

CORNISH JAIL

ONCE IN THE REAR ROOM OF THE HISTORY CENTER,

WHAT WAS THE SELECTMEN'S OFFICE

"An annex to the rear of the Record Building was made in 1895, at the expense of about \$450, furnishing the only "lock-up" belonging to the town. Its chief use has been to accommodate certain moneyless traveling gentry, called tramps, with cheap lodgings, crackers and cheese moistened with Adam's Ale,' all at the expense of the town. Sometimes this institution has its share of patronage but has no constant boarders."

From Child's History of Cornish, p. 236

Record Building was the name given to the Selectmen's Office

Iron Stove

Formerly used in the Jail in the old Selectmen's Building,
now home to the Cornish Historical Society

Stove was restored and given by Jack and Teenie
Rock, 1988

location Meetinghouse





A piece of Cornish history goes on the move

Old town jail cell taken to Fairgrounds

By RUTH ROLLINS
Contributing Writer

CORNISH — Friday morning found a piece of Cornish history on the move.

Members of the Cornish Highway Department used their bucket loader to move parts of the old jail out of the Elmhurst Barn on South Parsonage Road, which is to be renovated.

The two sections were raised very gingerly and carried to the Cornish Fairgrounds for storage.

The jail cells, made of steel and measuring nine feet by 13 feet, were located in the back room of the little old town office on School Street in years past. They were used mostly to house transients or hobos traveling through town and, of course, occasional cases of intoxication.

"I never heard of them holding any real criminal," said former selectman Michael Yatsevitch. "I remember the jail cells were in the office during my first term as selectman (1953-55) and were moved

before I returned to office. People were put in there for safe keeping, but to my knowledge not attended to. The town constable would check to see if they were still there in the morning. It's so different than today with all the safety devices."

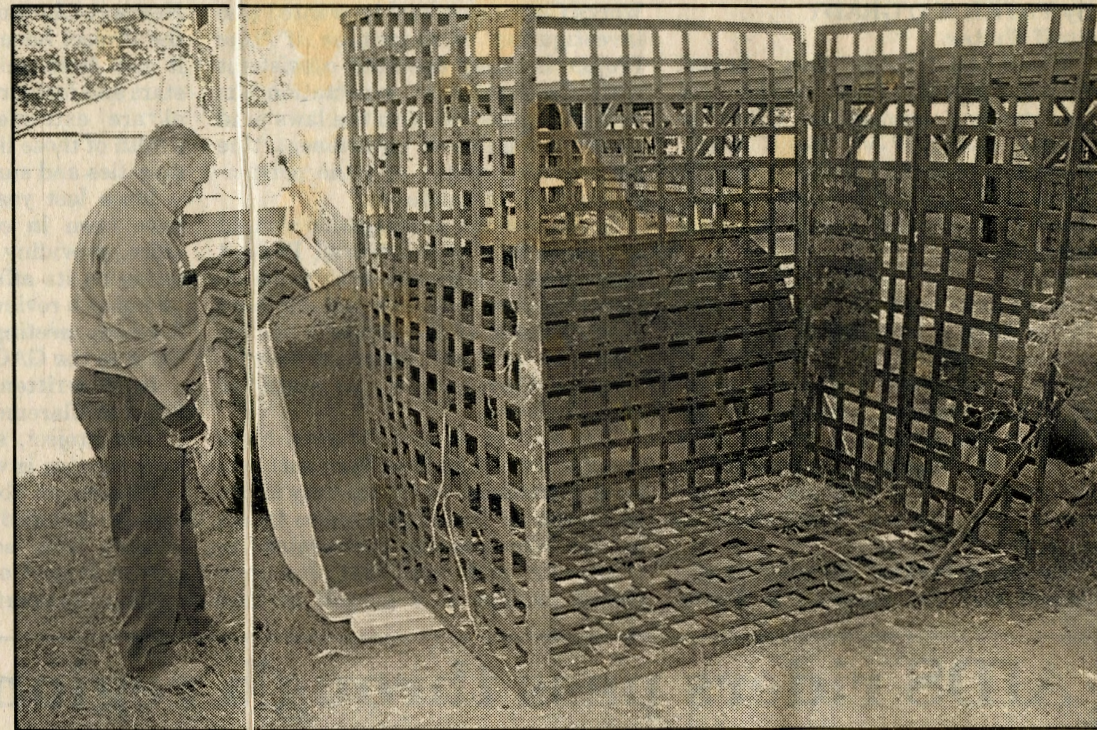
In 1960 the old jail cells were removed to the residence of Robert LaClair, one of the town's history buffs, to make room for a Civil Defense Office.

His brother, Paul LaClair, was civil defense director at that time and in the 1961 town report, he stated that the newly decorated room in the Selectmen's Office made a very nice headquarters and hoped the Civil Defense team could be more active to use it. He planned more drills for evacuating school children, new classes in monitoring and police work and a program on fallout shelters.

When LaClair could no longer house the antique cells, they were taken to the Elmhurst barn for storage.

For residents moving to Cornish in later years, it would be hard to realize anything of that size could have been located in such a small area, which served as the town clerk's office from sometime in the 1970s until the present move to the Town House Road offices at the former Cornish Grange Hall.

Cornish Town Clerks had worked out of their homes, where they housed all important town information and issued licenses at all hours of the day and night prior to the 1970s.



ON THE MOVE — The Cornish Highway Department moved an old jail cell from the Elmhurst barn to the Fairgrounds on Friday. Highway agent Tom Spaulding led the work crew. (Wayne Carter photos)

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