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Along with some other western states, Idaho shares a story that some town promoters had a choice of institutions that might be available for community development: that in deciding whether to accept a state university or penitentiary, they chose a prison because it provided greater opportunity. Boise often has been credited with that foresight. But in Idaho's case, Boise was given a territorial prison about two decades before consideration was given as to where a state university might be placed. Actually, Idaho did not have a great battle between rival communities that wanted to have a territorial prison. Prior to construction of Idaho's prison, decided upon by Congress rather than by territorial legislative action, a territorial statute authorized use of county jails in Idaho City and Lewiston. But that action was taken only to recognize a need to accommodate territorial prisoners until Congress should provide a permanent solution.

(This information has not been edited.)

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