

HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT
HANOVER COUNTY COURTHOUSE AND JAIL

HANOVER, VIRGINIA



AUGUST 1, 2004

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
The County Seat	3
Research Design	3
Data Limitations	4
Historical Context	4
Hanover County Courthouse	
Hanover County's Historic Courthouse	51
Architectural Chronology	57
Architectural Description and Analysis	
<i>Exterior</i>	69
<i>Interior</i>	81
Conditions Survey	
<i>Exterior</i>	91
<i>Interior</i>	99
Plumbing / Mechanical / Electrical Systems Survey	103
Hanover County Courthouse Drawings	A1 - A6
Hanover County Jail	
Hanover County's Historic Jails	107
Architectural Chronology	111
Architectural Description and Analysis	
<i>Exterior</i>	115
<i>Interior</i>	121
Conditions Survey	
<i>Exterior</i>	131
<i>Interior</i>	139
Plumbing / Mechanical / Electrical Systems Survey	141
Hanover County Jail Drawings	A7 - A9
Hanover County Courthouse Site and Landscape Assessment	145
Site Plan Plantings and Site Features Key	151
Site Plan	

INTRODUCTION

This report tells the story of two Hanover County buildings—the brick courthouse, believed to have been built c. 1737-41 and the stone jail, built c. 1841. The study was commissioned by the Hanover County Planning Department in consultation with the Historic Courthouse Area Advisory Committee. Funded by a Federal grant through the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, its purpose is to provide a basis for informed decision-making about the future of these buildings and their larger setting.

The report presents separate evaluations of the Courthouse and the Jail, each including a section on historical background, an architectural chronology, an architectural description and analysis, an assessment of overall physical condition and a separate assessment of systems. Following these evaluations of the two buildings is a study of the landscape they share.

The authors wish to thank Anne Geddy Cross, Chair of the Courthouse Advisory Committee for her assistance. Her well-researched chronology became the foundation for our work, and her suggestions concerning certain sources have been helpful. Lois Wickham shared her recollections regarding certain aspects of the building prior to restoration, and offered important additional information in the review of this manuscript. James T. Moore, III made his invaluable collection of photographs available for use in this report. Equally important were the contributions of Carl Lounsbury, architectural historian at Colonial Williamsburg, the undisputed authority on eighteenth century Virginia courthouses and a student of the Hanover buildings in particular. Carl generously opened his files, making all of his research available to us. Ann Andrus, State Grants Coordinator at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, kindly read our draft and suggested useful changes.

The authors are also grateful for the assistance of Hanover County Staff in completing the preparation of this report. County Clerk Frank Hargrove provided access to important court records and made suggestions as to which collections would be helpful in carrying forward the documentary research. Director of Facilities Management David Butler and his staff ensured that we always had access to the building and the necessary ladders for conducting our work, and David also supplied scans of the Moore photographs. In the County Administrator's office, Patricia Mills provided keys to the Jail and Courthouse, and County Planner Claudia Cheely answered our questions on all matters, facilitating varied aspects of the work.

The project team included individuals from Williamsburg, Virginia and Albany, New York. Martha McCartney, an independent scholar with extensive knowledge of Virginia cartography and public records, prepared the historical narrative and compiled the bibliography. All architectural components of the report were completed by the staff of Mesick ■ Cohen ■ Wilson ■ Baker ■ Architects. Partner Jeff Baker conducted the conditions assessments, while Gina Gundersen prepared measured drawings of the buildings and Mark Wenger of the Williamsburg office drafted the architectural chronologies, descriptions, and analyses.

Curtis Wilsey, principal of Quantum Engineering Co., conducted mechanical assessments of both buildings, and Kent Brinkley, at the time an independent landscape architect, and formerly landscape architect at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, prepared the site plan and landscape assessment.

THE COUNTY SEAT

Research Design

Research on the historic Hanover Courthouse complex commenced with the examination of collections of historical maps that are on file at the Library of Virginia, the Library of Congress, the National Archives, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, the Virginia Historical Society, and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's Rockefeller Library. Facsimiles were assembled in chronological order so that subtle changes to the cultural landscape could be noted. Use was made of an index to the plats and surveys that are included in the Virginia Historical Society's collections of private papers, as well as lists of maps, plats and surveys that are on file in the Huntington Library in San Marino, California. Maps reproduced in secondary sources such as *The Official Atlas of the Civil War* and the *American Campaigns of Rochambeau's Army* were utilized as were maps that are on file at the Newberry Library in Chicago.

Records of the Virginia Land Office (commonly referred to as patents and grants) were examined as a means of determining how early land ownership patterns evolved within the immediate vicinity of the courthouse property and how its boundaries changed over time. It should be noted that all of the Virginia Land Office's patents that predate 1683 are copies of original documents that were fragmentary at the time they were transcribed. A search was made for references to the Hanover County seat in British Public Records Office (BPRO) documents. This was done through the examination of Virginia Colonial Records Project survey reports. Collections of private papers were examined at the Library of Virginia and the Virginia Historical Society.

During a series of visits to the Hanover County courthouse, deeds, wills, court orders, chancery records, and plat books were examined as were early-dated county records available on microfilm at the Library of Virginia and at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's Rockefeller Library. Research on the courthouse tract's original owners was carried out in Virginia's official records, first as a colony and then as a state. The search for relevant information included the examination of the *Journals of the House of Burgesses*; the *Journals of the Council of State*; the *Legislative Journals of Council*; the *Executive Journals of Council*; W. W. Hening's *The Statutes At Large of Virginia* and the sequel compiled by Samuel Shepperd; Winfree's *Supplement to Hening's Statutes*; the *Calendar of Virginia State Papers*; and the *Minutes of the Governor's Council and General Court*.

At the Hanover County courthouse, several groups of record books were examined that are not readily available to the public. These included volumes stored for safekeeping in the basement of the courthouse and in the Board of Supervisors offices. Among the less well known records groups examined were Common Law Order Books, Minute Books, Chancery Order Books, Superior Court Order Books, Monthly Court Minutes, and Supervisors Record Books. Some of these sets of records are in such fragile condition that access must be limited.

In 1873 clerk of court Bickerton L. Winston testified about the loss of Hanover County's antebellum court records. He said that after the Union Army's arrival in the area in May 1862, there was "constant anticipation and fear of raids, which were frequently occurring." It was then that Hanover's records were packed up so that they could be sent to Richmond, the Confederate capital, for safekeeping. When the records arrived in Richmond, some were placed in one warehouse and some in another. While the warehouse containing Hanover's boxes of deeds, wills, and other monthly court records burned, the other warehouse, in which Hanover's chancery court records had been placed, did not. For that reason, Hanover County (unlike many of Virginia's other so-called "burned counties") has a wealth of records that provide invaluable information. Included in these chancery records are depositions, affidavits, wills, deeds, plats, fiduciary accounts, and business records.

During the 1940s William R. Cocke III prepared abstracts of many antebellum court cases, but he omitted those of a later date. By doing so, he overlooked some early materials. In 2000, when Frank D. Hargrove Jr. became clerk of the circuit court, he sought state funds that could be used to preserve and microfilm approximately three-

fourths of the chancery records. Thanks to his efforts, the Library of Virginia's Court Records Preservation Program personnel trained two individuals, Anne Cross and Martha Wingfield, as paid curators of the records. Through their efforts, these important documents have been readied for permanent preservation. Mrs. Cross and Mrs. Wingfield also prepared an index of surnames mentioned in the records. It is likely that after Hanover's "Loose Papers" have been microfilmed and they can be subjected to additional scrutiny, other meaningful documents may be found.

Articles and advertisements mentioning the Hanover County seat of government, published in eighteenth century editions of the *Virginia Gazette*, were examined as were collections of private papers, wartime correspondence, and travel journals dating to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and military records generated both officially and unofficially during the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. Published sources and microfilms were accessed in the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's Rockefeller Library, the Williamsburg Regional Library, the Library of Virginia, the Virginia Historical Society, the National Archives, the Library of Congress, and the College of William and Mary's Swem Library. The accounts filed in York County's monthly court by William Parks' executor, John Shelton, establish the date when the Hanover County courthouse became publicly owned property. This occurred more than a decade earlier than has been presumed. Data compiled during the production of a research report on Hanover Tavern and its environs were helpful in discerning land ownership patterns and identifying accounts that make reference to the courthouse complex during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Historical data on the Hanover County courthouse and jail, compiled by Anne Cross, were very useful as were articles published in the Hanover County Historical Society's bulletins. Thanks to the diligence of caring local citizens, much historical information has been gathered and preserved for researchers' use.

Data Limitations

The availability of documentary data on the Hanover County courthouse tract's early history can be characterized as limited but good. The study area lies within territory that originally was part of York County, one of Virginia's eight original shires. Although York County's antebellum court records essentially are intact, those of Hanover County's immediate antecedent, New Kent County, are fragmentary. Likewise, Hanover's records sustained significant losses during the Civil War. It should be noted, however, that the availability of chancery records, real estate tax rolls, processions records, and adjunct sources, such as historical maps and iconographic works, were extremely helpful in understanding the cultural landscape. The conspicuous absence of certain land patents, known to have been issued, demonstrates that a significant number of the colony's land records have been lost or destroyed. This is particularly true of Hanover County, where many early riverfront patents are lacking.

The importance of the Hanover County seat at the time of the American Revolution and the Civil War led to its being mapped by successive generations of military cartographers. By the mid-nineteenth century, some topographic engineers had begun producing relatively sensitive maps. Plats and surveys that are on file in the county courthouse, at the Virginia Historical Society, and the Library of Virginia were found to provide much useful information about land boundaries, ownership trends, and the cultural landscape.

Historical Context

The Evolution of County Courthouse Facilities

In 1634, when the Virginia colony was subdivided into eight shires or counties, Hanover County's first antecedent, Charles River County, was formed. Later it was renamed York County. In 1653, the western portion of York County was split off to form New Kent (Virginia State Library 1965:21). By that date, each county was to have

a local court with justices (or commissioners) of the peace, a sheriff, a clerk, and other lesser functionaries. County justices were authorized to take depositions, settle petty disputes and minor criminal cases, and try civil cases involving less than 10 pounds sterling. The establishment of county courts, which authority increased over time, relieved the General Court of many routine matters and allowed it to handle important cases and function as an appellate body. Burgesses were elected at the county seat, which was at the hub of local life (Craven 1970:166-170).

By the late 1640s it had become traditional for incumbent county justices to recommend prospective appointees. In time, local courts became increasingly competent in handling administrative duties. A significant number of county justices were burgesses and the largest landowners in their own jurisdictions (Billings 1974:232-233). Research has shown that in newly formed counties, private residences (and sometimes, taverns) served as an interim seat of a local court until a publicly sponsored courthouse could be built.

In November 1647 when the Virginia assembly convened, the burgesses, who noted that “divers escapes have been made by prisoners, and more [were] likely to be, for want of sufficient prisons,” decided to set some minimum standards for jail construction. They stipulated that structures would be

. . . accompted sufficient prisons as are built according to the forme of Virginia houses,¹ from which no escape can be made without breaking or forcing some part of the prison house, and that all persons so offending whether debtors or others shall be pursued and adjudged and suffer as in case of felony. . . . The commissioners may have power to appoint such reasonable bounds and limits for the convenience and accommodation of prisoners in the day time . . . and all prisoners soe transgressing and exceeding the said bounds to be kept close and secured in the said prison [Hening 1809-1823:I:340-341].

This mandate compelled county courts to keep prisoners in buildings from which they had little likelihood of escape, but allowed lesser offenders access to an area in which to get some exercise and fresh air.

In September 1667 the assembly decided that county courts had the right to confiscate two acres of land “and noe more” for the erection of churches or courthouses, fairly compensating the landowner for his or her property. However, if such structures were abandoned, the land was to be offered to its previous owner at the price he previously had been paid (Hening 1809-1823:II:261).

In April 1684, the assembly re-enacted the 1647 law requiring “a good strong and substantiall prison, after the form of Virginia housing be built” in each county. However, the new legislation stipulated that the justices of each county have a prison of the required type built before January 1st or face a fine of 5,000 pounds of tobacco. The justices also were to see that a parcel no larger than 80 poles square be laid out adjacent or around each prison, so that prisoners who posted a bond for their own security could get some exercise for their health and refreshment. However, people committed to prison for treason or a felony were not to be allowed out. The boundaries of county prisons were to be marked out and clearly defined in the public record (Hening 1809-1823:III:14-16).

In 1705 when Virginia’s legal code was summarized and refined, county justices were given more explicit instructions about what constituted an adequate prison and facilities for public punishment. This time, the law specified that every county was to build and maintain

. . . one common gaol, or county prison, to be built of brick, or timber, after the manner of Virginia housing; the chimnies and windows to be strongly grated with iron bars, and the doors to be well and strongly made secure with good locks and bars of iron; and . . . (near the court-house) one pillory, whipping-post, and a pair of stocks [Hening 1809-1823:III:267].

County justices who failed to see that a secure prison was built were subject to severe fines and there were heavy penalties for allowing prisoners to escape. Again, local courts were ordered to see that parcels of 10 acres or less were laid out so that prisoners could exercise for the preservation of their health (Hening 1809-1823:III:268).

The justices of newly formed counties had some latitude when it came to building courthouses. In 1726 when the justices of Spotsylvania County were ordered to build a courthouse, they had the right to select an acre of land and build “a decent Court house of such dimensions as to them shall seem necessary.” They also were to build a substantial prison, pillory and stocks nearby (Winfree 1971:277).

In 1748 Virginia’s House of Burgesses again turned their attention to what constituted an adequate courthouse complex. It was agreed that all county courts were to build and maintain a “one good and convenient courthouse of stone, brick, or timber, and one common gaol and county prison, well secured with iron bars, bolts, and locks, and also, one pillory, whipping-post, and stocks.” In localities where land had not been set aside as a courthouse lot, justices were authorized to purchase two acres to accommodate the county’s public buildings. In counties where courthouses already had been built, two acres were to be laid out as a courthouse lot, as long as the acreage did not contain houses, orchards or other conveniences.² However, where a courthouse had been built in an urban setting, the land it was on was deemed sufficient. Each jail was to have a 10 acre parcel for prisoners’ use as an exercise yard (Hening 1809-1823:V:507-508). As time went on, these basic requirements for county courthouse complexes became fixed.

Hanover County’s First Seat of Government

In 1721, Hanover County was formed out of the western part of New Kent. Hanover’s boundaries extended from Mattaquin (Matadequin) Creek on the east, westward beyond what became Louisa County. Its northerly boundary was the Pamunkey River and its northernmost branch, the North Anna. Hanover’s southerly boundary was Henrico County and what eventually became Goochland. Until 1727, Hanover County’s boundaries were coterminous with those of St. Paul’s Parish (Cocke 1967:70, 75, 292; Hening 1809-1823:IV:95).

On May 21, 1721, the House of Burgesses appointed Hanover’s first county justices: Nicholas Meriwether, Nathaniel West, Roger Thompson, John Perkins, John Syme, and David Meriwether. The burgesses then indicated that “the Court for the said County of Hanover [was to] be held at the Plantation of Robert Jennings” and that “the Court House be erected there, and that the Sheriff of the said County be directed to attend the Justices at that Place” (McIlwaine 1925-1945:III:544). Thus, the county’s first courthouse was located upon privately owned property. Jennings, a prominent local citizen, served as Hanover County’s high sheriff throughout 1722. Later, he became a member of the vestry of St. Paul’s Parish. Processioners’ records that date to 1711 reveal that Robert Jennings’ plantation was on the upper side of Mechumps Creek, which originally formed the boundary line between St. Paul’s Parish’s two precincts (Chamberlayne 1940:51, 101, 175).³ Although no documentary records have come to light that reveal the precise location of Jennings’ land, it probably was very close to the acreage formerly owned by John Kimbrough, which bordered the main road and straddled Mechumps Creek. It was on a two acre tract Kimbrough donated that a new church or chapel was built for St. Paul’s Parish around 1704 (Chamberlayne 1940:86).

Several years prior to the time Hanover County was formed, Robert Jennings owned a 6 acre tract at the mouth of Slayden’s (Slaydon’s) Branch, a tributary of Mechumps Creek. Jennings’ acreage included a mill seat, dam, and pond. Surviving Hanover County court records reveal that on April 17, 1716, Robert Jennings sold his 6 acres to Alexander Cocke, who conveyed it to Charles Hudson and William Morris on August 4, 1726. Hudson and Morris retained the title to their “watermill on Mechumps Creek” until November 2, 1734, at which time they sold it to Thomas Prosser of St. Paul’s Parish. The property was then identified as having formerly belonged to Robert Jennings, who in 1716 had conveyed it to Alexander Cocke (Hanover County Court Record Book 1733-1735:136-138). A topographic quadrangle sheet published in 1918 reveals that Slayden’s Branch is located approximately three-quarters of a mile southwest of the community known as Hanover Courthouse (USGS

1918). The mill owned in secession by Robert Jennings, Alexander Cocke, Charles Hudson and William Morris, and ultimately by Thomas Prosser, would have been in that vicinity. As Robert Jennings disposed of his 6-plus acre mill tract in 1716, five years prior to the formation of Hanover County, that portion of his land could *not* have been the site of the first Hanover Courthouse.

On January 9, 1734, Thomas Prosser purchased 150 acres on Mechumps Creek in St. Paul's Parish from Anthony Wadding of nearby St. Martin's Parish. The parcel that changed hands reportedly was adjacent to John Anderson's boundary line (Hanover County Record Book 1733-1735:3-4). Patents, court documents, and processioners records indicate that the Anderson property was contiguous to the acreage that became the final seat of the Hanover County court, whereas a real estate advertisement that appeared in the *Virginia Gazette* suggests strongly that Prosser's new land was relatively close to the mill seat on Slayden's Branch that he had bought from Charles Hudson and William Morris in October 1734 (Nugent 1969-1979:II:353; Hanover County Court Record Book 1733-1735:1).

On August 7, 1735, Thomas Prosser received an ordinary license from the justices of Hanover County. He indicated that he wanted "to keep ordinary at a place called Boucher's *near* Hanover Court House" (Hanover County Court Record Book 1733-1735:296). Three years later, Prosser offered some land for sale. He stated that:

There will be expos'd to Publick Sale, at Hanover Court-house, on the 6th, 7th, and 8th days of September next, the following Tracts of Land . . . 75 acres of Land, within Sight of Hanover Courthouse, and within One Mile of Two Ferries, made by Act of Assembly; one into King William County, and the other into Caroline County, the Roads meeting on the Land: Having one very good Dwelling house. . . Likewise, to be sold with the above Land, or by itself, a very well accustomed Grist-Mill near the adjoining, with Six Acres of Land [Parks, *Virginia Gazette*, August 18, 1738].⁴

Thus, Thomas Prosser quickly disposed of the 6 acre mill tract that he had purchased from Hudson and Morris and half of the land he had bought from Anthony Wadding. It is probable that his ordinary "near Hanover Court House" was in that vicinity.

On January 5, 1734, Peter Marks obtained a license from Hanover County's justices, so that he could "keep an Ordinary *at the Court house*" for a year (Hanover County Court Record Book 1733-1735:9-10). As Marks' ordinary was "at the Court house," it probably was in the immediate vicinity of Robert Jennings' plantation on Mechumps Creek. This raises the possibility that Marks had purchased some or all of Jennings' property. By 1784 Peter Marks' grandson, Thomas, who had come into possession of the plantation that had belonged to his late father, Hastings Marks, sold it to William Pollard. A synopsis of the Marks-Pollard deed, which appears in Hanover County court records dating to 1787, reveals that the property abutted the land of the Thilmans and Wingfields "at [the] Elbow in the Court House road" (Parks 1982:156). Thus, the Marks land was close to, *but not the same as*, the property on which Hanover County's current historic courthouse was built. During the nineteenth century, Pollard descendants still were in possession of land in that area, the farm known as Courtland.

Today's Historic Courthouse Complex

The Site's Early Owners

The Craffords

The land upon which Hanover County's current historic courthouse complex was built appears to have belonged to David Crafford (Crawford) during the fourth quarter of the seventeenth century. Crafford, who moved from James City County to New Kent around 1672, by 1683 had acquired a large tract of land along Assesquin (Assaquint) Run, within what by 1685 was described as St. Peter's Parish of New Kent County. Simultaneously, he also laid claim to 277 acres described only as being in the upper part of New Kent (Nugent 1969-1979:II:231, 253, 293-294).⁵ The latter patent appears to have been Crafford's initial claim to acreage in the vicinity of

Mechumps Creek, part of which became the tract upon which the second Hanover County Courthouse was built.

On May 21, 1691, David Crafford of St. Peter's Parish in New Kent County gave his daughter, Sarah, and her heirs approximately 500 acres of land within what by 1704 had become St. Paul's Parish.⁶ The acreage Sarah received, which was entailed or restricted by the right of inheritance, consisted of a neck of land that bordered the lower side of the Pamunkey River and adjoined the mouth of Herring Gut. When the House of Burgesses convened during May and June 1723, the twice-widowed Sarah Crafford Poindexter Brechin received permission to convey 200 acres of the land her late father, David Crafford, had given her to her nephew, William Meriwether, in exchange for five slaves.⁷ As a result of this transaction, William Meriwether seems to have acquired land near what became Hanover County's permanent seat. The special act passed at the May-June 1723 session of the assembly reveals that William Meriwether was in actual (but not legal) in possession of Mrs. Brechin's land at the time she sought to have the entail doctored. Moreover, as soon as official approval of the sale had been obtained, the acreage became part of Meriwether's entailed landholdings (Winfree 1967:265-267).⁸

In May 1732 the House of Burgesses was called upon to deal with the rest of Mrs. Sarah Crafford Poindexter Brechin's entailed land on Mechumps Creek. This time, her son, John Poindexter, sought the burgesses' consent to sell the acreage that had descended to him from his maternal grandfather, David Crafford. Poindexter noted that the land formerly was in St. Peter's Parish in New Kent County but now lay within the boundaries of St. Paul's Parish in Hanover County. He said that on November 5, 1731, his mother, Sarah Brechin (Bricken), had relinquished her legal interest in the land she had inherited from her father. Poindexter stated that he wanted to dock the entail upon the Crafford acreage so that he could convey it to William Meriwether. The assembly agreed and said that in accord with the law, John Poindexter had announced his intentions to sell his entailed lands and that no one had opposed the sale. The clerk of the assembly noted that "an Exact survey" of the land being transferred to William Meriwether had revealed that it consisted of 414 acres and that the parcel was being entailed to Meriwether (Winfree 1967:379-381). As Sarah Crafford Poindexter Brechin sold 200 acres to William Meriwether in 1723 and John Poindexter conveyed 414 acres to him in 1732, Meriwether came into possession of 614 acres within the large neck of land defined by the confluence of the Pamunkey River. It appears to have extended inland, enveloping what became the site of the Hanover County seat and was contiguous to the property on Mechumps Creek that Meriwether already owned.

The Meriwethers

William Meriwether, who between 1723 and 1732 acquired acreage in the immediate vicinity of what became Hanover Courthouse, was the son of Nicholas Meriwether II of St. Martin's Parish in Hanover County and the grandson of Nicholas Meriwether I of Jamestown, in James City County. In 1704 Nicholas Meriwether II paid quitrent upon 3,327 acres of land in New Kent County. A substantial portion of that acreage probably lay within the borders of what became Hanover County, for members of the Meriwether family owned a great deal of land there during the early eighteenth century. David, Nicholas II, and William Meriwether, whose land abutted Mechumps Creek, laid claim to tracts that bordered both sides of the North and South Anna Rivers and along Indian Creek. By July 1734 Nicholas Meriwether II had possession of approximately 15,000 acres. In December 1734 he bequeathed land to his grandson, Nicholas III, the son of William Meriwether, and to grandson Thomas, the son of Thomas Meriwether. Nicholas II also left to his granddaughter, Judith Littlepage, 459 acres of land in King William County. When making that bequest, he indicated that the land Judith stood to receive was "over against [across from] my son William Meriwether's plantation." This probably was a reference to the acreage that Sarah Crafford Poindexter Brechin and her son, John Poindexter, had sold to William Meriwether in 1723 and 1732 (Hanover County Court Record Book 1733-1735:153-154; Wertebaker 1922:218; Winfree 1967:265-267; Glazebrook 2000-2001:II:68; Meriwether 1964:63).

William Meriwether played an active role in public life. On April 27, 1737, he was designated a commissioner (or justice of the peace) of the county court, which position he held through at least 1740. Like other wealthy and prominent community leaders, he was a vestryman of St. Paul's Parish. Between 1738 and 1740, and from 1744

to 1749 he served as a burgess for Hanover County (McIlwaine and Kennedy 1905-1915:1712-1740:ix; 1752-1758:28; McIlwaine 1925-1945:IV:391; Stanard 1965:110-111, 116-124). It probably was around the time that William Meriwether became a local justice that a decision was made to build a new county courthouse upon his property.

In 1735 Hanover County's incumbent justices of the peace had given some consideration to building a new courthouse. This resulted in a public outcry and on December 10, 1735, a group of Hanover County citizens presented a petition to the House of Burgesses, "complaining that the Justices of that County have without any reasonable cause, ordered a new Court House to be built in the said County and assessed the Inhabitants for the charge thereof, though the present Court House be a good substantial building and capable of serving for that purpose for many years." The burgesses agreed and ordered Hanover's justices to cease action "until all parties be heard before the General Court" (McIlwaine 1925-1945:IV:366).

Some of the Hanover County justices' problems may have been attributable to the longstanding tradition of allowing candidates for office to sell liquor during elections. Sheriff Peter Garland informed the House of Burgesses that on July 23, 1735, he had "used all the means in my Power" to hold an election for Hanover's assembly seats, but that "the people were so tumultuous and riotous that I could not finish the Poll: for which Reason, no Burgesses could be returned [elected] for the County" (McIlwaine and Kennedy 1905-1915:1727-1740:256). On August 23, 1736, when the House of Burgesses ordered the Hanover County sheriff to appear before them, to explain why there had been no election in the county in 1735, he responded that "he believed the Candidates had distributed too much Liquor amongst the People, which made them so disorderly, that he was obliged to give over taking the Poll, but intended, nevertheless, to have proceeded if they had not still grown more tumultuous than before." He said that the colony's Attorney General, who happened to be present, had advised him not to proceed and to report the matter to the assembly. Sheriff Garland named Thomas Prosser and Matthew and Pouncey Anderson as the principal perpetrators. All three men were summoned to appear before the House of Burgesses and the sheriff was ordered to take them into custody. Thomas Prosser and Pouncey Anderson were brought in, but Matthew Anderson (a former burgess) sent word that he was "confined within the bounds of *Hanover prison*" on account of several law suits.⁹ A new writ was issued for an election to be held in Hanover County. Shortly thereafter, William Meriwether and Robert Harris were chosen Hanover County's burgesses (McIlwaine and Kennedy 1905-1915:1727-1740:266; Parks, September 24, 1736).

The issue of building a new county courthouse resurfaced within a matter of months, but there was still some strong opposition. In fact, on June 16, 1737, John Chiswell presented the Executive Council with a petition on behalf of certain "Upper Inhabitants of Hanover County" who asked that "an Order of the [county] Justices for building a New Court house" be disallowed (that is, nullified). After some deliberation, however, the governor and his Council agreed that "There is no reason to Reverse the said Order; it is therefore rejected" (McIlwaine 1925-1945:IV:396). This definitive decision would have given Hanover County's incumbent court justices the right to build a new courthouse upon the site they had selected.

Although a nineteenth century historian's statement that the Hanover County's brick courthouse was built in 1735 has given rise to a deeply rooted tradition, the county's court records for the years 1733-1735, which are extensive, make no reference to plans to build a new seat of government. Thus, it is more likely that courthouse construction got underway during the latter part of 1737 or in 1738, shortly *after* approval was secured from high ranking government officials and William Meriwether had become a burgess and county justice. In 1851 Benson J. Lossing said that the structure was erected in 1740 but failed to reveal the source of his information (Lossing 1976:II:223-224).

A Library of Virginia archivist, John Hopewell, who discovered a document conclusively proving that James Skelton of Hanover County, with the assistance of John Young, was responsible for building the Abingdon Parish Church in Gloucester in ca. 1753-1754, has speculated that Skelton may have been involved in the construction of Hanover Courthouse. Skelton was the county's sheriff in 1738 and was a respected member of the community. He also was a highly skilled builder and in 1749 served as contractor for the reconstructed capitol in Williamsburg. He died in 1754, while working in Gloucester County (*The Rosewellian* [November 1999]:3-4).

On April 6 and 7, 1743, William Meriwether sold his 550 acre tract to William Parks, a printer “late of the City of Williamsburgh.” Included in the Meriwether-Parks transaction were the county courthouse and all of the other improvements associated with the 550 acres (Shelton Oliver Winn Papers, MS 24677). Thus, it is certain that sometime prior to early April 1743, a new courthouse was built upon a 550 acre tract then owned by William Meriwether.¹⁰ The land “*whereon the Court house of the said [Hanover] county is erected*” lay a short distance inland and most likely was part of the Crafford land that William Meriwether purchased from his aunt, Sarah Crafford Poindexter Brechin, and first cousin, John Poindexter, between 1723 and 1732. It adjoined the old road that ran up the lower side of the Pamunkey River and crossed over into Caroline County. As William Meriwether owned property at the mouth of Mechumps Creek and until 1743 was in possession of the courthouse tract, and as his son, Nicholas II, had acreage further inland (two miles from the courthouse), it appears that members of the Meriwether family controlled almost all of the land on both sides of the creek, for a considerable distance inland.

The Parks

William Parks, an English printer from Ludlow, in Shropshire, England, by March 1726 moved to Annapolis, Maryland, where he set up a press and opened a printing office. He presented the Maryland assembly with an offer to print the colony’s legal code and journals. While in Annapolis, Parks styled himself “publick printer to the province.” In 1727 he began publishing the *Maryland Gazette* (Wroth 1926:9-13, 20).

By summer or fall 1730 William Parks, who appears to have been hounded by his creditors in Maryland and England, had moved to Williamsburg, Virginia, where he acquired Lot 48, near the capitol building,¹¹ and established a print shop. Then he asked the Virginia assembly to hire him to print the “collected laws of the colony” and apparently was allowed to do so. In 1736 Parks commenced publishing the *Virginia Gazette*. In 1742 he was authorized by Virginia’s governor and his council to print the “Inspectors Notes and Books.” Perhaps profits from the services Parks performed generated the disposable income that enabled him to expand his entrepreneurial activities. Sometime prior to July 1744 he established a paper mill near Williamsburg, the first in colonial Virginia and the only manufacturing facility of its type south of Pennsylvania (Wroth 1926:14-15, 20-21, 24; McIlwaine and Kennedy 1905-1915:1742-1749:10; Goodwin 1937:8, 15).¹² William Parks, despite his financial shortcomings, apparently was considered a respectable member of the community. He served on juries and occasionally witnessed wills and testified in court cases (York County Orders, Wills, Inventories 18:7, 113, 157, 177, 182, 191, 193, 200, 390, 396, 407-408, 439).

As noted above, in April 1743 William Parks purchased William Meriwether’s 550 acre plantation in Hanover County, the parcel upon which the county courthouse then stood (Shelton Oliver Winn Papers, MS 24677). Despite this acquisition, he continued to reside in Williamsburg. On August 19, 1749, Parks executed an agreement with Sarah Packe (Pack), a Williamsburg widow and storehouse owner from whom he borrowed 500 pounds sterling. Parks secured his debt with a plantation near Williamsburg, his share of the “store goods in Williamsburgh” and certain commodities sent from Williamsburg “to my [Parks’] storehouse at Hanover Courthouse in the time of the smallpox in Williamsburgh.” On July 16, 1750, Mrs. Sarah Packe and the late William Parks’ executor, John Shelton, acknowledged the authenticity of the legal agreement that the two business partners had made in 1749 (York County Deeds, Orders, Wills 5 [1741-1754]:374; Orders, Wills, Inventories 19:310-311, 390; 20:323-326; Deeds, Administrations, Bonds 5:374-375).

In 1748, while William Parks owned the 550 acre courthouse tract, the House of Burgesses enacted legislation specifying that

. . . every county should erect and keep in good Repair a courthouse of stone, brick, or timber and one common Gaol, and county prison, well secured with iron bars, bolts and locks, and also, one pillory, whipping post and stocks’ and where land not already provided for that purpose such court may buy two acres. . .
[As for] *those already erected and established, two acres of the land built upon and adjacent thereto, not having any house, orchard, or other immediate conveniences thereon, shall be and*

remain appropriated to such court-house, and fee simple thereof is hereby declared to be in the court of such county, as aforesaid; but where a courthouse is already built in any city, or town, the land now laid off for the same and other public buildings shall be and held to be sufficient. And if the justices of any county court shall at any time hereafter fail to keep and maintain a good sufficient prison, pillory, and stocks, every member of the court so failing shall forfeit and pay five hundred pounds of tobacco. . . . The justices of every county shall be . . . required to mark and lay out the bounds and rules of their respective county prisons, not exceeding ten acres of land, adjoining to such prison, which marks and bounds shall be recorded [Hening 1809-1823:V:507-508].

Thus, a two acre tract enveloping the courthouse would have been laid out on William Parks' property and an additional parcel (not to exceed 10 acres) would have been demarcated as prison bounds. Local court justices had the right to have a ducking stool built, if deemed necessary (Hening 1808-1823:V:508).

Early in 1750 William Parks became ill aboard ship while enroute to England. He made his will on March 30, 1750, and died on April 1 (Wroth 1926:26-27).¹³ Parks bequeathed all of his real and personal estate to his married daughter, Eleanor Parks Shelton, and her heirs but left nothing to his wife, Eleanor. He asked John Garland of Hanover and Benjamin Waller of Williamsburg to settle his accounts with Mrs. Sarah Packe and named as his executors son-in-law John Shelton of Hanover County and Benjamin Waller and William Prentis of Williamsburg. On June 18, 1750, the will that William Parks made at sea was presented to the justices of York County's monthly court. At that time, John Shelton was named executor and given the right to settle the decedent's estate (York County Wills and Inventories 20 [1745-1759]:183-184).

On December 12, 1750, the widowed Eleanor Parks, who was then in Hanover County, renounced her late husband's will. Doing so would have enabled her to take control of her dower third of his estate, the share to which she was entitled under the law. Afterward, she formally waived her legal interest in her dower share of the decedent's estate (York County Wills and Inventories 20 [1745-1759]:195; Judgments and Orders 1:371).¹⁴ It is uncertain whether William Parks, when making his will, assumed that his widow was adequately provided for without his support or whether he was trying to shield her (and perhaps her personal estate) from his creditors.

In mid-June 1750, when William Parks' will was presented to York County's monthly court, six men were given the task of appraising his personal estate. Any three of the four Hanover County men who were named (Edward Garland, John Dabney, Robert Jennings Jr., and Francis Smith) were ordered to prepare an inventory of the decedent's personal estate in Hanover. That compilation and Parks' executor's accounts shed a considerable amount of light upon how the decedent used the Hanover County acreage he bought from William Meriwether in 1743. Parks had placed an overseer, Harry (Henry) Farmer, upon his property, which included the county courthouse, and he appears to have used his acreage as a working plantation. As previously noted, Parks' 1749 legal agreement with Mrs. Sarah Packe reveals that he had a storehouse upon his property at the Hanover County seat, whereas the inventory of his estate suggests strongly that he had a blacksmith's shop there (York County Deed Book 5 [1741-1754]:374; Wills and Inventories 20 [1745-1759]:255; Judgments, Orders 1:320). It is unclear whether overseer Harry Farmer occupied a dwelling upon William Parks' property or resided upon some land of his own while tending to Parks' acreage, slaves and livestock.

The Transition from Private to Public Property

Legal records associated with the settlement of William Parks' estate reveal that he was indebted to numerous people, including some British merchants. During 1751 executor John Shelton distributed funds to several creditors who presented legitimate claims against his late father-in-law's estate. In 1752 he received payment from some of Parks' debtors. The estate accounts he presented to the justices of York County's monthly court on April 25, 1754, reveal how he went about raising the rest of the funds he needed to settle the decedent's debts. Shelton indicated that in 1752 he had sold Hanover Courthouse to the county's justices for 660.5.0 pounds sterling.¹⁵ *Thus, it is certain that the public building in which the county court convened regularly was*

*privately owned until 1752.*¹⁶ Simultaneously, Shelton, as executor, collected a year's back rent for Hanover Courthouse. As late as June 17, 1754, Shelton was still in the process of settling William Parks' estate (York County Judgments and Orders 1752-1754:15, 493; Wills and Inventories 20 [1745-1759]:323-326; Bruton Parish Register, May 5, 1751; McIlwaine 1924-1945:V:15, 173, 288, 297; VI:695, 697).

The County Seat: A Focal Point of Local Life

From the time of William Parks' death until October 1764 John Shelton and his wife, Eleanor, Parks' daughter, were in physical and then legal possession of the decedent's 550 acre tract in Hanover County, *with the exception of the acreage upon which the county courthouse had been built.* Although Eleanor Parks Shelton had inherited a legal interest in all of her late father's property, ultimately the Hanover County tract had to be sold to satisfy his debts to some English merchants. It was then that John Shelton purchased the residue of the Parks plantation, borrowing a substantial portion of his purchase money. By autumn 1764, however, he realized that he had little hope of repaying his debt and sold what was known as the courthouse plantation to Paul Thilman (Thilman) Sr., who by November 1763 had moved to Hanover County. On October 15, 1764, the sale was finalized. The Shelton-Thilman deed recounts William Parks' purchase of the property from William Meriwether in April 1743 (Shelton Oliver Winn Papers, MS 24677).

According to family tradition, John Shelton was operating a tavern in his home within the village known as Hanover Courthouse, when Patrick Henry and his family moved in. Some writers believe that it was while Henry was working as a barkeep in the Shelton tavern that he learned many invaluable lessons about human nature, knowledge he put to good use when he became a practicing attorney and orator.¹⁷ In April 1760 Patrick Henry registered his law license in the court of Goochland County and began practicing law. Almost immediately, his fortunes began to improve. His reputation was enhanced by his winning a law suit in December 1763, the famous case that became known as "The Parson's Cause." In July 1774 he and John Syme served as delegates when Hanover County's resolutions were formulated in preparation for the Virginia Convention (English 1988:9-13; Meade 1957:77, 83; Wester 1818:7; Morgan 1907:36, 39).

Significantly, John Shelton appears to have been the first person to operate a tavern upon the 550 acre tract that also contained the Hanover County courthouse built during William Meriwether's ownership. As previously noted, William Parks, who purchased the property in 1743, by 1749 had a storehouse on his acreage, a building that probably was located near the main road and the courthouse. Parks, like Meriwether, also was in possession of the land upon which the courthouse had been built. However, there is no indication that Parks (or his agents) ever owned or operated a tavern on his 550 acres. Therefore, the building that John Shelton utilized as a tavern probably was a dwelling that was located upon the late William Parks' property, or was a structure that he erected specifically for that purpose.¹⁸ Paul Thilman Sr. and his successors carried on the tradition of keeping a tavern at the county seat. Several also served as Hanover County's jailers and/or provided food and firewood to those who were incarcerated.

On November 26, 1764, a candidate who had lost an election accused Paul Thilman Sr. of serving alcoholic beverages to voters contrary to law. The county justices, however, decided that "Paul Thilman, the Person employed by the sitting Member to prepare his Entertainment at the Election," had not broken any laws. Later, when plaintiff appealed the case to the House of Burgesses, it was decided that "the sitting Member expressly ordered that the said Thilman not to give the Freeholders any liquor until after the closing the Poll; and that none of them had any Liquor except some few who insisted on it, and paid for it themselves" (McIlwaine and Kennedy 1905-1915:1761-1765:272). Thus, Thilman was exonerated. Patrick Henry, whose ledger indicates that he handled some legal matters for Thilman during 1767, identified him as "Paul Thillman, Ordinary keeper at hanr. court. House" (Henry, Ledger 1762-1770:67). The allegations against Thilman in November 1764 suggest strongly that he commenced conducting business as a tavern-keeper as soon as he took possession of the courthouse tract. The Hanover County courthouse complex and Paul Thilman Sr.'s tavern at the county seat would have been at the hub of community activity.

A Frenchman who visited Virginia in 1780 claimed that whenever county courts were in session, people spent the night “Carousing and Drinking,” with a beverage in one hand and a box and dice in the other. In fact, as early as 1752 Virginia’s governor urged the colony’s burgesses “to discourage Gaming, Swearing, and immoderate Drinking, particularly at the County Courts” (Carson 1965b:21, 33; Isaac 1982:94-95, 100). Because of their important role in citizens’ lives, Virginia’s county seats usually were identified by those who made maps of Virginia (Fry and Jefferson 1754; Henry 1770).

On court days, county justices heard civil suits, held preliminary hearings in criminal cases, issued tavern licenses, naturalized new citizens, and decided whether freed slaves should be allowed to remain in the county. They also were responsible for the probate of wills and seeing that local roads were kept in usable condition. According to legislation enacted during the first part of the eighteenth century, the men who served as county justices were required to take an oath of office in which they promised “to do equal right to the poor and to the rich” and to use their “cunning, wit and power” in accord with the law. Local court justices were empowered to try all cases except capital crimes and outlawry and a solitary justice of the peace could hear civil cases that involved less than 20 shillings (Carson 1965b:21; 1979:15; Porter 1947:109, 163).

Several announcements that appeared in the *Virginia Gazette* throughout the 1770s indicate that Paul Thilman Sr. served as keeper of the Hanover County jail. It is likely that his constant presence at the county seat and the availability of his tavern’s kitchen and enslaved workers to do chores (such as cooking, cleaning, and cutting firewood) would have made it relatively easy for him to tend to prisoners’ needs. A notice that Thilman placed in the March 12, 1772, edition of the *Virginia Gazette* stated that there had been “Committed to the county jail of Hanover County on the 20th of December last, a young negro man who says his name is Billy.” Thilman said that “The owner is desired to take him away” (Purdie and Dixon, March 12, 1772). Several months later, Thilman announced that there had been “Committed to the gaol of Hanover County the 22nd of August, [a] negro man George.” He asked George’s owner to remove him and pay for the cost of his care (Rind, October 8, 1772). In December 1774 jailer Paul Thilman Sr. informed the public that there was “committed to the Hanover County jail, [a] negro man James.” Again, Thilman called upon James’s owner to remove him promptly and pay for his board (Purdie and Dixon, December 22, 1774).

Revolutionary War Activity at the Hanover County Seat

Throughout the war, British prisoners were detained at the Hanover County seat and a letter Thomas Durie sent to George Washington on November 27, 1781, reveals that even after the surrender at Yorktown, they were still being sent there for detention. Some were confined in the county jail and jailor Paul Thilman Sr. was reimbursed for providing them with food and shelter. Between August and October 1781 he reportedly had furnished firewood for 20 prisoners in the jail and the 21 people who guarded them. Another 25 British prisoners also were furnished with wood, perhaps individuals who were not considered dangerous and may have been allowed to live close by (Fitzpatrick 1915:III:1997; Palmer 1968:II:577, 580, 601, 623; Abercrombie and Slatten 1992:40).¹⁹

Narratives written by several men reveal that there was much military activity at the Hanover County seat during the Revolutionary War, especially at the conflict’s beginning and end. In May 1775 John Lord Dunmore wrote a letter in which he stated that Patrick Henry “and a Number of deluded Followers have taken up Arms, chosen their Officers, and styling themselves an Independent Company have marched out of their County [Hanover], encamped, and put themselves in a Posture of War.” Within a year, Hanover County had a company of minutemen. On March 19, 1775, George Washington noted in his diary that he had “Dined at Roys at the Bolling green and lodged at Hanor. Court House.” Then, on March 28th he “Left Richmond, Dined at H.C.H.” May 1st found Washington back at Hanover Courthouse, where he “took a late breakfast.” Then, On May 28th, he reportedly “Left Richmond. Dined at Hanover Ct. Hou. & Lodged at Roys at the Bolling Green.” As Paul Thilman Sr.’s was the only tavern in the Hanover County seat, it may be safely assumed that he served as Washington’s host. George Washington returned on April 25, 1786, and “lodged at H.C.H.” (McIlwaine 1925-1945:III:665; Jackson and Twohig 1978:314, 316).²⁰

On January 12, 1781, when Virginia Governor Thomas Jefferson corresponded with Baron von Steuben, he indicated that General George Weedon was “now at Hanover Courthouse.” He added that he had referred Colonel Loyaute to Weedon and given him the authority to make use of certain unmounted cannon and howitzers that were at Newcastle Town. Then, on March 5, 1781, Jefferson sent word to Weedon that it was “utterly out of our Power to send the Arms and Cartouch Boxes to Hanover Courthouse which you desire.” On April 8, 1781, General Weedon informed Governor Jefferson that he had “lodged orders at Hanover court for the Commanding Officers who are directed to cross James River at Sandy Point and join General Muhlenburg” (Boyd 1950:IV:344; V:20, 28, 70, 383).

The Marquis de Lafayette was another military officer who considered Hanover Courthouse a convenient and important location. In late spring, British General Charles Lord Cornwallis and his army of seasoned veterans arrived in Petersburg, where they joined forces with General Phillips’ men, who temporarily were under the command of Benedict Arnold. This union of forces created a British Army that was 7,000 strong. Cornwallis left Petersburg, crossed the James and set out in pursuit of Lafayette, who had retreated toward Fredericksburg while awaiting reinforcements. The savvy young French general embarked upon a strategy of paralleling the British Army’s movements while staying just out of reach. On April 25, 1781, Lafayette sent word to Governor Jefferson that very soon he expected to be at Bowling Green or Hanover Courthouse, where he “shall be Happy to Hear from your Excellency.” He added a request “that this journey of Mine Be kept Secret and if possible that Some Horse Could Be at Hanover Court House for our Escort.” Three days later, Lafayette, who had reached Hanover Courthouse, wrote General Nathaniel Green that he expected the Continental Detachment to arrive within a few hours. He added that “The enemy are more than double our force in Regular Troops” and said added that their control of the waterways gave them a tremendous advantage (Idzerda 1977:68-69).

