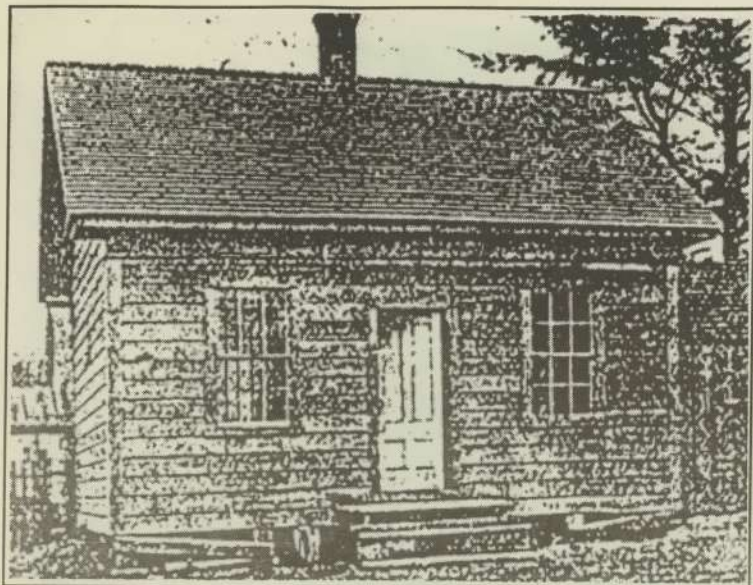




Coos County's First Jail

Coos County's first jail was located in Empire City. A wooden frame structure 18x24 feet, it had walls one foot thick, being constructed of two layers of 1x6 plank, laid flat. The outside was covered with 'rustic'. The door in the center opened into a corridor three feet six inches wide, running the entire length of the building. The two front windows were six feet from the ground and protected only by soft iron bars.

Back of the corridor were two wooden cells, 19'8" x 13' 3", constructed in the same manner as the jail walls. The left cells had two iron doors and the right cell had one door which opened into the corridor. Each cell had two windows 12x18 inches, about six feet from the floor, grated with iron bars. The floors of the jail and the cells were composed of a double thickness of 1 1/2 inch plank with scantling between them.

Each cell had a bed and stove. There was a water closet, consisting of a hole which opened into a plain vault beneath the floor. There was no ventilation of the closet and the stench became very bad especially when the room was heated from the stove.

An early day comment on the jail was that "a poorer sanitary arrangement could scarcely have been devised! It is a dark and foul smelling hole with no ventilation or light."

According to Commissioner Ross, the building was not moved and was later converted into a home, still stand-

Sheriffs

J.H. FosterApr.-June 1854
C.H. Haskell.....1854-Dec. 1856
W.H. Jackson.....1856-Apr. 1857
John A. Chick.....1857-Dec. 1857
J.S. MacNamara.....1858-July 1860
Stephen Davis.....1860-July 1861
Jod. Burgess (act.).....Aug. 1861
Wm. S. Dryden.....1861-June 1863
I. Hacker.....1863-July 1864
A.J. Moody.....1864-July 1870
C.A. Hanscom.....1870-July 1872
G. W. Sleeper.....1872-Apr. 1873
T. G. Owen.....1873-July 1874
Jos. Ferry.....1874-Apr. 1875
Jay Tuttle.....1875-July 1876
A.G. Aiken.....1876-1879
John Lane.....1880-1894

W.R. Simpson.....1884-July 1885
Isaiah Hacker.....1885-1886
L. Harlocker.....1886-1890
Z. T. Siglin.....1890-1892
R. H. Wider.....1892-1894
W.W. Gage.....1894-1902
Stephen Gallier.....1902-1906
W.W. Gage.....1906-1920
E.P. Ellingsen.....1921-1935(died)
W.W. Gage.....1925-1929(died)
Henry E. Hess.....1929-1935
William F. Howell.....1935-1952
Charles M. Strawn.....1952-1971
Tony Zarbano.....1971-1975
Les D. Miller.....1975-1981
Veral E. Tarno.....1981-1993
Mike Cook.....1993 -Present

ing and is the oldest house in Coos County, having been constructed in 1857. It has had additions, remodels and could scarcely be recognized today. The master bedroom is located where the two cells stood. Ross's father lived in that house until he died. It is located on Latin Street in Empire, painted yellow and has a hedge around it.

A bond proposal for a 103 bed expansion was voted down in the March 12, 1996 election. The 49 bed expansion will proceed since it is state funded.

Coos County Jail —1996

