

BRANDON TRAINING SCHOOL  
Brandon - Vermont

CONFERENCE held Thursday, January 26, 1956, at the  
Brandon Training School, Superintendent's Office.

Present: Mr. Mehlman, Mr. Russell - Mrs. Spiess, stenographer  
part of the time: Mrs. Harriett G. Edson, Administrative Assistant  
in charge of personnel records  
Miss Irma Hutchins, BTS bookkeeper

Francis W. Russell - Superintendent  
Springfield (Mass.) College '35, B.S. majored in administration of social  
agencies, minored in education and psychology, Master's degree in Education  
in '38

Religious Education work for five years  
Then taught College level in Georgia for one year - Education  
Came North, spent five years as Director of Adult Education in Connecticut  
Invited by Connecticut State Mental Hospital System and spent five years  
as Executive Secretary of the Joint Commission on Mental Hospitals. The  
job consisted of coordinating mental hospitals, training schools, estab-  
lishing joint policies, public relations, interpreting to public what mental  
illness is, educating public to mental illness, dispel bogies, etc. Spent  
a lot of time in clinical staff conferences, clinical meetings with patients, etc.  
Then went to Ring Sanatorium, Arlington, Mass., for five years, as administrator.  
Long established psychiatric center, quite famous in early days, back again  
under present psychiatrist. Management of mental illness, physical plant  
design, design of rooms for the mentally ill, for the disturbed patients -  
one hour clinical staff conference every morning - very broad base of education  
on clinical side.

Mr. Russell

At Brandon 22 months, succeeded Francis Needham, who died of a heart attack.  
Mr. Needham passed on everything, Mr. Russell believes in departmental  
organization, where each department runs itself.

Dr. Brooks

Dr. George W. Brooks, psychiatric consultant at Brandon Training School  
Senior resident physician at Vermont State Hospital, Women's side.  
It is Dr. Brooks who has recommended that no more girls from BTS go to  
the Colony under present regime.  
He is prepared to state so publicly and at a hearing.

Dr. Kelly

Would Dr. Kelly be interested in helping with the case -  
Dr. Kelly now connected with a psychiatric hospital in Canandaigua, New York.  
Might be willing to help, but probably not at his own expense.  
His letters would not be admissible but his testimony would be by way  
of rebuttal.

BTS

BTS consists of: 500 acres of land, 9 dormitories with 547 inmates  
3 major classifications: low, middle and high grade, or  
idiot, imbecile, moron  
2 even groups, male and female, equal size  
staff of 126 on the grounds. Patient help used extensively.  
Patients between five and 21 regularly committed, others by special order  
of the Commissioner, quite regularly done.  
Large farm, gardens, produce share of own needs, older boys work.

We are also concerned about reports, and we will hear your story later -  
stories regarding immoral incidents, comments about the sending of

land Colony

Rutland Colony House is considered another dormitory, more specialized. We check on linen, physical facilities, morale of inmates, their care, place them out when they have finished their training. Colony visited by psychiatrist, psychologist

Katherine M. Dolan, Colony House matron. Was she ever a patient or inmate - mention of being a graduate. Worked here under Dr. Allen - in the service building, ran the kitchen, as a law unto herself, would accept no rules or regulations. Dr. Allan transferred her and his problem to the Rutland Colony House.

Mr. Russell visited the Colony perhaps once every two months. If this is considered not sufficient supervision, explanation is that one got nowhere with her, always going off at a tangent, never staying on the subject. Comment: this cuts both ways, cannot be accused of interfering.

Defense's possible approach: 25 girls leaving the Colony each morning, one lone matron to make out 25 work slips every morning - humanly impossible. Daily work slips in triplicate (with carbons) were designed for Miss Dolan's relief but were not used regularly or in accordance with instructions - a slip a day for each girl, whether or not she worked, slips numbered in sequence. Without a work slip every day, impossible to say if a girl worked or not, if anything was due her or not. No accounting possible without them. Slips in triplicate - one copy to employer, to be signed by employer and returned to Colony, one copy for the Colony, one copy for Brandon.

