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Mary Baker Eddy
and
Institutional Work
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FAMILY CONNECTIONS

"Christian Science activities in the prisons greatly interested Mrs. Eddy...frequently Mrs. Eddy received letters from various parts of the Field telling of the good accomplished in the prisons through Christian Science services. So interested was she in having this work made known that she often sent such letters to the Concord church to be read at the Wednesday evening meeting, and then had them forwarded to the Christian Science periodicals for publication....Her interest in prison work never flagged."¹ Eighteen articles relating to Christian Science institutional work in jails and prisons appeared in the Christian Science periodicals from 1895 to 1905.²

On June 20, 1906 Mrs. Eddy wrote a letter to her neighbors, "the good folk of Concord," praising the city for, among other things, its "...humane institutions...and well-conducted jail and state prison...if indeed such must remain with us a little longer—speak for themselves."³ This was not a casual observation. She was knowledgeable on these subjects. She—from earliest girlhood—and her family before she was born, were acquainted with the Pilsburys, the greatest family of enlightened prison wardens of the nineteenth century.⁴ The year Mrs. Eddy became a teenager, her brother George went to work for the Pilsburys in the Connecticut State Prison. Her sister Martha married Luther Pilsbury, deputy warden in the New Hampshire State prison.

You can see that by having prison wardens as family friends, a brother working in a prison and a deputy warden for a brother-in-law, Mrs. Eddy had an early introduction to institutional work. While she was growing up in Bow, New Hampshire during the early years that God was "graciously preparing" her for the reception of Christian Science, America was experiencing "...one of the great reform eras in United States history,"—a period of awakened social consciousness, becoming for the first time the world leader in prison reform.⁵

Captain Moses Pilsbury, "...the Bakers' friend..."⁶ was warden of New Hampshire's state prison in Concord (1818-1826, 1837-1840). He was the first warden to read the *Bible* to the assembled inmates twice a day and conduct Sunday church services when the state couldn't afford a regular chaplain. In an age when prison keepers were often worse than the kept, he tried to hire officers and guards of the highest moral character. In an age when the lash and other cruel forms of punishment were in constant use in other prisons, he felt that corporal punishment was unnecessary to maintain discipline. In an age

when prisons were a financial burden to state governments, he was such an honest and able administrator that, after paying all expenses, his prison made a profit and returned money to the state treasury, while his inmates learned a trade in prison industries that helped them find employment after release.⁷

The prison in Concord was the pride of New Hampshire, "a noble edifice of beautiful granite" and one of the state's most popular tourist attractions (a tour of the prison cost twenty-five cents).⁸ It was located between what is now Beacon and Tremont streets, near the Court House and only a few blocks north of the present-day Christian Science Church on North State Street, about five hundred feet from the site of the Old North (Congregational) Church,⁹ which the Baker family started attending in 1831.¹⁰

In November, 1826, Captain Moses' son, deputy warden Amos Pilsbury, married Emily Heath, daughter of Laban Heath, one of the Baker's neighbors in Bow, New Hampshire.¹¹

Moses and Amos Pilsbury left Concord in 1827 to build and operate a prison on the new Auburn plan, in Wethersfield, for the state of Connecticut which had been using an underground copper mine to confine prisoners since the Revolutionary War. Three years later (1830), Moses retired to the family farm in Derry, New Hampshire. Amos succeeded him as warden and quickly eclipsed his father, establishing a reputation as the most efficient and humane prison warden in the world.¹² (Amos' older brother, John Pilsbury, served as his deputy warden.)

Many idealistic young men were attracted to Wethersfield and trained for prison service under Captain Amos Pilsbury. Mrs. Eddy's brother George was one of them, starting in 1835 as a watchman, progressing to gatekeeper, and rewarded with a supervisory job when a new prison machine shop began operation.¹³

To the Pilsburys, religion played an important redemptive role in a prison.¹⁴ "Captain" Amos Pilsbury welcomed Gerrish Barrett as Wethersfield's first full-time chaplain. Barrett was formerly chaplain at New York's Sing Sing prison. His efforts to provide moral and religious instruction to inmates at Sing Sing (which included teaching inmates to read, and to memorize passages from the *Bible*) had been resented and hampered by Sing Sing's warden Elam Lynds who "drove him from the prison."¹⁵

At Wethersfield, Barrett performed the religious service on Sunday, and took up the Pilsbury tradition of reading the *Bible* twice a day to the inmates. Pilsbury required George Baker and the other Wethers-

field officers to help teach Sunday School and conduct reading classes for inmates. The inmate population was about one-third black; Wethersfield was one of the few places in the United States, North or South, where a black man could learn to read. (In neighboring Hartford, one brave woman who opened a school for black children was ostracized, thrown into jail, and her school closed. In the South, one state had a \$200 fine for beating a slave and a \$500 fine for teaching a slave to read.)

Mrs. Eddy's September 7, 1835 letter written to brother George at Wethersfield was, she said, "...the second I ever wrote...." During the thirty-three months George worked at Wethersfield (July 8, 1835 to March 15, 1838), another prison overseer, Moses Cutchins, a friend of George and his family, periodically visited the Bakers during trips to Bow where he owned land. He sometimes carried letters and presents and stayed overnight with the Baker family.¹⁶

Back at the New Hampshire State Prison in Concord, all was not well. When the Pilsburys had been in charge, the prison ran efficiently and made a profit after paying all expenses. When they left, the Concord prison began experiencing problems and started running a deficit. The New Hampshire governor and state legislature coaxed Moses Pilsbury out of retirement in 1837. He returned to Concord as warden, with his youngest son, Luther (who had been keeping prison accounts for Amos at Wethersfield) as his deputy warden.

Amos Pilsbury's reputation at Wethersfield was gaining world recognition for himself, his methods and the Connecticut State Prison. The prison officers he trained were in demand in other states looking for able prison administrators. Mrs. Eddy's Shakespeare-quoting brother George¹⁷ was well-liked, doing a good job and certain to get one of those openings. His brother, Albert Baker, detected a disconcerting wanderlust in George's letters, and gave him good advice, "stick with Pilsbury."¹⁸ But, headstrong George left Wethersfield. Later in life he would return to prison work as a deputy warden in the Maryland State Prison.

Moses Pilsbury retired as Warden of the New Hampshire State Prison for the second and last time in 1840. He left his youngest son, Luther, at Concord to gain experience as deputy warden. Moses retained his influence on prison matters, and was respected by his three sons as the family patriarch to be consulted about any changes in their prison administrations.

George Baker's letters and journal indicate he maintained an active interest in the affairs of both

Concord and Wethersfield prisons, kept up friendship and correspondence with Amos Pilsbury and other prison officers he had worked with at Wethersfield, and acted as liaison between retired Moses Pilsbury and his three sons.¹⁹

Concord prison was still a popular tourist attraction and every year hundreds of people visited and paid twenty-five cents for a tour of the prison and workshops.²⁰ George was a frequent visitor at the prison because of his friendship with Luther and the other officers. We don't know how often the rest of the Baker family visited the prison, but one indication is the fact that Mrs. Eddy's sister Martha fell in love and became engaged to deputy warden Luther Pilsbury.

Three days before Christmas, 1841 Luther married Martha. In a letter to her friend, Augusta Holmes, Mrs. Eddy relates how she "and others" visited the newlyweds in their prison apartment. (In those days the warden and his deputy were on call twenty-four hours a day and housing was provided for them in the prison building.) Because of winter weather conditions and the lateness of the hour, Mrs. Eddy and the others (probably Baker relatives) stayed overnight at the prison.²¹

In 1843, Captain Amos' older brother, John Pilsbury left his position as deputy warden at Wethersfield to take a new position at the Penitentiary on Blackwells Island in New York City's East River. Luther Pilsbury accepted an offer from Amos to become John's replacement.

Mrs. Eddy became a newlywed December 10, 1843. While on her honeymoon in Wilmington, North Carolina, she received a February 6, 1844 letter from her mother with information that Martha and Luther had been staying at the Baker home the previous two weeks (over Christmas and New Years), and that Luther had just left for his new job as deputy warden in Wethersfield, Connecticut.²²

Humanitarian and crusader, Dorothea Dix, visited Wethersfield during her famous investigation of prisons and prison discipline in the United States. "...though plagued by illness, she covered 30,000 miles...painstakingly conducting her investigations and preparing for the state legislatures her now famous reports..." Early in 1845 she wrote, "...in the last three years...I have visited 18 Penitentiaries, 100 alms houses and other institutions, besides hospital and houses of reform." Wethersfield was the only prison she visited three times; its contrast to the others was so great, she found it hard to believe, too good to be true. She said, "This is the most accurately neat and

thoroughly clean prison in the United States. I have never found it neglected. Everything is in order... [the Chaplain] holds services on Sunday, and the convicts are assembled morning and evening for prayers. The Sunday school is taught by the officers of the prison; those of the convicts attend who are under 25 years of age, and are divided into Bible and reading classes."²³

About this time, Albany County in New York State contemplated the building of a prison in Albany and sent commissioners to investigate Wethersfield. They reported: "The financial management of this prison is of a remarkable character, it has not only paid all its expenses, but in seventeen years has accumulated a surplus of \$93,000...and this is but the least of the benefits it has conferred upon the state, its moral influence is equally salutary, second commitments averaging about five per cent, while third commitments are not to be found upon its records."²⁴ Happily for New York, upon receiving assurance that politics would not be allowed to influence the Albany institution or its administration,²⁵ Captain Amos Pilsbury accepted an invitation from Albany. He moved there in July 1845, built a penitentiary, and served as its warden for twenty-seven years. His fame and reputation grew.²⁶

Mrs. Eddy's brother-in-law, Luther Pilsbury, moved his family to Albany but did not take a job in the prison. He ventured Westward developing civilian markets for the shoes and other products manufactured by inmates at the Albany Penitentiary. Luther's wife Martha and their two young daughters Mary and Ellen were left alone for long periods of time. This situation distressed Mrs. Eddy. She wrote her sister Martha on March 5, 1848, "My heart aches for you and Luther both, to be separated as you have been." She told Martha that brother George had just applied for a job as warden at Brooklyn City Prison, a job "similar [to that of] Captain Amos." She expressed hope that Luther would apply for the job because it would enable him to spend more time with his family. George had first refusal for the Brooklyn warden position but decided not to accept it.²⁷ Luther didn't apply for the job because he had made other plans that would enable him to stay in Albany with his family.

