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## ENGLISH SCHOOLS FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS

NORMAN S. HAYNER<sup>1</sup>

Just as the language, food habits, architecture and methods of regulating traffic change from nation to nation so also do the customs of punishment. In crossing from Calais to Dover the traveler not only shifts from driving on the right to driving on the left, and from a *petit dejeuner* to a real breakfast, but he changes also to a country with a different philosophy about the treatment of offenders. In France the offender is guilty until he is proved innocent; in England he is innocent until proved guilty.

Although the country in which Lindbergh sought refuge from kidnap threats has as yet no chair of criminology, it has experienced progress in the field of penology. During a period when the American prison population has been increasing, the number of prisoners in England has been declining. When a criminal shoots a policeman in New York City, the public is not much disturbed; but in London, where the police rarely carry pistols, the shooting of a bobby would make a headline. The custom of keeping prisoners in solitary confinement for long periods of time, a practice introduced from America and still well established on the Continent, has been almost abolished in England. Even the floggings, so often cited by Americans, declined from 4.4 per cent of penalties in 1904 to 0.2 per cent in 1930.

During the summer and fall of 1933 the writer made a criminological tour of the United States and Western Europe. A clear cut conclusion from this trip was that the methods of penal treatment in the various countries visited are largely a matter of tradition.

In the United States, for example, the political appointment of wardens and superintendents is a widespread pattern. The average tenure of the superintendents at the Washington State Training School—and the situation there is probably typical—has been about one and one-half years. With each of these changes there is also considerable turnover in personnel. Less than ten per cent of the present staff of forty were employees five years ago. A few eastern states, including Massachusetts, New York and New Jersey, have developed methods to offset this custom. In most of the other states, however, the spoils system persists.

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In Austria and Germany one of the unique patterns that has become traditional in the treatment of young offenders and has persisted through radical changes in government is the *Stufen* system. The juvenile section of the old *Männerstrafanstalt* in Graz, Austria, houses about 100 offenders under 18 and may be used to illustrate this method. These boys spend about one-third of their sentences in the *Unterstufe*. During this period they are isolated in single cells—the Pennsylvania system transplanted. They wear dark colored clothes and may each write one letter every three weeks. When they graduate to the *Mittelstufe*, which is contingent on good behavior, they sleep in a dormitory, wear lighter colored pants, may write a letter every two weeks and are permitted musical instruments. In the *Hohestufe* the boys have a very attractive room with many pictures on the walls and flowers in the windows. They are permitted to write a letter once a week. Alone and in street clothes they may occasionally take a walk of four hours in the city. In this way they are gradually prepared for life outside of the institution.

Of all the institutions visited on the tour, those for young offenders in England proved to be the most interesting. A number of the methods used by the English might well be copied by Americans. Our mores are fundamentally similar to those of the mother country. In fact we have already borrowed in this field. The Elmira Reformatory in New York State, opened in 1876, drew its emphasis on indeterminate sentence, the mark system and parole from the "Irish system" of England and Ireland, which had in turn been copied from Australian convict camps. The widely used cottage system of architecture was also patterned after European systems.

These English establishments for young offenders fall naturally into two main groups: (1) the approved schools for young persons under 17 and (2) the Borstals for offenders 17 to 21. They will be discussed under these heads with the emphasis on characteristics which might be transplanted.

The present system controlling the approved schools was set up by the Children and Young Persons Act of 1933. Under the new act these schools are designed for children over ten and under seventeen sent to them by the juvenile courts. In the words of the Secretary of State, who approves these schools: "Where the influence of the home is unsatisfactory or where probation has been tried and has failed, the best chance for a lad or girl may be found

in the facilities offered by approved schools." The cost is shared equally between the state and the locality from which the child comes. The flat rate required in 1933 from local authorities was fourteen shillings per week for each child—about three dollars and a half.

