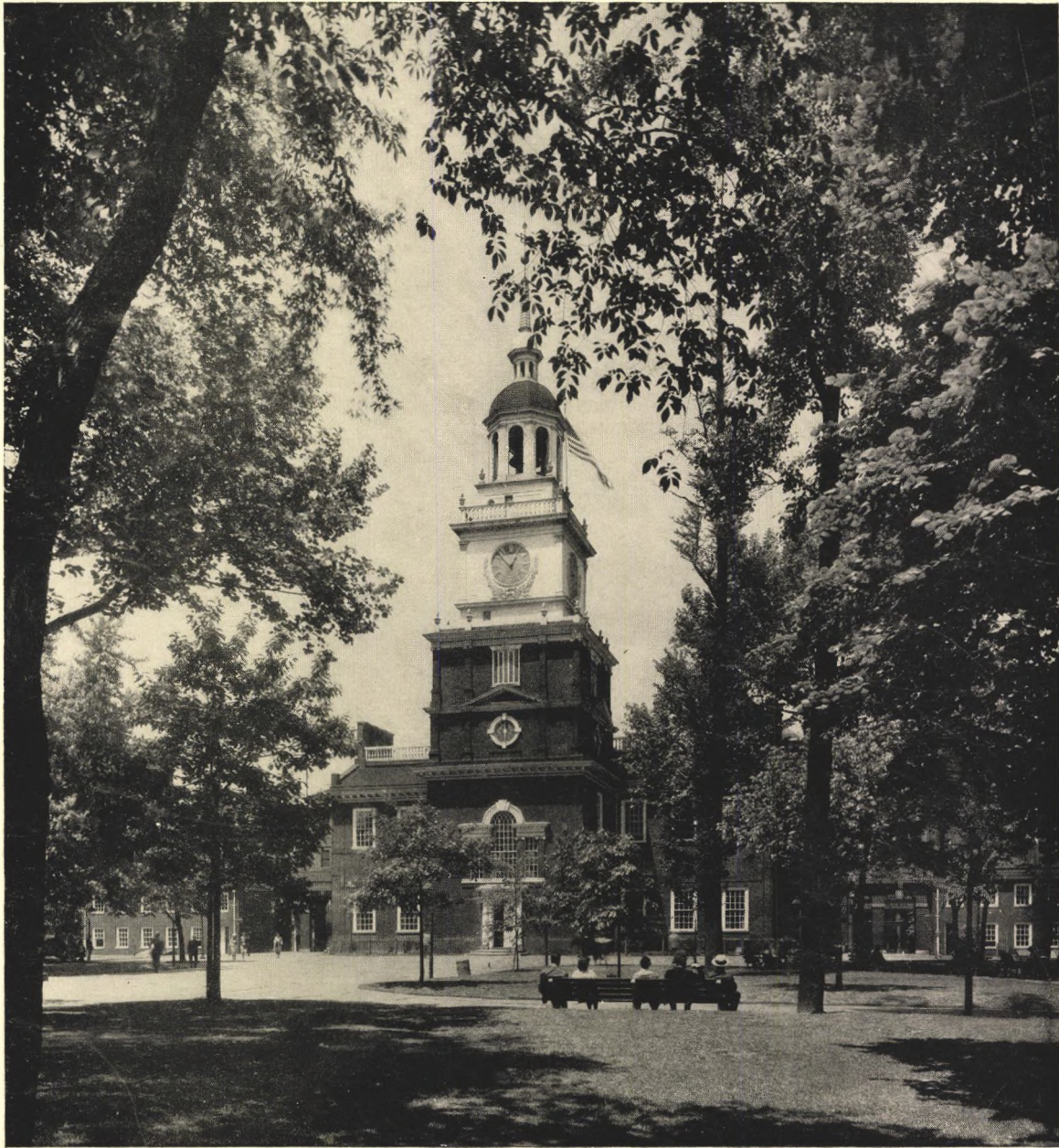


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History of
THE INDEPENDENCE HALL GROUP

EDWARD M. RILEY

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THE INDEPENDENCE HALL GROUP

EDWARD M. RILEY

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STANDING in Independence Square are three buildings—Independence Hall, Congress Hall, and the Old City Hall—undoubtedly the most important group of buildings in the early history of the United States. Independence Hall was built originally as the State House of the Province of Pennsylvania;¹ during the Colonial period the Assembly, Council, and Supreme Court of the Province met here. From 1775 to 1783 the Continental Congress and the Congress of the Confederation held most of their sessions in this building.² In it Independence was declared and the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union began their short-lived career.³ Here was written the Federal Constitution as well as the state constitutions of 1776 and 1790.⁴ Following

¹ The building was known generally as the State House until the last half of the nineteenth century when the name Independence Hall began to be used. See Etting, Frank M., *An historical account of the Old State House of Pennsylvania now known as the Hall of Independence*, Phila., Porter and Coates, 1891. In the early period it was also referred to as the "Province-hall." See *Votes of Assembly, Penna. Archives* (Eighth Series) 3: 2302, Harrisburg, published by the State, 1931. Hereafter cited as *Votes*. From the 1820's on the Assembly Room in which independence of the United States had been declared was called the Hall of Independence or Independence Hall. Sometimes it was also referred to as the Hall of the Declaration, and Independence chamber. The use of "Independence Hall" to designate the entire building rather than just the Assembly Room appears by implication as early as 1850; but the first clear-cut evidence of such use appears in 1852. See *Journal of Common Council* (Oct. 17, 1851 to Oct. 7, 1852), 198, 230, Phila., King and Baird, 1852.

² The Second Continental Congress met in the State House from May 10, 1775 to December 12, 1776. After a stay of less than three months in Baltimore, they returned to Philadelphia from March 4, 1777 to September 18, 1777. The occupation of Philadelphia by the British forced the Congress to move to Lancaster and later to York, Pennsylvania. The Congress returned to the State House on July 2, 1778 and held its sessions there until June 21, 1783 when they removed to Princeton, New Jersey. Ford, Worthington C., ed., *Journals of the Continental Congress*, 34 v., Washington, Gov't. Printing Office, 1904-1937; Burnett, Edmund C., ed., *Letters of Members of the Continental Congress*, 8 v., Washington, Carnegie Institution, 1921-1936 (hereafter cited as Burnett, *Letters*); Burnett, Edmund C., *The Continental Congress*, N. Y., Macmillan, 1941.

³ Richard Henry Lee's resolution of independence was passed by the Congress on July 2, 1776 and the Declaration of Independence was adopted on July 4, 1776. Ford, *op. cit.* 5: 507, 510-515, 1906; Becker, Carl, *The Declaration of Independence, a study in the history of political ideas*, 3, 172-193, N. Y., Peter Smith, 1933. The Articles of Confederation were framed partly in Philadelphia, but were also considered further, and submitted to the States, while the Congress was sitting at York, Pa. The Articles were finally ratified and went into effect at Philadelphia on March 1, 1781. Ford, *op. cit.* 5: 546, 674; 7: 240, 287, 300, 328, 351; 8: 492, 501; 9: 778-907; Burnett, *Continental Congress*, *passim*, 500.

⁴ [Pennsylvania], *Journal of House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1776-1781* 1: 49, 89, Phila-

the adoption of the Federal Constitution, the Pennsylvania legislative and judicial branches remained in the State House, while the corresponding parts of the new national government were housed in the new county courthouse (just to the west of the State House) and in the new City Hall to the east.⁵

INDEPENDENCE SQUARE

Originally the land bounded by Chestnut, Walnut, Fifth, and Sixth Streets, now called Independence Square,⁶ was set aside by William Penn as "bonus lots." To each purchaser of a substantial farm, or "country lot," Penn also gave a city lot as a bonus. The pieces in this particular square were given to Welsh Friends who settled in Radnor township.⁷

By the time the ground along Chestnut Street was acquired to erect a State House, most of the original owners had already sold their parcels. By deed dated October 15, 1730, the first lot on the square was purchased by William Allen for the use of the Province.⁸ Within the next two years the entire Chestnut Street frontage, extending halfway back to Walnut Street, had been secured. Construction of the State House was begun in 1732.

The desire to provide a proper setting for the State House was evident from the beginning. In the same year that the building was begun, the Assembly considered leveling the site and enclosing it with a board fence "in order that Walks may be laid out, and Trees planted, to render the same more beautiful and commodious."⁹ It is not known whether this project was carried out.

Soon afterward, on February 20, 1736, the Assembly determined on a most important policy. In an act vesting the State House and its grounds in trustees, it was provided: "That no part of the said ground lying to the southward of the State House as it is now built be converted into or made use of for erecting any sort of

delphia, John Dunlap, 1782; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 16, 1776. Pennsylvania, *Proceedings relative to calling of Conventions of 1776 and 1790*, 137, 296.

⁵ See Act of April 3, 1799 in *Statutes at Large of Pennsylvania, 1682-1801* 16: 239-241, Harrisburg, C. E. Auginbauch, 1911 (hereafter cited as *Statutes*); *Columbian Magazine* 1: 514.

⁶ During the eighteenth century and the first part of the nineteenth century the square was called the "State House Yard" or "State House Garden." Despite the fact that the City Councils passed an ordinance on May 19, 1825 specifying that the square be called "Independence Square," the new name was not in popular use for many years.

⁷ Browning, Charles H., The State House Yard, and who owned it first after William Penn, *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 40: 85-86, 1916.

⁸ Deed Book F, No. 5, 266-269 [City Hall, Phila.].

⁹ *Votes* 3: 2163.

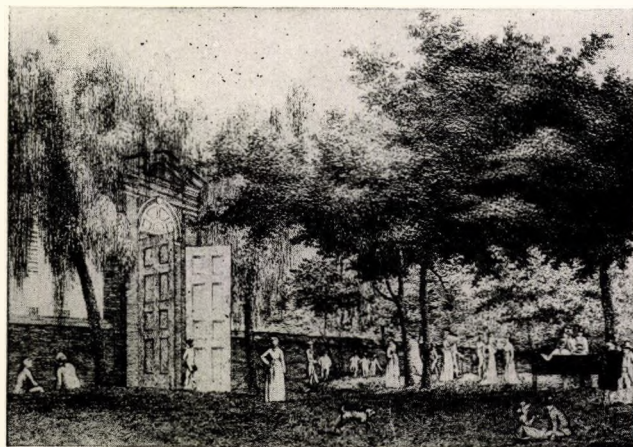


FIG. 1. "State House Garden," 1798 by William Birch showing the high brick wall along Walnut Street and the great gateway at the southern end of the main walk. Courtesy of Philadelphia Free Library.

buildings thereon, but that the said ground shall be enclosed and remain a public open green and walks forever."¹⁰ This provision has been retained as a guiding principle in the development of the square, save for an occasional deviation.¹¹ On August 9, 1739, the Assembly ordered "that Materials be prepared for encompassing the Ground with a Wall in the ensuing Spring. . . ."¹² Two years later a portion of this wall was taken down and rebuilt, and a shingle cornice was added to carry off the rain water.¹³

The purchase of the remainder of the square was delayed nearly four decades. Finally on May 14, 1762, the Assembly directed that this be done,¹⁴ and by 1769 the balance of the lots had been acquired.¹⁵ In 1770 the Assembly enclosed the whole square with a brick wall seven feet high, pierced at the center of the Walnut Street front by a tall arched gateway with solid wooden doors.¹⁶

¹⁰ *Statutes* 4: 301, Harrisburg, Clarence M. Busch, 1897. This provision was repeated in much the same language in an act of 1762 (*ibid.* 6: 180, Harrisburg, Wm. Stanley Ray, 1898) and in the deed dated June 29, 1818 by which the square and its buildings were sold to the City of Philadelphia by the Commonwealth for \$70,000.

¹¹ If the act were strictly interpreted, the Observatory and Philosophical Hall were contrary to this provision. The only other exception was the new courthouse built in 1866-1867 just south of Congress Hall. Scharf, J. Thomas, and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia 1699-1884* 3: 1824, Phila., L. H. Everts, 1884. This building was subsequently demolished.

¹² *Ibid.* 3: 2501.

¹³ *Ibid.* 3: 2683. The location of this wall is shown on Nicholas Scull's map of Philadelphia, published by Matthew Clarkson and M. Biddle, Phila., 1762.

¹⁴ Hazard's *Register* 5: 116, January-July 1830.

¹⁵ Deed Book I, No. 6, 203-207; 207-212 [City Hall, Phila.].

¹⁶ In 1770 Joseph Fox was paid, "per Order of the Trustees of the State-House," the sum of £1689.14.2 "for Repair and Building the State-House Wall." *Votes* 7: 6561, 1935. A scene depicted by William Birch (see fig. 1) shows the wall and gateway.

At this time the square contained the State House with its wings and wooden sheds, along with a small wooden platform erected in 1768. The last item was constructed at the instigation of the American Philosophical Society for observing the transit of Venus across the sun on June 3, 1769. It is believed that the observatory stood about forty feet south of the east wing of the State House.¹⁷

Although the landscaping of the State House Yard had been long discussed, nothing of consequence appears to have been done in this regard during the Colonial period. Apparently the square was more or less barren with no planned landscaping or system of walks at the time of the American Revolution. Cannon parked within the walls must have been a prominent feature of the yard.¹⁸

With the return of peace, interest was again awakened in improving the grounds. The landscaping was finally begun about 1784 under the direction of Samuel Vaughan, a wealthy Jamaica sugar planter then living in Philadelphia.¹⁹ In addition to the wide central walk of gravel leading from the tower door to the gate in the center of the Walnut Street front and the serpentine walks about the perimeter of the square, the most prominent feature of the plan was the planting of one hundred elm trees presented to the Commonwealth by George Morgan of Princeton, N. J.²⁰ Shortly after the land-

¹⁷ On October 15, 1768, an address of the American Philosophical Society requesting the Province to purchase a suitable telescope in England to observe the transit of Venus was considered by the Assembly. After due consideration the sum of £100 sterling was appropriated. *Ibid.* 7: 6288-6289, 1935. Another address of the American Philosophical Society requesting permission "for erecting an Observatory in the State-House Ground" was presented to the House in the following February and on February 11 the permission was granted together with the sum of £100. *Ibid.* 7: 6356-6357, 6359. Colonel Etting reported that he found the foundations of the building about 1876 "when recently perfecting the sewerage of the Square." He stated that the foundation "appears to have been of circular shape, and was erected about forty feet due west from the rear door of the present Philosophical Hall, and about the same distance south from the wall of the present (eastern) wing." Etting, *Historical account of the Old State House*, 65. No archeological records of this discovery have been found, however, and it will be necessary to carry out an archeological investigation at some future date.

¹⁸ A return for the iron guns in Philadelphia in November 1775 found in the State Records Office, Harrisburg, lists eleven cannon in store on the west side and east side of the State House and fifty-two cannon in the State House Yard. *Revolutionary Papers* 1a: 57.

¹⁹ Stetson, Sarah P., The Philadelphia sojourn of Samuel Vaughan, *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 73: 459-474, 1949. It is clear that the planting was done in the spring of 1785 for Jacob Hiltzheimer recorded in his diary on April 23 that he "Went to the State House yard to look at the rows of trees Samuel Vaughan donated, and is directing the planting of."

²⁰ Poulson's *Daily American Advertiser* of May 22, 1819 published a letter of Governor John Dickinson to George Morgan, dated April 22, 1785, expressing the appreciation of the Council for the gift of the trees.



FIG. 2. View of Independence Square from the State House steeple, 1838. Lithograph by J. C. Wild. Courtesy of Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

scaping was completed, the Reverend Manasseh Cutler visited the square and described it in his journal:

We passed through this broad aisle into the Mall. It is small, nearly square, and I believe does not contain more than one acre. As you enter the Mall though the State House, which is the only avenue to it, it appears to be nothing more than a large inner Court-yard to the State House, ornamented with trees and walks. But here is a fine display of rural fancy and elegance. It was so lately laid out in its present form that it has not assumed that air of grandeur which time will give it. The trees are yet small, but most judiciously arranged. The artificial mounds of earth, and depressions, and small groves in the squares have a most delightful effect. The numerous walks are well graveled and rolled hard; they are all in a serpentine direction, which heightens the beauty, and affords constant variety. That painful sameness, commonly to be met with in garden-alleys, and other works of this kind, is happily avoided here, for there are no two parts of the Mall that are alike. Hogarth's "Line of Beauty" is here completely verified. The public are indebted to the fertile fancy and taste of Mr. Sam'l Vaughan, Esq., for the elegance of this plan. It was laid out and executed under his direction about three years ago.²¹

²¹ Cutler, William Parker and Julia Perkins Cutler, *Life, journals and correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler, LL.D. by his grandchildren* 1: 262-263, Cincinnati, R. Clarke & Co.,

The next "improvement" to the State House Garden following Vaughan's landscaping was undertaken in 1811. In that year, when the old wing buildings were demolished to be replaced by "modern" office buildings, the high brick walls were removed to allow a "freer circulation of air."²² In their place was erected in the following year a low brick wall, about three feet high,

1888. An English visitor to Philadelphia stated that the State House Garden was "the pleasantest walk at Philadelphia," and that it was "something like Kensington Gardens, but not so large." Wansey, Henry, *Excursion to the United States of North America . . . 1794*, 131, Salisbury, England, J. Easton, 1796.

²² The authority for the City of Philadelphia to remove the east and west walls to within three feet of the pavement and to erect "palisades of iron" was enacted by the Legislature in September 1791. The reasons stated for this action was that "it would contribute to the embellishment of the public walks in the state-house garden, and may conduce to the health of the citizens, by admitting a freer circulation of air. . . ." *Statutes* 14: 164, Harrisburg, Harrisburg Pub. Co., 1909. Nothing appears to have been done under this act until August 8, 1811 when City Council passed an ordinance naming commissioners to carry out the project. *The Ordinances of the Corporation of the City of Philadelphia*, 254, Phila., Moses Thomas, 1812. On March 10, 1812, the Legislature authorized the removal of the south wall under the same conditions.

with a marble coping surmounted by a railing of plain iron palisades. Access to the yard was provided by a large gate on Walnut Street and smaller ones on Fifth and Sixth Streets, about halfway between Chestnut and Walnut Streets.²³

About 1876 this second wall was removed. A low wall of granite, with an ornamental coping of marble, was placed around the sides; broad steps were constructed in the center of the Walnut Street front and at the corners on Fifth and Sixth Streets. Wide flagstone walks were laid through the grounds in almost every direction from street to street.²⁴ The later addition of steps on Fifth and Sixth Streets, near Chestnut, substantially established the condition of the square as it is today.

The square through the years has served varied purposes. It was frequently the scene of mass meetings and public demonstrations. Large gatherings met here frequently in the course of the critical days before and during the early part of the Revolution.²⁵ The most noteworthy of these occurred on July 8, 1776, when Colonel John Nixon—from the observatory platform described above—read publicly for the first time that document since known as the Declaration of Independence.²⁶

THE PROVINCIAL STATE HOUSE

1. ERECTION OF THE STATE HOUSE

Prior to the construction of the State House, the Provincial government had no official building. The small unicameral legislature of the Province met usually in private dwellings rented annually for the purpose, or occasionally in the City Hall at Second and High (now Market) Streets.²⁷ The desirability of a permanent

government building was probably brought to the attention of the citizens of Philadelphia when, on October 16, 1728, the Assembly passed a resolution requesting the Governor and Council to consider the possibility of the Assembly's moving from Philadelphia because of the "indecentcies" to which its members were subjected by "rude and disorderly Persons."²⁸ For in February 1728/9 the citizens of the city and county of Philadelphia petitioned the Assembly to provide for building a market and state house on High Street near the prison, at Third Street. Although the petition was laid on the table by the Assembly, it showed recognition of the need for a government building.²⁹

Apparently, everyone agreed that a building was desirable, but funds were unavailable. However, another movement, completely unrelated to the building program fulfilled this want. This movement was engendered by the determination of the Assembly to overcome the shortage of paper money in the Province.³⁰ The two unrelated projects were brought together on May 1, 1729. On that day the Assembly was considering "the necessity of a House for the Assembly." It was suggested that £2,000 of the £30,000 of paper money proposed for issue be "appropriated for Building the said House." The motion was passed unanimously.³¹ The money act, passed May 10, 1729, authorized the printing of £30,000 in bills of credit, of which £26,000 were to be lent on land security for sixteen years at five per cent interest. In this act, £2000 of the total issue were appropriated towards the building of "a house for the representatives of the freemen of this province to meet and sit in general assembly in the city of Philadelphia. . . ." The two thousand pounds were to be sunk by annually destroying two hundred pounds of the paper money received in payment of interest on the £26,000 on loan.³²

Records, Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania 1: 132-141, Phila., Jo. Severns & Co., 1852. See also *ibid.* 1: 92, 178 and 2: 26, 364-365, 1852; *Votes* 1: 128, 176, 186, 276, 528, 552 and 3: 1978, 2125-2126; *Governors' Papers, Penna. Archives* (4th ser.) 1: 452-453, Harrisburg, Wm. Stanley Ray, 1900, for meeting places of Assembly.

²⁸ *Votes* 3: 1908. Apparently, it was felt that a permanent building would lend dignity to the Assembly and serve to protect its members from rowdiness. A state house would also serve to keep the capital in Philadelphia. The Council and the Governor opposed the move for the time being, but stated that a move to Chester might be considered. *Colonial Records* 3: 340, 1852; *Votes* 3: 1909-1910.

²⁹ *Ibid.* 3: 1929.

³⁰ Benjamin Franklin, a young printer of Philadelphia, wrote and published a most effective pamphlet entitled *A Modest Enquiry into the Nature and Necessity of a Paper Currency*. Smyth, Albert Henry, *The writings of Benjamin Franklin* 2: 133-155, N. Y., Macmillan, 1905; Van Doren, Carl, *Benjamin Franklin*, 101-102, N. Y., Viking, 1938.

³¹ *Votes* 3: 1950.

³² *Statutes* 4: 98-116. Mr. Reeder, in his scholarly study of the Independence Hall group of buildings, states that the two thousand pounds provided only a small portion of the total cost of buying the site and erecting the State House. It did, how-

²³ Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.* 3: 1795.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 3: 1795-1796.

²⁵ On October 5, 1765, a mass meeting of the citizens of Philadelphia to protest against the Stamp Act was held in the square. *Ibid.* 3: 1796. Other meetings followed this demonstration until December 27, 1773 when an estimated 8,000 persons assembled upon learning that the ship "Polly" was bringing a cargo of tea to Philadelphia. At this meeting it was decided that the tea would not be landed and that it should be returned to England. *Pennsylvania Packet*, January 3, 1774. With the outbreak of hostilities, the number of meetings increased. An incomplete listing shows meetings in the State House Yard on June 9, 1774 (*ibid.*, June 13, 1774); June 18, 1774 (*ibid.*, June 20, 1774), April 25, 1775 (Duane, William, ed., *Extracts . . . Diary of Christopher Marshall*, 17, Albany, Joel Munsel, 1877; May 20, 1776 (*ibid.*, 72-73), November 28, 1776 (*Penna. Archives*, 1st ser.) 5: 77, Phila., Joseph Severns, 1853, and on September 25, 1777 (Biddle, Henry D., ed., *Extracts from the journal of Elizabeth Drinker*, 52, Phila., Lippincott, 1889).

²⁶ Duane, ed., *op. cit.*, 83.

