

Exploring the History of Prisoner Education

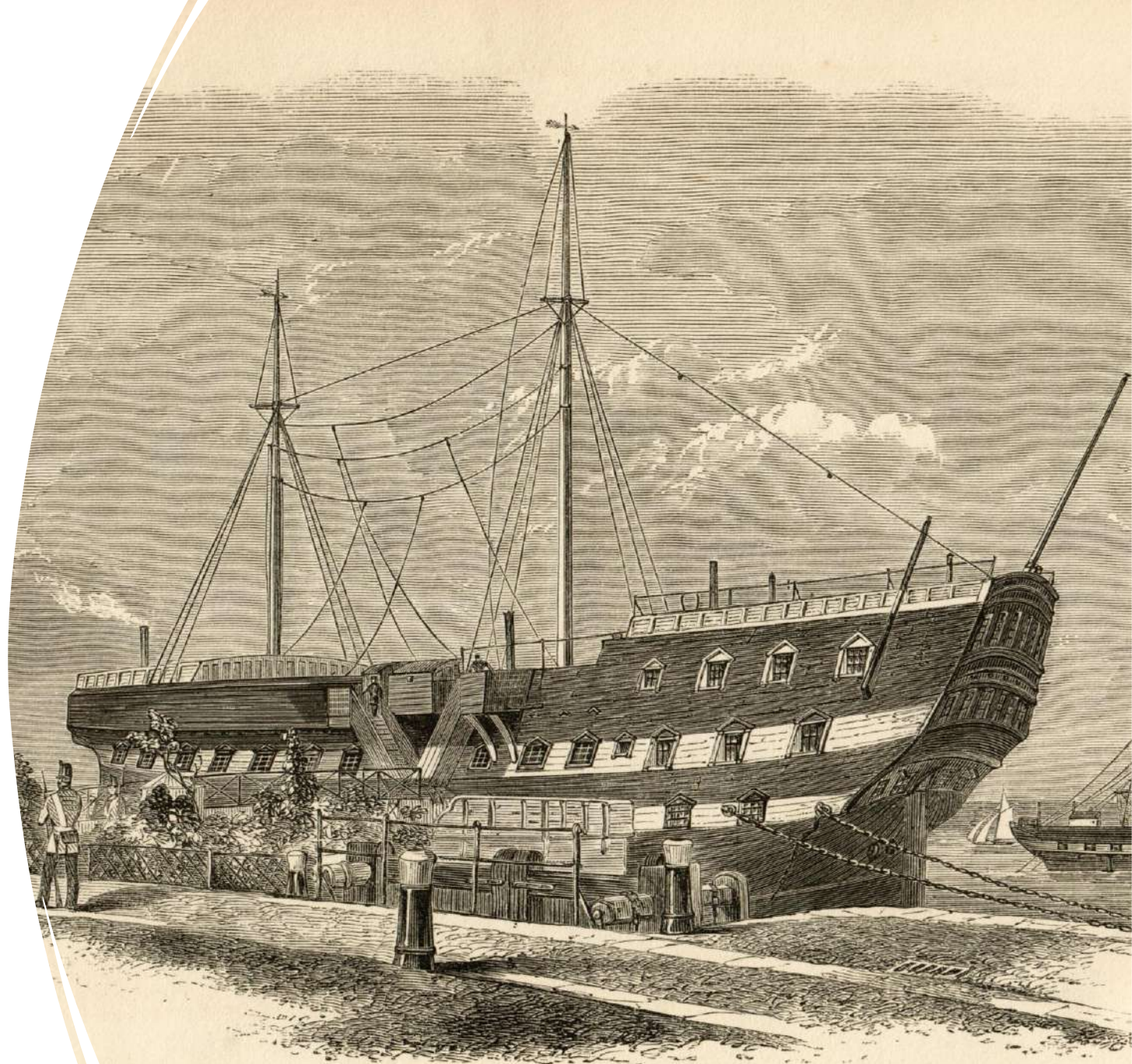
A free Badged Open Course (BOC)
available through OpenLearn

Rosalind Crone (The Open University) & Leah Humphries (Wayout TV)

On behalf of the course production team!

