

MITCHELL CASE RECORD

January 15, 1958 Rev. Alfred Johnson, Chaplain of the Swedish Covenant Hospital, contacted the Children's Home on this date regarding possible placement of a 3 year old boy, Robert Mitchell. Mr. & Mrs. Mitchell are both in the hospital at this time and thus they are unable to care for Robby their son. Mrs. Mitchell is in Swedish Covenant Hospital and Mr. Mitchell is in a hospital in Atlanta, Georgia. Since the worker was in Chicago arrangements were made for the caseworker to contact Rev. Johnson and make plans to see Mrs. Mitchell.

January 15, 1958 The caseworker met with Rev. Alfred Johnson regarding placement of Robert Mitchell. Before the worker talked with Mrs. Mitchell she was able to talk with Rev. Johnson regarding this matter. Rev. Johnson has had several contacts with Mrs. Mitchell as she has been in the hospital now on two different occasions. Mrs. Mitchell has an Asthmatic condition that at times becomes very bad. Rev. Johnson stated that when she was brought into the hospital last week she was almost in a coma because her condition was so severe. Mrs. Mitchell has told Rev. Johnson that her husband is in a hospital in Atlanta, Georgia due to the fact that he had attempted suicide. Apparently there has been a great deal of difficulty between Mrs. Mitchell and her husband and they now have been separated since October. Previously he would be gone for several weeks at a time and then would reappear in Chicago. Both Mr. & Mrs. Mitchell are college graduates and in fact Mr. Mitchell has a Masters Degree from Northwestern University. Mrs. Mitchell has been in contact with the parents of her husband in Atlanta, Georgia but to date she has not been able to get any real satisfactory answer regarding his illness. He is supposedly under constant supervision in this hospital and of course his medical care is extremely expensive. Since Mr. Mitchell has been with his parents in Georgia they have been sending Mrs. Mitchell \$20.00 per week for the care of Robby. This is the money that Mrs. Mitchell plans to send to the Children's Home if he is placed in the Home. Rev. Johnson feels that Mrs. Mitchell is quite a reliable person and he feels that we can really be of service to this woman if we care for her child.

Rev. Johnson went and got Mrs. Mitchell from her room and brought her into his office to talk with the worker. Mrs. Mitchell is a very high but rather attractive young woman. It was very obvious that she is quite an intellectual young woman. She spoke in a very mature way and it was also obvious that she had been thinking for quite a long period of time about this placement. Mrs. Mitchell is very dependant upon Rev. Johnson and seemed to feel that whatever he might say might be correct. For instance she was not really very interested in hearing about the Home but rather she said that if Rev. Johnson thought it was a good place

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for placement she was certain that it would please her. The worker tried to tell her something of our facilities and also something of our thinking of placement of children but really she didn't seem very interested in this. The worker did mention to her that part of our program is our foster home program. Mrs. Mitchell became rather hesitant when the worker spoke about this and she said that she wondered if actually it would be wise to place Robert in a new family situation at this time. The worker stated that we were not telling her of this program because we particularly planned to place her son but we did want her to know that this was a part of our total program. Mrs. Mitchell felt that her son, who is 3 years old, should fit rather well into group living inasmuch as 3 is an age where children like to be with other children. The worker agreed with this but also indicated that young children cannot get as much individual attention and love and security in an institution as they would in a family home. It was felt at this time that really we would not want to consider foster home placement until we knew a little more definitely the plans of Mrs. Mitchell regarding her own life and that of her son.

