

first and that space was allotted as formerly. That would mean that the Anne Arundel County Clerk of the Court had another loft room and that the Court probably met in the large court-room downstairs. Since there is no contemporary description of the building we must be satisfied with the nineteenth-century description of Ridgely:

. . . It is described as having been a neat brick building. It was in form an oblong square, entered by a hall—opposite to the door of which was the judges' seat, and on each side there were rooms for the jurys to retire. Over the judges' seat was a full length likeness of Queen Anne, presenting a printed charter of the city of Annapolis. In this house the general assembly held its sessions. A Handsome cupola surmounted the building, surrounded by balustrades, and furnished with seats for those who desired to enjoy the beautiful scenery around.<sup>23</sup>

This reconstructed State House was badly spoken of by travellers to Annapolis. It apparently was much too small for its purpose and soon was quite neglected. Among those who commented on its sad appearance was Thomas Jefferson, who saw the building in May 1766. His description follows:

I will now give you some account of what I have seen in this metropolis. The assembly happens to be sitting at this time. Their upper and lower house, as they call them, sit in different houses. I went into the lower, sitting in an old courthouse, which, judging from it's form and appearance, was built in the year one.<sup>24</sup>

Another witness was William Eddis, who was in Annapolis in 1769:

The court-house, situated on an eminence at the back of the town, commands a variety of views highly interesting; the entrance to the Severn, the majestic Chesapeake, and the eastern shore of Maryland, being all united in one resplendant assemblage. Vessels of various sizes and figures are continually floating before the eye; which, while they add to the beauty of the scene, excite ideas of the most pleasing nature.

In the court-house, the representatives of the people assemble, for the dispatch of provincial business. The courts of justice are also held here; and here, likewise, the public offices are established. This building has nothing in its appearance expressive of the great purpose to which it is appropriated; and by a strange neglect is suffered to fall continually into decay; being, both without and within, an emblem of public poverty, and at the same time a severe reflection on the government of this country, which, it seems, is considerably richer than the generality of the American provinces.<sup>25</sup>

## Courthouse in The Council Chamber

The seat of county government remained in this combination State House and Courthouse until 1769 when the building was torn down to make way for a new one, but the new building, the present State House, was never occupied or used by the officials of Anne Arundel County. Instead, the General Assembly assigned to the use of the county a small building adjacent to the State House:

And be it further Enacted That after the said Stadt House shall be built and finished as aforesaid the House in which the Upper House of Assembly usually sits and the Room thereto Adjoining commonly called the Conference Chamber shall be and are hereby vested in the Justices for the Time being of Ann Arundel County to and for the use of the same County and the City of Annapolis in which House the County Court of that County shall from Time to Time be Held and the same House shall to every Intent and purpose thenceforth be deemed the County Court House of the said County and the Records of the same Court shall be hereafter kept in the said Room called the Conference Chamber and at all Times when the said County Court shall not be sitting the Mayors Court and the Meetings of the Corporation of the City of Annapolis may be held in the said House.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>23</sup> David Ridgely, *Annals of Annapolis*, Baltimore, 1841, 106-07.

<sup>24</sup> *Arch. of Md.*, LXI, xv.

<sup>25</sup> Elihu S. Riley, *The Ancient City*, Annapolis, 1887, p. 81.

The same author notes that the State House had been struck by lightning and set afire June 24, 1756, but the damage appears to have been slight, p. 119.

<sup>26</sup> Ch. 14, Acts of 1769.