Beginnings... the history of prison education

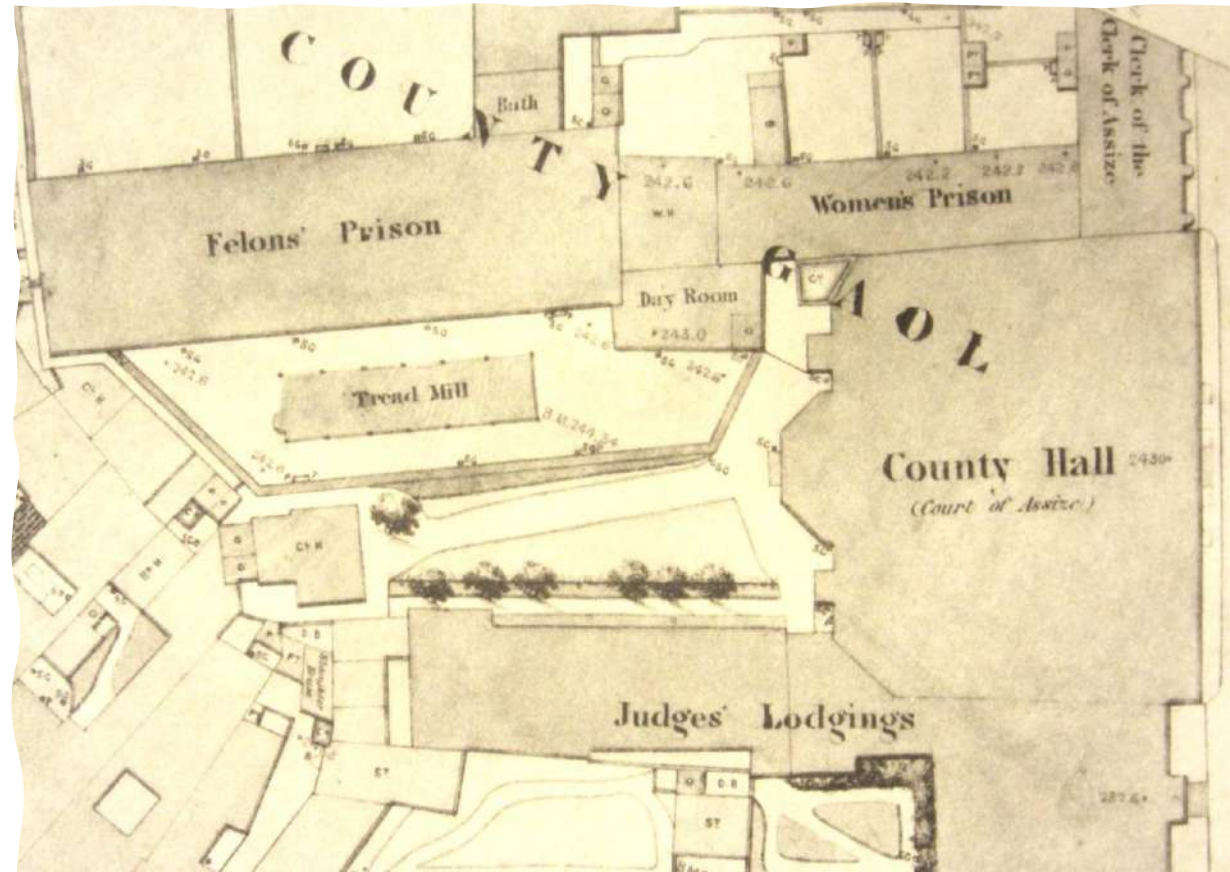
- 'I have also to report, that a school is established in the ship, which is attended to, and some of the ignorant are beginning to read.' Thomas Price, Chaplain of the Zealand Convict Ship, January 1st 1812
- '...several of them, who before were scarcely acquainted with their letters, have been restored to liberty, able both to read and write with correctness, and it is presumed, have carried back with them more profitable and industrious habits...' William Tate, Chaplain, Captivity, December 31st 1815