²⁷ Speaker Hamilton in his "Remonstrance" of January 18, 1733/34 speaks of the Assembly being "Obliged annually to hire some Private House to meet and sit in." *Votes* 3: 2213. Early in the eighteenth century the Assembly held some of its sessions in the City Hall and the Governor received the Assembly here in other years. *Ibid.* 2: 1036, 1931. The 1686 session of the Assembly met in the so-called Bank Meeting House located on Front Street above Arch. *Ibid.* 1: 71-77, 1931; *Colonial*

This act of 1729 also named a committee, consisting of Andrew Hamilton and Dr. John Kearsley from the Assembly and Thomas Lawrence from the Council, to carry on the building.³³ Strong disagreement soon arose between Hamilton and Kearsley. The former presented a plan and elevation of a building which "was compared with several other Plans and Elevations, one or more produced by one of the Gentlemen joined in the said Undertaking. . . ." After the committee had agreed on the plan sponsored by him, Hamilton proceeded, with Lawrence's advice, to obtain materials for the building.³⁴ Kearsley's opposition continued, however, until Hamilton (Speaker of the Assembly) brought the entire matter to the attention of the House on August 8, 1732. In his address to that body, Hamilton stated that "John Kearsley had opposed the Work both on account of the Place where it is built, and of the Manner and Form of the Building, and had frequently insisted, that the House of Representatives had never agreed it should be erected in that Place. . . ." He asked "to know the Sentiments of the House thereupon. . . ." Dr. Kearsley then arose and "offered to the House his Reasons and Allegations touching the premises, which were fully heard. . . ." Whereupon the House resolved itself "into a Committee of the Whole House" so Hamilton could answer.³⁵ Unfortunately, there is no record of this debate. But the matter was finally settled on August 14 when the Assembly, siding with Hamilton, selected the south side

ever, establish a precedent as to the manner of securing funds for the purpose. The reports of the trustees of the General Loan Office showed that during the many years in which the building was under construction, the necessary funds were obtained almost exclusively from interest loaned in bills of credit. Reeder, Robert P., *The first homes of the Supreme Court of the United States*, *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 76: 536, 1936.

³³ Andrew Hamilton's abilities as a lawyer brought him many public offices in Pennsylvania. For twelve years, beginning in 1727, he represented Bucks County in the Assembly and from 1729, except for one session, was its speaker. His chief claim to fame was his successful defense of John Peter Zenger, a New York publisher, against a charge of seditious libel. His defense greatly strengthened the principle of freedom of the press. Spencer, Charles Worthen, Andrew Hamilton, *Dict. Amer. Biog.* 8: 181-182, N. Y., Charles Scribner, 1932. Dr. John Kearsley was a prominent physician of Philadelphia. He represented that city in the Assembly for many years. The design of Christ Church and of St. Peter's Church has often been attributed to him. Jacob, Arthur C., John Kearsley, *ibid.* 10: 274, 1933. Thomas Lawrence was mayor of Philadelphia in 1727 and again in 1734. He served as a member of the Governor's council from about 1728 until his death. Watson's *Annals* 3: 87, Phila., Leary, Stuart Co., 1927; *Colonial Records* 3: 303 and 5: 736, Harrisburg, 1851.

³⁴ Hamilton's "Remonstrance," dated January 18, 1733/4, is in *Votes* 3: 2213-2214. In this paper, Hamilton recited the history of the difficulties in building the State House, and asked to be discharged from his responsibilities. The Assembly refused to release him.

³⁵ *Ibid.* 3: 2144. Unfortunately the records do not present Kearsley's side of the dispute, nor has a copy of the plan sponsored by him been found.

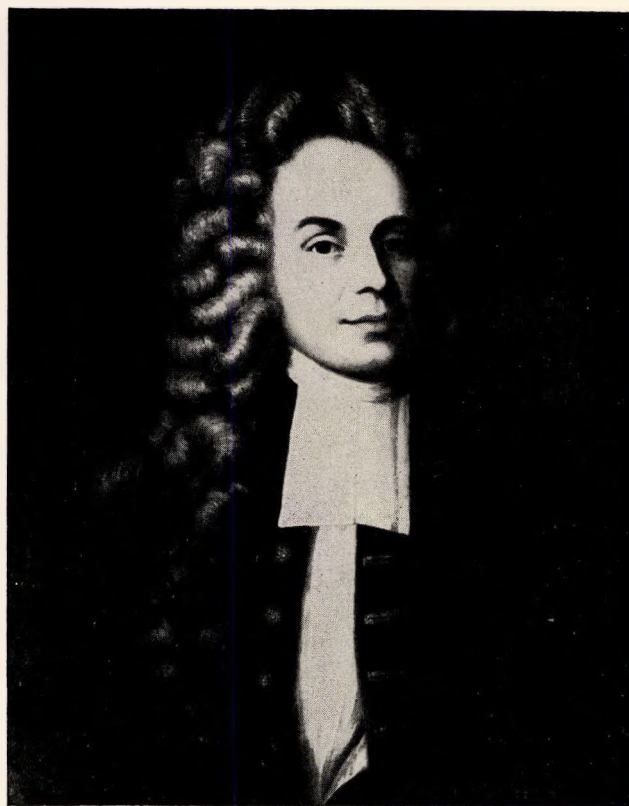


FIG. 3. Andrew Hamilton, an eminent lawyer and Speaker of the Assembly, superintended the building of the State House. From a portrait copied by Adolf Wertmüller (1751-1811) from an original now lost. Courtesy of Hist. Soc. of Penna.

of Chestnut Street between Fifth and Sixth Streets, on the outskirts of the city, as the site.³⁶

In the course of the debate, Hamilton, on August 11, "produced a Draught of the State-House, containing the Plan and Elevation of that Building; which being viewed and examined by the several Members, was approved of by the House."³⁷ Apparently the ground was broken for the erection of the building shortly after the adoption of the plan,³⁸ and Hamilton was named to supervise its construction "with the Advice of the two Gentlemen before nominated."³⁹

Because of his prominence in the erection of the State House, Andrew Hamilton has usually been called its architect. Even the parchment plan of the main building (bearing the date 1732 and found about 1890 in the papers of John Dickinson) has long been attributed to

³⁶ The resolution of the Assembly stated, "That Mr. Speaker, both in regard of the Place whereon the Building of the State-house is fix'd, and of his Manner of conducting the same Building, hath behaved himself agreeable to the Mind and Intention of this House." *Ibid.* 3: 2156-2157.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 3: 2154.

³⁸ In his "Remonstrance," Hamilton stated that after the ground was purchased "nothing further was done towards buildings the said House, till the Year 1732. . . ." *Ibid.* 3: 2213.

³⁹ *Ibid.* 3: 2154.

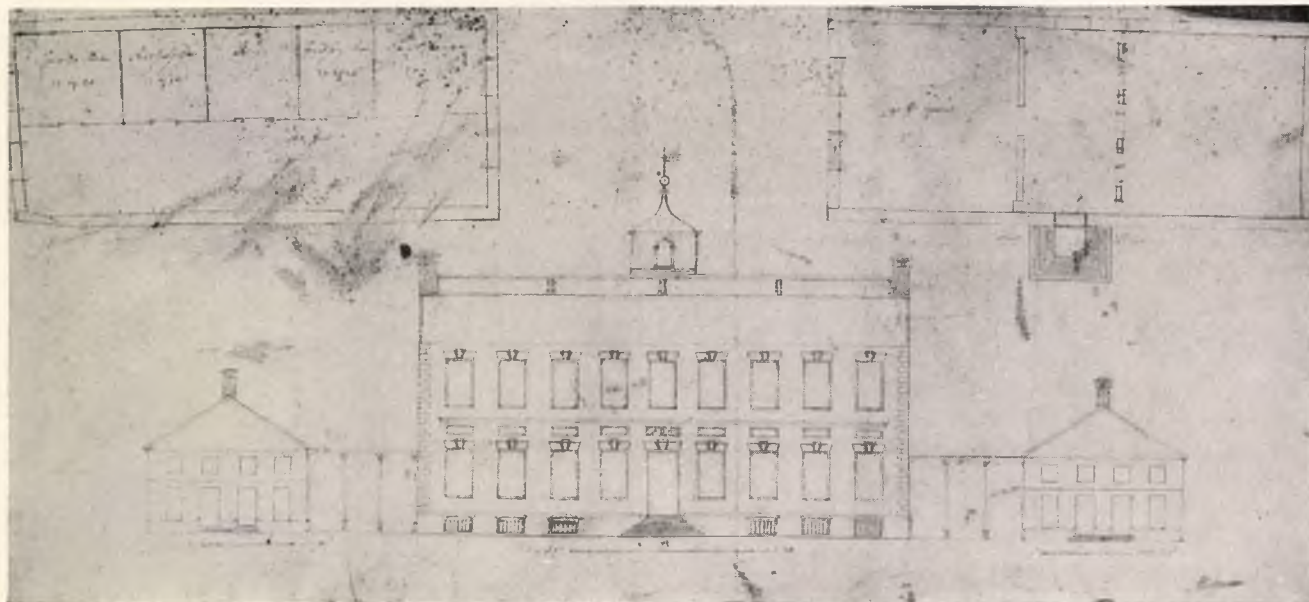


FIG. 4. Plan of State House (1732), found about 1890 in the papers of John Dickinson, has often been attributed to Andrew Hamilton. The elevation, below the floor plan, shows the main building substantially as it was first erected. Courtesy of Hist. Soc. of Penna.

1735 The Honourable John Penn Esquire
 To drawing the Elevation of the Front one
 End the Roof Balconey Chimneys and Porret
 of the State House With the fronts and Plans of
 the Two offices and Piarras also the Plans
 of the first and second floors of the State House
 J^d Edmund Woolley £ 5⁰⁰ 00
 Paid the 22^d of July 1736 of James Steel the above mentioned
 five Pounds J^d Me Edmund Woolley

FIG. 5. Account of Edmund Woolley with Governor John Penn for floor plans and elevation drawings of the State House, 1735-1736. Penn Manuscripts, Hist. Soc. of Penna.

him without adequate substantiation.⁴⁰ The drawing is certainly a very early plan of the edifice and may conceivably have been the one sponsored by Hamilton and approved by the Assembly on August 11, 1732. The document is unsigned, however, and the draftsman has not been identified.

Although it is undoubtedly true that Hamilton as superintendent of its construction had much to do with the form of the building, one may question whether he was the actual architect. In fact, there is documentary evidence which would bestow that title on Edmund Woolley, master carpenter. For in 1736 the latter received five pounds for "drawing the Elevation of the Frount one End the Roof Balconey Chimneys and Turret of the State House With the fronts and Plans of the Two offiscis And Piazzas Allso the Plans of the first and Second floors of the State House."⁴¹ It is apparent, therefore, that Woolley prepared the drawings from which the State House was constructed.

In addition, Edmund Woolley and Ebenezer Tomlinson are mentioned repeatedly in the records as the carpenters employed in building the State House. In August 1732 Hamilton stated that he had attempted to employ workmen as cheaply as possible, but the carpenters "alleging the Work expected from them was heavy, and to be carried on in an extraordinary Manner insisted on the Price of *Thirty Shilling per Square*. . . ." He would not pay them at this rate without the approval of the Assembly. A committee was named to confer with the carpenters. Upon receiving their report, the Assembly agreed that the price should be thirty shillings per square.⁴² On January 30, 1734/5 a petition of Edmund Woolley requesting a clarification of this action was considered. He wished to know "the Species of Work" he and Tomlinson were to perform at this rate. He was told that it included "the Floors,

Outside Windows, Doors, Roof and Eves, Turret, Balcony, and the Stairs."⁴³

A year later Woolley and Tomlinson reported to the Assembly that they had "almost finished that Part of the State-house, which they undertook to perform. . . ." That body then ordered that the inside be plastered, "a proper Cornish round the Room next the Cieling, and a Surbase below."⁴⁴

The building of the State House was a slow process. The Assembly was not able to meet in the new building until September 1735.⁴⁵ At that time the walls were not paneled and the windows were not glazed.⁴⁶ Difficulties of various types, especially the scarcity of skilled workmen, kept the building in an unfinished state. Finally, in the summer of 1741, the impatient Assembly ordered that the walls and windows of their chamber be finished at once and the remainder of the building completed without undue delay.⁴⁷ Despite this order,

⁴³ *Ibid.* 3: 2245.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 3: 2337. In 1740 Woolley and Tomlinson requested permission of the Assembly "to be excused from doing any more of the Work of the State-house, and that what they have done may be measured, that they may be enabled to settle their Accounts. . . ." The Assembly granted them the permission. *Ibid.* 3: 2604-2605. Unfortunately, little is known of Woolley. On July 13, 1705 he was admitted a freeman by the Common Council by the payment of £1.12.6. *Minutes of the Common Council of the City of Philadelphia, 1704-1776*, 25, Phila., Crissey and Markley, 1847. The Council on the following December 29 ordered that an ordinance be prepared "for restraining those that are not admitted freemen of this City to keep open Shops, or to master Workmen. . . ." *Ibid.*, 34. In Woolley's will, written in 1760 and probated October 18, 1771, his home on Second Street was devised to his son Stephen. The remainder of his rather extensive properties was divided among his son and his daughters, Mary and Sarah. A burial plot on his land on Magazine Street in the Northern Liberties was set aside for the use of his family. His library, "except the Books of Architecture," was left to Stephen. His architectural books and carpenter's tools were to be sold and the money divided between his daughters. The will was witnessed by Joseph Galloway, Benjamin Bayton, and Nicholas Waln. Will Book P, 152-157, City Hall, Phila. Also, see payments to Woolley and Tomlinson for work on the State House in *Votes* 3: 2233, 2264-2265.

⁴⁵ After the lots on Chestnut Street were acquired for the construction of the State House, the Assembly met in one of the houses standing on one of the lots. On June 24, 1735 the Assembly, "Ordered, That the two old houses opposite to the State House (the one being the house where the Assembly now sits) be demolished, and the materials thereof disposed of to the best advantage; and then the House adjourned to the fifteenth of September next." *Ibid.* 3: 2274.

⁴⁶ The Assembly directed, on January 25, 1734/5, that their room be wainscoted. *Ibid.* 3: 2257. In the following year, on February 18, it was decided that wainscoting was too expensive at that time; they decided "That the Inside of the said Building be finished with good plastering, a proper Cornish round the Room next the Cieling, and a Surbase below." *Ibid.* 3: 2337-2338. It has not been determined when the Assembly room was paneled. Glass was not put in the windows because of the danger of breakage. *Ibid.* 3: 2682.

⁴⁷ On June 4, 1741, the Assembly named a committee, consisting of Edward Warner, Mark Watson, and William Hewes, "to enquire into the Causes of the said Delay." *Ibid.* 3: 2680.

⁴⁰ This plan is in the collections of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

⁴¹ Penn Manuscripts, Accounts 1: 32, Hist. Soc. of Penna. As early as 1906 this receipt (fig. 5) was published without comment in the *Penna. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.* 30: 507, 1906, and four years later was republished in the same magazine (*ibid.* 34: 498, 1910) with the query: "Who was the architect of the State House, Andrew Hamilton or Edmund Woolley?" The late Horace Wells Sellers, who served for many years on the committee of the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects advising the city government on the restoration of the Independence Hall group of buildings, made a most exhaustive search of available records and reached the conclusion that Woolley was the architect of the State House rather than Hamilton. Although Sellers was quoted on this matter in several newspaper accounts, his "resurrection" of Woolley appears to have been little noted. Mr. Harold Donaldson Eberlein, however, does refer to Woolley as the "architect-builder" of the State House. Eberlein, Harold Donaldson, and Cortlandt Van Dyke Hubbard, *Diary of Independence Hall*, 35-36, Phila., Lippincott, ca. 1948.

⁴² *Votes* 3: 2154-2155. "Square" means one hundred square feet.

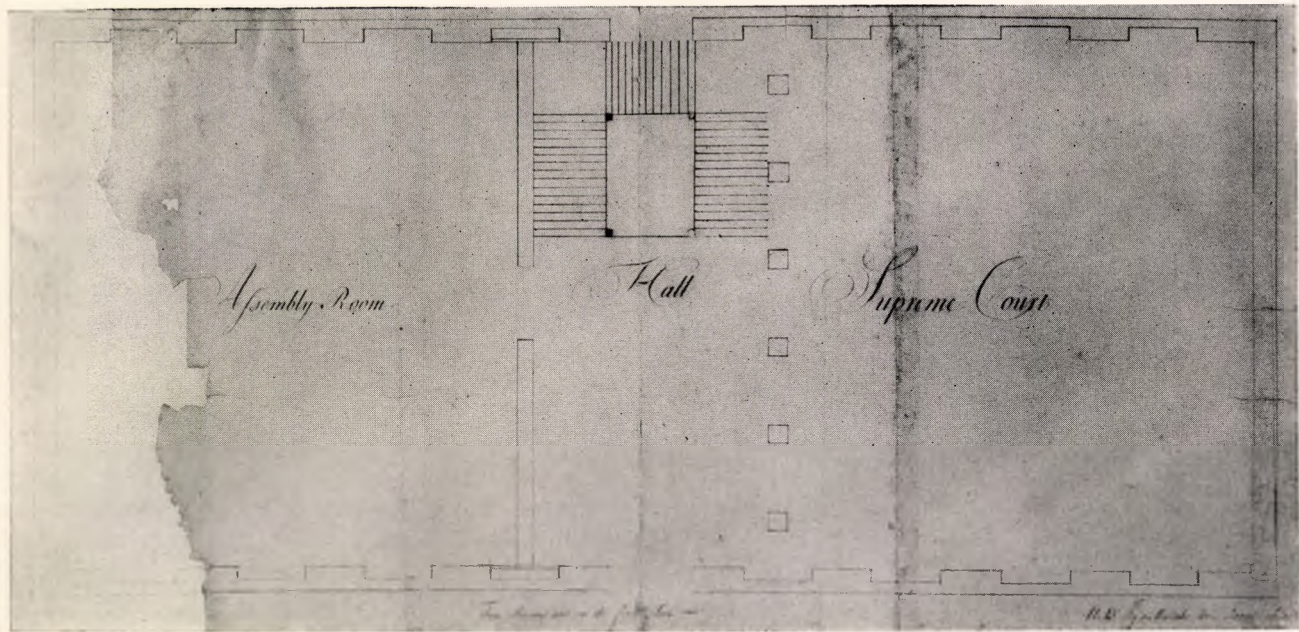


FIG. 6. Very early floor plan of the State House, apparently drawn prior to erection of tower showing the

plans for completing the Supreme Court Chamber were not submitted until November 1743.⁴⁸ The Council Chamber was not ready for occupancy until February 1747/8.⁴⁹ It appears probable that the building was completed at about the latter date.

During the construction of the State House, the old custom of "raising feasts" was followed. Usually when the main timbers in a building had been raised, a feast was given for the workmen in celebration of the event. For the State House and its wings, there were a number of such feasts. For instance, on October 14, 1734, Hannah Powell asked the Assembly for "speedy Payment of the Ballance of her Account, for Victuals, Drink &c, provided for the People employed in the Several Raisings of the State-House. . . ."⁵⁰ She received the bal-

The Committee discussed the matter with the Manager of the building and reported orally on the next day "that the Carpenters Work however was now finished; that the Sashes even made, and the Glass ready to put in. . . ." It was impossible to procure a plasterer although he had hopes of getting one next spring. *Ibid.* 3: 2682. An unsuccessful attempt was made to obtain two plasterers from England. *Ibid.* 4: 2715-2716. On the next day the committee recommended in writing "that the Assembly-room of the State-house should be plastered, glazed, and finished, all but the Cieling and upper Work, by the next Meeting of the Assembly. And the Cieling and upper Work to be finished as soon a Workman can be got." *Ibid.* 3: 2682-2683. After Hamilton's death, the Assembly named on August 20, 1741 Thomas Leech, Isaac Norris, and Edward Warner "Superintendents" of the State House and ordered them to carry out these recommendations. *Ibid.* 3: 2690.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 4: 2909.

⁴⁹ *Colonial Records* 5: 69, 163, Harrisburg, 1851.

⁵⁰ *Votes* 3: 2259. An itemized listing of the large quantities of food and drink consumed at one of these "feasts" may be seen in Edmund Woolley's account with the Province of Pennsylvania, "For expenses in raising the tower [cupola] of the State

ance of her account on March 27, 1735 and it is noted that the entire bill amounted to the sizeable sum of £88.19.1.⁵¹ On the next day Hannah Powell stated she had not charged for "dressing Victuals" at the raisings. The Assembly allowed her the further sum of ten pounds.⁵²

Shortly after the construction of the State House had been started, the Assembly ordered that office buildings be erected as wings to the main building. On March 24, 1732/3, that body resolved, "That for the greater security of the publick Papers of this Province (agreeable to a plan now produced before the House) two Offices be built adjoining to the State House. . . ." The sum of £400 was appropriated for this purpose.⁵³

Early in 1736 the new wing buildings were practically ready for occupancy.⁵⁴ The Assembly intended the offices as "Repositaries for such Records and Papers as more immediately concern the Publick, and particularly those of the Trustees of the General Loan-Office, the Rolls Office for recording Deeds, and the Register General's Office."⁵⁵ Two of these officials, Peter Evans, the Register General, and Charles Brockden, the Recorder of Deeds, were most reluctant to move their offices and protested against an act compelling them to move.⁵⁶ Despite these protests, the act was

House," on November 4, 1741 in Hazard's *Register* 2: 376, 1828-1829.

⁵¹ *Votes* 3: 2265.

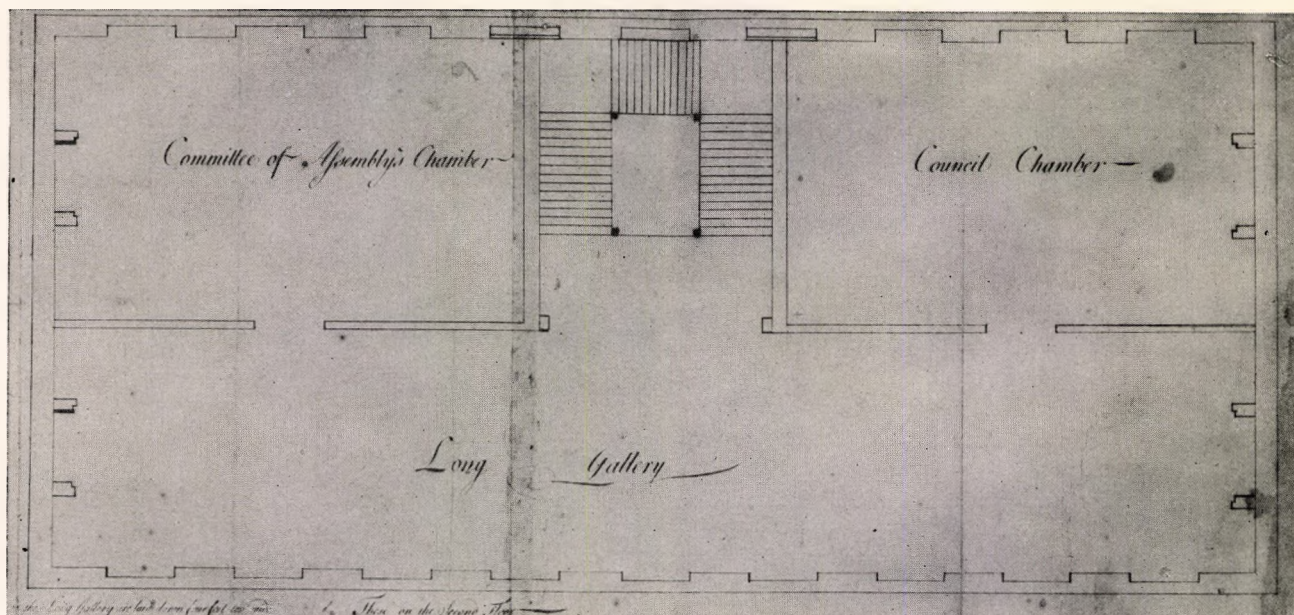
⁵² *Ibid.* 3: 2266.

⁵³ *Ibid.* 3: 2171-2172.

⁵⁴ On January 15, 1735/6, John Kinsey in moving that an act be passed compelling the officers to move to the new offices, stated that they "are almost completed. . . ." *Ibid.* 3: 2298.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ In his memorial to the Assembly, Mr. Evans offered to



interior stairway in south end of hallway. In Penn Manuscripts, Warrants and Surveys, Hist. Soc. of Penna.

passed by the Assembly, only to fail because of the opposition of the Governor and Council.⁵⁷

Despite the failure of the act compelling their removal to the new offices, the various county and provincial officials occupied the wings voluntarily within a few years.⁵⁸ The wings were located a short distance from the east and west walls of the State House and were connected to it by arcades or "piazzas." Each arcade

build at his own expense "a strong Brick Room near the Market-place, apart from other Buildings, arched with Brick and covered with Tile or Slate. . . ." *Ibid.* 3: 2306. Brockden's protest can be found in *ibid.* 3: 2318.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 3: 2324-2325, 2336; *Colonial Records* 4: 17, 21, 1851. The Assembly attempted to pass a similar bill in 1742 without success. *Votes* 4: 2750, 2751.