The national government has no schools of its own for offenders under seventeen. Most of the schools of this type in England and Wales are voluntary charitable institutions owned and operated by boards of managers. Cities and counties may also have approved schools. The control exercised by the Home Office is one of inspection and standard-setting. Not having its own schools the state can be the critic rather than the criticized. The state also profits by voluntary personal service and monetary donations. In 1935 there were seventy-two approved schools with a total child population of just under seven thousand. Fifty-six of these schools were under voluntary management and sixteen were provided by local authorities. The twenty-one girls' schools, housing a total of about one thousand girls, were divided into two groups: (1) Junior—for girls under 15 and (2) Senior—for girls 15 and 16. The fifty-one boys' schools were classified by age into three groups: (1) Junior—for boys under 13; (2) Intermediate—for boys 13 and 14; (3) Senior—for boys 15 and 16. If possible a boy is sent to a school of his own religion. Most of the Roman Catholic schools are in the north of England, however, and the three schools for Jewish boys and girls are located in or near London.

The Home Office has adopted as a principle the sending of boys to schools within a reasonable distance of their homes. When this is done, if their homes are tolerable, they can return on leave for a week or two once or twice a year. After-care, which is a responsibility of the school staff, can be more easily administered if the distance is short. Furthermore, the industrial training in the school can correspond to the local industries in which the boy will be employed. Although England is a small country, there are marked differences in the industries of the various districts. It is not wise to send a boy whose relatives are all coal miners or potters or weavers to a part of the country where his home industries are unknown. He will probably return to his home neighborhood and take up a local industry. Unfortunately at the present time (1936) the demand from the juvenile courts for vacancies in the schools—due to encouragement by the Children and Young Persons Act of 1933—is far in excess of the accommodations. Consequently the

courts have to search England for a vacancy. The large cities are especially deficient in approved schools of their own.

A child need not commit a crime to be sent to an approved school. Under the old system, based on the Children's Act of 1908 which set up juvenile courts, an offense was prerequisite. Under the Children and Young Persons Act of 1933 any child or young person who is "in need of care and protection" may be sent to an approved school. In case an offense has been committed there is no conviction and no sentence. The boy or girl is merely sent away on an order of the court. No definite period of detention is specified. The limit indicated in the Act is in most cases for a period of three years from the date of the order or until the age of nineteen has been attained.

In the junior schools the education is similar to that in the public elementary schools. In the schools for older boys and girls the emphasis is definitely vocational. It is regarded as essential that there be a choice in the forms of vocational training that are available in a school. Specialization in type of training tends to make the child fit the school, instead of fitting the school to the child.

The managers have the power at any time over one year to release without a court order any child whom they think fit. They may also recall him within three years. In practice the headmaster decides when a boy is fit to leave, whether he shall go back home, what work he shall do. Most of the boys and girls are placed out in employment as soon as their progress makes this possible. After-care is a responsibility of the school. As a rule headmasters take a real interest in placing their graduates and in helping them in various ways during the three-year period.

The value of supervision by the Children's Branch of the Home Office is everywhere apparent. There are eight inspectors for the approved schools. Each one is a specialist—a farm expert, for example, a specialist on equipment, or a trained educator. They arrive at unannounced times and can consequently report on the school as it is actually operating.

A more vivid picture of the approved school may be gained from a case study of an individual school. Of the six schools visited by the writer the Philanthropic Society's School at Redhill in Surrey stands out as particularly significant.

This school founded in 1788 and formerly located in London, is the oldest correctional school in England. In 1938 it will publish

its 150th annual report. The school was originally designed to care for the children of transported felons and for the reformation of "criminal" boys and girls. Since 1848 when the school was moved to Redhill, some twenty miles south of Trafalgar Square, London, almost seven thousand boys have been received. During this period Queen Victoria, King Edward VII and King George V have been patrons.

There are about fifty buildings on the Society's 300-acre estate. The atmosphere is one of farm life—cows, fields, gardens. Forty or more boys live together in a house. Some of the masters and their own children share these houses with the boys. Since November 1933 the school has been of senior rank, certified for 130 boys.

