

Regulations of the Probationary Establishment for Female Convicts in Van Diemen's Land.
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[GO33-1-52P0762](#)

REGULATIONS
OF THE
PROBATIONARY ESTABLISHMENT
FOR
FEMALE CONVICTS
IN
VAN DIEMEN'S LAND
HOBART TOWN
PRINTED BY WILLIAM PRATT, 67 ELIZABETH STREET

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VAN DIEMEN'S LAND

July 1st, 1845

The following Regulations of the Probationary Establishment for Female Convicts in Van Diemen's Land, have been approved by His Excellency the LIEUTENANT-GOVENOR, and are to be strictly carried out by all persons employed in this branch of the Convict Department.

M. FORSTER,
COMPTROLLER- GENERAL

1. —ALL Female Convicts arriving in Van Diemen's Land will be placed under probationary restriction and discipline for at least six months previously to becoming Pass-holders.
2. —In this first Stage of probation the attainment of two objects is contemplated, "punishment and reformation." The first will be secured by the due application of coercive labour and restrictive discipline—the second, it is hoped, will be attained by means of religious and moral influences, and by the careful inculcation of industry and regularity.
3. —The systematic employment of such means instruments of reformation, it is expected, will prepare the women for a gradual restoration to freedom with benefit to themselves and advantage to society; but they must understand that, until they have afforded satisfactory evidence of amendment and improvement, they will not be permitted to emerge from this Stage of probation into that of Pass-holders, in which they will have an opportunity of obtaining wages in private service.
4. —The entire management of the Establishment will be guided in accordance with these principles, and it will be impressed upon the women that the coercive and restrictive discipline they are undergoing, is the consequence of the misconduct; but that at the same time, the lasting benefit is the object in view.
5. —Discipline will be most effectually enforced by calmness and firmness on the part of the various Officers of the Establishment. Reproachful and harsh language can never be attended with advantage, and must be carefully avoided. [Kindly] treatment and mild language are perfectly compatible with strict and systematic discipline.
6. —One uniform system of discipline and treatment must prevail. Women of humble [attainments] and capacity are not on that account to be more rigorously dealt with than those [of] superior acquirements; but women of a [restless] disposition will be placed at

such description [to] work as requires the closest and most unvarying attention, and be kept under the separate system, whenever such can be enforced.

7. —No female convict whilst under probationary restriction will be entrusted with power or authority over the others, nor be employed in any permanent situation of ease or trust on account of her ability and usefulness, or from motives of expediency.

8. —This regulation will not prevent the employment of women as hereafter pointed out in the performance of the daily duties of the establishment, or as servants to such officers of the Establishment as are allowed attendance.

9. —All articles of indulgence such as tea, tobacco, &c., are strictly prohibited. Nothing in addition to the rations and clothing supplied by the Government, which are ample, will be allowed.

CLASSIFICATION.

10. —The discipline of the Establishment—the efficacy of the system—and the present as well as the future comfort of the women, depend much upon proper classification. To this object, therefore, the utmost attention must be given to the Superintendent and Matron, who in their arrangement into classes of the women when first received into the Establishment, will be greatly [aided] by the reports made by the Surgeon-superintendent, as to the general character and conduct of each woman whilst under his charge.

11. —There will be three classes— the first will be composed of the best conducted women who have been longest in the Establishment, and who are therefore nearest to emergence; the second of those, who, although generally well conducted, [but] not so regular as the women of the first class, and have not been so long in the Establishment; and the third will consist of the disobedient and intractable. The Superintendent is hereby ordered to follow this plan, and not on any account to classify by ships' companies.

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12. —Each class will be divided into messes of ten. The women of the 1st and 2nd classes will be allowed to select their own mess associates. One woman of each of the messes will have charge of its details and will be responsible for them to the Warden in charge of the class.

EMPLOYMENT.

