

"Take from the past, to use in the present, to prepare for the future".
John Dewey.

Outline of Biography

Dramatic sketch

Educational Preparation for future work.

- a. Private school for girls- special science teacher
grad. Noble School Syracuse
- b. Emerson School of Oratory in Boston. (Year of graduation).
- c. *Special Studies S. U. - Tufts Coll. B. U. Teachers lectured a*

Beginning teaching in Boston with friends.

- a. Circumstances that developed early scientific principles in the alignment of the human body.
- b. Discovery of her greater interest in body alignment than in voice teaching.
- c. How the First World War expanded her teaching clientele.
- d. Her capacity for interesting men who were in the scientific and educational fields.
- e. Miss Todd contemporary with F. Matthias Alexander.
Discussion of the two techniques by Prof's John Dewey and James Harvey Robinson. The latter wrote a chap. for T.B.
but not used,
- f. Some Doctors worked with her, while others were antagonistic.
Early research by Dr. Franklin G. Balch. *large clinical practice author*

Expansion of teaching into New York City.

- a. Developed first as private clientele. *large clinical practice* 1st student, wife of Miss Todd's physician.
Educational people, theatrical, professional and all levels interested in the approach to the subject.

Beginning of class teaching on a collegiate scale started at Columbia University under the endorsement of Dr. Jesse Feiring Williams.
statement re. made about her

Thumb Nail Sketches of early teachers

- a. Background of some of them.
- b. Reason for study with Miss Todd.
- c. Type of teaching done by some.
- d. Statements of student's who were in other fields.

Medical History. Short sentences. 2 - 3 - pages.

' When anyone said, "Miss Todd" the inflection of their voice stayed high. It brought an image to their minds of great pleasure such as having a lesson or hearing her talk to them about one. Her touch, her voice, her glance all carried a feeling of particular concern in them. Her body was buoyant and she was light on her feet: about average in height and a few pounds overweight. Miss Todd was a handsome woman with color in her cheeks, laughing blue eyes and brown hair (that was beautifully dyed for several years).

Miss Todd's personality was so electrifying that it struck sparks in many people. They became enthused about her and the ideas that she put forth. Once in a while when she was tired she would stay with an idea too long but most people excused her I thought, the same as I, because they were so fond of her.

Miss Todd's ideas brought glamour and enthusiasm to perplexed and discouraged minds, to weary and aching bodies. She put hope in their souls that there was a way of thinking and feeling on their own that could take the place of their uncertain attitude toward their condition. She could establish a rapport with an unusually large number of people; and each would feel that she shared something especially his in her interest. Miss Todd had within herself an idea that was difficult to express in the thinking of that day. It was much the same idea as that held by Isadora Duncan who could express it so beautifully in movement. Miss Todd realized that to learn to move in balance is something like learning a language. There is an alphabet with which the eyes must become familiar, syllable sounds the ear can pick up, a rhythm of words the muscles can feel, all contributing to a choreography of movement that makes routine action a joy. This is what Miss Todd felt in herself to a great degree and attempted to share with others. The ability to grasp her ideas depended to a great extent on the background and experience of those who studied with her

Quite a number of people were fascinated by the possibilities of what they might be able to do physically and/or mentally with her techniques.

(quote from Ruth M's letter)

Shortly before I began studying with Miss Todd she started a nursery school for children of her student's in a large room in her studio. (later Mrs. Lawson's room). Small balsa wood chairs were still in the basement. She planned to make it a model from the body alignment angle. I do not know the educational capability of the person to be in charge. I was told by Miss Choate that it was not a success, and when I made the remark to Miss Todd, soon after beginning study with her, that I planned to work with children she laughed at me and mentioned her failure in it. I did not say that it seemed to me it would be better to start making a model of a school that was sympathetic to her principles but not to become involved in an educational manner in which she had not been trained or had any experience. Soon after I became a friend of Hazel Orton, a Normal School graduate, and was introduced by her to Gertrude Athearn, another teacher who was in charge at Ruggles St. Nursery School which was being transformed from a Day Care Center. Miss Abigail Eliot, the Principal, was in England for the summer gaining additional experience. (Dr. Rachel Hardwick - Mrs. Garfield and others). The above shows one of the impractical ideas that Miss Todd occasionally

'came up with. It also shows her desire to put into action something concrete. (Experience with a private school staff in Brookline ^{class} before this in which she was blocked by the Doctors.)

