

**ON THE BORDERLAND OF INSANITY:
WOMEN, DIPSOMANIA AND INEBRIETY, 1879-1913**

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the
University of the West of England, Bristol for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy.**

**Faculty of Arts, Creative Industries and Education,
University of the West of England, Bristol
June 2014**

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Abstract

This thesis highlights the complex issues associated with women habitual drunkards and the changing perceptions of such women as sinful, as a social problem, and latterly as a threat to the nation's health. The national situation is investigated and the perceived relationship between habitual drunkards and insanity is discussed. The local context of Bristol is examined including the emergence of the inebriate institutions the Royal Victoria Homes, Horfield, and Brentry. In addition, the working relationship between the Royal Victoria Homes and the state, philanthropy, and public bodies is analysed. The thesis also examines women habitual drunkards sent to the National Institutions for Inebriates, a network of institutions associated with Bristol. The key workers involved with these institutions and how they contributed to debates and practices are explored. Gendered attitudes and how they affected women's lives and the way women's social roles and behaviour were shaped by stereotypes is a central theme of this thesis. The thesis argues that habitual drunkards, particularly women, sent by the courts to inebriate reformatories were often perceived by doctors to be on the borderland of insanity. Such women were considered not sufficiently sane to be in control of themselves, nor sufficiently insane to be certified and sent to a lunatic asylum. The over-arching aim of the thesis is to discover the complex factors, national and local, that had an influence on women habitual drunkards sent by the courts to a certified inebriate reformatory. Finally, why reformatories were viewed by contemporaries as a solution to serious concerns over women and drinking and the reaction of some of the women sent to an inebriate reformatory is considered. The thesis period ends with the Mental Deficiency Act, 1913, which brought habitual drunkards within the meaning of the Inebriates Act, 1898 under its provision.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the University of the West of England for making this PhD possible and the many members of staff who have helped me on my PhD journey. I would also like to thank my supervisors, Dr Moira Martin and Professor June Hannam for their guidance, help and advice during the course of this PhD. Thanks also to Dr Kent Fedorowich for his encouragement, kindness and practical assistance.

Thank you to my husband, Bernard, for the many meals cooked, cups of teas made and household chores completed. Thanks also to my children and friends for their encouragement, support and patience.

Abbreviations

BMJ	<i>British Medical Journal</i>
BPP	British Parliamentary Papers
BRO	Bristol Record Office
CETS	Church of England Temperance Society
EES	Eugenics Education Society
HC Deb	House of Commons Debate
HL Deb	House of Lords Debate
NII	National Institutions for Inebriates
NIPRCC	National Institutions for Persons Requiring Care and Control
Inc.NIPRCC	Incorporation of the National Institutions for Persons Requiring Care and Control
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
UKA	United Kingdom Alliance
RVH	Royal Victoria Home(s)

Introduction

This thesis focuses on the perceived problems of alcoholism, insanity and the criminality of women habitual drunkards. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries women's drinking habits caused widespread concern. Female habitual drunkards sent to inebriate reformatories were commonly viewed as morally lax, incapable of managing themselves, feeble minded, and a danger to society. The aim of the thesis is to examine contemporary attitudes, consider why women habitual drunkards were conceived as a problem, and explore the solution to the problem. The themes that run throughout the thesis are the creation of inebriate reformatories, the types of women sent to them, and the question of whether inebriate reformatories were intended to be punitive or reformative. The thesis shows how attitudes to gender changed over time and considers how these changes relate to women sent to inebriate reformatories. The relationship between the state, philanthropy, private individuals and public bodies in their efforts to address the problem of habitual drunkenness is also examined. An insight into the lives of women sent to a certified inebriate reformatory by the courts and the key people who established inebriate reformatories is revealed through a case study of Bristol.

Bristol played an important role in the creation of inebriate reformatories throughout England, as the city was the regional centre for the temperance movement. A local study allows us to identify key people working in the field of inebriate reform and to consider the impact they had on national policy-making and local practice. The case study will test how different conceptions of female habitual drunkards were worked out in the context of a provincial city. The assumptions of contemporaries are discussed and the private lives of the women inmates examined. The inebriate institutions investigated in the thesis were created, owned and managed by the Bristol based Rev Harold Burden and his wife Katharine. Harold Burden came to Bristol in 1895 to work for the Church of England Temperance Society (CETS) and subsequently Harold and Katharine created a network of inebriate reformatories throughout the country, making Harold Burden the largest provider of inebriate accommodation in England. Bristol was also the location of the first certified inebriate reformatory

in England. The regime of an inebriate reformatory, the classification of inmates and their transfer from one institution to another, depending on whether they were considered reformable were part of a strategy intended to create useful citizens.

Bristol's role in inebriate reformatories has received little attention from historians; however, Peter Carpenter has written two articles about Harold and Katharine Burden and their work with inebriates and people with learning difficulties.¹ Carpenter has also written a history of the Brentry house and estate that was used as an inebriate reformatory.² This thesis builds on this work and adds to it by showing how national and local issues shaped the lives of the women habitual drunkards who were sent by the courts to a certified inebriate reformatory and it places the problem of inebriety in a broader context of social deviance.

The title of the thesis reflects a common concern of contemporaries that women habitual drunkards needed care and protection from themselves and society. Women inebriates were often perceived by medical men to be 'on the borderland of insanity', not sufficiently sane to be in control of themselves, but in need of care and protection. However, they were not certifiable as insane, so could not be sent to a lunatic asylum. Such women fell into an ambiguous zone between sanity and insanity. Dr Andrew Wynter wrote in *The Borderlands of Insanity* (1875) that the borderland sheltered many persons with lunatic tendencies and it only needed an "exciting cause" for the lunacy to become manifest.³ The concept of the borderland was disseminated by the psychiatrist Henry Maudsley who argued in his book *Responsibility in Mental Disease* (1895) that it was not possible to classify with any accuracy the insane from the sane. Therefore, "it is important to recognise there is a borderland between

¹ Peter Carpenter, "Rev Harold Nelson Burden and Katherine Mary Burden: Pioneers of Inebriate Reformatories and Mental Deficiency Institutions." *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, 89 (April 1996) 205-209 and "Missionaries with the Hopeless? Inebriety, Mental Deficiency and the Burdens." *British Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 28 (2000) 60-64.

² Peter Carpenter, *A History of Brentry: House, Reformatory, Colony and Hospital*. Bristol: Friends of Glenside Hospital Museum, 2002.

³ Andrew Wynter, *The Borderlands of Insanity and Other Allied Papers*. London: Robert Hardwicke, 1875, p.1. <http://www.archive.org/details/borderlandsofins00wyntrich> Accessed 10 April 2010.

sanity and insanity and of greater importance still to study the doubtful cases with which it is peopled.”⁴ Maudsley was convinced that habitual drunkenness was inherited by each succeeding generation so that people were born with a predisposition to alcoholism. Mark Jackson has suggested that in Victorian England the term borderland was used in two ways: behaviour that was situated between the normal and the diseased, and behaviour situated between medical and social deviance.⁵ Women habitual drunkards fell into both of these categories. They were considered a threat to the fabric of society. Neither completely sane nor insane, it was believed they required therapeutic treatment for their inebriety, as well as punishment for their disorderly or criminal behaviour. Therefore, the borderland represents the problems of placing these women in a medical or punitive space and the ambivalent attempts made to deal with the problem of female inebriety.

The terminology used in the thesis: habitual drunkenness, inebriety, and dipsomania, were not stable terms and were often used in different ways in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Some doctors argued that each term should refer to a specific form of drunkenness, but most of the contemporary literature relating to habitual drunkenness used the terms interchangeably.

A period of thirty-four years from the Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879 to the Mental Deficiency Bill, 1913 is examined in the thesis, but in order to place the study in context some key events that had an influence on attitudes concerning drunkenness prior to 1879 are considered. The 1879 Act allowed for the confinement of persons who declared before magistrates that they were habitual drunkards and consented to be detained in a private licensed retreat for a specified time. Matthew Thomson makes the point that by 1913 it was realised that the main piece of legislation, the Inebriates Act, 1898, which permitted inebriates to be incarcerated in an inebriate reformatory for up to three years had failed in its purpose to reform habitual drunkards. Thomson

⁴ Henry Maudsley, M.D, *Responsibility in Mental Disease*. New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1895, p.40. <http://www.archive.org/details/39002086347144.med.yale.edu> Accessed December 2012.

⁵ Mark Jackson, *The Borderland of Imbecility: Medicine, Society and the Fabrication of the Feeble Mind in Late Victorian England*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000, pp.12-13.

believes that because many reformatory inmates were considered to be unreformable it made a good case for contemporaries to argue that such people were weak-minded mental defectives needing permanent care.⁶ “The problem was shifted from the penal sphere to a borderline area, lying uneasily between penalty and medicine.”⁷ Under the 1913 Mental Deficiency Act a person classified as a habitual drunkard could be placed in an institution for the mentally deficient on a permanent basis rather than placed in temporary custody for up to three years. Therefore, by 1913 most certified inebriate reformatories had closed or were gradually winding down towards closure.

My interest in the subject of women and inebriety was aroused by an exploration of temperance and temperance politics in Bristol. Very little research had been undertaken on the temperance movement in Bristol, yet the city was important as a centre of temperance activity as it was the home of the Western Temperance League. This organisation provided resources, practical help and expertise to a diverse membership that was comprised of various church denominations and temperance societies from sixteen counties of England. The focus on women in this thesis stemmed from an interest in the role that women played in Bristol’s temperance movement. Women were encouraged to join temperance societies for the sake of their families, country and religion, but they did not usually play a part in the leadership of mixed societies. Women formed their own women’s committees and their own temperance societies.

Temperance women were considered a good influence on the conduct of other women and they were involved mainly in activities such as bazaars, fundraising, catering and teaching children. Towards the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with the advent of ‘gospel temperance’ and the creation of temperance organisations run and managed by women, it became easier for women to move outside the domestic sphere and adopt a more public role. The temperance movement attracted some of Bristol’s wealthy men and women and many of them were members of CETS. This organisation was responsible for employing a temperance reformer as its secretary who possessed the energy,

⁶ Matthew Thomson, *The Problem of Mental Deficiency: Eugenics, Democracy, and Social Policy in Britain, c1870-1959*. Oxford: Oxford Historical Monographs, Clarendon Press, 1998, p.17.

⁷ Thomson, *The Problem of Mental Deficiency*, p.17.

organisational and fundraising abilities to create England's first certified inebriate reformatory at Brentry, Bristol. It was intriguing to discover that whilst the Brentry reformatory admitted both men and women for up to three years the vast majority of those sent to the institution by the courts were women.

Drunkenness in the nineteenth century was a common occurrence that engendered widespread anxiety in politicians, reformers, the medical profession, the clergy, and many others. Reformers and politicians considered alcohol was responsible for most of the crime, poverty, destitution and immorality in Britain.⁸ Women habitual drunkards caused particular concern because they did not conform to the conventional standards of femininity. Women were expected to be nurturing, caring, self-sacrificing and modest. Male drunkards accounted for the largest number of offences yet female drunkards generated the greatest alarm among politicians, the medical profession and the public. At the end of the nineteenth century many medical men saw inebriate women as a threat to the wellbeing of the British race, since it was considered that their excessive drinking habits could be passed on and lead to the procreation of physically and mentally unhealthy children. Bills were introduced to Parliament in an attempt to deal with the problem in 1871, 1872, 1873 and 1877. Increasingly members of the medical profession perceived that habitual drunkenness was not only a bad habit and a vice, but also a disease analogous to insanity that required therapeutic measures. The proposed legislation contained a clause to commit habitual drunkards to specialist institutions for up to one year on a compulsory basis, however, many politicians found it unacceptable that people could lose their liberty for a non-criminal social problem and the bills were not passed. After the failure of parliamentary bills in the late 1870s, the government passed the Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879. This Act was stripped of the compulsory clause and was given a ten-year lifespan as an experimental measure. Under the 1879 Act, persons who admitted to magistrates that they were habitual drunkards voluntarily consented

⁸ See Louis Gordon Rylands, *Crime: Its Causes and Remedy*. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1889, <http://www.archive.org/details/cu31924024845202> Accessed 14 December 2012 and Rev. John William Horsley, *Jottings from Jail: Notes and Papers on Prison Matters*. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1887. <http://www.archive.org/details/jottingsfromjai00horsgoog> Accessed 14 December 2012.

to be detained in a licensed inebriate retreat for a specified period. The fees were to be paid by the drunkards or their sponsors. The term 'retreat' was used to describe a house licensed by the government for the reception, control, care and curative treatment of habitual drunkards.⁹

During the 1880s frequent court appearances of recidivist habitual drunkards and the scandalous publicity they aroused demonstrated to the government and public the futility of short terms of imprisonment as a deterrent to drunkenness and created a demand for fresh legislation to deal with the problem. Lord Aberdare commented that the majority of drunkards were working class and pointed out that the 1879 Act did not reach them because most working class people could not afford the fees.¹⁰ Males accounted for the largest number of habitual drunkards, but female drunkards generated greater alarm. Women drunkards were thought vulnerable to the doubly corrupting influence of alcohol and prison. They were considered in need of protection, particularly as they were often perceived as weak-minded and at risk of insanity. The Inebriates Act, 1898 was passed with little of the controversy that the 1879 Act produced. The fears concerning personal liberty still existed, but by this time concerns about women's immorality and the effect it could have on British society overshadowed anxieties over any curtailment of liberty. Significantly, there was less concern about men's immorality. The 1898 Act gave power to the courts to send habitual drunkards to a certified inebriate reformatory for up to three years. The Inebriate Acts were drawn up to include both men and women; however, in practice the vast majority of persons sent to inebriate reformatories were female. As Patrick McLaughlin points out, sending women to inebriate reformatories was not merely a matter of clearing the streets of nuisances or controlling women, but of demonstrating that the Government was tackling the problem of drunkenness, particularly female drunkenness.¹¹ This complex problem involved politicians, the police, the judiciary, the medical profession

⁹ Sir W T Charley, QC, DCL, "The Inebriety Acts, 1879 and 1888 – Ought We to Amend them?" *Proceedings of the Society for the Study and Cure of Inebriety*, 36 (May 1893) 1-24, p. 4.

¹⁰ Charley, "The Inebriety Acts, 1879 and 1888", p.16.

¹¹ For a discussion on the social context that inebriate reformatories worked within see Patrick McLaughlin, "Inebriate Reformatories in Scotland: An Institutional History" in *Drinking Behaviour and Belief in Modern History*. Susanna Barrows and Robin Room, eds. Oxford: University of California Press, 1991, p.304.

and members of the public and these agencies often had competing views on how the social problem of habitual drunkards should be dealt with. At the centre of these competing interests were the women habitual drunkards whose lives were affected by the implementation, or otherwise, of the Inebriates Acts.

The thesis examines inebriate reformatories and their inmates through the institutions that Harold and Katharine Burden created. In 1897, Harold Burden established the Royal Victoria Home, Horfield, Bristol, (RVH Horfield) a charitable home for inebriates and a place of detention for well-conducted convicts. After the Inebriates Act was passed in 1898, Harold Burden opened England's first certified inebriate reformatory the Royal Victoria Home, Brentry, Bristol (RVH Brentry) in 1899, an institution that was financed by a consortium of twenty-four local councils. The couple then moved on in 1902 to purchase their own network of five inebriate institutions throughout the country, the National Institutions for Inebriates (NII), before changing their institutions to mental deficiency asylums and acquiring further properties to be used as homes for mental defectives. The institutions for mental defectives operated under the National Institutions for Persons Requiring Care and Control (NIPRCC) and the NII integrated with the NIPRCC in 1913.

Harold Burden's work in inebriety and mental deficiency is often considered philanthropic, but he established a network of inebriate institutions that might be described as a business. Although, Harold Burden rejected the idea that his purpose was philanthropy, nonetheless he also denied that he ran his institutions as a business to make a profit.¹² Harold and Katharine Burden created institutions by leasing property that needed little alteration and authorities or sponsors were charged a fee for each bed occupied by an inmate or patient. When sufficient income had been raised from the charging authorities or sponsors, the property was purchased without a mortgage and further properties were leased and purchased. Harold and Katharine were the sole owners of their institutions and their enterprise did not have shareholders. The income raised from rental charges for patients became a matter of dispute

¹² Carpenter, "Missionaries with the Hopeless?" *British Journal of Learning Disabilities*, p.63.

at Sandwell Hall, Harold Burden's institution for mentally defective boys created in 1907. A complaint was raised that the charges levied enabled him to make a profit and purchase other institutions and this profit prejudiced his public philanthropy.¹³ Yet, as mentioned, Harold Burden maintained that the institution was not created "from a sense of philanthropy" and he denied that "he ran it as a business to make a profit."¹⁴ It appears the finance to set up the Burdens' institutions initially came from Katharine Burden, although there is no documentary evidence to support this. Katharine did not come from a wealthy family, but she is likely to have inherited money from family members as she loaned the Royal Victoria Homes £750 to pay off its debts and when Harold Burden's spinster sisters were in debt in 1907 they petitioned her to pay their creditors.¹⁵ The institutions owned and run by Harold and Katharine Burden were the product of private enterprise and they were governed and controlled under trust deeds which the couple set up to ensure their work carried on after the death of one or both of them. The trust deed notes that Harold Burden ran his institutions with "freedom of interference", but subject to "all Acts of Parliament and Regulations".¹⁶

Harold Burden is an interesting character to examine as his initiatives illustrate some of the complications private individuals, charitable organisations, the state, and county and borough councils experienced in their endeavours to work together to alleviate the social problem of habitual drunkenness. He was responsible for organising and bringing together these agencies in partnership to create and maintain an inebriate institution. However, whilst each of these bodies aimed to deal with habitual drunkenness, their approach was very different and this made for a fraught working relationship. Jane Lewis makes the point that whilst the voluntary sector and the state shared the same principles,

¹³ Carpenter, "Missionaries with the Hopeless?" p63.

¹⁴ Carpenter, "Missionaries with the Hopeless?" p.63.

¹⁵ Request of the Misses Clara Ann Burden and Bertha Munk Burden to Mrs. Katharine Mary Burden to pay off all debts to Lloyd's Bank re property at Eastbridge, Hythe, Kent, 4 January 1907, BRO 39910/B/1.

¹⁶ Deeds and documents of the Burden family, trust deeds and articles of association, etc. National Institutions for persons requiring care and control. Trust Deed dated 1913, BRO 33910/B/1-7.

“there was no question of the state funding the voluntary sector.”¹⁷ Lewis comments that “at the turn of the century the central state left local territory relatively free from control” and that both advocated co-operation within their respective spheres of action.¹⁸ Legislation to deal with habitual drunkenness was the political action that it was hoped would bring about change, however, it was left to the voluntary sector, private individuals, and local councils to implement that change and create specialist institutions, although with some financial aid from central government for the upkeep of inmates. This raises the question of whether Harold Burden in creating his network of reformatories was motivated by philanthropic concern or whether his priorities were those of making a profit. The answer to this question is ambiguous. Harold Burden was an ordained priest who endeavoured to look after individuals in need of care, yet he needed to make a profit from his various institutions to sustain them and create further institutions for individuals in need. However, he died a very wealthy man; he had amassed a considerable amount of money and property through his various enterprises. His institutions were run economically and he saved the Government a great deal of money by accommodating patients at as little cost as possible.

Geoffrey Finlayson takes the view that welfare can be “self-regarding” as in self-help groups and mutual aid, designed to advance individual or collective wellbeing or “other-regarding” where a group or groups are solely interested in philanthropic activity.¹⁹ There is no evidence to suggest that Harold Burden’s wealth was not due to his organisational ability, economic frugality and his willingness to risk his own capital. Sources do not exist that provide detailed accounts and particulars of the Burdens’ financial activities concerning how they raised money to finance and maintain their institutions. It is therefore impossible to know exactly how much income from the rental of beds was ploughed back into their institutions, how much money was used to lease and purchase further institutions, and how much money was used as their own

¹⁷ Jane Lewis, “The Voluntary Sector in the Mixed Economy of Welfare” in David Gladstone, ed, *Before Beveridge: Welfare Before the Welfare State*. London: Civitas 1999, p.15.

¹⁸ Lewis, “The Voluntary Sector in the Mixed Economy of Welfare”, p.15

¹⁹ Geoffrey Finlayson, “A Moving Frontier: Voluntarism and the State in British Social Welfare 1911-1949.” *Twentieth Century History*, 1.2 (1990) 183-206, p.184.

personal expenditure. The lack of sources is the reason for much of the ambiguity and speculation concerning Harold's motives, the purpose of his work and whether it was humanitarianism or profit-focused.

Sources

Various types of sources have been used in this thesis to analyse the perceived problems of alcoholism, insanity and the criminality of women habitual drunkards. Official parliamentary papers and legislation relating to women habitual drunkards are an important resource. They have been used to examine how politicians and others viewed the problem of women habitual drunkards. The annual reports of the Inspector of Inebriate Reformatories were particularly useful as they provide not only facts and statistics pertaining to inebriate reformatories, but also reports from reformatory superintendents and medical officers. This makes it possible to examine a local reformatory such as Brentry in a nationwide context, and it enables the differences between different reformatories to be discerned. Reports of select committees, departmental committees and royal commissions were examined to gain an understanding of the debates and the diverse views of the police, inebriate managers, the medical profession and others with a business, charitable, or other type of interest in inebriety. Yet, legislation does not contain the attitudes of society as a whole, only the opinions and views of a select few people. To go beyond official parliamentary sources and reveal a wider range of views various other sources were examined.

Contemporary published literature such as the *British Medical Journal* (BMJ) and the *Proceedings of the Society for the Study of Inebriety* was used to gain an understanding of the 'expert' attitudes and opinions on women habitual drunkards and the usefulness of inebriate reformatories.²⁰ The thesis draws on national and local newspapers such as *The Times* and the *Bristol Mercury & Daily Post*. Newspapers were used in various ways in the thesis, for example, legislation was followed up in newspaper reports. They were also examined to

²⁰ Note a change in name: the Society for the Study and Cure of Inebriety until August 1887 and after November 1887, the Society for the Study of Inebriety.

reveal contemporary debates and the views of local councils and their efforts to deal with the problem of women habitual drunkards. The letters sections of newspapers are of interest as they give an indication of the position of some prominent figures and members of the public concerning women's excessive drinking. Some local and national newspapers considered poverty and drunkenness serious enough to warrant a prolonged special investigation, for example, the *Bristol Mercury's* investigation from 1883 to 1885 into the "Homes of the Bristol Poor" and the *Daily Telegraph's* "The Slavery of Drink" in 1891.²¹ Newspapers can be a source of lengthy debate, a forum of discussion and can reveal how attitudes changed over time. It is hard to know how well articles were received by readers so we can only speculate on the attitudes and values of their readership. The proceedings of the police courts in the local and national press were used in the thesis to understand how women habitual drunkards were viewed by the police and magistrates. These reports often noted previous offences for drunkenness, details of arrest, sentences conferred, marital status, and whether the women had children. Newspaper reports were also used in conjunction with census records and official reformatory records to reveal the types of women sent to a reformatory and understand something of their lives. In some instances, it was possible to discover what happened to women after discharge from the reformatory, however, women sometimes used different names, which made it difficult to follow them up or link them with other records. Only the women whose lives drew official attention and whose court appearances were reported in newspapers could be traced.

Of particular interest to this thesis were the views of those directly involved with the day-to-day running of reformatories, or those in contact with the inebriates themselves. However, records for Brentry Inebriate Reformatory and the NII are patchy and incomplete and no personal documents in the form of letters and diaries have been found. Some official documents have survived, such as the proceedings of the management board and visiting committees, as well as some of the admission and discharge books. In addition, a few individual

²¹ *The Homes of the Bristol Poor*. Bristol: William Lewis & Sons, 1884, reprinted from the *Bristol Mercury & Daily Post*, 1884. "Concerning Legislation for Inebriates." *British Medical Journal*, 19 September 1891, p.651.

official warrants that reduced women's sentences and the papers for the removal of some women to a lunatic asylum exist. The minute books, visiting books and most of the documentation for the NII reformatories have not survived. The available records have been used in various ways to discover how a reformatory was managed and how the inmates were viewed and treated. The minute books of Brentry were useful in examining the squabbles that arose over finance and management and the consequences of such disagreements. Further, the books record the misdemeanours of inmates and hold information on what happened to those who did not conform to the rules. From this it was clear that some women resisted and rebelled against the regime of the reformatory in different ways, for example, attempting to escape, tearing clothes, attacking staff, and trying to smuggle alcohol into the reformatory. The minute books reveal that arrangements were made for the discharge of inmates and follow-up procedures. Therefore, these official reformatory records give a personal sense of some of the women in the reformatory as well as an understanding of how some women reacted to their confinement.

The admission, transfer and discharge records of NII's Midlands Counties Reformatory, from 1902-1910 were used to create a database of one hundred inmates so that an analysis could be made of the type of women sent to an inebriate reformatory. The Midlands Counties Reformatory was part of Harold and Katharine Burden's NII network of five reformatories. Brentry Inebriate Reformatory and the NII worked closely together and Brentry's accounts were dealt with at the NII's central London Office. The admission and discharge records give details of the inmates' previous address, age, physical appearance, marital status, religion, occupation, place and date of committal. An interesting feature of these sources is that the records show how some women moved from reformatory to reformatory before transfer from the Midlands Counties Reformatory to the Horfield institution, which was used as a preparation for discharge.

The photographic publicity booklets of Brentry and the NII group of reformatories complement the written sources, as they illustrate women inmates

undertaking various occupations and leisure activities. The publicity booklets include over one hundred and fifty photographs and, although produced as a marketing tool, the booklets give a graphic sense of the individuals and the conditions in which they lived. The women appear well dressed, but only a few rugs cover the hard floors and the dining rooms have benches rather than chairs. Further, some of the dormitories contain over ten beds so privacy and noise would have been a problem. The booklets also portray women working at trades such as carpet weaving, laundry work, mending shoes and sewing. There are also photographs of women lying in hospital beds, photographs of the lying in room, and photographs of mothers and nurses with babies. Therefore, some women had babies in the reformatory and cared for them whilst they were inmates.

In summary, parliamentary papers were useful as they provided details of legislation, the views of parliamentarians, as well as the views of witnesses who gave evidence to various committees and commissions connected with inebriety. In addition, the annual reports gave details of individual reformatories, which could be followed from year to year. To learn more about the views of contemporaries, newspapers and periodicals were helpful. Newspapers were also used to follow-up individual women and when used in conjunction with reformatory records, census records and photographs they provided an impression of women inmates and their lives.

Historiography

The importance of alcohol as a social question began to be explored by historians in the 1960s and 70s. A groundbreaking study was Brian Harrison's 1971 *Drink and the Victorians* in which he explored the temperance movement in England from 1815-1872.²² Harrison's book considers the temperance movement in relation to political action, business, leisure and religion to give an understanding of the place of drink and the public house in social history. The competing views on alcohol of the many Victorian political pressure groups

²² Brian Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England 1815-1872*. London: Faber and Faber Ltd, 1971.

examined in the book underscore how strongly people felt about curbing alcohol consumption. The anti-spirits movement aimed to reduce the amount of alcohol consumed by people and appealed for sobriety. The teetotal movement campaigned to persuade individuals to sign a pledge that promised abstinence from all alcohol for the remainder of their lives. The United Kingdom Alliance, from 1853, considered the way to deal with the problem of drunkenness was through legislation and campaigned for the government to restrict alcohol.

Chapels and churches pointed to the admonitions in the Bible to refrain from drunkenness and lead Christian lives. Some prominent female campaigners are mentioned in the book, for example, Julia Wightman, but little detail is given of the important practical role women played in fundraising, teas, bazaars and children's work, or that women were considered important in influencing other women to follow suit and sign the pledge. Although Harrison's book provides us with an important framework for understanding issues related to drink from 1851-1872, he does not cover the role that women played in the temperance movement or draw attention to the gendered attitudes that prevailed.²³ The temperance movement was a male dominated movement, although from the 1870s, the cut-off date of Harrison's book, women had begun to run and manage their own temperance societies.

Another study of the problems associated with excess alcohol consumption takes a medical and social policy perspective. MacLeod discusses the progress of British inebriety legislation from 1870-1900. He argues that Victorian professional men and social reformers had to combat public apathy and parliamentary ignorance towards drunkenness to place legislation on the statute books.²⁴ MacLeod considers that inebriate legislation signified a new aspect in an emergent relationship between medicine and the state, but he does not mention women in his work. This is despite the fact that newspaper articles of the late nineteenth century frequently carried sensational reports of flamboyant

²³ Bronwyn Morrison points out that Harrison's book reflects the masculine bias of the time and she argues that the book does not reveal the gendered attitudes and double standards connected with women's habitual drinking. Bronwyn Louise Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women: Female Drunkenness in England c.1870-1920." PhD Thesis. Keele University (2005).

²⁴ Roy M MacLeod, "The Edge of Hope: Social Policy and Chronic Alcoholism." *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 22.3 (July 1967) 215-245.

and colourful female recidivist habitual drunkards. MacLeod's article was published in 1967, before historians had begun to raise awareness of the lack of literature about women and their experiences. His primary concern is to show how legislation developed and to examine the debates that surrounded its introduction. However, the debates surrounding the implementation of inebriate legislation he explores in his article has informed this thesis.

How the Inebriates Acts were implemented is a theme in Gerry Johnstone's article, "From Vice to Disease? The Concepts of Dipsomania and Inebriety, 1860-1908." He argues that the concepts of dipsomania and inebriety were applied to those people whose habitual drunkenness had led them to neglect their domestic and financial responsibilities towards their families. This group of people had not only lost self-control over their drinking habits but over their lives. He considers that in practice the Inebriates Acts were used by magistrates against female drunkards who were child neglecters, prostitutes and poverty stricken male drunkards.²⁵ Johnstone points out that Roy MacLeod and David Garland consider that inebriate reform was important as it drew attention to a change in attitude that had taken place at the end of the nineteenth century from drunkenness viewed as a vice and subject to criminal law to drunkenness viewed as a social and medical problem.²⁶ He considers that behaviour that was a consequence of poor social conditions was portrayed as a consequence of a lack of discipline and personal immorality.²⁷ However, as my thesis will demonstrate, not all women sent to inebriate reformatories were prostitutes, although some may have engaged in casual prostitution to fund their alcoholism. We learn from Frances Finnegan's study of prostitution in York that habitual drunkards lived in precarious circumstances and it cannot be assumed that because a woman had a history of court appearances for drunkenness she was a prostitute, even though prostitution and drunkenness were often linked.²⁸ The minute books of RVH Homes show that some women had husbands who enquired after them, some wives returned to husbands after

²⁵ Gerry Johnstone, "From Vice to Disease? The Concepts of Dipsomania and Inebriety, 1860-1908." *Social and Legal Studies*, 5 (1996) 37-56.

²⁶ Johnstone, "From Vice to Disease?" p.37.

²⁷ Johnstone, "From Vice to Disease?" p.52.

²⁸ Frances Finnegan, *Poverty and Prostitution: A Study of Victorian Prostitutes in York*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979, p144.

discharge, whilst others had husbands who were drunkards themselves. Johnstone considers that inebriety reformers saw drunkenness as a want of self-control. However, there were those that seemed unable to regulate their behaviour and the reformers tried to discover why this was the case. There were many debates waged over the relationship between inebriety and feeble-mindedness and insanity. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was common to associate drunkenness with insanity since both deprived people of their reason and rendered them incapable of managing their own lives.²⁹ The title of Peter McCandless's article "'Curses of Civilization': Insanity and Drunkenness in Victorian Britain" suggests a strong reaction to the problems associated with alcohol in Victorian society. McCandless acknowledges that the temperance movement promoted the belief that alcohol was responsible for the majority of the insanity in Britain, but he argues this belief grew because of the social conditions, prejudices of the time and the experience of Victorian medical men.³⁰

The medicalization of excessive drinking and whether men and women's habitual drunkenness was a breakdown of the will, a medical problem or a vice to be punished, is explored in Mariana Valverde's book *Diseases of the Will: Alcohol and the Dilemmas of Freedom*.³¹ If it was a medical problem, did that absolve drunkards from responsibility, could they be cured and what treatment should be given? These questions were fervently debated by Victorian and Edwardian doctors. The Society for the Study of Inebriety, a medical society set up by doctors, took the view that alcoholism was a disease, although they disagreed as to its prevalence. Heidi Rimke and Alan Hunt make the point that a transition had occurred by the end of the nineteenth century in western societies in which habitual drunkenness changed from a moral problem to being seen as a disease that required treatment.³² In Britain, this change in attitude was fuelled by the poor condition of recruits for the Boer War and the increasing

²⁹ Peter McCandless, "'Curses of Civilization': Insanity and Drunkenness in Victorian Britain." *British Journal of Addiction*, 79 (1984) 49-58, p.50.

³⁰ McCandless, "'Curses of Civilization'", p.49.

³¹ Mariana Valverde, *Diseases of the Will: Alcohol and the Dilemmas of Freedom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p.33.

³² Heidi Rimke and Alan Hunt, "From Sinners to Degenerates: the Medicalization of Morality in the 19th century." *History of the Human Sciences*, 15.1 (2002) 59-88, p.61.

influence of eugenics. Rimke and Hunt's article notes that in the late nineteenth century there was a preoccupation with "tracking the general health, economic and moral conditions of the urban labouring classes."³³ The Inebriates Act, 1898 was an element in this preoccupation and was a first step in government legislation to incarcerate people for a considerable length of time in order to protect the individual and society.

By the early twentieth century women could be classified as 'feeble minded', but also as 'mentally' or 'morally defective'. The title of Jackson's book *The Borderland of Imbecility: Medicine, Society and the Fabrication of the Feeble Mind* leaves the reader in no doubt that he considers feeble-mindedness was constructed in response to late nineteenth century concerns about marginalised people on the fringes of respectable society.³⁴ He says that the borderland was a cognitive space between those considered socially normal and the pathological.³⁵ Nineteenth and early twentieth century doctors played a key role in constructing feeble-mindedness as an altered state of mind for which there is no cure. With the right kind of care and training, it was believed that such people, if managed carefully, could be useful to society rather than a menace to society. Jackson considers the construction of the feeble-minded revealed that such individuals could be perceived as the agents of the decline of the British race, but they could also be a solution to the problem and thus represented progress. By recognising, isolating and controlling the behaviour of the feeble-minded in specialist homes social problems could be greatly reduced in a civilised humane and compassionate manner. Jackson comments, "Increasingly, doctors, teachers, politicians, the managers of institutions, social reformers, and others fixed on the feeble-minded as the principal cause of a variety of social problems."³⁶ Inebriates would obviously fall into this category, and women were particularly vulnerable because of their biology and the widespread belief that it was necessary to produce mentally and physically fit children to ensure the nation's wellbeing. Jackson comments that the borderland reflected concerns about the danger of people classed in this

³³ Rimke and Hunt, "From Sinners to Degenerates", p.62.

³⁴ Jackson, *The Borderland of Imbecility*.

³⁵ Jackson, *The Borderland of Imbecility*", p.13.

³⁶ Jackson, *The Borderland of Imbecility*", p.2.

ambiguous situation, but also “provided an authoritative space for the crystallisation of those concerns.”³⁷ This appears to be the case in the NII publicity brochure produced by Harold Burden, in which he says that years of neglect and unrestrained drunkenness left women on the borderland of insanity.³⁸ It demonstrates the prevalent concerns about women’s excessive drinking habits, which places them in a hazardous situation.

The feeble-minded occupied a variety of borderlands in the nineteenth and early twentieth century some imaginatively and some literally, for example between criminal and law abiding, disease and ability, and charitable and state provision. The boundaries between them were being constantly restructured and reconfigured.³⁹ In fact, Jackson observes “the late Victorian and Edwardian period itself constituted a crucial borderland. A time between the casual characterisation of the borderland of imbecility in the *British Medical Journal* in 1894 and its formalisation as a legal category in 1913 and 1914.”⁴⁰ He goes on to say that people were progressively subjected to state rather than charitable intervention and they became a public rather than private responsibility. This is echoed in the progress of legislation to curb habitual drinking and in the creation of the charity the Royal Victoria Home, Horfield. The Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879 brought state, charity and magistrates together to help habitual drunkards who admitted they were drunkards and wished to enter the retreat. Charity, state and public authorities came together in the Royal Victoria Homes after the Inebriates 1898 Act was passed and, finally the Mental Deficiency Act, 1913 took responsibility for inebriates certified under the 1898 Act. Just as the seeds of the borderland of imbecility are visible in mid-nineteenth century debates, the borderland of insanity, whether habitual drunkards were insane, weak-minded or suffering from a disease, is visible in the work of Dr Henry Maudsley, Dr Forbes Winslow, Dr Andrew Wynter, Dr Norman Kerr and others.⁴¹

³⁷ Jackson, *The Borderland of Imbecility*, p.3.

³⁸ *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women*, 1908, BRO 39910/PM/1.

³⁹ Jackson, *The Borderland of Imbecility*, p.13

⁴⁰ Jackson, *The Borderland of Imbecility*, p.13

⁴¹ Henry Maudsley, M.D, *Body and Mind: an inquiry into their connection and mutual influence, specially in reference to mental disorders. Being the Gulstonian Lectures for 1870*. New York: D Appleton and Company, 1871. Forbes Winslow, “On Uncontrollable Drunkenness,

A recognition that gender provides a lens through which to view Victorian attitudes to social questions has led to important new insights that inform a study of inebriety. Two influential and groundbreaking studies that have changed perceptions of women and drawn attention to gender are Elaine Showalter's *A Female Malady* and Lucia Zedner's *Women, Crime, and Custody in Victorian England 1815-1872*.⁴² Showalter's *A Female Malady* was important in changing the way women considered to be on the edge of madness were perceived by historians. Her book was one of the first to consider how gendered attitudes affected women's lives and the way their social roles and behaviour were shaped by stereotypes.⁴³ Showalter uses a variety of sources, medical, non-medical, and pictorial to explore the frustrations and tensions women experienced as the result of cultural notions of appropriate feminine behaviour and how these ideas and attitudes affected the definition and treatment of insanity in women. *The Female Malady* opened up a new understanding of women's experiences as people whose stories and experiences had not previously been given a voice and it challenged earlier views of progress in medicine and of the benign nature of psychiatry.

Showalter claimed that women could be defined as mad because they did not conform to social norms, for example, male relatives could have women committed because they refused to marry someone seen as an appropriate spouse. Her work is particularly interesting and relevant to the thesis because in a chapter about the borderland, she explains that from the 1870s definitions of insanity moved from quite simple categories to include ambiguous forms of eccentricity and deviance.⁴⁴ Classification is one of the themes of this thesis and whilst specialist doctors argued that they alone had sufficient expertise to

Considered as a Form of Mental Disorder" cited in David Ross LLB. "Suggested Practical Checks on Excessive Drinking and Habitual Drunkenness." *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland*, VI Part XLVII (May 1875) 397-407. Andrew Wynter, *The Borderlands of Insanity* and Norman Kerr, M.D, *Inebriety or Narcomania: Its Etiology, Pathology, Treatment, and Jurisprudence*. Third Edition. London: H. Lewis, 1894.

⁴² Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady: Women, Madness and English Culture, 1830-1980*. London: Virago Press, 1987. Lucia Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody in Victorian England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.

⁴³ Showalter, *The Female Malady*.

⁴⁴ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, p.101.

diagnose and classify mental weakness and insanity, the women sent to inebriate reformatories were sentenced by magistrates who had no medical expertise. A constant complaint by reformatory managers was that they were not sent enough people who would benefit from the institutions. Showalter uses the terms “sheltered”, “shadowy” and “lurked” to describe the borderland, which suggests sinister connotations. Shelter is something that affords protection, but may also cover up something, shadowy is something obscured and lurked could be described as something concealed for an evil purpose. Showalter’s conceptual framework of considering how gendered attitudes influenced how madness was viewed and how men and women’s lives were shaped by those attitudes could be applicable to other situations, for example, gender differences in how male and female drunkenness was perceived and differences in treatment, fines or prison sentences for those that transgressed the law.

Writing in 1991, Zedner’s work on *Women, Crime, and Custody in Victorian England* has also been influential in changing perceptions and drawing attention to gender. Zedner argues that women’s criminality cannot be fully understood without considering gender. Her research examines the extent to which female crime was influenced by the prevailing notions of femininity. She considers that female crime was regarded as a repudiation of women’s duties to care for and nurture their families, and as such it was regarded as damaging to the moral structure of society. In her article “Women, Crime, and Penal Responses” Zedner proposes that contemporaries reacted very differently to female offenders than to male offenders. She suggests that the reason for this was that women were judged against the standard of the ideal woman whose behaviour was both moral and exemplary. Similarly inebriate women did not live up to those standards, with the result that they were punished more harshly than men or were sent to reformatories to be reformed in that hope that they would be returned to society better equipped to live up to the feminine ideal.⁴⁵ According to Zedner, penal institutions, including inebriate reformatories, attempted to inculcate morality through rules, routine, orderliness and cleanliness. Anxieties over crime were exacerbated by the social problems that

⁴⁵ Lucia Zedner, “Women, Crime, and Penal Responses: A Historical Account.” *Crime and Justice*, 14 (1991) 302–62.

many women experienced such as poverty, disease, and overcrowding. As she points out some contemporary criminologists believed that the poverty in which most of these women lived induced crime, immorality and degradation. My own research on inebriety confirmed that such attitudes were commonplace. Dr Fleck of Brentry remarked that on arrival at the reformatory women were in a pitiful, desolate state and Harold Burden commented in his NII publicity booklet that years of neglect and unrestrained drunkenness had left women on the borderland of insanity.⁴⁶

Zedner points to the value of writing “a history from within and not just relying on official sources and observations” and this is something I have tried to emulate.⁴⁷ She comments on how women in penal institutions such as prisons and reformatories are portrayed in official sources may differ from how they are portrayed in other publications. In her research she has used a variety of sources such as minute books, contemporary printed literature, journals and periodicals to go beyond official sources. Her research examines the female state inebriate reformatory at Aylesbury and the London County Council’s Farmfield Inebriate Reformatory. Aylesbury was used by certified inebriate reformatories, including Brentry and the NII to accommodate the most violent and disruptive inmates so that they would be dealt with in a more penal environment. A principal theme of Zedner’s study is the relationship between how society responded to women criminals and the prevalent social values of the time concerning women’s role in society and how it changed. She proposes that towards the end of the nineteenth century it was considered that all women possessed an inborn morality and this innate morality and the fabricated standard of how women should conduct themselves made women susceptible to biological and pathological explanations of criminality. This view meant that women habitual drunkards were seen as a threat to the future of the British race because their immorality and their biology were suspect. Zedner concludes

⁴⁶ *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women*, 1908, BRO 39910/PM/1.

⁴⁷ Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.298.

that, “The aim was to remove inadequate or ‘incorrigible’ women from the penal sphere altogether to new special institutions.”⁴⁸

Alana Barton in her article “Wayward Girls and Wicked Women” considers that inebriate institutions were more closely linked to prisons than other types of semi-penal institutions and that their regimes were consequently more penal than reformatory.⁴⁹ Barton looks at how society controlled women who transgressed the law and whose behaviour was perceived as a nuisance to citizens. She also looked at the semi-penal institutions, such as reformatories, which were used to punish and contain such women. The view she takes is that although the purposes of such institutions were intended to be constructive, in reality reform was based on prison methods of control and strict discipline which infantilised women. My thesis suggests that the issue is more complex, as inmates of inebriate reformatories were often taught a skill so that when they were discharged they could earn their own living and women were often transferred to a city institution three months before discharge and allowed more freedom in order to acclimatise to life outside the institution. Whilst control was considered a necessary part of the reformatory regime, to ensure that the institution ran smoothly and that order was maintained, efforts were made to reform women and equip them to live useful lives outside the reformatory.

Although earlier studies of social questions have tended to focus on women as victims of Victorian views of ideal womanhood in which transgressors had to be controlled, more recent research has indicated that issues connected with gender and control were complex and varied. This thesis will suggest that women habitual drunkards were affected by the environment in which they lived, poverty, the police, judiciary, the location and management of inebriate reformatories, as well as national crises and circumstances such as the Boer War and the need to populate the British Empire. It is important to see women as social actors who often attempted to resist and escape the constraints put upon them.

⁴⁸ Zedner, “Women, Crime, and Penal Responses” p.352.

⁴⁹ Alana Barton, “Wayward Girls and Wicked Women’: Two Centuries of ‘semi-Penal’ Control.” *Liverpool Law Review*, 22 (2000)157-171.

Local studies are an important way to test assumptions about the attitudes of those who had to deal with women personally on a face-to-face basis. Several local studies of institutions have been undertaken by historians, which give an insight into women inmates of inebriate reformatories. Hunt, Mellor and Turner's article on Farmfield Inebriate Reformatory is a significant contribution to the history of inebriate reformatories as it brings together contemporaries' views, a consideration of class and gender, and an analysis of the women themselves. Their study looks at the methods of treatment found in reformatories and the way in which the Society for the Study of Inebriety tried to persuade others of the benefits of the Inebriates Acts through the Society's journal.⁵⁰ A central theme in Hunt et al's work is gender and why the Inebriates Acts were applied more to females than males. The article includes a one in ten sample of the case records of 932 women admitted to Farmfield's Inebriate Reformatory to discover the types of women sent to the reformatory. The study of the women at Farmfield is a useful comparison to the analysis of the one hundred female admissions to the NII reformatory in this thesis. Hunt et al found that Farmfield's regime was strict and was based on the belief that hard work and a system of rewards and punishments would lead to moral improvement. They put forward the suggestion that historians may have misunderstood the legacy of Victorian attitudes towards poor women by focusing primarily on the view that habitual drunkards had transgressed acceptable feminine behaviour and needed to be controlled. In conclusion they proposed that it was not only because of gendered attitudes that more women than men were sent to inebriate reformatories, but because women drunkards were seen as women in a wretched, miserable condition and three years in a reformatory might help them. Hunt et al's conclusion demonstrates the ambiguous nature of inebriate reformatories, which is a theme running through this thesis. Were reformatories places where women were treated or places where they were punished?

⁵⁰ Geoffrey Hunt, Jenny Mellor, and Janet Turner, "Wretched, Hatless and Miserably Clad: Women and the Inebriate Reformatories from 1900-1913." *The British Journal of Sociology*, 40.2 (1989) 244-270.

Social control is the subject of Bronwyn Morrison's PhD thesis, which is based on Langho Inebriate Reformatory, Lancashire.⁵¹ Morrison highlights the police, magistrates, the prison, legislature and certified inebriate reformatories as the prime mechanisms of social control and she examines the ways in which women either complied or resisted efforts to control them. She considers that the media and contemporary literature stigmatised women drunkards as bad mothers, prostitutes and mentally weak, and that reformatories were primarily places of detention to incarcerate and punish. Morrison's study of Langho found that the reformatory was used to control problematic women and that some of the women had been inmates of reformatories two or three times previously. Others had been inmates of Magdalene Homes and poor law institutions prior to being sent to Langho. Morrison suggests that this indicates inebriate reformatories were used as places to control women who proved unmanageable in other types of institutions. She notes that large numbers of inmates of Langho were classified as mentally defective upon arrival and this subverted all attempts to reform. In her opinion, reformatories were places to control women rather than a genuine attempt to reform habitual drunkards so that they could be returned to society as useful citizens. This thesis will argue that sending women to inebriate reformatories was not solely a matter of controlling a group of people considered a nuisance to society. Habitual drunkards could endanger themselves and those close to them if they remained in the community. Reformatories were an attempt to deal with the problem and help the women in their care, not merely contain them. Efforts were made to reform inebriate women so they could return to society as useful citizens and although these efforts may have failed they were often well intentioned.

Gillian Hall's study looked at the women sent to Langho from Liverpool and Manchester to discover as much as possible about their lives and how the Inebriates Acts became a reality for them. Gillian Hall comments that she encountered difficulties in gathering sufficient information about the women's lives prior to entering the reformatory.⁵² Her research examined the regime of

⁵¹ Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women."

⁵² Gillian Hall, "Disorderly Acts: The Court Disposal of Liverpool's Inebriate Women" in *Crime Fear or Fascination?* Anne Boran, ed. Chester: Chester Academic Press, 2002.

Langho and she notes that discipline was an important element in the regime and comments that although inebriety laws were designed for both men and women, they were used predominantly against women. Her conclusion that gender was the most prominent aspect of her research is similar to Zedner and Morrison's conclusion.

David Beckingham uses Langho Inebriate Reformatory and the Grove Retreat, Manchester as case studies to explore the issue of control and liberty. He considers Langho was a place where control of women inebriates was the dominant principal of the reformatory and the failure of reformatories such as Langho to reform inebriates led to inebriety being reclassified within mental deficiency.⁵³ Beckingham concluded that the Inebriates Act 1898 failed partly because of the uneven take-up of inebriate reformatories in England and Wales and partly because women inebriates came to be viewed as mentally deficient, which made efforts to reform them fruitless.

This thesis adds to the existing literature through a case study of Bristol and examines inebriate institutions and the key personnel who had their origins in the city. The main work already carried out is Carpenter's study of Brentry and the Burdens.⁵⁴ Carpenter comments that Brentry Inebriate Reformatory launched the career of Harold Burden, a local energetic figure with ambitions to become a national figure in the field of inebriety. He considers that the rise and fall of Brentry is a little known chapter in the history of reform. His book is a historical account of Brentry house in all its phases, but there is only a limited attempt to place Brentry in its wider national context. Carpenter has written two other articles which relate to Brentry, one concerning Brentry as an institution for people with learning difficulties and another article that gives some personal details about Harold and Katharine Burden. What makes Brentry so interesting and different is that it grew out of the small charitable institution, RVH Horfield, and the two institutions worked in partnership, which is an issue that is analysed in the thesis.

⁵³ David Beckingham, "An Historical Geography of Liberty: Lancashire and the Inebriates Act." *Journal of Historical Geography*, 36.4 (2010) 388-401.

⁵⁴ Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, "Rev Harold Nelson Burden and Katherine Mary Burden" and "Missionaries with the Hopeless?".

The Royal Victoria Homes came into national prominence through the efforts of Harold Burden after the Inebriates Act, 1898 was passed. After the Mental Deficiency Act 1913 the inebriate institution was gradually reduced until its closure in 1921. However, Carpenter remarks that subsequent to the Mental Deficiency Act, Brentry's managers and medical men did not enter again into national debates as they had during its time as an inebriate reformatory and Brentry became a quiet backwater. The NII reformatories changed use and became institutions for people with learning difficulties.

This thesis takes Carpenter's research further by examining the local and national context in which Brentry and the Burdens functioned. Some historians have mentioned Bristol's reformatories in their work, but they have not unravelled the complicated relationships between the institutions or the way in which they were created or funded. Very little research has been undertaken generally on the subject of charity, the state and local councils working in partnership with regard to inebriety and this thesis helps to fill some of that gap. The funds to erect RVH Horfield came from voluntary subscription and as Frank Prochaska points out, fundraising through bazaars was vital to charitable efforts. Women were very active in charitable ventures and Prochaska highlights that women found ways through charity to work for the welfare of others.⁵⁵ RVH Brentry was financed through local councils and the state. Both RVH Horfield and RVH Brentry were created by Harold and Katharine Burden and the thesis examines their work and the reformatories they set up and the NII. It is important to study Brentry and the NII because the reformatories operated differently from Langho and Farmfield, for example, Langho and Farmfield only accepted habitual drunkards into their reformatory from their own areas. Brentry and the NII, on the other hand, were not restricted to inebriates from a specific geographical boundary, but accepted people from all over England. In addition, the NII used a different classification system from other reformatories, which has not been researched previously and is an original feature of the thesis.

⁵⁵ Frank Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century England*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980.

This thesis looks at many of the questions raised by Zedner, Morrison, Hunt et al and others, including management attitudes towards inebriates, and how women inebriates experienced reformatory regimes. Most of the studies noted above, however, have concentrated on one or both of the same two reformatories – Langho and Farmfield. By taking Bristol and the Burdens as a case study, this thesis hopes to add new insights into the attitudes towards female habitual drunkards and the nature of the treatment they received, as well as into the lives of the women themselves.

Many of the historians cited in this thesis have been influenced by Michel Foucault. Zedner comments “Foucault denied that prison can be assessed in simple terms of success or failure and his theories on power/knowledge rests on “total surveillance as the ulterior purposes of the prison.”⁵⁶ However, Zedner takes issue with Foucault as she deems that he did not fully consider “the realities of most nineteenth-century prisons, and, above all, his failure to account for changes over time combined to restrict the value of his work for historians.”⁵⁷ Nevertheless, Zedner considers Foucault’s work enables historians to re-examine, re-evaluate incarceration in prison, and question its purpose.⁵⁸ Caroline Ramazanoglu remarks, “Feminists cannot afford to ignore Foucault, because the problems he addresses and the criticisms he makes of existing theories and their political consequences identify problems in and for feminism.”⁵⁹ Morrison also considers Foucault enables historians to critically question and disrupt established notions of the drunken woman. Using Foucault’s idea of subjugated or masked knowledge it is possible to discover an alternative exposition of drunken women. Barton considers Foucault moves beyond a top-down, male dominated view and opens the way to consider complex notions of the relationships of power between men and women.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.95.

⁵⁷ Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.95.

⁵⁸ Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.95.

⁵⁹ Caroline Ramazanoglu, ed, *Up Against Foucault: Explorations of some tensions between Foucault and Feminism*, London: Routledge, 1993, p.3.

⁶⁰ Alana Barton, “Fragile Moralities and Dangerous Sexualities: A Case Study of 'Deviant' Women and Semi-Penal Institutionalisation on Merseyside 1823-1994.” PhD Thesis. Liverpool John Moore’s University (2001) p.47.

Foucault's ideas have some relevance for this thesis in so far as the changing definitions of drunkenness as a vice, a social problem or a mental problem, are each associated with different forms of control and containment. The fact that the laws are applied differently in terms of social class and gender illustrates the operation of systems of power based on science and religion as much as the law.

The Inebriates Act, 1898 came about partly because of society's concerns and fears about women habitual drunkards. Whilst the old systems of execution and torture of past ages are no longer inflicted upon the body in such a brutal manner, nevertheless, as Foucault argues, the body is still central to punishment and discipline. This is echoed in the inebriate reformatory as the institution works on the body through diet, exercise and training to produce and change habits and conduct. The habitual drunkard is regarded as someone whose character is in need of reform. Foucault puts forward the argument that prisons produce "delinquents" whether inmates are isolated in cells or given useless work to do, and create an unnatural useless and dangerous existence.⁶¹ It is the feeling of "injustice that may make his character untameable."⁶² This thesis argues that the inebriate reformatory looks on women habitual drunkards sent by the courts as pitiable creatures in need of help and the regimes of the inebriate reformatory are designed to return women back into society free of their alcohol habit and capable of living 'respectable' lives. Nevertheless, to incarcerate women for up to three years isolating them from friends and family, gave rise to a sense of injustice, which may have resulted in some women becoming 'untameable'. Foucault suggests detention causes recidivism and leaves those discharged from prison with a high chance of returning. The levels of recidivism and women sent on more than one occasion to an inebriate reformatory was a topic of ardent debate in the early nineteenth century and one that only the Mental Deficiency Act, 1913 ended.

⁶¹ Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. London: Penguin Group, 1975, p.266.

⁶² Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, p.266.

The organisation of the thesis

This thesis examines the role of two leading figures in the field of inebriate reformatories and the combination of philanthropy, the state and private enterprise working together to care for inebriates sent to an inebriate reformatory associated with Bristol. The nature of institutional life in inebriate reformatories, the types of women sent to the institutions, the system of classification and the impact of reformatory life on inmates are examined. The thesis has been organized into seven chapters.

Chapter 1 focuses on legislation and parliamentary committees, royal commissions and pressure groups relevant to inebriety and inebriate reformatories. It outlines the progress of legislation from 1879-1914 and it illustrates the difficulties politicians experienced in formulating a solution to the social problem of drunkenness in England. Legislation is central to the thesis because it is the reason why the licensed and certified inebriate reformatories studied in the thesis were created.

Chapter 2 raises the question of the purpose of inebriate reformatories and the types of people who should be detained in them. The chapter considers the perceived relationship between habitual drunkenness and insanity. Contemporary debates reveal a conflict of ideas as to whether asylums should be places of treatment or places to confine those considered a nuisance or threat to society. Some believed inebriety was an inherited medical condition, whilst others considered it a vice and an acquired temporary insanity. These differing views stimulated debates on whether inebriate reformatories were therapeutic institutions for those suffering from the disease of inebriety, or custodial institutions for those that had indulged in the vice of excessive alcohol consumption. Towards the end of the nineteenth century debates on inebriety and insanity gathered a new impetus with the rise of eugenics and anxieties about the future of the British race. Women were seen as responsible for the future health of the nation and assumed a new importance as the procreators of the next generation who would produce wealth and stability for Britain. In 1913,

The Mental Deficiency Act was passed and inebriates within the meaning of the Inebriates Acts could be placed in an institution indefinitely.

Chapter 3 focuses on the inebriate institution RVH Horfield, Bristol, and explores the relationship between the state, philanthropy and private enterprise. This small charitable inebriate home for women was the precursor to the much larger national institution, Bentry Certified Inebriate Reformatory. The chapter looks at drunkenness in the city and the arrival of Rev Harold Burden and his wife Katharine in Bristol in 1895. Harold Burden came to Bristol to take up the position of clerical secretary with CETS and the Police Court Mission. Harold and Katharine are central to the thesis as they created a network of inebriate reformatories and Harold became an influential figure in the field of certified inebriate reform in England. The partnership of Harold and Katharine highlights working partnerships of married couples and this topic is examined in the chapter.

Chapter 4 makes a case study of RVH, Bentry, the large inebriate institution Harold Burden created with funding from local councils and the state. The chapter deals with the impact of opening an inebriate institution under the Inebriates Act, 1898 with mixed funding from the state, public, and voluntary sectors. A number of issues are examined in the chapter such as the confusion and disputes that arose over the state, charity, and public bodies working together in a joint venture, the role of women in managing the institution, and the arrangements made for the aftercare of inmates.

Chapter 5 examines the NII, the network of five female inebriate institutions founded by Harold and Katharine Burden after their resignations from the Royal Victoria Homes. The chapter highlights some of the complex issues that inebriate reformatories experienced in their attempts to classify inmates as to the likelihood of reform. For instance, how should they identify and manage the different types of women that were sent to inebriate reformatories, including sane well-behaved women, insane women, those considered feeble-minded, and refractory and violent women. To discover the kinds of women that were sent to an NII reformatory an analysis of the records of one hundred women

extracted from the admission and discharge books of an NII reformatory was undertaken.

Chapter 6: In this chapter there is a shift in focus from an organisational perspective to the lives of the inmates in an inebriate reformatory. The chapter discusses the extent to which magistrates and others frequently acted with good intentions in sending women habitual drunkards to an inebriate reformatory. To explore this issue the lives of women sent to a Bristol certified inebriate reformatory are studied. The ways in which some women demonstrated their anger and frustration at their freedom being taken away from them for a considerable length of time is explored and the chapter reveals that some of the discharged women from the reformatory continued to offend and they were subsequently placed on a police black list of habitual drunkards. The efficacy of inebriate reformatories in terms of the recidivism of former inmates is discussed in the chapter.

Chapter 7: The conclusion highlights the complexity of the issues associated with women habitual drunkards sent to an inebriate reformatory. The partnership examined in the thesis between charity, the state and local councils was severed, and Harold Burden resigned as superintendent of the Royal Victoria Homes, but he retained a place on the management board of Brentry. RVH Horfield was sold to Harold and Katharine Burden and became part of the NII, the network of institutions the couple created. The NII system of classifying inmates enabled the Burdens' institutions to be managed economically, which was appreciated by other reformatories as they joined in working closely with the NII. The research does not satisfactorily determine whether Harold Burden was a man whose objective was to make money and amass wealth, or whether he acted out of humanitarian motives in creating and running his reformatories. It is argued in the thesis that up to the end of the nineteenth century women habitual drunkards had been perceived as a social problem, but after that date women were viewed as feeble-minded and a threat to the health of the nation. The question that runs throughout the thesis was whether medical men, magistrates, the police and the public considered reformatories should be places of reform for inebriates suffering from a disease, or places of punishment

for those that drank to excess. This question was resolved by the introduction of the Mental Deficiency Act 1913. This act classified habitual drunkards as mentally defective and in need of care and protection for themselves and for society.

Chapter 1: Habitual drunkards and inebriety legislation 1879-1913

Introduction

This chapter examines the key legislation pertaining to inebriety. Legislation and associated parliamentary committees are significant because they form the foundation for many of the debates that follow in subsequent chapters and provide a framework for the thesis. Examining legislative debates and discourses reveals the struggles and resistance reformers encountered in their attempts to place inebriate legislation on the statute books. Parliamentary papers and legislation can also reveal how MPs and witnesses to committees viewed women habitual drunkards and the solutions they put forward to deal with the problem. The chapter focuses on the development and progress of inebriate legislation in Britain from 1879-1913, and underlines how difficult it was for politicians to formulate legislation on borderline issues that involved personal liberty, over indulgence, the rights of the individual and the welfare of society.

The chapter begins by clarifying as far as possible the extent of female inebriety nationally. In order to do this the judicial statistics for drunkenness for England and Wales were used as they informed public opinion and used as a basis for formulating policy.⁶³ The chapter then examines the temperance movement an organisation that campaigned to change the drinking habits of the nation. The temperance movement also contributed to the cultural background in which inebriate legislation was framed. From the 1870s, concerns over the extent of women's excessive drinking had increased as well as the ease with which women could purchase alcohol. Women habitual drunkards transgressed the boundary of what was considered appropriate conduct and a solution needed to be found to bring them back to acceptable feminine standards of behaviour. Therefore, the chapter considers the issue of gender, women's drinking habits and the Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879 and the Inebriates Act, 1898. The chapter

⁶³ Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.301.

also examines fears over race degeneration as well as the issue of personal liberty and considers how they were connected to the development of inebriety legislation. In conclusion, the Mental Deficiency Act, 1913 is considered, an act that incorporated habitual drunkenness into the sphere of mental deficiency and gave rise to new specialised institutions.

Judicial statistics

The statistics in Appendix 1 were extracted from the annual Police Returns and later Judicial Returns for England and Wales. From 1857 onwards the returns contained “the numbers of indictable offences known to the police, the numbers of people committed to trial for indictable and summary offences respectively, and the numbers and personal characteristics of people imprisoned upon conviction.”⁶⁴ The statistics recorded both male and female drunkenness, though regional statistics did not record gender. In addition, the printing and reproduction of the judicial statistics occasionally rendered figures unclear; some pages were omitted, formats varied and classifications changed over time. In 1893, the annual judicial figures for drunkenness were affected by a reorganisation in the presentation of judicial statistics and whereas the annual police and prison returns had been based on the year ending 30 September each year, all returns from 1893 onwards were standardised on the calendar year.⁶⁵ Thus, the data published before and after 1893 was not entirely continuous. Despite this, it was possible to chart the figures for drunkenness over time. David Beckingham comments, “Of course, in thinking about statistics for drunkenness there are many problems, not least whether they were accurate. Year by year the details requested by the Home Department changed...”⁶⁶ Further, Beckingham points out that drunkenness may or may not be an offence against the law according to whether a police constable considers it necessary to arrest or report an offender and his superior thinks the case is

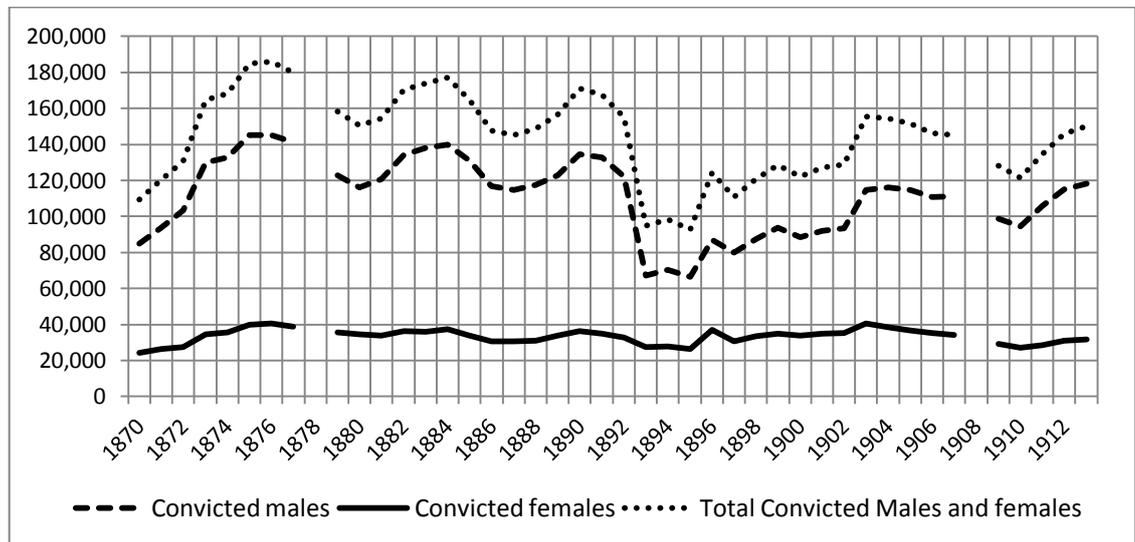
⁶⁴ V.A.T. Gatrell and T. Hadden, “Criminal Statistics and their Interpretation” in E. A. Wrigley, ed, *Nineteenth-Century Society: Essays in Quantitative Methods for the Study of Social Data*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.336.

⁶⁵ Gatrell and Hadden, “Criminal Statistics and their Interpretation”, p.344.

⁶⁶ David Beckingham, “Geographies of drink culture in Liverpool: Lessons from the drink capital of nineteenth-century England.” *Drugs: education, prevention and policy*, 15 .3 (June 2008) pp.305-313, p.307.

one for prosecution.⁶⁷ However, judicial statistics are useful in highlighting trends over time.

Figure 1: Courts of Summary Jurisdiction. Offences tried summarily – male and female convictions for drunkenness from 1870-1913



Source: British Parliamentary Papers. Judicial statistics, England and Wales 1870 to 1913

Figure 1 shows the extent of male and female convictions for drunkenness from 1870-1913 of those persons brought before a magistrate on summary jurisdiction. It demonstrates that male convictions each year from 1870 to 1913 outnumbered female convictions. The average total percentage of male convictions from 1870 to 1913 was 77% and the average total convictions for females from 1870-1913 was 23%. However, figure 1 does not record the more serious indictable offences that involved drunkenness, which were tried before a judge or bench of magistrates and jury at assize courts or quarter sessions. In addition, Figure 1 does not record the levels of private drunkenness of people in their own homes. Also, it does not record public drunkenness that was not prosecuted and subsequently convicted by the police. The number of persons prosecuted for drunkenness was higher than convictions as not all prosecutions resulted in a conviction and some people were discharged. The Chief Constable

⁶⁷ Beckingham, "Geographies of drink culture in Liverpool", p.307.

of Liverpool remarked that “drunkenness statistics were merely a record of illegal drunkenness.”⁶⁸

From 1870 to 1875, drunkenness convictions increased for males and females and drunkenness convictions for both men and women reached their highest peak in 1876. The Licensing Act, 1872 introduced new regulations concerning drunkenness in public places, which probably accounted for some of this increase. This rise in the drunkenness statistics may have had an effect on repeated endeavours to place legislation on the statute books to consign habitual drunkards to specialist institutions. From 1876, although male and female drunkenness convictions fluctuated over the years, drunkenness convictions did not appear (the figures for 1878 are missing) to go beyond the 1876 high point. It is interesting to note that statistics for drunkenness had fallen at the time of the Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879

In 1893 the number of female convictions dropped, but as a percentage of the total figure it increased (see Appendix 1). This rise may have added to anxieties over women’s drinking. Ellen Ross comments that before World War I “in poor neighbourhoods there was a considerable women’s pub culture.”⁶⁹ Women of all ages went into pubs bringing with them their babies and children, though the restrictions of the 1908 Children’s Act outlawed this practice.⁷⁰

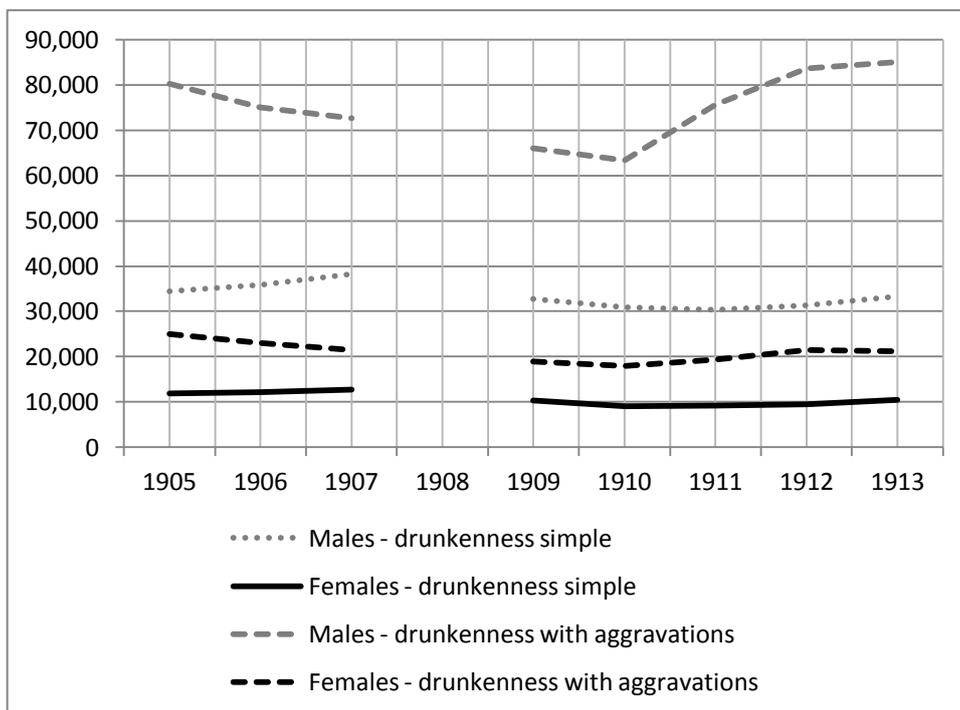
Following the Licensing Act, 1902, the judicial returns classified drunkenness as two separate offences: simple drunkenness and drunkenness with aggravations (figure 2). These two categories have been merged in figure 1 to approximate the pre 1902 classification. Simple drunkenness referred to being found drunk on a public highway or in a public place. Drunkenness with aggravations referred to drunken riotous or disorderly behaviour, drunk on the highway whilst in charge of a carriage, horse, cattle or steam engine, drunk in possession of loaded firearms, and refusing to leave licensed premises when requested.

