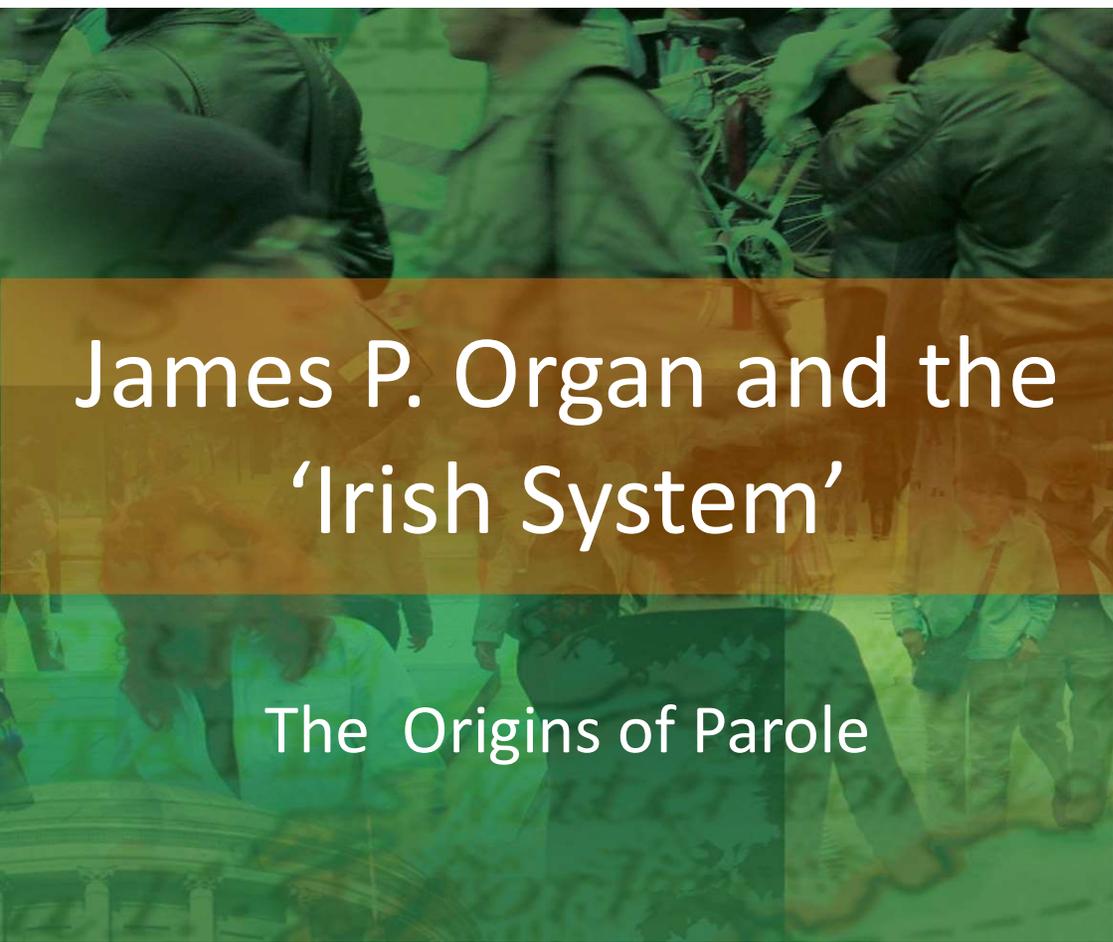




An tSeirbhís Phromhaidh
The Probation Service



James P. Organ and the 'Irish System'

The Origins of Parole

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Ottawa

Outline

- Prisons and Punishment in 18th-19th century
- Molesworth Committee Report and Transportation 1838
- Penal Servitude
- Walter Crofton and the Irish Convict Prisons Board
- The Irish System in practice
- James Patrick Organ, Inspector of Discharged Convicts
- What happened next.....

