

PH0507083

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED NOV 15 1977

DATE ENTERED

MAR 29 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Wyoming Territorial Penitentiary

AND/OR COMMON

University of Wyoming Agricultural Experiment Station Stock Farm

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

University of Wyoming Stock Farm

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Laramie

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Wyoming

CODE

56

COUNTY

Albany

CODE

001

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

 DISTRICT  
 BUILDING(S)  
 STRUCTURE  
 SITE  
 OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

 PUBLIC  
 PRIVATE  
 BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
 IN PROCESS  
 BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

 OCCUPIED  
 UNOCCUPIED  
 WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
 YES: RESTRICTED  
 YES: UNRESTRICTED  
 NO

## PRESENT USE

 AGRICULTURE  
 COMMERCIAL  
 EDUCATIONAL  
 ENTERTAINMENT  
 GOVERNMENT  
 INDUSTRIAL  
 MILITARY  
 MUSEUM  
 PARK  
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
 RELIGIOUS  
 SCIENTIFIC  
 TRANSPORTATION  
 OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

State of Wyoming/University of Wyoming

STREET &amp; NUMBER

College of Agriculture

CITY, TOWN

Laramie

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Wyoming 82071

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Albany County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Fifth Street and Grand Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Laramie

STATE

Wyoming 82070

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS** (See also Addendum A)

TITLE

Wyoming Recreation Commission, Survey of Historic Sites, Markers and Monuments

DATE

1967 (revised 1973)

\_\_\_ FEDERAL  STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Wyoming Recreation Commission

CITY, TOWN

Cheyenne

STATE

Wyoming 82002

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT                       DETERIORATED  
 GOOD                                 RUINS  
 FAIR                                  UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

---

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Wyoming Territorial Penitentiary at one time stood alone in the open plain on the west side of the Big Laramie River, separated from the nearby city of Laramie by its forbidding outward appearance and by the prison preserve that covered hundreds of acres. A dirt road from the east led up to the gabled front entrance centered on the east side of the main prison building. A twelve-foot-high wooden plank fence, flanked at intervals by guard towers, enclosed the prison yard to the west of the main building. Outside the enclosure to the south stood the warden's residence, a stark building stationed on a treeless yard. Several ancillary structures—hen house, hog pen, etc.—also stood outside the walls, and the prison garden was situated to the northeast of the main building.

Today, the penitentiary presents a much different appearance. Now a part of the University of Wyoming Agricultural Experiment Station Stock Farm, the prison buildings are the easternmost buildings of a large complex of farm structures. The plank fence and guard towers of the prison have been removed, as have all of the outbuildings, and the prison garden is indistinguishable from the surrounding fields. Corrals now stand to the north, east and south of the main prison building, and the lawn of the warden's residence is surrounded by a chainlink fence. The barren landscaping has been eased considerably by expanses of grass and a number of cottonwood and evergreen trees. Basically the only evidence of the penitentiary that remains with any degree of integrity—and the only structures included in this nomination—are the main prison building, the warden's residence and the brick-lined underground steam tunnel which linked the two buildings. The exact location of the tunnel is not known, and excavation would have to be undertaken to ascertain its extent. The prison building and warden's residence are described below:

### PRISON BUILDING

The prison building is a massive, simply detailed stone structure, consisting of a central gabled section, two-and-a-half stories tall, which is flanked to the north and south by end wings. It is actually the result of three separate stages of development. The original building, built in 1872, is now the north wing of the prison. A simple rectangular structure, 40' x 70', the most distinguishing features of the building are the elongated window openings which line the walls. The second stage is the brick addition to the west of the original building. This is a simple rectangular structure capped by a hipped roof; it may have been the broom factory although further research would be required to state this conclusively. The large central section and the south wing—built in 1889—represent the final stage of the building's growth. The general appearance of the building today—aside from the obvious aging—is much as it was when the penitentiary was turned over to the State of Wyoming by the federal government in 1890. The most notable exception to this is the addition of two ceramic block silos and their connecting structure along the east wall of the central section where the main entrance to the penitentiary once stood. Some less noticeable alterations are the stuccoing of the brick addition, the shortening of a number of the massive chimneys, and the alteration of a number of windows.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES	1. 1872	2. 1875	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	1. Livingston and Schram
	3. 1889			3. Pauly Jail Co./W. H. Holliday
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	Co. (subcontractor)			

