

Memorandum Re: Women and Girls Who Come before the Central Criminal Court on Serious Charges – And Other Relevant Matters

E.M. Carroll*

Summary: In this paper, a memorandum written in July 1941, the author provides her own analysis of female offending, particularly infanticide, at the time and how it was addressed in the criminal justice system in Ireland. The author examines issues in social attitudes as well as the treatment, aftercare and resettlement of female offenders. She makes proposals for changes in approach, probation supervision and more effective interventions in the interests of the young female offenders and the community in general.

Keywords: Ireland, female offenders, offending, infanticide, sentencing, imprisonment, detention, Borstal, aftercare, Industrial Schools, Magdalen Asylum, institutions, treatment, education, training, probation supervision.

Background and introduction

This paper is a memorandum submitted by Evelyn (Leila) Carroll, Probation Officer to the Department of Justice in July 1941. It was found in the archives of the Department of Justice and Equality and is published here with the permission of the department. There is no record of a response to the memorandum.

Evelyn Carroll was born in Kiltelly, Co. Limerick in 1897. In a career that included poultry keeping, managing a boarding house, working as a journalist and sub-editor at the (Catholic) Standard in Dublin and studying Social Service in Holland during 1935, Evelyn Carroll was appointed as a female Probation Officer in the Dublin Metropolitan Area following one of the first

* Evelyn Carroll was a Probation Officer in the Dublin Metropolitan Courts and the Adoption Board between 1938 and 1969.