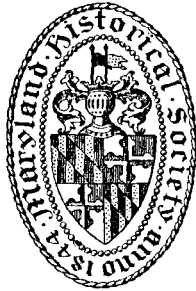


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## GOVERNOR HORATIO SHARPE'S WHITEHALL

By CHARLES SCARLETT, JR.

WHERE the lane to Whitehall turns abruptly aside at a fenced enclosure, the visitor can see the high double stairway of the old Georgian mansion through the deep shade of overhanging trees. The long sweep of the house seems lost in green foliage as he crosses the lawn, and blank bull's eye windows above the arches of the arcades joining the wings to the central structure give marked individuality to an otherwise apparently conventional brick manor house of the eighteenth century.

Rounding the building to the right—low windows open into basement bedrooms here, with floors below the ground level, rotting away from the damp—the visitor, climbing a little rise, sees the southward sweep of the Chesapeake. Borders of flowers and shrubs fall away from the house toward the Bay, and toward the creeks that bound the estate on either side are the locust, lilac, willow and crepe myrtle walks that were the delight of the colonial governor who designed and planted them nearly two hundred years ago.<sup>1</sup>

On the garden front of the house one is struck by the scale and elegance of the high Corinthian portico, although the central section is now seen to be only one room deep. This seemingly pretentious mansion, its dependencies set well back and its basement lost from sight beneath the grade, has from here assumed almost modest proportions.

Whitehall was built at the close of the French and Indian War by Maryland's bachelor governor, Horatio Sharpe, and it has long

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. J. P. Story in 1895 attempted to develop the colonial aspects of her garden. She was told that the quadrangles on either side of the center borders were once laid out in formal designs. The *Harbor of Annapolis*, U. S. Survey of the Coast (1846), shows profile of shoreline and "Whitehall Poplars" located presumably at ends of present borders; also shown is the large square garden area to south of house.

been the tradition that he planned it with the hope, which turned out to be illusory, of charming into matrimony the young daughter of Governor Samuel Ogle. It was designed and built under his personal supervision, as were the surrounding gardens and parks. The superb wood carving was said to be the work of a young redemptioner who died of consumption, his identity unknown, as he finished the work by which he was to earn his freedom. Soon afterwards, the story ran, letters from England showed that he had been condemned for a crime of which he was innocent.

After being retired as Governor in favor of Lord Baltimore's young brother-in-law, Robert Eden, Colonel Sharpe spent several years at his plantation, enjoying his gardens, his race horses, and the gay life of Annapolis. He sailed in 1773 for a visit to England and never returned, the property passing on his death to his secretary, John Ridout. Ridout had married Mary Ogle, for whom Colonel Sharpe is said to have built Whitehall, and who thus became its mistress in a way he had not altogether planned.

Little more of its early history has been recorded. Ridout descendants farmed the plantation until 1895, when the house was bought with some sixty acres of land by Mrs. John P. Story of Washington, D. C. Mrs. Story devoted herself, with a love of beautiful things of the past, to preserving this remote and neglected remnant of Maryland's colonial history, bringing to it once again an air of bygone days. Time and change have severely challenged the innate charm of the stately old house, but the charm endures today much as in the past.

In 1659 Captain William Fuller, Puritan soldier and Chief Executive of the Province of Maryland at the time of Oliver Cromwell, obtained a patent to approximately 150 acres of land near the town of Providence on the Severn River which he called Fuller.<sup>2</sup> In 1695 Nicholas Greenberry, deputy governor and one of Maryland's most illustrious citizens, purchased the plantation from Fuller's son, then living in Virginia, and added it to his Greenberry Forest holdings.<sup>3</sup> At this time improvements included "houses, tobacco houses, outhouses and tenants [*sic*], garden and orchards." But William Fuller's association with Claiborne, along with his Puritan faith, made his memory anything but pleasant

<sup>2</sup> Patent Book IV, f. 486, Hall of Records.

<sup>3</sup> Anne Arundel County Deeds, I. T., No. 5, f. 1-3, Hall of Records.

in the Colony;<sup>4</sup> so the Greenberrys changed the name Fuller to Whitehall of London fame.

Colonel Charles Greenberry inherited the property from his father,<sup>5</sup> and on his death in 1713, bequeathed Whitehall to the vestry and churchwardens of St. Margaret's Westminster upon the demise of his wife, Rachel Stimson.<sup>6</sup>

On November 17, 1763, at the instigation of Governor Sharpe, the Legislature passed an act<sup>7</sup> allowing for the setting aside of Colonel Greenberry's will and the sale of Whitehall at public auction to the highest bidder for a price of not less than £300. The deal was concluded after the opening of the sale by the Governor's sporting £305. offer.<sup>8</sup> But on September 3, 1764, the day preceding settlement, he had sold to the vestry and churchwardens of St. Margaret's Westminster an equal amount of land, or 144 acres, farther inland on the peninsula, for the sum of £305.<sup>9</sup> This new glebe land was part of an adjoining 814 acres that Sharpe had bought from Mr. John Hesselius on October 4, 1763,<sup>10</sup> and this 144 acre strip he leased back from the church for £18. a year.<sup>11</sup> So in the late summer of 1764 Sharpe was established on his 1000 acre plantation, bounded to the east and west by Scotcher's (Meredith) and Homewood's (Whitehall) Creeks and on the south by an estuary of the Severn, then known as Half Pone Bay (Whitehall Bay). The site for his new dwelling was that occupied by an old barn then standing, the foundation of which may still be found a few feet from the house on the garden side.<sup>12</sup>

Horatio Sharpe was born near Hull in Yorkshire in 1718, the youngest of a family of nine boys. In 1745 he was commissioned

<sup>4</sup> J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Maryland* (Philadelphia, 1879), I, 225.

<sup>5</sup> Will Book 7, f. 314, Hall of Records.

<sup>6</sup> Will Book 13, f. 542, Hall of Records.

<sup>7</sup> Bacon's *Laws of Maryland*, Chapter XX (1763).

<sup>8</sup> Anne Arundel County Deeds, B. B. No. 3, f. 261, Hall of Records. Four of Maryland's early governors or acting governors have held title to Whitehall: William Fuller (1659), Nicholas Greenberry (1696), Horatio Sharpe (1764), and Benjamin Ogle (1782).

<sup>9</sup> Anne Arundel County Deeds, B. B. No. 3, f. 259, Hall of Records.

<sup>10</sup> Provincial Court Judgments, D. D. No. 3, f. 107, Land Office Records, Annapolis.

<sup>11</sup> Plantation accounts in possession of writer.

