

# Where Was Galesville's First Jail? Records To Now Are Incomplete

## Anyhow, the Query Brings Out History Concerning Once "New Home"

The question above was submitted to The Republican and was referred to its research department. Answers varied; but some of these came from those of two or more generations following the pioneers. At different places they had seen buildings with bars on a window, in their younger years.

Up to the present moment, The Republican is stumped. First thought was to delve into early records of the county board. Only one or two volumes of such have yet been found. About 15 years ago these old records were assembled and nicely bound under the WPA program and stored in a small vacant room in the basement of the courthouse in Whitehall. In recent years this room was demanded for other purposes, and the books were removed and placed elsewhere. Just where, nobody knows.

But so far as this writer knows, and his memory dates back as far as any other person here, Galesville's first jail stood close to the site of the present Maxwell-Davis Lumber Co. office.

Anyhow, one was there back in 1884, when the writer first saw it. No lumber yard was there then—no other building on that side of the street. It served until cells were placed in the city hall, which building was erected in 1896. Whether the cells were added at the same time is not recalled.

### Last Served As Lime House

D. O. Ness, now manager of the Maxwell-Davis Lumber Co., who started with the yards more than 50 years ago under Frank G. Davis, says the jail building, then abandoned for that purpose, had been moved farther up along the Beaver creek bank to provide for extension of shedroom. It was moved again, as the yards extended. Finally, it was bought by the lumber company and used for a lime and cement house.

Eventually, the jail building was torn down. Mr. Ness says it was 10 x 24 in size. Originally it did not have that length. The addition was made when a second room was

desired. Mr. Ness also has a clear recollection of its construction. The walls were of rough 2 x 4 lumber laid flat, making a wall four inches thick, each strip spiked together. It was no easy job to take that wall apart, and the lumber was splintered to pieces before the building was completely razed.

The jail had but one door and one window. The door was secured by a heavy padlock. The window had steel or iron bars. The bars served for one prisoner, name unknown now, to hang himself. He was found dead the next morning, when the marshal or other attendant appeared with the man's breakfast.

### "The New Home"

No record is found as to when the length of the jail was extended. Originally, it probably was not more than 10 x 12 in size. That was as it appeared to the writer when he first saw it. What he recalls in particular was a sign, several feet in length, nailed over the entrance reading, "The New Home." The sign originally was one sent out for the New Home sewing machine, then a popular household piece of equipment, and its attachment to the village hoosegow was in all probability the work of some wag, and that joker may have been Fred Gallup, who was oft up to such capers.

Another instance of the old jail will be recalled by oldsters. A Trempealeau citizen who had imbibed too freely when visiting here, was locked up. After sleeping off his jag, he seemingly did not like his quarters, and proceeded to find a way out. Those four-inch walls baffled him. So did the iron window bars. He solved the problem by wrecking the brick chimney attached to an inner wall near the ceiling, then through the opening, knocked off the brick chimney above the roof, and made his escape.

### When Built Doubtful

It is also probable the jail was built soon after the county seat was moved from Galesville in 1877, and served Galesville and the town of Gale, the village being under township government. Galesville was not set apart from Gale until 1887, and then for some years, until the change in the law, parti-

culated in the town's elections, although town voters had no say in the election of village officers.

It would seem too, there must have been some provision for a county jail when Galesville was the county seat. Could the old records be found, it might come to light that the jail was originally built by the county, and that its location on the flat came about because in the early days there was a hotel, several stores and some small industries in that area. Also, the first mill was built there.

If there is some other who knows more about the old jail, let him go on from here. BAG

# The Old Jail

## The Question Concerning It Brings Reminiscences

The person who propounded the question as to the site of Galesville's first jail started something; and that something is still going the rounds. Now, this writer finds he took in too much territory when he said his memory runs back as far as any other hereabouts. His story brought out recollections of one whose residence in the community dates back 72 years. That one is Carl Carlson, better known as Charlie, now residing with his sister, Augusta, on Southside.

And Charlie has something. A son of Carl John Carlson, he arrived from Sweden at the age of 10. He first visioned Galesville when its business sector was really in the raw. Old stereoscopic views bear him out. There was no Public Square, although the bare, treeless ground was there, unrailed, and about where the bandstand stands now was an open well.

### As Charlie Visioned

There was no Bank of Galesville block, but on the present site was Hi Bartlett's blacksmith shop. Prior to that, Herman Czepull built a sort of shack there in 1874. This housed his first venture in the harness trade in Galesville. But Herman's new frame building stood on the ground now occupied by the Sacia building, with the Green Lantern cafe on the first floor. There was no Grover block in between, but another little shack was on the lot. Where the building occupied by the Red Owl grocery stands was a sizable two story frame building, built by T. T. McAdam, and occupied by the said Tom as a photograph gallery, and by his wife as a milliner. Just a moment's pause here to pay tribute to Tom McAdam, whose camera produced many shots of early Galesville to preserve history. This building burned to the ground soon after young Charlie arrived.