19th Century Prisons Background

- Transportation as a sentence in UK and Ireland
- After 1836, in UK, executions only for murder or attempted murder (1841 murder only)
- Separate System (Crawford and Russell)
- Maconochie, Jebb and Crofton
- Arnould Bonneville De Marsangy (1802-1894) Conditional Release 1846
- Obermaier (Munich), Montesinos (Valencia)
- Molesworth Report 1837-8

Prison Reform

“Criminals are bad because they have been open to wicked influence. If exposed to good influences, Christianity in particular, they will change for the better.”

Sir Joshua Jebb, Surveyor-General of Prisons

Pentonville Prison 1842 (Model Convict Prison/Depot)

Separate confinement intended, through religious exhortation, rigorous discipline, moral training and the imposition of separation in its most extreme form, to produce deep repentance and rehabilitation. High rates of mental breakdown, delusions, hallucinations, panic, depression, anxiety and morbid feelings.

Mountjoy Prison 1850

Transportation - Colonial opposition grew in the 1830s and 1840s Alternatives?

Ticket of Leave

The **Penal Servitude Act 1853** substituted terms of transportation to Australia with sentences of penal servitude in a British or Irish convict prison. (4 years PS for 7 years Transportation)

The **Penal Servitude Act 1853** also created the facility for individuals serving time in convict prisons to be released part way through their sentence on a "conditional licence" or "**Ticket of Leave**" similar to the release system in Australia

Alexander Maconochie (1787-1860)

1803 Royal Navy

1833 first Professor of Geography at UCLondon

1836 Van Diemen's land (Tasmania)

1836-8 Report on Convict Penal discipline critical of the fixation on punishment – Maconochie dismissed

1838 Molesworth Report

1840 Appointed as Commandant of the penal settlement at Norfolk Island and Implemented his mark system

1843 Governor Gipps reported the System of Moral Reform as a success

1844 Maconochie replaced and returned to London

Crofton adapted Maconochie's mark system to measure and reward reform and added pre-release preparation and supervised conditional release.



Sir Joshua Jebb (1793–63)

1812 Royal Engineers

1812-20 US campaign and canal building in Canada

1837 Surveyor-General of prisons and technical adviser on the construction of prisons.

1838-42 Design and construction of Pentonville model prison

1843 Commissioner of Pentonville Prison

1850 Chair of the Board of Directors of Convict Prisons for England

English Convict System adopted its own system progressive stages of confinement, but Jebb and Crofton took opposite positions on post-release supervision and revocation.

In England, nothing was done to supervise ticket-of leave-holders beyond the warning on the licence of consequences. Jebb believed that supervision would make released prisoners second-class citizens and undermine their reintegration.



Sir Walter Crofton (1815–97)

1852 Retired Army Officer (54th foot) and County Magistrate in Wiltshire

1854 Report of Commissioners on Convict Inquiry in Ireland

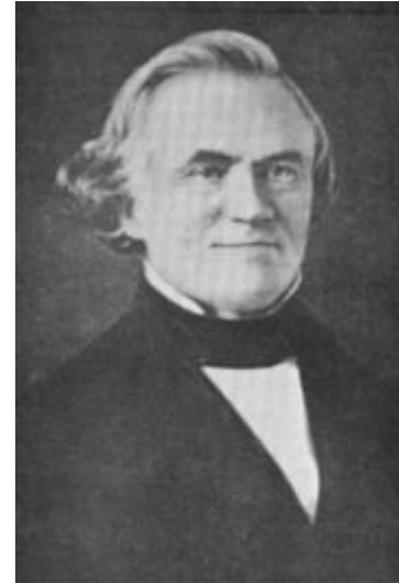
October 1854 Appointed chairman of the Directors of Convict Prisons for Ireland (Crofton, Knight and Lentaigne)

1862 Retired and knighted

1869 Special Commissioner in Ireland for Prisons, Reformatories, and Industrial Schools

The convict is “arbiter of his own fate” persuaded through rewards to begin “co-operating in his own amendment.”