<sup>12</sup> Survey run by John Frederik Augustus Priggs for Sharpe in ca. 1763 sights "to the Locust Post, the beginning of White Hall. / from the locust post to the center of the barn on close to which spot the house will be built, S 47° W. 132P." Copy in possession of writer.

captain in the marines and shortly afterward lieutenant-colonel of foot in the West Indies. It was this experience in military and colonial affairs that enabled his brother William, as guardian to the young proprietary, Frederick Calvert, to obtain for him the governorship of the province of Maryland. The new Lieutenant-Governor arrived in Annapolis on August 10, 1753, on the *Molly*, and settled down in this elegant little capital city, described as the richest and most luxurious upon the Continent, to a task much to his liking and for which he seemed extremely well fitted.<sup>13</sup>

The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748 between England and France had left unsettled the boundaries between their possessions in North America, and trouble was already brewing. By the spring of 1754, the French had invaded the Ohio River in large force, having engaged the Chippeways, Ottaways and Arundacks to take up the hatchet against His Majesty's subjects settled there. King George despatched a commission to Governor Sharpe "appointing him Commander-in-Chief of all the forces that are, or may be raised to defend the frontiers of Virginia and the neighboring colonies."<sup>14</sup> When the gravity of the situation increased and news of Major Washington's sound defeat at Great Meadows was received, Major General Braddock with two regiments and a great train of artillery embarked for America to take charge of the situation. It was significant of the times in Annapolis that the Maryland Governor could provide the ill-fated General with his English chariot for six horses in which he was to ride on his exploits into the wilderness and against the enemy at Fort Duquesne.<sup>15</sup>

With the close of the French and Indian War in 1763, the Governor once again found time for the things that were nearest his heart. He owned an island in Rhode River, but this was too remote from Annapolis to be easily accessible for the entertainment of his many friends and personages visiting the province.<sup>16</sup> Gardening was his great love, and although the large house he had rented in town was surrounded by several acres of gardens, and equipped with a greenhouse,<sup>17</sup> he wanted the privacy and

<sup>13</sup> Scharf, *op. cit.*, II, 10.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 449.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 457.

<sup>16</sup> Family tradition, Mrs. C. Nelson Dugan.

<sup>17</sup> Joseph T. Wheeler, "Reading Interests of Maryland Planters and Merchants, 1700-1776," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, XXXVII (March, 1942), 40.

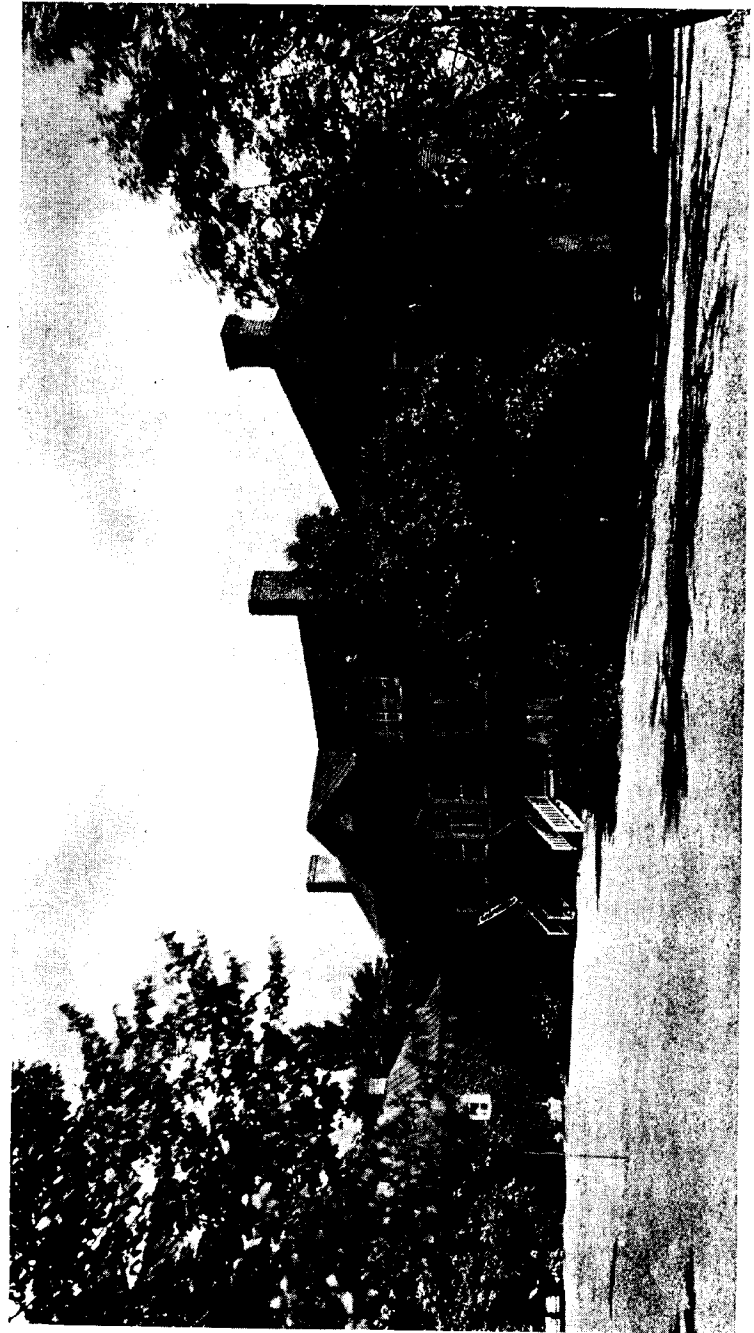
freedom of the extensive lawns, walks and parks he had known at home in England. The old glebe plantation, Whitehall, almost surrounded as it was by water and little more than a half hour from town by boat, suited his purpose admirably. Since this was entailed church property, it would require his influence with the Legislature to have laws passed setting aside the terms of Colonel Greenberry's will. So certain he was that this would be done, he bought the adjacent land in the fall of 1763, almost a year prior to his settlement for Whitehall. In all likelihood plans and materials for his new place had been worked up during the interim, and the house was under way by the fall of 1764, for by 1765 a French traveler reported on June 22nd, "Crossed the severn (which is about 2 miles broad) and waited on the governor in company with both Galloways. he lives about 6 m. from town where he was bought a farm and is building a prety box of a house on the Bay side, which he calls white hall."<sup>18</sup>

A careful examination of the structure of Whitehall reveals that the central block was completed as a unit, with brick retaining walls near the south corners of the building to allow for the exposure of the basement on the north side. One needs but thumb through the volumes of *Vitruvius Britannicus* to find its prototypes and components in the architectural drawings of Colin Campbell.<sup>19</sup> Sharpe was erecting in the center of his English gardens a pavilion or garden house in the form of a Roman Temple—a tribute to the growing things about him and such a one as could have been found on many of the great country estates in Britain.

