



A Jail of Which to be Ashamed

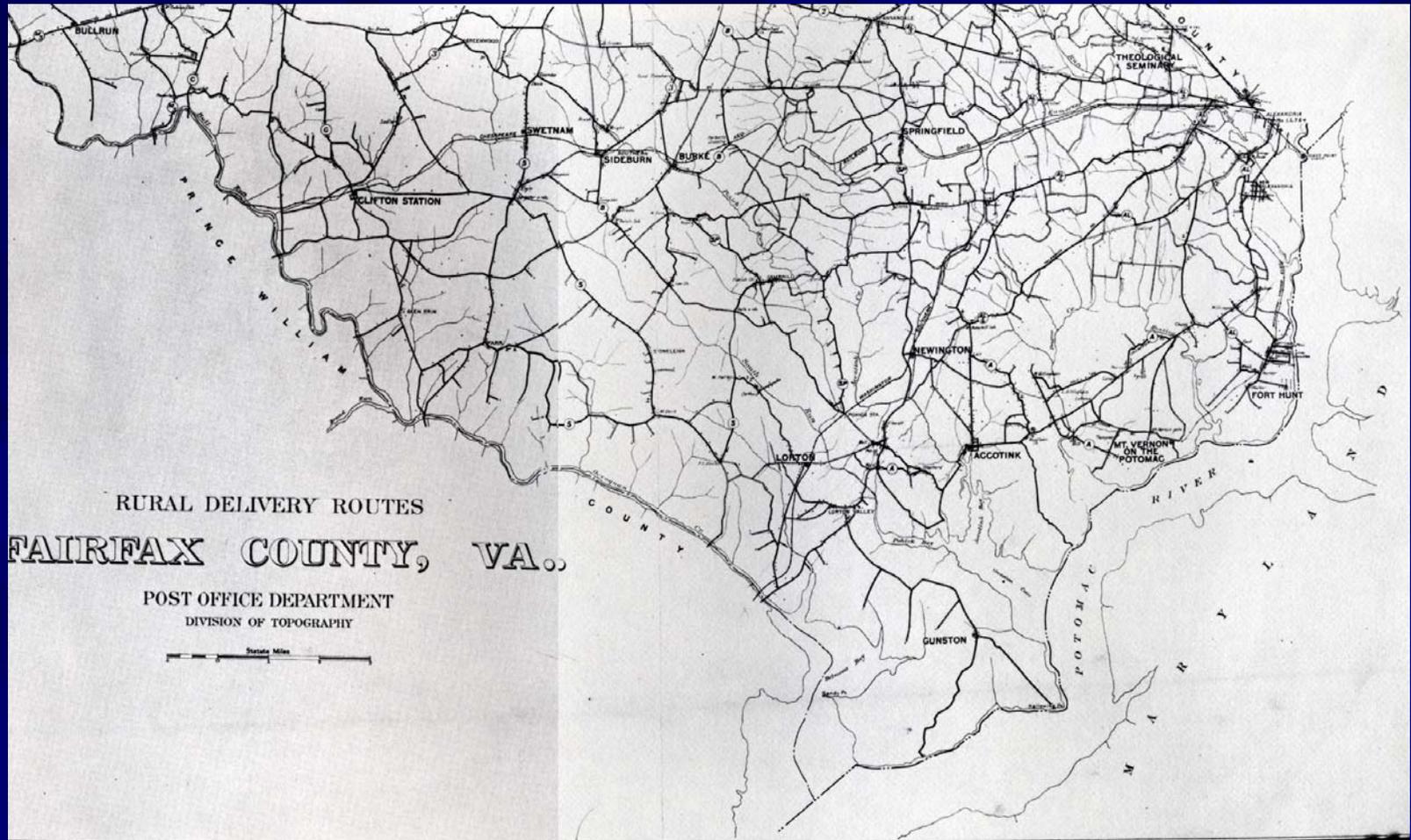
- “The general conditions continue to be bad. The jail is still without sanitation. The old bucket system of centuries is still in vogue.”

■ Report of Warden McKee, 1909

The former District
of Columbia
Correctional
Complex at Lorton
began as a
Progressive Era
prison.

