

# Federal Probation

Integrating Community Service: The Referral Process ..... Probation Division, Administrative Office of the United States Courts

Strategies for Working With Special Needs Probationers ..... Ellen C. Wertlieb, Martin A. Greenberg

Integrating the Industries: Adversity Impact on the Private Sector? ..... Robert C. Grieser

Use of State Court-based Officials: Community Corrections, Court Orders, and Solutions ..... Fred Holbert, Jack E. Call

Utilization of Probationers: Support Rehabilitation? ..... Francis T. Cullen, Faith E. Lutze, Bruce G. Link, Nancy Travis Wolfe

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# This Issue in Brief

**Implementing Community Service: The Referral Process.**—A community service sentence can serve many purposes—to deter, punish, or rehabilitate, while at the same time assuring that an offender receives a publicly discernable penalty. With increased interest in community service, many questions and issues have arisen regarding its use. This article, an excerpt from the monograph, *Community Service: A Guide for Sentencing and Implementation*, concentrates on the practical aspects of operating a community service program. Among the issues addressed are how to select appropriate agencies to receive community service; how to prepare the offender for community service; how to follow up after the offender is placed with an organization; and how to evaluate the success of a community service program. The information is especially directed to Federal probation officers but will also serve as a guide for other criminal justice and corrections professionals involved in sentencing and sentence implementation.

**Strategies for Working With Special-Needs Probationers.**—Authors Ellen C. Wertlieb and Martin A. Greenberg discuss the results of a survey of what alternatives to incarceration probation officers use with their disabled clients. Findings indicate a great deal of disparity regarding the approaches used within and across probation jurisdictions. All probation officers agreed, however, that they needed additional training to better serve their special-needs clients. The article concludes with some suggested strategies for improving service-delivery to probationers with disabilities.

**Do Correctional Industries Adversely Impact the Private Sector?**—Correctional industries have been the subject of much attention and often unfavorable publicity over the past several years. Complaints have gotten stronger in recent months as prison industries nationally are seeking to expand to keep pace with rapidly rising prison populations. Author Robert C. Grieser responds to those com-

plaints by addressing some of the numerous myths about prison industries that exist on the part of many in the private sector. The author also suggests ways in which the private sector and prison industries can work together to the benefit of both.

**The Perspective of State Correctional Officials on Prison Overcrowding: Causes, Court Orders, and Solutions.**—Overcrowding continues to be a major problem facing prison administrators

## CONTENTS

|   |  |  |              |
|---|--|--|--------------|
| [ | Implementing Community Service: The Referral Process .....   | Probation Division, Administrative Office of the United States Courts      | 117255       |
| [ | Strategies for Working with Special-Needs Probationers .....   | Ellen C. Wertlieb<br>Martin A. Greenberg                                   | 117256<br>10 |
| [ | Do Correctional Industries Adversely Impact the Private Sector? .....  | Robert C. Grieser  | 117257<br>18 |
| [ | The Perspective of State Correctional Officials on Prison Overcrowding: Causes, Court Orders, and Solutions .....                        | Fred Holbert<br>Jack E. Call   | 117257<br>25 |
| [ | The Correctional Orientation of Prison Guards: Do Officers Support Rehabilitation? .....   | Francis T. Cullen<br>Faith E. Lutze<br>Bruce G. Link<br>Nancy Travis Wolfe | 117259<br>33 |
| [ | Rehabilitation and Correctional Privatization: Observations on the 19th Century Experience and Implications for Modern Corrections ..... | Alexis M. Durham III   | 117260<br>48 |
| [ | Ireland's Ennis Inebriates' Reformatory: A 19th Century Example of Failed Institutional Reform .....                                     | Beverly A. Smith   | 117261<br>53 |
| [ | The Kentucky Substance Abuse Program: A Private Program to Treat Probationers and Parolees .....   | Gennaro F. Vito  | 117262<br>65 |
| [ | The Forgotten Few: Juvenile Female Offenders .....   | Ilene R. Bergsmann   | 117263<br>73 |
|   | Departments  |  |              |
|   | News of the Future .....   |  | 79           |
|   | Looking at the Law .....   |  | 85           |
|   | Reviews of Professional Periodicals .....  |  | 89           |
|   | Your Bookshelf on Review .....   |  | 95           |
|   | Letter to the Editor .....   |  | 105          |
|   | It Has Come to Our Attention .....   |  | 106          |

# Ireland's Ennis Inebriates' Reformatory: A 19th Century Example of Failed Institutional Reform\*

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IN THE late 19th century, one of the chronic problems facing Irish prison authorities was the habitual drunkard. The General Prisons Board (GPB), charged since the 1877 centralization with control of convict and local prisons, consistently called for some other means of dealing with the alcoholic recidivist than repeated, short-term imprisonments which did little more than allow the habitual drunkard to sober up and to disrupt the local gaols.

In this call for alternative methods of dealing with the habitual drunkard, the GPB was joined by prison authorities elsewhere in the British Isles, police authorities, temperance advocates, various charities, and other groups. As an answer to the problem and in response to pressure groups, the government authorized a three-tier system of inebriate reformatories. One of the three tiers was made up of state reformatories, totally financed by the central government and run as part of the prison systems. In Ireland, the government ordered Ennis County Prison converted into a state inebriates' reformatory under the GPB. Annual reports on Ennis written by the GPB and by the reformatory's own officers showed an original optimism about the institution's ability to reform its inmates and about its daily operations. But that optimism faded with the strains of competing with private reformatories, of running an institution different in purpose and form from prisons, and of dealing with a small, recalcitrant population. Not only did Ennis have limited success with those relatively few habitual inebriates/criminals with which it dealt, but also authorities recognized that its inmate population represented only a small fraction of the eligible pool, who still crowded the gaols and even the convict prisons.

The Irish prison system, once the model of prison reform worldwide, saw Ennis as a valuable experiment and a means to regain some of the prestige and acceptance lost in the decline of the Irish or Crofton system and in the political conflicts of the 1880's

which had touched the prisons and blackened the names of prison officials. The overall failure of Ennis also meant a failure in the GPB's unannounced purpose, rehabilitation of the reputation of the Irish prison system. Ennis as inebriates' reformatory essentially disappeared with World War I, along with the late Victorian spirit of reform that had spawned it.

## Introduction

Any effort to understand the appearance, functioning, and decline of Ennis requires an examination of the history of the Irish prison system and very briefly inebriety and temperance movements and the political context during the time of its operation. For the story of the institution itself, this study relies on the official, annual reports of the GPB for much of its information. Of course, such a reliance creates some problems. Officials responsible for the safe, effective functioning of an institution are not likely to admit, at least readily or without another purpose, the failures that occur during the period of their supervision. However, in the case of Ennis, as well as other institutions, the official reports, when read carefully, do give insights into the problems of the reformatory. Fortunately, these official reports on Ennis do provide very brief portraits of the persons admitted to and released from the institution. The reformatory's small inmate population, official concern with the success of the program, and general public interest in the experiment probably led to the inclusion of such portraits, which do not appear in the reports of other Irish penal institutions, with exception of the Clonmel Borstal, another late 19th century experiment. The problems in dealing with these portraits will be dealt with later; but the official reports, together with secondary sources, do provide at least a partial view of the reformatory.

