

Educating Wards of the State: Gender-Based Vocational Curriculum in Jamaican Industrial Schools 1890 – 1940

Introduction

This paper is the first stage in a larger attempt to historicize the development of social services catering to wards of the state in Jamaica. As such, this research bridges the gap between education history and social policy in exploring ideas of citizenship, as it relates to children, in post slavery societies. Key to this exploration is the analysis of the early vocational curriculum of children housed in industrial schools in the island with specific reference to the Government Industrial School and Reformatory. Children found wandering without evidence of a home, abandoned, neglected, and orphaned were placed in both orphanages and industrial schools. The difference between the two types of institutions is negligible since both ‘criminal’ and destitute children coexisted in both institutions. The real difference was in the quality of education provided to children housed in these institutions.

In Jamaica, the terms industrial schools and reformatories were used interchangeably to describe state/private run institutions that catered to children of unfortunate circumstances. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Jamaican colonial government along with several religious institutions established a small network of Industrial Schools and a Reformatory that housed criminal, destitute, and displaced juveniles. Many of the inmates entered the industrial school system through the courts, poor relief or by the parochial boards.<sup>1</sup> In the twentieth century, a few parents had their children admitted to these institutions as a result of behavioral issues. Each of these institutions doubled as a school and a home. Children lived onsite, attended school,

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<sup>1</sup> Since 1670, the Jamaican political structure has included a municipal system for which responsibilities

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worked in the fields, and helped to maintain the general infrastructure of the schools. These institutions also took in work from the general public in part to improve the practical aspect of the children's training as well as to promote self-sufficiency in the institution.

The foundation of the industrial school system lay with the passage of the Industrial Schools Act in 1858. Based on the British Act, this legislation targeted children between the ages of 5 and 16 years of age found begging, orphaned and abandoned or wandering in public without evidence of familial and community support. Inevitably, the children of the black working class were most affected by this legislation as they participated extensively in the labor market. Their mobility contributed to their visibility. Industrial Schools and reformatories catered to juvenile delinquents, destitute and orphaned children. An industrial education curriculum emphasized training in vocational skills over the "three R's" – reading, writing and arithmetic. As such it was intended to produce a competent industrial workforce. Unlike children in other Jamaican schools, those in the industrial schools were subjected to a comprehensive industrial education program.

The development of industrial schools in the nineteenth and early twentieth century occurred within a larger context of emerging social issues with urbanization, such as crime, juvenile delinquency and homelessness, which forced colonial authorities to reevaluate existing laws to deal with these perceived nuisances. At the center of these efforts was the re-socialization of children of the black laboring classes. Extensive complaints of the indecent behavior of youth in the streets pervaded newspapers- such as sexual immorality, stone throwing, indecent language, drunken behavior, and fighting.

Many attributed such behavior to the high level of illegitimacy among the laboring population of the island. Writers to newspapers (mainly from the planter class and 'respectable' community) argued that illegitimate children were more susceptible to indecent and criminal behavior because their parents were irresponsible and amoral. Industrial schools would guide these children along to becoming proper well-adjusted adults. Increased provision of social services, therefore, began in the late nineteenth century and gathered momentum after the Moyne Commission (1938) with the creation, in the 1940s, of the Development and Welfare Organization in the West Indies.<sup>2</sup>

Key to the re-socialization of industrial school children was the promotion of ideas such as self-sufficiency, loyalty, and obedience. Through perseverance and hard work as well as adherence to class and social norms of respectability, these displaced delinquent and destitute children could become successful farmers, artisans, mothers and fathers. Weekly attendance at church, educational and athletic activities and competitions provided inmates with a sense of community and a general respect for authority, rules and regulations. It was hoped that the inculcation of loyalty through the promotion of group activities would eventually produce law-abiding citizens.<sup>3</sup> More importantly, achieving success through hard work would promote self-sufficiency. A successful industrial school, therefore, would produce disciplined, productive and amenable colonial citizens.

This ongoing discourse on citizenship included colonial officers, government officials, school administrators as well as the public. Citizenship, as defined here, did not refer to responsible political participation. Instead it was a more nuanced discussion

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<sup>2</sup> Midgley, 'Colonialism and Welfare,' *Journal of Progressive Human Services* 9:2 (31 – 50) 40.

<sup>3</sup> Jamaica Archives (JA) 1B/5/77/27 (1934), 'Extract from Report of Committee appointed by the Government to advise on Industrial Work at Stony Hill.'

about social responsibility and belonging. In light of contemporary political practices, the laboring population could not be considered citizens in the true sense of the word. Rather, the ascribed notion of citizenship emphasized productivity, amenability as well as respect for law and authority. Key to this discourse was the notion of ‘respectability,’ in which tangible representations of established gender norms and societal values such as creating nuclear family provided a mode of transportation for social mobility. The propagation of the nuclear family was essential because fathers as breadwinners were also symbols of authority, law and order. Mothers as caretakers reinforced the values of society through their interaction with their progeny.

‘...Children will under suitable influences become a valuable asset for the State while if neglected and uneducated, they run the risk of becoming criminals and paupers and of continuing to be a burden to the community.’<sup>4</sup>

Industrial schools, therefore, served as spaces of re-acculturation based on the belief that children entering these schools came from dysfunctional and unstable family situations. Earlier learned behavior patterns had to be dispensed with and children inculcated with new core values that emphasized hard work, thrift and respect for civil society. A successful industrial school, therefore, produced children who were assets rather than burdens to the society at large. These institutions, however, targeted a small subset of the population between the ages of 0 – 15 years. Majority of children existed and worked in the elementary school system and the remnants of the plantation economy. The inability, therefore, of school administrators and colonial officials to quantify the supposed benefits of the industrial school curriculum in these made it difficult to justify increased

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<sup>4</sup> Report of the Board of Supervision for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March, 1910 in the *Departmental Reports of Jamaica 1909 – 1910* (Jamaica: Government Printing Press, 1912) p. 418.

expenditure on these institutions as opposed to the mainstream education system – especially in the face of great economic hardship.<sup>5</sup>

*The Industrial School Circuit*

**Map of Jamaica showing Parishes and Parish Capitals<sup>6</sup>**



Jamaican colonial administrators inherited the idea of an industrial education from Britain. Initially tied to the reformatory movement, industrial schools served as safe spaces to house and educate juvenile paupers and delinquents. Many of these children were victims of the ‘rapid urbanization and industrialization’ in the 19<sup>th</sup> century that

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<sup>5</sup> Early provisions for educating the children of the ex-slave population was established with the Negro Education Grant, through which the Imperial government provided £30,000 per annum for the provision of education for ex-slaves. The newly freed received basic religious instruction from missionary-run schools that were supported by government grants. The instruction in these schools included reading, writing and basic arithmetic. Overall, there was a rapid expansion of elementary schools catering to large black population (some Indian and Chinese by the mid nineteenth century) into the twentieth century. Secondary schools catered to the mostly white Jamaican population for the majority of the period under review.

<sup>6</sup> Jamaica is 144 sq. miles and is made up of fourteen parishes. The capital of the island is the parish of Kingston. Municipal and administrative responsibility for Kingston sits with the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation (formed in 1923)

disrupted traditional social and familial networks.<sup>7</sup> These dislocated children were highly visible because they often eked out a living on the streets and back alleys of urban centers. Their needs as well as their misdeeds could not be effectively addressed in the existing penal and social service institutions. Reformatories, and much later, Borstal institutions and youth clubs, became useful spaces to rehabilitate delinquent and destitute children so that in adulthood they would be useful citizens. Jamaica adopted the Industrial Schools Act in 1858, several years after it had been passed in Britain. By the late 1890s, Britain also encouraged social reform through the creation of clubs and youth societies along with institutional reform in an attempt to arrest criminal behavior among youths. In Jamaica, however, industrial school development fluctuated. Both in the 1890s and 1920s, the industrial school network expanded. But in the early 1900s and 1930s, the system contracted as a result of school closures and mergers due to financial insecurity. In spite of these setbacks, many members of the public deemed these institutions as essential to reforming children associated with the ‘criminal classes.’

Many elementary schools attempted to incorporate some practical agricultural training into the school curriculum by establishing school garden plots for the students.<sup>8</sup> In contrast, industrial schools offered a more diverse vocational curriculum organized along gendered lines. Boys learned masonry, blacksmithy, carpentry, baking, tailoring and general agricultural pursuits. Such training hopefully would make it financially viable for them to take on the role of being the main breadwinner for their families. The training of female inmates, however, was limited to baking, sewing and laundry. When

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<sup>7</sup> Christina Twomey, ‘Gender, Welfare and the Colonial State: Victoria’s 1864 Neglected and Criminal Children’s Act’ *Labour History* No. 73 (Nov 1997) 169 – 186, p. 176.