Crofton adapted Maconochie’s mark system to measure and reward reform and added pre-release preparation (intermediate prison) and supervised conditional release.



The Irish System

The sentence of penal servitude under the **Irish System** comprised separate phases:

- a period of **solitary confinement** (about 6-9 months at Mountjoy Prison) on a restricted diet;
- a period of **association and work**, in which the prisoner advanced to higher levels by credits, or “marks,” earned for industry and good behaviour;
- a period in an “**intermediate prison**” with minimal supervision, during which the prisoner had training and testing to demonstrate dependability and employability outside (individualisation);
- early release on a “**ticket of leave**” under the supervision of the **Inspector Discharged Convicts, James Organ**, who arranged employment, conducted periodic visits and reported to the Convict Prisons Directors. (outside Dublin supervision was by the local police constabulary)
- unconditional discharge** including freedom to emigrate.

Intermediate Prisons

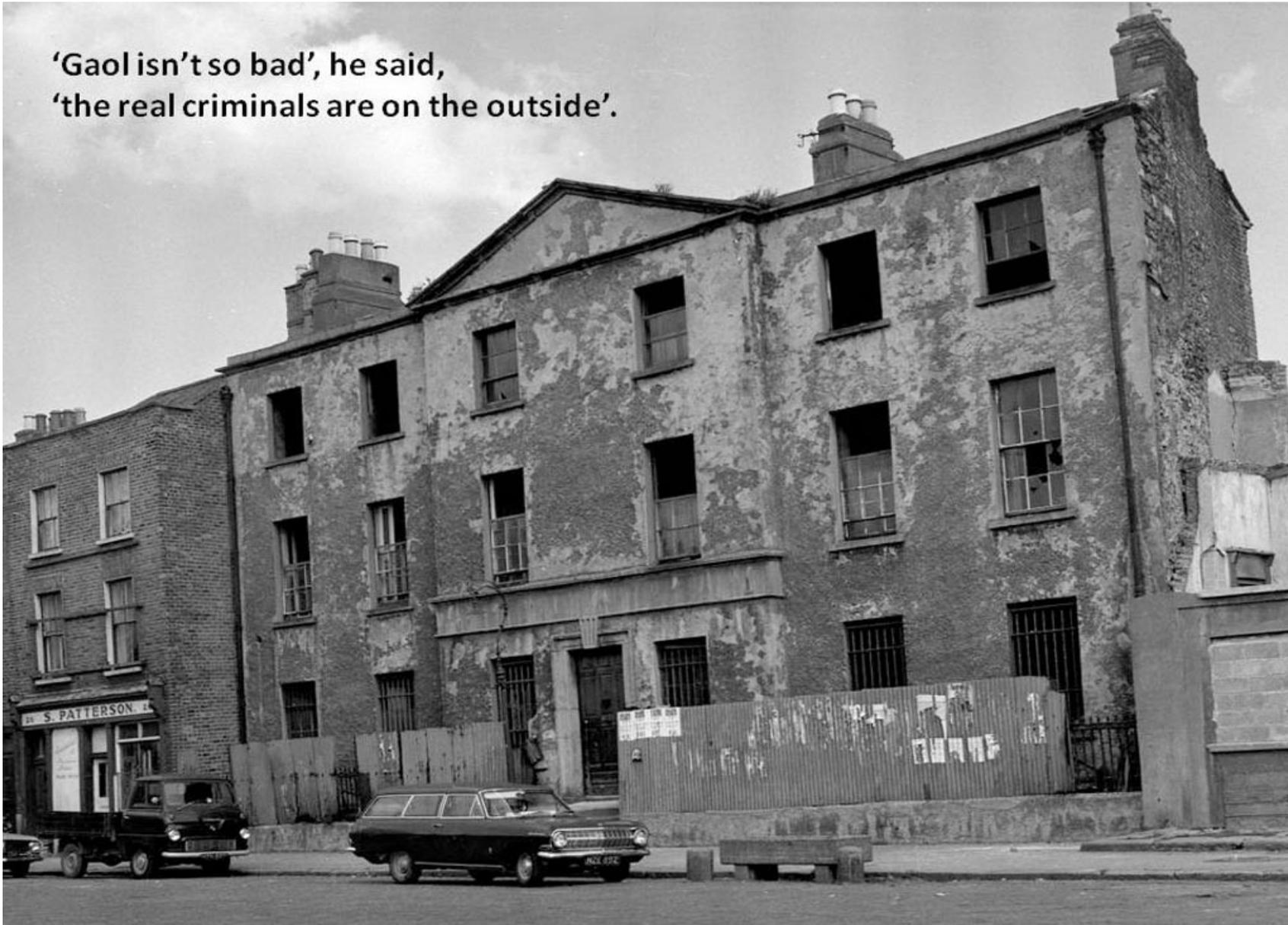
- Smithfield
 - Lusk
 - Fort Camden and Fort Carlisle
-
- “individualization” small numbers in an open environment, no more than 100
 - test the assumed self-control and good conduct of the convict and
 - through lectures and work placement increase chances for employment after release and lessen public fears
 - post-release supervision