Some of those secondary sources are part of the on-going debate on the origins of the asylum/penitentiary/prison. Even before and certainly after the publication of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*,<sup>1</sup> many scholars have examined the growth of the custodial institutions, largely in the United States and West-

\*An earlier draft of this article was delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology at Montreal, Canada, November 1987. The author thanks Dr. Alexis M. Durham of the Center for Studies in Criminology and Law at the University of Florida for his comments on that earlier draft.

<sup>1</sup>Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York, NY: Pantheon, 1978.

ern Europe. Their perspectives have varied. Few cling to old progressive concepts that each institution, each reform meant more humane and/or efficient treatment. More scholars argue the first prisons, asylums, hospitals, etc., arose out of the desire by society, or at least those who ran society and government through wealth and influence, to control the "deviant." Marxist or radical scholars see that control as more than just "keeping the streets safe." They believe that the controlling elements in society, capitalists if you will, wanted to subordinate and train the lower classes through public institutions to be profitable workers. To other scholars, the social control theory smacks too much of a grand, but unworkable "conspiracy." While many involved in the development of the first prisons may have had goals and methods in common, they did not actively coordinate their efforts. And the humane efforts of early reformers cannot be dismissed as mere hypocrisy.

Increasingly scholars, including some like Ignatieff<sup>2</sup> once considered a part of the social control perspective, are urging another approach, namely social context. They argue that institutions developed in response to a number of social, economic, political, and bureaucratic factors, including the desire of the working classes to be protected from being victimized or burdened by those of their own class. The social context approach has been criticized for being too atheoretical and for emphasizing that the practice of early institutions did not live up to the reform goal. Racism, sexism, nativism, inefficiency, and various other factors undercut the promise of the institutions.

The differences between the various schools of thought suggest that perhaps we can never have a "generic" theory on the development of the asylum that applies over time and across cultures or societies. In a narrower context, it is possible that historians have too much tried to apply what they have learned about the late 18th and 19th century penitentiary to other later institutions. What has been lost in this debate is the essence of the historian's craft, a sense of time and place. Social control historians argue that society affects its prisons, but only

in a certain direction. Although they may have done so more directly, the "ruling" classes were not the only ones to influence those institutions. Social context historians, for their part, make anachronistic judgments. For example, while laudibly explaining how and to what extent prejudice became entrenched in the penal system, they seem to imply that prejudice has disappeared or lessened in our present-day institutions. Such a position may well be inaccurate and unfortunate self-congratulation. If indeed our current institutions are less prejudiced than earlier ones, it is only because our society is marginally less so. Likewise, 19th century institutions would have reflected the prejudices of their own times.

Perhaps scholars of prison history should borrow from those of industrialization. The exact causes and steps of the original Industrial Revolution remain in dispute, but it is agreed that economies that underwent industrialization later than England or even the United States differed in their development from those first industrial giants. Of course, some characteristics remained the same. Thus, in Third World countries, peasant populations underwent cultural demographic change in moving to the cities and to an "industrial time." But those same Third World countries imported whole technologies, rather than developing industrialization all over again from its modest beginnings. The choice of industries would have been dependent on the availability of raw materials, world markets, governmental policy, and any number of factors.

Likewise, the development of prisons in the late 19th and early 20th centuries did not replicate exactly the origins of the penitentiary. By that time, very few inside or outside government had to be convinced of the rightness or necessity of prisons. While the basic goals of punishment and many of the methods of penal management may have remained the same, the prisons developed after the mid-19th century differed from their predecessors if for no other reason than the differences in their environment. To quote Ignatieff: "The real challenge is to find a model of historical explanation which accounts for institutional change without imputing conspiratorial rationality to a ruling class, without reducing institutional development to a formless *ad hoc* adjustment to contingent crisis, and without assuming a hyper-idealist, all-triumphant humanitarian crusade."<sup>3</sup> In his call for a new model, Ignatieff points to the necessity of examining early 20th, as opposed to 19th century, institutions to better understand our prison, or our whole criminal justice system today. He, like McConville and others,<sup>4</sup> urges that sin-

<sup>2</sup>Michael Ignatieff, *A Just Measure of Pain: The Penitentiary in the Industrial Revolution*. New York, NY: Pantheon, 1978; Michael Ignatieff, "State, Civil Society and Total Institutions: A Critique of Recent Social Histories of Punishment." In Stanley Cohen and Andrew Scull (eds.), *Social Control and the State*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1983, pp. 75-105.

<sup>3</sup>Ignatieff, "State, Civil Society and Total Institutions," p. 77.

<sup>4</sup>Sean McConville, *A History of English Prison Administration*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981; Margaret Delacy, *Prison Reform in Lancashire, 1700-1850: A Study in Local Administration*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1986; and Eric Stockdale, *A Study of Bedford Prison, 1660-1877*. London: Phillimore, 1977.

gle institutions, not entire prison systems, be studied. It is arguable that we have also not traced the histories of institutions that bridged the transition between the centuries.

Ennis Inebriates' Reformatory, spawned in the late Victorian era, lasted until World War I. It used literally the foundations of one of the earlier 19th century prisons, but Ennis was geared to rehabilitate, even more than deter, a specialized criminal population of male and female habitual drunkards. It featured a carefully chosen custodial staff and greater usage of professionals, the chaplain who had been the symbol of reform in the 19th century and the doctor who was to be the symbol of treatment in the 20th. As will be shown, the reformatory retained vestiges of Crofton's Irish system, yet approached the framework of the co-sex institutions of the 20th century. It was innovative in training and recreation, yet restricted by the nature of the facility and the availability of land. It was to serve all of Ireland, yet it had one of the smaller inmate populations of the prison system. Its appearance was one of the last victories of the temperance and inebriety movements; its disappearance was one indication of the decline of those movements. The following sections outline the history of the prison system of which Ennis was a part, the movements and pressures which brought about its opening, and the forces which shaped its operation.

### *History of the Prison System*

Prior to centralization, the Irish prison system was not a system, but a mixture of state-run convict prisons, whose size, number, and importance had grown with the virtual abolition of transportation to

Australia in the 1850's, and local gaols (major facilities holding convicted prisoners not sentenced to penal servitude) and bridewells (small facilities holding defendants prior to trial or offenders serving very short sentences). The gaols and bridewells were operated independently by county and city authorities.<sup>5</sup> Attempts to bring uniformity and basic humane conditions to the local gaols brought the trend-setting appointment of two inspectors-general in 1822, nearly a decade and a half before their English and Scottish counterparts. Of course, inspectorates were a feature of British governmental expansion in the 19th century.<sup>6</sup> The inspectors-general made annual reports, but by law they had no means of enforcing their recommendations on local authorities.