Miss Dolan runs a fairly large establishment, with no help, except:

Miss Sharkey - former BTS and Colony House inmate. Was given a complete discharge but unable to make it on her own, completely dependent on Miss Dolan. Returned to Colony, was placed on state payroll as a full time employee of the state, grade II, now earns \$44. a week less maintenance charge. So far as state is concerned, she is not retarded, is entitled to full employee rights. She is of benefit and help to Miss Dolan in the line of physical work, completely devoted to her, brain-washed.

Heart of the whole controversy: Purpose of colony is to serve as spring-board for girls who have had training at BTS. Colony provides chance to acquire security in social contact, independence, go out and meet people, stand on their own feet and earn their own living. But Miss Dolan has made herself the center of the girls' life, she is the "mother figure". The girls must have no other interest, allegiance, than Miss Dolan.

Bessie Jerome - inmate, the slavey of the Colony. She mowed the lawn, put up the storm windows, did the hard work around the place. The State paid her \$5. a month for spending money, and had maintenance like any other inmate of BTS.

Large number of girls, the inmates, to help with the housework, laundry, booking, between jobs.

Catherine Dolan - aunt of Katherine M. Dolan, Colony House matron. Covered on Miss Dolan's days off, for \$5. a day, no limitation as to number of days.

Miss Dolan felt she did not have enough time off. While she had no scheduled time off, she was her own boss, engaged in a great many activities, belong to Gray Ladies, entertained elaborately (do not know who underwrote the cost), was free to do so, no one stopped her. She wanted coverage for the time off from the Colony, suggested and was allowed to engage her aunt, Miss Catherine Dolan.

Bookkeeper - to assist her with bookkeeping work, a Miss Grant was engaged in June of 1949. Woman resigned, gossip has it she was driven out.

Auditor's verbal report to Mrs. Edson that Miss Dolan did not want a bookkeeper at the Colony. In auditors' report, opinion is given that there is not enough bookkeeping work at the Colony to warrant a full-time office worker.

Mrs. Edson: explained Miss Grant's payroll sheet. (Miss Grant worked from 6/1/49 to 9/30/50. Born 10/30/88 - would now be 67 Had been a cook at Vergennes, was transferred from there. Was she qualified as a bookkeeper? No vacancy carried for bookkeeper at the Colony because at that time present personnel rules not in effect.

BTS bookkeeper goes to the Colony once a month, picks up the girls' work slips, materials purchased, collections. She reconciles these at BTS, Colony bookkeeping done at BTS since 1952.

Miss Dolan made no request at any time for help. She would have been given help if she had asked for it.

Auditors are working on the Colony Accounts now. Great mass of material, complete confusion on financial side.

Auditors concerned: William Hamblin, Bruce Mosher, the former's superior. Both work out of Mr. Anderson's office, but Mr. Hamblin has been working on the accounts of the Colony here at BTS for two weeks. Both men are planning to go to Rutland on Monday, to call on all employers where girls worked to get direct information on amounts owed, etc.

On the basis of the March 55 general audit, letters were sent out in April to all employers asking them to verify accounts, whether correct or incorrect. Another audit, August 31, 1955, showed no change in amounts due, yet reports were received that some accounts had been paid. Another set of letters was sent out in December of 1955, asking the same questions. Some of the answers were shown to Mr. Mehlman.

Checks drawn by the state treasurer to the names of the girls were endorsed by Miss Dolan with the girls' names. Girls should have been shown how to endorse a check, how to deposit checks, etc, as part of training. If girls could not write, Miss Dolan should have gotten their x-marks on the checks before depositing them

Information gathered from several of the girls that have come back from the Colony:

Every morning girls were lined up, asked by Miss Dolan to turn over any money they might have from tips given to them by employers. This went into the so-called animal fund, supposedly to feed the many pets some of the girls kept (at one time the Colony had 11 cats, one dog). Refusal was not even thought of. One girl who rebelled (Blanche Shewell) had a rough time of it.

