

Individual Case
Study
Helen Spillington
1924-1930

DON'T DISCLOSE IDENTITIES

Individual Case Study

Dec 28, 1930

From the beginning of these studies, the identities of the persons under study have been kept confidential. We took to you to carry this out. We took the person involved in the study of code symbols for real names.

Conversation with Mrs. M. B. Operator I of Mica Test Group, on Thursday, December 26th, revealed the following facts pertaining to her status conditions. Her extended absence from the test room at this time, according to her statement, is due to prolonged brooding over the thought of the running away of her son, [redacted], shortly before the opening of the school term. She related several incidents showing that she had deprived herself of many necessities in order that he might continue his schooling and enjoy the social companionship which he desired. I counter-acted this statement, however, with a suggestion that the boy had probably left home near the end of his vacation period in order to obtain employment in some particular line of his choice (farming) and believed that he might be able to return before the beginning of the school term with some small amount of money for his mother. However, these hopes were not realized, and he returned home somewhat chastened instead of being able to receive the commendation his mother for his efforts. My explanation was accepted to some degree by [redacted], and seemed to relieve her of this pre-occupation.

Her absence at this time, however, is sanctioned, and according to her conversation, promoted more or less by the Company doctors. She complains of spitting blood at various intervals, although conversation with personnel authorities who are intimate with her situation did not reveal any physical peculiarities of this kind. She felt that she would be able to return to her work in possibly two weeks. She commented on the thought that a change of environment, possibly a trip to some remote part of the country would remove the depressed mental condition of which she is aware. She mentioned a trip to Niagara Falls. Although [redacted] seemed to ask my approval of this venture, I tended to discourage it, but not by direct disapproval.

Our talk developed into more or less a conversational interview and through indirect questioning, I was able to find out something of her various home interests with the thought in mind of probably discovering her hobby. It seems that sometime in the past she has taken some interest in poultry raising. I have had some connection in this field and was able to discuss the subject with her at some length. She explained that a small poultry house and yard is now occupying a portion of her back yard; and some hints were offered which developed a possibility that her son's interest (farming) could be diverted in these channels and through his help a few chickens could be raised, and her time would be taken up with this hobby instead of with morbid pre-occupations. These thoughts seemed to bother her considerably, to the extent that she is often troubled with insomnia and takes long walks, sometimes as late as ten or twelve o'clock at night.

I took the matter up with [redacted], director of the Operating Personnel Department, who has in several particular instances had intimate connection with [redacted] affairs. She told me that [redacted] married life had been anything but pleasant, and that since the death of her husband she has had the responsibility of raising her two children. Because of ill health and mental derangement, she has become involved in several financial difficulties including an investment in a home and the loss of it. She has subscribed for A. T. & T. Stock on several occasions but has never been able to pay for it. [redacted] opinion coincides with mine in that Mrs. [redacted] trouble is probably almost all mental and makes this case of interest because of its psychiatric significance. It seems that the Western Electric Company has on several occasions attempted to offer advice to M. [redacted] but this help has been ignored. However [redacted] believes that the advice I offered to Y [redacted] was excellent and that it would probably well worth while to become acquainted with the family in as much as the boy at this stage was in dire need of educational and social advice. Records on Mrs. [redacted] family history and financial problems will be reviewed in the near future.

Ref. 6088-3

Had a very unhappy married life.
Husband died in the County Hospital.
Has two children - boy and girl.
Is considered an extreme nervous type.
Has had several nervous breakdowns and stated she would
have had another had she not been selected for the test.
Has made numerous loans from the Company, ranging from
\$30 to \$300.

Company gave her \$2,000 upon the death of her husband, who
had been employed at Hawthorne for ten years. This money she used
and in addition placed a mortgage of \$1,000 on her property \$500 -
of which she gave to a brother who had been gassed in the war.
Sold this home and received \$1,000 - cash then purchased another
priced at \$7,600 - making a payment of only \$600. Had trouble with
the owner and tried to be released from her contract through the
advice of the Legal Aid Society.