13. —As a general rule, the women will perform every description of work for themselves and for the advantage of the Establishment which they can accomplish. They are to be kept in constant employment, and at such work as may be from time to time provided. In its performance the Officers under whose superintendence the women immediately are, will see that they are industrious and pains-taking, and that no intermission of work is allowed during the hours allotted for that purpose.

14. —The women employed in the daily duties of the Establishment, such as cleaning, washing, scrubbing, &c., which can be performed by the women generally, will be changed weekly. Bakers, cooks, hospital attendances, store assistants, and servants will be selected from such women as have been classed as Pass-holders. In the event of Pass holders not being found for such employment, women who have finished two-thirds of their term of probation in the Establishment, with uninterrupted good conduct, and who are in the 1st class, may be employed.

15. —Servants will not be allowed gratuitously to the Superintendent, Matron, Religious Instructor, or Medical Officer. A charge of 6*d.* a day will be made for such of the women as they employ as servants. The other Officers will be allowed attendance, selected as already directed, in the proportion of one female servant for every two Officers.

16. —The Officers, however, will respectively be allowed washing according to the scale appended; the same being performed by the women employed in that duty. They will also be allowed to employ women at the rate of 1*s.* a-day for each woman so employed.

17. —Beyond this, the women are not to be employed in any manner whatever, for the profit or advantage of any Officer of the Establishment, nor of any other individual. The entire proceeds of their labour will be for the advantage of the Convict Service alone; and all moneys received for work done for private individuals, according to the scale annexed, will be paid monthly by the Superintendent to the Assistant-Comptroller.

18. —The afternoon of Saturday will be devoted to a careful inspection of the clothing of the women and of the messing utensils and other articles of bedding and furniture—The women will besides repair their clothing, and otherwise prepare for Sunday, so that it may be kept holy and as a day of rest.

19. —All women who cannot read and write with [tolerable] ease and accuracy, will attend the schools, as will such others as may desire to do so. A cheerful obedience to the school regulations will be required, and great care will be taken that the ignorant are never so employed as to prevent their receiving daily school instruction.

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20. —The women will go to bed at 9 o'clock in summer, and 8 o'clock in winter, getting up throughout the year at sunrise.

SUPERINTENDENT AND MATRON.

21. —The position of the Superintendent and of the Matron of the probationary Establishment for females is one of very great responsibility and trust. The beneficial effects of probation depend chiefly on their judicious and careful management. Their whole time and attention therefore should be devoted to the duties of their respective situations. The introduction and maintenance among the women, and generally throughout the Establishment, of habits of industry cleanliness, order and obedience, require the zealous and unceasing care. In the performance of their duties they have the aid of able Assistants, who must cheerfully obey and zealously co-operate with them.

22. —The Superintendent will receive his instructions through the Comptroller-General. These are to be fully and fairly carried into effect, and no departure from them will be allowed.

23. —The Superintendent and Matron must not be absent from the Establishment during the night and should avoid being absent together during the day. In the event, however, of necessity requiring them to be so by day, their absence must not exceed three hours.

24. —The Superintendent will prevent any communication with the women by unauthorised persons. He will also prevent letters or parcels being sent or received by the women through any other medium than himself or the Matron.

25. —In any unavoidable absence of the resident Religious Instructor, the Superintendent or the Matron will read morning and evening prayers; but no Minister or Layman, excepting the authorised Religious Instructors, will be permitted to officiate, or to afford instruction without special authority.

26. —The Superintendent and Matron will visit the school daily, and afford every assistance to the Religious Instructors in conducting them. They will also conjointly make minute monthly reports of the conduct and disposition of each of the women according to the form annexed. To this point great attention is required to be paid.

27. —Any misconduct on the part of the Officers of the Establishment, which the Superintendent cannot himself properly settle, will be reported by him to the Comptroller-General, for the Lieutenant-Governor's information.

