

Barbara B. Snowden

"A New Court House of Brick"
**A Documentary History of the Currituck County Courthouse,
Currituck, North Carolina,**

with an addendum:
**Establishing a Construction Date for the
Currituck County Jail.**



by
John B. Green III
Historic Preservation Consultant

New Bern, N.C.
1998

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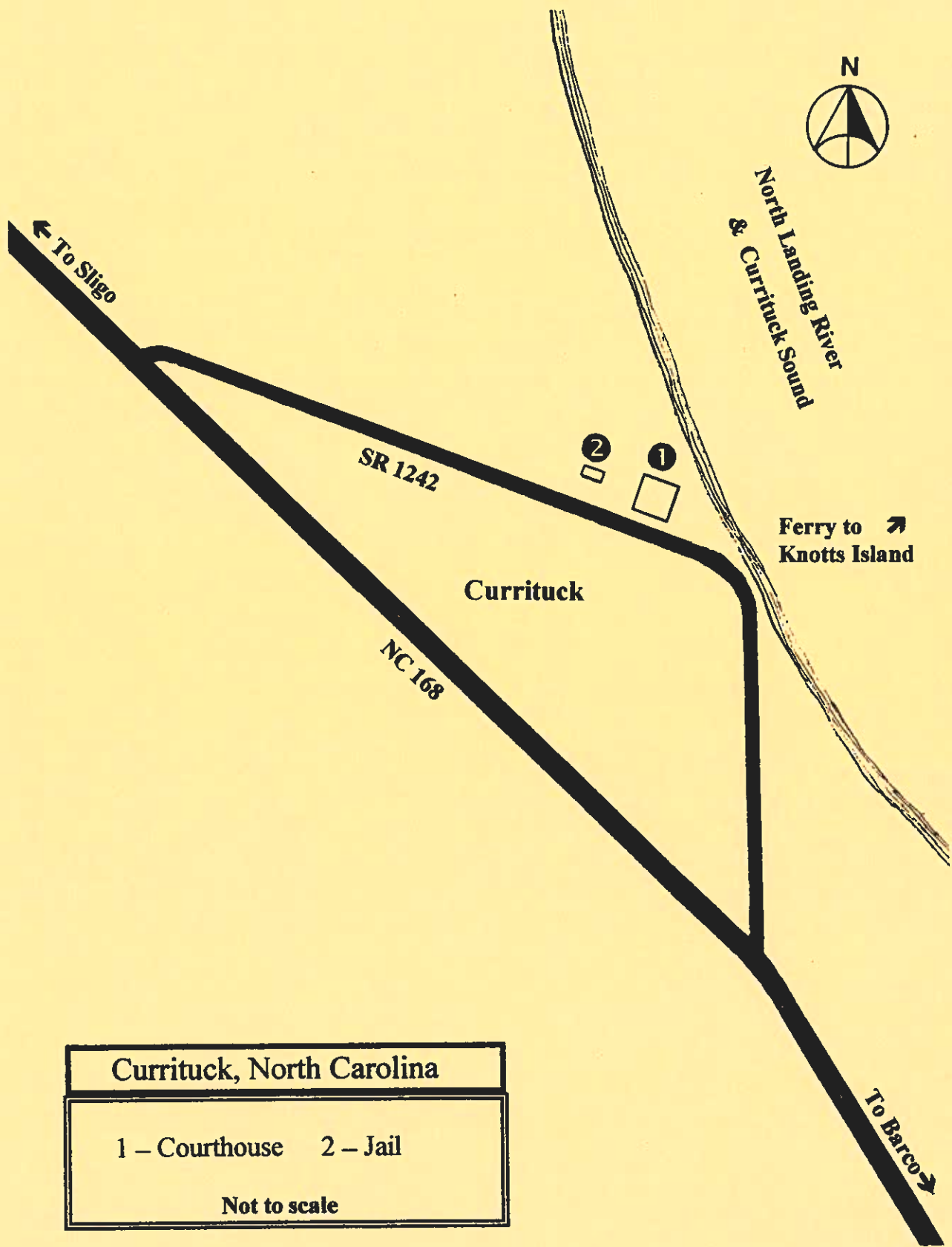
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**Prepared for
The County of Currituck, North Carolina
and
The Currituck County Historical Society**

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Currituck, North Carolina

1 – Courthouse 2 – Jail

Not to scale

INTRODUCTION

Positioned along a major county thoroughfare, and fronting the broad expanse of North Landing River and Currituck Sound, the village of Currituck, North Carolina presents today's traveler with a rare view of a traditional country courthouse settlement. The handful of houses and stores, scattered along the road, face the courthouse which sits opposite them with the water behind it. The red brick courthouse with its cedar-shaded grounds and adjacent early jail evokes images of a county of overwhelmingly rural and, until recently, isolated nature. While some of the buildings have been replaced, the scale and setting of Currituck is little changed from that described more than one hundred and thirty years ago. In the May 1859 issue of *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* Edward C. Bruce wrote that ". . . the town comprises but five houses, independent of the court-house and jail . . ." ¹ Another writer described the village as "beautifully located" on Currituck Sound (see figures 8 and 9). ²

The Currituck County Courthouse, begun in the 1840s and expanded and remodeled 1897-1898, has served as the seat of county government for more than one hundred and fifty years. This year's centennial anniversary of the 1897-1898 remodeling has prompted a re-examination of the building's long history and the significant changes that have been made to the building's appearance over time. The Currituck County Historical Society, concerned with the courthouse's preservation, has sought to document and promote the architectural and historical importance of the building to the people of Currituck County. This documentary history, generously funded by the County of Currituck, is one tangible result of the society's ongoing efforts.

This research has been pursued with two essential goals in mind: to determine the construction date of the oldest portion of the courthouse, and to document the changes in the building's size and appearance brought about by the 1897-1898 remodeling. The primary sources used have been the minutes of the meetings of the two governmental bodies who have had charge of the courthouse and its maintenance: the County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, and since 1868, the Board of County Commissioners. The justices of the County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions served as the primary administrative and judicial officers of the county. Their quarterly court sessions encompassed everything from the maintenance of court facilities such as the courthouse, clerk's office and the jail, to the building and repair of other public buildings such as the poorhouse, and public works such as roads, bridges, wharves, and landings. The justices were responsible for the election or appointment of county officials, the registering of deeds and mortgages, the "proving" of wills, the probate of estates, and the administration of the affairs of orphans, apprentices, widows, lunatics, and bastards. Their judicial responsibilities included the hearing of civil disputes and minor criminal cases. The County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions was abolished by the new state constitution of 1868. Its judicial and probate responsibilities were assumed by other courts and county officials. Its administrative functions, including the maintenance of county buildings, were assumed by the newly created Board of County Commissioners. ³ This arrangement has remained essentially unchanged to the present day. The surviving

minutes of the justices, meeting quarterly, and the county commissioners, meeting monthly, provide the basic time-line of construction, maintenance, and alteration of the courthouse and other county buildings.

In the course of searching the minutes for information about the courthouse important information concerning the construction date of the Currituck County Jail was also located. Although this early and significant building has not been considered a part of this research project, this newly found information has been included as an addendum to the main report.

BRIEF HISTORY OF CURRITUCK COUNTY

Currituck County is one of the oldest counties in North Carolina having been created possibly as early as 1668 as a precinct of Albemarle County. Bordered on the north by Virginia, on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, on the south by Albemarle Sound, and to the west by Camden County, Currituck County today comprises approximately 469 square miles, more than a third of that being the waters of Currituck Sound. Until 1870 the county also included Roanoke Island.⁴ Currituck County was settled primarily, like most of the Albemarle Region, by people of English descent who migrated south from Virginia during the 17th and 18th centuries.⁵ Always sparsely populated and isolated, the county weathered the American Revolution in relative peace suffering only foraging raids on Currituck Banks and Roanoke Island by the crews of British ships.⁶ Long a predominately agricultural area, by the early 19th century the county's farmers had formed an association that often held events such as the "Hog Show" of January 5, 1828.⁷ In 1851 the products of the county were listed as 213,595 bushels of corn, 7,685 bushels of wheat, 7,084 bushels of oats, 400 bushels of salt, 11,465 pounds of wool, and 400 barrels of fish.⁸ The building of the Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal in 1855-1860 brought a more reliable connection to Norfolk, Virginia for the county's products. So important did the justices of Currituck County feel this new canal to be, that the county subscribed to \$44,000 worth of shares of the canal company and issued county bonds in that amount to pay for the stock.⁹

The Civil War brought the Burnside Expedition in January 1862, which resulted in the Federal capture and occupation of Roanoke Island, and the placing of Currituck County under nominal Federal control. The controversial raid of Union Brigadier General Edward A. Wild at the head of two regiments of African-American troops, December 5 to December 23, 1863, affected the entire county. While the chief purpose of the raid was to eliminate the Confederate threat to the Dismal Swamp Canal the raid resulted in the burning of private homes, the destruction or appropriation of private property, the taking of civilians as hostages, the capture or dispersion of Confederate forces and the freeing of large numbers of slaves. Wild and his troops ranged from Norfolk to Elizabeth City and then across Camden and Currituck Counties to Currituck Court House where the liberated slaves were loaded on steamers bound for Roanoke Island or Norfolk.¹⁰

Following the war, fishing, always a staple enterprise of the county, became more of an industry in importance. An 1888 publication listed twenty-nine "leading shippers and proprietors of fisheries" in Currituck County.¹¹ Another late 19th century industry of increasing importance was waterfowl hunting – both guiding, outfitting and housing hunters drawn to the area by the vast numbers of ducks and geese on Currituck Sound – but also "market gunning" or harvesting and packing of waterfowl for the northern markets. *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory* for 1896, after listing the county's staples as cotton, corn, fish and truck crops, added that "Large quantities of live fowl are killed during the winter months, and find a ready sale at Norfolk and points farther north."¹²

The 20th century has seen Currituck County maintain its agricultural and commercial fishing economic bases. The sport hunting and fishing enterprises have endured although not at the levels they enjoyed during the early part of this century. In addition the last twenty years have seen a remarkable growth in tourism and upscale waterfront real estate development with an accompanying upgrading of the county's public infra-structure.

PREVIOUS COURTHOUSES

The establishment of the village of Currituck has traditionally been said to date to the building of the earliest known courthouse, presumably on that site, in 1723.¹³ Certainly by 1733, the Moseley map of North Carolina shows the courthouse located at or very near the location of the present Currituck County courthouse. Six additional maps dating from 1770 to 1833 – Collet, 1770; Mouzon, 1775; a manuscript map of Currituck County, c.1780; Price-Strother, 1808; Tanner, 1825; and MacRae-Brazier 1833 – all show the courthouse at approximately the same site. In each case the courthouse is shown on the shore of Currituck Sound and in about the same position northwest of Bells Island and Church Island (see figures 1-7).¹⁴

The earliest known courthouse for Currituck County is described in a construction contract of 1723. The justices of the precinct court of "Carotuck" contracted with Robert Peyton on April 22, 1723 to build,

a Court House of Thirty foot in Length, Eighteen foot in weadth, with a fashionable overfitt fram'd work standing upon Sedar Blocks, ye Roof to be Shingl'd with Syprress Shingells, ye Sides and Ends with Boards Twelve foot of the flore to be Raised two foot from ye Ground with plank, Two Bars on ye said flore from side to side two foot and a half asunder and all yt part of the house to be seal'd workmanlike Judges Cheare Bench and Clarkes Table the upper flower plain'd Joynted and Crose Lade the fraime of ye House to be plain'd and made Smooth with Stares from flow to flow with Sash Winders and not to be less than Eight foot Pitch.¹⁵

Peyton was to receive £140 if he completed the courthouse by March 31, 1724. A subsequent law suit brought by the justices against Peyton provides a clearer – and better spelled – description of the desired features of the building,

a Courthouse of thirty feet in length eighteen feet in width with a fashionable over Jet framed Worke Standing on Cedar Blocks the roof to be Shingled with Cypress Shingles the Sides and ends with boards the floors to be raised two feet from the ground with plank two Barrs on the Said Floor from Side to Side two feet and an halfe asunder and all that part of the house to be ceiled workmanlike Judges Chair Benches and Clerks Table the upper floor plained Joynted and Close layed the frame of the house to be plained and made Smooth with Stairs from floor to floor with Sash windowes not less than eight feet pitch[.]¹⁶

Although the justices sued Peyton for noncompliance with the contract, and although the suit dragged through many sessions of court (at least through March 1730), it is evident from Peyton's insistence that he had fulfilled the conditions of the contract that some type of building was constructed.¹⁷

It is not known how long the courthouse built by Robert Peyton survived. "An Act to empower the Justices of Currituck County to build a Prison, Pillory, and Stocks, in the said County, on the Lot whereon the Court House now stands, for the Use of the said County," ratified by royal governor William Tryon in 1768, indicates that a formal courthouse was in existence at that date although it is impossible to know whether this building was the same constructed by Peyton ca. 1724.¹⁸ Local tradition maintains that the Peyton courthouse survived into the 19th century although if this is true the structure can not have survived beyond May 23, 1804.¹⁹ On that date "the court-house, jail and clerk's office in that county [*Currituck*], with all the books and papers, were totally destroyed by fire" The *Federal Gazette & Baltimore Daily Advertiser* of Baltimore, Maryland, in its issue of 31 May 1804 gives the following account:

By a person who left Currituck, in N. Carolina, on Friday last, [25 May] we are told, that the court-house, jail and clerk's office in that county, with all the books and papers, were totally destroyed by fire on Wednesday morning last [23 May]. There was a store kept by Messrs. Marchant & Schurr, under the court-house [*on the ground floor*], which, with a considerable quantity of goods, was also destroyed. Mr. Land's tavern, opposite, was saved with great difficulty. It is the general opinion, that the place was designedly set on fire.²⁰

The first session of the Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions following the reported fire, that of 28 May 1804, finds the justices in session at "the courthouse Protempory." That the courthouse was indeed totally destroyed or at least damaged beyond repair is indicated by the order of the justices of 29 May 1804,

Ordered that the Sheriff Collect the Sum of four Shillings on each pole and one Shilling and four pence on each hundred acres of land. In this County for the year one thousand eight hundred & three For the purpose of building a Courthouse on the publick ground Whereon the Courthouse formerly Stood &C."

The justices further ordered that,

Andrew Bates and Edward Bunnill Esquires be Appointed Commissioners together with the County treasurer to Contract for the building of a Courthouse.²¹

The total destruction of what must have been a frame courthouse and jail is further attested to by the justices' order issued the following day, May 30, 1804, that "Col^o John Williams Take care of the nails and other Iron Saved from the Late Publick Buildings Till further Order."²²

Whatever the courthouse or courthouses which followed the one destroyed in 1804 may have been like, by 1837 the justices were considering constructing yet another and better building.²³

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PRESENT COURTHOUSE

A casual examination of the Currituck County Courthouse, excluding the large post-1950 additions to the rear, reveals a small but substantial public building of modest late-Victorian detailing (see figure 17). A closer examination reveals clear evidence of an earlier building expanded and built-over to form the present structure. Traces of this earlier courthouse, believed to have been constructed in the early 1840s, consist of brick- and stonework visible at the first floor level of the exterior. While the exact appearance of this earlier building is unknown it appears to have consisted of a two story, three-bay, projecting central block flanked by one-story wings, each having its own entrance door (later converted to windows). Then as now the two one-story wings housed the Clerk of Court's and Register of Deeds' offices.²⁴ The original use of the first floor, aside from housing the building's stair or stairs, is unclear with conflicting local traditions maintaining that it either housed the courtroom, or a tavern or store, with the courtroom occupying the second floor.²⁵

The present courthouse is a two-story brick building, with a seven-bay facade. The facade width is 57'5" and the building's depth, including both the earlier 1840s portion and the 1897-98 additions, is 51'2". These additions include a two-story 30' by 13'11" wing projecting from the rear elevation of the rectangular courthouse. An unfinished attic is covered by a hip roof originally bearing slates but now covered with asphalt shingles. The courthouse has no cellar due to the low elevation of the site.

Traces of the earlier courthouse include the first floor facade of pressed brick laid in running or mechanical bond with door and widow openings defined by finely tooled granite sills and lintels (see figures 24 and 25). The west and east or end walls of the earlier portion are of hand made bricks laid in 5:1 common bond. These windowless walls are broken only by two small vertical slit vents positioned just above the foundation of rough-dressed granite (see figures 26-29). Of unknown significance are two bricks in

the west wall inscribed with the initials "J A B" and "H T" (see figure 30). The walls of the later 1897-98 additions to the first and second stories are of hand-made or coarse machine-made bricks laid in 6:1 common bond. More than a dozen bricks in these walls are impressed with one of four marks: "Edenton Brick Works;" "W.O.S 1897;" "W.O.S;" and "1897" (see figures 36-39). The first story windows of the 1897-98 additions have concrete sills and finely tooled granite lintels possibly salvaged from windows eliminated in the 1840s portions of the courthouse that were built-over in 1897-98. The second-story windows have granite sills, once again probably salvaged from the older portions of the building, and are topped by shallow arches with projecting brick hoods. A belt course laid in a pattern of repeating squares, and painted white, defines the division between the first and second stories. The walls are capped by a wooden modillion cornice (see figures 31-33).

The 1897-1898 appearance of the courthouse has been significantly altered over time. The roof has suffered the most. Aside from the removal of the slates, the roof's most important decorative feature – a broad hip-roofed dormer centered over the front door and containing three stained glass sash – has been covered over by a large pedimented gable with a round, louvered ventilator. This major alteration may have been made during the 1950s expansion and remodeling of the courthouse. It was also probably at this time that the building's four chimneys were removed. Rising through the roof from the east and west walls, these tall chimneys with corbelled caps, provided along with the broad dormer, significant visual interest to the roof which is now missing from its appearance (see figures 13 and 17).

