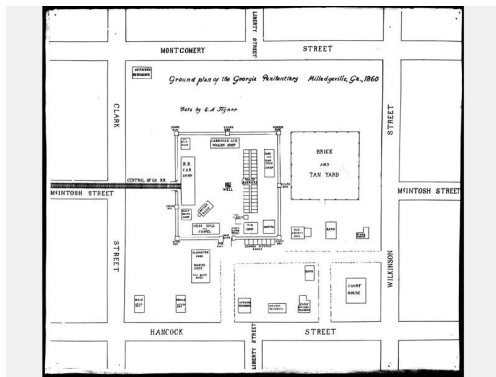


State Penitentiary of Milledgeville

By: Vanessa Martinez

Georgia was one of the first southern states to build a penitentiary for convicted criminals. One of these was The State Penitentiary of Milledgeville which was built in Milledgeville, Georgia from 1812 to 1816. It was originally governed by a board of 9 inspectors appointed each year to make sure everything was running smoothly. The state penitentiary promised to perform miracles in the rehabilitation of every prisoner. Prisoners worked hard labor 8-10 hours a day 6 days a week in prison shops. They did not only receive a small pay for their jobs but also produced revenue for their state. This brought a lot of tension with the local townsfolk since it created “competition” and stole potential customers.



<https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/georgia-penitentiary-milledgeville>

A Dash of History

(1861-1865)

During the Civil war this penitentiary was used as an armory. Part of the building caught on fire and later rebuilt. During this incident, many prisoners escaped, and new prisoners were brought in. Over 9/10 of the prison population were black.

(1868)

The penitentiary was going through harsh financial issues. Provisional Governor Thomas Ruger instituted the convict lease system. This system leased out 100 prisoners to work on the Georgia and Alabama railroad. A year later, most of the population inside the penitentiary were transferred to work on the Macon and Brunswick railroad. This new system brought a substantial amount of money.

(1874)

The penitentiary was closed and by 1880 it was torn down. The area now holds Georgia College and State University.

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<http://sites.rootsweb.com/~gabaldw2/penitentiary.html>