

# A Crash-Course in Femininity ?

Female criminals in the Victorian and Edwardian era

*By Alice Bonzom*

---

**While ideal Victorian women were supposed to be “angels in the house”, female criminals were seen as “demons in the jailhouse”. As such, they were a disruptive force and had to be dealt with. Deconstructing and reconstructing these deviants to make them more “womanly” became a major issue in the late 19th century.**

---

Nowadays, female prisoners in England and Wales represent 5% of the prison population. Between 1995 and 2010, this number more than doubled. Because of this worrying trend, there has been much debate in Britain around the issue of rehabilitation. Such attempts at rehabilitating criminals are nothing new, but they took on a different dimension in the mid-Victorian and Edwardian eras. In a society that was fascinated with the criminal mind,<sup>1</sup> reconstructing the identity of the criminal for it to fit certain moral and gender-biased standards was key. The female criminal in particular was the focal point of reconstruction attempts.

---

<sup>1</sup> It was fostered by and echoed in the press, penny dreadfuls as well as detective novels and the music-hall. From Sherlock Holmes to Jack the Ripper, fictional and real-life murders captivated a large audience.



*Susan Joyce, arrested for stealing money from a gas meter. Source: Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums*

Because they had infringed gender norms as well as legal boundaries, female criminals were often seen as more deviant than male criminals. Their 'broken' psyches needed to be deconstructed and rebuilt so that they could be 'reclaimed'. Spiritual, moral and religious reform went hand in hand with a more physical approach. A tendency to medicalise the treatment of female criminals became more prevalent at the turn of the century, but moral approaches endured. Theories on how to best refashion women according to certain femininity standards offered an insight in the image of the female criminal. Women were subjected to theoretical and empirical attempts at deconstructing their identities to create a new woman. These reformative endeavours targeted their minds and bodies. Yet, the gap between principles and reality was wide. Between the 1860s and the eve of the First World War, theories, techniques and institutions designed to reshape women changed a great deal; this constant revamping being a sign of uncertainty regarding the rehabilitation of inmates. The system itself was partly reconstructed in the hope of reconstructing criminals, especially in 1877 when local prisons were nationalised and many closures occurred. Characteristic of the period is a wavering between punishing deviant women (from the mid-1860s to the mid-90s, the authorities' motto was "Hard bed, hard board, hard labour") and protecting their supposedly weak and sick psyches (especially in the late Victorian period and early 20<sup>th</sup> century).

Exploring the ways in which women were constructed as a special category can help us understand the purpose, nature, impact and limits of the rehabilitation methods that were used to drill female inmates into becoming what was seen as proper women.

## Finding a system fit for the unfit

Until mid-century, transportation offered prison officials a good opportunity to deal with some convicted criminals; the individuals considered the most dangerous were thus conveniently evacuated to penal colonies in Australia.<sup>2</sup> But only a minority was concerned, as most offenders had committed petty crimes (women were often incarcerated for larceny and offences related to prostitution, drunkenness and other types of disorderly conduct<sup>3</sup>). However, the end of the transportation of women in 1853 prompted discussions regarding penal discipline.

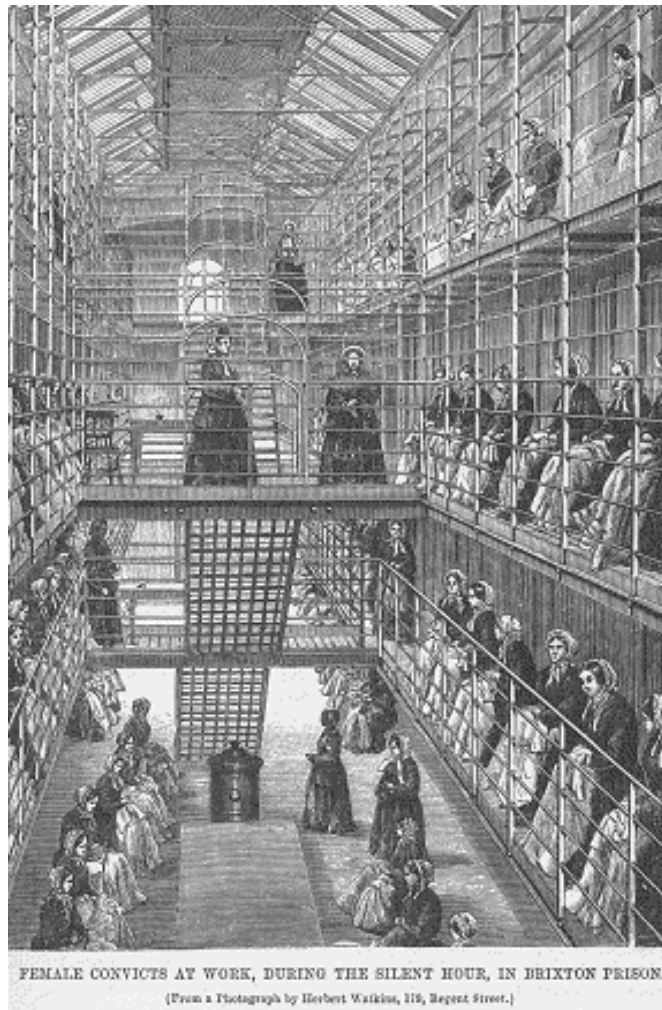
### Separate or silent system?

