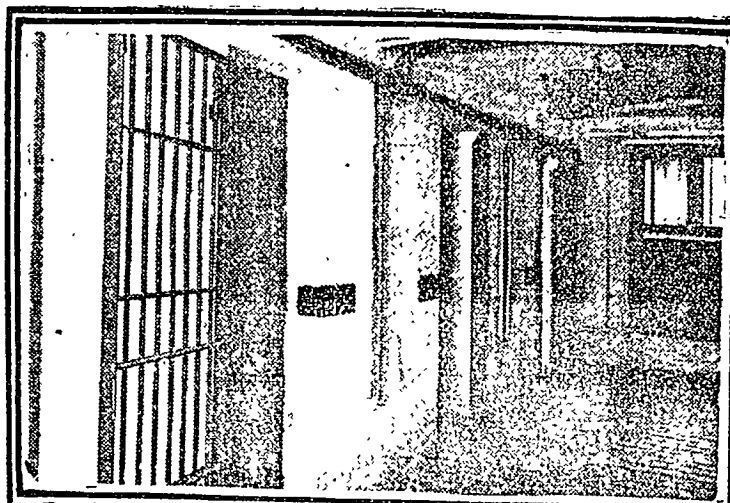
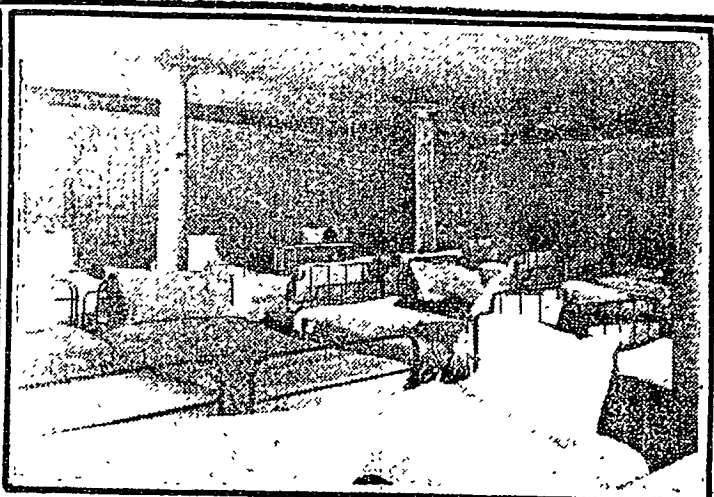


CROWDED POLICE AND COURT QUARTERS AT SOUTH BOSTON AND CHARLESTOWN



DETENTION CELLS, SOUTH BOSTON COURT HOUSE, (NEWLY WHITENASHED SINCE RECENT INVESTIGATIONS)



MAIN DORMITORY, STATION 15. (NOTE CROWDED CONDITION, - TWO PATROLMEN USE EACH BED.)

POLICE HINDERED BY LACK OF ROOM

Station 15 and the South Boston Courthouse Surveved.

Experts Declare New Buildings, Not Remodeling, is the Remedy.

The question of a new or remodeled police station for East Boston has been settled by the appropriation by the city of \$85,000 for a new combination courthouse and police station. Now there remains the problem of a new or a remodeled police station for the Charlestown district, and a new or a remodeled courthouse in South Boston. For both these latter districts the sum of \$35,000 has been appropriated with the understanding that it may be used for remodeling or for rebuilding.

There has been considerable said of late as to the necessity for a new police station in Charlestown and a new courthouse in the South Boston district, but the actual conditions in either place are little known to the general public. A representative of the Globe and a staff photographer visited the buildings in question and made a careful survey from basement to attic.

It may be said at the outset that \$35,000 would practically be wasted if expended in remodeling either of the two buildings in question. In neither Charlestown nor South Boston could the remodeling work be done for that sum, and after the work was complete, there would be a station and a court house, improved over present conditions, but still anything but satisfactory. By those who have looked the two places over it is conceded that remodeling can give only temporary relief and that it would be economy to build new structures.

Never Designed for Its Present Use.