<sup>8</sup> Enos Nuttall, ‘A paper on Education in Jamaica in its relation to skilled handicraft and agricultural work, written at the request of, and for publication by, the board of in England’ (n.p. July 1902).

their terms ended, these girls would be fully equipped to become domestic workers, laundresses and mothers. A system of licensing, as a form of apprenticeship, provided limited opportunities for a small number of inmates to work with a ‘respectable’ family, merchants, blacksmiths, carpenters and other artisans.<sup>9</sup> The licensing system, however, was not considered very successful as children were sometimes sent back to the institution because they were deemed unsuitable for the posts they occupied. Nonetheless, many hoped that this gender-oriented education would eventually improve the quality of family life and stem the tide of illegitimacy and the juvenile criminals that it supposedly produced.

The Jamaican industrial school circuit, however, housed only a small number of children. For example, the Government Reformatory (later renamed Government Industrial School in St. Andrew), which existed as the only institution capable of housing children entering the penal system under the Industrial Schools and Reformatories Act. Yet no more than 350 children stayed at the institution during its early years. This was a small fraction of the estimated population of 146,934 children between the ages of five and sixteen years.<sup>10</sup>

In 1890, the government established the Hope Industrial School for Boys on the lands of the Hope Botanical Gardens in St. Andrew. Twenty-five non-criminal inmates were transferred from the Government Reformatory and Industrial School in Stony Hill, to help start the school.<sup>11</sup> The school’s curriculum placed a great emphasis on agricultural

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<sup>9</sup> The term ‘inmate’ is used extensively in the primary sources, especially in the interwar years, due to the early prison-like heritage of the reformatory movement. I have used the term to reflect the ambiguity of the colonial state and the public towards children housed in these institutions at the time.

<sup>10</sup> G.W. Roberts, *The Population of Jamaica* (Great Britain: Cambridge University Press, 1957) 62.

<sup>11</sup> Report on Industrial Schools for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 1893 in *The Governor’s Report on the Blue Book and Departmental Reports 1892 – 93* (Jamaica: Government Printing Establishment, 1894).

training. Eventually, the school became aligned with the Public Gardens and Plantation Department.<sup>12</sup> In doing so, the administrators hoped to provide the inmates 'with as thorough an Agricultural training as possible.'<sup>13</sup> They inherited their rules and regulations from the Reformatory in Stony Hill.

In the 1880s, a system of rewards was introduced in the Government Reformatory in an effort to motivate children to be on their best behavior.<sup>14</sup> Under this system, the children earned a small amount of money for good behavior, which would be awarded to them at the end of their time at the institution. Bad behavior or destruction of property resulted in deductions from their rewards in addition to the standard corporal punishment given for bad behavior. The Hope School replicated this program and, by 1904, arrangements were made for the inmates to lodge their reward money in the Government Savings Bank. This practice had a three-fold purpose of providing incentive for good behavior, teaching inmates the importance of thrift, and providing them with some security at the end of their tenure at the institution.<sup>15</sup> The Hope Industrial School eventually closed in 1910 due to the high cost of maintenance.<sup>16</sup> At no point during its existence did the institution attain maximum capacity and, as a result, the remaining boys were transferred to the reformatory at Stony Hill.

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<sup>12</sup> JA 1B/5/76/3/190, 'Enclosure to Message from His Excellency the Governor to the Honourable the Members of the Legislative Council date 11<sup>th</sup> February 1909.' Hope Industrial School was closed in 1910 but eventually reopened to become the première agricultural school in the island. By the mid-twentieth century, its name was changed to the College of Agricultural Science Education and the actual institution was moved to the parish of Portland.

<sup>13</sup> Report on Industrial Schools, 1892 – 93, p. 284

<sup>14</sup> British National Archives (BNA) Colonial Office (CO) 137/508/6, 'Report on the Government Reformatory for Boys and Girls for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 1882.'

<sup>15</sup> Report on Industrial Schools 1904 – 1905 in the *Departmental Reports of Jamaica 1904 – 1905* (Jamaica: Government Printing Establishment) p. 62.

<sup>16</sup> JA 1B/5/76/3/190, 'Draft correspondence to the Director of Public Works 7<sup>th</sup> November 1908.'



In 1892, the Shortwood Industrial School for Girls was established on the grounds of the Shortwood Training School (now Shortwood Teacher's College also in St. Andrew). The founders modeled the school curriculum along the same lines of the Government Reformatory for Girls, which at the time was located across from the Union Poor House in Admiral's Pen, Kingston.<sup>17</sup> Their training emphasized house cleaning, baking and sewing. Similarly, the Alpha Cottage for Girls and Boys as well as the Belmont Orphanage, established in the parish of St. Andrew by the Roman Catholic and Anglican Church respectively in the 1890s, attempted to provide children with a comprehensive education. A key element of this philosophy was to provide these children with practical skills so as to ensure that they had the tools to be self-sufficient at the end of their terms. Inmates, therefore, maintained the general appearance of the institution, engaging in gardening, basket making, and other income earning activities to supplement subventions from the government. During the holidays, boys from Hope Industrial School joined the girls at Shortwood or the children at Belmont for an evening of festivities. The best behaved children of each institution often got the opportunity to attend lantern slide shows, concerts and public lectures.

During the 1890s, the government encouraged the use of the term industrial school over reformatory in an attempt to remove the stigma associated with being in a reformatory. Ideally providing a more disciplinary regime that was geared towards controlling every movement of the inmates, a reformatory was thus perceived as a modified prison system. Industrial schools, arguably, were considered glorified

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<sup>17</sup> The government moved the female inmates from Stony Hill, in 1885, on the recommendation of Thomas Mair, the Superintendent of the Government Industrial School and Reformatory. He argued that the girls did not receive as much attention as the boys. It was therefore necessary to separate them so that they could receive much more attention and mentoring from a visiting committee of women. It eventually returned to Stony Hill in 1899 and remained there until it closed in 1937.

orphanages providing a diverse educational curriculum for ‘waifs and strays.’ Reformatories fell under the portfolio of the Director of Prisons, while the Inspector of Industrial Schools attached to the Department of Education monitored the industrial schools. The government also included all the industrial schools in a singular report, separate from that of the reformatories. No real difference existed in the curriculum of reformatories and industrial schools; however, the inmates of the latter entered the institutions as displaced children, paupers or orphans. Children entered the reformatory through the courts rather than the parochial boards or poor relief. Due to the paucity of spaces available, however, children of all backgrounds coexisted in these institutions. For example, the Belmont Orphanage was built to accommodate twelve children ranging from as young as one year old to sixteen years. Yet any child residing at Belmont, Hope, Shortwood or Alpha industrial schools who was viewed as a troublemaker could be transferred to the Government Reformatory in Stony Hill on the basis that life in the government reformatory was more restrictive and regimented.

Eventually, in 1910, the government established the St. Catherine District Prison Juvenile Reformatory to house the most intractable boys in the system. As early as 1911, the most difficult boys from Stony Hill were transferred, by order of the Governor, to the juvenile branch of the St. Catherine District Prison.<sup>18</sup> Such a move signaled to the boys as well as the administration that the former were deemed incapable of reform. Although the government established the reformatory on the same grounds as the St. Catherine District Prison, it treated them as two separate institutions. This practice continued to reinforce local perceptions that children attached to either Stony Hill or St. Catherine Reformatory were prisoners rather than wards of remedial institutions. By World War I, the number of

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<sup>18</sup> JA 1B/5/76/231, ‘Minute 20<sup>th</sup> December 1911.’

boys sent to the juvenile reformatory dwindled and the government decided that the institution no longer fulfilled its initial purpose. Officials reconstituted this institution as a remand centre for juvenile – adults (persons between the age of 16 and 21) and modeled it along the lines of the Borstal system in London.<sup>19</sup>

Similarly, in 1916, the government closed the Shortwood Industrial School due to low occupancy and high cost of maintenance. Though originally a girls' school, administrators opened up the institution in the early 1900s to accept young boys until the age of eight years when they would then be transferred to Hope and, after 1910, to Alpha. Belmont was eventually closed for similar reasons in 1924. The remaining boys and girls were transferred to Government Industrial School. Caretakers, however, suggested that the closure was due to the fact that most of the children admitted were 'quite below the class for whom the home was originally intended.'<sup>20</sup> This position suggested that the children entering the institution in its earlier years were the progeny of the more respectable laboring and middle classes. Possibly, by the 1920s, the system had become so overcrowded that children were randomly sent to industrial schools despite the original mandate of these institutions. The system, however, tried to place children in institutions that reflected their religious orientation. In contrast, the Government Industrial School was non-denominational and housed all children regardless of religious orientation. For example, boys from Hope Industrial were transferred to Alpha on the basis that the children were Catholic. Similar transfers were also made to Belmont Orphanage during the late nineteenth century. Because this practice continued into the twentieth century, it

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<sup>19</sup> JA 1B/5/76/3/383, 'L.S. Amery to Sir Leslie Probyn, Governor of Jamaica 10<sup>th</sup> February 1920.' This file contains general enquiries into the Borstal system but suggests that the government never actually attempted to replicate the system, on a large scale, due to financial constraints.