The Union Pacific Railroad came to Wyoming in 1867 and soon thereafter, in July 1868, came the organization of the Territory of Wyoming. During the first months of the territory's existence, towns cropped up almost overnight just ahead of the westward-moving railroad, and many disappeared as quickly as they had appeared. "Hells-on-wheels" they were called and were aptly named, teeming with saloons, brothels, burlesque shows, and gambling houses and all the activities, both legal and illegal, that were associated with such establishments. Although law enforcement at the time was somewhat uneven, some of the "frontier desperadoes", as one Laramie newspaper called them, were caught, tried, and convicted. Once sentenced, these convicts had to be held in a prison for the terms of their sentences.

Within two years after its formation the new territory was in a quandry as to what it should do with its growing number of convicts. Wyoming had been sending its prisoners to the Detroit House of Correction, but transportation costs were high and it was felt that the money saved by housing the offenders within the territory would justify the construction of a new penitentiary. Wyoming Governor John A. Campbell wrote in 1870 in an appropriation request to the U. S. Secretary of Interior: "The building of a penitentiary will result in a great saving to the general government." The decision to build the facility was made in Washington soon thereafter, and later that year money was being set aside from the federal tax revenue collected from Wyoming. The Territorial Legislature had by that time designated Laramie City, one of the railroad towns, to be the location for the prison. The penitentiary was to be a federal facility, intended to be occupied by federal convicts. Territorial convicts would also be kept there—at a daily charge to the territory. The prison was to be under the management of a federal marshal who would be assisted by at least one warden.

Bids for the construction of the prison were called for in September 1871, but irregularities were discovered in the bidding procedure and the resulting charges and countercharges delayed the awarding of the contract for several months. Construction was finally begun on the building on April 30, 1872 by Livingston and Schram, contractors from Denver, (the winning bid was \$31,450.) It continued without report of incident, and on July 15 the cornerstone was laid in place. According to the Laramie Daily Sentinel of that day, it was dedicated "to evil doers of all classes and kinds, in token of which C. H. Brussard deposited a bottle of old bourbon in the cornerstone." In October the wing was accepted, and the first prisoners were brought from Cheyenne on January 14, 1873 and received by Warden N. K. Boswell.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Addendum B

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

UTM REFERENCES  
Prison Building

A 

1	3	4	4	9	0	4	0	4	5	7	3	4	0	5
ZONE			EASTING				NORTHING							

C 

ZONE			EASTING				NORTHING							

Warden's Residence

B 

1	3	4	4	9	0	4	0	4	5	7	3	3	2	5
ZONE			EASTING				NORTHING							

D 

ZONE			EASTING				NORTHING							

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Clayton Fraser, Historical Architect

ORGANIZATION

Wyoming Recreation Commission

DATE

May 24, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

604 East 25th Street

TELEPHONE

(307) 777-7695

CITY OR TOWN

Cheyenne

STATE

Wyoming 82002

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Jan K. Wilson*

TITLE

Wyoming State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

October 27, 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: *W. M. Smith*  
*Walter H. Cole*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 3-29-78

DATE 3-26-78

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED NOV 15 1977
DATE ENTERED MAR 29 1978

CONTINUATION SHEET Territorial Pen ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

The exterior walls of the main building are constructed of light grey sandstone laid in a broken ashlar pattern. Contrasting reddish-brown, dressed sandstone blocks are used for quoins at the building corners and for quoins and voussoirs around the windows and doors. True tuckpointing accentuates the mortar joints between the grey stones while the joints between the brown stones are concave. The stones and mortar joints from the base of the building to about the three-foot level have undergone a marked deterioration and require immediate attention. The south wall has developed a number of structural cracks and is currently being braced by interior steel rods. The arched window and door openings remain essentially intact, although alterations to and deterioration of the sashes, doors and casings have changed their appearance somewhat.

