United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Historic District

other names/site number Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Branch and Illinois Women's Prison, Joliet Correctional Center, Joliet Penitentiary, Joliet Prison, Old Joliet Prison

Name of Multiple Property Listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

street & number 1125 Collins Street ☐ not for publication

city or town Joliet ☐ vicinity

state Illinois county Will zip code 60432

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: ___ **national** ___ **statewide** ___ **local**

Applicable National Register Criteria: ___ **A** ___ **B** ___ **C** ___ **D**

Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Illinois Department of Natural Resources - SHPO
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
Name of Property

Will County, Illinois
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Historic District
Name of Property

Will County, Illinois
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- [ ] private
- [ ] public - Local
- [x] public - State
- [ ] public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

- [ ] building(s)
- [X] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
31	3	buildings
1	0	site
7	1	structure
0	0	object
39	4	**Total**

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT – Correctional Facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-19th CENTURY – Gothic Revival
MID-20th CENTURY – Modern Movement

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Limestone
walls: Limestone, Brick, Concrete Block
roof: Asphalt, Bitumen, Metal
other: Brick, Concrete Block

Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Historic District
Name of Property

Will County, Illinois
County and State

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity).

Note: During its 144-year history, the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet (ISP-Joliet) operated under various names and state organizations. When the prison was opened, it was known simply as the Illinois State Penitentiary. The penitentiary retained this name through the early 20th century. When a second penitentiary was established in the southern part of the state near Chester in the late 1870s, the Chester prison was referred to as the Southern Illinois Penitentiary. Both the Illinois State Penitentiary and the Southern Illinois Penitentiary operated under separate commissions consisting of three commissioners appointed by Illinois' governor. Under the Civil Administrative Code of 1917, all Illinois penitentiaries and reformatories were placed under the Department of Public Welfare but continued to be managed by separate commissions. In 1933, administration of the state's prisons and reformatories was consolidated as the Illinois State Penitentiary System, with each prison operating as a branch of the system and known by their place names—under this new system, the Joliet Branch of the Illinois State Penitentiary included the prison complex at Joliet, as well as the newly-constructed Stateville Penitentiary. After the completion of Stateville Penitentiary in the 1920s, the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet was often referred to in newspapers and other media as "Old Joliet Prison" to differentiate it from Stateville. Between 1941 and 1969, ISP-Joliet and the other prisons within the state's penitentiary system operated under the administration of the Department of Public Safety. In 1970, The Department of Corrections was created to administer all the state's penal institutions, including prisons and juvenile institutions. All prisons within the state were renamed as correctional centers and distinguished by their place names—under the Department of Corrections, ISP-Joliet became known as Joliet Correctional Center.

Between 1933 and 1973, Joliet and Stateville penitentiaries were operated as a single branch within the state's penitentiary/correctional system and were under the administration of a single warden. In 1973, the prisons were separated, and Joliet Correctional Center was assigned its own warden.

The Joliet Women's Prison, which was completed in 1896, operated as part of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet through the early 20th century. Under the Civil Administrative Code of 1917, the Women's Prison was renamed the Illinois Women's Prison, and its administration under the Department of Public Welfare was separated from ISP-Joliet. When the state's first female reformatory was completed at Dwight in the early 1930s, the complex that housed the Illinois Women's Prison was converted into a Diagnostic Depot for the northern part of the state—all prisoners from the northern half of the state entering the Illinois Penitentiary system were initially housed at the Diagnostic Depot before being permanently placed in one of the state's prisons. Under the Illinois Department of Corrections, the Diagnostic Depot was renamed the Northern Reception and Classification Center.

Summary Paragraph

The Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Historic District (also referred to as the ISP-Joliet Historic District) is located at 1125 Collins Street, approximately 1.5 miles north of downtown Joliet and just east of the Des Plaines River. The district is approximately 92 acres in size, with a 24-acre parcel west of Collins Street and a larger 68-acre parcel east of Collins Street.

West of Collins Street is the original ISP-Joliet complex, which was designed by the architecture firm Boyington & Wheelock in the Gothic Revival style using rusticated limestone blocks quarried on-site by prison labor. Construction began in 1857 and was largely complete by 1867. The primary south façade of the complex contains an impressive central administration building flanked by long cell block wings. Massive stone walls with corner guard towers on the north, east, and west sides of the complex enclose the prison yard, which houses multiple ancillary buildings and structures (constructed between 1858 and circa 1990) that supported the operations of the prison until its closure in 2002.

The Women's Prison at Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet, located at the northeast corner of Collins Street and Woodruff Road, was also designed by Boyington & Wheelock in the Gothic Revival style, and constructed in 1896 with limestone quarried on-site. Prior to its construction, women prisoners were kept on the fourth floor of the original prison's administration building. The complex features a central administration building facing Woodruff Road and a long cellhouse wing extend north from the administration building. The prison yard was originally enclosed by rusticated limestone walls; the east prison wall and the east half of the north prison wall have been replaced by modern fencing. A limestone laundry wing was added to the east side of the cellhouse wing in 1900, and warehouses were constructed just east of the Women's Prison in ca. 1929. Additional buildings and structures were added after 1933, when the Women's Prison was converted to serve as a diagnostic and reception center for the entire Illinois penitentiary system.

East of the Women's Prison is the Illinois State Police-Joliet Forensic Laboratory, a two-story brick building that was constructed in 1964. Although located within the historic district boundary, it is a non-contributing building because it was not associated with the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet and operated independently of the prison.

The area north of the Women's Prison within the district boundaries encompasses the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet's limestone quarry operations, including the original West Quarry (opened c. 1857), the East Quarry (opened in 1904) and a Quarry Crusher Plant that was constructed in 1914.

The Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Historic District retains excellent integrity to reflect its significance under National Register Criterion A as the oldest and longest-operating penitentiary complex in Illinois. Alterations and additions to the original 19th century Gothic Revival design—including a large-scale modernization campaign in in the late-1940s and early 1950s, construction of a modern school and chapel in the mid-1960s, construction of a kitchen and dining hall and gymnasium in the late 1980s, and modifications related to the diagnostic center—are almost exclusively within the district's period of significance (1857-2002) and reflect the evolution of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet over nearly 150 years of operation. Of the 43 resources within the district, only three are non-contributing. The largest of these non-contributing resources is the forensic laboratory west of the Women's Prison. The remaining three non-contributing resources—a water tower, a utility building, and a metal shed—were all constructed after 2002 and are outside the period of significance for the district.

Narrative Description

Site and Setting

The Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Historic District is located at 1125 West Collins Street, approximately 1.5 miles north of downtown Joliet and just east of the Des Plaines River. The district consists of a roughly rectangular 24-acre parcel at the northwest corner of Collins Street and Woodruff Road, and an irregularly shaped 68-acre parcel bounded on the west by Collins Street, on the south by Woodruff Road, on the east by Louise Ray Parkway, and on the north by Dartmouth Avenue.

The Illinois & Michigan Canal Trail is located directly west of the district boundary, running between the prison and the tracks of the Chicago & Alton Railroad, just east of the Des Plaines River. The areas north and south of the district along Collins Street contains primarily industrial development. East of the district

boundary is the large, wooded area that originally operated as the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Farm. South and east of the former farm, the area is largely residential and populated with single-family homes.

Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Grounds

At its largest, the prison grounds encompassed a 26-acre rectangular parcel west of Collins Street (the original prison compound) and a larger 160-acre parcel east of Collins Street, which contains the Women's Prison and State Crime Lab at the southwest corner. North of the Women's Prison were the prison's quarry operations; two large quarry lakes and a crusher plant remain on the site. The area east of the quarry was open land, which was used for a prison farm through the early 1900s but has not been an active part of the prison complex since the farm was abandoned. The proposed east district boundary follows Louis Ray Parkway (constructed after 2002) to encompass the quarries and crusher plant and exclude the open land east of the quarries. East of Collins Street, the proposed district boundary excludes the larger south parking lot that appears on the 2002 site plan for the prison (Figure 16).

West of Collins Street

The area west of Collins Street within the district boundary is primarily taken up by the original enclosed prison complex, which runs close to the district boundary along its east and north walls. The east wall of the prison is set back approximately 18 feet from Collins Street, separated from the street by a narrow grass parkway with concrete sidewalk. The north wall is set back approximately 40 feet from Hills Avenue, running east-west just north of the prison complex.

The east and west cell blocks that form the south side of the complex are set back approximately 148 feet from the south district boundary. The Administration Building between the two cell blocks projects approximately 40 feet farther south. The west district boundary line is angled to follow the railroad tracks. The southwest guard tower at the southwest corner of the prison complex is set back approximately 260 feet from the railroad track and the northwest guard tower at the northwest corner of the prison complex is set back approximately 60 feet from the railroad track.

Historic photographs show that originally, the area south of the Administration Building and Cell Blocks was a landscaped lawn with ornamental flower beds and mature plantings. By the late 1890s, a lily pond and large greenhouses had been installed south of the west cell block. None of these historic landscape features remain. The original entrance drive, which extended west from Collins Street and terminated in a round-about just south of the Administration entrance pavilion, has been removed. A large asphalt parking lot is now situated south of the east cell block, accessed from Collins Street. A modern metal archway with letter signage spelling "Old Joliet Prison," set on polygonal limestone piers, frames the entrance to the parking lot. Narrower landscaped strips extend along the south side of the complex. A chain link fence extends along the south side of the east cell block and turns south to terminate at the Gate House, separating the parking lot from the rest of the prison grounds. Concrete sidewalks connect the parking lot to the gate house and a larger parking lot to the south, outside of the district boundary. The area between the Administration Building and the Gate House is largely covered with concrete paving. South of the west cell block, the ground is flat with two large concrete pads and smaller concrete walkways. The open space at the southwest corner of the parcel contains no distinctive features or landscaping. A chain link fence extends along the south district boundary west of the gate house.

West of the prison complex's west wall, between the main prison complex and the west warehouse, the grounds are primarily paved with concrete or gravel. Just north of the original main (west) prison entrance is a modern ComEd electric substation and modern radio tower.

Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Prison Yard

Historic maps and photographs illustrate that the enclosed yard of the prison evolved to reflect changing activities at Joliet. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps from the 1880s and 1890s show that the enclosed prison yard was divided roughly into four quadrants. An east-west "Main Street" connected the east and west entrances, with a rail spur that allowed for delivery of coal into the prison. This main thoroughfare is still evident as a paved road that extends from the east to the west entrances. A north-south "Broadway" extended from the north side of the Administration Building to the north end of the grounds, which is no longer extant. Secondary roads, no longer extant, also extended along the perimeter of the grounds. By the late 1890s, most of the space within the prison yard was taken up by buildings and manufacturing equipment, reflecting the focus on utilizing prison labor for local industries. Although historic photographs from the early 1900s show inmates playing baseball in the yard, there were no dedicated outdoor recreation areas for prisoners until the mid-20th century. A 1961 arial photograph shows a large open lawn with a baseball diamond in the southwest quadrant of the prison yard. A 2002 site plan also shows this ballfield, as well as basketball courts and a smaller ballfield along the north end of the northeast quadrant. The large lawn is extant, but the baseball diamond has been removed. The concrete pad of the basketball court is extant and additional courts have been added, but the smaller ballfield that shows in the 2002 site plan is now open lawn.

The current condition and features of the prison yard are described below by quadrant.

The Hospital Building (#27) is located at the southeast corner of the southeast quadrant. The Gymnasium/Multipurpose Room (#26) is located directly west of the Hospital. North of the Hospital and Gymnasium is the Dining Hall/Cafeteria (#25), which extends to the north side of the quadrant. These buildings are separated from the east wall by a flat strip of lawn. Directly west of the Dining Hall/Cafeteria are the Women's Cellblock/Clothing Department/Bath House (#24) and Harness Shop (#23). The Segregation/Solitary Building (#15) is located at the northwest corner of the quadrant. The south edge of the southeast quadrant along the East Cell Block is flat lawn intersected with rectilinear concrete walkways. The open space west of the Gymnasium and Dining Hall is also flat lawn with concrete walkways. The South Guard Shack (#14) is located near the southeast corner of the quadrant. Wider concrete paths are located south of the Clothing Department/Bath House and Harness Shop, and between the Harness Shop and Solitary Building.

The southwest quadrant is primarily open lawn, with concrete sidewalks along the perimeter. The Center-West Industrial Shop (#7) is located at the northwest corner of the quadrant. The Chapel (#6) and Schoolhouse (#5) are located directly south of the Center-West Industrial Shop. The space between these buildings and the west wall is a narrow strip of lawn. The Powerhouse and Well Pump House (#13) are located near the northeast corner of the quadrant, separated from the Center-West Industrial Shop by a rectangular concrete pad.

The northwest quadrant contains the North Industrial Shop (#10) along its north end; south of this shop, the west half of the quadrant houses the Northwest Industrial Shop (#8) and the Marble Cutting Shop (#9).

The open space around these buildings is primarily lawn with brush and small trees. The Fire House (#11) is located near the southeast corner of the quadrant. The remaining open space on the east half of the quadrant is primary paved; a small lawn extends behind the Fire House.

The northeast quadrant contains a cluster of smaller buildings and structures, primary concentrated along its south half. The Auto Storage (#19) and Textile Materials Storage (#20) buildings are situated near the southeast corner of the quadrant, north of Main. Just west is the Marble Shop (#21). The Dry Kiln/Marble Shop (#22) extends north from the northwest corner of the Marble Shop. West of the Marble Shop is the Reservoir (#16). The Yard Tower (#12) sits at the southwest corner of the northeast quadrant, at the center of the prison yard. The Warehouse/Stable (#18) is located north of the Dry Kiln/Marble Shop, with the Mule Barn (#17) situated just west of the Warehouse/Stable's southwest corner. The Tunnel Entrance (#32) is located near the northeast corner of the quadrant. The open space between buildings is primarily flat lawn with concrete walkways between buildings. A paved drive extends west from the west end of the Warehouse/Stable. At the northeast end of the quadrant are two rectangular concrete basketball courts. Between the two basketball courts is a smaller concrete ballcourt.

East of Collins Street

The roughly 68-acre parcel within the historic district boundary east of Collins Street is bounded on the south by Woodruff Road, on the east by the Louise Ray Parkway, on the north by Dartmouth Avenue (which connects to the Louise Ray Parkway) and on the west by Collins Street. The parcel is bisected into two sections by a railroad line, which runs diagonally from Collins Road (approximately 600 feet south of Dartmouth Avenue) to the southeast corner of the district. The triangular section south of the railroad contains the Women's Prison/Diagnostic Depot complex and the Illinois State Police – Joliet Forensic Laboratory at its south end, facing Woodruff Road, and the large west quarry at its north end. The section north of the railroad contains the

The Women's Prison/Diagnostic Depot complex is situated at the northeast corner of Collins Street and Woodruff Road. The west prison wall is set back approximately 30 feet from Collins Street, and the south prison wall is set back approximately 110 feet from Woodruff Road; these setbacks contain flat areas of lawn with mature trees. A concrete sidewalk extends east from Collins Street to the east end of the Women's prison complex along the south boundary of the district. The Women's Prison Administration Building (#34) extends approximately 50 feet south of the prison walls. A wide concrete walkway extends from the sidewalk along Woodruff road to the concrete steps that lead to the main entrance of the Administration Building. A concrete ramp with metal pipe railings is located east of the entrance pavilion. East of the Administration Building, along the north side of Woodruff Road, is a paved parking area. The original stone walls along the east side of the Women's Prison complex, as well as the east half of the north prison wall, have been removed and replaced with a double row of chain link fencing topped with razor wire. A paved driveway extends north from Woodruff Road just east of the Women's Prison complex.

Inside the Women's Prison yard, the Cellhouse Wing (#35) extends north from the Administration Building. The East Laundry Wing (#36) and Annex Medical Wing (#40C) are located east of the Cellhouse wing and set back approximately 90 feet from the south prison wall. The open space south of the East Laundry Wing and Annex Medical Wing is a paved recreation area with chain link fencing and razor wire along its perimeter. A paved drive runs north from the southeast corner of the prison yard to an

entrance near the north end of the east perimeter fence. North Annex Medical Wing is the Joliet Diagnostic Depot Well Pump House (#40C). Directly west of the Well Pump House is a metal Shed (#40B). The open space around these buildings is flat lawn, with overgrown shrubs and brush west of the Shed. Concrete walkways are located north of the East Laundry Wing.

The area west of the Cellhouse Wing within the yard is largely taken up by the Joliet Diagnostic Depot's West Wing (#37). The narrow open spaces around this building are overgrown with trees and brush. North of the Cellhouse Wing and Diagnostic Depot West Wing is a large, paved area, with a curb cut east of the existing north stone wall, at the north entrance gate.

To the east of the Women's Prison complex is the Illinois State Police – Joliet Forensic Laboratory (#41). Although located on the prison grounds, the facility was operated separately by the Illinois State Police and its functions were not associated with the operations of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet. The building is set back approximately 100 feet from Woodruff Road, surrounded by concrete walkways, and flanked by large, rectangular parking lots. The open area surrounding the buildings and parking lots is primarily lawn with scattered mature trees. North of the Forensic Laboratory are the West Portion (#42a) and East Portion (#42b) of the prison's East Warehouse. A paved parking lot extends north from the West Portion of the East Warehouse.

East of the Forensic Laboratory is a gravel service road that runs north from Woodruff Road; this road branches into several smaller gravel service drives that run north to the West Quarry (#45), west to the East Warehouse, and northwest to the railroad. The land to the east is primarily wooded with mature trees.

Directly north of the Women's Prison complex are rectangular parking lots with flat lawn in between. A paved driveway provides access to Collins Street. Although the Google Earth GIS map (Figure 2) shows the East Livery Building north of the Women's Prison complex, this building was demolished in 2021. North of the paved driveway is the Water Tower (#43).

North of the Water Tower, the area between Collins Street and the railroad is primarily taken up by the large West Quarry, an irregularly shaped lake that is approximately 9.5 acres in size. The West Quarry is surrounded by woods with mature trees; an open area of lawn is situated just southeast of the south end of the West Quarry.

North of the railroad is the East Quarry (#46) and Stone Crusher Plant (#47). The East Quarry is an irregular, roughly 4.6-acre lake, situated approximately 250 feet east of Collins Street, 450 feet south of Dartmouth Avenue, and 100 feet west of Louise Ray Parkway. It is largely surrounded by mature woods, with an area of open prairie to the south. The Stone Crusher Plant is situated along the south side of the East Quarry and is set back approximately 330 feet from Louise Ray Parkway.

Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Buildings and Structures (West of Collins Street)

The buildings and structures that comprise the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet west of Collins Street are listed and described in detail below.

Resource Name	*Resource Number*	*Date of Construction*	*Contributing/Non-Contributing*
Gate House	1	1949	C
Administration Building	2a	1867-1868	C
Shed	2b	c. 1980	C
West Cell Block	3	1866	C
West Schoolhouse	4	c. 1888-1889	C
School	5	c. 1965	C
Chapel	6	1969	C
Industrial Shop, Center-West	7	c. 1858-1861	C
Industrial Shop, Northwest	8	c. 1858-1861	C
Marble Cutting Shop	9	c. 1858-1861	C
Industrial Shop, North	10	c. 1858-1861	C
Fire House	11	c. 1914	C
Yard Tower	12	1940	C
Powerhouse and Well Pump House	13	1893	C
South Guard Shack	14	c. 1979-1998	C
Separate System Prison/Solitary Building	15	1862	C
Reservoir	16	1874	C
Mule Barn	17	c.1900-1930	C
Warehouse/Stable	18	1873	C
Auto Storage	19	c. 1948-1979	C
Textile Materials Storage/Wood Carding Shop	20	1940	C
Marble Shop	21	1939, 1948	C
Dry Kiln/Marble Shop	22	c. 1940	C
Harness Shop	23	c. 1880	C
Women's Cellblock /Clothing Department/Bath House	24	1859	C
Dining Hall/Cafeteria	25	1987	C
Gymnasium/Multipurpose Building	26	1987	C
Hospital	27	1895	C
East Schoolhouse	28	c. 1890	C
East Cell Block	29	1860	C
East Prison Wall	30a	1858-1860	C
North Prison Wall	30b	1858-1860	C
West Prison Wall	30c	1858-1861	C
Southeast Guard Tower	31a	1859-1860	C
East Guard Tower	31b	c. 1948	C
East Sallyport	31c	c. 1950	C
Northeast Guard Tower	31d	1860	C
Northwest Guard Tower	31e	1860	C
West Guard Tower	31f	c. 1950	C
West Sallyport	31g	1952	C
Southwest Guard Tower	31h	c. 1860-1865	C

Tunnel Entrance	32	c. 1900	C
West Warehouse	33a	c. 1870	C
Fire Alarm Control Shed	33b	c. 1990-2002	C

Gate House (#1, Contributing Building)
Date: 1949
Architect: Hammond C. Herrick (State of Illinois, Dept. of Public Works)

The one-story gate house was constructed in 1949 as part of the large-scale renovation of the prison from 1947 through 1953. Located directly south of the Administration Building at the prison property's southern boundary and facing east towards Collins Street, the gate house served as an initial point of entry to the prison and contained gender-segregated waiting rooms, restrooms, and an examination room. A one-and-a-half story guard tower rises along the gate house's north elevation and was historically accessed via a spiral staircase behind the desk in the main waiting room. When the prison was opened for tourism in 2018, the gate house was used as a visitor center and gift shop. The building was designed in an Institutional Mid-Century Modern style and retains its historic exterior features and interior layout and features.

The one-story gate house with one-and-a-half-story guard tower has an L-shaped footprint with a poured concrete foundation, limestone veneer cladding, and a flat roof with deep, aluminum-clad eaves and asphalt shingles. Portions of the roof are edged with painted metal security rails and razor wire. The gate house features rectangular window openings with concrete sills and headers. Original drawings indicate the building had steel sash windows. The extant windows are predominantly glass block, and the window openings along the east elevation are covered with metal security grills. The guard tower's upper half story features metal-framed, replacement observation windows with wood trim and cladding and a flat roof with deep, aluminum-clad eaves. The gate house has two north-facing entrances that are accessed by concrete ramps with metal pipe railings. The entrances contain utilitarian metal doors with glazed viewing panels. A stone memorial panel dated to 1949 is set in the wall above the main north-facing entrance at the east end of the gate house.

East Prison Wall (#30a, Contributing Structure)
Date: 1858-1960
Architects: Boyington & Wheelock
Contractors: Lorenzo P. Sanger & Samuel K. Casey

The east prison wall was constructed between 1858 and 1860 using convict labor. The wall is approximately 830 feet in length and 32-35 feet tall with a base approximately 6 feet in depth. The wall runs north-south along the west side of Collins Street, with a narrow grass strip and concrete pathway between the wall and the street. The wall is constructed of rough-cut, cream-colored Joliet limestone blocks in a broken course pattern. The top of the wall has limestone coping, with limestone modillions on the street-facing side. The wall's upper interior and top are lined with razor wire and barbed wire. The north and south ends of the wall each terminate at a taller limestone guard tower. The middle portion of the wall has an entrance with a metal sally port and a guard tower.

North Prison Wall (#30b, Contributing Structure)
Date: 1860

Architects: Boyington & Wheelock
Contractors: Lorenzo P. Sanger & Samuel K. Casey

The north prison wall was completed by 1860 using convict labor. The wall is approximately 830 feet in length and 32-35 feet tall with a base approximately 6 feet in depth. The wall runs east-west and forms the north boundary of the prison. Hills Avenue runs west from Collins Street along the east portion of the wall, and a circulation driveway jogs south from Hills Avenue closer to the north wall along its west portion. The wall is constructed of rough-cut, cream-colored Joliet limestone blocks in a broken course pattern. The top of the wall has limestone coping, with limestone modillions on the outer side. The wall's upper interior and top are lined with razor wire and barbed wire. At the wall's center point is an arched entryway that has been infilled with limestone blocks and concrete parging. Sanborn maps show a guard house at the top of the wall above the opening, which was subsequently removed. The east and west ends of the wall terminate at taller limestone guard towers.

West Prison Wall (#30c, Contributing Structure)
Date: 1860
Architects: Boyington & Wheelock
Contractors: Lorenzo P. Sanger & Samuel K. Casey

The west prison wall was completed by 1860 using convict labor. The wall is approximately 830 feet in length and 32-35 feet tall with a base approximately 6 feet in depth. The wall runs north-south and forms the prison's west boundary. The area outside this prison wall historically contained switch railroad tracks for the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad, industrial warehouses operated by the penitentiary, and main tracks for the Chicago and Alton Railroad. The switch tracks have been abandoned and paved over with a concrete driveway that continues from the north boundary south to a concrete parking pad servicing a modern electric substation and tower. The Chicago and Alton main railroad tracks are extant and are now owned by the Union Pacific Railroad Company. Amtrack and Chicago's Metra communiter rail Heritage Corridor line also operate on these tracks by agreement. The wall is constructed of rough-cut, cream-colored Joliet limestone blocks in a broken course pattern. The top of the wall has limestone coping, with limestone modillions on the outer side. The wall's upper interior and top are lined with razor wire and barbed wire. The north and south ends of the wall each terminate at a taller limestone guard tower. The middle portion of the wall has an entrance with a metal sally port and a guard tower.

Southeast (#31a), Northeast (#31d), Northwest (#31e), and Southwest (#31h) Guard Towers (Contributing Structures)
Date: Southeast Tower: 1859-1860, Northeast Tower: 1860, Northwest Tower: 1860, Southwest Tower: ca. 1860-1865
Architects: Boyington & Wheelock
Contractors: Lorenzo P. Sanger & Samuel K. Casey

The guard towers placed at the southeast, northeast, northwest, and southwest corners of the prison walls are consistent in design and historically served as the prison's original main guard towers. The southeast, northeast, and northwest guard towers were completed by 1860 and the southwest guard tower was finished between 1860 and 1865; all were built using convict labor.

Each four-story guard tower is designed in the Gothic Revival style and is approximately 60 feet tall with an octagonal footprint. The towers are constructed of rough-cut, cream-colored Joliet limestone blocks laid in a coursed pattern. Limestone rounded bartizans project from each corner at the base of the fourth-story observation level, which are alterations dating to ca. 1950 when the prison was modernized. The observation level is a cream brick structure with paired, aluminum-framed, one-over-one windows in openings with limestone sills and brick headers. The observation level has a polygonal hipped roof with asphalt shingles. The tower entrances from outside the prison are set within narrow, recessed window openings with metal doors; entrances from the prison yard have been infilled (southeast). Concrete stoops with limestone block foundations and metal handrails lead to the outer entrances, except for the southwest tower, which has a taller, battered base with a metal stair leading up to the outer entrance. Lower-story windows are set within narrow slit openings with splayed sills and label mold lintels and contain either glass blocks or limestone block infill.

East (#31b) and West (#31f) Guard Towers (Contributing Structures)
Date: East Guard Tower – ca. 1948, West Guard Tower – ca. 1950

The prison's east and west entrances likely originally had guard towers, and these are shown on the 1873 Bird's Eye View of the prison, however, no guard towers were shown at these entrances on the 1886 – 1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps. Historically, the west entrance was used more heavily than the east entrance due to its relative proximity to the river and the railroad. The present east and west guard towers were constructed during the large-scale modernization of the prison that occurred between 1947 and 1953.

The east guard tower was completed ca. 1948 and sits immediately north of the east sallyport facing Collins Street. The west guard tower was completed ca. 1950 and sits immediately north of the west sallyport facing the Metra commuter rail tracks. The towers are consistent in design and reflect an Institutional Mid-Century Modern style that differentiates them from the prison's original corner guard towers. Each is three stories tall with a square base constructed of rough-cut, cream-colored limestone blocks in a coursed pattern. The upper story containing the observation room has a cut stone base with stuccoed pebbledash siding, projecting polygonal bay windows with aluminum-framed, one-light sashes, and a polygonal hipped roof with asphalt shingles. A metal door is on the north wall of the tower base and additional doors are located on the top level and access the top of the prison wall.

East (#31c) and West (#31g) Sallyports (Contributing Structures)
Date: East Sallyport – ca. 1950, West Sallyport – 1952

The prison's east and west entrances originally had sallyports as seen on the 1873 Bird's Eye View of the prison and the 1886 – 1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps. Historically, the west entrance was used more heavily than the east entrance due to its relative proximity to the river and the railroad. The present east and west sallyports were constructed during the large-scale modernization of the prison that occurred between 1947 and 1953.

The east sallyport was completed ca. 1950 and faces Collins Street. It controls access to a flat-arch entrance in the east prison wall wide enough for a vehicle and consists of a shallow flat-topped metal cage lined with security spikes and razor wire. The west sallyport is larger and was completed in 1952. It controls access to an arched entrance with double-leaf metal doors in the west prison wall that is wide enough to accommodate a vehicle. It consists of a concrete foundation topped with a concrete structural

frame spanned with double-leaf metal grill doors, metal grills panels, and a flat metal grill roof with razor wire at the cornice. A small concrete guard shack is located within the southeast corner of the west sallyport.

Administration Building (#2a, Contributing Building)
Date: 1867 – 1868
Architects: Boyington & Wheelock

Construction on the prison's Administration Building was completed in 1868 using convict labor. Historic drawings show the lower floors were occupied by offices and administrative spaces, and the third floor served as the warden's residence. Beginning in 1870, the fourth floor was used to house women inmates until the Joliet Women's Prison was completed in 1896. The Administration Building is centered along the south edge of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet's enclosed area and is flanked on the east and west by the prison's cell blocks (#3, #29). The Administration Building, East and West Cell Block wings, and East and West Schoolhouses form the south end of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet and present a stylistically unified, public-facing facade for the enclosed grounds.

The four-story and basement Administration Building was designed in the Gothic Revival style and faces south towards the Gate House (#1) and a paved area that is enclosed with chain link fencing topped with razor wire and barbed wire. The masonry structure has a square footprint and is clad with rubble and rock-faced, cream-colored Joliet limestone; ashlar blocks are laid in regular courses on the south, east, and west façades and rubblestone is laid in broken courses on the north façade, which faces the prison yard. The exposed, subterranean basement level along the south façade is clad with rock-faced limestone blocks with a stone water table and fronted with a ground-level stone retaining wall topped with a spiked metal fence. The building has a hipped roof with asphalt composite shingles and crenellated parapet walls. The roof has collapsed, along with partial areas of interior upper floors. Five-story octagonal towers topped with battlements rise from the southeast and southwest corners of the building. A polygonal turret with a rounded stone apron and battlements rises from the northeast corner beginning at the second story and terminating above the parapet wall. Stone belt courses line the bottom and top of the third story on the south, east, and west façades. The cornice features an ornamental frieze with repeating quatrefoils on the south, east, and west façades.

A two-story entrance pavilion projects from the center bay on the south façade. The first story of the entrance pavilion has a stone foundation supporting two-story limestone piers with carved inset lancet arches and gablets; a solid limestone balustrade bridges the piers at the second story. A concrete stoop leads to the entrance, which contains double-leaf, aluminum-frame doors flanked with sidelights and topped with a transom. The entrance pavilion's second story features a square enclosed guard tower with wood siding, aluminum-frame windows, and a hipped roof; this structure was built in ca. 1950 and replaced an original sunroom / conservatory. The center bay above the entrance pavilion slightly projects from the façade and is outlined with polygonal pilasters that rise above the roofline and are topped with polygonal turrets with inset panels carved with pointed arches. A carved limestone shield ornaments the wall between the pilasters. The highly decorative stepped parapet wall above the shield features repeating pointed arches, inset carved geometric shapes, and crenelation.

The building is regularly fenestrated with rectangular window openings on the façades and tall, narrow slit window openings on the corner towners. Window openings on the primary façades, towers, and turrets

have stone label mold lintels and splayed limestone surrounds; openings on the north façade have heavy stone lintels and stone sills. Windows throughout the building are predominantly replacement, aluminum-frame, one-over-one sashes or glass blocks. A few historic wood-frame sashes remain in the corner towers. Many windows have metal security bars. A secondary entrance containing a single-leaf metal door is placed at the southwest corner. A one-story entrance pavilion with a flat roof is located at the center of the north façade. This entrance pavilion faces a small grass lawn with a concrete pathway that is enclosed with a chain link fence.

The Administration Building reflects the Gothic Revival style in its soaring corner towers and turrets, carved lancet arch and quatrefoil motifs, crenellations, battlements, and label mold window lintels. It is the most ornately designed building in the penitentiary and reflects the historic design motif for the prison grounds. Exterior alterations occurred within the period of significance and include window replacement, the second-story guard tower at the entrance pavilion, and the entrance bay at the north façade. The roof has collapsed, along with partial areas of the upper floors. Despite its deteriorating condition, the Administration Building retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic exterior design, historic interior layout, historic building materials, and historic function.

Interior

Historic blueprints for the first and second floors show part of the Administration Building's original interior layout. The first floor contained administrative rooms organized around a central axis of crossed north-south and east-west oriented corridors. The main stair led to the south corridor hall, which was narrower than the north corridor hall. Secondary stairs were placed at the ends of the east-west corridor. The southeast portion of the floor contained the warden's office, a reception room, public bathrooms, and a private office. The southwest portion contained a visitor's room and two offices. The northwest portion contained a large office and the northeast featured a prisoner's visiting room and an ammunition closet.

The second and third floors of the Administration Building contained the warden's apartments. Historic blueprints for the second floor of the building show a center stair opening into a T-shaped corridor. The living room and parlor were situated to the east and west of the south leg of the corridor. The south portion of the floor also contained southeast and southwest bedrooms opening into small turret rooms, and a smaller den and bedroom. A sunroom / conservatory was located at the south end of the corridor, within the building's entrance portico. Secondary stairwells were placed at the east and west ends of the north leg of T-shaped corridor; the elevator was located along the north side of the corridor near the west stairwell. The dining room occupied the center-north portion of the floor. To the east of the dining room was the kitchen, butler's pantry, and a bathroom. To the west were two small bedrooms and bathrooms, and a linen closet. No blueprints are available for the third and fourth floors of the Administration Building—because of a partial collapse of the roof and upper floors of the building, the third and fourth floors are not accessible.

The interior today is deteriorated due to vacancy and the collapse of the roof and partial collapse of upper floors. However, the historic layout is largely intact and some historic building materials are extant. The entrance pavilion's vestibule has decorative plaster columns, a Tudor-arch entryway with wood trim and arched wood door frames, and plaster walls and ceilings. The main stair hall has historic tiled floors, plaster walls, wood trim, round-arch room entryways with wood trim, historic wood stair with historic iron balusters, wood banister, and wood newel post, and plaster ceiling. Historic materials extant in some

first-floor administrative offices include wood baseboards and window trim, plaster or wood-paneled walls, arched entryways with carved wood trim, carved wood doors, and plaster ceilings, some with decorative plasterwork. The second-floor stair hall leading to the warden's apartment is intact and retains plaster walls, wood trim, and plaster ceiling, and the intact second floor apartment corridor has original arched entryways with ornate wood tracery, carved wood doors, and plaster walls and ceilings. The apartment living room, west parlor, southeast bedroom, and southwest bedroom are accessible, but the north portion of the second floor is not safe to access. Historic building materials in the apartment include plaster walls, wood trim, arched entryway with ornate wood tracery, carved wood fireplace mantle, and carved wood doors. Flooring is typically vinyl composite tile, and some plaster ceilings remain.

West Cell Block (#3, Contributing Building)
Date: 1866
Architects: Boyington & Wheelock

The West Cell Block was completed in 1866 using convict labor and is one of two cell blocks, the other being the 1860 East Cell Block (#29) that were designed by Boyington & Wheelock as part of the original prison plan. The West Cell Block is located at the south edge of the enclosed prison grounds and extends west from the Administration Building (#2a). The West Schoolhouse (#4) abuts the West Cell Block's west façade. An open grass lawn is to the north. The Administration Building, East and West Cell Block wings, and East and West Schoolhouses form the south end of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet and present a stylistically unified, public-facing façade for the enclosed grounds.

Larger than the earlier East Cell Block, the West Cell Block was designed to contain five tiers of cells, totaling 500 jail cells, that were set back from the exterior walls. Each cell was seven by four feet and meant to house one prisoner, although there were usually two inmates due to overcrowding. The current cell blocks within the building date to the large-scale renovation of the prison from 1947 through 1953. The original cells were removed and replaced with larger modernized cells with plumbing, creating approximately 320 cells total. Each contained spring beds, a toilet, and lavatory with running water. The building's window openings were enlarged during the renovation to admit more sunlight into the cell block.

The two-story and basement Gothic Revival style West Cell Block has a rectangular footprint with longer north and south façades that are each approximately forty feet in length and divided into twelve bays. The building is clad with rock-faced, cream-colored Joliet limestone with ashlar blocks laid in regular courses on the south (outer-facing) façade and rubble blocks laid in broken courses on the north façade facing the prison yard. The building has a cornice ornamented with limestone block modillions, limestone parapet walls, and a hipped roof clad in replacement asphalt composite material with covered skylights. At the south façade's west end is a rounded two-story corner tower, and at the west end of the north façade is a rounded turret. Bays on the south façade are divided by stone buttresses. The center bay on the south façade contains a polygonal tower, installed sometime after 1992, with a canted entrance containing a single-leaf metal door guarded with a metal sallyport and accessed via a concrete stair with a limestone base. The center bay on the north façade contains a square-shaped entrance tower, also installed sometime after 1992, with a single-leaf metal door, metal sallyport, and access stair. The windows date to the late 1940s renovation and feature double-height openings with limestone surrounds and a heavy limestone mullion dividing steel louvered windows faced with metal security bars.

The interior cell blocks dating to the late 1940s are intact and consist of two horizontal lines of stacked cells with metal bars and concrete partitions that are arranged back-to-back facing the north and south walls of the building. Floors and ceilings are painted concrete.

The West Cell Block is highly intact and reflects the Gothic Revival style through its stone buttresses and corner tower and turret. Alterations within the period of significance include the interior cell remodeling in the late 1940s and the enlargement of the window openings. The center bay entrance towers on the north and south façades were installed between 1992 and 2002, during the period of significance. The West Cell Block retains good integrity and clearly communicates its historic design and function.

Shed (#2b, Contributing Building/Structure)
Date: ca. 1980

This one-story shed was constructed ca. 1980 and projects from the east end of the West Cell Block's (#3) south façade. A paved concrete drive leading from a larger paved area fronts the shed. The shed's specific function is unknown. The shed is one bay wide and two bays deep. It has rock-faced, cream-colored, coursed Joliet limestone cladding and a flat roof with stone coping. On the west façade are two spaced entrances containing double-leaf metal doors. A window opening immediately north of the south entrance is covered with metal security bars. The south façade contains an entrance that is downsized with metal panels and a metal-frame window opening.

The shed was built within the period of significance and retains sufficient integrity to communicate its original design.

East Cell Block (#29, Contributing Building)
Date: 1860
Architects: Boyington & Wheelock

The East Cell Block was completed in 1860, using convict labor, and is one of two cell blocks, the other being the 1865 West Cell Block (#3) that were designed by Boyington & Wheelock as part of the original prison plan. The East Cell Block is located at the south edge of the enclosed prison grounds and extends east from the Administration Building (#2a). The East Schoolhouse (#28) abuts the East Cell Block's east façade. A shallow grass lawn with concrete pathways and the Gymnasium/ Multipurpose Building (#26) are to the north. The Administration Building, East and West Cell Block wings, and East and West Schoolhouses form the south end of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet and present a stylistically unified, public facade for the enclosed grounds.

Smaller than the West Cell Block constructed five years later, the East Cell Block was designed to contain four tiers of cells, totaling 400 jail cells, that were set back from the exterior walls. Each cell was seven by four feet and meant to house one prisoner. The current cell blocks within the building were renovated in 1951, coinciding with the large-scale renovation of the prison from 1947 through 1953. The original cells were removed and replaced with larger modernized cells with plumbing, and a floor was placed between the second and third cell tiers. Each cell had tiled walls, concrete floors, a lavatory, a small table and stool secured to the floor, and a barred metal door. The building's window openings were enlarged during the renovation to admit more sunlight into the cell block.

The two-story and basement Gothic Revival style East Cell Block has a rectangular footprint with longer north and south façades that are approximately forty feet in length and divided into twelve bays. The building is clad with rock-faced, cream-colored Joliet limestone with ashlar blocks laid in regular courses on the south (outer-facing) façade and rubble blocks laid in broken courses on the north façade facing the prison yard. The building has a cornice ornamented with limestone block modillions, limestone parapet walls, and a hipped roof clad in replacement asphalt composite material with covered skylights. At the south façade's east end is a rounded two-story corner tower, and at the east end of the north façade is a rounded turret. Bays on the south façade are divided by stone buttresses. The center bay on the south façade contains a two-story square tower constructed of rock-faced concrete masonry units, installed during the 1980s. It has an entrance containing a single-leaf metal door guarded with a metal sallyport. The center bay on the north façade contains a tower of identical construction. The building's windows date to the 1951 renovation and feature double-height openings with limestone surrounds and a heavy limestone mullion. Windows on the south façade are multi-light opaque glass with small, single-light inner sashes and exterior security bars. Windows on the north façade are steel louvers.

The interior layout and cell blocks dating to 1951 are intact and consist of two horizontal lines of stacked cells with metal doors and concrete partitions that are arranged back-to-back facing the north and south walls of the building. The jail cells have tiled walls, concrete floors, a lavatory, a small table and stool secured to the floor, and a barred metal door. Walkways between each stacked tier feature metal railings. Floors and ceilings are painted concrete.

The East Cell Block is highly intact and reflects the Gothic Revival style through its stone buttresses, block modillion cornice, and corner tower and turret. Alterations within the period of significance include the interior cell remodeling in 1951 and the enlargement of the window openings. The center bay entrance towers on the north and south façades were installed in the 1980s, during the period of significance. The East Cell Block retains good integrity and clearly communicates its historic design and function.

West Schoolhouse (#4, Contributing Building)
Date: ca. 1888 – 1889

The West Schoolhouse, completed in 1889-1889, is appended to the west end of the West Cell Block (#3) and sits at the southwest corner of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet. Like the East and West Cell Blocks and the Administration Building (#2a), the West Schoolhouse was designed in the Gothic Revival style. A similarly designed East Schoolhouse (#28) was completed the following year and appended to the east end of the East Cell Block (#29). The Administration Building, East and West Cell Block wings, and East and West Schoolhouses form the south end of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet and present a stylistically unified, public facade for the enclosed grounds.

The West and East Schoolhouses were used for educational instruction through the 1930s. The penitentiary's 1948 and 1979 site plans indicate the West Schoolhouse was later used as a garage. In the mid-1960s, a new school building (#5) was constructed within the prison yard to the north of the West Schoolhouse. The 2002 site plan shows the building used as a garage.

The three-story building is three bays wide with a rectangular footprint and a flat roof with parapet walls. It is constructed of stone with walls of rough-cut, cream-colored Joliet limestone blocks in a coursed pattern on the south (outer-facing façade) and broken courses on the north (prison-facing) façade (which

may be comprised of the original prison wall, according to an 1873 Will County Atlas Bird's eye View of the penitentiary). Bays on the south façade are divided with limestone buttresses. A rounded limestone tower rises along the southwest corner. A rounded limestone turret with a slit window rises from the northeast corner where the West Schoolhouse meets the West Cell Block. Rectangular first and second story window openings on the south façade have limestone label molds, quoined stone trim, and splayed stone sills. The window openings are infilled with split-face cement blocks. There are no windows on the north façade. The cornice at the south façade is ornamented with three rows of modillion blocks of varying sizes. Within the prison yard, a small rectangular area abutting the north façade is paved with concrete and enclosed with chain link fencing topped with razor and barbed wire.

The West Schoolhouse displays the Gothic Revival style through its rough-cut masonry, stone buttresses, decorative window lintels, quoining, cornice ornamentation, and corner tower. The West Schoolhouse retains sufficient integrity and clearly communicates its historic design. Alterations are minimal and include the infilling of window openings and the alteration of the roof shape from gabled to flat sometime after 1961, based on historic aerial photographs.

East Schoolhouse (#28, Contributing Building)
Date: ca. 1890

The East Schoolhouse, completed ca. 1890, is appended to the east end of the East Cell Block (#29) and sits at the southeast corner of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet. Like the East and West Cell Blocks and the Administration Building (#2a), the East Schoolhouse was designed in the Gothic Revival style. A similarly designed West Schoolhouse (#4) was completed the previous year and appended to the west end of the West Cell Block (#3). The Administration Building, East and West Cell Block wings, and East and West Schoolhouses form the south end of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet and present a stylistically unified, public-facing facade for the enclosed grounds.

The West and East Schoolhouses were used for educational instruction through the 1930s. In 1933, the East Schoolhouse was used as a Barber School, and in 1948 it was used as a Barber Shop. A 1953 annual report indicated the building would be remodeled for continued use as a school. In the mid-1960s, a new school building (#5) was constructed within the prison yard to the north of the West Schoolhouse. The 1979 and 2002 site plans show the building used for Reception and Classification.

The two-story building is three bays wide with a rectangular footprint and a flat roof with parapet walls. It is constructed of stone with walls of rough-cut, cream-colored Joliet limestone blocks in a coursed pattern on the south (outer-facing façade) and broken courses on the north (prison-facing) façade. Bays on the south façade are divided with limestone buttresses. A rounded, three-story limestone tower rises along the southeast corner. The tower has slit windows with glass block infill, small Gothic-arched windows at the third story, and a flared cut stone cornice with a limestone parapet wall above. A rounded limestone turret with a slit window rises from the northwest corner where the East Schoolhouse abuts the East Cell Block. The cornice at the south façade is ornamented with two rows of modillion blocks. Rectangular first and second story window openings on the south façade have been infilled with rough-cut limestone blocks. The north façade is regularly fenestrated. The first story has deeply recessed rectangular window openings with steel security bars. The second story has rectangular window openings that have been infilled with metal louvers or split-face concrete blocks. An entrance at the west end of the north façade contains a

metal door with a viewing panel, and a stone memorial plaque above indicating the building was remodeled in 1953. Another entrance, deeply recessed, is located at the east end of the north façade.

The East Schoolhouse displays the Gothic Revival style through its rough-cut masonry, stone buttresses, quoining, cornice ornamentation, and corner tower with slit and lancet-arched windows. The East Schoolhouse retains sufficient integrity and clearly communicates its historic design. Alterations are minimal and include the infilling of window openings and a 1953 remodeling for continued use as a school.

School (#5, Contributing Building)
Date: 1966
Architects: Loebl, Schlossman, Bennett & Dart (design by Richard Bennett)

This 1966 school building replaced the educational function of the East and West Schoolhouses. The low, one-story school was designed in the Mid-Century Modern style and is located at the southwest end of the prison yard directly north of the West Schoolhouse. A Mid-Century Modern chapel (#6), also designed by Richard Bennett of Loebl, Schlossman, Bennett & Dart and constructed at the same time as the school building, abuts the school's north elevation. The school has a rectangular footprint with longer east and west façades, with the main entrance centered in the east façade facing the prison yard. A concrete sidewalk abuts the east façade. The school is clad with long, horizontal rock-faced Roman stones in cream and red hues laid in a broken course pattern and has a low-pitched, side-gabled roof with overhanging eaves and metal flashing. The gabled entrance bay contains double-leaf, aluminum-frame doors with wide, aluminum-frame sidelights. A heavy limestone lintel tops the doors and has affixed metal lettering reading "MAKE TIME SERVE YOU." The building's east and south façades are largely unfenestrated.

The school interior features a wide double-loaded corridor lined with classrooms. The corridor leads north to the chapel and has concrete flooring, tiled walls, and metal tiled ceiling panels. Extant classroom doors are either solid wood or metal single leaf doors with large metal-framed window walls looking into the classrooms from the corridor; most of the glazing has been broken or removed. Classrooms have concrete floors and tiled or concrete block walls.

The school displays the Mid-Century Modern style through its long and low horizontal massing, Roman stone cladding laid in broken courses, and flat roof with overhanging eaves. The school interior has deteriorated with vacancy but overall, the building has few alterations and retains sufficient integrity to clearly communicate its historic design and function.

Chapel (#6, Contributing Building)
Date: 1966
Architects: Loebl, Schlossman, Bennett & Dart

The chapel was completed in 1966 and designed in the Mid-Century Modern style by Richard Bennett of Loebl, Schlossman, Bennett & Dart. It held religious services for prisoners and served as a meeting space. The chapel is located at the north end of the 1966 school (#5) within the southwest quadrant of the prison and faces east towards the prison yard. A concrete sidewalk abuts the east façade. The one-story chapel has a square footprint and long, horizontal rock-faced Roman stone cladding in cream and red hues laid in

a broken course pattern. The roof is a distinctive, pointed, polygonal or tented form that rises in height from its northeast to its southwest corner. The roof cladding and ridge are copper; smaller, diagonal, parallel copper ridges extent from the main ridgeline and create a repetitive geometric visual effect. A steel sphere and pointed spire rise from the southwest corner. The chapel's main entrance is at the north end of the east façade and contains recessed double-leaf metal doors with glass block sidelights. The sidelights feature Intaglio glass blocks, which contain a recessed glass area in the shape of an hourglass or oval, and a textured, grey-colored, opaque surface level. A large limestone entablature above the entrance is carved with the phrase "MAKE YE A NEW HEART AND A NEW SPIRIT" with "EZEKIAL 18-31" below in smaller lettering and a carved limestone open book above with Roman numerals I through X, referencing the Ten Commandments. Four full-height vertical window openings to the south of the entrance contain three columns of Intaglio glass blocks. Four vertical Intaglio glass block windows are also placed along the north façade. These east and north façade windows illuminate the interior sanctuary.

The sanctuary features a concrete floor, textural brick wall cladding with recessed and projecting masonry units, and a vaulted, beamed ceiling with original suspended lighting fixtures. A simple altar is set on a raised platform at the southwest corner with a triangular window with diamond-shaped lights above.

The chapel reflects the Mid-Century Modern style in its Roman stone cladding laid in broken courses, Intaglio geometric glass block windows, and expressive, sweeping, copper-clad roof with geometric steel spire. The chapel interior, particularly the ceiling, has deteriorated with vacancy but overall, the building has few alterations and retains a high level of integrity.

Industrial Shop, Center-West (#7, Contributing Building)
Date: ca. 1858 – 1861
Architects: Boyington & Wheelock
Contractors: Lorenzo P. Sanger & Samuel K. Casey

The Center-West Industrial Shop is located along the center axis of the prison, at the far west end of the enclosed area. It was constructed sometime between 1858 and 1861 and is one of a number of extant workshop buildings that were part of the original prison plan. This building's original function is unknown. An 1876 site plan shows the first floor in use as a stone cutting shop for E.R. Brainard & Co. and the second floor was used by Selz, Schwab & Co. as a boot and shoe shop. After the outlaw of contract labor in prisons in 1904, the building was most likely continued in industrial use as part of the prison industries system. In 1956, the building was repurposed to contain a first-floor laundry and a second-floor library; these functions are also shown on the 2002 site plan.

The two-story building has a rectangular footprint with longer east and west façades featuring twelve bays. It has rubble and rock-faced, cream-colored Joliet limestone walls laid in broken courses and a side-gabled roof with asphalt shingles. Centered entrances within segmented-arched stone openings are located on the east and west façades. The rectangular window openings have rock-faced limestone lintels and sills and are infilled with glass blocks, some with inset hopper sashes. A cornerstone at the north end of the east façade notes the building was remodeled in 1956. The south façade lacks fenestration. The north façade has a centered, segmented-arch stone entrance opening at the first and second stories. The first story entrance partially infilled with cement blocks and contains a single-leaf opening. The second story entrance is partially infilled with limestone and has offset, double-leaf metal doors. A metal stair leads up to the second-story entrance.

The building's interior remains an open industrial space and has concrete floors, exposed masonry walls, and concrete columns and ceiling beams. A partitioned room with concrete block walls is located at the north end.

The Center-West Industrial Shop was remodeled in 1956 and its south portion was removed within the period of significance to accommodate the construction of the School (#5) and Chapel (#6). Overall, the building continues to clearly communicate its historic design and functions and retains sufficient integrity.

Industrial Shop, Northwest (#8, Contributing Building)
Date: ca. 1858 – 1861
Architects: Boyington & Wheelock
Contractors: Lorenzo P. Sanger & Samuel K. Casey

The Northwest Industrial Shop is located in the northwest quadrant of the prison yard and was constructed between 1858 and 1861. A grass strip abuts the west façade and a concrete pathway abuts the east façade. A concrete driveway leads to the south façade from the prison's main east-west street. It is one of a number of extant workshop buildings that were part of the original prison plan. The original use is unknown. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps from 1886, 1891, and 1898 show the building in use as a boot & shoe shop by Selz, Schwab & Co. After the outlaw of contract labor in prisons in 1904, the building was most likely continued in industrial use as part of the prison industries system. In 1948, the building was used as a fiber shop. Between 1948 and 1979, it was repurposed for mechanical storage and use as a vocational school. These uses are also reflected on the 2002 site plan.

The Northwest Industrial Shop has a rectangular footprint with longer east and west façades. The north portion of the building is two stories, and the south portion is one story; each portion has sixteen bays on the east and west façades. The building has rubble and rock-faced, cream-colored Joliet limestone walls laid in broken courses and a side-gabled roof with asphalt shingles. The north portion has gabled parapet walls with shoulders on the north and south façades. A small, one-story concrete block addition is placed at the south end of the west façade. Window openings have painted heavy stone lintels and stone sills, and entrances have stone segmented-arch openings. Entrances are located on the north portion's north façade and the north and south end of its east façade, and on the south portion's east façade at the south end, and on its south façade. Entrance openings have been largely infilled with limestone or concrete block and have metal utilitarian doors. Window openings are predominantly infilled with glass blocks or concrete blocks and first-story windows on the east façade have metal security bars. A metal staircase leads up to the second-story entrance at the north end of the east façade.

The Northwest Industrial Shop has experienced minimal alterations consisting primarily of window and entrance infill. The south portion's second story was removed by 1961 within the period of significance. Overall, this building has sufficient integrity to communicate its historic design and functions.

Marble Cutting Shop (#9, Contributing Building)
Date: ca. 1858 – 1861
Architects: Boyington & Wheelock
Contractors: Lorenzo P. Sanger & Samuel K. Casey

The Marble Cutting Shop was constructed between 1858 and 1861 is one of a number of extant workshop buildings that were part of the original prison plan. It is located in the northwest quadrant of the enclosed prison grounds immediately east of the Industrial Shop Northwest (#8). It is encircled by a grass lawn with a paved concrete driveway running near its north end and a driveway from its south façade leading to the main east-west center street. The original use is unknown. The building was a marble cutting shop for the Burlington Manufacturing Company in 1886 and for E.R. Brainard & Co. in 1891. In 1898 it housed woodworking machinery for the Frankfort Chair Company. After the outlaw of contract labor in prisons in 1904, the building was most likely continued in industrial use as part of the prison industries system. The building served as a machine shop throughout the 20th century and in 2002.

The Marble Cutting Shop has a rectangular footprint with longer east and west façades. The building is one story; the north portion has seven bays along the longer facades and a side-gabled roof with asphalt shingles and gabled parapet walls with shoulders at the north and south ends. The building's south portion has eleven bays along the longer facades and a flat roof. A one-story, concrete block garage addition with two vehicular openings and a shed-on-hip roof with asphalt shingles projects from the south end of the east façade. The Marble Cutting Shop has rubble and rock-faced, cream-colored Joliet limestone walls laid in broken courses. Window openings have painted heavy stone lintels and stone sills, and entrances have stone segmented-arch openings. The north façade entrance has double-leaf metal doors and a chain link security gate. Former entrances on the west façade have been infilled with limestone and glass blocks. The south façade has a centered recessed entrance with double-leaf metal doors topped with a tall transom area filled with a metal panel. Above this entrance are cut metal letters reading MACHINE SHOP. A recessed secondary entrance with a single-leaf metal door is to the west of this entrance. Windows are predominantly infilled with glass blocks and metal hopper sashes.

The Marble Cutting Shop's alterations consist predominantly of infilled window openings and downsized entrances. The south portion's roof was changed from pitched to flat sometime after the 1930s but within the period of significance. The one-story concrete block garage addition was added within the period of significance. Overall, the building retains sufficient integrity to communicate its historic design and functions.

Industrial Shop, North (#10, Contributing Building)
Date: ca. 1858 – 1861
Architects: Boyington & Wheelock
Contractors: Lorenzo P. Sanger & Samuel K. Casey

The North Industrial Shop was constructed between 1858 and 1861 is one of a number of extant workshop buildings that were part of the original prison plan. It is located at the north end of the northwest quadrant of the enclosed prison grounds. A paved area and concrete pathway with ramps leading to a slightly elevated platform front the building's south façade. The original use is unknown. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps show the building in use as a boot and shoe factory by Selz, Schwab & Co. in 1886 through 1891; the first floor was also used by the Frankfort Chair Company. The building was converted into an honor dorm sometime between 1948 and 1979, but likely during the 1950s. The building remained in use as an honor dorm until the prison closed in 2002.

This two-story Industrial Shop has a rectangular footprint with longer south and north façades with approximately thirty bays. The building is clad with rubble and rock-faced, cream-colored Joliet limestone

walls laid in broken courses and has a side-gabled roof with asphalt shingles. The shorter east and west façades have gabled parapet walls with shoulders; there is also a parapet wall with shoulders in the center of the roof mass, indicating a fire wall. There are multiple first and second-story entrances along the south façade, which faces the prison yard. The entrances largely contain recessed single-leaf metal doors and are topped with heavy stone lintels. Second-story entrances are accessed via a flight of metal stairs with rolled metal handrails; second story entrances accessed via exterior stairs are a historic feature of the building as evidenced on late 1800s Sanborn maps. The east façade features a first story entrance with a rock-faced, segmented-arch stone lintel that has been infilled with concrete blocks and a second-story entrance accessed by metal stairs. The west façade has a second-story entrance accessed via a metal staircase and an entrance with a rock-faced, segmented-arch stone lintel that has been infilled with limestone blocks and a glass block window. Window openings throughout the building have heavy stone lintels and stone sills and are predominantly filled with glass blocks, although the first-story windows on the south façade are infilled with concrete blocks with smaller glass block windows.

The second-floor interior space was subdivided, likely in the 1950s, to create dormitory rooms. Exposed painted stone exterior walls and wood ceiling beams are evident throughout. The conversion into an honor dormitory occurred during the period of significance and reflects the evolution of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet. The building retains much of its historic exterior design features; later alterations within the period of significance include entrance and window infill. Overall, the building retains integrity and clearly communicates its historic design and functions.

Fire House (#11, Contributing Building)
Date: ca. 1914

The Fire House was constructed in 1914 and is located in the northwest quadrant of the enclosed prison grounds, immediately north of the main east-west street. The building sits to the east of the Marble Cutting Shop (#10) and to the west of the Reservoir (#16). A circular grass lawn abuts the north façade, and paved driveways and circulation areas abut the east and west façades. According to the 1886 and 1891 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps, this area of the prison originally housed a one-story wood-frame stone sawing building with an attached brick engine house and a small wood-frame structure housing an office and photo room. By 1898 these structures were gone and a brick tool house was located on the site. This tool house was expanded and remodeled in ca. 1914 into the fire house. From 1893 until the fire house was completed, the prison's fire department was housed within the northeast corner of the Powerhouse and Well Pump House (#13). The Fire House's first floor served as a fire station and the second floor contained sleeping quarters for inmates on fire duty and prison personnel. The 1979 site plan shows a water tank directly north of the fire house that was later demolished. The fire department was disbanded sometime after 1979. After this time, the first floor was used for storage and the second floor housed a graphic arts program and recreation/meeting space.

The two-story Fire House has an L-shaped footprint with the main entrance located along the inset southern portion of the east façade. The walls are rock-faced, cream-colored Joliet limestone laid in courses and the roof is flat with parapet walls with metal flashing. The building is regularly fenestrated with window and entrance openings that have heavy stone lintels and stone sills. The lintel over the primary entrance is inscribed with FIRE DEPT and the entrance contains double-leaf metal doors with metal security gates. The primary entrance is flanked with single-leaf entrances. The north portion of the east façade has a recessed first-story entrance with a metal door and a second-story entrance accessed via a

metal staircase. An original first-story entrance on the north façade has a segmented-arch limestone lintel and been infilled with limestone blocks. A former vehicular entrance fronted with a concrete ramp is located on the west façade and has been infilled with concrete blocks surrounding double-leaf metal doors secured with a chain link gate. A concrete platform accessed via a wooden stair abuts the southern portion of the west façade. First-story windows are primarily glass block, and some openings are secured with metal grills. Non-original, double-hung sashes remain in some of the second-story window openings.

Building alterations are primarily the infilling of windows and entrances within the original openings. The fire house retains sufficient integrity to communicate its historic design and function.

Yard Tower (#12, Contributing Structure)
Date: 1940
The Yard Tower was constructed in 1940 and was accessed via underground tunnels. The yard tower was used as a guard house and was located at the central point of the enclosed prison grounds, immediately west of the Reservoir (#16) and east of the Fire House (#11) on the north side of the main east-west street.

The four-story tower has a round form with original brick walls laid in a four-course common bond. A one-story block with original brick cladding and a concrete shed roof extends from the south side of the tower. A centered vertical column of stacked rows of soldier bricks rises up the south façade of the block and tower, terminating at the sill of a third-story slit window. The third story has four regularly-spaced slit window openings containing aluminum-frame, one-over-one sashes with transoms. The fourth story contains an observation room with concrete block cladding and regularly-spaced rectangular window openings with aluminum-frame, one-over-one sashes. The tower has a low domed roof with standing seam metal cladding. No visible entrances are within the tower. The one-story block historically housed access to an underground tunnel.

The tower retains excellent integrity and clearly communicates its historic design and function.

Powerhouse and Well Pump House (#13, Contributing Building)
Date: 1893

The Powerhouse and Well Pump House was constructed in 1893 in the northeast corner of the southwest quadrant of the enclosed prison grounds. It was built directly south of the main east-west street, to the east of the Industrial Shop Center-West (#7). A large grass lawn is to the south of the building, and there are concrete paths cutting through a grass lawn on the east side of the building. A paved concrete area is to the west of the building. The Powerhouse and Well Pump House was built to provide a central source of power for the prison complex, which previously had been supplied through the state and various contractors operating prison labor within the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet. In addition to housing generators and boilers for the prison, the 1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows the northeast corner of the powerhouse contained the fire department until the 1914 Fire House (#11) was completed. The southern half of the original Powerhouse was heavily damaged by fire in the early 20th century and subsequently demolished.

The one-and-one-half story powerhouse has a square footprint and an asymmetrical side-gabled roof clad with corrugated metal. A tall, round, prominent red and brown brick chimney – originally 145 feet tall but

lowered in height in 2022 – rises along the center of the west façade.[1] The square brick chimney base has chamfered corners. The one-story, shed roof Well Pump House dates to the 1940s and projects from the north end of the Powerhouse's west façade. The Powerhouse and Well Pump House have rubble and rock-faced, cream-colored Joliet limestone walls laid in broken courses. The primary entrance is centered within the east façade. Entrance openings have segmented-arch, rock-face stone lintels. The primary entrance contains double-leaf doors with a chain-link security gate and a tall, metal transom panel. Two additional entrances in the east façade contain metal security gates. Window openings predominantly have heavy stone lintels and stone sills. Within the upper half-story beneath the gable are circular window openings; there are two on the west façade flanking the brick chimney and one on the east façade. The round window openings are framed with rock-faced limestone surrounds and contain circular metal grills. Window openings contain either wood or metal-frame sashes, or glass blocks. Most window openings are secured with metal bars. A raised one-story concrete block addition projects from the east end of the south façade. An L-shaped one-story concrete block addition projects from the south portion of the west façade.

The Powerhouse and Well Pump House retains good integrity. The southern half of the Powerhouse was demolished well within the period of significance due to fire damage. During the large-scale remodeling of the prison in the 1940s and 1950s, several one-story concrete block additions were constructed. The brick chimney was shortened at an unknown date but still retains its soaring scale. Overall, the buildings easily communicate their historic design and function.

South Guard Shack (#14, Contributing Building)
Date: Between 1979 and 1998

The South Guard Shack was built between 1979 and 1998. It is located at the south end of the enclosed prison grounds, immediately north of the Administration Building (#2a). The one-story, square-shaped, wood-frame guard shack faces south and is fronted with a concrete sidewalk and surrounded by a grass lawn with concrete pathways. The area containing the north and south guard shacks historically contained a two-story, rectangular row of connected limestone buildings that abutted the south side of the Solitary Building (#15) and extended southward towards the East Cell Block (#29). In 1898 this two-story building contained, from north to south, a shipping room and office, a harness department, a dining room, a kitchen, a bread room, a store, and a library. These were demolished in the 1940s.

The guard shack has a painted brick base with stone coping, painted wood board and batten siding, and a front-gabled roof with asphalt shingles and an enclosed eave with a stuccoed gable projecting over the south façade. A single-leaf entrance is in the south façade and windows on each façade are aluminum-frame, horizontal sliding sashes. The guard shack also appears to have functioned as a gate house.

The guard shack was constructed within the period of significance. With no apparent alterations, it retains integrity and communicates its original function and design.

A similar guard shack (the North Guard Shack) was constructed at the same time as the South Guard Shack but was demolished sometime after 2018.

Separate System Prison/Solitary Building (#15, Contributing Building)

[1] The bricks removed from the chimney in 2022 were retained and stored on site.

Date: 1862
Architects: Boyington & Wheelock

Constructed in 1862, the Separate System Prison/Solitary Building housed disruptive prisoners or inmates who had violated prison regulations. The south section of the Solitary Building held the prison cells. Along with the Women's Prison/Clothing Department / Bath House (#24), the Solitary Building is the only remaining portion of a series of connected buildings that initially housed many of the departments that supported the prison population. Extending south from the Solitary Building was a rectangular row of connected two-story limestone buildings that housed various functions throughout the latter half of the 1800s, including a chapel, library, kitchen, dining room, bread room, and storage rooms. These were demolished in the 1940s. The Solitary Building's north portion was originally a walled courtyard that contained a second-story polygonal structure at the northwest corner housing the deputy warden's office. In the 1940s, the deputy warden's office was demolished, and the courtyard was largely enclosed and roofed over except for a small area immediately north of the cell building. Inside the courtyard is an original cell taken from one of the cellhouses during the 1940s-1950s renovations. In 1979 the building continued to be a segregation area for prisoners and also housed clinical services.

The two-story south portion has a square footprint with the primary entrance facing south. The walls are rock-faced, cream-colored Joliet limestone laid in courses. The building has a front-gabled roof with gabled parapet walls with shoulders at the north and south façades. The centered, round-arch entrance in the south façade has a single-leaf door flanked with three-light sidelights and an arched metal panel in the transom. A limestone, round-arch entry hood with columns dating to 1956 shelters the entrance. A one-story, stuccoed outbuilding with a flat roof to the west of the entrance is a later addition. A rectangular window opening above the entrance contains steel bars. Window openings on the east and west facades are set at the top of each story and correspond to interior cells. The window openings have heavy stone label mold lintels and are infilled with a wood frame and louvers. A single, round-arched window pierces the two-story building's south façade and an entrance opens into the small portion of the courtyard that remains unroofed. The one-story north portion is clad with rubble and rock-faced, cream-colored Joliet limestone laid in broken courses and has a flat roof with asphalt shingles. A centered entrance on the south façade contains a single-leaf metal door with a small viewing pane within an opening with a heavy stone lintel. Window openings are recessed and have heavy stone lintels, limestone quoining, and stone sills. Windows are infilled with glass blocks and metal louvers, and some have metal security bars. The interior cells within the Solitary Building are extant and have concrete floors, walls, and ceilings and solid metal jail doors with small viewing panes. The cells are organized along a double-loaded corridor with stone floors. The inscription "IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO MEND" is set into the floor of the corridor just inside the south entrance of the building. The interior of the north building is subdivided into offices with tiles or carpeted floors, wood paneled walls, and acoustic tile ceilings.

Alterations to the Solitary Building, including the partial enclosure of the courtyard, occurred within the period of significance. The building retains good integrity, including the interior solitary cells, and clearly communicates its historic design and function.

Reservoir (#16, Contributing Structure)
Date: 1874

The reservoir was constructed in 1874 and is located near the center of the enclosed prison grounds, just north of the main east-west street and immediately west of the Marble Shop (#21). The reservoir served the penitentiary and primarily held wastewater.[2] According to the 1886 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map, the reservoir was forty feet in diameter and eight feet deep with the ability to hold 8,800 gallons. The 1898 Sanborn map notes an 89,000-gallon capacity. The reservoir was supplied from artesian wells and had several underground pipelines extending to various prison buildings.

The above-ground portion of the reservoir consists of a base comprised of a circular mound ringed with a deteriorating stacked rubble stone retaining wall and topped with grass. A smaller circular mound on top of the base is ringed with a stacked stone retaining wall and covered with grass. On the south side of the reservoir is a stone staircase leading from the main street to the top of the upper mound. The stone staircase has stacked stone knee walls. Metal pipes are visible protruding from the reservoir along the east side of the staircase.

The reservoir retains integrity and clearly communicates its historic function.

Mule Barn (#17, Contributing Building)
Date: ca. 1900 – 1930

The Mule Barn was constructed sometime between circa 1900 and 1930 and is visible on a 1930s aerial of the prison but is not shown on the 1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map. The Mule Barn is located in the northeast quadrant of the enclosed prison grounds, immediately southwest of the Warehouse / Stable (#18). To the south of the building is a grass lawn with a concrete pathway and to the north is a paved driveway leading to the Warehouse / Stable (#18). Site plans from 1948 show the Mule Barn as having been used as a garage by that time. The 1979 and 2002 site plans list the building's use as a warehouse and garage.

The one-and-a-half-story Mule Barn has a rectangular footprint and rock-faced, cream-colored Joliet limestone laid in broken courses. The building has a side-gabled roof with asphalt shingles. Entrances are located within the west end of the south façade and the center of the west façade. The south façade entrance has a large timber lintel, concrete block infill, and a single-leaf metal door. The west façade entrance has a stone lintel, concrete block infill, and double-leaf metal doors with a painted sign above that reads YARD DEPARTMENT. Window openings have heavy stone lintels and stone sills and contain glass blocks with metal security bars.

Alterations include downsized garage entrances and window infill. Overall, the building retains sufficient integrity to communicate its historic design and its historic function as a garage and warehouse during the period of significance.

Warehouse / Stable (#18, Contributing Building)
Date: prior to 1873

The Warehouse / Stable was built prior to 1873 and is visible on the 1873 Will County Atlas Bird's Eye Map. The building is located in the northeast quadrant of the enclosed prison grounds and is surrounded

[2] *Report of the Commissioners, Warden, Chaplain, Etc., of the Illinois State Penitentiary for the Year Ending November 30, 1874* (Springfield, IL: State Journal Printing Office, 1875), 7.

by grass lawns with concrete paths along the south, east, and north sides and a paved driveway leading to the west façade. The 1886 Sanborn Fire Insurance map shows the building in use as barrel storage for J.H. Winterbotham & Son's cooperage operation. By 1898, the west section of the building was used as a carriage house. The 1948 site plan lists the building as a stable, and the 1979 plan states that it housed the graphic arts program. In 2002, the building was shown as a data processing center.

The Warehouse / Stable has a rectangular footprint with longer north and south façades and the entrances located in the shorter east and west façades. The building has rock-faced, cream-colored Joliet limestone laid in broken courses and a front-gabled roof with asphalt shingles and metal flashing at the gable ends. The west façade has two limestone-infilled entrances with rock-faced, segmented-arch limestone lintels; a punched opening between these former entrances has a flat brick lintel and metal doors. The east façade contains a downsized entrance opening with a stone lintel, concrete block infill, and a single-leaf metal door with a glass block window above. The east portion of the north façade has window openings with heavy stone lintels, stone sills, and recessed glass block windows with metal security bars. At the far east end of the façade, pay phones are affixed to the wall and the area is enclosed with a chain link fence. The west portion of the south façade has large window openings with a continuous stone lintel, individual stone sills, and glass block infill. The building retains an open interior floorplan with concrete floors, exposed limestone walls, and an exposed wood beam truss ceiling.

Alterations include the downsizing of the east and west façade entrances and the infill of window openings. Overall, the building retains sufficient integrity to communicate its historic design and functions from the period of significance.

Auto Storage (#19, Contributing Building)
Date: Between 1948 and 1979

The Auto Storage shed was built between 1948 and 1979 and is located in the southeast corner of the northeast quadrant of the enclosed prison grounds. It sits directly north of the Textile Materials Storage / Wool Carding Shop (#20). A grass lawn abuts the north side of the shed. In the late 1800s, this area of the prison grounds was the site of connected limestone industrial shops for the Joliet Ratan & Reed Company; these buildings are not extant on the 1948 site plan. The shed first appears on the 1979 site plan as an automobile storage shed.

The one-story Auto Storage shed has a rectangular footprint with longer north and south façades. The shed has a structural steel frame with original corrugated metal walls and a low-pitched, front-gabled roof clad in standing seem metal. Vehicular entrances are located in the center of the north and east façades. The interior retains an open, utilitarian space as well as concrete block partitioned spaces.

The Auto Storage shed has no apparent alterations and retains sufficient integrity to communicate its historic design and function.

Textile Materials Storage / Wool Carding Shop (#20, Contributing Building)
Date: 1940

The Textile Materials Storage / Wool Carding Shop was constructed in 1940. The shop is located in the southeast corner of the prison's northeast quadrant. It sits directly north of the main east-west street. The

east prison wall is located to the east, the Marble Shop (#21) is located to the west, and the Auto Storage Shed (#19) is located to the north. This building served as a wool carding shop and a storage space for raw materials for the prison's large textile operation, which was located directly south. By 1979, the textile operation building was demolished, and the shop was used for automobile restoration. The 2002 prison site plan indicates the shop continued to be used for this purpose. The shop's roof and interior were destroyed by arson after the prison closed in 2002.

The one-story shop has a rectangular footprint with longer south and north façades. The south, west, and north façades are largely remaining, while the upper and central portions of the east façade and the roof were destroyed in the fire. The structural walls are brick masonry faced with rock-faced concrete blocks laid in regular courses with grapevine mortar joints. The shop was regularly fenestrated along the south and north façades with rectangular window openings with a continuous heavy concrete lintel that served as the cornice, concrete sills, and glass block windows. Most of the glass block windows were destroyed. A cornerstone is placed in the center of the south façade and provides the date of construction as 1940. Wider vehicular entrances are located at the east and west ends of the south façade. The interior concrete floor remains, as well as some interior concrete masonry unit partitions.

The Textile Materials Storage / Wool Carding Shop has experienced the loss of portions of the east façade, glass block windows, some interior walls and ceiling, and the roof due to arson that occurred after the prison closed. Despite the loss of some material elements of the building, the remaining elements sufficiently convey the historic design, including the use of rock-faced concrete block siding which echoed the late-19th-century rock-faced limestone industrial shops within the prison. Despite the arson damage, the shop retains sufficient integrity to communicate under Criterion A the industrial functions that continued at the prison into the 1940s.