Luther wrote to Mrs. Eddy a few weeks later on May 17, 1848, inviting her to visit his family and him in Albany. He, Martha and their two girls had been staying several weeks at the Albany Penitentiary with Captain Amos and his wife Emily, and were about to move into a place on Hamilton Street. Luther an-

nounced he had gone into the auction business in Albany and enclosed a clipping of his newspaper advertisement.²⁸

Captain Pilsbury gave Mrs. Eddy's brother George a letter of recommendation when he applied for a job teaching textile weaving to inmates at the Maryland State Penitentiary. Mrs. Eddy was pleased when George married her friend Martha (Mathy) Rand on November 4, 1849. George immediately moved to Baltimore with his bride and started work on his new job as a deputy warden.²⁹

Luther Pilsbury passed on of cholera on a steam boat trip on the Mississippi River in October, 1850. For the next few years Mrs. Eddy's widowed sister Martha and Martha's two daughters were forced to rely on the Pilsburys for aid and a place to live. They stayed with Amos and Emily for long periods at Albany Penitentiary and the Refuge and Hospital Immigration Center at Wards Island, New York.³⁰

Mrs. Eddy's momentous discovery of Christian Science was made in 1866. The following year her niece, Ellen Pilsbury (Martha's daughter), was given up by three doctors, and "...lay dying of enteritis..." Mrs. Eddy hurried from Taunton, Massachusetts to Ellen's bedside in Sanbornton Bridge (Tilton), New Hampshire. After a few minutes of prayer at Ellen's supposed death-bed, a remarkable healing occurred. An eye witness testimony of the healing appeared in early editions of the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, by Mary Baker Eddy.³¹

About 1868, Mrs. Eddy healed an insane man who had escaped from an asylum and entered her home in Lynn.³² This healing has special significance to those working in psychiatric wards.

The first record of Christian Science literature distribution in a prison occurred in 1895. A small notice appeared in the April, 1895 *Christian Science Journal*: "*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* was placed in the library of the woman's prison, Auburn, New York, while the *Journal* is received there monthly.—A.L.H., Auburn, N.Y."

A CALL TO ACTION

A month later, two events made the Field aware of the possibilities of using Science for good in prison work:

1. On June 3rd, 1895, an address written by Mrs. Eddy was read to the Alumni of the Massachusetts Metaphysical College. They learned that in 1882 their Leader had entered the Washington, D.C. prison cell of President Garfield's assassin, where with a few words from her to the

assassin, Christian Science crossed swords with moral idiocy. "He had no sense of his crime; but regarded his act as one of simple justice, and himself as the victim. My few words touched him; he sank back in his chair, limp and pale; his flippancy had fled. The jailer thanked me, and said, 'Other visitors have brought to him bouquets, but you have brought what will do him good.'"³³

2. The June, 1895 *Journal* carried an article titled, "A VOICE FROM PRISON." The editor described how institutional work began at the Massachusetts State Prison at Charlestown when a Christian Scientist employed there to teach inmates how to make shoes, carried his textbook and the *Journal* in the prison and shared Christian Science with the inmates.

The *Journal* editor printed excerpts from letters an inmate wrote to students of Christian Science "who are interesting themselves in this work." The inmate expressed gratitude to these workers for their letters and books and the interest showed to him and his fellow prisoners. He had been healed of a love of sin and physical problems. He said, "I am indeed an altered man." He shared his own healings and the *Journal* with receptive fellow inmates.

The Charlestown prison chaplain, in his annual report for 1895, referred to his seven thousand volume library as: "...both a life and peace giver, to say nothing of quickened intellect and morals which are derived from its use."³⁴ That was certainly true of one volume. The inmate is quoted in the June, 1895 *Journal* article:

"The chaplain told me I could keep *Science and Health* until I got through with it. I would never get through with that book, but as others were waiting for it, I did not like to keep it too long. God bless the author!...God bless you all."

Most prison-made products were of notoriously poor quality, but the inmate and his instructor in the prison shoe factory (the man who introduced him to Christian Science) could be grateful that the exceptionally high quality of Charlestown's shoes and other prison products was recognized when the institution won a silver medal for its exhibit in the Massachusetts building at the 1895 International Exposition in Atlanta, Georgia.³⁵

Following the April and June 1895 *Journal* articles, institutional work was started by individual Scientists in several states, but the articles appearing in the *Journal* for the next two years were all from the most populated state in the Union, New York. In a September 1896 *Journal* article a member of the newly formed "Christian Science Workers of Oneonta" wrote, "In May last I got the address of a young man who had been sent to Auburn prison for life...and

[asked] the privilege of sending him *Science and Health*....At this request the chaplain wrote us stating we were at liberty to send him any religious reading we wished." A letter from the inmate dated June 28, 1896 follows in which he says: "I am so happy to know that God has sent you to be a guiding angel to me, and has sent me such a fine Christian book (*Science and Health*). I have found it to be the Key to Scripture for me."

A page-and-a-half article in the February, 1897 *Journal*, titled "Another Voice From Prison," describes how a New York City Christian Scientist, Mrs. Bay, about three years earlier had read a newspaper account of the trial of a female Homeopathic physician of that city who was sentenced to Auburn prison for malpractice. Mrs. Bay sent Christian Science literature to the inmate. The seed was sown but did not take root until the Spring of 1896 when Christian Scientists living in Auburn obtained permission to place Christian Science literature, a *Christian Science Hymnal* and a single copy of *Science and Health* in the Auburn woman's prison library. (This happened about the same time permission was obtained by the Oneonta lady mentioned in the previous article to send a copy of *Science and Health* to the Auburn men's prison.) The inmate commenced reading the literature in earnest, and was prompted to write Mrs. Bay "...when I am free I would seek a Christian Scientist to heal me of my maladies." Mrs. Bay wrote to an Auburn Christian Scientist, who immediately began to visit the inmate and others in the woman's prison. The *Journal* devoted a page-and-a-half to a letter Mrs. Bay received from the inmate: "Mrs. C. came to me with love in her heart, with healing in her thought and hope and encouragement in her teaching. My health at once improved, rheumatism and quite a number of lesser ills vanished. And I am not the only person that has been brought under the benign influence of Christian Science healing. Some marvelous cures have been wrought upon others...Several patients are waiting for the healing influence to come to them and Mrs. C. will invite other Christian Scientists to join in the redemptive work. This movement is in its infancy and is destined to grow."

Mrs. Eddy's book *Miscellaneous Writings* came out in 1897 preserving for posterity both her address of June 3rd, 1895 (which told of her visit to a prison cell in 1882) and contained the June, 1895 *Journal* article about the institutional work starting in the Charlestown, Massachusetts prison (pp. 110-116, 403-405). All Christian Scientists were expected to read the new book.³⁶ The book's preface (xi) contains

these words: "May this volume be to the reader a graphic guidebook, pointing the path, dating the unseen, and enabling him to walk the untrodden in the hitherto unexplored fields of Science." Institutional work was certainly a relatively unexplored territory of Science.

Charles Dickens visited the "Tombs" in New York City during his 1842 visit to the United States. The horrible conditions there filled him with disgust.³⁷

Fifty-four years later the 1896 annual report to the New York Senate by the Prison Association of New York reads: "One of the greatest evils which at present exist in the prisons of New York [State] is the overcrowding of the Tombs....Such treatment of dogs would be gross cruelty...its design and arrangement is radically and irremediably bad....It ought to be immediately demolished. It cannot be made decent."³⁸

It was in 1896 that members of Laura Lathrop's Student Association in Second Church of Christ, Scientist (New York City) were prayerfully led to form a prison committee and began visiting the "Tombs" (consisting of a city block surrounded by a wall within which were three prison buildings—the large "old Tombs" prison for men, and two smaller prisons for women, boys and petty offenders).