⁵⁸ Because of the lack of definite information, it is impossible to determine the interior arrangement of the wing buildings or their occupants. The following notes summarize the available information. "The lower of the West wing has been the Secretary's office from the first building of the State House to this day. . . ." Secretary Matlack to Lewis Nicola, May 1, 1779, in *Penna. Archives* (1st ser.) 7: 364, 1853. The offices of the Recorder of Deeds, and the office for probating wills were apparently in the east wing. Schoepf, J. D., *Travels in the Confederation* 1: 69, Phila., W. J. Campbell, 1911. The prothonotary of the Supreme Court moved into one of the wings around 1750. *Votes* 4: 3364. During the Confederation period the War Office was located in the west wing. Schoepf, *op. cit.* 1: 69. In 1790, in order to make the entire west wing available for the use of the Congress, the Secretary and Receiver General of the Land Office, the family of the Doorkeeper of the Assembly, and the Register-General were given quarters elsewhere. In this same document mention is made of the Comptroller General being in the east wing. *Penna. Archives* (2nd ser.) 16: 486, Harrisburg, E. K. Meyers, 1890. The Register General had opened his office in the west wing only the year before. *Penna. Archives* (1st ser.) 11: 569, 1855. John Beckley, clerk of the House of Representatives, later said that the Doorkeeper's family would not be compelled to move. *Ibid.* 11: 739.

contained a stairway leading to the second floor of the wings. The archways of the arcade were closed on the south sides by solid brick walls.⁵⁹

County and provincial officials were not the only ones to occupy the wing buildings. In 1739 the Library Company of Philadelphia was granted permission to deposit its books in the upper floor of the west wing.⁶⁰ From 1745 until long after the Revolution,⁶¹ also, the Doorkeeper of the Assembly and his family occupied quarters in the west wing. Furthermore, during the early years, Indian delegations were sometimes lodged in one of the wings.

⁵⁹ The plan for the "piazzas" was not approved until November 29, 1743. *Votes* 4: 2909. Although the plans of the wings and arcades have not been found, there are numerous artists' renderings which provide an accurate picture of the exterior arrangements of the wings. William Birch's "State House, in Chestnut Street," plate no. 21, is considered the most detailed and accurate. See Birch, William & Son, *City of Phila. in the State of Penna., N.A., as it appeared in the year, 1800.* (28 pls.), drawn and engraved by W. Birch & Son. Pub. Dec. 31, 1800, Phila.

⁶⁰ *Votes* 3: 2513-2514, 2515. See Benson, Adolph, ed., *Peter Kalm's travels in North America* 1: 25, N. Y., Wilson-Erickson, 1937, for a description of the Library about 1750. The Library Company remained in the west wing until 1773 when it removed to Carpenters' Hall.

⁶¹ A certificate of Mary Burden, dated February 12, 1788, states that her family lived in the west wing from 1745 to 1756 without paying rent, since her husband was Doorkeeper to the Assembly. Society Misc. Coll., Box 9A, Hist. Soc. of Pa. See also *Votes* 5: 4160. In 1788 Joseph Fry, the Doorkeeper, was exonerated from the payment of rent "on account of his occupying of part of the western wing of the state-house, and consuming the herbage of the state-house yard." *Minutes of Assembly of Pa., 1786-1789*, 104, 114, 148, 152, 168, 198, Phila., Hall & Sellers, 1788.

These exotic "tenants" proved a source of worry to the Assembly. Their carelessness with fire posed such a serious threat to public records, that in 1759 the Assembly was forced to consider the matter. On June 13 of that year, the Assembly resolved that "a small House, suitable for the Purpose" be erected "adjoining the Wall of the State-house Yard. . . ." Whether the house was built on the site first selected, to the south of the State House, is not known.⁶² It is believed, however, that one of the two wooden sheds built before the Revolution at the corners of Fifth and Sixth Streets on Chestnut Street was used for this purpose.⁶³

Although the fifteen years required to build the State House must have been a source of irritation to legislators eager to occupy it, the building as completed proved the time well spent. A most ambitious project for that early date,⁶⁴ it emerged a sturdily constructed, brick building with a façade one hundred and seven feet in length connected by arcades, or "piazzas," to wing buildings some fifty feet long. The main building had a decked gabled roof balustraded between the chimneys and surmounted by a centrally located cupola.⁶⁵

⁶² The resolution of the Assembly specifies that the building be erected "on the lot formerly conveyed by Anthony Morris to William Allen, Esq." *Votes* 6: 5009, 1935. This was a Walnut Street lot 49½ feet on Walnut Street and extending north 255 feet to the back of the Chestnut Street lots. Deed Book H, 10: 635-638. It is probable that they wanted the building outside the State House Yard. A wall divided the square approximately in half at this time. See Eastburn's map, pub. 1776; for this map see the listing in Phillips, P. L., *Maps and views of Philadelphia* in the Library of Congress, Geological Society, 1926.

⁶³ Although this seems to be a logical use for these structures and tradition says they were so used, no documentary proof of the housing of Indian delegations in the sheds has been found.

⁶⁴ John F. Watson derived from "the original bills and papers, as kept by Andrew Hamilton, Esq." the following list of workmen employed in building the State House: "Edmund Woolley did the carpenter work, John Harrison the joiner work, Thos. Boude was brick mason, Wm. Holland did the marble work, Thos. Kerr, plasterer, Benjamin Fairman and James Stoores made the bricks; the lime was from the kilns of the Tysons. The 'glass and lead' cost £170, and the glazing in leaden frames was done by *Thomas Godfrey*, the celebrated. The interior brick pavement was made of clay tiles, by Benjamin Fairman." Watson's *Annals* 1: 396. Unfortunately, the records consulted by Watson have not been found, but the names, with exception of Holland, Kerr, Stoores, and Godfrey, are listed in the reports of the committee to settle Hamilton's account. *Votes* 4: 2715-2717, 2766-2768. Other workmen are included in these lists, but none has his occupation or work shown. In addition, Gustavus Hesselius is named as the painter and Thomas Ellis as glazer of the State House. *Ibid.* 4: 2857, 3077. No proof has been found indicating that a brick pavement was laid inside the State House when first built.

⁶⁵ The parchment plan of the State House in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania represents the main building approximately as it was built (see fig. 4). Some confusion has arisen from Peter Kalm's reference to a tower on the State House in his journal written prior to 1750. From his mention of a tower on City Hall in High Street, it is clear that Kalm's "tower" was a "cupola." Benson, *op. cit.* 1: 25-26. It is clear that a turret did exist, for Woolley's account of the work done in

The interior arrangement of the State House provided suitable space for the various agencies of the government. The first floor contained two chambers about forty feet square separated by a spacious center hall about twenty feet in width. The eastern chamber served as the meeting place of the Assembly. Since the Assembly's sessions were usually secret, the room was provided with doors. The western chamber housed the Supreme Court of the Province and was entered through open archways. The staircase to the upper floor occupied the south end of the central hall.⁶⁶ The Provincial Council, the Governor's advisory body, met in a chamber approximately twenty by forty feet in the southwestern corner of the upper floor. This room was separated by a small vestibule or hallway from a similar chamber in the southeastern corner which was designed as a committee room of the Assembly. The entire Chestnut Street frontage was one room, called the "gallery" or "long room," which measured one hundred by twenty feet. The "gallery" was used "generally for public entertainment."⁶⁷

Information concerning the early furnishings used in the Provincial State House is scanty. In fact, there is practically a void for the early years except a notation for £100 paid Thomas Leech in 1742 "towards furnishing the State House."⁶⁸ No enumeration of the articles purchased by Leech has been found. Screens and curtains were ordered for the Assembly room in 1748. Perhaps these items were obtained to aid in subduing the echo in the room which annoyed the members in 1745.⁶⁹ In 1752 a silver inkstand was made for the Speaker's table by Philip Syng at a cost of £25.16,⁷⁰ and

building the tower and committee room, 1750-1756, mentions "pulling down the Old Turret & making good the State house roof where it stood. . . ." Miscellaneous accounts, General Loan Office, The Norris Papers, Hist. Soc. Penna.

⁶⁶ Although it has been frequently stated that no stairs were provided between the first and second floors of the early State House, stairs are clearly shown at the south end of the hall or vestibule on both the parchment plan dated 1732 (fig. 4) and an early plan (fig. 6) undoubtedly drawn before the erection of the tower. See Warrants and Surveys, folio III, Penn MSS, Hist. Soc. Penna. Furthermore, stairs were listed as part of the work for which Woolley and Tomlinson contracted. *Votes* 3: 2245.

⁶⁷ Duché, Jacob, *Observations on a variety of subjects*, 10, Phila., John Dunlap, 1774. A feast given by Mayor William Allen for the citizens of the city at the State House on September 23, 1736 (*Penna. Gazette*, Sept. 30, 1736) has often been said to have occurred in the "long room." This assumption appears to be erroneous because of the unfinished condition of the building. Probably the feast was held outside the building, or, perhaps, in the more nearly completed Assembly room.

⁶⁸ *Votes* 4: 2808. On August 9, 1733 the Province paid one pound, sixteen shillings for chairs for the use of the Assembly. *Ibid.* 3: 2179.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 4: 3233.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 4: 3485, 3534. The silver inkstand now on exhibition in Independence Hall bears Syng's mark. It is believed that it is the one purchased in 1752. Col. Frank Etting located the inkstand in 1875 and returned it to the Hall. Etting, *op. cit.*, 168-170.

in the following year a bottom was acquired for the Speaker's chair from Plunket Fleeson.⁷¹

No mention is made of the method of heating the building prior to 1744. In that year iron chimney-backs, valued at £6.1.3, were delivered by William Branson.⁷² Then on January 10, 1772, Lewis Brahl was paid for two stoves and pipes for the Assembly room.⁷³

Lighting the building was not too serious a problem since the meetings rarely continued until darkness. On these occasions, however, the Assembly would order, "That Candles be brought in, and they were brought in accordingly."⁷⁴

Pictorial representation of the interior of the State House during the Colonial period is totally lacking. The Assembly room, to be sure, is depicted in the painting by Pine and Savage, "The Congress Voting Independence," but this painting was executed approximately a decade after the event.⁷⁵

2. CONSTRUCTION OF THE TOWER

A few years after the State House was completed, the Assembly in January 1749/50 authorized the Superintendents of the State House "to carry up a Building on the South-side of the said House to contain the Staircase, with a suitable Place thereon for hanging a Bell."⁷⁶ Edmund Woolley was the master carpenter entrusted with the actual construction of the tower. By March 29, 1753, the brick tower was finished and Woolley began construction of the belfry.⁷⁷ In June 1753 the project was completed and the State House bell was hung.⁷⁸

According to Woolley's accounts, the following work was done in building the tower and repairing the State House:

⁷¹ *Votes* 4: 3618.

⁷² *Ibid.* 4: 3047, 7: 5903.

⁷³ *Ibid.* 8: 6758, 1935.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 4: 3295. No reference has been found to the large crystal chandelier now in the Assembly room.

⁷⁵ Robert Edge Pine actually painted in the Assembly room. An advertisement placed in the *Penna. Packet* for November 15, 1784 by Pine states that he had been provided "with the use of a commodious apartment in the State-house, for the purpose of painting the most illustrious scenes of the late revolution. . . . Attendance will be given at the side door of the Congress chamber. . . ." The Assembly room depicted in the painting is much more simple than the present room; the Ionic order is shown rather than the Doric order now in the room.

⁷⁶ *Votes* 4: 3316.

⁷⁷ In a letter to James Wright dated March 29, 1753, Charles Norris wrote "Ed Woolley this day has begun to raise the Belfry in order to hang the Bell. . . ." *Penna. Mag. of Hist. & Biog.* 39: 464, 1915. The raising feast for the belfry was held before April 17, 1753 for on that date Woolley submitted a bill for £5.13.10 "For sundrys advanced for raising the Bell Frame and putting up the Bell." *Hazard's Register* 2: 376.

⁷⁸ In the *Pennsylvania Packet* of June 7, 1753 appeared the following notice: "Last week was raised and fixed in the state house steeple, the new great bell, cast here by Pass and Stow, weighing 2080 pounds. . . ."

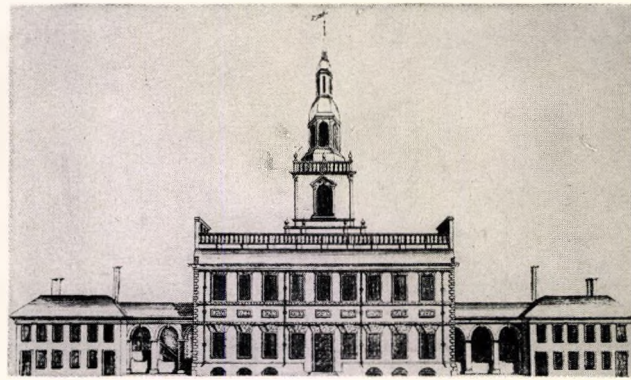


FIG. 7. The completed State House with wings and arcades, 1752. From the *Gentleman's Magazine* for September, 1752, this view is almost identical with the one shown on the Scull and Heap map of Philadelphia of 1750, earliest known view of the State House. Courtesy of Philadelphia Free Library.

To Work done at the State house Vizt. drawing drafts, Bills of Scantling, taking an Account of all the Timber & reducing the same to Superficial Measure, also taking an Account of all the Plank & Boards used for the State house. To making 3 rounds & 3 half round Centers for Windows & doors; Cutting away the Old roof & floor in order to build the tower Wall on the State house wall; making Scaffolds to ye tower in Side & Out, for My Self, Bricklayers Plasterers & Painters; pulling down the Old Turret & making good the State house roof when it stood & a Large dormand between State house & tower Wall, & Shingling against S. wall; altering the Balconey & adding thereto with Stairs leading to State house flat; getting the Bell up & down & up again & twice hanging Bells; Jointing Many thousand of Shingles; making a Scaffold the whole length of the State house, to paint ye Eves, front windows &c. & striking ye Same again; Making many drawers & cases for ye Same in ye Loan Office; hanging ye upper front Sashes anew in Long Gallery; Time Spent in attending the Clock makers while fixing ye Clock ye first time, many of the above Articles not now to be Seen.⁷⁹

The bell for the State House was authorized by the Assembly on October 15, 1751.⁸⁰ The Superintendents of the State House acted promptly. On November 1 they requested Robert Charles, the Provincial agent in England, "to get us a good Bell of about two thousand pounds weight. . . ." The Superintendents estimated the cost of the bell to be about one hundred pounds sterling and enclosed a bill of exchange for that amount. The letter closed with the following directions:

Let the Bell be cast by the best Workmen & examined carefully before it is Shipped with the following words well shaped in large letters round it vizt

By order of the Assembly of the Province of Pennsylvania for the State House in the City of Philada 1752 and Underneath

⁷⁹ Edmund Woolley's account with the Province of Pennsylvania, 1750-1756, miscellaneous accounts, General Loan Office, Norris Papers, Hist. Soc. Penna. Samuel Harding did the woodcarving for the stairs and tower. *Votes* 7: 6214, 6216-6217, 1935.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* 4: 3470.

Proclaim Liberty thro' all the Land to all the Inhabitants thereof—Levit. XXV.10.⁸¹

The bell, cast by Thomas Lester of Whitechapel, England, arrived at Philadelphia in August 1752.⁸² Upon being tested, the bell cracked "by a stroke of the clapper without any other violence as it was hung up to try the sound. . . ." ⁸³

At this critical time, "two Ingenious Work-Men" of Philadelphia offered their services.⁸⁴ Pass, "a Native of the Isle of Malta," and Stow, the son of the door-keeper of the Council, undertook to recast the bell.⁸⁵ But the tone was unsatisfactory, and it was cast again by Pass and Stow in 1753.⁸⁶

This bell was intended to be rung on public occasions such as the times of meeting of the Assembly and the

⁸¹ Isaac Norris, Thomas Leech, and Edward Warner to Robert Charles, November 1, 1751, Norris Letterbook, 1719-1756, Hist. Soc. Penna. Norris was paid £198 "to send for a Bell." *Votes* 4: 3526. The bell received its present name, "Liberty Bell," from the Biblical verse inscribed on it, which begins, "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year. . . ." This was probably intended as a fiftieth anniversary memorial to William Penn's Charter of Privileges of 1701. See Jordan, Wilfred, The Liberty Bell, *American Numismatic Society* 1: 111-112, 1915. The inscription was altered somewhat in the final casting by Pass and Stow.

⁸² On November 8, 1753 Norris wrote Charles authorizing "Lister" to cast another bell to replace the first bell. Norris Letterbook, 1719-1756, Hist. Soc. Penna., 43. The Whitechapel Bell Foundry, which cast the bell is still in existence. Thomas Lester was taken into partnership with Richard Phelps in 1735. Prior to that time, Lester was foreman of the foundry. When Phelps died in 1735 he left the business, plant, etc. to Lester who died in 1769. A. A. Hughes, President of Whitechapel Bell Foundry, to E. M. Riley, April 7, 1952, Independence National Historical Park Project historical files.

⁸³ I. Norris to R. Charles, March 10, 1753, Norris Letterbook, 1719-1756, Hist. Soc. Penna., 32-33.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ After the bell cracked, it was decided to send it back to England. Captain Budden, however, could not take it on board. Before recasting the bell, "our Judges" agreed that the old bell was "too high & brittle & cast several little bells out of it to try the sound & strength & fixed upon a mixture of an ounce and a half of copper to a pound of the old Bell & in this proportion we now have it." Norris to Charles, March 10, 1753, *ibid.* 32-33. This is probably the earliest casting of a large bell in English America. Norris, in the same letter, expresses pleasure "that we should first Venture upon and succeed in the greatest Bell cast for ought I know in English America. . . ."

⁸⁶ Norris described the operation to Charles in a letter dated April 14, 1753: ". . . A native of the Isle of Malta & a son of Charles Stow were the persons who undertook to cast our Bell They made the Mould in a Masterly Manner and run the metal well but upon tryal it seems they added too much copper in the present Bell which is now hung up in its place but they were so teized with the witicisms of the Town that they had a New Mould in great forwardness before Mesnards [a ship captain] arrival & will be very soon ready to make a second essay if this should fail we will embrace Listers offer & send the unfortunate Bell again to him by the first opportunity." Norris to Charles, April 14, 1753, *ibid.*, 39. Pass and Stow were paid £60.13.5. *Votes* 4: 3607. A bill for £5.13.10 was submitted by Woolley on April 17, 1753 for the cost of the food and drink consumed at the feast "for raising the Bell Frame and putting up the Bell." Hazard's Register 2: 376.

courts of justice.⁸⁷ Apparently these were not the only uses made of the bell for on September 17, 1772, a petition from "divers Inhabitants of the City of Philadelphia, living near the State-House," was presented to the Assembly complaining of "the too frequent Ringing of the great Bell in the Steeple of State-House. . . ." The petition was laid on the table for further consideration, and appears to have been forgotten.⁸⁸

Having arranged for a bell for the tower, the Assembly ordered in March 1752 that the Superintendents of the State House provide a "large Clock to strike on the Bell, in the Tower of the said Building, within a suitable Dial-plate to show the Hours and Minutes." ⁸⁹ Mr. Stretch, a local clockmaker, was entrusted with its construction and care.⁹⁰ This order was not followed in detail for the clock faces were placed in the eastern and western walls of the building, just below the eaves. The hands were moved by rods connected with the works of the clock. A masonry structure similar to the familiar tall-case clock was constructed under the face of the clock in the western wall.⁹¹ The bell in the steeple was not used to strike the hours; for this purpose there was a second bell, ordered by the Assembly after the first bell had cracked, which was placed in a turret on the roof of the building in front of the tower.⁹²

3. THE COMMITTEE-ROOM

In February 1752, the Assembly directed the Superintendents of the State House to "build a suitable Room,

⁸⁷ See petition of citizens of Philadelphia to the Assembly, September 17, 1772, in *Votes* 8: 6856. On December 2, 1755 the Assembly passed a ruling that all members who were not present one-half hour after "The Assembly Bell ceases to ring, shall pay *One Shilling*." This money was to be paid into the charity box for the use of the "Provincial Hospital." *Votes* 5: 4097-4098, 1931.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.* 8: 6856.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 4: 3507.

⁹⁰ The clock was made by Thomas Stretch, son of Peter Stretch. *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 56: 225, 1932. On September 30, 1759, the Assembly paid Mr. Stretch £494 for making the clock and cleaning and repairing it for six years. *Votes* 6: 5067.

⁹¹ See Birch, *Views of Philadelphia*, "Back of the State House" and *Columbian Magazine* for July 1787 for picture of clock; also, the description of the State House written in 1774, in *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 23: 419, 1899.

⁹² Isaac Norris wrote Robert Charles on November 8, 1753, that he did not like Pass and Stow's bell and if Lester would cast a new one for two pence a pound for recasting, the metal of the present bell would be returned at the first opportunity. Norris Letterbook, 1719-1756, Hist. Soc. Penna., 43. This was not done, however, for on August 13, 1754, "The Speaker, in Behalf of the Superintendents of the State-house, desired the Opinion of the House whether they should send the old Bell to England, in Part Pay for the new One they had purchased (as they had a Right to do by their Agreement) or keep them both for public Use." It was decided that they pay for the new bell and "keep the Old One for such Uses as this House may hereafter appoint." *Votes* 5: 3729. This bell probably cost £170 as shown in the accounts dated August 7, 1754. *Ibid.* 5: 3735. Birch's *Views of Philadelphia*, "Back of the State House," shows the turret for the clock bell (see pl. 22).

adjoining to the *South-East* Corner of said Building, for the Accommodation of the Committee of this House."⁹³ Work apparently began soon after the passage of this order. Edmund Woolley was the master carpenter on this project under the supervision of Thomas Leech, one of the Superintendents of the State House.⁹⁴ Apparently the room was completed in 1753.⁹⁵

This addition also served as the library of the Assembly. The published *Votes of the Assembly* make frequent mention of books and maps ordered for their library.⁹⁶ For example, a set of the English statutes was purchased; and in 1752 Speaker Isaac Norris was directed to order additional new books for which he paid £70 sterling.⁹⁷ On January 16, 1753, the Assembly directed the Speaker and Benjamin Franklin to procure such books and maps as were suitable and necessary for the use of the House.⁹⁸

With the completion of the committee room and library, no additional structures were erected in the State House grounds during the Colonial period. It is true, however, that other buildings were contemplated. On February 20, 1735/6, the Assembly passed a resolution reserving the lots on Chestnut Street at the corners of Fifth and Sixth Streets for the erection of a City Hall and a County Courthouse within the next twenty years.⁹⁹ But these buildings were not erected until several years after the Revolution.

⁹³ *Votes* 4: 3491.

⁹⁴ "To building ye Committee room together with the Book-cases, table, the Entry & all other Wood Work as it now stands." Edmund Woolley, Account with the Province of Pennsylvania, 1750-1756, Misc. Accts., General Loan Office, Norris Papers, Hist. Soc. Penna. On September 24, 1767 the Assembly postponed the adjustment of the accounts of the tradesmen employed in building the room since the "Representation of Thomas Leech, deceased, who superintended that Business, being absent beyond Sea. . . ." *Votes* 7: 6053.

⁹⁵ On March 10, 1753, Norris wrote that the room was "near finished," and again on March 27, he mentioned that the plastering of the room would begin on the next day and if the glass arrives from England it will be "finished against the nex[t] sitting of the Assembly Abt the Middle of May." He acknowledged receipt of the glass on February 3 in his letter of April 14, 1753. Norris Letterbook, 1719-1756, Hist. Soc. Penna.