The interior of the structure retains no visible remnants of the original 1840s fabric, although early pine flooring does survive beneath the present linoleum of the first floor stair hall. The building's 1897-1898 interior finishes do, for the most part, survive intact. These include door and window openings with symmetrical molded surrounds with corner blocks, four-panel doors (some with original hardware), and the intact double stair with its molded stair rail, turned and paneled newels and turned balusters (see figures 40-43). The double entrance doors with their stained-glass transom are also original to the 1897-1898 remodeling, as is the second floor double door which leads out onto the entrance porch roof. These doors retain a complete set of finely cast late-Victorian hardware (see figures 40 and 35). The Register of Deeds' and Clerk of Court's records vaults survive largely intact although each has been enlarged in this century by an additional vault room. These "fireproof" vaults have steel entrance doors, steel window shutters, and vaulted, ribbed-steel ceilings. The ceiling of the Registrar of Deeds vault survives above a recent hanging-panel ceiling (see figures 44-46). Steel book racks complete the fireproof fittings. The enlargement of the record vaults led to the one major alteration of the 1897-1898 first floor interior. Both enlargements intrude into the space of the first-floor central hallway. On the second floor the stairhall and two small rooms adjoining the courtroom retain most of their original woodwork. The courtroom itself is, however, much changed from its 1897-1898 appearance. No original furnishings survive and modern wall-to-wall carpeting, plywood paneling, and a recent plasterboard ceiling

have significantly altered the late 19th century ambiance of the room. Fortunately the room's doors, door and window surrounds, and baseboards do survive.

No early lighting fixtures survive anywhere in the courthouse. Likewise the original 1897-1898 two-light-over-two-light sash have been replaced with modern nine-light-over-nine-light sash. In spite of these alterations the building's 1897-1898 interior architectural details remain, for the most part, intact. With the installation of appropriate reproduction lighting fixtures and the removal of modern carpeting and paneling the interior spaces of the courthouse could be returned to something resembling their late-19th century appearance.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE EARLIEST PORTION OF THE PRESENT COURTHOUSE, ca. 1842-44

"But there is not even a tradition as to the court houses before the present one, which was built perhaps prior to 1800, though there are no records showing the precise date."²⁶

Although this was the prevailing opinion in 1921, the date of the above quote, there is ample evidence in the minutes of the Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions that the oldest portion of the present courthouse was constructed in the early 1840s.

The first indication that a new courthouse was needed or desired is found in the court minutes for 28 May 1839 when commissioners appointed "for the purpose of Planing [*sic*] a Court House" complained that they had only the day before received notice of their appointment two years earlier in May 1837, and thus they were

not able to report upon any particular plan for the Said House, but Respectfully beg leave to suggest the laying a Tax that Shall not exceed one thousand dollars for the purpose of purchasing the materials and the appointment of Some person or persons to make contracts for the furnishing materials as Soon as the quantity and quality of each and every article may be ascertained and made known.²⁷

The justices then proceeded to appoint Caleb Etheridge, Gedion C. Marchant, and Tulley Bell as ". . . Commissioners to Contract for Bricks and timber to be delivered next Spring for the purpose of Building a new Court House." The justices further levied a tax "for the Purpose of Building a new Court House 50 cts on the Poll and 16 cts on each Hundred dollars worth of Land."²⁸ The justices levied the same tax in May 1840 and discharged the commissioners "heretofore appointed to form a Plan for a New Court House," appointing new commissioners for that purpose.²⁹

There is no further mention of the effort to build a new courthouse until the following year. On February 26, 1841 the justices ordered that,

Dennis Simmons, John N. Wilson, David Morse, Benjamin T. Simmons, John Simmons, Tully L. Dozier, William Jarves, Isaac Tillet, Spencer Daniel, & Thomas L. Jford be appointed Commissioners to Contract for the materials and the Building a new Court House of Brick.

At the same session the justices levied a reduced tax of twenty-five cents on the poll and 10 cents on each 100 dollars valuation of land for the purpose of building the new courthouse.³⁰ There is no indication that construction of the new courthouse had begun. One year later on February 28, 1842 the court ordered that,

Isaac Baxter former Sheriff of Currituck County pay over to Dennis Simmons one of the Commissioners of the public Buildings Such an amount of money as he may have in his hands or due to said County for the purpose of Building a new Court House, that is to say the amount of Taxes Lev[i]ed for that purpose while the Said Isaac Baxter was Sheriff.³¹

The minutes for the following day, March 1, 1842 provide the first evidence that construction might be about to begin. The court ordered Dennis Simmons, one of the building commissioners, to

proceed to the city of Baltimore [forth] with [sic] and purchase Bricks for a new Court House the quality and quantity is left to his own Judgement.³²

It is noteworthy at this point to consider that the fine pressed bricks in the facade of the oldest portion of the courthouse are of a type that would most probably have been imported from a major urban and manufacturing area to the north such as Baltimore or Philadelphia.

In a cryptic entry in the minutes of the next term of court on May 28, 1842, the justices ordered that ". . . the new Court House be placed on the back of the old, as near as it conveniently can be." Whether it was intended that the new building would be attached, at least for a time to the old, or whether the siting of the new building had, because of a lack of space on the lot, to be placed that close to the old, which would by necessity have to remain standing until the new building was completed, is not known. The justices once more levied a special tax for the new courthouse at a reduced rate of twenty-five cents on each poll and eight cents on each one hundred dollars valuation of land in the county.³³

No mention is made of the new courthouse during the next two sessions of the court, August and November 1842, although it is conceivable that the construction of the building may have begun during this time. By the February 1843 term of the court of pleas and quarter sessions the justices are ordering the clerk to notify Isaac Baxter, former sheriff, and S.B. Dozier, the present sheriff, to turn over all of the tax money collected by them for the courthouse project. This may be seen as evidence of increased

activity on the part of the building committee at this time and is the only mention of the project during 1843.³⁴ The new courthouse was apparently completed by the following February 1844 when the justices ordered Jno. Humphres, Tully L. Dozier, and Wallis Bray to act as a committee,

to Settle the accounts and Vouchers of Dennis Simmons acting Commissioner of the Building [of] the New Court House [and] also to Settle his own account for his Services rendered.

At this same session of court the justices settled the account of Caleb Etheridge for timber and bricks supplied for the new courthouse. As this is the only surviving account from the project it is reproduced in full below:

on motion ordered that Caleb Etheridge [sen.] be allowed the Sum of Seventeen dollars & 91 cents for Six Hundred & Twenty feet of Rafters and Bond timber for the new Court House and the further Sum of forty Six dollars & 46/100 for twenty three hundred and twenty three feet of laths and strips and the further Sum of one Hundred and twenty nine dollars and 25/100 for twenty three hundred and fifty feet of flooring Plank, and the Sum of one Hundred and twenty four dollars for Sixteen thousand Bricks at \$7.75 pr 1000.³⁵

The dispatching of Dennis Simmons to Baltimore to purchase bricks in 1842 and the relative small number of bricks listed in the above motion are hardly sufficient evidence to conclude that the new courthouse was a brick building. The mention of "bond timber" and "laths and strips" in the motion does however provide evidence that a brick building was in fact constructed. The bond timber would have been horizontal timbers set into the interior brick work to act as nailing blocks for the vertical *furring* "strips" to which the laths would have been nailed as the base for the interior plaster wall surfaces.³⁶

Thus by February 1844, after seven years of discussion and construction, Currituck County had at last supplied itself with "a new Court House of Brick."

THE REPAIRS OF 1857

It is curious and interesting that only nine years after the completion of the courthouse in 1844 there was talk of making extensive alterations to the building. The Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions meeting November 25, 1851 ordered that,

G.C. Marchant and Wallis Bray be appointed to contract for the building of a Portico or Porch in front of the Court House, of Such dimensions as they may think proper and for the removal of the Stair Case from the inside of the Court room So as to enter up Stairs by the middle window of the Second Story in front. Said window to be changed to a door, and to alter and improve the Bar & Clerks Desk So as to afford more room and convenience,

and for Such repairs as may be necessary for the preservation of the Building, including painting Glazing &c.³⁷

It is well to pause at this point and note that the record of the next six years of meetings of the court is marked by so many new orders, counter orders, and changes of plans that by the time actual work began in 1857 it is difficult to determine exactly what was done to the building.

Returning to the record we find that no further mention is made of the proposed alterations of the courthouse until the court session of November 29, 1852 when the justices order,

that the former order in relation to repairs and improvements of the Court House be rescinded and that in lieu thereof G.C. Marchant and Wallis Bray be appointed to enlarge the house by adding to its length Sixteen feet and to its width twelve feet, that they make such alteration therein as they may think will add to the Convenience of the Bench, Bar - and officers of the Court, and they do and perform all other things necessary for the preservation of the house Such as Blinds, lightning-rod [,] painting &c.³⁸

But at the next session, February 28, 1853, the justices rescind "in toto," with no reason given, "the order made at November Term 1852. authorizing and appointing G.C. Marchant and Wallis Bray Esqr. to enlarge the Court House by adding to its length and width and putting such other repairs as they may deem necessary. . ." ³⁹ Apparently the extensive alterations to the exterior of the building had been deemed unnecessary or too expensive for we find the justices proposing at the following term, May 30, 1853, a program of interior repairs and re-allocation of the existing space within the building. It was ordered by the court that,

the following repairs and alterations be made on the inside of the Court House - that the Seat of the Magistrates be taken down, and that the plastering in the corners be removed so that the seat of the Magistrates may pass across the end of the House from one Side to the other and said Seat be put up in due form, and that the seat for Jurors be put in front of said Magistrates seat extending from the steps binding to said Magistrates seat on one side to the steps on the other side of said House binding to the aforesaid seat of Magistrates, and the seat for the members of the bar be taken down and a railing put up in due form, and chairs be furnished for the members of the bar - that the roof and outside of the Court House be put in good order and that the offices of the County and Superior C[ourts] be removed up stairs and that seats be made in the offices and on each side of the Court House for the accomodation of the Jurors - and that the following Gentlemen be appointed commissioner to have said work done before August Term 1853 - B.T. Simmons - Edmund Simmons - Jo^s S. Dey and B[enjⁿ] S. Dey.⁴⁰

Some of the proposed work may have been completed by the August Term 1853 deadline, for we find the justices allowing Joshua W. Baxter "Six dollars for a Desk ordered by the Court."⁴¹ At the next term of court, November 29, 1853, the same Joshua W. Baxter is "allowed the Sum of Seven dollars for repairs of [a] Book Case & one new table for the use of the office."⁴² No further mention of the repairs is made until the next

term, February 27, 1854, when B.S. Dey is allowed "the Sum of forty five dollars & Sixty eight [sic] cents for Timber furnished for the repairs of the Court House &c . . ." and James Brabble is allowed "ten dollars & ninety two cents for labor d[one] on the Court House &c." The very next day the justices appear to return to a plan of more drastic alterations to the building when they order,

that the main body of the Court House be extended back fourteen feet & that the Stairs Commence at the doors & run up & that the old Committee to wit J.S. Dey Benj T. Simmons E. Simmons & B.S. Dey contract & carry on the work forthwith [sic].⁴³

Thirty days later the plans of the justices become yet more drastic! On May 29, 1854 the court moves that,

the former order for the repairs of the Court House was rescinded [sic] - and on Motion Wallis Bray, E.C. Lindsey & A. Perkins were appointed & Elected by the Court a Committee to draw a draft or plan for the repairs of the Court House & that they report forthwith.

"[A]fter a few minutes retirement," the committee reported to the court,

Say there Shall be twelve feet added to the length of the Court House & ten feet to the width, the offices to be taken down and used in the building, that the Courtroom Shall be on the Second Story, with a portico in front, all the offices to be formed in the basement or lower Story, also two Jury rooms, the floor of the basement to be of Good Brick, the roof to be of the best Cypress Shingles, the timber used in the building to be of Good pure pine heart. We the Said committee recommend [sic] that the ~~Materials~~ ~~for the building~~ be let out to the lowest bidder after Giving 30 days notice & that a committee of three be appointed to Superintend the work & receive the Same when finished. also that the building Committee take bond with Good Security for the faithful performance of the work all of which is respectfully Submitted to your worships.

The report was adopted and the committee discharged and B.T. Simmons, Wallis Bray & Joseph S. Dey were "constituted a building Committee to Contract & Superintend the rebuilding of the Court House."⁴⁴

Up to this point all the proposed plans seem to indicate that, while the project was referred to as a rebuilding of the courthouse, it was in essence an expansion and remodeling of the existing building. The actions of the next session of the court, August 28, 1854, however, indicate that the plans had changed again and that an entirely new courthouse was to be erected. Under the heading "order for Rebuilding the Court House" the justices ordered that,

the former order to repair the Court House be rescinded [sic] & the Committee be discharged from further consideration. And it is further ordered, that Benjamin T. Simmons Wallis Bray, & Joseph S. Dey be appointed to contract for the building of a Suitable Court House, on the Site of the present Court House and the Public Grounds adjoining thereto, the size of which

Shall be 56 feet by 44 feet - that it have Six finished rooms in the basement, & a court room and two Jury rooms above - the entrance to the Court room, to be by two flights of steps leading to a piazza - The details of finishing to be with the discretion of the Committee - it is further ordered that the Contractor be allowed authorised and required to use Such of the material of the present Court House, as he may deem proper & fitting, in the Construction of the new House.⁴⁵

No further action is recorded until August 28, 1855 when the justices order the building committee

to Call on Jessee B. Lee High Sheriff of Said County, for Such Sum of Sums [*sic*] of Money as may be in his hands to be appropriated to the building of Said House and that their receipt be a voucher to him for the Same in Settlement of his public account.⁴⁶

Nine months later on May 27, 1856, under the heading "order concerning new Court House," the justices again order sheriff J.B. Lee to turn over to the building committee "all Public monies in his hands for the purpose of building new Court House - after defraying the necessary County expences and that their receipt for the Same be a legal voucher for him." An indication of the size and expense of the proposed courthouse is the justices' further order that the building committee "take bond for the Completion of Said building in the Sum of Twenty thousand dollars and to take Security for the Same amt of the State."⁴⁷

At the next session of the court, August 26, 1856 we learn of the acceptance of one Samuel Barnet "as Contractor for the Said Work" when the justices approve Stephen B. Tatum, John M. Drury & Everet Williamson as sureties to his bond of twenty thousand dollars. In doing so the justices further stipulated that "the Brick Work of which [*the courthouse*] is to be done & house shut in between the first day of March 1857, and the first day of October of the Same."⁴⁸ Six months later, however the plans would change again.

On February 24, 1857 the justices of the County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions issue, without explanation, the following terse order:

ordered by the Court that the order heretofore made to build a new Court House be recinded.

Under the heading "apt [*appointment*] of Commissioners to examine the Court H. &C." the justices order,

that B.T. Simmons, B.S. Dey & William F. Baxter be and they are hereby appointed Commissioners to ascertain the Cost of repairing the Court House and a plan of the same, and make report what will be the probable Cost of repairing the Jail.⁴⁹

The building commissioners made their report at the next term May 26, 1857. Although the report was apparently accepted it unfortunately was not recorded in the minutes. However the justices, under the heading "order to repair Court House," did order that,

W^m F. Baxter & B.S. Dey be appointed Superintendents to have and make repairs on the Court House according to report of Commissioners also ordered that the Sheriff pay to W^m F. Baxter & B.S. Dey five hundred dollars for the purpose of purchasing materials to accomplish the same.

By contrast the justices, who had apparently also approved building a new jail, ordered the building commissioners for the jail to "take bond and Security in the Sum of two thousand Dollars for the proper building of Said Jail, according to estimate: amt of Contract being \$1000."⁵⁰

What could have caused the justices to yet again so radically change their plans for the courthouse? In May 1856 they had proposed building a entirely new courthouse that would have cost perhaps as much as \$20,000. One year later those plans had been discarded in favor of making only \$500 worth of repairs to the existing structure. No reason is stated in the minutes although one may be inferred. Excavation of the Virginia end of the Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal had begun in October 1855.⁵¹ This long awaited project would connect Chesapeake Bay with Albemarle Sound through Currituck County. The economic advantages of such a canal were obviously not lost on the justices of Currituck County for in May of 1855 they had authorized a referendum to be held on July 4th to determine whether the county should subscribe to \$50,000 worth of stock in the Great Bridge Lumber & Canal Company (the name of the corporation would be changed to The Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal in February 1856). The response, announced at the November 1855 term of the court, was overwhelmingly positive with the justices being authorized to subscribe to \$44,000 worth of stock, the cost of which to be defrayed by the issue of \$50,000 worth of Currituck County bonds, bearing 6% interest per annum and maturing in twenty years.⁵²

No significant notice of the canal effort appears in the minutes of the County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions until November 25, 1856 when the justices do a curious thing. On that day the justices ordered the sheriff to turn over to the courthouse building committee the sum of \$2,700 "out of any funds in his hands raised upon a tax for building Said Court House." The court then ordered the building committee to loan the \$2,700 to the "Commissioners appointed by this Court to Sell the bonds of Currituck County made to raise the Subscription of Said County to the stock of the Chesapeake & Albemarle Canal," in exchange for \$4,000 of Currituck County bonds which the building committee were authorized to "Sell whenever it shall be necessary for the purpose of raising money to Carry out any Contract they have made or was made for the building of Said Court house."⁵³

Based on this admittedly scanty evidence it is not unreasonable to speculate that insufficient courthouse building tax collections combined with the significant financial obligation of supporting the canal project caused the justices at the next session of the

court, February 24, 1857, to cancel the ambitious and expensive new courthouse in favor of repairing the old building.⁵⁴

On September 1, 1857 the committee appointed to repair the courthouse made their final report to the justices just a little more than three months after their initial report at the May 1857 term. The bulk of the repairs and alterations to the courthouse, including the construction of a portico first proposed in November 1851, had been completed at a cost of \$667.72. As the committee observed, the completion of the repairs and alterations recommended in May 1857 along with the construction of the portico and alterations to the interior of the building could not fail "to render it more commodious and comfortable." The committee's report is reproduced in full below.