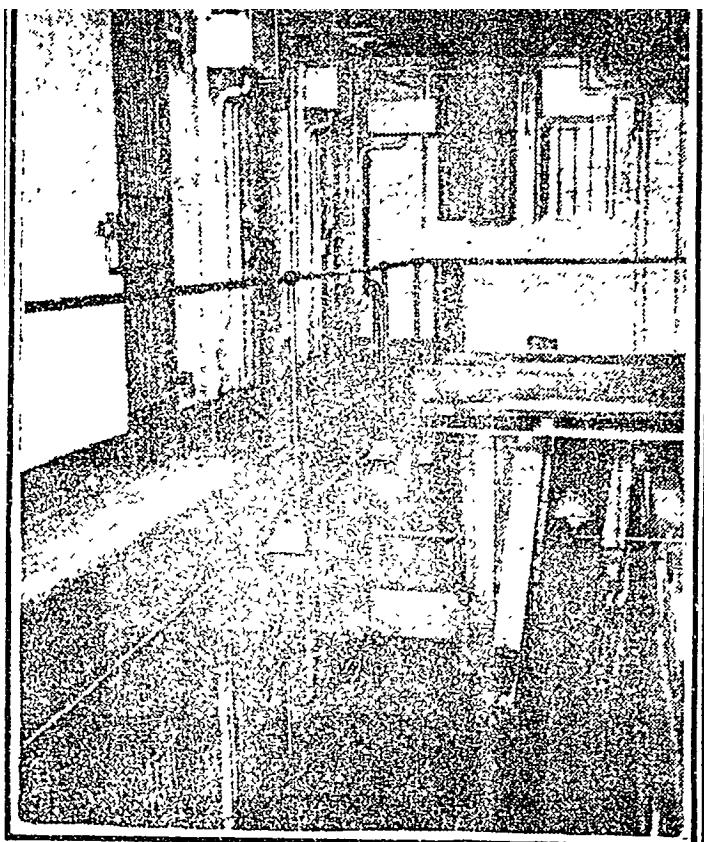
The old city hall building in Charlestown was erected in 1858-9 at a cost of \$111,200 and was something of a building for that time, but it was never intended for a modern police station or a courthouse. What was the old guard room of the police station at the time the building was first constructed is now used as a dormitory, and a miserable one it makes.

Entrance to both the police station and to the court room is by little side doors on Harvard st. That to the police station admits one within the station office. This is somewhat small and cramped. Off from the railed-in portion is the office of the captain, fronting on City sq.

From the main office a door leads to the guard room, a small affair totally inadequate to the demands of the station, in which are quartered, including officers, about 75 men. At times there are as many as 40 patrolmen supposed to assemble in this little space designated as guard room. Small as it is a portion of it has to be used for clothes closets, as there is not sufficient room for them in the dormitory, where the major portion of the closets are built.

Cells Dark and Inadequate.

Coming through the guard room you come to the upper tier of cells, and a steep, narrow stairway leads to the lower tier. There are nine cells to a tier, or 18 in all, small, narrow, dark affairs without ventilation or light, save the illumination from a couple of gas jets outside each face of cells. The



ONE "FACE" OF CELL ROOM, STATION 15. (NOTE THE SINGLE GAS JET TO LIGHT INTERIOR.)

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POLICE HINDERED BY LACK OF ROOM

wardroom and veteran military organizations. The courtroom is on the ground floor, and last Monday there were 23 cases tried there, although the average is about 20 to 25 cases per day.

The dock is small and narrow, at the right of the courtroom and just at the head of the stairway leading to the detention cells in the basement. The women prisoners are not placed in the dock, but are brought into court separately. In the rear of the courtroom is the small and inadequate clerk's office, used also as a consulting room. The office of the judge is off this and is also small.

Down in the basement are the four detention cells, which, since the recent investigation, have been freshly white-washed and cleaned, and now are not so repulsive as they were at that time. One cell is reserved for women, as far as possible. There is a space of about five feet in front of the cell doors, and in this is the furnace for heating the building.

Ingenious Fumigating Device.

This makes the cells extremely hot in winter and there is no ventilation. The cells are very dark and small, of massive brick work, with a bench inside and a rough iron bowl. The only means by which the bowls can be flushed is by one of the court officers turning a faucet outside each cell. There is no means of separating the sexes, and the male prisoners annoy the unfortunate women in the next cell with impunity.

In the two South Boston police stations the cellrooms are in very good condition, and at station 12 Capt Lowery has devised an excellent method of fumigating them after prisoners have occupied the cells. He has had constructed a small wooden door with heavy felting about its edges. This is placed inside the cell, pulled up tightly against the masonry at the door and lashed firmly to the steel bars of the regular door.

It is thus air tight. A quantity of sulphur is burned inside the cell while this false door is in place, and all vermin is thus killed. The scheme is one which could be used with great advantage in practically all of the city police stations.

It is the belief of the court officers that in the changes to be made in the courthouse, whether by remodeling or in a new building, provision should be made for about 40 cells of modern cage construction and have that place a detention room instead of having prisoners kept at the two police stations all night, and brought to court in the morning, as is now the case.

Upper Floor Crowded.