On May 28, 1781, Lafayette, who was then at Gold Mine Creek on the South Anna River, informed Jefferson that the British were in Hanover County. He said that “Their Dragoons were this morning near Hanover Court House and (unless this is a feint) I expect the Army will be there this evening.” Lafayette added that he planned to move his own troops toward Anderson Bridge at nightfall. It was a wise decision. On May 29th he sent word to General Anthony Wayne that “The first object of the Enemy has been to fight & disperse us; the second to destroy our Stores, the third, which they think themselves better able to effect, will be to push for Fredericksburg.” He reported that the British had gone to Bottoms Bridge the preceding night and had crossed the bridge, but that “Their D’gons [dragoons] came as far as Hanover C. House this Morning.” The young French general added that, “A few hours may perhaps decide a great deal in the fate of this warr.” He made very similar statements to General George Weedon (Idzerda 1977:141-142). On May 30, 1781, James Hunter of the State Gun Manufactory in Fredericksburg confirmed Lafayette’s report. He said that “Tarleton with 500 Horse is reported to have been at Hanover Court yesterday, and last night within five miles of Bowling Green on his way to distroy [sic] my works. If that be true (Fredericksburg is thereby nearly deserted) he may do the mischief tonight” (Boyd 1950:IV:344; V:70, 383, 554; VI:21, 41). British Lieutenant-Colonel Banastre Tarleton, when reporting on the same incidents, said that “After passing James river at Westover, I moved to Hanover court house, and crossed South Anna.” He added that the Marquis de Lafayette “marched to the left, keeping above at the distance of about twenty miles.” A British military map shows the routes over which Cornwallis and Tarleton moved their men, whereas one made by Major Michael Captaine, a cartographer in Rochambeau’s Army, traces the route the French followed to and from Annapolis, Maryland (Tarleton 1968:348-349; Anonymous [British Army] 1782; Captaine 1781-1782).

Dr. Robert Honyman of Hanover County said that on May 30th he received intelligence

. . . of the Enemy’s Horse coming up to Hanover Court House, I set off & got home in the evening, finding the people everywhere dreadfully alarmed and sending off their families, Horses & most valuable effects. The Enemy’s horse yesterday came up to Hanover court House pursuing several of our light horse; but went down toward Hanover town in the evening.

He added that “The Enemies horse this morning advanced about Hanover Court house several miles, & took some light horse prisoners.” On May 31 he said that “The main body of the British were this morning at Hanover Court house; then piquets & horse several miles advanced upwards. The horse scouring the country in every direction for many miles around the Court house” (Honyman, May 30 and 31, 1781).

Despite pressure from the British, Lafayette continued to consider the Hanover County seat a strategically important supply point. On July 3, 1781, he sent word to Colonel Davies that many of his men were in dire need of shoes and firearms. He asked that “a thousand stands [be] at Hanover Court House with waggons ready to remove them at the shortest warning word, for such militia as may be called in from the adjacent Counties” (Lafayette 1928:24).

In mid-August 1781 General George Washington, who learned that the French fleet was sailing toward the Chesapeake Bay, began moving his army and that of the Comte de Rochambeau southward to Virginia. Some of Rochambeau’s men marched to Annapolis, Maryland, where they boarded ships that transported them to the Williamsburg area. However, the French Army’s horses and wagons were sent overland. Victor Collot and Louis-Alexander Berthier, assistant quartermasters-general, escorted the fifteen hundred horses, eight hundred oxen, and two hundred wagons from Annapolis to Williamsburg, pausing at suitable sites along the way. Because Berthier expected to follow the same itinerary when returning north, he made detailed sketches of the campsites his men had used along the way and described the neighborhoods in which some of them were located (McCartney 1997:228-229).

On September 21, 1781, the French wagon train set out from Annapolis on a 219-mile-long trip that took them through Hanover Courthouse. According to Berthier, when the wagon train approached the Hanover County seat, it crossed the Pamunkey River on a wooden bridge, a span he later identified as Page’s (or Littlepage’s) Bridge.²¹ He said that, having crossed the bridge, “You pass a crossroads, then another road on the left. You come to a triple fork. Take the left. The first road on the right leads to a plantation, and the second to the mountains. You pass a house on the left and arrive at Hanover Courthouse.” He indicated that upon leaving Hanover Courthouse, “You go downhill, cross a brook [Mechumps Creek] on two wooden bridges, then climb again.²² You pass a house on the left and enter the woods. You pass a house on the right and another on the left.” In July 1782 when the French returned to Annapolis, they retraced their course (Rice and Brown 1972:II:100-101, 107; Anonymous 1782).

In 1781, General George Washington’s cartographer, Simeon DeWitt, made a series of topographically sensitive maps that laid out the itinerary used by the French. On Map Number 124 Q, which is entitled “From Head Lynche’s Ordinary across the Pamunkey River to some distance past Hanover Courthouse,” DeWitt showed Littlepage’s Bridge, which crossed the Pamunkey, linking Caroline and Hanover Counties. From that point the main road (the forerunner of Route 301) traced a bend in the river and then headed almost due south toward an intersection just northwest of Hanover Courthouse. The road then veered to the southeast and continued on through the courthouse community. It passed close to the east side of a nameless branch of Mechumps Creek and then descended an incline and crossed two prongs of a small fork in the creek. Using a cartographer’s symbol, DeWitt identified the approximate location of the Hanover Courthouse and a “Lodge,” on the northeast side of the main road and upper side of Mechumps Creek, in all likelihood, Paul Thilman Sr.’s tavern at Hanover Courthouse (DeWitt 1781) (Figure 1). Eight years later, mapmaker Christopher Colles (1789) also showed the location of the courthouse, the so-called triple fork in the road, and the two bridges that crossed Mechumps Creek (Figure 2).

When the DeWitt map is compared with U.S.G.S. topographic quadrangle sheets published in 1918 and 1991, it is evident that that portion of modern Route 301 which crosses the Pamunkey at the site of Littlepage’s Bridge and then heads southward toward Hanover Courthouse, has been widened, straightened, and shifted in an easterly direction (U.S.G.S. 1918, 1991). Moreover, the 1781 DeWitt map reveals that on the way to Hanover Courthouse, Route 301’s forerunner intersected with the forerunner of State Route 646, with which combined as it headed east, and it joined a third road, the forerunner of Route 54. Together, these roads formed the complex

intersection that Berthier had described as “a triple fork.” To the east of the junction of the forerunners of Routes 646, 54, and 301 was St. Paul’s Church. The main road then took a southeasterly turn as it continued on toward the Hanover County seat, following the track of State Route 646, the upper part of what later became known as St. Paul’s Church Road. Thus, at the time of the American Revolution, the main road that passed through the Hanover County seat was located to the west of the right-of-way now occupied by modern Route 301. It followed the upper part of St. Paul’s Church Road, and then paralleled the branch of Mechumps Creek that runs behind Hanover Tavern. This road pattern seems to have persisted until the mid-nineteenth century.

Dr. Johann David Schoepf, who in 1784 was traveling southeast and crossed the Pamunkey River near Hanover Courthouse, said that “On the banks of the Pamunkey lay several French metal cannon, 24-pounders, with their names inscribed. . . . They had been brought there by water in the year 1781 as a precautionary measure, and being found by some of Cornwallis’s troops, were spiked and rolled into the river, out of which they are just now being fetched again” (Schoepf 1911:II:46). In 1788 Colonel Meriwether was ordered to take the “public cannon near the [Hanover] Court House” to Taylor’s Ferry, where they were to be stored “upon the best terms” that could be found. Later in the year Captain Samuel Eddins offered to purchase the “disabled brass cannon at Hanover Court House” (Palmer 1968:III:75-76, 191, 289, 341; McIlwaine 1912:V:17, 189). It was too late, for they already had been moved.

After the surrender at Yorktown, Rochambeau’s army wintered-over in Williamsburg and other parts of Hampton Roads. Then, when summer came, they set out for Annapolis, retracing the itinerary the wagon trains had used the previous fall. The army’s four divisions departed from Williamsburg on four successive days. Thus, each of their camp sites was occupied four times in rapid succession. All of these French soldiers would have passed through Hanover Courthouse.

Francis John, the Marquis de Chastellux, who left Williamsburg three months ahead of the army’s wagon train, reached the Hanover County seat on April 9, 1782. He commented that he stopped at Hanover Tavern, which provided accommodations to “the people who assemble every three months at the courthouse, either for private or public business.” He added that “Care has been taken to place the courthouse in the center of the county” (Chastellux 1963:II:381).

Dr. Johann David Schoepf, a German physician, who came to America in 1779 as surgeon to the Hessians in the British Army, kept a journal of his travels in Virginia during 1783 and 1784. He observed that “As once it was the custom in Europe, [for] the furtherance of piety, to place tap house near remote churches and chapels, so in America, to the advantagement of justice, the courthouse is never without a like convenience.” Thus, near the seat of Virginia’s county courts could be found one or more taverns (Schoepf 1911:35, 46-47). This was a practical arrangement, for county courts convened regularly and the justices were supposed to meet daily (except Sundays) until they had heard all of the cases on their agenda. Thus, their sessions typically lasted for several days. Dr. Schoepf said that courthouses usually were placed in the middle of the county. He added that, “If there is no little town already there, the court-house is built in the woods nonetheless” (Schoepf 1911:47).

George Washington frequently visited Hanover Courthouse and patronized Paul Thilman Sr.’s tavern. On November 22, 1784, he encountered the Marquis de Lafayette, Captain Granchau and Chevalier Caraman and on May 1, 1785, he “Took a late breakfast at Hanover C. house” and then continued on his way. Washington returned to the area on April 25, 1786, “and lodged at Hanover Court House.” On April 26th he noted that he “Left Hanover Court Ho. about Sun rise: breakfasted at Norvals tavern and reached Richmond about Noon” (Jackson and Twohig 1978:132, 317). Undoubtedly, many prominent individuals visited the community at Hanover Courthouse. In 1787 when Thomas Jefferson made a map of Virginia, he identified the seat of Hanover County (Jefferson 1787).

From the late 1780s on, stage coaches passed through Hanover Courthouse, plying a well traveled route that linked northern Virginia with Richmond and Williamsburg. The main north-south road ran through Fredericksburg, Bowling Green, and Hanover Courthouse, following part of what became Route 301. Maps made Bishop James

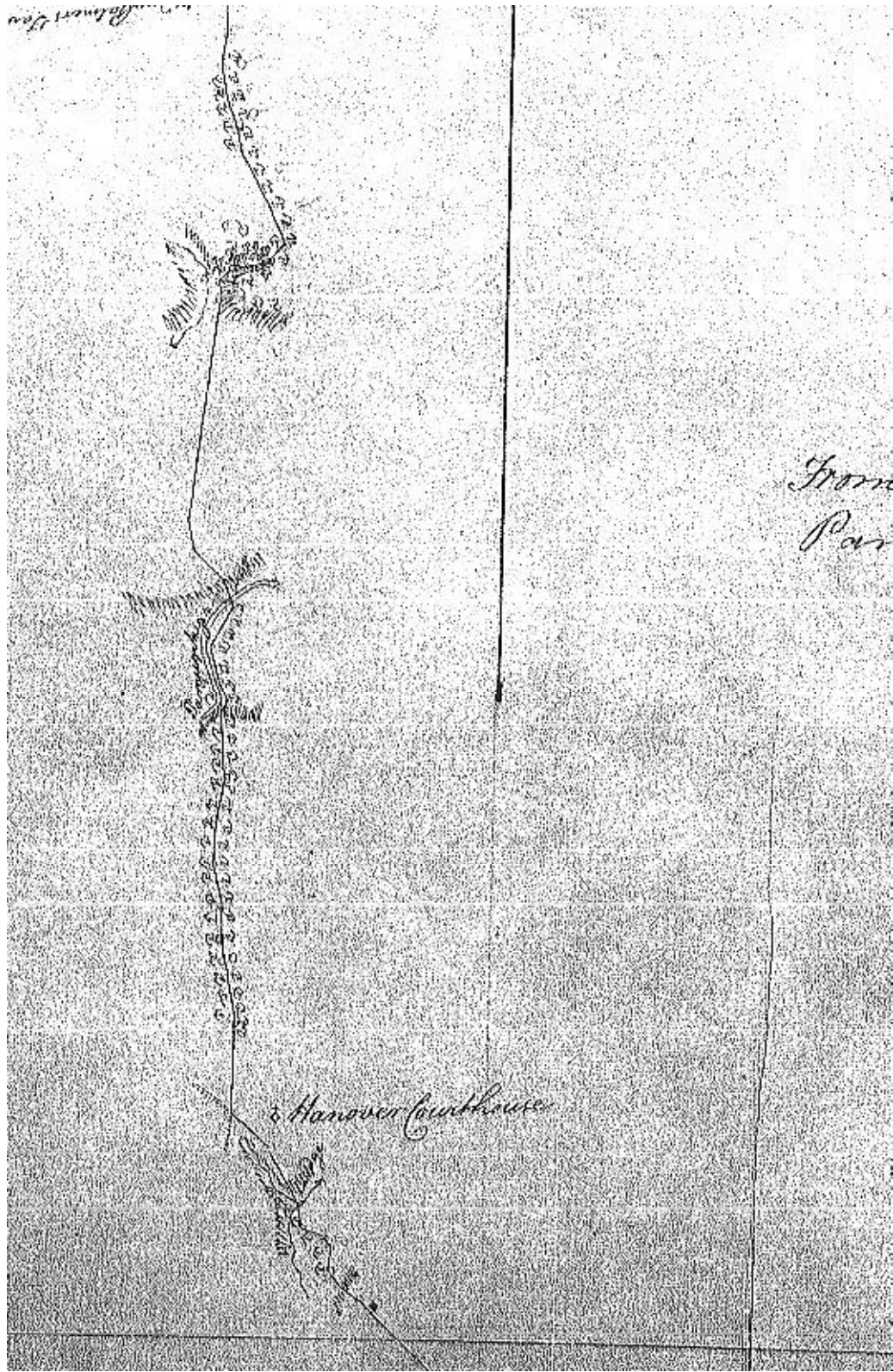


Figure 1: No. 124 Q, From Head Lynch's Ordinary across the Pamunkey River to some distance past Hanover Court House (DeWitt 1781). Note the location of the courthouse.

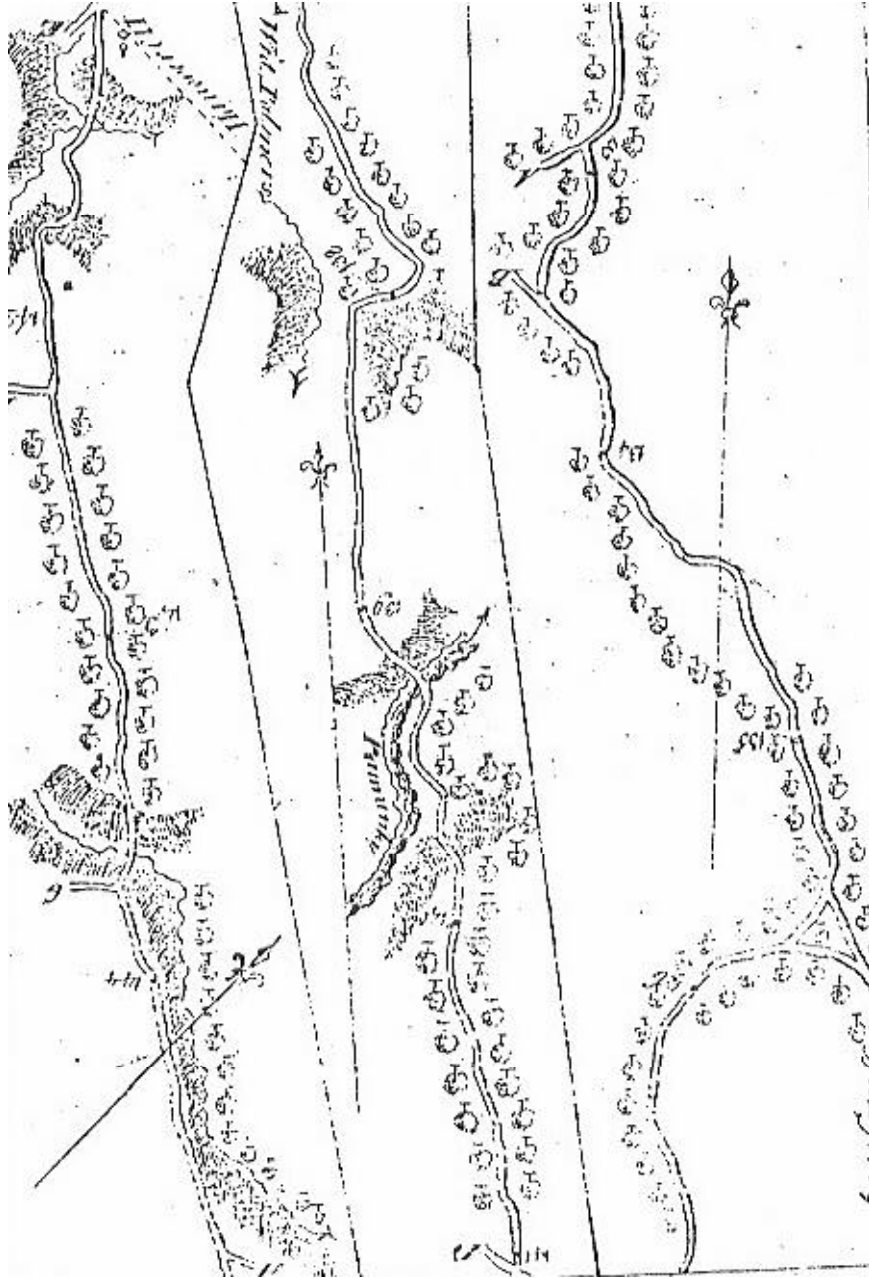


Figure 2: From Annapolis to Hanover & Newcastle (Colles 1789). The courthouse location is depicted symbolically in the upper left-hand corner of Colles' map.

Madison (1807) and his successors John Wood (1820) and Herman Boye (1826) indicate that the forerunner of the River Road (State Route 605, which intersected with Route 301) also was an important stage road that ran to New Kent County and Williamsburg. It was over these routes that local mail was carried (Figure 3).

In 1790 some of Hanover County's citizens proposed that a new county courthouse, prison, and other public buildings be erected upon the land of James Crews, near the community that became known as Negro Foot. They claimed that the old county seat was inconveniently located, but those opposed to moving the courthouse prevailed, for they contended that "the place where the present Court house of the County stands has long been known to be a convenient situation for the resort not only of the people of the county but of the adjacent counties." They added that "the County has lately been at the expense of upwards of 300 pounds *for building a prison and repairing the Courthouse*" (Hanover County Legislative Petitions 1794).²³ On March 6, 1795, while Paul Thilman Jr. of Hanover Tavern was the keeper of the Hanover County jail, it caught fire and burned. The blaze claimed the life of a runaway slave named Taylor, who belonged to Henry Lawrence of Louisa County. Afterward, Lawrence sought reimbursement for the loss of his slave, whom the law considered valuable personal property (Hanover County Legislative Petitions 1796). It is uncertain how the fire got started. However, there are recorded instances of slaves' starting fires when attempting to escape from jail.

The Impact of Gabriel's Insurrection Upon the Hanover County Seat

During the spring and summer of 1800 some of Paul Thilman Jr.'s slaves became involved in a carefully planned slave revolt that became known as Gabriel's Insurrection, an uprising that included African-Americans from the city of Richmond and several surrounding counties. Court testimony gathered after the rebellion was suppressed reveals much about the participants and their course of action. The attack, which objective was seizing control of Richmond, was supposed to occur on August 30, 1800, a time when the country was at peace, the militia was disbanded, and no patrollers were expected to be on duty. The authorities were expecting trouble, for Governor James Monroe heard rumors that there was to be an attack on the capital. As a precautionary measure, he summoned the state militia and placed stationary patrols along the river, to watch for signs of trouble. When Gabriel (or Gabriel Prosser) and his followers arrived, the militia was ready to oppose them. Ultimately, the ringleaders were captured, taken into custody, and put on trial in Henrico and Caroline Counties (Palmer 1968:IX:147, 164-165, 168; Executive Letterbooks 1800).

Justice Thomas White later reported to the governor that when two enslaved black men, taken into custody upon suspicion of murder, were brought before him, he "thought it expedient to commit them to the Jail of Hanover for further trial." One man was acquitted, but the other was detained and sentenced to death (Palmer 1968:IX:172-174).

Problems persisted even after Gabriel had been captured and hanged. In November 1800 jailer Paul Thilman Jr. was quoted as saying:

That on Thursday and Friday last the negroes in the neighbourhood of Hanover Court house and at that place were very riotous & ungovernable; that on Saturday between eleven & twelve o'clock *two fellows who were condemned to death & confined in the Gaol of Hanover were, it is presumed, set at liberty by the Slaves, because they were handcuffed & chained to the floor. Being loosed at liberty they attacked one of the Guards who was taking to them their provision & knocked him down, stomped him and effected their escape although a number of negroes were present & pretended to follow them; that other circumstances which occurred furnish cause of belief that they were assisted to escape; such as a great number visiting the Gaol under the pretence of preaching &c the week before* [Executive Letterbooks 1800].

One of Thilman's slaves, a man named Glasgow, was put on trial in Hanover County on May 5, 1802, found guilty, and sentenced to death. Ultimately the court decided that he should be transported out of the state (Palmer 1968:IX:298-299).

Hanover's Next Jailer

After the death of Paul Thilman Jr., his widow, Barbara, married Captain Bathurst Jones, an experienced ordinary-keeper. He took over her late husband's responsibilities as jailer and as keeper of the Hanover County jail. On September 26, 1809, Jones was authorized to receive compensation as Hanover County's jailer; however, by early 1810 he apparently was dead (Slatten 1987:I:6).²⁴

A Clerk's Office

On April 22, 1811, when a Superior Court of Law was held for Hanover at the courthouse, the justices commented upon the fact that there was no office for the clerk of court. They passed a resolution stating that "No office being provided for the clerk of this court, the court thinks fit to permit the said clerk to keep the records and papers belonging to this court *in the house in which the office of the county court is kept*" (Hanover County Superior Court Order Book [April 1809-January 1827]:31).

The Requirements for Jails

When the General Assembly convened in 1818-1819, several laws were passed that affected Virginia's county justices. Local court justices were ordered to see that county jails were equipped with iron bars, bolts, and locks, and that a pillory, whipping post, and stocks were on hand. Chancery courts also were created to serve several contiguous counties, grouped together into districts (Ritchie 1819:197, 250-251). It is probable that Hanover County's jail was adequately equipped with what the law required. In at least one Virginia county, a small committee of men was appointed to inspect the jail and to determine whether it met the minimum standards and to make sure that the prison's boundaries had been marked (Gloucester County Minutes 1820-1821:23).

The County Seat during the 1830s

The accounts of two men who visited the Hanover County seat in 1835 and 1836 shed some light upon what the courthouse community was like. Joseph Martin commented that "This place contains a C.H. [courthouse], Clerk's office, and 2 jails,²⁵ a very large and commodious tavern with various other houses, 1 mercantile store, 1 blacksmith, and 1 boot and shoemaker." He estimated that the community had a population of 50, including one attorney. Martin said that stagecoach passengers were "in the habit of getting out and visiting the courthouse and lingering away the passing hours in reminiscences of the master spirits that rendered them illustrious" (Martin 1836:186-187).

Circus owner P.T. Barnam and his traveling troupe were scheduled to entertain at Hanover Courthouse in autumn 1836, but were unable to perform because of heavy rain. Barnam later recounted his experience there and his encounter with the keeper of Hanover Tavern, then in the possession of John D. Andrews (Barnam 1882:86-87).

A report on Hanover County's old and new jails, inspected in April 1841 by three court appointed commissioners, sheds some light upon how both structures were used and what they were like. This inspection was done in accord with Virginia law, which required county jails to meet certain specifications. The jail inspectors noted that Hanover County's new jail was used for the confinement of criminals and runaways and that it consisted of two rooms that measured 14 feet by 14 feet with a 5 ½ foot passage between them. Each room had two windows secured by iron bars, but at the time the inspection was done, they lacked shutters or window glass to keep out the cold. There was a stove in each room to provide prisoners with warmth. The inspectors noted that the new jail was sufficiently well ventilated in summer and that shutters and glass could be added in winter to keep it warm enough. The doors to the new jail were secured by bars and bolts. In 1841 the room of the old jail that was being used as a debtors prison measured 16 feet by 20 feet. In the opinion of the building's inspectors, it was insecure. They said that it had been whitewashed and that there was sufficient ventilation. They indicated that the jailor (as far as they could ascertain) had been providing prisoners with good food and adequate heat and that

the bed and bedding in the debtors “apartment” was clean. The inspectors said that there had been “no intemperate use of liquors” in the jail and that no slaves had been confined there, contrary to law (Hanover Historical Society 1979:1).

Henry Howe, who included a summary history of each Virginia county in his *Historical Collections of Virginia*, included an engraving that depicts the Hanover Courthouse. To the southeast of the front of the building was a small structure, perhaps the old county jail that in 1841 was being used as a debtors prison. In the preface to his book, Howe said that “Early in the year 1843 we commenced traveling over the state, collecting materials and taking sketches for illustrations.” He added that “The drawings for the numerous engravings were, with a few exceptions only, taken by us on the spot” (Howe 1856:iii-iv, 298) (Figure 4). Therefore, it is probable that Howe’s rendering was relatively accurate.

In 1844, J. R. M’Culloch published a “gazetteer” in which he noted that Hanover Courthouse was one of the communities he had visited. He described it as the “capitol of Hanover County” and said it was located about 20 miles north of Richmond and was situated “on elevated ground near Pamunkey river.” He noted that the county seat “contains a courthouse, jail, a store and about seventy inhabitants” (M’Culloch 1844:106).

The Hanover County Seat in 1851

In 1851 when Benson J. Lossing passed through the Hanover County seat, he was coming from the direction of Bowling Green. He crossed the Pamunkey and

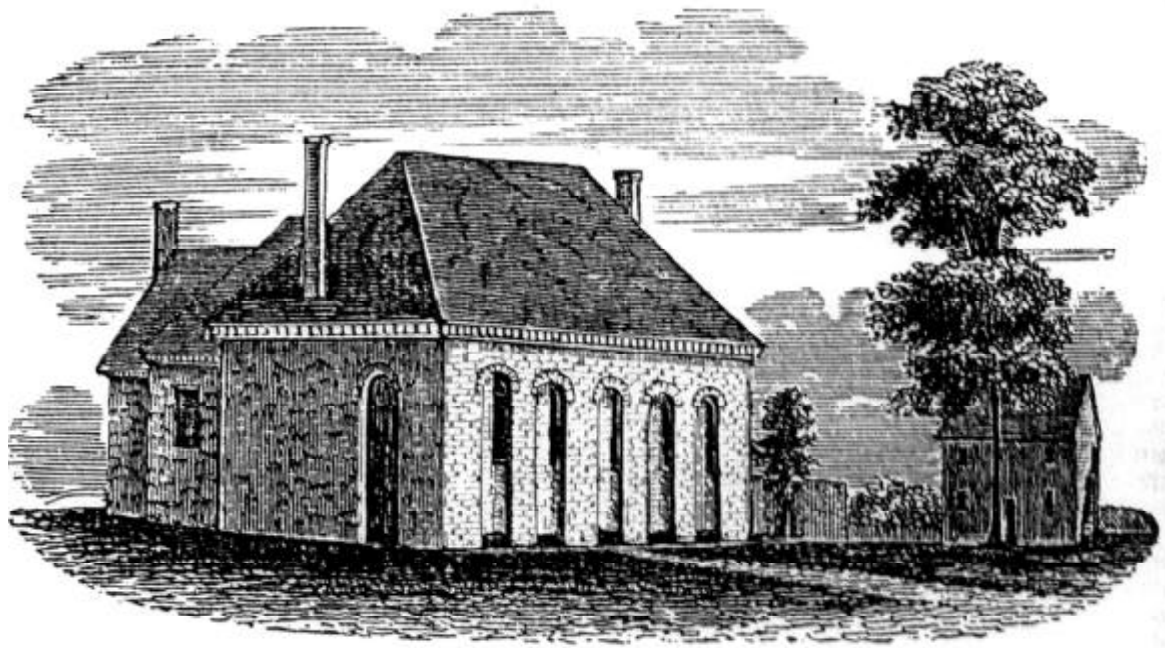
. . . at a mile distant, reached Hanover Court House in time for a late dinner. The village now consists of the ancient court-house and tavern, one brick house, several negro huts, and a jail. *The latter was in process of reconstruction when I was there, having been burned a few months previously.* . . . The old tavern where I lodged, and the court-house, are objects of much interest.

Lossing then lapsed into a lengthy discussion of Patrick Henry’s oratorical prowess and quoting Wirt, called him the “American Demosthenes.” In a footnote, Lossing said that the Marquis de Chastellux had visited Hanover Tavern. He quoted from the marquis’s account and added that it was “Under shelter of the ‘covered portico’ mentioned by the marquis, [that] I sketched the court-house. *The general external appearance of the house, I was informed, has been changed.*”¹ Benson J. Lossing’s text includes a small engraving of Hanover Courthouse, a view he said was “from the front, looking east-northeast.” He added that “*The building is of imported brick, with an arcade in front. It was erected in 1740. An addition has been made to the rear, wherein is the judge’s bench*” (Lossing 1976:II:223-224) (Figure 5). Robert Alonzo Brock, who kept a diary between 1858 and 1861, included crude sketches of several buildings, one of which was Hanover Courthouse (Brock 1858-1861) (Figure 6). He, too, showed that the courthouse had an extension to the rear.

The Civil War Comes to Hanover Courthouse

In late summer 1861 the Confederate Army’s forces in Virginia were concentrated in the northern part of the state, leaving eastern Virginia open to an enemy advance. The James-York Peninsula was especially vulnerable, for at its terminus was Fort Monroe, the Union Army stronghold. The readily navigable York River and its headwaters opened the upper peninsula to invasion. The result was that Hanover County, like much of eastern Virginia, became part of a theater of war (Catton 1960:75). The Hanover County seat, which was close to Richmond, was located on a railroad that served the Confederacy as a supply line. Therefore, from time to time throughout the war, it became a focal point of military activity.

During late May 1862 military activity in the region was especially intense. On May 27th there was fighting in the immediate vicinity of Hanover Courthouse. In early June the fighting still continued on the outskirts of Richmond.



The old Court-House, Hanover.

Figure 4: Hanover Courthouse as depicted in Henry Howe's narrative (Howe 1856).

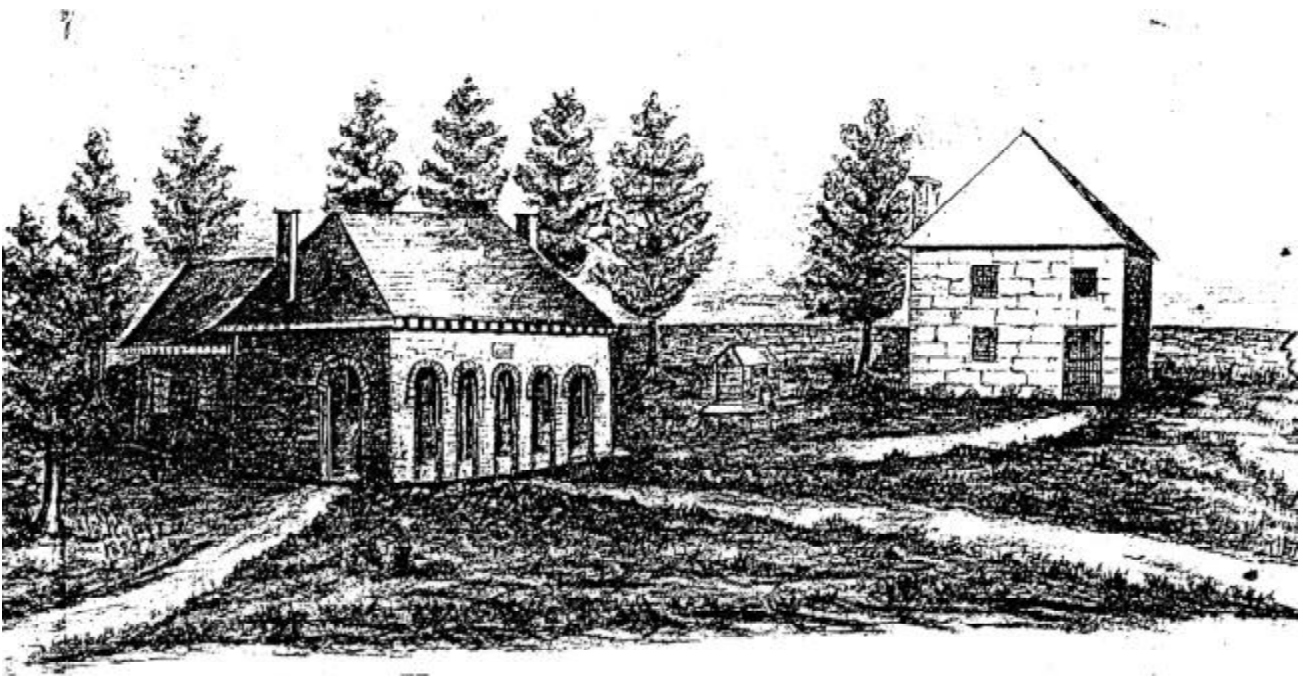


Figure 5: Sketch of Hanover County's courthouse and jail, included in Benson Lossing's 1851 book (Lossing 1974).



Figure 6: Crude sketch of Hanover Courthouse that Robert Alonzo Brock included in his 1858-1861 diary.

After the war, Union Army General George B. McClellan recalled that on May 26th he had learned “that a very considerable force of the enemy was in the vicinity of Hanover Court House, to our right and rear, threatening our communications.” To remedy the situation, he ordered General Fitz-John Porter to dislodge the Confederates from Hanover Courthouse and to destroy the railroad. Lieutenant Colonel William N. Grier of the First U. S. Cavalry informed his superiors that he had learned that there were “several regiments stationed at or near Hanover Court House, artillery, cavalry, and infantry.” He added that in his opinion there were at the most five or six thousand men stationed there. As McClellan concluded that “the position at Hanover Court House was too much exposed to be permanently held,” he withdrew General Porter’s command on May 29th (Long and Long 1981:216-217, 226; Johnson and Buel 1956:II:175-176, 211, 271-272).

On May 27th, General McClellan told the Secretary of War that he had “this moment heard from F. J. Porter, with his division. He has taken Hanover Court-House.” He reported that there was “Little loss on our side; [but] many killed, wounded, and prisoners of rebels” and added that Porter’s men had captured one of the Confederates’ guns. McClellan said that the operations around Hanover Courthouse promised “perfect success in all its objects” and he stated that Porter had cavalry and horse artillery to insure that he would retain his position (USWD 1891:Series 1:II:Part 1:667, 677-679, 736). A map included in the Union Army’s official records portrays troop movements and positions during the Battle of Hanover Courthouse (Davis et al. 1978: Plate XXI:No. 11). Some of the terrain through which the opposing armies moved is shown on a map that was made by Jed Hotchkiss (1871) after the war.

General Porter said that his men buried around two hundred Confederate dead and sent some 730 prisoners and wounded men to headquarters. They had taken a 12-pounder howitzer, a caisson, and a large number of small arms, including some in new condition. He reported that “Two important military railroad trains were captured and destroyed by General Stoneman’s and General Emory’s commands respectively.” He indicated that he was pleased that the Confederates had been able to escape with only a small part of their baggage and supplies. Porter included a list of the Union Army casualties “at Hanover Court-House, Va., May 27, 1862,” noting that the losses were significant (USWD 1891:Series 1:II:Part 1:680-690, 736-737). The numerous accounts of the events of May 26 and 27, 1862, leave no doubts that the Union forces converging on Hanover Courthouse from several directions were following a carefully contrived plan. Robert Knox Sneden made a sketch of the battlefield and preserved it in a scrapbook. He also included a picture of the courthouse (Sneden 1862) (Figures 7 and 8). On May 31, 1864, combat again occurred in the courthouse community. This was the second Battle of Hanover Courthouse (Gilmer 1862-1863; 1864) (Figure 9).

Researcher Anne Cross, when examining chancery suits in 2002, discovered a letter written by a Union soldier on June 9, 1864, upon the back of a Hanover County marriage license. He commented that “The courthouse is one of the prettiest little villas I ever seen – but [blank] the ware [sic] has nearly destroyed its former beauty. I wish I could sketch[.] I’d give you one of it” (Cross n.d.:11).

The Aftermath of War

In June 1865 state officials authorized the collection of local real estate and personal property taxes and that fall, elections were held to fill Virginia’s congressional seats and to choose representatives to the General Assembly. The delegates that attended the General Assembly’s 1866-1867 session rejected the United States Constitution’s 14th amendment, which granted freed blacks full citizenship. That had dire consequences, for Southern states’ failure to endorse African Americans’ civil and political equality produced a strong backlash, and in March 1867 Congress passed the Reconstruction Acts. Virginia was designated Military District Number 1 and Lieutenant General John M. Schofield was placed in command of the state’s military government. He made temporary appointments to vacant public offices and established voter registration procedures that provided for the enfranchisement of Virginia’s adult black males. Anyone who had held a state office before the war, but had supported the Confederacy, was ineligible to vote and was disqualified from holding any public position, including

those on the local level. As a result, under the Reconstruction Acts, an estimated seventy thousand white males, who formerly had served in government, were disfranchised and deprived of the right to hold office. Meanwhile a large percentage of eastern Virginia's registered voters were blacks, most of whom were illiterate. As a result of the Reconstruction Acts, the next time elections were held, more than half of the state's 5,446 offices were left vacant and a substantial number of those elected were disqualified on account of their service to the Confederacy. When General Assembly convened in October 1869, it ratified the 14th and 15th amendments to the U. S. Constitution. In January 1870 Military District Number 1 ceased to exist and Virginia was re-admitted to the Union (Tindall 1990:674-677; Morton 1919: 15-17, 27, 30, 50, 57, 59-60; Bottom 1917: 249).

On August 22, 1865, the justices of Hanover County's monthly court appointed a special committee to "let to the lowest bidder the necessary repairs to the clerk's office, courthouse, and jail of this county at the charge of the same." The justices also ordered the clerk of court to procure stationary for their use (Hanover County Monthly Court [August 22, 1865-February 1867]:9, 52). On November 29, 1865, when the monthly court convened, the clerk of court was told "to contract for the necessary shutters and to have the necessary glazing done to the windows and repairs to the locks of the clerk's office" (Hanover County Monthly Court [August 22, 1865-February 1867]:54).

The monthly court's justices at their March 27, 1866, meeting appointed a group of commissioners who were to hire the low bidder to make the necessary repairs to the courthouse and jail. Simultaneously, the clerk of court was authorized to "have the necessary repairs done to the enclosure of the courthouse green of this county and also to the necessary repairs done to the press, desks and painting of the shutters and doors of the clerk's office." In August 1866 the clerk of court was authorized to procure "the necessary chairs for the courtroom" (Hanover County Monthly Court [August 22, 1865-February 1867]:113, 116, 244).

On September 28, 1867, three court appointed commissioners made an inspection of the county jail. The report they prepared sheds a great deal of light upon the structural attributes of the building and its layout. They said that the jail, which was two stories in height and built of stone, had walls that were 2 feet thick. It had four rooms that measured 12 feet by 18 feet and a passage approximately 6 feet wide. The jail's two lower rooms had a granite floor, whereas the two upper rooms were lined with hewn timbers measuring 12 inches by 12 inches. The ceiling also was comprised of hewn timber and had lathing and plaster. The inspectors commented that the jail's brick chimneys passed through an iron grating at the joist and the ceiling and that the grating was of heavy iron that had been secured strong bolts fastened to the walls, floors, and ceiling. They said that thanks to a recent jail break, the building had been repaired and made secure. The interior of the jail had been whitewashed (Hanover County Loose Papers, Non-Chancery 1866-1875). No further information was provided on the appearance and condition of the jail.

Local judicial officials apparently were concerned about keeping the courthouse green in good condition. On May 23, 1866, only two months after the clerk of court was authorized to have repairs made to the enclosure around the green, he was ordered to,

. . . have notices posted up as speedily as practicable prohibiting any person or persons from fastening horses or other animals to the nailing or walls or enclosures of the court green and any trespass to the buildings, yard or enclosures of the court green of this county that may come to the knowledge of the said clerk, warning them that such conduct is presentable and fineable [Hanover County Monthly Court (August 22, 1865-February 1867):164].

A month later, Clevers (Clever, Clivers) S. Chisholm, then owner of the Hanover Hotel, located directly across the road, was allowed a salary of \$60 a year "to superintend the court green of this county and furnish wood and lights for the use of the courthouse" (Hanover County Monthly Court [August 22, 1865-February 1867]:178).

On December 1, 1868, the clerk of the Hanover County court was "authorized to have the necessary repairs to the courtroom of this courthouse, to make the same comfortable and to purchase a dozen more chairs as most

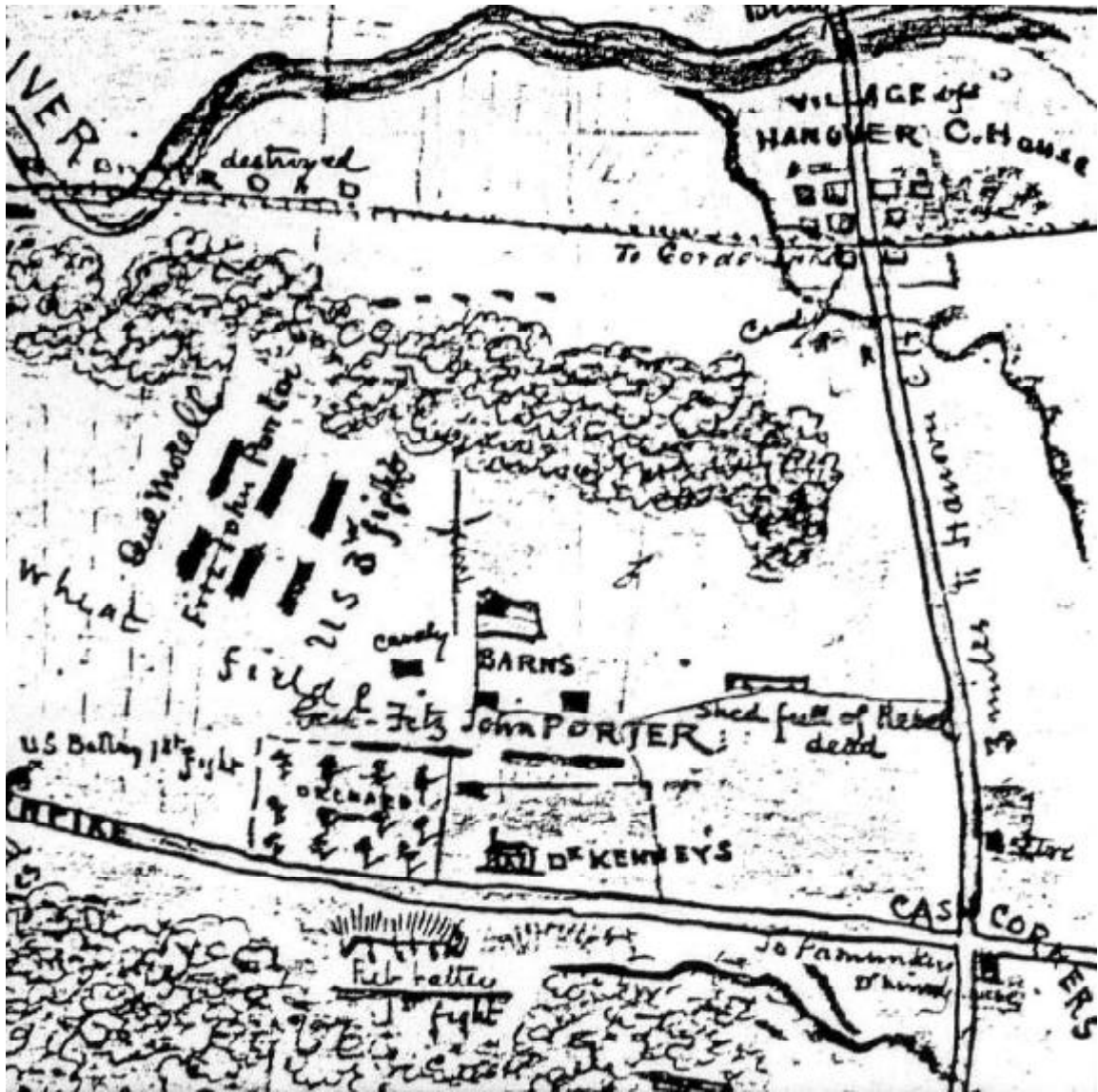


Figure 7: Portion of a sketch map done by Robert Knox Sneden, labeled May 26, 1862.



Figure 8: Sketch of the Hanover County courthouse included by Robert Knox Smeden in one of his scrapbooks.

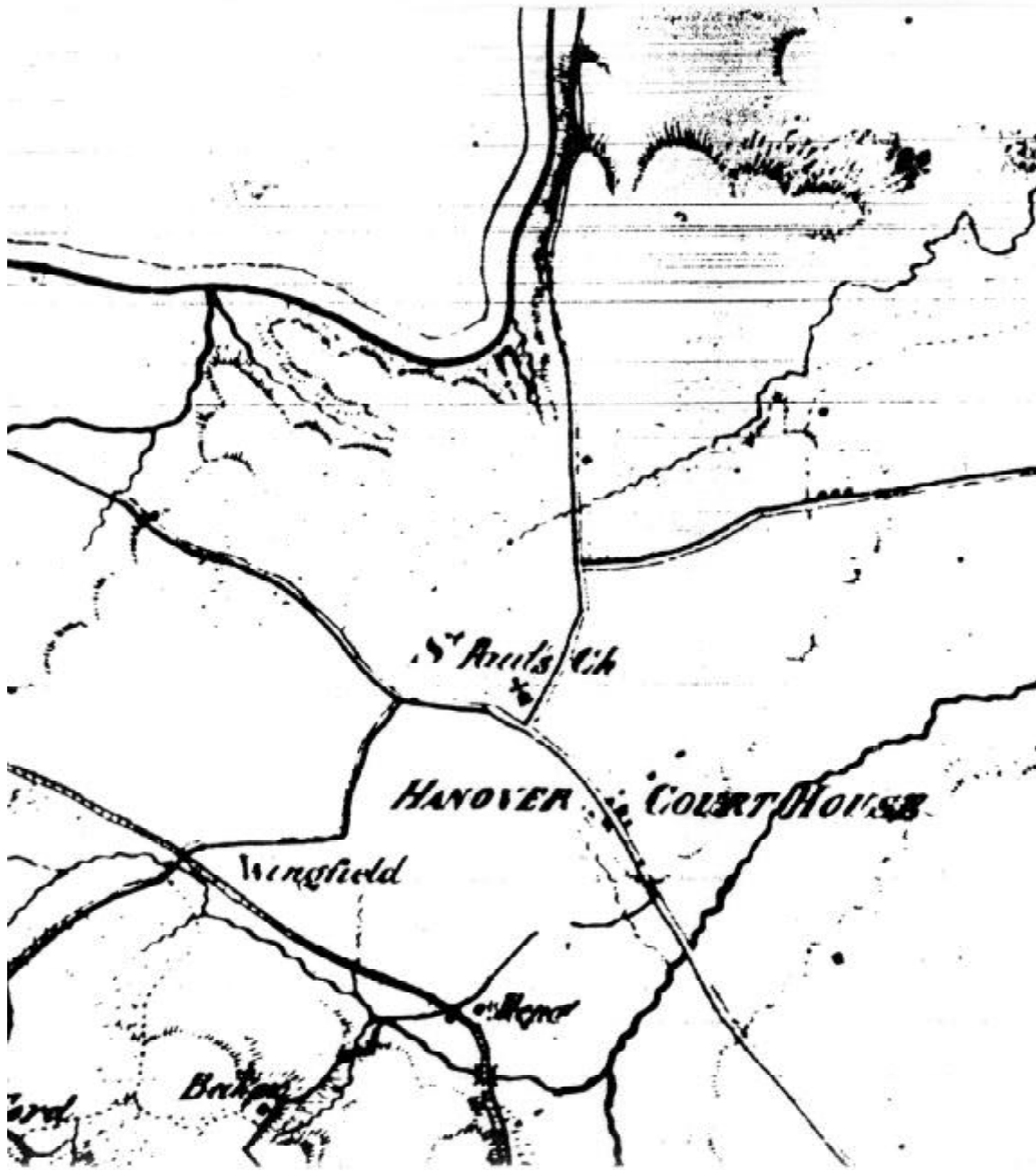


Figure 9: Map of Hanover County, Virginia (Gilmer 1864a).

advisable for the said room, at the charge of the county” (Hanover County Minute Book 2:31). The clerk’s office also needed attention and on January 29, 1869, the incumbent clerk was ordered “to have such repairs done to the presses and other furniture in the clerk’s office of this county as may be necessary, at the charge of the county” (Hanover County Minute Book 2:129).