A mansard roof covers the original wing, and the center part is covered by a gabled roof. The roof over the south wing is pitched the same as that over the north. However, the south wall of the wing extends beyond the roof, forming a parapet; thus the roof is a parapetted gambrel rather than a mansard. The roof of the north wing is punctuated at regular intervals by segmental dormers with six-over-six double hung windows. Historic photographs indicate that the south wing had similar dormers, but they have subsequently been removed. The historic photos also show some projections at the ridges which may have been ventilators, but they are now gone. Metal sheets cover the roofs of the two wings, and the central part is covered by asphalt shingles which are peeling off to reveal wood shingles. The roof of each wing is supported by four large wooden trusses (reinforced by iron rods) which bear upon the tops of the stone walls. The trusses are a sophisticated feature of the building, spanning a distance of forty feet and permitting column-free spaces below. The roof structure of the central portion is a more conventional rafter-and-joist configuration.

Interior alterations have been extensive, especially in the two end wings. Originally they had contained three tiers of cells—brick in the north wing, iron in the south. All of the cells have since been removed, and post-and-beam systems have been installed to divide the wings into two stories. The ground stories have been divided into animal stalls or pens and the upper stories are open lofts. Currently, hay is stored in the south wing and the north wing loft is essentially unused. The masonry wall in the south wing which had separated the bath and laundry facilities (on the ground floor) and the hospital (on the floor above) from the main cell block has been removed. The spaces in the central section stand relatively intact. The ground floor is divided into five spaces; a T-shaped hallway, the boiler room (which is still used as such), the kitchen, an office and a storeroom (all of which are presently unused). The second story is divided into a large dining hall and three sleeping rooms for the guards (also unused). Makeshift wooden stairs have been added in the north wing and the central section to give access to the upper floors.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED NOV 15 1977
DATE ENTERED MAR 26 1978

CONTINUATION SHEET Territorial Pen ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

Enough of the original fixtures remain in the building to give an impression of its original appearance inside. A number of the iron doors and their casements remain, as well as the bars on many of the windows. Perhaps the most interesting features of the interior which remain are the two barred watch chambers which cantilever from the walls of the cell blocks and are accessible through the guards' sleeping rooms. These were installed in 1889 to provide vantage points from which the stairs in the cell block could be guarded.

Stylistically, the prison building is hard to define. It does not fall readily under any one of today's categories of style. The contrasting quoins are trademarks of the Richardsonian Romanesque style, but the building lacks any of the other features which distinguish that style. The mansard roof and segmental dormers of the original wing might indicate that it is a Second Empire building, but that label would also be misleading. The general form of the prison is symmetrically arranged, but it certainly could not be considered one of the classical revivals. The prison building seems to adhere more to modern design tenets of functionalism than to the late nineteenth century philosophy of applied ornamentation. This is due, no doubt, to the extreme nature of the building's function. This austere approach to design marks the prison as a stand-out in Wyoming architecture—a striking contrast to the High Victorian Italianate business buildings and the Queen Anne houses that were built in Laramie and Cheyenne at the time.

Maintenance of the building by the University has been minimal, and the consequent deterioration has had its effect, although the damage has not been irretrievable up to this point. Most of the interior walls and some of the ceilings retain their original plaster finishes, albeit deteriorated. Holes of varying sizes in the floors, walls and ceilings have been cut and occasionally patched as specific needs have arisen. Numerous leaks in the roof and cracks and holes in the doors and windows have allowed precipitation to cause some interior damage. The exterior stone walls need attention at the bases, and the south wall requires major structural repairs. Despite this, the prison remains a substantial structure.

