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FIRST ANNUAL REPORT
of the
MANAGERS
of
CLINTON FARMS
N. J. STATE REFORMATORY FOR WOMEN
CLINTON, HUNTERDON COUNTY,
NEW JERSEY.

1913
1914
1922
1934
1946
1947

For the Year Ending October 31st
1913

NEW JERSEY STATE LIBRARY

Union Hill, N.J.
Dispatch Printing Company.
1914

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SUPERINTENDENT

May Caughey

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF MANAGERS

TO HIS EXCELLENCY, LEON R. TAYLOR, ACTING GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF
NEW JERSEY:

SIR:-

The Board of Managers of the New Jersey State Reformatory for Women, at Clinton, beg leave to submit their first annual report.

Every agitation must have a birthplace and every birth implies a god-mother. In the case of the Woman's Reformatory for New Jersey, Orange was the birthplace and Mrs. Paddock is the godmother.

For several years before the steps were taken which made the Reformatory a fact, a group of earnest men and women collected statistics which showed all too plainly the lamentable neglect, on the part of the State, of the women who had broken the law and the disastrous result of this neglect. Hudson and Essex Counties provided Penitentiaries and Mercer County a Work House, but in these institutions, the drunk and disorderly, who might have been committed a score of times, were necessarily thrown in contact with the young girl sentenced for the first time. For all other Counties of the State and for all offences considered too serious for the Penitentiaries, the State's Prison at Trenton was the only means of restraint open to the Judges. There the women were confined in a wing, where sewing was the only occupation furnished, and where they did not even do their own cooking. Any educational method of reformation was obviously impossible in such antiquated surroundings. The necessity for a Woman's Reformatory was as apparent as had been that for the Men's Reformatory at Rahway, established about ten years previously, but just such work was needed as was done by the pioneers at Orange in gathering the facts and in presenting them over and over again to the authorities at Trenton. Many hearings were held before many Legislative Committees, many letters were written, much agitation was stirred up through the Federation of Women's Clubs and other agencies and finally in 1903 Governor Franklin Murphy appointed a Commission "To consist of five persons, two of whom shall be women, to examine carefully into the present facilities and accommodations of the State for the imprisonment and care of women offenders, and the provisions made and methods employed in other states for their care, and to report as to the necessity or advisability of establishing a state reformatory for women, to the Legislature at its next session; and if said commission shall find that the best interests of the State require the establishment of such an institution, said Commission shall embody in its said report an estimate of the approximate cost of the necessary buildings for such institution, and any recommendations it may care to make as to the location, arrangement, general plan and conduct of such institution." This Commission visited other States having Women's Reformatories and still further studied the situation in New Jersey and made a unanimous report, strongly urging the establishment of a Reformatory for Women "on the cottage plan in the country." It also suggested the necessary buildings and estimated the total cost at \$150,000.

This was only the first engagement in the fight. The same methods of warfare were continued by the same devoted band, who by this time had succeeded in interesting others throughout the State and at last victory was won by the passing of an Act for the establishment of the Woman's Reformatory by the Legislature of 1910.

This Act provided that the Reformatory should be governed by a Board of six Commissioners, not less than three of whom should be women, and for a Superintendent and other officers all of whom should be women. The commitments to the Institution were to include any female above the age of seventeen convicted of any crime which is punishable by imprisonment in the State Prison or Penitentiary and also the transfer from the State Prison of female inmates. It provided that the several courts "in sentencing to the Reformatory shall not fix or limit the duration of the sentence." Full powers as to parole are given to the Board of Managers with power to retake or recommit any prisoner violating her parole.

Site
Governor Fort appointed the first Board of Managers, who prepared a plan providing for several cottages and for the purchase of a site. The Appropriation Committee of 1912 allowed only the sum asked for the land, \$20,000. Before deciding on a site for the Institution, many farms were inspected in various counties and the final choice was a farm of 346 acres beautifully situated among the hills of Hunterdon County one and a half miles from the small town of Clinton and four and a half miles from the Glen Gardner Tuberculosis Sanatorium. On the property were two comfortable farm houses and numerous barns, outhouse, chicken houses, etc. A report was secured from a competent hydraulic engineer showing that the water supply, furnished by streams and springs on the place, was practically unlimited.

