

Multimedia Library Collection: Environment and History (journal)

"Trees of Gold and Men Made Good? Grand Visions and Early Experiments in Penal Forestry in New South Wales, 1913–1938"

Taylor, Benedict

Taylor, Benedict. "Trees of Gold and Men Made Good? Grand Visions and Early Experiments in Penal Forestry in New South Wales, 1913–1938." *Environment and History* 14, no. 4, Trans-Tasman Forest History special issue (Nov., 2008): 545–62. doi:10.3197/096734008X368439 . While modern penal institutions exist, putatively, to transform the people held within them into law-abiding citizens, it is not generally recognised that since the early twentieth century, Australian and New Zealand penal systems have also sought to transform 'wastelands' into ordered, productive landscapes. In Australia, this experiment began in 1913 on the north coast of New South Wales, where small groups of prisoners were set to work creating a pine plantation. Penologists and foresters saw themselves as the architects of a grand project; men with 'wasted lives' would reclaim 'wasted land', and, in the process, reclaim themselves. Depraved city-dwelling criminals would be transformed into hardy, upright bushmen, while the unproductive native landscapes would be replaced by useful exotic softwood forests. Although these reforms were hailed as modern and progressive, a close study of the history of this scheme reveals that a range of relationships to landscapes, some very old indeed, are deeply embedded in historical understandings of human rehabilitation. All rights reserved. © 2008 The White Horse Press

Download:

PDF: https://www.environmentandsociety.org/sites/default/files/key_docs/taylor-14-4.pdf

Related links:

- *Environment and History* at The White Horse Press
<http://www.ericademon.co.uk/EH.html>

Websites linked in this text:

- <http://dx.doi.org/10.3197/096734008X368439>