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**CHANGING**

**FACES**

**HISTORY OF  
CORRECTIONS  
IN KENTUCKY**

**COMMON**

**WALLS**

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CHANGING FACES

COMMON WALLS

HISTORY  
OF  
CORRECTIONS  
IN  
KENTUCKY

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June 1988

These facts about corrections in Kentucky were collected from 1982 to 1988 by Kentucky Corrections Cabinet, Office of Corrections Training. If you have photos, articles or artifacts of interest to corrections, we would appreciate the opportunity to make copies or photographs.

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## INTRODUCTION

Prisons have been built in out-of-sight, out-of-mind locations. Because of this, the public often learns about prisons only from media accounts of emotional events such as riots, escapes, and increased costs causing concern for taxpayers. Consequently, there is a need for a more objective and less emotional examination of the history of Kentucky's prisons. "Changing Faces, Common Walls" is an attempt to meet this need.

Throughout history, society has sent felons to prison for various reasons. People are incarcerated as an alternative to execution or other cruel punishments; they are sent to be reformed; they are sent because they cannot be reformed; they are sent to be punished; they are sent to deter other potential offenders; and, of course, they are sent to protect the public.

Once society meets its needs by sending offenders to prison, another set of problems emerges: the human need of those incarcerated must be met by the prison system. It is this duality that makes prisons such complex social institutions.

The fact that the needs of the imprisoned are attended to more diligently at some times than at others reflects the values prevailing in society during a given era. How has Kentucky responded to these societal changes? "Changing Faces, Common Walls" chronicles these changing values.

Major themes of this chronology are: procurement of adequate money to operate the system safely and to prevent overcrowding; the rise, fall, and return of private business to the prison system; and the progress of efforts to reform the system.

Overpopulation first became a problem in 1817 when the Governor requested a new prison, hoping to meet the needs of the next 50 years. Instead, the General Assembly added only 40 new cells to the existing facility. In the fifteen years following the Civil War inmate population increased nearly fivefold, from 201 to 951. (Over half the inmates were black which raises questions about the continuation of slavery within the penal system.) Between 1879 and 1881 Governor Luke Blackburn pardoned 850 inmates to ease overcrowding and in 1884 construction of Kentucky Branch Penitentiary began at Eddyville.

From 1930 to 1935 inmate population climbed from 2,300 to 4,300 inmates. During this period, two governors pardoned over 700 inmates and plans were made to build a new institution. From 1980 to 1987, inmate population increased 78% and over 1,000 inmates were backed up in county jails awaiting bed space in state prisons. In 1987, the cost of operating this system was over \$2 million per week and significant increases were projected to build and operate additional institutions.

Private business first took control of the prison system in 1825 when the state leased the entire Kentucky State Penitentiary at Frankfort to a businessman instituting the "lease system." The lease system continued for 55 years and several lessees made fortunes in the process, while others, claiming inability to pay, were excused from paying their "rent" by the General Assembly. Several lessees used their position to gain political power and control the legislative process to their economic advantage.

In 1880, Kentucky State Penitentiary, Frankfort, was returned to the "warden system" but inmate labor was then sold through the "contract system" for use at railroad construction sites and other projects away from the penitentiary. Hundreds of inmates left the penitentiary to work for contractors and were never seen again. When contractors realized that the penitentiary was so overcrowded that there was no room in the prisons for inmates they housed and worked outside the penitentiary, they exploited the situation to secure highly favorable terms in negotiations with the state for use of inmate labor.

After 1891, it became illegal to work inmates outside the walls of the prison and the contractors turned to labor-intensive manufacturing of products such as shoes, shirts, chairs, brooms, and leather goods at factories within the prison walls. Wage laborers outside prisons could not compete with unpaid prison labor and in 1929 they successfully lobbied for federal legislation which kept convict-made products from being sold across state lines. By the mid-1930's private contractors had pulled out of the prisons and the state faced the problem of furnishing employment to thousands of inmates without competing unfairly with wage laborers. Large prison farms were purchased to alleviate this problem but high unemployment of inmates continues to present problems. Today, goods and services produced by inmates are limited to use by state government.

As early as 1821, reformers called for educational, religious, and vocational instruction for inmates. Later reform efforts attempted to end abuses of inmates under the lease and contract systems and secure separate facilities for juveniles, females, first offenders, and geriatric inmates. In the early 1960's "treatment" personnel were hired as the system began another era of reform. The greatest reform agent during the past 10 years has been the Federal Court which mandated, in 1980, funding for a wide range of improvements in prison facilities and staffing and set population limits at several institutions.

Reform efforts have always played against the realities of political pressure. This chronology can serve as a guide for further research into the fields of corrections, public administration, and social justice. Those in public office for a relatively short time must make decisions which will affect public safety, prisoners, prison staff, and taxpayers over the long term. They might find the information included here of assistance in effecting real improvement in our prison system. Without knowledge of where we have been and why, we are in danger of fostering repetitive correctional "solutions" to recurring problems of society as a whole.

## HISTORY OF CORRECTIONS IN KENTUCKY

- 1792 Kentucky becomes a state. Penalty for all felonies is death. Misdemeanor penalties include burning the hand, whipping, pillory, and dunking.
- 1799 Kentucky State Penitentiary is established on one acre of land in Frankfort. Plans call for 30 prisoners to be held in cells 6 feet wide, 8 feet long, and 9 feet high. Supervision of the penitentiary is granted by law to the Governor and 6 inspectors appointed by the Franklin County Court to serve one year terms. The Governor can appoint or remove the "Keeper" of the institution. First prisoner arrives in 1800. This is the first penitentiary built west of the Allegheny Mountains.
- 1800-10 A total of 128 inmates serve time at the Kentucky State Penitentiary.
- 1802 Two inmates escape.
- 1808 Inmates produce: nails, log chains, plow irons, axes, hoes, shoes, boots, and tin/copper ware.
- 1813-14 Forty-six British Officers are imprisoned as retaliation for forty-six Americans held in British prisons.
- 1817-19 Three or four convicts are housed per single cell. Legislative Committee and Governor recommend building a new prison to meet the needs of the next fifty years.
- 1821 Governor John Adair's message to the legislature calls for uneducated inmates to be instructed in reading, writing, arithmetic, and occupational trades and skills.
- 1822 General Assembly authorizes addition of one acre and forty new cells.
- 1825-34 The penitentiary and inmates are leased to Joel Scott in return for a percentage of the profits from prison labor. As Lessee, Scott makes \$40,000 in nine years. Scott adds chair making, shoe making, cooperage, wagon making, sleighmaking, and weaving to prison industries. Two-thirds of inmates are employed making rope from hemp. Lessees maintain control of the penitentiary for the next 55 years.
- 1828 Eight solitary confinement cells are built. Each cell is 3 feet wide, 4 feet high, and 7 feet long. Lashing remains the primary punishment. A recaptured escapee might receive 70 to 80 lashes.
- 1829 Legislature directs that one sermon be preached to the prisoners by a minister of the gospel on each Sabbath followed by 4 hours of reading, writing, and arithmetic for illiterate prisoners.
- 1833 All but two inmates have cholera. Twenty percent of the inmates die.

- 1834 Population of the penitentiary is 90 prisoners.
- 1834-44 Lessee Thomas Theobald makes \$200,000 profit from prison labor. Competition for the position of Lessee becomes intense.
- 1835 Twin towers are built at the entrance to the penitentiary to provide suitable offices for the Lessee and his assistants. These towers stand until 1950.
- 1840 240 new cells are added to the penitentiary.
- 1840's Mandatory shaving of inmates' heads is ended.
- 1844 Delia Webster is convicted of helping slaves escape and gets a two year sentence. Lessee Newton Craig takes her to his home near Georgetown to serve as governess. Webster is pardoned after two months. Ten years later she provides "The Louisville Democrat" with letters Craig has written to her. These letters are published and Craig is not reappointed as lessee. The Craig home, built with convict labor, still stands.
- 1845 Dorothea Dix is commissioned by the General Assembly to report on the institutions of the Commonwealth. Her report criticizes the lack of funding for educational and religious instruction of prisoners.
- 1845-58 Female prisoners are housed in a 20 foot square building, ten feet from the men's cellhouse, without a wall separating them.
- 1845-69 Penitentiary fails to show a profit and lessee does not pay the required annual rent to the state treasury for years: 1845, 1846, 1848, 1854, 1856, 1861, and 1869. The governor is empowered to remove any lessee who fails to comply with the law but politically no governor dares use this power.
- 1846 Legislature authorizes the building of a chapel at the penitentiary. A full-time chaplain is not hired until 1883.
- 1847 An Indiana prison in Clarksville, across the Ohio River from Louisville, is enlarged to become Indiana's major penitentiary. Like Kentucky, the Indiana State Penitentiary also used the lessee system but ended use of lessees in 1856. In 1897 this institution is renamed the Indiana State Reformatory. In 1921 this prison is sold to Colgate-Palmolive Co., its present owner, and inmates are moved to Pendleton, Indiana.
- 1851 Large stone cellhouses containing a total of 320 cells are added to Jefferson County's Workhouse at Lexington Road and Payne Street in Louisville. The Workhouse is in use until 1954. A public swimming pool now occupies this site.
- 1855 Sixty inmates are treated for scurvy.
- 1855-60 Lessee Jeb Ward ignores the statutory requirement of weekly sermons and Sabbath Schools for illiterate convicts in favor of emphasis on convict labor.

- 1855 A large stone house is built at the town of Airdrie on the Green River in Muhlenberg County, about one mile from Paradise, Kentucky, and used as a machine shop. In 1884, inmates were kept a few weeks at this house while they quarried stone to build the Branch Penitentiary at Eddyville. This structure still stands, and is "the abandoned old prison down by A'drie Hill" in John Prine's popular song "Paradise". The full story of Airdrie is lost in the passage of time and folklore.
- 1856-72 Penitentiary costs the state \$337,000 more than it receives in rent from lessees.
- 1857-59 Two-thirds of inmate labor is devoted to the manufacture of hemp. During a fifteen month period, three inmates cut off a hand in order to escape from the task of making hemp products. Hemp is the state's largest cash crop, and Kentucky produces more hemp than any other state.
- 1859 Jeremiah W. South is elected by the General Assembly to serve a four year term as Lessee.
- 1859-66 Both Union and Confederate soldiers are confined in the penitentiary. The Union soldiers are charged with various crimes, such as rape, or with desertion. The Confederate soldiers are generally confined for guerrilla activities. Over 26 "guerrillas" names appear on the Register and they could be considered prisoners of war.
- 1860 William C. Sneed, penitentiary physician from 1844 to 1863, publishes a book on the history of the penitentiary from 1798 to 1860. Sneed predicts that the Lessee System would make the penitentiary into the "engine of political ambition and the pest house of moral corruption."
- 1860 An armed mob of citizens rounds up convicts working outside the walls at the Indiana State Penitentiary at Jeffersonville and returns them to the penitentiary to protest their competition with free labor.
- 1862 State law stipulates that lessee be fined \$100 for every inmate worked outside the penitentiary walls. When the law goes into effect in 1872 it is discovered that the penalty of the 1862 act is "inadvertently" left out. Inmates continue to work outside walls on farms in Franklin and adjoining counties.
- 1863 General Assembly reduces the annual rent charged the lessee from \$12,000 to \$6,000.
- 1863 Henry Todd is elected to a four year term as Lessee. While in office, he keeps 50-75 inmates working on his farm and building his house in Frankfort.
- 1864 Fourteen prisoners escape. Lessee Todd states that the ease of joining the Army makes escapees difficult to recapture.
- 1865-80 By continuing to use the lease system Kentucky remains the only state free from direct responsibility for its convicted criminals.