Female catholic convicts were placed in Sisters of Mercy run “houses of refuge” at Goldenbridge.

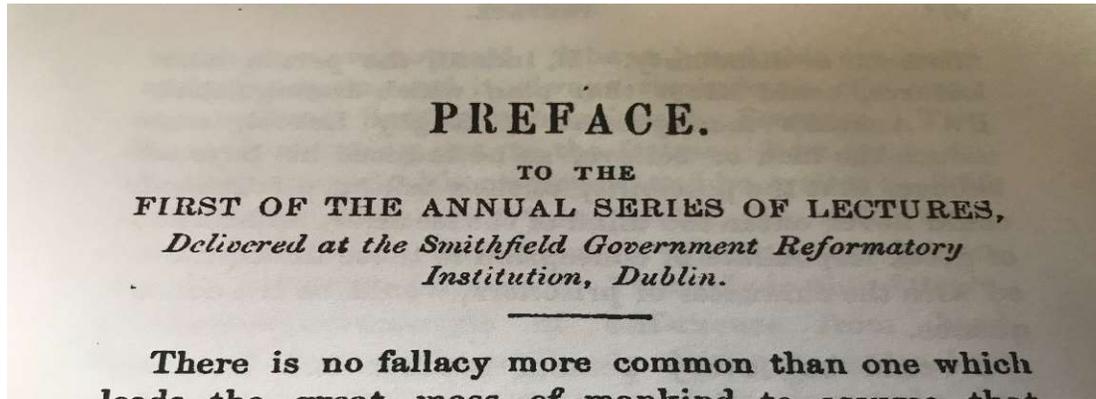
Smithfield Penitentiary (1801-1871)

Picture : Dublin City Archives 1968

**'Gaol isn't so bad', he said,
'the real criminals are on the outside'.**



James Organ



‘A lecturer to convicts must...bear two particulars in mind.....first, that being men, **they must not be talked down to, or treated as children;**

second that they must never for one moment perceive that when once received into the highest class of good-conduct men, that they are ever suspected of falsehood or dishonesty’.

‘My great objective was to talk **to** them, rather than **at** them.....I have never found that when once we had got to understand each other, my audience and myself differed...

(Preface, v-viii)

Lectures or Preparation for Release

James P. Organ: Lectures On Educational, Social And Moral Subjects delivered to the Inmates of Smithfield Reformatory Institute, Dublin. W.B. Kelly, Grafton Street, Dublin (1858)

‘The ordinary class of well-conducted convicts are [not] in any respect, in mind, morals, passions or feelings, inferior to the generality of those of their class in life...’