Buildings
The next step was to secure from the Appropriation Committee of the following year funds sufficient to add to the larger of the farm houses so that it might accommodate twenty-five girls, to repair the barns, etc., and purchase animals and implements necessary to begin farm work. Next came the selection of a Superintendent. The choice of the Managers was Miss May Caughey, at that time in charge of the discipline at the House of Refuge for Girls, at Darlington, Pa. The Managers have no reason to doubt the wisdom of this selection, as Miss Caughey has met unusual difficulties with courage and intelligence and has shown that she is capable of bringing into shape the workings of the Institution as well as of establishing a very unusual relation of confidence and helpfulness with the individual inmates.

Staff
In addition to the superintendent, our Board has employed a dietitian, who has charge of training the girls in the kitchen and a nurse who oversees their health and also assists in many other ways. Our force is completed by a woman farmer to plan and direct the outdoor work and a varying number of men necessary on so large a farm for such labor as the girls cannot undertake.

The first girls were received in January, 1913, and by the spring all the beds were full. The Institution was formally opened on the 26th of May, when Governor Fielder, Bishop McFaul and Mrs. Falconer of Darlington assisted in making the day a memorable one, not only for those connected with the Reformatory but for hundreds of the neighboring farmers.

Colored girls

The developments so far in view, consist of building this spring a cottage for colored girls for which the Legislature last year appropriated \$25,000, and the improving of our roads, etc. We have decided to provide for the colored girls first, although we realize that their treatment will involve many difficulties, because we feel that theirs is the greater need. Our plans for the future include a disciplinary building which will become more essential as our number grows, a reception cottage including an infirmary and as many more cottages as we can secure, each one to contain twenty-five girls.

*Girls
psychological*

We are too young to add any valuable contribution to the fundamental work being done at Bedford or elsewhere, but the shortness of our experience and the smallness of our numbers do not prevent our working toward certain ideals which might be summarized in the hope that Clinton will become more and more a workshop for character building. To achieve this, the "tonic and discipline of liberty" must be used to the fullest extent, where the individual case is in a condition to respond. We have already found some who need a mental nursery and some who need a mental hospital. Our effort is to discover what course of training is most helpful and in order to do this we are making a careful psychological study of every inmate, going back as far as we can into heredity and including a thorough report of her environment, occupations, etc., before her arrest. Our treatment thus includes her life before and after coming to us, through a diagnosis of every girl by means of this preliminary study and through the exercise of the utmost caution in the choice of her surroundings after release, with a supervision so thorough that she must needs feel that our protection, interest and authority follow her to the outside world. Our psychological analysis of each girl or woman also shows us what kind of work will best help in the strengthening of the weak spots in her development. With this end in view, we are using a certain amount of schooling and a great deal of domestic and outdoor work, with the primary object of the educational values of all these occupations and with the secondary object of preparing our girls for the test of liberty by sending them out in good health and equipped to secure and keep, decently paid work.

Amusements must form an important part of our curriculum and our Superintendent has shown much ingenuity in devising and adapting many and varied kinds.

*See Reclamation
Principles - 1870
Religion*

Most important of all must be the moral and religious influences brought into the life of our charges, which alone can supply both the motive and the strength for the hard battle ahead of each one of them. Obedience, self-restraint, the true sense of values, power to choose the right and leave the wrong, all these are hard lessons, doubly hard for the untrained, undisciplined, half developed girls who will be our pupils.

Our ideal will be to develop and train the bodies, to awaken the minds, hearts and consciences of all committed to us so that they may know and follow the Truth, which alone can make them free. If Clinton Farms proves a school for such knowledge the work done there will in truth not be in vain.

CAROLINE B. ALEXANDER, President
KNOX TAYLOR, Vice-President,
ALFRED G. EVANS, Treasurer,
ANNA I. LAMONTE, Secretary,
MARY SPALDING BROWN,
THOMAS A. DAVIS,
MABEL C. FIELDER,
MRS. LEWIS THOMPSON.