Miss Dolan then doled out taxi fares, out of the girls \$5. monthly spending money.

Auditors set up a rule or policy that employers would pay taxi fares of girls. In many instances, girls paid their own.

Purchases made by the girls had to be submitted to Miss Dolan, who marked the price to set against the "spending money" account. Sometimes she would give the girls cash to shop with. No accounting was ever made to the girls.

If Miss Dolan had planned a special event, girls were asked for contributions. Movies, dances, etc. were paid out of this common kitty, but so were such things as "bread for visitors, when Miss Dolan had forgotten to put in an order".

When a girl went to the Colony, no maintenance was charged by the state for six months, whether or not the girl earned anything.

After six months at the Colony, a maintenance charge is made.

Bookkeeper's charge schedule:

At Colony	Maintenance Charge	Spending Money	Total Charge	Hourly Wage Rate
1 to 6 months	0	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$.25
6 to 12 months	\$20.00	5.00	25.00	.40
12 to 24 months	30.00	5.00	35.00	.50
24 to 36 months	45.00	5.00	50.00	.75

Moneys paid to Miss Dolan, or brought back by the girls with their work slips, were placed in bank account by Miss Dolan. Total in that account at end of month was sent to Montpelier in lump sum, with statement showing each girl's earnings.

Example: If a girl earned \$70. one month, and had been at the Colony over two years, treasurer deducted \$45.00 for maintenance. \$25.00 balance sent to Colony in check drawn to the name of the girl. Of this \$25., the girl could keep \$5.00 for spending money. (Instructions to Miss Dolan were explicit that the girl could use this money as she saw fit, without interference from Miss Dolan. See letter from Mr. Needham) The balance of \$20. was placed in the girl's savings account in Rutland.

A girl not earning any money in any one month got nothing but still had her maintenance charged against her against future earnings. If the girl never worked again prior to discharge, accumulated maintenance charges would be written off, even though she might have had a sizable savings account of her own, probably on the theory that she worked out her keep at the Colony.

Although a girl might never have attained the 75¢ hourly wage scale, for personal inadequacy or other reasons, she still paid the \$45. a month maintenance charge once she was at the Colony two years or over.

On resident wage placement (conditional discharge), after graduation from the Colony, and also directly from BTS:

Average wage \$35. to \$40. a month plus keep:

Employer sends monthly wage to Brandon, payable to BTS

Bookkeeper deposits half of this amount in girl's savings account, returns other half to girl for spending money, in check drawn to girl's name.

On basis of average monthly earnings of all girls, resident placement is more profitable to the girl over the years.

Information to be gathered or supplied by Mr. Russell:

1. Miss Dolan's brother - when did he die?  
the effect of his death on her?  
To what extent, if any, did he help her with  
bookkeeping problems?

2. Miss or Mrs. Grant (bookkeeper) - is she still living?  
Address?

3. Dr. Thorne:

living here in town,  
as director of the school, battled with Miss Dolan, but  
since then collaborated with Miss Dolan on a series of  
articles on training regarded girls.  
Attitude uncertain.

4. Mrs. Phillips - first matron: is she still living?  
Address?

5. Background of Colony House:

Date started:

Buildings purchased?  
donated?

Miss Dolan frankly and openly mentioned her power in Rutland  
because of the cheap labor she provided - to limited group only.

6. American Association of University Women - AAUW

Last July, Miss Dolan invited this group to hold their November/december  
meeting at Colony House. Miss Dolan spoke. Diatribe against BTS, and  
Montpelier. She paraded the girls at the meeting, in their presence  
gave details of past records, peccadillos, present bank accounts.

Committee of women then asked to meet the superintendent, also had  
a meeting with Mr. Dale. Consensus of opinion: fire her.

Women at the meeting: Mrs. Wild, Miss Bernice Tuttle, etc.

At meeting with Mr. Dale, also Mrs. Terenzini, friend of Miss Dolan.

Mrs. Helen (Mrs. George) Sloan, 150 Stratton Road, Rutland, Vt.

a personal friend of Mrs. Spiess, told Mrs. Spiess about the meeting.