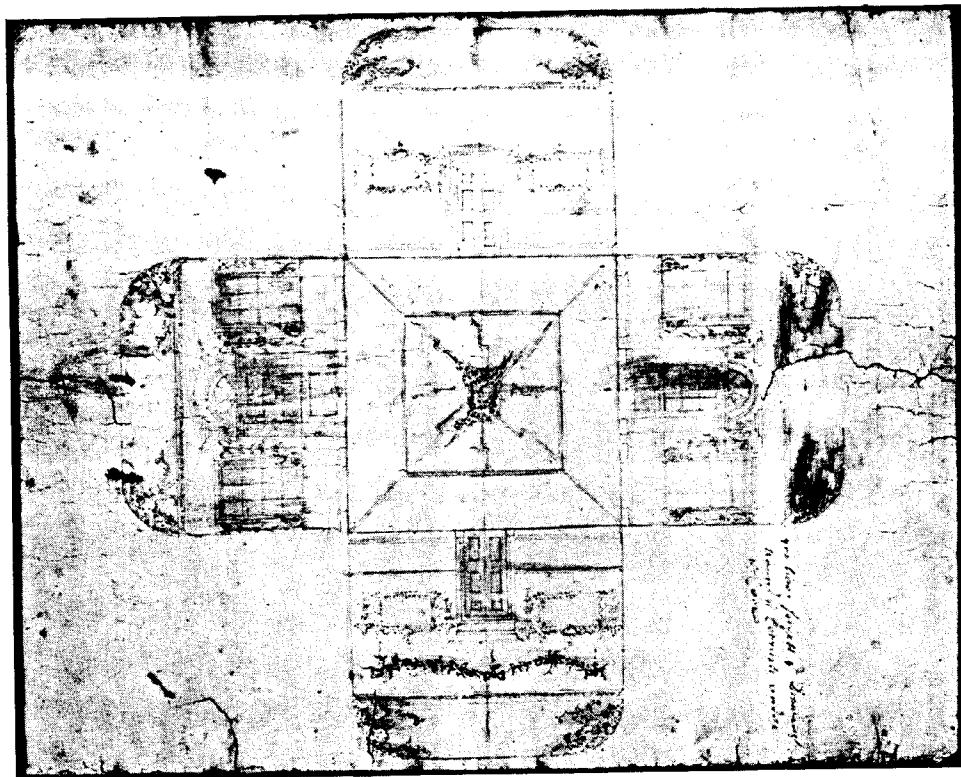
The great square hall or salon occupies the full depth of the house, and its high coved ceiling extends into the roof space. Centered in the ceiling is a gilded phoenix, embodiment of Egypt's sun god, rising from blue gray ashes amid bolts of lightning and surrounded by a circle of twelve gilded stars set in a black field. The stars are to commemorate the twelve rebirths of this miraculous bird, supposed to take place in Syria once every five hundred

<sup>18</sup> Anonymous, "Diary of a French Traveller in the Colonies, 1765, II," *American Historical Review*, XXVII (1921-1922), 72. See also "Journal of an officer's [Lord Adam Gordon's] travels in America and the West Indies, 1764-1765" in Newton D. Mercness (ed.), *Travels in the American Colonies* (New York, 1916), pp. 408-409: "The present Governour Horatio Sharpe Esq. has a house in town, but resides much at a little place he is now building at about 6 or 7 Miles up Severn River, which here falls into Annapolis Bay. . . ."

<sup>19</sup> (London, 1717-1771), III, 49-50. For instance, "A new Garden Room at Hall Barn near Beaconsfield in the County of Bucks."



WHITEHALL—LAND APPROACH FROM THE NORTH



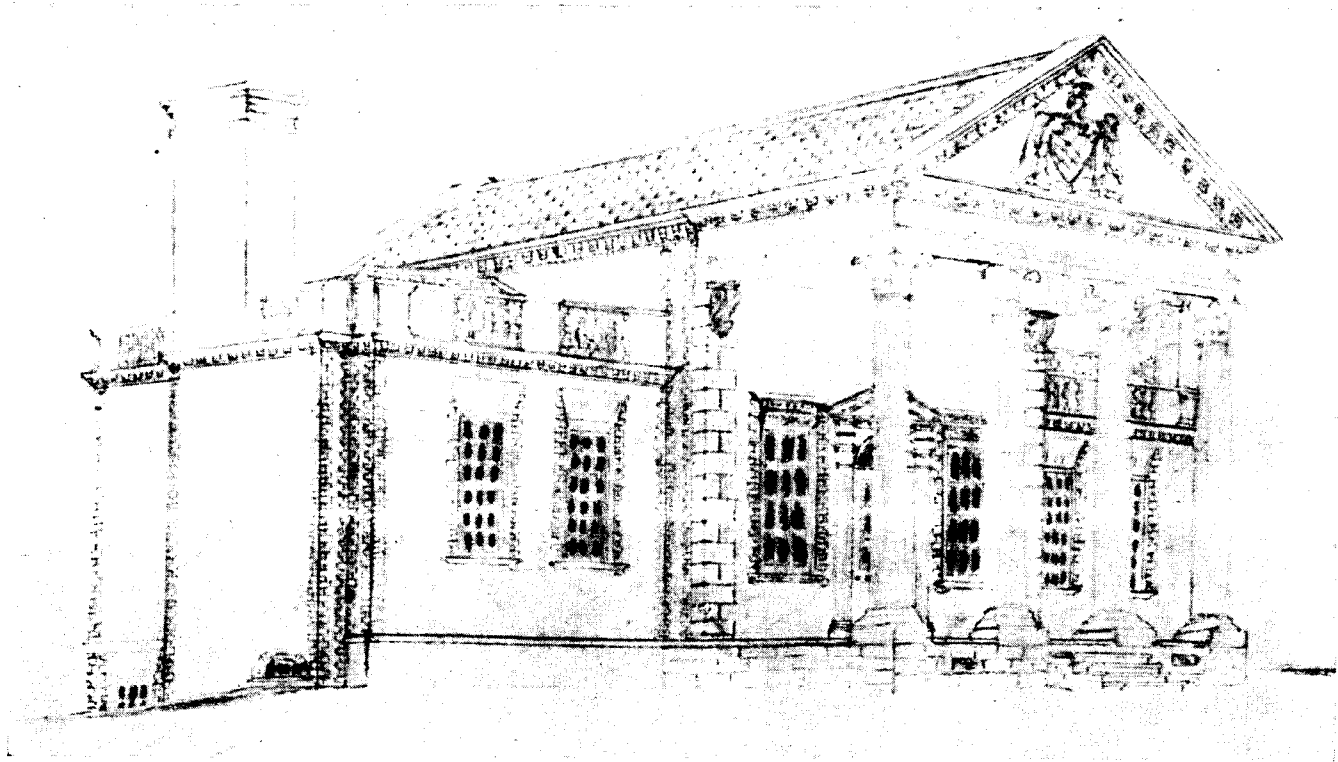
"A DRAFT OF THE ORNAMENTS FOR THE HALL AT WHITEHALL,"  
 Attributed to William Buckland



