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## Briefer Contributions--Prison Officers' Training Schools

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## BRIEFER CONTRIBUTIONS

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### PRISON OFFICERS' TRAINING SCHOOLS

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From late July, 1929, until late April of 1930 there were seven major prison outbreaks and many minor disorders such as riots and escapes.

In the riot on July 22, 1929, at Clinton Prison, Dannemora, N. Y., three prisoners were killed, two were wounded, and two guards were severely beaten. More than \$170,000 worth of damage was done.

On July 28, 1929, a rebellion broke out at Auburn, N. Y. Two prisoners were killed and four escaped and \$500,000 worth of property was destroyed.

On August 1, 1929, in the uprising at the Federal Prison at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, several convicts were wounded, one was killed.

On October 3 and 4, the most dramatic of all the year's prison disturbances occurred at the Colorado State Prison at Canon City. Seven guards and five convicts were killed. Three of the seven guards were killed at once and the other four were shot one by one as the Warden refused to meet the demands of the convicts.

On December 11, 1929, inmates attempted to break away from the prison at Auburn, N. Y. The principal keeper was killed and the Warden was captured. Eight convicts were killed.

On April 19, 1930, gunmen from the outside tried to liberate the con-

victs of the Rhode Island State Prison. Two inmates were killed.

On April 21, 1930, a riot occurred at the Ohio State Penitentiary. There 318 men were burned to death and some 250 others were sent to the hospital.

During April of 1930, two convicts shot their way out of the Alabama State Prison; 400 prisoners rioted at the Missouri State Prison; a jail break at the Ohio State Prison was narrowly prevented; three insane men broke out of Matteawan; a convict was shot trying to escape from Sing Sing, and another one, from the New Jersey State Prison; three convicts were shot trying to escape from a North Carolina prison farm; two convicts were killed in an attempted prison break in California; a convict escaped from Auburn and eight convicts escaped from a Texas prison.

Dr. H. H. Hart says in his syllabus on "Training Schools for Prison Officers," that "many of the past failures of American prisons can be traced to the mismanagement of officers who were selected without regard to their ability or training for the important work they are called upon to perform. A task requiring character, education, experience, and the scientific attitude often has been entrusted to novices and politicians merely in

quest of a job, men who were incapable of social vision and constructive work. The hope for future success is to transform prison administration into a profession and to train candidates for prison service in such a manner that they shall be able to meet its executive requirements."

Prison Officers' Training Schools are an entirely new feature of prison work and the few in existence in the world today are of very recent origin. At present there are three such schools in Great Britain, one each in Belgium and Holland, two in Germany and only six in the United States. The first Prison Officers' Training School was opened in Wakefield, England, in 1925. All the other schools of this type have been opened within the past two years.

This work was begun in the United States when the Honorable Sanford Bates was appointed superintendent of Federal Prisons on June 1, 1929. He at once took the matter up with Dr. H. H. Hart, consultant in Delinquency and Penology of the Russell Sage Foundation of New York, and requested his aid in planning a Federal Prison Officers' Training School. Hon. Bates wrote to Dr. Hart saying: "I would appreciate it if you would send me a tentative schedule for such a course, with suggestions for competent men to carry it on."

Dr. Hart invited Jesse O. Stutsman, who later became the Director of the new school, to assist in compiling schedules and literature from the schools in Great Britain and New York. The leading prison Wardens were consulted on what in their opinion should be the nature of the work covered in a Prison Officers' Training School. Together Dr. Hart and Mr. Stutsman

worked for three weeks in the offices of the Russell Sage Foundation in New York while preparing the course of study for the school.

Regarding the location, purpose and course of the Federal Prison Officers' Training School Dr. Hart says in his syllabus: "The school is located in New York City, which is the logical place for such a federal institution. In the city and its vicinity, there are several prisons, affording opportunity for the study of practical problems of management. Moreover, New York contains colleges and schools of social work, and it is the residence of prison officers and scientific criminologists who are notably qualified to assist in the courses of instruction. The school is connected with the U. S. Detention Headquarters, a new prison which is used for offenders awaiting trial and for short term convicts, and which can serve as a laboratory for student officers to study the diagnosis of criminal personality.

"Candidates are selected by civil service examinations and are paid a salary, with living allowances, while taking the course. They must show aptitude for the service and are required to meet certain standards of character and efficiency in order to be eligible for appointment to an institution. Successful students are given certificates of graduation.