⁹⁶ See, for example, *Votes* 4: 3607.

⁹⁷ "The Assembly last year at my request ordered the purchase of a parcel of law books for their use." Norris to Charles, March 10, 1753, Norris Letterbook, 1719-1756, Hist. Soc. Penna., 32.

⁹⁸ *Votes* 4: 3543. Charles Norris, the brother of Isaac Norris, offered to serve as librarian and on December 24, 1754 he was named "Keeper of the Assembly." *Ibid.* 5: 3801. On October 16, 1772 a committee was named "to procure a Catalogue, to be taken of all the Books in the Assembly Library, to number the same, and place them in proper Order." *Ibid.* 8: 6901, 6908. The room also served as a depository of some of the records of the Province. See *ibid.* 6: 5269-5270, 5283-5284; 7: 6058, 6072.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.* 3: 2355-2356. The lots had not been transferred to the ownership of the Province at the time of the passage of this act.

At the close of the Colonial period, the State House of the Province of Pennsylvania was one of the best known structures in America. Fortunately there has been preserved a most graphic description of the buildings and its wings written in 1774:

The State House is situated on the one side of the City Squares, the front of which lies to the North is bounded by Chestnut Street; the wall on the South by Walnut Street; the wing on the East by Fifth Street and on the West by Sixth Street, and fronts the North. It stands about twenty five or thirty feet from the street. It is a large handsome building, two stories high, extending in front one hundred feet. On each side is a wing which joins the main building by means of a brick arcade—each of these wings is fifty feet in length. In the West wing was formerly deposited a valuable collection of books belonging to the Library Company of Philadelphia, but it is now removed to the Carpenter's Hall. In the lower story of this wing, the keeper of the house lives with a salary of about £20 per annum and house rent free. In the East wing are deposited the Rolls of the Province, and in the second story, the Indians make their abode when in town. These wings are arched with brick, that there can be no damage in case of fire.

The State House is adorned on ye outside with rustic corners and marble pannels, between the two storys. At your entering, you rise a flight of five steps into the entry. To the West is a large room in which the Supreme Court is held, and another on the East, in which the Assembly meet. The first of these rooms is ornamented with a breast-work and a cornish supported by fluted pilasters of the Doric order. This is open to the entry only by the entering of three arches supported by fluted pilasters of the same order. The Assembly room is finished in a neat but not elegant manner. From this room you go through a back door into the Assembly's library, which is a very elegant apartment. It is ornamented with a stucco ceiling, and chimney places. Round the room are glass cases, in which the books are deposited. These books consist of all the laws of England made in these later years, and besides these history and poetry. The Assembly only have recourse to this library. There is likewise deposited a most beautiful bust in wax of Thomas Penn Esqr, one of the Proprietors of the Province, which was sent as a present to the Assembly by the Lady Juliana Penn.

From thence you go to the entry which leads to the hall. It is the first story and its cornish is supported by sixteen fluted pilasters of the Doric order. In the hall is an elegant staircase which leads up to the second story, and at the head of these stairs is another hall or entry. In the room towards the East, the small arms of the city are deposited, which consist of between one and two thousand pieces, all placed in a regular manner. The room towards the West is called the Council Chamber, because it is appropriated to the Governor and Council. You then proceed into what is called the Long Room which runs the whole length of the house and has a fire place at each end. Along the ceiling there is a stucco cornish.

In the hall is a handsome staircase which leads up to the third story of the steeple, and cock-loft of the house, which extends the whole length and breadth of the building. In the middle of this large affair is an apartment in which the Town Clock stands, from whence to the East and West a large prong of iron runs through the gable ends of the house, on which the hands are fixed. The outsides of the two clocks are adorned with handsome faces. You then arrive at the third story of the steeple, in which there is nothing remarkable, and then proceed to the fourth story by another flight of stairs. On the top of the building is a

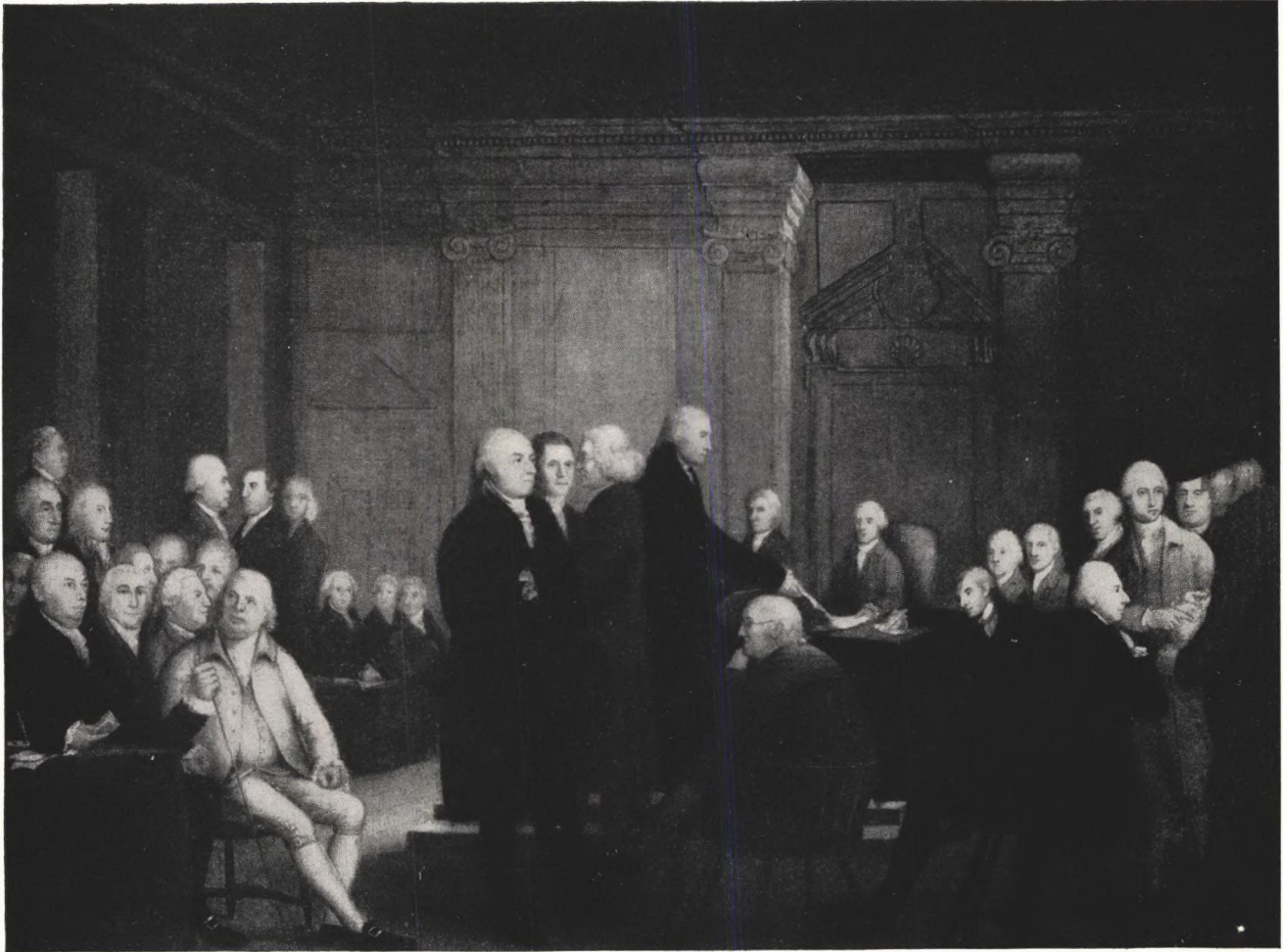


FIG. 8. Congress Voting Independence, July 4, 1776. Painting begun by Robert E. Pine *ca.* 1784 and completed after his death by Edward Savage. Courtesy of Hist. Soc. of Penna.

platform surrounded on the East and West by a balustrade and on the North and South by a pallisade. From the fourth story of the steeple is a door and a handsome flight of stairs which lead up to the platform. Opposite these steps is a leaden canopy, under this the bell, on which the clock strikes, is placed. The striking of this clock can be heard at any part of the city. The other part of the steeple being entirely of wood is in such a ruinous condition that they are afraid to ring the bell, lest by so doing the steeple should fall down. But this inconvenience the Honourable House of Assembly took into consideration the last Session and appointed a Committee to treat with some ingenious persons to build a new one and also to lay before them at their next sitting an elegant plan of the same. The present building is more like a tower than a steeple, and about one hundred and twenty feet high.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 23: 417-419, 1899. The ruinous condition of the wooden part of the steeple is amply corroborated. Jacob Duché in 1774 wrote: "Behind and adjoining to the State House was sometime since erected a tower, of such miserable architecture, that the Legislature have wisely determined to let it go to decay (the upper part being entirely of wood) that it may hereafter be built upon a new and more elegant construction." Duché, *op. cit.*, 12. The Assembly repeatedly considered its condition from February 25, 1773 to

THE STATE HOUSE AND INDEPENDENCE

The State House was destined to become even more prominent during the American Revolution. Events changed its character from a provincial to a national house. Philadelphia, the metropolis of English America, was located near the geographical center of the thirteen colonies. It was, therefore, the logical meeting place for the delegates of these colonies. The first Continental Congress, which convened in Philadelphia in September 1774 to protest against Britain's policies, was

October 1774 when they ordered it removed. *Votes* 8: 7084, 7154. On March 18, 1775 a proposal was received from Robert Smith to remove the wooden and brick part down to the eaves of the State House and erect a cupola on the roof of the State House. Consideration of the proposal was postponed until the next session. *Ibid.* 8: 7220-7221. Nothing was done about removing the steeple for several years. The author's statement, "that they are afraid to ring the bell," when considered with the other information, casts some doubt on the tradition that the State House bell rang on July 8, 1776. It is that bells in Philadelphia rang during the public celebration, but it is possible that the State House bell was silent. John Adams to Samuel Chase, July 9, 1776, in Burnett, *Letters* 2: 8.

offered the use of the State House, but this offer was refused in favor of Carpenters' Hall.¹⁰¹ On May 10, 1775, the Second Continental Congress met in the Assembly room in the State House.¹⁰² This body, forced by events, moved from protest to resistance. In view of the fact that warfare had broken out in Massachusetts, the Congress in June chose Colonel George Washington to be General and Commander in Chief of the Army.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Politics played some part in the selection. Joseph Galloway, Speaker of the Assembly, was a conservative while the majority of the delegates were of a more radical persuasion. Silas Deane wrote to Mrs. Deane on September 1: "The City has offered us the Carpenter's Hall, so called, to meet in, and Mr. Galloway offers the State House and insists on our meeting there, which he says he has a right to offer as Speaker of that House. The last is evidently the best place, but as he offers, the other party oppose. . . ." Burnett, *Letters* 1: 4. On September 5, Joseph Galloway wrote to Governor William Franklin of New Jersey: "The Congress this day met at Carpenter's Hall, notwithstanding the offer of the Assembly Room a much more proper Place. They next proceeded to chuse a Secretary, and, to my Surprise, Charles Thomson was unanimously elected. The New Yorkers and myself and a few others, finding a great Majority, did not think it prudent to oppose it. Both of these Measures, it seems were privately settled by an Interest made out of Doors." *Ibid.* 1: 9.

Other considerations in the selection of Carpenters' Hall for the first Congress were convenience and especially the presence of an excellent library. John Adams wrote in his diary: "At ten the delegates all met at the City Tavern, and walked to the Carpenters' Hall, where they took a view of the room, and of the chamber where there is an excellent library; there is also a long entry where gentlemen may walk, and a convenient chamber opposite to the library. The general cry was, that this was a good room, and the question was put, whether we were satisfied with this room? and it passed in the affirmative." Adams, Charles F., ed., *The works of John Adams* 2 (Diary): 355, Boston, Little and Brown, 1850. See also Burnett, *Letters* 1: 4-22. Although the Congress chose Carpenters' Hall for their meetings, they did accept two invitations for entertainment at the State House. On September 16, 1774 the members and the citizens of Philadelphia, totaling about 500 persons, had "a grand entertainment at the State House" with "plenty of every thing eatable and drinkable, and no scarcity of good humor and diversion." Silas Deane to Mrs. Deane, September 12, 1774 in Burnett, *Letters* 1: 32; also in Parsons, Jacob C., ed., *Extracts from the diary of Jacob Hiltzheimer*, 32, Phila., Wm. F. Fell, 1893; *Pennsylvania Packet*, September 19, 1774. In October the Assembly ordered another entertainment at the State House for the delegates. Dr. Solomon Drowne to Dr. William Bowen, October 19, 1774, *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 48: 235, 1924.

¹⁰² Burnett, *Letters* 1: *passim*; Duane, *op. cit.*, 11, 22-28, 76, 107, 117.

¹⁰³ Burnett, *Letters* 1: 124, 126-127, 129, 130-131, 134, and 138-139. John Adams in his Autobiography describes Washington's nomination in these words: ". . . I had no hesitation to declare that I had but one gentleman in my mind for that important command, and that was a gentleman from Virginia who was among us and very well known to all of us, a gentleman whose skill and experience as an officer, whose independent fortune, great talents, and excellent universal character, would command the approbation of all America, and unite the cordial exertions of all the Colonies better than any other person in the Union. Mr. Washington, who happened to sit near the door, as soon as he heard me allude to him, from his usual modesty, darted into the library-room. . . ." *Ibid.* 1: 131.

While Washington organized the army, Congress organized the civil government. On July 2, 1776, the Congress adopted the resolution, offered by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia, declaring "That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States. . . ." ¹⁰⁴ Two days later the Congress adopted the document largely written by Thomas Jefferson which is now known as the Declaration of Independence.¹⁰⁵ The Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union, the first framework of government, went into effect in the Assembly room on March 1, 1781.¹⁰⁶ Undoubtedly the two most encouraging events of this period were the formal reception of Gérard, the first French minister to the United States, in 1778, and the official receipt, on October 24, 1781, of news of the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown, Virginia. About a week later the Congress was presented with twenty-four stands of the captured colors.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Ford, *op. cit.* 5: 507, Washington, Gov't. Printing Office, 1906; Burnett, *Letters* 1: 525-527. John Adams, writing to his wife on the evening of that day, made this rather interesting statement: ". . . The second day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable epocha in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary Festival. It ought to be commemorated, as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward, forevermore. . . ." Adams, C. F., ed., *Familiar letters of John Adams and his wife, Abigail Adams during the American Revolution*, 193-194, N. Y., Hurd and Houghton, 1876.

¹⁰⁵ Ford, *op. cit.* 5: 510-516; Burnett, *Letters* 1: 528-538.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* 6: 1-4, 7, 1933; Ford, *op. cit.* 19: 208-223. The Congress remained in Philadelphia until June 21, 1783 when it moved to Princeton, N. J. Other capitals under the Confederation were Annapolis, Md. (1783-1784), Trenton, N. J. (1784), and New York City (1785-1788). *A Biographical Congressional Directory*, 25, Washington, Gov't. Printing Office, 1913. Efforts of the Pennsylvania Legislature, in 1783 and 1784, to have Congress return to Philadelphia were unsuccessful. *Votes of the Assembly* [1781-1784], 791-792, 888, and 910, Phila., John Dunlap, [1781-1784] and *Journals of the Assembly of Pennsylvania Minutes of 1st Session 9th Assembly* [1784-1786], 37, Phila., Francis Bailey, [1784-1786].

¹⁰⁷ For the ceremony pertaining to the reception of the French minister on August 6, 1778 see Ford, ed., *op. cit.* 11: 753-757, the *Pennsylvania Packet* of August 11, 1778, and Hazard's *Register* 4: 102. A detailed account, together with a "Plan de la Séance du Congrès," (fig. 9) transmitted by Gérard to Vergennes, may be found in Doniol, Henri, *Histoire de la participation de la France à l'établissement des États-Unis d'Amérique* 3: 311-313, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, ca. 1888. See also Meng, John J., ed., *Despatches and instructions of Conrad Alexandre Gérard 1778-1780*, 198-200, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1939, and Burnett, *Letters* 3: 361-362. The official dispatches concerning the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown were received by the Congress on October 24, 1781. Ford, ed., *op. cit.* 21: 1071-1072. See also the *Pennsylvania Packet* of November 1, 1781 for a most interesting account of the celebration in Philadelphia. The captured colors were presented to the Congress on November 3, 1781. Ford, ed., *op. cit.* 21: 1099; see also, Parsons, ed., *op. cit.*, 46.

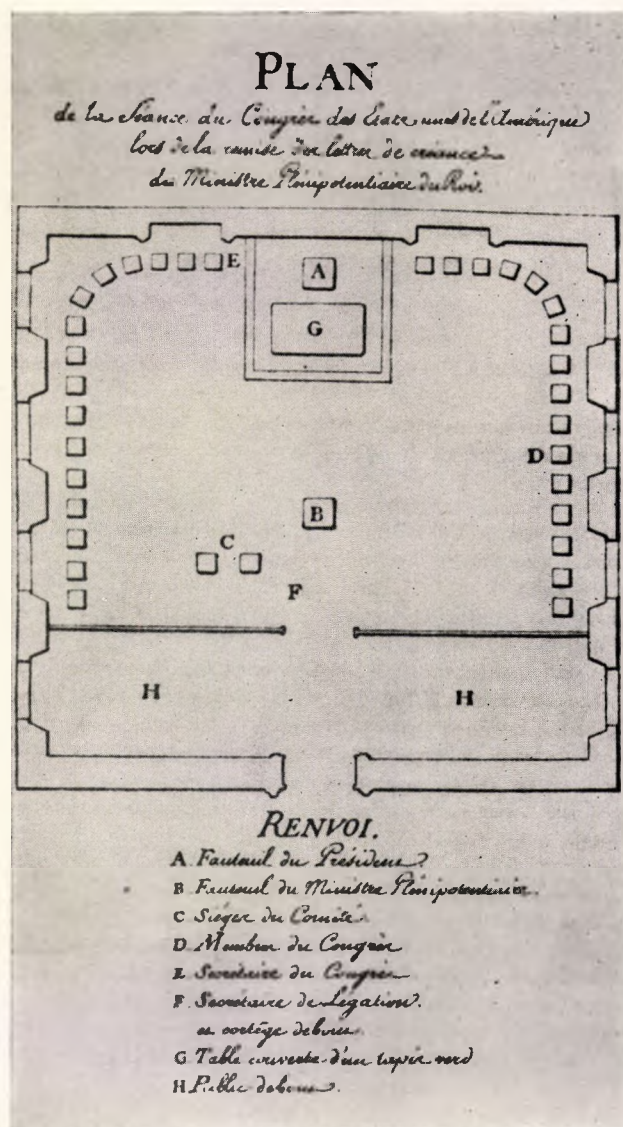


FIG. 9. Seating plan of the Assembly room, August 6, 1778, when the French Minister Gérard presented his credentials to Congress. Note the bar and gallery marked "H." From Henri Doniol, *Histoire de la Participation de la France à l'établissement des États-Unis d'Amérique* 3: 312, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, ca. 1888. Courtesy of University of Pennsylvania.

During the Revolution, Congress sat in the Assembly room of the State House, except for periods of danger such as the occupation of Philadelphia by the British from September 1777 to June 1778.¹⁰⁸ Prior to the arrival of the British, the House of Representatives

¹⁰⁸ It is clear that the Congress used the east or Assembly room on the first floor. On December 14, 1775, "Gadsen moved that the Congress should purchase a handsome Time Piece and set it up in the Assembly Room in the State House, where we meet as a Present for the use of the Room." Robert Smith Diary quoted in Burnett, *Letters* 1: 276. See also Balch, E. W., ed., *Narrative of de Broglie, Mag. of Amer. Hist.* 1: 231-232, April 1876, and Schoepf, *op. cit.* 1: 69-70.

made plans to evacuate. On June 16, 1777, they resolved, "That the president and council be authorized and empowered to remove as soon as they think proper, all the bells belonging to the several churches and other public buildings, as also all the copper and brass in this city, to some place of safety."¹⁰⁹ Pursuant to this order the State House bells, and others bells of the city, were taken down in September and transported to Allentown.¹¹⁰

When the British occupied the city, the State House was used at first as quarters for their troops.¹¹¹ After the battle of Germantown, however, the long room served as a hospital for the wounded American soldiers.¹¹²

It is evident that the State House was left in poor condition by the British. The building was found by the Americans "in a most filthy condition & the inside torn much to pieces. . . ." ¹¹³ Because of the condition of the building, the Congress was forced to meet in the College Hall for a brief period.¹¹⁴

The Assembly room, after repairs were made, was again occupied by the Congress. A French visitor to Philadelphia in 1782 described it in some detail:

Congress meets in a large room on the ground floor. The chamber is large and without any other ornament than a bad engraving of Montgomery, one of Washington and a copy of the Declaration of Independence. It is furnished with thirteen tables each covered with a green cloth. One of the principal representatives of each of the thirteen states

¹⁰⁹ *Journal of the House of Representatives of Penna., 1776-1781*, 144, Phila., John Dunlap, 1782.

¹¹⁰ The bells were taken down by Evans and Allison at a cost of £92.17.6. Comptroller General's Financial Records (MS.), Journal "A-1" (1775-1786), 69, State Records Office, Harrisburg. On the way to Allentown, the wagon carrying the State House bell broke down in Bethlehem and had to be unloaded while repairs were being made. *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 20: 144, 1896; also *ibid.* 13: 74, 1889.

¹¹¹ Diary of Robert Morton, *ibid.* 1: 8, 1877.

¹¹² Extracts from the Journal of Mrs. Henry Drinker, *ibid.* 13: 300.

¹¹³ Josiah Bartlett to William Whipple, July 20, 1778, *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 22: 115, 1899. Henry Laurens described the conditions more graphically: ". . . from various impediments I could not collect a sufficient number of States to form a Congress earlier than the 7th Instant [July], one was the offensiveness of the air in and around the State House, which the Enemy had made an Hospital and left it in a condition disgraceful to the Character of civility. Particularly they had opened a large square pit near the House, a receptacle for filth, into which they had also cast dead horses and the bodies of men who by the mercy of death had escaped from their further cruelties." Laurens to Rawlins Lowndes, July 15 [1778], Burnett, *Letters* 3: 332-333.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*; Josiah Bartlett to Col. Langdon, July 13, 1778, *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 22: 114. In August 1778 Cornelia Taylor was paid fourteen shillings for cleaning out the Assembly room (Journal "A-1." Comptroller General, State Records Office, Harrisburg), and in September William Hurrie received £16.14.0 for clearing out the State House. *Journal of House of Representatives of Pa., 1776-1781*, 298. Peter Anderson was paid £1.10.0 for whitewashing the State House in September. Journal "A-1," Comp. Gen., State Records Office, Harrisburg.

sits during the session at one of these tables. The president of Congress had his place in the middle of the hall, upon a sort of throne. The clerk is seated just below him.¹¹⁵

The Congress continued to meet in the State House until the summer of 1783. The crisis which finally brought about its departure from Philadelphia developed from the inability of the Congress to raise sufficient funds to provide back pay for the army. With the cessation of hostilities and the subsequent disbanding of the army without pay, a group of mutineers on June 21, 1783 surrounded the State House to demand settlement of their grievances. Although the members of the Congress were not harmed, the incident, and the continuing excitement among the soldiers in Philadelphia, caused that body to move to Princeton on June 26. The Congress was destined never to return to Philadelphia.¹¹⁶

Meanwhile, the Assembly took advantage of the need for repairs after the British occupation to make much needed alterations so as to provide adequate space for their sessions. When the Assembly relinquished their room on the first floor to the Congress in 1775, they moved into the small room in the southeastern corner of the second floor.¹¹⁷ Although the enlargement of its membership, by the State Constitution of 1776, from forty-one to seventy-two Representatives made this room inadequate, nothing appears to have been done to improve conditions until after the British occupation.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ Balch, ed., *op. cit.* 1: 231-232, April 1876.