<sup>20</sup> Report on Industrial Schools, 1924 in the *Annual Report of Jamaica* (Jamaica: Government Printing Establishment, 1925) p. 85.

was highly likely that these children described as being ‘lower quality’ were raised as Anglican yet their social background made them unsuited to be housed at the Belmont. In this particular circumstance, administrators discriminated against children admitted to this institution due to their class rather than religious affiliation.

Though based in Kingston and St. Andrew, these early industrial schools catered to the entire island. Soon after, other philanthropic and non-government organizations were granted permission to open Industrial Schools in other parishes. In 1904, the Happy Grove Industrial School for girls was opened in the parish of Portland to cater to displaced East Indian children.<sup>21</sup> Happy Grove eventually became known as the Lyndale Industrial School in 1921 and accepted children of all ethnicities although it maintained a small cohort of children of East Indian ethnicity.<sup>22</sup> In November 1913, the Manchester Parochial Board started the Broughton Industrial Home for boys. The school started with seven boys and was open to receive boys from the Resident Magistrate Court.<sup>23</sup> In that same year the St. Elizabeth Parochial Board also established the Manning Home for Destitute Children, specifically to house displaced children in the parish.<sup>24</sup> The founding of the Broughton and Manning Homes improved the quality of care provided to children under the poor relief administration. Under the Poor Law, Parochial Boards acted as the legal guardians of pauper children and were consequently responsible for their health and

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<sup>21</sup> Report on the Industrial Schools for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 1905 in the *Departmental Reports of Jamaica 1904 – 1905* (Jamaica: Government Printing Office, 1906) 62.

<sup>22</sup> Report of the Board of Supervision for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 1922 in the *Annual General Report of Jamaica along with Departmental Reports, 1922* (Jamaica: Government Printing Office, 1924) p. 71; JA 1B/5/75/117, ‘Draft of Certificate of the Lyndale Industrial School for East Indian Girls Under Law 34 of 1881 and 13 of 1891.’ The girls were transferred from Happy Grove to separate lands and the school renamed Lyndale Industrial School in 1921. School was intended to hold no more than eighteen girls at any one time.

<sup>23</sup> Report on Industrial Schools for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> of March 1915 in the *Departmental Reports of Jamaica 1914 -1915* (Jamaica: Government Printing Office, 1916).

<sup>24</sup> The Report of the Board of Supervision for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 1916 in the *Departmental Reports of Jamaica 1915 - 1916* (Jamaica: Government Printing Office, 1917) p. 473.

education. Children in the Manning Home received three meals a day along with a basic elementary education, which included reading, writing and arithmetic. Girls were trained in hat and mat weaving, sewing, washing and floor cleaning while boys were taught to use a hoe and machete, the two most important implements associated with farming.<sup>25</sup>

A number of industrial schools and children's homes (orphanages) opened during WWI and in the early 1920s. In June 1917, the Rio Cobre Home for Children of Men of the Jamaica War Contingents opened in the parish of St. Catherine. This institution was one of very few social service provisions made for former members of the West India Regiment who fought in the First World War. By the mid 1920s, the government identified this institution as the ideal space to place pauper and orphaned children younger than eight years of age as a way of alleviating the congestion in the industrial schools. Children older than eight years could then be sent to industrial schools where they would receive adequate training until the age of sixteen years.<sup>26</sup> Three years later, in 1920, the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation opened the Maxfield Park Home for Pauper Children next door to the Union Poor House. This institution also catered specifically to children of paupers, destitute and orphaned children from the Corporate Area and St. Andrew.

Several industrial schools and orphanages were established in 1921, including the Wortley Orphanage for East Indians (St. Andrew) and Mrs. Swift's Orphanage (Portland). The Farm Industrial School for Boys (St. James) and Carron Hall Girl's Home were also founded that year. Broughton Home, Carron Hall as well the Farm Industrial

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<sup>25</sup> Report of the Board of Supervision, 1915 - 1916, p. 473.

<sup>26</sup> Report of the Board of Supervision for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> of March 1919, in the *Departmental Reports of Jamaica 1918 - 1919* (Jamaica: Government Printing Office 1920).

School were either managed by or associated with the Presbyterian Church.<sup>27</sup> Mrs. Swifts Orphanage changed its name to Swift Industrial School once it became certified as an industrial school in 1923. Mrs. Alma Swift, former Quaker missionary and the founder, was appointed as the Superintendent of the Institution.<sup>28</sup>

By 1934, therefore, six industrial schools, operated by the local or private management, were certified to receive children committed by magistrates under the Pauper Law. Another four orphanages received assistance from the Government but were not certified as industrial schools. General upkeep of children came from the Parochial Boards of the parishes to which they belonged as well as grants from the government and charitable institutions. The Inspector of Industrial Schools attached to the Department of Education monitored all of these schools, with the exception of the Government Industrial School and Maxfield Park Home. The Maxfield Park Home was maintained by the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation, while the Government Industrial School fell under the portfolio of Inspector of Prisons and Industrial School who was attached to the Prisons Department.<sup>29</sup> Despite the increased number of spaces available, children in industrial schools and orphanages composed only a small number of destitute children in the island. In 1916, industrial school children constituted one sixth of the 2,474 of children maintained by parochial boards as paupers in the island.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Report on Industrial Schools for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 1921 in the *Annual Report of Jamaica together with Departmental Reports 1921* (Jamaica: Government Printing Office, 1922) p. 136.

<sup>28</sup> JA 1B/5/77/519 (1923) and 1B/5/77/366 (1923), 'Mrs. Alma Swift to the Colonial Secretary 6<sup>th</sup> September 1923'; Report on Industrial Schools for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 1924 in the *Annual General Report of Jamaica along with Departmental Reports, 1924* (Jamaica: Government Printing Office, 1926) p. 86.

<sup>29</sup> JA 1B/5/77/70 (1934), 'Mr. Tucker, Acting Director of Education to the Colonial Secretary, Kingston, 30<sup>th</sup> November, 1934.'

<sup>30</sup> Report of the Board of Supervision, 1915 – 1916, p. 473.

**Table 1: The Number of Industrial School Children in Relation to the Total Number of Destitute Children on Relief 1900 - 1938**

Year	Number of Industrial School Children	Total Number of Destitute Children on Relief
1900	208	484
1901	199	462
1903	182	459
1907	264	614
1908	268	658
1909	222	642
1910	268	826
1911	270	899
1912	315	509
1913	333	762
1914	364	916
1915	395	2,159
1916	430	2,474
1917	530	2,676
1918	590	3,088
1922	464	3,098
1928	563	3,298
1929	592	3,737
1930	551	3,517
1933	515	3,611
1934	519	4,404
1935	543	4,469
1936	760	5,002
1937	1,022	5,337
1938	1,078	5,823
Total	11,445	59,924

Source: Figures compiled from select Annual Reports of the Board of Supervision 1900 - 1938

Table One presents a breakdown of the number of children in the industrial school system in comparison to the overall number of destitute children who received relief under the poor relief system. The Board of Supervision provided yearly reports detailing the expenditure as well as the general nature and type of relief dispensed.<sup>31</sup> Figures of destitute children between 1900 and 1914 typically included only orphans and abandoned children who received assistance as independent paupers, as well as industrial school children. After WWI, there was a dramatic increase in the number of destitute children in

<sup>31</sup> The Board of Supervision was the over arching body monitoring the Poor Relief system in the island.

the island because the Board of Supervision started to include the number of children boarded to members in the wider community as well as children receiving relief as dependents of paupers. Throughout the 1920s, the Board of Supervision acknowledged the existence of children in orphanages but it did not include them in its reports because those institutions did not fall under the control of their department. By the 1930s, however, this changed and the figures between 1935 and 1938 included all children maintained on the pauper roll, orphanages and industrial schools. Although the number of children in industrial schools gradually increased throughout the period under review, overall they constituted a small fraction of the total number of children maintained in the early years of the child welfare system especially by the 1920s.<sup>32</sup> Nonetheless school administrators expanded facilities to accommodate an increasing number of children each year. Such efforts, however, were stymied by difficulties over which the administrators themselves had little control.

