

# Training Class

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This picture in 1915 shows seven inmates in a cooking/baking class at the Western House of Refuge in Albion. This institution was established in the early 1890's and is now known as the Albion Correctional Facility. The instructor shown with these girls is Ruth Webster (Mrs. Charles Howard).

Domestic subjects were taught here by various teaches in a school building as a means of rehabilitation. Classes in cooking and serving were promoted. Once a year McNalls Furniture Store allowed items made by the inmates to be sold in their front windows. The inmates gained a fine reputation for their handcraft in needlework.

Wayward girls in those days were given a second chance at improving their life style through education. Hard cote

criminals were not part of the prison's population.

Our photo shows the inmates were wearing uniforms, in this case long dresses with a fine print design. White caps are seen here as a means to cover their heads during the food preparation. All the girls appear to have long hair pulled up under the caps. aprons of course were a necessity in this situation.

A Bunsen burner under a heating rack appears at each workstation. Cooking and coffee pots are seen in these racks. In the background is an ice box with glass doors. On the other side of this kitchen/classroom are two stoves. One is a gas stove vented through a register. The other is probably a large institutional cooking range vented to a chimney. Nearby is a hot water tank, which would have been heated in conjunction with the coal range.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A pressed metal ceiling supports utilitarian electric lights simply hanging down on their cords. A polished board floor serves the needs before our common place tile. In the far corner is a high back sink. Hanging next to it is a continuous linen towel for wiping the hands.