Probably the most disturbing area in which poor judgment was evident was that of choosing a secretary. It was necessary to have one in both Boston and New York. Miss Choate who was the secretary in Boston was an unusually capable person and contributed a great deal to Miss Todd's success there. In New York it was a different story. It seemed as though there was a different one each year and often the one of the moment accompanied Miss Todd to Boston. In the efficiently managed set-up there the visiting secretary showed up at a disadvantage.

Preparation for the field to which Miss Todd devoted her life.

Miss Todd was a dedicated person. I was given an understanding of this by Miss Galbraith who also was one with exceptionally high ideals, for service to mankind. She had known Miss Todd for several years which included her early teaching. Miss Galbraith was quite disturbed by Miss Todd's reaction to the work at Columbia University where she was involved in teaching a large group of graduate teachers.

RESEARCH OF TODD TECHNIQUE.

(what I, myself, knew something about as a graduate nurse).

'Dr. Franklin G. Balch - office at 279 Clarendon St. Boston Mass. -	
Dr. Edward L. Young Jr.	Mass. General
Dr. Horace K. Sowles	Faulkner
Dr. Franklin G. Balch Jr.	Hospitals Deaconess
Dr. W. W. Howell	Baptist

When a student nurse at Faulkner Hospital - 1919 -/22 before beginning study with Mabel E. Todd I was interested in observing the doctors who came to the hospital to see their private patients. The hospital was situated in West Roxbury, about a 1/2 hour distance in time by auto from the Public Hospitals - Mass. General - Boston City - Peter Bent Brigham and other private hospitals in the area. Faulkner had been fairly recently established to take care of the West Roxbury district of Boston and also the private patients of those doctors who worked in the above mentioned hospitals.

The group of doctors surrounding Dr. Balch and other prominent surgical and medical men, as well as orthopedic and obstetrical doctors were on the teaching staff of the hospital's school for nurses.

Dr B as diagnostician - not enough indication for surgery

The quality of the Balch group impressed me both in character and performance. I was later to know them in work that I did with a few of their patients, following study with Miss Todd. The studio in which Miss Todd worked was at 260 Clarendon St., a short block away from the offices of this medical group. Even before I began my nurse's training Dr. Balch was sending certain of his patient's to Miss Todd for the help he thought she could give them and she was referring students to him for what she knew he could do for them. Through this close contact with Miss Todd's teaching I was very grateful to know what his opinion of the results might foresee. It came about in this way.

*Build up more
or research*

' Dr. Balch's office nurse decided to study with the Todd group a few years after I began my teaching of Miss Todd's principles regarding body movement. She was in a class a little ahead of me in graduating from Faulkner hospital. I especially admired her character as well as her high quality standard as a nurse. So when Dr. Howell, a pediatrician called me into his office to give me the medical data about a child with whom he desired me to work, it gave me an easy way of continuing an acquaintance with Miss Rebecca Tarr. Of course she had been observing the people that Miss Todd had been sending in to Dr. Balch and probably knew something about the results from them and possibly more from those patients sent by Dr. Balch to be helped by Miss Todd. At any rate when she was debating studying the technique herself naturally she asked Dr. Balch for his advice in the matter. What did he really think of the value of this work by Miss Todd? His reply was, "There is not a doubt in my mind but what it is a coming thing." This gave me great assurance. I also thought Miss Tarr would make an excellent teacher. After a few months she stopped her lessons with Miss Colwell and when I asked her why she said, "There is no use in my studying that work because I could not work with Miss Colwell." I was so amazed at the moment that nothing further was said about it. Later on as I thought about it and turned it over in my mind it occurred to me that she was so group minded that she was not able to think of functioning on her own. In later years she took a position as Superintendent of a small hospital. Now ^{Today} I realize that Miss Galbraith, a graduate nurse, should have been brought into the picture, to really advance the interest in the teaching.

It would seem logical to think that her approach as a nurse would have been better to start another nurse. What could have been an opportunity to advance the teaching was lost. I built up my work with children in the nursery schools and homes, and parents also took this advantage

to work with me. It saved them the inconvenience of going out which took time and energy and also gave them the choice of rest or other relaxation following.

was waiting to offer congratulations and give me my pin. She said they would send me my diploma but it never reached me and could not be found. It did not concern me as I knew I had the knowledge. I have the future framed in my mind instead of a RESEARCH OF TODD TECHNIQUE. record of the past on the wall. (what I myself knew about as a graduate nurse).