- 1865 Inmate population at Frankfort is 201. This figure grows to 653 by 1870 and to 951 by 1880. By 1938, inmate population grows over 1900% while Kentucky's population increases by 123%.
- 1866-7 Over one-third of prisoners sent to the penitentiary are between 15 and 20 years old.
- 1868 There are 35 female inmates--1 white and 34 black.
- 1868 The prison population is 38.5% black. By 1879, this figure rises to 54.8%. Negroes make up over 50% of the inmate population for approximately 30 years.
- 1869 Governor John Stevenson calls for a thorough reformation of the prison system, establishing: a House of Reform for juveniles; classification system; payment of a portion of earnings to the inmate upon his release. A commission is appointed to investigate prisons of other states and report their findings. The commission recommends ending the lease system and re-establishing state control of prisons, but the Legislature votes this down.
- 1870 Outgoing Lessee Henry Todd recommends use of a classification system to separate the young convicts (one was ten years old) from the hardened ones.
- 1870 Legislature elects Jeremiah W. South to a second four-year term as Lessee and he remains in power until his death in 1880. South gains a reputation by providing 25 legislators with cheap boarding, cheap washing, and free drinks, and as many as 50 guests for meals. One-third of the legislators are reported under his control and he is considered the most influential man in eastern Kentucky.
- 1870 Governor John W. Stevenson urges that families of convicts receive a share of the profits from prison labor.
- 1870-80 The Courier-Journal conducts a vigorous campaign to employ inmates on public works projects. This legislation is passed only after Lessee Jeremiah South is promised a share of the profits.
- 1872 Legislature approves \$45,000 for building a 36-cell female cell block and a hemp spinning walk on a triangular piece of ground in the northeast corner of the penitentiary. Female inmates had been quartered at the penitentiary to replace quarters in a large room over the hospital. Male staff remain in charge of female inmates until 1917.
- 1872 Penitentiary inspectors urge that whipping be discontinued.
- 1872 Part of the hemp factory burns. One convict dies, and damage is estimated at \$29,800.
- 1873 Governor Preston H. Leslie sends a committee to the Prison Reform Congress in Baltimore. The committee's report is strongly critical of the lessee system and recommends use of the warden system. Governor Leslie joins with his committee, calling the lessee system a "reproach to the Commonwealth." The General Assembly rejects these recommendations and re-elects Jeremiah South to another four year term as lessee.

- 1873 Convicts are being leased for 5 cents each per day. Editor of the Courier-Journal writes that Kentucky is the only state where convicts are sold into "absolute slavery."
- 1874 Kentucky House Committee recommends building a 500-cell branch penitentiary in Covington to relieve overcrowded conditions in Frankfort and to make classification possible. The General Assembly fails to act.
- 1875 One of every five inmates has pneumonia. One in twenty-four die of the disease. The prison physician blames overcrowding in the cellhouse for the outbreak.
- 1875-99 Cost of feeding an inmate is less than 10 cents per day.
- 1876 Frankfort correspondent for the Courier-Journal states there is no need to raise the grand larceny threshold in order to decrease the number of Negro convicts because the state could furnish "plenty of occupation to all violators of the criminal law."
- 1876 At Frankfort there are 911 convicts in 648 cells. Governor James McCreary calls for an expansion of the penitentiary; lowering the population by raising from \$4 to \$15 the value of articles whose theft constitutes grand larceny; and employment of convicts on navigable rivers. The legislature appropriates \$25,000 for expansion; raises grand larceny limit to \$10; and provides 5 days per month reduction in sentence for good behavior.
- 1876 The Courier-Journal carries an account of an inmate who died as a result of whipping and other mistreatment.
- 1878 Lessee Jeremiah South uses his influence to interfere with all legislation relating to the penitentiary until the Democratic Caucus agrees to appoint him to another four-year term.
- 1878 Frankfort is flooded with counterfeit coins made by enterprising inmates.
- 1878 Free laborers petition the General Assembly to keep inmate labor from competing with them inside or outside the walls.
- 1878 Penitentiary houses 960 men and 40 women. There are only 740 cells for male inmates and penitentiary workshops are designed for only 500 men. The General Assembly is now faced with proposals for: enlarging the penitentiary; creating a branch penitentiary; hiring inmates for public works; or leasing inmates for labor in iron and coal mines.
- 1878 General Assembly passes a bill allowing up to 500 inmates to be leased to contractors carrying on public works with the state. Contractors are to provide food, housing, clothing, and discipline of inmates and pay nothing for their labor.
- 1878-79 One hundred six inmates die of scurvy and other diseases.

- 1879 Governor Luke Blackburn recommends appropriation of \$300,000 to build three branch penitentiaries under the warden system and emphasizes reform as the primary aim of the penitentiary system. He proposes a three-fold classification system for prisoners. All should enter prison at the lowest grade, which was solitary confinement at hard labor. Good behavior would advance the prisoner to the second stage where punishment was but slightly penal. If improvement continued, the prisoner would serve the remainder of his sentence under police supervision outside the penitentiary.
- 1879-81 Governor Luke Blackburn pardons 850 inmates and later justifies his actions citing overcrowding.
- 1880 A ten year old boy is sentenced to life imprisonment.
- 1880 Reports show that inmates are punished by means of a wooden door placed over their cell door. This confines the inmate to a space 6 feet 8 inches long, 3 feet 9 inches wide, and 6 feet 3 inches high without light or air. The "shower bath" is also used to punish inmates. The prisoner's arms and legs are restrained to a wall and he is hosed down with a force pump powered by four large inmates to 180 pounds of pressure.
- 1880 Frankfort correspondent for the Courier-Journal writes, " We must slowly murder our convicts or give up their reformation because it will cost a great deal to build a branch penitentiary."
- 1880 Two weeks after the death of Lessee Jeremiah South, the General Assembly adopts the Warden System and state government re-accepts responsibility for prisoners. Warden is to be elected by the General Assembly for a 4-year term and is forbidden to have any financial interest in the convicts or the penitentiary. William S. Stone, who had been a strong supporter of South, is elected Warden.
- 1880 The state moves toward the "fair" use of convict labor by adopting the contract system. This allows private contractors to bid for rights to use convict labor. The first contractor fails to pay the amount owed the state for prisoner's labor.
- 1880 Inmate population at Frankfort is: 316 whites; 472 blacks; and 28 females.
- 1880 The first contingent of 110 convicts leaves the penitentiary to work for the contractor building the Big Sandy Railroad near Mount Sterling.
- 1880 Kentucky Senate committee recommends establishment of new prison rules describing plainly each offense, the penalty, and the method of inflicting punishment. Rules of the Ohio State Penitentiary are ordered into effect.
- 1880 Kentucky legislature authorizes the parole of inmates and sets up a board of directors to hear cases.

- 1880 Governor Luke Blackburn appoints a three-man commission to visit penitentiaries in other states and report on a location and plans for a new penitentiary in Kentucky. General H.B. Lyon of Eddyville is on the committee and a site on the Cumberland River in Lyon County is chosen for a fortress-type prison modeled after the Illinois Penitentiary at Joliet. It is to have 320 men's cells and 32 women's cells and cost \$233,753. The legislature fails to provide funds.
- 1881 Commissioners of penitentiary order that no physical punishment be administered without the presence of a physician. This order is rescinded two months later.
- 1882 Investigating Committee is appointed by the Legislature and a prison camp at Triplett and Means Tunnel near Grayson is visited. One contractor, C.R. Mason, admits that 25 of 50 convicts at Triplett's Tunnel died. Other reports show that convicts are forced to work in waist-deep water in winter, that several were killed by cave-ins, and that beatings are the mainstay of discipline. At Camp Shearer (on Kentucky River, 2 miles north of Boonesboro) the Committee finds no one who knows how many convicts are there, how many are sick, or how many had died. No records were kept. Dead inmates had been placed in boxes and covered with the "dump of the railroad." The committee recommends abolition of the contract leasing system. No changes result from their recommendation.
- 1882 Editor of the Louisville Commercial urges a sweeping investigation of the penitentiary and the entire contractor-lease system.
- 1882 General Assembly seriously considers re-establishment of the whipping post to reduce the number sent to the penitentiary and thus remove the need for appropriating money for a branch penitentiary.
- 1883 Governor Blackburn informs the Legislature that the penitentiary will not hold one quarter of the prisoners working on the railroad and that these prisoners might be returned to the penitentiary at any time by the contractor. The threat of returning large numbers of inmates to an overcrowded penitentiary gives contractors great power over penitentiary administrators.
- 1884 C.R. Mason, principal contractor of convict labor, announces he will not renew his contract when it expires. The Attorney General complains that Mason is attempting to secure the convict labor at a reduced rate. The attempt succeeds and under the new contract Mason pays only for feeding, clothing, and housing the convicts. Remedial reading and writing are taught by the chaplain.
- 1884 Five hundred thirty-two out of 1,074 convicts are in railroad camps.
- 1884-89 A total of 436 inmates are reported to have escaped from work sites outside the walls of the penitentiary. It is likely that many of these inmates died from maltreatment and unsafe working conditions.
- 1884 Contractor threatens to return 150 convicts to the Penitentiary in order to pressure the General Assembly into passing an amendment permitting employment of convicts in coal mines outside incorporated towns.

- 1884 A DuPont subsidiary, Central Iron and Coal Co., leases 600 convicts from C.R. Mason Company to work in coal mines at Central City. Large scale protest results in convicts being shipped back from the mines. Free miners who struck in protest return to work the next day, ending a bitter 2 months strike.
- 1884 Lexington City Council contracts for 600 to 700 convicts to dig a water-works reservoir. Two weeks later contractors are accused of beating two convicts to death and attempting to secretly bury them in a Negro graveyard. Discovery of this incident is accidental. The county attorney, coroner, and a reporter had gone to the camp to investigate rumors of a prisoner mutiny, and had seen the coffins being removed as they entered the compound.
- 1884 A 400-cell penitentiary is approved and \$150,000 is appropriated. Construction of Kentucky Branch Penitentiary at Eddyville continues for 6 years and \$270,000 in additional funding is necessary.
- 1884 At Frankfort, 3 convicts overpower a guard at the gate and obtain guns. Two guards are wounded and one convict is killed. The remaining two escapees are cornered in a Fayette County cornfield by a posse from Lexington. The two inmates and one member of the posse are killed.
- 1885 Mason and Foard Company, a contractor, obtains rights to work inmates outside the penitentiary on railroads, mines, waterways, and levees. Inmates convicted of murder, arson, attempted rape or rape, or having longer than 5 years to serve are not eligible. Death rates are high for inmates working outside the walls.
- 1885 DuPont purchases stock in Mason and Foard Company which, in turn, sublets convicts to Beaver Creek and Cumberland River Coal Companies for work in Greenwood mines in Pulaski County, and to the Main Jellico Mountain Coal Company (DuPont owned) for its mines at Kensee in Whitley County. An armed mob of citizens at the Greenwood convict camp demands return of the convicts to Frankfort. The mob is persuaded to wait two days while the Governor makes a decision. Governor Knott sends 5 companies of the State Guard and a Gattling gun to protect the convicts and the stockade.
- 1885 A total of 1,052 inmates are employed by contractors throughout the state.
- 1886 Mason and Foard Company works 394 inmates building railroads, 235 in coal mines and 122 building a branch penitentiary. Inside the penitentiary at Frankfort, the company works 33 inmates in the broom factory, 110 inmates in the furniture factory, and 40 inmates in the shoe factory.
- 1886 Warden Barry South (son of the late Jeremiah South) is replaced because Mason and Foard threatens to cancel the prison labor contract. South had been accused of lax enforcement of prison discipline by failing to whip the prisoners enough.
- 1886 Twelve convicts serving sentences at Frankfort are under 15 years of age.