TREASURER'S REPORT

I beg to submit my report as Treasurer for the fiscal year ending October 31st, 1913, as follows:

ITEMS	Annual Appropriations	Expenses	Unused Balance
Fertilizers	\$ 900.00	\$ 891.82	\$ 8.16
Seed for crops.....	250.00	248.39	1.61
Maintenance of live stock	1,900.00	931.19	968.81
Wages and board three men	1,800.00	1,012.19	787.81
Repairs and horse shoeing	200.00	199.30	.70
Extra help and misc'l. expenses....	1,000.00	920.00	80.00
Fencing	300.00	300.00
Telephone poles.....	200.00	71.59	128.41
Live stock and poultry.....	2,000.00	1,909.20	90.80
Wagons and implements.....	1,000.00	995.60	4.40
Maintenance 25 girls at \$300 a year	7,500.00	7,494.03	5.97

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS

Small cottage for help.....	4,000.00		
Alterations, farm house.....	500.00	461.95	38.05
Manager's expenses.....	300.00	102.93	197.07
	<u>\$21,850.00</u>	<u>\$15,538.19</u>	<u>\$6,311.81</u>

The appropriations by the State as above amount to \$21,850, of which there has been expended during the year \$15,538.19, leaving a balance of \$6,311.81 of which \$4,000 appropriation for the small cottage for help is carried over and is available in the present year.

The above amounts, covering expenditures, have all been made on warrants issued by the Comptroller's Office, and as a matter of fact no actual moneys have been placed in my hands during the period covered from November 1st, 1912, to October 31st, 1913.

Respectfully submitted,

ALFRED G. EVANS,
Treasurer.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

TO THE BOARD OF MANAGERS OF THE NEW JERSEY STATE REFORMATORY FOR WOMEN AT CLINTON, NEW JERSEY.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:-

Building

The New Jersey State Reformatory for Women is situated in the midst of a gently rolling farm country in Hunterdon County about one and a half miles from the small town of Clinton. It comprises a farm of 346 acres, only a small part of which has been under cultivation this year. The institution is housed in a small farm house, to which has been added two wings, thus making it possible for us to accommodate in all twenty-four women. There are only five occupying single rooms, all the rest living in dormitories, a bad plan which will not be followed in our new buildings. This was necessary because of the desire, on the part of the managers, to take as many women as possible. Though we have only actual room for twenty-four we have at present in the institution twenty-seven women, the extra ones sleeping out on one of our porches. There are three officers who live in the same building, Fielder Cottage, the Superintendent, the dietitian and the nurse. Besides these, we have a woman farmer and a utility man who live in another building, as well as three farm laborers who work by the day.

Psychologist

The institution aims to return the women to a self-supporting life, better able to meet their difficulties and responsibilities. As we shall see, by the tables appended to this report, the women, on the whole, were working at unskilled labor and for a wage very small, when we consider that they had to clothe and feed themselves from their wage. If they can leave us better able to work, we offer to them the possibility of more skilled labor with its accompaniment of higher wages and greater independence. While the women are here, we also try to find out in so far as possible why they came here and thus, in a larger sense, why we need institutions of this kind. Through the kindness and interest of a young woman interested in psychology, it has been possible for us to test the women here, and to find out their state of mental development. This, in many cases, has made it possible to deal with them more intelligently. The work of an institution such as this is surely two-fold; first, to help train the women who come here, and, second, to learn from their experience and life how to prevent other young women from making the same failures. The desire on the part of the women to share the knowledge they have gained here with other members of their family, is illuminating along this line.

Student Govt. absolutely page

This aim of ours can best be developed in an air of freedom for that, of necessity, throws the responsibility of the success of the place back to the women - where it so truly belongs. The more normal we make the life here, the less apt the women will be to fail when placed back in an environment less protected. We must guard against a tendency to decide affairs for such women - they must be made to think and decide for themselves or all our training will be in vain. They must realize that the consequences of work poor in any way,

rest absolutely upon the person who does this work. The ideal we hold is the home life, where all the members of one family are working together cheerfully and willingly to bring about the best good for that family. Of course, with an ideal as high as this, and remembering that the women need to learn to distinguish between freedom and lawlessness - while here, not to wait till they are paroled, we will occasionally find women who mistake our motive and take advantage of the apparent lack of restraint. We have found that the attitude of the rest of the women has been the best punishment for such persons. So we have cheerfully gone on taking this risk, feeling that it was well worth while to educate the women to a sense of their own responsibility and honor in this respect, even at the expense of the few who misinterpreted the place and its ideals for them and so took the consequences - their loss of the others' approval.

Perhaps the first days of this institution were the happiest we have ever had. It was opened January, 1913, the girls coming in from the courts rather slowly, thus giving us time to get well acquainted with each other. There was an enormous amount of work to do and very few people to do it. Everyone was so busy getting the house and grounds cleaned up, that we found no necessity for rules of any kind. There was a splendid spirit of responsibility and cooperation which made both officers and girls enjoy any kind of work - for example, when we all pitched in together and scrubbed and shellaced a large floor in one afternoon. This hearty co-operation between officers and girls is something we have always been able to rely on in any emergency and this spirit, expressed so well in our earlier days, is the ideal we wish to keep for the whole institution.