The competing goals of the penal system revolved around deterrence and punishment versus atonement and reformation. The chairman of the convict prison system in the 1850s and early 60s, Sir Joshua Jebb, was concerned with merging the “*punishment* due to the crime with the *reformation* of the offender” (Jebb, 1862: 1) before his successors put the stress on deterrence until the turn of the century. Yet, the means of achieving reform were quite controversial. From the 1830s onwards, there were fiery debates between the advocates of the silent system and of the separate system. The silent system (developed at Auburn Prison, New York) prohibited communication between inmates, though prisoners could work in association. Women were also believed to be more corruptible than men, hence the fear that association would lead to moral contamination. However, women were seen as inherently loquacious and sociable creatures. Many reformers opposed the system on the basis of the deleterious effects it could have on their very nature. Florence Maybrick, who wrote a book about her prison experience in 1905, severely condemned the silent system: “there is no rule of prison discipline so productive of trouble and disasters as the ‘silent system’” (Maybrick, 1905: 78).

---

<sup>2</sup> The first convict ships arrived in Australia in 1788, so the practice was not new in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Until the American War of Independence, convicts could also be sent to the American colonies. Botany Bay in Australia has remained (in)famous for its transportees; Victorian female convicts were sent to Van Diemen’s Land (renamed Tasmania in 1856) until Western Australia decided to no longer accept them in 1853.

<sup>3</sup> Throughout the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, roughly 98% of the women convicted by the courts were sent to local prisons. Throughout the period, there was a drop in the number of prisoners and convicts, both for males or females (from a daily average of 3,633 female prisoners in 1879-1884 to 2,236 in 1914; and from a daily average of 1,076 female convicts in 1879-1884 to 95 on the eve of the great War). For more statistics, see the yearly Reports of the Commissioners of Prisons and the Directors of Convict Prisons, Parliamentary Papers.



Source: <http://www.victorianlondon.org/prisons/prison.gif>

The separate system (first experimented at the Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia in 1829) hinged on the same overarching principle: corrupting influences had to be curbed to foster personal redemption via self-analysis. Its epitome in Britain was Pentonville, opened in 1842. Prisoners were to be kept apart day and night; they spent their time in individual cells and would exercise alone, sometimes even wearing a mask. But preventing communication proved next to impossible. The ways inmates found to communicate is a tribute to their creativity. Some used letters, called “stiffs”, written on paper provided for the gaslights. The separate system fostered the idea that space and a specific type of architecture were tools to achieve moral reconstruction.