¹¹⁶ Burnett, Edmund C., *The Continental Congress*, 572-578.

¹¹⁷ J. D. Schoepf wrote the following description of the State House in 1783: "The lower storey contains two large halls, one of which the Congress formerly made use of. . . . The other hall, on the ground floor, is for the use of the Supreme Court of Judicature. Above, there are two halls, for the General Assembly and for the Governor and Council." Schoepf, *op. cit.* 1: 69. Hiltzheimer also mentioned the Assembly as meeting in the upper chamber, in Parsons, ed., *op. cit.*, 131-132.

¹¹⁸ There were forty-one members in October, 1775. *Votes* 8: 7301-7302. Under the new constitution the number was increased to seventy-two. *Statutes* 9: 593-594, ch. II, sec. 17, Harrisburg, W. Stanley Ray, 1903. The state legislators contemplated leaving the State House because of the crowded conditions. On October 30, 1778, when the House assembled, there was an insufficient number for a quorum: "One of the gentlemen addressed his brother members, observing, that the chamber in which they were then assembled was already so crowded that it would be extremely inconvenient for the dispatch of public business; that it would become more so, when the house should be full; that therefore and also to make room for such of the freeman as choose to be present at the debates, he moved that some gentlemen should be appointed to visit and examine the different public buildings in the city and report in what place the house might be most conveniently accommodated: The inconvenience being obvious, the motion was unanimously agreed to, and three gentlemen appointed on that service." At the next meeting, on November 2, the House, still unable to constitute a quorum, received the committee's report, "that they had made the necessary enquiries, but that all the public buildings where the house could be tolerably accommodated, were so taken up with public stores &c. that they recommended the place where they then assembled, with some enlargement and alteration, as most suitable; they then pointed out the manner in which the



FIG. 10. The State House in 1778 showing wooden sheds at Fifth and Sixth Streets. Engraved by Trenchard for *Columbian Magazine* (1790); detail from Charles Willson Peale's portrait of Gérard. Courtesy of Hist. Soc. of Penna.

At this time the room was almost doubled in size by removing the partition between it and the long room, and continuing the west wall of the room to the Chestnut Street wall. This made the room the same size as the old Assembly room they had left.¹¹⁹ The new quarters seemed to be so comfortable that the Assembly occupied it for some time after Congress left Philadelphia in 1783.¹²⁰

Another "improvement" at this time was the erection of a brick necessary, probably located at the corner of Fifth and Chestnut Streets.¹²¹ Apparently a causeway

proposed enlargement and alteration might be made; which being agreed to, the gentlemen were desired to procure workmen, &c. to make the same with all possible expedition: In the meantime it was agreed to meet at the college." *Journal of House of Representatives of Pa., 1776-1781*, 231. Another committee was named on October 7, 1779 "to direct the repairs of the chamber of the general assembly" (*ibid.*, 385), only to be followed by a third committee on November 27, 1779 (*ibid.*, 408). The committee made a report of their expenses on March 24, 1780. *Ibid.*, 454. It is possible that the Assembly continued to meet at the college until the fall of 1780. The session convening on October 23, 1780 is the first to mention meeting in the State House. *Ibid.*, 525.

¹¹⁹ Although no descriptions of the alterations have been found, an article in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of March 18, 1789 mentions the Assembly room on the first floor and states that, "the apartment above . . . is of the same dimensions. . . ." The Assembly spent a considerable sum for furnishing the new chamber. On November 27, 1778, Francis Trumble was paid £60 for twenty Windsor chairs for use of the Assembly (*Journal of the House of Representatives of Pa., 1776-1781*, 478). John Folwell was paid £200 for materials for a Speaker's chair. *Ibid.*, 636.

¹²⁰ On November 23, 1785, the Surveyor General was informed that he could be "accommodated with an apartment in the State House for holding his office; that the room assigned to him for this purpose is that lately occupied by the General Assembly. . . ." *Colonial Records* 14: 583, 1853.

¹²¹ The absence of reference to a necessary prior to 1778 is puzzling. The use of the words ". . . for the new privy . . ."

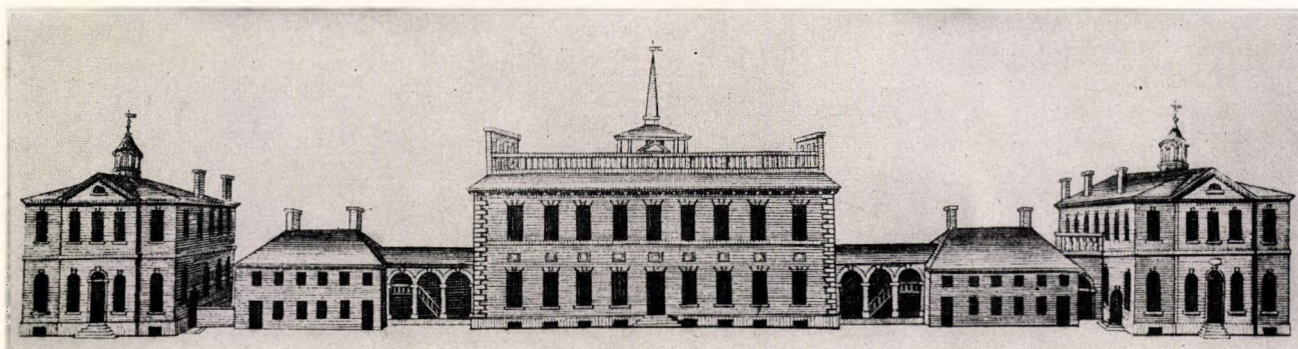


FIG. 11. The State House, after removal of wooden steeple, with the Supreme Court (City Hall) building on left and Congress Hall (County Courthouse) on right. This engraved view is from the Davies map of 1794. Courtesy Phila. Free Library.

was built to provide access from the State House.¹²²

From the large sums expended at this time, and the great amounts of building materials purchased, the repairs to the State House must have been extensive.¹²³ With the exception of the changes made on the upper floor, however, there is no record of great alterations made to the interior arrangements of the State House.

The most important alteration made to the exterior of the building was the removal of the badly decayed wooden steeple above the brick tower. In April 1781, the Supreme Executive Council was "authorized and directed to have such parts of the steeple of the State House as are constructed of wood and in a decayed and dangerous condition, taken down, and the remainder sufficiently and effectually covered, in such manner as may be necessary for the preservation of said building."¹²⁴ After the steeple was removed, the brick tower was covered with a low, sloping, hip roof surmounted by a slender finial.¹²⁵

at this time, however, would indicate that an earlier building existed. *Journal of the House of Representatives of Pa., 1776-1781*, 481. The location of the building is not too definite, but it apparently was on the site of the subsequently erected City Hall on the northeast corner of the Square. On July 26, 1790, the Supreme Executive Council noted "that in consequence of the corporations erecting the City Hall, the necessary in the State House yard must be taken down," and resolved "that a proper place be fixed upon, and workmen employed to erect a building for a necessary." *Colonial Records* 16: 410, 1853.

¹²² Jacob Stovemetz [Steinmetz] was paid £124.63 for bricks for "The new building, causeway, &c. at the State House on Nov. 9, 1778." *Journals of House of Representatives, 1776-1781*, 480.

¹²³ See *ibid.*, 274-299, 478-489, 635-640 for accounts of payments made by the Treasurer. From October 27, 1778 to May 11, 1779, Robert Allison, carpenter, was paid £3600. See "Contingent expenses . . . 1778-1780," in *Journal "A-1,"* 90-91, Comptroller General Records, State Records Office. On February 17, 1780, he received an additional £511.17.5 "for carpenters work done at State House." *Ibid.*, 119.

¹²⁴ *Journal of House of Representatives of Pa., 1776-1781*, 604.

¹²⁵ See William Birch's *Views of Philadelphia*, "Back of the State House" (pl. 22) for appearance of altered steeple. Thomas Nevell was the carpenter responsible for the alterations. See Nevell's estimate in *Penna. Archives* (1st. ser.) 9: 46-47, 1854, and his letters to President Reed, April 16, 1781, in *ibid.* 9: 76-77, and of July 16, 1781 in *ibid.* 9: 283. John Coburn, a

A French visitor to Philadelphia in August 1782, shortly after the wooden steeple was removed, was not too pleased with the result. He wrote, "The state-house . . . is a building literally crushed by a huge massive tower, square and not very solid."¹²⁶

Notwithstanding the repairs of 1778-1780, it appears that the State House still needed additional work. By 1784 it was apparent that extensive repairs were necessary. A committee of the House of Representatives, appointed in January, made a detailed survey of the building and in September recommended essential repairs estimated at £684.5.0.¹²⁷ These repairs pertained largely to the roof and exterior woodwork of the building.¹²⁸ In the following year additional repairs, estimated at £505.10.0, were recommended.¹²⁹

rigger, was employed by Nevell in "getting down the Old Steeple, and getting up the new one, getting up the Bell, and fixing of it." *Hazard's Register* 2: 376. On February 22, 1785, the committee of the Assembly responsible for the repairs to the State House reported an item for, "Hanging the bell in the upper brick story, and setting three of the windows with sounding boards. . . ." *Journals of Assembly of Pa., 1783* (Minutes of 2nd Session, 9th Assembly), 152.

¹²⁶ Balch, ed., *op. cit.* 1: 231.

¹²⁷ *Journal of House of Representatives of Pa., [1781-1784]*, 97, 325; *Penna. Archives* (1st. ser.) 10: 335-336, 1854.

¹²⁸ James Pearson, "House Carpenter," apparently made the repairs with the exception of the roof repairs at a cost of £460. See Pearson's report to Supreme Executive Council, December 20, 1784, *Penna. Archives* (1st. ser.) 10: 373; *Colonial Records* 14: 285-286.

¹²⁹ The report of the committee was received on February 22, 1785, but consideration of it was postponed. *Journal of the Assembly of Penna. [1785]* (Min. of the 2nd Sess., 9th Gen. Assembly), 152, Phila., F. Bailey, 1786. It is not clear whether all of the suggested repairs were made, but on November 12, 1785, James Pearson reported to the Council that he had received a total of £990 on account for repairing the State House and requested an additional £200. *Penna. Archives* (1st. ser.) 10: 535, 1854. On November 29, 1785, the House resolved that the roof "between the Steeple and the turret of the clock bell . . ." be covered with copper. In addition, three courses of shingles on each side of the ridge were to be replaced and the upper pitches painted "with clarified turpentine and Spanish brown." *Journal of Assembly of Pa.* (Min. of 1st Sess., 10th Gen. Assembly), 64; *Colonial Records* 14: 542. James Pearson again received the contract for the work for the sum of £83. See articles of agreement between the Council and Pearson,

Before the Assembly returned to its old room on the first floor of the State House, certain "alterations and repairs" were made to it as well as to the adjoining committee room.¹³⁰ This work was followed by a total replacement of the roof of the committee room.¹³¹ Proposals to erect a gallery in the Assembly room and to build a partition so as to separate the Supreme Court chamber from the public entry hall came to nothing.¹³²

The repairs, alterations, and improvements made in the State House, together with the landscaping carried out in the yard to provide "more walks, shaded with trees, a pleasant lawn, and several beds of shrubs and flowers," provided an excellent setting for the approaching Federal Constitutional Convention.¹³³ The Convention, attended by the leading minds of the new nation, convened in the Assembly room of the State House on May 25, 1787.¹³⁴ With Washington as the presiding

officer, it completed the drafting of the Constitution and adjourned on September 17.

Following the departure of the delegates from Philadelphia after the close of the Federal Constitutional Convention, the State House became the meeting place of two state conventions. The first met to consider and ratify the Federal Constitution,¹³⁵ the second to frame and adopt the state constitution of 1790.¹³⁶

Some repairs, and probably some alterations, were made to the State House in 1788 and 1789. Performed under the direction of Joseph Rakestraw, this work required 500 feet of pine boards "to repair the Assembly Room" and included "carving work" and plastering.¹³⁷ The extent of the repairs may be judged from the fact that Rakestraw received in payment £1258.14.4 in June 1789 and £500 in October 1789.¹³⁸

PHILADELPHIA, THE CAPITAL

Just prior to Philadelphia's becoming the capital of the United States, Independence Hall acquired two neighbors of destiny—the City Hall on the east and the County Courthouse on the west. These fulfilled the original plan of a city government center as conceived by Andrew Hamilton. Rather little is known about the City Hall, but considerably more about the County Courthouse.

The Federal Government under the new Constitution first met in New York where Federal Hall Memorial National Historic Site now stands; then, in 1790, that

Cutler, *op. cit.* 1: 262. Undoubtedly, this must have been a committee meeting of the Convention for Jacob Hiltzheimer, a member of the General Assembly, noted on September 5, 1787 that the Convention had been meeting downstairs and that the Assembly, then in recess, would meet upstairs. Parsons, *op. cit.*, 131. Cf. *Journal of the Assembly of Pa.* (Min. 3rd Sess., 11th Assembly), 200. In addition the *Columbian Magazine* of July 1787 said the sessions of the Convention were held "in the same hall which enclosed the patriots who framed the Declaration of Independence." See Reeder, *loc. cit.*, 568 for a well-reasoned discussion of this point.

¹³⁵ The state ratifying convention met in the Assembly room upstairs. Parsons, *op. cit.*, 138.

¹³⁶ Evidence is inconclusive as to the room used by the state constitutional convention. The Assembly was in session at this time and it seems logical to assume that the convention used the room upstairs. *Ibid.*, 159; *Minutes of Convention of Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*, 1789.

¹³⁷ A manuscript account of the work performed by Rakestraw from June 12 to 17, 1789 is listed in a voucher found in State Records Office, Harrisburg (Internal Improvements, Buildings, State House). Brick was purchased for "laying the entry and hall floor of the Statehouse and Steeple. . .," but the work appears not to have been done at this time. The brick floor in the State House was laid prior to 1818 when the building was described in an insurance survey. Philadelphia Contributionship Survey No. 3795, Survey Book 1795-1824, p. 218. See note 64. Watson states that a tile floor was laid when the State House was first erected, but no substantiating proof has been found. Watson, *op. cit.* 1: 396.

¹³⁸ Rakestraw's account, June 12-17, 1780, *op. cit.*; *Journal "AAA-3"* (1788-1789), Comp. Gen. Financial Records, Harrisburg, 172.

December 15, 1785, in *ibid.* 14: 597. William Williams and Silas Engles bid £83.10.0. *Penna. Archives* (1st ser.) 12: 295, 1856.

¹³⁰ On October 25, 1785, Pearson received £71.5.10 for this work. *Journal "AA,"* No. 2, Comp. Gen. Rec., State Records Office, Harrisburg, 680. See note 118.

¹³¹ On September 27, 1786, it was reported to the House that James Pearson had constructed the new roof for the sum of £32.10.0. *Journal of Assembly of Pa.* (Min. 3rd Sess., 10th Gen. Assembly), 320-321.

¹³² In the *Pennsylvania Evening Herald*, September 9, 1786, it was reported that a committee was appointed "to make an estimate of the expense of erecting a gallery in the Assembly room, for the convenience of those citizens who may choose to attend the debates." Use of the word "erecting" would seem to indicate a raised gallery was proposed. Haviland, in 1831, upon examining the room before restoration, thought he found evidence of such a gallery. Hazard's *Register* 7: 264-265, 1831. There is nothing to indicate it was built. A railing or bar had earlier been placed in the room, and apparently the public space "without the bar" was frequently referred to as "the gallery." See mention, on March 6, 1786, in *Votes* 7: 5566. The location of the bar is shown in Doniol, *op. cit.* 3: 312. The *Pennsylvania Packet* of August 11, 1778, in describing the reception of the French Minister Gérard by the Congress, reported that one hundred gentlemen were in the audience without the bar. A correspondent to the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 18, 1789, wrote that the Assembly room "will contain two hundred persons in the gallery without the bar. . . ." Furthermore, Gerry in 1790 declared in Congress in New York, "The State House of Philadelphia has no gallery. . . ." *Ibid.*, June 9, 1790. A proposal was made to the General Assembly on November 23, 1786 to appoint a committee to obtain an estimate on erecting the partition between the Supreme Court chamber and the hall and "setting up a stove therein." The resolution was not passed when considered on November 30. See Reeder, *loc. cit.* 572, note 148, citing Min. Gen. Assembly for November 23, 30, 1786. No earlier mention has been found of any heating arrangement for the Supreme Court chamber. The chimneys on the west end of the State House apparently did not reach to the first floor. In Birch's *Views of Philadelphia* a scene of the back of the State House shows that in 1799 two stove pipes came out of the upper panes of the two western windows and crossed the wall diagonally to enter the chimneys from outside the building.

¹³³ *Columbian Magazine* for July 1787.

¹³⁴ Some confusion has existed over the meeting place of the Convention because of the Rev. Manasseh Cutler's statement, written on July 13, 1787, that the body was meeting upstairs.

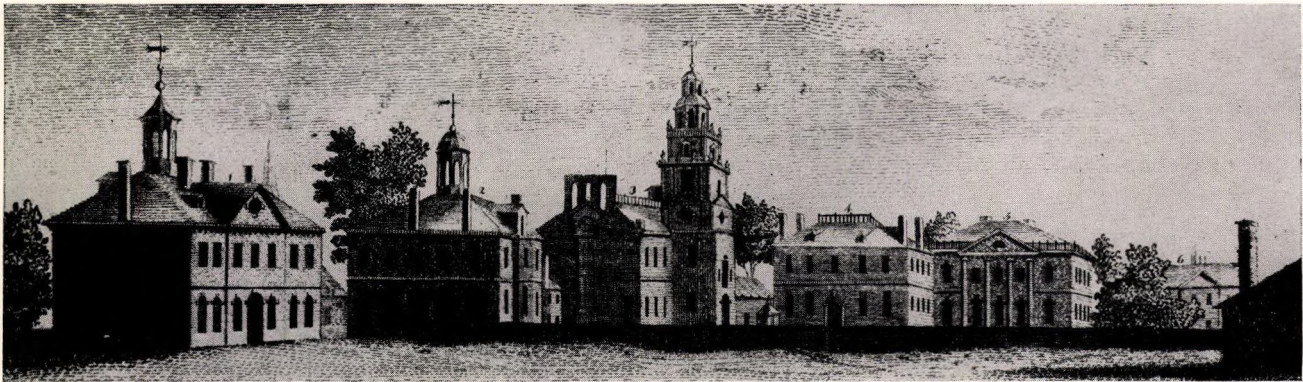


FIG. 12. "View of Several Public Buildings in Philadelphia," from *Columbian Magazine*, 1790. Left to right (1) the Episcopal Academy; (2) Congress Hall; (3) the State House (actually the steeple had been removed in 1781); (4) the Hall of the American Philosophical Society; (5) the Hall of the Library Company of Philadelphia; (6) Carpenters' Hall. This is the only known view showing the Committee Room of the Assembly (just to the right of the State House tower). Courtesy of the Hist. Soc. of Penna.

body came to Philadelphia.¹³⁹ Congress sat in the new County Courthouse (now known as Congress Hall) and the United States Supreme Court in the new City Hall (now known as the Supreme Court Building).¹⁴⁰

Although the Residence Act, approved July 16, 1790, directed that the permanent capital was to be situated on the Potomac, it also stipulated that the temporary seat of government was to be in Philadelphia for ten years.¹⁴¹ Robert Morris was generally credited with bringing the capital to Philadelphia,¹⁴² and was castigated

by the New Yorkers for his part in its removal. A particularly vicious attack was the New York cartoon depicting Morris and the devil as they led the Congress from New York to Philadelphia.¹⁴³ Naturally, many attempts were made by local interests to locate the permanent capital in Philadelphia, while some forces almost succeeded in locating it in nearby Germantown.¹⁴⁴ Southerners, needless to say, were eager to move the capital to the Potomac,¹⁴⁵ and their illustrious member, Washington, supported this site.¹⁴⁶ The Residence Act, as a compromise, received sufficient support to be passed by the Congress, and Philadelphia became the capital.

1. SUPREME COURT BUILDING

During the Colonial period the Philadelphia city government occupied the courthouse at Second and High (now Market) Streets. To accommodate the growth of municipal departments and functions, however, a larger city hall was erected in 1790–1791 on the State House Square.¹⁴⁷ When Philadelphia became the tem-

which was read." *Journals of Senate of the United States* [1789–1793], 83, Washington, Gales and Seaton, 1820.

¹⁴³ This cartoon is in the possession of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

¹⁴⁴ For Philadelphia, see *Journals of the Senate*, 148, 151, 169, 170, 171, 172, 177; *Annals of Congress* 2: 1718, 1719, 1730. For Germantown, see *Journals of the Senate*, 88; *Annals of Congress* 1: 71, 789, 922, 925; 2: 1725, 1735.

¹⁴⁵ *Annals of Congress* 1: 844–848, 854–857, 860–865, 866–868, 922; 2: 1728, 1729.

¹⁴⁶ Washington was strongly in favor of the Potomac site; see, for example, his letter to David Stuart of November 20, 1791 in John B. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The writings of George Washington* 31: 419–423, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1939.

¹⁴⁷ Reeder, *loc. cit.*, 583. The erection of the new city hall and county courthouse had been contemplated for fifty years (see note 99). The funds for the erection of the city hall were raised mainly from a lottery authorized by the Assembly on March 27, 1789. The lottery was to raise ten thousand dollars of which eight thousand were to go to the City of Philadelphia towards the building of a city hall and two thousand to Dickin-

¹³⁹ The dismay felt by New Yorkers at losing the Federal Capital to Philadelphia is well illustrated in an anonymous letter which appeared in Dunlap's *Daily Advertiser* for March 4, 1791. The anonymous writer said, in part: ". . . We are told that both houses of Congress are stored into a county court house, a single building, without portico or trees to shade them from the midday sun. In summer it must be as hot as Tophet. Was this contrived to fit the constitutions of the Southern members, or merely to save money, by driving away the northern members in the spring, and working short sessions? New York expended 25,000 under the mere impression of propriety and respect. Philadelphia more frugal, will not expend a tenth part of the money, though they are sure of ten years residence. Their little court house hooked up in humble imitation of our city-hall, is found to be good enough for Congress, and the President is to continue in a noisy house in Market Street, much too small for his family, serenaded every morning with the music of waggoners. . . ."

¹⁴⁰ For negotiations relating to the fitting up of the County Courthouse for the accommodation of Congress, see *Minutes of the Common Council* 1: 237, 316; see also, Reeder, *loc. cit.* 573–574 and note 154. For the occupancy of City Hall by the U. S. Supreme Court, see *ibid.*, 583 and *Gazette of the United States*, August 3, 1791.

¹⁴¹ "An act for establishing the temporary and permanent seat of the Government of the United States approved July 16, 1790," in *Annals of the Congress of the United States* 2: 2294.

¹⁴² "Monday Sept., 21 [1789], Mr. Morris in behalf of the Senators from the State of Pennsylvania, introduced a resolve of the General Assembly of that State, of March the 5th, 1789, making 'a respectful offer to Congress of the use of any or all the public buildings in Philadelphia, the property of the State. &c., in case Congress should, at any time, incline to make choice of that city for temporary residence of the Federal Government,'

porary national capital, the new city hall was offered, together with the new county courthouse, to the Federal Government. Thus the city hall became the seat of the Supreme Court of the United States.¹⁴⁸

No evidence of the original plan for this building has as yet been found, but eighteenth-century pictures show the exterior substantially as it is today. The Supreme Court Building, conforming in style with other buildings on the Square, is a two-story brick structure approximately fifty feet wide by sixty-six feet deep, with a projecting southern bay, a peaked roof and a cupola in the middle of the roof.

A plan appearing in a Philadelphia guide book of 1824¹⁴⁹ shows that the first floor contained an open stairway (along the north wall) leading to the second story, two small rooms on the east side of the building, and one on the west; the south end had one large chamber. The second floor was composed of a single large room on the east side, another on the south end, and two smaller rooms on the west. Stairs led up to the attic.

As it stands today, the first floor of the building contains a room in the northeastern corner, an adjacent hall (to the west) containing the stairway, and a room (the full width of the building) at the south end approximately fifty feet square. The second floor is similar, with a large room on the south end, but with various smaller rooms on the east and west sides separated by a central hallway.

