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Riverside Women's Reformatory

This article discusses the Riverside Women's Reformatory in Rutland, first established in 1921 by Lena Ross. The building was originally a typical prison structure that, with the help of new State Legislature of 1923, Miss Ross transformed into a homelike setting with a kitchen, dining area, bright bedrooms, and even a chapel. Miss Ross ran Riverside with the philosophy of treating women the way she would like to be treated herself. At Riverside, the women would do what Miss Ross called "womanized work" such as laundry. The goal was for Riverside to be a constructive rehabilitative program for the women that came. Miss Ross ran the program until her death, and then it was taken over by her assistant, Helen Koltonski, who ran it until her retirement. During these times, the program was celebrated for its work in the community. After Koltonski's retirement the house was eventually shut down.