Mrs. Elizabeth T. Brough, Mrs. James H. Marshall and Miss Anna F. Dunn of Poultney; two brothers, William Dunn of Poultney and Charles Dunn of Columbia, Ct., and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services will be held at 9 o'clock Saturday morning at St. Peter's church, Poultney. Rev. J. F. O'Brien, pastor, will celebrate the requiem high mass. Burial will be in the family plot in St. Raphael's cemetery in Poultney.

MEETING HELD BY WALLINGFORD D.A.R.

(Special to The Herald.)

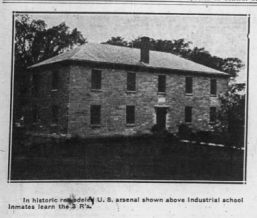
WALLINGFORD, Aug. 15.—Miss Grace Hoyt, of Manchester read an amusing series of monologues written by her sister, Miss Frances Hoyt, at the meeting of Palmetullo chapter, D. A. R., held yesterday afternoon at the home of Mrs. Fluby Shepard.

Mrs. B. C. Batchelder, regent, appointed Mrs. E. N. Edgerton, Mrs. Wilbur Griffith and Mrs. Mary Gilbert Smith, delegates to the state conference and voted to send $25 to the Vermont Children's aid society.

The program was followed by a social hour, during which refreshments were served by the hostess. There were about 30 members and guests present.

BARRE BASEBALL TEAM LEAVES FOR TOURNEY

BARRE, Aug. 15.—The Barre baseball Junior American Legion baseball team, champions, left today for Lynn, Mass., to participate in the New England Legion championships.



In historic remodeling U. S. arsenal shown above Industrial school inmates learn the 3 R's.

Superintendent Howard N. Hanson who has tendered his resignation.

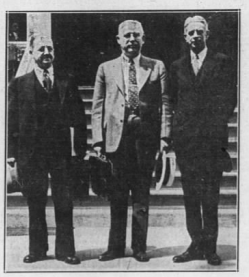
Administration building, which is also superintendent's quarters.

Bandmaster Samuel E. Pollard said to be one of those slated for dismissal.

McDonough cottage, above, is typical of the several buildings where the inmates make their homes.

Herald Photos.

The Governor's Probing Committee



Herald Photo.

Gov. Charles M. Smith's Vergennes Industrial School investigating committee is shown above. Dr. Edward A. Tobin of Bennington, chairman, is in the center, with Dr. Lauren R. Pierce of Woodstock on the left and Professor A. R. Gifford of Burlington, right.

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