Carved Mask, One of the Four Winds in the Cove Ceiling of  
 the Great Hall

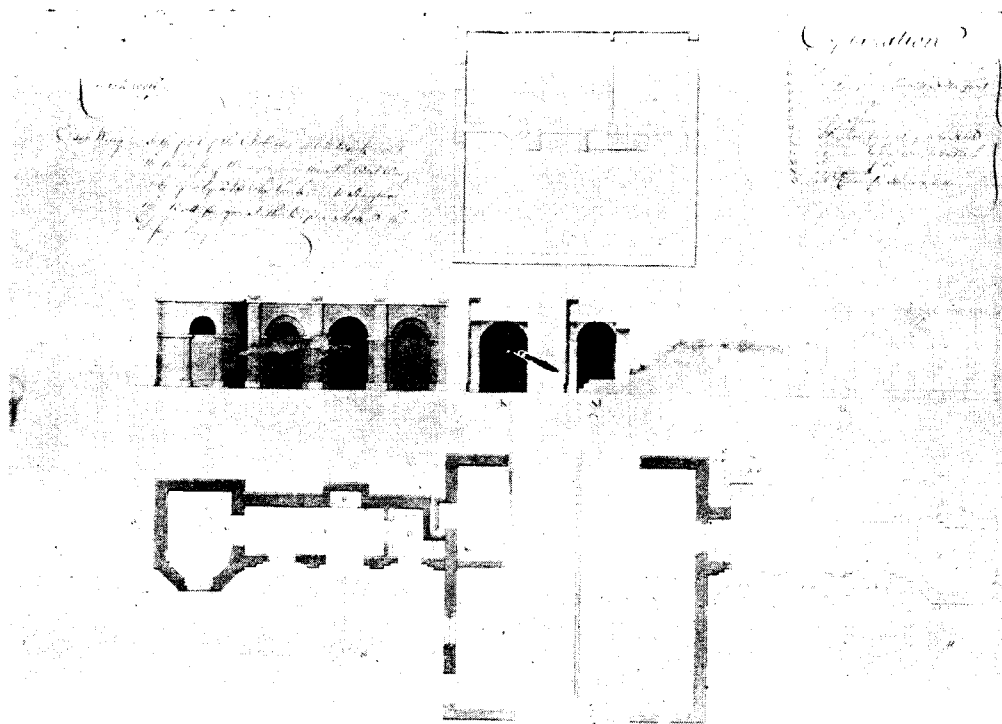


Door and Window Trim of the Great Hall; Probably from  
 Buckland's Workshop

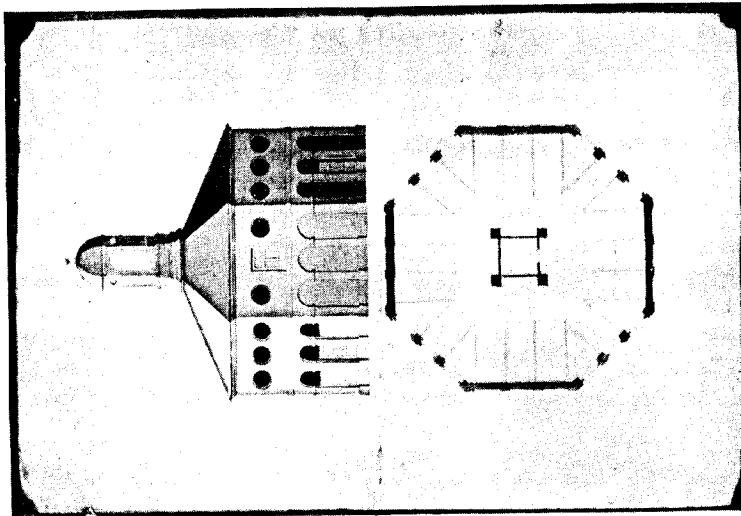


DRAWING OF GOVERNOR SHARPE'S GARDEN HOUSE, ca. 1765,

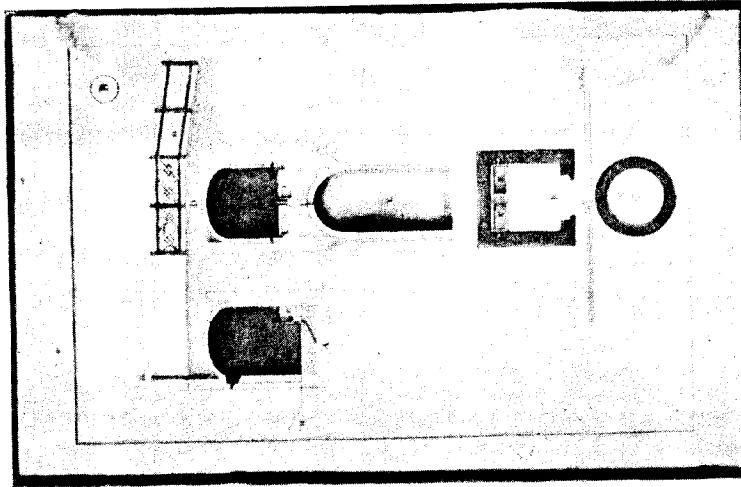
Prepared by the Writer



ANDERSON'S DRAWING FOR THE MISSING EXTENSIONS TO THE PAVILIONS



Anderson's Elevation and Plan of the Octagonal Racing Stable



Anderson's Section and Plan of the Water Closet for the West Extension

years. In the angles formed by the coves are carved baroque masks representing the four winds, and below an elaborate plaster cornice once appeared on the red plaster walls delicately carved garlands and festoons of flowers and fruit. Spaces between doors and window frames were adorned with carved pendants, side wall spaces were supplied with pairs of these drops, and all were painted white. The entrance doorways to north and south are of a rich Corinthian order. Chair rails and base mouldings are heavily carved. The consoles of the window architraves are superb.

The front doors themselves, flanked by windows, were half glazed to bring into the room the gardens and court yard, and the window lights are reputedly the largest found anywhere in the Colonies.<sup>20</sup> The trim was white save for the two oak grained doors in the center of the two wall spaces which lead into the withdrawing rooms. There is strong evidence that the floor was of white marble tile edged by a dark slate border.

The east drawing room woodwork fairly drips with ornamentation and was painted a pale olive. The heavy plaster cornice was once gaily done up in yellow and white, with the various mouldings set apart by red lines, the shadows between the dentils being deepened by the use of purple paint. The whole is in the very finest mid-eighteenth century tradition, either in the colonies or in Britain. It has been suggested that this was the gentlemen's drawing room, for the carved window architraves and consoles made unnecessary any draperies which might be ruined by the smells and dirt from the rank green tobacco smoked by our forefathers.<sup>21</sup>

Through the door across the great hall one steps into the ladies' drawing room, which has similar mouldings but is much more restrained in its ornamentation. The trim and plaster walls here were done in white oil paint. As though unable quite to accept this attempt at relative simplicity, the plasterer has worked into his cornice sheaves of wheat and bunches of grapes, giving to the square ceiling an ornamental character as of a delicately bordered carpet. Unlike the east drawing room, this room is supplied with a simply framed door in the corner to the left of the fireplace. The door once opened onto a spiral stairway lead-

<sup>20</sup> Fiske Kimball, *Domestic Architecture of the American Colonies and of the Early Republic* (New York, 1922), p. 106.

<sup>21</sup> Suggestion of Dr. James Bordley, Jr.

ing down to the Governor's basement office or bedroom. These stairs were long ago removed.

The low ceiling of this basement room, the heavy muntins of the windows, the panelled window seats and shutters, and the high mantel over the fireplace,<sup>22</sup> are in stern contrast to the airy rooms above. Leading from this room is a hallway where one passes the vaulted dungeons whose walls support the floor of the great hall above. The dungeon windows are barred for the securing of prisoners.<sup>23</sup> To the left, a pair of French doors look out under the north steps to what was once the courtyard. Through the door at the other end of this basement hall one enters the family dining room, much in character with the office just described, except that in place of the circular stairway, there was a sunburst wall cupboard with a skillfully executed glazed door. This feature has now been removed to an upstairs hallway to prevent its complete disintegration from the damp of the ground floor. Food from the kitchen either had to come through the doorway under the north stairs, or after the house was enlarged, be passed through the window to the left of the fireplace. At this stage of the building the old plantation farm house presumably still remained,<sup>24</sup> where supplies could be stored, food prepared and reserve accommodations provided for any who might require them.

Nor was any possible opportunity lost in embellishing the exterior of the Governor's retreat in the finest classical tradition. The well proportioned Corinthian columns of the portico supported a fully ornamented pediment, the highly stylized and gaily colored arms of the Province,<sup>25</sup> which all but filled it and proclaimed that here resided the supreme authority of the Government in Maryland. Window heads and door frame were richly carved, echoing in form the similar but simpler treatment of the north

<sup>22</sup> Mantel many years ago moved to Miss Nancy Ridout's house about a mile away.

