

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

4th November, 1968.

Dear Mr. Tanner,

I am sorry to come back again over the matter of the Reverend Roy William Cotton. Since my last letter I have had a chance of talking with his Vicar who, as I said, has been perfectly aware of the past history all the way along.

I think I ought also to add that before accepting Cotton as an ordinand I went very carefully indeed into the past, and I discovered that all who then had any dealings with him had grave doubts of his guilt in the matter for which he was accused. This is now fifteen years ago and there have been no indications of any sort of trouble since then.

Cotton himself has been staggered that the matter should have been raised all over again, and not unnaturally asks the question 'am I to be continually dogged by an incident in which I still assert my innocence?'

Secondly, the Vicar is bitterly disappointed for Cotton has pulled together a Scout Troup which has been very much in the doldrums and is making a resounding success of it, and the Vicar has literally no one to replace him. Portsmouth, I think, of all places is desperately short of leaders for youth organizations and it may well be that the troup will have to fold up.

My simple question is, how long does a doubtful past record dog a man and if on every side those concerned intimately with him are satisfied, does this past history hang over him? I should add that he has now been nearly three years with his parish and has been entrusted with the Scout Troup by his Vicar all the way along.

Yours very sincerely,

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