

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

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OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

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1858.

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# THIRTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE.

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SENATE.]

[No. 42.

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## STATE OF MAINE.

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STATE HOUSE,  
Augusta, Maine, February 24, 1858. }

GRIDLEY J. F. BRYANT, Esq.

SIR:—The Joint Standing Committee on the State Prison, to whom was referred so much of the Governor's message as relates to the State Prison, together with the reports of the Warden and Inspectors, are desirous of conferring with some competent architect, with reference to the presentation to the Legislature, of a judicious plan for the improvement of the structure, to meet the pressing and immediate wants of the institution.

You having been named to the Committee, as a person of large experience in designing and superintending the erection of Prisons, Jails and Houses of Correction in various portions of the United States, have been selected by them for the purposes above contemplated.

You are authorized and requested, on behalf of this Committee, to visit the institution at Thomaston, to inspect the buildings as they now exist, to take such measurements thereof as will enable you to report their present condition, together with a design for the prospective enlargement and improvement of the same, keeping in view strict economy, as far as may be consistent with the introduction of all the acknowledged requirements of modern prison construction,

now generally introduced, and to present such report and design to the Committee, together with estimates of cost, at as early a day as practicable, to be embodied in their forthcoming report to the Legislature.

Your obedient servant,

JOHN BERRY, JR., *Chairman.*

## REPORT OF THE ARCHITECT,

APPOINTED BY THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE STATE PRISON, PRO-  
POSING A PLAN FOR ITS IMPROVEMENT AND EXTENSION.

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AUGUSTA, Me., March 16, 1858.

HON. JOHN BERRY, *Chairman of Joint Standing*

*Committee on the State Prison, of the Legislature of 1858.*

SIR:—In accordance with the request of your Committee, made the 24th ult., that I should visit the State Prison at Thomaston and inspect the buildings as they now exist, take such measurements thereof as would enable me to report their condition, and prepare a design for the prospective enlargement and improvement of the structure, having in view strict economy, as far as would be consistent with the introduction of all the acknowledged requirements of modern prison construction, now generally introduced, and to present such report with estimates of cost, at as early a day as practicable, for the purpose of embodying the same in the forthcoming Report of the Committee to the Legislature, I have the honor to submit the following statements, together with a set of drawings illustrative of the buildings as they now exist, and of a contemplated addition thereto to “meet the pressing and immediate wants of the institution,” together with suggestions for the prospective enlargement and improvement of the present structures at this time, or at such future periods as succeeding legislative committees may deem expedient.

The prison property of the State of Maine situated in the town of Thomaston, Lincoln county, embraces about — acres of land,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres of which are covered by a limestone quarry, (which is operated by a portion of the convicts,) and by the buildings of the institution; the quarry and buildings being enclosed within a boundary wall of the form and position indicated upon one of the drawings hereinafter

described. The buildings embrace the following, and is covered by the following structures, to wit: a prison building of stone, measuring 47 feet by 112 feet, and 26 feet in height, containing within its exterior walls a block of cells arranged upon the "Auburn" plan, with areas, galleries and staircases around the block of cells, between it and the exterior walls of the building. A hospital building, of stone, measuring 23 feet by 59 feet, and  $20\frac{5}{12}$  feet high, containing, within its exterior walls, in the upper story, two blocks of cells built against the front and rear exterior walls, with a corridor in the centre; and in the lower story a number of old dungeons which have not been used since the present Warden has had charge of the buildings. These two buildings are connected by a guard-room building, measuring 23 feet by 50 feet, and 30 feet in height, appropriated to kitchen uses in its lower story, the guard-room in its second or middle story, and to officers' sleeping apartments in its upper story. There is also a projection from the centre building measuring  $24\frac{5}{12}$  feet by 30 feet, and  $20\frac{5}{12}$  feet high, and containing in the first story the entrance steps and store room, and in the second story the office of the Warden. A Warden's house, having turnkeys' and officers' quarters, measuring 45 feet by 32 feet, and 34 feet in height, with an L part measuring 22 feet by 37 feet 7 inches, containing within their walls three stories of apartments, to wit: a drawing room, sitting room, dining room and kitchen for the Warden's family, and a separate dining room for the officers in the first story, and in the upper stories the various chambers required by the family. A building used as a shoe shop, of stone, measuring 33 feet by 64 feet 6 inches, and two stories in height, containing within its walls a wood shed in first story and shoe shop above. A barn building of wood. A blacksmith's shop, of stone, one story high, measuring 80 feet by 25 feet. A wheelwright's shop, of stone, two stories high and measuring 34 feet 6 inches by 101 feet. A carpenter's shop, of wood, one story high, and measuring 31 feet by 50 feet; and a powder magazine, of brick, one story high and measuring 8 feet by 11 feet. Besides these, there are several other small buildings, of wood, scattered about the yard and quarry, and used as storehouses, sheds and outbuildings.