28. —All orders given by the Superintendent on [points] of discipline and management, are to be entered in his daily order book; and all matters of importance connected with the health, discipline, and employment of the women in his Journal. In the Journal of misconduct also, are to be entered [fully], all instances of minor misconduct which he or the Matron may themselves, deal with; but the Superintendent will be careful not to inflict any punishments illegally. These books will be laid before the Visiting Magistrate whenever he visits the Establishment, and an extract from them, and from the Magistrate's Visiting Book will be forwarded by the Superintendent to the Comptroller-General on the last day of each month.

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29. —The Superintendent will specially request the attention of the Religious Instructors and Medical Officer to the case of any woman whose condition, mental or bodily, requires particular attention; and, where the treatment or discipline in any case is found by these Offices to be attended with injurious effects, it may be modified, a report being immediately made to the Comptroller-General and Principal Medical Officer.

30. —The Superintendent or Matron will visit once at least, every twenty-four hours, every ward division, separate apartment, and cell in the Establishment, and enter such visit in their respective journals. The Superintendent will satisfy himself daily, that the provisions furnished for the use of the women are good in quality and correct in quantity, immediately reporting any deficiency in either to the Commissariat.

31. —The Superintendent and Matron will frequently [both] visit the women whilst at their [meals] and see that the provisions are of the full allowance, wholesome and well-cooked.

32. —The Superintendent will ascertain that [the] several branches of the Establishment are securely locked up at nine o'clock at night in summer and at eight in winter, and the keys deposited with him; and these are to remain in his possession till sunrise the following morning.

33. —During the night, in cases of emergency, ingress to the women's wards is to be allowed to the Medical Officer, or Religious Instructors, but on such occasions, the Matron, or one of her Assistants, is to be present. These visits, and the circumstances rendering them necessary, will be recorded in the Superintendent's Journal Book.

34. —The illness of any of the women is to be immediately notified by the Superintendent to the Medical Officer, by whom, daily lists of the sick will be furnished. The

Superintendent's daily lists of women under separate treatment, or in solitary confinement, will be furnished by the Superintendent to the Medical Officer, as well as the Religious Instructors. In the event of the dangerous illness, or death of any woman, the Superintendent will make an immediate report to the Principal Medical Officer and Comptroller-General, and if the death be sudden, to the Coroner of the district.

35. —The Superintendent will read and explain weekly to the women under his charge, those parts of the regulations which immediately [affect] their condition. He will also have the [orders] suspended, printed in legible characters, [for] each of the divisions and wards of the Establishment. Lists of Pass-holders, and their respective classes will also be suspended for the [information] of the Public.

36. —All articles of provisions, stores, bedding, [?&c] are under the general charge of the Superintendent, and he is responsible for the same. The immediate care of the stores will rest however with one of the Officers, to be named by the Superintendent.

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37. —The Superintendent will afford every facility to the Officers of the Commissariat and Ordnance Departments when their duties lead them to visit the Establishment.

ASSISTANTS, TEACHERS, WARDERS, AND OTHER OFFICERS

38. —The Assistants, Teachers, Warders, and other Officers will strictly conform to the rules of the Establishment —obey the directions of the Superintendent and Matron, and zealously assist them in maintaining order and discipline. They are not to be absent without leave from the Superintendent, and then only during the day, and never for more than four hours.

39. —The general and special duties of each Assistant and other Officer will be determined by the Superintendent, and will be entered in a book to be kept by each Officer for that purpose.

40. —Written reports will be made by the Assistants and Warders daily in a report book— which they are all to be provided—on such [subjects] as may be necessary to be brought [upon] the notice of the Superintendent, more particularly as regards the conduct of the women immediately under their charge. In cases of emergency verbal reports will be made, but these [must] afterwards be recorded.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

41. —Divine service will be performed by the respective Religious Instructors in the morning and afternoon of every Sunday, Christmas-day, and Good Friday, at such hours as may be determined on by the Superintendent. Prayers are also to be read daily in the morning and evening by the resident Religious Instructor.

42. —The Religious Instructors will have the general superintendence and interior management of the daily and Sunday schools, in which they will be aided by the School Assistants.