Theodore Roosevelt
1901 - 1909

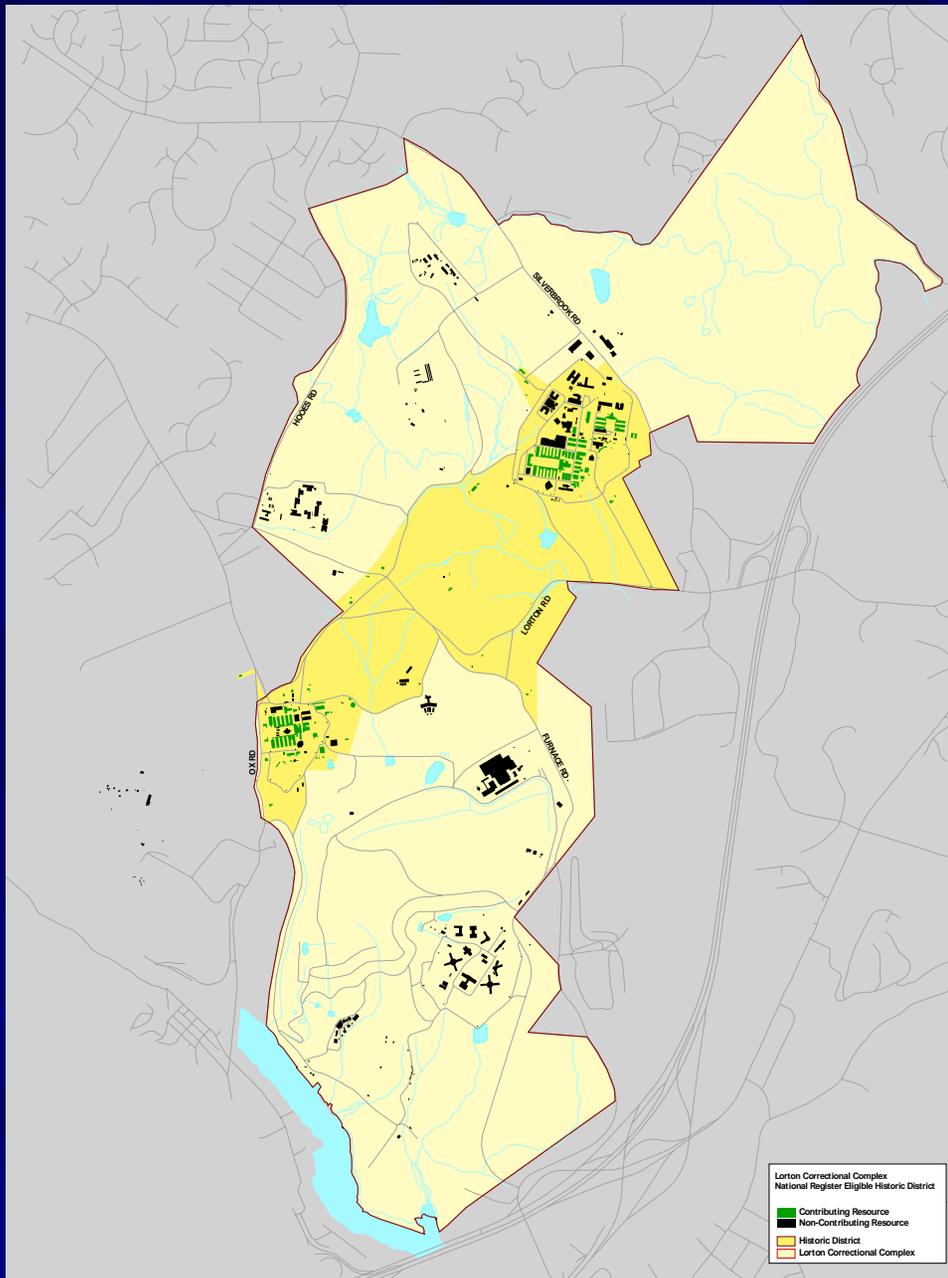




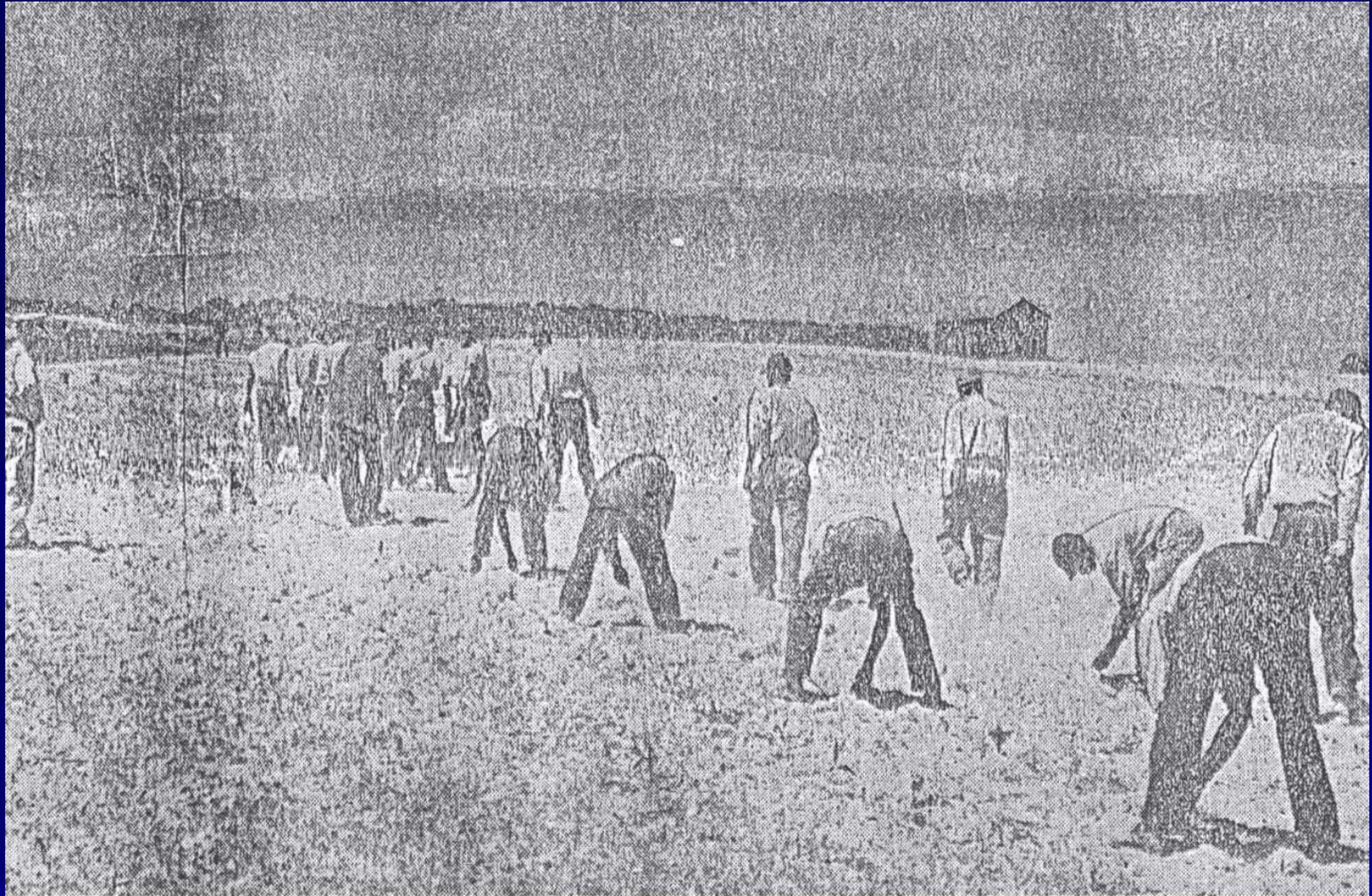
Congress authorizes purchase of sites for reformatory and workhouse in 1909



Five prisoners arrive in 1910 – live in tents



A 1,155 acres site along the Occoquan River in Fairfax County was selected.



Start agricultural activities in area, help raise economic