‘A lecturer to convicts must...bear two particulars in mind.....first, that being men, **they must not be talked down to, or treated as children**; second that they must never for one moment perceive that when once received into the highest class of good-conduct men, that they are ever suspected of falsehood or dishonesty’.

‘My great objective was to talk **to** them, rather than **at** them.....I have never found that when once we had got to understand each other, my audience and myself differed...

(Preface, v-viii)



James Organ

Smithfield Institution for Exemplary Prisoners,
January 1, 1857.

Repo

GENTLEMEN,—In compliance with your directions, I beg to present my first Annual Report as Lecturer in the Smithfield Institution for Exemplary Prisoners.

When you honoured me with my present appointment in the institution, I understood my duties to be of a combined nature; I was not to consider myself merely a literary teacher, nor yet solely a moral trainer. I believed that I was to make myself acquainted not alone with the knowledge or ignorance, in an educational point, of the inmates committed to my charge, but I was likewise to obtain an insight, as much as possible, into the natural character, the disposition, the hopes, the fears, the wishes, and the intentions of each individual. I knew also that I was, if possible, to keep myself acquainted with the employment and conduct of the men upon quitting the institution. These things I have endeavoured to accomplish, and I have been aided willingly and earnestly by every officer of this institution.

Upon my appointment I found fifty inmates committed to my charge, and upon an examination I was enabled to classify them educationally, though not with perfect accuracy, as exhibited in the following table:—

Number able to read and write.



James Organ

... the past year, allowed the question, what should be the education of convicts, to engage my attention, and have given it my calm and thoughtful consideration; but before committing to paper a system which I would urge to be adopted in all adult prison schools, I have deemed it advisable to give it a fair trial. This I have done, and with the results I have no cause to be dissatisfied.

You are aware, gentlemen, that the time set apart for school instruction is two hours each evening, commencing at five o'clock and ending at seven o'clock; the period of commencement, at all events, is regular and fixed; but the concluding hour is not quite so definite, as the lectures may at some times prove longer and more interesting than at others; in such cases neither lecturer nor audience seem wearied or fatigued.

My experience of adult education has aided me materially in determining the course of instruction best calculated, in my mind, to meet the educational wants of the class of men in our Intermediate Prisons. In carrying out the system it was necessary that I should appear to forget that I was instructing men of many crimes, repulsive dispositions, callous hearts, and suspecting natures.

But when I ascended the little platform to address them, or when I held private converse with them upon their past crimes, their present hopes and fears, and what were likely to be their future destinies, the mask fell, and they saw me as willing and determined to censure as I was anxious and happy to commend.

How the two hours for school instruction are employed will be seen from the subjoined table:—

Employment of Time—Smithfield.

Monday evening.—Writing, reading, arithmetic, and lecture.

Tuesday evening.—Writing, reading, geography, and lecture.



James Organ

July 1-11, 1856.—The Form and Magnitude of the Earth. The Bank and the Fire-side. The Water we Drink. The Ruins of Creation. The Gold Fields of Australia.

July 14-18, 1856.—Conscientiousness respecting Reputation and Property of others. Coal and the Coal Mines. Opening Address in Newgate. Mysteries of the Deep. Canada and her Resources.

July 21-25, 1856.—Forbearance and Forgiveness. The Race of Man. Life of Alexander Selkirk. The Plant we Cultivate.

July 28 to August 1, 1856.—Slander. Rivers and Lakes of the World. Endowments of God to Man. The Bread we Eat. English Grammar.

August 4-8, 1856.—Electric Telegraph, Anecdotes of. Mines and Minerals. Self-denial and Decision of Character. Lives of Great Men—Columbus. Physical Geography—Lecture No. 1.

August 11-15, 1856.—Emigration. Life and Death of the Drunkard. Commerce. Precious Metals and Precious Stones. The World of Plants.