1 September 1857

To the worshipful Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions, August Term 1857

In obedience to an order passed at May Term 1857, your Committee respectfully report that the repairs & alterations to the Court House as recommended by a former Committee in their report made to the Court at May Term 1857 have been Completed, and a portico added to the building, which with the alterations made inside of the building Can not fail to render it more commodious and comfortable. We have thought it best to defer the painting of the building until September or october as painting done at that Season is much more durable, and looks better, than when done in the heat of Summer.

Below we make a Statement of expences for material, labour &c.

No. 1	Seth M[arch]'s receipt for nails 2 kegs	\$ 8.25
" 2	Balls & Constables receipt for 25 barrels lime	27.50
" 3	" " " for white pine plank	12.50
" 4	G.W. Dey's receipt for 2 boxes Glass	5.00
" 5	B[]kin's receipt for tin roofing for portico	35.25
" 6	L. S[alusberr]y receipt for 6 chairs	9.00
" 7	J. Winslow's receipt for cutting air holes	12.60
" 8	W ^m F Baxter's receipt for Services in traveling to Norfolk	<u>8.38</u>
	Amt of Cash paid out on account of Court House	\$118.48

John Frost's bill for work	\$ 98.00
B.S. Devs bill for laths & lumber	25.18
J. Ballance bill for Brick Work & Plastering	52.50
James Mercers bill for Do	17.33
Tho ^s B[] bill for Do	27.00
Jo ^s S. Dey's Bill for freight on lime, Chairs &c & materials	45.65
Tho ^s Mercers Bill 147 feet wide flooring plank	3.67
James Halls Bill for Work	125.00
Samuel Mercers Bill for Work	121.25
E.F. Baxter's Bill for hire of labour	15.50
T.C. Mercers Bill for 2 bushels of hogs hairs	1.00
Samuel B. Hughes Bill for hauling Sand	5.00
B.T. Simmons Bill for lumber furnished	<u>12.16</u>
Amt of bills unpaid	\$ 549.24
to which add Amt of Cash spent	<u>118.48</u>
Whole amt expended for Court House	\$ 667.72

W^m F Baxter
B.S. Dey

While \$667.72 seems to have been the principle amount expended on the repairs to the courthouse, various incidental expenses continued to be recorded in the minutes for more than a year. At the same session that the above report was submitted, Joseph Winslow was "allowed the Sum of Three hundred & five dollars for taking down the Jail, Attention, extra work on C.H. & drawing Contract."⁵⁵ What portion of the three hundred and five dollars was for the "extra work" on the courthouse is not specified. At the next session of the court, December 1, 1857, the justices ordered the sheriff to pay B.S. Dey seventy-five dollars and W^m F. Baxter forty dollars "for their services as building Committee for Court House and Jail." The justices also ordered that J.S. Dey "be allowed Sixty one dollars & Fifty Cents for hauling Timber for Court House & other expenses St[a]cking the Same freight &C."⁵⁶

On August 31, 1858, the court ordered that J.W. Baxter "be allowed ten dollars for furnishing lightning Rod for the Court House & putting the same up," an improvement first proposed in November 1852.⁵⁷ Finally on November 29, 1858 the justices ordered that John Burfoot "be allowed the Sum of Twenty five dollars . . . for labor and work done on the Court House Grounds."⁵⁸ With this last entry the seven-year effort to improve the Currituck County courthouse draws to a close. No further repairs to the building are recorded in the minutes until after the Civil War.

POST-CIVIL WAR REPAIRS

The Civil War seems to have had little or no physical effect on the Currituck County courthouse. While Currituck County found itself on the periphery of the Union Army occupation of eastern North Carolina, the county government seems to have continued to function although at times with some difficulty. The greatest disruption to county life was undoubtedly the expedition of Union Brigadier General Edward A. Wild of December 5 through 24, 1863. This controversial raid originated in Norfolk, Virginia and ranged across northeastern North Carolina from Elizabeth City to Currituck Courthouse, engaging Confederate forces, freeing slaves, and harassing and destroying the property of suspected Confederate sympathizers.⁵⁹

The Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions continued to hold sessions during the war although they were held at more irregular intervals as the war progressed. The justices held their regular sessions during all of 1861 and 1862. There are no recorded sessions for February, May or August 1863 although the court did meet in November 1863. The court met in February, March [*special session*], and May 1864 but there are no more recorded sessions until August 1865 following the end of the war.⁶⁰

The Currituck County Courthouse, although largely undamaged by the war, did require some minor repairs and cleaning following the end of the hostilities. At the August 29, 1865 session of the court the justices ordered "that a tax of one dollar be laid on the Poll for the purpose of repairing the Court House & the relief of the poor of the

County."⁶¹ Eight months later at the May 1866 term the court ordered "that Rudolph Munden be allowed Six dollars for Services in glazing & putting in windows in Court House."⁶² At the November 1866 session the justices ordered that " Thomas C. Humphries Sheriff be allowed twenty five dollars for money advanced to T.G. Munden for sash & lights [*window glass*] for the Court House." The court further ordered that "John F. Frost be allowed Ten dollars for plastering and white washing Court room in the Court House" and that "Tho^s G. Munden be allowed five dollars for Services done in Glasing [*glazing?*] & putting in [*sic*] Court House &c."⁶³

There is no mention of repairs to the courthouse during the court sessions of 1867 and the sessions of February and May 1868 after which the county courts of pleas and quarter sessions ceased to function having been abolished by the new North Carolina constitution of 1868. Maintenance of the courthouse now became the responsibility of the newly constituted Board of County Commissioners. The minutes of their monthly meetings record few significant repairs or alterations to the courthouse until the summer of 1895.

THE 1897 REMODELING AND EXPANSION

The growing inadequacy of the Currituck County Courthouse, whose last significant repairs and improvements had been completed in 1857, must have become increasingly obvious as the 19th century wore on. Minor repairs and the occasional cleaning and rearranging of the court facilities did little to alleviate the principle problem with the building – it was just too small.

At the June 3, 1895 meeting of the county commissioners Capt. Wilson Walker, J.L. DeCormis and G.A. Griggs were appointed "a committee to report to the Board of Co. Comms. plans &c as to the building or repairing Court House and repairing Jail." The committee was to report back to the commissioners on the first Monday in July 1895.⁶⁴ At the July 1 meeting of the board the committee recommended "that a new Court House 40 x 80 feet be built and all the wall of the Old Court House be used that can be." Obviously desiring as broad a consensus as possible before undertaking such a construction project the Board of County Commissioners ordered,

That the Justices of the Peace be invited to meet with the Board not in joint Session but to be present and aid the discussion of ways, means &c, on the first Monday in Aug. as to the raising funds necessary for the erection of said new Court House.⁶⁵

The Board of County Commissioners met next on August 5, 1895 and

The Justices of the Peace having been invited to discuss plans, &c. with the Board County Commissioners as to building or repairing Court House, Chairman Willey had them called and invited them to participate in the deliberations.

After due deliberation it was ordered by the board

That a Court House be built and that the Chairman correspond and find about what will be the cost to have an architect to come, introduce plans &c., and report at next meeting of the Board.⁶⁶

Nothing further is recorded in the minutes of the board concerning the needed construction project until nearly two years later.

On July 5, 1897, the board, apparently now prepared to act on the need, issued the following resolution:

Whereas, the apparent need of enlarging and repairing the Court House for the better convenience of the people and the safety of the Records of the County has been long felt as a grave and public necessity and whereas the Grand Jurys of the County for several years in their official reports have recommended the building of a Court House or repairing the old Court House and alike recommendation has been earnestly suggested by many Judges who have lately presided over the Courts of the County - and whereas it is apparent to every citizen of the Co. that the present Court House is utterly insufficient for the transaction of the public business the Board of Commissioners declares a larger and more commodious Court House a public necessity - Therefore be it resolved that the present Court House be enlarged and repaired - the cost of which shall not exceed eight thousand dollars . . .

The resolution went on to describe the method of financing the project by the issuance of interest-bearing bonds to be due and payable between October 1900 and October 1906. The Board of County Commissioners then proceeded to appoint a building committee consisting of W^m H. Bray, Edward Tillett and J.L. DeCormis "to look after & superintend the repairing, remodding [*sic*] and construction of the Court House in Currituck County."⁶⁷ The board met again on August 3, 1897 to receive bids "for the remodeling and repairing of the Court House. After reviewing the bids "the contract for remodeling and repairing the Court House [*was*] awarded to St Louis Art Metal Co. of St. Louis Mo. as per contract filed in this Office."⁶⁸

As research into the nature of the St. Louis Art Metal Company and the type of construction work which they undertook was not within the scope of this project, it is difficult to determine the exact role the company played in the design and reconstruction of the Court House. The minutes of the Board of County Commissioners mention no other person or firm as having been awarded any part of the project other than the St. Louis Art Metal Company. Yet while the St. Louis Art Metal Company may have had the overall contract for the project there is evidence that they had a local agent or subcontractor whose construction company may actually have been responsible for producing the building that we know today. The Board of County Commissioners met on November 8, 1897 to receive bids for the bonds to be issued for rebuilding the court house. Two bids were received – one from B.F. Smith on behalf of the St. Louis Art Metal Company, and one from the Norfolk National Bank of Norfolk, Virginia. The bid

from the bank was accepted.⁶⁹ This episode raises the question of who B.F. Smith was and what was his connection to the St. Louis Art Metal Company.

B.F. Smith is known today for his work in building a number of courthouses and related structures in northeastern North Carolina during the early part of the 20th century. Based in Washington, D.C., the B.F. Smith Construction Company was responsible for the Northampton County Clerk's office (1900); the Tyrrell County and Dare County courthouses (1903); and the Pamlico County Register of Deeds Office (1905).⁷⁰ That B.F. Smith was directly involved in the reconstruction of the Currituck County Court House is left in no doubt by a letter which appeared in the Elizabeth City, North Carolina newspaper *The Economist* for September 16, 1898. Written from Washington, D.C., August 6, 1898 to G.A. Griggs, Currituck, N.C., Smith denies rumors that he had,

had to pay out twenty-five hundred dollars or any other sum more or less to secure the contract for the building of Currituck County Court House, and wish you to deny for me the same, as being untrue and slanderous,

Smith goes on to praise the building committee for their integrity saying that,

in my dealings with public men extending over twenty five years, have never found a more upright and honorable set of county officers than I had to deal with in Currituck county.

The building committee had been,

faithful to the interest of the county and very exacting and have got a court house for less than \$8,000 that should have cost your county ten thousand dollars.

He further stated that,

My office books will show this job of work lost us money and cost more than we got of it, on account of several of the sub contractors, violating their agreements with us.⁷¹

The minutes of the Board of County Commissioners contain few details of the remodeling of the courthouse and no information as to the building's planned or eventual appearance. Further, no papers or records of the building committee seem to have survived. That an architectural plan or plans did exist is attested to only by a article appearing in *The Economist* of Elizabeth City, N.C. for February 18, 1898 whose editor stated that,

We have seen the design of a new court house for Currituck county, which is under construction by the commissioners of the county. It will be a splendid structure, very convenient, and a credit to the present body of commissioners. When it is finished, and tried and found satisfactory in accoustics and in every other department we hope the commissioners will have a marble tablet, inscribed with their names, placed in its walls as a monument to their faithful work in office.⁷²

The course of the rebuilding can be roughly traced through the Commissioners' minutes and newspaper accounts of their meetings. The funds necessary to pursue the project were received at the meeting of December 6, 1897 where G.A. Griggs, chairman of the board, turned in,

Eight Thousand and Two Hundred (\$8,200~~00~~) Dollars it being the amount of money derived from the sale of Eight Thousand in Currituck Counties [*sic*] bonds, dated Nov. 1st 1897 and executed the 23rd day of Nov. 1897, said Bonds were issued for the purpose of repairing and rebuilding the Court House in Currituck County, as evidenced by resolution passed by the said Board July the 5th 1897 and amended Oct. 4th 1897.⁷³

The construction work was apparently underway by February 1898. The same February 18, 1898 issue of *The Economist* that had commented on the plan for the remodeling reported that the county was considering postponing the regular term of Superior Court in favor of a later special term "on account of the unfinished condition of the new Courthouse."⁷⁴ E.W. Ansell, Clerk of Court and W.H. Bray, Registrar of Deeds, were still occupying temporary quarters in March 1898 when the board instructed them,

to move their offices from the Old Simmons Hotel to S.C. Simmons building across the road and occupy two rooms rented from E.R. Johnson at Six dollars per Mo.⁷⁵

Although the minutes of the Board of County Commissioners take no notice of the fact, the courthouse remodeling was apparently completed by August 1898. On August 1, 1898 the board ordered that "all the old shantys be removed from the Court House ground by the 20th day of August, 1898," possibly as part of a scheme to landscape or at least cleanup the grounds of the newly completed building. That the courthouse was complete and ready for use is indicated by the commissioners' further order that if the shanties were not removed by August 20th,

it is ordered that the sheriff remove them himself before Sept. Court - shff can notify parties who own the shanties at once so the grounds can be cleaned off for Court."⁷⁶

That the courthouse project was completed by August 1898 is further attested to by the August 6, 1898 letter of the builder B.F. Smith previously mentioned.

Thus between December 1897 and August 1898 the old courthouse of 1842-1844 was remodeled and greatly enlarged. This "new" courthouse survives to this day as the front portion of the present building and retains much of its 1897-1898 appearance inside and out.

20th CENTURY EXPANSIONS AND MODIFICATIONS

Prior to the 1950s the only significant changes to the Currituck County Courthouse were repairs and alterations made to the front entrance porch as evidenced by documentary photographs (see figures 10-14). In 1952 a large brick office wing was added to the rear of the courthouse.⁷⁷ Designed in a simple, institutional neoclassical style, the addition nearly tripled the size of the 1897-1898 courthouse. It was probably during the building of this addition that the changes made to the 1897-1898 courthouse, described previously, were carried out. These alterations included the building over of the roof's front dormer and the removal of the building's chimneys. It was also at this time that the 1897-1898 courthouse's front entrance porch was remodeled in the same neoclassical style as the rear addition. While the porch was largely rebuilt, brick railing panels and the brick and granite steps from the earlier porch were retained.

A wing extending from the 1952 addition joined the courthouse to the jail in 1968.⁷⁸

CONCLUSION

Preceded by at least two courthouses on the same site, the present Currituck County Courthouse have served the county since ca. 1842-1844. Originally a two-story brick building with flanking, attached offices, the building received a two-story portico and other repairs in 1857 and minor repairs after the Civil War. The years 1897-1898 saw a major enlargement and remodeling of the courthouse resulting in its present late-Victorian appearance. The construction of a large addition to the rear in the 1950s included some significant alterations to the building, most notably changes to the roof resulting in the covering over of the 1897-1898 dormer and the removal of the chimneys. The entrance porch was also remodeled at this time in the same 1950s neoclassical style of the rear addition. In spite of the numerous alterations the building still retains much of its 1897-1898 fabric, inside and out, and significant traces of the c.1842-1844 building.

The future of the present Currituck County Courthouse is uncertain. While some county administrative offices will continue to occupy the 1950s addition to the building, most judicial functions of the building as well as the offices of the Clerk of Court and the Register of Deeds will have been transferred by the spring of 1998 to a new county office and judicial center recently constructed nearby.

Notes

Notes

1. Edward C. Bruce, "Loungings in the Footprints of the Pioneers." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 18 (May 1859), 760.
2. John H. Wheeler, *Historical Sketches of North Carolina, From 1584 to 1851*, II, (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo and Co., 1851), 133.
3. A description of the authority and duties of the county courts of pleas and quarter sessions and the county boards of commissioners can be found in Helen F.M. Leary and Maurice R. Stirewalt, eds., *North Carolina Research: Genealogy and Local History*, (Raleigh, N.C.: The North Carolina Genealogical Society, 1980), 223-232, 267-268.
4. For descriptions of the formation of Currituck County see David L. Corbitt, *The Formation of the North Carolina Counties 1663-1943*, revised second printing, (Raleigh: Department of Archives and History, 1969), xxv, 83-85, and William S. Powell, *The North Carolina Gazetteer*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 6, 131.
5. Harry Roy Merrens, *Colonial North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century: A Study in Historical Geography*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964), 61-66.
6. David Stick, *The Outer Banks of North Carolina, 1584-1958*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1958), 257 and passim.
7. Jesse F. Pugh and Frank T. Williams, *The Hotel in the Great Dismal Swamp*, (Old Trap, N.C.: Jesse F. Pugh, 1964), 52-53.
8. Wheeler, *Historical Sketches of North Carolina, From 1584 to 1851*, II, 133.
9. Currituck County's involvement in the construction of the Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal is detailed in the minutes of the County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions for the following sessions: 28 May 1855; 27 November 1855; 25 November 1856; and 25 February 1857; and in Alexander Crosby Brown, *Juniper Waterway: A History of the Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1981), 47-48 and passim.
10. For a general account of Civil War activities in northeastern North Carolina see John G. Barrett, *The Civil War in North Carolina*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963), passim. For specific accounts of General Edward A. Wild's raid in the Currituck County vicinity see Barrett, *The Civil War in North Carolina*, 177-181, and Wild's official report of his activities in *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 70 vols. in 128, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), XXIX, Ser. I, Pt. I, 910-918.