These women need training in many ways in order to develop physically, mentally, morally and spiritually. We often find that the women come to us in very poor physical and nervous condition. The life of the jail leaves its imprint. It sometimes takes several months to overcome the nervous strain of this time while they are waiting trial. Often we find them so different, after this jail experience has been somewhat forgotten, that we hardly know them for the same people. Our outdoor life helps greatly in building up the women's health. From May to November they are outside at least a half of each day, some of them all day, doing farm work. This is splendid for their health and nerves and we often find our most restless and unmanageable girls gaining self-control after they have been placed at outdoor work. All during the year, even on the coldest days of winter, the women are taken for a brisk walk and are kept out at least an hour. In summer, we practically live outdoors, even holding our sewing classes outside. All the year, the milking and taking care of the chickens are done by the women. They love this sort of work and we have no trouble in getting women willing to do it. They hand in their names to go "on milking" long before some other woman's time at that particular job is over.

Daily Program

Besides our outdoor recreation, such as walks, games, drives and picnics, we have at least one party a week where the women are taught good dancing, both folk and round dances. We also have a good deal of reading loud, at their own request. We pick out a book and start it. Then, when they want to go on with it they ask to be read to. We get their interest in the first place, then make them feel that they are the ones who want the story or play finished.

Afterwards, we talk about the books and pick out our favorite characters in them. Even the women, who are unable to read for themselves, enjoy our evenings reading. I think, largely because it is not anything forced upon them. We only have reading when they want that form of recreation. I think it is a constant surprise to us how often they want it and the kind of books they care for, such as the "Life of Alice Freeman Palmer." We also have a Victrola, which helps to make our evenings pleasant. In this way, the women are learning good music as well as to recognize different selections by name and to know by whom played or sung. We also have taken up the difference between a band and an orchestra and the sound and description of different instruments, so they can be recognized when they are used together.

Medical
Besides our trained nurse, who lives on the place, we call in a physician from High Bridge, when such medical attention is necessary. We have had to send at least eight women to Plainfield to be examined by the oculist and fitted out with glasses. A dentist comes here once in four months to look at their teeth. This Fall we had an outbreak of diphtheria, which was luckily confined to one case, but the whole institution had to be placed under quarantine, because we had no way of absolutely isolating the patient. We were all given anti-toxin to prevent the spread of the disease. This emphasizes one of our great necessities, an infirmary or some kind of hospital facilities, which we now entirely lack.

Training
In common with other institutions of this kind, we have found several cases of mental deficiency. But even the brighter women and those who are normal in ability have had a miserable training and education, erratic and meagre, with no regularity in going to school even during the brief period of their lives when they were supposed to be enrolled in school. We give them training here in sewing, laundry, kitchen, dining room, housework and handwork. Each girl takes care of a certain part of the house each day and is directly responsible for the condition of that part. Besides that, each girl during the mornings, serves three months in one of the above departments. If she shows unusual proficiency in the kitchen, she is given special instruction in cooking, though all women are expected to do some cooking before they leave the institution. Their handwork includes hemstitching, cross stitch, fine sewing, embroidery and different kinds of crocheting and knitting. One of the greatest values of this work is to provide them with profitable means of occupying leisure moments. The difficulties of the academic side of their school work are well nigh insurmountable. To realize this fully and to show the truth of the above fact, I have only to say that the ages of the women here range from 17 to 46 and their previous education from illiteracy to the high school. All seem pathetically eager to learn during our school period of two hours three times a week, but in most cases all we can do is to arouse in them an ambition and a realization that an education is greatly to be desired as well as a decidedly practical way of increasing their earning capacity. Their only hope of further education when they leave here, will be the night schools.

There is a peculiar need of a library here because the town of Clinton has a very small one open only one hour a week and we are too far from any large city to enjoy their advantages. If we expect cultured and educated women to be willing to remain here working on a small farm, away from all social life, we must provide for them the relaxation of books. No one who has not tried to live and work without the help of a library, no matter how small, can appreciate its necessity.