#### WARDEN'S RESIDENCE

The Warden's Residence, built in 1875 by convict labor, is now the residence for the Superintendent of the Stock Farm. It is a relatively plain single-story stuccoed stone structure, with fenestration that is simple and sparsely used. The hip-and-valley roof is presently covered by asbestos shingles, and it is punctuated by a single brick chimney. Exterior alterations have been limited to routine maintenance items (replacing wood shingles with asbestos, for instance) the addition of

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	NOV 15 1977
DATE ENTERED	MAR 9 1978

CONTINUATION SHEET Territorial Pen    ITEM NUMBER 7    PAGE 4

---

metal porches, the covering over of an exterior door and the enlarging of some of the windows. A number of interior renovations have changed the character of the inside of the building considerably. The twelve-foot-high ceilings have been lowered, partitions removed, doors changed or walled up, a walk-in wardrobe converted into a bathroom, fire places removed or closed and radiators removed. In addition, the steam tunnel which was routed to the house when the steam heating system was built in 1889 has been blocked off. As the prison building, the house, however altered, is a substantial structure.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUN 15 1977
DATE ENTERED	

CONTINUATION SHEET Territorial Pen ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

The prison building, a 40' x 70' stone masonry structure, was intended as only one wing of a larger building. A total of forty-two brick cells were arranged in three tiers—each tier had fourteen cells, seven on either side of a corridor. Each cubicle, 8' long x 6' wide x 7' high, was to be occupied by two prisoners, sleeping at night on canvas hammocks hung from leather straps. Only one cell on each level had running water, and fireplaces at one end of each tier heated the building. At the opposite end of the corridor was an iron stairway. Soon after the prison opened, M. Fillmore, Boswell's successor, had constructed a 25' high tower in the prison yard west of the building which, according to the Laramie Daily Sentinel, "commands the entire ground, and in which is stationed good marksmen, armed with Henry rifles, and who could 'wing' every (prisoner) before they could get beyond range." It is unclear whether it was built with the original building, but by 1877 a 12' high wooden plank fence had been erected to enclose the 150' x 300' prison yard.

From the beginning, the territorial penitentiary was beset with problems which were to plague it over the entire time it served as a prison facility. Approximately seven months after the first prisoners were admitted, a fire broke out in the roof structure near one of the massive chimneys, causing \$4,000 worth of damage. Prisoners who were on their way to the brickyard a half mile away were called to fight the blaze, and reportedly none tried to escape during the incident.

Although no prisoners escaped at that particular time, escapes were a major concern for prison officials in Laramie and Washington. Inadequate facilities, chronically overcrowded conditions, lack of discipline, and administrative mismanagement all contributed to the prison's reputation as something less than a maximum security institution. During the first two years of operation, in which forty-four convicts were received, fully one-fourth of the prisoners escaped at various times. The first major jailbreak occurred in March 1874. An elderly guard returning a prisoner to his cell released a second man before locking up the first. The two overpowered the guard, locked him in a cell, and cut the shackles from a third prisoner, a convicted murderer. The three men then freed five others and all escaped on stolen horses—none were recaptured. More typically, however, convicts would escape in ones or twos from work parties. On one occasion, a man left the prison yard to feed a pet antelope. Once outside, he proceeded to fasten the gates from the outside and make his escape. Explained U. S. Marshal Gustave Schnitger, then warden of the prison: "Well, they will slip away from us, even with the utmost vigilance. You see we only have a wooden fence around the jail..."

Despite the escapes, the penitentiary soon became severely overcrowded. An article in the January 1, 1877 edition of the Laramie Daily Sentinel noted: "Our penitentiary, which was only built to accommodate 45 prisoners now has 53, and if that Cheyenne Court doesn't stop pretty soon there will be a hundred." The problem became more

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY
NOV 15 1977
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED MAR 29 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET Territorial Pen ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

acute a few months later when one-quarter of the cells held three men instead of two, with more than eighty convicts occupying the prison. With no hospital facility, the sick and well were confined together, and influenza swept through the cell houses, despite the warden's "strictest rules of cleanliness." When the weather permitted, the prisoners were allowed to work outside on work programs intended to provide activity for the men and to help defray the costs of their internment. Inmates were put to work raising potatoes and other vegetables, putting up ice blocks for the prison and the Union Pacific Railroad, quarrying stone, and manufacturing bricks and brooms. In addition, work squads dredged a one-and-a-half mile irrigation canal from the Big Laramie River to the prison farm and constructed the warden's residence. During the winters, however, bitter cold precluded any outside work, and the effects of the crowding were amplified by the continual inside confinement.

