

WESTERN PACIFIC HIGH COMMISSION

Pitcairn Island,

26th December, 1940.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward a copy of the Prison Rules made by the Island Council under Regulation 6 (m) of the Pitcairn Island Government Regulations, 1940. The rules are based on those framed by Captain Vaughan Lewis, R.N., on the 7th July, 1909, which have been in force up to the present. They have been intentionally kept as simple as possible.

2. Like so many other matters bound up with the administration of justice in the island, the management of the local prison and the discipline and control of prisoners has got into a thoroughly unsatisfactory state. It would not be an exaggeration to state that imprisonment has, at any rate during recent years, become largely a farce. On my arrival in Pitcairn I found the prison in a dilapidated state, the Council assuring me that it was repaired whenever someone was sentenced to imprisonment. After some months an islander was sentenced to a month's imprisonment, whereupon the Chief Magistrate confessed that it was often the practice for prisoners to serve their sentences living, as a member of the family, in the house of the warder.

3. The principal difficulty appears to be that it is almost impossible

The Secretary,  
Western Pacific High Commission,  
Suva, Fiji.



is almost impossible to persuade anyone to take on the position of warder except on the understanding that the prisoner is to live with him and work on his land. The warder being unpaid, it is not unnatural that few, if any, are prepared to give up their livelihood and liberty for perhaps several months and live, eat, and sleep, with a prisoner in the local gaol. The fact that, were the prison rules enforced, the unfortunate warder would receive in effect a harder sentence than the prisoner himself is a never-failing source of merriment among the islanders.

4. In an attempt to remedy the position I have had the old prison demolished and a new one erected in a better, though not an entirely satisfactory, situation. Subject to His Excellency's covering approval, I have directed that in future warders or wardresses, whenever it is necessary to employ them, shall be paid a salary at the rate of £1 per month; a rate which should be sufficient to enable the government to obtain the full-time services of a suitable person. Instructions have been given that the prisoners are to live in future in the prison and not in private houses; that they are to be locked up at night; that they are to be isolated from the community and not engage in ordinary public activities (hitherto, for example, they have been accustomed to sell their curios in person on board visiting ships); and that they are to work on the public roads, buildings, etc., and not on the private land of the warder and his family.

5. It will be noted that no specific penalties are provided for the infringement of prison rules. Regulation 6 (3) only permits the infliction of fines for breaches of Island Rules and this did not seem an appropriate penalty for breaking a



for breaking a prison rule. At the same time the matter did not appear a suitable one for dealing with in the main code of regulations. I doubt if any special provisions are necessary for punishing breaches of prison discipline, as the Gilbert and Ellice Islands governments appear to have got along very well without them for nearly 50 years, but should they be considered desirable it is suggested that they should be added in Suva.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed). H.E. Maude.

High Commission Representative,  
Pitcairn Island.



### Prison Rules.

1. No communication is permitted between prisoners and any person outside the prison.
2. It is forbidden to pass anything into or out of the prison without the permission of the warder.
3. Prisoners are to keep the prison and its vicinity in a proper state of cleanliness under the supervision of the warder.
4. Relatives or friends of prisoners are permitted to visit them between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. on the Wednesday of each week on application to the Chief Magistrate.
5. Church officials, not to exceed two in number, may hold a service for prisoners on the Sabbath Day between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. with the sanction of the Chief Magistrate.
6. No person is allowed near the prison except as permitted under Rules 5 and 6.
7. Prisoners are permitted to write not more than two letters a week with the sanction of the Chief Magistrate. No writing material is to be passed into or out of the prison except with the permission of the warder.
8. Prisoners shall work for 6 hours each day, except the Sabbath Day, under the supervision of the warder.
9. Prisoners shall adhere strictly to the prison routine laid down in the Schedule to these rules.
10. Prisoners wilfully disobeying the orders of the Chief Magistrate or warder shall be liable to disciplinary punishment by the Island Courts.



The Schedule.

Prison Routine.

- 6 a.m. Rise - clean out prison, and wash.
- 6.30 a.m. Exercise, under the supervision of the warden.
- 7.30 a.m. Return to prison.
- 8.15 a.m. Breakfast - clean vicinity of prison.
- 9 a.m. Muster for labour. Road making and stone breaking, wood cutting, digging, etc.
- 12 noon. Return to prison.
- 1 p.m. Muster for labour.
- 4 p.m. Return to prison, and wash.
- 4.30 p.m. Dinner - clean prison and vicinity.
- 7.50 p.m. Prepare bedding.
- 8 p.m. Lock up prison.

-----  
(Signed). David A. Young.

Pitcairn Island,  
25th December, 1940.

Chief Magistrate,  
Pitcairn Island.

-----  
-----  
--