⁶⁸ David Beckingham, “Gender, Space, and Drunkenness: Liverpool’s Licensed Premises, 1860-1914.” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 102.3 (2012) 647-666, p.307.

⁶⁹ Ellen Ross, “Survival Networks: Women’s Neighbourhood Sharing in London Before World War One.” *History Workshop* 15 (1983:Spring) 5-26, p.10

⁷⁰ Ross, “Survival Networks”, p.10.

Figure 2: Courts of Summary Jurisdiction. Offences tried summarily - male and female convictions for simple drunkenness and drunkenness with aggravations from 1905-1913



Source: British Parliamentary Papers. Judicial statistics, England and Wales 1870 to 1913

Summary convictions for males outnumbered females for both simple drunkenness and drunkenness with aggravations (figure 2) though the difference is smaller between males and females for simple drunkenness than for drunkenness with aggravations.

The temperance movement

The temperance movement was the first attempt to deal with the problem of drunkenness on a national scale. Many influential people and parliamentarians responsible for the production of legislation were supporters of the temperance movement. By the 1870s, it became almost fashionable to be a member of a temperance society in Britain. Harrison comments that by the 1860s a minority of fewer than one hundred thousand teetotallers in Britain had probably influenced the personal drinking habits of a million adult teetotallers and many others who were not members of temperance organisations.⁷¹ Temperance campaigners helped make acceptable the notion that state intervention in the

⁷¹ Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians*, p.308.

form of legislation could provide a solution to the problem of drunkenness. This may have encouraged the belief that a legal framework was needed for the state to intervene in people's lives to deal with the personal vice of habitual drunkenness, and was the thinking behind subsequent inebriety legislation.

The temperance movement arose in Britain from the 1830s; it quickly spread throughout the country and became the first nationally organised pressure group. Temperance reformers believed drunkenness was a personal moral problem that had a detrimental and deleterious effect on the whole of society. In the early days of the movement temperance reformers campaigned for people to moderate their drinking habits, but within a few years most temperance reformers had adopted a more radical line and argued for total abstinence from alcohol. Temperance advocates vociferously and vigorously campaigned to persuade the public to refrain from drinking any form of alcohol. By the 1860s, temperance reformers had made little headway in persuading society to moderate their drinking habits. The temperance historian Lilian Lewis Shiman comments, "The anti-drink movement in the 1850s and 1860s was at a crucial point; it would fade away altogether or it would discover new methods and issues..."⁷² Some temperance reformers considered attempts to persuade individuals to abstain from alcohol would always be ineffective whilst liquor was legally available. Therefore, in 1853 the United Kingdom Alliance (UKA) was established to campaign for the suppression and prohibition of the liquor trade through legislation. The UKA believed local ratepayers should be given legislative powers to suppress or prohibit the drink trade in their area. This notion of giving local bodies authority over their own affairs is echoed in the Inebriates Act, 1898, whereby local councils or boroughs were given the power to decide whether to create inebriate reformatories or purchase beds for their inebriates from councils outside their areas. From the 1870s, Evangelical Christianity combined with temperance ideology crossed the Atlantic from the United States to become 'Gospel temperance'. Gospel temperance was very popular and most churches and chapels created their own temperance organisations, temperance meetings, and temperance leisure activities. Many

⁷² Lilian Lewis Shiman, *Crusade Against Drink in Victorian England*. New York: St Martin's Press, 1988, p.12.

influential people, including politicians such as Joseph Chamberlain, the MP for Birmingham, were members of the temperance movement. Gospel temperance viewed drunkenness as a sin and those who drank to excess as sinners in need of redemption. Members of temperance organisations came from all classes and walks of life and much of the legislation that dealt with inebriety was framed by politicians sympathetic to the cause.

The temperance movement was male dominated, although from the 1870s, women became increasingly involved in forming their own temperance organisations with the aim of rescuing females from drunkenness. Temperance attracted many middle and upper class women with experience of parochial and hospital visiting, and their involvement in the temperance movement was an extension of that tradition.⁷³ Historians have often given only scant attention to the role women played in the restoration and reformation of intemperate women in temperance and associated movements, and have tended to emphasise women as victims of drunkenness. According to Morrison, many historians have failed to consider the increasing part gender played in discourses concerning the problem of drunkenness.⁷⁴ From the early days of the temperance movement, women were called upon to teach the principles of temperance to their own sex. For example, in 1856, the Western Temperance League Conference urged its female members to visit homes and workshops, to enter into conversation, and hand out temperance tracts.⁷⁵ The nineteenth century temperance movement highlighted the profound chasm between women considered reputable, civilized, and moral and women habitual drunkards considered disreputable, shameful and immoral. It was against the backdrop of an active temperance movement that from the 1870s anxiety concerning drunkenness increased and women's drinking habits came to be seen as a national and local problem that needed to be addressed. This anxiety about women's drunkenness cut across all denominational barriers and political

⁷³ See Julia Bainbrigge Wightman, *Haste to the Rescue; or, Work While it is Day*. London: James Nisbet & Co, 1859. <http://www.archive.org/details/hastetorescueor00wighgoog> Accessed 30 January 2010.

Agnes Weston, *My Life Among the Blue-jackets*. London: James Nisbet & Co. Ltd. 1913.

⁷⁴ Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women", p.110.

⁷⁵ *Bristol Temperance Herald*. (No.7 May 1837) p.30, BRO 41001/WTL/J/1/1.

boundaries and was to have far-reaching effects on how subsequent inebriety legislation was applied to women.

Women's drinking habits

Concerns about women's drinking in the 1870s were due in part to the ease with which women could obtain alcohol without visiting a public house. This situation was an unintended consequence of the Wine and Beer Houses Act, 1869. This Act aimed to regulate and control the types of person licensed to sell liquor and limit the number of beer houses that could be opened. The Act had no authority to close down establishments already licensed, unless problems arose over the character of the proprietors or the way establishments were run. Consequently, many small shopkeepers had obtained a license to sell alcohol. The Chief Constable of Bradford remarked that these shops "afforded a cloak to women in obtaining drink."⁷⁶ The Act enabled women who would not enter a beer house or public house to purchase alcohol discreetly. Public houses were often considered disreputable and many women would not wish to be seen purchasing alcohol at such an establishment. On the other hand, a visit to a grocer's shop was perfectly respectable and alcohol could be purchased with the usual grocery items. The *Huddersfield Chronicle* reported in 1869, that Councillor Wild considered a large proportion of female inebriety was the result of grocers licensed to sell wines.⁷⁷ The *Bradford Observer* in 1869 commented that women who gave way to habits of intoxication became the worst drunkards.⁷⁸ *Punch* remarked in 1870, "Drunkeness is bad enough in a man, but in a woman...female drunkenness is very much worse than male."⁷⁹ The language used in these newspaper and journal articles conveyed attitudes of shock, revulsion, and disgust. Much of the shock and revulsion stemmed from the realisation that middle class women and the wives of respectable working men could discreetly obtain alcohol and drink to excess. Women could

⁷⁶ BPP *Return of the Number of Licences for the Sale of Beer and Cider in England and Wales Granted or Refused in Each County, showing the Number Granted or Refused in Each Petty Sessional Division and in Each Borough at the Annual Brewster Sessions of 1869*, p.61; 1870 (215) (215-I) LX1.177.

⁷⁷ "License Amendment League." *Huddersfield Chronicle and West Yorkshire Advertiser*, 13 November 1869, p.3.

⁷⁸ "Women Drunkards." Extract from *Liverpool Mercury* reprinted in *Bradford Observer*, 30 September 1869, p.7.

⁷⁹ "The Worst of Drunkenness." *Punch, or the London Charivari*, LVII (5 February 1870) p.50.

send their servants out to purchase alcohol, or buy their drink themselves and become inebriated in the privacy of their own homes. The cultural ideal of a woman tending to her home and nurturing her family was at odds with a woman that drank to excess and neglected her husband and children. Women were considered easily influenced and those that succumbed to drink were thought a threat to their families and communities. In a letter to the *Preston Guardian*, the writer comments that prior to the Wine and Beer Houses Act, 1869, nothing was heard of “drawing room alcoholism” or of “inebriate asylums for ladies”. The writer considered that the advent of the Act allowed wives to conspire with their children to “hoodwink the Husband” until eventually, she “throws off shame and boldly drinks in gin houses and public houses.”⁸⁰ In the 1870s, there was agreement throughout Britain that female drunkenness had increased at an alarming rate. For example, in the Hammersmith Police-court, London, on 16 April 1873 the vast majority of cases were women charged with drunkenness.⁸¹ The *Bradford Observer* reported in December 1869, that out of 1000 prisoners 700 were drunkards and a large proportion of them were women. Drunkenness in the nineteenth century had steadily increased from 4,000 drunken offenders in 1860 to 70,000 in 1890 and 30 per cent were women. Female offenders were often considered irreclaimable and more likely to return to prison than males.⁸² The *Liverpool Mercury* in 1869 stated that a large proportion of drunkards were women many of whom had been convicted many times for drunken offences.⁸³ Although women’s drinking habits cut across class, attitudes to how they were viewed and dealt with by the courts was class biased. Middle class women habitual drunkards tended to be viewed sympathetically by the courts, whilst working class women drunkards were likely to be viewed as immoral and imprisoned.

Concern over women habitual drunkards was probably also exacerbated in the 1870s by other factors. Women had begun to move out from their domestic roles into the public sphere and this may have caused uneasiness and anxiety.

⁸⁰ “Sale of Liquor by Grocers.” Extract of a letter by R. Martin reprinted in the *Preston Guardian and Lancashire Advertiser*, 10 February 1872, p.6.

⁸¹ “Female Drunkenness.” *Pall Mall Gazette*, 16 April 1873, p.9.

⁸² “Bradford Sunday Closing Association.” *Bradford Observer*, 3 December 1869, p.3.

⁸³ “Women Drunkards.” Extract from *Liverpool Mercury* reprinted in the *Bradford Observer*, 30 September 1869, p.7.

For example, Josephine Butler started a campaign in 1869 for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts. She travelled throughout Britain to publicise and win support for her campaign and finally achieved the repeal of the Acts in 1886.⁸⁴ In 1870, the first suffrage bill for women came before parliament; the Education Act, 1870 allowed women to sit on local school boards; and in 1875 the first woman poor law guardian was elected.⁸⁵ The majority of men and some women considered a woman's supreme duty and only role in life was to look after her husband and family members. Females were expected to stay within the sphere of the home and find fulfilment and contentment in domesticity. The rising middle class 'new women' and drunken working class women had deviated from what was culturally expected of them, and both groups of women had deviated from cultural ideas of feminine behaviour. In her article on the semi-control of wayward women, Barton argues, "women have been deemed to be 'deviant' or 'unruly' for many different reasons and consequently they have been subjected to a whole range of strategies designed to regulate, control and reform them back to an appropriate standard of femininity."⁸⁶ The forms of control used to rehabilitate women and bring them into the normalised cultural idea of femininity were varied: lock hospitals, Magdalene homes, refuges, juvenile homes, retreats and institutions for mad women. These institutions catered for various types of women perceived to be dangerous or unruly.⁸⁷ Female inebriate reformatories, as Morrison argued in her PhD thesis, also endeavoured to regulate, control and reform women and attempted to inculcate their compliance to what was considered an appropriate standard of femininity.⁸⁸ In all these institutions males and females were segregated because it was considered women were vulnerable to corruption. They were also frequently segregated by class, education, conduct and behaviour.

⁸⁴ See Julia Parker, *Women and Welfare: Ten Victorian Women in Public Social Service*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1988, p. 133.

⁸⁵ See: British Library. The Campaign for Suffrage. <http://www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/21cc/struggle/suffrage/background/suffragettesbackground.html> Accessed 20 January 2013. Parliament UK. The 1870 Education Act. <http://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/livinglearning/school/overview/1870educationact/> Accessed 20 January 2013 and Moira Martin. "Guardians of the Poor: A Philanthropic Female Elite in Bristol." *Regional Historian*, 9 (Summer 2002) p.6.

⁸⁶ Barton, "Wayward Girls and Wicked Women", p.158.

⁸⁷ Alana Barton, "Fragile Moralities and Dangerous Sexualities".

⁸⁸ Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women."

The Inebriates Acts, 1879 and 1888

In view of increasing anxieties over habitual drunkenness, particularly women's drunkenness, parliamentary bills were introduced to deal with the problem in 1871, 1872, 1873 and 1877. Many members of the medical profession supported legislative action, as they perceived that habitual drunkenness was not only a bad habit and a vice, but also a disease analogous to insanity that required therapeutic measures. The proposed legislation contained a clause to commit habitual drunkards to specialist institutions for up to one year on a compulsory basis, however, many politicians found it unacceptable that people could lose their liberty for a non-criminal social problem and the bills failed. After the failure of the 1877 bill, it was realised that unless the compulsory clause was withdrawn a habitual drunkards bill would not progress through Parliament. Therefore, the compulsory detention clause was abandoned as a tactical measure to obtain the majority of parliamentary support. Although concerns over women's drinking were prominent, they did not prevail over the fears of possible loss of liberty due to drunkenness. An amended bill minus the compulsory clause received Royal Assent as the Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879 and was limited to a ten-year period.⁸⁹

Under the Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879, inebriates voluntarily consented to detention in a licensed inebriate retreat. A habitual drunkard could not be admitted into an inebriate institution without his or her consent. If an inebriate declined to confess to being a habitual drunkard and refused to enter a retreat, he could not be compelled to do so by the magistrates or his family. Habitual drunkards were required to make an application to enter and remain in a licensed inebriate retreat for a specified amount time not exceeding twelve months. The application had to be signed by the habitual drunkard and validated by two justices of the peace. The justices of the peace were obliged to explain the course of action the habitual drunkard was about to undertake and make sure the habitual drunkard understood the explanation provided. The

⁸⁹ BPP *Report from the Departmental Committee on the Treatment of Inebriates*, p.93; 1893-94 (C.7008) (C.7008-I) XVII.597.

application also had to be accompanied by the declaration of two people to the effect that the applicant was a habitual drunkard within the meaning of the Act. The costs of care and treatment in the institution had to be met by the habitual drunkard or a sponsor. After this procedure had been followed, the application would be sent to the proprietor or manager of the inebriate retreat the habitual drunkard wished to enter. All licensed retreats were required to employ a medical attendant, and be inspected by a government officer who would draw up an annual report.⁹⁰ After almost ten years of striving to place habitual drunkenness legislation on the statute books, the legislation that was finally passed was a compromise and disappointment to many reformers. The 1879 Act was permissive in essence rather than compulsory. Inebriates could only be admitted to an inebriate retreat by the voluntary consent of the habitual drunkard concerned. Dr Peddie of the Society for the Study and Cure of Inebriety, considered the Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879, with the compulsory clauses removed 'feeble', and felt it was particularly disappointing to medical men who wanted to treat the disease of drink craving.⁹¹ He viewed the 1879 Act as a small step in the right direction, but of little value without habitual drunkards "enforced withdrawal from present surroundings, and a restraint imposed on personal liberty."⁹² The result of the Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879 was the establishment of an assortment of small-scale privately managed licensed institutions "known as inebriate retreats."⁹³

Victorian and Edwardian society was highly divisive, the middle classes rarely encountered the working classes and knew little about their lives, and the 1879 Act perpetuated these divisions. The middle classes could afford treatment in retreats whilst there was no alternative other than to send working class habitual drunkards without the means to pay the fees to prison. *The Times* commented that habitual drunkenness fell into two categories, the small

⁹⁰ The Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879 (42 & 43 Vict. c.19).

⁹¹ Dr Alexander Peddie, "The Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879. Inefficient, and not Adequate to Accomplish the Important Objects Desirable." *Proceedings of the Society for the Study and Cure of Inebriety*, 7 (February 1886) 3-15, p.5.

⁹² Peddie, "The Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879", p.5.

⁹³ Bronwyn Morrison, "Controlling the 'Hopeless': Re-Visioning the History of Female Inebriate Institutions c.1870-1920" in Helen Johnston, ed. *Punishment and Control in Historical Perspective*. London: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd, 2008.

percentage from the respectable ranks of society whose vice caused misery to their families, and the large percentage of the vagabond and criminal classes whose vice turned them to crime.⁹⁴ The attitude of the writer in *The Times* article seemed to be that working class habitual drunkards were considered far more dangerous and injurious to society than middle class drunkards. Dr Bucknill, in a letter to *The Times* wrote of his distaste in administering the Act. He opined that as a Justice of the Peace by law he had to treat rich drunkards as though their conduct was the result of an uncontrollable disease and working class drunkards as criminals and send them to prison.⁹⁵ The 1879 Act did nothing to alleviate the problem of women recidivist drunkards since the same women continued to appear before the courts, which it could be argued was an indictment of the effectiveness of the Act. Further, the Act did not finance or compel local authorities to establish or create retreats.

In 1881, a charity was launched to raise funds for the Dalrymple Home for Inebriates, an institution that was intended to function as a model inebriate retreat for the working and lower middle classes. The Dalrymple Home's supporters included the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Earl of Shaftesbury, Dr Alfred Carpenter MP, the British Medical Association, the Social Science Association, and the Society for Promoting Legislation for the Control and Cure of Habitual Drunkards.⁹⁶ Clearly, there was powerful support from some of the most influential people in England for a retreat affordable by working men. In 1883, the Dalrymple Home for Inebriates opened; it was licensed for sixteen males, who were either private patients or patients admitted under the 1879 Act. The Home catered for working class drunkards at low cost fees, which ranged from 20s (£1) per week upwards, the wages of a working man with a good job, but more than the earnings of a labourer. These fees were still expensive for working men and beyond the means of many people. The home did not cater for destitute inebriates or women. Dr Kerr of the Homes for Inebriates Association remarked at the Dalrymple Home's inaugural meeting in 1881 that women were the greatest victims of a disease, which had increased on an

⁹⁴ *The Times*, 17 June 1878, p.11, col.D.

⁹⁵ Dr John Charles Bucknill, F.R.S, "Habitual Drunkards Bill", Letters to the Editor, *The Times*, 9 July 1878, p.12, col.B.

⁹⁶ "Habitual Drunkards." *The Times*, 18 May 1881, p.9, col.D.

enormous scale.⁹⁷ Therefore, it is surprising in the light of concerns and comments about women's drinking that the home catered exclusively for males, but as the Dalrymple Home was set up as a model home, it may have been considered that a home for female inebriates that admitted working class women would attract negative unfavourable press coverage if problems occurred. Negativity towards female inebriate homes can be seen in an article published in 1882 in the *Liverpool Mercury*. The newspaper did not disclose the name of the author of the article, and merely used the caption, "From a Correspondent." The article stated that the writer was stirred to write to the paper about the deplorably common phenomenon of women drunkards after the annual meeting of the St James's home, Kennington, London, a home for female inebriates. The language used in the article suggested that the writer perceived women drunkards as odious, loathsome, and revolting, something to be shunned and detested. The writer took a fatalistic view of women drunkards and expressed the opinion that their excessive drinking had robbed them of their strength and moral purity; death would be the inevitable outcome of their drinking habits.⁹⁸ The existence of the St James's home was also a source of local animosity to its neighbours and could have evoked concerns that the women drunkards might be a nuisance and a threat to respectable men and women living nearby. The St James's Home was a large establishment and contained 82 inmates with only the proprietor of the house, his wife, a chaplain and just seven members of staff to care for patients.⁹⁹ In 1892, the proprietors of the St James's home entered into a long, protracted, and expensive libel action with the wealthy Mr Labouchere, the radical Liberal MP for Northampton. Mr Labouchere, editor, writer, and owner of the controversial magazine *The Truth*, asked through his magazine whether the inebriate institution was a gaol or a home, and intimated it was a sweatshop.¹⁰⁰ His lawsuit damaged the reputation of the home, with a resultant loss in income. The St James's home was not licensed under the 1879 Act, therefore not inspected by any

⁹⁷ "Habitual Drunkards." *The Times*, 18 May 1881, p.9, col.D.

⁹⁸ "A modern Feminine Vice." *Liverpool Mercury*, 22 May 1882, p.6.

⁹⁹ 1881 Census, Ebenezer Terrace Home for Inebriate Women, Newington, Surrey. RG11 Piece/Folio 0551/14, p.20.

¹⁰⁰ See "St James's Home for Female Inebriates." *Illustrated Police News*, 17 December 1892. <http://www.jtrforums.com/showthread.php?t=13032> Accessed 10 June 2012. "High Courts of Justice." *The Times*, 11 July 1893, p.2, col.F.

government official. The home was an example of animosity towards women habitual drunkards and an example of the financial difficulties that could ensue if proprietors of unlicensed inebriate institutions chose not to be licensed under the Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879. Homes licensed under the Act were inspected regularly; therefore, it was difficult to make allegations without sufficient corroborative evidence.

The Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879 was an experiment scheduled to run ten years, but just before the end of its term an act was passed to amend and make the 1879 Act permanent. This new act changed the wording of the title of the 1879 Act from the Habitual Drunkards Act to the Inebriates Act, and both Acts were to be read and cited together as the Inebriates Acts, 1879 and 1888.¹⁰¹ Importantly, the change of title reflected a change in attitude amongst medical men and politicians towards habitual drunkenness, which was increasingly considered a disease to be treated rather than a vice to be punished. According to McLeod, this change in attitude was brought about by the growing concerns of doctors over the numbers of “persons dying while intoxicated” and the related increase in revenue from the sale of liquor, which added a social dimension to a medical problem.¹⁰² A joint committee was appointed by the British Medical Association and the Social Science Association to canvass support for legislation. Doctors were also persistent in their efforts to educate the public about the pathological nature of alcoholism, and the Society for Promoting Legislation for the Control and Cure of Habitual Drunkards co-ordinated the activities of medical and non-medical groups to form a unified front. The temperance campaigner Dr Norman Kerr who founded the Society with the support of the *BMA* was instrumental in the formulation of the Inebriates Acts and for bringing before the public and medical community the need for compulsory legislation.¹⁰³ A few changes were made in the administration of the 1879 Act and rules were put in force to make it easier to attest to a justice of the peace that a person was a habitual drunkard. MacLeod stated that the Act “operated as a welcome incentive to fresh activity.”¹⁰⁴ The

¹⁰¹ The Inebriates Act, 1888 (51 & 52 Vict c.19).

¹⁰² MacLeod, “The Edge of Hope”, p.233.

¹⁰³ MacLeod, “The Edge of Hope”, p.233.

¹⁰⁴ MacLeod, “The Edge of Hope”, p.231.

BMJ printed a letter from Dr Norman Kerr, which stated that the Inebriates Legislation Committee had been rewarded “by the enactment (though an imperfect measure) of permanent legislation for the inebriate.”¹⁰⁵ However, Dr Kerr was of the opinion that it was still necessary to press for provision for poor inebriates and for compulsory admission to inebriate homes.

In August and September 1891, the *Daily Telegraph* ran a series of correspondence over a number of weeks on ‘The Slavery of Drink’; correspondents were from all classes of society as well as inebriates themselves.¹⁰⁶ Scores of letters told of the misery of habitual drunkenness and those printed in the newspaper were “a tithe of the communications which were sent to the editor.”¹⁰⁷ The *Daily Telegraph* reported, “By no previous exposition, we believe by no temperance lectures or anti-alcoholic publication, have the evils of this deplorable passion for strong drink been so plainly brought before the population and Parliament.”¹⁰⁸ This correspondence was important in bringing to the public and parliament over an extended period of weeks the need for further legislation for inebriates and added considerable weight to the campaign for legislation that would deal with the working classes.¹⁰⁹ The *Daily Telegraph* called on the state to provide inebriate institutions for the poor and advocated compulsory detention in such establishments.¹¹⁰ However, widespread support for compulsory legislation had not yet been achieved, as the *BMJ* pointed out that only three weeks prior to the publication of the *Daily Telegraph*’s letters *The Times* took the view that habitual drunkards should not be deprived of their liberty.¹¹¹ The letters in the *Daily Telegraph* and repeated representations to the government by the Society for the Study and Cure of Inebriety put pressure on the government and led to a departmental enquiry in 1892 under the chairmanship of John Lloyd Wharton, MP for Ripon. The remit of the Departmental Committee on the Treatment of Inebriates was to examine

¹⁰⁵ “The Inebriates Legislation Committee.” *British Medical Journal*, 18 August 1888, p.390.

¹⁰⁶ “Concerning Legislation for Inebriates.” *British Medical Journal*, 19 September 1891, p.651.

¹⁰⁷ “Concerning Legislation for Inebriates.” *British Medical Journal*, 19 September 1891, p.651.

¹⁰⁸ “The Slavery of Drink.” Reprinted in *The Mercury*, (Hobart, Tasmania) 31 October 1891, LVIII 6.767. <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/title/10> Accessed 20 July 2012.

¹⁰⁹ See MacLeod, “The Edge of Hope”, p.233.

¹¹⁰ “Concerning Legislation for Inebriates.” *British Medical Journal*, 19 September 1891, p.651.

¹¹¹ “Concerning Legislation for Inebriates.” *British Medical Journal*, 19 September 1891, p.651.

the “best mode of dealing with inebriates” [and] “what kind and degree of punishment for offences committed by habitual drunkards would be the most effectual, both as a deterrent, and with a view to the reformation of such offenders.”¹¹² Johnstone comments that the departmental committee accepted without question that inebriety was a disease and so avoided the causes of inebriety and concentrated on institutional provision and reform.¹¹³ Presumably, it was easier for the committee to be pragmatic and stick closely to the terms of reference rather than become embroiled in a controversy over the causes of inebriety, which could not be resolved. The committee recommended that retreats should be encouraged for poor inebriates and be funded by voluntary contributions, or if thought desirable helped by local rates. Reformatory funding was to be supported by the state and local funds. The period of detention should be lengthened to two years and habitual drunkards should be committed to a retreat on a compulsory basis.¹¹⁴ The *BMJ* hoped the enquiry would overrule the objections to compulsory detention, which had previously proved a stumbling block to fresh legislation on both sides of the house.

Pressure on the government to deal with inebriates, especially female habitual inebriates, intensified during the 1880s and 1890s with sensational newspaper reports of scandalous infamous drunken women. Two of the most notorious were Jane Cakebread and Tottie Fay who had accrued hundreds of convictions for drunkenness.¹¹⁵ The *BMJ* commented in 1893 that society and the wretched victims themselves needed to be protected from the domination of a disease that effaced womanhood. An editorial in *The Times* stated that people have realised inebriates are a “curse and a nuisance” and if they cannot mend their ways it was inevitable they would be placed in “some kind of permanent seclusion.”¹¹⁶ It appears *The Times* had changed its attitude from its earlier position “congratulating the advocates of compulsory temperance” on the sense they showed in accepting voluntary rather than compulsory confinement of

¹¹² *Report from the Departmental Committee on the Treatment of Inebriates*, p.19; 1893-94 (C.7008) (C.7008-I) XVII.597.

¹¹³ Johnstone, “From Vice to Disease?”, p.49.

¹¹⁴ *Report from the Departmental Committee on the Treatment of Inebriates*, p.8; 1893-94 (C.7008) (C.7008-I) XVII.597.

¹¹⁵ “Drink and Prison.” *British Medical Journal*, 13 August 1892, p.374.

¹¹⁶ *The Times*, 12 May 1893, p.9, col.E.

inebriates.¹¹⁷ *The Times* in 1893 seemed resigned to the necessity of some form of legislation for compulsory confinement of habitual drunkards. This was probably partly due to the scores of *Daily Telegraph* letters mentioned earlier and the realisation that popular opinion was shifting in favour of compulsory confinement. Pressure for legislation was further heightened by a report in *The Times* in January 1898, stating the committee of the Howard Association expressed the hope:

Her Majesty's Government will no longer delay to carry out the recommendation for years urged by departmental committees of State, by bodies of magistrates, medical societies, and the Howard Association, in regard to securing legislation for the adequate reformatory treatment of habitual drunkards and misdemeanants, whose repeated recommittals to prison for very short terms have been abundantly proved to be not only useless to themselves, but to involve much waste of money and time and greatly to increase offences, instead of diminishing them.¹¹⁸

Bowing to pressure the Home Secretary promised to introduce a government bill in 1897. The bill passed through the House of Commons without hostile criticism. In contrast, in the House of Lords, Lord Wemyss stated the bill created a crime of what previously was not a crime and ran counter to liberty. He felt the bill carried legislation too far and it would be a first step in increasing state interference in people's lives. The Lord Chancellor in reply pointed to the recidivist Jane Cakebread and the scandal of her hundreds of prison convictions and put the question to Lord Wemyss whether he considered that state of affairs should continue.¹¹⁹ Nevertheless, despite Lord Wemyss' concerns the inebriates' bill received Royal Assent as the Inebriates Act, 1898.

The Inebriates Act, 1898

The Inebriates Act, 1898, allowed for the establishment of both certified inebriate reformatories and state inebriate reformatories.¹²⁰ Section 1 of the Act

¹¹⁷ See *The Times*, 17 June 1878, p.11, col.D and *The Times*, 4 July 1878, p.9, col.B.

¹¹⁸ "Habitual Misdemeanants and Drunkards." *The Times*, 17 January 1898, p.9, col.D.

¹¹⁹ *Hansard*. "Habitual Inebriates Bill." HL Deb, 4 August 1898, 64 cc 9-17
<http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1898/aug/04/habitual-inebriates-bill> Accessed 2 October 2012.

¹²⁰ The Inebriates Act, 1898 (61 & 62 Vict c.60).

dealt with drunkards convicted of crimes punishable by prison. Inebriates under Section 1 could be committed to a state or certified reformatory for up to three years if drunkenness was a contributing cause, or if they were found by the courts, to be habitual drunkards. Inebriates could be sent to a reformatory in lieu of prison, or in addition to a criminal sentence. Section 2 of the 1898 Act dealt with drunkards convicted of petty crimes involving drunkenness or disorderly conduct four times in one year. This class of inebriates could be sent to a certified inebriate reformatory for up to three years. If offenders refused to be dealt with summarily at a Petty Sessional Court, they would be sent to the Assize or Session courts for trial on indictment. Central government did not have the power to establish certified inebriate reformatories. Certified reformatories could only be established by county or borough councils acting separately or in conjunction with each other, philanthropic bodies, or other persons.¹²¹ Any number of town or county councils could join together to establish a reformatory and any town or county council could contribute towards the expense of a reformatory.¹²² The Secretary of State laid down the rules and regulations for the management of reformatories, which were financed jointly by central government, county or borough councils, or charitable donations. Managers of certified reformatories had the power to refuse admission to any inebriate convicted under the 1898 Act and all reformatories had to be periodically inspected by a government inspector. Refractory inebriates, or inebriates who proved uncontrollable and difficult to manage in certified reformatories were sent or transferred to state inebriate reformatories. However, only two state reformatories were established: Aylesbury Inebriate Reformatory for women opened in 1901 for criminal cases convicted under the Inebriates Act, 1898, and in 1902 for all female inebriates convicted under the 1898 Act; and a reformatory for men attached to Warwick Prison which opened in 1902. State inebriate reformatories were to be run on penal lines. The 1898 Act caused little debate and controversy and was only briefly reported in the press. According to Thomas Holmes, a magistrate and Police Court Missionary, "Few important measures of reform, probably, have been brought

¹²¹ Richard Elihu Cross, "The Inebriates' Act, 1898 and its Application to the West Riding of the County of York." (1899) *LSE Pamphlets*, p.10. <http://www.jstore.org/stable/60222635> Accessed December 2012.

¹²² Cross, "The Inebriates' Act, 1898 and its Application to the West Riding", p.10.

about so quietly and with so little public discussion.”¹²³ The lack of publicity and controversy over the 1898 Act is surprising in view of the discourses and debates over the passage of the 1879 Act through parliament. It demonstrated a change in attitude and a general agreement on the need for inebriate legislation, as Thomas Holmes stated the 1898 Act’s time “had fully come.”¹²⁴ Morrison states the 1898 Act was passed “to remedy the class bias of the previous Acts and make provision for criminal inebriates.”¹²⁵ The Act attempted to plug the gap created by the Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879 by providing for male and female drunkards who could not afford to pay for their stay in an inebriate retreat. The voluntary 1879 Act was retained, but under the 1898 Act, poor inebriates would be committed to a reformatory on a compulsory basis whilst criminal inebriates would be sent to a state inebriate reformatory. Therefore, both Acts, it was hoped, would be all encompassing. However, the 1898 Act was a disappointment to some reformers because it had failed to legislate to compel authorities or boroughs to provide their own accommodation for inebriates. Consequently, the creation of reformatories was often left to private individuals.

The recidivists Jane Cakebread and Tottie Fay were considered by Thomas Holmes to have played a large part in the making of the new Act.¹²⁶ This view was also confirmed by *The Times* in an article announcing the death of Jane Cakebread in December 1898, which reported that, ‘It was to meet cases like that of Jane Cakebread that the Habitual Drunkards Act was passed last session.’¹²⁷ Thomas Holmes considered the men who qualified to be dealt with under the 1898 Act were far fewer in number than women. He considered they were men of the worst kind, those who loitered outside public houses and terrorised or robbed in order to be treated to a drink, beggars, and those living on immoral earnings. Magistrates had no power to send these men (or women inebriates) to inebriate reformatories for up to three years unless they

¹²³ Thomas Holmes, “Habitual Inebriates.” *Contemporary Review*, 75 (January/June 1899) 740-746, p.740.

¹²⁴ Holmes, “Habitual Inebriates”, p.740.

¹²⁵ Morrison, “Controlling the ‘Hopeless’”, p.144.

¹²⁶ Holmes, “Habitual Inebriates”, p.740.

¹²⁷ “Death of Jane Cakebread”, *The Times*, 6 December 1898, p.10, col.E.

consented to be dealt with by a magistrate and admitted to being habitual drunkards.¹²⁸ Thomas Holmes felt magistrates should have been given wider powers to send inebriates to a state reformatory and whilst in the reformatory they should work to pay for their maintenance.¹²⁹ He made the point that, “Vicious women and vile men then are to be cared for; dementia and sensuality are to be treated as drunkenness; but to the great army of the drink-smitten comes no relief, no ray of hope.”¹³⁰

The 1904 Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration

From 1900, public interest focused on the possible physical deterioration of the British race as the Boer War had drawn attention to the unhealthy condition of many of the recruits, which in turn influenced attitudes towards habitual drinking and women. In 1904, an inter-departmental committee was appointed to enquire into allegations that the health and strength of the population had deteriorated, which was evidenced by the many recruits rejected as unfit for the army. Sir William Taylor, the Director-General of the Army Medical Service, in a memorandum published in the 1904 Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration reported that forty to sixty per cent of the men who presented for enlistment in the Boer War were found physically unfit for military service.¹³¹ He felt no time should be wasted to take the steps required to improve the physique of all classes in order to produce fit and healthy recruits. The Physical Deterioration Committee considered that women’s drinking habits had extremely prejudicial consequences to children’s welfare and led to the birth of disabled infants.¹³² The birth rate in England had been declining from a peak of 36.3 per 1000 in 1876 to 28.5 per 1000 in 1901.¹³³ Women’s fertility and

¹²⁸ Holmes, “Habitual Inebriates”, p.744. As previously mentioned, if offenders refused to be dealt with summarily at a Petty Sessional Court, they would be sent to the Assize or Session courts for trial on indictment.

¹²⁹ Holmes, “Habitual Inebriates”, p.744.

¹³⁰ Holmes, “Habitual Inebriates”, p.746.

¹³¹ BPP *Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration. Vol. I. Report and Appendix*, p.2; 1904 (Cd.2175) XXXII.1.

¹³² *Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration. Vol. I*, p.31; 1904 (Cd.2175) XXXII.1.

¹³³ Richard Soloway, “Counting the Degenerates: The Statistics of Race Deterioration in Edwardian England.” *Journal of Contemporary History*, 17.1 (January 1982) 137-164, p.153.

morality became important components in debates about physical deterioration. Concerns about women habitual drunkards developed into a much wider and far-reaching issue than simply being seen as a nuisance to society. Their habitual drinking was perceived to have the potential to affect future generations and was considered as a serious threat to the survival and well-being of the race.

As well as alcoholism, the committee looked at the problems of urbanisation, employment, the juvenile population, schoolchildren, and health. Those that lived in Britain's overcrowded cities where housing was poor and the atmosphere polluted were at risk from disease, immorality, and mental and physical degeneration. These factors together with long hours of work in unhygienic conditions were perceived by the committee to be agents in the production of drunkenness and explained why people drank.¹³⁴ The 1904 committee recognised a need for hygiene and temperance education in schools, training of teachers, medical inspections, and feeding of schoolchildren. These measures were considered essential to curb parental intemperance and produce future healthy babies. Dr Eccles, a witness at the 1904 Committee, in answer to the question, "Are the effects of alcohol in the mother brought to bear on the child as a rule," stated it had been proved that alcohol circulating in the mother's blood reaches the foetus and alcohol could pass from one to another. In such a case two things would happen, either death through miscarriage or the foetus would fail to develop properly.¹³⁵ Dr Eccles also remarked that after birth a child might be affected by the milk of a drunken mother and such children would either grow up extremely weak or die.¹³⁶ The summary of the 1904 Committee stated, "If the mother as well as the father is given to drink, the progeny will deteriorate in every way and the future of the race is imperilled."¹³⁷ The health visitor Frances Zanetti, in her paper

¹³⁴ *Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration. Vol. I, p.30; 1904 (Cd.2175) XXXII.1.*

¹³⁵ *BPP Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration. Vol. II. List of Witnesses and Minutes of Evidence, p.390; 1904 (Cd. 2210) XXXII.145.*

¹³⁶ *Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration. Vol. II, p.388; 1904 (Cd. 2210) XXXII.145.*

¹³⁷ *Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration. Vol. I, p.31; 1904 (Cd. 2210) XXXII.145.*

“Inebriety in Women and its Influence on Child-Life” read before the *British Journal of Inebriety*, contended that there was no question more important than national degeneration and it was a worrying fact that degenerate tendencies were becoming entrenched, particularly amongst the lower classes.¹³⁸ Amy Strachey wrote a letter to *The Times* that expressed the view that the “highest service which women can perform for the State is to help in the care and bringing up children-either their own or those of their neighbour.”¹³⁹ The historians Rimke and Hunt suggest that the hereditary theory of deterioration and degeneration provided a scientific discourse to legitimise the acceptance and continuance of gender roles.¹⁴⁰ This view is of consequence because women could be deemed “mothers of the nation” and, therefore, their maternal role was of critical importance. Women who engaged in vices such as habitual drunkenness were not only a threat to their own and their family’s health and happiness, but also a threat to the health and happiness of the nation. Consequently, women’s conduct should be moral, pure and exemplary. Anxieties also arose that if responsible women limited their families, the future of the nation would be left to immoral, drunken and immigrant women whose children were likely to be mentally and physically unfit. Inebriates were often classed as socially deviant and female inebriates were thought of as a threat to society, as they were considered likely to produce ‘defective stock’. However, it was in the interests of the wealthy middle classes to advocate that the fertility of the respectable working classes should not be curbed, as reliable servants and labourers were needed to work in affluent middle class homes and in the factories and businesses the middle classes owned. The historian David Gutzke comments, “In the years 1899-1907 a new critique of alcohol evolved which pointed to increasing female insobriety as a factor in infant mortality.”¹⁴¹ Gutzke goes on to say the Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration allowed fourteen doctors known for their anti-drink stance to influence the report’s conclusion “associating alcoholic abuse with racial deterioration.”¹⁴² Therefore,

¹³⁸ Frances Zanetti, “Inebriety in Women and its Influence on Child-Life.” *The British Journal of Inebriety*, 1.2 (October 1903) 45-57, p.47.

¹³⁹ Amy Strachey, “The Duty of Motherhood.” *The Times*, 20 October 1906, p.4, col.B.

¹⁴⁰ Rimke and Hunt, “From Sinners to Degenerates”, p78.

¹⁴¹ David Gutzke, “The Cry of the Children: The Edwardian Medical Campaign Against Maternal Drinking.” *British Journal of Addiction*, 79 (1984) 71-84, p.71.

¹⁴² Gutzke, “The Cry of the Children”, p.71.

the 1904 Committee on Physical Deterioration was heavily biased in blaming alcohol for the poor condition of the working classes rather than giving equal consideration to factors such as good quality food, wages, and warm, sanitary housing.

The 1908 Departmental Committee to look into the operation of the law relating to inebriates

The Inebriates Act, 1898 failed to function in the way it was envisaged and in 1907, only 493 persons had been sent to inebriate reformatories. This led to a fall in income and consequently inebriate reformatories began the process of closing down.¹⁴³ For this reason, in 1908, a departmental committee was convened to look into the operation of the law relating to inebriates and their detention in reformatories.¹⁴⁴ The report verified that the Inebriate Acts were not operating as expected and further legislative measures were needed. The committee considered it was desirable for the state to take responsibility for the control and maintenance of inebriates perceived as on the borderland of criminality as well as inebriates who had committed crimes.¹⁴⁵ They also considered that local authorities should be compelled by law to provide sufficient reformatory accommodation, which was undoubtedly a criticism of the many local authorities that had failed to provide adequate accommodation for inebriates and had ignored the 1898 Inebriates Act. In addition, the 1908 committee criticised the amount of money spent on reformatories by Lancashire, Yorkshire and London County Councils complaining that these three councils had lavished a great deal of money on their reformatories by furnishing them with oak panelled boardrooms, arched ceilings, expensive woodcarvings, and stained glass windows.¹⁴⁶ The committee stated that they saw no reason why “the mere fact a person has become an inebriate should not, of itself, entitle him to be maintained under conditions altogether superior to

¹⁴³ Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.46.

¹⁴⁴ BPP *Report of the Departmental Committee Appointed to Inquire into the Operation of the Law Relating to Inebriates*; 1908 (Cd.4438) XII.861.

¹⁴⁵ *Report of the Departmental Committee Appointed to Inquire into the Operation of the Law Relating to Inebriates*, p.26; 1908 (Cd.4438) XII.861.

¹⁴⁶ *Report of the Departmental Committee Appointed to Inquire into the Operation of the Law Relating to Inebriates*, p.30; 1908 (Cd.4438) XII.861.

those to which he has been accustomed.”¹⁴⁷ These remarks indicate that it was considered inappropriate to accommodate working class drunkards in such lavish accommodation. It was recommended that earlier inebriate acts should be repealed and a new act put in place consolidating, amending, and expanding the law relating to inebriety. In this new consolidating act the term habitual drunkard would be substituted by the word ‘inebriate’ to widen the scope of the act to include not only alcohol, but intoxication by drugs and substances that people ate, inhaled, or injected. Parssinen and Kerner suggest that drug addiction was often incorporated into inebriety and “occupied a decidedly secondary position in the Society for the Study of Inebriety concerns” as doctors saw it as part of the wider problem of inebriety. From 1910, however, drug addiction began to emerge in Britain as a separate issue in both professional and popular literature.¹⁴⁸ The 1908 committee felt that only small numbers of people had been convicted under the Acts because magistrates had problems in interpreting the description of a habitual drunkard given in the Inebriates Acts. A habitual drunkard was described in the Acts as “a person who by reason of habitual intemperate drinking of intoxicating liquor is dangerous to himself or herself or to others, or incapable of managing himself or herself, and his or her affairs.”¹⁴⁹

The committee also considered that intoxicating substances other than alcohol could ruin people’s health and cause misery to their families and such people were precluded from being dealt with under the Inebriates Acts. It was hoped a new definition of an inebriate would end confusion and allow the Acts to operate more efficiently than before. An inebriate was defined by the 1908 committee as:

a person who habitually takes or uses any intoxicating things or things, and while under the influence of such thing or things, or in consequence of the effects therefore is-

¹⁴⁷ *Report of the Departmental Committee Appointed to Inquire into the Operation of the Law Relating to Inebriates*, p.30; 1908 (Cd.4438) XII.861.

¹⁴⁸ Terry Parssinen and Karen Kerner, “Development of the Disease Model of Drug Addiction in Britain, 1870-1926”. *Medical History*, 24 (1980) 275-296, p.293.

¹⁴⁹ *BPP A Bill as Amended in Committee to Facilitate the Control and Cure of Habitual Drunkards*, p.2; 1878 (250) III.381.

- (a) Dangerous to himself or others; or
- (b) A cause of harm or serious annoyance to his family or others; or
- (c) Incapable of managing himself or his affairs, or of ordinary proper conduct.¹⁵⁰

The new definition of an inebriate was not only based on those considered dangerous to themselves and others as in the previous definition, but on the behaviour of people who had serious issues related to addiction and failed to conform to what was considered as “ordinary proper conduct” and caused annoyance to others. The committee pointed out that previously only the worst cases had been sent to inebriate reformatories and reform was unlikely. The committee described inebriates as “noxious”, “prone to commit crime”, “a cause of disorder” and a “bad influence on others, leading to a spread of evil.” They felt that inebriates were likely to neglect their children and “as is alleged by some, to produce offspring burdened with the congenital consequences of his inebriety.”¹⁵¹ Therefore, they concluded that reformation was not the only objective of incarceration; inebriates should also be sent to a reformatory to protect the community against possible “ill-doing.” The 1908 report did not provide an explanation of “ordinary proper conduct” and consequently this definition was ambiguous. The *BMJ* pointed out that they could not imagine an Act of Parliament that contained the phrase “ordinary proper conduct”, or understand why a committee that had done excellent work in other directions considered such a phrase as suitable.¹⁵² In total, the departmental committee put forward forty recommendations, a number *The Times* described as voluminous.¹⁵³ The *BMJ* called the 1908 committee’s report elaborate as it suggested “several new principles and many novelties of detail in dealing both with those inebriates who offend against the law, and those who do not.”¹⁵⁴ The *BMJ* reported that all the recommendations put forward were in accord with the British Medical Association’s report of 1906, which called for urgent legislation to place inebriates under stricter controls to restrain them from excessive alcohol or drug use, whether they were willing to be controlled or not and

¹⁵⁰ *Report of the Departmental Committee Appointed to Inquire into the Operation of the Law Relating to Inebriates*, p.33; 1908; (Cd.4438) XII.861.

¹⁵¹ *Report of the Departmental Committee Appointed to Inquire into the Operation of the Law Relating to Inebriates*, p.18; 1908 (Cd.4438) XII.861.

¹⁵² “The Inebriates Acts.” *British Medical Journal*, 16 January 1909, p.169.

¹⁵³ “Care of the Inebriate.” *The Times*, 27 January 1909, p.9, col.F.

¹⁵⁴ “The Inebriates Acts.” *British Medical Journal*, 16 January 1909, p.169.

whether or not they had been convicted of a crime.¹⁵⁵ Doctors influence on the formation of inebriety legislation seemed to have increased, which is evidenced by a report in the *BMJ* that noted the sections of the 1908 report that dealt with the observations on the nature of inebriety by medical men was a unique feature in a Government report.¹⁵⁶

The 1908 Departmental Committee also examined whether the treatment of inebriety by drugs might be viable in the event of the possibility that an alleged cure for inebriety might be found and whether it might be enforceable by law. This raises the question of freedom and state control and the dilemma of how far the state should intervene in people's lives through medicalization; the balance between the rights of the citizen versus the wider issue of the wellbeing of society. Nadja Durbach suggests that from the 1860s many believed the British Government increasingly meddled in the everyday lives of ordinary citizens through dictatorial legislation.¹⁵⁷ For example, "truancy officers, cruelty inspectors and medical officers of health" who were "eager to moralize households educate children [and] vaccinate infants."¹⁵⁸ The interference was resented and feared by the working classes, particularly as the middle classes, due to their more affluent economic status, were not subjected to the same type of examination. In her study about women and neighbourhood sharing in London before World War One Ellen Ross found that the police and agents of authority representing the church or state who invaded streets and homes were met with hostility and treated harshly.¹⁵⁹ The 1908 committee considered that the resistance and public demonstrations to the Vaccination Acts revealed that no method of medical treatment could be successfully enforced by an act of Parliament, and any action to implement such a measure would produce "friction, discontent and agitation."¹⁶⁰ Compulsory vaccination of infants against

¹⁵⁵ "The Inebriates Acts." *British Medical Journal*, 16 January 1909, p.168.

¹⁵⁶ "The Inebriates Acts." *British Medical Journal*, 16 January 1909, p.168.

¹⁵⁷ Nadja Durbach, "Class, Gender, and the Conscious Objector to Vaccination, 1898-1907." *Journal of British Studies*, 41.1 (January 2002) 58-83, p.58.

¹⁵⁸ David Wright, Review of "Friends of the Family: The English Home and Its Guardians, 1850-1940 by George L. Behlmer." *The Journal of Modern History*, 73.1 (March 2001) 161-162, p.161.

¹⁵⁹ Ross, "Survival Networks", p.17.

¹⁶⁰ *Report of the Departmental Committee Appointed to Inquire into the Operation of the Law Relating to Inebriates*, p.2; 1908 (Cd.4438) XII.861.

smallpox came into force in Britain in 1853 and caused unrest for forty-five years until the 1898 Vaccination Act allowed parents to opt out by producing a certificate of conscientious objection from a magistrate.¹⁶¹ Conscientious objectors held the view that compulsory vaccination subverted personal liberty.¹⁶² The working classes made up the bulk of vaccination protesters; they reasoned that compulsory vaccination compromised their rights as English citizens. Vaccination of children was an area where the urban poor could have some governance over their lives and they were unwilling to relinquish their right to make an important decision over their children's welfare. All children were required by law to be vaccinated except those that were conscientious objectors. However, in the case of inebriates, no law or proven effective drug treatment to cure or prevent inebriety existed and only those people addicted to alcohol were likely to be affected by any proposed legislation. The 1908 committee concluded that as well as being a deeply unpopular measure, the administration of enforced medical treatment would prove impractical as people's needs varied and medical men would lose their freedom to prescribe appropriately. The issue of whether drug treatment to cure inebriety would be effective was strongly debated amongst medical men. A letter by Dr Mary Gordon in 1904, stated that "quackery in drink cures" was rampant and although medical men used drugs they used them to try and combat the *symptoms* (the italics are my own) of inebriety.¹⁶³ Reports in the *BMJ* of a possible cure for inebriety by the use of hypodermic injections prompted correspondence from Dr Stewart, the owner of a private inebriate institution in Bristol. Dr Stewart stated he had never known an inebriate cured permanently by drugs.¹⁶⁴

The 1912 -1913 a bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to inebriates

Between 1912 and 1913, a bill was placed before Parliament to consolidate and amend the law relating to inebriates and this bill incorporated many of the recommendations of the 1908 Departmental Committee. This bill proposed

¹⁶¹ Durbach, "Class, Gender, and the Conscious Objector to Vaccination", p.58.

¹⁶² "Leicester and the Vaccination Bill." *Leicester Chronicle and Leicestershire Mercury*, 30 April 1898, pg. 2.

¹⁶³ M. Gordon, "Treatment of Inebriety by Drugs." *British Medical Journal*, 4 June 1904, p.1346.

¹⁶⁴ James Stewart, "Treatment of Inebriety by Drugs." *British Medical Journal*, 21 May 1904, p.1223.

some important changes in respect of compulsory detention. Far from being a non-contentious consolidating bill, it proposed radical changes that could further affect the freedom of citizens and allow the state to interfere to a greater extent than previously in people's lives. The bill proposed that an inebriate could sign a voluntary agreement to abstain from intoxicants for an indefinite period of not less than one year. If the inebriate failed to comply with this agreement and consumed intoxicants during the year, he or she could be committed to a reformatory for two years. The inebriates who managed to adhere to their agreement to abstain would have the threat of the reformatory hanging over them if their sobriety lapsed occasionally. It was possible that if this bill became law inebriates might be pressed into signing the undertaking by families when they were intoxicated and incapable of understanding the serious consequences of signing such a document. In addition, the bill allowed appointed guardians to have the power to stipulate where inebriates lived, to deprive them of intoxicants, and to inform retailers not to sell intoxicants to inebriates.¹⁶⁵ Not everyone in parliament agreed with a bill that proposed greater powers for the state to interfere in the lives of non-criminal inebriates. In July 1914, in a House of Commons debate to decide whether the bill should be read a second time, the Liberal MP for Newcastle-under-Lyme, Mr Josiah Wedgwood, vehemently stated he hated a bill such as this one. He said, "It is one of a trio of Bills—the others being the Mental Deficiency Bill and the Criminal Justice Administration Bill, all being directed to take in the unfits and misfits—those who do not fit into our civilisation—and put them into institutions in order to turn out more useful citizens to the possessing classes."¹⁶⁶ His objection was that "socially undesirable" drunkards could suffer long periods of compulsory detention for offences where a fine of 5s.0d or seven days imprisonment would have been "ample punishment." The bill was discussed in the House of Commons in the early hours of the morning and Mr Bridgeman, the Conservative MP for Oswestry, protested that a committee had sat for months considering the matter with little help from the government only for the bill to be brought in at an impossible time for it to be passed. He considered

¹⁶⁵ BPP *A Bill to Consolidate and Amend the Law Relating to Inebriates*; 1912-13 (89) II.843.

¹⁶⁶ *Hansard*. "Inebriates Bill." HC Deb, 29 July 1914, 65 cc1511-29.

<http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1914/jul/29/inebriates-bill> Accessed 12 December 2012.

that the Home Secretary had been devious in dropping some of the clauses in the “hope of getting what would only be a miserable measure...”¹⁶⁷ The bill was rejected, probably because some MPs considered that the changes in the law were too radical and encroached too much on people’s personal liberty. In addition, the impetus for new inebriate legislation had lost its urgency, as the Mental Deficiency Act, 1913 included powers over people previously dealt with under the inebriety acts.¹⁶⁸

The Mental Deficiency Act, 1913

The Mental Deficiency Act, 1913 was based on the recommendations made in the report in the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1904-1908. Further, the 1908 committee that looked into the operation of the Inebriates Acts concluded that the acts were not operating as intended, which added weight for inebriates to come under the umbrella of the 1913 Act. The act included various types of people defined as feeble-minded and mentally defective including inebriates who in addition to being defective is “an habitual drunkard within the meaning of the Inebriates Acts 1879 to 1900.”¹⁶⁹ Under the 1913 Act, inebriate reformatories would not have to accommodate inebriates considered mentally defective (it was estimated that 60 to 70 per cent of habitual inebriates dealt with under the Inebriates Acts were mentally defective). Inebriates would be committed to a dedicated institution and reception orders and all other methods applicable to other forms of mental defect would be extended to mentally defective inebriates.¹⁷⁰ As far as existing inebriate institutions were concerned, the Treasury would pay contributions to state and certified inebriate reformatories for habitual drunkards.¹⁷¹ County and borough councils would be obliged to make provision for mental defectives in separate institutions, which would be maintained by the Government.

¹⁶⁷ *Hansard*. “Inebriates Bill.” HC Deb 29 July 1914.

¹⁶⁸ Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.46.

¹⁶⁹ BPP *Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded. Vol. VIII*, p.359; 1908 (Cd. 4202) XXXIX.159. The Mental Deficiency Act, 1913 (3 & 4 Geo 5. c. 28).

¹⁷⁰ *Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded. Vol. VIII*, p.37; 1908 (Cd. 4202) XXXIX.159.

¹⁷¹ *Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded. Vol. VIII*, p.139; 1908 (Cd. 4202) XXXIX.159.

The Mental Deficiency Act, 1913 was passed at a time when most inebriate reformatories had closed down because too few people had been sent to reformatories by magistrates and this led to a lack of funding since the Treasury subsidised each inmate sent from the courts. This raises the question of why the 1913 Act was passed at a time when inebriate legislation that incarcerated habitual drunkards in dedicated institutions had declined. The answer to this question involves the issue of citizenship, control and freedom. The poor success rates of long-term recovery from excessive drinking made the investment in inebriate institutions ineffective. Yet a solution to the problem of habitual drunkards who caused harm to themselves, their families and law-abiding citizens was needed. Eugenics (“the science which deals with all influences that improve the inborn qualities of a race; also with those that develop them to the utmost advantage”¹⁷²) fears over the degeneration of the race, and the morality of habitual drunkards were significant issues that influenced the successful passage of the 1913 Act. However, they were perhaps not the only factors that swayed politicians to support the 1913 act. Thomson asserts that the problem of mental deficiency should be placed in the context of a wider debate about “responsible citizenship,” humanitarian concerns about helping others less capable, the social incompetence of those that lacked self-control as well as eugenics and the deterioration of the race.¹⁷³ He considers that debates concerning mental defectives were conducted within this broader debate about citizenship and the rights, duties, control, and freedom it entailed.

The 1913 Act included the feeble-minded; moral imbeciles; epileptics; mentally defective, deaf, dumb and blind persons; and inebriates.¹⁷⁴ Inebriates who were deemed mental defectives were provided with the same care and protection given to lunatics, idiots, and imbeciles under the Lunacy and Idiots Acts. A mental defective was described in the 1913 Act as a person that required care

¹⁷² Francis Galton, “Eugenics, its Definition, Scope and Aims.” *The American Journal of Sociology*, 10.1 (July 1904) 1-25, p.1.

¹⁷³ Thomson, *The Problem of Mental Deficiency*, pp.297-298.

¹⁷⁴ BPP *A Bill to Amend the Law Relating to Mentally Defective and Epileptic Persons*, p.ii; 1912-13 (134) III.845.

and control and was incapable of managing himself or his affairs.¹⁷⁵ Habitual inebriates, on the other hand, were classified under the act as mentally defective if they met the criteria of a habitual drunkard within the meaning of the Inebriates Acts. They could then be institutionalised indefinitely. The 1913 Act allowed mentally defective persons to be dealt with under the central authority of the Board of Control and as it was considered that the majority of habitual inebriates were mentally defective, they came under their jurisdiction.¹⁷⁶ Provision was to be made to build large farm colonies, hospitals, and private homes to accommodate the expected numbers of mental defectives certified under the new Act.¹⁷⁷

Inebriety under the 1913 Act was considered a problem that needed long term institutional care. Reformatories certified under the Inebriates Acts were specialised institutions, but their success in reforming inmates was poor, which reinforced the view that inmates were weak-minded rather than having a predisposition to crime. Attitudes towards inebriates had changed over time, at first inebriates were seen as indulging in a vice, then as victims of a disease and finally the majority of inebriates were considered mental defectives. This enabled the state to have extensive power over habitual drunkards, which was based on the premise that mental defectives required care and protection as they were suffering from mental incapacity.¹⁷⁸ Jan Walmsley states, “At its height 65,000 people were placed in colonies, hospitals or other institutions, in some cases for many years, with no legal right to petition against continued detention.¹⁷⁹” The 1913 Act was the first of its kind in the world. Its sweeping powers allowed many people including inebriates to be incarcerated in institutions for the rest of their lives with the result that their rights to social,

¹⁷⁵ *A Bill to Amend the Law Relating to Mentally Defective and Epileptic Persons*, p.20; 1912-13 (134) III.845.

¹⁷⁶ *A Bill to Amend the Law Relating to Mentally Defective and Epileptic Persons*, p.iii; 1912-13 (134) III.845.

¹⁷⁷ *A Bill to Amend the Law Relating to Mentally Defective and Epileptic Persons*, p.iv; 1912-13 (134) III.845.

¹⁷⁸ *A Bill to Amend the Law Relating to Mentally Defective and Epileptic Persons*, p.i; 1912-13 (134) III.845.1912-13.

¹⁷⁹ Jan Walmsley, “Women and the Mental Deficiency Act of 1913: Citizenship, Sexuality and Regulation.” *British Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 28 (2000) 65-70, p.65.

economic and political citizenship were denied. The Mental Deficiency Act, 1913, remained in force until 1959.¹⁸⁰

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the key legislation that informs the thesis. Changes in attitudes towards habitual drunkards were revealed and the difficulties parliamentarians experienced in trying to legislate for borderline issues that involved personal liberty, private indulgence or vice, and the rights of the individual and the welfare of society discussed. From 1900, public interest focused on the possible physical deterioration of the British race when it was found many recruits were unfit for military service. Fears that the race was deteriorating emphasised the need for women to produce strong healthy children and early twentieth century attitudes to habitual drunkenness hardened and were less sympathetic, particularly in the case of female habitual drunkards as they were viewed as a danger to society. By 1913, habitual drunkards were considered mentally defective due in part to the influential discourse on eugenics. Habitual drunkards were included in the Mental Deficiency Act, 1913 and instead of receiving a sentence by magistrates for up to three years in an inebriate reformatory, the 1913 Act had the power to incarcerate habitual drunkards in an institution permanently.

The chapter commented on the notion that temperance was the context in which much of the inebriety legislation was framed. Drunkenness was considered a major cause of poverty and crime in the nineteenth century and inebriate legislation emerged as a solution to this problem. The Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879 was a disappointment to inebriate reformers because it did not have the power to send inebriates to an inebriate retreat against their will. Only the middle classes or people who were sponsored financially could afford the fees of an inebriate institution. Magistrates had no alternative but to send working class, poor, and pauper inebriates to prison. Despite fears that personal liberty could be compromised, anxieties over women's excessive drinking took precedence and the Inebriates Act, 1898 was passed. The 1898 Act was drawn

¹⁸⁰ Walmsley, "Women and the Mental Deficiency Act of 1913", p.65.

up to include both men and women, and to overcome the class bias of the 1879 Act. For the first time in England and Wales habitual drunkards could be sent to an inebriate reformatory on a compulsory basis. Institutions such as inebriate reformatories were an integral part of the nineteenth century commitment to social action and the moral improvement of society. The 1904 Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration emphasised that alcoholics were not merely troublemakers, miscreants and social nuisances, but posed a danger to the British race as alcoholic parents prejudiced the health of their children. In view of these problems, a Departmental Committee in 1908 looked into the need for a new act to expand the scope of inebriety. The committee verified that the Inebriates Acts were not operating as they should and considered the difficulties in finding a solution to a problem that the committee considered was in part an inebriate's physical susceptibility to drink and in part an acquired habit. A further bill was put before Parliament in 1912-1913 incorporating the recommendations of the 1908 committee. Under this bill inebriates signed an agreement to abstain from intoxicants for over one year and the penalty for breaching the agreement was two years in a reformatory. A guardian could also be appointed who could specify where the inebriates lived, deprive him or her of any intoxicants, and instruct shops not to sell their charges intoxicants. The bill was rejected because it encroached too far into people's personal liberty. The Mental Deficiency Act, 1913 redefined inebriates as mentally defective and made the Inebriates Act, 1898 extraneous. Three main issues seemed to run through the struggles and successes to place inebriate legislation on the statute books: personal liberty, the rights of the individual versus the control of the state, and women's drinking habits. The failure of inebriate legislation did not lessen the perceived need for institutional care for habitual drunkards, but it was channelled in a new and different direction. The Mental Deficiency Act, 1913 gave the State far-reaching powers over people's lives considered deviant, such as habitual drunkards.

Chapter 2: Discourses and debates

Introduction

This chapter examines the perceived relationship between habitual drunkenness and insanity in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Contemporaries debated this relationship extensively and saw insanity and drunkenness in competing ways. Some believed inebriety was inherited and consequently a medical problem. Others considered inebriety was a vice, or an acquired temporary insanity that required total abstinence from alcohol and detention in prison or in an inebriate institution. These differing opinions led to ambivalence as to whether asylums were hospitals that offered treatment for disease or custodial institutions intended to protect society.¹⁸¹ This had echoes in the debates concerning the purpose of certified inebriate reformatories and the types of people who should be detained in them. The debates appeared to have revolved around the question of whether inebriety was a disease allied to insanity that required treatment, with its sufferers segregated from society, or a vice that deserved punishment. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, debates on inebriety and insanity gathered momentum with the rise of eugenics, a movement that linked social issues, ideology and science in an attempt to deal with the problem of what was perceived as the deterioration of the race. The relationship between inebriety and insanity, therefore, is an important theme to examine in the context of the thesis, especially as the majority of those sent to inebriate reformatories were women.

The emergence of psychiatry as a specialist branch of medicine, the rise of insanity as well as discord over the extent of insanity caused by drunkenness is examined in the chapter. Debates between medical men on the relationship between insanity, drunkenness and disease and debates that inebriety was a perversion of the will that led to insanity is also examined. Moreover, the chapter considers the issue that lunatic asylums often functioned as places of safety for their habitual drunkard patients, as they were treated for their

¹⁸¹ Peter McCandless, "Dangerous to Themselves and Others: The Victorian Debate over the Prevention of Wrongful Confinement." *The Journal of British Studies*, 23 (1983) 84-104, p.84.

ailments, sobered up, and upon recovery discharged back into society. From the late nineteenth century, eugenic ideas that only individuals perceived physically and mentally fit should produce children became widespread. It was felt that preventing the unfit from procreating would result in a relatively short time in the eradication of habitual drunkenness and insanity induced by alcoholism. Many people in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century sympathised with eugenic views, therefore, it is relevant to discuss eugenics within this chapter as it relates to habitual drunkenness. Also examined in the chapter are debates about institutional care and the best way to deal with the problem of drunkenness and insanity within inebriate institutions. In addition, the concept of the borderland and the importance of the concept of the borderland to institutions are examined.

Drunkenness and insanity

In the first half of the nineteenth century, a series of reformers such as William Tuke of the York Asylum and the social reformer Lord Shaftesbury campaigned to improve the lot of the insane by humanitarian treatment. Dr Gardiner Hill and Dr Charlesworth of Lincoln Asylum, Dr John Conolly of the Middlesex County Asylum at Hanwell, and the French physician Philippe Pinel, were among the pioneering physicians who advocated and practised the humane treatment of the insane.¹⁸² They opposed the use of physical restraints and championed benevolent treatment. In the 1830s and 1840s, there was no legal requirement to provide specialist care for the mentally ill. People with mental health problems were housed in workhouses, prisons or private madhouses. The necessity to provide care and treatment for the mentally ill and the recognition of the need for urgent action by Parliament to deal with the problem resulted in two Acts. The Lunacy Act of 1845 set up a permanent national Commission of Lunacy and The County Asylums Act of 1845 made it compulsory for county asylums to be built to accommodate pauper lunatics.¹⁸³ The County Asylums Act resulted in increased numbers of doctors employed as 'alienists' in the new lunatic asylums. (Alienist was a term mainly used for doctors working in lunatic

¹⁸² "The Care and Cure of the Insane." *The Times*, 29 December 1877, p.3, col.F.

¹⁸³ Vieda Skultans, *English Madness: Ideas on Insanity, 1580-1890*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979, p.117.

asylums.) The increase in the number of lunatic asylums built after the Lunacy Act, 1845 and the growth in the numbers of patients gave alienists the opportunity to observe their intemperate patients and to deliberate on the relationship between alcohol and insanity. McCandless claims that medical men perceived that insanity and drunkenness robbed people of their reason and both arose from “bad habits, bad environment, and bad heredity”, which often led to violence and immorality.¹⁸⁴ By 1845, the notion that insanity was a disease that could only be diagnosed by a specialist mad doctor had gained considerable support.¹⁸⁵ Alienists believed that madness was something that could be diagnosed, certified and treated and they were keen to promote their specialism as a credible medical speciality on a par with other medical specialities. It was believed by some alienists that certain types of behaviour and events such as intemperance, grief, over-excitement, mental shock, immorality and a bad environment could lead to lesions of the brain, inflammation of the tissues of the brain, and disease of the brain. Alienists in asylums often considered that social issues were pre-disposing factors in causing a person’s insanity. In his influential work, *Treatise on Insanity*, Dr J C Prichard deemed, “Eccentricity of conduct, singular and absurd habits, a propensity to perform the common actions of life in a different way from that usually practised” were indications of moral insanity, but not sufficient evidence to be conclusive. However, these symptoms coupled with a “wayward and intractable temper, with a decay of social affections...in short, with a change in the moral character of the individual define moral insanity.”¹⁸⁶ Nevertheless, in order to maintain their identifiable professional medical status alienists often attached physical causes to abnormal behaviour, which they deemed pathological and which needed their specialist medical expertise to treat. Exactly how this process came about alienists could neither adequately explain nor agree. Dr Skae, Superintendent of the Royal Edinburgh Asylum, defined insanity as “a disease of the brain

¹⁸⁴ McCandless, “Curses of Civilization”, p.50.

¹⁸⁵ Andrew Scull, *The Most Solitary of Afflictions: Madness and Society in Britain, 1700-1900*. First Edition. London: Yale University Press, 1993, p.232.

¹⁸⁶ James Cowles Prichard, M.D, F.R.S, *A Treatise of Insanity and Other Disorders Affecting the Mind*. Philadelphia: Haswell, Barrington and Haswell, 1837, p.28.
<http://archive.org/details/39002086171072.med.yale.edu> Accessed 5 February 2011.

affecting the mind.”¹⁸⁷ The term moral insanity in the early nineteenth century was used in the same way as psychological is used today and gradually the term came to be used in the later nineteenth century in connection with “the ethical sense”.¹⁸⁸ Dr John Q Donald, medical superintendent of Inverneith Lodge Retreat, commented. “It is my belief that inebriety or dipsomania is a mental disease, and a disease which causes its victim to become irresponsible – a moral insanity – and to treat this effectually I believe there is only one method, viz – detention in a place where the patient has no access to alcohol.”¹⁸⁹ Moral insanity was a subgroup of insanity. It linked socially unacceptable deviant behaviour such as alcoholism with the potential danger or harm to society that such behaviour could cause.

McCandless comments that the notion of drunkenness as a prime cause of insanity “emerged in the late 18th century from the work of physicians such as Thomas Trotter and the American Benjamin Rush.”¹⁹⁰ During the 1870s, many medical men considered intemperance was responsible for an increase in insanity, but there was no universal agreement amongst the medical profession on the extent of insanity caused by drunkenness. Medical superintendents, such as Dr George Hearder, Medical Superintendent of Carmarthen Lunatic Asylum, observed that intemperance was “the most prolific cause of insanity” in his patients.¹⁹¹ Dr Hearder was not alone; the majority of doctors and alienists who gave evidence to the 1872 Select Committee on Habitual Drunkards reported that drunkenness was a major cause of insanity.¹⁹² Dr Carpenter in an oration to the Medical Society for London reproduced statistical data taken from the 1877 report of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Intemperance to show that the United Kingdom’s consumption per head of alcohol in 1876 had increased progressively since 1861. Dr Carpenter

¹⁸⁷ Frank Fish, “David Skae, M.D, F.R.C.S: Founder of the Edinburgh School of Psychiatry.” *Medical History*, 9.1 (January 1965) 36-53, p.38.

¹⁸⁸ Frank Fish, “David Skae”, p.43.

¹⁸⁹ BPP *The Report of the Inspector for Scotland under the Inebriates Acts, for the year 1905*, p.7; 1906, (Cd.3073) XVI.167.

¹⁹⁰ McCandless, “Curses of Civilization”, p.49.

¹⁹¹ George Hearder, “An Address on the Means of Checking the Growth of Insanity in the Population.” *British Medical Journal*, 19 July 1873, p.55.