Most headmasters work up from the ranks of school teachers. The Rev. R. P. McAuliffe, "warden" of the Philanthropic Society's School, is, however, a clergyman. He possesses that keen insight into the psychology of boys that is a common characteristic of the headmasters. He has directed the work at Redhill since 1918. The man who preceded him served 35 years.

Vocational training includes farming, metal work and estate maintenance. Some of the boys take mechanical drawing and similar subjects in the Redhill town school. They go in to this school from the estate on their honor.

Boys whose behavior is satisfactory may visit their homes for a week every six months. One hundred and ten boys were permitted to go home for one or two weeks during 1934. "All returned voluntarily and punctually." Every summer each boy has a week at the seashore under canvas and with boys who are not from correctional schools.

The boys have a bun each on arising, breakfast in their houses, lunch and tea at the central dining room, a snack of cake or something before retiring. "They really need it, you know."

An attractive chapel adjoins the dining hall. The windows are beautifully colored. Ivy decorates the exterior. The Rev. McAuliffe is the resident chaplain and spiritual advisor. All of the boys at Redhill belong either to the Episcopal church or to none.

Each boy is paid from twopence to eighteen pence per week for spending money. Except during the first months they may also receive a reasonable amount from home. Boys are allowed to buy articles in town. They may also use their money for movies. They are allowed to smoke. Since the warden believes that the boys appreciate opening their own letters, mail is only read at first or when the handwriting is new or a love affair is suspected.

Running away does occur, but is infrequent. "Truancy is one of the risks of training boys, under free conditions, for freedom." Home troubles and difficulties at school are factors. Older boys desert more than younger ones. As in American institutions absconding tends to come in epidemics—six boys close together for example. An absconder found to be doing well would be left undisturbed.

The case of every boy is reviewed once a year. The power of "license," i.e. placing the boy on parole, is used as a reward. The boys remain under the supervision of the school for three years or until they are 21. Each boy going out from the school is given a complete set of equipment. Boys trained in carpentry take their tools with them.

Traits that might be transplanted to America from the best English schools will be outlined later. Let us consider for a moment those traits that could be transplanted to England from the best American schools for young offenders. Dr. Arthur H. Norris, chief inspector for the Children's Branch of the Home Office, hit the nail on the head by greeting the writer with the query: "Well, you didn't find thorough psychiatric and psychological studies, did you?" Miss Warner, an inspector of girls' schools, who had recently spent three months in the United States visiting institutions, courts and psychiatrists, was "appalled" at the emphasis on psychiatry in our country. Prior to the writing of the Children and Young Person's Act of 1933 a committee from England made a study of the Belgian system and recommended the establishment of a central clearing house for doctors, psychologists and social workers that would study each child and decide where he should be placed. Unfortunately, in the interest of economy, this feature was omitted from the act when it was passed. The remand homes of England, corresponding to the detention homes of America, might well be expanded to include such medical, psychiatric and psychological studies as those of Juvenile Hall in Los Angeles. The real problem children would be better handled if there were a consulting psychiatrist or psychologist for each school.

The second type of school for young offenders in England is called the Borstal. The name comes from the little village of Borstal two miles from Rochester, where, in 1909 in an abandoned convict prison, the first institution of this kind was established. The Borstals are administered by the Prison Commission of the Home Office and have no official connection with the Children's Branch. To be

eligible for treatment at one of these prison schools the offender must be 17 to 20 years of age inclusive—in some special cases 16—and it must appear to the court that, by reason of his "criminal habits and tendencies, or association with persons of bad character," the offender requires a term of instruction and discipline. The lads or girls are sent by a senior court and are prisoners maintained by the state. The usual period of training is about two years.

Before being sentenced to Borstal Detention the offender is studied in the local prison. Information is collected from the offender's school, parents and employers, from the police, and from any probation officers under whom he may have been placed. All girls—the average annual number of receptions is less than 50—are sent to Aylesbury. All boys—there are more than 1000 receptions during a year—are sent first to a reception class in a separate cell block in the Wormwood Scrubs Prison in London. Here they wear the customary school boy shorts, as in all the Borstal Institutions for boys, and are employed sawing wood. Psychologists and physicians examine each boy. A volunteer social worker interviews him to get his social history. With this data in hand Dr. J. C. W. Methven, who is in charge of Borstal Institutions for the Prison Commission, decides where each boy shall go. In some cases he interviews him.

