The Landmark Trust

HOUSE OF CORRECTION
History Album

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Re-presented in 2015
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BASIC DETAILS

Built: 1808

Designed by: Bryan Browning

Repaired and restored: 1986/87 and 1991

Architect: Philip Jebb

Builders: E Bowman and Sons

Furnished: 1987

Contents

The House of Correction, built in 1808
to designs by local architect Bryan Browning.

SUMMARY

In 1982, the House of Correction was acquired by the Landmark Trust, a charity which rescues historic buildings in distress and gives them a new life by letting them for holidays. Its previous owners were Sir Arthur and Lady Petersen, who had rescued the building from demolition in 1965. By passing it on to Landmark, they both gave it a secure future and also ensured that it would be appreciated by all those people who now stay in it. Like many buildings cared for by Landmark, the House of Correction as we see it today is a fragment of a much larger building. This imposing structure was once the gateway to a prison capable of accommodating up to seventy wrongdoers. The inmates were not hardened criminals, however. Most of them were guilty of minor felonies and misdemeanours - petty theft, disorderly conduct or that once serious offence of idleness, which as all knew led rapidly to subversion.

There had been a House of Correction in Folkingham, serving parts of Kesteven, since 1609. This original building, now two houses in the market place, had four cells and a small yard for exercise. Here, in a system devised by the Elizabethans, the 'idle poor' were confined and put to work to teach them better ways. But while the corrective power of hard labour lay behind the original Houses of Correction (also known as Bridewells after the first to be founded in a former royal palace in London), they soon merged with ordinary gaols or lock-ups. This is what the one in Folkingham had become when it was visited by an inspector in 1774. His report was damning: not only was it damp and cramped, but there was no pump and no sewer. When another report of 1802 told the same story, plans were made for its replacement.

Work began on a new House of Correction in 1808. It was built on the site of the great castle of the de Gaunts and the de Beaumonts which had been abandoned since the sixteenth century. The moated inner ward lent itself exactly to the new strongly walled compound. The entrance seems to have been quite humble, however - an opening in the brick outer wall with the Turnkey's lodge just inside. The Governor's house lay beyond that, on the far side of which was the airing yard for the prisoners, surrounded by the prison buildings themselves.

An eighteenth century writer declared that prisons should be depressing by reason of their function, with civil prisons expressing misery while criminal ones should evoke actual horror: 'let there be deepest shade, cavernous entrances, terrifying inscriptions'. The first entrance apparently did not get the message across strongly enough. In 1825, a gifted local architect, Bryan Browning, was commissioned to build a new gatehouse. Browning had clearly studied neo-classical architects such as the Frenchman Ledoux, who published designs which were full of strength and drama. He was no doubt familiar too with the work of Vanbrugh, particularly his military buildings. As this gatehouse shows, Browning had undoubtedly learned how to give power to a design by the use of mass and form in a way that must have sent the hearts of new inmates plummeting into their boots.

The regime inside was still based on the original lines of reform through hard treatment and hard labour - a short, sharp shock. Bare boards to sleep on, bread and gruel to eat and work at a treadmill or stone-breaking were standard for felons undergoing a short sentence. Women worked in the laundry or picked oakum. For all there was a daily chapel service.

The House of Correction closed in 1878. Two years later it was sold to a builder who pulled down the outer wall and turned the prison buildings into cottages. In the 1930s the gatehouse was also turned into a house, when a brick addition was made at the back. In the 1960s the cottages were declared unfit and were demolished. It was only by the intervention of the Petersens that Browning's monumental gateway did not suffer the same fate.

RESTORATION BY THE LANDMARK TRUST

When the Landmark Trust took on the House of Correction it had been lived in as a house for fifty years, with a brick addition at the back which doubled it in size. The addition was Georgian in character and not unattractive but Landmark and its architect, Philip Jebb, felt that it was too much of an anticlimax when compared to the front. The proposal therefore was to take down the addition in order to restore the gatehouse to its original form.

Some sort of addition was still desirable, however, to link the two sides of the gatehouse. Examination of early plans of the building and a description of it in 1825 provided the answer, together with evidence found in the rear wall. It was clear that when the new gatehouse was built it backed onto the existing prison wall and Turnkey's lodge, which had one room on each side of the entrance, with a water cistern above. The new addition followed the same plan and comes as close to the original as is feasible without photographic or other visual evidence. Most importantly, it respects Bryan Browning's design whereby the rear pediment rises up over the plain brick and stone coping of the wall, as reinstated along the back.

Bricks from the demolished addition were used to form the new back wall and the stones forming the arch of the back door were also taken from the addition, as they had no doubt been taken from one of the former prison buildings in the 1930s - perhaps even the Turnkey's lodge itself. In addition to this, the roof was repaired and new windows and doors provided. On the side elevations, outer doors were fitted to the ground floor windows to recall the original use of the rooms inside as the Governor's stable and coach house.

Some rearrangement was needed inside to make the new accommodation work. With the 1930s addition had gone the only stair from ground to first floor. Two new stairs were built therefore, one running all the way from the new kitchen to the top room via the new bathroom, the other from the sitting room to the bedroom above it. The floor levels were changed too, making the ground floor rooms slightly lower and those on the first floor taller. Over the arch the floor was raised a little to give a better view out of the window. In the sitting room an existing fireplace was opened up.

The restoration was completed in 1986. It was a long held wish of Sir John Smith, the founder of Landmark, to rebuild the first lengths of the prison wall on either side of the gatehouse, to put it back in its proper frame. This formed a separate phase of work, which was carried out in 1991. New gates and fences, based on a photograph of the old ones, were put up at the same time. Both this and the main restoration were carried out to a very high standard by E. Bowman and Sons of Stamford.

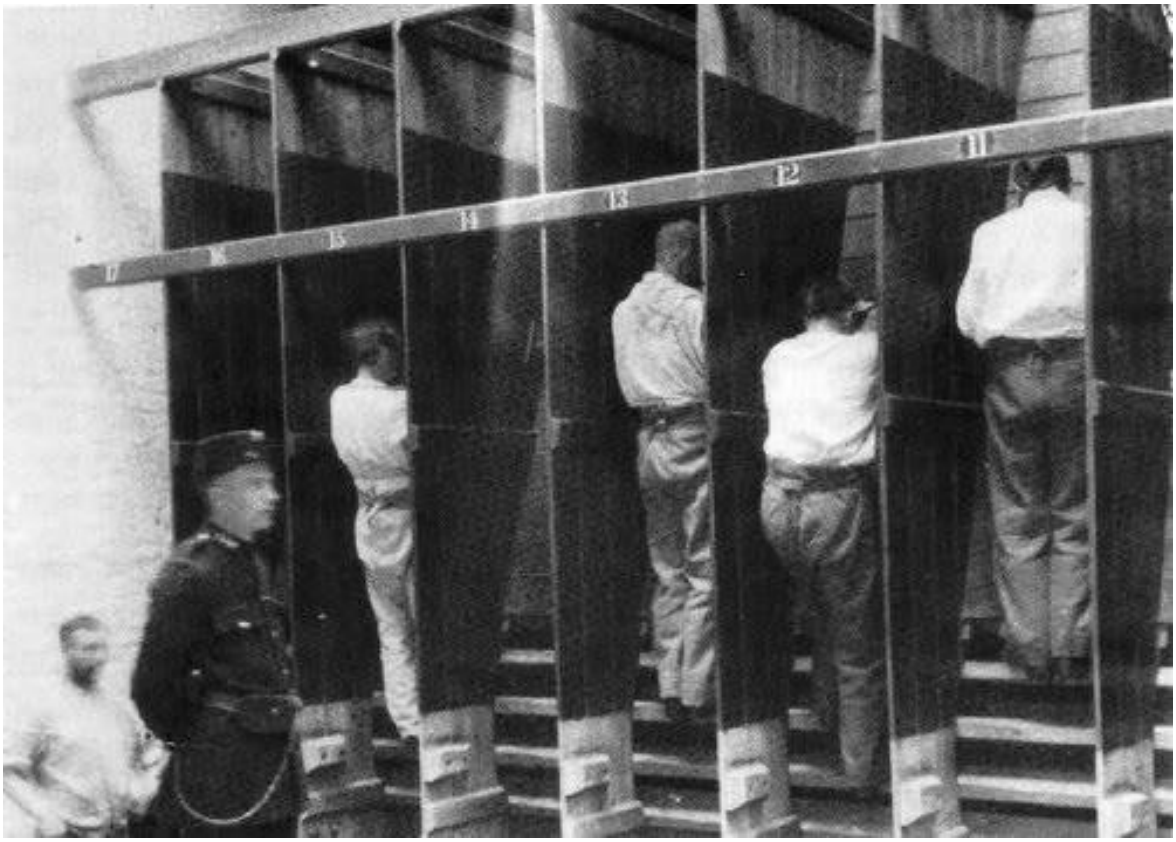
Houses of Correction ('Bridewells')

Notes from an article by J N Spencer in the journal Justice of the Peace*, 28.11.1987 (Little London, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1PG)*

The first House of Correction in England was constructed in London in a converted Royal Palace called Bridewell. Like the name Borstal, the name Bridewell was also used for many other Houses of Correction subsequently built, such as the Bridewell in Bristol.

Imprisonment was used as a sentence by Judges for minor felonies but from the sixteenth century until 1867, transportation was the common penalty for felonies, with death for the more serious cases. Houses of Correction were used by the justices and also by Judges when imposing short periods of imprisonment with hard labour for comparatively minor offences. In the case of magistrates, this would be for offences of petty larceny, vagrancy and damage, and in the seventeenth century breaches of the religious observance and labour and apprentice laws. The Judges were also required to use terms of imprisonment for misdemeanours such as perjury and fraud, and the maximum permitted periods were short.

Those vagrants without visible means of support might be sentenced to a period of hard labour in the House of Correction and sent on their way to their parish of origin. The impotent poor who had been born in the village, or who had been resident there for three years or more, would be separately provided for in the workhouse or, until 1834, by way of out-relief supplementing their wages to a living level based on the price of bread. In Folkingham the workhouse was off the opposite side of the Rectangle along West Street, next to the New Inn, which is only new in Folkingham terms, being built before 1839. The building has the words 'Folkingham Workhouse 1813' displayed on it. These resident paupers were permitted to beg within the parish and were issued with a begging badge to demonstrate to the public their right to this privilege. Other persons were liable to be convicted of begging and sentenced to imprisonment, with or without the option of a fine, in the House of Correction in accordance with the Vagrancy Acts.



A treadmill in Gloucester prison in 1873, also known as a treadwheel or 'everlasting staircase.' It was introduced in 1818 by the British engineer Sir William Cubitt as a means of usefully employing prisoners. The device was a wide hollow cylinder, usually composed of wooden steps built around a cylindrical iron frame, and was designed in some cases to handle up to 40 convicts. As the device began to rotate, each prisoner was forced to continue stepping along the series of planks. The power generated by the treadwheel was used to grind corn and pump water, although some served no purpose at all other than punishment. The use of treadwheels was abolished in Britain by the Prisons Act of 1898.

Houses of Correction were under the control of the county justices. In theory the establishments were supposed to be self-supporting. The justices contracted out the right to use the prisoners as out-workers. Common employers were those in the textile and rope-making industries, and prisoners would be set to preparing wool, sewing mailbags, or unpicking used rope for the rough strands called oakum, which were used for caulking ships' seams. Candle makers would contract to employ them in making candlewick. The Governor was allowed to use the whipping post to compel obedience and he would be given authority by the justices to administer up to a maximum number of lashes to the recalcitrant or disobedient prisoner. The magistrates allowed the Governor of the Clerkenwell Bridewell in 1770 to apply up to 20 lashes for disobedience.