- 1887 Population of the penitentiary at Frankfort is 1,052. New commitments for the preceding two years total nearly one thousand.
- 1887 Penitentiary Commission advertises in Kentucky and 5 surrounding states to solicit bids for a new prison labor contract. Mason and Foard is the only company to submit a bid.
- 1888 A state statute on parole is passed. Convicts who are serving their first term, have good conduct records, and are not sentenced for rape or incest are eligible. Murderers must serve ten years prior to parole, and any parolee who does not leave the state is required to report to the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund every six months. The number of paroles granted per year is limited to 5% of the inmate population. A total of 50 convicts are paroled in the first 18 months.
- 1889 Convicts complete a 440 foot railroad tunnel near Natural Bridge. Today, Natural Bridge State Resort Park Lodge stands above the tunnel and graves of six inmates are nearby.
- 1889 Fayette Hewitt, a member of the Penitentiary Commission, uses his position to award a convict labor contract to Mason and Foard Company, who, in turn, sublet convicts to Midlands Construction Company to build a railroad. (Hewitt is a stockholder in Midlands.) Five months later, the State National Bank is established in Frankfort. Mason and Foard Company and Governor Buckner are major stockholders in this bank and Hewitt resigns his position to become the bank's president.
- 1890 Kentucky Branch Penitentiary, Eddyville, Kentucky, officially opens on Christmas Eve.
- 1890 Governor John Young Brown calls the Kentucky Branch Penitentiary a "stupendous mistake."
- 1890 Four hundred fifty-seven convicts work in six railroad camps, although there has been no legal justification for lease since 1886.
- 1890 The limit on paroles to 5% of the inmate population is removed.
- 1891 New State Constitution Article 253 prohibits leasing of convict labor outside the penitentiary walls. Contractors respond by expanding their factories inside the walls.
- 1891 Governor William O. Bradley is the first Republican elected governor. All Democratic employees of the penitentiary are replaced.
- 1891-92 In east Tennessee, use of convict labor to break a coal miners' strike results in a long term confrontation known as the "Tennessee Convict War."
- 1891-19 Forty-eight percent of inmate deaths at Frankfort and Eddyville are due to tuberculosis.
- 1892-3 Inmate population at Frankfort is 1,101 and the chapel is converted for use as temporary cell space. At Eddyville there are 504 inmates but room for only 414 and a new cellhouse is under construction.

- 1893 General Assembly is displeased with contractors observance of rules governing feeding and clothing of inmates and enacts a law leasing only the labor of inmates. The state assumes sole responsibility for maintenance of inmates.
- 1893 At Frankfort, chair manufacturing equipment is installed. It is expected that this endeavor will employ one-half the inmates.
- 1893 Commissioners of the Penitentiary are forced to file suit against a contractor in order to secure pay for officers at the Branch Penitentiary.
- 1893 Sixty-eight to one hundred inmates are whipped per month. During the month of August, inmates receive 1,263 lashes. Nineteen inmates escape.
- 1893 At Frankfort, thirteen inmates are under 15 years of age.
- 1894 Warden Henry George surveys other states and finds that Kentucky uses the lash 300 times more often than the next highest state, Louisiana. Warden George whips 23 prisoners and confines 381 to their cells during the year 1895.
- 1894 Governor John Y. Brown assures the legislature that the Penitentiary in Frankfort will be self-supporting if broom manufacturing is started. Machinery is purchased to employ 100 to 150 convicts, but the building which was to be used for the broom factory has to be used as a dormitory for overflow of inmates.
- 1895 A new cellhouse with 408 cells is completed at Frankfort. Two years later additional cell space is requested.
- 1895 Twenty-four inmates die, all of them black.
- 1896 R.A. Hancock becomes Warden at Kentucky State Penitentiary, Frankfort, and reinstates whipping for the female as well as male prisoners. Hancock uses a leather strap 18 inches long, 2 inches wide and 1 1/2 inches thick, attached to a 10 inch wooden handle. Solitary confinement on bread and water, deprivation of light and air, loss of "good time," hanging by chains, the ball and chain, and the thumb stall are used. An average of 190 convicts per month are punished during 1897.
- 1896-15 Use of the strap remains prominent at the Kentucky State Penitentiary/Reformatory, Frankfort, and continues into the 1930's despite legal prohibitions against its use. The strap is sometimes soaked in water and dragged through sand before being used.
- 1897 Legislature establishes a House of Reform on a 200-acre tract at Greendale in Fayette County. Both boys and girls are sent to this institution in ages ranging from 8 to 21. Children are worked on the farm and in the rock quarry. Whipping, "the hole," and leg chains with thirty-five pound weights are used to control inmates. This institution, also called Kentucky Village, is now the site of Blackburn Correctional Complex.

- 1897 Governor William O. Bradley urges that institutions be run on a non-partisan basis to minimize turnover in personnel. In addition, Governor Bradley calls the General Assembly into special session to secure the abandonment of the Branch Penitentiary at Eddyville. A committee investigates and recommends continued use of the Branch Penitentiary.
- 1897 Two women become pregnant while serving their sentences. A female inmate tells a committee investigating the Frankfort institution that she has personal knowledge of guards having sexual intercourse with female inmates. The warden requests a matron to supervise female prisoners, but no females are hired until 1917.
- 1897 Competition between convict labor and free labor intensifies when contractors form monopolies. One furniture company controls furniture output from 7 prisons in 5 states. Another company manufactures clothes at 8 prisons in 6 states.
- 1897 Louisville Board of Trade protests introduction of labor-saving machinery into the Penitentiary, and requests that all prison-made goods be labeled "convict made."
- 1898 An inmate caught drunk loses seven days good time and receives thirty lashes.
- 1899 Inmate population in Frankfort decreases. The Board of Prison Commissioners learns that the decrease in prison population is nationwide and is attributed to the ease of finding employment and the enlistment of many in the army.
- 1900 Governor J.C.W. Beckham proposes an entirely separate facility operated by women for female inmates.
- 1900 General Assembly vests paroling authority in the Board of Prison Commissioners and rules that murderers must serve 5 years to be eligible for parole.
- 1900-03 Total inmates paroled is 205. Six violate their parole.
- 1902 General Assembly requires separation of youthful and hardened offenders as long as this does not interfere with the contractors' use of inmates.
- 1902 A legislative committee learns that guards are accepting presents and money from a contractor as a supplement to their salaries.
- 1903 Population of Kentucky Branch Penitentiary, Eddyville, is 184 white inmates and 365 black inmates, a total of 549.
- 1904 Sixteen hundred eleven inmates are employed by contractors and inmate labor is valued at over half a million dollars. Contractors pay the state \$180,587 for inmate labor.
- 1904 State pays \$99,305 to maintain its two penitentiaries.
- 1905 Disgruntled guards at Frankfort protest compulsory contributions to Prison Commissioner Edward Fennell's campaign for re-election. Fennell denies exerting pressure.

- 1906 The first prisoner is sent to Kentucky Branch Penitentiary for execution.
- 1907 George P. Chinn is appointed warden at Kentucky State Penitentiary, Frankfort. The new warden opposes use of corporal punishment. This displeases the labor contracting company, and Warden Chinn is soon replaced.
- 1907 Warden Mudd of Kentucky State Penitentiary, Frankfort, has picture shows and baseball games for inmates.
- 1909 At Frankfort, the Bertillon System of inmate identification is installed.
- 1910 Two "Parole and Employment Officers" are hired.
- 1912 Guards are to be appointed to four-year terms.
- 1912 Kentucky State Penitentiary in Frankfort is renamed Kentucky State Reformatory (KSR). Kentucky Branch Penitentiary at Eddyville is renamed Kentucky State Penitentiary (KSP).
- 1912 Each prisoner begins to receive a share of his earnings.
- 1912-29 John B. Chilton serves 17 years as warden of the Kentucky State Penitentiary, Eddyville. This unusually long period may be credited to the distance between the Penitentiary and the Capitol.
- 1913 Board of Prison Commissioners authorizes regular school. Cell houses are used as classrooms. Two years later claims are made that illiteracy among inmates has been abolished.
- 1913 Due to an outbreak of typhoid fever at KSP, Eddyville, all cooking and drinking water must be boiled.
- 1913 Black inmates make up 54.6% of the total inmate population. Of 51 female prisoners, nine are white.
- 1913 Whipping is forbidden at Kentucky State Penitentiary, Eddyville.
- 1913 Total parolees at large is 1,763. Fifteen are returned for violation.
- 1913-15 Seventeen hundred twenty convicts are paroled.
- 1914 Legislature requires each county to pay \$100 per year toward upkeep of each child below the age of sixteen.
- 1915 Chairman of the Board of Prison Commissioners requests a new cell house at Frankfort and suggests construction of an entirely new penitentiary on a farm.
- 1915 At KSR Frankfort, attendance at church services is mandatory and 1,225 inmates attend services.
- 1916 A road camp with 75 convicts is established in Bell County.

- 1921 Convicts in Frankfort, using assembly-line methods, turn out a weekly product of: 10,309 pairs of shoes, 14,544 shirts, 8,019 brooms, and 3,198 chairs. These items are sold to large companies for nationwide distribution.
- 1921 Each convict can receive a maximum of 10 cents per day minus fines for misconduct or bad work.
- 1921-35 Total inmate population at KSR and KSP is 1,101. This figure grows to 3,167 by 1930 and 4,024 in 1935.
- 1921 Venereal testing at Frankfort discloses that 41% of inmates have syphilis.
- 1922 Legislature ends employment of convicts on highways.
- 1922 A reward of \$100 is offered for the capture of an escaped convict. Guards would sometimes take civilians along on a manhunt because guards could not collect this award. The inmate paid for the award out of his earnings.
- 1922 Byers fires Kentucky State Reformatory Warden L.R. Davis because he had replaced prison employees with those of his own political faction and recommends appointment of an experienced warden from New York.
- 1922-24 Investigating committees urge Byers' dismissal, recommending replacement of this "carpetbagger" by a Kentuckian.
- 1923 There are a total of 206 employees of penal institutions: 78 at Frankfort, 46 at Eddyville, and 82 at the Kentucky House of Reform at Greendale.
- 1923 Total population of KSP is 530 inmates. Nearly 500 of these prisoners are leased to the Worthy Manufacturing Company (shirts), the Kentucky Whip and Collar Company, and the Louisville Broom Works. The average sum paid to the state for the labor of these inmates is \$1.00 per day.
- 1923 KSP, Eddyville, operates at a loss of \$27,498.77 despite receipts of \$128,037.94. Reformatory operates at a net loss of \$41,138.09 despite receipts of \$339,259.62
- 1923 At KSP, three convicts obtain guns, kill three officers, wound a fourth officer, and barricade themselves in the dining room. The Fifty-Fourth Machine Gun Squadron is called to the scene from Hopkinsville. They fire at various intervals into the dining room. Tear gas is used, but the gas grenades fall outside the building and roll back into the crowd. The siege lasts from Wednesday morning until Saturday night. After 81 hours of almost uninterrupted firing, the assaulting army discovers that the three convicts had been dead since Wednesday. Two had killed themselves and left suicide notes, and the third inmate died of wounds received when he entered the dining room.
- 1924 Board of Charities and Corrections forbids guards working inside KSP to carry firearms until inmates are in their cells.