Source: <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/the-criminal-prisons-of-london-by-henry-mayhew>

### Was penal architecture designed to foster reconstruction?

When transportation was transformed into penal servitude in the 1850s, the government bought the former county prison in Brixton to create a female convict prison where inmates sentenced to three years or more would be sent. In 1856, the government opened Fulham Refuge, an institution meant to be less penal and more akin to a home where well-behaved women could finish their sentences. Asylums and reformatories were likewise meant to provide a more humane treatment for inmates who were deemed sick or irresponsible. This marked the beginning of a series of real-estate swaps and reconversions. Aylesbury is a good example of the many changes which affected women's penal establishments. Originally a local gaol, it was converted into a convict prison. In 1902, blocks were added for the opening of the first State Inebriate Reformatory. In 1908, the convict prison section became the first female borstal.—Local prisons were reorganised following nationalisation in 1877.<sup>4</sup> In 1902, HMP Holloway was re-designated as a female-only local prison – the first of its kind (and one of the largest in Europe until its very recent closure in 2016). The system was hastily built and rebuilt, so much so that little thought could be put into creating spaces designed to foster reconstruction. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, more thought

<sup>4</sup> The number of local prisons dropped after nationalisation, from 113 in April 1878 to 68 in August of the same year. In 1880, there were 68 prisons, 61 of which held women. In 1898, ten prisons had closed their gates and only 32 prisons held female prisoners; in 1921, 30 prisons held women out of 40. For more information, see Stephen Hobhouse, A F. Brockway, *English Prisons To-Day*, Leicester, The Blackfriars Pr., 1922.

was put into the reform of inebriates: certified reformatories were built away from cities which were seen as places of corruption.

### **Leading women to rehabilitation: a carrot and stick approach?**

The progressive stage system, based on marks and privileges, had been designed to foster rehabilitation even for the most hardened criminals. It relied on the idea that inmates would be prompted to behave according to the rules to reach the highest class or division, thereby allowing them some privileges – including the right to wear a black and white badge indicating which class they belonged to. This scheme could be described as a carrot and stick approach, a scheme not too dissimilar from the current Incentive and Earned Privileges Scheme.<sup>5</sup> The issue for women was that the “stick” was limited: corporal punishment was forbidden, which wasn’t the case in male prisons where inmates could be whipped with the cat-o’-nine-tails or the birch. There was therefore heated debate about appropriate punishment for women. Dietary measures were deemed dangerous for their allegedly weak constitution and were meant to be used cautiously. Prison personnel could resort to close confinement and loss of privileges. Handcuffing was forbidden as a punishment in 1865 but allowed as a restraint. Loose canvas dresses could also be used to restrain prisoners, officially “as a matter of protection”, as stated by Dr. Brayn, the governor and medical officer of Woking Female Convict Prisons to the Gladstone Committee which investigated the prison system (Report from the Departmental Committee on Prisons, 1895: 165). However, in practice, the line between restraint and punishment seems to have been blurry. “I think the handcuffs are very beneficial to naughty passionate young girls. That is as a restraint really, but the restraint becomes a punishment, although they are not really put on as a punishment”, declared a lady visitor to the Gladstone Committee (Report from the Departmental Committee on Prisons, 1895: 206). This raises the question of the gap between theory and reality. How was reconstruction to be effected within the prison itself?

## **Taming and revamping the body**

Even though women made up only a small percentage of inmates, they were considered more problematic. According to Henry Mayhew, a social researcher who investigated criminality in the 60s, “When they’re bad, they’re bad indeed” (Mayhew, 1862: 260). Well-known English psychiatrist Henry Maudsley went as far as asserting that

No doubt it will painfully surprise many amiable people to learn to what a depth of degradation woman sometimes sinks; it will be difficult for them to conceive how she can

---

<sup>5</sup> The scheme, introduced in 1995, set the status of prisoners. Each new prisoner can earn privileges (longer visits, access to television, right to spend more, etc.) if he or she abides by the rules and behaves well. Prisoners can go from Basic to Entry (the status a new prisoner gets upon comittal), Standard and Enhanced. However, they can also regress if they infringe the rules, incurring loss of status and privileges.

so completely lose all sense of shame, modesty, self-respect, and gentleness, all her womanliness, and become violent, cruel, outrageously blasphemous, and impudently immodest; in fact, a sort of fiend with all the vices of woman in an exaggerated form, and with none of her virtues (H. M., 1863: 69).

Female prison records are rife with entries emphasising their supposed evil ways: fighting with fellow prisoners, attempting to cut another inmate's hair, "singing and being noisy". They were well known for "breaking out", a behaviour explained by the penal authorities in the following terms:

Experience has shown that the prevailing passion of a woman, incensed beyond the control of her reason, is to destroy, no matter what property may be within reach, even if it be her own; she destroys it sometimes with rage amounting to insanity, sometimes with a cool concentration of purpose which has the appearance, though only the appearance, of a very deliberate intention (Report of the Directors of Convict Prisons for the Year 1859, 1860: 38).