43. —The Religious Instructors are to make themselves acquainted with the women of their respective flocks individually, in order that they may be enabled to judge of the nature of the instruction each may require; and with the same end in view, they will keep a record

book of the age, occupation, condition, education, character and conduct of the women, and of such other particulars as they may find useful towards the discharge of their duties.

44. —The fundamental parts of the education alone are to be taught; and, as the probation of the women may be for so short a period as six months, it should be a main object to teach those to read who cannot already do so. All such women must receive instruction regularly in school.

45. —The women in hospital, in separate apartments, and in cells, are to be visited, and instructed daily by their respective Religious Instructors, who will enter their visits in their journals of duties performed.

[GO33-1-52P0774-75](#)

46. —In the performance of these duties much is of necessity left to the discretion of the Religious Instructors, on whose zeal and prudence every reliance is placed.

47. —The respective Religious Instructors will issue books on religion to the women under their care. The management of the General Library will rest with the Resident Religious Instructor, and the books composing it be under his care.

MEDICAL OFFICER.

48. —The particular duties of the Medical Officer have already been laid down by the Principal Medical Officer; but it may be added that he is to visit the women in separate or solitary confinement daily, and twice a-week to inspect every part of the Establishment, reporting upon every circumstance which may be necessary as to clothing, diet, warmth, ventilation, &c., on which the health either of mind or body may depend, and which may require, in his opinion, revision or alteration.

49. —When necessary, he may direct an increase of clothing and diet, as also of the time allowed, morning and evening, for exercise in the open air, to women who are in separate or solitary confinement; but on every such occasion he will immediately report the circumstance to the Principal Medical Officer.

50. —Once a month at least, in presence of the Matron, the Medical Officer will examine into the health of the women, on the strength of the Establishment.

51. —On every point of duty he will make a record in his medical journal for future reference, if necessary.

52. —In all cases of death a special medical report will be required.

VISITING MAGISTRATE.

53. —The probationary Establishment will be visited by this Magistrate at least twice in each week.

54. —He will investigate all charges brought against the women, and award punishment, as sanctioned by law. In the discharge of this duty care will be taken to regulate the description and amount of punishment by the temper, disposition, and understanding of the offender. The description of punishment, which to one would be trifling, to another would be severe. Want of attention in inflicting punishment on this principle frequently renders it unequal and unjust.

55. —A distinction is also to be drawn between offences: some in their nature are criminal, whilst others are mere breaches of discipline or of regulation; and it is not too much to expect that, under a strict system of personal superintendence on the part of the Officers, offences will not be frequent, and severe punishment seldom required.

56. —Advice, admonition, and kindness, will in most cases be found effectual; but if these fail, and it should be found necessary to resort to punishment, extension of the allotted period of probation—or separate or solitary confinement—will, it is hoped, in most cases, be found sufficient.

[GO33-1-52P0776-77](#)

57. — It will however at all times be the Magistrate's duty to explain the grounds of sentence patiently and calmly, and with clearness, and to point out the folly of persevering in a course of conduct, the inevitable consequence of which must be, to delay the period of the offender's emergence from probation, even—if rendered necessary by her own misconduct—to the termination of her sentence of transportation.

58. —The Magistrate, accompanied by the Superintendent, or Matron, will occasionally inspect the various wards, hospital, separate apartments, solitary cells, the school, the messes, and the rations. He will likewise examine into the general management, and take care to ascertain that no illegal punishments occur. A correct record of his trials of offenders will be kept, and a proper return of all the proceedings in each case, authenticated by himself, will be made to the Comptroller-General weekly.

59. —He will record his visits in the Magistrate's visiting book, with his remarks upon any irregularities which may come under his notice or within his knowledge. He will also record and report all deficiencies, and every circumstance necessary to be brought under the Lieutenant-Governor's notice.

60. —The Visiting Magistrate is authorized to require the perusal of all communications addressed by the Comptroller-General to the Superintendent.

61. —He will—accompanied by the Medical Officer—once a month at least, inspect every branch of the Establishment; he will see that cleanliness, due ventilation, and order are attended to, and that all the arrangements are complete.