Despite these sanctions, it was always difficult to employ forced labour and it was always difficult to make the House of Correction pay. In the end the inmates had to be either supported by the rates or, sometimes, allowed to starve.

With the difficulty of providing out-work, arrangements were made, particularly in the early nineteenth century, to provide different forms of internal hard labour. In addition to the Chapel, the Folkingham House of Correction also possessed a treadmill and a hand-crank. Prisoners would be expected to endlessly tread the treadmill. Originally it was a mill to grind corn but finally it became a pointless labour in itself, the monotony intended to break the will of even the most recalcitrant inmate.

The treadmill and hand-crank are no longer to be found in the House of Correction at Folkingham. The whipping post and the stocks are still there to be seen, however, located in, of all places, the church.

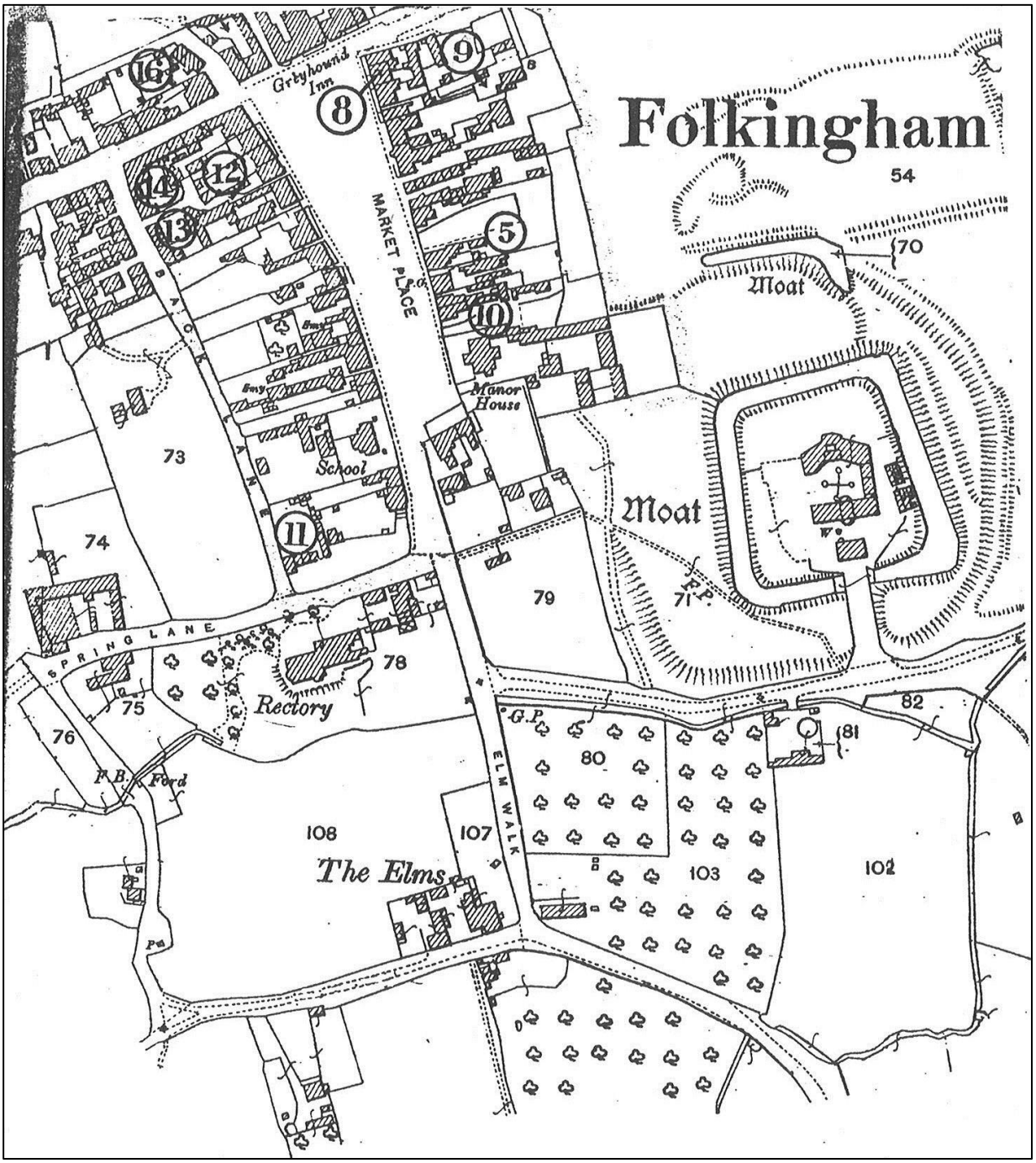
Folkingham Castle

The second House of Correction was built on the site of Folkingham Castle, where long before there seems to have been a Saxon settlement. There had been a castle on this site since soon after the Norman Conquest. Originally the land was given to a kinsman of William the Conqueror, Gilbert de Gaunt, who married Alice de Montfort. De Gaunt made Folkingham the head of his barony and presumably erected a motte and bailey castle there; by the early thirteenth century a stone keep had been added but this seems to have been damaged after the barons' rebellion against King John in 1216. But in 1219 a pair of informers wrote to the local authorities:

> May you know that we were at Folkingham at the castle of Gilbert de Gaunt [this Gilbert is believed to be the third of that name] and that he is having it fortified with arrowholes and hoardings of wood and as they are making the stonework they are making the moat, and a good third part of it is done and they are putting much hard work into it. And you may know that they have a certain high tower which was broken on two sides of which one side has been well made up of stone and rubble in the middle of the tower, and well crenellated, and the other side is good stonework and crenellated, and people say that he has a licence from the King and the Earl of Salisbury.

When the de Gaunt line died out in 1297 the castle was granted by Edward I to his cousin Henry, Baron de Beaumont, who was also allowed to hold a weekly market and an annual fair in the town. Edward II stayed in the castle in 1319 and issued edicts from there. Henry rebuilt the castle in 1321: it was now a formidable building, with a great gatehouse, a strong curtain and both an inner and an outer moat; the moat enclosed an area of about 10 acres. In 1471 Henry's descendant William de Beaumont, Lord Bardolph, fought against the King at the battle of Barnet; he was thereon declared a traitor. After the end of the Wars of the Roses in 1485 he had to buy his pardon from Henry VII (a good businessman) for the enormous sum of £10,000.

The de Beaumont line failed in 1507 and the manor Reverenderted to the crown. The castle was by now deteriorating, and the stonework was used as a quarry by local builders. In 1535 John Leland recorded 'it hath bene a goodly house but now it fallith al to ruine'.



Map of Folkingham in 1920

The first House of Correction (1609–1808)

Folkingham's first House of Correction occupied a stone house (No 34) on the east side of the Market Place. Here the Keeper lived, the cells being under the Keeper's house.

An official visit was made to this House of Correction on 26th October 1774, and the report states:

> Folkingham. Damp rooms: no chimney: small yard: no pump: no sewer. Yet the Keeper said a woman with a child at her breast was sent hither for a year and a day: the child had died. Conveyance to Quarter Sessions at Keeper's expense.

The great prison reformer John Howard also said of this gaol, rather sarcastically: 'The Keeper maintains, or starves, his prisoners'. (At that time, the food allowance for each prisoner was sixpennyworth of bread a week.)

A Report on this first House of Correction dated 1802 gives some interesting details of the prison itself:

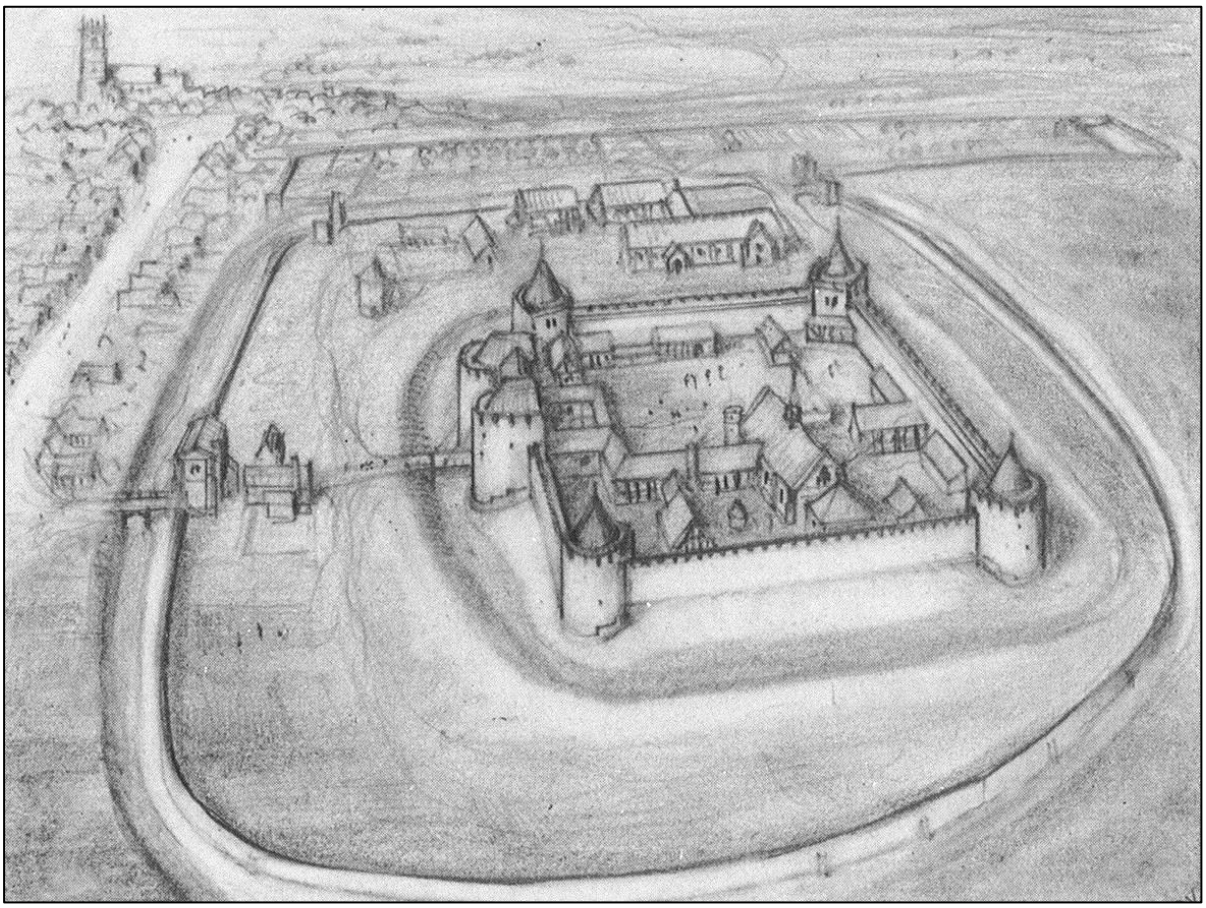
> This prison is under the Keeper's house, and consists of four sleeping cells, about 10 ft square and 6 ft high, which open into a day room with a fire-place, 19 ft by 9 ft, and 6 ft high. Three of the cells have iron gratings in each door about a foot square, for lighting and ventilation. The fourth cell is called the dungeon, is totally dark, having no light nor air but what is admitted by means of four small holes perforated through the door about the size of a pistol ball. The day room has three iron-grated and glazed windows; the floors are boarded and not damp now. The county finds straw on the floor with a rug to each, and firing to the day rooms. The women have two rooms, about 8 ft square and 6 ft high; the front room has a fire place and a glazed window. Prisoners, Aug 10th 1802, two men, three women, one of them with a child at her breast.