- 1924 Board of Charities and Corrections learns the "shower bath" has been revived and orders use discontinued.
- 1925 After a long and intense public battle, Byers resigns his position as Commissioner of Public Institutions.
- 1925 Jefferson County Jailer, Tom Dover, has radio installed for inmates. A favorite program is the "Piano Concert" broadcast from the Missouri State Penitentiary.
- 1926 General Assembly appropriates \$50,000 for a building to house insane criminals at Central State Hospital at Lakeland.
- 1926 Governor Fields states that cells at Kentucky State Reformatory, Frankfort, are "unfit for cattle" and proposes a tax increase to pay for improvements.
- 1926 The office of Commissioner of Pardons is created to assist the Governor.
- 1926 There are a total of 674 inmates at KSP, Eddyville: 335 are white, 339 are black.
- 1926 Total cost of operating KSR and KSP is \$99,313. Cost per inmate per year at KSP is \$322.24; cost per year at KSR is \$316.93. Revenue from sale of goods reduced these figures to \$71.17 and \$70.52 respectively. Governor Sampson calls for the two prisons to be self supporting.
- 1927 Despite overcrowded female quarters, the state contracts with the federal government to accept women prisoners for \$1.25 per day and use of their labor.
- 1928 The State Board of Charities and Corrections hires 4 Parole Agents to cover the Frankfort and Eddyville institutions. A total of 666 men are paroled in one year, and 93 of these are subsequently declared violators.
- 1928 Kentucky State Penitentiary, Eddyville, has a total of 52 employees on the payroll. Thirty-eight are guards appointed by the warden. The guards work a 12 hour schedule, seven days a week, and have 14 days off per year. There are 750 inmates.
- 1928 Kentucky State Reformatory, Frankfort, has 88 employees on the payroll. Inmate population is 1,649, of whom 85 are females. There are 1,056 cells necessitating the use of dormitories to quarter 400 inmates.
- 1928 Prisoners under 30 years of age who cannot read and write do not receive favorable consideration by the parole board unless they attend night school. At KSR, Frankfort, school enrolment is 600 men and 70 women. Classes are held in cellhouse walkways. Inmates who teach school are paid 15 cents per day.

- 1928 Governor Flem Sampson deploras the practice of paroling prisoners to make room for new arrivals and recommends enlarging the reformatory grounds at Frankfort, building a new prison, and employing a portion of the prisoners outside the prison.
- 1928 Inmates in the punishment section of the Kentucky State Reformatory, Frankfort, have one hand cuffed to their cell door and the other hand cuffed to a post supporting the upper gallery. They remain standing in this position during working hours for periods of five to twenty days.
- 1928 At KSP, Worthy Manufacturing Company of Chicago employs 325 inmates in the manufacture of shirts; Kentucky Whip and Collar Company of Eddyville employs 112 inmates to manufacture horse collars; Meyer Bridges Company of Louisville employs 64 inmates to manufacture brooms. A total of 141 inmates are employed to maintain the institution.
- 1928 At KSR, Gordon Shirt Company of Moundsville Virginia employs 363 inmates in the shirt shop; Frankfort Chair Company of Frankfort employs 211 inmates; Hoge Montgomery Shoe Company of Frankfort employs 618 inmates in the shoe factory; Frankfort Broom Company of Frankfort employs 68 men to manufacture shirts. A total of 342 inmates are employed to maintain the institution. Per capita cost is \$316.93; per capita revenue is \$246.41. Net cost to keep an inmate for one year is \$70.52.
- 1928-38 Forty-nine men are executed at Kentucky State Penitentiary.
- 1929 Congress passes the Hawes-Cooper Act limiting inter-state shipment of prison-made goods. Other laws are passed which effectively end unfair wage and price differences between convict labor and free labor. Contractors pull out of the prisons during the next 6 years and the effects on inmate employment are devastating. In 1930, income from convict labor was over \$600,000 per year but by 1935 income was approximately \$60,000 per year.
- 1930 Board of Charities and Corrections announces plans to spend \$1.2 million to modernize the Kentucky State Reformatory in Frankfort. This proposal is strongly criticized by the American Prison Association, which asserts that the prison is beyond repair.
- 1930 Myer-Bridges Company renews its prison labor contract, hiring 75 inmates to manufacture brooms at KSP. This agreement is to stay in effect until the Hawes-Cooper Law takes effect in 1933. The Kentucky Whip and Collar Company at KSP asks to reduce its labor contract from 150 inmates per day to 75 inmates per day. Up to this time, Kentucky Whip and Collar had been the largest manufacturer of work-horse leather goods east of the Mississippi River.
- 1930 At Frankfort there are 2,314 inmates and only 1,128 cells. One hundred sixty-five inmates sleep in a single dormitory. Warden Roach tells large counties to send no more prisoners until provisions are made to house them.
- 1931 Contractors employ 2,325 of a total of 3,100 inmates.

- 1931 On April 21 at KSP, an inmate kills William Levi Moneymaker, guard, with a hatchet. The inmate takes Moneymaker's pistol and kills himself.
- 1931 Eddyville merchants protest the opening of an inmate canteen at KSP because it diverts \$1500-\$2000 worth of business.
- 1931 KSP is so crowded that inmates sleep on cots in corridors. Governor Flem D. Sampson pardons 187 inmates at KSP on the day before he leaves office.
- 1931 Board of Charities and Corrections requests the courts to place convicted criminals in county jails until a sufficient number of prisoners can be released to provide bed space.
- 1932 Governor Ruby Laffoon creates the Department of Public Welfare, a 5 member board, to replace the Commissioner of Institutions. This change solidifies political control of institutions.
- 1933 The two penitentiaries receive 2,656 convicts, an increase of 125.9% over 1922 figures. In 1922, 188 inmates had been paroled. In 1933, 2,025 convicts are paroled. In spite of these efforts, total prison population increases from 1,559 in 1922 to 3,499 in 1933.
- 1933 At KSR, Frankfort, two rooms in the shirt factory are converted for use as a 300-bed dormitory.
- 1934 Adult probation law passes, but judges fail to use it.
- 1935 Of all Kentucky convicts, 27.7% are serving sentences for murder or manslaughter. Only Tennessee approaches this high percentage.
- 1935 There are 54 female inmates at Frankfort, 53.7% of whom are serving sentences for murder or manslaughter.
- 1935 Inmates serving sentences of five years or less make up 60.2% of the population.
- 1935 U.S. Public Health Service Hospital opens in Lexington, and is known as the "Federal Narcotics Farm."
- 1935 Total population of KSR, Frankfort, and KSP, Eddyville, is approximately 4,300 but capacity is only 2,240. Governor Lafoon pardons 276 inmates at Frankfort and 282 inmates at Eddyville.
- 1935 A.B. Chandler is elected Governor and the State Department of Welfare is created. Penal institutions are placed under this department.
- 1935 KSR and KSP work 989 inmates in institutional jobs and contractors employ only 110 inmates. 2,848 are idle.
- 1935 Unruly inmates at KSP are put in stripes and chains with weights attached for the duration of their sentence.
- 1936 National rate of prison commitments is 50 per 100,000 population. Kentucky's commitment rate is three times higher.

- 1936 Governor Chandler recommends use of convicts for upkeep of county roads. Five hundred inmates are used for this purpose.
- 1936 In Owensboro, 10,000 people witness the last legal hanging in Kentucky.
- 1936 Governor A.B. Chandler's State Planning Board recommends: abandonment of Kentucky State Reformatory; modernization of Kentucky State Penitentiary for housing hardened inmates; serving minor offenses in county jails; raising the grand larceny limit from \$20 to \$50; examination of all inmates by a psychiatrist; construction of a hospital for insane criminals; a new medium security institution; minimum age of eighteen for admission; portable barracks for road and forestry work; a receiving and hospitalization unit for all new arrivals; passing a probation and parole law; penalties for theft of livestock limited to value only; introduction of vocational guidance and training; and, production of goods needed by the state.
- 1936 Counties are asked to submit offers for a new prison to replace KSR Frankfort.
- 1936 New probation law goes into effect. A written Pre-Sentence Investigation Report by a Probation and Parole Officer is required. Legislature increases the field force of Probation and Parole agents to thirty-eight.
- 1936 Legislature appropriates funds for a 2,800 acre farm one mile west of LaGrange, on the L&N railroad as the first step toward erection of a medium security institution to replace the reformatory at Frankfort. Matching funds are obtained from the Public Works Administration and total cost is \$3 million.
- 1936 Thirteen hundred ninety-one inmates at KSP, Eddyville, eat in relays in the chapel after the kitchen and mess hall burn.
- 1937 Overcrowding at Kentucky House of Reform forces 100 white boys to sleep in a dormitory containing 50 beds and 2 toilets.
- 1937 Kentucky State Reformatory, Frankfort, is flooded. Water is 6 feet high within the walls, and the din of rioting prisoners can be heard for blocks outside the walls. Male inmates obtain keys to the women's cellhouse. Approximately 600 National Guardsmen and U.S. Army troops guard the walls. Twenty-nine hundred six inmates are evacuated in one day and taken to jails, a tent city, the United States Public Health Service Hospital, Lexington, and other sites. Twenty-four inmates try to escape, none successfully.
- 1937 Kentucky State Reformatory at Frankfort is demolished. This site is now occupied by the State Office Building. Terrace walls surrounding this building are made of stone from the Reformatory walls. An old Reformatory building was used for years as the State Office Building Annex.

- 1937 In March, the National Guard moves 30 inmates to the site of the new Kentucky State Reformatory at LaGrange. Inmates live in tents while they build a barracks-stockade of corrugated tin buildings lined with celotex. As soon as a barracks is completed more inmates are transferred to the site to construct the permanent buildings. Eight proposed dormitory units and several other buildings are not built. The ten-story tower in front of KSR bears a striking resemblance to a design the same architect had entered in the Chicago War Memorial Competition in 1936.
- 1937 A Correctional Officer's salary is \$100. per month.
- 1937 In Kentucky State Penitentiary dining room, three inmates overpower the Deputy Warden and take his gun. Two inmates are killed as they try to escape and one guard is shot in the leg. Inside officers relinquish their guns as a result of this incident.
- 1937 Population of KSR LaGrange is 2,660 inmates. Population at KSP, Eddyville, reaches an all-time high of 1,528 inmates. Construction of Number 5 Cellhouse begins.
- 1937-83 In Boyle County, near Burgin, work begins on a \$2,500,000 hospital for the mentally ill, (designed by the same architects that designed KSR at LaGrange). Fifty inmates from KSR, LaGrange, are used to prepare the site. In 1941 the Army takes over this facility, completes construction in 1943 and names it Darnall General Hospital. In 1945, sixty prisoners of war arrive and an electrified fence is used for security. In 1946 the State takes control of the 126-building facility and renames it Kentucky State Hospital for the mentally ill. One hundred State prisoners are kept on the grounds for hospital duty. In 1948 there are 1,029 patients and by 1957 there are 1,475 patients. By 1967 patient numbers are reduced to 1,086 and by 1977 there are only 320 patients. In 1977 the hospital closes and is replaced by a juvenile detention facility, Danville Youth Development Center, which operates until 1982. In 1983 the Corrections Cabinet opens Northpoint Training Center at this site under Warden Dewey Sowders. Community response to opening the prison is negative.
- 1938 First issue of the prison paper, "The Rehabilitator" is published at KSR, LaGrange.
- 1938 Women's Division of Kentucky State Reformatory is built at Pewee Valley and is known as "Pine Bluff."
- 1939 On October 9th, the Kentucky State Reformatory, LaGrange, is dedicated before a crowd of three to four thousand spectators.
- 1939 Administration of Probations and Paroles is transferred from the Division of Corrections to a separate Division of Probation and Parole by executive order of Governor A. B. Chandler.
- 1939 Population of Kentucky prisons is 4,584. KSP, Eddyville, houses 1,569 of these inmates.
- 1940 U.S. Census figures show 2,845,627 as the total population of Kentucky.