Throughout the early twentieth century, school administrators constantly wrestled with the question of whether or not industrial schools were successful in their mission of reforming inmates and producing productive and responsible colonial citizens. One of the greatest failures of the industrial school network was its inability to keep track of the progress of inmates after they had left the institution. These institutions lacked the infrastructure to actually trace the successes and possible failures of former residents – a problem that continues today in Jamaica. As a result, caretakers had no way to prove that these institutions were useful and that they were achieving their purpose of reforming

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<sup>32</sup> In 1938, an estimated population of 196,000 children between the ages of 7 and 14 years old lived in the island. Of this number 158,413 were enrolled in primary schools with an average of 46% (89,221) attending all sessions. Many of these students were housed in 661 government schools built to hold 121,148 students.



delinquents, waifs and strays. Assumptions about the character of former inmates littered official correspondence while school administrators expressed constant concern about the inability to protect and guide former inmates after their tenure. Despite these challenges, the official discourse on industrial schools and orphanages suggested that administrators saw a difference between the general delinquent juvenile population and children in homes and institutions. Each investment in a child within the industrial school and orphanage circuit represented a potential productive citizen. As such the underlying concern of administrators was whether or not they were effectively disseminating the virtues of the ideal Jamaican colonial citizen to the laboring classes through their children. Inherently, these institutions were pilot projects in citizenship.

#### *Government Industrial School*

The government established the country's first reformatory at Stony Hill in 1869 and by the 1870s placed it under the portfolio of the Director of Prisons where it remained until the late 1930s. Early in its existence, therefore, the Government Reformatory came to be perceived by the general public as a modified prison and its young inmates as criminals. In the 1890s the legislature amended the Industrial Schools and Reformatories Act to facilitate the creation of privately run industrial schools. As a result, industrial schools were considered to be more wholesome institutions created as safe havens to care, educate and protect 'waifs' and 'strays.' In response to these perceptions, the government renamed the institution 'Government Industrial School' by the early twentieth century so as to remove the stigma of criminalization. The children, however, continued to be identified as inmates rather than students, both within colonial

correspondence and newspapers, thereby signaling the retention of aspects of its penal heritage.

A key part of the Government Industrial School curriculum was the preference of an industrial education over the standard program of the three R's – reading, writing and arithmetic. It is important to note that the main distinction in Jamaica between an industrial school and industrial education was that the former provided an opportunity to engage in a more holistic approach to juvenile rehabilitation. In contrast, aspects of an industrial based curriculum could be introduced into a school's curriculum. Orphanages, where possible, attempted to incorporate industrial education within their general curriculum but with less intensity. Many believed that industrial schools offered better quality of education than the existing elementary education system because it provided children with greater opportunity to be trained in vocations. However, industrial schools in Jamaica evolved out of the reformatory system and this heritage stigmatized children who left these institutions in the early twentieth century.

The Government Industrial School suffered from a high turnover rate of teachers due to the low pay offered comparative to teachers in the education system. Teachers at the institution received less pay for more work. This was especially true for the skilled artisans who taught masonry, carpentry, and tailoring as well as metal work. Mr. James Mair,<sup>33</sup> Superintendent of the Government Industrial School in correspondence with Shillingford, Inspector of Industrial Schools, argued that

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<sup>33</sup> On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 1881, the Secretary of State appointed Thomas Mair to become the Superintendent of Industrial School in Stony Hill. Born in Ayrshire, Scotland in June 1850, Mair was educated at the Science and Art School, Kilmarnock, Scotland. Upon completing his education he joined the staff of the Paisley Reformatory until 1881 when he moved to Jamaica to be the Superintendent of the Government Reformatory and Industrial School. At the age of sixty-six, Thomas Mair retired from the post of Superintendent on the 8th June 1916 after thirty-five years of service. His son James Mair was then

‘Schoolmasters play a great part in the training of the boys, in moulding their characters and general discipline...the whole tone of the Institution depends to a very large extent on the School – masters.’<sup>34</sup>

Management, therefore, lost several excellent teachers to other institutions due to the lower salaries offered at the school. As a result, this high turnover of teachers hindered the effective running of the institution. In 1922, former Superintendent Thomas Mair suggested that the government upgrade the salaries of the schoolmaster as well as the first and second assistant. If the government failed to accept his suggestion, the school would only be able to hire teachers who were unable at that time to find more lucrative employment elsewhere.<sup>35</sup> Generally, where possible, the government attempted to meet the requests of the superintendent. But very often they identified the poor economic climate as a deterring factor in paying teachers higher salaries and consequently making improvements to the general infrastructure of the institution.

Another major issue with running the school was the quality of education provided to the inmates. Many of the children entered the school with no prior exposure to education. Some inmates suffered from various mental and physical disabilities that hindered their ability to perform in the average school setting. By the 1930s a great number of the inmates admitted to the Government Industrial School were over the age of eleven years and had never previously attended school. Administrators described such boys as ‘truants...[who] detest and have no desire for school education.’<sup>36</sup> James Mair, the Superintendent, argued that those boys admitted to the institution at nine years or younger would receive a solid education comparative to the average child during their

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promoted to the post of Superintendent soon after. In preparation for stepping into his father’s shoes, James Mair went to the Paisley Reformatory in Scotland for three months of training.

<sup>34</sup> JA 1B/5/75/123, ‘James Mair, Superintendent to the Director of Prisons, 11<sup>th</sup> January 1922.’

<sup>35</sup> JA 1B/5/75/123, ‘James Mair, Superintendent to the Director of Prisons, 11<sup>th</sup> January 1922.’

<sup>36</sup> JA 1B/5/77/27 (1934), ‘James Mair, Superintendent to W. Shillingford, Inspector 25<sup>th</sup> February 1937.’

tenure at the institution. Comparatively, instructors had less time with the older boys because the duration of their stay was much shorter – on average two to four years depending on their age at admittance. As a result their educational experience was significantly more stunted than that of their younger counterparts. The table below provides the percentages of boys admitted to the school without previous educational experience.

**Table 2: Ages and the Percentage of Inmates at Stony Hill who have not Attended School in 1937**

Ages	Percentage on total	Percentage of inmates who did not previously attend school
9 years and under	20%	80%
10 years	16%	90%
11 years	22.50%	70%
12 years	26.50%	60%
13 years	13%	60%
14 years	2%	60%

Source: Taken from JA 1B/5/77/27 (1934) Mair to Shillingford 25<sup>th</sup> February 1937

According to Mair’s statistics, inmates nine years and younger constituted twenty percent of the general school population. Eighty percent of inmates in this category had no previous exposure to elementary education. A significant portion of the school population consisted of boys aged eleven and twelve years of age at 22.5% and 26.5% respectively. Seventy percent of eleven year olds and sixty percent of inmates twelve years of age had never been to school and were completely illiterate. This was in spite of the fact that the older the child the more likely it would be for him/her to have experienced some formal education. The quality of this earlier exposure may have been deficient but nonetheless increased the possibility of such inmates leaving the institution, at the very least, functionally literate. On a whole, the administration argued that older

inmates would be underperforming when compared with children their age that attended school consistently in the early years of their lives. Key to this discourse was the idea that the younger the child, the more successful the process of reformation. Like many of their contemporaries, administrators perceived children under ten years of age as impressionable who, once placed in a structured environment, were amenable to change. The older the child, the less receptive he/she was to the reformation process. School administrators sought to address this situation.