Marble Shop (#21, Contributing Building)
Date: 1939, 1948

The Marble Shop (#21) is located along the southern edge of the northeast quadrant of the enclosed prison grounds. The building is directly north of the main east-west street. The Reservoir (#16) sits to the west and the Textile Materials Storage / Wool Carding Shop (#20) sits to the east. A Dry Kiln / Marble Shop (#22) is attached to the northwest corner of the building. The Marble Shop (#21) was constructed in two phases. Cornerstones indicate the smaller, one-story west portion was constructed in 1939 and the larger two-story building was constructed in 1948. The 1939 west portion connected the Marble Shop (#21) to the Dry Kiln / Marble Shop (#22) to the northwest. Historically, there was a larger dry kiln room attached to the north side of the Marble Shop (#21); this was demolished sometime before 1979. The 1979 and 2002 site plans show both Marble Shops (#21 and #22) used as a Mattress Factory. Like the adjacent Textile Materials Storage / Wool Carding Shop (#20), the Marble Shop (#21) was damaged by a fire sometime after the prison closed in 2002. The fire destroyed the roof, upper sections of the walls, and the interior of the 1948 building.

The 1948 Marble Shop is two stories with a square footprint, and the smaller, one-story 1939 portion has a rectangular footprint and is attached to the north end of the main building's west façade. The structural walls on both portions are brick masonry faced with rock-faced concrete blocks laid in regular courses with grapevine mortar joints. The remaining upper areas of the 1948 building's east and west façades indicate a side-gabled roof form, and the 1939 portion has a flat roof with metal flashing at the cornice.

The 1948 building's south façade is regularly fenestrated with two entrances on the first story containing double-leaf metal doors and a metal panel above. A second-story entrance in accessed via a metal staircase. Window openings have concrete lintels and sills and were filled with glass blocks; most of the glass blocks in the second story windows were destroyed by the fire. The west and east façades are regularly fenestrated with glass block windows and the east façade contains an entrance that has been downsized with a single-leaf metal door and concrete masonry units. The south façade of the 1939 portion contains a single-leaf metal door with a transom flanked by recessed glass block windows with a continuous heavy concrete lintel.

The Marble Shop has experienced the loss of portions of the upper walls, glass block windows, interior walls and ceiling, and the roof due to arson that occurred after the prison closed. Despite the loss of some material elements of the building, the remaining elements sufficiently convey the historic design, including the use of rock-faced concrete block siding which echoed the late-19th-century rock-faced limestone industrial shops within the prison. Despite the arson damage, the shop retains sufficient integrity to communicate under Criterion A the industrial functions that continued at the prison into the 1940s.

Dry Kiln / Marble Shop (#22, Contributing Building)
Date: ca. 1940

The Dry Kiln / Marble Shop was constructed in ca. 1940 and is located in the northeast quadrant of the enclosed prison grounds. The southeast corner of the building is connected to the northwest corner of the Marble Shop (#21). The Reservoir (#16) is located to the southwest of the building and the Warehouse / Stable (#18) is located to the north. A grassy area with a concrete path is to the east, where there previously existed a larger dry kiln room that was demolished sometime before 1979. The 1979 and 2002 site plans show both Marble Shops (#21 and #22) used as a Mattress Factory.

The one-story Dry Kiln / Marble Shop has a rectangular footprint with longer north and south façades and a front-gabled roof with asphalt shingles. The structural walls are brick masonry faced with rock-faced concrete blocks laid in regular courses with grapevine mortar joints. The entrance is centered in the north façade and contains double-leaf metal doors. The west façade is regularly fenestrated with rectangular window openings with a continuous heavy concrete lintel and concrete sills and glass blocks.

The building retains sufficient integrity and clearly communicates its historic design and use as an industrial building.

Harness Shop (#23, Contributing Building)
Date: ca. 1880

The Harness Shop was constructed sometime between 1873 and 1886. It is located at the north end of the southeast quadrant of the enclosed prison grounds, directly south of the main east-west street. The Solitary Building (#15) is to the west and the Women's Cellblock/Clothing Department / Bath House (#24) is to the east. A concrete patio and a grass lawn intersected with concrete walkways extends to the south. In 1886 and 1891, this building was used as a harness shop. By 1898, it was a saddle and harness factory for W.S. Bruce & Company. The 1948 site plan shows the building in use as a bath house. In 1976, a fire destroyed the second story. By 1979, the building was a barber shop and shower room. The 2002 site plan lists the building as the prison commissary.

The one-story Harness Shop has a rectangular footprint with longer east and west façades and a flat roof with asphalt cladding; the roof was a later alteration following the 1976 fire that destroyed the second story. It has rock-faced, cream-colored Joliet limestone walls laid in broken courses. Portions of the southeast and southwest corners appear to have replacement ashlar limestone blocks that may have been installed after the 1976 fire. The main entrance is centered on the north façade and contains double-leaf metal doors with a transom and a heavy stone lintel. The north entrance is flanked with wide window openings with heavy stone lintels and stone sills; windows are not extant. The east and west façades are regularly fenestrated with large, square-shaped window openings with heavy stone lintels, stone sills, and recessed glass blocks; some windows have partial concrete masonry unit infill within the openings. The interior has deteriorated with vacancy but retains low partition walls and some ceramic tiles from its use as a bathhouse and shower room.

Alterations occurred within the period of significance and include glass block and concrete masonry unit infill in some window openings and the loss of the second story due to a fire in 1976, altering the building's height and the roof shape. The building retains sufficient integrity to communicate its historic design and functions.

Women's Cellblock/Clothing Department / Bath House (#24, Contributing Building)
Date: 1859

The Women's Cellblock was constructed in 1959 and, along with the Solitary Building (#15), is the only remaining portion of a series of connected buildings that initially housed many of the functions that supported the prison population, such as a chapel, library, kitchen, bakery, food storage, and hospital. These buildings were demolished in the 1940s. The building originally served as separate quarters for Joliet's female prisoners; in 1869, the women inmates were removed to the fourth floor of the administration building, and the cellblock was converted to a workshop and storage space. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps from 1886 through 1891, show a clothing department in the north portion and a bath house in the south portion. In 1948, the building was used as a clothing store. In 1979 it was a food storage warehouse, and in 2002 it was a mechanical store. A fire destroyed the building's roof and interior after the prison closed.

The one-story Women's Cellblock/Clothing Department / Bath House has a rectangular footprint with longer east and west façades. It has rock-faced, cream-colored Joliet limestone walls and the parapet wall at the south façade indicates it had a front-gabled roof form. The entrance is centered in the north façade and contains a single-leaf metal door and a heavy stone lintel; another entrance is set within a former window opening at the east end of this façade. The building has narrow rectangular window openings with stone label mold lintels and stone sills; windows are largely non-extant. The south façade lacks fenestration.

The building suffered damage after the period of significance due to a fire that destroyed its roof, interior, and windows. However, the remaining walls and the original window openings are extant and convey the historic design. Overall, the building retains sufficient integrity to communicate its significance.

Dining Hall / Cafeteria (#25, Contributing Building)
Date: 1987

The Dining Hall / Cafeteria was completed in 1987 and is located at the northeast corner of the southeast quadrant of the enclosed prison grounds. It sits directly south of the main east-west street. To the east is the prison's east wall, to the southeast is the 1895 Hospital (#27), to the south is the Gymnasium / Multipurpose Building (#26), and to the west is the Women's Cellblock/Clothing Department / Bath House (#24). Until the construction of this building in 1987, the dining hall was in a building constructed in 1903 located west of the Hospital (#27); this area now contains the Gymnasium / Multipurpose Building (#26).

The Dining Hall / Cafeteria is a one-story building with an irregular massing and original rock-faced concrete block walls. It has a combination roof with a hipped north portion and gabled south portion; the roof cladding is standing seam metal. The building's north façade contains a recessed concrete loading dock for food shipments and three building entrances. The north portion of the building contains the kitchens, and the south portion contains the dining halls which are accessed via entrances along the south end of the west elevation. The building largely lacks fenestration. Along the north portion of the west façade, high on the wall, are original, metal-frame, two-light windows. The dining halls have vinyl tile flooring, painted concrete masonry unit walls, and an exposed steel truss ceiling.

The building has few alterations, and it retains sufficient integrity to communicate its original design and function.

Gymnasium / Multipurpose Building (#26, Contributing Building)
Date: 1987

The Gymnasium / Multipurpose Building was constructed in 1987 and is located at the southeast corner of the southeast quadrant of the enclosed prison grounds. The 1895 Hospital (#27) sits directly east and the 1987 Dining Hall / Cafeteria (#25) is directly north. To the south is the East Cell Block (#29) and to the west is a grass lawn with intersecting concrete pathways. The Gymnasium / Multipurpose Building is located on the site of the former 1903 dining hall. The Gymnasium was the prison's first purpose-built building for physical recreation.

The one-story Gymnasium / Multipurpose Building has a rectangular footprint with longer east and west façades, with a smaller one-story, rectangular entrance block centered on the west façade. Both building portions have a gabled roof with standing seam metal cladding. The building has original rock-faced concrete block walls. The main entrance in the center of the west façade contains recessed metal doors with a tall, flush concrete header set within a slightly-projecting bay with metal louvers under an oversized segmented arch. Simple concrete pilasters rise along the west façade of the larger building. The larger building's south façade has two spaced entrances, each containing double-leaf metal doors.

The building has few alterations, and it retains sufficient integrity to communicate its original design and function.

Hospital (#27, Contributing Building)
Date: 1895

The Hospital was built in 1895 and is located in the southeast corner of the southeast quadrant of the enclosed prison grounds. To the east is the prison's east wall, to the south is the East Schoolhouse (#28), to the west is the Gymnasium / Multipurpose Building (#26) and to the north is the Dining Hall / Cafeteria (#25). The building is listed as a hospital on the 1948 site plan. A cornerstone on the south façade indicates the building was remodeled in 1959. The 1979 and 2002 site plans also show the building in use as a hospital.

The three-and-one-half-story Hospital has a rectangular footprint with longer east and west façades and faces south. It has a front-gabled roof with asphalt shingles and parapet walls with shoulders on the north and south facades. The walls are rock-faced Joliet limestone laid in broken courses. The south and east façades are regularly fenestrated. A small, one-story addition and an enclosed circulation tower abut the rear (north) façade. The primary entrance is centered in the south façade and contains double-leaf metal doors, a metal transom, and a flat metal canopy. Window openings are rectangular with heavy stone lintels and stone sills. Windows are historic, wood-frame, one-over-one sashes that are deeply recessed within the openings and fronted with flush steel security bars. Carved limestone blocks above the third story on the south façade read HOSPITAL ERECTED A.D. 1895. The upper half-story contains a Palladian window arrangement with a centered round arch with limestone voussoirs.

Alterations include interior remodeling for continued use as a hospital in 1959, and the rear addition. Overall, the building retains good integrity and continues to communicate its historic design and function.

Tunnel Entrance (#32, Contributing Structure)
Date: ca. 1900

The tunnel entrance was constructed in ca. 1900 and is located in the northeast corner of the northeast quadrant of the enclosed prison grounds. It is a concrete structure that housed an entrance to an underground tunnel that connected the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet on the west side of Collins Street with the Joliet Women's Prison on the east side of Collins Street. The tunnel also provided access to the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet's Yard Tower (#12). The tunnel was sealed sometime between 1979 and 2002.

The tunnel entrance is one bay wide with an entrance facing south. The structure is built of concrete blocks that have been painted. It has a flat concrete roof and the north portion of the tunnel entrance slopes downward. The metal entrance door has fallen off the structure; within the threshold of the entrance is another metal security gate.

The tunnel entrance has not been significantly altered and retains sufficient integrity to communicate its historic design and function.

West Warehouse (#33a, Contributing Building)
Date: prior to 1873

The West Warehouse was constructed prior to 1873 outside of the enclosed prison yard. It sits to the west of the enclosed area's west prison wall and is aligned on a northeast-southwest axis parallel to the former Chicago and Alton Railroad, which now serves the Metra commuter rail line. Switch tracks, no longer extant, ran from the southeast along the east façade. The 1886 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map identifies the

building as state-owned facilities containing a warehouse for the Ashley Wire Company, a leather shop for Selz, Schwab & Company, a harness shop for Risser & Reitz, and barrel storage for J.H. Winterbotham & Son. In 1891, it contained lumber and ratan storage for Joliet Ratan & Reed Company, harness storage for A.F. Risser & Co., and barrel storage. In 1898, in addition to ratan, reed, and barrel storage, it housed broom corn for Smith & Jones. The 1979 and 2002 site plans identify the building as a warehouse.

The one-story West Warehouse consists of two rectangular portions, both with longer east and west façades. The south portion is wider than the north portion. The warehouse has original rubble and rock-faced, cream-color Joliet limestone walls. Both portions have gabled roofs with asphalt shingles; the south end of the roof has partially collapsed. There are gabled parapet walls with shoulders at the south portion's south and north façades. The gable end at the north portion's north façade is infilled with painted masonry units. There are multiple building entrances along the north portion's east façade. The entrances have heavy stone lintels and quoining. The south portion has no visible fenestration. The north portion has small window openings high on the east façade; some are infilled with glass blocks. A recessed, full-width concrete loading dock is set within the north façade.

Alterations to the West Warehouse include the installation of the loading dock at the north end and glass block window infill. Overall, the building retains sufficient integrity to communicate its historic design and function.

Fire Alarm Control Shed (#33b, Contributing Building)
Date: Between 1990 and 2002

The Fire Alarm Control Shed was constructed by 2002, as evidenced by Google Earth satellite imagery. This utilitarian, one-story shed is located outside of the enclosed prison at the south end of the west prison wall. It has concrete masonry unit walls and a flat roof with metal flashing at the cornice. It is one bay wide and one bay deep with a narrow overhead metal rolling door on the west elevation and a single-leaf metal entrance door fronted with a concrete stoop on the north elevation. Utility equipment is affixed to the south elevation.

The shed was constructed within the period of significance.

Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Buildings, Structures, and Sites - East of Collins Street

The resources that comprise the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet east of Collins Street are listed and described in detail below.

Resource Name	*Resource Number*	*Date of Construction*	*Contributing/Non-Contributing*
Women's Prison: Administration Building	34	1896	C
Women's Prison: Cellhouse Wing	35	1896	C
Women's Prison: East Laundry Wing	36	1900	C
Joliet Diagnostic Depot: West Wing	37	2000	C
Joliet Diagnostic Depot: Southeast	38a	c. 1942	C

Guard Tower			
Women's Prison: Southwest Guard Tower	38b	1933	C
Women's Prison: Northwest Guard Tower	38c	1942	C
Women's Prison: West Sallyport	38d	c. 1950	C
Women's Prison: Walls	39	1898	C
Shed	40a	After 2002	NC
Joliet Diagnostic Depot: Well Pump House	40b	c. 1945	C
Joliet Diagnostic Depot: Annex Medical Wing	40c	c. 1990	C
Illinois State Police – Joliet Forensic Laboratory	41	c. 1964	NC
East Warehouse – West Portion	42a	c. 1929	C
East Warehouse – East Portion	42b	c. 1929	C
Water Tower	43	c. 2002-2005	NC
Utility Building	44	c. 2002-2005	NC
West Quarry	45	c. 1857	C
East Quarry	46	1904	C
Quarry Crusher Plant	47	1914	C
Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railroad Tracks	48	c. 1886	C

Women's Prison: Walls (#39, Contributing Structure)
Date: 1898

The walls surrounding the Joliet Women's Prison grounds were completed by 1898 and enclosed an approximately 2-acre parcel. The east and west walls were approximately 250 feet in length and the north wall was approximately 360 feet in length. The south wall portions abutted the 1896 Women's Prison Administration Building (#34).

The prison walls are 27 feet tall and constructed of rough-cut, grey-colored limestone blocks laid in a coursed pattern with a slanted limestone coping. The walls were originally designed with curved outer corners with flanking buttresses. The original main entrance to the prison yard is located at the west end of the north wall and features a segmented-arch opening framed by limestone piers with pointed capitals.

A 1931 aerial photograph of the prison and the 1933 architectural drawings for the Diagnostic Depot show the east side and approximately half of the north side of the complex enclosed by fencing and not a stone wall, indicating that these sections of the wall were demolished some between ca. 1900 and 1931, during the period of significance. The current extant fencing is metal chain link topped with razor wire and barbed wire. Overall, the remaining portions of the wall retain sufficient integrity to communicate their historic design and function.

Women's Prison: Southwest Guard Tower (#38b, Contributing Building)
Date: 1933

The Joliet Women's Prison was originally designed without guard towers. In 1933 when the women's prison was converted to the Joliet Diagnostic Depot, later called the Northern Reception and Classification Center, the existing Administration Building's (#34) northwest and northeast turrets were remodeled into guard towers.

This guard tower sits 100 feet east of the southwest corner of the original prison walls. It was created by removing the crenellated cap of the original turret, which was constructed of rough-cut, cream-colored Joliet limestone blocks, and installing a rounded guard house in its place. The guard house has its original concrete-block walls and conical metal roof with original pressed, patterned metal panels. It has curved, aluminum-framed, replacement windows. Dating to the period of significance, the guard tower retains sufficient integrity and communicates its historic function.

Joliet Diagnostic Depot: Southeast Guard Tower (#38a, Contributing Building)
Date: ca. 1942

The Joliet Women's Prison was originally designed without guard towers. In 1933 when the women's prison was converted to the Joliet Diagnostic Depot, later called the Northern Reception and Classification Center, the existing Administration Building's northwest and northeast turrets were remodeled into guard towers.

This guard tower sits 150 feet west of the southeast corner of the original prison walls. Its design was originally identical to the southwest guard tower; however, it was replaced ca. 1942 with the present structure. The southeast guard tower is four stories with a square massing and a flat roof with overhanging eaves. It is constructed of rough-cut, cream-colored Joliet limestone laid in a broken course pattern with random projecting rock-faced blocks. An entrance at the base of the east wall contains a metal door. Narrow, recessed window openings are placed on the east wall at the second and third stories. The observation room at the fourth story has brick cladding and replacement, metal-frame windows that wrap the corners. The tower's rock-faced limestone cladding and narrow window openings echo the design of the original Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet guard towers. Dating to the period of significance, the guard tower retains sufficient integrity and communicates its historic function.

Women's Prison: Northwest Guard Tower (#38c, Contributing Building)
Date: 1942

The northwest guard tower was constructed in 1942, approximately ten years after the Women's Prison was converted into the Joliet Diagnostic Depot. The three-story guard tower is placed on the inside of the north prison wall immediately west of the original main entrance at the west end of the north wall. The guard tower has a square massing, concrete block walls, and a hipped roof with overhanging eaves. An entrance at the base of the south wall contains a metal door with a viewing panel. A first-story window opening to the right of the door is infilled. Another entrance containing a solid metal door is located at the base of the east wall. The second story contains a narrow opening with an original eight-light metal sash window. The observation room at the third story has replacement, metal-frame windows that wrap the southeast corner. The west wall at the third story contains an original multi-light metal sash window. A third-story metal door with two viewing panes on the north wall of the tower leads to a metal catwalk that extends to the east along the top of the prison wall. The roof is clad with historic metal panels and topped

with a metal finial. Dating to the period of significance, the guard tower retains sufficient integrity and communicates its historic design and function.

Women's Prison: West Sallyport (#38d, Contributing Structure)
Date: ca. 1950

The west sallyport was completed in ca. 1950 and faces north towards a concrete paved area. It controls access to the original main entrance to the Women's Prison located at the west end of the north wall. The rectangular sallyport consists of a metal, chain-link cage with a concrete block knee wall along its east side. An interior metal gate is set within the original segmented-arch entrance at the north wall; this metal gate appears to date to the 1933 conversion of the Women's Prison into the Joliet Diagnostic Depot. Dating to the period of significance, the sallyport retains sufficient integrity and communicates its historic design and function.

Women's Prison: Administration Building (#34, Contributing Building)
Date: 1896

The Administration Building for the Joliet Women's Prison was completed in 1896 and modeled in design after the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet's Administration Building (#2a). Prior to its completion, women prisoners were kept on the fourth floor of the penitentiary's Administration Building. The Women's Prison Administration Building is located at the center of the south edge of the enclosed Women's Prison grounds and faces south towards Woodruff Road. The prison walls (#39) extend to the east and west of the rear end of the building. The Women's Prison Cellhouse (#35) extends to the north from the rear façade. A grass lawn with deciduous trees fronts the building and extends to the east and west along Woodruff Road. A concrete sidewalk abuts the lawn. Like the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet's Administration Building, this building housed offices and administrative rooms and the prison matron's quarters. In 1933, after the construction of a new Women's Prison in Dwight, Illinois, the Joliet Women's Prison was converted into a Diagnostic and Reception Center for the Illinois Penitentiary system. The 1948 site plan shows the building housing administration offices and doctors' quarters. It continued in use as an administrative building into the twenty-first century.

The Gothic Revival style Administration Building has a rectangular footprint with a three-story, three-bay-wide center massing and two-story, one-bay-wide east and west wings. The masonry structure has walls clad with rock-faced, cream-colored Joliet limestone laid in regular courses. The roof is flat with stepped, crenellated stone parapet walls with an ornamental frieze featuring alternating smooth and rock-faced medallions. The center bay on the primary south façade is framed with polygonal corner towers capped with battlements. The tall, stepped parapet wall above contains a carved stone plaque reading 1896; this portion of the parapet is framed with inset polygonal turrets that rise from the polygonal corner towers immediately below. Round stone bartizans ornament the southeast and southwest corners of the center massing. The outer wings have corner stone buttresses and rounded turrets with battlements. The primary entrance in the center bay is fronted with concrete steps with metal handrails and contains double-leaf, aluminum-frame metal doors with sidelights filled with Intaglio glass blocks. A concrete accessibility ramp extends from the east side of the entrance pavilion. The entrance is sheltered with a flat metal canopy and a transom area above contains a multi-light window with a heavy stone lintel and flanking pilasters with Greek key motifs at the capitals. The south, east, and west façades are regularly fenestrated with paired window openings with heavy stone lintels and stone sills. Window sashes consist of a small,

hopper sash topped with a larger, fixed, upper pane above and a short transom area infilled with an opaque panel. A metal stairway that is reinforced with razor wire and barbed wire leads from the grass lawn up to the roof at the northwest corner of the building, near the Northwest Guard Tower (#38c).

The Women's Administration Building reflects the Gothic Revival style with its corner towers and turrets, bartizans, crenellated parapet walls and battlements, and stone buttresses. Later alterations occurred during the period of significance and include replacement windows and entrance sidelights. The building retains good integrity and clearly communicates its historic design and function.

Women's Prison: Cellhouse Wing (#35, Contributing Building)
Date: 1896

The cellhouse wing of the Joliet Women's Prison was completed in 1896 along with the Administration Building (#34) to the south. It extends to the north from the north (rear) façade of the Administration Building. The Diagnostic Depot West Wing (#37) is to the west. To the east are a paved recreational area and the East Laundry Wing (#36).

The first floor of the cellhouse wing contained workshops and other support spaces for the inmates; the upper two floors contained two tiers of cells on the east and west sides of a double-height central space, with balconies and north and south staircases providing circulation within the cellhouse. The cellhouse contained a total of 100 cells. The cells in the Women's Prison were larger than the men's cells in the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet, and each cell contained an exterior window. When the prison was converted into the Diagnostic and Reception Center in 1933, the cells housed inmates awaiting classification and assignment to prisons within the Illinois system.

The three-story, Gothic Revival style Women's Prison Cellhouse Wing has a rectangular footprint with longer east and west façades. The cellhouse is a masonry structure with rock-faced, cream-colored Joliet limestone walls laid in broken courses. It has a center gabled roof clad with asphalt shingles and a gabled north parapet wall. Two polygonal towers with battlements rise along the northeast and northwest corners. A small, one-story addition with concrete block and brick walls and a flat roof projects from the center of the north façade. Another small, one-story, concrete block addition is placed at the north end of the west façade and contains a vehicular entrance with an overhead rolling door. There are no primary entrances to the cellhouse, which was historically accessed through the Administration Building. A secondary entrance is located in the one-story addition at the north façade. The cellhouse is regularly fenestrated and window openings have heavy stone lintels and stone sills. Window openings in the towers have stone quoining. Windows are predominantly replacement steel louvers or glass blocks. Most of the window openings have metal security bars and some are infilled with stone blocks.

The interior has experienced some deterioration but retains the historic layout and building materials. The cell block on the second and third floors is largely intact and consists of two tiers of cells along the east and west walls facing in towards a double-height circulation space with metal staircases and the north and south ends providing access to the upper tier of cells. There is an enclosed observation tower at the center of the block. The central cellhouse corridor is concrete and lined with cells with concrete walls and solid metal doors with small viewing panes and openings for ventilation and communication with guards. Metal north and south staircases provide access to narrow walkways with metal handrails along the upper cells

framing the corridor. The cells have concrete floors, concrete walls with a plaster finish, a single window, a toilet, and concrete ceilings.

Alterations to the Women's Prison Cellhouse Wing are largely within the period of significance and include window replacement in the 1930s and later one-story concrete block additions at the north and west façades. Overall, the Cellhouse retains good integrity and clearly communicates its historic design and function.

Joliet Diagnostic Depot: West Wing (#37, Contributing Building)
Date: 2000

The West Wing was constructed as a cellhouse in 2000 for the Joliet Diagnostic Depot, later called the Northern Reception and Classification Center. The West Wing is located in the southwest corner of the enclosed Women's Prison grounds, immediately west of the Women's Prison Cellhouse Wing (#35). A paved circulation area is to the north. The 2000 West Wing's design is in marked contrast to the 1896 Cellhouse Wing (#35) and demonstrates the evolution of prison design during the late 20th and early twenty-first century. The West Wing has larger cells equipped with security glass facing the center of the block, and a modern observation area.

The two-story West Wing cellhouse has a rectangular footprint with longer east and west façades. The walls are split-faced concrete block and the roof is flat with metal coping. An entrance with a wide, single-leaf metal door with a large viewing pane and a sidelight is located at a single-story entrance pavilion projecting from the east façade. A secondary entrance is located at the north end of the east façade and contains a single-leaf metal door fronted with a wood ramp. Window openings are placed at the top of each story and are short horizontal slits with single, fixed, steel-frame lights.

The West Wing was constructed during the period of significance. It has minimal alterations and demonstrates the evolution of cellhouse design. It retains integrity and communicates its original design and function.

Women's Prison: East Laundry Wing (#36, Contributing Building)
Date: 1900

The East Laundry Wing of the Women's Prison was constructed in 1900. It is located perpendicular to the Cellhouse Wing (#35), extending east from its east façade. A paved recreation area is located to the south of the Laundry Wing. A concrete pathway leads from the north façade to a paved circulation area on the north side of the cellhouse. The Annex Medical Wing (#40c) abuts the Laundry Wing's east façade. Originally, the laundry for the Joliet Women's Prison was located on the first floor of the cellhouse wing. As early as 1898, the commissioners of the penitentiary reported that the "intense heat and steam created by its constant use" threatened the health and safety of the workers and inmates. Plans were drawn up for a separate laundry wing to be constructed at the east side of the cellhouse wing, and the commissioners reported in October 1900 that the one-story laundry wing had been completed and equipped. The laundry wing was rehabilitated in 1965 for use as a health clinic within the Joliet Diagnostic Depot, later called the Northern Reception and Classification Center.

The one-story East Laundry Wing has a rectangular footprint with longer north and south façades. It is a masonry structure with rock-faced Joliet limestone walls laid in broken courses. It has a flat roof with stepped parapet walls with stone coping. A shed-roof, one-story addition with uncoursed, rubble limestone walls projects from the west end of the north façade. An entrance is located at the south end of the north façade and is fronted with a concrete ramp. The building has rectangular window openings on the north and south façades with heavy stone lintels and stone sills. Most windows are filled with glass blocks and metal panels and have metal security bars.

The East Laundry Wing alterations occurred during the period of significance and include window infill and a small, one-story addition. Overall, the building retains sufficient integrity to communicate its historic design and functions.

Joliet Diagnostic Depot: Annex Medical Wing (#40c, Contributing Building)
Date: ca. 1990

The Annex Medical Wing was constructed ca. 1990 for the Joliet Diagnostic Depot, later called the Northern Reception and Classification Center, which had operated on the Women's Prison grounds since 1933. The Annex Medical Wing abuts the East Laundry Wing's (#36) east façade. To the south is a paved recreational area, to the east is a grass lawn, and to the north is a utilitarian shed (#40a) and a well pump house (#40b).

The one-story building has a rectangular footprint, rock-faced concrete masonry unit walls, and a side-gabled roof with asphalt shingles. The gable eaves are clad with standing seam metal siding. A vehicular entrance with an overhead rolling door is in the center of the north façade. The east façade has two rectangular window openings with stone sills and metal-frame, one-over-one windows. The south façade has a centered, single-leaf metal door with a viewing pane.

The building was constructed during the period of significance and retains sufficient integrity to communicate its design and function.

Joliet Diagnostic Depot: Well Pump House (#40b, Contributing Building)
Date: ca. 1945

The Well Pump House was built ca. 1945 after the Women's Prison was converted into the Joliet Diagnostic Center. It is located at the northeast corner of the grounds to the east of a utilitarian shed (#40a) and north of the Annex Medical Wing (#40c).

The one-story Well Pump House is a small, rectangular, utilitarian building with brick walls laid in a six-course common bond and a flat roof. The entrance is on the south façade and is set within a bay with textured brick walls and a slightly higher roofline than the rest of the building. The entrance has a flat brick lintel and contains a single-leaf metal door. Another entrance at the north end of the east elevation contains a single-leaf metal door. A rectangular window opening with glass block infill pierces the north façade and there are smaller, square openings filled with metal vents.

The building was constructed within the period of significance and retains sufficient integrity to communicate its historic design and function.

Shed (#40a, Non-Contributing Building)
Date: after 2002

This utilitarian shed was built after 2002 and is in the northeast corner of the former Women's Prison grounds. It sits directly west of the Well Pump House (#40b). The shed is one bay wide with a rectangular footprint and faces south. The walls are original standing seam metal, and it has a front-gabled roof with standing seam metal cladding. A vehicular entrance with a metal overhead rolling door is centered in the south façade.

The shed was constructed after the period of significance and is counted as non-contributing to the district.

Illinois State Police – Joliet Forensic Laboratory (#41, Non-Contributing Building)
Date: 1964, renovated in 1987

The Illinois State Police – Joliet Forensic Laboratory is a rectangular, two-story building, mid-century modern in design, with a flat roof and exterior walls of buff colored face brick. The main entrance to the building is located at the center of the primary south elevation and housed in a slightly projecting anodized metal and glass vestibule. The entrance is sheltered by a rectangular projecting canopy and framed by simple buff brick piers that extend to the roofline. White brick planters flank the entrance doors, which are modern aluminum doors with large sidelights and a large single pane transom. The south elevation is symmetrical; east and west of the entrance are groupings of six window bays framed by shallow brick piers and topped with concrete panels. Window openings at the first and second stories are rectangular single-light windows.

The secondary east, north, and west elevations of the building are unfenestrated. Two secondary entrances are located on the west elevation. A one-story L-shaped brick addition with a shallow side gabled roof extends from the northeast corner of the building.

Although constructed within the period of significance, the Illinois State Police – Joliet Forensic Laboratory is counted as non-contributing to the district because it was not associated with the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet and operated independently of the prison from its construction in 1964 until the prison closed in 2002.

East Warehouse – West Portion (#42a, Contributing Building)
Date: ca. 1929

The ca. 1929 East Warehouse was originally one building, however, a 1939 aerial shows the building separated into west and east portions with a rail spur running between. The warehouse portions are located outside and to the east of the former Women's Prison's enclosed grounds and likely served as storage for the prison's industrial shops. The warehouses sit on a grass parcel with paved circulation paths to the north and south. A paved circulation area sits to the north of the west portion.

The Warehouse's one-and-one-half story West Portion is longer than the East Portion (#42b) and has a rectangular footprint with a slanted east façade, which historically faced the railroad spur. It is a masonry structure with rock-faced concrete block walls laid in regular courses. It has a low-pitched, front-gabled

roof with asphalt shingles. A single-leaf metal entry door is located at the east end of the south façade. Two vehicular entrances with metal overhead rolling doors are spaced on the south façade. The north façade has multiple spaced vehicular entrances with metal overhead rolling doors. Window openings are placed on the shorter east and west façades and on the upper half-story of the south façade. They have concrete lintels and sills and predominantly contain glass blocks, though some are infilled with concrete blocks.

The building has had few alterations and retains sufficient integrity to communicate its historic design and industrial function.

East Warehouse – East Portion (#42b, Contributing Building)
Date: 1929

The ca. 1929 East Warehouse was originally one building, however, a 1939 aerial shows the building separated into west and east portions with a rail spur running between. The warehouse portions are located outside and to the east of the former Women's Prison's enclosed grounds and likely served as storage for the prison's industrial shops. The warehouses sit on a grass parcel with paved circulation paths to the north and south.

The Warehouse's one-and-one-half story East Portion is shorter than the West Portion (#42a) and has a rectangular footprint with a slanted west façade, which historically faced the railroad spur. It is a masonry structure with rock-faced concrete block walls laid in regular courses. It has a low-pitched, front-gabled roof with asphalt shingles. A concrete dock was historically attached to the foundation of the west façade but was subsequently removed with areas of parging remaining. The west façade has a centered loading dock entrance with a sliding wood door. The south elevation has a loading dock entrance with double-leaf metal doors. The north façade has a downsized entrance with double-leaf metal doors and concrete masonry unit infill. Window openings are placed along the upper half-story of the façades. They have concrete lintels and sills and contain glass blocks.

Although the building's loading dock was removed at an unknown date, it retains sufficient integrity to communicate its historic design and industrial function.

Utility Building (#44, Non-Contributing Building)
Date: Between 2002 and 2005

Google Earth satellite imagery shows this Utility Building was constructed between 2002 and 2005, likely to service the adjacent Water Tower (#43) to the northwest. It is located to the north of the enclosed former Women's Prison grounds and south of the West Quarry (#45).

The one-story building has a rectangular footprint with longer north and south façades. It has split-faced concrete masonry unit walls and a hipped roof with asphalt shingles and overhanging eaves. Single-leaf metal doors are located on the west, south, and north façades. A vehicular opening with an overhead door is in the east façade. The building has minimal fenestration with a rectangular metal-framed window with missing upper light on the west façade.

The building was constructed after the period of significance and is counted as non-contributing to the district.

Water Tower (#43, Non-Contributing Structure)
Date: Between 2002 and 2005

Google Earth satellite imagery shows the Water Tower was constructed between 2002 and 2005. The water tower is a metal structure with a flared base with a single, round-arch entry and a circular reservoir at the top. The structure was built after the period of significance and is counted as non-contributing to the district.

West (#45) and East (#46) Quarries (Contributing Sites)
Date: West Quarry – ca. 1857, East Quarry – 1904

Much of the Joliet Penitentiary and Women's Prison was constructed using limestone taken from the two quarries on site. The quarries also provided crushed stone for the state's roads through the mid-20th century. The quarries are situated on a bench of the Des Plaines River bluff. The larger West Quarry opened ca. 1857. The East Quarry opened in 1904 and provided building stone through 1905. The rail line running between the quarries was historically used by the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway and is now part of the Canadian National Railway. A 1925 publication titled "Limestone Resources of Illinois" described the quarries as over 30 feet deep and containing "thin-bedded, fine-grained, buff to gray dolomite with thin layers and nodules of chert."[3] In April 1906, the first stone crusher was installed at the East Quarry. The crusher was replaced in 1914 with the present structure (#47). After over 100 years in service, the quarries were closed in 1961. Both quarries were filled with water sometime between 1974 and 1983.

The quarries are situated at the north end of the state prison grounds between Collins Street to the west and Louise Ray Parkway to the east. A railroad line operated by the Canadian National Railway runs diagonally from the southeast to the northwest between the quarries. The quarries are surrounded with trees and are generally inaccessible from public right of ways. The larger West Quarry, located south of the railroad line, has an irregular shape and is approximately 9.5 acres. The smaller East Quarry is located to the north of the railroad line, has a roughly circular shape, and is approximately 4.6 acres. Both quarries are filled with water.

The quarries are within the boundaries of the prison grounds and represent the use of local materials in the construction of the prison. The quarries continue to express their historic function and are counted as contributing sites to the district.

Quarry Crusher Plant (#47, Contributing Structure)
Date: 1914

The Quarry Crusher Plant was established in 1914 to crush stone blocks retrieved from the quarries. A 1917 publication by Frank L. Roman, "Materials available for highway construction in Illinois" stated the

[3] Frank Krey, *Limestone resources of Illinois* (Urbana, Illinois: State Geological Survey, 1925), 187.

Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Quarry could screen material into three sizes ranging from dust to 3/8 inch, 3/8 to ¾ inch chips, and ¾ inch chips to 2-inch stones. The stone was not sold at the quarry, but townships could request crushed stone materials from the quarry via the State Highway Department in Springfield, Illinois. The daily capacity of the quarries in 1917 was noted as twelve railroad cars.[4]

It is located at the south point of the East Quarry on the northeast side of the railroad line. It is barely visible and not accessible from Louise Ray Parkway to the east. The extant industrial buildings are multiple stories in height and the elevations and roofs are clad with corrugated metal sheeting. The west structure has a gabled-roof massing with a taller, narrow, multi-story tower with a side-gabled roof with a longer rear slope. A metal chute that would have carried crushed stone extends down from the tower to the east structure. The east structure is at least two stories tall with a rectangular, front-gabled massing and rear portion with a steeply sloped shed roof. Punched window openings are visible on all elevations.

The Quarry Crusher Plant retains good integrity and clearly conveys its historic function and association with the operation of the quarries and is counted as contributing to the district.

Joliet, Aurora & Northern Railroad/Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railroad Tracks
(#48, Contributing Structure)
Date: ca. 1886

The portion of the ISP-Joliet site east of Collins Street is bisected by railroad tracks that run diagonally southeast to northwest directly southwest of Louise Ray Parkway and between the east and west quarries. The tracks were originally laid by the Joliet, Aurora & Northern Railroad, which was organized in 1884 to build a railroad connecting Joliet and Aurora. Two years after beginning operations, the railroad was sold to the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway. Although the EJ&E initially provided passenger service to Aurora, competition from local interurban lines led the railroad to discontinue passenger trains along the line by the early 20th century. In 1898, the EJ&E was sold to the Federal Steel Company, owned by Illinois steel magnate Elbert Henry Gary. When the merger of the Federal Steel Company, Carnegie Steel Company, and National Steel Company created the United State Steel Corporation in 1901, the EJ&E became a subsidiary of US Steel. The Joliet Division of the railroad operated the East Joliet Yard, a large complex of switching facilities and shops located approximately one mile southeast of ISP-Joliet, through the late 19th and 20th centuries.[5]

In 2009, the EJ&E was purchased by the Canadian National Railway, which merged the line into its Wisconsin Central Limited subsidiary in 2013. The line remains active.

[4] Frank L. Roman, *Materials available for highway construction in Illinois* (Springfield, Illinois: State Highway Department, 1917), 26.
[5] "The Railroads of Will County: Elgin, Joliet & Eastern," Blackhawk Railway Historical Society website (accessed April 21, 2023 at https://www.blackhawkrailwayhistoricalsociety.org/elgin-joliet--eastern.html).

Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Historic District
Name of Property

Will County, Illinois
County and State

Contributing Site	Contributing Buildings	Non-Contributing Buildings	Contributing Structures	Non-Contributing Structures
1. Prison site, including east and west quarries, basketball courts and walkways in main prison yard, walkways surrounding Women's Prison, and parking lot south of main prison	1. Gate House (#1)	1. Shed (#40a)	1. Prison Walls (#30a, #30b, #30 c)/Guard Towers (#31a, #31b, #31d, #31e, #31f, #31 h)/Sally Ports (#31c, #31g)	1. Water Tower (#43)
	2. Administration Building (#2a) and Shed (2b), West Cell Block (#3), and East Cell Block (#29)	2. IL State Forensic Science Laboratory (#41)	2. Reservoir (#16)	
	3. West Schoolhouse (#4)	3. Utility Building (#44)	3. Tunnel Entrance (#32)	
	4. East Schoolhouse (#28)		4. Women's Prison Walls (#39) and West Sallyport (#38d)	
	5. School (#4) and Chapel (#6)		5. Women's Prison Northwest Guard Tower (#38c)	
	6. Center-West Industrial Shop (#7)		6. Quarry Crusher Plant (#47)	
	7. Northwest Industrial Shop (#8)		7. Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railroad Tracks (#48)	
	8. Marble Cutting Shop (#9)			
	9. North Industrial Shop (#10)			
	10. Fire House (#11)			
	11. Yard Tower (#12)			
	12. Powerhouse and Well Pump House (#13)			
	13. South Guard Shack (#14)			
	14. Separate System Prison/Solitary Building (#15)			
	15. Mule Barn (#17)			
	16. Warehouse/Stable (#18)			
	17. Auto Storage (#19)			
	18. Textile Materials Storage/Wood Carding Shop (#20)			
	19. Marble Shop (#21)			
	20. Dry Kiln/Marble Shop (#22)			
	21. Harness Shop (#23)			
	22. Women's Cell Block/Clothing Department/Bath House (#24)			
	23. Dining Hall/Cafeteria (#25)			
	24.Gymnasium/Multipurpose Building (#26)			
	25. hospital (#27)			
	26. West Warehouse (#33a)			
	27. Fire Alarm Control Shet			

Contributing Site	Contributing Buildings	Non-Contributing Buildings	Contributing Structures	Non-Contributing Structures
	(#33b)			
	28. Women's Prison Administration Building (#34), Southeast Guard Tower (#38a), Southwest Guard Tower (#38b), Cellhouse Wing (#35), East Laundry Wing (#36), Joliet Diagnostic Depot Annex Medical Wing (#40c), Joliet Diagnostic Depot West Wing (#37)			
	29. Joliet Diagnostic Depot Well Pump House (#40)			
	30. East Warehouse – West Portion (#42a)			
	31. East Warehouse – East Portion (#42b)			

Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Historic District
Name of Property

Will County, Illinois
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [X] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [ ] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- [ ] A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- [ ] B removed from its original location.
- [ ] C a birthplace or grave.
- [ ] D a cemetery.
- [ ] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- [ ] F a commemorative property.
- [X] G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

CRITERION A – Politics/Government
CRITERION A – Social History

Period of Significance
1857-2002

Significant Dates
1858, 1896, 1933

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

Architect/Builder
Boyington & Wheelock (Architects, Original ISP-Joliet Complex)
Loebl, Schlossman, Bennett & Dart (Architects, 1966 School and Chapel
Lorenzo P. Sanger & Samuel K. Casey (Contractors)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

"Prison is the black flower of civilization—a durable weed that refuses to die."

- Scott Christianson[6]

The Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Historic District (hereafter referred to as the ISP-Joliet Historic District or Old Joliet Prison) is significant under National Register Criterion A in the Areas of Government and Social History as the oldest extant and longest-operating penitentiary in Illinois. The level of significance in both Government and Social History is state-wide.

Under the area of Government, the collection of buildings and structures that comprise the district, as well as its site, are a tangible reminder of the long and complex evolution of penal ideology within the State of Illinois, from the construction of the original ISP-Joliet complex in the 1850s and 1860s through 2002, when the prison finally closed its doors. The district exemplifies the shifting philosophies of prison reform in Illinois through its nearly 150-year history—from the early years of the state penitentiary system in the mid-19th century, through the various attempts at Progressive-Era prison reforms from the late-19th century through the mid-20th century, and into the era of mass incarceration in the late-20th and early-21st centuries.

As a central component of the state's criminal justice system, the ISP-Joliet Historic District is a product of the complex web of laws that formed and reformed the state prison system in the 19th and 20th centuries, reflecting the tensions between competing ideologies related to the ultimate purpose of incarceration and conflicting ideas regarding proper prison management. The original prison complex and the Women's Prison at Joliet were constructed based on the Auburn system of prison design, which developed in America in the 1820s. The arrangement of spaces—long blocks of small cells and multiple facilities dedicated to prison labor—was rigidly organized around the principals of industry, obedience, and silence, which proponents of the system saw as the best means of rehabilitating inmates who had been driven to crime by the corrupting influences of society. As Progressive Movement reforms were implemented beginning in the early 20th-century at new prisons within the Illinois system, administrators who sought to make meaningful changes at Joliet were forced to work within the limitations of the existing Auburn-style facilities. However, later alterations and additions to the prison that exist today highlight important points of transition at Joliet. The conversion of the Women's Prison at Joliet to a diagnostic depot in 1933 reflected larger structural changes within the Illinois prison system and the implementation of increasingly sophisticated classification systems for incoming prisoners, while the construction of a modern school and chapel in the 1960s reflected reform efforts aimed at expanding educational programs for prisoners and accommodating a wider range of religious beliefs.

Under the area of Social History, the district is significant as a place of conscience that allows for a critical understanding of the experiences of incarcerated people—the conditions they faced, their struggles for autonomy in a tightly controlled system, and the impact that changing attitudes and philosophies on incarceration had on their daily lives. For much of Joliet's history, prisoners were essentially considered "slaves of the state"—they were granted few rights, forced to labor without pay, and had no recourse against abuses and sub-standard living conditions. Incarcerated people at Joliet Prison existed in a completely closed system that

[6] Scott Christianson, *With Liberty for Some: 500 Years of Imprisonment in America* (Boston: Southeastern University Press, 1998), 312.

was designed to function away from public view, and their fates were entirely in the hands of administrators, wardens, and prison guards. Overcrowding and antiquated facilities at ISP-Joliet were a constant source of anxiety for prison administrators because funding for basic upgrades and expansion of the aging complex could never garner sufficient support from the state legislature or the public. Consequently, prisoners at Joliet spent most of their time in chronically overcrowded cells and endured conditions that were considered sub-standard even compared to other state prisons in Illinois.

Throughout its history and most-strikingly in the last half of the 20th century, the Joliet Prison also exemplifies the inequities within the criminal justice system that disproportionately affected communities of color, particularly the Black community. While Black prisoners remained a small percentage of the prison population at Joliet Prison through the mid-20th century, racial discrimination in policing and law enforcement led to greater rates of incarceration in Black communities and longer sentences for Black prisoners. The push for "law and order" in the 1960s (which began as a conservative backlash against the Civil Rights Movement) and the subsequent "War on Drugs" in the 1980s and 1990s created a sea change within the American prison system that is now commonly recognized as the era of mass incarceration. As prison populations skyrocketed, Joliet and prisons across the country filled primarily with young, urban Black men. At the same time, society's attitudes towards incarceration turned decisively away from rehabilitation and towards a punitive model that focused on "increased use of imprisonment, longer sentences, and harsher prison conditions."[7]

The ISP-Joliet Historic District also reflects the unique experiences of incarcerated women through the early decades of the 20th century, and the challenges they faced in a system that was largely designed for men. Although the Women's Prison at Joliet housed female prisoners only until 1933, the facility as it stands today remains a reflection of the state's philosophies and practices related to the incarceration of women during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Historic District is the oldest extant state penitentiary in Illinois. From its construction in 1858 until 1933, it housed both male and female prisoners and served as one of only a handful of state penitentiaries within the Illinois prison system. In 1933, the Women's Prison was converted to the Northern Diagnostic Depot as part of a comprehensive plan to scientifically classify new inmates so that they could be segregated into separate facilities within the state prison system based on their perceived ability to be rehabilitated. In its last decades, the Joliet prison was the point of entry for tens of thousands of prisoners during the era of mass incarceration. Over its long history, Joliet Prison has been celebrated for its iconic Gothic Revival architecture, made infamous by its many high-profile inmates, and become a fixture of popular culture through its references in movies, literature, and music. However, the prison's significance as a place of incarceration and a physical representation of the problematic and complicated history of Illinois' prison system remains its most enduring legacy.

The period of significance for the district begins in 1857, when the when construction began on the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet, and ends in 2002, when the prison closed. Because the ISP-Joliet Historic District exhibits exceptional significance within the history of Illinois' state correctional system, the district meets Criterion Consideration G. ISP-Joliet is the only extant prison complex in Illinois that represents the entire arc of the history of incarceration in the state. The prison began operation in the 1850s as only the second penitentiary in Illinois and served as the sole prison in the state for two decades. The Joliet Women's Prison,

[7] Robert Scott, "A Case Study of Racial Exclusion and Incarceration in the Midwest: Illinois Before the Carceral State," *American Studies*, Vol. 56 No. 3/4, 39.

built adjacent to the original prison complex in 1896, was the first of its kind in Illinois, and held all the state's female inmates through the early 1930s. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, ISP-Joliet was shaped by successive prison reform movements that swept through the country in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which were implemented with various levels of success by wardens and other prison administrators and reflected changing ideas about the nature of crime and the possibility of rehabilitation. Although the prison ceased to be the state's largest correctional facility after the construction of Stateville Penitentiary in the early 20th century, the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet continued to play a critical role in the state's prison system as its primary reception and classification center, one of only two such centers that operated in the state from the early 1930s through Joliet's closure in 2002. Because of its location in the northern part of Illinois, ISP-Joliet served as the point of entry for the majority of inmates entering the state's prison system. During the era of mass incarceration in the final decades of the late 20th century, which saw an unprecedented expansion of state correctional facilities under the Illinois Department of Corrections, ISP-Joliet (then known as the Joliet Correctional Center), processed tens of thousands of prisoners annually. While a relatively small number of these inmates were placed permanently at ISP-Joliet in its final decades of operation, many prisoners' first experiences of incarceration were formed there.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Development of the State Prison in the United States

The long-term incarceration of citizens convicted of crimes, and the establishment of prisons to hold them, developed in America in the late 18th and early 19th centuries and was the result of changing attitudes and philosophies surrounding crime and punishment that occurred concurrently in the new republic and in Europe. In the early colonial period, American colonists lived mostly in small settlements where they were usually familiar with their neighbors, and settlement laws could be relied upon to keep out unknown "vagrants" who might bring in criminal activity. Established members of a community that had broken the law were subject to relatively simple criminal codes that were derived from English common law and judged by juries that held the power both to determine guilt and sentence offenders.[8] Punishments were also based on English and European precedents and generally limited to fines, corporal punishments like whipping or branding, and shaming punishments like imprisonment in the public stocks or pillory. Often multiple punishments were used in combination, and offenders who could not pay a fine were sentenced to time in the stocks or a whipping. The erection of stocks, whipping post, and pillory were often prescribed in colonial legislation.[9] Historian David J. Rothman recounts that, "As early as 1662, the Virginia burgess ordered every county to build stocks, along with a whipping post and pillory, or be liable for a fine of five thousand pounds of tobacco."[10]

Capital punishment (the death penalty) was widespread in the colonial era, with hanging as the most common form of execution. Although not as severe as England's "Bloody Code" which imposed the death penalty for a

[8] Nancy Gertner, "A Short History of American Sentencing: Too Little Law, Too Much Law, or Just Right," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, Vol. 11, Issue 3, 692-693.
[9] A pillory consisted of a wooden frame set on platform, where the head and hands of the offender could be forced through holes in the frame. Stocks were similar to a pillory but confined the feet of the offender instead of his hands and head.
[10] David J. Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1990), 49.

disturbingly wide array of offenses, crimes punishable by death in the American colonies were still broadly defined and varied from colony to colony. Capital punishment was also often used as a last recourse for punishing repeat offenders convicted of more minor crimes like burglary, counterfeiting, or even pickpocketing.[11]

In addition to corporal and capital punishment, some convicted offenders were sentenced to periods of indentured servitude, usually because they were not able to pay an imposed fine. While the number placed into indenture through the nascent colonial criminal justice system was relatively small, the American colonies of the early and mid-18th century were also home to thousands of convicts that were shipped from England as part of a system of penal transportation. Starting in the late 17th century as an informal way for convicted offenders to avoid harsh corporal punishment and later codified in the British Parliament's Transportation Act of 1717, penal transportation allowed prisoners to work off their sentences through a period of indentured servitude. The 1717 act allowed those convicted of minor felonies to be sent to American plantations for seven years while those convicted of capital crimes were sent for fourteen years.[12] The use of a set period of labor as a suitable punishment for breaking the law was in some ways the precursor to the system of imprisonment and hard labor that followed. The indentured prisoners sent from England to America made up a sizeable percentage of the colonial population. According to a study by A. Roger Ekirch, "Convicts represented as much as a quarter of all British emigrants to colonial America during the 18th century."[13] The practice of British penal transportation was effectively ended with the onset of the American Revolution.

Most colonial communities in America were equipped with jails which also followed English models. These buildings were used mainly as a holding place for those awaiting trial or execution and were not used for long-term incarceration. The jailhouse was often one of the first buildings erected in a newly settled American colonial community and by the mid-18th century even the smallest towns boasted a jailhouse. A visitor to the village of Bristol, Pennsylvania wrote that the community "had only one road 'marked by anything like a continuity of building,' but that cluster included an Episcopal church with its lonely graveyard, a Quaker meeting house, and a brick jail."[14] Unlike later penitentiaries which featured "distinct architecture and special procedures," colonial jails were often designed to resemble residences and followed a household model:

> . . .the keeper and his family resided in the jail, occupying one of its rooms; the prisoners lived several together in the others, with little to differentiate the keeper's quarters from their own. They wore no special clothing or uniforms and usually neither cuffs nor chains restrained their movements. They walked – not marched – about the jail.[15]

By the late 18th century, popular sentiment regarding the widespread use of corporal punishment, both in Europe and America, had begun to sour. In the United States, Enlightenment ideals that had informed the creation of the republic also led its leaders to reevaluate their nation's criminal codes and methods of punishment. In particular, the ideas of Italian philosopher and economist Cesare Beccaria (1738-1794), laid out in his 1764 treatise *On Crimes and Punishments*, were widely embraced by governments in Europe and in the U.S. and inspired the work of influential prison reformers like John Howard (1726-1790) and Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) in England. Beccaria proposed, among other things, severely restricting the use of the death

[11] Ibid, 51.
[12] Christianson, *With Liberty for Some: 500 Years of Imprisonment in America*,23.
[13] A. Roger Ekirch, *Bound for America: The Transportation of British Convicts to the Colonies, 1718-1755* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 86.
[14] Christianson, *With Liberty for Some,* 61.
[15] Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum,* 55.

penalty and using alternative forms of punishment, including long-term imprisonment and banishment, claiming that "perpetual slavery" was more than sufficient "to deter the most hardened and determined, as much as the punishment of death."[16] Beccaria's ideas eventually made their way into state constitutions in America—in 1776, both Pennsylvania and Maryland adopted new constitutions that curbed the use of "sanguinary laws," and Pennsylvania included a provision that "houses are to be provided for punishing by hard labor, those who shall be convicted of crimes not capital; wherein the criminals shall be imployed [sic] for the benefit of the public, or for reparation of injuries done to private persons."[17]

In March 1787, at the Philadelphia home of Benjamin Franklin, Dr. Benjamin Rush (1746-1813) presented a paper to a small gathering of citizens proposing "a new program for the treatment of criminals" centered on the "establishment of a prison which would include in its program (a) classification for prisoners for housing, (b) a rational system of prison labor to make the prison self-supporting. . . (c) individual treatment for convicts according to whether their crimes arose from passion, habit, or temptation, and (d) indeterminate periods of punishment.[18] Rush's plan was similar to that promoted by English prison reformer John Howard in the 1770s, and contained the seeds of what would become the penitentiary system in America. Pennsylvania led the way, passing a new penal code in 1789 and 1790 that severely curtailed the use of capital punishment and substituted long term imprisonment and hard labor for serious crimes. The legislation also called for an extension of the existing Walnut Street Jail in Philadelphia for use as a state prison. Other states quickly followed—New York's legislature approved funding for the Newgate Prison in New York City in 1796, and New Jersey's first state prison was completed by 1797. By 1800, similar penal codes had been enacted in several eastern and southern states, including Virginia, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maryland.[19]

While the enthusiasm for prison as an alternative to corporal and capital punishment was strong, initial efforts to organize these new facilities were largely unsuccessful. More focused on legal reform than on developing specific programs of incarceration, late 18th-century legislators and prison administrators largely modeled state prisons on existing jails, and reports of mismanagement, escapes, and riots were common. Administrators, legislators, and the public were also concerned that, because of the mixing of the criminal populations within these institutions, prisons would become a kind of laboratory for crime.

The Pennsylvania System and the Auburn System

By the 1820s, two competing programs of prison design and management—the Pennsylvania system and the Auburn system—emerged in America, both of which became "the object of national acclaim and international study."[20] Despite their much publicized and fiercely debated differences, both systems were based on the fundamental idea that criminal behavior was not inherent, but largely the result of corruption in the larger community and "an upbringing that had failed to provide protection against the vices at loose in society." [21] Because a prisoner's environment led them to commit a crime, they could conceivably be rehabilitated within a

[16] Christianson, *With Liberty for Some,* 24.
[17] John D. Bessler, "Foreword: The Death Penalty in Decline: From Colonial America to the Present," *Criminal Law Bulletin*, Vol. 50, No. 2, 250.
[18] *The Attorney General's Survey of Release Procedures, Volume V: Prisons* (Leavenworth, KS: Federal Prison Industries, Inc. Press, 1940), 1.
[19] Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum*, 94.
[20] Ibid, 61.
[21] Ibid, 82-83.

"well-ordered institution" that separated them from any corrupting influences—both inside and outside of the prison walls—and provided a regimented environment of discipline and industry.[22]

The Auburn system, known as the "congregate system" or the "silent system," was first implemented in 1823 at Auburn Prison in western New York State after a series of failed experiments to effectively organize the prison population there. The new system revolved around the principles of industry, obedience, and silence. Inmates were housed in solitary cells at night and were required to work together in various industries during the day. To prevent prisoners from interacting with each other and to impose regularity and order, a regimen of strict military discipline was developed. Silence was to be observed by the prisoners at all times, even when alone in their cells. Daily schedules and work times were tightly regimented and marked by the ringing of bells. While moving through the prison, inmates were required to march in lockstep—"close order and single file, each looking over the shoulder of the man in front, faces inclined to the right, feet moving in unison."[23] This new method of marching was devised by Auburn officials "to give the spectator somewhat similar feelings to those excited by a military funeral; and to the convicts, impressions not entirely dissimilar to those of culprits when marching to the gallows."[24]

The Pennsylvania system, also called the "separate system," first implemented at the Eastern State Penitentiary in 1829, was distinguished from the Auburn System through its use of total solitary confinement of prisoners. Each inmate was housed in a private cell, and no communication or contact with other prisoners or with the outside community was allowed. The complete isolation of the prisoners informed every aspect of the penitentiary's design and its protocols. Each cell was equipped with taps that supplied running water and flush toilets, both innovations that were all but unheard of in the 1820s. An individual yard was also attached to ground-floor cells to allow prisoners an outdoor space to exercise; prisoners on upper levels were afforded double-cells to make up for the lack of a private yard. An inmate's total isolation began the moment they stepped inside the prison. Guards were instructed to place hoods over the heads of new prisoners as they entered the facility to prevent them from seeing other inmates as they were walked to their cells. In its initial experiments with solitary confinement at the Pittsburgh State Prison, the Pennsylvania system required that prisoners remain in their cells without work. Concerns about the effects of "idleness" on the well-being of the inmates, however, led the state to institute a program of solitary work at the Eastern State Penitentiary. Work conducted within the prison was limited to jobs—including weaving and shoe-making—that could be completed within the confines of the cell.[25]

The differences in the Pennsylvania and Auburn systems were reflected not only in the program of rules, regulations, and daily routines applied within the prison walls, but also in the design of the prisons themselves. At Auburn, each wing contained a five-story cell block consisting of two rows of cells, arranged back-to back in the center of the wing. Each tier was accessed through long open galleries that faced onto open areas between the cell block and the outer walls of the wing. In comparison to those at the Eastern State Penitentiary, the cells at Auburn were tiny—seven feet long by three-and-one-half feet wide by seven feet high—and each cell was secured with iron bars. The open arrangement of the Auburn cell blocks allowed guards a clear view of the

[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid, 154.
[24] Christianson, 117.
[25] Ibid; William Kashatus, "'Punishment, Penitence, and Reform': Eastern State Penitentiary and the Controversy Over Solitary Confinement," *Pennsylvania Heritage*, Winter, 1999 (accessed November 1, 2022 at http://paheritage.wpengine.com/article/punishment-penitence-reform-eastern-state-penitentiary-controversy-solitary-confinement/).

prisoners from multiple stations along the wing. In order to retain close supervision of the convicts during their congregate work hours, narrow passages were constructed at Auburn along the backs of the workshops with small apertures that allowed keepers to surveil the prisoners as they worked. In contrast to Auburn, architect John Haviland's design for Pennsylvania's Eastern State Penitentiary featured a series of one- and two-story cell block wings, with cells arranged along a center corridor. The cell block wings radiated out from a central rotunda, allowing guards to view the full length of each cell block from a single position. The first-floor cells were twelve feet long and eight feet wide and included an enclosed exercise yard that was eighteen feet in length. To compensate for the lack of an open yard, second-floor cells were approximately twice the size of those on the first floor.

Both the Pennsylvania and Auburn systems quickly garnered international attention, and foreign dignitaries, prison reformers, and writers flocked to the Eastern State Penitentiary and Auburn Prison to see their innovations firsthand. Among them were French magistrates Alexis de Tocqueville and Gustave de Beaumont, who had been commissioned by the French government to conduct a tour of American prisons. Tocqueville and Beaumont arrived in New York City in May of 1831 and remained in the United States for nearly a year, visiting a number of prisons throughout the country, including Auburn Prison, Eastern State Penitentiary, and the newly completed Sing-Sing Prison in Ossining, New York. Tocqueville and Beaumont published the findings of their visit, *On the Penitentiary System in the United States and its Application to France*, in 1833, and included a detailed comparative analysis of the two systems.

The public was quick to pick sides on which of the new systems was superior. Advocates for the Pennsylvania system claimed that complete isolation was necessary to truly reform prisoners. Away from any outside influence, the inmate "will be compelled to reflect on the error of his ways, to listen to the reproaches of conscience, to the expostulations of religion."[26] Pennsylvania proponents also highlighted how the separate system placed fewer demands on the keepers and required no threat of physical punishment to maintain discipline—with each inmate locked within their own cell, there were few opportunities for collusion, riots, or escapes.

Those who supported the Auburn congregate system pointed to Auburn Prison's own experiment in 1821, in which 80 of its worst offenders were sentenced to Pennsylvania-style solitary confinement without work, only to have the prisoners become mentally unstable. So disastrous was the effect of Auburn's experiment with the Pennsylvania system that the Governor of New York pardoned 26 of the prisoners subjected to it, and the state quickly pivoted to the congregate system.[27] Although Pennsylvania's separate system did allow its inmates to participate in solitary artisanal work, there was widespread concern about the effects isolation on the mental and physical well-being of prisoners under solitary confinement. The English novelist Charles Dickens, who visited the prison in 1842 while on tour in the United States, echoed this concern about the Pennsylvania system, writing:

> In its intention, I am well convinced that it is kind, humane, and meant for reformation; but I am persuaded that those who devised this system of Prison Discipline, and those benevolent gentlemen who carry it into execution, do not know what it is that they are doing. I believe that very few men are capable of estimating the immense amount of torture and agony which this dreadful punishment, prolonged for years, inflicts upon the sufferers; and in guessing at it myself, and in reasoning from what I have seen written upon their faces, and what to my certain knowledge they

[26] George W. Smith, *A Defence of the System of Solitary Confinement of Prisoners Adopted by the State of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: published in 1929, republished by order of the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons, 1833),*75*.

[27] Gustave de Beaumont and Alexis de Tocqueville, *On the Penitentiary System in the United States and its Application to France*, trans. Francis Lieber (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea & Blanchard, 1833) 5.

> feel within, I am only the more convinced that there is a depth of terrible endurance in it which none but the sufferers themselves can fathom, and which no man has a right to inflict upon his fellow-creature.[28]

Despite impassioned arguments on both sides as to which system more effectively rehabilitated prisoners, in the end most states were swayed more by the relative economy of the Auburn congregate system. Having inmates work together during the day allowed for greater efficiency and output from the penitentiary's industries, bringing larger returns from prison labor that could help the institution become self-supporting. Because Auburn system prisoners were only placed in solitary confinement at night, the cells in the Auburn model could also be considerably smaller than those used in the Pennsylvania system and were therefore less expensive to build and maintain. The consensus of American prison builders gathered around the congregate model, and by the mid-19th century nearly all the new state prisons constructed in the United States were built on the Auburn system.

Although hailed by reformers in the 1820s and early 1830s, the Auburn system did not prove to be the humane and effective solution to the problem of crime and punishment that its proponents had promised. Even at so-called model examples like New York's Sing-Sing which opened in 1826, reports of horrific conditions—including overcrowding, wide-spread use of corporal punishment, and insufficient food rations—began to infiltrate to the public by the mid-1830s.[29] Complaints from labor leaders about unfair competition from convict labor also emerged in this period. In 1835, stonecutters in New York City gathered at Five Points to protest the use of marble quarried from Sing-Sing in several buildings in the city, marking the beginning of a long conflict between prison industries and free labor that would continue through the early 20th century.[30]

Alton Penitentiary and the Establishment of the Illinois State Penitentiary System

In Illinois, the evolution away from corporal punishment and toward long-term incarceration began in the early 19th century, and followed the path set by states in the northeast United States several decades earlier. Legislation passed in 1792 by the Northwest Territory, of which Illinois became a part in 1787, authorized the construction of jails in each county, which were to contain separate sections for debtors and criminals. Further legislation also "required that each county equip its jail with stock and pillory and whipping post."[31] As in the eastern colonies before the Revolutionary War, whipping or fines were the most common forms of punishment used in territorial Illinois, and incarceration was limited to those awaiting trial or punishment in county jails.

Although language in Illinois' first constitution of 1818 seemed to indicate that the new state would soon be embracing the national movement of penal reform, no movement was made toward the establishment of a state penitentiary system until 1827, when state representative John Reynolds (1788-1865) proposed using the proceeds from the sale of the Ohio and Vermilion saline lands to fund a prison. The Illinois Assembly passed legislation providing for the establishment of the new penitentiary in February of that year, and a seven-acre plot overlooking the Mississippi River near the town of Alton was chosen as the site. By the time Reynolds was inaugurated as governor in December of 1830, construction on the prison at Alton had begun.[32]

Alton Prison was designed following the Auburn system plan and included a stone cell block with 24 solitary cells measuring seven feet by four-and-one-half feet, slightly wider than the cells at the Auburn Prison. The

[28] Charles Dickens, *American Notes for General Circulation,* Vol. 1 (London: Chapman and Hall, 1842), 238.
[29] Christianson, 124-125.
[30] Ibid, 127.
[31] William Robert Greene, "Early Development of the Illinois State Penitentiary System," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society (1908-1984)*, Vol.70, No. 3 (August 1977), 186.
[32] Ibid, 186; John Reynolds, *My Own Times* (Chicago: Fergus Printing Co., 1879), 271.

building and surrounding grounds were encircled by a stone wall varying from three to five feet in thickness. In February 1831, the Illinois legislature revised its criminal code to include specific terms of incarceration at the new penitentiary as punishment for felonies. Under the new code, capital punishment was limited to murder and treason, and corporal punishment was banned for other offenses. Misdemeanors would remain punishable by fines or imprisonment in county jails.[33] The legislature also stipulated that the prison would be administered by four inspectors appointed by the governor and supervised by a warden. Marmaduke Davenport was selected as the Alton prison's first warden.[34] In his later memoir, John Reynolds recalled, "I have never performed a public service that has afforded me more satisfaction than my efforts to aid in establishing the penitentiary and to adapt the laws to the system. It is too brutal and barbarous to whip, crop, and brand a man in the pillory, if it can be avoided."[35]

Despite the early optimism of Reynolds and the legislature, by the late 1830s Alton Prison was plagued by mismanagement, a rapidly deteriorating physical plant, and overcrowding. A special investigation was undertaken in 1839, and the subsequent report found that the walls of the prison were crumbling, and that the 24 existing cells were "extremely uncomfortable and unhealthy—in summer the water trickles down the sides of the walls, and in winter they are coated with ice."[36] Thirty-two additional cells, which had been authorized by the previous legislature, had yet to be completed, requiring two or more inmates to be placed in cells meant to house a single prisoner.[37]

The investigating committee proposed an appropriation of $17,000 for rebuilding the outer wall and recommended the construction of more workshops to keep the prisoners occupied. More significantly, the committee also recommended that the state lease out the entire penitentiary to a private individual. Unlike the convict leasing system that flourished in the American South in the late 19th century, where convicts were essentially sold out into indentured labor, the system of prison leasing practiced in the northern and western United States required state governments to maintain prison facilities, while lessees oversaw the everyday operation of the prison, including contracts with manufacturers for prison labor and the care and discipline of inmates. Although government-appointed inspectors were usually employed to provide periodic reports on prison conditions, the leaseholders were essentially free to run the prison as they wished. Lessees looking to make as much money off the arrangement as possible had little incentive to provide anything other than the basest of living conditions for the prisoners in their charge, and reports of abuse and mismanagement were common. While simplifying the state's role in the management of its first penitentiary, Illinois' adoption of the lease system also showed the state's waning interest in prisoner rehabilitation and its greater focus in having Alton Prison pay for itself without further taxing the government and its citizens. The leasing system was approved by the legislature in March of 1839, and the state advertised for bids by potential lessees soon after.[38] In June 1839, Samuel A. Buckmaster, a resident of Alton who later served in the Illinois House of Representatives, was awarded the first three-year lease of the prison; Buckmaster would later take on another eight-year lease of Alton in 1845.[39]

[33] *Laws of Illinois*, 7 G.A. (1830-1831), 110-113.
[34] Greene, "Early Development of the Illinois State Penitentiary System," 187-188.
[35] Reynolds, *My Own Times,* 272.
[36] *Memorial of Miss D. L. Dix, in Relation to the Illinois Penitentiary*, 15 G. A., 1st Session (1847), 6.
[37] Greene, "Early Development of the Illinois State Penitentiary System," 188.
[38] *Laws of the State of Illinois* 11 G. A. (1839), 281.
[39] Greene, "Early Development of the Illinois State Penitentiary," 188-189.

Predictably, conditions did not improve under the new lease system and, despite subsequent additions to Alton Prison, overcrowding proved to be a perennial problem. In the following report to the Illinois General Assembly in 1840, inspectors William Montgomery, P. Merrill, and B. K. Hart, wrote:

> There are now fifty-six cells, of a size barely sufficient for the accommodation of our convicts, and there are now 90, and the number increasing, by a ratio that will more than double this number before another regular session of the Legislature. Of the 34 now in excess, some when it will possibly do, are placed two in a cell, some are chained to the walls in the passages of the prison, and others confined in the cellars. The practice of doubling is very unhealthy, and ought not to be permitted to any considerable extent; and confining in passages and cellars facilitates their escape, and endangers the lives of the Warden and his family, who are compelled to reside within the walls of the prison. A glance will be sufficient to show that the present state of things cannot continue long.[40]

By the time reformer and activist Dorothea Dix visited Alton Prison in 1846, there were only 88 cells to accommodate nearly 130 inmates. She found conditions in the prison to be far below even basic standards: the walls, which had been called out for reconstruction in the late 1830s by prison inspectors, were "badly built, of small stone. . .filled with rubbish and mortar"; workshops were "either temporarily thrown up, out of repair, or inconvenient in location or construction;"; and the dining room was not equipped with benches, forcing prisoners to stand during their meals.[41] Alton's hospital building had been taken over by the warden as a residence, and sick inmates convalesced in the building's basement. Overall management of Alton Prison was also found wanting, with no provisions given to released prisoners, no chaplain, no detailed rules of conduct for prisoners or guards, and no record of hospitalized inmates. Of the continual overcrowding, Dix questioned the state's wisdom in constructing "small biennial additions, finished only to reveal how inadequate they are for the positive necessities of the Institution."[42] She concluded that "no outlay of money can convert this prison into a secure, commodious, or durable establishment. . . . I see but one remedy and money saving resource. It is to make sale, as speedily as possible, of this State property, and with the proceeds, purchase and construct a new prison. . ."[43]

The state's own report on the prison by a joint select committee agreed with Dix on many of the issues she raised in her own report but did not go so far as to call for its replacement. The committee instead recommended immediate construction of 96 additional cells at Alton to alleviate overcrowding, pointing out that double-celling was "well calculated to defeat most of the benefits designed by solitary confinement" by allowing "evil communications" between offenders.[44] The committee urged the legislature to appropriate funds for a warden's house to free up needed space in the hospital building and new benches and tables for the dining room, and also recommended regular reports by the warden and physician. Notably, the committee had only praise for Samuel Buckmaster's management of the prison and frequent use of whipping as a control measure, claiming that, although "doubted by some of the most humane and philanthropic of our country," the lash was "indispensable to reduce convicts to submission and obedience."[45]

Although these improvements were implemented, Alton Prison could not keep up with the continuous rise in the state's prison population and by the mid-1850s the state faced calls for a new penitentiary. Because over half of the incarcerated population at Alton came from the more populous and rapidly developing northern

[40] *Report of the Inspectors of the Penitentiary*, Illinois Legislature, 12th Assembly, Second Session, December 9, 1840, 5-6.
[41] *Memorial of Miss D. L. Dix*, 4-9.
[42] Ibid, 8.
[43] Ibid, 5.
[44] *Report of the Joint Select Committee on the Penitentiary at Alton*, 15 G.A., 1st Session, February 3, 1847, 3.
[45] *Ibid*.

section of the state, prison inspectors recommended that the new prison be located there. In response, the state at first opted only to build additional cells at Alton, but growing public criticism of overcrowded conditions eventually forced the legislature to relent, and the General Assembly passed "An Act to Locate and Build an Additional Penitentiary." on February 19, 1857.[46]

Construction of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet

As authorized by the February 1857 act, a commission was formed in early March 1857 to determine a suitable site for the new state penitentiary and to oversee its construction. Chicago architects W. W. Boyington (1818-1898) and Otis Leonard Wheelock (1816-1893) were selected by the State of Illinois to design the penitentiary. In the spring of 1857, Wheelock and several members of the commission visited existing prisons in several other states, including New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Ohio, and Boyington & Wheelock drew up preliminary plans for the new penitentiary at Joliet by May.[47] The commissioners also examined several sites throughout northern Illinois before recommending a 72-acre tract of land just north of the City of Joliet as the best location for the prison. Adjacent to the Illinois & Michigan Canal and the Chicago & Alton Railroad, the site included a limestone quarry to supply building stone for the new prison complex as well as a natural spring. In their first report to the legislature, the commissioners wrote that the location was "well adapted to all the wants and conveniences of a prison required for so populous and growing a state as Illinois is now."[48]

Boyington & Wheelock's design for the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet sought to alleviate the problems that had plagued the prison at Alton while synthesizing elements of other recently constructed Auburn-style prisons, creating a facility that could "accommodate any future wants of the state in the capacity of a prison."[49] The original plans called for the fifteen-acre prison site to be surrounded on the north, west, and east sides by 25-foot stone walls, rising from a width of six feet at the base to three feet at the top. Substantial guard towers were placed at each corner, and a five-foot-wide catwalk was planned along the entire wall. The centerpiece of the design was the four-story warden's building flanked by east and west cellblock wings, which together formed the south enclosure for the complex and served as the public face of the prison. The warden's building would serve as the central administrative hub for the prison and contain offices for the warden, deputy warden, and matron, the warden's residence, and a dormitory for the guards. The east and west cellblock wings were designed on the Auburn system, with four tiers of cells, each approximately four feet wide, seven feet long, and seven feet high, arranged back-to-back and connected by open galleries. Cells would be secured by doors of iron bars, "so that when shut they will admit nearly as much light as when open."[50] Directly north of the warden's building and east wing, a series of connected two-story structures housing the kitchen, dining room, chapel, and hospital were planned. The chapel was to be equipped with "a gallery extending across one end, to accommodate the female convicts, which will allow them full view of the chaplain during service, and at the same time be entirely out of sight from where the male convicts are seated below."[51] Five cobblestone workshop buildings were to be stationed at the outer edges of the complex.