August 18-22, 1856.—Conscientiousness in adhering to a Promise. Vegetable Kingdom. Thunder and Lightning. Victoria and Port Philip. Physical Geography—Lecture No. 2.

August 25-29, 1856.—Contentment and Religious Repose of Mind. Clouds and Storms. Structure of the Earth. Howard the Philanthropist. Canada and her Resources.

September 1-5, 1856.—Conscientiousness respecting Rights of others. The Drainage and Natural Features of Europe. Temperance and Intemperance. The Human Heart. The Mechanical Powers.

September 8-12, 1856.—Conduct towards Inferiors and Superiors. The Bank and the Fire-side. Circulation of the Blood. New South Wales English Grammar and Dictation.

September 15-19, 1856.—Anger. Trade Winds. Who should Emigrate



James Organ

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Fourth Annual Report of the Directors

FIRST REPORT ON MEN ON LICENCE in the City and County of Dublin, for month of January, 1858, made fortnightly by the Lecturer.

When Released.	Initials of Name.	Residence.	Employer.	Employment.	Weekly Wages.	Observations.
Sept. 3, 1856,	D. L.	Chapelizod,	J. N.	Labourer,	£ s. d. 0 10 0	A most exemplary man.
" 15, "	D. K.	Crumlin,	M. C.	Do.	0 8 0	Do. do.
Nov. 11, "	D. R.	Saggart,	J. M'D.	Do.	0 7 0	In hospital.
" " "	M. M'L.	Do.	Do.	Do.	0 7 0	Doing well.
Feb. 20, 1857,	M. G.	Do.	Do.	Do.	0 7 0	Doing well as regards his public duties.
Nov. 6, 1856,	P. M'N.	Do.	Do.	Do.	0 7 0	Doing well.
Oct. 28, 1857,	P. W.	Do.	Do.	Do.	0 7 0	Do.
Dec. 3, 1856,	D. R.	South King-st.	G. and R.	Do.	0 9 6	Retained in employment when three of his fellow-labourers were discharged a few days since.
May 13, "	M. R.	Poolbeg-street,	M. B.	Do.	0 9 0	Doing well.
July 22, 1857,	P. M'G.	Fado-street,	—	—	—	In hospital.
" 13, "	J. S.	Francis-street,	M. M.	Labourer,	0 12 0	No better character.
" " "	C. M'C.	Fado-street,	M. R.	Do.	0 8 0	I cannot speak too highly of this man.
Aug. 10, "	P. M.	Old Bawn,	J. M'D.	Do.	0 10 0	Do. do.
" 6, "	W. W.	Ryder's-row,	W. L.	Shoemaker,	Piece-work	Doing well.
Nov. 27, "	M. B.	North King-st.	M. C.	Labourer,	0 8 0	Going on well; got married a few days since.
Oct. 14, "	T. R.	Bride-street,	P. M'L.	Tailor,	3s. & board	A proper young man.
Nov. 16, "	J. M.	Longford-st.	M. G.	Shoemaker,	Varying	An excellent character.
" 13, "	J. M.	Mary's-lane,	M. C.	Labourer,	0 9 0	Going on well; he was dealing in fowl, but has become a bankrupt.
Dec. 18, "	M. L.	Bedford-st.	Do.	Do.	0 9 0	Going on well.
Sept. 24, "	P. D.	Gloucester-pl.	Do.	Do.	0 9 0	An industrious, sober, and well-inclined young man, and, what is more, a good son to his aged mother.
" " "	E. H.	Clarke's-court,	M. W.	Shoemaker,	3s. & board	Doing very well.
" " "	J. D.	Swords,	—	—	—	This man is going on well I hear, but have not seen him some lately.

James Organ

“..[H]e is one of that privileged number who will have left a mark on their age...in the extent and amount of the quiet, unnoticed good that he has accomplished, and the wholesome healing influences he has wrought upon the dispositions and destinies of his fellow-creatures.”

