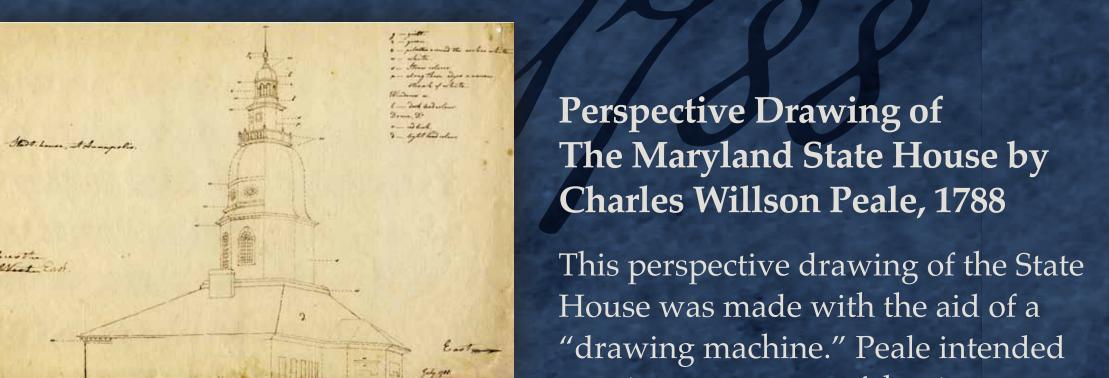# The Maryland State House

This is the third state house to stand on State Circle. The first one was built soon after the capital of Maryland moved to Annapolis from St. Mary's City but it burned in 1704. The second state house was completed in 1709; 60 years later it was too small for the colony's growing government and was too dilapidated to be renovated. The cornerstone for this new building was laid by Royal Governor Robert Eden in 1772 and the building was first used by the Legislature in 1779. The architect of State House was Joseph Horatio Anderson and the builder, known as the "undertaker," was local merchant Charles Wallace.
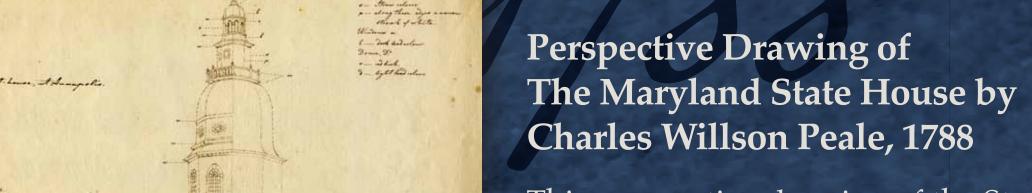

Front Elevation of the State House, by Joseph Horatio Anderson (d. by 1781)

This is one of the drawings used by Charles Wallace to build the State House. In 1774, a violent storm blew off the roof soon after it was completed. Soon after, the presence of British warships in the Bay sent the workmen packing, many of whom never returned. It was not until 1779 that Wallace turned the building over to the Legislature, seven years after the cornerstone was laid.

John Work Garret Collection of The Johns Hopkins University, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 1936-100

Perspective Drawing of The Maryland State House by Charles Willson Peale, 1788

This perspective drawing of the State House was made with the aid of a "drawing machine." Peale intended to paint a panorama of the city as seen from the State House dome with a perspective view of the State House in the middle. He completed only two views. The drawing is important because it indicates the colors of the State House and neighboring buildings.
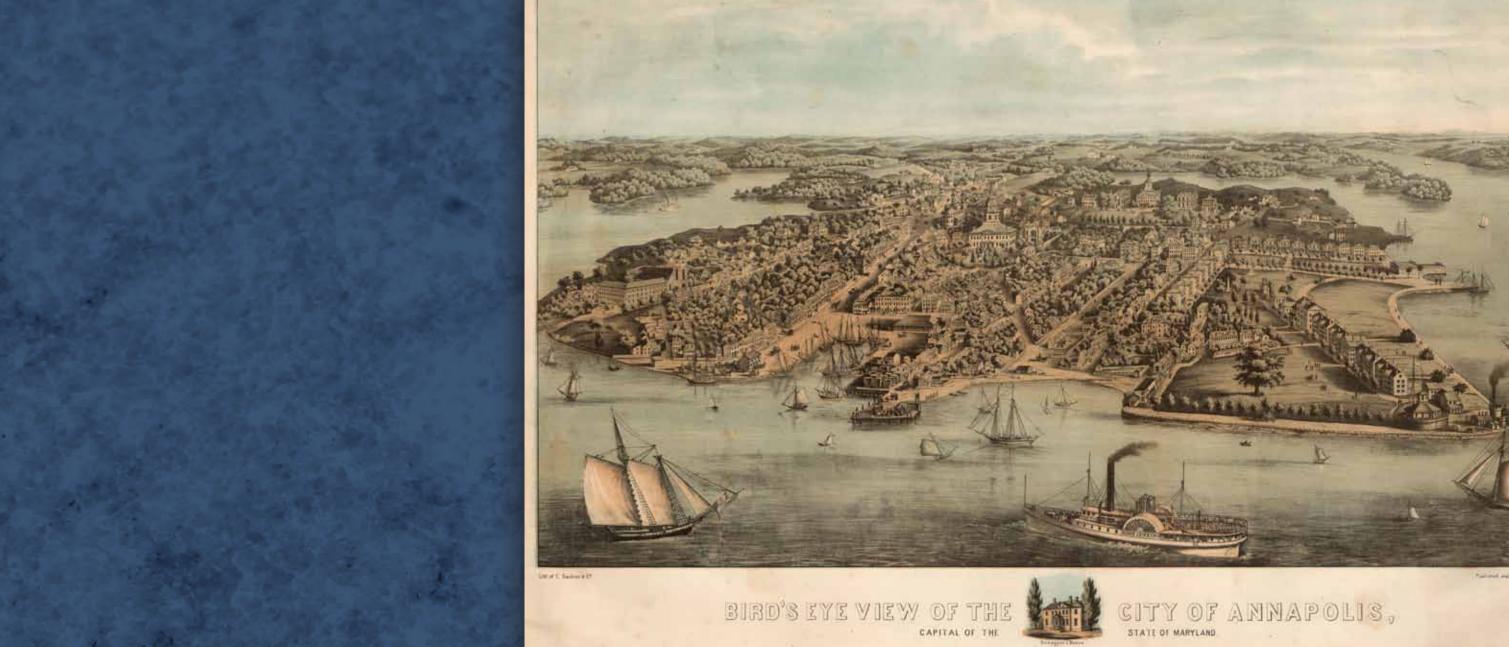
Maryland State Archives