- 1940 A Federal Correctional Institution opens at Ashland, Kentucky.
- 1940 At KSP, Eddyville, inmates publish a periodical entitled HOURS.
- 1940-45 Staff of KSR, LaGrange, numbers 50, necessitating the use of inmates in civilian jobs.
- 1940-49 At KSR, music and inmate talent programs are broadcast to dormitories over an inmate-operated radio station.
- 1941 Cellhouse #5 is completed at KSP, Eddyville, providing approximately 363 new cells.
- 1942 Inmate population at KSR, LaGrange, is approximately 3,000 inmates. Six hundred inmates are paroled to enter the Armed Services.
- 1943 Governor Keen Johnson inspects KSP and a recently purchased 430 acre prison farm near Eddyville.
- 1944 A.S. Nunn, a former sheriff, is appointed warden at KSR, LaGrange, for a salary of \$3,600 a year.
- 1944 Kentucky Attorney General authorizes an investigation of KSR. Irregularities in the prison canteen fund are found. Also discovered are: premature release of inmates (inmates working in the Reformatory's Bertillon Office had altered record cards); drugs in the institutions; inmates and guards arrested together drunk in the town of LaGrange.
- 1944 Compulsory for all KSR inmates to attend Sunday School and Academic School (elementary grades only).
- 1944 At KSP, Eddyville, inmate population is 1,078 and total staff is 86.
- 1944 Five hundred seventeen inmates are paroled (27.7% of all inmates who are eligible). Forty-two are returned as parole violators.
- 1944 The War Production Board awards Certificates of Merit to officers and inmates of KSR and KSP for production of dungarees and work jackets shipped to Allied Countries.
- 1945 In June, the Department of Welfare sends an investigating team to KSP, Eddyville. Results of the investigation show filthy food service and that 100 of the 900 inmates eat meals in the commissary which is owned and operated by inmates. Some inmates have not eaten in the prison dining room for five years. Investigators also note rackets in money lending, narcotics, sex, and weapons.
- 1945 An investigation of KSP, Eddyville, finds: seven prisoners, six of them trustees, had escaped in nine weeks; the Warden had allowed an influential inmate to give his nephew a pony; the Warden had collected unauthorized payments to transport prisoners from KSP to KSR; the Warden allowed the prison band and choral sextette to perform outside the penitentiary walls. The Commissioner of Welfare requests the resignation of Warden Dewey Ward. Ward's resignation followed similar action against Warden A. S. Nunn at KSR. Also resigning is John P. Jarvis, Director of Probation and Parole.

- 1945 On July 21, at KSP, Eddyville, six prisoners armed with knives lock five guards and the school principal in a cell during an escape attempt. When Warden Guy Tuggle arrives at the scene he is also overpowered and taken hostage. Deputy Warden L. R. Gumm arms himself with a pistol and proceeds to the scene along with several guards and quickly subdues the inmates. Tuggle had been appointed Warden nine days prior to this incident.
- 1945 On December 22, an inmate at KSP obtains a smuggled gun and kills Deputy Warden L.R. Gumm and wounds a Correctional Officer.
- 1945 At KSR, LaGrange, five inmates attempt to escape over the wall near the main entrance. Two inmates are shot and the escape attempt fails.
- 1945 Women's Division of Kentucky State Reformatory, Pewee Valley, hires its first full-time teacher. Typing classes are the most popular courses.
- 1945 The "bullwhip," a stick with leather thongs attached, is ordered out of Kentucky Village and paddling takes its place as a means of punishment.
- 1946 Harold Black is hired as first psychologist at KSR. (He is appointed Warden in 1970.)
- 1946 Oldham County Grand Jury recommends hiring of more alert guards at KSR due to the large number of escapes (117 escapes in one year).
- 1946 Classification Committee is set up at KSR and full-time chaplain is hired.
- 1946 At KSR, LaGrange, an inmate breaking the rules might have his head shaved and be marched to the rock quarry to work "under the gun." The "dark hole" is also used.
- 1946 Population of KSP is 860 inmates.
- 1946-47 Total Corrections budget is \$995,000.
- 1946-50 Total population of the Women's Division of the Kentucky State Reformatory is 41, and the total staff is 17. By 1950, there are 67 female inmates and 15 employees on the staff.
- 1947 40.2% of inmates meeting the parole board make parole.
- 1948 Honor detail is allowed to work outside the fence at KSR, LaGrange.
- 1948 Hickory canes carried by correctional officers are done away with, causing a rift between old line staff and administration.
- 1950 At KSP, Eddyville, four prisoners attempting to escape, throw Molotov cocktails into a wall tower. The officer, his clothing in flames, fires a shot and disperses the inmates. The escape attempt fails but the officer is seriously burned.
- 1950 It is not unusual for 15 to 20 officers to be replaced at KSR immediately following an election.

- 1950 Officers at KSR are dismissed or suspended for having drinking parties in their time off from the job.
- 1950-51 Probation and Parole Officers attend three days of annual inservice training in Frankfort.
- 1950-51 At KSR, inmates working at the rock quarry produce 7,861 tons of crushed stone.
- 1950-51 Three hundred sixty cases are probated in Kentucky.
- 1951 Inmate canteen funds are used to purchase a television set at the Women's Division, Kentucky State Reformatory.
- 1951 The Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (A F of L) announces that a group of officers at KSR voted to apply for a local union charter. Earlier, a group at KSP had been chartered as Local 1348.
- 1951-52 Total staff at KSP is 110 and total inmate population is 1,122. A prisoner rebellion causes \$10,000 damage.
- 1951-52 KSR Annual Report notes inmate population decreased from 2,103 to 1,969 and that new commitments total 878 for the year. 464 men were paroled and 56 parole violators were returned. Sixty-five men escaped and 70 escapees were returned. One-hundred eighteen men were transferred to KSP.
- 1952 At KSP, one officer and 10 inmates are injured as 75 inmates seize control of the garment factory. The institutional Chaplain successfully negotiates release of the garment factory superintendent who is held hostage. After four days of disturbances, prisoners are stripped of all clothing and forced to eat meals in the nude. A committee of five inmates presents inmate grievances to prison officials. Demands include better food, medical treatment and recreation, a pledge of no retaliation against participants in the rebellion, and dismissal of Deputy Warden Walter Stephens who had ordered a guard to fire into a group of menacing prisoners. Warden Jess Buchannan establishes a permanent inmate grievance committee.
- 1952 At KSR, concrete blocks are manufactured from crushed stone and a new soap factory is under construction.
- 1952 Recreation program at KSR includes: softball and hardball teams, boxing, horseshoe pitching, dance orchestra, brass and string bands, picture shows, minstrel shows, and a forty-member choral group.
- 1953 Position of Superintendent of Prison Industry is created in the Department of Welfare.
- 1953 At KSP, six inmates reach the cellhouse roof by sawing through several doors and then lower themselves to freedom on a 90 foot rope made of braided bedding. All six inmates are caught within 48 hours. The escape was blamed on the carelessness of two guards.

- 1953 A KSP inmate trustee is accused of attacking a woman in her Kuttawa grocery store. Lyon County residents petition Governor Wetherby to stop use of prison labor on KSP farms and to sell the farms as quickly as possible. The Courier-Journal responds with an editorial stating that sale of the prison farms would increase problems caused by inmate idleness. Of 1,000 inmates, 600 have no employment.
- 1953 The Parole Board stops hearing juvenile cases at Kentucky House of Reform (Kentucky Village).
- 1953 Plans are made to remodel Cellhouse #3 at KSP. The interior will be gutted and 152 maximum security cells built in four sections of 38 cells each. In addition, 11 solitary confinement cells, 6 death row cells, and the new death chamber will be located on the ground floor.
- 1953 KSP stops holding prisoners in the "dry hole." These were small cells in the lower level of Cellhouse #2 which had no light, water, bed, and poor ventilation.
- 1953 Population of KSR is 2,171 men. During 1953 a total of 1,130 inmates are admitted to KSR.
- 1954 A three year drought causes a water shortage at KSR. Five miles of water pipe are used to connect KSR to the L&N Railroad lake west of IaGrange.
- 1955 Jess Buchanan steps down from his position as Warden at KSP. Governor A.B. Chandler (who had appointed Buchanan warden in 1936) requested his resignation after Buchanan supported Bert Combs in the Governor's race.
- 1955 Governor Chandler states that conditions at KSR are deplorable, rehabilitation is lagging and inmate gangs are active.
- 1955 Over one-half of the 1,020 inmates at KSP are first offenders.
- 1955 KSR receives 200 men from KSP because of major renovation.
- 1956 Total parole caseload numbers 1,090; total probation caseload numbers 862. Probation and Parole Officers earn \$210-270 per month. The General Assembly passes legislation implementing a merit system governing the selection and dismissal of Probation and Parole Officers.
- 1956 On July 13, Lt. Owen W. Davenport is stabbed to death by an inmate in the yard of KSP.
- 1956-57 Correctional Officers at KSP are placed in uniform and an inservice training program is started. Annual report recommends renovation of cellhouses #1 and #2 at KSP. These cellhouses have no plumbing and still use the "bucket system."
- 1957 Governor A.B. Chandler attempts to sell KSP to the Federal Prison System as an "Alcatraz type" prison.
- 1958 Population at KSR is 2,423.

- 1956-60 At KSR, Warden Dan Grey uniforms Correctional Officers, initiates weekly staff meetings, stresses officer training, initiates a classification board, stresses inmate orientation into the system, starts a pre-release program, and doubles farm production.
- 1960 Oldham County Grand Jury examines KSR and recommends: minimum security inmates be put to work in road camps; more cell blocks be built; constructive employment be found for idle inmates; and continued use of the Merit System to remove unqualified personnel.
- 1961 Outgoing Probation and Parole Director, Elmore Ryle, states that a Probation and Parole Officer cannot be employed or dismissed "without approval of the the county chairman or patronage dispenser."
- 1961-63 National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) studies the Kentucky Correctional System and reports that the administration is not in control of the institutions and that the "big operator" type of convict dominates. Other problems noted are: overcrowding, intermingling of all types of offenders, political patronage, failure of judges to use probation, lack of a reception area to evaluate incoming inmates, and inadequate treatment facilities. The NCCD team notes that Kentucky is releasing 39% of its prisoners on parole compared to the national average of 59%. This study strongly recommends building farm dormitories at KSR and KSP; separation of inmates with special problems such as mental illness, senility or tuberculosis; hiring additional custody staff; drawing up a written policy manual for the Division of Corrections and restoring its Research and Statistics section.
- 1961 Total inmate population is 4,000 inmates. By 1969 this figure is reduced to 3,290.
- 1961 Three Classification and Treatment Officers and several vocational and academic teachers are added to the staff of KSR. Rifts between "Treatment" and "Custody" develop.
- 1962 Department of Corrections is formed, moving adult correctional institutions and community services (Probation and Parole) out of the Department of Welfare.
- 1962 Full time Parole Board is established. Up to this time the only full time position was the Chairman of the Parole Board.
- 1962 Executions cease at KSP. A total of 162 men had been executed.
- 1962 Bell County Forestry Camp (BCFC) is established for use as a minimum security institution. By 1979 there are six minimum security institutions for men and one for women.
- 1963 Correctional Officers are on a six day work week because adequate staff cannot be recruited. Unmarried inmates cannot receive visits from unrelated females.
- 1963 Starting pay for Probation and Parole Officers is raised from \$270/month to \$308/month.