Why were Christian Scientists going into places like this? What warrant did they have for taking stately Science into prisons? The answer lies in the heading of the *Journal* article, Jesus' words from Matthew 25:36, 40: "I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me....Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Prison conditions, and the indifference and skepticism of prison officials, did not disturb or distract the Second Church workers. Their pure motives, consecrated prayer and selfless love is evident from Rosalind S. Robert's report of the work appearing in a July, 1897 *Journal* article entitled "Prison Work." She writes: "At the very first visit to the Tombs...the principal city prison, they had access to about twenty-five captives. To these, tracts were distributed, words of love and cheer spoken, and the seed was sown." (All three prisons were visited.) "On return of the Scientists the following week for another visit, they were received with marked courtesy by the prison officials, the matron, especially, showing extreme gratification. She declared, voluntarily, that she had never seen such results from the visits of any other missionaries."³⁹

Institutional work being done on the other end of our continent was described in the October 1897 *Journal* by the wife of a Government Civil Engineer who reported that she and her husband spent eight months of each year for the past several in Portland, Oregon, and while there, they were invited to visit jails with the missionary committee of First Church of Christ, Scientist, Portland. The workers wisely let our "Pastor" do the work:

"The method adopted by this committee is most excellent. It is right in line with impersonal work, for they allow the books by our Leader to do the teaching. These are read to the prisoners or by them; hence personal opinions are excluded, and God's words, as found in Christian Science, are not shaded, but given an opportunity to glow and radiate." One inmate had a healing of "...a dreadful toothache....Another case was of one who was controlled by the morphine habit....The M.D.'s had tried to cure him of the appetite they themselves had aroused, but in vain....The jailer remarked not long since, 'I wish all of them would read *Science and Health*, because I never have trouble from those who do read it'....Since this noble work has commenced here, many have been set free, physically, morally, and spiritually."

Sometimes individual Christian Scientists did their own thing as the Spirit moved them. This was apparently true at the Scranton, Pennsylvania County Jail. Two articles appeared in the 1899 *Christian Science Sentinel*, and both must be read together to get a complete picture of the work conducted at the jail. The May 11, 1899 *Sentinel* article describes the work of two ladies who worked at the jail in January, 1898; (they were not the first). Three months later, the August 24th *Sentinel* contained a "Me Too" article written by a worker who apparently initiated work at the jail.

The description in the May 11th article of an interview with "...one of the hardest criminals in the jail" is reminiscent of Mrs. Eddy's words in her book, *First Church of Christ Scientist and Miscellany* (p. 165): "Of two things fate cannot rob us; namely, of choosing the best, and of helping others thus to choose. But in doing this the Master became the servant. The grand must stoop to the menial. There is scarcely an indignity which I have not endured for the cause of Christ, Truth, and I returned blessing for cursing. The best help the worst; the righteous suffer for the unrighteous; and by this spirit man lives and thrives, and by it God governs." The Scranton worker's patience and perseverance paid off. The inmate's change in character was obvious to everyone. When he was transferred to the state prison,

the Scranton workers sent him literature and continued to shepherd his reformation, offering to contact a Christian Scientist in Philadelphia to visit him in prison.

The experiences of the Scranton County jail worker in the August 24, 1899 *Sentinel* describes how the work originally started there in November, 1897. She wrote, "A copy of the *Journal* was left with one prisoner and a short talk on Christian Science was listened to most respectfully....I did not distribute the literature generally but tried to let Truth work its own way, and it was most encouraging to watch the growing interest, as one after another would ask to see me, or for something to read....Feeling keenly my inability to meet the great need of these sin-stricken ones without divine help, I constantly turned to God for guidance and light....'Shepherd show me how to go' became my daily companion."

One of the men helped by this worker was serving a second term for dishonest business practices. "[He]...at first scoffed at the ideas advanced by Christian Science and religion in general. However, noticing the effect of truth on some hard drinkers he began to read *Science and Health*....In a very short time he was able to demonstrate over claims for himself...and has since proved his faith by his works....Another, who had become an abandoned inebriate, and for four years had not provided a home for his wife, upon release was successful in obtaining employment the second day....Both he and his wife attend our services."

In the spring of 1900, Mrs. Eddy provided institutional work with a rousing send-off into the 20th century. More articles on prison work appeared in *Sentinels* in the year 1900 than were published in both periodicals for the previous three years. And, for the first time, *Sentinel* prison article titles and authors were placed on the front cover. The following is an excerpt from the leadoff editorial in the April 19, 1900 *Sentinel*:

"From many parts of the Field we hear of a good work being done in the jails and penitentiaries. We have from time to time published reports of this line of work. We have also published a number of letters from persons confined in jails and prisons, some of which have been most interesting and touching. Therein we have read of natures transformed by the light of divine Love which has penetrated the thick walls of the prison, and shed its generating rays into the darkness of the prison cells.

"Men and women who according to the world's estimate are criminals and who, indeed, were self condemned as such, have been suddenly awakened to the fact that they are not abandoned and hopeless children of Satan, but

children of God....They have learned from reading literature placed in their hands by our earnest co-workers, that they are not shut out from the radius of Infinite Love.

"When they grasped the teaching of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* that God is Love, always has been and always will be....They suddenly, unexpectedly, and joyously found their faces turned Zionward, and read, for the first time, with an understanding of their meaning, those tender words of Jesus 'I was in prison and ye came unto me....Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'...as showing how deeply they feel who have been thus touched by the hand of Love, we gladly publish the following letter written by a prisoner in the Penitentiary of Nebraska, to a Christian Scientist through whose ministrations he was brought into the Light of Truth: [short excerpt here from a long letter] 'Dear Lady and sister...You are correct in your conclusion as the influence Christian Science has upon me, for I am convinced of its Truth....'"

The editorial ends with these words: "This rough outline speaks a true history of many cases, as all may learn who so desire. Through divine Love the prison doors are being opened and the captive set free."

A few weeks later (May 12, 1900) Mrs. Eddy paraphrased words in the editorial's last sentence. In a note to Irving C. Tomlinson after he notified her that he had completed arrangements at her direction for Christian Science services to be held in the Merrimac county jail, she wrote: "I am glad you have begun the Christian Science mission with faith that you can open the prison doors and set the captive free. God will bless us in this way of his appointing...."⁴⁰

Tomlinson observed:

"...Mrs. Eddy's practical piety was manifest in her active interest in the welfare of those confined to prison. One of her early talks with the writer after his arrival in Concord concerned the unfortunates in the county jails and state prison. At her earnest request the writer visited Sheriff Edgerly of the county and made the proposition to hold on each Sunday at two o'clock in the afternoon in the Merrimac County jail a Christian Science service for the prisoners. The Sheriff welcomed the plan....That the prisoners might have help in putting off the 'old man' she presented them with two copies of *Science and Health* which were immediately put to good use."⁴¹

"...these services were held as long as I was First Reader which was seven years. We went out in the afternoon and held the service just like the Sunday morning service. Then during the week I would see the prisoners if they asked for help...I may say that Mrs. Eddy was much interested in the work with prisoners, and always enjoyed reading letters on the subject and frequently sent them down to headquarters to have them appear in our periodicals."⁴²

The experiences of these early workers will seem very familiar to today's workers. The sentiments expressed in Mrs. Hattie Frederick's July 12, 1900 *Sentinel* article, "Prison Work in Detroit, Michigan" could easily have been written by a present-day institutional worker:

"Not until one has had the privilege of breaking the living bread of truth with those in bonds at the city jails, can he realize what a wealth and diversity of experience accompanies this particular field of labor. To proclaim liberty to the captive; the opening of prison to them that are bound; to tell of man's dominion over the beasts of the carnal mind; of peace on here and now—not afar off; to see the eager faces, sobered and saddened by the rough hand of sin; to hear the earnest inquiry and astonishment, when told that within each individual consciousness lies the same Christ power to annul material law and sin) so wonderfully demonstrated by Jesus—all these and many more such sacred experiences are written on the tables of memory as enduring as stone.

"This work is carried on by two students for each ward, alternating in turn each Sunday...These men are coming and going constantly, sometimes the faces are all new, and again there is but one or two. In this way a great number are being reached...The entire retinue of officials at the jail have felt the uplifting thought brought here by the ministrations of Science...they acknowledge that Christian Science had done more towards bringing a better condition of affairs among the men than the combined efforts of all the other denominations.

"That there is a great field of work, rich in its yield, open to Christian Science in this direction, is proven beyond a doubt in the brief period of our effort."

FRUITAGE

"...In due season we shall reap if we faint not." Sometime earlier this thought or title in a *Journal* article had impressed Juliette M. Mink as she explained in the August 9, 1900 *Sentinel* article entitled "Prison Work:"

"Today, after many months of continuous work in the County jail in Salt Lake City, one whom I visited there, and later at the penitentiary, attended our church. On seeing him enter, the above beautiful text occurred to me...Wednesday is visiting day at the prison and with other Scientists representing both churches of the city...one remarkable feature, noticeable from the first, is the receptivity to the teachings of Christian Science. Although of varying age and sex; from the lower walks of life to the cultured gentleman; some serving sentence for petty larceny, others awaiting trial for murder.

"My thought at this time is to let the men speak for themselves; some of the extracts following (ten letters) are from men now in jail, some from those at liberty and some from others who have gone to the penitentiary." One individual wrote, "I never heard of Christian Science till I

came to this jail, so hardly feel able to express myself....I have felt great benefit from Christian Science since I have been here, through the noble work of the ladies who brought us Christian Science."