It was the convict prisons, however, that were to make Ireland synonymous with prison reform. In 1854-55, Sir Walter Crofton<sup>7</sup> was appointed chairman of the newly created directors of convict prisons, who were to bring uniformity to the convict prisons. Basing his reforms on the work of Alexander Maconochie with transported felons in Australia,<sup>8</sup> Crofton developed the Irish or Crofton system of graduated marks earned by prisoners for good conduct and labor, intermediate prisons geared toward training in agriculture and the trades, and police supervision of inmates upon release. This system became the worldwide model for reform in the 1860's, and it was the focus of the 1870 National Prison Congress in the United States. Even in its early stages, however, the Crofton system had serious flaws: the non-existence of an intermediate prison for women, limited training in all the prisons, a reliance on corporal punishments, and the unwillingness and inability of the police to supervise released convicts. Plagued by ill health, Crofton left the chairmanship after about 7 years service. With him went much of the drive for reform.<sup>9</sup>

By the 1870's, the annual reports of both the inspectors-general and the directors revealed, among other problems: untrained prison staff, recidivism and drunkenness among prisoners, and the overall failure of local authorities to meet statutory requirements on discipline, labor, diet, education, health, and classification of prisoners. But it took more than prison authorities' insistence on reform to bring about centralization. Public interest in penal affairs arising out of the controversial treatment in English convict prisons of the Fenians, failed Irish revolutionaries of the 1860's, and Conservative campaign promises of local tax relief helped to move Parliament in 1877 to establish three separate, centralized prison systems, in England and Wales, Scotland, and

<sup>5</sup>Joseph P. Starr, "The Enforcing of Law and Order in Eighteenth Century Ireland: A Study of Irish Police and Prisons from 1665 to 1800." Ph.D. dissertation, Trinity College, Dublin, 1968; Tom Corfe, "Monuments: Kilmainham Jail," *History Today*, 30, May 1980, pp. 46-47; R.B. McDowell, *The Irish Administration, 1801-1914*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964; Michael V. Conlon, "Debtors in Cork Gaols, 1705-1872," *Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, 47, 1942, pp. 9-23; Henry Heaney, "Ireland's Penitentiary, 1820-1831: An Experiment That Failed," *Studia Hibernica*, 14, 1974, pp. 28-39; and Freida Kelly, *A History of Kilmainham Gaol: The Dismal House of Little Ease*. Cork and Dublin: Mercier Press, 1988.

<sup>6</sup>P.W.J. Bartrip, "British Government Inspection, 1832-1875: Some Observations," *Historical Journal*, 25(3), 1982, pp. 605-26; Eric Stockdale, "A Short History of Prison Inspection in England," *British Journal of Criminology*, 23(3), July 1983, pp. 209-28.

<sup>7</sup>Richard S.E. Hinde, "Sir Walter Crofton and the Reform of the Irish Convict System, 1854-61," *The Irish Jurist*, n.s. 12, 1977, pp. 115-41.

<sup>8</sup>John V. Barry, "Pioneers in Criminology: Alexander Maconochie (1787-1860)," *Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology, and Police Science*, 47, July-August 1956, pp. 145-61; William Banks Taylor, "The Separate System under Fire: Alexander Maconochie and Prospective Penal Discipline," *New England Journal on Prison Law*, 7, 1981, pp. 54-71.

<sup>9</sup>Mary Carpenter, *Reformatory Prison Discipline, as Developed by the Rt. Hon. Sir Walter Crofton in the Irish Convict Prisons*. London: Longmans, Green, Reed, 1872; Elizabeth Eileen Dooley, "Sir Walter Crofton and the Irish or Intermediate System of Prison Discipline," *New England Journal on Prison Law*, 7, 1981, pp. 72-96.

Ireland. The Prisons (Ireland) Act (40 & 41 Vict. c. 49) took centralization one step further than in England in that both local and convict prisons were under a single board.

Despite the promise for uniformity, flexibility, and change offered by the creation of the General Prisons Board (GPB), the prison system continued to be troubled. Centralization coincided with an agricultural depression and the resulting agrarian unrest and demands for land reform. "Suspects" held without trial under the Protection of Person and Property Act of 1881, including major Nationalist leaders in Parliament; the "Invincibles" arrested for the Phoenix Park murders of Ireland's Chief Secretary and his subordinate; members of the Ladies' Land League who campaigned for land reform; and other political prisoners crowded Irish prisons and brought ordinary operations to a virtual halt. More importantly, the presence of such men and women forced public attention on the prison system, and it was found wanting.

Its defects were clearly revealed in the investigations and report of the Royal Commission on Irish Prisons of 1883-85. The commission report outlined in very clear terms that the Irish prison system, once the model for the world, was both inept and wasteful. Although acknowledging that Parliament had neglected to pass necessary enabling legislation and that generally unforeseen political unrest had complicated the task of establishing a centralized, humane penal system, the report pointed to the failures of the GPB to deal effectively with such basic problems as staff selection and supervision, building maintenance and safety, and division of executive responsibility among its own membership and the reconstituted inspectorate.<sup>10</sup>

In the next few years the system faced its greatest challenge. The failure of Home Rule agitation to obtain a separately governed Ireland, inadequate land reform, agricultural depression, tenant protests in the so-called "Plan of Campaign," and the Conservative Government's countering coercion campaign brought about confrontations between Irish members of Parliament and the Government. Irish politicians and protestors often continued their struggles in prison by demanding a special, political status.

The contracting prison system, developed to house a prison population that had been declining since the effects of the 1845 Famine had diminished in the 1850's, had to supervise hundreds of political prisoners, ranging from virtually anonymous tenant farmers to fiery members of Parliament.<sup>11</sup>

Understandably, but not inevitably, the system was not adequate to the task and proved an embarrassment to the Conservative Government and a worry to its Irish Chief Secretary, who both defended the government's Irish policy in Parliament and supervised the GPB, and all other Irish departments, from Dublin Castle. Most of the blame for the prison system's failure in the late 1880's must lie with the General Prisons Board and its chairman, the Rt. Hon. Charles F. Bourke, who misjudged political crises and proved inflexible in prison administration. Many prison officials, especially gaol governors and doctors, saw their careers altered or destroyed when forced on one hand by the Government to adhere rigidly to prison rules in the handling of all prisoners, including those imprisoned under the politically motivated Coercion Act, and confronted on the other hand by members of their local communities and Nationalist politicians with demands for special, less severe conditions for men, and women, who demanded the label of political prisoner.<sup>12</sup> Luckily for the GPB, the political struggle was largely over by late 1889. In Catholic Ireland, the Nationalist Party, already drained by the political struggle and the imprisonments, broke apart over a divorce case involving its leader, Charles Stewart Parnell.<sup>13</sup>

By the mid-1890's, there were several major changes in the membership of the GPB and its inspectorate. Plagued by ill health and branded as inept, Bourke was forcibly retired in 1894. Others who had been there since the beginnings of centralization stepped down as well. They belonged to a generation of prison officials intent on bringing various local prisons up to a uniform, if barely humane standard, closing unnecessary or costly facilities, and maintaining an autocratic control over subordinates. With their disappearance and the easing of political tensions until the build-up to the Easter Rebellion of 1916, the prison system had greater freedom to operate and prison officials had a greater willingness to experiment, especially with practices and institutions that seemed in line with the 1895 Gladstone Report on prisons.

### *The Opening of Ennis*

The Gladstone Committee Report, either reflecting or directing the penal theories of the time, called

<sup>10</sup>Beverly A. Smith, *The Irish General Prisons Board, 1877-1885: Efficient Deterrence or Bureaucratic Ineptitude?* *The Irish Jurist*, n.s. 15, 1980, pp. 122-36.

<sup>11</sup>Beverly A. Smith, "William O'Brien, Mr. Balfour's Prisoner," *Eire-Ireland*, 18(4), Winter 1983, pp. 72-96.