Throughout the period 1868-1871, C. S. Chisholm, was paid for seeing that the courthouse was cleaned regularly. He also was compensated by the court justices for providing firewood and seeing that the building was heated adequately (Hanover County Common Law Order Book 1853-1868:448; 1869-1876:104). It is likely that some of the African American men and women that Chisholm employed in his hotel actually carried out these tasks.

By January 17, 1872, there was some concern among the local judiciary that the Hanover County courthouse was in need of repair. It was then that George P. Haw, Harrison Southworth, and P. B. Winston were designated commissioners who were to look into what repairs the courthouse needed and what alterations might be desirable. On April 20, 1872, the three commissioners reported to the court that when they had advertised for a contractor to undertake the repairs, they had received offers from three. No reference was made to the proposed project’s scope of work. Richard Kersey, B. S. Winston, and J. H. and W. Haw submitted proposals, although Winston withdrew “upon mature consideration of the advantages to be derived by the plan submitted by the Messers. J. H. and W. Haw.” Therefore, the court appointed commissioners recommended that the Haws’ bid to repair the courthouse for the sum of \$600 be accepted. It was and B. S. Winston, P. B. Winston, and George P. Haw were authorized to supervise the contractor’s work. On October 16, 1872, the court appointed commissioners reported that the repairs and alterations made to the courthouse by John H. and William Haw had been done “in a satisfactory and workmanlike manner” and that the additional work that had proved necessary had been accomplished at a reasonable charge: \$137.76 (Hanover County Minute Book 3:359-360, 446, 538-539). The courthouse, jail and another structure were shown on a map of Hanover County that was done in 1875 (Anonymous 1875) (Figure 10).

By summer 1883 the county courthouse again was in need of repairs. On June 20, 1883, when court was in session, the clerk noted in his record book that:

It being apparent to the Judge of this court that the Court House of this County is in a dangerous condition and is in need of speedy repairs, the Court doth hereby order that John R. Taylor, Superintendent of Public Buildings of this County, proceed to inspect the same and if in his opinion any of the timbers in the said building are decayed or unsafe and need replacing, he will have said repairs done and whatever other repairs in his opinion are necessary (including a tin roof) to be done to said building, he will have the same repaired at as small cost to the county as practicable, but that he in no respect change the present shape or style of said building.

Two men also were appointed to look at the jail to see what repairs were necessary. (Hanover County Common Law Order Book 7:252-253). A month before plans were made to repair the courthouse, Hanover County’s Board of Supervisors authorized R. H. Cardwell,

. . . to erect on the courthouse green between the clerk’s office and the fence on the south a building to be used and occupied as a law office, provided the said building is neatly built so as not to be a disfigurement to the grounds and provided further that the said R. H. Cardwell shall at any time that the Board of Supervisors may require upon 90 days notice remove said building from the grounds, said R. H. Cardwell to file with the clerk of this board his obligations to do so [Hanover County Supervisors Record 1871-November 20, 1884:402].

Research in photographic archives may shed some light upon the type of building that Cardwell constructed on the courthouse green and how long it was there. The records maintained by the Board of Supervisors make no reference to the repairs being made to the county courthouse in 1883. In November 1886 a vote was taken on

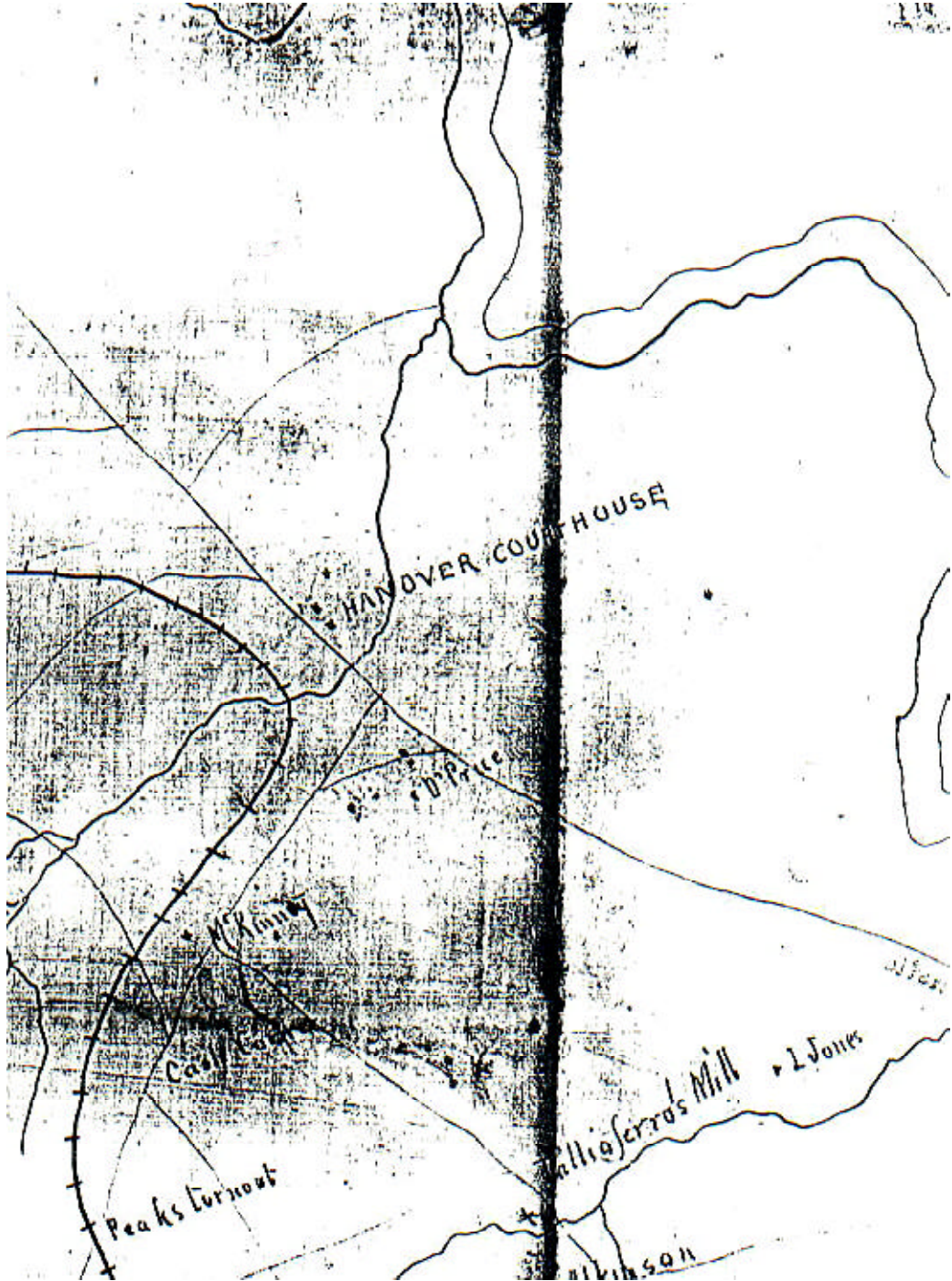


Figure 10: Untitled map of Hanover County (Anonymous 1875). Note the courthouse complex.

whether to move the county seat to Ashland or leave it in its traditional location. The majority voted to leave the county seat where it was (Hanover County Common Law Order Book 8:422).

On June 20, 1883, B. L. Winston and T. L. Gregory, who had been appointed commissioners and ordered “to view the Jail of this county,” reported “that certain repairs are necessary to be done to said jail.” Therefore the court ordered John R. Taylor, the Superintendent of Public Buildings, have said jail repaired “as set forth in said report” (Hanover County Common Law Order Book 7:252-253).

On April 14, 1884, when John W. and Lucy Woolfolk transferred to William H. and J. A. Chisholm a 2 ½ acre parcel east of the courthouse lot, reference was made to the common boundary between the two. The Woolfolk-Chisholm lot’s southwestern boundary’s was contiguous to the courthouse lot’s northeastern boundary line and its northwestern boundary was aligned with the courthouse lot’s northwestern boundary line. A plat recorded with the Woolfolk-Chisholm deed shows that the common boundary line that separated the courthouse lot from the Woolfolk-Chisholm acreage was 322 feet long. In 1892 when the Chisholms’ lot was surveyed again its northeastern and southeastern boundaries were delimited, as was the common boundary that separated it from the courthouse lot. The northeastern boundary of the courthouse lot was then 401.28 feet long, whereas its northwestern boundary was 297 feet in length. As the courthouse lot’s southeastern boundary measured 322 feet long, and its roughly parallel boundary on the northwest was 297 feet long, the parcel upon which the courthouse complex sat apparently was not quite rectangular. As its back line, which ran parallel to the main road was just over 401 feet long, the courthouse lot appears to have been between 2.7 and 2.9 acres in size (Hanover County Deed Book 18:364-365; 32:156; Plat Book 2:14; Wingfield 1892a) (Figures 11 and 12).

By 1895 the Hanover County courthouse again was in need of repair. At a Board of Supervisors meeting held on August 21, 1895, bids for repairs to the courthouse were opened and ranged from \$716.00 to \$1,068.75. The Supervisors’ minute book states that:

The bid of Mr. P. T. Bowles being the lowest the Board decided to award the contract to him. The clerk is directed to draw a proper contract and the Building Committee heretofore appointed – John R. Taylor, H. W. Wingfield, W. D. Cardwell, and Col. Wm. F. Wickham are authorized and directed to superintend the work, receive when completed, and report to the Board [Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 3 (February 18, 1885-September 1, 1900):285].

According to the 1894-1895 minutes of St. Paul’s Church, after the parish’s mid-nineteenth century church burned in December 1893, its bricks were sold to several people. Among the purchasers was Peter or P. T. Bowles, who was hired to make repairs to the Hanover County courthouse. On April 12, 1895, Bowles purchased ~~\$36 50 worth of bricks~~ and on July 17th he bought another \$3.00 worth. Finally, on December 18, 1895, the county treasurer paid Bowles for 4,000 bricks “for use of County ct. house” (Cross n.d.:13). An engraving of the Hanover County courthouse was used as an illustration in an article by Woodrow Wilson, which was featured in the May 1896 issue of *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* (Wilson 1896) (Figure 13).

On May 19, 1896, the Board of Supervisors appointed John R. Taylor, George P. Haw and Dr. B. L. Winston as a Board of Commissioners whose duty it was to see that a fireproof vault was erected in the clerk’s office. The vault was supposed to be built “in accord with a plan and specifications furnished by the St. Louis Art Metal Company through B. F. Smith their agent” (Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 3 [February 18, 1885-September 1, 1900]:285). On May 27, 1896, the Supervisors passed a resolution acknowledging “that the clerk’s office of this county is in need of repairs to make it fireproof as required by law and that in their opinion it will be necessary to contract a loan of \$2500 to be payable in 1, 2, 3, and 4 years.” A copy of this order was to be forwarded to the Judge of the County Court for his action (Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 3 [February 18, 1885-September 1, 1900]:314).

At the same session, the Board of Supervisors voted to set aside the order they had made at their May 19, 1896, meeting, authorizing a group of commissioners to have repairs made to the clerk’s office. Instead, they “duly

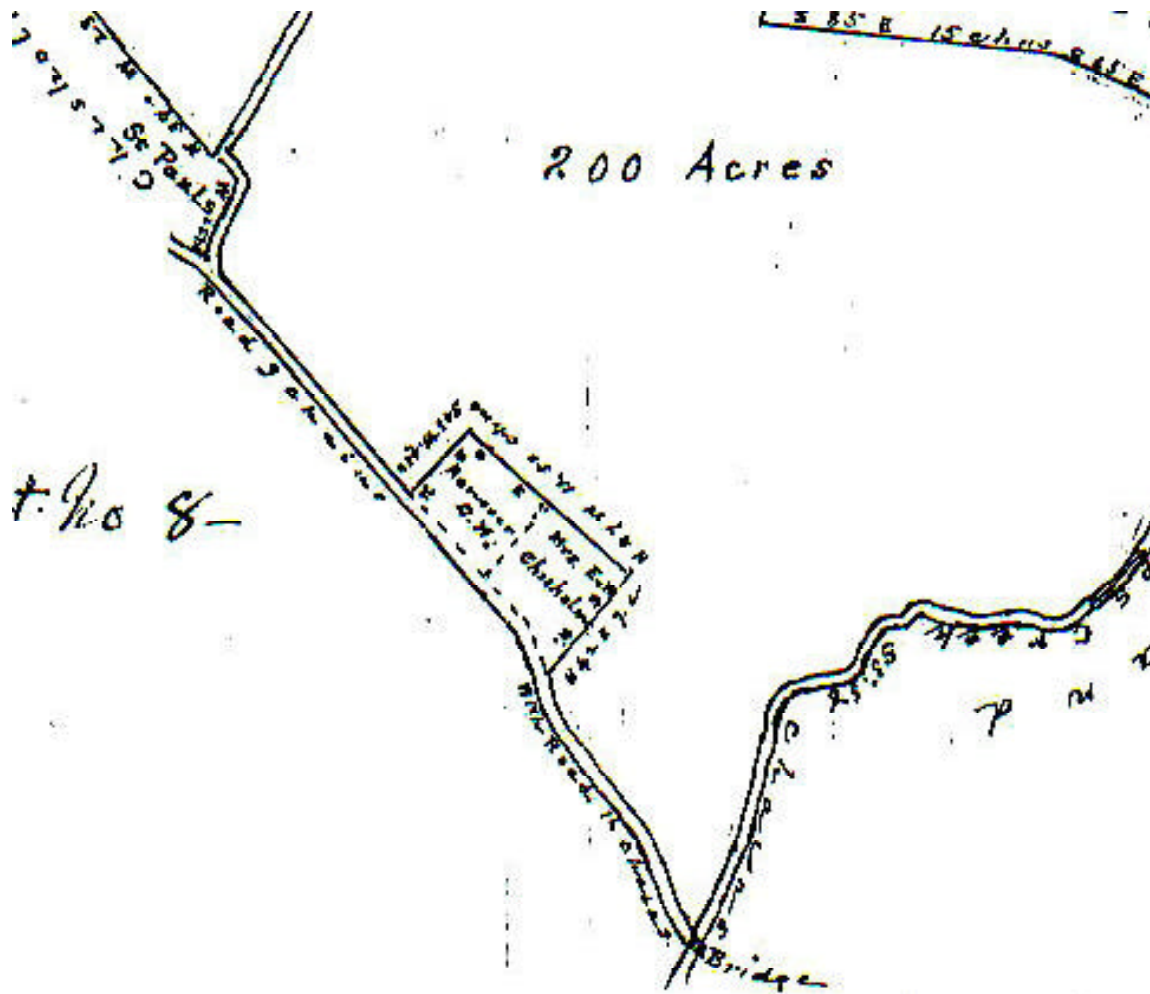


Figure 12: A plat showing a 200 acre parcel that originally was part of the “Courthouse tract” (Wingfield 1892b). Note that the courthouse lot is contiguous to a lot owned by the Chisholms in 1885. The boundary line separating the courthouse lot from that of the Chisholms measured 322 feet long.



HANOVER COURT-HOUSE.

Figure 13: The Hanover County courthouse as depicted in the May 1896 issue of Harper's New Monthly Magazine.

accepted the bid of the St. Louis Art Metal Company this day made for which plan and specifications are to be furnished by the said [contractor], repairs according to the specifications and plans subject to the action of the county and circuit court” (Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 3 [February 18, 1885-September 1, 1900]:314).

When the Board of Supervisors convened on June 16, 1896, they noted that “The plans and specifications for the fire and damp proof vault and for repairs to the clerk’s office and the furnishing of Roler [sic] shelves and file cases for the said vault and office furnished by B. F. Smith under his bid which was accepted by this Board on May 27, 1896, which plans are marked No. 0.96.” The Supervisors indicated that the work was to cost \$2532.50, “the said \$32.50 being for stove to be furnished and put up and the Judge of the County Court of this county and the Judge of the Circuit Court of this county having approved the said improvements and repairs” (Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 3 [February 18, 1885-September 1, 1900]:315).

In 1926 the Directress of the Hanover Branch of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities addressed the Hanover County Board of Supervisors about the need to repair the brick arches of the historic courthouse’s front. Although some repairs were made to the building, it was done with cement. APVA members, who felt that the repair work had created an eyesore, urged the Supervisors to have the cement removed. In 1932 the cemented arches were refurbished to the satisfaction of the APVA (Cross n.d.:13-14).

During the early 1950s, a group of concerned citizens approached the Hanover County Board of Supervisors about restoring Hanover County’s historic courthouse. On April 1, 1953, Mrs. G. M. Weems, Capt. Wm. C. Wickham and Mrs. T. W. L. Hughes, representing the APVA, made a formal appeal (Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 10:411). At the end of the month, on April 28, 1953, Judge Leon M. Bazile, chairman of the Courthouse Restoration Committee, told the Board of Supervisors that his group would like to install a heating system in the courthouse during the summer months and lower the floor (Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 10:415). On October 1, 1953, Judge Bazile presented the Supervisors with a bill for \$225.12 from the Interol Company, which had waterproofed the old courthouse (Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 10:470). By December 1, 1953, the waterproofing bill had been paid. The Supervisors asked the Courthouse Restoration Committee to present its plans to the December 21, 1953, Supervisors meeting (Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 10:485). However, a few more months elapsed before they were able to do so.

On May 3, 1954, Captain W. C. Wickham, representing the Courthouse Restoration Committee, presented the Board of Supervisors with a list of recommendations made by architect Alan McCullough and the estimated costs of construction. Captain Wickham reported that his committee had approved the recommendations and that he was now requesting the Board of Supervisors’ approval to proceed with the work. The first phase of work was to be done during summer 1954 and involved the exterior of the courthouse. The second phase called for removal of the chimneys, installation of heat (a new underground boiler room and pipe work), and general finishing of the interior; those tasks were to be finished during 1955. The third phase of the project, which was to be completed during 1956, included the final portion of the paneling, the judge’s rostrum, the cornices, and other work. Captain Wickham provided the Supervisors with a copy of Alan McCullough’s letter, which recommended the hiring of a well qualified general contractor from Richmond, skilled in restoration projects. Attached to the letter was a list of the specific tasks to be accomplished (Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 11:32-33). Through this means, and with the support of Hanover County’s preservation-minded citizens, the historic courthouse was carefully restored. In 1969 the Hanover County Board of Supervisors agreed to lease the old, unused stone jail to the historical society (Hanover Historical Society 1969:2).

Endnotes

1 The term “Virginia house” typically was used in reference to a frame building.

2 Plats of contiguous property, prepared in 1885 and 1892, suggest that the Hanover Courthouse complex was situated upon a lot that measured between 2.7 and 2.9 acres (see ahead).

3 The lower precinct extended from Mechumps Creek to Totopotomoy Creek and the upper precinct ran from Mechumps Creek “until the end of the parish” (Chamberlayne 1940:68). An old thoroughfare, portions of which became Route 301 and the River Road (Route 605), passed along the lower side of the Pamunkey River.

4 ~~The~~ *Virginia Gazette* indicates that several other pieces of Hanover County property were auctioned off “at Hanover Court-house.”

5 David Crafford’s patent for 277 acres in upper New Kent is fragmentary. No meaningful descriptive information has survived.

6 In 1704, when quitrent rolls were compiled, David Crafford Sr. was credited with 400 acres in New Kent County, whereas David Crafford Jr. was in possession of 300 acres there. Meanwhile, Thomas Poindexter (Pendexter), the husband of David Crafford Sr.’s daughter, Sarah, paid quitrent upon 1,000 acres of land in New Kent (Wertenbaker 1922: 216, 219). Sarah was not the only one to whom David Crafford gave a gift of land. In 1706 when David Holt patented 300 acres on a branch of Totopotomoy Creek, he indicated that he had acquired it from his grandfather, David Crafford (Nugent 1969-1979:III:107). Crafford also gave land to his daughter, Elizabeth Meriwether (see ahead).

7 St. Paul’s Parish processioners records that date to 1716 make reference to Nicholas, William and David Meriwether’s land, which adjoined that of the “Widow Crafford” and James Brechin, a clergyman. In 1727 the Meriwethers’ land was listed again, as were the parcels of John Poindexter (Sarah Crafford’s son by her first marriage), “Captain Crafford” (John Poindexter’s uncle, David Crafford Jr.), and the glebe (John Kimbrough’s land) (Chamberlayne 1940:271, 326).

8 The familial connection between the Crafford and Meriwether families was complex, for David Crafford Sr.’s daughter, Elizabeth, was married to Nicholas Meriwether II.

9 This statement reveals that Hanover County’s first courthouse complex, in accord with the law, had a jail. Matthew Anderson apparently was being sued as a debtor.

10 In 1742 Hanover County was subdivided and its western (or upper) part was split off to become Louisa. The residents of upper Hanover County cited the fact that they were a “great distance from the court-house, and other places appointed for public meetings” (Hening 1809-1823:V:208-209).

11 Parks’ lot is shown upon the so-called Frenchman’s Map, prepared in 1781. It was then owned by printer William Hunter, William Parks’ former journeyman.

12 On the back cover of the *Virginia Almanack*, Parks placed an advertisement for linen rags for use in paper manufacture. He said “This is the first mill of the Kind that ever was erected in this colony” (Goodwin 1937:15).

13 William Parks’ obituary, published in Williamsburg’s *Virginia Gazette* on May 24, 1750, and in the *Maryland Gazette* on June 13, 1750, states that when he set sail on March 22, he was in good health, but in a short time was “seized with a pleurisy” (Headley 1987:258).

14 In the document she signed, Eleanor Parks stated that she would “not accept and receive or take the legacy or legacies to me given or bequeathed in and by the last will and testament of my deceased husband or any part thereof, but do hereby renounce all benefit and advantage which I might claim by the said will and testament (York County Orders, Wills, Inventories 20 [1745-1759]:195).

15 Specifically, Shelton, as executor, noted that “By the sale of Hanover Courthouse taken by Execution: £ 660.5.0.”

16 This was not an uncommon arrangement. Gloucester County’s first courthouse, a brick structure erected around 1683, was built upon property owned by Edmund Gwyn, who conveyed it to the people of the county but imposed certain restrictions. Gwyn was granted the exclusive right to operate an ordinary at the county seat. Moreover, the courthouse tract was to revert to Gwyn whenever it ceased being used for official purposes. As it turned out, Gwyn’s heirs regained possession of the acreage sometime prior to 1766, at which time some adjoining acreage was purchased and a new brick courthouse was built (Middlesex County Order Book 1680-1694:200-201; Edmund Gwyn to the Justices of Gloucester County, February 26, 1680; McCartney 2001:67-68, 87-90). Similarly, in Jamestown privately owned buildings often served as the colony’s statehouse and courthouse.

17 In 1851 Benson J. Lossing visited Hanover Courthouse and stayed at Hanover Tavern. He said that Patrick Henry had been “a temporary bar-tender” in the tavern and that it was in the courthouse that “he made those first efforts at oratory which burst forth like meteors from the bloom of his obscurity.” Lossing went on to say that Henry “had passed his youthful days in apparent idleness, and lacking business tact and energy, he failed to succeed in mercantile pursuits, in which he was engaged. He became bankrupt, and no one was willing to aid him. He had married at eighteen, and yet in the twenty-fourth year of his age he had done little toward supporting a wife. They lived most of the time with his father-in-law (Mr. Shelton), who kept the tavern at Hanover, and when the proprietor was absent, young Henry took his place behind the bar. As a last resort he studied law” (Lossing 1974:II:223).

18 When the vestry of St. Paul’s Parish convened at Hanover Courthouse during the 1760s, they may have met at the tavern that was run by John Shelton and his successor Paul Thilman Sr. In November 1756 Shelton was paid for furnishing claret to the parish (Chamberlayne 2000-2001:362, 386, 402, 465).

19 In Gloucester, British prisoners were sent to the county seat where they were detained until they could be evacuated. At times they were unguarded. In Albemarle County, common soldiers, who were prisoners-of-war, were housed in what became known as the Albemarle Barracks, but enemy officers were allowed to live in private homes in the neighborhood.

20 It was likely at Thilman’s tavern that Robert Mickleborough and others were “imprudent enough to engage in gaming” during “Hanr. Court day.” As the articles of the Continental Association had made gaming and gambling illegal, the participants were violating the law (Van Schreeven et al. 1973-1979:VII:219).

21 On a map Berthier made in 1782 he indicated that his men had encamped at Graham’s house, near Littlepage’s bridge (Rice and Brown 1972:II:115, Plate 7).

22 This suggests that the main road crossed two branches of Mechumps Creek. Such a fork in the creek is located just west of Route 301’s right-of-way.

23 A decade earlier, a group of citizens in the western part of Hanover County proposed that it be subdivided. However, there was substantial opposition to that proposal, which was rejected (Hanover County Legislative Petitions 1784).

24 Mutual Assurance Society policies purchased for the Hanover Tavern complex and a rental property in 1801 and 1811 indicate that the tavern complex included a large kitchen (Mutual Assurance Society 1801, 1811).

25 Many counties had two jails: one for criminals and one for debtors.

26 It is unclear which building Lossing meant had undergone a change in its external appearance: the courthouse or Hanover Tavern.

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HANOVER COUNTY'S HISTORIC COURTHOUSE

Although Hanover County's first courthouse was located upon the land that belonged to Robert Jennings and his successors, by 1735 the county's justices of the peace had begun giving some consideration to building a new courthouse. Some Hanover County citizens objected and on December 10, 1735, asked the House of Burgesses to intervene. They claimed that "the present Court House be a good substantial building and capable of serving for that purpose for many years." The burgesses agreed to call a halt to Hanover County's justices' plan until the matter could be aired before the General Court (McIlwaine 1925-1945:IV:366).

After William Meriwether and Robert Harris had been elected Hanover County's burgesses, the issue of building a new county courthouse surfaced again. However, there was still some strong opposition. In fact, on June 16, 1737, some of the inhabitants of the upper (western) part of Hanover County asked the Executive Council to set "an Order of the [county] Justices for building a New Court house." After some deliberation, the governor and his Council agreed that there was no reason to interfere (McIlwaine 1925-1945:IV:396). This would have given Hanover County's justices the right to build a new courthouse upon the site they had selected.

Although a nineteenth century historian's statement that the Hanover County's brick courthouse was built in 1735 has given rise to a deeply rooted tradition, the county's court records for the years 1733-1735, which are voluminous, make no reference to plans to build a new seat of government. Thus, it is more likely that courthouse construction got underway during 1737-1738, shortly *after* approval was secured from high ranking government officials and William Meriwether had become a burgess and county justice. In 1851 historian Benson J. Lossing said that the structure was erected in 1740 (Lossing 1976:II:223-224).

A Library of Virginia archivist, John Hopewell, who discovered a document conclusively proving that James Skelton of Hanover County was responsible for building Abingdon Church in Gloucester, has speculated that he may have been involved in the construction of Hanover Courthouse. Skelton was the county's sheriff in 1738 and was a respected member of the community (*The Rosewellian* [November 1999]:3-4). His construction of Abingdon Parish's brick church (which still exists) attests to his skill as a builder.

On April 6 and 7, 1743, William Meriwether sold his 550 acre tract to William Parks, a printer "late of the City of Williamsburgh." The land being conveyed included the acreage "*whereon the Court house of the said [Hanover] county is erected*" (Shelton Oliver Winn Papers, MS 24677). Thus, it is certain that sometime prior to early April 1743, a new courthouse was built upon a 550 acre tract owned by William Meriwether. The acreage changing hands most likely was part of the land that David Crafford left to his daughter, Sarah Crafford Poindexter Brechin, who sold it to her nephew, William Meriwether between 1723 and 1732. It adjoined the old road that ran up the lower side of the Pamunkey River and crossed over into Caroline County. As William Meriwether owned property at the mouth of Mechumps Creek and until 1743 was in possession of the courthouse tract, and as his son, Nicholas II, had acreage further inland (two miles from the courthouse), it appears that members of the Meriwether family controlled almost all of the land on both sides of the creek, for a considerable distance inland.

William Parks of Williamsburg, who in April 1743 purchased William Meriwether's 550 acre courthouse tract, was in possession of the property at the time of his death in 1750 (Shelton Oliver Winn Papers, MS 24677). As he was heavily in debt and his executor and son-in-law John Shelton had to sell some of his property in order to satisfy his creditors. In early April 1754, when Shelton submitted an account of his activities as executor of the Parks estate, he indicated that in 1752 he had sold the Hanover County courthouse for 660.5.0 pounds sterling. *Thus, it is certain that the public building in which the county court convened regularly was privately owned until around 1752.* Shelton, as executor, collected a year's back rent for Hanover Courthouse (York County Orders, Wills, Inventories 19:310-311, 390; 20:323-326; Deeds, Administrations, Bonds 5:374-375).

Owing to the destruction of many of Hanover County's antebellum court records, the deed whereby John Shelton conveyed the courthouse lot to the county justices does not appear to be extant. However, it is probable

that the lot was approximately two acres in size.¹ Some legislation the House of Burgesses enacted in 1748 authorized counties that had not built their government offices to purchase two acres upon which a courthouse, jail, pillory, and stocks could be erected. On the other hand, the burgesses said that in instances where courthouses already had been built, county justices could confiscate “*two acres adjacent with nothing on it*” and take fee simple ownership of the property. However, courthouses that already had been built with lots of a sufficient size were deemed adequate (Hening 1809-1823:V:507-508). As the Hanover County courthouse was situated upon privately owned land until 1752, it is likely that when the county justices acquired the courthouse, they exercised their right to purchase a two acre lot that surrounded it. The justices also would have laid out an additional parcel (not to exceed 10 acres) as prison bounds, if a county jail was in existence.

Although Hanover County’s seat of government was a focal point of social, commercial, and military activity throughout the second half of the eighteenth century, none of these early visitors commented upon the appearance of the courthouse or the county jail, which most certainly was in existence by the 1770s. Maps made by Revolutionary War cartographers and their successors schematically identify the county seat but fail to show the layout of the buildings that comprised the courthouse complex. In 1790 some of Hanover County’s citizens claimed that the old county seat was inconveniently located and proposed that a new county courthouse, prison, and other public buildings be erected upon the land of James Crews, near what became known as Negro Foot. Those opposed to moving the courthouse stated that “the place where the present Court house of the County stands has long been known to be a convenient situation for the resort not only of the people of the county but of the adjacent counties.” They added that “the County has lately been at the expense of upwards of 300 pounds *for building a prison and repairing the Courthouse*” (Hanover County Legislative Petitions 1794). This statement suggests that major repairs were made to the courthouse during the early 1790s.

On April 22, 1811, when a Superior Court of Law was held for Hanover at the courthouse, the justices commented upon the fact that there was no office for the clerk of court. They passed a resolution stating that “No office being provided for the clerk of this court, the court thinks fit to permit the said clerk to keep the records and papers belonging to this court in the house in which the office of the county court is kept” (Hanover County Superior Court Order Book [April 1809-January 1827]:31).

On August 22, 1865, the justices of Hanover County’s monthly court named Bickerton L. Winston, John H Taliaferro, and John G. Lumpkin to a special committee that was authorized to “let to the lowest bidder the necessary repairs to the clerk’s office, courthouse, and jail of this county at the charge of the same” (Hanover County Monthly Court [August 22, 1865-February 1867]:9, 52). Three months later, when the monthly court convened on November 29, 1865, the clerk of court was authorized “to contract for the necessary shutters and to have the necessary glazing done to the windows and repairs to the locks of the clerk’s office” (Hanover County Monthly Court [August 22, 1865-February 1867]:54).

The monthly court’s justices at their March 27, 1866, meeting designated William C. Wickham, Lucien P. Price, John G. Lumpkin, John H. Taliaferro, and Bickerton L. Winston as commissioners who were authorized to hire the low bidder to make the necessary repairs to the courthouse and jail. At the same meeting the clerk of court was authorized to “have the necessary repairs done to the enclosure of the courthouse green of this county and also to the necessary repairs done to the press, desks and painting of the shutters and doors of the clerk’s office.” In August 1866 the clerk of court was authorized to procure “the necessary chairs for the courtroom” (Hanover County Monthly Court [August 22, 1865-February 1867]:113, 116, 244).

Apparently there was some concern about keeping the courthouse green in good condition. On May 23, 1866, only two months after the clerk of court was authorized to have repairs made to the enclosure around the green, he was ordered to

. . . have notices posted up as speedily as practicable prohibiting any person or persons from fastening horses or other animals to the nailing or walls or enclosures of the court green and any trespass to the buildings, yard or enclosures of the court green of this county that may come to the knowledge of the said

clerk, warning them that such conduct is presentable and fineable [Hanover County Monthly Court (August 22, 1865-February 1867):164].

A month later, Clivers (Clevers) S. Chisholm, proprietor of the Hanover Hotel, was allowed a salary of \$60 a year “to superintend the court green of this county and furnish wood and lights for the use of the courthouse” (Hanover County Monthly Court [August 22, 1865-February 1867]:178).

On December 1, 1868, the clerk of the Hanover County court was “authorized to have the necessary repairs to the courtroom of this courthouse, to make the same comfortable and to purchase a dozen more chairs as most advisable for the said room, at the charge of the county” (Hanover County Minute Book 2:31). The clerk’s office also needed attention and on January 29, 1869, the incumbent clerk was ordered “to have such repairs done to the presses and other furniture in the clerk’s office of this county as may be necessary, at the charge of the county” (Hanover County Minute Book 2:129).

Throughout the period 1868-1871, C. S. Chisholm was paid for seeing that the courthouse was cleaned regularly. He also was compensated by the court justices for providing firewood and seeing that the building was heated adequately (Hanover County Common Law Order Book 1853-1868:448; 1869-1876:104). It is likely that some of the African American men and women that Chisholm employed in his hotel were responsible for accomplishing these tasks.

By January 17, 1872, there was some concern among the local judiciary that the Hanover County courthouse was in need of repair. It was then that George P. Haw, Harrison Southworth, and P. B. Winston were designated commissioners who were supposed to look into what repairs the courthouse needed and what alterations might be desirable. On April 20, 1872, the three commissioners reported to the court that they had advertised for a contractor to undertake the repairs and had received offers from three. No reference was made to the proposed project’s scope of work. Richard Kersey, B.. S. Winston, and J. H. and W. Haw submitted proposals, although Winston withdrew “upon mature consideration of the advantages to be derived by the plan submitted by the Messers. J. H. and W. Haw.” Therefore, the court appointed commissioners recommended that the Haws’ bid to repair the courthouse for the sum of \$600 be accepted. B. S. Winston, P. B. Winston, and George P. Haw were authorized to supervise the contractor’s work. On October 16, 1872, the court appointed commissioners reported that the repairs and alterations made to the courthouse by John H. and William Haw had been done “in a satisfactory and workmanlike manner” and that the extra work that had proved necessary had been accomplished for \$137.76 (Hanover County Minute Book 3:359-360, 446, 538-539).

By summer 1883 the county courthouse again was in need of repairs. On June 20, 1883, when court was in session, the clerk noted in his record book that:

It being apparent to the Judge of this court that the Court House of this County is in a dangerous condition and is in need of speedy repairs, the Court doth hereby order that John R. Taylor, Superintendent of Public Buildings of this County, proceed to inspect the same and if in his opinion any of the timbers in the said building are decayed or unsafe and need replacing, he will have said repairs done and whatever other repairs in his opinion are necessary (including a tin roof) to be done to said building, he will have the same repaired at as small cost to the county as practicable, but that he in no respect change the present shape or style of said building.

Two men also were appointed to look at the jail to see what repairs were necessary. (Hanover County Common Law Order Book 7:252-253).

A month before plans were made to repair the courthouse, Hanover County’s Board of Supervisors authorized R. H. Cardwell,

. . . to erect on the courthouse green between the clerk's office and the fence on the south a building to be used and occupied as a law office, provided the said building is neatly built so as not to be a disfigurement to the grounds and provided further that the said R. H. Cardwell shall at any time that the Board of Supervisors may require upon 90 days notice remove said building from the grounds, said R. H. Cardwell to file with the clerk of this board his obligations to do so [Hanover County Supervisors Record 1871-November 20, 1884:402].

Research in photographic archives may shed some light upon the type of building that Cardwell constructed on the courthouse green and how long it was there. The records maintained by the Board of Supervisors make no reference to the repairs being made to the county courthouse in 1883. In November 1886 a vote was taken on whether to move the county seat to Ashland or leave it in its traditional location. The majority voted to leave it where it was (Hanover County Common Law Order Book 8:422).

On April 14, 1884, when a 2 ½ acre lot east of the courthouse property changed hands, reference was made to its interfacing with the courthouse lot's eastern boundary line and running parallel to the courthouse lot's northern boundary line. A plat recorded at that time shows the boundary line separating the courthouse lot from the acreage that was being sold was 322 feet long. In 1892 when the lot east of the courthouse was surveyed again its northeastern and southeastern boundaries were delimited, as were the courthouse lot's northeastern and northwestern boundaries. The northeastern boundary of the courthouse lot was then 401.28 feet long, whereas its northwestern boundary was 297 feet in length. As the courthouse lot's southeastern boundary measured 322 feet long, and its roughly parallel boundary on the northwest was 297 feet long, the parcel upon which the courthouse complex sat was not quite rectangular. As its back line, which ran parallel to the main road was just over 401 feet long, the courthouse lot was between 2.7 and 2.9 acres in size (Hanover County Deed Book 18:364-365; 32:156; Plat Book 2:14; Wingfield 1892a).

By 1895 county officials agreed that the Hanover County courthouse again was in need of repair. At a Board of Supervisors meeting held on August 21, 1895, bids for repairs to the courthouse were opened and ranged from \$716.00 to \$1,068.75. The Supervisors' minute book states that:

The bid of Mr. P. T. Bowles being the lowest the Board decided to award the contract to him. The clerk is directed to draw a proper contract and the Building Committee heretofore appointed – John R. Taylor, H. W. Wingfield, W. D. Cardwell, and Col. Wm. F. Wickham are authorized and directed to superintend the work, receive when completed, and report to the Board [Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 3 (February 18, 1885-September 1, 1900):285].

According to the 1894-1895 minutes of St. Paul's Church, after the parish's mid-nineteenth century church burned in December 1893, its bricks were sold to several people. Among the purchasers was Peter or P. T. Bowles, who was hired to make repairs to the Hanover County courthouse. On April 12, 1895, Bowles purchased \$36.50 worth of bricks and on July 17th he bought another \$3.00 worth. Finally, on December 18, 1895, the county treasurer paid Bowles for 4,000 bricks "for use of County ct. house" (Cross n.d.:13).

On May 19, 1896, the Board of Supervisors appointed John R. Taylor, George P. Haw and Dr. B. L. Winston as a Board of Commissioners whose duty it was to see that a fireproof vault was erected in the clerk's office. The vault was supposed to be built "in accord with a plan and specifications furnished by the St. Louis Art Metal Company through B. F. Smith their agent" (Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 3 [February 18, 1885-September 1, 1900]:285). On May 27, 1896, the Supervisors passed a resolution acknowledging "that the clerk's office of this county is in need of repairs to make it fireproof as required by law and that in their opinion it will be necessary to contract a loan of \$2500 to be payable in 1, 2, 3, and 4 years." A copy of this order was to be forwarded to the Judge of the County Court for his action (Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 3 [February 18, 1885-September 1, 1900]:314).

At the same session of the Board of Supervisors, they voted to set aside the order they had made at their May 19, 1896, meeting, authorizing a group of commissioners to have repairs made to the clerk's office. Instead, they "duly accepted the bid of the St. Louis Art Metal Company this day made for which plan and specifications are to be furnished by the said [contractor], repairs according to the specifications and plans subject to the action of the county and circuit court" (Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 3 [February 18, 1885-September 1, 1900]:314).

When the Board of Supervisors convened on June 16, 1896, they noted that "The plans and specifications for the fire and damp proof vault and for repairs to the clerk's office and the furnishing of Roler [sic] shelves and file cases for the said vault and office furnished by B. F. Smith under his bid which was accepted by this Board on May 27, 1896, which plans are marked No. 0.96." The Supervisors indicated that the work was to cost \$2532.50, "the said \$32.50 being for stove to be furnished and put up and the Judge of the County Court of this county and the Judge of the Circuit Court of this county having approved the said improvements and repairs" (Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 3 [February 18, 1885-September 1, 1900]:315).

During the early 1950s, a group of concerned citizens approached the Hanover County Board of Supervisors about restoring Hanover County's historic courthouse. On April 1, 1953, Mrs. G. M. Weems, Capt. Wm. C. Wickham and Mrs. T. W. L. Hughes, representing the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, made a formal appeal (Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 10:411). At the end of the month, on April 28, 1953, Judge Leon M. Bazile, chairman of the Courthouse Restoration Committee, told the Board of Supervisors that his group would like to install a heating system in the courthouse during the summer months and lower the floor (Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 10:415). On October 1, 1953, Judge Bazile presented the Supervisors with a bill for \$225.12 from the Interol Company, which had waterproofed the old courthouse (Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 10:470).

By December 1, 1953, the waterproofing bill had been paid. The Supervisors asked the Courthouse Restoration Committee to present its plans to the December 21, 1953, Supervisors meeting (Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 10:485). However, a few more months went by before they were able to do so.

On May 3, 1954, Captain W. C. Wickham, representing the Courthouse Restoration Committee, presented the Board of Supervisors with a list of recommendations that had been made by architect Alan McCullough, along with the estimated costs of construction. Captain Wickham reported that his committee had approved the recommendations and that he was now requesting the Board of Supervisors' approval to proceed with the work. The first phase of work was to be done during summer 1954 and involved the exterior of the courthouse. The second phase called for removal of the chimneys, installation of heat (a new underground boiler room and pipe work), and general finishing of the interior; those tasks were to be finished during 1955. The third phase of the project included the final portion of the paneling, the judges rostrum, the cornices, and other work; that was to be completed during 1956. Captain Wickham provided the Supervisors with a copy of Alan McCullough's letter, which recommended the hiring of a well qualified general contractor from Richmond, skilled in restoration projects. Attached to the letter was a list of the specific tasks to be accomplished (Hanover County Supervisors Record Book 11:32-33). Through this means, and with the support of Hanover County's preservation-minded citizens, the historic courthouse was carefully restored.

Endnotes

1 As the so-called "courthouse tract" owned in succession by the Meriwethers, Parks, and Sheltons was consistently described as 550 acres, it is probable that the courthouse lot was considered an insignificant part of that acreage.

ARCHITECTURAL CHRONOLOGY¹

Hanover County Courthouse

Hanover County Courthouse has seen repeated and extensive modifications over the years. Though nothing survives of the building's early interior finishes, substantial portions of the eighteenth century exterior remain intact, including much of the exterior brickwork and substantial portions of the modillion cornice. In addition, most of the framing for the courtroom ceiling and portions of that for the roof also remain. The building, as we now see it, is largely a product of the restoration carried out during the years 1954 and 1955.



Above: South elevation of courthouse.

Documentary sources, historical views, and physical evidence provide a basis upon which to reconstruct the building's physical development. The dating of certain alterations and campaign of construction has been problematic, owing to the lack of specific documentation, especially from the periods before c.1850.

Period I – 1737-1742 - Construction²

As first completed, Hanover County Courthouse was deployed in a T-shaped plan, a standard arrangement that had emerged during the second quarter of the eighteenth century. (The earliest extant example of this type appears to be King William Courthouse, built c. 1725). The new plan was in part a reordering of familiar components - courtroom, jury room and justice room - with the addition of one new feature, the piazza.

In earlier courthouses, the rooms set aside for jury and justices had occupied one end of what was typically a simple, rectangular plan. At Hanover, and at other similar courthouses, these rooms moved outside of the main body of the building to a position flanking either side of the courtroom. The result was a T-shaped building, the front being the “cap” of the T. Extending across the entire breadth of this front was an arcaded porch or “piazza” as it was usually called. This feature faintly echoed the arcaded piazza centered on the ground floor of the first Williamsburg Capitol. That space was, in turn, a visual reference to the arcaded markets that comprised the

ground stories of town halls throughout England. On these shores and in England as well, the arcaded piazza acknowledged the intimate association of commerce and public business. An itinerant peddler active in Virginia during the first decade of the nineteenth century wrote of hawking his wares on successive court days in several Virginia counties, offering a glimpse of how the piazza figured in the commercial activities associated with court day. At Nelson County Courthouse, the peddler and his two companions, “Jones” and “Downing,” set up their operations:

...[Jones] and Mr Downing had taken Possession of the Porch, Downing of my old stand, and Jones of Fosters. We However fixed out of Doors and as for me I was in a welldoing way. It commenced Snowing, had to bundle up my duds and retire to the Porch, lost by that means the best part of the day.³

The T-shaped courthouse plan gave special prominence to the piazza and produced a broad, symmetrical front, more formal and more imposing than those of earlier buildings.

No contract or specification for the initial construction of Hanover County Courthouse is known to survive, but the disposition of its courtroom probably followed a traditional model, evident in other courthouses for which more information survives. At the upper end of the courtroom was typically an elevated, semi-circular bench for the justices. Behind this bench, the wall was often wainscoted to a height of several feet, providing a refined backdrop for deliberations of the court. In the middle of the bench was a raised, armed seat for the senior justice, often having a wainscoted back with a pediment above, all emblematic of this gentleman’s position as the head of the court. Above this seat hung the arms of the monarch, symbolizing the royal sanction under which the court operated.

The front of the justices’ platform was commonly enclosed by a molded railing, borne on turned balusters. Directly below this balustrade was a semi-circular bench for the accommodation of jurors, who sat facing the bar and any of their neighbors who had assembled to witness the proceedings. Just in front of the jurors stood a movable table and chair for the clerk, who also sat facing the public area beyond the bar. Directly in front of the clerk, and still within the bar, was an enclosure for lawyers, plaintiffs and defendants, composed, like that before the justices, of a molded railing and turned balusters.