John Speight was the Keeper at that time, with a salary of £50 per annum. A Surgeon, Mr W C Headley, visited the gaol and charged for his services, but there was 'no chaplain or religious attention'. Details of the prisoners' food are also given:

> Allowance, 10 lbs of bread per week, and 2s per week for oatmeal and salt, each prisoner. The oatmeal is boiled with crumbs of bread into porridge, and given to them twice a day in tin pans which hold one quart each.

There was no employment for them, and the men and women occupied separate cells and had separate courtyards 'but can see and converse with each other through an aperture in the door a foot square'.

Another keeper was William Stredder, who was the Gaolkeeper and Bailiff in the year 1797; he was younger brother to Josiah Stredder (1756–1827), one of Folkingham's bakers and also a grocer and corn-dealer.



Folkingham Castle (an artist's reconstruction)

The new House of Correction (1808–1878)

Following the increase in the number of offenders at the turn of the century, it was found necessary to build a larger House of Correction in Folkingham for the Parts of Kesteven. Thus, in 1808, work was commenced on the building in brick and stone of a larger House of Correction. The place chosen was the site of the old castle of Henry de Beaumont which, by the mid-sixteenth century, according to John Leland's *Itinerary* 'now fallith al to ruine, and it stondith even about the egge of the fennes'.

By 1825 further building work had been done, a treadmill had been erected, and Bryan Browning, the designer of Bourne's attractive Town Hall, had completed the imposing Gatehouse, all that now remains of the original buildings – and a real 'eye-catcher' to the motorist driving north and catching his first glimpse of the picturesque village of Folkingham. The late Professor Pevsner says of this gatehouse:

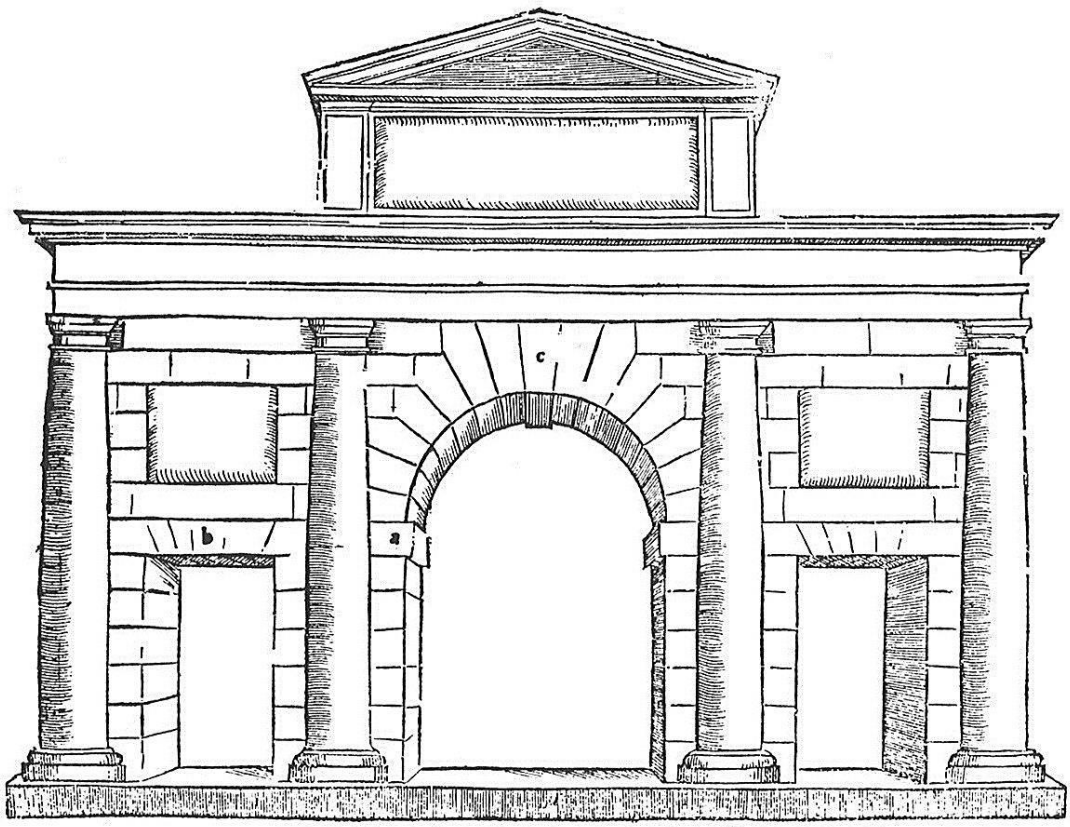
> The stone front has an illustrious pedigree: Sammicheli's town gates, Ledoux's toll gates, and of course Vanbrugh – especially for the details at the back

though it also bears a strong family resemblance to one of the designs in Serlio's fourth *Book of Architecture,* which he recommends (among other things) for prisons. In 1835 additions were made so that more prisoners could be accommodated. The census of 1841 records that the House of Correction was then holding 35 prisoners – 11 women and 24 men, ranging in age from 15 to 60 – in the charge of the Governor, the Matron (the Governor's wife) and two Turnkeys. In 1849 another twenty new cells were added and in 1852 a west wing was added to the gaol, which thus now accommodated about 70 prisoners and prison staff. The buildings were of brick with a surrounding brick and stone wall of octagonal form. The gaol now contained a chapel, which was:

The fourth Booke. The fift Chapter. Fol. 6

AND for that the workeman ought to be copious of inuentions, to please himselfe and others, the Gate of the City, Towne, or Fortresse, may be set out in this maner, obseruing this rule: that so broad as the going through of the Gate is, the height shall be as much, and halfe as much agayne, that is, 2. parts in bredth, and 3. parts in height.

The Pilasters shall be the 8. part of the wideneſſe of the Gate: and the Columnes stand for the round Columnes and flat Pillars, being the fourth part of the Gate. But for that the Columne is a third part set into the wall, and is bound fast with other stones, more for shew then bearing, it is to be made 7. parts high, and also of 8. at the workemans will, which will set forth the Gate with more shew. The wideneſſe of the Posterne shalbe the halfe of the middle Gate, the Pilasters also (as the greater) that is the halfe. The height thereof shalbe such as the Facie that beareth the Arch, and it shalbe the Supercilie, or Architraue thereof, as we call it: and if you find not a stone all of one peece fit for it, then you shall make the Cunei or Pennants as you see them heere in the Figure. And thus the proportion of the Posterne shall bee, that is, 3. parts in bredth, and 5. of the like parts in height. The Cunei or Pennants of the Arch, shall be 15. In the Bases, Capitals, Architraue, Freese, and Cornice, you must obserue the rule aforesayd; and the eleuation in the middle shall be at the workemans will, as I sayd of the other: and all such workes, the groser they be made, and bolt out, the stronger they are for fortification.



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> extremely neat and very appropriate, being so contrived that the prisoners in each pew or seat could command a full and sufficient view of the minister, but were at the same time completely excluded from seeing any of their fellow prisoners.

The prison chapel in Lincoln Castle was designed on very similar lines, and can still be seen by visitors to the Castle there.

The Prisons Act of 1865 laid down general regulations, and the Quarter Sessions made additional rules in 1867 whereby visiting justices were expected to visit the House of Correction every month, and on the first Saturday in the month. Without delay they had to deal with any report in writing from the Governor, the Chaplain or the Surgeon that alleged that the mind or body of any prisoner was likely to be injured by his treatment. No prisoner who complained of illness could be compelled to work until the surgeon had examined him and given his decision as to the man's fitness. The prisoner's day of discharge had to be notified to his relatives. In 1866 the visiting magistrates were W E Welby MP, the Reverend George Carter, Rector of Folkingham, and Captain Smith. Prisoners were interrogated and a few complaints were received. They examined the accounts of the prison and gave authority for the provision of leather for the prisoners' boots and the purchase of coal, bread, meat, groceries, and cloth for uniforms. Small structural alterations could be authorised using prison labour. In 1868, for example, authority was given for the conversion of an open space in the women's yard into a wash house.

A footnote in *White's Directory of Lincolnshire* has its amusing side:

> **A Lincolnshire Magistrate in 1870.** — As Sir F Whichcote, Bart., of Aswerby Hall, was dressing one morning, he perceived the under-groom making very free with his wall fruit. When breakfast was finished, he wrote a note addressed to the Keeper of the House of Correction at Folkingham, which he ordered the culprit to take without delay. The note contained the following words: 'Give the bearer a dozen lashes; he will guess the reason'. This he signed with his initials. Whether the offender was conscience smitten, or, what is still more

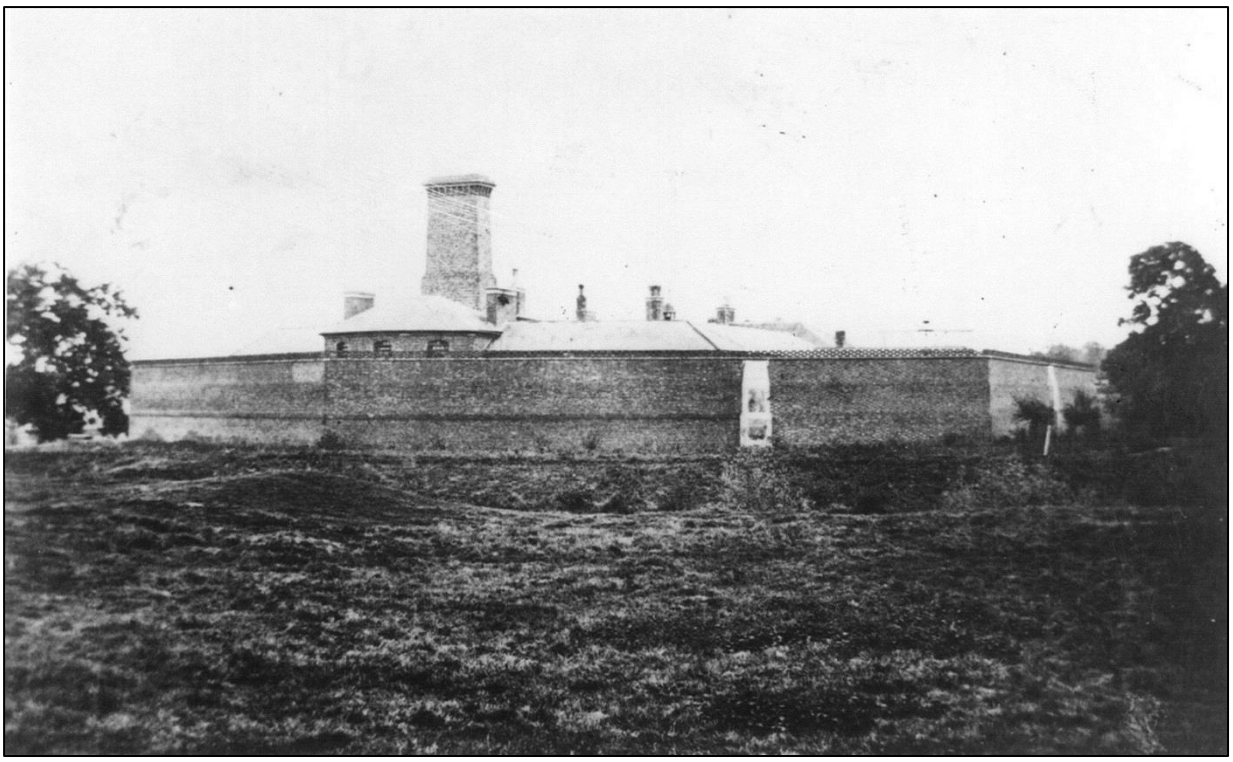
Sarah Maille, Matron of the House of Correction for 32 years alongside her husband, Matthew, who was Governor.