11. George I. Nowitzky, *Norfolk; The Marine Metropolis of Virginia, and the Sound and River Cities of North Carolina. A Narrative*, (Norfolk, Va., and Raleigh, N.C.: George I. Nowitzky, 1888), 206-207.
12. Levi Branson, *Branson's North Carolina Directory, 1896*, (Raleigh: Levi Branson, Office Publisher, 1896), 222.
13. Currituck County Courthouse National Register of Historic Places file, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Eastern Regional Office, Greenville, North Carolina.
14. Copies of these maps are available at the North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Archives and Records Section, Raleigh, North Carolina.
15. J.R.B. Hathaway, ed., *The North Carolina Historical and Genealogical Register*, three volumes, (Edenton, N.C.: n.p., 1900-03), January 1901, 134.
16. *Colonial Records of North Carolina (Second Series)*, 9 vols. and continuing, (Raleigh: Division of Archives and History, 1963-), Vol. 7, Robert J. Cain, ed., *North Carolina Higher-Court Minutes 1724-1730*, 174.
17. Cain, ed., *North Carolina Higher-Court Minutes 1724-1730*, 619-20.
18. *Colonial and State Records of North Carolina*, 30 vols., (Goldsboro and Raleigh: state printers, 1886-1914), VII, 623-24; XXIII, 747-48.
19. For local traditions concerning the various Currituck County courthouses see Margaret Walker and Barbara B. Snowden, "Currituck," *Journal of Currituck County Historical Society*, (Barco, N.C.: Currituck County Historical Society, 1976), passim.
20. *Federal Gazette & Baltimore Daily Advertiser* (Baltimore, Maryland), 31 May 1804, 3:1.
21. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 29 May 1804.
22. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 30 May 1804.
23. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 28 May 1838.
24. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 30 May 1853 and 29 May 1854.
25. See comments of Mr. Oscar Frost in Margaret Walker and Barbara B. Snowden, "Currituck," *Journal of Currituck County Historical Society*, (Barco, N.C.: Currituck

County Historical Society, 1976), passim. Mrs. Barbara Snowden, relaying local tradition, states that the courtroom may have been on the second floor with a tavern or store on the first floor. Mrs. Barbara Snowden, Currituck, N.C., personal communication, 5 October 1997. See also Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions minutes for 1 December 1840, 30 August 1852, 30 November 1858, 27 February 1860, and 26 February 1866.

26. Fred A. Olds, *Story of the Counties of North Carolina, With Other Data*, (Oxford, N.C.: Oxford Orphanage Press, 1921), 26.

27. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 28 May 1839. The minutes of the county court of pleas and quarter sessions are missing for 1837, thus the commissioners' report at the May 28, 1839 session is the first indication of their appointment in 1837 and of any desire on the part of the court to plan a new courthouse.

28. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 28 May 1839.

29. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 25 May 1840.

30. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 26 February 1841.

31. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 28 February 1842.

32. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 1 March 1842.

33. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 28 May 1842.

34. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 7 February 1843.

35. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 26 February 1844

36. Carl R. Lounsbury, *An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture & Landscape*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 39.

37. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 25 November 1851.

38. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 29 November 1852.

39. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 28 February 1853.

40. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 30 May 1853.

41. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 30 August 1853.

42. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 29 November 1853.

43. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 27-28 February 1854.
44. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 29 May, 1854.
45. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 28 August 1854.
46. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 28 August 1855.
47. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 27 May 1856.
48. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 26 August 1856.
49. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 24 February 1857.
50. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 26 May 1857.
51. Brown, *Juniper Waterway: A History of the Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal*, 40.
52. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 28 May 1855 and 27 November 1855; Brown, *Juniper Waterway: A History of the Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal*, 38.
53. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 25 November 1856.
54. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 24 February 1857.
55. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 1 September 1857.
56. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 1 December 1857.
57. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 31 August 1858.
58. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 29 November 1858.
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Camden County Courthouse

Currituck County Courthouse

Currituck County Jail

Raleigh, North Carolina.

North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Archives and Records Section

Currituck County Records

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Minutes, Board of County Commissioners

Iconographic Collections

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Winston-Salem, N.C.

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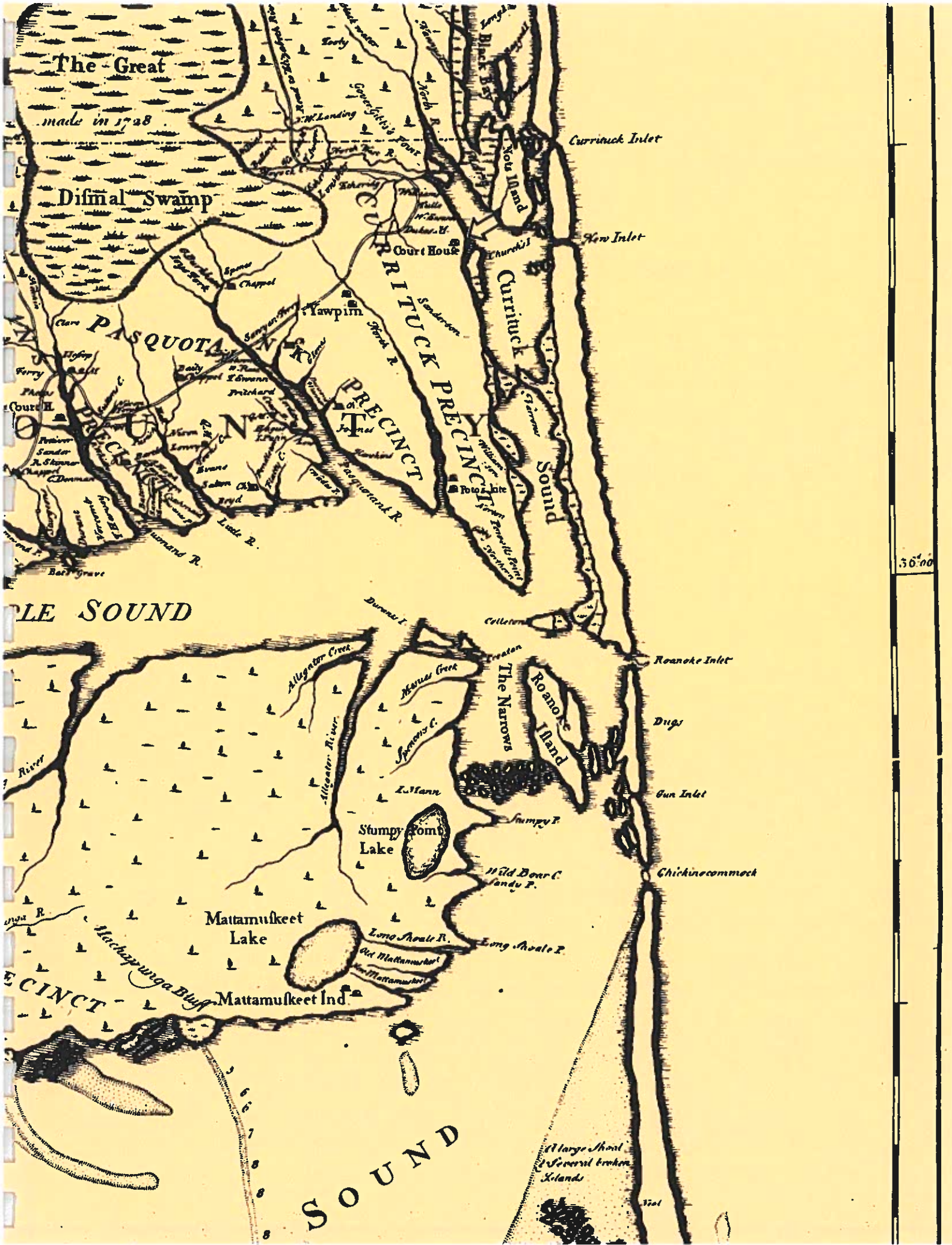
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Illustrations

**Figure 1. Detail of the Moseley map of North Carolina, 1733.
Arrow indicates location of Currituck County Courthouse.**



36° 00'

SOUND

**Figure 2. Detail of the Collet map of North Carolina, 1770.
Arrow indicates location of Currituck County Courthouse.**

Figure 3. Detail of the Mouzon map of North Carolina, 1775.
Arrow indicates location of Currituck County Courthouse.



XI

A. L. B. E. M. A. R. L. E. S. O. U. N. D.

P. A. M. I. T. I. C. O. E. S. O. U. N. D.

C. A. P. E. H. A. T. T. E. R. A. S.

30

Figure 4. Detail of a manuscript map of Currituck County, c.1780.
[negative Photostat copy] Arrow indicates location of Currituck
County Courthouse. *North Carolina Division of Archives and
History.*

**Figure 5. Detail of the Price-Strother map of North Carolina, 1808.
Arrow indicates location of Currituck County Courthouse.**



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Black Water
Village
LAKE CHAMPLAIN
CANTON
INDIAN TOWN
PACIFIC RIVER
NORTH
BEMARLE SOUND
Killed Hill
ROSEMONT INLET
NEW INLET
MATTIMUSKEET LAKE
CHICKEN CREEK

**Figure 6. Detail of the Tanner map of North Carolina, 1825.
Arrow indicates location of Currituck County Courthouse.**

**Figure 7. Detail of the MacRae-Brazier map of North Carolina, 1833.
Arrow indicates location of Currituck County Courthouse.**



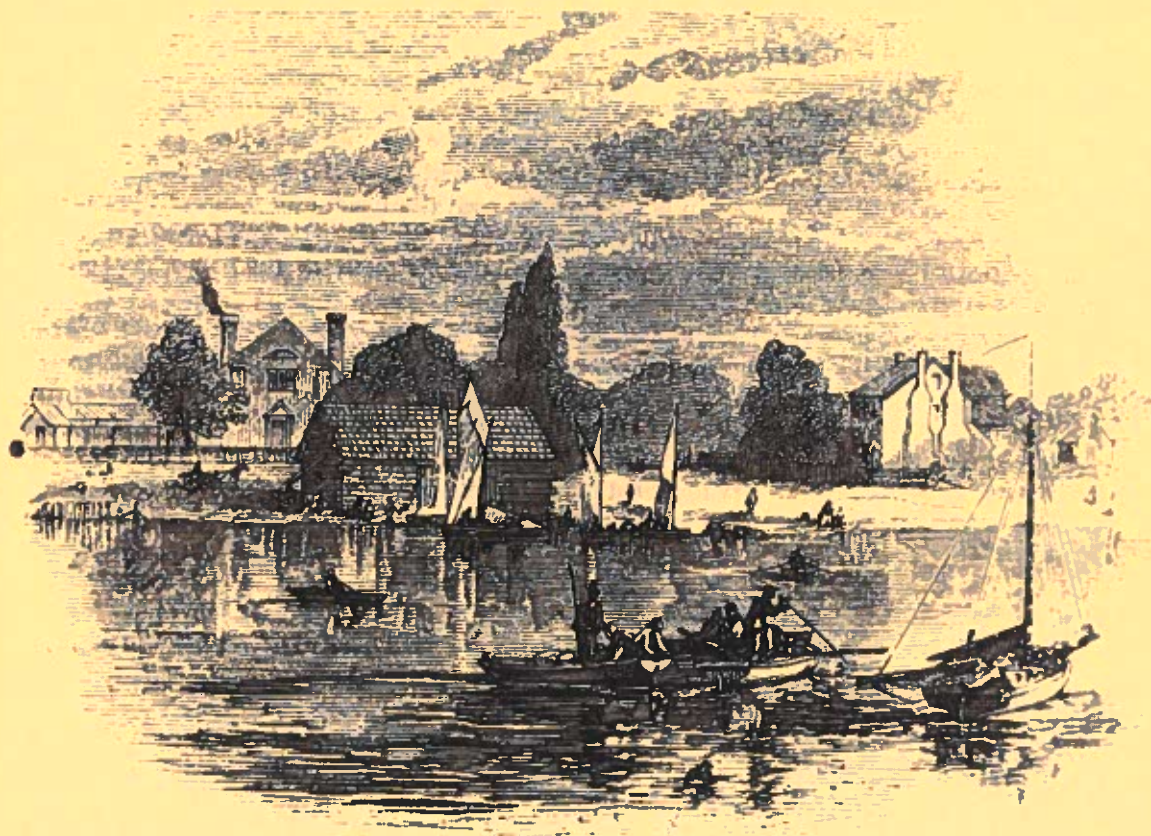


Figure 8. Engraved view of Currituck, N.C., 1859.
Harper's New Monthly Magazine. May 1859, 18: 758.



PROVISIONING, 1859.

Figure 9. Engraved view of "provisioning" booths, Currituck, N.C., 1859. *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*. May 1859, 18: 760.



Figure 10. Currituck County Courthouse after dismantling of front porch, c. 1910-1920. *Collection of Mrs. Barbara Snowden, Currituck, N.C.*



Figure 11. Currituck County Courthouse with partially dismantled retail "booth", or stall, c.1910-1920. *Collection of Mrs. Barbara Snowden, Currituck, N.C.*

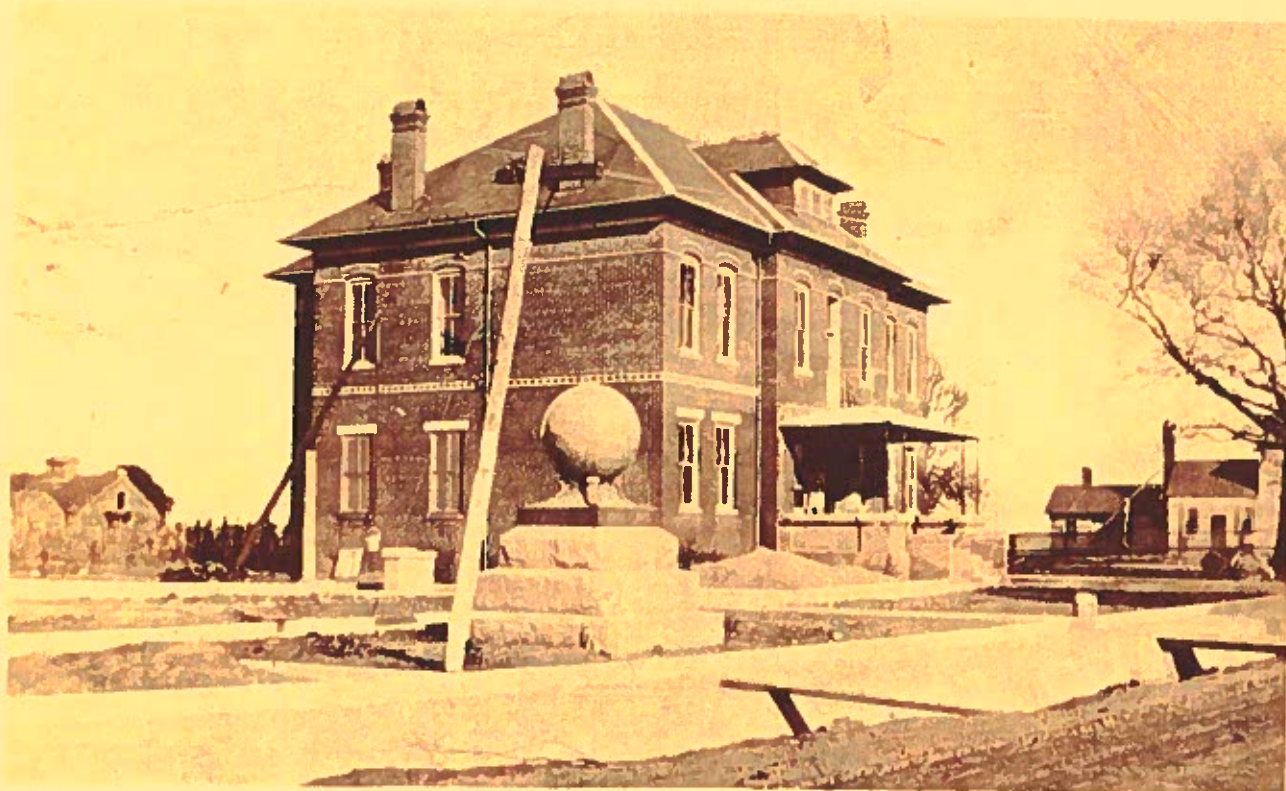


Figure 12. Currituck County Courthouse with Confederate monument, c.1920-1930. *Collection of Mrs. Barbara Snowden, Currituck, N.C.*



Figure 13. Currituck County Courthouse with Confederate monument, c.1920-1930. *North Carolina Division of Archives and History.*



Figure 14. Currituck County Courthouse, c.1920-1930.
Collection of Mrs. Barbara Snowden, Currituck, N.C.



Figure 15. Currituck County Courthouse and county jail,
with early roadworking equipment, c. 1920-1930.
Collection of Mrs. Barbara Snowden, Currituck, N.C.



Figure 16. Currituck County Courthouse and county jail,
with early roadworking equipment, c. 1920-1930.
Collection of Mrs. Barbara Snowden, Currituck, N.C.



Figure 17. Currituck County Courthouse, c.1948.
North Carolina Division of Archives and History.



Figure 18. Currituck County Courthouse, c. 1948.
North Carolina Division of Archives and History.



Figure 19. Currituck County Courthouse, c. 1940s.
Collection of Mrs. Barbara Snowden, Currituck, N.C.



Figure 20. Currituck County Courthouse, c.1955.
North Carolina Division of Archives and History.



Figure 21. Currituck County Courthouse, 1975.
North Carolina Division of Archives and History.



Figure 22. Currituck County Courthouse, 1997.



Figure 23. Currituck County Courthouse, 1997.