Three months later he wrote from the state penitentiary:

"This little confinement will do me no harm, for I have learned more, and taken more interest in [the study of Christian Science] than I ever before knew. I believe that I was called here for that purpose, more than to be punished. I consider that I am not only gaining in health, but in salvation, which I must say is due to the beloved works of Christian Scientists....If I am not free it is a blessing to know that salvation is free."

Another man writes from the penitentiary, where institutional work was just getting started:

"*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* and *Miscellaneous Writings* were the first and only religious works that I could ever read fifteen minutes [at the Scranton jail] without becoming disgusted with what seemed to me to be silly writings, now I miss the *Journal* as much as I miss the visits of my Science friends. An incident here [at the penitentiary] serves to show how the others feel. It was the occasion of the first Science meeting here; the jailer announced that there were two meetings that Sunday, but that all who didn't care to, need not attend the Science one, but the attendance proved the choice as everyone attended, and all were sorry when the meetings were stopped."

M.A.O., in the *Sentinel* of August 23, 1900 tells how the number of inmates attending the Christian Science service on Sunday at Washington State Penitentiary in Walla Walla grew in a little over eighteen months:

"...from the original one to between twenty and thirty, and there are thirty more who are reading the literature...and when they are sufficiently interested to study the lesson they have the privilege of coming to our service, and are furnished with the necessary books...We meet these men each Sunday and read the lesson with them. They are each supplied with a copy of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, the *Bible*, and the *Quarterly*. We read the lesson text responsively, then have silent prayer followed by the Lord's Prayer and its spiritual interpretation from *Science and Health*, then the Lesson-Sermon, closing with the Scientific Statement of Being, repeated in unison. The men bring their books into the class and turn with the reader to the topic of each citation, showing study and thoughtfulness.

"As some of the men have no means to buy any of the literature, the class (men attending the service) took up a collection and subscribed for one copy of the *Journal* and two copies of the *Sentinel*, and also pay for the *Quarterlies*.

Two men have *Miscellaneous Writings* and several have *Unity of Good*.

"One man said, 'I found in reading the *little book* that I could not be a Christian Scientist and continue to use tobacco.' In three days he overcame the habit which had held him for more than twenty years. He also had *tobacco heart*...and Christian Science came to him just in time to prevent having one of his legs amputated...An officer said to me, 'He cannot live long, and will only be a burden. I wish he might obtain a pardon.' (Inmates considered certain to die in prison were often pardoned, not so much for humanity's sake, as to get them out of prison before they added to the number of deaths on the warden's annual report.) 'Instead of being a burden he was healed through his study of *Science and Health* and in place of spending so much time in the hospital has been able to attend to all his duties, and has done much to interest others.'

"Two of our workers go to county jail each Sunday and read the lesson and talk to the men there, and there have been very good results....One man from the jail said, 'You came to us so differently from all other workers, as though you were not afraid your God would take care of you, and as though you knew you had something that would do us good, and you have, you have given us hope, and I have come to thank you.' This same man passing through the city a year later called to tell me of his mother, who is now a Christian Scientist, and of her being healed from the results of an accident."

The article ends with the following letter from an inmate (an American Indian) expressing gratitude for Mrs. Eddy and the textbook, which he had purchased and which healed him of consumption before he came into the prison class:

"My bad reputation is largely due to my constant visits to bar-rooms, gambling-tables, and race-tracks...my reformation is all due to the destruction of sin through the revelation of Truth, which has come to me through the book we all love, *Science and Health*. When my time expires, I shall come forth a "free man," free, not only from behind the prison bars, but also loosed from the grave-clothes of superstition and fleshly indulgence..."

"Prison Work in Joliet, Ill." by M.E.S., October 4, 1900 *Sentinel*:

"You will be interested to hear about a Christian Science service held in the Joliet, Ill. penitentiary Sunday, August 12 [1900]. The regular service was conducted by the readers of the Joliet church, and between eight and nine hundred of the twelve hundred forty five prisoners were present, and listened most attentively. I sang the solo that I have frequently sung at our church service, entitled 'I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say.' While I sang to that rapt throng of men, I was so conscious of Love's power and presence that my one desire was to have my hearers feel the divine Love that so filled my thought...I earnestly strove to see those men, not as mortals and criminals, but

as the children of divine Life and Love, perfect as God's image and likeness. Well, when I had sung the last note there arose a great cheer, and I knew that those men had responded to the Love that filled heart and voice, and then I understood the joy that possessed me while singing.

"There are eight copies of *Science and Health* in constant circulation in the penitentiary, and five additional copies are soon to be sent to the prisoners. One of the keepers is a Scientist, and sees to it that the men have access to all the Christian Science literature they may desire. The choir consists of prisoners who sang at this service from *Christian Science Hymnals*."

"Prison Work at South Boston, Mass.," April 4, 1901 *Sentinel*:

"About a year and a half ago, the Commonwealth Institute placed in their library *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, *Miscellaneous Writings*, the *Journal*, and *Sentinel*...there was no call for the literature the first year. Scripture says, 'How shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?' Some six months ago one was literally sent there who had known of Christian Science and been helped by it. The chaplain took a deep interest in him, so far as to go to a Christian Scientist to inquire about him. In a conversation about two months ago the man said twelve or fifteen of the prisoners were interested, one having read *Science and Health* two or three times.

"Arrangement was made for the lesson to be read to the men on the first Sunday in March...The regular order [of service] was followed as nearly as possible...The number present was about five hundred men, including the choir, officers, and superintendent of the institution...The men gave quite close attention to the reading. 'When did we see you ill, or in prison, and come to visit you? I tell you, the King will reply, so far as you did so to one of these my brothers, however lowly, you did it to me.' (Matthew, 25:39- 40, Twentieth Century New Testament). Henry C. Lawrence, Roxbury, Mass."

The next article has an O'Henry ending. The July 11, 1901 *Sentinel* article, "Prison Work at Joliet, Ill" by W.F. Austin records the first instance where Christian Science churches throughout a state joined in support of work at an institution. It reads as follows:

"In August, 1899, there was one copy each of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* and *Miscellaneous Writings* in the library of the Illinois State penitentiary located at Joliet, Ill....now there are thirty-eight copies of *Science and Health*, five of *Miscellaneous Writings* and a large number of *Journals* and *Sentinels*. These are all in constant use...Some ten or twelve of the books are owned by inmates. Cooperating with First Church of Christ, Scientist here, the balances were contributed to the library by Christian Science Churches throughout the State of Illinois, together with personal friends of inmates and the Cause. There are fifteen or twenty inmates who are mak-

ing a close study of Christian Science, and many more who are reading *Science and Health*.

"The Readers of the local church have on two occasions conducted the regular service in the chapel and once in the woman's department. On these occasions solos were rendered by Christian Scientists much to the appreciation of large audiences (numbering between eight hundred and one thousand).

"As an officer of the prison I greatly appreciate the fact that I have better discipline, obedience, and health among the men under my charge who study Christian Science."

Nettie Sheldon writes in "Prison Work" in the August 8, 1901, *Sentinel*:

"The result of the work of putting *Science and Health* into the jails and prisons has recently been brought to my notice in a very gratifying way. A man awaiting trial in a jail where *Science and Health* had been placed became deeply impressed with its teaching, and after having been sentenced to three years' imprisonment in Fort Madison Prison, Iowa, wrote to me asking for Christian Science literature. Our church sent him a copy of *Science and Health*. The *Sentinel* has also been forwarded to him....The following is a copy of the man's last letter:

"...Since my introduction to Christian Science it has extended to me an entirely new life by completely destroying a false appetite that was rapidly carrying me to self-destruction. Through the inspiration of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, I have been liberated from all those impulses which have so characterized my past life, and which have placed me in my present surroundings—prison walls. Now, however, as I am entering a new life, my aim will be to prove myself worthy of the benefit Christian Science has so graciously bestowed upon me. In my present environs *Science and Health* is indeed my true friend and only companion, and as I advance in the spiritual understanding of its teaching, it brings a corresponding amount of peace for which I am overwhelmed with gratitude."

Nettie Sheldon's article is a fitting capstone to the series of articles opening the new century, one small Christian Science church with active witnesses, doing what they could to light the "dark places of earth."⁴³

Fruitage from institutional work at Joliet prison appeared in a four page testimony titled "FREE" written by a former inmate in the May 1903 *Journal*. He recounts his "...arrest, confinement in Cook County Jail for three months, conviction, and sentence to prison...his bitterness, hate, and revengeful thoughts toward the prosecutor...[being] put aboard the Alton train bound for Joliet...the judge said I probably would have to remain in prison at least two years before being pardoned, and the man who prosecuted me said he would use his influence to keep me there seven years before being pardoned."

The inmate's hatred toward his prosecutor melted when he started reading *Science and Health* at the urging of his cell-housekeeper (a Christian Scientist). Then...

"About two months after my arrival at the prison I received a letter from a friend saying that I was God's child and just as soon as I was free from envy, hatred, malice and all other evils that attend them, I would be free from prison, as God did not want any of his children in the penitentiary. From this time on I devoted all the time allowed for reading to reading *Science and Health, Journals, Sentinels, and Bible* texts, and gave up all daily papers and magazines....God in his goodness changed my revengeful thoughts; and by drawing closer to the understanding of Him, I became full of love and forgiveness.