¹⁹² BPP *Report from the Select Committee on Habitual Drunkards; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix*, 1872 (242) IX.417.

considered this increased consumption of alcohol was matched by a progressive increase in crime and lunacy. The number of lunatics under the supervision of the Lunacy Commissioners in 1861 was 39,645 whilst in 1875 this figure had risen to 63,793.¹⁹³ Dr Carpenter stated that 251,125 persons had been charged in the Metropolis with drunkenness in the ten years ending 1876.¹⁹⁴ He felt that alcohol's "poisonous nature" in "large and continuous doses" was not in dispute and its effects were increasing. Dr Carpenter quoted a figure of 1,566 deaths in England for the year 1875, which were directly caused by alcohol and this figure was not a one-hundredth part of those deaths that were hastened by alcohol.¹⁹⁵ McCandless points out that it seemed logical for many nineteenth century doctors to connect insanity with habitual drinking.¹⁹⁶ It must also be borne in mind that Dr Carpenter was an advocate of temperance reform and believed that total abstinence from alcohol would solve many of society's problems, including insanity caused by intemperance. In addition, as a magistrate, Dr Carpenter had to deal with numerous cases of drunkenness linked to crime, which was likely to have confirmed his views on the harmful effects of alcohol to individuals and society. However, whilst most medical men agreed that intemperance was a major cause of insanity, the extent to which they believed insanity was due to intemperance varied considerably. Dr Crichton Brown in his evidence to the 1877 Select Committee to inquire into the Operation of Lunacy Laws stated that he considered insanity due to indulgence in alcohol had not exceeded twenty per cent and commented that he believed "exaggerated notions on the subject have been disseminated."¹⁹⁷ In 1880, the *BMJ* published an article in which various doctors discussed, "The Influence of Alcohol in the Causation of Insanity."¹⁹⁸ This article illustrated that there was disparity in doctors' views over the extent of alcohol-induced insanity and there were problems in the collection of reliable

¹⁹³ Alfred Carpenter, "An Address on Alcoholic Drinks: As Diet, As Medicines, and As Poisons." *British Medical Journal*, 18 May 1878, p.703.

¹⁹⁴ Alfred Carpenter, "An Address on Alcoholic Drinks", *British Medical Journal*, 18 May 1878, p.703.

¹⁹⁵ Alfred Carpenter, "An Address on Alcoholic Drinks", *British Medical Journal*, 18 May 1878, p.703.

¹⁹⁶ McCandless, "Curses of Civilization", p.52.

¹⁹⁷ BPP *Report from the Select Committee on Lunacy Law; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix*, p.77; 1877 (373) XIII.1.

¹⁹⁸ "Forty-Eighth Annual Meeting of the British Medical Association Held in Cambridge, August 1880." *British Medical Journal*, 4 September 1880, p.375.

data. Dr G M Bacon of Cambridge Lunatic Asylum, considered figures for rates of insanity were exaggerated and it was unproven that intemperance was the prime cause of insanity. He felt that “numerous potent causes were associated with intemperance”, for instance, the existence of organic disease, general paralysis, hereditary influences, blows on the head and sunstroke and these influences were not taken into consideration. To illustrate his point, Dr Bacon pointed to an analysis he had undertaken of cases at Cambridge Asylum where he found that 75 of 1,950 cases could be attributed to drink, while 40 of those cases could be assigned to other causes such as the ones mentioned above.¹⁹⁹ Therefore, Dr Bacon was sceptical about figures showing high levels of insanity caused by intemperance. He commented that figures for the proportion of cases of insanity attributed to alcohol varied, for example, in agricultural areas from 5 to 14 per cent, in coal-mines and iron manufacture from 3 to 29 per cent, and in large towns from 2 to 30 per cent. He argued that the disparity made the figures unreliable and that four per cent was nearer the truth.²⁰⁰

Despite their disagreements over how much insanity was caused by intemperance, it was generally agreed by medical men that alcohol was one of the causes of insanity. It was considered likely that more people from the urban poor working class would go insane due to excessive consumption of alcohol than people from the middle class.²⁰¹ Working class drunkenness was often seen as a social problem that needed to be dealt with whilst middle class drunkenness was often viewed as a problem of the individual.²⁰² Carl May states, “Inmates of the new asylums were primarily members of the urban working classes, and often Irish immigrants.”²⁰³ McCandless makes a similar point and notes that the areas that reported the highest rates of insanity caused by drink were in industrial towns and cities.²⁰⁴ The migration of people to seek work in towns and cities led to many homes being located in densely populated and overcrowded areas. Public houses were numerous and were frequently

¹⁹⁹ “Forty-Eighth Annual Meeting.” *British Medical Journal*, 4 September 1880, p.375.

²⁰⁰ “Forty-Eighth Annual Meeting.” *British Medical Journal*, 4 September 1880, p.375.

²⁰¹ McCandless, “Curses of Civilization”, p.52.

²⁰² Carl May, “Habitual Drunkards and the Invention of Alcoholism: Susceptibility and Culpability in Nineteenth Century Medicine.” *Addiction Research*, 5.2 (1997) 169-187, p.172.

²⁰³ May, “Habitual Drunkards and the Invention of Alcoholism”, p.180.

²⁰⁴ McCandless, “Curses of Civilization”, p.52.

situated on the corner of working class streets. People often worked near their homes and it was difficult for them to avoid passing the doors of a public house on their way home from work, thus making it hard for them to resist pressure to drink with their workmates. Temptation to drink could be difficult to overcome because of the overcrowded poor, cold and miserable conditions in which many people lived; drunkenness was often a public affair. The Bristol born Dr Wynter took the view that alcohol was harmful to the individual and to society. In his book *The Borderlands of Insanity* published in 1875, Dr Wynter commented, “There is an immense amount of latent brain disease in the community, only awaiting a sufficient exciting cause to make itself patent to the world...”²⁰⁵ The exciting cause to which Dr Wynter referred was alcohol. Dr Carpenter argued that vice becomes a disease later in life and the person who does not exercise self-control when he was able to do so, “after a time becomes a nuisance and a scandal to society at large.”²⁰⁶

The Society for the Study of Inebriety was keen to promote the view that inebriety was a disease, which needed specialised treatment rather than punishment. The Society was set up to investigate the various causes of inebriety and to educate the professional and public mind; it published its first *Proceedings* in 1884. At the Society’s inaugural meeting a founder member, Dr Norman Kerr, described inebriety as a “diseased state of the brain and nerve centres” and considered that it should be treated as a medical problem. Dr Kerr exerted considerable influence as he was an officer of the UKA, a member of CETS, honorary secretary of the Homes for Inebriates Association, and chairman of the BMA, as well as president for over fifteen years of the Society for the Study of Inebriety. Therefore, he was in a position to disseminate his view that inebriety was a disease allied to insanity, and to influence others through lectures, publications and the Society for the Study of Inebriety.²⁰⁷ Many doctors agreed with Dr Kerr’s view, but Dr George Bodington, the proprietor of a private asylum went further and stated that all habitual

²⁰⁵ Wynter, *The Borderlands of Insanity*, p.1.

²⁰⁶ Alfred Carpenter, “An Address on Alcoholic Drinks”, *British Medical Journal*, 18 May 1878, p.702.

²⁰⁷ “Society for the Study of Inebriety, Jubilee Celebration.” *British Medical Journal*, 14 April 1934, p.681.

drunkenness was a disease. Dr Bodington used the term dipsomania rather than inebriety, which he described as an irresistible, uncontrollable, morbid impulse to drink stimulants. He stated that the disease may have originated from various causes, but when developed it ran in parallel lines with insanity and as such needed treatment.²⁰⁸ The term dipsomania was not used as widely as inebriety. Dipsomania was a term that some alienists used because it conveyed the idea of 'mania' or madness. Dr Robert Christison at the *BMA's* Forty-third annual meeting gave notice that the following resolution had been passed: "That excessive intemperance is in many cases a symptom of a special form of insanity, which requires special treatment, with a view, first to the recovery of those affected, and second to the protection and advantage of them and of society." This resolution was carried by the members.²⁰⁹

Some doctors disputed the extent to which drunkenness was a disease allied to insanity (for example, Dr Bucknill, the medical superintendent of the Devon County Asylum and founder of the *Journal of Mental Science*). Unlike many alienists working in asylums Dr Bucknill resisted the disease concept and considered that many of his medical colleagues viewed drunkenness not as the cause of disease, but the disease itself and were "taking hold of the stick by the wrong end."²¹⁰ He considered the claims of some of his fellow doctors were enormously exaggerated and felt that the view expressed in much of the medical literature that all habitual drunkenness was a disease was unfounded.²¹¹ Dr Bucknill considered that treating drunkenness as a disease taught the drunkard that drunkenness is an uncontrollable impulse, to be cured by treatment rather than a vice to be resisted and overcome by effort.²¹² If habitual drunkenness coexisted with any real symptoms of insanity, the lunacy laws were capable of dealing with it, although Dr Bucknill stated it would be useful for convenience if such patients were classified and segregated in

²⁰⁸ Dr George F Bodington, "On The Control and Restraint of Habitual Drunkards." *British Medical Journal*, 28 August 1875, p.255.

²⁰⁹ "Forty-third Annual Meeting." *British Medical Journal*, 14 August 1875, p.214.

²¹⁰ John Charles Bucknill, M.D, *Habitual Drunkenness and Insane Drunkards*. London: Macmillan & Co. 1878, p.3. <http://www.archive.org/details/39002086347797.med.yale.edu> Accessed 5 February 2010

²¹¹ John Charles Bucknill, M.D, "Habitual Drunkenness: A Vice, Crime or Disease." *Contemporary Review*, 29 (December 1876-May 1877) 431-447, p.434.

²¹² Bucknill, "Habitual Drunkenness: A Vice, Crime or Disease", p.440.

separate wards of asylums.²¹³ In his opinion, many doctors had taken an extreme position with regard to inebriety and disease. Dr Bucknill disputed Dr Bodington's description of dipsomania as a disease that developed and ran on parallel lines to insanity. Dipsomania, according to Dr Bucknill, was a form of moral insanity, which exhibited itself in a passion for strong drink because the drinker liked the effect the alcohol produced. He considered true dipsomaniacs were usually thoroughly sane and often eminently virtuous.²¹⁴ Therefore, in Dr Bucknill's view dipsomania was not associated with an uncontrollable impulse on a par with madness.

Labelling habitual drunkenness as a disease absolved drunkards from responsibility, invalidated the concept of drunkenness as a sin, and undermined Christian notions of morality and justice. Under English law, only delirium tremens counted as a form of insanity for legal purposes.²¹⁵ Dr Bucknill seemed to imply that doctors who promoted the notion of insanity as a disease colluded with the drunkard to weaken personal responsibility for drunkenness and alleviated the drunkard of disgrace and shame.²¹⁶ Beliefs surrounding the role of drunkenness in producing insanity can be seen as a "complex mixture of social and medical attitudes" together with people's ideas, and circumstances. McCandless suggests that the divisions between doctors over drunkenness and insanity reflected the wider divisions in Victorian society, such as between rural and industrial areas and the different way of life and values between the working classes and the middle classes.²¹⁷ Various groups had their own agenda to pursue in disseminating the notion that drunkenness was the most important cause of insanity. For example, temperance reformers who endeavoured to persuade people to abstain from alcohol, parliamentary reformers who agitated to change the licensing laws, and asylum proprietors who wanted to increase business. Alienists wished to expand and promote their specialist medical status whilst doctors were concerned about their incomes. The medical profession had no agreed demarcation line between vice

²¹³ Bucknill, "Habitual Drunkenness: A Vice, Crime or Disease", p.446.

²¹⁴ Bucknill, "Habitual Drunkenness: A Vice, Crime or Disease", p.435.

²¹⁵ Valverde, *Diseases of the Will*, p.195.

²¹⁶ Bucknill, "Habitual Drunkenness: A Vice, Crime or Disease", p.447.

²¹⁷ McCandless, "Curses of Civilization", pp.56-57.

and disease and no consistent agreed definition of the role alcohol played in producing insanity. Dr Bucknill did not repudiate the idea that strong drink often caused a disturbance of the mental functions but felt, "The proposition that habitual drunkenness *passes into* the condition of a disease is a much more limited and cautious one than that propounded by what are called by the euphonious name inebriate asylums."²¹⁸ Dr Bucknill did not doubt that lunatic asylums accommodated people suffering from insane drunkenness and that drunken insanity should be treated by specialist physicians. However, it was the exaggerated claims made by his fellow medical professionals with which he disagreed. Dr Bucknill also considered there was no need to establish dedicated institutions for inebriates because people who needed treatment could be adequately dealt with in lunatic asylums.²¹⁹ In his view, inebriate institutions were an unfortunate attempt to "coddle drunkenness, and patch up a wide and fruitful mischief."²²⁰ However, Showalter suggests that the large public county asylums had over extended their capacity and curative treatment was not possible, as many of these institutions had grown so big that all that could be provided was custodial care.²²¹ Therefore, dedicated institutions that dealt with inebriates would ease the pressure on existing lunatic asylums. It is interesting to note that both lunatic asylums and inebriate reformatories contained more female inmates than male inmates. It is possible that lunatic asylums may have created a model of placing some problematic poor and pauper women in institutions, which made it seem reasonable that women should be institutionalised in an inebriate reformatory. The numbers of women patients in lunatic asylums had increased and by 1871 women were the majority of pauper lunatics in England.²²² The reason for this imbalance is unclear; it may have been that men were often considered the main breadwinner in a family and their earnings essential to the family's survival. Showalter comments that statistics show that women stayed in public asylums much longer than men and to illustrate her point used the figures of Hanwell Lunatic Asylum where the average stay for a woman was 6 years whilst for a man it was 3.7 years. She

²¹⁸ Bucknill, "Habitual Drunkenness: A Vice, Crime or Disease", p.433.

²¹⁹ Bucknill, "Habitual Drunkenness: A Vice, Crime or Disease", p.434.

²²⁰ Bucknill, *Habitual Drunkenness and Insane Drunkards*, p.3.

²²¹ Elaine Showalter, "Victorian Women and Insanity." *Victorian Studies*, 23.2 (Winter 1980) 157-181, p.160.

²²² Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.269.

notes that women had lower death rates than men and that asylums were filled with those considered incurable.²²³ In contrast, inebriates certified insane and admitted to lunatic asylums did not usually stay within them indefinitely. The records of Bristol Lunatic Asylum show that patients admitted to the asylum because of intemperance were released after a short stay of a few weeks, others were confined for few years and only a very small number of patients admitted for an alcohol related cause spent the remainder of their lives in the asylum.²²⁴ As soon as individuals admitted to the asylum for intemperance had sobered up and were free from alcohol, they were released back into the community. The short-term stays in lunatic asylums by drunkards were a powerful argument for those campaigning for a more specialised form of institution dealing exclusively with inebriates. Dr Crichton Browne in his evidence to the 1877 Select Committee convened to look into the operation of the lunacy laws, felt there were many cases where drunkards have “drunk themselves into madness, have been sent to asylums, and become sane very soon afterwards”²²⁵ In such cases they were discharged within a few days or weeks. However, Dr Browne noted some patients returned to the asylum again and again until eventually they became permanent inmates with chronically diseased brains due to drunkenness.²²⁶

Many of those admitted to lunatic asylums for excessive drinking were described as suffering from mania a potu, which is evidenced by the records of Bristol Lunatic Asylum.²²⁷ Dr Kerr described this condition as a transient acute mania that lasted only a short time. Nevertheless, Dr Kerr stated an attack rendered people wild and ungovernable; people who were unconscious of their actions with all moral control gone. He writes that there can be no doubt as to the reality of their insanity whilst the attack lasts.²²⁸ The Bristol Lunatic Asylum records also show some patients were described as having delirium tremens. Dr Kerr described delirium tremens as often preceded by morbid fears, which

²²³ Showalter, “Victorian Women and Insanity”, p.161.

²²⁴ Bristol Lunatic Asylum. Register of Admissions 1901-1904, BRO 40513/R/2/10.

²²⁵ *Report from the Select Committee on Lunacy Law*, p.74; 1877 (373) XIII.1.

²²⁶ *Report from the Select Committee on Lunacy Law*, p.74; 1877 (373) XIII.1.

²²⁷ Bristol Lunatic Asylum. Register of Admissions, BRO 40513/R/2/9,1898-1901 and 40513/R/2/10, 1901-1904.

²²⁸ Kerr, *Inebriety or Narcomania*, p.29.

closely resembled the acute delirium of insanity, but much more brief in its existence. During an attack a person appeared out of his mind, although when recovered the mind was perfectly sound again, but not strong.²²⁹ Dr Kerr was of the opinion that inebriety resembled the disease of insanity and he believed that it was the duty of Christians, philanthropists and statesmen to establish special homes for this type of diseased patient in the same way as it was a duty to provide care for the insane.²³⁰

Habitual drunkenness a disorder of the will leading to insanity

The function of the mind, many nineteenth century people believed, was to master the passions.²³¹ It was often thought that the will was associated with the mind and reason, and the will held in check the passions. Many doctors considered that the will could become diseased and the symptoms of a diseased will was a loss of control or craving for a substance such as alcohol, which led to addiction. The American physician, Benjamin Rush, a signatory to the American Declaration of Independence, and one of the earliest writers on what came to be known as alcoholism argued, "Habitual drunkenness should be regarded not as a bad habit but as a disease, a palsy of the will."²³² Harry Levine proposes that taking Rush's work as a whole is found "the first clearly developed modern conception of alcohol addiction."²³³ He further comments that it was not until the nineteenth century that people "came to identify themselves as alcohol addicts; drunkards who had lost the ability to control their drinking." This was brought about Levine argues by the work of the temperance movement.²³⁴ Dr Forbes Winslow's pamphlet, *On Uncontrollable Drunkenness, Considered as a Form of Mental Disorder*, published in 1866 stated, "The passion for intoxicating drinks paralyzes the will".²³⁵ The temperance reformer, Dr Norman Kerr, considered that both the disease of inebriety or insanity

²²⁹ Kerr, *Inebriety or Narcomania*, pp.28-29.

²³⁰ Kerr, *Inebriety or Narcomania*, p.40.

²³¹ Valverde cited in Rimke and Hunt, "From Sinners to Degenerates", p.62.

²³² Benjamin Rush cited in Valverde, *Diseases of the Will*, p.2.

²³³ Harry G Levine, "The Discovery of Addiction: Changing Conceptions of Habitual Drunkenness in America." *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 15 (1978) 493-506, p.7.

²³⁴ Levine, "The Discovery of Addiction", p.30.

²³⁵ Forbes Winslow, "On Uncontrollable Drunkenness, cited in David Ross LLB. "Suggested Practical Checks on Excessive Drinking and Habitual Drunkenness." p.401.

incorporated spiritual and moral features.²³⁶ Although not always acknowledged in jurisprudence, Dr Kerr believed inebriety was a form of insanity because reason was suspended and the will was dominated by uncontrolled “imagination, emotions, and animal propensities.”²³⁷ Inebriates, according to Dr Kerr, found themselves in a precarious place on the borderland of reason and insanity, and they needed to be rescued before they became insane. It was a conventional and common belief that humans were separated from animals because of reasoning power, therefore, suspension of the will or reason rendered humans on a par with animals, without the capacity to know good from evil. Dr Kerr deemed inebriety reduced people to victims not only of their imagination and emotions, but also their unrestrained instincts. This he believed would render them a danger to themselves and others and warranted their admission to an asylum.²³⁸

Not all doctors agreed with Dr Kerr’s view that insanity and inebriety incorporated a spiritual dimension. Maudsley, writing in the 1880s, took a strictly non-religious materialist view and argued that the concept of the will was “speculative theory based on no solid evidence, and in our practical affairs we do not in fact behave as if we believed in the freedom of the will.”²³⁹ However, although most doctors assented to the existence of the will there was no scientific evidence or explanation. Most doctors (although not all) considered that an individual’s will could become diseased through excessive consumption of alcohol and regarded a diseased will as a medical and a spiritual problem that required medical and spiritual remedies. In an address on the institutional treatment of inebriety, Sir W. J. Collins, of the London Temperance Hospital remarked, “if inebriety was a disease of the will the drunkard’s will worked within the person to control the disease either for good or for ill.”²⁴⁰ This view was in accord with the biblical doctrine that humans are morally responsible beings with God given free will to make moral choices. Collins believed making immoral and evil choices corrupted the will until individuals were unable to

²³⁶ Kerr, *Inebriety or Narcomania*, p20.

²³⁷ Kerr, *Inebriety or Narcomania*, p38.

²³⁸ Kerr, *Inebriety or Narcomania*, p38.

²³⁹ Maudsley cited in Valverde, *Diseases of the Will*, p.59.

²⁴⁰ Sir W.J. Collins, M.D, M.S, F.R.C.S, “An Address on the Institutional Treatment of Inebriety.” *British Medical Journal*, 7 November 1903, p.1208.

function as moral beings. In Collins' view, those people who drank to excess were on a slippery downward slope from which they could not escape without specialised help. How to restore the will was the problem Collins considered under-pinned the therapeutics of inebriety and needed to be addressed.²⁴¹ It might be argued, therefore, that if the will became diseased, a person evolved into a slave to the temptations of alcohol. Morrison comments that a disease model of inebriety did not replace moral explanations and often the idea of disease and the pathology of illness coexisted with ideas of morality, bad habits, and reformation.²⁴² This co-existence might be explained by the likelihood that doctors and others allied their spiritual beliefs with medicine in the absence of a consistent effective medical remedy for habitual drunkenness. Spirituality and morality proffered explanations for problems science alone could not answer. The spiritual element, therefore, was thought just as important as remedies to treat physical ailments.

Valverde was struck by the lack of debate between spiritualists and materialists, and comments that most physicians seemed happy to write as though it did not matter whether the will could be diseased and just accepted that it had both a physical and spiritual component.²⁴³ Doctors who believed that the will could be diseased were unable to pinpoint its exact location and seemed unsure whether it was situated in the physical realm of the body or the metaphysical realm. Perhaps the most practical and pragmatic solution for some doctors was not to try to offer explanations, but to just accept the existence of a will that could become diseased. The remedy for repairing diseased wills according to Mrs Bramwell Booth of the Salvation Army writing in the *British Journal of Inebriety* was physical, moral and spiritual. She believed that inebriates had suffered a breakdown of the whole man (the body, the emotions and spiritual beliefs) and that this was as much a moral lapse as a physical disorder. Mrs Booth stated, "Measures which influence the moral and spiritual nature are as really necessary as those which are addressed to the physical to a permanent

²⁴¹ Collins, "An Address", *British Medical Journal*, 7 November 1903, p.1208.

²⁴² Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women", p.259.

²⁴³ Valverde, *Diseases of the Will*, p.61.

cure.”²⁴⁴ It could be argued that whether the nature of inebriety was physical or spiritual, the prime aim of doctors involved in inebriety was to strengthen the inebriate’s resolve to resist the temptation of alcohol, to endeavour to understand the physical effects of drunkenness on the body, and provide treatment to alleviate the suffering of inebriate patients in their care.

Eugenics, a change of direction

Some views on early twentieth century eugenics have been discussed in the previous chapter, but in this chapter eugenics is discussed in the context of insanity and its impact on inebriety and the institutional care of inebriates. In addition, an attempt is made to assess the impact of eugenic ideas on inebriety and their application to the institutional care of inebriates. The rise of eugenics is also discussed. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, debates on inebriety and insanity gained new momentum and shifted direction with the rise of eugenics, a movement that linked social issues, ideology and science in an attempt to deal with the problem of what was perceived as the deterioration of the race. William Greenslade notes that the social panic of degeneration at the end of the nineteenth century was linked to “huge economic, social and cultural changes” that had taken place in Britain and other European countries.²⁴⁵ Greenslade considers that feelings of disappointment and dissatisfaction with how little progress had been achieved in bringing about a social utopia of improvement converged in the notion of degeneration. “Founded on the Darwinian revolution in biology and harnessed to psychological medicine, the idea of degeneration spread to social science, to literature and art.”²⁴⁶

Fears that the race was degenerating coalesced into a biological solution to deal with people considered detrimental to society, which included amongst others, habitual drunkards, prostitutes, paupers and those that refused to work and earn an honest living. Degeneration was considered the result of being born with a biological susceptibility to such conditions as feeble-mindedness,

²⁴⁴ Mrs Bramwell Booth, “The Management of the Inebriate woman.” *The British Journal of Inebriety*, IX.2 (October 1911) 53-108, p. 69.

²⁴⁵ William Greenslade, *Degeneration, Culture, and the Novel, 1880-1940*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, p.28.

²⁴⁶ Greenslade, *Degeneration, Culture, and the Novel*, p.16.

lunacy, epilepsy and inebriety. This 'bad' heredity was thought to be handed down by parents from generation to generation and the way to prevent it happening and thus the race deteriorating was to prevent people afflicted with 'bad' heredity from producing children. Eugenics also changed the concept of the 'borderland' from habitual drunkards thought of as between sanity and insanity, from which condition people could be reformed and rehabilitated, to people with a predetermined inescapable fate. A fate for which there was no cure; however, the inevitability of this fate could be contained and kept in check by total abstinence from alcohol.

In 1883 Francis Galton, the half cousin of Charles Darwin, a biostatistician and human geneticist conceived the theory of eugenics, the selective breeding of only fit and healthy individuals. He derived the term eugenics from the Greek language and used it to describe his system of selective breeding.²⁴⁷ Influenced by Darwin's *Origin of Species* and other early nineteenth century beliefs concerning heredity, Galton questioned whether humans could be subject to selective breeding. Galton published his book *Hereditary Genius: an inquiry into its laws and consequences* in 1869, and in 1883 he published *Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development* setting out his ideas on heredity. However, it was not until the end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries that his ideas became widespread and popular. Galton's ideas came to the fore in Britain at a time of anxiety. These anxieties centred over the poor condition of army recruits, increased rates of lunacy, concerns over women's drinking habits, and continuing concerns over anti-social behaviour in the poor of densely populated overcrowded cities. In addition, importantly, the high birth rate of the poorer classes led to fears that the less fit would breed in ever increasing numbers. The historian, David Barker, points out that before 1901 there were very few references to eugenics in medical and scientific journals, but by 1910 eugenics ideas had become commonplace and "they were to be

²⁴⁷ Ruth Schwartz Cowan, "Sir Francis Galton (1822–1911)." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford University Press, 2004. Online edn, October 2005. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/33315> Accessed 13 January 2013.

encountered wherever the 'social problem' was treated in the press, at medical gatherings, in novels, at Church assemblies and in parliament."²⁴⁸

Karl Pearson, a mathematician and Galton's protégé, considered only mentally and physically healthy people should produce children, thus the race would be improved, and the mentally strong would prevail over the weak and unhealthy. Healthy intelligent people would be encouraged to marry when young and fit and to produce large families; this was known as positive eugenics. In contrast, mentally defective and socially deviant people such as inebriates would be discouraged and prevented from reproducing. This was known as negative eugenics. By this method, it was thought habitual drunkenness and much of the crime that surrounded alcohol would be reduced and eradicated. There would be no need for inebriate reformatories and lunatic asylums would not be populated by people with alcohol-induced insanity. Children would be reared in a healthy manner so that future generations would flourish and the 'quality' of the race improved.²⁴⁹ In the early twentieth century, inebriates inside and outside the reformatory system were often grouped in the same category as criminals, neurotics, kleptomaniacs, prostitutes and borderland cases (those that cannot be diagnosed as sane or insane) as degenerates. The Liverpool GP and eugenicist, Dr Robert Reid Rentoul in his book *Race Culture: Or Race Suicide?* (1906), defined the term mental degenerate to mean:

a person whose mental condition is that which is found in the insane, feeble-minded, and in those who have lost their will-power and self-control to such an extent that they cannot command their actions, and are incapable of obedience to the moral laws and those of society.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁸ David Barker, "How to Curb the Fertility of the Unfit: The Feeble-Minded in Edwardian Britain." *Oxford Review of Education*, 9.3 (1983) 197-211, p.197.

²⁴⁹ Donald MacKenzie, "Eugenics in Britain." *Social Studies of Science*, 6 (1976) 499-532, MacKenzie states, eugenics identified social failure with biological unfitness and deemed the progress of society was based on the elimination of the unfit. This could be applied to inebriates as they were often unable to provide and care for their families, and despite confinement in inebriate reformatories and short-term imprisonment, some continued to drink to excess. Such inebriates fell into the category of social failures and treatment in reformatories or imprisonment was ineffective because they were thought to have a biological susceptibility to drunkenness.

²⁵⁰ Robert Reid Rentoul, *Race Culture; or, Race Suicide? (A Plea for the Unborn)*. New York: Sir Walter Scott Publishing Co. Ltd, 1906, p.11.
<http://www.archive.org/details/racecultureraces00rent> Accessed 28 February 2012.

It is clear from Rentoul's definition that inebriates or habitual drunkards fell into the category of degenerates as drunken inebriates could not control their actions and neither did they have the will power to control their drinking habits.

In 1904, the Eugenics Laboratory was established in London. The ideas of the eugenics movement spread among the English political elite and culminated in the establishment of the Eugenics Education Society (EES) in 1907.²⁵¹ It was founded to publicise and educate the public on eugenics and attracted the scientific, professional and medical elite. The membership included Havelock Ellis, Dean W. R. Inge, Lady Ottoline Morrell and Arnold White and members of the Fabian Society, for example Sidney and Beatrice Webb.²⁵² Despite the agreement of members of eugenic societies as to the principle of selective breeding, there remained uncertainty within the eugenic movement on the part alcohol played in producing unhealthy children. In May 1910, *The Times* published an article based on research undertaken by Miss Ethel M Elderton, a Galton Research Scholar at the University of London, and assisted by Karl Pearson of the Galton Research Laboratory, on 'Alcoholism and Offspring'.²⁵³ The project looked at children of alcoholic parents in Manchester and Edinburgh to determine whether they were inferior physically and mentally to children of sober parents. The research was based on 'special' schools for mentally defective children in Manchester compiled by Mary Dendy from data supplied by the Charity Organisation Society and from an elementary school in Edinburgh. The research revealed that there was little difference between the two groups and "parental alcoholism is not the source of mental defect in offspring."²⁵⁴ This research was criticised by eugenic supporters as on too small a scale to be useful, and for giving the impression that alcohol had no measurable detrimental effect on the heredity of children of alcoholic parents. For example, Sir Victor Horsley and Mary Sturge, temperance campaigners and

²⁵¹ Harvey Simmons, "Explaining Society Policy: The English Mental Deficiency Act of 1913." *Journal of Social History*, II.3 (Spring 1978) 387-403, p.395.

²⁵² Simmons, "Explaining Society Policy", p.395.

²⁵³ "Alcoholism and Offspring." *The Times*, 21 May 1910, p.6, col.D.

²⁵⁴ "Alcoholism and Offspring." *The Times*, 21 May 1910.

authors of the book *Alcohol and the Human Body*, considered that Elderton's and Pearson's data was inadequate and their research inconclusive.²⁵⁵

Despite its widespread acceptance by many middle-class people some sections of the public opposed eugenics. For example, clergymen and Catholic priests resented what could appear like a competing ideology.²⁵⁶ Whilst heredity might seem to confirm the Old Testament biblical sanction that the sins of the parents are visited upon the children, it denies the New Testament biblical doctrine of free will and redemption. In addition, some Socialists also opposed eugenics as they considered themselves the champions of the working classes and some temperance reformers were angered that the perceived biological benefits of eugenics gave the impression that it was unnecessary and impossible for habitual drunkards to change their drinking habits.²⁵⁷

Eugenicists believed that the biological solution of selective breeding to protect the British race was the way forward. They wanted habitual drunkards to be segregated (and separated) from society in institutions. Other people, such as temperance reformers, considered that the way to deal with the problem of habitual drunkards was to change their behaviour and habits from insobriety to permanent sobriety. It was hoped that the regime in an inebriate reformatory of total abstinence, religious teaching and hard work would transform and reform habitual drunkards. These two opposing views came together in the recognition of the usefulness of inebriate reformatories to their particular ideology. Eugenic supporters considered habitual drunkenness would remain a problem as long as inebriates were free to produce children who would replicate their parents' drunkenness. Therefore, by incarcerating habitual drunkards for up to three years in a reformatory, inmates would be unable to reproduce, as males and females were strictly segregated. Although, habitual drunkards were detained for up to three years only, it would prevent the procreation of some children. When London County Council threatened to close their certified inebriate reformatory due to a squabble over money, the journalist and author George R

²⁵⁵ Sir Victor Horsley & Mary Sturge, *Alcohol and the Human Body*. London: MacMillan and Co. Ltd, 1911, p.245.

²⁵⁶ MacKenzie, "Eugenics in Britain", p.520.

²⁵⁷ MacKenzie, "Eugenics in Britain", p.520.

Sims declared in *The Times* that such a course of action would be “disgracefully anti-eugenic” and “young England would be drunk before it was born”.²⁵⁸ The EES considered that the closure of the inebriate reformatory would be an intolerable shameful situation and passed a resolution that a protest be entered against the recent administration of the Inebriates Act whereby it would mean, “hundreds of criminal inebriate women will be set adrift in London with an inevitably deteriorating result to the race.”²⁵⁹ Therefore, eugenics had an impact on inebriate reformatories because it advocated to keep the inebriate institutions open, although it didn’t seem to have an influence in how reformatories were run and managed. Whilst the Inebriates Acts were in force and reformatories had been established, eugenicists wanted the legislation applied because there were no other institutions at the time that could segregate inebriates from society on a compulsory basis. Inebriate reformatories, therefore, offered a short-term temporary partial solution to those people concerned about the effects upon the next generation. Inebriate reformatories also offered an answer to those people that sought a moral, spiritual, and social solution to habitual drunkenness. For example, in the reformatory Christian values would be taught, inmates would be trained to work and care for themselves and inmates would be separated from respectable society.

However, for some advocates of eugenics to remove people considered detrimental to the health of the nation from society was not enough to deal with the problem. Mr Champion B Russell in his evidence to the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded in 1905, on behalf of Essex County Council stated, “...the rational and humane course for imbecile and hopeless cases would be sterilization.” He further commented, “Public opinion might possibly be against any compulsory sterilisation...But if public sentiment be against sterilisation the time seems ripe for a policy of segregation, which should be compulsory under certain circumstances.”²⁶⁰ Before 1907, segregation and sterilisation had not been seriously debated in Britain, but by

²⁵⁸ “The Higher Education Of Girls.” *The Times*, 28 February 1908, p.17, col.F.

²⁵⁹ “The Higher Education Of Girls.” *The Times*, 28 February 1908.

²⁶⁰ BPP *Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded. Minutes of Evidence (England and Wales) with Appendices and Witnesses Index*, p.37; 1908 (Cd.4216) XXXVI.1.

1909, after the USA State of Indiana passed the first sterilisation statute, sterilisation began to be discussed more seriously in medical journals.²⁶¹ The *BMJ* in 1912 commented that the public were not ready to accept sterilisation as a solution.²⁶² Sir Christopher Nixon, M.D, a witness to the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble Minded, stated, “The proposal of sterilization is not one that can be considered in a Christian country, and we may at once dismiss it.”²⁶³ Nevertheless, he was in favour of segregation, particularly for women during their reproductive years from sixteen to forty-five years old.²⁶⁴

Eugenics in the work of Dr Branthwaite and Dr Fleck

Dr Branthwaite, the Government Inspector of inebriate reformatories and Dr David Fleck the medical superintendent of Bentry Inebriate Reformatory were in powerful positions and their views were influential on a national and local level. Dr Branthwaite had responsibility for how reformatories interpreted and carried out legislation, offering advice and making suggestions as to how reformatories were run and managed. Dr Fleck had responsibility for the day-to-day running of the Bentry institution. The over-arching aim of the thesis is to discover the factors, national and local, that had an influence on women habitual drunkards sent to a certified inebriate reformatory. Their views are pertinent to this aim because they were key workers connected with institutions and were in a position to exert influence both nationally and locally on circumstances that affected women’s lives. It is relevant to the thesis, therefore, to endeavour to discern whether their work was informed or influenced by eugenic principles and whether their views contributed to inebriety debates and practices nationally and locally. Any eugenic sympathies that Drs. Branthwaite and Fleck held would have had an influence on how they viewed the women inmates under their care and whether they considered them insane or on the borderland of insanity as well as how they experienced their detention.

²⁶¹ David Barker, “How to Curb the Fertility of the Unfit”, p.202.

²⁶² “Is Insanity Increasing?” *British Medical Journal*, 11 May 1912, p.1089.

²⁶³ BPP *Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded. Minutes of Evidence (England and Wales) with Appendices and Witnesses Index*, p.103; 1908 (Cd.4217) XXXVII.1.

²⁶⁴ *Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded*, p.103; 1908 (Cd.4217) XXXVII.1.

In his annual reports from 1901 to 1913 Dr Branthwaite gave the impression that he was influenced by the views of B Morel, the French psychiatrist who in the 1850s argued that excessive use of alcohol could be passed down to succeeding generations through heredity, making each generation weaker.²⁶⁵ In addition, Dr Branthwaite also seemed to be influenced by Francis Galton's ideas on eugenics. Before 1901, Dr Branthwaite's annual reports did not contain the terms mentally deficient, mentally defective or feeble minded. The first reference was in his report for the year 1901 in which he commented that violent, mad or excitable behaviour as an accompaniment to drunkenness indicated an "ill-balanced brain" and failure to reform was not due to addiction to drink, but to a "defective mental condition."²⁶⁶ The term feeble-minded first appeared in Dr Branthwaite's 1903 report when it was used in connection with inmates admitted to the inebriate institutions of Bentry, Ashford, Farmfield and the NII group. The 1908 report *Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded* commented, "The mental deficiency of many inebriates has become patent only recently" since inebriates have been detained in reformatories for long periods under close observation.²⁶⁷ Dr Branthwaite noted that reformatories had to deal mostly with:

those who are known (for want of a better term) as "feeble-minded" – not amenable to any jurisdiction in lunacy, but nevertheless, to a great extent irresponsible, and, in consequence, a danger and constant burden upon the community.²⁶⁸

Patrick McDonagh gives a definition of feeble-mindedness as "an intellectual capacity apparently greater than that of idiots or imbeciles, but still beneath that considered normal, as well as to designate a group of persons thought to be in critical need of guidance and supervision."²⁶⁹ The term Feeble-mindedness

²⁶⁵ Howard Padwa and Jacob, Cunningham, *Addiction: A Reference Encyclopaedia*. Santa Barbara, California: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2010, p.125.

²⁶⁶ BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1901*, p.58; 1902 (Cd.1381) XII.697.

²⁶⁷ *Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded. Vol. VIII*, p.138; 1908 (Cd. 4202) XXXIX.159.

²⁶⁸ BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1903*, p.24; 1905 (Cd. 2285) XI.1.

²⁶⁹ Patrick McDonagh, *Idiocy: A Cultural History*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2008, p.198.

was not a nineteenth century invention, it was used in John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) a book that makes the point the strong should support the weak.²⁷⁰ In the late nineteenth century, feeble-mindedness was an increasing concern, and in 1895 the National Association for Promoting the Welfare of the Feeble-Minded was created to promote the need for specialist accommodation.²⁷¹ In 1901, the term feeble-minded seems to have been widely used as a category as it replaced the word idiot in the census. Barker asserts that the "widely disseminated" stereotypical view of the feeble minded was of men and women that were often criminal, dependent on poor relief, involved in prostitution and liable to alcoholism.²⁷² In his report for the year 1904, Dr Branthwaite charted the history of a recidivist female inmate considered irreformable and feeble-minded. He stated the woman was mentally defective, unfit for freedom, without self-control, or able to earn an honest living. According to Dr Branthwaite she came from "bad stock" and had inherited her lack of control. Dr Branthwaite quoted a member of a county council (no details provided) who stated that "irreformables" were a constant nuisance and a constant danger and expense to society. They "breed their like" and prison only makes them worse. The council member considered that those considered irreformable should be detained and taken care of in a reformatory if only to "keep them from making fresh cases for us to deal with in future..." Dr Branthwaite commented that he felt the gentleman was not far wrong.²⁷³

Dr Branthwaite believed many inebriate reformatory inmates were in a state of "unimprovable degradation" and he considered it was a necessity to set apart some inebriate institutions as "moral refuse heaps, for the detention of the hopelessly defective, at the lowest possible cost to the country."²⁷⁴ This view was very close to the eugenicist view that the 'unfit' should be permanently segregated from society in an institution and prevented from producing children.

²⁷⁰ McDonagh, *Idiocy: A Cultural History*, p.198.

²⁷¹ Millicent Sutherland, "Homes for the Feeble-Minded." *The Times*, 7 December 1897, p.10, col.C.

²⁷² Barker, "How to Curb the Fertility of the Unfit", p.206.

²⁷³ BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1904*, p.20; 1905 (Cd.2590) XI.147.

²⁷⁴ BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1905*, p.9; 1906 (Cd.3246) XVI.1.

The language used by Dr Branthwaite in his 1905 report to describe such reformatory inmates was extremely potent. For example, the phrase “moral refuse heaps” gave the impression that those habitual drunkards considered beyond improvement were rubbish and not fit to be a part of society and they served no useful purpose. Dr Branthwaite’s comments also signified that habitual drunkards perceived insane or mentally defective should be deprived of their citizenship. Dr Branthwaite’s words underlined the seeming utter hopelessness of the condition of many habitual drunkards, and he implied that if there was no possibility of usefulness to society the only solution was to have them incarcerated in an institution, with as little cost to the taxpayer as possible.

In his 1905 annual report Dr Branthwaite published data that classified the mental state of inmates admitted to certified inebriate reformatories in England and Wales.

Figure 3: Classification of inmates of reformatories mental state for England and Wales

Classification according to mental state.	Number in each Class.	Percentage to Total Number of Persons admitted to Reformatories.
(1.) Insane—Certified and sent to asylums	48	} 17.0 } 62.7 } 45.7
(2.) Very defective—Imbeciles, degenerates, epileptics	271	
(3.) Defective—As above, but less marked, eccentric, silly, dull, senile, or subject to periodical paroxysms of ungovernable temper.	857	
(4.) Of average mental capacity—On admission, or after six months' detention.	697	37.3
Total Admissions	1,873	—

Source: BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1905*, p.9; 1906 (Cd.3246) XVI.1.

The data in Figure 3 shows that just under two thirds of inmates were insane or defective and just over a third were considered to possess average mental capacity and, therefore, were capable of reform. According to Dr Branthwaite, this point was frequently overlooked and not taken into consideration by critics of inebriate reformatories success and failure rates. He commented that it was

important to note that habitual drunkenness in some inmates merely masked symptoms of insanity and it was only after admission and enforced abstinence from alcohol that their mental problems were revealed. Dr Branthwaite stated that for some inmates insanity was the result of physical causes, such as tissue degeneration due to persistent alcoholism, alcoholic epilepsy or delirium tremens, but he felt that the majority of insane inebriates were born with a predisposition to incurable mental illness.²⁷⁵ He was satisfied that they “have become alcoholic because of *congenital defect or tendency to insanity*, not insane as the result of alcoholism, and that drunkenness which preceded “alcoholic insanity” was merely the herald – the only obvious sign of incipient mental disorder.”²⁷⁶ The data on the mental health of reformatory inmates attracted the attention of supporters of eugenics. In the book, *The Progress of Eugenics* by Caleb Williams Saleeby, published in 1914, Dr Branthwaite’s report was used to give credence to eugenic ideology.²⁷⁷ Saleeby noted that biometricians (the study of biological data using mathematics and statistics) had come to the same conclusion, but not until a later date. He stated the claim that eugenic biometricians were the first to demonstrate the relationship between feeble-mindedness and inebriety involved “a gross injustice to Dr Branthwaite and should never have been made.”²⁷⁸ The statement by Saleeby gave the impression to readers that the aims of eugenics and the work of Dr Branthwaite were in accord.

The aim of eugenics was to curb the fertility of some people and improve the fertility of other people for future generations. Dr Branthwaite’s work was not involved with campaigning to either curb or improve fertility, but his reports provided a rich source of argument for those that were involved in such campaigns. In his 1905 annual report, he explained that it was comparatively

²⁷⁵ Alcoholic epilepsy was characterised by convulsive seizures and this could result from abstinence from alcohol or drinking again after an absence. However, some doctors such as Dr Frederick W Mott, Pathologist to the London County Asylums and Physician to Charing Cross Hospital, believed that alcoholic epilepsy occurred in people who were born with a predisposition to the disease, which could lead to epileptic insanity. See Frederick W. Mott, F.R.S, *Heredity and Eugenics in Relation to Insanity*. London: Eugenics Education Society, 1912. <http://www.archive.org/details/heredityeugenics00mott-rich> Accessed 9 March 2013.

²⁷⁶ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1905*, p.11; (Cd. 3246) XVI.1.

²⁷⁷ Caleb Williams Saleeby, *The Progress of Eugenics*. London: Cassell & Company Ltd, 1914. http://archive.org/details/cihm_992105 Accessed 21 May 2012.

²⁷⁸ Saleeby, *The Progress of Eugenics*, p.192.

easy to identify the defective inmate from the normal inmate because their conduct and physical characteristics were too well defined for mistakes to be made.²⁷⁹ Eugenic advocates were particularly interested in the genealogy of people because they believed what had occurred in the past predicted what would reappear in the future.²⁸⁰ Inebriate reformatories were required to record details of inmates' family history to study whether there was a history of alcoholism, but this was often difficult for reformatory staff to obtain and often unreliable. Some inebriates lied about their history, some were unable to provide information, and others refused to co-operate. In an analysis of two hundred reformatory inmates, ninety inmates did not, or would not provide family history details. The information on which reformatories provided the data was not given in Dr Branthwaite's report.

Figure 4: Analysis of the family history of 200 mentally defective women admitted to reformatories during 1905.

ANALYSIS OF FAMILY HISTORY.							
							cases.
No information obtainable	...	...	...	...	...	...	90
History of inebriety only	...	...	...	...	...	...	74
Inebriate, with insane or epileptic history			...	...	...	...	25
Insane or epileptic history only	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
							200
							200

Source: BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1905*, p.68; 1906 (Cd.3246) XVI.1.

Since Dr Branthwaite's assertion that most habitual inebriates were congenital mental defectives could not be accurately substantiated from taking inmates' family histories, it was necessary for him for to look elsewhere to corroborate his assertion. He felt the most conclusive way to prove that there was a mental

²⁷⁹ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1905*, p.10; (Cd. 3246) XVI.1.

²⁸⁰ Alison Bashford and Philippa Levine, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010, p.9.

defect in habitual drunkards committed to reformatories was to study the character and conduct of inmates, as well as whether they were amenable to reason. He considered it was easy to diagnose violent and refractory inmates as mentally defective because they were unfriendly, deficient morally and “cannot understand the ethics of social life.”²⁸¹ These persons were considered mentally unsound first and inebriates second. Quiet passive inmates were more difficult to diagnose. They were likely to be thought sane unless close observations were made to prove otherwise.²⁸² Such inmates exhibited symptoms of dullness, lack of energy and apathy, tears, depression, despair, inattentiveness, pilfering, hoarding, and a disregard for the truth. Dr Branthwaite believed these characteristics and their physical appearance offered powerful evidence of the presence of defect, which was predominantly congenital. To illustrate this point, he published photographs and drawings of habitual drunkards committed to reformatories selected from the Black List in his annual report for the year of 1905.²⁸³ The Black List was a collection of photographs and descriptions of men and women drunkards distributed to public houses in order that publicans could recognise habitual drunkards and refuse to sell them alcohol.

²⁸¹ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1905*, p.11; (Cd. 3246) XVI.1.

²⁸² *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1905*, p.11; (Cd. 3246) XVI.1.

²⁸³ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1905*, p.94; (Cd. 3246) XVI.1.

Figure 5: Some photographs of female habitual drunkards committed to reformatories, selected from the “Black List” and reproduced to show congenital irregularities and mental types.



Source: BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1905*, p.97; 1906 (Cd. 3246) XVI.1.

A selection of sixteen women’s photographs, full face and profile, were published in Dr Branthwaite’s 1905 annual report to prove that the majority of inebriates in reformatories were not wicked vicious criminals but mental defectives. According to Dr Branthwaite, the women in the photographs drank to excess because they did not possess the intelligence or will power to control their drinking. He considered their feeble-mindedness and lack of will power was visible in the arrangement of their facial features and in their

expressions.²⁸⁴ He stated that whilst symptoms of insanity and mental defect varied with each individual, “Certain peculiarities in cranial conformation, general physique, and conduct have long been recognised as mental defect.”²⁸⁵ He considered that physical signs, for example, stunted growth, abnormally small heads, misshapen heads, developmental arrest, or irregularities in upper and lower jaw demonstrated the most scientific conclusive evidence of congenital defect. A woman inebriate was described as often being a “heavy, repulsive, masculine type, with a tendency to violence and brutality, beady eyes, square jaws and dull flabby, expressionless face.”²⁸⁶ He says, “...so far as the face may be taken as an indication of the mind they illustrate in a convincing manner the presence of defect, most congenital; even the untrained eye should meet with no difficulty in recognising the signs in most of them.”²⁸⁷ This was the only occasion photographs of female inmates detained in inebriate reformatories appeared in any of Dr Branthwaite’s annual reports. They were included in the 1905 report to provide information for the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble Minded, 1904-8.²⁸⁸ The Select Committee on Publications in 1907 questioned whether it was thought important that such “unfortunate people” should be made public in this way and whether this practice was likely to continue. Mr Toulmin answered the question and stated it was likely to continue because the photographs were necessary since “you could not very well describe the degeneracy which is indicated in these pictures in words; or not nearly so well as by giving the type here.”²⁸⁹

The comments by Dr Branthwaite concerning cranial conformation and physical appearance are reminiscent of the therapeutic treatment of phrenology, which determined character from bumps on the head and Lombroso’s study of criminal types. The Italian criminologist Cesare Lombroso (1835 – 1909) was influenced by phrenology and he used eugenic ideas, Social Darwinism,

²⁸⁴ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1905*, p.94; (Cd. 3246) XVI.1.

²⁸⁵ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1905*, p.10; (Cd. 3246) XVI.1.

²⁸⁶ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1905*, p.11; (Cd. 3246) XVI.1.

²⁸⁷ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1905*, p.11; (Cd. 3246) XVI.1.

²⁸⁸ *Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded. Vol. VIII; 1908* (Cd. 4202) XXXIX.159.

²⁸⁹ *BPP Report from the Select Committee on Publications; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, and Minutes of Evidence*, p.71; 1907 (272) VII.545.

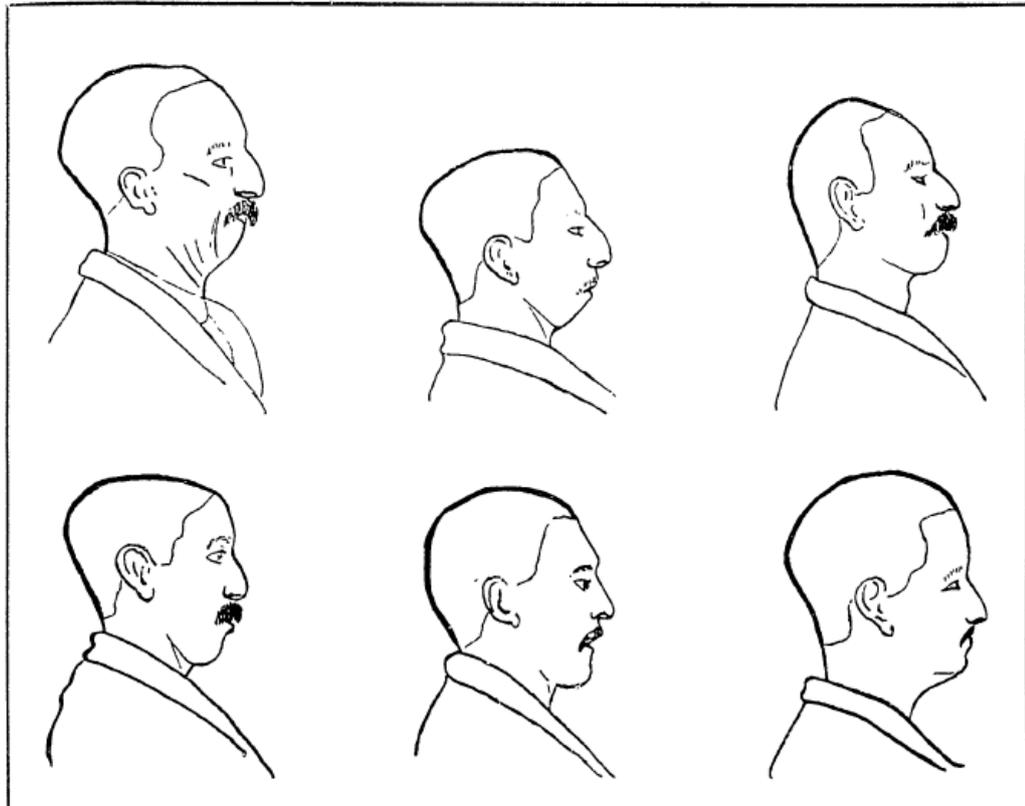
physiognomy and psychiatry to develop the theory that a person's criminality could not only be inherited but also identified through their physical characteristics such as strong jaws or thick lips.²⁹⁰ Lombroso considered that anyone with a small skull, low forehead, protruding jaw and jutting ears would be denoted as an atavistic offender, someone who displayed the features of a primitive uncivilised human. Meanwhile, Francis Galton had devised a photographic technique that he hoped could be used to demonstrate the physical characteristics of various criminal 'types', for example, men convicted of violence. Jackson argues that physical depictions of mental defectives together with their descriptions were used to illustrate the features of mental deficiency, to assist diagnosis and to enable people to be classified and placed in a sub-class of society.²⁹¹ The photographs demonstrated the perceived physical features of mental defect to medical practitioners, teachers, politicians and others. Jackson also suggests that photographs were used to authenticate "a variety of social observations and political strategies."²⁹² In Dr Branthwaite's report, the photographs seemed to have been used to justify and add weight to his argument that many inmates were 'irreformable' due to their congenital feeble-mindedness and that inebriate reformatories were useful to society because whilst in their care, such people could not procreate and hand down disabilities to their offspring. However, the photographs published in the 1905 report depict only typical everyday working class women; nothing about their facial features or expressions appear abnormal or indicative of any form of mental defect or insanity. In contrast to the photographs of women inmates, male faces in the report were caricatured in profile making the identification of a person impossible.

²⁹⁰ David Putwain and Aidan Sammons, *Psychology and Crime*. Hove, Sussex: Routledge, 2002, p.30.

²⁹¹ Mark Jackson, "Images of Deviance: Visual Representations of Mental Defectives in Early Twentieth-Century Medical Texts." *The British Journal for the History of Science*, 28.3 (Sep., 1995) 319-337, p321.

²⁹² Jackson, "Images of Deviance", p.337.

Figure 6: Some sketches of male habitual drunkards committed to reformatories, selected from the “Black list” and reproduced to show congenital irregularities and mental types.



Source: BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1905*, p.95; 1906 (Cd.3246) XVI.1.

The reason why sketches of men were used rather than photographs was not given. It can only be assumed that the photographs of women drunkards indicate there was a greater concern over female drinking than males and a general acceptance that female drunkards were more likely to be feeble minded than male drunkards. It seems that male privacy was of more value than female privacy and the public shaming of female drunkards by publishing their photographs signifies that it was considered they deserved to be shamed.

In Dr Branthwaite’s annual report of 1909, his sympathy for the ideas of Morel, Lombroso and Galton were clearly revealed in his statement, “*even the most mentally sound inebriates are not normal persons, but the victims of a constitutional peculiarity, or fault of some kind, which cannot yet be defined or located.*”²⁹³ He stated inebriates have a susceptibility that has been inherited

²⁹³ BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1909*, p.5; 1911 (Cd.5799) XXIX.PT.I.11.

from the parent. This weakness was considered permanent and eradicable. Nevertheless, Dr Branthwaite believed that if inmates were admitted to reformatories early in their career, mental defectiveness could be remitted and reformation could take place.

Dr Fleck, the medical officer for Bentry Certified Inebriate Reformatory also appeared to be influenced by eugenic ideas of the time. In his evidence to the 1908 Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble minded, Dr Fleck commented that there were certain physical and mental characteristics seen in idiots and imbeciles, but not usually seen in the normal population. He listed these physical characteristics as stunted growth, irregularities in cranial formation, arched palate, and “peculiarities of facial contours and want of intelligence in facial expression.”²⁹⁴ He went on to say that although these physical characteristics were not so evident in inebriates, similar deformities could still be seen that indicated mental deficiency. In addition, he commented, “Although this is undoubtedly the case it would be insufficient evidence of mental deficiency did not the actual mental condition of these cases confirm the physical indications.”²⁹⁵ In Dr Fleck’s opinion, 30% of inmates were of fair mental capacity, whilst 70% were mentally deficient, which was slightly more than Dr Branthwaite’s figures. However, he commented that without sufficient data he was unable to determine how much of this was due to heredity, or degeneration that was the result of alcohol. Nevertheless, in his view all these cases started life handicapped and added to their poor mental condition by their drinking habits with a small number certifiable as insane.²⁹⁶ These types of mentally defective inmates according to Dr Fleck had very little hope of reform. He believed the history of an individual’s alcoholism would show in succeeding generations in some form of psychiatric disorder such as epilepsy, mental weakness and other forms of mental problems, which might be accompanied by

²⁹⁴ BPP *Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded. Vol. V Appendices*, p 242; 1908 (Cd. 4219) XXXVIII.1.

²⁹⁵ *Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded. Vol. V*, p.243; 1908 (Cd. 4219) XXXVIII.1.

²⁹⁶ *Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded. Vol. V*, p.243; 1908 (Cd. 4219) XXXVIII.1.

an inherited tendency to drink to excess.²⁹⁷ He further considered that the intemperance of the fathers was the chief cause of mentally defective individuals drinking to excess. He calculated that as many as 66 per cent admitted a history of alcoholism in their mothers, fathers, uncles, aunts, or other near relatives. In Dr Fleck's opinion congenital inebriates made up 20 per cent, with 50 per cent mentally degenerate and only 30 per cent were of sound intellectual ability.²⁹⁸ He appeared very confident of his figures and did not mention any difficulty in obtaining the family histories of the inebriates in the reformatory, or that the inmates might not have told the truth about their history.

Dr Branthwaite and Dr Fleck needed to justify their work in reforming inebriates; otherwise, they were in danger of losing their livelihoods, therefore, it was necessary for them to stress that if inebriates were sent to reformatories at an earlier stage of their habitual drunkenness there would be some hope of recovery. However, this seems to contradict the comments made by Dr Branthwaite that many inebriates were in a state of "unimprovable degradation" and reformatories should be set up as "moral refuse heaps, for the detention of the hopelessly defective."²⁹⁹ The situation seems complex as both doctors were influenced by eugenic ideas, but they appeared to have a modified version of it and did not accept the more extreme conclusions of eugenics. The language of eugenics was widespread in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but only a minority concurred with extremist eugenic notions. Joanne Woiak remarks that "Most Edwardian reform movements considered that an individual's personal failings and character flaws, which were sometimes interpreted in hereditarian terms, were to blame for poverty, ill health, and degeneracy and emphasised the need to reform or manage individual behaviour rather than improve the social and economic circumstances of working-class life."³⁰⁰ Inebriate reformatories were not set up to be places for the feeble-minded without hope of reform to be permanently cared for, but for inebriates to be reformed and returned to society as useful citizens. Dr

²⁹⁷ David Fleck, M.D, "Inebriety and Weakness." *The British Journal of Inebriety*, 4.2 (1906) 99-106, p.101.

²⁹⁸ Fleck, "Inebriety and Weakness", p.101.

²⁹⁹ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1905*, p.9; (Cd.3246) XVI.1.

³⁰⁰ Joanne Woiak, "Drunkenness, Degeneration, and Eugenics in Britain, 1900-1914." PhD Thesis. Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science and Technology (1998) p.376.

Branthwaite and Dr Fleck complained that inebriates were sent too late for treatment to be effective and although many inmates were feeble minded and would always struggle against an inborn weakness to alcoholism, they stressed that abstinent inebriates could be taught to live moral, useful, and productive lives in society. Despite sympathy with eugenic ideology and agreeing with some aspects of eugenics, it was not in Dr Branthwaite and Dr Fleck's interest to align themselves too publicly with an organisation contrary to the basic principles of inebriate reformatories, which was to reform inebriates and protect society from their excesses. For example, Amy Barrington and Karl Pearson from the Eugenics Laboratory stated in an article in the *BMJ*, that reformatories did not restore mentally defective people to mental efficiency, nor enable them to manage their own lives.³⁰¹ In contrast, Dr Branthwaite stated, "The intention of the promoters of the Act of 1898 was primarily the provision of means for the reformation of reformable inebriates and, only secondarily, the detention of the irreformable for the good of the community."³⁰² Dr Fleck in the minutes of the annual board of management, RVH Bentry, stated, "it was gratifying that after a short time inmates will admit to the evil of their former ways and were grateful for their reformation, and although the flesh is weak they have begun to regain will-power, the restoration of which will constitute a cure."³⁰³ Whilst Dr Branthwaite and Dr Fleck might agree with many of the sentiments of eugenics, such as the majority of inebriates were mentally defective, they were unlikely to have agreed with the opinion of Dr Heron, the Assistant Professor of Eugenics in University College London, who stated. "...medical skill was powerless in dealing with the mentally defective [and] in nine-tenths of the cases of inebriates the work of reform was absolutely thrown away."³⁰⁴ Although he felt it useful in the short-term to segregate inebriates from society for up to three years, in the long-term Dr Heron appears to suggest that the work of inebriate reformatories were doomed to failure and reformatories were a waste of public money. How inebriates were perceived, whether reformable, mentally defective or insane by

³⁰¹ Amy Barrington and Karl Pearson, *Preliminary Study of Extreme Alcoholism in Adults*, A Memoir XIV, London: Dulau and Co, 1910 in "Alcoholism in Adults." *British Medical Journal*, 7 January 1911, p.30.

³⁰² *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1905*, p.18; (Cd. 3246) XVI.1.

³⁰³ Royal Victoria Homes and Bentry Certified Inebriate Reformatory, Minutes of the Board of Management Quarterly Meetings 1899-1917, 25 January 1904, No.25, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

³⁰⁴ "Reformatory Treatment for Inebriates" *The Times*, 10 September 1912, p.47, col.A.

those people with responsibility for their care and those with political influence was crucial to their future liberty.

The importance of the borderland to inebriate reformatories

The concept of the borderland was necessary for the survival of reformatories to demonstrate the importance and success of their work in reforming and rescuing inmates from insanity and degradation, as well as providing justification for those that were unable to be reformed, those inebriates considered insane. With the expansion and increase of institutions in the nineteenth century, it became necessary for doctors to make a medical diagnosis to differentiate between the sane and the insane, the mentally defective from the mentally sound, and the socially normal from the socially deviant. The concept of the borderland was useful for medical officers, proprietors, and managers of inebriate reformatories because it provided a figurative space to assess and evaluate the inmates in their care. It conveyed the idea of a crossing place where people could be classified as either hopeful or hopeless and was the crucial point that determined a person's future fate. After diagnosis, appropriate treatment, education, and discipline, as considered proper to a person's needs, could be provided. Accurate classification prevented undesirable and insane people from being released from asylums and reformatories to cause disorder in the community. In addition, it meant that resources could be used wisely and the best use could be made of taxpayers' money so that, whether people were perceived undesirable or reformed they had to be released from asylums upon recovery, or the expiry of their detention period, unless they were certified insane. In addition, insanity could be difficult for doctors to diagnose because with a large number of patients to look after doctors and staff may not have had the time to observe and consult with inmates. The borderland, according to Showalter, was the most characteristic and revealing metaphor of Darwinian psychiatry, it "sheltered latent brain disease" and the "seeds of nervous disorders", and there "lurked many persons, who without being insane, exhibit peculiarities of thought, feeling, and character

which render them unlike ordinary beings and make them objects of remark among their fellows”.³⁰⁵

In the early twentieth century eugenic thinking began to change the concept of the borderland because notions of heredity became widespread and the majority (although not all) habitual drunkards committed to reformatories under the 1898 Inebriates Act were regarded as feeble-minded. From 1908, inebriate reformatories began to close, partly because the Treasury had not provided sufficient funds for inebriate legislation to be fully effective and partly because many magistrates had not sent enough inebriates to reformatories to make it economically viable to maintain and treat them. Nevertheless, despite problems Dr Branthwaite in his report of 1911 declared reformatories had done well, “so far as the unsatisfactory nature of their inmates will allow” and commented that reformatories were capable and able to fulfil their objectives.³⁰⁶ He went on to say, “Whatever may be said about other phases of the work, all that relates to the practical side, the detention and treatment of inmates, is being done thoroughly.”³⁰⁷ By 1914, the majority of inebriate reformatories had been closed, or were in the process of closing. Dr Branthwaite commented in 1912 that had committal to an inebriate reformatory occurred sooner rather than later, before people had undergone many imprisonments and their continued addiction became firmly entrenched, something could have been done to remedy the situation. Unfortunately, after many years of addiction for such people the only advantage likely to accrue is “detention for the good of the community.”³⁰⁸ The Mental Deficiency Act, 1913 made the usefulness of the concept borderland to inebriate reformatories redundant. If inebriates met the criteria of a habitual drunkard within the meaning of the Inebriates Acts they were classified under the 1913 act as mentally defective and could be sent to an institution for mental defectives indefinitely. Therefore, there was no longer a need to demonstrate the importance and success of inebriate reformatories work in reforming and

³⁰⁵ Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady*, p.106.

³⁰⁶ BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1911*, p.11; 1913 (Cd. 6822) XXVIII.703.

³⁰⁷ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1911*, p.11; (Cd. 6822) XXVIII.703.

³⁰⁸ BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1912*, p.10; 1914 (Cd. 7281) XXXVI.251.

rescuing inmates from insanity and degradation or provide a justification for those that were unable to be reformed.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the perceived relationship between habitual drunkards and insanity in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by considering some of the contemporary debates. The chapter described how during the nineteenth century the treatment of insanity changed, a more humane approach began to be used, and psychiatry emerged as a new specialist branch of medicine. The Lunacy Act, 1845 heralded the beginning of a new era from old practices to new ways of thinking, which led to a building wave of new county asylums controlled and inspected centrally and staffed by specialist doctors. Alienists observed that many of the patients admitted into these new asylums had a history of excess drinking and believed alcohol abuse to be a significant cause of insanity.³⁰⁹ However, doctors were not agreed over the extent of alcoholic disease and thought that the figures given by some medical men were exaggerated. Further, some doctors considered habitual drunkenness to be a moral problem and a vice rather than a medical problem. In addition, some doctors considered that alcohol paralysed the will and rendered habitual drunkards powerless to resist and combat their addiction. Such people, it was thought, were suffering from a disease of the will, a disease that could lead to insanity.

Very few patients admitted to a lunatic asylum for an alcohol related mental illness stayed for long periods. Once they sobered up and were completely free from alcohol they were released back into society. This was a powerful argument for those campaigning for specialised institutions. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the notion of eugenics became widespread. Eugenics was adopted by many of Britain's middle class elite as a way to solve the social problems of the country. Eugenicists believed that to improve the human race and prevent it deteriorating only mentally and physically healthy people should be allowed to reproduce. The Inebriates Act,

³⁰⁹ McCandless, "Curses of Civilization", p.49.

1898 proved very useful to supporters of eugenics as it removed from society male and female habitual drunkards, although mainly females were sent to inebriate reformatories. Whilst in the reformatory males and females were segregated, women were prevented from producing further children for up to three years. Eugenics had an impact on inebriate reformatories because it underpinned the views of those who campaigned to keep institutions open, but it did not impact on how reformatories were managed or the people sent to the reformatories. Dr Branthwaite, the Government Inspector for Inebriate Retreats and Reformatories, and Dr Fleck the medical officer for Brentry Certified Inebriate Reformatory were influenced by the basic principles of eugenics. Both doctors deemed that the majority of people sent to inebriate reformatories were mentally defective, yet they insisted that if habitual drunkards were sent to an inebriate reformatory at an early stage of their alcoholism it was possible to teach them new habits so that they could be returned to society. Therefore, although sympathetic to eugenics their version of it was modified, as was the case with many people at the time. Drs Branthwaite and Fleck also contributed to the debates on the best way to deal with the feeble minded in their evidence to the 1908 Royal Commission and stated that whilst most inebriates were mentally defective it was possible for inebriates to lead productive lives if treated early. The borderland was very useful to doctors, proprietors and managers of inebriate reformatories as it gave them time to assess and evaluate the mental condition of inmates in their care. However, in the early twentieth century the concept of the borderland became redundant as people who met the criteria of a habitual drunkard within the meaning of the Inebriates Acts were classified mentally defective and dealt with under the Mental Deficiency Act, 1913.

Chapter 3: Bristol, the Burdens and the Royal Victoria Home, Horfield, Bristol.

Introduction

In this chapter the issue of the importance of the individual and the relationship between the state, philanthropy and private enterprise are discussed through focusing on the Royal Victoria Home, Horfield, Bristol, a charitable inebriate home for women, which was the forerunner of Brentry Certified Inebriate reformatory, Bristol, the first institution to be certified under the Inebriates Act, 1898. The chapter also discusses the working partnerships of married couples through two influential figures in the field of inebriety nationally and locally, the Rev Harold Burden and his wife Katharine. Harold Burden came to Bristol in 1895 as an employee of CETS and the Police Court Mission. He was the driving force behind a successful fundraising campaign to build a retreat for female inebriates and recently released offenders. His wife, Katharine, supported him in the venture. Ultimately, the couple progressed from this small retreat to create an empire of inebriate institutions situated throughout England.

The chapter places the thesis in its historical and cultural context with an overview of Bristol and considers whether Bristol was a particularly drunken city compared to other cities in England. The important role CETS and the Police Court Mission played in establishing retreats for women habitual drunkards are examined in the chapter. The experience, skills and abilities the Burdens gained before they came to Bristol and how they applied them to their work in creating the Women's Shelter Home in 1896 (renamed the Royal Victoria Home, Horfield, the same year) are also examined. Finally, how the Burdens raised the funds to build the Royal Victoria Home, Horfield, is examined as well as the institution's purpose and the kinds of women it accommodated.