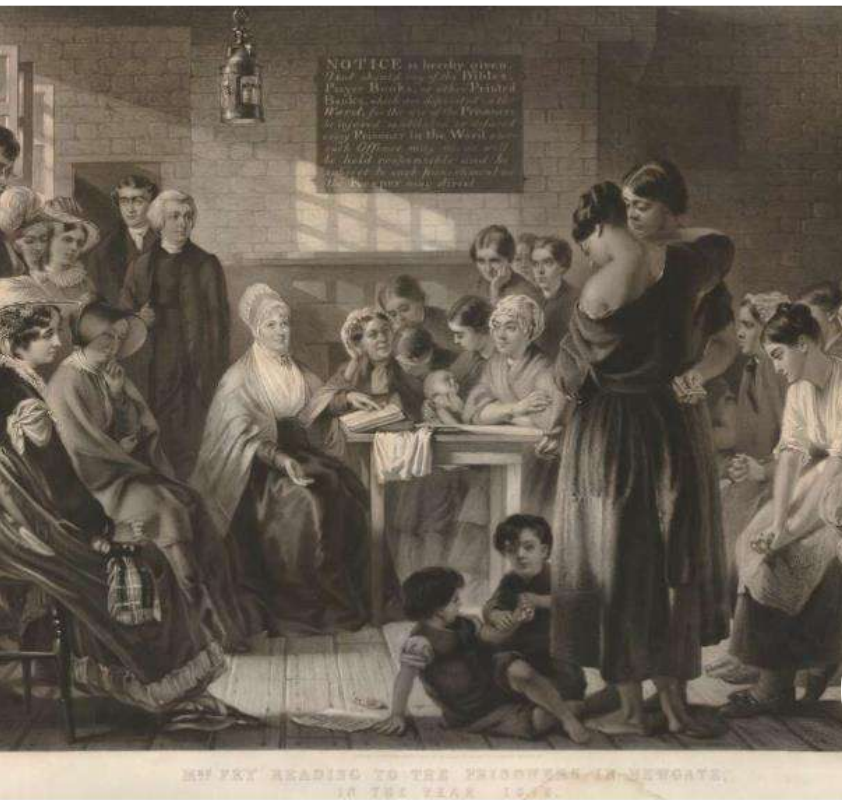
THE "WARRIOR" HULK WITH THE "SULPHUR" WASHING-SHIP IN THE DISTANCE.

Education at Warwick County Gaol

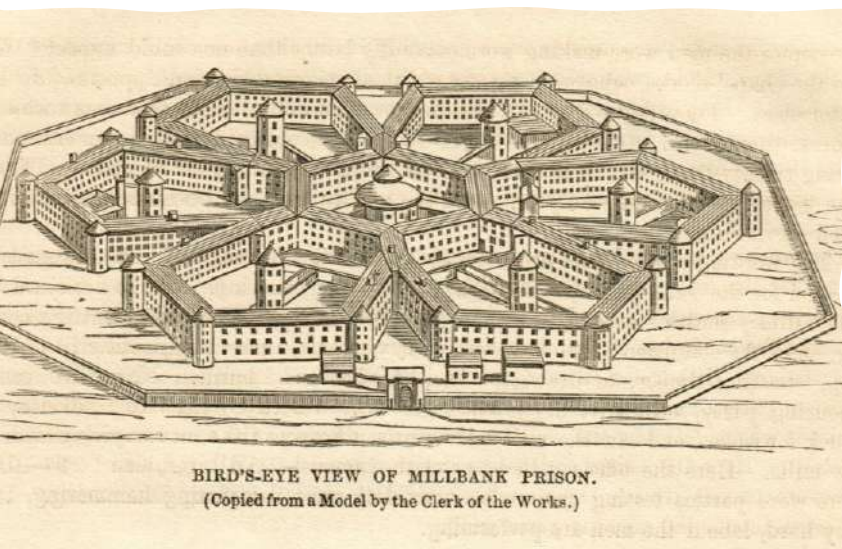
- ‘...active members visited the prison, and observing the want of emulation and of all desire of improvement which prevailed among prisoners, were forcibly struck with the applicableness of the National System to their peculiar circumstances ...’
Fourth Annual Report of the National Society... (1816)