During the period of occupancy by the Supreme Court of the United States between 1791 and 1800, it is believed that this judiciary body usually sat in the Mayor's Court, the large room at the south end of the first floor.¹⁵⁰ There is some doubt on this point, however. It is quite likely that the corresponding room on the second floor was also used on occasions by the high tribunal. At the first session held in this building on August 1, 1791, John Jay presided as Chief Justice, with James Wilson, William Cushing, John Blair, and James Iredell as Associate Justices.¹⁵¹ Jay was succeeded in

son College. *Statutes* 13: 276-282. A small fund had originated in 1746 when Mayor James Hamilton presented £150 to the city towards the building of an exchange or other public buildings in lieu of the customary dinner to the Council. *Minutes of Common Council, 1704-1776*, 463-464. Later mayors also made donations to this fund. *Ibid.*, 502, 511, 563. In 1763 five hundred pounds of fund was authorized to be used towards erecting an exchange at Front and High Streets. *Ibid.*, 684. In October 1772 the special fund amounted to £136.15.1. *Ibid.*, 776. See also *Colonial Records* 14: 285, and act of April 8, 1785, No. MCLXV, *Statutes* 11: 597 for account of other funds.

¹⁴⁸ See note 139.

¹⁴⁹ [Anon.], *Philadelphia in 1824* . . . opposite p. 133. Phila., Carey & Lea, 1824.

¹⁵⁰ Reeder, *loc. cit.*, 584.

¹⁵¹ *Gazette of the United States*, August 3, 1791; Reeder, *loc. cit.*, 583.

turn by John Rutledge and Oliver Ellsworth.¹⁵² Here the Court began its active work, thereby laying the foundation for the development of the Judicial Branch of the Federal Government.

After the Supreme Court moved to Washington in 1800, the building continued in use as the city hall, with lower Federal courts also holding sessions periodically. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, the city government moved to its new quarters at Broad and Market Streets, and the building was temporarily closed. For many years the building was used for the meetings of various groups, such as the Grand Army of the Republic, Boy Scouts, and Pennsylvania Prison Society. Finally in 1922 the Old City Hall was restored to its early appearance to serve as a museum.

2. CONGRESS HALL

The ground on which Congress Hall stands was purchased for the Province of Pennsylvania in 1736.¹⁵³ In 1775 the Common Council of the City of Philadelphia discussed the matter of erecting a courthouse on the southeast corner of Sixth and Chestnut Streets as well as a city hall on the southwest corner of Fifth and Chestnut. It was decided to have a plan prepared and an estimate made as to the probable cost.¹⁵⁴ It was not till 1785, however, that the Assembly of Pennsylvania passed an Act and appropriated funds for the erection of a county building.¹⁵⁵ Work finally commenced in 1787 and was completed in 1789.¹⁵⁶ This county court

¹⁵² Warren, Charles, *The Supreme Court in United States history* 1: 35, 128, 140, Boston, Little, Brown & Co, 1922.

¹⁵³ The ground for the City Hall on the southwest corner of Fifth and Chestnut Streets, was acquired at the same time. Both lots were of the same dimensions, i.e., fifty feet wide along Chestnut Street and seventy-three feet deep along Fifth and Sixth Streets. It was provided that upon these two lots "two public Buildings are to be erected, of the like outward Form, structure and Dimensions, the one for the Use of the County, and the other for the Use of the City of Philadelphia, and are to be for the Holding of Courts, or Common Halls, and not for private Dwellings." *Votes* 3: 2355-2356. An act passed on February 17, 1762 provided for the conveyance of the two lots to the following trustees: Isaac Norris, Thomas Leech, Joseph Fox, Samuel Rhoads, Joseph Galloway, John Baynton, and Edward Pennington. They were to convey this land to the city and county, respectively, upon the payment of £50 each. See *Statutes at Large* 6: 177-183, 1899. Payment of the fee of £50 by the Corporation of Philadelphia to the Province was made in 1766. See *Votes* 7: 5928. Finally, in an act passed March 29, 1787, the General Assembly extended the depth of both lots to eighty-eight feet. See *Statutes at Large* 12: 472-473, 1906.

¹⁵⁴ *Minutes of Common Council (1704-1776)*, 804.

¹⁵⁵ *Statutes at Large* 11: 596-601, and 12: 53-57, 1906.

¹⁵⁶ Work commenced in the spring of 1787, sometime after March 29 and before July. The *Columbian Magazine* for July speaks of the courthouse as "lately" begun. The date of completion appears to have been sometime prior to April 15, 1789, as on that date the Mayor and Councilmen met for the first time in the south room on the second floor. See *Minutes of City Council* 1: 27-35; see also Reeder, *loc. cit.* 533 note 152, and *Columbian Magazine* for January, 1790. (The latter has a picture of Congress Hall at that time.)

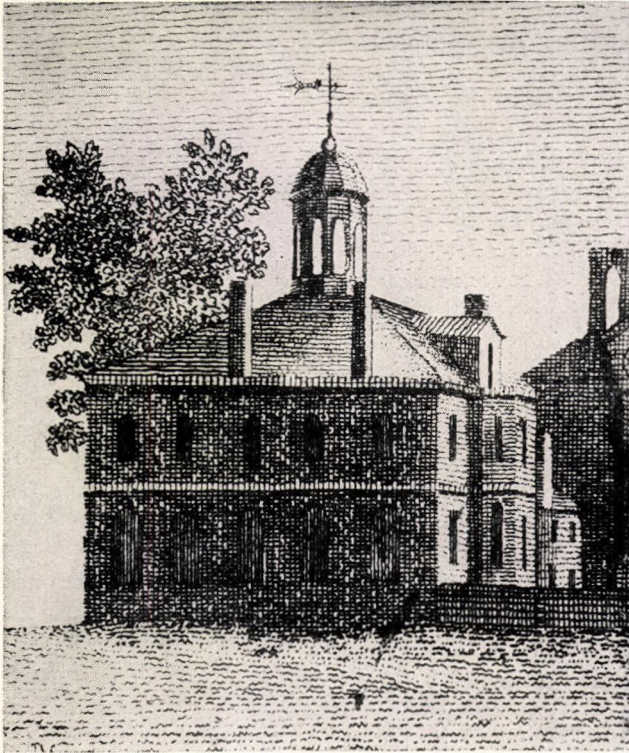


FIG. 13. Congress Hall (County Courthouse) prior to enlargement of 1793. From *Columbian Magazine*, January, 1790. Courtesy Phila. Free Library.

building became the meeting place of the first United States Congress, Third Session, on December 6, 1790¹⁵⁷; F. A. Muhlenberg was the Speaker of the House and John Adams, President of the Senate.¹⁵⁸

The physical history of Congress Hall is incomplete, and only a few highlights can be offered here. Before the County Court House could be turned over to the United States Congress, alterations had to be made to

¹⁵⁷ *Annals of Congress* 2: 1770.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 2: 1770, 2371. *A Biog. Cong. Dir.*, 30. "The House of Representatives, in session," writes an anonymous correspondent in 1829, "occupied the whole of the ground floor, upon a platform elevated three steps in ascent, plainly carpeted, and covering nearly the whole of the area, with a limited 'Loggia,' or promenade for the members and privileged persons; and four narrow desks, between the Sixth Street windows, for the Stenographers, Lloyd, Gales, Callender, and Duane. The Speaker's chair, without canopy, was of plain leather, and brass nails, facing the east, at or near the centre of the western wall. The first Speaker of the House, in this city, was Frederick Augustus Muhlenberg, who, by his portly person, and handsome rotundity, literally filled the chair. . . ."

Regarding the Senate and Mr. Adams, upstairs, he says: "In a very plain chair, without canopy, and a small mahogany table before him, festooned at the sides and front with green silk, Mr. Adams, the Vice President, presided as President of the Senate, facing the north. . . . Among the thirty Senators of that day, there was observed constantly, during the debate, the most delightful silence, the most beautiful order, gravity, and personal dignity of manner. . . ." See *Reminiscences in Hazard's Register* 4: 142, 1829.

fit the building for its new purpose. The first floor chamber, to be used by the House of Representatives, was fitted up with a gallery to accommodate about three hundred people.¹⁵⁹ The chamber was furnished with mahogany tables and elbow chairs, carpeting, stoves, and venetian blinds, all of fine workmanship.¹⁶⁰ The Senate Chamber on the second floor was even more elegantly furnished.¹⁶¹

Then, between 1793 and 1795, to accommodate an increase in membership of the House from sixty-eight to a hundred and five, the building had to be enlarged by an addition of, apparently, twenty-six feet to the end of the original structure.¹⁶² Two windows were added to each story on the east and west sides, and two additional chimneys were installed.¹⁶³ After these alterations, the building still measured fifty feet along Chestnut Street, while the depth on Sixth Street was increased to one hundred feet.¹⁶⁴ The first floor, though larger, probably remained one large room with a hallway entrance. The second floor, however, was apparently altered in its arrangement with the south room (or Senate Chamber) now included in the new extension; the rest of the second floor most likely contained four smaller rooms, two each on the east and west sides of the building, separated by a hallway leading into the Senate Chamber.¹⁶⁵

The next addition was the Senate gallery, constructed in 1795.¹⁶⁶ It was similar to the gallery on the floor below, but smaller.¹⁶⁷ Extending the length of the Senate Chamber at the northern end, it was probably

¹⁵⁹ *Pennsylvania Packet*, December 6, 1790.

¹⁶⁰ Evidence of this work may be found in the Public Records Office, Harrisburg, under "Public Improvements—Congress Hall" in the form of vouchers for payment. The cost for furniture and fixtures was £1565.12.3½; for labor, £899.7.11; for materials, £136.14.11.

¹⁶¹ Weld, Isaac, *Travels in North America* . . . 10, London, J. Stockdale, 1807.

¹⁶² An act of April 11, 1793 specified that Congress Hall would be enlarged not over forty feet in depth on Sixth Street; see *Statutes at Large* 14: 431–432. Today one can see a break in the continuity (on the outside) of the north-south walls of Congress Hall; the distance from this line to the present rear (south end) of the building measures twenty-six feet.

¹⁶³ This statement is based on a comparison between the appearance of the building as shown on Davies' map of Philadelphia, 1794, and its appearance as depicted in the *Columbian Magazine* engraving (January, 1790).

¹⁶⁴ Present day measurements.

¹⁶⁵ Letter from John McAllister to J. M. Wallace, February 19, 1872; this letter contains McAllister's recollections of visiting Congress as a boy (about twelve years old). Quoted in Wallace, J. W., *Discourse before the Historical Society of Pennsylvania*, March 11, 1872, 59–62.

¹⁶⁶ "Report of the Registrar General 1796," *Journal of House of Representatives of Pennsylvania, 1795–1796*, 5. See also Hazard's *Register* 16: 79–80, July 1835–January 1836; this quotes an article in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of July, 1835, which says that when the gallery was removed that year, an inscription was found in the pilaster naming George Forepaugh as the master carpenter and dated November 14, 1795.

¹⁶⁷ See note 165.

entered from the east room adjoining the Senate Chamber. Lastly, in 1796–1797, the City of Philadelphia replaced the floors in the Senate Chamber.¹⁶⁸

In the nineteenth century a number of changes were made to the interior arrangement to accommodate the several courts and municipal departments using the building. As for the exterior, one known change of major proportion was the blocking of the Chestnut Street entrance and the opening of a doorway on the Sixth Street side.¹⁶⁹ In the restorations which followed after 1895, however, the original situation was restored.

As for the historical accuracy of the final restoration, carried out by the American Institute of Architects, it is not possible to give detailed evaluation at this time. Some features as now existing seem to be questionable. For instance, there are now twin stairs leading to the second floor where, originally, there appears to have been but one.¹⁷⁰ Also, in the House Chamber, the three tiers replaced in 1934 under other auspices, can hardly accommodate more than about sixty-eight chairs, and it is known that from 1795 the House had a membership of one hundred and six.

As yet, none of the original architectural plans or drawings for Congress Hall have been discovered. The earliest picture is a copper plate engraving, entitled "Views of Several Public Buildings in Philadelphia," which appeared in the *Columbian Magazine* for January, 1790. The view, made before the alterations of 1793, shows the south and west sides of a two-story brick building with a hipped roof, dome shaped cupola, and a dormer to the south. Three chimneys are in evidence, two on the west and one on the east side; possibly a fourth chimney is hidden by the roof and cupola. The west elevation shows five arched windows on the first floor separated from the second floor by a string-course. The second floor has five windows, four of which appear arched and one rectangular. The print also shows five windows in each story of the south elevation, three in

¹⁶⁸ Report of James Pearson and William Garrigues [?], October 20, 1796; in State Archives, Harrisburg, Congress Hall box.

¹⁶⁹ McAllister letter cited in note 27. This door shows up in many pictures, e.g., J. T. Brown's lithograph of the drawing by J. C. Wild (ca. 1840); photographs made later in the nineteenth century also show the door.

¹⁷⁰ In Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.* 1: 489, we find: "From the front door on Chestnut Street a hall or entry led [in 1797] to the door of the hall of the House of Representatives, or to the stairway leading to the second story, in the same position as the present stairway [ca. 1880] leading to the District Court rooms." A letter of December 26, 1795 from Theophilus Bradbury, Congressman from Massachusetts, to his daughter implies but one stairway in Congress Hall: "You ascend the stairs leading to the [Senate] chamber at the north end [of the building]. . . ." Letter printed in *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 8: 226–227, 1884. See also Baker, William S., Washington after the revolution, 1784–1799, *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 20: 74, 1896; the author says Congress Hall had ". . . a vestibule running along the full front on Chestnut Street, and contain[ed] on the left of the main entrance the staircase leading to the chambers above."



FIG. 14. Back of State House just before turn of century. Note hip roof on tower, which replaced the steeple in 1781, the bell cupola directly in front of tower on State House roof, and tall-case clock. Engraving by Birch (1799). Courtesy Phila. Free Library.

the center bay. Evidently the flanking windows of the south elevation were replaced by doors in 1793 since there is evidence that in 1795 this condition prevailed, since Theophilus Bradbury, a member of Congress from Massachusetts, wrote of Congress Hall: ". . . At the south end . . . there is an area of half circle with large windows looking out into a large square or mall . . . and two doors open into it."¹⁷¹

Among the outstanding events that took place in the building, must be mentioned that on March 4, 1793 George Washington was inaugurated for his second term in the Senate Chamber upstairs¹⁷²; at the same time, John Adams assumed the Presidency of the Senate.¹⁷³ Washington delivered his last formal message to Congress, before retiring, in the Chamber of the

¹⁷¹ Quoted in *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 8: 226, 1884.

¹⁷² "Sat. March 2, 1793—The President notified the Senate that the President of the United States proposes to take the oath of office on Monday next, at 12 o'clock in the Senate Chamber." *Journal of the Senate of the United States (1789–1793)*, 501.

¹⁷³ Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.* 3: 1821.

House of Representatives, downstairs, on December 7, 1796.¹⁷⁴ It is this message which some have confused with Washington's famous Farewell Address which, of course, he never delivered in person.

It was in Congress Hall that the first Bank of the United States and the Mint were established as part of the comprehensive program developed by Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury, to rectify the disordered state of government finances.¹⁷⁵ Here, too, Jay's Treaty with England was debated and ratified¹⁷⁶; Vermont, Kentucky, and Tennessee were admitted into the Union¹⁷⁷; and it was while here that the Federal Government successfully weathered a major internal threat to its authority, the Whisky Rebellion in western Pennsylvania.¹⁷⁸

Here in the lower Chamber, Chief Justice Oliver Ellsworth administered the oath of office to John Adams as the second President of the United States on March 4, 1797.¹⁷⁹ Two years later, official news of the death of Washington was received by Congress.¹⁸⁰ Here, too, were introduced General Henry Lee's famous words: "First in War, First in Peace, and First in the Hearts of his Countrymen."¹⁸¹ And finally, as almost one of its last official acts before leaving for the new Capital on the Potomac, Congress recommended that the next birthday of Washington be properly solemnized, setting the precedent for its future observance as a national holiday.¹⁸²

Following the removal of the Federal Capital to Washington in 1800, Congress Hall entered upon a less eventful, though no less useful, career. It reverted to the purpose for which it was originally erected, a courthouse. Throughout the nineteenth century, the Orphans' Court and the Courts of Common Pleas and Quarter Sessions met on the first floor, while the United States District and Circuit Courts used the old Senate Chamber and other rooms upstairs. Other courts and municipal departments used sections of the building, too, from time to time.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁴ *Journal of the Senate* . . . 1793-1799 2: 296-299.

¹⁷⁵ For the Bank see *Annals of Congress*, March 1789-March 1791 2: 2375-2382. For the Mint see *ibid.*, October 1791-March 1793, 69, 772, 1351-1355, 1411.

¹⁷⁶ Bailey, Thomas, *A diplomatic history of the American people*, 63-69, N. Y., Crofts, 1940.

¹⁷⁷ *Annals of Congress*, March 1789-March 1791, 2: 2372-2373 [Kentucky] 2374-2375 [Vermont]: *ibid.*, December 1795-June 1796, 109 [Tennessee].

¹⁷⁸ Morrison, Samuel E., and Henry S. Commager, *The growth of the American Republic* 1: 361-362, N. Y., Oxford Univ. Press, 1942.

¹⁷⁹ *Journal of the Senate* 2: 397-401.

¹⁸⁰ *Annals of Congress*, December 1799-March 1801, 16, 203.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 1310.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 1532.

¹⁸³ See plan in *Philadelphia in 1824*, 133 et seq. which shows the rooms occupied by the various courts. The published *Journals of Councils* of the City of Philadelphia, from 1836 on, *passim*, indicate subsequent changes in the location of various courts. See also Scharf and Westcott, *History of Philadelphia*

By 1895 Congress Hall was abandoned, as expanding functions of the courts¹⁸⁴ and municipal departments necessitated their removal to more adequate quarters, particularly to the new City Hall which was conveniently located in the newer section of the city. A century of use left the exterior and interior of Congress Hall extensively changed from its original plan and in a poor state of repair. Patriotic groups, however, particularly the Pennsylvania Society of Colonial Dames, took action to preserve it as a historic shrine.¹⁸⁵ Under the supervision of the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects,¹⁸⁶ restoration was completed in 1913. President Woodrow Wilson participated in the dedication ceremonies. In 1934 the Speaker's rostrum and the circular, ramped platform for the members' chairs and desks were rebuilt with Civil Works Administration funds.¹⁸⁷

AFTER 1800

With the turn of the century, Philadelphia ceased to be a capital city; the State Government moved to Lancaster and the Federal Government to Washington. The State House became an empty building, used apparently only at elections.¹⁸⁸

1. PURCHASE BY THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

The Governor, on March 13, 1815, approved an act authorizing the county commissioners of Philadelphia to take charge of the State House and to rent out the space as they considered advisable. All profits obtained were to be used to make repairs and improvements on the properties.¹⁸⁹

Having released the State from responsibility for the State House, the Legislature next sought to realize money from the property to be used in building the new capitol in Harrisburg. In an act, approved March 11, 1816, the Legislature provided for the sale of the square and its buildings. This act required the Governor to appoint three commissioners, none from Philadelphia,

3: 1822: Pennypacker, Samuel W., *Congress Hall*, 28 et *passim*, Philadelphia, privately published, 1895.

¹⁸⁴ In June of 1895, for instance, ordinances were passed to allow both the University of Pennsylvania Law School and the Colonial Dames to occupy former court rooms in Congress Hall. See *Journal of Common Council*, April 1-September 26, 1895, 331, 353-354.

¹⁸⁵ *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 22: 252.

¹⁸⁶ See *Public Ledger* for September 21, 1913.

¹⁸⁷ The ceremonies are voluminously described in the Philadelphia newspapers around the first part of November, 1913. See *The Evening Bulletin* of Jan. 17, 1934 for C.W.A. work.

¹⁸⁸ The Legislature reserved the right to hold elections in the east room when Peale was granted permission to use it for museum purposes. *Laws of Penna., 1801-1802*, 283. See also letter of President Reed to Continental Congress, Jan. 4, 1779, in *Penna. Archives* (ser. I) 7: 140-141 for earlier use of this room to hold elections.

¹⁸⁹ "An ACT providing for repairing the State House in the city of Philadelphia." *Laws of Penna., 1814-1815*, CXVIII, 162-163.



FIG. 15. State House row with the new office buildings designed by Robert Mills which replaced the old wings and "piazzas" on either side of the State House. Engraving by Traversier (ca. 1828), published in France. This view is very similar to George Strickland's drawing, engraved by C. G. Childs in 1828. Courtesy Phila. Free Library.

to lay out a street or streets through the square "in such manner as in their opinion will most conduce to the value of the property." The square was to be divided into lots suitable for building; the total amount to be realized was not to be less than \$150,000.¹⁹⁰

One section of the act, however, saved the State House. This provided that the City of Philadelphia should have the privilege of purchasing the building and square for the sum of \$70,000.¹⁹¹ The City Councils promptly passed an ordinance to purchase the property and took title to it on March 23, 1818.¹⁹²

Although the City of Philadelphia had saved the State House and its sister buildings from possible destruction, there is no evidence that there was any desire to preserve them intact. Prior to its purchase from the State, a series of petitions, beginning in January 1811, had been presented to the Legislature requesting that the commissioners of the City and County of Philadelphia be permitted "to pull down the east and west wings of the state-house . . . and to erect in their place, suitable buildings for the deposit of the records of said City and county. . . ." ¹⁹³ On March 24, 1812, the authority was granted to the local officials by the State govern-

ment.¹⁹⁴ The old wings, and the committee room, were demolished to be replaced by "modern" office buildings designed by the architect Robert Mills. These new offices consisted of two row buildings attached to the east and west ends of the State House. These offices, often called "State House row," were occupied by various officials of the city, county, and Federal governments.¹⁹⁵

Other changes to the State House followed as a result of the city's desire to adapt it for current needs. The most celebrated room in the building, the Assembly room in which the Declaration of Independence was adopted, became a court room. It was "modernized" by the removal of the paneling and the substitution of plaster and paint.¹⁹⁶ In addition, the original doorway to the State House from Chestnut Street was taken down and replaced by a more ornate doorway completely out of keeping with the simple dignity of the building.¹⁹⁷

2. PEALE'S MUSEUM

The various uses to which the State House was put during this period also show that it was not venerated as a patriotic shrine. The first occupant after the State government moved to Lancaster was Charles Willson Peale, who converted portions of the building into a museum of natural history and portrait gallery. It was most fortunate for the old building that a man of Peale's caliber was responsible for its care during this dark period. In 1802 he received permission to use the upper floor of the State House, including the tower rooms, and the Assembly room on the first floor for his museum which had occupied Philosophical Hall since 1794. By the terms of the agreement, Peale was responsible for

¹⁹⁴ *Laws of Commonwealth of Penna.* [1812-1813], 340-341.

¹⁹⁵ The plans and papers concerning Mills' buildings have not been found. See plan showing location of offices in *Philadelphia in 1824*, 133.

¹⁹⁶ *The Saturday Evening Post* for May 16, 1829 contains a description of the State House in which the rooms on the first floor are spoken of as having "a modern appearance, from alterations made a short time since, in violation of every principle of good taste. . . ." An Englishman, visiting the State House in 1832, was puzzled by the desecration of the room: "Some Goth in office modernized the room, for the purpose, as I was informed, of giving his nephew a job, and tore down all the old panelling and pillars which supported the ceiling, and substituted a coating of plaster and paint. It is a matter of surprise to me that the inhabitants ever permitted such a profanation, being generally so proud of their revolutionary relics and duds of arms." Coke, E. T., *A subaltern's furlough* . . . 37, London, Saunders and Ottey, 1833. Apparently the "modernizing" occurred prior to Jan. 9, 1819, for on that date John Trumbull wrote his wife that, "the alterations which have been made in the Room in which Congress actually sat on the famous 4th July are such that the picture cannot be hung in it. . . ." Trumbull Coll., MS. Div., Library of Congress, Washington.

