

ment of rent to the proprietors of the assembly room at Upper Marlboro, where the court sat for one day during that term and for twelve days during the April term of 1800.

In the meanwhile, the Levy Court on April 26, 1799 agreed with William Levering, Architect of the City of Washington, to draft a plan for a new courthouse, whose size was not to exceed 2,550 square feet. The following June 22nd, the Levy Court ordered advertisements to be inserted in the Georgetown and Baltimore press, asking for proposals for building the new courthouse on the plan submitted by Levering.

On August 3, the Levy Court contracted with Thomas Jones of the City of Washington for building the courthouse for \$9,550 plus whatever materials he could salvage from the old structure. Jones apparently did his work satisfactorily, for the Court accepted the courthouse on May 30, 1801.<sup>26</sup>

This courthouse of 1801 remained in service for eighty years, a remarkable life span for a Southern Maryland public building of that period.<sup>27</sup> It required extensive repairs—serious enough at least to authorize a special levy—in 1820, in 1840, and in 1852.<sup>28</sup> In addition, separate offices were built for the Clerk of the Court and the Register of Wills—that of the Register of Wills survives—in the 1830's. The history of these additions is somewhat confusing. An act of 1832 authorized the construction of separate offices or the enlargement of the courthouse to provide adequate quarters for the Clerk and the Register.<sup>29</sup> In 1834, another act was passed with the same provisions but only after an annoyed preamble rebuking the county officers for their delay in getting the work under way.<sup>30</sup> This time a special commission, named in the act, was charged with the undertaking.

### Third Courthouse at Upper Marlboro

By 1880, this courthouse, even with the separate offices mentioned above, was too small for the needs of the growing county. The General Assembly of 1880 passed an act authorizing the county commissioners to borrow not over \$20,000 to build a new courthouse, this sum to include the purchasing of new furniture and landscaping the grounds.<sup>31</sup> Thereafter, the county commissioners set up a special "Committee for the Erection of a New Court House," and this committee kept its own account book which is now preserved at the Hall of Records. The entries in this record indicate to whom the bonds were sold and then to whom payments were made; the reason for the payment must be guessed in most cases. However, since the bulk of the allotted funds went to William A. Jarboe, it is safe to assume that he was the contractor. The architect was Frank E. Davis of Baltimore.<sup>32</sup> B. F. Smallwood and Hall and Fisher were paid for removing the "Furniture," A. S. Abell, for printing the bonds. The last payment was made September 22, 1881, and presumably the building was in use at that time. While the modern critic might find the victorian gingercake far from handsome, this courthouse was generally admired by contemporaries. A journalist who recorded his impressions in the early years of this century may be considered as typical:

The present courthouse is spacious and substantial and eminently beautiful in appearance as far as its exterior is concerned, while inside there is decidedly more attractiveness than is usually found in the courthouses of county seats.<sup>33</sup>

However, spacious this building seemed to this observer, it was not considered adequate by the officers who were housed there, and so at the very next session of the General Assembly authorization was asked and granted to build an addition to cost \$12,000.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>26</sup> *Minutes of the Levy Court, 1795-1818*, ff. 82, 94, 95, 132. *Ms.*

<sup>27</sup> In Talbot Hamlin, *Benjamin Henry Latrobe*, New York, 1955, p. 381, there is a statement that Latrobe worked on the "Marlborough Courthouse." This is indicated also in Ferdinand C. Latrobe, II, "Benjamin Henry Latrobe: Descent And Work," *Md. Hist. Mag.*, XXXIII, p. 259. The writer has been unable to determine what he did, if anything.

<sup>28</sup> Ch. 61, Acts of 1820; Ch. 41, Acts of 1840; Ch. 54, Acts of 1852.

<sup>29</sup> Ch. 293.

<sup>30</sup> Ch. 331.

<sup>31</sup> Ch. 35.

<sup>32</sup> This information and the drawing were supplied by Wilbur H. Hunter, Jr., Director of The Peale Museum.

<sup>33</sup> *Baltimore Sun*, October 13, 1907.

<sup>34</sup> Ch. 297, Acts of 1908.