Of the original structures, erected upon the property, the stone building now used as the hospital, formed for many years one of

the two wings of the only prison building of the State. It contained 28 cells arranged against the two front and rear exterior walls, and was divided in the centre of its width by a corridor which extended from the front to the rear end of the structure in each of its two stories. Its construction was as barbarous and detestable as any of the worst prisons of its day, and it remained for many years a disgrace to the State, and would still be so were the cells in the lower story now permitted to be used. It was fitted up for hospital uses in its upper story in the year —, and since that time has been used solely for this object.

In corroboration of the opinion above expressed, relative to the faulty construction of the cells, I insert the following extract from the Second Report of the Board of Managers of the Prison Discipline Society, published in 1827 :

“STATE PRISON IN MAINE. *Construction.* The construction of this prison is peculiar. The night rooms, or cells, are pits, entered from the top, with a small ladder, through an orifice about two feet square. The ladder is removed when the convicts are in the cells. The orifice is secured with an iron grate, used as a trap door. The only other orifices in the cell are one in the bottom, about one and a half inches in diameter, to admit the warm air from underneath, which is heated by a furnace; and another in the side of the cell, about one and a half by eight inches. This orifice has an angle in the wall to prevent the convict from seeing any person without. The cells are 8 feet and 9 inches long, 4 feet and 6 inches wide, and 9 feet and 8 inches high. They are arranged in two rows, in each wing of the building. In the east wing are 28 cells; in the west wing 22. Over each block of cells is built a covering of wood, with upright posts 7 feet high, and a roof. The sides of this covering are composed, in part, of large doors, which move on rollers; so that, when they are rolled back, one-half of each side of the covering is open, for the free circulation of air, over the tops of the cells. At night these doors are closed, and secured with hooks on both sides. The spaces covered by the doors, on the sides towards the street, are secured by iron bars, one inch in diameter, and about four inches asunder. On the side towards the yard, they are not secured in this manner. The wings of the building, in which the cells are built, are two stories high; the first of stone, and the

second of wood. The wings fronting the north extend to the east and west, from a stone house in the centre, 50 feet by 40, two stories high, with convenient apartments for the keeper's family and the guard. We have been thus minute in the description of this building, because there is nothing like it in this country."

The present "new" or west prison building, occupying a portion of the site of the original west wing, was erected in the year 1839, and although constructed upon the "Auburn" (New York) plan, so called, which the enlightened of the present age concede to be the only correct system of arranging cells, it is extremely faulty, by its cramped and badly ventilated cells, its narrow galleries, stairs and areas, and its lack of light in the exterior walls. It is connected at its east end with the guard room building, which is so located between the two buildings as to be of little use for the purposes really intended, in consequence of its entire separation from both the prison and hospital structures by massive walls intervening, instead of being *entirely open to, and connected with, the areas and corridors of the prison.*

The height of this guard room is such that were it open at its two ends, as it should be, only one tier of cells of the prison, and one range of the hospital apartments would be commanded from its interior. The exterior front and rear walls of this guard room are so located that no exterior range or view of the prison and hospital walls are commanded; which is a most unfortunate defect. It is difficult to conceive of a more ill-arranged and useless structure than this guard room, thus formed and located; planned as it was, at a period when so much information on the subject of prison arrangement existed and was demonstrated by the erection of improved prisons in sister States.

The jailor's house is a convenient and somewhat spacious structure, but, strange to say, is located some twenty feet from the guard room building of the prison, instead of being immediately contiguous thereto and connected therewith, as is now conceded to be a most important desideratum in prison construction. By this arrangement the warden and his officers are as much cut off from personal supervision of the interior of the prison and hospital buildings, as if they were quartered in any of the village residences.

The shoe shop building needs enlargement; it being far too



cramped for the proper accommodation of the number of convicts engaged in this branch of industry. It should be connected with the prison wing by a corridor or passage-way at least, instead of being disconnected, as it now is. A fire-proof separation should, however, be maintained between the buildings.

The barn, which is placed without the prison wall, consists of a large building and several sheds, the whole in rather a dilapidated condition; and, although it, with its adjuncts, may be of sufficient size, yet its rough and ruinous appearance is by no means calculated to do credit to a public institution.

