



ARCHIVED - Archiving Content

Archived Content

Information identified as archived is provided for reference, research or recordkeeping purposes. It is not subject to the Government of Canada Web Standards and has not been altered or updated since it was archived. Please contact us to request a format other than those available.

ARCHIVÉE - Contenu archivé

Contenu archivé

L'information dont il est indiqué qu'elle est archivée est fournie à des fins de référence, de recherche ou de tenue de documents. Elle n'est pas assujettie aux normes Web du gouvernement du Canada et elle n'a pas été modifiée ou mise à jour depuis son archivage. Pour obtenir cette information dans un autre format, veuillez communiquer avec nous.

This document is archival in nature and is intended for those who wish to consult archival documents made available from the collection of Public Safety Canada.

Some of these documents are available in only one official language. Translation, to be provided by Public Safety Canada, is available upon request.

Le présent document a une valeur archivistique et fait partie des documents d'archives rendus disponibles par Sécurité publique Canada à ceux qui souhaitent consulter ces documents issus de sa collection.

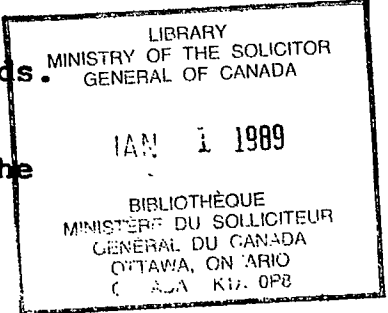
Certains de ces documents ne sont disponibles que dans une langue officielle. Sécurité publique Canada fournira une traduction sur demande.

BRIEF HISTORY OF DORCHESTER PENITENTIARY

~~VF 1337~~

HV
9509
.N2D6
D84
1987

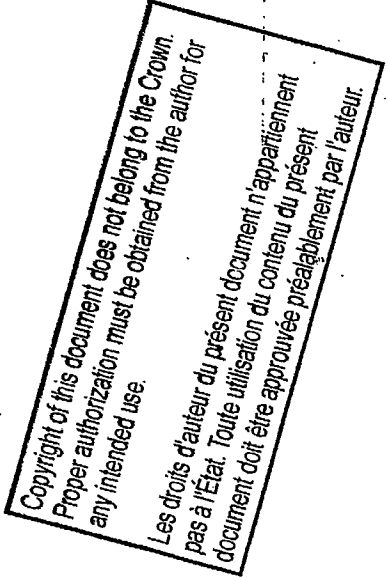
Dorchester Penitentiary is named from the town where it is located, this being the Shiretown of the County of Westmorland, in the Province of New Brunswick. It is sometimes called the "Maritime Penitentiary" from the circumstance that under the British North America Act of 1867, it was the Penal Institution for the Maritime Provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and the Magdalen Islands.



At this time Queen Victoria was the Sovereign and the Prime Minister of Canada was the Right Honourable Sir John A. MacDonald.

Dorchester, like a number of other Maritime Ports, was a busy and thriving shipbuilding center that sent many of the finest and fastest sailing vessels to fly the seven seas. It was a growing town of oil lamps and hitching posts. There were no telephones, no electricity, nor running water. Many paintings, photographs, and relics of the day can be viewed at the Keillor House Museum in the town.

On June 8, 1865, the land for Dorchester Penitentiary was purchased from the Honourable Edward Barron Chandler, one of the Fathers of Confederation. Additional property was purchased from the pioneer



HV
9509
.N2D6
D84
1987

family of Martha Weldon "For and in consideration of the sum of sixty pounds of lawful money of New Brunswick to them in hand and truly paid at or before the en sealing and delivery of these presents by the Said Blair Botsford, his heirs and assigns". Blair Botsford was the first Warden of Dorchester Penitentiary.

Over the ensuing years additional land has been purchased. Today the total reserve totals approximately 2200 acres.