Not all the information given at this conference came from Mrs. Sloan.

She is a devout Catholic, but quite opposed to Miss Dolan.

Both Mrs. Sloan and her husband teach at the Rutland High School.

Uncertain whether Mrs. Sloan would be willing to testify.

7. Rumor that the Colony is to be a sinecure for the Mulcahys.

Raymond M. Mulcahy, asst. superintendent. Colony would be small operations,  
dead-end road. Also, present salary is way above what the Colony would pay.  
Such a plan has never been considered, the superintendent would be very much  
opposed to this.

Personal factors involved: Mrs. Mulcahy is Lillian Noyes, former medical secretary and bookkeeper at BTS (also sister of Mrs. Beulah Noyes Tierney, former General Matron at BTS who was permanently injured in an automobile accident while on state business. Mr. Bloomer is Tierney's lawyer.

Tierneys are violently anti-Ray Mulcahy.)

Miss Dolan accuses Lillian Noyes Mulcahy of misappropriating some bank books. Bank books collected from the Colony were mislaid, and new ones had to be obtained from the bank. Later on the old ones were found (in safe, by Mr. Levonas, Dr. Kelly's business manager). No money was involved at all, but Miss Dolan keeps harping on Mrs. Mulcahy's dishonesty.

8. Lucy Curtis, social worker. Has left BTS, on good terms, went to Florida. She had a great many contacts in Rutland. Her successor does not have the same amount of information, personal contacts, knowledge.
9. No income tax ever made out on any of these girls. They do not have social security either - except those who are now on resident work placement - none of those at the Colony or at BTS.
10. Mr. Dale intimates that Employees' Association has had grievance presented to it. He feels that the time limitation, that a grievance with supporting evidence must be filed within a time limit, should not be insisted upon too strictly, because insistence on mere technicality might be interpreted as weakness, unwillingness to give Miss Dolan a fair chance.
11. Miss Dolan's separation pay is still going.
12. Miss Dolan is still at the Colony, heat, electricity, phone still being supplied. Physical condition of the house has been checked. Food still in the freezer, must be inventoried by auditors.

Miss Sharkey is also staying at Colony House. She was asked to send in a food requisition. In answer to first inquiry she stated that there was plenty of food, that she did not need any. In answer to a second inquiry she stated she preferred to buy her own food. A letter confirming this telephone conversation was sent, and she was asked for the date when she began buying her food, so that her maintenance charges could be adjusted accordingly.

There is no place at Brandon for Miss Sharkey. There is no position here under Grade 3. Having a retarded person working at BTS for wages higher (Miss Sharkey is in the top step of her grade) than received by most attendants (\$39. to \$50. pay range) would cause difficulties at BTS.

13. Plans for Colony House - comprehensive program.
14. Summary of coming conference with Congregational ministers.
15. Summary of conference with AAUW women.

Consideration of individual charges:

Miss Dolan does not have the exhibits (not furnished with the letter of dismissal).

Charge 1. Possible witnesses: Mr. Russell  
Mrs. Edson  
Miss Hutchins

Charge 2. Mother Superior -  
Father Clancy of Catholic Charities, now owners of Loretto Home.  
Possibly could get statements through Ray Mulcahy

Charge 4. Could be considered training for girls.  
Question: Did all the girls participate?  
Story of the flowers and weeds.

Charge 5. Statement never received.

Charge 9. No report ever came in on that.

Form of quarterly dormitory report furnished Mr. Mehlman.

Charge 13. No direct communication from Miss Dolan.

Charge 14. Referring to Mt. St. Joseph Convent -  
summary of visit, possible objection to Mulcahy testifying.  
Letters sent to Convent in April and again in December.  
BTS received no reply to April letter. Convent may have  
communicated directly with Miss Dolan.

Reviewed Mrs. Edson's compilation of items purchased for the girls, in price range way above anything the girls can afford when on their own.