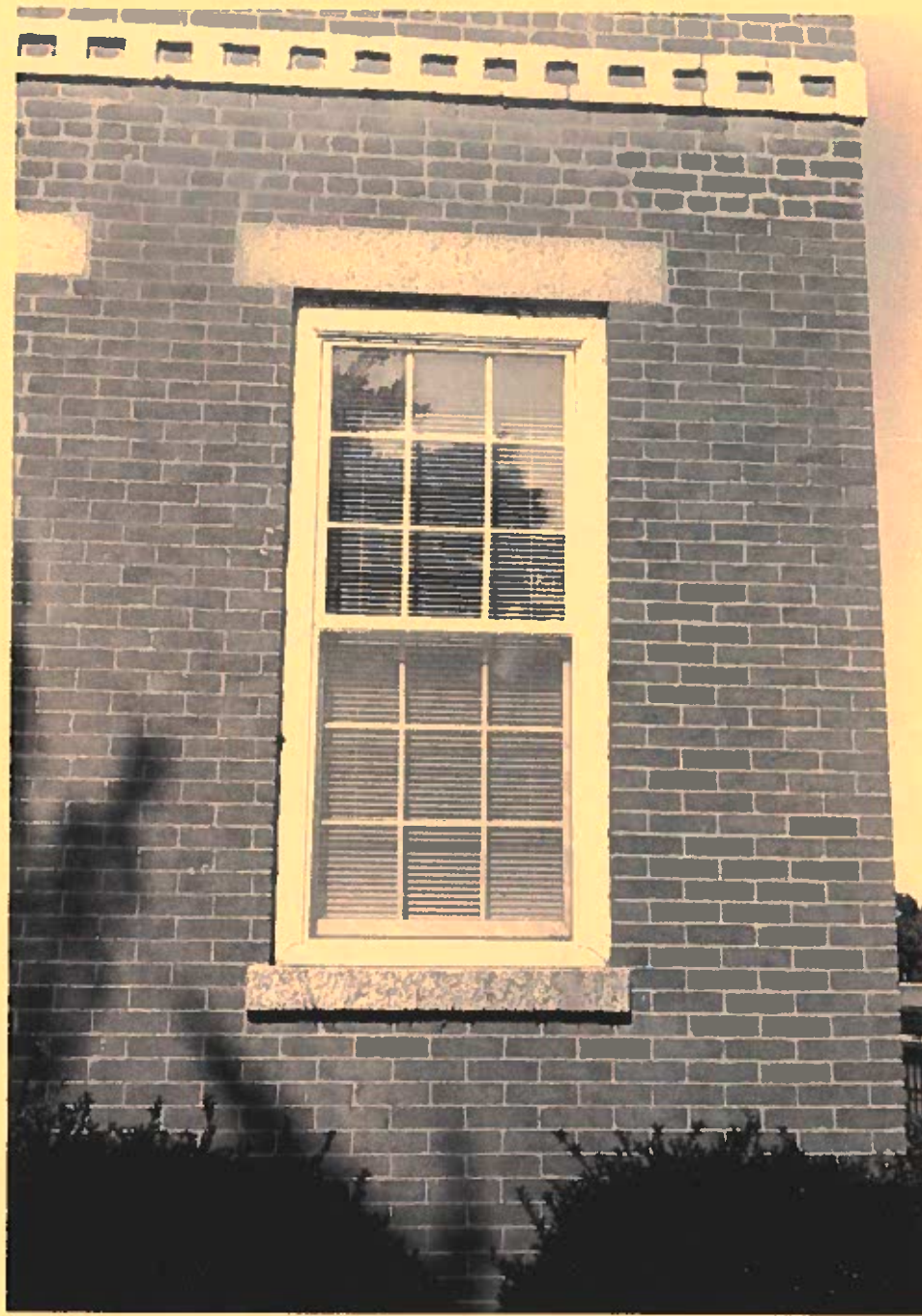


Figure 24. Currituck County Courthouse, window, façade, first-story, c.1842-1844. [*replacement sash*]



Figure 25. Currituck County Courthouse, brickwork, façade, first-story, c.1842-1844.



Figure 26. Currituck County Courthouse, west elevation.

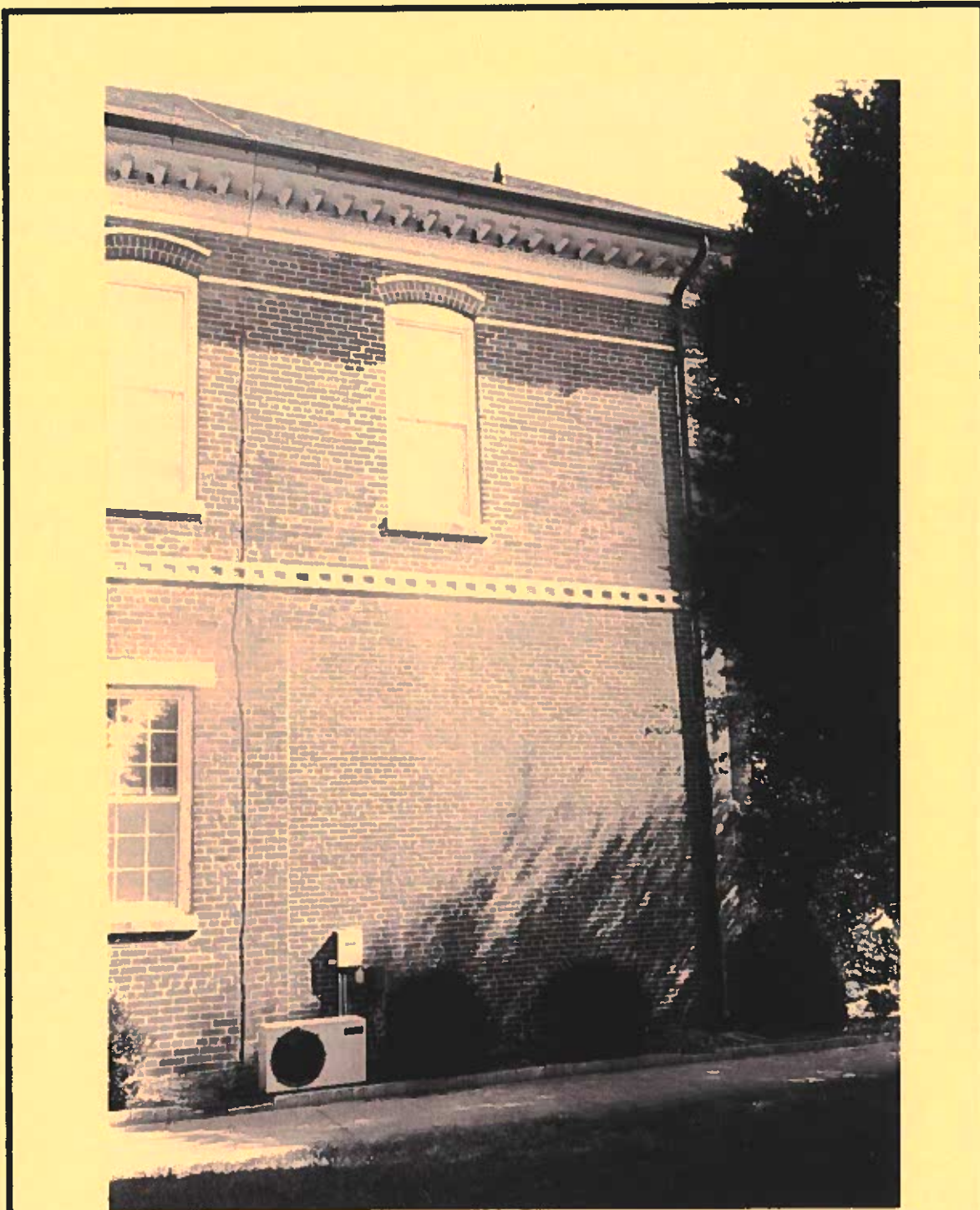


Figure 27. Currituck County Courthouse, west elevation, detail showing vertical joint between c. 1842-1844 brickwork and 1897-1898 brickwork.



Figure 28. Currituck County Courthouse, west elevation, showing vertical slit vent [lower left], c. 1842-1844.



Figure 29. Currituck County Courthouse, east elevation, showing rough-dressed granite foundation, c. 1842-1844.



Figure 30. Currituck County Courthouse, west elevation, initials "J A B" and "H T" carved into c. 1842-1844 brickwork.



Figure 31. Currituck County Courthouse, west elevation, 1897-1898 addition.



Figure 32. Currituck County Courthouse, window, west elevation, first-story, 1897-1898. [*replacement sash*]



Figure 33. Currituck County Courthouse, window arch and hood, façade, second-story, 1897-1898.



Figure 34. Currituck County Courthouse, cast iron vent grille, east elevation, first-story, 1897-1898.



Figure 35. Currituck County Courthouse, double door leading onto roof of porch, façade, second-story, 1897-1898.

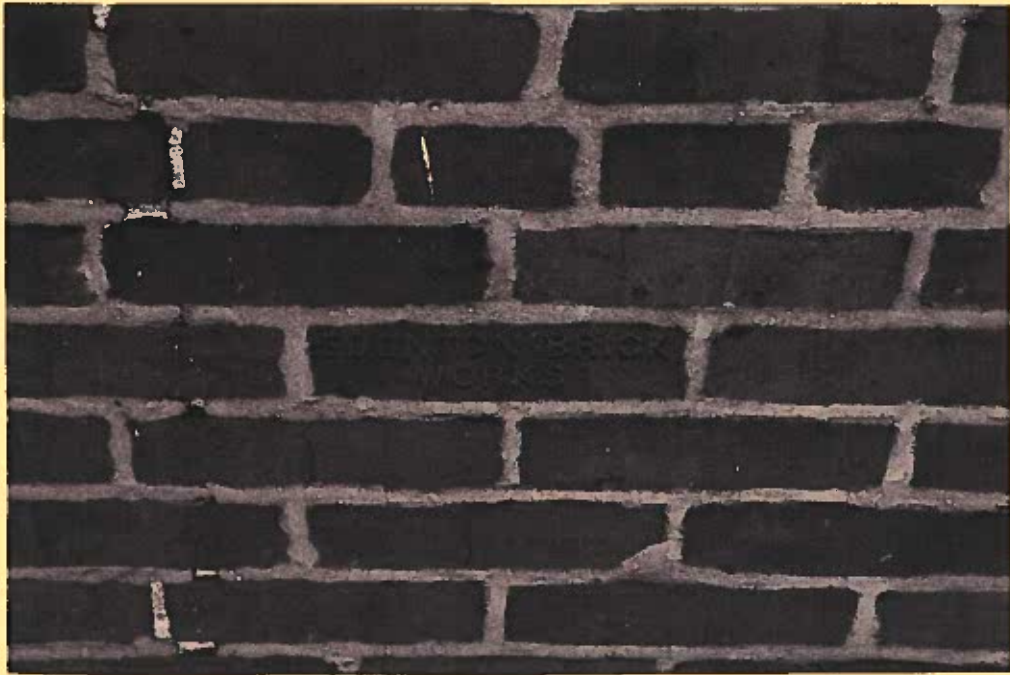


Figure 36. Currituck County Courthouse, brick impressed with the words "Edenton Brick Works", façade, 1897-1898.



Figure 37. Currituck County Courthouse, brick impressed with initials and date "W.O.S 1897", east elevation, 1897-1898.



Figure 38. Currituck County Courthouse, brick impressed with initials "W.O.S", east elevation, 1897-1898.



Figure 39. Currituck County Courthouse, brick impressed with the date "1897", west elevation, 1897-1898.



Figure 40. Currituck County Courthouse, entrance hall, front door and double stair, 1897-1898.



Figure 41. Currituck County Courthouse, entrance hall, east stair, 1897-1898.



Figure 42. Currituck County Courthouse, second floor hall, courtroom doors, 1897-1898.



Figure 43. Currituck County Courthouse, second floor courtroom, window, 1897-1898.



Figure 44. Currituck County Courthouse, first floor, Register of Deeds' office, records vault door, 1897-1898.

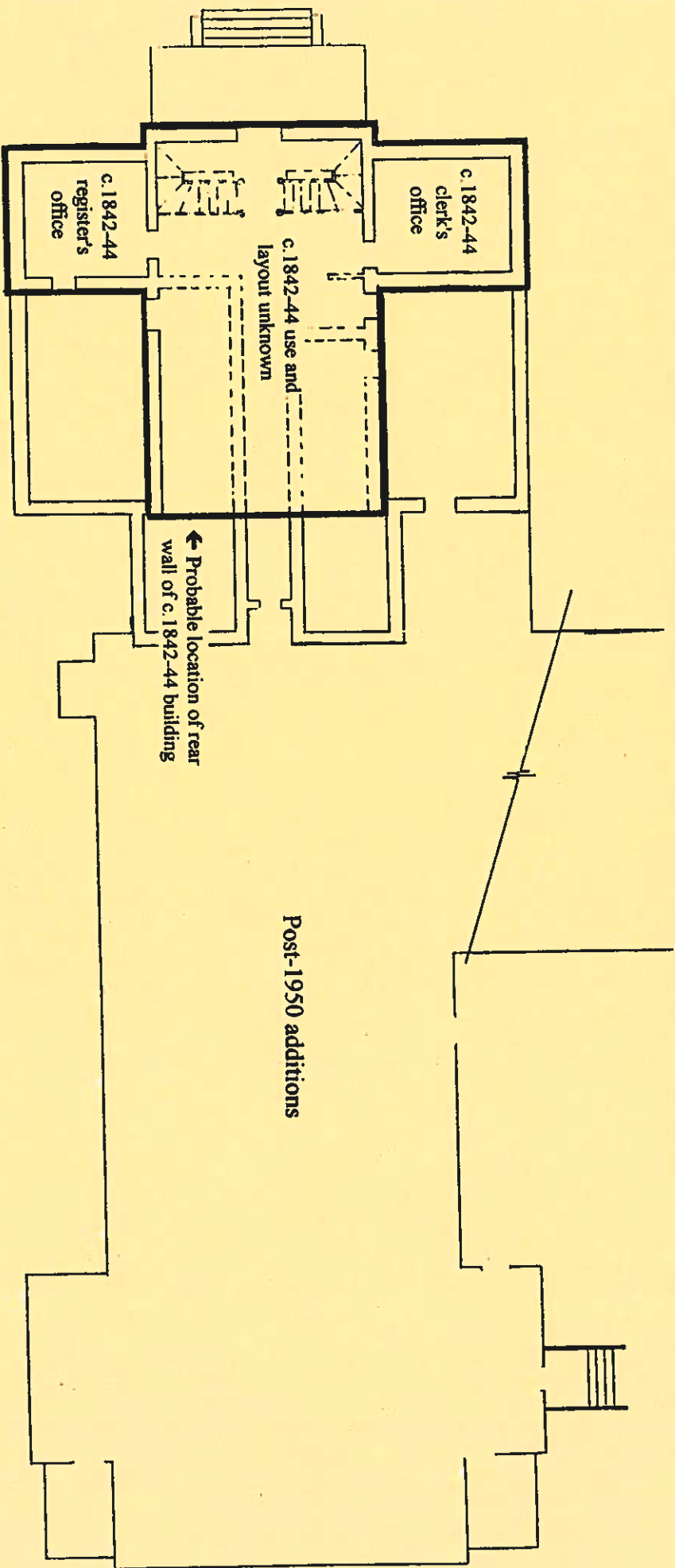


Figure 45. Currituck County Courthouse, first floor, Register of Deeds' office, records vault interior shutters, 1897-1898.



Figure 46. Currituck County Courthouse, first floor, Clerk of Court's office, records vault, ceiling, 1897-1898.

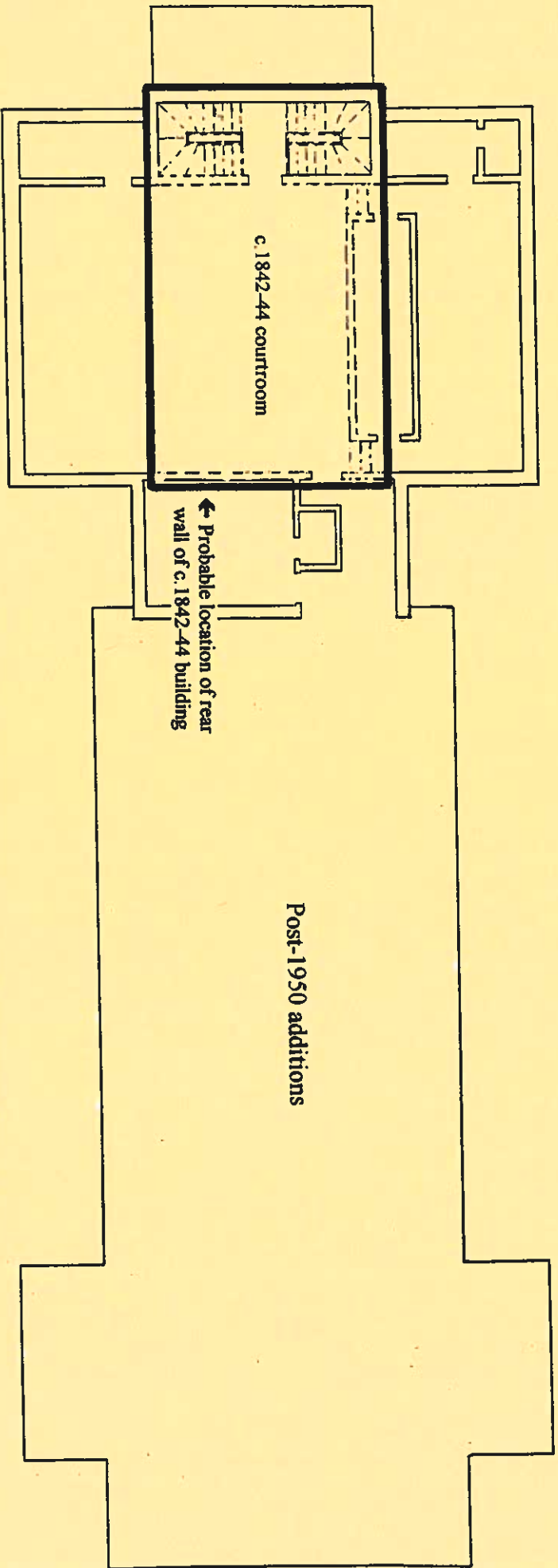
**Figure 47. Currituck County Courthouse, plan of first floor,
showing outline of c.1842-1844 courthouse.**



Currituck County Courthouse
Plan of First Floor

Heavy lines indicate original c. 1842-1844 courthouse.
 Dashed lines indicate present-day features not a part of original building.

