

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC The Old York Gaol

AND/OR COMMON

The Old York Gaol

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Junction of Lindsay Road and U. S. 1A (Maine Street)

__ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

York

__ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

001

STATE

Maine

CODE

23

COUNTY

York

CODE

031

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Town of York (building), First Parish Church of York (land),
Administered by The Old Gaol Museum Committee of The Old York

STREET & NUMBER Improvement Society

Emerson House, Lindsay Road

CITY, TOWN

York

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Maine

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRAR OF DEEDS, ETC Registrar of Deeds, York County

STREET & NUMBER

Highway 111 at Court House

CITY, TOWN

Alfred

STATE

Maine

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE

1965

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress, Division of Prints and Photographs

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Old Gaol at York, Maine is a large, striking, one-and-a-half storey gambrel-roofed structure atop a rocky hillock, and is composed of an original stone cell to which was subsequently added wooden sections. The building was erected in four distinct building programs:

- 1) A single-room stone cell about 1720, now referred to as the "dungeon". Its two-and-a-half foot thick stone walls are lined with vertical and horizontal oak planking on the interior, while the exterior is coursed dressed rubble.
- 2) c. 1736: The kitchen, the wooden dining room (probably originally a parlor), and a part of the cellar, as well as a pair of rooms to the south, which have adjoining corner fireplaces and a panel partition. The latter is constructed in such a way that it hinges at the ceiling so that it can be swung up to convert the two rooms into one larger one. This panel was added in the 1890's when the building was used as a school.
- 3) c. 1763: The gambrel roof and the upper floor with its three additional cells and a central room. The southernmost of the three cells is rather comfortable, and speculation has been that this room was used as a debtor's cell.
- 4) 1799-1806: The second stone cell on the first floor at the former date, as well as the dining room and bedroom on the upper floor, and the small parlor for the gaoler at the latter date in a small addition at the south-east end of the building.

The overall condition of the 76' x 38' gaol is excellent. Its mortised and tenoned post and girt frame supports a broad gambrel roof, covered today with composition shingles, and a modified "salt-box" gable roof over the 1806 southeast addition. Two dormers with shed roofs, on the east side interrupt the gambrel, as well as two large brick chimneys straddling the gambrel's ridge. A third, small, square, brick, chimney services the southeastern 1806 addition.

Aside from the stone section of the building laid in coursed dressed rubble (west wall), the rest is composed of clapboards of varying widths with lapped joints. There are two entrances, both from the east, each doorway there having a plain architrave. Windows throughout the building have wooden double-hung sash, with various muntin patterns, and all are without shutters.

(Continued)

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES c. 1720, 1736, 1763, 1799- BUILDER/ARCHITECT anonymous
1806.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Old Gaol at York Maine is an excellently preserved and rare example of a substantial colonial prison building. Constructed in four distinct building programs between 1720 and 1806, the structure has been altered very little and clearly illustrates the atmosphere of a type of building that few people ever see, particularly the interior.

Each stage of growth can be traced, from the earliest 1720 stone cell to the 1806 parlor for the gaoler. Begun about 1720, The Old Gaol served its incarceration function for over a century-and-a-half, until at least 1879. Although not the first gaol built in Maine, it served all of the Province until 1760, and continued in service to the town for another century. Altering its function to some degree at least, the building served as a schoolhouse during the 1890's, and in 1900, at the instigation of William Dean Howells, came to be used as a museum when a long term lease was obtained by the Gaol Committee of the Old York Improvement Society, and The Society for the Preservation of Historic Landmarks. The Gaol is still administered by this committee, which keeps it excellently maintained and regularly open to the public.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

HABS DATA SHEETS, 1965, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.
 Hugh Morrison, Early American Architecture (New York, 1952).
Architecture Near The Piscatagun (Strawberry Bank, Inc., Portsmouth, N. H. 1964).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1/2

UTM REFERENCES

A	19	365600	4777920	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(See Continuance Sheet)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

James Dillon, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

DATE

6/2/75

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street NW.

TELEPHONE

202-523-5464

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C. 20240

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

Designated: Nov. 24, 1968
 date

Boundary Certified:

George J. ...
2/15/77 date

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

DATE

2/15/75

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

The cellar of the Old York Gaol has been gradually filled in, and no longer exists. Finally, one should note that many of the gaol's original fittings survive, and add to the genuine atmosphere of one of the oldest of the few surviving colonial gaols. Its hinges, pintles, bolts, latches, and locks, are all period reminders of the century and a half when this building served as an important colonial "house of correction."