In addition to the cellblock wings, a "separate system" prison building and women's prison building were also planned for the complex. The separate system building was to be constructed adjoining the north wall of the

[46] *Laws of the State of Illinois,* 20 G.A. (1857), 131.
[47] "The New Penitentiary," *Alton Weekly Telegraph*, May 14, 1857, 2.
[48] *Reports to the General Assembly of Illinois*, 21 G.A. (1859) Vol. I, 154.
[49] Ibid, 188.
[50] "The New Penitentiary," *Chicago Tribune*, August 28, 1857, 2.
[51] *Reports to the General Assembly of Illinois*, 21 G.A. (1859) Vol. I, 190.

kitchen building. Modeled after the cellblocks of the Pennsylvania system, the separate system building contained larger cells that could house prisoners placed in solitary confinement without work, a punishment that was increasingly applied in Auburn-style prisons to replace or complement corporal punishment. A separate women's cellblock would be located east of the separate system and kitchen buildings and include an enclosed yard for the exclusive use of the female prisoners. A separate workshop was also planned for the women held at the prison. Both the separate system and women's prison buildings were each initially designed to hold 88 individual cells.[52]

The warden's building and cellblock wings, along with the north, east, and west walls, were rendered in the Gothic Revival style, determined by Boyington & Wheelock to be "the most applicable and appropriate style of architecture" for the highly visible and public elements of the complex.[53] Used at the Eastern State Penitentiary in Pennsylvania, the Gothic Revival style, with its references to medieval fortifications, conveyed a sense of austerity and security. Buildings located within the prison walls and largely out of sight from the public were much simpler, designed "in a permanent, safe and wholesome manner, at the least possible cost of construction."[54]

Although Boyington & Wheelock's design for the penitentiary at Joliet boasted a number of improvements over Alton, the most important was the substantial increase in the total number of cells. The initial plans called for a total of 800 cells for male prisoners and 88 for female prisoners, for a total of 888.[55] This did not include the separate system cells, which could be used to house additional inmates if necessary. Later modifications to the proposed design increased the number of tiers in the west cellblock wing to five and added 22 cells to both the women's prison and separate system prison, bringing the projected total up to 1,000 cells, nearly four times the number that had been built piecemeal over a period of over 20 years at Alton Penitentiary.[56]

On May 19, 1857, the commissioners presented the plans and site recommendation to Governor William H. Bissell, who authorized the purchase of the land and the construction of the warden's building, the east wing of cells, and the building housing the dining room, kitchen, hospital and chapel.[57] The 72-acre tract near Joliet was purchased from Anson H. Taylor, Jr. at $100 per acre, for a total of $7,219. With the penitentiary site assured, the commission moved to secure bids for the initial phase of construction, which by statute was to be completed by prison labor and overseen by private contractors. Although initial bids received in June 1857 were well above estimates prepared by Boyington & Wheelock, a second round received in late July was more in keeping with projected costs, and the contract for the first phase was awarded to Zadock Casey for $129,000. Casey in turn transferred the contract to Lorenzo P. Sanger and his partner Samuel K. Casey, who had taken over Samuel Buckmaster's lease of Alton prison earlier that year.[58]

Illinois' penitentiary lease system had been criticized by reformers like Dorothea Dix in the 1840s, and that criticism was revived with the prospect of its continuation at the new penitentiary in Joliet. An editorial in the February 9, 1857, *Chicago Tribune* neatly summarized the case against leasing, stating that "the lessee becomes, to all intents and purposes, the State, and there is nobody to stand between his rapacity and the

[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid, 188.
[54] Ibid.
[55] *Alton Weekly Telegraph*, May 14, 1857, 2.
[56] *Reports to the General Assembly of Illinois,* 21 G.A. (1859) Vol. I, 191; Greene, "Early Development of the Illinois State Penitentiary System," 190.
[57] Ibid, 165.
[58] *Reports Made to the General Assembly of Illinois* 21 G.A. (1859) Vol. I, 168.

prisoners at his command. He is an autocrat in a limited sphere; and, however good may be his intentions now, the temptations to an abuse of his unlimited power are too great to be resisted."[59] Although some hoped that the legislature would use the establishment of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet to institute state control of the prison system, in the end the Illinois General Assembly chose to continue with the leasing system.

While the legislation gave the commission the option of retaining Alton Prison for continued use by the state after the new penitentiary was completed, after visiting the prison and conferring with city officials and residents, the commission concluded that "the penitentiary at Alton was in every respect unsuited for the purpose of a prison."[60] The city agreed to convey its reversionary interest in the prison land to the state with the condition that the facility would be shut down and all prisoners removed by July 30, 1860.[61] The property was sold at public auction to Sanger & Casey, who agreed to pay $16,000 and have the remainder of the value of the site applied as credit for work completed on the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet.[62]

Work began on the site on August 10, 1857, and almost immediately the project met with substantial delays. Sanger & Casey initially employed a team of approximately 100 men to begin the construction of buildings housing the kitchen, chapel, dining room, and hospital. By December, the two-story section of the building intended to house the kitchen, hospital, and storerooms had been completed, and the dining room and chapel south of the kitchen building were underway. However, because initial work at the quarry had not produced enough quality stone, construction of the east cellblock wing had not begun, and there was growing concern among the commissioners that the transfer of prisoners from Alton would be substantially delayed. To ensure that secure accommodations would be available as quickly as possible, the commissioners directed Sanger & Casey to place iron grates on the first story of the dining room and chapel building and to complete the walls around the outdoor yard for the women's prison.[63] In January of 1858, the commissioners paused work on the east wing and contracted with Sanger & Casey for the construction of the women's prison building, anticipating that the smaller cellblock could be rapidly built and provide space for at least some of the growing population at Alton.

On May 22, 1858, the first 53 convicts from Alton were transferred to Joliet, and by December a total of 226 prisoners had been removed from the old prison and were working to construct the new one.[64] With the women's cellblock still not finished, all of the prisoners were forced to crowd together in the dining room; other spaces in the existing kitchen and hospital block were fitted with temporary partitions for use as sleeping rooms, a private kitchen, and a dining room for the guards. These alterations required diverting appropriations from the east wing, further delaying the construction of badly needed cells. The commissioners admitted in their 1859 report to the legislature that these conditions were far from ideal, stating that "from the difficulty and anxiety incident to guarding some two hundred. . . congregated in one room, by night as well as by day" they "regretted that they had not sooner made preparations for the construction of the prison for females, that it might have been in use at an earlier period for the safe keeping of males."[65]

In 1859 the Illinois General Assembly approved an additional $200,000 for the penitentiary for construction of the west workshop and a section of the west wall in addition to the buildings already under construction. By the

[59] *Chicago Tribune,* February 9, 1857, 2.
[60] *Reports Made to the General Assembly of Illinois*, 21 G.A. (1859) Vol. I, 167.
[61] Ibid, 168.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid, 171.
[64] Ibid, 173.
[65] Ibid, 174.

end of the year, the women's prison and workshop had been completed, as well as the east workshop, two corner towers, and sections of the north workshop and northeast engine house. With 390 prisoners now living and working on the site and the cells in the women's prison completed, Samuel Casey, who was serving as warden at both Joliet and Alton, was compelled to house two prisoners in each available cell (a practice known as double-celling or double-bunking) and to place the remaining 190 inmates in a single room that was planned for use as a chapel.[66]

The commissioners and contractor were caught in a vicious cycle that would continue through the early 1860s—prison labor was desperately needed to bring the complex to a point where it could adequately house more inmates, but the number of prisoners working on site could not be increased until that housing was completed. Conditions at the site also had a harmful effect on the prisoners who were already there. Performing back-breaking labor from dawn until dusk, hundreds of inmates were still forced to sleep in a single room together, either in hastily constructed bunks or on the floor. Under those circumstances, disease spread rapidly, and no permanent hospital had been set up at the site. Although the commissioners admitted that the rate of illness among the prisoners had been high, there was little that could be done to improve the situation until the east cellblock wing was finished.[67]

Construction continued at a slow pace through 1860. Although work on the east wing advanced considerably through the spring, by May 1860 the money set aside in 1859 appropriation for contract work had run out. With the July 1860 deadline to remove all prisoners from Alton fast approaching, the commission met with the governor, state treasurer, and secretary of state to discuss how to keep the project moving forward. It was agreed that Sanger & Casey could secure loans to complete work over and above the state's appropriation, with the understanding that the General Assembly would later provide funds to repay them. The last remaining Alton inmates arrived at the Joliet site on July 24, 1860, and in December 1860 Warden Casey reported that there were 672 inmates at Joliet, including eight women.[68] With the east wing completed, most prisoners were now securely housed in individual cells, although the continued lack of a complete perimeter wall around the site had allowed 21 inmates to escape that year.

In January of 1861, the legislature made an appropriation of $226,093.48 for continued work on the site, along with an additional appropriation of $79,210.46 to cover contractor's drafts from the previous year. The commission now turned their attention to enclosing the site through the construction of the warden's building and west wing. The warden's building was their first priority--the deputy warden and dozens of guards were still living in space originally built for the kitchen and hospital, as were the female prisoners. Sanger & Casey stipulated in their contract with the state that the building would be enclosed by November 1861 and finished the following October. By the end of 1862, the warden's building and west wing were still under construction, although enough of both structures were finished to completely enclose the prison site. Other improvements, including a warehouse at the west end of the property near the Chicago & Alton Railroad tracks, were also made.

Also completed in 1862 was Joliet's separate system prison (later known as North Segregation or the Solitary Building). Its construction had not been an immediate priority for the commission. However, in 1860 and 1861

[66] *Reports Made to the General Assembly of Illinois*, 22 G.A. (1861) Vol. I, 77.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid, 107.

seven prisoners working at the Joliet site had suffered mental breakdowns, and with no solitary cells in place, Warden Casey had confined these inmates to the women's prison, "where for weeks and months at times, their heart-rending outcries could be heard at all hours of the day and night"[69] The commissioners appealed to the superintendent of the Hospital for the Insane in Jacksonville to have the inmates transferred there. Although he initially refused, five of the "worse cases" were ultimately admitted to the hospital. This incident compelled the commissioners to quickly move forward with construction of the separate system building, although on a smaller scale than what was originally planned. The finished structure, located north of the kitchens and west of the women's prison, contained only 24 cells instead of 100. Each cell measured seven feet wide by seventeen feet long, and was enclosed with two doors, one of solid wood and one of iron bars. To prevent inmates from taking mortar out of the mortar joints to communicate with those in neighboring cells, partition walls were constructed of large slabs of stone, with iron rods set within the mortar joints.[70]

With the Civil War underway, the Illinois General Assembly was hesitant to provide more money for the prison, which in its unfinished state had already cost the state over $580,000, tens of thousands over the original estimate for the project. While they conceded that the additional taxation required to fund construction of the penitentiary amid the war "would fall with crushing weight upon all the industrial interests of the people," the commission urged the legislature for additional appropriations, arguing that leaving the prison's buildings "in an incomplete and unprotected state" would only require additional money to repair if work were to stop.[71] The legislature reluctantly agreed, and in February 1863 the project was given an appropriation of $177,935, with an additional $116,381 for contractor's drafts over the 1861 appropriation.[72]

With Samuel Casey's lease set to expire in June of 1863, the commissioners had urged the General Assembly in their 1862 report to extend the existing lease to allow for construction to continue uninterrupted under the same contract. Instead, a new lease was awarded to James M. Pitman, who operated it under J. M. Pitman & Company. The change in contract required full payment to Samuel Casey for "all profits property due on work then done," in addition to "existing obligations by the successors or assignees of the contractors," which exceeded the latest appropriation by over $5,000.[73] With no appropriation remaining and uncertainty surrounding the change in the contract, work on the penitentiary essentially stopped.

In 1864, reports of irregularities in the penitentiary leases led to an investigation of the penitentiary by the Illinois Senate. By that time, Pitman had sold the lease to Samuel Buckmaster, former warden and lessee of Alton. The investigation revealed that Samuel Casey had consistently over-charged the state for materials and that the overall quality of construction was not as high as stipulated in the 1857 plans. More serious charges were laid against Pitman and Buckmaster, who was acting as the prison's warden. Testimony revealed that Pitman had taken on secret partners in the lease, including Buckmaster, Samuel Casey, and Dr. I. A. Buck, a penitentiary commissioner. These partners then lobbied to secure the lease for Pitman at a time when the penitentiary commission and members of the legislature were calling for a bill to end prison leasing in Illinois.[74]

[69] *Reports Made to the General Assembly of Illinois* 23 G.A. (1863) Vol. I, 232.
[70] Ibid, 233.
[71] Ibid.
[72] *Public Laws of the State of Illinois*, 23 G.A. (1863) Vol. I, 61.
[73] *Reports Made to the General Assembly of Illinois*, 24 G.A. (1865) Vol. I, 326.
[74] Greene, "Early Development of the Illinois State Penitentiary System,"192-193.

The Senate committee also argued that, because the act approving the lease to Pitman stipulated that he also act as warden and the subsequent sale of the lease to Buckmaster had not been authorized by the commissioners or the legislature, the penitentiary was now "in the hands and under the control of a person without authority to enforce the discipline thereof, and without responsibility to the State for his acts."[75]

The investigation was met with public outcry over the mismanagement of the penitentiary construction project, as well as renewed calls to abolish the leasing system in Illinois. An editorial in the *Chicago Tribune* suggested that "It is worthy of serious consideration whether the work should not be properly housed against the weather, and allowed to rest until the war is over. We have already paid about two thousand dollars apiece for each convict in the Penitentiary, to provide respectable quarters for themselves and their successors in office. Suppose we let them enjoy what they have got for a few years, till stone and mortar get cheaper."[76] The General Assembly seemed to agree with this sentiment, and, with the whiff of scandal hanging over the project, voted against appropriating funds to complete the work during their 1865 session. Although the Senate committee investigating the matter recommended, with the support of Governor Richard Oglesby, that the current lease be declared invalid, the legislature took no action on the matter and Buckmaster remained in control of the new penitentiary.[77]

The failure to secure additional funding threw the construction of the prison at Joliet further into chaos. Newly appointed commissioners R. E. Logan, A. T. Briscoe, and Andrew Shuman reported in January 1866 "at the time that we took possession of the Penitentiary premises (March 3d, 1865,) there had already expired a period of more than a year, during which there existed no provisions for carrying on the work, or even for preserving in proper repair or safety the work already more or less completed."[78] George R. MacGregor, who had acted as superintendent of works since 1858, was charged with making any necessary repairs to the unfinished buildings to keep them "in as good a state of preservation as possible," but otherwise no work was completed on the site through 1865.[79]

In the meantime, the inmate population continued to rise. In 1865, the penitentiary contained 820 prisoners, making it the fourth largest state penitentiary in the country.[80] Although this number necessitated that nearly all of the inmates be double-bunked within the 500 available cells, the existing site was still able to accommodate them all "with tolerable comfort."[81] Continued increases through the first half of 1866 compelled the commissioners to enter into an agreement with Buckmaster to complete construction of the west cellblock wing as quickly as possible. As Samuel Casey had done in the early 1860s, Buckmaster agreed to purchase materials and proceed with the work, assuming that any costs would be covered by a later appropriation. By the end of 1866, the west wing was occupied—rather optimistically, the commissioners reported the overcrowding issue had been "fully solved."[82] The only major project left unfinished was the warden's building, which remained exposed and deteriorating. Pointing out that nearly $120,000 had already been expended on the building,

[75] *Reports Made to the General Assembly of Illinois,* 24 G.A. (1865) Vol. I, 416.
[76] "The Penitentiary—Prison Labor," *Chicago Tribune*, December 29, 1864, 2.
[77] Greene, "Early Development of the Illinois State Penitentiary System," 194.
[78] *Reports Made to the General Assembly of Illinois,* 25 G.A. (1867) Vol. I, 171.
[79] Ibid, 172.
[80] Greene, "Early Development of the Illinois State Penitentiary System," 194.
[81] *Reports Made to the General Assembly of Illinois*, 25 G.A. (1867) Vol. I, 172.
[82] Ibid, 176.

commissioners warned that leaving the work unfinished meant a potential loss of "thousands of dollars [sic] worth of valuable work to damage and dilapidation."[83]

Even with construction at the penitentiary finally nearing an end, controversy surrounding the leasing of the prison continued through 1867. In January, Samuel Buckmaster sold his lease on the penitentiary for $100,000. Although there were calls to void the sale, no action was taken by the legislature and over the next five months at least seven different lessees expressed interest in taking on oversight of the prison.[84] In mid-June, current penitentiary lessees Henry Root and George W. Burns sent notice to Governor Oglesby that they were canceling their Joliet lease; newspapers reported that "the reasons for this action. . . are understood to be the failure of the Legislature to provide for the completion of the prison and to put it in properly working condition to employ the increased number of convicts. The contractors claim that there is at least an implied obligation on the part of the State to furnish a prison complete with all the necessary facilities for working the men."[85]

Governor Oglesby called an emergency session of the General Assembly and on June 16, 1867, the legislature passed a bill authorizing the state to take control of the penitentiary at Joliet. Three new commissioners were appointed by the governor to serve until the next election year; from that point forward, commissioners were to be elected officials. The new penitentiary commission would "have the general charge, superintendence, management and control of said penitentiary and of the convicts therein" and appoint a warden to oversee the day-to-day operations of the prison. The commissioners were also authorized to make contracts with outside businesses for the use of prison labor. Twelve days later, the legislature passed an appropriation in the amount of $300,000 for the maintenance of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet.[86]

On July 1, 1867, the three newly-appointed penitentiary commissioners went to Joliet to take formal possession of the premises from the Illinois Manufacturing Company, the company under which the final lease was organized. It quickly became clear to them that the state was in no way ready to immediately take over the management of the prison, primarily due to the fact that "the State owned merely the walls and buildings, together with two stationary engines, the main lines of shafting in the shops, heating and cooking apparatus, and a small quantity of furniture.[87] Everything else—from the machinery and tools in the workshops to the dishes in the dining room—was the property of the former leaseholders. The commissioners arranged for the Illinois Manufacturing Company to continue running the prison for an additional three days while the existing materials not owned by the state could be inventoried and appraised; most of what was in the prison at the time of the handover was ultimately purchased from the lessee.[88]

In addition to establishing its management over the penitentiary and arranging contracts for the prisoners' labor, a top priority of the commission was to complete the warden's residence, the last of the buildings included in Boyington & Wheelock's original plans for the complex that remained unfinished. Work on the structure resumed almost immediately, and by September 1867 the new warden General Benjamin Dornblaser had moved in.[89] With the last of the buildings occupied, the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet was now officially complete. With a construction period spanning over ten years, the project had cost the state over $1 million. Two prisoners had died while working to build the prison, and many more had been injured—penitentiary

[83] Ibid, 178.
[84] Greene, "Early Development of the Illinois State Penitentiary System," 194.
[85] "The State Penitentiary," *The Illinois State Journal*, June 13, 1867, 1.
[86] *Public and Private Laws of the State of Illinois*, 25 G.A., 1st and 2nd Special Sessions (1867), 21-36.
[87] *Report of the Commissioners of the State Penitentiary for the Years 1867-8 (*Springfield, IL: State Journal Printing Office, 1869), 3.
[88] Greene, "Early Development of the Illinois State Penitentiary System,"194.
[89] *Report of the Commissioners of the State Penitentiary (1867-1868),* 5.

physician John R. Casey reported in 1861 that there were "almost daily cases of minor surgery" to treat accidents at the site.[90] In the 144 years that the prison remained in operation, the complex was remodeled multiple times as penal philosophies and the prison population changed, but many of the principal buildings that made up the original penitentiary—including the administration building (warden's building), east and west cellblock wings, separate system (solitary confinement) building, and multiple workshop buildings—were still in service when the prison closed in 2002.

The Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet in the Late 19th Century

When the State of Illinois took over management of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet in mid-1867, the prison had been in some form of operation for nearly ten years. During that period, the day-to-day operations of the institution had gradually taken shape, and by the late 1860s many of the administrative practices that would define the management of the penitentiary and the daily lives of the people incarcerated there for decades to come were largely in place. Although individual policies influenced by various reform movements, as well as the makeup of the prison population, would evolve over the coming decades, many of the central features that informed the operation of Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet in the 19th century—including labor, attempts at reform through education and religious guidance, and the constant struggle to maintain discipline and security—would survive well into the 20th century.

Administration

In its 1867 Penitentiary Act, the Illinois legislature moved irrevocably away from the prison lease system and shifted the control and administration of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet to the state. Subsequent legislation enacted in July of 1871 set into place the basic management of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet through the 19th century, establishing the general administrative hierarchy and outlining the responsibilities of the officers tasked with running the institution. Although it was absent from earlier penitentiary acts in Illinois, the 1871 law specifically established an ongoing leadership and oversight role for the state's governor, most likely due to scandal revolving around prison leasing in the 1860s and subsequent investigations of mismanagement. Under the law, the governor was required to visit the penitentiary at least twice a year "to inquire into all alleged abuses, or neglect of duty."[91] The governor also had the right to make any changes to the general discipline of the prison.

A group of three penitentiary commissioners appointed by the governor maintained broad control over the financial and disciplinary management of the penitentiary, with the power to make all financial decisions, let all contracts, and make rules for the penitentiary. Members of the state commission were required to visit the prison at least once a month and make a report to the general assembly and governor every two years with detailed financial information and a summary of prison activities. Although more removed from the day-to-day operations of the institution than the warden and other on-site officers, the commission also made decisions that directly impacted prisoner's lives, including how much food they received and how many hours they worked.[92]

The penitentiary commission's most significant task was the appointment of the warden. While the commission oversaw the higher-level functioning of the penitentiary system, the warden served as the day-to-day head of operations within the prison walls. Joliet's warden was required by law to live on site during his tenure, and

[90] *Reports Made to the General Assembly of Illinois*, 22 G.A. (1861) Vol. I, 317.
[91] *Public Laws of the State of Illinois,* 27 G.A. (1871), 596
[92] Ibid, 596-598.

apartments were provided on the second and third floors of the administration building (originally called the warden's house or warden's building) at ISP-Joliet. The warden worked closely with the penitentiary commission, and those wardens who maintained good relationships with the commission were given broad authority to make decisions regarding the management of the prison. State law also required that the warden keep detailed financial records and present them to the commission on a regular basis; additional information on the prison population, repairs and maintenance of the facilities, and convict labor contracts were also under his purview. As with the penitentiary commission, the position was inherently political, and wardens were often replaced when there was a change in administration at the state level.

The late 1860s and early 1870s saw a series of state-appointed wardens, all of whom served relatively short tenures. General Benjamin Dornblaser (1867-1869) and George Perkins (1869-1870), both of whom entered the position during the chaotic years immediately after the abandonment of the prison lease system, served as wardens for brief periods. Elmer Washburn, who later became Chief of the Chicago Police and Director of the US Secret Service, was warden at Joliet between 1870 and 1872. Washburn, who had an acrimonious relationship with the penitentiary commissioners, was fired from his position in 1872 and replaced by A. W. Edwards, who held the post until 1873.[93] John W. Smith was appointed in May of 1873 and died just two months later. Major J. W. Wham, who at that time was serving as a penitentiary commissioner, filled the vacant position from August 1873 to July of 1874.[94]

The longest-serving warden at Joliet before the turn of the 20th century was Robert McClaughry. McClaughry held the position twice—first from 1874 to 1888, and again from 1897 to 1899; he was also warden at Pontiac Reformatory in central Illinois from to 1893 to 1897. McClaughry was an advocate of many of the ideas circulating around prison reform in the late 19th century, which served as a precursor to later progressive-era reform movements. This movement's overall philosophy was first codified in 1870 under the *Declaration of Principles* at the inaugural meeting of the National Congress of Penitentiary and Reformatory Discipline (later known as the American Prison Association), and focused on treating prisoners with more respect and humanity while advocating a progressive classification system that rewarded prisoners for "good conduct, industry, and attention to learning."[95] During his time as warden at Joliet, McClaughry instigated several changes that reflected a "tough but fair" approach to discipline that echoed some of the principles espoused by other 19th-century reformers. He expanded and clarified the rules for inmates, which re-instated and strictly enforced the rule of silence in the workshops and the yards and required all prisoners to attend chapel services.[96] McClaughry also advocated for changes to the state's good-time law to allow prisoners to keep a portion of their good-time credits even after violating the rules of the penitentiary.[97] McClaughry also established the first regular period of recreation and social time at the prison outside of religious services and educational activities. On July 4, 1877, McClaughry allowed the prisoners to mingle freely in the cellblocks outside of their individual cells for a short period; afterward, McClaughry instated an annual recreation period in the prison yard every July 4.[98] Although his time at Joliet was not without controversy (most notably an investigation on abuses in

[93] "Palmer's Campaign," *Chicago Evening Post,* June 17, 1872, 4.
[94] *Report of the Commissioners, Warden, Chaplain, Etc., of the Illinois State Penitentiary for the Year Ending November 30, 1874*, 33.
[95] Thames Ross Williamson, ed. *Readings in American Democracy* (Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., 1922), 291.
[96] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1874*, 17.
[97] Ibid, 16. A more detailed explanation of good-time credits is found on page 85 and 86 of this report.
[98] Frank Morn, *Forgotten Reformer: Robert McClaughry and Criminal Justice Reform in Nineteenth Century America* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, Inc., 2011), 86.

prison discipline following the death of solitary inmate Gus Reed in 1878), McClaughry was generally considered the most effective of ISP-Joliet's 19th-century wardens.

In addition to the warden, the state commission appointed the penitentiary's chaplain and physician, who both played critical roles in the functioning of the prison. Joliet's chaplain attended to the religious needs of the prison population, providing "moral and religious instruction," leading services in the prison chapel, and visiting the sick at the prison hospital.[99] In addition to his religious duties, the chaplain also served as the sympathetic face of the larger prison administration and was in some ways responsible for the prisoners' mental well-being. He visited the prisoners in their cells regularly, listening to their complaints and troubles. The chaplain, not the warden, was responsible for reading and explaining the rules of the penitentiary to newly arrived inmates. In the early years of the prison, the chaplain was also responsible for prisoner education, maintaining the prison library, and "giving instruction in the useful branches of an English education" to prisoners in the evening.

Joliet's penitentiary physician was responsible for the physical health of the inmates, tending to sick or injured prisoners and keeping detailed records on injuries, illnesses, and deaths. In cases where prisoners claimed they were not well enough to work, it was the job of the prison physician to examine them and determine whether their illness was severe enough to warrant time away from the workshop. Because of the high risk of disease that came with housing hundreds of prisoners in close quarters, the physician was also tasked with inspecting the facilities to ensure a baseline of cleanliness and hygiene were maintained, including examining each cell on a weekly basis. In certain instances, the prison physician made recommendations to the warden and commission on ways to improve the overall health of the prison population.[100]

Serving under the warden were a group of lower penitentiary officers and guards. The 1871 penitentiary legislation charged the warden with appointing (with the commission's approval) a deputy warden, who assisted the warden in all aspects of prison operation and took over his duties in his absence; a clerk, who helped in the maintenance of prison records and financial information; a steward, who was responsible for managing the prison's kitchens; and a matron to oversee the female inmates at the prison.

Although among the least-paid of the penitentiary's employees, Joliet's prison guards were in many ways most essential to the security and smooth operation of the institution. Guards were in direct contact with prisoners at all times of the day and night and were responsible for moving the inmates to and from their cells in an orderly manner, keeping a constant eye out for insubordinate behavior or escape attempts, and reporting any deviation from the prison rules that might warrant punishment. Shifts were long—usually around 12 hours—and the threat of violence was constant. Many guards who did not have families lived in a dormitory on the upper floors of the administration building, above the warden's apartments, and took their meals in a mess hall on site. Speaking of the guard's immersion in the unending routine of the penitentiary in 1892, Warden Henry Dement mused that "their lives are such that they do not know much of the outside world."[101]

By the early 1870s, the corps of prison guards at Joliet had been divided into distinct ranks. First-class guards, the highest paid, were responsible for guarding the workshops, gates, cellblock wings, warden's house, and yard. Second-class guards monitored the front gates, walls, and quarries. By the late 1870s, the penitentiary also

[99] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary,1874,* 602.
[100] *Public Laws of the State of Illinois* 27 G.A. (1871), 605-606.
[101] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet for the Two Years Ending September 30, 1892* (Springfield, IL: H. W. Rokker, State Printer and Binder, 1892), 10.

employed several supernumerary guards, who received the lowest pay in the corps. A list of individuals on the penitentiary's payroll in February of 1879 lists the monthly salary for first-class guards as $45; second-class guards received $40 a month, and supernumerary guards $30 a month.[102]

Early commission reports are largely silent about the number or role of guards working at ISP-Joliet through the 19th century, and newspapers of the period generally only reported on the guards' activities in relation to instances of violence or attempted escapes. Because of their constant proximity to the prison population, there was ample opportunity for sympathetic or friendly relationships between guards and the prisoners, as well as an increased risk of open hostility, corruption, or violence. Prison administrators recognized the heightened impact that the guards could have on the inmate population and sought to engender a feeling of mutual respect between guards and inmates. While Warden Robert McClaughry outlined strict rules around how inmates could interact with prison officers—insolence or talking about matters outside of prison business was completely forbidden, and each prisoner was required to touch his cap when approaching an officer—he also required that all officers and keepers "speak to and treat convicts kindly but firmly," and "treat the convicts under their charge in such a manner as to cultivate in them a spirit of manhood, responsibility and self-respect."[103] Given the inherent tension that existed between keepers and kept, the rules on either side were often broken.

Daily Life of Prisoners at the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet

A person beginning their sentence at the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet in the late 19th century entered a world that, although changed in specifics, a prisoner in the late 20th century would also recognize from its broad outline. From its beginning, the daily life of prisoners at the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet and others like it around the country was marked by routine, labor, and drudgery. Time spent outside of the cellhouse was strictly ordered and, particularly in the years during which the penitentiary operated under the lease and contract labor systems, designed to extract as much productive work time from the inmates as possible. What few waking hours remained after the prisoners' time in the shops during the work week were mostly spent in their cells. Before the reform movements of the early 20th century, there was no regular recreation or social time, although prisoners found ways to communicate and form relationships with each other, often through breaking the established rules of the institution. Reading materials such as books and newspapers provided some distraction and edification to prisoners in the cells, but an organized educational program was slow in developing, with an emphasis in the early decades on religious instruction. The dictates of the Auburn system, although beginning to lose favor among prison reformers by the 1870s, were generally adhered to at Joliet and other Auburn-style penitentiaries and reformation of the prisoner through hard labor and solitary contemplation were the guiding principles.

A new arrival at the penitentiary was taken through the front gate at the warden's building and into the main prison office, where he was formally committed to the institution. After a required bath, the inmate was issued what would become his daily uniform—a set of wool clothing consisting of a pair of pants, vest, and coat made of black and white two-inch stripes. Caps and coats were also provided, and a straw hat for protection from the sun was also issued in summer. In the 1860s, half of these straw hats were painted red. Penitentiary Chaplain S. G. Lathrop remarked in his recounting of life at Joliet in 1866, "A convict in his full dress has a very strange and grotesque appearance. A lady who visited her husband here told me that his appearance reminded her of a

[102] *Journal of the Senate*, 31 G.A. (1879), 264-265.
[103] *Report of the Commissioners, Warden, Chaplain, Etc., of the Illinois State Penitentiary for the Year Ending November 30, 1874,* 13, 34.

clown in a circus, and for weeks she could not get the strange image from her mind."[104] Although a prisoner's civilian clothes were stored and returned to them upon their release, these clothes were often found to have disintegrated after a long sentence, so discharged prisoners were provided a new suit of clothes upon their release.[105]

After receiving the uniform, each prisoner was then shaved and his hair cut short. This practice was done under the guise of hygiene, but it also physically transformed the inmates and homogenized their appearance, making them easily identifiable as members of the prison population. A reporter from the *Chicago Tribune* remarked with some shock in 1887 that the requisite prison garb, shave, and haircut had rendered anarchist Oscar Neebe, who was being committed to Joliet for his role in the Haymarket Riot, all but unrecognizable:

> Seated in a plain wooden chair beside a table holding the remnants of a morning's meal was what had once been a good-looking, well-dressed man. The dark mustache and imperial were removed, disclosing a full, fleshy face, from which all color had fled. The striped, loose-fitting suit had added to the naturally robust figure of the Anarchist; but, taken as a whole, he did not even suggest the appearance of his former self.[106]

After this physical transformation, a description was then taken of the prisoner that included his physical appearance, crime and length of sentence, occupation, state or country or origin, and date of reception—all information that was included in the registers of the prison and used to generate statistics of the prison population for the warden's biennial report. The prisoner was also assigned a number. After Warden Robert McClaughry introduced the Bertillon system of identification in the 1880s, the taking of the physical description became a much more involved process, requiring precise measurements of the head, ears, left middle finger, and other specific body parts, as well as any marks, scars, or other features that could be used to identify the inmate in case of escape or recidivism.[107]

Once the prisoner was fully registered, he was given his work assignment. Although an effort was made to align shop assignments with prisoners' work experience or training, often the inmate was assigned to whatever shop in the yard needed workers. If the prisoner arrived during daytime hours, he was usually put to work immediately.

After an initial holding period in the separate system prison located near the center of the yard, the prisoner was assigned to a cell in the east or west wing. In accordance with the Auburn system, the cells at Joliet were tiny and spare—seven feet long by four feet wide, with seven-foot ceilings, stone walls, and stone floors. Set far back from the narrow windows along each wing's exterior walls, the cellblocks were lit with a single gas fixture at each cell. The collective heat produced by hundreds of these fixtures made the summer months in Joliet's cellblocks nearly unbearable; in 1892 an electric light plant was constructed at the prison, and the gas fixtures in the cellblocks were replaced with electric bulbs.[108] The cells were not equipped with plumbing until the mid-20th century, and each prisoner received a wooden bucket in lieu of a toilet as well as a stone container for fresh water. Because the penitentiary was regularly overcrowded, each cell was fitted with a set of double iron bunks to hold two prisoners if necessary. In the early decades of the penitentiary's operation, each inmate slept on a

[104] Rev. S. G. Lathrop, *Crime and Its Punishment and Life in the Penitentiary,* (Joliet, IL: S. G. Lathrop, 1866), 247.
[105] Ibid, 149.
[106] "Neebe Gets His Number," *Chicago Tribune*, September 28, 1887, 2.
[107] Matthew Pate, "Bertillon System," *The Social History of Crime and Punishment in America, Vol. 1* (United Kingdom: Sage Publications, 2012), 115-117.
[108] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1892,* 9.

straw mattress that was changed infrequently. Under Robert McClaughry's tenure as warden, the cells were equipped with mattresses and sheets that were washed on a weekly basis.[109]

Soon after his arrival, the prisoner was visited by the chaplain, who read him the rules of the institution. Serving as a "mediator between the sternness of law, and sympathy for the unfortunate prisoner," the penitentiary chaplain played an important role in helping to introduce and acclimate inmates to their new reality.[110]

Daily Routine and Rules for Inmates

From his very first day, an inmate at Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet was committed to a strictly enforced schedule that would define his existence until the end of his sentence. Based loosely on military precedents, this schedule allowed prison officers to efficiently manage the large inmate population and was meant to instill discipline. Many of the specific aspects of the schedule were codified in the rules for prisoners and deviating from it was grounds for punishment.

The day began with the ringing of the morning bell at 5:30 am which announced that all prisoners should rise, dress in their work clothes, make their beds, and stand at attention in front of their cell doors. At a signal from the guard, prisoners opened the doors, stepped out and stood in a line along the galleries. After marching to the west end of the prison yard to empty their cell buckets, which they hung on racks to dry, the prisoners received breakfast. After the morning meal, prisoners marched to their assignments in the various workshops that lined the east, north, and west sides of the prison yard. The workday was broken into two five-hour blocks, the first beginning at seven a.m. and ending at noon, the second starting at one p.m. and ending at six p.m.[111] Penitentiary rules required that "at all times during working hours" inmates give "undivided attention" to their work.[112] No prisoner was allowed to leave his workstation without the permission of a foreman or guard, and any inmate who claimed to be too ill to work had to be examined by the penitentiary physician before being allowed leave the shop. In the hour between shifts, prisoners were served dinner, which was the main meal of the day. After work ended, prisoners were given a small supper of bread and coffee.[113] The return to the cellhouse was a highly choreographed process—each inmate stood before his cell door and on the first signal from the guards, they opened the door, stepped in, and held the door "close within six inches."[114] On the second signal, each prisoner closed his cell door and stood with one hand on the door. A bar stretching across each row of cells was lowered, and the guards conducted the nightly count to ensure that all the prisoners were present. Once the count was completed, the prisoners remained in their cells until the next morning.

There were small variations to this routine during the weekend. On Saturday, inmates took their weekly baths and were shaved by the prison barber. Workshops were usually closed on Sunday, although a provision in the 1871 legislation did allow for general maintenance work and other labor for the state on Sundays.[115]

While moving through the cellblocks or grounds, prisoners marched in lockstep, "a curious combination of march and shuffle" originating at Sing-Sing and implemented in penitentiaries throughout the country in the

[109] *Report of the Commissioners, Warden, Chaplain, Etc. of the Illinois State Penitentiary for the Two Years Ending September 30, 1876* (Springfield, IL: D. W. Lusk, State Printer and Binder, 1877), 49.
[110] Ibid, 44.
[111] "Illinois Penitentiary," *Chicago Evening Mail*, April 5, 1872, 2.
[112] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary for the Two Years Ending September 30, 1878* (Springfield, IL: Weber, Magie & Co., State Printers, 1878), 26.
[113] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary*,1892, 9.
[114] *Report of the Commissioners, Warden, Chaplain, Etc., of the Illinois State Penitentiary,1874*, 16.
[115] *Public Laws of the State of Illinois*, 27 G.A. (1871), 605.

mid-19th century.[116] Penitentiary rules detailed the precise method for the lockstep, dictating that each prisoner should march "with his right hand upon the shoulder of the man in advance" and "incline his face towards the officer."[117] The lockstep, along with the striped uniform, remained indelible signifiers of the American prison long after they were abolished in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Although the original system of congregate labor developed at Auburn called for absolute silence at all times, rising prison populations made consistent enforcement almost impossible, and most Auburn-style penitentiaries had relaxed the rule somewhat by the time the penitentiary at Joliet was established. While Warden Robert McClaughry attempted to reinforce a strict code of silence at the beginning of his tenure, by the late 1870s he had amended the prison rules to allow inmates who were sharing a cell to "converse in A LOW TONE," although talking with prisoners in adjoining cells was still prohibited.[118]

Communal activities for prisoners outside of work were strictly limited at Joliet in the 19th century, and generally revolved around religion or education. Inmates initially gathered in the prison dining room for their early and midday meals, but this practice had been abolished by the early 1870s, and prisoners ate in their cells until a separate dining hall was built in 1903. An article in an 1872 edition of the *Chicago Tribune* stated, "It was necessary to make this change to prevent frequent quarrels or fights, and too much communication between convicts."[119] The prison chaplain conducted a morning service for men and preached to the female prisoners in the afternoon; Sunday school classes for the male inmates was also offered before the morning service. Because of the chapel's small size, prisoners had to alternate attending services every other week. Long-time chaplain A.T. Briscoe lamented in 1878 "the injustice of keeping half of our prisoners confined in their cells all day Sundays."[120] Services and Sunday school catered only to Protestants, although by the late 1870s a priest made regular visits to minister to Catholic prisoners in their cells; by the early 1890s the commissioners had appointed a Catholic chaplain to serve alongside the Protestant chaplain, and Catholic mass was held in the prison chapel every few weeks.[121]

Educational programs outside of religious instruction were modest during the early years of the penitentiary. Legislation regarding the management of the prison from the late 1860s and early 1870s placed responsibility for any educational efforts with the chaplain, allowing for "instruction in the useful branches of an English education. . .for such length of time daily as said commissioners shall prescribe (Sundays excepted), between the hours of six and nine o'clock P.M."[122] Reports for the penitentiary show that by the mid-1870s, regular classes were conducted three nights a week between the months of November and March.[123] No instruction was offered during the spring and summer, likely due to prisoners working longer hours. No school room or building was included in the original plans for the prison, and enrollment in the 1870s and early 1880s was necessarily small due to lack of space to conduct classes. James L. Wheat, who served as an instructor to the school in 1874, reported that several students who were refused enrollment "owing to lack of room, actually

[116] David J. Rothman, "Perfecting the Prison," *The Oxford History of the Prison: The Practice of Punishment in Western Society* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1998), 110.
[117] *Report of the Commissioners*, *Warden, Chaplain, Etc., of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1874*, 16.
[118] *Report of the Commissioners, Warden, Chaplain, Etc., of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1876*, 26.
[119] *Chicago Tribune*, April 5, 1872, 2.
[120] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary*, 1878, 23
[121] Ibid; *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet for the Two Years Ending September 30th, 1898* (Joliet, IL: Illinois State Penitentiary, 1899) 1.
[122] *Laws of the State of Illinois*, 1871, p. 602.
[123] *Report of the Commissioners*, *Warden, Chaplain, Etc., of the Illinois State Penitentiary,* 1874, 23; *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary*, 1878, 23.

begged not to be crossed of [sic] the list."[124] In 1888, school buildings were constructed at the end of each cellblock wing to accommodate the prison's educational program; by the mid-1890s enrollment had risen to nearly 300 students, and the school term had been extended to seven months (October-May).[125]

Outside of work and a handful of shared activities, most of an inmate's time was spent in his cell. Penitentiary officers viewed keeping prisoners contained within their cells as essential to maintaining order. Those who still clung to the rehabilitative potential of solitary confinement believed that this time allowed the prisoner to reflect on his actions, an important part of their ultimate reformation. To the prisoners, cell time was marked mainly by boredom. The only sanctioned activities during cell time, outside of eating meals or sleeping, were reading and writing. Each prisoner was given a Bible and a slate tablet for writing—pencils and paper were considered contraband. Inmates were supplied with a copy of the prison library's catalog and could check out books to keep in their cells. Weekly newspapers were also available, provided the inmate could pay for them. Daily newspapers and "sports papers" were contraband, and the weekly papers were carefully screened by censors before distribution and any offending articles cut out. Those inmates who could not read or write, or foreign prisoners not proficient in English (the majority of books in the library's collection were in English) had few options for diversion. While the nightly cell time during the workweek was manageable, the long period between the evening bell on Saturday night and the Monday morning bell could be difficult for some prisoners, particularly those who were unwilling or unable to attend Sunday services. Chaplain Briscoe wrote in his 1878 report, "They often complain to me—and I think justly, too—of their confinement on Sunday in their cells. They say, 'they would rather be at work.'"[126]

Prison Labor

More than any other activity, work shaped the typical day of the 19th-century prisoner in the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet. From the perspective of the state, penitentiary administrators, and the public, hard labor was a critical component of both the prisoner's punishment and his rehabilitation. It was also the engine that allowed the penitentiary to be largely self-sustaining or even profitable, whether through the leasing out of the entire facility to an outside individual or corporation, the hiring out of convict labor via the contract system, or by selling prison-made goods on the open market through the state account system. Prison labor also shaped the physical makeup of Joliet Penitentiary through the 19th and early 20th century—outside of the administration building (warden's building) and the cellblock wings, workshops and storage facilities for materials and finished goods occupied most of the space within the walls of the penitentiary, and secondary structures that supported the industry of the complex spilled out along the adjacent rail lines and across Collins Street to the east. Looming east of the prison were the stone quarries that provided building material for private and public construction projects and, by the early 20th century, state-sponsored road building campaigns.

The principal concern of prison administrators and state legislators was finding a way to ensure that the operation of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet was funded through the labor of its incarcerated population. This desire to make the prison pay for itself was what led the state, along with most others in the mid-19th

[124] Biennial reports from the Commissioners of the Penitentiary from the early 1870s through the late 1890s show that the period during which the prison had instructors separate from the chaplain was very brief (early to mid-1870s). Through 1880s, the prison's chaplain was administering the educational program at the prison. By the mid-1890s, inmates were being recruited to serve as teachers. *Report of the Commissioners*, 1874, 1876, 1878, 1880, 1888, and 1894.

[125] *Report of the Commissioners of the State Penitentiary at Joliet for the Two Years Ending September 30, 1894* (Springfield, IL: Philip Bros., State Printers, 1895), 20; *Report of the Commissioners of the State Penitentiary at Joliet for the Two Years Ending September 30, 1896* (Springfield, IL: Phillip Bros., State Printers, 1897), 21.

[126] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary,* 1878, 23.

century, to choose the Auburn system over the Pennsylvania system when establishing its first penitentiary at Alton in the late 1820s. And with over $1 million of state funds already sunk into its construction, the pressure on the governor, general assembly, and penitentiary commissioners to make Joliet pay for itself was immense, particularly in light of the leasing scandal that overshadowed the completion of the prison in the late 1860s.

Also front of mind for the penitentiary commissioners and officers was the unavoidable fact that keeping as many inmates productively employed as possible was critical to maintaining prison discipline. The biennial reports of the commissioners and warden reveal a constant fear of the prison population sinking into idleness. Inmates who were not employed had to be kept in their cells, where they would quickly become bored, frustrated, or emotionally unstable, which increased the likelihood of a breakdown of discipline. This fear of an idle prison population was shared by every penal administrator in the country. A report on convict labor from the U.S. Commissioner of Labor in 1886, in responding to calls to abolish prison labor, put the case starkly: "The experience of all countries shows that by the adoption of this plan the convicts would gradually lose their status as convicts, and become, to a large extent, the inmates of insane asylums. . . . And it has become clearly apparent, too, to the public that the maintenance of prisoners in idleness would result in a more vicious class of criminals than of any that has yet obstructed the morals of society. . ."[127]

When the State of Illinois was forced to take over the administration of ISP-Joliet in 1867, new legislation enacted that year changed the management of labor at the prison to the contract system. Under the contract system, the state retained control over the administration of the prison, and convict labor was leased out through multiple contracts representing a variety of businesses. Contractors agreed to employ a set number of prisoners at a certain price per day, and provided any necessary tools and materials, while the prison supplied workshop space. Although many states also paid for machinery and power supply, administrators at ISP-Joliet allowed the contractors to pay for machinery and engines to keep costs down, which would prove problematic later. All work took place within the prison walls, which allowed for the penitentiary officers to maintain discipline and control over the inmates.

In practice, the contract system at the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet was nearly identical to the former lease system, which had allowed lessees to sub-contract out prison labor to businesses. The key difference was that now the state was directly responsible for securing and maintaining those contracts. In the early years of the contract system, penitentiary commissioners struggled to attract businesses to contract with the prison. They argued that this was mainly because the general assembly had restricted the length of contracts to two years, explaining that "capitalists cannot be induced to invest their money in the machinery and stock necessary to carry on a business of this kind, and take the risks attending it, for the short term of two years. It requires about a year for a contractor to properly organize his shop and make the convicts effective and profitable workmen."[128] Even as they argued to extend the contract periods, the Commissioners also openly expressed their concerns with the contract system's potential effect on prison discipline, calling the system "fruitful of trouble and mischief." They complained:

> In this institution, more annoyance and confusion attend or originate in the two contract shops, employing only about 100 convicts, then in all the rest of the Penitentiary. Contractors insist upon their right to employ their own citizen foremen—men who have no direct interest in the general discipline or welfare of the institution and that the convicts

[127] *Second Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor, 1886: Convict Labor* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1887), *382*-383.
[128] *Illinois State Penitentiary, Reports of the Commissioners, Warden, Chaplain, and Physician for the Year 1867-8* (Springfield, IL: State Journal Printing Office, 1869), 10-11.

> shall, during working hours be under their supreme control. There is not, infrequently, a conflict of authority between the contractors and the officers—the former exacting too many privileges, and the latter finding it impossible to secure good discipline and a systematic government unless the prison rules and regulations are of uniform application and effect throughout the entire institution.[129]

Because of the lack of contracts, commissioners in the late 1860s were forced to employ many of the prisoners at Joliet through the state account system, in which the prison itself manufactured goods that were either sold to outside buyers or placed on the open market. Joliet's inmates during that period produced cut stone for building, agricultural implements, wagons, chairs, brooms, cigars, and harnesses, in addition to tents for the US Army.[130] Perhaps anticipating that the contract system would ultimately fail at Joliet, the commissioners recommended that the general assembly provide "a material increase of the capital invested in this extensive manufacturing establishment, if it be settled policy for the State to operate it on its own account. In no other way can it be made *permanently* self-sustaining."[131]

The building up of sufficient contract work took several years, but by the early 1870s, ISP-Joliet was able to earn enough from its inmates' labor to maintain operations, helped in part by the legislature's extension of allowable length for prison contracts in 1871. An 1872 letter from Penitentiary Commissioner John Reid to Governor John M. Palmer listed five contracts that the prison held with various manufacturers, including Selez & Company, a shoe manufacture employing 260 men at 65 cents per day; Winterbotham, a cooperage working 160 men at 70 ½ cents per day; and Fuller, cigar makers employing 200 men. An additional 300 inmates were occupied in the quarries and stone cutting departments preparing stone for use on the new State Capitol, which was under construction.[132]

The penitentiary continued to be self-sustaining through the mid-1870s, but by 1877, the effects of the economic depression sparked by the Panic of 1873 were evident on the prison's balance sheet--several of the contracts had been annulled and some of the businesses that had contracts had gone bankrupt, and in September of 1878 the penitentiary reported debt of over $50,000. At that time, Joliet held the largest inmate population since its establishment—on March 15, 1877, the prison housed an astonishing 1,900 prisoners, nearly double its capacity and the highest number of inmates in its history. Of this number, 200 were transferred to the newly built Southern Illinois Penitentiary in Chester, but the sheer size of the prison population combined with the economic depression made it impossible for all the prisoners to work on contract, and Warden McClaughry was forced to put the inmates to work repairing buildings and filling in the grounds of the prison.[133]

By the end of the decade, the penitentiary was on a better footing, although Warden McClaughry noted in his report to the commissioners that "An examination of the financial statements will show that the institution lives, literally, 'from hand to mouth.' The earnings of each day are required to meet its expenses."[134] In 1879, the general assembly approved a standing appropriation for the penitentiary of $50,000 to help meet expenses (like general repairs and the furnishing of suits, money, and train fare for released prisoners) not directly tied to running the institution.

[129] Ibid, 10.
[130] *Fourth Biennial Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics in Illinois* (Springfield, IL: R. W. Rokker, Printer and Binder, 1886), 34.
[131] *Reports of the Commissioners for the State Penitentiary,* 1867-8, 73.
[132] *Reports Made to the General Assembly,* 28 G.A. (1873),*408.*
[133] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary*, 1878, 24-26.
[134] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet for the Two Years Ending September 30, 1880* (Springfield, H. W. Rokker, State Printer and Binder, 1880), 17.

At the same time, the contract system at Joliet and other prisons around the country faced pushback from business associations and a growing organized labor movement, who claimed that prison industries imposed unfair competition on outside businesses and depressed wages. Demonstrations against prison industries at Auburn and Sing-Sing by labor organizations had taken place as early as the 1830s in New York, but the movement gained momentum through the 19th century in step with the rise of industrial manufacturing and organized labor, and protests in Chicago against the contract system at Joliet were organized and widely reported in the press through the 1870s and early 1880s.

Investigations made in the mid-1880s confirmed that, in particular markets and in industries commonly undertaken by prisons (shoe and boot manufacture, cooperage, cigar making, wagon and agricultural implement manufacture), convict labor did affect competition. An 1886 report prepared by the Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics gave a detailed account of the cooperage shop at ISP-Joliet, which had been producing barrels for meatpacking under contract with Winterbotham for over a decade, and analyzed the effect of the shop on the cooperage market in Chicago. It found that J. W. Winterbotham's shop at Joliet, along with another run out of a prison in Indiana, accounted for nearly 70% of the barrels sold in Chicago, a prime meatpacking market. The report further illustrated that Winterbotham's prison-made barrels, which were sold at a much lower price than those produced by similar shops in and around Chicago, had also suppressed the wages of journeyman coopers in the city, concluding that "Chicago coopers have often been able to earn more upon the streets at any kind of unskilled labor than at the trade they have spent years to acquire."[135]

Although not as concerned with its financial consequences, prison reformers also disliked the contract system of prison labor, believing that the influence of contractors disrupted and hindered the inherent rehabilitative qualities of the penitentiary system. W. M. F. Round, Secretary of the National Prison Association, framed the role of the contractor within the penitentiary as that of an autocrat whose only motive was profit, claiming that "The interest of the contractor is promoted by the non-reformation of the criminals. The most persistent criminal who most frequently returns to the prison, becomes the best-trained and consequently most profitable workman."[136] Zebulon Brockway also condemned the system's mercenary quality, noting that its tendency "to drive the prisoner along a single process of routine work, with little regard to preparation for future industrial success when released" was in direct opposition to the penitentiary's goal of reform.[137] The 1886 US Commissioner of Labor report pointed to a more subtle danger, pointing out that the contractor's own lack of moral character could have a detrimental effect on prisoners. The report recounted the story of an inmate convicted of "obtaining goods under false pretences [sic]" who was "set at work making shoes, in which the spaces between the inner and outer soles were filled with paper instead of leather. The reformatory effects of such labor are not discernible, for the convict and all working with him could not help drawing the conclusion that the contractor should be working at his side."[138]

Fearing that attacks on the contract system would create a public prejudice against prison-made goods and precipitate a "crisis like that which characterized the downfall of the lease system" of 1867, the Illinois General Assembly attempted to pass legislation during its 1885 session that would replace contract labor with an alternative system. Similar legislation had already been adopted in many eastern states, including New York (1883), New Jersey (1881), and Pennsylvania (1883), although the systems of prison labor they established

[135] *Fourth Biennial Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics of Illinois, 1886*, 114-117.
[136] Ibid, 90-91.
[137] Ibid, 91.
[138] *Second Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor, 1886: Convict Labor,* 379.

varied. But Illinois representatives could not reach an agreement on how the state's prison labor should be managed, and after rejecting thirteen separate bills, the House and Senate passed a joint resolution putting the question to voters in a proposed constitutional amendment:

> *Resolved,* That hereafter it shall be unlawful for the commissioners of any penitentiary, or other reformatory institution in the State of Illinois, to let by contract to any person, or persons, or corporations, the labor of any convict confined within said institution.[139]

In the months before the November 2 amendment vote, agitation against prison labor continued to escalate. On August 26, 1886, a group of midwestern manufacturers joined the fray when they convened the inaugural meeting of the National Anti-Convict Contract Association at the Grand Pacific Hotel in Chicago, adopting as its main object "the thorough investigation of the subject of convict labor, for the purpose of discovering and securing the adoption of that method of employing the prison population. . . which shall be least burdensome to all labor and least oppressive to manufacturing interests."[140] In their report to the General Assembly one month later, the penitentiary commissioners lamented the effect of the looming amendment on the financial future of the Illinois Penitentiary system, claiming that threats of boycott had already made contractors wary of doing business at Joliet, and that, if the amendment passed, they would "be confronted with the fact [that]. . . existing contracts for the labor of 287 men will expire, who now contribute more than 58 cents per man per diem towards defraying the heavy expenses of the penitentiary.[141]

The constitutional amendment passed handily in November by a 64% majority, but in the years following the ban on contract labor, the Illinois General Assembly failed to pass any legislation outlining an alternative system of prison labor at Joliet and Chester penitentiaries into place. A report prepared by the Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1886 had laid out the available alternatives, including the state account system, which was already in use at Joliet on a limited basis, and the piece-price plan proposed by prison reformer Zebulon Brockway and implemented at the Elmira Penitentiary in the 1870s, in which the prison manufactured goods from materials provided by outside contractors and was paid a set price per finished item. Although both the state account and piece-price plan still allowed for prison products to be sold on the open market, they also completely removed any potential influence from the contractors out of the penitentiary walls and gave prison administrators the opportunity to diversify production and lower competition with free labor, both of which appealed to prison administrators and reformers. Business and labor groups protested that these alternate plans were too like the contract system and still created unfair competition. While agreeing on the need to employ prisoners in some kind of productive work, they favored utilizing inmate labor in public works programs like highway building and maintenance or in the manufacture of supplies for public institutions. Some even recommended that prisoners abandon the machinery of industrial production and produce only hand-crafted items, echoing the artisan labor favored in Pennsylvania's solitary system prisons.[142]

In the end, the Illinois General Assembly did nothing, and the penitentiary commissioners continued to run ISP-Joliet on existing contracts that had been let before the passage of the amendment, supplementing with state account work and, to a more limited extent, piece-price work through the early 1890s. Although technically constitutional (contracts that went into place just before the enforcement of the amendment were not set to

[139] *Laws of the State of Illinois,* 34 G.A. (1885), 256.
[140] "Anti-Convict Labor," *Chicago Tribune*, August 27, 1885, 3.
[141] "Condition of the 'Pen,'" *Chicago Tribune*, December 29, 1886, 7.
[142] *Fourth Biennial Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics of Illinois, 1886*, 132.

expire until 1894), the continuation of the contract system proved to be an ongoing irritant to business and labor groups, as well as fodder for both Republican and Democratic politicians and the press.

By the time John P. Altgeld was inaugurated as governor in January 1893, most of the existing contracts at Joliet had expired, and the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet was again running at a deficit. Altgeld, a Democrat and early leader in the Progressive Movement, had attacked Republican incumbent Joseph W. Fifer on the state's use of the contract system during his campaign, harnessing anti-contract feeling in the northern section of the state to narrowly defeat Fifer and become the first Democrat elected to the office since the 1850s. Altgeld's time as governor was marked by several reforms, including the implementation of some of the country's most progressive child labor and work safety laws. Altgeld was also a member of the prison reform movement, publishing an essay in 1884 entitled *Our Penal Machinery and Its Victims* that advocated for indeterminate sentencing, greater leniency in sentencing for minor crimes, and support for prisoners after their release.

Altgeld appointed Bradford Durfee, Daniel Heenan, and Levie Waterman to the penitentiary board in January 1893, and the commissioners selected Robert L. Allen to serve as warden. Allen, native of Joliet, had previously served as superintendent of City of Joliet's electrical plant and was appointed Postmaster of Joliet in 1884 by President Grover Cleveland. The new commissioners and warden were tasked by Altgeld with setting up ISP-Joliet to run exclusively under the state account system and were given an appropriation of approximately $390,000 to purchase existing machinery from contractors and construct plants for new industries to employ the inmates.[143] Among the more substantial improvements made to the prison complex as part of the plan was a new and expanded electrical plant, which would provide power for the new and existing shops. The commissioners also visited prisons and factories around the country in search of additional industries that would diversify the prison's output and ensure that "the number of prisoners working at any one industry might not be too great."[144] By December 1894, the existing stone cutting plant, machine shop, and harness and collar plant had been purchased by the state from contractors, and a chair factory, broom shop, knitting plant, and cigar factory had been established under state control. Understanding that the production of prison-made goods was still a point of contention with the state's labor and business organizations, the commissioners noted in their report that most of the products made at the prison were sold outside of Illinois, "the demand for goods having been mostly in the south and west."[145]Although the penitentiary's shift to state account had coincided with the Panic of 1893 and ensuing depression, the commissioners nevertheless reported that ISP-Joliet was "on a good, substantial footing." However, they warned that, without a substantial appropriation to purchase additional workshops for the men employed on expiring contracts, the State of Illinois would be placed "in the inhuman position of compelling them to exist in enforced idleness during a part or all of their term of imprisonment."[146]

The legislature denied this request, going so far as to specifically forbid any of the most recent appropriation for use in purchasing or constructing new workshops. The lack of funding hobbled the efforts of Warden Allen and the commissioners through 1895 and 1896. A plan to purchase the Joliet Rattan & Reed Company's shop for state use was abandoned, and Warden Allen complained that "our industries have been handicapped for lack of

[143] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet for the Two Years Ending September 30, 1894*, 5-9.
[144] Ibid, 6.
[145] Ibid, 8.
[146] Ibid, 11.

capital."[147] However, Allen and the commissioners did succeed in converting the existing cooperage shop, which had been run using machines, to one in which the manufacture of barrels was done completely by hand.

Warden Allen's 1896 report also illuminated an ongoing problem with the state account system and with prison labor in general. For any other business operating outside of the penitentiary system, owners could shut down production in times of depression or when markets were oversaturated. Mandated to keep its prisoners under hard labor at all times, the commissioners and warden of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet did not have that option, and were "obliged, under the natural order of things, to keep the men at work, at a profit if we can at a loss if we must, for to keep 1,250 confined idle, would be dangerous to health and good discipline, as well as inhuman."[148] The necessity of dumping products onto the market at drastically reduced prices only inflamed labor organizations further, and Republican gubernatorial candidate John R. Tanner used the continued controversy surrounding prison labor and the precarious financial condition of the state prison system in his successful campaign against Altgeld in 1896.

In his final address to the general assembly, Altgeld reiterated that prison labor should not "enter into competition with those who have to make their living by the sweat of their brows, and therefore the prisoners should be taken out of all employment in which they directly affect the wages of free laborers," while admitting that "the prisons would not be self-sustaining" and "just what the prisoners should work at. . .will perhaps be impossible to prescribe by law."[149] The Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet returned to the piece price system, but there was a growing acknowledgement that the era of the self-supporting industrial prison was coming to an end. Labor and business organizations in Illinois and throughout the country continued to oppose the prison factory model through the turn of the 20th century, ultimately resulting in legislation that severely curtailed the manufacture and sale of prison-made goods. Prison reformers, who had long sought to divorce prison labor from the corrupting influence of the marketplace, embraced this development. Richard Vaux, president of the board of directors for the Eastern Penitentiary of Pennsylvania, proudly claimed "We are not self-supporting, and I trust we never shall be. When a prison becomes self-supporting, it is just what prisons are not intended to do."[150]

To the incarcerated population at Joliet Penitentiary in the 19th century, who were removed from the controversies surrounding prison industries, hard labor was simply another unavoidable fact of penitentiary life. The prisoners worked from dusk until dawn, quarrying and cutting stone or making barrels, shoes, brooms, wire fencing, harnesses, wagons, rattan furniture, oak chairs, hosiery, and brass and iron work. The industries in which they worked were determined largely by what businesses chose to contract with the state for their labor or what work was needed by the state.

Those who weren't assigned to the contract shops or state-run shops worked in one of the departments dedicated to the daily operation of the penitentiary. In times when contract work was lean or during transitions from various prison labor systems, inmates were often put to work repairing buildings or grading and improving the penitentiary site. Prisoners in the tailor's shop made striped uniforms worn by the inmates, as well as suits of clothing for released prisoners. Those in the kitchens watched over large kettles containing coffee, beans, or vegetables. Prisoners served as staff for the warden's household, which had its own cooks, bakers, waiters, and

[147] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet for the Two Years Ending September 30, 1896* (Springfield, IL: Ed. F. Hartmann, State Printer, 1896), 17.
[148] Ibid, 17.
[149] *Champaign Daily Gazette,* January 7, 1897, 2.
[150] John P. Altgeld, *Our Penal Machinery and its Victims* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Company, 1886), 121.

chambermaids, Nursing positions at the hospital, as well as teaching positions in the nascent prison schools, were often filled by inmates. Every job at the penitentiary that could conceivably be done by a member of the inmate population was assigned to them.

Although officers made some attempt to match them to jobs that took advantage of experience they had outside, most prisoners were required to perform work in industries for which they had little experience or inclination. Some shops were able to employ a substantial number of experienced workers for brief periods—an 1894 article in the *Chicago Tribune* stated that many of the prisoners working in the state's machine shop were "practical machinists, mechanics, and masons" and were employed "making tools for drilling wells, sharpening the tools used in the prison and stone shop, and building some new machinery for chair and broom shops."[151] Those prisoners with more education were often placed working as assistants or clerks in the prison offices. Charles Angell, a former secretary of the Pullman Palace Car Company who served a 10-year sentence in the 1870s and early 1880s for embezzlement, worked as an assistant in the warden's office.[152] Given the limited number of industries and high percentage of unskilled laborers, however, inmates were often assigned to whatever shops needed workers.

Penitentiary officers did give some consideration to those prisoners who were unable to perform hard labor at the quarry or the more physically demanding workshops, including those inmates who were disabled, ill, or elderly. In the decade following the Civil War, a significant percentage of Joliet's inmate population—as much as ten to twenty percent—were disabled from injuries sustained in the war. S. G. Lathrop, who served as chaplain in the 1860s, remarked on the number of Civil War veterans during his time there, writing "Do you notice that man with but one leg—he left the other at Shiloh; and that man yonder, with but one arm—left the other upon the battlefield. Many, very many of the men gathered here, have been in their country's army, and will carry to their graves the scars of battle fields."[153] Most disabled or infirm prisoners were assigned to do menial work related to the prison's upkeep—early prison reports and newspapers show that "incapables" were often assigned to yard-duty, or were tasked with rolling cigars in the cigar shop.[154] In the late 1880s, an "idle shop" was established, where "the blind, lame and halt: the consumptive, and those suffering from other bodily ills: men who were not capable of performing the work of an able-bodied man" were placed together and assigned piece work. When determining suitable industries for the state account system in the early 1890s, Warden Robert Allen chose hosiery and broom plants in part because work in both industries could be performed by those unable to work in the other shops, and eventually the idle shop was shut down.[155]

Women at the penitentiary were also given "light work" such as mending convicts' clothing or washing and ironing guards' uniforms. Although a separate women's workshop had been planned as part of the original penitentiary complex in the 1850s, the workshop and accompanying 100-cell women's prison building had been taken over for use by the male inmates by 1870, and the female prisoners were sequestered on the top floor of the warden's building until a separate women's prison was built east of Collins Street in 1896.

Surrounded by heavy machinery and lacking thorough training, those prisoners able-bodied enough to labor in the shops were often injured while working. Physicians' reports from the 19th century detail all injuries

[151] "In a Big State Shop," *Chicago Tribune*, March 11, 1894, 1.
[152] *The Indianapolis Journal*, May 23, 1885, 2.
[153] Lathrop, *Crime and Its Punishment and Life in the Penitentiary,* 139.
[154] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary*, 1872, 27.
[155] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1888*, 7; *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1894*, 15.

sustained by prisoners during each year; although workplace injuries were usually not specifically called out, it is likely that at least some of the contusions, lacerations, amputations, and fractures included in these reports occurred while prisoners were on the job. In the 1894 physician's report along, there were five entries for severed fingers; the same report also listed the death of Thomas Lavan (inmate #2291), who died from "injuries sustained by explosion from steam trap."[156]

Some inmates tried to avoid work by feigning illness or injury. Penitentiary commissioners noted in their 1874 biennial report that "Feigned and imaginary sickness is frequently reported where none really exists," and the ferreting out of such cases was a critical task for the prison physician.[157] Before the establishment of the Illinois Asylum for Insane Criminals on the grounds of the Southern Illinois Penitentiary at Chester in 1891, prison physicians also regularly discussed the problem of prisoners pretending to be insane to secure transfer to the state hospital in Jacksonville.[158] Some prisoners even resorted to injuring themselves to escape the workshops. An 1887 *Chicago Tribune* article reported that "Muldoon" Harry Meyers, a bank robber who was serving a 14-year term, had "deliberately chopped off one of his fore-fingers" in an attempt to be temporarily taken off of his work assignment. Meyers was still "made to perform his task just the same as if he had the regulation number of fingers and thumbs."[159]

The problem of motivating prisoners to work at productive levels was a perennial concern of the penitentiary officers. Before corporal punishment was banned in the Illinois penitentiary system by the legislature, unwilling prisoners were whipped if they refused to work, but even then, it was feared that using only the threat of punishment as an inducement for labor would not be enough to make inmates productive. A committee investigating the penitentiary in 1867 during the height of the lease crisis stated the problem plainly, saying "The great inducement for labor is compensation. Where there is no compensation, it is involuntary, and, of course as valueless as the fear of the lash will permit,"[160] Calls to provide some positive incentive to induce inmates to labor began in the state in the 1860s. The 1867 investigating committee recommended giving good-time credits for prisoners as a reward for "industry, as well as for deportment."[161]

Instead of a reduced sentence, the Illinois General Assembly offered payment in the form of an overwork system, first included in the 1867 legislation on the management of the penitentiary and retained in amended legislation in 1871. Commissioners were allowed to make contracts stipulating that inmates could work extra hours for the contract over the time allotted for the prison and be paid for the extra time at the same rate as the state or at a rate agreed upon by the contractor and prisoner. Overwork pay could not be used to make up for time not worked by the inmate on other days. The money each prisoner earned was placed into an overwork fund controlled by the commissioners.[162]

Commission reports from the early 1870s show that the penitentiary officers were not enthusiastic about the overwork system: Warden George Perkins wrote in his 1870 report to the commissioners that "One of the heaviest drawbacks upon us has been the system of overwork. . . . I think you will all agree with me that this system neither benefits the convict nor the institution."[163] Reports from the 1870s show that the system was not

[156] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1894,*26-28.
[157] *Report of the Commissioners, Warden, Chaplain, Etc., of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1874,* 9.
[158] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1888,* 11.
[159] "Geniuses in Stripes," *Chicago Tribune*, September 18, 1887, 2.
[160] "The Penitentiary Investigation," *Chicago Tribune*, June 22, 1867, 2.
[161] Ibid.
[162] *Public and Private Laws of the State of Illinois, 1867,* p. 30 Section 26.
[163] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary*, 1870, 17.

popular with contractors, either—statements of overwork payments from 1872 through 1874 list just two contractors, L.H. Winterbotham and The Ohio Butt Company, who allowed overwork in their contracts.[164]

Daily wages per prisoner were low (a necessity to attract outside contractors in the 1870s and 1880s), and the amount of overwork pay prisoners could earn during their sentences was limited. John Altgeld noted in his 1886 essay on American prisons that "It will strike any one at a glance that this [daily prison wage] is an exceedingly low average; that it is less than half what a man should earn, and less than half what a free laborer will earn on an average."[165] Because contractors weren't required to participate in the overwork system, those prisoners who worked in contract shops not offering overwork had no opportunity to earn money for extra labor. When the contract system was later abolished, no system of wages or overtime work for the state was put into place, and prisoners lost the ability to earn money from their labor. Even with the low hourly wage, however, some prisoners did accumulate substantial sums of money through overwork during their sentences. Daniel O'Brien, sentenced to life in prison in 1867 for murder, was able to earn over $300 in overwork pay before being pardoned in December 1876.[166]

Prisoners were also limited in how they could use their overwork pay during their incarceration. They were allowed to purchase books or newspapers, or they could send money home to family or friends. Any money remaining in their overwork fund at the end of their sentence was given to them upon their release. Many prisoners used their overwork pay to hire attorneys to present their cases to the state's Board of Pardons. Henry Donnell, a Black inmate from Tennessee serving a life sentence for murder, worked as an assistant to the chaplain in the 1880s and 1890s, but earned overwork pay picking up trash around the prison grounds. He used the money to hire an attorney, who pled his case to the pardon board. They recommended clemency, and Governor John Tanner commuted his sentence to 43 years, which with Donnell's good-time credits was reduced to 22 years. When he was notified of his release in February of 1900, Donnell asked the deputy warden to use money from his overwork fund to buy a white hat for him to wear when he left the prison.[167]

Discipline, Punishment, & Reward at the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet

While hard labor served as both the means of punishment and the hoped-for path of reform for the prisoner at the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet in the 19th century, a separate system of punishment—and, to a lesser extent, reward—also existed to ensure the maintenance of discipline within the prison. The rules of conduct for prisoners at Joliet remained remarkably consistent through this period, with only minor changes made through the turn of the 20th century. The first rule was always strict obedience, both to the regulations of the prison and to its officers. Silence and deference were also emphasized in many of the rules of conduct. Inmates were forbidden from speaking to an officer or another prisoner without permission and were not allowed "to gaze at visitors or strangers passing through the prison."[168] Other rules insured the general upkeep of the facilities, requiring that inmates keep their cells clean and bathe regularly. The rules served as a constant reminder to prisoners of their place in the penitentiary—incoming prisoners were read the rules almost immediately on their arrival and a copy was put in each cell.

[164] *Report of the Commissioners, Warden, Chaplain, Etc., of the Illinois State Penitentiary,* 1874, 45.
[165] Altgeld, *Our Penal Machinery and its Victims,* 96-97.
[166] "Pardoned Criminals," *The Inter Ocean*, January 19, 1876, 2.
[167] "To See the World Again," *Chicago Tribune,* February 28, 1900, 6.
[168] *Report of the Commissioners, Warden, Chaplain, Etc., of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1874*, 16.