¹⁹⁷ "The main entrance [to the State House] is by a Corinthian doorway, of recent construction. . . ." *The Saturday Evening Post*, May 16, 1829.

¹⁹⁰ "An ACT providing for the sale of the State House and State House Square in the city of Philadelphia." *Ibid.*, LXXIX, 109-112.

¹⁹¹ Section VII of above act. *Ibid.*

¹⁹² The commissioners of the county of Philadelphia refused "to deliver up possession of the lower part" of the State House to the city officials after the sale consummated on April 23, 1816. The Legislature thereupon passed a supplementary act to the foregoing act of sale, approved March 23, 1818, compelling the county officials to deliver possession of the property. *Ibid.*, 1817-1818, CXV, 234-235. The deed of sale to the city is recorded in Deed Book, MR, No. 20, 241-242, City Hall, Phila. Unfortunately, the minutes of the council for the period 1791 to 1835 cannot be located.

¹⁹³ *Journal of the House of Representatives of Pa.* [1810-1811], 202, 276, 469, 652. Some of these petitions mentioned the inclusion of a room in the new offices for the museum.

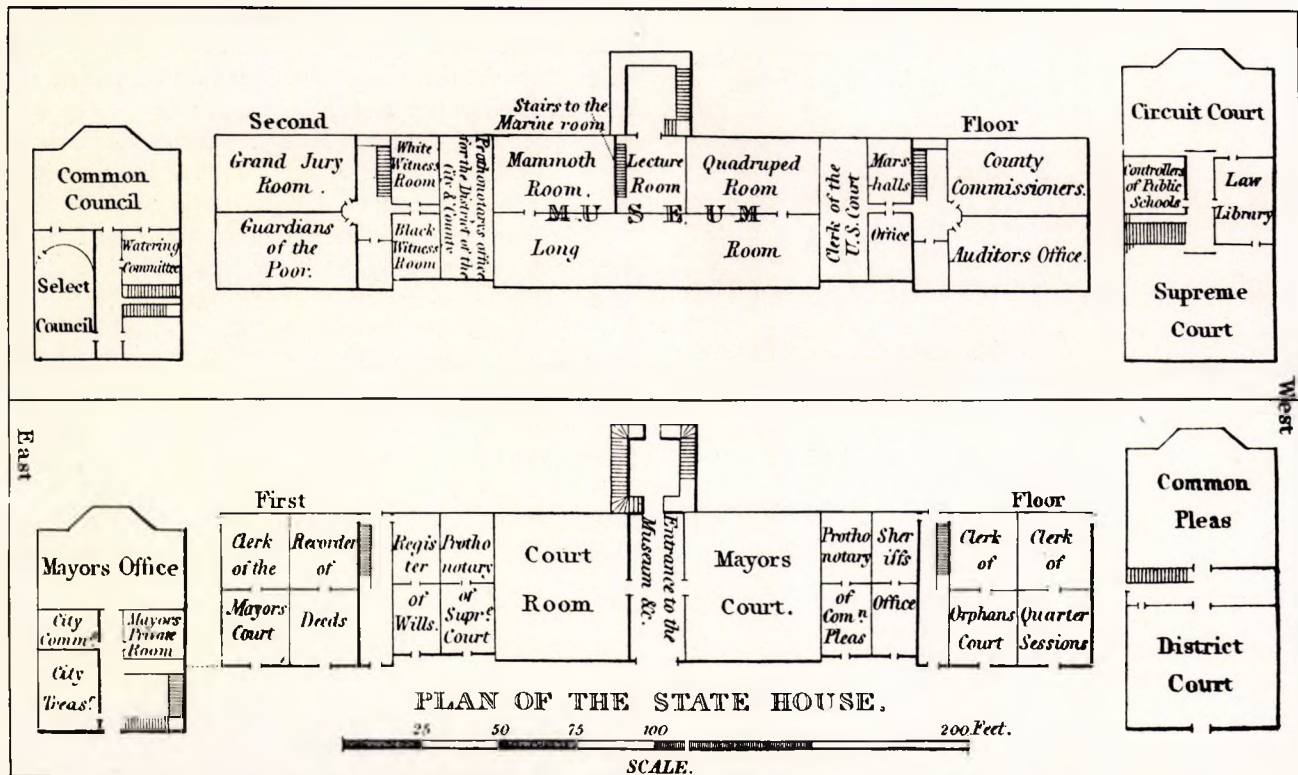


FIG. 16. Plan of the State House during its occupancy by the City government. From *Philadelphia in 1824*, facing p. 133.

the maintenance of both the building and the State House yard.¹⁹⁸

In order to make the building more suitable for his museum, Peale removed the alterations made in 1778–1779 to accommodate the Assembly, and rebuilt the long room as it had been during the Colonial period.¹⁹⁹ The museum, which occupied the second floor of the State House until 1828, included not only an extensive collection in natural history, but also a unique portrait gallery of the great men of the country painted largely by Charles Willson Peale and his son, Rembrandt.²⁰⁰ Peale also took most seriously his charge to care for the yard. He planted trees, added new gates, benches, and improved the walls and lawns.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁸ Joint resolution of March 17, 1802. *Laws of the Commonwealth of Penna., 1801–1802*, 283. Peale's petition was presented to the House on Feb. 24, 1800. *Journal of the House of Representatives of Penna. [1799–1800]*, 280.

¹⁹⁹ The long room was said to be one hundred feet long in 1811. Mease, James, *The picture of Philadelphia . . .* 312, Phila., B. & T. Kite, 1811. The appearance of the room is shown in Peale's *Portrait of the Artist in his Museum in the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia*. (See fig. 6 in article by C. C. Sellers on Peale's Museum in this volume.)

²⁰⁰ Sellers, Charles Coleman, *Charles Willson Peale* 2: 227–246, Phila. *Mem. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 23 (1 & 2), 1947. See also Mease, *op. cit.*, 311–314 for a detailed description of the museum in 1811, and plan of museum in 1824 in *Philadelphia in 1824*, 133.

²⁰¹ Charles W. Peale to Select and Common Councils, March 21, 1804, in *Amer. Philos. Soc.*; see also Sellers, *op. cit.*, 227.

After Peale's museum moved from the State House in 1827–1828, the second floor was rented to the United States government for judicial purposes.²⁰² Alterations were made under the direction of the architect John Haviland to adapt the space for its new use. The long room was again obliterated, and the western portion of the upper floor was made into one large room for the use of the United States Circuit and District Courts. The partitions in the eastern portion apparently were retained; the northern room became the jury room for the court and the southern room the office of its clerk.²⁰³

²⁰² On December 11, 1828 the joint committee of the Councils on the State House and Independence Square was intrusted to inquire into the expediency of renting the second floor to the United States. *Hazard's Register* 2: 361. On December 24, 1828, after obtaining plans and an estimate from Haviland, the committee reported in favor of leasing the space for ten years. *Phila. Gazette*, Dec. 26, 1829.

²⁰³ Scharf and Westcott, *History of Phila.* 3: 1791. The United States paid an annual rental of \$600 for the first six years, and \$1,500 for each of the last four years. *Hazard's Register* 5: 23; *Journal of Select Council, 1839–1840*, app. 26. After 1840 the annual rental of \$2,000. *Ibid.*, 1843–1844, app. 89. In an undated draft of a letter to Thomas Kittera, Haviland said that "it is indispensibly necessary to take away the present trussed partition immediately over the Mayors Court [west room] which is suspended from the roof and supports the floor, to enable me to do this I have introduced two castiron columns of sufficient thickness cast in one entire [blk ?] resting on a solid foundation of masonry. . . ." Haviland MS., 2, University of Penna. Library. Haviland's plans for those alterations have not been found. *Poulson's Advertiser*, Feb. 25, 1830, described

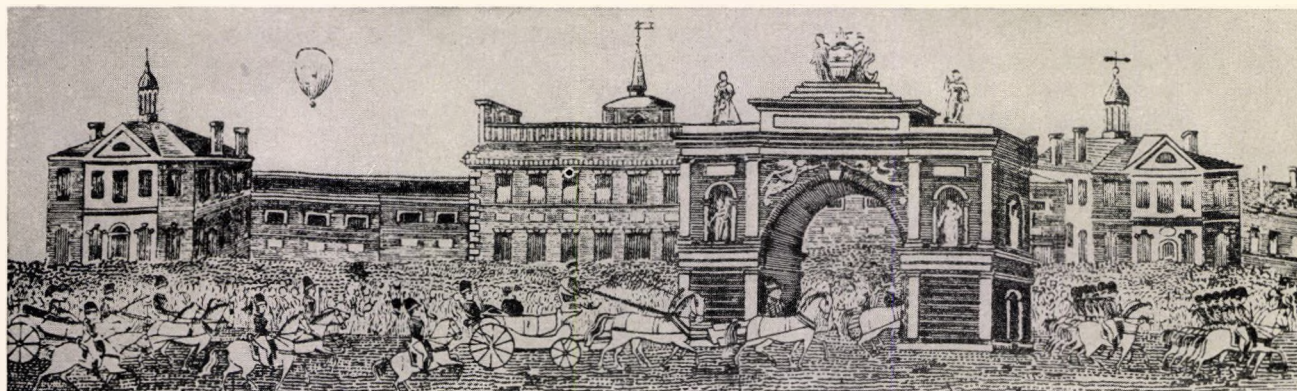


FIG. 17. Lafayette's arrival at Independence Hall, September 28, 1824, showing triumphal arch. Courtesy of Phila. Free Library.

This occupancy of the State House by the Federal courts continued until 1854. In that year, upon the consolidation of the City and Districts, it was decided that a larger space was required for their meetings. The United States Courts were asked to remove from the second floor of the State House, and the Courtroom on the west was occupied by the Common Council. On the east the partition between the former offices of the Court clerks was removed and a single room was fitted up for the Select Council. The Councils occupied the upper floor until 1895.²⁰⁴

EVOLUTION OF A SHRINE

1. LAFAYETTE'S VISIT

Prior to 1824, as has been shown above, there was little, if any, reverence or regard for the State House; but in that year the visit of the Marquis de Lafayette to Philadelphia awakened an interest in the building which, with the exception of brief periods of backsliding, has persisted to this day.

Elaborate preparations were made for the visit of the celebrated Frenchman, much of it centering around the State House which became the principal center of interest. Across Chestnut Street in front of the State House was erected a huge arch, "constructed of frame work covered with canvass, and painted in perfect imitation of stone . . . designed by the architect William Strickland." A covered way led to the door of the

the accommodations of the courts: "The upper story of the State House, formerly occupied by the Museum, has been leased for the accommodation of the United States Court and its offices. The repairs and renovations for that purpose are considerably advanced under the designs of Mr. Haviland. The court room will occupy the west end of the story, extending from Chestnut street to the yard. Next to it, on Chestnut street, is the jury room, measuring 22 by 20 feet. In the eastern end is the clerk's office 34 by 20 feet, and in the rear of it, facing the square, the marshals office 25 by 20 feet. The judge's rostrum will be beautifully ornamented with Corinthian columns and pilasters."

²⁰⁴ Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.* 3: 1791.

State House.²⁰⁵ The Assembly room, then called the Hall of Independence, was completely redecorated:

The Hall of Independence has been fitted up in the most splendid manner. The room is 40 feet square, the walls and ceilings painted a stone color, the windows hung with scarlet and blue drapery studded with stars. In the east side stands a statue of the immortal Washington, in a recess which was formerly occupied by the chair of the Speaker of the first Congress. Behind the statue there is an azure star drapery suspended from spears and wreathes. To the right and left of the statue hang the Portraits of William Penn, Franklin and Robert Morris and Francis Hopkinson. The intermediate spaces are filled with the portraits of Greene, Wayne, Montgomery, Hamilton, Gates, Rochambeau, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, and Gov. McKean.

Over the door of entrance is placed the celebrated Portrait of Washington by R. Peale, relieved on each side by crimson and azure drapery suspended from spears and laurel wreathes. On the right and left of the entrance are placed the Portraits of Jefferson, Hancock, Adams, Madison, Monroe, and the Venerable Charles Thompson. On the north and south of the windows are draped to the floor with crimson and Azure, the carpet of similar colors, and the furniture of mahogany tastefully and appropriately disposed.²⁰⁶

Lafayette was formally received at the "Hall of Independence" by the Mayor and other dignitaries on September 28. On the following days during his week-long visit, it served as his "levee" room. Here he received addresses from special groups, such as the clergy, the American Philosophical Society, the bar association, the children of the schools, and many others.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁵ *American Daily Advertiser*, Sept. 30, 1824. This was the chief arch of thirteen designed by Strickland and built along the four-mile route from Frankford. The chief arch was modeled after the arch of Septimus Severus in Rome. Thomas Sully painted the coat of arms of the city for the arch and the wooden figures of Justice and Wisdom by William Rush were also placed on it. Gilchrist, A. A., William Strickland . . . , *Gen. Mag. and Hist. Chron.* 54: 53, 1951. Rush's statues were placed in Independence Square in 1825. *Saturday Evening Post*, Sept. 5, 1825.

²⁰⁶ *National Gazette*, Sept. 25, 1824.

²⁰⁷ Levasseur, A., *Lafayette in America, in 1824 and 1825, or, journal of a voyage to the United States* 1: 133-139 [trans. by John D. Goodman]. Phila., Carey and Lea, 1829.

2. RECONSTRUCTION AND RESTORATION

The interest in the State House engendered by the visit of Lafayette was not permitted to die. On February 7, 1828, a committee of the City Councils was named "to cause the turret in the rear of the State House to be surveyed, and to procure a plan and estimate of the cost of carrying it up a sufficient height to place a clock and bell therein."²⁰⁸ The Committee proceeded to procure estimates and plans from architects and artisans. On February 28, at a meeting of the Councils, the committee recommended that William Strickland provide the architectural plan, John Wilbank the new bell, and Isaiah Lukens the clock. Strickland's plan was said to be ". . . in fact a restoration of the spire originally erected with the building, and standing there on the 4th July 1776."²⁰⁹

The committee's report precipitated a most heated discussion in the Councils which continued until March 15. On that day the Councils agreed to accept Strickland's plan and to purchase a clock and bell. The sum of \$12,000 was appropriated for the entire project. Work was begun directly and the steeple was completed that summer.²¹⁰

Strickland's steeple was not an exact replica of the original, but it may be considered a restoration since it follows the general design of its predecessor. The principal deviations were the installation of a clock in the steeple and the use of more ornamentation.

The old clock and its bell, no longer needed, were sold to the Roman Catholic Church of St. Augustine.²¹¹ Both were destroyed by the burning of the building in May 1844 during the riots in which two Roman Catholic churches were burned to the ground.²¹²

Within two years after the rebuilding of the steeple, interest was aroused in the restoration of the Assembly room, then referred to as the Hall of Independence. On December 9, 1830, the subject of the restoration of this room "to its ancient Form" was considered by the Councils.²¹³ Shortly afterwards John Haviland, architect, was requested by the committee on the State House to investigate the matter. His report, dated March 29, 1831, was submitted to the Councils in the following April:

²⁰⁸ Hazard's *Register* 1: 152.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.* 1: 152-154.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.* 1: 176; Gilchrist, Agnes Addison, *William Strickland . . .*, 78-79, Phila., Univ. of Penna. Press, 1950. William Plankard, a carpenter, was killed while working on the steeple. Hazard's *Register* 2: 83.

²¹¹ The clock was sold for two hundred and fifty dollars and the bell for four hundred. On January 28, 1830 the Councils remitted the cost of the clock. Hazard's *Register* 5: 72, 87.

²¹² See Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.* 1: 663-675 for information on the riots of 1844. Fragments of the bell were saved and another bell was cast. This bell is now located at Villanova College.

²¹³ *Poulson's Daily Advertiser*, Dec. 9, 1830.

In compliance with your request, I have examined "the Hall of the Declaration of Independence," with a view of reinstating it with its original architectural embellishments. From the best information I can obtain of its former style of finish, it appears to have been similar to the Mayor's Court room in its general features: a gallery supported by small columns, occupied the western side, and a chair with its dressings, raised on a platform on the eastern side; the precise detail of which I find it impossible to obtain authority sufficient to recommend its introduction; the materials we have are in good taste, corresponding with the bold Roman architecture of the staircase and vestibule, and constitutes nearly the whole finish; the last parts are so trifling and imperfect, that, although they would complete the portrait, they would encumber it with useless and defective features.

The arches on either side of the entrances, were formerly open, similar to the one through which you pass to the staircase—it would add much to the magnitude and beauty of the two rooms if these apertures could be restored; which might be effected by using them jointly for some public purpose; such as an Exchange, Athenaeum, Exhibition, or Town Meeting Room, that would not encumber the walls or conceal their architectural features.

Your subscriber therefore most respectfully recommends reinstating the room with the general finish of pilaster, entablature, pedestals, and window dressings, corresponding with the Mayor's Court room, vestibule and stairs, which he is of opinion was the original finish of the room, at the period of the Declaration of Independence.

The estimated cost of the whole alteration including the painting and plaistering is twelve hundred dollars.²¹⁴

The restoration of the room was a most welcome development to the local citizens. One of them, visiting the building in October 1831, was surprised at the confusion, but was relieved to learn that "It was undergoing repairs in order to render the appearance similar to that which it bore when our ancestors there assembled on the 4th of July, 1776." He investigated the work and described the plans, "On the east end of the room, fronting the entrance to the room on the west, it is proposed to fix, in a place set apart for that purpose, the Declaration of Independence with the facsimiles of the signers painted on canvas."²¹⁵

3. THE ANTEBELLUM YEARS AND THE CIVIL WAR

For a few years after the restoration, the "Hall of Independence" apparently was little used. On January 28, 1836, the Committee on City Property reported to the Select Council, "that Independence Hall should not be permitted to remain in its unfurnished state; but that it should be neatly fitted up with such furniture as would be consistent with the venerated Hall." Two years earlier the Councils had ordered that the room be furnished

²¹⁴ Hazard's *Register* 7: 264-265. According to Hazard's notes to Watson's *Annals*, Haviland "reinstated such portions of the panelling as had been removed, but fortunately preserved in the attic of the State House, and only eked out the missing portions." Watson, *op. cit.* 3: 211. Available information tends to prove that Haviland erred in regard to the gallery and open arches. No trace of Haviland's plans has been found, however, and it is not possible to give a detailed account of his work.

²¹⁵ *Poulson's Daily Advertiser*, Oct. 8, 1831.

"in the manner it was at the time of the declaration; but the Committee finding it impossible to execute the direction, it has since remained without furniture, and almost as a lumber room." The committee then suggested that "the room be occupied by the Mayor, when not in the office, and our own citizens as well as strangers, would at all times be enabled to visit a place of deep interest."²¹⁶

Interest in the Hall as shown by the multitude of applications to the Councils for its use and the growing veneration of the room caused that body to adopt a policy governing its use. In November 1836 the Councils passed an ordinance declaring that "it shall not be lawful to allow the Hall of Independence to be used for any purposes of public exhibitions, or any display for which money should be demanded for admittance, without permission therefor being previously obtained from the Councils."²¹⁷

The use of the room has always been a knotty problem. During this period it served many purposes. In 1830 the Academy of Fine Arts rented the room for three months "for an exhibition of pictures." Benjamin West, the son of the painter, received permission in 1841 to exhibit there a large painting by his father representing the visit of Paul and Barnabas to Lystia. Charles Shaeffer exhibited in 1836 statues of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.²¹⁸

Following the precedent established by Lafayette's visit, the principal use of the Hall was as a levee room for distinguished visitors to the city. On June 10, 1833, President Jackson received the citizens at the Hall. Henry Clay followed the President a few months later. During the next quarter century, levees were held here by Presidents Van Buren, Harrison, Polk, and Tyler, as well as other famous personages.²¹⁹

During the decade of the 1840's, the development of the idea of a shrine continued. In 1846 a "Register of Visitors" was purchased for Independence Hall.²²⁰ In addition, the State House was thoroughly repaired and given a complete painting. A local newspaper noted that the walls of the center hall, previously whitewashed with lime, were now being painted. "This is a great improvement, as hereafter they can be washed regularly with water; and paint and all kept clean."²²¹

²¹⁶ *Journal of Common Council* . . . , 1835-1836, 83.

²¹⁷ *Journal of Select Council* . . . , 1836-1837, app. 4.

²¹⁸ Hazard's *Register* 6: 204; *Journal of Common Council* . . . , 1841-1842, 85; *Journal of Select Council* . . . , 1835-1836, 74.

²¹⁹ Hazard's *Register* 11: 377-378, 1833; 12: 351, 1833; *Journal of Common Council*, 1839-1840, 8; *Public Ledger*, June 12, 1843; Westcott, Thompson, *Historic Mansions of Philadelphia*, 126-127.

²²⁰ *Journal of Common Council*, Oct. 16, 1846-Oct. 7, 1847, 96.

²²¹ *The United States Gazette*, Nov. 14, 1846. An account of S. and R. S. Wilson for painting of State House in 1846 includes four coats of paint on the steeple, gilding figures on the clock faces, and the "ball, vane, and cap," painting "Independence room," "graining doors of Independence and Court rooms, and

By the 1850's, and during the critical years of the Civil War, veneration for the State House was even more evident. In 1852 the Councils resolved to celebrate July 4 annually "in the said State House, known as Independence Hall. . . ." ²²² This idea of a patriotic shrine was expressed on July 4, 1858, by the famed orator Edward Everett in his usual grandiloquent manner:

Let the rain of heaven distill gently on its roof and the storms of winter beat softly on its door. As each successive generation of those who have benefitted by the great Declaration made within it shall make their pilgrimage to that shrine, may they not think it unseemly to call its walls Salvation and its gates Praise.²²³

The list of famous visitors during these years would be entirely too long for this paper. During the visit of the famed Hungarian patriot, Louis Kossuth, in 1851, the room again served for a reception.²²⁴ Presidents Fillmore, Pierce, and Buchanan also held levees in the east room.²²⁵ President-elect Lincoln on February 22, 1861, raised the flag of the United States over "the Hall of Independence" and was received in the historic room.²²⁶ His brief remarks at this time have not been surpassed in stating the significance of the room:

I am filled with deep emotion at finding myself standing in this place, where were collected together the wisdom, the patriotism, the devotion to principle, from which sprang the institutions under which we live. You have kindly suggested to me that in my hands is the task of restoring peace to the present distracted condition of the country. I can say in return, Sir, that all the political sentiments I entertain have been drawn, so far as I have been able to draw them, from the sentiments which originated and were given to the world from this hall. I have never had a feeling politically that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence.²²⁷

Meanwhile, efforts of a more concrete nature were undertaken to develop a patriotic shrine. In the fall of 1851 the Select Council passed a resolution inviting the thirteen original states to appoint delegates to assemble in Independence Hall on July 4, 1852, to consider a plan to erect in the square one or more monuments to commemorate the Declaration of Independence. This convention met as called, but its deliberations, for various reasons, proved fruitless.²²⁸

scraping walls, ceiling, and staircase of State-house, and painting same." *Journal of Common Council*, Oct. 16, 1846-Oct. 7, 1847, 100.

²²² *Ibid.*, Oct. 11, 1851-Oct. 9, 1852, 230.

²²³ Quoted in Westcott, *Historic Mansions*, 128.

²²⁴ Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.* 1: 702.

²²⁵ *Journal of Common Council*, Nov. 12, 1856-May 7, 1857, 105, 367, 536.

²²⁶ For information on plans for 1861 celebration of Washington's birthday, see *ibid.*, Nov. 15, 1860-June 27, 1861, 157; for description of Lincoln's see *Public Ledger*, Feb. 22, 1861.

²²⁷ Speech is quoted in full in *ibid.*, Feb. 23, 1861.

²²⁸ *Journal of Common Council*, Oct. 11, 1850-Oct. 9, 1851, 240-242, 249; 1851-1852, 228-231.