Education at Millbank Penitentiary and Newgate Gaol

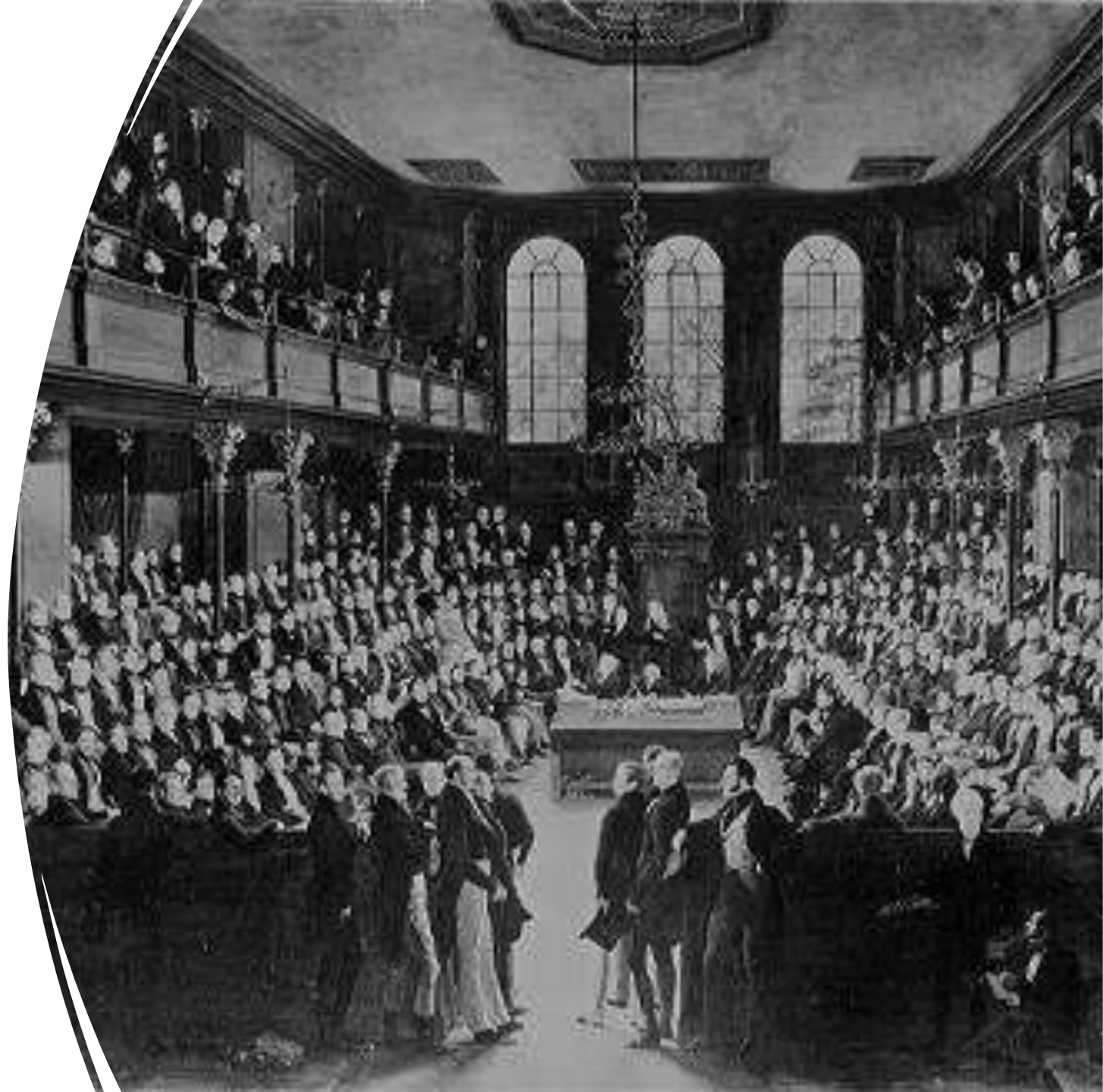


- Millbank Penitentiary – from 1816, prisoners taught in the corridors in groups of 16
- Newgate Gaol – a school for boys from 1815; a school for women and their children from 1817