To either side of this lawyer’s enclosure was a raised, wainscot box resembling a pulpit, one each for the sheriff and undersheriff or cryer. From their elevated boxes, these officials controlled access to the area within to the bar, to the lawyer’s enclosure, and to the justices’ platform. Joist pockets discovered in the north and south walls of the courtroom probably represent the existence of such boxes in the original courtroom.

The bar was perhaps the oldest, most important fixture in the courtroom. Physically and symbolically, it drew a line between the proceedings of the court and those members of the public who assembled to witness them. The phrase, “passing the bar,” as applied to licensing for the practice of law, derives from the exclusionary function of this fixture. Only participants in the case before the court passed through this barrier.

Within the bar, the courtroom was most often floored with pine plank. Outside the bar, the public area of the courtroom was typically paved with stone, sometimes identified as “Bristol stone” in contemporary accounts, perhaps in reference to some quarry nearby that city, or a reflection of the customary shipment of this stone through the port of Bristol. In any case, the pavers are usually grayish or reddish sandstone. Those now visible in the piazza may have been part of the original courtroom paving, though a 1929 measured plan shows paving in the courtroom and in the piazza at that time.⁴ Other pieces seem to have been reused in the walk by the entrance to the jail.

Beyond the bar, the walls of the courtroom often received only minimal finish. In this case, however, the removal of modern wainscoting from the north wall of the courtroom revealed a blocked up void, possibly left by the removal of a chair board nailer.



Above: Paving - Piazza (left) and Jail (right).

Period II – Early Nineteenth Century – Heating and Adjustments

Some time after the initial period of construction, probably around the beginning of the nineteenth century, new doorways were created on opposite sides of the courtroom, situated in the angles between the courtroom and jury rooms. Such doorways were a common alteration in T-shaped courthouses during the first half of the nineteenth century, similar entries once existed at King William and Charles City courthouses, where they allowed the attorneys to come and go without passing through a raucous and sometimes hostile crowd of spectators. According to Lounsbury, this provision reflected the growing status of the legal profession and the greater dignity accorded attorneys in the daily operations of the court.

It seems that a chimney was added at this time behind the justices' bench. In 1955, Alan McCullough, architect of the courthouse restoration, wrote to Capt. Wickham, reporting on the discovery of a chimney base *against the period I east wall*:

After seeing the little etching of the building on an APVA bulletin which showed an East Chimney (behind Judges Rostrum) we asked Mr. Lane to have a man dig under the bldg where the original E. wall was. & sure enough there is a chimney footing there – just as at King William – Do you not feel that we would be on sound ground in replacing the East Chimney – since the original bldg had it – even though it was on the orig. E. wall...I hope that you do for the East chimney is definitely a part of the orig. bldg.⁵

McCullough was mistaken to think that a chimney on the back wall of the original courtroom justified one on the later extension, but his mention of a foundation is very intriguing. Was he merely looking at the foundations seen by Eubanks in 1929, or did he really discover a chimney base? In view of McCullough's familiarity with the example at King William courthouse, it is likely that he knew a chimney base when he saw one.⁶

This chimney was probably *not* an original feature - chimneys were not commonly encountered behind the justices' benches in early Virginia courtrooms - the one at King William Courthouse, cited as a precedent by McCullough, was a nineteenth century addition. Given the customary absence of heat in eighteenth century Virginia courtrooms, this chimney, if it ever existed, was an early addition swept away by later alterations.

The addition of this chimney reflected the growing level of amenity required for public buildings at the beginning of the nineteenth century, for most of the preceding century large public spaces - churches, courtrooms, and legislative chambers - had typically remained unheated. With a few important exceptions, fireplaces and stoves were rare in such spaces until about 1800. The chimney behind the justices' platform at King William is but one example of such an addition, dating from the early nineteenth century.

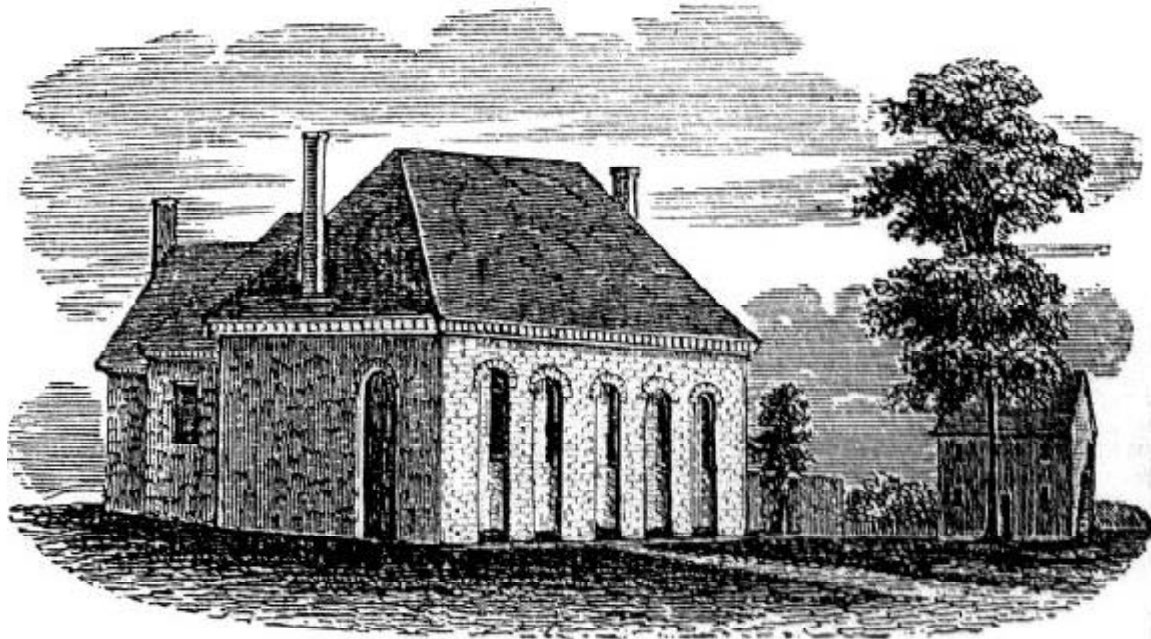
An early nineteenth century painting of Patrick Henry's argument in the Parson's Cause depicts an early Virginia courtroom of the period, though probably not the space at Hanover—there are no windows shown in the long

wall of the courtroom and the artists' depiction is incorrect in regards to tavern's location and architectural detail. Nonetheless, the painting is useful in documenting the general character of Virginia courtrooms at the time of the Hanover alterations. An important exception is the artist's positioning of certain players—the Parsons, plaintiffs in the case, appear on the platform where the justices normally sat—an obvious concession to dramatic and compositional considerations.

On the exterior of the courthouse, rubbed arches above the windows of the courtroom may date from this period. Earlier arches were usually a stretcher and a header in height. Single-stretcher arches of the sort now in place at Hanover were rare before 1790, and the present ones do not appear typical of early eighteenth century work.

Period III – 1851 to 1862 – Altering and Heating the Courtroom

Shortly before 1851 the chimney behind the justices' bench was pulled down and the courtroom extended by the addition of a small room to accommodate a new justices' bench. While visiting Hanover Courthouse in 1851, Benson Lossing remarked that, "An addition has been made to the rear, wherein is the judge's bench." The new room had a chimney on its eastern (rear) wall, replacing the earlier one torn down to make way for the addition. While this appendage is not visible in Lossing's 1851 view, it does appear in a woodcut view of the courthouse first published in Henry Howe's *Historical Collections of Virginia* (1856), illustrated below.

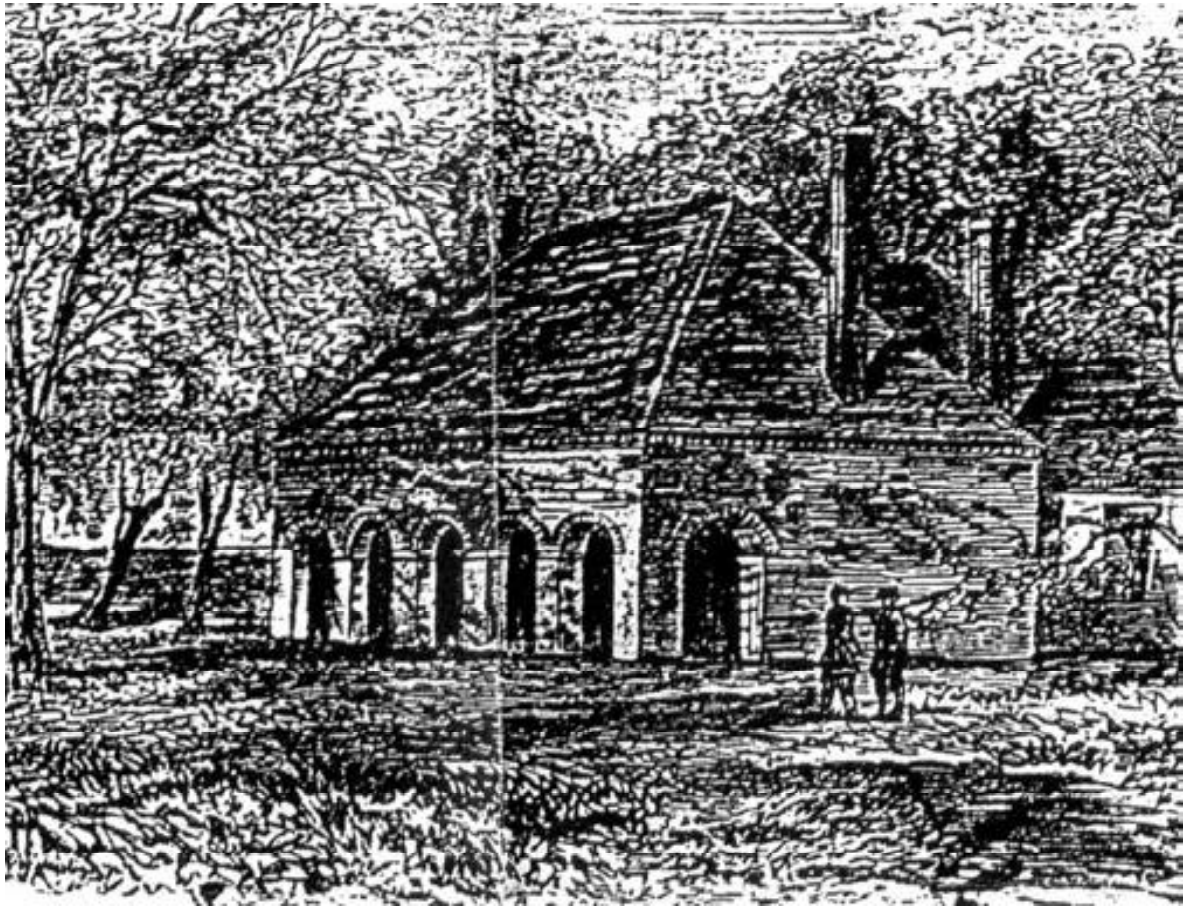


The old Court-House, Hanover.

Above: 1851 Sketch by Benson Lossing

Foundations of this room remained under the wooden floor of the courtroom and were recorded by architect Beaufort N. Eubank on a measured plan of 1929.⁷ Though Eubank concluded that this room had been a part of the original construction, he also observed that its early character and extent could not "be fixed correctly." These remnants were probably effaced during a later restoration of the courthouse building in 1954-5.

To assist in heating the courtroom, two more chimneys were added in the interior angles between the courtroom and jury rooms, where the lawyers' doorways previously stood.⁸ These chimneys are not visible in Benson Lossing's 1851 view, or in Henry Howe's 1856 woodcut, but they do appear in the 1862 sketch by Union cartographer Robert Knox Sneden.



Above: 1862 Sketch by Robert Knox Sneden - Virginia Historical Society

These side chimneys survived until the time of the 1950s restoration, Roanoke architect Beaufort N. Eubank recorded them on his 1929 measured plan, and Alan McCullough, architect of the 1950s restoration, showed them in elevation on his 1954 drawings. Moreover, a photograph from the collection of Lois Wickham, taken before the 1950s restoration, documents the general form of the south chimney, a low mass with a single set of weatherings. (see Period VII, below). This form is still discernable in the repairs to the brick wall on that side of the building, made after the chimney was demolished. The Wickham photo shows that the stack of the south chimney rose against the south wall of the courtroom.

Period IV – 1872-1895 – Repairs and Expansion

In the decades that followed the Civil War, the courthouse sustained three or perhaps four distinct campaigns of repair:

- On March 27, 1866, the court appointed commissioners to receive bids for work which was to include unspecified repairs to the courthouse and jail.
- In 1872, contractors J. H. and W. Haw performed unspecified repairs for which they received \$137.76.
- In 1883, however, the courthouse was described as being in “dangerous condition and in need of speedy repair.” Decayed timbers were to be replaced, but the court instructed that “the superintendent of public buildings will in no respect change the present shape or style of said building.” It is unclear whether these repairs were completed immediately, however, three years later there was an unsuccessful effort to move the county seat from Hanover to Ashland. It seems that General Williams Carter Wickham, and his son, Henry Taylor Wickham a Virginia state Senator led the fight to keep the county seat at Hanover.⁹

- In 1895, one Peter T. Bowles was awarded a contract for repairing the courthouse. Having purchased bricks from the demolished St. Paul's Church nearby, Bowles received \$22.50 for "4000 bricks for use of County ct. house." Presumably, his contract involved masonry repairs to the masonry walls of the courthouse.¹⁰

The unspecified work to be done by Bowles may have included far-reaching changes, the small appendage on the eastern end of the building was probably demolished at this time and the courtroom extended eastward a distance of 9' - 3 1/2". No doubt, this change reflected the changing character and growing amplitude of the county court. To avoid an overabundance of windows in the elongated courtroom, the central opening on each side was closed up, as were the fireplaces. The courtroom extension must have undone the courtroom fixtures at the eastern end of the space, and new fittings were created to replace them. The pre-1955 bar, salvaged from the courtroom at the time of the restoration, is now displayed in the Jail.



A photograph of the courtroom interior, taken prior to the restoration, leaves no doubt that this artifact, along with other courtroom fixtures present at the time, probably dated from this last episode of repair.

The photo looks eastward toward the upper end of the courtroom. Late nineteenth century courtroom fittings are visible here, including the railing now displayed in the jail, the partition separating the litigants from the judge, the judge's rostrum, and the wainscoting behind, mostly executed in matchboard. Also visible are some of the tables displayed in the jury rooms and jail, and also some of the oak chairs presently used in the courtroom.

Behind the judge's seat, the window sills appear lower than at present. These were almost certainly built this way in the 1895 extension of the courtroom, the sills of the older windows being lowered to correspond.

It also appears that the roof over the eastern end of the courtroom was reframed at this time. The evidence cited by Ronald Geraci for dating this alteration to the late nineteenth century is persuasive (see Period

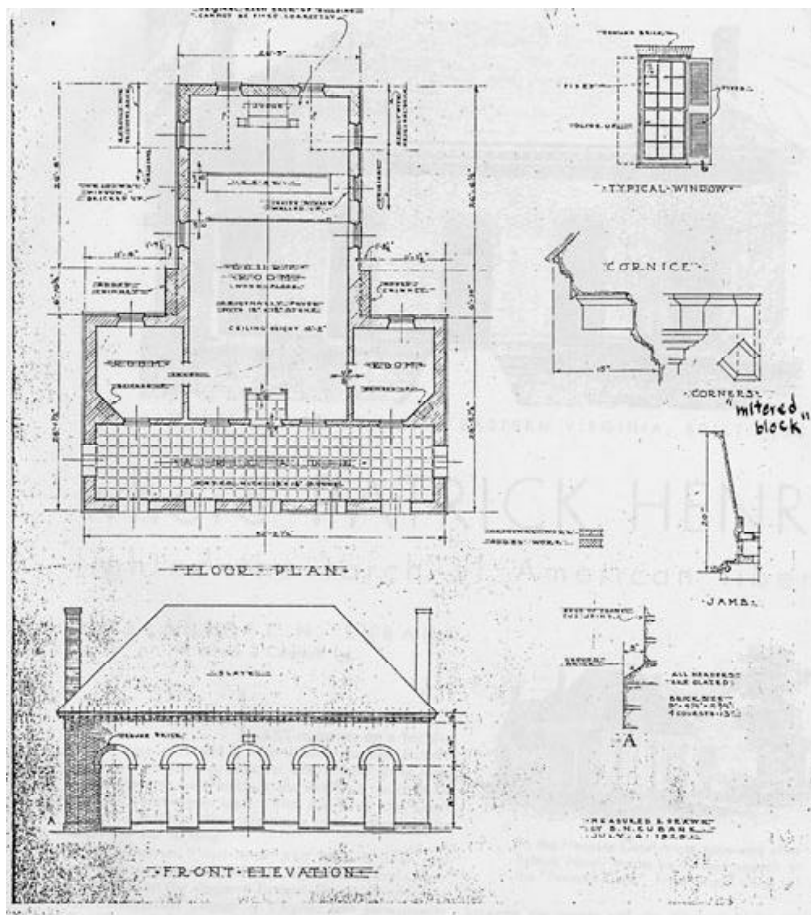


Top Left and Above Left: Newel and balustrade of bar removed from courtroom in 1954-5. Above Right: Eastern end of 1895 courtroom - bar now displayed in the jail.

VII)—the large, lower member that now spans where the rear wall of the courtroom was removed is circular-sawn, indicating that it probably dates from the second half of the nineteenth century. (However the member above this one has two wrought nails in it, together with a series of square holes for large bolts, suggesting it was once part of a composite beam. It must have spanned the courtroom at some earlier time, possibly on axis with the rear walls of the jury rooms).

Portions of the roof framing over the extension appear to be somewhat earlier than 1895 and may be reused. These include pit-sawn poplar (or gum?) rafters, sash-sawn white oak outriggers, and sash-sawn dragon beams. These are secured with cut nails having square, machine-made heads with corner tipping. Such nails are typical of the middle to late nineteenth century. The joists over the courtroom extension appear to be pine and are circular-sawn, indicating a post-1850s date. The rafters are secured with wire nails indicating a post-1885 date.

The best means of dating the courtroom extension will be dendrochronology—the science of dating buildings by the annual growth rings of their wooden members. In the near future, continuing advances in this field will make it possible to obtain reliable tree-ring dates for gum and poplar. When that time comes, the roof framing of the extension should be sampled and analyzed.



A measured plan and elevation, made in 1929 by Roanoke architect Beaufort N. Eubanks, shows the courthouse as it existed after the 1895 alterations.

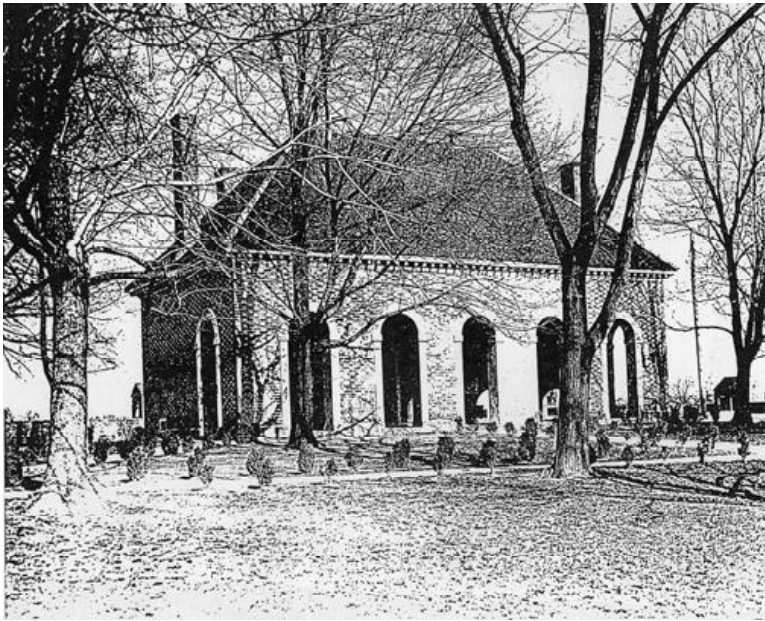
Eubanks' measured plan shows that the piazza was already paved at this time, and that the floor of the courtroom stood three risers above the piazza paving. The south jury room and the lower platform were one riser above that, and the upper platform, where the judge's rostrum stood, was still another riser higher. Eubanks' plan also shows the added chimneys flanking the courtroom, the blocked middle window on each side. The desk shown in the interior photograph and now displayed in the rear cell of the jail is shown on the plan, standing against the balustrade before the judge's rostrum. The elevation shows that the building was, by this time, covered with slate.

Period V – 1926-32 – Further Repairs

Above: 1929 Measured drawings by Beaufort N. Eubanks

By 1926, the rubbed dressings of the piazza arches were evidently spalling, for Mrs. Cardwell, director of the Hanover APVA branch, communicated with the county Board of Supervisors concerning the need for repairs. Without further consultation the supervisors ordered these repairs, and the rubbed dressings of the piazza openings were stuccoed over with cement mortar. Members of the local APVA branch voiced strong objection and voted to remove this stucco, if practicable. In 1932, the stucco was removed and unsatisfactory repairs made to the rubbed work.

By 1926, the rubbed dressings of the piazza arches were evidently spalling,



Above: Stuccoed openings of piazza, 1929-32

Period VI - 1952-57 – Restoration

Shortly after 1950, the Hanover Chapter of the APVA persuaded the Hanover County Board of Supervisors to appoint a committee for the purpose of overseeing and advising on the restoration of Hanover County Courthouse. In 1952 this committee reported that \$20,000.00 had been raised to begin the work.

By September of 1955, the work was well underway. The front wall of the courtroom and the brick walls between the courtroom and the jury rooms had been taken down, and stripping of the interior plaster was complete, revealing the arched heads of the jury room fireplaces.

original material within the walls of the old edifice. On the exterior the crude brickwork of the courtroom extension was refaced to blend with the older work of the original building.

Added to successive periods of alteration, this thorough stripping of the interior left no

Demolition of the interior courtroom walls had not been anticipated in the original scope of work, and 1955, an additional \$6500.00 was set aside for their reconstruction. Photographs taken around this time showed the work in progress, some taken before and some after the demolition of these walls. One view, looking northwest shows the front wall prior to demolition, and also piping for a radiant heating system now in place below the present slate floor.

Prompted by the discovery of an early courthouse view, illustrated on the cover of an APVA bulletin, architect Alan McCullough excavated the area inside the Period I east wall of the courtroom, where a chimney foundation was reportedly uncovered. On that basis, McCullough concluded that a chimney should be included on the east wall of the courtroom extension.¹¹



Above: South elevation - c. 1954

On June 10, 1957, the restored courthouse was dedicated. A selection of photos from the restoration follows. These were taken by Mrs. Martha Riis Moore (Mather), a photographer for the Hanover *Herald-Progress*.

Shown in this photo to the left is one of the mid-nineteenth century chimneys, added where there had earlier been doorways for the convenience of the attorneys. The chimney had a single set of weatherings and a narrow stack that ascended against the wall, penetrating the eave. The shutters are closed on the middle window of the courtroom, believed to have been blocked up in the late nineteenth century.



Taken after removal of the south chimney, the photograph to the left shows cut bricks on the south wall of the courtroom where the mid-nineteenth century chimney stood. Ghosts of the weatherings and stack are visible above, and a ghost on the back wall of the jury room shows that the chimney was about 1'-9" deep.

The arched head and the clean west jamb of the blocked fireplace are visible, together with what was probably the late-nineteenth century infilling of the opening. The bottom of this infilling represents the floor level in the public area of the courtroom during the mid-nineteenth century. If, as reported by Lois Wickham, the original paving of the courtroom was still in place at the time of the restoration, this infill would locate the original floor level about three brick courses below the top of the watertable.

The sills of the windows had been lowered to the height seen here. Thus, neither the window frames nor the shutters visible in this photo can be original. To the right of the chimney, down at the ground, is a nineteenth century ventilation hole.

Above: Removal of chimney, 1954-5.



Above Left: Courtroom interior - looking west. Above Right: Courtroom interior, looking southwest.

When the photograph to the above left was taken, the wall between the courtroom and the north jury room had already been demolished, but not the west or front wall. Thus, the ghost of the jury room partition is still visible on that front wall. The pre-1955 doorway, window frames, and sash of both rooms are visible in this west wall. On some previous occasion, the masonry had been rebuilt around these openings, indicating that the frames were probably not original. In the north wall, the present exterior doorway and the 1955 raised-panel door are visible. On the floor is piping for the under-floor heating system. The east jamb of the exterior doorway appears to have been rebuilt at some earlier date.

Piping for an under-floor heating system is visible in the photograph to the right, set over a concrete slab. The jury room wall had been taken down, making it possible to see the fireplace in that room, with its arched head. Evidence for earlier finishes on these brick walls is ambiguous, but there seems to be a horizontal ghost about 5 or 6 feet above the floor. Perhaps this represented finishes associated with the 1895 remodeling.

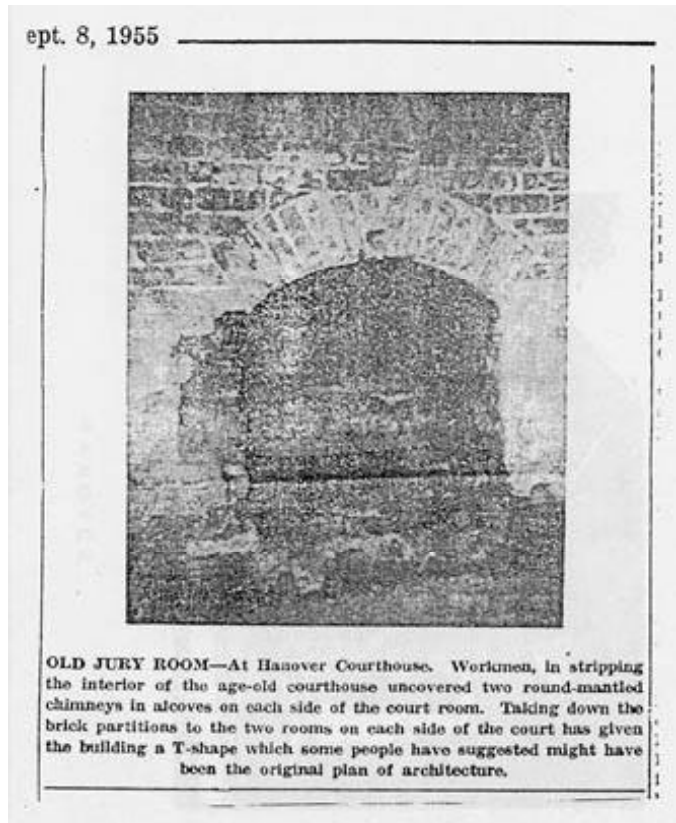


Above: Front room of the courtroom under construction, looking northeast.

Above Right: Newspaper clipping shows fireplace in north jury room.

Bottom Right: Masons repointing the north side of the piazza and jury room.

Taken from inside the piazza, the photograph on the upper left shows reconstruction of the front wall in progress. The frame of the present front doorway has been set in place and the masonry laid to it. In the background, it appears that the jury room partition has already been rebuilt in concrete block, and furring strips have been applied to the entire wall. The status of the floors at this time, in the piazza and in the courtroom, remains unclear.



Period VII – 1988-1989 – Consultants’ Studies & Subsequent Repairs

In 1988, Dr. Bruce English, chair of the Hanover Courthouse Committee for Judge Richard H. C. Taylor, 15th Judicial Circuit, persuaded the Hanover Board of Supervisors to commission a study of the air conditioning system in the courthouse attic and of the damage this system was doing to the ceiling of the courtroom.¹²

In March of 1989 the Richmond architectural/engineering firm, Torrence, Dreelin, Farthing, and Buford, Inc., completed a survey of the courthouse building and presented their findings, which included recommendations for repairs.¹³ These included:

- Renovation of the HVAC system
- Repair of exterior doors, installation of thresholds and weather stripping

- Reconstruction of the stoop at the north doorway
- Installation of a foundation drainage system
- Roof repairs, including the replacement of slates.

Moreover, in May of 1989, historical finishes consultant Frank Welsh submitted a report on the paint history of the building's exterior cornice. Welsh sampled the cornice in two locations and on the basis of those samples concluded that the early cornice had been primed with a reddish brown, oil-based paint, followed by an off-white, oil-based finish coat. Four successive finishes, of the same color followed.¹⁴

In the wake of these studies, the county funded a campaign of work aimed at correcting the problems identified in the architectural survey. This work included repairs to the roof, the courtroom ceiling, and the exterior doors, installation of lightning protection and fire alarm systems, and the installation of a new pan under the air handler in the attic.¹⁵

Costs figures were developed for foundation drainage as well, but it appears that this work was not completed at the time.¹⁶ Several additional items, including removal of the mechanical systems to an underground vault, repairs to the slate roof and complete restoration of the courtroom ceiling were never completed.¹⁷

Period VIII – 2002 - Foundation Drainage and Archaeology

Installation of a foundation drainage system was finally approved in February of 2002. Thomasson Construction Company was the contractor. Work proceeded with archaeological monitoring by Gray and Pape, Inc., Cultural Resource Consultants. Two test units were opened and, in addition, two early builder's trenches were identified during excavations for the drainage system. One of these was a three meter builder's trench by the southwestern corner of the piazza. According to the report the foundation here stood about 15.3" below grade. The artifacts seem to date the feature to the second half of the eighteenth century. This presents two possibilities, that the courthouse is later than previously believed, or that there was an episode of repair to the foundations in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries.¹⁸

Endnotes

1 This account is based in part on an earlier chronology developed in 1985 by Carl Lounsbury of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, though it departs from Lounsbury's account in certain particulars. It also draws on the documentary chronology assembled by Anne Geddy Cross and also on the additional research and chronology of Martha McCartney, presented in the opening chapter. Finally, the explanation of the supposed architectural fittings in the original interior is based on Lounsbury's "Order in the Court: Recommendations for the Restoration of the James City County Courthouse," Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, October, 1985.

2 Archaeology raises questions about the construction date of the present building. See Period VIII.

3 Richard Beeman, ed., "Trade and Travel in Post-Revolutionary Virginia: A Diary of an Itinerant Peddler, 1807-1808." *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 84:2 (April 1976), p. 179.

4 Whatever their original location, these stones are not in their original situation, having been laid with exposed mortar joists. Generally early paving was dry-laid with the edges butting. Mrs. Lois Wickham recollects that the original paving stones were present in the courtroom at the time of the 1954 restoration.

5 Alan McCullough to Captain Wickham, 2 September 1955.

6 In a 1980 letter assessing the structural condition of the roof, Richmond architect Ronald Geraci noted that the original outrigger joists for the Period I east wall had been removed and repositioned in conjunction with the courtroom expansion. He suggested that this was done in order to adjust and equalize their spacing following the removal of an earlier chimney. However, the previous outriggers were spaced on two foot centers, as was typical. They would seem, then to have had no special significance in relation to a chimney. See Ronald B. Geraci to Dr. Bruce English, 24 March 1989.

7 See Period IV. A note on Eubank's drawing reads: "Original Room back of Building – Cannot Be Fixed Correctly." Beauford N. Eubank, "Hanover Court-House in Eastern Virginia, Where Patrick Henry Lighted the Torch of American Liberty," *The American Architect*, (February 1931), p. 53. Eubank was a partner in the Roanoke firm of Eubank and Caldwell. Eubank was active between 1914 and 1953. His firm did many buildings in Roanoke, in Southwestern Virginia, and in Southside.

8 The eastern jamb of the south doorway survives behind the present wainscoting. The identification of this jamb with the second-period work arises from the scored joints it exhibits on the interior of the wall. This scoring of the joints was an early practice, but is nowhere evident in the work known to be associated with Period I. Clearly, the jamb and thus the doorway were part of the next phase of work. Judging from the framing in the roof of the extension and from the cut nails associated with this work, the modifications probably occurred sometime during the early nineteenth century.

Based on the information of Kitty Winslow, Lois Wickham reports that the chimney behind the judge's rostrum was removed at this time, however, this is unlikely since it seems had been built only recently. Memorandum, June, 2004.

9 Vertical File - Hanover County Library – "Hanover Co. - Effort to move the County Seat"

10 Wickham Memorandum, June 2004.

11 Alan McCullough to Capt. Wickham, 2 September 1955.

12 Dr. Bruce V. English to Richard Wood et al., 21 August 1989.

13 Torrence, Dreelin, Farthing and Buford, "Hanover Courthouse Renovation Study," 17 May 1989.

14 Frank S. Welsh, "Microscopical Analysis to Determine and Evaluate the Nature of Colors of the Original Surface Coatings," 30 May 1989, 3 pp.

15 H. William Metzger to Allan T. Williams, 27 November 1989.

16 *Ibid.*; Hanover County Architectural Review Board, Meeting Notice, 16 April 1991. In May of 1991, Richard R. Johnson applied to the Hanover County Architectural Review Board for permission to construct a stoop outside of the north doorway—this work was never completed. "Application for Certificate of Approval Prior to Exterior Changes," ARB 88-1, 13 February 1991.

17 *Ibid.*

18 Brad McDonald to David Butler, 25 June, 2004.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Hanover County Courthouse - Exterior



General Observations

Roof

The present slate roof may date to the 1955 restoration, when the frame of the roof was reinforced and the present copper attic vents replaced those visible in pre-1955 photos. The existing slates have been daubed with roofing cement at the hips, and from the attic one can see daylight through this covering.

Paint

Paint analysis conducted in 1989 by Frank Welsh indicates that the exterior cornice was initially primed with a reddish brown, oil-based paint, over which an off-white finish coat was applied. Thus, the present paint scheme approximates the original treatment.

Recent research has revealed that brick buildings in colonial Virginia were typically “color-washed,” covered with a transparent red coating that served to enhance the uniformity of the brickwork. At some point it would be useful to determine whether this building was color-washed also.

Foundation Drainage

In 2002, foundation drains were installed around the perimeter of the building, with archaeological monitoring performed in concert with the work.¹ The drains were bedded in gravel behind a metal spline or stop. To prevent



Above: Foundation drainage system.



Above: The Courthouse, looking southeast.

the stop from inflicting injury on unsuspecting persons, a plastic cap was placed over its protruding edge. This cap has come loose in many areas.

West Elevation - General Observations

The west side of Hanover County Courthouse is also the front. In that respect it resembled the typical Anglican church, where the altar invariably stood at the eastern end, an allusion to Christ's resurrection. Perhaps the builders of Hanover County Courthouse saw some equivalence between church and courthouse, and determined the orientation of their building accordingly. Thus, the justices' bench at the upper end of the courtroom, with its raised floor and refined finishes, would be the analog of a Christian altar.

Whatever the actual builders' intent, the structure was familiar in regards to its orientation and its situation in the middle of a large green, the latter was typical for courthouses throughout Virginia. From the road, the T-shaped building presented a broad, imposing front to the road, and the arcaded piazza invested that front with an appearance of substance and dignity, wholly appropriate to the building's weighty purpose.

Cornice

The cornice is original from the bed molding up to and including the soffit. The plain fascia and the cyma recta crown molding date from the 1955 restoration.

Doorways

The five arched openings of the piazza echoed the arcade of the Williamsburg Capitol, itself an allusion to the arcaded markets situated below town halls throughout England. Following their introduction early in the eighteenth century, these arcades became a defining attribute of Virginia courthouses and remained so for nearly a century. So close is the identification of this form with Virginia, that the Virginia Department of Transportation made it the public face of the Commonwealth when planning for rest stops on the interstate system.

Tablet

This western façade, the public face of the courthouse, has suffered fewer alterations than others, but there have been changes. Over the middle arched opening is a white marble tablet bearing the following inscription:

HANOVER
COURT HOUSE
BUILT 1735

This inscription is executed in the style of mid-nineteenth century grave stones and the stone is visible in the Benson Lossing sketch of 1851. No doubt, it was let into the wall sometime in the decade before Lossing's Hanover visit. The edges of the masonry around this plaque were parged with mortar to prevent water infiltration behind.

Brickwork

The entire front was laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers, the five arched openings of the piazza having rubbed arches, imposts and returns. The rubbed arches are composed of 43 rubbed stretchers or "voussoirs." The imposts were rebuilt in 1955, but early photos show that the originals projected beyond the face of the wall as the present ones do, and that they extended an inch or so into the clear opening. Here and at the corners of the façade the returns are rubbed back to and including the closers. On the façade (and inside the piazza) a beveled watertable makes the transition from the massive foundation to the thinner walls of the superstructure.

In 1926 the rubbed arches and returns of the courthouse were parged with cement stucco, which, after protests from members of the local APVA chapter, was removed in 1932. These removals probably damaged substantial portions of the ornamental rubbed work, and repairs that followed were wholly unsatisfactory, as can be seen in the accompanying photograph.

In the photograph below, we can see the poorly executed repairs were made on the jambs of the arched openings. To correct this problem all rubbed brick on the openings, up to and including the rubbed imposts, was replaced in the 1955 restoration. However, the new brick had prominent, yellowish inclusions, and so did not replicate the original work as well as one might wish.

The rubbed arches are all original, except the northernmost, which shows indication of having been partly rebuilt. The rubbed jambs and the piers between the arches are heavily rebuilt, as are the areas above the arches. Early work in the lower zone of the wall is mostly repointed. On the northwest corner of the building, the rubbed work, beginning with the watertable, is rebuilt to a height of 13 courses.



Above: Repainting the Courthouse walls, c. 1955.

Piazza

Ceiling

The ceiling of the piazza was originally plastered, and what appears to be the original lathing remains in place and is visible from the attic. However, the plaster does not appear to be early.

Scuttles

Over the southern jury room window is a large scuttle, about 2'-6" square. This succeeds an earlier, smaller opening, identical to that still extant at the north end of the piazza. The enlargement of this opening was probably associated with the installation of an air handler and ductwork in the attic during the mid 1970s.

Walls

In the 1955 restoration the front wall of the courtroom was pulled down and rebuilt, and the doors and windows all replaced. The new wall was laid in glazed-header Flemish bond, with scored joints. The jambs and flat arches of the windows were rubbed.

The diminutive thickness of this wall might provide opportunities for getting utilities up to the attic if mechanical work is to be done here. It is unclear whether the depth of this wall replicated the original, or whether the front wall had a water-table like the exterior walls of the piazza. Under present circumstances, the doors and windows have no embrasure. Additional investigations below the floor and in the attic may be necessary to settle this question.

If the front wall of the courtroom were originally parged, the character of the early wall might have been somewhat simpler than the Flemish-bond, glazed-header wall, with scored joints, that we now see. The granite sill of the present doorway is associated with the 1955 restoration.

In masonry arcades of this sort, it was common to extend the plaster of the ceiling to the interior face of the arcade, extending as far down as the impost—*and this has been done at Hanover County Courthouse. (The stucco or plaster on the walls is not painted or whitewashed, but the ceiling is).*

Thomas Jefferson's arcades at the University of Virginia offer several well-preserved examples of this practice. In domestic buildings, moreover, it was common to plaster the wall of the house itself under a porch. The c. 1770 porticos at Shirley are the earliest examples of this treatment the author has seen.

The previous exterior photograph, taken during the restoration, but before the front wall of the courtroom came down, shows that this wall had been parged or plastered at some point. (Posted on this wall, were advertisements and legal notices typical of early courthouse settings). Whether the plaster was an original treatment here remains unclear. We can be certain however that none of the existing plaster inside the piazza is old.

Windows

The present windows, with their 9/9 sash, date from the 1955 restoration. The profiles for sill, architraves and sash follow conventional eighteenth century designs.

Doorway

The double-width doorframe, the two-light-high transom sash and the granite sill all date to 1955. The doors were repaired in 1991. In deference to modern fire codes, these doors swing out—in the eighteenth century, they would have swung in. The mortise lockset is mounted in the north door. The cylinder lock has a pivoting oval cover plate of brass. The doors swing on modern butt hinges which are visible from the exterior, owing to the direction of their swing.

Each door is three-panel design, laid out in the conventional eighteenth century fashion, with a short upper panel, and a broad lock rail in the middle. The panels are raised on both sides.

Floor

The present floor consists of eighteenth century paving stones set in Portland cement mortar. This mortar indicates that the stones cannot be in their original locations. Indeed, it may be that they came here from the courtroom. This supposition is based on Lois Wickham's recollection that in 1955 the paving stones were still present under the raised wooden floor of the courtroom. Later photographs show that these stones were replaced by a concrete slab on which the piping for an under-floor heating system was installed. Clearly, the stones were removed from the courtroom, and it is likely that they were reused here. Some were cut to fit within the portico footprint, and within each of the arched openings, single pieces of stone formed a border for this earlier paving. These stones are gray sandstone, and exhibit the form of "Chiclets," possibly because they have been inverted. In any case, the surfaces of some have spalled.

Judging from the vertical jambs and closers at the bottom of the arched openings, the floor of the piazza was probably raised sometime after the original construction. The 1955 photograph shows that this change had already occurred by the time of the restoration. The photograph on the next page shows the jamb of the arched

opening extending down beyond the piazza floor. The 1955 brickwork below the stone generally cuts into the sides of the original jambs. Also the jambs have been cut back to create some thickness for the stuccoed reveal.

Bulletin Board

A glazed wooden case for posting notices is mounted on the east piazza wall, just south of the front doorway. 4'-0" square, it has a hinged door, and the cabinet hardware used suggests that the whole assembly dates to the 1950s restoration.



Above: North jamb of arched opening.

South Elevation – Piazza and South Jury Room

Chimney

The chimney stack is rebuilt, dating from the 1955 restoration. In plan the stack is three stretchers and a header wide by two stretchers and a header deep. This layout is based on a surviving remnant of the original stack, still visible in the attic. The chimney appears to have been flashed in recent times with stainless steel.

Cornice

The cornice is original from the bottom of the bed molding up to and including the soffit. The plain fascia and the cyma recta crown molding date from the 1955 restoration.

Walls

Pre-1955 photos show a ventilation opening in the foundation, which was closed up in the restoration. This and other repairs are recorded on the measured elevations that accompany this report (drawing A6). The repairs are especially prevalent over the arched opening, and in the middle of the wall, where a nineteenth century foundation vent was closed up in the 1950s restoration.

The rubbed corners of the building are rebuilt to a height of 27 courses on the southwest corner and 14 courses on the opposite corner.



In the upper zone of the wall, the masonry remains in remarkably good shape, and so provides a reliable example of the original workmanship.

Arched Opening

The arch appears to be entirely original, but the rubbed returns and impostes of this opening all date from the 1955 restoration. Below the elevation of the piazza floor, closers are visible on both jambs, suggesting that the piazza floor was originally lower than the existing pavement.

Left: South elevation - Piazza and South Jury Room.

Hose Bib

A cast iron hose bib stands about 2'-0" from the southeast corner of the jury room, emerging from the gravel of the foundation drainage system.

Lightning Protection

A cable for the lightning protection system rises at the southwest corner of the building. It turns and runs along the bottom of the cornice to the middle of the wall, where it branches to protect the chimney.



Left: East Elevation - South Jury Room.

East Elevation – South Jury Room

Cornice

A portion of this cornice is entirely modern, extending out about 2'-2" from the interior corner of the jury courtroom. Otherwise, the cornice is original from the bottom edge of the bed molding up to and including the soffit. The plain fascia and the cyma recta crown molding date from the 1950s restoration. Pre-restoration photos indicate that the antebellum chimney on the side of the courtroom did not impinge on this area. To assist in ventilating the attic, eight holes have been drilled in the soffit.

Walls

The masonry of this wall is largely original, having been laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers. There have been substantial repairs, recorded on the measured elevations that accompany this report (drawing A5).

Repairs are most visible below the window, the sill of which had been lowered in the 1895 remodeling and returned to its original height in the 1955 restoration. The throating below the wooden sill dates from the restoration.

The midsection of the foundation has also been heavily repaired, probably a consequence of closing up a nineteenth century foundation vent. The present grade may now be lower than the bottom of the original wall, which is exposed here.

Window

The present window, with its 9/9 sash, dates to the 1955 restoration. Profiles for the sill, the architraves and the sash follow conventional eighteenth century designs.

Stoop

See South Elevation – Courtroom.

Electrical Devices and Mechanical Equipment

Electrical service formerly came into the building by overhead wires, just below the cornice, and a wall-mounted fitting with three insulators remains from that earlier installation. Electrical service is now buried and emerges at the southeast corner of the jury room to connect with a wall-mounted meter. Conduits from this meter feed the building, the condenser nearby, and the air handler in the attic. All of these circuits have their own disconnects, as does a photo electric cell mounted nearby, probably for activation of the exterior lighting.

From the condenser just south of the building, insulated supply lines and uninsulated return lines run from the condenser along the top of the watertable, turning up on the far side of the window and ascending to the attic. In this same path are two condensate lines, one of which frequently discharges water next to the foundation.

South Elevation - Courtroom

Cornice

Following removal of an antebellum chimney at the interior angle formed by the jury and court rooms, the cornice was completely rebuilt from that intersection out to a point about 7'-4" from the corner. From this point to the southeast corner of the Period I courtroom, the cornice is entirely original. Beyond that point, the cornice on the courtroom extension is composed almost entirely of original material, probably reused during the 1895 renovation. To assist in ventilating the attic, eight holes have been drilled in the soffit.



Above: South elevation - Courtroom.

Walls

A substantial portion of this wall was rebuilt in the 1955 restoration. At the eastern end, the course masonry of the late nineteenth century extension presented a jarring contrast with the richness of the eighteenth century work. To mask this difference, the masonry walls of the extension were entirely refaced. Thus, all masonry from the east jamb of the middle window back to the exterior corner of the extension dates to the restoration. In what remained of the original wall, five major corrections were necessary to return the work to its early appearance:

- All window sills had been lowered in the 1895 renovation of the building and these sills were returned to their original height.
- Rubbed returns and arches of all the windows were evidently in a poor state of repair and so were completely rebuilt.
- A large ventilation hole had been punched through the foundation (below the middle window), and this was closed up.
- The antebellum chimney that had stood at the interior angle formed by the courtroom and jury room had to be demolished and the wall repaired, affecting all brickwork down to grade. In the process it was necessary to reinstate an early doorway, recreating the rubbed work around the opening.

Given this lengthy list of repairs, there is less original masonry on this wall than one would initially suppose, and this makes it difficult to identify evidence for the early courtroom interior.

On this elevation is what appears to be a blocked air hole for ventilating the space under the justices' platform. The date of this opening remains unclear.

Windows

The present windows, with their 9/9 sash, date from the 1955 restoration. Profiles for the sill, the architraves and the sash follow conventional eighteenth century designs. What is now the middle window had been blocked up from the interior during the late-nineteenth century renovation, and had to be reopened.

Doorway

The present doorway dates to the 1955 restoration when the chimney that had occupied this location was pulled down and an earlier opening recreated. The architraves of the doorframe are of anomalous, non-eighteenth century design, having been replaced in 1991. The doors, also replaced at this time, do not conform to conventional early design, the widths of the rails and stiles being too wide for the period. The granite sill dates from the 1955 restoration.