An overview of the City of Bristol

Bristol in the eighteenth century was the largest city and port outside London with much of its wealth derived from merchandise that passed through Bristol's

port, as well as profits from the slave trade.³¹⁰ Indeed, it has been suggested that “Bristol’s eighteenth-century ‘Golden Age’, was built on the trans-Atlantic trade.”³¹¹ In the nineteenth century, Bristol underwent unparalleled changes, its population grew rapidly and its boundaries and transport links expanded. Unlike many cities, Bristol had a varied economy, for example, shipbuilding, coal, shoemaking, packaging, tobacco, cotton, chocolate, and papermaking. However, wages were on average lower than many other large cities and its technology outdated.³¹² By the 1860s, many of Bristol’s wealthy citizens had moved from central Bristol out to the suburbs of Clifton, Cotham, and Redland and certain parts of Kingsdown. Clifton contained substantial mansions, villas, elegant shops, green spaces and was an affluent pleasant place to live. It was situated on a hill above the city, and in the nineteenth century, it was completely separate from the city’s port and industries. The people of Clifton were rarely exposed to the working classes living and working in the industries and port down the hill in central Bristol. The inner city areas were populated by the working classes, many of whom earned their living from Bristol’s docks. Some of the poorest lived in parts of Redcliff and Temple a short distance from the docks, whilst others lived in St Philip and St Jacob, St Jude’s, Bedminster, and parts of Kingsdown. The working classes also lived around the railway station at Totterdown and the coalmines of Bedminster and Eastville. Bristol was, therefore, a divided city with little interaction between the middle and working classes. In his PhD thesis Spencer Jordan states, “The development of middle-class suburbs, isolating the working classes in central ghettos, was seen as a phenomenon of the modern industrial city in which the social integration of the pre-industrial community was undermined.”³¹³

Bristol had a long philanthropic tradition of generous benefactors and a prominent middle class who were active in civic life and keen to combine

³¹⁰ Helen E Meller, *Leisure and the Changing City, 1870-1914*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976, p.21.

³¹¹ Peter Fleming, “The Emergence of Modern Bristol” in *The Making of Modern Bristol*. Madge Dresser, Philip Ollerenshaw, ed. Tiverton: Redcliffe Press, 1996, p.1.

³¹² Meller, *Leisure and the Changing City*, p.34.

³¹³ Spencer Kenneth Jordan, “The Development and Implementation of Authority in a Regional Capital: A Study of Bristol’s Elites, 1835-1939” PhD Thesis. The University of the West of England (1999) p.59.

personal success with the social development of their city.³¹⁴ The Merchant Venturers were generous benefactors of the city, and had taken an important role in the railway, Bristol Suspension Bridge, and the founding of schools. In addition, Bristol Municipal Charities, an endowed charity, established in 1836, administered, managed and looked after the interests of many of the smaller charities in Bristol. Helen Meller states that alongside improvements to the social environment of the city many of the middle class elites were involved in a “civilizing mission’ to the poor.”³¹⁵ Numerous voluntary societies existed in Bristol and most of them had the same objective, to moralise and civilise those elements of the urban poor that were disruptive, disorderly, and hostile to law and order. Their objective was to mould the lives of these problematic elements of society to the middle class ideas of order and civility. In this way, Bristol’s undisciplined poor could be transformed into moral, hardworking sober and disciplined citizens. The civilising mission to the poor in Bristol was often underpinned by a religious ethos, which provided a cultural unity to Bristol’s middle classes.³¹⁶

Bristol possessed an active temperance movement, which was set up to alleviate and eradicate drunkenness. Bristol was the centre for the Western Temperance League (founded in 1837) and covered sixteen counties including parts of South Wales. This organisation provided practical resources and expertise to the many burgeoning temperance societies springing up in the area. During the 1870s a new relationship between temperance, chapels and churches was forged, commonly known as Gospel temperance. CETS was formed in 1872 and was created on a dual basis, which included Anglicans that advocated total abstinence and Anglicans that advocated drinking in moderation. The historian Gerald Wayne Olsen considers that the founding of CETS made temperance respectable at the highest strata of society.³¹⁷ The political influence of the temperance movement was firmly established, and some Bristol MPs, for example, the Congregationalist, Samuel Morley, Liberal

³¹⁴ Meller, *Leisure and the Changing City*, pp.37 & 95.

³¹⁵ Meller, *Leisure and the Changing City*, p.122.

³¹⁶ Jordan, “The Development and Implementation of Authority in a Regional Capital”, p.71.

³¹⁷ Gerald Wayne Olsen, “Physician Heal Thyself’: Drink, Temperance and the Medical Question in the Victorian and Edwardian Church.” *Addiction* 89.9 (1994) 1167-76.

(1868-1885) and the Quaker, Lewis Fry, Liberal, (1878-1885 and for the constituency of Bristol North from 1885–1892 and 1895–1900) were active members of temperance societies. Temperance brought together on the same platform members of many different churches, chapels and societies to fight the evil of drunkenness.

Drunkenness and public houses

In the late 1870s and 80s a variety of enquiries were undertaken to investigate the issue of drunkenness. Following the Select Committee of the House of Lords in 1877 into the national situation, two local studies were conducted: the *Bristol Mercury* investigation into the “Homes of the Bristol Poor” from 1883 to 1885, and the *Report of the Committee to Inquire into the Condition of the Bristol Poor*, 1884 headed by the Bishop of Bristol.³¹⁸ It might be assumed that Bristol had a serious problem with drunkenness. However, the amount of drunkenness in Bristol was no worse than in some other cities in England in the nineteenth century. Mr Elisha Robinson, a Bristol magistrate and an employer of 600 workers gave evidence to the Government’s 1877 *Select Committee on Intemperance*. Mr Robinson emphasised that Bristol was a port city and that there were more drunken brawls in public houses in the areas around the quays than any other area of the city.³¹⁹ In his evidence to the 1877 *Select Committee* Mr T W Jacques, the temperance solicitor to the Bristol Vigilance Committee (a philanthropic organisation formed to aid the enforcement of the Licensing Acts in Bristol and Clifton in respect of public houses) stated emphatically that he did not consider Bristol exceptionally drunken.³²⁰ Mr Jacques felt there were too many public houses in Bristol, but he answered “no” to the question of whether the Bristol Vigilance Committee was appointed “on account of the great amount of drunkenness or the great amount of disorder in Bristol.”³²¹ From a Licensees

³¹⁸ BPP *Second Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Intemperance; Together with the Minutes of Evidence, and an Appendix*, 1877 (271) XI.357. *The Homes of the Bristol Poor* and the *Report of the Committee to Inquire into the Condition of the Bristol Poor*. Presented 22 December 1884 to The Bishop of the Diocese. Bristol: W. Lewis & Sons, 1885.

³¹⁹ *Select Committee of the House of Lords on Intemperance*, p.187; (271) XI.357.

³²⁰ *Select Committee of the House of Lords on Intemperance*, p.177; (271) XI.357

³²¹ *Select Committee of the House of Lords on Intemperance*, p.174; (271) XI.357.

Return dated 1st August 1883, and published in the *Bristol Mercury* it appears that only Portsmouth had a greater number of licensed houses in proportion to its population than Bristol (Appendix 3). Mr Jacques informed the 1877 *Select Committee* that Bristol contained one public house to every 144 of the population, or 1 to 80 of those over 12 years of age. Proceedings against persons that were drunk and disorderly were 1 to 108 of the population, whereas Liverpool had a ratio of one public house to 208 of the population and proceedings against persons that were drunk and disorderly of 1 to 25. Other cities such as Newcastle and Halifax had fewer public houses to the population, but more proceedings against drunk and disorderly persons.³²² *The Illustrated Police News* commented in 1878 that next to London, Liverpool was the largest English contributor to drunkenness and when the “population is considered...it is at once apparent that the great Lancashire seaport has much more drunkenness than the metropolis, or probably any town in England.”³²³ Birmingham was reported to have 2,850 arrests for drunkenness and in “Newcastle arrests for drunkenness were almost identical with those of Birmingham; but in no other English town did the total of drunkenness arrests reach a total of 2,000.”³²⁴ By 1893 out of 63 London and County Boroughs, Bristol ranked No.38 in order of the largest to the smallest number of drunkenness offences of persons proceeded against per 100,000 of the population.³²⁵ (Appendix 4.) The Judicial Statistics for England and Wales for 1893 described Northumberland, Durham and Lancashire as the worst counties in respect of drunkenness.³²⁶

Mr Jacques also considered that Bristol had a well managed and numerous police force of 1 to every 500 of the population and as such, the police figures for proceedings for drunk and disorderly conduct would be expected to be higher.³²⁷ It was pointed out to Mr Jacques by the Earl of Onslow that the police figures seemed to contradict Mr Jacques view that Bristol had too many public

³²² *Select Committee of the House of Lords on Intemperance*, p.178; (271) XI.357.

³²³ “Statistics of Drunkenness”, *The Illustrated Police News*, 16 March 1878, p.3.

³²⁴ “Statistics of Drunkenness”, *The Illustrated Police News*, 16 March 1878, p.3.

³²⁵ BPP *Drunkenness and licensed houses (England and Wales). Return relating to drunkenness and licensed houses (England and Wales). 1895*, p.7; 1893 (352) LXXXI.311.

³²⁶ BPP *Judicial statistics for 1893 (England and Wales)*, p.22; 1895 (C.7725) CVIII.271.

³²⁷ *Select Committee of the House of Lords on Intemperance*, p.178; (271) XI.357.

houses.³²⁸ However, Mr Jacques claimed that the police figures were only a small proportion of the amount of drunkenness in the city, if drunken people made their way home quietly, the police did not apprehend them. The Police only apprehended the worst cases.

The Bristol Mercury's 1885 study into the "Homes of the Bristol Poor" noted that the availability to obtain drink in Bristol was greater than many other cities.³²⁹ A major concern was the opportunities afforded for drunkenness in public houses located in the poorer areas of the city. Drink was described as the "curse of the poor" and was blamed for keeping people in domestic and social degradation and living lives of crime.³³⁰ According to the *Bristol Mercury* the poor drank because they lacked insufficient strength of character and integrity to resist the many opportunities the presence of public houses provided.³³¹

In the midst of concerns about the number of public houses in working class areas, the issue of women's drinking was a major cause of anxiety. This was stressed in the *Bristol Mercury* article "The Bristol Poor", but was particularly highlighted in a *Report of the Committee to Inquire into the Condition of the Bristol Poor (Presented December 22nd, 1884 to the Bishop of the Diocese)* dated 1885. The report commented on the increasing prevalence of women's drinking in Bristol and the deleterious effects this had on homes and families. The committee was headed by Bishop Ellicott and consisted of members of Bristol's elite such as: Samuel Morley MP, businessman, philanthropist and a proprietor of the Liberal paper the *London Daily News*. Solicitors T.H. Ormston Pease and Francis Sturge, the social reformer the Rev. Urijah Thomas, minister of Redland Park United Reform Church, and Mark Whitwill, wealthy ship owner and a founder of Bristol Children's Hospital. The committee's method of investigation was to seek written replies to detailed questions from relevant interested persons. Chapter V of the report concentrated on "Intemperance and the Poor." Opinions differed as to how far poverty was responsible for

³²⁸ *Select Committee of the House of Lords on Intemperance*, p.179; (271) XI.357.

³²⁹ See Appendix 3, Licensing returns, 1 August 1883, for a table showing: name of town, population, the number of population to each licensed house extracted from "The Bristol Poor." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 4 March 1885, p.3.

³³⁰ "The Bristol Poor." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 4 March 1885, p.3.

³³¹ "The Bristol Poor." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 4 March 1885, p.3.

drunkenness, but all concurred that poverty, immorality, and crime were largely brought about by drunkenness and the latter had the most appalling consequences for home life. It was virtually unanimous that,

... intemperance amongst women is an evil of the most fatal and incurable character, as the sensitiveness of their organisation more early suffers a permanent moral and physical derangement. It is disastrous to the family and home; and not only is it as prevalent as drunkenness amongst men, but perhaps more so and increasing. It is said to be most seen in middle-aged women, thus differing from drunkenness amongst men: though sometimes in young and abandoned, or careless ones. Weak-minded and selfish young women, who have married from idleness with a view to being kept by their husbands, soon find their way to the public-house.³³²

It is clear from the near unanimous statement of the Bishop's Committee that they considered women's drinking in Bristol to be of utmost seriousness. They felt that women who drank would gradually lose their sense of shame, honour, and affection for their families and that their example more so than men "tainted" their children. The Bishop's Committee suggested that to reduce women's intemperance, female volunteers not likely to be tempted by drink, should come forward as an example for weaker women to emulate. It was also proposed that employers of girls should provide facilities for them to be able to take their meals at other places than public houses; and employers should ban alcohol from women's workrooms.³³³ The Bishop's Committee considered the number of public houses be reduced and that public houses should close earlier in the evening.

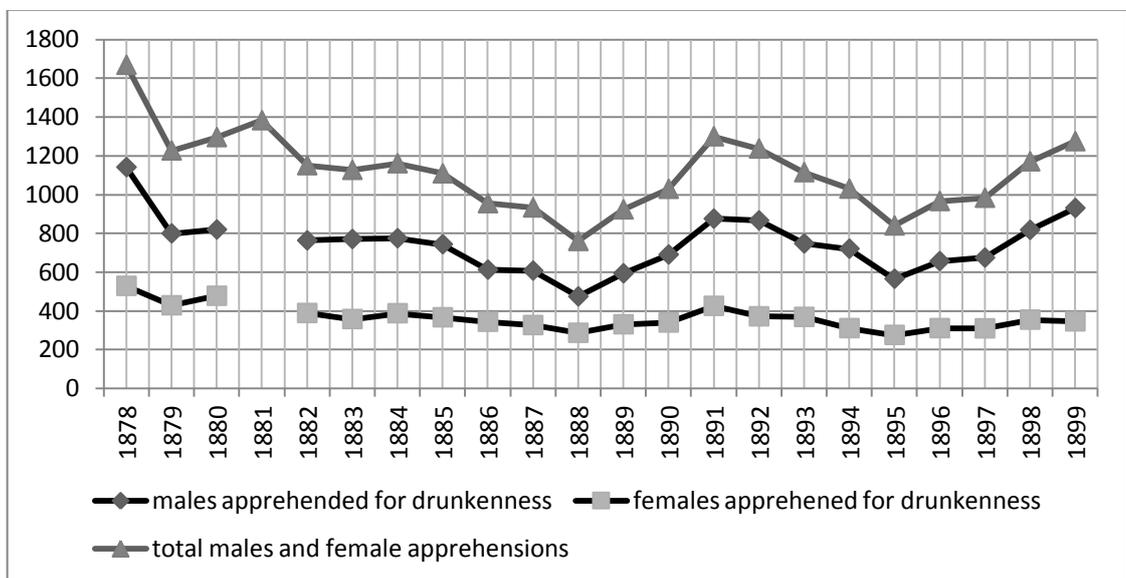
During the 1880s, public and press anxiety continued to increase over the levels of crime and prostitution thought to be caused by drunkenness and the numbers of women habitually coming before the courts for drunkenness. As mentioned previously, regional data in the annual judicial statistics did not record gender; therefore, it was not possible to consider the extent of female drunkenness in Bristol. However, the local newspapers the *Bristol Mercury* and the *Western*

³³² *Report of the Committee to Inquire into the Condition of the Bristol Poor*, 1885, p.73.

³³³ *Report of the Committee to Inquire into the Condition of the Bristol Poor*, 1885, pp.73 & 85-6.

Daily Press often published details of the annual Bristol Licensing Sessions, which included details extracted from the Chief Constable's report of the number of male and female prosecutions for drunkenness and the number of males and females convicted (see figure 7 and appendix 2). The data provided in the newspaper reports was not reported consistently and consequently there are gaps in the data. The dates in figure 7 are from the year before the Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879 and the year after the Inebriates Act, 1898.

Figure 7: Bristol male and females apprehended by the police for drunkenness as reported in the Bristol Mercury and Daily Post and the Western Daily Press, 1878-1899



Sources: *Bristol Mercury & Daily Post*, 5th September 1878, p.6. 2nd September 1880, p.3. 8th December 1881, p.3. 7th September 1882, p.3. 30th August 1883, p.3. 28th August 1884, p.3. 4th September 1885, p.3. 2nd September 1886, p.6. 30 August 1888, p.6. 31st August 1893, p.3. 28th August 1890, p.6. 31st August 1893, p.3. 31st August 1893, p.3. 29th August 1895, p.3. 29th August 1895, p.3. 29 August 1896, p.6. 31st August 1899,p.6. 31st August 1899,p.6. 31st August 1899,p.6. *Western Daily Press*, 4 September 1879, p.3 and 1 September 188, p.6.

From figure 7 it seems that male apprehensions for drunkenness in Bristol followed the national trend of male and female convictions, as male apprehensions outnumbered female apprehensions. From 1888 to 1898, males accounted for 68 per cent of apprehensions and females 32 per cent. In 1891 the statistics for male and female drunkenness had risen to its highest point since 1878. The reporting of male and female convictions for drunkenness was patchy and it is not possible to compare conviction rates.

Nationally and locally the publicity, debates and discourses about the perceived serious problem of women's drunkenness may have deflected some attention away from the much greater numbers of men who were prosecuted and convicted of drunkenness offences. This could have had the effect of normalising men's drunkenness and inflating the problem of women's drunkenness.

The Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879 enabled private fee paying licensed inebriate retreats to be created, which were inspected by a government official. However, it was unlikely that the working classes, unless sponsored by a charity, could afford the fees. Despite being a large important city Bristol lacked a retreat licensed under the 1879 Act for women inebriates, although a retreat existed that had been licensed under the Act for men at Kingswood, just outside of Bristol.³³⁴ Bristol and its environs contained unlicensed private inebriate retreats such as the "Dunmurry".

Figure 8: Dunmurry Inebriate Retreat

TREATMENT OF INEBRIATE GENTLEFOLK.
"Dunmurry," Sneyd Park, near Clifton, Glos.
 ESTABLISHED A.D. 1876. *No Legal Formality required None but GENTLEFOLK received.*
 A beautifully situated detached private residence, devoid of any features marking it as different from the other houses in Sneyd Park—a district on the Sea-wall side of the "Downs," a common of 490 acres. *There is not within a mile of "Dunmurry" a single place where any alcoholic drink can be purchased. None is ever allowed in the house under any circumstances whatsoever.*
DR. AND MRS. STEWART
 (both total abstainers) receive as *voluntary* boarders in their family a few ladies and gentlemen of good social position—the total number seldom exceeding six—who are desirous of being cured of Inebriety. Not engaging in private practice, Dr. STEWART is able to devote his whole time to their treatment and *personal supervision*. He accompanies the gentlemen *himself* in their walks, &c. The highest Medical References in London and the Provinces can be given.
 No "nervous" or "borderland" cases are received.
 Postal Address: *As above.* Telegraphic Address: "Dunmurry, Rockleaze, Bristol."

Source: *The Medical Annual Synoptical Index to Remedies and Diseases, for the Twelve Years 1887 to 1898.* Bristol: John Wright & Co, p.436.

Dunmurry was an example of the need in Bristol for retreats to be licensed under the Inebriates Act, 1879 so that a wider group of people could benefit from inebriety treatment and afford the fees.

³³⁴ Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.20.

The surgeon, total abstainer and member of the Society for the Study of Inebriety, Dr James Stewart (B.A., F.R.C.P, Edin) owned and managed the Dunmurry retreat situated in the wealthy suburb of Sneyd Park, Bristol. The advertisement (in the *Medical Annual Synoptical Index to Remedies and Diseases*) stated that the retreat had been in operation since 1876, no legal formalities were required and only “gentlefolk” were received. The advertisement also boasted that the house could not be distinguished from its wealthy neighbours and there were no public houses within a mile of the home. The boarders were “voluntary” and no “nervous” or “borderland cases” were received.³³⁵ Male boarders were charged four guineas a week, females four and a half guineas per week. No one was admitted for less than eighteen weeks and six patients were the maximum number admitted to Dunmurry.³³⁶ It is not clear why males were charged less than females, perhaps Dr Stewart considered females were more difficult to supervise and more likely to give cause for concern. In his annual report for 1891, the inspector of retreats noted that the popular view of the reclamation of a female drunkard was one “beyond hope.”³³⁷ Women may have been considered a greater risk than men, and more difficult to deal with; consequently, therefore, not a good business proposition. Dr Stewart’s advertising was careful to reassure his clientele that privacy would be maintained in his establishment, a luxury not available to poor drunkards and those people who came before the magistrates for drunken offences and whose exploits were published in the local paper. Dunmurry specifically targeted the wealthy and Dr Stewart promised to supervise his patients personally. This close supervision ensured his patients were unlikely to bring shame and embarrassment upon their families. A Dunmurry patient was always accompanied. If a nobleman was a patient and wished to travel to London to cast his vote in the House of Lords, Dr Stewart engaged the services of a locum tenens so he could personally accompany him. Dr Stewart instructed his Dunmurry staff that patients often tried to bribe servants with

³³⁵ *The Medical Annual Synoptical Index to Remedies and Diseases, for the Twelve Years 1887 to 1898*. Bristol: John Wright & Co, p.436.

<http://www.archive.org/details/medicalannualsyn00brisuoft> Accessed 11 April 2012.

³³⁶ “The extension of inebriate homes for women.” *British Women’s Temperance Journal*, 39.3 (1886) 1 March 1886 p.33.

³³⁷ BPP *Twelfth Report of the Inspector of Retreats under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 and 1888, for the year 1891; with Appendix*, p.4; 1892 (C.6741) XX.645.

money to obtain alcohol, but if the bribes were reported to him the servant concerned would be given double the amount of any bribe. If money was taken by a servant as a bribe and not reported, the employee would be dismissed without wages within the hour.³³⁸ Dr Stewart had not licensed his establishment under the 1879 Act because he believed that this would have required a greater number of staff than his establishment provided. This would have made his retreat more vulnerable to bribery, and personal individual care would have been compromised. His advertising stressed that no legal formalities were necessary to enter his establishment. In contrast, a retreat licensed under the 1879 Act needed the signature of two magistrates before a patient could be admitted. Inebriety, according to Dr Stewart, should be separated from drunkenness because inebriety was a “lesion of the brain” that affected will power, whilst drunkenness was a “pernicious habit.”³³⁹ Presumably, all Dunmurry’s patients were considered inebriates, a term that indicated a medical problem, rather than habitual drunkards, which indicated a vice.

The lack of affordable treatment for working class habitual drunkards was not just confined to Bristol, but was a national problem. To deal with the problem of adult minor offenders and rescue them from a life of drunkenness and crime CETS created the Police Court Mission and its offshoot, the Prison Gate Mission, to look after newly released prisoners. In 1883, Canon Farrar, speaking in Westminster Abbey, called for an organising resident agent of the Police Court Mission to be sent into every diocese.³⁴⁰ Shiman believes that of all the activities of CETS the Police Court Mission had the most profound influence on English life; indeed, some historians deem the Police Court and Prison Gate Mission to be the forerunner of the probation service.³⁴¹ A combination of “good influences, the pledge and material help” was used to aid

³³⁸ “Temperance Column. Curing Inebriates.” *Evening Post*, Rōrahi LXVI, Putanga 22, 25 Hōngongoi 1903, p.12. <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>

³³⁹ Dr James Stewart, “The Treatment of Inebriety in the Higher and Educated Classes.” *Proceedings of the Society for the Study of Inebriety*, 19 (February 1889) 2-14, p.12.

³⁴⁰ Axel Gustafson, *The Foundation of Death: A Study of the Drink Question*. Boston: Ginn, Heath & Co, 1885, p.421. <http://www.archive.org/details/foundationdeath02gustgoog> Accessed June 2012.

³⁴¹ Shiman, *Crusade Against Drink in Victorian England*, p.105.

those that were “deemed likely to be receptive.”³⁴² Missionaries helped prisoners through the court process and upon release handed them over to a CETS branch in their own parish. A female CETS Police Court Mission auxiliary organisation was also set up, the Women’s Union, which employed female missionaries. Maurice Vanstone comments that the CETS’ minute books of 1889 demonstrate their enthusiasm for dealing with the problem of intemperance by giving grants to appoint missionaries and to set up shelter homes.³⁴³ *The Times* in 1892 published a letter by Mrs Temple of the Women’s Union Branch of CETS appealing for financial donations, clothing and orders for needlework for two homes for intemperate women. One was a shelter home where women could stay free of charge for three months and the other was a home where women could stay for two years and payment for accommodation was on a sliding scale according to means.³⁴⁴ As mentioned earlier, Bristol lacked a permanent shelter home for women, therefore, the Prison Court and Police Gate Mission in Bristol was keen to have their own permanent women’s shelter home as it was a “long-cherished desire of CETS Prison Gate Mission to secure a more convenient and commodious shelter.”³⁴⁵

Harold and Katharine Burden

Harold Burden came to Bristol in 1895 to take up an appointment as an employee of CETS and, starting in a small way with a Women’s Shelter Home in Bristol, he went on to become the leading authority, proprietor and provider of inebriate homes and mental deficiency colonies in England. His work was supported practically and financially by his wife Katharine and the couple worked in partnership until her death in 1919. Harold Burden was to exert a remarkable local and national influence in the field of inebriety and mental deficiency. Bristol with its strong temperance movement and its long tradition of charity and ethos of reform made it an ideal centre to utilise the couple’s missionary fervour to reach habitual drunkards.

³⁴² Raymond Gard, “The First Probation Officers in England and Wales 1906-14.” *British Journal of Criminology*. 47.6 (2007) 938-954, p.939.

³⁴³ Maurice Vanstone, *Supervising Offenders in the Community: A History of Probation Theory and Practice*. Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2004, p.8.

³⁴⁴ “Ecclesiastical Intelligence.” *The Times*, 19 January 1892, p.5, col.D.

³⁴⁵ A letter by Edward Thomas to *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 1902, BRO 40359/B/8/1.

Harold Nelson Burden was born in 1860 in Hythe, Kent. His father, Thomas Burden, owned a prosperous grocery business in the Hythe area and the business was sufficiently prosperous to employ a grocer's assistant, a grocer's lad and two housemaids.³⁴⁶ However, the family's fortunes changed when Thomas died in 1872 leaving his wife to bring up three young children.³⁴⁷ Harold's mother sold the grocery business and lived on income from lands, houses, and interests.³⁴⁸ By the age of twenty-one Harold Burden was running his own business as a grazier, stock dealer, and dairyman, but after a few years the business failed and he was registered bankrupt. In 1886, the *London Gazette* published a receiving order in his name under the 1883 Bankruptcy Act and he underwent the humiliation of a public financial examination for bankruptcy in open court.³⁴⁹ The bankruptcy limited Harold's choice of future career as it disqualified him from election to the House of Commons, from holding office as a justice of the peace, mayor, alderman or councillor and guardian of the poor, as well as membership of various boards.³⁵⁰ It is paradoxical that in later years, Harold Burden became well known for the economic manner in which he ran his reformatories. Although Harold Burden's career choices were limited due to the bankruptcy, he found employment with the Police Court Mission as a missionary in the East End of London and whilst working there he met and married Katharine Garton, his first wife.

Katharine Mary Garton was born in Islington to John Henry Garton and Harriet Hall Radford in c1846. Katharine's grandfather, John Garton, was in partnership with a relative in Kingston-upon-Hull, Yorkshire, manufacturing snuff, tobacco, and dealing and selling cigars. In 1844 the partnership dissolved and the Garton family moved from Yorkshire to London. Katharine worked in the East End of London as a teacher, and assisted the social reformer Octavia Hill to provide housing for working class people. A letter

³⁴⁶ 1861 Census, RG9 Piece/Folio 554/114, p.12.

³⁴⁷ Death of Thomas Burden. September Quarter, 1872, District Elham, Vol. 2a page 523.
<http://www.freebmd.org.uk/>

³⁴⁸ 1881 Census, RG11 Piece/Folio 1014/16, p. 26.

³⁴⁹ *The London Gazette*, 16 November 1886, p.5568.

³⁵⁰ BPP *Bankruptcy Bill. Copy of Memorandum showing the General Effect of the Changes in the Law Proposed by the Bill*, pp.3-4; 1883 (85) LV.59.

written by Octavia Hill described Katharine as possessing a “quiet and gentle manner” and having “time to chat with people.”³⁵¹ Katharine’s family did not live in a fashionable part of London, and in all likelihood Katharine worked as a paid employee.

Whilst in London, Harold and Katharine visited the church of St Martin in the Fields to hear a sermon by the Bishop of Algoma, Canada. In his sermon, the Bishop appealed for missionaries to work in Canada to serve the growing number of immigrants that had settled there. The Bishop’s sermon had a profound effect on Harold and Katharine and inspired them to apply as missionary candidates.³⁵² They were accepted as missionaries and married on 26 September 1888, beginning the journey to Canada on their wedding day. Prior to their marriage, and before embarking for Canada, Harold Burden was ordained a deacon in the Church of England in September 1888 by letters of dimissory from the Bishop of Algoma.³⁵³ The move to Canada appears fortuitous for Harold, as it enabled him to leave any residual financial difficulties over his bankruptcy behind him in England and begin a new life in another country. Ordination gave the impression of trustworthiness, respectability, and integrity, which was reinforced by Harold’s newly acquired missionary status. Within a short time of his arrival in Canada he embarked on a fundraising campaign to build a new church. This was his first experience of fundraising for a large project and it proved a successful enterprise. Harold was ordained a parish priest on the 25 January 1891 by the Bishop of Algoma in St Marks Church, Elmsdale, Ontario, Canada.³⁵⁴ However, due to Harold’s ill health, and the deaths of their two infant children, the Burdens left Canada and returned to England after only three years.

³⁵¹ Letter from Octavia Hill in Joze Jancar, *Research at Stoke Park: Mental Handicap (1930-1980. The Supplement to Stoke Park Studies*. Dorchester: Henry Ling Limited, Dorset Press, 1981. p.6.

³⁵² HNB (Harold Nelson Burden), *Life in Algoma, or, Three years of a Clergyman's Life and Church Work in that Diocese*. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1894 p.16.

³⁵³ “Ordinations.” *The Times*, 26 September 1888, p.13, col.C.

³⁵⁴ Certificate of Ordination for Harold Nelson Burden (1891) BRO 40686/HB/1.

On the couple's return to England Harold Burden obtained employment as curate of Holy Trinity Church, Shoreditch, London. This was an interesting and challenging position for Harold as he was curate to the eccentric and unorthodox minister, Arthur Osborn Jay, commonly known as Father Jay. Holy Trinity, Shoreditch, was situated in a notorious area of London, well known for crime and poverty. Working as a curate in the East End of London advanced Harold Burden's experience in dealing with drunkenness, crime and poverty. It seems likely that Harold Burden could have been influenced by Father Jay's fundraising methods. Sarah Wise in her book *The Blackest Streets* writes that in the basement of his church Father Jay had a gymnasium and a boxing ring installed and charged men one penny per week to use them as well as to play billiards, board games and drink lemonade, tea and coffee.³⁵⁵ At night, the basement of the church became a night shelter for those searching for work. Father Jay financed and equipped the gymnasium and night shelter by persuading people of power and influence such as the aristocracy and wealthy philanthropists to donate sums of money.³⁵⁶ Working as Father Jay's curate may have impressed upon Harold the importance of gaining the confidence and support of people of influence and wealth, especially the aristocracy. It is also interesting to note that Father Jay held controversial ideas on penal establishments for people who had not committed an offence against the law, but were considered possessed of a 'hereditary taint', in other words people on the borderland of insanity. Father Jay considered such people as "moral manic" and felt they should be placed in institutions away from cities.

...such a place would be the best home they had ever known, and in time it might be that poor creatures, acknowledging their own weakness, knowing the dreary bitterness of the past, would gladly, many of them, be put where they would lose some liberty, but gain a better and perhaps a happier life.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁵ Sarah Wise, *The Blackest Streets: The Life and Death of a Victorian Slum*. London: Vintage, 2009, p.196.

³⁵⁶ Wise, *The Blackest Streets*, pp.190-221.

³⁵⁷ "A New Scheme by the Rev. Osborne Jay, a Militant Bethnal Green Parson, for Sending the Submerged to a Penal Settlement." *The London*, 12 March 1896. THHOL (Tower Hamlets History Online) <http://www.mernick.org.uk/thhol/survunfi.html> Accessed September 2011.

Father Jay considered that these institutions should be situated in healthy country areas and would be single sex establishments; people should be housed in comfortable conditions and paid for any work they carried out.³⁵⁸ The institutions Father Jay described, away from cities and in healthy surroundings where the sexes were separated, were not dissimilar to the inebriate reformatories that Harold Burden later created, owned, and maintained. In Harold Burden's inebriate reformatories, females and males were segregated, housed in semi rural surroundings, and provided with wholesome food and clean clothing.

Although Father Jay's ideas were radical he was not alone since other reformers in the 1880s had similar radical ideas. For example, William Booth of the Salvation Army advocated colonies to eradicate pauperism and drunkenness.³⁵⁹ In 1889, Charles Booth proposed to remove the poor of East London who lived on casual earnings to colonies, which would benefit them and society. The workers were to be well fed, warm and work for themselves, or for the government.³⁶⁰ John Brown notes that, "Booth showed that the causes of distress were low wages and irregular employment rather than drunkenness or thriftlessness, and that almost one-third of the population seemed inflexibly condemned to poverty."³⁶¹ The Rev Samuel Barnett believed that, to relieve poverty, educated men should be involved with the poor on a practical basis. He established University Settlements where young male graduates worked and lived amongst the poor to understand their needs.³⁶²

Many of Father Jay's ideas seem to have found an outlet in Harold Burden's future inebriety work, although there is no record that Harold Burden referred to the influence of Father Jay in his life. It is also interesting to note that Father

³⁵⁸ Wise, *The Blackest Streets*, p.220.

³⁵⁹ William Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*. (this Etext comes from the 1890 1st ed. pub. The Salvation Army) Project Gutenberg. <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/475> Accessed September 2011.

³⁶⁰ John Brown, "Charles Booth and Labour Colonies, 1889-1905." *The Economic History Review*, 21.2 (August 1968) 349-360, p.351.

³⁶¹ Brown, "Charles Booth and Labour Colonies", pp.351-2.

³⁶² See Katharine Marie Bradley, "Poverty and Philanthropy in East London 1918 – 1959: The University Settlements and the Urban Working Classes." PhD Thesis. University of London. (2006).

Jay and Harold Burden shared certain personal characteristics, including great energy and enthusiasm, but were autocratic and difficult to work with. This is significant as Harold Burden was protective of his authority and jealous of his right to act without consulting others, which caused difficulties in his future employment.

In 1893, Harold Burden resigned his position of curate at Holy Trinity, Shoreditch to study for a degree at Ayerst Hostel, Cambridge.³⁶³ Ayerst was a college established for men who could not afford college fees and had to earn a living. During this time Harold also worked as a curate at Milton, Cambridgeshire, and as chaplain of St Catherine's College, Cambridge from 1893-1895.³⁶⁴ The chaplaincy at St Catherine's College gave Harold prestige and status. In addition, he was "admitted to the Barbers' Company in London in 1893 and later joined other City Livery Companies such as the Shipwrights, the Cutlers, the Masons, and was an honorary member of the Knights of the Round Table."³⁶⁵ As a member of these establishments, Harold Burden was likely to have made influential friends and gained influential supporters. In 1895, he accepted the position of clerical secretary to the Church of England Temperance Society and with his wife, Katharine, moved to Bristol. The work in Bristol needed someone with initiative, energy and fundraising abilities so the society could pay off any debts and stay debt free. Soon after his arrival in Bristol he was appointed honorary secretary of the Police Court Mission, and chaplain of Horfield Prison. Harold's previous experience as a missionary in Canada and skills in fundraising made him an excellent candidate and choice for the job. In addition, he would have gained experience working amongst habitual drunkards, petty criminals, the mentally ill, and the socially deviant through his work as Father Jay's curate. He was, therefore, in a position to bring a great deal of knowledge and experience about drunkenness and the role it played in crime and poverty to his new employment in Bristol. According to the *Bristol Mercury*, Harold came to Bristol to work in a job for which he was

³⁶³ Jancar, *Research at Stoke Park*, p.1.

³⁶⁴ Cambridge University Alumni, 1261-1900. Ancestry co.uk.

³⁶⁵ Jancar, *Research at Stoke Park*, p.3.

eminently suited and “he threw himself into a movement so congenial, and for which he was admirably fitted...”³⁶⁶

Harold and Katharine Burden worked as a partnership, although Katharine stayed quietly in the background. During their time in Canada, Katharine was integral to Harold’s missionary work. In a book Harold wrote in 1894 about his work in Canada, he quotes a Canadian parishioner saying, “Supposing God had called your wife what would you have done? What would the Church here do just now without her?”³⁶⁷ It is clear that Harold’s Canadian parishioners held Katharine in high esteem because of her hard work for the benefit of others. Katharine and Harold Burden’s infant children died in Canada and the couple had no further children, therefore, Katharine was free to pursue her work alongside her husband. The Burdens were part of a trend in couples that worked in partnership together and demonstrated how women were active in dealing with social issues despite the ‘Victorian Ideal of domestic women, but perhaps less publicly. Mrs Mary Muller worked together with her husband George in his Orphan Asylum at Ashley Down, Bristol. Mrs Muller was married over thirty-nine years and during that time she worked alongside her husband as a pastor’s wife in Plymouth and then in Bristol. George Muller stated that his wife “in the fullest way joined in the work among the children of God” and “died in harness” working for the orphanage.³⁶⁸ William and Catherine Booth of the Salvation Army also worked in partnership, although Catherine was a more prominent figure than Mrs Muller and Katharine Burden. Catherine published articles, spoke in public, and she was known by Salvationists as the ‘Army Mother’.³⁶⁹ Sidney and Beatrice Webb were economists, socialists and also worked together to achieve their political ambitions.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁶ A letter by Edward Thomas to *Bristol Mercury & Daily Post*, circa 1902, BRO 40359/B/8/1.

³⁶⁷ HNB, *Life in Algoma*, p.83.

³⁶⁸ “The Funeral of Mrs Geo. Muller.” *Bristol Mercury & Daily Post*, 12 February 1870, p.8.

³⁶⁹ Mrs J. B. Mawer, “Illustrious Women, Married and Single.” *The Woman's Signal*, Issue 128, 11 June 1896, p. 373.

³⁷⁰ See Sidney and Beatrice Webb, “Industrial Democracy”. *The Women's Trades Union Review*, 29 (1 April 1898) p.16.

The Burdens' missionary initiative: The Women's Shelter Home, Bristol

In November of 1895, Harold Burden was introduced as clerical secretary of CETS at their annual festival in Bristol attended by bishops and many other dignitaries of the Church of England.³⁷¹ In April 1896, a report to the annual meeting of the Bristol Police Court and Prison Gate Mission stated that the mission had interviewed 1579 discharged prisoners at the prison gate, 1501 of them were given a free breakfast, 701 were visited in their own homes, and 1500 charged at the police courts had been given counsel and help. However, the support from the parishes only amounted to £104.14s, which was described as inadequate.³⁷² *The Bristol Mercury* reported that Harold Burden stated that there was not enough money to maintain the work of the Bristol mission and they only had enough funds to cover the salaries of the rescue agents and the caretaker of the temporary rescue shelter. Most of the costs had been borne by CETS, which he considered was unsatisfactory because it depleted CETS funds.³⁷³ (Details of the temporary shelter have not survived; therefore, it is not known how long the shelter was in operation, where it was situated and how many agents it employed.) Harold Burden went on to say that the greatest need was the “re-establishment on a permanent basis of the shelter home for homeless inebriates and other women, who were not ‘fallen women’.” Many of these women came under the notice of the Mission at the police court, prison gate, or during visits of the missionaries in the parishes of our city”.³⁷⁴ Harold Burden proposed that a shelter should be re-established and suitable premises procured and owned by the Police Court and Prison Gate Mission. The sum needed was estimated at £600. This was an ambitious statement for Harold to make as the mission's balance in hand stood at only £1. 2s. 4d.³⁷⁵ It was suggested that an urgent fundraising campaign should be put before the “charitable public” for a permanent shelter home, and the sum needed must be raised quickly. The treasurer of the Police Court and Prison Gate Mission gave his support to the project and said that this was the “first time for many years

³⁷¹ “Church Temperance Work.” *Bristol Mercury & Daily Post*, 23 November 1895, p.6.

³⁷² “Bristol Prison Gate Mission.” *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 23 April 1896, p.3.

³⁷³ “Bristol Prison Gate Mission.” *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 23 April 1896, p.3.

³⁷⁴ “Bristol Prison Gate Mission.” *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 23 April 1896, p.3.

³⁷⁵ “Bristol Prison Gate Mission.” *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 23 April 1896, p.3.

that even a very small balance on the right side had been secured” and this was all due to the efforts of the clerical secretary, Harold Burden. The Mayor of Bristol, Mr Howell Davies, proposed a resolution “to collect the funds to purchase or erect suitable premises and to establish a women’s shelter home therein.” The resolution was passed and a committee formed.³⁷⁶ Mr Howell Davies also pointed out that there was a great deal less drunkenness in Bristol than in many other cities but the figures were still unsatisfactory because drunkenness and all the evils associated with it were still prevalent. Women drunkards, because of their status as home/family makers appear to have been viewed with revulsion and treated harshly when they came before magistrates in court.³⁷⁷ The Clerk to the Magistrates in Bristol, Mr T Holmes Gore, a witness to the 1896 Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing Laws, commented that magistrates (severely) punished women drunkards if they were found “dead drunk.”³⁷⁸ He commented that some magistrates considered that women found dead drunk were “guilty of indecent conduct.”³⁷⁹ Mr Holmes Gore considered that despite Bristol having very few habitual drunkards, just two or three men and half a dozen women it was still worth legislating for habitual drunkards, especially women.

Evidence by Mr Holmes Gore to the 1896 Royal Commission demonstrates the serious concern of magistrates over women’s drinking habits and morality.

The *Bristol Mercury* reports that Mr Holmes Gore told the Royal Commission that he considered it was desirable for Bristol to have a home or retreat where habitual drunkards could be placed and work for their own livelihood.³⁸⁰

Harold Burden “threw himself heart and soul into the cause” to raise the money for the Women’s Shelter Home in Bristol.³⁸¹ One of the earliest fundraising events was a bazaar held in fashionable Whiteladies Road, Bristol, in 1896.

³⁷⁶ “Bristol Prison Gate Mission.” *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 23 April 1896, p.3.

³⁷⁷ Barton, “Wayward Girls and Wicked Women”, p.160

³⁷⁸ BPP *Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing Laws. First Report of the Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing Laws*, p.371; 1897 (C.8355) (C.3856) XXXIV.247, 253.

³⁷⁹ *Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing Laws*, p.363; (C.8355) (C.3856) XXXIV.247, 253.

³⁸⁰ “The Licensing Commission. Bristol evidence.” *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 6 August 1896.

³⁸¹ “Bristol Prison Gate Mission.” *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 23 April 1896, p.3.

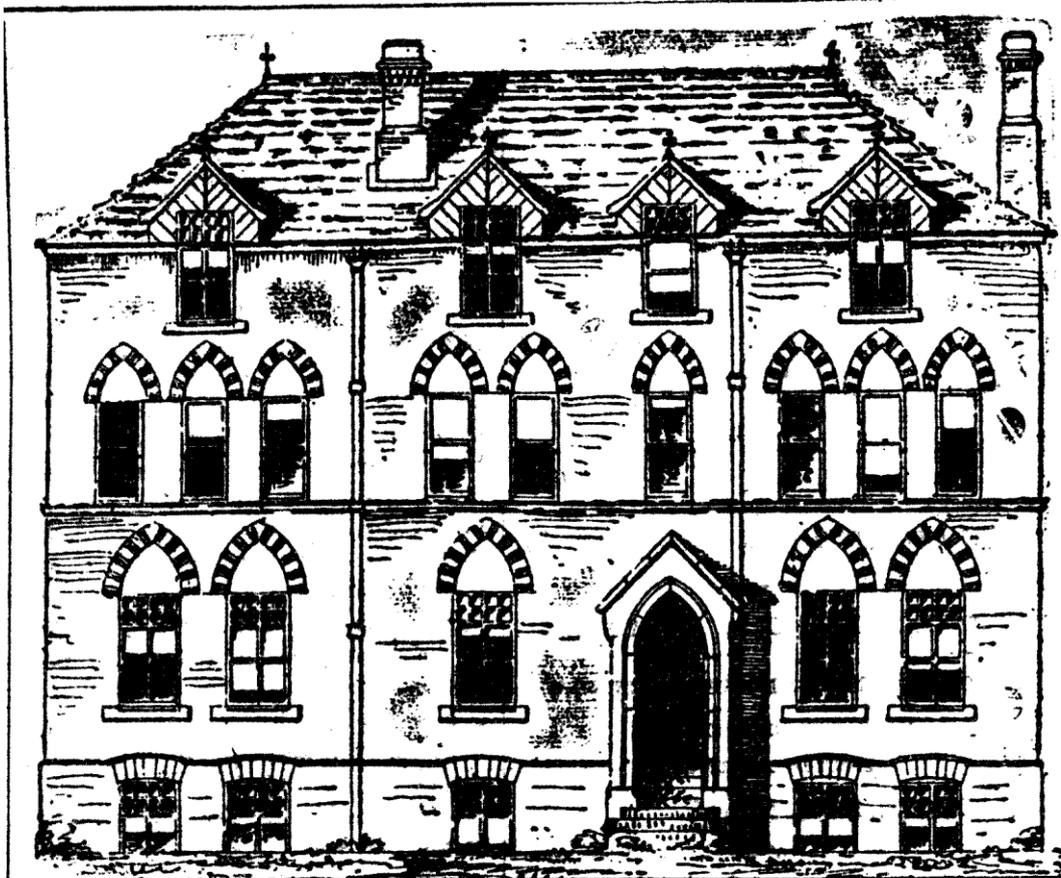
The bazaar was opened by the Mayoress of Bristol and offered various stalls, entertainments and a performance by the Bristol CETS choir.³⁸² Bazaars in the nineteenth century were a popular and profitable way for all social classes to raise money for their chosen charity. They were events which offered opportunities for women to become involved in charity work, gain confidence and demonstrate their compassion towards others. Moreover, they often brought people together on a non-sectarian and non-political basis. As Prochaska notes, "Clergymen of all persuasions, not without a touch of compromise, looked to them as a last resort to build a church or to enlarge a school or drawing-room".³⁸³

In October 1896, the *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post* published an illustration of the new shelter home in course of erection at the corner of Manor Road and Victoria Road, Horfield, just opposite Horfield Gaol.

³⁸² "Prison Gate Mission Bazaar." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 30 June 1896, p.6.

³⁸³ Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy*, p.47.

Figure 9: The Women's Shelter Home, Horfield, Bristol



PRISON GATE MISSION: WOMEN'S SHELTER HOME.

The Women's Shelter Home, of which the above is an illustration, is being erected by the Bristol Police Court and Prison Gate Mission for inebriate women and homeless discharged prisoners (other than unfortunates). The site of the Home is Manor road, opposite the Gaol at Horfield, and as soon as the premises, which will contain accommodation for twenty women, are ready for occupation, the magistrates will be asked to send to the Home women inebriates instead of committing them to prison. Until an Act of last session the permissive character of the Inebriates Acts of 1869 and 1882 rendered them practically a dead letter. In addition to inebriates, who will always be received at the Home, female prisoners with not more than three convictions against them will be sheltered, the Home aiming not only at reclaiming women who have already suffered imprisonment, but also at preventing the degradation of imprisonment falling upon inebriates. Such women while in the Home will be treated as patients for whom there is hope of recovery rather than as prisoners undergoing punishment. It may be added that the Prison Gate Mission works on unsectarian lines, and the Home will be open to all without question as to creed. The funds at the disposal of the committee will only allow them to put in hand a portion of the building at present, but when it is completed and outbuildings added, in which home industries can be carried on, it is hoped that the institution will be largely self-supporting.

Source: "Prison Gate Mission: Women's Shelter Home." *The Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 10 October 1896, p.6.

Even though the building work had started, the Bristol Police and Prison Gate Mission did not have the funds to complete it, therefore, fund raising efforts needed to continue. As a clergyman, Harold Burden was in a position to use invitations to preach and to use the pulpit to appeal for funds. For example, he preached at the Lord Mayor's Chapel during a civic visit in October 1896 and on

the 8 November preached in the morning at St Silas, in the afternoon at St Simon's, and in the evening at St Barnabas.³⁸⁴ Harold Burden's preaching engagements gave him access to influential wealthy local people whose friendship could be fostered to persuade them to give of their time and money. The links he made might also advance his own career and publicise his name amongst Bristol's elite. Meller suggests that "'Social citizenship' was the moral basis of the power of the elite in their philanthropic role. But the moral influence of members of the elite lay beyond their philanthropic work. It was based on religion."³⁸⁵ On the 8 November 1896 in a sermon in Bristol Cathedral attended by Bristol's civic dignitaries, Archdeacon Robeson expounded, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." Archdeacon Robeson commended Rev Harold Burden and stated many people considered the victims of drink hopeless but this was not the case "as the hard-working secretary of the Mission could prove."³⁸⁶ Archdeacon Robeson went on to say Harold Burden visited the police courts daily to give counsel, advice and sympathy, and help them start a new life. Within a short time of his arrival in Bristol Harold Burden had made a good impression and had gained an excellent reputation. He seemed to have had a talent for fundraising and used the opportunities at his disposal to persuade others to become involved in supporting the shelter home. Many of the city's justices of the peace pledged financial support for the venture, which demonstrated the high regard the Police Gate and Prison Gate Mission was held by the elite in Bristol and the work Harold Burden did amongst women drunkards.

At a meeting for the Women's Shelter Home in January 1897 at Clifton, Bristol, it was announced by the Chairman, Canon Cornish that in three months £1,000 had been raised. At that meeting, Harold Burden was described as having worked "unflaggingly".³⁸⁷ It was also suggested that the word "shelter" caused misunderstanding and as the home was situated in Victoria Road and it was

³⁸⁴ "Bristol Volunteer Diary." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 23 October 1896, p.5 and "Sunday Services." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 7 November 1896, p.4.

³⁸⁵ Meller, *Leisure and the Changing City*, p.77.

³⁸⁶ "Police Court & Prison Gate Mission: Special Sermons at the Cathedral." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 9 November 1896, p.7.

³⁸⁷ "Bristol Women's Shelter Home." *Bristol Times and Mirror*, 31 January 1897. Accessed through Ancestry.co.uk.

erected in the 60th year of Queen Victoria's reign, the name should be changed to the Victoria Home. The meeting reported that the two largest donors of the home would double the amount of their donation if the full amount was received by 23 April 1897 and the home was without debt. A notice appeared in the press in March by the Lord Mayor to raise £1,000 to pay for fixtures and fittings and "leave a small balance in hand towards the maintenance of inmates."³⁸⁸ A board of management for the home was elected consisting of a canon of Bristol Cathedral, six clergymen, seven justices of the peace, two colonels and eight women.³⁸⁹ Women were central to the fundraising for the shelter home. *The Bristol Times and Mirror* in January 1897 acknowledged the efforts of Mrs Tetley, members of the Women's Branch of the Police Court and Prison Gate Mission, Mrs Poynder, Mrs Chapman, and Miss Temple, "whose several labours have in a great measure brought about the success with which the work has been blessed."³⁹⁰

On the 6 April 1897, part of the premises of the Women's Shelter Home was licensed under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 and 1888 for ten inebriates with the Rev H N Burden and Mrs K Burden as licensees.³⁹¹ Harold Burden was appointed chaplain and secretary, and Katharine Burden, lady superintendent.³⁹² On 7 April 1897, the *Bristol Times and Mirror* announced that a letter from Queen Victoria had been received giving permission for the prefix "Royal" to be used and the home would be known as the Royal Victoria Home.³⁹³ The patrons of the Royal Victoria Home, Horfield (RVH Horfield) were the Duke and Duchess of Beaufort.

The *Bristol & Clifton Directory* for 1898 lists the home as:

- (i) a home for the treatment of inebriate women

³⁸⁸ "To the Citizens of Bristol." *Bristol Times and Mirror*, 20 March 1897, p.4

³⁸⁹ "Bristol Women's Shelter Home." *Bristol Times and Mirror*, 31 January 1897.

³⁹⁰ "Bristol Women's Shelter Home." *Bristol Times and Mirror*, 31 January 1897.

³⁹¹ BPP *Eighteenth Report of the Inspector of Retreats under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 and 1888, for the year 1897 with Appendix*, p. 11; 1898 (C.8997) XIV.403.

³⁹² "Private Asylums." *Bristol Times and Mirror*, 7 April 1897. Accessed through Ancestry.co.uk.

³⁹³ "Private Asylums." *Bristol Times and Mirror*, 7 April 1897.

- (ii) a place of detention for well conducted female convicts
- (iii) a home to which magistrates may send hopeful female offenders instead of prison
- (iv) a home for women whose alleged offence is of so trivial a nature as to render a prosecution undesirable
- (v) a home for hopeful female discharged prisoners.³⁹⁴

The Royal Victoria Home consisted of the main building and two wings. In the west wing were the living quarters of Harold and Katharine Burden, a chapel, laundry, workrooms, and hospital ward. The building was four storeys high and the main building was used to accommodate female inebriates admitted under the Habitual Drunkards Acts, 1879 and 1888.³⁹⁵ Presumably, the East wing was used for female discharged prisoners. These were women whose “history before and after conviction showed them to be suitable for clemency...and a wing was added to the home for their reception.”³⁹⁶ The house staff consisted of six resident and six non-resident officers, including a warden, chaplain, four consulting physicians, two medical officers, a lady superintendent, and three matrons, assisted by associates, all of whom were the daughters of clergymen or medical men. Patients were received for periods of not less than three and no more than twelve months.³⁹⁷

The building was a substantial villa set in a corner plot and seems to have been deliberately designed to look un-prison like to emphasise that inmates were to be treated as patients rather than prisoners. The home was comfortably equipped with modern conveniences and furniture, which again reinforced the notion that the home was a refuge and shelter, not a prison. The Golden Lion Public House adjoined the stables at the back of the building, which might have been thought rather strange for a shelter set up by a temperance organisation. However, the home’s location across the road from Horfield Gaol ensured

³⁹⁴ *J Wright & Co’s Bristol & Clifton Directory*, 1898. Bristol: John Wright & Company, p.718.

³⁹⁵ “Notices: The Inebriates Acts 1879 & 1888.” *The Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 22 March 1898, p.4.

³⁹⁶ Joze Jancar, “Sketches from the History of Psychiatry. The Burdens – Pioneers in Mental Health.” *Psychiatric Bulletin*, 13 (1989) 552-555, p.554.

³⁹⁷ *Kelly’s Directory. UK City and County Directories*, 1600-1900s, Gloucestershire, 1897. Bristol: John Wright & Co, p.15.

prisoners recently released could be met at the prison gates and walk the short distance to the home before encountering the temptation of a public house.

The Royal Victoria Home, Horfield

At the time of opening RVH Horfield was the only “public or charitable institution in the United Kingdom, built and established chiefly for the reception and treatment of inebriate women...”³⁹⁸ The home was intended for people whose friends and family could only afford a small sum towards care and those who were described as “criminal Inebriates.”³⁹⁹ The home endeavoured to help female inebriates and young women considered in moral danger to regain their self-respect and lead temperate, respectable lives.

The home attempted to train the married women to be better housewives and the unmarried women for domestic service. The ideology of the time was that domesticity and usefulness automatically led to self-respect and temperate habits. The women were taught practical skills such as basket weaving, doll making, wooden toy making, clothing, and needlework, so that they would be able to earn their living upon release. Visits from friends and family could take place on Saturdays between 2.30 and 4.30pm.⁴⁰⁰ However, if the licensees thought that a visit by a friend or family member was “prejudicial” to an inmate’s treatment and recovery, they had the power to “prohibit the visit.” Such refusals by licensees had to be recorded together with the reason for the refusal and a copy was then sent to the Inspector of Retreats within twenty-four hours.⁴⁰¹ In addition, if the licensees considered it necessary, visits by the opposite sex were carried out “in the presence of an official or attendant of the retreat.”⁴⁰² In a report of a sale of work in the *Bristol Mercury* dated May 12 1898, Harold Burden remarked that, “no matter how many cases might be waiting for admission, preference was always given to persons residing in Bristol.”⁴⁰³ As

³⁹⁸ *Eighteenth Report of the Inspector of Retreats, 1897*, p.9; (C.8997) XIV.403.

³⁹⁹ *Eighteenth Report of the Inspector of Retreats, 1897*, p.9; (C.8997) XIV.403.

⁴⁰⁰ *Bristol & Clifton Directory 1898*, p.78.

⁴⁰¹ *Eighteenth Report of the Inspector of Retreats, 1897*, p.13; (C.8997) XIV.403.

⁴⁰² *Eighteenth Report of the Inspector of Retreats, 1897*, p.13; (C.8997) XIV.403.

⁴⁰³ “Talk of St Stephens: House of Commons Wednesday.” *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 12 May 1898, p.6.

few records survive for RVH Horfield, it is unclear whether in practice Bristol women were given priority over women from other parts of the country. Possibly economics rather than geographical area actually dictated the women that were offered priority places at the home. Nonetheless, the published intention of the home was to give preference to Bristol women and this probably encouraged local Bristol people to support the home financially. The home was supported by the Duke and Duchess of Beaufort, the Duchess of Bedford, the Countess of Dudley, Lady Battersea and many others.⁴⁰⁴

The home housed two types of inmates: prisoners who were transferred to Horfield because they had behaved well in prison and whose sentences had not yet expired, and inebriates whose fees were paid by charity, family or friends. The prisoners in the home were maintained by a grant from the government and if their good behaviour continued, they were allowed to forego the last quarter of their sentence.⁴⁰⁵ The income from the state for the maintenance of the convicts probably helped keep the inebriate side of RVH Horfield afloat, and contributed to the maintenance and extension of the home's building.

Admission or discharge records have not survived for any of the convicts accommodated at the home. The only evidence of their presence is through newspaper reports and parliamentary papers. *Hansard* records that under the Prevention of Crimes Act, 1871 (licence with special conditions) "Mary Ann Sprackland, a Convict under detention in Aylesbury Prison" was permitted to be at large, on condition that she entered the Royal Victoria Home, Horfield, Bristol.⁴⁰⁶ Women convicts and inebriates were segregated and only limited contact was possible. It is likely that inebriates were separated from prisoners because women convicts might entice inebriates into crime and immorality. In addition, the charities, families, or friends that paid the fees of inebriates in the home might have been unwilling to pay if they thought inebriates were in

⁴⁰⁴ Printed letterhead of circular letter from Harold Burden dated 18 November 1898. Bristol Reference Library 3219-22.

⁴⁰⁵ *Bristol Times and Mirror*, 24 October 1897. Accessed through Ancestry.co. uk.

⁴⁰⁶ *Hansard*. "Prevention of Crimes Act, 1871. (Licence with Special Conditions.)" HC Deb, 03 August 1898, 63 c1025. <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1898/aug/03/prevention-of-crimes-act-1871-licence> Accessed 4 September 2011

contact with criminals. Inebriates were also allowed greater freedom and privileges than the convicts and required less supervision.

RVH Horfield was described by the Government Inspector of Retreats appointed under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 and 1888 as a “national Institution.” Therefore, whilst the home was situated in Bristol and was financed by Bristol dignitaries, it was never intended to be solely a local institution. Further, although the home was the initiative of CETS and the Police Court and Prison Gate Mission, it admitted women of all creeds or places of residence.

Figure 10: Details of the women inebriates at RVH, Horfield, 1896

<i>Periods for which Patients have entered:—</i>				<i>Religion:—</i>			
Entered for 12 months ...	...	9	Protestant ...	...	...	8
" 6 " ...	...	3	Roman Catholic...	...	...	4
		<u>12</u>				<u>12</u>	
<i>Age:—</i>				<i>Education:—</i>			
Between 20 and 25 years	...	5	Very good	...	...	2
" 30 and 35 "	...	4	Good	...	...	2
" 40 and 45 "	...	1	Fair	...	...	4
" 45 and 50 "	...	2	Elementary	...	...	4
		<u>12</u>				<u>12</u>	
<i>Marriage:—</i>							
Single ...	...	6	General servants	...	...	2
Married ...	...	2	Laundresses	...	...	2
Widowed	...	4	Tailoress...	...	...	1
		<u>12</u>	Gloveress	...	...	1
			Corset maker	...	...	1
			Paper-bag maker	...	...	1
						<u>12</u>	
<i>Occupation:—</i>				<i>Discharged:—</i>			
Clergyman's daughter	...	1	Efflux of time	...	...	2
Housekeeper	...	1					
Housemaids	...	2					

Source: BPP *Eighteenth Report of the Inspector of Retreats under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 and 1888, for the year 1897 with Appendix, p.9, 1898 (C.8997) XIV.403.*

From the details given in the Eighteenth Report of the Inspector of Retreats, the women admitted to RVH Horfield were respectable working women, which is in accordance with the home's policy of refusing to accept 'fallen women'. Barton notes that it was difficult to differentiate because "prostitutes were often labelled

alcoholics and (vice versa)".⁴⁰⁷ All the women except for a clergyman's daughter could be described as working class and most of them had been employed.

From the outset RVH Horfield was a successful enterprise in terms of numbers. At the end of December 1897 all ten places were occupied and in 1898 a hundred cases were waiting to be admitted.⁴⁰⁸ Whether the women on the waiting list were Bristol women is uncertain. The *Bristol Times and Mirror* reported that this success was due to the "self denying efforts" of Harold and Katharine Burden, the warden and his wife, who lived at the home and had responsibility for the daily lives of the people in their charge.⁴⁰⁹ To cope with the demand for places at RVH Horfield additions were made to the buildings to accommodate a greater number of women, but the additions proved insufficient. When the Inebriates Act, 1898 was passed the RVH Horfield premises were inadequate, as they did not have enough land to extend the accommodation and meet the requirements of the Act. The accommodation, therefore, was not enough to support the expected numbers of women to be sent by the courts under the Inebriates Act, 1898. If the work was to develop new premises and funding was needed. The passing of the Inebriates Act was the impetus Harold and Katharine Burden needed to seek new premises to expand the work with inebriates.

Conclusion

Bristol was an important city in the history of inebriate institutions; it was the location of the first charitable institution for inebriates in England. It could be assumed that Bristol, with its large number of public houses per head of the population had a considerable problem with drunkenness and this was the reason Bristol was a pioneering city in this field. However, this was not the case, and Bristol's problems with drunkenness were no worse than many other cities with a similar population. Nevertheless, in the 1870s and 1880s, anxiety from magistrates and the public over the numbers of drunkards dealt with by

⁴⁰⁷ Barton, "Wayward Girls and Wicked Women", p.160.

⁴⁰⁸ "Talk of St Stephens: House of Commons Wednesday." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 12 May 1898, p6.

⁴⁰⁹ *The Bristol Times and Mirror*, 24 October 1897. Accessed through Ancestry.co.uk.

magistrates, the inadequacy of short prison sentences, and the small fines charged, gathered momentum, both locally and nationally. At the annual meeting of CETS at Lambeth Palace in 1883, Archbishop Benson raised the question of whether it was useful to provide decent housing for the poor if they were not taught to be temperate. He believed that, “We must drive out the Spirit of Drink by the Spirit of the gospel.”⁴¹⁰ To combat the problem of drunkenness, in 1883, CETS called for a resident organising agent to be sent out to every diocese and for police court missionaries to continue their work rescuing inebriates.⁴¹¹ Women recidivist drunkards were singled out as a particular cause for concern. In a report on the working of the male inebriate institution, the Dalrymple Home, the temperance reformer, Dr Norman Kerr, stated that despite the success of the Dalrymple home he regretted not having the funds to create a female refuge.⁴¹²

In Bristol, temperance and philanthropy had a long tradition, which often crossed denominational and ideological boundaries in a humanitarian effort to improve the lives of working class and poor people. CETS and the Police Court and Prison Gate Mission considered a permanent female inebriate institution was urgently needed within the city and the Women’s Shelter Home (RVH Horfield) which was licensed under the Inebriates Act, 1879 and 1888, was the result of the energy and enthusiasm of CETS and Harold Burden together with Bristol’s tradition of temperance and philanthropy. This chapter has demonstrated the importance of the individual and philanthropy in implementing inebriate legislation locally through focusing on the Royal Victoria Home, Horfield. In addition, through looking at the Burdens the chapter has highlighted that some husbands and wives worked in partnership to achieve their goals. RVH Horfield, employed Harold Burden as Warden and Katharine Burden as Lady Superintendent, and the institution became a significant component in the Burdens’ future network of inebriate reformatories, which were established throughout England.

⁴¹⁰ Gustafson, *The Foundation of Death*, p.421.

⁴¹¹ Gustafson, *The Foundation of Death*, p.421.

⁴¹² Dr Norman Kerr cited in Gustafson, *The Foundation of Death*, p.375.

Chapter 4: The Royal Victoria Home, Brentry

Introduction

This chapter considers the impact of opening an inebriate institution under the Inebriates Act, 1898 with mixed funding from the state, local authorities and voluntary sectors. Through a case study of one institution, RVH Brentry, a number of different issues can be examined such as the problems, confusions and benefits encountered by various sectors working together in a joint venture. The chapter also investigates the management of inebriate homes and how some women combined their Christian faith, family and church responsibilities with their role in managing a large reformatory. In addition, the everyday regime of a certified inebriate reformatory and the aftercare of its inmates are also examined.

RVH Brentry was created as an extension of RVH Horfield, but the Brentry institution was set up on a very different premise to the Horfield institution. RVH Horfield was a charity and was wholly funded by voluntary subscriptions. RVH Brentry, on the other hand, was funded by local councils that purchased an agreed number of beds in the Brentry institution to accommodate habitual drunkards. A per capita grant was also paid by central government for the maintenance costs of inebriates sent by the courts to certified inebriate reformatories. Despite the disparity in the way RVH Horfield and RVH Brentry were financed, both institutions worked in partnership under the name of the Royal Victoria Homes (Near Bristol), or separately as RVH Horfield and RVH Brentry. Harold Burden was appointed warden of the Royal Victoria Homes and his wife, Katharine Burden, lady superintendent. However, the partnership of the two institutions caused confusion, which eventually led to the closure of RVH Horfield. After Horfield closed Brentry continued to operate but with a different management structure and a new name, the Brentry Certified Inebriate Reformatory. This chapter examines the creation of RVH Brentry, some of the financial problems encountered, its regime, and the aftercare provided for inmates.

The emergence of the Royal Victoria Home, Brentry

The Royal Victoria Home, Brentry emerged as the result of the Inebriates Act, 1898. As mentioned in Chapter 1, this allowed for the establishment of both certified inebriate reformatories and state inebriate reformatories. The certified inebriate reformatories catered for people coming before the courts for drunken offences and habitual drunkards who neglected or were cruel to their children. Crimes of a serious or violent nature where drunkenness was a significant component were catered for in a state inebriate reformatory. Habitual drunkards charged under the 1898 Act could be sent direct from the courts to certified or state reformatories. State inebriate reformatories were to be under the control of the Prison Commissioners. Reformatories set up by councils, consortiums, or philanthropic individuals or organisations were to be certified by the state and inspected periodically by a government inspector. As Alan Kidd has argued, the state became involved in areas that until the 1880s and 1890s had been the domain of the voluntary sector.⁴¹³ He suggests that in the nineteenth century charity occupied a leading place rather than a subordinate place in state welfare.⁴¹⁴ Thus, a new kind of partnership emerged between voluntary welfare services and the state, a partnership that worked together instead of working separately.⁴¹⁵ This was recognised at the time by Benjamin Kirkman Gray. Writing in 1908 he described inebriate homes as a co-ordinated work between state and philanthropy. "Philanthropy does something and the State does something."⁴¹⁶ Gray considered inebriate homes were an illustration of this new kind of partnership between state and voluntary agencies.⁴¹⁷ The emergence of the RVH homes was a practical example of this new

⁴¹³ Alan Kidd, *State, Society and the Poor in Nineteenth-Century England*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1999, p.65.

⁴¹⁴ Kidd, *State, Society and the Poor in Nineteenth-Century England*, p.65.

⁴¹⁵ Bernard Harris, "Voluntary Action and the State in Historical Perspective." *Voluntary Sector Review*, 1.1 (2010) 25-40, p.36. Harris criticised the idea of separate spheres in respect of the state and the voluntary sector and suggested that there was a mixed economy of welfare between the state and private individuals. Harris deemed that the voluntary sector did not merely plug the holes left by legislation.

⁴¹⁶ Benjamin Kirkman Gray, *Philanthropy and the State, or Social Politics*. Westminster: P.S. King & Son, 1908, p.132. <http://www.archive.org/details/philanthropystat00grayuoft> Accessed 26 February 2012.

⁴¹⁷ Gray, *Philanthropy and the State*, p.191.

kind of partnership as it was the first inebriate institution that brought together state welfare, local council resources, and a charitable agency to deal with the problem of habitual drunkards.

Since RVH Horfield did not have the finances, land, or space to accommodate the expected numbers of inebriates sentenced under the 1898 Act at Horfield, Harold Burden conceived a plan to rent a suitable large property to operate as a certified inebriate reformatory and charge councils in England a fixed amount in return for beds. His plan was “to set up a reformatory in which councils bought what were effectively shares, so they were not frightened by having to put up large expenses.”⁴¹⁸

Harold Burden acquired a large estate located at Brentry a few miles from the centre of Bristol, which consisted of a large house set in eighty-nine acres of land.

On the 12 April 1898, a meeting was arranged by Harold Burden at the Guildhall, Westminster with Sir John E Dorrington MP, of Gloucestershire County Council in the chair and attended by eight representatives of county councils to enquire into whether the councils would be interested in contributing to this venture. Forty invitations were sent out to county councils, nineteen did not reply, ten declined and eleven said they hoped to attend the meeting.⁴¹⁹ The lack of a response denoted that the majority of councils were either indifferent or not interested in making provision for inebriates. Some council representatives felt Bristol was too far away from their own areas, but in the absence of a more conveniently situated institution, they agreed to support RVH Brentry. In reply to the point about distance, it was pointed out by the chairman that inmates would be admitted to the home for eighteen months to three years. Once the initial cost of transferring the inebriates to Bristol had been met there would be no further travelling expenses, as they would be detained in the reformatory. Representatives from several of the councils felt that any

⁴¹⁸ Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.21.