**Figure 48. Currituck County Courthouse, plan of second floor,
showing outline of c.1842-1844 courthouse.**



c. 1842-44 courtroom

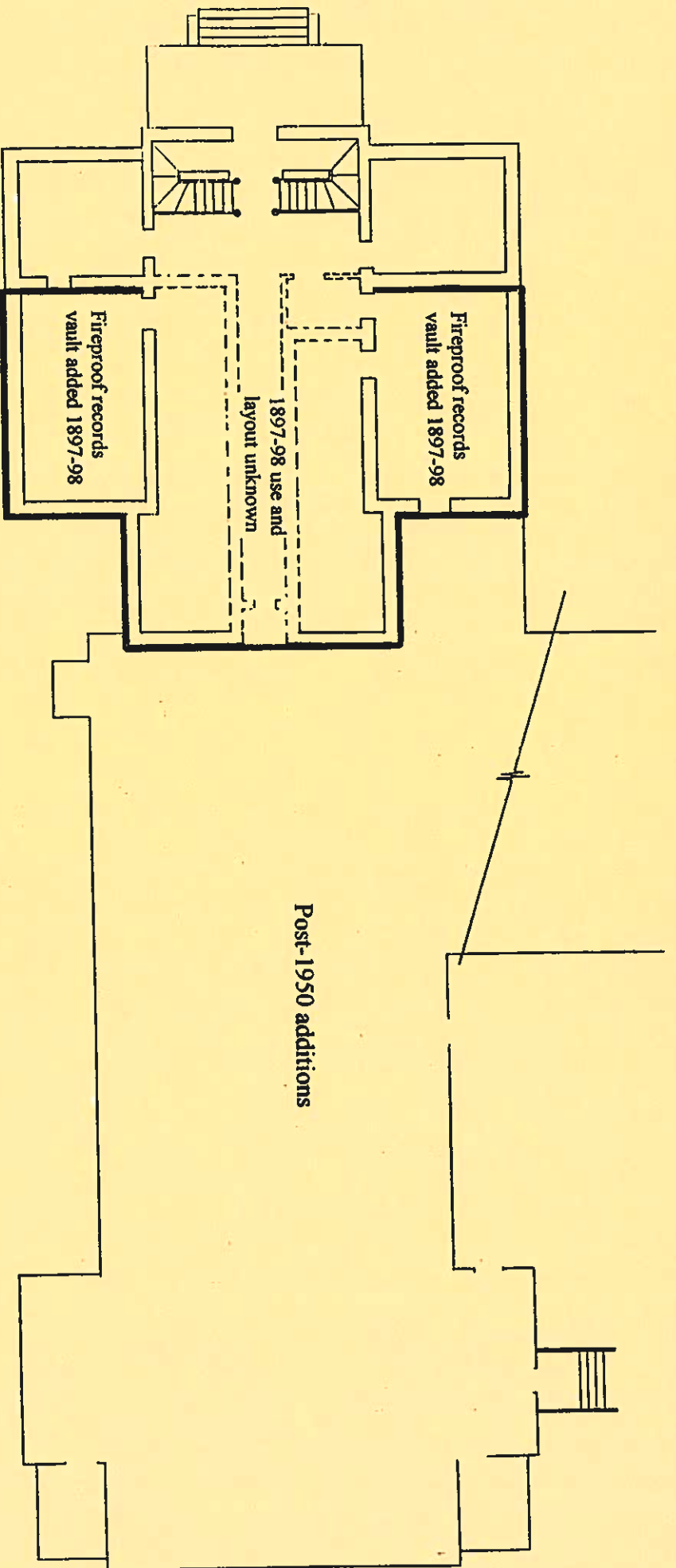
← Probable location of rear wall of c. 1842-44 building

Post-1950 additions

**Currituck County Courthouse
Plan of Second Floor**

Heavy lines indicate original c. 1842-1844 courthouse.
Dashed lines indicate present-day features not a part of original building.

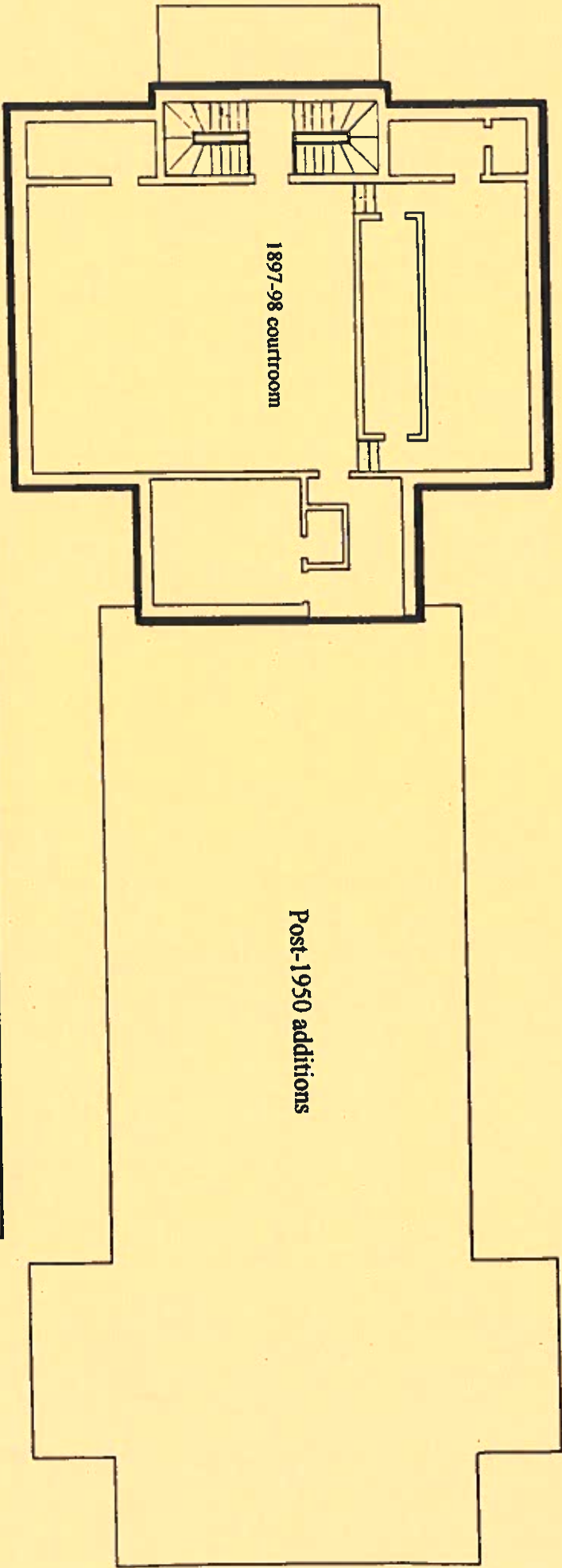
**Figure 49. Currituck County Courthouse, plan of first floor,
showing outline of 1897-1898 additions.**



Currituck County Courthouse
Plan of First Floor

Heavy lines indicate additions of 1897-1898.
 Dashed lines indicate present-day features not a part of 1897-1898 additions.

**Figure 50. Currituck County Courthouse, plan of second floor,
showing outline of 1897-1898 additions..**



**Currituck County Courthouse
Plan of Second Floor**

Heavy lines indicate additions of 1897-1898.
Dashed lines indicate present-day features not a part
of 1897-1898 additions.

Acknowledgments

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Appendices

**Appendix 1 – abstracts of minutes of County Court
of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, 1820-1868.**

**Currituck County, North Carolina
County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions
Abstracts of minutes, 1820-1868.**

**Abstracts concerning the construction, repair, and furnishing of the Currituck
County courthouse and jail.**

29 February 1820

"Ordered that Brickhouse Bell[,] Saml. Salyear Jun^r
& Thomas Sanderson be appointed Commissioners to
view & examine the situation of the Gaol of this County
and report to next term whether in your opinion
the said Gaol of said County will be fortified and
in the strongest Condition by a wall of Brick wood
or stone to be built as a bull wark in security of
the said Gaol from assaults &c.

1 March 1820

"Order that Isaac Baxter shiff [sic] be allowed be allowed [sic]
the sum of \$20 for having stocks and Correction Post
Erected on the public ground or Square at the Courthouse
and also a further sum of \$8. for a new patent Lock
for the Gaol of said Country as per bill rendered and
allowed in all twenty eight dollars &c.

31 May 1820

"On report to[sic] the Commission to this Term made for
the further security of the Jail of said County and
accommodations for a Jailor &c &c B. Bell[,] S. Salyear Jun^r
T. Sanderson []
It is ordered that Spence Hall[,] Caleb Etheridge and Sam
-uel Ferebee sen^r be appointed Commissioners to Contract
with a fit person to build a house Contegeous [sic] to the jail
of Said County on the public Ground for the reception
of a Jailor &c to occupy [,] to be let to the undertaker
to Complete the said house & wall round the said
Jail [,] to have to have [sic] the use of the said house and property

vested in him for the L[ast] term of years for the
Completing the same according to contract with the
said Commissioners [,] that they make report thereof []
their hands & Seals to next Term &c &c."

30 August 1820

"Ordered that the Sheriff have made a strong substantial out-
side door to the Jail of said County with a Strong lock &
Key thereto and also have the Coroner [sic]* boards put on in good
[] repairing upon said Jail & that he render
[] the same to next Term &C.

[* probable 1830 transcription error, see 30 May 1821]

30 May 1821

[p306]

"Ordered that Isaac Baxter sheriff be allowed the
Sum of \$19.0¹/₂ for making new Doors & Plank nails
lock and repairs to Corner &c of the Jail as per his
a/c rendered and that he be allowed the same
out of the County Tax &c."

26 November 1821

"On Motion Ordered that Isaac Baxter Sheriff be allowed
the sum of \$1.⁵⁰/₁₀₀ for 3 necessary tubs furnished for Jail
By said Isaac Baxter."

27 November 1821

"Ordered that Jeremiah Land be allowed \$3 for the present
for Keeping the Court house &c."

28 November 1821

"Wednesday Nov. 27 [*sic*] Ordered that Jeremiah Land be allowed the sum of Eight dollars for Keeping and scowering the Court house from 27 March 1819 to 27 Nov 1821. two years and Eight months at \$3 pr year as long as he shall Keep the Court house from the said 27 November 1821. Ordered that Jeremiah Land be allowed the sum of five dollars for blocking the Court House up."

28 May 1822

"Ordered that Isaac Baxter furnish stands, weights & measures for the County of Currituck and return his a/c to Court."

27 August 1822

"Ordered that Caleb Etheridge furnish materials to repair the Jail & employ some Carpenters to perform the work and make Return to next Court and have it completed by the Superior Court."

25 February 1823

"Ordered that Sam^l Ferebee Rent out the lands whereon the booths now stand on the public Ground for one year and account with the same with C[]"

25 [*sic*] February 1823

"Ordered that the Sheriff have good Locks on the Jury Box & Return his a/c to Court."

28 May 1823

"Ordered that Caleb Etheridge, Enoch Ball, Sam^l Salyears, Andrew Bray, Mitchel Simmons, Thomas Whitehall, and Dennis Simmons or a majority of them examine the County Jail and fix on some place for a house and wall to be attached to the Jail of said County for the safe Keeping of Prisoners confined therein and that they estimate the Cost of the same and make Return to the next Court."

25 November 1823

"Ordered that Caleb Etheridge, Daniel Lindsay and Sam^l Salyear be app^d Commisioners to contract with Jeremiah Land for a Lot of Ground adjoining the Jail, also that they contract with some person or persons for timber to build a house adjoining the public Jail - Also that they contract with some person or persons for stones to repair and build a wall around the County Jail according to a report made this term & Costs &c."

26 February 1824

"Ordered that Negro D[u]ck be taken to the public Whipping Post & given 39 Lashes on the Bare Back by the Sheriff of the County of Currituck."

2 June 1824

"Ordered that the Clerk issue to Cartwright Bell a certificate to the County Treasurer for what he is to receive for cutting sundry scantling plank &c for the public Building at Currituck C. House by his producing the Commissioners Certificate for what quantity he has delivered & what price & the full amt to be paid him by the Treasurer."

"Ordered that Isaac Baxter furnish window Glass for the Court house and H[inges] & present his acct to Court when Complete."

2 March 1825

"Ordered that Cartwright Bell be appointed to repair the Public Building untill may Term and render his bill for the same."

29 November 1825

"Ordered that Carterite [*sic*] Bell be appointed Treasurer of the publick Buildings and that they [*sic*] give bond agreeable to the law in the Sums of \$2000."

30 November 1825

"Ordered that Thomas Poyner Sen^r W.D. Barnard and John B. Jones Esquires be added to the number of commissioners here before appointed to finish the Publick House on the public ground and that they be and that they are hereby uthorised [*sic*] to finish the said building and to rent it out or dispose of [*sic*] it to the best advantage to the county and it is further ordered that any three of them shall constitute quorum sufficient to transact any business relative to the Same."

28 February 1826

"Ordered the Clerk Issue to Cartwright Bell Commissioner of Public Buildings [] [] per account filed."

1 March 1826

"Cartwright Bell Treasurer of the Public Buildings made his report recommending sundry improvements to the Court house New house & Jail And it is ordered that Dennis Dozier & Enoch Ball together with the treasurer of the public buildings do examinene [*sic*] the necessary attention of the public

Buildings and contract for repairing of them the Court house & Jail agreeable to the [act] of Assembly in such cases made & provided & at the same time furnish a copy of the report to the treasurer of Public Buildings."

30 May 1826

"Cartwright Bell was reelected Treasurer of the Public Buildings of who [sic] Bonded according to Law with D. Dozier as security."

28 November 1826

"Ordered that Cartwright Bell esquire do allow the sum of \$27- 32 Cents for Ballance due in furnishing Timber for the New House."

29 November 1826

"Ordered that C. Bell be allowed \$173-11 Cents for money expended on the public Building."

28 February 1826

"Ordered that Cartwright Bell be allowed \$13 for the stock &c."

29 May 1827

"Ordered that Jail fees for the future be forty Cents for each Day."

"Ordered that Thomas Williams & Reuben Taylor be allowed \$26.12½ cents for 5438 shingles at \$4.83 cts per M. Issue to Isaac Baxter sheriff."

"Ordered that Joshua Baxter be allowed \$249.99 Cents for building a house on the public Land according to contract - Issue to Isaac Baxter - sheriff."

"Ordered that Caleb Etheridge be allowed six dollars & fifty Cents for services rendered as a commissioner in receiving the timber for the Publick house Issue to J. Baxter."

28 August 1827

"Cartwright Bell is appointed Treasurer of the Publick Building who entered into bond with Tully Bill [sic] & Samuel Ferebee as securities in the Sum of _____"

"Ordered that Caleb Forbes, C. Etheridge John B. Jones together with the treasure [sic] of Public Building be appointed commissioners to finish the [sic] erected for the Jailors. Repair the said Jail & Build & [sic] a good & sufficient wall around it of Brick & Stone & thas [sic] let the same at Publick Auction at 20 days Notice."

29 August 1827

"Ordered that Cartwright Bell be allowed the Sum of \$31.63 cents for the Ballance due on reports as Treasurer of publick buildings."

26 November 1827

"Corneleus Forbes } Petition for a Stove &c.
To } Ordered [thusly] the Court that the Treasurer
The Court } of the Public Building furnish a
stove for the benefit of the prisoners who may be confined
in the jail & that Jailor furnish fuel for the use of the
stove and that the Prisoner C. Forbes be allowed to
remain in the debtors apartment & that the Treasurer
of the public Building & [sic] the setting up the said
stove immediately."

27 May 1828

"Ordered that C. Bell be allowed \$12.00 cts for his services as treasurer of Public Buildings"

"Ordered that in future the Jail fees be 30 cents per day for each person confined in the County Jail."

"Ordered that G.C. Marchant. Joshua Baxter Lemuel Taylor be appointed Commissioners to Draft and contract for the building of A new Brick Jail."

"Taxes Laid as follows viz

Parish Taxes	18 cts on the Pole	6 cts on the \$100 - value
County Tax	30 cts on the Pole	10 cts on the \$100 - value Land
Public Buidings	50 cts on the Pole	10 cts on the \$100 value Land
State Tax	<u>20</u> [cts] on Pole	<u>6</u> Cents on the \$100 dol val Land
	118	32

27 August 1828

"Ordered that Daniel Lindsey William Woodhouse and James G. Hill be appointed to Examine the work done on the New house to see if the work is done according to Contract & report."

"Ordered that Patrick Northern & Jacob Aydelett [&] G.C. Marchant with the Treasurer of Public Buildings the Commissioners to examine to [sic] Jailors House to say whether it is done according to contract or not both wood and Brick work and make their report to next Court."

"Ordered that the Jailor be directed to Chain Negro Elie now a Prisoner in the Common Jail with a good and sufficient Chain to a staple in the Back part of the Jail so that he cannot Get to the window also have hand Cuffs put on him."

25 November 1828

"G.C. Marchant Patrick Northern & Jacob Aydelett
be appointed to examine the work done on the Public
Buildings made their Report stating that the work
was not done ~~according~~ in workmanlike maner
nor according to Contract was confirmed"

26 May 1829

"They proceed to lay the Tax for the Public Buildings at Sixty cent
on evry [sic] Pole 20 cents on the \$100 value of Land - County tax laid
52 Cents on the Pole and 18 Cent on the \$100 value,
Parish Tax at 18 Cents on the Pole & 6 cents on the \$100 value of land."