While the prison rules themselves remained consistent, their enforcement varied with each administration. Although state law gave the penitentiary commissioners broad powers over the administration of Joliet, in practice it was the warden generally who set the tone for prison discipline, determining how strictly each regulation was enforced and how punishment was administered. The wardens of ISP-Joliet walked a fine line in maintaining control over the incarcerated population. They believed that leniency would result in a breakdown of discipline, and at the same time worried that enforcing the rules too strictly or relying too heavily on severe punishments could drive inmates to riot and rebellion. Investigations in the late 1860s showed that in the early days of state control, prison discipline was lax—shop foremen and guards testified that "The men had become idle and hard to manage. There had been many attempts to revolt. The men were allowed to talk almost without restraint. It could not be helped. There were too many men."[169] Under Robert McClaughry's long tenure in the 1870s and 1880s, additional guards were hired, the rule of silence was more strictly enforced, and, for at least a short period, all inmates were required to attend chapel services. Steady contract work during this time also ensured that the prison population was regularly employed. A keeper in the prison yard seemed to sum up McClaughry's philosophy of prison management in 1884 when he observed, "A convict is like a rubber ball—he will stay as long as you press him down, but flies up when the pressure is removed. He must feel the pressure all the time."[170]

For the prisoners at Joliet, what seemed to matter most was that the enforcement of the rules was consistent and fair and that the punishment for breaking them was proportional to the infraction. Those wardens and officers who appeared to inmates to dole out discipline fairly earned the grudging respect, if not the affection, of the inmate population, while those who showed preferential treatment or administered severe punishments for minor offenses did not. An unnamed prisoner recounting his experience at Joliet in the late 1880s observed:

> Physically the convicts of the Joliet are fairly well off. They have a plenty of good, coarse food, they are properly clothed according to the season of the year, and their beds are not uncomfortable. But the discipline—ah, there is where the killing is done. . .I know of a man getting twelve days solitary confinement and light diet—one ounce of bread every twenty-four hours—for looking at an officer. The officer said the man was insolent. I know another case where a prisoner was punished five days for stealing a glance at visitors.[171]

Not surprisingly, prisoners found ways around the penitentiary's rules and regulations. Although the rule of silence, a lynchpin of the Auburn system, was meant to psychologically separate prisoners who by necessity mingled in the workshops, inmates found multiple ways of communicating with each other. Notes, known in prison parlance as "kites," were regularly passed among inmates. In his 1883 book *Behind the Bars: Life and Times in Joliet Prison,* ISP-Joliet clerk Sidney W. Wetmore illustrates "the crook's alphabet," a code devised by prisoners to keep their communications from being read by guards or other prison officials.[172] Wetmore also described what he called "the rogue's lexicon," which included definitions to common words or phrases used by criminals and prisoners. In prison slang, the penitentiary became "the stir," guards were "screws" and "the grand screw" was the warden.[173] Prisoners often fashioned makeshift weapons, either sharpening the dull knives or other utensils to a fine point or using stolen material from the workshops. One prisoner even made a key from a piece of gas pipe to fit the locks in the cellhouse doors. Escape was the ultimate violation of prison rules, and inmates often devised ingenious ways to get beyond the penitentiary walls. They hid in barrels being carried out of the prison yard, chiseled away at the iron bars and stuffed the cracks with soap to hide the

[169] *Chicago Tribune*, June 21, 1867, 1.
[170] *Chicago Tribune*, February 23, 1884, 12.
[171] "The Discipline at Joliet," *Chicago Tribune*, January 20, 1889, 26.
[172] Sidney W. Wetmore, *Behind the Bars: Life and Times in Joliet Prison* (Chicago: Ottaway Printing Co., 1883), 49.
[173] Ibid, 53-56.

openings, or stole civilian clothing and attempted to walk out disguised as foremen or workers. An inmate named "By" Day, left alone in his cell during the day on sick leave, released himself with a homemade key and placed a stuffed dummy made of newspapers in his bed to delay discovery of his escape by the guards.[174]

Prisoners who broke the rules of the institution were punished in a variety of ways. For minor infractions, officers could give a verbal warnings. Privileges like using the prison library, writing letters, or having visitors could also be taken away for a period of time. Inmates who incurred more serious violations—refusing to work, being insolent to officers, or being disruptive or violent—received either corporal punishment or time in solitary confinement. The cold shower bath and cold-water bath were also used as a punishment for malingering or feigning insanity in the early years Joliet's operation. In his 1860 report to the governor, penitentiary superintendent Friend S. Rutherford wrote of this method of punishment:

> I have recommended discontinuance of the *bath* punishment, and it has not been resorted to for over a year. Some accidents which came to my knowledge led me to investigate the effects of the infliction of the bath, and I came to the conclusion that it was an extremely dangerous punishment. None but the most skillful and experienced hands can administer it, without great risk of permanent injury to the victim of its application."[175]

Despite Rutherford's banning of "the bath punishment," cold-water baths continued to be used at Joliet through the early 1870s.

Although the establishment of the state's penitentiary system roughly coincided with the elimination of whipping or public shaming as court-ordered punishment for criminal offenses in the early 1830s, corporal punishment was still used to discipline those incarcerated within the prison system through the 19th century. The state's revised penal code of the early 1830s stipulated that isolation without work was to be the standard punishment for prisoners who broke the rules, but also allowed for any necessary use of force to quell outbreaks or "refractory" behavior from inmates, opening the door for a broader use of corporal punishment within the penitentiary walls.[176] Early officers of the Illinois State Penitentiary system expressed doubts about the effectiveness or morality of corporal punishment. Superintendent Rutherford wrote in his 1860 report that "I have no arguments to urge in its favor. Whatever characteristics of civilization it may possess, the victim of its application alone can tell." Even as he condemned the practice, Rutherford also saw whipping as a necessary evil in disciplining "convicts whose sensibilities are so far demoralized as to be beyond the reach of sympathy or kindness—those whom nothing but the influence of corporeal punishment will keep within the line of duty."[177]

Before whipping was officially banned by the Illinois legislature as a punishment for inmates in 1867, wardens at Joliet claimed to use it only "in the worse cases."[178] Warden Simons, testifying to the investigating committee in June 1867, stated that most men "were punished with solitary confinement, averaging four a day," with the lash used "on six persons a week."[179] Simons stated that a prisoner was subjected to "five to twenty" strokes with a lash made of rawhide, and generally went back to work the next day.[180] A particularly florid article in the July 5, 1869 edition of the *Chicago Tribune* alleged that under the administration of Samuel Buckmaster "a dozen or twenty men were frequently lashed before breakfast. Lashing meant from 10 to 100

[174] Ibid, 56-58.
[175] *Reports to the General Assembly of Illinois,* 22 G.A. (1861) Vol. I, 313.
[176] *Laws of Illinois,* 7 G.A. (1831), 106.
[177] *Reports to the General Assembly of Illinois,* 22 G.A. (1861) Vol. I, 313.
[178] *Chicago Tribune*, June 21, 1867, 1.
[179] Ibid.
[180] Ibid.

gashing cuts with rawhide on the bare back and limbs of a convict. His arms were drawn up by pulleys to the ceiling till he stood up on his tip toes. The blood would gush in the wake of every stroke."[181]

Solitary confinement was widely considered to be a more effective and humane method of "reducing convicts to submission." During time in solitary, prisoners were shackled to the cell door with their hands at waist height for most of the day and fed a diet of bread and water. They were unshackled and free to move around the cell at night, but no bed or other furniture was provided. Biennial reports during this period do not detail how long each prisoner spent in solitary confinement. Tables recording punishment at the penitentiary indicate that the average number of workdays lost to solitary per infraction ranged from 3 to 5 days, although newspaper articles and testimony given in the various investigations on prison discipline through the 19th century indicate that some prisoners were held in solitary confinement for much longer.

In response to calls from penitentiary commissioners to set into law some parameters for the discipline and punishment of prisoners "in order to obviate the danger of abuse," the Illinois legislature officially outlawed the use whipping in the Illinois State Penitentiary in 1867; however, it left in place the 1863 provision that penitentiary officers could employ "all suitable means to defend themselves, to enforce the observance of discipline," and "to secure the persons of the offenders" in cases of potential violence or escape.[182] Solitary confinement was only to be used if it was "deemed necessary in any case to inflict unusual punishment, in order to produce the entire obedience or submission of any convict."[183] Although the use of solitary punishment as the principal means of discipline was now enshrined into law, with Joliet operating well above capacity through much of the 19th century and a limited number of solitary cells, the lash or other methods of corporal punishment were still likely viewed by some officers as more practical and expedient for maintaining discipline. Further, in the years of the lease and contract systems, days that prisoners spent in solitary were days not spent in productive labor. Superintendent Rutherford noted this in his 1860 report to the governor, worrying that "if this mode were to be adopted to a great extent, the lessees would not only lose the labor of the convicts, but their arrangements would be seriously disconcerted."[184]

The biennial reports of the penitentiary commissioners and warden were, for obvious reasons, vague on any use of severe punishment beyond solitary confinement. However, the deaths of two prisoners in the 1870s, which were widely reported in the press, shone a spotlight on the hidden use of corporal punishment during this period.

In December of 1873, newspapers reported the death of inmate George Williams (later identified as Henry Williams). Williams was brought to Joliet from Madison County on November 21 and assigned to the shoe shop. On December 11, Williams refused to work and was placed in solitary for 11 hours. When he was placed back in the workshop, he again refused to work, claiming that his hands were paralyzed and he could not hold the tools. Dr. Mason, the prison physician, was called to the workshop to determine whether Williams was feigning paralysis. After examination, Mason claimed that Williams was in fact capable of work and ordered that Williams be placed in a cold-water bath, presumably as punishment for malingering. The next morning, Deputy wardens James P. Hall and Daniel Sleeper administered the cold-water bath. When Williams took too much time getting dressed after the bath, the deputies ordered him in again, instructing two inmates to hold him under the water. The *Chicago Tribune* reported, "How long it was [he was held under water] cannot be

[181] "The Joliet Penitentiary," *Chicago Tribune,* July 5, 1869, 2.
[182] *Laws of the State of Illinois,* 25 G.A. (1867), 34.
[183] Ibid.
[184] *Reports Made to the General Assembly of Illinois,* 22 G.A. (1861) Vol. I, 314.

ascertained. Those who were present disagree. One says it was five seconds, and another that it was a minute, while it is rumored around the prison that it was four minutes. But it is certain that when they took him out the second time, he was gasping, and that he died a moment afterwards."[185] Dr. Mason was informed of Williams' death when he arrived at the prison, and after dissecting the body the physician determined that Williams had died from "a fatty degermation of the heart" that had caused the walls of the organ to rupture "under the influence of excitement or unusual stress."[186]

The practice of cold-water baths or "ducking," in which a prisoner was submerged in cold or ice water, had been regularly used at both Alton and Joliet on inmates who feigned illness or insanity. In July of 1873, penitentiary commissioners had issued an order forbidding the use of cold-water baths as punishment, but a subsequent investigation revealed that Warden Joseph W. Wham and Deputy Hall had allowed the practice to continue as a "medical treatment." Hall's own testimony also revealed that Williams had been placed in the bath four times, although he was struggling to breathe after the first immersion. Several local physicians, including former penitentiary physician C. H. Bacon, testified that Williams was not healthy enough to work, and Dr. Bacon claimed that "I would have regarded it as criminal negligence to have been absent when the bath was given."[187]

In his testimony, Hall also detailed other severe methods of punishment used at Joliet. Although time in solitary was the common punishment for first and second offenses, on the third offense prisoners were handcuffed to a "bullring" attached to the wall with their hands at chin height, where they were left until they agreed to "live up to the rules of the prison.[188] Particularly recalcitrant inmates were sometimes forced to walk the solitary yard with fifty-pound weights strapped to their backs.

Although the coroner's jury ultimately determined that William's death had been the result of a misunderstanding among prison officers on the rules surrounding cold-water baths, Dr. Mason was removed as penitentiary physician and replaced by Dr. Adolph C. Heise. In August 1874, Robert McClaughry replaced Joseph Wham as warden. In his first report to the commissioners, McClaughry clearly stated what punishments would and would not be allowed under his tenure:

> Cruel and degrading punishments are positively prohibited; indeed, the character of this part of prison discipline has almost wholly changed within the last few years. Whipping was abolished by law in June, 1867. 'Bathing' has since been prohibited by order of your board. The 'ring bolts' in the solitary cells have not been used since August 3, 1874, and the good effects following their disuse have warranted me in favorably endorsing the recommendation of the Deputy Warden, made September 12, 1874, that they be entirely removed from the cells. The most severe punishment now inflicted consists of solitary confinement in a warmed and lighted cell, floored with pine, eight by sixteen feet in size. . .[189]

Four years later, the death of another prisoner again brought unwanted attention to disciplinary methods at Joliet, this time under McClaughry's watch.

Newspapers first reported on the coroner's inquest regarding the death of Gus Reed at the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet on May 10, 1878. The *Joliet Morning Post*'s article on the inquest stated that the paper had initially received news from the prison about an attempted suicide, but "recent developments have shown that

[185] "The Penitentiary Bath," *Chicago Tribune*, December 17, 1873, 2.
[186] Ibid.
[187] "Prison Discipline," *Chicago Tribune*, December 28, 1873, 16.
[188] Ibid.
[189] *Report of the Commissioners, Warden, Chaplain, Etc., of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1874*, 34.

the man died and it was not a suicide. He was gagged and confined in the solitary at the time of his death."[190] The details surrounding Reed's death unfolded as coroner's inquest and subsequent investigation by penitentiary commissioners continued through the week. Reed, a 32-year-old Black prisoner, had been sent to Joliet in March to serve a two-year term for larceny. On Monday, May 6, Reed was taken to solitary on orders from Deputy Warden Benjamin Mayhew. At 10am the next morning, Reed began shouting, and Stephen Reed, who was on duty as daytime guard for the solitary cells, placed a gag in his mouth to keep him quiet. This practice was common when inmates in solitary became loud or disruptive. After a few minutes with the gag on, Gus Reed appeared "as though he was going to faint." Stephen Reed removed the gag but then attempted to put it back when Gus Reed began making noise again. At that point, Assistant Deputy Warden Sleeper came to the solitary cells and asked the prisoner if he would behave. Reed nodded, and Stephen Reed removed the gag. When Gus Reed again began to shout, Stephen Reed whipped him, and Gus Reed remained silent through the rest of the morning. Stephen Reed entered his cell again in the afternoon with fresh clothing, and when Gus Reed refused to change, Stephen Reed whipped him again.[191]

By the time the night guard, Park Leasure, reported for duty, Gus Reed was again being disruptive, and Leasure placed a makeshift gag made from a piece of broom handle into Reed's mouth, placing the gag on loosely and asking if Reed could still say his name to ensure that the gag wasn't too tight. Later, Reed continued making noise and Leasure tightened the gag. Reed began having difficulty breathing and Leasure loosened the gag. When Reed again continued to make noise, Leasure tightened the gag again, only to loosen it again when Reed's breathing became ragged. At that point, Leasure left the solitary cells for a brief period. As he was speaking to the captain of the night watch, Leasure heard Reed loudly calling out his own name. By the time Leasure returned to solitary, Reed was unresponsive and hanging from the cell door to which he was shackled. Leasure sent for C. T. Dripps, the physician on duty that night, and the two men unshackled Reed and laid him on the floor of the cell. Soon after, Dripps determined that Reed was dead.[192]

The inquest was concluded on May 10, with the coroner's jury determining that, although Gus Reed's death was at least partly caused by the fact that he was gagged, the guards were justified for using the gag to subdue Reed and maintain discipline at the penitentiary.[193]An investigation was then conducted by the penitentiary commissioners. During the investigation, Stephen Reed testified that, in addition to Gus Reed, the whip had been used on multiple prisoners on orders from Deputy Warden Mayhew, including John Anderson and Thomas Harris, who had been whipped by Stephen Reed a few weeks before Gus Reed's death for feigning insanity.[194] Officer Reed also detailed an incident with another inmate, Michael Ryan, who was gagged while in solitary in November 1877. After being called away, Officer Reed returned to find "that Ryan had fallen down as nearly prostrate as it was possible for him to fall on account of the handcuffs which secured him to the iron door of his cell. . . .When Ryan recovered, blood and froth issued from his mouth and nose."[195]Although Ryan ultimately recovered and was transferred to Chester, Officer Reed testified that he had begun to consider the gag "a dangerous instrument to use" but that "he knew no other way of quieting noisy convicts except with the gag."[196]

[190] "A Suicide that was Not a Suicide," *The Joliet Morning Post*, May 10, 1878, 4.
[191] Thomas Bahde, *The Life and Death of Gus Reed: A Story of Race and Justice in Illinois During the Civil War and Reconstruction,* Kindle edition (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2014), location 2836-2859.
[192] Ibid, location 2859-2881.
[193] *Chicago Tribune*, May 11, 1878, 2.
[194] "Torture: The Manner of its Administration at the Joliet Prison," *Chicago Tribune*, May 17, 1878, 2; Bahde, location 2386.
[195] Ibid.
[196] Ibid.

Meanwhile, Deputy Warden Mayhew and Dr. Heise maintained that they had not ordered any convicts to be whipped. Warden McClaughry, who had been away from the penitentiary the night Gus Reed died, testified that he had "expressed his astonishment to the board on finding that a convict had been punished [whipped] in that manner, contrary to his instructions as well as in direct violation of the statute," but admitted that without the threat of the gag "it would be absolutely impossible to maintain quiet in the prison, There are so many vicious men here who are only restrained by fear of punishment, that it would be impossible to restrain them if they didn't know that they would be punished for a violation of the rules."[197]

After hearing two days of testimony, the penitentiary commissioners decided that no wrongdoing had occurred among prison administrators but recommended that Stephen Reed and Park Leasure be dismissed. The inquest and investigation were widely covered throughout the country, with the tone of coverage divided along political lines. An article published at the conclusion of the investigation in *The Inter Ocean* struck a middle ground. Although the paper agreed that McClaughry was "kept wholly in the dark" about the affair, it did place blame on Mayhew, Dr. Heise, and Dr. Dripp, claiming that "Though great ingenuity was used by these three gentlemen to shift the responsibility from one to another, they each deserve severe censure, if nothing else, for not making a record of their action."[198] The paper also firmly condemned the use of the gag and other severe methods of punishment outside of solitary confinement, while at the same time reminding its readers that "the men who come to solitary for punishment are of the most desperate and wicked class. They often attempt to take the lives of their keepers, and it is only by the most rigid discipline that such men can be controlled."[199] No mention of Gus Reed's death was made in the subsequent commissioner's report in 1878; however, in his report to the commissioners, Dr. Heise recommended that "a new solitary be built, or that some of the present solitary cells be reconstructed, with deadened walls. It is well known that the disturbance and noise created in 'solitary' by incorrigible convicts has a deleterious and exciting effect upon their fellow convicts within hearing, and from which arises the necessity of compelling quiet by mechanical means, which sometimes may result in serious injury to the culprit." [200]

While punishment was seen by prison administrators as the principal method of maintaining discipline at Joliet in the 19th century, they also acknowledged that rewarding inmates for good behavior could also be useful, both in the overall management of the institution and to the prisoners themselves. Small privileges, such as access to the prison library, writing letters and receiving visitors, and tobacco were offered to prisoners who exhibited good behavior during their time at Joliet, and were often included with the rules of conduct. The removal of these privileges also provided officers with a method of mild punishment for minor infractions of the prison rules. Prisoners who were in good standing with penitentiary officers—called "trusties"—were also rewarded with unofficial privileges. Inmate trusties were assigned less physically demanding work in the prison offices or in the warden's apartments, given more freedom of movement, or were even allowed to carry small knives with which they could cut tobacco or food. [201]

Although privileges within the prison walls, as well as the introduction of overwork pay in the 1860s, provided Joliet inmates with incentives for good behavior and diligent labor, the ultimate inducement to making prisoners submit to the authority and discipline of the penitentiary was the possibility of a reduced sentence. Prior to

[197] *The Pantagraph* (Bloomington, IL), May 13, 1878, 1; Bahde, location 2950.
[198] "The Convicts Death," *The Inter Ocean* (Chicago, IL), May 20, 1878, 4.
[199] Ibid.
[200] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1878*, 11-12.
[201] "The Penitentiary," *Chicago Tribune,* June 30, 1869, 2; *Report of the Commissioners*, *Warden, Chaplain, Etc., of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1872*, 19.

legislation enacted by the Illinois General Assembly in the early 1860s, prisoners received fixed sentences and the only means of obtaining early release was through executive pardons by Illinois' governor. Prisoners could point to a record of good behavior during their time of incarceration in applying for clemency from the governor, but there were no guarantees that pardons would be granted. In 1860, penitentiary superintendent Friend S. Rutherford wrote in his report to Governor John Wood that "Frequent applications are being made for pardon, for the grounds of good behavior in person. . . I am confident the practice has resulted in great good." However, Rutherford also noted that "Under the present practice, although the well-behaved convict may look forward with hope, he will, after all, feel that his reward, to some extent, depends upon the caprice, prejudice or perhaps the ill-will of the officers of the prison."[202]

Instead of relying solely on the hope of a pardon to induce good behavior in prisoners at Joliet, Rutherford urged the legislature to consider enacting a "good-time" law, which would provide a systematic method of reducing the length of a prisoner's sentence for good behavior. Good-time laws had already been in place in several eastern states since the early 19th century. Rutherford argued that the law would improve penitentiary order and increase the likelihood of reformation—although a prisoner may initially follow rules only in the interest of earning good time, the discipline of the prison would eventually become "second nature," and "the habit of well-doing will not fail to develop the moral sentiments and convince the convict of the advantage of an upright life."[203]

In 1863, the Illinois General Assembly passed its first good-time law. The law required the warden at Joliet to keep a detailed record of rule violations for each prisoner. At the end of each month, if the prisoner had a clean record, a set number of days were taken off his sentence—one day for the first month, two for the second, three for the third, and five days for each subsequent month. schedule was revised slightly in 1869, allowing an increasing number of days per year of sentence, from 30 days for the first year to 370 days for the 35th year.[204] Prisoners who had gained enough good time were still required to request early release from the warden and governor.

Although it was warmly received by penitentiary commissioners and administrators, the good-time statute as written in 1863 dictated that if a prisoner violated a single rule, he would lose all the good time credits that he had accumulated. Chaplain S. G. Lathrop pushed back against this section of the law in his 1866 book about Joliet, stating that "some modifications are needed to make it in all respects what it should be. If a convict has once but broken a prison rule, he can never thereafter secure any advantage from the law. He has not encouragement from it, to good conduct after one transgression. It makes a man's citizenship depend upon less than a crime, the simple violation of a prison rule."[205] The law was amended in July 1871, replacing total revocation of good-time for the first violation to two days, with each subsequent offense doubling the number of good-time days forfeited. The amended law also gave the warden the right to take away "any or all portion of the good time that the convict may have earned" on the fourth offense.[206] In their report to Governor John Palmer later that year the penitentiary commissioners reported the positive effects of the amended law, writing that it "is of great benefit to the convicts, particularly those who are sent here for a term of years. . . . There are

[202] *Reports to the General Assembly of Illinois,* 22 G.A. (1861) Vol. I, 316.
[203] Ibid, 315-316.
[204] *The Attorney General's Survey of Release Procedures, Volume 1: Digest of Federal and State Laws on Release Procedures* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1939), 328; *Laws of Illinois, 1863*, 63.
[205] Lathrop, *Crime and Its Punishment, and Life in the Penitentiary*, 254.
[206] *Laws of the State of Illinois,* 25 G.A. (1872), 294-295.

instances in our Prison, where men, by one misdemeanor, lost more than a year of good time [under the old law].”[207]

Under the good time law, prisoners for the first time had a true incentive for good behavior. The reduction of lengthy sentences also helped in some small way to reduce the prison population, and the detailed records required by the law helped them to introduce an early, if crude, classification system that anticipated the later systems put into place as part of the broader prison reform movements of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The Incarcerated Population of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet in the 19th Century

Like most of the state penitentiaries operating in the North and Midwest during the 19th century, the vast majority of prisoners who were incarcerated at the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet from the late 1850s through the 1890s were young, poor and working-class White men. Although women were housed at Joliet through much of the 19th century, the population of the prison was overwhelmingly male. In December 1860, the warden’s report listed a total of 672 inmates, of which only eight were women. While the number of women prisoners rose briefly in the 1860s and again in the late 19th century, the male population remained significantly higher. According to the biennial report for the two-year period ending in September 1898, ISP-Joliet housed between 60 and 68 female prisoners in any given month. During that same period, the number of male inmates at the prison at the end of each month ranged from 1212 to 1272.[208]

Statistical information collected as part of the wardens’ reports for the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet through the 19th century shows that most of the men incarcerated there shared roughly the same economic, occupational, and educational status. In every biennial report containing information on occupations and the prison population at Joliet, “laborer” was the most common job listed for inmates. The 1880 commissioner’s report showed that between October 1878 and September 1879, 234 (approximately 77%) of the 668 inmates received were general laborers. An additional 68 (roughly ten percent) were unemployed, and 49 (approximately seven percent) were farmers. Skilled or semi-skilled laborers were also represented in smaller numbers, including blacksmiths (5), cigar makers (16), coopers (9), printers (10), and shoemakers (19).[209] By the 1890s, the jobs represented in the commissioners’ reports had expanded to include low-level service jobs. The statistical table of former occupations included in the 1898 biennial report includes 25 waiters, 18 coachmen, 11 porters, and 22 housekeepers. It is likely that the housekeepers listed in the table were female prisoners. No information was collected at state penitentiaries like Joliet on the prisoner’s economic status, but the occupation lists can be used as a proxy to determine where inmates fell on the economic spectrum. As historian David J. Rothman points out in his analysis of 19th-century prisoners in state penitentiaries, “These labels do not indicate an exact position in the society—the blacksmith might have employed several others in a large shop or just owned a pair of tongs—but it is unlikely that a good number of them ranked above the lower-middle-class and most were probably below it.”[210] Those occupations associated with the middle-class or upper-middle class are under-represented or often completely absent in Joliet’s occupation lists—the list for the 1892 biennial report included only one broker, two merchants, and three physicians.[211]

[207] *Report of the Commissioners, Warden, Chaplain, Etc., of the Illinois State Penitentiary 1872*, 13.
[208] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1898*, 59.
[209] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1880,* 67-68.
[210] Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum*, 253.
[211] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1892,* 60.

While the emphasis placed on educational training as a part of rehabilitating prisoners may imply that most prisoners entering ISP-Joliet were completely uneducated, data compiled in the biennial reports shows that the majority of prisoners could read and write and that most had received at least some educational instruction. Although James L. Wheat, the instructor for the prison's night school, claimed in 1874 that "I have no doubt, if the facts could be ascertained, that fully 50 per cent of the inmates [at Joliet] would be classed as illiterate," the prison's own statistics showed that over 79% of the inmates received in 1873 and over 77% of those received in 1874 could read and write, a number that was not much lower than the national average of 80%.[212] The number remained relatively stable through the 19th century.

By the late 1880s, penitentiary administrators were including more detailed information on education and literacy in their reports, including how many prisoners had received "common school," high school, and college education. The inclusion of this data in prison records roughly corresponds to the expansion of public primary education in Illinois after the enactment of compulsory education laws in 1883.[213] The 1888 commissioners' report showed that of the 556 prisoners received between October 1886 and September 1887, 40% (211) had attended public school and approximately 9% (49) had attended high school or college. Only nine percent were classified as illiterate. The low numbers of high school and college graduates included in the prison statistics also reflected those of the broader population in the 19th century—most American children did not attend high school until the early 20th century. By 1898, approximately 66% of the prisoners received at Joliet reported having attended primary school, while the rate that had attended high school or college remained roughly the same.[214]

While class and occupation remained relatively stable in Joliet's male population through the 19th century, the nativity, ethnicity, and race of the overall population shifted, largely in response to the changing demographics of the state and its cities. Early statistical reports for the penitentiary show that among those prisoners born in the United States, most were originally from locations outside of Illinois. Commissioners' reports from the 1860s and early 1870s illustrate that a substantial number of prisoners had been born in neighboring states (Kentucky, Indiana, Missouri) or in those states that had lost a substantial number of migrants to Illinois in the mid-19th century (New York, Pennsylvania). The table listing nativity of prisoners in the 1874 report shows that, of the 379 prisoners received at Joliet in 1873, 69 (18%) were New York natives and 77 (20%) were natives of Indiana, Missouri, and Pennsylvania, while just 21% (78) were Illinois natives.[215] These higher numbers reflect Illinois' position as a relatively young state that continued to attract new residents from the east and south. By the turn of the 20th century, however, the number of prisoners who were Illinois natives had increased to 31%, with smaller numbers from surrounding states.[216]

The Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet's foreign-born population in the 19th century also reflects broader patterns of immigration in Illinois during that period, particularly in urban centers like Chicago. Early biennial reports

[212] *Report of the Commissioners, Warden, Chaplain, Etc., of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1874,* 23, 58; Thomas H. Snyder, ed. *120 Years of American Education: A Statistical Portrait* (Washington, DC: US Department of Education, 1993), *9*. James Wheat's impressions of the illiteracy rate at Joliet may have been skewed by his experience working in the prison's school. Because room was limited, not all prisoners attended the school, and those who did were likely the least-educated. Wheat himself writes in his 1874 report that "At present, we have on our roll the names of but sixty men who attend school, which is as many as we can accommodate. Those are selected from the many as being the most illiterate."

[213] David Hogan, "Education and the Making of the Working Class, 1880-1930," *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Autumn, 1978), 227.

[214] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1898,* 71.

[215] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary*, *1874,* 55.

[216] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet for the Two Years Ending September 30, 1900* (Springfield, IL: Phillips Bros., State Printers, 1901), 68-69.

indicate that in the years immediately after Joliet received its first prisoners in 1858, the immigrant population of the penitentiary was large, averaging around 45% of the total population.[217] Of the 661 prisoners incarcerated on January 1, 1859, almost half (301) were born outside of the United States. Of these, nearly 46% (138) came from Ireland, and nearly 20% (60) from Germany.[218] Irish and German immigrants made up the largest percentage of immigrants coming to the state in the mid-19th century, and immigrants from those two groups continued to make up the majority of Joliet's foreign-born population through the end of the 19th century. In the 1860s, the percentage of immigrant prisoners fell to 29%, and decreased to 24% in the 1870s; however, compared to the state's overall population, foreign-born men were still over-represented in the penitentiary's population. Irish- and German-born citizens were also over-represented in the state's county jails and almshouses, as evidenced by a report by Illinois' Board of Commissioners of Public Charities in 1871 that stated, "About thirty per cent of our county prisoners, and nearly fifty per cent of our county paupers, are of foreign birth" and "a large proportion of the remainder are of foreign parentage."[219]

By the 1880s, the number of German prisoners incarcerated in Joliet had outpaced the number of Irish inmates. The 1888 commissioners' report stated that German immigrants made up over one-third of the prison's foreign-born population that had been received between October 1886 and September 1887, while Irish prisoners accounted for only 14%.[220] Meanwhile, the number of inmates born in Scandinavian countries rose slightly. The 1880s also marked the point at which the average percentage of foreign-born men in Joliet dropped below that of the general population in Illinois, a trend that continued through the turn of the 20th century. By 1900, approximately 15% of the male prison population at ISP-Joliet had been born outside of the United States, compared with 20% of the state's population.[221] This decline in the number of immigrant prisoners was likely due to the aging of the existing immigrant population in the state, as well as increased assimilation among immigrant groups.

Black Prisoners at the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet in the 19th Century

In stark contrast with today's prison population, the number of Black prisoners incarcerated at the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet through the 19th century was small, although both Black men and Black women were overrepresented in the prison's overall population when compared with their corresponding numbers within the state population. Convict registers for Joliet before 1895 did not include an entry for race—instead, entries list "negro," "colored," or "mulatto" under the entry for "complexion." Statistics for the approximate number of Black convicts compiled by historian L. Mara Dodge indicate that the percentage of Joliet's male prison population that was African American was consistently higher than the percentage of the state's population and that disparity rose continually from the 1850s to the 1890s. The percentage for Black female prisoners was substantially higher—in the 1890s, approximately 17% of Joliet's male prisoners were Black compared to 1.5% of the state's population, while Black women accounted for 42% of the prison's female inmate population.[222]

Higher Black incarceration rates at Joliet were consistent with regional and national trends and reflected the prejudice and hostility African Americans faced in Illinois and throughout the United States. Before Illinois'

[217] L. Mara Dodge, *Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind: A Study of Women, Crime, and Prisons, 1835-2000* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2002), 115.
[218] *Reports Made to the General Assembly of Illinois,* 21 G.A. (1859) Vol. I, 246.
[219] *Reports Made to the General Assembly of Illinois at its Twenty-Seventh Session*, Vol. I (Springfield, Illinois Journal Printing Office, 1871), 195.
[220] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1888,* 63.
[221] Dodge, *Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind*, 115.
[222] Ibid*,* 117.

entry into the union in 1818, earlier regional and territorial governments had established and condoned Black enslavement, beginning with the French in the early 18th century and continuing under Britain and the newly formed United States through the late 1780s. Although the ordinance creating the Northwest Territory in 1787 forbade the continuation of slavery, residents who had held slaves at the time of its passage were allowed to keep them, and the ban was not enforced by territorial governors. While Illinois was admitted into the Union as a "free" state in 1818, slavery continued under the guise of indentured servitude, and Illinois Black Laws (or Black Codes) prevented free Black citizens from voting, testifying or bringing suit against Whites, gathering in groups, or owning weapons.

In 1848, Illinois voters—many of whom had migrated to the state from slave states in the Upper South—approved an amendment to the new state constitution that barred the emigration of African Americans from other states and forbade anyone from bringing enslaved persons into the state for the purpose of freeing them. The General Assembly did not enact legislation on the matter until 1853. Under the new law, any Black person entering the state had to leave within 10 days. If they remained in the state, they were subject to a high misdemeanor charge and fined fifty dollars—if that fine was not paid, the county sheriff was then authorized to sell that person at public auction into indentured servitude. Black residents already in the state were required pay a substantial bond and obtain a Certificate of Freedom.[223] Illinois' Black Laws remained in force until February 12, 1865, approximately 10 months before the ratification of the 13th Amendment abolishing "involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime."

Even with the repeal of the Illinois Black Laws and the rights of citizenship granted to them by the ratification of the 14th and 15th Amendments, African Americans living in the state in the late 19th century were still the object of suspicion, fear, and hostility from many of their White neighbors, who harbored a deeply ingrained belief of White superiority and saw the influx of Black residents into the state as a danger to "law and order."

Although no mention is made of Joliet's Black prisoners in the biennial penitentiary reports, correspondence from prison officials included in some of the pardon petitions of the 19th century indicate that penitentiary administrators were aware that race was a determining factor in the imprisonment of African Americans in the state. Writing to the governor in 1869 on behalf of Sally Bentley who had been sentenced to Joliet for manslaughter, Penitentiary commissioner John Reid asserted that "only for her color she never would have been here."[224] In 1875, a 25-year-old "mulatto" inmate named Louis McNeil asked former warden A. W. Edwards to help her secure a pardon. Edwards wrote in his letter to the governor that he was "fully impressed with the opinion that colored people usually had to contend with the 'presumption of guilt' instead of the contrary," and that "many colored persons came under long sentences where 'our people' may have been 'let off.'"[225] Neither Bentley nor McNeil received the pardons they sought.

Women Prisoners at the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet in the 19th Century

Although their numbers were small compared with the male population, women prisoners occupied a unique position within the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet in the 19th century. In the years before the establishment of the penitentiary system in the early part of the century, women had been subjected to the same punishments as men. But, with the exchange of corporal or shaming punishments for long-term incarceration as the principal

[223] *Laws of the State of Illinois Passed by the Eighteenth General Assembly, Convened January 3, 1853* (Springfield, IL: Lanphier & Walker, Printers, 1853), 67-60.
[224] Dodge, *Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind*, 59.
[225] Ibid.

method of penalizing convicted criminals, little thought was given to how the female prison population would be managed. While the segregation of women prisoners within Pennsylvania-style "separate system" prisons was made easier by the fact that all prisoners were kept in separate cells at all times, in early congregate-style prisons the handful of women prisoners were an afterthought. At Auburn prison in the 1820s, female prisoners, some serving sentences of over ten years, were "lodged together, unattended, in a one room attic, the windows sealed to prevent communication with men," leading a member of its Board of Inspection to single the practice out as "a specimen of the most disgusting and appalling features of the old system of prison management at the worst period of its history."[226]

At the same time, social ideals surrounding femininity that placed women within narrowly defined roles of "respectability" shaped how female inmates were treated. 19th-century American women were simultaneously viewed as moral, virtuous, and passionless, yet uniquely susceptible to corruption. Those "fallen" women who had succumbed to vice and criminality were considered far more "depraved" and dangerous than their male counterparts, and even some prison reformers worried that they were beyond any hope of rehabilitation.[227] The observation of the Joliet's penitentiary commissioners in their 1876 report that "Female convicts in a penitentiary are universally regarded as the most degraded of their sex, if not humanity" was generally shared by prison officials and the public throughout the country.[228]

Given these prevailing views of females in general and female prisoners in particular, women who entered Joliet Penitentiary in the 19th century were considered by male prison administrators as both a nuisance and a threat to the discipline and rehabilitation of the male inmate population. When planning the design of the new prison complex in the late 1850s, architects Boyington & Wheelock and penitentiary committee attempted to keep women prisoners out of the sight (and ideally the minds) of the larger inmate population by creating completely separate living and working quarters for the female inmates within the prison walls, a solution that was also used in other Auburn-style penitentiaries in the mid-19th century. They hoped to avoid situations like the one that had developed at Alton prison in the 1840s and early 1850s—with no separate section of the prison to house them, penitentiary administrators had placed female inmates in a cellar under the warden's house or into the cellhouse along with male prisoners. The hospital at the center of the prison yard was eventually converted to a female ward in 1852, but even then, male and female prisoners shared space in the workshops.[229] Boyington & Wheelock's plan for the women's prison within the original penitentiary at Joliet included a two-story 100-room cellblock and adjoining workshop surrounded by an enclosed yard. Plans were also made to create a separate enclosed gallery within the prison chapel to allow women prisoners to attend religious services without being seen by the men. With too little stone from the newly-opened quarries to build the enormous east and west cellblocks, prison contractors opted to construct the women's prison first—the enclosed prison-within-a-prison could then be used to house incoming inmates temporarily but securely from Alton as they worked to complete the larger cellblocks and prison walls.

The first prisoners arrived from Alton to Joliet in May of 1858 and by December of that year, over 200 inmates were being held at the new prison, including five women. Although the women's prison was completed by 1860, the building was used to hold approximately half of the 400 male inmates living and working at the prison site; the remainder of the male prisoners were kept in bunks in the chapel, which had also been finished by that

[226] Estelle B. Freedman, *Their Sisters' Keepers: Women's Prison Reform in America, 1830-1930* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1981), 15.
[227] Dodge, *Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind*, 14-15.
[228] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1876*, 14.
[229] Ibid, 29.

point in the construction. The commissioners bemoaned the necessity of keeping so many men in a single space but made no mention of the eight women prisoners who were living on the site at the end of the year. A year later, with the west wing and warden's house still not finished and, with 525 male prisoners living in the east wing and women's prison, the female inmates were sequestered in part of the building housing the kitchen, dining room, and chapel. In urging the completion of the warden's building, the commissioners noted that the deputy warden and guards were also occupying this structure, and that the fourteen women prisoners, "owing to the crowded state of the unfinished part of the work, are necessarily confined in one small room, which was made to serve the three-fold purpose of working, eating, and sleeping, rendering it alike inconvenient and unhealthy."[230]

The women inmates at Joliet were finally allowed to take their place in the cellhouse that was originally designed for them in 1864 where they remained for only five years. Eyeing the ever-increasing male prison population, the warden, chaplain, and physician began openly advocating for the female inmates to be removed, not just from the women's prison but from the penitentiary itself. In his 1868 report to the Commissioners, Warden Dornblaser argued that "building a female prison outside the present walls. . . . would give us 100 more cells for male convicts, and enable us to use the 'solitary system' for its legitimate purpose."[231] Chaplain A. T. Briscoe, although stopping short of calling for a separate prison for the women, emphasized the danger of having the female convicts in such proximity to the male prisoners, writing "Experience has convinced all who have been intimately connected with the prison, that no degree of vigilance secures the great mass of prisoners from the pernicious influence of these females. It is the bane, in fact, of morality among our men."[232] Penitentiary Physician C. H. Bacon was the most explicit, blaming "the prevailing habit of self-abuse among convicts" on the presence of women in the prison. While he conceded that "In the absence of intellectual enjoyments, it is natural that their minds should revert to the most pleasing episodes of the past," he warned "but add to this the presence within the prison walls of a large number of depraved females, who, by secret contrivances, are in constant communication with the male convicts, and you will be at no loss to understand that the temptations to this vice are irresistible to natures already fearfully depraved." He ended his screed with the emphatic demand that *"At any cost the female prison should be removed from the premises."*[233]

The commissioners concurred with prison management, asking the General Assembly in its 1868 report to authorize construction of a separate building for the women outside of the penitentiary walls, arguing that "we need more cell-room and more storage and shop-room, and these needs would be amply supplied by the proposed change of the female department, which. . . takes up much room for its accommodation and requires much extra care and attention for its property management."[234] Although they did not state so explicitly, the commissioners were actually asking the legislature to relieve the administrators of ISP-Joliet of all responsibility for female prisoners, to whom they were "a great annoyance."

Female inmates did prove challenging to the managers and officers in a number of ways. Keeping them segregated from the male prisoners was difficult given the every-increasing size of the prison population through the late 1860s. Because they could not be tasked with hard labor or work alongside men in the prison workshops, women prisoners were considered essentially "unproductive," even as they worked laundering and mending prison uniforms or doing finishing work on the textiles produced by men in the workshops. Social

[230] *Reports Made to the General Assembly of Illinois*, 23 G.A. (1863), Vol. I, 220.
[231] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1868*, 39.
[232] Ibid, 123.
[233] Ibid, 126.
[234] Ibid, 7.

mores prevented punishment of female inmates using the same harsh physical methods used to discipline the male population, and they required the hiring of matrons and other female staff members. The treatment of pregnant inmates was also an intractable issue for prison administrators. Penitentiary Superintendent F. S. Rutherford had specifically called out the issue of women who were "brought to the prison in a state of pregnancy" in his quarterly report to the General Assembly in 1859, suggesting that either a lying-in hospital be constructed at Joliet or that the pregnant inmate be "committed to proper persons outside of the prison."[235] Rutherford also expressed concerns about the overuse of the pardon to handle such cases, and questioned "whether a woman after delivery can be detained longer in the prison, as certainly the Warden. . . is under no obligation to support the child."[236] Legislators and commissioners, apparently unable or unwilling to foresee the possibility of women giving birth while incarcerated, failed to develop any sort of policy or provision for pregnant prisoners, leaving prison managers to deal with these delicate and difficult events as they saw fit. Against Rutherford's advice, most wardens did seek pardons for their pregnant inmates. In 1862, an interim warden at Joliet wrote to the governor about Anna Roach, a recently-arrived prisoner who was in the late stages of pregnancy, pleading with him to "relieve me by granting her a pardon and doing so *at the earliest possible day."*[237] This became such common practice by the late 1860s that prison physicians examined all women entering the prison and immediately submitted requests for pardons for those who were pregnant.[238]

Even with this ad hoc solution in place, women inmates did give birth to children in the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet in the 19th century. An article in the 1888 *Chicago Tribune* describing the women's department at Joliet claimed that "There is almost always a baby in the woman's ward." Describing inmate Dora Heintzelman, who was serving a 17-year sentence for killing her husband, the article stated that "A baby girl was born to her a few months after she entered the penitentiary, and the infant was allowed to remain with her until old enough to be taken away. The child grew to be a pale, eerie little thing—a second Little Dorrit—and she was a great favorite with the matron." There was also an 11-month-old boy living at the penitentiary with his incarcerated mother. "He accompanied her to Joliet when he was 4 months old, and his presence in the world is somehow the cause of his mother's choice of the fourth floor in a penitentiary as a nursery for him."[239]

Beyond the obvious biological differences, the women who were incarcerated at ISP-Joliet in the 19th century were on average poorer and less educated than their male counterparts, an unsurprising difference at a time when women generally had more limited opportunities for employment and education than men. While some male prisoners were skilled laborers or had clerical positions before their conviction, most female inmates had worked in low-level service jobs as housekeepers or servants prior to incarceration. White women were also more likely to be foreign-born or newly arrived in the state, particularly in the early decades of the prison's operations. As the percentage of immigrant female inmates declined through the late 19th century, the number of African American women at Joliet increased, rising to over 40% of the female inmate population by the 1890s. Although absolute numbers of African Americans both in the state and at ISP-Joliet remained low through the

[235] *Waukegan Weekly Gazette*, January 8, 1859, 2.
[236] Ibid.
[237] Dodge, *Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind*, 32.
[238] Ibid.
[239] "Women in Prison Garb," *Chicago Tribune*, September 25, 1888, 26. Although the article has no by-line, it appears that it was written by Sidney J. Wetmore, who worked as a clerk and photographer at Joliet Penitentiary. Wetmore published *Behind the Bars at Joliet: A Peep at the Prison, Its History, and Its Mysteries*, in 1892. Language in the 1888 *Chicago Tribune* and Wetmore's book are identical.

19th century, African American women were vastly overrepresented in the prison population when compared to the state population.[240]

Although the General Assembly did not authorize the construction of a separate women's prison outside of Joliet's walls, they did allow the commissioners and prison administrators to move the female inmates to the fourth floor of the warden's building in 1869. In his 1871 report to the commissioners, Chaplain Briscoe noted with approval that "The removal of the female convicts from their old quarters to the fourth story of the Warden's house, thus cutting off every avenue of communication with male prisoners, has been of vast importance to the prison," while also pointedly adding that "to remove them entirely away from here, would prove of still greater importance."[241]

Sequestered in the warden's building above the warden's apartments, female prisoners at Joliet lived an existence entirely separate from their male counterparts. Compared to the dark cells of the east and west cellblock wings, their quarters were relatively comfortable. The floor contained dormitory-style sleeping quarters with single beds lined up in rows and a work room where the prisoners mended clothing or did finishing work on the socks made with knitting machines in the workshops below. Windows lining the walls of the workroom looked out over prison's manicured front lawn, providing a tantalizing glimpse of the world outside the penitentiary walls.[242] Women cleaned officer's uniforms, linens from the warden's household, and their own uniforms in a separate laundry room. The matron's quarters were also located on the floor and separated from the prisoners by a large iron grate. While the men's prison was consistently overcrowded through the late 19th century, the number of female prisoners at Joliet declined from its peak in the 1860s and remained relatively low through the 1880s. When a visitor to the female ward in 1872 complimented the matron on the fact that only 16 of the prison's 1,416 inmates were women, she replied "O! it's all on account of the 'men's juries'. . . Let them be tried by 'women juries' and they wouldn't escape, as they do."[243]

Except for holidays, the female prisoners at Joliet never left their fourth-floor quarters in the warden's building. Inmates ate their meals in their own small dining room, and church services were held every other Sunday in the work room. Separate solitary cells were even provided for the women on the floor, tucked within the corner towers of the building.[244] On the rare occasions that the female inmates were allowed to venture beyond the warden's building, the penitentiary administrators took steps to ensure that contact with male prisoners was limited. During Joliet's annual Thanksgiving Day celebration in 1886, the women were seated at the front of the chapel under the watchful eye of the warden and matron, and each prisoner "had over her head and around her neck, partially concealing her from the male convicts, a knit nubia or head scarf."[245] Female prisoners were then taken back to their quarters to participate in the livelier aspects of the day, which included singing or dancing. On the Fourth of July, women were brought outside the prison confines to the south front lawn while the men were "given the liberty of the east cell-house yard."[246] Even penitentiary administrators seemed to sympathize with the female prisoners' constant confinement within their fourth-floor ward—in 1878, the commissioners recommended that the female prisoners' quarters "be placed on the ground; these unfortunate

[240] Dodge, *Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind,* 116-117.
[241] *Report of the Commissioners, 1871*, 7.
[242] *Chicago Tribune*, September 23, 1888, 2.
[243] *The Illinois State Journal*, July 21, 1875, 2.
[244] Dodge, *Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind,*44.
[245] "The Day in Other Cities," *Chicago Tribune*, November 26, 1886, 2.
[246] "Theresa Sturla," *The Inter Ocean*, July 7, 1883, 15.

women should at least have the opportunity one or more times during the year of stepping on the earth; on which they now look from their windows fifty feet in the air."[247]

While penitentiary commissioners and managers infrequently mentioned the female prison population at Joliet in their reports to the General Assembly, they almost never discussed the matrons who were charged with the care and discipline of the women. The position of matron was not formally codified in legislation until the 1867 Penitentiary Act; the 1871 amended law also allowed the warden to appoint "such assistant matrons as may be necessary, not exceeding one for each twenty-five female convicts."[248] The 1868 biennial report states that Mrs. E. M. L. Mather was appointed to serve as matron in July 1867, but was later replaced by Sarah A. Brown.[249] No other information about the position or these women's management of the female inmates is included. When Robert McClaughry became warden in 1874, he appointed Mrs. J. E. Judson as matron. Judson, who served from 1874 to 1878, is the only matron at the ISP-Joliet who is discussed at any length in the biennial penitentiary reports. In 1874, McClaughry praised her efficiency, stating that under her "excellent management. . .the earning of each prisoner has averaged as much as those of the male department, and the prison itself is a model of neatness and order."[250] The penitentiary commissioners echoed his statements in their 1876 report to the General Assembly, emphasizing the parity of female prisoners' earnings with that of the men and commending Judson for extracting such a "large amount of labor" from "her most unwilling subjects.[251]

In the late 1880s, Joliet's female prison population again began to rise again, fueled in part by legislation passed in 1889 ordering the transfer of all women inmates from Chester Penitentiary to Joliet; by 1890, there were 48 prisoners living in the women's department on the fourth floor of the warden's building. Commissioners reported that "to meet this large increase, changes have been made to the present female prison, so that at the utmost, fifty inmates can be cared for, although this is a greater number than should be confined within the present limits," but warned that "If the number of female prisoners continues to increase, as is now thought probable, enlarged accommodations must be provided within the walls of existing penitentiaries, or by the erection of a female prison separate from the male prisons, as in some other States."[252]

Late 19th and Early 20th Century Prison Reforms and the Expansion of the Illinois Penitentiary System

Overcrowding at the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet and Construction of the Southern Illinois Penitentiary at Chester

The overcrowding in Joliet's female department in the 1890s paled in comparison to conditions experienced by the prison's male population, whose numbers were consistently over capacity through the end of the 19th century. By the 1870s, the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet was the largest prison in the United States and one of the largest in the world, with a prison population that reached nearly 2,000 in 1877.[253] Double-celling—considered anathema by the reformers who developed the Auburn system in early decades of the century—was a common occurrence at Joliet, and penitentiary authorities constantly complained about having to resort to the practice in their biennial reports, observing that "It is truly a wonder that cell houses so densely packed with

[247] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1878*, 8.
[248] *Laws of the State of* Illinois, 23 G.A. 1871, 598
[249] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinoi, 1868*, 4-5.
[250] Dodge, *Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind,* 45; *Report of the Commissioners, 1874,* 35.
[251] *Report of the Commissioners, Warden, Chaplain, Etc., of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1876,* 14.
[252] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1890,* 5.
[253] Dodge, *Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind, 38*; *Report of the Commissioners, 1878,* 24.

convicts. . .should not be breeding houses of disease and pestilence."[254] In fact, ISP-Joliet endured numerous outbreaks of typhus, measles, and tuberculosis among its prison population through the 19th century. A typhoid epidemic in the late 1860s, blamed by penitentiary physician C. H. Bacon on unsanitary conditions, afflicted dozens of prisoners and killed eight.[255] Tuberculosis (known as "consumption") was an ongoing concern of prison authorities in the 1880s and 1890s—an outbreak in 1888 sickened 42 inmates, and penitentiary physician M. B. Campbell recommended that "some large room accessible to the hospital be set apart as a dormitory for those cases which have pulmonary tuberculosis but are not confined to the hospital" to prevent the disease from spreading further.[256]

To help alleviate the overcrowding at Joliet, the Illinois House of Representatives initially introduced a bill during their 1877 session to enlarge the existing prison; however, it was later replaced with an existing bill to construct a new prison in the southern part of the state, which had already passed the house in 1876.[257] Prisoners convicted in the northern district of the state would be sent to Joliet, while prisoners from the southern district would to the new southern penitentiary. A 122-acre site along the Mississippi River approximately one mile from Chester, Illinois was selected in September 1877, and plans were quickly prepared by architects Bell & Hackney.[258] Like the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet, the new prison at Chester was designed along the Auburn system and included a cellhouse containing 200 cells (which was later expanded to 400); a building containing the warden's quarters, prison offices, library, chapel, and guards' dormitory; and a series of stone and brick workshops. These plans were later expanded to include a second cellhouse, a women's prison, and a "convicts' insane asylum."[259] Construction progressed quickly, and in March 1878, 200 prisoners were transferred from Joliet to the new penitentiary. Construction on the first cellhouse was completed by October. Echoing the long construction period seen at Joliet in the late 1850s and 1860s, the second cellhouse at Chester was not ready for occupancy until July of 1889[260] Although the completion of Chester helped to divert prisoners away from ISP-Joliet, most of Illinois' offenders came from cities in the northern part of the state, and Joliet remained substantially above capacity. In 1898, the Commissioners at Joliet again asked for relief from overcrowding, requesting that the legislature authorize the construction of a third cellblock with 400 cells.[261]

The Illinois Prison System and "The New Penology"

The erection of the Southern Illinois Penitentiary at Chester (later called Menard) marked the beginning of an era of expansion and diversification within Illinois' penitentiary system in the 19th century that was aligned with broader prison reform movements of the era. These movements, beginning in the mid-19th century and accelerating through the Progressive Era of the early 20th century, took inspiration from advances in both the natural sciences and the emerging social sciences in developing new systems of classification and rehabilitation for criminals, while pushing for the centralization and professionalization of penal institutions. The leading lights of this "New Penology" were Enoch C. Wines (1806-1879) and Zebulon Brockway (1827-1920). Wines, a former minister, became involved in prison reform through the New York Prison Association (NYPA), which had been established in 1844. Serving as secretary of the organization in the early 1860s, by the middle of the

[254] *Report of the Commissioners, Warden, Chaplain, Etc., of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1876, 13.*
[255] *Report of the Commissioners, Warden, Chaplain and Physician, 1868*, 125.
[256] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1888*, 10.
[257] Jeffrey Koerber and Walter L. Brieschke, "Menard: Development of a Nineteenth-Century Prison," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* Vol. 96, No. 3 (Autumn, 2003), 230.
[258] "Southern Penitentiary," *Chicago Tribune*, September 2, 1877, 3.
[259] Koerber and Brieschke, "Menard: Development of a Nineteenth-Century Prison, 231-232.
[260] Ibid, 234.
[261] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1898*, 14.

decade Wines had embarked on an ambitious survey of prisons in the northern U.S. with fellow association member Theodore William Dwight (1822-1892). In a report of their findings published in 1867 as the *Report on the Prisons and Reformatories of the United States and Canada*, Dwight and Wines denounced the current state of America's prisons, claiming that "there is not a state prison in America in which the reformation of the convicts is the one supreme object of the discipline, to which everything else is made to bend, and which the whole administration, in all its arrangements, is intended to advance."[262] To bring rehabilitation back to the forefront of the penitentiary, Dwight and Wines recommended the American prisons follow a graded system similar to that developed by Sir Walter Crofton in Ireland, where prisoners could move through a series of phases through industry and good behavior. Inmates in the Irish system began in solitary confinement, then ascended through a period of congregate labor marked by increasing privileges, and finally to a period of minimal supervision before receiving conditional freedom through a "ticket of leave." Dwight and Wines also advocated for more centralized control of penal institutions. Their efforts led to the creation of state-run charity boards that consolidated oversight of local jails and houses of correction along with other charitable institutions. Wine's son, Frederick Wines, served as secretary of Illinois' State Board of Charities for 30 years.[263]

In 1870, Enoch Wines and other reformers organized the National Congress of Penitentiary and Reformatory Discipline, held in Cincinnati The meeting marked the beginning of the National Prison Association of the United States, and its *Declaration of Principles* included the seeds of most of the reforms instituted in prisons throughout the country in the following decades, including classification of prisoners, a system of rewards for good behavior, and indeterminate sentences that could be individually calibrated to each prisoner. Foremost among these principals was the idea that "the prisoner's destiny should be placed, measurably, in his own hands; he must be. . .able through his own exertions, to continually better his own condition. A regulated self-interest must be brought into play."[264]

Also at the meeting was Zebulon Brockway, then head of the Detroit House of Correction. Brockway presented a paper, "The Ideal of a True Prison System for a State," that "set the tone for penal reform for the rest of the century."[265] Brockway supported segregating inmates by sex, age, and severity of offense, and advocated for indeterminate sentencing and support for released prisoners through parole. Brockway gained national attention for incorporating many of his ideas into the Elmira Reformatory in New York. The reformatory was authorized by the state legislature as a facility for young first offenders (ages 16 through 30) in 1869 and opened in 1876 with Brockway as chief administrator. Elmira's program centered around the indeterminate sentence, enshrined into law in 1877, and a three-grade system that allowed students at the reformatory to advance toward parole. Brockway expanded the institution's educational program through the 1880s, introducing more advanced coursework, summer school, and a trade school. When subsequent legislation abolished its industrial programs, Brockway replaced them with a military program that included expanded physical education. Although later controversies surrounding Brockway's management slightly tarnished its image, the Elmira system popularized the practice of a unique penal system for young offenders.[266]

[262] Enoch C. Wines and William Dwight, *Report on the Prisons and Reformatories of the United States and Canada (*Albany: Van Benthuysen & Sons' Steam Printing House, 1867), 287-288.
[263] "Dr. Wines Passes Away at Springfield," *Illinois State Journal*, February 11, 1912.
[264] David J. Rothman, *Conscience and Convenience: The Asylum and its Alternatives in Progressive* America (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1980), 33.
[265] Larry E. Sullivan, *The Prison Reform Movement: Forlorn Hope* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1990), 19.
[266] "Elmira," New York Correction History Society website (accessed January 30, 2023 at http://www.correctionhistory.org/html/chronicl/docs2day/elmira.html).

Reform-minded administrators at the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet like Warden Robert McClaughry promoted many of the ideas espoused by Wines, Brockway, and other reformers of the 1870s and 1880s. But the process of implementing reform within Illinois' penitentiary system was a slow one, encompassing changes to the physical plant at Joliet and the creation of separate institutions for young offenders, mentally ill prisoners, and women, as well as new laws and administrative policies implementing a rudimentary classification system for inmates and establishing indeterminate sentencing. Some of the reforms begun in the 19th century were further refined and expanded in the early decades of the 20th century and established the administrative framework under which ISP-Joliet would operate until the late 1970s.

The Illinois State Reformatory at Pontiac, The Hospital for Insane Convicts at Chester, and the Women's Prison at Joliet

The separation of young, mentally ill, and female prisoners from the adult male population of Joliet was emblematic of the iterative nature of prison reform in the late 19th century and early 20th century. The state's earliest efforts were focused on young offenders, particularly those below the age of majority. Although Illinois' first criminal code allowed for the incarceration of children as young as ten in the state penitentiary, by the 1860s officials expressed concern about the effect of the congregate system on young prisoners. Chaplain A. T. Briscoe wrote in his 1868 report to the commissioners that "One great draw-back to the moral elevation of the convicts, is the indiscriminate manner in which they are thrown together in our work-shops. The young and inexperienced are thrown too much under the influence of confirmed criminals. In fact, I have found that there is a perpetual conflict between the moral influences at work here and the baneful influence of the latter class of prisoners."[267] In 1867, the Illinois legislature instituted "An Act for the Reformation of Juvenile Offenders and Vagrants" authorizing the construction of a state-run reform school for boys.[268] A site was selected near Pontiac in Livingston County, Illinois, approximately sixty miles southwest of Joliet, and the reform school officially opened in 1871. Boys younger than 18 years of age could be transferred to Pontiac from the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet and boys as young as eight could be sentenced to the institution by the courts. Upon entering the reform school, these young inmates were considered wards of the state and could be kept there until they reached the age of 18 or until "reformation is deemed complete." Although in many ways the design of the school resembled that of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet, with Auburn-style cellblocks and workshops that produced shoes and caned chairs, the institution also included a large school building where boys received a common-school education, outdoor areas for sports and recreation, and trade schools that taught bookbinding, printing, woodworking, and mechanical and electrical engineering. The advisory address given to inmates entering the institution stressed that "this institution is not merely a prison home; it is also a school for instruction. . .. It will give to you thousands of advantages not possessed by the illiterate criminal class with which, had you been sentenced to a convict prison, you would ultimately be numbered. The institution is also an industrial school. . . in which industries pursued. . . will enable you to obtain the comforts and enjoyments of life."[269]

Influenced by the program at New York State's Elmira Penitentiary, in 1891 Pontiac's State Reform School was reorganized as the Illinois State Reformatory and divided into two separate departments—one for boys from ten to sixteen years of age, and another for young men ages sixteen to twenty-one. The juvenile department

[267] *Report of the Commissioners*, *Warden, Chaplain & Physician, for the Years 1867-8, Together with Accompanying Statistics, Inventories, Financial Statement, List of Convicts, Etc.* (Springfield, State Journal Printing Office, 1869),123.
[268] Offenders from Cook County were excepted in the 1867 legislation, as were female juvenile offenders—both groups were taken by the already-established reform school in Chicago.
[269] *Statutes and Rules Governing the Illinois State Reformatory at* Pontiac (adopted December 4, 1893), 33-34.

accepted boys who had been charged with any offense, while those aged sixteen to twenty one could only be sent to the reformatory for felonies.[270] With the establishment of Illinois's juvenile court system in 1899—the first in the country—and the subsequent construction of the Home for Dependent and Delinquent Boys (later known as the Illinois Home for Boys) in St. Charles, the Board of Managers at Pontiac Reformatory requested that the age of commitment for the institution be raised again to between 16 and 25. They explained in their biennial report that the younger offenders could be taken in by the new St. Charles facility. "In making this proposed change," they wrote, "the institution would become a real reformatory, as the name implies. It would take charge of first offenders to a large extent, as statistics show the criminal age to be from sixteen to twenty-four years."[271] While the St. Charles Home for Boys followed the most up-to-date ideas surrounding juvenile reform, with cottage-style model considered ideal for housing women and young offenders, Pontiac continued the reformatory system modeled by Elmira in the 1870s, with mornings and evenings spent in the industrial shops, manual training shops, and farm.[272]

While the Illinois State Reformatory at Pontiac helped to draw away the youngest offenders from ISP-Joliet, the segregation and treatment of mentally ill prisoners remained an issue through most of the 19th century. Penitentiary officials had long grappled with how to treat prisoners who presented with mental illness. The general policy at Joliet was to send "insane" inmates to one of the state mental hospitals where they could receive more appropriate care. However, these hospitals were not equipped to securely hold convicted criminals and hospital superintendents complained that "their presence is felt to be a reproach and an insult to the other patients."[273] The officers at Joliet approached claims of mental illness by prisoners with suspicion, assuming that the inmates were feigning insanity to obtain transfer to the state hospitals, where escape was easier and there was no requirement to work. The state's Board of Charities, which managed Illinois' mental hospitals, expressed concern that, because prison officers were not equipped to properly diagnose prisoners, they were likely to postpone commitment until an inmate's "insanity is so far developed as to be beyond question, thus diminishing the chance of recovery" or "use severe measures with prisoners really insane. . . and thus be guilty of unintentional cruelty."[274] Administrators at Joliet and the state's mental hospitals were united in their recommendation for a separate hospital for the "insane convict," and soon after construction began on the new penitentiary at Chester the Illinois General Assembly authorized an appropriation to build the hospital on a site just southwest of the penitentiary grounds. Continued development of other buildings on the penitentiary site took priority, however, and the project was delayed. In 1889, the legislature revised the act for the hospital, authorizing its construction within the new penitentiary complex. Plans by Chicago architect J. H. Lawlor were approved in May of 1890 and by November 1, 1891, the Illinois Asylum for Insane Criminals was ready to receive patients.[275] The physician's report included with the 1892 commissioners' report shows that the first prisoners were transferred from Joliet to the new hospital on January 25, 1892; by September 1894, 45 inmates had been removed to Chester.[276] Mentally ill female prisoners at the penitentiary continued to be transferred to state psychiatric hospitals.

[270] Ibid, 4.
[271] John S. Wilcox, Newton Bateman, and Paul Selby, ed., *Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois* (Munsell Publishing Co., 1904), 673; *Tenth Biennial Report of the Illinois State Reformatory from July 1, 1908 to June 30, 1910* (Pontiac, IL: Illinois State Reformatory Print, 1911), 18.
[272] *Fifth Annual Report of the Department of Welfare* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1922), 180-181.
[273] *Reports Made to the General Assembly of Illinois,* 31 G.A. (1879) Vol. II, 73-74.
[274] Ibid.
[275] Koerber and Brieschke, "Menard: Development of a Nineteenth-Century Prison," 235.
[276] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1892*, 22; *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1894*, 29.

In 1896, prison officials achieved their long-held goal of establishing a separate institution for women prisoners outside of the walls of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet, rounding out the establishment of specialized penal institutions in the state through the late 19th century. The construction of the new penitentiary followed in the wake of several prisons and reformatories for women that had been established in the 1870s and 1880s, including the Indiana Women's Prison (1873); the Massachusetts Reformatory Prison for Women (1877); and the New York Houses of Refuge for Women at Hudson (1887) and Albion (1893).[277] While the officials at ISP-Joliet had discussed the building of a separate prison for its female population primarily as a means to ameliorate the disruption they caused among the male inmates, prison reformers in the 19th century advocated for separate institutions as a means to more effectively encourage reformation of the women. Although they shared the officers' general view that women convicted of crimes were "weak and wicked," they also believed that they retained the "right to repent, to forsake sin, to strive for a better future."[278] Even when housed in physical plants that were similar to Auburn-style penitentiaries, reformatories and prisons for women, like those for young offenders and juveniles, often implemented elements of prison reform ideology in combination with traditional penitentiary practices. Most employed a graded classification system and greater recreation time, did not utilize the lock step or rule of silence, and generally allowed more freedom of movement.

The Women's Prison at Joliet was constructed on land east of Collins Street and southwest of the prison quarries, a site that had formerly been occupied by a motley collection of storehouses and outbuildings associated with Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet's industrial workshops. The design for the prison resembled a smaller version of the neighboring ISP-Joliet, with a center administration building facing south onto Woodruff Road. Like the men's prison, the administration building at the female penitentiary housed the prison office, visiting room, hospital, staff dining room, and living quarters for the matron and assistant matrons. A three-story cellblock wing extended north from the administration building—the wing contained 100 cells arranged along the outer east and west walls on the upper two floors, while the first floor housed an industrial laundry and drying room, workrooms, chapel, and kitchen. Surrounding the administration building and cellhouse was a large yard 120 feet wide by 200 feet long, enclosed by a high stone wall.

In stark contrast to the men's prison, the cells in the new prison were relatively large and equipped with modern conveniences. Each cell measured ten feet long by seven feet wide, and was fitted with electric lighting, running water, and a toilet. Most notably, each cell also featured a double-sash window overlooking the prison yard, a luxury that the interior cells in the men's prison lacked. Even with these modern elements, security was still a priority—each window was protected by iron bars, and staircases throughout the building were equipped with iron gratings. Solitary cells were also installed on the third floor of the administration building to discipline any recalcitrant inmates.

On November 16, 1896, the 68 female prisoners moved from the fourth floor of the warden's house into Women's Prison. The new accommodations did provide a tangible improvement to the female prisoners' overall quality of life. Instead of sleeping together in dormitories, each prisoner was now afforded, if not privacy, then a space of her own. Newspaper reports often remarked on how the women decorated their cells with drawings, photographs and "elaborate tidies and other pieces of fancy work" they had made.[279] While

[277] Estelle B. Freedman, "Sentiment and Discipline: Women's Prison Experiences in Nineteenth Century America," *Prologue* (Journal of the National Archives), Vol. 16 No. 4 (Winter 1984), 249.
[278] Mrs. Ellen Cheney Johnson, "Separate Prison for Women," Proceedings from the Adjourned Meeting of the National Prison Association at New Orleans, Louisiana, January 21-24, 1899, 440.
[279] "New Prison Now Ready," *Chicago Tribune*, November 15, 1895, 28.

before the women had only left their fourth-floor quarters in the old prison on the rare holiday or other special celebration, now they were permitted a period of outdoor recreation every day in the prison yard.

Even in this modern and spacious facility, however, the daily routine of the inmates remained relatively unchanged. Women inmates followed the same schedule of morning and afternoon labor, working in the new prison laundry washing uniforms and linens for the administration buildings, making rattan seats for chairs, or doing piece work.[280] Apart from meals and a Sunday chapel service once a month, the women spent most of their time outside of work hours in their new cells.[281]

The opening of the Women's Prison at Joliet marked the end of 19th-century expansion within the Illinois' penitentiary system and no further appropriations for a new prison would be authorized by the legislature until 1907. In addition to the Women's Prison, several improvements were made within the walls of the existing men's penitentiary around the turn of the century. With rates of tuberculosis continually rising at the hospital through the 1880s and early 1890s, there was a dire need for additional space to effectively quarantine tubercular patients, and the existing hospital, located in a small space above the bakery and kitchen storage rooms, was declared by the prison physician in 1892 to be "a disgrace to the prison" that was "more calculated to breed disease" instead of curing it.[282] In 1895, a large, freestanding hospital building was erected at the southeast corner of the complex, and the top floor was immediately put to use as a separate TB ward. Seven years later, at the request of the commissioners and warden, the Illinois legislature authorized the construction of a massive dining hall and adjacent kitchen directly west of the hospital building, and for the first time in over 30 years, prisoners were able to take meals outside of their cells. Penitentiary physician W. R. Fletcher praised the dining room and kitchen in his 1906 report, stating that they helped to "elevate the mind as well as the physical man."[283]

But these improvements did little to ameliorate the increasingly deteriorated and outdated condition of ISP-Joliet's physical plant, which was only exacerbated by consistent overcrowding. Warden McClaughry wrote in his report to the commissioners in 1898, "I cannot too strongly comment upon the present cell house system of this Institution, which has, for many years, compelled the authorities to crowd its prisoners into limits so restricted, and so utterly lacking in needed sanitary provisions, that it ought not, in all conscience, longer be permitted to exist."[284] To remedy this situation, the commissioners recommended "constructing a new two story building of vitrified brick. . . so that a transfer can be made while the first building is being overhauled, and thus by a system of replacement. . . the old buildings can be gradually repaired and strengthened in a proper manner."[285] Having just appropriated substantial sums to build both the Hospital for Insane Convicts and the Women's Prison, legislators opted to take no action on the matter.

The Implementation of Parole and the Early Classification of Prisoners at the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet

By the turn of the 20th century, the prison reform movement had become entangled within the larger web of ambitious social and political activism that defined the Progressive Era in the United States. Using 19th-century prison reform ideology as their starting point, Progressives developed unbelievably ambitious programs that

[280] A one-story expansion of the laundry at the east side of the cellhouse wing was constructed in 1899.
[281] *Chicago Tribune,* November 15, 1895, 28.
[282] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1892*, 16.
[283] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet for the Two Years Ending September 30,1906* (Springfield, IL: Phillips Bros., State Printers, 1907), 13.
[284] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1898,* 19.
[285] Ibid, 16.

sought to simultaneously root out and eliminate the broader causes of crime within communities, diagnose the source of criminality in offenders, and develop individual rehabilitation for prisoners. While the root causes of crime were to be treated through social programs, Progressives endorsed tackling the issue of individual criminal behavior through three specific criminal justice reforms—probation, indeterminate sentencing, and parole. Through these reforms, individual offenders could be divided into three distinct categories—probationers, who were capable of rehabilitation without incarceration; prisoners, who were either incapable of reform or in the process of rehabilitation; and parolees, those who, during their period of incarceration, had proven themselves ready to re-enter society. Through both probation and parole, offenders who had proven capable of criminal behavior but were not considered a danger to society by the courts or parole board, would remain under the supervision of probation officers or parole officers. Progressive reformers envisioned that these officers would act as counselors and guides, aiding offenders in becoming fully functioning members of society.

While probation and parole extended the reach of the penal system beyond the prison walls, the indeterminate sentence would allow for greater discretion and flexibility in the application of the rehabilitative process during incarceration. Instead of receiving a sentence by a judge that gave a fixed period of incarceration, the date of a prisoner's release would now be determined by prison administrators or a dedicated parole board, who would weigh the inmate's background, habits, and behavior during incarceration to make a judgement on whether parole was warranted. The high level of discretion given to parole boards was considered by Progressives to be a critical component of the rehabilitative process—prison authorities must respond to the criminal, not the crime.[286]

Reformers believed that indeterminate sentences were the only way to provide for the individualized rehabilitation that was central to reducing crime. Sentencing an offender to a fixed time in prison was akin to sentencing "the lunatic to three months in the asylum, or the victim of smallpox to thirty days in the hospital, at the end of these periods to turn them loose, whether mad or sane, cured or still diseased."[287] They also argued that the possibility of parole incentivized rehabilitation and gave prisoners more sense of agency during their incarceration—a prisoner serving an indeterminate sentence "becomes the arbiter of his own fate. He carries the key to the prison in his own pocket."[288]

Prison authorities also embraced indeterminate sentencing for their own reasons. They hoped that the application of parole laws would help to equalize sentence length for similar crimes and ameliorate discontent among prisoners. Wardens also recognized the power that the parole would give them in maintaining discipline within the prison; wardens played a significant role in determining which prisoners would be paroled, and they could use this power as leverage in managing the inmate population.

Many prisoners, however, were adamantly against indeterminate sentencing. Fixed sentences provided a definite date of release to which they could look forward with certainty, and good-time laws already provided a means through which they could reduce, to a certain extent, those sentences. Although the potential length of time that could be taken off a sentence through parole was significantly more than under the good-time laws, in practice most prisoners served more time under indeterminate sentencing. Proponents of indeterminate sentencing actually cited these longer sentences to rebuff critics of the policy—an editorial in the March 1925

[286] Rothman, *Conscience and Convenience*, 59.
[287] Ibid, 69.
[288] Ibid.

edition of *The Institution Quarterly*, calling out Illinois' indeterminate sentencing law as "the best that has yet been adopted by any state," reported that "A survey of the last five years under the definite sentence law [1890-1895], compared with the last five years under the parole law [1900-1925] shows that the division has administered heavier sentences, in every class of crime, than was administered under the old jury system."[289] What inmates hated most about indeterminate sentencing, however, was exactly what appealed to prison authorities—the extraordinary power that it gave to wardens and prison officers over both their lives and their freedom.[290]

Illinois was one of the earliest states in the country to establish indeterminate sentencing and parole, enacting initial legislation in 1895 that was amended slightly in 1897. Although the state's juvenile court law included probation for young offenders, probation for adults was not established in the state until 1911. Because they were essentially used as an alternative to incarceration for convicted criminals, probation and the supervisory elements of parole operated largely outside of the penitentiary system and had no effect on the administration of its prisons, other than diverting inmates away from the penitentiary system. The establishment of indeterminate sentencing and the parole board, however, did have a significant impact on the management of the Illinois Penitentiary at Joliet that continued through much of the 20th century.