"At this time I was unable to do my task in the [prison] shop, and I was constantly told by the contract foreman that if I did not do more work I would be sent to the dungeon and chained by my wrists over night. I had no fear of punishment for I knew I was doing my best, and God would protect me. My task was [caning] five chairs, and I worked hard and on Saturday completed my task for the first time. About 5:30 P.M. the foreman came around, punched my ticket, but in his hurry forgot to take the chair. Mortal mind said, Now you have him, the ticket punched for a full days work and one chair over; but Principle said, No, that is not Christian Science. And so on Monday morning when the foreman came, took the chair, and punched a new ticket, I told him I was not entitled to it, as he punched for it Saturday night. For about two minutes he stood and looked at me, then...sorted out a nice bunch of cane and brought it to me with a smile. Prior to this, he was constantly calling me vile and profane names. A few days later the superintendent of the shop came and ordered me to report to his office. I did so and was placed in charge of all his books, telephone, time-roll, and general office work. So far I had used no material means for my release, simply trusting in divine Love, and was certain I would be protected. The day came for me to go before the Board of Pardons....After looking up my case they could not find that I had [ever] been dishonest....I was going to be pardoned, vindicated, and my demonstration made....I was pardoned in eleven months, the shortest time possible....I came out a free man in every sense of the word...."

Members in the Christian Science Society in Portsmouth, New Hampshire felt encouraged to start institutional work at the Portsmouth jail in 1902. One of the "Letters to our Leader" published by Mrs. Eddy in the June 4, 1904 *Sentinel* was from Ada G. White, telling of the work there. When they started:

"...over a year and a half ago...the place used to be flooded with flashy novels, and no Bible could be kept there, as it would be tom up to light pipes with...in the mean time [we] have presented the jail inmates with an

organ, also a Bible, a copy of *Science and Health*, and considerable other literature...the organ was contributed largely by business and professional men here....There are about a half dozen to twenty-five or more prisoners thrown in together; and some are resolved to resist our efforts and discourage the others who take an interest, it is not difficult to believe the boys when they tell us how difficult it is to be Christians under such circumstances. That many are helped is all the more proof of the power of Truth revealed in Christian Science....When I go on Wednesday to study the lesson with them and lift their thought to a love of spiritual things, the thought is especially impersonal....During the past year and a half we have seen much good resulting from our work, not only while the prisoners are there but after they leave...they obtain work more readily, and live more manly and moral lives."

When *The Daily Patriot* moved to a new location in Concord, Mrs. Eddy sent them a letter dated February 18, 1905 which read, "Your removal and pleasant office on Main street compliments our city. I have wanted to send you something to appear in your paper but have not found the moments in which to prepare it. The enclosed I send subject to your judgement as to publishing it. Accept my best wishes for your welfare."

Mrs. Eddy's enclosure was a February 14th letter sent to her by Ada G. White telling:

"How much of a blessing the truth [Christian Science] is in the [Portsmouth, New Hampshire] county jail...One who was sentenced to the state's prison for a term of from four to seven years, took with him a New Testament, *Miscellaneous Writings*, *Unity of Good*, and a *Journal*. He writes that he reads the books diligently, is most grateful for the truth and says, 'God has come into my life to stay.' He feels he is not in bondage, for he says, 'where the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.' (II Cor. 3: 17)

"Another young man who left about two months ago, after a term of a year in jail, has been greatly transformed, reads the Christian Science literature he took with him...intends to purchase *Science and Health* soon.

"Still another has attended every service except one, in our [Portsmouth Society] rooms since he left jail some time ago, and has interested his mother and father, who have come and testified to the help Christian Science has been to them...."

Ada White then testifies to personal healings she experienced.

The *Patriot* published Mrs. Eddy's letter, expressing appreciation for it. They also published Ada White's letter, commenting: "The following letter, addressed to Mrs. Eddy by one of the thousands of Christian Scientists of whom she is the revered spiritual leader, will interest *Patriot* readers as indicating some rea-

sons why she is held in such grateful love by an ever-increasing multitude of followers.

At the end of Ada White's letter, the *Patriot* editor wrote a postscript, "There are many suggestions in the above, especially for those having the care of criminals. It is clear that there is a better way." Amen to that.

Mrs. Eddy published all of the above; her letter, Ada White's, and the *Patriot's* comments, in the *Sentinel* for March 11, 1906, "Appreciated Congratulations," under "Selected Articles."⁴⁴

In 1905, Tomlinson was in the fifth year of the seven that he conducted Christian Science services at the Merrimac county jail. "These services were given under the auspices of the Concord Church and reports of the work sometimes appeared in the local papers. *The Daily Patriot* of January 12, 1906, in reporting the Annual Meeting of the Concord Church on January 11 of the year, said: "Religious services are regularly held by the church in the county jail, and much good is being accomplished with the prisoners."⁴⁵

The unfortunates in the nearby New Hampshire State Prison had also been receiving Mrs. Eddy's attention. "Two members of Mrs. Eddy's household were appointed Readers [in the State prison], and each week she would ask them for verbal reports of progress."⁴⁶ "To aid the prisoners in putting off the 'old man', [Mrs. Eddy] presented the prison with copies of *Science and Health*....Frequently the expressions of gratitude toward Mrs. Eddy were touching. The prisoners of the New Hampshire State Prison presented her with a wicker chair they had made themselves. In the middle of its back they had woven a cross and crown in color."⁴⁷ In 1908 when Mrs. Eddy moved to her last home in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, the rocking chair went with her. (This Historian saw it on the second floor at Chestnut Hill during a visit in 1982. I wonder if it is the same rocker she sat in at Pleasant View when she read letters from institutional workers and reviewed prison articles in the periodicals. ("In the morning hours at Pleasant View, she could often be seen seated in her favorite rocker in her study...It was her practice to go over most carefully not only the editorials, but often the leading articles in the *Journal* and *Sentinel*."))⁴⁸

Mrs. Eddy's gift to the world, *The Christian Science Monitor*, gave Christian Scientists a powerful new missionary tool, and before Mrs. Eddy's passing, several articles testified to its being put to good use in institutions. An article titled "*The Christian Science Moni-*

tor" appearing in the March 12, 1910 *Sentinel*, printed a letter received from an official at the Denver county jail, which "...indicates clearly that the leaven of Truth is working through the *Monitor*...the three copies received daily, filling...a long felt want, especially for a place of confinement like this....It is an unbounded relief...the most desired daily reaching us at this time."

In "THE DEMONSTRATION OF FRIENDLINESS BY MEANS OF THE *MONITOR*," Rev. Wm. P. McKenzie (*Sentinel*, August 31, 1910) acknowledges that "Already the *Monitor* has done educational service in a number of charity and reform schools for children, and in workshops, jails, and reformatories where adults are confined...the paper has found its way into fellowship with other methods for transforming the crime-infected ignorant foes of society into intelligent workmen and useful citizens..."

December 3, 1910 Mary Baker Eddy passed on.

There can be no doubt that Mrs. Eddy expected institutional work to continue, expected Christian Scientists to continue the Christian Science mission with faith that they could open prison doors and set the captive free, knew God would continue to bless the Christian Science movement in this way of His appointing.

Christian Scientists of the period were well aware of Mrs. Eddy's great interest in institutional work and considered it part of the movement. The prison articles published in the periodicals could almost be considered a primer on how institutional work should be conducted. Students of Christian Science had everything they needed their dual pastor the *Bible* and the Christian Science Textbook, *The Manual of the Mother Church*, and Mrs. Eddy's other writings.

Christian Science was fast becoming a world-wide religion but there were (and still are) foreign countries where only "state religion" literature and workers were allowed into institutions. In the United States, some states had few Christian Scientists and fewer Christian Science churches; prisons were non-existent in some areas, remote from churches in others (without benefit of the automobile and good roads, traveling was a hardship). Wardens usually ran their prison as a personal fiefdom. Prison officers in most cases were political appointees, patronage jobs filled by the party currently in power; wardens changed with the political wind (at Sing Sing prison a common joke was that the fastest way to get out of prison was to become a warden); a warden that welcomed volunteer workers one day might be replaced by a new warden who refused entrance the next day.

Prison rules and regulations varied widely from prison to prison; state laws governing volunteer workers varied from state to state, and were becoming increasingly complicated and restrictive.

For many decades into the twentieth century New York State remained the most populated state in the Union with a corresponding large prison population. It isn't surprising that the nucleus of a state-wide institutional committee began forming there in 1913.⁴⁹ It is surprising that only two decades after Mrs. Eddy's passing, new Christian Scientists appearing on the scene were unaware of her interest in institutional work. A few self-satisfied church members apparently felt their "neighbor" did not include inmates in institutions, and thought Mrs. Eddy would be opposed to institutional work.⁵⁰ Irving C. Tomlinson's book, *Twelve Years with Mary Baker Eddy*, unfortunately would not be published until 1945. In 1934 the Christian Science Prison Committee for the State of New York wrote Mr. Tomlinson asking for permission to quote from one of his earlier letters. He replied, "...in response to your question, let me say that I have no objections to your quoting, or anyone else quoting, the facts stated in my letter to you of September 30, 1927 correcting the erroneous belief that our leader was opposed to prison work....Mrs. Eddy was much interested in the work with prisoners."⁵¹

IN CONCLUSION

Mrs. Eddy loved, supported, and promoted institutional work. Hopefully this history has made that clear. By the 1960's, pleas from New York City and New York State Correction Department officials resulted in the elimination of isolated individuals and splinter groups doing institutional work in New York State.