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

The Old York Gaol and its "yard" occupy about 1/4 to 1/2 acre at the southeast corner of the junction of Maine Street and Lindsay Road in the town of York. Happily, in 1770 the Court of General Sessions of the peace, meeting at York on July 10, moved that a committee be appointed to fix and ascertain the limits of the prison, and pursuant to that motion, a verbal description of the boundary of the gaol soon followed. A copy of the transcript of that definition is enclosed with this form and should serve to define precisely what will now be outlined approximately.

The Old York Gaol surmounts a hillock at the junction already mentioned. The northern limit of the property is U.S. Route 1A, Maine Street. The western limit is Lindsay Road. At the back of the gaol (the south side) near a point in Lindsay Road, is a stone marker, a remnant of an old stone wall. This may be seen in one of the official photographs along with this form, and is the same stone marker mentioned in the boundary specified in 1770. It is from this point that the southern and eastern limits of the property were and are, measured. Behind the gaol is a small woodlot separating it from the next most northerly house on Lindsay Road. East of the property is the York Hospital, the nearest evidence of which is a paved parking lot adjacent to the gaol property. A building stands adjacent to the property at the northern edge of that eastern limit. The barn and the barber shop mentioned in the 1770 description have disappeared from where they once stood near the stone wall on Lindsay Road, and the only other building on the site is a modern wooden outhouse just southeast of the gaol, for the use of the many tourists who visit the gaol each year.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10

PAGE 2

In the Court of General Sessions of the peace Begun & held at York within & for the County of York on the Second Tuesday of July in the Tenth Year of the Kings Reign Annoque Domini 1770

On a Motion made & Seconded Samuel Sewall & David Sewall Esqu^{rs} & M^r. Jotham Moulton are Nominated and Appointed a Committee to fix & Ascertain the Limits of the Prison or Goal Yard in York in Said County & to fix Such Marks & Monuments as to them Shall Seem Necessary for Ascertaining the Same & to make Report of their Proceedings therein to this Court as Soon as may be
Attest Tim.^o Frost Cler

Pursuant to the foregoing direction & Appointment We have Viewed & Measured the Ground Contiguous & Adjoining to the Goal in York & unanimously agree to Repott that the Limits & Bounds of the Said Goal Yard be as follows Viz^t Beginning at the Northerly Corner of the Stone Wall on the South West Side of the Country Road leading from the Court House in York to Wells which Corner is opposite to the Garden of the late Doct.^r Alexander Bulman deceased & from the Corner of the Said Stone Wall to run North Seventy Degrees West by the Nedle Six Rods and Six Links to a Stone Set into the Ground then South Sixty Six degrees West three rods & fifteen Links to a ledge or Flatt Rock Marked with the Letter.Y. then South Thirty Seven Degrees

West Six Rods & Eight Lincks to a Corner of the Stone wall being the Northwest Corner of Lands Now imporved by Moses Safford. Then South Fifty Degrees East by Lands Improved by Said Safford Six Rods & thirteen Links to Lands heretofore Alexander Bulman's Deceased then North East or thereabouts as the Goal Yeard & fence Adjoining thereto now Stands to the Corner of the Stone Wall first Mentioned within which Limits & Bounds are Included the Goal a Small
Barn

(Continued)

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 3

Barn now Improv.^d by the present Goaler Robert Rose
a Barber Shop Standing very near the Corner of the wall
first Mentioned Built Some Years Since by the Said
Robert & a Shed lately Built by the Said Robert Near
to the Flat Rock aforesaid Marked with the Letter.Y.

Samuel Sewall
David Sewall
Jotham Moulton

The foregoing Report being Seen & understood by the
Said Court of General Sessions of the Peace is Accepted &
Approved & It's THEREUPON Ordered That the Bounds
and Limits of the Said Goal Yard be & hereby are Ascertain-
-ed & Established Agreeable to the Report aforesaid & that
the Clerk of this Court forthwith Transmit a Copy hereof
to the Goaler or Keeper of the Said Prison to the end and
Intent the Presoners that are or Shall be in the Custody
of the Said Goaler or his Successors in Said Office May
fully know & be Acquainted therewith--

Attest Tim^o Frost Cler
Copy Exam^d PP
Tim^o Frost Cler