- 1963 Governor Bert T. Combs appoints an Executive Task Force on Corrections to follow up on recommendations made in the NCCD report.
- 1963 Inmate population of KSR is approximately 2,000 inmates.
- 1963 Joe Cannon, Director of Treatment Services for the Ohio Division of Corrections is appointed Commissioner of Corrections. This is the first corrections professional appointed to this position since 1920.
- 1963 The "silence system" in institutional dining rooms is abolished and inmates are allowed to use forks. Correctional Officers pay is raised to \$266 a month.
- 1963 Position of Associate Warden for Treatment is established at KSR and social workers are hired.
- 1963 Pre-Service training for Correctional Officers is held at Kentucky State Police Academy.
- 1964 Women's Division of Kentucky State Reformatory at Pewee Valley is officially re-named Kentucky Correctional Institution for Women (KCIW).
- 1964 On Oct. 24, a Courier-Journal editorial describes conflict between the reform/treatment goals of Corrections Commissioner Joe Cannon and the custody/efficiency goals of wardens at KSP and KSR.
- 1965 Staff members at KCIW are placed in uniforms for the first time. A training program is established and Correctional Officers from KSR attend a 16-week inservice training program.
- 1965 At KSP, newly appointed Warden John Wingo along with Commissioner Joe Cannon and Harold E. Black, Director of Correctional Institutions, announces plans to: hire 30 new Correctional Officers; start a continuous intensive staff training program; establish a 40 hour work week for all Correctional Officers (night-shift Officers were working 54 hours/week and other shifts were working 42-48 hours/week). Warden Wingo states he will not hire through the system of political patronage.
- 1965 Warden's salary is \$9,850 a year. Inmates may earn up to 20 cents per day.
- 1966 Key control system is established at KSR. Glass partition in the visiting room is removed.
- 1966 Inmate population at KCIW is racially integrated.
- 1966 Riot squads, each having 45 Officers, are established at KSR and KSP and given special training by Kentucky State Police and the FBI.
- 1967 Operation of a reception and diagnostic center begins at KSR.

- 1967 Western Kentucky Farm Center, designed for 100 minimum security inmates is completed at a cost of \$600,000 and is expected to relieve overcrowding at KSP. This facility remains empty for months and reasons given include lack of funds and difficulty recruiting 14 qualified personnel. Community resistance to a minimum security institution also contributes to delay in opening the facility.
- 1967 Inmate scrip is removed at KSR in favor of using commissary cards. Tear gas is used to quell the resulting disturbance. It is reported that 100 inmates were involved and that damage was \$7,000 to \$8,000. Eyewitnesses state that there were major disturbances in 7 of 9 dormitories, that at least 500 inmates were involved, and that damage costs were much higher than reported.
- 1968 Betty Greenwell is appointed Warden at KCIW. At age 26, she is the youngest person to serve as warden of a state correctional facility.
- 1968 Governor Louie B. Nunn makes an unannounced inspection of KSP. Problems found include: overcrowding, lack of special facilities for inmates with mental handicaps, shortage of Correctional Officers, an out-dated hospital, and absence of a prison psychiatrist.
- 1969 Salaries for Classification and Treatment Officers are raised to \$530 a month.
- 1969 A Job Corps Center at Frenchburg is acquired by the Department of Corrections for use as Frenchburg Correctional Facility (FCF), a minimum security institution for approximately 100 first offenders.
- 1969 At KSR, 800 inmates are involved in a racial riot. Two inmates are injured and \$15,000 damage is done. KSR dormitories are still segregated at this time.
- 1970 At KSR a racial confrontation causes \$2,000 damage.
- 1970 Population of Frenchburg Correctional Facility is 80 inmates. By 1973 this figure is 110 inmates.
- 1970-87 For 1970, State Probation and Parole staff in Jefferson County is approximately 12 officers and 8 secretaries. Total client caseload is 677 cases. For 1987, Probation and Parole staff in Jefferson County is 60 officers and 14 secretaries. Total client caseload is approximately 4,000 cases. The total number of incoming cases assigned to this office during 1987 is 3,065 for supervision and 1,974 cases for Pre-Sentence and other investigations.
- 1971 There are twenty escapes from KSR. Average inmate population at KSR is 1,772.
- 1971 Average turnover for Correctional Officers is 7 months; for treatment staff: 1.5 years; for administration: 2.9 years.

- 1972 Department of Corrections Commissioner Charles J. Holmes proposes a work release program allowing selected inmates the opportunity to live in regional release centers and work for private employers. Attorney General Ed Hancock challenges the law in Franklin Circuit Court contending the program would violate a section of the State Constitution that forbids prisoners to be employed outside institutional walls.
- 1972 In June, a Shock Probation law goes into effect and 80 inmates are discharged to this program during the next 7 months.
- 1972 An admission and orientation program is started for new arrivals at KSP. Inmates receive intelligence and aptitude testing, and descriptions of available programs and services.
- 1972 Five inmates hold three employees hostage in the hospital pharmacy at KSP. After eighteen hours of negotiations the hostages are released.
- 1972 On Sunday, August 6, at KSR, groups of black and white inmates arm themselves with homemade weapons. After several violent incidents these groups "square off" on either side of the railroad tracks. An armed emergency squad is used to keep the inmates separated. After 8 days of negotiations, several "lock-downs" and "weapon turn-ins" KSR gets back to "normal" routines.
- 1972 Kentucky House of Reform at Greendale (Kentucky Village) is converted from use as a juvenile facility to use as a minimum security institution by the Bureau of Corrections. This facility is later named Blackburn Correctional Complex (BCC) in honor of Governor Luke Blackburn who pressed for prison reform in the 1880's.
- 1972 A staff residence building at Kentucky Correctional Institution for Women is remodeled for use as a Corrections Department Staff Development Center. Fifteen correctional caseworkers attend a training course on group counseling skills. Plans are made for new staff members to receive a one week Corrections Orientation course before they are put on the job and for all staff members to have 60 to 80 training hours per year.
- 1972 Staff Development Center established at Blackburn Correctional Complex to train new employees.
- 1972 Clearinghouse for Ex-Offenders is established in Louisville to assist ex-offenders in finding jobs. Similar programs are started in Lexington and Northern Kentucky.
- 1972 First black caseworker is hired at KSR.
- 1972 In December, 2 inmates are killed when the upholstery section of the KSP furniture factory burns. Two inmates batter a hole through a cinderblock wall allowing 18 trapped inmates to escape. Property damage is estimated at \$100,000.
- 1972-73 Average daily population by institution: KSR-1,552 inmates; KSP- 1,022 inmates; KCIW-98 inmates; BCC-112 inmates; BCFC-38 inmates; FCF-107 inmates. Average cost per inmate is \$8.52 per day or \$3,110.69 per year.

- 1972-73 Statewide totals for probation and parole are: 1,514 parolees, and 2,068 probationers. Cost to supervise a probationer or parolee is \$1.59 per day or \$579.17 per year.
- 1972-75 At KSP there are 10 inmate suicides, 9 murders, and 5 accidental deaths.
- 1973 The Kentucky Legislative Research Commission reports that the Department of Corrections fails to protect society, prevent crime or rehabilitate offenders. KSR is labeled brutal and abusive and its treatment programs grossly inadequate. Inadequate and ill-trained staff is also an issue. Community based correctional programs are emphasized. The report also recommends abolishing the prison farms.
- 1973 Kentucky Crime Commission uses federal funds for a reorganization of the Department of Corrections. A Deputy Commissioner for Community Services (co-equal with the existing Deputy Commissioner of Institutions) is hired to supervise the Probation and Parole Division, halfway houses, job clearinghouse, volunteers, and misdemeanor services. New offices are created to handle planning and research, training, and inmate grievances.
- 1973 Charles J. Holmes, Commissioner of Corrections, states one of his objectives is to tear down KSP and replace it with a more humane institution.
- 1973 At KSR the "unit concept" is planned. This will divide the large institution into five sections, restrict inmate movement, and allow additional custody and administrative personnel to be hired.
- 1973 Harlan County Forestry Camp is opened. Thirty minimum security inmates perform forestry work and community projects such as building sidewalks, digging graves for indigents, janitorial services for geriatric homes, and construction work on community buildings. The institution is closed in 1981 for financial reasons. Local citizens petition a Federal Judge to keep the facility open, to no avail.
- 1973 The number of inmates at KSP drops below 1,000 for the first time since 1944. Reasons given for this drop include: assignment of more prisoners to the new pre-release center at Blackburn Correctional Complex; fewer transfers from KSR which had declined in population to 1,500 inmates; shifting more inmates to work details in Frankfort (a project formerly handled exclusively from KSR).
- 1973 Five inmates use a pocket knife to hold a Correctional Officer hostage at KSP.
- 1973 At KSP, 3 inmates take a Correctional Officer, a prison canteen employee, and 2 inmates hostage in the canteen.
- 1976 After a thirteen month study, the Governor's Select Advisory Commission on Prisons releases its report sharply criticizing Bureau of Corrections leadership, especially at KSP. Warden Henry Cowan is replaced.

- 1976 Frankfort Career Development Center, a minimum security institution, opens in Frankfort on land which had once been farmed by inmates from Kentucky State Reformatory, Frankfort. This new institution provides inmate work details for public buildings and grounds and inmates no longer need to be bussed daily from KSR LaGrange.
- 1976 Daniel Boone Career Development Center opens in northern Kentucky to relieve overcrowding at KCIW and to provide a minimum security institution for 40 females, with emphasis on vocational and academic education. In 1981 this institution is closed to save money.
- 1976 Honor Unit at KSR is the first living unit to be racially integrated.
- 1976 Corrections budget totals \$15.6 million.
- 1976 Roederer Farm Center opens at LaGrange with 150 minimum security inmates. Garland Beyerle is appointed as the first superintendent.
- 1976 Plans are unveiled for a new institution on KSR property (Luther Lockett Correctional Complex). Oldham County residents react unfavorably.
- 1977 KSR hires females for Correctional Officer and Classification and Treatment Officer positions. At first, women Correctional Officers are frequently assigned jobs (such as guntower duty) which keep them out of direct contact with the inmate population.
- 1977 All of KSR is integrated. In spite of "dire predictions" 1,000 inmates move to different dormitories without incident. Detailed planning and the unusually cold and overcast weather in early spring on "moving day," helps to maintain order. The operation is completed by noon, four hours ahead of schedule, without any serious incident.
- 1978 Hidden Valley, a 500 acre resort park in Powell County, is purchased to replace the minimum security institution at Frenchburg. One-hundred eighty minimum security inmates are to be housed in this facility to be named Eastern Kentucky Career Development Center. During renovation a hotel building catches fire killing one inmate and injuring three. The facility is never opened.
- 1979 Population of KSR exceeds 2,000 inmates.
- 1979 State-wide Probation and Parole Caseload is 7,200. (By 1985 caseload rises to 10,400).
- 1980-88 Governor John Y. Brown appoints George W. Wilson Commissioner, Bureau of Corrections. He is the first black to hold this position. In July 1981, Commissioner Wilson is appointed Secretary of the Corrections Cabinet after Governor Brown removes corrections from the Justice Cabinet. Secretary Wilson holds this position until 1988; longer than any other corrections administrator in Kentucky.

- 1980 Dismas House of Louisville, a halfway house operated by a non-profit corporation, accepts inmates in addition to the parolees already in residence there. By 1984 there are 60 inmates in residence at Dierson Center, a Community Residential Center run by Dismas House.
- 1980 After 4 years of litigation before Federal Court Judge Edward H. Johnstone, correctional officials settle a class action suit with inmates at KSP and KSR. Settlement includes: population caps at both institutions, pay raises for staff, extensive construction and renovation, changes in the classification system, and improvements in educational opportunities and medical care. Improvements mandated by this Consent Decree are expected to cost \$40 million.
- 1980 A daily average of 3,719 inmates are serving time in Kentucky's institutions.
- 1980 U.S. Census figures show Kentucky's population is 3,260,257.
- 1980 Inmates being transferred from KSR to KSP seize control of their transportation bus and run off the road. Two Correctional Officers are shot as the inmates escape.
- 1980 There are 79 inmates serving long sentences under the Persistent Felony Offender Law. This number increases to 1,142 inmates by 1984. By 1987 total inmate population rises to 6,600 inmates, an increase of 78% over 1980 figures. Institutional capacity increases 36% during this period forcing over 1,200 inmates to be held in local jails awaiting bed space in state institutions.
- 1980 At KSR an inmate is shot and killed while trying to scale the perimeter fence. The last time an escaping inmate was killed had been in 1959.
- 1981 Luther Lockett Correctional Complex (LLCC) LaGrange opens. Bill Seabold is appointed Warden. Plans to install plumbing in every cell were canceled due to lack of funds. Within the security perimeter of LLCC, Kentucky Correctional Psychiatric Center (KCPC) opens, replacing the old forensic unit at Central State Hospital. KCPC is staffed by the Kentucky Cabinet for Human Resources.
- 1981 Kentucky has a higher percentage of women Correctional Officers (28%) than any other state.
- 1982-83 State spends approximately \$50 million for corrections. This is triple the 1975-76 budget.
- 1983 U.S. District Court rules the state may keep no more than 30 convicted felons at Jefferson County Jail and that no convicted felon can be left there for longer than 30 days.
- 1983 There are 118 county jails in the state. Kentucky is the only state where County Jailers are elected officials. The state sets mandatory jail standards regulating such areas as inmate health, safety, diet, security, and new jail construction. Jails failing to meet standards are closed until standards are met.
- 1983 At KSP renovation of #5 cellhouse is completed.