Illinois' indeterminate sentencing and parole law, called "An act in relation to the sentence of persons convicted of crime and providing for a system of parole," was approved by the state legislature on June 15, 1895, and went into effect on July 1. The law replaced determinate sentences handed down by courts with an indeterminate sentence that included a minimum and maximum term. It conferred upon the Board of Commissioners for each penitentiary "the power of determining upon the date of release to the Illinois State Penitentiary, allowing them to go upon parole, at any time after having served the minimum sentence for the crime convicted of prescribed by law."[291] A subsequent law passed in 1897 removed the possibility of early release through parole for prisoners convicted of treason, murder, manslaughter, or rape, as well as repeat offenders. The amended law also transferred control over the parole process from the penitentiary commissioners to a Board of Pardons.[292]

To administer the parole program, prison authorities needed a method through which they could evaluate the progress of an inmate's rehabilitation and determine whether he or she was a good candidate for parole. Illinois' parole law did not include specific provisions for this process, so in the two decades immediately following its passage, a rudimentary system of grading prisoners was implemented at both Joliet and Menard.[293] This grading system had already been introduced at the Illinois State Reformatory at Pontiac as part of an indeterminate sentencing structure that placed the release of juvenile and young offenders at the discretion of the reformatory board. Prisoners' behavior and adherence to prison rules became the standard through which they were classified within the institution and served as the path to parole. The system included three grades—first, second, and third. Inmates entering the prison were automatically placed in the second grade and were able to rise to the first grade through "marks" earned by good behavior and industry. Conversely, marks could be

[289] "The Indeterminate Sentence," *The Institution Quarterly*, Vol. XVI, No. 1 (March 1925), 7.
[290] Sullivan, *The Prison Reform Movement: Forlorn Hope*, 33-34; Rothman, *Conscience and Convenience*, 80.
[291] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penientiary,1896*, 7.
[292] *Laws of the State of Illinois*, 40 G. A. (1897), 203.
[293] Frederick H. Wines, "Conditional Liberation and the Indeterminate Sentence," *Proceedings of the Annual Congress of the National Prison Association of the United States Held at Austin Texas, December 2-6, 1897* (Pittsburg: Shaw Brothers, Printers, 1898), 267-268.

taken away for offenses.[294] Although this grading system aided prison authorities and the Board of Pardons in administering the state's parole law, prisoners of differing grades at Joliet still lived and worked together, and research indicates that more informal systems of segregation existed at the prison through the first decade of the 20th century based on race, nationality, or work assignment.[295]

The Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet and the Expansion of Prison Reform Efforts in the Early 20th Century

The first decades of the 20th century saw the continued implementation and refinement of Progressive prison reforms at the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet and in other penal institutions in the state. In June 1899, Robert McClaughry, then serving his second term as warden, left Joliet for the United States Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas. He was replaced by Everett J. Murphy, a former Illinois House representative who had served for a brief time as warden at Menard in the late 1880s. Murphy's tenure as warden served as a transitional period for Joliet Prison, when changes sought by Progressive reformers slowly made their way into the prison. Murphy was considered a "typical, old-fashioned prison disciplinarian"—in a 1925 article in *Welfare Magazine*, former warden A. L. Bowen described him as "cold and firm as adamant"—and he was reluctant to let go of the traditional routines and methods of discipline that defined the penitentiary in the previous century.[296] When officials at Sing Sing announced they would abolish the lockstep, Murphy disagreed with the change, claiming that "The necessity of keeping the proper step keeps the men quite a distance from each other. . . With the men just so far apart it is possible for guard to watch the whole line, and prevent whispering or the passing of an article from one to another. Many conspiracies among convicts are prevented by this one point."[297] Nevertheless, Murphy did acquiesce to certain changes that improved the daily lives of prisoners at Joliet during his tenure as warden. By 1906, he had abolished the lockstep, and conceded that "the good effects are plainly seen in the improved conduct of the men."[298] He oversaw the construction of the new dining room and kitchen facilities, which allowed inmates to dine outside of their cells for the first time since the early 1870s. In 1912, toward the end of his tenure, he allowed for the first movies to be shown in the prison. And when a group of over 100 prisoners serving life sentences organized to prepare a bill that would extend the possibility of parole to them, Murphy wholeheartedly supported their efforts. Echoing a sentiment expressed by many penitentiary officials, Murphy asserted that "lifers" generally made the best prisoners:

> . . .we practically have no trouble with them. Many of them who have been here for years have yet to be given a black mark for violation of the prison rules. They are perfect gentlemen in their conduct towards other prisoners and to the officers. Personally I would rather have 100 life men around me than a dozen burglars, pickpocket thieves, highwaymen and the like. A large percentage of the murders they are charged with were committed on the spur of the moment and their past records show absolutely no criminal traces.[299]

E. J. Murphy's piecemeal acceptance of Progressive reforms at Joliet was typical of prison administrators throughout the country in the early years of the 20th century. Wardens generally accepted those changes that would be relatively easy to implement and would not disrupt discipline within the institution.

[294] Statutes and Rules Governing the Illinois State Reformatory at Pontiac, December 4, 1893, 37-43.
[295] "Offers Psychopathic Tests," *The Champaign Daily News,* January 9, 1915, 3.
[296] Dodge, *Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind,* 128; A. L. Bowen, "Ten Years Ago and To-Day: Joliet State Prison," *Welfare Magazine*, Vol. 19, Issue 5 (May 1928), 575.
[297] "Differ as to the Lockstep," *Chicago Tribune*, August 13, 1900, 9.
[298] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1906,* 8.
[299] "'Life Termers' at Prison Seeking Right to Parole," *Herald News* (Joliet, IL), December 2, 1912, 1.

Murphy's term as warden also coincided with the first substantial legislation regulating prison labor since the constitutional amendment abolishing contract labor was ratified in 1886. After years of continued protest by labor and business organizations on prison labor and unfair competition, in May 1903 the Illinois General Assembly approved legislation effectively banning the use of prison labor or products outside of state use. A Board of Prison Industries was tasked with monitoring production at Joliet, Menard, and Pontiac, as well as distributing goods to state agencies. The new law also created an eight-hour workday within the penitentiary system and allowed prisoners to earn compensation for work at the discretion of the warden. In keeping with Progressive-Era ideology, the law implemented an official grading system that regulated the types of labor each grade of prisoner would be assigned. First grade prisoners who were "corrigible or less vicious than the others and likely to observe the laws" were to be given vocational training or work in industries most likely to allow the prisoner "to maintain himself by honest industry after his discharge." Inmates deemed "incorrigible or vicious, but so competent to work and so reasonably obedient to prison discipline as not seriously to interfere the productiveness of their labor" were placed in the second grade and assigned to the state shops. Third-grade prisoners, who were "incorrigible or so incompetent, otherwise than from temporary ill health," were "directed to such exercise as shall tend to the preservation of health" or employed in state work.[300]

Protests from penitentiary commissioners quickly led to an amendment of the new law in 1905, allowing for up to 40% of labor to be used in the production of goods that would be sold by the state on the open market. The legislature also approved an act authorizing the penitentiaries to produce tile, piping, machinery, and crushed stone for road building.[301] Even with this change, Joliet struggled to keep all of its prisoners employed—the commissioners complained in 1910 that it had been "impossible to keep all of this 60 per cent of the labor busy," and reminding the legislature that "idleness is an embarrassment to a penal institution, impairing, as it does, discipline, filling the hospital and increasing insanity."[302]

Meanwhile, Murphy and the penitentiary commissioners continued to sound the alarm on the poor condition of Joliet's physical plant. In his 1906 report, Murphy noted that, while he had previously requested only new cellhouses for the existing site, industrial development directly south of the prison site had made life there increasingly untenable for those living and working there. "I am convinced," he wrote, "that it is only a question of a reasonable time. . .in which the penitentiary will be practically enveloped in an atmosphere which will vitally affect the health of all connected with our institution." Murphy and the penitentiary commissioners recommended that an appropriation be made to construct a new penitentiary to replace Joliet on a site farther from the city, claiming that by using prison labor "the amount of money necessary. . .would be scarcely more than one and a half million dollars."[303] A special report on the prison by the Illinois State Board of Charities agreed, stating bluntly that "The conditions at Joliet are inhumane and intolerable. While the state has the right to deprive convicts of their liberty and to profit by their labor, it has no moral right to confine them under conditions which unfit them to work and live when restored to society."[304] In April 1907, Governor Charles S. Deenen, appropriation committee chairs C. P. Gardner and David Shanahan, and R. J. Barr met at Joliet to examine the facilities. When Deenan and Senator Gardner both stepped into an unoccupied cell in one of the

[300] *Laws of the State of Illinois,* 43 G.A. (1903), 272-274.
[301] *Laws of the State of Illinois,* 45 G. A. (1905), 344-345.
[302] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet for the Two Years Ending September 30, 1910* (Springfield, IL: Phillips Bros., State Printers, 1911), 6.
[303] *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1906,* 7.
[304] "Joliet 'Inhuman:' Urge New Prison," *Chicago Tribune*, April 29, 1907,1.

cellblock wings, "They found that they could not walk across the cell at the same time, it being too narrow to permit of such constitutionals."[305]

Murphy's and the penitentiary commissioners' lobbying proved successful, and the General Assembly authorized the creation of a commission to find a suitable site of at least 2,000 acres near Joliet for a new penitentiary.[306] In January 1911, a 2,500-acre site approximately two miles northwest of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet was selected, and plans for a new penitentiary by Illinois State Architect William Carbys Zimmerman were unveiled in December 1912. Zimmerman's design for the complex included a series of eight circular cellhouses, each containing 240 cells. The design for the cellblocks was based on British philosopher Jeremy Bentham's 18th-century "Panopticon," which allowed prisoners to be constantly surveilled from a central guard tower placed in the middle of each cellhouse. Each cell was equipped with its own window and ventilation system, and large skylights placed on the roof of the cellhouse provided additional natural light. Instead of iron bars, the cells were secured with glass doors. The eight cellhouses were arranged around a massive central dining hall, with tunnels connecting it to each cellhouse. Surrounding the cellhouses were recreation yards and gardens; workshops were grouped together directly west of the cellhouses, and the administration building and residences for the warden and prison officers were located outside of the prison walls. While the proposed penitentiary complex occupied only approximately 65 acres of the site, plans for a penitentiary farm on the remainder of the land were implemented in 1913.

The design for the new penitentiary stood in stark contrast to the Auburn-style plants at Joliet and Menard (Chester) and fit neatly with the tenets of Progressive-Era prison reform. The large, well-lighted cells, equipped with modern plumbing and ventilation would be a vast improvement over the interior cells at the two older prisons, while smaller cellhouses would more easily allow prison officers to segregate the prison population and maintain discipline. Zimmerman declared that, when completed, the prison would become the "model penitentiary of the world."[307] Newspapers optimistically reported that the prison would be open by 1915.

Warden Edmund M. Allen and the Realization of Progressive Prison Reform at ISP-Joliet

In April 1913, the commission for the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet, under the order of newly inaugurated governor Edward Fitzsimmons Dunne, appointed Edmund M. Allen to replace Everett Murphy as warden. Dunne, a former mayor of Chicago, was a leader of the Progressive movement in Illinois, and his choice of Allen as warden showed his commitment to implementing prison reform on a larger scale at Joliet. Allen's father, Robert L. Allen, had served as warden under Governor Altgeld from 1893 to 1897—under the senior Allen's tenure, "prison stripes" had been abolished—and Edmund Allen was fully supportive of Dunne's agenda of reform. The day after he was appointed, Allen declared "The commission proposes to do all that can be done to carry out the progressive policies of Gov. Dunne, and I will second them in everything of this kind." Allen also pledged to operate Joliet in full transparency, stating that "The institution will be open to representatives of the newspapers at all times and every opportunity will be given to them to obtain all the news which will interest the public. There will be nothing to conceal from the press."[308]

In the first year of his tenure as warden, Allen implemented a sweeping program of reform at Joliet. He allowed prisoners a daily hour of recreation in the prison yard, with groups of between 60 to 200 men given "freedom of

[305] Ibid.
[306] *Laws of the State of Illinois,* 45 G.A. (1907), 46.
[307] "Model Prison Plans Ready," *The Champaign Daily Gazette*, December 3, 1912, 3.
[308] "New Warden Will Banish Secrecy," *Herald News* (Joliet, IL), April 25, 1913, 1.

the yard" at one time.[309] He abolished the rule of silence, giving inmates the "privilege of conversation" at all times of the day. He arranged for 48 Jewish inmates to observe Yom Kippur in the prison's chapel for the first time in its history and removed guards from all chapel services. A monthly magazine, *The Joliet Prison Post,* was inaugurated in January 1914, and inmates contributed news items, poems, editorials, and interviews with prison staff. Allen organized a prison band that played weekly in the chapel and on special occasions. Updates were made to the prison hospital, and Allen installed an optical department that provided glasses to inmates who needed them.[310]

In addition to relaxing prison rules and providing more services and support to the inmates, Allen implemented other programs designed to give the prisoners at Joliet more agency during incarceration. He instituted a more expanded grading system, adding an "industrial efficiency grade" for first-grade prisoners who showed "exceptional efficiency and helpfulness." Honor farm and honor camp assignments were limited to prisoners in the first grade or industrial efficiency grade, and both groups were granted additional mail and visitor privileges. To enter these grades, Allen required prisoners to sign an "honor pledge" in which they promised to obey the rules of the prison.[311] Allen also established a monthly meeting of the first-grade and industrial efficiency grade prisoners, allowing them to discuss the discipline and conditions of the prison and bring any grievances to him. Allen wrote in the April 1, 1914 edition of the *Joliet Prison Post* that the meetings were intended "to permit the men gradually and in a limited way to become self-governing."[312]

In a more controversial move, Allen also attempted to abolish solitary confinement at the prison in August of 1913, going so far as to ask for the resignation of the solitary cell keeper. The Joliet *Herald News* expressed skepticism at his decision, calling the removal of all solitary confinement "problematical" and relaying reports of recently discharged prison guards who claimed to "have been abused unmercifully by the convicts since they have learned that they will not have to suffer through being placed in solitary confinement for doing any wrong."[313] Allen later quietly re-introduced solitary confinement as a disciplinary measure at the prison.

Among the most ambitious programs that Allen helped to implement at ISP-Joliet were the honor camp and honor farm. Governor Dunne first spoke about his plan to employ prisoners in the construction of the state's roads in his inaugural address, and in August 1913 he sent Allen to Colorado to tour the system of roadwork "honor camps" the state had set up, which allowed trusted inmates to live and work with minimal supervision outside of the prison walls.[314] In June, the General Assembly approved legislation authorizing the use of inmate labor on public roads, and in August Dunne announced that he had agreed to commute 10 of every 30 days from the sentences of inmates during their time working at the camp.[315] On September 3, 1913, the first camp in Illinois, called "Camp Hope," was established at Grand DeTour in Lee County. Fifty-one "honor men," all with sentences less than five years as required by the new statute, worked over the next five months cutting and grading a one-mile section of road while living in tents near the site. Although foremen were on site to oversee

[309] "Hour's Rest for Convicts," *Urbana Courier-Herald*, May 24, 1913, 8; *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet for the Two Years Ending September 30, 1914* (Springfield, IL: Schnepp & Barnes, State Printers, 1915),8.

[310] *Report of the Commissioners, 1914,* 12; "Warden Allen of Joliet Says He Doesn't Forget Convicts are Human Beings," *The Day Book* (Chicago, IL), September 13, 1913, 23-24; "Jew Convicts Keep Holy Day," *Herald News* (Joliet, IL), October 12, 1913, 1.

[311] "To the Men Confined in the Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet," *Joliet Prison Post*, April 1, 1914, 178.

[312] Ibid.

[313] "Allen Abolishes Famed 'Solitary,'" *Herald News* (Joliet, IL), August 27, 1913, 1.

[314] "Allen to Study Convict Labor; Leaves for West," *Herald News* (Joliet, IL), August 11, 1913, 1.

[315] *Laws of the State of Illinois,1913*, 581; "Forty Convicts to Start Road Work September 1 on Honor System," *Herald News* (Joliet, IL), August 21, 1913, 1.

construction, no armed guards were present at the honor camp. Allen boasted that "The forty men I have selected for the first camp are high class men. I could send them to China without a guard."[316]

The *Chicago Tribune* reported on the prisoners' arrival to the camp in early September and recounted their first evening outside of the penitentiary:

> Part of the men made a sortie against the great hill through which they propose to cleave a pathway during the next few weeks. In spite of heat that registered more than 90 degrees they wielded picks and shovels with zeal. And after Supervisor T. F. Kegan had called the experiment at an end for the day they returned to camp duties, perfecting arrangements for their long stay. In the late afternoon they played baseball, went swimming, fished. None of the men look on the hard work that is confronting them as other than a congenial summer outing.[317]

J. R., a prisoner from Chicago interviewed by the paper, claimed that none of the honor camp workers would think of escaping. "We think too much of the new warden," he said. "Mr. Allen has told us all about what is expected of us and we are not going to let him be disappointed."[318]

When work at Camp Hope was completed, prisoners from the honor camp were dispatched to a second road camp in Beecher, called Camp Allen, or to the newly established Joliet Honor Farm at the site of the new penitentiary. Soon after his inauguration, Governor Dunne had announced that, as part of an "economy regime," work on the new penitentiary would be paused for two years. Dunne assured the public that "The ground for the new penitentiary has already been secured, and it will be equally as valuable and advantageous a site for the new prison two years from now as it is at the present time."[319] In August, Warden Allen and the penitentiary commissioners met with penitentiary site commission and agreed that, in the meantime, a portion of the 2,500-acre parcel could be used temporarily as an honor farm for Joliet.[320] Two storage buildings were constructed on the site, and in January 1914 superintendent Bert H. Faltz was hired to oversee running of the farm. Honor prisoners assigned to the farm repaired some of the existing buildings on the property for use as dormitories, and by April the men were preparing the ground and sowing crops. Superintendent Faltz wrote in his first report to the commissioners that the men in his charge "consist of all nationalities and their terms vary from ninety days of unexpired time to life sentences.[321] Some have trades and professions, others none, while a very few if any were farmers. . .Some did not know a plow from a drag, or a cultivator from a mower, but all were willing and anxious to learn."[322] By October, the prisoners had succeeded in harvesting their first crops on the farm, which included over 14,000 pounds of tomatoes, 34,000 pounds of cabbage, and over 8,000 pounds of onions, all of which were delivered to the penitentiary commissary.

In establishing the honor camps and farm, Allen was attempting to implement a fully Progressive prison system under less-than-ideal circumstances, given that ISP-Joliet was slated to be abandoned as soon as the new penitentiary was completed. Allen openly expressed his disappointment with the design of the new prison in his 1914 report to the commissioners, claiming that "The plan contemplates a prison like the old one, excepting that the cells are to be larger and better ventilated; that the steel bars shall be heavier and the walls higher and consequently more difficult to penetrate or scale. It does not contemplate or provide for road camps or an honor

316 *Herald News* (Joliet, IL), August 21, 1913. 1.
317 "Convicts Pick Own Guards," *Chicago Tribune*, September 4, 1913, 3.
318 Ibid.
319 "No New Prison is Governor Dunne's Reported Answer," *Herald News* (Joliet, IL), April 10, 1913, 12.
320 "Complete Plans for Prison Farm at Joint Meeting," *Herald News* (Joliet, IL), August 7, 1913, 1.
321 Unlike the honor camps, which by law were only open to those prisoners who had five years or less to serve, the honor farm was open to all prisoners who achieved the first grade within the prison's classification system, regardless of sentence.
322 *Report of the Commissioners of the Illinois State Penitentiary, 1914*, 19-20.

farm, nor even an honor system in any way." Instead, Allen urged the commissioners, legislature, and governor to create a more diversified penitentiary on the existing Joliet site:

> I desire to establish a healthy prison for those who must be kept behind bars; honor camps and honor farms for the sick and semi-invalids, regardless of their trustworthiness; gravel pits and a stockade. Men who work upon the farm are to be housed in cottages, men who work in the gravel pits and quarry are to be housed in dormitories within a stockade in connection with a cottage system for the sick and semi-invalids. This plan contemplates the abandonment of the old cell houses, the abandonment of nearly all shop work, and the wrecking of many of the present buildings. In some ways the present plant is too valuable to be abandoned and its continued occupation as a base is necessary to the success of the plans I have already laid before your honorable board.[323]

Allen's assessment of the design for the new penitentiary was incorrect on several points—the legislature had always planned to establish a farm on the site, and there was no reason why the honor systems and honor camps could not be continued at the new prison. And while most of the inmates at the new penitentiary would be housed in cells and not in cottages or dormitories, the design of the new prison still allowed for prisoners in different grades to be separated from each other within the smaller cellhouses. Although they continued to praise Allen for his work in implementing reform at Joliet, the commissioners and the governor pointedly ignored his recommendations regarding the new penitentiary.

Edmund Allen and his Progressive transformation of Joliet suffered a sudden and devastating blow on June 20, 1915. A fire was detected in a bedroom of the warden's quarters, and when prison guards and inmates arrived to put out the blaze, they discovered the body of Allen's wife, Odette. Penitentiary physician John P. Benson and Dr. Haldane Cleminson, a Chicago physician who was an inmate at the prison, examined Mrs. Allen's body and found a fracture on the right side of her head. Warden Allen, who was away from the prison at the time of his wife's death, was summoned back immediately. William D. Heise, former state's attorney and friend of Allen, led an unofficial investigation of the death immediately after the discovery of her body, and a subsequent search of the bedroom revealed pieces of a broken alcohol bottle around the bed.[324] Suspicion swiftly coalesced around "Chicken" Joe Campbell, a Black trusty who had recently been assigned to work in the warden's residence. Campbell had been the last person to see Mrs. Allen alive that morning, when he had entered her room to deliver papers and collect her dog for its morning walk. Campbell was taken to solitary confinement and interrogated—he maintained his innocence throughout, claiming that he had taken Mrs. Allen the papers and had immediately gone outside with her dog. Word quickly spread through the prison that Campbell was a suspect, and the next day a riot broke out in the prison dining room, with several White inmates attempting to make their way to the solitary cells to lynch Campbell. James Allen, the brother of Warden Allen, urged the prisoners to "do nothing to violate the confidence he [Warden Allen] has in you. He will come back, but he won't if you do violence here today."[325]

Campbell's case attracted the attention of Chicago journalist and civil rights leader Ida B. Wells. After reading about Campbell in the local newspapers, Wells published an appeal in the Chicago *Record-Herald* asking for officials and the public to "suspend judgment until that Negro should have a chance to prove whether he was guilty or innocent of the horrible crime of which he was accused." As a result of Well's statement, Governor Dunne dispatched Representative John P. Devine to Joliet to oversee the investigation and ensure that Campbell

[323] Ibid, 13.
[324] "Joliet Warden's Wife Slain," *Chicago Tribune*, June 21, 1915, 1.
[325] "Warden Stops Lynch Sprit of Prisoners," *Chicago Tribune*, June 22, 1915, 1.

was not being mistreated during the inquest. [326] Wells also wrote directly to Campbell, offering the services of her husband, former state's attorney Frederick L. Barnett, in his defense.[327]

At the conclusion of the inquest, the grand jury voted to hold Campbell for Mrs. Allen's murder, and he was transferred to the Will County jail to await trial. Despite the lack of concrete evidence linking the murder to Campbell, Edmund Allen had become convinced of the prisoner's guilt—in an interview with the *Chicago Tribune*, Allen declared "I shall not rest a day or night until he pays the penalty on the gallows."[328] In early July, Ida B. Wells came to Joliet to attend a meeting of the Crispus Attucks club regarding Campbell's case. When she learned that Campbell was still without legal representation, she went to the Will County jail to visit him, producing the letter she had written to him earlier to gain entrance. Campbell agreed to have Barnett represent him, and later wrote to Wells "I know that if I am given a chance I can prove than I am innocent of this crime." Wells and the Negro Fellowship League began a fundraising campaign for Campbell's defense, cajoling prominent African American political and social groups in Chicago to support the cause. Speaking of the case on July 15, Barnett asserted that "'Chicken Joe' is not the brute the press would have the public believe. His story is connected and clear, and I feel confident he cannot be convicted."[329]

Almost immediately, the tragedy was portrayed in the press as an indictment on Edmund Allen's reform measures at the prison, with newspapers reporting that Odette Allen was murdered by a member of Allen's lauded "honor system." Allen vociferously defended the system, claiming that "the honor system should not be confused with the 'trusties."[330]

Although Edmund Allen initially announced that he would remain at Joliet as warden to continue his reform measures, he refused to return to the warden's apartments at the prison and asked Governor Dunne for permission to reside outside of the penitentiary while still acting as warden. Governor Dunne refused, declaring that state statute required the warden to reside on the premises. The dispute between the two men quickly devolved into a bitter exchange of recriminations that were eagerly reported in the press—Allen claimed that Dunne's decision to send Representative Devine to oversee the investigation into his wife's death "stopped whatever chance we had of every securing a confession from Campbell," while Dunne took credit for the reforms that Allen had implemented at Joliet, pointing out that he had advocated for the honor system in his inaugural address as governor before Allen was even appointed warden.[331] Allen formally tendered his resignation on August 6, 1915, and Dunne appointed Deputy Warden Lawrence Ryan to replace him.

On September 30, Campbell was formally indicted for the murder of Odette Allen. The trial began in late October, with Barnett, Robert McCurdy of the Chicago NAACP, and A. M. Cowings representing Campbell. Barnett's motion to exhume Mrs. Allen's body and conduct a more thorough post-mortem was denied by the judge, and Edmund Allen and other members of the family all testified against Campbell during the trial. Despite a vigorous defense from Barnett, after several days of deliberation, the jury sentenced Campbell to hang. The *Chicago Defender* called the verdict "a blot on justice in Illinois," stating that "Although the verdict of the jury was 'guilty' it should afford the people behind the prosecution but little comfort, inasmuch as a new

[326] Ida B. Wells, *Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 288; "Governor Sends Envoy to Joliet," *Freeport Journal-Standard*, June 24, 1915, 1.
[327] Wells, *Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells*, 290.
[328] "'Campbell Will Hang,' Declares Warden Allen," *Chicago Tribune*, July 22, 1915, 15.
[329] "'Joe' Campbell Declares He is Innocent," *The Chicago Defender*, July 17, 1915, 1; Ida B. Wells, *Crusade for Justice*, 290; "Chicken Joe Innocent, Negro Lawyer Says," *Chicago Tribune*, July 14, 1915, 7.
[330] *Chicago Tribune,* July 22, 1915, 15.
[331] "Allen Takes Jabs at Dunne; Quits Joliet," *Chicago Tribune*, August 7, 1915, 1, 5.

trial is almost assured, it is dollars to doughnuts that. . . the first verdict will be reversed, and the prisoner given justice."[332] Barnett appealed the case to the Supreme Court, who refused to overturn the verdict. Nevertheless, Barnett and Wells, along with other supporters, continued to advocate on Campbell's behalf, securing six reprieves to his execution. In April 1918, Governor Frank Orren Lowden commuted Campbell's sentence to life in prison.

The Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet in the Late 1910s and Early 1920s

Although the tragedy of Odette Allen's death planted doubts among the public about Progressive reforms, relatively little changed at Joliet when Michael Zimmer was appointed warden in September 1915. During his initial inspection of the prison, Zimmer promised, "The honor system is going to be upheld intelligently and without any excitement or theatricals. . . I am for the honor system, carefully and thoughtfully and scientifically administered."[333] At the end of 1915, Zimmer instituted a slightly stricter version of Allen's classification system to curb "abuses" that had "grown up and flourished under that system."[334] Under Zimmer's "merit" system, third-class prisoners received no privileges and were given "hard labor" at the quarry; second-class inmates worked as "shop hands, mechanics, furniture makers and hospital attendants, and were allowed moderate privileges previously given to all prisoners, such as talking during meals and work and periods of recreation; first-class prisoners were allowed greater privileges and work at the honor farm or in office work under minimal supervision.[335]

While no further honor camps were instituted at Joliet through Zimmer's tenure as warden, several camps were established at Chester in 1915 and 1916, and disciplinary rules at that prison were also relaxed.[336] The honor farm at the new penitentiary site near Joliet, renamed "Camp Zimmer," was also maintained, and in 1916 additional honor prisoners were dispatched to the site to begin construction of the prison complex there.[337] Although Dunne had originally vowed not to begin work at the site for at least two years, conditions at Joliet Penitentiary had been continually declining, and the governor and legislature ultimately chose to move forward with the new penitentiary in order to avoid further repairs and improvements to the existing prison.

Despite his attempt to maintain discipline while retaining the reform agenda implemented under Edmund Allen, Zimmer's brief tenure as warden at Joliet was marked by growing disorder within the prison walls. Numerous honor prisoners escaped from the honor farm, and in February 1916, prison officers uncovered a plot by twelve prisoners to blow up the west gate of the penitentiary with dynamite smuggled in from the quarry.[338] Guards and 'outsiders' were discovered bringing liquor to inmates at the prison quarries and workshops.[339] A series of fires set by prisoners destroyed several shops in the prison, leaving a growing number of inmates without work. Republicans in the state were eager to point out the issues at Joliet during an election year—in October, Fred E. Sterling, chairman of the Republican state central committee, declared that Joliet had become the center of "a thousand scandals" under Dunne's administration, and produced affidavits claiming that prisoners on the honor

[332] "Summons Allen as Witness for 'Chicken Joe,'" *Chicago Tribune,* November 9, 1915, 7; "Campbell Railroaded to Gallows," *The Chicago Defender*, December 4, 1915, 1.
[333] "Zimmer Visits Prison; Finds Some 'Friends,'" *Chicago Tribune*, September 3, 1915, 4.
[334] *The Delinquent*, Vol. V, No. 11 (November 1915), 12.
[335] "Prison to Quit 'Honor' System," *Bureau County Tribune*, December 10, 1915, 15.
[336] "Road to be Scenic Asset," *The Champaign Daily Gazette*, March 2, 1916, 4.
[337] "More Convicts to Honor Farm," *Ford County Press* (Melvin, IL), May 19, 1916, 7; "Convicts to Begin Work on Model Penitentiary," *The True Republican* (Sycamore, IL), March 29, 1916, 3.
[338] "Plot to Free Scores Bared by Joliet Warden," *Freeport Journal-Standard*, February 14, 1916, 6.
[339] "Joliet Warden Says Booze is Brought into Prison," *Journal Gazette* (Mattoon, IL), January 12, 1916, 7.

farm were allowed to visit "disorderly houses" in Lockport and that cardplaying and gambling had become rampant.[340]

Dunne was defeated in the 1916 gubernatorial election by Republican Frank Lowden, and in May 1917 Michael Zimmer left Joliet to become warden of Cook County hospital. A. L. Bowen, executive secretary of the State Charities Commission, was tapped by Lowden to serve as temporary warden for Joliet until a permanent replacement could be appointed. Bowen was instructed to maintain the status quo at the prison until a permanent warden took over—reports in the press indicated that conditions at Joliet were "far from ideal" and that "insubordination, carelessness and lack or organization among employees" required a "complete reorganization and a general shakeup" at the prison.[341] Bowen's first days at the prison confirmed these reports. He later recalled:

> What had been told me was true. My own sympathetic attitude towards the men was being interpreted as a weakness. I realized that all the disquieting predictions which accompanied me to Joliet and there repeated themselves were founded. In less than a week I understood that, before long, serious trouble would occur, no matter who the warden or how trivial the inciting cause might be. Challenge was in the air. The spirit of revolt seemed to have a substance, it was so apparent.[342]

Initially, Bowen had announced to the prisoners that he had no intention of making immediate changes to prison regulations; however, five weeks after his arrival he abruptly changed course, instituting new rules restricting prisoners' movements and banning women visitors. He later argued that these changes were necessary to bring the prison into order—the ban against female visits was made after "the enticing of a negro prisoner from the Honor Farm by a woman, not related to him in any manner,"[343] Bowen had expressed alarm at the number of women visitors to the prison in the weeks after his arrival, as well as letters prisoners had received from female members of the Oriental Esoteric League of Washington, D.C., many of which were "vulgar" and "insidious."[344]

Bowen's announcement of these new rules during breakfast in the dining room sparked an immediate uprising, with prisoners throwing dishes and overturning tables in protest. Prisoners set fire to five buildings in the complex and surrounded the prison gate to prevent firemen from entering. At Bowen's request, Governor Lowden dispatched troops from the First Illinois Infantry to quell the riot. Upon the arrival of the battalion, most of the prisoners surrendered; a smaller group of 200 men who remained sheltered between two buildings in the yard later surrendered just before an order was given to the troops to fire on the remaining prisoners. Don Flaherty, a prisoner serving a life sentence, was killed when he jumped from a burning building, and several others were injured.[345]

Bowen squarely placed the blame on the idleness forced upon prisoners through legislation and Joliet's "archaic" physical plant, stating "As it stands today, the old Joliet prison is itself the pre-eminent criminal in Illinois; it violates all of society's and nature's laws in health, sanitation, and morals; it breed a class and a type that even the slums cannot furnish."[346] Others pointed to widespread discontent among the prison population

[340] "Cites Affidavits to Prove Joliet Prison Scandal," *Chicago Tribune*, November 2, 1916, 9.
[341] A. L. Bowen, "Joliet Prison and the Riots of June 5th," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, Vol. 8, Issue 4 (1918), 578-579; "Shakeup in Joliet Prison is Expected," *Journal Gazette* (Mattoon, IL), May 28, 1917, 3.
[342] A. L. Bowen, "Joliet Prison and the Riots of June 5th," 579.
[343] Ibid, 582.
[344] Ibid.
[345] "Women Blamed for Riots at Joliet Prison," *Chicago Tribune*, June 6, 1917, 1.
[346] Bowen, "Joliet Prison and the Riots of June 5th," 584.

with the current parole board, which were viewed as arbitrary and corrupt.[347] Jurors presiding over the inquest following Don Flaherty's death pointed the finger directly at the honor system, claiming that the riot "was the direct consequence of the past utter lack of enforcement of any discipline" and "that the government of the penitentiary under the honor system has been a direct and ever present menace to the lives of all employes and to the safety of the inhabitants of the city of Joliet."[348]

On June 9, former warden Everett J. Murphy was brought back to Joliet to reestablish order at the prison. Murphy immediately reinstated the exact rules and regulations he had used in his previous tenure as warden and which had governed the prison through much of the 19th century.[349] All prisoners were frisked for weapons and contraband and their cells thoroughly searched. In a direct repudiation of Allen's operational transparency, Murphy also instituted a "closed door" policy with the press. Echoing the 19th-century penal philosophy of obedience, silence, and labor, Murphy stated "We will enforce discipline and demand one hundred per cent efficiency and obedience. In return we will give one hundred per cent of administration. We will be fair but not sentimental."[350] The only evidence that remained of the Progressive reforms instituted by Dunne and Allen was the honor farm, which remained in operation.

Despite Warden Murphy's crackdown, a second riot occurred at Joliet just three months later. The morning of September 9, a group of 60 "incorrigible" prisoners who had been segregated in a separate section of the cellhouse began throwing stones they had gathered in the yard at officers. When a guard attempted to take one prisoner who had thrown a piece of iron at him to solitary confinement, the prisoner threatened the officer and was subsequently shot in the shoulder. Word of the shooting reached the other segregated prisoners, who attacked several guards with knives that had been taken from the dining room and sharpened. Murphy and the other prison officers managed to quell the outbreak quickly, and the prisoners were taken back to their cells. In his report on the incident, Superintendent of Prisons John L. Whitman remarked that, in contrast with the June 5th riot, the initial disturbance had not spread to the larger population of prisoners who were at work in the yard and were almost certainly "cognizant of the fact that these sixty men were in revolt."[351] Whitman urged Murphy to gather the prisoners not involved in the riot as soon as possible to "commend them. . . for not participating in the trouble," and reward them for their good conduct by restoring certain privileges that had been rescinded following the June riot. Murphy followed Whitman's advice, and allowed the prisoners not involved in the most recent uprising to smoke in their cells during the evening.[352]

Whitman's involvement in the aftermath of the September riot at Joliet was indicative of his management of the Illinois penitentiary system as head of the newly created Division of Prisons. Until 1917, each state prison and reformatory had operated independently, governed by separate boards of commissioners. Under Illinois' new Civil Administrative Code, which went into effect July 1, the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet became part of the Division of Prisons under the Department of Public Welfare, which oversaw all the state's charitable and penal institutions. The state's decision to bring all its prisons under the control of a single administrative body was in keeping with the broader move toward consolidation in the Progressive Era.

The new division's method of classification was also in line with Progressive reforms that veered increasingly toward a reliance on psychology and psychiatry in its search for the roots of criminality. Whereas in the 19th

[347] Dodge, *Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind,* 137.
[348] "Menace," *Chicago Tribune*, June 10, 1917, 15.
[349] "Joliet Prison in Back on Same Old Basis of Irons Rule," *Free Trader-Journal* (Ottawa, IL); Jun 13, 1917, 2.
[350] "Co C. to be Relieved from Duty at Joliet Penitentiary," *Free Trader-Journal* (Ottawa, IL), June 11, 1917, 1, 3.
[351] "Disorder in Prison and Reformatory," *Welfare Bulletin*, Vol. 8 (1917), 69-70.
[352] Ibid.

century, administrator at Joliet gathered basic information on each prisoner's place of birth, occupation before incarceration, and level of education along with physical characteristics like eye color and height, beginning in the late 1910s incoming inmates were subjected to an increasingly involved "diagnostic evaluation" that included a battery of psychological and medical tests, along with detailed social histories. This initial examination was designed to weed out and segregate those prisoners who were physically limited, mentally ill or "feebleminded" before they were placed with the general prison population. Illinois was an early adopter of this "medical model" of classification that would come to dominate prison administration through the post-World War II era. To aid in the gathering and analysis of this data, Illinois created a Division of the State Criminologist, which operated separately from Dr. Herman Adler, a professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, served as head of the division from 1917 to 1929. In addition to aiding in the placement of prisoners within the state's penal system, the division was also responsible for preparing reports and providing recommendations to the state's parole board, which had also been reorganized under the new civil code. [353]

Due to a lack of dedicated clinical facilities and adequate staff, diagnostic evaluations conducted by the Division of the State Criminologist were relatively limited through the 1920s. Psychiatrists were placed at Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Branch (which by the mid-1920s included both Stateville and Joliet prisons), the Illinois State Reformatory at Pontiac, and the State School for Boys at St. Charles, with additional psychiatrists serving the remaining institutions on a rotating basis. Because of the sheer volume of prisoners coming into the system through the 1920s, most evaluations were routine, involving only a simple background questionnaire and group intelligence test. Only those prisoners "presenting extraordinary histories or who reveal any evidence of acute mental or emotional disorders upon admission" were given a more detailed examination by a psychiatrist.[354]

The ultimate goal of the Department of Welfare was to be able to use this classification system in conjunction with specialized institutions that allowed for a more refined segregation of the prison population. This process had already begun in the 19th century, when separate facilities were established for the mentally ill, women prisoners, and juvenile and young offenders. In his first report as prison superintendent, Whitman unveiled plans for the first large-scale expansion of the Illinois Penitentiary system since that period. In addition to the new penitentiary (called Stateville) under construction outside of Joliet, the Division of Prisons planned to establish a state penal farm for misdemeanants at Vandalia and a new women's prison that, unlike the current prison at Joliet, was based on the reformatory model.[355] Amendments to the existing parole laws also permitted more efficient transfer of inmates among penal facilities, giving the Division of Prisons more flexibility in managing the state's prison population as a whole.[356]

While the initial diagnostic evaluation would help to place those inmates who needed special facilities, a separate classification system would be used to track the progress of all inmates who were determined to be physically and mentally capable of rehabilitation. The system that Whitman devised—called the "progressive merit" system—was similar to earlier grading systems used at Joliet under wardens Murphy, Allen, and Zimmer, and designed to "encourage and give opportunity to the inmates to prepare themselves for ultimate freedom through the operation of the Parole Law."[357] The individual classes in the system, as in the past, were tied to overall behavior and industry, although the initial class level and subsequent promotions or demotions

[353] *Twenty-Third Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare 1939-1940* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1940), 697.
[354] *Twelfth Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare 1928-1929* (Springfield, IL: Journal Printing Company, 1930), 56.
[355] The Illinois State Farm at Vandalia was completed by 1921, and the first commitments received August 9, 1923
[356] Illinois Department of Public Welfare, *Report of the Department of Public Welfare July 1, 1917-June 30,1918* (Springfield, IL: Illinois State Journal Co., State Printers, 1918), 242.
[357] Ibid, 243.

were now decided by a group known as "prison staff" consisting of a prison psychologist and psychiatrist, the prison physician, the warden and the deputy warden.[358]What distinguished the progressive merit system from previous systems was that, for the first time, it could be thoroughly implemented within a purpose-built facility—the Stateville Penitentiary—where the arrangement of the physical plant corresponded with various classes within the system. Newly arrived prisoners would begin their sentences with confinement within the prison and under strict prison rules. Prisoners at this initial stage would be housed in single cells within one of the circular cellhouses. As they earned the confidence of prison administrators through good behavior, they would be placed within "positions of trust" within the walls of the penitentiary, in larger shared cells. They would then progress to "cottages" or dormitories outside of the prison walls; each cottage would contain sleeping quarters for up to 15 men, as well as a large, shared living room. The final stage within the progressive merit system was the farm colony, where prisoners would be held under minimal supervision. After a period of time at the farm, inmates would finally be eligible for parole.[359] Whitman envisioned that Stateville would serve as the model for all future penitentiaries in the state, "a modern institution" with 'buildings differing entirely from the old-time cell block construction."[360]

The Opening of Stateville Penitentiary and Merging of Joliet and Stateville

As construction progressed through the 1920s on Stateville, prison administrators continued to make do with the existing facilities at Joliet. Everett Murphy remained as warden of the prison until his death in April 1922. John Whitman, who at that time was still serving as Superintendent of Prisons, was made acting warden. In December, Governor Len Small announced that Elmer E. Greene would be heading the Division of Prisons, making Whitman's temporary appointment to Joliet permanent.[361] Because the new penitentiary at Stateville had been combined with Joliet Penitentiary into a single administrative entity, Whitman served as warden to both prisons through his tenure, as would all subsequent wardens until 1970, when the two units were separated under the administration of the Department of Corrections. Given his deep involvement with Stateville as Superintendent of Prisons, Whitman was likely happy to have the chance to directly administer his progressive merit system at the new prison.

With the unprecedented rise in the state's incarcerated population through the 1920s, the opening of Stateville could not come fast enough. Between the end of World War I and the early 1930s, the United States was gripped by a "crime wave" that saw a dramatic spike in violent crime only partially precipitated by prohibition. Between 1920 and 1925, homicides in Chicago doubled, and its robbery rate in the early 1920s was over one hundred times the rate for London.[362] Sensational news coverage of particularly heinous crimes, such as the St. Valentine's Day Massacre in Chicago and the murder of a bank security guard in Boston by Italian anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti, combined with extensive government-sponsored crime reports detailing the phenomenon, contributed to rising public panic regarding the breakdown of law and order. In Chicago, the trial of University of Chicago students Nathan Leopold and Richard Loeb for the kidnapping and murder of 14-year-old Bobby Franks in 1924—called "the crime of the century"—generated a media firestorm in Illinois and throughout the

[358] Illinois Department of Public Welfare, *Fifth Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare, July 1, 1921 to June 30, 1922* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1922), 226.
[359] "New State Penitentiary Buildings Have Facilities for Prison Reform," *Moline Daily Dispatch*, January 27, 1921, 2.
[360] *Report of the Department of Public Welfare, July 1, 1917-June 30, 1918*, 243.
[361] "E. J. Murphy, Joliet State Warden, Dies," *The Rock Island Argus,* April 10, 1922, 1; "State Plum Tree is Again Shaken on Lake County Man," *Bellevue Daily Advocate*, December 19, 1922, 1.
[362] Jeffry S. Adler, "Less Crime, More Punishment: Violence, Race, and Criminal Justice in Early Twentieth Century America," *Journal of American History*, June 2015, 34.

country. Newspapers reported extensively on the trial and captured their first moments entering Joliet Penitentiary in September 1924.[363]

In an effort to deter rising crime rates, Illinois legislators updated the state's criminal code to raise minimum sentences for violent crimes. In 1919, the state enacted the Sadler Law, which raised the sentence for robbery with a gun—a crime that Warden Everett Murphy noted was "one of the most numerous and dangerous crimes peculiar to Chicago," from one to ten years to ten years to life. Murphy noted in his 1921 warden's report that the number of prisoners sentenced under the Sadler Law nearly doubled between 1920 and 1921.[364] The law, as well as subsequent laws limiting parole for serious offenders, resulted in more long-term prisoners at Joliet, increasing the daily population.

Because most convictions resulting from changes to the criminal code originated in Chicago and other urban centers in the northern part of the state, the Joliet branch of the Illinois State Penitentiary system absorbed much of the increasing number of prisoners. In 1921, the Department of Public Welfare report announced that the current penal population was the largest in the state's history, with over 4,000 inmates incarcerated at Joliet, Pontiac, and Chester. ISP-Joliet alone housed nearly 1,900 inmates; Will Colvin, the Superintendent of Pardons and Paroles, noted, "Were it not for the fact that more than 400 inmates committed to the Joliet Prison are cared for at the new prison, at the State Farm, and at the Vandalia State Farm, it would be necessary at this time to close the Joliet prison to incoming inmates."[365] By 1930, Illinois' total prison population stood at 9,355, nearly half of which (4,167) were contained at Joliet and Stateville. Between 1926 and 1929 alone, the state prison population increased 32 percent. Superintendent of Prisons Frank D. Whipp reported that most of the state's prisons were housing three or four inmates in a single cell.[366]

In addition to the meteoric rise in prison population, executions in the state also increased substantially between 1917 and 1930, peaking in 1921 and again in 1927. A total of sixty-nine prisoners were executed in Illinois in this period.[367] Legislation passed in 1927 changed the method of execution from hanging to electrocution and moved the site of executions from county jails to the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Branch and the Illinois State Penitentiary-Menard Branch. The new law allowed counties with over one million residents to continue to execute those sentenced to death in their courts, making Cook County the state's third execution site.[368] A new electric chair designed by Illinois State Architect William Lindstrom was installed at Joliet in a room near the prison chapel, and inmates awaiting execution were housed in the upper floor of the north segregation/solitary building near the center of the prison complex.[369] The first executions at Joliet took place just after dawn on December 15, 1928. Three men--Dominick Bresette, Claude Clark, and John Brown—who had been sentenced to death for the murder of Waukegan farmer William Beck were electrocuted one after the other within a span of 29 minutes. Unlike previous executions at county courthouses, which had often drawn large crowds, only the twelve jurors who had found the men guilty and three reporters were allowed to witness the executions.[370] Joliet

[363] "We'll Blow Up Jail, Says Phone to Sheriff," *The Dispatch* (Moline, IL) September 11, 1924, 1; "Killers in 'Solitary' Cells," *Chicago Tribune*, September 12, 1924, 1.
[364] *Fifth Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare*, 167.
[365] Ibid, 45.
[366] Illinois Department of Public Welfare, *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare, July 1, 1929-June 30, 1930* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1930), 19.
[367] Ibid, 368.
[368] Jess Maghan, "Capital Punishment," Encyclopedia of Illinois website (accessed March 5, 2023 at http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/209.html).
[369] "Illinois' New Electric Chair," *The Lanark Gazette*, November 16, 1927, 4.
[370] "Three Electrocuted at Joliet Prison," *The Times* (Streator, IL), December 15, 1928, 1.

remained as a site of electrocutions until the mid-1940s, when a new segregation building with execution chamber was constructed at Stateville.[371]

The punitive measures taken to curb the crime wave of the 1920s strained state penitentiary systems across the country. A report on penal institutions in the United States compiled by the Wickersham Commission in 1931 depicted an epidemic of overcrowding in the country's prisons, which was exacerbated by the presence of so many aging, Auburn-style facilities like Joliet. The commission reported Federal census bureau estimates that showed prisons and reformatories were operating at nearly 20% over original capacity in 1927; in that year, Michigan's prisons were at 78.6% over capacity, and California was at 62.2%.[372]

In December 1924, the Illinois State Penitentiary-Stateville was opened to receive prisoners. By August 1925, three of the circular cellhouses, one shop, the mess hall and kitchen, the solitary building, the powerhouse, and the receiving station had been completed, as had the wall encircling the site. Construction on the fourth cell house was in progress. [373] The alarming rise in the prison population, as well as an eagerness to have the complex completed, led the Department of Public Welfare to substitute the remaining unbuilt circular cellhouses with a massive Auburn-style cellblock containing 1,100 cells.[374] Although Stateville was originally meant to replace Joliet, by the late 1920s, the Department of Public Welfare realized that the old prison could temporarily serve as a release valve for new one. While it was clear that Joliet needed to be kept open to relieve crowding at Stateville, what was less certain was how the state's classification and progressive merit system would be administered there. Auburn-style prisons like Joliet did not lend themselves effectively to segregation—inmates could theoretically be separated on various tiers within the cellhouses, but the congregate nature of the rest of the prison complex rendered this practice largely ineffectual. With a newly completed, $5 million facility just a few miles away, substantially improving Joliet was out of the question; instead, prison officials opted to use the old facility as the first step within Whitman's progressive merit system, reserving its cellblocks for newly-arrive inmates or "habitual criminals" considered incapable of reform.

With Stateville fully operation by the mid-1920s, the Division of Prisons began the process of moving certain operations and industries away from Joliet to the new penitentiary. All incoming prisoners to both units of the Illinois State Penitentiary were now processed at Stateville, and the tailor shop and show factory had been moved there by 1925.[375] The Mental Health Office, which had been established at Joliet in 1920 and overseen by a full-time resident psychiatrist, was moved to Stateville in 1926.[376] The hospital unit was also moved from Joliet to Stateville, although the Joliet hospital building would later be refurnished and supplied with a new X-ray machine. Joliet prisoners continued work at the quarry providing crushed stone for roadwork, as well as in the fibre factory and furniture factory. In some ways the merging of Joliet with Stateville did result in improvement to overall quality of life for Joliet, in no small part because now there was a more modern institution within striking distance with expanded departments, some of which could be shared with Joliet inmates. Special medical staff, including dentists, pathologists, and ear, nose, and throat surgeons were shared among Stateville, Joliet, and the Illinois Women's Prison through the early 1930s.[377]

[371] "Plans New 'Club' at Stateville," *Journal Gazette* (Mattoon, IL), October 20, 1945, 3.
[372] National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, *Report on Penal Institutions Probation and Parole* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1931), 11.
[373] Illinois Prison Inquiry Commission, *The Prison System in Illinois* (Springfield, 1937), 133.
[374] Illinois Department of Public Welfare, *Twelfth Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare, July 1, 1928 to June 30, 1929* (Springfield, IL: Illinois Department of Public Welfare, 1929), 239.
[375] Illinois Department of Public Welfare, *Eighth Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare, July 1,1924 to June 30,1925* (Springfield, IL: Illinois State of Illinois, 1925), 16.
[376] Illinois Department of Public Welfare, *Twenty-Third Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare, July 1, 1939 to June 30, 1940* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1940), 695.
[377] *Eighth Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare,* 257-258.

Prison Life and the Prison Population at Joliet in the Early 20th Century

For prisoners lucky enough to be transferred or promoted to the modern facilities at Stateville, daily routine while incarcerated could be substantially different than that of the average prisoner in the 19th century, particularly in sections like the honor farm that allowed considerably more freedom than the cell houses. For those left at Joliet, however, little had changed. Nathan Leopold's memoir, *Life Plus 99 Years,* published around the time of his parole in 1958, gives a detailed view into the workings of both Joliet and Stateville penitentiaries through the 1920s and 1930s. Leopold and his partner in crime, Richard Loeb, were received at Joliet in September 1924, just before Stateville was officially opened.

Leopold's recounting of his first few months at Joliet are remarkably like those of prisoners from decades before. New inmates were still received in the prison in the same manner, given baths, haircuts, and rough institutional clothing, and immediately put to work making rattan furniture or breaking rocks in the quarry. The daily routine also remained essentially the same. Every morning, prisoners made the "bucket run" to empty their waste buckets.[378] They marched to and from work assignments and spent their days weaving chair bottoms, cutting stone, cleaning up the prison yard, or serving as clerks in the administrative offices. Instead of eating in their cells as 19th-century inmates had, prisoners now ate within the enormous dining hall completed in 1903, sitting at rows of narrow wooden tables facing a single direction to discourage socializing. By the time Leopold arrived at Joliet, the prison bathtubs had also been replaced with showers, and each inmate was given three minutes to soap up and rinse off during their weekly shower.[379] The long period of confinement between the end of work on Saturday afternoon and Monday morning still served as the low point of most prisoners' week, and, although most prisoners did not have any strong religious affiliation, many still attended chapel services just to relieve the weekend monotony. Inmates who violated the rules or were disruptive were sent to the solitary cells near the center of the yard, where they stood shackled to the door of the cell during the day and fed a diet of bread and water.

Because the prisoners at Joliet were in the lowest ranks of the progressive merit system, privileges were limited. Unlike at Stateville, where men were given two hours of recreation time in the yard every week, freedom of the yard was still only granted to Joliet prisoners on the Fourth of July. More recreational opportunities were granted by the 1930s by Warden Henry C. Hill. Under Hill's tenure, a new athletic field was established at the base of the exhausted quarry across Collins Street, and a radio system and new motion picture equipment that allowed for the screening of talking pictures were installed at both Joliet and Stateville. Hill also established Joliet's first commissary where prisoners could buy pre-rolled cigarettes, food, and other sundries. [380] By 1932, a boxing training program had been established, with 50 inmates training in the sport.[381]

What truly made the average prisoner's experience at Joliet through the early 20th century so like that of his 19th-century counterpart was the antiquated physical plant itself. The tiny interior cells, cramped prison yard, and archaic workshops—only one of which by the 1920s had running water—along with the lack of even basic conveniences made life at Joliet difficult for most prisoners, especially when compared with the gleaming new facility a few miles away.[382]

[378] Nathan F. Leopold, Jr., *Life Plus 99 Years* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1958), 97.
[379] Ibid,109.
[380] *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare*, 331-334.
[381] "Discipline Runs Hard to Soft in Joliet Prisons," *Chicago Tribune*, December 23, 1932. 4.
[382] *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare*, 184.

In addition to describing the day-to-day routine at ISP-Joliet in the early 20th century, Leopold's memoir also shed light on the actual workings of Whitman's progressive merit system within Joliet. Leopold recalled that "On paper the system looks reasonable and workable; in practice it did not work at all."[383] That the system did not operate as intended should not be surprising, given that most of the work of applying it landed on prison guards and keepers, who were already overworked and underpaid. While giving demerits to prisoners for disobeying the rules was relatively straightforward, grading hundreds of men in each shop on their workmanship and effort every month proved to be an inconvenience for guards who were also on constant watch for any disturbance to prison discipline. Leopold wrote that, while serving as a clerk at the shoe shop in Stateville, the keeper at the shop delegated the task of grading the prisoners to him. "My instructions," he explained, "were to grade every man 49 for workmanship and effort and 49 for conduct every month unless he had been punished by being sent to 'the hole'. . . Obviously, since every man received the same grade, regardless of whether he held a relatively important job and applied himself diligently or whether he slipped by. . .there was. . .no possibility of earning advancement."[384] Despite being lauded by Whitman and other officials as a more "scientific" system of classification, moving up within the progressive merit system still depended largely the largesse of the warden and other prison officials.

Despite the arbitrary nature of the progressive merit system at Joliet, Leopold managed to secure transfer to the new prison at Stateville in mid-1925, just after the prison had begun accepting inmates. With its larger, more brightly lit cells, modern prison shops, cafeteria-style dining room, and extensive recreation yards, Stateville proved to be a completely different experience. Recalling his first day at Stateville, Leopold wrote, "I decided that there was such a tremendous difference between the two prisons that I would rather serve a year at Stateville than six months at Joliet."[385]

When he was transferred back to Joliet from Stateville in 1930 for violating prison rules, Leopold contemplated suicide:

> The world looked pretty black, far blacker than it had when I first came to prison. Then I had had no standard of comparison; if this was what prison was like, I'd simply have to make the best of it. But now I knew better. I had seen with my own eyes how much more pleasant even prison could be and I knew that I could never again be satisfied with this. How I longed for my nice, clean, airy cell at Stateville. I had never thought I could be homesick for prison, but that night and every endless day I was to spend at the old prison my heart ached for Stateville. It was all I could think of.[386]

Nathan Leopold, a young university student from a privileged background, was not the typical prisoner at Joliet. As in the 19th century, the prison population was largely made up of young, working-class men. Most were serving sentences for burglary, robbery, or larceny. The percentage of foreign-born inmates in Joliet's population had steadily declined through the early 20th century, although the prison still held more immigrant inmates than the downstate prisons at Menard and Pontiac. In 1925, approximately 15% of the state's prisoners were foreign-born, which was slightly lower than the percentage of immigrants within the state's population.[387] By the 1940s, the percentage of foreign-born prisoners in Illinois was only two percent, compared to eleven percent of the state population.[388]

[383] Leopold, *Life Plus 99 Years,* 92.
[384] Ibid.
[385] Ibid, 135.
[386] Ibid, 184.
[387] *Eighth Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare*, 336.
[388] Dodge, *Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind*, 115.

Although the overall percentage of Black men in the prison population remained relatively stable through the early 20th century, they continued to be overrepresented when compared to the state population. Between 1900 and 1930, roughly 20% of the state's prisoners were Black, while the state's population grew from approximately two percent to six percent African American.[389]

Outside of Joliet's walls, Illinois remained a hostile place for African Americans in the first half of the 20th century. The First Great Migration brought a wave of Black southerners into Chicago and other Northern and Midwestern cities in the 1910s, 20s, and 30s. African Americans, fleeing the legal segregation and violence of Jim Crow in the South, moved in droves to Chicago in search of industrial employment and better living conditions. Between 1910 and 1920, over 50,000 African Americans moved to the city.[390] Although many found work and housing, they also faced growing resentment from the city's White and immigrant residents. Black residents attempting to find better housing outside of the city's overcrowded "Black Belt" were met with open hostility and violence, and many industries refused to hire African Americans. Racial tensions exploded in the "Red Summer" of 1919, when dozens of riots broke out throughout the country. In Chicago, the murder of a young Black man for swimming near a beach along Lake Michigan that was unofficially reserved for Whites triggered an explosion of violence that left 23 African Americans dead and over 1,000 Black families homeless.[391]

Outside of Chicago, the racial discrimination and violence under which African Americans had lived in the 19th century continued through the early 20th century, especially in the southern part of the state. Between the end of the Civil War and World War II, approximately 56 lynchings took place in Illinois, predominately in southern counties.[392] In Cairo, Illinois, thousands attended the lynching of William "Froggie" James, a Black man accused of the rape and murder of Anna Pelley in 1909. The state also contained at least 219 "sundown" towns, where African Americans were excluded using formal and informal means. Citizens of Anna Illinois, the hometown of Anna Pelley, violently expelled its Black residents soon after William James was lynched.[393]

In the wake of Chicago's 1919 riot, Illinois Governor Frank Lowden authorized the formation of a Commission on Race Relations, consisting of six Black and six White citizens appointed by the governor to "study and report upon the broad question of the relations between the races."[394] The commission submitted a report of its findings, entitled *The Negro in Chicago: A Study on Race Relations and a Race Riot*, to Governor Lowden on January 1, 1921. Largely attributed to Charles S. Johnson, a 26-year-old Black graduate student at the University of Chicago's Department of Sociology who served as the commission's associate executive secretary, *The Negro in Chicago* provides a detailed account of the riot and an exhaustive study of the social, economic, and cultural conditions of African Americans in the city, as well as a probing investigation into its race relations.[395] The commission's investigation of the intersection of Chicago's Black community with the criminal justice system, although somewhat hampered by a lack of reliable statistical information from the

[389] Ibid, 117.
[390] "Chicago Race Riot of 1919," Encyclopedia Britannica Website. https://www.britannica.com/event/Chicago-Race-Riot-of-1919.
[391] Stanley B. Norvell and William M. Tuttle, Jr. "Views of a Negro During 'The Red Summer' of 1919," *The Journal of Negro History*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (July 1966), 209-210.
[392] Erick Johnson, "Illinois Experienced More Lynchings Than Most Midwestern States," The Crusader Newspaper Group website, (accessed March 1, 2023 at https://chicagocrusader.com/illinois-experienced-more-lynchings-than-most-midwestern-states/).
[393] James W. Lowen, "Sundown Towns and Counties: Racial Exclusion in the South," *Southern Cultures,* Vol. 15, No. 1 (Spring, 2009), 23, 25.
[394] The Commission on Chicago Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago: A Study of Race Relations and a Race Riot* (University of Chicago Press, 1922), xvi.
[395] Naomi Farber, "Charles S. Johnson's 'The Negro in Chicago,'" *The American Sociologist*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (Fall, 1995), 79.

city's police departments, nonetheless illustrates some of the discrimination African Americans encountered from law enforcement and the courts. In its examination of police and court records and in testimony from policemen and judges, the commission found that Black Chicagoans were more likely to be arrested for breaking the law than Whites, and they were more likely to be "mugged" by the city's Identification Bureau, which photographed and fingerprinted citizens who had been arrested. Statistics showed that African Americans who were convicted of crimes received much longer sentences than their White counterparts, and fewer paroles. African Americans on parole were also arrested, interrogated, and harassed more often than White parolees, "even while on legitimate business."[396]

John L. Whitman, who was then serving as Superintendent of Prisons, testified to the commission on the experiences of Black and White parolees, providing a surprisingly sympathetic and astute assessment of the discrimination that African Americans faced:

> If there is a consistent effort being made to prepare inmates of prison for good citizenship when they are released, the colored man responds as readily as the white, but it is a question in my mind whether the colored man can profit as much by it when he gets out as the white man can. That however, is not due to a natural inclination; perhaps his opportunities on the outside are not as good. . . . I think if the reports of those on parole from the state institutions now are closely studied, it will be found that they have more difficulties to surmount on the outside than the whites. If you assumed the white and colored ex-convicts on a par when they get out, the colored ex-convict would find it more difficult to lead the 'straight and narrow'—on account of the forces set against him he is more greatly handicapped.[397]

Whitman also provided information on the treatment and conduct of Black inmates in the state's prisons. He testified that at Joliet, as well as Menard, Pontiac, and the State Hospital for the Criminal Insane at Chester, "in no cases were Negro and White prisoners kept in the same cells. Mr. Whitman stated that this arrangement is preferred by both Whites and Negroes. Negro and White prisoners are not segregated in separate cell sections but occupy adjoining cells in the same block."[398] Whitman was quick to point out that, while the cellhouses at Joliet and other prisons in the state were segregated, inmates were together in all other areas, working in the same shops, and eating and attending worship services and assemblies together. Whitman testified that the prisoners all received the same food, clothing, types of jobs, and discipline, and that Black and White prisoners "mingled without distinction, and that the result had been satisfactory."[399]

Whitman's testimony illustrates that, at least in some ways, Black prisoners at Joliet in the early 20th century likely experienced less overt discrimination in prison than in larger society. Economic disparities were largely erased within the walls of the penitentiary, and the "culture of the convict" placed more value on being tough or wily than on racial hierarchy. Although there were almost certainly instances of prejudice and discrimination from both White inmates and prison officers, both Black and White prisoners shared the loss of liberty and control that marked the experience of all incarcerated people.

The Joliet Prison Riot of March 14, 1931

In the early years of Leopold's time at Joliet-Stateville, the Department of Public Welfare was rocked by a scandal sparked by the murder of Deputy Warden Peter Klein at Stateville, which revealed that a "parole mill" had been operating inside Stateville and Joliet prisons. Public Welfare Director Chauncy H. Jenkins and Parole

[396] The Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro In Chicago: A Study of Race Relations and a Race Riot,* 330, 334-336.
[397] Ibid, 337.
[398] Ibid, 338-339.
[399] Ibid.

Board Chairman William Colvin were forced to resign, as was Warden John Whitman. Although Whitman was not directly linked to the operation of the parole mill, the Will County grand jury connected his operation of the prison under the progressive merit system with the wider scandal.[400] Whitman was replaced by Prison Superintendent Elmer J. Greene, former sheriff of Lake County. It was widely acknowledged that Greene's appointment had been political quid pro quo for helping Governor Small avoid a conviction for diverting public funds for personal use.[401] Leopold wrote that Greene "believed in confining himself to the business and external activities of the institution and leaving the internal management entirely in the hands of the deputy warden. He almost never came inside the walls; the inmates hardly ever saw him."[402]

Hinton G. Clabaugh was picked as the new head of the state's parole board, and he immediately authorized an investigation into Illinois' parole system. The subsequent report roundly criticized the pervasive influence of politics both the parole board and penitentiary administrators and recommended sweeping changes to the state's parole practices. Among the changes made to the system after the parole scandal was a revision in communicating probable sentence length under the indeterminate sentencing law. Under the previous system, each prisoner had received a ticket that indicated exactly how much time he was required to serve (called his "setting"); under the new system, tickets were marked "continued without prejudice," and prisoners now had no idea what their earliest release date might be. This change "caused a great deal of confusion among prisoners and a great deal of dissatisfaction."[403]

The Clabaugh Report also revealed that, despite the promise of the new prison and classification system instituted at Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Branch, the administration of the rehabilitative program at the Joliet and Stateville units was far from ideal. The commission clearly stated that, although official reports showed a majority of inmates engaged in work, in reality there was widespread idleness at both Stateville and Joliet—many of the jobs assigned to prisoners in the workshops were "vain assignments, without actual labor," and that maintenance jobs were similarly "over-manned and much soldiering on the job exists."[404] Educational programming at Joliet was also deemed inadequate—the prison school was staffed mostly by inmates with no experience in teaching, and little instruction was provided beyond the fourth grade. Although the library was cited as an asset to the prison, no books had been added to its 48,000 volumes within the past seven years.[405]

The Clabaugh Commission, like Leopold, had also found that discipline and the administration of the progressive merit system was inconsistent at best. Prisoners were not given a copy of the rules of the prison after their first meeting with the warden, and largely had to rely on other inmates to "show them the ropes." The method of reporting infractions was rudimentary and sometimes chaotic, and prisoners rarely ever had the chance to respond in their hearings with the deputy warden. One of the investigators relayed a hearing with a first-time prisoner:

> A first offender recently received at the prison was reported in writing to have cut the sleeves out of his undershirt. He was brought before the deputy's court, the charge read to him and as he sat there, apparently frightened, the deputy asked him 'Didn't I read the rules of the prison to you when you came in?' He said 'Yes, sir.' And he was sent to solitary confinement.[406]

[400] "Fire Whitman, Ban Honor Plan, G. Jury Urges," *Carbondale Free Press*, May 26, 1926, 1.
[401] James B. Jacobs, *Stateville: The Penitentiary in Mass Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 20.
[402] Leopold, *Life Plus 99 Years,* 164.
[403] Ibid, 166.
[404] Committee on the Study of the Workings of the Indeterminate Sentence Law and of Parole in the State of Illinois, (C. Landesco, J. Harno, A. James, E.W. Burgess, Bruce Alexander), *Workings of the Indeterminate Sentence Law and Parole System in Illinois: A Report to the Honorable Hinton G. Clabaugh* (Chicago, 1928), 154.
[405] Ibid, 159-160.
[406] Ibid, 165.

In the wake of the parole scandal, Governor Len Small was defeated in the infamous Republican "Pineapple Primary" by Louis L. Emmerson, who was subsequently elected governor in 1928. Emmerson appointed Major Henry C. Hill to replace Elmer Greene as warden of Joliet and Stateville. Although he had no previous experience in prison administration, Hill's military background served him well in his new position, and he was generally well-regarded by Joliet's inmates. Leopold remembered Hill as "a natural leader and true humanitarian."[407] Hill managed Joliet with the dual aim of preventing escapes and uprising while allowing as much freedom as was reasonably possible to maintain discipline. His instruction to the prison guard was "if a convict shows his head over the wall, shoot it off. But inside the prison give the men all the freedom reasonably possible. Their punishment is the loss of their liberty. They are not to be punished further unless their conduct makes it necessary."[408]

In early 1931, a series of incidents, along with rising tensions around the policies of the new parole board, culminated in a riot at Joliet on March 14. The most significant of these precipitating events was the "Washington's Birthday Massacre" on February 22. Prison guards were alerted to a plot involving three prisoners who planned to escape by climbing a low point in the prison wall at the barber shop. Instead of securing the prisoners to prevent their escape, the guards waited until the prisoners had scaled the wall and then shot and killed all three men. Warden Hill was away from the prison that night undergoing surgery at Michael Reese Hospital in Chicago, and Superintendent of Prisons Frank D. Whipp, who was staying in the warden's residence, had not been informed of the plot.[409]

Word of the massacre, which was witnessed by six prisoners in the hospital, quickly spread through Joliet, and in the following days several prisoners set a series of fires in the workshops. Although these prisoners were removed to Stateville, tensions ran high at Joliet through the end of the month. On Saturday, March 14, prisoners started to riot in the dining room and moved through to the prison bakeshop. Two prisoners were killed by guards as they attempted to gain control. A second riot at Stateville three days later destroyed several buildings and required four companies of National Guardsmen to quell.[410] Warden Hill blamed the Joliet riot on prison chaplain George L. Whitmeyer, claiming that Whitmeyer had not been censoring letters to the convicts and that he was later heard saying to inmates, "What the prison needs is a good riot."[411] Whitmeyer resigned, but he denied Hill's charges, claiming that he was being punished for revealing the circumstances surrounding the Washington's Birthday Massacre.

Months before the Joliet and Stateville riots, Superintendent of Prisons Frank Whipp had written in his annual report that the riots in other prisons had served as "an awakening to our citizens. We are not getting improvements in our institutions. These places have been sadly and woefully neglected by our people who seemed contented to have the convicts locked up. They have put the whole question out of mind, but they now realize that the destruction of life and public property can only be avoided by giving the authorities facilities for carrying on with safety to all."[412]

The Illinois Women's Prison in the Early 20th Century

[407] Leopold, 181.
[408] Ibid.
[409] Ibid, 218-219.
[410] "Three Buildings Burned at Loss of $300,000," *Carbondale Free Press*, March 19, 1931, 1.
[411] "Bare Foiled Plot for an Outbreak at New Prison," *Chicago Tribune*, March 17, 1931, 9.
[412] *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare*, 22.

The fact that the female inmates of the Illinois Women's Prison, located a stone's throw from the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet, were relatively unaffected by the rioting that took place there in March 1931 underscores the complete separation that existed between the two institutions during the early 20th century. In stark contrast to the female inmates who had been sequestered on the top floor of Joliet's administration building through most of the 19th century, prisoners at the Illinois Women's Prison now lived and worked within a separate facility complete with cellhouses, workshops, prison yard, and a staff of matrons and assistant matrons to maintain discipline. Control of the prison, however, remained under the warden of Joliet, even if most of the day-to-day operations of the prison were left to the discretion of the prison matron. Women prisoners were bound to the same rules and regulations as the male prisoners at Joliet, and the consistent routine of labor and isolation remained in place at the Illinois Women's Prison through the early 20th century. The reports of the commissioners and wardens through the 1910s continued to remain largely silent on the women's prison, and no separate matron's reports were required by law until the late 1910s.

In an interview to the *Joliet Prison Post* on the eve of her retirement, long-serving matron Maria S. Madden outlined the rhythms of the prisoners' lives, noting their work at the prison's laundry on the first floor of the cell house, and how each of their cells was marked by "the woman's touch in the shape of decorations of various kinds." She detailed how they used their recreation time to "dance upon the platform [in the prison yard], and they run, jump and play baseball with soft balls and light bats." In describing the prison, Madden remarked that it was "more like a boarding school. . .except for the fact that the women work instead of study." Madden also expressed sympathy for those inmates who had no friends or family to write or visit them, saying "I have never been able to comprehend how people can be cruel enough to desert those of their own flesh and blood who violate the law."[413] Frances Cowley, the first assistant matron who temporarily replaced Madden after her retirement in May 1914, also took a sympathetic view of the female prisoners, claiming that "men, more than anything else, cause women to be imprisoned in penal institutions." [414]

Like ISP-Joliet, the women's prison was also subject to Progressive-Era reform efforts. In August 1914, Warden Edmund Allen selected Grace Fuller, a well-known domestic science instructor and committed prison reformer, to head the women's prison at Joliet. College-educated and "independently wealthy," Fuller's appointed realized "a lifelong dream in her work with women criminals in the penitentiary."[415] In keeping with her training and background, Fuller implemented a full domestic science program that included classes in sewing, baking, dressmaking, and laundry work. She had a series of eight kitchen stations complete with ranges and moveable cabinets installed in one of the workshops for cooking classes and instructed the inmates herself.[416] Like other Progressive reformers, Fuller sought to instill middle class values into the women in her charge. Although Fuller claimed that her instruction would help to "make the life of the women here more normal" and give them "self-supporting work when they shall leave," it was unlikely that the prisoners, most of whom were working class, would be able to enter a life of domesticity after their release.[417]

The 1917 Civil Administrative Code officially placed administration of the prison, which was renamed the Illinois Women's Prison, outside of the main prison at Joliet and into the hands of a female superintendent. Grace Fuller continued as Superintendent of the prison until 1921, when a series of escapes and a change in administration forced her resignation. She was replaced by C. Elinor Rulien of Joliet, a former high school principal and widow. Like the matrons before her, Rulien maintained a sympathetic view of the female

[413] "Miss Maria S. Madden," *The Joliet Prison Post*, February 1, 1914, 56-57.
[414] Dodge, *Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind,* 134.
[415] "To Revise Penal System," *The Times* (Streator, IL), August 21, 1914, 7.
[416] Ibid, 135.
[417] "The New Superintendent of Matrons and the New Methods at the Women's Prison," *Joliet Prison Post,* September 1, 1914, 449.

prisoners and their low status in society. In her 1925 report, she emphasized the need to support female parolees, who "have a hard battle to fight. They have to live down the disgrace of their conviction and meet the curious glances and cold shoulder of the unsympathetic public. Unless they have family or friends to take care of them, they easily become lonely and discouraged."[418] During her tenure as superintendent, Rulien sought to bring modest improvements to the female inmates' lives. She expanded the prison garden begun by Fuller, established the prison's first permanent school, and secured a physical education director for the institution.[419]

Like Warden John Whitman, Rulien was swept up in the 1926 investigation of the prison and accused of gross mismanagement and lax discipline. Although the Will County grand jury recommended her dismissal, she remained at the Illinois Women's Prison until 1929, when she was fired as part of the routine political turnover that accompanied every change in the governor's office. When they learned of her dismissal, all 116 prisoners signed a farewell message to her that was printed in the *Joliet Evening Herald*, expressing their gratitude for her service, calling Rulien "kindness personified." The main author of the letter was a young Black woman named Virginia Foster, who had been incarcerated several times for theft and had a history of resisting the discipline imposed on her at The Illinois Women's Prison. Foster was perhaps thinking of her own experience with Rulien when she wrote "Like a mother you forgave us time after time, seeing good even in the worst of us."[420]

Rulien's departure coincided with an alarming rise in the number of female inmates at the Illinois Women's Prison, the result of longer sentences served by the parole board. The expanded parole system also brought more female (and male) parole violators back to prison. By the time Rulien was replaced by Bertha Finnegan in 1929, the number of female prisoners had risen to 120, requiring double-celling for the first time in the institution's history.[421] Although the congregate design of the prison (like that of the men's prison across the street) made segregating the female prison population under the progressive merit system difficult, it was likely made almost impossible by overcrowding.