Instead, they came in under the umbrella of one state-wide committee, coordinated through one office under the direction of a professional Executive Administrator, in liaison with an Executive Committee representing every zone in the state. This brought a system of stability and order to the work, efficient distribution of literature, and the elimination of duplicate efforts. Today every Christian Science church in the state has the privilege of democratic representation on the state committee through the appointment of an institutional representative (the representatives in each zone elect a zone chairperson, and these make-up the state executive committee). Every church has the privilege of supporting the work metaphysically and financially. The adoption of a set of rules and regulations, guidelines governing all

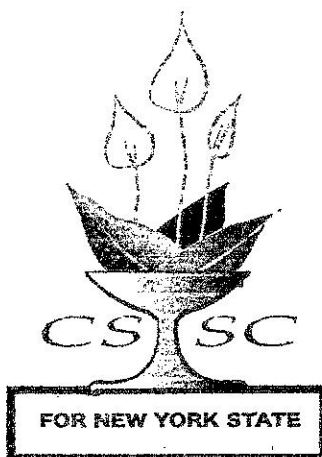
workers, education through seminars, periodic zone meetings, executive committee meetings and newsletters, etc., provide assurance the work will be carried on in the way Mrs. Eddy intended—according to Principle.⁵²

Mrs. Eddy's words to Irving C. Tomlinson speak to

all institutional workers today whether the field of labor is a hospital, psychiatric ward, nursing home, geriatric center, jail or prison: **"I am glad you have begun the Christian Science mission with faith that you can open the prison doors and set the captive free. God will bless us in this way of his appointing."**

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³ *Sentinel*, June 20, 1906, Letter by Mary Baker Eddy, Vol. 8, p. 700; (reprinted), August, 1906 *Journal*, Vol. 24, p. 311; *First Church of Christ Scientist and Miscellany*, by Mary Baker Eddy, p. 175.

⁴ "New Hampshire made a real contribution to prison management and progress in this country. From New Hampshire came the Pilsburys. First, Moses C. Pilsbury, warden from 1818 to 1826 of the state prison, which had been erected in Concord...in 1812. The son of Amos was Louis, who became in 1877 superintendent of [all] state prisons in New York. Moses was the first and earliest of the enlightened wardens." Dr. Orlando F. Lewis, *The Devel-*

opment of American Prisons and Prison Customs, 1922, pp., 149, 150; (Also, see endnotes #12, 26, 30.)

⁵ "The establishment of the Pennsylvania and Auburn systems of prison discipline...attracted world-wide attention." Harry Elmer Barnes, *The Story of Punishment*, (Patterson Smith, Montclair, NJ), c. 1930, 1972, p. 103; *Mastering American History*, (Keystone Education Press), 1968, p. 207; Harry J. Carman, Harold C. Syrett, Bernard W. Wishy, *A History of The American People*, (Alfred A. Knopf, New York), 1967, 3rd ed., (Vol. 1), pp. 518, 519.

⁶ Jewel Spangler Smaus, Mary Baker Eddy, *The Golden Days*, Christian Science Publishing Society, 1966, p. 101. In 1981 and 1982 this historian had several phone conversations with Jewel Spangler Smaus, Palo Alto, California, regarding the Pilsbury/Baker relationship and the contents of the Baker family letters in the archives at Longyear Historical Society, Brookline, Massachusetts. We are grateful for her support and encouragement of this history. She expressed a great deal of interest in institutional work. She said that at one time she spent a year of study toward the goal of becoming a policewoman.

⁷ Yale President Dwight's observation in his 1812 "Travels." (New Hampshire's granite industry began at the Concord prison. Inmates worked at cutting and finishing granite blocks that went into some of the finest early buildings in New England).

⁸ *History of Concord, New Hampshire*, (City History Commission, 1896), New Hampshire Historical Society, (Vol. 1), p. 1157. The phenomenal popularity of the prison when it opened in November 1812 caught the directors by surprise. Although only one inmate had been received, "The number visiting [the prison in one month] became embarrassing to such a degree that the directors felt obliged to give published notice dated December 1812, 'That after the first of January next no spectators shall be admitted into the prison or apartments, except on Saturday, of each week, from 10 to 12 o'clock a.m., and from 2 to 5 p.m.... except in special cases.'" The directors quickly realized that prisons in other states were earning extra income by charging the public for tours. Charging twenty-five cents per person for a tour of the Concord prison workshops and facilities brought in thousands of extra dollars over the years.

⁹ Concord 1844 City Directory map (New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH)

¹⁰ Smaus, *Golden Days*, pp. 58-60; *Miscellany*, p. 147:2-8.

¹¹ *Tribute To The Memory of Amos Pilsbury*, (Albany Times Co., 1873, New York Public Library, p. 16.)

¹² "...Wethersfield differs from all others by its extreme mildness...The directors of this establishment seem to have a decided aversion to corporal chastisement." Gustave de Beaumont and Alexis de Tocqueville, *On the Penitentiary System in the United States*, 1833, p. 73, 74.

"Connecticut had the good judgment to call the able warden Moses Pilsbury from New Hampshire to manage its prison; and for twenty years this self-made administrator, and his son Amos who succeeded him, maintained the best penal institution in the country...William Crawford, the English commissioner who in 1833 visited all but two of the prisons of America, generously recognized its merits...which he attributed largely to the genius of the Pilsburys...." Blake McKelvey, *American Prisons, A History of Good Intentions*, 1903, p.17, 27.

"Just as Old Newgate at Simsbury had been a state scandal and a constant financial burden, so now Wethersfield grew to be the pride of the state and far more than a self-supporting institution. The new Connecticut prison first imitated Auburn, and then passed it in the race for supremacy among American prisons. In the increasingly heated discussions of the relative merits of the Auburn and Pennsylvania systems, Wethersfield became ultimately the mainstay of the Auburn supporters...its fame traveled even to Europe...satisfying almost completely the demands of the period for a successful prison...The two Pilsburys achieved the reputation of being the best prison keepers in the world. Of the two, Amos became far better known, his career in Wethersfield being succeeded by similar service in the Albany penitentiary. We find in Amos Pilsbury the first noted professional prison warden, with a system that for the time was enlightened and constructive. Captain Lynds of Sing Sing and Auburn was in the business of running a prison, but we do not gain from him a penal philosophy. Moreover, Lynds was a man of cruelty and limited vision...Wethersfield, under Amos Pilsbury, was the training school and standardizer of the system...out of which developed the American reformatory system. The connection is direct and clear. It was not from Auburn and Sing Sing that the lessons came, but from Wethersfield and from Amos Pilsbury, who engaged Zebulon Brockway as a clerk...." Orlando F. Lewis, *The Development of American Prisons*, 1922, p.175-179.

"The State-prison at Wethersfield, from its foundation in 1827, was, during the twenty years of General Amos Pilsbury's administration, the model institution of the whole country. This is the position assigned to it by the eminent French commissioners, Messrs. de Beaumont and de Tocqueville." E.C. Wines, *State of Prisons and Child Saving Institutions*, 1880, p.138.

¹³ Smaus, *Golden Days*, pp. 66, 67; Robert Peel, *Mary Baker Eddy, The Years of Discovery 1821-1875*, (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, 1972), p. 31. Mr. Peel described George's job in Wethersfield as "...teaching textile weaving to prisoners in the Connecticut State Prison," a skill George acquired after he left Wethersfield and went to work in his brother-in-law's textile mills in Tilton, New Hampshire. Textile weaving was never a prison industry at Wethersfield.

The "letter of recommendation" Amos Pilsbury gave to George Baker (in Longyear Historical Society archives) was not written for the Connecticut State Prison at Wethersfield, but for the Maryland state prison. (Inadvertent small errors of omission, commission, and chronology re-

lating to people and events associating Mrs. Eddy with prison and institutional work are not unusual in contemporary biographies of Mrs. Eddy.) This historian wrote Robert Peel, November 9, 1982 expressing our humble, "...heartfelt gratitude for [his] three volume biography of Mary Baker Eddy...Your monumental biography of Mrs. Eddy is a boon to the Christian Science movement." We mentioned several "small errors" he might want to correct in a future revision. Mr. Peel's gracious reply, dated December 8, 1982, expressed appreciation for our discovery of the Wethersfield Prison employment records in the Connecticut State Archives at Hartford, and said, "...you can be sure that I'll make the correction in future printings of my book." (At his suggestion, we mailed a photocopy of the Wethersfield employment records to the Mother Church Archives.) We never had an opportunity to discuss the details of other changes with Mr. Peel before his passing.

¹⁴ "...To Moses Pilsbury, one of the most distinguished prison officers of the last generation, the question was put: 'What do you think of a prison without a chapel where the convicts can be assembled on the Sabbath for worship and Sunday-school instruction, and on week-days for morning and evening prayers?' His reply was: 'It is like a ship laden with rich cargo and sent to sea without a rudder, compass, or chart.'" Wines, *State of Prisons*, p. 622.