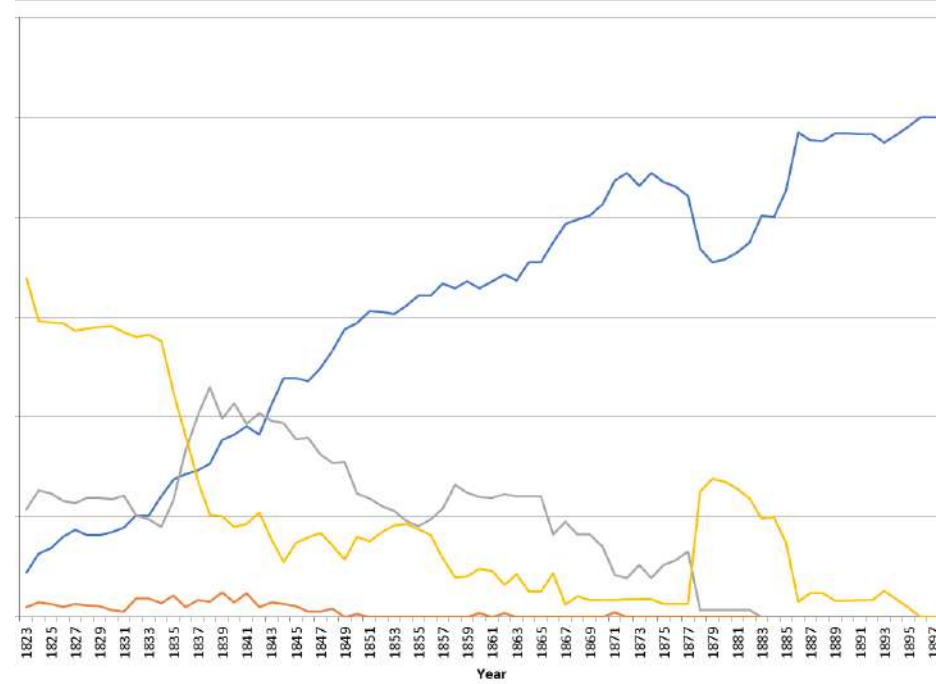


1823: The legislative moment

- 1823 Gaols Act, Section 10 (10):
 - ‘Provision shall be made in all prisons for the instruction of prisoners of both sexes in reading and writing, under such rules and regulations, and to such extent as to the Justices may seem expedient’
 - (note: Justices = local magistrates, who were in charge of local prisons until 1878)



22	William Trump	R	-	-	21	Acq ⁿ on a Charge of Felony
"	Joseph Jewell	R	-	-	17	
"	Edward Miller	R	W	-	21	
"	Joseph Townsend	R	W	-	25	
23	William Hodder	R	-	Chas	3 15	before for dism. Serv ^t : Acq ⁿ of Felony Ep 7. 1828
"	William Chick	R	-	Admin ^{str}	3 13	
26	John Poole	R	-	Taunton	4 20	
"	William Brooks	R	-	do	4 21	before for like offence
"	John Lane	R	W	do	3 20	
"	Betty Smith	-	-	-	05	before 1 Month, Stealing Apples
"	Isaac Palmer	-	-	-	35	Third time for Teaching
"	Elizabeth Sealey	-	-	-	26	
"	John Hyde at B. Boston	-	-	-	27	
29	William Withhurn	R	-	-	32	
"	James Lewis	-	-	-	35	



Consequences:

- Increasing number of prison schools
- Appearance of data on prisoner literacy
- Growth of prison libraries

Prison school curriculum

- Growth – from instruction in reading and writing, to include arithmetic, and geography, history and science
- Pentonville in the 1840s: a curriculum that matched or surpassed the state supported elementary schools
- From c.1865: a narrowing to instruction in the basic elements (matching trends in elementary education outside the prison)

Date 1843

Orders

March 2nd 1843. 27
 24
 2nd
 24
 24
 24
 24

Search Prigs to be made, the same size as the Board room key, for the Governor, Secretary, Medical Officers, Deputy Governor Officers, Colours and Patterns to be suited to the Carpets.

Wicks for Cottens & Yarns, Shelves for Warts & Brushes, Closets or Cupboards for Clothes when manufactured for Clothes. Nail for examining Cloth.

2 Large Tables with Drawers 1 Large Weave & Scale with weights. All required for Manufacturers Show room.

Required immediately in the School

77 addit. Cop. of paper B^o N^o 1 Example Board School at 3rd each

by 5th of Reading B^o N^o 2 Chis. H. Soc. 6th each

by 5th of Lessons B^o N^o 3 Wor. Wand Sch. 2nd 1/6

by 5th of 3rd N^o 4 S. D. D. 2nd 1/6

200 B. of Arithmetic for Jun. Classes B^o.

100 Slate Mulhauges suited diagonally

100 Slate plain 2 1/2 ft. D^o. W. P. School

1000 Slate Pennils

No. 9. School 7

F & T 10,000 7-68 1766

2446 P. EXAMINATION BOOK.

No. and Name ~~4552~~ Geo. E. Smith

TABLE I.—To show Class and Standard of Attainment

Date of Examination.	29.4.72		4.6.72		1.1.73		1.7.73		1.1.74	
	Class.	Stand-ard.	Class.	Stand-ard.	Class.	Stand-ard.	Class.	Stand-ard.	Class.	Stand-ard.
Reading -	I	4	I	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Writing -	3/3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Arithmetic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

