

Women, Crime and Punishment in Ireland

Focusing on women's relationships, decisions and agency, this is the first study of women's experiences in a nineteenth-century Irish prison for serious offenders. Showcasing the various crimes for which women were incarcerated in the post-Famine period, from repeated theft to murder, Elaine Farrell examines inmate files in close detail in order to understand women's lives before, during and after imprisonment. By privileging case studies and individual narratives, this innovative study reveals imprisoned women's relationships with each other, with the staff employed to manage and control them, and with their relatives, spouses, children and friends who remained on the outside. In doing so, Farrell illuminates the hardships many women experienced, their poverty and survival strategies, as well as their responsibilities, obligations, and decisions. Incorporating women's own voices, gleaned from letters and prison files, this intimate insight into individual women's lives in an Irish prison sheds new light on collective female experiences across urban and rural post-Famine Ireland.

Elaine Farrell is Senior Lecturer in History at Queen's University Belfast where her research focuses on gender, crime and punishment, and social relations. She is the author of *'A most diabolical deed': Infanticide and Irish society, 1850–1900* (2013) which was awarded the National University of Ireland Publication Prize in 2015.

Women, Crime and Punishment in Ireland

Life in the Nineteenth-Century Convict Prison

Elaine Farrell

Queen's University Belfast



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UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-83950-1 — Women, Crime and Punishment in Ireland
Elaine Farrell
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India
79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108839501
DOI: 10.1017/9781108884242

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First published 2020

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Farrell, Elaine (Elaine Frances), author.

Title: Women, crime and punishment in Ireland : life in the nineteenth-century convict prison / Elaine Farrell, Queen's University Belfast.

Description: New York : Cambridge University Press, 2020. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020018100 (print) | LCCN 2020018101 (ebook) | ISBN 9781108839501 (hardback) | ISBN 9781108813266 (paperback) | ISBN 9781108884242 (ebook)

Identifiers: LCCN 2020019436 (print) | LCCN 2020019437 (ebook) | ISBN 9781108472623 (hardback) | ISBN 9781108560818 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: Female offenders – Ireland – History – 19th century. | Women prisoners – Ireland – History – 19th century. | Prisons – Ireland – History – 19th century. | Prison discipline – Ireland – History – 19th century. | Criminal justice, Administration – Ireland – History – 19th century.

Classification: LCC HV6046 .F267 2020 (print) | LCC HV6046 (ebook) | DDC 365/.430941509034–dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020018100>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020018101>

ISBN 978-1-108-83950-1 Hardback

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For Yiannis

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Acknowledgements

This book began life as an Irish Research Council postdoctoral fellowship in 2011 at University College Dublin. I am grateful for this financial backing and for the support I received there, particularly from Diarmaid Ferriter. My thanks are due to the archivists and staff who aided my research, particularly at the National Archives of Ireland, the Dublin Diocesan Archive, the Congregational Archives of the Holy Faith Sisters, the Representative Church Body Library, the Millisle Prison Archive and the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland. For permission to reproduce images, I am grateful to the National Archives of Ireland, particularly Patricia Fallon, Elizabeth McEvoy and Gregory O'Connor, and to the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, especially Sarah Connaghan. I am very thankful to Leanne Calvert and Ruth Thorpe who, with characteristic diligence, gathered material when I could not, and to Conor Reidy for preparing the index with care and for dealing with my requests with patience and humour. I am grateful to the generous peer reviewers for their insights, and to Liz Friend-Smith, Michael Watson and the editorial team at Cambridge University Press for their dedication.

The History Department at Queen's University Belfast, where I have worked since 2012, is a wonderfully collegial place. Colleagues have been most generous with their time, encouragement or suggestions across the years, particularly Evi Chatzipanagiotidou, Marie Coleman, James Davis, Shannon Devlin, Leonie Hannan, David Hayton, Tom Hulme, Liam Kennedy, Chris Marsh, Laura Pfunter, Olwen Purdue and Nik Ribianszky. I am indebted to Mary O'Dowd, who has been a most generous advisor and inspiration for years, and who has shaped my approach to writing history. I have also benefitted greatly from the work and support of other historians, including Ciara Breathnach, Christina Brophy, Sarah-Anne Buckley, Catherine Cox, Arunima Datta, Cara Delay, James Kelly, Laura Kelly, Maria Luddy, Shaun McDaid and Jennifer Redmond. I owe special thanks to Lindsey Earner-Byrne, whose undergraduate lectures inspired me to become a historian and who has been most generous with

Acknowledgements

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her guidance since, and to Liz Dawson and Leanne McCormick, who I got to know over the duration of this project and who, with characteristic wisdom and humour, have been key to ensuring the manuscript's completion. Wonderful friends provide a welcome world outside academia and I must express my gratitude especially to Julianne, Mairead, Ceara and Anneliese. I have presented aspects of this research at various conferences and seminars in Ireland and beyond, and I am grateful to the delegates who engaged with the material and offered suggestions.

My parents, Liam and Marie, and sisters, Deirdre and Fiona, are most deserving of thanks. At this stage they have probably all visited an archive to locate specific sources! I am grateful for this, and for their encouragement and support. I am indebted to Yiannis, for his endless patience and advice, and to my baby boy, who made clear by his early arrival that he was going to dictate both my personal and professional lives from there on in. My world.

Abbreviations

CRF	Convict Reference File
CSORP	Chief Secretary's Office Registered Papers
DMP	Dublin Metropolitan Police
GPB	General Prisons Board
GPO	Government Prisons Office
NAI	National Archives of Ireland
PRONI	Public Record Office of Northern Ireland
RIC	Royal Irish Constabulary