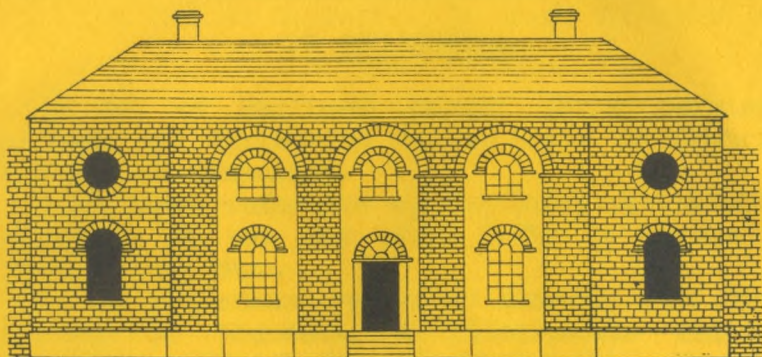


# HOUSE OF CORRECTION



TO TOWN HALL



COWBRIDGE

1998

15p

THE HOUSE OF CORRECTIONOR BRIDEWELL.

1576 An Act of Parliament passed giving permission for a House of Correction to be built at Cowbridge in the County of Glamorgan.

1725 First known reference to the House of Correction in Cowbridge. It was not until 1719 it became law for records to be kept.

1793 In an inspectors report 27 inmates were listed as follows; 10 Vagrants, 4 Illegitimate children, 4 for leaving work, 2 for abandoning their families, 1 Felon, 4 for Breach of Peace, 1 Selling ale without licence and 1 Alien.

1805 Charles Wallace presented plans of the New House of Correction.

Materials to be used:- Stone from Thomas Wyndam's Quarry near West Gate, Cowbridge. Lime from Stalling Down. Pennant Stone for floor paving. Roof Slates from Bangor. Door Cases of oak. Doors 2" thick cased with iron plates. Locks with solid copper wards.

Specification:- Outer walls to be 2ft. thick. Boundry walls to be 2ft. at bottom, 18ins. at top and 16ft. high. The whole to be completed in a good and substantial manner. The old building allowed for taking down and removing.

Builders:- John Davies, Builder of Cardiff. William Williams, Builder of St. Mary Church. George Thomas, Gentleman of Wick. Roger Knighton, Shipwright of Cardiff.

1806 Work commenced on 10th May and was completed on 1st September. The price was £1600 and the builders gave a bond of £3200.

1816 A sample of some crimes and sentences:- Stephen Rees, assault with intent to commit rape, Twelve months hard labour. Catherine Lewis, stealing oatmeal, Ten months. Charles Herbert, stealing copper, One month. The last man to be taken from Cowbridge to Stalling Down to be hanged was Gordon of Gower. Exact date unknown but shortly before the prison was closed.

After being hung prisoners were some times Gibbeted. The Gibbet was on the west side of Cowbridge on the hill going out to Bridgend. It is still known locally as Gibbets Hill.

2.

1829 A large new Prison was built in Swansea and the Cowbridge House of Correction was closed.

#### GUILD HALL.

The Mediaeval Guild Hall stood in the High Street between what is now the Duke of Wellington and the Vale of Glamorgan inns. The Town Cross stood in front of the Guild Hall. (A Brass Cross in the surface of the road marks the position of the Cross.) Behind the Guild Hall was the Market House. Mainly because of it's obstruction to traffic, the Burgees of Cowbridge planned for many years to pull the Guild Hall down. Finding a suitable site for it's replacement was the major problem.

TOWN HALL.

1823 The Reverend John Montgomery Traherne had, at his own expense, plans and estimates drawn up for a New Town Hall.

1824 The Court of Common Council passed a firm resolution stating they would move the Guild Hall, Shambles and Weigh House to some other spot as and when the opportunity arose.

