

Extracts from The State of Prisons in England and Wales by John Howard, 1777 (DUL ref: Winterbottom+ K2/1)

COUNTY GAOL AT DURHAM.

GAOLER, *Bainbridge Watson*, by Patent from the Bishop  
*durante Beneplacito.*

Salary, none.

Fees, Debtors, - - £0 : 10 : 0,

Felons at Affize, - 0 : 16 : 8,

at Quarter Seffions, 0 : 13 : 4.

Transports, about £10 : 10 : 0 each.

Licence, for Beer and Wine.

PRISONERS,

Allowance, Debtors, none. (*See Remarks.*)

Felons, two pence a day.

Garnish, Debtors, £0 : 4 : 6.

Felons, 0 : 1 : 0.

Number of - - Debtors. Felons &c.

1774, March 20, 37 - - 21,

1775, Jan. 6, 9 - - 20,

1776, Jan. 14, 21 - - 12,

---- Oct. 25, 18 - - 6.

CHAPLAIN, Rev. Mr. *Decent.*

Duty---Sunday and Thursday.

Salary, £40.

SURGEON, Mr. *Bainbridge.*

Salary, none : he makes a Bill.

YTHUOQ

DURHAM.

NORTHERN CIRCUIT. D U R H A M.

D U R H A M.

THE HIGH GAOL is the Property of the Bishop. By Patent from his Lordship, Sir *Hedworth Williamson* Bart. is perpetual Sheriff.—The Court-yard for Master's-side Debtors is only twenty-four feet by ten. Common-side Debtors have none at all: their free wards, the *Low Gaol*, are two damp unhealthy rooms by the Gateway: they are never suffered to go out of these, unless to Chapel, which is the Master-side Debtors Hall; and not always to that: for on a Sunday when I was there and missed them at Chapel, they told me they were not permitted to go thither. No sewers: at more than one of my visits, I learned that the dirt, ashes &c. had lain there many months. There is an excellent double-barreled Pump, which raises water about seventy feet.

FELONS have no Court-yard: but they have a Day-room and two small rooms for an Infirmary. The Men are put at night into Dungeons: one seven feet square for three Prisoners: another, the *Great Hole*, has only a little window. In this I saw six Prisoners, most of them *Transports*, chained to the floor. In that situation they had been many weeks; and were very sickly. Their straw on the stone-floor almost worn to dust. Long confinement, and not having the King's allowance of 2s. 6d. a week, had urged them to attempt an *Escape*: after which the Gaoler chained them as above.—There is another dungeon middle-sized; and for Women-felons a separate room or two.

THE Common-side Debtors, whom I saw eating boiled bread and water, told me, that this was the only nourishment some had lived upon for near a twelvemonth. They have from a Legacy two shillings a week in winter, and one shilling and six pence a week in summer

SEWERS.

FROM hence any one may judge of the probability there is against the health and life of prisoners, crowded in close rooms, cells, and subterraneous dungeons, for fourteen or sixteen hours out of the four and twenty. In some of those caverns the floor is very damp: in others there is sometimes an inch or two of water; and the straw, or bedding is laid on such floors, seldom on barrack bedsteads. Where prisoners are not kept in underground cells, they are often confined to their rooms, because there is no court \* belonging to the prison, which is the case in most City and Town-Gaols: or because the walls round the yard are ruinous, or too low for safety: or because the gaoler has the ground for his own use. Prisoners confined in this manner, are generally unhealthy. Some Gaols have no SEWERS; and in those that have, if they be not properly attended to, they are, even to a visitant, offensive beyond expression: how noxious then to people constantly confined in those prisons!

ONE cause why the rooms in some prisons are so close,  
is

is perhaps the window-tax, which the gaolers have to pay: this tempts them to stop the windows, and stifle their prisoners\*.

IN many Gaols, and in most Bridewells, there is no allowance of STRAW for prisoners to sleep on; and if by any means they get a little, it is not changed for months together, so that it is almost worn to dust. Some lie upon rags, others upon the bare floors. When I have complained of this to the keepers, their justification has been, "The county allows no straw; the prisoners have none but at my cost."

THE evils mentioned hitherto affect the *health* and *life* of prisoners: I have now to complain of what is pernicious to their MORALS; and that is, the confining all sorts of prisoners together: debtors and felons; men and women; the young beginner and the old offender: and with all these, in

some counties, such as are guilty of misdemeanors only; who should have been committed to Bridewell, to be corrected by diligence and labour; but for want of food, and the means of procuring it in those prisons, are in pity sent to such County-Gaols as afford these offenders prison-allowance.