On the upper floor is the juvenile court. It consists of two very small rooms made into one, and while small, it answers its purpose fairly well. Off this the front portion of the second floor is used as a ward room. On the floor above is the headquarters of Washington post 32, G. A. R.; Gettysburg Regt 19, U. V. U.; Maj M. J. O'Connor camp 4, L. S. W. V.; W. R. C. 91 connected with the Grand Army post, and the women's auxiliary of Spanish war veteran's camp.

In the house of engine 1, in the other side of the building, the men are very cramped for space. There is not room for the horses, which have to be placed one behind the other, the stalls being placed tandem fashion, while in the winter the extra horses have to be kept in the open space between the regular stalls. This gives the men almost no opportunity to move around the animals.

The sleeping quarters of the captain and of the district chief are small, and while the windows seem large from the outside because of their arched tops, they will open only a very small way, so that the rooms are extremely hot and stuffy in summer weather.

Ladder Truck Difficulties.

There is a narrow alley between the rear of the court building and that occupied by ladder 5. Part of this has been roofed over and the district chief's wagon stands there. The building occupied by the men of ladder 5 is a two-story affair, fronting on 4th st. Including the horses, the truck is 47 feet 5 inches long, and from the house door to the curb of the opposite sidewalk is only 43 feet 5 inches. In winter, with a lead horse, the truck occupies 56 feet 10 inches.

The problem of getting in or out of quarters is rather a trying one to the driver of the truck, as may readily be imagined under the circumstances, and several times the doorway in the house opposite has suffered in consequence. Then again it is a stiff up grade to Dorchester st and a still further grade up to Broadway, so that the horses have a hard time to get properly started on a run in that direction.

Owing to cramped space the horses of the ladder truck have to be stabled one behind the other, or tandem fashion, as have those of the engine company in the other building. For this reason of lack of space the captain and the lieutenant have to occupy one room, which is very narrow and close and with only one window to it. The men have to sleep over the stable.

The men of the fire department would like to see the court house removed from the present building and have that structure made into a double company house, thus giving the ladder truck a frontage on Dorchester st.

Remodeling Decried.

A couple of experts looked over the building occupied by the South Boston court and engine 1, and in reference to the city appropriation of \$35,000 to remodel or rebuild, said that the sum would not begin to do the remodeling work necessary, and that in fact the building had outlived its usefulness and could never be made entirely satisfactory for courtroom work, especially if the idea of a district detention house was incorporated in the plans.

The building was first used as a courthouse in 1874, and the following year a small wing was put on, as it was even then inadequate for the court work. At the present time the roof is in bad shape, and it is said that to remodel for a court house it would be necessary to strip the building to its four walls; that the walls would have to be shored up and the floors raised, etc.

The experts argue that the walls are not worth the work, and that the money expended in such work would almost be wasted, and certainly could be spent to far better advantage if used toward a larger sum for a new courthouse and detention place.

PRISON BOARD APPROVES.

Secretary Reports South Boston Courthouse and Charlestown Police Station Structures Unfit.

SEC. WARREN F. SPALDING of the Massachusetts prison association submitted a report to the directors yesterday of his visits to the Charlestown and South Boston police stations and courthouses, condemning the present condition of the buildings both in South Boston and Charlestown, and strongly urging the necessity of new structures. The directors adopted a resolution commending the action of the city council in providing for the better treatment of persons arrested for crime in Charlestown and South Boston.

Both structures were declared unfit for use and badly adapted to their work. The board urged that the expenditures proposed by the city council are none too large.

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cells are of massive brick construction with steel grating doors.

Inside each cell is a wooden bench for prisoners to either sit or sleep upon and at the end nearest the door is a rough toilet bowl. There is no automatic means of flushing these, and a patrolman on house duty must visit each tier of cells each half hour to look over the prisoners and to flush the bowls by a chain outside the cell door.

At the extreme end of each cell near the ceiling is a small square opening supposed to provide ventilation, but tests showed that absolutely no air passed through the ducts. The interior of the cells is so dark that a prisoner might strangle from illness without his trouble being visible to the patrolman on guard duty.

Station 15 has anywhere from 50 to 75 prisoners in the cells over a Sunday, and on last June 17 there were 107 arrests made, and only a small proportion mailed out, the remainder being crowded in the 18 cells until the following day.

No Separate Place for Women.

There is no opportunity to separate the women prisoners from the men, which is an extremely objectionable feature in any such place.

Prisoners needing actual restraint are sent at once to the tombs in Boston, where there are proper facilities to care for them, for there is nothing in the nature of a padded cell at station 15 and no provision for the care of an unconscious man. Persons in such a state have to be kept in the guard room until they are recovered sufficiently to be placed in a cell.

The disadvantage of having to take drunk and violent men down the narrow stairs to the lower tier of cells is something to be considered. Inside of six months two patrolmen, while engaged in this task, were tripped up by the prisoners and fell headlong down the stairs with their charges. In both cases the patrolmen and the small bones in the hand broken in the falls.