¹⁵ At every turn, Sing Sing warden Elam Lynds hampered Gerrish Barrett's ministry. Lynds felt that giving inmates moral and religious instruction, teaching them to read, was a total waste of time. Fortunately for the inmates, Lynds dared not take their *Bibles* away from them. Gerrish Barrett's effort to teach inmates to read, without benefit of spelling books, using only the *Bible*, became legendary. The 1829 *Report of The Boston Prison Discipline Society (B.P.D.S.)*, p. 25, describes how Barrett taught one inmate "...four letters of the alphabet the first day—in five weeks the man correctly read the first chapter of Genesis. One man committed 8 chapters to memory in one week...one man in seventeen weeks committed 49 chapters to memory...another man in eighteen weeks committed to memory 770 [*Bible*] chapters, containing 19,328 verses."

The B.P.D.S. Report for 1830, p.17, states that warden Lynds "...seized [Barrett], shook and abused him, and drove him from the prison." At this time charges of "maladministration and cruelty were brought against Captain Lynds by one of the commissioners..." (Lewis E. Lawes, *Life and Death in Sing Sing*, Double Day, Doran & Co., Inc., 1928, p. 198-203, 218, 219.) Lynds resigned October 31, 1830. When the French Commissioners, de Toqueville and de Beaumont visited this country, they found Lynds tending his hardware store in Syracuse, NY. The final altercation between warden Lynds and Chaplain Barrett was probably precipitated by the chaplain's complaint over the absence of funeral services for dead inmates. (Unclaimed bodies were sought and bought by medical schools for dissection by medical students. There were plenty of bodies.)

For his book, *Twenty Thousand Years in Sing Sing* (A.L. Burt Co., 1932), Lewis E. Lawes, who became warden at Sing

Sing in 1920, "...dived into musty reports and records that had not been looked at in decades." He writes, "...the records show, one thousand lashes were inflicted within the space of three weeks...attempts to escape were weekly occurrences, inmates choosing to run the risk of being shot by the guards rather than remain to be killed by inches." (p. 68, 75). Lynds was called back to Auburn in May 1838. Angry citizens appeared at the prison gates demanding an inquest for an inmate who died April 8, 1839. Lynds resigned from Auburn, April 19, 1839.

"There was under Lynds at Auburn a want of humanity in the treatment of prisoners suspected of insanity...For a trifling offense a prisoner had been stripped naked and whipped from fifty to five hundred blows and the said prisoner was subject to fits! The treatment of deranged prisoners was revolting, beatings continuing until the body of the insane inmate was cut from shoulder to heels. And no record of this punishment had been entered on the prison books." (Lawes, *Life and Death*, pp. 218, 219.)

In stark contrast, Amos Pilsbury provided special cells for the insane and suggested prison profits go toward building an asylum for them.

He wrote the Wethersfield prison Directors, April 1, 1841, "At the present time we have six who are deranged in confinement here they are unfit subjects for imprisonment to say nothing of humanity and public justice...a prison is an unfit place for a lunatic...Humanity would seem to demand that something be done for their comfort and restoration to reason..." (Letter attached to 1841 Annual Prison Report.)

Pilsbury did not believe in capital punishment. He believed an inmate could be confined for life if necessary without being a threat to the safety of prison personnel. When Lewis E. Lawes became warden of Sing Sing in 1920, he was "...a firm believer in the social necessity of capital punishment..." Twelve years later, however, in 1932, he wrote, "I have been directed to kill lawfully [in the electric chair] one hundred and fifty men and one woman...My experience has convinced me of the futility of capital punishment." (Lawes, *Twenty Thousand*, p. 1.) I realize that the most horrible crime that can be committed is the killing of a human being, and, likewise, the most horrible punishment that can be imposed is the killing of a human being; the first the community could not prevent; the second is accomplished with premeditation and deliberation." (Lawes, *Life and Death*, p. 139.)

¹⁶ Smaus, *Golden Days*, pp. 67, 68, 71, 75, 76; Peel, *Years of Discovery*, pp. 32, 33, 38, 39. Cutchins trips were probably made to check on his real estate investments in Bow. In an August 4, 1982 letter to this historian, the Bow, New Hampshire, Town Clerk, Cindy Batchelder, wrote, "Cutchins, a nonresident...owned [several parcels of] land in District #2 from 1830-1838."

¹⁷ Years after leaving Wethersfield, George wrote a lengthy letter to his old boss Captain Amos Pilsbury, in which he

said, "You will say Baker is getting in his old trim again, he will soon be quoting Shakespeare."

¹⁸ Advice from Albert Baker to his brother George, August 23, 1836, "Cling to Pilsbury;" October 16, 1836, "stick to Pilsbury," Baker letters, Longyear Historical Society.

¹⁹ Baker family letters, etc., Longyear Museum and Historical Society archives.

²⁰ *Report of the NH State Prison To the General Court*, June 4, 1841, p. 4. (\$179.30 income for the year at 25 cents a head = 717 visitors.)

²¹ Smaus, *Golden Days*, pp. 101, 102, excerpts only part of the letter to friend Augusta. Not mentioned is the fact that Mrs. Eddy visited the Concord prison and stayed overnight in the deputy wardens residence. (See endnote #13.)

²² Baker letters, Longyear Historical Society.

²³ Dorothea Lynde Dix, *Remarks on Prisons and Prison Discipline in the United States*, 1845, pp. 44, 50, 51; Dorothy Clarke Wilson, *Stranger and Traveler*, Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1975, p. 152, 154; James, James and Boyer, *Notable American Women 1607-1950*, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1971, p. 488.

²⁴ David Dyer, *History of Albany County*, Joseph Munsell, Albany, 1868, p. 16, 17. These recidivism figures appear remarkable, even miraculous. They could be accurate. However, they cannot be accepted without reservation because in the early 1800's, the means was not available to make a positive identification of all repeaters (men coming back into the prison a second or third time). The Bertillon method of identifying criminals had not been invented (The French anthropologist wasn't born until 1853.) Fingerprinting was almost a century away. (The Bertillon method was still being used to identify inmates at Sing Sing in 1913, the year from which we date the founding of the Christian Science Institutional Committee for New York.)

²⁵ At Wethersfield Captain Amos Pilsbury's remarkable performance enabled him to weather changes in Connecticut politics - except for one brief period, when, after a change in political parties, he was replaced by a political hack, a former sea captain, who promptly ran the prison into the ground. Discipline all but disappeared, as did the profits. When an elderly, almost deaf, guard, hired by the new warden from the ranks of the party faithful, was murdered during an attempted prisoner escape at night, Pilsbury was quickly recalled. Pilsbury refused to move to Albany unless he was guaranteed freedom from political interference.

"It has been truthfully said that: 'One feature in the administration of the Albany Penitentiary merits special mention and universal imitation. No political consideration, no merely party question or motive is allowed the slightest weight in the appointments to office, or in the conduct of the Institution. The total exclusion of party politics from

the management of the Penitentiary, and the personal fitness for the duty in every appointee, were principles settled and resolved upon by the commissioners, before a stone of the edifice was laid.' These views were adopted and fully carried out by the inspectors, and also by the larger board of supervisors. This was the main cause of their success." Dyer, *History*, p.154-163.

²⁶ Dyer quotes a letter the Secretary of the Boston Prison Discipline Society, David Dwight, sent to Samuel Pruyn, chairman of the Prison Building Committee in Albany, "I know of no man living, nor have I ever seen the man, during twenty years of observation, on prisons and prison officers, who is certain to bring about favorable pecuniary results in the management of a Penitentiary, as Amos Pilsbury...I do not speak of this because I consider it the most important object of prison discipline; but because of the proof which it affords of wisdom, industry, economy, caution, energy, activity, and faithfulness, which makes the man so reliable as a public officer, and a Prison Keeper...If the question be whether the County Prisons, in the state of New York, shall become self-supporting institutions, and, at the same time, disciplinary and reformatory in character and morals, Amos Pilsbury is the man, in my opinion, above all others...Am I asked for proof[?] I refer to the life...No other man has shown such results in this or any other country, for so long a course of time..." Dyer, *History*, pp. 63, 64.

The Albany Prison Inspectors Report for 1852 reads: "In all that constitutes excellence in a prison, both morally and physically considered, so far as the inspectors have seen and known, the Albany Penitentiary has not its superior in the world." In 1855, "...The Albany Penitentiary, now widely renowned, is [Mr. Pilsbury's] own creation. The ability and success with which it has been conducted, are unparalleled anywhere. It has conferred honor on our city...The example has been copied in three other judicial districts of the state, and is accomplishing a sure revolution through the land. Mr. Pilsbury's pupils, young men whom he has educated in his peculiar system, are now conducting, with great success, similar institutions in this and other states." Dyer, *History*, pp. 61, 62.

In 1872 Albany proudly sent Amos Pilsbury to the International Penitentiary Congress in London, England. Where he was lionized by the international community. He died in 1873. "The fame of his work and the force of his character, we remember, have him a leading position of honor and influence in the International Penitentiary Congress held in London a year ago." *Tribute to Memory of Amos Pilsbury*, Albany Times Co., 1873, New York State Library, Albany. (Also see endnote #30.)