> probable, took advantage of the wet wafer to acquaint himself with the contents, I know not; but he bribed a helper in the stable, by the promise of a pot of beer and the loan of a horse, to take it for him. The governor after reading the note, ordered the bearer to be tied up, and the directions were scrupulously obeyed, to the consternation of the poor fellow, who had no idea why he was thus treated until his return, when his account of what had taken place caused much merriment in the stable-yard. The tale very soon came to the ears of the baronet, who laughed very heartily, and took no other notice of it than fining the delinquent half-a-crown for the privilege of being flogged by deputy, and ordered it to be given to the suffering party.' (Gunning's *Reminiscences of Cambridge*)

In June 1870, the House of Correction was authorised to purchase a camera and complete photographic apparatus, to record the likenesses of prisoners to meet the Secretary of State's instruction that photographs of offenders should be sent to the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.

The House of Correction contained both a hand-crank (an instrument of prison discipline like a paddle-wheel) and a treadwheel for pumping water. In August 1872, the machinery for a new treadmill was delivered ready for erection. On 9th November 1872, the *Grantham Journal* reported:

> **Folkingham House of Correction.** — The new tread wheels which have recently been cast and fixed by Messrs Tuxford and Sons, Boston, are now completed and in daily use. The weight of iron used in their erection is nearly 12 tons; they are about two horse power, each capable of being worked by seven men. Although made for punishment, they are also for use, for they can be so fixed as to pump water from five pumps for the use of the prison, which pumps can also be worked by crank power, by adjusting an extra wheel, to which is connected a strap. The labour appears to be more fatiguing than by the old wheel, as the usual handrail by which the prisoners hold themselves up is dispensed with, and in its place a handle of wood tassle fastened to a piece of chain so as to handle loosely, by which the men have to cling with both hands whilst at work, giving them very little chance of resting any weight on their arms as hitherto.



The prison walls

The treatment of prisoners was organised on ‘sharp shock’ lines, especially in the case of criminals. For example, prisoners serving sentences of less than one month were made to sleep on a bed of wooden planks, without a mattress. Those sentenced for longer terms spent their first month on a plank bed, a mattress being supplied thereafter. Felons and those doing hard labour were allowed no visitors for the first three months of their incarceration. Bread and gruel only was supplied to those confined for seven days or less; those serving between seven and twenty-one days enjoyed the addition of one pint of soup per week. Those who were serving terms exceeding twenty-one days, but less than six weeks, received three ounces of meat on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

The prisoners rose each morning at six o’clock and were locked into their cells at 6 p.m. On Sundays they remained locked in their cells all day, apart from attendance at chapel and an exercise period.

To avoid escapes being arranged, prisoners’ mail was scrutinised and trees were not allowed to grow near the walls. Some prisoners did, however, manage to escape. In 1826 William White managed to get clear away; and Samuel William Close, accompanied by Richard Elmore, both of Sleaford, made good their escape

on 28th August 1861. But one prisoner who had escaped the pReverendious year was recaptured and sentenced to an extra eight years imprisonment.

In the 1820s and 1830s most of the prisoners had found their way to the House of Correction via convictions that covered the full range of rural crime: felony (including theft, often of food, clothing and bedding, and receiving stolen goods), assault, vagrancy, offences against the game laws and bastardy. This last was one of the commonest causes of imprisonment, and one that carried a sentence of up to a year in the House of Correction with hard labour or the treadwheel, the women concerned generally being treated notably more harshly than the men.

There were far less severe punishments for those convicted only of misdemeanours: they could wear their own clothes, have books and newspapers and, if required, buy beer. Mr Baily Jnr, licensee of the Greyhound Inn, regularly supplied the House of Correction with transport and drinks in the mid-nineteenth century.

But the treadwheel, the crank and stonebreaking was the fate of those serving ‘hard labour first class’, for males over 16; for the ‘second class’ there was mat making, picking oakum, pumping, tailoring, and stone-making (for example, drinking-troughs for cattle and horses, which were made using a mallet and chisel). For females, hard labour entailed work in the laundry, picking oakum, cleaning and knitting.

Under the terms of the Prison Act of 1877, orders were issued to close the House of Correction at Folkingham, and henceforth Kesteven prisoners were to be committed to prisons at Spalding or Lincoln. Regret at this decision was expressed locally, but it was assumed that the main reason for its closure was the absence of a railway station nearer than three miles.

By order of the Prison Commissioners, the gaol was closed on 30th April 1878. It is said that the last prisoner was a pedlar taken in Folkingham market place for selling Old Moore’s Almanac. While that was not in itself a serious crime, the itinerant was illiterate and had not checked the merchandise he was carrying. Had he sought the help of an educated friend, he would have found that his Old Moore’s were a year out of date.

Early in May of that year was seen a melancholy sight by those travelling on the Billingborough Road. Two gangs of prisoners, each man handcuffed between two chains, were marched from Folkingham to Billingborough Railway Station and conveyed by train from there to Southwell Prison. One of these prisoners, having a term of years unexpired, was conveyed to London where, as a local reporter wistfully put it, 'he will probably not find this confinement so agreeably relieved by songs from the birds and sweet fragrance from the flowers and fields.'

Then on 31st January 1880, the *Grantham Journal* reported:

> **Folkingham —** After the County Prison at this place ceased to be occupied, the Prison Commissioners submitted the building and site for public tender. The sums offered (says the *Mercury*) were so much below the value that none of them were accepted, and the authorities placed the disposal of the building in the hands of Messrs Goddard and Son, architects, Lincoln, who have recently sold it to Mr John Wadsley, builder of Horbling, for a sum which is satisfactory both to vendors and purchaser.

The prison buildings were later converted into dwelling houses, providing accommodation for some dozen families. In the 1930s the gatehouse was also turned into a house, with a brick addition built on at the back. After the Second World War the prison accommodation was condemned as unfit for human habitation and the people living there were moved out. All that now remains of this once forbidding prison complex is the Governor's Gatehouse, a noble monument to Bryan Browning and rightly protected by statute.

Building accounts for the new House of Correction

In 1824, tenders were invited for the enlargement and repair of the prison in Folkingham, it having been resolved by HM justices of the peace, that the 'insufficiency ...to contain the number of prisoners usually confined therein was well founded...and it was requisite and proper to enlarge the same by erecting Apartments at the North end of the said House of Correction capable of receiving 24 prisoners, in addition to the present accommodations – 4 Day-rooms, with yards.., the Chapel to be enlarged to contain 50 persons, or a new building to be erected to that purpose; an Hospital to hold 10 persons with a 2 sleeping rooms, one larger than the other, and a small sitting-room; a room or building to receive a Tread-mill; the mill is intended to work from 4 to 12 persons, and over this building is to be a chamber of the height of 7 feet. The materials to be similar to those which compose the present building'. (Stamford Mercury 13 Feb 1824)*.

A book entitled ***An Enlargement of Folkingham House of Correction Workmen's Bills from Mr Browning the Architect,*** **14th September 1825** contains on Folio 47 an abstract of cost of work done by Messrs Kirks (Mason and Carpenter), James Chambers (Smith and Ironmonger), J Macklin (Painter), W Goodson (Plumber), and Sharman (Slater) totalling £7,076. 0. 2d. Further work brought the total to £8,299. 5. 3d, an amount agreed upon at the Greyhound Inn, Folkingham, on 25th October 1825. James Chambers of Lincoln, meanwhile, charged £250 for the erection of the Tread Mill.

In 1825, '**Mr Brian Browning** of Doughty Street, near the Foundling Hospital, London, the Architect employed in this undertaking' presented a bill for his professional services as follows:

> 'For plans, journey expenses, commision as Architace on the money expended, viz: Commission , Travelling Expenses, Expenses on measuring up the work, Plan for Secretary of State and PReverendious Expenses'

which amounted to £457. 12s. 0d.

As a matter of comparison with present-day prices, it is interesting to note that George Foster, Draper, of Sleaford, presented a bill for the carpet for the Magistrates' Room in the Prison amounting to £6. 13s. 8d.

PLATE 156 BUILDINGS DESIGNED BY THE BROWNING FAMILY

(59) Former STAMFORD INSTITUTION. By Bryan Browning, 1842.

(96) BARN HILL HOUSE. North front by Bryan Browning, 1843–4.

The Inmates & Staff of the House of Correction[1]

From a description of the House of Correction in the 1840-44 Parliamentary Gazetteer of England and Wales and the 1868 Rules and Regulations to be observed in the prison at Folkingham, a detailed picture can be built up of life at the House of Correction.

On admission the prisoner was searched, and dangerous weapons, articles likely to facilitate escape and other prohibited articles taken from them, as well as money, which could be eventually restored to the prisoner, once certain deductions had been made. Before trial,l a prisoner could procure or receive food and 'malt liquor', clothing, bedding and other necessaries, and receive letters once read by the Governor. Once convicted, he or she would be provided and expected to wear 'prison dress', and allowed to see friends or relations once in three months (but not on Sundays). They were required to keep themselves clean and 'decent'. The Matron superintended the work of the female prisoners, and where practical provide employment for prisoners awaiting trial for those who wished to work. Before trial, no prisoner could be compelled to work. Convicted prisoners would be expected to attend chapel on Sunday, but not compelled if they were members of another church or 'persuasion'. Before trial, prisoners could communicate with friends, and were entitled to see their legal advisors alone.

Male prisoners were shaved 'at least once a week' unless specially exempted by a Justice, and convicted prisoners had their hair cut once a month (before trial hair would only be cut when necessary for health and cleanliness). All prisoners were required to wash daily, and provided with clean linen and clean towels once a week. All prisoners before trial and of the First Division, were, if ordered by the Surgeon, to be placed in a bath at least once a month, and all other prisoners placed in a 'Tepid Bath' at least once a month unless exempted by the Surgeon. All prisoners were provided with a hair, flock or straw mattress, two blankets and a coverlet, all of which should be kept clean and straw changed regularly. When ordered by the Surgeon two sheets and a pillow could be supplied. Where

[1] The following notes are largely based on research done in 2014 by volunteer Elaine Edge, a Landmarker and genealogist.

the sentence exceeded a month, convicted prisoners were made to sleep on a plank bed without a mattress for the first month of their sentence.

Those convicted of felonies or sentenced to hard labour were unable to receive visits or letters from their friends for the first three months; thereafter they were allowed visits or letters once every three months. Other convicted prisoners could see their friends, in the presence of a prison employee, once a month 'at convenient hours between 9 in the morning and 4 in the afternoon.' All prisoners were expected to observe a rule of silence.

There was a detailed diet regime for the prisoners.

Class 1 (prisoners sentenced to a term not exceeding 7 days) men and women had the same – a pint of oatmeal gruel, I pound of bread, and for supper another pint of oatmeal gruel.

Class 2 (between 7 – 21 days) could expect the same, but with 6 oz of additional bread at breakfast and supper and only 12 oz bread for dinner. If they were employed at Hard Labour, they had an additional pint of soup per week, containing per pint 3 oz of cooked meat (off the bone), 1 oz of onions or leeks, 1 oz of barley, rice, or oatmeal, and 3 oz potatoes, with pepper and salt. Gruel was to contain 2 oz of oatmeal per pint, sweetened on alternate days with ¾ oz sugar and seasoned with salt.

Class 3 prisoners (those employed at hard labour for between 21 days and six weeks, or convicted but not hard labour between 21 days and 4 months), had similar rations for breakfast, on Mondays and Fridays a pint of soup and 8 oz of bread (6 oz for women and boys under 14), on Tuesdays and Saturdays 3 oz cooked meat off the bone, and 1 pound of potatoes (half a pound of potatoes for women) plus 8 oz bread (6 oz for women). On Sunday, Wednesday and Thursday, dinner was bread and potatoes or a pint of gruel if potatoes could not be obtained.

