

the November Session of 1709, an agreement was even made for the construction of a courthouse. But for some reason this contract was not carried out.

Then on November 4, 1710, an act was passed empowering the justices to purchase land at Pitt's Bridge for the purpose of erecting a courthouse.<sup>9</sup> Consequently, the next court, that of January 16, 1710/11, met for this purpose at the plantation of Philemon Armstrong "near Pitts His Bridge." Several other special courts were held here for the purpose of choosing the site and setting a fair price. This task was concluded at a court held on March 1 of the same year.<sup>10</sup> The site, the same on which the present courthouse stands, was apparently wooded, for the levy allowed a sum of money for the necessary grubbing, and a road and a bridge had to be built.

The justices entrusted the building of the courthouse to Philemon Hemsley and their agreement was extremely detailed:

Articles of agreement made and concluded by and between we the subscribers her majesties Justices of Talbot County of the one part and Philemon Hemsley of Queen Anns County Gent<sup>o</sup>. of the other part Witnesseth, whereas there is a certain act of assembly in this province entituled An Act for building and erecting a Court House for Talbot County at or near Pitts Bridge impowering the said Justices or the major part of them to treat and agree with undertakers or workmen for building a Court house for the said county at the place aforesaid; In pursuence of the said act we the said Justices hereunto subscribed, have accordingly treated and mutually agreed to and with the said Philemon Hemsley for building a Court house on two acres of land already laid out near Pitts Bridge for that purpose according to the Plott of the said house drawn by the said Philemon Hemsley and the Dimensions fol: viz<sup>t</sup>.

First. The said house to be thirty foot long in the clear and twenty foot wide in the clear with a back building for the Seat of Judicature of twelve foot and eighteen foot in the clear; and thirteen foot pitch from the level of the earth to the wall of plate; the walls of the said house all around from the foundation to the water table to be two brick thick and a brick and a half upward to the wall plate; and the gabel ends above joyce to be one brick thick with a small chimney in the chamber that is over the Seat of Judicature; the said building to be built of well burnt brick Laid in good Sufficient mortar workmanlike; the front of the said house of Smooth bricks; with blue headers and stretchers to be rubbed from the Sills of the Windows upwards to the wallplate with Streight arches over the windows done workmanlike; the ends and back part of the said house to be plain good work with a hemsome Peddiment over the front doore supported with well turned Cullums and bases of Cedar and Locust; the roof of the S<sup>d</sup>. house to be well shingled with Cypress Shingles sheweing mundillions in the front barge boards at the ends; all the back eaves to be well boxt with good moulding workmanlike; the front Door to be Cedar or Locust if Cedar the Sill to be Locust with Lights over the Door worked with Archytrive on the s<sup>d</sup>. Doore Case the front to have archytrive Transome windows all the other windows to be plain transome windows except the Dormers which are to be without transome; the Seat of Judicature to be handsomele Wenscutt; with a Suitable chaire benches railes and ballisters with tables and benches for the attorneys; with Suitable railes and ballesters round where the Grand and Pettit juries must Stand; with convenient Stairs for either jury to go up Stairs at either end; as Described in the Platt; all the floor within the railes and Seat of Judicature to be planked; all without well paved; the upper floor to be rabbitted or Grooved Devided into Convenient rooms with Pettitions of Plank with good frame doors; the front doore to be a hansome Double Doore the joyce of the said house to be all galloping joyce of Ten inches and four inches Square; the Rafters Seven and four inches square at foot and four inches Square at head; the inside of the said house or building above Stairs; and below, to be well lathed and plastered all the windows of the said house to be well glazed with Led and Glass; Except the Lower Lights in the transome windows in the front and End below joyce which are to have shetters instead of glass; all the windows front doore cullums peddiments Dorments and Eaves of the said house and Seat of Judicature to be well primed and painted.

Secondly. The said Philemon Hemsley doth promise to compleat and finish the s<sup>d</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Ch. 5.

<sup>10</sup> The minutes of these special sessions of the court are to be found in Tilghman, II, 221-23. The original records, once lost, were returned to the clerk's office in 1854 and were filed among

the papers of the Court. They were also recorded verbatim in *Land Records, S.T.H. No. 65*, ff. 529-31, of that year. Ms., Clerk's office, Easton.