62. —He will also with that Officer muster the women on these occasions, and record in the visiting book his opinion of their general appearance and health.

63. —With the interior and moral discipline and arrangements of the establishment the Visiting Magistrate will not interfere; but he will do everything in his power to uphold the authority of the Superintendent and Matron. His duties generally will be to see that all orders are fully carried into effect, especially as regards proper classification—that the women are properly worked and not employed except in accordance with regulation, and for the public benefit alone; that moral and religious instruction is duly and regularly imparted, that the schools are regularly attended; and that the women are advised and admonished by those under whose immediate charge they are. Information on each of these points will be included in his monthly report to the Comptroller-General.

64. —The Visiting Magistrate will at all times suggest to the Comptroller-General any alterations or improvements considered desirable in the Establishment.

FOOD, CLOTHING, BEDDING, WARDS, &c.

65. —The charge of issuing the rations will rest with an Officer specially appointed by the Superintendent for that purpose. No more than one day's supply of flour and meat will be issued on any one day. The officer to whom the duty of issuing rations is entrusted will see that the various articles of provisions are fairly and justly distributed; that they are good and wholesome, and of full weight, and according to the contract quality.

[GO33-1-52P0778-79](#)

66. —The various mess-rooms are to be regularly visited at meal-hours by Officers appointed by the Superintendent for that purpose.

67. —The duty of these Officers will be to see that the provisions are equally distributed to the several messes—that they are of the full allowance, wholesome, and well cooked, and that the conduct of the women at their meals is regular. On these points, as well as on any complaints made by the women as regards diet, daily reports will be made to the Superintendent. These reports must be so full as to enable the Superintendent to judge of the duty having been properly performed.

68. —The various wards, dormitories, and places of confinement must be frequently visited during the day by the chief Assistant, who will be particularly careful that proper ventilation is attended to, and that there is no damp.

69. —This Officer will also inspect the bedding at least once a week; and whenever the weather permits, have it hung out in the open air.

70. —The messing of the women and all mess utensils and furniture will be under this officer's general superintendence. The immediate charge will rest with the officers of the several wards.

STOREKEEPER.

71. —In the management and issue of clothing and stores the strictest economy must be exercised, and due care must be taken to have everything which admits of mending properly repaired. All articles will bear the mark of the Establishment and be numbered from No. 1 onwards.

72. —Unserviceable stores, when condemned by the Superintendent and Visiting Magistrate, will be received into store and remain for survey and disposal by the Ordnance authorities.

73. —The Officer in charge of stores will be allowed the assistance of one or more of the women, waiting to be hired, when requisite; but the Superintendent will limit the number to what may be absolutely necessary.

MISCELLANEOUS.

74. —All communications to the Comptroller-General, from Officers of the Establishment, will be forwarded through the Visiting Magistrate, who will enquire into the points referred to, and will request the Superintendent to transmit the necessary information respecting them. In any case of urgency a statement may be made to the Comptroller-General direct.

75. —Visitors to the Offices of the Establishment must be furnished with an order of admission from the Lieutenant-Governor or the Comptroller-General. They will enter their names and address in a book to be kept for that purpose. They are not to go over the

Establishment unless accompanied by an Officer. Visits made to the Superintendent, Matron, or Religious Instructor, by their personal friends, are not included in the regulation rendering previous permission necessary; but the names and address of such visitors are to be recorded in the book referred to.

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76. —No female convict is to be allowed to leave the Establishment, unless under a contract for service, without the Lieutenant-Governor's sanction being previously obtained.

The following books will be kept by the several Officers respectively:-

SUPERINTENDENT.

Daily Order Book.
Prison Register – Names, Description, Offences, &c.
General Daily Account Book.
Provision Book—Receipt and Distribution.
Prisoners' Misconduct Book.
Visitors' Book.
Return of Work done Private and Public.

MATRON.

Journal.

CHAPLAIN.