Class 4 prisoners (sentenced to hard labour for between 6 weeks and 4 months had 3 oz cooked meat plus potatoes and bread four days a week, and just soup and bread on the other three. After the first two months they might have 2 oz of bread extra for supper.

Class 5 prisoners (those sentenced to hard labour for terms exceeding four months)were allocated for breakfast (instead of gruel) I pint of cocoa (on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays). This was to be made of ¾ oz of flaked cocoa, sweetened with ¾ oz of sugar.

Organising all of this to the specific amount to each prisoner must have been a detailed labour intensive task, and one wonders to what extent these regulations were observed.

The 1840-44 Parliamentary Gazeteer also records the testimony of a man whose father was a turnkey at the House of Correction. He remembered that 'The prisoners used to be served with a skilly in two mugs. One man wrote on the bottom of one of them with in a beautiful hand the following doggerel.

'Jesus wept, and well He might
To see us poor devils! In such a plight
Eight ounce of bread, one pint of gruel
And that's all we get, without the fuel'

The Case of William Wright

The inquest into the death of William Wright, a 63 year old prisoner, was reported at length in the Grantham Journal on 20th June 1863 and gives an vivid insight into conditions and culture at Folkingham, including the voice of the Governor, Matthew Maile, two turnkeys, William Stacey and William Tatham, and the surgeon, George Grewcock. The surgeon had reported Wright as fit for work, although according to the testimony of William Stacey 'he seemed shaky on his legs from the first and walked with a stick when he came here. He said he had been so for a year or two.' Almost at once Wright was in trouble for neglecting his work: 'he never refused to work, said he would, but the moment the officer went away left off work'. He was sent to [hand] crank labour.....and it can only be worked standing'...light work ... which a child might have done', 1875 turns before breakfast, 5,000 before dinner and 3,125 times before supper – 10,000 times a day. He had seemed reluctant to work and was thought to be malingering. The inquest established that he was first punished with confinement of 40 hours 'in the dark cell', and then, on the evidence of the surgeon, and at the magistrate's orders, he was flogged with 12 lashes. William Wright had ulcers on his legs, and after the flogging (during which the Governor,

Matthew Maile testified, the lash did not touch his legs), deteriorated and died. The inquest found that death was not due to the flogging. However an independent surgeon who had been called in to examine the body, found that the ultimate cause of death was diarrhoea and paralysis, and considered that William Wright's ulcer required rest to be cured. He added 'that if I had seen the leg in such a state '*I should not have thought it right to advise that he should be set to the crank work in this house*'.

Census Returns

1841

This census tells us that Matthew Maile aged 30 is governor of the HC, and his wife Sarah, is Matron. Two young men both aged 25 are turnkeys, William Hill and William Phillips. There are 35 prisoners, 24 men and 11 women. Only six of the male inmates are over twenty-five, with John Leeson at 60, by far the eldest. Seven boys are fifteen years old and under, the youngest just fourteen.
The men's previous occupations include groom, drover, shoemaker, tobacco manufacturer, bricklayer, sawyer, soldier, carrier, a servant and several (agricultural) labourers. Of the women, there is one aged sixty (a 'tramp'), one fifty, another aged forty, three twenty-year olds, and five girls aged fifteen. They all seem previously to have been either servants or vagrants, indication of how precarious and dependent upon others a woman's financial state was at the time.

1851

The Mailes are still in charge, with their nephew, twenty-nine year old Henry Stacey as one of the two turnkeys. The number of inmates has swollen to 78 prisoners, only eleven of them women. The eldest male is fifty-six while the youngest John Tresby/Trisby is apparently listed as 'under 7'. The transcript is hard to read, but this little boy could be the son of one of 22 year old Mary Ann Fresby. The occupations of the men again range widely: labourers, grooms, watermen, a cotton spinner, butcher, fancy polisher, carpenter, fisherman, baker, brickmakers, a gardener, a cork cutter, a sweep, 'a proprietor of houses' and one Abraham Black, a farmer of 40 acres. The women give their previous occupation as wife or servant, and the eldest female inmate, fifty-four year old Jane Roulds/Woulds, as washerwoman.

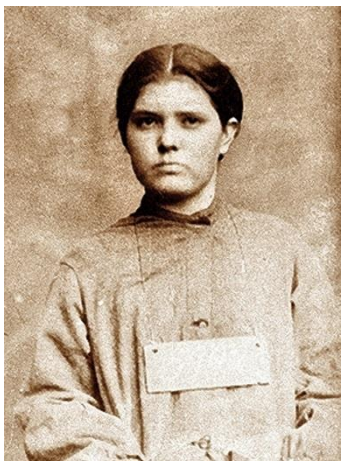
1861

The Mailes are still Governor and Matron, now assisted by Richard and Mary Ann Chamberlain as Head Turnkey and Assistant Matron, with James Hills as Gate Turnkey. The number of prisoners has dropped to 36, only four of whom are women. The men reveal the usual range of occupations – carpenter, agricultural labourers, brickmaker, bricklayer and a vagrant. The women are a glove-maker, a servant, a charwoman and a gypsy.

1871

The Mailes have now departed, and James and Emma Higgins have taken over as Governor and Matron. Living with them are their two daughters, Emily and Alice. The Chief Warder is Samuel Tuxworth, William Baxter is Warder, and his wife Annie, Assistant Matron. Of the 46 prisoners, nine are women. Among the males there are three 12 year olds - Thomas Smith, a sweep, and Joseph Hall and Thomas Brown, both agricultural labourers. There are also two fifteen year old boys, a fourteen year old and a fifteen year old girl, so it seems that the proportion of children incarcerated has increased. Most are from Lincolnshire and the surrounding counties but there is also a Scotsman and an Irishman, as well as individuals from Surrey, Dorset, Middlesex and Essex.

Lives Unravelled: an illustrative gallery of Victorian prisoners

		
Albert Turner. Imprisoned at Aylesbury. Details unknown.	1871: Thomas Brown, aged 17, labourer living with his mother. 3 months for stealing tobacco. Stony Stratford.	1872: Thomas Lebutt, tinman aged 36. 9 months for stealing paintbrushes from his master. Stony Stratford.
		
1878: Mark Tomkins, bricklayer's labourer, aged 30. 1 month for assault. Stony Stratford.	1874: Elizabeth Bandy, lacemaker, aged 18. 1 month for stealing a cloak. Ayelsbury.	1867: Joseph Horwood' aged 27. 7 years' penal servitude for stealing 3 spades.

The Chaplain's journal, 1834–1847

The Governor, Matron, Surgeon and Chaplain were all required to keep a journal, which was then signed off by the Chairman of the trustees, who for most fo this period was Mr W. Johnson. There is one surviving Chaplain's journal for Folkingham (today in Lincoln Record Office).

The chaplains did not live at the House of Correction and in the case of the Reverend Emly (and probably the other chaplains), they combined the duties as parish rector with the chaplaincy. Reimbursement in the form of the full stipend for the job was a constant bone of contention.

At the beginning of the journal the Chaplain is the Reverend John Wilson, and the journal records the death of the Governor, John White, on 23 July 1834, and the arrival of his replacement, Matthew Maille on 1 November of the same year. The entries begin as a basic record of sermons and prayers. Perhaps not surprisingly, the resources available for religion in the prison seem permanently stretched. When the Reverend Wilson did an inventory of the Bibles and prayer books available in the House of Correction on 7 Feb 1835, he discovered only two Bibles in perfect condition, with four more 'imperfect.' There were eight perfect testaments with three imperfect, plus nine prayer books (perfect) and two others imperfect. According to the regulations, he pointed out, the thirty six cells in the prison required a testament in each, and the eight day rooms should each have more than one Bible.

The Reverend Wilson seems to have had health problems, and various chaplains stood in for him during his absences , notably William Hughes from the end of December 1837. Hughes either made more visits or else more extensive records of these visits to the prisoners. Those in solitary confinement are visited, as are visits to the sick, and the distribution of tracts for reading to the prisoners. Visits continue throughout 1838, when the Reverend Wilson takes up his duties again, despite continuing ill health for in April Chairman Johnson expresses his opinion that Wilson should vacate his situation. Wilson finally resigned on 15 October 1839, and a new chaplain takes over, one Frederick Septimus Emly.

Emly was born in Salisbury around 1806, a graduate of Wadham College Oxford, and at the time of his chaplaincy, Rector of Kirkby Underwood (where he died in

1875). Emly was an active and conscientious chaplain, recording many visits, and 'admonishing' 'remonstrating' and 'expostulating' as appropriate. His accounts provide a vivid window into the day to day life in the House of Correction between 1834 and 1847.

Black Holes & Refractory Cells

During Emly's incumbency, the first disturbing mention of 'The Black Hole' appears - on 21 January 1840 he records that he 'read prayers and visited several female prisoners in separate confinement, and likewise three boys in the Black Hole then William Parker died this morning about half past nine o clock.' The Black Hole appears at intervals in his journal after this, and seems to have been reserved for 'boys'. There was also the Refractory Cell, a dark place designed for solitary confinement – in fact one source describes them as being the successors to castle dungeons, so in the case of Folkingham, they may not have had far to look for suitable cells and 'holes'.

The Spirit of Insubordination

On 20 July 1843 the Reverend Emly conducted prayers, and then 'visited a man locked up in the refractory cell and remonstrated with the other prisoners who had manifested a spirit of insubordination since I attended the Prison last.' There was a surprising amount of defiance and resistance among the prisoners, given the extreme punishments they risked – they could and did often refuse to attend Chapel - and were also often disorderly and disobedient to the rules, and frequent escapes were attempted. The women prisoners seem to have particularly turbulent, causing disproportionate instances of insubordination.

Not all the prisoners by any means were amenable to religious instruction and observation even in the most extreme of circumstances – on 11 August 1838, Samuel Clarke refused to take the last sacrament from the Reverend Hughes, and died the next day.

Over Christmas and New Year 1840, Thomas Michelson expressed a 'determination to absent himself from Chapel', earning himself an expostulation from the Reverend Emly for his 'ignorance, bigotry and obstinacy' and a period in

the lock up for so breaching prison rules. He continued to resist despite Reverend Emly's continued expostulation; until suddenly he changed his mind and expressed 'his willingness to attend Chapel in future' (although the Chairman added a note in the journal objecting to the amount of time spent by Reverend Emly upon this black sheep).

There are sudden deaths ('Richard Burton a prisoner was found this morning a corpse in his cell about 5 o'clock' - 19 July 1839), misbehaviour, and more refusals to attend Chapel. On 30 Nov 1831 Thomas Hobin 'began his tricks again' and had to be removed from the service, and was later convinced of his folly and wickedness in counterfeiting either bodily or mental infirmity '(from which competent judges declared him to be free).'

There are many poignant examples of lonely lives gone wrong. On 2 July 1841 Reverend Emly recorded a conversation he had with Ellen Koint whose term of imprisonment was due to expire the following day and who wished to go to London. The Reverend wrote that he could not conceive how she could get to London in her weak state and without money, as her walking there was 'out of the question'.

Thomas Winterbottom died on 21 March 1841, his death meriting an inquest, but none of his relations attended his funeral even though Reverend Emly had informed them as to the place and time of burial. In New Year 1842, there were concerns about James Taylor 'a friendless boy' who had been imprisoned for running away from the Bourne Union – his release was delayed, presumably pending some arrangements for his future care. In August 1842 J Bitton was locked up for destroying books, but was 'quite indifferent' to imprisonment and ordinary punishments. In October 1843, Reverend Emly had to request to Matron that Elizabeth Brown be barred from Chapel her 'habits being intolerably filthy.'