Mrs. Mitchell explained that she and her husband were separated at this time and right now she didn't know exactly what would happen to them and to their marriage relationship. She stated that her husband has often held down a very good job and he has a good education but he has seemed to have very many personal problems. Mrs. Mitchell stated that he left for the last time in October and shortly after he attempted to take his own life. He is in a Sanitarium now under constant supervision by doctors and nurses. Mrs. Mitchell does not know what the future holds for him or for them together. Rev. Johnson has written to the doctor in Atlanta, Georgia requesting some information regarding the illness of Mr. Mitchell but so far no answer has been received from him. Apparently Mr. Mitchell's family has a great deal of money and they have assumed a real sense of obligation towards Mrs. Mitchell and Robby. Ever since October Mrs. Mitchell has been receiving \$20.00 per week for the support of Robby. It is Mrs. Mitchell's plan for this amount to be sent to the Children's Home to care for her son. We talked a little generally about term for placement and the worker stated that usually \$60.00 is the amount paid for private placement. Mrs. Mitchell seemed thrilled with this stating that if she did have that little extra money why she would be able to get herself on her feet financially. Mrs. Mitchell's plan is to place Robby and then give up her apartment and get a room and get a job. Mrs. Mitchell herself has a college degree in Social Science but she feel that at this time she would like to get a job in an office. She stated that she does not want to get a job where there is a great deal of pressure but rather one where she can do her own work and sort of mind her own business. She said that just before Christmas she worked in Mandel's selling and she felt that this was very nerve racking and upsetting to her. They had indicated that they might have a job available for her in the office after the middle of January and Mrs. Mitchell does plan to contact them regarding this. At this time Mrs. Mitchell has a housekeeper who is caring for Robby while

she is ill.

We talked a little bit about Mrs. Mitchell's family and their responsibility in this matter. Mrs. Mitchell's parents are divorced and her father is living in Philadelphia. Mrs. Mitchell's mother is residing in Chicago and she works at Marshall Field's in Evanston. Mrs. Mitchell is very desirous that her mother not know anything about this placement right at this time. The worker was unable to detect what the real reason might be for the secrecy. Mrs. Mitchell stated that her mother is a very prominent person and has a great many friends and she does not feel that she would like to burden her with this knowledge that her grandson is in a children's home. Apparently Mrs. Mitchell feels that her mother will take this as an offense and that it will be harmful not only to her but also that her friends will think that it is very strange and odd. Mrs. Mitchell feels that if she doesn't tell her mother about this it will be easier for everyone concerned. The worker tried to inject the idea that probably the grandmother is interested in Robby and certainly she ought to be consulted regarding plans for him. Mrs. Mitchell stated that after Robby was here she probably would tell her mother but right now she just did not want to give out this information. The worker wondered if perhaps arrangements could not be worked out so that Mrs. Mitchell could live with her mother for a period of time and they could keep Robby with them. Mrs. Mitchell was quite against this so apparently there is some conflict between Mrs. Mitchell and her mother. The worker wondered how she would be able to get along financially particularly at first since she only gets about \$80.00 per month and she will be responsible to us for \$60.00. Mrs. Mitchell did feel that her mother would help her until she could get a job. There is of course always the problem that her husband's parents in Georgia will discontinue sending this money. We talked about this a little bit and Mrs. Mitchell felt certain that she would be able to plea this amount as soon as she gets a job. We talked a little bit about future plans for herself and her boy. Mrs. Mitchell stated of course a lot depends upon whether or not she and her husband go back together again, but her plan is to get work and then as soon as she gets on her feet a little bit better financially she can place her boy in a nursery school or get another housekeeper to care for him. Mrs. Mitchell stated that Robby has been in nursery school and he enjoyed this experience very much so she could do this again at a later time. Rev. Johnson feels that at this time it is important for Mrs. Mitchell to be free from the care of Robby in order that she might concentrate on building up her health. She is in a very run-down condition at this time and naturally quite nervous and upset about all of the recent events that have taken place in her life.

The worker promised Mrs. Mitchell that we would notify Rev. Johnson by mail as to whether or not we would accept Robby. Mrs. Mitchell stated that he has a great many clothes and she would be certain that these would be marked before he was brought to the home. The worker also mentioned that it would be necessary for him to have a physical.

January 16, 1958 Letter written to Rev. Alfred Johnson indicating that we would accept Robby Mitchell for placement. We are to be notified before he arrives.

January 21, 1958 Mrs. Mitchell telephoned the worker on this date. She stated that she would like to bring Robby down to the Children's Home on this date. The weather was very very bad and the worker mentioned this but Mrs. Mitchell said that she was coming anyway. Later a call was made to Rev. Johnson and he was able to get in touch with her and persuade her not to attempt to come to Princeton, Illinois on this date. Rev. Johnson felt that something had made Mrs. Mitchell upset and thus it has made her react in this way as to seek placement on this day.

January 22, 1958 Rev. Johnson telephoned the children's Home on this day and requested that Mrs. Mitchell be allowed to bring Robby to the Children's Home on this date. Arrangements were made for Mrs. Mitchell to bring Robby to Princeton later in the afternoon.

1/28/58