The Dominion of Canada was eleven years old when Dorchester Penitentiary was founded on October 10, 1878. The North Wing was the first cell block to be constructed by the Department of Public Works. The East Wing was later built and at that time the prison was capable of confining over 200 prisoners.

On the 14th day of July, 1879, 58 male and two female prisoners were transferred from the Old Saint John Penitentiary to their new home and on the 16th of July, 57 male convicts were received from the Halifax Penitentiary while Prince Edward Island contributed six inmates on October 12 of the same year.

The South Wing was constructed in the early 1920's and completed in 1922, thus giving additional accommodation of 260 modern cells. This was badly required as prior to this prisoners were obliged to sleep in the corridors of the North and East Wings.

As the need for inmate segregation became even more urgent B-7 Cell Block was constructed by inmate labour commencing in the early 1930's and completed by the early 1940's. This block can house approximately 230 inmates.

During the month of March 1971, the Old North Wing was completely demolished and removed by outside contractors.

The present cell capacity at Dorchester Penitentiary is 455.

The first prison wall erected was by dipping long logs in tar and by placing these on end. This palisade type wall was replaced during the years 1910-1912 when a stone wall with four towers was constructed.

About 30 wooden tenements were built on the Penitentiary reserve from 1883 to 1900 and nine single and double brick tenements were built from 1920 - 1930. Four brick houses were added during the 1950's. This area

is commonly referred to as Guard Row.

The last of the wooden tenements were demolished in 1969 and the revenue from the rentals had paid for the buildings over and over again many times.

The total staff of Dorchester Penitentiary in 1878 was 43 persons, composed of the following:

| <u>Position</u> | <u>Salary</u> |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Warden | \$2,000.00 |
| Protestant Chaplain | 550.00 |
| R.C. Chaplain | 500.00 |
| Deputy Warden | 1,200.00 |
| Surgeon | 1,200.00 |
| Accountant | 900.00 |
| Chief Keeper | 500.00 |
| Storekeeper | 700.00 |
| Steward | Unknown |
| Hospital Overseer | 560.00 |
| Engineer | 780.00 |
| Assistant Engineer | Unknown |
| Schoolmaster | 600.00 |
| Matron | 500.00 |
| Deputy Matron | 250.00 |
| 5 - Keepers | 550.00 |
| 20 - Guards | 450.00 |
| Farmer - Gardener | Unknown |
| 2 - Teamsters | 250.00 |

It is quite evident how the service has expanded in the past 100 years. The staff has increased approximately over nine times and it is doubtful if the annual salary of 100 years ago would meet one day of today's payroll.

Brief History of Dorchester Penitentiary
Page 5

Wardens Who have Served Dorchester Penitentiary

| | | |
|------|-----------------------|---|
| (1) | Blair Botsford | 1878-1887 |
| (2) | John B. Forster | 1887-1889 |
| (3) | Charles Ross | 1889-1900 |
| (4) | John A. Kirk | 1900-1910 |
| (5) | A. B. Pipes | 1910-1920 |
| (6) | L. H. Chambers | 1920-1920 (Acting Position retired December 31, 1920) |
| (7) | William Meighan | 1921-1923 |
| (8) | G. T. Goad | 1923-1956 |
| (9) | David M. McLean | 1956-1960 |
| (10) | Charles E. Desrosiers | 1960-1962 |
| (11) | Hazen F. Smith | 1962-1965 |
| (12) | Ulrie Belanger | 1965-1971 |
| (13) | John L. Bennett | 1971-1974 |
| (14) | Humphrey D. Sheehan | 1974-1977 |
| (15) | Harry VanSchaayk | 1977-1978 |
| (16) | G. J. Rhodes | 1978-1980 |
| (17) | M. E. Corbett | 1980-1981 |
| (18) | E. J. Niles | 1981-1985 |

(Reproduced from writings by D.P. Duffy, Personnel Officer - 1961)

| | | |
|------|----------------|--------------|
| (19) | Hank Neufeld | 1985-1986 |
| (20) | Claude Dumaine | 1986-Present |