Although the Department of Public Welfare had been recommending the construction of a new institution for incarcerated women based on the reformatory model since the late 1910s, the General Assembly had consistently resisted funding the project. Prison reformers and various women's clubs in Illinois had generally focused their attention more on the treatment of female misdemeanants continually brought before the courts on minor charges of immorality, petty larceny, and disorderly conduct. But in the mid-1920s, they shifted their focus to getting the women's reformatory constructed, forming the Committee for a State Reformatory for Women in 1926. The committee argued that the need for a reformatory for women was dire, claiming that the outdated Auburn-style arrangement of the Illinois Women's Prison forced the comingling of the "hardened" female criminal with younger, first-time offenders and hindered effective rehabilitation of the women incarcerated there.[422]

Through constant lobbying, the committee succeeded in securing a $1.1 million appropriation for the new institution in 1929. The new Oakdale Reformatory, located just outside of Dwight, Illinois, was completed by mid-1931.[423] The 160-acre complex featured a series of eight stone "cottages," each with fourteen single rooms and a living room, dining room, and sun porch. A multi-purpose building christened "Jane Addams Hall" served as the reformatory's school, chape, and recreation center. An industrial laundry, sewing factory, and 50-acre

[418] *Eighth Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare, 1924-1925*, 259.
[419] Illinois Department of Public Welfare, *Ninth Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare, July 1,1925 to June 30,1296* (Springfield, IL: Illinois Department of Public Welfare, 1926), 276.
[420] Dodge, *Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind*, 141.
[421] Ibid, 149-150
[422] Ibid.
[423] Ibid.

farm provided work for the inmates. At the formal dedication of the institution in November, Governor Emmerson boasted that Oakdale was "in direct contrast to the layman's conventional ideas of a prison."[424]

In mid-1931, Superintendent of Prisons Frank D. Whipp announced plans to convert the Illinois Women's Prison for use as a ward for "mentally defective" inmates at Joliet.[425] In anticipation of the transfer of female prisoners from the women's prison to Oakdale, a new "medium security" cellblock was constructed at the new reformatory.[426] Oakdale Superintendent Helen H. Hazard explained the cellblock was necessary to segregate the "hardened felons" of the old women's prison who "had been impregnated with prison practices and prison traditions."[427]

The Establishment of the Northern Diagnostic Depot at Joliet

The conversion of the women's prison for use by the Joliet unit of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Branch was part of a larger program of expansion within the Division of Prisons spurred by the continued rise in the prison population in the early 1930s. Between 1930 and 1932, the Department of Public Welfare constructed new cellblocks at Pontiac, Stateville, and Menard prisons; new dormitory buildings, each accommodating at least 100 prisoners, were also constructed on the farms at Stateville and Menard, and five dormitory buildings were constructed on the State Farm at Vandalia.[428] In its 1931 annual report, the department announced that plans had also been prepared for a group of "medium security" buildings on state-owned land east of the former women's prison at Joliet the could accommodate an additional 600 "minor or less hardened inmates" at the institution.[429] With these new buildings and the proposed segregation unit within the women's prison building, Joliet Penitentiary could evolve from being an annex to Stateville to a fully-functioning penal unit capable of segregating various classes of inmates.

Joliet's planned expansion was never constructed. The economic effects of the Great Depression necessitated severe budget restrictions across all departments within state government, and the Department of Public Welfare chose to prioritize construction of new cellhouses and dormitories at its other state penitentiaries. In 1932, the department also announced plans to modernize and renovate many of the existing 19th century stone cellblocks at both Menard and Joliet. Again, budget conscious administrators chose to renovate the 19th-century cellhouses at Menard first. Director of the Department of Public Welfare Rodney Brandon expressed his hope that, by the time renovations at Menard were complete, the population increases in the penitentiary system would have slowed sufficiently to allow the department to finally abandon Joliet.[430]

In June of 1932, Major Henry C. Hill left Joliet-Stateville to serve as warden of the newly constructed federal penitentiary at Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. In a cost-saving measure, Superintendent of Prisons Frank D. Whipp agreed to take over Hill's post until a change of administration. In his first address to the prisoners, Whipp stated that, under his tenure, they would be treated as "red blooded he-men, not sissies or special pets."[431] The day-to-day operation of Joliet was delegated to Second Assistant Warden Edward M. Stubblefield, a former sheriff of Macoupin County who had been appointed soon after the riots of 1931.

[424] Ruth Cowan, "State Makes Progress in Care of its Unfortunate," *The Dispatch* (Moline, IL), November 19, 1931, 1.
[425] "Seek to Have All Deaths Carried Out in Menard Chamber," *Clinton Daily Journal and Public* (Clinton, IL), June 2, 1931, 5.
[426] *Farmer City Journal*, September 3, 1931, 2.
[427] Dodge, *Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind*, 154.
[428] *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare,* 19-20; "New Buildings at State Penal Farm Nearly Completed," *Herald and Review* (Decatur, IL), May 17, 1931, 16.
[429] *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare,* 19-20.
[430] "Reformatory is Inspected by State Officials," *Bellevue Daily Advocate*, May 25, 1932, 10.
[431] "New Warden of Joliet Prison Takes Command," *The Edwardsville Intelligencer*, July 1, 1932, 3.

Through Whipp's tenure as warden of Stateville and Joliet, the Illinois penitentiary system continued to struggle with the dual problems of overcrowding and idleness. Additional legislation enacted by the Illinois legislature in response to the Hawes-Cooper Convict Labor Act of 1929 banned all sales of prison-made goods on the open market, and additional statutes had limited the use of prison labor in road building. The Department of Public Welfare scrambled to adjust to this new reality amid unprecedented prison population levels.[432] Industrial superintendents for Joliet-Stateville, Menard and Pontiac convened in late 1931 and early 1932 to discuss industries that could be retained or introduced in accordance with the new law.[433] Prisoners were put to work landscaping the extensive prison yards at Stateville while a new soap and license plate factories were established, and a new textile factory was planned for Joliet.[434] Warden Whipp, although admitting that prison labor shouldn't compete with free labor in the middle of a world-wide depression, still warned that unless new prison industries were established quickly "every day will be Sunday for the convicts and every day will be hell for the warden and his assistants," asserting that "proper control of these institutions is almost impossible without industry."[435]

After the inauguration of Henry Horner as governor in 1933, the Department of Public Welfare was reorganized to further centralize the operations of the state's penal system and integrate the work of the Division of the State Criminologist more fully into the classification and segregation of its inmates. A series of laws passed by the legislature (effective July 1, 1933) consolidated the separate state penitentiaries under the umbrella of "the Illinois State Penitentiary," and shifted the responsibility of assigning convicted offenders to various institutions within the penitentiary system from the courts to the Department of Public Welfare.[436] Under the new legislation, all inmates entering the Illinois State Penitentiary would begin their sentences at one of two diagnostic depots—the Northern Diagnostic Depot at Joliet or the Southern Diagnostic Depot at Menard—where they would undergo a 21-day period of examination by staff psychiatrists, psychologists, and sociologists. The new legislation also refined the existing roles of each prison within the Illinois penitentiary system that had been planned in earlier statutes. Instead of holding both juveniles and young offenders, Pontiac now held only young adults under the age of 21.[437] Mentally ill or unstable prisoners were transferred to a new Psychiatric Division at Menard. The Illinois Asylum for Insane Criminals at Menard was renamed the Illinois Security Hospital and held mentally ill or "feebleminded" men with criminal characteristics who had been committed directly from the courts or transferred from other state hospitals.[438] Stateville and Menard (outside of its Psychiatric Division and Security Hospital) were reserved for adult offenders who were largely considered "improvable," and Joliet housed the recidivists or those deemed "unimprovable."[439] Although newspapers heralded the diagnostic depots as an innovation within Illinois' prison system, it was in fact an expansion of policies already established with the 1917 Classification Act. However, by requiring that every new inmate undergo examination and classification before commitment, and by establishing separate facilities for this

[432] Illinois Department of Public Welfare, *Annual Reports of the Department of Public Welfare: Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1935), 304.
[433] "Will Standardize Prison Products," *Belvidere Daily Republican*, August 5, 1931, 4.
[434] "Bad Convicts Out to Work on Flowers," *The Champaign News-Gazette*, August 21, 1932, 16; "5,000 Well Fed Joliet Convicts Offer a Problem," *Chicago Tribune*, December 22, 1932, 5; *Chicago Tribune*, December 23, 1932, 4.
[435] "Illinois' Prison Population," *The Decatur Daily Review,* October 6, 1932, 6.
[436] W. Abraham Goldberg, "Illinois Penitentiary and Related Laws," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, Vol. 25, Issue 1 (Summer 1934), 103, 107.
[437] The maximum age for prisoners sent to Pontiac was later raised to 30. *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare*, 704.
[438] Koerber and Brieschke, "Menard: Development of a Nineteenth-Century Prison," 241.
[439] A. L. Bowen, "Classification of Prisoners in Illinois (Under the Laws of 1933)," Issued by the Department of Public Welfare, State of Illinois, 5; *Annual Reports of the Department of Public Welfare, Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth*, 212.

process, the new legislation represented the State of Illinois' full embrace of the medical model of penology that would come to dominate state prison systems through the 1960s.

Both State Criminologist Paul L. Schroeder and A. L. Bowen, the director of the Department of Public Welfare, were quick to point out that the role of the Classification Board was limited to recommending placement of inmates within the penitentiary system and would not interfere with the administration of each prison by its warden and officers. Bowen stressed this point in his report on the classification legislation in 1933, stating emphatically "The classification and segregation program now going into effect will disturb in no way the management of the penitentiary system. . . . Prison authorities must be charged with classification of men within the walls and with the methods of discipline."[440]

With plans for the expansion and rehabilitation of Joliet prison still on the back burner, the Department of Public Welfare instead converted the vacated Illinois Women's Prison complex across the street into the Northern Diagnostic Depot, which would process most the state's incoming prisoners. The first floor of the cellhouse wing was completely remodeled to include a suite of medical and psychological examination rooms, while the administration building was reworked slightly, with a dormitory for guards installed on the third floor. Prisoners undergoing examination and classification were held in the existing 100-cell wing north of the administration building. Although plans by Illinois State Architect C. Herrick Hammond were prepared for a two-story cellblock wing extending from the east side of the existing cellhouse, this addition was never constructed.[441]

In the first year of its establishment under the new law, the Joliet's Diagnostic Depot was not yet complete, and staff from the Division of the Criminologist were still determining how the expanded program of diagnostic examination and classification would work under the new centralized system. The division's 1935 report states that classification had only been applied to new prisoners, and with rising population the task of examining and reclassifying the prisoners was a daunting one. Schroeder admitted, "The resident populations at Joliet and Stateville remain as an admixture of all types of men. The purpose and philosophy of the classification program, aiming at the reclamation of prisoners as it does, cannot be fully carried out until the older recidivistic groups and first offender groups within the prisons are separated." He also pointed out that "a definite program of therapy could not be attempted, except in a few instances, because the institutions were not prepared to receive it and carry it out. Prescriptions for treatment have been limited, of necessity, to practical suggestions for work assignment, school placement, and the care of the mentally and physically ill.[442]

With increases in resources and staff, the Division of the Criminologist was able to expand the diagnostic and classification efforts of the penitentiary system through the late 1930s and 1940s, adopting what it claimed was "an integrated approach" to "understand the offender as a total personality—his goals, conflicts and frustrations, and characteristic behavior tendencies."[443] The division's classification work and research garnered international attention, and some of the country's leading criminologists and sociologists were employed by the division or studied its work during this period. Pioneering work begun by University of Chicago sociologist Ernest Burgess for the Clabaugh Commission's 1928 report on Illinois' parole system and penal institutions was expanded in the 1930s and 1940s, resulting in the development of actuarial methods for successfully predicting

[440] Ibid, 8.
[441] Additions and Alterations to the Diagnostic Hospital (Former Women's Prison) Illinois State Penitentiary, revised October 25, 1933. Drawings in collection of the Joliet Area Historical Museum.
[442] *Annual Reports for the Department of Public Welfare: Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth*, 211-212.
[443] Illinois Department of Public Safety. *Annual Report of the Department of Public Safety for the Fiscal Year July 1, 1952-June 30, 1953* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1953), 69-70.

parole risk. Saul Alinsky, a student of Burgess at the University of Chicago, worked briefly at the Diagnostic Depot in the mid-1930s before turning to community activism.[444] Donald Clemmer, who worked as staff sociologist at Menard through the 1930s, later compiled his insights on prisoners as a distinct social group in his seminal work The *Prison Community*, which was published in 1940.

The old prison at Joliet continued to be a thorn in the side of both prison administrators and staff at the Diagnostic Depot. While other prisons within the system were expanded and, in some cases, reconfigured to provide more substantial mental health treatment and educational or vocational training through the 1930s and early 1940s, the penitentiary at Joliet was essentially still stuck in the 19th century. For inmates classified as "unimprovable," Joliet's antiquated physical plant was seen by prison administrators to be the most appropriate environment in which they could serve out their time, and the strict discipline used in the prison was viewed as necessary to maintain order. Some prison officers even claimed that the "old-timers" left at Joliet preferred this type of environment to Stateville. While leading a tour of Joliet with reporters from the *Chicago Tribune* in December 1932, Stubblefield stated the prisoners there would be "uneasy" under the relatively relaxed rules at Stateville, claiming "I have sent some of the oldtimers to Stateville as a reward for good behavior and have had them plead after a few weeks there to be returned to the old prison." Stubblefield asserted that the only privilege under the progressive merit system that the inmates at Joliet cared about was good time, declaring that "there is no desire for reform in them and they are irritated at efforts of the state to improve them."[445]

Despite these claims that the hardened inmates at Joliet weren't interested in better conditions or programming, reports from the Division of the Criminologist indicated that most of the prisoners originally assigned to Joliet requested a transfer to either Menard or Stateville as soon as they moved up within the progressive merit system.[446] In the late 1930s, the division reported a rash of attempted suicides at the old prison—between January and October of 1939, 92 inmates were transferred from Joliet to the Detention Hospital at Stateville for psychiatric evaluations, over half of which had attempted to take their own lives. The inmates "complained of bad living conditions, severe discipline. . . brutality, sickness, and many other grievances of a similar nature"—and many of them threatened to attempt suicide again if they were not transferred out of Joliet. Warden Joseph Ragen and other prison officers dismissed these cases as malingering and maintained that the behavior would stop if the possibility of transfer were taken off the table. But State Criminologist Paul Schroeder disagreed, stating that "in almost all" of the cases there was "some genuine emotional depression, instability, or other affective disturbance," brought on at least in part through the conditions at Joliet.[447]

Schroeder and Ragen agreed to establish a separate gallery in the prison to house inmates presenting with mental disturbances where they could "be placed under a special type of supervision which would minimize attempts at self-injury and permit a change from the usual routine." Schroeder and staff at the Diagnostic Depot went further in their recommendation, proposing to use the segregated space within the prison as a "treatment gallery" where each inmate would be given an individualized "plan of work, schooling, leisure time activity, entertainment, recreation and religious devotion." Inmates would participate in group therapy conducted by staff to give them an "opportunity for reformulating grievances and problems on a higher level of expression." The prison routine on the gallery would be less rigid and include "constructive work which had tangible meaning."[448] Not surprisingly, Ragen balked at the idea, and instead treated the segregated gallery as a place to punish the prisoners—Schroeder reported that, not long after the gallery was set up, "the emphasis shifted from

[444] Sanford D. Horwitt, *Let Them Call Me Rebel: Saul Alinsky-His Life and Legacy* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 27-29.
[445] *Chicago Tribune*, December 23, 1932, 4.
[446] *Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare, Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth,* 716.
[447] Ibid, 718.
[448] Ibid, 718-719.

constructive therapy to punitive, authoritarian methods," and prisoners assigned to the gallery "were kept on solitary rations of bread and water during most of their stay."[449] The "treatment gallery" was disbanded less than a month later.

In addition to highlighting the poor conditions under which inmates at Joliet lived, this incident also neatly illustrates the priority that prison administrators placed on security and discipline over the "medical model" of diagnosis and rehabilitation promulgated by the academic, professional staff of psychologists, psychiatrists, and sociologists working in the Illinois penitentiary system through the mid-20th century. This tension between administrative and diagnostic staff was common in prisons throughout the country. In many cases, rehabilitation efforts recommended by staff were stymied by outdated physical plants, a lack of capacity or funding for educational, vocational or social programming, and the insistence by administrators that such efforts would impede the security and discipline of the institution.

Warden Joseph Ragen's Reign at ISP-Joliet in the mid-20th Century

Amid the further development of prisoner classification at Joliet's Diagnostic Depot, reports of unprecedented overcrowding and deteriorating discipline at Joliet and Stateville continued to escalate through the early 1930s, culminating with the daring escape of infamous bank robber Henry J. "The Midget" Fernekes from Joliet in August 1935. Fernekes, who was serving a sentence of ten years to life, disguised himself as a visitor to the prison and walked directly out of the administration building.[450] Several guards were fired in the fallout of the escape, and in October Frank Whipp formally resigned as warden of Joliet-Stateville. Governor Horner appointed Joseph E. Ragen, warden of Menard Prison in southern Illinois, as temporary warden of the two prisons in October. Ragen had also replaced Whipp as Superintendent of Prisons in January 1935. During his time at Menard, Ragen had established his reputation as a strict disciplinarian, something that Horner hoped he would bring to bear at both Joliet and Stateville.[451]

Joseph Ragen looms large in the history of the Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet and the state's prison system. He served in some capacity within the system for almost his entire career and spent nearly 30 years (between 1935 and 1961) as head of its largest branch at Joliet-Stateville. Ragen built his national reputation as a prison administrator during his time at the two prisons and was both beloved and despised for his penal philosophy and authoritarian management style. Regan considered work and obedience to prison rules as the primary means of an inmate's rehabilitation, a philosophy that aligned him more with 19th-century prisoner reformers than proponents of the medical model. He generally ignored the recommendations of the staff psychologists, psychiatrists, and sociologists in the Diagnostic Depot, preferring instead to start new prisoners out in the coal shed or quarries and giving them more desirable jobs if they behaved. He embraced the indeterminate sentence and parole, repeating in the many speeches he gave across the country his support for a "one year to life" sentence for all prisoners. But while he claimed to be "morally bound to prepare men during their incarceration for their return to society," he also maintained that his first duty was to maintain the secure custody of the prison population.[452]

The total control that Regan established at Joliet and Stateville was lauded by the press, penologists, and the state legislature, and his tenure was notable for its low number of escapes and disturbances, particularly as other

[449] Ibid.
[450] "Outlaw Dupes Guard; Flees," *Chicago Tribune*, August 4, 1935, 1.
[451] Gladys Erickson, *Warden Ragen of Joliet* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1957), 28-30.
[452] Illinois Department of Public Safety. *Annual Report of the Department of Public Safety for the Fiscal Year July 1, 1954-June 30, 1955* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1955), 44.

prisons across the country exploded in a series of riots in the years after World War II. But he was also denounced by more liberal reformers who found his obsession with discipline and control appalling. One of the chaplains at Joliet-Stateville who claimed to be a friend of the warden remarked that "Regan has set penology back 20 years in Illinois."[453]

Warden Ragen's grip on Joliet and Stateville took some time to be firmly established—just weeks after his appointment in 1935, a prisoner named William Neill was stabbed in the yard at Stateville. In his testimony at the subsequent inquest, Ragen stated "You can see what I'm up against. Certain customs have grown up that are going to be stopped at once. Ragen ended his testimony by promising, "We'll have better discipline in the future."[454] In his first years as warden—which he referred to as his "five-hundred-day headache"—Ragen made good on that promise, implementing a series of sweeping changes to both Joliet and Stateville.[455] Among his first targets were the gangs—organized roughly along ethnic background—which had been allowed to proliferate at both prisons through the 1920s and early 1930s. Gang members had constructed small shacks in the prison yards in which they gambled and operated homemade stills for alcohol. Money circulated freely throughout both prisons, and extortion was a common occurrence.[456] Ragen ordered all the shacks within the yards demolished and banished cash from both prisons—from now on, inmates were allowed to spend only three dollars a week at the commissaries, which prevented prisoners from stockpiling goods to sell or use to bribe other inmates or guards. [457] To further control the flow of contraband from outside of the prisons, Ragen also discontinued the practice of allowing inmates to receive food, clothing, or other items from visitors.[458]

To improve prison morale, Ragen focused on providing the basics of orderly facilities, decent food, and hygiene. While polishing up of the old prison at Joliet proved more challenging than updating the facilities at Stateville, Ragen wrote in his 1940 annual report that "everything possible has been done to provide the Old Prison with sanitary conditions," and that "the entire institution has been thoroughly cleaned and painted." Ragen also pointed to several improvements to security at Joliet, including the construction of a new guard tower at the center of the yard and the installation of a new "electric eye" (metal detector) at the entrance to the administration building.[459] The kitchens at Joliet, Stateville, and the Diagnostic Depot were thoroughly cleaned and reorganized to allow for the more hygienic preparation of food, and a more systematic inventory of supplies was implemented to reduce food waste. Ragen was especially careful in ensuring that the food served to prisoners was, if not novel or interesting, at least palatable—at each meal a lieutenant had to taste the food and confirm that it was fit for consumption.[460]

While these basics were well provided for, everything else that made prison life tolerable was considered a privilege, which could only be earned through strict and constant adherence to Ragen's regulations. Under Warden Ragen, the prisoners at Joliet and Stateville were bound to follow a detailed list of over 100 rules, many of which would have been familiar to their 19th-century counterparts. In addition to the standard rules against violence, insubordination, and insolence, inmates were forbidden from writing notes, swearing, whistling, staring at visitors, having their hands in their pockets while in line, "silent insolence," or having the bottom button of their shirts undone. Ragen also explicitly forbad inmates to criticize the institution in any way, either while within its walls or in letters they wrote to outsiders.

[453] "Inside Stateville—World of its Own," *Chicago Tribune*, July 3, 1955, 4.
[454] "Convicts Tell Lax Discipline at Stateville," *Chicago Tribune*, November 9, 1935, 9.
[455] Erickson, *Warden Ragen of Joliet,* 19.
[456] "Organized Gangs Ruled in Prison," *The Dispatch* (Moline, IL), February 19, 1936, 31.
[457] Erickson, *Warden Ragen of Joliet,* 57.
[458] *Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare: Twenty-Third*, 823.
[459] Ibid, 844.
[460] Jacobs, *Stateville: The Penitentiary in Mass Society*, 41.

Ragen was also obsessive about security at the two units, ordering regular "shake downs" of prison cells and reporting the total number of contraband items discovered to the press. He severely curtailed the movement of inmates through prison grounds. All prisoners were marched to and from the cells, dining hall, and workshops at both Joliet and Stateville. Any inmate movement among buildings had to be sanctioned by a written ticket from an officer, and each inmate was searched before being allowed entry. A daily count was made of all tools within both prisons, and a record of every tool issued to an inmate during work hours was maintained.[461] In 1948, a separate guard house was constructed at Joliet outside of the prison walls where visitors could be searched before entering, and subsequent security upgrades—including the remodeling of the east and west sallyports—were made in the 1950s.[462]

In addition to maintaining an iron hold on inmate's discipline, Ragen also placed the prisons' guards and officers under similarly strict regulations, which emphasized loyalty to the warden above all. Ragen was adamant about removing political influence from the hiring of administrative and security staff at both Joliet and Stateville, demanding from every administration he worked under that no political hiring would occur. Although the divesting of politics from the hiring process was a major shift to the status quo in Illinois, Ragen's motive was as much to retain control over the officers as it was to maintain their professional integrity. Regan preferred to recruit guard staff from rural southern Illinois, which provided a steady supply of culturally homogeneous men who were eager to escape poor economic prospects. Because the guards were far from home, most of them either lived in the guard dormitories within the two prisons or in the trailer park Ragen had constructed for married guards near Stateville in 1953. As with the prisoners' cells, the guards' quarters and the homes in the trailer park were subject to surprise shakedowns from captains or Ragen himself.[463]

Like the prisoners, guards were also expected to obey a dizzying list of rules covering every aspect of their behavior, as well as to conduct themselves in outside of the prisons in a way that would not reflect badly on Regan or the institution, and the warden did not hesitate to punish or fire those who did not live up to his standards. In return for their loyalty and obedience, Ragen did request higher pay for officers, and in 1936 he supported the Department of Public Welfare's decision to reduce guard shifts from twelve to eight hours. He also instituted the state's first training camp for guards in the 1939, which provided practical instruction on security and disciplinary practices by experienced officers and classroom instruction from law enforcement experts.[464] Even with these token gestures, however, many guards at Stateville and Joliet chafed under Ragen's management. In March 1937, 18 guards at Joliet-Stateville attempted to form a union, eliciting the assistance of the Will County Trades and Labor Council. When Ragen got wind of the rumors, he ordered the men to be transferred to Menard. They refused to go, and Ragen suspended them. Ragen's actions are unsurprising, given that a guards' union would have threatened his control over the prisons.

As the national rhetoric around prisoner rehabilitation reached its height, Ragen cannily repackaged his vocational and educational programming at Joliet and Stateville as an effort to rehabilitate the prisoners there. While Regan did believe that providing vocational training and schooling would better prepare the inmates at Joliet-Stateville for life after release than the psychiatric treatment advocated by staff at the Diagnostic Depot, he also recognized, as had prison administrators in the 19th and early 20th centuries, that keeping prisoners

[461] Illinois Department of Public Welfare, *Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare: Twenty-Third* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1940), 829.
[462] *Annual Report of the Department of Public Safety for the Fiscal Year July 1, 1952-June 30, 1953,* 42.
[463] Jacobs, *Stateville: The Penitentiary in Mass Society*, 40.
[464] "Training School for Prison Guards Opens at Joliet," *The Belleville News-Democrat*, January 29, 1939, 3; Illinois Department of Public Welfare, *Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare*: Twenty-Second (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois 1939), 524.

occupied was vital to maintaining discipline and morale. During his long tenure as warden, Ragen was able substantially expand prison industries, vocational training, and educational programs at the two penitentiaries. After creating permanent barber shops in both Stateville and Joliet in the 1930s to replace the practice of prison barbers moving through the prison to shave and give haircuts to prisoners, Ragen implemented barber training for inmates in the shops at both Joliet and Stateville. Prisoners who completed the training would be eligible for certification as licensed barbers upon their release. In 1940, Ragen inaugurated a "toys for tots" program at Joliet, where prisoners made or repaired toys for Joliet's needy children. The program employed approximately 130 inmates in its first year, many of whom, Ragen claimed, were "incorrigibles, violent characters and tough guys" who "could not be fitted into a regular work program at the prison."[465] By the late 1950s, the combined industries at Joliet and Stateville employed approximately 30% of the inmates, a vast improvement from the widespread idleness of the 1930s. In addition to its textile plant, which supplied thousands of yards of denim, overcoating, suiting, and toweling material for the garment factory at Stateville, Joliet boasted a mattress factory, shoe factory, and concrete products plant. The prison's stone quarry also continued to provide crushed stone for state road work and agricultural limestone for state-run farms.[466]

As under past administrators, prisoners were offered primary school education up to eighth grade, but under Ragen Joliet-Stateville's secondary and college-level offerings were expanded through Stateville's correspondence school. Enrollment at the school was open to all prisoners at Stateville, Joliet, and Menard, as well as to all past inmates who were on parole. Ragen's 1939 report for the Department of Public Welfare indicated that 274 students were enrolled in correspondence classes at Stateville, and 98 at Joliet.[467] A vocational training school, housed in a purpose-built structure at Stateville, offered mechanical drawing, sheet metal work, printing, and watch repair. Automobile and airplane motor repair were also offered, In the late 1950s and early 1960s, drafting classes, lawnmower repair, and TV repair were also added, the last of which proved to be "of keen interest to staff and educators everywhere."[468] No formal vocational programs were offered at Joliet.

Ragen's efficient running of Joliet and Stateville earned him the unreserved support of his superiors at the Department of Public Welfare and, later, at the Department of Public Safety, which helped him to weather several crises that occurred in the early years as warden. When Richard Loeb was killed by fellow inmate James Day at Stateville in 1936, Governor Horner and Department of Public Welfare head A. L. Bowen staunchly defended Ragen against allegations that discipline had begun to deteriorate. Even Nathan Leopold reported through Bowen that "Discipline in the past year has been stricter than at any time since I've been in prison."[469] A subsequent investigation of Illinois' prisons also largely exonerated Ragen of any direct responsibility.

In February 1941, Ragen announced that he would step down from his post as warden of Joliet-Stateville to take a position with the US Department of Justice. Ragen's time away from the prison was short-lived, however; in October 1942, the escape of seven inmates from Stateville, including notorious mob boss Roger Touhy and his

[465] "Criminals Make Toys for Poor," *The Belleville News-Democrat,* May 7, 1940, 7.
[466] Illinois Department of Public Safety, *Annual Report of the Department of Public Safety for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1959 and 70th Biennium July 1, 1957-59* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1959), 41; Illinois Department of Public Welfare, *Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare: Twenty-Fourth* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1941), 486-7.
[467] Illinois Department of Public Welfare. *Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare: Twenty-First* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1938), 584.
[468] Illinois Department of Public Safety, *1961 Annual Report: Department of Public Safety* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1961), 25; Illinois Department of Public Safety, *1963 Annual Report: Department of Public Safety* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1963) Report, 38.
[469] "Leopold Denies He is Withholding Information About Loeb Slaying," *The Daily Illini*, February 2, 1936, 5.

long-time associate Basil "the Owl" Banghart, forced Governor Dwight Green to dismiss Edward Stubblefield, who had replaced Ragen as warden of Stateville and Joliet.[470] Green personally appealed to Ragen to take back his former position, and Regan returned to the post later that month. In announcing Regan's return to Joliet and Stateville, Green stated that the warden "has been assured that there will be no interference with his control of the prison and all requests or suggestions concerning the prison or prisoners will be referred to him for his decision."[471] Although ostensibly under the command of T. P. Sullivan, director of the newly created Department of Public Safety, Ragen had been given a free hand to run both prisons as he saw fit.

The onset of World War II only helped Ragen to tighten his control over Joliet-Stateville in the 1940s. With many potential offenders either in active military service or gainfully employed in the war effort, the prison population in Illinois and across the country began a steep decline from its late 1930s zenith, making overall discipline at both prisons easier to maintain. A scarcity of available men to work as guards at the prison also allowed Ragen to skirt civil service requirements and bring in new officers as direct hires. During the war years, the factories at Joliet and Stateville were offered up by the state for "the production of supplies essential to meet governmental needs in the present national emergency."[472] The textile mill at Joliet produced material for blankets and uniforms, which were manufactured in Stateville's garment factory. Thousands of inmates donated blood through a mobile blood bank that traveled between the two prisons. At Stateville, prisoners volunteered to participate in a joint research project conducted by the Department of Medicine at the University of Chicago and the US Army to test potential treatments for malaria. Although none of the volunteers were promised any additional privileges or additional good time for their participation, Governor Green later rewarded many of the participants with parole or sentence reduction.[473] The malaria study opened the door for others at Joliet and Stateville in the post-war era. An experiment was proposed at Joliet in the mid-1950s to test the effects of M1960, an insect repellant, on prisoners there. Volunteers were to live for three months in clothing soaked with the repellant and be monitored for skin irritation or other effects. Captain Robert W. Merley, who led the experiment, stated "what we want to determine is how much [of M1960] can the body stand?"[474] Although Stateville's malaria study was celebrated in the contemporary press, subsequent concerns around the ethics of using prisoners for scientific research finally led the state to abandon the study mid-1970s.[475]

Most prisoners at Joliet and Stateville, however, hoped for the chance of early release through military service. Amendments to the Selective Service Act in 1941 allowed prisoners and ex-felons to be considered for military service, and in July of 1943 the inmates at Joliet and Stateville were examined for potential early release and service in the US Army. When word later circulated at Stateville that only 140 of the inmates there had been deemed eligible for service, prisoners threatened a strike against prison war work.[476] By the end of the war, Illinois had released 2,500 prisoners for army service; Joliet and Stateville sent a combined total of 751 prisoners and paroles into the army, only 11 of which were returned for violations of discipline.[477]

[470] "As Stubblefield Resigns, Green Shakes Up Stateville Routine and Administration," *The Dispatch* (Moline, IL), October 1942, 1.
[471] "Former Warden of Joliet, Stateville to Return to Post," *Dixon Evening Telegraph*, October 21, 1942, 1.
[472] Illinois Department of Public Safety, *Annual Report of the Department of Public Safety*, *July 1, 1941 to June 30, 1942* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1942), 52.
[473] "Illinois State News," *Waterloo Republican*, April 23, 1947, 3.
[474] "Prisoners Will Undergo Human Guinea Pig Tests," *The Daily Chronicle*, February 25, 1954, 1.
[475] "Prison Official in Illinois Halts Malaria Research on Inmates," *New York Times*, April 28, 1974, 50.
[476] "500 Convicts Kept in Cells," *The Belleville News-Democrat*, November 4, 1943, 19.
[477] "Find 220 Convicts Acceptable to the Army," *Belvidere Daily Republican*, June 15, 1943, 7; "Illinois Gives 2,500 Convicts Chance in Army," *Chicago Tribune*, February 5, 1944, 3; "Guards Kept at Peak of Efficiency," *Chicago Tribune*, January 26, 1947, 1-2.

While Stateville was Ragen's showpiece, Joliet remained in the newer prison's shadow, and its antiquated plant continued to rankle the warden and other state officials. At the height of the war, Department of Public Safety Director T. P. Sullivan abruptly announced that the state intended to abandon the penitentiary at Joliet and construct a new annex at Stateville to house the diagnostic depot and other departments from the old prison.[478]Since the mid-1930s, prison officials and state lawmakers had gone back and forth between renovating the existing plant or building a new prison to replace it. In his final report as director of the Department of Public Welfare in 1940, A. L. Bowen had described the old prison "the 'hole of Calcutta,'" claiming that, "if it is the thought and desire of the State to return at least a part of its prisoners in better frame of mind and better equipped for life, then old Joliet neutralizes every penny and every ounce of effort."[479] It was likely that the decision was made because the drop in the state's prison population finally allowed Stateville to absorb all of the prisoners at Joliet until the annex could be constructed. Plans were arranged to move the remaining 770 inmates at Joliet to Stateville gradually, and the first 90 prisoners were transferred in mid-November.[480]

After the initial announcement and transfer, the state quietly shelved its plans to vacate the plant at Joliet, choosing instead to extensively renovate and modernize the existing complex after the war. The renovation included a complete remodeling of the existing cellblocks that replaced the narrow stone cells with new concrete cells equipped with modern plumbing, lighting, and ventilation. The narrow windows on the south walls of the blocks were widened to allow more natural light to penetrate the galleries, and the exterior stone was sandblasted. In addition to the cellblocks, the existing dining room and hospital were also modernized, and the two-story block south and east of the north segregation/solitary building that housed the chapel, library, and former kitchens was demolished to provide more space within the prison yard. The east schoolhouse was also renovated, and a new barbershop and laundry were installed within other existing structures in the complex. Construction on the project began in early 1947 and was completed in 1958.[481] To serve as a reminder of the conditions under which prisoners at Joliet had lived in the 19th century, Ragen had one of the original cells moved to the yard behind the solitary cellblock. A plaque installed beside the cell identified it as a remnant of the "last of the Illinois medieval prisons."

With the old prison at Joliet finally brought to a more modern standard, Warden Ragen spent much of the last decade as warden of Joliet-Stateville codifying his system of administrating the prisons, giving tours of Stateville to media outlets, fellow penologists, and politicians, and speaking at conferences throughout the country. By the time he left Joliet-Stateville in 1961 to become director of the Department of Public Safety, Ragen was "Mr. Prison," and his association with the Stateville and Joliet penitentiaries was deeply ingrained in minds of most state officials, journalists, and the public. Although the position of warden at Joliet-Stateville was officially handed over to his long-time assistant warden Frank J. Pate, Ragen continued to exert an extraordinary amount of influence over the administration of the two prisons, which he justified through his role as public safety director. Ragen even continued to live in the warden's residence at Stateville through the early 1960s. Ragen's long career in corrections ended in May 1965, when Governor Otto Kerner, Jr. replaced Ragen as public safety director with Warden Ross Randolph of Menard. Randolph's approach to prison management was more liberal than Ragen's, and under his direction, the Department of Public Safety sought to further centralize the administration of the institutions under its purview and shift the focus of prison administration in the state toward rehabilitation and treatment.

[478] "State Prepares to Abandon Old Joliet Prison," *Chicago Tribune*, November 4, 1943, 19.
[479] A. L. Bowen, "Our Prison Problems," *Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare: Twenty-Third* (1939-1940), 38-39.
[480] "Transfer First Convict Group," *The Times* (Streator, IL), November 17, 1943, 10.
[481] "Illinois Claims Nation's Most Modern Prison," *Chicago Tribune*, June 3, 1952, 17; George Wright and Chesly Manly, "How Ragen Routed Big Shot Rule at Stateville," *Chicago Tribune*, July 11, 1955, 3.

ISP-Joliet in the late 20th Century

The two decades following Ragen's resignation as director of the Department of Public Safety were ones of incredible change for the prison system in Illinois and its incarcerated population, spurred by political and social upheaval occurring beyond the walls of its prisons. The Civil Rights Movement in America dismantled the legal and governmental framework of Jim Crow and led to the passage of sweeping legislative reforms that expanded rights and opportunities for African Americans, women, and other minority groups, while the war in Vietnam spurred a growing political consciousness among the country's young population, many of whom rejected the more traditional and conservative values of their parents' generation. This fight for expanded rights for marginalized and minority communities extended into the prison system in the 1960s, with federal and state courts recognizing for the first time—although in a limited way—the constitutional rights of the incarcerated. The Attica Prison Riot of 1971 brought increased attention of deteriorating conditions in many prisons throughout the country, and subsequent judicial scrutiny—and, at times, direct oversight—of prison conditions was common by the end of the decade.

The explosion of social and political activism throughout the country led to a social disequilibrium that, along with rising levels of poverty and crime in deteriorating and segregated urban centers, led to a conservative backlash that demanded "law and order" above all else. In a pattern like that seen in America the 1920s and 1930s, beginning in the 1960s the FBI reported a dramatic rise in the national crime rate caused, among other things, by increasing unemployment rates and a spike in the number of young men in the 15-24 age group, which is generally responsible for most crimes. Sensationalized news reports often linked this "crime wave" with the push for civil rights and anti-war sentiment, and widespread media coverage of the series of uprisings in Black urban neighborhoods throughout the country in 1967 and 1968 only served to increase public panic.[482] Although the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, appointed by President Lyndon Johnson in 1967, concluded that the riots were an understandable response to segregation and poverty in the city's ghettos, which were created, maintained, and condoned by White society, by the late 1960s, crime had become the most important political issue for most voters.[483] In a 1968 Gallup Poll, 81% of respondents agreed with the statement that "law and order has broken down in this country," and a majority agreed that "Negroes who start riots" and "Communists" were the cause.[484]

As noted by civil-rights attorney and legal scholar Michelle Alexander in her seminal work, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, this shift toward policies that purported to be "tough on crime" in the late 1960s was, in large part, the result of a decade-long campaign by "conservative Whites" who were searching for a way to maintain the existing racial hierarchy without the appearance of intentional racial discrimination. In the late 1950s, Black civil rights organizers were openly characterized by Southern governors and law enforcement officials as criminals rather than political protestors, but as the nation moved toward equal

[482] Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: New Press, 2020), *46.*

[483] In response to urban riots that broke out across the country in the summer of 1967, President Lyndon Johnson appointed the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, chaired by Illinois Governor Otto Kerner. After seven months of investigation, the Kerner Commission released its findings in a 426-page report. In stark contrast to much of the media coverage and conservative political rhetoric surrounding the riots, the report found that the riots resulted from frustration of Black and Latino communities at the lack of economic opportunities and basic services. The commission stated bluntly, "This is our basic conclusion: Our Nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal. Segregation and poverty have created in the racial ghetto a destructive environment totally unknown to most white Americans. What white Americans have never fully understood—but what the Negro can never forget—is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it." *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (Washington, DC: Kerner Commission: US GPO, 1968), 1.

[484] Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 46.

rights and civil rights legislation dismantled the Jim Crow system of segregation, the message from conservative politicians eager to court resentful working-class White voters while retaining support from their base of "corporate interests and the conservative elite" became more subtle. The 1968 presidential campaign of Republic candidate Richard Nixon focused almost exclusively on a return to "law and order" while running television ads that showed images of Black protestors and violence in Black neighborhoods. Although liberal politicians sought to convince the public that civil rights legislation and social reforms such as the War on Poverty would reduce crime by addressing its root causes, the majority of Americans did not agree.[485]

Just as Jim Crow laws had supplanted slavery after the end of the Civil War, the 'War on Crime' (and more specifically in the 1980s and 1990s, the 'War on Drugs') waged by the federal government and state governments across the country in the last decades of the 20th century essentially created a new system of racial discrimination that was administered through the criminal justice system. The federal government and state legislatures enacted more punitive criminal laws that increased sentencing lengths for property crimes and drug offenses. In Illinois, this push toward tougher laws led the state to abandon indeterminate sentencing and parole and create a new "Class X" felony class with harsher penalties in the late 1970s that marked the beginning of the era of mass incarceration in the prison system.

Prison Administration in Illinois in the 1960s and 1970s

Through the late 1960s and early 1970s, the individual control asserted by wardens like Joseph Ragen in the administration of Joliet and other prisons in Illinois gave way to more centralized and bureaucratic management of the state's penal system. Although he remained warden of Joliet-Stateville until 1970, Frank Pate encountered increasing interference from Public Safety Director Ross Randolph in his final years there. Despite vocal protests from Pate and his assistant wardens, Randolph eased several Ragen-era restrictions on Joliet-Stateville's inmates early in his tenure. When Pate resisted the formation of a union at Joliet-Stateville in 1967, Randolph quickly moved to recognize it, and later that year the union officially joined the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSME). Randolph also introduced some of the first civilian staff within both Joliet and Stateville in the late 1960s. This move was largely necessitated by changes to Illinois' criminal code in 1962, which made prisoners with life sentences eligible for parole after twenty years. As a result of the new law, many of the "old timers" at Joliet-Stateville—most of whom had held long-time positions as clerks, bookkeepers, instructors in the schools, or in the prison industries—were paroled. In the coming decade, many of these administrative positions would be filled by civilians, leaving few "plum" jobs left for the inmates. [486]

Despite tensions between Warden Pate and higher officials in the Department of Public Safety, some improvements were made at Joliet in the late 1960s. In 1967, a one-story school building was constructed at the west end of the prison complex. A new chapel was also built directly north of the school building to replace the prison's original chapel, which had been demolished as part of the renovation of the complex in the 1940s and 1950s. The sweeping parabolic roof and spare interior of the chapel, designed by Chicago architects Loebl, Schlossman, Bennett & Dart, stood in striking contrast to the 19th-century stone buildings surrounding it and provided a nondenominational space for prisoners to worship.[487]

When he took office in 1969, Republican Governor John Ogilvie formed a task force to review Illinois' penal system. Ogilvie appointed Peter Bensinger, the 32-year-old head of the Department of Public Safety's Youth

[485] Ibid, 39-47.
[486] Jacobs, *Stateville: The Penitentiary in Mass Society*, 55-59.
[487] Illinois Department of Public Safety, *1967 Annual Report: Department of Public Safety* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1967), 32.

Commission, to head the task force. Although many correctional officers in the existing prison system (including Frank Pate) served on the task force, it also included several academics and staff from the State Criminologists office.[488] The task force recommended a complete overhaul of the state's prison system, and legislation based on the task force's report and modeled on guidelines from the National Council of Crime and Delinquency and the American Correctional association was signed into law in July 1969. The law reorganized all adult and juvenile correctional facilities under a new Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) and formed the state's first full-time professional parole board.[489] Governor Ogilvie tapped Bensinger—who had no direct experience in corrections—to serve as the new department's first director, a move that alarmed many old-school prison administrators in the state.[490]

Under Bensinger, IDOC embarked on an ambitious plan to further consolidate its operations and expand programming and facilities. The department increased its state funding by nearly $30 million and sought additional money through federal grants. Bensinger also expanded staffing at the Springfield office, adding dozens of personnel in the first year of operation. A year after the department was established, the state's first minimum-security prison at Vienna, which had been under construction since 1965, was completed. Plans were made for a significant expansion of community-based correctional facilities, including half-way houses and group homes to "provide transitional treatment for parolees" and six work release centers that would allow prisoners to work within the community with minimal supervision. Plans for replacing the Diagnostic Depot at Joliet (renamed the Adult Reception and Classification Center under IDOC) with a new facility on the grounds of Stateville were later scrapped, although the east cellhouse of Joliet Prison was taken over by Reception and Classification as overflow for the prisoners entering the prison system.[491]

In a show of faith for the work of the Reception and Classification Centers, Bensinger brought on additional psychologists, psychiatrists, and sociologists to aid in the work of examining and classifying incoming prisoners. By the end of 1970, Joliet' reception center employed seven full- and part-time psychologists and 10 sociologists. Both centers were also reorganized as separate units within IDOC, with their own budgets and administrative personnel. In addition to expanding staff for examination and classification, IDOC hired 60 full-time civilian counselors to help inmates adjust to prison life and provide a more sympathetic outlet for their issues and grievance than the custodial officers. Prison psychologists also conducted group therapy sessions at Joliet and the other adult facilities for recently released inmates.[492]

In keeping with the more liberal administrative model first attempted by Ross Randolph, Bensinger implemented a relaxation of certain rules for prisoners and expanded privileges. He doubled the number of letters that prisoners could write to two per week and increased the "gate" money given to inmates on release from $35 to $50. Inmates were allowed to buy or receive typewriters to use in their cells and have visits on Sundays and holidays. Spanish-speaking prisoners could write and receive letters in their native tongue, and Spanish-language masses were given at Joliet for the first time in the prison's history.[493] These privileges were a hard pill to swallow for some prison officers and administrators, who feared that they would set prisoners' expectations too high and erode discipline. In his 1970 report, Assistant Director A. M. Monahan, who oversaw the department's adult division, conceded that "there exists a general tendency toward resistance to change and deviation from long-standing traditions," but stated that "attempts continue to be made to eliminate traditional

[488] Jacobs, *Stateville: The Penitentiary in Mass Society,74*.
[489] Illinois Department of Corrections, *First Annual Report of the Department of Corrections, 1970* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1970), 3-4, 15-16.
[490] Jacobs, *Stateville: The Penitentiary in Mass Society*,75.
[491] *First Annual Report of the Department of Corrections, 1970*, 4-5.
[492] Ibid, 5; Jacobs, *Stateville: The Penitentiary in Mass Society*, 76.
[493] Ibid, 49-50, 70.

regulations and policies where these appear to be realistically serving no useful purpose, particularly when they tend to hinder the ability of institutional staff to relate to inmates."[494]

Although he did not personally court newspapers like Ragen had, Bensinger did attempt to cultivate a formal relationship with the press by appointing a full-time information officer who prepared press releases on the department's activities. IDOC sought "increased citizen participation" through advisory boards consisting of academics, businessmen, and outside penal administrators.[495] The department also participated in the American Correctional Association's (ACA) initial development of its accreditation program in the early 1970s. Funded by a grant from the Ford Foundation, the ACA recruited state correction departments around the country to contribute self-evaluations of their facilities to aid the organization in developing national correctional standards.[496]

Ogilvie and Bensinger's efforts to establish a more formal, structured, and centralized management of the prison system culminated in 1972, when the Illinois General Assembly passed the Unified Code of Corrections, the first comprehensive legislation regulating the administration of a state prison system in the nation.[497] In addition to creating a more definitive management structure within IDOC, the code also established a programs for staff training, long term research and development, and a formal system for handling inmate grievances. Most notably, it articulated minimum standards for prison conditions and the treatment of inmates, including sanitation, safety, food, recreations, mail, visits, and religious activities.[498]

IDOC's attempt to create more uniform standards for its prisons was in part a response to the increased interest in prisoners' welfare by federal courts. Since the establishment of the penitentiary system in the United States in the early 1890s, the judicial system had consistently applied a "hands off" policy regarding the administration of state prisons. Although the courts of the 19th century declined to interfere because they viewed prisoners as "slaves of the state" who were not entitled to constitutional rights, 20th-century courts reasoned that the handling of prisoners was the prerogative of state legislatures and experienced penitentiary administrators. However, by the early 1960s, more liberal judges had begun to consider cases brought by inmates regarding the violation of constitutional rights. Many early cases that managed to overcome the courts' "hands off' doctrine were brought by Black Muslims, and their successes built a basic framework for the legal rights of prisoners throughout the country.[499]

One such case—*Cooper v. Pate*—concerned Joliet-Stateville warden Frank Pate's refusal to allow Black Muslims at Stateville to use the prison chapel for religious services, consult with ministers of their faith, or obtain or read the Quran and other religious materials. In 1964, Stateville inmate Thomas Cooper sued the prison, claiming that Warden Pate had violated his 14th Amendment right to practice his religion in the same manner that the prison's Christian inmates did. The US District Court dismissed the case, and the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the ruling. Cooper appealed to the US Supreme Court, which reversed the decision. The case marked the first time that the court acknowledged that prison inmates have standing to sue state

[494] Ibid, 43.
[495] Ibid, 6.
[496] "The History of Standards & Accreditation," American Correctional Association website (accessed March 3 at https://www.aca.org/ACA_Member/Standards___Accreditation/About_Us/ACA/ACA_member/Standards_and_Accreditation/SAC_AboutUs.aspx ; *First Annual Report of the Department of Corrections, 1970*, 43.
[497] Jacobs, *Stateville: The Penitentiary in Mass Society*, 77.
[498] Patrick D. McAnany, "Imprisonment Under the Illinois Unified Code of Corrections: Due Process, Flexibility, and Some Future Doubts," *Chicago-Kent Law Review,* Vol. 49, Issue 2, 178-182.
[499] Christopher E. Smith, "Black Muslims and the Development of Prisoners' Rights," *Journal of Black Studies,* Vol. 24, No. 2 (Dec. 1993), 131-132.

correctional officers. In the subsequent trial, Judge Richard B. Austin ruled in favor of Cooper, agreeing that he and other Black Muslims should have the same religious freedoms afforded to Christian prisoners. Although many judges still adhered to the hands-off doctrine, prisoners through the 1960s and 1970s won a series of cases that affirmed their rights to due process in disciplinary hearings and limited rights of protection against cruel and unusual punishment while incarcerated.[500]

Changing Racial Makeup of Illinois' Prison Population in the 1960s and Early 1970s

Through the 1960s, the prison population in Illinois remained relatively stable, and by the early 1970s had even begun to decline. At the end of 1973, the population had reached its lowest level since 1925, with a total number of 5,600 inmates. The decline reflected the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, the modest success of Progressive Era reforms that sought to emphasize rehabilitation, the rise of parole, and changes to sentencing laws. Although the average age and economic background of the population had remained relatively steady—most prisoners were still young and working-class or poor—its racial makeup shifted dramatically in the post-war period. Black men had always been overrepresented in Illinois' prisons, and the percentage of Black inmates within the total prison population had consistently risen through the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In the 1960s and 1970s, however, the number of Black prisoners in Illinois increased sharply, brought on largely by the higher number of Black offenders being sentenced to its penal institutions. Through these two decades, over half of convicted criminals sentenced to Illinois prisons were Black, although they only accounted for roughly eleven to twelve percent of the state's total population. By 1974, 75% of the state's prisoners were Black, compared to 47% in 1953.[501] The change in Illinois' prison population mirrored the changing demographics in prison systems across the country.

In addition to the discrimination that Black citizens had always faced from law enforcement and the court system in Illinois, the rise in the number of Black prisoners in the state can also be attributed to the precipitous economic decline of Chicago and other major urban centers in the state during this period, which had a disproportionate effect on its African American population. African Americans who came to the city as part of the Great Migration in the early 20th century faced a web of discriminatory housing policies that forced them into neighborhoods that suffered from continual disinvestment. As White residents fled to the suburbs in the decades immediately following World War II, poverty and crime within inner-city neighborhoods worsened. City officials and institutions used federal urban renewal programs to clear many minority neighborhoods for new development, pushing these communities into more concentrated ghettos. While crime rates had always been higher in Chicago than in more rural parts of the state, the increasing number of young Black men in the city's poor neighborhoods, facing limited educational or economic opportunities, were "prime candidates for arrest and imprisonment."[502]

The 1975 Joliet Riot

Amid the shifts in administrative policies and the makeup of the prison population in the late 1960s and early 1970s, both Joliet and Stateville saw a proliferation of gang activity not seen at the prisons since the 1930s. Gangs within the prisons during this period were organized along racial lines. Most gangs operating in Joliet and Stateville were extensions of street gangs originating in Chicago, including the Blackstone Rangers (Back

[500] Jacobs, *Stateville: The Penitentiary in Mass Society, 64-67, 107.*
[501] Ibid, 160.
[502] Christianson, *With Liberty for Some,* 276.

P. Stone Nation), the Disciples, and the Vice Lords. The Latin Kings, a Latino street gang from Chicago, also operated in the prisons. White gangs associated with the Ku Klux Klan were represented in larger numbers at Menard.[503] In contrast to urban gangs of the pre-World War II era, Chicago's gangs in the 1960s and 1970s had developed a political consciousness and savvy that operated alongside the illegal activity and violence endemic to earlier gangs. As their memberships grew in Chicago through the mid-to-late 1960s, both the Rangers and Disciples became more politically active, organizing voter turnout drives and meeting with local aldermen. This activity gained the attention of Civil Rights Movement leaders, the federal government, and private philanthropic organizations who sought to harness the influence of Chicago's gangs toward political mobilization. In 1966, the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. and other staff from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) met with Chicago's gangs to convince them to band together in service to the movement.[504] In 1967, the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) awarded a $927,000 grant to the Woodlawn Organization to implement a job training program. The grant stipulated that both Ranger and Disciples were to be involved in the administration of the project, and Rangers President Eugene Hairston and Vice President Jeff Fort were among the salaried staff for the project. In explaining the reasoning behind the grant, the OEO stated, ". . .it is better to work with the already prominent and undeniably influential gang structure than it is to destroy it."[505]

Many members of the Black community in Chicago who had been witnesses to or victims of the violence of the Blackstone Rangers were skeptical about its political and social organizing. One anonymous Woodlawn resident wrote in the *Chicago Defender* in 1969:

> A am black. I have lived in Chicago all my life. . . This letter is written not to condemn or condone the actions of the Blackstone Rangers but to express the anxiety of many black people about them. . . . Due to their connection with various social-oriented groups, the Rangers adopt the guise of being a good influence in the community. This is only a cover-up. The Rangers' primary purpose is to get control of the community—not just legitimate home rule but of every dollar spent.[506]

These suspicions appeared to be justified when Senator John McClellan held public hearings on the Rangers' use of OEO funding. Several ex-Rangers implicated Fort and others in a series of illegal activities while working on the OEO job training program. Woodlawn Organization President Arthur Brazier admitted in his testimony that the Rangers were not "choir boys," but insisted that the program had helped to curb violence among rival gangs.[507] Around the time of the hearing, Hairston was convicted on three charges of solicitation for murder and was sent to Stateville.[508]

Like gangs operating in the two prisons in the 1930s, incarcerated members of Chicago's gangs at Stateville and Joliet in the late 1960s and 1970s sought to maximize their power within the institutions, relying on the loyalty of fellow members and threats of violence and extortion of non-members to stake out their positions within the confines of the prisons. Initially, prison administrators attempted to work with the gangs, giving their leaders special privileges in exchange for keeping the peace among their members or informing on other gangs. Under Bensinger's direction, Warden Twomey also established an inmate council at Joliet to mediate grievances and open dialogue between the prisoners and staff, with most of the council's executive committee consisting of

[503] Illinois Legislative Investigating Commission, *The Joliet Correctional Center Riot of April 22, 1975* (Chicago: State of Illinois Legislative Investigating Commission, 1975), 17.
[504] Betty Washington, "SCLC Organizing Youth Gangs City Wide," *Chicago Defender*, June 13, 1966, 1.
[505] Bert Useem and Peter Kimball, *States of Siege: U.S. Prison Riots, 1971-1986* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 62.
[506] "Black Fear of Blackston Rangers," *Chicago Defender*, February 1, 1969, B10.
[507] "TWO's Rev. Brazier Calls $927, 341 Cutoff 'Tragic,' Blames 'Political Forces,'" *Chicago Defender*, September 7, 1968, 3.
[508] "S. Side Gang Leader Sentenced 5-15 Years," *Chicago Defender,* August 15, 1968, 4.

representatives from each of the gangs operating in the prison. Members of the executive committee had relative freedom of movement throughout the prison.[509]

Although these strategies largely kept the peace at Joliet and Stateville through the late 1960s, by the early 1970s administrators at both prisons were struggling to maintain order. James B. Jacobs, a sociologist working at Joliet-Stateville during this time, reported that "The gangs had completely intimidated the staff of the Old Prison. Independent [non-gang affiliated] inmates could not trade at the commissary or exercise on the recreation yards without paying off the gangs. . . when a gang member was brought before disciplinary court, fellow gang members would leave their assignments, gather at the disciplinary unit and chant gang slogans while the hearing was in process."[510] After a fight broke out a prison baseball game at Stateville in June 1971, Brensinger acknowledged that something had to be done, and that fall he authorized the creation of the Special Program Unit (SPU) within Joliet Prison, which would house the most disruptive prisoners from both Stateville and Joliet. In his 1971 report, Bensinger described SPU as "a program designed for the effective control and treatment of a relatively small but highly visible and significant element of the inmate population which is extremely disruptive, difficult to control and seriously threatening to the welfare of the facilities, programs, employees and other inmates."[511] SPU combined treatment "to assist the individuals assigned to acquire the necessary motivations and desire essential to integration into the general prison population" with increased security measures, including wire mesh over the bars and a mobile cage to protect guards entering the unit.[512]

Between September and December, over 100 inmates were transferred from Stateville to the Special Program Unit at Joliet, including Blackstone Rangers president Eugene Hairston and Disciples leader Hy Smith. The prisoners fought their removal from Stateville, requiring guards to use tear gas and mace to force them out of Cell House B. Once installed in SPU, the inmates destroyed the cells, throwing shards of broken porcelain sinks and fluorescent lights at the guards and staff who entered the unit. In 1972, the inmates in SPU filed a class-action lawsuit—*Armstrong v. Bensinger*—challenging the constitutionality of unit. Although the judge agreed that the punitive nature of the unit required due process for prisoners assigned to it, he dismissed the inmates' claims that SPU met the judicial standard of cruel and unusual punishment.[513] Two years later, IDOC announced that it had shut down the Special Program Unit at Joliet.[514]

Conditions at Joliet were further destabilized in early 1973, when Daniel Walker replaced Ogilvie as governor. Bensinger resigned as head of the Department of Corrections, and the legislature, displeased with Walker's first nominee, took almost six months to name his replacement. In the interim, there had been a series of disturbances at Stateville, including one incident where a guard was stabbed and thrown off a tier in the cellhouse. Allyn Sielaff was finally confirmed in June, and quickly moved to break up the influence of gangs at Stateville, Joliet, and Pontiac. He directed the wardens to revoke special privileges from gang members and ordered that gang leaders be transferred to other prisons where gang activity was more limited.[515]

A month after his appointment, Sielaff announced that Joliet-Stateville would be reorganized as separate institutions for the first time since the completion of Stateville in the mid-1920s. Sielaff appointed Charles A. Felton as warden at Joliet Correctional Center. A 29-year-old with experience as a probation officer and police caseworker, Felton was the prison's first Black warden. In December 1974, Felton resigned, claiming that

[509] Jacobs, *Stateville: The Penitentiary in Mass Society, 171.*
[510] Ibid, 163.
[511] Illinois Department of Corrections, *1971 Annual Report* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1971), 54.
[512] Jacobs, *Stateville: The Penitentiary in Mass Society*, 110.
[513] Ibid, 111.
[514] Illinois Department of Corrections, *1974 Annual Report* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1974), 7.
[515] Bert Useem and Peter Kimball, *States of Siege: U.S. Prison Riots, 1971-1986*, 68.

IDOC officials were "insensitive to the problems of inmates and that the prison staff refused to implement reforms."[516] He was replaced with Fred Finkbeiner, who had experience with Chicago's gangs through his former position as chief operational officer at Cook County Jail. Finkbeiner immediately implemented Sielaff's strategy to break up the gangs at Joliet, ordering an audit on the prison's Jaycee program, which was run by members of the Blackstone Rangers. Hairston and 35 of the Jaycee members wrote and signed a petition claiming that Joliet officers had disregarded the operating policy for the program and ordered all Jaycee members to boycott the club. Members who defied the boycott were harassed and beaten. Among those who were targeted by the gang was Herbert Catlett, a former member of the Blackstone Rangers who had taken a photograph of another inmate during the boycott. Catlett had alerted the assistant warden in July that Hairston had threatened to have him killed if he did not rejoin the gang.[517]

With tensions growing amid the boycott, Finkbeiner ordered the transfer of five inmates who had instigated the beatings of Jaycee members to Menard. On April 22, the day of the transfer, two of the prisoners were taken to the west gate; when a captain went into the dining room to retrieve a third inmate, he initially walked with the officer to the gate, but then said, "I'm not going" and walked back into the west cellblock. Approximately 70 prisoners—most of whom were Blackstone Rangers—followed him, and by 1:00 the group had taken over the cellblock and seriously injured one of the guards. Robert Buchanan, who was superintendent of the east cellblock housing prisoners from Reception and Classification, entered the west cellblock with Jaycee photographer Herbert Catlett and another prisoner, who was a member of the Blackstone Rangers. Catlett and Buchanan were taken hostage along with the other guards and around a dozen independent inmates already in the cellblock.[518]

About 90 minutes later, Warden Finkbeiner came to the prison yard directly below the west cellblock windows and ordered the inmates to release the hostages and surrender. Finkbeiner initially refused to hear the prisoner's demands, instructing officers to lob tear gas canisters through the windows. A group of officers were sent into the cellblock to quell the riot, but retreated when they discovered the body of Herbert Catlett, who had been killed by the rioters and left on the third tier of the cellblock. When Finkbeiner called Daniel Walker to alert him of the riot, the governor ordered him to "open a dialogue with the rioters." Walker's aid Al Raby and Joseph Feconda, Administrator of Adult Institution Services at IDOC, were sent from Springfield to oversee the negotiations. Through Buchanen, the prisoners conveyed a list of three demands to Finkbeiner: the three inmates would not be transferred that day; no prisoners who were involved in the riot would be physically retaliated against; and a Black TV reporter from Chicago would be allowed into the prison to talk with the rioters. Finkbeiner agreed to all three demands, and, at the rioters' insistence, made a recorded statement of the agreement that was broadcast over a local Joliet radio station. Once the prisoners had heard the statement on the radio, they began to release the hostages, and the cellblock was locked down that evening.[519]

Ultimately, the uprising did nothing to prevent the transfers, and within days the inmates were sent to Menard. Remarking on the disturbance, Sielaff told the press "We run the prisons, not the gangs. We will not tolerate gangs running the prison." He conceded, however, that it was likely "not possible to completely eliminate them in prison."[520] Following the riot, IDOC installed protective custody units within each of the state's maximum-security prisons to segregate vulnerable prisoners (including informants and inmates not affiliated with gangs) from the general population. Sielaff also announced that going forward, Joliet would house all young inmates

[516] Ibid.
[517] Ibid, 69-70.
[518] Ibid, 72-3.
[519] Ibid, 73.
[520] "Street Gang Influence Ignited Takeover," *The Pantagrapgh* (Bloomington, IL), April 24, 1975, 1.

who requested voluntary protective custody within the other maximum-security prisons. Sielaff explained that the new program was designed to remove these inmates "from the more sophisticated and aggressive elements in maximum security institutions," and would allow them "to participate fully in a wide range of programs."[521]

Illinois' Determinate Sentencing and "Class X" Law and the End of the Rehabilitative Ideal

Amid growing public panic around rising crime rates in Illinois, in December 1977 the Illinois legislature passed H. B. 1500, also known as the "Class X" bill, a sweeping criminal justice reform package that eliminated determinate sentencing and parole in favor of fixed sentence lengths. The law created a new class of felonies, called "Class X," including rape, armed robbery, manufacture or sale of narcotics, felonies committed with a dangerous weapon, heinous battery, and aggravated arson. Persons convicted under the new classification would not be eligible for probation and were subject to mandatory minimum and greater maximum sentences than under the previous law.[522] A habitual offender sentencing provision under the law also required judges to give a life sentence for an offender's third conviction for a violent felony, an early iteration of the "three-strikes laws" subsequently passed by a number of states in the 1990s. Although the new law did allow inmates to earn a day-for-day good-time credit to reduce time served, increased minimum and maximum sentence lengths, as well as potential increases that could be applied by judges for certain aggravating factors, meant that many of the sentences given under the law—particularly for higher-class felonies—would be substantially longer than under previous legislation. Republican Governor James R. Thompson, who had pledged during his campaign to eliminate indeterminate sentencing and parole, declared when announcing the legislation that "Sooner or later we have to tell criminals that we are not going to fool around with them any longer."[523]

Thompson's new law held obvious appeal for "tough on crime" advocates who wanted criminals to pay for their misdeeds with longer stints in prison. Determinate sentencing also had liberal supporters, who argued that indeterminate sentencing could be arbitrary. Prisoners had long railed against the state's parole board for its inconsistency—both the 1917 and 1931 riots at Joliet had occurred in part because of inmates' displeasure with the caprices of the parole board. But many judicial and governmental officials also expressed concern that the law was too punitive. Dallas C. Ingermunson, Kendall County state's attorney, worried that Class X would leave judges and prosecutors with little flexibility in sentencing, stating "I'm a little reluctant to say that I want to take every 17-year-old who commits a Class X crime and put him away for six years."[524]

In addition to the "Class X" legislation, Thompson's administration also re-instated the death penalty in Illinois. The Supreme Court's ruling in Furman v. Georgia in 1972 had required states to remove arbitrary and discriminatory effects to satisfy the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution, which protects against cruel and unusual punishment. In the years following the ruling, several states, including Illinois, re-wrote their capital punishment laws to abide by the ruling. Illinois reinstated the death penalty in 1974, but the state's Supreme Court subsequently voided the law. The subsequent 1977 law stood until 2011, when subsequent legislation abolished the death penalty in the state.[525]

[521] Illinois Department of Corrections, *1976 Annual Report* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1976), 3.
[522] Gregory W. O'Reilly, "Truth in Sentencing: Illinois Adds Yet Another Layer of Reform to its Complicated Code of Corrections," *Loyola University Chicago Law Journal*, Vol. 27 Issue 4 (Summer 1996), 993-994.
[523] Marcia Stepanek, "Thompson Proposes Tough Anti-Crime Laws," *Chicago Tribune*, April 6, 1977, 1.
[524] Bill Densmore, "'Class X' Crime Bill Creates Controversy," *The Pantagraph* (Bloomington-Normal, IL), September 19, 1977, 2.
[525] Jess Maghan, "Capital Punishment," *Encyclopedia of Chicago*; "State and Federal Info: Illinois," Death Penalty Information Website (accessed March 3, 2023 at https://deathpenaltyinfo.org/state-and-federal-info/state-by-state/illinois).

Illinois' "Class X" law and the reintroduction of the death penalty represented a larger nation-wide shift away from the rehabilitative ideal of criminal justice that had dominated the late 19th and early 20th century toward a more retributive model. Several prominent criminologists had given credence for this turn by publishing numerous articles showing that rehabilitation programs in prisons did not reduce recidivism rates and by arguing that the greater uniformity of determinate sentencing led to a fairer system for offenders.[526] Political scientist James Q. Wilson neatly summed up the conservative rationale behind determinate sentencing, a view which was shared by a majority of American by the late 1970s:

> Now suppose that we abandon entirely the rehabilitation theory of sentencing and corrections—not the effort to rehabilitate, just the theory that the governing purpose of the enterprise is to rehabilitate. . . Instead, we would view the correctional system as having a very different function—namely to isolate and to punish. It is a measure of our confusion that such a statement will strike many enlightened readers today as cruel, even barbaric. It is not. It is merely a recognition that society at a minimum must be able to protect itself from dangerous offenders and to impose some costs (other than the stigma and inconvenience of an arrest and court appearance) on criminal acts; it is also a frank admission that society really does not know how to do much else.[527]

Although prison administrators and other officials expressed apprehension that the new sentencing laws enacted in Illinois and other states would lead to substantial increases in the prison population, these concerns were largely ignored by politicians eager to prove to voters that they were restoring "law and order."

Almost immediately after "Class X" went into effect, IDOC Director Charles R. Rowe warned in an interview that the state's prisons were already struggling, claiming that "the system is in a state of crisis. The adult division is just straining every department we have." The pressure was greatest on Stateville, which in March 1977 was operating at over 100% capacity, but nearly all the prisons, including Joliet, were housing more prisoners than they were designed to hold. Rowe placed the blame squarely on "the increasing calls for the legal system to 'get tough' on criminals," combined with a lack of concern about how increased arrests and conviction rates would affect the state's correctional facilities. "I understand what the community is saying," Rowe said, "but if we're going to lock more people up, we're going to have to pay the tab."[528]

Joliet in the Era of Mass Incarceration

Illinois' Prison Population Explodes in the 1980s and 1990s

The final two decades of Joliet's operation coincided with an unprecedented rise in the state's prison population. Between 1978, the year that the state's "Class X" law went into effect, and 2002, the year Joliet closed, the number of people incarcerated in the Illinois' prison system rose catastrophically, from 10,733 to 43,142.[529] This explosion of the prison population was in large part due to increasingly punitive legislation enacted by the state through the 1980s and 1990s, as well as increased policing funded through federal grants from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, which pumped billions of dollars into local law enforcement agencies in the late 1960s and 1970s.[530] Unlike in previous eras, the population increase could not

[526] Christianson, *With Liberty for Some: 500 Years of Imprisonment in America*, 278.
[527] James Q. Wilson, quoted in Franklin E. Zimring, "Making the Punishment Fit the Crime," *The Hastings Center Report*, Vol. 6, No. 6 (December 1976), 14.
[528] Toni Ginneti, "Prisons Plagued by Numbers Game," *The Daily Herald*, March 3, 1977, 13.
[529] Illinois Department of Corrections, *1994 Statistical Presentation,* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1994), 4; Paige M. Harrison and Jennifer C. Karberg, "Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2002," *Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin,* April 2003, 3.
[530] Illinois Department of Corrections, *1983 Annual Report: Meeting the Challenge* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, 1983), 14.

be alleviated through other methods like parole or probation, which had been severely limited by the legislature. Nor could officials simply absorb the excess number of prisoners through double-celling—the sheer volume of new prisoners every year far exceeded space within existing prisons in the system, even if two inmates were placed in every available cell. Continual overcrowding placed a tremendous strain on prison administrators, staff, and prisoners, and incidents of violence between inmates and toward staff increased.

Before Class X went into effect in early 1978, the prison population had jumped from 6,707 to 10,054 between 1974 and 1976 but had remained relatively stable through 1978. By 1979, however, the number again began to climb rapidly, and by 1981 the population had reached levels not seen since the late 1930s.[531] In 1980, as the population began its precipitous rise, the Department of Corrections sought to alleviate overcrowding through a "forced early release" program that applied additional good-time credits to selected prisoners who had been convicted of lower-class crimes and held good records of behavior. The program served as a much-needed release valve for the prison system until 1983, when a public outcry and multiple lawsuits forced the department to abandon the practice.[532]

At the same time, Governor Thompson appointed a 27-member Task Force on Prison Crowding to investigate possible solutions to overcrowding in the state's prison system. The task force issued their recommendations—which included amending existing laws, strengthening probation, and constructing new prisons and community centers—in September of 1983. An unused section of the mental health hospital at Logan Correctional center had already been converted to a cell house in 1977, and two additional medium security prisons had been constructed in 1980.[533] Even as IDOC scrambled to contain the crisis in the early 1980s, the Illinois General Assembly continued to enact new laws that increased sentences. In 1981, the legislature expanded mandatory imprisonment for felonies outside of the Class X category, and in 1982 it reduced minimum weights of both cocaine and heroin for Class X and Class 1 drug offences.

By the mid-1980s, the "War on Drugs" had replaced the "War on Crime" in Illinois and the rest of the country, and the state's General Assembly responded in turn, enacting ever stricter laws around the sale and possession of drugs between 1985 and 1995. Although generally linked to the introduction of crack cocaine in urban centers, the War on Drugs began in the early 1980s under Ronald Reagan, whose administration provided federal funding and other resources to local police forces that prioritized the enforcement of drug laws. Both the federal government and state governments increased penalties for drug use and sales through the 1980s and 1990s. State law enforcement agencies and prosecutors enthusiastically joined in the fight, and the number of arrests and convictions for drug offenses climbed precipitously through the 1980s and 1990s. Even the federal judiciary played its part through rulings that continually eroded citizens' Fourth Amendment rights against search and seizure, allowing for more warrantless searches, "stop-and-frisk" procedures, and random drug testing to root out potential offenders.[534]

The evolution of the state's "Safe Zone" laws through the 1980s and 1990s neatly illustrates the Illinois General Assembly's continual ramp-up of punitive legislation regarding drug offenses. Based on an earlier law that aimed to curb the sale of drugs to minors, Illinois' first Safe Zone law was enacted in 1985, and doubled the penalty for the sale of an illicit substance if it occurred within 1,000 feet of any school. In 1992, the legislature clarified the language of the law to prohibit the sale of drugs in and around schools even at times when children

[531] Illinois Department of Corrections, *1994 Statistical Presentation*, 4.
[532] Illinois Department of Corrections, *1983 Annual Report*, 4-8; Daniel Egler and Billy Grady, "Governor Asks Counties to Keep Inmates," *Chicago Tribune*, July 16, 1983, 5.
[533] Illinois Department of Corrections, *1983 Annual Report: Meeting the Challenge,* 18.
[534] Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 61-62.

were not present. Between 1988 and 1999, the law was extended to include public parks, public housing, buses and bus stops, rest stops and truck stops, places of worship, and nursing homes, creating a web of overlapping zones that covered nearly the entire area of Chicago. Over this same period, the law was also expanded to include over two dozen additional non-drug-related offenses.[535]

Although the War on Drugs did little to stop the flow of drugs into the country, it did succeed in putting many more people in prison, mostly for relatively minor drug charges like possession or low-level sales offenses. Between 1984 and 2002, the number of drug offenders sentenced to prison in Illinois alone rose a staggering 1,968%, from 628 to 12,985.[536]

The weight of increased convictions and longer sentences for drug offenses in Illinois fell almost exclusively on the state's Black male population, largely due to law enforcement agencies targeting of poor, urban Black communities for low-level drug offenses. Although Blacks and Whites in America have consistently shown similar rates of drug use, and sales of most drugs occur between members of the same racial group, African Americans during this period were far more likely than White offenders to be arrested and convicted for drug offenses in Illinois and most other states throughout the country. Between 1988 and 1990, the number of African Americans sent to prison in Illinois for drug offenses increased fourfold. By the time Joliet Correctional Center was closed in 2002, more than 80 % of all convicted drug offenders in the state were Black.[537]

The War on Drugs pushed Illinois' prison population to levels never seen in the system's history. By 1990, the number of inmates in Illinois prisons had reach 27,516, nearly double the number incarcerated in 1983.[538] With violent crime again on the rise in the late 1980s and early 1990s, however, state legislators continued to enact more punitive sentencing laws. In 1995, Republican Governor James Edgar signed the latest such law, called the "Truth-in-Sentencing" law, which he claimed would "keep violent offenders behind bars where they belong."[539] The new law eliminated day-for-day good-time credits for offenders convicted of murder and severely restricted them for select violent offenses. The law was applauded by most legislators, law enforcement officials, and the public; however, Michael Mahoney, president of the John Howard Association, criticized the new legislation, pointing out that "It robs corrections officials of one of the few management tools to control the inmate population. . ."[540]

In the years following Illinois' Truth-in-Sentencing law, the state's prison population continued to soar, topping 40,000 in 1997 and reaching over 45,000 by 2000.[541] To conservative officials who advocated for "tough on crime" policies, this was good news. Jeff Ladd, a Republican candidate for Illinois attorney general, declared in 1992, "Some people say our prisons are too full. I say they're not full enough."[542] IDOC officials, however, continued to point out the real costs of prioritizing punitive sentences and high conviction rates without considering the effects on the state's correctional system.