⁴¹⁹ RVH Brentry. Memorandum of Proceedings held on 12 April 1899. Bristol Reference Library, B31218.

council that contributed to RVH Brentry should have the option of taking over the institution if the management board decided to abandon it or was unable to continue.⁴²⁰ In September and October 1898, Harold Burden sent out a further circular letter to councils in England informing them of his plan to establish a reformatory and retreat under the 1898 Act.⁴²¹ As explained in Chapter 1 a licensed retreat admitted persons on a voluntary basis under the Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879. They had to admit before a magistrate(s) that they were habitual drunkards and state they wanted to enter a licensed inebriate institution of their own accord. They also had to pay their own costs or a sponsor had to pay the costs. In contrast, people admitted to certified inebriate reformatories were sent by the courts and detained in reformatories on a compulsory basis. Institutions could accommodate both types of inebriates, provided the government had approved the buildings to be used as a retreat or reformatory, and issued the appropriate documentation. In November 1898, Harold Burden sent councils details of the Brentry property with a covering letter.⁴²² In this letter, he stated that it had cost £20,000 to establish Brentry and asked for “contributions of £1,000 upwards from public bodies.” Harold Burden invited county and borough councils to pay £1,000 for ten reserved beds for inmates eligible for admission under the Inebriates Act. In addition, the letter stated that contributing councils were required to maintain each inmate admitted and the contract was to last for five years from December 1898. The Brentry board could not terminate a contract without the approval of the Secretary of State. After five years the contract could continue subject to six months notice by either party to terminate. If sufficient contributions were received from the councils for the management board to erect additional buildings, immediate arrangements would be made to accommodate larger numbers of inmates.⁴²³ Harold Burden’s intention of establishing Brentry as a national institution was illustrated in the header of his letter to the councils

⁴²⁰ RVH Brentry. Memorandum of Proceedings held on 12 April 1899. Bristol Reference Library B31218.

⁴²¹ Letter sent by Harold Burden to the Councils in England dated 18 November 1898. Bristol Reference Library, B31219-22.

⁴²² Letter to the Councils 18 November 1898.

⁴²³ Letter to the Councils 18 November 1898.

as he described the Horfield institution as a “national institution for the reception of inebriates and others without question as to Creed.”⁴²⁴ He also emphasised that the work was approved by Queen Victoria and Her Government as well as “strongly and actively supported by the Duke and Duchess of Beaufort, the Duchess of Bedford, the Countess of Dudley, Lady Battersea and many others” and was the only home in the country built for this purpose.⁴²⁵ Clearly, Harold Burden considered that the use of royal and aristocratic names would lend credence and confidence to the proposed venture. In a footnote to his letter to the councils, Harold Burden had detailed the relevant clauses of the Inebriates Act, 1898 to remind them of their obligation to provide inebriate accommodation. A further public meeting was held in London in March 1899 and most of those attending the meeting were from temperance societies and other organisations such as the Refuge Union. At this meeting, a committee was appointed to raise funds to stimulate county councils to consider implementing the Act and to assist magistrates in providing information for dealing with cases under the 1898 Act.⁴²⁶ Harold Burden explained how RVH Horfield operated as a small charitable institution and commented that he felt to “effectively grapple with the evil there should be large national institutions, managed by persons thoroughly trained for the work, rather than a large number of small homes.”⁴²⁷ It is obvious from this statement that Harold Burden had ambitions that stretched beyond managing a small local organisation; he considered that a coordinated national solution to the problem was the way forward in dealing with inebriates. Harold Burden expected certified inebriate reformatories to be the principal solution for dealing with the problem of recidivist habitual drunkards.

RVH Brentry was granted a certificate to operate as a certified inebriate reformatory on the 30 March 1899.⁴²⁸ It was the first institution in England

⁴²⁴ Letter to the Councils 18 November 1898.

⁴²⁵ Letter to the Councils 18 November 1898.

⁴²⁶ “The Inebriates Act, 1898.” *The Times*, 15 March 1899, p.14, col.E.

⁴²⁷ “The Inebriates Act, 1898.” *The Times*, 15 March 1899, p.14, col.E.

⁴²⁸ “Inebriates Act, 1898.” *London Gazette*, 31 March 1899, p.2159.

to be certified as an inebriate reformatory under the 1898 Inebriates Act.⁴²⁹ Twenty-three councils had agreed to contribute to Brentry, twenty-one councils agreed to contribute £1000 for seven beds, and two councils, Birmingham and Bristol, agreed to contribute £2000 for fifteen beds.⁴³⁰ In addition, the sum of three shillings and sixpence per head per week was agreed by each authority as a maintenance charge for all cases committed from each of the council's districts.⁴³¹ RVH Horfield was considered too small to be used as a certified inebriate reformatory; therefore, it was certified as the reception house for Brentry for twenty-five females on 22 April 1899. The women were to stay in the reception house for a period of no longer than four weeks before their removal to the larger Brentry premises.⁴³²

RVH Brentry possessed 89 acres of land, which provided ample room for expansion if required. At a meeting of Gloucestershire County Council, it was stated that the Government required one acre of ground for every ten patients.⁴³³ Thus, Brentry's 89 acres could accommodate around 890 patients.⁴³⁴ The Brentry estate was situated in countryside three miles from Bristol, surrounded by good roads and only three miles from the railway station at Clifton. The Brentry mansion house was supported by an "Iconic colonnade" with a spacious interior and bedroom accommodation for seventy-two people. It was set in parkland and pasture almost totally enclosed in a ring fence. The outbuildings included a lodge, farmhouse, three other houses, as well as stables, sheds and barns for animals.⁴³⁵ RVH Brentry was designed to resemble as far as possible the rural ideal of a small remote English village, which contained its own mansion house, chapel, hospital, recreation rooms and workshops. Alcohol was unavailable within this 'ideal' village. Initially it was

⁴²⁹ "Homes for the Drunken." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 2 January 1899, p.6.

⁴³⁰ BPP *Inebriates Act, 1898. Return Showing the Number and Names, with Addresses, of State Reformatories Instituted, or About to be Instituted, under Section 3 of this Act, with the Number of Males or Females to be Accommodated in Each; &c*, p.3; 1900 (346) LXIX.187.

⁴³¹ *Inebriates Act, 1898. Return*, p.3; 1900 (346) LXIX.187.

⁴³² "Inebriates Act, 1898." *London Gazette*, 25 April 1899, p.2630.

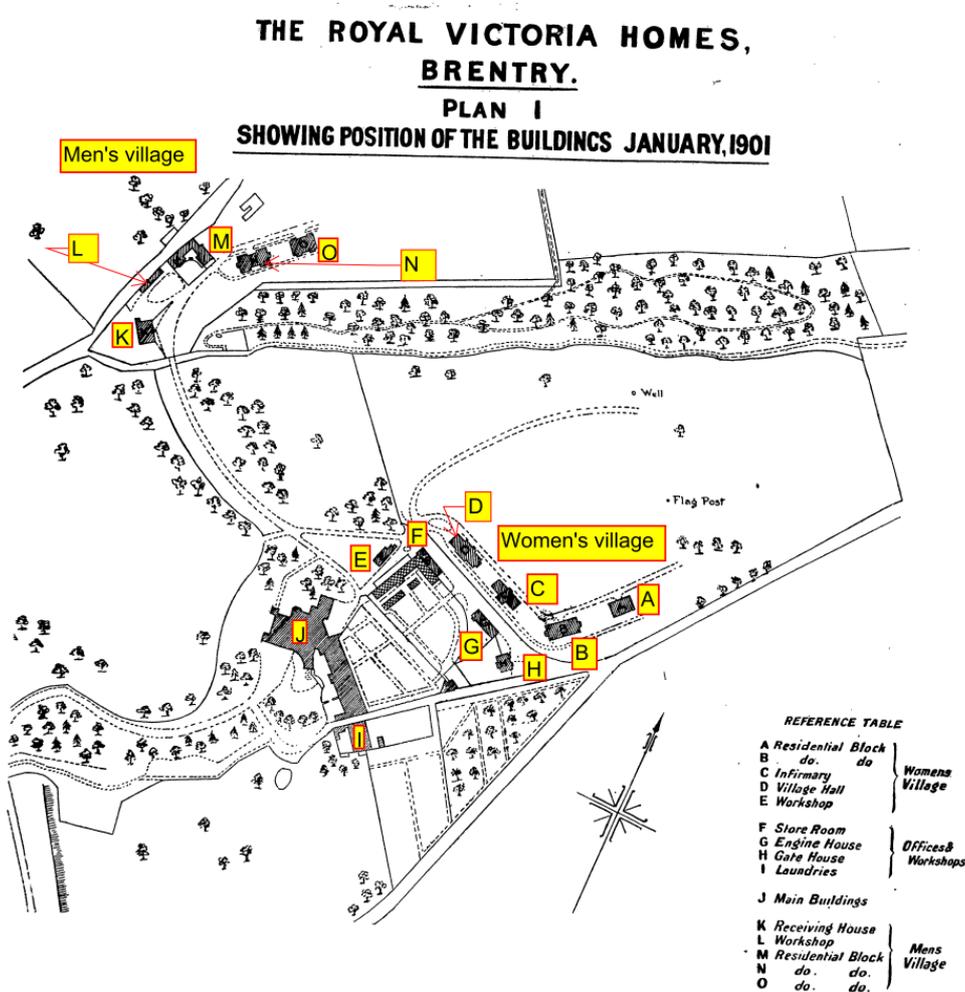
⁴³³ "Gloucester County Council." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 14 January 1899, p.6.

⁴³⁴ "Gloucester County Council." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 14 January 1899, p.6.

⁴³⁵ "Homes for the Drunken: Horfield and Brentry" *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 2 January 1899, p 6.

restricted to females only, but a second village was created for male inmates and the first male inmate was received on 6 February 1900.⁴³⁶ The agreement Harold Burden secured with the contributing councils had enabled him to extend RVH Horfield and convert buildings at RVH Brentry to accommodate males and build a receiving house for men. Although certificates were granted for males and females, the two sexes were housed in separate buildings in their own villages. The male and female villages at Brentry were hidden from each other by the natural geography and contours of the land and a strip of woodland obscured the two villages.

Figure 11: Plan of the RVH Brentry, 1901.



Source: Map adapted from Peter Carpenter, *A History of Brentry: House, Reformatory, Colony and Hospital*. Bristol: Friends of Glenside Hospital Museum, 2002, p.27 and BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1899 for the year 1900*, p.40; 1902 (Cd. 811) XII.599.

⁴³⁶ Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.24.

The property at Brentry was chosen because inmates sent from the courts could be removed from society to live in an enclosed community and abide by its rules. The social scientist Erving Goffman (1922-1982) made some interesting insights into institutions that might be applied to my study. In a series of essays, he described “total institutions” as places where like-minded individuals are accommodated and isolated from the wider society.⁴³⁷ Goffman’s notion of “total institutions” encompassed very different types of institutions set up to care for very different types of people, but all the institutions shared common characteristics. Most important was the inmates’ inability to engage in everyday social intercourse with the world outside because of physical barriers, for example, “locked doors, high walls, cliffs, water, forests, or moors.”⁴³⁸ This description is reminiscent of RVH Brentry because Brentry’s many acres of ground isolated the institution from the neighbouring village and city. Brentry also contained physical barriers such as fences and parkland, which ensured inmates were cut off from the outside world and were unable to interact with society. There was some interaction between the inmates and the residential staff, but this type of interaction was unequal. This is echoed in Goffman’s notion of total institutions as he states that as well as physical barriers in total institutions, there was a social divide between staff and inmates as staff interacted with inmates on a supervisory and management level rather than a social level.⁴³⁹ The key factor in Goffman’s notion of total institutions, and the one that is most reminiscent of inebriate reformatories, was the governance and organisation of a large group of people and the efforts made to deal with their human needs.

⁴³⁷ Goffman Erving, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd, 1961, p.11.

⁴³⁸ Goffman, *Asylums*, p.16.

⁴³⁹ Goffman, *Asylums*, p.18.

Figure 12: RVH Brentry, Nr. Bristol. View of the drive leading up to the main house



Source: *Forty Views of the Royal Victoria Homes, Brentry, Nr. Bristol* (undated c1901).
BRO 40686/B/BK/1.

Figure 13: RVH Brentry, Nr. Bristol. View of the grounds from the drive



Source: *Forty Views of the Royal Victoria Homes, Brentry, Nr. Bristol* (undated c1901).
BRO 40686/B/BK/1.

The Brentry property was initially rented then purchased with a mortgage by Harold Burden, the warden of the institution, and Mr Edward Thomas the honorary solicitor.⁴⁴⁰ A trust deed was drawn up to the effect that the venture was a joint undertaking between the management of the Royal Victoria Home (known as the promoters) and the councils that had agreed to contribute to the costs of the reformatory.⁴⁴¹ The property was then transferred from Harold Burden and Edward Thomas to twelve trustees, six from the promoters and six from the councils. RVH Horfield trustees included the wealthy confectioners, Lewis and Francis James Fry, the Bishop of Bristol, and Sir Michael Hicks Beach, the Chancellor of the Exchequer.⁴⁴² These were eminent members of Bristol elite who had a great deal of power over people's lives in various ways, the Fry's were one of the largest employers in Bristol, the Bishop was responsible for Bristol's Anglicans, laymen and clergy, whilst Sir Hicks Beach was a Conservative politician and British aristocrat. The management consisted of twelve members representing RVH Horfield and twelve representing the contributing councils. It was agreed that any future subscribing councils could also assign a nominee to the management board. The management board, therefore, consisted of nominees from RVH Horfield and nominees of the contributing councils. The chairman of this joint venture was Captain Belfield (1899-1902) a Horfield nominee. He was an active member of the Lawford's Gate Bench of Magistrates, a governor of Kingswood Reformatory for boys, Bristol, and a councillor for Mangotsfield and Winterbourne, near Bristol.⁴⁴³ He was well known and respected in the area and his previous experience as a governor of Kingswood Reformatory and as a magistrate made him an appropriate choice. Another board member was the Horfield nominee, Henry Fedden JP who had been instrumental in setting up the Bristol Training Ship, 'Formidable', in 1869, a training ship for destitute boys and boys in danger of falling into crime. Women were also represented on the board of management, for example, Mrs Howell Davies, the wife of a Bristol Mayor, William Howell Davies, the Liberal Member of Parliament and

⁴⁴⁰ "The Talk of Bristol." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 6 June 1899, p.8.

⁴⁴¹ Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.23.

⁴⁴² Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.23.

⁴⁴³ A B Freeman, *Bristol Worthies and Notable Residents Past and Present. 1st Series*. "Captain William Belfield, J.P." Bristol: Burleigh Ltd, 1907, p.89.

temperance campaigner. The minute books record that Mrs Howell Davies served on the buildings committee and she was made a life member of RVH in 1900.⁴⁴⁴ The most active woman on the management board was Katherine Robinson, the daughter of F W Gotch the president of Bristol Baptist College and the wife of Edward Robinson, the son of Elisha Robinson, the wealthy Bristol paper bag manufacturer. Katherine was not involved in political organisations nor did she use the skills she had acquired in philanthropic work as a stepping-stone to political campaigning, but she preferred to work for the Baptist church, the Baptist Missionary Society and temperance activities. Edward and Katherine were financial supporters of Bristol Baptist College, Tyndale Baptist Church, Bristol, and other local charitable causes. A description of Edward and Katherine's marriage in a booklet published for the centenary of Tyndale Baptist Church states that Edward Robinson was a man devoted to Christian service, which was expressed through schemes of welfare, profit sharing, pensions and holidays for his employees. His wife, Katherine, "shared fully in all his interests and activities; making her own gracious contribution also both in the family life and hospitality in the home and in her friendly activities among the churches."⁴⁴⁵ Katherine Robinson continued to serve on the management board after RVH Horfield closed and RVH Brentry was renamed Brentry Certified Inebriate Reformatory. She was a member of the Buildings and Visiting Committees, alongside her predominantly male colleagues, and was a powerful voice in how the institution was run. Katherine was elected honorary secretary of RVH Brentry in 1901.⁴⁴⁶ Within the framework of legislation, a great deal of autonomy was possible at a local level. Katherine was involved in decisions concerning extending the buildings; punishing inmates for misdemeanours; transferring inmates to the state inebriate reformatory or lunatic asylums; accepting inmates into the RVH Brentry; and hiring and dismissing staff. Professional middle class women working at local level could have a great deal of power and influence whether in local government or in the voluntary sector, for instance, as poor law guardians. As Patricia Hollis comments, there was a strong desire in some middle class

⁴⁴⁴ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 25 June 1900, p.2, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁴⁴⁵ *Tyndale Baptist Church, Bristol, 1896-1968*. Compiled by L. G. Champion, Principal of Bristol Baptist College, p.21.

⁴⁴⁶ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 25 March 1901, p.17, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

women with time on their hands to occupy their leisure hours by doing something worthwhile to serve the public.⁴⁴⁷ These women often lived in homes where servants took care of the domestic duties and looked after their children; therefore, they were looking for something useful to fill their time. Hollis notes that many women worked for various types of voluntary causes and visited the poor in their own homes, whilst others were engaged in public service.⁴⁴⁸ Katherine Robinson's role in managing RVH Horfield and Brentry illustrates there were other ways that wealthy middle-class women could do something useful and exert influence. Katherine is also an illustration that married women could be powerful without being involved in formal politics. She combined her Christian faith, family, and church responsibilities with her role in managing a large inebriate reformatory for men and women. Mrs Robinson was the wife of a very wealthy man and was part of Bristol's elite, therefore, the influence she exerted over working class inebriates was shaped by middle class notions of how the largely poor inebriates should live their lives. The values of hard work, respectability, and religion would be instilled in order to produce law-abiding useful citizens. Katherine worked in the male dominated sphere, nonetheless, the minute books of Brentry indicate that her opinions, decisions and contributions were respected, well informed, and valued by her male colleagues. This is demonstrated by her election to Hon. Secretary to the Homes for 1901.⁴⁴⁹

The considerable outlay in purchasing Brentry led to concerns by its management board over the possibility of competition from organisations that might create inebriate institutions in opposition to Brentry.⁴⁵⁰ In 1899, the board of management of RVH Brentry wrote to the Secretary of State for reassurance on the matter. The Secretary of State replied:

Sir, With reference to your letter of the 21st inst/. In which on behalf of the committee of the Royal Victoria Homes, Bristol, you asked that some assurance may be given that the

⁴⁴⁷ Patricia Hollis, *Ladies Elect: Women in English Local Government, 1865-1914*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987, p.4.

⁴⁴⁸ Hollis, *Ladies Elect, 1865-1914*, p.4.

⁴⁴⁹ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 25 March 1901, p.17, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁴⁵⁰ See "The Treatment of Inebriates." *London Daily News* 15 March 1899, p.3.

Homes which the Board are establishing under the Inebriates Act of 1898 may be protected from undue competition. I am directed by Secretary Sir Matthew Ridley to acquaint you that your representations will be carefully borne in mind; and that though he cannot admit the Board's right to a monopoly of any district, nor give any pledge on the parish they have brought to his notice, they may be best assured that he attaches much importance to the successful conduct and development of their Homes.⁴⁵¹

The management board sought this reassurance as Belfast, Birmingham and Yorkshire had investigated the possibility of creating their own reformatories. However, Belfast was too far away to be a serious competitor and Birmingham subsequently decided to cater for its inebriates by purchasing beds from Brentry. Yorkshire established a reformatory, but only for its own male cases. Perhaps the greatest threat was Lancashire as in 1900 a bill was passed that enabled councils in its geographical area to combine and borrow money to purchase land and erect male and female inebriate reformatories⁴⁵² Lancashire Council made temporary arrangements with Brentry for the reception of its cases. However, Lancashire decided to build only one inebriate reformatory for women, Langho Inebriate Reformatory, which was opened in 1904.⁴⁵³ Fears over competition proved groundless as the majority of public bodies or private individuals and conglomerates failed to establish reformatories and preferred to use the services of Brentry, which was the most economical solution.

In 1901 twenty-three councils had subscribed to RVH Brentry, and its board of management chiefly comprised of members from the subscribing councils, which made it an institution almost entirely controlled by public bodies.⁴⁵⁴ In addition, councils that did not subscribe to Brentry but were willing to pay the maintenance charges could accommodate inebriates convicted under section 2 of the Inebriates Act. A government grant paid for all criminal inebriates

⁴⁵¹ Royal Victoria Homes, Minutes of Visiting Committees 1898-1900, 3 February 1899, p13, BRO 40359/B/3/a.

⁴⁵² Hall, "Disorderly Acts" in Boran, ed. "*Crime: Fear or Fascination*", p.95.

⁴⁵³ BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1899, for the year 1900*, p.40; 1902 (Cd. 811) XII.599.

⁴⁵⁴ BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1899, for the year 1899*, p.33; 1901 (Cd.445) X.735.

committed under section 1 of the 1898 Act from any court in England and Wales. The management report for April 1901 stated:

The income of the Board is derived from monies received from the Government and County Councils, the amount to be received entirely depending upon the number of cases in the Homes, and the sum available after paying the cost of food and clothing for the cases in respect to which the monies are paid is in round figures about £20 per inmate per annum.⁴⁵⁵

By 1902, RVH Brentry was certified for 200 females and 111 males, and RVH Horfield was certified to retain its female inmates sent by the courts for three months.

It is not surprising that the close working arrangement between RVH Horfield, a charity, and RVH Brentry, an institution funded by public bodies, came to be questioned by the press and the financial donors of the Horfield charity. The close links between the two institutions and the way they were run as a joint venture caused confusion. The *Bristol Mercury* reported that any impression that RVH Brentry was a private institution was erroneous.⁴⁵⁶ At a Bristol City Council meeting in June 1899 Mr Elkins stated he felt contributing councils should have a clear majority on the committee to safeguard any problems that might arise. He thought it unfair that a few subscribers to a charity should have control over an institution supported by public money.⁴⁵⁷ In September 1899, Canon Tetley, a member of the RVH Horfield management board at a prestigious fund-raising event attended by her Grace the Duchess of Beaufort felt it necessary to explain that, "Their little Victoria Home at Horfield was not on the same footing" as Brentry.⁴⁵⁸ In addition, he remarked that the "Brentry Home was a public institution, but they [prospective contributors] must recollect that the Victoria Home was a charity, and was absolutely dependent on two sources of income – one from the charity of those supporting the home, and the

⁴⁵⁵ Minutes of the Board of Management 1898-1917, 29 April 1901, p.3, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁴⁵⁶ "Talk of Bristol." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 6 June 1899, p.8.

⁴⁵⁷ "The Home for Inebriates." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 14 June 1899, p.6.

⁴⁵⁸ "Royal Victoria Home." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 28 September 1899, p.3.

other from the industry of the inmates.”⁴⁵⁹ It was important for Canon Tetley to emphasise the difference between the two institutions to its wealthy supporters, otherwise subscriptions would be withdrawn and funding for RVH Horfield would dry up. The same confusion can be seen in the work of historians. In a footnote, for example, Beckingham comments that Brentry Inebriate Reformatory was founded by private philanthropy. Beckingham has confused RVH Horfield that as mentioned was founded by private philanthropy with RVH Brentry, which although purchased as an extension to Horfield was financed by councils and borough councils.⁴⁶⁰ Later in the chapter it will be explained that in 1902 disputes over finances led to the closure of RVH Horfield.

RVH Brentry’s regime and aftercare

The Secretary of State laid down model rules for all certified inebriate reformatories, although these were subject to modification to meet the needs of an institution’s special circumstances.⁴⁶¹ Before admission to Brentry all women sent by the courts had to pass through a cleansing and assessment process before transfer to the larger institution. RVH Horfield was used to cleanse (bath, delouse and provide clean clothes), medically examine and assess inmates, and take measures to ensure there was no likelihood of new admissions contaminating or infecting inmates in the main house at Brentry. The process of bathing, cleaning and putting on clean clothes was not unusual, other institutions such as workhouses carried out similar procedures. As well as serving a practical purpose, the cleansing process was a visible illustration of stripping off the inmates’ old way of life and adopting a new way of living. Goffman notes that the staff of institutions attempted to disconnect inmates’ attachment to their civilian lives by this stripping process.⁴⁶² Upon arrival all inmates were searched, and any prohibited articles confiscated, and money or other possessions kept in custody until discharge. A medical examination was carried out as soon as possible after admission and the person’s state of health

⁴⁵⁹ “Royal Victoria Home.” *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 28 September 1899, p.3.

⁴⁶⁰ Beckingham, “An Historical Geography of Liberty”, p.394.

⁴⁶¹ BPP *General Regulations for the Management and Discipline of Certified Inebriate Reformatories, under the Provisions of the Statute 61 & 62 Vict., cap. 60*, p.3; 1899 (C.9114) LXXIX.185.

⁴⁶² Goffman, *Asylums*, p.51.

recorded. Every new inmate was given a bath and anyone with a skin disease was treated, and if necessary, the inmate was disinfected. Personal clothing, bedding, or other necessities were not allowed unless permission had been given by the medical officer. The confiscation of personal items further emphasised the break from the old life and the move to a new way of life, which was upheld by rules. Chronic invalids incapable of earning their own living and in need of constant personal care and any person suffering from advanced serious disease were not eligible for admission into Bentry. If someone was found to be suffering from tuberculosis special precautions were taken to avoid them infecting others. After approximately four weeks, if considered unlikely to contaminate, infect or disrupt fellow inmates, RVH Horfield inmates were transferred to the RVH Bentry institution. Similar procedures for the reception of habitual drunkards also appear to have been instituted at Langho Inebriate Reformatory. Gillian Hall, writing about the court's disposal of Liverpool's inebriate women, states that the women of Langho Inebriate Reformatory (opened in 1904) were classified according to their capacity to work, both physical and mental, as the work ethic was an important part of reformatory life.⁴⁶³ Bentry consisted of separate cottages for those inmates considered hopeful of reform, more secure accommodation for unreliable and less amenable inmates, and a penal section for the safe custody of refractory inmates.⁴⁶⁴ The Inspector of Reformatories stated that occasionally there would be a few inmates, "who are of too good a class to be brought, in the least degree into contact with the ordinary committal." He suggested that for the time being the cottage system had to suffice, but the best solution would be to create a small section separated from other inmates, which was strictly reserved for such inmates.⁴⁶⁵ Classification of inmates was not unusual in the late nineteenth century, other institutions such as workhouses and prisons classified their inmates in a similar way to Bentry. These types of institutions segregated inmates according to gender and separated the able bodied from the sick. Surveillance by staff was also important to ensure inmates were clean, tidy and

⁴⁶³ Hall, "Disorderly Acts" in Boran, ed. *Crime: Fear or Fascination*, p.101.

⁴⁶⁴ BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1902*, p.6; 1904 (Cd.1823) X.657.

⁴⁶⁵ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1902*, p.6; (Cd.1823) X.657.

developed good habits and behaved themselves. Inmates were also required to work according to their abilities and physique unless prevented by sickness.

The inmates of Brentry worked around eight hours per day at home industries, laundry work, or in the gardens, and a reward system of marks and percentages ensured inmates who worked productively were given a financial gratuity on discharge.⁴⁶⁶ The reward system gave inmates an incentive to obey the rules and encouraged obedience to the staff. Goffman believes that inmates of asylums built their world around rewards and privileges and it was an important factor in inmate culture. He considers inmates often fantasised about what they would do when discharged and rewards were an important part of the fantasy.⁴⁶⁷ From earnings accrued inmates were permitted to purchase tobacco or other items after deductions for maintenance or money to the family had been agreed. Smoking was allowed in the day rooms, exercise areas, and the grounds during recreation hours, but subject to the regulations prescribed by the reformatory's managers. However, there appears to be no evidence in Brentry's record books of women being punished or rebuked for smoking in inappropriate places. Women at RVH Brentry were employed in baking, cooking, gardening, housework, laundry work, sewing, and other occupations. The men were employed in boot mending, carpentry, wood chopping, gardening, and general out-door work⁴⁶⁸ Inmates were expected to rise between 6am and 7am and physical drill and attendance at prayers were part of the daily routine. All inmates were obliged to attend religious services on Sundays unless permission was given by the superintendent for absence. However, inmates were not compelled to attend religious services of a faith other than their own. On Sunday, Christmas Day, Good Friday and fast and thanksgiving days the work of the inmates was confined to what was strictly necessary for the running of the reformatory. Separate arrangements were made for Roman Catholic inmates who had their own chaplain. However, payments to the Roman Catholic chaplain for his services, travelling expenses and the vestments and other things needed for services were the subject of a

⁴⁶⁶ BPP *Nineteenth Report of the Inspector of Retreats under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 and 1888, for the year 1898; with Appendix*, p.8; 1899 (C.9451) XII.731.

⁴⁶⁷ Goffman, *Asylums*, p.32.

⁴⁶⁸ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 24 March 1902, p.4, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

long ongoing dispute at the Royal Victoria Homes, which was never satisfactorily resolved for either party.⁴⁶⁹ Letters were sent to the Secretary of State by both parties, the Roman Catholic Chaplain complained that he was not paid enough for his services and Brentry stated in response that they could not afford to pay more. Finally, the Bishop of Clifton instructed the Chaplain to take one service weekly and perform such other duties as might be necessary.⁴⁷⁰ Mass was the first Sunday of the month and a service was performed weekly. An inmate of the Jewish faith was not compelled to work on the Sabbath or particular holy days. All inmates were expected to go to bed at 9.30pm with lights out at 10.00pm.

The food was “plain and wholesome” according to the diet approved by the Secretary of State and no “substantial alterations” to the diet could be made without notice to the Inspector of Reformatories.⁴⁷¹ The model diet and rules suggested by the Secretary of State for meals consisted of:

Breakfast	cocoa and bread and butter
Dinner	bread and either meat, beans or cheese and on some days a fruit, currant, rice or sago pudding was served.
Supper and tea	tea and bread and butter served daily. Oatmeal and gruel at bedtime.

Vegetables were to be grown in the reformatory’s garden and given frequently when in season up to 4oz per person (weighed after cooking). Fish could be substituted for meat on Fridays, meat pie on Saturdays and corned beef substituted for bacon or pork. The amounts of food given was strictly rationed, for example, per person per day, when served: 12oz potatoes, 4oz cooked

⁴⁶⁹ Royal Victoria Homes. Minutes of Visiting Committees 1900-1903, 1 August 1902, p.90, BRO 40359/B/3/b.

⁴⁷⁰ Minutes of Visiting Committees 1900-1903, 1 August 1902, p.90, BRO 40359/B/3/b.

⁴⁷¹ *General Regulations for the Management and Discipline of Certified Inebriate Reformatories*, p.23; 1899 (C.9114) LXXIX.185.

meat, 2oz bacon, 4oz pork, 4oz shin of beef in a soup, 1oz of butter plus 2oz of milk and $\frac{3}{4}$ oz of sugar. The exception was bread which was unlimited.⁴⁷² Fish such as herrings, kippers or cockles frequently eaten by many working class people were not mentioned on the dietary list. Tea, and sugar were given in very small quantities and relishes such as jam to make food more palatable were also not included. The inmates diet although monotonous was considered adequate to maintain health and strength. At the end of the nineteenth century more was known by the medical profession about nutrition, caloric values and its importance in maintaining health.⁴⁷³ An advantage of the institution growing its own vegetables was that seasonal vegetables were likely to be plentiful as was milk from the institution's own cows. The dairy products were unlikely to be adulterated and were of good quality. No intoxicating liquor or drugs of any kind were allowed in the reformatory unless prescribed by the medical officer. All the inmates ate together and any additions to the diet had to have the permission of the medical officer. In comparison, the diet of the workhouse was also plain and monotonous and very similar in quantities of food served. By the turn of the century, the recommended workhouse diet was 22oz of meat, 8oz of fish per adult per week, with bread as the staple food. Workhouse diets also included a meat dinner every day, with fish or bacon as an alternative, jam was added to the bread and butter for breakfast, and an institutional milk pudding or jam tart served with the midday meal.⁴⁷⁴ Although the reformatory and the workhouse diets were monotonous, they were probably better than their inmates had been accustomed to. All reformatory inebriates were provided with suitable clothing to wear and they were expected to keep themselves clean, take regular baths, and keep their rooms and utensils both clean and neatly arranged. The inmates did not appear to wear a uniform, but their clothing was plain and of a similar style with white aprons over their skirts. Every inmate was supplied with sufficient clean bedding and issued with additional bedding in severe weather, or as instructed by the medical officer.

⁴⁷² *General Regulations for the Management and Discipline of Certified Inebriate Reformatories*, p.23; 1899 (C.9114) LXXIX.185.

⁴⁷³ Margaret Ann Crowther, *The Workhouse System 1834-1929: The History of an English Social Institution*. London: Batsford Academic and Educational Ltd, 1981, p.217.

⁴⁷⁴ Crowther, *The Workhouse System 1834-1929*, p.219.

Friends and relatives were allowed to visit if the reformatory staff did not consider such visits prejudicial to an inmates' recovery. All visits were carried out within sight of a member of staff, but not within hearing. If it was impossible for friends and relatives to visit during the week a Sunday visit could be arranged. In practice, the majority of the inmates' families and friends lived too far away from the reformatory and were too poor to make many visits. All letters written and received by inmates could be read by the Superintendent. Letters could be prohibited if the addressee or sender was considered undesirable. Any letters from former inmates of the reformatory to inmates currently in the reformatory were returned to the post office marked "return to sender."⁴⁷⁵ Unless deprived of privileges for misconduct, inmates were allowed to receive and write letters as often as they desired, but no money, stamps, clothing, newspapers, or other articles could be received through the post.⁴⁷⁶ The withdrawal of letters was used as a punishment and RVH Brentry's minute book records the withdrawal of an inmate's letters until the end of the month for contravening the rules.⁴⁷⁷ Only one letter per inmate could be forwarded to family or friends with the postage paid by the reformatory.⁴⁷⁸ Letters were the inmates' link to the world outside the reformatory and a sense of isolation could result if their families lived many miles away. However, letters afforded little privacy as all letters were censored except those addressed to the Secretary of State or to the Inspector of Reformatories, which were forwarded unopened. Some inmates availed themselves of this and RVH Brentry minute books state that an inmate had written to the Home Office, but did not go into details concerning the reason for the letter only commenting that it was "under consideration."⁴⁷⁹ Morrison suggests that as many inebriates were illiterate their sense of separation must have been heightened.⁴⁸⁰ However, at RVH Brentry, steps were taken to remedy this situation and illiterate women were taught by a trained teacher to read and write, and those women who could write were

⁴⁷⁵ Minutes of Visiting Committees 1898-1900, 29 September 1899, p.79, BRO 40359/B/3/a.

⁴⁷⁶ *General Regulations for the Management and Discipline of Certified Inebriate Reformatories*, p.14; 1899 (C.9114) LXXIX.185.

⁴⁷⁷ Minutes of Visiting Committees 1898-1900, 22 December 1899, p.117, BRO 40359/B/3/a.

⁴⁷⁸ Brentry Certified Inebriate Reformatory. Minutes of Visiting Committees 1903-1908, 14 March 1904, p.61, BRO 40359/B/3/c.

⁴⁷⁹ . Minutes Visiting Committees Minute Book 1903-1908, 7 August 1903, p.18, BRO 40359/B/3/c.

⁴⁸⁰ Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women", p.218.

encouraged to write their own letters. A supply of suitable literature was also circulated to develop and encourage reading and RVH Brentry contained a library of 800 volumes. Obviously, this library needed to be replenished from time to time and the *Western Daily Press* published an appeal by Captain Belfield, the Chairman of RVH Brentry, for books to occupy the inmates during their spare time.⁴⁸¹ Inmates were allowed to receive books and periodicals from friends if the superintendent was satisfied that they were not of an objectionable nature. Inmates who were not interested in literary pursuits were encouraged to attend gardening lessons and look after garden allotments. Dr David Fleck, superintendent of Brentry, considered that gardening “will afford much contentment and fostering industrious principles, may lead to reformation in a way not to be gained by the pressure of rules.”⁴⁸² It also appears the occasional dance was held at Brentry for the inmates and the *Western Daily Press* recorded that a dance took place in June 1903 at which four inmates absconded.⁴⁸³

Violations of discipline included:

Disobeying any order of the superintendent, or of any other officer, or any regulation of the Reformatory.

Treating with disrespect any officer of the Reformatory.

Idleness, carelessness, negligent work, or refusal to work.

Absence without leave from divine service, or prayers.

Behaving irreverently at divine service or prayers.

Swearing, cursing, or using any abusive, insolent, threatening, or other improper language.

Indecent language, act, or gesture.

Making any objectionable noise, giving any unnecessary trouble, or making repeated groundless complaints.

⁴⁸¹ “Correspondence. A good use of spare books.” *Western Daily Press*, 8 February 1902, p.7.

⁴⁸² Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 25 January 1904, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁴⁸³ “Lawford’s Gate Petty Session.” *Western Daily Press*, 12 June 1903, p.9.

In any way defacing or damaging any part of the Reformatory, or any article to which an inmate may have access.

Committing a nuisance.
Having in an inmate's room or possession any forbidden article.

An inmate in any other way offending against good order and discipline.

Attempting to do any of the foregoing.⁴⁸⁴

It will be seen from the list of rules above that it was not difficult for an inmate to breach discipline. The interpretation of whether an offence had been committed was the responsibility of the superintendent and officer concerned. No inmates would be punished unless they understood the offence and they were given an opportunity of making a defence. Inmates who misbehaved and broke the rules could be placed on a punishment diet of 8oz bread at breakfast, a stirabout (a kind of porridge, made from 2oz of oatmeal and 2oz of Indian meal) for dinner, and 8oz of bread for supper. This diet was limited to three days only, it was lacking in protein, and if inmates were kept on it indefinitely they would become seriously malnourished. After three days of the restricted diet, the inmate returned to the usual diet for one day. This would be repeated, three days restricted diet one day normal, for up to twenty-four days.⁴⁸⁵ The dietary punishment must have been exhausting for inmates and it is not clear whether they were required to continue working whilst on dietary punishment. Dietary punishment could not be administered until the medical officer had declared inmates fit and well. Restricting food as a form of punishment was an essential part of discipline in all types of institutions including workhouses.⁴⁸⁶ Therefore, this form of punishment appears to have been used as a deterrent in institutions, particularly as lack of food would deplete energy and might render inmates too weak to rebel.

⁴⁸⁴ *General Regulations for the Management and Discipline of Certified Inebriate Reformatories*, p.16; 1899 (C.9114) LXXIX.185.

⁴⁸⁵ *General Regulations for the Management and Discipline of Certified Inebriate Reformatories*, p.24; 1899 (C.9114) LXXIX.185.

⁴⁸⁶ Crowther, *The Workhouse System 1834-1929*, p.214.

Discipline was a real issue at Brentry and if inmates committed more serious offences than those outlined above, and dietary restrictions and deprivations were not considered sufficient punishment, the managers of the reformatory were instructed to render a more severe type of punishment. They could also consider whether offenders should be transferred to another institution, or brought before the magistrates courts. If brought before the courts and convicted of an offence, an inmate was liable on conviction “to a fine not exceeding £20, or imprisonment with or without hard labour, not exceeding three months.”⁴⁸⁷ Serious offences, which required severe and prompt action included:

Mutiny, or incitement to mutiny.

Personal violence to any officer or servant, or to a fellow inmate.

Grossly offensive or threatening language to any officer or servant.

Wilfully or wantonly breaking the windows, or otherwise destroying the property of the Reformatory.

When under punishment, wilfully making a disturbance tending to interrupt the order and discipline of the Reformatory.

Any other act of gross misconduct or insubordination requiring to be suppressed by extraordinary means.

Escaping or attempting to escape from the Reformatory, or aiding or abetting another to escape.

Introducing intoxicating liquors or drugs into the Reformatory.

Entering a public house, or taking any intoxicating liquor.

⁴⁸⁷ *General Regulations for the Management and Discipline of Certified Inebriate Reformatories*, pp.3-4; 1899 (C.9114) LXXIX.185.

Strait jackets, the only physical restraint used in a reformatory, were used to prevent inmates from injuring themselves or other people. Any inmates under restraint were seen every half an hour by an officer. Nine months from admission inmates became eligible for discharge under license and if inmates remained in the institution after eighteen months, a review should be undertaken.⁴⁸⁸ Strait jackets do not appear to have been used very often and it was likely that this form of restraint was only used as a last resort. Further, the constant surveillance took staff away from other duties.

The regime of a certified inebriate reformatory such as RVH Brentry, was harsh and strict and this would have been the same for both males and females. However, Brentry was the only certified reformatory that accepted males, although strictly segregated. Nevertheless, it appears that inmates flourished. On admission new inmates were described as “really a sad and pitiable sight, generally they are poorly clad and look ill-cared for, almost all have that crest fallen and consciously miserable appearance which denotes at least a want of self respect and only too often a life of degradation for some time previously.”⁴⁸⁹ However, the report states that their health soon picked up, and an improvement was achieved through a regular regime of abstinence from alcohol and by providing a tonic treatment.⁴⁹⁰ Hunt et al suggest that the “philosophy behind the certified reformatories reflected some of the same ideas which inspired the development of borstals”: institutions that bordered upon both rehabilitation and punishment.⁴⁹¹ RVH Brentry, and institutions run on similar lines, bridged the divide between punishment and moral reform. Zedner makes the point that unlike most traditional prisons, which were usually located in cities, inebriate reformatories were usually located in rural areas and accommodation was in cottages organised around a large country house which was designed to maximise the potential for curing and domesticating women...⁴⁹² She notes that legislation had failed to address the plight of the poor and the female inebriates who came before the courts repeatedly. Many

⁴⁸⁸ *General Regulations for the Management and Discipline of Certified Inebriate Reformatories*, p.16; 1899 (C.9114) LXXIX.185.

⁴⁸⁹ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 25 January 1904, p.33, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁴⁹⁰ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 25 January 1904, p.35, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁴⁹¹ Hunt et al, “Wretched, Hatless and Miserably Clad”, p.245.

⁴⁹² Zedner, “Women, Crime, and Penal Responses”, p.333.

influential people were agreed that such women were a scandal and long-term care in an environment that offered hope and encouragement away from the temptations of the public house could maximise any potential for reform these women possessed.⁴⁹³ Morrison considers small cottage accommodation permitted greater surveillance by staff and allowed the staff to exert a personal influence over the women in their care.⁴⁹⁴ Barton remarks that it was believed by contemporaries that these women were susceptible to negative influences, but they could just be as susceptible to positive influences.⁴⁹⁵ Therefore, it could be argued, that this system personalised institutional life and cultivated trust between inmates and staff. In the cottage system women lived in family groups which enabled them to know each other intimately, support each other, be conscious of each other's needs, and be aware of what their fellow inmates in the cottage were doing. The women were overseen by a mother figure, a member of staff who offered guidance and if necessary chastisement. Brentry tried to create a type of village hierarchy and seemed to be an attempt to return to an idealised form of rural life. A photographic publicity booklet "Forty Views of Brentry" described the buildings the inmates lived in as cottages, village homes, and depicted the women on the 'village green', and the village hall. Presumably, the main house, which accommodated the staff, could be analogous to the village manor house.⁴⁹⁶ Reformatories situated in rural areas removed women from what was seen as the corrupting influence of the city.⁴⁹⁷ Zedner argues that those interested in inebriety believed that because environmental factors contributed to alcoholism they could provide the solution to the problem by recreating in microcosm, a past world in which the destitution and demoralization of the urban simply did not exist."⁴⁹⁸ Valverde believes that middle class ladies were never sent to reformatories, however weak their self-control.⁴⁹⁹ As Zedner explains reformatories firstly worked to ensure women had a healthy diet and plenty of exercise in the fresh air and then attempted to

⁴⁹³ Zedner, "Women, Crime, and Penal Responses", p.333.

⁴⁹⁴ Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women", p.218.

⁴⁹⁵ Barton, "Fragile Moralities and Dangerous Sexualities", p.5.

⁴⁹⁶ *Forty Views of the Royal Victoria Homes, Brentry, Nr. Bristol* (undated c1901) BRO 40686/B/BK/1.

⁴⁹⁷ Zedner, "Women, Crime, and Penal Responses", p.333.

⁴⁹⁸ Zedner, "Women, Crime, and Custody", p.237.

⁴⁹⁹ Mariana Valverde, "'Slavery Within': The invention of alcoholism and the question of free will", *Social History*, 22.3 (1997) 252-268, p.263.

restore the women's moral sense and domesticated femininity. The gender issue highlighted by Zedner was class specific since middle class women were rarely if ever sent to an inebriate reformatory.⁵⁰⁰

Barton considers that the "female reformatory movement developed primarily around the belief that the behaviour of some, but not all women who had 'strayed' or 'fallen' could be reformed due to their 'infantile' characters. It was perceived, therefore, that women's character made them suitable persons for guidance, as they could be retrained and new moral habits created.⁵⁰¹ As Zedner points out it is likely that rewards and sanctions may have been put in place in the reformatory to foster self-respect and take an interest in feminist pursuits, but it could also have the negative effect of infantilising women.⁵⁰² Zedner argues that the inebriate reformatory could sap inmates of initiative, which would leave them unable to cope with daily life outside the reformatory. In Chapter 6 the inmates who resisted and rebelled against the regime is examined. In Bentry the situation seems complex. Younger inmates who had been drinking excessively for a short time may have been able to cope with outside life better than older inmates who had been drinking excessively over many years. The management and staff at Bentry endeavoured to re-educate women to take responsibility and exercise self-control in order to teach them skills that could be used to live an independent life through earning their own living when they left the reformatory. In that way, they would be able to earn sufficient wages to support themselves and their children. The fact that illiterate women were taught to read may also have been beneficial in fostering self-respect and helping women to live independently. Inmates were discharged either at the end of their term, or on licence prior to the end of their allotted term. Dr Fleck recommended that inmates due to be released from Bentry should be interviewed to find out what they intended to do upon leaving. If inmates were willing to accept assistance the reformatory tried to find them situations away from their old associations and companions. Nevertheless, inmates often insisted on going back to their old homes particularly in the case

⁵⁰⁰ See Valverde, "Slavery from within", p.263

⁵⁰¹ Barton, "Fragile Moralities and Dangerous Sexualities", p.5.

⁵⁰² Zedner, "Women, Crime, and Penal Responses", p.333.

of a husband or wife.⁵⁰³ This could mean going back to the same problems that had led them to drink and for some it meant a return to a drunken violent husband. Dr Fleck considered no one should ever be discharged without satisfactory arrangements for their care. Inmates discharged from Brentry were given a change of clothing, five shillings, and, if they did not come from Bristol, their train fare home was paid by the reformatory. Arrangements were also made for the person responsible for their aftercare to meet them upon arriving at the train station. All gratuity monies due was paid through the person responsible for the inmates aftercare at a rate of five shillings per week, provided that person lived a sober respectable life.⁵⁰⁴ The after-care of its inmates was important to the management at Brentry and contact with ex-inmates was maintained by corresponding with them on a weekly basis, arranging for someone to look after them, and for that person to provide a report on their progress. The management of Brentry felt that allowing inebriates to be discharged on license was to be discouraged, as they needed more time to make sure inebriates' will power was strengthened sufficiently to resist the many temptations outside the reformatory. The Board of Management at Brentry concluded in 1903:

...the success of the treatment at Brentry depends upon the abstention from intoxicants for as long a time as possible, and that unless this is persevered in for a considerable time the craving for drink is not lost, and for the future your committee propose only to issue licences to be at large after residence of a least twenty-one months, and to discontinue the practice of granting licences for a longer period than one year.⁵⁰⁵

Dr Fleck noted in his annual report for 1906 that he had endeavoured to keep in touch with all discharged inmates during the year and concluded:

Out of the 62 reported, 41, or 66.12%, are said to be doing well, and so far show no signs of a return to their drunken habits. Taking the cases separately we have discharged 53 females, and of these 28 are doing well and of the remaining 25, 13 have been lost sight of and 12 have returned to their old habits are

⁵⁰³ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 22 January 1906, p.19, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁵⁰⁴ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 22 January 1906, p.19, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁵⁰⁵ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 22 June 1903, p.4, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

doing badly. Thus we record 52.83% of all females discharged as known to be doing well, and of the 22 men discharged 13 or 59.09% are equally satisfactory, and although we have been unable to make a return for 13 of the females discharged, I am hopeful that several of them are doing well also.⁵⁰⁶

Whether the women themselves considered they were doing well or whether this was someone else's view is not clear. It is likely that the figures provided were inaccurate as it is probable that ex-inmates discharged at the end of their sentence were not truthful about their current situation and some people once released from the reformatory could not be traced. The Inspector of Inebriate Reformatories commented in his report that figures should contain only persons who have been at liberty for over one year, but it was practically impossible to keep in touch with the majority of inmates for that period. The inmates were likely to be people of 'no fixed abode', some of whom may have been illiterate, or could not write well. Some probably did not have the money to pay postage or purchase writing materials so they were unable to keep up a correspondence.⁵⁰⁷ On the other hand, for those discharged on licence, it was easier for the reformatory to keep in touch, because the person responsible for the discharged inmate on licence had to send a monthly report to the reformatory. In addition, if an inmate was reported drinking the discharge licence would be revoked and the inmate returned to the reformatory. Of course, after the period of licence had elapsed the person was at liberty to go back to their old habits, but it was hoped a long period of enforced sobriety would have produced a new sober way of living. MacLeod states retreat managers rarely kept follow-up records because they were not required by law to do so and very few physicians considered there was a need for after-care.⁵⁰⁸ Inmates were often released into the hands of the After Care Association; the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; the Police Court Missionaries; and occasionally a few inmates were taken into private families.⁵⁰⁹ Other organisations also helped with aftercare such as the Church Army, the Salvation Army, the Church of England Temperance Society, the British

⁵⁰⁶ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 22 January 1906, p.19, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁵⁰⁷ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1902*, p.19; (Cd.1823) X.657.

⁵⁰⁸ MacLeod, "The Edge of Hope", p.243.

⁵⁰⁹ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 22 January 1906, p.19, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

Women's Temperance Association, and the Catholic Prisoners' Aid Society. Her Grace Adeline Duchess of Bedford, and many middle class women throughout the country also visited and took an interest in inebriates on license.

The Inebriates Reformation and After-care Association, established in 1898, aimed to "promote the reformation of inebriates" and provide for their care.⁵¹⁰ The Association also endeavoured to give assistance to magistrates in dealing with inebriates under the Inebriates Act, 1898 and to be a point of information on matters related to the inmates of inebriate reformatories. When inebriates from any of England's certified inebriate reformatories were discharged, one of the Association's one hundred and sixty honorary agents located throughout the country met and befriended them at the railway station. The Association was given prior notice of inebriates about to be discharged and their intended destinations, as well as any other help that might be required. The Association agent helped find lodgings and employment and administered any gratuities earned. During 1905, eighteen men and seventy-one women were helped by agents in England, but this figure did not include inebriates released from Farmfield Inebriate Reformatory as they had their own arrangements for after-care.⁵¹¹ No statutory powers were in place to prevent inebriates returning to homes that were unsuitable, and many inebriates drifted back into the society they came from and returned to their old drinking habits. The Association complained that there were not enough 'hopeful' cases passing through their hands and most of the cases they had dealings with were either "aged or confirmed inebriates."⁵¹² In addition, the Association considered that reformation of people committed to a reformatory for short periods often failed and there would be more chance of succeeding if all cases were committed for the full term of three years.⁵¹³ Arthur J S Maddison, the Secretary of the Inebriates' Reformation and After-care Association, considered that institutional treatment conducted scientifically was doing good work, but after-care was

⁵¹⁰ Maddison Arthur, "The After-Care of Inebriates." *The British Journal of Inebriety*, 3.1 (July 1905) 40-44, p.41.

⁵¹¹ Maddison, "The After-Care of Inebriates", p.41.

⁵¹² Maddison, "The After-Care of Inebriates", p.42.

⁵¹³ Maddison, "The After-Care of Inebriates", p.42.

essential if reformation was to be permanent.⁵¹⁴ Carpenter notes that the low rates of success with inebriates led to the Treasury cutting the grant to inebriate reformatories.⁵¹⁵

RVH Brentry's financial problems

In 1900 the Inspector of inebriate Reformatories gave RVH Brentry an excellent report.⁵¹⁶ However, this did not mean the reformatory did not suffer financial and management problems, in fact virtually from the beginning the reformatory experienced financial difficulties. Not enough male inebriates were sent to the reformatory to fill all its beds resulting in a loss of income. The management of Brentry considered unoccupied beds were often the fault of magistrates' reluctance to send male inebriates to the reformatory. A reason for this situation was that poor and pauper male drunkards were likely to have dependants, which the parish would have to care for if the breadwinner was sent to a reformatory. Brentry's contributing councils frequently failed to fill their allotted number of beds, which also resulted in a loss of income. Some county councils, although not contributors to Brentry, paid for beds within the reformatory for some of their inebriates and without these non-contributing authorities Brentry would have had many fewer beds occupied.⁵¹⁷ It was a grave concern to the managers of Brentry that councils from the contributing bodies had sent so few inebriates to the reformatory, even though the beds had been paid for.⁵¹⁸ The Brentry minute book for the 10 December 1900 recorded that only Bristol and Middlesex had all their reserved beds occupied.⁵¹⁹ Further, the minute book noted that, the total number of beds reserved for the year 1900 was 194, of which only 58 were occupied making 30 per cent overall. 14 were on the Men's side, making 7 percent. 44 were on the Women's side making 23 per cent.⁵²⁰ The falling off in council subscriptions meant that towards the end of 1900 RVH Brentry was in danger of closing due to a reduced income. The

⁵¹⁴ Maddison, "The After-Care of Inebriates", p.44.

⁵¹⁵ Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.46.

⁵¹⁶ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts*, 1900, p.36; (Cd. 811) XII.599.

⁵¹⁷ "Local Notes." *Western Daily Press*, 24 June 1903.

⁵¹⁸ "Local Notes." *Western Daily Press*, 24 June 1903.

⁵¹⁹ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 10 December 1900, p.4, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁵²⁰ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 10 December 1900, p.4, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

Horfield site was also in danger of closing as subscriptions had tailed off and there was not enough money to keep the home free of debt. Therefore, in order to keep RVH Horfield viable and pay off its debts Katharine Burden loaned the Horfield Home £750. However, towards the end of 1900 it became evident that the Horfield home would have to close due to insufficient funds.⁵²¹ Harold Burden informed the management board of RVH Brentry that if RVH Horfield closed Brentry would not have a receiving house, therefore, the management of Brentry decided to take over the Horfield Home for six months until a new female receiving house could be built.⁵²² This arrangement enabled RVH Horfield to continue to function for a further two years, during which time efforts were made to transfer the home to a charitable society with a view to its continued use as an inebriates home for women.⁵²³

To offset the financial difficulties Dr Branthwaite, the Inspector of Inebriate Reformatories, in a confidential letter, recommended extensive cuts including cutting staff on the male side of the reformatory to keep the reformatory viable.⁵²⁴ The problem with Dr Branthwaite's solution was that to run efficiently and safely greater numbers of staff were needed on the male side to maintain discipline. Male inmates proved much more difficult to control than female inmates because males possessed greater physical strength so they were difficult to restrain if the need arose. This was particularly pertinent as Brentry's board of management considered that a large number of the male inmates in the reformatory were borderland cases and not fully responsible for their actions.⁵²⁵ In order to keep the male section of the reformatory afloat and not to run into deficit RVH Brentry needed to increase the number of male inmates in the reformatory to at least 60. Concern was expressed by the Board that if the present loss of income continued the men's side of the reformatory could not continue operating and the losses would endanger the female side.⁵²⁶

⁵²¹ Copy of a letter by Edward Thomas to the Editor of the *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, September 1902, BRO 40359/B/8/1.

⁵²² Minutes of Visiting Committees 1900-1903, 21 December 1900, p.24, BRO 40359/B/3/b.

⁵²³ Copy of a letter by Edward Thomas to the Editor of the *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, September 1902, BRO 40359/B/8/1.

⁵²⁴ Letter by R W Branthwaite, 15 April 1901 in Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.30.

⁵²⁵ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 10 December 1900, p.16, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁵²⁶ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 29 April 1901, p.6, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

Financial problems continued to escalate and in 1902, councils were asked to contribute further money and take over the running of RVH Brentry.⁵²⁷ A debate by Bristol City Council's Estates and General Purpose Committee showed that councillors had different views about Harold Burden and his management of Brentry and expressed concerns over the way the home was run and managed. On the 30 July 1902 a request from Brentry was discussed for an extra £250 per £1000 contribution. RVH Brentry wanted the extra money to clear a deficit and carry out new building works. The Council discussed the matter and considered the problem had arisen because the home was a new untried venture and felt that the experiment of inebriate reformatories was an expensive failure. They concluded that inebriates could be kept in gaol or in a workhouse more cheaply. Concerns were also raised that the work of reforming inmates was not carried on as it should be and this work was not possible whilst the administration of the institution was in the hands of one man (Harold Burden) who worked as warden, chaplain and secretary. The point was made that these positions should be separated, as it was impossible for one man to perform all these jobs satisfactorily. It seems that some members of the Council felt that Harold Burden wielded too much power in the reformatory and proposed a medical man should be appointed as warden, a clergyman appointed as chaplain and an administrator appointed to perform the duties of business secretary.⁵²⁸ Criticisms were also voiced about whether the money had been spent in a reckless manner by the management of RVH Brentry. However, Alderman Hall pointed out that in comparison to other institutions RVH Brentry was one of the cheapest institutions of its type in the country and although he was not perfectly satisfied with the management, Bristol should not be the only council from Brentry's contributing councils to refuse the request for extra money. He also pointed out that that some of the worst characters were sent to the RVH Brentry.⁵²⁹ Mr Cotterell stated that the warden, Harold Burden, was motivated by a sincere wish to decrease drunkenness and its associated evils by reforming drunkards. A vote was taken as to whether the Bristol Estates

⁵²⁷ "The Brentry Inebriates Home." *Western Daily Press*, 30 July 1902, p.7.

⁵²⁸ "The Brentry Inebriates Home." *Western Daily Press*, 30 July 1902, p.7.

⁵²⁹ "The Brentry Inebriates Home." *Western Daily Press*, 30 July 1902, p.7.

Committee should defer any decision for three months until they had more information about future management. The vote was carried and it was decided the matter should be investigated by three of its members.⁵³⁰ Despite concerns voiced by the Council the *Western Daily Press* reported in December 1902 that the investigation into the future management of the RVH considered that although mistakes had been made initially by the management, changes had been made and they had learnt from the experience. Therefore, Bristol City Council acceded to the request of the additional grant and continued to have confidence in the management.⁵³¹

In response to the financial crisis in March 1902 Captain Belfield, a Horfield nominee, resigned as chairman of RVH Brentry and Sir Henry Mather Jackson, the representative for Monmouth took over.⁵³² RVH Horfield had been set up as a charity for poor women inebriates and women from the prison in need of shelter, however, as Carpenter notes, it was a bizarre situation, as Horfield had become Brentry's reception house. No records of RVH Horfield's charity cases exist, therefore, it is impossible to determine how many charity cases were admitted to Horfield, why they were admitted, or who admitted them. The subscriptions to the Horfield Home dried up because subscribers did not wish to contribute to a publicly funded venture.⁵³³ RVH Horfield originated as the initiative of CETS, a temperance organisation, whose prime aim was to rescue women from sin and crime so they would respond to the Gospel and lead lives of abstinence. The contributing councils' principal priority was to make provision for inebriates as economically as possible in accordance with the legislation and deal with the problems drink caused, such as petty crime and public nuisance. There was obviously a conflict of ideologies. This point was made by the Government Inspector, Dr Branthwaite as he stated:

Institutions conducted by philanthropic bodies will always carry with them a feeling of confidence, for the very reason that financial considerations are subsidiary in importance

⁵³⁰ "The Brentry Inebriates Home." *Western Daily Press*, 30 July 1902, p.7.

⁵³¹ "Local Notes." *Western Daily Press*, 6 December 1902, p.7.

⁵³² Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.32

⁵³³ Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.33.

and presumably always secondary to the desire for the reformation of persons placed under their charge.⁵³⁴

In his PhD thesis, Peter Hughes comments on this conflict of ideologies between the police courts, which wanted a way of dealing with petty offenders and the temperance movement which wanted an effective method of treatment. In Hughes' view, "Longer term containment and control with no hope of transformative outcome had become confused with detention for compulsory treatment."⁵³⁵

The Board of Brentry had discussed taking Horfield over in 1900, but failed to take any action. The situation over the Horfield premises finally came to a head with a dispute about an alleged agreement for £40 per annum rent to accommodate Brentry inmates at Horfield. The Brentry management board disputed the existence of the agreement and denied all knowledge of it. Brentry ignored all appeals to pay rent as they considered any such agreement was unauthorised. Harold Burden had not recorded the agreement in the minute books and although Captain Belfield remembered it, there was nothing in writing. Captain Belfield stated in a private letter to Edward Thomas concerning the money, that he had often nagged Harold Burden to record everything down in the minutes.⁵³⁶ The squabble over rent may have been a reason why Captain Belfield resigned. The quarrel dragged on until September 1902 when Horfield, which had been Harold and Katharine's home for a number of years, was put up for sale.⁵³⁷ The RVH Horfield charity became extinct and the retreat was closed down.⁵³⁸ In November 1902, Harold Burden wrote to Canon Parker, a member of the Horfield and Brentry management board, to inform him that, "we have just signed an agreement to purchase the Horfield property (by we, I mean my wife and myself)."⁵³⁹ Any claim to rent was abandoned by the vendors and the Burdens' purchased RVH Horfield debt free for £1,200. Harold and Katharine officially resigned as Warden and Lady Superintendent of the Royal

⁵³⁴ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1900*, p.5; (Cd. 811) XII.599.

⁵³⁵ Peter Hughes, "Cleanliness, and Godliness." PhD Thesis. Brunel University (1985) p.194.

⁵³⁶ Copy of a letter from Captain Belfield to Edward Thomas, 3 August 1902, BRO 40359/B/8/1.

⁵³⁷ Copy of a letter by Edward Thomas to the Editor of the *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, September 1902, BRO 40359/B/8/1.

⁵³⁸ "The Diocesan Branch of the C.E.T.S." *Western Daily Press*, 23 April 1903, p.9.

⁵³⁹ Letter from Harold Burden to Canon Parker, 18 November 1902, BRO 40359/B/8/1.

Victoria Homes at a special meeting of the board of management, on Thursday, March 5th 1903. The notes of the meeting state:

...in view of his [Harold Burden's] other interests he thought it desirable to resign his present office of Warden, which he would be glad to be relieved of either on the 30th June or the 30th September...at the same time he had no wish to wholly dis-associate himself with Brentry, or to cease to take part in its management.⁵⁴⁰

The “other interests” of Harold Burden was his purchase of a substantial building in another part of England in order to set up his own inebriate venture, the National Institutions for Inebriates (NII), which is discussed in Chapter 5. In 1903, a new scheme for Brentry was approved that authorised increased contributions by the contributing councils and granted the councils perpetual rights. The name of the institution was also changed to Brentry Certified Inebriate Reformatory.⁵⁴¹ The close connection with RVH Horfield that had previously existed was consequently formally severed.

Carpenter claims that Harold Burden and the original management board had taken the blame for the financial crisis.⁵⁴² However, the severing of the partnership did not signify Harold Burden's influence in RVH Brentry was at an end. At the annual general meeting of Brentry Certified Inebriate Reformatory on 23 March 1903, Harold Burden was appointed Honorary Secretary and thanks were expressed to Harold and Katharine Burden for their work.⁵⁴³ The Government Inspector of Reformatories commented that Harold Burden had “nursed it [Brentry] through many difficult stages of development.”⁵⁴⁴ Despite the disputes over RVH Horfield's rent, Harold Burden seems to have continued to be held in high esteem by many people at Brentry. He was probably appointed secretary because he had acquired considerable skills and experience over the years as well as a network of contacts, which would be valuable to Brentry's management board. Harold Burden was in the process of setting up his own

⁵⁴⁰ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 5 March 1903, p.4, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁵⁴¹ Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.32.

⁵⁴² Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.35.

⁵⁴³ Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.35.

⁵⁴⁴ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1902*, p.6; (Cd.1823) X.657.

inebriate venture, consequently it was in his interest to accept the voluntary position of Honorary Secretary and continue to be an influence on Brentry's management board to the benefit of Brentry and his new inebriate enterprise.

Brentry Certified Inebriate Reformatory

Due to the loss of Horfield a new female receiving house was built in 1903. The minute book of Brentry for 1903 recorded that the title 'warden' should be changed to superintendent and the management should either appoint someone trained in medicine or someone with experience in working with inebriates and reformatories. In either case, the appointee should be a total abstainer.⁵⁴⁵ The appointee was Dr David Fleck, the medical officer at the very large Caterham Asylum for pauper imbeciles of the harmless class. The previous medical officer, Dr Ormerod, was re-employed as a consulting medical officer and he covered for Dr Fleck in his absence. Dr Fleck was a suitable choice as he not only had experience of working in a large institution, but also had experience of working with people with mental health problems. He classified Brentry's male and female inmates under three headings with the intention of demonstrating a link between alcoholic intemperance and mental weakness :

- a. The congenitally defective
- b. The mentally degenerate
- c. The intellectually unsound⁵⁴⁶

This classification of inmates, as discussed in Chapter 2, demonstrates that Dr Fleck was influenced by eugenics. He also placed inmates into upper and lower classes, according to whether it was felt they were likely to be reformed. The upper class inmates (the most likely to be reformed) were given better accommodation, work and privileges.⁵⁴⁷ Dr Fleck stated that he found that 66.2% of inmates had a family history of alcoholism, which had affected other members of the family.⁵⁴⁸

⁵⁴⁵ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 5 March 1903, p.4, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁵⁴⁶ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 22 January 1906, p.17, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁵⁴⁷ Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.37.

⁵⁴⁸ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 22 January 1906, p17, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

By 1908, inebriate institutions throughout England were in decline and had begun to close down. A loss in income caused by some serious problems at Brentry led to considerable financial expense. In 1908, an outbreak of typhoid occurred that caused the deaths of two people and infected twenty-eight others. Eventually, after expensive investigations into the cause of the outbreak, the source was identified as an inmate female carrier working in the dairy. The female carrier was placed in isolation for the protection of others and had to remain at Brentry despite applications to the Secretary of State for her to be removed.⁵⁴⁹ In addition, a mutiny and mass escape of twenty-nine males occurred and after this incident, Dr Fleck tendered his resignation on 26 July 1909.⁵⁵⁰ After Dr. Fleck's resignation, Commander Richard Lay took up the position of superintendent and Dr Ormerod took up the position of medical officer. Dr Fleck found employment at the NII's Eastern Counties Inebriate Reformatory, East Harling, Suffolk.⁵⁵¹ Reformatories that closed transferred their inebriates to Brentry to finish their sentences.⁵⁵²

After the Mental Deficiency Act, 1913 there was not the need for specialist inebriate reformatories as inebriety was incorporated into the 1913 Act. Brentry changed use to a mental deficiency colony for adult males and admitted its first male defective in 1917.⁵⁵³ For a short period inebriates and mental defectives were accommodated at Brentry, albeit separately and segregated, until the last inebriates were discharged in October 1921 and Brentry's licence was surrendered. By 1922 all of England's certified reformatories had closed.⁵⁵⁴ Brentry changed use and became a colony for adult male mental defectives and was operated by a consortium of councils and Harold Burden's organisation which had been set up to deal with people with learning difficulties, the Incorporation of National Institutions for Persons Requiring Care and Control (Inc.NIPRCC).

⁵⁴⁹ Minutes Board of Management 1899-1917, 27 July 1908, pp.5-6, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁵⁵⁰ Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.40.

⁵⁵¹ Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.40.

⁵⁵² Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.49.

⁵⁵³ Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.49.

⁵⁵⁴ Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.50.

Conclusion

This chapter has described the process by which a small local project in the form of a shelter home for female inebriates progressed to be a part of a large nationwide project. The chapter has examined the impact of opening a certified inebriate reformatory and highlighted the difficulties experienced when philanthropy, publicly funded bodies, and central government worked in partnership to reform inebriates sent to certified reformatories. The buildings of RVH Horfield were too small to expand the Burdens' work further. Therefore, Harold Burden devised a scheme which was financed by local councils to create a large inebriate reformatory and use RVH Horfield as its female reception house. This caused confusion and financial problems, which resulted in the eventual closure of RVH Horfield. Also, highlighted was the important role married women played in the management of the reformatory. Despite their domestic responsibilities, they were able to administer a large building and care for its male and female inebriates. The chapter also examined the regime of the reformatory and the provision that had been put in place for the aftercare of inmates.

The regime of Brentry with its regulations and rules governed all aspects of female inebriates' lives from their daily work schedule to their leisure activities. All decisions were made for the inmates and they were deprived of the freedom to regulate their own lives. Some historians such as Zedner considered this infantilised women inmates, but the situation seems far more complex than that suggested. It has to be borne in mind that the aim of the management of RVH Brentry was to teach the women in the institution a trade or occupation so that they were able to become independent and earn a respectable living when discharged. Aftercare was also problematic for reformatories as it was difficult to assess the success of their efforts because people moved addresses, remarried and changed their names. What makes Brentry interesting in the field of inebriate reformatories was not only the unique way in which it was funded, but that the reformatory accepted inebriates from all over Britain rather than just its own local area. This would have made keeping in contact with discharged inmates more difficult. It would have been easier to keep in touch

with women in the local area. Further, it was easier to trace and have some knowledge of the women who continued drinking upon discharge and came before the courts again, rather than the women who merged quietly back into their own lives.

Chapter 5: The National Institutions for Inebriates, 1903-1913

Introduction

This chapter illuminates some complex issues such as the difficulties inebriate reformatories encountered in classifying inmates appropriately according to their likelihood of reform and rehabilitation, and the relationship between legislative reform and private enterprise. The tensions between those that considered the purpose of inebriate reformatories was reform and those that considered reformatories should be places of punishment and correction are also highlighted. The issues are examined by focusing on the NII the network of certified inebriate reformatories the Burdens created after resigning their employment with the RVH, Bentry. The chapter also examines the types of women who passed through the NII system of reformatories by analysing the records of one hundred women extracted from a register of 203 NII cases.

Bentry Inebriate Reformatory and the NII were separate organisations. Bentry was managed, funded and owned by local councils whose management board took over Bentry's outstanding mortgage liability. The NII was owned and managed by Harold Burden. However, both organisations had a strong working relationship and Harold Burden sat on Bentry's management board in a voluntary capacity as honorary secretary. The NII consisted of five inebriate reformatories situated in Sussex, Norfolk, Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Bristol that catered exclusively for women. Harold Burden considered classification was essential for effective treatment and control, and he created his own system to classify the inmates who came under his care. Dr Branthwaite, the Inspector of Reformatories noted that the inmates of reformatories, were a heterogeneous collection of human beings that varied widely in mind, body and general conduct.⁵⁵⁵ Various types of women were sent to inebriate reformatories, for example, sane women, insane women, women considered on the borderland of insanity, well-behaved women, and refractory and violent women. Contemporaries believed that classification required understanding and experience in order to place women into an appropriate category. Sir William

⁵⁵⁵ BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1906*, p.19; 1907 (Cd. 3685) X.589.