1829 House of Correction closed and put up for sale for £700. Immediate action was taken. The Town Clerk sent out 200 circular letters to "The Gentlemen and Ladies of Fortune" of the district, requesting subscriptions towards purchasing the House of Correction and building a new Town Hall. Mr.C.R.Talbot, M.P. for Glamorgan, was the largest benefactor and was granted the Freedom of the Borough in recognition of his generosity.

1830 The New Town Hall was built. The basic structure of the House of Correction was retained but it was much altered and enlarged. This was carried out under the direction of Isaiah Verity the elder who was made a Freeman of the Borough for his skill and care in this task. The oak casket which contains his Freedom Scroll was made from the timber of the old Guild Hall. On the completion of the new Town Hall the Guild Hall and Cross were removed from the High Street.

1836 The clock which had never worked very well since it's transfer from the Guild Hall was replaced and the Cupola built by the generosity of Dr.Coplestone of Llandough Castle, the then Bishop of Llandaff.

1842 The first Police Station was accomodated in the Town Hall. Sergeant Thomas Thomas was the first Sergeant in Charge.

1848 Easter, the last Quarter Sessions were held in Cowbridge.

1852 The stocks were last used. James Knap was punished for drunkenness. The stocks are rare as they are on wheels and are portable. They are now in the Welsh Folk Museum.

1862 New Police Station opened.

1866 The fixed seats in the Main Hall were removed.

1882 The Magistrates Court moved to the New Court Room at the Police Station.

1895 Town Hall enlarged and altered. The Mayors Parlour constructed.

1902 The Vale Fire Brigade Headquarters were in what is now the kitchen, bar and Lesser Hall area.

1911 Central heating installed.

1927 Cowbridge had it's first motor fire engine and a Fire Alarm Bell was installed in the cupola of the clock.

1974 The Council Chamber and Mayors Parlour were renovated and a well was discovered. It is now a feature of the Mayors Parlour.

1981 A Museum was established in 3 cells of the male prisoners block.

1986 Museum was extend into 3 cells of the female prisoners block.

1988 The caretakers flat which had occupied part of the Prison Warders accommodation and the female prisoners day room, was converted into the Town Clerks office downstairs and Committee rooms upstairs.

The staircase of the flat being removed and the passage into the Council Chamber reopened.

MA.C.  
1988

#### MUSEUM.

- CELL 1. A Prison cell, circa 1806.
- CELL 2. A 100 years of Trade and Commerce.
- CELL 3. Charters, Documents etc..
- CELL 4.
- CELL 5. Archeaology and Cowbridge.
- CELL 6. A 100 years of Domesticity.
- CELL 7. Geology, including local minerals and fossils.
- COUNCIL CHAMBER. A copy of the 1412 Charter, Plans of the House of Correction, A facsimile of the Roman Lion found by G-G.A.T. at Hopyard Meadow, and The Mayors of Cowbridge since 1886.

FRIENDS OF COWBRIDGE & DISTRICT MUSEUM TRUST.

The Friends of Cowbridge & District Museum was established in 1986. Membership is open to all interested persons.

The objects of the Friends are:-

- a) To stimulate interest in the Museum.
- b) To assist in any way the further development of the Museum.
- c) To acquire and present to the Museum items of historical or any other special interest, subject to the approval of the Curator.
- d) To report to the Curator when objects relating to the history of The Vale area become available or are liable to be destroyed.
- e) To help raise money to purchase objects or equipment of special importance and to further the work of the Museum.
- f) To make individual knowledge and skills available to the Museum.

The Friends is to be a charitable body to support the Museum by means of voluntary assistance. There are many ways in which the Friends can assist in the smooth running and expansion of the content of the Museum. This will help to make it a more interesting place to visit and act as a vital link between the Museum and the Community.

---

I apply for membership of the Friends of Cowbridge & District Museum.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

---

Tel No. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature. \_\_\_\_\_

Ordinary Membership @ £3.00

Family Membership @ £5.00

Under 18 @ 50p

Please tick Membership required.