

PENITENTIARY IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

MESSAGE

FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

TRANSMITTING

The twelfth annual report of the inspectors of the Penitentiary of the District of Columbia.

JANUARY 30, 1841.

Read, and referred to the Committee for the District of Columbia.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States :

In compliance with the act of Congress of the 3d of March, 1829, I herewith transmit to Congress the twelfth annual report of the board of inspectors of the penitentiary of the District of Columbia.

M. VAN BUREN.

WASHINGTON, January 27, 1841.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States :

In compliance with the act of the 3d of March, 1829, the board of inspectors of the penitentiary for the District of Columbia respectfully present to Congress the twelfth annual report, showing the operations of the institution for the past year.

Paper A, from the secretary to the board, exhibits the receipts and expenditures, and shows the state of the funds, both in the hands of the warden, and in the Treasury of the United States, subject to the requisition of the inspectors, at the end of the year 1840. Paper No. 1, from the warden; paper No. 2, from the physician; paper No. 3, from the acting chaplain; and paper No. 4, from the clerk of the penitentiary, give all the information relative to their respective departments.

In conducting the penitentiary through the past year, every economy has been used consistently with the public interest. Not a cent has been lost by bad debts or otherwise, and all the supplies have been procured upon the cheapest and the best terms.

A part of the wharf attached to, and built for the use of, the penitentiary, was carried away by the ice during the last spring; and several hundred feet of the coping and railing, with the wooden platform attached to it,

was, last summer, stripped from the outer wall by a tornado. To repair these damages, has cost nearly \$1,500.

The number of convicts in the penitentiary, during the last year, was 79: of whom 21 have been discharged at the expiration of sentence, 3 have been pardoned by the President, and 1 has died; leaving, at the end of the year 1840, 54 still in confinement. It is gratifying to state that the number of convicts has very much diminished within the last few years. This is either evidence of reformation among them, or that they have sought another field for their wicked operations. It is certain, however, that the citizens of the District of Columbia have cause to rejoice that penitentiary crimes have become less frequent among them, and it is to be hoped that they will continue to diminish. The prisoners have been fed and clothed as the law directs, and they have generally conducted themselves well. The government of the prison is mild, but rigid. The rules and regulations have been strictly enforced, but with proper regard to humanity and justice.

Only one death, and but few cases of sickness, occurred within the last year. To the neat and cleanly state of the penitentiary, the dry and well-ventilated apartments, and the plain and regular diet, may be mainly attributed the high degree of health enjoyed by the prisoners.

The warden and his officers have been vigilant and attentive to their respective duties, and they merit the commendation of the inspectors.

All which is respectfully submitted.

B. HOOE,
WM. MINOR,
THO. CARBERRY.

JANUARY 23, 1841.

A.

Dr.

Penitentiary for the District of Columbia in account with the United States for 1840.

Cr.

To balance due to the United States on last account, settled to December 31st, 1839 - - -	\$8,537 36	By balance due to the warden, in account settled December 31st, 1839 - - -	\$514 56
To amount appropriated by act of May 8, 1840 - - -	14,503 50	By amount paid for rations, beds, bedding, and for clothes for the prisoners, in 1840 - - -	2,277 11
To cash received for articles manufactured and sold in all the year 1840 - - - - -	3,783 12	By amount paid for repairs to the buildings and to the wharf - - -	1,557 53
		By amount paid for fuel - - - - -	412 65
		By amount paid for medicines and for hospital stores - - -	144 82
		By amount paid for tools and implements of trade, and for raw materials to be worked up - - -	337 14
		By amount paid for books, stationary, and for postage - - -	100 48
		By amount paid for horse-feed, shoeing, and for repairs to carryall - - - - -	111 29
		By amount paid for filling ice-house - - - - -	50 56
		By amount paid for furniture - - - - -	44 25
		By amount paid to discharged convicts - - - - -	42 00
		By amount paid to officers and agents - - - - -	9,219 13
		By balance in the hands of the warden, and unexpended, December 31st, 1840 - - - - -	8 96
		By amount in the Treasury of the United States, and undrawn on the 31st of December, 1840 - - - - -	12,003 50
	26,823 98		26,823 98
To balance in hands of the warden, and unexpended, December 31st, 1840 - - - - -	8 96		
To balance in the Treasury of the United States, and undrawn, December 31st, 1840 - - - - -	12,003 50		
	12,012 46		

Attest:

THOMAS CARBERY,
Secretary to Board of Inspectors.