standards in community. Not all happy about prison locating in area.



Occoquan Women's Workhouse – 1913

1917 – women
imprisoned over the
Right to Vote

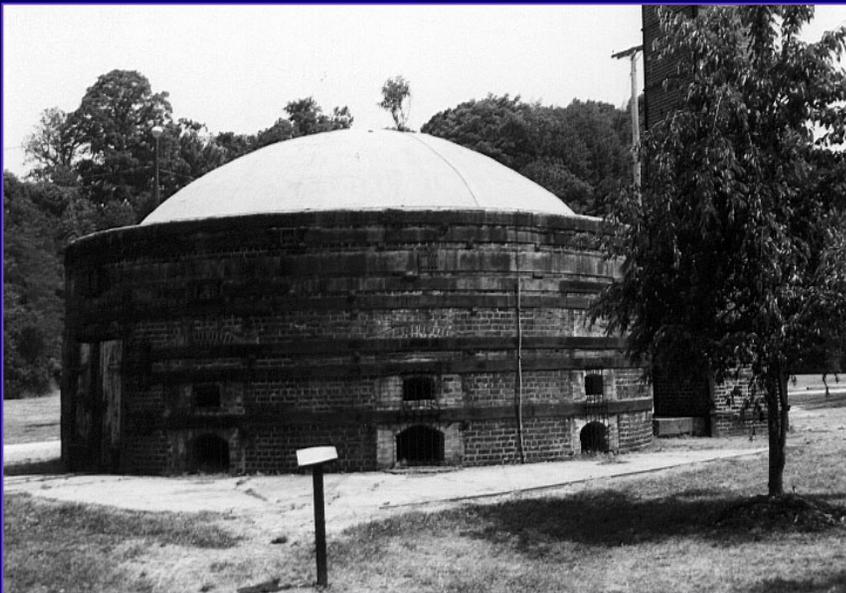




Congress authorized funds for the reformatory in 1913. In a radical experiment in penology for the era, no bars or fences to confine prisoners were included in the construction.