The Territorial Legislature soon began sending convicts to other prisons elsewhere in the country, for in addition to being filled beyond capacity, the penitentiary had become an enormous financial burden on the territory. What had at one time been lauded as a model institution by the Laramie newspapers had become a white elephant. Prisoners for which the territory was charged one dollar per day per man by the prison in Laramie could be kept at the Nebraska State Penitentiary in Lincoln for forty cents—the cost of transporting the inmates was far outweighed by the lower *per diem* rates charged by the other prisons. Eventually the penitentiary held only territorial convicts with light sentences and federal convicts. The others were sent to Lincoln in the 1870's and to the Illinois State Prison in Joliet in the 1880's. During this period the prison population averaged thirty-five inmates, but at one time it held only three.

With fewer men available for the maintenance of the buildings and grounds, the penitentiary was allowed to deteriorate to the point that it had become an embarrassment to Washington. In a letter sent to the U. S. Attorney General in September 1886, Marshal T. J. Carr stated: "The U. S. Pen here is in bad condition for want of repairs, it is almost impossible to keep it comfortably warm in winter, it is so open about windows and roof, and a kitchen is needed badly..." Marshal Carr was notified that "all U. S. convicts in the trans-Missouri country will be confined here," and in 1887 despite the fact that the prison was far from full (it housed twelve convicts) and rumors were circulating that it was about to be closed, Congress appropriated \$25,000 for repairs of the original building and construction of the addition. Bids for construction were called for in May 1888, but when none were received, a second bidding was scheduled for February 1889. Like the bidding of the original wing in 1872, the second bidding was surrounded by controversy and charges of fraud. The Pauly Jail Company of St. Louis was awarded the contract in March 1889, and by October of that year construction was completed.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	NOV 15 1977
DATE ENTERED	MAR 29 1973

CONTINUATION SHEET Territorial Pen    ITEM NUMBER 8    PAGE 4

The expansion increased the capacity of the penitentiary to one hundred and fifty prisoners and almost tripled the size of the main building. What originally had been a simple massive rectangular structure became a much more massive building composed of a 2½-story central section flanked on both sides by end wings. The central part served as the core of the building, housing the boiler room for the new steam heating system, the kitchen, dining hall, guards' sleeping rooms, an office and a store room. The new south wing was laid out similar to the 1872 north wing—forty-two cells on three tiers. The cells were somewhat smaller than those in the original building—5' wide x 7' long x 7' high, and they were made of cast iron instead of brick. At least five of the cells were set aside for female inmates. On the top tier was one dark cell used for solitary confinement. In its heavily plated door were stationary louver slats for ventilation and a small plate feed door near the center which was secured with hinges and a padlock. In addition to the cellblock, the new wing had spaces for a laundry and communal baths on the ground floor and a hospital on the floor above.

The expansion proved to be a very shortsighted action, because on July 10, 1890, just nine months after completion of the new facilities, Wyoming was admitted to the Union, and the penitentiary was turned over to the newly-formed state. Its service as the state penal institution was from the start destined to be a short one. The Territorial Legislature in 1886 and 1888 had determined that the capitol for Wyoming would be situated in Cheyenne, the university in Laramie, the insane asylum in Evanston, and the penitentiary in Rawlins. So, amidst growing dissatisfaction about the suitability of the inherited penitentiary in Laramie (it was again overcrowded), construction was begun on the new facility in Rawlins, and in December, 1901 the first prisoners were transferred. An account in the December 13 issue of the Laramie Boomerang explained the procedure:

Fifty of them were loaded into the car that was got ready for them months ago...Those taken in the first installment were the "long timers." They were brought to the depot in the hay wagon shackled together two and two, the shackles being riveted by Jack Martin, who made them in his shop in this city.

