

Then, on the night of December 6, 1871, both the old building and the new courtroom were burned beyond repair.

Third Courthouse at Hagerstown

The county commissioners took steps immediately to find quarters for the courts and the other agencies of county government—they could not ask permission of the General Assembly for that body was not in session. Accommodations for the court were found in the basement room of the Methodist Church, which was located but a short distance from the courthouse.¹⁴ At the next session of the General Assembly, the county commissioners were authorized to issue bonds in the amount of \$75,000 for a new courthouse to be built on the site of the burnt-out structure and to be completed “on or before July or August first, eighteen hundred and seventy-three”¹⁵ Permission was granted in 1874 for the purchase and improvement of several parcels of ground contiguous to the courthouse for the use of the County.¹⁶

The new courthouse, designed by H. A. and J. F. Sims, Architects, and built by R. C. Thornsburg, was dedicated in the spring of 1874. A great throng had assembled to witness the picturesque dedication ceremonies conducted by the Masonic Order and to hear the address of Judge Richard Henry Alvey. The building was considered beautiful in its day, but its mid-Victorian gingerbread overlaid with the dust and grime of nearly a hundred years offers little for the modern critic to admire. Nor was its appearance notably enhanced by the two-story addition constructed in the rear of this building in 1933-1934. The architect was A. J. Klinkhart. The work was supervised by Hubert A. Mullen, and the cost may have been as much as \$20,000.¹⁷

¹⁴ The rental was \$400 per year, payment of which was authorized by Ch. 392, Acts of 1872. This act also provided the cost of rental of quarters for the other officers.

¹⁵ Ch. 278, Acts of 1872.

¹⁶ Ch. 397.

¹⁷ Information about the present courthouse and the addition was kindly furnished by the Honorable G. Merlin Snyder, Clerk of the Circuit Court.