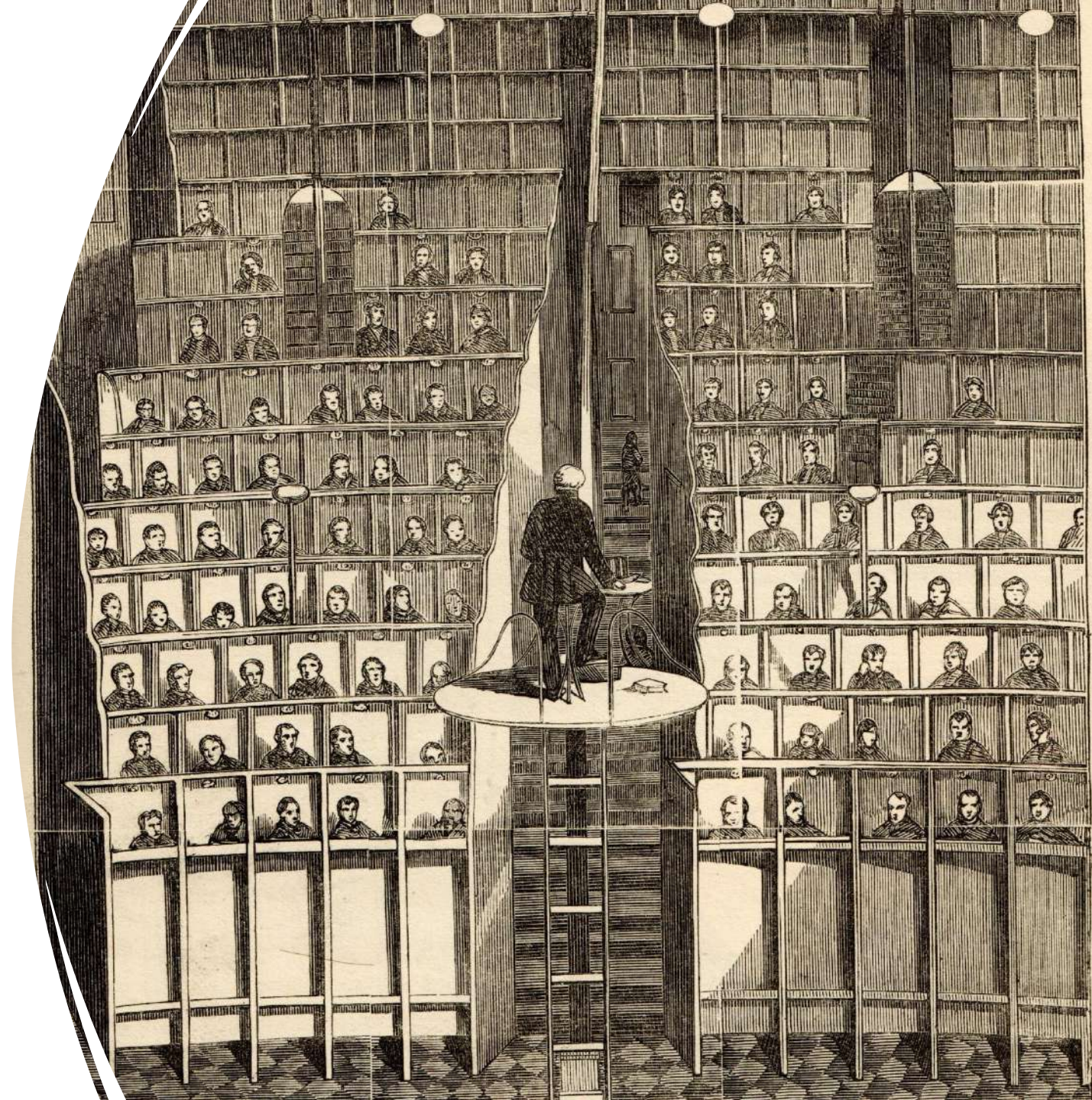
N.B.—The Class shown is to be that in which the Prisoner was prior to Examination. The which the Examination shews him to be qualified. If a new Standard is not attained, between be necessary to make a new entry of the Standard, but merely insert the date of the last Exam dates.