This collecting center makes possible a segregation into separate Borstals of boys approximately similar in type. Segregation not only serves to keep boys with little experience in crime from the tougher ones; it also permits divergence of treatment for different types. Hard boys, well-established in crime go to the Portland Borstal, a reconstructed convict prison located on the Channel six miles from Weymouth. Here the discipline is strict. Boys who steal cars go to Camp Hill on the Isle of Wight where they could not travel far if they were tempted again. Boys with better records are sent to the original Borstal near Rochester. Nottingham Borstal gets the older boys—those that are like men. Physically and mentally defective boys—borderline intelligence cases, other mental problems, boys with weak legs and hearts—with a leaven of normal lads go to Feltham; "The pick of the crop" to Lowdham Grange.

"The object of Borstal Detention is training rather than punishment." The methods used to achieve this aim may be illustrated by the work at Feltham. The 400 boys are divided evenly into five houses with a schoolmaster in charge of each house. The lads work eight hours a day at eighteen types of work. There is work in the machine, woodworking and blacksmith shops; dairying and pig-

raising; unskilled labor for the mentally weak; tailoring for the cardiacs. Graduates of a cooking class take examinations given by an expert cook sent out by the Home Office. If they pass they are given a certificate similar to one held by boys on the outside. There are about ten football fields, a gymnasium and a swimming pool. Each house has four rugby football teams that compete for trophies with each other and with the teams from other houses. From six to eight in the evening there is school with a wide variety of classes. Sunday morning services in the beautiful chapel are optional; Sunday evening services, required.

For one year boys at Feltham, and in most of the Borstals, wear brown uniforms. With good behavior they graduate to blues at the end of the year. The blues have more privileges: recreation room, walking about the grounds alone, staying up a bit later. Discharge on license never takes place here in less than two years. Punishment is by withdrawal of privileges. If this does not work the boy is brought before the governor and sentenced to crushing stone and living in solitary on reduced rations. Bread and water is provided for those who will not work. Flogging is not used.

The boys who go to Lowdham Grange are not only selected, they must choose to go. Each lad must make this promise: "Because of the Trust put in me, I promise, on my honour, to do my best to keep up the good name of Lowdham Grange." In the words of W. W. Llewellyn, founder and former governor of Lowdham Grange and now in charge of a new Borstal known as North Sea Camp: "There is an absence of any form of external restraint. There is no surrounding wall; there are no window bars; no boy is locked in. The surroundings encourage trust. The restraints are internal."

During the summer of 1930 Governor Llewellyn with 42 selected boys and leaders marched the 150 miles from Feltham to a beautiful rural site in the rolling hills of Nottinghamshire two miles from the village of Lowdham. His purpose was to found a new Borstal. Service clubs assisted the group on the way. At first they lived in tents, the governor sharing the same conditions as the boys.

In November 1933, when the writer visited Lowdham Grange, Governor Llewellyn was en route to South India and Burma to help the colonial government improve its Borstal system. During his absence Mr. C. T. Cape, deputy governor and later governor, had charge of Lowdham Grange. Cape had begun his service with the Prison Commission as an assistant housemaster at Feltham only eight years before. He was one of the staff that hiked up to make the new Borstal. He is deeply religious, quick and clear in

thought, and wears shorts like the boys. After the usual inspection tour—the vigor with which a laboring group used picks and shovels was very impressive—we sat in front of the fireplace in the 300-year old farm house that Mr. and Mrs. Cape now use for their home. While sitting here Mr. Cape dictated the following statement about the philosophy and methods at Lowdham Grange:

There is a definite attempt to make conditions within the institution approximate those with which the lads will have to contend on the outside. We attempt to eliminate control by central government and to substitute for that, self-control by self-government. Responsibility is thrown on the lad himself. We have abolished parades. A boy does not march back and forth to work. He is not taken to a place—he must get there himself.