In November 1843 services were disrupted for some time when the Chapel roof was 'taken off', whether for building work, or because of some kind of gale, is not recorded. 1844-5 continued with the usual round of vandalism to books and furnishings, breaches of prison rules, misconduct, attempts to barter food and clothes, further escape attempts and recalcitrant female prisoners causing trouble for Matron. On 9 Jan 1846 Emly decided to 'reprove severely and at unusual

length' a couple convicted for keeping a disorderly house, and the same month 'interrogated' two young men charged with highway robbery

Escapes

There were also regular escape attempts and plots. These ranged from 'a prisoner locked up for making an attempt to escape from his cell last night' (31 Jan 1843), to group efforts, 'Visited four men locked up for assaulting one of the turnkeys and attempting to make their escape from Prison yesterday' (29 Aug 1843). Occasionally they were successful. 'On my arrival it was announced to me that a prisoner had effected his escape yesterday about noon during the absence of the Governor at the Sessions' (8 April 1845).

Sometimes they were determined and more violent. 'admonished several prisoners on the subject of a violent assault committed yesterday on one of the turnkeys during the dining hour, as is supposed, with the intent of effecting their escape'. (12 May 1846). In August of the same year there was yet a further escape attempt by three prisoners who after attacking the turnkey, 'possessed themselves of his keys', then made their escape as far as the outer gate, where they were foiled and 'baffled' by the 'persons from the town' who had heard the alarm. (23 Aug 1846)

During this period Emly's entries grow more detailed (perhaps as a result he now refers to prisoners just by their initials). To the end of the journal in mid 1847 there is a succession of entries for prisoners awaiting transportation, vagrants, felons, poachers and deserters. If a Catholic prisoner was dangerously unwell, a Catholic priest would be called from Insham. A young man was imprisoned for 12 months for want of sureties to keep the peace towards his father, having been in gaol about two years previously for the same offence. SW is reproved and locked up for conversing with a male prisoner. A woman is scarcely recovered from 'the beastly state of intoxication, in which I am told, she arrived'. HC is discharged after being convicted (of poaching) on a mistaken identity. There is a boy 'who for some time has been leading the life of a tramp' (27 Nov 1846). On 13 Aug 1846 JB, a young man's 'alarming symptoms' make it necessary to remove him from the (Tread)Mill to the Infirmary'. By the 23rd he is well enough to attend services at Chapel.

Complaints into food are investigated ('I found he had several rations of excellent bread untouched in his cell.') In Sept 1845 some of the prisoners suspect believe themselves the victims of a crime when their bread goes missing – they suspect the sweeper. The Surgeon too is often called upon.

There are times when Reverend Emly is heartened or impressed by the prisoners, like that of MH, a catholic Irishman, who was 'good, orderly and always willingly attended the services of the Chapel and conducted himself there becomingly'. Or SB 'in solitary confinement....I explained a portion of the Catechism to her the whole of which she can now repeat. She appears to have taken some pains to learn it perfectly to be in a frame of mind favourable to reformation.' (27 Sept 1846). Then there was JR, 'who is to leave the Gaol tomorrow. Advised her as to her future conduct and was pleased to find that one of the first steps she intends to take is to deliver up some stolen property to the owner' (12 Oct 1845).

The Governor of the prison was frequently absent, sometimes to London (escorting prisoners awaiting transportation to Pentonville and Millbank Penitentary and thence to the transportation hulks). Sometimes Matron (who was his wife) accompanied him, and trouble often brewed in their absence.

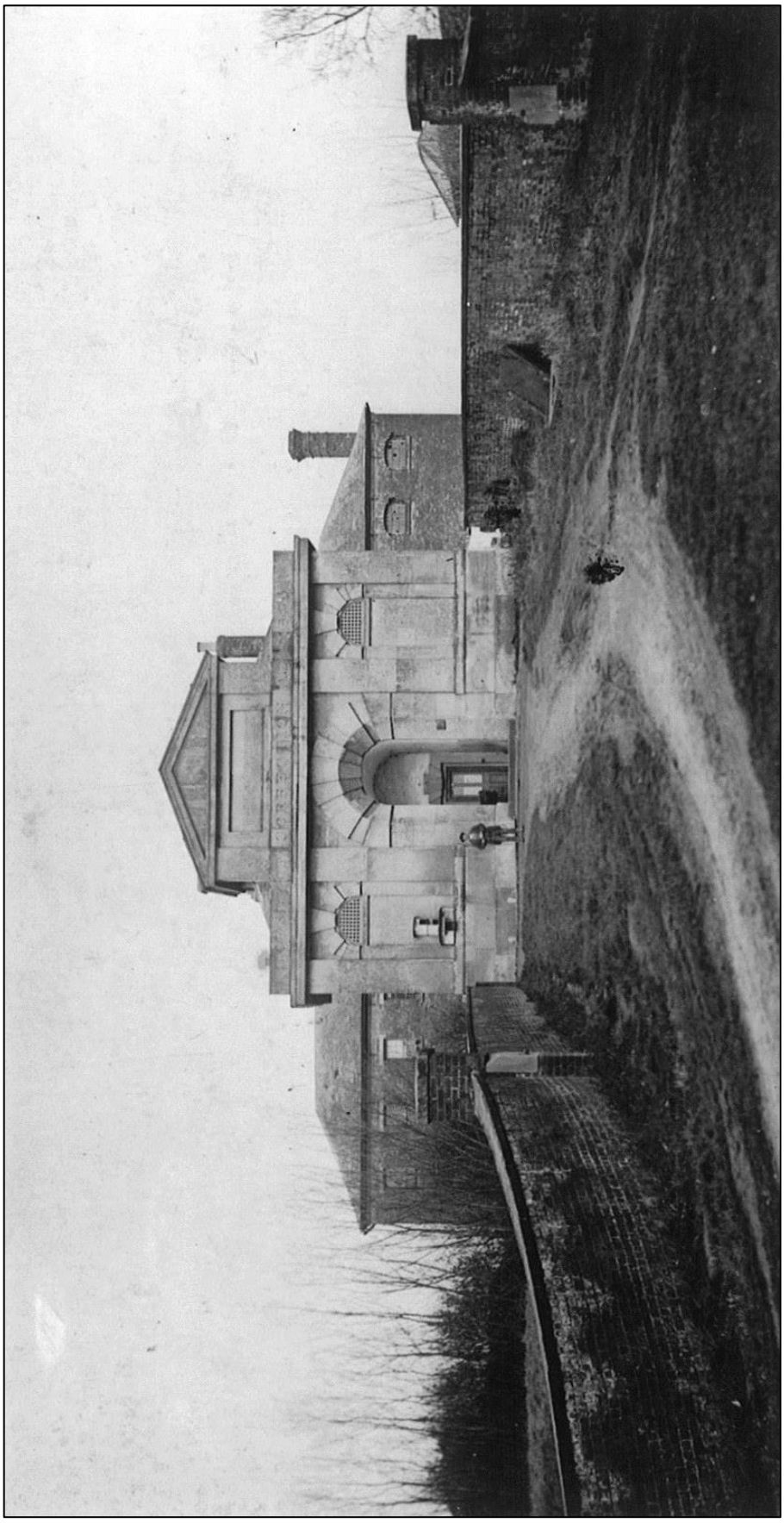
The Chaplain's journal also makes it clear that there were people in the House of Correction who are 'aged' and other unhappy souls who were mentally ill or whose circumstances had generated a sense of despair. The Chaplain was often required to take on the role of counsellor, although it is hard to tell how sympathetically, John Richardson was 'expostulated' to for attempting to take his own life (2 Feb 1841). In June 1845 Reverend Emly remonstrated with a girl who had threatened to poison herself if compelled to return to her place. He had 'a long conversation with Sarah Jackson, who 'appears for some time to have given way to desponding thoughts (13 Oct 1844). There was John Muxloe , who displayed 'imbecility of mind at times amounting to an aberration and incoherency': Thomas Davies ('said by the Surgeon to be insane') : and 'the poor woman disturbed in mind...I think her probably not quite sane' and a vagrant, who he deferred visiting 'until he has been cleansed from the filthy state in which he came into gaol' and whose language is 'incoherent and unintelligible – there can be no doubt as to his insanity.'

Sometimes women gave birth in the prison – on 14 May 1842 'churched a woman in the Chapel who has been confined in the prison': on another occasion a child whose mother feared would not live, was baptised in the chapel.

Attempts were also made to improve the prisoners' skills and minds. The chaplain in 1829, the Reverend Charles Hodgeson, wrote in a Report that he had been attempting to give prisoners instruction in reading, but he could 'only mention two individuals as having made much proficiency, the others having shown themselves but little interested and he had not persevered'. Apparently repeating an earlier unsuccessful application, he requested lamps in the day-rooms for prisoners 'during the dark evenings of winter, that the prisoners may have some opportunity for reading, which, under present circumstances, during this season of the year, they do not enjoy' He reassured the Justices that they need not fear that his concern arises from a desire to see them with additional comforts, but from a wish to improve their principles. However he could resist adding that punishment has generally a 'tendency to harden [the prisoners], whereas if in a few instances Christian principles can be implanted, a real benefit can be produced' He felt that the reading of the scriptures is important, and that he would not trouble the Bench again on this subject had he not known that in other Prisons, the light of lamps is allowed for two or three hours each evening for this purpose.

Some Folkingham Governors and Turnkeys

John White was governor until 23 July 1834, when the Chaplain's Journal records his death at the House of Correction – he appears to have died at his post. On November 1 of the same year, Matthew Edis Maille took up his duties he must have been considered to have been a young man of some ability for such a senior post, being only 28 when appointed. In 1822 an advertisement for a Governor for Folkingham appeared in the Stamford Mercury (possibly this is when John White was appointed) – this specified that he must be a member of the Church of England, and at least 25 years of age, and 'a good accomptant'. The salary was £80 per year, with an allowance for coals, candles and soap for washing, but no fees, perquisites or other emoluments sic.