Typically, children were discharged from the school at the age of sixteen unless the superintendent deemed otherwise. Law 8 of 1929, Industrial Schools and Reformatory Act, allowed for the extension of an inmate's term until the age of eighteen years based on the recommendation of the superintendent. Many times, during the period under review, Mr. Mair recommended that certain inmates be held back either because they showed promise or were unfit to be sent out on their own. In 1932, for example, Mair wrote to Shillingford requesting that the governor approve the extension of inmate Cecil Davis' time at the institution. He described him as being a

...small boy of poor physique and mentality; yet has shown much improvement – but will ever be a charge on the Government. Attached to the Tailor's Department.<sup>37</sup>

Mair placed Davis in the Tailor's Department in hope of providing him with the opportunity to acquire a skill. His 'poor' mental and physical condition apparently hindered his overall progress while at the institution. The decision to extend his stay allowed Mair and his teaching staff more time to provide Cecil with some stability and security. Similarly, Mair requested that Shadrack Hines should be retained until the age

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<sup>37</sup> JA 1B/5/77/543 (1932), 'W. Shillingford, Inspector Industrial School to the Colonial Secretary, Kingston 14<sup>th</sup> April 1932.' Appended a copy of the correspondence from James J. Mair, Superintendent Government Industrial School to W. Shillingford, Inspector Industrial School 12<sup>th</sup> April, 1932.

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of eighteen years on the basis that he ‘started to make definite progress after showing much dullness.’<sup>38</sup> Shadrack Hines, originally from Smith’s Village in Kingston, arrived at the institution at the age of thirteen on the 26<sup>th</sup> April 1928. While at Stony Hill he engaged in mostly agricultural activities and continued to do so after the Governor extended his stay on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1932. The improved performance of inmates, therefore, provided them with the opportunity to extend their stay at the institution. More importantly, each of these cases reflected individualized care and concern for children in the institution.

Another case worthy of mention is that of Donald McLeannan whom Mair described as

...A very promising boy – Scout – Reading in 6<sup>th</sup> Std. – Learning Carpentry and Cabinet making and fairly advanced. To be kept on as Trade Boy. Very undesirable home and environment.<sup>39</sup>

Donald Mcleannan entered the industrial school at the age of seven on the 20<sup>th</sup> February 1923. After discreetly investigating his home situation with the help of the police force, they determined that sending him back to his home environment would undo all he had learned at the Industrial School. Based on the description provided, Donald successfully engaged in more activities than Shadrach and Cecil, both of whom were his contemporaries at the Institution. Concerns about the family life of the inmates as well as impact of parental irresponsibility on inmates also permeated the departmental correspondence.

Mair vented his frustration to Shillingford, the Inspector of Industrial Schools

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<sup>38</sup> JA 1B/5/77/543 (1932), ‘James Mair, Superintendent to W. Shillingford, Inspector Industrial School, 17<sup>th</sup> March 1932.’

<sup>39</sup> JA 1B/5/77/543 (1932), ‘James Mair, Superintendent to W. Shillingford, Inspector, Industrial School, 16<sup>th</sup> January 1932.’

'I see no reason why Stony Hill should be treated as a dumping ground for the children of careless and irresponsible parents or as a clearing house for troublesome children. It is not so intended. Further it appears that the children are not generally placed at work afterwards as they go back to their parents, who are quite prepared to take them plus the bonuses they earn (his emphasis)<sup>40</sup>

Mair believed that some parents who sent their children to the Industrial School due to behavioral issues made no effort to contribute to their maintenance during their stay at the institution. Such parents, however, expected to benefit in the long run from the vocational training the children acquired while at the institution.

Administrators at the Industrial School established a reward system as a way of encouraging inmates to adhere to the rules and regulations of the school. At the end of their tenure, they received a small sum of money as well as tools of their trade, both of which were important in providing them with a start in life. James Mair was convinced, however, that parents sought to take advantage of their earning potential and access their reward money.<sup>41</sup> Concerns about the irresponsibility of parents and guardians, were not specific to the Industrial School and Reformatory system. Similar sentiments were expressed amongst the poor relief administration. They argued that many of aged and infirm entering almshouses did so due to a refusal of extended family members to care for loved ones. Such resistance, administrators believed contributed to the high cost of relief giving in the island.

It was within this context that the Hon. A. S. Jelf, Colonial Secretary for Jamaica, sent out a circular to Resident Magistrates in the island to ascertain if magistrates established the financial status of parents before sending children to industrial schools

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<sup>40</sup> JA 1B/5/77/25 (1934), 'Minute Paper.'

<sup>41</sup> JA 1B/5/77/25 (1934), 'Mair to Shillingford 16<sup>th</sup> December 1934.'

and orphanages.<sup>42</sup> Almost all the Parochial Boards replied that the children sent to the Industrial School were paupers or generally orphans with no other means of support. Furthermore, the Inspector of the Poor assessed each of these cases, where applicable, before the child was sent to the industrial school. The St. Ann Parochial Board reported that it had never been able to recoup the cost of sending children to industrial schools as only destitute children were sent to the institution.<sup>43</sup> Only one child had been committed to the industrial school from the parish of St. James on the basis that his mother, a registered pauper, had been sent to prison.<sup>44</sup> Such responses challenged Mr. Mair's supposition that parents opted not to support their children when sent to industrial school. In fact, the frequency with which Mair reiterated these views suggests that he accepted local perceptions of the irresponsibility and lack of accountability amongst the lower classes. His mission, therefore, was to challenge the earlier socialization of inmates by providing them with the tools to survive in society at the end of their tenure.

Mair argued that in the public sphere that the school had been classified as a juvenile prison and the inmates as prisoners. Civil servants such as policemen, magistrates, and medical officers also reinforced this perception by referring to the children as criminals. Since its inception in 1869, the institution had to grapple with the negative perceptions of the school. Mair felt that the persistence of such stereotypes in the twentieth century demonstrated how sections of the public wished to

‘...separate the children here into two classes as “orphans, waifs and strays” on the one hand and “Criminals” on the other, the “wheat and the tares.” I would therefore ask...what practical purpose would his training

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<sup>42</sup> JA 1B/5/77/70 (1934), ‘Circular no. 4: A. S. Jelf, Colonial Secretary to Parochial boards 8<sup>th</sup> January 1935.’

<sup>43</sup> JA 1B/5/77/70 (1934), ‘Arscott, Clerk of the St. Ann Parochial Board to A. S. Jelf 15<sup>th</sup> January 1935.’

<sup>44</sup> JA 1B/5/77/70 (1934), ‘Clerk of the St James Parochial Board to A.S. Jelf 15<sup>th</sup> January 1935.’



serve and what would be his future hope of going out into the world coming from an institution for the reform of criminal boys.<sup>45</sup>

In an effort to get rid of the stigma attached to the institution, Mair advocated a change in the name of the institution. He recommended the discontinuation of terms such as “Reformatory” and ‘Industrial School,’ both of which were out of date in the metropole. In Britain, the trend was to use the term “Home” or “Home Office Schools.” Within the colonial administration, however, the focus was to shift the industrial school from the portfolio of prisons to that of the department of Education.

Throughout the twentieth century, several discussions were held over the possibility of removing the Stony Hill Industrial School from the portfolio of the Director of Prisons to the Director of Education. Administrators believed that the public identified the Industrial School at Stony Hill as a modified prison and as a result the inmates were defined as criminals. In reality both pauper and ‘criminal’ children were housed at the institution. Many entered the system through courts because they had either been found wandering without any visible means of support, had been abandoned, or were caught stealing food and other basic provisions. Furthermore, only a small number of the children brought before the courts were actually sentenced to the Industrial School until the age of sixteen years. The crux of the matter was that no real difference existed between reformatories and industrial schools in Jamaica. In fact, the closest example to a real reformatory in the island was the St. Catherine District Prison Juvenile Reformatory for boys, which was housed on the same compound as the prison itself. This institution catered to the most disruptive boys in the industrial school system in the early twentieth

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<sup>45</sup> JA 1B/5/77/25 (1934), ‘Mair to Shillingford 16<sup>th</sup> December 1934.’

century.<sup>46</sup> In contrast, the 'Government Industrial School' catered to less disruptive children and provided them with access to a much more diverse curriculum.