Stoop

Construction of the present foundation drainage system in 2002 required removal of the stoop that once served the south doorway of the courtroom. This stoop extended from beyond the east side of the doorway to the rear wall of the jury room. A remnant of mortar from that installation still adheres to the jury room foundation, and also to the south wall of the courtroom, especially under the sill. The top of the stoop stood at the same elevation as the bottom of this sill.



Above: East elevation - Courtroom.

East Elevation - Courtroom

General Observations

This extension of the courtroom dates from the late nineteenth century. During the 1950s restoration, the entire addition was refaced to match the old courthouse. Thus all brickwork on this elevation and both windows date to the 1950s.

Chimney

The chimney stack also dates from the 1955 restoration. Restoration architect Alan McCullough argued for adding this chimney to the courtroom extension, citing archaeological evidence that the courtroom had such a chimney *prior to* the extension, and is thus non-historical.

Cornice

The cornice on this east wall of the courthouse is composed entirely of original materials, probably reused at the time of the 1895 extension.

North Elevation - Courtroom

Cornice

From the east end of the Period I courtroom to a point about 7' -11 ½" from the interior corner by the jury room, the cornice is original from the bottom edge of the bed molding up to and including the soffit. The plain fascia and the cyma recta crown molding date from the 1955 restoration. Pre-restoration photos indicate that the antebellum chimney on the side of the courtroom did not impinge on this area. To assist in ventilating the attic several holes have been drilled in the soffit.



Above: North elevation - Courtroom.

explanation is that this rubbed jamb was laid up in 1955 to match the others, using the later mortar. All the rubbed window arches are late.

What may be two of the original air vents are blocked up, being more or less aligned with the jambs of the westernmost window.

Windows

The present windows, with their 9/9 sash, date from the 1955 restoration. Profiles for the sill, the architraves and the sash follow conventional eighteenth century designs. What is now the middle window was blocked up during the late-nineteenth century renovation, and had to be reopened during the restoration.

Doorway

The present doorway dates to the 1955 restoration when the chimney that had occupied this location was pulled down and the earlier opening recreated. The architraves of the doorframe are of anomalous, non-eighteenth century design, having been replaced in 1991. The doors, also replaced at this time, do not conform to conventional early design, the widths of every rail and stile being wrong for the period. The granite sill dates from the 1955 restoration.

Stoop

Here, as on the south side of the building, construction of the present foundation drainage system in 2002 required removal of the stoop that once served the doorway of the courtroom. This stoop extended from beyond the east side of the doorway back to the rear wall of the jury room. A remnant of mortar from that installation still adheres to the jury room foundation, and also to the south wall of the courtroom, especially under the sill. The top of the stoop stood at the same elevation as the bottom of this sill.

Walls

Previous observations concerning the walls of the south courtroom elevation are applicable here. The outline of the original chimney stack can be read in the repairs above the present doorway.

In contrast with the south windows of the courtroom, the early windows on this northern side all retain their original rubbed returns, with the original mortar intact. Curiously, the eastern side of the easternmost window also incorporates what may be early rubbed brick, though the mortar is late. This cannot be an early jamb if the extension of the courtroom occurred in the late nineteenth century. The likely



Above: East elevation - North Jury Room.

East Elevation – North Jury Room

Cornice

The cornice is original from the bottom of the bed molding up to and including the soffit. The plain fascia and the cyma recta crown molding date from the 1955 restoration. Pre-restoration photos indicate that the antebellum chimney on the side of the courtroom did not impinge on this area. However, the repairs may be a consequence of moisture problems associated with the chimney. To assist in ventilating the attic six holes have been drilled in the soffit.

Wall

This wall remains largely intact, but as on other elevations, a large ventilation hole had been punched through the foundation at some point and was closed back up in the restoration. Much of the watertable has been rebuilt, especially at the end adjacent to the courtroom. Lower courses of the foundation are in need of cleaning and repointing.

To return the window sill to its original height, the area below the window also had to be rebuilt. It follows that the throating below the wooden sill also dates to the restoration.



Above: North elevation - Piazza and North Jury Room.

North Elevation – Piazza and North Jury Room

Chimney

The chimney stack is rebuilt, dating from the 1955 restoration. In plan the stack is three stretchers and a header wide by two stretchers and a header deep. This layout is based on a surviving remnant of the original stack, still visible in the attic. The chimney appears to have been flashed in recent times with stainless steel.

Cornice

The cornice is original from the bottom edge of the bed molding up to and including the soffit. The plain fascia and the cyma recta crown molding date from the 1955 restoration. To assist in ventilating the attic several holes have been drilled in the soffit.

Walls

Much of the original brickwork remains, especially up high. The wall has been heavily repointed in the lower two thirds of its height. In the lower half of the wall, there are very few glazed headers, perhaps indicative of massive repairs on the lower wall—or simply spalling of the glazed finish. Curiously, the headers seem to be darker in the middle third of the wall, than in the upper third.

Arched Opening

Most of the rubbed arch has been rebuilt at some unknown date, probably prior to 1955, as the repairs are not consistent with the 1955 work. The rubbed return and impost on the east side of the opening date to the restoration. On the west side of the opening, the rubbed work is largely intact.

The jambs of the opening extend well below the piazza floor but are disturbed, so it is difficult to know whether they originally did so. Elsewhere, it looks as if the jambs continued downward at least to what is now grade and that the piazza floor was originally several inches lower.

Lightning Protection

A cable for the lightning protection system rises at the northwest corner of the building. It turns and runs along the bottom of the cornice to the middle of the wall, where it branches to protect the chimney.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Hanover County Courthouse - Interior



Above: Courtroom interior, looking east.

Courtroom

Ceiling

The present coved ceiling with its acoustical tiles is non-historical and dates to the 1955 restoration. The ceiling is blueboard with a skim coat of plaster. The tiles in the flat of the ceiling are enclosed by a wooden molding. The framing above this ceiling is original, however, so the present ceiling height is historically correct.

For present purposes, the coved ceiling is useful as a reflective surface for fluorescent lighting fixtures installed behind the cornices, though the cove and the lower situation of the cornice are not historical.

Some time after the restoration, eight supply and four return registers were punched through this ceiling, perhaps in the mid-1970s when the present air conditioning equipment was installed. The supply registers are evenly spaced on both sides of the courtroom, over its entire length. The four return registers are grouped at the west end of the room, over the front windows. An area of the tile ceiling, six by six tiles in extent, had been replaced but later damaged again by water, presumably condensate from the air handler.

At the upper end of the courtroom, opposite the middle windows, a series of tiles are partly detached from the ceiling and appear ready to fall.

In the original courtroom, the ceiling would have been flat, and the cornice, if there was one, would have butted to this ceiling.

Walls

Like the ceiling, the plastered walls are really blueboard on wooden furring with a skim coat of plaster. All of this dates to the 1955 restoration.

Memorials

Mounted on both sides of the courtroom, in the space between the exterior doorway and the nearest window, is a bronze memorial plaque. On the north wall, the plaque commemorates the life of William Brockenborough Newton, Colonel of the 4th Virginia Cavalry, killed at the battle of Kelly's Ford. The bronze plaque is 1'-3 7/8" high x 1'-9 7/8" wide. With the surrounding oak frame, the entire memorial is 1'-6" high x 2'-0 3/8" wide.

The bronze plaque on the south wall commemorates the service of county clerk, Francis A. Taylor, who served the county circuit court in various capacities from 1928 to 1963. The plaque measures 1'-4" high x 1'-10" wide. With the walnut surround, the entire monument measures 1'-7" high x 2'-1" wide.

Wainscoting

The entire perimeter of the room is wainscoted. In the lower end of the courtroom, this wainscoting is 4'-1" high, finished on the top with a dado cap that features a torus. At the upper end of the courtroom, this torus becomes the nosing for the window stools, and behind the judge's seat, the torus of the surbase on the paneled wall. All is raised-panel work, fashioned in the conventional eighteenth century style, though without visible pegs. All wainscoting is applied over blueboard skimmed with plaster.

Windows

The windows at the upper end of the courtroom have deep, splayed embrasures, finished with the flat plank jambs and heads. The openings are trimmed with double architraves that die against the stools. The muntin profiles of the 9/9 sash accord with standard colonial details.

Owing to the diminutive thickness of the front (west) wall, the window openings have no embrasures. Because the sills of these windows stand well above the torus molding of the dado cap, the architraves trim all four sides of the opening.

West Door

See Architectural Description and Analysis - Hanover County Courthouse Exterior - West Elevation.

South Jury Room Door

This is a standard, six-panel door, having raised panels and ovolos on the courtroom side, and flat panels with unmolded rails and stiles on the jury room side. The door is assembled without pegs.

The door swings from the east jamb on reproduction H-L hinges, surface-mounted with Phillips-head screws textured to present an "antique" appearance. The door is secured by a reproduction iron rimlock.

South Exterior Door

See Architectural Description and Analysis - Hanover County Courthouse Exterior - South Elevation - Courtroom

North Jury Room Door

The observations concerning the south jury room door are applicable here. Like that door, this one swings from the east jamb.

North Exterior Door

See Architectural Description and Analysis - Hanover County Courthouse Exterior - North Elevation - Courtroom

Floor

The paving at the lower end of the courtroom appears to be a cleft bluestone, reportedly from Pennsylvania. The individual stones are 17 ½” square, so that, with ½” of grout the paving module is 18” x 18.”

The original stones may be probably reused in the piazza, though the 1929 Eubank drawing shows that the piazza was already paved at the time. In any case, the present paving may have been turned face down to obtain a new surface. Originally, they would have been dry-laid without mortar or grout between.

Within the Bar

The eastern end of the courtroom is cordoned off by the bar, which consists of a molded railing, newels, and turned balusters, the latter being similar to those at the Nelson House, in Yorktown, VA.



Within this balustrade, the lower platform stands one riser above the stone floor of the courtroom. The wooden flooring is clear, edge-grain southern yellow pine in varying widths. Here and on the upper platform the flooring is face-nailed with finish cut nails.

On the lower level of the platform are three desks for lawyers, plaintiffs, defendants, etc. These have oak tops; the sides and front are raised-panel wainscoting. On the front of each desk a low wainscot screen shields books and papers from the view of judge and jury. Under each desk and on the front as well, are microphone jacks. Also located below these desks, against the face of the second platform, are registers for convection of warm air from a radiant heating system under the platform.



The second level of the platform stands two risers above the first, and was reserved for the use of jurors, who apparently sat to either side of the judge’s rostrum. Under the windows on the second platform were a series of sixteen registers to allow for the convection of warm air from the heating system below.



The judge’s rostrum consists of a third platform raised two risers above the second. On this upper platform, the judge was seated behind a wainscot desk and side bar. Behind the judge’s seat is a projecting wall, resembling the breast of a chimney. This is finished, floor to ceiling, with paneling—flush boards below the surbase and raised-panel wainscot above.

Clockwise from top: Bar, Judge’s Rostrum and Desks.

Investigation of Evidence for Early Courtroom Fixtures

General Remarks

The present study represented a rare opportunity to look behind the existing finishes of the courtroom and thus learn more about its early fittings and finishes of the courtroom. The side walls are the only location the original walls remain. On those side walls, only those sections between the east extension and the side doorway areas

remain intact. Within that short zone of each side wall, only the portion between the bar and the doorway could be revealed without major expense.

North Wall

Wainscoting was removed from the north wall of the courtroom, in that portion between the bar and the north exterior doorway. Furring strips for the blueboard mounted behind the paneling were not removed. At a point 5'-1" east of the exterior doorway, beginning two courses above the floor, was a filled joist pocket. This anomaly corresponded with no opening or other feature on the exterior. Possibly, the pocket was associated with some earlier feature of the courtroom, such as a sheriff's box. The masonry jamb of the doorway appeared to have been rebuilt.²

Below the bronze plaque, two courses below the top of the opening in the wall finish are two glazed headers with oversized mortar joints around them. These bricks probably filled an earlier void, perhaps for a nailer associated with some sort of early finish - a chair board, perhaps.



Above Left: North wall revealed. Above Right: Detail of joist pocket.

South Wall

Removal of paneling from the south wall revealed *two* pockets, both similar to that seen on the opposite wall, and one of these in a corresponding location. Again, these anomalies seem to have been joist pockets associated with some early feature like a sheriff or cryer's box.

The brickwork has closers adjoining the south doorway, and the mortar joints in this area are scored, a practice usually associated with eighteenth century work. Reaching behind the architrave of the doorway, one could feel the early masonry jamb. Evidently, this opening was simply filled with masonry when the antebellum chimney was added here.

Conclusions

These investigations uncovered a filled void in the north wall of the courtroom. This may have been for a nailer associated with some early finish element, like a chair board.

Also uncovered were three joist pockets, two on the south wall and one on the north. They do not relate to an earlier raised floor in the courtroom:



Above Left: South wall revealed. Above Right: Detail of filled joist pocket.

- Since the pockets were closed *prior to* the 1950s, they *cannot* relate to the raised floor present in 1954. (This floor had probably been installed in 1895, contemporary with cutting in the foundation vents and blocking the antebellum fireplaces).
- The antebellum fireplaces were positioned in such a way that a raised floor would have been impossible during the period they were in operation—from about 1851 to 1895.
- Earlier doorways created for the use of attorneys indicate that the floor level had not been raised during the time of their existence—from the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century to c. 1851 when the chimneys were built.
- What we know of eighteenth century courtrooms makes it unlikely that any raised floor existed prior to the addition of the side doorways. This floor had always been paved, judging from Lois Wickham’s recollection that stone pavers were still present under the 1895 raised floor of the courtroom.

If the filled pockets in the side walls are not related to a raised floor, they must reflect features from an earlier courtroom, perhaps boxes for cryer and sheriff. Investigations behind the paneling on the platform would be useful in plotting the full extent of these features.

North Jury Room

Ceiling

The ceiling is covered with acoustical tiles. Apart from repairs, these tiles date to the 1950s restoration.

Cornice

The cornice consists of a crown molding planted on a beaded fascia. The crown molding is applied against the underside of the acoustical tile and so must date to the 1950s restoration.

Walls

As in the courtroom, the walls here consist of blueboard over wood furring, skimmed with white-coat plaster. All trim is applied over this finish.



Far Left: North jury room fireplace, facing northwest.

Left: South jury room fireplace, facing southwest.

West Window

Previous observations concerning the west windows of the courtroom are applicable here.

East Window

The observations concerning the windows at the upper end of the courtroom are applicable here.

Door

See Architectural Description and Analysis - Hanover County Courthouse Interior - Courtroom - North Jury Room Door.

Fireplace

The fireplace and chimney stand in the northwest corner of the room. The flue is closed off and the fireplace is non-functioning. The firebox has straight jams and is paved with a single piece of stone, matching that used elsewhere in the courthouse interior. The opening has an arched head, following the original, and a plaster surround which is painted black.

Chimneypiece

The chimneypiece is a simple frame, consisting of two stiles and a head rail, all beaded on the inner edge, the latter following the segmental curve of the opening. The cyma backband is reversed to face outward, and a cove added on its inner margin.

Chairboard and Base

The chairboard is 5 ½" wide and beaded on both edges. The upper edge stands 3'-0" above the stone floor. It is applied over the plaster skim coat/blueboard substrate. The base is 5 ½" high, and is beaded on the upper edge. It is applied over the plaster skim coat/blueboard substrate.

Floor

Earlier observations concerning the courtroom floor are applicable here.

Furniture

The pine table with turned legs and the oak chairs in this room are part of the historical furnishings of the courthouse and should be treated with utmost care. This table, or one of its companions, is visible in the photo of the pre-1955 courtroom.

South Jury Room (Judge's Robing Room)³

Ceiling

The ceiling is covered with acoustical tiles. Apart from repairs, these date to the 1950s restoration.

Walls

See Architectural Description and Analysis - Hanover County Courthouse Interior - North Jury Room.

Windows

See Architectural Description and Analysis - Hanover County Courthouse Interior - North Jury Room.

Door

See Architectural Description and Analysis - Hanover County Courthouse Interior - North Jury Room. Here, too, the door swings into the jury room from the east jamb.

Fireplace

See Architectural Description and Analysis - Hanover County Courthouse Interior - North Jury Room.

Chimneypiece

The lower chimneypiece is similar to the North Jury Room. Above this chimneypiece, however, was an extra shelf, possibly installed with the intent of identifying this space as a room for justices, rather than jury.

Floor

See Architectural Description and Analysis - Hanover County Courthouse Interior - North Jury Room.

Chairboard

See Architectural Description and Analysis - Hanover County Courthouse Interior - North Jury Room.

Base

See Architectural Description and Analysis - Hanover County Courthouse Interior - North Jury Room.

Furniture

The two pine tables in this room probably date from the middle of the nineteenth century and so represent the earliest known remnant of the Hanover County Courtroom interior. They should be jealously guarded.

Attic

General Observations

The 1955 restoration impacted this area significantly, the old roof covering was removed, (including metal copings on the ridges and hips), and a substantial portion of the roof was reframed at this time. A series of ridge ventilators, probably relics of the 1895 courtroom extension, were discarded and the present louvered vents were installed. Those areas of the eaves affected by removal of the antebellum chimneys were reframed and the cornice repaired.

In spite of these changes, much early fabric remains in the attic. This material presents a chronological puzzle, for which dendrochronology can probably provide the solution.

Attic Floor Framing

The early framing of the attic floor remains largely intact (see accompanying measured plan, drawing A2). The original joists were fashioned from southern yellow pine, measuring 7 ½" high x 4 wide in section. These notch two inches down over the wall plate, a 6" high x 10 ¼" wide member of southern yellow pine. In the front range

of the building the joists run east-west. Near each end of this range is a chimney girt of southern yellow pine. Outriggers and dragon beams frame into the outer face of each girt. From these smaller members the roof hips over the jury rooms are framed and the end cornices hung.

The east-west floor framing over the west end of the building and the north-south framing of the rear wing met over the courtroom, on alignment with the rear walls of the jury rooms. The beam that once supported the east ends of the front joists was removed in 1955 and replaced with a large, circular-sawn member, fashioned from yellow pine and secured with wrought nails.

At the east end of the courtroom at least two campaigns of construction are evident. The Period I courtroom was framed with a hipped roof, having dragon beams at the corners and outriggers extending over the east wall. Late in the nineteenth century the courtroom was extended and the original east wall—together with the wooden plate above it—were removed, leaving only a small stump of wall and plate at each end. To support the outriggers of the original hip, a new beam, spanning the width of the courtroom, was installed. Fashioned from circular-sawn, southern yellow pine, this beam notched over and bore on the remaining stumps of the old plate. The character of this member suggests a late nineteenth or early twentieth century date for the courtroom extension.

Above, and just to the west of this member is another, much earlier beam, possibly dating to Period I, which seems to have come from some other part of the building. Fashioned from southern yellow pine, this beam cannot be a remnant of the old plate, since it is longer than the gap between the remaining pieces of that member.

Instead, it seems to have been part of a composite beam. In the top face is a series of square holes on 1'-5" centers. Each of these holes seems to have accommodated a 5/8" square pin, almost certainly of iron. Above each hole is the deep impression of a square bolt head. Two wrought nails in the member's top face attest to its early use. In Period I, this remnant was probably part of a composite beam that spanned the courtroom to receive the east ends of the front joists.

Beyond the beams that replaced old east wall of the courtroom are three circular-sawn joists, running in a north south direction. Sash-sawn outriggers of white oak are tenoned through the easternmost of these joists, and at each corner a dragon beam of white oak is toe-nailed into this same joist. The nails used in these connections are of a type common from the middle to the late nineteenth century, supporting the supposition that the present courtroom extension came relatively late in the building's history.

Roof Framing

The framing of the courthouse roof—i.e., everything above the false plates—was extensively repaired during the late nineteenth century and again in the middle of the twentieth century. However, some original fabric remains undisturbed on the front slope of the piazza roof, in the portion between the hips. Indeed, most of the rafters and collars seem to be original in this portion of the roof. The Period I rafters are typically made of hewn and pit-sawn southern yellow pine, measuring 4 1/2" high x 3 1/2" wide in section. The rafters stand on a board false plate of pine, 7/8" thick by 11 1/4" wide. The collar ties are also made of hewn and pit-sawn pine, these being 4 1/4" high x 3 1/2" wide in section. Only the front rafters and collars appear to survive in this area. Some reused material, most of it poplar, has been used as cripple rafters in reframing the hips, probably during the 1955 restoration, as they are consistently secured with wire nails. However, deep impressions of eighteenth century rose-head framing nails indicate that these members have come from a similar context in the original building.

Reused material, mostly poplar, was used in re-framing the hips of the late nineteenth century courtroom extension. In both locations, the rafters bear the impressions of wrought nail heads at the connections with the present hip rafters, which are late, being circular-sawn, southern yellow pine. The present connections are wire-nailed, suggesting that the rebuilding occurred in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. The presence of the reused poplar rafters with early nail evidence suggests that the hips of the roof were originally framed with that material.

There seems to have been two phases of wire-nailed construction in the courthouse roof. The earlier of these is characterized by circular-sawn rafters of pine, wire-nailed, yet fashioned in traditional sizes. The later period features circular-sawn rafters of pine, having modern, sectional dimensions—2 x 8, 2 x 10, etc. These seem to “double up” the earlier framing and so represent the installation of a slate roof, perhaps in 1955.



Fragment – Door Panel

At the east end of the courtroom attic is a fragment of an early door panel used to shore up one of the A/C supply ducts. Both edges are lost but the panel was originally 2'- 1 ½" long. It is very weathered and so was once part of an exterior door. It seems to be covered with white paint. This paint stops were the rails and stiles once covered the margins of the panel.



Fragment – Crown Molding

Close by the panel fragment was a piece of crown molding. It appears to have been part of the exterior cornice, as the paint is quite alligatored, with reddish brown under later coats of white, precisely the sequence of colors reported by Frank Welsh for the exterior cornice in 1989. The remnant is 7'-5 ¼" long.

Uppermost: Door panel fragment. Above: Crown molding fragment.

Endnotes

1 The work was performed by Gary and Pape, Cultural Resources Consultants. See Brad McDonald to David Butler, 25 June 2002.

2 It is unlikely that this pocket was associated with the previous raised floor, shown in the Eubanks plan of 1929. First the mortar and brick used in closing up the pocket appears to be quite early, and in any case does not match those used in the 1950s restoration. And though the convectors in the floor of the platform made it difficult to see under the walls below, the apparent absence of such pockets on the side walls of the courtroom extension also favors an earlier date for the one uncovered here.

3 Lois Wickham reports that the south room functioned as a robing room for the judge: “It was always used that way while Judge Simkins was there. After the new Courthouses were built and they had the “Parsons Cause” the Actors used the Jury Room to dress and the tables and chairs were moved to the robing [sic] room give the actors more room.” Memorandum, Lois L. Wickham, June, 2004.

CONDITIONS SURVEY

Hanover County Courthouse - Exterior



West Elevation of the Hanover County Courthouse

Roof

All roof surfaces have been covered with Buckingham slate, although it is quite likely that the original roof was covered with rounded butt wood shingles. The slate roof appears in photographs dating to the turn of the twentieth century, but evidence found in the courthouse suggests that the first slate roof was removed and reinstalled during the 1955 restoration project. The weathered appearance of the slates may be evidence that the earlier shingles were removed and later reused on the roof, perhaps interspersed with modern shingles. In raking light, it can be discerned that there are many areas or patches of slates that differ from the surrounding slates. The slates within these areas are both thicker and wider than the uniformly narrow (approximately 6" or so) surrounding slates and since these characteristics are commonly associated with modern slate preparation practices, it is likely that these patches are areas where original slates have failed and have subsequently been replaced.

It is apparent that all of the roof flashings and details date from the 1954 restoration or later. The valley flashings (or pans) are copper, and each has an



Above: In raking light many patches of roof shingles can be easily discerned because the later shingles do not match the thickness of the earlier shingles.

inverted “V” running down the center of the valley. Although this feature was only used after the middle of the twentieth century and is therefore not “historic” in its appearance, it helps prevent leaks by directing water down the valley rather than over-shooting beneath the opposing shingles.

All of the hips on the building appear to be poorly detailed. Each of these hips was “battered” with asphalt-based compound, which is both unsightly and relatively short lived. It is not known if any secret woven flashings were installed beneath the hip shingles.

There are three large semi-circular copper roof ventilators on the east slopes of the roof; one is on the east end of the main roof behind and in alignment with the chimney, and the other two are on the east side of each wing. These ventilators appear to have been installed during the 1955 restoration.

Recommendations:

Buckingham slate is considered to be one of the most durable slates available, and if it is properly installed it should last well over 125 years. However, it is clear that many areas of the slate roof have been replaced over the years, and this may be attributed to hairline cracks that may have formed when the slates were removed and reinstalled. In any event, it is clear that at some time, the roof should be replaced in its entirety. While repairs and patches can be continuously applied to the roof for the foreseeable future, there will come a time when economics will demand that the roof be replaced. It is difficult to forecast when this time will come, but based on past performance, one can expect that this roof should be replaced within the next 15 years.

When the roof is eventually replaced, we recommend that a new slate roof be reinstalled. Although the slate roof is not accurate to the original period of the building, it will provide greater durability and potentially less maintenance than a wood shingle roof. It is further recommended that the copper roof ventilators be reused during the roof replacement effort. These ventilators appear to be in good condition, although they may require a small amount of soldering and will certainly require repainting.

Both the 1989 condition survey of the courthouse and the present inspection noted that there has been a long standing problem of water infiltration at the north and south doors (the most serious problem being observed at the south door). While it does not appear as if the weather-stripping beneath the doors was installed as it was recommended in the 1989 report, it is evident that the problem persists and should be addressed at the roof level. It is our recommendation that a water diverter be installed near the roof edge above these doors to divert water away from the doors below. Until the roof is replaced, an interim diverter can be installed, allowing for a more permanent solution when the roof is replaced.

Other Roof Features

Chimneys

There are three chimneys on the roof. Two of these chimneys, one on the north wall of the north wing, and one on the south wall of the south wing, were reconstructed in 1955, while the one on the east wall of the building sits within the late nineteenth century addition and substantially dates from that period. Each of these chimneys are flashed at the roof with modern copper step flashings (step flashings generally did not appear until the mid to late nineteenth century).



Above: North elevation of the courthouse. The chimney to the right is in its original location, but the chimney has been reconstructed.

Recommendations:

All chimneys appear to be in good condition, and each chimney has been properly ventilated at the top. However, no provision has been made to ventilate the chimneys at the bottom to encourage air flow, and it is recommended that some provision be made for bottom ventilation. While the brickwork of the chimneys is in good condition, it is estimated that approximately ten percent of the brick joints will require re-pointing. Mortar tests should be performed at the chimneys to insure that the proper mortar is used during the re-pointing operations. It is likely that the modern reconstructed chimneys are constructed in Portland cement based mortar, while the east chimney is certainly laid in pure lime mortar in areas that have not been rebuilt.



Above: The east end of the courthouse was added to the building in the late nineteenth century. There is a modern roof ventilator directly behind this chimney.

Lightning Protection

Although the system appears to be at least thirty years old (and may date from the 1955 restoration), modern stainless steel fasteners that hold the copper cabling to the building reveal that the system has been maintained and upgraded over the years. One air terminal along the ridge of the courthouse has become detached from the roof and must be reinstalled.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the entire system be inspected by a Factory Mutual certified inspector to insure that the system conforms to modern code requirements. It is likely that the system will be replaced when the slate roof is replaced.



Above: The courthouse from the northeast. The roof ventilators date from the 1955 renovation.

Exterior Woodwork and Wood Features

Main Cornice

From the ground, it appears that most of the wood cornice is original to the building, although two lengths of the cornice, on the east end of the north and south elevations, were added when the courthouse was extended in 1824. Judging by the paint build-up on the east elevation, it appears that the 1730s east cornice was removed from the early east side of the building, then later reinstalled on the east face of the late nineteenth century wall after the addition was constructed. The carpenters then simply filled in the missing lengths along the north and south walls of

the addition with matching lengths of cornice-work. Evidence of these changes can be observed at the juncture between the 1730 building and the late nineteenth century addition where a 45 degree miter still survives in the cornice at both sides of the building.

In an effort to ventilate the attic space over the courthouse, many clusters of holes have been drilled through the soffit of the cornice. It is likely that these holes were drilled when the insulation was blown into the attic.

Recommendations:

The main cornice of the building appears to be in very good condition. Although the rough and weathered appearance of the woodwork beneath the paint reveals that the woodwork was left exposed to the weather for a long period of time in the distant past, however, consistent painting and maintenance since that time has allowed the cornice to survive in very good condition to date. It is only recommended that consistent maintenance be continued and no other work is required at this time.

Windows

All of the windows in the courthouse date from the 1955 renovation of the building, and as a result the cylinder glass sash and their frames and sills are in very good condition inside and out.

Recommendations:

A small percentage of glazing putty is beginning to fail and must be replaced, and a small percentage of paint is failing near the base of the architraves. It is recommended that these small maintenance items be attended to, along with some attention to various small holes that need to be filled. It will likely be necessary to repaint the entire sash and frames of those windows needing glazing repair and other cosmetic attention.

Doors

Like the windows, all doors, frames and thresholds were replaced in the building during the 1955 renovation, and for the most part, they are in good condition. The work recommended at the front door in the 1989 survey was apparently performed, and these protected doors are in very good condition. The north and south doors may have been replaced since the 1989 study and are generally in good condition but several panels within the doors have shrunk and split. This shrinkage is caused by a high degree of movement commonly found in soft plantation grown woods. Ineffectual efforts have been made to fill in the cracks over the years, yet the movement and the cracks persist.

Recommendations:

The roof section of this study has described that water is continuing to enter the courthouse beneath the north and south doors. The most serious problem appears to be at the south door. This problem was also observed by the authors of the 1989 study, and they recommended that weather-stripping be installed beneath the doors and a new platform be installed outside the doors. While a water diverter should be installed at the edge of the roof above, the doors should have new weather-stripping installed beneath the doors. The splitting of the door panels is likely more of an annoyance than a significant problem, the doors may eventually be replaced with old growth recycled heart pine doors if it is found that the doors are deteriorating in the future. At this time, it is recommended that the cracks be carefully filled, sanded and the doors repainted.



Above: South elevation of the courthouse.

Masonry Walls

As the accompanying masonry mapping drawings illustrate, there is only a relatively small percentage of original eighteenth century brick masonry surviving in the building. Overall, there are at least three periods of brick masonry in the building; mid eighteenth century, early nineteenth century, and mid twentieth century. The first two periods were undoubtedly laid in pure lime mortar, while the later period was laid in Portland cement based mortar. It can be generally stated that most of the brick masonry in the courthouse is in very good condition, but approximately 20% of the mortar joints should be re-pointed.

Recommendations:

At those locations where re-pointing is necessary, it is highly recommended that efforts be made to match the original mortar of each period in both composition and appearance. Since the 1950s brick masonry was very likely laid up in Portland cement based mortar, only a similar kind of mortar can be used in the re-pointing work. Similarly, only lime based mortar (no Portland cement whatsoever) must be used when re-pointing areas of brickwork laid up in early mortar. It is clear that most of the re-pointing work will be devoted to those areas laid in lime based mortar. It is recommended that pure, high calcium lime be used for this mortar, and this is now available through Virginia Limeworks or St. Astier's.

The predominate areas of brick masonry requiring re-pointing is found at the exposed foundation walls around the entire perimeter of the building. It is also recommended that the entire foundation around the perimeter of the building be cleaned of moss, fungus and other material before the pointing work takes place. This is particularly critical at the foundations of the north and south wings.

Rising Dampness

It is obvious that a substantial amount of rising dampness is occurring in the lower portion of the outside walls forming the north and south wings. This phenomenon is manifesting itself in the form of exfoliating plaster within



Above: Rising dampness is destroying the plaster in the north and south wings.

the rooms of the wings. It not known how long the rising dampness problem has persisted, but some foundation drainage was recommended by the firm of Torrence, Dreelin, Farthing & Buford in their 1989 renovation study for the building. It is assumed that the fairly modern foundation drainage system around the building (installed in 1991) was motivated by rising dampness observed in the outside walls.

The rising dampness within the walls is clearly being caused by water at grade being absorbed into the porous clay brick masonry at the base of the walls. Although probes should be made to determine the depth of the



Above: Moss and lichen is growing on the brickwork, indicating that these areas are consistently damp. The lack of mortar in the head joints at the lowest course of brickwork may indicate that the foundations do not extend deep into the ground.

original walls, it appears that the eighteenth century walls nearly rest on grade. If this is the case, it is possible (although uncertain until probes can be made) that the 1991 footing drainage system may have actually exacerbated the problem by introducing water beneath the bottom of the walls. Evidence observed on the walls of the building reveal that at one time grade may have been somewhat higher than it is today, and if this was so, the clay soil around the building may have protected the bottom of the walls from water infiltration. Once the grade was lowered, water was allowed to enter beneath the walls, and the warm air within the heated courthouse encouraged rising dampness. If it is found that the footing drain is lower than the brick walls, the porous washed stone at the base of the walls would allow water to flow beneath the walls before it is captured by the drain pipe, and rising dampness would be the result.

Recommendations:

A final diagnosis concerning the rising dampness cannot be made until probes are performed around the building. If photographs were taken of the foundations while the 1991 drainage system was installed, it may not be necessary to perform the probes. If the probes or the archives reveal that the foundation walls are nearly at grade, the best and only way to arrest the rising dampness is to underpin the shallow walls with a new concrete foundation approximately two feet below grade. This work is commonly executed in three foot intervals so as not to undermine the structural stability of the walls, and the concrete itself becomes a very effective damp-proof course. If archeology has not been performed around the building, it will be necessary to develop some level of archeological testing before the underpinning work is performed. If the county elects to install the underpinning, a new foundation drainage system should be installed at the same time.

If it is found that the foundation walls extend below grade deeper than is presently thought, it may be necessary to excavate around the building, apply lime mortar based rendering on the walls below grade, install a water proof membrane on the rendering, and reinstall the footing drainage system. Further research will determine the best approach as to how to arrest the rising dampness within the wings.

Exterior Plaster

The entire interior of the piazza has been plastered. It is likely that this space was always plastered, yet the present day plaster appears to date from the 1955 renovation of the building. The plaster has been patched over the years, particularly where the plaster meets the brickwork of the arches, but with the exception of a cracked area at the east corner of the south archway, the plaster is in good condition.



Left: Overall view of the piazza from the north. The plaster and light fixtures date from the 1950s renovation.

Above Right: A detail of plaster damage at the east jamb of the south arch within the piazza.

Recommendations:

Repair the cracked area of plaster at the east jamb of the south archway. All other surfaces appear to be in good condition and no additional work is required at this time.

Exterior Stone Pavers

The 18” square “Bristol” gray sandstone pavers within the west portico is set in mortar with Portland cement mortar joints. These pavers may be very early and possibly date from the eighteenth century, although the original pavers would have been simply set directly into grade on a bed of sand. Commonly, eighteenth and nineteenth century pavers would have had sand, not mortar



Above: A view of the piazza from the south. Although the pavers may be original and are very worn, it is recommended that they remain in place. Note the bulletin board to the right.

within the joints. The fact that the piazza pavers are set in Portland cement with cement mortar joints reveals that they were very likely lifted during the 1955 renovation and reinstalled in cement.

The Bristol stone is a very porous material, and while historically water was allowed to pass through the stone, the modern cement setting bed traps moisture within the pavers. This moisture has caused the stone to severely deteriorate on their surfaces, and they now have a badly weathered appearance.

Recommendations:

There is no question that the tenacious nature of the cement setting bed will make it impossible to remove and re-set the stone pavers without destroying them. It is therefore recommended that the county leave the stones as they are until it is absolutely necessary to replace them.

Other Exterior Features

Piazza Lighting

There are presently three large electrified pendant lanterns illuminating the piazza. All of these features clearly date from the 1955 renovation and all are in good condition. It is recommended that these be left as is.



Above Left: It is recommended that the modern mechanical equipment be moved away from the building. The unsightly meters, piping and conduit should be removed from the face of the exterior walls.

Above Right: This areaway holds the pump and valves for the sub-floor radiant heating system. Since this system no longer functions, it is recommended that the areaway be removed.



Left: A detail of the modern piping as it passes through the main cornice to the air handlers in the attic.

Bulletin Board

There is a glass encased bulletin board on the east wall of the piazza mounted to the wall of the south wing. The location of this feature makes perfect sense in terms of weather protection and function, yet its location erodes the aesthetic quality of the building. If some other location (off the building) can be found for the bulletin board, it is recommended that it be removed from the building.

Conduits, Piping and Equipment

The 1989 renovation study for the courthouse recommended that the compressor and the associated meter boxes, junction boxes, electrical conduits, etcetera be relocated away from the building. We concur with this recommendation, and its implementation must be made in tandem with the recommended upgrades to the systems within the courthouse. Once these features have been removed away from the building, holes made by fasteners holding these features to the building should be repaired.

Vegetation

The present location of the air conditioning compressor unit is masked by shrubs situated along the south wing of the courthouse. These shrubs are fairly close to the brick walls of the wing, and moisture is not allowed to evaporate from the surfaces of the walls. The resulting moss and fungus growing on the walls is deteriorating the mortar joints. Once the mechanical equipment is moved away from the building, it is recommended that the shrubs be moved at the same time.

CONDITIONS SURVEY

Hanover County Courthouse - Interior

The interior of the Hanover County Courthouse is generally in good condition. Since its renovation in 1955, the building has been relatively well maintained. Although some water infiltration has occurred both through the roof and through the foundation walls in the form of rising dampness, the remainder of the interior fabric remains essentially as it was after the renovation. This survey assumes that the goal of the county is to repair the finishes on the interior while leaving the remainder of the interior essentially intact.



Above Left: Overall view of the main courtroom looking east. The entire interior dates from the 1955 renovation work. Above Right: A detailed photograph of the c. 1950s courtroom bench.

Main Courtroom

Ceiling

The cove ceiling over the courtroom is constructed of a form of drywall with a skim coating of plaster. This system, known in the industry as the “Imperial” system, dates from the 1955 renovation. The acoustical tiles were installed sometime after the renovation, and several of the original tiles have been replaced owing to leaks in the roof. The newer tiles do not match the old, and many tiles have lost their adhesion to the plaster skim-coat substrate. There is also some damaged plaster from a newer roof leak at the north wall between the two doors.

Recommendations:

The installation of the acoustical tiles on the ceiling is an unfortunate event in the life of the building. Since these tiles have now lost their adhesion and are generally unsightly, it is recommended that they be removed in their entirety. It is expected that the skim-coat plaster ceiling beneath these tiles will be damaged during the removal

process, and it is therefore recommended that this ceiling be newly skim-coated and generally reinstated.



Above Left: Many of the acoustical tile ceiling panels have lost their adhesion to the skim coated drywall substrate. Above Right: Modern air conditioning grilles in the ceiling of the courtroom are functional yet unsightly.

The 1955 skim-coat ceiling will be particularly successful if a more elegant solution can be found for the location and design of the cooling system grilles.



Above Left: Some staining and deterioration of the c1950s bluestone floor has occurred near the south door. Above Right: These sandstone pavers found in the walk near the jail door may have been salvaged from the original courtroom floor.

Floor

All floors within the courthouse appears to be a natural cleft bluestone. It is likely that the original stone flooring in the courthouse matched the Bristol stone within the piazza. Pieces of matching stone have been found within the pavers to the nearby jail, and it is possible that these pavers were once used inside the courthouse. In any event, the bluestone now on the floor within the building clearly dates from the 1955 renovation.

Recommendations:

Since the present floor is in good condition, no work is required at this time. Some staining has occurred in the floor adjacent to the north and south doors, but once the water infiltration problem has been addressed on the exterior of the building, these stains can be removed. In the event that the courthouse is ever restored to an eighteenth or nineteenth century appearance, this floor should be removed and replaced with a floor matching the Bristol stone.

Walls

The walls of the main courtroom are finished with skim-coated drywall and are in good condition. No further work is required at this time.



Above: Both the north and south jury rooms now have acoustical tile ceilings. It is likely that they were Imperial plaster ceilings after the 1955 renovation work.

North and South Jury Rooms

Ceilings

There are presently acoustical tile ceilings in both jury rooms, and it is likely that these cover a skim-coated plaster drywall ceiling. Although these ceilings are generally in good condition, the south jury room ceiling has had some of its tiles replaced, most likely owing to water infiltration (roof or mechanical equipment).

Recommendations:

The condition of these ceilings is good, but from a historical perspective, they have no place in a courthouse of this importance and it is recommended that they be removed. Like the main courtroom, it is likely that the plaster skim coat substrate will have to be renewed after the tiles are removed.



Walls

The lower portions of the exterior walls are some of the most heavily damaged areas found in the courthouse. This damage has been caused by rising dampness within the masonry walls, and this condition, along with various scenarios for its remedy, has been described in the exterior section of this study.

Recommendations:

Once the rising dampness problem has been solved, the interior walls will require re-plastering in those areas affected by the infiltration. It will also be necessary to paint all of the walls in each of the jury rooms once the plaster repair work is completed.

Left: A detail of the rising dampness along the jury room walls.

Miscellaneous

Doors

The interior doors date from the 1955 renovation and these doors are in good condition. It is recommended that the closers on the doors be removed. These date from the time when the courthouse was still functioning as a court facility, and since the closers are unsightly and no longer needed they can be removed.



Fireplaces

It has been noted in the Exterior Conditions Survey that we recommend the openings from the fireplaces to the flues be once again opened to encourage air flow through the chimneys. This will eliminate moisture build-up in the flues.

Attic Structure

The structural system within the attic dates from several different periods, yet the overall structural system appears to be in very good condition. No checking, warping or cracking was observed and all connections appeared very sound. Modifications have been made to the early structure when the late nineteenth century addition was added, and once again when the heavy slate roof was installed. Although there is some deflection in the ceiling members over the courtroom, it appears to be long standing and the additional structural members appear to be working well at this time. It is recommended, however, that efforts be made to eliminate all entries for insects and rodents.



Above Left: Both fireplaces in the north and south jury rooms have been sealed. These should be opened to allow the flues to ventilate.

Left: Overall photo of the main attic over the courtroom looking east. The attic framing on the extreme end of the attic was modified when the late nineteenth century addition was added.



Left: Overall photo of the framing above the piazza. The diagonals to the right were very likely installed to support the heavier load imposed by the slate roofing.

Above Right: Before the late nineteenth century addition was added, there were chimneys situated at the juncture of the main body of the building and the north and south wings. Evidence for these chimneys can still be observed in the attic where the framing once circumscribed the brick chimney.

PLUMBING / MECHANICAL / ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS SURVEY

Hanover County Courthouse

The mechanical and electrical evaluations contained herein review the systems from two perspectives. First is a description of the sub-system plus an assessment of its condition and functionality. Second are recommendations.

Plumbing

- The courthouse presently contains no apparent active or inactive plumbing systems. There is a series of (3) buried concrete structures in the lawn between the courthouse and jail. All seem to be related to water supplies. One structure contains a pitcher pump which appears in fair condition but not functional. The other two appear to be a mid twentieth century well, pump, and storage systems and are no longer functional.
- There is no evidence of plumbing in the courthouse. There is evidence of plumbing in the Jail. There is an old water hose hydrant just outside the courthouse foundation on the south side. Perhaps the well system supplied water to the hydrant and to the jail.

Recommendations:

- All unnecessary buried plumbing systems and pits should be eliminated if they are no longer required or no longer important to the interpretation of the two buildings. Eventually the pits will be a maintenance and safety liability.
- Assuming that no plumbing systems are needed in the courthouse, we make no further recommendations.

Mechanical

- The heat source for the courthouse is reportedly fed from the old court clerks' office building. There are buried lines between the buildings. The buried lines are reportedly new and should be in good condition, although they are not visible to verify their condition.
- There is a distribution heating system manifold located in an exterior pit along the south east side of the courthouse. The valves, piping, and pumps appear in fair condition. Having the equipment in a pit such as this will lead to shortened life. The pit is not watertight, is difficult to access for maintenance and subject to corrosion.
- The heating distribution within the courthouse consists of the following major components:
 1. There are recessed convectors with sixteen (16) floor grilles at the raised wood platform area.
 2. There reportedly are buried copper heating lines beneath the stone floor which provide radiant heating for the balance of the courtroom.
 3. There are two surface mounted convectors in each of the jury rooms. There are buried lines leading to them from the raised platform area.
 4. There are electric heating coils within an air-handling unit in the attic which delivers heat via the ductwork and the grilles in the ceiling.

- There apparently are leaks in the buried piping and the hot water system has been valved off. Presently only the electric heating coils are serving the courthouse pending repairs to the piping. Also, there apparently are not enough isolation valves to isolate the leaking pipe; therefore, the entire system needed to be shut down.
- There is a split direct expansion air conditioning system serving the courthouse. The air-handling unit is in the attic and the condensing unit is located on grade. The air-handling unit and ductwork distribution were reportedly installed in the 1970's. The condensing unit was replaced about 6 years ago. The condensate line from the unit, the refrigeration lines, and conduits all rise up the exterior of the building and are very unsightly. Also, the condensate line discharges water causing the brick wall to be wet creating moss, mold, and deterioration of the brick. The plaster on the inside of the building at this location is also blistering.
- The air is distributed to the courtroom and the jury rooms via modern ceiling registers. The registers are modern intrusions and appear inappropriate. The ductwork is run in the attic and appears in fair condition.
- The air-handling system is over 30 years old and appears to have reached the end of its useful life. The unit appears in fair/poor condition. While it is not ideal, access for maintenance is achievable with a ladder through a hatch in the entrance overhang.
- There are four thermostats in the building. One serves the air-conditioning portion of the system. One appears to serve the heat for the jury rooms, one serves the spectator portion of the courtroom and the remaining one serves the raised judges bench area. The thermostats appear functional.

Recommendations:

- Efforts should be made to conceal the pipes rising up the exterior of the building leading to the attic. They are visually distracting and are causing damage to the building.
- There are different extents to which the mechanical systems could be renovated. At a minimum, the entire heating system should be replaced and the air-handling unit should also be replaced. The systems could be replaced in kind and one would expect similar performance comfort, noise, and visual intrusion as the existing systems. Now is an opportunity to consider alternate approaches which could improve the performance, energy efficiency and at the same time, the visual appropriateness of the system.
- We suggest that geothermal heating/cooling systems are good applications for both the courthouse and the jail. Geothermal systems offer advantages of eliminating the unsightly condensing units, eliminate the noise, and are very efficient, saving energy and operating costs. It is possible to have the geothermal system be the sole means of heating the courthouse, eliminating the need for the buried pipes between the buildings and eliminate the need for the manifold pit. The geothermal system would however require the installation of its own pumps, water source heat pumps, and associated electrical equipment. A buried vault provides a good location in terms of minimizing the visual impact of mechanical equipment. It may also be possible to install equipment in the Court Clerks building and install new buried insulated plastic piping between the buildings.
- We suggest that the means of delivering the air to the interior spaces be reconsidered and changed to a method which attempts to hide or minimize the appearance of the registers. Perhaps having equipment or grilles within the raised platform area would also be possible.
- The insulation on the ductwork in the attic is of poor quality and has been damaged. We recommend that the ductwork insulation be replaced in its entirety.