<sup>23</sup> "The lords of the manors could hold courts-leet and courts-baron on their own estates, and this was done, sometimes, upon some of the largest manors. The members of the privy council, together with the Lord Proprietary or Governor, could sit upon the bench of the high Provincial Court, whose functions were analogous to that of the King's Bench." Scharf, *op. cit.*, II, 50.

<sup>24</sup> Undoubtedly this was the "little place" referred to in Mereness, *op. cit.*, pp. 408-409.

<sup>25</sup> The portico is part of the original building as shown by the original plan of the house and also by the presence of the original slate roof under the present one. Fragments recovered indicate complete rendering of the arms with supporters, ermine mantle, etc.

façade.<sup>26</sup> To cover the angles formed by the projection of the house to receive the portico, were placed wooden quoins, similar to those bordering the D- window in the pediment of the Scott House in Annapolis. Over the uppermost three quoins on each corner, to give needed support to the beams above, ornamented scroll brackets were doubtless placed.<sup>27</sup>

The balustrade<sup>28</sup> around the roofline of the wings containing the drawing rooms all but hid from view the lead roofs behind. The central pedimented structure was covered with slate,<sup>29</sup> those slates near the crest being nine inches below the coping of the gables but flaring at the base to be flush with the crown mould of the cornice, thus emphasizing the temple aspect that was so much desired.

The old clay bank and fragments of the water table found elsewhere on the plantation indicate that the bricks were burned on the place. They are of a rich red color and a full nine inches in length, the joints finished in a finely tooled white oyster shell mortar. To soften the union of brick and painted wood as well as to further excite the eye, the brick dressings at the corners of the building and around the projecting architraves of the windows are painted white.<sup>30</sup>

Dominating the north side that faced the park was once a high sandstone double stair, which, after descending to either side of the entrance doorway, turned on semicircular landings and returned on itself at the ground level.<sup>31</sup> In all probability the

<sup>26</sup> The missing door frame under the portico will be replaced by a reproduction of that at the north entrance but ornamented in keeping with the portico window heads. The original pilaster bases are extant and suggest that the pilasters were fluted. Assuming uniformity of treatment, an accurate reconstruction is possible.

<sup>27</sup> The location of the inset panel of the lintels indicates that such supporting features were used. This same treatment is found within the portico of St. Paul's Chapel of Trinity Church in the City of New York, the foundations of which were laid within a few months of Whitehall's.

<sup>28</sup> Balustrades are indicated by the presence of rough masonry on the sides of the pedimented central block to a height that would be concealed by them. The flashing marks of the original roof line were also found under the plaster of the added upstairs rooms, denoting inside gutters. The Ridout House in Annapolis was originally supplied with a "walnut balustrade" above the cornice, front and back; Mrs. C. Nelson Dugan. Anderson's two separate State House elevations show similar treatment.

<sup>29</sup> Much of the original slate roof remains beneath the present tin one.

<sup>30</sup> Isaac Ware, *Complete Body of Architecture* (London, 1756), p. 61, discusses the transition from the use of white painted wood to brick, by using gray stock brick dressings. Similar brick paintings were not uncommon in England.

<sup>31</sup> Examination of the stair area has not been completed, but indications point to



balusters were again of wood, turned in urn shape, in keeping with those above the roofline.

It is perhaps well here to develop one of the most perplexing enigmas found at Whitehall. A traditionally English building had been ordered erected on the verge of a wilderness but without traditional materials to do the job. Portland and Bath stone had made the great classical building period possible at home, but here was to be found at best a darkish and structurally unstable sandstone from Aquia Creek below Alexandria, and this was not too easily obtained. The local sandstones, as used for quoining the corners of McDowell Hall in Annapolis ca. 1743, were of a red rust color and of little ornamental value. So except for the facing and floor of the south porch—even here the coping around the edge of the porch seems to have been originally of wood—and the terminal step that was necessary to keep the wood treads from the ground, there was no other sandstone utilized above ground on the garden front. The decorative details were of carved wood imitating stone. An attempt had apparently been made to put up the portico quoins in stucco, as seen around the basement windows and corners of the Brice House in Annapolis, but this rather difficult process was abandoned in favor of the use of hard pine, abundant in the neighborhood.

The designs for the present State House in Annapolis, now at the Johns Hopkins University, have been attributed to William Anderson by one of Maryland's early historians, Thomas W. Griffith, who stated in his book published in 1821: "Mr. William Anderson was the architect, but it received its present finish several years after by Mr. Joseph Clarke."<sup>32</sup> When these drawings were

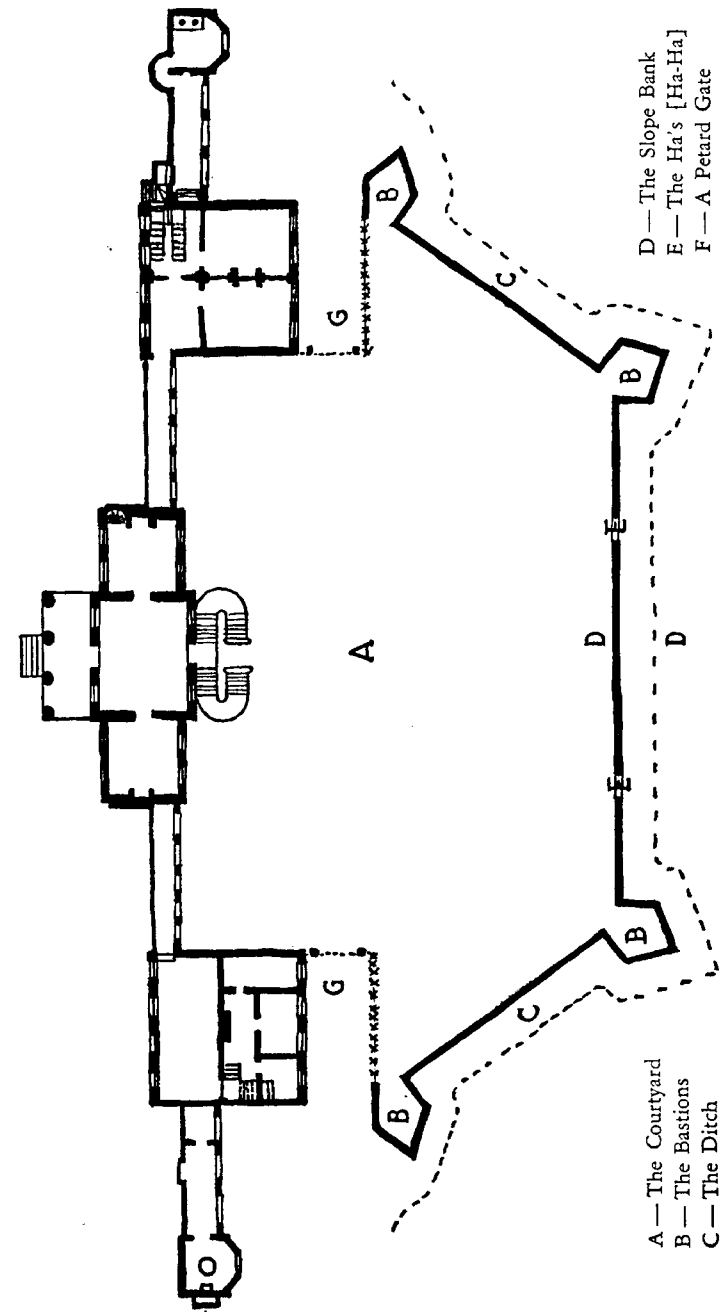
the form outlined by Anderson in his ground plan for Whitehall. Prototype: "General Plan and Elevation for Lowther Hall" in Campbell, *op. cit.*, II, 78-79.