[from original minute book]

"Whereas Tho^s Etheridge has instituted a suit against the Commissioners of Caleb
Etheridge, Caleb Forbes & John B. Jones for the Contract of Building Chimneys to the
Jailors House and wall around the Jail, The Court and Tho^s Etheridge agreed that they
would refer it to W^m C. Etheridge and Dennis Simmons and if they do not agree for them
to choose an umpire and that [there] award to be binding provided it does not exceed the
original sum and make Report at August Term next.

27 May 1829 *[from original minute book]*

"ordered that Carterite [sic] Bell Treasurer of Public buildings pay unto Jeremiah Land
Eight Dollars for Keeping and scouring the Courthouse from March 1819 to 27 Nov 1821
& that he be allowed \$3 per year for keeping the Court House from the said 27 november
1821 until [nov 27th 1826] and five dollars for blocking the Court house up."

1 September 1829

"Ordered by the Court the the [sic] Award of Dennis Simmons
& William C. Etheridge in the Case of the suit of Thomas
Etheridge for Two hundred and forty four dollars and
that the County pay the Cost &c.
Ordered by the Court that the work to be done by James Lee

by former contract on the new house and publick [Ward] and report not done agreeable to Contract be refered to Joshua Baxter and William C. Etheridge they to examine the work and report to next Court the value of the work done not to exceed the Contract etc."

2 September 1829

"Ordered that the Treasurer of the public buildings pay unto Thomas Etheridge two hundred and forty four dollars and the cost of the suit out of any money not already appropriated."

24 November 1829

"Ordered that the Treasurer of Public Buildings pay to James Lee the sum of thirty five Dollars for work done on the Public House &c."

"It is unanimously Resolved by the Court that our representatives be and they are hereby requested to endeavor to have a law passed to authorize the County Court of Currtuck to lay a Tax sufficient to finish the House of Public Buildings on the Public grounds & Erect the necessary out Houses that ought to be attached thereto & also to authorize them to dispose of the same to the best advantage of the County."

22 February 1830

"Ordered that the Clerk get a new Case made for the safe keeping of the Records of the County & that he bring in the workman[s] account for the same &c."

1 June 1830

"The Court proceeded to Lay Taxes for the County of Currtuck for the year 1830

County Tax Sixty cents on the Pole 30 cents on
" " the \$100 valuation of Land
Parish Tax Ten cents on the Pole & 3¹/₃ cts on
" " the \$100 valuation of Land
Public Building Tax - Sixty cents on the Pole & []
" " Cents on the \$100 valuation of Land

31 May 1831

"The following are the Taxes Laid by the Court
Patroll Tax. Ordered that ten cents be levied
and collected on each taxable pole of Blacks.

Public Buildings Tax. fifty five Cents on the pole
and Twenty Cents on the \$100. value of Land

Parish Taxes. Laid at 10 cents on the pole & three &
a half cents on the \$100 value of Land

County Tax. Laid at sixty Cents on the Pole and 22 cts
on the \$100 Value of Land."

No minutes for May Term 1832 through February Term 1838

27 November 1838

"ordered that John C. Hatfield be authorized and directed
forth with to Erect a comfortable Stove in the room in
which Esther Toller is now confined in Jail and to covey [*sic*]
the pipe through the victualing hole and the Jailor of the
County is ordered to furnish fuel of quallity and quantity
Sufficient to Keep her comfortable during the time of her
imprisonment."

28 May 1839

"on Motion ordered that Isaac Baxter be allowed the Sum of fifteen dollars for [raising] the Ground before & at the Courthouse door."

"to the worshipful Court of Currituck. the undersigned appointed at May Term 1837. for the purpose of Planing [sic] a Court House, beg leave Respectfully to Report that in consequence of circumstances over which they had no control the order of appointment did not come to hand until yesterday So that they are not able to report upon any particular plan for the Said House, but Respectfully beg leave to suggest the laying a Tax that Shall not exceed one thousand dollars for the purpose of purchasing the materials and the appointment of Some person or persons to make contracts for the furnishing materials as Soon as the quantity and quality of each and every article may be ascertained and made known by the undersigned May Term 1839

G.C. Marchant in behalf
of Commisioners"

"ordered that Caleb Etheridge Gedion C. Marchant and Tulley Bell Esqrs Be appointed Commissioners to Contract for Bricks and timber to be delivered next Spring for the purpose of Building a new Court House."

"on motion the following Tax was ordered to be Laid for the support of the Parish. to wit twenty cents on the Poll and 10 cts on each \$100 worth of Land.

County Tax 30 cts on the Poll and 16 cents on each \$100 worth of Land for the Purpose of Building a new Court House 50 cts on the Poll and 16 cts on each Hundred dollars worth of Land."

25 May 1840

"ordered that the parish Tax. for 1839. be twenty cents on the poll & Ten cents on each Hundred dollars worth of Land. for the support of Common Schools ten Cents on each Poll. for the purpose of Building a new Court House fifty cents on the Poll and Sixteen Cents on each Hundred dollars worth of Land. County Tax thirty Cents on the Poll and sixteen Cents on each Hundred dollars worth of Land."

"ordered that the Commissioners heretofore appointed to form a Plan for a New Court House, be discharged, and new Commissioners appointed"

"ordered that John C. Hatfield and Benjamin T. Simmons be appointed to Have the Jail and such Repairs on the Court House as they may deem expedient."

26 February 1841

"ordered that Dennis Simmons, John N Wilson, David Morse Benjamin T Simmons, John Simmons, Tully L Dozier, William Jarv[e]s, Isaac Tillet, Spencer Daniel, & Thomas L[]ford be appointed Commissioners to Contract for the materials and the Building a new Court House of Brick."

"A majority of the acting Justices be present ordered that the following Tax be lev[i]ed for 1840, as follows viz
Parish Tax fifteen cents on the Poll and six cents on each Hundred dollars worth of Land
County Tax Twenty five cents on the Poll and and [sic] Ten cents on each Hundred dollars worth of Land for the purpose of Building a New Cort [sic] House
Twenty five cents on the Poll and Ten cents on Each Hundred dollars worth of Land
For Common Schools Twenty five cents on the Poll and Ten cents on each Hundred dollars worth of Land"

28 February 1842

"ordered by the court that Isaac Baxter former Sheriff of Currituck County pay over to Dennis Simmons one of the Commissioners of the public Buildings Such an amount of money as he may have in his hands or due to said County for the purpose of Building a new Court House, that is to say the amount of Taxes Lev[i]ed for that purpose while the Said Isaac Baxter was Sheriff."

"ordered that Alfred Perkins be appointed Commissioner to Superintend the Building a new Court House in room of Tully L Dozier former Commissioner."

1 March 1842

"ordered that Dennis Simmons proceed to the city of Baltimore [forth] with [sic] and purchase Bricks for a new Court House the quality [sic] and quantity is left to his own Judgment"

28 May 1842

"ordered that the new Court House be placed on the back of the old, as near as it conveniently can be."

"ordered that the county Tax be laid @ 25 cents on each Pole and 8 cts on each \$100. worth of land and Court House Tax be laid @ 25 cents on each Pole & 8 cents on each Hundred Dollars worth of land no school nor Parish Tax to be laid."

7 February 1843

"ordered that the clerk issue notices to Isaac Baxter former sheriff and S B Dozier present sheriff Requesting them to pay over the mon[ies] they have collected for the purpose of Building a new Court House in to [sic] the hands of the commissioners of Public Buildings and make return of proceedings to May Term 1843 stating whether they pay or not. and on failure to pay over they be delt [sic] with as the law directs."

28 August 1843

"ordered that Joseph Dey have leave to Remove the whipping [sic] Post to the North West corner of the Public Ground."

26 February 1844

"on motion it is ordered that the clerk purchase three Ink Stands for the use of the Bench."

"on motion order that Jno Humphres, Tully L Dozier and Wallis Bray be appointed a Committee to Settle the accounts and Vouchers of Dennis Simmons acting Commissioner of the Building the New Court House also to Settle his own individual account for his Services rendered and make Report"

"on motion ordered that Caleb Etheridge [sen.] be allowed the Sum of Seventeen dollars & 91 cents for Six Hundred & Twenty feet of Rafters and Bond timber for the new Court House and the further Sum of forty Six dollars & 46/100 for twenty three hundred and twenty three feet of laths and strips and the further Sum of one Hundred and twenty nine dollars and 25/100 for twenty three hundred and fifty feet of flooring Plank, and the Sum of one Hundred and twenty four dollars for Sixteen thousand Bricks at \$7.75 pr 1000."

7 May 1844

"on motion the following Tax was laid for the Year 1843 Viz. State Tax twenty cents on the Pole & six cents on each \$100. worth of land.
School Tax twenty cents on the Pole & Six cents on the \$100 worth of land
County Tax none Parish Tax none"

25 August 1845

"Ordered that all the Booths that are occupied either by those who Retail Spiritus Liquors or other articles be removed to the west side of the Jail before the next Superior Court and that the occupants be informed accordingly."

31 May 1847

"On motion in open Court it is ordered by the Said Court that John B. Jones Esqr Joshua Harrison and John C. Hatfield Esqr be and they are hereby appointed to Examine the accounts and Vouchers of Dennis Simmons Esqr

Contractor and pay master for the Building of the new Court House in said County at [sic] Report to the next Term of this Court.

Ordered that the County Court Clerk have the Glass Repaired in the windows in the Court House and draw on the Sheriff for the Same.

30 Aug 1847

"ordered that Tully Williams be allowed the Sum of \$23.50 for timber &c to Repair the Jail -
ordered that Joseph Dey be allowed the Sum of \$138.60 for Repairing Jail."

"ordered that Samuel B. Dozier be appointed to Sell the Shingles plank lead and other articles not used in Repairing the Jail on a Credit of three months and Report to the next Term of this Court."

28 February 1848

"ordered that Joseph Dey be allowed the Sum of \$2. 20/100 for Iron work on Jail in 1847."

27 August 1849

"ordered that B.T. Simmons furnish one Rime of writing paper three Ink Stands and one Bottle of Ink."

24 November 1851

"Ordered by the Court that Benjamin T. Simmons, E. Simmons and Joseph S. Dey put up a horse rack above the Court House."

"It is ordered by the Court, that G.C. Marchant and Wallis Bray be appointed to con-

tract for the building of a Portico or Porch in front of the Court House, of Such dimensions as they may think proper and for the removal of the Stair Case from the inside of the Court room So as to enter up Stairs by the middle window of the Second Story in front. Said window to be changed to a door, and to alter and improve the Bar & Clerks Desk So as to afford more room and convenience, and for Such/ repairs as may be necessary for the preservation of the Building, including painting Glazing &c."

23 February 1852

". . . the following Tax for 1851 -

viz, Parish Tax	20 cts on the Poll	6 cts on the \$100 worth of Land			
State Tax	20 "	" 6 "	100 "	"	"
School "	20 "	" 6 "	100 "	"	"
County "	20 "	" 12 "	100 "	"	"
Insane Hospital	5¼	1¾ "	100 "	"	"

29 November 1852

"Ordered by the Court, that the former order in relation to repairs and improvements of the Court House be rescinded and that in lieu thereof G.C. Marchant and Wallis Bray be appointed to enlarge the house by adding to its length Sixteen feet and to its width twelve feet, that they make such alteration therein as they may think will add to the Convenience of the Bench, Bar - and officers of the Court, and they do and perform all other things necessary for the preservation of the house Such as Blinds, lightning-rod [,] painting &c."

28 February 1853

"The Court proceeded to lay the following Tax to wit for the Year 1852 - viz.

County Tax	65 cents on the Poll and 20 cents on each \$100. worth of land
Parish "	20 cents on the " and 6 cents on each \$100. worth of Land
School "	20 cents on the " and 6 cents on each \$100. worth of Land
State "	20 cents on the " and 6 cents on each \$100. worth of Land

and other Taxables as the law directs &c &c.
Insane hospitall &c &c as the law directs."

"on motion ordered that the order made at November Term 1852. ~~appointing and~~ authorizing and appointing G.C. Marchant and Wallis Bray Esqr. to enlarge the Court House by adding to its length and width and putting such other Repairs as they may deem necessary be and the Same is Recinded in toto."

30 May 1853

"Ordered by the Court that the following repairs and alterations be made on the inside of the Court House - that the Seat of the Magistrates be taken down, and that the plastering in the corners be removed so that the seat of the Magistrates may pass across the end of the House from one Side to the other and said Seat be put up in due form, and that the seat for Jurors be put in front of said Magistrates seat extending from the steps binding to said Magistrates seat on one side to the steps on the other side of said House binding to the aforesaid seat of Magistrates, and the seat for the members of the bar be taken down and a railing put up in due form, and chairs be furnished for the members of the bar - that the roof and outside of the Court House be put in good order and that the offices of the County and Superior C[ourts] be removed up stairs and that seats be made in the offices and on each side of the Court House for the accomodation of the Jurors - and that the following Gentlemen be appointed commissioner to have said work done before August Term 1853 - B.T. Simmons - Edmund Simmons - Jo^s S. Dey and B[enjⁿ] S. Dey.

Ordered that the following Tax be levied for the repairs of the Court House and Tulls Creek Bridge - viz - 5¢ on each poll - and 6¢ on each \$100-⁰⁰/₁₀₀ worth of Land.

31 August 1853

"ordered by the Court that Joshua W. Baxter be allowed Six dollars for a Desk ordered by the Court."

29 November 1853

"ordered by the Court that Joshua W. Baxter be allowed the Sum of Seven dollars for

repairs of [a] Book Case & one new table for use of office."

"ordered by the Court that B.S. Dey be allowed the Sum of Seven dollars & fifty cents for making key & altering lock to Jail door. Repairing three locks, making fetters and Securing them on convict & furnishing chain & attaching the Same to Jail floor."

27 February 1854

"ordered that B.S. Dey be allowed the Sum of forty five dollars & Sixty eight [sic] cents for Timber furnished for the repairs of the Court House &c to be paid out of the Tax of 1852. ordered that James Brabble be allowed ten dollars & ninety two cents for labor d[one] on Court House &c."

28 February 1854

"ordered by the Court that the main body of the Court House be extended back fourteen feet & that the Stairs Commence at the doors & run up & that the old Committee to wit J.S. Dey Benj T. Simmons E. Simmons & B.S. Dey contract & carry on the work forthwith [sic]. also ordered that the allowance for the repairs of the Court House & Tulls Creek bridge be divided and paid over to the committees for Said puposes by the Shff of the County."

29 May 1854

"The Court Proceeded to Lay the following Tax to wit for the year 1853

County Tax	\$1.00 on the polls	and	30 cents on each hundred worth of Land
Parish	" 20 cts on the Polls	and	6 cents on each \$100 worth of land
School	" 20 cents on the "	and	6 cents on each \$100 worth of land
State	" 20 cents on the "	ans	6 cents on each \$100 worth of Land

and other taxables as the Law directs &c

The additional County Tax 35 Cents on the Polls & 10 Cents on each hundred dollars worth of Land is for the Purpose of Rebuilding the Court House."

"On Motion the former order for the repairs of the Court House was recinded [*sic*] - and on Motion Wallis Bray, E.C. Lindsey & A. Perkins were appointed & Elected by the Court a Committee to draw a draft or plan for the repairs of the Court House & that they report forthwith.

after a few minutes retirement, the Said Wallis Bray, E.C. Lindsey, & A. Perkins Reported as follows to wit, Say there Shall be twelve feet added to the length of the Court House & ten feet to the width, the offices to be taken down and used in the building, that the Courtroom Shall be on the Second Story, with a portico in front, all the offices to be formed in the basement or lower Story, also two Jury rooms, the floor of the basement to be of Good Brick, the roof to be of the best Cypress Shingles, the timber used in the building to be of Good pure pine heart. We the Said committee reccommend [*sic*] that the ~~Materials for the building~~ be let out to the lowest bidder after Giving 30 days notice & that a committee of three be appointed to Superintend the work & receive the Same when finished. also that the building Committee take bond with Good Security for the faihful performance of the work all of which is respectfully Submitted to your worships.

A. Perkins

W. Bray

E.C. Lindsey

Report Received & adopted & Committee discharged.
on Motion ordered that B.T. Simmons, Wallis Bray & Joseph S. Dey be constituted a building Committee to Contract & Superintend the rebuilding of the Court House."

28 August 1854

"order for Rebuilding the Court House

On motion ordered that the former order to repair the Court House be recinded [*sic*] & the Committee be discharged from further consideration. And it is further ordered, that Benjamin T. Simmons Wallis Bray, & Joseph S. Dey be appointed to contract for the building of a Suitable Court House, on the Site of the present Court House and the Public Grounds adjoining thereto, the size of which Shall be 56 feet by 44 feet - that it have Six finished rooms in the basement, & a court room and two Jury rooms above - the entrance to the Court room, to be by two flights of steps leading to a piazza - The details of finishing to be with the discretion of the Committee - it is further ordered that the Contractor be allowed authorised and required to use Such of the material of the present Court House, as he may deem proper & fitting, in the Construction of the new House."

27 February 1855

"ordered that Joseph B. Morgan be appointed Commissioner to Contract for building a new Court House in the place of Wallis Bray Deceased."

28 May 1855

"The Court Proceeded to lay the following Tax to wit for the year 1854

Court Tax	\$1.00	on each Poll	&	30 cts	on each hundred dollars worth of land
Parish "	20 cts	on each Poll	&	6 cts	on each hundred dollars worth of Land
School "	20 cts	on each Poll	&	6 cts	on each hundred dollars worth of Land
State "	40 cts	on each Poll	&	12 cts	on each hundred dollars worth of land

28 August 1855

"ordered that Jos. Dey, Jo^s B. Morgan, and B.T. Simmons Building Committee to Contract for the building of a new Court House in Said County be, and are hereby authorized to Call on Jessee B. Lee High Sheriff of Said County, for Such Sum of Sums [*sic*] of Money as may be in his hands to be appropriated to the building of Said House and that their receipt be a voucher to him for the Same in Settlement of his public account.

