

Dr. Jack Hammond, Who Led Willowbrook State School, Dies

Head of Staten Island Facility From 1964 to 1972 Sought to Upgrade Treatment

Special to The New York Times

ROME, N. Y., Jan. 2—Dr. Jack Hammond, director of the Rome State School and former head of the widely criticized Willowbrook State School on Staten Island, died today, apparently of a heart attack. He was 56 years old.

He leaves his wife, the former Elizabeth Furno; two sons, Robert and David, and a daughter, Susan.

Decried Staff Shortage

Dr. Hammond had been director of the Rome institution only since last July. He had been Willowbrook's director for eight years, and although that school came under wide criticism in the news media, he was not himself a target of the attacks.

Critics conceded that he had striven to improve conditions at Willowbrook, which were sharply attacked by Senator Robert F. Kennedy in September of 1965.

The Senator testified after a tour of the Rome and Willowbrook institutions that the state was failing woefully to provide proper care for its mentally retarded children.

Soon after, Dr. Hammond conducted newspaper reporters on a tour of an adult facility at Willowbrook and remarked that "with proper facilities and adequate staff, something could be done to improve the condition of these men."

He also said at the time that wards were so crowded it was impossible to prevent assaults and even homicides and added that such tragedies could have been avoided with adequate staffing.

Dr. Hammond was credited with improving employee relations and with reducing the



Associated Press

Dr. Jack Hammond

patient population, this before the public reacted strongly to accounts of severe overcrowding, inadequate staffing and poor conditions for the patients, most of them mentally retarded.

In Albany, Dr. Alan D. Miller, State Mental Hygiene Commissioner, said Dr. Hammond was "fully and deeply a physician, gentle with his patients and unwavering in their behalf."

Dr. Hammond joined the State Mental Hygiene Department at Willard State Hospital in 1952 and became assistant director at Rome in 1959, serving until 1964, when he was named to the Willowbrook post. In 1967 he received the Mental Hygiene Department's Distinguished Service Award.

Dr. Hammond received his undergraduate and medical degrees from Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and was licensed to practice in New York State in 1939.

He was a Navy medical officer in World War II, serving from 1941 to 1946, and then entered private psychiatric practice in New York.

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HAMMOND—Dr. Jack, We regret the untimely passing of Dr. Jack Hammond and extend our sympathies to his bereaved family; his dedication to the mentally retarded and his efforts on their behalf will long be remembered.

Welfare League,
Leitchwood Village Chapter,
NYS Assoc. for Retarded Children, Inc.,
FRANCES W. REVILLE, President,
HAMMOND—Dr. Jack, The New York State Association for the Retarded Children expresses its deep sorrow at the loss of their esteemed friend and extends its deepest sympathy to the bereaved family.

N. Y. TIMES - 1/4/73

HAMMOND—Dr. Jack, 56, Director of Rome State School on Tues. Jan. 2, 1973. Funeral services today at the J. P. Keefe School Bldg., 454, Rome State School. Those so desiring may make contributions to Louis Beem (Daenette) and Commission, Clinic of the Guild for Exceptional Children, 647 1st Ave., Bklyn., N. Y., and Association for Retarded Children (Tribune Center), Manhattan St., Bklyn., N. Y.

HAMMOND—Dr. Jack, The parents and children of The Guild for Exceptional Children of Brooklyn, deeply mourn the passing of Dr. Jack Hammond, Founder and Director of Our Louis Beem Mental Rehabilitation Clinic, 104 Kew-Forest, with his dedication and love for the retarded knew no bounds. We extend to his bereaved family our condolences.