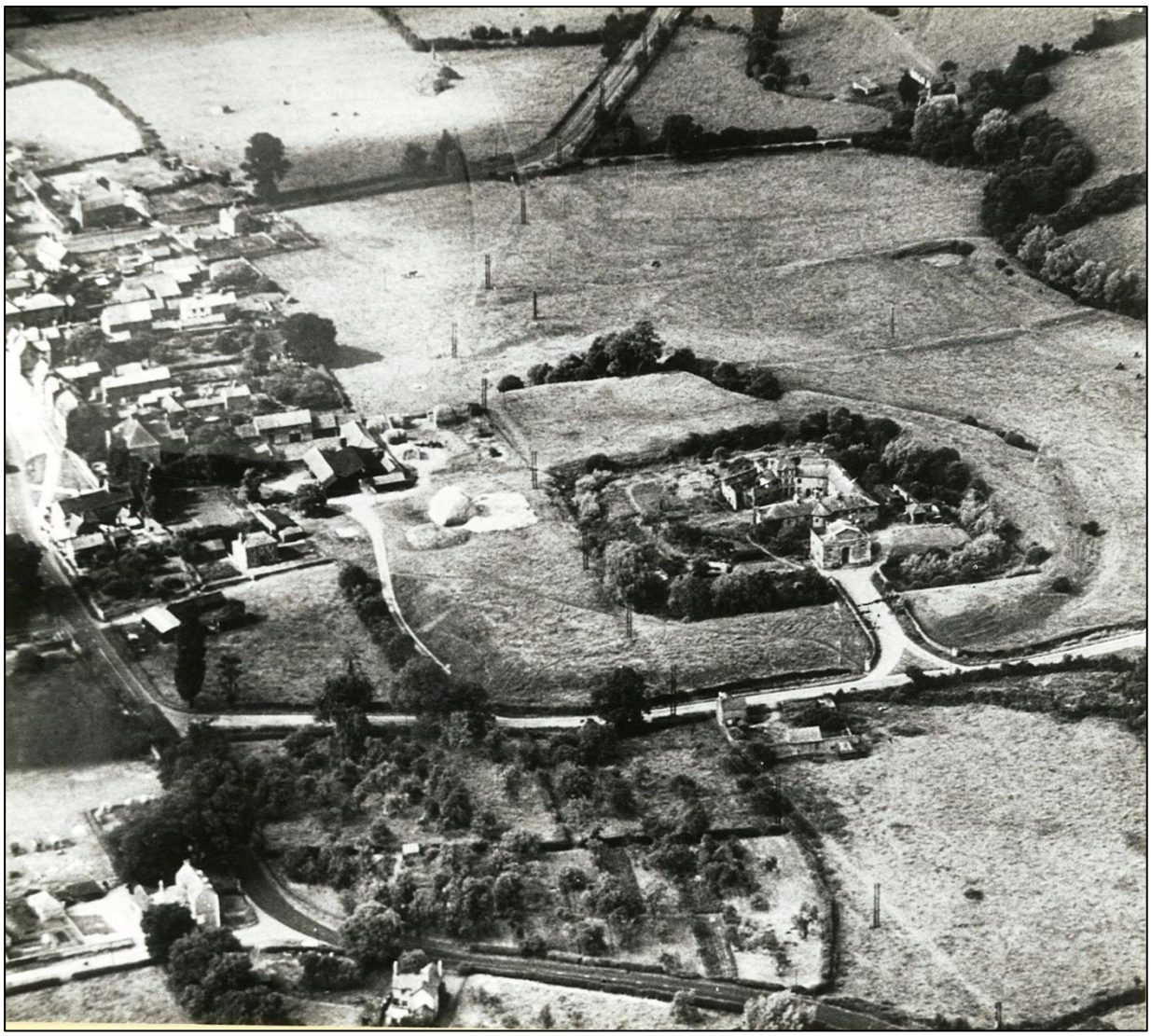


A 19th-century photograph of the House of Correction.

Matthew Maile had been born in Huntingdon on 14 July 1806. Another Edmund Maile, probably Matthew's brother, appears in the 1841 census as 'sheriff's officer', suggesting a possible law enforcement background in the family. Matthew married Sarah Johnson in Cambridge in 1827, and the couple do not appear to have had any children. Sarah served as Matron at the House of Correction. The Mailes remained at Folkingham for many years, but had retired by 1871, leaving Folkingham and returning to Huntingdon, where Matthew appears as a 'retired gaoler' resident in the High Street with Sarah, and in 1877 the couple celebrated their Golden Wedding – an event significant enough to warrant a piece in the Stamford Mercury (10 Aug 1877), when 'the new bells in St Mary's church rang out merry peals during the day in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the wedding day of Mr M E Maile and his wife, who were for thirty-two years the governor and Matron of the Folkingham house of correction' The article added that he was a church warden of St Mary's, and that 'at morning service Mr and Mrs Maile publicly returned their humble and hearty thanks to Almighty God for fifty years of united happiness and uninterrupted welfare' – which may have been a conventional form of words, but does suggest that their life at Folkingham had not been unhappy.

James Higgins and his wife, Emma, who succeeded the Mailes as governor and matron, were also from Huntingdonshire. James Higgins had been born in Godmanchester in 1824 and appears in 1851 as Second Turnkey in Huntingdon Gaol. By 1861 he was Governor of Peterborough Gaol. After Folkingham closed, he went on to be governor of HM Prison Spalding, and had retired to Dogsthorpe near Peterborough by 1891. The Higgins' had (at least) two children, daughters, Emily and Alice, who appear on the census resident in the prison with them, aged 22 and 7 respectively.

The Parliamentary Gazetteer of England and Wales 1840-44 includes this vignette of relationship between prisoner and governor: 'A man, whose Father was head Turnkey at the (Folkingham) Gaol told me the following incident…of an old poacher named Wal Handford who passed twenty one xmas days in Folkingham Gaol. One 25 December, when he was not confined there, he sent the Governor a hare.' The 1822 advertisement for a governor mentioned above also advertised for a turnkey. He too had to be a member of the Church of England, unmarried and be prepared live in the gaol. He was given a salary of £35 a year, with allowance for coals, candles and soap.



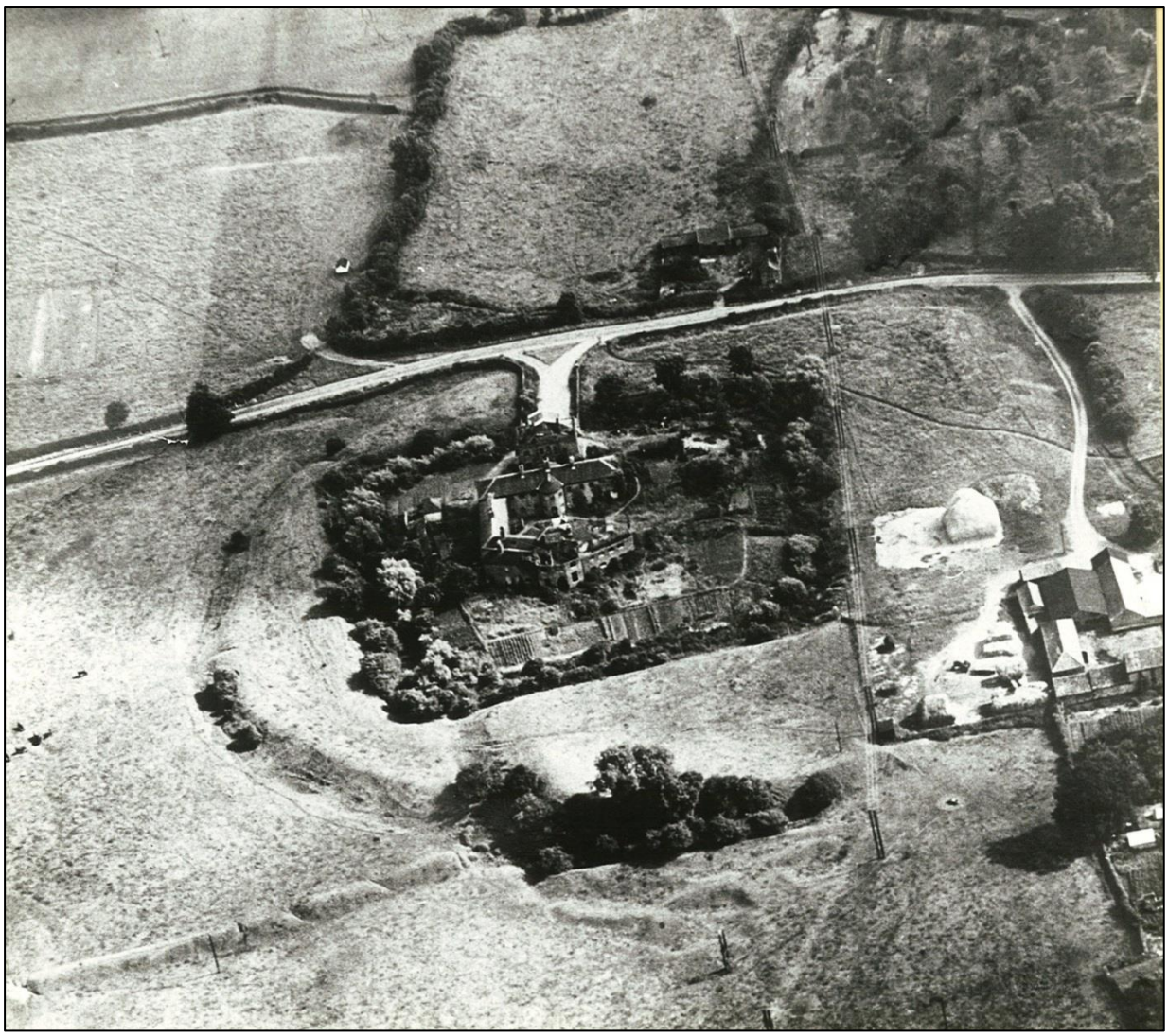
Aerial view from the 1940s, with the former prison buildings visible behind the gatehouse

In 1841 there were two turnkeys at the House of Correction; in 1851 (despite the expanded prisoner numbers) still only two, one of whom was the Maile's nephew. In 1861 there were three, and by 1871 two again (now termed warders – a chief warder and an assistant warder). The marriage prohibition seems to have been enforced as on 5 June 1840 the Stamford Mercury recorded the marriage of Mr Henry Tooms, 'late turnkey of Folkingham House of Correction,' to Miss Mary Reedman. By 1871, it had been relaxed as the assistant warder, William Baxter's, wife Annie, was living with him and employed as Assistant Matron. In any case turnkey would have been a job for a young and necessarily fit man – it had its obvious dangers as the attacks recorded in the Chaplain's Journal showed: the turnkeys, as custodians of the keys, were a target for any would-be escapee.

And, as the promotion of James Higgins shows, it was possible for an aspiring turnkey to become governor.