Members of the Board of Visitors (of the Government Industrial School) resisted early efforts in the 1920s to remove the Stony Hill Industrial School from the portfolio of the Director of Prisons to that of Education. Major E. T. Dixon, a member of the board of visitors for the Reformatory and Industrial School, argued that while it was plausible that changing the name of the institution might remove any 'criminal taint', such a change did not eliminate the necessity for a reformatory.<sup>47</sup> He believed that such an effort placed a 'premium on pauperism' while ignoring the reality that there were 'children of distinctly criminal tendencies.' Dixon went further to suggest that such children needed to be segregated from their peers and supervised by a man such as the Director of Prisons who was qualified in eradicating such behaviors.<sup>48</sup> Other members, such as Mr. C. Halman Beard, Mr. H.A.L Simpson and the Hon. A. E. DaCosta, all agreed with Dixon. They believed that the stigma of criminality was inevitable and that there were children in the institution that required some form of strict regulation. In fact, it was common practice since the late nineteenth century to transfer some of the most incorrigible inmates from Alpha and other industrial schools to Stony Hill in the hope of reforming them. Another member Mr. F. J. O'Leary went as far to say that the school was an industrial school in name only and as a result was really a reformatory.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> BNA CO 137/711/11, 'Sydney Oliver to Mr. C. Grindle 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1915.' Mr. Oliver argued that the Industrial School at Stony Hill became crowded. They re-christened the school as an Industrial school and used it as a 'sieve' to remove boys of more questionable character. The Reformatory at the St. Catherine District Prison was created to house these boys and have them trained under the supervision of Mr. A. F. Gear. Mr. Gear had a background in the Borstal system.

<sup>47</sup> JA 1B/5/77/224 (1926), 'Memorandum of Discussion at a meeting of the board of Visitors of Government Industrial School, 21<sup>st</sup> May 1926.'

<sup>48</sup> JA 1B/5/77/224 (1926), 'Memorandum of Discussion.'

<sup>49</sup> JA 1B/5/77/224 (1926), 'Memorandum of Discussion.'

*Building School Citizenship*

In the early twentieth century, Superintendent James Mair organized the boys in the school around a house system. He established five houses – the Governor’s House, the Superintendent’s House, The Bishop’s House, the Colonial Secretary’s House and the Visitor’s House. The main goal was to inculcate a sense of loyalty and corporation, instill a sense of community as well as encourage good behavior among inmates. More importantly, this system taught children a sense of responsibility to his/her fellow teammates and to subject themselves to the 'extremely powerful influence of Public Opinion.'<sup>50</sup> Such a program focused on training boys and girls (to a lesser extent) to make them fit for citizenship.<sup>51</sup> As a result, the school’s program paid attention to developing the mind, body, and character through school work, physical drills, games, through their dedication to learning skills in workshops, the cook-house, bakery, farms and through general work. Inmates received Good Conduct Badges for good behavior, and this added points to their house. Bad behavior, however, resulted in the loss of badges in addition to receiving a warning or being subjected to corporal punishment. Houses also competed against each other in sporting events and other school activity. Upon admission, therefore, each boy was placed in a house. In reality, girls did not receive the same quality of training in citizenship due to the fact that they constituted a very small percentage of the school population.

Children at the Government Industrial School, Stony Hill, spent approximately fifteen hours a week receiving an elementary education. Their vocational training occupied another thirty-six hours a week. Between six and nine o’clock in the morning,

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<sup>50</sup> JA 1B/5/77/188 (1926), ‘Minute: Shillingford to the Colonial Secretary.’

<sup>51</sup> JA 1B/5/77/188 (1926), ‘Minute: Shillingford to the Colonial Secretary.’

inmates tidied their beds, showered, and attended to their basic needs.<sup>52</sup> At ten, the boys were divided into two groups, with one group going to classes while the other was engaged in vocational pursuits.<sup>53</sup> At two in the afternoon, the groups switched places. Generally, however, whenever the workshops required the full services of the boys, they were taken out of classes. The students nonetheless had an extensive schedule that included evening classes, choir practices, scouting, social evenings as well as duties on the weekends. Night classes were held for senior boys so as to make them more effective in their respective trades.<sup>54</sup>

The skills taught to boys at Stony Hill included carpentry, blacksmith, tailoring, masonry, cooking and baking as well as general agricultural work. Each group engaged in general work for the institution, for the Girls' Department (until 1935) as well as the general public. For example in March 1932, Mr. Mair reported that the thirty-six boys learning carpentry repaired buildings on the institution as well as being engaged in making, repairing and polishing a variety of furniture for the general public. Similarly in June 1932 the twenty boys in the Mason's Department built a new kitchen for the Girls Department and also made alterations to an old school room to convert it into a dining room.<sup>55</sup> They also built concrete posts for customers.

Inmates displayed their work at fairs and participated in competitions and national events. Students exhibited 36 articles of furniture, iron gates, horseshoes, concrete reinforced posts and several provisions from the school's farm at the All Jamaica

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<sup>52</sup> JA 1B/5/77/114 (1932)

<sup>53</sup> JA 1B/5/77/27 (1934), 'Minute from W. Shillingford to Colonial Secretary 6<sup>th</sup> December 1934.'

<sup>54</sup> JA 1B/5/77/27 (1934), 'Mair to Shillingford 25<sup>th</sup> February 1937.'

<sup>55</sup> JA 1B/5/77/187 (1932), 'James Mair to Shillingford, 7<sup>th</sup> July 1932.'

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Exhibition in 1932.<sup>56</sup> In February 1934, they also exhibited items in the Jamaica and Empire Trade Exhibition and Fair.<sup>57</sup> The Scouts attended the Farewell Rally to the outgoing governor Sir Edward Stubbs while the Band participated in the Welcome Rally to new governor, Sir Ransford Slater.<sup>58</sup> In December 1933, the boys' choir entered and won the elementary schools competition while the older group came second to Calabar College in the Secondary Schools Competition. The Band retained the Military Cup at the Musical Festival, which they won in 1931.<sup>59</sup>

By 1933 the school's fortunes were apparently improving. Mr. Mair reported in his second quarterly report of 1933 that the school had a fairly successful 'Open Day' educating the public on the activities of the students at the school. He also announced that the Schoolmaster, Mr. Rainford, and Group Scoutmaster Mr. Rodgers, had been granted a leave of absence to attend the World Jamboree in Hungary. Mr. Rodgers received the coveted Gilwell Wood Badge for efficient Scoutcraft.<sup>60</sup> The school also had an Annual Athletic Sports event every August and generally the boys participated in sports such as cricket and football. They also had drill practice on a regular basis. In fact, the boys participated in such a wide range of activities that the Superintendent found it difficult to find competitors for them amongst the general school population.

'all the boys here receive Vocational training which boys at Elementary Schools do not receive and our boys are taught to a greater extent drill, physical exercises, discipline and games. We have not been able to find an Elementary School XI ... match for our boys in either cricket or football.'<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> JA 1B/5/77/187 (1932), 'Mair to Shillingford, 6<sup>th</sup> October 1932.'

<sup>57</sup> JA 1B/5/77/187 (1932), 'Mair to Shillingford, 4<sup>th</sup> April 1934.'

<sup>58</sup> JA 1B/5/77/187 (1932), 'Mair to Shillingford, 7<sup>th</sup> January 1933.'

<sup>59</sup> JA 1B/5/77/187 (1932) 'Mair to Shillingford 8<sup>th</sup> January 1934'

<sup>60</sup> JA 1B/5/77/187 (1932), 'Mair to Shillingford, 8<sup>th</sup> July 1933.'

<sup>61</sup> JA 1B/5/77/27 (1934), 'Mair to Shillingford, 25<sup>th</sup> February 1937.'

Throughout the 1930s, the boys continued successfully to participate in national performing arts competition.

Some detail about the lives of boys entering the institution can be ascertained from correspondence in the 1930s. For example Jacob Eccleston, originally from the parish of Hanover, was sentenced to the Industrial School on the 8<sup>th</sup> October 1931.<sup>62</sup> He was approximately ten and half years old. Upon his arrival to the institution, Jacob was placed in Colonial Secretary's House. On the 24<sup>th</sup> March 1933 he received nine stripes (whipped) for leaving the school property. In addition, his house lost one Good Conduct Badge (GCB) as a result of his 'mis-behavior.'<sup>63</sup> Later in August that year, he received six stripes for breaking away from work, losing his house another GCB.<sup>64</sup> In January, June and November of 1934, he was punished for stealing grapefruit, cane and bread respectively. He received twelve stripes for attempting to sell the bread. Jacob again received nine stripes in May 1935 for stealing jackfruit and trying to sell it in his dormitory.<sup>65</sup>

Another interesting character was Noel Gravesandie, originally from the parish of St. Andrew. Resident Magistrate Robinson convicted Noel in the Half-Way-Tree Court of false pretences. Accordingly, Robinson sentenced Noel to the Industrial School on the 21<sup>st</sup> of January 1931 at the age of thirteen until he had attained the age of sixteen years.<sup>66</sup> Upon his arrival he was placed in the Bishop's House. A year before he was to be discharged, Noel was whipped for stealing money and using obscene language.

