

Probation in Ireland: A Brief History of the Early Years

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Summary: This article, the first of a two-part history, traces the early years of probation in Ireland from its origins prior to the foundation of the state to the 1970s. It reviews the social, cultural and political factors at work in Ireland and reflects on their particular influences in the practice and development of the Probation Service. The article acknowledges the contribution of individual officers in their practice and in the development of the Probation Service. Comparison is made with developments in probation in Northern Ireland and in England and Wales.

Keywords: Probation, Probation Service, probation practice, Probation of Offenders Act 1907, history, twentieth-century Ireland, voluntarism, social work, Department of Justice, criminal justice, courts.