Collins in an address to the Society for the Study of Inebriety claimed that, “The greatest discrimination was required in so-called “borderland” cases in order to decide how to classify and how to treat a particular individual.”⁵⁵⁶ He considered classification was important because the differences between women considered mentally weak or insane from those who were thought of as corrupt and immoral were virtually imperceptible graduations. In Sir William Collins’s opinion, how far moral responsibility could be attached to individual inebriates for their actions was a matter for the philosopher, the physician, the jurist, the philanthropist and the scientist.⁵⁵⁷

The aim of the NII was to reform inebriates believed to be improvable, to offer the possibility of reform to those thought of as doubtful, and to detain those deemed irreformable. The NII also worked in conjunction with other inebriate reformatories to classify and accommodate women habitual drunkards sent by the courts in a way that was appropriate to their status and situation. Some areas in England did not have their own certified inebriate reformatory and purchased beds from the NII. This made the NII group the largest provider of inebriate beds in England.⁵⁵⁸ However, by 1907/08, it became clear that magistrates were only sending a small number of habitual drunkards to inebriate reformatories. The reasons for this varied, for example, a lack of available places, difficulties in interpreting the Inebriates Acts, magistrates being unconvinced of reformatories’ ability to reform and some magistrates holding the view that penal measures should be applied to inebriates. This made it difficult for reformatories to continue operating and certified inebriate reformatories began to close. By 1913, most inebriate reformatories had either closed or changed use to institutions for mental defectives. The chapter illustrates the changing nature of policy towards inebriates, from the opinion that some habitual drunkards were capable of reform and rehabilitation back into society, to inebriates viewed as mentally defective and in need of permanent care and protection in a specialist institution.

⁵⁵⁶ “The Institutional Treatment of Inebriety.” *Temperance Record*, 1 (1903) p.482, BRO 41001/WTL/J/4/1.

⁵⁵⁷ “The Institutional Treatment of Inebriety.” *Temperance Record*, 1 (1903) p.482, BRO 41001/WTL/J/4/1.

⁵⁵⁸ See *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women*, 1908, BRO 39910/PM/1.

The Burdens' new venture

Harold and Katharine Burden's resignation as warden and lady superintendent of RVH, Bentry enabled them to concentrate on developing their own venture, the NII. Since 1895, the couple had been involved in the organisation of fundraising activities and the creation of accommodation for inebriate women. Therefore, it was a natural progression that they should create their own venture in this field. It is likely that from his experience in setting up Bentry Harold Burden deduced that it was ineffective to depend upon the initiative and power of county and borough councils to set up inebriate reformatories. Only London, Lancashire and Yorkshire had provided inebriate accommodation, which according to a 1908 NII publicity booklet, had left two-thirds of the country without provision.⁵⁵⁹ Harold Burden believed that there was a need in England to create new certified inebriate reformatories that were not attached to any specific local authority and were open to cases from all districts on payment by any council of the maintenance costs. He felt that there should be reformatories for males and females and they should be run economically.⁵⁶⁰ Harold Burden chose to admit females only to NII reformatories. It was likely that as the majority of women sent to inebriate reformatories by magistrates were women, and the state subsidy was the same for males and females, it was a sensible decision to take this course of action. The income from the accommodation of males would probably not cover the costs of their maintenance.

The Burdens vacated RVH, Horfield in September 1902 and they began to rent and purchase suitable large properties that could be adapted and used as inebriate reformatories. In October 1902 a certificate was granted under the Inebriates Act, 1898 to Harold Burden for an inebriate reformatory for fifty-seven females at Whittington Hall, Nr Chesterfield, Derbyshire.⁵⁶¹ Whittington Hall like Bentry was a large mansion house set in extensive grounds. In the two years that followed the acquisition of Whittington Hall, Harold Burden rented and purchased a series of five properties throughout England and together with his

⁵⁵⁹ *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women*, 1908, BRO 39910/PM/1.

⁵⁶⁰ See *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women*, 1908, BRO 39910/PM/1.

⁵⁶¹ "The Inebriates Act, 1898." *The London Gazette*, 7 October 1902, p.6342.

wife ran them as female inebriate reformatories. Harold Burden called his new venture the National Institutions for Inebriates (NII) to reflect his intention to create a privately owned and managed national network of institutions throughout England. A 1908 NII publicity booklet stated it had been necessary to establish reformatories to control inebriates as uncontrolled drunkenness and persistent immorality had created women degraded both mentally and physically who were a public nuisance and likely to be involved in crime. The booklet went on to state that such women needed protection from themselves and from inflicting harm on members of the public. This is reminiscent of John Stuart Mill who stated in 1859 that the only justification for interfering in people's liberty was the prevention of harm to others.⁵⁶² Beckingham also makes the point that, "The liberty of most relied on the control of a few. As with other reformatory institutions, this was negotiated by class, gender and geography."⁵⁶³ It is reasonable to suppose that in the early twentieth century gender and class had an impact on many people's view that the inebriate institution was the best option to control and reform habitual drunkards.⁵⁶⁴ Fines and imprisonment had been unsuccessful in reforming inebriates, therefore, to achieve reformation inebriate women were removed from the influences that caused them to drink excessively and taught a new sober, productive way of life. Such an action was thought to protect single women from immoral conduct and prevent the birth of children without any means of support. Geography was a factor, as in areas where no provision had been made by county or borough councils for inebriate reformatories, the only options for magistrates were prison sentences or fines.

The 1908 publicity booklet stated that Harold Burden had created different types of inebriate institutions to cater for the various types of women sent by the courts to his reformatories. He was aware that women had different needs and were at different stages in their drinking careers. Women sent from the courts were initially admitted to one of two reformatories for initial assessment. These two reformatories contained only a basic level of accommodation and comfort.

⁵⁶² Richard Boire, "John Stuart Mill and the Liberty of Inebriation." *Independent Review*, 7.2 (Fall 2002) 253-258, pp.253 & 254.

⁵⁶³ Beckingham, "An Historical Geography of Liberty", p.389.

⁵⁶⁴ See Chapter 1 for a discussion of this topic. Also, Hunt et al, "Wretched, Hatless and Miserably Clad", p.245 and Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women."

Subsequent to admission, if inmates were considered likely to be reformed they were moved to a more comfortable reformatory. Women deemed irreformable remained in the basic level reformatories, as they were thought to require little other than detention for the public good. Women considered doubtful of reform were moved to an institution where they could be evaluated further, a type of halfway house. If their conduct was good or had improved, they were moved to a better institution, but if their conduct deteriorated and was poor, they were moved back to one of the basic standard institutions. Harold Burden considered his reformatories offered “universal accommodation for inebriates, and accommodation...with as little drain as possible upon public funds.”⁵⁶⁵

The NII reformatories consisted of:

Southern Counties Reformatory, Lewes, Sussex certified in 1902 for 120 females. This reformatory was used for Roman Catholic inebriates.⁵⁶⁶

Eastern Counties Reformatory, East Harling, Norfolk certified in 1904 for 170 females. This reformatory was used for protestant inebriates.⁵⁶⁷

North Midlands Reformatory, Ackworth, Yorkshire, certified in 1903 for 90 females.⁵⁶⁸

Midland Counties Reformatory, Whittington Hall, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, certified in 1902 for 57 females.⁵⁶⁹

The Royal Victoria Home, Horfield, Bristol, certified as a discharge house for 25 females three months from release in January 1903.⁵⁷⁰

The general management of the NII reformatories was in the hands of a warden (Harold Burden, the proprietor) who had overall responsibility for the management and discipline of all its institutions. The warden dealt with matters relating to administration including communications from the Secretary of State, the Government Inspector of Inebriate Reformatories, officers in charge of

⁵⁶⁵ *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women*, 1908, BRO 39910/PM/1.

⁵⁶⁶ “The Inebriates Act, 1898.” *The London Gazette*, 25 November 1902, p.7936.

⁵⁶⁷ “The Inebriates Act, 1898.” *The London Gazette*, 18 November 1904, p.7475.

⁵⁶⁸ “The Inebriates Act, 1898.” *The London Gazette*, 29 December 1903, p.8564.

⁵⁶⁹ “The Inebriates Act, 1898.” *The London Gazette*, 7 October 1902, p.6342.

⁵⁷⁰ Harold Burden purchased RVH Horfield after he resigned from Brentry as warden and incorporated it into the NII. He used the Horfield building as a discharge house to acclimatise women nearing the end of their sentences to the outside world. “The Inebriates Act, 1898.” *The London Gazette*, 30 January 1903, p.602.

reformatories and police officers. He also periodically visited all the reformatories under his control. Harold Burden opened a central London office where he employed staff to deal with the administration of his reformatories and check the accounts and expenses for each institution to ensure all the institutions within the NII group followed government guidelines. He therefore had total control over his network of institutions, unlike the London County Council's reformatory at Farmfield, and the consortium of council representatives that made up the managing board of Brentry. Harold Burden was not answerable to colleagues or to any public body, or voluntary organisation, which suited his autocratic personality, organisational abilities, and allowed policy decisions to be made quickly. Thus, it would have been easier to control the organisation, on the other hand, the advice and experience of staff may not have been heeded and there was no capacity for the staff to respond quickly to local situations. Centralisation of the Burdens' organisation ensured all reformatories operated in the same way, and the expenditure of each reformatory could be compared and any discrepancies noticed and rectified. Dr Branthwaite praised the way the NII reformatories were managed, he described this as a "triumph" because the economic cost per head at each reformatory only varied by a matter of pennies, which he considered was attributed to the NII's central London office.⁵⁷¹ The NII office received daily reports "concerning the conduct of inmates, and all matters of importance connected with each reformatory."⁵⁷² Two lady managers (names unknown) were employed by the NII to visit and inspect all the NII reformatories, interview inmates and offer advice. Each reformatory was in the charge of a manager, but if that manager was not a medical man a visiting medical officer was appointed. The manager was responsible for the day-to-day running of the reformatory and for the classification of inmates in his reformatory as well as transfers to other institutions as necessary. All the reformatories employed a visiting chaplain and were fully staffed by officers and subordinate officers.⁵⁷³ Medical treatment was

⁵⁷¹ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1906*, p.32; (Cd. 3685) X.589.

⁵⁷² See *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women, 1908*, BRO 39910/PM/1.

⁵⁷³ *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women, 1908*, BRO 39910/PM/1.

available and a small hospital was provided at Lewes and an infirmary at East Harling.

All inmates of NII reformatories were expected to work in the house, kitchen, laundry and garden. Four of the reformatories had particular “staple trades” which provided employment, for example:

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|--|
| Eastern Counties | - | Wool-sorting, carding and spinning, bobbin-winding, the weaving of woollen, linen and cotton materials, including all the various incidental processes, the manufacture of carpet broad, straw hats, artificial flowers, baskets, drawn thread work, knitting, and chair and shoe mending. |
| Southern Counties | - | Brush making, mat making, knitting, church embroidery, chair mending, and laundry work. |
| North Midlands | - | Wool-sorting and carding, weaving tapestry and linen, spinning, drawn threadwork, and the making of clothing. |
| Midland Counties | - | Machine knitting, the manufacture of corsets, making up of clothing, poultry rearing, pig keeping, and market gardening. ⁵⁷⁴ |

The range of industries outlined above enabled the NII to be virtually self-sufficient. For example, all the stockings used by inmates were made at the Midland Counties reformatory from wool processed and spun at the North Midlands reformatory. Almost all the inmates’ clothes, including corsets, were manufactured at the Eastern Counties reformatory. In addition, to offset costs many of the manufactured items were sold to wholesale companies. The NII publicity booklet for 1908 was illustrated with photographs of well-dressed women working at many of the trades carried out in its reformatories. Carpet and rug making seemed to be particularly lucrative, as the goods were sold wholesale at a competitive cost. Some photographs depict women working at sorting, carding, spinning, skeining, winding, cutting and weaving the yarn for carpet making. Another photograph shows four women making a pile carpet twenty yards in length and four yards in width. The sale of the goods the women had made generated an income that kept maintenance costs to a

⁵⁷⁴ *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women, 1908*, BRO 39910/PM/1.

minimum and other reformatories were unable run their institutions as economically. In the 1908 publicity booklet Harold Burden quoted the Inspector of Inebriate Reformatories as saying that the occupations the NII meet the:

“...three-fold object of all work in institutions – provide healthy physical and mental exercise for each inmate, supply him with an employment likely to be useful in after life, and financially benefit the establishment. So far as Inebriate Reformatories are concerned some useful steps have been taken with these objects in view, and evidence is forthcoming that continued advance is likely to be steady.”⁵⁷⁵

Women inmates employed in work that could be sold commercially were extremely important to the financial stability of the NII group. The production of goods to be sold might have been considered of greater importance than merely keeping inmates occupied, or teaching a trade to be used when discharged. The historian Crowther comments that the Victorians had “glorified the dignity of labour” and saw work “less as a necessity than a duty.”⁵⁷⁶ Work was thought to inculcate self-respect and Morrison comments that regular and constant employment was considered an essential element in long-term reformation.⁵⁷⁷ Morrison also states that that the work carried out in an inebriate reformatory was more intensive and carried on for a longer duration than work in prison.⁵⁷⁸ Therefore, this raises the question of whether women’s labour was exploited by Harold Burden for profit, or whether their work was part of the reformation process and profit was secondary to that aim. This question cannot be answered as accounts of the materials purchased, where items were sold, in what quantity, how much was charged, and how much of the money was given to the women who made the goods have not survived. A trust deed drawn up in 1913 states that the institutions’ goods can be sold at market price to the public, but it does not note how the money from sales should be used.⁵⁷⁹ The only record that has survived of the work women did in the reformatories is a publicity booklet that depicts women making carpets and other items using

⁵⁷⁵ *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women, 1908*, BRO 39910/PM/1.

⁵⁷⁶ Crowther, *The Workhouse System 1834-1929*, p.201.

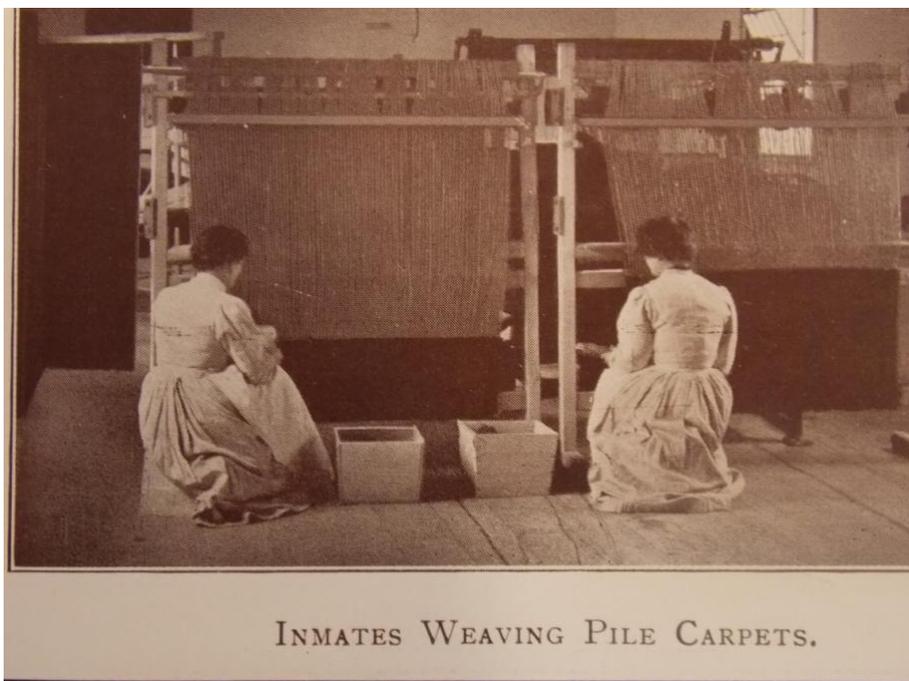
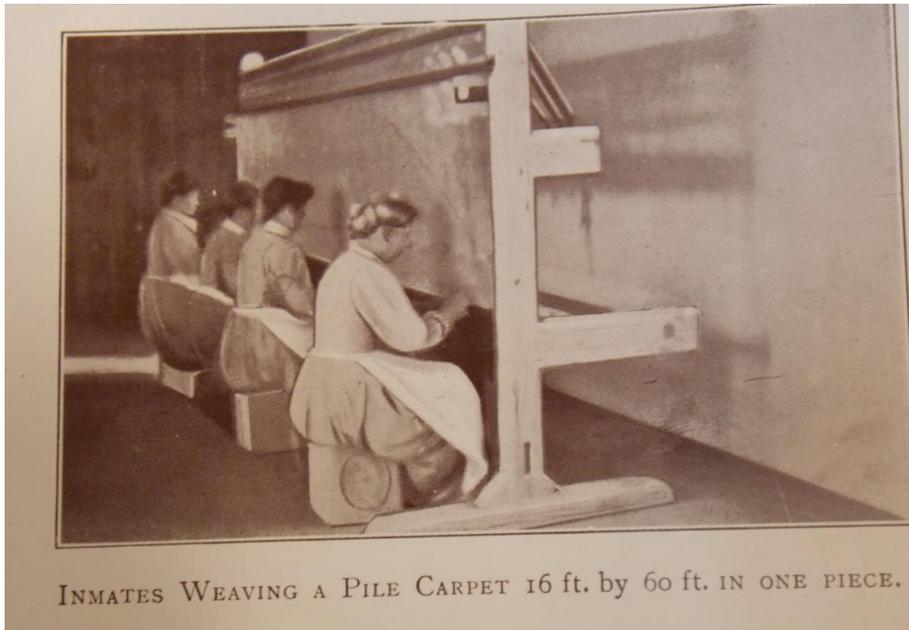
⁵⁷⁷ Morrison, “Ordering Disorderly Women”, p.284.

⁵⁷⁸ Morrison, “Ordering Disorderly Women”, p.284.

⁵⁷⁹ Trust Deed dated 1913, BRO 33910/B/1-7.

industrial machinery, which would have necessitated considerable outlay. The publicity brochure depicts some of the varied items the women made.

Figure 14: Eight photographs illustrating the types of Industrial machines operated by women inmates of the National Institutions for Inebriates and examples of the goods produced.





INMATES THREADING "THE LAMB."



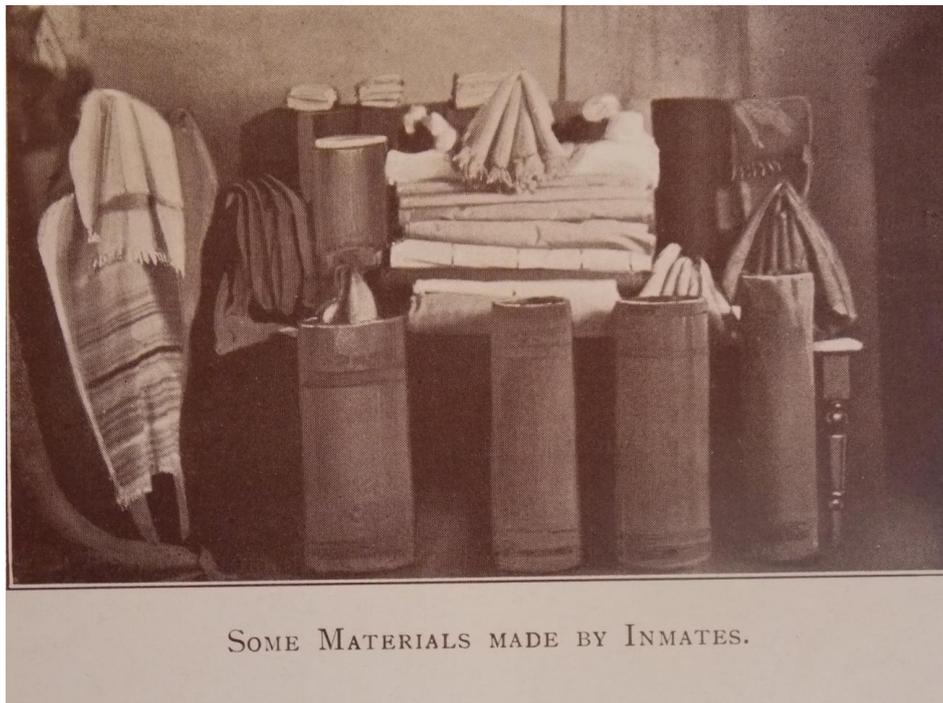
INMATES WEAVING SERGE.



SOME HATS, FLOWERS AND BASKETS MADE BY INMATES.



SOME MATERIALS MADE BY INMATES.



Source: *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women, 1908.* BRO 39910/PM/1

If women were learning skills that could be used to earn a living after discharge, perhaps it could be argued that it was reasonable that their labour was used in payment for teaching such skills. Sourcing suitable varied work may have

caused difficulties to some managers of inebriate reformatories. Many occupations required a high initial outlay for machines, materials, and teachers before any profit could be made. The NII's five reformatories were able to work together which gave it an advantage over other reformatories. For example NII reformatories could be virtually self sufficient in food, clothing and carpeting as well as selling their goods competitively. Dr Branthwaite believed that those cases deemed 'hopeful' liked working and the only difficulty he found was in finding enough work for them to do.⁵⁸⁰ Morrison believes the amount of work women had to undertake in reformatories was a reason for bad behaviour, and considered some women behaved badly deliberately in order that they would be sent to prison. Morrison quotes the case of Mary Stainforth who in 1897 escaped from a retreat and begged magistrates not to send her to an inebriate reformatory as they treated her like a slave washing and scrubbing clothes.⁵⁸¹ Reformatory inmates would have had to satisfy the notion that a reformatory was not an easy option, which seems to be confirmed by Mary's point about being treated as a slave. Dr Branthwaite in his annual report of 1901, refuted objections that life in the reformatory was too easy and pleasant and inmates of reformatories lived a "lazy life." He stated that there was considerably more work done in the reformatories than in prisons and the inmates who had been sent to prison by managers of reformatories for their bad behaviour had an easier time.

Areas in England without inebriate reformatory provision

The NII group had created certified reformatories in various parts of England, but there remained many areas, for example, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Cumberland and Westmorland that lacked a certified inebriate reformatory. These counties were predominantly rural areas and contained only a few large cities and overall had a smaller population, therefore, there was less need for certified inebriate reformatories.⁵⁸² The whole of Wales did not have certified reformatory provision for any of its inebriates. The industrial coal mining areas of South Wales and Cardiff considered setting up a reformatory but plans did

⁵⁸⁰ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1901*, p.56; (Cd.1381) XII.697.

⁵⁸¹ Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women", p.287.

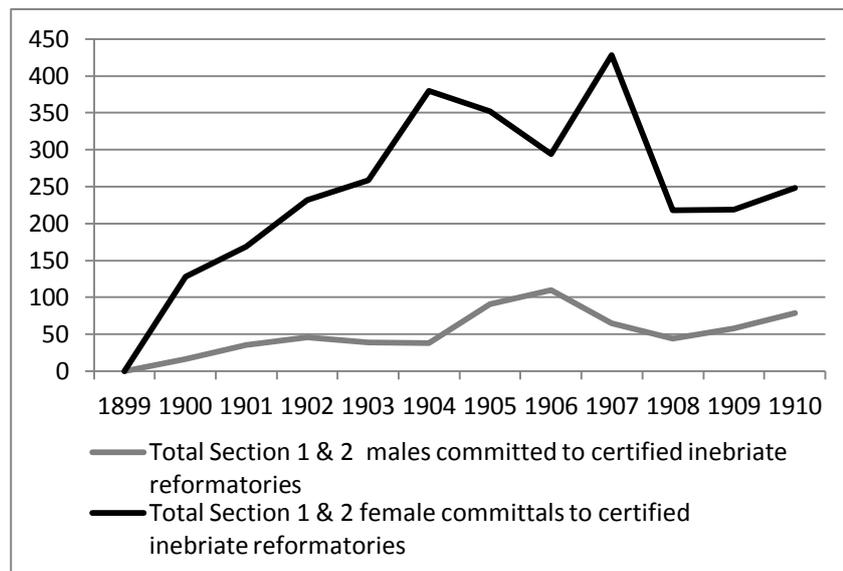
⁵⁸² *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1899*, p.33; (Cd.445) X.735.

not get off the ground and a reformatory failed to be provided. Similarly, County Durham, which contained the extensive coal mining and shipbuilding industries, considered building a reformatory (for its own county), but plans did not come to fruition.⁵⁸³ In addition, the Midlands certified inebriate reformatories were all situated in the perimeter of the Midlands industrial areas and the large industrial city of Birmingham lacked its own certified inebriate reformatory.

Female admissions to reformatories

Morrison notes that between “1870 and 1920 women on average committed twenty per cent of drunkenness offences” and “were also less likely to enter public houses, die from alcohol related causes...”⁵⁸⁴ However, women far outnumbered men in certified inebriate reformatories in the United Kingdom and according to Hunt et al the figure was as high as 81 per cent.⁵⁸⁵

Figure 15: Section 1 & 2 male and female committals to inebriate reformatories



Source: BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1910*, p.6; 1912-13(Cd.6166) XXIX.497

The attitudes towards women were complex, they were considered crucial to home life but if they were considered a bad influence they would be removed. As mentioned previously, some magistrates considered men were the main

⁵⁸³ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1899*, p.36; (Cd.445) X.735.

⁵⁸⁴ Morrison, “Ordering Disorderly Women”, p.9.

⁵⁸⁵ Hunt et al. “Wretched, Hatless and Miserably Clad”, p.246.

breadwinners and if they incarcerated a man for a period of up to three years in a reformatory the family would be dependent upon the local authority or parish. Women's earnings, the financial contribution they made to the family purse, and how much a family's survival depended upon a woman's earnings, were rarely if ever considered. In addition, as mentioned in Chapter 4, more staff was needed to supervise male inmates, thus making male reformatories more expensive to administer. Males' greater physical strength could also pose a threat to the security of staff if their authority was challenged. In his annual report for 1906 Dr Branthwaite, the Inspector of Inebriate Reformatories stated, "The comparatively small number of male committals, the apparent surfeit of accommodation for that sex, and the loss incurred by those Managers of Reformatories who had made arrangements for the reception of men, deterred others from taking steps towards the establishment of further provision."⁵⁸⁶ Inebriate legislation was drawn up to apply to both males and females alike; it was not envisioned there would be such a large imbalance in the number of females to males in inebriate reformatories. In practice, few local authorities established their own reformatories and few philanthropists were sufficiently interested or concerned about male inebriates to put their money into what they might have considered an unpopular and undesirable venture. The publicity in contemporary literature and newspapers, especially the sensational articles about female habitual drunkards, such as Jane Cakebread and Tottie Fay, reinforced the view that money should be directed towards female inebriate reformatories rather than male reformatories. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Jane Cakebread and Tottie Fay were habitual drunkards notorious for their hundreds of court appearances for drunkenness offences, but each town had similar cases.

In his 1909 report, Dr Branthwaite put forward what he believed were his three most persuasive reasons for the high number of women in inebriate reformatories England:

- (1) the deficiency in institutional accommodation for men

⁵⁸⁶ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1906*, p.11; (Cd. 3685) X.589.

- (2) the reluctance on the part of magistrates to commit men
- (3) the difference between the effect of alcoholic excess upon women and men.⁵⁸⁷

Classification

Women sent by the courts to a certified inebriate reformatory were classified and assessed upon admission to discern their physical and mental health and whether they were capable of reform. However, because Harold Burden had rented or purchased a series of five institutions to function as inebriate reformatories the NII were able to adopt a different classification procedure to other reformatories. Most inebriate reformatories such as Brentry and Langho admitted female habitual drunkards sent directly from the courts where they were housed in separate sections or buildings often known as cottages. Alan Kidd notes that cottage homes “pioneered by voluntary societies like Barnardo’s became a preferred policy from the 1870s”.⁵⁸⁸ Cottage homes could be used to provide for moral classification and improved opportunities for fulfilment. It was felt that girls should be housed in a family-like environment rather than in large institutions so that they could learn the domestic skills they needed to care and nurture others. Similarly, under the cottage system troublesome inebriates, those who were disruptive or insubordinate could be identified and housed separately from other inmates. Staff were then able to classify and isolate the women perceived as ‘hopeful’ of reform from those considered ‘hopeless’ or irreformable. Beckingham comments that the cottage system allowed for easier classification and supervision.⁵⁸⁹ However, a problem with the cottage method was that although different classes of inmates were separated there could still be opportunities for the ‘hopeful’ to mix with the ‘unhopeful’ during work and recreation. This could lead to well-behaved inmates being subjected to the influence of difficult to manage, disruptive and immoral inmates.⁵⁹⁰ The Inspector of Inebriate Reformatories considered that as many of the women had been living in filthy and unsanitary conditions and many had been living a life of

⁵⁸⁷ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1909*, p.17; (Cd. 5799) XXIX. PT.I.11.

⁵⁸⁸ Kidd, *State, Society and the Poor in Nineteenth-Century England*, p.57.

⁵⁸⁹ Beckingham, “An Historical Geography of Liberty”, p.396.

⁵⁹⁰ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1906*, p.19; (Cd. 3685) X.589.

prostitution, for them to mix with hopeful cases could lead to a dangerous situation.⁵⁹¹ Further, it took time for the reformatory staff to assess newly admitted inebriates, as the courts could not be relied upon to provide accurate information about the women's state of mind or health. It was not always possible to decide immediately which women sent from the courts needed treatment in a lunatic asylum and which women were unsuitable for a certified reformatory and should be committed to the state inebriate reformatory. This point was underlined by the Inspector of Reformatories who stated in his 1903 report:

...any attempt to distinguish the reformable from the irreformable upon evidence supplied at police courts is hopeless. Persons dealt with at that time, although not necessarily drunk, have not recovered from the influence of drink; their real character is masked and impossible to estimate correctly.⁵⁹²

Harold Burden made the point in his publicity booklet that St Joseph's Certified Inebriate Reformatory, Ashford; Duxhurst Certified Inebriate Reformatory; and Farmfield Certified Inebriate Reformatory had all suffered problems because the classification of inmates was inadequate. Many of the women sent to these reformatories from the courts were found to be insane, imbecile, violent, immoral and completely irreformable, which made them difficult to manage.⁵⁹³

St Joseph's Certified Inebriate Reformatory for Roman Catholic women, Ashford, was run by nuns for well-behaved, obedient, reformable inebriate women. The Roman Catholic sisters who ran the reformatory had been unprepared for the refractory and violent inebriates sent to them from the courts. The sisters had endeavoured to use the information provided by the police and any knowledge of the inebriates' previous history to admit only well-behaved inebriates and reject others with possible disruptive and violent tendencies. This method of selection proved unsuitable and many inmates refused to comply with the reformatory regime and were little different from

⁵⁹¹ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1903*, p.12; (Cd. 2285) XI.1.

⁵⁹² *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1903*, p.8; (Cd. 2285) XI.1.

⁵⁹³ *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women*, 1908, BRO 39910/PM/1.

inmates admitted to other inebriate institutions where no attempt at classification had been made. To discipline disruptive inmates and keep order within the reformatory the sisters relied upon moral and religious methods. It is unsurprising that such methods proved ineffective and according to the Inspector of Reformatories, the disruptive inmates interpreted the kindness of the sisters as weakness.⁵⁹⁴

Lady Somerset's Certified Inebriate Reformatory at Duxhurst experienced similar problems to Ashworth. Duxhurst combined the work of a licensed retreat with that of a certified reformatory. The institution was established to take female inmates under the Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879 and receive cases of confessed habitual drunkards on a voluntary basis. After the Inebriates Act, 1898 came into force provision was made to admit women who had been sent to the institution on a compulsory basis by the courts under the 1898 Act. It was thought that both types of inebriates could be treated within the same institution. The managers of Duxhurst reserved the right to select women under Section 2 of the Inebriates Acts (the non-criminal section) they considered suitable for admission on the information provided by the courts. The selection process, as in the case of Ashford, proved inadequate. The women sent to Duxhurst under the 1898 Act had a variety of problems and their presence in the reformatory impeded the work with the voluntary retreat cases.⁵⁹⁵ In 1902, Duxhurst stopped admitting women under Section 2 of the 1898 Act. In 1903, they restricted admissions to women convicted and sentenced under Section 1 of the Inebriates Act, 1898 for child neglect, caused or aggravated by drunkenness. This eased the problem, as women convicted of child neglect were considered more likely to be reformable than Section 2 cases and less liable to be difficult to manage. Women convicted of child neglect were often family women rather than women who were single, living in lodgings, or living on the streets.⁵⁹⁶ Further, the NSPCC were very thorough in their record keeping and obtained the life histories of the women sent to inebriate reformatories. Therefore, Duxhurst could have a reasonable idea of what to expect from the women sent

⁵⁹⁴ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1903*, p.7; (Cd. 2285) XI.1.

⁵⁹⁵ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1903*, p.7; (Cd. 2285) XI.1.

⁵⁹⁶ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1903*, p.7; (Cd. 2285) XI.1.

to the reformatory. Dr Branthwaite stated that this selection process resulted in Duxhurst “dealing with the cream of reformatory work, and is able to do, with mild measures, what has proved impossible in other places where committals are indiscriminate in character.”⁵⁹⁷ Obtaining a reliable history from the police, the courts and other organisations was a problem experienced by all inebriate reformatories.

As mentioned previously, Brentry had close links with the NII through Harold Burden’s position as honorary secretary, but it was not part of the NII. Brentry had adopted a classification system whereby cottages were used. Male and female inebriates were admitted to Brentry from the courts under Section 1 and Section 2 of the Inebriates Act, 1898. The male and female divisions of Brentry reformatory each consisted of four divisions: the reception house, a village complex comprised of separate cottages for hopeful inmates, a section for difficult to manage inmates and a penal section for refractory inmates. Females had their own infirmary and recreation hall. A chapel was situated in the administrative block, which was used by all inmates of the reformatory.⁵⁹⁸ A criticism made by Dr Branthwaite was that there would always be inmates ‘too good’ to be brought into contact with the ordinary type of inmates committed to the reformatory, and it was impossible for inmates of differing types not to have some association during the day. Dr Branthwaite, felt the solution to the problem was a self-contained fifth section strictly reserved for ‘hopeful’ cases. He considered that if this suggestion were put into action great benefit would accrue, as the good would be separated from the bad.⁵⁹⁹ McLaughlin notes the concern about the class of inebriates sent to reformatories was common and all reformatories had an ideal “client group” in mind of the type of persons that were most likely to be reformed.⁶⁰⁰ The preference was likely for younger women who were considered less likely to have been permanently corrupted than older inveterate habitual drunkards.

⁵⁹⁷ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1903*, p.10; (Cd. 2285) XI.1.

⁵⁹⁸ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1902*, p.6; (Cd.1823) X.657.

⁵⁹⁹ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1902*, p.6; (Cd.1823) X.657.

⁶⁰⁰ McLaughlin, “Inebriate Reformatories in Scotland”, p.87.

By 1904, Harold Burden had created five reformatories in his NII group and each reformatory was designated for a particular class of inebriate. After sentence by the courts or after serving their allotted time in prison, female habitual drunkards were sent either to the Southern Counties Reformatory, Lewes, Sussex, or to the Eastern Counties Reformatory, East Harling, Norfolk. These two institutions functioned as reception houses for the NII group of reformatories. The Southern Counties Reformatory catered for Roman Catholic women sent straight from the courts or prison and East Harling catered for Protestant women sent from the courts or prison, in both institutions for “cleansing and sorting.”⁶⁰¹ The language used of “cleansing and sorting” denotes that the women were expected to arrive dirty and ill kempt and gave the impression that some of the women were virtually sub-human. Further, the words “cleansing and sorting” signified that some women were deserving of treatment whilst others were undeserving. Upon admission to either Lewes or East Harling, and after a reasonable period of sobriety, a judgement was made concerning the mental condition and character of the new inmates. This procedure appears straight forward, but in practice it was fraught with difficulties. Dr Branthwaite commented in his annual report for 1905 that all communities included criminals, lunatics, or disorderly drunkards, and special provision had to be made to deal with them so that the public would be protected from any misbehaviour. Harold Burden felt that the way forward was to take time to assess and separate those that could be problem individuals from those perceived amenable to the discipline of the reformatory. He considered that by this method there was the likelihood of returning women back into society as useful citizens.

The Reformatory at Lewes was a former workhouse that had fallen into disuse by the time Harold Burden took possession of it. The reformatory was intended for the reception of women sent by the courts under Section 1 and Section 2 of the Inebriates Act, 1898 by any court in England and Wales. The only stipulation being that the local authorities, from whose jurisdiction the women were sent, accepted responsibility for their share of the financial liability. The

⁶⁰¹ *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women*, 1908, BRO 39910/PM/1.

building at Lewes needed very little alteration when Harold Burden took it over. He used the original workhouse division between male and female paupers to classify inebriate inmates and the old tramp wards were remodelled to form the accommodation for refractory cases. The workhouse infirmary and chapel remained for the use of inebriates.⁶⁰² Compared to the other reformatories in the NII group, the reformatories established in the redundant workhouse buildings appear more forbidding with rooms plainly decorated and furnished.⁶⁰³ Kidd states that from the late nineteenth century the guardians of workhouses were being urged to classify inmates more clearly, in terms of the causes of their poverty and their character.⁶⁰⁴ From the 1860s, the greatest cost in workhouses had been in construction, but after the 1870s most construction expenditure was used for additional blocks on existing workhouses. The building of separate blocks of buildings sited on the same workhouse premises allowed for greater classification and a sharp division between “the deserving and the undeserving.”⁶⁰⁵ The women admitted to Lewes who were well behaved stayed for just a short time before being transferred to another more comfortable reformatory. Women who proved difficult to manage remained in the basic penal like accommodation at Lewes. Whilst Roman Catholic inebriates were sent to Lewes initially they were transferred to other NII reformatories according to how well they conducted themselves and not according to their religion. It was probably cheaper in the first instance to make special arrangements for all the Roman Catholic inmates to be catered for in the same reformatory. After transfer it seems that there were not enough Roman Catholic inebriates to justify the creation of dedicated reformatories. It therefore made economic sense for Harold Burden to use former workhouses as receiving houses where inmates could be accommodated in basic accommodation as only a minimum financial outlay was needed to render the buildings suitable. It was also likely that the buildings could have been acquired cheaply as they were redundant workhouses and at much less expense than the large houses set in their own grounds, such as Ackworth and Chesterfield.

⁶⁰² *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1902*, p.8; (Cd.1823) X.657.

⁶⁰³ See the photographs of NII reformatories in the 1908 Booklet: *Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women*, BRO 39910/PM/1.

⁶⁰⁴ Kidd, *State, Society and the Poor in Nineteenth-Century England*, p.55.

⁶⁰⁵ Kidd, *State, Society and the Poor in Nineteenth-Century England*, p.55.

East Harling was described by the Inspector of Inebriates as a “most economically provided reformatory”.⁶⁰⁶ East Harling was also a former workhouse and was situated in a rural area of Norfolk. The buildings were fenced in, repaired, cleaned and whitewashed in order to admit inebriates. The two-storey building at East Harling had fourteen-inch thick walls, which were mostly whitewashed. The rooms opened into one another, but there were a few separate rooms for special cases. The inmates slept in dormitories consisting of nine inmates each. In addition, extra wings had been added to the building making it an institution that had the capacity to accommodate three hundred people and was the largest of the NII reformatories.⁶⁰⁷ East Harling was described by the Inebriates Inspector as a “marvel of cheapness” and demonstrated that “good enough provision can be made without the enormous expenditure now apparently necessary in buildings erected for public purposes.”⁶⁰⁸ Further, he stated that cleaning the reformatory was simple by scrubbing the paint and whitewashing the walls and was perfectly good enough for the inmates few of whom have ever lived in such comfortable accommodation.⁶⁰⁹ These remarks demonstrate that inmates in East Harling were incarcerated in semi-penal conditions until discharge at the lowest possible cost. The “special purpose” of East Harling was to cater for feeble-minded, epileptic, physically diseased, and aged inebriates transferred from other reformatories.⁶¹⁰ The “moral refuse heaps” for inebriates that were considered by Dr Branthwaite to be in a state of “unimprovable degradation” and “hopelessly defective.”⁶¹¹ This reformatory as well as having separate sections for epileptics, consumptives and a yard and two beds for venereal cases, also had a block for feeble-minded inmates, something that NII’s other reformatories lacked.

Women who were well behaved, physically able-bodied and healthy were transferred to a part of the reformatory away from refractory or troublesome

⁶⁰⁶ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1905*, p.7; (Cd. 3246) XVI.1.

⁶⁰⁷ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1905*, p.7; (Cd. 3246) XVI.1.

⁶⁰⁸ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1905*, p.8; (Cd. 3246) XVI.1.

⁶⁰⁹ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1905*, p.8; (Cd. 3246) XVI.1.

⁶¹⁰ *The Report of the inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1904*, p. 6; (Cd.2590) XI.147.

⁶¹¹ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1905*, p.9; (Cd.3246) XVI.1.

inmates. If their behaviour continued to improve, they were transferred by order of the Secretary of State to a better NII reformatory that accommodated a better class of inmates, but if their conduct was troublesome, they were removed to a wing set aside for difficult cases where they remained for the duration of their sentence.⁶¹² The system adopted by the NII was intended to encourage women to be well behaved and continue to be well behaved. The possibility of transfer to a better reformatory helped maintain good behaviour in East Harling and Lewes. However, if an inmate was epileptic, diseased or very aged their behaviour was of little consequence. If the managers of Lewes and East Harling were unsure whether an inmate was reformable or irreformable they were transferred to the North Midlands Reformatory at Ackworth. Should conduct improve whilst at Ackworth and inmates be considered reformable, they were transferred again to Chesterfield reformatory. Conversely, if inmates of Lewes and East Harling were transferred to Ackworth and their conduct deteriorated they were sent back to Lewes or East Harling. Ackworth inmate reformatory was a former teacher training college and needed very little adaptation to turn it into an inmate reformatory. It was described by the Inmate Inspector as “pleasantly and healthily situated” on rising ground; the buildings were arranged in a quadrangle, which made the surveillance and supervision of the inmates convenient.⁶¹³ Foucault considered that the development of institutions such as asylums was linked to the progress of surveillance and discipline. He used Jeremy Bentham’s (1748-1832) idea of the panopticon as a metaphor for the operation of power and surveillance.⁶¹⁴ Foucault writes there are two “images of discipline” the enclosed institution on the fringes of society, concerned with “arresting evil, breaking communications and suspending time” and the panopticon.⁶¹⁵ The panopticon functions by exerting discipline through subjecting the individual to constant observance.⁶¹⁶ The panopticon could be used for a range of different techniques and to observe their effects on the prisoner, including “alter behaviour, to train or

⁶¹² *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1905*, p.21; (Cd.3246) XVI.1.

⁶¹³ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1903*, p.11; (Cd. 2285) XI.1.

⁶¹⁴ <http://www.michel-foucault.com/concepts/> Accessed 22 March 2013.

⁶¹⁵ Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison* p.209.

⁶¹⁶ Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison* p.209.

correct individuals.”⁶¹⁷ Foucault notes that, “Whenever one is dealing with a multiplicity of individuals on whom a task or a particular form of behaviour must be imposed, the panoptic schema may be used.”⁶¹⁸ Female habitual drunkards might be described as aberrant as they were considered to be behaving in an unfeminine manner. Such behaviour could be viewed as masculine and, therefore, their conduct needed to be altered to culturally acceptable notions of femininity and trained in new habits.

As mentioned, surveillance was important to inebriate institutions whether inmates were housed in cottages, or like Ackworth around a quadrangle. East Harling, consisted of four blocks radiating from the superintendent’s quarters. Inmates’ freedom was curtailed by the walls of the buildings, but it appears also to have been curtailed by a form of moral control, which tied inmates to strict regimes in order that they would be “docile bodies” and not pose a threat to the authorities.⁶¹⁹ Although, Harold Burden did not erect these reformatories, but merely took them over from the previous owners, he obviously considered them suitable and he used the different standards of buildings as part of the system of moral classification.

Chesterfield was considered the most superior of all the NII reformatories and only those women who had acquitted themselves well in one of the other NII reformatories were admitted. This reformatory had been a large residential house, which stood in its own grounds surrounded by parkland. There were no walls or high fences or anything that might indicate that Chesterfield was an inebriate reformatory. Lighter restrictions applied at Chesterfield than at Lewes, East Harling or Ackworth, which made it suitable for well-behaved inmates and unsuitable for refractory inmates.

Finally, the RVH Horfield institution was used as a discharge house where women were sent to serve the last three to six months of their sentence from any NII reformatory. At Horfield, women were allowed special privileges to

⁶¹⁷ Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, p.203.

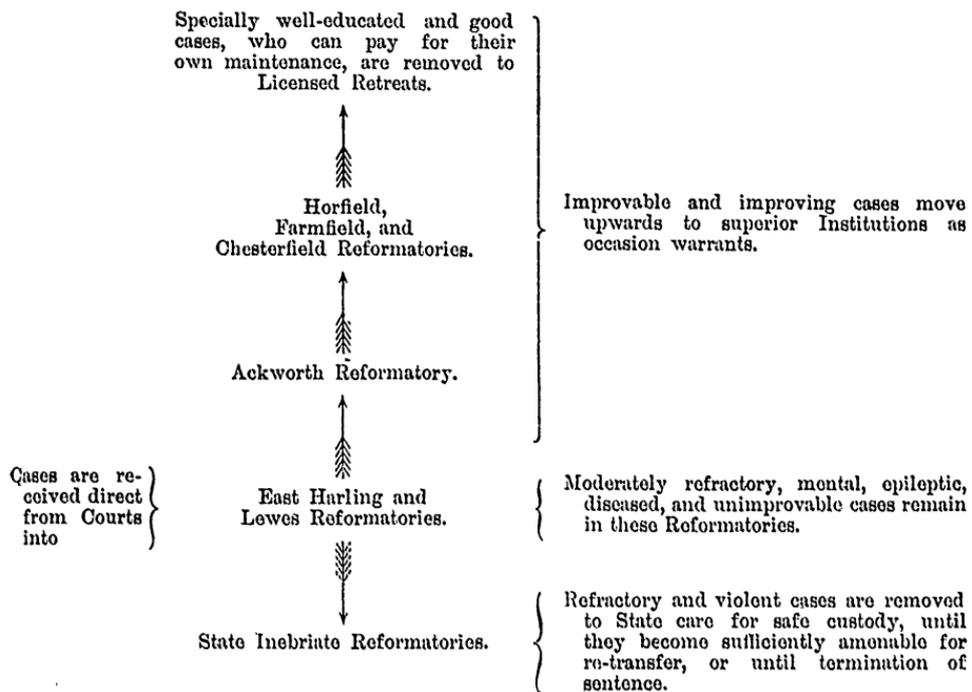
⁶¹⁸ Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, p.205.

⁶¹⁹ Anne-Marie Barry and Chris Yuill, *Understanding the Sociology of Health: An Introduction*. Second Edition. London: Sage Publications, 2008, pp.235-6.

prepare them for release. It could be argued that by this stage inmates might have succumbed to moral control and were “docile bodies” who did not pose a threat to the authorities. Horfield functioned as a type of half way house to prepare inmates for the freedom of the city outside the walls of the reformatory. The staff at Horfield helped familiarise inmates with the everyday life of a town before discharge. Nevertheless, they were not permitted to walk alone in the streets and the staff had to accompany inmates during walks and shopping expeditions⁶²⁰ For some inmates the transition from the strict regime of the inebriate institution to the freedom of life outside the institution might prove too difficult for them to manage and they could be in danger of falling back into their old drinking habits.

Figure 16: The complete classification scheme of the NII in diagrammatic format

The complete classification scheme, so far as this group of Reformatories is concerned, may be diagrammatically illustrated as follows :—



Source: BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1906*, p.19; 1907 (Cd. 3685) X.589

⁶²⁰ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1902*, p.9; (Cd.1823) X.657.

To demonstrate that the classification system outlined above was “no paper scheme” and to clearly show how the system worked, an NII publicity booklet of 1908 noted the numbers of transfers that had taken place for the year 1906:

143 women were removed from East Harling –
89 to Ackworth
25 to Farmfield
10 to Chesterfield
19 to Aylesbury

68 women were removed from Lewes –
30 to Farmfield
21 to Aylesbury
12 to Horfield
5 to Ackworth

63 women were removed from Ackworth -
44 to Chesterfield
19 to Farmfield

22 women were removed to Horfield from Chesterfield.
Farmfield transferred 5 women to either Lewes or East Harling

During one year a total of 301 persons were transferred from one reformatory to another in order to remove the hopeful from the ‘irreformable’, and to give the hopeful the greatest possible chance of reform.⁶²¹ These figures would have been typical of the numbers transferred up to 1908. After that date, inebriate reformatories began to close down. The costs of the transfers, except for the removals to Aylesbury State Inebriate Reformatory, were the responsibility of the managers of certified reformatories and amounted to more than £274. The author of the 1908 booklet suggested that this was “some guarantee of the desire, on the part of those who control institutions, to do their best at any cost for the benefit of persons who are placed in their charge.”⁶²²

Women committed to the NII under the Inebriates Act, 1898 who were deemed ‘better class’ and thought unsuitable for long continued detention in an inebriate

⁶²¹ *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women, 1908, BRO 39910/PM/1.*

⁶²² *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women, 1908, BRO 39910/PM/1.*

reformatory could be removed to a retreat on conditional license. It was considered that by this course of action they would mix with people of their own rank. Whilst affluent middle class women habitual drunkards were committed to reformatories on the same basis as working class habitual drunkards, their money and status could buy them the privilege of entering a retreat, which was denied to working class habitual drunkards. However, it is unlikely that many middle class women came before the police courts. The system of rewards and punishment to obtain better or more comfortable accommodation or treatment was also used in prisons and some institutions.

Dr Branthwaite, the Inspector of Reformatories praised Harold Burden for the advances he had made in the classification of inebriates, which he felt had come to fruition after years of experience. Dr Branthwaite considered the method of classification adopted by the NII “approaches nearest to the ideal.”⁶²³ The NII system of classification meant that inmates in one of the group’s reformatories were all at a similar stage of reform or categorised as unlikely to be reformed. The system meant that those in the intermediate or better class reformatories were not exposed to those still under the influence of the craving for drink and those considered irreformable. Moreover, resources could be allocated to places thought more suitable such as Chesterfield, where the women were seen as the most likely to be reformed. The women least likely to be reformed needed little resources other than strict supervision. The weak point of the NII classification system was that magistrates sent too few cases deemed ‘hopeful’ to reformatories, with the result that the institutions set aside for ‘hopeful’ cases ran at half capacity and financial problems ensued. In addition, magistrates’ reluctance to send ‘hopeful’ cases to reformatories made reform rates appear poor, which gave the impression that the system was failing. This in turn, confirmed the appropriateness of magistrates’ decision not to send habitual drunkards to inebriate reformatories as there was little likelihood of benefit and it was a poor use of finances.

⁶²³ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1906, p.19, (Cd. 3685) X.589.*

Some women were unable to cope with the routine of a certified inebriate reformatory and the challenging behaviour they displayed was often classified as insanity. However, such women may have been suffering from a physical illness or been mentally ill and therefore any attempt at reform would be ineffective. These cases were transferred to a lunatic asylum for treatment, where some of them eventually died. Harold Burden considered that, as far as possible, he had put in place a system that catered for all types of women and remarked that the NII's classification system meant, "No case need be too bad or too good" for his group of reformatories.⁶²⁴

Classification has been studied before in the context of other institutions such as workhouses and lunatic asylums, but little has been written by historians about the classification system used by the NII's network of reformatories. For example, paupers in workhouses were classified according to age, sex and infirmity. A suggestion was put forward in 1890 at the Annual Conference of Poor Law Guardians of the West Midland district that poor law unions should work together to separate people by their character. It was proposed that it would be practical to have a house for the worthy, a house for the idle and dissolute, a house for the sick, and a house for "sickness induced by depraved habits such as the habitual drunkard." Unmarried mothers and cases not deserving of hospital would also be housed separately.⁶²⁵ The inebriate system links to these other ways of classification and although Harold Burden's system may have been unique in the context of inebriate reformatories, it was not in the wider sphere of Victorian and Edwardian society. In addition, classification had been undertaken in many fields of research not connected with institutions for example, social sciences and the work of Charles Booth, Charles Darwin and in the medical advances in classifying diseases. How Harold Burden classified inmates is noteworthy because it demonstrates the way his organisation classified the people in his care and how other inebriate reformatories were influenced by the way he managed his institutions.

⁶²⁴ *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women, 1908*, BRO 39910/PM/1.

⁶²⁵ "T. Lloyd Murray-Browne, "Classification of Workhouses: A paper read by at the Annual Conference of Poor Law Guardians, Etc. of the West Midland District." (May 1890) *LSE Pamphlets*. p.10. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/60222637> Accessed 10 June 2013.

Farmfield Inebriate Reformatory and the NII

Farmfield, Horley, Surrey opened in 1900 and was owned and managed by the London County Council. It was not part of the NII group of reformatories, as it had been set up by London County Council to deal with its own cases.

However, Farmfield is used in this thesis to compare with the benefits of the NII system. By 1906 Farmfield was working with the NII group to classify and accommodate its inebriates.⁶²⁶

In 1902, Dr Branthwaite expressed concerns that Farmfield's buildings consisted of a series of blocks "which affords some opportunity for useful classification", but it was not possible to prevent "good and bad cases" coming into contact with each other during work and recreation.⁶²⁷ Hunt et al note that despite courts attempts to "select reformable cases for Farmfield" by 1903 concerns had been raised that Farmfield's selection procedures were defective.

⁶²⁸ This is demonstrated by the Inspector of Reformatories:

The cases at Farmfield are of a type little, if any, better than those admitted to institutions where no effort at selection is made; during the last year for instance, a greater proportion of cases have been transferred from Farmfield to the State Reformatory than from any other similar institution.⁶²⁹

The Inspector considered that it was of prime importance to put in place an efficient classification method.⁶³⁰

Another problem that the managers of Farmfield encountered was that the reformatory was frequently full and, therefore, it was difficult for institutional places to be found for all London County Council cases. When Farmfield joined the NII group the contract was beneficial to both parties. Farmfield benefitted from an efficient system of classifying inebriates and found places for its

⁶²⁶ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1906*, p.20; (Cd. 3685) X.589.

⁶²⁷ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1902*, p.8; (Cd.1823) X.657.

⁶²⁸ Hunt et al, "Wretched, Hatless and Miserably Clad", p.263.

⁶²⁹ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1903*, p9; (Cd. 2285) XI.1.

⁶³⁰ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1903*, p9; (Cd. 2285) XI.1.

inebriates. For the NII, Farmfield's use of beds increased income and added prestige to his organisation. This can be demonstrated in the 1908 publicity booklet in which Harold Burden announced that co-operation between the London County Council reformatory and the NII made possible a complete classification process.⁶³¹ In addition, the quality of women sent to Farmfield improved because the NII group's Southern Counties and Eastern Counties Inebriate Reformatories were used to receive and assess Farmfield inmates.⁶³² The benefits of the NII classification system were not lost on other inebriate reformatories. As the most unmanageable inebriates were sent to the NII's receiving reformatories it enabled reformatories such as Farmfield, St Joseph's and Duxhurst able to manage their inebriates where they had experienced problems previously.

Unmanageable, uncontrollable and violent women

The role of the state inebriate reformatory was vitally important to the NII and other certified inebriate reformatories because it allowed them to run their institutions as efficiently as possible with the minimum possible disruption to daily routine. Aylesbury Inebriate Reformatory gave Harold Burden and managers of reformatories confidence that should an inmate become uncontrollable she could be transferred to a more penal environment, once permission had been obtained from the Secretary of State. Historians such as Hunt et al and Beckingham considered Aylesbury Inebriate Reformatory as a last resort to which violent, unruly inmates from certified reformatories could be transferred.⁶³³

Women in any reformatory in England who proved unmanageable, uncontrollable, or violent were transferred by warrant of the Secretary of State to the state inebriate reformatory at Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. This was the only state reformatory established for England and Wales. Around ten to twelve percent of inebriates were found to be unmanageable in certified reformatories

⁶³¹ *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women, 1908*, BRO 39910/PM/1.

⁶³² Hunt et al, "Wretched, Hatless and Miserably Clad", p.263.

⁶³³ Hunt et al, "Wretched, Hatless and Miserably Clad", p.245. Beckingham. "An Historical Geography of Liberty."

and transferred to a State inebriate reformatory. In August 1901 a section of Aylesbury Prison had been set aside temporarily for inebriate women, and in 1902 permanent accommodation was provided.⁶³⁴ Certified Reformatories had not been set up or equipped to deal with refractory and violent inebriates, and for the first two years of the Inebriates Act, 1898 the Government had failed to establish a state inebriate reformatory. During the first twenty-one months of the Inebriates Act, 1898 eleven inmates proved uncontrollable in inebriate reformatories and required a transfer, but as no state reformatory was in existence, the inmates had to be discharged. This appeared to put a premium on bad conduct and signalled to inmates that if they made themselves sufficiently intolerable they could gain their freedom. It also rendered the 1898 Act ineffective and appeared to reward rather than punish bad behaviour; therefore, in response to this problem and complaints from inebriate reformatory managers the state inebriate reformatory at Aylesbury was established.

The State Reformatory at Aylesbury was predominantly used for the detention of difficult unruly women who interfered with the work of certified reformatories and constituted a serious danger to reformatory inmates, the staff and the public. The Aylesbury reformatory received some of the worst characters committed to detention under the Inebriates Act, 1898, and only loosely could be said to function as an institution with the aim of reform. Many of the women that came into Aylesbury or were sent to Aylesbury from other reformatories were from the poorest sections of society who had been caught up in the revolving door of short prison sentences followed by committal to an inebriate reformatory only to offend again and be imprisoned or committed to a lunatic asylum. The reformatory comprised of women that were considered to have lived wicked, immoral lives, who were a problem to the police and prison authorities. It was thought they were often too old, too insane, or too entrenched in their ways for any hope of reformation. The Aylesbury inmates were classified into three groups, "penal, ordinary, and special" and each class was identified by wearing a badge. However, inmates were enabled to move from one class to another if their conduct warranted it. The special class of

⁶³⁴ *Report of the Departmental Committee Appointed to Inquire into the Operation of the Law Relating to Inebriates*; p.24:1908 (Cd.4438) XII.861.

inmates had a greater level of trust than the other classes and could be removed to a certified inebriate reformatory should it be felt that a reasonable hope of reformation was possible.⁶³⁵

Under the Inebriates Act, 1898, Section 1 criminal cases could be sent directly from the courts to any certified inebriate reformatory if the managers were willing to receive them, or to the State Inebriate Reformatory at Aylesbury. The Inspector of Inebriate Reformatories commented in his annual report of 1902 that it was assumed criminal inebriates were more difficult to control and less amenable to discipline than inebriates detained under Section 2 of the 1898 Act. Conversely, this assumption proved in practice to be incorrect, and the experience gained by certified reformatories in the two years before Aylesbury State Inebriate Reformatory was inaugurated demonstrated that Section 2 inebriates were more troublesome than criminal inebriates. The criminal class of inebriates detained under Section 1 were found to be less violent and more likely to be reformed.⁶³⁶ The explanation for this was that most criminal inebriates were women prosecuted by the NSPCC for neglect or cruelty to children and were not women who had been before the courts on numerous occasions for public order offences. Inebriate inmates who behaved well could be transferred back to the certified inebriate reformatory they came from and this made the success rate of reform at Aylesbury very small, although the figures of how many of the women transferred from the state reformatory back to a certified reformatory do not appear to have been recorded. In contrast, Dr Branthwaite, Inspector of Inebriate Reformatories in 1902 was optimistic about the possibility of reform at Aylesbury and stated that this would be demonstrated in the number of cases returned to certified inebriate institutions.⁶³⁷ However, the Inspector's optimism had waned in his 1906 report, as he stated the most important aspect of the state inebriate reformatory was the detention of unmanageable inebriates for the good of the community. Dr Branthwaite's 1906 report noted that only a few inmates had responded to

⁶³⁵ BPP *General Regulations for the Management and Discipline of State Inebriate Reformatories*, p.7; 1901 (Cd.656) LXI.199.

⁶³⁶ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1901*, pp.116 &117; (Cd. 1381) XII.697.

⁶³⁷ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1901*, p.119; (Cd. 1381) XII.697.

treatment at Aylesbury and the majority of Aylesbury's inmates stayed within the reformatory until discharge.⁶³⁸ In his article on Lancashire, Beckingham considers the state reformatory showed no pretence of reform and merely provided detention for difficult to manage inebriates.⁶³⁹ Therefore, the cases that remained in Aylesbury did so because they were considered 'hopeless' cases.

Only a small proportion of women were sent to Aylesbury from those admitted to certified reformatories. The Governor of Aylesbury Inebriate Reformatory reported that up to the end of 1903 just thirty-three females had been sent to Aylesbury from the 700 women committed to inebriate reformatories and all were insubordinate and violent.⁶⁴⁰ He stated in his report of 1902 that all the women transferred from a certified reformatory resented the transfer and he believed that upon transfer they were determined to make life difficult through violence and insubordination for those in authority. In order to counteract this problem stringent and repressive measures had to be taken and offenders severely punished.⁶⁴¹ Occasionally, compulsory feeding had to be undertaken when inmates persistently refused food.⁶⁴² Many of the inmates at Aylesbury were considered "borderland" cases, of unsound mind but not certifiable as insane. Seventy-five percent of Aylesbury inmates were considered by the Governor to be defective in mind, and twenty-five percent consisted of persons so confirmed in their bad habits that they had no desire to live any other life than one of drunkenness, crime and immorality. It was felt that such women had become too entrenched in a life of alcohol and crime because they knew no other life and were beyond hope of permanent change.⁶⁴³

Whatever type of classification system was adopted by licensed inebriate retreats, certified inebriate reformatories and state inebriate reformatories all these institutions were required to follow Parliamentary regulations. Garland

⁶³⁸ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1905*, p.97; (Cd. 3246) XVI.1.

⁶³⁹ Beckingham, "An Historical Geography of Liberty", p.398

⁶⁴⁰ BPP *Report of the Commissioners of Prisons and the Directors of Convict Prisons, with Appendices*, p.69; 1904 (Cd.1800) XXXV.1.

⁶⁴¹ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1901*, p.129; (Cd. 1381) XII.697.

⁶⁴² *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1901*, p.130; (Cd. 1381) XII.697.

⁶⁴³ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1906*, p.91; (Cd. 3685) X.589.

notes that the Prison Act 1877 had put county gaols into the hands of central government, thus ensuring that Britain had a strictly regulated centrally administered system of dealing with offenders.⁶⁴⁴ The aim appears to have been uniformity throughout various types of government penal institutions. Whether institutions were prisons, state inebriate reformatories, certified inebriate reformatories or licensed retreats they were all subject to government inspection and control. Uniformity has also been highlighted in the way the Burdens administered their organisation from a central office. Also highlighted was the complexities of legislation and private reform and although the Government may have wanted uniformity in the implementation of the Inebriates Act, adequate funding was not available, therefore it was left to private enterprise and the result was not every area in the country had a certified inebriate reformatory. It seems that the compromise offered by the Government, that councils could purchase beds for its inebriates, led to patchy and incomplete reform. Private business would not create reformatories unless practical and profitable to do so, and this highlights the complexities of the relationship between legislative reform and private enterprise .

Analysis of 100 women admitted to an NII reformatory from 1902-1906

The aim of the NII analysis is to investigate as far as possible the kinds of women sent by the courts to an NII certified inebriate reformatory. The purpose of the analysis is to give an insight into the social backgrounds of women in inebriate reformatories. The data for the analysis is extracted from a register of 203 cases of the NII Midlands Counties Reformatory, from 1902-1910 held at Bristol Record Office. The data analyses the first one hundred cases in date order recorded on the register. Hunt et al also undertook an examination of the records of Farmfield Certified Inebriate Reformatory to discover the kinds of women sent to Farmfield.⁶⁴⁵ They analysed a sample of one in ten records extracted from 932 admission records, 94 records in total and made the point that their analysis relied upon records kept for other purposes and complete

⁶⁴⁴ David Garland, *Punishment and Welfare*. Aldershot: Gower Publishing Company Ltd, 1985, p.9.

⁶⁴⁵ *National Institutions for Inebriates*. Midland Counties Case Registers, 1902-1910 with Index, 1 Vol, BRO 40686/NI/5/a.

accuracy was not possible, since the records could only give an impression of the reformatory.⁶⁴⁶ The NII data used for this thesis was also kept for other purposes and dates of admissions, transfers and discharges were not consistently recorded. However, all the women on the register were sent to an NII reformatory, assessed and classified; therefore, the NII analysis presents a useful general impression of the types of women admitted to its reformatories. Further, the NII analysis differs from Hunt et al's because the women came from many areas of England and not just the London area.

The addresses of the inmates recorded in the register show that women were transported long distances from their homes, friends and families. This made physical contact difficult as friends and family would have been too poor to visit, which would have reinforced the women's isolation and total break from their old lives. Moreover, women were moved from reformatory to reformatory, which would also have made visits difficult. The analysis demonstrates that a large number of London County Council's inebriates were sent to NII reformatories, and this was probably an important source of income.⁶⁴⁷ In this sample, forty of the women had been transferred to RVH Horfield, Bristol, in order to prepare them for life outside the reformatory before discharge. Fifty-three women had been transferred from Ackworth Reformatory to another NII inebriate reformatory. The register does not state to which reformatory the Ackworth women were transferred, but as most of the women were discharged within a few months of transfer it seems highly likely that they were transferred to the RVH Horfield. Twenty-nine women were transferred from Ackworth on the 1 July 1904 and sixteen on the 28 July 1904, therefore, admission procedures may at times have been extremely busy and some of the women's details unrecorded. The register suggests that the preferred way to transfer women to another reformatory was en bloc, which would have been the most economical method of transporting women around the country. Forty-five women had been admitted to the Southern Counties Reformatory, Lewes before transfer to another NII reformatory. One woman had been admitted to the Southern

⁶⁴⁶ Hunt et al, "Wretched, Hatless and Miserably Clad", p.257.

⁶⁴⁷ See Appendix 6. Analysis of 100 female NII inmates extracted from the Midland Counties Register of Cases October 1902 to February 1906.

Counties Reformatory, Lewes, for a short period and was then admitted to the Eastern Counties Reformatory, East Harling; North Midlands Reformatory, Ackworth; and finally the RVH, Horfield. The NII inmates were transported from reformatory to reformatory according to their conduct and the accommodation available. The flexibility of the NII system ensured that all beds could be utilised as economically as possible, empty reformatory beds would be filled and places would be available. The result of this flexible system was that Harold Burden could run his NII reformatories efficiently and inexpensively to generate as much income as possible. However, it could be argued that women were treated as commodities and moved from place to place for economic convenience rather than for their benefit.

The majority of women were recorded on the North Midlands register as English and one woman as British. Two women were recorded as Irish and their religion given as Church of England. It is possible that the women felt they would receive better treatment if they gave their religion as Church of England. One of the women had been an inmate of Lewes Reformatory, which made special provision for Roman Catholics. Two women were recorded as Greek and they were the only two women from countries overseas, apart from Ireland. Hunt et al's results for nationality were similar to the NII, their case records also showed that the majority of the women were English.⁶⁴⁸ It is interesting to note how few ethnic minority women were recorded in both the NII and Farmfield studies. It is unclear how many women from ethnic minorities were habitual drunkards and sentenced under the Inebriates Act, and this is a matter for further research. Only four of the women were non-conformists, which would be expected as many non-conformist chapels robustly promoted temperance.

Sixty-nine of the NII inmates were recorded as married and one woman was recorded as married with three children. The majority of women recorded in the NII North Midlands register were in their thirties or forties, only twelve women were under thirty and only six women over fifty. The youngest woman was eighteen and the oldest sixty. Not all the married women lived with their

⁶⁴⁸ Hunt et al, "Wretched, Hatless and Miserably Clad", p.261.

husbands and families. Seven married women were recorded as having lived alone, seven women were recorded as having lived with husbands. It could be speculated, therefore, that most of the older women had adult children who had left home. Dr Branthwaite made the point in his 1909 report that as the average age of women admitted to reformatories was around 38 most women would have had very young children.⁶⁴⁹ One woman was described as divorced, one woman as separated from her husband, and one married woman lived with her mother. Under the Licensing Act, 1902 the husband of a habitual drunkard could apply to the court for an order that he was no longer bound to co-habit with his wife and could take custody of the children. A sum of money was agreed for the maintenance of the wife not exceeding £2.00 per week. Many working class men and women would not have been able to afford the court costs of divorce or legal separation. Twenty-two inmates of the reformatory were recorded as single, two lived in lodgings and one lived with her mother. It was also noted that ten women were widows, one lived with a married sister and four lived with their families.

The occupation data shows that the majority of women admitted to the reformatories were working class, the largest proportion being recorded as housewives, servants and charwomen. The only occupations that approached a middle class status were a governess and a Post Office clerk; both occupations required a good level of literacy. There appears to be little uniformity in sentencing with some women sentenced under section 1 of the Inebriates Act, 1898 being given two year sentences, whilst others sentenced under section 2 of the 1898 Act, three years. In addition, more women had been sent to the reformatory under section 1 (37 women) than section 2 (31 women). Many of the section 1 committals were likely to have been brought by the NSPCC against women who neglected their children. Finally, most of the women were over 5 feet tall, which illustrates that most women were of normal stature and probably had been adequately nourished.

⁶⁴⁹ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1909*, p.27; (Cd.5799) XXIX.PT.I.11.

The separation and segregation from the influences of the women's old lives were not only achieved by the physical barriers of the reformatory, but also by the isolation incurred at having to travel many miles, from their homes to unfamiliar places. Transferring women to reformatories seems to have been determined largely by practical and financial considerations as well as behaviour and compliance to the regime of an inebriate reformatory.

The bulk of the women in the analysis were of child-bearing age and, therefore, their excessive drinking habits would be deemed a threat to society. Nursing babies were allowed to accompany their mothers to an NII reformatory, which is demonstrated in photographs published in a 1908 NII publicity booklet that depicts some of the babies born in the Eastern Counties Reformatory, East Harling. The babies' age range appears to be between a few months and two years. There are no records of children transferred with mothers to other reformatories; therefore, it is likely that mothers stayed with their children in the Eastern Counties Reformatory, East Harling or the Southern Counties Reformatory, Lewes until the children were weaned. After weaning alternative arrangements might be made for the children because they were less dependent upon their mothers, and the mothers could be transferred to other reformatories if considered appropriate.

Figure 17: Some of the babies born at Eastern Counties Reformatory, East Harling



Source: *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women, 1908.* BRO 39910/PM/1.

Figure 18: Some of the inmates nursing their infants at the Southern Counties Reformatory, Lewes



Source: *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women, 1908*. BRO 39910/PM/1.