<sup>12</sup>Beverly A. Smith, "The Irish Prison System, 1885-1914: Land War to World War," *The Irish Jurist*, n.s. 16, 1981, pp. 316-49; B.A. Smith, "Irish Prison Doctors—Men in the Middle, 1865-90," *Medical History*, 26, 1982, pp. 371-94.

<sup>13</sup>F.S.L. Lyons, *Culture and Anarchy in Ireland, 1890-1939*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979.

for: more separate cell accommodation; fewer arbitrary limits on visits and letters; greater cooperation between the Government and discharged prisoners' aid societies, which were to receive increased grants; limits on the use of bread and water diet and the punishment cells; earned remission of sentences served in local prisons; abolition of unproductive work; expansion of productive industries, especially farming, gardening, and land reclamation at higher gratuities and supervised by skilled warders; extended talking, library, exercise, and education privileges; an experimental penal reformatory for young adult males; separation of habitual criminals, weak-minded, and habitual drunkards from other classes; and assorted ameliorations of staff conditions.

Only piecemeal and to a limited degree could the GPB enforce or create these changes in the local and convict prisons under their control. Although the number of prisons, especially of the smaller bridewells, had decreased dramatically, the GPB still faced trying to deal with outmoded facilities, often built a century or more before, and with a staff and prison routine that seemed immutable. The new Board members needed a showcase institution in which they could implement some, even many of the much vaunted reforms of the Gladstone Committee Report and through which they might regain some of the prestige of the Irish prison system tarnished by a decade of political turmoil. The Board developed two such institutions, both in essence copied from the English models; the Inebriates' Reformatory at Ennis opened in 1900 and the Clonmel Borstal became operational in 1906. Of the two, only Clonmel was to survive. Juveniles and young adults have always been a focus of the criminal justice system, and it is easy to see why the borstal survived. But the inebriates' reformatory had enthusiastic support as well.

Although it seems clear that for internal reasons, the GPB may have wanted the development of an inebriates' reformatory, the Board may have also

been quite sincere in its public call for an institution like Ennis. Habitual drunkards or alcoholics had long been a major complaint of prison officials. As late as 1895, the Board estimated that at least half of the prisoners in the local prisons were habitual drunkards.

From a curative point of view this system has admittedly proved a failure. While from a disciplinary point of view grave objection must be taken to sending habitual drunkards to prison where, owing to their condition of health, they have in most cases to be treated as patients rather than as prisoners.

We think it to be a question for consideration whether the law on this subject should not be amended, so that such inebriates, instead of being committed to prison for short terms, should be detained and treated for lengthened periods in special institutions to be established for this purpose.<sup>14</sup>

Passages similar to the one above appeared in several GPB reports. Those sentiments were echoed in the reports of the Gladstone Committee of 1895, the Committee on the Treatment of Inebriates of 1893, and the Scottish Committee on Habitual Offenders of 1893, that all argued that the Habitual Drunkards Act of 1879 urging special sentences and other measures had not really alleviated the problem of offenders spending 1 or 2 days in the local gaol on a charge of drunkenness or related offenses. Some individuals were admitted to gaol more than 200 times in a single year.<sup>15</sup> This number of habitual offenders appeared all the larger with other crime rates actually going down or at least believed to be declining.<sup>16</sup>

Outside the prison system, temperance advocates, charities, and those interested in the rehabilitation of inebriates argued for specialized institutions. The larger temperance movement, already torn by differences between prohibitionists and abstainers, was making efforts in a number of areas: licensing laws, higher taxation of liquor, private and church-related abstinence societies, and a drive by some for total prohibition. So divided in its aims, the temperance movement could give only limited support to inebriate reformatories. Also, the temperance movement was always stronger in England than in Ireland, despite the image of Irish drunkenness connected to criminality. Temperance movements in Ireland had always suffered from the fact that the Irish public and the Catholic Church associated temperance with the wishes of the Protestant Ascendancy based in the North. Irish nationalists never took up the temperance cause per se; instead, nationalists argued that the alcohol problem would be one of many problems solved when the Irish took over control of their

<sup>14</sup>*British Sessional Papers*, 27th Annual Report of the General Prisons Board, 1895, p. 972.

<sup>15</sup>Leon Radzinowicz and Roger Hood, "Curing and Restricting the Habitual Drunkard." In *A History of the English Criminal Law*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986; Leon Radzinowicz and Roger Hood, "Incapacitating the Habitual Criminal: The English Experience," *Michigan Law Review*, 78, August 1980, pp. 1305-90.

<sup>16</sup>V.A.C. Gatrell and T.B. Hadden, "Nineteenth Century Criminal Statistics and Their Interpretation." In E.A. Wrigley (ed.), *Nineteenth Century Society: Essays in the Use of Quantitative Methods for the Study of Social Data*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Lynn McDonald, "Theory and Evidence of Rising Crime in the Nineteenth Century," *British Journal of Sociology*, 33, September 1982, pp. 404-20.

own affairs through Home Rule still under Parliament or complete independence.<sup>17</sup>

Charity organizations on both sides of the Irish Sea did cite drunkenness as one cause of family violence and the neglect of children. The inebriety movement pointed to retreats, homes, and other institutions used to house and rehabilitate the alcoholic in America since the 1850's.<sup>18</sup> In the United States, the inebriate facilities ranged from custody-oriented retreats to open, therapeutic homes. The range of institutions left no clear choice for British officials considering the state housing of the chronically alcoholic. The three-tiered system eventually developed probably reflected this variety of choice as much as the Government's willingness to be flexible in its approach.

Together those voices and examples were enough to induce the Government in 1898 to introduce legislation to establish inebriate reformatories in England, Wales, and Scotland. The measure was not extensively debated. When Irish Nationalist M.P. Tim Healy asked why Ireland had not been included, the Home Secretary, Sir M.W. Ridley, replied, tongue-in-cheek: "I do not know that there are any inebriates in Ireland."<sup>19</sup> At the bill's next reading, however, the Government extended the measure to Ireland as well. Under the provisions of the act, a court could sentence any person convicted of an offense punishable by imprisonment or penal servitude, committed under the influence of drink or in which drunkenness was a contributing factor, to up to 3 years in a state or a private certified inebriates' reformatory, if the

defendant admitted to being, or a jury found the defendant to be, a habitual drunkard.

The legislation established a three-tier system for the treatment of habitual alcoholics. Those three tiers or types were: the retreats, established and run by private individuals or charities and conducted as private hospitals or other facilities for those who could afford to pay for their own care;<sup>20</sup> the certified reformatories, established privately, but licensed, supervised, and partially funded by the central government, either through the Home Office or the Chief Secretary's office; and the state reformatories, part of the prison system controlled and funded by the government. Typically the state reformatories were the institutions with the harshest regimen. Some of the most difficult cases were sent there initially, but the state reformatories were also the last resort facility for the housing of those who had proven recalcitrant or violent in the certified reformatories.

### Functioning of the Institution

There have been three modern studies of these reformatories: MacLeod's sketch of the English system, McLaughlin's detailed study of the Scottish system based on official reports and confidential institutional records, and Bretherton's outline of the Irish system.<sup>21</sup> Bretherton divides his study among the three types and does not relate the Ennis facility to the rest of the prison system. Indeed in his mind, Ennis was less prison-like than the two certified reformatories which opened later. Without the involvement of the Catholic Church, Ennis might well have been the only inebriate reformatory in Ireland. Traditionally the Church has assumed nursing, custodial, or charity roles in Ireland, and the certified inebriates' reformatories were another example of that role.