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<sup>62</sup> JA 1B/5/77/145 (1932), 'Returns of Juvenile Offenders 1931.'

<sup>63</sup> JA 1B/5/77/187 (1932), 'W. Shillingford, Inspector, Industrial School to the Colonial Secretary, Kingston, 11<sup>th</sup> April 1933.' File contains the quarterly reports of the Boys' Industrial School, Stony Hill.

<sup>64</sup> JA 1B/5/77/187 (1932), 'Statement showing offences committed by inmates of the Boys' Industrial School during the Quarter ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 1933.'

<sup>65</sup> JA 1B/5/77/187 (1932), 'Statement showing offences of inmates in Quarterly reports for 1934 and 1935.'

<sup>66</sup> JA 1B/5/77/145 (1932), 'Returns of Juvenile Offenders for 1931.'

Thereafter he disappeared from the records.<sup>67</sup> Similarly, Eaton James from the parish of St. James was convicted of praedial larceny at the age of fourteen and sentenced to the Industrial School, Stony Hill until the age of sixteen.<sup>68</sup> He too started to misbehave a year before his term had ended. In March and July of 1932, Superintendent, James Mair noted in his quarterly reports that Eaton had been whipped for knocking down a boy with his fist and stealing breadfruit respectively.

Behavior such as stealing fruits and vegetables, fighting, and breaking away from classes seems to be identified as standard assertiveness associated with male adolescents. There were times, however, when James Mair found boys beyond the capacity of reform. He would occasionally request that such a boy be transferred to Juvenile Reformatory at the St. Catherine District Prison. In January 1923, Mair asked the Director of Prisons to transfer Ivor Scarlett from the Government Industrial School to Juvenile Reformatory of the St. Catherine District Prison. Ivor Scarlett, from Comfort Hall, St. James, was sentenced to the Industrial School for praedial larceny on the 5th Dec. 1919. He was then twelve years old. Once at the school, he committed several other crimes. In December 1920 he stole corn for which he was whipped. Two years later he was caught stealing potatoes, and a month later willfully destroying property while in the hospital. In July 1922 he was punished for deliberately disobeying orders and by January 1923, he stole money from the nurse and lied. Ivor received twelve stripes and was placed in a cell. Based on the evidence presented, Ivor clearly stole on a regular basis but the movement from stealing produce to stealing money suggests that he may have struggled with kleptomania. In the correspondence, Mair described Ivor Scarlett as a boy of very bad

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<sup>67</sup> JA 1B/5/77/187 (1932), 'Statement showing offences of inmates in Quarterly Reports for 1934.'

<sup>68</sup> JA 1B/5/77/145 (1932), 'Returns of Juvenile Offenders for 1931.'

character and fit for the Reformatory in Spanish Town.<sup>69</sup> Clearly Mair felt that the institution was not the best fit for him.

The quarterly reports of the institution, however, revealed that the curriculum for the girls lacked the same diversity as that provided for the boys. Very little information was provided of their daily activities except that the girls sewed for the school, did laundry work, and cooked. In April 1934, it was reported that a company of Girl Guides was formed and invested in by the island's Secretary Mrs. K.H. Bourne, O.B.E. A hobby-class was also introduced in their curriculum about that period. The girls learned to make mats and hats from banana trash. They also learned to crochet in their hobby class. By July, Mair reported that the Girl Guides attended the Rally at Kings House and won the hat-making competition while earning second place in the Games.<sup>70</sup> Despite these efforts, the reports clearly reveal that the administration did not invest as much time in providing a high quality of education for the girls.

It is possible that the treatment the girls received was a result of their small number at the institution. Mr. Mair sent detailed quarterly reports to Mr. W. Shillingford on the progress of the Industrial School between April 1932 and October 1935.<sup>71</sup> These quarterly reports provide the most complete and systematic data on the Industrial School other than the annual reports presented in the Annual Departmental Reports of Jamaica. At a glance the reports revealed that the number of girls admitted to the institution was insignificant as it relates the general population of the institution. Figures suggested that

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<sup>69</sup> JA 1B/5/77/1698 (1923), 'Mair to the Director of Prisons 4<sup>th</sup> January 1923.'

<sup>70</sup> JA 1B/5/77/187 (1932), 'Rodgers to Shillingford, 10<sup>th</sup> July 1934.'

<sup>71</sup> W. Shillingford became Inspector of Prisons and Reformatories in 1926. He worked as a housemaster and tutor in Borstal institutions in London prior to coming to Jamaica to work for the Department of Prisons. By 1939 He was promoted to the position of Director of Prisons.



there were, on average, about fifty girls attending the institution until the government closed its doors in September 1935.

Table Three below provides a detailed breakdown of the number of girls housed at the institution between 1932 and 1935.

**Table 3: Gender Breakdown of Persons Housed at the Industrial School in Proportion to the General Population between 1932 and 1935**

Quarter Ending	Number of Girls	Number of Boys	Total Population
Mar-32	52	355	407
Jun-32	52	359	411
Sep-32	53	362	415
Dec-32	52	354	406
Mar-33	48	354	402
Jun-33	49	360	409
Sep-33	51	371	422
Dec-33	51	370	421
Mar-34	59	370	429
Jun-34	53	376	429
Sep-34	50	372	422
Dec-34	47	350	397
Mar-35	47	340	387
Jun-35	43	342	385
Sep-35	5	330	335

Source: Figures drawn from the Quarterly Reports of the Government Industrial School JA 1B/5/77/187 (1932)

Historically, boys have always outnumbered girls at the institution. From as early as 1885, it was decided to move the girls from Stony Hill and place them in a separate institution in Admirals' Pen in Kingston. Administrators believed that the girls would receive more individual attention in a separate institution and by extension, be more accessible to specific voluntary women organizations from which role models could be provided.<sup>72</sup> Eventually, the Admiral Pen institution was closed in 1899 and the girls returned to Stony Hill. In those early years, administrators repeatedly expressed concern

<sup>72</sup> BNA CO 137/488 #234, 'Sir Anthony Musgrave to Sir M. G. Hicks Beach 4<sup>th</sup> December 1878, Appended Mr. Shaw, Inspector of Prisons and Reformatories to the Colonial Secretary, Kingston, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1878.'

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about the poor quality of education that the girls received in relation to the boys; however, very little was actually done to rectify this problem. In fact the girls remained in the shadow of the boys throughout the institution's existence.

### *Closure of the Girls' Reformatory*

In 1935, the Governor convened a select committee of inquiry to investigate the working of the Government Industrial School. One of the main recommendations of the committee was to close the school entirely as a means of freeing the inmates from the stigma of being in a reformatory.<sup>73</sup> The move was made, however, to close the girls' section with immediate effect. Neither the Governor nor the Director of Prisons conveyed this decision to the Board of Visitors, which was mandated to oversee the running of the institution.<sup>74</sup> By 1935, the number of girls housed at the Government Reformatory, Stony Hill had fallen to forty-eight inmates. It was felt that the space would be more effectively used as a Junior School for boys under ten years old.<sup>75</sup> To facilitate this process, Miss Symons, former headmistress for the girl's department, was retained to work with the boys in the new department.<sup>76</sup> Plans were made to transfer the girls from Stony Hill to other institutions that generally accepted girls. The girls were sent to Alpha Cottage, the Lyndale Home, the Salvation Army Rescue Home and the Rio Cobre Home. Additionally, the Governor directed the Director of Prisons to secure employment for older girls in the hospitals or other government departments. Others were released to their families.

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<sup>73</sup> JA 1B/5/77/628 (1935), 'Minute.'

<sup>74</sup> JA 1B/5/77/24 (1934), 'Souter, Secretary of the Board of Visitors, to the Colonial Secretary 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1935.'

<sup>75</sup> JA 1B/5/77/24 (1934) Colonial Secretary to the Director of Education 27<sup>th</sup> November 1935

<sup>76</sup> JA 1B/5/77/24 (1934) 'W. Shillingford to Colonial Secretary 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1935'

Several complications, however, occurred during the closure of the school. The law allowed the Governor to discharge inmates from the school but did not permit him to further detain inmates in an institution that was not an industrial school. Only a child below the age of 12 years could be transferred from one institution to another.<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, the Bathesda Home of the Salvation Army was not certified as an industrial school and therefore could not receive inmates from the Stony Hill School. Other institutions such as the Lyndale Home did not have the proper facilities to accept incorrigible children. These legal issues had to be addressed before any child could actually be transferred from the school.