Some pregnant women were admitted to an NII reformatory. The publicity booklet of 1908 depicted inmates nursing their babies at Lewes Inebriate Reformatory (as well as the lying in ward). Very little is known about children born to women inebriates in reformatories. However, in 1900, Dr William Sullivan carried out a study of women inmates at Liverpool prison to discover the influence of maternal inebriety on the development of children and published his investigation in the *Society for the Study of Inebriety* journal. He compared the outcomes of alcoholic women's pregnancies with their non-alcoholic relatives' pregnancies.⁶⁵⁰ Dr Sullivan found that the deaths of children born to the alcoholic mothers were nearly two and a half times greater than their sober relatives and if conception occurred whilst a woman was drunk, the children were stillborn or died soon afterwards.⁶⁵¹ He concluded that alcohol played an important role in racial deterioration and he suggested that enforced sobriety by imprisonment during part of the pregnancy had a favourable effect on a child's survival and prevented the procreation of children who would be a

⁶⁵⁰ Valverde, *Diseases of the Will*, p.57

⁶⁵¹ Dr William Sullivan, "The Children of the Female Drunkard." *Proceedings of the Society for the Study of Inebriety*, 63 (February 1900) 1-8, p.3 & 5.

burden and danger to society.⁶⁵² To discover more about the women in certified reformatories Dr Branthwaite collected extensive personal details from 865 women committed to reformatories to ascertain their fertility and the mortality of their children, and published his findings in his 1909 annual report.⁶⁵³ This report recorded that 2,589 children had been born to 865 women detained in inebriate reformatories and of that number, 1,199 children had died (46.31 per cent).⁶⁵⁴ The highest death rates were amongst single women, 61.43 per cent as compared to 41.34 per cent for married women and 57.27 per cent of widowed women.⁶⁵⁵

Dr Branthwaite considered the reason for the higher number of children's deaths in single women was that single mothers led drunken immoral lives, did not want their children, and neglected them. He considered that husbands who were sober restrained their wives from both drunkenness and child neglect. In Dr Branthwaite's opinion, the influence of the husband had been lost in widows and this was the reason for the high mortality figures.⁶⁵⁶ In contrast to Dr Branthwaite, Dr Sullivan had concentrated on the medical effects of alcohol on children rather than make judgements as to the mothers' morality. Nevertheless, drunken mothers were often held responsible for their children's deaths.⁶⁵⁷ If records exist, it would make an interesting project to study how many children were born in certified inebriate reformatories, how many infants died, and how many infants were discharged with their mothers.

Closure of the NII and Brentry reformatories and a change of direction

Since the NII was a large group of reformatories, it was able to pay for the beds at Brentry Certified Inebriate Reformatory that had been left unoccupied by Brentry's contributing councils, but records do not show how many beds the NII paid for. Although the Burdens had resigned from their employment with

⁶⁵² Sullivan, "The Children of the Female Drunkard", p.6.

⁶⁵³ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1909*, pp.56-94; (Cd.5799) XXIX.PT.I.11.

⁶⁵⁴ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1909*, p.27; (Cd.5799) XXIX.PT.I.11.

⁶⁵⁵ See Appendix 7 Inebriate women: their fertility and the mortality of their children. *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1909*, p.25; (Cd.5799) XXIX.PT.I.11.

⁶⁵⁶ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1909*, p.27; (Cd.5799) XXIX.PT.I.11.

⁶⁵⁷ See Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women", p.131.

Brentry they continued to use its facilities to accommodate NII inebriates. The NII could quickly move its inebriates to another reformatory at short notice if a Brentry bed was required by a contributing council. This was particularly important to Brentry because it was operating at reduced capacity since the contributing councils frequently did not fill all their allotted reserved beds. Carpenter considers that it was likely that the NII helped keep the Brentry institution in business as the NII paid for more beds to accommodate its inebriates than the contributing councils.⁶⁵⁸ The partnership between the NII and Farmfield Inebriate Reformatory was not without problems and those problems reduced the NII's income. *The Times* reported in 1908 that the Prime Minister, Mr Gladstone, had received a letter from the London County Council stating that it would not be renewing its contract with the NII. Out of eight certified inebriate reformatories Farmfield's maintenance costs were the highest, and the Government instructed the managers to bring costs down. The Treasury reduced its contribution to reformatories and Farmfield cancelled its contract with the NII and threatened to cease to administer the 1898 Act.⁶⁵⁹ A report in *The Times* of the first annual meeting of the EES stated that the squabble over costs between the Government and London County Council over Farmfield was "disgraceful". In 1910, Harold Burden complained to the Home Office that unless the numbers of cases were increased it would be hopeless for many inebriate reformatories to operate.⁶⁶⁰ In his annual report for 1910, Dr Branthwaite stated:

Owing to the small number of committals to reformatories during the last year the accommodation for women inebriates during 1910 exceeded requirements. This was especially so in regard to accommodation for cases committed from the London District, with the result that the managers of the 'National Institutions for Inebriates' who have always largely depended on the London Courts for their population found it necessary to surrender their Certificate for the Southern Counties Reformatory.⁶⁶¹

⁶⁵⁸ Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.35

⁶⁵⁹ "House of Commons." *The Times*, 19 February 1908, p.8, col.D.

⁶⁶⁰ Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.47.

⁶⁶¹ BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1910*, p.6; 1912-13 (Cd. 6166) XXIX.497.

The Mental Deficiency Act, 1913, defined inebriety as a problem that needed institutional care. Habitual inebriates would be classified as mentally defective if they met the criteria of a habitual drunkard within the meaning of the Inebriates Acts and they would then be institutionalised indefinitely. Therefore, inebriate reformatories were no longer required and by 1915 all the NII certified inebriate reformatories had closed or changed use to institutions for mental defectives. Other inebriate reformatories, such as Farmfield and Langho were in the process of doing the same. Brentry was the last inebriate institution to close.

Harold and Katharine Burden appear to have been aware of the effect that the Mental Deficiency Act, 1913 would have on their inebriate institutions. For some years the numbers of inebriates sent to reformatories had fallen and from 1907 the Burdens had begun to diversify into the field of mental defectives. The Burdens opened a residential school for mentally defective boys at Sandwell Hall, Nr. Birmingham in 1907 (the school was never certified under the Mental Deficiency Act) and rented a 180 acre estate, Stoke Park, Bristol (owned by the Duke of Beaufort) as an institution for permanent life-long care for people who were mentally deficient in 1909. As was the case with the Inebriates Act, 1898, Harold Burden's Institution for the mentally deficient at Stoke Park was the first to be certified under the Mental Deficiency Act, 1913. Institutions for people with learning difficulties became their sole focus and they continued to expand and develop their mental defective institutions.

In 1913 the NII was renamed the NIPRCC and changed its institutions from dealing with inebriety to being concerned with mental deficiency. Two Trust deeds were drawn up in 1913 to protect the Burdens' properties, to recognise the switch from inebriates to mental defectives (NIPRCC) and ensure that Harold and Katharine's institutions would be able to continue in the event of their deaths. The trust deed dated 20 February 1913 states, that the properties could be used for homes and refuges, institutions, certified inebriate reformatories, industrial schools and for any purpose that may be sanctioned or approved by the founders (Harold and Katharine Burden). Harold Burden was

to use and exercise supreme powers of control, management and discipline (as well as financially as otherwise) over all trust premises. All contracts and

agreements shall be made by him and he shall appoint dismiss and regulate the duties and remuneration of all servants, officers and workmen...He shall in every sense, but subject to all Acts of Parliament and Regulations thereunder continue to administer all the affairs of the institutions with the same freedom of interference as he has done from their foundation. He shall receive all moneys for the maintenance of cases sent to the institutions and be responsible for the due discharge of all financial liabilities and may use surplus moneys expended on the institutions or in any way that he in his absolute discretion may determine.⁶⁶²

The institutions for mental defectives unlike inebriate reformatories provided permanent lifelong care. A second trust deed also dated 20th February 1913, noted, “Katharine Mary Burden has been throughout and is now associated with him in the work” and also that the couple had acquired various freehold and leasehold hereditaments for the purpose of institutions.⁶⁶³ Harold and Katharine did not have any heirs, their two children died in infancy. The trust deed notes that large sums of money had been expended increasing the accommodation and “no mortgage charge or encumbrance of any kind has been created for the purpose of securing such moneys.” The office of warden would be held by Harold Burden until he was no longer capable or resigns.⁶⁶⁴

The Trust deed allowed the institutions to be managed from one central office. All expenses of the central office would be provided for by an allowance of five per cent (after Harold Burden ceases to hold the office of warden the trustees should set a figure that they deem adequate and the salary of warden should form part of the expenses) of the total income from the institutions. Trustees were paid expenses and an agreed fee for each meeting attended.

In 1914, the Burdens set up the Incorporation of National Institutions for Persons Requiring Care and Control (Inc-NIPRCC) which ran the institutions and paid rent to the NIPRCC.⁶⁶⁵ This split was for legal purposes: transfers of land, assets and any liabilities could be dealt with efficiently with a minimum

⁶⁶² Trust Deed dated 1913, BRO 33910/B/1-7.

⁶⁶³ Trust Deed dated 1913, BRO 39910/B/1-7.

⁶⁶⁴ Trust Deed dated 1913, BRO 39910/B/1-7.

⁶⁶⁵ Carpenter, “Rev Harold Nelson Burden and Katherine Mary Burden Pioneers of Inebriate Reformatories” p.208.

amount of expense; money could be raised; money secured; and payments made in any way the Inc-NIPRCC thought fit. Harold Burden continued to have supreme powers of control management and discipline.⁶⁶⁶

Confusion over how Harold Burden conducted his financial affairs in the 1920s led to a series of newspaper articles. A letter published in the *Western Daily Press* by R F Wilkins, a local businessman and parish warden, of Stapleton, Bristol, asked whether someone would give particulars of the Stoke Park Institution, Bristol, under the “guardianship” of Rev. Burden. Mr Wilkins complained that many of the large houses and all the land on the northern side of Stapleton had been acquired by the Stoke Park Colony for mentally defective children leaving very little semi-public recreational spaces.⁶⁶⁷ In a further letter to the newspaper, R. F. Wilkins writes that the “taxpayer should realise that his money is paid by a Government committee...to the Stoke Park Colony , a sort of octopus spreading out in every direction and spending public money as fast as it is received in a luxurious way.” He complained that some of the best houses and land in the area had been purchased and that mentally deficient children were brought to the Colony from all parts of the country whilst the parents of “efficient” children were heavily taxed to provide the former children with luxurious accommodation. Mr Wilkins asked the question whether it is not time some check should be placed on the “squandermania.” Through the letters page of the *Western Daily Press*, Mr Wilkins called upon members of parliament to “get information about the workings and financial conditions of Stoke Park Colony affairs.”⁶⁶⁸ In a further letter, Mr Wilkins remarks that in regard to his own business he “has never pretended to run his business as a charity organisation”, has nothing to conceal and is quite prepared to open all his books and accounts for public examination on condition that Stoke Park Colony do likewise.⁶⁶⁹

On the 8th July 1922, Seagrove, Woods & Mitchell of London, the solicitors for the Inc-NIPRCC, wrote a letter to the *Western Daily Press* to clear up the misapprehensions that existed over finance:

⁶⁶⁶ Trust Deed dated 1913, BRO 39910/B/1-7.

⁶⁶⁷ “The Stoke Park Colony.” *Western Daily Press*, 5 June 1922.

⁶⁶⁸ “Stoke Park Colony.” *Western Daily Press*, 13 June 1922.

⁶⁶⁹ “Stoke Park Colony.” *Western Daily Press*, 27 June 1922.

It is a mistake to suppose that the National Institutions are in any way a Government Department. They were not founded, nor are they maintained by the State. They are the product of private enterprise and are governed and controlled under trust deeds. So far from being any burden upon Imperial or local funds, they do, by their existence, very greatly relieve the national funds.⁶⁷⁰

The letter went on to state that the Stoke Park Colony provides employment for between 250 and 300 persons and pays a sum exceeding £1,000 per annum in rates. Stoke Park “makes no appeal either to the general public or to the Government, or to the local authorities for financial support.” The letter writer comments, “...the various local authorities who are glad to avail themselves of the assistance of the colony could not possibly maintain the patients whom they send to the Colony so economically in any other way.”⁶⁷¹ It seems from the letter written by Harold Burden’s solicitors that the creation of his network of inebriate reformatories and later the switch to mental defectives and the creation of mental defective colonies were a private enterprise and did not rely on Government grants and tax concessions. Neither was there anyone with a financial stake in the Burdens’ enterprise.

Conclusion

This chapter has illuminated various complex historical issues, such as the relationship between legislation and private enterprise and the competing aims of the authorities and institutions between rehabilitation and punishment. The difficulties encountered over classifying inebriates have also been studied in the chapter. The success of Harold Burden’s organisation, the NII, rested on the accurate classification of inebriates in his reformatories, as he not only classified his own reformatory, but also classified inmates for other reformatories such as Farmfield and St Joseph’s so they could run efficiently. However, it seems behaviour and practical considerations, such as the availability of beds, were often the determining factor in classification.

⁶⁷⁰ “Stoke Park Colony.” *Western Daily Press*, 8 July 1922.

⁶⁷¹ “Stoke Park Colony.” *Western Daily Press*, 8 July 1922.

The NII came into existence because Harold and Katharine Burden resigned their employment at the Royal Victoria Homes and needed to pursue other avenues to earn a living. The couple had gained experience in the field of inebriety and even before they resigned from the Royal Victoria Homes, they had obtained a property with the intention of setting up their own inebriate reformatory. The organisation they created, the NII, was wholly owned and managed by them and they were able to control their institutions as they considered appropriate. This undoubtedly suited Harold Burden's rather autocratic personality and proficient organisational abilities. The acquisition of five inebriate reformatories and the classification system that was set up within the reformatories led to Farmfield Inebriate Reformatory and other inebriate reformatories working with the NII group. The analysis of 100 women sent to an NII reformatory demonstrates that inebriate women were often transferred to reformatories many miles from their homes. The analysis reflects the wide variety of inmates within the reformatory system, although almost all were working class. Harold Burden had a monopoly in the early twentieth century of inebriate institutions in England. In addition, Harold Burden worked in a voluntary capacity at Brentry Inebriate Reformatory and, therefore, was a powerful person in the inebriety field.

In an NII publicity booklet of 1908, Harold Burden commented that large numbers of inebriates sent to his reformatories were mentally defective and permanent reformation was impossible. However, as mentioned, inmates seem to have been classified according to their compliant behaviour to the regime rather than by any other criteria. The NII lacked the full co-operation of magistrates who chose not to make use of the Inebriates Acts and this lack of support, and the view that inebriates were mental defectives, led to the closure of inebriate reformatories. The Mental Deficiency Act, 1913 finally brought an end to inebriate reformatories and the Inebriates Acts were no longer needed to deal with habitual drunkards, as inebriates were dealt with under the 1913 Act.

Chapter 6: Inebriate reformatories and their inmates

Introduction

Contemporaries saw inebriate reformatories as an answer to the difficult problem of habitual drunkenness. This chapter explores why reformatories were considered a solution to what were serious concerns that are still current today. Also explored are the complicated issues of how effective the reformatories were and whether the women sent to them resented their freedom of action being taken away for a considerable length of time.

This chapter suggests that contemporaries often acted with good intentions in sending women to inebriate reformatories because they considered reformatories offered the possibility of reform, which would be beneficial to the women themselves and society. To explore this issue the chapter focuses on women sent to RVH Horfield and RVH Bentry (in 1902 RVH Bentry was renamed Bentry Certified Inebriate Reformatory and RVH Horfield was sold to the Burdens and incorporated into the NII). The chapter shows the ways in which the reformatory tried to help women inmates improve their lives rather than simply punishing them for habitual drunkenness. The chapter reveals the reaction of some inmates to this reform agenda and considers how they demonstrated their discontent by rebellion, resistance and escape. The chapter also considers, as far as possible, what happened to some inmates after discharge.

The chapter begins by discussing the notion that many women habitual drunkards were disorderly, violent, and neglectful or cruel to their children. A sentence of up to three years in an inebriate reformatory, although harsh, was an attempt to solve the problem, as it was felt that society needed to be protected from such women because they posed a danger to themselves, to their families and the public. The chapter explores the issue by looking at some of the women admitted to the Horfield and Bentry institutions to examine why it might have been considered defensible to send them to a reformatory.

In the absence of first hand accounts of what life was like for inebriates at RVH Horfield and Brentry this chapter relies upon records created for the practical purpose of managing the everyday running of the institutions, on official government records, and on newspaper reports. These sources are investigated to construct an account of the women's lives, but the sources contain little of their thoughts and opinions, therefore, the everyday lives of the inmates can only be inferred. Further, many of the women in this study were conspicuous through newspaper accounts of court hearings and police reports, and these reports were only representative of the women habitual drunkards who made news, and are not representative of all women. Nevertheless, by using the data available some insights into the lives of women sent to a Bristol inebriate institution are revealed.

The perceived benefits for sending women to inebriate reformatories

The approach adopted in this chapter is to look at women inebriates' lives through an institutional lens and consider the view that there were some benefits in sending women to inebriate reformatories for up to three years. This is not a view that historians of inebriate reformatories usually adopt. Morrison approached women and drunkenness from a social control or gender stance in her thesis.⁶⁷² She examined women habitual drunkards at Langho Inebriate Reformatory, Lancashire, and identified the police, the magistrates, the courts, the legislature, the prison and certified inebriate reformatories as agencies for the social control of women habitual drunkards. Morrison considers that contemporary discourses in Victorian and Edwardian England constructed women habitual drunkards as dangerous and that cultural notions of "femininity, domesticity, respectability and pathology" characterised the "normal woman" and stigmatised habitual drunkards as deviant.⁶⁷³ This is demonstrated in an article in the *Yorkshire Herald* in 1889, that complained women habitual drunkards were an outrage to God and a curse to themselves. They were "putting an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains" which took away

⁶⁷² See Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women." Beckingham. "An Historical Geography of Liberty." Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*.

⁶⁷³ See Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women", p.8.

their womanhood and left them “ghastly counterfeits”.⁶⁷⁴ This article suggests that women habitual drunkards were viewed as less than female. Morrison also argues that inebriate reformatories were penal in nature, and an extension of prison, and not places of rehabilitation and reform, rather they functioned to control deviant women. This approach does not take into account the very real danger women faced in terms of excess alcohol consumption or the ways their drinking habits affected their families and children.

This chapter seeks to consider if reformers’ aims were humane and if historians have overlooked the damaging impact of alcoholism on the lives of women and their families. The only national provision made for habitual drunkards to break free from their alcohol habit was the certified inebriate reformatory and a sentence of up to three years in a certified reformatory offered a hope of reform and the aspiration that women habitual drunkards’ lives would not be governed by their addiction to alcohol. If a woman habitual drunkard was free of her excessive drinking habits it would be of considerable benefit to her health, her family and society. A certified reformatory’s aim was long-term recovery from alcoholism so that when women had completed their sentence they would be returned to society to live as productive, useful citizens who were free of the alcohol habit. Zedner approaches the subject of women sent to inebriate reformatories in her book *Women, Crime, and Custody in Victorian England* through the moral influences imposed upon women and she explores pathological, biological and gender issues.⁶⁷⁵ She states that the purpose of the inebriate reformatory was to moralise inmates. To achieve its purpose the reformatory endeavoured to improve the health of inmates through a nourishing diet, exercise and fresh air. Only when inmates’ health had been improved could the main aim of the reformatory be undertaken, “to restore blunted moral sense.”⁶⁷⁶ According to Zedner, constant watchful vigilance was needed to ensure the prime influence on inmates’ lives were the staff. The example of staff was crucial and their influence and not the influence of other inmates should take precedence so as not to detract from the purpose of moralising

⁶⁷⁴ “The working of the Inebriates Act.” *Yorkshire Herald and York Herald*, 22 July, 1899, p.16.

⁶⁷⁵ Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.267.

⁶⁷⁶ Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.237.

inmates.⁶⁷⁷ In the Royal Victoria Homes and all the reformatories in which Harold Burden had an interest, the overruling influence the managers considered most important was that of religion. As mentioned in Chapter 4, Harold Burden, warden and later honorary secretary of Brentry, was an ordained Anglican priest and remained so all his life, so it is not surprising that he would consider religion of utmost importance. He stated, "I cannot urge too strongly that the privileges of religion be increasingly extended to the inmates."⁶⁷⁸ It is interesting to note that the institution accepted women of all faiths and persuasions, not just those who were Christian and as mentioned in Chapter 4 other faiths could be catered for as necessary.

Hunt et al began their study of Farmfield Inebriate Reformatory with a similar premise to Morrison and Zedner regarding control and morality, but their research reached a very different conclusion. Their study of Farmfield focused on reasons why many more women than men were sent to inebriate reformatories and explained the growing concerns over working class women's drinking in the early twentieth century. Hunt et al considered that alongside concerns about women's drinking and the necessity of control was a desire on the part of the reformatory to improve the lives of the "miserable and wretched" women admitted to Farmfield.⁶⁷⁹ The desire to change women's lives so that they would be equipped to live in sobriety and earn a living in a world beset with temptations was also the goal of Brentry staff. Brentry reformatory endeavoured to impress upon its inmates that it was necessary to accept responsibility and curb the desire to drink in order to live as productive citizens. This limited inmates' freedom to drink alcohol without restraint. Beckingham, in his article, *A Historical Geography of Liberty: Lancashire and the Inebriates Acts*, noted that, "The liberty of most relied on the control of a few". Beckingham deemed that inebriate legislation was not driven by medical evidence however convincing, but by the political expediency of the criminal justice system. He considered that it was in the government's interest to clear the streets of inebriates and control them by sending them to inebriate

⁶⁷⁷ Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.237.

⁶⁷⁸ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 24 March 1902, p.8, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁶⁷⁹ Hunt et al, "Wretched, Hatless and Miserably Clad", p.267.

reformatories.⁶⁸⁰ In a discussion on liberty in the House of Commons, the MP for Salford, Mr Lees Knowles, stated that debates about curbing liberty had been aired before, but already habitual drunkards were not free since they were slaves to the disease of inebriety.⁶⁸¹ Beckingham suggests that the concept of freedom was an important principle in Victorian and Edwardian England, but freedom entailed controlling and limiting behaviour.⁶⁸² Prison had failed to ensure that women habitual drunkards desisted from drinking and treatment in an inebriate reformatory was the only opportunity pauper women had of regaining health, strength and freedom from their excessive alcohol habit.

Morrison considers that three years in an inebriate reformatory was inhumane, but this view begs the question of whether the alternative of short prison sentences was even more inhumane. In the nineteenth century it was well known that alcohol was a drug that caused damage to a person's internal organs and had a cumulative effect on the body, which affected the well-being of the individual.⁶⁸³ Alcohol was also known to have a deleterious effect on the unborn child and contribute to infant mortality.⁶⁸⁴ Some nineteenth century doctors also deemed alcohol was responsible for paresis, or general paralysis of the insane, "a form of tertiary syphilis, which leads to degeneration of the brain and nervous system."⁶⁸⁵ In the late nineteenth century, those suffering from paresis made up a large amount of asylum patients.⁶⁸⁶

Challenging and difficult behaviour

Morrison argues that women habitual drunkards were neither 'bad' nor 'mad' but were pauper victims of rough treatment who were persecuted by the police. She also suggests that inebriate reformatories were inhumane because the infringement into women's lives was harsh and unwanted.⁶⁸⁷ However, she

⁶⁸⁰ Beckingham, "An Historical Geography of Liberty", p.389.

⁶⁸¹ *Hansard*. "Habitual Inebriates." HC Deb, 08 March 1898, 54 cc1036-52.

<http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1898/mar/08/habitual-inebriates>. Accessed 20 November 2011.

⁶⁸² Beckingham, "An Historical Geography of Liberty", p.389.

⁶⁸³ See Horsley & Sturge, *Alcohol and the Human Body*, p. 12.

⁶⁸⁴ See Horsley & Sturge, *Alcohol and the Human Body*, p. 12.

⁶⁸⁵ McCandless, "Curses of Civilization", p.54.

⁶⁸⁶ McCandless, "Curses of Civilization", p.54.

⁶⁸⁷ Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women", p.330.

does not consider the practicalities of dealing with drunken women who repeatedly came before the courts, and whether it was inhumane to deprive habitual drunkards of the possibility of overcoming their alcohol habit. Nor does she take into account the problems posed by drunken women who were a nuisance to the public, the police and a danger to themselves. Detailed case studies of particular women can show a more complex situation. Some women habitual drunkards did see themselves as the victims of rough treatment by the police and the courts and this can be seen in a report about a woman named Mary in the *Birmingham Daily Post*. Mary, listed in the 1901 census for RVH, Bently as a 51 year old single woman from Birmingham, was well known to the courts and in August 1900 she had been found drunk and disorderly in the early hours of the morning by a police officer. Mary had been convicted on six previous occasions during the past twelve months.⁶⁸⁸ She was taken to the police station where she was described as lively and noisy. When brought before the magistrates Mary stated, "As soon as I get out of prison they are after me again, and send me to Winson Green. It is nothing but a scandal to get my money, and as a ratepayer I claim protection."⁶⁸⁹ The police superintendent gave evidence in court that Mary was incapable of taking care of herself, a statement she strongly refuted stating that she was a "good Christian girl". The magistrate also asked whether Mary was a respectable woman when sober, which was answered in the affirmative by the police superintendent.⁶⁹⁰ The case of Mary demonstrates the importance of the police as witnesses in court hearings in bringing about convictions and they acted as visible deterrents to others.⁶⁹¹ Mary was an articulate woman. She described herself to the court as "drunk with oppression" and when she was formally charged with being a habitual drunkard and asked whether she had anything to say, Mary answered, "I bitterly deny it. I don't often get drunk, but you don't give me time to get sober."⁶⁹² Mary had clearly felt oppressed and persecuted by the police and resented police intrusion into her life. Her many previous prison sentences had

⁶⁸⁸ "Drunk with Oppression." *Birmingham Daily Post*, 25 August 1900, p7.

⁶⁸⁹ "Drunk with Oppression." *Birmingham Daily Post*, 25 August 1900, p7.

⁶⁹⁰ "Drunk with Oppression." *Birmingham Daily Post*, 25 August 1900, p7.

⁶⁹¹ Judith Rowbotham, "Turning Away From Criminal Intent: Reflecting on Victorian and Edwardian Strategies for Promoting Desistance Amongst Petty Offenders." *Theoretical Criminology*, 13.1 (2000)105-108, p.108. .

⁶⁹² "Drunk with Oppression." *Birmingham Daily Post*, 25 August 1900, p7.

not curbed her drunken behaviour and Mary remained a habitual drunkard. Unless Mary received treatment for her drunkenness the cycle of short-term prison sentences were likely to persist. Mary would continue to be criminalised as a drunkard and be a nuisance to the police, a danger to herself, as well as causing distress to citizens going about their everyday business.⁶⁹³ The inebriate reformatory offered the possibility of breaking the cycle of short-term prison sentences, something that was not offered by punitive treatment. It could be argued that sending women to an inebriate reformatory under the Inebriates Act, 1898 could be construed as some form of sympathy for the plight of such women by magistrates, particularly when the women were homeless and living on the streets. However, not many magistrates sent women to reformatories and most women were sent to prison. Sending women to inebriate reformatories conveniently cleared the streets of women drunkards and took them out of their environment, but the issue was more complicated. Magistrates often had to make difficult decisions about whether a woman habitual drunkard was a criminal, someone who needed treatment, or someone that was insane. They had little information on which to base their judgement other than the witness of a police officer. Rowbotham states that there were different views amongst contemporaries towards recidivist men and women and they were not “universally pessimistic, despite the development of scientific approaches of promoting ideas about incorrigible criminality.”⁶⁹⁴ Many inebriates had accumulated numerous appearances before the courts, and the sentences received had neither reformed nor prevented them from reoffending. It should also be borne in mind that inebriates could be a danger to themselves and others and inebriate legislation was formulated to reform and improve the lives of habitual drunkards. However, as well as reformation the legislation was designed to be a solution to the problem of public drunkenness and, therefore, there were, contradictory aims.

Dr Branthwaite, the inspector of Inebriate reformatories, considered that it was only after committal to a reformatory and enforced abstinence that the mental

⁶⁹³ “Drunk with Oppression.” *Birmingham Daily Post*, 25 August 1900, p7.

⁶⁹⁴ Rowbotham, “Turning Away From Criminal Intent”, p.108.

condition of a habitual drunkard's sanity could be discerned with confidence.⁶⁹⁵ Dr Ormerod (the Medical Officer for RVH Homes and Brentry Inebriate Reformatory 1899-1903, Consulting Medical Officer, 1903-1909 and Medical Officer from 1909) deemed that many of the inmates at Brentry possessed minds that were unstable and they were not responsible for their actions.⁶⁹⁶ In Mary's case the magistrate seems to have been doubtful whether she was sane and he seemed unable to make a conclusive judgement on the matter. The question of Mary's sanity arose because her conduct during her court hearing prompted the magistrate's clerk to ask whether she was incapable of taking care of herself. This was an extremely important question, because for legal purposes the test of unsoundness of mind or insanity was an individual's inability to manage his or her affairs due to his or her mental state.⁶⁹⁷ It was important for the magistrates to try to discern the most appropriate treatment for Mary: a lunatic asylum or an inebriate institution. The newspaper report of Mary's court hearing noted that it was not until her depositions were read out in court that she demonstrated some understanding of the evidence against her.⁶⁹⁸ This was possibly because Mary was still intoxicated when she came before the court and her intoxication might have been interpreted as a symptom of an unsound mind. Therefore, the problem was not Mary's lack of understanding due to insanity, but her lack of understanding because of insobriety. The arrest took place in the early hours of the morning and Mary's appearance in court was just a few hours later, which did not leave enough time for her to fully sober up. Many habitual drunkards appeared before the summary courts while still under the influence of alcohol and their odd or erratic behaviour was attributed to an unsound mind. Mary was sentenced to prison for one month and sent for trial at Stafford Quarter Sessions and was charged with being a habitual drunkard. At the Quarter Sessions Mary would have appeared before the court sober, as abstinence would have been enforced upon her.

⁶⁹⁵ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1900*, p.42; (Cd. 811) XII.599.

⁶⁹⁶ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 24 March 1902, p.10, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁶⁹⁷ Alfred Swaine Taylor, M.D, F.R.S, *Medical Jurisprudence*, Fifth American from the Seventh and Revised London Edition, Edited with Additions by Edward M Hartshorne, Philadelphia: Blanchard and Lea 1861, p.630. <http://www.archive.org/details/medicaljurispru01hartgoog> Accessed 20 January 2010.

⁶⁹⁸ "Drunk with Oppression." *Birmingham Daily Post*, 25 August 1900, p7.

Dr Fleck, superintendent and medical officer at Brentry from 1903-1909, in his written statement to the Royal Commission in 1908 stated a small percentage (the exact number was not given) of inmates had been removed from the reformatory because of severe challenging behaviour, depression, and suicidal tendencies. He considered insane inmates were generally suffering from “chronic mania, with acute exacerbations or melancholia and with a tendency to suicide” and they were removed because they were a danger to themselves or others.⁶⁹⁹ The decision as to whether an application should be made to the Secretary of State for the removal of a Brentry inmate to a lunatic asylum was made jointly between the reformatory medical officer, the warden and reformatory staff. Nevertheless, Dr Fleck in his role as superintendent and medical officer exercised considerable power in decisions concerning the sanity or otherwise of inmates. Mary X, a 36 year old married woman, was sent from RVH Horfield to Bristol Lunatic Asylum in February 1899 in a feeble state. She was unable to speak, muttered incoherently, resisted everything done for her and was described as suffering from mania a potu (delirium tremens).⁷⁰⁰ This was a severe form of alcohol withdrawal with symptoms of tremors, sweating, vomiting, and hallucinations and mental confusion.⁷⁰¹ Mary X died in May 1899 in Bristol Lunatic Asylum. Mania a potu was a serious condition that could result in death. An inebriate reformatory would not have had the medical staff and facilities to deal with someone suffering from this condition therefore such people were removed to a lunatic asylum. The records of Bristol Lunatic Asylum note that Mary X’s state of health was “feeble” therefore it appears that some of the women sent to inebriate reformatories were in such poor health that they needed to be protected and sheltered.⁷⁰² The *Manchester Times* in 1894 described an inebriate suffering from mania a potu as “so dominated and carried away by the intensity of the seizure, that he is literally raving mad, quite unable to control or curb his insane rage.”⁷⁰³

⁶⁹⁹ *Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded. Vol. V, p.243; 1908 (Cd. 4219) XXXVIII.1.*

⁷⁰⁰ Bristol Lunatic Asylum. Register of Admissions 1898-1901, BRO 40513/R/2/9.

⁷⁰¹ Dryout Now.com <http://www.dryoutnow.com/alcohol-info/Delirium-Tremens.html> Accessed 23rd October 2012.

⁷⁰² Bristol Lunatic Asylum. Register of Admissions 1898-1901, BRO 40513/R/2/9.

⁷⁰³ “Miscellaneous Extracts Etc.” “Drunkenness a disease.” *Manchester Times*, 11 May 1894, p.6.

Dr Fleck claimed he found no difficulty in determining whether inmates were sane or insane.⁷⁰⁴ On the other hand, not all doctors agreed with him. In a lecture on *Sanity and Insanity* given by Dr F W Mott he took the view that it was difficult to draw the line between sanity and insanity. Dr Mott considered a person insane “who by virtue of mental defect or mental disorder no longer feels, thinks or acts in conformity with the usages and customs of the society in which he lives.”⁷⁰⁵ Dr Mott considered that behaviour alone was not enough to determine insanity; the “social environment” must also be taken into consideration.⁷⁰⁶ According to Rowbotham there was some awareness that drunkards needed help to escape “from the mire of criminality in an era when philanthropic social investigation suggested that criminality was increasingly associated with environment (especially the morally depressing urban environment) as well as individual nature.”⁷⁰⁷ In his lecture, Dr Mott remarked it was also difficult to decide whether people suffering from inconsistent attacks of epilepsy were insane. He equated the criminal behaviour of epileptics suffering from irregular seizures to “automatism” as he considered they were likely to be attended by irresponsible criminal actions, which epileptics did not remember.⁷⁰⁸

Rose, an inmate of RVH Brentry, exemplifies the difficulties managers experienced in dealing with habitual drunkards that were also epileptics. Rose was transferred from Brentry to Bristol Lunatic Asylum as she was described as a criminal alcoholic subject to epilepsy, dangerous to others and with delusions that she had been ill-treated. Rose was a married 33 year old tailoress who had borne five children, three of whom had died. She was a habitual drunkard and had been convicted for drunk and disorderly offences on numerous occasions.⁷⁰⁹ In July 1900, the *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post* reported that Rose had been charged with drunkenness in Gloucester Lane, Bristol. She had

⁷⁰⁴ *Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded. Vol. V, p.424; 1908 (Cd. 4219) XXXVIII.1.*

⁷⁰⁵ Frederick W Mott, “A Lecture on Sanity and Insanity.” *British Medical Journal*, 11 May 1912, p.1053.

⁷⁰⁶ Mott, “A Lecture on Sanity and Insanity.” *British Medical Journal*, 11 May 1912, p.1053.

⁷⁰⁷ Rowbotham, “Turning Away From Criminal Intent”, p.108.

⁷⁰⁸ Mott, “A Lecture on Sanity and Insanity.” *British Medical Journal*, 11 May 1912, p.1053.

⁷⁰⁹ Bristol Lunatic Asylum. Register of Admissions 1901-1904, BRO 40513/R/2/10.

smashed a window at the Bell Inn with her fist following a dispute with a female after her eviction from the public house and she was sent to gaol for 21 days.⁷¹⁰ Rose continued to offend and in the 1901 census she was listed as a prisoner at Horfield Gaol, Bristol. On the 19 November 1901, Rose went before the magistrates and received a sentence of two years in RVH, Brentry. However, her behaviour deteriorated in the reformatory and a warrant was issued on the 21 March 1902 for her removal from RVH, Brentry to Bristol Lunatic Asylum. The removal forms noted Rose was in fair bodily health, but was subject to epilepsy. Some hours before an epileptic episode she was troublesome, oblivious to her surroundings, and violent if thwarted. On several occasions after an epileptic episode she had threatened to commit suicide.⁷¹¹ Rose needed more supervision than Brentry could provide, as she was a danger to herself, staff and other inmates. Prison would have been unsuitable, she clearly needed care in an institution, but an inebriate reformatory was not equipped to deal with such cases. The temperance reformer Dr Kerr stated that it should be stressed to the public that inebriates were not “scoundrels” and to treat them as criminals can only make them worse.⁷¹² The proceedings of the annual board of management for Brentry noted that special provision should be made for epileptics because it was felt it was not safe for them to be left in a dormitory without constant supervision.⁷¹³ It was not known whether the magistrates who sent Rose to Brentry knew she had suffered from epilepsy, but she was a habitual drunkard who needed protection for her own safety. In a lunatic asylum Rose would be supervised closely by the medical staff and physical restraint exercised if necessary. The Bristol Lunatic Asylum case book for 31 March 1902 noted that Rose quietened down after drug treatment, but was still very wild unless under the influence of treatment. On 9 April 1902, Rose developed pneumonia and died in the Asylum on 11 April 1902.⁷¹⁴ In 1903 out of 102 admissions at Brentry four were epileptic.⁷¹⁵ May considers that to see lunatic asylums as primarily curative is to miss that their purpose was also to segregate the insane from society and many disorders were not treatable in Victorian

⁷¹⁰ “Bristol Police Court.” *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 27 January 1900, p.7.

⁷¹¹ Bristol Lunatic Asylum. Admission Warrants 1901-1902, BRO 40513/R/4/40.

⁷¹² May, “Habitual Drunkards and the Invention of Alcoholism”, p.184

⁷¹³ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 25 January 1904, p.33, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁷¹⁴ Bristol Lunatic Asylum Female Case Book Vol. 21, 1900-1902, BRO 40513/C/3/15.

⁷¹⁵ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1903*, p.6; (Cd. 2285) XI.1.

medicine such as epilepsy, depression and other problems.⁷¹⁶ The number of epileptics transferred from all certified inebriate reformatories in 1903 was only seven. However, Dr Branthwaite, the inspector of reformatories made the point that this number did not represent an accurate proportion of habitual inebriates suffering from epilepsy as some reformatory managers refused to accept such cases.⁷¹⁷ It appears that women sent by Brentry to Bristol Lunatic Asylum were often sick and in very poor health, and their problems were intensified and increased due to alcoholism. The inebriate reformatory was unsuitable for very sick women whose alcoholism was so entrenched and their health so poor that there could be no hope of recovery either physically or mentally. However, women sent to inebriate reformatories were fed, clothed and their ailments treated as far as possible. The alternative, the *Manchester Times* reported, was to treat the offender as a criminal and to impose punishment whereas the person should be treated for a disease.⁷¹⁸

Treatment in an inebriate reformatory tended not to rely upon drugs, although tonics were given at Brentry to build up the inmates' health.⁷¹⁹ McLaughlin states, "despite the involvement of the medical profession, there was little reliance on drugs in inebriate reformatories as a cure for habitual drunkenness."⁷²⁰ As mentioned in Chapter 1, some medical men were sceptical about using drugs to treat inebriety. Instead, treatment consisted of abstinence from alcohol, work, religious influences, fresh air, leisure pursuits such as sewing, suitable reading material, and literacy classes if needed. Dr Branthwaite claimed that in his experience as medical superintendent of the Dalrymple Inebriate Home, Rickmansworth, many habitual drunkards recovered from the effects of alcohol without the need for medication and although withdrawal from alcohol caused distress, it was bearable for the patient.⁷²¹ In some instances, Dr Branthwaite recommended that bromides might be used as

⁷¹⁶ May, "Habitual Drunkards and the Invention of Alcoholism", p.180

⁷¹⁷ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1903*, p.25; (Cd. 2285) XI.1.

⁷¹⁸ "Miscellaneous Extracts Etc." "Drunkenness a Disease", *Manchester Times*, 11 May 1894, p.6.

⁷¹⁹ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 25 January 1904, p.35, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁷²⁰ McLaughlin, "Inebriate Reformatories in Scotland", p.294.

⁷²¹ Robert Branthwaite, M.D, "Some Clinical Experiences in the Treatment of Inebriety." *Proceedings of the Society for the Study of Inebriety*, 56 (May 1898) 1 -14, p.3.

a sedative to calm the inebriate down.⁷²² However, there is no evidence that this was used at Brentry. An abundance of cures for inebriety were advertised in newspapers, the most famous being the Keeley gold cure, but Brentry did not appear to use them.

Inmates such as Rose who were found to be suffering from a medical condition and were considered insane could be transferred to a lunatic asylum. However, until the temporary state inebriate reformatory was established for criminal inebriates in August 1901 (the permanent building opened in 1902) there was no alternative for inmates not certified as insane, but too disruptive to remain in an inebriate reformatory, other than discharge back into the community.

Louisa was an unmarried woman from Bedminster, Bristol and in 1900 she was an inmate of RVH, Brentry. In August 1898 she had been charged with stealing six blacklead brushes from a shop in Bristol and sent to prison for two months.⁷²³ In December of 1898, she had been charged with stealing six scrubbing brushes, which were hung up outside a shop in Bedminster, Bristol and sent to prison for two months with hard labour.⁷²⁴ In April 1899, Louisa had received a sentence of three months hard labour and on the 13th April 1900, a few days after release from prison she had gone to her local police station in a drunken state and asked to be locked up. She was sent back to prison for seven days. A few days after her release on 24 April 1900 she approached a policeman in a drunken state and produced a pair of boots she had stolen. On this occasion, Louisa requested to be sent to an inebriate home, as she was sick of prison. She realised that she could not resist the temptation to reoffend and could not control her drunkenness. She was aware that she needed to desist from criminal drunkenness and break the repetitive cycle of prison sentences. Whilst most inmates did not want to be sent to an inebriate reformatory, Louisa illustrates that was not always the situation. Louisa was sent to RVH Brentry, however, whilst there her behaviour deteriorated and she was unable to cope with the daily routine and discipline of reformatory life. She

⁷²² Branthwaite, "Some Clinical Experiences in the Treatment of Inebriety", pp.10-11.

⁷²³ "Bristol Police Court." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 8 August 1898, p.2.

⁷²⁴ "Bristol Police Court." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 21 December 1898, p.2.

twice tried to escape, attempted to stab a reformatory police constable with a knife and attempted to kill herself.⁷²⁵ The management of RVH Brentry sent her before the Lawford's Gate Magistrates, Bristol, to be punished and Louisa was sent to prison for one month and discharged from Brentry reformatory by order of the Secretary of State.⁷²⁶ There were no facilities in Brentry for the long term care of violent, volatile women and as the state inebriate reformatory at Aylesbury was not fully in operation until 1902, there was no other option for Louisa except prison and discharge. After her discharge from RVH Brentry, on the 12 March 1901, Louisa was charged with breaking a large window of a shop in Bedminster and was sent for trial at the Quarter Sessions and committed to Horfield Prison. In May 1903, Louisa was a patient in Bristol Lunatic Asylum, the reason for her insanity is "unknown". Whether she was mentally ill through excessive use of alcohol or for some other reason is not clear. She was recorded as suffering from "mania", being abusive without cause, and strange in manner. She was discharged as 'recovered' on 9 July 1903.⁷²⁷ It seems reasonable to assume that alcohol was the reason for her admission to the lunatic asylum and after she had sobered up, she was released. However, fifteen, days later on 24 July 1903 Louisa was readmitted into Bristol Lunatic Asylum. Her address on this occasion was given as "late of Horfield Prison." Louisa died in Bristol Lunatic Asylum on 24 December 1903.⁷²⁸ If the state inebriate reformatory had been open before Louisa's discharge from RVH Brentry she would have been transferred rather than allowed to go back into society to damage property and continue drinking.

During her detention in RVH Brentry there did not appear to be enough evidence of insanity to warrant Louisa's transfer from Brentry to a lunatic asylum, but her behaviour was too unruly for the staff to manage and she was a danger to staff and inmates. Louisa had a long record of convictions involving drunkenness and theft and she had spent many months in prison, which had done nothing to deter her from drinking. Louisa could have been considered a

⁷²⁵ Minutes of Visiting Committees 1900-1903, 3 August 1900, p.6. 7 September 1900, p.9 and 9 November 1900, p.19, BRO 40359/B/3/b.

⁷²⁶ Minutes of Visiting Committees 1900-1903, 3 August 1900, p.6, BRO 40359/B/3/b.

⁷²⁷ Bristol Lunatic Asylum. Register of Admissions, 1901-1904, BRO 40513/R/2/10.

⁷²⁸ Bristol Lunatic Asylum. Register of Admissions 1900-1904, BRO 40513/R/2/10.

'borderland' case. Dr Ormerod of Bentry felt that in the reformatory there were patients he suspected should be removed to a lunatic asylum because of their mental health, but there was insufficient proof to do so.⁷²⁹

In her thesis on suicide Sarah Hayley York states, "When patients were discharged from a lunatic asylum they were commonly classified as cured, relieved, recovered, or unimproved."⁷³⁰ These terms were not strictly defined and might be interpreted in different ways; Samuel Tuke interpreted the word 'recovered' to be "where the patient is fully competent to fulfil his common duties or is restored to the state he was in previously to the attack."⁷³¹ In 1910, this statement was moderated by Dr Pierce of the York Asylum who admitted that, "in many [recovered] cases there remains an instability, a latent tendency to mental disorder, although at the moment [of discharge] no sign of insanity can be discovered."⁷³²

Women were sent to Aylesbury Inebriate Reformatory because they posed a significant risk to the public. They were also transferred from certified inebriate reformatories as their behaviour was unmanageable and they were a danger to staff and other inmates. The case of Louisa shows that her drunkenness was of too violent a nature to go unpunished, yet prison had done nothing to curb the violence and drunkenness. An inebriate reformatory at least offered some kind of hope, but Louisa's alcohol habit and violence was too entrenched for the reformatory to deal with. As mentioned in Chapter 4, State inebriate reformatories functioned to augment the work of certified inebriate reformatories and they were financed entirely by the government. The Governor of Aylesbury stated there was no standard type of woman transferred from certified reformatories, but they varied in age, mental state, and in the treatment required.⁷³³ He felt some women were weak-minded and needed to be treated

⁷²⁹ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 24 March 1902, p.10, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁷³⁰ Sarah Hayley York, "Suicide, Lunacy and the Asylum in Nineteenth-Century England." PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham (2009) p.164.

⁷³¹ Cited in Sarah Hayley York, "Suicide, Lunacy and the Asylum", p.164.

⁷³² Anne Digby, "Quantitative and Qualitative Perspectives on the Asylum" in *Problems and Methods in the History of Medicine*, eds. Roy Porter and Andrew Wear. New York: Croom Helm, 1987, p.168.

⁷³³ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1901*, p.129; (Cd. 1381) XII.697.

like children, some were chronic drunkards, some hysterical and the remainder congenitally depraved and vicious.⁷³⁴ In his annual report of 1901 Dr Branthwaite, the inspector of reformatories, provided descriptions of typical women inebriates sent from Bentry to Aylesbury. A woman aged twenty-eight was transferred on 3 September 1901 for extremely refractory behaviour. She was described as highly hysterical and passionate, an accomplished liar who constantly tried to cause enmity between her fellow inmates, or brought false charges against her attendants. When aroused she used filthy language, uttered threats and tried to assault an attendant. Her health was described as fairly good, she was stout and fairly strong, of sound mind and intelligent. She had been drinking excessively at intervals for seven or eight years and led the life of a prostitute for eight years.⁷³⁵ The woman obviously felt very deeply about her confinement, as she was described as passionate. She was also intelligent and used her intelligence to manipulate staff and fellow inmates for her own ends. She clearly demonstrated her anger and frustration at being in the reformatory in her language and hysterics. However, the assault on staff was a more serious matter and consequently she would have been classed as vicious and removed from Bentry. Dr Branthwaite also used unflattering language to describe her for example “strong and stout” which emphasised that she had the capacity to cause not only considerable damage to property, but also to the person. However, as mentioned in Chapter 4, if a woman’s behaviour improved she could be returned to the less penal environment of the certified reformatory, therefore, there was hope for women such as the one described above that they would be returned back to a less penal environment. The Deputy Governor reported in his annual report for 1902 that two women were sent back to certified reformatories and one licensed to a convent. It was considered that these women would benefit from a milder discipline and “more hopeful surroundings.”⁷³⁶ Aylesbury acted as a deterrent to inmates of reformatories and as a reminder to the outside world that refractory deviant women would be punished through the justice system. A similar point was made by the Report of the Commissioners’ of Prisons published in Dr Branthwaite’s annual report for

⁷³⁴ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1901*, p.129; (Cd. 1381) XII.697.

⁷³⁵ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1901*, p.132; (Cd. 1381) XII.697.

⁷³⁶ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1902*, p.99; (Cd.1823) X.657.

1906. The report states, “outside its immediate work with its own refractory cases, and viewed as an integral part of a large scheme, the State Reformatory exercises an enormous power for good, and, indirectly, a strong reformatory influence.”⁷³⁷ An example of a woman sent to Aylesbury that Dr Branthwaite included in his annual report was an inmate of Brentry sent to Bristol Prison for offences that occurred whilst in the reformatory.⁷³⁸ Dr Branthwaite described the woman as a prostitute for several years who drank heavily, smoked a pipe, and suffered occasional delirium tremens. She was also terminally ill and had undergone an operation in a London hospital. This confirms that the state inebriate reformatory could not be described as totally inhumane. The medical officer for Aylesbury in Dr Branthwaite’s 1901 annual report wrote about the same woman as suffering from carcinoma of the cervix and stated that after her reception to Aylesbury she was operated on at the London Hospital. Her condition was found to be terminal and she was released when she had recovered from her operation to a Union infirmary.⁷³⁹

Morrison concedes that certified inebriate reformatories did all they could to repair the body and if ailments were found they were treated in the reformatory hospital. This way of attending to the inmates’ physical health also extended to Aylesbury. The Deputy Governor commented on the good health of inmates, which was surprising given their previous history. This he puts down to the healthy lifestyle whilst at certified reformatories before admission to Aylesbury. Through intervals in prison and containment in a reformatory, the Governor considered habitual drunkards had been “saved from such an extent of physical injury as would otherwise have resulted from prolonged excessive drinking unbroken by periods of enforced sobriety and regular life.”⁷⁴⁰ Therefore, the Governor had no doubt about the benefits of inebriate reformatories to women habitual drunkards. Morrison suggests that inebriate reformatories appeared to take better care of the women in their care than prisons. However, she argues that the reformatory also tried to restore the mind of its inmates with the aim of “long term control” to produce the cultural ideal of what it was felt womanhood

⁷³⁷ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1906*, p.95; (Cd. 3685) X.589.

⁷³⁸ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1901*, p.132; (Cd. 1381) XII.697.

⁷³⁹ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1901*, p.13; (Cd. 1381) XII.697.

⁷⁴⁰ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1902*, p.99; (Cd.1823) X.657.

should be.⁷⁴¹ This was a major difference between prison and reformatory, the purpose of a prison was to punish not 'restore the mind'. Judith Rowbotham comments that increasingly as the nineteenth century progressed, people saw short sentences as retribution. The sentences were designed to shock the offender into desisting, but many offenders were serial offenders and such offenders posed an impossible challenge.⁷⁴² Morrison uses a "feminist standpoint" to argue that, reform and rehabilitation in inebriate reformatories took second place to control; the prime aim was submission to the socially accepted ideas of what a woman should be.⁷⁴³ The point concerning control is reinforced in this thesis as the majority of drunkenness offences were committed by men and yet 80% of people sent to inebriate reformatories were women, indeed, the majority of inebriate reformatories catered solely for females. This feminist approach illuminates the part paid by the criminal justice system, experts in inebriety, interested contemporaries, including other women, in endeavouring to ensure that women behaved according to culturally constructed notions of femininity. However, this approach could overlook some of the positive and benevolent paternalistic purposes of the inebriate reformatory, which was to return women back to society to earn a living and feed, clothe, and care for their families. The women would be better protected, less vulnerable to unscrupulous individuals and less likely to be a danger to themselves or to others by their drinking habits. Women inebriates were seen as pitiable creatures and the inebriate institution, although entrenched in the cultural expectations of notions of femininity of nineteenth-century men and women, attempted to deal with what was perceived a serious possibly life threatening problem to the women themselves and those around them. At its best, the reformatory offered women a way to recover from their alcohol craving, earn a living, and care for themselves and others in society. Therefore, there is a fine line between approaches which regard inebriate reformatories as places to ensure women adhered to culturally acceptable notions of femininity, and those that see reformatories as places of reform where women could be returned to society as productive citizens. This thesis aims to restore some

⁷⁴¹ Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women", p.276.

⁷⁴² Rowbotham, "Turning Away From Criminal Intent", p.111.

⁷⁴³ Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women", p.276.

balance by highlighting some of the positive aspects of the inebriate reformatory experience. The women sent to Aylesbury were often violent and abusive to others, to themselves, the staff and inmates, and were considered out of control. For example, a twenty-five year old woman was transferred from prison in Bristol to Aylesbury on 28 September 1901. The woman had been an inmate of Brentry for eleven weeks and was sentenced to seven weeks' imprisonment for offences committed in the reformatory. Her health was good, but her mental state was unstable and she was 'deficient in self-control'. She was violent and had been reported twelve times for assaults, had threatened to destroy property, and had used foul language. The woman was described as the most dangerous woman received at Aylesbury to-date. She had been a prostitute for three or four years and she had been drinking excessively for six months before her detention.⁷⁴⁴ This woman demonstrated a lack of restraint and the problem her doctors at Aylesbury had to determine was whether her state of mind was due to her drinking habits or whether her unstable mental state was responsible for her drinking.

Caroline Ramazanoglu notes that Foucault considered that women and "other subordinates could destabilise power by seeking shifting local and specific points of resistance."⁷⁴⁵ A diagnosis by reformatory doctors was important to establish whether a woman's behaviour was the result of mental illness, so she could be treated or transferred as appropriate to prevent such sites of resistance from developing. Ramazanoglu and Holland write, "Feminism's political strategies are based on conceptions of power and the body." They argue that Foucault's theories are difficult to reconcile with feminist approaches as the latter start from women's experiences of subordination.⁷⁴⁶ Ramazanoglu points out that Foucault did not "speak from women's experiences of having power exercised over them, or from women's anger and pain and he did not see it as his role to specify political actions for those who might resist."⁷⁴⁷ Some feminist writers such as Morrison consider that Foucault's work is androcentric,

⁷⁴⁴ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1901*, p.132; (Cd. 1381) XII.697.

⁷⁴⁵ Caroline Ramazanoglu and Janet Holland, "Women's sexuality and men's appropriation of desire" in Ramazanoglu, ed. *Up Against Foucault*, p.240.

⁷⁴⁶ Ramazanoglu and Holland, "Women's sexuality and men's appropriation of desire", p.239.

⁷⁴⁷ Ramazanoglu and Holland, "Women's sexuality and men's appropriation of desire", p.240.

but she nevertheless argues that it is useful for illuminating the way power is considered.⁷⁴⁸ Morrison endeavours to take the theory of knowledge (epistemology) and apply it to drunken women, she uses the term 'subjugated' in the Foucauldian sense of masked or concealed knowledge, which was "confined to the margins of historical knowledge."⁷⁴⁹ Morrison considers that in our historical knowledge of female drunkards the voices of drunken women were not heard, because most official documents concerning women drunkards were written by males. Women habitual drunkards' voices were "buried" "disguised" and "disqualified".⁷⁵⁰ Morrison argues that the "buried and disguised" knowledge of women drunkards, therefore, can be regarded as a type of subjugated knowledge.⁷⁵¹ As inebriety was incorporated in the Mental Deficiency Act, 1913, and habitual drunkards within the meaning of the Inebriates Act, 1898 could be detained permanently, it might be argued that women habitual drunkards' voices remained unheard.

Writing about the Mental Deficiency Act, 1913, Dr Tredgold claimed that it had been recognised for a long time that "vicious and criminal conduct" may be the result of "defective development, or innate absence of a regulating capacity", the term for which was "moral deficiency."⁷⁵² Dr Winder made the point to the Royal Commission in 1908, that since 1901 out of 167 admissions only 25 percent of inmates could definitely be classified as feeble minded.

If, however, the term 'feeble-mind' is to be extended over a broader basis, and made to include all those individuals who are abnormally excitable, subject to attacks of uncontrollable temper, perverted morally, inconsequent in ideas, of feeble reasoning powers, and unable to acquire knowledge beyond the most rudimentary principles, then nearly all might be classed as feeble-minded, but certainly over 70 per cent, should be so defined.⁷⁵³

⁷⁴⁸ Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women" and Ramazanoglu and Holland, *Women's sexuality and men's appropriation of desire*, p.240.

⁷⁴⁹ Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women", p.30.

⁷⁵⁰ Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women", p.29.

⁷⁵¹ Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly Women", p.29.

⁷⁵² Alfred Frank Tredgold, M.D, F.R.S Edin, *Mental Deficiency (Amentia)*. Third Edition. New York: William Wood and Company, 1910, p.348.

<http://www.archive.org/details/mentaldeficiency00trediala> Accessed 30 March 2012.

⁷⁵³ *Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded. Vol. VIII*, pp.9,135 and 136; 1908 (Cd. 4202) XXXIX.159

Therefore, in the definition quoted above, the vast majority of inmates were classified as feeble-minded on social grounds rather than purely physiological grounds. To be “deficient in self control” could as Dr Winder stated, be equated with feeble-mindedness. It was thought by the doctor at Aylesbury that for such women the situation was not entirely hopeless for with nourishing food, attention to their physical ailments, regular work and fresh air some “moral backbone” might be achieved.⁷⁵⁴ By moral backbone, it is assumed that the doctor considered that inmates might be taught to have some understanding that there were consequences to their actions and with abstinence from alcohol be able to be returned back to certified reformatories and ultimately into society as well conducted citizens.

The Bentry managers did not wish to have unruly, violent and disruptive women within their reformatory and in 1900 the management board passed a resolution to request courts and interested parties not to send violent women to the institution.⁷⁵⁵ Zedner notes that the work of the reformatory in reforming was constantly thwarted not only by a woman’s own lack of will to be reformed, but also by “the corrupting influence of other more hardened inmates.”⁷⁵⁶ She writes that the superintendent at Farmfield Inebriate Reformatory had found the efforts of the staff had been repeatedly sabotaged by the few women who caused constant irritation and annoyance and “kept the whole institution in a state of ferment and unrest” before their removal to Aylesbury.⁷⁵⁷ An inmate of Bentry complained to the Visiting Committee that she was in the reformatory to be “cured of a fault and (if she might respectfully say so) not learn other faults.”⁷⁵⁸ Bentry’s request for better conducted women was often ignored and violent, volatile women continued to be sent to the reformatory by magistrates. The case study of Margaret given below, shows that magistrates knew from Margaret’s conduct in court that she was violent, nevertheless, they sent her to an inebriate reformatory knowing that in all likelihood she would cause distress

⁷⁵⁴ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1901*, p.131; (Cd. 1381) XII.697.

⁷⁵⁵ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 25 June 1900, p.4, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁷⁵⁶ Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.236.

⁷⁵⁷ Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.236.

⁷⁵⁸ Minutes of Visiting Committees 1898-1900, 24 October 1899, p.96, BRO 40359/B/3/a.

and disruption to staff and inmates. Margaret, aged 29, a habitual drunkard from Birkenhead, Cheshire was listed in the 1901 census as an inmate of RVH, Brentry.⁷⁵⁹ In April 1899, she came before Liverpool magistrates at Birkenhead for drunken disorderly behaviour. Margaret was described as a “Dangerous Woman” who had spent the past eight years in and out of prison. She complained to the court that as she had spent so much time in prison she did not know how to behave during the Easter holiday period.⁷⁶⁰ The magistrate informed her she would be sent to an inebriate home and fined her 40s (£2.00) or a month in default.⁷⁶¹ The sentence clearly angered Margaret so in response she took a lemon from her pocket and threw it at the head of a police officer. A tussle with police officers ensued and she was forcibly removed to the cells. Her behaviour resulted in a further charge of assault and an additional sentence of two months in gaol.⁷⁶² Margaret’s violent behaviour continued within Brentry and she was prosecuted for assault.⁷⁶³ Reformatory treatment proved futile for Margaret and rather than reform, which was the prime aim of the reformatory, Margaret would have been better suited sent to Aylesbury where she would have been prevented from harming herself or others and segregated from less disruptive inmates.

The importance of inebriate reformatories to child cruelty and neglect

When Aylesbury was fully opened in 1902, it was thought that most of the inmates would be from Section 1, the criminal class and not Section 2 reserved for non-criminal drunkenness offences. Most of the women convicted under Section 1 of the Inebriates Act and sent to an inebriate reformatory were women convicted of neglect or cruelty to children. The NSPCC took advantage of the compulsory nature of the Inebriates Act, 1898, to prosecute parents who neglected or abused their children. The compulsory committal of drunken parents to a reformatory for up to three years promised greater relief to children

⁷⁵⁹ 1901 Census, Royal Victoria Home, Westbury on Trym. RG13 Piece/Folio 2403/137-144, p.6.

⁷⁶⁰ “Liverpool and District Police Courts.” *Liverpool Mercury*, 12 April 1899, p.11.

⁷⁶¹ “Liverpool and District Police Courts.” *Liverpool Mercury*, 12 April 1899, p.11.

⁷⁶² “Liverpool and District Police Courts.” *Liverpool Mercury*, 12 April 1899, p.11.

⁷⁶³ BPP *Return showing the Working of the Regulations Made in 1886 for Carrying out the Prosecution of Offences Acts, 1879 and 1884, with Statistics Setting Forth the Number, Nature, Cost, and Results of the Proceedings instituted by the Director, in Accordance with those Regulations, for 1902 (Prosecutions, Public)*, p.55; 1903 (209) LVI.659.

as it gave them time to recover from ill-treatment . It also offered the possibility of permanent reform for parents and prevented the mother from giving birth to further children during her period of detention. Up to the end of 1909, 46 male and 427 female inebriates had been committed to inebriate reformatories under Section 1, of the Inebriates Act, 1898. The NSPCC had successfully brought 371 convictions for unlawfully neglecting children in a manner likely to cause unnecessary suffering, and only 102 people were convicted of other offences. The Inspector appointed under the Inebriates Acts remarked in his report of 1909:

Had it not been for the energy of the National Society of the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, no more than 102 persons would have been dealt with under its provisions during 11 years. This result, so far as the application of the Section to general offences is concerned, borders closely upon the ridiculous.⁷⁶⁴

To send parents who had neglected or were cruel to their children to an inebriate reformatory relieved the children of further cruelty and gave the parent an opportunity to recover from alcohol addiction as the case study of Alice demonstrates. In 1902, Alice was indicted as a habitual drunkard and for neglecting her six children, whose ages ranged from three to fifteen years. Alice was the wife of a butcher in Aldgate, London, but due to her excessive drinking her husband had separated from her. The husband allowed Alice to keep her children and paid her £3.00 per week maintenance. Most of the furniture in Alice's home had been sold to buy drink, her house was bare of food, and she had neglected her children. She was described as seldom sober and the children complained that when drunk their mother assaulted them. Alice was prosecuted on behalf of the NSPCC, found guilty, and sent to RVH, Bristol.⁷⁶⁵ The admission register for Brentry described her as a social, cheerful, 36 year old person who had been drinking gin excessively for five years and gave the reason she drank as neglect by her husband. Alice was discharged from RVH,

⁷⁶⁴ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1909*, p.14; (Cd.5799) XXIX.PT.I.11.

⁷⁶⁵ "Law Report, May 24." *The Times*, 26 May 1902, p.3, col.E.

Horfield on licence on 24 June 1904.⁷⁶⁶ Alice's children needed protection and the NSPCC used the inebriate reformatory to help both the children and the mother, with the aim of eventual reconciliation. The NSPCC endeavoured to maintain contact between mothers in inebriate reformatories and their children. After six months' detention women committed under Section 1 of the Inebriates Act, 1898 were sent a photograph of their children so they could see how much with proper care and treatment the children had improved. This was likely to be the only contact mothers had with their children, but it is not clear whether children visited their mothers whilst in the reformatory. Photographs were also sent at the end of two years' detention. Zedner states that by reminding mothers of their children, the children became agents for reform rather than victims.⁷⁶⁷ The photographs, it was hoped, would awaken the maternal instinct of the mothers and so reform would come about sooner because the mothers would be anxious to be reunited with their offspring. In addition, the NSPCC encouraged husbands to correspond with their wives. Upon discharge, the NSPCC arranged for the family to move to a new area to make a new start.⁷⁶⁸ Whenever inebriate parents were committed to inebriate reformatories through a prosecution brought by the NSPCC the Society maintained an interest in the parents during the term of their detention. After release, a lady visitor or an inspector from the Society befriended and visited the parents every two to three weeks and in many cases a Society inspector paid the parents the gratuities earned in the reformatory in weekly instalments. The Society continued to exercise supervision until confident that relapse was unlikely.⁷⁶⁹

Women who were prosecuted by the NSPCC and sent to inebriate reformatories were helped as much as possible to ensure the family was preserved. Support to keep the family intact was also given for as long as necessary after discharge. In contrast, the parents of children who were not prosecuted under the Inebriates Act for child cruelty or neglect were usually punished with short periods of imprisonment, often with hard labour. Although

⁷⁶⁶ NII Midland Counties Referrals Nos.1-28. Dates of Admission 1902-3, BRO 40686/NI/1/c.
NII Midland Counties Case Registers 1902-1910 with Index, 1 Vol, BRO 40686/NI/5/a.

⁷⁶⁷ Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.253.

⁷⁶⁸ BPP *Report of the Departmental Committee Appointed to Inquire into the Operation of the Law Relating to Inebriates with Appendices and Indexes*, p.201; 1908 (Cd.4439) XII.861.

⁷⁶⁹ Minutes of Visiting Committees 1900-1903, 1 August 1902, p.90, BRO 40359/B/3/b.

short periods of imprisonment meant that parents were not separated for long periods from their children, prison was too short a duration to effect long-term recovery from alcohol addiction. For example, in 1899, the *Bristol Times and Mercury* reported cases of child cruelty under the heading, 'How the Poor Live: Bristol Parents Cruelty'. The first case was a couple charged with ill-treating their children. Mr Ottley, the NSPCC inspector, visited the children's home and found the children dirty and their room filthy and swarming with fleas. The Bench sent the woman to prison for one month and sentenced the man two months with hard labour.⁷⁷⁰ The second case, Sarah, a married woman, was summonsed for neglect of her three children. The NSPCC inspector Mr Ottley visited the home and found Sarah drunk and violent. The Bench reminded Sarah that she had been warned many times and sent her to prison for three months.⁷⁷¹ The cycle of drunken violence and cruelty to children would continue until the children were removed from the parents. If no suitable carers were found to look after them they would be placed with the local Poor Law, either in the workhouse or in children's homes. However, life in a workhouse or Poor Law home may have been harsh and difficult for the children placed in these institutions for up to three years. The parents were likely to remain victims of their excessive drinking habits with little chance of recovery. The role certified reformatories played in the prevention of child cruelty and neglect, was important and offered parents a way out of the cycle of prison drunkenness and cruelty. By using the Inebriates Acts the NSPCC enabled some children to be free of cruelty and neglect for up to three years as well as the possibility that parents might overcome their alcohol habit.

Women habitual drunkards the victims of crime

Drunkenness rendered people vulnerable to crime and especially at night when attacks of violence could be carried out under cover of darkness. In addition, women habitual drunkards who were victims of crime were not always believed by the police. For example, Mary Y accused a male of 'taking liberties with her little girl'; however, the male called the police and Mary Y was arrested. The

⁷⁷⁰ "How the Poor Live." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 18 April 1899, p.8.

⁷⁷¹ "How the Poor Live." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 18 April 1899, p.8.

police constable stated he knew the woman as a “low type and drunken woman and had seen her out very late at night with a little girl about 13 years of age.”⁷⁷² A young woman named Emily was found drunk and incapable in the early hours of the morning. She was being “pulled about by a number of young men” who had torn her clothes. Emily was taken into custody by the police constable for her own protection. The young men involved do not seem to have been charged. Emily was discharged and told that it was deplorable to see a girl in such a state.⁷⁷³ Morrison states, “the drunken woman out after dark alone was construed as an appropriate victim in Victorian media discourses.”⁷⁷⁴ It is unlikely that a drunken woman who reported an incident of assault to the police would be a given sympathetic hearing; it would be deemed she was responsible for the assault because of her drunkenness. Women who financed their drinking habit from casual prostitution were particularly at risk, which is shown in the case of Ada, a single woman aged 37 from Leicester. Ada did not have a permanent home or income; therefore, she did whatever she could to survive including casual prostitution, which compromised her physical safety. Many women habitual drunkards would have been too drunk to be capable of working and holding down a permanent job.⁷⁷⁵ Ada had been convicted on numerous occasions for petty offences such as drunk and disorderly; indecency; indecent conduct; importuning; drunk and incapable; and behaving in a riotous manner. On 22nd January 1898, she was charged with indecent conduct in a park.⁷⁷⁶ On 24 June 1899, she was charged with indecency with a stableman and both parties were fined⁷⁷⁷. Ada was described in newspaper reports as of no fixed residence, a bad character and “one of the worst cases to come before the Bench” and “it was a pity that no one could rescue her from her unfortunate position.”⁷⁷⁸ The newspaper report picked up on Ada’s physical vulnerability and the need for her to go into some kind of home by describing her as in need of

⁷⁷² “Police.” *The Times*, 24 June 1886, pg.13, col.A.

⁷⁷³ “Law.” *The Times*, 4 April 1888, p.4, col.A.

⁷⁷⁴ Morrison, “Ordering Disorderly Women”, p.206.

⁷⁷⁵ Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.246.

⁷⁷⁶ “Borough Police Court.” *Leicester Chronicle and Leicestershire Mercury*, 22 January 1898, p.2

⁷⁷⁷ “Borough Police Court.” *Leicester Chronicle and Leicestershire Mercury*, 22 January 1898, p.2.

⁷⁷⁸ “Borough Police Court.” *Leicester Chronicle and Leicestershire Mercury*, 20 January 1900, p.6

rescue. On 22 December 1900, Ada was sentenced to RVH, Bentry for three years under section 2 of the Inebriates Act, 1898.⁷⁷⁹ Ada's father was a baker and she seems to have come from a respectable family. In the 1911 census, she was recorded as an inmate of Leicester Poor Law Infirmary, Billesdon, Leicester, where, in all probability, she died.⁷⁸⁰ It could be argued that it was reasonable for women like Ada to be placed in an inebriate home as their drunkenness left them in physical danger and in need of care and protection. Finnegan makes the point that it remains unclear whether some of the women in inebriate reformatories were habitual drunkards because of prostitution, or whether some of the women inmates had resorted to prostitution because of their habitual drinking.⁷⁸¹ Prostitution was a very grey area that women such as Ada could step in and out of as the need to purchase alcohol arose. It might be argued that women like Ada might be sent to an inebriate reformatory for protection as habitual drunkenness rendered them vulnerable to violence.