The state, having closed a number of delapidated and economically unsound prisons, reopened one to serve as the state inebriates' reformatory. Closed as a prison in 1880, the Ennis County Jail had been temporarily reopened to house political prisoners during the 1880's, but it had lain largely dormant for nearly two decades. The best existing description of the horseshoe-shaped facility is from the 1850's. There is every reason to believe the basic structure of Ennis was not much changed when reopened at the turn of the century.

'All the males sleep in single cells, where they take their meals, and, during the hours of industrial labour, they work in the stalls, stone breaking being carried on apart by those engaged in it back to front at wide intervals so as to prevent intercourse. The females are divided into three classes, the

<sup>17</sup>A. Jaffe, "Reform in American Medical Science: The Inebriety Movement and the Origins of the Psychological Disease Theory of Addiction, 1870-1920," *British Journal of Addiction*, 73, 1978, pp. 139-47; Brian Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians*. London: Faber, 1971; Richard Stivers, *A Hair of the Dog: Irish Drinking and American Stereotypes*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976; L.P. Curtis, Jr., *Anglo-Saxons and Celts*. Bridgeport, CT: University of Bridgeport Press, 1968; Elizabeth Malcolm, "A Bibliography of Drink and Temperance in Ireland," *Alcohol and Temperance History Group Newsletter*, No. 8, Autumn 1983, pp. 8-10; E. Malcolm, "The Catholic Church and the Irish Temperance Movement, 1838-1901," *Irish Historical Studies*, 23, May 1982, pp. 1-16; E. Malcolm, *Ireland Sober, Ireland Free, Drink and Temperance in Nineteenth-Century Ireland*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1986.

<sup>18</sup>P.W.J. Baumohl, "On Asylums, Homes, and Moral Treatment: The Case of the San Francisco Home for the Care of the Inebriate, 1859-1870," *Contemporary Drug Problems*, 13(3), Fall 1986, pp. 395-445; Edward M. Brown, "What Shall We Do With the Inebriate?: Asylum Treatment and the Disease Concept of Alcoholism in the Late Nineteenth Century," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 21, 1985, pp. 380-95.

<sup>19</sup>Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 1898, 4th s., Vol. 56, Col. 975.

<sup>20</sup>Anne Digby, *Madness, Morality and Medicine: A Study of the York Retreat, 1796-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

<sup>21</sup>Roy M. MacLeod, "The Edge of Hope: Social Policy and Chronic Alcoholism, 1870-1900," *Journal of the History of Medicine*, 22, July 1967, pp. 215-45; Patrick M. McLaughlin, "Inebriate Reformatories in Scotland, 1902-1921: An Institutional History." Paper presented at the International Group for Comparative Alcohol Studies, 1984; George Bretherton, "Irish Inebriate Reformatories, 1899-1920: A Small Experiment in Coercion," *Contemporary Drug Problems*, 13(3), Fall 1986, pp. 473-502.

convicts and lunatics consisting two, while the third is almost subject to complete separation. All the prisoners of this sex occupy single cells, except those of the lunatics who require unremitting attendance and supervision.' At this stage the jail had 103 single cells for men and 12 for women. Each cell was not less than nine feet long, six feet wide and eight feet high. It had eight male and two female wards, yards, nine day rooms, four hospital rooms, nine sleeping rooms, one chapel, three workshops, one kitchen, one bakery, one laundry, two lavatories, two baths, two fumigating rooms, two reception rooms, eleven pumps and wells, four worksheds and one treadwell.<sup>22</sup>

Built in 1815-16, the institution was already four decades old when the bulk of the description above was written. It was another 40 years before the institution began to be remodeled for the reformatory after years of disuse.

Not only was the facility old and formerly vacant; but also the standards for housing inmates, especially in the wake of the Gladstone Report, had changed. The nature of the population had changed as well. Ennis housed more women than had the old prison. As noted later, the women frequently outnumbered the men by three to two. Health was an even greater concern than before because of the problems recognized as being engendered by excessive drinking. The reformatory would have to provide a safe, secure environment. Authorities were also determined to provide a less institutional environment. For example, they pulled up the flagstones which lined the cell floors and replaced them with wooden planks. Cell doors and windows were changed to provide more light and air, and so on. All these changes were expensive, even when done by inmate labor. But the institution was obviously going to be considered a model or important prison, which would be viewed by important visitors. Much of the work also went to improve the on-site housing of prison officers. The reformatory insisted on the selection of special, abstemious officers, who might have been more easily recruited and retained with adequate or better housing. And the training aspect of the reformatory regimen demanded refurbishing and expansion of the work areas for both warders and inmates.<sup>23</sup> The repairs consumed a great deal of the time and energy of the prison staff from governor on down and were the chief aspect of training and labor for the male inmates for most of the early years, despite the wish of many supporters of the inebriates' reformatories that inmates engage primarily in out-

door labor, supposedly healthier and more attuned to the agricultural basis of the country.

In addition to the repairs begun before Ennis opened in mid-1900, the Government prepared for institutional operations by issuing a set of rules, which established three stages for the inmates. The first stage inmates spent at least 6 months strictly confined within the walls of the institution "under the immediate supervision of an officer," a level of supervision not clearly defined. The inmate was not to be promoted "from that state unless by his industry and conduct he has proved himself worthy of promotion." In the second stage, inmates spent at least another 3 months at work, "but not necessarily under the immediate supervision of an officer." If conduct was satisfactory, the inmate could work without supervision within the institution "in positions of trust" and later "walk outside the walls under escort" and 3 months later without escort. The labor was to be "so far as circumstances of the reformatory allow, in such form of labor as he has either a desire to learn or has shown a capacity for executing, regard being had in all cases where possible, to his chances of employment on release."<sup>24</sup> As already noted, the circumstances of the reformatory demanded extensive labor on the renovation of the facility.

After at least 6 months in the third stage, some inmates were ready for the intermediate stage, supervised release, though many more were to leave the institution through the expiration of their sentences than through early release, earned through general good conduct.

In order to attain the intermediate class an inmate must (1) prove to the satisfaction of the governor and the medical officer, by his exemplary conduct in the third stage, that there exists a *reasonable* hope of his remaining a total abstainer and becoming a good citizen; (2) find a responsible person who will undertake in writing the charge of the inmate, and who will *periodically* report how he is conducting himself. The name of the inmate, with that of his proposed guardian, and other particulars as may be necessary will be laid before the visiting committee, or not less than two members thereof, who will therefore, if they are satisfied that his discharge can take place without danger to society, submit his name to the General Prisons Board for license of the Chief Secretary [emphasis added].<sup>25</sup>

The system of stages including release under supervision owed an obvious debt to Crofton's earlier system.

The narrative which accompanied the new rules made it clear that officials believed that Ennis compared favorably, even very favorably, to local prisons. Ennis featured strict cellular confinement only at night; dining and recreation rooms; better furnished sleeping rooms; better, more varied food; more

<sup>22</sup>Tim Kelly, "Ennis County Jail," *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, 16, 1973-1974, pp. 66-69. Kelly quotes from the Clare Jury Presentments of 1857.