The closure of the institution also made it difficult for Resident Magistrates (RM) to sentence female delinquents brought before them in the courts. No girl under the age of fourteen years could be imprisoned under law 25 of 1904. This forced RMs to discharge such individuals since they could not be sentenced to an Industrial School or find suitable alternatives. The Governor refused to support any proposal ‘for the immediate establishment of an Institution to receive girls who are uncontrollable, or who being over twelve years of age of committed offences punishable with penal servitude.’<sup>78</sup> Such young girls would have to be sent to prison rather than a reformatory centre. The most common practice at the time was to send first time offenders to the Salvation Army ‘Bathesda Home’ for the tenure of their sentence. Older girls attended the day school while officers in the home taught the younger ones.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> JA 1B/5/77/24 (1934), ‘Minute.’

<sup>78</sup> JA 1B/5/77/24 (1934), ‘Colonial Secretary to the Directory of Prisons, 12<sup>th</sup> July 1935.’

<sup>79</sup> JA 1B/5/77/24 (1934), ‘Gordon Simpson, Chief Sec. Salvation Army to C. C. Woolley Colonial Secretary, 8<sup>th</sup> June 1937.’

In response to a circular sent by the Colonial Secretary, RMs throughout the island reiterated the importance of a government institution in the reform of delinquent children. Acting RM for St. Thomas, argued that

‘Female juvenile first offenders are almost invariably dealt with under the Probation of Offenders’ Law and in a very large percentage of cases they do not come back before the Courts. Particularly...in the country parishes where there is always some responsible relative or friend willing to ...care of such child. In Kingston and Saint Andrew, however, where [there] is a large criminal population localized in a comparatively small area it is far more difficult to rescue the child from her undesirable environment...’<sup>80</sup>

Such perspectives suggested that urbanization was a key factor in the development of juvenile delinquency. Cities such as Kingston suffered the most as a result of the closure of the school. The RM for Kingston reiterated this position by arguing that an Industrial school should be provided for accommodating girls less than fourteen years coming before the courts for fairly serious crimes.<sup>81</sup>

H.P. Allen of Westmoreland declared that it ‘was inexpedient to inflict punishment involving a prison term’ thereby sentencing such children to mix with hardened criminals. The goal, he believed, should be to reform and teach such children so that they would be able to earn a living and be responsible citizens.<sup>82</sup> The RM of St. Catherine suggested the creation of correctional department with significantly wider scope than the Industrial School in which inmates could be provided with proper training until the age of eighteen years. He suggested increasing the age of leaving the institution from sixteen to eighteen because he considered sixteen years to be too young for children to be sent out into the world.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> JA 1B/5/77/24 (1934), ‘RM, St Thomas to the C.C. Woolley, 15<sup>th</sup> June 1937.’

<sup>81</sup> JA 1B/5/77/24 (1934), ‘RM, Kingston to C.C. Woolley, 19<sup>th</sup> June 1937.’

<sup>82</sup> JA 1B/5/77/24 (1934), ‘RM Westmoreland to C.C. Woolley 16<sup>th</sup> June 1937.’

<sup>83</sup> JA 1B/5/77/24 (1934), RM, St. Catherine to C.C. Woolley 25<sup>th</sup> June 1937.’

In response, the Director of Prisons argued that the girls department of the Industrial School had been underutilized in the last ten years of its existence, thus resulting in its closure in September 1935. On average eleven girls were sent to the institution each year. For the system to work, he posited that all members of the penal and poor relief administration would have to cooperate by sending ‘neglected’ and other types of girls to the institution as early as possible for a period of training and reformation before they became young delinquents.<sup>84</sup>

Table Four below details the number of girls, by parish, who was sent to the Industrial School. The term ‘reformatory class’ refers to those girls defined as juvenile delinquents.

**Table 4: The Number Of Girls Sent to the Industrial School, Stony Hill from 1<sup>st</sup> July 1925 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 1935**

Reformatory Class	Parish	Industrial School Class
22	Kingston	22
11	St. Andrew	8
10	St. Ann	2
6	Trelawney	0
5	St. Catherine	2
5	St. Elizabeth	0
4	Portland	0
4	Westmoreland	0
3	St. Mary	1
3	Manchester	0
2	St. Thomas	0
1	St. James	1
0	Clarendon	0
0	Hanover	0
77	Totals	36

Source: Taken from JA 1B/5/77/24 (1934)

The table clearly reveals that Kingston sent more girls to the school than any other parish.

The figures also suggest that juvenile delinquency amongst girls between the ages of

<sup>84</sup> JA 1B/5/77/24 (1934), ‘Precis.’

eight and fifteen years was not a significant social problem. This might have been so because families tended to keep their girls in house doing domestic work or they worked alongside their mothers and guardians. Typically, boys were not monitored in a similar fashion and therefore had more freedom of movement. This freedom of movement often provided the boys with opportunities to commit crimes such as vagrancy and praedial larceny which in turn brought them in direct conflict with the industrial school and larceny laws which legislated the terms of movement as well as access to private/public property. These social practices, such as keeping girls in the home, effectively marginalized girl's vocational curriculum within industrial schools.

### *Conclusion*

By 1900, the Jamaican colonial administration actively supported the creation of a network of industrial schools and orphanages in the island. Indeed, these early institutions, especially orphanages, provided destitute and delinquent children with access to food, clothing, shelter and a basic elementary education. Additionally, school administrators also included vocational oriented activities in the curriculum. They hoped that these additions would further enforce values of self-sufficiency and thrift as well as reinforce gender roles and notions of acceptable gender interaction. Boys maintained the general surrounding and tended to provision grounds while girls washed, cooked and learned to sew. These institutions, however, lacked the financial and human resources to engage in a more systematic attempt at social reform. In fact, administrators, where possible, drew upon the resources of the première industrial school in the island – the Government Industrial School and Reformatory.

Established in 1869, the Government Industrial School catered to both destitute and criminal children. The institution took a holistic approach to reformation. Inmates, especially boys, participated in an extensive physical and educational program. James Mair, the school superintendent, organized the boys in a house system partly to encourage good behavior and healthy competitiveness and also to inculcate a sense of community, loyalty and a general respect for authority. The boys also received training in a wider variety of vocations than girls, including masonry, tailoring, baking, farming and metal work. They participated in national competitions and events, did work for the wider community and sold produce on the local market. In contrast, girls were offered a basic elementary education and training in sewing and various crafts such as hat and mat – making. Possibly, girls received less attention because a significantly smaller number of girls were admitted to the institution. Such emphasis on gender specialized roles in the school curriculum, however, suggests a commitment not just to training citizens but creating responsible mothers and fathers.

Several issues, however, hindered the effective running of industrial schools. The school experienced a high turnover in teachers because they were paid less than elementary school teachers but had significantly more intense work schedules. Other industrial schools and orphanages constantly faced possible mergers and closure due to inadequate financial and infrastructural resources. Furthermore many of the children entering the institution were of poor health and had no previous exposure to education. These institutions, therefore, were required to make provisions for all areas in a child's life. The Department of Education often expressed unease over the quality of the curriculum offered to inmates. It was generally felt that children in industrial schools

were not on par with their counterparts in elementary schools. Finally, the lack of a cohesive child welfare policy deterred any real expansion or improvement to the industrial school system. The closing of the Girls Department of the Government Industrial School in 1935 revealed that the colonial administration viewed many of these institutions as financial burdens.

These early Industrial Schools, however, provided the skeletal framework for children services in post independent Jamaica. In March 2004, the Jamaican government passed the Child Care and Protection Act. As the first comprehensive legislation on children in the island, the goal of the act was to promote the best interest, safety and well being of children. It consolidated earlier laws to establish the machinery for handling juvenile delinquents and destitute children through the courts. This also included the creation of the Child Development Agency (CDA) and the Children's Advocate – which caters to children defined as being in need of care and protection. This legislation, however, maintains the historic yet superficial distinction between children in need of care and protection (orphaned, abandoned, abused and neglected) and those in conflict with law. The CDA adheres to the policy of the Ministry of Education, which is, that every child has a right to be educated. Today, wards of the state are integrated into the mainstream education system although teachers are employed in places of safety to provide assistance to children housed in these institutions. There remains, however, no existing structure to assess the performance of wards of the state in relation to the general population. As such the issue of instituting effective systems of accountability continues to pervade discourse surrounding the education of wards of the state.