JANUARY 23, 1841.

Doc. No. 92.

No. 1.

PENITENTIARY, D. C., *January 1, 1841.*

The termination of the late year imposes upon the warden the duty of submitting his regular annual report, and he begs leave to make the following statement :

On the 1st of January, 1840, the whole number of prisoners was - 62

Received during the year—

For first offence	-	-	-	-	-	10
For second offence	-	-	-	-	-	5
For third offence	-	-	-	-	-	2
						— 17
						79

Discharged during the past year—

By expiration of time	-	-	-	-	-	21
By Executive pardon	-	-	-	-	-	3
By death	-	-	-	-	-	1
						— 25
						54

Present number

The above is a very favorable result—showing a declension, in a large ratio, for the last two years. It is ascertained that, of the present number of prisoners, 40 attribute their present situation to bad company and the use of intoxicating drinks, and 8 to gambling and forgery. The number of males is 50; females, 4. Of the former, 27 are white, and 23 colored. Of the latter, 2 white, and 2 colored. They are severally employed as most calculated to advance the interests of the institution, as follows :

In the male department are—

Shoemakers	-	-	-	-	-	34
Broom-makers	-	-	-	-	-	2
Carpenters	-	-	-	-	-	2
Tailors (for prison use)	-	-	-	-	-	2
Bakers (for prison use)	-	-	-	-	-	2
Cooks (for prison use)	-	-	-	-	-	2
Barber	-	-	-	-	-	1
Picking oakum	-	-	-	-	-	1
Shop-boy	-	-	-	-	-	1
Laborers and servants	-	-	-	-	-	3
						— 50

The females are employed at washing, making, and mending for the use of prison - - - - - 4

Total - 54

The manufacture of corn brooms, which had been but recently started at the date of my last report, has been fully successful, though not to the extent anticipated or desired. The article manufactured is a superior one, and equal to any in the market.

The general conduct of the prisoners the past year has been orderly and decorous—at work, in their rooms after work, or waiting on the

exercises of the chapel, or Sabbath school. Their work has been faithfully executed, and with much diligence and apparent alacrity. Breaches of order, it is true, have not unfrequently occurred; and sometimes a disposition has been manifested, by a few of the most refractory, to put the government of the institution at defiance. In all such cases the laws have been *rigidly enforced*, without the exercise, however, of any undue severity. Indeed, we have endeavored to impress upon the minds of the prisoners that we are their friends, laboring for their good, and who sympathise with them, and are much grieved whenever their conduct calls for exemplary punishment, and then it is promptly administered.

The health of the prisoners the past, like that of former years, has been remarkably good, considering the location, and the fevers consequent thereon, during the summer months. One case of death occurred, and it was that of a man in an advanced stage of consumption at the time of admission. He received the most attentive nursing, and very able medical treatment; but he was beyond the power of medicine. There is not a case of insanity. The greatest regard is ever paid to cleanliness. Personal cleanliness is insisted upon, together with the frequent scouring, whitewashing, ventilation of the buildings, airing of beds, &c. I feel no hesitancy in saying that the strict requirements pertaining to cleanliness have contributed in no small degree to the exclusion of contagion, and the preservation of such remarkable health up to the present moment.

Religious and moral instruction, as imparted to the prisoners, by means of preaching and the Sabbath school, for several years past, is still pursued, and with like results. Of the prisoners, 31 could read when admitted; and 23 have since learned to spell or read, through the instrumentality of the school. The ministrations of the chaplain (with a single exception or so) have been performed regularly each Sabbath during the past year; and on those occasions has been presented the interesting spectacle of a congregation of orderly, attentive, and anxious listeners. It is worthy of remark, that, of the number discharged the past year, two are known to have become respected and esteemed members of a Christian church, and there is good reason to hope that others have come to a knowledge of their "lost estate," and now rely with Christian hope and confidence upon a Saviour's merits. That every case of *professed* reform is not *genuine*, there is good cause to know; but that *many* of them are, is attested by a refusal to return to the society of old accomplices, and a changed life and conversation. Enough has been demonstrated, even under our worst discouragements, that no point in our system is more necessary and useful than this.