26 February 1856

"The Court proceeded to lay the following Tax for the year 1855 to wit

County Tax	\$2.00	on each Poll	60 cents	on each hundred dollars worth of land
Parish "	20	" " "	6	" " " " " " "
School "	20	" " "	6	" " " " " " "
State "	40	" " "	12	" " " " " " "

27 May 1856

"order concerning new Court House

ordered by the Court that J.B. Lee Shff pay over to J.B. Morgan, B.T. Simmons

& Joseph S. Dey - all Public monies in his hands for the purpose of building new Court House - after defraying the necessary County expences and that their receipt for the Same be a legal voucher for him. The Said Commissioners are further authorized to take bond for the Completion of Said building in the Sum of Twenty thousand dollars and to take Security for the Same amt of the State."

26 August 1856

"order Concerning new Court House

ordered that the Commissioners appointed by the Court to Contract for and Superintend the building of a new Court House in this County be and the Same are hereby instructed to accept Stephen B. Tatum, John M. Drury & Everet Williamson as Sureties, to the bond of Samuel Barnet as Contractor for the Said Work to be taken in the [*sic*] of Twenty Thousand dollars, for the faithful performance of Said Work, the Brick Work of which is to be done & house shut in between the first day of March 1857, and the first of day of October of the Same."

25 November 1856

"ordered by the Court that, the Sheriff of this County be & he is authorized and directed to pay over to Benjamin T. Simmons, Joseph S. Dey & Joseph B. Morgan the Committee heretofore appointed to Contract for and Superintend the building of a Court house in this County, the Sum of two thousand Seven hundred dollars out of any funds in his hands raised upon a tax for building Said Court House: and it is further ordered & directed by the Court that the Committee appointed for building the Said Court house lend the Said Sum of two thousand Seven hundred dollars to John B. Jones, H.M. Shaw & C.J. Etheridge the Commissioners appointed by this Court to Sell the bonds of Currituck County made to raise the Subscription of Said County to the stock of the Chesapeak & Albemarle Canal, and the Said Commissioners for the sale of the bonds aforesaid are directed to deposit and hypothecate with the Said building Committee, bonds of the County of Currituck to the amount of four thousand dollars. Which bonds So deposited the Said building Committee are authorized to Sell whenever it shall be necessary for the purpose of raising money to Carry out any Contract they have made or was made for the building of Said Court house - and of the said ~~twenty Seven hundred dollars~~ Bonds so deposited Shall Sell for more than twenty Seven hundred Dollars then the Said building Committee Shall pay the excess to the aforesaid Commissioners appointed for the sale of

Said bonds."

23 February 1857

"ordered that G.C. Marchant be allowed the Sum of Four dollars & eighty Cents for Glass &C furnished for the Court House."

24 February 1857

"ordered by the Court that the order heretofore made to build a new Court House be recinded."

"apt of Commissioners to examine the Court H. &C.

also ordered that B.T. Simmons, B.S. Dey & William F. Baxter be and they are hereby appointed Commissioners to ascertain the Cost of repairing the Court House and a plan of the same, and make report what will be the probable Cost of repairing the Jail"

"Report of Grand Jurors on Jail

The Jurors for the State upon a view & examination of the Jail in Said County, beg leave to report to your Worships that the Jail is in a very bad Condition being in the opinion of Said Jurors insecure & insufficient for the Safe Custody of Criminals that may be ordered there for Safe keeping, the dungeons having holes in them Sufficiently large to allow the escape of prisoners that may be therein Confined.

C.B. Cason Foreman"

"The Court proceeded to lay the following tax for the year 1856 to wit

County tax	\$00.60¢	on each Poll	each hundred dollars	valuation of land	\$00.23
Parish	" 20	" " " "	" " " "	" "	6
School	" 20	" " " "	" " " "	" "	6
State	" 50	" " " "	" " " "	" "	15
	<hr/>				<hr/>
	\$1.50				\$..50

26 May 1857

"order Concerning Jail

ordered by the Court, that the Building Commissioners for the County Jail take bond and Security in the Sum of two thousand Dollars for the proper building of Said Jail, according to estimate: amt of Contract being \$1000."

"order to repair Court house

ordered that W^m F. Baxter & B.S. Dey be appointed Superintendents to have and make repairs on the Court House according to report of Commissioners also ordered that the Sheriff pay to W^m F. Baxter & B.S. Dey five hundred dollars for the purpose of purchasing materials to accomplish the same."

1 September 1857

"To the worshipful Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions, August Term 1857

In obedience to an order passed at May Term 1857, your Committee respectfully report that the repairs & alterations to the Court House as recommended by a former Committee in their report made to the Court at May Term 1857 have been Completed, and a portico added to the building, which with the alterations made inside of the building Can not fail to render it more commodious and comfortable. We have thought it best to defer the painting of the building until September or october as painting done at that Season is much more durable, and looks better, than when done in the heat of Summer.

Below we make a Statement of expences for material, labour &c.

No. 1	Seth M[arch]'s receipt for nails 2 kegs	\$ 8.25
" 2	Balls & Constables receipt for 25 barrels lime	27.50
" 3	" " " for white pine plank	12.50
" 4	G.W. Dey's receipt for 2 boxes Glass	5.00
" 5	B[]kin's receipt for tin roofing for portico	35.25
" 6	L. S[alusberr]y receipt for 6 chairs	9.00
" 7	J. Winslow's receipt for cutting air holes	12.60
" 8	W ^m F. Baxter's receipt for Services in traveling to Norfolk	<u>8.38</u>
	Amt. of Cash paid out on account of Court House	\$ 118.48

John Frost's bill for work	\$ 98.00
B.S. Deys bill for laths & lumber	25.18
J. Ballance bill for Brick Work & Plastering	52.50
James Mercers bill for Do	17.33

Tho ^s B[] bill for Do	27.00
Jo ^s S. Dey's Bill for freight on lime, Chairs &c & materials	45.65
Tho ^s Mercers Bill 147 feet wide flooring plank	3.67
James Halls Bill for Work	125.00
Samuel Mercers Bill for Work	121.25
E.F. Baxters Bill for hire of labour	15.50
T.C. Mercers Bill for hire 2 bushels of hog hairs	1.00
Samuel B. Hughes Bill for hauling Sand	5.00
B.T. Simmons Bill for lumber furnished	<u>12.16</u>
Amt of bills unpaid	\$ 549.24
to which add Amt of Cash spent	<u>118.48</u>
Whole amt expended for Court House	\$ 667.72

W^m F Baxter
B.S. Dey

"ordered that Joseph Winslow be allowed the Sum of Three hundred & five dollars for taking down the Jail, Attention, extra work on C.H. & drawing Contract."

"ordered that W.G. Granby be allowed the Sum of nine dollars for Pioneer office for advertising done for proposals for new Court House"

1 December 1857

"ordered by the Court that the Sheriff of Currituck pay over to Benjamin S. Dey & William F. Baxter Commissioners the Sum of Fifteen hundred and one dollars and Eighty Cents to be by them disbursed in payment of balance a[pc]^t of repairs to Court House & for costs of rebuilding the Jail.

ordered by the Court that the Sheriff pay to B.S. Dey Seventy five dollars & to W^m F. Baxter Forty dollars for their services as building Committee for Court House and Jail."

"ordered by the Court that J.S. Dey be allowed Sixty one dollars & Fifty Cents for hauling Timber for Court House & other expences St[a]cking the Same freight &C."

"ordered by the Court that the Sheriff proceed on Tuesday the 1st Dec^r to sell the Bricks and other materials left from building the Jail and repairs of the Court House Said materials to be sold in such lots not to exceed 5000 & take notes with approved Security int. from date."

23 February 1858

"The Court proceeded to lay the following tax for the year 1857

County Tax	33	on \$100 Valuation of land	State tax	50 cents on the Poll
State	" 15	" " " "	School	20 " " "
School	" 6	" " " "	Parish	20 " " "
Parish	<u>6</u>		County	<u>85</u> " " "
	60¢			\$1.75

"Jail Fees

ordered by the Court that the Jailor of this County be allowed fifty Cents pr day instead of thirty Cents, for prisoners confined in Jail."

24 February 1858

"ordered by the Court that Jo^s W. Baxter receive and be paid out of the public monies Seventy five dollars for Signing County Bonds attaching Seals to the Same with Certificates, also finding materials for Court House."

1 June 1858

"ordered by the Court that W^m F. Baxter be allowed thirty four Dollars for Services rendered on the public Buildings as Commissioner."

30 August 1858

"ordered by the Court that A.M. Cunningham be allowed Six dollars for services rendered in repair of Jail locks."

31 August 1858

"Also ordered that J.W. Baxter be allowed ten dollars for furnishing lightning Rod for the Court House & putting the same up."

29 November 1858

"ordered by the Court that John Burfoot be allowed the Sum of Twenty five dollars to be paid by the Shff out of the County funds for labor and work done on the Court House Grounds."

1 March 1859

"inspection of Jail by Grand Jury"

"We the Grand jury having inspected the Jail report the locks of the doors, especially two, in Such bad order as to make it impossible for the Jailor to make the jail secure - one of the rooms we find to be very filthy - in fact the whole of the rooms we consider in bad Condition - all of which is respectfully Submitted.

Peter Parker Foreman"

"ordered by the Court that the Sheriff procure proper locks for Jail."

30 November 1859

"ordered by the Court that Benjamin Brabble have license to erect a building on the public grounds lands belonging to the Court House the Said house to be put in place of Some of he Old Booths for the purpose of a Barroom and that he have license to remove the said building or sell it when he sees propper [sic]."

28 August 1860

"ordered by the Court that J.B. Lee Sheriff put new locks to the Jail."

26 February 1861

"Examination of Jail by Grand Jury"

"report of Grand Jury on Jail"

"To the Honourable the Judge of Superior Court of Law and equity for the State of North Carolina Currituck County. Beg leave to Submit the following report as to the Condition of the Common Jail of Currituck County, We find no prisoners Confined in Said Jail. The Jail is strong and in Good Condition, Excepting the outside lock & key destroyed.

J.B. Lee forman [sic] of Grand Jury

26 November 1866

"ordered by the Court that Thomas C. Humphries Sheriff be allowed twenty five dollars for money advanced to T.G. Munden for sash & lights for the Court House.

"ordered by the Court that John F. Frost be allowed Ten dollars for plastering and white washing Court room in the Court House.

ordered that Tho^s G. Munden be allowed five dollars for Services done in Glasing & putting in [sic] Court House &c.

ordered by the Court that J.W. Baxter be allowed for making Jail door & ~~twenty~~ dollars for repairs of his office & table in the Same for his office - Twenty five dollars

27 November 1866

"report of Condition of Jail Nov T 1866 by the Grand Jury of Superior Court"

"State of North Carolina }

Currituck County } To the Hon^f E.J. Warren Judge of Superior Court of law & Equity for the County of Currituck now in Session

The Grand Jury through their foreman beg leave to Submit the Following report of the Condition of the County Jail - We report the Jail to be in Good Condition, we find no prisoners confined therein all of which is respectfully Submitted - J.B. Lee Foreman"

[end of volume]

Comptroller of the Treasury, Nashville, Tennessee
January 15, 1895

Received of the Board of County Commissioners, Davidson County, Tennessee
the sum of \$100.00

1895

Comptroller of the Treasury, Nashville, Tennessee
January 15, 1895

Received of the Board of County Commissioners, Davidson County, Tennessee
the sum of \$100.00

Appendix 2 – abstracts of minutes of Board of County Commissioners, 1895, 1897-1898.

1895

Comptroller of the Treasury, Nashville, Tennessee
January 15, 1895

Received of the Board of County Commissioners, Davidson County, Tennessee
the sum of \$100.00

1897

Comptroller of the Treasury, Nashville, Tennessee
January 15, 1897

Received of the Board of County Commissioners, Davidson County, Tennessee
the sum of \$100.00

man of the said board of Commissioners and countersigned by the Clerk of said board in the presence of the County Treasurer and a majority of the aforesaid Board of Commissioners - Ordered this the 5th day of July 1896 [*sic*]. The board reserving the right to reject any and all bids."

"The Board appointed as a building Committee W^m H. Bray, Edward Tillett and J.L. DeCormis to look after, & superintend the repairing, remoddleing [*sic*] and construction of the Court House in Currituck County."

2 August 1897

"The Board adjourned to meet on August the 3rd for the purpose of receiving bids for the remodeling and repairing of the Court House."

3 August 1897

"The Board met according to adjournment, Present G.A. Griggs chm, B.D. Tillett and W^m H. White.

The contract for remodeling and repairing the Court House awarded to St Louis Art Metal Co. of St. Louis Mo. as per contract filed in this Office."

4 October 1897

"Ordered by the Board that the Register of Deeds and Clerk of Court's Offices Books and papers be moved in rooms rented of J.W. Brabble in the Granberry House at six dollars per mon. from Oct 1st 1897."

**Addendum:
Establishing a Construction Date for the
Currituck County Jail**

ESTABLISHING A CONSTRUCTION DATE FOR THE CURRITUCK COUNTY JAIL

A number of possible dates of construction have been suggested for the Currituck County Jail. These range from 1768 to ca.1820. The first date refers to an act of the colonial assembly authorizing the justices of Currituck County "to build a prison pillory and stocks in the said county on the lot where the court house stands . . ."¹ It is not known whether these facilities were ever built and it is architecturally and stylistically improbable that the present building was built in the 18th century. The second date, that of ca.1820, has been suggested since the 1970s as a more likely date of construction considering the construction techniques, materials, and style of the building.² Measuring thirty-two by twenty feet, the two-story jail features brick walls laid primarily in three-to-one common bond with some sections of four-to-one common bond. The door and windows have brownstone sills and lintels. These features are more likely to date from the first half of the 19th century than from the 18th century.

Whatever 18th century jail did exist appears to have been destroyed by fire in 1804. The *Federal Gazette & Baltimore Daily Advertiser* for 31 May 1804 reported that,

By a person who left Currituck, in N. Carolina, on Friday last, [25 May] we are told, that the court-house, *jail* and clerk's office in that county, with all the books and papers, were totally destroyed by fire on Wednesday morning last [23 May].³

A replacement courthouse and jail were soon thereafter constructed. That the jail was a frame building is indicated by the nature of the various schemes to repair and fortify it over the years.⁴ Although the justices at their May 27, 1828 session ordered that "G.C. Marchant Joshua Baxter Lemuel Taylor be appointed Commissioners to Draft and contract for the building of A new Brick Jail," there is no indication in the minutes of subsequent sessions of the court that the building of a brick jail was pursued. Minutes for later sessions of the court seem to imply, by the nature of the repairs ordered, that the jail or jails of Currituck County continued to be frame structures.⁵

On 24 February 1857 the grand jury reported to the justices of the county court of pleas and quarter sessions that,

upon a view & examination of the Jail in Said County, beg leave to report to your Worships that the Jail is in a very bad Condition being in the opinion of Said Jurors insecure & insufficient for the Safe Custody of Criminals that may be ordered there for Safe keeping, the dungeons having holes in them Sufficiently large to allow the escape of prisoners that may be therein Confined.

The justices responded by ordering the commissioners appointed to repair the courthouse to also "make report what will be the probable Cost of repairing the Jail."⁶ Although the commissioners' report at the following May Term of court is not recorded it is apparent that they reported that the jail should be rebuilt for we find the justices ordering,

that the Building Commissioners for the County Jail take bond and Security in the Sum of two thousand Dollars for the proper building of Said Jail, according to estimate. amt of Contract being \$1000.⁷

The new jail was either completed or well under way and the old jail demolished by September 1, 1857 when the justices ordered that,

Joseph Winslow be allowed the Sum of Three hundred & five dollars for taking down the Jail, Attention, extra work on C.H. & drawing Contract."⁸

On December 1, 1857 the justices conducted the final business concerning the rebuilt jail ordering that,

the Sheriff of Currituck pay over to Benjamin S. Dey & William F. Baxter Commissioners the Sum of Fifteen hundred and one dollars and Eighty Cents to be by them disbursed in payment of balance a[pc]^t of repairs to Court House & for costs of rebuilding the Jail.

and that the sheriff

proceed on Tuesday the 1st Dec^r to sell the Bricks and other materials left from building the Jail and repairs of the Court House Said materials to be sold in such lots not to exceed 5000 & take notes with approved Security int. from date.⁹

Thus in using the phrase "taking down the Jail," indicating that the jail existing in 1857 was demolished and in using the phrases "rebuilding the Jail" and "building the Jail," that a new jail was built, it appears that the present Currituck County Jail must date from this building activity or later. As the present jail is structurally and stylistically unlikely to have been built later than the 1850s, it is in all probability the jail erected between February and December 1857.

1. *Colonial and State Records of North Carolina*, 30 vols., (Goldsboro and Raleigh: state printers, 1886-1914), VII, 623-24; XXIII, 747-48; Margaret Walker and Barbara B. Snowden, "Currituck," *Journal of Currituck County Historical Society*, (Barco, N.C.: Currituck County Historical Society, 1976), np.

2. Currituck County Jail National Register of Historic Places file, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Eastern Regional Office, Greenville, North Carolina; Catherine W. Bishir and Michael T. Southern, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Eastern North Carolina*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 92.

3. *Federal Gazette & Baltimore Daily Advertiser* (Baltimore, Maryland), 31 May 1804, 3:1.

4. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 12 May 1812; 30 May 1821; 27 August 1822.
5. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 27 May 1828; 30 August 1847.
6. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 24 February 1857.
7. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 26 May 1857.
8. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 1 September 1857.
9. Currituck County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, minutes, 1 December 1857.