The present boundary wall around the prison yard is very substantial and perfect, but it does not enclose the whole property, and the rear portion will soon require to be moved, as, apparently, the quarry cannot much longer be worked, without endangering its stability. This ought to be done, as the quarry is most favorably situated for working, since the river, which forms the rear boundary of the property, is so much below the bottom of the quarry that all the surface water is carried off by natural drainage; otherwise it could only be worked at great expense for pumping, &c., or would require to be abandoned, from considerations of economy.

Having thus, somewhat in detail, described the present condition and position of the buildings connected with the institution, the undersigned respectfully presents, for the consideration of the Committee, the following suggestions for the improvement of the same to the extent required for placing the establishment only on a par with those of other States containing the acknowledged requirements of the present day in prison economy; having in view, also, the impossibility of making perfect structures of those which were originally defective both in design and construction. The undersigned believes, from information furnished him by your Committee, as well as officers connected with the institution, and by a personal examination of the premises, that the "*immediate and pressing wants of the institution*" require the following improvements of its buildings, namely:

*An extension of the New Prison* west, of sufficient size for the construction of at least sixty additional cells to the "Auburn" block now existing therein. These cells are proposed to be of uniform length and height with those now in the block, but each to be of one

foot additional width. This extension to contain areas at its sides and outer end, of uniform width with those now within the building, in which will be located the galleries for communication with the cells, to be arranged on uniform levels with the present galleries. The height and width of the extension to correspond with the present height and width of the building.

The present windows of the exterior walls to be increased in size at least two feet in width, and five feet in height, each; and the windows of the extension to be made in correspondence with the enlarged old windows; and both the old and new windows to be constructed with moveable sashes, in frames, and grated with heavy iron upright and cross bars.

Additional ventilation to be secured in the new prison and in its proposed extension, by the introduction of ventiducts over the areas and over the ventilating flues of the cells, which ventiducts should be connected with not less than six of the largest size ventilators, upon the exterior of the roof, of the pattern known as the "Emerson ejector."

The boundary wall to the west of the new prison which faces the highway in front of the institution, will require to be removed and partially rebuilt in consequence of the extension to the prison.

*The remodelling of the original East Prison*, now the hospital building, by which twenty-four cells on the "Auburn" plan may be obtained in its basement story, beneath the hospital portion of the building, as substitutes for the useless "dungeons" and "pits," now therein. The enlargement of all the windows in the exterior walls to render them in keeping with those proposed for the west or new prison; and an improvement in the ventilation, similar to that described for the new prison.

*The erection of an extension to the L part of the Warden's house*, back to join the front end of the building now denominated the Warden's office, by which this officer or his deputies, can be located at all times within the institution, as they should be, and not in an isolated building unconnected with the prison. This extension is proposed to be of uniform width and height with that of the L part of the house, and to be constructed of similar materials therewith. It will contain one room in each of its stories, besides a cellar or basement apartment on a level with the cellar of the present L.

Some few minor changes in the present office building will be made consequent upon the erection of the extension to the above L part.

The undersigned further believes and recommends, as being of the highest importance to the institution, that, as soon as practicable, the following improvement be made to the buildings now erected, in addition to those hereinbefore set forth as being required for "the immediate and pressing wants of the institution," to wit: the removal of those portions of the structure denominated kitchen, guard-room and office, in the building now located between the hospital building and the new prison, as also the Warden's office building in front of the guard-room building, and the substitution therefor of a central octagonal building of three stories in height, of such size and form, and so located as to occupy the entire space between the two prison buildings, from east to west; and to cover the space, from north to south, requisite for its front wall to stand on and form part of the rear end wall of the extension of the L part of the Warden's house, hereinbefore described; and for its rear wall to be located 16 feet outside of the rear exterior wall of the new prison building, and to be parallel therewith.

This central octagonal building is proposed to be occupied as a kitchen for cooking, washing, ironing and baking purposes in its basement story, of about 9 feet in height; for a guard-room in its second story, which will be as high as the two upper stories of cells in the new prison; and for a chapel in its third or upper story, of about 15 feet in height.

There may be a cellar beneath the basement story or kitchen of this building, if deemed requisite. It is proposed to crown this octagonal building with a hipped roof, to be surmounted, in its centre, with an octagonal cupola for containing an alarm bell, as well as for the machinery of a four dial clock, should one be deemed essential. The new structure will receive light in each of its stories, from large windows located in the octagonal corners thereof, and in the rear side wall of the same.