[535] The Illinois Consortium on Drug Policy (Kathleen Kane-Willis, Jennifer Janichek, Tiffini Cooley, Alison Grimmer, Keara Enoch, and Stephanie Schmitz), "Through a Different Lens: Shifting the Focus on Illinois Drug Policy," (Chicago: The Institute for Metropolitan Affairs, Roosevelt University, 2007), 8-9; Gregory W. O'Reilly, "Truth in Sentencing; Illinois Adds Yet Another Layer of Reform to its Complicated Code of Corrections," *988.*

[536] The Illinois Consortium on Drug Policy, "Through a Different Lens: Shifting the Focus on Illinois Drug Policy," 13.

[537] Ibid, 15-16.

[538] Illinois Department of Corrections, *1994 Statistical Presentation*, 4.

[539] Gary Marx, "Edar Signs a Stricter Truth-in-Sentencing Law, *Chicago Tribune,* August 21, 1995, section 2, p. 2.

[540] Ibid.

[541] Darrell K. Gilliard and Allen J. Beck, Ph.D., "Prisoners in 1997," *Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin*, August 1998, 3; Allen J. Beck, Ph.D. and Paige M. Harrison, "Prisoners in 2000," *Bureau of Justic Statistics Bulletin,* August 2001, 3,

[542] Reid Magney, "Coming To Terms," *Herald & Review* (Decatur, IL), November 28, 1993, 1.

Remedies to Overcrowding

Through the 1980s, the primary way the Illinois Department of Corrections and the state legislature dealt with the sharply rising inmate population was by building more prisons. Between 1980 and 1989, the state built nearly a dozen minimum- and medium-security prisons throughout the state, more than doubling the size of the system within a single decade. Only two of the medium-security facilities—Dixon, completed in 1983, and Shawnee, completed in 1984—housed more than 1,000 inmates. The construction of these smaller, lower-security institutions allowed IDOC to move lower-level offenders or prisoners nearing release out of the existing maximum-security prisons—Joliet, Stateville, Pontiac, and Menard—that housed serious or repeat offenders. As the incarceration rate continued to rise, six additional minimum and medium-security facilities were added to the system in the 1990s.

Illinois' initial decision to embark upon such a massive construction program was driven in part to avoid the potential legal risks that came with double-celling prisoners. Lawsuits filed by prisoners at Joliet and Pontiac prisons asserting that double-celling constituted cruel and unusual punishment were making their way through the courts in the early 1980s. In 1981, IDOC was dealt a blow when US District Court Judge Harold A. Baker ruled in *Smith v. Fairman* that involuntary double-celling violated Pontiac prisoners' Eighth Amendment protection against cruel and unusual punishment, claiming that the practice was "a punishment contrary to every recognized standard of penology."[543] He ordered that the Illinois Department of Corrections had until the end of the year to cease double-celling inmates at the prison. The state appealed the case to the 7th US Circuit Court of Appeals, which reversed Baker's ruling, noting that, although double-celling may be unpleasant, it was "part of the penalty that criminal offenders pay."[544] The U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear the case, and the practice of double-celling was allowed to continue at Pontiac. Even with the approval of the courts, double-celling was still viewed by Illinois prison officials as a last resort because of the constant concerns about potential violence, sexual assault, or collusion between cell mates. And, in contrast with 19th century prisoners who spent most of the daytime hours outside of their cells working, prisoners at Pontiac testified that they spent between 16 and 20 hours a day in their cells, with little relief from the stifling conditions they presented.[545]

The Illinois Department of Correction's decision to focus its efforts on constructing minimum and medium security institutions made financial sense—with fewer security requirements, these facilities were cheaper and faster to build than modern maximum-security prisons. However, this choice only highlighted the poor condition of the state's existing maximum-security complexes, all of which were at least 50 years old. As early as 1974, the *Illinois Corrections Master Plan* prepared by the National Clearinghouse for Criminal Justice Planning and Architecture had recommended a phased abandonment of Joliet, Pontiac, Menard, the Pontiac Psychiatric Unit, the Menard Psychiatric Hospital, and Stateville—the entirety of the system's maximum-security units. In discussing the fate of these prisons amid rising inmate population in 1980, Illinois' Capital Development Board made the obvious point that it was "fiscally and politically improbable that the State of Illinois could replace the five [oldest] facilities as long as new bedspaces are in demand."[546] Through the 1980s and 1990s, IDOC remained in the uncomfortable position of being keenly aware that all of its maximum security facilities were antiquated and well below current national standards for prison design, but unable to even temporarily go without any of the beds that they contained. Even before the crisis in prison overcrowding

[543] Mary Ann Flick, "Top Court Allows 2-Man Prison Cells," *The Pantagraph* (Bloomington-Normal), May 24, 1983, 1.
[544] Associated Press, "Two-man cells at Pontiac OK," *Belleville News-Democrat*, October 6, 1982, 7.
[545] Illinois Legislative Investigating Commission, *Illinois Corrections: An Interim Report to the Illinois General Assembly* (Chicago: State of Illinois, 1982),*23*.
[546] Ibid, 20-21.

was evident, the 1974 *Master Plan* had acknowledged that its replacement plan was highly unlikely, and recommended that, if the facilities must be kept, as little money as possible be spent on their upkeep.[547]

Throughout this period, Joliet and the other maximum-security prisons in Illinois were updated periodically when funding was available or when conditions became untenable. Joliet received the final substantial upgrades to its physical plant in the late 1980s, when the 1903 dining room and kitchen were torn down and replaced with a modern facility directly north of the hospital. An indoor recreation building was also constructed on the site of the former dining room. The recreation building—with a regulation-size basketball court, weight room, and showers—was likely a welcome addition for the inmates. The east and west cellhouses and honor dorm were updated with more modern fixtures and electrical wiring, and various former industrial buildings within the plant were also updated to house new vocational training and industrial programs.

In addition to substantially increasing the number of minimum- and medium-security prisons in the state, in the 1990s the Department of Corrections also began to utilize alternative programs to keep low-level and first-time offenders out of the state's prisons. In 1990 it inaugurated the Impact Incarceration Program, which was a "boot camp" for first time offenders under the age of 30. After completing a short, intensive program of military training, drug abuse counseling, and academic and social skills training, participants were allowed out on parole. The first Impact Incarceration Program Site was established on grounds of the former Dixon Springs Work Camp, which offered its participants "meaningful work opportunities in the Shawnee National Forst."[548] That same year, the Department of Corrections was authorized by the legislature to deduct an additional 90 days of good time from the sentences of select inmates. The department was also allowed to relax the enforcement of "technical violations" made by parolees (such as missing an appointment with their parole officer), which prevented parolees from re-entering prison. But these interventions were not enough to significantly impact the overcrowding crisis, and budget cuts the following year threatened to delay the opening of a new medium-security prison and four work camps.[549] With most of the existing lower-security prisons in the system already well above capacity, in 1993, Governor James Edgar signed into law a prison reform bill that authorized the construction of a new 500-bed maximum-security facility, implemented a program of electronic detention, and awarded additional good time credits to inmates who participated in educational programs.[550] Although funding was not provided by the legislature for the new prison, the electronic detention and educational good-time credit programs were put into place.

The Effects of Overcrowding on Illinois' Prisons in the 1980s and 1990s

Even after undertaking a massive building program and implementing alternative measures in incarceration through the 1980s and 1990s, the Illinois Department of Corrections could still not keep pace with continual rise of the state's prison population. The chronic state of overcrowding within Illinois' correctional centers had serious negative effects on almost every element of the prison system. Coordinating meals and recreation periods became more difficult due to the number of inmates using the facilities. Programs were chronically understaffed and underfunded, and there were long waiting lists for educational and vocational programs that only grew after the state approved additional good-time credits for inmates who participated.[551] Disturbances within prisons often led to extended lockdowns, with inmates remaining in their cells for days, weeks, or even

[547] Ibid.
[548] Illinois Bureau of Administration & Planning, *Impact Incarceration: 1991 Annual Report to the Governor and the General Assembly* (Springfield: Illinois Department of Corrections, 1991), 7.
[549] Don Thompson, "Population in Prisons to Increase," *The Pantagraph* (Bloomington-Normal, IL), January 5, 1992, 2.
[550] Lorie A. Postman, "Education Spells Success," *The Rock Island Argus,* August 30, 1993, 8.
[551] Kimberly Clarke, "Prison Schooling Waiting List is Long," *The Belleville News-Democrat*, January 24, 1991, 14.

months—when an inmate uprising at Pontiac in July 1978 resulted in the death of three guards, the prison was put on lockdown for over six months. Given that such disturbances could reverberate through the system and set off a chain reaction, multiple prisons were often locked down simultaneously as a preventative measure. When inmates at Stateville took three guards hostage in July 1991, IDOC Director Howard A. Peters III ordered lockdowns at Joliet, Menard, and Pontiac.[552] Disease also spread more easily through overcrowded cell houses—in 1991, IDOC reported that nearly 800 inmates (approximately three percent of the population) had tested positive for Tuberculosis.[553]

Although the prison population crisis affected all the facilities within Illinois' correctional system, IDOC's greatest concerns centered around its aging maximum-security prisons—Joliet, Stateville, Pontiac, and Menard. Because Class X and Class 1 felons received lengthier sentences and mandatory prison time, they remained in the prison system longer, creating an accretion of more violent and serious offenders—by the 1990s, approximately 70% of the state's prison population were serious offenders. At the same time, a skyrocketing number of prisoners convicted of lesser drug offenses and serving shorter sentences continually cycled through the prisons, taking up much-needed bedspace. Inmates in Illinois' maximum-security institutions were frequently double-celled—in July 1990, IDOC reported that 84% of the inmates at Joliet were double-celled, the highest percentage of any prison in the system.[554] By the 1990s, Illinois remained as one of only a handful of states that continued to double-cell inmates at maximum-security facilities.[555]

Gang and drug activity were chronic issues at all the state's maximum-security prisons through the last decades of the 20th century. In 1982, after a series of disturbances at Menard and Pontiac, Department of Corrections Director Michael Lane transferred eleven inmates—including one from Joliet—to federal prisons outside the state.[556] Even with attempts to break up influence of gang leaders, media outlets continued to report on the prevalence of gangs and drugs in the state's prisons through the 1980s and 1990s. In 1997, the Department of Corrections announced that the minimum-security Taylorville Correctional Center would be designated as the state's first "gang-free" prison. Using data on inmate's gang affiliation that had been gathered by prison officers and administrators, IDOC was able to identify which prisoners were not affiliated with any of the prison gangs and transfer selected numbers to Taylorville. Any display of gang colors or hand signals was strictly forbidden, and all inmates were required to undergo substance abuse counseling and "lifestyle redirection programming."[557] The department also instituted regular sweeps for drugs and other contraband, began random drug-testing of employees, and established K-9 units to combat the flow of drugs through the system.[558]

The overcrowding at Joliet and throughout Illinois' prison system also placed tremendous strain on the prison guards responsible for maintaining security and order in an increasingly unstable environment. Through the 1980s and early 1990s, inmate assaults on prison staff rose dramatically—in 1990, there were 62 inmate assaults and 171 assaults on staff members at Joliet, and by 1996, a record 1,219 assaults on staff members within Illinois' prison system had been reported.[559] In 1981, members of the AFSCME representing prison guards at Joliet picketed outside of the prison to protest overcrowding of the prison yards. Picketers carried

[552] Associated Press,"Stateville Violence Gang-Linked, Corrections Director Says," *The Belleville News-Democrat*, July 16, 1991, 9.
[553] *Rock Island Argus,* April 6, 1992, 3.
[554] *Insight into Corrections*, July 1990, 14.
[555] The Illinois Task Force on Crime and Corrections, *Final Report* (Springfield, IL: Illinois State Police, 1993), 84.
[556] "Gang-Related Riots at Prisons Prompt Transfer of 11 inmates," *Evansville Press* (Evansville, IN) August 9, 1982, 17.
[557] Illinois Department of Corrections, *1997 Annual Report* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois), 45.
[558] Christi Parsons, "Madigan to Create Prison-Reform Panel," *Chicago Tribune*, January 17, 1997, 158; Illinois Department of Corrections, *1997 Annual Report*, 41.
[559] Wes Smith, "State's Prisons Test the Limits," *Chicago Tribune*, March 30, 1991, 1; Henry Bayer, "Prison Reform: Schools Weren't the Only Losers," *Southern Illinoisan* (Carbondale, IL), June 12, 1997, 14.

signs reading "150 in the yard are too many" and "We don't want another Pontiac," a reference to the 1978 Pontiac riot that killed three guards. Union members also filed suit in Will County Circuit Court demanding that conditions at the prison be improved.[560] Nearly ten years later, with guard-to-inmate ratios continuing to fall, Illinois prison guards planned a state-wide demonstration to protest rampant overcrowding and to urge the legislature to increase staffing at its prisons.[561]

Faced with increasing inmate violence and low staff morale, members of the Illinois Task Force on Crime and Corrections convened by Governor Edgar in 1993 recommended the construction of the state's first "supermax" prison, which could house 500 inmates deemed too disruptive or violent to remain in Joliet, Stateville, Pontiac, or Menard.[562] Funding for the new prison was subsequently approved, and in 1998 Tamms Correctional Facility began operation. In a program reminiscent of the Pennsylvania system advocated by early 19th-century prison reformers, inmates condemned to Tamms remained in solitary confinement for months or years, leaving their cells only for brief periods of recreation in a small, enclosed yard. After numerous lawsuits and reports from prison advocacy groups on the devastating physical and psychological effects of long-term solitary confinement, Tamms was closed in 2012.

Life at Joliet in the Final Decades

Through the 1980s and 1990s, Joliet Correctional Center remained in a holding pattern—its function as the main processing center for incoming inmates, as well as the desperate need for bedspace, kept the facility in operation, even as it was repeatedly called out by prison officials, legislators, and advocacy groups for its antiquated physical plant. By the late 1990s, the Northern Reception and Classification Center had increasingly taken over cell space and facilities in the main prison in order to accommodate the huge volume of prisoners coming from the northern part of the state—by the late 1990s, the center processed up to 23,000 inmates in a single year.[563] Through the 1990s, the permanent population at Joliet continued to decrease, and by 2000 only 400 inmates were housed permanently in the west cellhouse.[564] As they did at most of the state's maximum-security prisons during this period, inmates at Joliet spent much of their time in their cells. Those prisoners who had been assigned to the few remaining industries at Joliet made mattresses and sheets at its mattress factory, performed data entry for the office of Illinois' Secretary of State, or worked on state-owned vehicles in the prison's automotive garage.[565] A small number of inmates nearing release were allowed to work clearing litter from highways in and around Chicago.[566] The prison's largest industries—the textile plant, shoe shop, and quarry—had been discontinued by the early 1970s. Inmates spent time in the prison's school—those who had tested below the 6th grade level attended mandatory adult education classes, and other inmates worked toward their GEDs or on more advanced degrees offered through a contract with Lewis University.[567] IDOC records from 1990 show that a relatively large percentage of Joliet's permanent inmate population was enrolled in two- or four-year college programs during their incarceration.[568] Vocational programs in graphic arts, welding, and mechanical drafting were also available for a small number of prisoners.

[560] *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 6, 1981, 5.
[561] "Guards Plan Protest at E. M. Prison," *The Dispatch* (Moline, IL), April 21, 1990, 28.
[562] The Illinois Task Force on Crime and Corrections, *Final Report*, 87.
[563] Illinois Department of Corrections, *1997 Annual Report,* 78.
[564] Illinois Department of Corrections, *2000 Annual Report* (Springfield, IL: Illinois Department of Corrections, 2000), 9.
[565] "The Wheels of Industry Behind Bars," *Southern Illinoisan* (Carbondale, IL) January 23, 1983, 24.
[566] Christi Parsons, "Prison Officials Say Chains Aren't What Convicts Need," *Chicago Tribune*, April 22, 1996, Section 1, p. 14.
[567] *Insight into Corrections,* January 1991, 6.
[568] *Insight Into Corrections*, July 1990, 22.

In many ways, the daily lives of inmates incarcerated at Joliet in its final years were materially better than those of their 19th-century counterparts. Their cells were slightly larger, and the "bucket brigade" had been replaced with modern lavatory facilities. They weren't required to perform hard labor at the prison quarries or workshops. They were able to spend more time outside during regular recreation periods, and they could distract and amuse themselves with TV or radios. Musicians and other performers were brought in to entertain them. They could write to and receive visits from family members and friends more often, and they could talk with them on the telephone. They had greater educational opportunities, better medical care, and access to drug and alcohol counseling.

Even with these improvements, however, inmates at Joliet at the turn of the 21st century still experienced the same monotony, physical confinement, and mind-numbing routine that remained at the core of prison life. They experienced the initial shock of losing their freedom when they entered the prison; they learned its rules from guards and how to get around them from their fellow prisoners; and—if not doomed to a mandatory life sentence—they waited for their time to be up. As in the past, some prisoners managed to endure the inherent challenges of incarceration, do their time, and leave the prison behind, while others succumbed to violence, mental illness, or despair.

The era of mass incarceration had (and continues to have) devastating impacts on the state's African American communities, which have been disproportionately affected by the increasingly punitive crime bills passed in the late 20th-century. As legal scholar Dorothy E. Roberts noted in 2004, "Mass imprisonment inflicts harm at the community level 'not only because incarceration, experienced at high levels, has the inevitable result of removing valuable assets from the community, but also because the concentration of the incarceration affects the community capacity of those who are left behind."[569] Mass incarceration damages social networks within families and the larger community, with "the most devastating consequences fall[ing] on children with parents in prison." High levels of incarceration within African American communities also serve to normalize prison, so that children within these communities come to see it as a "rite of passage imposed upon African American teenagers."[570] Former prisoners returning to their communities also face a host of "invisible punishments" that have long term impacts on their ability to participate fully in the civic and economic areas of community life:

> Unbeknownst to th[e] offender, and perhaps to any other actor in the sentencing process, as a result of his conviction he may be ineligible for many federally-funded health and welfare benefits, food stamps, public house, and federal education assistance. His driver's license may be automatically suspended, and he may no longer qualify for certain employment and professional licenses…He will not be permitted to enlist in the military, or possess a firearm, or obtain a federal security clearance. If a citizen, he may lose the right to vote; if not, he becomes immediately deplorable.[571]

While these restrictions are faced by all former prisoners, the impact remains greatest within African American communities.

In November 2001, Governor George Ryan announced that Joliet Correctional Center and the adjacent Reception and Classification Center would be shut down to help the state close an anticipated $500 million budget shortfall. Although construction had already been approved for a new 1,800-bed Reception and Classification Center at Stateville to replace the Joliet reception facility, the announcement still surprised local officials and prison employees, who had assumed that the prison would continue operating after the center had

[569] Dorothy E. Roberts, "The Social and Moral Cost of Mass Incarceration in African American Communities," *Stanford Law Review*, Vol 56:127, 2004, 1281.
[570] Ibid, 1283-1288.
[571] Ibid, 1291.

been relocated. Nearly $5 million dollars had been spent just the previous year to construct a new 300-bed cell block wing to the former women's prison, which temporarily housed violent sexual offenders undergoing intensive treatment before release.[572] The AFSCME, the union representing Illinois prison guards, opposed the closing, claiming that it would only lead to further overcrowding at the state's other maximum-security facilities. But Joliet Warden Ron Matrisciano voiced his approval, agreeing that the prison outlived its usefulness. "Since they built this," he explained, "they've found better ways to do thing, just like any industry."[573]

On February 16, 2002, the final inmate's that comprised the permanent population at Joliet were transferred to Stateville.[574] With the opening of the new Reception and Classification Center at Stateville in 2004, the Department of Corrections ceased all activity at the prison. The treatment center for sex offenders in the former women's prison remained in operation for several years under the direction of the Illinois Department of Health and Human Services.

[572] Christi Parson and Ray Long, "Ryan Swings Big Ax to Shore Up Budget," *Chicago Tribune,* November 28, 2001, 1; Jonathan Lipman, "Leaders Express Shock at Prison's Closing," *Southtown Star*, November 29, 2001, 7l; Rex Robinson, "Funds to Move Sex Offender Program from Joliet Found," *Southtown Star*, June 3, 2001, 44.
[573] David Heinzmann, "Joliet Prison: Old, Obsolete, Over," *Chicago* Tribune, December 1, 2001, 19.
[574] David Heinzmann, "Prison in Joliet Closing its Doors After 144 Years" *Chicago Tribune,* February 15, 2002, 1.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
____previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

____State Historic Preservation Office
____Other State agency
____Federal agency
__X__Local government
____University
____Other
Name of repository: _____

Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Historic District	Will County, Illinois
Name of Property	County and State

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Historic District
Name of Property

Will County, Illinois
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 96 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

A.	41.5480813	-88.076073	K.	41.5462246	-88.0652907
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
B.	41.548164	-88.072691	L.	41.5461371	-88.0654393
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
C.	41.5529353	-88.0726808	M.	41.5461583	-88.0667769
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
D.	41.5529792	-88.071105	N.	41.5460913	-88.0679537
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
E.	41.5528794	-88.0703834	O.	41.5456854	-88.070869
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
F.	41.5523344	-88.0691184	P.	41.5455955	-88.0726805
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
G.	41.5514549	-88.076073	Q.	41.5451768	-88.0726657
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
H.	41.5495292	-88.0690883	R.	41.5451134	-88.0770018
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
I.	41.5486702	-88.0687788	S.		
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
J.	41.5465885	-88.0661009	T.		
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary of the Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District encompasses the extant buildings, structures, and features that reflect the operations of the prison during the period of significance.

Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Historic District
Name of Property

Will County, Illinois
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lara Ramsey and Emily Ramsey date March 31, 2023

organization Ramsey Historic Consultants, Inc. telephone 312-613-1039

street & number 1105 W. Chicago Avenue, Suite 201 email lara@ramseyhcinc.com

city or town Chicago state IL zip code 60642

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **GIS Location Map (Google Earth or BING)**
- **Local Location Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).

Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Historic District
Name of Property

Will County, Illinois
County and State

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Name of Property: Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Historic District

City or Vicinity: Joliet

County: Will **State:** Illinois

Photographer: Ramsey Historic Consultants and Bauer Latoza Studio

Date Photographed: July and October 2022

1. Gate House (#1), view west.
2. Administration Building (#2a) and East Cellblock Wing (#29, partial), view northwest.
3. Administration Building (#2a), front façade, view north.
4. Administration Building (#2a), front entry porch, view northeast.
5. Administration Building (#2a), first floor, view south from hallway to vestibule.
6. Administration Building (#2a), first floor, hallway and staircase, view north.
7. Administration Building (#2a), second floor, staircase landing, view south.
8. Administration Building (#2a), second floor, east sitting room, view north.
9. Administration Building (#2a), southwest turret interior, view southwest.
10. West Cell Block (#3), south elevation, view north.
11. West Cell Block (#3), north elevation, view south.
12. West Cell Block (#3), second-floor south cellblock tier, view west.
13. School (#5) and Chapel (#6), view north.
14. Chapel (#6), front façade, view west.
15. Powerhouse (#13), south and east elevations, view northwest.
16. Gate at West Prison Wall (#30c), view west.
17. Center-West Industrial Shop (#7), east elevation, view west.
18. Northwest Industrial Shop (#8), south and east elevations, view northwest.
19. Marble Cutting Shop (#9), north and east elevations, view southeast. Powerhouse visible at left, Center-West Industrial Shop (#7) at right.
20. North Industrial Shop/Honor Dorm (#10), south elevation, view north.
21. Mule Barn (#17) and Warehouse/Stable (#18), west and north elevations, view southeast.
22. Marble Shop (#21), south elevation, view northwest.
23. Reservoir (#16), view south.
24. Yard Tower (#12), view northeast.
25. Fire House (#11), south and east elevations, view northwest.
26. Separate System Prison/Solitary Building (#15), east and south elevations, view northeast.
27. Separate System Prison (#15), first floor, view south to front entrance.
28. Harness Shop (#23), south and west elevations, view northeast. Partial view of Separate System Prison (#15) at left.
29. Women's Cellblock /Clothing Department/Bath House (#24), west elevation, view northeast.
30. Dining Hall/Cafeteria (#25), north elevation, view southeast. View of east prison entrance at left in background.
31. Gymnasium/Multipurpose Building (#26), south and west elevations, view northeast. View of Harness Shop (#23) at left in background, and Hospital (#27) directly right (east) of gymnasium.
32. Hospital (#27), front and east elevations, view northwest.
33. East Schoolhouse (#28) and Southeast Guard Tower (#31a), view south.

34. Prison Yard, view southeast, with Powerhouse (#13) at left and north elevations of Administration Building (#2a) and cellblocks (#3 and #29) center-right.
35. Prison Yard, view northeast from southwest corner of yard. Powerhouse (#13) on the left, Separate System Prison/Solitary Building (#15) at center, Dining Hall/Cafeteria (#25) at right.
36. Women's Prison, Administration Building (#34), front and east elevations, view northwest.
37. Women's Prison, Cellblock (#35), east elevation, view west.
38. Women's Prison, Administration Building (#34), second floor, principal staircase.
39. Women's Prison, Cellblock interior (#35), view north.
40. Women's Prison, north entrance and Northwest Guard Tower (#38c), view northwest.
41. Quarry Crusher Plant (#47), view northwest.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page X

Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
Name of Property
Will County, Illinois
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

List of Figures
(Resize, compact, and paste images of maps and historic documents in this section. Place captions, with figure numbers above each image. Orient maps so that north is at the top of the page, all document should be inserted with the top toward the top of the page.

Figure 32: *Chicago Defender* article dated December 4, 1915, reporting sentence of death for Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet inmate Joseph Campbell, who was convicted of murdering Odette Allen, wife of Joliet's warden, Edmund Allen.
Figure 33: Letter from Illinois State Representative Michael I. Igoe dated March 28, 1918, one of many letters written in support of clemency for Joseph Campbell (Illinois State Archives)
Figure 34: View of Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet grounds on March 14, 1931, showing debris after a riot broke out at the prison (Joliet Area Historical Society)
Figure 35: Damage to the shoe factory at Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet after the 1931 riot (Joliet Area Historical Museum)
Figure 36: Women's Prison under construction, c. 1896 (Joliet Area Historical Society)
Figure 37: Circa 1900 photograph of the Women's Prison at Joliet, looking northwest (Joliet Area Historical Museum)
Figure 38: Cell block in the Women's Prison, c. 1900 (Illinois State Archives)
Figure 39: Female inmates working in the laundry at the Women's Prison, c. 1900 (Illinois State Archives)
Figure 40: Laundry room in the Women's Prison, ca. 1910 (Joliet Area Historical Museum)
Figure 41: Female inmates in the cell block of the Women's Prison, c.1900 (Joliet Area Historical Museum)
Figure 42: View of a cell at the Joliet Women's Prison, c. 1900 (Illinois State Archives)
Figure 43: International News photograph dated December 1, 1940, showing Joliet inmate repairing toys for distribution to needy children as part of a toy drive organized by Joliet's civic leaders (Joliet Area Historical Museum)
Figure 44: Warden Joseph Ragen presenting a diploma to an inmate, circa 1950 (Joliet Area Historical Museum)
Figure 45: Vocational training at Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet, c. 1950 (Joliet Area Historical Museum)
Figure 46: 1971 photograph of the new chapel at Joliet Prison (*Chicago Tribune*)
Figure 47: Inmates in a cell at Joliet Prison, July 30, 1978 (*Chicago Tribune*)
Figure 48: Correctional offices picketing outside of Joliet Correctional Center for additional staffing in 1990 (*Chicago Tribune*)

Property name: Illinois State Penitentiary-Joliet Historic District
Illinois, County: Will

Figure 1. Location map

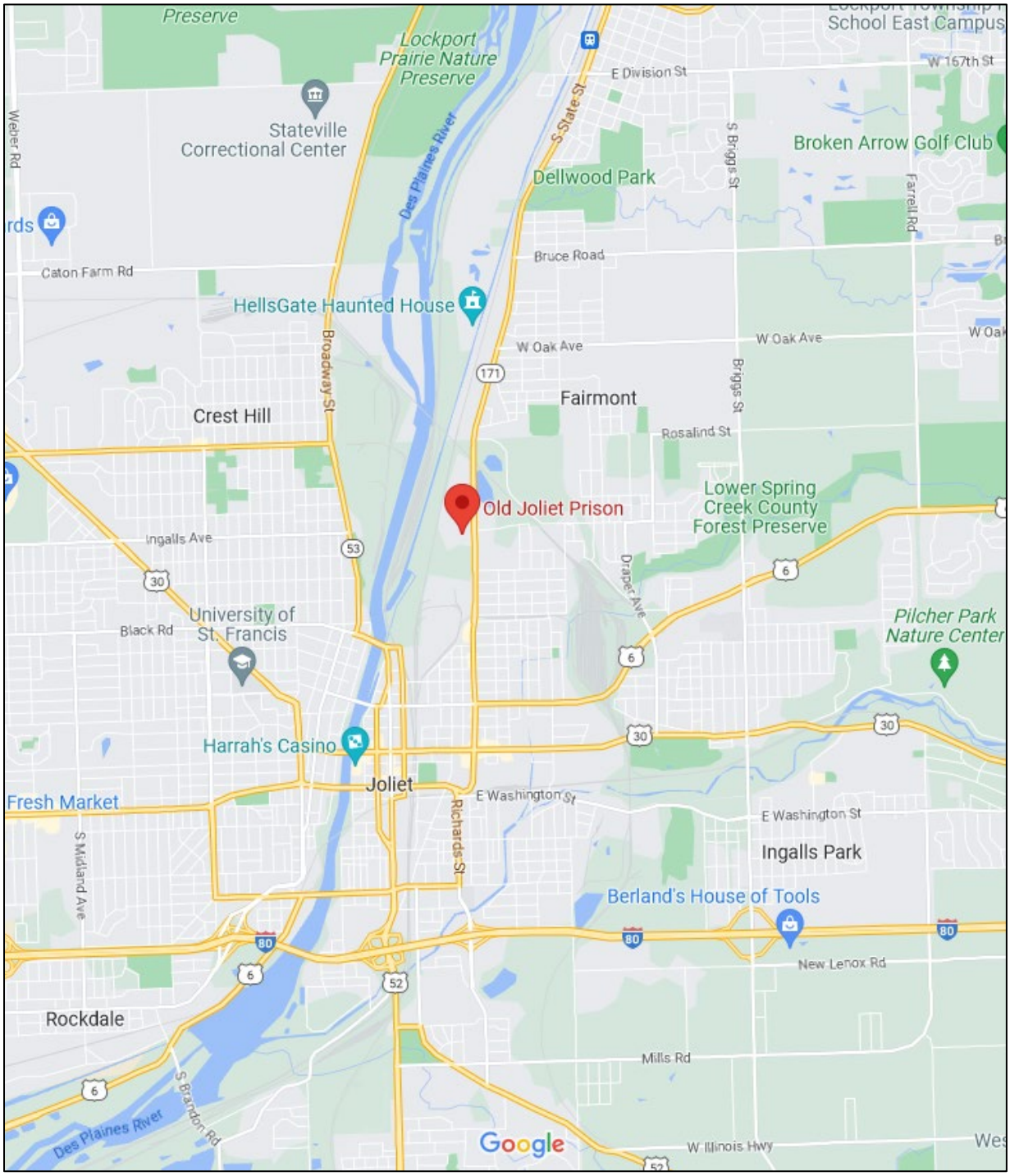

Figure 2. Google Earth GIS Map with District Boundary and Coordinates

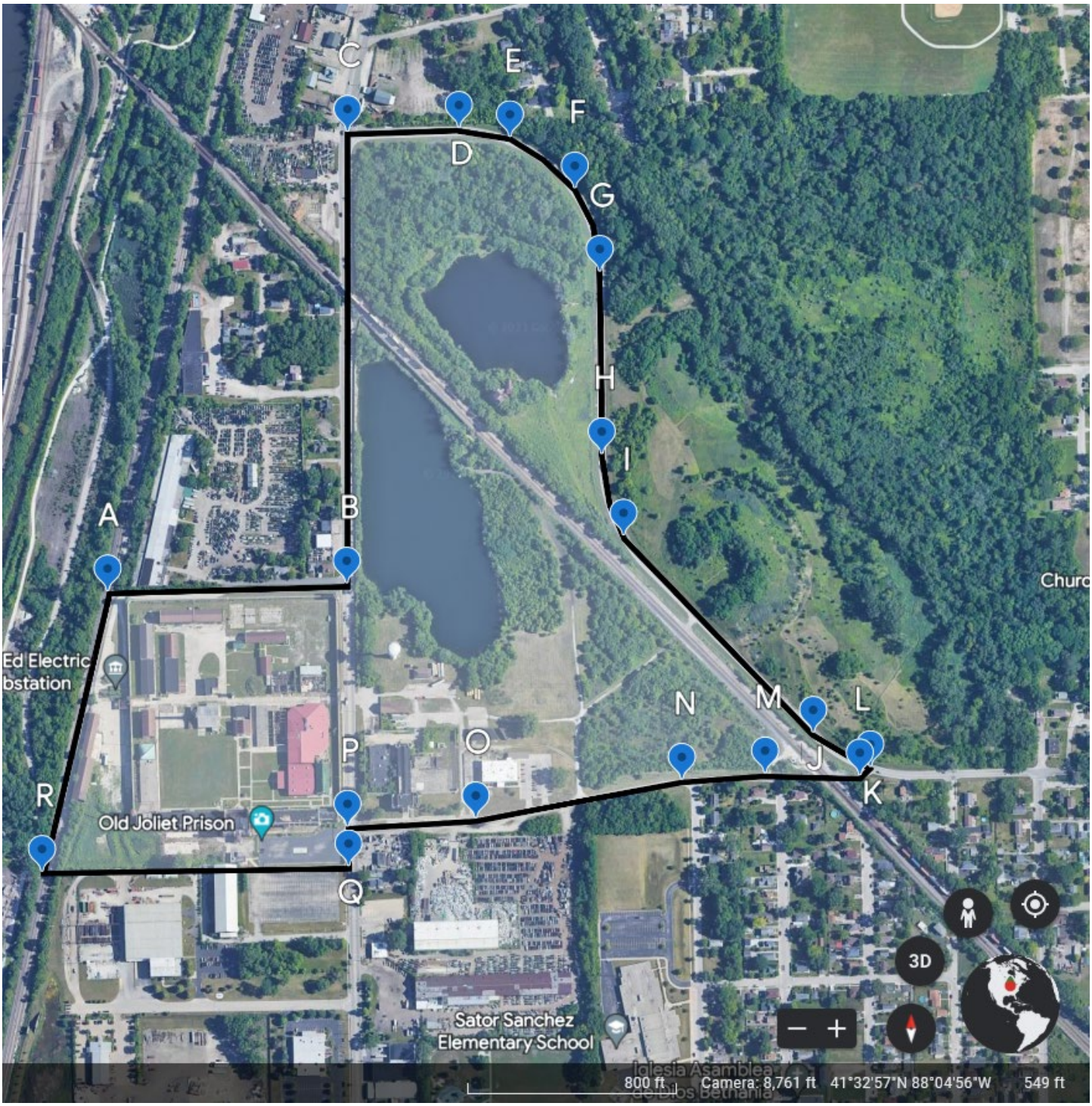

Figure 3. Building and Structures Key

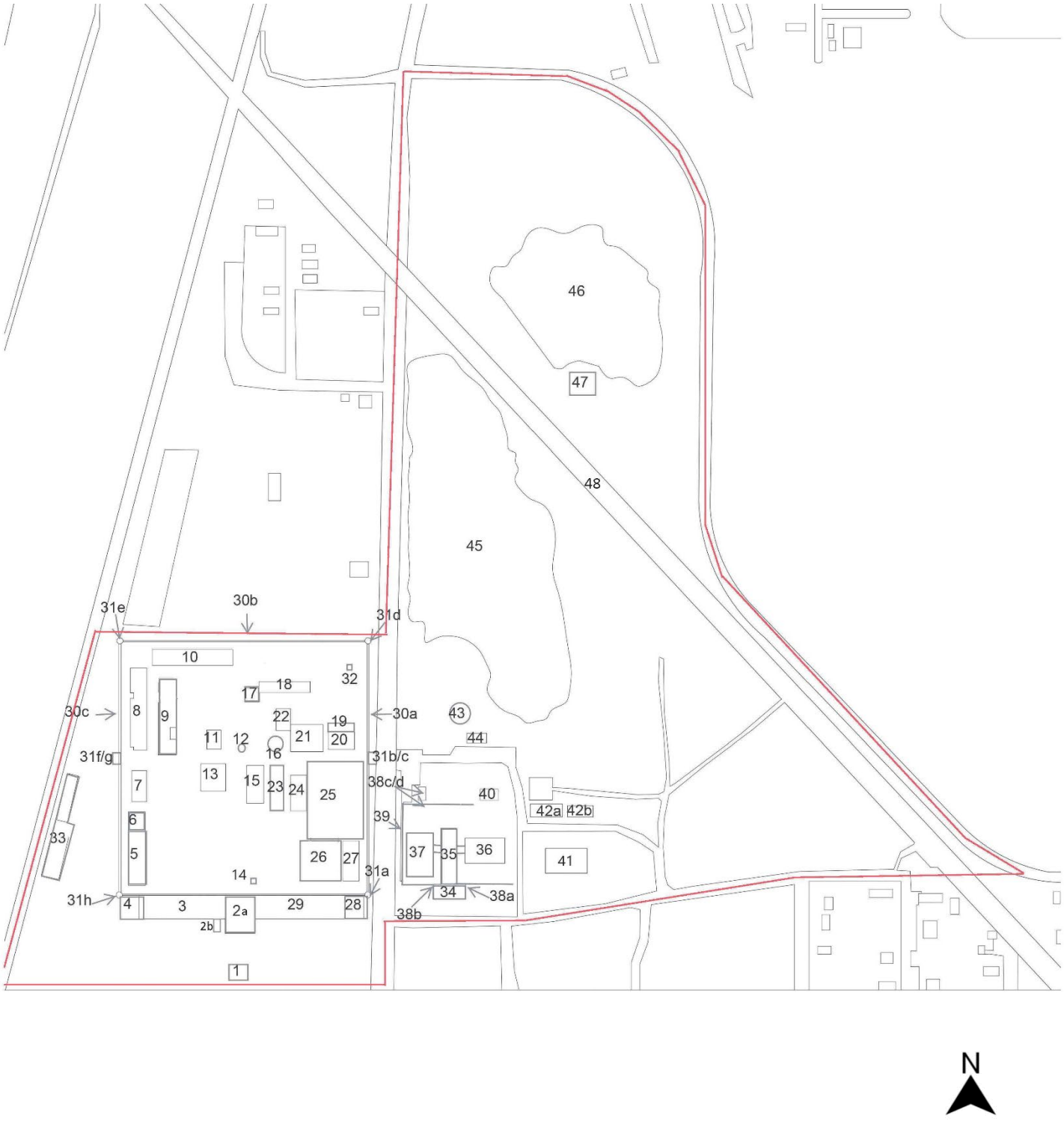

Figure 4: 1873 Bird's Eye View of Joliet Penitentiary (Will County Atlas)

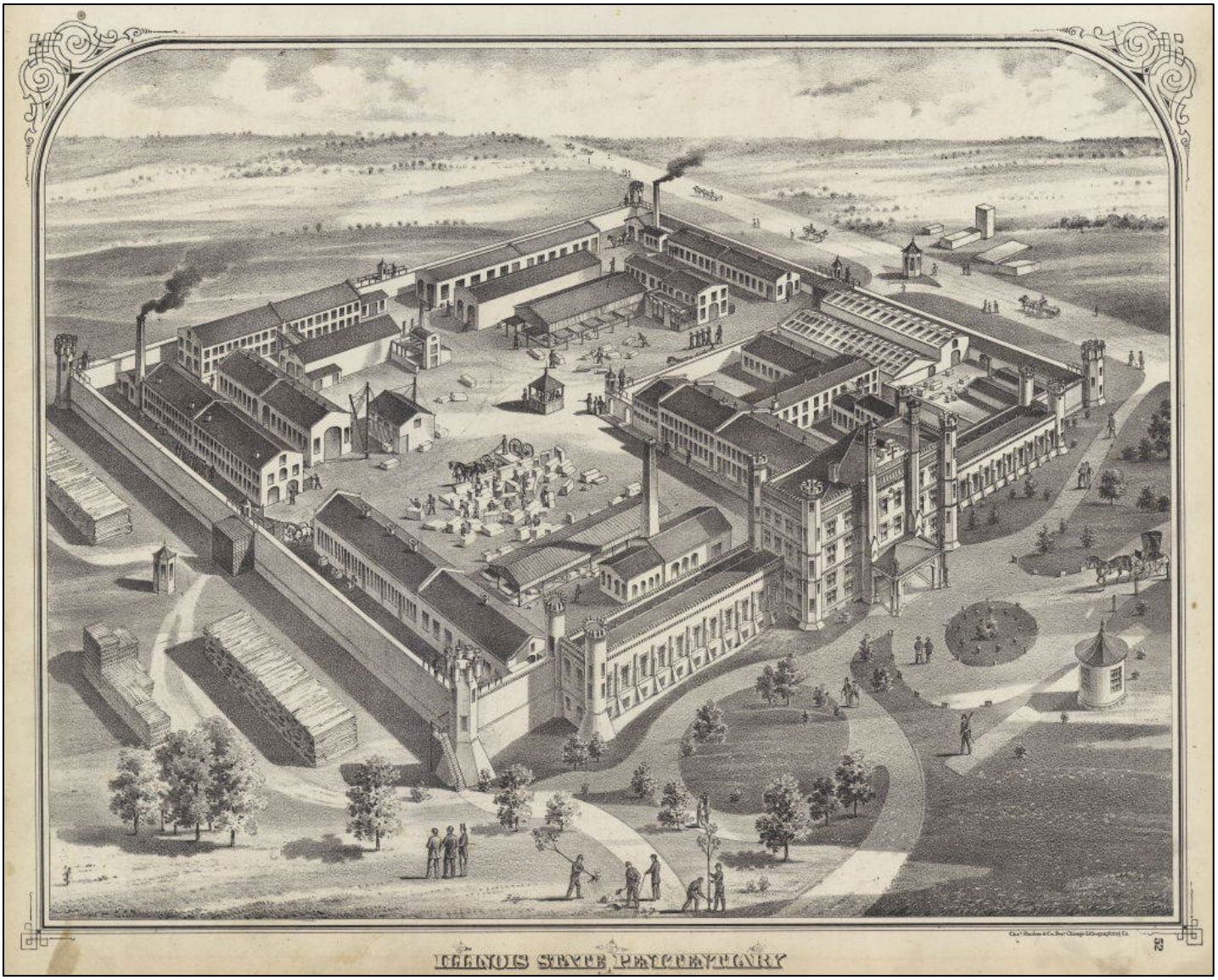

Figure 5: 1886 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing original Joliet Penitentiary (West of Collins Street)

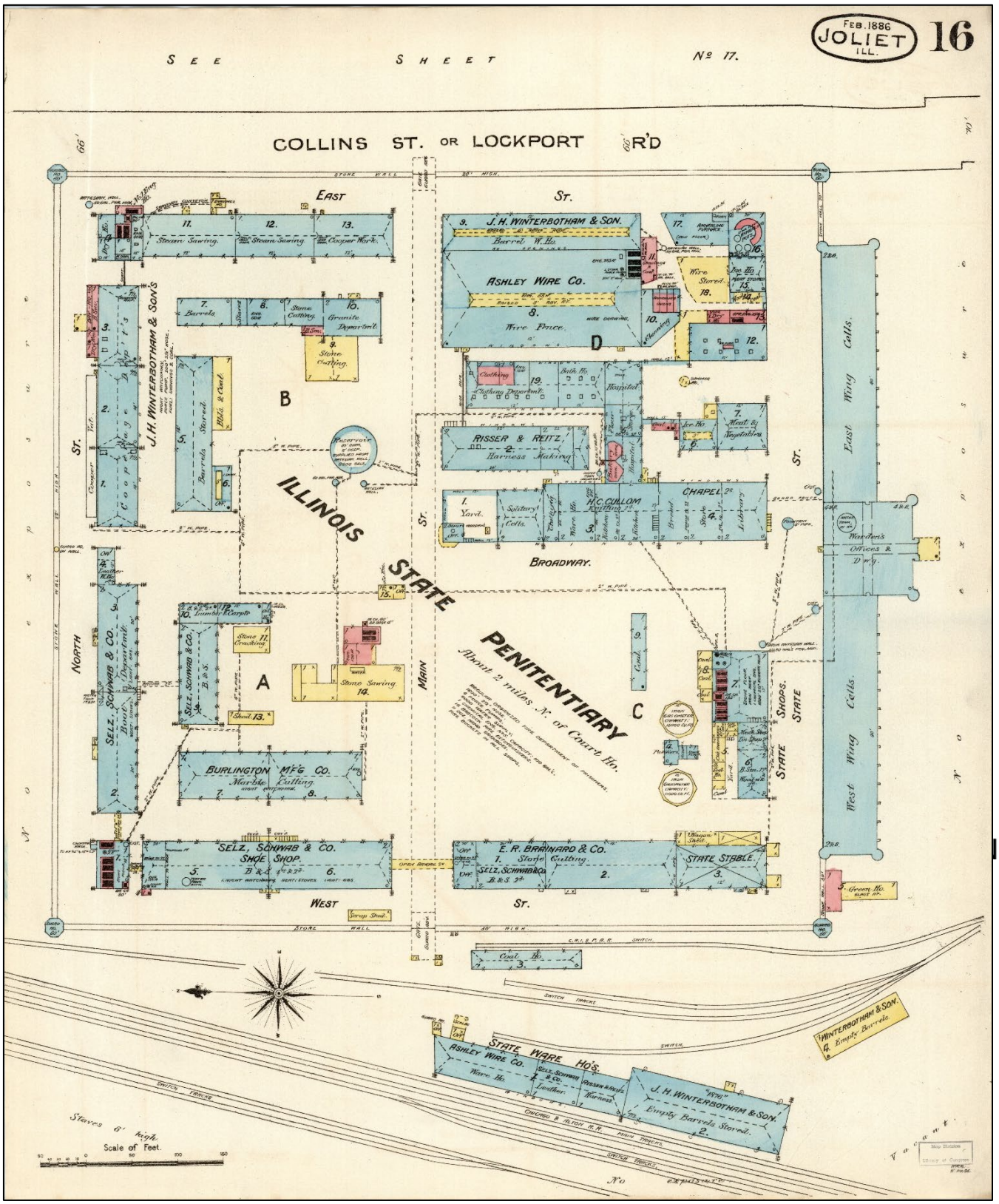

Figure 6: 1891 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, showing area east of Collins Street prior to construction of Women's Prison

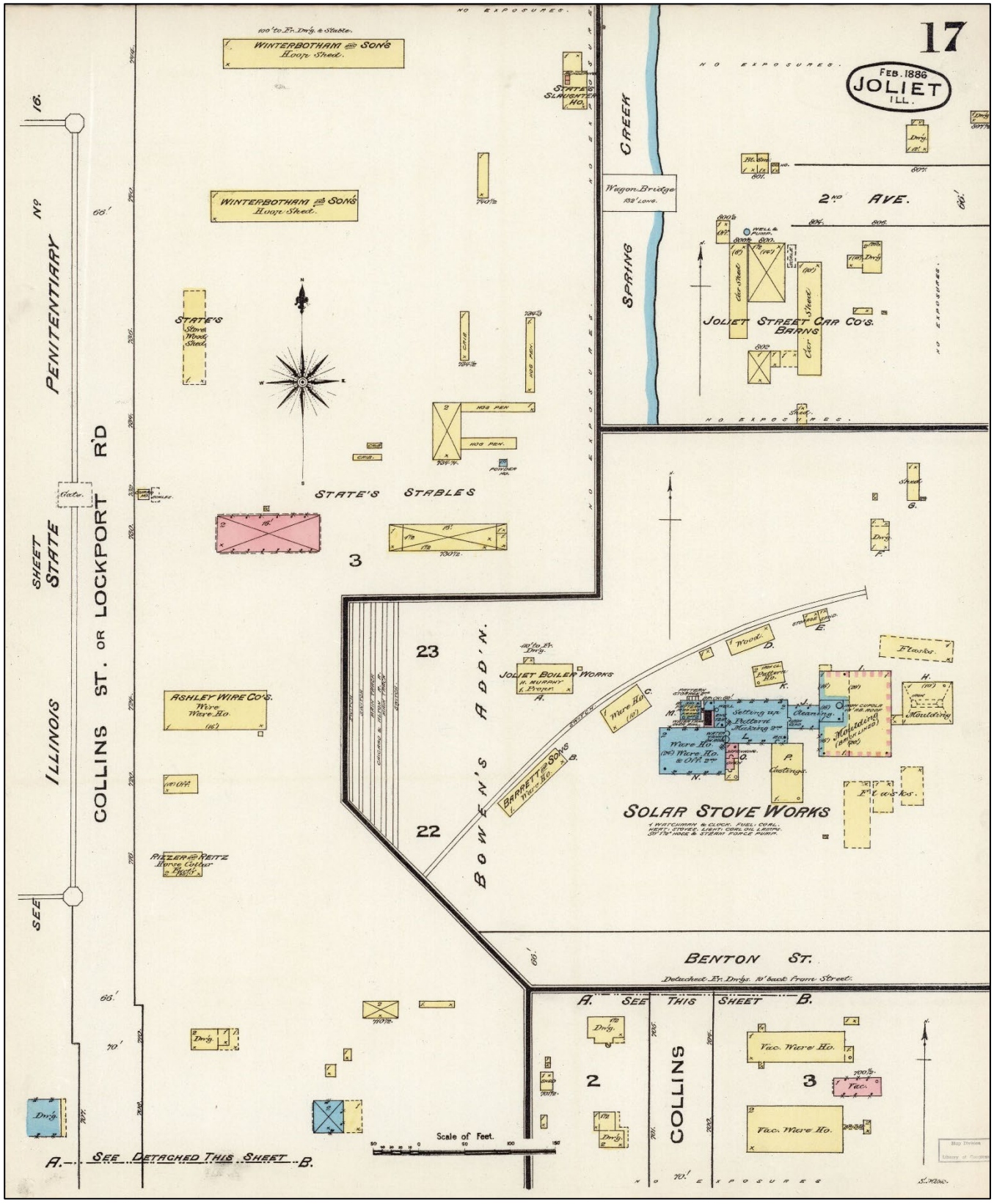

Figure 7: 1891

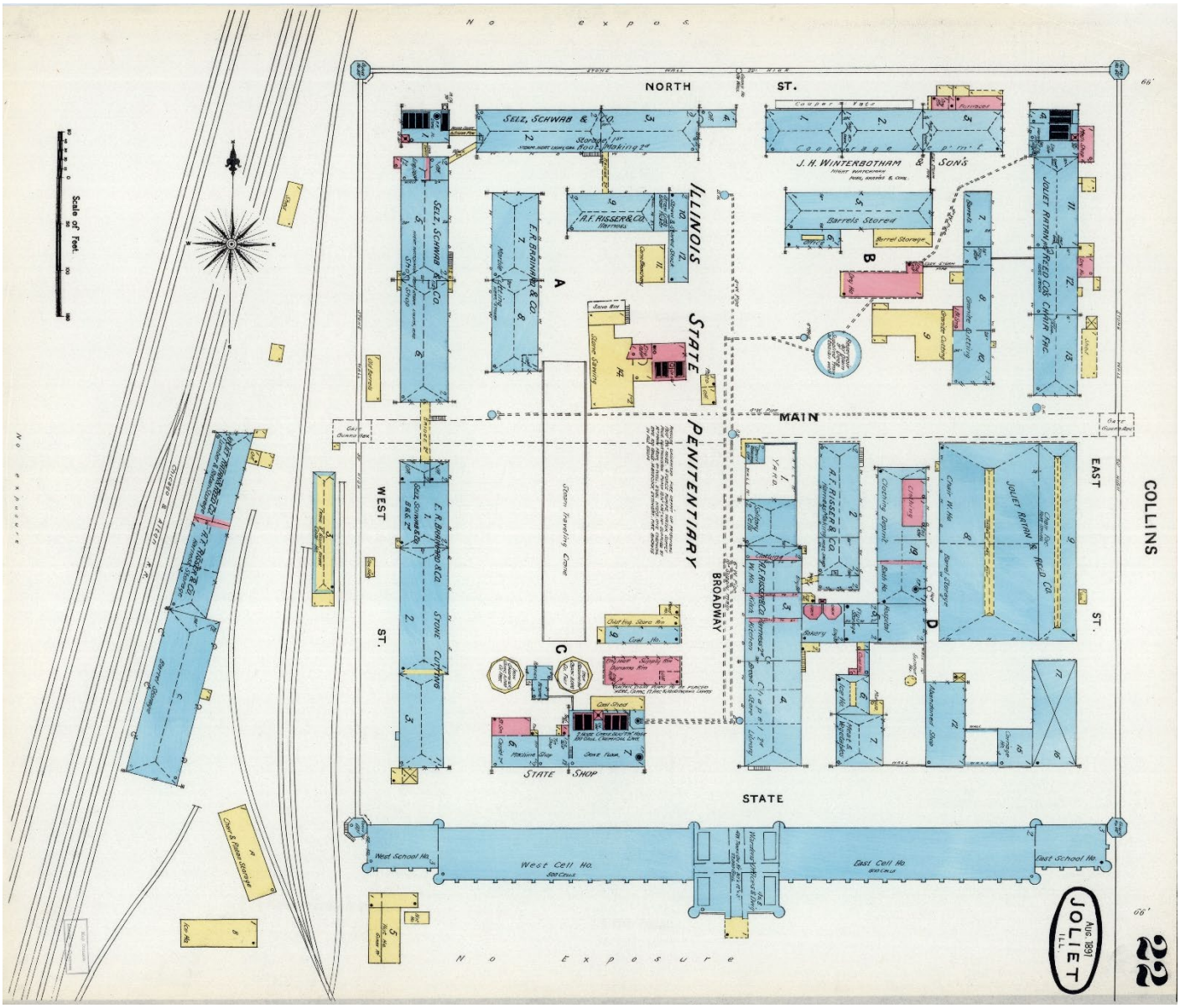

Figure 8: 1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, showing construction of Women's Prison west of Collins Street

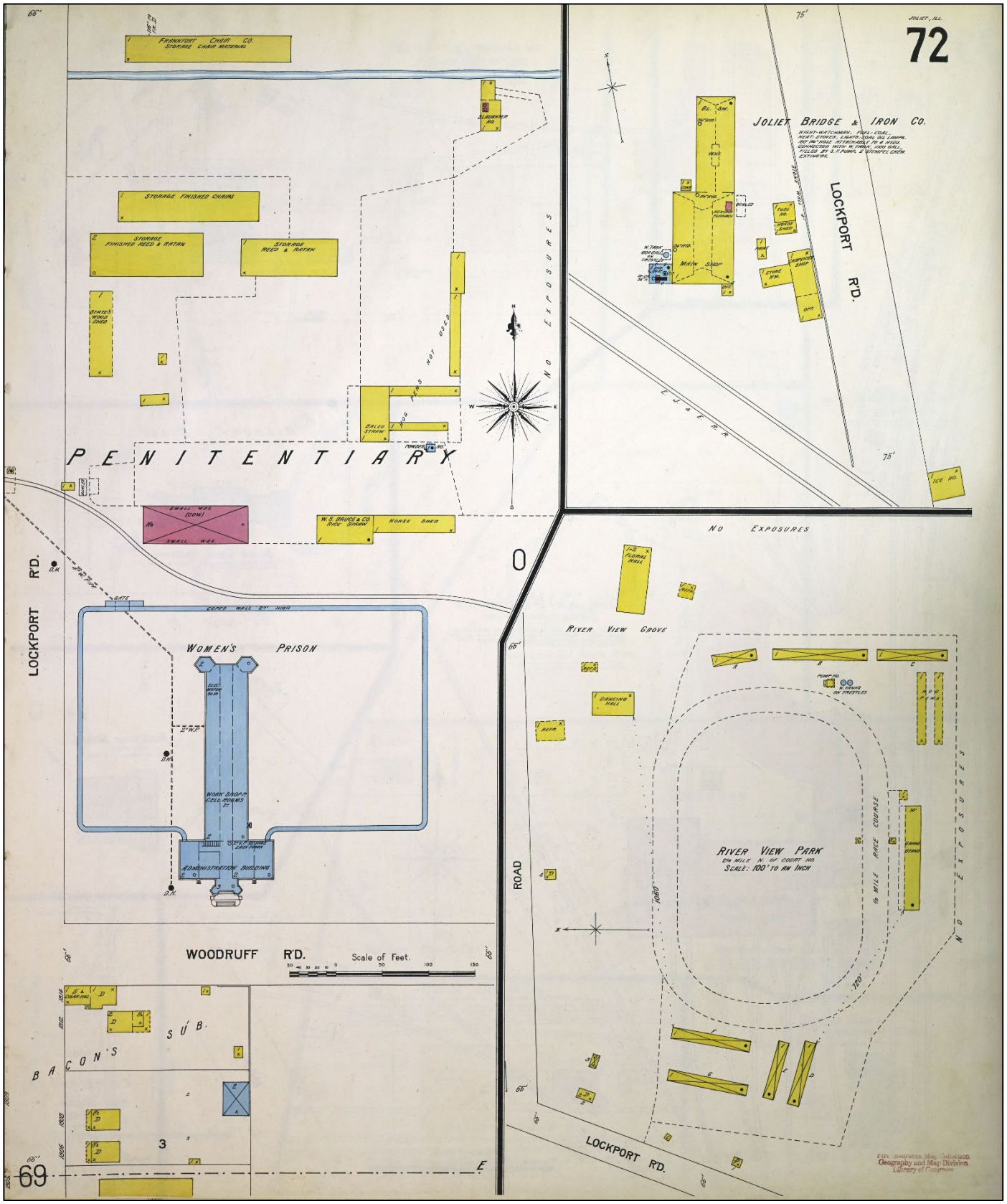

Figure 9: 1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, showing Joliet Penitentiary west of Collins Street

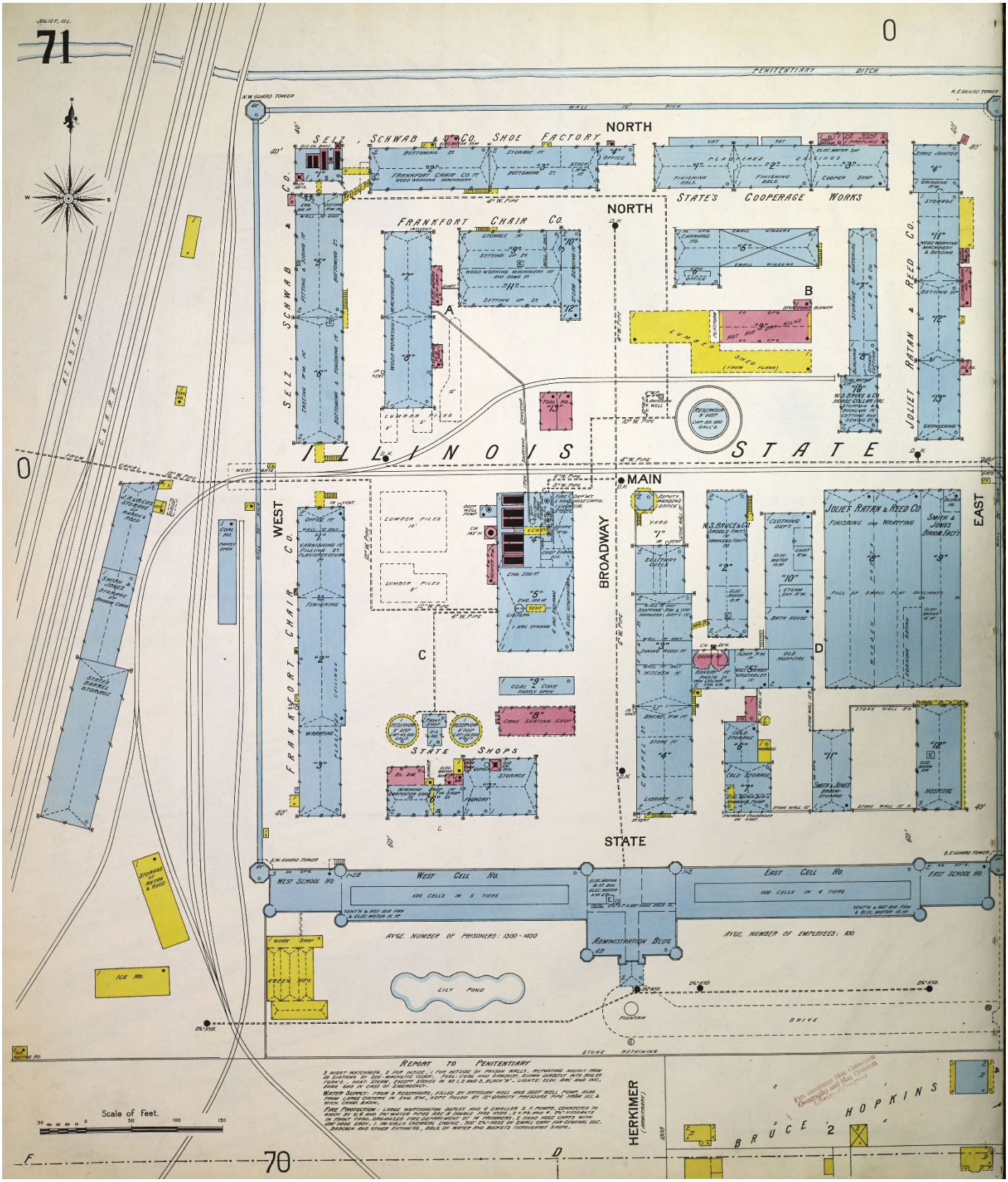

Figure 10: Detail of Joliet Penitentiary map (created in 1942), showing companies that contracted with the prison for inmate labor in 1876 (southeast corner)

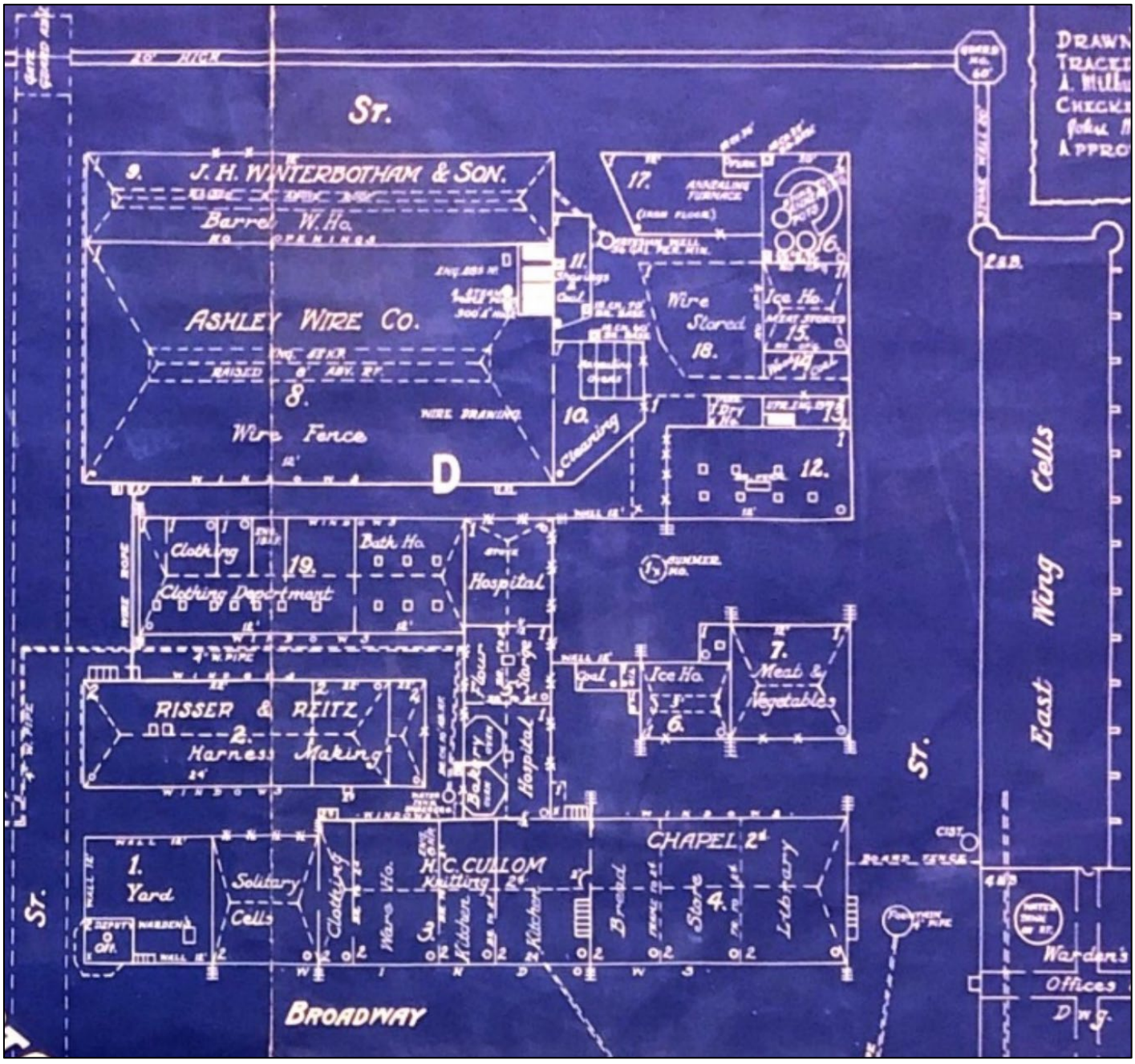

Figure 11: Detail of Joliet Penitentiary map (created in 1942), showing companies that contracted with the prison for inmate labor in 1876 (northeast corner)

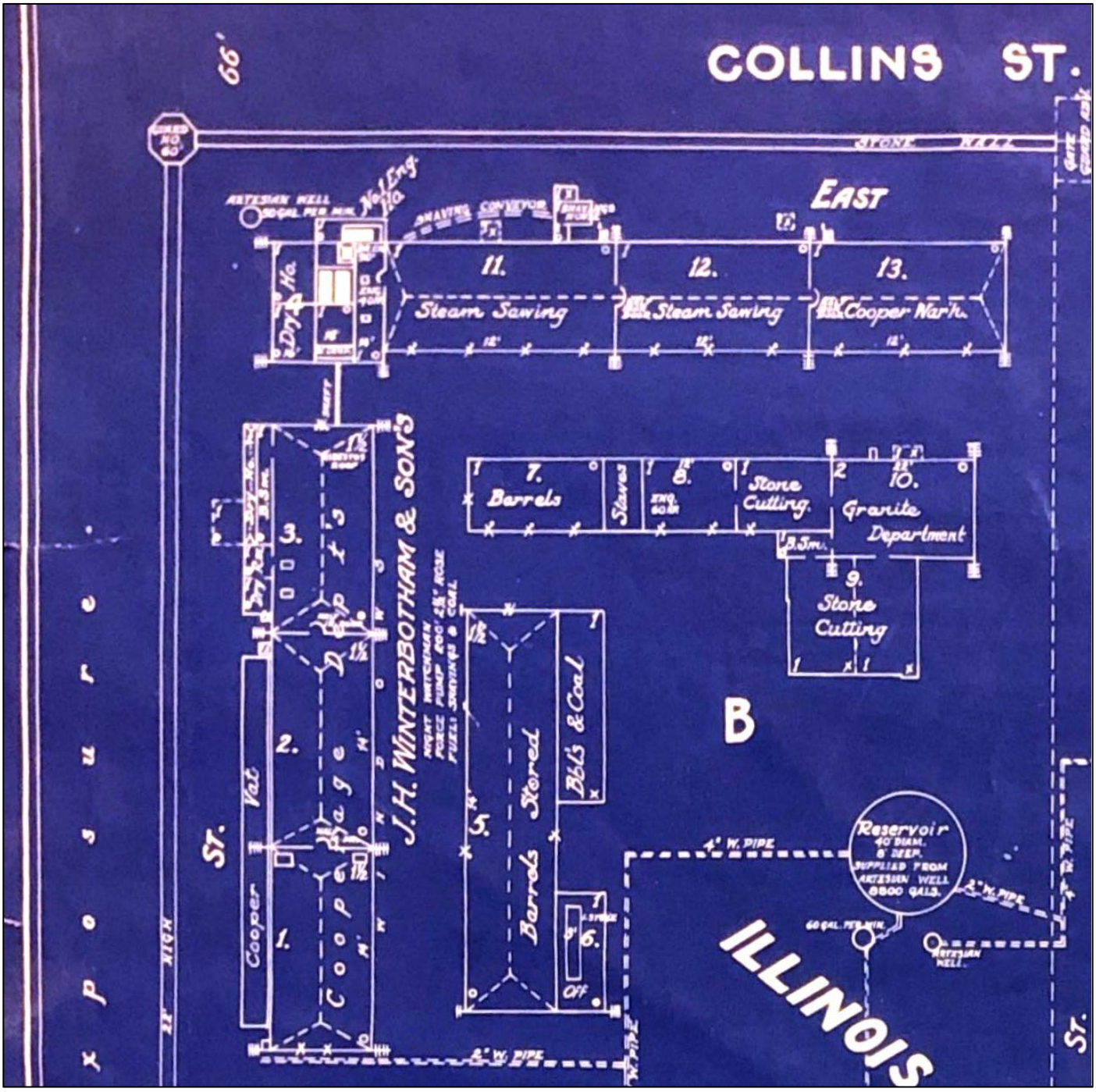

Figure 12: Detail of Joliet Penitentiary map (created in 1942), showing companies that contracted with the prison for inmate labor in 1876 (northwest corner)

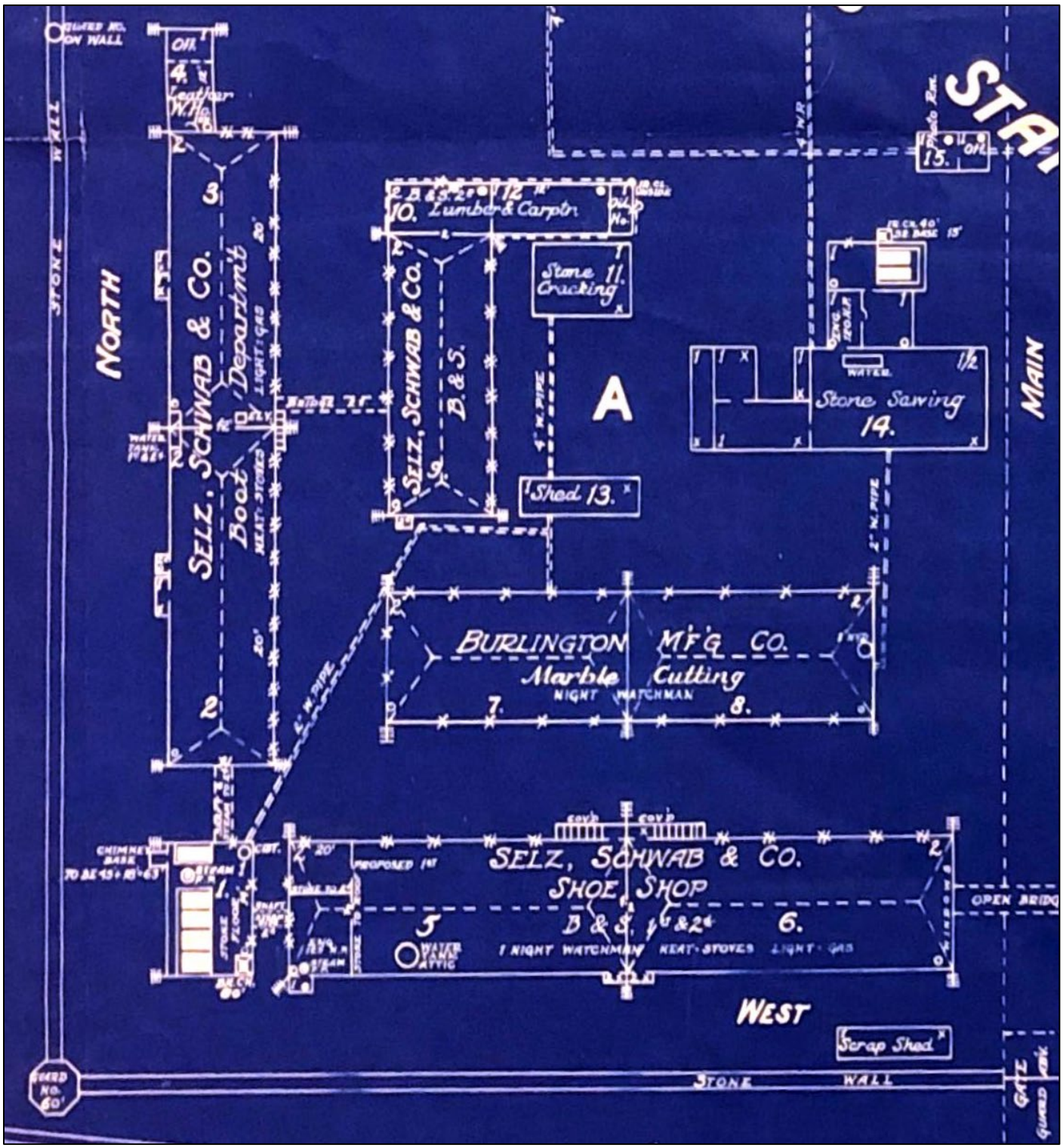

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Figure 13. Detail of Joliet Penitentiary map (created in 1942), showing companies that contracted with the prison for inmate labor in 1876 (southwest corner)