²⁷ Smaus, *Golden Days*, 116. Peel, *Discovery*, 90. Neither author mentions the wardenship job opening at Brooklyn prison, Mrs. Eddy's brother George applying for it, or Mrs. Eddy's hope that her brother-in-law Luther Pilsbury would apply for the position. (See endnote #13.)

²⁸ Baker Letters, Longyear Museum and Historical Society, Brookline, Mass.

²⁹ Longyear Historical Society archives; Smaus, 119; Peel, 94. Neither author mentions that George's new job is deputy warden, and that his employer in Baltimore is the Maryland state prison.

³⁰ In 1855, Captain Amos Pilsbury accepted a challenge to solve a deficit at the Refuge and Hospital of the Commissioners of Immigration, Wards Island, NY. In 1858 he assumed control of both Wards Island and the Albany Penitentiary. Then, without his solicitation or knowledge, he was unanimously chosen General Superintendent of New York's Metropolitan Police. He returned to Albany penitentiary and for the rest of his life was addressed as "General" Pilsbury.

When the Civil War started, creating a shortage of inmates to work the industries at Albany Penitentiary, General "Amos Pilsbury made a visit to Washington, D.C., and shortly thereafter, President Abraham Lincoln signed an order transferring all [Washington Penitentiary] prisoners, to Albany County Penitentiary, which officially earned a second title, The United States Federal Penitentiary of Washington D.C. at Albany". Dyer, *History of Albany Penitentiary*, pp. 110-117. The old penitentiary in Washington D.C. was needed for an armory.

"Amos Pilsbury was one of the original commissioners for locating and building the reformatory establishment at Elmira." (Zebulon Reed Brockway, *Fifty Years of Prison Service*, 1912, p. 33.) "Brockway went with Pilsbury to the Albany Penitentiary from 1851 to 1853...the Pilsbury system of prison management...constituted a sound and invaluable basis for building the Ideal Prison system for a State...Brockway became the first superintendent of the New York Reformatory at Elmira." (Lewis, *The Development*, p.179.)

General Pilsbury died in 1872. Louis Dwight Pilsbury followed his father as warden of the Albany penitentiary. He later became New York State's first General Superintendent of Prisons. In 1880, E.C. Wines wrote: "...two years of the administration of Mr. [Louis] Pilsbury has wrought marvels in the industries and finances of the three State prisons for men [Sing Sing, Great Meadow, Auburn]. .. some thirty-six hundred inmates...From being an annual charge upon the treasury of nearly or quite half a million of dollars, they are to-day from the labor of the convicts, besides paying every dollar of current expenses, turning a considerable revenue of hard cash...."

Louis Pilsbury reported to the Legislature "...the welfare of the prisoners has not been overlooked. There has been no deterioration in the quantity or quality of the food and clothing provided for them. Religious instruction has been regularly given on every Sunday, besides frequent ministrations at the cells. Kindly treatment is not inconsistent with strict discipline, and no uncalled for punishments are allowed...instances of reformation resulting from wholesome moral influences in the prisons are not rare, and efforts to decrease the number of the permanently-criminal classes will not be abated. Much, doubtless, re-

mains to be done in the way of efforts to solve the problem of the reformation of criminals, especially after the expiration of sentences; but without intending to reflect on other agencies so far as life within the prisons is concerned, I am satisfied that the employment of convicts at labor which enables them to maintain themselves is one of the most important factors in any efforts to reclaim them." (Wines, *State of Prisons*, p. 151.)

Unfortunately for New York inmates and taxpayers, politics outweighed common sense—Louis Dwight Pilsbury was not re-appointed General Superintendent of Prisons for New York State.

A loose newspaper clipping in the Wethersfield Historical Society collection (with a hand written notation attributing it to the New York Sun, 1898) reads: "Louis Dwight Pilsbury retired as superintendent of Blackwells Island Prison in New York, as the oldest living warden in the United States..." The year is correct, but during hours of searching at the New York Public Library I could not find this article on 1898 New York Sun microfilm. The clipping may have been from another newspaper.

Without the genius of Pilsburys to run the Albany County Penitentiary, and with adverse labor laws increasingly restricting prison industries, the prison became an expense to the County. The city of Albany grew around the deteriorating buildings known to Albanians as "The Castle on the Hill." Its last half-century of life was less than ordinary. It ceased to exist September 8, 1931 when prisoners were transferred to a new Albany County Jail near the Albany County airport. In the 1940's the Albany Veterans Administration Hospital was built over the site of the old penitentiary.

³¹ Robert Peel, *MARY BAKER EDDY: The Years of Discovery*, The Christian Science Publishing Society, Boston, MA, 1998, p. 215; Yvonne Cache von Fettweis and Robert Townsend Warneck, *Mary Baker Eddy, Christian Healer*, The Christian Science Publishing Society, 1998, pp. 223-225, 356.

³² In the 1980's while this historian was State Chairman of the Christian Science Institutional Committee for New York State, he and the then Executive Administrator, Bernard Meyerson, visited the Mother Church to discuss institutional business with Dick Kemp, Manager of Branches and Practitioners (at the time overseeing institutional work). We also visited the Mother Church Archives where an assistant archivist was asked if there was primary source corroboration of Mrs. Eddy's healing of the maniac described on page 50, 51 of Tomlinson's book, *Twelve Years With Mary Baker Eddy*, page 57, *Amplified Edition*. Their reply was, "Indeed there is, we have a half-dozen firsthand accounts of that healing as told by Mrs. Eddy to students and members of her household. It must have been very special to her."

³³ Mary Baker Eddy, *Miscellaneous Writings*, p. 112.

³⁴ Charlestown chaplain's report, 1895, Massachusetts State Archives, p. 52.

³⁵ Charlestown warden's report, 1895, Massachusetts State Archives, p. 27; 1896, p. 27.

³⁶ Peel, *Authority*, p. 104; notice in April, 1897 *Journal*.

³⁷ Charles Dickens, *American Notes*.

³⁸ New York Senate Document #68, April 28, 1896 pp. 76-79.

³⁹ Excerpts from a July, 1897 *Journal* article, "Prison Work."

⁴⁰ Tomlinson, *Twelve Years with Mary Baker Eddy*, p. 186. *Amplified Edition*, p. 243

⁴¹ Tomlinson's three page write-up of "Mrs. Eddy's Interest in Welfare of Prisoners," attached to his secretary's June 23, 1932 letter to the Chairman, Christian Science Prison Welfare Committee of the City of New York, Archives, pp. 1, 2.

⁴² Tomlinson letter, September 30, 1927 to W.F. Beckert, Christian Science Prison Committee for The State of New York, Archives.

⁴³ Mary Baker Eddy, *Miscellaneous Writings*, p. 250: 14-29.

⁴⁴ When Louis H. Kammerer was Executive Secretary of the New York State Institutional Committee in the 1950's, he asked the Mother Church Archives if they had a copy of the original *Patriot* article. Finding they did not, he had the New Hampshire State Library Archives make Photostats of the article, and gave a copy to the Mother Church Archives.

⁴⁵ Tomlinson letter, June 23, 1932, Archives, p. 2; Recorder, Vol. III, p. 73.

⁴⁶ The New York Institutional Committee, "Prison Worker's" (Mr. Reynolds), report of December 30, 1919, to the Christian Science Prison Committee for New York State, Archives.

⁴⁷ Tomlinson, *Twelve Years with Mary Baker Eddy*, p. 186. *Amplified Edition*, p. 243.

⁴⁸ Tomlinson, *Twelve Years with Mary Baker Eddy*, p. 101, *Amplified Edition* p. 121.

⁴⁹ David E. Coughtry, *The Start of Organized Work in New York State*, August 23, 1993, Archives, Christian Science Institutional Committee for New York State.

⁵⁰ Tomlinson, *Twelve Years with Mary Baker Eddy*, p. 76. *Amplified Edition*, p. 89, "...she [Mrs. Eddy] spoke of the Christian Science work at one of the jails and of the interest which the prisoners took in the Sunday Services held there. She said that she would have more hope for one of those prisoners than for a jealous, self-satisfied Christian.

⁵¹ Tomlinson letter, December 7, 1934, to the Christian Science Prison Committee for the State of New York, Archives.

⁵² Irving C. Tomlinson's words in his letter of September 30, 1927 to the Christian Science Prison Committee for The State of New York, bear repeating: "My experience is that prison work should be conducted very wisely...." We are indeed, "...a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2: 14), but overzealousness must be tempered and guarded against. For instance, before there was a state-

wide committee, two members of one large church did not attend the Sunday church service at their own church because they were conducting services in a state prison at that time. The wisdom of having a statewide committee with guidelines, rules and regulations for all workers is well proven. Today, as in Mrs. Eddy's time, New York institutional workers are among the most active and dedicated branch church members. They serve their churches as Readers, officers, ushers, Sunday School Superintendents, committee members, etc.—their cup running over—doing institutional work with the spiritual surplus.

**"May the great Shepherd that "tempers the wind to the shorn lamb,"
and binds up the wounds of bleeding hearts,
just comfort, encourage, and bless all who mourn.
Father, we thank Thee that Thy light and Thy love reach earth,
open the prison to them that are bound,
console the innocent, and throw wide the gates of heaven."**

Mary Baker Eddy, Miscellaneous Writings, p. 275



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