Typical of female prisoners, the practice proved for some that women had hysterical tendencies. Obviously, the humdrum routine of female prison life might be another way to explain this behaviour. Even Maudsley mitigated his harsh statements when he asserted:

It is not unlikely that the 'breakings out,' which are so annoying to prison officials, are the salvation of some prisoners who but for them would go mad. Perhaps we are at times a little inconsiderate in our judgments upon humanity (Maudsley, 81).

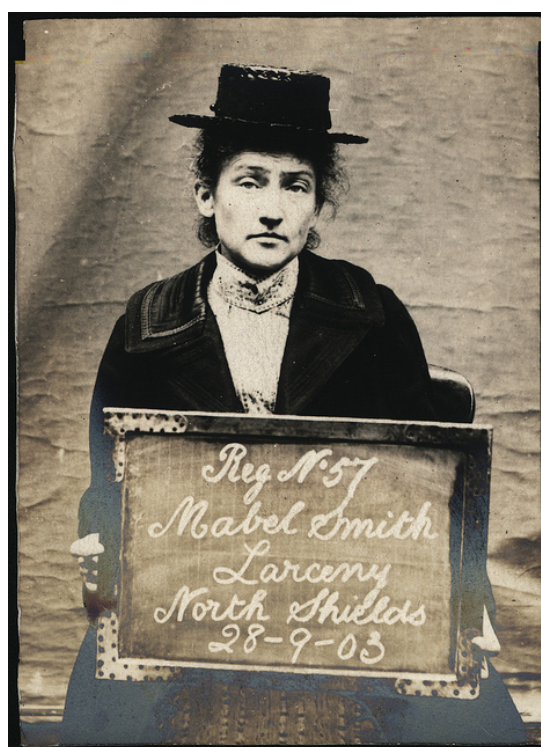
Whatever the reason behind this behaviour, the wayward bodies of women had to be domesticated, whether in prisons per se or in specialised institutions such as inebriate reformatories.

Activities were geared at reconstructing these women who had failed in what was seen as their natural roles as domestic creatures. Suitable feminine employment was the rule in prisons, refuges, asylums and reformatories for the inebriates. The idea was to prepare women for life outside prison and avoid idleness to reform their habits. The plans of Aylesbury Reformatory (Buckinghamshire) and Broadmoor Asylum (Berkshire) reveal the importance of the laundry in the buildings, even in more specialised institutions. Not much difference can be observed between work performed in prisons per se and Fulham Refuge, where women were employed in "cooking, baking, cleaning, needlework, and laundry work" (RDCP 1869, 1870: 405); when the institution was turned into a prison, women were employed "in "cooking, baking, knitting, needlework and laundry work, and, when the weather has permitted, in making up, rolling, and cleaning the footpaths, exercise yards, &c., &c." (RDCP 1874, 1875: 158). There was virtually no change, and if any, only a slight improvement. Mothers with babies worked as well, unless the infant was less than 8 months old. If work was intended to rehabilitate women and reshape them into domestic beings, it also had the added benefit of ensuring the daily running of the prison. Even though authorities insisted on the curative role of work, the financial benefits derived from it were considerable. Male inmates in the early stages of imprisonment could be forced to work on purely punitive treadwheels until the turn

of the century. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with a new chairman at its head, Sir Evelyn Ruggles-Brise, the system offered more varied occupations as a way to encourage productivity. For instance in 1905, the female inmates at Holloway prison were employed at bead-blind making, bookbinding, bed and mattress making as well as more traditional occupations such as knitting. In this context, women's work became more profitable. Their labour was rebranded as a privilege, or even as a treatment, with a therapeutic role that conveniently also helped with the upkeep of the establishment. This philosophy prevailed in reformatories, as emphasised by the 1908 Committee on the Inebriates Act:

“the lessons of discipline and self-control learnt during employment in the reformatory may help to transform a wastrel into a wage earner and a useful member of society”  
(Departmental Committee on the Inebriates' Acts, 1908: 210)

While the few men who went to male refuges had more varied occupations, women mainly did washing and laundry work: it was hoped it would “feminise” their mentalities, as their absence of “feminine qualities” had led them astray in the first place. The skills acquired would also prepare them for domestic servant labour upon release. The situation improved slightly in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when women were offered more varied tasks such as garden work or making Japanese blinds.