Shirley Mailhotte (completely discharged, Miss Dolan's prize orchid) asked for her share of wages paid by Mt. St. Joseph Convent directly to BTS after Miss Dolan's discharge. She was told check was in the hands of the auditors, that she would be paid when the matter was settled.

Mr. Mehlman recommended that checks be not held too long, employers might object that it ties up their accounts, and that delay in payment to girls is inconsistent with reason for demand that payment be made.

These girls had left  
Miss Dolan's supervision,  
nothing different,  
Mr. Mehlman will consult with  
Miss Hutchins explained how they  
were handled by Miss Dolan.  
Miss Hutchins does not think  
she is really



Miss Hutchins' comments:

Bookkeeper at BTS

Started making monthly visits to Colony House in 1952

Under Mr. Needham

Reception at Colony - Miss Dolan sometimes quite disturbed, sometimes quite cordial.

Miss Hutchins not able to maintain reasonable control of accounts, sometimes had to return to BTS without work slips, or incomplete work slips; telephone calls required to straighten things out, sometimes had to adjust records as best she could and leave it at that.

Miss Dolan did not cooperate with bookkeeper at all times.

Her attitude added to bookkeeper's burdens a great many times. Interfered with the efficient operation of the accounting system to some extent. Miss Hutchins tried to explain this to Miss Dolan at times, then gave up. Cannot explain Miss Dolan's attitude, whether it is based on stubbornness or lack of ability.

Miss Dolan had many years' experience, should have had the ability. It is not an excessively burdensome procedure.

Miss Hutchins was never treated with discourtesy.

Miss Dolan said many unkind things about people here, but Miss Hutchins would rather not go into details, would hate to repeat statements.

Miss Hutchins laughed when asked if she considered Miss Dolan loyal to her supervisor, the superintendent.

Miss Hutchins states that she was frequently very confused about the work because Miss Dolan refused to cooperate, found it difficult to get figures together to send to Montpelier.

Probably every girl ever at the Colony and within reach had to sign petition for Miss Dolan. Would not dare refuse.

None of the people who employed Colony girls have ever tried to speak to Miss Hutchins personally, or wrote to her, about the accounts.

Accounts owed are of long standing, some back to 1953.

Basis of figures is auditors' accounts.

No cash handled at BTS for Colony girls.

Separate ledger account at BTS kept for each Colony girl.

Checks drawn to the names of boys and girls out on resident placement are endorsed by them, never by anyone at BTS.

Checks received from employers are drawn to the name of BTS, endorsed by superintendent, deposited.

Get names of girls involved when "eight bank books" were sent in by Miss Dolan but only Doris Ball's statement of account.

These girls had left the Colony some time ago, were no longer under Miss Dolan's supervision, accounts were being handled from BTS - nothing different, usual procedure.

Mr. Mehlman will consult with auditors when in Montpelier.

Miss Hutchins explained how daily work slips should be, and how they were, handled by Miss Dolan.

Miss Hutchins does not think funds were misappropriated or put to personal use, - merely carelessness, slipshodness on the part of Miss Dolan.

Miss Hutchins has nothing to do with small purchase orders, they are handled by the business office - Mrs. Edson.

\$5. personal spending money. Miss Hutchins has no idea what happens to the money, no accounting made either to the girls or to bookkeeper.

Re checks for November earnings of girls who left the Colony in December:

State would send such checks to the Colony for forwarding.

Miss Hutchins knew checks would be on the way, in transit.

"Warrants" is the official name of such checks.

Miss Hutchins asked Miss Dolan for them.

Miss Dolan stated she had them but would keep them because the girls owed the Colony money for taxis, etc.

Miss Hutchins is responsible for girls' money, to see that the girls get their money.

If the girls had bills outstanding, if money was owed Miss Dolan, Miss Dolan should have rendered a statement and the BTS office would have paid them from Brandon out of the girls' accounts in the usual way.

Mr. Russell signs withdrawal slips from girls' account, as trustee.

Four of the "Warrants" were received, endorsed by Miss Dolan. All of these girls are out on resident work placement, some in and around Rutland, others out of town.

Four or five more warrants are to come.