

AN IMMORAL WOMAN, NOT A BAD ONE

NAME INC ALIASES:

Thomas Chatterley alias
Wilson & Cissy Phillips

NATIVE PLACE:

England

RELIGION:

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OFFENCE:

Brothel keeping

SENTENCE:

Three months'
imprisonment
(Thomas Chatterley)

Mr and Mrs Chatterley ran a shop in Princes Street near the corner with Manor Place which sold tobacco, cigarettes and lollies. Two young ladies lived upstairs. All was not as it seemed, for the shop was simply a front or 'blind' for a brothel.

The neighbours complained to the police, and in January 1896 Maggie Smith and Maggie Leahy were charged with being idle and disorderly, since prostitution was not in itself an offence. Thomas Chatterley and his 'wife' Cissy Phillips were then charged with managing the place as a brothel, which was illegal. Chatterley said he had no idea what his wife was getting up to with her 'shop', but the judge did not believe him: 'you have been

living on the proceeds of the prostitution of these women, or in plain English you have reached the very lowest depths of human degradation. You will be sentenced to three months' imprisonment.'

The law eventually caught up with Cissy Chatterley, too. In 1917, she was found living in a house 'frequented by women of ill-fame and by thieves'. The detective however argued she 'was an immoral woman, not a bad one', and she was given the light sentence of a month in Addington Prison in Christchurch.