A wagon load of bedding and supplies was brought over before the arrival of the prisoners and placed in the cars, together with a lot of wooden benches, upon which the men were placed when they were put into the car.

Guards armed with rifles accompanied the two wagonloads of prisoners in Lovejoy's dray wagon, and they stood about the car while the men were being transferred, keeping an eye on all sides.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	NOV 15 1977
DATE ENTERED	

CONTINUATION SHEET Territorial Pen ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 5

Over the next two years the prison stood virtually empty, with a handful of prisoners held there over short periods of time. In 1903 the State Board of Charities and Reform tentatively turned the buildings over to the University of Wyoming for use as an experimental stock farm for the School of Agriculture. The territorial penitentiary was formally transferred to the university in 1907 along with a \$5,000 appropriation for repairs and remodeling. The cell blocks were dismantled and removed, and their iron fittings were sold to cities and counties throughout the state. The university made other alterations to tailor the buildings more to its needs (discussed in more detail in the building descriptions) and has used the penitentiary structures up to the present time.

The significance of the Wyoming Territorial Penitentiary lies in the fact that it is historically and architecturally unique in Wyoming. Aside from the rich history accumulated over its thirty year service as a penal institution, the penitentiary has a number of notable points which distinguish it as one of Wyoming's most significant buildings. It is the only federal penitentiary ever to have been built in Wyoming and the only facility which was used to house territorial convicts within the territory. It is one of the oldest buildings still standing in the state, and one of the few remaining from the 1870's. As a non-military government building, the penitentiary is exceeded in age by only one other remaining structure—the Sweetwater County Jail in South Pass City (built in 1870). When the original wing was constructed in 1872, it was the most massive stone structure to have been built in Wyoming at the time. It was by far the largest and most elaborate jail in the state, until the construction of its replacement in Rawlins.

Architecturally, the main building of the penitentiary is a handsome, well-proportioned, well-crafted stone structure, indebted for its form not to the strict adherence to any particular architectural style, but to the function for which it was intended. This functionalism by choice—as opposed to functionalism by necessity, which was the case with the earlier frontier structures—distinguishes the building as a landmark in Wyoming architecture, an anachronism built during the period in which the Victorian styles dominated the architecture of the country. The Warden's Residence, although it possesses no great architectural significance, is linked closely with the history of the institution and is the only remaining structure built using convict labor. Together, the two buildings and the tunnel which joins them afford a unique opportunity to preserve this fascinating aspect of Wyoming territorial history.

ADDENDUM A

ITEM 6: REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE: Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE: 1974                    x Federal

DEPOSITORY: Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN: Washington, D. C.



ADDENDUM B

## ITEM 9: MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

BOOKS:

Larson, T. A. History of Wyoming. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1965.

Trenholm, Virginia Cole (editor). Wyoming Blue Book. (Reprint, 3 Vols.). Cheyenne, Wyoming: Pioneer Printing and Stationery Company, 1974.

Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press, 1976.

BULLETINS AND REPORTS:

"Eighteenth Annual Report: Wyoming Agricultural Experiment Station," Laramie, Wyoming: University of Wyoming, September 1908.

NEWSPAPERS:

Laramie (Wyoming) Boomerang, 13 December 1901.

Laramie (Wyoming) Sentinel, 15 July 1872, 28 June 1875, 24 January 1876, 28 August 1876, 18 September 1876, 1 January 1877, 9 July 1877, 1 October 1877, 12 November 1877, 7 January 1878, 28 January 1878, 18 May 1878, 14 April 1883, 17 January 1885, 4 April 1885, 26 December 1885, 14 September 1889.

PERIODICALS:

Gunderson, Mary Alice, "Big House Across the River," In Wyoming, Dec.-Jan. 1977, pp. 25-30.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Vertical Files, Western History Research Center, Coe Library, University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming: Wyo-County-Albany (W994-pen; two folders).

Vertical Files, Wyoming Recreation Commission, Cheyenne, Wyoming. Research-Albany-Wyoming Territorial Penitentiary.