<sup>23</sup>For example, 25th GPB, 1903, p. 134.

<sup>24</sup>23rd GPB, 1901, pp. 22-23.

<sup>25</sup>23rd GPB, 1901, p. 23.

frequent visits and letters; shorter hours of more varied labor for slightly more money; different clothing; smoking, exercise, and recreational game privileges; and occasional lectures and concerts.<sup>26</sup> Although the list is considerable in length, the differences between Ennis and the ordinary local prison were cosmetic at best.

The institution's timetable was simple: rise 6:30 a.m.; breakfast, 7:30; work 8:30-12:30; dinner, 12:45-2:00 p.m.; work, 2-5 p.m.; supper, 5 p.m.; in sleeping apartment (note not cell), 8 p.m.; lights out either 8:30 or 9 p.m. depending on classification. Although the small number of inmates would have made feeding them within the time allotted easy, the time structure did not allow for daily education. According to the governor:

The work of education is being carried on as usual, at least four hours' instruction being given each inmate in the week. Good progress has been made in this line; many of the inmates who were illiterate on reception are now able to read and write, and others have made equal progress. For the most part the inmates are attentive to the instructions given them, and many are both anxious and apt to learn. The schoolmaster and schoolmistress are unremitting in their attention to this branch of their duty.<sup>27</sup>

Such optimism about educational levels and the ability of education to reform were not unique to Ennis in the time period, but such paltry efforts could hardly overcome the neglect of a lifetime. So even though illiteracy was seen as a cause and literacy a cure for crime, unemployment, and other social ills, Ennis was probably not well equipped to meet the needs of illiterate, often emotionally disturbed inmates. The small staff of five male warders and four matrons was already stretched thin in even this small institution. And prison libraries of the time were notoriously outdated, inadequate, and filled largely with religious tracts.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>26</sup>23rd GPB, 1901, p. 18.

<sup>27</sup>27th GPB, 1905, p. 133.

<sup>28</sup>Thom Gehring and William R. Muth, "The Correctional Education/Prison Reform Link, Part I, 1840-1900," *Journal of Correctional Education*, 36(4), December 1985, pp. 140-48; Harvey J. Graff, "Pauperism, Misery and Vice: Illiteracy and Criminality in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Social History*, 11, Winter 1977, pp. 245-68; Henry Heaney, "Ireland's First Prison Library," *Library History*, 3, Autumn 1973, pp. 59-62.

<sup>29</sup>M. Heather Tomlinson, "Not an Instrument of Punishment: Prison Diet in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Consumer Studies and Home Economics*, 2, 1978, pp. 15-26; Valerie Johnston, "The Diets of the Local Prisons, 1835 to 1878," In D.V. Oddy and D.S. Miller (eds.), *Diet and Health in Modern Britain*. London: Croom Helm, 1985, pp. 207-30.

<sup>30</sup>25th GPB, 1903, p. 136.

<sup>31</sup>Estelle B. Freedman, "Their Sisters' Keepers: An Historical Perspective on Female Correctional Institutions in the United States, 1870-1900," *Feminist Studies*, 2, 1974, pp. 77-95; E.B. Freedman, *The Sisters' Keepers: Women's Prison Reform in America, 1830-1930*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1981.

<sup>32</sup>Betty Messenger, *Picking Up the Linen Threads: A Study in Industrial Folklore*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1975, 1978; Margaret MacCurtain and Donncha O. Corrain (eds.), *Women in Irish Society*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979.

Ennis officials were proud of the prisoner diet. Breakfast each day was tea, bread and butter or stirabout. Dinner three times a week included meat, while the same meals on the other 4 days featured potatoes, soup, and/or bread. Supper meant more bread and potatoes. With vegetables and fruits served only occasionally the meals lacked nutrient value, and even such a high level of carbohydrates was not enough to sustain those engaged in hard labor, sometimes after a lifetime of hard drinking. Despite these inadequacies, officials were probably correct that the Ennis diet was better than those elsewhere in the prison system.<sup>29</sup>

The work pattern outlined early on continued through the life of the institution with the amount of farming and gardening somewhat increased after the acquisition of an additional 4 acres of cultivatable land. For 1902, the Governor wrote:

The males have been chiefly employed, shoemaking, tailoring, carpentering, chopping firewood, gardening, and in the ordinary service of the Reformatory. About two and a quarter acres are under cultivation. . . . The females have been kept regularly at work in such occupations as cooking, cleaning, washing, sewing, knitting, making uniforms for the female officers, and the service of the Reformatory generally. They have been most industrious. All the clothing, &c., for the Reformatory and uniforms for the matrons have been made by them, and in addition, clothing, bedding, and uniforms to the value of £130 odd have been manufactured for the various prisons during the year 1902. Whenever it is possible I make every effort to utilize the labour at work of which the value can be appreciated by the inmate. The improved appearance of those employed at work which interests them is readily observed by anyone inspecting the Reformatory. Every inmate is employed at his own trade, if he has any.<sup>30</sup>

Domestic skills were the common labor of women in 19th century prisons.<sup>31</sup> Many of these women came from troubled families where they had shown few, if any, domestic skills in the widest sense of the term. This domestic training was to make them better wives and mothers. Although there were industrial, factory jobs for women in the North, women were kept in subordinate, family-oriented roles in conservative, agricultural, and Catholic Ireland.<sup>32</sup>

Ennis was to provide treatment, not deterrence. Almost every report featured a synopsis of the basic treatment philosophy of Ennis:

The treatment adopted was hygienic only—a wholesale regular life, plenty of best air, moderate strict discipline, total abstinence, and the personal influence of the staff and chaplains. The discipline is not over strict; the inmates are allowed very considerable latitude in many respects. They are confined within the walls of the reformatory for the first portion of their sentence, but later, when it is known that they can be trusted, they are allowed outside for walks. In every instance there is a distinct improvement in the personal appearance after a few months in the reformatory, and the restless, sleepless condi-

tion in which they are usually admitted disappears after a few weeks. They invariably increase in weight and the majority are happy and contented.<sup>33</sup>

That optimism is repeated time and time again in the official reports. However, the reports also indicate that the reform undergone in the institution was cosmetic and/or transitory. Despite the governors' annual reports that inmate discipline was excellent, the statistical tables of punishments required by law show dietary, restraint, and separation punishments handed out with regularity, especially to the female population. The females were more numerous, but also they were subject to stricter rules than the men in what was a restricted co-sex institution. The greater freedom of movement offered men in the institution and the extramural labor limited the freedom of movement and conduct of the women. The actual success of the institution in reforming habitual inebriates will be discussed in the last section.

Even at the time officials were willing to admit that the heavier responsibility placed on prison officers produced a strain, one much like the conflict between custody and treatment in the literature on present-day correctional officers. In the words of one of the observant chaplains:

I cannot help remarking that it gives me the impression of a greater strain being exercised on the minds of the officials, who come into more immediate and constant intercourse with the inmates in carrying out the *spirit* of kindness, yet strictness, than those in the ordinary prison are called on to bear. This is specially the case of the female side of the Home [emphasis in the original].<sup>34</sup>

The reports offer little about the officers other than their generally efficient conduct and their own total abstinence. From other sources,<sup>35</sup> it is clear that underpaid prison service did not always attract and keep the best officers. Warders and particularly matrons had long been urged to serve as role models or in more 19th century terms, moral examples. In other institutions it was less important that officers could not fulfill those roles than in Ennis.