This is her story, or part of it, previous to coming on the
test.

Since coming on the test her mental condition has improved.
She is happier, has gained weight, her absenteeism has reduced, she
has made the most consistent gain in production of the five mica
test operators, and has subscribed for A. T. & T. stock besides
making application for the Ready Money Plan. These two thrift
features coming together seem to indicate a more balanced outlook
on her situation.

As a mental or nervous case she is not "cured", but is much
better fitted, both mentally and physically, to carry on her work.

Western Electric Company.
INCORPORATED

DATE _____ 192 _____

Apr 1 * Sold home for 1000- cash and purchased another bungalow
in Brookfield for \$7600-!!! Made first payment of 600- and
agreed to pay 50- cash mo. Is receiving \$1,400 a week benefits.
Wants to be released from her contract, builder did not
live up to his end of it. Will secure advice from
Legal Aid.

- 1- Recommend that somebody be appointed to furnish a
retraining or guiding hand in her personal affairs
- 2- That she be given a severe shake up by a layoff etc
at least threatened with some drastic action.

10N-A
(1-23)

Western Electric Company.

INCORPORATED

Aug 1920 Loan 300 - defraying expenses acct husband's sickness.
 May 1923 7 line
 Dec 1923 Loan 100 - Pay coal, milk & grocery bills accumulated during illness.
 Feb 1924 2 line.
 1924 Case diagnosed as fatigue poisoning.
 March 1924 Loan 35 - pay interest on mortgage.
 June 1924 nervous debility.
 * April 1924 Loan 50 - pay water bill & taxes.
 Jan. 1927 Loan of \$75.00 to pay balance of loan borrowed from a friend.
 April 1924 nervous prostration

Her record as far back as 1923 was an average of one and one half days a week.

Husband died after ten years service with B. Died in the County Hospital.

She received approx 2000.00 death benefit. Used up the 2000.00 and put a \$1000.00 mortgage on property, 500.00 of which she had given to her brother who was a gassed vet. of the world war.

" All are agreed this case is essentially a nervous one. She is consciously tense and high strung - find her some easy job not requiring mental tension & strain.

Jan 1928 Influenza
 March - 1928 examined by University of Chicago clinic - find achlorhydria + extreme nervous prostration.
 April 19, 1928 out for nervous prostration.

January 4, 1930.

[REDACTED] - 6309-2:

Following is a summary of the sickness cases on
Clock No. 407, Department 5317, service 9 years, 6 months.

<u>Case No.</u>	<u>Time Absent</u>	<u>Reason for absence</u>	<u>Benefits Paid</u>
S-21157	10-21-21 to 10-31-21	Chronic otitis media	No case
S-21436	12-12-21 to 3-18-22	Influenza	\$ 174.59
	Employee was on a leave of absence from 3-19-22 to 1-3-23.		
S-26843	3- 9-23 to 8-14-23	Influenza	223.16
	A leave of absence was issued following expiration of benefits from 8-15-23 to 9-25-23		
S-32647	1- 7-24 to 2-13-24	Influenza	89.73
S-36926	5-29-25 to 11- 2-25	Nervous Debility	500.75
S-44950	12-27-27 to 4- 2-28	Influenza - Achlorhydria	449.13
S-44950-RR	4- 4-28 to 5- 7-28	Nervous prostration	49.37
S-51589	7-30-29 to 8-27-29	Ptomaine poisoning	115.20
S-51589-RR	11-20-29 to 11-29-29	Bronchitis	7.96
S-51589-RPM	11-30-29 to -	Employee is still incapacitated Bronchitis (to date)	162.63
Total Benefits			\$1772.52

FEC:CK

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Following is a summary of the information received from Josephine Nichols,

• *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 2000; 284: 1039-1044

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