
JAIL BULLETIN

NUMBER 20

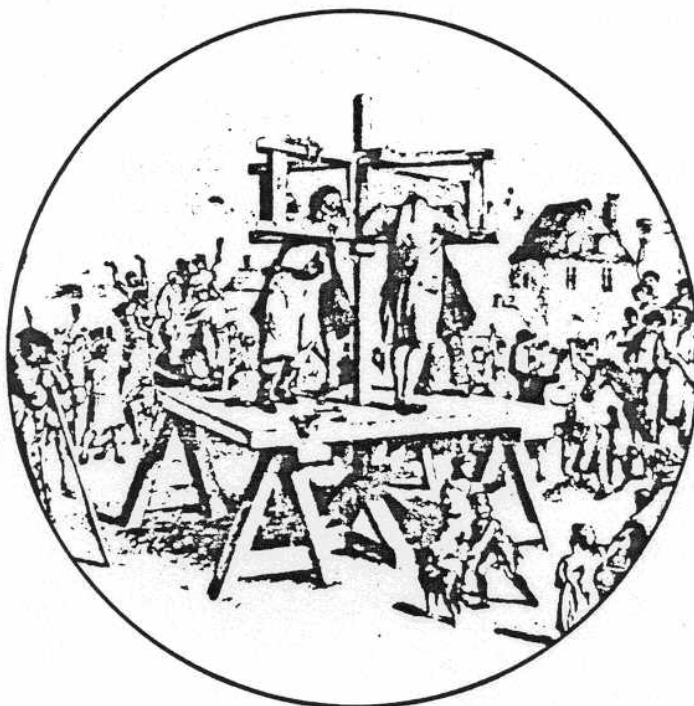
AUGUST, 1986

The Jail Bulletin is a monthly feature of the Crime Commission Update. The Bulletin may be used as a supplement to your jail in-service training program if officers study the material and complete the attached "open book" quiz. The Bulletin and quiz may be reproduced for use by your staff. We welcome any jail training material you would like to contribute to the Bulletin.

HISTORY OF INCARCERATION - PART II

THE UNITED STATES EXPERIMENTS

The American colonists brought many of the English methods of punishment with them. Corporal punishment was the sentence for many minor law breakers. This punishment, usually inflicted in a public area to set an example, included the use of stocks and pillory, whipping, dunking or branding. Public humiliation played an important role in the criminal justice process. Hanging or burning at the stake were the preferred methods of capital punishment. A death sentence could be earned for a large variety of offenses including murder, treason, burglary, rape, sodomy, arson, witchcraft, malicious maiming or manslaughter by stabbing.



As in England, incarceration in the colonies was used mainly for pretrial detention or housing debtors. Jails suffered the chronic problems of overcrowding, disease, filth, and corruption. We must look to William Penn and the Quakers to find the earliest source of jail and prison reform in the colonies. In the late 1600's Penn established a penal code in the province of Pennsylvania that retained the death penalty only for those convicted of homicide and used imprisonment at hard labor as punishment for other crimes. Penn's Code also provided significant reform by allowing all prisoners eligibility for bail, free food and lodging in the jail, restitution if wrongfully jailed and it put an end to the use of public corporal punishment for petty offenses. Although many of Penn's laws were later modified, they laid the groundwork for the colony of Pennsylvania to become the leading innovator in jail and prison reform.

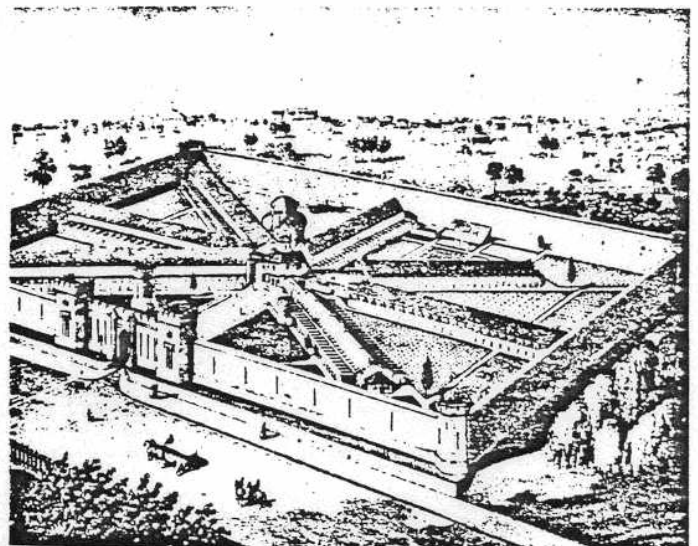


Walnut Street Jail
Philadelphia 1790

In 1790 the Philadelphia Society for the Alleviation of the Miseries of Public Prisons played a role in opening the Walnut Street Jail. This jail is considered the first true house of correction in the United States. It used a policy of "firmness and fairness" coupled with solitary confinement for serious offenders. Inmates were separated by age, offense and sex. This concept of solitary confinement was advanced by Dr. Benjamin Rush and later became known as the "Pennsylvania System."