TABLE II.—To show the qualification for the six Stand

	Standard I.	Standard II.	Standard III.	Standard IV.	Stand
READING -	Narrative in monosyllables.	One of the narratives next in order after monosyllables in an elementary reading book used in the School.	A short paragraph from an elementary reading book used in the School.	A short paragraph from a more advanced reading book used in the School.	A few poetry fr reading fr in the B of the Se
WRITING -	Form on black board or slate, from dictation, letters capital and small, manuscript.	Copy in manuscript character a line of print.	A sentence from the same paragraph slowly read once and then dictated in single words.	A sentence slowly dictated once by a few words at a time from the same book, but not from the paragraph read.	A senty dictate a few w time from ing book the First the Scho
ARITHMETIC	Form on black board or slate, from dictation, figures as up to 20, name at eight figures up to 20, add and subtract figures up to 10; orally, from examples on black board.	A sum in Simple Addition or Subtraction, and the Multiplication Table.	A sum in any simple rule as far as Short Division (inclusive.)	A sum in compound rules. (Money.)	A sum pound ru (Common and Meas

The delivery of education within the prison

- Need/ desire to deter and punish
- Need to manage bodies (timetabling etc)
- Need for prisoners to work
- Short prison sentences
- Consequences of separation



The value of studying the past

- History is very interesting, imaginative exercise, intellectual pursuit
- Our world today, especially institutions, are shaped by their past. (Prison education isn't a new thing; it is bound up with the rise of the modern prison)
- History provides a vast reservoir of human experience
- Studying the past makes the present strange



insidetime
the National Newspaper for Prisoners & Detainees

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Stuck in the Victorian past

Rosalind Crone 2nd September 2022 0 *Comment



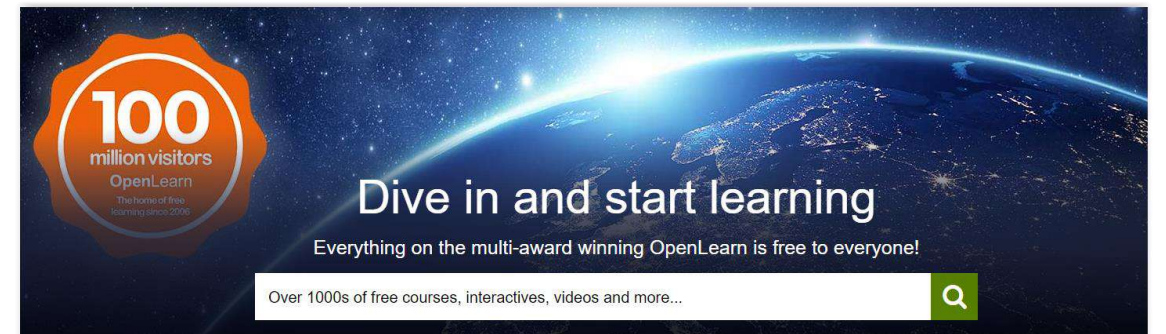
Reformers from a hundred and fifty years ago would still be campaigning for change...

For many in the UK, encounters with prison are limited to museums. Whether viewing a medieval dungeon or a 19th century model prison, visitors can often be heard breathing a sigh of relief that such grim times belong to a distant past.

Nothing better exposes that misconception than the photo, which featured in a recent report by HM

The birth of the BOC

- c.2013 – connections with Prisoners' Education Trust
- Prison University Partnerships – need for route into degrees/ qualifications
- HE fees and the exclusion of OU Access courses
- 2016 Coates Review and the new Prison Education Framework
- OpenLearn courses through Virtual Campus
- AHRC Follow on Funding (OU & PET)




Making the BOC

- The (dream)team!
 - Ros Crone & Dan Weinbren (OU)
 - Colleagues from Open Media Informal Learning (OpenLearn)
 - Francesca Cooney (PET)
 - Nik Jones and Leah Humphries, and others
- Covid pandemic!
- Pilot at HMP Leeds – producing an offline version



Free course Exploring the history of prisoner education

 Free statement of participation on completion



Course description

Course content

Course reviews

SESSION
1

SESSION
2

SESSION
3

SESSION
4

SESSION
5

SESSION
6

SESSION
7

SESSION
8

You can start this course right now without signing-up. Click on any of the course content sections below to start at any point in this course.