Dr. Franklin G. Balch (office at 279 Clarendon St. Boston Mass.) Mass. General (Faulkner Deaconess Baptist hospitals) When a student nurse at Faulkner Hospital, 4 years before beginning study with Mabel E. Todd I was interested in observing the doctors who came to the hospital on their rounds of visits to their private patients. The hospital was situated in West Roxbury, about a 1/2 hour distance in time by street car and auto from the Public hospitals - Mass. General - and Boston City - and Deaconess, Baptist and others. Faulkner had been fairly recently established to take care of the West Roxbury district of Boston and also the private patients of those doctors who worked in the above mentioned hospitals. The group of doctors surrounding Dr. Balch (Dr. Edward L. Young Jr., Dr. Horace K. Sowles, Dr. W.W. Howell, Doctor Balch Junior) were on the teaching staff of the hospital's School for Nurses as also prominent obstetrician's who brought the hospital wealthy patients. (Dr. Robert DeNormandie, Dr. Torbert, Dr. Robert Green, Prominent orthopedic men brought their patients too: Dr. Lloyd T. Brown, (Dr. Goldthwaite's assistant)

The quality of the Balch group impressed me both in character and medical performance. I was later to know them as backing me in the work that I did for some of their patients. Miss Todd's studio was at 260 Clarendon St. a short block away from the offices of this medical group. Even before I was at the hospital Dr. Balch was sending patient's to Miss Todd and she was referring student's to him.

A few years after I began my teaching of Miss Todd's technique Dr. Balch's office nurse decided to study with the Todd group. She like myself was a graduate of Faulkner Hospital, and had been assisting Dr. Balch as an operating nurse ever since. Naturally she asked him if he advised her to go into this field. His reply was that there was not a doubt in his mind but what it was the coming thing. This gave me great assurance and also confidence in her ability to raise the standard for the teaching to an even greater degree. After a few months she stopped her lessons and when I asked her why said, "There is no use for me to

to study that work because I could not work with Miss COLWELL." I was

so amazed at the moment that I could not discuss the matter further.

And as I thought it over I felt she must be too group minded to be able

to think of functioning on her own. It probably helped me into the state

of mind that gradually led me to slowly withdraw from the Boston group

and move to Bay State Road to work and live. Dr. Perrin Wilson with whom

I had conferred agreed with me that 50 per cent of the earnings of a

teacher were too much for her to turn back into the studio, in return

for rental and referred students. He requested a $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent of his

assistants which he estimated as the cost of separate maintenance.

Doctor Perrin T. Wilson, an osteopath, whom my aunt and uncle had

begun to employ when he first began working in Cambridge, Mass. during

the first world war. As I entered the hospital for training in Feb. 1919

sometime during that year they referred me to him. It was through his

treatments that I was able to stand up under a nurses training course

of that day. The long hours, making beds, turning of mattresses as well

as patients, heavy trays to carry, stairs to climb, operating room floors

to mop. As I write this I now recall that my first day's work included

cleaning the delivery room (mopping the floor) after a birth. I did not

have a choice in that. But I did have a choice on my last day which was

only a half day. My operating room experience came during the last month

of my training due to the interruptions in my course from illness and a

tonsillectomy. On duty work started that November morning of 1923 with

a few operations. Then came making surgical dressings. It seemed

very tedious and at eleven o'clock I thought "how can I ever wait until

noon to come and give me my freedom of action"? I looked at the operating

room floor, - it really did not need mopping - . But I thought "that is

Freda

the only way I can stand waiting!" So I said to Miss Christie, operating

room supervisor whom I very much liked as well as her sister the night

supertendent Miss Zena Christie, "Would you be willing to let me mop the

Floor"? She smiled and said "yes, if you wish to." I pulled out the pail

soap and mop and filled the pail $\frac{1}{2}$ full with water rolled up my blue

sleeves for the last time and went to work. Shortly before twelve I put

the things away, straightened my cap, went to the office where Miss Ladd

for instance "Making the Body think"

In finding material that Miss Todd must have known about but did not talk about I have come to think that she was good at adapting what someone else had started into her own theories and teaching.