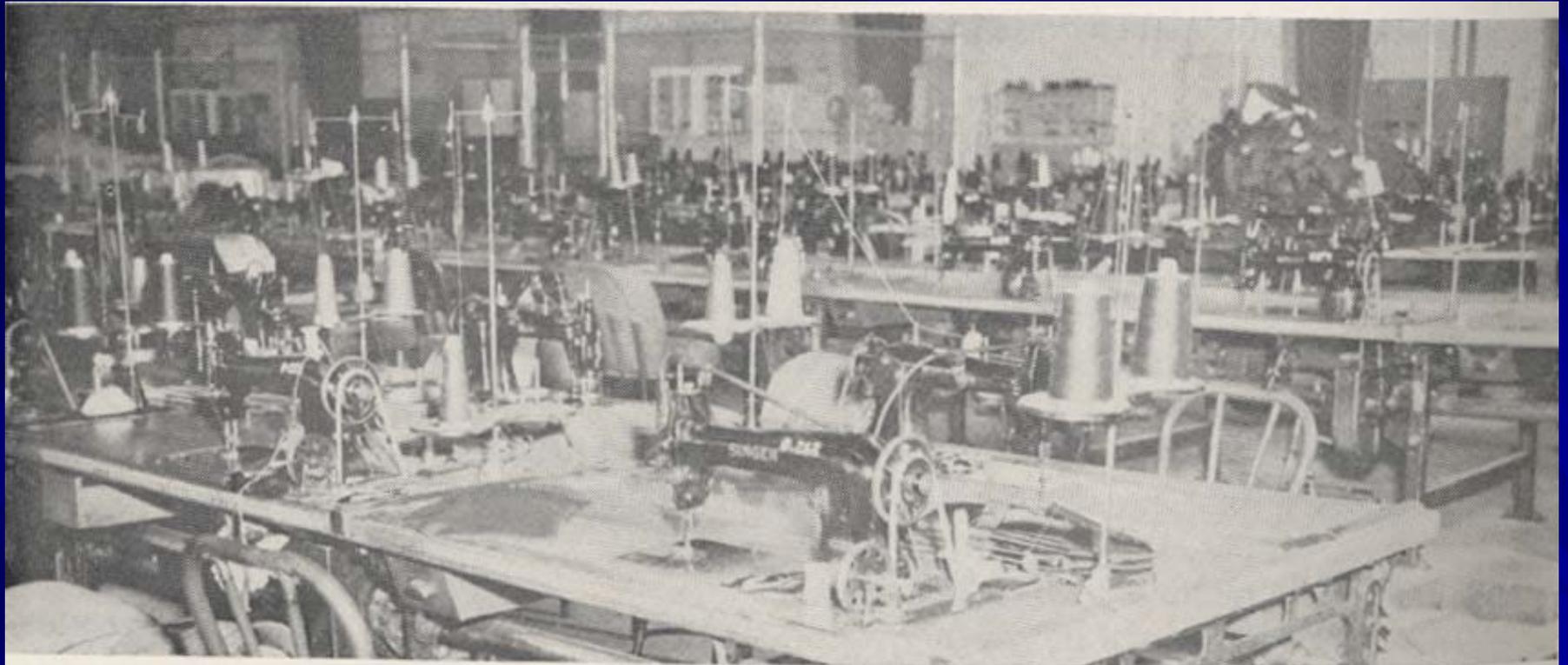
A brick factory was located along the Occoquan River and manufactured bricks used to construct most of the structures from the teens to the 1960's





Architecture of
Snowden Ashford
– dormitory-style
buildings in a
quadrangle.





Agricultural programs such as dairy, gardening, raising hogs, chickens and producing eggs were established.

Women prisoners made clothing in the sewing shop.



From the late 20's on industrial programs became a part of the rehabilitative process – broom factories, a foundry, laundry, furniture and furniture refinishing, print shop, sewing shop.



A railroad (L&O) was installed to bring prisoners and supplies from the Occoquan River and to carry industrial goods from the Reformatory to sites within the District.

Being a rural area the institutions were often called upon to assist during community emergencies.

The prison fire department fought many fires and the farm equipment plowed the roads during snowstorms.

During WW II an airplane spotting site was set up at the Reformatory.

After WW II, in the late 1940's, modernization came – tractors replaced horses and mules.

1950's – 1960's: Farming no longer useful and more applicable training and counseling was required.

- Alcoholism no longer treated as a crime.
- Federal Youth Act requires persons under the age of 26 to be treated separately.

1970's – 1980's: Racial tension, drugs and lax administration lead to community reaction.

- Politicians and citizens call for closing of facilities.

1990's: Congressional legislation is enacted to close the prison at Lorton.

- Last prisoner leaves – 2001?