The several heads I have thus made reference to, I present to your notice, with my grateful acknowledgments to the board for its general concurrence and ready co-operation in measures deemed the best for the good of those committed to our charge, and the prosperity of the institution.

Very respectfully submitted:

ISAAC CLARKE, *Warden.*

To the BOARD OF INSPECTORS

of the Penitentiary for the District of Columbia.

No. 2.

DECEMBER 31, 1840.

GENTLEMEN: The prisoners, during the present year, have very generally enjoyed good health; indeed, so much so, that it may be truly stated that less disease has occurred in the enclosure of the penitentiary than its immediate neighborhood. Located as the penitentiary is, upon the river on one side, and an extensive marsh on the other, the influence of a malarious and humid atmosphere might be expected to operate with peculiar force; but such is the salutary and counteracting influence of regular hours, diet, and non-exposure to night air, that the prisoners have been eminently exempt from the ordinary diseases of the fall season; and it is interesting, in a general way, to notice the fact, as proving the efficacy of prudential means in warding off disease.

There has been but one death in the course of the year: this man entered the penitentiary in confirmed consumption; and the life of this person was, I am sure, much prolonged by the humane attention with which he was treated.

It is gratifying to report that no case of insanity exists in the prison, and no chronic disease that may not be expected to terminate in health in a reasonable time.

Very respectfully, &c.

BENJ. S. BOHRER, M. D.

To the INSPECTORS of the Penitentiary, D. C.

 No. 3.

WASHINGTON CITY, January 1, 1841.

GENTLEMEN: During the period (the last eight months) in which the undersigned discharged the duties of chaplain in the penitentiary, I am pleased to have it to say that the conduct of the prisoners, during the time of those services, has been serious, attentive, and respectful; and have no doubt but the influence of those services the former part of the year contributed mainly to the decorum thus exemplified, and to the hope that much will be accomplished in the reclaiming of the hearts of many of the convicts. We have the gratifying intelligence to communicate, that two, at least, of those who have left the prison, have become members of the Methodist church, and continue to have the confidence and esteem of their brethren. And I shall be greatly disappointed if a much larger number will not be found to have seen the error of their ways, and become useful members of society.

I cannot refrain from awarding to the warden the praise that is due him for the aid afforded by his strict but mild conduct, in bringing about the reformation so apparent.

That the great moral experiment may speedily justify the hopes of its friends, and, in the coming, produce tenfold the moral effects of the past year, is the ardent prayer of your obedient servant,

JOHN B. FERGUSON,

Acting Chaplain.

To the BOARD OF INSPECTORS

of the Penitentiary of the District of Columbia.

No. 4.

Journal of convicts in the penitentiary for the District of Columbia, in all the year 1840, with the time of reception, employment, time of discharge, pardon, &c.