*Mabel Smith, arrested for larceny. Source: [Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums](#)*

It was thought that criminal women were lazy by nature: “their natural disposition is generally to be idle”, claimed Joshua Jebb in his personal notes (JEBB/6/38) and harder to “drill” than men. Officials frequently remarked on the supposed sedentary nature of women. It would therefore stand to reason that penal authorities would insist on women exercising,



even more since their “gentle” nature could not easily bear the pains of confinement. And yet, there was little time allocated to outside exercise. Even in Fulham Refuge in 1860, where discipline was supposed to be relaxed, women could only exercise 2 hours a day while 8 hours and a half were dedicated to work, due to the fact that authorities feared communication between inmates. Exercise in Holloway was allowed, but communication was strictly prohibited for those belonging to division 2; only division 1 prisoners could talk while exercising twice a day. Division 1 prisoners were put in this category by the courts based on the nature of their offences and had more privileges than the other two divisions, including exercise. Even in asylums, women had little free time outdoors. In 1894, the Gladstone committee asked Dr. Shaw, who worked at Banstead Lunatic Asylum, what sort of exercise he would recommend for women. He replied: “needlework, washing”. When told that the question was about *exercise*, not *work*, and that walking did not strengthen the arms, the doctor retorted: “do not they do the laundry work?” (Report from the Departmental Committee on Prisons, 1895: 196). The irony of these remarks is that they came from a doctor who did advocate exercise and nicer gardens for women. Albeit thought to be beneficial, exercise was really presented as a privilege. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century however, a change occurred when Swedish drill<sup>6</sup> was introduced in prisons, reformatories and asylums. The 1911 Report of the Commissioners of Prisons stressed that “the regular instruction in Swedish drill given in the open air [...] seems to have done much already towards improving the physique of the girls and training them in habits of discipline.” The very name of this type of gymnastics, Swedish “drill”, reveals a quasi-military dimension. The 1907 prison report claims that this physical training “develops their muscles, improves gait and carriage, teaches habits of alertness and promptitude in obeying orders, and at the same time exerts a mental and moral influence which is reflected in their general demeanour and conduct” (Report of the Commissioners of Prisons, 1907: 245). Swedish drill manuals stressed that this type of calisthenics was designed to promote “a love of order, and an actual liking for discipline” and it was widely introduced in schools as well. Swedish drill, the ancestor of the popular Swedish gymnastics programme, allowed the authorities to transform outdoor exercise into a disciplinary tool to train docile bodies.

## **Reprogramming the Mind**

All inmates, men and women alike, experienced attempts by penal authorities to colonise the mind. The chaplain had a key role, especially in the 1860s and 1870s: prayer

---

<sup>6</sup> Swedish drill (the ancestor of the popular Swedish gymnastics programme) was a type of fitness routine invented by Pehr Henrik Ling in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The exercises he developed were rooted in the scientific beliefs of his age. They relied on accuracy and prompt responses to command. Swedish drill became a popular form of exercise for girls in Britain when Martina Bergman Österberg was hired by the London School Board in the early 1880s to improve the physique of pupils. She founded the Hampstead Physical Training College, where women could learn the tenets of the drill as well as anatomy, physiology and team sports like hockey.

