



## ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING

This main building contains the administrative building. The central corridor accesses the different offices of the administrative personnel as well as the registry, the parlors...

Beyond the security door monitored by the guards is the chapel and access to the detention area. Only the few common criminals with outdoor chores, escorted by guards, cross this space daily. For everyone else, once past the formalities of registration and donning the penitentiary suit, it is the division between the yards and the segregated quarters: places of their prison life.

This space, the ultimate point of the resisters' progression during the insurrection of February 19, 1944, preserves traces of the fight that plays out against the collective escape.

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**Sources :** Amicale des anciens détenus patriotes de la centrale d'Eysses, *L'insurrection d'Eysses*, éditions sociales, 1974. Corinne Jaladieu, *La prison politique sous Vichy. L'exemple des centrales d'Eysses et de Rennes*, L'Harmattan, 2007.

- **The Registry, the Parlors**

Certain inmates arriving at Eysses are taken to the registry to be submitted to anthropometric formalities (fingerprints, photos, peculiar symptoms), to respond to questions for filling out the prison register. Then they must give up their clothing and personal objects in order to don the "criminal suit," composed notably of pants, a jacket, a beret, and a pair of clogs. At the time when the resisters of the Southern Zone arrive en masse at Eysses (at the end of 1943), these formalities are carried out directly in the living areas of the future inmates (the yards) and Director Lassalle authorizes the new arrivals to retain their civil clothing. The inmates meet their visiting relatives in the parlors, located in the east wing of the administrative building. These visits, like letters or packages, are sufficient links with the outside world to enable the inmates to sustain and to consolidate the spirit of solidarity and of resistance.

The failed escape of February 19, 1944 has a national impact. Effectively, Vichy, in a mobilized state, decides on February 26, 1944, to harden the system of detention for the political prisoners of the French penitentiaries, notably by depriving them of packages from their families and limiting them to one sole correspondence with their families per month.

- **Administrative Offices**

The penitentiaries are made up of different types of personnel: surveillance personnel and, contrary to prisons for short sentences, an administrative personnel (director, deputy director, finance administrator, accountant, school master, clerk, prison warden), a specialized staff (doctors, pharmacists, chaplains), and sometimes, a technical staff (foremen).

The majority of the 100-150 staff members at Eysses between 1940 and 1944 are natives of the region. Many are auxiliary (up to 66%), and the turnover is very important from 1940 to 1944, responding to the needs of an administration in crisis. The hunt for "terrorists" entails an inflation of inmates, a deficiency of personnel and a degeneration of working conditions.