No.	When received.	Names.	Sex and color.	Term of sentence.	Crime.	How employed in the penitentiary.	When and how discharged.
1	Nov. 1, 1833	J. O.	White man	7 years	Horse-stealing	Carpentry	Released Nov. 1, 1840.
2	Nov. 18, 1833	A. B.	Do	7 years	Do	Shoemaking	Released Nov. 16, 1840.
3	June 6, 1835	O. McM.	Do	8 years	Manslaughter	Do	
4	June 6, 1835	A. R.	Mulatto man	5 years	Stealing	Do	Released June 6, 1840.
5	June 6, 1835	A. C.	Black man	5 years	Manslaughter	Do	Do. do.
6	June 6, 1835	G. D.	Mulatto man	5 years	Do	Do	Do. do.
7	Dec. 14, 1835	R. J.	Do	5 years	Highway robbery	Do	Released Dec. 14, 1840.
8	Jan. 21, 1836	D. L.	White man	6 years	Assault with intent to kill and robbery	Tailoring.	
9	July 11, 1836	J. J.	Do	4 years	Forgery	Shoemaking	Released July 11, 1840.
10	Dec. 12, 1836	W. W.	Mulatto man	7 years	Assault and robbery on the highway	Do.	
11	Dec. 12, 1836	H. H.	Black man	7 years	Do do	Do.	
12	Dec. 17, 1836	R. P.	Do	5 years	Assault with intent to kill	Servant.	
13	Jan. 27, 1837	H. H. W.	White man	10 years	Burning United States Treasury office.	Carpentry.	
14	April 10, 1837	W. W.	Black man	3 years	Stealing	Shoemaking	Released April 10, 1840.
15	April 15, 1837	N. C.	Do	3 years	Do	Do	Do. do.
16	May 13, 1837	L. P.	White man	5 years	Manslaughter	Tailoring.	
17	May 13, 1837	J. F.	Black man	7 years	Forgery	Shoemaking.	
18	May 13, 1837	C. R.	Do	3 years	Burglary	Do	Released May 13, 1840.
19	June 24, 1837	N. L.	White man	6 years	Stealing	Do	
20	Dec. 21, 1837	J. H.	Mulatto man	2 yrs. and 6 mos.	Do	Do	Released June 21, 1840.
21	Dec. 23, 1837	W. C.	Black man	3 years	Do	Do	Released Dec. 21, 1840.
22	Jan. 9, 1838	J. L.	White man	4 years	Do	Do	
23	Jan. 9, 1838	R. B.	Mulatto man	3 years	Do	Broom-making.	
24	Jan. 24, 1838	N. G. N.	White man	7 years	Forgery	Shoemaking.	
25	April 23, 1838	H. B.	Do	5 years	Stealing	Broom-making.	
26	June 29, 1838	J. J.	Black woman	2 years	Do	Washing & mending	Released June 28, 1840.
27	June 29, 1838	N. S.	Black man	3 years	Do	Shoemaking.	

No.	When received.	Names.	Sex and color.	Term of sentence.	Crime.	How employed in the penitentiary.	When and how discharged.
28	July 2, 1838	J. B.	Mulatto man	2 years	Stealing	Shoemaking	Released July 2, 1840.
29	Sept. 27, 1838	J. B. H.	White man	10 years	Forgery	Do.	
30	Sept. 28, 1838	M. S.	White woman	3 years	Stealing	Washing & mending.	
31	Sept. 28, 1838	J. McC.	White man	2 years	Do	Shoemaking	Released Sept. 28, 1840.
32	Sept. 28, 1838	J. A.	Do	2 years	Do	Do	Do. do.
33	Sept. 28, 1838	W. McM.	Do	2 years	Do	Making sackings	Do. do.
34	Sept. 28, 1838	L. G.	Black woman	2 years	Do	Washing & mending	Do. do.
35	Oct. 3, 1838	G. L.	White man	2 years	Do	Shoemaking	Pardoned March 28, 1840.
36	Oct. 20, 1838	J. D.	Do	10 years	Robbing the mail	Barber.	
37	Nov. 12, 1838	W. C.	Do	3 years	Stealing	Shoemaking.	
38	Nov. 12, 1838	W. W.	Do	3 years	Do	Do.	
39	Nov. 12, 1838	H. B.	Do	2 years	Do	Do	Released Nov. 10, 1840.
40	Dec. 10, 1838	T. C.	Do	2 years	Do	Do	Released Dec. 21, 1840.
41	March 27, 1839	W. T.	Do	2 years	Do	Baker.	
42	March 27, 1839	S. C.	Do	3 years	Forgery	Shoemaking.	
43	March 27, 1839	L. A. T.	Do	3 years	Stealing	Do.	
44	March 27, 1839	J. W. W.	Do	2 years	Do	Do.	
45	March 28, 1839	F. S.	Black man	2 years	Do	Servant.	
46	March 28, 1839	J. B.	Do	5 years	Do	Cooking.	
47	March 28, 1839	J. C.	Mulatto man	2 years	Do	Servant.	
48	April 1, 1839	C. B. W.	White man	1 year	Do	Picking oakum	Died February 24, 1840.
49	April 4, 1839	A. H.	Black man	2 years	Do	Cooking.	
50	April 4, 1839	A. O.	Do	2 years	Do	Shoemaking.	
51	April 4, 1839	G. E.	Do	2 years	Do	Do.	
52	June 15, 1839	W. N.	Mulatto man	5 years	Forgery	Do.	
53	June 17, 1839	W. K.	White man	5 years	Stealing	Do.	
54	Nov. 19, 1839	F. F.	Do	2 years	Perjury	Do	Pardoned April 17, 1840.
55	Nov. 19, 1839	W. W.	Do	4 years	Stealing	Do.	
56	Nov. 19, 1839	B. F.	Do	2 years	Do	Do.	
57	Nov. 19, 1839	M. F.	White woman	2 years	Do	Washing & mending.	
58	Nov. 25, 1839	M. E. H.	White man	1 year	Do	Shoemaking	Released Nov. 25, 1840.
59	Nov. 25, 1839	M. A. C.	Mulatto woman	2 years	Do	Washing & mending.	
60	Nov. 25, 1839	H. S.	White man	2 years	Do	Baker.	
61	Nov. 25, 1839	J. C.	Do	2 years	Forgery	Shoemaking.	

