

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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SEVENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

SENATE

NO. 19

In Senate, Jan. 28, 1915.

Ordered, That one thousand copies be printed and that the same be referred to the Committee on State Prison.

Committee on Reference.

Presented by Mr. Chatto of Hancock.

STATE OF MAINE

RESOLVE. in favor of the purchase of land in some suitable location and the erection thereon of buildings for a new State Prison.

Resolved, That there be and hereby is created and constituted a commission to be known as the Maine state prison commission of which the governor of the state shall be chairman and two others by him appointed from two opposite political parties, with full power to select and designate a new location for the Maine state prison, now located at Thomaston, and to purchase or otherwise acquire in the name of the state any and all lands necessary and suitable for the erection and maintenance thereon of buildings for the care and detention of state prison convicts; and said commission is hereby authorized and directed to take imme-

12 diate steps to obtain plans and specifications for the erec-
13 tion on the lands so purchased or acquired such buildings
14 as in their discretion may be necessary and suitable for the
15 purposes of this resolve; and shall thereupon proceed to
16 contract for, prosecute and superintend the construction and
17 completion of said buildings; and the sum of one hundred
18 and fifty thousand dollars for the year 1915 and one hun-
19 dred and fifty thousand dollars for the year 1916 be and
20 hereby is appropriated for the purposes of this resolve, to
21 be expended under the direction of said commission, and
22 for the reasonable expenses of said commission, to be fixed
23 and determined by the governor and council and audited by
24 the state auditor.

Provided that the commission shall not begin the erection
26 of any buildings until they shall have first obtained a con-
27 tract or contracts from responsible parties to complete the
28 work for a sum not exceeding the amount specified in this
29 resolve, which contract shall be secured by a bond approved
30 by a majority of said commission.

Provided further that any balance of the above appropria-
32 tion remaining unexpended at the end of the year for which
33 it was appropriated shall not lapse, but may be expended
34 during the succeeding year.

Provided further that this resolve shall take effect when
36 approved by a majority vote of the legal voters within the
37 state of Maine voting at an election to be specially called
38 and held for the purpose, during the month of June, 1915.

STATEMENT OF FACTS.

The Maine state prison was built in Thomaston in 1824. At the present time there are 218 cells. The dimensions of 180 cells are 4 feet wide, 7 feet long and $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet high; the dimensions of 6 cells are 8 feet square by $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet high; the dimensions of 26 cells are $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide, 12 feet long and 7 feet 10 inches high.

In the 180 cells which are 4 feet wide, 7 feet long and $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet high, the bunks are 22 inches wide, and are fastened to the wall in order for the prisoner to get into his cell, and, when they are turned down, it leaves a space of about 20 inches between the wall and the bunk.

The whole number of prisoners in the Maine state prison at the present time is 162; number of male life prisoners, 25; number of female prisoners, 5, 2 sentenced for life, 2 for 20 years, and 1 for a maximum sentence of 3 years and a minimum of $1\frac{1}{2}$ years.

The capacity of the prison is 240.

The sanitary arrangements for the cells are very unsatisfactory. There is no water in them, and the prisoners have to use a slop bucket. On Sundays these buckets are in the cells about 24 hours, and in the summer time especially this is a very bad arrangement.

Also there is no place to segregate the tubercular patients, and, when they are too sick to be confined in the hospital, they are kept in a building unfinished and low-posted, the size of which is 10 by 12 feet, without any ventilation whatever.

There is no dining-room in the prison, and no place for one. The men are all placed in their cells and locked up and the food put in to them through little slides at the bottom of the door.

In the prison is a harness shop, broom shop, paint shop, wood shop and blacksmith shop. At the present time there are about 30 men employed in each department.

The general condition of the buildings is very much run down and out of repair, being built in 1824, and having very little expended on them for repairs during the last 10 or 15 years. The wall surrounding the prison is in a bad state of repair, and in several places it is bulging.

The heating plant is in a very poor location, being located under the wood shop and broom shop, and the top of the boiler comes within 6 inches of the floor, so that the floor is hot all the time, and this makes it very uncomfortable for the men working on that floor, particularly in the summer time.

The blacksmith shop is nothing more or less than a fire trap, and connected with it are the bathroom, tailor shop, dispensary and store.

The room used by the chaplain for school purposes is about 10 feet square, and is also used by the physician and dentist.

The amount of land owned by the state is about 1 acre outside the wall, and about 3 acres inside the wall. The prison was built on the site of the lime rock quarry. The purpose, probably, was to work the prisoners in the quarry, and consequently it was enclosed by the prison wall. The quarry was abandoned, and the bottom has been filled in somewhat and leveled off.

The warden has been able to get the use of some land outside for farm purposes, and planted potatoes and raised several hundred bushels, and bought some hay standing for the use of the cows and horses.