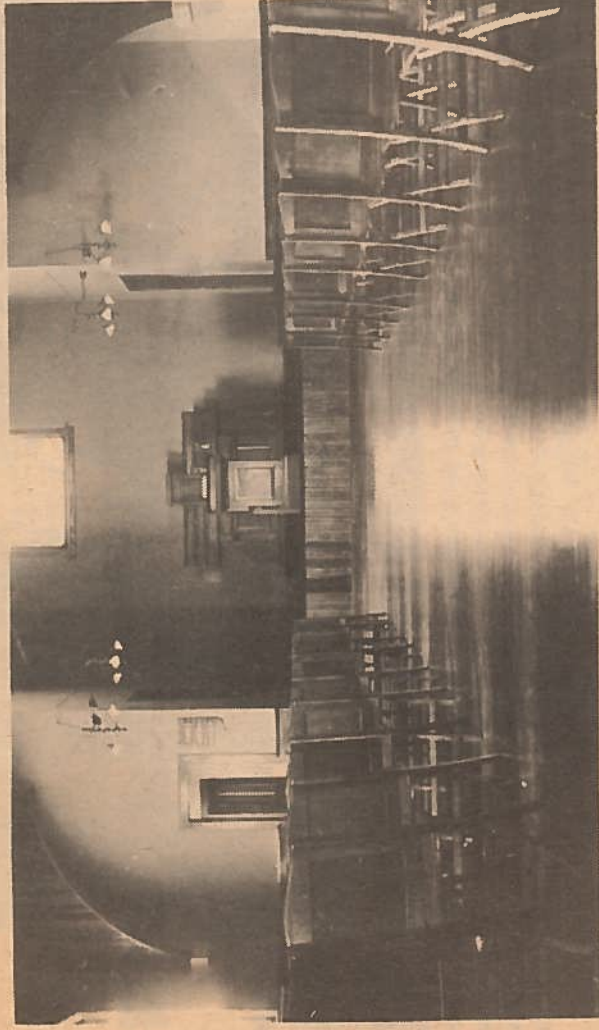


HOUSE OF REFUGE



An Act of the New York State Legislature which was passed on April 30, 1890 called for the establishment of a reformatory institution in the 7th or 8th Judicial District, to be known as the Western House of Refuge For Women. This legislation went on to say: "It shall be the duty of the governor, within thirty days after the passage of this act, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to appoint five residents of the state, at least two of whom shall be women, to constitute a board of managers of said house of refuge..."

The original board of managers for the institution were: George Sandbrook, Buffalo; E.K. Hart, Albion; E.C. Walker, Batavia; Miss Mary Fee, Rochester; and Mrs. Francis McMaster, Hornellsville. On June 24, 1890 the Board of Managers met in Rochester and heard arguments in favor of various sites including: Albion, Bergen, Canandaigua, Corfu, Lockport and Silver Springs. At that time they decided to visit and inspect the towns which

the evening of Oct. 22 in the form of a telegram to Chas. E. Hart as follows: "Albion the unanimous choice E.K. Hart". Concerning this, the paper reported as follows the next day: "This was the signal for a grand outburst of rejoicing. Two big bonfires were built on Main Street. The Drum Corps was called out to do its best and the air was deeply laden with the musical notes of the fish horn. All the fireworks and red fire that could be unearthed was used and a regular 4th of July celebration held sway for some time."

The three gentlemen of the Board of Managers of the Refuge were given the problem of selecting a site for the institution. On Sat., Oct. 31, 1890 after careful inspection of various sites offered, they decided in favor of the U. Clark Rogers farm west of Albion. Here they purchased 97 acres for \$125.00 per acre.

On Nov. 5, 1891 the Board of Managers awarded the contract to H.H. Edgerton of Roches-



grounds of the Correctional Facility today. The four isolated cottages gave a homelike setting for some inmates who were graded according to their department.

Construction of the Western House of Refuge was completed in the fall of 1893 with operation commencing in December 1893. The first inmate however, was not received until Jan. 3, 1894. In Feb. 1894 the chairman of the Board of Managers informed the Ways and Means Committee of the N.Y.S. Assembly that the bill carrying \$25,000 for operation of the facility was too much in that an institution with only three inmates ought to run on \$10,000. However, by Sept. 1894 there were 35 inmates on hand. The institution was originally constructed for a housing capacity of 150 women. The first Superintendent was Mrs. Mary K. Boyd. Inmates were thoroughly taught in domestic science and all kinds of needle work. Originally, permission to visit with an inmate was granted for any

religious services were held for the inmates. Sunday is now a day when the greatest numbers of family members visit the inmates.

Throughout the years, there have been many changes. The greatest building program occurred during the early 1930's when seven new buildings were added at a cost of \$1,500,000. Presently, plans are under way for the construction of an additional 30 million annex which will include dormitories, an educational building, food service building and power house.

Recently an historic marker was placed near the administration building just south of the main gate. This site was selected for historic designation through the Orleans County Community Pride Grant by Mrs. Edith Anderson, Historian for the Town of Albion. It is most appropriately placed this month as it is the Centennial for Albion having been selected as the location for the Western House of Refuge, known today as the Albion Correctional Facility.