As a national prison, once serving the whole country, Ennis had three chaplains—Catholic, Church of

Ireland, and Presbyterian. At various times, each of the three found himself with no co-religionists among the inmates. But successive Protestant chaplains wrote detailed reports. The priest consistently offered more perfunctory reports, perhaps for several reasons. Many local Catholic priests in the late 19th century were supporters of Nationalism, which urged that its followers not be a part of the British, or rather English, government of Ireland. The priests may have had more extensive extramural duties in a largely Catholic county. And the women whose numbers dominated the prisoner population were ministered to by the Sisters of Mercy, who were allowed to enter freely the institution.

The medical officers held a greater responsibility in Ennis than in other prisons; their duties more nearly resembled those of doctors in asylums or workhouses in that they remained in the institution and were not just called in periodically.<sup>36</sup> They were responsible for evaluating the physical and mental state of prisoners at admission, during their sentences, and prior to release. While not subject to the political pressures exerted on prison doctors during the earlier political troubles, they faced difficulties in dealing with an alcoholic, disturbed population in a facility being literally rebuilt around them. Consistently, the prison doctors reported that they did not employ the various 19th century cures or nostrums aimed at the inebriate. Considering the noxious, even harmful nature of those cures, those inmates were probably lucky not to have to experience "the cure." Each of the two doctors who served Ennis during the time period, 1900-14, had his own style. The first seemed caught up in the optimism of reform; his 1909 successor kept meticulous, if misleading statistics and employed some newer psychological terms to describe his charges. The medical officers embodied the changing view of state medicine and the medical field as a whole.

The personalities of the reformatory's officers and their belief in the reformatory system may have affected the functioning of so small an institution, even with its transitory population. The deaths of the Church of Ireland chaplain in 1907, two members of the original visiting committee in the same year, the matron in 1909, and the doctor in 1913 may have undercut the original spirit of the institution. To understand the effect of personalities on the facility we would have to know more about the backgrounds of these individuals and especially more about the governor who remains a virtually anonymous figure. Indeed we know more about some of the inmates than most of the officers.

<sup>33</sup>26th GPB, 1904, p. 134.

<sup>34</sup>26th GPB, 1904, p. 150.

<sup>35</sup>J.E. Thomas, *The English Prison Officer Since 1850*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972.

<sup>36</sup>Roy M. MacLeod, "The Anatomy of State Medicine: Concept and Application," in F.N. Poynter (ed.), *Medicine and Science in the 1860s*. London: Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 1968, pp. 199-228; R.M. MacLeod, "The Frustration of State Medicine, 1880-1899," *Medical History*, 11, 1967, pp. 15-40.

### *The Inmates of Ennis*

Four times from 1900 to 1914, the annual report on Ennis contained paragraph descriptions of the inmates who had been admitted to Ennis and then released. In the 25th annual report, the GPB printed detailed descriptions of the inmates who had entered the facility and were known to be success cases. The 36th annual report featured a similar presentation. In two of the intervening years, 26th and 27th annual reports, the board published more than thumbnail descriptions of the inmates admitted in each of those years and those on successful release at the time of those reports. In other years, the annual reports contained even briefer two- to three-line descriptions. These sketches, together with the simple statistical tables included in each report, provide some information about the inmates.

There were certain basics. Consistently, more admissions came from the urban centers of Dublin and the industrial north of Belfast and Londonderry. Of course, sheer population density played a role in these statistics. According to many in Victorian and Edwardian Britain, the cities with their slums, poverty, fast-paced life, and overcrowding engendered drunkenness.<sup>37</sup> Judges in urban areas were also more likely to avail themselves of all aspects of the institutional network that had built up in Ireland. Ennis admitted inmates directly from the courts or indirectly from certified reformatories where they had proved troublesome. Most of the admissions were direct.

Almost every admission was from the working class,<sup>38</sup> with the exception of a scattered tradesman or publican. Across the years until December 31, 1914, female admissions (172) outnumbered male admissions (111) three to two. The women were admitted for a number of, in the words of the reports, "drink allied offenses": larceny, receiving, assault, assault on a police officer, attempted suicide, and most of all neglect of children. The women stole to buy liquor, grew violent when drunk, became dependent, and neglected their homes and families. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (SPCC), which had taken an active part in the de-

velopment of inebriate reformatories, actively sought and reported cases of neglect and supervised the women and their families upon release.<sup>39</sup> Neglect of children made up 52.3 percent of the female admissions, while only 6.3 percent of the male admissions. Consistently those women in Ennis on a charge of neglect served the longest sentences, longer than those of women in on other charges and of men admitted on a variety of charges including assaulting policemen.<sup>40</sup>

The following two cases are typical of the female admissions and releases. Both are taken from the 27th annual report of the GPB:

A women, 36 years, married. Was for many years a confirmed drunkard, and spent considerable portion of her time in prison for drunkenness and neglect of home and children. Her husband is also a drunkard. Two of her children are in reformatory schools. She was twenty-four times previously convicted. Sentence: Twelve months' detention. She was released on expiration of her sentence, November, 1902.

Information received of her 13 April, 1905 *two years and six months after her discharge* [emphasis in the original]: "lives with her husband. He is in delicate health, and only works half-time at his trade. One of her sons is out of employment, and the other is serving his time to his father's trade. She is in poor circumstances. She takes porter, but not to excess."

A women, 36 years of age, married, and the mother of five children. She was of very intemperate habits since her marriage. Her husband held good positions with different railroad companies, but was frequently changed and reduced owing to the conduct of his wife, who used to visit the railway stations, and abuse her husband. She was six times previously convicted for drunkenness, disorderly conduct, assaults, and ill-treating her children.

Sentence: Twelve calendar months' detention in Ennis Reformatory. She was released on expiration of sentence, May 1903.

Information received of her 13th April, 1905 *one year and eleven months after discharge* [emphasis in the original]:— ". . . is living at the address given with her husband and family. She is going on well, and has not been noticed with the sign of drink for the past twelve months, but is not a total abstainer. Her husband and she are living on friendly terms."<sup>41</sup>

Typically, like those above, the women were in their thirties and forties with family responsibilities, were generally well-behaved within the institution, left at the expiration of their sentences, returned to their original home environments, were reported as keeping more tidy homes, and were not total abstainers. Their reform was measured more by their domestic skills, than by their drinking habits.<sup>42</sup> And often the persons responsible for reporting on these women were their husbands who may have engineered the original admittances of their "inconvenient" spouses. Although disturbed by the women's intemperance, reformatory officials still believed that for social and eugenic reasons those women had to be taken from their homes. Drunkenness was generational:

<sup>37</sup>J.B. Brown, "The Pig or the Stye: Drink and Poverty in Late Victorian England," *International Review of Social History*, 18, 1973, pp. 380-95.

<sup>38</sup>Mary E. Daly, "Social Structure of the Dublin Working Class, 1871-1911," *Irish Historical Studies*, 23, November 1982, pp. 121-33.

<sup>39</sup>George K. Behlmer, *Child Abuse and Moral Reform in England, 1870-1908*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1982.