It was so suggestive to her principles and she carried the ideas further with what she could add to them and leave out the wrong principles. This should encourage people of today. It is not necessary to be the originator of an idea. It is fully as clever, and possibly more, to use what someone else has started and interpret it in a simpler and more understandable way for the present. The formula for growth rooted in so distant a past that continuous study is necessary to bring out basic factors. The scientific material in "The Thinking Body" brings out the research material that Miss Todd spent her life

Miss Todd emphasized - the height and depth of the body

WHY ? Because up and down action is the direction breath takes. (exhalation - inhalation)

"gravity and reactionary force take.

" main principle of muscle is relaxation - contraction lengthening-shortening and one side at a time

Quotes from the "Thinking Body". Pp. 293-4-5- (breathe-move Appreciation and application of Nature's principles enable us to rest as we go. As one part or system works it's working mate is automatically thrown into the rest phase of the rhythm. Relaxation is the equilibrium of the rest and activity phases in the rhythms of living: rest being the passive phase between the active phases of these rhythms. Example- heart - diaphragm reciprocal muscle action.

The principle of work pairing rest - rhythm of daily routine. Frequency of applying principle more important than length of time for rest. Image itself (inner image) a form of physical expression and motor response is the reflection of it. (over)

Repeated from bottom of former page. Inner image itself is a form of physical

physical expression and motor response is the reflection of it.

WHAT IS MOVEMENT?

It was so suggestive to her principles and she carried the ideas

Breathing (letting air out and in) as you go.

further with what she could add to them and leave out the wrong

exhalation falls low in the back.

principles. This should encourage people of today. It is not necessary

to be the original inventor, clever, and possibly

more, to use what someone else has started and interpret it in a

simpler and more understandable way for the present. The formula for

Movement patterns keep forming by changing the bone angles

at the joints one by one.

Patterns can be

Very very slow - very slow - slow - more rapid - fast -

faster - very fast - very very fast.

Mrs Todd emphasized - the height and depth of the body

Movement is largely cross - patterning.

WHY? Because up and down action is the direction breath takes.

Rhythm of movement depends on combining

respiratory force take.

Breathing as you go with

as you go.

"main principle of muscle is relaxation - contraction"

Sequence of changing the bone angles

lengthening-shortening

and one side at a time

Quotes from the "Thinking Body". pp. 293-4-5-

Appreciation and application of Nature's principles enable us to rest

as we go. As one part or system works it's working mate is automatically

thrown into the rest phase of the rhythm. Relaxation is the equilibrium

of the rest and activity phases. The rhythm of living: rest being

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heart - diaphragm reciprocal muscle action.

The principle of work pairing rest - rhythm of daily routine. Frequency

of applying principle more important than length of time for rest.

Image itself (inner image) a form of physical expression and motor

response is the reflection of it.

Some students have thought that Mabel Todd was not properly scientific. Dr. Jesse Feiring Williams did or he would not have invited her to Columbia Univ. as a teacher and lecturer. He also gave her the chance to qualify for a bachelor's degree, in either science or art, after taking a few courses at Columbia Univ. Miss Todd chose a degree in science.

The history of all our scientific development has been the way an idea has been born, nurtured by a few in it's early life and gradually developed to a secure and readily adapted method for the general mass of people. Miss Todd offered a way to nurture as well as repair human bodies and during the first world war many women, especially, were better able to carry on their heavy loads of work because of their study with her. She developed within them a desire and a way to meet their extra tasks with a method of procedure that could appeal to the imagination as a challenge or a game. This could lift their spirits to carry them on in difficult as well as monotonous moments.

Teaching

'Animal adjusts its weight to balance and move. The human tendency is to overwork their muscles.

Emphasize Miss Todd's physical strength. She had the build of an athlete without the corners. She had a rounded look that was very pleasing to observe. Powerful thighs, she had based some of her work in her lower back and thighs that it gave her the appearance of great supple strength, that simply oozed over into you. Osmosis. Her hand clasp put strength into you. She was so well poised as she stood through her axis. Her touch - - - The way she could handle large people. As she held my thigh, as I lay on the table, it seemed so light in her grasp, and she moved it in its socket so easily it was a never to be forgotten image, and educated me to be ready for the next one.

you just drank

I couldn't comprehend what she wanted when I was standing. My body was so tense and out of line in so many respects that I felt very conscious when I first tried to do what she asked.

Miss Galbraith made it easier for me as she went over the explanation of what Miss Todd thought I should do. I felt wonderful after a lesson every time, with any of the teachers. It all contributed.