<sup>32</sup> *Sketches of the Early History of Maryland* (Baltimore, 1821), p. 62.

The drawings consist of front elevation and floor plans.

In the Wallace, Davidson and Johnson letters (Vol. I, dated London, December, 1771) in the Hall of Records, this sentence is found: "You tell me the house eclipses even Chases (now Lloyds) pray tell me whether or not it is agreeable to Anderson's plan or Noakes's." This reference is probably to the State House, for which plans, according to the *Maryland Gazette*, January 4, 1770, p. 4, had to be submitted by April 17, 1770.

The dearth of information regarding *William Anderson*, architect, designated only by Griffith as the architect of the State House, raises the question whether it was not actually the Annapolis architect and builder, *Joseph Horatio Anderson*, whose name appears in the *Maryland Gazette*, January 6, 1774, p. 3. The advertisement of Samuel Rustboth, "late pupil to Robert Maberly, Esq. coach and herald painter and varnisher to their Majesties and royal family," proposes "under direction of Joseph Horatio Anderson, Architect in Annapolis to carry on all the various



GENERAL PLAN OF WHITEHALL AS RECONSTRUCTED BY THE WRITER  
FROM ORIGINAL DRAWINGS AND SPECIFICATIONS

compared with the original unsigned drawings and specifications for Whitehall and with an earlier design for the State House found with the Whitehall plans, Dr. Richard H. Howland, Chairman of the Johns Hopkins Fine Arts faculty, with the writer concluded that Anderson was the architect and draftsman who drew up the plans for the house of Horatio Sharpe. The recent discovery of these wholly professional drawings and specifications adds clarification to the generally accepted opinion that our early mansions sprang from an informal application of English style books to the needs of the proprietor. Architecture was considered a necessary part of every gentleman's education, and the reluctance of the aristocrat of the day to share such creative honors with his artisans is readily understood. The writer knows of no other colonial plans for an existing private dwelling (Jefferson's early drawings for Monticello excepted), and, though fragmentary, these plans appear to be the key to a complete and accurate restoration of Whitehall.

Dr. R. T. H. Halsey contends that William Buckland was responsible for the house,<sup>33</sup> and a comparison of several words found on the sketch for the "Ornaments for the Hall at Whitehall" with the handwriting of a letter written by Buckland in 1771<sup>34</sup> partially supports this statement. Not only do they correspond, but similar pencil workings on Anderson's drawings lead one to believe that Buckland not only designed and executed the finishing of the house, but was involved in the building of it as well. The carving of the trim was undoubtedly done at his workshop in Annapolis or Virginia. A pair of pendants similar to those found in the hall drawing are at The Abbey, Chestertown, Mary-

branches of coach and herald painting, varnishing and gilding . . . [also] painting in fresco circ-obscure, decorated ceilings for halls, vestibules and saloons, either in festoons of fruit, flowers, figures or trophies. Carved ornaments in deception, gilding and burnishing in the neatest manner, as well as housepainting in distemper or dead white as in the common colours etc." On July 2, 1773, the Assembly passed an act authorizing Thomas Jett and William Bernard to sell a lot upon which Joseph Horatio Anderson had erected a dwelling for John Morton Jordan. *Notes and Proceedings* (1773), pp. 25-26.

The following entry is found in the Whitehall plantation accounts for 1773 (in possession of the writer): "By two Bbls of Pork to Horo. Anderson's People at the Glebe house [rented by Sharpe] £12/0/0." J. H. Anderson signed the petition for the relief of Boston, May 30, 1775. Elihu S. Riley, *The Ancient City* (Annapolis, 1887), p. 168.

<sup>33</sup> *Great Georgian Houses of America* (New York, 1933-1937), foreword, I, 12.

<sup>34</sup> Buckland to Robert Carter of Nomini Hall, Keith-Carter Collection, Virginia Historical Society.

land. When this room was removed to the Baltimore Museum of Art, the initials "WB" in cipher were found on the underside of the wainscoting, which further strengthens this claim insofar as the finishing of the house is concerned.

This garden house did not long restrain the Governor's ambitions to create in the land of his adoption a seat that not only he but the people of his province could look upon with pride. The Government House in Annapolis had long stood incomplete for lack of necessary appropriations by the Legislature and was referred to as "Bladen's Folly," the State House and office buildings were a sorry sight, and the Governor himself was housed in rented quarters. Marylanders with civic pride could hardly walk with ease in Williamsburg where funds for the maintenance of Government had been dispensed with a lavish hand by the Crown. In fact, the plans that had been drawn up for the Governor were of such nature that, using this building as the main block, the house could be extended to its eventual 258 feet of length.

Provoked by the indifference of the General Assembly to provide for proper housing of the executive branch of Government and pleased with the prospect of spending the remainder of his days in so delightful a situation, Sharpe proceeded with the completion of his mansion.<sup>35</sup> To it were added balancing pavilions that were joined to the central structure by closed passageways; these were supported by arcades at the basement level on the north side. These connecting members are unique in their concept, since they were not to allow access to the central building but only into the new pavilions. Their function was oramental, but they could also serve as elevated parapets<sup>36</sup> for defence of the premises against possible Indian<sup>37</sup> attack from the land side.

<sup>35</sup> The general plan seems to have been chosen from Robert Morris, *Select Architecture* (London, 1757), Plate III.

<sup>36</sup> As designated in original plans: "The Eastern [Western] Parapet and Balustrade Fronting Garden."

<sup>37</sup> Considerable evidence is available to show that Indian attacks were considered a real possibility. Tradition (Charles D. Ridout) has it that the blank bulls-eye windows were once used as openings or embrasures for defense against the Indians. This in itself has been disproved by examination of the brick work, which showed that they were always blank. However, on November 6, 1755, the citizens began to fortify Annapolis and in 1756 scalping parties were within 30 miles of Baltimore. Scharf, *op. cit.*, I, 472, 480.

Washington wrote to John Robinson, April 24, 1756, "You may expect, by the time this comes to hand, that, without a considerable reinforcement, Frederick county will not be mistress of fifteen families." John C. Fitzpatrick (ed.), *Writings of Washington* (Washington, 1931-1944), I, 332.

In 1756 "the defenceless inhabitants [of Baltimore] were greatly alarmed lest

The roof was a shed type rising from the base of a balustrade on the garden side to the top of the parapet of the north wall. Rifle-men stationed here could cover by crossfire down natural firelanes the entire width of the peninsula, from creek to creek.

From the bedroom pavilion<sup>38</sup> on the west side extended another arcade of three arches which terminated in a semi-octagonal building containing the water closet.<sup>39</sup> This 36-foot extension was completely below the grade level of the garden and was topped by a Chippendale railing. The seal troughs<sup>40</sup> themselves,

the Indians should reach the town; and we learn . . . that the women and children were put on board of boats or vessels in the harbour to be rescued by flight down the bay if necessary, while the inhabitants of the adjacent country were flying to town for safety." Thomas W. Griffith, *Annals of Baltimore* (Baltimore, 1824), p. 37.