- There are sections of ductwork in the vicinity of the air-handling unit which are damaged due to people stepping on them. The broken sections of ductwork should be replaced.
- We recommend that all buried lines be replaced with plastic tubing which will not be subjected to corrosion in the soil.
- We are assuming that the collection within the courthouse (and jail) do not require particular temperature and humidity conditioning. The types of heating and air-conditioning systems that are presently in place will eliminate the extreme high summer humidity conditions and will mediate the low humidity conditions in the winter provided that the space temperature is kept at 65°F or below. We suggest that no further temperature and humidity control efforts be required.

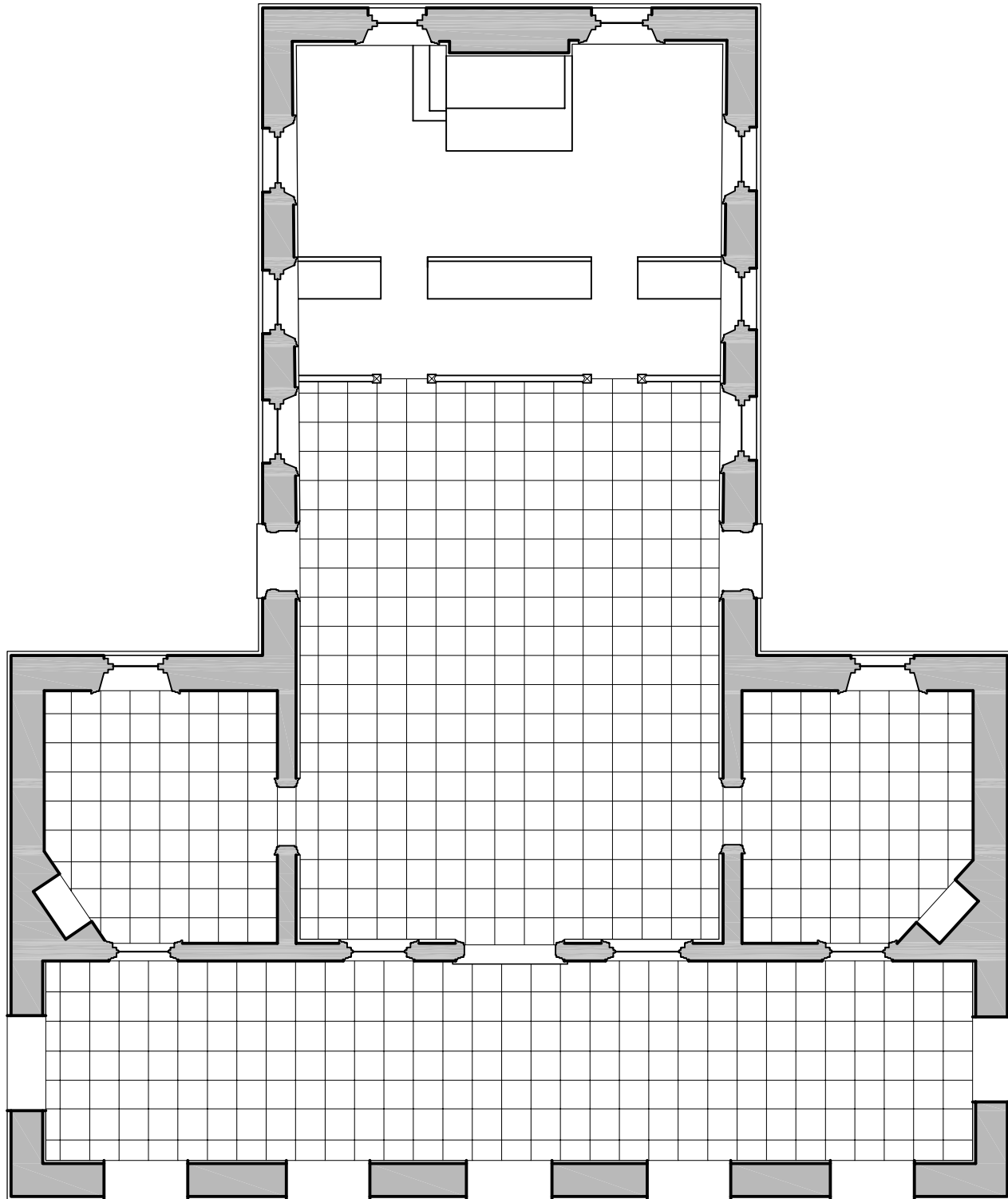
Electrical

- The electrical service enters at the southeast corner of the building. There is a series of (4) disconnect switches, a trough, and a meter. The service entrance feeder appears to run below the south jury room floor to a flush panel. The equipment is generally old and in fair condition.
- There is an ESL fire alarm system with an ADEMCO tape dialer. There are heat detectors in the attic. The system appears functional and in good condition. Tape dialers are not a reliable means of transmitting fire alarm messages and are not typically acceptable for code purposes.
- There are fluorescent cove lights around the perimeter of the courtroom. The lamps are visible in the fixtures along the rear wall over the Judges bench. While having cove lights is not historically correct, they at least avoid the intrusion of modern fixtures. The sight lines should be improved so that the rear lights are not visible.
- There are no exit signs or emergency lights in the courthouse. A code review for the building has not been done, however we suspect that emergency lights and exit signs will be required if more than 50 people are allowed in the building.
- There are small hanging lights in the jury rooms.
- There is a generous quantity of outlets distributed throughout the courtroom and jury rooms. There are old 220 volt, 20-ampere receptacles that likely served old portable electric space heaters.
- The branch circuit wiring to the light & outlet appears relatively new and in good condition.
- There is a sub-panel in the attic which appears to serve the mechanical equipment. The branch circuit wiring in the attic appears to be in conduit and appears in good condition.

Recommendations:

- The electric equipment on the exterior of the courthouse is extensive and unsightly. We recommend all unnecessary equipment be removed (such as the small disconnect switch and trough) and possibly install a remote pedestal meter and disconnect switches.
- The interior electric panel is very old and should be replaced. The existing location seems functional and if a new panel was installed in this location then many of the existing branch circuits could be reused. A new feeder conduit should be installed when the stone floor is removed for the installation of the new heating lines.

- The attic panel and its feeder could be retained for reuse, however, we feel it would be beneficial to replace them.
- We recommend the fire alarm system be upgraded to utilize a digital dialer for improved reliability and also be extended to provide heat detector coverage for the attic of the jail.



1 FIRST FLOOR PLAN
A1 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

HANOVER COUNTY COURTHOUSE

MESICK•COHEN•WILSON•BAKER•ARCHITECTS

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 p. (518)433-9394 f. (518)433-9397

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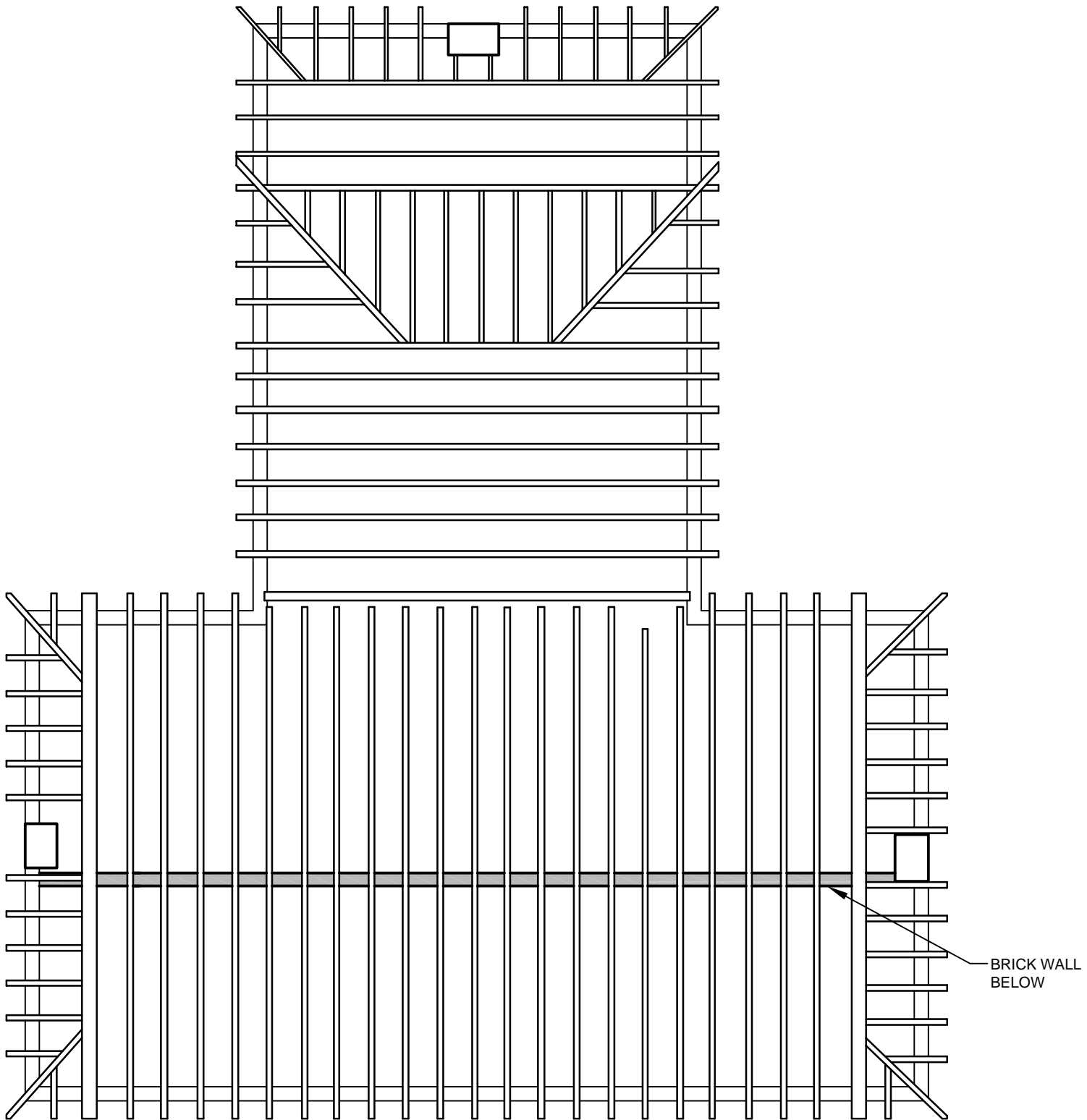
COMMISSION NO.
0338

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GMG

DATE
8-1-04

DRAWING NO.

A1



1 ATTIC FLOOR FRAMING PLAN
A2 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

ATTIC FLOOR FRAMING PLAN

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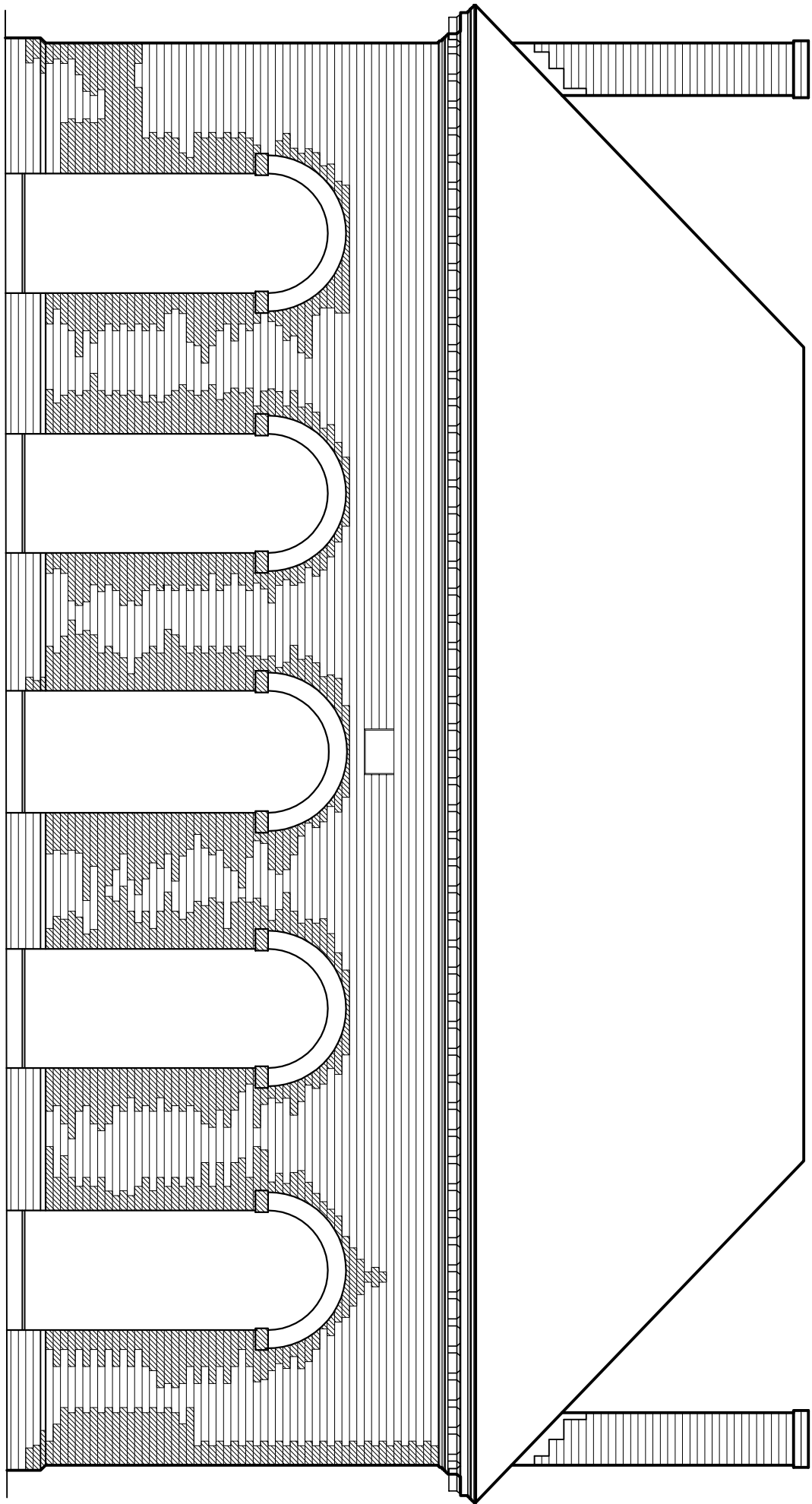
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A2



1 WEST ELEVATION
A3 SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

WEST ELEVATION

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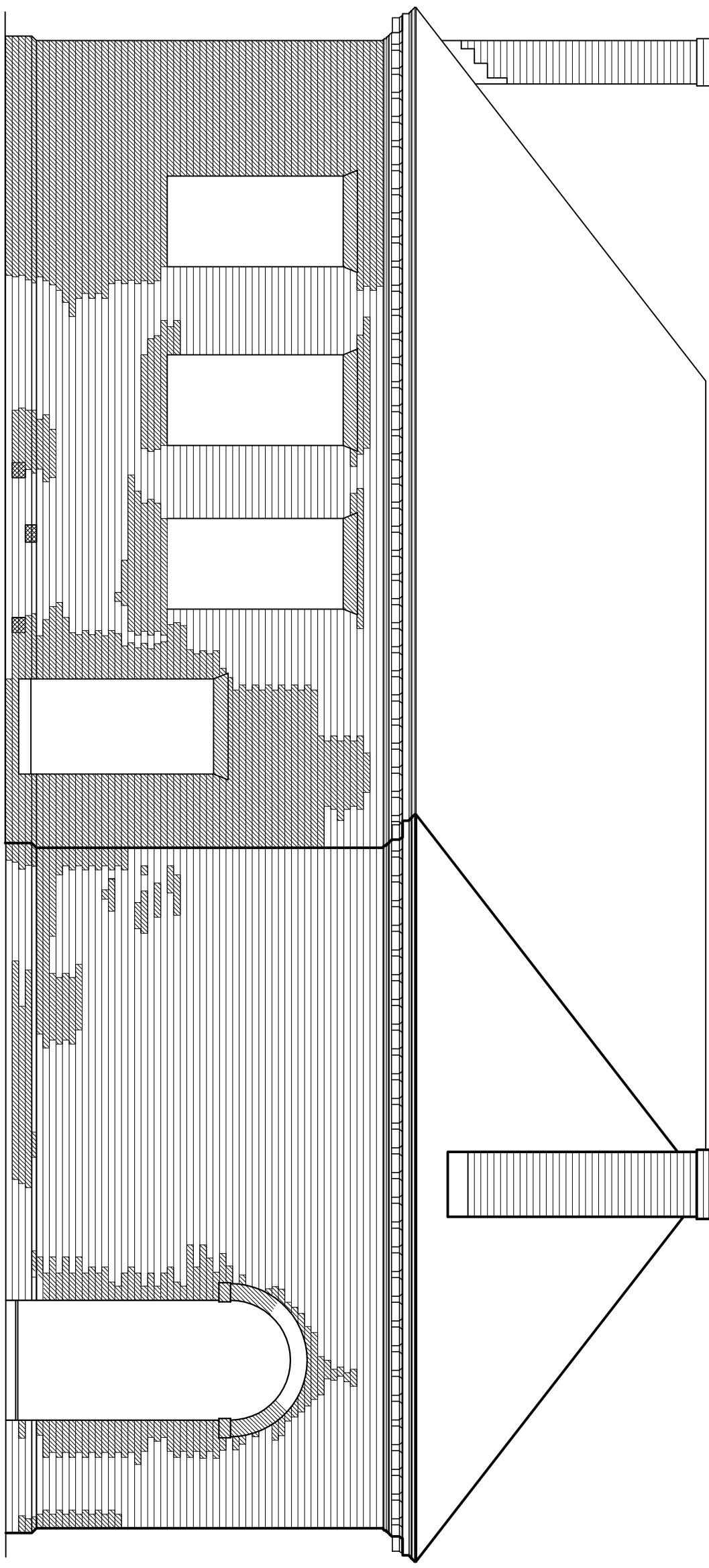
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A3



1 NORTH ELEVATION
 A4 SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

NORTH ELEVATION

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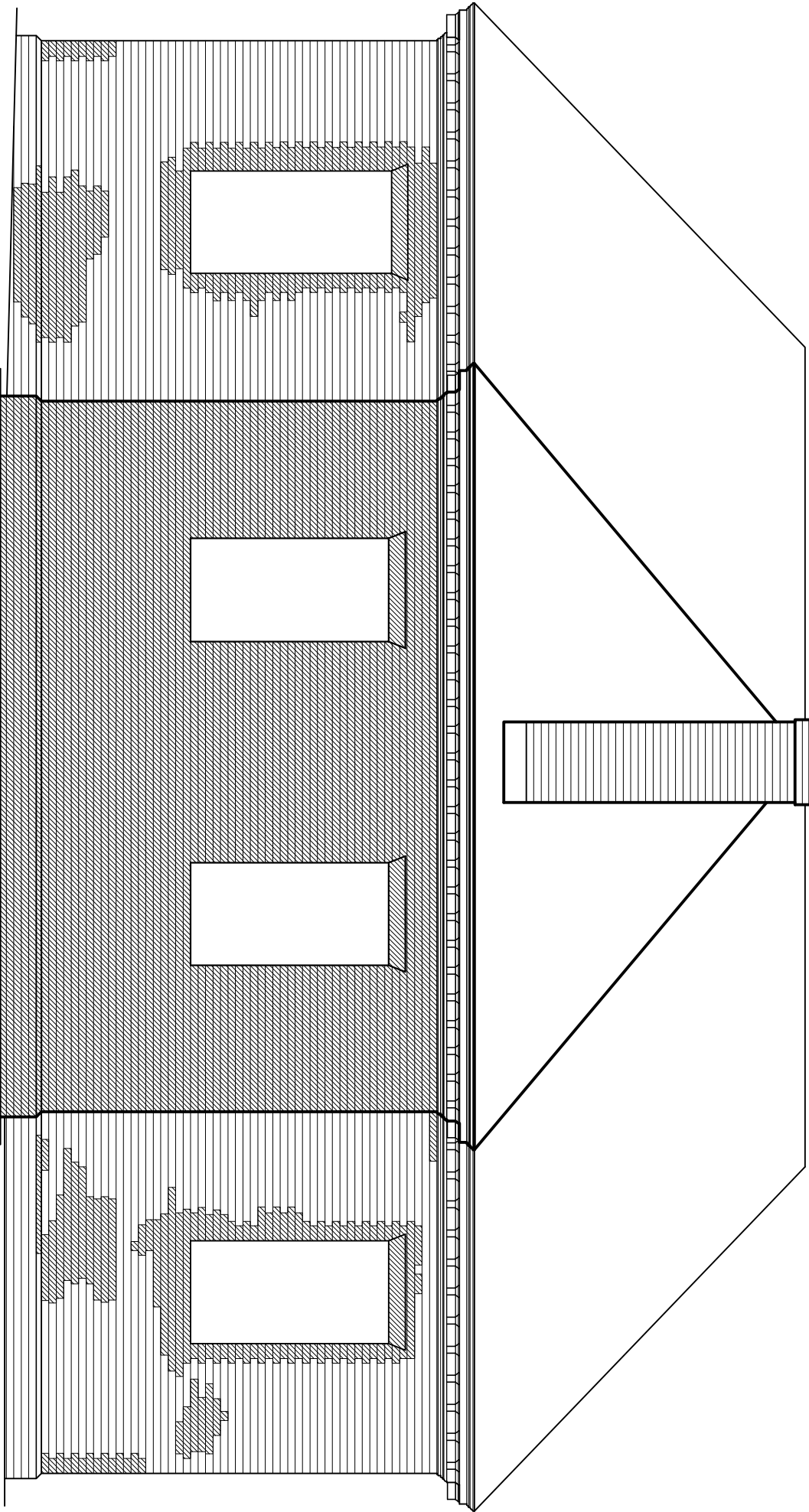
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DRAWING NO.

A4



1 EAST ELEVATION
 A5 SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

EAST ELEVATION

HANOVER COUNTY COURTHOUSE

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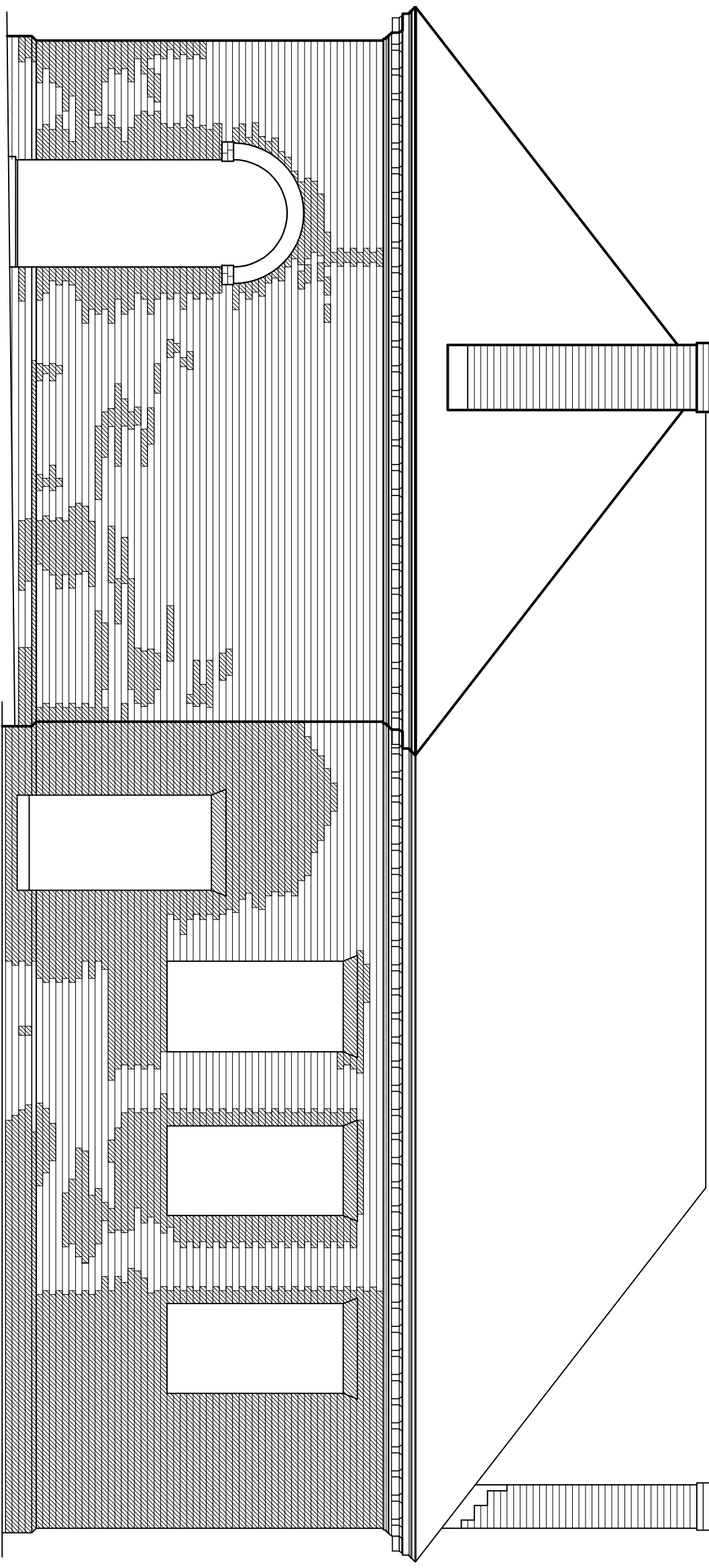
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8-1-04

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A5



1 SOUTH ELEVATION
 A6 SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

SOUTH ELEVATION

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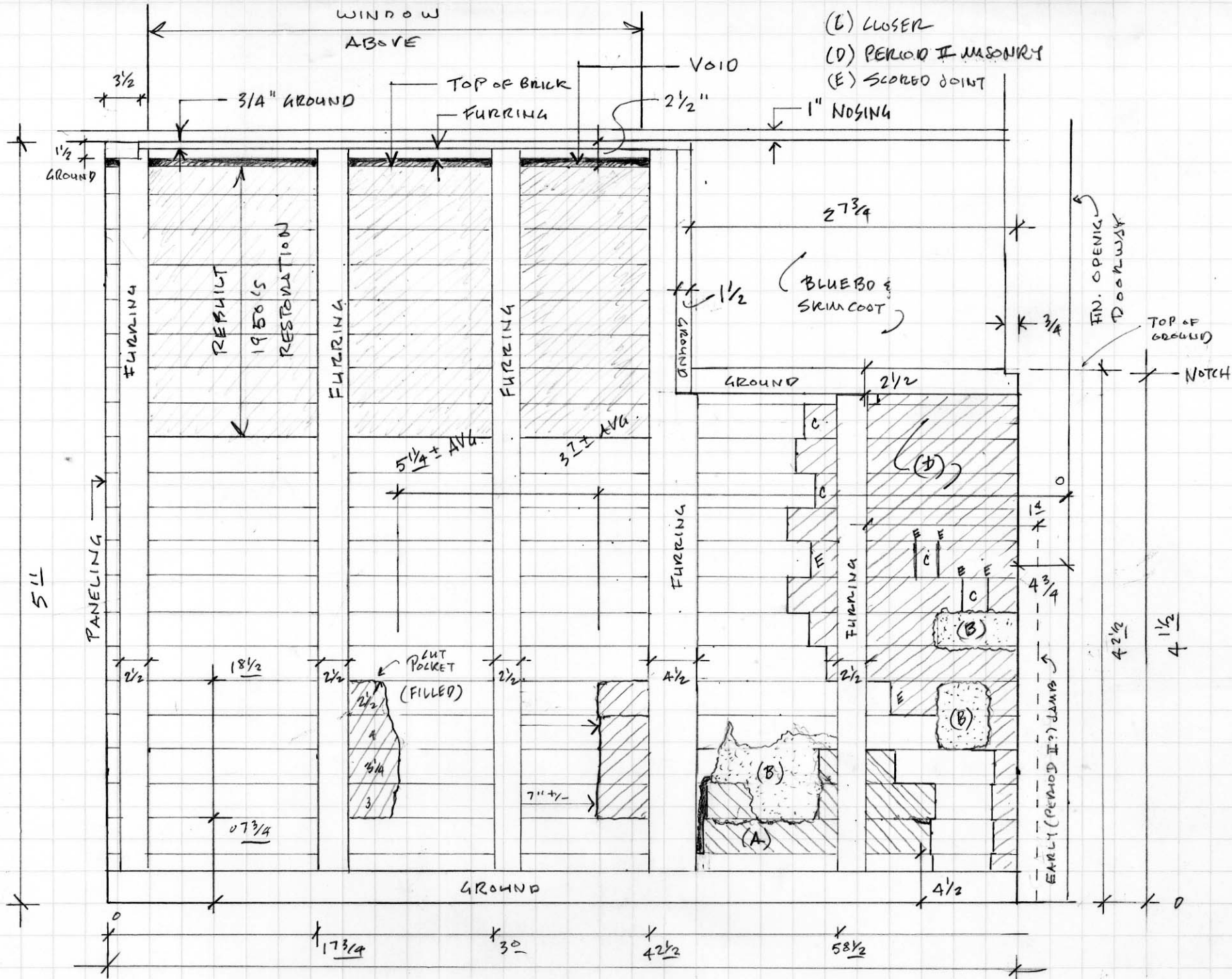
COMMISSION NO.
 0338

DRAWN BY
 GMG

DATE
 8-1-04

DRAWING NO.

A6



- (C) LOSER
- (D) PERIOD II MASONRY
- (E) SCORED JOINT

- (A) MODERN BRICK - PROBABLY 1950S
- (B) MODERN MORTAR - 1950S

7'-1"
SOUTH WALL OF COURTROOM
HANOVER COURTHOUSE

DRAW | 5.17.04 | 1" = 1'-0"

HANOVER COUNTY'S HISTORIC JAILS

From 1647 on, the justices of county courts were required to see that jails were constructed. These early prisons were supposed to be sturdy enough to prevent escape and built like a "Virginia house," that is, they could be of frame construction (Hening 1809-1823:I:340-341). In 1684, when the colony's legal code was revised, the 1647 requirements were updated. Each county jail was to have an exercise yard "no larger than 80 poles square," where people in prison for lesser offenses could spend time outdoors for the sake of their health (Hening 1809-1823:III:14-16).

Finally, in 1705 the legal requirements for county prisons were made more strict. Each county was to build and maintain,

. . . one common gaol, or county prison, to be built of brick, or timber, after the manner of Virginia housing; the chimnies [sic] and windows to be strongly grated with iron bars, and the doors to be well and strongly made secure with good locks and bars of iron; and . . . (near the court-house) one pillory, whipping-post, and a pair of stocks [Hening 1809-1823:III:267].

Local justices who failed to see that a secure county jail was built were subject to stiff fines and there were severe penalties for allowing prisoners to escape. Again, court justices were ordered to see that parcels of 10 acres or less were laid out so that prisoners could exercise for the preservation of their health (Hening 1809-1823:III:268).

Legislation passed in 1726 suggests that the justices of newly formed counties, who had some leeway when it came to building courthouses, may also have had more flexibility when it came to constructing jails. However, it was mandatory that the jail or prison be secure enough to prevent escapes (Winfree 1971:277). Thus, Hanover County's very first jail, constructed sometime after 1721, may have been of less substantial construction but it had to be escape-proof.

In 1748, the House of Burgesses enacted legislation specifying that "Every county should erect and keep in good Repair . . . one common Gaol, and county prison, well secured with iron bars, bolts and locks, and also, one pillory, whipping post and stocks." Court justices were to "mark and lay out the bounds and rules of their county prisons, not exceeding 10 acres, and every prisoner, not committed for treason or felony shall have liberty to walk therein for the preservation of his health" (Hening 1809-1823:V:507-508). Thus, a parcel that did not exceed 10 acres would have been laid as prison bounds.¹

Several announcements that appeared in the *Virginia Gazette* throughout the 1770s indicate that Paul Thilman Sr., who owned and operated the Hanover Tavern, served as keeper of the Hanover County Jail. His constant presence at the county seat and the kitchen associated with his tavern-keeping activities would have made it relatively easy for him to tend to prisoners. A notice that Thilman placed in the March 12, 1772, issue of the *Virginia Gazette* stated that there had been "Committed to the county jail of Hanover County on the 20th of December last, a young negro man who says his name is Billy." Thilman said that "The owner is desired to take him away" (Purdie and Dixon, March 12, 1772). Several months later, Thilman announced that there had been "Committed to the gaol of Hanover County the 22nd of August, [a] negro man George." He asked George's owner to remove him and pay for the cost of his care (Rind, October 8, 1772). In December 1774 jailer Paul Thilman Sr. informed the public that there was "committed to the Hanover County jail, [a] negro man James." Again, Thilman called upon James's owner to remove him promptly and pay for his board (Purdie and Dixon, December 22, 1774).

A runaway slave detained in the Hanover County Jail in 1795 suffered a terrible fate. On March 6, 1795, while Paul Thilman Jr. was the keeper of the Hanover County Jail, the building caught fire and burned, claiming the life of a slave named Taylor, who belonged to Henry Lawrence of Louisa County. Afterward, Lawrence sought reimbursement for the value of his slave, who under the law was considered personal property. Thilman certified

“that a negro man named Taylor, belonging to Harry Lawrence, was committed to the jail of Hanover County as a Runaway & was burnt with said Jail, 6th March 1795” (Hanover County Legislative Petitions 1796). It is uncertain how the fire got started. It should be noted, however, that sometimes prisoners set their bedding ablaze in an attempt to create a breach in the building and escape.

After Gabriel’s Insurrection had been quelled, some participants were detained in the Hanover County jail. In November 1800, jailer Paul Thilman Jr. reported that:

That on Thursday and Friday last the negroes in the neighbourhood of Hanover Court house and at that place were very riotous & ungovernable; that on Saturday between eleven & twelve o’clock two fellows who were condemned to death & confined in the Gaol of Hanover were, it is presumed, set at liberty by the Slaves, because they were handcuffed & chained to the floor. Being loosed ~~at liberty~~ they attacked one of the Guards who was taking to them their provision & knocked him down, stomped him and effected their escape although a number of negroes were present & pretended to follow them; that other circumstances which occurred furnish cause of belief that they were assisted to escape; such as a great number visiting the Gaol under the pretence of preaching &c the week before. [Executive Letterbooks 1800].

After Paul Thilman Jr.’s death, his widow, Barbara, married Captain Bathurst Jones, who took over her late husband’s responsibilities as jailer and tavern keeper. On September 26, 1809, Jones was authorized to receive compensation as Hanover County’s jailer. By early 1810 he was dead (Slatten 1987:I:6).

When the General Assembly convened in 1818-1819, several laws were passed that affected Virginia’s county justices. They were ordered to see that county jails were equipped with iron bars, bolts, and locks, and that a pillory, whipping post, and stocks were on hand. Chancery courts also were created to serve several counties, clustered together into districts (Ritchie 1819:197, 250-251). It is probable that Hanover County’s jail was adequately equipped with what the law required.

The accounts of two men who visited the Hanover County seat in 1835 and 1836 shed some light upon what the courthouse community was like. Joseph Martin commented that “This place contains a C.H. [courthouse], Clerk’s office, and 2 jails,² a very large and commodious tavern with various other houses, 1 mercantile store, 1 blacksmith, and 1 boot and shoemaker.” He estimated that the community had a population of 50, including one attorney (Martin 1836:186-187).

A report on Hanover County’s old and new jails, inspected in April 1841 by three court appointed commissioners, sheds some light on how both structures were used and what they were like. This inspection was done in accord with Virginia law, which required county jails to meet certain specifications.

We the undersigned inspectors of the jail of Hanover County, being first sworn do make the following report, to wit: New Jail is used for the confinement of persons charged with crimes and runaways, has two rooms with a passage between them. The rooms are about 14 feet square and the passage 5 feet and a half wide, two windows in each room opposite each other, secured by iron bars without shutters or sash and glass to keep out the cold. We deem it sufficiently commodious for the confinement of runaways and those charged with crime. It is in good repair and is capable of being sufficiently ventilated in summer and made warm enough during winter by the additions of shutters or sash and glass as spoken of before in this report; being supplied with a stove in each room; and the doors are secured by sufficient bars and bolts. No part of this jail has been whitewashed and there seems to be no accommodations in the way of bedding, bedclothes, etc. for the prisoners. The room of the old jail now used for the confinement of debtors is about 16 by 20 feet and is very insecure in our opinion. So far as we are informed or can ascertain, the treatment by the Jailor to the prisoners since the last inspection of the jail has been humane, that a plenty of good and sufficient food with good fires has been furnished by the said jailor and the bed and bedding in the debtors apartment is sufficient and cleanly; this has been whitewashed and sufficiently

aired. There has been no sick persons in the jail for sometime and consequently we can say nothing of the necessary nursing and attention to sick prisoners. There has been no intemperate use of liquors we understand at any time in said jail and there has been no negro slaves confined there at any time contrary to law. All of which is respectfully reported this 7th day of April 1841.

L. B. Price

Charles Thompson

Miles Macon [Hanover Historical Society 1979:1].³

Henry Howe's book about Virginia includes an engraving that depicts the Hanover Courthouse and part of the setting in which it was located. Howe indicated that to the right (southeast) of the front of the courthouse was a small structure with a steeply pitched A-framed roof. The possibility exists that the building was the old county jail that in 1841 was being used as a debtor's prison. Howe noted that in 1843 he and his companions began making sketches of the areas they visited and that, "The drawings for the numerous engravings were, with a few exceptions only, taken by us on the spot" (Howe 1856:iii-iv, 298). Therefore, the small building near the jail would have been in existence during the early 1840s.

In 1844, J. R. M'Culloch published a "gazetteer" in which he noted that Hanover County Courthouse was one of the communities he had visited. He described it as the "capitol of Hanover County" and said that the community was located about 20 miles north of Richmond and was situated "on elevated ground near Pamunkey river." He noted that the county seat "contains a courthouse, jail, a store and about seventy inhabitants" (M'Culloch 1844:106).

In 1851, when Benson J. Lossing passed through the Hanover County seat, he commented that the Hanover Courthouse community included "the ancient court-house and tavern, one brick house, several negro huts, and a jail. The latter was in process of reconstruction when I was there, having been burned a few months previously" (Lossing 1976:II:223-224). Lossing's sketch of the courthouse showed the historic stone jail with its distinctive roof and what appears to have been a privy. Although many military cartographers included Hanover County in the maps they made during the Civil War, none shows the layout of the courthouse grounds and placement of the courthouse complex's buildings.

On August 22, 1865, the justices of Hanover County's monthly court appointed a special committee to "let to the lowest bidder the necessary repairs to the clerk's office, courthouse, and jail of this county at the charge of the same" (Hanover County Monthly Court [August 22, 1865-February 1867]:9, 52). The monthly court's justices at their March 27, 1866, meeting designated William C. Wickham, Lucien P. Price, John G. Lumpkin, John H. Taliaferro, and Bickerton L. Winston as commissioners who were authorized to hire the low bidder to make the necessary repairs to the courthouse and jail (Hanover County Monthly Court [August 22, 1865-February 1867]:113). Then, on September 28, 1867, three court appointed commissioners, Bickerton L. Winston, John H. Taliaferro, and Dr. Thomas H. Kinney, made an inspection of the county jail. The report they prepared sheds a great deal of light upon the structural attributes of the building and its layout.

The undersigned Commissioners [were] appointed by the Circuit Court of the County of Hanover to examine and report upon the condition of the said jail . . . we have made a personal examination of said jail and report.

The said Jail to be a stone jail, walls two feet thick, having four rooms 12 by 18 feet, passage about 6 feet, the building is two stories high, the two lower rooms have a floor of granite grouting two feet deep, the floors to the two upper rooms are lined with timbers hewn 12 by 12 inches, the ceiling is of hewn timber 12 by 12 inches with lathing and plaistering, the chimneys are of brick passing through iron grating at joist and ceiling. This grating is of heavy iron securely united together with strong bolts securely fastened to the wall and to the floors and ceiling.

We further report that the Jail having been recently broken, it had been by the county court put under repair and is now just repaired and secured, during the period when the jail was under repairs all the bedding was stolen or destroyed. These have not been replaced but we are informed by the jailer that it will be replaced within a few days. We find only one inmate confined in jail.

We further report that the jail was whitewashed when repaired some six months since, and is now in want of whitewashing, but as the jail has not been regularly in the use of the jailer we do not think him responsible for its not having been whitewashed. The two lower rooms have not been used since being repaired, not having been finished long enough to dry. The two upper rooms we consider as decent as the nature of the care will admit [Hanover County Loose Papers, Non-Chancery 1866-1875].

No further information was provided on the appearance and condition of the jail.

On June 20, 1883, B. L. Winston and T. L. Gregory, who had been appointed commissioners and ordered “to view the Jail of this county,” reported “that certain repairs are necessary to be done to said jail.” Therefore the court ordered John R. Taylor, the Superintendent of Public Buildings, to have the jail repaired “as set forth in said report” (Hanover County Common Law Order Book 7:252-253). As time went by, the old jail increasingly became an object of interest to members of the local historical preservation community. In 1969 the Hanover County Board of Supervisors agreed to lease the old, unused stone jail to the historical society (Hanover Historical Society 1969:2).

Endnotes

1 In Gloucester County, the prison bounds were described very precisely in 1754. It is clear that they took in 18 ½ acres and included an ordinary and a private home or two. The old and new prisons were shown on a plat that surveyor John Throgmorton prepared (McCartney 2001:67, 88).

2 Many counties had two jails: one for criminals and one for debtors.

3 This rare document was made available to the Hanover County Historical Society by Mrs. George J. Diedrich of Richmond. She generously allowed the text to be transcribed and published.

ARCHITECTURAL CHRONOLOGY¹

Hanover County Jail

Period I - c. 1840-41 - Construction

It appears that construction of the present jail was completed shortly before April of 1841, when three commissioners were appointed by the county court to inspect the “New Jail” and report their findings.

The newly completed jail was just over 30 feet square in plan with an exterior doorway on the north façade, facing the clerk’s office. The building seems always to have had a hipped roof.² A single chimney on the east slope provided heated to four cells inside.

The walls of the building were two feet thick on the ground floor and 1’-8” on the upper floor. The interior was laid out with two cells on each floor, with access from a narrow side passage running along their western side. Corner chimneys for stoves were built in the eastern end of each cell, adjoining the shared wall between these spaces. Evidently, there were no fireplaces. Each of the cell rooms were lit by two windows, one on each of the adjacent exterior walls. The passage was lit on the ground floor by a single window in the west wall. The passage above the stairs had two windows—one on the north wall as well as one on the west.

The commissioners’ 1841 description conforms well to the existing structure, and provides several important observations about the building’s original character and use.

First, the building functioned as a place “for the confinement of persons charged with crimes and runaways.” Since the colonial period, corporal punishment, rather than incarceration, had been the preferred manner of punishing criminals. More than a place of punishment, the jail was simply the means of holding arrested persons until their trial, or of confining slaves until claimed by their masters. The exception to all of this was the debtor, for whom confinement was typically the punishment prescribed. According to the commissioners, such persons were accommodated in a 16’ x 20’ room in another building—the “old jail”—which they regarded as “very insecure.”

Initially there were no window frames or glazed sash in the jail. The commissioners found:

...two windows in each room opposite each other, secured by iron bars without shutters or sash and glass to keep out the cold.

They deemed these provisions inadequate, observing that the jail was:

...capable of being...made warm enough during winter by the additions of shutters or sash and glass as spoken of before in this report; being supplied with a stove in each room.

Although the present window frames and sash appear to be modern, it is possible that they were originally provided in response to the findings of the 1841 report.

At this early date nothing in the way of interior finish except lath and plaster ceilings had been provided:

No part of this jail has been whitewashed and there seems to be no accommodations in the way of bedding, bedclothes, etc. for the prisoners.

In the antebellum period, whitewash was still regarded as a kind of hygienic treatment, intended to cleanse and freshen a space. The absence of such finishes in 1841 and the lack of any bedding for prisoners may indicate

that the building had not yet been occupied.

A later report, completed in 1867, contained additional information about the building's interior, especially as it related to security. The floors seem to have been a particular concern. On the lower level they were composed of "granite grouting two feet deep"—probably what we would now call concrete. A grid of hairline cracks in the existing floor slab downstairs suggests that this earlier floor remains in place below. In the upper rooms, floors and ceilings were framed with "timbers hewn 12 by 12 inches", the ceilings having lath and plaster besides. Finally, the chimneys were constructed of brick and passed through some kind of ironwork in the floor, presumably to avert undermining or fire:

....the chimneys are of brick passing through iron grating at joist and ceiling. This grating is of heavy iron securely united together with strong bolts securely fastened to the wall and to the floors and ceiling.

Period II – 1865 – Repairs

On August 22, 1865, the Hanover County court appointed a special committee to solicit bids for unspecified repairs to the "clerk's office, courthouse, and jail of this county at the charge of the same."

Period III – Early 20th Century – Reconstruction

Sometime in the first half of the 20th century, perhaps in the 1920s or 30s, the timber-framed floors and ceilings of the cells were completely removed and reconstructed in concrete. On the second floor the new slab, reinforced in each room by a pair of beams, bore on the stone ledge that marked the transition from the two-foot-thick walls of the ground floor, to the thinner walls of the upper floor. For the second floor ceiling, another slab with reinforcing beams was poured, bearing on the tops of the stone walls, the original roof and wooden wall plate having been removed. On the top of this slab, a new roof was framed.

To provide access between the reconstructed floors, a new concrete stair was formed and poured, and the opening enclosed with the present pipe railings.

In the building's lower story, the floor of "granite grouting" was skimmed over with concrete. In the corner of each ground-floor cell, a small, L-shaped platform of concrete was created to accommodate a toilet and lavatory, the latter being mounted on the longitudinal wall of the cell, more or less opposite the fireplace. The toilet was bolted to the raised slab. Against the exterior of the adjoining wall, a concrete cesspit was constructed to receive waste from these fixtures in each of the ground-floor cells.

Other concrete repairs were made at this time. These included building up the sills of the windows as to drain toward the outside, and forming up a large patch below the second-floor window on the south elevation.

Period IV – 1969 – Hanover County Historical Society

In 1969, the stone jail was leased to the Hanover County Historical Society. It appears that some electrical work was completed at this time to facilitate the building's use and exhibition. This work included the installation of fluorescent lighting fixtures and duplex convenience outlets, all served by surface-mounted wire mold. The present casement sash and window frames may also date from this period, serving to make the building habitable for offices, etc. In the rear, ground-floor cell, a new fireplace was cut through the concrete casing of the breast, and through the stone behind. The firebox was lined with new brick and a raised hearth of the same material was added. The fireplace opening was adorned with a rude chimneypiece made up of old oak joists, probably

from a different building, since they do not match the 12 x 12 dimensions of the floor framing mentioned in the 1867 report.