In a table lesson to me each move that Miss Todd made with her hands, along with the direction to me to follow, must have both relaxed and integrated me as it gave me strength. In one of the last of my lessons with her in Boston she worked directly on my diaphragm. It was the only experience that I ever had of anyone doing so. I was a little surprised at first but not at all apprehensive. I always relaxed to her touch as I was confident that she knew what she was doing. Miss Sheehan was observing the lesson and said later that Miss Todd had worked too hard on me. She had done a lot to release my rib case in the front.

(over)

THE STARPOINT SCHOOL

c/o Westchester Chap. A.H.R.C.

21 MOTT STREET • WHITE PLAINS, N. Y.

WHITE PLAINS 9-3008

Mr. DON FRIEND
Executive Director

Mrs. MARGUERITE B. SLATER, A.B., M.A.
Head Teacher and Educational Director

CONSULTANTS

Dr. Sidney Carter, A.B.
Elizabeth S. Freidus, B.S., M.A.
Shulamith Kastein, Speech Pathologist
Dr. Zeldia Klapper, Ph.D.
L. L. Kolburne, B.A., M.A.
Dr. Margaret Rose Giannini, M.D.

Miss Todd checked with me following the lesson before telling me come to an upright position. She asked if I felt all right, and I said yes, ^{altho a little tired.} I have thought of the experience vividly down through the years and been so thankful to have had it. It was a continuing lesson that grew and developed within me. I gradually became ^{more and more} aware of the depth of my diaphragm. The front to back dimension, the ligaments in the 8th - 10th ribs had become so rigid that I was locked to the ^{of the} lower part) and I felt that Miss Todd knew if it were not released I would not be able to progress very far. Her touch was so gentle but I grasped the fact that she determined to start me in releasing my breath otherwise I would not be able to go very far in reducing my tension and ^{getting a chance} at releasing ^{my} body.

Quotes of pupil's to be used:

"The teachers have the best of this. It does the most for them." Mrs. Sargent.
Reason she could say this was because she saw the continuous ^{postural} improvement
in the several teachers in the Boston studio. It keeps a teacher active
in her thinking and practicing of the principles and images involved.
This takes place during the study and preparation for teaching a
lesson and also during the lesson.

A young child said to Miss Todd - "Oh, now I understand -
You think it
Then you see it
Then you forget it
Then it happens."

Image - sponge - Peter Day
shell - Jimmy Greenwood

Miss Todd had within herself an idea that was difficult to express in the words of that day. It was much the same idea as that held by Isadora Duncan who could express it so beautifully in movement.

Miss Todd realized that to learn to move ^{in balance, something} is like learning a language.

There is an alphabet with which the eyes must become familiar, syllable sounds the ear can pick up, a rhythm of words that muscles can feel, a choreography of movement that makes routine action a joy.

This is what Miss Todd felt in herself to a great degree

A young child said to Miss Todd - " Oh, now I understand-

~~You think it~~ You think it
Then you see it
Then you forget it
Then it happens"

" Take from the past - to use in the present - to prepare for the future" -

education continually builds on
This quote from John Dewey was an idea that carried over from the 19th into the 20th century. A few in any age personify the main characteristics current in their lifetime. *and carry this idea into the following years* Mabel Elsworth Todd helped develop and keep alive the idea that the human body is a vertebrate and needs to follow through on it's inheritance, Human body engineering (functioning).
was one of those who

1 It was extremely important for me that attention was called to the fact that natural body movement is under the guidance of the unconscious. Physical education was over directing our movement in too conscious a way. The individual mind was not being given the education necessary in making the change from the horse and buggy era to the more mechanical one.

2 Education for more scientifically designed equipment zoomed ahead but the human body did not catch on too readily to what effects unnatural movement or the lack of movement might have on the human structure. For instance you could go farther and do more in a shorter period of time. It became more fun to ride than to walk.

4 Vision had to jump fast to observe what was passing before it instead of moving more slowly from one object to another.

3 Breathing became shorter and more rapid. The diaphragm and heart began to get lazy as the legs went on strike.

5 Alignment was considered unnecessary or too much bother.

6 Adults did not understand that child development began at birth and that the baby had a built-in mechanism for knowing what to do. He seldom was given the right environment in which to use his inheritance to the best advantage.]

over

W.E.T.
Biography is a History of the Man.
T. B. is really her biography and a history of the movement

is how T. B. came to be written
written it is a great deal for me
personally

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that the baby had a built-in mechanism for knowing what to do. He seldom
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over