and contemplation were thought to be essential. The main feminine quality religion was supposed to restore was shame, which in turn would lead to remorse, penitence and soul-cleansing for a woman reborn. The shattered moral decency of women had to be restored lest a generation of criminals be born. Indeed, there was an emphasis on the mother's influence on children, as opposed to the innocuousness of fathers: children could "grow up respectably, however idle and dissolute the father may be" (Hill, 1864: 134), claimed a female reformer. The chaplain strived to impart strong theological morals to his students. But his role was the subject of an ongoing debate. At the turn of the century, the authorities were alarmed at women's reoffending rates, in particular regarding alcohol-related offences. This shook confidence in the role of the chaplain. The notorious Jane Cakebread, for instance, was famous for appearing 281 times in court. A country girl from Hertfordshire, she went into service after leaving school. But she was repeatedly arrested for drunkenness, especially in the last thirty years of her life. She was a familiar face in the London Police Courts and prisons, and it is said that she was the reason why the 1898 Inebriates Act was passed. She died in 1898, at age 70. The *New York Times* called her the "World's 'Awful Example'" in December 1898. If criminals like Jane could undergo the reform programme of the chaplains and be reconvicted, the clerics' influence appeared to be limited, especially in local prisons where sentences could be very short. The controversy affected female prisons more than male establishments since women were thought to be "especially adept at dissimulation" (Zedner, 1991: 112), thus able to deceive chaplains. The chaplain of Woking prison deplored in 1880 that for female inmates, "deceit and hypocrisy have been professional qualifications" (Report of the Directors of Convict Prisons, 1880: 870). There was a real fear of fake epiphanies. Time spent in chapel could be an occasion for women to subvert authority, for instance by singing offensive lyrics while pretending to join in religious chanting. The role of chaplains waned, especially as a more medical approach was taken in the 1900s. Yet, the part played by lady visitors increased. The idea was to have righteous, ladylike members of society act as substitute mothers to provide inmates with a role model to emulate.<sup>7</sup> These middle and upper class women were like missionaries, reclaiming and reshaping the inmates' minds. In 1900, the Association of Lady Visitors to Prisons was founded to give recognition to prison visiting.

Contrasting with lady visitors, prison warders were seen as less educated and therefore less likely to inspire and reform deviant women. Experiences varied depending on whether staff worked in convict prisons or local prisons, where the inmate turnover was very high. The Holloway training school, opened in 1911, established a four-month training to instruct probationary staff in "the various duties of a Prison Officer", that is to say "physical exercises and Swedish drill and a certain amount of sick nursing". The matron gave daily lectures "on humane treatment, on employment as a factor in reformation, on the exercise of moral influence, &c.". Female warders were supposed to be of good character but generally stemmed from lower-class background and therefore played little part in the reclaiming of

---

<sup>7</sup> The tradition started with Elizabeth Fry's famous visits to Newgate in 1813.

prisoners, as pointed out by historian Helen Johnston.<sup>8</sup> The silent rule, albeit not systematically enforced, reduced their role to glorified turnkeys as they could not impart anything to women without talking. There were no higher ranking female officials until Mary Gordon was appointed Inspector of Prisons and Inebriate Reformatories in 1908; however, debates preceding her appointment showed dismissiveness towards the idea of female inspectors. The Prime Minister in 1905 refused such an appointment on the basis that voluntary lady visitors were more than enough. Mary Gordon did have an impact on some of the women she met. When an inmate who kept stealing men's clothes spoke to her and explained that "she felt it impossible to live as a woman, but could live as a man, and enjoyed men's work" (Gordon, 1922: 71), Mary Gordon got male clothing for her and paid for her journey to New South Wales, where the woman became a coal miner. This is a rare example of prison authorities rejecting gendered rules.

Women in local and convict prisons were amongst the least literate in the country, even after the 1870 Education Act. In local prisons, teaching basic reading was difficult given the high turnover of inmates.<sup>9</sup> In convict prisons, schooling had an ambiguous role. Some viewed instruction as a potential source of danger, but basic teaching was essential for women to read the Scriptures. Yet, even there, education was limited. Once a woman had reached a certain level, she could no longer attend classes. Miss Elizabeth Frazer, a lady visitor, thus pointed out that an inmate she'd been visiting for 6 years had gone from "bright and intelligent" to seemingly unable to read or even think at age thirty-two. Joshua Jebb's replacement, Sir Edmund Du Cane, flatly rejected the idea that inmates should spend their time at school, fearing that otherwise the prison might become a "criminal university": "experience has shown that literary education has not the reformatory influence on prisoners which was once expected from it, and that moral and industrial instruction are the most potent of the educational influences which can be employed with that object" (Du Cane, 1885: 57). However, after the 1895 Gladstone Committee report, education was more often advocated and properly set up. In the 1880s, the chaplain for Fulham prison praised the role played by the library. Writing letters was a privilege that could be earned. Writing material was not always made available, but Mary Gordon managed to secure notebooks for Holloway in 1908. Katie Gliddon, a suffragette imprisoned in 1912, was allowed reading material, but pencils had to be smuggled into prison, sewn into the collar of her coat, and she scribbled on the books she had with her. Preventing communication was in fact a difficult task as inmates subverted the rules to get information out; in 1912, Mrs. Sadd Brown, a suffragette, used toilet paper to send a note to her children.