The gatehouse was converted into an elegant dwelling-house in the 1930s

The 1930s brick addition still with the prison buildings behind



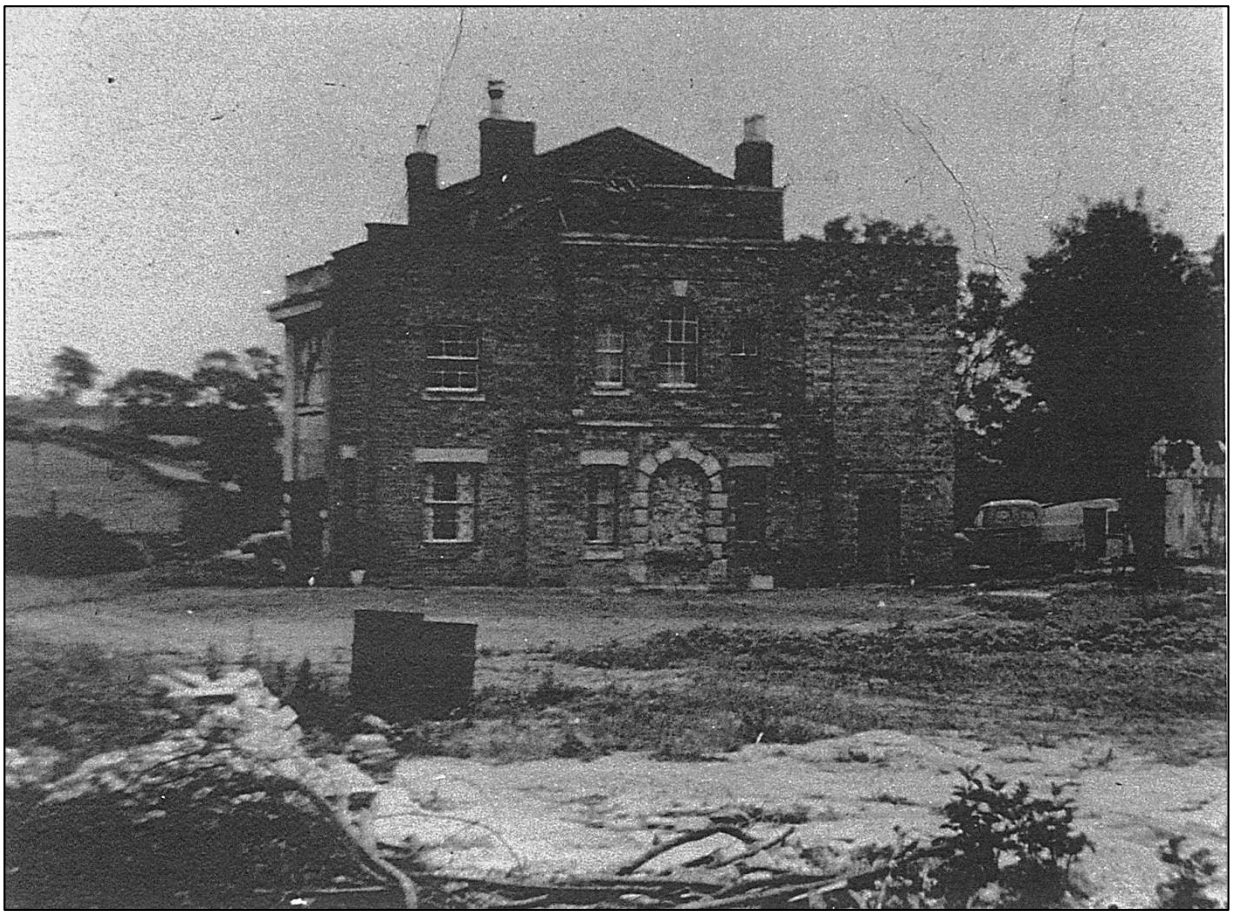
Aerial view from the 1940s

Restoration by the Landmark Trust

When the Landmark Trust took on the House of Correction it had been lived in as a house for fifty years, with a brick addition at the back which doubled its size. The addition was Georgian in character and not unattractive, but Landmark and its architect Philip Jebb felt that it was too much of an anti-climax when compared with the front. The proposal therefore was to take down the addition in order to restore the gatehouse to its original form.

Some sort of addition was still desirable, however, to link the two sides of the gatehouse. Examination of early plans of the building and a description of it in 1825 provided the answer, together with evidence found in the rear wall. It was clear that when the new gatehouse was built, it backed on to the existing prison wall and the Turnkey's lodge, which had one room on each side of the entrance, with a water cistern above. Landmark's new addition followed the same plan and comes as close to the original as is feasible in the absence of photographic or other visual evidence. Most importantly, it respects Bryan Browning's design whereby the rear pediment rises up over the plain brick and stone coping of the wall, as reinstated along the back.

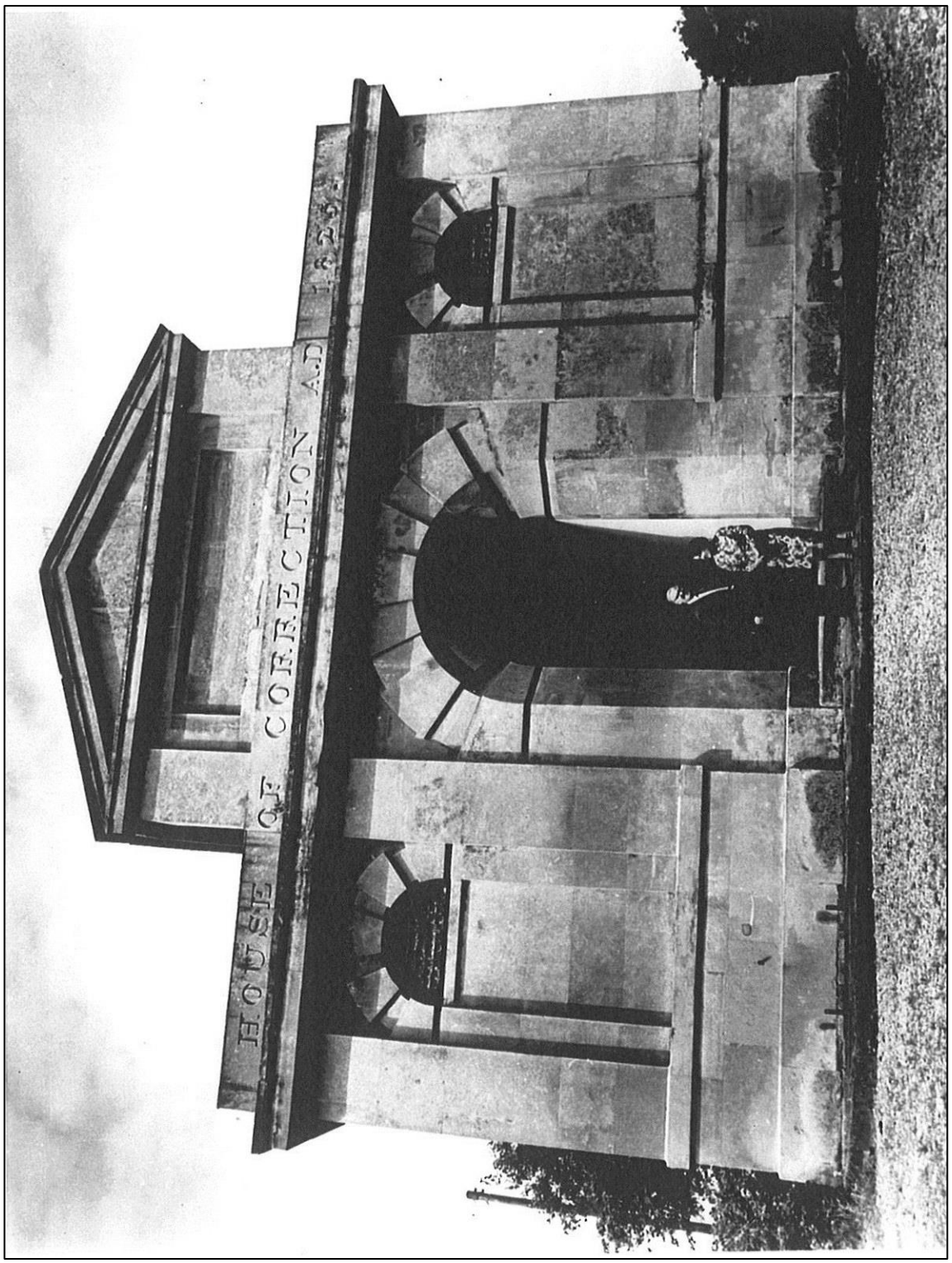
Bricks from the demolished addition were used to form the new back wall and the stones forming the arch of the back door were also taken from the addition, as they had no doubt been taken from one of the former prison buildings in the 1930s – perhaps even the Turnkey's lodge itself. In addition to this, the roof was repaired and new windows and doors provided. On the side elevations, outer doors were fitted to the ground floor windows to recall the original use of the rooms inside as the Governor's stable and coach house.



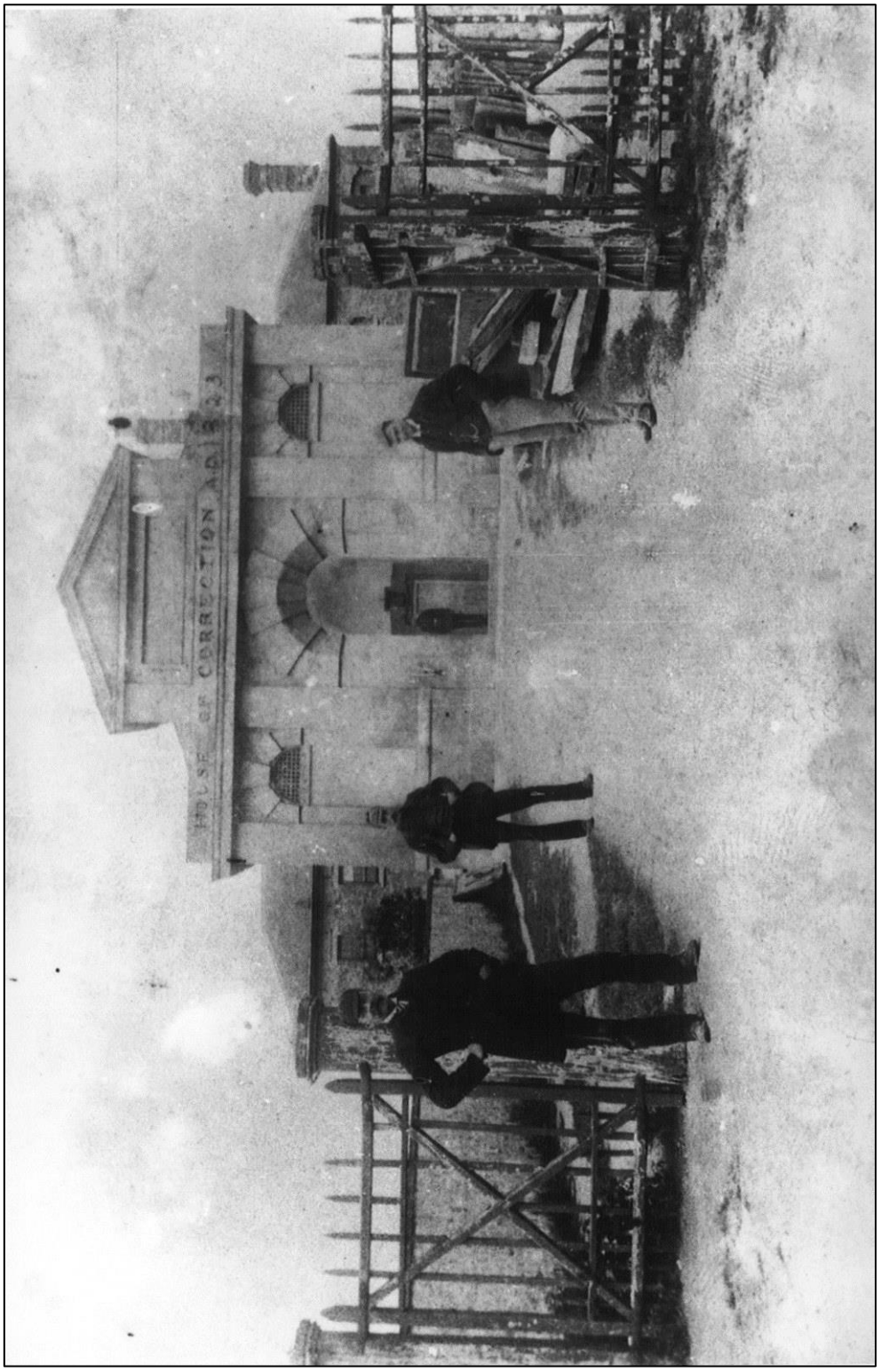
This was taken in the 1950s after the demolition of the prison buildings but before new windows were added to the wing on the right

Some rearrangement was needed inside to make the new accommodation work. The demolition of the 1930s addition took with it the only stair linking the ground and first floors. Two new stairs were built, therefore, one running all the way from the new kitchen to the top room via the new bathroom, the other from the sitting room to the bedroom above it. The floor levels were changed too, making the ceilings of the ground floor rooms slightly lower and those on the first floor higher. Over the arch the floor was raised a little to give a better view out of the window. In the sitting room an existing fireplace was opened up.

The restoration was completed in 1986. It was, however, a long-held wish of Sir John Smith to rebuild the first lengths of the prison wall on either side of the gatehouse, to put it back in its proper frame. This formed a separate phase of work, which was carried out in 1991. New gates and fences, based on a photograph of the old ones, were put up at the same time. Both this and the main restoration were carried out to a very high standard by E Bowman and Sons of Stamford.



Sir Arthur Petersen, a retired head of the Home Office, with LDY Petersen, from whom the Landmark \trust bought the House of Correction in 1982



The new gates were based on those in this photograph

The House of Correction during repair and conversion, the 1930s extensions now removed