"The general purpose of the school is, first, to stimulate candidates to think intelligently upon all the important tasks delegated to them as officers of a penal institution, whose function is not only to safeguard society but also to re-establish its inmates in civic life; to give the prospective officers an adequate understanding of the historical and sociological back-

ground of prison problems, the value of a just and impartial administration of law and order, and the part their services shall contribute in attaining this end.

"The course proper extends over a period of four months, with five lectures or recitations each week and frequent written and oral examinations. Each candidate is required to read a prescribed amount of supplementary literature on the subjects treated and to submit a written thesis. Seven and one-half hours each week are spent in floor drill for physical training, setting-up exercises, boxing, wrestling, jiu-jitsu, swimming, the proper use of firearms, and in first aid to the injured. At all times when not engaged in the above tasks, including Saturday and Sunday, a candidate is required to perform useful service at Detention Headquarters, so as to learn his duties by actual experience. During the course he is graded as to his intelligence, capacity to learn, alertness, character and general fitness, which information is passed on to the Warden to whom he is assigned for provisional service.

"After this provisional assignment a continuation course of at least two months is prescribed under the direction of his Warden, in co-operation with the school. This training consists of practical demonstrations, actual service under the supervision of capable, experienced officers, and correspondence directed by the Bureau of Prisons and the faculty of the school."

On November 9, 1929, Mr. J. O. Stutsman was appointed Superintendent of the Federal Detention Headquarters in New York City and Director of the School. He had previously been Superintendent of

the Detroit House of Correction and Warden of the State Prison at Bellefonte, Pennsylvania. Two years prior to this, a Keepers' Training School was organized in New York City by the Commissioner of Correction, in conjunction with the Police Officers' Training School. It was located in the Penitentiary on Welfare Island under the supervision of Joseph Fulling Fishman.

The opening of Prison Officers' Training Schools is under consideration elsewhere, as in Wisconsin, according to William B. Cox, Secretary of the Society for Penal Information in New York City. Massachusetts, Maryland, New Jersey and New York have Prison Officers Schools.

During their period of training the student officers are given physical training, instruction in firearms, jiu-jitsu, first aid, etc.

The chief topics presented in the present four months' course are as follows:

1. History of Crime and Punishment.
2. A Study of the Present Crime Situation.
3. Present Types of Penal Institutions and Their Functions.
4. The Physical Aspects of Penal Institutions.
5. The Prisoner and His Background.
6. The Prison Official.
7. Prison Discipline.
8. Classification and Segregation.
9. The Activities of a Penal Institution.

A—Employment.

B—Education and Training of the Prisoner.

C—Religious Work in the Institution.

D—The Morale Officer.

E—Medical Service.

- F—Housekeeping and Cleanliness.
- G—The Prison Dietary.
- H—Recreation.
- I—Parole.
- 10. Miscellaneous Routine Duties Performed in Actual Service.
- 11. Physical Training.

Secretary Wm. B. Cox, of the Society for Penal Information, very wisely states: "I believe an Officers' Training School is essential for proper prison management. However, I feel much stress should be placed on the necessity of very careful selection of guards before they are permitted to attend the school, this is a necessary requirement in the English system. Unless this phase be carefully watched and incompetents kept out of the training course, we will not get very far. No course on earth, however carefully and wisely given, would make anything but ordinary guards out of a certain type of candidate."

The above reference is to the following statement made on September 19, 1929, by Gilbert Hair, Deputy Governor, in immediate charge of the British Training School for Prison Officers, His Majesty's Prison, Wakefield, England: "The main points to note in the formation of any school appear to me to be,

a—The system of selection of Candidates, character first and record second.

b—The staff of the school. There are men in this service who might be judged to be smarter and perhaps a trifle more efficient in practice than the instructors of the school but there will not be men of sounder principles and character, or tact and patience.

c—The invariable rule is that the service must always have the benefit of the doubt if there is any concerning the character or temperamental suitability of a man for the service. A man may be a little weak in his knowledge of the job but a sound fellow. He will get in because he may pick up the work during the ensuing months. If it is a case of excellent work and the slightest doubt about character he will not get into the service. By character I mean not only honesty but general principles."

The Prison Officers' Training Schools are undoubtedly one of the most practical solutions for the many problems existing today in the Penal Institutions of the land and as such schools are established in the future it will be well to give heed to the experiences of others in similar activities and profit thereby and in this way the making of the same mistakes will be avoided.