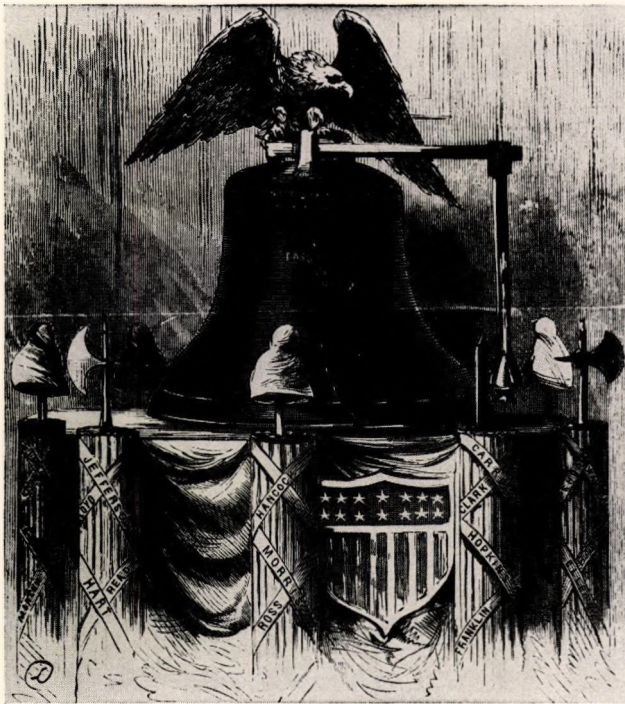


FIG. 18. The Liberty Bell on a thirteen-sided platform with a spread eagle on top, displayed in the Assembly room. From *Harper's Weekly* for July 10, 1869.

Although the convention was unsuccessful, the preparations for the meeting saw the old State House bell, which had been for the most part forgotten after the bell of 1828 was purchased, removed from the steeple and placed on a temporary pedestal in the east room.²²⁹ At this time the bell was called "old Independence bell" even though the name "Liberty bell" had been used earlier.²³⁰ After being put on exhibition in 1852, the bell has been displayed in several ways. At one time it was placed on a thirteen-sided platform with a spread eagle on top. Later it hung suspended by a chain of thirteen links in the stairwell of the tower. For a brief period the bell was exhibited in the west room. Another time saw it placed on its wooden frame, and later encased in glass in the tower entrance. Finally it was removed from the glass case and placed on a metal support near the south doorway. In addition to its travels within the building, the bell has made several excursions about the nation. Since being placed on display, the Liberty

²²⁹ The *Penna. Inquirer* for July 2, 1852 reported, "The Committee on city property, have caused the old Independence Bell to be lowered from its elevation in the State House steeple, and placed in the Hall of Independence, on an octagon pedestal, covered with green baize, where it will remain hereafter. . . ."

²³⁰ Rosewater in his authoritative book on the bell states that the earliest use of the name "Liberty Bell" was in antislavery propaganda in the 1840's. The illustration of the bell in Benson J. Lossing's *Pictorial field book of the Revolution* 2: 66, N. Y., Harper & Bros., 1860, drawn in 1848, bears the caption "Liberty Bell." Rosewater, Victor, *The Liberty Bell its history and significance*, 194-196, N. Y., D. Appleton & Co., 1926.

Bell has grown in importance until it is now the most venerated symbol of patriotism in America.²³¹

During the years after the restoration of the east room in 1831 a few paintings and other objects were purchased by or presented to the city for exhibition. One of the first acquisitions was the wooden statue of George Washington by William Rush which long occupied the east end of the room.²³² It was not until 1854, however, that the city made any real effort to establish an historical collection for Independence Hall. In that year the city purchased at the sale of Charles Willson Peale's gallery more than one hundred oil portraits of Colonial, Revolutionary, and early Republican figures.²³³

Following the acquisition of Peale's portraits, the east room was refurnished and the portraits hung on the walls, and on February 22, 1855, the room was opened to the public by the Mayor.²³⁴ From that time on many relics and curios were accepted by the city for display in the Hall. Catalogues of the paintings and other objects on display were placed in Independence Hall, and an attempt was made to have erected a sign identifying the Hall of Independence for the assistance of visitors.²³⁵

²³¹ *Ibid.* 133-140; Frey, Carroll, The strange fortunes of the Liberty Bell, *American Heritage* 3: 49.

²³² Letter of Rush to Thomas Kittera, chairman of the committee on the State House and Independence Square, dated Sept. 6, 1831, in Hazard's *Register* 8: 82, 1831. A description of the room in 1837 noted: "There is a curious statue of Washington in Independence Hall, carved in wood by Rush, and said to be an excellent likeness. Several fine pictures by Sully and Inman, are also deposited in this apartment." *A guide to the lions of Phila.*, 20, 1837.

²³³ *Journal of Common Council*, June 12, 1854-Dec. 2, 1854, 436-437, 637. The portraits were purchased on Oct. 6, 1854.

²³⁴ On Feb. 20, 1855 it was reported to the Common Council that the room had been renovated, refurnished, "and a large number of portraits of distinguished men of the Revolution placed upon its walls." On Washington's birthday following the Mayor was invited by the Councils to make an address at the opening of the Hall to the public. *Journal of Common Council*, Dec. 7, 1854-May 7, 1855, 320.

²³⁵ Catalogues were ordered on October 30, 1856. *Ibid.*, May 12, 1856-Nov. 16, 1856, 526. On September 20, 1858 a motion was made to direct the Commissioner of City Property "to



FIG. 19. Elisha Kent Kane's body lying in state in the Assembly room, Independence Hall, 1857. Courtesy of Phila. Free Library.



FIG. 20. Independence Hall group, 1876. Engraving by Poleni.

An effort was even made to ascertain "what became of the Revolutionary furniture belonging in Independence Hall; [and] what means are necessary to be taken to have same returned to the Hall."²³⁶ Unfortunately, the report of the committee which made this investigation has not yet been found.

Several amusing facts have come to light concerning use of the Hall in this period. For instance, that the cellar was used as a dog pound until 1851,²³⁷ also, that a refreshment stand was once located in the central hall, against which there were many angry protests.²³⁸

have a suitable inscription placed over the door of the Hall of Independence, by which strangers may be able to designate the room in which the Declaration of Independence was signed." This motion failed to pass. *Ibid.* May 10, 1858–Nov. 4, 1858, 345.

²³⁶ Resolution of the Councils passed January 6, 1859. *Ibid.*, Nov. 11, 1858–May 5, 1859, 247.

²³⁷ "Resolved that the cellar of Independence Hall shall not, from this time forth, be used as a receptacle for dogs taken up under the Ordinances; and that the Committee on Police be instructed to provide, forthwith, another receptacle for that purpose." Passed by the Councils on July 3, 1851. *Ibid.*, Oct. 11, 1850–Oct. 9, 1851, 220.

²³⁸ On January 17, 1861 a protest from "sundry citizens against the vending of coffee and refreshments in the vestibule of the

State House" was referred to the Committee on City Property. *Ibid.*, Nov. 15, 1860–June 27, 1861, 87. Apparently the vending continued for on June 4, 1868 Mrs. Mary Gould received a permit to occupy a refreshment stand "in the passage-way of Independence Hall." *Ibid.*, 1868 1: 431, app. 535–536.

²³⁹ The following soldiers lay in state in Independence Hall during the Civil War: Col. E. D. Baker, Nov. 1861 (*ibid.*, July 1, 1860–Jan. 3, 1862, 109); Major-Gen. David B. Birney, Oct. 1864 (*ibid.*, 1864 2: 158–160); Maj. Thomas Hawksworth, Jan. 1863 (*ibid.*, Jan. 5, 1863–July 2, 1863, 26–27); Maj. Adolph G. Rosingarten, Jan. 1863 (*ibid.*, 33); Col. Francis Mahler, July 1863 (*ibid.*, July 9, 1863–Dec. 31, 1863, 30). In addition to this sad use, the Hall was used for receptions tendered Lieut. Slemmer, "the gallant defender of Fort Pickens," Major-Gen. George G. McClellan, Major-Gen. George G. Meade, Major-Gen. Winfield Scott, and Lieut. Gen. U. S. Grant. *Journal of Select Council, 1860–1861*, 224; *Journal of Common Council, Jan. 5, 1863–July 2, 1863*, 15; 1864 1: 38, 67; 1865 1: 330. For Lincoln lying in state in Independence Hall, see *Phila. Inquirer*, April 24 and 25, 1865.



FIG. 21. The Assembly room (Declaration chamber) showing its cluttered condition prior to the restoration of 1876. From Etting, Frank M., *An Historical account of the Old State House of Pennsylvania* . . . , 165.

Kent Kane, the Arctic explorer, had lain in state there.²⁴⁰

In 1860 a movement was begun by the children of the public schools of Philadelphia to erect a monument to Washington. When the fund was nearly raised, Councils provided a space on the pavement directly opposite the Chestnut Street entrance. The statue, executed by J. A. Bailey, was unveiled on July 5, 1869.²⁴¹

4. THE CENTENNIAL RESTORATION

Little beyond actual maintenance of the buildings seems to have occurred until 1871 when Joseph Leed proposed to the Councils that Independence Square and buildings be made a memorial forever.²⁴² In the next year, with the approach of the Centennial of the Independence of the United States, a committee for the restoration of Independence Hall was named by the Mayor.²⁴³ In its first report, submitted in 1873, the committee described the condition of the Independence Chamber:

²⁴⁰ Westcott, *Historic Mansions*, 126. Charles Sumner lay in state in Independence Hall in 1874. *Journal of Common Council*, 1874 1: 204.

²⁴¹ Scattergood, David, *Hand Book of the State House* . . . , 34-35, Phila., publ. by the author, ca. 1890. Only one other statue stands in the Square, that of Commodore John Barry, donated by the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick in 1907.

²⁴² *Journal of Common Council*, 1871 1: app. 604-623. The only major change occurred following an order of the Select Council on April 29, 1863, to repair the furniture and to lay a marble floor in the Hall of Independence. The Council felt that this work was necessary because the condition of the Hall "is such as to reflect discredit upon the city of Philadelphia. . . ." *Journal of Select Council*, Jan. 5, 1863-July 2, 1863, 236.

²⁴³ The committee consisted of Frank M. Etting, Morton McMichael, W. E. Littleton, Jno. L. Shoemaker, A Wilson Henszey, J. H. Pugh. [First] *Report of the Committee on Restoration of Independence Hall*, 7, n.p., n.d. (ca. 1873).



FIG. 22. Assembly room of Independence Hall, 1876, following restoration. Courtesy Phila. Free Library.

We found the doors, cornices, wainscoting, and the architectural characteristics of the room completely concealed beneath a mass of pictures of every kind, while the floor contained the dilapidated furniture rejected by former Councils, and one of the windows was barricaded by the block of marble ordered by the City of Philadelphia as its contribution to the Washington National Monument. This last . . . we caused to be transmitted to its destination. . . .

Of the original equipment of the Hall, it appeared that not one single piece of furniture remained after the fitting up of 1802. . . .²⁴⁴

The committee entered upon its duties with energy. Furniture believed to have been in the Assembly room in 1776 was gathered from the state capital at Harrisburg and from private sources. Portraits of the "founding fathers" were hung in the room. The president's dais was rebuilt in the east end of the room, and pillars, thought to have supported the ceiling, were erected. The red paint, which had been applied to the exterior of the building, was removed from the Chestnut Street side. When the accumulated layers of paint were removed from the walls of the interior, on the first floor, the long-hidden beauty of the carved ornamentation was again revealed.²⁴⁵

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

²⁴⁵ The first report of the committee was submitted on June 7, 1873, the second on April 29, 1874, and the third on January 18, 1875. See Etting, *op. cit.*, 166-189 for an account of the restoration. According to Etting (p. 172) the pillars were placed in the room on the authority of Horace Binney who remembered seeing them before the "modernization" of 1818 or 1819. As shown above, the subaltern, who visited the Hall in 1832, mentions "the pillars which supported the ceiling" having been removed when the room was "modernized." See note 196. On the other hand, no pillars are visible in the Pine and Savage painting, "Congress Voting Independence," which was executed in the room in 1784 (see fig. 8), and Haviland does not mention them in his letter of 1831 regarding the restoration of the room. Without more clear-cut documentary evidence, it appears probable that the room did not have pillars supporting the ceiling prior to 1876.

After the committee had renovated the entire first floor of Independence Hall, it made a survey of the objects and relics in the building. A formal report was presented to the Mayor and Councils recommending the establishment of a museum in which to preserve objects associated with the principal events in American History. This report, approved on June 12, 1873, founded the National Museum. Much effort was exerted in collecting material for exhibit purposes.²⁴⁶

During the Centennial restoration project, a large bell, weighing 13,000 pounds, and a new clock were given the city by Henry Seybert for the steeple of Independence Hall. The old clock and bell, installed in 1828, were moved to, and set up in, the Town Hall of Germantown.²⁴⁷

5. THE RESTORATION OF 1896-1898

With the close of the Centennial celebration, Independence Hall experienced a period of quiet, disturbed only by the increasing number of visitors. Then toward the close of the nineteenth century, another restoration cycle began, but its emphasis was quite different from any of the past. Except for the replacement of the steeple in 1828, all restoration work heretofore had been concentrated in the east, or Assembly, room on the first floor. Little attention was paid to the rest of the building, except for periodic repairs and alterations serving current purposes. But interest shifted from the east room to the remainder of the building, finally, in the 1890's. An ordinance of the Common and Select Councils, approved by the Mayor December 26, 1895, called for the restoration of Independence Square to its appearance during the Revolution.²⁴⁸ A committee of city officers concerned with public buildings and an advisory committee of leading citizens were named by the Mayor to carry out the work. On March 19, 1896, a resolution of the Councils granted permission to the Philadelphia Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution to proceed with the restoration of the old Council chamber on the second floor of Independence Hall.²⁴⁹

The committees and the Daughters of the American Revolution between 1896 and 1898 carried out a most extensive program of restoration. The office buildings designed by Mills were replaced by wings and arcades which were more like those of the eighteenth century. The first floor rooms of Independence Hall were restored and the Daughters of the American Revolution attempted to restore the entire second floor to its Colonial appearance by reconstruction of the long room,

the vestibule and the two side rooms. Fireplaces, long bricked up, were opened and rebuilt, windows, closed by the Mills' additions of 1813, were again cut through and provided with sashes, and doors, forgotten for years, were located and reconstructed. The arches leading into the Supreme Court Chamber on the first floor were again opened. A dummy clockcase, similar to that of the Colonial period, was rebuilt on the west wall, but the planned moving of the clock back to its eighteenth century location was not carried out.²⁵⁰ With the completion of this work despite certain minor errors, the old State House was returned for the first time in almost a century, to an approximation of its original design and that presented during the American Revolution.

During the nineteenth century, the program of restoration and preservation was concerned largely with work on Independence Hall with little thought being given the entire group of historical structures. In fact, these buildings were directed to be demolished by an act passed by the General Assembly and approved on August 5, 1870. Fortunately this direction was not carried out at that time, and it was finally repealed in 1895.²⁵¹

²⁵⁰ In addition to work on Independence Hall, the new courthouse on Sixth Street south of Congress Hall was ordered demolished. The Law Department of the University of Pennsylvania, which used the building, was given notice to vacate. Demolition apparently began on June 15, 1898. *Ordinances of the City of Philadelphia, Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 1896*, 152-153, 301-302. Mr. Frank M. Riter, Director of the Department of Public Safety, prepared a detailed report of the restoration work of 1895-1896 which was published in *The Times Sunday* (Phila.) for July 3, 1896.

²⁵¹ The rapid growth of the city made the buildings on Independence Square totally inadequate and new municipal buildings became an absolute necessity. The Councils apparently assumed the new buildings should be located on Independence Square. On December 3, 1896, they passed an ordinance appointing commissioners for the erection of the new public buildings for the courts and the city and county offices. This ordinance specified that these buildings "shall be erected on Independence Square [and,] that upon completion of the buildings . . . all the present buildings on Independence Square, shall be taken down and removed by the said Commissioners." *Ordinances and Joint Resolutions of the City of Philadelphia from January 1 to December 31, 1868*, 571-573, Phila., 1869. A storm of protest led to an appeal to the Legislature, and the state intervened. An act of the Legislature, approved August 5, 1870, directed that the new buildings should be erected in either Washington Square or Penn Square, "as may be determined by a vote of the legally qualified voters. . . ." The act also specified that upon completion of the new buildings "All the present buildings on Independence square, except Independence Hall, shall be removed. . . ." *Laws of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania passed at the session of 1871*, (Act 1404), app. 1548-1550. Fortunately, the voters determined that the new building should be erected in Penn Square. Upon completion of the new city hall, the demolition of the buildings on Independence Square was not carried out. The act of 1870 was finally repealed by the Legislature on July 3, 1895. *Laws of 1895*, (Act 456), 604. See Lingelbach, William E., *The Story of "Philosophical Hall," Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 94: 195-196, 1950 (reprinted, with additions, in this volume, p. 43).

²⁴⁶ See first report of restoration committee, 1.

²⁴⁷ *Journal of Common Council*, 1877 1: 392.

²⁴⁸ *Journal of Select Council*, Oct. 2, 1895-April 2, 1896, app. 2: 78.

²⁴⁹ The Philadelphia Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution was granted permission to restore the old Council Chamber under the supervision and control of the Director of Public Safety. *Ibid.* 2: 302.

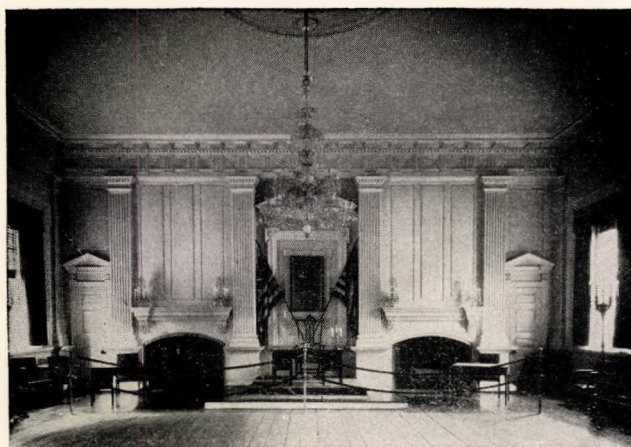


FIG. 23. Recent view of the Assembly room (also called the Declaration chamber) in Independence Hall.

6. THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

With the twentieth century, emphasis shifted from the main building to the remainder of the group. Although some restoration work had been done in Congress Hall by the Colonial Dames of America in 1896, their efforts were confined to the Senate chamber and one of the committee rooms on the upper floor.²⁵² The complete restoration of Congress Hall, however, was not undertaken at this time.

It was most fortunate that an organization with the knowledge of the American Institute of Architects became interested in the restoration of Congress Hall. Beginning in 1900 a meticulous study was made by the Philadelphia Chapter of this organization of the documentary evidence available on the building, and a comprehensive report was submitted to the city officials concerned. Here the matter rested because of the lack of adequate funds for the project.²⁵³

The architects continued to advocate the restoration, and in 1910 funds were made available. The work was begun early in 1912 by the city under the auspices of the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and was completed in the fall of the following year. On October 26, 1913, the building, restored to its appearance when the home of the United States Congress, was rededicated with appropriate ceremonies.²⁵⁴

The restoration of Congress Hall at Sixth Street brought into strong contrast the condition of the Supreme Court Building (Old City Hall) at Fifth Street. For many years the architects and other interested groups urged the City to complete the restoration of the entire Independence Hall group by carrying out the

plans for the Supreme Court building, but the work was not finished until 1922.²⁵⁵

These two restoration projects together with the completion of the restoration of the second floor of Independence Hall, and the stairs to the tower, completed the work on the group of buildings under the city's administration.

THE INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

With the completion of the restoration projects, the buildings on Independence Square presented an harmonious group of structures in substantially the appearance of their years of greatest glory. The neighborhood in which they were situated, however, had degenerated into a most unsightly area. The improvement of the environs of Independence Hall, containing a large concentration of significant historical buildings, was the next logical development.

This movement to preserve the historical buildings in Old Philadelphia, and, incidentally, to provide a more appropriate setting for these buildings, had long been considered. During World War II the nation wide movement for the conservation of cultural resources became particularly active in Philadelphia and a good deal was done to coordinate the work of different groups. In 1942 a group of interested persons, many of whom represented over fifty civic and patriotic organizations, met in the Hall of the American Philosophical Society and organized the "Independence Hall Association." This Association was the spearhead of a vigorous campaign which resulted in stimulating official action to bring about the establishment of the Independence National Historical Park Project.²⁵⁶

Conceived as a means of reclaiming some of the neighborhood around Independence Square and to preserve the many significant historical buildings in the area for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people, the historical park will be developed by the concerted efforts of the City of Philadelphia, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the United States of America.

In 1945 the State Government authorized the expenditure of funds to acquire the three city blocks between Fifth and Sixth Streets from the Delaware River bridgehead at Race Street to Independence Square. This project of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, officially designated "Independence Mall," provides for the demolition of the buildings within the authorized area for a great concourse to form a dignified approach to Inde-

²⁵⁵ Restoration of the Supreme Court Building was delayed by the First World War. A description of the dedication ceremonies may be found in the *Public Ledger* for May 3, 1922.

²⁵⁶ For an excellent discussion of the movement to establish a national historical park in Philadelphia, see Lingelbach, William E., *Old Philadelphia: redevelopment and conservation*, *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 93: 179-207, 1949; and Peterson, Charles E., *The Independence National Historical Park Project*, *American-German Review* 16: 7-11, 1950.

²⁵² *Public Ledger*, Sept. 21, 1913.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁴ *The Philadelphia Record*, Oct. 26, 1913. In 1934 the Speaker's rostrum and the circular ramped platform for the members were rebuilt with Civil Works Administration funds. *Evening Bulletin*, Jan. 17, 1934. See Reeder, *op. cit.*, 595 for criticism of restoration of Congress Hall.



FIG. 25. Aerial view of Independence Square showing demolition of buildings to the north in preparation for the construction of the Independence Mall by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Courtesy of the National Park Service.

pendence Square. The plans provide for spacious underground parking facilities, an information center, and other conveniences for the comfort and enjoyment of visitors. At the present time, the buildings in the first block (between Chestnut and Market Streets) have been demolished and the land is being prepared for landscaping.

The Federal area was defined by an act of the Congress (Public Law 795—80th Congress) after the matter had been studied intensively by a Federal commission named in 1946. The principal area will be the three city blocks between Walnut and Chestnut Streets (fig. 24, area A), with subsidiary areas on either side to include important historical sites, such as the property adjacent to old Christ Church (area E), the site of Franklin's home (area C), and an area leading from Walnut Street to old St. Mary's Church (area B). A

surprising number of significant buildings are included within the park boundaries. The first and second Banks of the United States, the Philadelphia Exchange, and the Bishop White and Dilworth-Todd-Moylan houses have been, or are in the process of being, acquired by the Federal Government. Carpenters' Hall and Christ Church will not be purchased, but their preservation and interpretation have been assured through special contracts with the Department of the Interior.

The contribution of the City of Philadelphia to the historical park is by far the most vital. On January 1, 1951, the custody and operation of the Independence Hall group of buildings and the square was transferred, under the terms of a special contract, from the City to the National Park Service. The title to the property will remain in the City. Earlier, in 1943 the buildings had been designated a National Historic Site by the Department of the Interior. Since assuming custody of the Independence Hall group, the National Park Service has carried out an extensive program of rehabilitation of these historic structures, and, many facilities have been provided for the dissemination of the history of the Independence Hall group, and the other structures in the park, to visitors. In addition, an extensive program of historical and architectural research has been undertaken. The facts gathered in this research will enable plans to be developed which will assure the maximum benefit to be derived from a visit to this most important historical area.

Thus the Old State House has survived more than two centuries; during these years the English colonies grew, successfully revolted from the mother country, and established a new form of government which has persevered to this day. In all of these events Independence Hall and its associated buildings have played a conspicuous part. It is fortunate that these old structures have survived, sometimes through accident rather than willful design, so that they may serve as tangible illustrations of this nation's history for the inspiration of this and succeeding generations of Americans.