62	Nov. 26, 1839	J. G.	-	Do	-	5 years	-	Horse stealing	-	-	Picking oakum.
63	March 19, 1840	J. H.	-	Copper color man	-	6 years	-	Stealing	-	-	Shoemaking.
64	March 19, 1840	S. S.	-	Mulatto man	-	9 years	-	Do	-	-	Do.
65	March 19, 1840	J. H.	-	Black man	-	2 years	-	Do	-	-	Do.
66	March 21, 1840	W. H. M.	-	White man	-	4 years	-	Do	-	-	Do.
67	April 9, 1840	J. C.	-	Do	-	3 years	-	Do	-	-	Do.
68	April 9, 1840	J. E.	-	Do	-	2 years	-	Do	-	-	Carpentry.
69	April 9, 1840	R. H.	-	Black man	-	2 years	-	Do	-	-	Shoemaking.
70	June 13, 1840	J. D.	-	Do	-	2 years	-	Do	-	-	Do.
71	June 13, 1840	C. G.	-	Do	-	4 years	-	Do	-	-	Do
72	June 13, 1840	A. B.	-	White man	-	2 years	-	Do	-	-	Do
73	Nov. 4, 1840	J. C.	-	Mulatto man	-	1 year & 6 mos.	-	Do	-	-	Do
74	Nov. 6, 1840	G. P.	-	Black man	-	2 years	-	Do	-	-	Do.
75	Nov. 27, 1840	J. S.	-	White man	-	3 years	-	Do	-	-	Do.
76	Nov. 27, 1840	H. W.	-	Black man	-	2 years	-	Do	-	-	Shop boy,
77	Nov. 27, 1840	J. J.	-	Black woman	-	2 years	-	Do	-	-	Washing & mending.
78	Nov. 27, 1840	J. B.	-	Mulatto man	-	3 years	-	Do	-	-	Shoemaking.
79	Nov. 27, 1840	J. A.	-	White man	-	2 years	-	Do	-	-	Do.

Pardoned July 25, 1840.

RECAPITULATION.

Whole number of prisoners in the penitentiary since the 1st of January, 1840	-	79
Discharged at the end of sentence	21	
Pardoned	3	
Died	1	
	<hr/>	25
		<hr/>
Now in the penitentiary	-	54
Sentenced to the penitentiary since this report was made out	-	2
		<hr/>
		56
		<hr/>
Shoemaking	-	54
Carpentry	-	3
Tailoring	-	2
Servants	-	3
Broom making	-	2
Washing and mending	-	6
Making sackings	-	1
Barber	-	1
Cooking	-	2
Picking oakum	-	2
Baking	-	2
Shop boy	-	1
		<hr/>
		79
		<hr/>

I certify that the foregoing is a true list of the prisoners confined in the penitentiary for the District of Columbia in 1840, with their several occupations, &c.

W. WHEATLY,
Clerk of the penitentiary, D. C.