Resistance and rebellion in the reformatory

Hunt et al in their study of Farmfield Inebriate Reformatory comment that some inmates were discontented and the efforts of staff to treat and rehabilitate them were despised.⁷⁸² Not all inmates appreciated the efforts made to reform them and they showed their discontent in different ways such as resistance and rebellion. It seems they did not want to be reformed even for the sake of their health and wellbeing and they resented abstinence being imposed upon them. Some inmates tried to find ways to drink alcohol through smuggling it into the reformatory. For example, Sarah, an inmate of RVH, Bentry in 1900 tried to persuade a member of staff to give a workman a shilling to obtain whisky.⁷⁸³ Ann, an inmate of RVH, Bentry in 1902, tried to smuggle alcohol into the reformatory and had managed to obtain a bottle of cider brought in by a member of the public.⁷⁸⁴ Women who attempted to bring alcohol into the

⁷⁷⁹ "Borough Police Court." *Leicester Chronicle and Leicestershire Mercury*, 22 December 1900, p.6.

⁷⁸⁰ 1911 Census, Leicester Poor Law Infirmary. National Archive Reference RG14PN18972 RD400 SD1 ED19 SN9999.

⁷⁸¹ Finnegan, *Poverty and Prostitution*, p144.

⁷⁸² Hunt et al, "Wretched, Hatless and Miserably Clad", p.246.

⁷⁸³ Minutes of Visiting Committees 1898-1900, 23 February 1900, BRO 40359/B/3/a.

⁷⁸⁴ Minutes of Visiting Committees 1900-1903, 14 March 1902, BRO 40359/B/3/b.

reformatory and staff that assisted them could be considered as deviant as they were not conforming to the rules of the society they lived in. Under the rules of the reformatory introducing intoxicating liquor or drugs, entering a public house, or consuming intoxicating liquor was prohibited. The only alcohol permitted in the reformatory was that prescribed by the written order of the medical officer and inmates and staff who contravened the rules were severely dealt with. Alana Barton comments, “the aim of these institutions was to provide women with a positive and appropriate role model, other external influences were kept to a minimum...”⁷⁸⁵ Inmates that transgressed the rules not only did not conform to the stereotype of the domesticated, submissive woman before they were sent to the reformatory, they did not conform to this stereotype whilst inside the reformatory. Inmates were punished by loss of privileges or time spent in purpose built cells for penal or refractory inmates. If the women involved staff in their attempts to bring alcohol into the reformatory, the consequences were very serious as the staff risked losing their livelihood. The Staff were also dealt with severely if they were found to be drinking on duty, as this compromised the cloistered atmosphere of the reformatory as a sanctuary from drink, reminded inmates of what they were missing, and set an example that it was acceptable to drink. For example, a policeman employed by RVH Brentry was found drunk on duty and was dismissed.⁷⁸⁶ Further, a male member of staff was brought before the reformatory managers accused of entering a public house whilst in charge of an inmate and failing to remain a teetotaler in accordance with the terms of his appointment; he was accordingly dismissed.⁷⁸⁷ Workmen were also not allowed to pollute the ‘drink free’ environment of the reformatory and if necessary they were coerced into signing the pledge, otherwise their employment would be terminated. For instance, a workman came before the reformatory managers to answer a charge of drunkenness, but on this occasion, he was allowed to continue in his post for the sake of his wife and children on the understanding that he signed the pledge and any failure to keep it would result in immediate dismissal.⁷⁸⁸ It required

⁷⁸⁵ Barton, “Fragile Moralities and Dangerous Sexualities”, p.128.

⁷⁸⁶ Minutes of Visiting Committees 1900-1903, 7 September 1900, BRO 40359/B/3/b.

⁷⁸⁷ Minutes of Visiting Committees 1900-1903, 14 March 1902, BRO 40359/B/3/b.

⁷⁸⁸ Minutes of Visiting Committees 1900-1903, 13 December 1901, BRO 40359/B/3/b.

constant vigilance on the part of the managers to ensure that inmates did not subvert the rules of a 'drink free' reformatory and compromise staff.

Refusing to work appears to be the most common way inmates at Brentry demonstrated their resistance to the regime imposed on them. The minute book of Brentry records various inmates who came before the managers for insubordination and refusal to work. Women were given a warning and advised if they refused to work again they would be put under cell punishment for seven days.⁷⁸⁹ RVH Brentry contained its own purpose built police station situated within the grounds of the reformatory, which was staffed by five or six policemen and ensured that any serious cases of insubordination and rebellion could be dealt with promptly.⁷⁹⁰ It also meant that insubordinate inmates were segregated from better behaved inmates until such time as they were prepared to conform to the rules of the reformatory. The RVH minute book records that Emma, an inmate, had destroyed her clothes and refused to work. She was punished by 14 days in the cells on a restricted diet. The destruction of clothing and refusal to work demonstrated Emma's resistance to the reformatory's regime. Clothes are a visible sign of a person's identity and individuality, Emma in tearing up her clothes could have been resisting being identified as an inmate of the reformatory as well as the suppression of her individuality. Conversely, Zedner points out that whilst some inmates consciously resisted and rebelled against the system and did all they could to cause disruption, other inmates may have had mental health problems, and this was the reason for their rebellious behaviour.⁷⁹¹ For example, Catherine had made three appearances before the magistrates charged with breaking windows at Brentry. She had also threatened to cut other inmates' throats and murder fellow inmates and she used abusive language. The managers of Brentry described her behaviour as "beyond all endurance and that the Homes ought not to be obliged to reclaim so bad a character." Catherine may have been suffering from a serious mental illness, for example, schizophrenia and this was the reason for her destructive, abusive behaviour. She was a person that clearly was a danger to herself and

⁷⁸⁹ Minutes of Visiting Committees 1903-1908, 3 July 1903, BRO 40359/B/3/c.

⁷⁹⁰ *Forty Views of the Royal Victoria Homes, Brentry, Nr. Bristol* (undated c1901) BRO 40686/B/BK/1.

⁷⁹¹ Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.249.

others, but her alcoholism may have masked mental health issues and they only became apparent after some time in the reformatory.

The location of Brentry inebriate reformatory in the countryside made escape appear a viable possibility to inmates who rebelled against the reformatory's regime. Despite the likely possibility of being brought back to the reformatory and punished, some women preferred to try to escape rather than stay in the reformatory until officially discharged. Escape was a way women showed their resistance at being sent to the reformatory. After a dance at Brentry on the night of the 11 June 1903 four women escaped, the fate of the fourth woman is unknown, but two of the women were given sentences of three weeks hard labour, the third woman, Emma, was given two months' hard labour. An article in the press stated that Emma's behaviour had been "very bad since she had been at the home" and, it appears, therefore, that she was given a harsher sentence because of her poor conduct in the reformatory.⁷⁹² After serving their prison sentences, some of the women were sent back to Brentry to complete their reformatory sentences.

Brentry, unlike the majority of inebriate reformatories also accommodated male inebriates, albeit segregated from the female inebriates. Rebellious males, especially if they incited other inmates, were of more concern than females because of their greater physical strength and capacity to overpower reformatory officers. Male escapees could be inconspicuous in city streets, travel freely, and were able to merge into everyday life and find work. On the other hand, it was more difficult for women to blend into the background, women often attracted attention, fewer opportunities for employment were open to them, and it was more difficult for them to travel inconspicuously. In 1909, twenty-nine males from Brentry Certified Inebriate Reformatory mutinied and escaped in their shirtsleeves as they had just finished working in the fields. The only thing that excited suspicion by the public was that the large group did not separate but stayed together.⁷⁹³ The male escapees were dissatisfied over the

⁷⁹² "Lawford's Gate Petty Sessions." *Western Daily Press*, 12 June 1903.

⁷⁹³ "Mutiny at inebriates' Home." *Barrier Miner* (Broken Hill, NSW: 1888-1954) 20 August 1909, p 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article45079341> Accessed 4th March 2011.

supply of bread in the reformatory and walked out through the gates, some armed with sticks and stones. The lodge keeper was intimidated by the large group and allowed them to pass through the gates. A newspaper report of the escape stated that this was a serious situation, which caused panic in the surrounding villages. The escapees were in rebellious mood; therefore, the police did not try to apprehend them until enough police reinforcements arrived to deal with the situation. After three hours, the inmates surrendered and they were taken to Staple Hill Police Station, Bristol in handcuffs.⁷⁹⁴ Females were less liable to band together in large numbers and less likely to have the physical strength to overpower and intimidate staff. Males were also considered superior in intelligence than females with a greater mental capacity for guile and deceit, and able to take advantage of any opportunity to escape. Male and female escapees were taken to court to be punished for escaping, but harsher sentences were often given to male escapees than female escapees. For example, Jessie, a female inmate, was given 14 days hard labour by the courts for escape, whilst Peter was given three months' hard labour.⁷⁹⁵ The management of Brentry were keen to let it be known that anyone that attempted to escape from the reformatory would be severely punished.

Discharged inmates

The records of Brentry do not hold any letters or documents that indicate how many discharged inmates recovered from their alcohol habit. In Dr Branthwaite's report for 1902, Harold Burden lists ten letters from the husbands, children and sisters of discharged inmates into whose care the inmates were released. All ten letters stated that the discharged inmates had continued to abstain from alcohol and remained in good health. Harold Burden comments that these women, notorious for their habits and violent temper, were "changed beings" not only in their physical condition but also in their behaviour and conduct.⁷⁹⁶ Of course, the annual reports were intended to present a positive image of the reformatory's work. However, many discharged inebriates

⁷⁹⁴ "Mutiny at Inebriates' Home." *Barrier Miner*, 20 August 1909, p 2.

⁷⁹⁵ BPP *Return Showing the Working of the Regulations Made in 1886 for Carrying Out the Prosecution of Offences Acts, 1879 and 1884, with Statistics Setting Forth the Number, Nature, Cost, and Results of the Proceedings Instituted by the Director, in Accordance with those Regulations, for 1903 (Prosecutions, Public)*, pp. 34 and 50; 1904 (267) LXXX.31.

⁷⁹⁶ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1901*, p.92; (Cd. 1381) XII.697.

resumed their habits of excessive drinking and continued to appear before the courts for drunkenness and disorder offences. Mary Ann, a middle-aged woman, appeared as an inmate in the 1901 census for RVH Brentry. In 1902, Mary Ann was discharged from Brentry on licence but her behaviour proved unsatisfactory and she returned to the reformatory to finish her sentence.⁷⁹⁷ The inebriate reformatory had failed in reforming Mary Ann's drinking habits, which is confirmed in 1904 by her photograph taken for circulation to public houses.

Figure 19: A page from the Black List issued to the Geach Arms, Summer Lane, Birmingham

PORTRAIT AND DESCRIPTION OF HABITUAL DRUNKARD.

Register No. 56.

Name—MARY ANN BAYLISS.
Residence—14 court, 3 house, Cecil Street.



Place of business or where employed—None.
Age—46. Height—5 feet 0 inches. Build—Stout. Complexion—Fresh.
Hair—Brown. Eyes—Grey. Shape of nose—Ordinary.
Shape of face—Round.

Peculiarities or marks—Yellow birthmark right cheek, near temple. Small mole left cheek.

Profession or occupation—Charwoman.

Date and nature of conviction—21st May, 1904. Drunk and disorderly. Placed upon the Black List.

Court at which convicted—Birmingham City Police Court.

N.B.—Should any known Habitual Drunkard attempt to purchase or obtain any intoxicating liquor at any premises licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquor by retail or at the premises of any registered Club it is requested that the licensed person or the person refusing to supply the liquor will, as soon as practicable, give information of such attempt to the Police of the District, in order that the law may be enforced.

To the Licensee of the } *Geach Arms Summer Lane*
To the Secretary of the }
Registered Club }

Whose special attention is called to above.

Special attention is also directed to paragraph 4 of the Watch Committee's regulations, viz.:-
"4. The Licensed Persons and the Secretaries of Registered Clubs on whom notices are served shall
keep them readily available for reference, and shall in the event of the licensed premises being

Source: Birmingham Pub Blacklist, Ancestry.co.uk. Accessed September 2010

⁷⁹⁷ Minutes of Visiting Committees 1900-1903, 1 May 1902, p.67, BRO 40359/B/3/b.

Mary Ann's photograph was circulated by the police to the Geach Arms, Birmingham. The black list was produced so that publicans and the staff would be able to recognise habitual drunkards such as Mary and refuse to serve them alcohol for three years. Mary's physical description, occupation and dates of convictions were recorded under her photograph so she could be easily identified by publicans. Thomas Holmes, the Police Gate Missionary and Secretary to the Howard Association, commented on the black list photographs that they were pictures of "women that fill our inebriate reformatories, and of whom the Home Office Inspector reports that 62.6 per cent are not sane."⁷⁹⁸ Holmes described the faces of the people on the black list as "getting back to primeval man, the faces are so strange and weird" and with a look of "bewilderment" imprinted upon them.⁷⁹⁹ However, the photograph of Mary Ann depicts an ordinary poor working class middle-aged woman with nothing to distinguish her from others of her class, and nothing to indicate she was of unsound mind. Mary's hair had been dressed with care, her clothes, although poor, were respectable and modest. There was nothing strange or weird about Mary's face, and if people's faces on the black list appeared bewildered, it could have been because they were unsure of what was happening when the photograph was taken. Thomas Holmes deemed that habitual drunkards, for the sake of public morality and public decency should be taken "aside, and keep them aside...for the remainder of their natural lives as they are "not responsible creatures."⁸⁰⁰ This view contradicted the aim of inebriate reformatories to reform and return women back to society as useful citizens. His ideas seem deterministic and they are reminiscent of eugenic thinking, as if women were set aside for the remainder of their lives they would be unable to procreate. In Thomas Holmes' view habitual drunkards were prostitutes and reformatories were too good for them because by the time they have been before the courts four times they were too depraved for any reformation. He considered that the government should focus efforts on respectable married women who drank since such women would benefit from the efforts of an inebriate reformatory. Despite attempts to prevent women on the black list from purchasing alcohol

⁷⁹⁸ Thomas Holmes, *Known to the Police*. London: Edward Arnold, 1908, p.55.
http://www.archive.org/details/known_topolice00holmrich Accessed 20 July 2012.

⁷⁹⁹ Holmes, *Known to the Police*, p.55.

⁸⁰⁰ Holmes, *Known to the Police*, p.56.

women continued to obtain and consume alcohol. The chaplain of Holloway Prison protested in 1904, “Those on the “black list” appear to find means of evading the restrictions, judging from the reappearance of many of them in prison.”⁸⁰¹

Bristol does not have photographs of its habitual drunkards but there is a register of persons convicted as habitual drunkards under section 6 of the Licensing Act, 1902 from January 1903-October 1904. The register consists of twenty-seven names, eighteen women and nine men and gives the names, addresses, occupations and sentences of habitual drunkards convicted under Section 2 of the 1902 Licensing Act, as well as the names of the licensed premises the habitual drunkards usually frequented. Three of the women on the Bristol habitual drunkards register had been inmates of RVH Brentry, one was Caroline, aged 54, who had been found too drunk to walk and had been wheeled to the police station on a stretcher.⁸⁰² In April 1899 Caroline came before the courts for her fifty-third time, she was sent to Brentry where she behaved well.⁸⁰³ In a newspaper report for 1903 Major Rumsey of Eastville Workhouse described her as a hard-working, well conducted woman but she could not be trusted not to drink.⁸⁰⁴ The other two on the list were Bertha, aged 67, recorded in the 1901 census as an inmate of Brentry, and Isabella, aged 45. The three women on the Bristol register were older women and Zedner claims it was older women who found it difficult to get “honest work.” The register shows that whatever aftercare agency may have been put in place to keep these women from drinking, if they did not wish to be helped there was little any agency could do. An article in the *BMJ* in 1911 stated that it was cruel to allow women to return to the misery from where they had come after they had been given a taste of a decent life, but that view does not take into account whether the women wanted to return to their old life.⁸⁰⁵ A survey published in the *BMJ* of women discharged from Farmfield Inebriate Reformatory found that out of the first 600 cases committed to Farmfield 19 per cent were doing well, 27 per cent

⁸⁰¹ *Report of the Commissioners of Prisons and the Directors of Convict Prisons*, p.342; 1904 (Cd.1800) XXXV.1.

⁸⁰² “Bristol Police Court.” *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 25 February 1899, p.7.

⁸⁰³ Minutes of Visiting Committees 1900-1903, 4 April 1902, p.65, BRO 40359/B/3/b.

⁸⁰⁴ “Another Black Lister.” *Western Daily Press*, 13 April 1903, p.9.

⁸⁰⁵ “The Treatment of Inebriates.” *British Medical Journal*, 22 April 1911, p.962.

did well for a considerable period, 45.5 per cent relapsed and the remainder could not be traced, or were living unsatisfactory lives.⁸⁰⁶ The report in the *BMJ* states that whilst these figures are unsatisfactory the efforts of the reformatory were not entirely wasted. The writer felt that the question to be considered was, is the expense of the inebriate reformatory worth it for so few people.⁸⁰⁷ It is impossible to assess with any accuracy how well women did after they left the reformatory. Some became ill and died in Bristol Lunatic Asylum, others were placed on the black list or inebriate registers as incorrigible drunkards. However, it is likely that many women quietly slipped into the background and just got on with their lives and survived as best they could.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the issue that contemporaries often acted with good intentions in sending women to inebriate reformatories for up to three years, because a reformatory offered the possibility of reform, which would be beneficial to the women themselves and to society. The chapter argues that an aim of a reformatory was to improve the lives of women inmates and not simply punish them for their habitual drunkenness. However, not all inmates appreciated the efforts made to reform and rehabilitate them back into society and they showed their discontent and anger at being detained for up to three years by rebelling against the reformatory's regime or by escaping. Morrison takes the view that sending women to inebriate reformatories was a type of control imposed on women by a male dominated society. Zedner suggests that reformatories were places of moral education where conduct and behaviour needed to be changed because women habitual drunkards were considered a major social problem. Female habitual drunkards were considered to have deviated away from the stereotype of a domestic, caring and nurturing woman and as such they were dealt with more harshly than their male counterparts. These views do not detract from the reality that some drunken women were a danger to themselves and others, cruel to their children and a drain on the time and resources of judicial and police authorities. They were a considerable nuisance to the public and it was felt that some form of solution needed to be

⁸⁰⁶ "The Treatment of Inebriates." *British Medical Journal*, 22 April 1911, p.962.

⁸⁰⁷ "The Treatment of Inebriates." *British Medical Journal*, 22 April 1911, p.962.

found for their own sakes and for society. The reformatory offered protection and the hope that they could overcome their alcohol habit and so lead independent lives in society. The chapter makes the point that even when women inebriates were found uncontrollable in a certified reformatory or considered insane they could be protected by removing them to an institution that could accommodate their needs. However, not all inebriates wanted to be reformed or changed and the chapter shows the ways some of the women rebelled. These women resented being sent to an inebriate reformatory for a considerable length of time, and considered this an unwanted intrusion into their lives. Some of the women upon discharge from the reformatory continued drinking and their time in the reformatory seemed to have been of little or no benefit in curbing their excessive drinking habits. However, it is only the more public women that were known about, those whose exploits were printed in newspapers and those who were recorded on the black list or habitual drunkards' list. It is likely that more women were helped than records show, as they lived their lives in privacy and did not seek publicity or notoriety. Women died, moved away and were untraceable; therefore, it is impossible to know how successful or unsuccessful the reformatory experience was for many of its inmates. The inebriate reformatory was an attempt to address the problem of habitual drunkards and although it may not have been as successful as it was hoped, it did have some successes and it offered protection for women living difficult lives and for the children who were victims of parental drinking. The key to helping women inebriates and dealing with the problem of habitual drunkenness was institutional care and this reflects a dominant belief that institutions could address a range of social problems.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This thesis has focused on the problems associated with women habitual drunkards and the changing perceptions of such women as sinful, as a social problem, and latterly as a threat to the nation's health. It has argued that women habitual drunkards were often considered to be on the borderland of insanity, in a 'no man's land', an area of uncertainty and ambiguity, from which they were in danger of crossing the border into insanity. The objective of the thesis was to reveal the complex issues that affected women habitual drunkards' lives both before and after being sent to a certified inebriate reformatory under the Inebriates Acts 1879 and 1898. To achieve this objective a case study of Bristol and the inebriate reformatories associated with the city was undertaken. In addition to examining the lives of inmates, a study has also been made of influential local reformers, especially Harold and Katharine Burden, and their conflicting roles as institution owners and philanthropists has been explored.

Several historians have developed a gendered analysis of official policies towards women's drinking and of the related areas of female madness and criminality and my study has been informed by this approach. Zedner considers that to understand penal and reformatory institutions a gendered analysis is necessary, while Showalter suggests that any kind of female behaviour thought of as disruptive or abnormal could be classified as 'moral insanity' and such women could then be placed in an institution.⁸⁰⁸ Morrison argues that there was a double standard in the way men's and women's drunkenness was perceived and she claims that because a drunken woman "violates established gender norms she was likely to experience a very strong reaction against her."⁸⁰⁹ She contends that reformatories were gender-specific forms of control and that female inmates predominated because they had stepped outside behaviour that was considered normal and feminine. In her opinion reformatories were used as places to control women who proved unmanageable in other types of institutions. Hunt et al also draw attention to the gender imbalance in inebriate reformatories, questioning why greater numbers of women than men were

⁸⁰⁸ Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*. Showalter. *The Female Malady*, p.29.

⁸⁰⁹ Morrison, "Ordering Disorderly", p.2.

represented in reformatories. They conclude that drunken women were often viewed by magistrates to be wretched and in need of help, rather than as deviants who needed to be controlled.⁸¹⁰

Whilst acknowledging the very different treatment of men and women who drank to an excessive and possibly dangerous degree, my thesis has focused on the very real problems associated with inebriety and has tried to assess why female inebriety in particular was viewed as a threat. Rather than interpreting all efforts to reform female inebriates in terms of a strategy designed to define and reinforce standards of acceptable female behaviour, or as part of a system of social control, this thesis has argued that there was a genuine desire on the part of many reformers to help such women. Nonetheless, humanitarian motives were often mixed with economic imperatives and policies and practices were developed against a changing background of scientific, legal and moral ideas. In order to examine the competing influences on the creation and operation of inebriate reformatories a case study of Bristol has been undertaken. This has enabled an examination of the links between local and national developments; it has revealed the overlap between philanthropy and private enterprise and shown the importance of key individuals associated with the temperance movement. It has also enabled me to consider what kind of women were sent to inebriate reformatories and to assess the importance of social class, age and marital status. In addition, by focusing on the lives of named women I have tried to reveal the personal crises associated with alcoholism rather than discuss it only in terms of the construction of a social problem.

Nonetheless, as Zedner argues, women habitual drunkards *were* constructed as a social problem and she considers why women recidivists predominated both as prison habitués and as feeble minded.⁸¹¹ Both Zedner and Morrison highlight the change in how women habitual drunkards were viewed towards the end of the nineteenth century, from women usually thought of as a social nuisance to women who possessed the potential to harm society by giving birth to mentally and physically unhealthy children. It was believed that these

⁸¹⁰ Hunt et al. "Wretched, Hatless and Miserably Clad".

⁸¹¹ Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.219.

children would inherit their mother's alcoholism and in turn pass this down to their own children. Zedner argues that feeble mindedness gained popularity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as an explanation for women's habitual drunkenness and she suggests that whilst the use of the term diminished in subsequent years in relation to female drunkenness, it remained an explanation of female crime into the twentieth century.⁸¹²

Eugenics, the notion of breeding only from the fit, healthy and intelligent, became widely accepted by many of those in authoritative positions. Although the influence of eugenic ideas has been examined by Zedner, Morrison and others, this thesis has dealt with this topic differently in that it considers how eugenic ideas were adapted and challenged by reformatory doctors. An examination of the attitudes of Dr Fleck of Brentry Inebriate Reformatory shows that despite having eugenic sympathies, Dr Fleck, together with the Inspector of Inebriate Reformatories, Dr Branthwaite, did not advocate any extreme eugenic measures. Perhaps it was not in their interests as employees to support an ideology that determined there was no hope of reform for habitual drunkards. Dr Fleck felt it important to "sow the seeds of temperance in all things so that succeeding generations would be strengthened against the common enemy alcohol."⁸¹³ He commented that he believed habitual drunkards were weak-minded and that a history of drunkenness, poverty, and thriftlessness by drunken parents played a considerable part in inebriety.⁸¹⁴ Dr Branthwaite considered that the chances of recovery from years of uncontrolled drunkenness, which affected a habitual drunkard's physical and mental condition permanently, was remote. However, he did not state all inebriates were born mentally defective, as he believed that if these people had been sent to an inebriate reformatory earlier in their drinking careers, reform would have been more likely.⁸¹⁵ Thus, even at a time when eugenic ideas were dominant, older attitudes to alcoholism persisted and it seems that it was pressure from

⁸¹² Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.296.

⁸¹³ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 25 January 1904, No.25, BRO 40359/B/1/a.

⁸¹⁴ Minutes of the Board of Management 1899-1917, 25 January 1904, No.25, BRO 40359/B/1/a

⁸¹⁵ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1910*, p.11; (Cd. 6166) XXIX.497.

those outside inebriate reformatories which ultimately led to mental deficiency legislation.

The concept of the borderland has not been considered by Zedner and Morrison, and this thesis uses the concept as an alternative way of looking at women and drunkenness. A borderland populated by habitual drunkards, considered neither sane nor insane, was described by Harold Burden in his NII publicity booklet. The booklet stated that it was habitual unrestrained drunkenness and persistent immorality which created people on the borderland of insanity.⁸¹⁶ As this thesis has emphasised, although doctors were agreed that alcohol could cause insanity they disagreed over the extent to which inebriates were insane. The borderland was a concept that proved particularly useful in the last decades of the nineteenth century. By bridging the domains of insanity and drunkenness it created a combined space and gave doctors time to evaluate their patients. It is speculation, but the borderland was also perhaps face-saving for doctors as it allowed those patients or inmates who refused to respond to their treatment and were disruptive or violent to be categorised as insane, while others, who were less disruptive but non-compliant with the regime, could be classified as feeble minded. This thesis found that eugenic ideas changed the concept of the 'borderland' from a space populated by habitual drunkards thought of as between sanity and insanity, which included the possibility of rehabilitation, to one in which inebriates were considered to have a predetermined inescapable fate and required permanent segregation from society. Thus, the borderland encompassed competing explanations of drunkenness and enabled reformatories to cater for a range of problems until the Mental Deficiency Act, 1913 came into operation and a more determinist approach became dominant.

The political response to the perceived problems of drunkenness has been explored through an examination of the temperance movement and a study of legislative efforts to find a solution. The thesis has discussed the development

⁸¹⁶ *The National Institutions for Inebriates. Some Particulars of Inebriate Reformatories for Women*, 1908, BRO 39910/PM/1.

and progress of legislation and revealed that opposition to proposed legislation was generated by the anxiety that private vice would be treated as a crime and punished with incarceration in an institution. The Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879 was a compromise to placate those who were anxious about a possible loss of liberty and those who felt a solution to the problem needed to be found. The thesis exposed the influential role the press played in changing attitudes towards habitual drunkenness and bringing to the attention of the Government the need for fresh legislation, thus the *Daily Telegraph* helped put pressure on the government for fresh legislation, which led to a departmental enquiry in 1892. In 1894, the *Daily Chronicle* ran a series of articles on “Our Dark Places” which reported the harsh, cruel, and inhumane treatment of people sent to prison.⁸¹⁷

Victor Bailey suggests that between 1895 and 1914 a different type of criminology emerged based on the tenet that “since people were impelled to commit crime by constitutional and environmental forces beyond their control, and thus were not responsible for their actions, treatment, not punishment, was the most appropriate legal response.”⁸¹⁸ The Inebriates Act, 1898 alerted the public to the possibility of rehabilitation and reform of difficult to manage individuals and the need to safeguard those unable to manage their own lives, which could be accomplished in institutions. Garland suggests that rehabilitation and reform were principles which underpinned what later became known as the Welfare State.⁸¹⁹ The Inebriates Act demonstrated a move away from a prison regime for habitual drunkards towards a programme of training and reform and thus the Act can be seen in this wider context of welfare reform.⁸²⁰ On the other hand, the Act also provided an important precedent as it established the right of the state to control the freedom of people deemed unable to function as citizens because of their unacceptable behaviour and such persons were considered a

⁸¹⁷ “*The Woman’s Signal*, Issue 1.4, 25 January 1894, p.54.

⁸¹⁸ Victor Bailey, “English Prisons, Penal Culture, and the Abatement of Imprisonment, 1896-1922.” *Journal of British Studies*, 36 (July 1997) 285-324, p.290.

⁸¹⁹ David Garland cited in Bailey, “English Prisons” p.291.

⁸²⁰ See Christopher Harding, “‘The Inevitable End of a Discredited System’? The Origins of the Gladstone Committee Report on Prisons, 1895.” *The Historical Journal*, 31.3 (1988) 591-608, p.602.

danger to themselves and to others.⁸²¹ Both these views illustrate the contradictory nature of the Inebriates Act. On the one hand, the Act was a courageous and humane attempt to treat people suffering from the misery of alcohol dependence and was ultimately a positive model for future humanitarian legislation. While on the other hand, the Act took away people's freedom and the sentences given by the courts could be considered severe given the petty nature of many of the offences committed. The precedent the Act set enabled the state to intervene in people's lives, which had serious implications for future legislation.

It is unsurprising that the policy recommended in the Inebriates Acts was to create institutions to cater for those suffering from inebriety. In the late nineteenth century there was considerable faith that specialised institutions were the most effective means to deal with problems such as crime, insanity, physical ill-health, poverty and old age. Historians have undertaken detailed research of individual institutions. Zedner has focused on Langho Inebriate Reformatory and Aylesbury Inebriate Reformatory, Morrison on Langho Inebriate Reformatory, and Hunt et al on Farmfield Inebriate Reformatory. This thesis has focused on the Royal Victoria Homes, Horfield and Brentry and the National Institutions for Inebriates. (RVH Brentry was later renamed Brentry Certified Inebriate Reformatory and the Horfield premises was purchased by Harold and Katharine Burden, the owners of the NII in 1902.) The Bristol institutions and the NII received women from many different counties of England and not just from one specific area, as was the case of Langho and Farmfield reformatories. Therefore, whilst the thesis has employed a local study, it has also incorporated wider national issues and by examining the NII's network of reformatories it has been able to analyse the complex system of classification used within the NII. The way in which women inmates were classified by the NII group of reformatories according to their health and conduct has previously received little attention. Women inebriates were transferred to a more comfortable reformatory based on whether their health was reasonable and

⁸²¹ See Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.290.

their conduct was deemed by reformatory managers as good. If their conduct was deemed bad, they remained in one of the more penal NII reformatories.

Very few historians have looked at the relationship between the state, philanthropy and private enterprise when working together in partnership. This is a field of enquiry that it would be interesting to investigate further and explore whether there were other institutions that had operated with mixed funding from the state, the voluntary sector and public bodies and, if so, what difficulties were encountered. The problem that a small charitable inebriate institution experienced working in partnership with a larger institution funded and managed by local authorities has received little attention. RVH Horfield was created by the Rev Harold Burden and his wife Katharine and Bristol's wealthy elite were generous subscribers. The charity RVH Horfield, a small licensed retreat, accommodated well-behaved women convicts who were near the end of their sentences and the cooperation of charity and state seems to have worked well. Problems arose after the Inebriates Act, 1898 was passed. Harold Burden devised a scheme to extend RVH Horfield by obtaining larger premises, RVH Brentry, to operate as a certified inebriate reformatory. The state subsidised each inmate sent by the courts to the reformatory and the local authorities paid a lump sum for beds plus a maintenance fee per inmate. The Horfield premises functioned as the receiving house for RVH Brentry. This situation was extraordinary, Horfield was set up as a charity for poor and convict women who needed care and the charity relied upon voluntary donations and fundraising. On the other hand, Brentry was not set up as a charity, its income derived from councils paying a lump sum to reserve beds in the institution as well as a maintenance fee for each inmate accommodated. Therefore, Brentry's income came from commercial revenue for beds unlike Horfield whose income came from charitable donations. The charitable subscribers were unhappy that the Horfield home had become the reception house for Brentry and the charity subscribers and fundraisers considered their premises were subsidising a commercial enterprise. The charity subscribers and financial supporters of Horfield ceased donating money to the charity. It seems justified that the charity supporters should withdraw financial support as the Horfield institution had become a part of a larger fee charging organisation, something

that was not envisaged when the charity was set up. The charity was set up for women who could not afford to pay the fees of a retreat. The withdrawal of charitable donations meant that Horfield had to close, which left Brentry without a reception house for its inmates. The state considered that as the charitable organisation also had representatives on the management board it was not acceptable that a charity could dictate how state and public funds should be used. In addition, the charity's main aim was to rehabilitate women whilst the borough and county councils needed to fulfil the requirements of the 1898 Act. Members of the public and the press were confused at the strange situation of the charity RVH Horfield and the publicly-funded organisation RVH Brentry working together under one name: the Royal Victoria Homes. The problems and squabbles that arose over finances led to the closure of RVH Horfield and the resignations of the Burdens. Historians also appear to have found the institutional set up confusing and this may be a reason why RVH Horfield and RVH Brentry have only previously been examined by the Bristol-based doctor, Peter Carpenter.⁸²² The thesis found that charity and the state seemed to work together well and local authorities and the central state were able to work together, but difficulties arose when charity, the state and local authorities attempted to work in partnership.

The thesis also considered husband and wife partnerships and revealed that some women who worked alongside their husbands, such as Katharine Burden, did not want publicity and chose to be inconspicuous and discreet. By contrast, Mrs Katherine Robinson, the wife of a wealthy businessman, was an RVH Horfield nominee and an elected lifelong member of Brentry Inebriate Reformatory. She held a powerful position on the management board and worked alongside male colleagues in decision-making concerning buildings, discipline and all matters relating to an inebriate reformatory. A focus on such women has also served to highlight the chasm between wealthy middle class women's lives and the lives of the working class habitual drunkards in the reformatory.

⁸²² Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*.

Harold Burden is important to the thesis because he was a local figure who became an influential national figure. He started in a small way in Bristol as an employee of CETS. Together with his wife, he created a network of inebriate and mental defective reformatories and he was appointed to the *Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble Minded, 1904-8*. Harold Burden was also a close personal friend of Dr Branthwaite, the Government Inspector of Reformatories. Although Harold Burden's name is well known by historians, only Carpenter has written about his life and work.⁸²³ His life raises the question of where philanthropy ends and profit and self-interest begins. However, no clear conclusion has emerged from the thesis as to whether Harold Burden was a benign philanthropist, a humanitarian inspired by concern for others, or a person motivated by self-interest. Sources are limited regarding his personal, financial, and institutional activities and, therefore, a conclusion cannot be made. He was once a bankrupt, yet his activities in the fields of inebriety and mental deficiency made him a wealthy man. At the time of his death he left an estate worth £149,161 to his second wife Rosa Gladys and also Clevedon Hall, Somerset, a substantial property set in extensive gardens situated on the coast about twenty miles from Bristol, which he purchased as his private residence and a holiday home for mentally defective children. He had a zeal for creating and running institutions for both inebriates and subsequently for people with learning difficulties. He was the proprietor of a number of large institutions for people with learning difficulties, for example, Stoke Park, Bristol, and Stoke Park's ancillary properties: Beach House, Stapleton, Bristol; Heath House, Stapleton, Bristol; The Royal Victoria Home, Horfield, Bristol; Hanham Hall, Bristol; Leigh Court, Abbots Leigh, Bristol; and Whittington Hall, Derbyshire. An article in the *Guardian* in 2002 said of Dr Barnardo, who rescued hundreds of children from poverty that "Clearly it was not just matters of philanthropy, but also in marketing, that he was a maverick and a visionary."⁸²⁴ These sentiments equally apply to Harold Burden who was

⁸²³ Carpenter, "Rev Harold Nelson Burden and Katherine Mary Burden: Pioneers of Inebriate Reformatories" and "Missionaries with the Hopeless?"

⁸²⁴ "The echoes of Barnardo's altered imagery", *Guardian*, 3 October 2002.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2002/oct/03/advertising.childprotection>. Accessed 6 January 2012.

a secretive, autocratic opportunist with a talent for self-promotion.⁸²⁵ Yet the Inspector of Reformatories remarked in 1906 that some day, when his modesty can be overruled, the story of the work of Harold Burden and his institutions “will reveal a romantic history of energy and self sacrifice, which has rarely been excelled”.⁸²⁶ He personally kept tight control of all his institutions from a central address and ran them as economically as possible. He was valued by the Home Office because “he was an excellent manager” who devoted his whole life to his work and appreciated that it should be done fully and economically and “made a great success of it.”⁸²⁷

The NII became a victim of its own economic success because its inebriates could be accommodated at less expense than other reformatories. Therefore, the Treasury reduced its grant to all reformatories, which led to Farmfield ending its contract with the NII. A drop in income ensued and ultimately all NII institutions closed.⁸²⁸ Meanwhile, the Burdens had diversified into mental deficiency institutions. Harold Burden may have had eugenic sympathies similar to Dr Fleck and Dr Branthwaite, but they were never discussed openly and he would have been unlikely to voice a controversial opinion that might harm his organisation. Harold Burden not only made a good living out of purchasing and managing inebriate and mental deficiency institutions, but he also amassed considerable wealth.

The way Harold Buren classified inebriates was unique and has not been examined by historians previously. Most inebriate reformatories relied upon the courts to classify inmates prior to entering the reformatory. Harold Burden classified inmates subsequent to their entering a reformatory and he used all his NII reformatories in the classification process by utilising each reformatory for a particular type of inmate. Reformatories used for those considered

⁸²⁵ Events in Harold Burden’s personal and business life seem to have been deliberately concealed or glossed over, such as his bankruptcy, Katharine Burden’s age, his second wife’s family background, and intriguingly that she was described in the 1911 census as the Burdens’ adopted daughter.

⁸²⁶ *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1906*, p.19; (Cd. 3685) X.589.

⁸²⁷ *Report of the Departmental Committee Appointed to Inquire into the Operation of the Law Relating to Inebriates*, p.201, 1908; (Cd.4439) XII.861.

⁸²⁸ F.G. Mackereth, “Inebriates.” *The Times*, 24 February 1908, p.12, col.E.

unreformable or unable to benefit from reformatory treatment were considered to need only basic furnishing, decoration and maintenance since many of the inmates in these reformatories were difficult to manage and likely to damage the furniture and buildings. The reformatories reserved for inebriates considered reformable were more comfortable and the inmates would have been less likely to cause damage. In addition, inmates could be moved from reformatory to reformatory if beds were required. This would be impossible for Langho, Farmfield and Brentry as they were stand-alone institutions and not part of a group. It was the reason that Farmfield and Duxhurst joined with the NII group so that these reformatories only received cases that were more hopeful, those considered less likely of reform remained in an NII reformatory. This system was very fluid as inmates who improved could be removed to a better class reformatory and the reverse if inmates' behaviour deteriorated. It was not only efficient, but could aid good behaviour, as life was more comfortable and less penal for those considered 'hopeful'.

The analysis of 100 women inmates admitted to an NII reformatory adds to the work of Hunt et al, but is different because many of the women were transported around the country from reformatory to reformatory many miles from their homes. Women might be considered as having been treated like commodities if they were transferred for economic reasons rather than personal benefit. The transfer of inebriates makes the NII reformatories different from other reformatories that have been studied. The analysis notes that many regions of England used the NII reformatories for female inebriates. The study differs from Hunt et al's work as it looked at sentencing and found that there was no standardisation in sentencing by magistrates. Some women sentenced under Section 1, those that had committed a crime, received a shorter sentence than those committed under Section 2 for habitual drunkenness. Most prosecutions under Section 1 were brought by the NSPCC and this organisation probably helped to keep inebriate reformatories afloat since magistrates were reluctant to send women to reformatories.

The last chapter of the thesis argues that contemporaries acted with good intentions in sending habitual drunkards to an inebriate reformatory and the

prime aim was not punishment, but reform and rehabilitation. Zedner contends that historians have paid too much attention to the medical aspect of habitual drunkenness and not enough to gender and the traditional view of how women should behave. Gender has also influenced my thesis and this is tested with Bristol. Yet, Zedner leaves the question of what could or should have been done to help habitual drunkards unanswered, so, whilst the inebriate reformatory may not have been an ideal solution to the problem, it was an attempt to find a solution that would help habitual drunkards. Some historians such as Johnstone and Zedner consider that the purpose of a certified inebriate reformatory was moral rather than medical, however, this thesis has demonstrated that the issue was more complex and other issues need to be taken into consideration.⁸²⁹ Many inebriate reformatories attempted to teach the women in their care a trade so that they could earn their own living when discharged, and aftercare was put in place to try and keep the women from drinking again. It could be argued that the purpose of the reformatory was citizenship, which would include morality, so that inmates were discharged from the reformatory as reformed people who would be useful citizens. Habitual drunkenness and inebriate reformatories were part of wider debates about the purpose of prison in the late nineteenth century. Bailey suggests that the Humanitarian League, established in 1896, “sought to humanize the conditions of prison life and to affirm that the true purpose of imprisonment was the reformation, not the mere punishment of the offender.”⁸³⁰ However, as inebriate women did not consent to enter the reformatory but they were sent by the courts, it is not surprising that some rebelled, tried to escape, and showed their discontent by disruptive behaviour. Inebriate reformatories were a way to address the problem of habitual drunkards but the legislation did not have the support of the majority of magistrates.

A number of themes, national and local, emerged from the thesis that could not be pursued due to space, time and resources. It would be interesting to research, if availability of sources allowed, whether other organisations were

⁸²⁹ Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, pp.237-238 and Johnstone, “From Vice to Disease?” p.38.

⁸³⁰ Bailey, “English Prisons”, p.306.

run in a similar way as the Burdens', without shareholders and controlled by trust deeds. Women habitual drunkards from ethnic minorities sentenced under the Inebriates Acts might be studied. The Southern Counties Reformatory at Lewes was used for female Roman Catholic inebriates and other researchers might follow up how many of the women who passed through the NII group of reformatories were Irish. In addition, the experience of English inebriate homes could be linked to the experience of inebriate institutions in Ireland and other countries. Institutions such as Magdalene Homes could also be examined to discover the similarities and differences between the institutions. Men sent to inebriate institutions have not been examined and researchers could focus on males sent to Bentry, the Church Army Reformatory for males at Newdigate, Surrey (certified in 1901 for twelve males and its certificate resigned in 1906) as well as those sent to the state inebriate reformatory for men at Warwick. Researching men would complement the work of Zedner and Morrison on female inebriate reformatories and the work on women examined in this thesis. Classification has been a theme in this thesis and it would be interesting to compare in more detail how other institutions classified their inmates and compare it to the NII group method.

The records of Bristol Lunatic Asylum show some of its patients suffering from mania a potu (delirium tremens). A local study of male or female patients admitted to Bristol Lunatic Asylum for drunkenness or intemperance could be undertaken and the study placed in a national context by comparing intemperate patients admitted to lunatic asylums in other cities. Zedner notes, women removed from the penal sphere and diagnosed as "sick rather than sinful" decriminalised women and they were regarded as "mad rather than bad."⁸³¹

This thesis has contributed to studies concerning women inebriates sent to a certified inebriate reformatory by studying the women from Bentry Inebriate Reformatory and the women sent to the NII group of reformatories. The strength of the thesis is that it places the inebriate reformatories examined in a local and

⁸³¹ Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.296.

national context. The thesis expands our understanding of how legislation was implemented and applied in a local situation and in the context of a private nationwide enterprise. The key figures that linked national and local developments in inebriate institutions are studied and the influences that impacted upon their work with inebriates examined. Our understanding of the people involved with inebriety and how they conducted their lives in a specific locality, institution or situation is increased, especially in relation to national trends, discourses and debates. The study of Brentry and the NII reveals how the institutions created by the Burdens were financed and this adds to our knowledge of how institutions were funded and maintained. The local study of Brentry and the NII undertaken in this thesis expands our knowledge of women classified as inebriates and sent to an inebriate reformatory. A local study enables the women affected by national issues such as legislation to be studied in greater depth than if the research focused solely on parliamentary debates, parliamentary papers and discourses about women habitual drunkards. Using local sources such as institutional minute books, lunatic asylum records, and local newspapers together with legislation, parliamentary papers, and contemporary debates and discourses, widens our understanding of how women reacted to incarceration in a reformatory. In addition, this study reveals how inebriate institutions and the women sent to them were organised and managed. Bristol is a relevant location for an in-depth local study because the city has a history of innovative pioneering work in the field of inebriety and mental health, a history that influenced governmental policy and events on a national as well as a local level through the work of Harold and Katharine Burden.

Brentry as a house, reformatory, colony and hospital from 1795 to 2000 has been the subject of a full-length study by Peter Carpenter. He endeavoured to tell the story of the estate and in so doing, he remarks that he “omits any extensive reference to the development of community services for ‘inebriates’ ” or for those considered mentally deficient.⁸³² This thesis, on the other hand, has explored the personal details and experiences of the inmates and the ways

⁸³² Carpenter, *A History of Brentry*, p.2.

in which the institution was managed, its focus has been on Brentry and the NII as inebriate reformatories, whereas Peter Carpenter's book is more concerned with Brentry and Stoke Park as mental defective institutions.

The thesis complements the work of other historians such as Zedner, Beckingham and Hunt et al as they located their studies on the Lancashire Women's Inebriate Reformatory at Langho, and the London Women's Inebriate Reformatory at Farmfield. Morrison's approach was to take the theory of knowledge and apply it to drunken women and to do this she used the records of Langho Inebriate Reformatory. This study links local and national as Brentry and the NII group accepted women nationwide and is very different from other historians' studies of Langho and Farmfield, which served specific geographical areas. The importance of a local study is demonstrated by these historians, but this thesis with its emphasis on the little known Brentry and the previously un-researched NII adds to their studies in both approach and data, for example, the thesis looked at the experiences of women from a wide geographical area through a different use of sources.

This thesis sits within the scholarly literature as it reveals a greater knowledge of women sent to a reformatory managed by the largest inebriate providers in England. It has endeavoured to make clear the differences between the organisations the Royal Victoria Homes, Horfield and Brentry, Brentry Certified Inebriate Reformatory and the National Institutions for Inebriates. It has dispelled the confusion that seems to have arisen by historians over these institutions by explaining how they were financed, managed and organised. The use of the medical biography of key doctors, Dr David Fleck and Dr Branthwaite to discern whether their work was influenced by eugenic principles and where their views differed and agreed is a topic of original research. It was discovered that before 1901 Dr Branthwaite's annual reports did not contain the terms mentally deficient, mentally defective or feeble-minded and the point was made that both doctors needed to justify their work in reforming inebriates otherwise they were in danger of losing their livelihoods. The importance of the 'borderland' as a useful space where doctors in inebriate reformatories together with proprietors and managers could evaluate the inebriates sent to a

reformatory has not been studied previously. The present thesis reveals something of the personal lives of female habitual drunkards sent to Brentry and the NII group from an analysis of 100 female NII inmates extracted from the Midland Counties Register of Cases October 1902 to February 1906. In this way, it acknowledges them as individuals with complex lives rather than as statistics.

A main theme running through Zedner's study was that of gender, how the prevailing cultural ideas about women led to far more women than men being sent to inebriate reformatories. This thesis complements Zedner's argument that contemporary views of "criminal women related directly to notions of femininity."⁸³³ The thesis also examines the way in which gender was an issue in the management of reformatories. Both Katharine Burden and Katherine Robinson, for example, were able to exercise and influence without undermining contemporary notions of femininity. In the case of Katharine Burden, she chose an understated quiet manner in which to wield her authority and responsibility in partnership with her husband and was able to use her wealth to support their joint enterprise. Katherine Robinson, on the other hand, also wielded power and authority as an active member of Brentry's management board and her views and opinions are often minuted and recorded in the various committee minute books. This thesis has tried to consider some of the nuances that a study of inebriate reformatories highlights and has argued that women habitual drunkards were often seen as pitiable and in need of help, as well as being regarded as a threat to society.

This thesis has added to existing studies of women habitual drunkards sent to an inebriate reformatory by looking at social reform and the problems associated with charity, the state and public bodies working together. It has also examined how inmates were classified and considered whether inebriate reformatories were a genuine attempt to find a solution to the problem of inebriety. The thesis has contributed to an understanding of the complexity of the issues of women's habitual drunkenness by emphasising that many

⁸³³ Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody*, p.297.

reformers were inspired by a genuine desire to help inebriate women. The thesis has added to other regional studies by looking at Bristol and the reformatories associated with Bristol. Even though Bristol was a regional centre for temperance and was the location for the first certified reformatory in the country it has been the focus of very little attention from historians interested in inebriety. The role that Bristol played in the creation of inebriate reformatories has been demonstrated in the thesis and the lives of the most influential characters concerned with inebriety have been highlighted. The reformatories' poor success rates and the increasingly widespread acceptance of the notion that habitual drunkenness was a form of feeble mindedness led to the Inebriates Acts falling into disuse.

There are many original themes in this thesis, for example, the NII has not been studied previously by historians nor has the way the organisation joined with other inebriate reformatories to ensure that women were classified and sent to what was considered the most appropriate institution. The way the NII was managed, how expenses were scrutinised, and the way in which Harold Burden had supreme control of his network of reformatories are also topics of new research. The borderland has been extensively studied by Mark Jackson, but not, as in this thesis, in connection with women habitual drunkards and the Inebriates Act, 1898. The local study of Bristol, and the discussion in the thesis of Bristol and public houses compared to other cities, and the figures for drunkenness extracted from the newspaper the *Bristol Mercury* adds to Helen Meller's work in her book *Leisure and the Changing City, 1870-1914*. It is also relevant to note that the inebriate retreat Dunmurry and the comparison with the charity the Royal Victoria Home have not been studied previously.

The question of whether alcohol is a disease or a vice and whether some people are more susceptible to alcoholism continues to be debated today and concerns over the extent and level of women's drinking is once more seen as a major problem both in terms of women's health and in terms of the welfare of children. The best way to tackle habitual drunkenness and other forms of addiction is still relevant today and has never been resolved.

Appendix 1: Judicial statistics
Courts of Summary Jurisdiction. Offences tried summarily - male and female convictions for drunkenness from 1870-1913

Year	Convicted males	Convicted females	Total Convicted Males and females	Percentage of female convictions	Percentage of male convictions
1870	84,933	24,423	109,356	22.33	77.67
1871	93,811	26,412	120,223	21.97	78.03
1872	103,172	27,315	130,487	20.93	79.07
1873	130,024	34,529	164,553	20.98	79.02
1874	132,615	35,712	168,327	21.22	78.78
1875	145,124	39,718	184,842	21.49	78.51
1876	145,133	40,704	185,837	21.90	78.10
1877	141,343	38,734	180,077	21.51	78.49
1878	Figures missing				
1879	122,913	35,483	158,396	22.40	77.60
1880	115,956	34,407	150,363	22.88	77.12
1881	120,694	33,781	154,475	21.87	78.13
1882	134,081	36,225	170,306	21.27	78.73
1883	137,898	36,097	173,995	20.75	79.25
1884	139,861	37,329	177,190	21.07	78.93
1885	131,100	33,699	164,799	20.45	79.55
1886	116,899	30,649	147,548	20.77	79.23
1887	114,518	30,642	145,160	21.11	78.89
1888	117,645	31,140	148,785	20.93	79.07
1899	122,718	33,916	156,634	21.65	78.35
1890	134,502	36,446	170,948	21.32	78.68
1891	132,613	35,063	167,676	20.91	79.09
1892	122,179	32,949	155,128	21.24	78.76
1893	67,307	27,500	94,807	29.01	70.99
1894	70,451	27,770	98,221	28.27	71.73
1895	66,315	26,501	92,816	28.55	71.45
1896	87,019	37,081	124,100	29.88	70.12
1897	79,955	30,784	110,739	27.80	72.20
1898	87,311	33,368	120,679	27.65	72.35
1899	93,704	34,740	128,444	27.05	72.95
1900	88,309	33,851	122,160	27.71	72.29
1901	91,970	35,041	127,011	27.59	72.41
1902	93,267	35,430	128,697	27.53	72.47
1903	114,750	40,599	155,349	26.13	73.87
1904	115,927	38,622	154,549	24.99	75.01

Year	Convicted males	Convicted females	Total Convicted Males and females	Percentage of female convictions	Percentage of male convictions
1905	114,623	36,844	151,467	24.32	75.68
1906	110,932	35,251	146,183	24.11	75.89
1907	110,961	34,142	145,103	23.53	76.47
1908	Figures illegible				
1909	98,777	29,219	127,996	22.83	77.17
1910	94,328	27,037	121,365	22.28	77.72
1911	105,945	28,554	134,499	21.23	78.77
1912	114,965	31,011	145,976	21.24	78.76
1913	118,271	31,710	149,981	21.14	78.86
TOTAL	4,664,819	1,400,428	6,065,247		
Average percentage of male and female convictions 1870-1913: 23% females. 77% males					

Source: British Parliamentary Papers. Judicial statistics, England and Wales 1870 to 1913

Courts of Summary Jurisdiction. Offences tried summarily - male and female prosecutions, discharges and convictions for drunkenness from 1870-1892

Year	Total prosecutions for males	Total prosecutions for females	Total Male & Female Prosecutions	Discharged males	Discharged females	Convicted males	Convicted females	Total Male & female prosecutions
1870	98,942	32,928	131,870	14,009	8,505	84,933	24,423	131,870
1871	107,672	34,671	142,343	13,861	8,259	93,811	26,412	142,343
1872	115,697	35,387	151,084	12,525	8,072	103,172	27,315	151,084
1873	141,232	41,709	182,941	11,208	7,180	130,024	34,529	182,941
1874	142,970	42,760	185,730	10,355	7,048	132,615	35,712	185,730
1875	156,468	47,521	203,989	11,344	7,803	145,124	39,718	203,989
1876	156,542	49,025	205,567	11,409	8,321	145,133	40,704	205,567
1877	152,617	47,567	200,184	11,274	8,833	141,343	38,734	200,184
1878	Data missing							
1879	134,189	44,240	178,429	11,276	8,757	122,913	35,483	178,429
1880	127,949	44,910	172,859	11,993	10,503	115,956	34,407	172,859
1881	131,831	42,650	174,481	11,137	8,869	120,694	33,781	174,481
1882	145,073	44,624	189,697	10,992	8,399	134,081	36,225	189,697
1883	148,661	44,244	192,905	10,763	8,147	137,898	36,097	192,905
1884	152,316	45,958	198,274	12,455	8,629	139,861	37,329	198,274
1885	141,990	41,231	183,221	10,890	7,532	131,100	33,699	183,221
1886	127,168	37,971	165,139	10,269	7,322	116,899	30,649	165,139
1887	124,673	38,099	162,772	10,155	7,457	114,518	30,642	162,772
1888	127,822	38,544	166,366	10,177	7,404	117,645	31,140	166,366
1899	132,605	41,726	174,331	9,887	7,810	122,718	33,916	174,331
1890	145,313	44,433	189,746	10,811	7,987	134,502	36,446	189,746
1891	143,797	43,496	187,293	11,184	8,433	132,613	35,063	187,293
1892	133,043	40,886	173,929	10,864	7,937	122,179	32,949	173,929

Source: British Parliamentary Papers. Judicial statistics, England and Wales 1870 to 1913

Courts of Summary Jurisdiction. Offences tried summarily - male and female convictions for simple drunkenness and drunkenness with aggravations from 1905-1913

Year	Males - drunkenness Simple	Females - drunkenness simple	Total males and females - simple drunkenness	Males - Drunkenness with aggravations	Females - drunkenness with aggravations	Total males and females drunkenness with aggravations	Male drunkenness total	Female drunkenness total	Total Male and Female Drunkenness.
1905	34,392	11,828	46,220	80,231	25,016	105,247	114,623	36,844	151,467
1906	35,887	12,185	48,072	75,045	23,066	98,111	110,932	35,251	146,183
1907	38,268	12,725	50,993	72,693	21,417	94,110	110,961	34,142	145,103
1908									
1909	32,704	10,339	43,043	66,073	18,880	84,953	98,777	29,219	127,996
1910	30,964	9,088	40,052	63,364	17,949	81,313	94,328	27,037	121,365
1911	30,337	9,175	39,512	75,608	19,379	94,987	105,945	28,554	134,499
1912	31,361	9,535	40,896	83,604	21,476	105,080	114,965	31,011	145,976
1913	33,264	10,521	43,785	85,007	21,189	106,196	118,271	31,710	149,981

Source: British Parliamentary Papers. Judicial statistics, England and Wales 1870 to 1913

Appendix 2: Regional statistics extracted from Bristol newspapers. Male and Female apprehensions and convictions for drunkenness

Year	male apprehensions	females apprehensions	total arrests	Convicted males	Convicted females	Total convictions	Discharged males	Discharged females	Total
1878	1141	528	1669	1043	419	1462	98	109	1669
1879	799	428	1227	781	347	1128			
1880	819	477	1296	742	399	1141	77	78	1296
1881			1383	815	444				1259
1882	763	388	1151	714	323	1037	49	65	1151
1883	770	357	1127	726	309	1035	44	48	1127
1884	774	387	1161	749	334	1083	25	53	1161
1885	743	366	1109	722	334	1056	21	32	1109
1886	612	343	955	580	301	881	32	42	955
1887	607	326	933	561	284	845	46	42	933
1888	474	286	760	452	257	709	22	29	760
1889	593	330	923						
1890	690	339	1029	671	317	988	19	22	1029
1891	875	425	1300						
1892	866	371	1237						
1893	747	368	1115	723	349	1072	24	19	1115
1894	720	310	1030	703	291	994	17	19	1030
1895	565	275	840						
1896	656	310	966						
1897	674	309	983						
1898	817	354	1171						
1899	930	345	1275						

Sources: *Bristol Mercury & Daily Post*, 5th September 1878, p.6. 2nd September 1880, p.3. 8th December 1881, p.3. 7th September 1882, p.3. 30th August 1883, p.3. 28th August 1884, p.3. 4th September 1885, p.3. 2nd September 1886, p.6. 30 August 1888, p.6. 31st August 1893, p.3. 28th August 1890, p.6. 31st August 1893, p.3. 31st August 1893, p.3. 31st August 1893, p.3. 29th August 1895, p.3. 29th August 1895, p.3. 29 August 1896, p.6. 31st August 1899, p.6. 31st August 1899, p.6. 31st August 1899, p.6. *Western Daily Press*, 4 September 1879, p.3 and 1 September 188, p.6.

Appendix 3: Licensing returns

1 August 1883 arranged in order according to the proportion of population to each licensed house

Name of Town	Population*	No. of population to each licensed house
Portsmouth	127,989	148
Bristol	206,374	152
Manchester	314,414	163
Brighton	107,546	180
Newcastle	145,359	215
Devonport and Plymouth	122,604	217
Blackburn	104,014	224
Sheffield	284,508	237
Birmingham	400,774	229
Liverpool	552,508	239
Sunderland	116,542	261
Bolton	105,414	259
Leicester	122,376	265
Oldham	111,343	277
Cardiff	82,761	290
Salford	176,325	259
Nottingham	186,575	289
Hull	154,240	327
Bradford	183,032	352
Leeds	309,119	392

*The figures are taken from the census 1881.

Source: "The Bristol Poor." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*; 4 March 1885, p.3

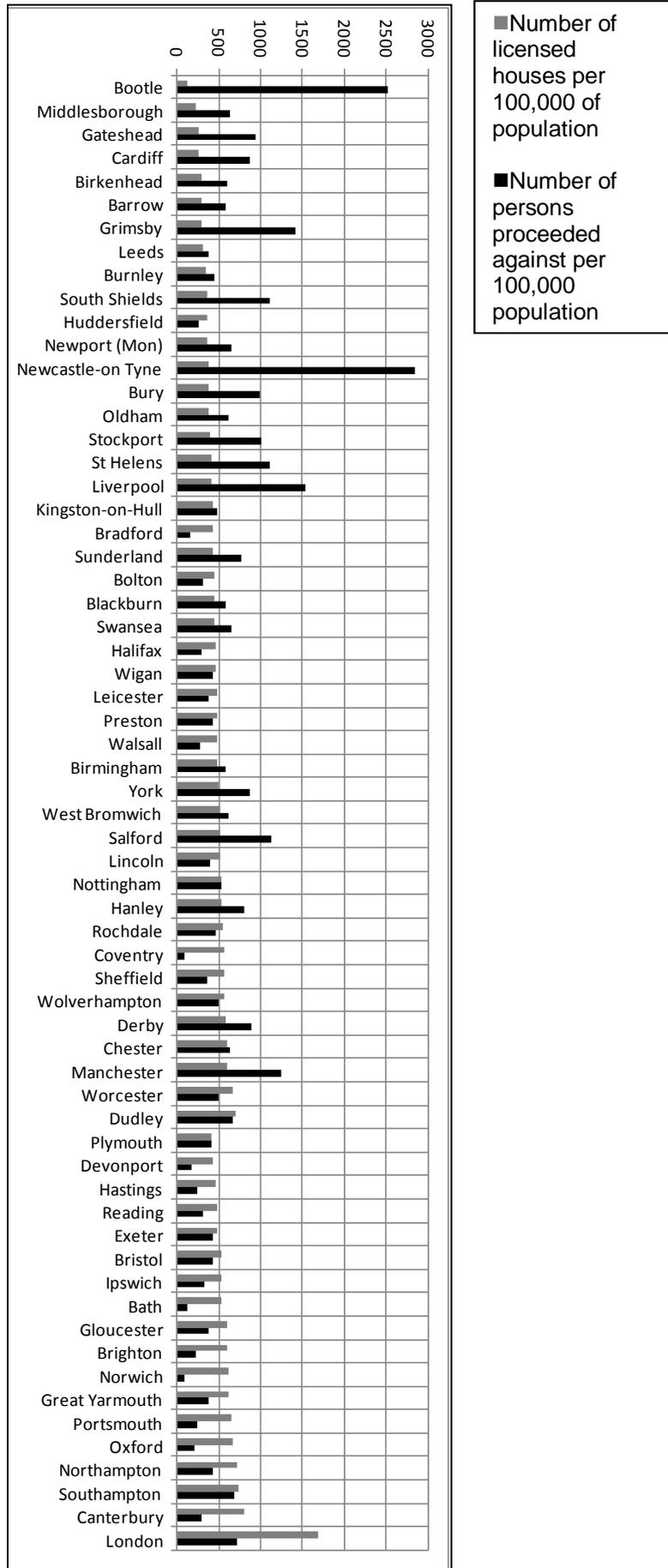
Year	No of establishments licensed to sell drink per head of the population
1876	A place licensed for the sale of drink for every 133 inhabitants.
1882	A place licensed for the sale of drink for every 152 inhabitants.
1884	A place licensed for the sale of drink for every 170 inhabitants.*

Source: "The Bristol Poor." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*; 4 March 1885, p.3

Year	Establishments licensed to sell drink
1882	1350
1883	1279
1884	1239

Source: "The Bristol Poor." *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*; 4 March 1885, p.3

**Appendix 4:
Licensed houses in
proportion to the
population and
comparison with
proportion to
population of number
of persons proceeded
against for
drunkenness.
London and County
Boroughs 1893**



	Number of licensed houses per 100,000 per population		Number of persons proceeded against per 1000,000 population
London	1,681	Bootle	2,515
Canterbury	811	Newcastle-on Tyne	2,841
Southampton	738	Liverpool	1,532
Northampton	723	Grimsby	1,408
Dudley	697	Manchester	1,254
Worcester	674	Salford	1,132
Oxford	669	St Helens	1,118
Portsmouth	654	South Shields	1,106
Great Yarmouth	624	Stockport	1,001
Norwich	611	Bury	993
Brighton	608	Gateshead	936
Manchester	600	Derby	882
Gloucester	598	Cardiff	880
Chester	596	York	873
Derby	576	Hanley	806
Wolverhampton	572	Sunderland	767
Coventry	558	London	726
Sheffield	558	Southampton	678
Rochdale	553	Dudley	676
Bath	538	Newport (Mon)	651
Hanley	537	Swansea	649
Ipswich	535	Chester	636
Nottingham	532	Middlesbrough	629
Bristol	531	Oldham	624
Lincoln	523	West Bromwich	612
West Bromwich	518	Birkenhead	596
Salford	518	Barrow	584
York	497	Blackburn	582
Birmingham	488	Birmingham	578
Walsall	483	Nottingham	529
Exeter	481	Worcester	506
Leicester	475	Wolverhampton	494
Preston	475	Kingston-on-Hull	489
Reading	475	Rochdale	465
Wigan	471	Burnley	441
Halifax	461	Wigan	436
Hastings	461	Northampton	436
Swansea	452	Bristol	435
Blackburn	445	Preston	429

Bolton	440	Exeter	425
Sunderland	434	Plymouth	419
Devonport	431	Lincoln	402
Bradford	428	Leeds	381
Kingston-on-Hull	426	Gloucester	380
Plymouth	421	Leicester	378
Liverpool	412	Great Yarmouth	377
St Helens	405	Sheffield	366
Stockport	404	Ipswich	321
Oldham	383	Reading	305
Bury	376	Bolton	304
Newcastle-on-Tyne	373	Canterbury	299
Newport (Mon)	364	Halifax	295
Huddersfield	362	Walsall	273
South Shields	361	Huddersfield	263
Burnley	349	Portsmouth	244
Leeds	314	Hastings	241
Barrow	300	Brighton	232
Grimsby	300	Oxford	210
Birkenhead	292	Devonport	179
Cardiff	261	Bradford	159
Gateshead	258	Bath	118
Middlesbrough	222	Coventry	91
Bootle	132	Norwich	87

Source: BPP *Drunkenness and licensed houses (England and Wales). Return relating to drunkenness and licensed houses (England and Wales). 1895, p.7; 1893 (352) LXXXI.311.*

Appendix 5: Male and female committals to inebriate reformatories

Year	Section 1 - Male Committals to Certified Reformatories*	Section 2 - Male Committals to Certified Inebriate Reformatories*	Total Section 1 & 2 Males committed to Certified Inebriate Reformatories	Section 1 Female Committals to Certified Inebriate Reformatories	Section 2 Female Committals to Certified Inebriate Reformatories	Total Section 1 & 2 Female Committals to Certified Inebriate Reformatories	Total Male & Female Committals under both Sections	Males Convicted Summarily or drunkenness	Females Convicted Summarily for drunkenness	Total Convicted Male and female convictions summarily for drunkenness
1899	0	0	0	7	81	88	88	93,704	34,740	128,444
1900	2	14	16	15	113	128	144	88,309	33,851	122,160
1901	0	35	35	26	143	169	204	91,970	35,041	127,011
1902	1	45	46	45	187	232	278	93,267	35,430	128,697
1903	7	32	39	68	191	259	298	114,750	40,599	155,349
1904	5	33	38	72	308	380	418	115,927	38,622	154,549
1905	10	81	91	60	292	352	443	114,623	36,844	151,467
1906	9	101	110	37	257	294	404	110,932	35,251	146,183
1907	6	59	65	30	398	428	493	110,961	34,142	145,103
1908	2	42	44	41	177	218	262			
1909	4	54	58	26	193	219	277	98,777	29,219	127,996
1910	3	76	79	26	222	248	327	94,328	27,037	121,365
Total	49	572	621	453	2,562	3,015	3,636	1,127,548	380,776	1,508,324
*Section 1: individuals convicted of a criminal offence punishable by prison. *Section 2: individuals convicted of petty crimes involving drunkenness or disorderly conduct four times in one year.										

Appendix 6: Analysis of 100 female NII inmates extracted from the Midland Counties Register of Cases October 1902 to February 1906

No of women	Address of women inmates as given in the Register of cases
37	London area
11	Manchester, Lancashire
4	Liverpool, Lancashire
4	Leeds, Yorkshire
3	Bolton
2	Hull, Yorkshire
2	Wrexham, North Wales
1	Wakefield, Yorkshire
2	Salford, Greater Manchester
1	Birkdale, Merseyside (Lancashire)
1	Bootle, Merseyside (Lancashire)
1	Burnley, Lancashire
1	Burton on Trent, Staffordshire
1	Chester, Cheshire
1	Derby, Derbyshire,
1	Lancaster, Lancashire
1	Margate, Kent
0	Norwich, Norfolk
1	Nuneaton, Warwickshire
1	Plymouth, Devon
1	Preston, Merseyside (Lancashire)
1	Seaforth, Merseyside (Lancashire)
1	Southport, Merseyside (Lancashire)
1	Scarborough
1	Sunderland, County Durham (Tyne and Wear)
1	Torquay, Devon
1	Willenhall, Staffordshire
1	Workington, Cumbria
1	Altofts, West Normanton, Yorkshire
1	Northwich, Cheshire
14	Blank
100	TOTAL

Age range		Nationality		Religion	
1	teenage girl of 18	1	British	94	Church of England
11	women in their twenties	85	English	3	Wesleyans
48	women in their thirties	2	Scottish	1	Agnostic
34	women in their forties	8	Welsh	1	Methodist
5	women in their fifties	2	Irish	1	Left Blank
1	woman in her sixties	2	Greek		
100	Total	100	Total	100	Total

Occupation

No	Occupation
24	Housewives
10	charwomen
8	Laundresses
3	Barmaids
3	Cooks
2	Dressmakers
2	Houseworkers
2	No occupation
1	button holemaker
1	Corset maker
1	Domestic servant
1	Fancy trimming maker
1	Fishmonger
1	General servant
1	Governess
1	Housewife or Laundress
1	Mantel maker
1	Matchbox maker
1	Mill hand
1	Milliner
1	Post Office clerk
1	Ribbon weaver
1	Unclear
19	Servants
1	Silk winder
4	Tailoresses
1	Tailoress and charwoman
1	Worker in a factory
5	Left blank
100	TOTAL

Sentences

The length of sentences passed by the courts	
No of women	Length of sentence
49	3 years
1	2 years 11 months
1	2 years 6 months
48	2 years
1	Not given
100	Total

The number of women sentenced under Sections 1 and 2 and the length of sentence		
No of women	Women sentenced under Section 1 and 2	Term of sentence
16	Section 1	3 years
21	Section 1	2 years
18	Section 2	2 years
13	Section 2	3 years
1	Not given	
29	Blank	Blank
1	Blank	2 years 6 months
1	Blank	2 years 11 months
100	Total	

Married/Single/Widow

69	women were married
20	women were single
10	women were widows
1	woman described as "alone"
100	Total

Height

29	women 5'0" and under
65	women who were over 5'0 and up to and including 5'.5"
6	women were over 5'5" and under 6'
100	Total

Appendix 7: Inebriate women: their fertility, and the mortality of their children

Inmates.			Children.			Average number of children to each woman.	Average number per woman, excluding childless women.	Percentage of child deaths to children born.
Condition as to marriage.	Number.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.				
Single	277	81	129	210	·76	1·74	61·43	
Married	430	1,077	759	1,836	4·27	5·10	41·34	
Widowed	158	232	311	543	3·44	4·18	57·27	
Total	865	1,390	1,199	2,589	3·00	4·24	46·31	

Source: BPP *The Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the Year 1909*, p.25; 1911 (Cd.5799) XXIX.PT.I.11.

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