Payment gives an incentive and a reason for work. Without pay, the boy worked as a prisoner under pain of punishment. He worked to keep his head above water—to avoid trouble. Now the attitude is utterly altered. A man takes pride in his work. The stigma of prison labor is removed. He desires to excel in craftsmanship. In other places the boy who is best at games is hero. Here there is no emphasis on games. The boy who is the best laborer, bricklayer, carpenter, plumber, electrician, painter, cook, baker or farmer has the lad's respect. Every week positions in work are posted. "Look at that list," we say to a boy. "Is that the best you can do?" As a result the quality and quantity of work have more than doubled.

Pay is in the coinage of the realm—not in tokens. The actual amount paid is much less than outside, but the pay is in direct proportion to output and skill. A boy starts as a laborer. From that stage he may be promoted, after thoroughly satisfactory reports, through successive stages to the position of an "improver." An increase of a twopence a week goes with each promotion to a maximum of one shilling and twopence. Rates of pay are not fixed, however. Records showing a better week's work mean a little more money. Weekly pay in the laboring gangs, for example, varies from fourpence to one shilling and twopence.

About two-thirds of the weekly earnings are deducted for board and lodging. There is also a small "income tax." The rest is paid in cash. All clubs and athletic activities, including cricket and swimming, are optional and can only be enjoyed by the payment of a weekly subscription. Concerts and pictures are paid for at the door and are optional. Cigarettes, sweets, jam or hair oil may be purchased from the "Tuck Shop." A boy must have a minimum deposit of four shillings in the "savings banks" before discharge. Some save thirty-four.

The pay system has introduced responsibility for property. If a boy is careless with his clothes they are repaired at his cost. If a fellow breaks a window pane, either through negligence or deliberately, it is replaced at his cost. If a boy is not at work by 7:30 he is fined twopence; a second offense doubles the fine. A serious offense calls for a conference with the governor. As a last resort a boy may be transferred to another Borstal. This occurs in less than three per cent of the cases.

We have 170 boys at present. The average number in a house is 60—30 would be better.

A committee of lads composed of leaders chosen by the house staff and a boy from each group of 12 chosen by a vote of the members of the group meets with the governor and the housemasters regularly each month. Matters of food, clothing, conditions of work—anything affecting the lads may be discussed. The governor may or may not accede to the requests. The committee members always get a reasoned answer which they then take back to the lads. At first everybody was anxious to be on the committee, but they had to learn that it wasn't all jam. When they got what was wanted, all went well. When the answer was "No," they found "more kicks than ha'pennies in it."

Once or twice a month about twelve boys, wearing ordinary civilian clothes, spend three hours in the city of Nottingham without supervision. Only one failure, the Prison Commission has ruled, and the Nottingham trips stop. 400 lads have made the trip, however, and there has been no trouble yet. After six months any lad may submit his name to his representative on the committee. There is a secret ballot on these names. A one-third vote against a lad prevents him from going.

In conclusion the transplanting of old world traits to America involves many difficulties. We are younger, more heterogeneous in cultural backgrounds, more mobile, less dominated by tradition than the English. It is really not fair to compare the success of American with English graduates of correctional schools. It is easier for a boy to make good in England. Social influences are more consistent and definitions of proper behavior less conflicting. On the other hand, we have the same fundamental mores of individualism, democracy and humanitarianism as in England.

The following traits might profitably be transplanted to America and cultivated here on a wider scale than they are at present:

1. Inspection and standard-setting by a central agency, such as, the federal Children's Bureau or the Departments of Child Welfare in the various states.

2. The separation of "juvenile adults" from adults fully grown in contrast to the tendency in American reformatories to include men as old as forty with boys of sixteen.

3. Choice of superintendent and staff on the basis of merit and for long periods, rather than as a reward for political services and subject to discharge with a change in administration. Long terms make possible the working out of consistent policies.

4. Longer terms for boys and girls enabling effective vocational training.

5. Closer approximation of conditions within the school to those on the outside.