<sup>40</sup>Of the female admissions, 52.3 percent were for neglect, 21.5 percent for property crimes, 16.9 percent for violent crimes, and 8.1 percent for attempted suicide.

<sup>41</sup>27th GPB, 1905, pp. 142-43.

<sup>42</sup>Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820-1860," *American Quarterly*, 18, Summer 1966, pp. 151-74.

It frequently happens that the inebriate committed to the Reformatory is the father or mother of a large family, sometimes indeed of ten or twelve children, and the reformation or removal of such a man or woman often means the saving of those children from a life of drunkenness and crime, from becoming inmates of our poorhouses, prisons, and asylums, and in their turn transmitting the curse of drink to their children and grandchildren. It is also a strong plea for the treatment of Reformatories rather than that of prisons, for it certainly goes a long way to show that many of these unfortunate drunkards are not responsible, or only partly so, for their drunken habits and their consequent crimes, and should, therefore, be treated as patients rather than as criminals. It would be well, indeed, that a knowledge of the great injury done their children by excess drink was instilled into parents and others. Even in the case of inmates committed to the Reformatory, whose natural feelings have not been entirely destroyed by alcohol, a knowledge of these ill-effects in their drinking habits on their children has borne good fruit in their after life.<sup>43</sup>

Despite the best wishes of Ennis officials these women continued to drink, and several, along with members of their families, were institutionalized in workhouses, poorhouses, prisons, and lunatic asylums.<sup>44</sup> Women, lacking the money to support themselves or pay fines, were more likely than men to have to enter one of those institutions. The few single women admitted were described as homeless and/or prostitutes, and these women were certainly less capable of defending themselves or paying fines.<sup>45</sup>

The men who entered Ennis were more likely to have committed violent crimes, as well as larceny, receiving, disorderly conduct, attempted suicide, and neglect of children.<sup>46</sup> There were more single men than single women. Most of the single men seem to have been transient laborers, even vagrants. A number were charged with getting drunk and physically abusing their families.<sup>47</sup> The following case, with the exception of the fact that the released inmate is not recorded as drinking, is typical of the male cases:

A man, 45 years of age, married, and the father of eight children. He was sent to Glenree Reformatory for five years in 1876. Since his discharge he was a drunken and disorderly habits, and is known to have been forty times convicted of drunkenness, assaults, larceny, picking pockets, etc. He used

to travel about peddling, and attending fairs and race meetings with a roulette table.

Sentence: Three years' detention in Ennis Reformatory. Released conditionally, to the care of his good parish priest, June, 1903.

Information received of him 5th April, 1905, *one year and ten months after his discharge* [emphasis in the original]: "... about whom you write, is going on in the best possible manner. He has not taken one drop of intoxicating drink since he left your establishment, and, as a result, the consequences follow. He is a good, practical Catholic, faithfully discharging his duties to his large family, most industrious at his little business, and succeeding exceptionally well. Within the last week or ten days he has taken a fair-sized shop, at two or three times the rent of his former residence, and I have no doubt from his industrious habits he is bound to succeed. If he is a fair sample of the work done in your reformatory, you have every reason to feel proud of the results attained."

In a letter to the Governor, dated 1st May, 1905, the man himself states: "I here enclose a few lines, wishing to find yourself and Mrs. . . . enjoying the very best of health; I also send my best wishes to all the officers, not forgetting the inmates; and as for myself, I am going on really well, the same old T.T. I hope you will excuse me not writing before this."<sup>48</sup>

The priest to whom he was released may have written the glowing letter. Attention to religion by the ex-inmate may have been the first element to enter the priest's mind, but he like many others describing the successful male parolee concentrated on the steady job or business acumen. Perhaps success in business is not just a sex-typed mark of success. The governor reported that: "the greatest difficulty I have to contend with is finding suitable employment for inmates to enable them to start life afresh." At times the governor was forced to place ex-inmates even in liquor bottling firms.<sup>49</sup> And some inmates could not be traced for fear of revealing their pasts to prospective and current employers. Male ex-inmates with a higher level of literacy than the females, were more likely to write to the officers themselves and, thereby, portray their own actions in a favorable light.

Inmates were released to guardians, relatives or clergymen, and to the general supervision of the police, discharged prisoner aid societies, the SPCC, religious orders, and charity and other groups. Their relatives may have been part of the original problem. Clergy and the police were too busy with a variety of other tasks to spend much time or effort supervising the released inmates. The SPCC focused on protection of the children. The religious orders functioned with female populations in the large cities, and other charity groups could not make up the difference. The groups designated to help and to supervise inmates released from all penal institutions, the certified discharged prisoners' aid societies, by 1910 numbered 16. But several were virtually moribund, and the remainder were largely denominational and sex specific. Despite the hopes that inmates

<sup>43</sup> 27th GPB, 1905, p. 140.

<sup>44</sup> Andrew Scull, *Museums of Madness: The Social Organization of Insanity in Nineteenth Century England*. London: Allen Lane, 1979; Mark Finnane, *Insanity and the Insane in Post-Famine Ireland*. London: Croom Helm, 1981.

<sup>45</sup> Judith R. Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class, and the State*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1980.

<sup>46</sup> Of the male admissions, 45 percent were for violent crimes, 34.2 percent for property crimes, 6.3 percent for neglect of children, and 9.9 percent for attempted suicide.

<sup>47</sup> D.J.V. Jones, "A Dead Loss to the Community: The Criminal Vagrant in the Mid-Nineteenth-Century Wales," *Wales Historical Review*, 8 June 1977, pp. 312-43; Nancy Tomes, "A Torrent of Abuse: Crimes of Violence between Working-class Men and Women in London, 1840-1875," *Journal of Social History*, 11, Spring 1978, pp. 328-45.

<sup>48</sup> 27th GPB, 1905, p. 143.

<sup>49</sup> 26th GPB, 1904, pp. 147-48.

would be helped and closely monitored after release, there was really no agency or mechanism for doing so.

The inadequacy of release procedures was one of the factors cited by officials for inability to "cure" inmates. They also argued for longer mandatory sentences. When the majority of inmates were sentenced to 18 months or less, officials clamored for the statutory limit of 3 years. When many were sentenced to 3 years, officials argued for 5-year sentences or indefinite terms. Although the institution has been designed to care for the habitual offender, officials increasingly argued for the admittance of younger, less hardened inmates as the only ones capable of reform.

In short, the Ennis State Inebriates' Reformatory had never acted effectively or efficiently. When an inebriates' reformatory has to list released inmates who are drinking as its "success" cases, it must have been desperate to prove its viability. Seldom more

than 50 or 60, the inmate population never grew enough to match the size of the reformatory or to justify the expenditures of renovating and maintaining the facility. Although it may be difficult to imagine in light of current overcrowding problems, some institutions cannot function effectively because they are underpopulated. Some of the possible inmates went to private retreats or certified reformatories, but by the end of the century drinking seemed less of a social problem. Temperance societies had focused their attentions on other goals. Quite bluntly no one knew how to cure a drunk. And the General Prisons Board had its necessary success story in the Clonmel Borstal. The Ennis institution was clearly in decline by the end of the First World War. By 1920, it had closed and been turned over to the military for barracks in the Anglo-Irish civil war of the early 1920's. Ennis never reopened as an inebriates' reformatory.