Next to the McAdam building was the Albert Towner residence, emptied of its contents when its nearby neighbor burned; and was to be emptied the second time when the first Grover block, the Herman Czepull building and the then J. A. Hauge building were destroyed by fire years later, but continued there until it made way for the present Wadleigh garage.

On the north side of what is now the Square was a rambling shed-like building owned by George Rall and serving as a machinery depot. Next to it was the old courthouse, and then the town hall, but recently built. Both those buildings are now a part of the Co-Op garage.

Buildings as they faced the street on the west side of the square were pretty much as now, with the Commercial Hotel, now the Gardner Hotel, then only a frame structure, with an overhead porch extending the entire front and a double-decked porch overlooking the lake on the north end. Except for changes in its front, the W. A. Johnston building, now occupied below by Frank Wall and Curtiss Homer, was much the same; and the L. H. Feiring brick building, built jointly by Feiring and the Odd Fellows lodge, in 1879, now occupied by the Gamble Store, was different only in that the sidewalk in front was elevated three feet above the street, with steps ascending and descending at either end. Also the floor has been dropped to sidewalk level. On the corner was the Gilbertson & Myhre store, now a part of the Hammer-Engshagen building. Facing the Square on the south side were the Stone store, stocked by Wilson and several small buildings owned by him. A large hotel on the site of the present Gilbertson Myhre Co. building had but recently burned.

### And Now, That Jail

By this time the reader is wondering what all this has to do with the old jail. It pictures the setting in which the jail stood. According to Charlie Carlson, Galesville's first hoosegow stood very near the southwest corner of what is now the Public Square. As he recalls it, the building was about 12x16 in size. That it was later moved to the Flat to where the Maxwell-Davis Lumber yards extend, and there enlarged, is well known. When the addition was completed, and some wag ornamented the entrance with the "New Home" sign, that may have occasioned the dedication mentioned by Fred Sacia in this paper last week. It seems logical that it was originally built near the the courthouse when Galesville was the county seat, but why out in front, that's a question?

### Stories of the old jail are not yet

at an end. Three other now old-timers but young boys of more than three score years ago, will be heard from next week.

# Old Jail Question Brings Out Story Of Its Dedication

The question about Galesville's first jail has brought out recollections of a number of people since the story published by The Republican last week. Included is one from Fred Sacia. Fred isn't yet in the old, old man class, but he has kept pretty close tab on passing events, and his date on the opening of the old frame jail which stood in the area of the Maxwell-Davis Lumber Co's. yards tallies closely with the story in The Republican, of when it was first observed by the writer in November 1884.

Fred's date runs to early summer in the year 1885, and in a communication to The Republican he cites the eagerness of the citizenry to have the jail occupied, with some first offender to serve in the dedication. Most anyone would do. He hints that had Fred Gallup been the jokester who nalled, "The New Home" sign over the entrance been caught in the act, he'd have been held to account, a kangaroo court rounded up by Frank Davis, Ed Adkins, Aaron Kribs and other pranksters of that time, and the jokester locked up to the delight of the assembled citizenry.

## Fred's Story of 1885

"Lacking documentary evidence, I have, after a series of deductions, fixed the date of the completion of the old jail as of (about) July 10, 1885.

"The jail must have been finished only the morning of that date. Had it been completed the day before, surely someone other than Mr. James Turley should have been its first occupant, for certain of the townsmen were eager for its dedication. As was, Turley was released the next morning to go on with his haying.

"In the telling of this old story, some reader may say I am getting the cart before the horse.

"The little plot of unplanted ground just off the upper end of the present Sacia orchards in Little Tamarack, a long time ago figured in an episode that finally led to when Galesville's local pride and interest triumphed over justice, for that new jail had to be tried out.

"In justice to Mr. James Turley, I shall go on with the story. Grandpa Sacia had cleared the said land along with the rest of the valley, and had been in possession several years when Turley, noting a certain 'witness tree,' slipped in and cut the crop of hay right to the line. Grandpa immediately slipped over town and had Turley arrested. Returning home that evening, he announced that Turley had been lodged in jail, where he belonged. I heard the announcement. Released, Turley went on with his haying; but he felt he was a victim of circumstances.

"As a commentary on those times, if Fred Gallup did 'The New Home' stunt, and had been observed, he certainly would have been the first occupant of the jail. People were funny in those days."