- 1983 KCIW and KSP are accredited by the National Commission on Accreditation for Corrections.
- 1983 Northpoint Training Center (NTC) opens at Burgin, Kentucky in the old Kentucky State Hospital facility. Six weeks after opening it is more than two-thirds full and 360 inmates are still awaiting transfer from jails to state institutions. By 1985 there are 700 inmates at this facility.
- 1983 Patricia Ward Martin is appointed Superintendent at FCDC. She is the first woman appointed to administer an institution for male inmates.
- 1984 At Northpoint Training Center, a racial disturbance between inmates leaves three Correctional Officers injured. Emergency Squads from KSR and LLCC are called to the scene to assist NTC staff in maintaining control of the institution.
- 1984 State correctional institutions house 4,784 inmates. Over 600 inmates are backed up in county jails awaiting entry into state institutions. Governor Martha Layne Collins appoints a Task Force on Prison Options to study ways of dealing with prison overcrowding. Recommendations of this task force include: raising the threshold for felony theft from \$100 to \$500; urging judges to make greater use of restitution, pre-trial diversion, weekend confinement, and probation; placement of alcoholics in facilities other than jails; placing inmates in renovated county jails across the state; placing 200 inmates in a privately renovated facility; placing 150 inmates into intensive parole supervision; allowing inmates to work for private firms by day and return to prison at night; repeal of law requiring certain offenders in medium or maximum security institutions; placement of 60 inmates at Kentucky Correctional Psychiatric Center; placement of 60 inmates in a proposed geriatric facility near LaGrange. Final recommendation is for emergency release of prisoners through gubernatorial commutation if all else fails to solve the over-population problem.
- 1984 Renovation of #4 cellhouse is completed at KSP.
- 1984 At KSP, Pat Ross, Food Service Instructor, is killed by an inmate.
- 1984 An Attorney General's opinion states it is illegal for the state to contract with a private vendor to operate a residential corrections center free from the supervision, administration and disciplinary control of corrections officials.
- 1984 A total of 2,680 inmates are released by: parole, conditional release, serve-out, shock probation, or transfer to another state.
- 1984 Three-fourths of the 4,850 inmates housed in the state's ten institutions lack a high school diploma.
- 1984 Total corrections budget is \$80 million.

- 1985 Over 875 inmates are backed up in county jails awaiting admission to state correctional institutions. Eleven county jails have obtained court orders forcing acceptance of their inmates. Corrections officials predict that, if current inmate population trends continue, a new prison will have to be built every two years until 1995.
- 1985 Bids are solicited for a 200-bed minimum security institution to be owned and operated by private business.
- 1985 Corrections Cabinet officials consider a plan calling for the State's five penal farms to be managed privately under contract with a farm management corporation.
- 1985-86 During a 14 month period, inmates at KSP file 1,288 grievances. Of that number, 691 were resolved in favor of the inmate.
- 1986 In January, 10 inmates are moved to Marion Adjustment Center, a privately operated minimum security institution owned by U.S. Corrections Corporation of Frankfort. It is expected that 200 inmates will be housed in this facility.
- 1986 In February, Corrections Cabinet announces plans to move geriatric inmates from KSR to Central State Hospital. One hundred elderly and disabled inmates would be housed in Central State's Grauman Unit which would be surrounded by a double fence with electronic sensors, razor wire, and two watchtowers. Residents of the Central State area protest, citing concern that the facility would open the door to a larger prison housing regular inmates. Corrections withdraws the proposal.
- 1986 A bill introduced to the State Senate would legalize castration of inmates convicted of rape and sodomy before releasing them on parole.
- 1986 The Parole Board is expanded from five to seven members.
- 1986 Lt. Governor Steven Beshear calls for abolition of parole.
- 1986 House Labor and Industry Committee approves a bill making corrections employees who are in direct contact with inmates eligible for hazardous duty retirement benefits. Police officers, firefighters, and Probation and Parole officers already have this benefit and are eligible to retire after 20 years service. The legislature votes this proposal down.
- 1986 On May 9, at Western Kentucky Farm Center, Charles Fred Cash, Farm Supervisor, is murdered by an inmate.
- 1986 At KSP, 500 inmates refuse to eat meals during a weekend in June. The following morning after breakfast about 150 inmates refuse to leave the yard and begin throwing billiard balls and other objects at wall towers. Inmates break into the law library and set it afire and ransack the classification and treatment building. The KSP Emergency Squad quells the disturbance within two hours.

- 1986 At KSR, 115 inmates work in computer data entry jobs which provide services to other state agencies. Inmate wages are 25 to 60 cents per hour.
- 1986 Legislature passes House Bill 535 establishing a comprehensive treatment program for sex offenders who are in institutions or on parole.
- 1986 Metro Correctional Services Department in Louisville releases almost 500 inmates to comply with a population limit of 900 set by a Federal Court order.
- 1986 In order to ease population pressures at the jail, Jefferson County contracts with the state Probation and Parole Office in Louisville to supervise 150 county jail inmates who have been released early. This program, known as Intensive Probation, costs Jefferson County \$252,000 per year which includes salaries for five additional Probation Officers.
- 1986 Jefferson County contracts with Dismas House, a private non-profit corporation, to house 172 low-risk inmates at a cost of \$18.75 per inmate day.
- 1986 Jefferson County contracts with U.S. Corrections Corporation to run a "home incarceration program." Inmates are released to their homes and must wear wrist devices which can be monitored electronically by computer.
- 1986 In compliance with the 1980 Federal Court Consent Decree, cellhouses #1 and #2 at KSP are closed. Inmates are moved to Cellhouse #6, a new six million dollar facility built on the site of the old garment factory.
- 1986 Legislature passes House Bill #76, known as the "Truth in Sentencing" law, which permits disclosure of prior criminal record before a jury sets length of sentence for a new conviction.
- 1986 Corrections Cabinet has 4,808 institutional beds and 519 beds in community centers. Projected growth of prison population is 6,698 by July 1987. By 1991 an estimated 9,571 inmates will require housing.
- 1986 Construction of a new 500-bed correctional institution is begun in Morgan County.
- 1986 In Frankfort, the 90 year old State Office Building Annex is demolished. This was the last surviving building of the old reformatory.
- 1986 Total staff at LLCC numbers 200. KSP has 311 employees, NTC has 220 employees, KCIW has 77 employees, and KSR has 500 employees. Starting pay for a Correctional Officer is approximately \$12,000 per year.
- 1986-87 Corrections officials testify in U.S. District Court in Paducah that \$232 million has been spent to comply with the Federal Consent Decree of 1980. In mid-1987 the court rules that Corrections is in substantial compliance with the Consent Decree.

- 1986-87 Frankfort Career Development Center and Roederer Farm Center are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the American Correctional Association. The Corrections Cabinet sets a goal of having all institutions and community services programs accredited by 1988. By 1987 all institutions except BCFC are accredited.
- 1986-87 Per diem cost per inmate by institution is: Kentucky State Reformatory- \$33.34; Kentucky State Penitentiary- \$39.03; Luther Lockett Correctional Complex- \$34.40; Kentucky Correctional Institution for Women- \$39.55; Northpoint Training Center- \$31.99; Western Kentucky Farm Center- \$20.99; Roederer Farm Center- \$18.83; Frankfort Career Development Center- \$40.53; Blackburn Correctional Complex- \$27.15; Bell County Forestry Camp- \$21.60. Average per diem cost for all ten institutions is \$32.37 or \$11,813.99 per year.
- 1986-87 Average daily inmate population for each institution is: KSR-1,448; KSP-778; ILCC-576; NTC-678; KCIW-169; BCC-330; BCFC-104; WKFC-282; RFC-249; FCDC-75. Total average daily population is 4689. This figure does not include average daily populations of: 1,300 inmates held in county jails awaiting bed space in a state facility, 311 inmates in community centers, 201 inmates at Marion Adjustment Center, and 56 inmates at Kentucky Correctional Psychiatric center.
- 1987 Construction at Bell County Forestry Camp will double capacity to two hundred inmates. Frankfort Career Development Center and Western Kentucky Farm Center are also undergoing expansion.
- 1987 Over fifty percent of inmates are serving sentences for crimes of violence.
- 1987 Roederer Farm Center is converted from minimum security to medium security. The fence, razor wire, 4 guntowers, and lighting cost \$139,000. Six additional 24 hour-per-day security posts are created necessitating hiring 30 additional Correctional Officers plus additional personnel for educational, medical, casework, and food services. Per-year cost of keeping an inmate at RFC rises approximately 30 percent.
- 1987 Federal Bureau of Prisons announces plans to build a new prison in Clay County.
- 1987 The 1,000 men and 600 women at the co-ed Federal Correctional Institution at Lexington, learn that the institution will be used to house only women.
- 1987 Three double-wide mobile homes are installed at KCIW. Twenty medium-security inmates will be housed in each unit.
- 1987 Total number of parole violators returned to institutions is: 674 for technical violations and 257 were returned for new felony convictions. Supervision fees collected from cases under supervision are approximately \$1,000,000.

- 1988 Two-hundred and nine Probation and Parole Officers and 28 supervisory personnel handle a caseload of 10,585 offenders. Of these cases, 4,104 are parolees, 5,302 are probationers, 1,110 are misdemeanor offenders and 69 are pre-trial diversion cases. If caseload turnover is taken into account, the total number of offenders managed by Probation and Parole Officers during the past year is approximately 18,000.
- 1988 A factory building in Grant County and the old Hazel Green Academy in Laurel County are studied as possible sites for a new institution.
- 1988 John T. Wigginton is appointed Secretary of the Corrections Cabinet.
- 1988 The Courier-Journal reports that U.S. Corrections Corporation received a request, from an aid to Governor Wallace Wilkinson, to submit a proposal for private operation of all minimum security institutions in the state. U.S. Corrections notes the cost per inmate would drop from \$35.00 per day to \$25.00 per day in the private prisons. Also discussed is the possibility of putting the regional jail system under private control.
- 1988 The Courier-Journal reports that Governor Wilkinson's budget calls for contracting with a private firm for 250 minimum security beds and announces plans to contract with a private firm for construction of a 300-bed medium security prison financed with \$8 million in bonds. The budget also calls for a 550-bed addition at the Morgan County prison; placement of 200 additional beds in an existing dormitory at Northpoint Training Center; and completion of a new \$3.5 million 152-bed dormitory at KSP. Even with the added space the state expects to have about 800 fewer beds than inmates by 1990.
- 1988 Plans to buy a former Dr. Scholl's factory building near Falmouth and convert it into a 300-bed prison are dropped after Pendleton County residents organize a strong protest.
- 1988 At KCIW, there are 9 disciplinary segregation cells available for inmates who have broken institutional rules or inmates who are intoxicated, fighting, or out of control. There is a five-month back-log of inmates waiting to serve disciplinary sentences in these segregation cells.
- 1988 Plans are made to house an additional 100 inmates at LLCC in five double-wide mobile homes.
- 1988 A 112-bed minimum-security housing unit is being built at KCIW. When construction is completed, the total capacity of KCIW will be 312 inmates. Also under construction are a new administration building and a vocational school building. Funds for these projects were provided in response to a Federal Court Order.
- 1988 Correctional Industries at KSR employs: 150 inmates in data-entry for state agencies; 60 inmates to manufacture auto license tags; 45 inmates to make metal lockers, shelves, and jail furniture; 12 inmates to produce soap used in state agencies; and 12 inmates to make street/highway signs and plastic name plates. At LLCC, 40 inmates print state agency forms. At KSP, 40 inmates manufacture office furniture and 60 inmates make institutional/jail clothing in the garment plant. At NTC, 40 inmates manufacture institutional mattresses

and other inmates are employed to re-upholster office furniture, repair auto bodies, and manufacture metal furniture. At BCC, 20 inmates assemble modular office furniture and box springs. At KCIW, 12 inmates are employed in the printing shop.