Journal.

Character Book.

List of Library Books.

SURGEON.

Journal

Register of Prisoners' Health.

The DAILY RATION of all OFFICERS will be according to the following Scale:—

1¾ lb. of 12 per cent. Flour, or 2¹/₈ lb. of Bread.

¾ lb. of Fresh or Salt Meat, or 8 oz Salt Pork.

¾ lb. Vegetables.

½ oz. Salt.

1 of a pint of Yeast.

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The DAILY RATION for the WOMEN will be according to the following Scale:—

WOMEN ON PROBATION.

4-5ths lb. of 12 per cent. Flour, or 1 lb. of Bread.

½ lb. of Meat.

½ lb. Vegetables.

½ oz. Salt.

¼ pint Oatmeal.

WOMEN IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT.

1½ lb. of Bread.

½ oz Soap.

The CLOTHING for the Half-year, in addition to the Articles in possession of the Women on arrival, will not exceed—

1 Jacket.

1 Cap.

1 Petticoat.

1 Pair Stockings

1 Shift.

1 Apron.

1 Pair Shoes.

1 Handkerchief.

BEDDING.

1 Hammock. 1 Flock Mattrass.
 1 Flock Pillow. 1 Blanket.
 1 Rug.

SCALE of WASHING to be performed for the Officers of the Establishment:—

Superintendent and Matron .. 4 dozen.
 Religious Instructor (Resident) 3 dozen.
 Assistants 1 ½ dozen each.
 Warders 1 dozen each.

[The following Returns have been transcribed separately]

GO33-1-52P0782 NOMINAL RETURN of FEMALE CONVICTS at the Probationary Establishment—ANSON

GO33-1-52P0783 NUMERICAL RETURN of Females attending the School

GO33-1-52P0784

Present SCALE of CHARGES for NEEDLE-WORK, &c.

| ARTICLES | s. | d. | |
|---------------------|----|----|-----------------|
| Gentlemen's Shirts | 2 | 6 | Full Bosom. |
| Do. | 2 | 0 | Plain. |
| Night do. | 1 | 0 | |
| Boys' do | 1 | 6 | With collars. |
| Boys' Pinbefores | 1 | 6 | Holland. |
| Ladies' Garments | 1 | 6 | |
| Night ditto | 2 | 0 | Full trimmed. |
| ditto ditto | 1 | 6 | Plain. |
| Wrappers | 3 | 0 | For morning. |
| Petticoat | 1 | 6 | Plain. |
| Frock | 1 | 0 | For Infants. |
| Pinbefores | 0 | 9 | do. |
| Flannels | 0 | 9 | do. |
| Petticoats | 0 | 9 | do. |
| Shirts | 0 | 6 | do. |
| Caps | 1 | 6 | Ditto, trimmed. |
| Ditto | 0 | 6 | Ditto, plain. |
| Night Gowns | 0 | 9 | Ditto. |
| Sheets | 1 | 0 | per pair. |
| Gentlemen's Collars | 0 | 6 | each. |
| Bride's | 0 | 3 | |
| Capes, Cardinal | 0 | 10 | |
| Collars, muslin | 0 | 2½ | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------|------|--------------------|--------|
| Sewing on Habit Shirts | 1½d. | Shirts, Habit | 2½d. |
| Cuffs, Ladies' | 2½d. | Shoes, Infants | 3½d. |
| Goffering per doz. yards | 6d. | Caps, full trimmed | 2s.6d. |

Scale of Prices to be charged for the undermentioned Articles of Work when performed for the Trade: —

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--------|-------------------------|---------|
| Men's Collars, per doz. | 3s.6d. | Trowsers & Jackets each | 1s.[?]. |
| Men's Shirts, ditto | 10s. | Waistcoats, | do 6[?] |
| Ladies' Garments do | 10s. | | |

The Articles sent are to be cut out, and thread and trimming provided by the parties, or when not furnished a charge will [be] made by the Matron, for such quantity of either or both [as] may be used.