---

<sup>8</sup> To find out more about the role of prison officers, see Helen Johnston, "Reclaiming the Criminal: The Role and Training of Prison Officers in England, 1877 to 1914", *The Howard Journal*, vol. 47, n°3, July, pp. 297-312.

<sup>9</sup> Around 97% of the female inmates served three months or less.

## Conclusion

The female prison system experienced numerous changes between the 1860s and 1914.<sup>10</sup> The high number of repeat offenders prompted the authorities to reorganise the penal landscape and divert some women towards specialised institutions like reformatories. However, there appears to have been minimal differences in terms of treatment. Up to the Second World War, female prisoners were subjected to reformatory endeavours which aimed at restoring their feminine qualities. Looking at all penal institutions, we find many similarities despite the different theoretical aims of each establishment, especially in urban prisons. Deviance was territorialised within women's bodies and minds, and therapy was often not much more than a rebranding of discipline.

Even as the Gladstone Committee set out to reemphasise principles of reform in 1895, empirical changes did not immediately appear, especially in local prisons. Suffragette Katie Gliddon claimed in 1912 that "the prison system is wrong. It is not only not constructive of character but it is destructive". Ideals of reconstruction did not necessarily translate into reality, and women attempted to subvert the rules. A large portion of these reformatory endeavours was designed to foster productivity, including in reformatories, and not just femininity. As the role of religion waned, medical doctors also played a larger part. Yet, reconstruction was still synonymous with work as a means of forging and shaping moral character – for the inebriates and feeble-minded too. It is worth noting that female offenders were the object of rehabilitation attempts only once they had been sentenced to prison; however, evidence suggests that women committing minor acts of violence were treated more leniently (or dismissively) by court magistrates. This means that lower-class male offenders were the target of rehabilitation attempts suggesting 'civilising' endeavours on the part of the authorities, perhaps more so than their female counterparts. The tensions between reform and punishment that haunted the Victorian and early 20<sup>th</sup> century prisons could still be said to haunt our current justice system.

---

<sup>10</sup> The workings of penal institutions (especially local prisons) were disrupted by the war. After 1916, many conscientious objectors were sentenced to imprisonment; the overall number of prisoners decreased (the daily average population in local prisons in 1913-14 was around 14,352; in 1918-19, it was 7,220); the number of officers dropped as well, as many of them served with the army. The decrease in prison population was also partly to the passage of the 1914 Criminal Justice Administration Act, but the war also played a part. In 1920-21, the figure had gone back up, but only slightly (the daily average was 9,209). Economic, political, legislative and administrative upheavals changed the face of prisons after the war.

## Further reading

- Edmund Du Cane, *The Punishment and Prevention of Crime*, London, Macmillan and Co., 1885.
- Mary Gordon, *Penal Discipline*, London, Routledge, 1922.
- Rosamond Hill, “A Plea for Female Convicts”, *The English Woman’s Journal*, vol. 13, n°73, 1864, pp. 130-134.
- Stephen Hobhouse, A F. Brockway, *English Prisons To-Day*, Leicester, The Blackfriars Pr., 1922.
- Helen Johnston, “‘Reclaiming the Criminal’: The Role and Training of Prison Officers in England, 1877 to 1914”, *The Howard Journal*, vol. 47, n°3, July, pp. 297-312.
- Henry Maudsley, “Review of Female Life in Prison”, *Journal of Mental Science*, vol. 9, n°45, 1863, pp.69-86.
- Florence Maybrick, *My fifteen lost years*, New York & London, Fund & Wagnalls, 1905.
- Henry Mayhew, John Binny, *The Criminal Prisons of London and Scenes of Prison Life, with Numerous Illustrations from Photographs*, London, Griffin, Bohn and Company, 1862.
- Lucia Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody in Victorian England*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1991.
- [Wayward Women: Victorian England’s Female Offenders.](#)

Published in *Books & Ideas*, 9 October 2017.