A Front View of the State House &c at Annapolis the Capital of MARYLAND.

Maryland State House, by Charles Willson Peale, 1789

This engraving was published in the February 1789 issue of the *Columbian Magazine*. In addition to the new State House with its recently completed dome, on the far left is the home of Annapolis cabinetmaker John Shaw. To the right are the Old Council Chamber and Ball Room, the octagonal outdoor privy, known as the "public temple," and the Old Treasury Building. The color was added by another hand in the 19th century.

Maryland State Archives

Floor Plan of the Maryland State House, 1789

This floor plan of the State House accompanied Peale's drawing in the February 1789 issue of *Columbian Magazine.*

Maryland State Archives.

Bird's Eye View of Annapolis, by Edward Sachse (1804-1873), c. 1858

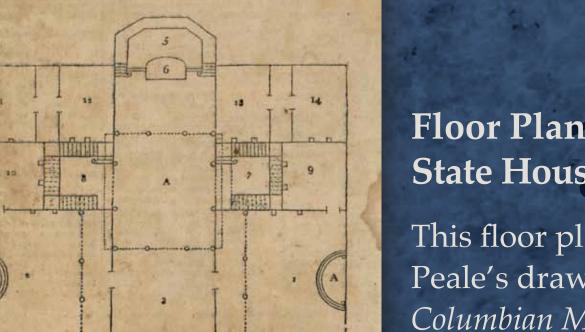This shows Annapolis at the eve of the Civil War. With the exception of the establishment of the Naval Academy in 1845, Annapolis did not experience any of the dramatic growth that characterized Baltimore in the 19th century. As one writer put it, the Earth's axis must surely be Annapolis. "It should be called the pivot city...for while all worlds around it revolve, it remains stationary."

Maryland State Archives

Court of Appeals, c. 1902

View of the Court of Appeals Chamber on the second floor of the State House, just before construction of new court house across the street from the State House. During much of the 19th century, all three branches of Maryland government were in the State House.
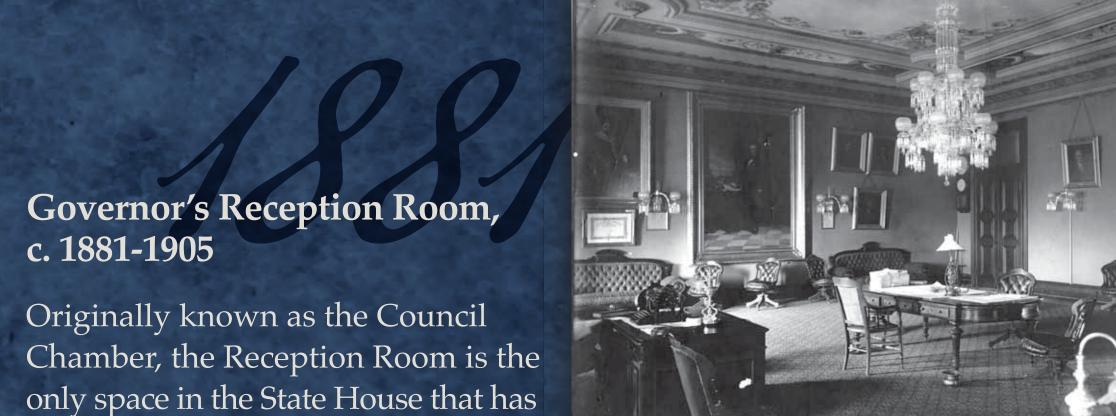
Maryland State Archives

Governor's Reception Room, c. 1881-1905

Originally known as the Council Chamber, the Reception Room is the only space in the State House that has been used continuously by the same branch of government since 1779.

Maryland State Archives

State House Annex, 1907

Exterior view of the 1902-05 annex designed by the Baltimore architectural firm of Baldwin and Pennington.

Maryland State Archives