If you want to be able to track your progress, earn a free Statement of Participation, and access all course quizzes and activities, **sign-up**.

What we made

- Level 0/1 course (introduction to learning at HE level)
- 8 sessions; total = 24 hours
- Range of materials: teaching text, exercises, primary sources (evidence), bespoke audio-visual assets
- Assessed via quizzes: formative (sessions 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7) & summative (sessions 4 & 8)
- Successful completion – award of a digital badge

A flexible approach to prisoner learning

- Online and offline
- 7 bespoke films = standalone mini series on the history of the prison, can be delivered through prison television
- Both free and freely available
- Standalone course OR can be included in a larger course run by another provider
- Plugs into the OU systems through YXM130 *Making your learning count* (a low cost way for students to count study from open educational resources towards at OU qualification, i.e. OU Open degree)

SESSION

1

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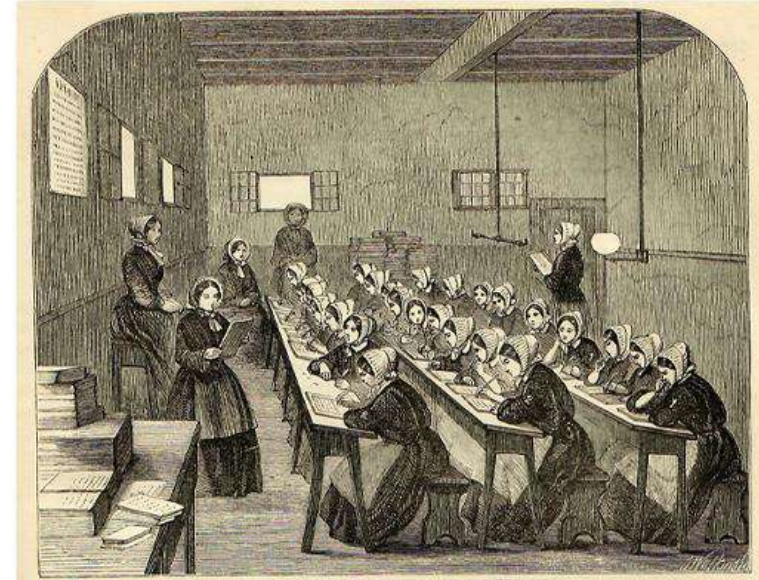
SESSION

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SESSION

4 The rise of the prison schoolmaster

The period 1835 to 1855 witnessed the rise of the prison schoolmaster. This was in part a consequence of the imposition of silence and separation. Schoolmasters were often employed to replace prisoners who had been employed in teaching. The new importance given to education meant that prison officials were eager to employ qualified teachers rather than relying on the efforts of family members and subordinate officers. Regulations for prisons in England and Wales published by the Home Office in 1840 insisted that schoolmasters and schoolmistresses had to be employed in large prisons (*Regulations for Prisons*, 1840, rule 178).



GIRLS' SCHOOL AT TOTHILL FIELDS PRISON.

Figure 7 Girls' schoolroom at Tothill Fields Prison in the late 1850s. By this time, Tothill Fields had become a prison for women and juvenile males. This concentration of female prisoners meant that there were enough to justify the appointment of a schoolmistress. In many other local prisons, the matron took on the duties of a schoolmistress.

Show description ▼

At the same time, prison visiting by charitable ladies and gentlemen began to decline. The famous prison visitors Elizabeth Fry and Sarah Martin both died in the mid-1840s, removing two powerful examples of

Next steps

- We need willing learners!
 - Prisoners,
 - Anyone working in the prisons sector especially those involved in the delivery of education
 - Anyone interested in prisons or prison history
- We would love to work directly with providers and institutions
- We need feedback – to improve and to do more in this space
- Talk to us directly, surveys for anonymous feedback (hard copy and online), plans for a 1-year post-launch event