

TO THE OFFICER-in-CHARGE FIELD BRANCH:

Because it is not general policy of the Department to place State Wards requiring Institution treatment in private Institutions, and because of several special cases of State Wards, and children under supervision of Probation Officer (i.e. on Bonds) having been admitted, I considered that we should learn more about the conditions at Mount Barker Boys' Home, I asked Mr. Roberts, when visiting recently, to observe conditions with a view to recording in detail his impression for the information of the Chairman, and the Board, without making it obvious that he was making a check.

Officers placing children at Mount Barker usually make arrangements for the parents to pay fees direct to the Home Authorities.

State Wards are usually placed "Staying with" the Officer-in-Charge (at present Major Lawler) and not "On Probation" to him. A formal Probation placement, where necessary, is usually On Probation to the father or mother, as the case may be, with the understanding that he/she is obligated to pay maintenance and clothe the child. It will be realised that the State Wards so placed are Custody and Control, and not Glandore Children's Home committals.

Mr. Roberts' report is attached herewith. In my opinion the report reveals satisfactory conditions with far fewer abscondings than perhaps one would expect.

The visit was opportune from Mr. Roberts' view point as Major Lawler was off duty, and his Deputy spoke quite freely and openly on all matters referred hereunder. Mr. Roberts feels that had Major Lawler been on duty little, if any, information would have been forthcoming.

*M. J. Curtis*

3rd October, 1961.

SENIOR PROBATION OFFICER.

*To Chairman for information.*

*16/10/61*

*990.01073*

*Board*