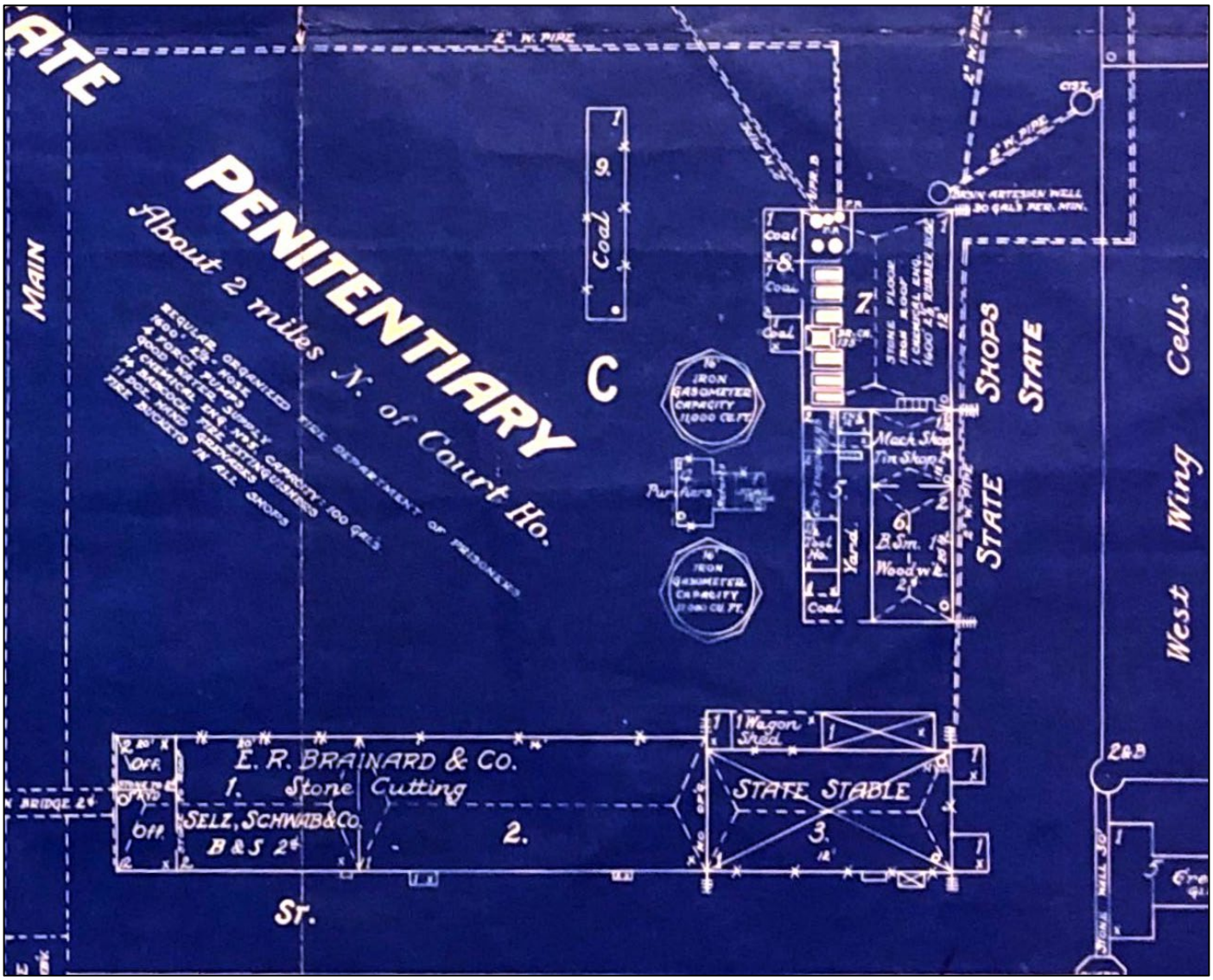


Figure 14. 1961 Bird's Eye View, looking northwest (Joliet Area Historical Museum)

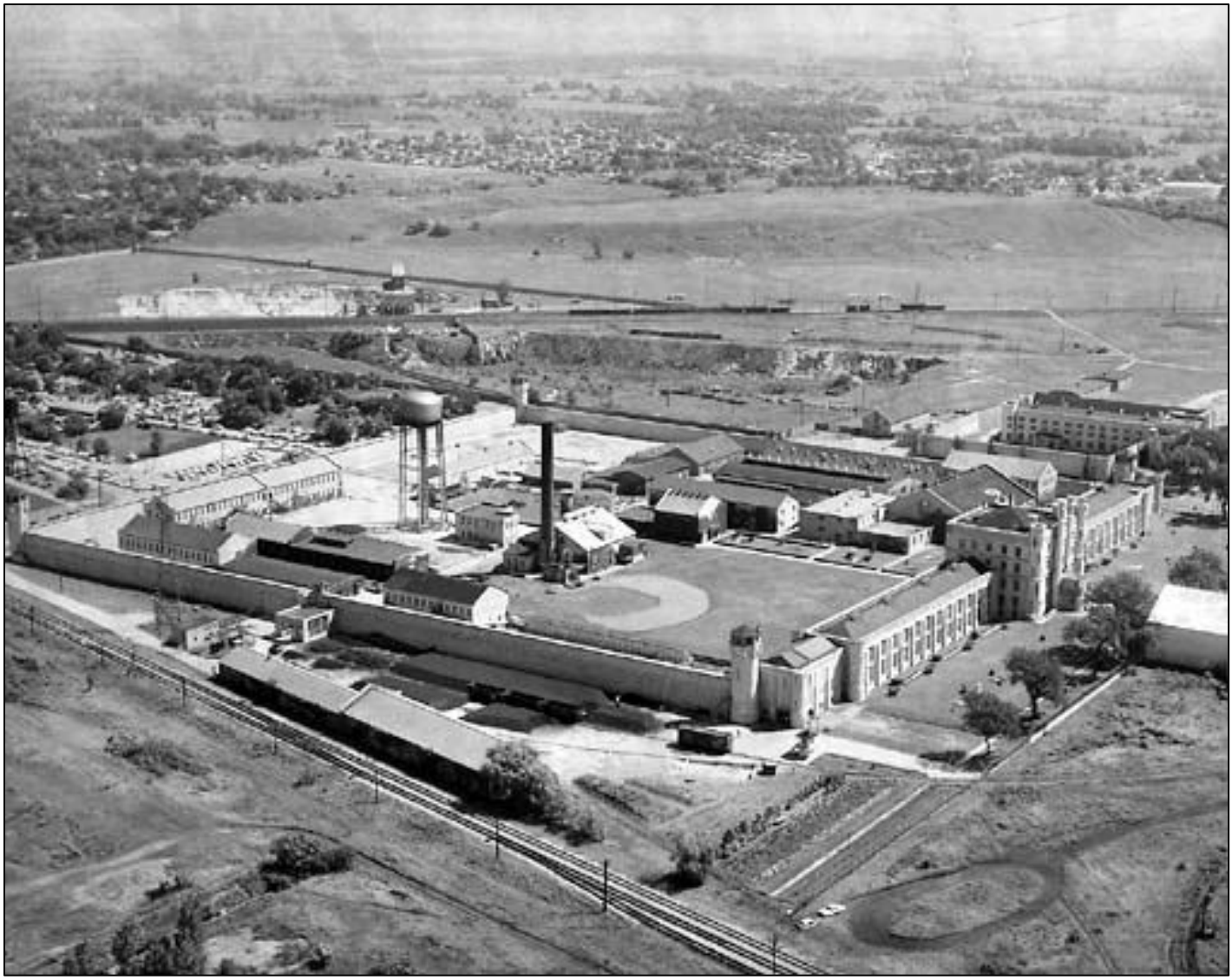


Figure 15. 1979 Site Plan of Joliet Correctional Center (Joliet Area Historical Museum)

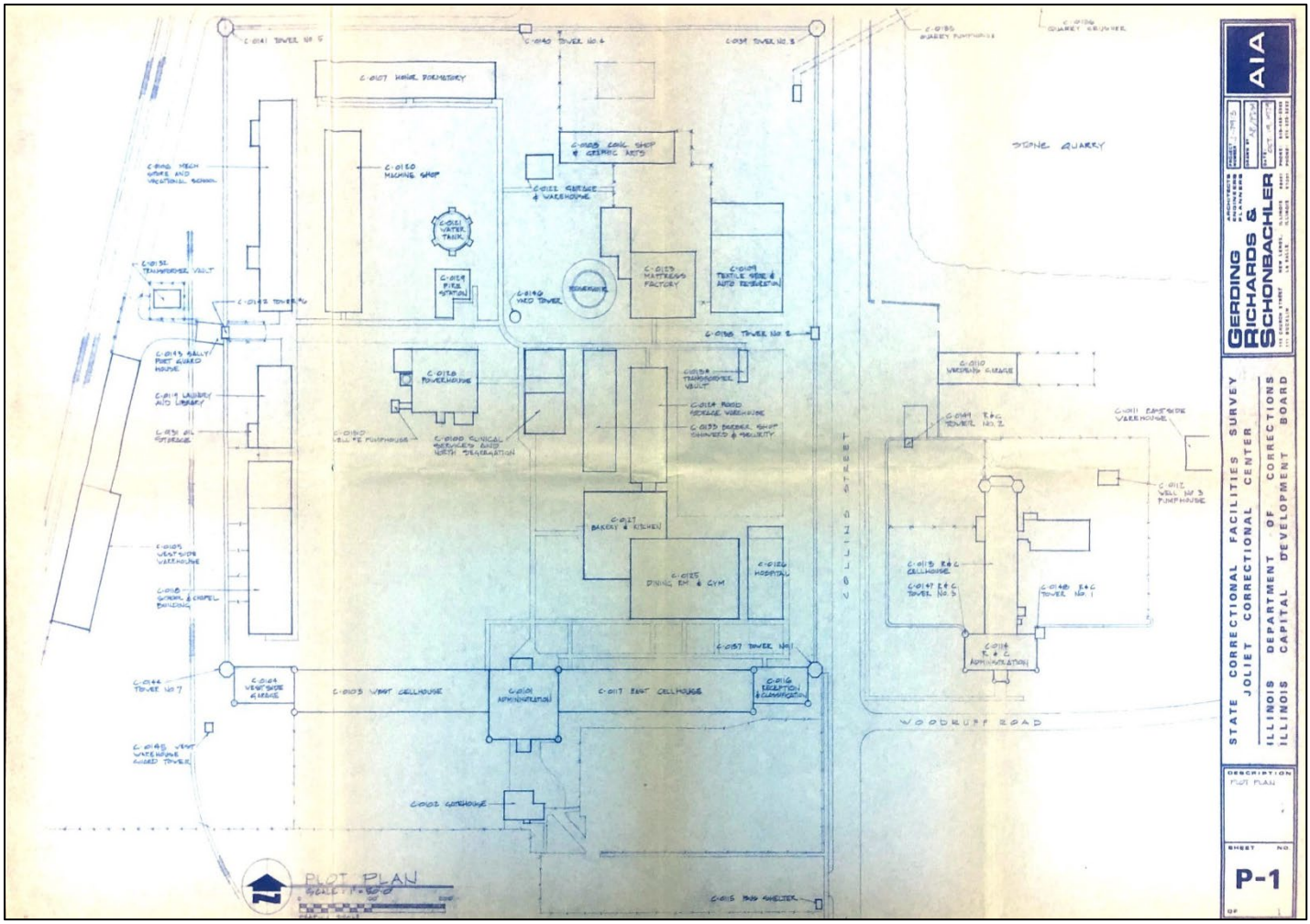
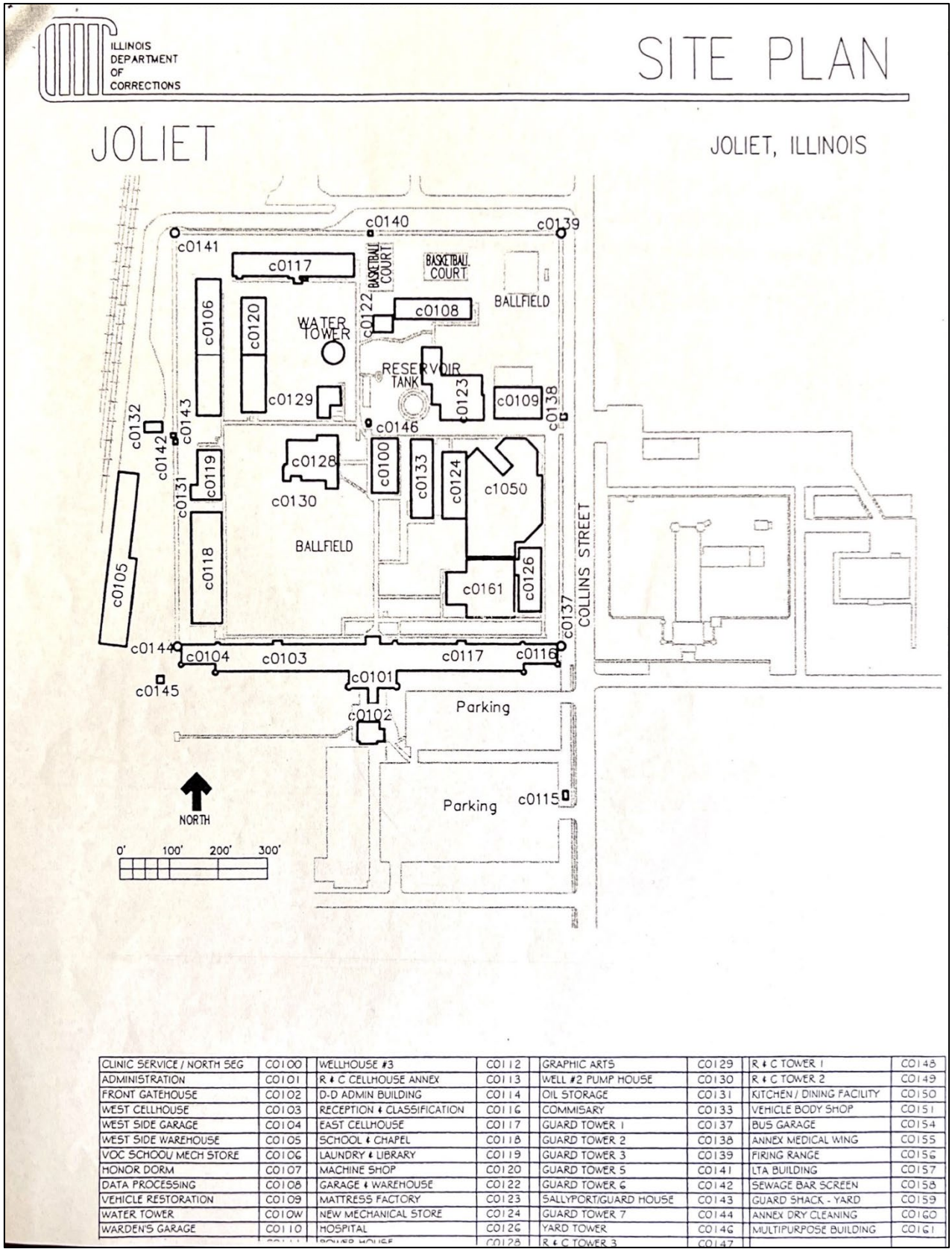


Figure 16. 2002 Site Plan and Inventory of the Joliet Correctional Center (IL Department of Corrections)



CLINIC SERVICE / NORTH SEG	C0100	WELLHOUSE #3	C0112	GRAPHIC ARTS	C0129	R & C TOWER 1	C0148
ADMINISTRATION	C0101	R & C CELLHOUSE ANNEX	C0113	WELL #2 PUMP HOUSE	C0130	R & C TOWER 2	C0149
FRONT GATEHOUSE	C0102	D-D ADMIN BUILDING	C0114	OIL STORAGE	C0131	KITCHEN / DINING FACILITY	C0150
WEST CELLHOUSE	C0103	RECEPTION & CLASSIFICATION	C0116	COMMISARY	C0133	VEHICLE BODY SHOP	C0151
WEST SIDE GARAGE	C0104	EAST CELLHOUSE	C0117	GUARD TOWER 1	C0137	BUS GARAGE	C0154
WEST SIDE WAREHOUSE	C0105	SCHOOL & CHAPEL	C0118	GUARD TOWER 2	C0138	ANNEX MEDICAL WING	C0155
VOC SCHOOL/ MECH STORE	C0106	LAUNDRY & LIBRARY	C0119	GUARD TOWER 3	C0139	FIRING RANGE	C0156
HONOR DORM	C0107	MACHINE SHOP	C0120	GUARD TOWER 5	C0141	LTA BUILDING	C0157
DATA PROCESSING	C0108	GARAGE & WAREHOUSE	C0122	GUARD TOWER 6	C0142	SEWAGE BAR SCREEN	C0158
VEHICLE RESTORATION	C0109	MATTRESS FACTORY	C0123	SALLYPORT/GUARD HOUSE	C0143	GUARD SHACK - YARD	C0159
WATER TOWER	C010W	NEW MECHANICAL STORE	C0124	GUARD TOWER 7	C0144	ANNEX DRY CLEANING	C0160
WARDEN'S GARAGE	C0110	HOSPITAL	C0126	YARD TOWER	C0146	MULTIPURPOSE BUILDING	C0161
		POWER HOUSE	C0128	R & C TOWER 3	C0147		

Figure 17. Joliet Penitentiary c. 1900, looking northwest to East and West Cell Blocks and Administration Building (Joliet Area Historical Museum)

Figure 18: Joliet Penitentiary, c. 1900, looking west with east cell block at right and Administration Building at left

Figure 19: Joliet Penitentiary prison grounds, c. 1900, looking south with Deputy's Office at left Administration Building in background (Joliet Area Historical Museum)

Figure 20: Joliet Penitentiary prison grounds, c. 1900 (Joliet Area Historical Museum)

Figure 21: Joliet Penitentiary prison grounds, c. 1910, looking northwest from reservoir (Illinois State Archives)

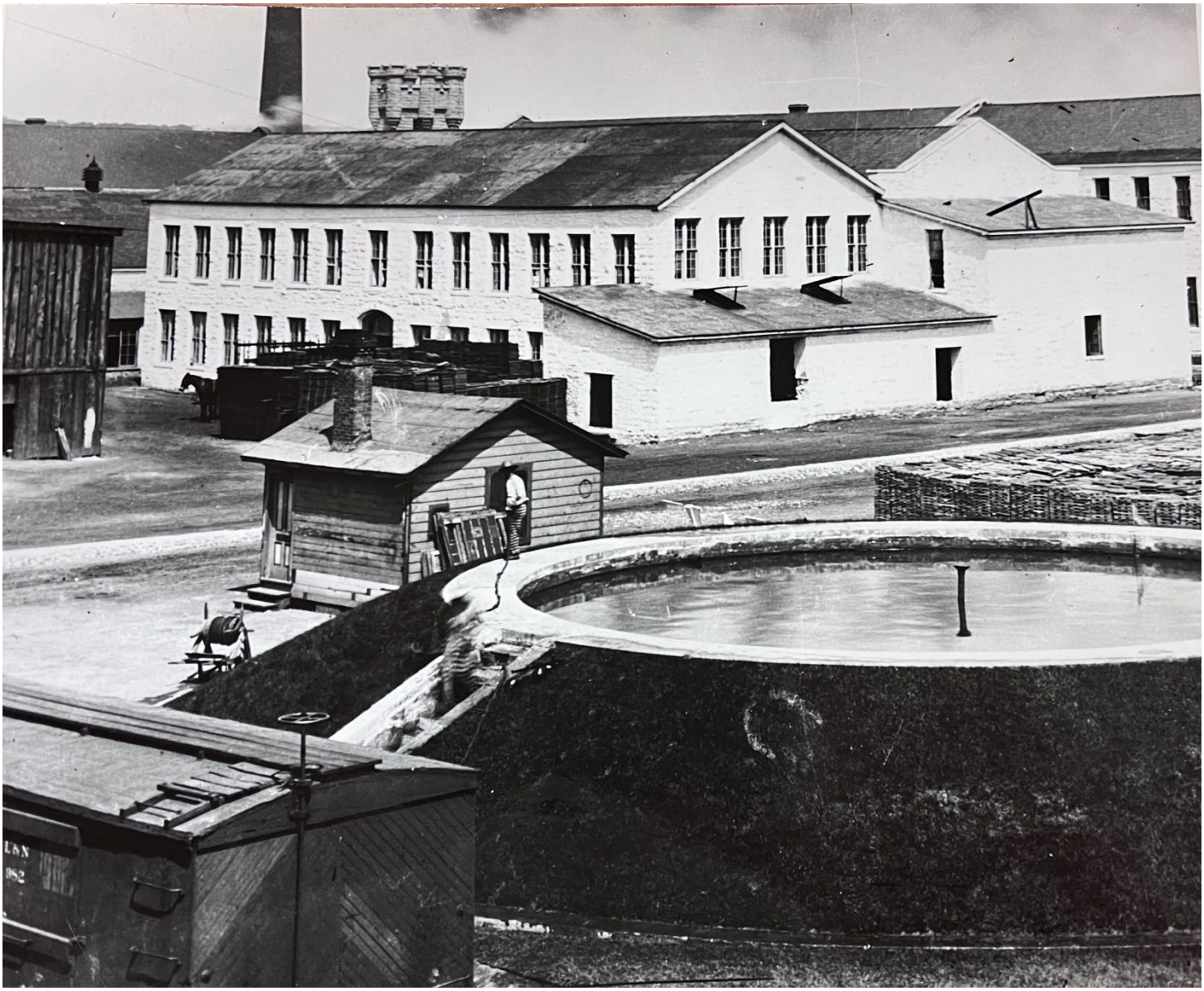


Figure 22: Joliet Penitentiary, East Cell Block, c. 1900, looking east (Joliet Area Historical Museum)

Figure 23: Prisoners making furniture at Joliet Penitentiary, c. 1900 (Joliet Area Historical Museum)

Figure 24: Prisoners making shoes at Joliet Penitentiary, c. 1900 (Illinois State Archives)

Figure 25: A prisoner working in the bakery at Joliet Penitentiary, c. 1910 (Illinois State Archives)

Figure 26: Stone quarry operated by Joliet Penitentiary, c. 1910 (Illinois State Archives)

Figure 27: Collage of stone quarry operations at Joliet Penitentiary, c. 1910 (Illinois State Archives)

Figure 28: Joliet Prison Honor Band, c. 1910 (Illinois State Archives)

Figure 29: Recreation hour at Joliet Penitentiary, c. 1910 (Illinois State Archives)

Figure 30: Joliet Penitentiary, cell with two male inmates, c. 1915 (Illinois State Archives)

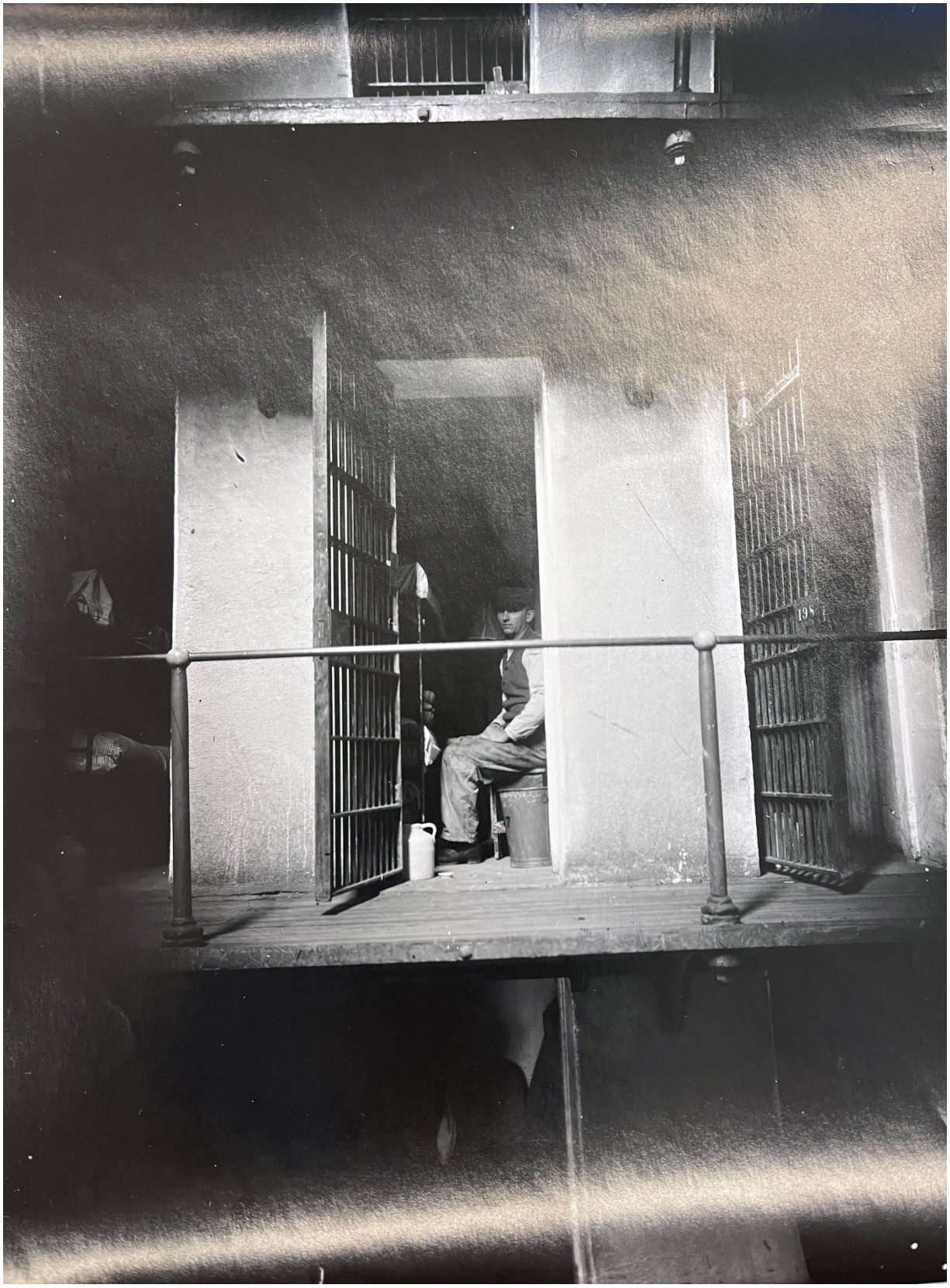


Figure 31: Circa 1910 photograph of inmates in solitary confinement and handcuffed to the cell bars. (Joliet Area Historical Museum)

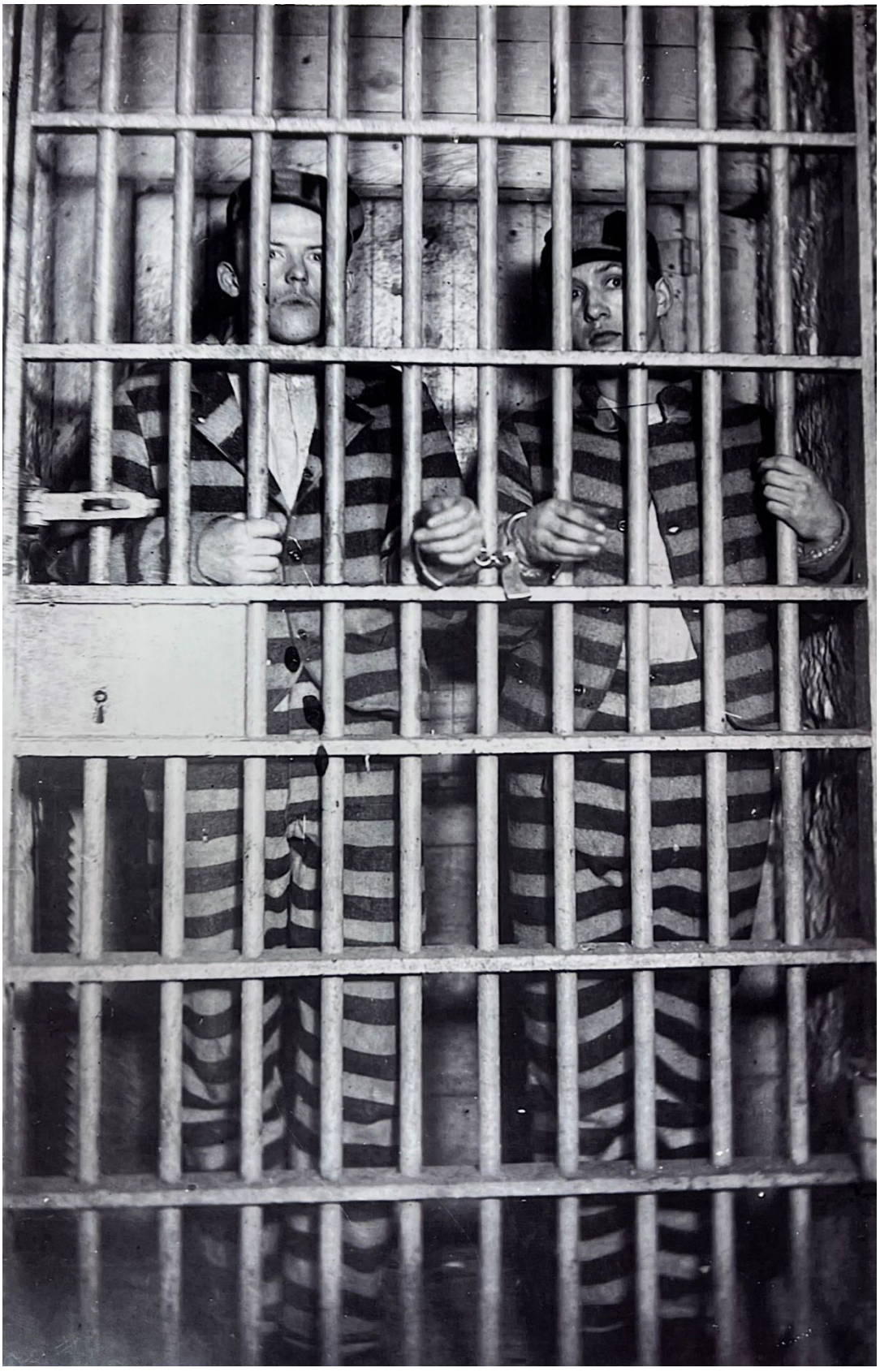
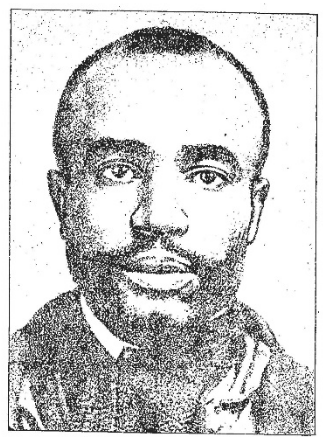


Figure 32: *Chicago Defender* article dated December 4, 1915, reporting sentence of death for Joliet Penitentiary inmate Joseph Campbell, who was convicted of murdering Odette Allen, wife of Joliet's warden, Edmund Allen

CAMPBELL RAILROADED TO GALLOWS

A VICTIM OF RACE PREJUDICE

All of Joliet and the Entire State Said in One Accord "Great Master, What a Shame! and Illinois?"



Mr. Joe Campbell, taken especially for the Chicago Defender.

JOLIET CASE A BLOT ON JUSTICE IN ILLINOIS

After Evidence Submitted Had Overshad-owed the Possibility of Guilt of the Accused Then Comes the Verdict "Guilty."

VERDICT A REAL SURPRISE

From the Attorney to the Close Follower o the Five Weeks' Trial of Joe Campbell No One Looked for a Verdict Con-victing the Prisoner.

By Tony Langston.

In accordance with the progressive policy of the Defender, I was sent to Joliet on Monday, Nov. 29th, for a personal interview with Joseph Campbell, who had, on that day, been convicted by jury, after a trial extending over a period of five weeks, for the murder of the wife of ex-Warden Allen of the State penitentiary.

Every courtesy was extended me by the jailer at the county jail, and he kindly made it possible for me to make my trip a successful one by introducing me to the famous prisoner, who had had instructions from Attorney F. C. Barnett to see no one. When Joe learned that I represented the Defender, he granted the interview, and thanked Editor Abbott through me for the manner in which interest in his welfare had been aroused through the columns of the "World's Greatest Weekly."

The nickname, "Chicken Joe," would lead a great many people to picture the subject of this article a typical tough, low-browed degenerate type, whose very appearance would cause a feeling of revulsion. To be candid, I had formed an opinion slightly along those lines myself, and was really startled when, in reply to the jailer's call of "Joe!" a clean-cut, genteel and neat-appearing young man stepped forward, and in a soft voice said, "I am glad to see you and to thank the paper you represent for the friendly interest it has shown me during the dark days of the past five weeks, and I know that your thousands of readers will be as surprised at the verdict brought in against me as I was, and as was also every one else connected with the case with the exception of the jurymen themselves. I hope that you will excuse any further statement from me at this time, but I want to thank you again for the encouragement your visit has brought me at this, my darkest hour."

And this, from "Chicken Joe," who has been pictured as a demon incarnate, as a man possessed of the very devil himself, whose talk likened the gibberish of an uncivilized beast and whose moral ideas placed him beneath the lowest strata of degeneracy. Joe Campbell is a man of prepossessing appearance and of excellent address, and presented an air of neatness and respectability entirely foreign to his surroundings.

Although the verdict of the jury was "guilty" it should afford the people behind the prosecution but little comfort, inasmuch as a new trial is almost assured, and it is dollars to doughnuts that at the trial the first verdict will be reversed the prisoner given justice. There is a founded report that ex-Warden A responsible for the position that th judge is holding on the bench, and it not be surprising should the defe attorneys demand a change of ven the second trial. I made the rounds number of the public places in Joli the day of my visit, and on every heard nothing but expressions of su at the conviction of Joe Campbell. " understand how a jury of men right minds could have brought dict of guilty," said one nected with one of the big lowed the trial closely, and reached by the jury had racial prejudice and had the evidence presented as pu local papers, "Chicken Joe" been exonerated, and I think press the opinion of the fair-mi people of this community. In fa discussed the case with many verdict of guilty was brought the very life of the man most was not in jeopardy, this trial looked upon as a huge joke."

The statement quoted above is of what was handed me on every In conclusion I want to say that of even the jailer himself carried sympathetic surprise at the verd has been a model prisoner whi been in my care, and despite which stares him in the face an innocent bearing which I have ne in a prisoner whose guilt was pr yond the shadow of a doubt."

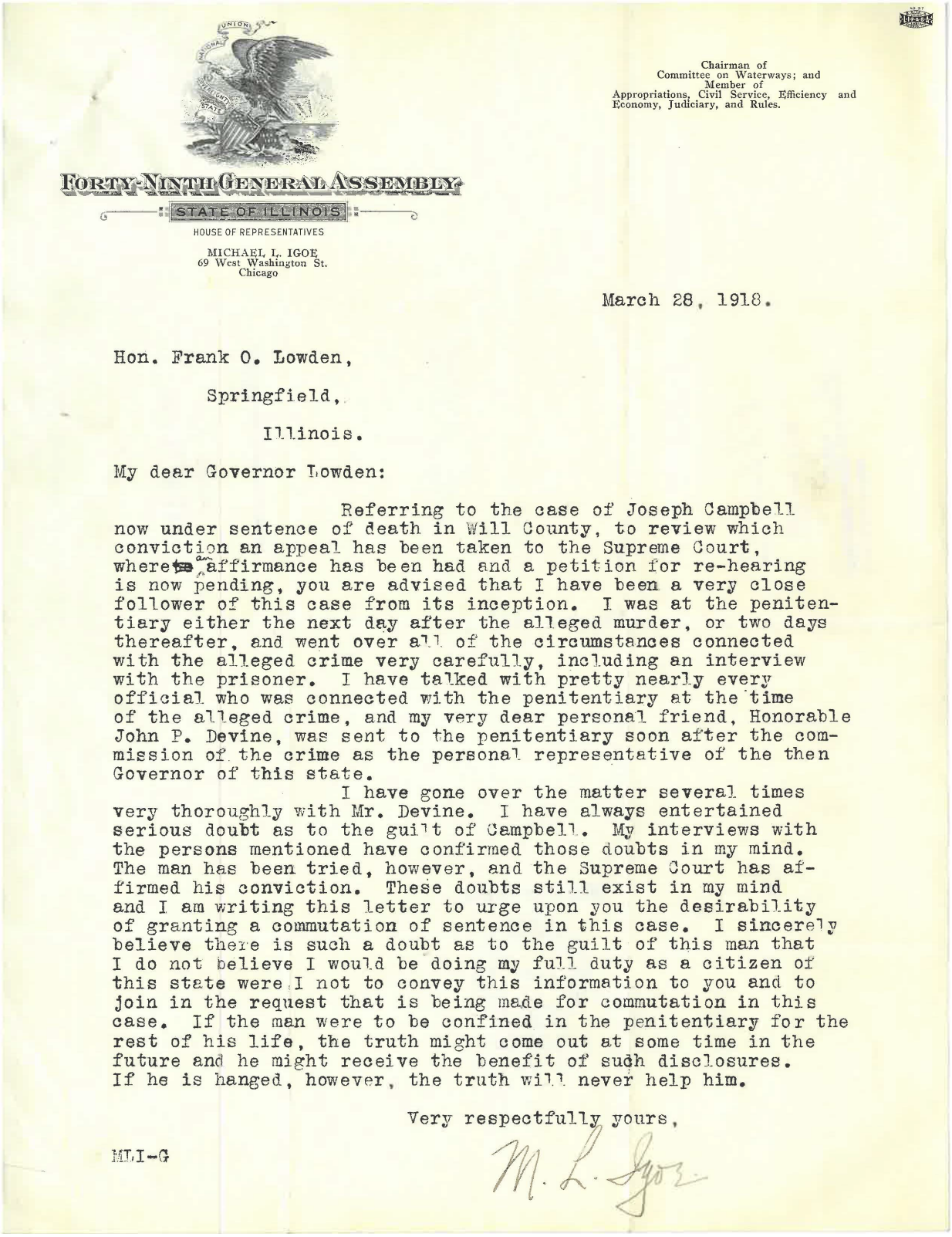
A little touch of comedy my trip on the Rock Island took back to Chicago late in I was engrossed with the thi had transpired during th train porter eased into t

"Ain't you from The plied that I was.

"Well," he said, "I found 'Chicken Joe' since his trial starte ten to twenty peop who never failed to en Joe,' so today w customary 'George' something had happe

The Defender will touch with the future teresting case.

Figure 33: Letter from Illinois State Representative Michael I. Igoe dated March 28, 1918, one of many letters written in support of clemency for Joseph Campbell (Illinois State Archives)



FORTY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE OF ILLINOIS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MICHAEL L. IGOE
69 West Washington St.
Chicago

Chairman of
Committee on Waterways; and
Member of
Appropriations, Civil Service, Efficiency and
Economy, Judiciary, and Rules.

March 28, 1918.

Hon. Frank O. Lowden,

Springfield,

Illinois.

My dear Governor Lowden:

Referring to the case of Joseph Campbell now under sentence of death in Will County, to review which conviction an appeal has been taken to the Supreme Court, where ~~he~~ an affirmance has been had and a petition for re-hearing is now pending, you are advised that I have been a very close follower of this case from its inception. I was at the penitentiary either the next day after the alleged murder, or two days thereafter, and went over all of the circumstances connected with the alleged crime very carefully, including an interview with the prisoner. I have talked with pretty nearly every official who was connected with the penitentiary at the time of the alleged crime, and my very dear personal friend, Honorable John P. Devine, was sent to the penitentiary soon after the commission of the crime as the personal representative of the then Governor of this state.

I have gone over the matter several times very thoroughly with Mr. Devine. I have always entertained serious doubt as to the guilt of Campbell. My interviews with the persons mentioned have confirmed those doubts in my mind. The man has been tried, however, and the Supreme Court has affirmed his conviction. These doubts still exist in my mind and I am writing this letter to urge upon you the desirability of granting a commutation of sentence in this case. I sincerely believe there is such a doubt as to the guilt of this man that I do not believe I would be doing my full duty as a citizen of this state were I not to convey this information to you and to join in the request that is being made for commutation in this case. If the man were to be confined in the penitentiary for the rest of his life, the truth might come out at some time in the future and he might receive the benefit of such disclosures. If he is hanged, however, the truth will never help him.

Very respectfully yours,

M. L. Igoe

MLI-G

Figure 34: View of Joliet Penitentiary grounds on March 14, 1931, showing debris after a riot broke out at the prison **(**Joliet Area Historical Society)

Figure 35: Damage to the shoe factory at Joliet Penitentiary after the 1931 riot (Joliet Area Historical Museum)

Figure 36: Women's Prison under construction, c. 1896 (Joliet Area Historical Society)

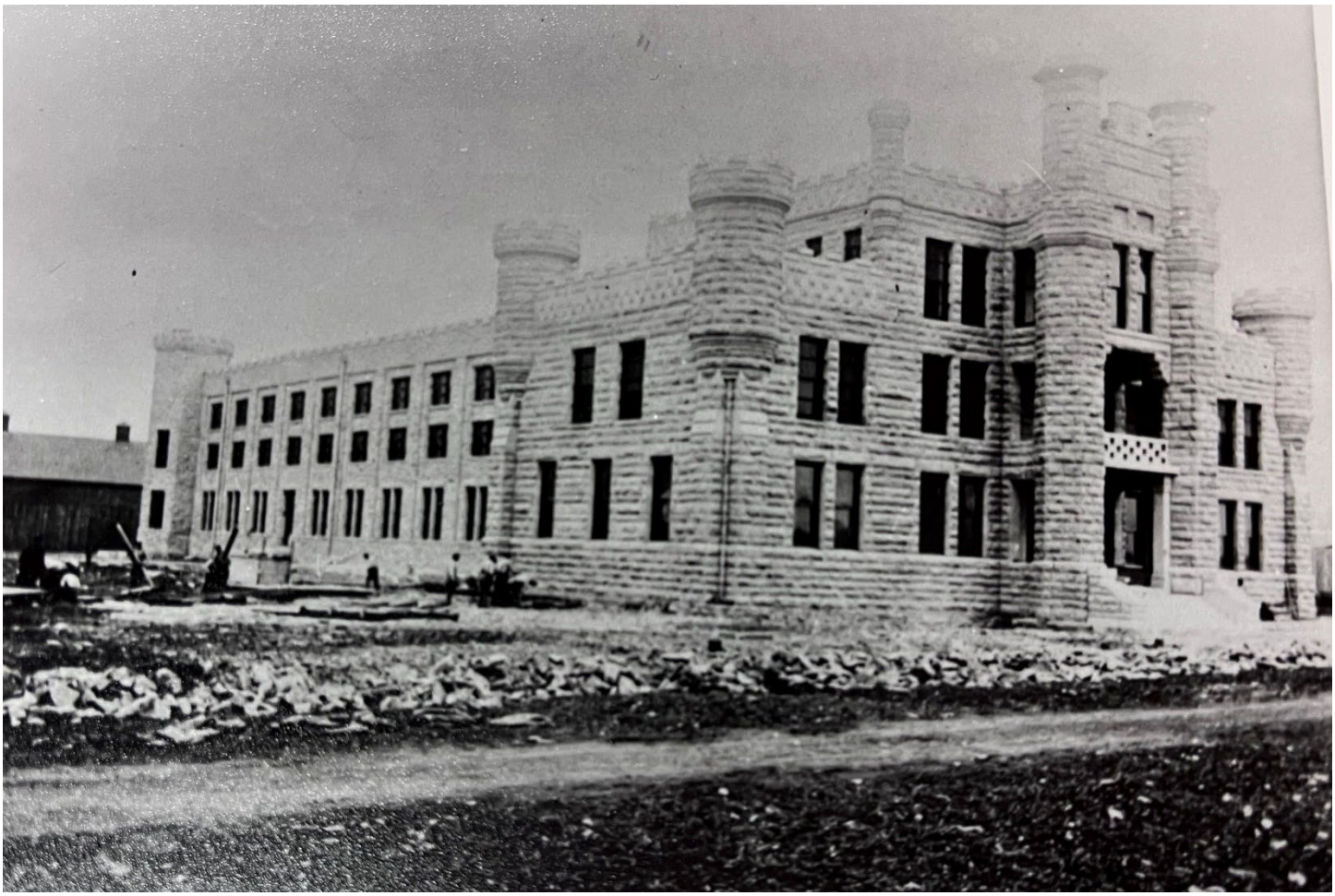


Figure 37: Circa 1900 photograph of the Women's Prison at Joliet, looking northwest (Joliet Area Historical Museum)

Figure 38: Cell block in the Women's Prison, c. 1900 (Illinois State Archives)

Figure 39: Female inmates working in the laundry at the Women's Prison, c. 1900 (Illinois State Archives)

Figure 40: Laundry room in the Women's Prison, ca. 1910 (Joliet Area Historical Museum)

Figure 41: Female inmates in the cell block of the Women's Prison, c.1900 (Joliet Area Historical Museum)

Figure 42: View of a cell at the Joliet Women's Prison, c. 1900 (Illinois State Archives)

Figure 43: International News photograph dated December 1, 1940, showing Joliet inmate repairing toys for distribution to needy children as part of a toy drive organized by Joliet's civic leaders (Joliet Area Historical Museum)

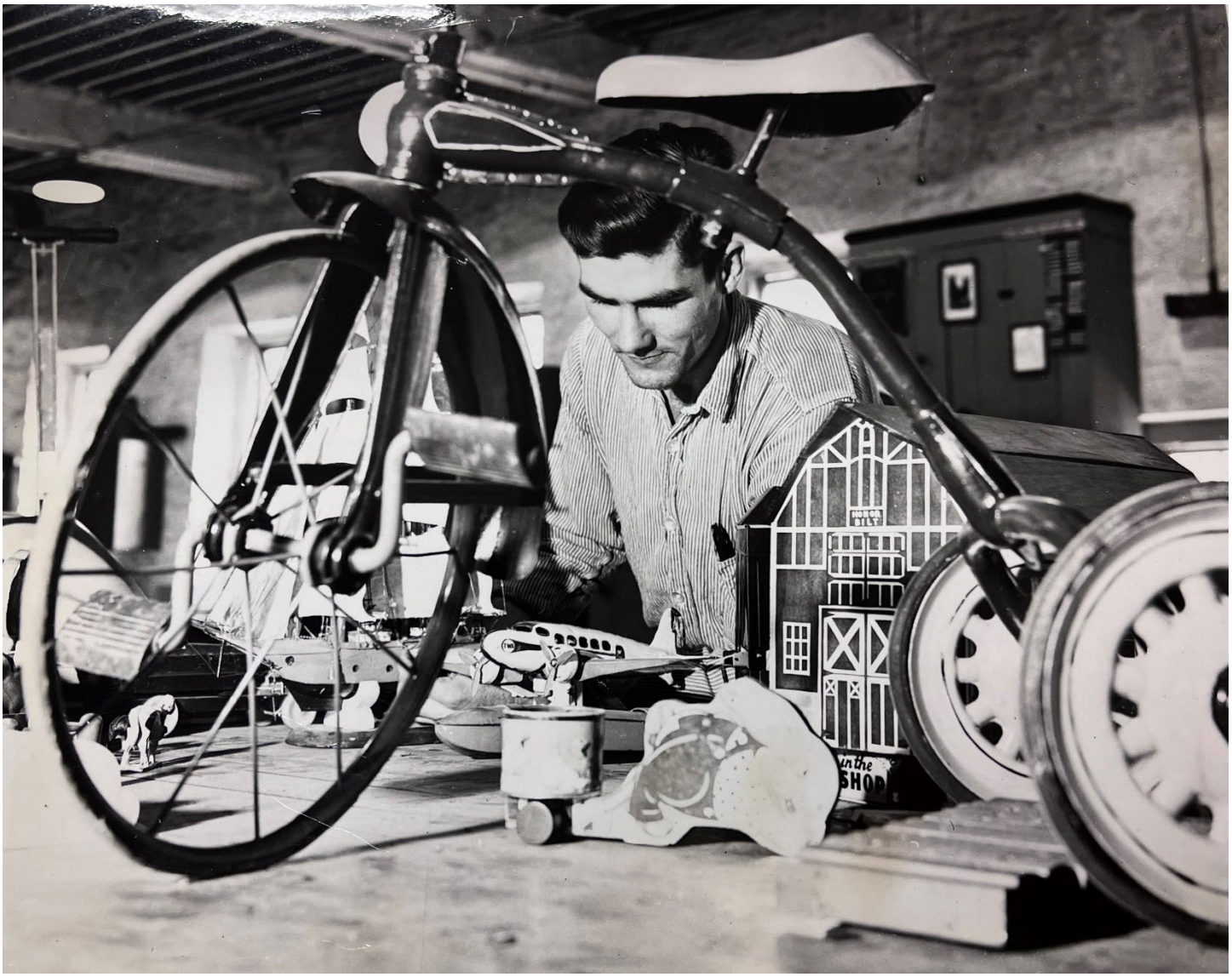


Figure 44: Warden Joseph Ragen presenting a diploma to an inmate, circa 1950 (Joliet Area Historical Museum)

Figure 45: Vocational training at Joliet Penitentiary, c. 1950 (Joliet Area Historical Museum)

Figure 46: 1971 photograph of the new chapel at Joliet Prison (*Chicago Tribune*)

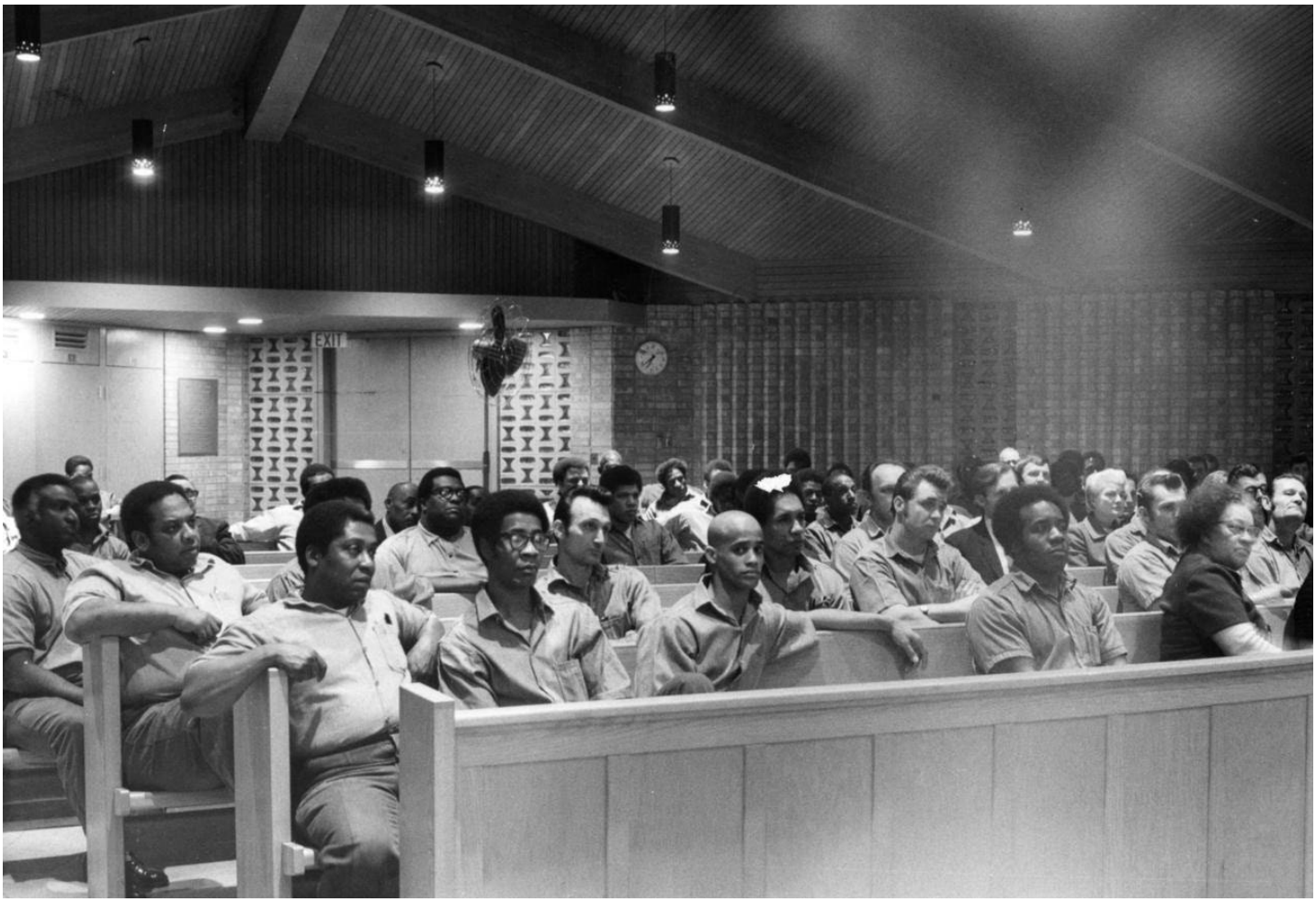
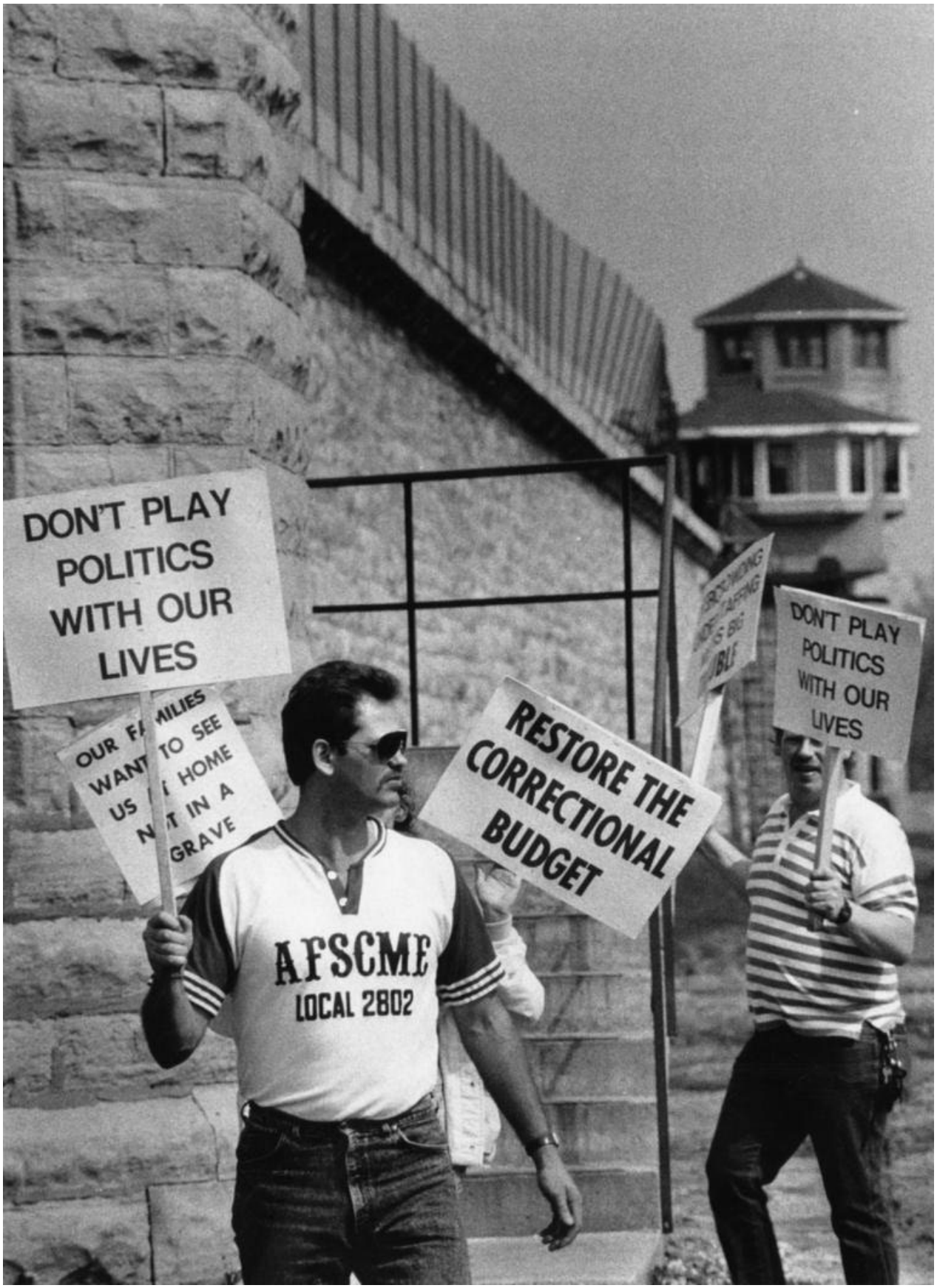


Figure 47: Inmates in a cell at Joliet Prison, July 30, 1978 (*Chicago Tribune*)

Figure 48: Correctional offices picketing outside of Joliet Prison for additional staffing in 1990 (*Chicago Tribune*)



National Register Nomination - Current Photos
Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

1. Gate House (#1), view west.

2. Administration Building (#2) and East Cellblock Wing (#29, partial), view northwest.

National Register Nomination - Current Photos
Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

3. Administration Building (#2), front façade, view north.

4. Administration Building (#2), front entry porch, view northeast.

National Register Nomination - Current Photos
Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

5. Administration Building (#2), first floor, view south from hallway to vestibule.

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6. Administration Building (#2), first floor, hallway and staircase, view north.

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Joliet, Illinois 60432

7. Administration Building (#2), second floor, staircase landing, view south.

8. Administration Building (#2), second floor, east sitting room, view north.

National Register Nomination - Current Photos
Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
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9. Administration Building (#2a), southwest turret interior, view southwest.

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1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

10. West Cell Block (#3), south elevation, view north.

11. West Cell Block (#3), north elevation, view south.

National Register Nomination - Current Photos
Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

12. West Cell Block (#3), second-floor south cellblock tier, view west.


13. School (#5) and Chapel (#6), view north.

National Register Nomination - Current Photos
Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

14. Chapel (#6), front façade, view west.

15. Powerhouse (#13), south and east elevations, view northwest.

National Register Nomination - Current Photos
Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

16. Gate at West Prison Wall (#30c), view west.

17. Center-West Industrial Shop (#7), east elevation, view west.

National Register Nomination - Current Photos
Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

18. Northwest Industrial Shop (#8), south and east elevations, view northwest.

19. Marble Cutting Shop (#9), north and east elevations, view southwest. Powerhouse visible at left, Center-West Industrial Shop (#7) at right.

National Register Nomination - Current Photos
Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

20. North Industrial Shop/Honor Dorm (#10), south elevation, view north.

21. Mule Barn (#17) and Warehouse/Stable (#18), west and north elevations, view southeast.

National Register Nomination - Current Photos
Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

22. Marble Shop (#21), south elevation, view northwest.

23. Reservoir (#16), view south.

National Register Nomination - Current Photos
Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

24. Yard Tower (#12), view northeast.

National Register Nomination - Current Photos
Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

25. Fire House (#11), south and east elevations, view northwest.

National Register Nomination - Current Photos
Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

26. Separate System Prison/Solitary Building (#15), east and south elevations, view northeast.

27. Separate System Prison (#15), first floor, view south to front entrance.

National Register Nomination - Current Photos
Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

28. Harness Shop (#23), south and west elevations, view northeast. Partial view of Separate System Prison (#15) at left.

29. Women's Cellblock /Clothing Department/Bath House (#24), west elevation, view north-east.

National Register Nomination - Current Photos
Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

30. Dining Hall/Cafeteria (#25), north elevation, view southeast. View of east prison entrance at left in background.

31. Gymnasium/Multipurpose Building (#26), south and west elevations, view northeast. View of Harness Shop (#23) at left in background, and Hospital (#27) directly right (east) of gymnasium.

National Register Nomination - Current Photos
Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

32. Hospital (#27), front and east elevations, view northwest.

33. East Schoolhouse (#28) and Southeast Guard Tower (#31a), view south.

National Register Nomination - Current Photos
Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

34. Prison Yard, view southeast, with Powerhouse (#13) at left and north elevations of Administration Building (#2a) and cellblocks (#3 and #29) center-right.

35. Prison Yard, view northeast from southwest corner of yard. Powerhouse (#13) on the left, Separate System Prison/Solitary Building (#15) at center, Dining Hall/Cafeteria (#25) at right.

National Register Nomination - Current Photos
Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

36. Women's Prison, Administration Building (#34), front and east elevations, view northwest.

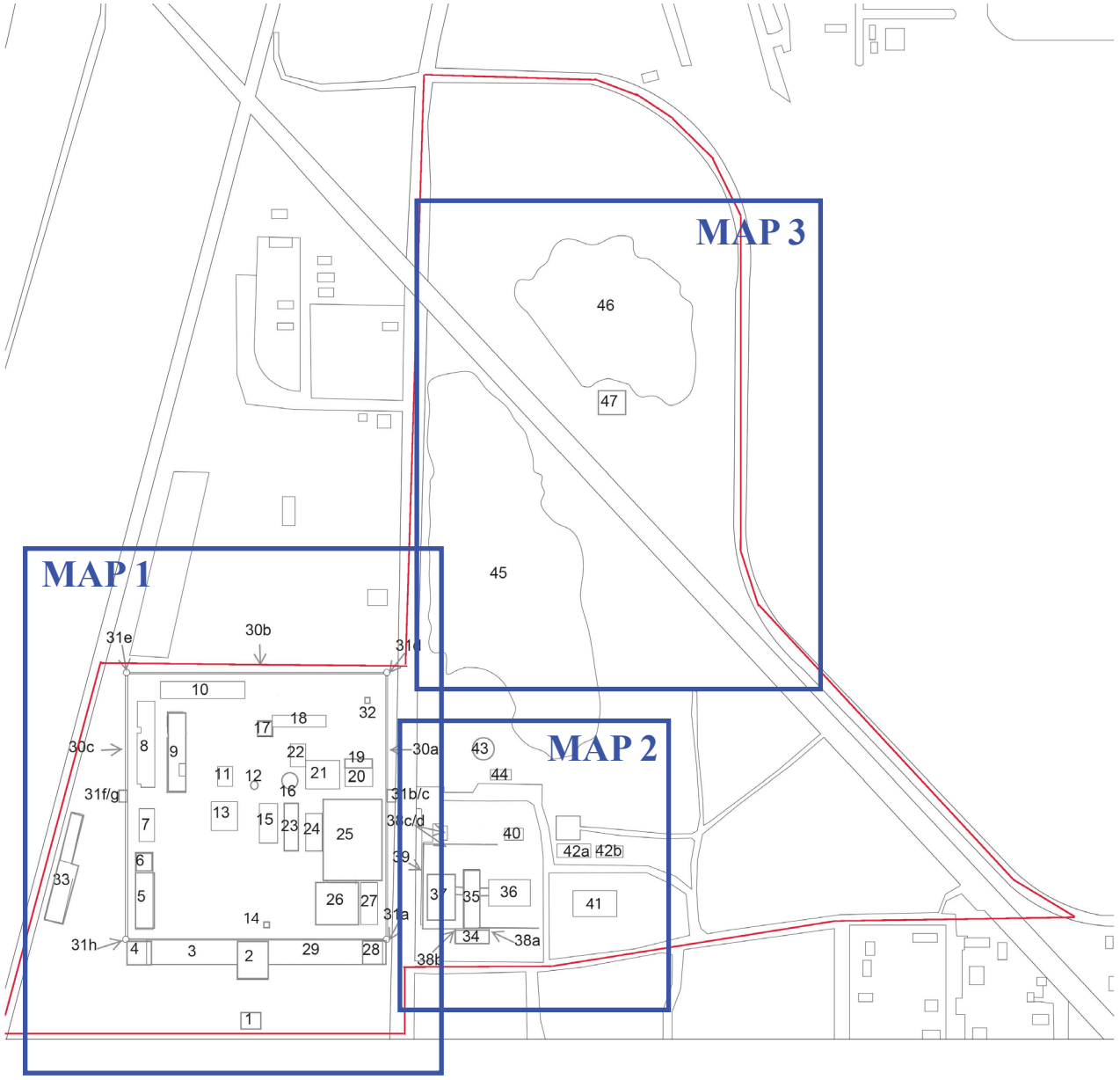
37. Women's Prison, Cellblock (#35), east elevation, view west.

38. Women's Prison, Administration Building (#34), second floor, principal staircase.

39. Women's Prison, Cellblock interior (#35), view north.

40. Women's Prison, north entrance and Northwest Guard Tower (#38c), view northwest.

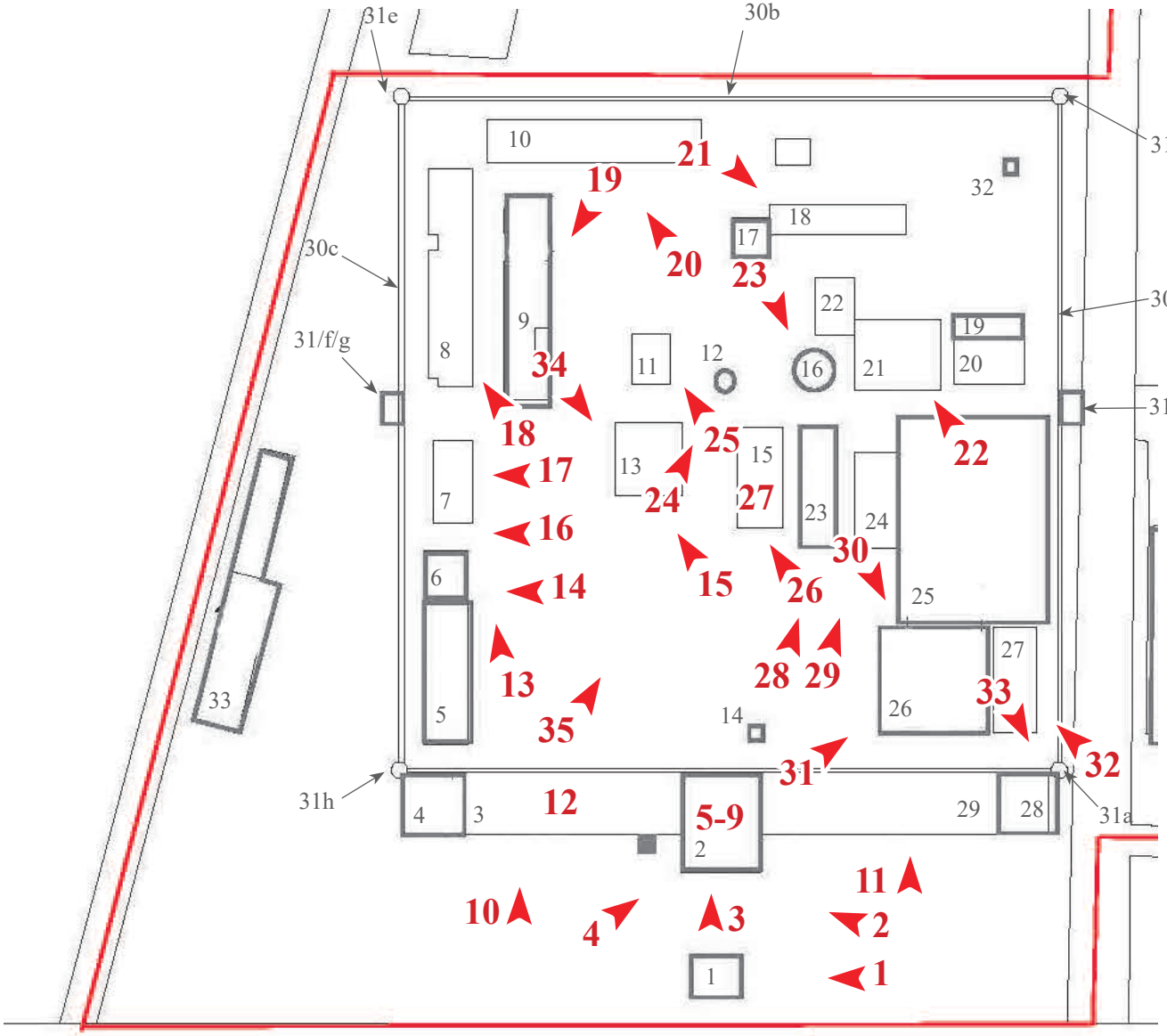
41. Quarry Crusher Plant (#47), view northwest.



Locator Plan

Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet Historic District
1125 West Collins Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

National Register Nomination
Photo Key



Map 1 - Men's Prison

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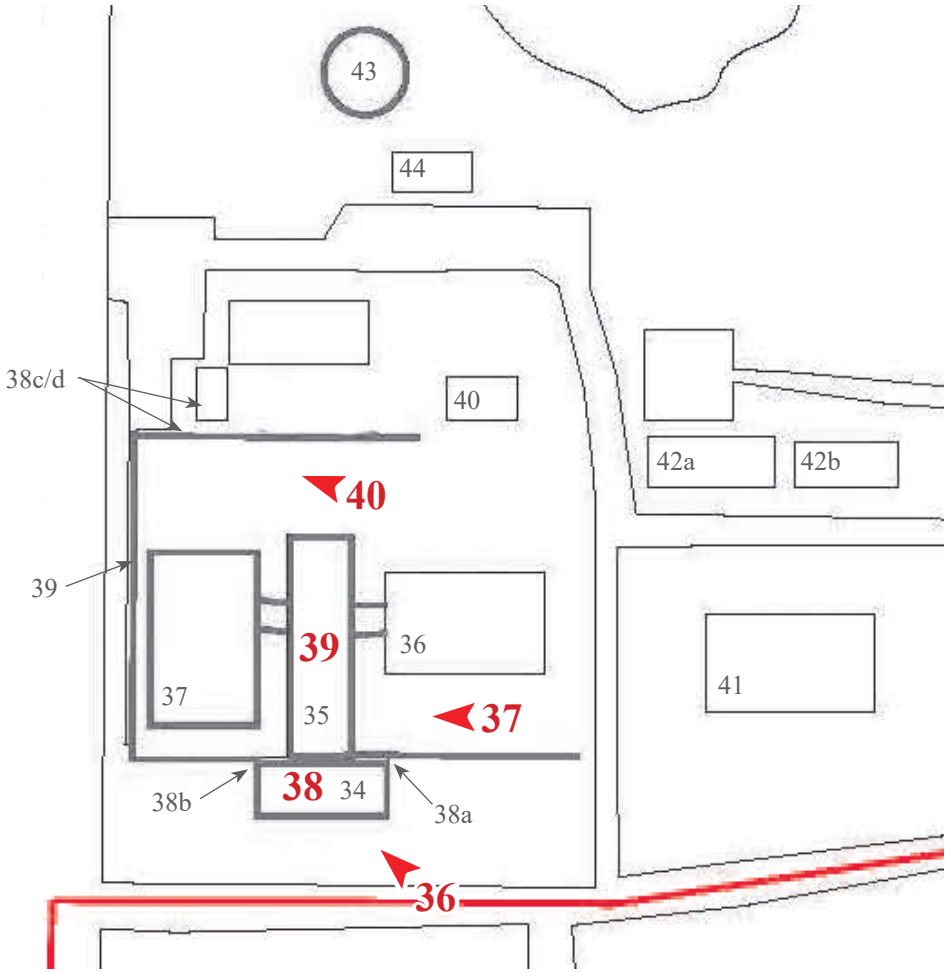
Joliet, Illinois 60432

National Register Nomination
Photo Key



Map 2 - Women's Prison

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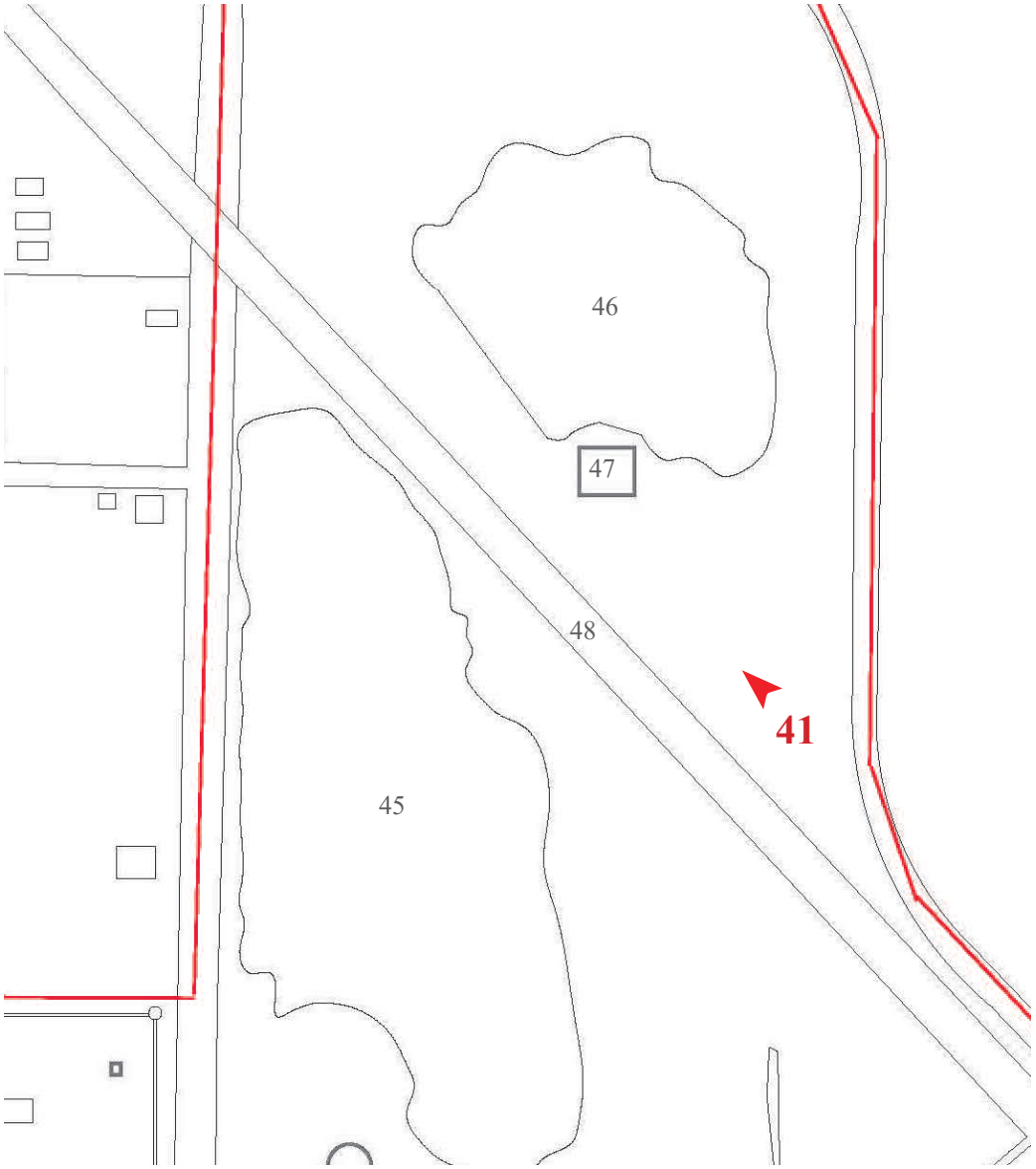
Photo Key



Map 3 - Quarry

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Photo Key