Access to the chapel in the upper story of the building, would be by staircases located immediately over the staircases of the new prison; suitable galleries being to be formed on and around the same.

The areas of the front and rear sides of the block of cells of the new prison, will be open to, and communicate immediately with the guard-room, and the area between the ranges of cells in the hospital story of the old prison, as well as those in front and rear of the new "Auburn" block of cells hereinbefore proposed to be erected in the basement story beneath the hospital cells, will also all be open to and communicate with the guard room over the proposed new kitchen; thus enabling any officer on duty in the guard room to command, at all times, every cell door, every fastening, every staircase, every window in the exterior walls, and by day, the approach of any person to the prison, either within or without the yard boundary walls. One of the most important improvements effected by the construction and formation of a guard room like that now proposed, is in the thorough ventilation given to the whole edifice in its cells and areas, by their immediate connection with the guard room.

The necessity of absolute connection between all the buildings which form the prison proper, beneath a single roof, is so apparent to every person well informed on the subject, that the utility of such a building as that now proposed to take the place of the irregular and disconnected structures aforesaid, will not, it is believed, be questioned by any member of the Committee or of the Legislature which it represents. A large quantity of the materials now in the buildings recommended to be removed to give place to the octagonal building, may be re-used to advantage in the new structure, so that the expense to the State by the removal of said buildings would be comparatively light.

The undersigned had the honor of being employed by a Legislative Committee of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in the year 1850, to design an "Extension" to its State Prison, at Charlestown; and, among other improvements recommended the construction of a "centre octagonal building" between the old and new wings of the prison, for uniting buildings which were, at that time, wholly disconnected. This Committee adopted the suggestion, the Legislature approved their adoption, the money for the object was appropriated, the building erected, and its appropriateness and utility have been most thoroughly tested and acknowledged.

The construction of the various improvements herein proposed is intended to be mainly of stone, brick and iron, excepting the floors and roofs of the "central octagonal building," and those of the extension to the L part of the Warden's house, which will be of wood. The roof of the extension to the new prison is also proposed to be of wood. All the roofs should be slated and fitted with copper gutters, and trunks or conductors. The window frames and sashes to be of wood, and every window grated with iron rods, including those of the extension to the L part of the Warden's house. All doors of communication in the prisons, kitchen, guard-room, chapel and extension of the L part of the Warden's house are to be of iron. All stairs to be of iron or stone, and also all area galleries and railings. The cell doors to be of iron grated bars encircled with iron frames. No interior finish, except whitewash, is intended in any of the structures, save in the extension of the L part of the Warden's house, where lath, plaster and wood finish is intended, like the other portions of the house already built. The chapel walls and ceilings should be plastered, and a gallery erected along the east side of the chapel. The cupola upon the roof of the octagonal building to be of wood; the roof over octagonal building to be heavily trussed, and the chapel floor hung therefrom by rods of iron. The guard-room floor to be supported in the kitchen by iron columns; and in the cellar the kitchen floor to be supported by stone piers under the iron columns aforesaid.

Accompanying this communication is a set of drawings illustrative of the prison buildings as they now exist, taken from actual measurement on the spot. Another set of drawings is appended, showing the several improvements recommended for the consideration of the Committee.

There is also a block plan of so much of the prison property as is at this date enclosed by boundary walls, with the buildings located as they now stand, and also as proposed to be improved. A perspective view of the contemplated improvements in the various structures composing the prison buildings accompanies the aforesaid drawings; and each sheet of drawings is so labeled as to be comprehensive of its object.

I have prepared estimates of the cost of construction of the various improvements herein recommended, and find the same to amount to

the following sums: For those required for "*the immediate and pressing wants of the institution,*" there will be required the sum of — thousand — hundred and — dollars (\$—); and for the erection of the "central octagonal building" and its adjuncts, a further sum of — thousand — hundred and — dollars (\$—.)

In the preparation of this report, the aim of the undersigned has been to present a clear view of the actual position of the buildings of the institution; and to suggest as improvements only such *practical* measures as the spirit of the age dictates. Should the various suggestions herein indicated be adopted, it is believed the institution will, in the construction and arrangement of its buildings, favorably compare with any of the remodeled prisons of other States which were originally constructed upon defective principles.

Very respectfully submitted.

GRIDLEY J. F. BRYANT.

STATE OF MAINE.

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IN SENATE, March 22, 1858.

ORDERED, That 350 copies of the foregoing report, resolves and accompanying documents, be printed for the use of the Legislature.

ATTEST:

JOSEPH B. HALL, *Secretary.*