"The Peace of Paris was signed in 1763, but in the colonies there was still unrest, for Pontiac's fiery spirit had roused the Indians, and blazing farms and desolated hearths, and ruined forts, marked the path of the avenger of his people. . . . Suffice it to say that from 1763 to 1766 . . . the frontiers of all the colonies were in constant dread and peril." "In 1764 a treaty was made by Sir William Johnson with all the Indian tribes of the Lakes Ontario, Erie, Huron, and Michigan. The Shawanese and Delawares on the frontiers of Maryland and Virginia had not joined in the treaty. . . ." "The *Gazette* has the following letter describing the state of affairs on the Maryland frontier:

Frederick Town, 19th July 1763.

"Every day for some time has been offered the melancholy scene of poor distressed families driving downwards through this town who have deserted their plantations, for fear of falling into the hands of our savage enemies, now daily seen in the woods, and never was panic more general or forcible than that of the back inhabitants whose terror at this time exceeded what followed on the defeat of General Braddock when the frontier lay open to the incursions of both French and Indians." Lady Edgar, *A Colonial Governor In Maryland* (London, 1912), pp. 200-202.

In 1767 work was suspended on the Mason and Dixon Line because of hostile Indians.

<sup>38</sup> The interior pine trim of the bedroom pavilion and alleyway is, or was till recently, unpainted. This was quite unusual for a sophisticated dwelling of the period.

<sup>39</sup> A complete description of this facility is a part of the original specifications and seems to precede the earliest known specifications for the modern type water-seal closet by some six years. Glenn Brown, in his book, *Water Closets; A Historical, Mechanical, and Sanitary Treatise* (New York, 1884), shows a cut by Mr. S. S. Hellyer of a water closet taken from Osterly House which he considered the type "used in England one hundred to one hundred and fifty years ago" (*i. e.* 1735-1785). This is identical with the Whitehall plumbing. Brown also states, p. 27, that a Frenchman, A. J. Roubo, in his book, *L'Art Menuisier* (Vol. II, 1770), showed several views similar to the Whitehall water-seal type. The first English patent for a water closet was issued in 1775. Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 20. No patent was issued in America until 1835. Brown *op. cit.*, pp. 26-27.

Sir John Harrington's book, *The Metamorphosis of Ajax* (London, 1596), describes a water closet of his invention, erected at his seat at Kelston near Bath. This, however, was a Pullman car type and did not make use of the water seal.

Water closets appear in Joseph Diamond's drawings for the President's house in Washington, ca. 1791, Maryland Historical Society.

<sup>40</sup> Toilet bowls.

still extant at Whitehall, were fed by a cistern supplied by rain water from the roofs, and were discharged into a cesspool below. They are cut from solid blocks of marble and arranged as a pair side by side. In all probability the floor was of marble and the walls laid in English Delft tile.<sup>41</sup>

The eastern dependency not only contained the basement kitchen and store rooms, but on the main floor was to be a high ceilinged banquet hall or council chamber. This room was never finished because of the untimely retirement of the Governor. Instead it later served as a spinning room.

Beyond the kitchen wing was a similar semi-underground arcade and hexagonal end building housing the well. A cistern outside the well-house provided water for the horses and stock in the paddock, which lay to the east of the house. Within these confines were to be found the octagonal racing stable with its 15 standings, the little hip-roofed dairy, the corn house and a military monument or obelisk proclaiming the exploits of the Governor.

Perhaps the most unusual feature of this fantasy in brick and mortar was to be the courtyard laid out within a fortification, semi-octagonal in form and boasting of such components as angular bastions, ditches, ha-has, glacis, rampart slopes, chevaux-de-frise fences and petard gates, and north of the fort at the turn of the lane was, or was to be, still another military obelisk—all this drawn up as part of the architectural treatment of the house.<sup>42</sup> For its inspiration we may look to Sharpe's love of the dramatic and his desire for the baronial effect and a standing testament to his military prowess; for its justification, to precautions against an Indian attack from the wilderness, then some fifty miles away beyond South Mountain.

Evidence exists for a summer house, which once adorned the mound over the old ice house some distance to the west, and of a garden house to balance the old well on the lawn.

How pleasant for even such a sophisticated colonial as Colonel

<sup>41</sup> A large marble tile, two inches thick, was found and probably went with the marble seal troughs as flooring. The Delft tile, presently appearing as facing for the upstairs west bedroom fireplace which was added by using material from the extensions, is the same as that taken from the water closet at Epsom, the home of Frederick, Lord Baltimore, after fire of 1935.

<sup>42</sup> Described in the original architectural specifications and drawing. The entire north front was regraded some time after 1803 (buried coin found) to provide surface drainage for this area. Spot diggings suggest remnants of the fortifications, but excavations in the near future are planned.

Washington,<sup>43</sup> to draw up to old Stone Landing at the mouth of the Homewood's Creek in his Excellency's barge pulled by eight liveried Negroes, to cross through the gardens to the hospitality of this gracious house and inspect some of the finest racing stock in America; or perhaps dance in the great hall to the tune of Benjamin Franklin's musical glasses.<sup>44</sup>

Such was the nature of a Maryland villa, modestly referred to by its builder as his "small elegant lodge."<sup>45</sup> William Eddis, a cultivated resident of Annapolis for some years prior to the Revolution, wrote home to England in October 1769:

In the vicinity of Annapolis are many pleasant villas, whose proprietors are eminent for their hospitality. Colonel Sharp, the late Governor, possesses a most delightful retirement, about seven miles distant [from Annapolis]; his house is on a large scale, the design is excellent, and the apartments are well fitted up, and perfectly convenient. The adjacent grounds are so judiciously disposed, that utility and taste are everywhere happily united; and when the worthy owner has completed his extensive plan, Whitehall will be one of the most desirable situations in this, or in any of the neighbouring provinces.<sup>46</sup>

And so evolved in our part of the world a Palladian dwelling which in all probability marked the beginning of the full classic revival in America.<sup>47</sup> Taken to heart and fostered by Thomas Jefferson, it was to become the foundation of our national architecture.<sup>48</sup>

Momentous things were in the making across the sea by 1768, even before the house could be completed, for not only had our

<sup>43</sup> "[April] 15, [1773], Dined at Colo. Sharpe's and Returned to Annapolis." John C. Fitzpatrick (ed), *The Diaries of George Washington 1748-1799* (Boston and New York, 1925), II, 107.

<sup>44</sup> "There is a story told that John Ridout's handsome sister Mary crossed the ocean to pay a visit to her brother, and that George Washington was her partner at a dance, while Benjamin Franklin played the tune on musical glasses . . . this is the legend that is attached to a portrait that hangs in a country-house near Bristol." Edgar, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

<sup>45</sup> Horatio Sharpe to his brother, Dr. [Gregory?] Sharpe, December 10, 1768, MS Division, Library of Congress.

<sup>46</sup> *Letters from America* (London, 1792), p. 20.

<sup>47</sup> *Great Georgian Houses of America*, I, 16.