”[T]he system now adopted in Ireland rests upon principles so sound and so true to human experience.....for its early and rapid success it is largely indebted to the capacity of Mr. Organ to make powerful impressions upon the minds, sometimes sluggish and sullen, sometimes quick and impulsive, with which he was brought into contact, as well as the wholly voluntary and disinterested tenacity with which he clung to the discharged prisoner in his subsequent career, diminishing its risks and shielding him from its temptations.”

Earl of Carlisle: Address on Punishment and Reformation at the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science 1858 pp74-75

James Patrick Organ

- ❑ Baptism of JACOBUS ORGAN on 17 July 1825 (Parish - ST. NICHOLAS)
- ❑ 3 Wall's Lane (Francis Street to Spitalfields/Carman's Hall) Dublin 8.
- ❑ 1844-55 Adult Education Teacher
- ❑ 1855 Lecturer at Smithfield Government Reformatory
- ❑ 1856 Inspector of Discharged Convicts
- ❑ 1858 **Lectures On Educational, Social And Moral Subjects** published by W.B. Kelly
- ❑ Marriage of James Patrick Organ, Mespil Parade and Susan Foley, 17 Nassau Street on 21 January 1860
- ❑ Report from the General Committee on Valuation (Ireland) July 1869.
- ❑ premature death, at the age of 46, November 11th, 1869,
- ❑ James Organ's grave is unmarked in the Garden Section at Glasnevin Cemetery.

The Irish System reviews

Matthew Davenport Hill – Irish Convict Prisons have solved the problem of what to do with our convicts 1857

Earl of Carlisle

1861 Prince Consort (Albert) and children visit Smithfield

1870 Declaration of Principles Adopted and Promulgated by the Congress (National congress on Penitentiary and Reformatory Discipline Cincinnati)

“XVIII The most valuable parts of the Irish Prison System – the more strictly penal stage of separate imprisonment, **the reformatory stage of progressive classification, and the probationary stage of natural training** – are believed to be applicable to one country as another – to the United States as to Ireland”

☐ Jebb - Crofton Controversy.

What happened next....

1863 can be viewed as a key year for the increasing severity of the penal system, though largely through coincidence.

Joshua Jebb died. He was eventually to be replaced by Edmund Du Cane, a strict disciplinarian, who became Assistant Director in 1863.

The Select Committee of the House of Lords presented its report on Gaol Discipline in 1863. The **Carnarvon Committee** stressed the importance of **punishment over reformation** and many of its recommendations were incorporated in the Penal Servitude Act 1864.

The 1865 Prisons Act abolished the distinction between prisons and houses of correction. 80 smaller prisons were closed, leaving only 113 prisons under local control.

1878 Prisons Act brought all prisons under central control

What happened next....

2019 was the 150th anniversary of the death of James Patrick Organ on 11th November 1869.

James P. Organ, the 'Irish System' and the Origins of Parole

Irish Probation Journal 2019 Volume 16

[http://www.probation.ie/EN/PB/0/3269CCCE1A14195C802584C10055629E/\\$File/James%20P.%20Organ,%20the%20'Irish%20System'%20and%20the%20Origins%20of%20Parole.pdf](http://www.probation.ie/EN/PB/0/3269CCCE1A14195C802584C10055629E/$File/James%20P.%20Organ,%20the%20'Irish%20System'%20and%20the%20Origins%20of%20Parole.pdf)

<https://www.cep-probation.org/james-p-organ-the-irish-system-and-the-origins-of-parole/>

Anyone with good ideas, further detail on James Organ and the Irish System, and parole generally, should further explore the legacy of James Patrick Organ

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An tSeirbhís Phromhaidh
The Probation Service

www.probation.ie

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1	tot	5000
	add	250
28	tot	10100
32		3600
	add	500
30	tot	3550
32		4500

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