Religious

We have women here of different religious beliefs. We send the Catholics to their own church at High Bridge at least one Sunday in three months, and the Protestants to theirs in Clinton. So far we have only one Jew, and there is no synagogue near. The Protestants and Catholics are instructed once a week by members of their own faith near here, who come up to the institution for their classes. We shall make provision for the Jews when that becomes necessary. Every day we have a short chapel service in the morning and prayers at night, using the Lord's prayer and several hymns. Our Sunday service also is very simple, including singing, a short reading from the Bible and a talk or story.

Honor System

We try here to teach the women obedience, consideration for others, and responsibility. They must learn to help each other, to pull up, not down, to be patient and forbearing, for that is the only way we can live together in happiness. Especially, we try to develop their responsibility to this institution and for others like this. Ours is a new institution, we have put up no buildings as yet. It is for the women to decide what sort of buildings they shall be, prisons or homes. We never let them forget that women who come here after them will blame or thank them for this institution. And besides this responsibility, every privilege they gain here, every advance they make in honor methods, is a step in advance for other women, in other states, who may perhaps make one mistake and be sent to such an institution. It is for the women here and now to show that they can be trusted and that they want a home and not a prison.

MAY CAUGHEY,
Superintendent.

The following tables, though interesting and illuminating, cannot be relied on as containing absolutely accurate information, where the data used is dependent upon the word of the women interviewed. This is a new institution, and as yet, we are doing no field work. For this reason, we have been unable to verify the truth of their statements with regard to occupations, wages, education, and previous institutional experience.

Total number entered institution from January, 1913, to January, 1914, 31.
Number now present, 27.

Table I - Age: Below 21, 11; below 30, 10; above 30, 10.

Table II - Counties: Bergen, 2; Burlington, 2; Camden, 1; Essex, 11; Hudson, 6; Middlesex, 1; Monmouth, 1; Morris, 1; Passaic, 4; Union 2.

Table III - Agencies sending women: Courts, 19; transferred from State prison, 4; transferred from state home, 7; transferred from Essex county penitentiary, 1. Of the nineteen committed from courts, the following had been in institutions before: House of Good Shepherd, Newark, N. J., 3; State Home, Trenton, N. J., 1; Essex County Penitentiary, 1. Of seven from State Home, the following have also been in other institutions: House of Good Shepherd, 1.

Table IV - Crimes: Adultery, 5; atrocious assault and battery, 2; bigamy, 3; disorderly house, 2; forgery, 1; grand larceny, 8; larceny and receiving, 2; robbery, 1. Seven girls transferred from State Home had been committed there under charge of "incurability," said charge covering different misdemeanors from "running away from home" to immorality of various kinds, petty thieving, etc. Two out of eight committed for grand larceny were drunk when crime was committed and drunkenness was really the offense. One out of five committed for adultery is a laudanum fiend, that being the real cause of her commitment. By their own confession, eighteen out of thirty-one had been previously immoral, though not put into institutions for that, and four who denied it, probably were.

Table V - Nationality: American, 8; German, 8; Irish, 9; Polish, 2; Lithuanian, 1; Dutch, 2; Jewish, 1. Foreign-born out of 31, 6: Germany, 2; England, 1; Ireland, 2; Poland, 1.

Table VI - Married or Single: Married, 18; single, 13. Out of eighteen married, only seven lived with husbands at time of commitment, though none of husbands are dead.

Table VII - Occupations: Boarding house, 1; clerk, 1; cranberry picking, 1; housework, 7; factory, 4; restaurant, 1; washing by day, 3; typewriter, 1; telephone operator, 2; tea and coffee agent, 1; lady's maid, 1. The three who did washing worked at this while living home with their husbands. Also the one who did cranberry picking did this while living home. Four did not work except at home before marriage. Four lived at home and never did any definite work.

Table VIII - Wages: Housework, \$10 to \$20 per month; day's work, \$1 to \$2 per day; telephone operating and clerical work, \$20 to \$35 per month; factory work, \$20 to \$30 per month; miscellaneous (including living), \$30 to \$50 per month.

Table IX - Education, on entrance: Illiterate, 4; read and write, 7; read and write and arithmetic to fractions, 11; grammar school education and above, 9.

Sewing Report - Sheets, 5 doz.; pillow cases, 5 doz.; aprons (white), 5 doz.; aprons (colored), 5 doz.; underskirts (white), 2 doz.; underskirts (colored), 5 doz.; dresses (white), 30; dresses (colored), 5 doz.; nightgowns (muslin), 5 doz.; drawers (muslin), 6 doz.; nightgowns (cutting), 1 doz.; kimonos, 27.