The Pennsylvania System

Solitary confinement as a method of rehabilitation reached its peak in 1829 with the opening of the Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia. Inmates were supposed to reform themselves by sitting silently in their cells reflecting on their crimes. The negative aspects of this philosophy soon became apparent in the form of physical and psychological deterioration of the inmates. This, along with the difficulty staff had maintaining inmate silence, the high cost of running a single cell facility without any inmate labor and overcrowding, led to the eventual failure of this method of rehabilitation.



Eastern State Penitentiary
Pennsylvania

The Auburn System

Auburn, New York became the sight of a new penitentiary in 1816. The design and operation of this facility had a strong influence on prison architecture and philosophy throughout the United States for the next 150 years. The Auburn System included the use of rows of cells on interior walls (cell blocks) and silence on the part of the inmates. Inmates were housed in single cells at night but allowed to work and eat together but severely punished if they talked to each other. This type of system was adopted in prisons in over 30 states during the next 50 years.

The use of prisoner labor to produce a profit for the state was prevalent in the 1800's. With the growth of prison industries, less emphasis was placed on rehabilitation. Life in prisons was harsh for the inmates who would receive corporal punishment for violating numerous petty rules. Prisons began to play an increasingly larger role in the criminal justice system with the number of inmates in the United States climbing from 4,000 in 1840 to 33,000 in 1870.

The Reformatory

The reformatory era started in 1870 and reached its peak in about 1910. This system included the use of indeterminate sentences, parole, education, and vocational training for rehabilitation. Usually younger or less serious offenders were sentenced to reformatories. Reformatories were built in 18 states including one in Lincoln, Nebraska that was in operation from 1913 to 1979.

The Twentieth Century

Prison industry continued to play an important role in the early to mid 1900's. Some institutions contracted with private industry to produce goods, prisoners worked on public roads and prison farms operated into the 1970's. The U.S. prison population increased from 57,000 inmates in 1900 to 213,000 in 1960, to 412,000 in 1982.

The tremendous increase in prisoner population, along with an avalanche of inmate law suits during the last ten years, has placed a strain on both state and federal prison systems. In 1982, 42 state prison systems were under court order for overcrowding and/or general conditions.

Jail Progress

Most of the attention for reform was directed towards prisons, leaving jails in the sidelight until the late 1960's. During the 1970's many innovations were made in jail design and architecture. The most significant of these is the "podular" or "modular" design using direct supervision of inmates by staff in each living area. Use of materials other than steel bars and boiler plate have softened jail interiors and provided a more normal atmosphere for both inmates and staff. Direct supervision of inmates is credited with reduction in all types of assaults, suicides and destruction of jail property.

Next month: INMATES WITH AIDS

Resources: "History of Corrections"
From the Nebraska D.C.S. Training Manual
The American Prison: From the Beginning
a Pictorial History, the American
Correctional Assoc., Publishers

QUIZ

Nebraska Jail Standards require that jail staff receive eighteen (18) hours of inservice training each year. The Jail Bulletin may be used to supplement inservice training if an officer studies the Bulletin, completes the quiz, and this process is documented by the jail administrator for review during annual jail inspections.

SUBJECT; HISTORY OF INCARCERATION
PART II

NAME _____

DATE _____

1. Who was the earliest prison and jail reformer in the American colonies?

2. What was the name of the system that used "firmness and fairness" along with strict solitary confinement?

3. Where did the prison system originate that had a significant impact on U.S. prisons for 150 years? _____

4. What are three (3) of the methods the reformatory used to rehabilitate inmates? _____

5. What type of jail design was developed in the 1970's? _____

CREDIT: 1/2 HOUR CREDIT FOR JAIL INSERVICE TRAINING REQUIREMENT

ANSWER SHEET SHOULD BE RETAINED BY JAIL ADMINISTRATOR OR TRAINING OFFICER

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_____ WILLIAM PENN _____

2. What was the name of the system that used "firmness and fairness" along with strict solitary confinement?

_____ THE PENNSYLVANIA SYSTEM _____

3. Where did the prison system originate that had a significant impact on U.S. prisons for 150 years? _____ AUBURN, NEW YORK _____

4. What are three (3) of the methods the reformatory used to rehabilitate inmates? _____ INDETERMINATE SENTENCES, PAROLE, EDUCATION, _____

_____ VOCATIONAL TRAINING _____

5. What type of jail design was developed in the 1970's? _____

_____ PODULAR OR MODULAR _____

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