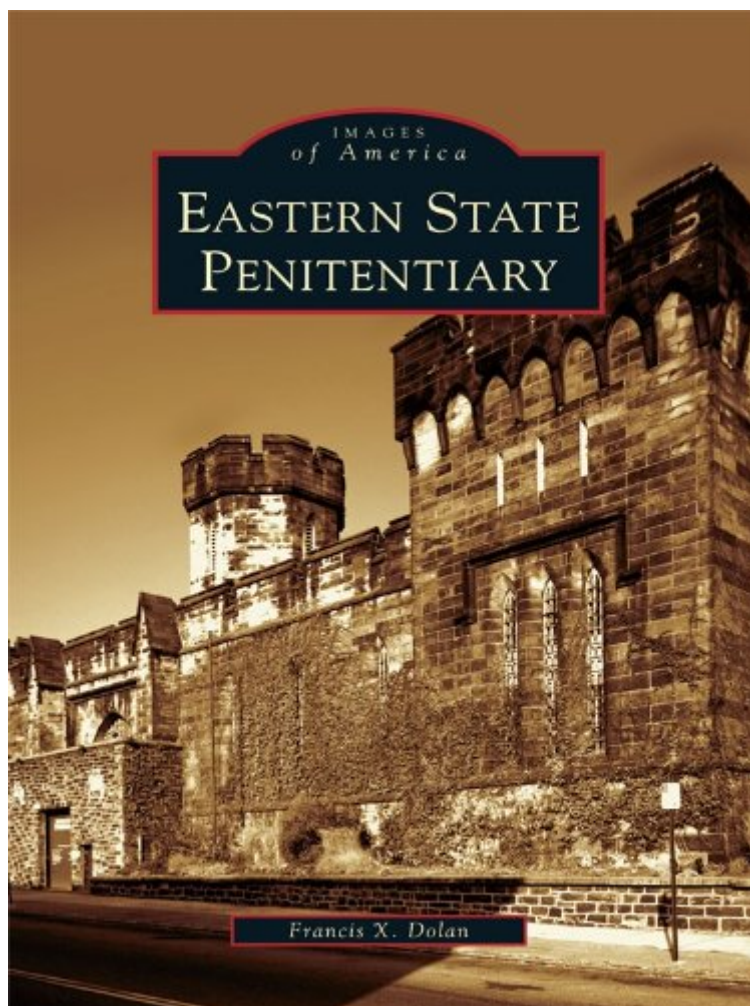


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Eastern State Penitentiary



Synopsis

The most significant building project of its time, Eastern State Penitentiary was designed to reshape the mind of an inmate, rather than punish the body of one. It was believed that by keeping prisoners isolated in the chapel-like cells the inner light of their souls would emerge, leading them to discover penitence. In reality, the isolation was nearly impossible to maintain, and the lofty goals of the founders crumbled in the 20th century, much like the building itself. Originally located on the outskirts of Philadelphia, the city eventually expanded and swallowed up the prison. Its unique location became problematic, and numerous escapes and riots threatened the civilian populace in the area. The prison was home to such well-known figures as Chicago mob boss Al Capone and bank robber Willie Sutton, once the most wanted man in America. Eastern State Penitentiary chronicles the history of this massive prison from its opening in 1829 to its closing and abandonment in 1971, and finally to the rebirth of the prison in the 1990s as a thriving historic site and national historic landmark.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is full of many interesting photos & facts about Eastern State. It arrived promptly!

Extremely disappointed... No actual chapters about the people who worked and locked there, day-to-day life and violence at the prison.. Just historical pictures and a brief synopsis of the photo (which was interesting but could have been used to enhance a story) rip off!!!

While most books about a certain place contain mostly words and not a lot of pictures. This one is all about pictures but with a lot of helpful history about the prison. I like the book, because it shows you how the prison was and is today. They have pictures of different inmates as well. It's a helpful book if you're looking to do a history report on or if you're going on a ghost hunt there (like me).

I bought this book for my daughter and she loved it. She has visited this site and felt that the pictures really did it justice. Although there's not a lot of text, it does contain interesting information.

Full of great information from its history and progress through time; info on who were there and what's happening now.

Eastern State Penitentiary (now a museum) is an imposing and magnificent building that draws thousands of curious onlookers and historians every year. From its decaying walls to the stories of the prisoners that once called it home, everything about the structure is impressive. Dolan has done a brilliant job documenting the history of the prison in one concise and detailed manuscript. His writing exposes his passion for Eastern State and every section seems to have been clearly researched and bolstered with fantastic new photographs. This is a must read and one of the best books in the Images of America collection.

In 1817, the "Auburn Plan" of industry, obedience, and silence, was established in New York's Auburn State Prison. While working together during the day, prisoners observed a strict code of silence, and then at night they were housed in individual cells. In 1829, Pennsylvania's Eastern State Penitentiary instituted the "Pennsylvania System" which employed solitary confinement both day and night. The Auburn Plan eventually won out primarily for economic reasons (although it was also observed that the Pennsylvania System tended to promote mental illness). While officials in Ohio studied both systems, neither was implemented when the original Ohio Penitentiary opened its

doors in 1815. However, when the prison was replaced in 1833, the Auburn Plan was put into place. Francis X. Dolan's book is essential reading for anyone interested in the development of corrections in the United States. David Meyers, author of CENTRAL OHIO'S HISTORIC PRISONS (Arcadia Publishing, 2009)

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