- 1988 A total of 170 inmates work on prison farms at WKFC, RFC, NTC, and BCC.
- 1988 At KSP, approximately 72 inmates are enrolled in vocational school. At KSR approximately 165 inmates are enrolled. At NTC there are approximately 100 inmates enrolled.
- 1988-90 Corrections Cabinet budget for fiscal 1988 is \$117 million; for fiscal 1989--\$129 million; and for fiscal 1990 a budget of \$140 million is projected.
- 1988 A Senate Committee approves SB 222 which would create the Kentucky State Corrections Commission to provide long-range planning for the Corrections Cabinet.
- 1988 Senate Bill 218 prohibits housing medium or maximum security inmates in a privately operated prison. The bill also requires counties with private prisons to have full-time police departments.
- 1988 At KSP, 8 inmates escape from Number 3 Cellhouse.

WARDEN'S JOURNAL  
\* 1889 \*  
EXERPTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF  
LOUIS CURRY, CHIEF WARDEN  
KENTUCKY BRANCH PENITENTIARY AT EDDYVILLE  
-1888 to 1896-

Entry 4th September

Prisoner Watkins, #123 was reported for smoking by the one-block Day Keeper. His cell was searched and a small quantity of tobacco was discovered secreted within his night bucket. The tobacco was neatly tied in a fold of moisture proof oil cloth. The lengths these prisoners will go to to hide ill-gotten contraband never ceases to amaze me. I ordered Watkins confined to his cell for an indefinite period since this is his second offense for smoking.

Entry 9th September

Prisoner Seth Barton, #328, was delivered into my keeping by the High Sheriff of Cumberland County. This is a villainous felon charged with murder, rape, and selling whisky to Indians, and is to be hanged in four months. It will be good riddance to the likes of him! I ordered him confined to a basement cell in two-block and a death watch is being kept least he make any attempt to escape his just punishment.

Entry 15th September

Matron Helen reported a disturbance between two of the women prisoners. They were fighting near the cook shack, which is directly outside the prison. We have a total of nine woman prisoners, and they are all a slatternly lot! I ordered the two woman prisoners confined to their quarters for three days. No quarreling will be tolerated among them.

Entry 17th September

Prisoner Phillips, #186, was released today after serving a six month sentence for chicken thievery. His attitude upon departing, was quite distastful and I was sorely tempted, despite his legal release, to order him chained and whipped. The horse given to him, he loudly claimed, was worm-eaten, and he demanded another one. He also found quarrel with the blanket roll that was issued to him. I had him run off the reservation, horse and all. I fear he will be back, within the fortnight, with a more serious charge. Then we will see if he cannot be taught a bit more serious discipline. Worm eaten horse, indeed!

Entry 19th September

The prison's 205 charges, including nine woman inmates, has been quiet. But a report has reached me that a Keeper has been seriously injured at the Frankfort prison. The full details are still unclear, but it appears the Keeper was attacked by a prisoner with a sharpen-down piece of metal during the noon meal hour. We would not allow such an occurrence to happen here! I venture to predict that no such assault will ever occur at this prison.

## Entry 23rd September

The weather has turned foul for the past two nights, and the prisoners have complained that the closed windows have increased the smoke that emits from their cell oil lamps. I have ordered the upper windows to be left open. Now I fear the Night Keepers will complain of the chill when they make their rounds. This is but a few of the many petty whines I must put up with! If the complaints persist, I will order the lamps removed from the prisoner's cells.

## Entry 25th September

Prisoner Berry, #289, was put on report for refusing to haul stone through the sallyport gate. He said he was not a beast of burden and does not care if the prison wall ever gets finished. Beast of burden, indeed! I ordered him confined and chained to the dungeon cell beneath two-block. Eventually, I predict, Berry will learn to march to my tune. There is yet one-third of the wall to be built. And, every able-bodied prisoner will be expected to do his share.

## Entry 29th September

Keeper Simmons has failed to report for the second day. He is rather young and I fear he finds the work at the prison distastful. But, I have serious doubts whether he can find a job that pays more than the \$38.00 per month he receives here, If he does not report back to work by tomorrow, I will be forced to discharge him.

## Entry 2nd October

Prisoner Shaffer, #149, died in his cell. This is the fifth prisoner death during my tenure. As with the other four, this death was of a natural cause. It has been reported to me by our prison physician, Dr. Harper, that Shaffer had numerously complained of chest pains and, consequently, was assigned to very light duty. Since Shaffer is without funds, friends or relatives, he will be buried at Cherry Hill, located a short distance outside the prison. His few personal effects will be distributed among the prisoners.

## Entry 5th October

Prisoner Burton, #152, caused a disturbance in the three-block dining area at the evening meal hour. He loudly claimed his beans were unfit to eat and splattered the contents of his bowl against the wall. He was in the process of doing further harm when he was overpowered by several alert Keepers and dragged away. He is presently chained up in the dungeon where I am sure he will cause very little mischief. I am glad to report no other prisoner was involved.

## Entry 7th October

Prisoner Wheeler, #169, requested an audience with me. Wheeler, even by prison standards, is an odious creature who is presently serving a 20-year sentence for incest. I also suspect him of strange behavior within the prison, but thus far, has escaped detection. Upon granting him an interview, it was his request to obtain a Bible. The very idea that such a vile creature should hold God's Word was quite repugnant to me. I ordered him

back to work, without futhur ado, and requested the Keepers to retain a close scrutiny at his doings. One false step and Wheeler will know the true meaning of prison. A Bible, indeed!

Entry 9th October

Prisoner Penrod, #147, was released from the dungeon after seven months confinement. An incorrigible conniver, Penrod was reported attempting to subvert a newly hired Keeper to bring loose tobacco into the prison. I will not tolerate any prisoner to misuse my Keepers for such nefarious deeds. As an added reminder, I have ordered Penrod's right ankle to be shackled with a ten-pound ball weight. This will perhapse go far in correcting his evil ways.

Entry 10th October

Colonel Clarence C. Harlen appeared to hold his annual Parole and Commendation Review. A kindly gentleman, Colonel Harlen granted an early morning audience to eighty felons, including three woman prisoners. He completed his onerous chore by granting another forty interviews during the afternoon hour. From among the numerous prisoners claiming repentence, Colonel Harlen was gracious in granting the female prisoner, Joyce Kimberly, #325, an early release from her six month sentence for immoral solliciting. She will be released in the morning, but I fear she is feigning repentance and will no doubt return upon her evil path. We can be thankful that these paroles will be but a passing fancy concocted, no doubt, in the adled mind of some liberal-thinking yankee. Paroles, indeed!

Entry 15th October

Upon my word, a Black Freeman appeared at the prison gate and requested employment as a Keeper. It is widly known that I bear no malace towards the numerous races that comprise humanities total. But this was a bit too much. I fear Constable Aaron of Princeton may have been the source of this outrageous maneuver since he is burden with a prankish twist of mind. Be that as it may, I sent word to the Freeman that our employment list is full for the remaining part of this century.

Entry 16th October

Physician Harper appeared for his monthly visit to the prison. I thereupon had Prisoner Berry, #289, brought to the mid-yard post and shackled. After assembling the prison population, I supervised the administration of twenty-five lashes. Keeper Gray welded the braided whip. Upon completion of this punishment, I inquired of Berry whether he was not ready to resume hauling stone. He cursed me vilely. For this unwarrant affront, I would have personally administered another twenty-five lashes had not the good Physician stayed my hand. Still, I was sorely tempted to ignore the Physician's warning and have the whip again laid to this villainous creatures back. With a great deal of effort, I managed to temper my outrage and await the Physician's next monthly visit to administer the added twenty-five lashes, which are the maximum number allowed. Prisoner Burton, #152, received twenty-five lashes for the recent disturbance he caused in the dining room. Both prisoners were then placed under guard in the prison infirmary. When their wounds have finished festering, they will be returned back to the dungeon.

Entry 22nd October

Prisoner Sully Martin, #329, was delivered into my keeping by two constables from Paducah. An obvious troublesome character, Martin received a five year sentence for rustling and assault. Upon receipt of this felonous person he loudly voiced his contempt for the two Constables who had accompanied him and their lice-infested jail. I was sorely tempted to strike this odious creature in his tracks but was able to control my pending outburst. Martin was removed at once to the dungeon where he will remain until he learns to use a civil tongue!

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OVERVIEW OF INFORMATION RESOURCES

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Kathy Jo Black, "A Historical Overview of the Kentucky State Reformatory 1937-1979" Unpublished paper, Xavier University, January 1980.

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Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort: Photographic archives; Legislative Documents; Annual Reports.

Courier-Journal, Louisville: Photographic Archives

State Library and Archives, Frankfort: Microfilmed archives of Courier-Journal and The Louisville Times; Legislative Documents; photographic archives.

Louisville Free Public Library: Scrapbook Collection.

University of Louisville: Photographic Archives Library.

University of Kentucky: Special Collections Library.

Eastern Kentucky University: Archives-Oral History Section: Interviews with former corrections employees recorded by Charles Reedy, Ph.D. Chair, Department of Correctional Services, Eastern Kentucky University.

Clarksville Town Hall Museum. Clarksville, Indiana: Photographs of Indiana State Reformatory, Clarksville, Indiana.

Kerry Rice, University of Louisville: Information and photographs.

Carolyn B. Koenig, Research Historian, Kuttawa, Kentucky: Photographs and information.

Wilson Francis, Naturalist, Natural Bridge State Park: Photographs and information.

Warden Porter B. Lady: Private Collection of Papers and Photographs.

Warden Henry Cowan: Private Collection of Papers and Photographs.

William B. Scott Jr., Architectural Historian, Frankfort, Kentucky: Photographs and information.

T. Kyle Ellison: Interviews with: 4 former employees of KSR, Frankfort; 2 former employees of Kentucky Village, Lexington; 3 residents of Eddyville. Note: These recorded interviews will be stored at Eastern Kentucky University Library Archives Division, Oral History Section.

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A portable exhibit of 70 photographs illustrating some of the events in Kentucky Corrections, is available through: Department of Correctional Services at Eastern Kentucky University Stratton 105, Richmond KY 40475 - (606) 622-1155; Kentucky Historical Society History-to-Go program, Frankfort KY; and Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives, Traveling Exhibit Program, Frankfort KY 40602. Funds for this exhibit were provided by the Kentucky Humanities Council and ECU Department of Correctional Services with support from ECU Archives Division and the Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort KY.

A slide presentation of Kentucky Corrections history is being produced and will be available through Kentucky Council on Crime and Delinquency which has provided funding for the project.