



*The old Branford Town Jail on the Green was built in 1878 and was torn down in 1968.*

*Courtesy Branford Historical Society*

### Pictures of the Past

## Jail eventually went 'to the dogs'

#### **The Branford Town Jail**

The Branford Town Jail stood on the Green to the west and rear of the town hall. The April 3, 1878 issue of the *Branford Opinion* reports that ground was broken on the green for the new jail. It would be 14 by 18 feet, 10-feet high and made of stone with an iron roof containing four cells with one completely dark. Many local men helped build the jail and the expenses totaled \$863.64. The date of 1878 was etched in stone above the door.

The "lock-up," as it was known, was used to house the occasional criminal but

more often a local drunk overnight. In 1896 the newspaper reports that the condition of the jail is a disgrace and prisoners were now housed in the basement of the town hall. In 1916 the old jail was used to keep stray dogs and the people of Montowese Street complained that the noise kept them up at night.

The old jail was used for storage until it was torn down in 1968 to make way for a new west addition to the town hall.

**Jane Peterson Bouley**