Stable Space Cramped.

In the stable at the rear of the station there is barely room for the patrol wagon and the ambulance to stand together, and there is not sufficient space for the men to work about them. There are stalls for three horses, of which only two are allowed to the station. As the majority of the arrests come from the Charlestown neck section, it means a two-mile run for the horse with the heavy wagon, and five such runs in a night about put the animal out of commission.

In fact, the horses have been so tired and exhausted some nights that the officer in charge of the station has been compelled to telephone patrolmen at a distance not to make any more arrests unless absolutely compelled to do so.

Another bad feature of the stable is the lack of storage room for hay and grain, and a vacant stall must be used for this purpose.

Many have supposed that Charlestown some time ago about reached its growth from the standpoint of the police this is not so. In 1905 the number of arrests was 43 percent greater than in 1907, and in the first four months of the present year the number of arrests has been 21 percent greater than for the same period of last year, and that represents the dull months of the year, from the police view of things.

Closets Unsanitary.

On the cell room of the station is the toilet room for the men, with entirely insufficient facilities and with only a gas heater to provide the hot water necessary for 75 men and the ordinary cleaning purposes. Next this toilet room is a chamber with five beds, and next that is the room for the matron.

The dormitories are above the cell room, so located that the noise from the drunken prisoners and the odor from the cells and the stable are very trying. One small locker, such as is provided for the men to hang their coats in, is all that the caretaker has in which to store the bedding, etc. for the entire station.

No sunlight or air can reach the bedding in that closet, and at times the sheets are so damp that they stick to the men when they turn in. More than one officer believes his rheumatism was contracted in this station because of this fact. In the dormitory closets, particularly in the fall, shoes are said to rot within 24 hours of being placed there.

In this dormitory are 25 beds placed as closely together as it is possible to squeeze them, and one bed has to do two men. There is no toilet on that floor. The sleeping rooms of the captain, lieutenants, sergeants and of a number more of the patrolmen are in another part of the station, and some of these rooms the sun never shines from one year's end to another.

Courtroom Jumbled Together.

On the second floor in the basement is a storeroom about 18 by 15 feet. In the closets of this room the station records are kept, as there is no other place for them.

The courtroom is also on the second floor of the building and it is very badly crowded and jumbled together. The dock is so small that frequently four and five relays of prisoners must be taken from the cell room of the station up a series of very narrow, crooked stairs. After one batch is tried the prisoners are taken back and locked up in cells to await commitment, and a new batch is taken up to the courtroom. Women are allowed to sit on a bench outside the dock, the bench being large enough for only two persons at a time.

In the rear of the courtroom is the clerk's office, a small affair, which of necessity is used as a consultation room between counsel and prisoners. Everything being said in the clerk's office must be overheard by all in the little room and the police claim that on more than one occasion when a warrant has been granted for the arrest of a man the bail commissioner has been waiting in the station before the man was brought in. That is one objection both the clerk and the police make to present conditions.

Library a Near Neighbor.

On the clerk's office is that of the judge. It is very small and it also has to serve as a juvenile court, as there is no other place in which to try cases. So small is the office that at times all the witnesses in one case cannot get into it. There is only one very small toilet on the floor and everybody must squeeze by that, as it is located in the passage, the doorway to which is so narrow that one must pass through it sideways. In the clerk's office there are no facilities for filing documents.

On the same floor on the City-st front of the building is the Charlestown branch of the Boston public library. It occupies all the front and one portion of the Harvard-st side. On the floor above are the rooms occupied by the evening drawing school classes. This free school uses the entire floor and the story above that is unfinished, except for one or two rooms, which at some time or other were used for school purposes.

Station Declared Ill-Placed.

Almost a glance at the building and its interior construction is sufficient to show that the \$35,000 appropriated by the city for remodeling the police station and police court would not be sufficient. The police say the location is not central enough and that the proper site for a police station is in the neighborhood of Thompson sq.

Building experts who have looked into the matter say the \$25,000 is insufficient to even attempt a remodeling of the present station and courthouse and that it would be a mere waste of money to attempt such a task in the present quarters. They have said it would be economy to build a new modern station in another location rather than to try to patch up the present one, which they assert, can never be made satisfactory for either police or court purposes.

Conditions in South Boston.

The same experts say the South Boston district court and fire headquarters building on Dorchester st, near Broadway, has outlived its usefulness and can never be made satisfactory for its present combined purpose; that remodeling would be as great a waste of money as in Charlestown.

The right side of the courthouse building in South Boston is occupied by engine 1, the left side by the courtroom.