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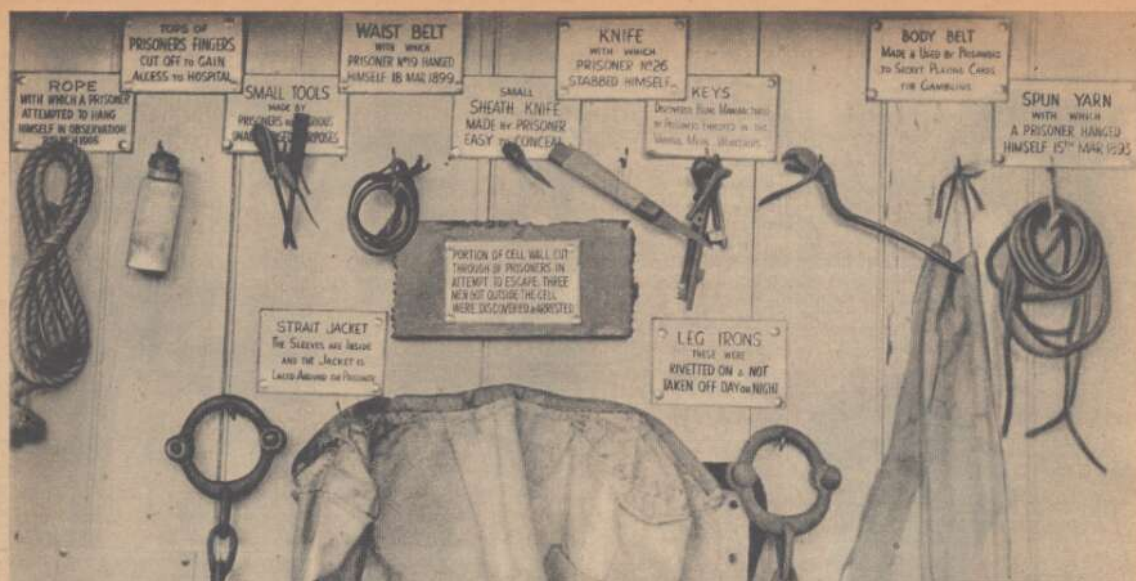
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Australia's St. Helena

Men dragged out their lives in leg-irons,
carried marks of the lash to the grave, in
this Queensland hell-hole of the Pacific

ON the island of St. Helena, in Moreton Bay, five miles from the mouth of the Brisbane River, stand the ruins of Queensland's first permanent gaol buildings. Deserted now and crumbling into ruins, it is a place of sombre memories, one of Brisbane's few remaining links with the convict days. In January 1868, 140 prisoners, guarded by officers and men of the 50th Regiment, occupied the buildings. From that time grim scenes were witnessed on the island. Desperate from their sufferings numbers of prisoners took their own lives; others cut off fingers to get away from the ceaseless toil. After the convict era the place was used as an ordinary gaol. It was abandoned as a prison in 1932.



Pictures on this page show grim mementoes of an era when men were chained and lashed in Queensland's first permanent penal settlement on St. Helena island.



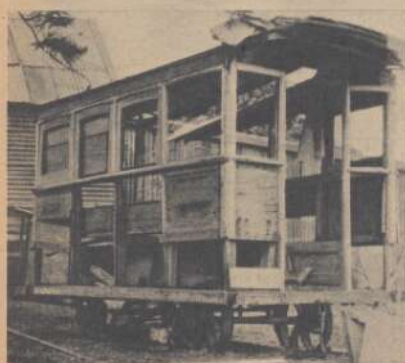
Once a warder's home, this ruin is now entwined with lantana. It was built from slabs of beach sand and cement. Shells can still be seen embedded in the slabs.



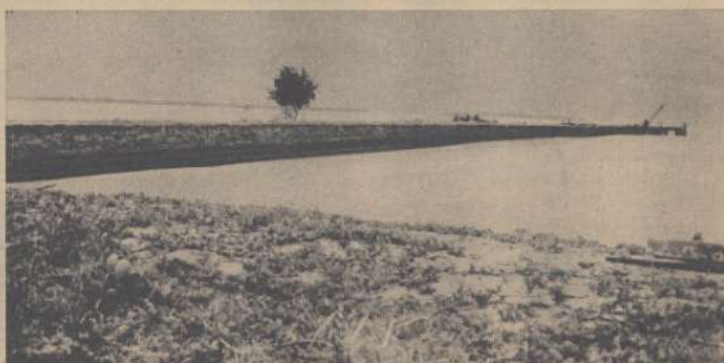
OLD CANNON was fired as an alarm when a prisoner escaped. Last escape was in 1924. Many tried to swim to the mainland through shark-infested waters.



ROOFLESS WALL of the blacksmith shop, where leg-irons were riveted on prisoners' legs. Solitary confinement men were placed in "Black Peter," underground dungeon. For exercise they had to carry a 56lb cannon ball a measure of distance, drop it, pick it up, and carry it again.



BLACK MARIA was horse-drawn tram which took convicts from the wharf to the prison. This is all that remains of old-time model, still standing on wheels.



FIRST SIGHT of their new hell-hole home was obtained by convicts when they landed on this jetty from government ship, and went to the prison on the hill. The causeway on which traces of the old tram lines are still to be seen, was made of rock obtained from the prison quarry.