<sup>48</sup> Thomas Jefferson first visited Annapolis in May 1766. *Archives of Maryland*, LXI (1944), 15-16. He was in Annapolis from November 25, 1783, to May 11, 1784 while a member of the Continental Congress. Edith Rossiter Bevan, "Thomas Jefferson in Annapolis" in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, XLI (1946), 115-124. "It must have been at Whitehall that he [Jefferson] first saw the temple form of architecture, such an outstanding feature at Monticello." *Great Georgian Houses of America*, I, 17.

pleasure seeking Proprietor, Frederick, Lord Baltimore been casting a longing eye in the direction of little Miss Sarah Woodcock, the milliner, but he seems to have pressed his affections beyond the point of propriety. The rape case that ensued held all English society by the ears for several seasons, and although His Lordship was quite understandably exonerated on the grounds that Miss Woodcock had afforded him provocation, he felt the need of a complete change of climate. His seat at Epsom was put up for sale, his young brother-in-law, Robert Eden, was despatched to Maryland to take over the Governorship and relieve him of any concern about the province, and Sharpe was urged to return to London to assist in the sale of the proprietorship of Maryland to the Crown.<sup>49</sup> The profligate Frederick died in Naples on September 14, 1771.

Colonel Sharpe was much hurt by this turn of events. Again in the words of Eddis:

This gentleman does not seem to entertain any idea of returning to his native land, but appears inclined to spend the residue of his days, within the limits of a province, which he has so long governed with honour to himself, satisfaction to the people, and fidelity to his sovereign.<sup>50</sup>

He set sail for England by the ship *Richmond* on the 10th day of July, 1773, for a visit with his family, only to become involved in the legal entanglements brought on by the death of the Proprietor and in the ever worsening relations between the mother country and the colonies, all the while hoping and expecting to return to Maryland as Governor.<sup>51</sup> But the outbreak of the Revolutionary War settled these problems forever.

John Ridout, his friend and former secretary, had looked after affairs at Whitehall during his absence and had helped save it from confiscation by taking advantage of the expressed concessions granted to Sharpe under the Confiscation Act of 1780.<sup>52</sup> Hard

<sup>49</sup> Horatio Sharpe to Joshua Sharpe, December 10, 1768, MS Division, Library of Congress.

<sup>50</sup> Eddis, *op. cit.*, p. 20-21.

<sup>51</sup> Sharpe's return to Maryland as governor, as he stated in a letter dated December 4, 1774, to John Ridout, "solely depends on Governor Eden quitting the Government, which he had not resolved on when he left London. Though his brother the Secretary, has since assured me that he will not tarry in Maryland, but of this be also silent." Edgar, *op. cit.*, pp. 260-261; also family letters in possession of Mrs. Dugan.

<sup>52</sup> *Laws of Maryland* (October 1780), Chapter XLV, "VIII. Provided, That the property of Horatio Sharpe, Esquire, within this state, shall not be seized or confiscated in consequence of this act, if he shall return to this state on or before the

times were in store. There is structural evidence to support the tradition that even the leaded portions of the roofs were removed before the close of the war for making shot, thus exposing it to the weather. This must have been a severe blow to a building so highly architectural, ornamented primarily through the use of wood.

By the end of the Revolution the Colonel's health was lacking its old time vigor, and a long sea trip to these shores was not felt advisable. He seemed content in the hope that he would one day return to America and retained the keenest interest in his old friends on this side and the progress at Whitehall.<sup>53</sup> On his death in England on November 9, 1790, it was revealed that all his property in Maryland was to be transferred to the Ridouts. It was the long-standing affection between the two men which prompted this generous gesture of esteem, and not unrequited love for Mrs. Ridout, as has been so often related. The Ridouts had been married prior to commencement of the building of Whitehall, and letters from Sharpe, at the Ridout House on Duke of Gloucester Street in Annapolis, will attest to his lack of any desire to see her in later years.

It can be conclusively demonstrated by a comparison of the plantation accounts<sup>54</sup> with the structural remains, that the house existed without the additions of the bedrooms over the wings and stairwells as late as 1781. The description of the house as contained in the assessment records for Anne Arundel County show it to have been substantially in its present form in 1798.<sup>55</sup> It can be reasonably concluded that John Ridout between 1791 and 1798 brought about the removal of the extensions to the house and the outbuildings to gain material for the raising of the roof, increasing the practical liveableness of the house but removing from

first day of March seventeen hundred and eighty-two, and within one month thereafter take and subscribe the oath of fidelity and support to this state, or dispose of his property to some subject of this or another of the United States. . . ."

<sup>53</sup> Horatio Sharpe to John Ridout, June 22, 1783, MS Division, Library of Congress; Sharpe to Dr. Upton Scott, July 31, 1785, May 1 and July 22, 1786, and other family letters in possession of Mrs. Dugan.

<sup>54</sup> The Whitehall plantation accounts in possession of the writer cover the period June, 1773, through December, 1780.

<sup>55</sup> "Ridout Mary—Brick Dwelling House. 2 story 50 by 20—2 Wings Joined by passage each 20 by 22—1 old Brick Stable 30 by 20—1 Smok House 13 by 10. 1 Grist Mill Wood 2 Story 30 by 22." Anne Arundel County Assessment Records (Broad Neck and Town Neck hundreds, assessed by Richard Menkin, "No. 8," p. [4]), Maryland Historical Society.

it as well much of the elegance that had but little place in the austerity that followed the war.<sup>56</sup>

It would be remiss to close without a word on behalf of the young woodcarver, who is said to have worked himself into an early grave that Whitehall might stand supreme in its ornamentation. Undoubtedly he did exist and, as the story goes, was indentured directly to the Governor. We look again at Buckland's drawing for the unusual hall ornaments and at the delicately carved designs that have evolved from piecing together fragments from the dirt of the garret over the east pavilion. They had been carefully stored away, wrapped in cotton and paper after removal from the walls, and exist today in sufficient quantity to make a successful restoration possible.

When inquiry was made of Sir Leigh Ashton of the Victoria and Albert Museum on the subject of how wooden ornaments would have been applied to plaster walls without the use of nails or cabinet maker's glue, the reply was received that it just was not done in England. Plaster ornaments were sized to plaster walls and wooden ornaments glued or nailed to wooden surfaces or panels. Here again in this far off part of the world there were perhaps no casts from which such decorations could be moulded or no plasterer in the vicinity who could execute the work. This impractical and tremendously intricate task of ornamenting the walls and ceiling was assigned to the gifted young redemptioner who had caught the fancy and the admiration of Governor Sharpe, and the carvings were sized to the plaster walls as though they had been made of plaster.<sup>57</sup>

The house, grounds and original furnishings that Mrs. Story had acquired from the Ridouts were purchased by the late Francis P. Garvan in 1929 as part of his plan for the restoration of Annapolis, with the intention of offering the estate as a summer White House for the President. Since that time the old house has stood unoccupied and the furnishings have been dispersed. For a few years in between, the gardens bloomed again under the friendly

<sup>56</sup> "It would seem to have been an article of faith in the immediate post-revolutionary period in this province to disdain all beauty of religion or of the arts and crafts for an ultra-republican simplicity . . . ;" Henry J. Berkley, "A Register of the Cabinet Makers and Allied Trades in Maryland, as Shown by the Newspapers and Directories, 1746 to 1820" in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, XXV (1930), 2.

<sup>57</sup> A gelatinous sizing still appears on the back side of many of the fragments, but the rosettes for the frieze of the wooden door frames shown glue on the under side.

care of Miss Sarah Henderson, and so it went till acquired by its present owners in 1946. The cycle has now been completed and, though changed, Whitehall again stands as a garden house serving as it did nearly 200 years ago: to please those who care for it and those of their friends who care to come and enjoy with them this lonely remnant of Maryland's all but forgotten Golden Age.

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