Endnotes

1 This account is based in part on an earlier chronology developed by Anne Geddy Cross and also on the additional research and chronology of Martha McCartney, presented in the opening chapter. Finally, the explanation of the supposed architectural fittings in the original interior is based on Lounsbury's "Order in the Court: Recommendations for the Restoration of the James City County Courthouse," Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, October, 1985.

2 Benson J. Lossing's illustrated work, *The Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution* (1851), shows a building in the approximate location of the present jail, however the fenestration does not conform to that of the original building. Howe's view, published in 1856, appears perfectly accurate in this regard and probably in its depiction of the roof as well, shown to be hipped in this case.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Hanover County Jail - Exterior



Above: South elevation of jail

General Remarks

Situation

The jail stands near the corner of the courthouse bounds, the corner of which is demarcated by a stone marker just across the drive and in front of the present Library. (Another of these markers stands across the opposite drive, beyond the clerk's office. Still another lies in the grass beside the gatehouse east of the jail). The jail faced the courthouse, and with the earlier clerk's office it formed a kind of forecourt in front of the courthouse. The Benson Lossing sketch of 1851 (Figure 5, *The County Seat*) shows that some sort of wall, seemingly of brick, ran behind the building, probably on axis with the stone marker. The view also shows a path leading from the



Above Left: Northwest boundary marker and loose boundary marker to the right.

doorway of the jail over to the south end of the courthouse piazza. In this view, the building is similar in appearance as it exists today.

Stonework

The jail is built using what is surely a local sandstone. According to Lois Wickham, Captain W.C. Wickham and Miss Kitty Winston reported that the stone was quarried, “just below the Winston Farm, ‘Blenheim,’ near Camptown Racetrack.”¹ Colors range from yellow to gray to blue-gray. There is also a pinkish-gray, very gritty stone.



Above: Stonework, note the range of color.

The walls are two feet thick on the ground floor and 1’-8” thick on the second floor. Individual stones in the superstructure of the building are crudely dressed on the edges to improve the precision and appearance of the joints. In some cases, indentations in the edges of the stones bear witness to the quarrying process, while sloping holes in the face of nearly all show the method of lifting and manipulating the stones. These holes have all been pointed up, probably at the time of construction.

Some of the stones appear to have been laid with their bed faces turned up and so are more vulnerable to weathering than would normally be the case. Significant spalling has occurred on some, especially where the work has been pointed with Portland cement mortar. The mortar seems originally to have been tooled to form beak joints, being cut at both edges with the trowel.

The top course of the stone stands about 1 ½” proud of the lower wall. The stones courses of the superstructure are much taller in the lower zone of the walls, a consequence of thicker walls in the lower story and the mason’s desire to keep the ends of the stones more or less square.

The stones of the foundation are undressed and inconsistent in their coursing. Most have been pointed with Portland cement mortar.

Roof

The hipped roof is covered with slate shingles of unknown date. They are certainly no earlier than the early 20th century, when much of the building, including the roof was rebuilt.



Above: Modern Jail cornice.

Cornice

The cornice is also of recent origin. Whether it closely follows the design of the original remains unclear, though the quirked cyma on the bottom member suggests that this was the case.

North Elevation

Wall

The projecting foundation is buried on this side of the building, except at the building’s northeast corner. The wall above has been whitewashed up to the top of the lintel over the doorway. This was a way to “freshen” the front of the building and may reflect the popularity of this area as a “leaning place” for loafers and

perhaps for others seeking to communicate casually with inmates.

The surface of the stone directly below the window is entirely gone, having spalled after the stone was patched with Portland cement mortar. Most of the stones in this course are badly spalled as well. The stone above the window is also badly deteriorated. The east jamb of the front doorway has been crudely parged with Portland cement.



Above: North elevation of jail.

Doorway

This was the only exterior access to the jail. It is secured by two doors, a barred outer door and a sheet iron inner door. Two vertical bars at each jamb and pair of bars at the head comprise two doorframes, one each for the inner and outer doors.

On the west side of the opening, two horizontal bars tie the vertical members of the two doorframes together at the top and at the bottom. These horizontal bars also bear the pintles on which both doors pivot. On the opposite side of this barred door is a hasp and on the corresponding jamb is a loop so that the door can be locked from the outside. However, the door can also be secured by a rimlock, which remains in its original position on the door. The iron doorframe is mortised to receive the bolt of this lock.



The outer, barred door is composed of two 1 ½” square verticals or stiles with seven 1” square vertical bars between. The smaller verticals are further reinforced by the straps of two hinges riveted to them, and also by the hasp, which is riveted to the smaller bars as well. Four horizontal bars, each ¾” x 3” lie in a flat orientation, forming the top and bottom of the door, and also a kind of lock rail near the center. The top and bottom bars of the door swell at the ends to provide a method of attachment to the verticals.

Windows

The first-floor window is roughly square, having a 4-light casement sash. It serves the front cell on the ground floor. The second floor windows are rectangular, having casement sash that are two lights wide and three high. All of these sash and their frames are modern.

The east window serves the front cell of the second floor. The west window served the north end of the upper passage.

Stone Walk

Before the front doorway of the jail is an area paved with stone flags. Some of these flags may have come from the courthouse, being similar in size, shape, color, and texture to those now in the courthouse piazza. At the eastern edge of this pavement are a



*Uppermost: Barred outer door to jail.
Above: Stone walk to entrance of jail.*



Above: East elevation of jail.

casements that are two lights wide and three lights high, while those below are two lights each way. The existing casement sash and window frames are modern. The four windows visible on this elevation serve the four prison cells within, two upstairs and two below.

Chimney

The chimney is built of hard, red brick with Portland cement mortar and probably dates to the early twentieth-century rebuilding of the jail interior. The stainless steel flashing and cricket behind the chimney are of more recent origin.



Above: Cesspit for south cell.

series of stones turned up on edge, probably to prevent flooding of the paved area. A terra cotta pipe runs under this walkway to carry water from the east to the west side of the walk.

East Elevation

Wall

Remarks concerning the west wall are applicable here. There is some spalling at grade and in the top course of the wall, just below the chimney.

Windows

As on the north façade the upper windows have casements that are two lights wide and three lights high, while those below are two lights each way. The existing casement sash and window frames are modern. The four windows visible on this elevation serve the four prison cells within, two upstairs and two below.

Cesspits

As part of the reconstruction of this jail early in the last century, interior plumbing fixtures were installed in the two ground-floor cells, and external cesspits created to process the waste from these fixtures. These are composed of poured-in place concrete, formed up with horizontal boards. In plan they are approximately 3'-9 1/2" wide by 3'-9" deep. They are presently filled with sand, gravel and coal.

South Elevation

Wall

Comments concerning the west wall are applicable here. There is some spalling on the first course above the foundation, and a badly deteriorated patch below the second-floor window was patched with concrete, having been formed up with horizontal boards. This work is similar in character to the cesspits and is surely contemporary with them.

Windows

The south elevation has only two windows, one serving the upper rear cell, and the other serving the cell below. The casement sash, three lights high and two lights wide, and the window frames are modern.



Above: South elevation of jail.

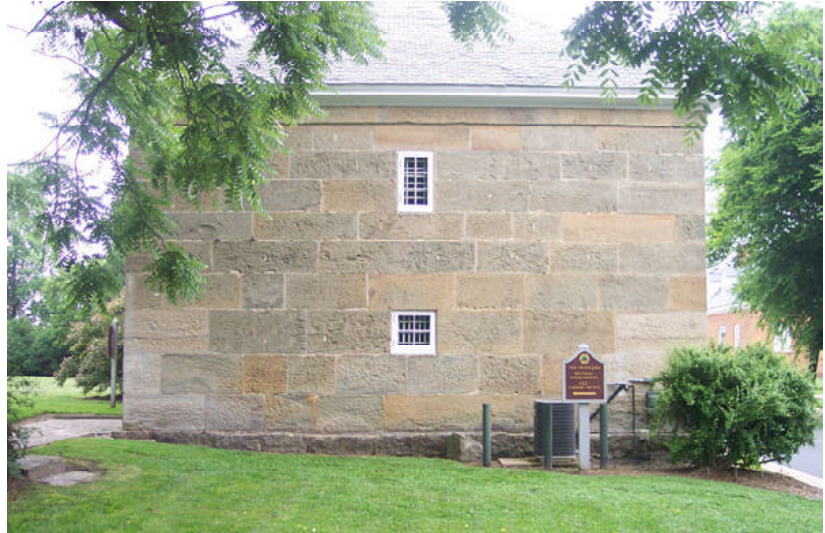
Electrical Devices

Along the top of the projecting foundation, a large electrical conduit runs from the disconnect on the west wall, to the electrical meter on the east wall.

West Elevation

Wall

The stone work seems to be in better shape here than elsewhere, though the bottom course of stone does exhibit some limited spalling. The marks left by the quarrying process are very evident on a number of the stones, as are the slanted holes that assisted in lifting the stone. The latter have all been pointed up. Indeed, many different periods of repointing are evident on this wall.



Above: West elevation of jail.

At the top of the fifth course are two wrought iron pintles, situated 4'-9" and 6'-6" respectively, from the northwest corner of the building. The original purpose of these fittings is unknown. They do appear to be quite early, possibly original.

On the ground below the window for the first-floor passage is a large piece of stone that seems to have come from a window, having three slots that once received the iron bars for one of the windows. The original location of this stone has not yet been determined.

Windows

The west elevation has only two windows, one serving the upper rear cell, and the other serving the cell below. The casement sash, three lights high and two lights wide, and the window frames are modern.

Electrical Devices

A disconnect for the compressor and a telephone interface panel are mounted on the stone wall near the buildings southwest corner. From the disconnect a conduit penetrates the wall. Supply and return lines for the air handler also penetrate the wall here, and two condensation drain lines besides. A telephone line also goes through the wall in this area. The condenser stands on a concrete pad where it is protected by three bollards set into the ground.



Above: Electrical devices and panels mounted on stone wall of jail.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Hanover County Jail - Interior

First Floor

Passage

Ceiling

The first-floor ceiling is a concrete slab, with reinforcing ribs at the third points of its north-south dimension and also around the stair opening. The ribs are 8 inches square. Along the exterior walls one can see where the slab turns down to bear on the stone ledge resulting from the diminished thickness of the second-floor wall. The textures visible on the underside of this slab indicate that the form was constructed of sawn boards, overlaid in some areas with some kind of craft paper.

This ceiling dates to the early twentieth century when the interior of the jail was completely gutted and rebuilt.

Walls

Except for the rear wall of the passage, and a small area of the front wall west of the exterior doorway, the stone walls of this space are entirely plastered at this level and finished with what may be simulated whitewash. The latter could date from the late 1960s when the Hanover Historical Society leased the building from the county.



Above: First floor interior.

The exposed stone at the rear of the passage retains traces of whitewash, which probably date from the early period of the building's use.

Floor

The floor seems to consist of a well-troweled skim coat of concrete over an earlier floor. Hairline cracks in this surface suggest the location of joints in the earlier material below. The 1867 commissioners' report on the jail mentioned "granite grout two feet deep." This may refer to a kind of concrete. If so, it represents an early instance of the use of that material.



Stair

The stair dates to the installation of the present concrete floors. The stringers are rolled steel channels and the treads, also channel sections, stand on angle clips bolted through the stringers. The railing incorporates two tiers of steel pipe, assembled with standard fittings—flanges, elbows, etc. The lower section of this railing and the newel at the first floor appear to have been replaced in recent times, these components having little of the rusted texture evident higher up the stair.

Iron Door – Exterior

The exterior doorway is secured by a barred door on the exterior and a hollow-core iron door on the interior. The outer door is described in the discussion of the north elevation. The inner door was originally secured by two sliding bolts operated from the outside, and there is no device by which to pull the door open

Above: Stair at first floor landing.



Clockwise from left: Inner door - exterior doorway, Inner door - detail, Cell door - ground floor.

from the inside. Clearly, the door was operated from the exterior, yet the loops that bore the bolts were secured with large nuts on the inside, and so were removable from within the building.

The door itself, about 3 1/2" thick, is built around a framework of iron angles, to both sides of which two pieces of sheet iron were riveted. The upper bolt assembly remains intact. The bolt is a large iron rod which slides horizontally within a pair of iron loops. Between these loops is a hasp with a slot that engages a third loop below. The lower bolt is gone; only the loops remain.

Just beyond this door is a concrete curb, probably created to keep water out of the passage when heavy rains overwhelm the surface drainage system outside.

Cell Doors – Ground Floor

Each of the doorways to the cells were originally secured with two doors, one on each face of the opening. The inner doors are now gone but those on the passage side remain. The remaining doors of both cells swing from the south jamb of their respective openings.

Each door is composed of two 1 1/2" square verticals with eight 1" square verticals between. Four horizontal bars, each 3/4" x 3" and each laid in the flat orientation, form the top and bottom of the door, and also a kind of lock rail near the center. As in the case of the outer barred door to the exterior,

the top and bottom bars of the first-floor cell doors swell at the ends to provide a method of attachment to the verticals. The smaller verticals are further reinforced by a series of eight horizontal bars, each 3/4" x 3," affixed with riveted clasps to the passage face of the door. Two of these horizontal bars are hinge straps.

The large hasps that now serve as the mechanism for locking the doors are not original, having been affixed long after the original construction. Each door was originally secured by an iron rim lock, which, judging from early screw holes, was mounted on the inside face of the door. Undoubtedly these locks resembled that remaining on the exterior, barred door.

As in the exterior doorway, a pair of vertical bars at each jamb comprised two doorframes, one for an inner door and another for the outer door. On each side of the opening, horizontal bars tied the vertical members of the two doorframes together, one at the top and one at the bottom. On one jamb these horizontal bars also bore the pintles on which both doors pivoted. Only the outer door frame was mortised to receive the bolt of a lock. The inner doors, it seems, were secured by hasps—just north of the doorway to the front cell is a hole where a loop once engaged this inner hasp.

Window

One window centered on the west wall of the passage lights this space. The exterior casement window is modern. The opening was originally secured by two barred grates, an inner and an outer. The present grates are both original, having been set into the stonework at the time of construction. Both are fabricated in the same manner having four horizontal bars, each measuring $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 3," set edgewise into the stone jambs of the opening. A series of nine vertical bars, each measuring 1" square, penetrates the vertical members to complete the grid. These grates differ from those in the first floor windows in that the flat bars are set into the jambs, and the second floor openings are nearly square. Here, and at every other window, the sill has been rebuilt in concrete so that it slopes to the exterior. Cracks below the sill show the extent of this repair.



Above: Cell window - first floor passage.

Electrical Devices

On the west wall, surface-mounted wire mold serves a number of electrical devices, including a switch at the top of the stair, a fluorescent light fixture on the ceiling, and two duplex convenience outlets on the west wall. Earlier electrical conduit brings power through the floor slab in the northeast corner of the room and runs along the east wall, up near the ceiling, to feed the two cells and also an incandescent light fixture over the stair landing.

Mechanical Equipment

On the concrete platform at the south end of the passage stands an air handler. From this unit, a duct rises to the ceiling, then runs northward along the west wall. It jogs around the stair opening, dropping down for a supply register opposite the doorway to each cell. A disconnect for this unit is mounted on the west wall.

Front Cell

Ceiling

As in the passage, the first-floor ceiling is a concrete slab. At the third points of the room's long dimension are two reinforcing ribs, each measuring 8 inches square. Another reinforcing rib over the chimney shows evidence of water damage, and rusting of the steel reinforcement has caused the concrete to spall. Along all the walls the slab turned down to bear on the stone ledge resulting from the diminished thickness of the second floor wall.

Walls

The stone walls were once entirely plastered, and finished with whitewash. The plaster has failed on the east wall below the window, and on the north wall, east of the window. The stone in these areas has spalled and was undoubtedly the immediate source of the plaster failure. In areas where the original stone surface remains, traces of whitewash are still present. These areas represent the building's earliest finish, though the 1841 report indicates that building interior was not whitewashed initially.

Flaking whitewash in the lower zone of the wall, signals a significant problem with rising damp around the entire perimeter of the space.

Chimney

The chimney mass stands in the southeast corner of the room, adjoining the partition shared with the cell next door. The breast of this chimney has been encased in about 9" of concrete, probably dating to the early twentieth century when the interior of the building was completely rebuilt. Impressions in this concrete indicate the form was built with horizontal boards. In the middle of the concrete breast is a stove thimble of uncertain date. The concrete breast dates from the early twentieth century, when the jail interior was gutted and reconstructed.

Floor

As in the passage, the original floor may yet be in place, skimmed over with a thin layer of concrete.

Iron Door

See Passage.

Windows

The remarks concerning construction and detailing of the passage window are applicable here. In this space, a single opening on each exterior wall supplied light and, initially, ventilation to the cell.

Platform for Plumbing Fixtures

In the northeast corner of the cell is a concrete platform, eight inches in height, which seems to have accommodated a toilet and lavatory. Two patched holes for the soil lines from these fixtures are visible in the top of the platform. On the fore edge is a plugged pipe, which must have served as a cleanout for the line connecting to a cesspit outside.

The platform is L-shaped and holes in the wall above its west leg suggest that the lavatory was situated there, and the toilet in the corner. In the wall above are holes that may have been associated with hanging the lavatory. There are two groups of holes, the first being 2'-8" apart, and 3'-8" above platform. The second group, centered on the first, is 1'-2" apart and 2'-5" above the platform. In the ceiling above the platform is a hole where the water line serving the fixtures probably entered the space.

Rear Cell

Ceiling

Here, as in the other first-floor rooms, the ceiling is a concrete slab. At the third points of the room's east-west dimension are two reinforcing ribs, each measuring 8 inches square. Another reinforcing rib over the chimney shows evidence of water damage. Rusted reinforcement has caused the concrete to spall. Along all the walls the slab turned down to bear on the stone ledge resulting from the diminished thickness of the second floor wall.



Above: Chimney breast - Front cell - Ground Floor.



Above: Concrete platform, front cell.



Above: Chimneybreast - Rear cell - Ground Floor.



Above: Platform in rear cell, plugged clean out hole.

Walls

The stone walls are almost entirely plastered and finished with whitewash. An exception is that the plaster has failed on the east wall below the window, and on the north wall, east of the window. The stone in these areas has spalled and was undoubtedly the immediate source of the plaster failure.

Chimney

The chimney mass stands in the southeast corner of the room, adjoining the partition shared with the cell next door. The breast of this chimney has been encased in about 7" of concrete, probably dating to the early twentieth century when the interior of the building was completely rebuilt. Impressions in this concrete indicate the form was built with horizontal boards.

Fireplace

The present fireplace is a modern creation, cut through the concrete casing of the chimney breast and the stonework behind. The firebox is lined with modern brick and provided with a raised hearth of the same material. These alterations probably date from the period shortly after 1969, when the Hanover County Historical Society first leased the building.

Chimneypiece

The chimneypiece is made up from remnants of oak framing. Nail holes in the tops of these members and also holes used in jacking the floors tight before nailing leave no doubt that these members were all floor joists. Their sectional dimensions do not match the 12' x 12" flooring timbers mentioned in the 1867 report, so they probably came from another building—possibly the courthouse or clerk's office.

Floor

As in the passage, the original floor may yet be in place, skimmed over with a thin layer of concrete. In the middle of this floor is a concrete patch possibly for a modern floor drain.

Iron Door

See Passage.

Windows

The remarks concerning construction and detailing of the passage window are applicable here. In this space, a single opening on each exterior wall supplied light and, initially, ventilation to the cell.

Platform for Plumbing Fixtures

In the southeast corner of the cell is a concrete platform, eight inches in height. As in the front cell, this platform is L-shaped and probably accommodated a toilet and lavatory. Here too, on the fore edge of the platform is a plugged conduit, which probably served as a cleanout for the line connecting to a cesspit outside. In the ceiling above is a hole where the water line serving the fixtures probably entered the space.

Electrical Devices

Surface-mounted wire mold served three duplex convenience outlets, a light switch and two fluorescent light fixtures on the northern sides of the ceiling ribs. These lights are clearly intended for display and may date to the period shortly after 1969 when the building was first leased to the Hanover County Historical Society.

Second Floor

Passage

Ceiling

The second floor ceiling is a concrete slab, which has no reinforcing ribs in this space. From the textures visible on the underside of this slab it appears that the form was constructed of sawn boards, overlaid in some areas with craft paper.



Scuttle

In this ceiling, at the midpoint of the east wall, a scuttle measuring two feet square provides access to the attic. Within this opening, bolted to the edges of the ceiling slab, is a cast-iron frame which functions as a stop for the cast-iron door. This door was originally hinged on the western side of the opening, but has now been detached and lies on the attic floor. The door is quite heavy and poses a significant risk to anyone who attempts to manipulate it. To avoid injury to maintenance personnel, this door should be reattached to its hinges.

Walls

The stone walls are entirely plastered at this level and finished with what appears to be simulated whitewash. At the north end of the passage, cracks on the north and west walls show where the finish has begun to delaminate from the wall.

Floor

The floor is a plain, concrete slab, covered with gray paint.

Stair

The stair lands several feet west of the rear wall. The opening is closed off by a pair of horizontal rails, which are simply steel pipes assembled with standard fittings—flanges and elbows, etc.—and bolted to the slab.

Iron Doors - Cells

The doors to the second floor cells superficially resemble those downstairs, but the differences are sufficient to suggest that the upper doors were made at a later time. Those on the ground floor, for instance, were fabricated entirely of wrought bars, while some parts of the second-floor doors appear to have been fashioned from rolled stock. And while all rivets in the lower doors are driven flush into countersunk holes, the upper doors have all domed rivets on the side toward the passage. Moreover, the top and lower rails of the later doors are bolted in place using cast or wrought angles, while on the



*Uppermost: Second floor passage.
Above: Stair railing - second floor.*



Above left and right: Door of rear cell and detail of door at second floor.

first floor doors, the haunch for attaching these rails to the outer stiles are integral with each rail. Finally, in contrast to the doors downstairs, there seems to have been only one door in each opening.

These second floor doors are composed of two 1 ½” square verticals with eight more 1” square verticals between. Four horizontal bars, each ¾” x 3” and laid in the flat orientation form the top and bottom of the door, and also a kind of lock rail near the center. These smaller verticals are further reinforced by a series of eight horizontal bars each ¾” x 3,” affixed with riveted clasps to the passage face of the door. Two of these horizontal bars are hinge straps. Above the lock rail, two of the small verticals are interrupted to provide a pass-through for food.

The large hasps that now serve as the mechanism for locking the doors are original, yet it is also clear that each door was originally secured by an iron rimlock. Judging from remaining screw holes, this lock was mounted on the inside face of the door. The hasp has been cut off of the front door with an acetylene torch.



Above: West window - second floor passage.

The manner of hanging these doors differs from those on the first floor. In this case the jambs and head of the frame are composed of steel channels instead of iron bars, the jambs being bolted to the stone sides of each opening. Instead of welding iron hinge pintles to vertical iron bars as on the lower doorways, they are screwed in each case to the rolled channel that forms the south jamb. The north member of each doorway was originally mortised to receive the bolt of a lock, near which a short bar was attached to the frame, acting as a stop.

Windows

Two windows light the passage, one at the north end of the passage and one centered on the west wall. In both cases, the exterior casement windows and frames are modern. The barred grates in both openings are original, having been set into the stonework at the time of construction. There are two grates, an inner and an outer, in each window. All are fabricated in the same manner, having five vertical bars, each measuring ¾” x 3” and set edgewise

into the head and sill of the opening. A series of eight horizontal bars, each measuring 1” square, penetrates the vertical members to complete the grid. These grates differ from those in the ground-floor windows in that the flat bars are set into the head and sill instead of the jambs, and the second-floor openings are all rectangular. Here, as downstairs, the sill has been rebuilt in concrete to slope toward the exterior.

Electrical Devices

On the west wall, surface mounted wire mold serves a number of electrical devices, including a switch at the top of the stair, a fluorescent light fixture on the ceiling opposite the doorway of the front cell, and two duplex convenience outlets on the west wall. Earlier electrical conduit brings power through the floor slab in the northeast corner of the room and runs along the east wall, up near the ceiling, to feed the two cells and an incandescent light fixture over the stair landing.

Mechanical Equipment

A single duct penetrates the floor in the southeast corner of the room, runs up the south wall, and then turns westward along the ceiling, dropping down with a supply register opposite the doorway of each cell.

Front Cell

Not accessible, however the remarks for the rear cell are generally applicable here.

Rear Cell

Ceiling

As in the passage, the second floor ceiling is a concrete slab. There are two reinforcing ribs in this space, each measuring 8 inches high by 7 inches wide at the bottom. Another reinforcing rib over the chimney shows evidence of water damage, and the consequent rusting of the steel reinforcement has caused the concrete to spall.

Walls

The stone walls are entirely plastered at this level and finished with what appears to be simulated whitewash.

Chimney

The chimney mass stands at the far end of the room, adjoining the partition shared with the cell next door. The breast of the chimney has a thimble cover for a stove. Whether this aperture was associated with the 1841 stove remains unclear.

Floor

The floor is a plain, concrete slab, now covered with carpet.

Iron Door

See Architectural Description and Analysis - Hanover County Courthouse, Interior - Second Floor - Passage.

Windows

The remarks concerning construction and detailing of the passage windows are applicable here. In this space, openings on both exterior walls supplied light and, initially, ventilation to the cell.



Above: Attic in jail.

Attic

Framing

The roof is framed in a hipped form with circular-sawn pine, butted and secured with wire nails. It stands atop the attic floor slab and thus probably dates to the early twentieth century, when the interior of the jail was gutted and thoroughly rebuilt.

Floor

The attic floor is simply the upper surface of the slab that forms the second floor ceiling.

Insulation

The attic floor is covered with modern fiberglass insulation.

Endnotes

1 Lois Wickham, Memorandum, June, 2004.

CONDITIONS SURVEY

Hanover County Jail - Exterior



Above: Overall view of the jail from the northwest. The roof appears to be contemporary with that on the main courthouse.

Roof

The roof of the jail appears to be absolutely contemporary with the roof of the courthouse. The roof is covered with the same Buckingham slate shingles and modern copper flashings, and there are patched areas of larger, thicker shingles on the main courthouse. Like the main courthouse, the hips are “battered” with asphalt-based roofing compound, and it is not known if secret woven flashings were installed beneath the hip shingles to improve performance.

From the attic side, the entire roof deck appears to be in good condition, except on the up-slope side of the chimney, where historic leaks have severely damaged the roof deck to the point where the decking no longer exists in close proximity to the chimney. This condition may be long standing, because it appears that the problem was addressed by the insertion of a cricket designed to cover over the damaged area. However, the extent of the damage to the deck around the chimney is such that it is very unlikely that the slate nails could be well fastened to the deck boards, and while it was not possible to inspect the roof closely during the current effort, it can be surmised that this roof is nearing the end of its useful life.



Above: View of the jail from the southeast.

Recommendations:

Since it appears that the damage to the roof deck around the chimney may be long standing, present efforts to keep the roof watertight appear to have been effective. However, at some point remedial repairs will become increasingly difficult, and it should be expected that the roof will need replacement in five to ten years. If it is not possible to replace both the courthouse roof and the jail roof simultaneously, preference should be given to the jail roof. When this roof is replaced, the roof deck boards around the chimney should be replaced with similar material to the surrounding roof deck. Funds should also be put aside to make repairs to the rafters at or near the chimney. It is further recommended that the main roof be once again replaced with Buckingham slate matching the smaller widths of the earlier shingles. All slates should be fastened with stainless steel nails (if the flashings are terne coated stainless steel, if they are copper, the nails should be copper also), and all flashings should be either copper or terne coated stainless steel.



Above: A close view of the roof deck deterioration around the chimney within the attic.



Above: The stone beneath the chimney deteriorated when water was allowed to flow around the flashings of the chimney. This leak does not appear to be active.

Other Roof Features

Chimney

There is one chimney centrally located on the east side of the roof of the jail. This chimney is the only brick feature on the exterior of the building. The chimney has been fitted with a contemporary ventilated cap.

Recommendations:

The chimney has been pointed on several occasions, and from the ground it appears that some Portland based cement mortar has been used. It is recommended that all loose and deteriorated mortar within the joints on the chimney be removed and re-pointed using a pure lime based mortar. Cement based pointing mortar should be carefully cut and removed, the work re-pointed with the same lime based mix. It appears that approximately fifty percent of the chimney joints require re-pointing.

Exterior Woodwork and Wood Features

Main Cornice

The main cornice appears to have been rebuilt in recent years, possibly when the roof was last repaired. Frequent painting and other maintenance has kept this feature in the good condition it is in today.

Recommendations:

There are several small areas of the main cornice that should be attended to, but these may be considered to be maintenance items in their scale. The most important of these is the hole carved by birds into the bed molding on the northeast corner of the building. At this time, these birds have nested within the attic and may be



Above: A detailed view of a hole in the cornice created by nesting birds.

causing more damage within the framing supporting the cornice. It is recommended that this hole be closed with a Dutchman as soon as practicable. There are a series of other small areas of damage to the cornice, caused either by birds or insects, which should be attended to at the same time. After these localized repairs are made, it is expected that those areas will be painted.



Windows

The wooden sash and frames on the jail appear to have been installed later in the life of the building. It is evident that originally, there were only iron bars fitted in the window openings, and while these still survive, they have been covered over by wooden sash. The sash and frames appear to date from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century, but further research may date these more precisely. Though not original to the jail, they serve a useful purpose and it is recommended that they remain in place.



Recommendations:

The sashes have been coated with many layers of paint over the years, and most if not all of them have been painted shut. Since the jail is air conditioned, it may not be necessary to have the windows operable, but in those areas where the paint has failed, it should be scraped and sanded to allow the new paint to adhere to the substrate. The glazing putty on several sash lights has failed, and it is now necessary to remove it so the sash can be re-glazed. This should be accomplished with great care so that the existing glass is preserved. Once the putty has been replaced, the sash will require repainting.

Uppermost: Hard cement based mortar at the base of one of the second floor windows is causing damage to the surrounding stone.

Above: A detail of one of the first floor windows.

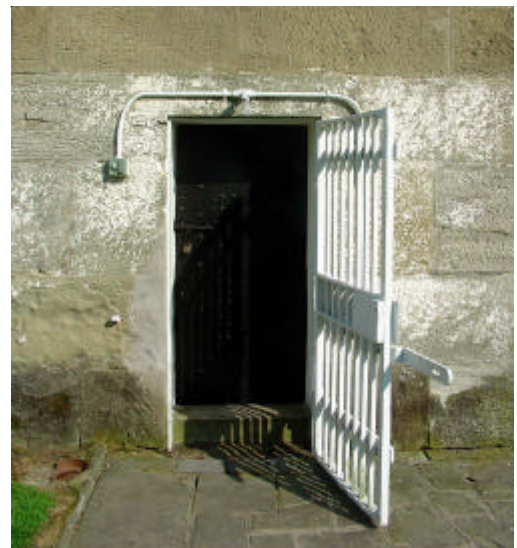
In many cases, the sealant around the window frames has failed or has been continually re-applied over the years. It is recommended that all old sealant be removed and replaced. This work will also require repairs to the pointing mortar around several of the openings. It may be that most of the mortar that can now be observed is not original to the jail, and it is recommended that probes be made to determine the early mortar mix and tooling before reinstating this material.

Iron Features

The iron bars at the windows appear to be original to the building and are in good condition. The barred door at the main entrance may be early, but it is difficult to determine if it has been replaced. This door is in good condition and no work is required at this time.

Stone Masonry Walls

The Hanover County Jail is a remarkable building in the sense that it was constructed of large blocks of cut sandstone. These blocks are approximately 24" thick, meaning the inside face of each block also forms the inside finished walls. Judging from the various colors of the sandstone, the stone may have originated from different quarries or different parts of the same quarry. Although the stones were cut, the face of the stones have been textured. A border was created around the perimeter of the faces of the stones with (most likely) a six point drove chisel. This border provides a defined face for finished pointing of the stone.



Above: The main door to the north.



Clockwise from above left: An example of poor stone within the building. The stone to the extreme left is still in remarkably good condition. Next, several stones have deteriorated because they were not well chosen when the jail was constructed. Lastly, this cement based stone patch has faded and is now an unsightly repair to the building.

While most of the stones within the jail are in very good condition, there are many that are in varying states of decay. This decay can be traced to a variety of causes. In several cases the stone has decayed because the bedding planes are vertical or nearly vertical to the surface of the wall. Since sandstone is a sedimentary stone, this material should be laid in the wall in the same way that it was found in the earth: the bedding planes should be horizontal or parallel with grade. If sandstone is laid so that these bedding planes are vertical or perpendicular to grade, water can enter between the bedding planes and cause exfoliation. Curiously, the bedding planes in several of the stones found on the jail are in varying directions within the same block of stone. As a result, those exposed planes that are perpendicular to grade have failed, while other portions of the stone are in good condition.

Another type of stone failure found within the jail is a loss of cohesion. It is evident that some stones were quarried from a denser grade of rock than others, and the result is that the weaker stones have eroded in the presence of water.

Further stone damage has occurred because of improper repairs that have been made to the building over many years. There are several areas where a cement based colored mortar was used over the exfoliated areas of stone. As water has entered the porous sandstone around the immediate area of the patch, the impermeable cement patch has trapped the water behind it. When the water froze and expanded behind the patch, the patch simply popped off of the building. In some cases the dense cement patch took surrounding sandstone with it, extending and widening the damaged area of stone.



Above: Many mortar joints have completely deteriorated and require re-pointing.

Similar types of damage can be observed at mortar joints, where hard Portland cement based mortar was used for re-pointing material. At some time, water entered the wall behind the cement mortar, froze and pushed the joint out, often taking surrounding stone with it.

Recommendations:

In a building of this type, it must be recognized that any stone repair or pointing material must exactly match the compressive strength, vapor permeability and appearance of the original material. The best and simplest way to achieve these characteristics is to make repairs using the same material and technologies originally employed in the

construction of the building. In other words, it is not recommended that synthetic stone repairs or modern cement based mortars be used in the repair of this building. All repairs to the stone should be Dutchman type repairs using sandstone matching the original and pure lime based mortars.

The recommendations related to the stone walls are in two parts; the first are related to arresting further stone deterioration and the second are devoted to recommendations for repairing the deterioration that has already taken place.



Arresting Deterioration

Regrading

It is likely that the original grade around the building was lower than it is today. Evidence for this may be the concrete dam at the main entrance door. This dam was clearly placed to prevent water from flowing down the hill to the north and entering the building through the doorway. The fact that it is concrete indicates that it most likely dates from the very late nineteenth century or perhaps sometime during the twentieth century. While grade was probably lower near the walls of the jail, it is as likely that some provision was made to prevent water from running down the hill from the north (toward the courthouse). This provision may have been in the form of a swale or some similar grading technique. At this time, surface water is allowed to flow directly down the northern slope toward the jail walls unimpeded. Although the terra cotta drain line is an attempt to keep water away from the main entry, no similar provision appears to have been made for the remainder of the north wall. Once the surface water reaches the porous sandstone jail walls, it is then wicked up into the wall through capillary action and evaporates through the inside and outside surfaces. Once this water evaporates, salts and other minerals crystallize in the walls and exfoliate the stone in the evaporative zone. This water may also freeze and similarly deteriorate the stone. It is therefore important to re-grade around the north side of the building to prevent water from wicking up the walls.



Above: This concrete raised threshold was created to prevent water from flowing into the building.

Left: It is likely that this terra cotta drainpipe near the main door is now ineffective.

Waterproofing/damp-proofing

It is very possible that re-grading the area of earth at the north of the jail may be sufficient to prevent further deterioration. Assuming that there is no desire to install eaves troughs at the roof cornice, roof run-off will then flow away from the walls of the building. If this initial step proves ineffective, it may be necessary to provide waterproofing and a foundation drain around the north side of the building. Although this will certainly capture most of the surface run-off entering the walls, it will be ineffective in the unlikely event that water is entering the walls from a high water table. Test probes should be performed around the jail to determine the level of the water table. If it is found that water is in fact entering the walls from beneath the walls, a damp-proof course will be required. Presumably, this would be in the form of a concrete underpinning beneath the entire wall. Since there is no cellar beneath the jail, it is very likely that the stone walls do not extend very deep below grade, and it is therefore equally likely that water entering the walls is surface water.



Upper Left: Water now flows down the slope to the north of the building directly to the wall of the jail.

Upper Right: A view of the damage caused by rising dampness at the north wall.

Left: It is evident that water has continued to deteriorate the block of stone beneath the window after the stone had been patched with cement mortar.

Re-pointing/Mortar Repairs

There are many failed and poorly filled mortar joints on the jail, and these joints are allowing water to enter the walls. As previously stated, these joints should be well raked and pointed using pure lime mortar matching the original mortar found in the building. Similarly, all cement and synthetic based patching compounds should be removed from the building. This will allow water to enter and exit the stone unimpeded. Additionally, all ferrous metal conduits and fasteners should be removed from the building to prevent them from rusting and expanding, which eventually causes the stone to chip at those locations.



Above: This is one of two cesspits that once served the cells within. These are now keeping water against the original stone walls and causing deterioration.

Other Action

There are two concrete cesspits situated against the east wall of the building. These features, now defunct, have been filled with stone and soil, providing a moisture conduit into the east wall; eventually deteriorating the stone in the same manner as the rising dampness described on the north wall. It is recommended that these former cesspits be lined with lead to prevent further damage to the original walls.

Stone Repair

It must be appreciated that these stone walls are two feet thick at the first floor and approximately 20" thick at the second floor level. Considering these dimensions,

the deterioration on the exterior (and interior) surfaces of the stone appears to be more cosmetic than structural in nature. The pivotal issue is to arrive at a repair program that will prevent further deterioration to the stonework. Because each stone exhibits a different level of deterioration, the level and approach to its repair will differ. Those stones that have simply eroded on their surface (perhaps to less than an inch back from its original finished surface) may be chiseled back and refinished to its original appearance. The alternative to refinishing these stones is to simply leave them as they are and accept the eroded appearance as a part of the aging process of the building.

Others stones that are chipped may be partially Dutchman repaired with new stone selected to match the surrounding block. Examples of such damage are visible directly beneath several of the windows.

Finally, several stones are severely eroded to the stage where partial Dutchman repair is not possible. Since the stone blocks extend into the full thickness of the wall, it is not a simple affair to replace them. It is therefore recommended that these stones be cut back to a depth of at least four inches to allow for the installation of a new four inch veneer stone on the surface of the original stone. The new veneer stone can be installed with lime based grout and stainless steel pins. Acrylics or epoxies should be kept to a minimum and only used to hold crimps and pins in place.

CONDITIONS SURVEY

Hanover County Jail - Interior

Since the walls of the jail are constructed of solid blocks of stone throughout, the problems found on the interior of the jail closely follow those on the outside. When water infiltration and other issues are addressed on the exterior, most of the interior problems will be solved.

Attic

With the exception of the deteriorated roof boards and the surrounding rafters at the east chimney (noted in the Exterior Conditions Survey), the roof framing system appears to be in good condition and no work is required at this time. It is recommended, however, that some provision for improved attic access be made to allow for more frequent inspections of the structure.



Left: A view of the attic structure looking east. The jail was likely insulated when the building was air conditioned. Right: An overall view of the peak of the attic structure.

Walls

After the water infiltration has been arrested on the exterior of the building, it will be possible to plaster the interior surfaces of the walls. It is recommended that pure lime plaster be used for this work. This material, when used together with a lime based white wash finish, will encourage vapor permeability and vastly diminish



Left: This photo, looking toward the east wall of the south room, illustrates the damage caused to the walls from the former cisterns. Right: A view of the northeast corner of the northeast first floor cell. The damage beneath the window was also caused by the cistern on the opposite side of the wall beneath the window.

problems in the future. There are other areas of cracking plaster over the windows and at the corners of the second floor of the building, yet these can be repaired once the exterior is addressed.

It is highly recommended that the cement based patching and plaster covering over the firebox in the northeast room on the first floor be removed. This will once again open the chimney and allow the flue to ventilate as it was designed. The rationale behind ventilating the flue is similar to that described in the Conditions Survey for the courthouse.



Left: This firebox in the northeast cell should once again be opened to allow air to circulate within the chimney flue.

Below right: Plaster cracking in the upper corners of the second floor can be repaired after the exterior problems have been addressed.

Below left: Plaster cracking along the ceiling of the south wall.



PLUMBING / MECHANICAL / ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS SURVEY

Hanover County Jail

Plumbing

- There are two large concrete foundations on the east side. Their purpose is not entirely certain. They appear to be related to possible sanitary sewer drainage from the cells and may be cesspools.
- There appears to be no active plumbing in the jail.
- Both of the raised curbs in the first floor cells have 4" cast-iron pipes cut-off flush at the face. It is possible they were for raised toilets and/or sinks. There are signs of supports and attachments for possible fixtures.

Recommendations:

- We make no particular recommendation for plumbing since there is no active plumbing. It may be desirable to recreate the interior fixtures depending on the time period for the interpretation of the cells.

Mechanical

- The day of the inspection the outside morning temperature was in the low 70's and fairly high humidity. The lower floor temperatures were in the mid 60's.
- The stones of the jail appear to be a combination of stone types. Some appear to be sandstone and show signs of spalling, particularly near the fireplace/chimney.
- There is a dx air-to-air heat pump on a curb in the southwest corner. The interior unit is relatively new and in very good condition.

It is a Nordyne Model # GB3BM-03K-BB
SKU 903499GB

Electric 208/230 VAC / 1Ø / 60 Hz / 2.2 FLA / 1/3 HP

Approved heater kits (there is a list of 7)

This unit can provide both heating and air-conditioning for the jail. The unit sits on a stand about 12" high. There is no return ductwork. There is a 3/4" PVC condensate which transitions to copper sweat before penetrating thru the stone exterior wall.

- There are two refrigeration lines. There is an insulated line about 3/4" and an uninsulated line about 1/4". Both penetrate out the front (west) wall.
- There is a York/Honeywell Thermostat (T87R1046 2TH11702224A)
- The supply ductwork is uninsulated, galvanized steel with steel registers. The ductwork is exposed to view.
- The northern cell does not have a fireplace but appears to have a stove flue.

- The exterior condensing Unit is a Nordyne Model:
 - JT3BA-036kA (3 ton)
 - Electrical Data: 208/230 VAC / 60 Hz / 1Ø / Total Amp = 15.9 / R22
 - Split system heat pump for outdoor use.
 - Insulation on exterior line is deteriorated.
- The cooling system may be oversized depending on whether the doors are left open during business hours. If it is oversized it will short cycle and it will not adequately control moisture.

Recommendations:

- We suggest that geothermal heating/cooling systems are good applications for both the courthouse and the jail. Geothermal systems offer advantages of eliminating the unsightly condensing units, eliminate the noise, and they are very efficient, saving energy and operating costs. It is possible to have the geothermal system be the sole means of heating the courthouse, eliminating the need for the buried pipes between the buildings and eliminate the need for the manifold pit. The geothermal system would however require the installation of its own pumps, water source heat pumps, and associated electrical equipment. A buried vault provides a good location in terms of minimizing the visual impact of mechanical equipment. It may also be possible to install equipment in the Court Clerks building and install new buried insulated plastic piping between the buildings.
- We recommend that if the floor is replaced, then this provides an opportunity to install hot water radiant tubing and create a radiant floor. This is a good application for radiant heating since it is efficient and easily kept at depressed temperatures when the building is not in use.
- The air-handling unit, the exterior condensing unit and the exposed ductwork are visually distracting. We suggest that consideration be given to installing the air-handler in the attic and having the ductwork feed from the second floor down to the first floor. While this does not entirely eliminate the modern intrusions it does minimize them.

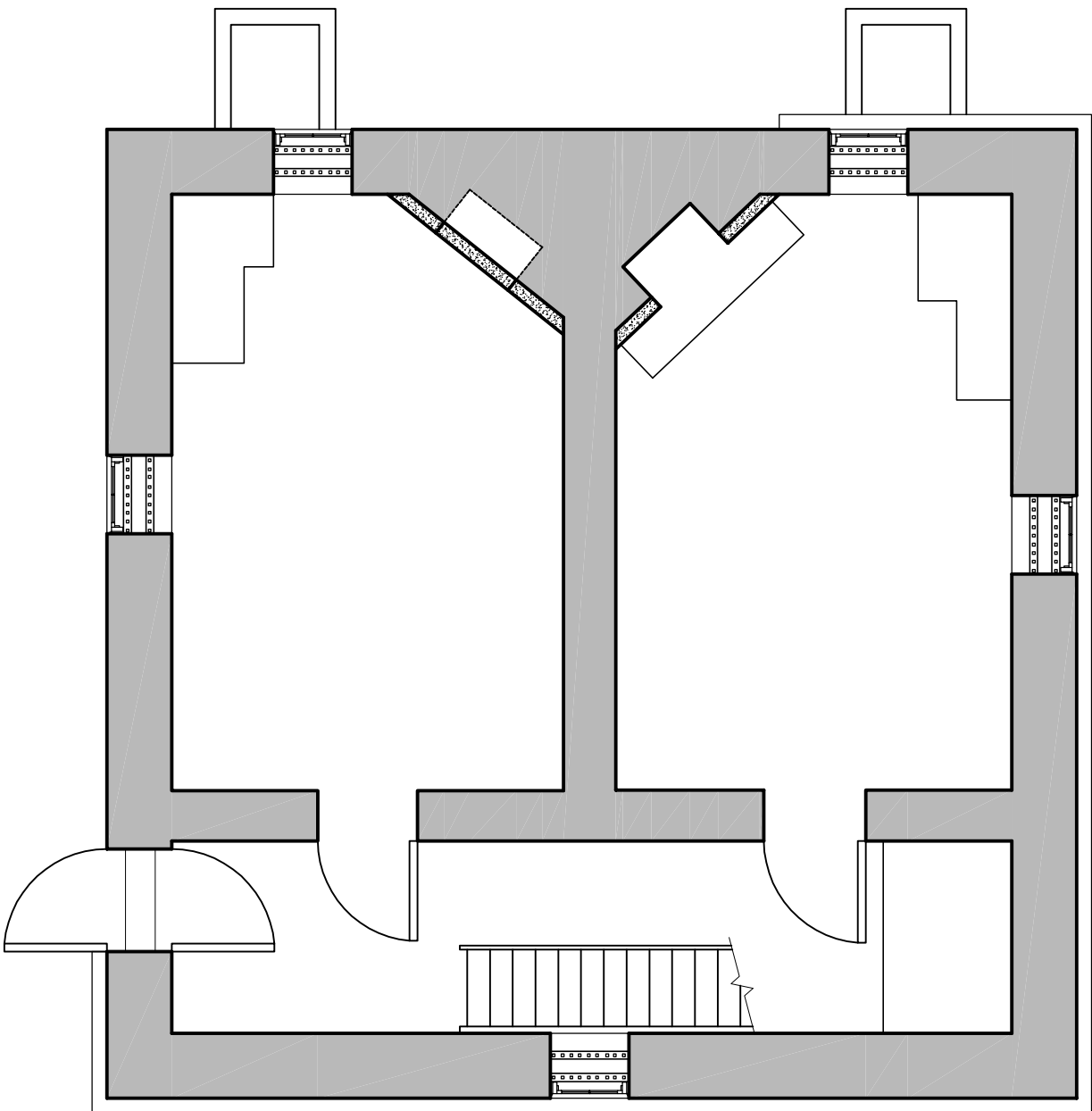
Electrical

- The electrical panel serving the jail presently has only (2) active circuit breakers. There is one 20-amp breaker for lights and receptacles and one 30 amp 2-pole breaker for the electric heat. The condensing unit is presently fed separately from the electric service.
- None of the conduits have separate green equipment ground wires; the conduit system is used as the equipment ground system. While this is a code compliant method, the conduit system does not presently have tight connections and the ground path is of poor quality.
- The electric meter is on the exterior at the southeast corner. The meter number is Dominion 75 963 063 (72530), 240 VAC, 3 wire, Class 200, Type D5SM, Serial # 5560C36G09, Form 2S, Kh 7.2, TA 30, 60 Hz.
- The service enters underground in a 2 ½” rigid galvanized conduit.
- There is a 1 ½” rigid galvanized conduit running from the meter across the top of the stone foundation all the way to the front (street side). It is unsightly.

