

PENITENTIARY IN WASHINGTON TERRITORY.

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LETTER

FROM

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL TO O. B. MCFADDEN,

RELATIVE TO

*The penitentiary in Washington Territory.*

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FEBRUARY 27, 1874.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,  
*Washington, February 24, 1874.*

SIR: Referring to our conversations relative to the penitentiary in Washington Territory, I now inclose a copy of a letter addressed to this Department on the 6th instant, by the marshal of that Territory, submitting an estimate of the amount required to place the building in a suitable condition for the reception and confinement of convicts, and the convenience and comfort of the guards. The amount estimated is \$7,271.

I would suggest that you either present the matter to the Committee on Appropriations, or have a separate bill introduced appropriating the amount required for this purpose.

Very respectfully,

GEO. H. WILLIAMS,  
*Attorney-General.*

Hon. O. B. MCFADDEN,  
*House of Representatives.*

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SEATTLE, WASH., *February 6, 1874.*

SIR: Your letter of the 16th ultimo, relating to the penitentiary lately erected on McNeil's Island, opposite Steilacoom, Pierce County, Washington Territory, was received on the 31st ultimo.

I wrote you on the 10th of January, concerning the condition and location of the penitentiary, which had not time to reach you when you wrote yours of the 16th.

The penitentiary mentioned in your letter of the 16th ultimo is finished according to contract, I believe, but in its present condition is not fit to put prisoners in; there is no house for the keeper or guards to live in, no cook-house; both will have to be built before prisoners can be kept in the prison.

The evening I received your letter of the 16th I met Mr. W. E. Boone, who superintended the construction of the penitentiary, and I asked him to make an estimate as to the cost of a house for the keeper and guards to live in; also, the cost of furnishing twenty of the forty-two cells. Inclosed please find his letter and plan of a kitchen or house for the keeper and guards to live in, and also his estimate of its cost, together with the estimated cost of bedding, bedsteads (of iron) for the cells.

As the only approach to McNeil's Island is by water, Mr. J. C. Ellis, the contractor who built the penitentiary, was compelled to build a wharf from the bank a sufficient distance into the bay, nearly 150 feet, for boats to land. As Mr. Ellis is the owner of the wharf, he can, and is liable to, remove it at any time, unless the Government purchase it of him. The wharf, I am told, cost over \$1,000, and can be bought of Mr. Ellis for that sum.

There will be needed a good safe boat, with two pair of oars and one sail, to cross the bay from the main-land to the island. I estimate the cost of a suitable boat at \$250.

Herewith I send you an estimate of the cost of improvements and necessary furniture for the penitentiary, before the United States prisoners can be confined therein.

Until the above mentioned addition to the penitentiary is completed, and the cells furnished, it will be unnecessary for me to make arrangements with the territorial authorities to receive and keep the territorial prisoners.

*Estimate in United States currency.*

One frame addition, 24 by 32 feet, dining and kitchen, with sleeping-rooms in second story.....	\$2,000
To purchase wharf.....	1,000
One building for armory and guard, 12 by 16 feet.....	250
One boat and fixtures.....	250
One pair horses or mules.....	300
One double-wagon.....	250
One set double-harness.....	70
Furniture for 42 cells, viz:	
Forty-two iron bedsteads, @ \$16 each.....	670
Forty-two straw mattresses, @ \$3 each.....	126
Eighty-four pairs blankets, @ \$9 per pair.....	756
Forty-two stools, wood, @ \$2 each.....	84
Forty-two small tables or stands, @ \$4 each.....	168
Forty-two patent hand-cuffs, @ \$5.....	210
Twenty leg-irons, with chain and ball, @ \$10.....	200
Four Spencer or Remington rifles, @ \$50.....	200
Four Colt's navy-revolvers, @ \$25.....	100
One large range for cook-house.....	175
Two large stoves, with pipe, @ \$40 each.....	80
Dishes, knives, forks, and spoons for forty-two prisoners.....	100
One large force-pump, with pipe and hose.....	150
Six wheel-barrows, @ \$6 each.....	36
Twenty-four shovels, @ \$1.50 each.....	36
Twelve picks, @ \$2.50 each.....	30
Twelve axes, @ \$2.50 each.....	30
Total estimate.....	7,271

Gold coin is the circulating medium in Washington Territory, but I have made the above estimation in United States currency.

I may have estimated the cost of some of the articles too high, but I think not.

The Department of the Interior can ascertain what articles, and their cost, was furnished the United States penitentiaries in Idaho and Mon-

tana Territories, and thereby form a more accurate estimate of the cost of the articles and what articles are needed than I can.

Two months ago there were twenty-five United States prisoners and witnesses in United States cases (who could not find bail) confined in the different jails of the Territory. At present there are but ten United States prisoners; there may at any time be a much larger number.

I am informed that there is no water on the twenty-seven acres of land donated to the United States for the penitentiary, but there is a spring about four or five hundred yards distant; and by first obtaining permission of the owner the water can be led from this spring in wood or iron pipes. I estimate the cost at \$600, making the total estimate \$7,871. Otherwise a well will have to be dug; the cost may not exceed \$250.

I am, sir, very respectfully,

E. S. KEARNEY,

*United States Marshal, Olympia, Wash.*

HON. GEORGE H. WILLIAMS,

*Attorney-General, United States.*

I certify that I have often visited the within-named penitentiary; also that I was one of the commissioners to examine whether it was completed according to contract; and I also certify that I have carefully read the foregoing letter and examined the estimates attached thereto; and I deem the recommendations of said letter good, the buildings and articles mentioned necessary to make the building inhabitable or useful. The estimates are reasonable. Whether a team and wagon are necessary, I do not know.

O. JACOBS,

*Chief Justice Washington Territory.*

OLYMPIA, WASH., *February 3, 1874.*

SIR: I have received your letter requesting me "to suggest the most needful improvements necessary to fitting up the Washington penitentiary on McNeil's Island for the reception of convicts, together with an estimate of the probable cost of the same."

You are aware that the appropriation for the Washington penitentiary was barely sufficient for the completion of one wing, leaving no surplus for additional buildings, heating-apparatus, &c. The plan adopted for the Wyoming prison would probably be the best in this case, that is, to build a small addition containing dining-room and kitchen. The kitchen should be supplied with range and other conveniences suitable for cooking for 50 men. You will also require a force-pump to lift water to tank above cells; 2 box-stoves for heating interior of prison; 1 small building for armory and for use of guards while off duty; furniture for 20 cells, some arms and shackles.

Below I add a list of items with the probable cost of same.

One frame addition 24 feet by 32, containing dining-room and kitchen complete .....	\$2,000 00
One building 12 by 16 feet for armory and for use of guards .....	250 00
Furniture for 20 cells, iron bedsteads, blankets, &c., \$40 each .....	800 00
One force-pump, with hose and attachments .....	100 00
Two box-stoves, for heating interior of prison .....	120 00
Probable cost of arms and shackles .....	500 00
Total .....	3,770 00

Inclosed find plan of addition to the Wyoming prison, as sent me from the Department of the Interior. The opening marked door takes the place of one of the windows of the main building. I would suggest making connection by means of outside door, if possible, as it will be difficult to make such an opening in the Washington penitentiary.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. E. BOONE.

E. S. KEARNEY,

*United States Marshal, Seattle, Wash.*

