

## **The Brampton Colony: Introduction to spreadsheet on adult staff (January 2024).**

### **Rob David**

Staffing the Brampton colony was a significant undertaking supervised by Lady Cecilia Roberts. Two maestras (teachers) and a varying number of Auxiliaries (largely untrained young women) who were assigned to the Brampton and Ambleside colonies came with the children on SS *Habana* in May 1937. The maestras worked hard and were instrumental in maintaining the education programme for the children. The value of the Auxiliaries varied. It is clear from the documents in the Roberts archive at Carlisle Archive Centre (DROB) that some of the Auxiliaries were not an asset to the community. By searching the archive readers will be able to acquire more information about the Auxiliaries.

In addition to the Spanish staff a large number of British adults were employed at the colonies. They took on a variety of administrative and housekeeping roles. There were also a number of British teachers who supplemented the work of the maestras. Some of these British staff remained at the colony for most of the time that it was open, but others were clearly only employed for short periods of time. As the children were repatriated the number of British staff required diminished.

Information about staffing can be found in the Roberts archive at Carlisle Archive Centre (DROB). Other information exists in oral testimony, the correspondence between maestra 'Lolita' and Kenneth Southern, and through personal communications between Rob David and family members.

In DROB Accn H15988 Box 3 at Carlisle Archive Centre there is a diary kept by Mr Dawson, one of the cooks, between 24 January and 12 March 1939. It accompanies his letter of resignation. Its purpose would seem to have been to justify what he says about his job and the difficulties he encountered from other staff members and some of the children. It is therefore difficult to know whether it is a true record of what happened or is the work of an embittered employee who was unpopular with the rest of the staff. It suggests that various named members of staff were always late to breakfast, that some staff members were absent without permission, that on 27 out of 38 days during the period of this diary there was no school provided for the children, and on the other days what schooling there was was of a limited duration, and it names some of the children who behaved badly or were in trouble with the police. As it is difficult to verify this information I have excluded it from the information provided on the accompanying spreadsheet of adult helpers. If anyone is interested to read what the diary says it can be seen in the archive box indicated at the start of this paragraph.

The accompanying spreadsheet of adult staff lists those who staff members who have been identified, the roles they had, and the sources of information about them.