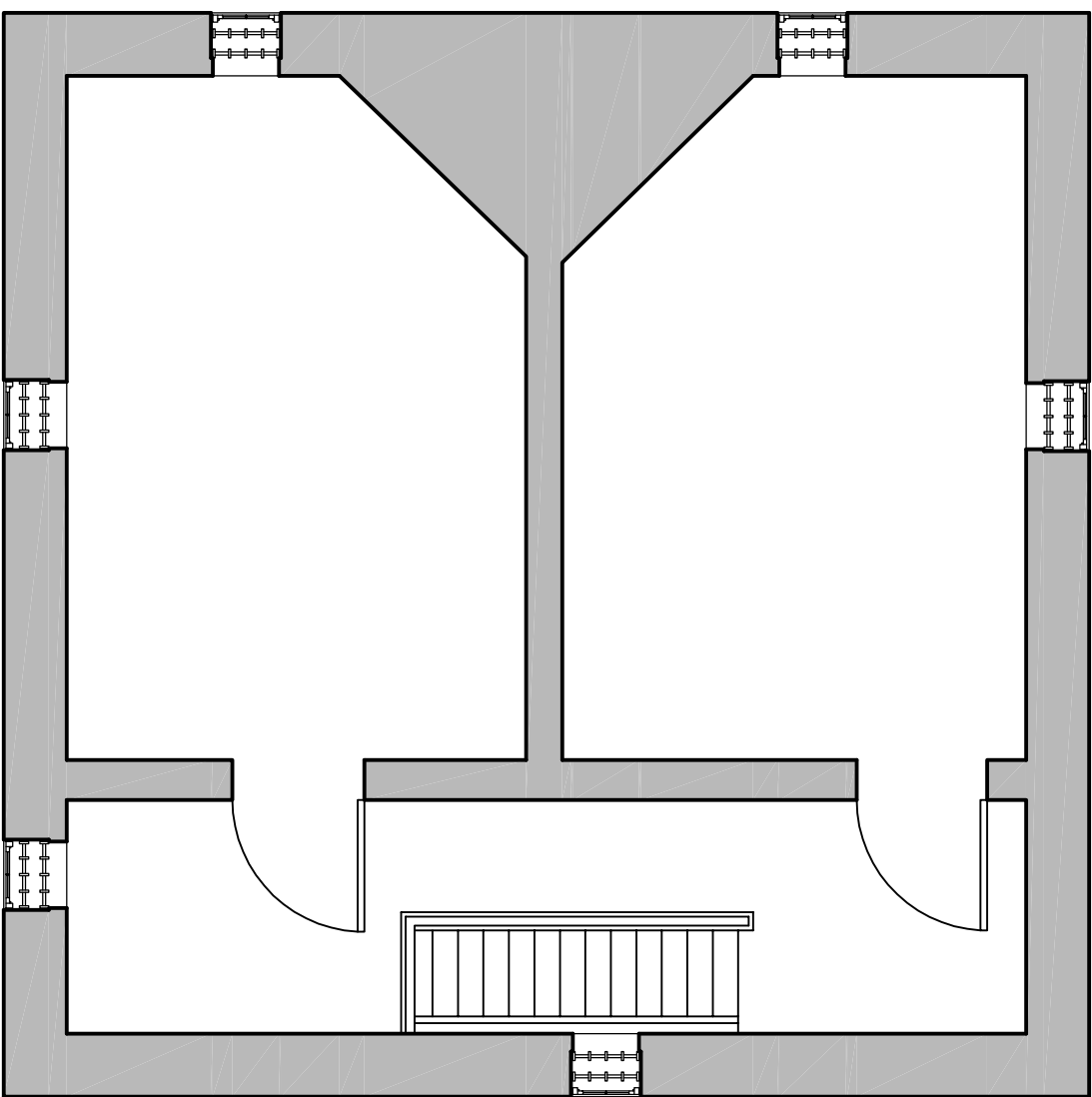
- There is an outlet on the 4" x 4" treated wood post in the front lawn between the jail and the courthouse. It is fed with a ¾" PVC conduit. It does not have an outlet which is waterproof while in use. It is not clear whether this outlet is fed from the jail, courthouse or another building.
- The electric panel is located in the southwest corner adjacent to the air-handling unit. The panel is a QOC12. The panel appears in good condition.
- There is a 30A fused disconnect switch behind the main door which appears to serve the lights and receptacles. Only one leg of this two-pole switch is used. There is a 15A screw-in fuse in the other leg. It says to keep it "on" because the answering machine needs it. The ground wires and neutral wires are bonded in this box. The wiring is not done with any craftsmanship.
- A portion of the conduit system is old (1920's +/-). Other portions are new EMT or wire mold. The craftsmanship is not good.
- The two first floor display cases have built-in lighting with cords for plugging into wall outlets. Both cords and the internal wiring appear very old, fragile, and unsafe. We do not recommend these be plugged in until the wiring is replaced.
- All receptacles appear to be of the old ungrounded type.

Recommendations:

- All interior electric conduits, wiremold, outlets, and light fixtures should be replaced.
- All conduit and raceways should have separate green equipment ground wires.
- We suggest that the attic of the jail be equipped with heat detectors possibly fed from the courthouse fire alarm system in order to detect a fire in the attic. Fire Alarm devices could be added in the first and second floor spaces, however, the potential for fire in these areas is minimal and the risk of a fire spreading is low. A fire alarm or smoke detection system is not required by code for the jail.
- There are improper electrical interconnections of the green safety ground wire to the neutral wire at multiple locations. For example, there is one such interconnection at the HVAC condensing unit disconnect switch, another at the 60 AMP main disconnect switch and a third in the junction box behind the door. There should be only one bond of the neutral and ground system located at the first disconnecting means.
- The telephone entrance wire runs within the same conduit as the main electric power service entrance wires. This is a code violation and the telephone wire should be provided with its own conduit sleeve through the wall.
- The electrical service, distribution, and devices all seem to have exceeded their useful life and should be replaced. We recommend that the service consist of a single disconnecting means and a single electric panel. Alternately the jail could be fed from the courthouse electric service. The electric power requirements for the jail are very low and may not justify a dedicated service. Eliminating the electric service would eliminate the unsightly clutter on the outside of the jail and would eliminate the monthly electric meter charge from the utility company.



1 FIRST FLOOR PLAN
 A7 SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"



2 SECOND FLOOR PLAN
 A7 SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

FIRST AND SECOND FLOOR PLANS

HANOVER COUNTY JAIL

MESICK•COHEN•WILSON•BAKER•ARCHITECTS

388 BROADWAY ALBANY, NY 12207
 p. (518)433-9394 f. (518)433-9397

3302 CRAGGY OAK COURT WILLIAMSBURG, VA 23188
 p. (757)221-0713 f. (757)221-0714

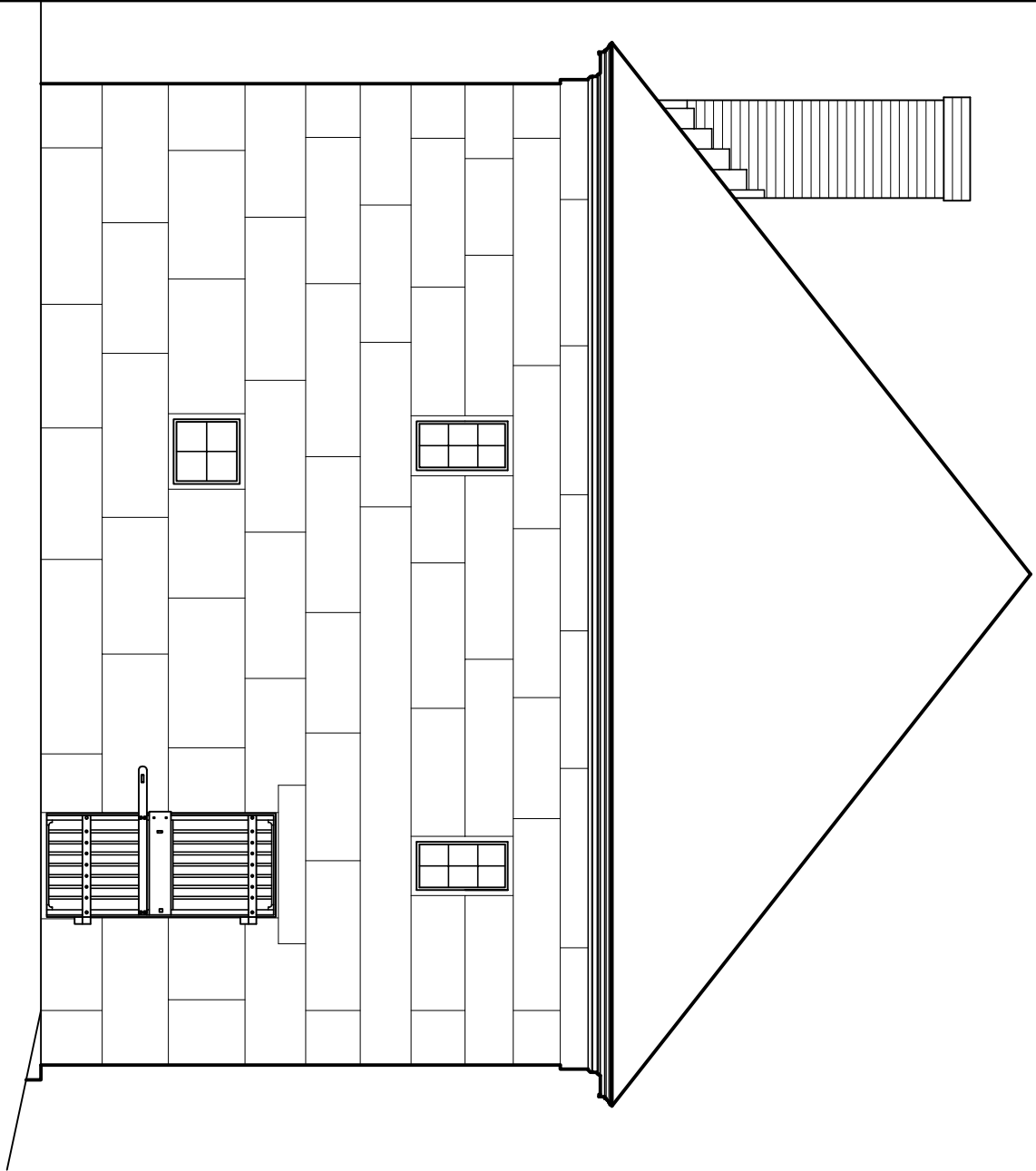
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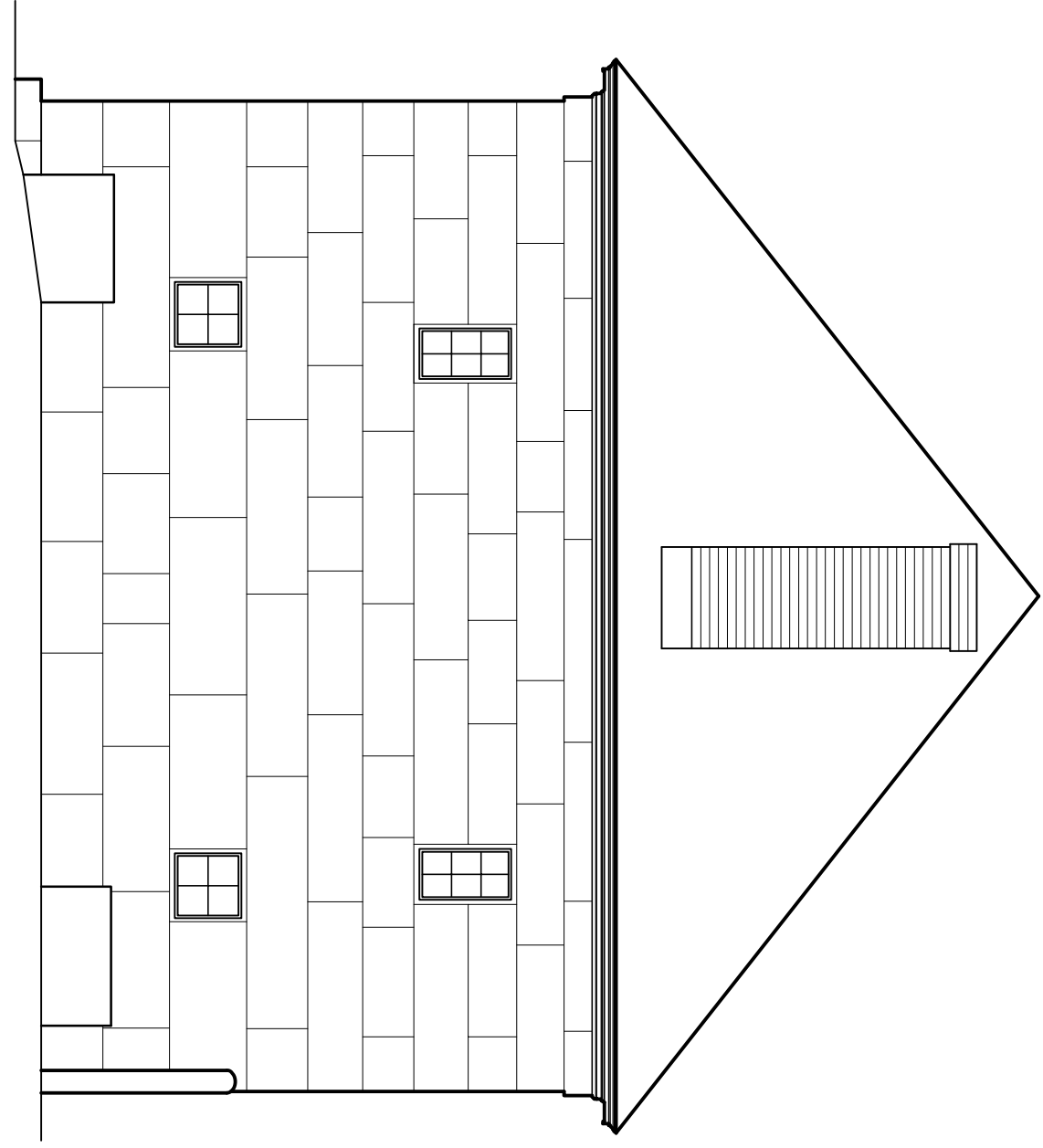
DATE
 8-1-04

DRAWING NO.

A7



1 NORTH ELEVATION
 A8 SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"



2 EAST ELEVATION
 A8 SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

NORTH AND EAST ELEVATIONS

HANOVER COUNTY JAIL

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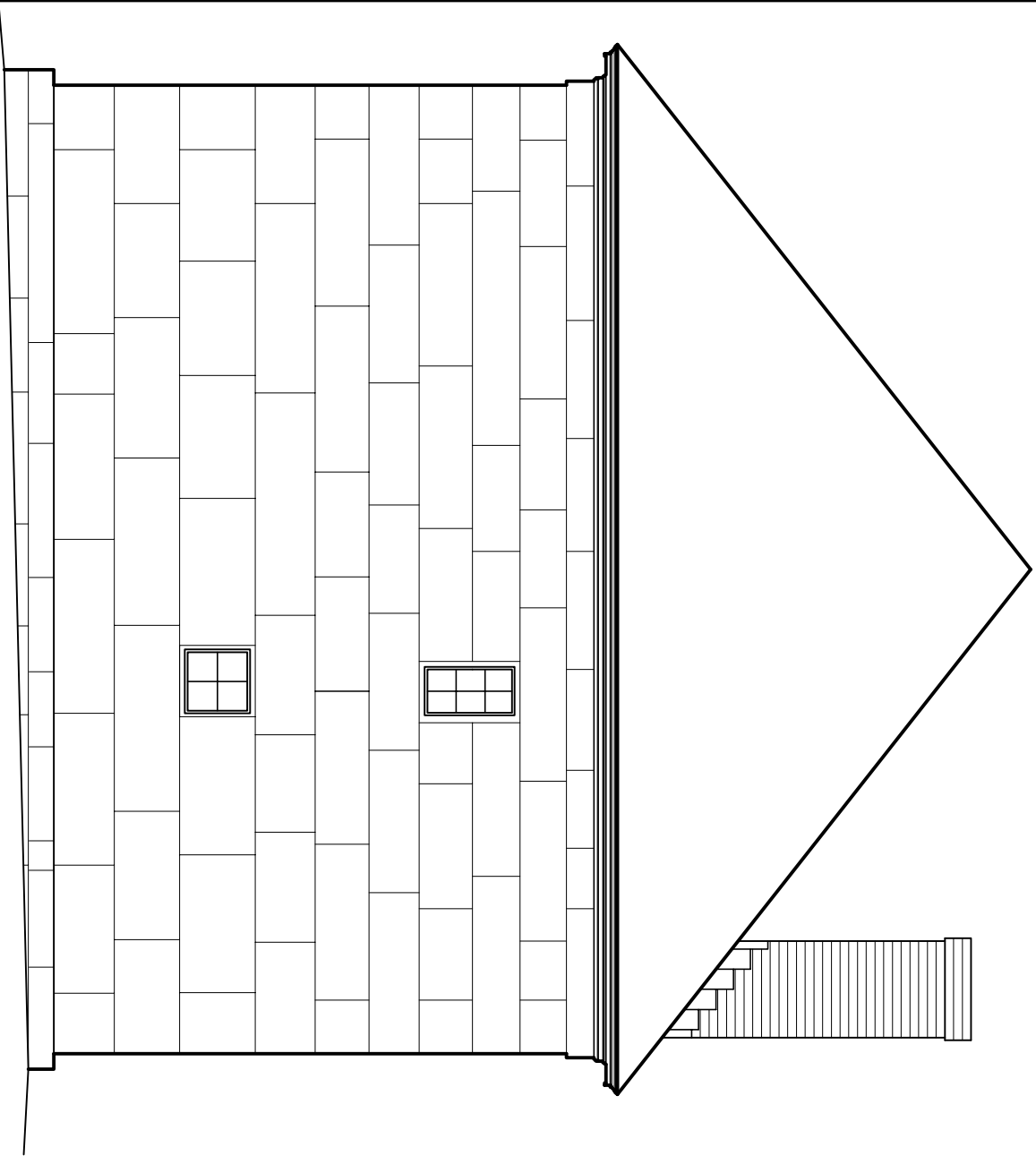
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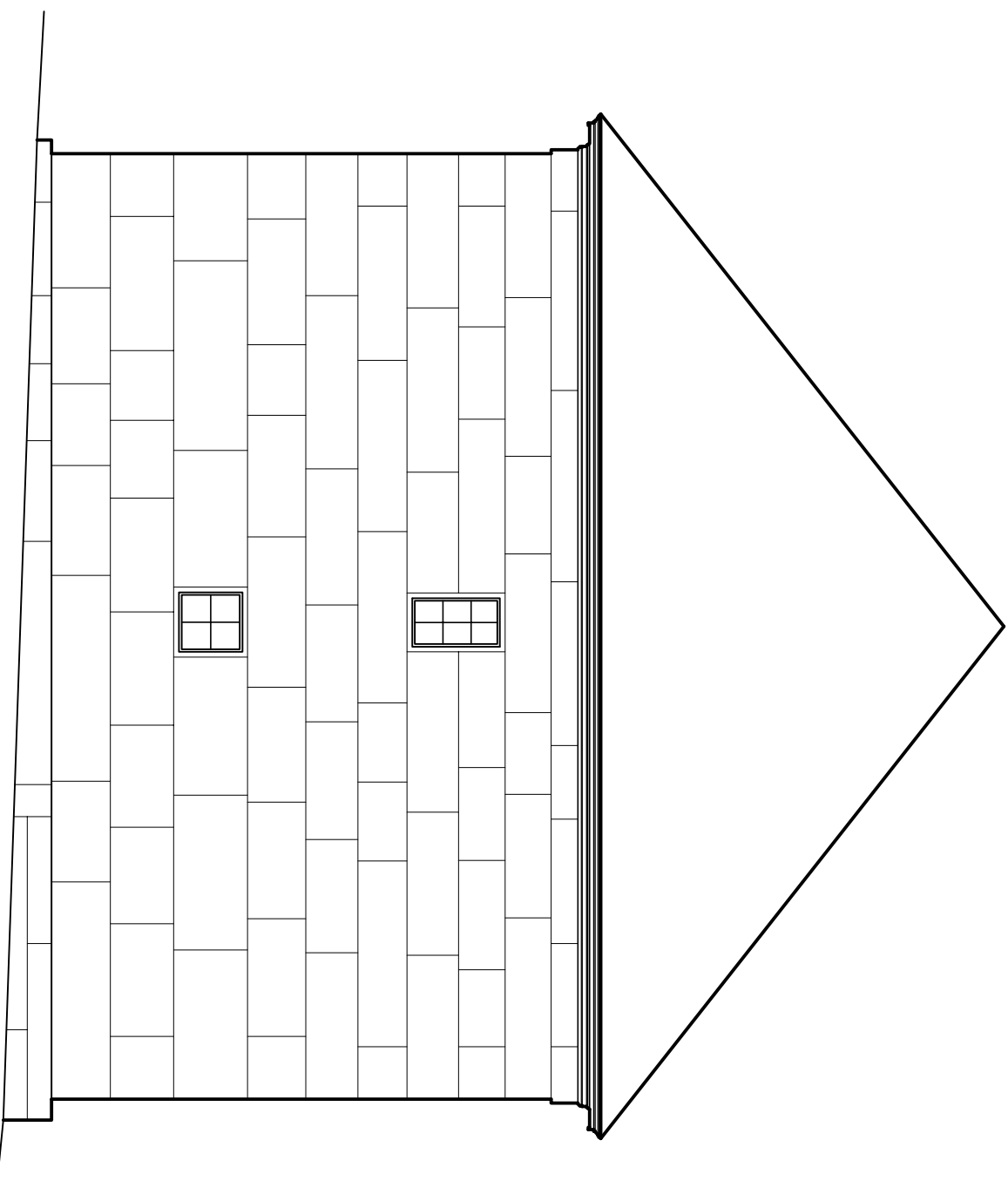
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A8

1 SOUTH ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"
A9



2 WEST ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"
A9



SOUTH AND WEST ELEVATIONS

HANOVER COUNTY JAIL

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COMMISSION NO.
0338

DRAWN BY
GMG

DATE
8-1-04

DRAWING NO.

A9

HANOVER COUNTY COURTHOUSE SITE AND LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

Like most historic properties that have been in more or less continual use for a period of several decades or longer, the oldest or most “historic” portion of the Hanover County Courthouse governmental center consists today of a complex layering of old buildings and site features.

Clearly, from a review of the available historical documentation and old photographs, it is certain that the grounds around the historic courthouse structure have been changing and dynamic throughout its long history; having evolved, as it has, through time to its current appearance today. This realization makes the task of deciding which historical period to adopt in restoring the grounds as no small challenge. This section of the report will cite the known evidence; direct or indirect, that substantiates several treatment recommendations made herein.

Background

Beginning in the third quarter of the seventeenth century, and increasing in numbers throughout much of the eighteenth century, important public buildings in Virginia were typically built of brick. Based upon considerable scholarship that has been conducted in recent years by architectural historian, Carl R. Lounsbury, and others on the design of public buildings in the Colonial Chesapeake; most notably on Virginia’s courthouses, we know that the grounds immediately surrounding all such structures were typically enclosed in some manner to set these landscape spaces apart from other common lands and use areas.

The primary intent behind these enclosures seems to have been the exclusion of animals from these obviously special, set-apart outdoor spaces. Churchyards were almost always enclosed as consecrated spaces, typically used for burials; and courthouse grounds were typically enclosed as a symbol of local government to set them apart from surrounding public and/or private lands. Literally and symbolically, the point of these enclosures was to enhance these special places visually, and to set them apart within the landscape; as befitted the perceived level of importance then attached to the church, and the courts—institutional symbols of social order and control.

Initially, the enclosure method used around such public structures was probably some sort of rail fence, although by the middle to latter half of the eighteenth century, many such structures were enclosed by a more permanent and imposing brick wall to match the brick used in the buildings themselves. King William courthouse and Bruton Parish Church in Williamsburg are just two examples of public buildings that were ultimately enclosed by brick walls by the late eighteenth century. However, some localities, because of their more remote rural location, sparse population, character of their agricultural lands, and other factors, may not have possessed the wealth to enclose their churches and courthouse with brick walls and a succession of more or less permanent styles of fencing may have been used throughout their histories.

Entry could be through one or more gates, but gates can too easily be left open through carelessness, allowing animals to get into these public grounds where they were clearly not wanted. Available historical evidence strongly suggests that the most common method of entry to these enclosures was one or more “stiles.” Stiles could be crude affairs, as are commonly still seen today along public footpaths in many rural areas in England but, more often than not, a number of surviving nineteenth century photos of Virginia courthouses indicates that the typical stile incorporated of wooden treads and risers that took the walker up; over the fence or wall; and then down into the enclosed yard surrounding the courthouse. This method of access provided easy access for people while excluding animals from enclosed yards.

Evidence of Enclosure Methods Used for Hanover County Courthouse Grounds

Whether or not the grounds around Hanover County Courthouse were totally or partially enclosed by a brick wall in the eighteenth century is not currently known. The earliest known visual evidence of the Hanover Courthouse landscape setting is a woodcut drawing of the courthouse and a small portion of the immediately

surrounding grounds that appeared in about c.1845 in an issue of *Atlantic Monthly* magazine. This view, unfortunately, does not show any method of enclosure that was then in use, but this omission does not mean that no barrier of any kind was then in place; indeed, the absence of any form of enclosure could simply indicate that the artist did not deem it to be important enough to show it in his view. The historic courthouse, itself, was clearly the subject of, and reason for, the drawing.



Above: Brick wall with modern patching.

The historic courthouse grounds today are partially enclosed by brick walls that seem to date from different historical periods. These walls that clearly date from different historical time periods strongly reflect changing landscape conditions, as well as the growth of the courthouse complex and its adjacent, supporting buildings; the old Clerk's Office, and old County Jail building.

The rear, or East, brick wall appears to be the oldest of the walls that today partially surround the historic courthouse grounds. From the appearance of its brick, and the way it was constructed, it appears to be roughly contemporary with the surviving (but sadly much-altered) brick privy that is located roughly midway along its length. It may well originally date from the early-nineteenth century, although it appears to have been altered sometime thereafter; probably late that century.

The Northeast portion of the brick wall seems to date from a later period than the East wall, but must have been constructed sometime before the 1883 and 1895 additions to the c. 1830's Clerk's Office, since it was patched where a portion of the pre-existing wall was removed to enable

the addition to be built. Substantial, later filling of the original grade along the outside of this wall is indicated by a 12 to 18 inch differential from the existing grade along its inside length, within the courthouse grounds.

A section of brick wall at the Northwest portion of the site that begins at the Northwest corner of the c.1895 Clerk's Office addition, and extends west to the Eastern edge of the right-of-way of U.S. Route 301 appears to be later still; dating from perhaps the early twentieth century. However, this wall appears to be at least a second brick wall at that location, due to the ghost profile of an earlier wall on the Northwest corner of the wall of the Clerk's Office addition. Another tell-tale indicator of this supposed earlier wall is the presence of mortar and brick rubble in the ground on the South side of the existing brick wall, which could be the remains of a prior wall



Above Left: Original privy. Above Right: Faux privy to the south of the courthouse.

at that location, and may have, in fact, coincided in date with either the Northeastern wall section, or the earlier Eastern portion.

The brick wall and faux privy, located to the South of the historic courthouse structure itself, appears to have been built even later still. The bricks used in its construction are modern and, while its detailing attempted to follow what was done elsewhere, this section of wall is clearly of a more contemporary construction date; only dating from the mid- to late- twentieth century.

Interestingly, a ghost profile of an earlier wall still survives at the Northwest corner of the old jail, and an adjacent stone walkway and steps just 15-20 feet to the west of that location (both of which appear to be contemporary and are clearly old, remnant, landscape features), indicates that a wall, a gate, and a related walk that leads to the jail's door, once existed there. This former wall may have continued west from that point, towards the right-of-way of the adjacent road (U.S. Route 301). Alternatively, this former wall could have originally extended only from the Northwest corner of the jail to the steps and gate. A wooden fence could have then continued from the gate to the road, and thence turning north to enclose and delineate the western boundary of the courthouse grounds.

At this point in time, this question of what type of enclosure was originally used here must remain unanswered, since we have seen no evidence as a part of this study to indicate that this western boundary or edge of the courthouse grounds was ever enclosed by a brick wall. Research has revealed, however, that there were at least six different and distinctive styles of fencing (or some form of similar visual enclosure) that we now know to have been used here, along the road.

What was originally built here along the road, and what style(s) of enclosure may have been in use from the eighteenth, and throughout much of the nineteenth centuries, is not known at this time. The other forms of enclosure that have been documented include:

- Surviving photographic evidence from the 1890s shows that the earliest known fence in this location was a white picket fence; constructed of plain, narrow, and narrowly-spaced pickets.
- This fence was apparently replaced in about c. 1900 by a rather substantial wooden board fence; being constructed of five horizontal boards and a cap board, a photo of which proves that it was standing there in c.1900-1910.
- Another photograph, dating from c.1910-1930, shows that this wooden fence had, by that time, been replaced by another, rather utilitarian type of fence that employed a series of equally-spaced posts and some type of wire mesh material.
- Another photo that apparently dates from c.1930-1940 indicates that the post and wire fence had, by that time, been superseded by a low barrier (not really a fence, per se) that initially consisted of a series of equally-spaced, low wooden posts topped by a formed wooden rail.
- Later (post-1940?), this low wooden barrier was apparently replaced by more permanent stone or concrete posts that were connected by a horizontal iron bar that appeared to have run only about 8-12 inches above the surface of the ground, and seemed to replicate the detailing of the posts and rails around the nearby Confederate monument.
- Finally, a c. 1971 photo reveals that a similar, but all-wooden, low, post-and-rail barrier had replaced the iron and stone barrier, and appears to have been the final version of a formal barrier that was used here. These three later, and more decorative, forms of enclosure were obviously meant to serve only as a visual, almost ceremonial marker, to define the western edge or boundary of the historic courthouse grounds.

Methodology Used for Determining Proposed Courthouse Green Enclosure Treatment Options

Important restoration questions that had to be considered as a part of this study were:

- *to what extent* should this western edge or boundary of the courthouse green be enclosed today, and,
- if enclosing the space is deemed to be important for either historical reasons; traffic-calming measures on U.S. Route 301; a probable increase in traffic noise, or all three, *how* should this edge of the courthouse green be treated, and *how* should it be enclosed?

A consideration of all the other existing site features of the courthouse green landscape must be first undertaken to provide an appropriate contextual basis for making an informed decision about proposed treatment recommendations. It follows that an assessment of all of the other surviving elements on the grounds surrounding the historic courthouse should suggest to us a probable time period when most of those elements were put in place. If this type of informed judgment can be made, then it follows that any proposed method of enclosing the Western edge or boundary should also be gauged and based upon such a probable date attribution or time period for when it was that most, if not all, of today's surviving landscape features were first put in place.

From a thorough, on-site survey of the courthouse ground's surviving site elements and landscape features (i.e. to document and record both "hardscape," and "landscape" or plant material elements), conducted on 18 and 30 December 2003, we have determined that with the exception of the various periods of the enclosing brick walls on three sides of the grounds (as previously discussed), ***nearly all of the remaining site and landscape elements date from the first half of the twentieth century.***



Above: Confederate monument.

Aside from the historic buildings mentioned earlier, the large stone obelisk or monument that was erected in c. 1914 to commemorate Hanover County's Confederate units and personnel has long been the most significant and visually-imposing landscape feature on the courthouse green. Like so many other Virginia counties, and Northern and Southern states with similar courthouse monuments, this important symbol of public commemoration and memory was erected by Hanover's citizens to remember the sacrifices of their fathers, sons and brothers in the American Civil War of 1861-1865, and as such, has today itself become both an artifact, as well as the visual symbol of public memory and commemoration that it was originally intended to be. It is a product of its time, and its longevity and long-standing prominence in this location as such a symbol and architectural element strongly argues for its continued retention within this historical setting.

The dotted pattern that was used to finish the surviving concrete walkways that connect the historic Courthouse building, the Confederate monument, and the Old Clerk's Office to one another, was created by the use of a roller on the semi-wet concrete, and indicate the c.1920-1930 origins of these several walks.

The most prominent surviving tree species that were noted on the courthouse grounds during our survey included Willow Oak (*Quercus phellos*), Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), Mulberry (*Morus sp.*), Southern Magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*), Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), American Holly (*Ilex opaca*), Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*), Dogwood (*Cornus florida*), and Elm (*Ulmus sp.*), among others. The most prominent shrubs on the site included Tree Box (*Buxus arborescens*) and American Box (*Buxus sempervirens*). Most (if not all) of the trees and shrubs on the courthouse grounds appear, from their size and maturity, to date from the

first half of the twentieth century. One or two of the trees may be slightly older, perhaps a little over one hundred to one hundred ten years old, at most.

One surviving photo of the front elevation and central concrete walk leading from the road to the courthouse, and appears to date from the c.1940s, shows an elaborate planting of flowers that once bordered both sides of the walk. These flowers no longer remain there today.

Conclusions/Recommendations

All of the historic Courthouse grounds' surviving site features and landscape elements appear to date from the early decades of the twentieth century. This fact strongly suggests that any proposed enclosure method that might be erected to enclose the Western boundary or edge of the courthouse green, along U.S. Route 301, coincide with what was originally in place there during the first half of the twentieth century. Yet, the surviving photographic evidence we have for that time period indicates that a post and wire fence is what should be put back in order to be historically correct and to be fully appropriate for this setting during that historic time period. Yet, despite its perceived appropriateness for purely historical reasons, this proposal may not be the most satisfactory solution here, due to the current, overriding issues of the future pavement widening of U.S. Route 301, and the probable increase in vehicular traffic noise that would be a likely result of this action.

Having considered this almost certain eventuality, and the rather "hybrid" nature in the dates of the various, surrounding brick walls and other site and landscape elements, we therefore recommend that consideration be given by Hanover County to providing replacement site elements and materials that would be both visually in keeping with the colonial context and time period of the eighteenth century Courthouse; and the late nineteenth and early twentieth century site elements that are verifiable from a historical point of view by the available, surviving, photographic evidence.

This recommendation would include erecting a new, enclosing, wooden board fence of the same type that was there in c. 1900; to extend from at/near the NW corner of the old Jail; to run West and then to the North; to tie into the existing brick wall at the extreme Northwest corner of the historic Courthouse green.

The existing, original, early twentieth century concrete walks on the site are cracked in numerous places and are heaving in those locations due to the proximity with tree roots from nearby maturing trees. These walks pose a significant safety hazard to visitors to the site. Moreover, concrete walks that have been built against the brick walls of the old Clerk's Office and a c.1883 addition behind it are causing moisture problems to those buildings. Because replacing only portions or patches of walks is not a workable alternative due to the difficulty of matching the color and finish of new concrete walks to the older ones, we recommend that all of these twentieth century walks should be removed from the site as soon as possible to help preserve the original buildings/structures, and to remove a potential tripping hazard posed by a wheelchair-accessible entryway that was apparently added in recent years.

We further recommend that Hanover County consider replacing all of these concrete walks on the site with new concrete walks just as the originals were; that is, with a dotted roller used to provide a textured surface finish treatment. Such proposed new concrete walks can also be sited further away from the walls of the original Clerk's Office (and its additions) to provide a turf or landscape buffer between the walks and building walls, and can be worked into the existing spot elevations and grades to improve the storm drainage around the structures.

Several existing trees were apparently lost, and others were significantly damaged during Hurricane Isabel, in September 2003. One tree to the south of the Confederate monument, and between it and the central walk leading to the Courthouse (see item #37 on the site plan), suffered significant loss to several of its branches and its crown is now misshapen and one-sided. We recommend that it be removed. Two other trees (items # 39 and 40 on the site plan) are located too close to the adjacent concrete walk, and #39 has badly cracked and heaved the walk beside it, creating a safety hazard. Moreover, tree #40 had significant crown damage from the hurricane.

Recommend that these two trees be removed. If future replacements are planted for these two trees, we recommend that they be planted at least 15 feet to the east of the current locations to ensure that future growth will not interfere with the proposed new concrete walk.

Also recommend the immediate removal of the, as much as, 12 inch tall mulched mowing rings that have been placed around all of the mature trees. These mulch rings force the trees' roots to grow higher out of the ground as they seek the air, water, and nutrients in the organically-rich but artificial mulched environment. Consider replacing these mulched rings with flat gravel bands and upright brick edging as a more horticulturally-sound and a more visually appropriate alternative.

Several drainage problems were noted within the Courthouse green area; more specifically, storm runoff water is apparently being trapped by the brick walls in the Northeast and Southeast corners of the site. These resulting wet conditions are not helpful to the boxwood plants in these general areas. While they need ample water and soil moisture, certainly, they cannot long withstand being drowned in standing water for potentially extended periods of time. Also, the periodic presence of standing water around two existing power transformers creates a hazardous and potentially dangerous condition. Recommend that the County Engineering staff and/or Public Works personnel consider the addition of at least one yard drain in each of these locations to better handle and drain the apparently substantial, excess storm water runoff that appears to quickly collect in these locations in rainstorms of long duration and/or intensity.

It is recommended that the existing boxwood shrubs be periodically fed and sprayed twice a year, if possible, to prevent debilitating infestations of boxwood leaf miner that can weaken these mature plants and, thus, possibly hasten their demise.

SITE PLAN PLANTINGS AND SITE FEATURES KEY

Hanover County Courthouse Historic Grounds

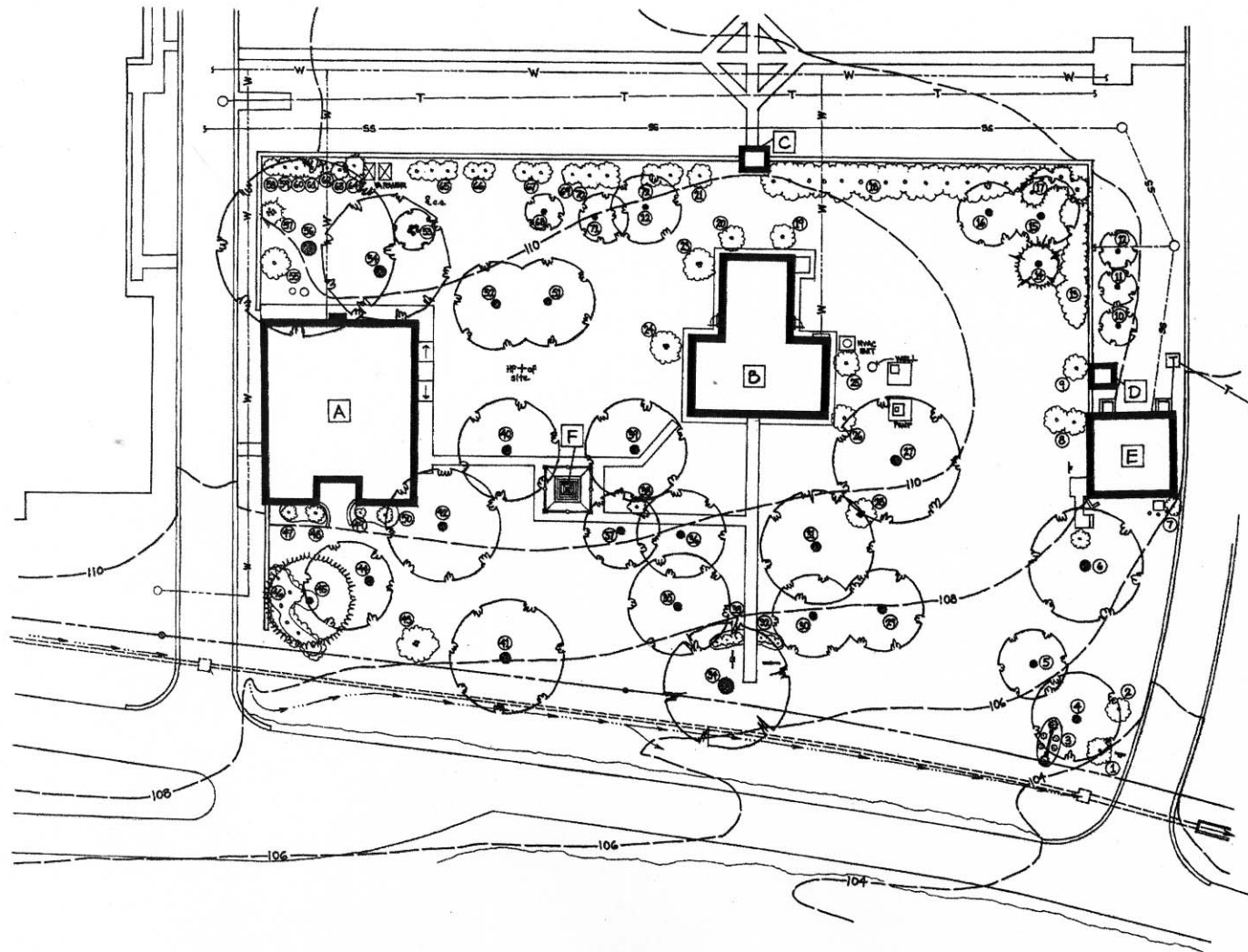
Existing Structures/Site Features:

- A. Old Clerk's Office (c. 1830, with c. 1883 and 1895 additions)
- B. Historic Courthouse (c. 1735, with early 19th century alterations)
- C. Former Privy structure (c. early 19th century, with later alterations)
- D. Privy (modern replica to replace a former structure of similar appearance in that location)
- E. Old Jail (c. 1840)
- F. Confederate Monument (c. 1913)

Existing Trees and Shrubs:

- 1. 10 ft. tall Boxwood shrub
- 2. 12 ft. tall Boxwood shrub
- 3. Shrubs around sign: 2-dwarf Nandina shrubs per side; 2-ornamental grasses on each end
- 4. 10 inch caliper Maple
- 5. 12 caliper Dogwood
- 6. 38 inch caliper Walnut
- 7. Small unidentified shrub
- 8. 12 ft. height x 15 ft. wide Abelia shrub
- 9. 7 ft. tall Boxwood shrub
- 10. 8 inch caliper Dogwood
- 11. 8 inch caliper Dogwood
- 12. 8 inch caliper Dogwood
- 13. Group of several 10 ft. height Boxwood shrubs in a hedge
- 14. 12 inch caliper Eastern Red Cedar
- 15. 10 inch caliper Dogwood
- 16. 10 inch caliper Dogwood
- 17. Group of 4 - 8 ft. tall Spirea shrubs
- 18. Group of several 12 ft. height Boxwood shrubs in a hedge
- 19. 8 ft. height Boxwood shrub
- 20. 6 ft. height Boxwood shrub
- 21. 8 ft. height Boxwood shrub
- 22. 8 inch caliper Willow Oak
- 23. 12 ft. height Boxwood shrub
- 24. 10 ft. height Boxwood shrub
- 25. 13 ft. height Boxwood shrub
- 26. 10 ft. height Boxwood shrub
- 27. 38 inch caliper Maple
- 28. 10 ft. height Boxwood shrub
- 29. 28 inch caliper Willow Oak
- 30. 28 inch caliper Willow Oak
- 31. 36 inch caliper Elm
- 32. Group of 3 - 2.5 ft. height Boxwood shrubs
- 33. Group of 3 - 2 ft. height Boxwood shrubs
- 34. 48 inch caliper Hackberry
- 35. 28 inch caliper Maple

36. 25 inch caliper Maple
37. 28 inch caliper Maple
38. 3 ft. height Boxwood shrub
39. 30 inch caliper Maple
40. 30 inch caliper Maple
41. 34 inch caliper Oak
42. 32 inch caliper Maple
43. 15 ft. height Boxwood shrub
44. 30 inch caliper Maple
45. 14 inch caliper American Holly
46. Group of 6 - 8 to 10 ft. height Boxwood shrubs
47. 4 ft. height Boxwood shrub
48. 3 ft. height Boxwood shrub
49. 4 ft. height Boxwood shrub
50. 4 ft. height Boxwood shrub
51. 15 inch unidentified tree
52. 15 inch unidentified tree
53. 6-8 inch caliper (multi-stem) Crapemyrtle
54. 30 inch caliper Southern Magnolia
55. 10 ft. height Boxwood shrub
56. 48 inch caliper Mulberry
57. 4 ft. height Spirea shrub
58. 7 ft. height Boxwood shrub
59. 8 ft. height Boxwood shrub
60. 10 ft. height Boxwood shrub
61. 12 ft. height Boxwood shrub
62. 4 ft. height Boxwood shrub (scraggly)
63. 6 ft. height Boxwood shrub
64. 4 ft. height Spirea shrub
65. Group of 3 – 6 ft. height Boxwood shrubs
66. Group of 2 – 5 ft. height Boxwood shrubs
67. Group of 2 – 6 ft. height Boxwood shrubs
68. 8 inch caliper Dogwood
69. 6 ft. height Boxwood shrub (scraggly)
70. Group of 2 – 10 ft. height Boxwood shrubs
71. 10 inch caliper Dogwood
72. Group of 2 – 8 ft. height Boxwood shrubs



HANOVER COURTHOUSE, VA SITE PLAN - EXISTING CONDITIONS - DEC. 2003
 SCALE: 1" = 20' 27 MARCH 2004

DRAWN BY: N. HENT BRINKLEY, C.A. P.A.C.I.A.
 CURATIVE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, WINNERS, VA.